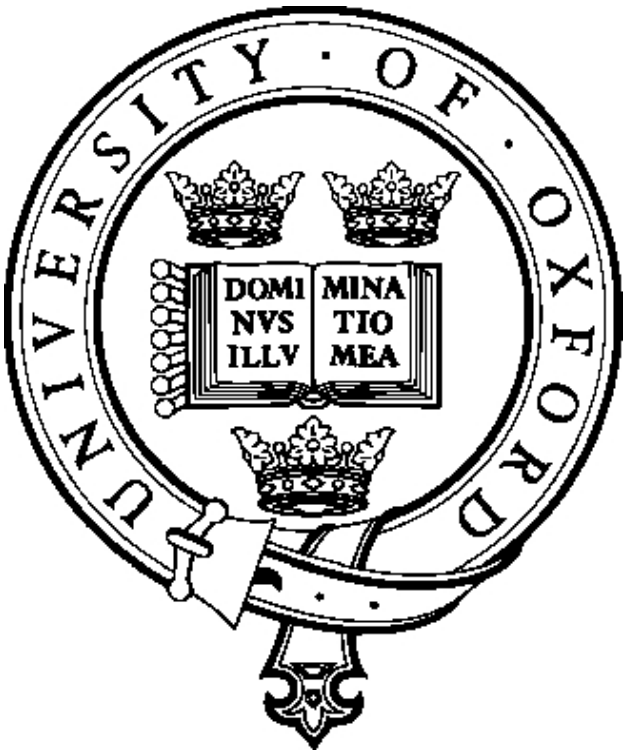
The Long Apprenticeship: Rodrigo Borgia as Papal Vice–Chancellor, 1457–1492.



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Short Abstract.

The initial purpose of this thesis was to examine Rodrigo Borgia (1431–1503) as vice–chancellor of the Church, head of the Apostolic Chancery. The Chancery was the one of the most important departments of the Roman Curia, responsible for the production of a multitude of papal documents. Borgia held the office of vice–chancellor from 1457 until his papal election in 1492, and the Chancery was housed in his palace, known as the Cancelleria. However, as the project progressed, it became clear that this objective was too narrow: the Chancery produced a wealth of documents, but they did not reflect the personal input of the vice–chancellor. Furthermore, Borgia was not a man of letters and left no record of his activities or even much in the way of personal correspondence. It was not possible to make a hard and fast division between his position as vice–chancellor and other aspects of his life as a cardinal, participating in the papal liturgy, advising the pope on matters of policy, being sent on legation, acting as a patron to clients within and beyond his household. Thus, the project evolved into a more rounded assessment of Borgia's career between 1456, when he was made a cardinal, and his papal election in 1492. It asks why, given the notoriety of his private life, did all the other cardinals consider him suitable to be pope, the vicar of Christ? In order to answer that question, the thesis examines Borgia's dealings with five popes – Calixtus III, Pius II, Paul II, Sixtus IV and Innocent VIII – and with the cardinals they created, the men who actually voted for him. One thing that distinguished Borgia from most of his fellow cardinals and from all the other electors in 1492 was his Spanish birth. He remained loyal to his homeland throughout his career, cultivating the monarchs of Aragon and Castile, sponsoring the monarchs' candidates to vacant benefices, and acting as a patron to Spaniards in Rome, whether or not they had positions in the Chancery. The final chapter of the thesis is a lengthy historiographical survey relating to Borgia's career before 1492,

distinguishing his heroic status in Spain from the ‘black legend’ that developed in Italy and spread elsewhere.

Long Abstract

The morning of 11 August 1492 brought Rodrigo Borgia's ascent through the ecclesiastical hierarchy to a fitting completion with his unanimous election as Pope Alexander VI (r. 1492–1503). Borgia had served as a cardinal for thirty–six years and vice–chancellor of the Church – head of the Roman Chancery – for a year less: none of the other twenty–two cardinals who voted in the conclave of 1492 could challenge him for length of service in the Church or knowledge of its workings. The other principal departments of the Roman Curia were the Apostolic Camera, which dealt with finance and aspects of local government in Rome, the Apostolic Penitentiary, which processed the forgiveness of more serious sins, and the Rota, the chief legal tribunal, but it was the Chancery which was at the heart of the Church's bureaucracy, issuing documents on a wide variety of subjects and sending them to every diocese in Western Christendom. For centuries the history of the papacy meant the history of the popes themselves, rather than the bureaucracy that functioned beneath them. In recent decades, there has been more of an emphasis on individual Curial departments, as can be seen in the work of Peter Partner on the Camera, Kirsi Salonen, Peter Clarke and others on the Penitentiary, or Salonen on the Rota. For the Chancery there is T. Frenz, *Die Kanzlei der Päpste der Hochrenaissance (1471–1527)* (Tübingen, 1986). The original intention for the present project was to focus on Rodrigo Borgia's tenure as vice–chancellor, which would mean overlapping with Frenz for the years from 1471 to 1492, but also covering the period from 1457. The problem with this was that there are no obvious sources that separate any personal contribution by the vice–chancellor from the work of the Chancery as a whole. A much more viable approach is to analyse the careers of the men who worked in the Chancery, some of whom had traceable connections with Borgia personally, but that had already been done by Frenz. The first attempt to solve this problem was to open up the study to account for

other aspects of Borgia's pre–papal career: as a curial cardinal from 1456 and dean of the College of Cardinals from 1483; as a legate, to the Marche in 1457 and the Spanish kingdoms in 1472–3. This confirmed that it was not possible, with predominantly online resources, to distinguished Borgia's role into the walls of the Chancery from his role in the rest of papal Rome. However, it still did not exhaust the options or offer a distinctive contribution to our understanding of the man and the contexts in which he operated. In the final year of the project new emphases were added: a detailed examination of additions to and subtractions from the College of Cardinals, with implications for Borgia; and an understanding of cardinals as patrons, specifically of their familiars, those clerics who were entitled to dine at their tables. Borgia was the most popular patron in late fifteenth–century Rome. He provided employment and advanced the careers of individuals, while also acting as a good lord to corporate institutions such as the abbey of S. Scolastica at Subiaco, of which he was commendatory abbot. The pope was the ultimate source of patronage and Borgia's various activities suggested that he was capable of exercising that responsibility.

Even with this additional material and appreciation, something else was required to hold the thesis together. That came to be provided by the contrast between the notoriety of Borgia's personal life and the fact that all the other cardinals voted for him by the end of the electoral process in August 1492. How did that come about? Could it be explained merely by short–term events, perhaps from the death of the previous pope, Innocent VIII, a few days earlier and the usual machinations of the papal interregnum and the conclave itself, or could the reasons be traced further back, in relations between Borgia and his fellow cardinals during the previous years and decades?

The thesis charts Rodrigo Borgia's personal history from his birth and early years in Spain. To understand the world in which he operated and the reasons for his papal election, it would have to take a different route, from fourteenth–century France, the era of the Avignon

papacy, the schism between popes in Rome and antipopes in Avignon, and the period of conciliarism, in which popes and general councils vied for authority over the Church. The twin spectres of the papal 'exile' in Avignon and of Conciliarism hung over the fifteenth–century Church. The popes reacted by rooting themselves ever more firmly in the city of Rome, rebuilding its infrastructure and proclaiming regular jubilees or holy years, when the faithful made pilgrimages to the papal capital. One of the last outposts of the papal schism was in the kingdom of Aragon, but Benedict XIII's fortress at Peníscola did not have the same connotations as the Palais des Papes at Avignon. Borgia and his family were identified as foreigners in Rome, but Spaniards were less threatening than Frenchmen. There was no chance of a French pope being elected at any point in the fifteenth century, as was demonstrated by the failed attempts of Cardinal Guillaume d'Estouteville in the conclaves of 1458, 1464 and 1471. It can be argued that Borgia was elected in 1492 because he was not the French candidate and had never had much to do with French clerics and French benefices.

The thesis traces Borgia's career through five pontificates, beginning with that of his uncle Calixtus III (r. 1455–8). That was when he established his reputation for strong and decisive leadership, in a temporary capacity as legate to the Marche, but none of the other cardinals created by Calixtus lived long enough to vote in 1492. What Borgia could take away from that early phase was an understanding of how papal regimes come and go, how a pope's lay kinsmen could sink without trace and his clerical *nipote* had to fend for themselves after his death. Pius II (r. 1458–64) appreciated Borgia's ability and kept him in post at the Chancery. Borgia was still a young man, but he had to make his own way in Curial Rome, forging new working relationships. However, only one of the thirteen cardinals created by Pius lived long enough to vote in the conclave of 1492, so most of Borgia's energies went into furthering more immediate objectives. There is relatively little information about Borgia's activities during the pontificate of Paul II (r. 1464–71), but among the ten cardinals

created by that pope were three who featured prominently in Borgia's election … or five, if one counts Francesco della Rovere, who became Pope Sixtus IV (r. 1471–84) and in turn promoted many of the other electors to the cardinalate. In terms of relations between the papacy and the secular powers, Pius had cultivated some of the Italian states by means of dynastic marriage and the bestowal of a red cardinal's hat, whereas Paul had poor relations with his nearer neighbours, including his home state of Venice, and sought to compensate by giving hats to the candidates of ultramontane princes. These were all lessons which Borgia was in a position to absorb, though precisely how he reacted to them is not known, for he left no record of his views. Either way, Borgia made a point of cultivating secular princes, first in his home state of Aragon and then venturing into Italy by means of the Aragonese kings of Naples.

Sixtus IV began his pontificate by seeking good relations with all the other major states of Italy – Naples, Milan, Venice and Florence – and did so by a combination of the lessons learned from his predecessors, dynastic marriages and political appointments to the cardinalate, but also by appointing his favourite *nipote* to Florentine and Venetian bishoprics. Borgia never showed much interest in republican states, papal monarchy and secular monarchy being a natural fit. Sixtus confirmed this by going to war with Florence in 1478–80 and with Venice in 1482–4. Of the thirty–four cardinals created by Sixtus twelve voted in the conclave of 1492. They included the two principal power brokers on that occasion, Giuliano della Rovere and Ascanio Maria Sforza, which makes it appropriate to look back over Borgia's previous dealings with each of them. The background to any vote cast for Borgia or by Borgia is also examined. The last of the five popes under whom Borgia served was Innocent VIII (r. 1484–92), six of whose eight new cardinals had the opportunity to vote for Borgia. In the ballots for which records survive, only one of them did so, while in turn Borgia voted for only one of them, meaning that his genuine support tended to come from the

longer–serving cardinals, even if all of them assented to his election when they found that it was the easiest way to achieve a result. In papal elections there is a choice between continuity with the previous pontificate and breaking with it. Innocent's pontificate is therefore worth studying in order to see what it was that the electors might have wanted to do differently. The sheer length of Borgia's career had permitted all his fellow cardinals to observe what sort of pontiff he would be if he was elected. The ambassadors of other states also considered his candidature and found him wanting on personal grounds, though the objections centred on simony, not on the illegitimate children who later became so prominent. The most influential account of the conclave, that of the Roman diarist Stefano Infessura, claimed that mules were seen carrying silver from Borgia's palace to that of Ascanio Sforza, which surely meant that Sforza's vote had been bought, even though Sforza was the pope–maker, not a waverer who might have been swayed by bribery.

One distinctive feature of this thesis is the emphasis placed on historiography, including the abiding influence of Infessura's account. As a rule, the logical place for historiography is at the beginning of a thesis, setting out the state of our knowledge before the present research was undertaken. This thesis is not based on original archival research. Rather, its account of Borgia's pre–papal career is taken almost exclusively from published sources, so a different approach seemed to be required. The originality in the present study lies in the extensive historiographical exploration of works relating to Borgia's career up to 1492. This work was undertaken during the final year of research, so is not as well integrated into the text as might otherwise be the case. Placing it at the end, rather than the beginning, therefore reflects the nature of the project's evolution, and also highlights it as the most original feature of the work. Alexander VI and his children are among some of the most notorious figures in European history: whenever a new medium – novel, film, television, video game – is devised, the Borgia have provided juicy subject matter. The 'black legend' of

unscrupulous immorality can be traced back to the early sixteenth century and is alluded to in the historiographical chapter of this thesis, but greater emphasis is placed on the accounts of historians from Francesco Guicciardini onwards. It is true that the 'black legend' has never been far from removed from historical works produced in Italy and disseminated throughout most of Europe. The 'black legend' of the Borgia was part and parcel of the Black Legend of Spanish rule in early modern Italy. When one turns to Spanish accounts of Rodrigo Borgia, whether as pope or cardinal, the emphasis is quite different, for there have been no Spanish popes since Calixtus III and Alexander VI, yet Spain was the bulwark of Catholicism from the sixteenth century onwards and Alexander was regarded as a heroic figure alongside Ferdinand and Isabella (who appear in this study as Ferrando and Isabel). In recent decades Alexander and his family have been appropriated as part of Catalan nationalist culture, particularly during the fifth centenary of his pontificate (1992–2003). Among the most promising works published at that time was M. Vaquero Piñeiro, 'Valencianos en Roma durante el siglo xv una presencia entorno a los Borja', in M. González Baldovi (ed.), *El hogar de los Borja* (Valencia, 2001), pp. 185–99. This study analyses lists of Borgia's familiars compiled periodically between 1470 and 1481 and is an obvious point of departure for any new studies of Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia and his associates. In that sense, the present thesis represents work in progress, a preliminary survey rather than an attempt at a comprehensive study based on detailed analysis of what sources there are for Rodrigo Borgia's life up to 1492.

Acknowledgements.

As with any research project there are a number of people who have contributed in many different ways by giving their time, advice and patience. Essentially, this project is the result of my studies as an undergraduate at the University of Warwick, where my love of religious history and the Italian Renaissance was fostered under the supervision of Professor Peter Marshall, Dr Jonathan Davies and the late Dr Humfrey Butters, who was the tutor for my term in Venice. Although I temporarily shifted focus to the Cathars of Languedoc for my Master's degree at Durham, it was my supervisor there, Dr Giles Gasper, who encouraged me to apply to Oxford. While at Oxford I was fortunate to be supervised by Professor Nicholas Davidson, whose patience and charisma were evident from our first supervision meeting. I am indebted to Dr Stella Fletcher who joined the project in its final year as co–supervisor and whose patience, knowledge and support has been invaluable in this project's completion. I also have to thank St Peter's College for both their personal and financial support. As a self–funded student, their generosity allowed me to spend time working in archives on primary material and then presenting my research at conferences. Further afield, I have to thank The Royal Historical Society and the Society for Renaissance Studies for the generous travel grants and fellowships which permitted study in the Vatican Archives and Library.

Closer to home, I need to thank my close friends, who have been a constant source of support and encouragement. Within my family I thank Clare and James: your unwavering love and support have been a source of immeasurable comfort and joy and have kept me going throughout the course of my academic career. There are three members of my family who I desperately wish could have seen this project come to fruition: my grandparents, Jean and Frank, who helped to raise me and who hoped I would study at Oxford (I would like to feel that I have held them to their word!), and my mum, Sarah, who we sadly lost when I was

very young and who I know has been watching me complete a project in a city where she studied and which she loved greatly.

It is only fitting that this thesis is dedicated to my dad, Nick. Dad: from such a young age you fostered my love of history, both in the classroom and through a large number of history–based family holidays! Your incredible work ethic, determination and passion for history is something to be marvelled at and is only eclipsed by the love and support you have shown me. No matter how many words sit on the following pages of this thesis, they will never quite cover and convey just how extraordinarily appreciative I am for everything you have done. Your love and support through the good and bad times we have experienced together mean the absolute world to me and are things that I will cherish forever.

Finally, this thesis was completed during the Covid–19 pandemic, which presented a unique challenge through the closure of libraries and archives, meaning that the majority of the final research was completed electronically, via online resources and the generous sharing of information within the online academic community. Here I have to pay particular thanks to Barry Torch in Canada for his invaluable help with Pius II's *Commentaries*. It is not lost on me for one second that this work was carried out whilst our frontline workers showed incredible selflessness, not just in Oxford but across the world, we owe them an enormous debt.

Oxford, Michaelmas Term, 2020.

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Introduction

> Although my brethren, the cardinals, might have agreed upon others, eminent by greater merits, yet, through a judgement of God, whose counsels are inscrutable, they have, on the 11 of August, with unanimous will and accord, elected me to be the Spouse and Pastor of his Holy Church.[1]
>
> Pope Alexander VI to Archduke Sigismund of Austria, 26 August 1492.

As dawn broke on the morning of 11 August, the 214th successor to the papal throne of St Peter was elected by his fellow cardinals. No one – cardinal, monarch or layman – expected to hear that the dean and vice–chancellor of the Church, Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia had been elected by his fellow cardinals. Whilst details of the previous conclave, that of 1484, had been recorded meticulously by the papal master of ceremonies, Johannes Burchard (1450–1506), his diary or *Liber Notarum* unfortunately stopped prior to the beginning of the next papal election.[2] Instead, diplomatic dispatches from the various states of the Italian peninsula and other contemporary records have to fill the gaps in our knowledge of the actions of the twenty–three voting cardinals. This has resulted in the diary of the contemporary Roman Stefano Infessura (1435–1500), becoming a large part of the conclave's narrative. The endurance of Infessura's narrative is testament to how strong anti–Borgia feeling has been for

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[1] L. von Pastor, *The History of the Popes, from the Close of the Middle Ages*, trans. F. I. Antrobus (vols 1–6, London, 1891–8), v, p. 385.

[2] J. Burchard, *Liber notarum ab anno MCCCCLXXXIII usque ad annum MDVI*, ed. E. Celani, RIS, tomo XXXII, (2 vols, Città di Castello, 1907–42).

the past five centuries and how it has crossed the boundaries of geography, literary genres and other media. With its stories of debauchery, diabolism and murder, it is little wonder Rodrigo Borgia's history continues to fascinate scholars today, becoming a byword for infamy.

In popular culture the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries are seen as a period of glamour and intrigue, and the Borgia have been cast as the most infamous family of that era. A lurid legend of corruption, murder and sexual depravity has criss–crossed the boundaries of print, theatre, opera, film, graphic novels and even a successful video game. Each genre has enticed audiences by playing on and perpetuating the family's notorious reputation. Quite recently, the release in 2011 of two simultaneous television series – The *Borgias* (Showtime) and *Borgia: Faith and Fear* (Canal+) – introduced the 'black legend' of the Borgia family to a new generation, and did so by exaggerating their reputation for corruption, violence and sexual misdemeanours. Where popular culture has led, scholars are now following, hoping to explain the historical reality behind the myths, fantasies and conjectures. Consequently, in the first two decades of the twenty–first century there has been a notable resurgence of interest in the Borgia family in Renaissance Spain and Italy, at the heart of which was the pivotal figure of Rodrigo de Borja/Borgia (1431–1503), who reigned as Pope Alexander VI from 1492 and whose history has reached us through what Orestes Ferrara called a 'tissue of inaccuracies'.[3] These inaccuracies have been the greatest hinderance to the progression of studies on Rodrigo Borgia. The 'black legend', which developed during his pontificate but became widely accepted after his death, has overshadowed any meaningful attempt to understand or appreciate his earlier ecclesiastical career. At least in English, a reassessment of Borgia as pontiff is long overdue – the last

[3] O. Ferrara, *The Borgia Pope: Alexander the Sixth* (London, 1942), p. 4.

being that of A. H. Mathew in 1912 – but it should not appear in isolation, making a study of Borgia's earlier – and longer – career integral to the greater whole.[4] Significant headway was made on Borgia's earlier career by Mgr. Peter de Roo in 1924 and then Michael Mallett in 1969, but more archival material has been published since then and considerable research has been undertaken into the relevant period as a whole. This thesis consequently aims to provide a synthesis of contemporary materials with recent research. The result means that Borgia can be studied in line with his contemporaries in the College of Cardinals. Renaissance cardinals were expected to balance a number of roles simultaneously. The broader studies of Gigliola Fragnito and Carol Richardson or the more focused research of D. S. Chambers on Francesco Gonzaga have gone some way towards demonstrating a number of these roles, particularly regarding patronage, both cultural and ecclesiastical.[5] By analysing Borgia's patronage, both in Valencia and in Rome, the thesis enables parallels to be drawn between Borgia and his contemporaries. In Rome, Borgia had the unique position of presiding over a palace which also housed a curial department, the Chancery, whilst also containing his own household. Whilst some individuals lived and worked in the same building, they were institutionally different entities. Here, the thesis draws on the invaluable work of Manuel Vaquero Piñeiro on Borgia's *familia* and Thomas Frenz's study of the Chancery which allows us to trace how

[4] A. H. Mathew, *The Life and Times of Rodrigo Borgia, Pope Alexander VI* (London, 1912).

[5] G. Fragnito, 'Cardinal's Courts in Sixteenth–Century Rome', *The Journal of Modern History*, 65/1 (1993), pp. 26–56; C. Richardson, *Reclaiming Rome: Cardinals in the Fifteenth Century* (Leiden, 2009); D. S. Chambers, *A Renaissance Cardinal and his Worldly Goods: The Will and Inventory of Francesco Gonzaga (1444–1483)*, (London, 1992).

many of these individuals found curial employment.[6] Borgia's thirty–six–year career in the Curia can also inform our understanding of the Renaissance papacy. The history of the Chancery during his tenure as vice–chancellor reveals a great deal about papal objectives, whether raising money for a crusading project or to ensure papal relatives or supporters were at the heart of papal administration.

Where scholarship was once determined to cast Borgia as the head of history's most notorious family, more recent efforts to rehabilitate his reputation have significantly altered how he is now perceived. The work of the Catalan historian Miquel Batllori in particular has proved invaluable, both for the publication of sources relating to Borgia and his treatment of the family.[7] Aside from Batllori's influence, historians including Michael Mallett, J. N. Hillgarth, Marion Hermann Röttgen and Óscar Villarroel González, have contributed significantly to challenging the previous assumptions of Borgia's notoriety.[8] However, the

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[6] 'M. Vaquero Piñeiro, 'Valencianos en Roma durante el siglo xv una presencia en torno a los Borja', in Mariano González Baldovi (ed), *El hogar de los Borja: Xàtiva: Museu de l'Almodí, Antic Hospital Major, del 16 de diciembre de 2000 al 28 de febrero de 2001* (Valencia, 2001), pp. 185–99; T. Frenz, *Die Kanzlei der Päpste der Hochrenaissance (1471–1527)* (Tübingen, 1986).

[7] The career of Miquel Batllori is discussed in chapter eight of this thesis (Rodrigo Borgia and the historians).

[8] M. Mallett, *The Borgias* (London, 1969); J. N. Hillgarth, 'The Image of Alexander VI and Cesare Borgia in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 59 (1996), pp. 119–29; M. Hermann–Röttgen, *Die Familie Borgia Geschichte einer Legende* (Stuttgart, 1992); Ó. Villarroel González, *Los Borgia: Iglesia y poder entre los siglos xv y xvi* (Madrid, 2005).

focus has been on his eleven–year pontificate, not on his earlier and much longer ecclesiastical career. Even in the most recent collection of essays on the Borgia, *The Borgias: Rumour and Representation* edited by Jennifer Mara DeSilva, no article focused on his time as a cardinal.[9] The volume explores the historical and cultural constructs that have come to define the early modern Borgia family and how these have both developed and persisted in the popular imagination. The closest article to touch on these thirty–six years was William Keene Thompson's article on the conclave of 1492 and the immersive *Reaction to the Past* game which allows students to 'experience' the conclave process, but the article did not reveal anything about Borgia's earlier career.[10] As a result, the chapter in Michael Mallett's monograph, which is now fifty–one years old, still remains the most valuable analysis of Borgia's earlier career. This thesis seeks to use the foundations laid by Mallett and combine them with more recent research. Here the work of the Internacional d'Estudis Borgians (IEB) has been of significant use, particularly during the closure of libraries during the 2020 Covid–19 pandemic. The IEB, which was formed in the wake of Batllori's passing, aims to promote, co–ordinate and spread research on the Borgia family, by means of monographs, the journal *Revista Borja*, updates on archival discoveries and an online presence has provided scholars with an electronic database of scholarly articles and archive collections relating to the family; for Borgia these had predominately focused on his artistic patronage in Spain.[11] The work of

[9] J. M. DeSilva (ed), *The Borgia Family: Rumour and Representation* (Abingdon, 2020).

[10] W. Keene–Thompson, 'Electing Alexander… or not? The development and reception of a *Reacting to the Past* role–immersion game based on the papal conclave of 1492', in J. M. DeSilva (ed.), *The Borgia Family: Rumour and Representation* (Abingdon, 2020), pp. 86–105.

[11] Institut Internacional d' Estudis Borgians < https://www.elsborja.cat>

Adele Condorelli and Ximo Company has provided a new angle on Borgia's career, that of a cultural patron.[12] Whilst no new material has been published since 2018 with the publication of its sixth volume, the IEB's blog has published a number of articles, the most recent of which, by Maria Toldrà, has focused on the murder of the duke of Bisceglie, the second husband of Lucrezia Borgia, ensuring that even in a time when academic publishing and research has been disrupted, research on the Borgia continues.[13] Considerable space in this thesis has been dedicated to emphasising and unpicking the historiography on Borgia's career until the point of his election in August 1492, the reason for this being the impact the commentators, both contemporary and modern have had on the Borgia's legacy.

As Rodrigo Borgia served under five different pontiffs, careful attention has been paid to documents pertaining to each pontificate and the Renaissance papacy as a whole. Miles Pattenden's 2017 study of papal elections between 1450 and 1700 has addressed how the College of Cardinals went about electing a new pontiff, how the qualities and faults of each cardinal were discussed, and how this could predict what sort of pontiff they could expect to choose.[14] For individual studies of the five pontificates from 1455 to 1492, substantial work

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[12] A. Condorelli, 'El Cardenal Rodrigo de Borja mecenas de Francesco Pagano y Paolo da San Leocadio', *Revista Borja,* 2 (2008–9), pp. 359–78; X. Company, 'Angels borgians amb música i policromia de Déu', *Revista Borja*, 2 (2008–9), pp. 379–407.

[13] 'L'assinat del duc de Bisceglie I el dol de la sevaviuda, Lucrècia Borgja, camí de Nepi' (Història aragonesa del pontificat d'Alexandre VI, 20) <.https://www.elsborja.cat/blog/lassassinat-del-duc-de-bisceglie-i-el-dol-de-la-seva-viuda-lucrecia-borja-cami-de-nepi-historia-aragonesa-del-pontificat-dalexandre-vi-20/ > (accessed 22 October 2020).

[14] M. Pattenden, *Electing the Pope in Early Modern Italy, 1450–1700* (Oxford, 2017).

has been published in recent years. However, despite being the first non–Italian pontiff resident in Rome since Gregory XI (r. 1370–8), Calixtus's life and three–year pontificate has received little attention from historians, dismissed on account of the attention devoted to his immediate predecessor and successor. The abiding view had been dominated by nepotism, of which Rodrigo was a major beneficiary, and the pontiff's futile crusading attempt. Recently, Calixtus's pontificate has been analysed by Miguel Navarro Sorní, who has shone a light on his earlier career as bishop of Valencia.[15] Published in *Revista Borja*, J. Cánoves and J. M. Badenas produced a study on the library of Calixtus III: this has challenged the idea that he did not care for literary endeavours.[16] For Calixtus's successor, Cardinal Enea Silvio Piccolomini, Pope Pius II, scholarly interest has been immense. While biographies of the pontiff have situated Pius's career and pontificate against the backdrop of Western Christendom, the majority of recent scholarship has focused on his vast literary output, with the pontiff's orations analysed in 2019 by Michael von Cotta–Schönberg.[17] Notable studies here are Emily O'Brien's critical edition of the *Commentaries* published in 2015 and a

[15] M. Navarro Sorní, 'Alfonso de Borja, obispo de Valencia', *Anales Valentinos*, 26/52 (2000), pp. 315–56; M. Navarro Sorní*, Calixto III Borja y Alfonso el Magnánimo frente a la Cruzada* (València, 2003).

[16] J. Cánoves, and J. M. Badenas, 'La biblioteca de Calixt III', *Revista Borja, 5, Actes del Congrés Els Borja en l'Art*, 2 (2015–16), pp. 1–7.

[17] V. Reinhard, *Pius II. Piccolomini: der Papst, mit dem die Renaissance began: eine Biographie* (Munich 2013); M. von Cotta–Schönberg (ed. and tr.), 'Oration *Ut apertum vobis* of Pope Pius II' (10 October 1458, Rome), (Copenhagen, 2019).

similar study by Christian Guerra in 2018.[18] In the same year, the third volume of the I Tatti Renaissance Library edition of the *Commentaries*, edited by Margaret Meserve, was published, the previous volumes having been published in 2004 and 2007 respectively by Meserve and Marcello Simonetta.[19] At the time of writing this thesis, book Four which would complete the analysis of Pius's work, has not been published; however there is a forthcoming edition of *De Europa* (1458) and an analysis of Pius's understanding of Europe, both by Nancy Bisaha, due for publication.[20] As the *Commentaries* provide an unparalleled insight into the world of the Renaissance papacy and cardinalate, Church politics and ideas of papal power, such studies are imperative to our understanding not only of the early part of Borgia's career but the world in which he operated for forty–seven years as both cardinal and pontiff.

Pius's successor, Paul II, was no author, so has received considerably less attention from scholars compared to his immediate predecessor and successor. The main focus of studies on Paul has been on the alleged anti–papal conspiracy by members of the Roman Academy of 1468. Here the recent works of Stefan Bauer on Bartolomeo Platina and Anthony D'Elia's study of the conspiracy have shone light on the complexities of the episode

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[18] E. O'Brien, *The Commentaries of Pope Pius II* (Toronto, 2015); C. Guerra, *Der erzählte Papst: Enea Silvio Piccolomini–Pius II. Und die römische Historiographie in den Commentarii de rebus a se gestis* (Basel 2018).

[19] Pius II, *Commentaries*, ed. M. Meserve and M. Simonetta (3 vols, Cambridge, 2003).

[20] 'Professor Nancy Bisaha',
< https://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/history/research/grants/PreviousProjects/crusading-in-the-fifteenth-century/leverhulme-trust-international-network/the-project-partners/professor-nancy-bisaha > (accessed 21 October 2020).

and how much it vexed the pontiff.[21] More recently, work on the ambassadors resident at Paul's court has been undertaken by Paul Dover, whilst Thomas Haye has focused on Paul's engagement with a new crusade against the Ottoman Turks, by studying the crusading dialogue of the Florentine Francesco da Montelupo, O. P.[22] More work certainly needs to be done on the seven years of Paul's pontificate if it is to be understood as more than just a stopgap between those of Pius II and Sixtus IV. By contrast, Sixtus IV has received wide scholarly attention, with events including the Pazzi Conspiracy (1478) and the War of Ferrara (1482–4) at the forefront.[23] These are followed up by his artistic endeavours to mark the jubilee year in 1475 to which Borgia contributed a tabernacle at S. Maria del Popolo. Most recently, Sixtus's relationship with Pietro Riario, his favoured nephew, has featured heavily in scholarship.[24] Riario acts as a good comparison for Borgia: cardinal–nephew, substantial

[21] S. Bauer, *The Censorship and Fortuna of Platina's Lives of the popes in the sixteenth century* (Abingdon, 2006); A. F. D'Elia, *A Sudden Terror: The Plot to Murder the Pope in Renaissance Rome* (Cambridge, MA, and London, 2009).

[22] P. Dover, "Saper la mente della soa Beatitudine": 'Pope Paul II and the Ambassadorial Community in Rome (1464–71)', *Renaissance and Reformation/Renaissance et Réforme*, 31/3 (Summer, 2008), pp. 3–34; T. Haye, 'Papst Paul II. (1464–1471) und der Türkenkreuzzug in einem literarischen dialog des Florentiners Silvestro Francesco da Montelupo, O.P. (1415–1479)', *Humanistica Lovaniensia*, 61 (2012), pp. 27–63.

[23] M. Celani, 'The conflict after the Pazzi conspiracy and Poliziano's Coniurationus Commentarium': *Literature, Law and Politics, Forum Italicum*, 53/2 (2019), pp. 327–49; S. Fletcher, 'Cardinals and the War of Ferrara', *Royal Studies Journal*, iv (2017), pp. 64–77.

[24] J. M. DeSilva, 'Princely Patronage on Display: The Case of Cardinal Pietro Riario and Pope Sixtus IV, 1471–1474', *Royal Studies Journal*, 6/1 (2019), pp. 55–79.

patron and an individual who enjoyed a meteoric rise to power, though the comparison can be taken no further, because Riario predeceased his papal uncle, whereas Borgia had survived his. Scholarship on Innocent VIII has been thin, his pontificate and character usually dismissed as feeble and controlled by the whims of Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere, as a result there has been no attempt to construct a biography of the Genoese pontiff after that of Francesco Serdonati in 1829.[25] By contrast, Innocent's pontificate features in the wider narratives of late medieval witchcraft, thanks to the bull *Summis Desiderantes* (5 December 1484). Papal history remains an active and ongoing area for research and publication. A new four volume, cross–disciplinary history of the papacy, edited by Joëlle Rollo–Koster, is set to be published by Cambridge University Press in 2022. Drawing on work from scholars including Rollo–Koster, Miles Pattenden and Catherine Fletcher, the thirty–five articles hope to present new perspectives on the Renaissance papacy.[26]

[25] F. Serdonati, *Vita e fatti d'Innocenzo VIII., papa CCXVI* (Milan, 1829).

[26] 'Cambridge to publish a history of the papacy', <http://services.cambridge.org/jp/academic/news/cambridge-publish-history-papacy/ > (accessed 25 October 2020).

A nephew of Pope Calixtus III (r. 1455–8), the young Rodrigo was elevated to the cardinalate in 1456 and appointed to the prestigious office of vice–chancellor of the Church in 1457. In due course Rodrigo advanced the interests of the next generation, including his sons Pier Luigi/Pere Lluis (1458–88) and Giovanni/Joan/Juan (1474/6–97), the first and second dukes of Gandía, Cesare/César (1475–1507), a cardinal and later duke of Valentinois, Lucrezia (1480–1519), successively lady of Pesaro, duchess of Bisceglie and duchess of Ferrara, and Gioffre/Jofré (1481–1517), prince of Squillace. Cesare's ruthless military campaigns on behalf of the Holy See and Lucrezia's successive dynastic marriages ensured that Alexander's children were central to the temporal policies of the papacy, but the existence of papal offspring also had unintended consequences when, during the night of 14–15 June 1497, the second duke of Gandía was murdered in Rome. The distraught pope wailed that he would 'have given seven papacies to have his son restored to him' and declared that the murder was a punishment from God for his own sins.[27] A high–level commission was established, charged with reforming abuses in the Church, but its proposals were not put into effect. Although nothing was ever proved, the finger of blame for the murder duly pointed at Juan's brother Cesare.[28] The accusation of fratricide took root and spread from Italy to Spain, where it appeared in the ballad 'Batallas y Quincuagenas', by Gonzalo Fernández de Ovido (1478–1557), who had been in Rome in 1497, a text incorporated into Jerónimo Zurita's later sixteenth–century *Anales de la Corona de Aragón*.[29]

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[27] M. Sanuto, *Diarii*, ed. R. Fulin (Venice, 1879–1902) i, pp. 653–4.

[28] J. N. Hillgarth, 'The Image of Alexander VI and Cesare Borgia in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 59 (1996), p. 124.

[29] C. Marías, 'The Hispanic Ballad of the Death of the Duke of Gandía', *The Borgia Family: Rumour and Representation*, ed. Jennifer Mara DeSilva (Abingdon, 2020), p. 167.

Dynamic characters and a strong dramatic thread are also to be found in the non–dynastic history of Alexander's pontificate. From 1490 the Dominican friar Girolamo Savonarola (1452–98) presented himself as a prophet to the citizens of Florence and warned them of imminent catastrophe if they did not reform their ways. After the death of Florence's leading citizen Lorenzo de' Medici in April 1492, Savonarola's preaching inspired reform of the republican constitution and the expulsion of the anti–democratic Medici. Flushed with political success, the friar turned his attention to ecclesiastical abuses and launched a sustained campaign against the pope himself. Alexander responded by seeking to silence him. The stand–off remained until the Florentine government could defend him no longer, leading to his public burning in Piazza della Signoria on 23 May 1498. Savonarola's story overlaps with that of King Charles VIII's invasion of Italy. The presence of French arms on Italian soil, not least in Rome itself in the winter of 1494–5, represented a watershed, the end of a forty–year period during which the states of Italy had managed to maintain a balance of power and avoid war to the death, even if peace was often elusive. French forces represented a potent threat to the balance of power in the peninsula but were also potentially a political threat to Alexander's control over the Papal States because the king was accompanied by Cardinal Giuliano Della Rovere (1443–1513) and other dissidents clamouring for Alexander's deposition. Alluding to the cardinal's titular church of S. Pietro in Vincoli and to his allies among the Roman barons, the invaders were greeted in Rome with shouts of 'Francia!' 'Colonna!' and 'Vincoli!' from the excited populace.[30] Charles needed favours from Alexander, so had no intention of deposing him and moved south to stake his claim to the kingdom of Naples. After some months he returned to France, leaving behind a garrison that was no match for the Spanish forces sent by Ferrando II of Aragon (r. 1479–1516) and

[30] J. Fyvie, *The Story of the Borgias* (London, 1912), p. 92.

Isabel I of Castile (r. 1474–1504) to support their kinsmen, the Aragonese kings of Naples. In 1494 Alexander secured a Neapolitan marriage for his son Gioffré and in 1498 another for his daughter Lucrezia, but the papacy needed to be even–handed in its dealings with the secular powers and it was also in 1498 that Alexander laicised his clerical son Cesare and sent him to France, where the young ex–cardinal soon obtained a royal bride, Charlotte d'Albret (1480–1514), sister of Jean III, king of Navarre (r. 1484–1516). Just as the last French king had sought to make good his dynastic claim to Naples, so his successor, Louis XII (r. 1498–1515), had similar designs on the duchy of Milan, which he invaded in September 1499 and held until 1513.[31]

Taken together, the murder of the duke of Gandía, the stand–off with Savonarola, and the invasions of Italy by external powers were used by Alexander's critics to argue that he was not a suitable individual to occupy the throne of St Peter. To Italians he was a foreigner, a Spaniard and, as tended to be the case with Spaniards, his blood was assumed to be tainted by non–Christian ancestry, making him all the more unfit to be Christ's vicar on earth, though any such criticism was muted during his lifetime. Tellingly, it snowballed after his death, encouraged by the next–pope–but–one, Julius II (r. 1503–13), the former Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere (b. 1443).

In October 1503 Alexander's immediate successor, Pius III, died after a reign of just twenty–six days and Della Rovere was elected in what was said to be the shortest conclave on record and therefore a reflection of the uncontested strength of his candidature. He cast himself as a patriotic Italian, a position deliberately designed to contrast with the Spanish heritage of the man who had died less than eleven weeks earlier. Julius and his associates

[31] M. Mallett and C. Shaw, *The Italian Wars: 1494–1559 War, State and Society in Early Modern Europe* (Harlow, 2012), pp. 42–3, 48.

deliberately played on that contrast, accusing the late Alexander and the surviving Cesare of numerous crimes, including the murder of cardinals whose sudden deaths offered any opportunity for suspicion. Giuliano della Rovere had certainly feared for his own safety in Borgia Rome and spent Alexander's pontificate in self–imposed exile in Avignon, from where he cultivated ties with the French monarchy. If the Spanish pope had been so notorious, the argument ran, there must have been something flawed about his election, for how could the Holy Spirit have inspired the electors to vote for him? The accusations in this regard were exceptionally severe, but they can be traced to France during the period of Della Rovere's exile. During that period an anonymous woodcut was produced in Paris depicting the Borgia pope as a grotesque devil.[32] From 1503, with Della Rovere not just in Rome but on the papal throne, rumours circulated in Italy that the Borgia pope had gained his illustrious office thanks to a pact with the devil. The marquis of Mantua, Francesco II Gonzaga (1466–1519), declared that 'those who knew his secret understood that after the death of Innocent [VIII], while in the conclave he bought the papacy with his soul'.[33] Gonzaga's assertion was no doubt influenced by antipathy towards Cesare, who had expelled the marquis's sister Elisabetta Gonzaga (1471–1526) and her husband Guidobaldo da Montefeltro (1472–1508) from their duchy of Urbino in 1502. As time passed, and the story spread further afield, it was treated as a matter of fact, as well as material for anti–papal entertainment. In the 1550's the Italian Protestants Francesco Negri and Girolamo Masserio wrote long anti–papal tracts on Alexander's pact with the devil, and the English Protestant John Bale declared that Alexander

[32] K. Fellows, 'Depictions of Pope Alexander VI as the Devil', *The Borgia Family: Rumour and Representation*, ed. Jennifer Mara DeSilva (Abingdon, 2020), p. 130.

[33] Quoted in Hillgarth, 'The Image of Alexander VI', p. 119.

was a very riotous tyrant who became pontiff through his pact with the devil.[34] Such works ensured that by 1600 Alexander's diabolic pact had become crossed with the legend of Faust, and in 1607 the English playwright Barnabe Barnes (1571–1609) depicted the pact as the prelude to much violence and bloodshed in his court entertainment *The Devil's Charter*.[35]

At least among scholars, contemporary accounts of the conclave held from 6 to 11 August 1492, in which Rodrigo Borgia was elected unanimously, are as well–known as those posthumous accusations. The observers included the Florentine Filippo Valori (1456–94) and other ambassadors accredited to the Holy See, alongside the Roman diarists Stefano Infessura (*c*. 1440–*c*. 1500) and Antonio de Vasco (dates unknown). Most striking is Infessura's assertion that two mules loaded with treasure were seen to be taken from Borgia's palace to that of the Milanese cardinal Ascanio Maria Sforza (1455–1505), the implication being that Borgia bought Sforza's vote.[36] The purchase of any ecclesiastical office constitutes simony and has consistently been condemned by the Church. Warming to their theme, the contemporary observers ventured to speculate about which benefices and Curial offices were offered by Borgia in exchange for the votes of certain cardinals.

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[34] F. Negri, *Della tragedia intitolata libero arbitrio* (Geneva, 1550), IV, p. 2; G. Masserio, *Eusebius captivus, sive modus procedendi in curia romana contra Luteranos* (Basel, 1553); J. Bale, *Acta romanorum pontificum* (Basel, 1558), pp. 355–65.

[35] B. Barnes, *The Devil's Charter, A Tragedy: Containing the Life and Death of Pope Alexander the Sixth*.

[36] S. Infessura, *Diario della città di Roma di Stefano Infessura scriba senato*, ed. O. Tommasini (Rome, 1890), p. 282; Pastor, *History*, v, pp. 379–80; A. de Vasco, *Diario della città di Roma,* ed. G. Chiesa, Rerum Italicarum Scriptores (hereafter RIS), XXIII (Città di Castello, 1911), p. 546.

If Rodrigo Borgia was such an unsuitable and utterly deplorable candidate, why was he elected unanimously by the other twenty–two cardinals who participated in the conclave of 1492? By the end of the electoral process they all agreed that he should be pope: it was not the case that he scraped over the line with two–thirds of the votes, leaving a third of the voters unhappy and disgruntled. At one level that question can be answered by examining what happened inside the conclave enclosure and how the electors voted in each of the three ballots. By 1492 the Sacred College of Cardinals was overwhelmingly Italian in character. Of those who voted, only Borgia and the Portuguese Jorge da Costa (d. 1508) were of non–Italian birth. It was also thoroughly politicised, being composed of men promoted to satisfy the interests of the various secular powers of Western Christendom. The states which took the closest interest in this election were the kingdom of Naples and the duchy of Milan. The cardinals who were identified as pro–Neapolitan were Giuliano della Rovere, the Venetian cousins Giovanni Battista Zeno (1439–1501) and Giovanni Michiel (1446–1503), the Portuguese Costa, Giuliano's kinsman Girolamo Basso della Rovere (1434–1507), the other Ligurians Paolo Fregoso (1427–98) and Lorenzo Cibo de' Mari (1450–1503), another Venetian Maffeo Girardi (1406–92), and the Romans Giovanni Battista Savelli (1422–98) and Giovanni Colonna (1456–1508).[37] The key figure in this grouping was Giuliano della Rovere, the nephew of Pope Sixtus IV (r. 1471–84) and the power behind the papal throne of Innocent VIII (r. 1484–92). His personal connections were not so much with Naples but with France. He was the French candidate at a time when France was still remembered as the focus of the papal schism in the fourteenth century and conciliarism in the fifteenth. At forty–nine he was too young to be considered *papabile* but was too experienced in the ways of power politics not to be a significant player in this conclave. Zeno and Michiel were of

[37] F. La Torre, *Del conclave di Alessandro VI* (Rome, 1933), p. 92.

similar age, while Costa was potentially too old to be anything other than a stopgap: no one could anticipate that he would live until 1508.[38]

The 'Milanese' faction was similarly composed of cardinals from various states and consisted of Borgia, the Neapolitan Oliviero Carafa (1430–1511), the Piedmontese Domenico della Rovere (1442–1501), the Roman Giovanni de' Conti (1414–93), Ardicino della Porta (1434–93) of Milan, Francesco Todeschini Piccolomini (1439–1503) of Siena, Raffaele Sansoni–Riario (1461–1521), Giovanni Battista Orsini (1450–1503), another Roman, Ascanio Sforza, and Federico Sanseverino (1475–1516).[39] If everyone voted along those factional lines, it made the votes of the three non–aligned cardinals, Giovanni Giacomo Sclafenati (1451–1497), Antoniotto Gentile Pallavicini (1441–1507) and Giovanni de' Medici (1475–1521) all the more significant. The key political player on this side was Sforza, the son, brother and uncle of successive dukes of Milan. His proximity to secular power excluded him from being a candidate, as did the fact that he was aged only thirty–seven. He could only ever be a pope–maker, not a pope. On the other hand, the 'Milanese' faction potentially had a choice of candidates: Borgia and Carafa were both of an age to have a long enough pontificate to provide stability but without the fear that they would live too long. Borgia was an exceptionally strong candidate. As the contemporary observer Sigismondo Conti (1432–1512), wrote, at sixty the cardinal was the age at which Aristotle thought men were at their wisest: 'Erat praeterea id aetatis, qua, ut Aristoteli placet, plurimum homenes

[38] D. S. Chambers, 'What made a Renaissance Cardinal Respectable? The Case of Cardinal Costa of Portugal', *Renaissance Studies,* 12/1 (1998), pp. 87–108.

[39] La Torre, *Del Conclave di Alessandro VI*, p. 92.

sapiunt, annurn agens circiter sexagesimum'.[40] As dean of the College of Cardinals, Borgia was a veteran of the previous four conclaves and lacked only the papal tiara to crown an exceptionally illustrious ecclesiastical career. Furthermore, as vice–chancellor of the Church, he could boast unparalleled knowledge of its bureaucracy and personnel.

In the first ballot, held on 8 August, Costa was put forward as the 'Neapolitan' candidate and, ironically enough, the Neapolitan Carafa as the 'Milanese' candidate. The table below demonstrates how the votes of the leading candidates were distributed in the first scrutiny.

Results from the first scrutiny, 8 August 1492.

Cardinal	**Votes received**
Carafa	9
Borgia	7
Costa	7
Michiel	7
Todeschini Piccolomini	6
G. della Rovere	5

In that ballot Borgia received the votes of Cardinals Carafa, Zeno, Domenico della Rovere, Sclafenati, Giovanni Battista Orsini, Sforza, and Pallavicini. Borgia himself voted for Carafa, Zeno and Della Porta.[41] Few cardinals changed their votes between the first and second

[40] S. Conti, *Le storie de' suoi tempi dal 1475 al 1510*, ed. G. Racioppi (2 vols, Rome, 1883), ii, pp. 53–4.

[41] La Torre, *Del Conclave di Alessandro VI,* p. 89.

scrutinies, though the field did broaden a little. Again, the table shows only the leading candidates.

Results from the second scrutiny, 9 August 1492.

Cardinal	**Votes received**
Carafa	9
Borgia	8
Costa	8
Michiel	7
G. della Rovere	5
Zeno	5

Borgia had lost Orsini's vote but added those of Conti and Sansoni–Riario.[42] On that occasion Borgia voted for Carafa, Zeno, Della Porta and Pallavicini. The most significant change on 9 August was that Zeno's tally went up from two to five, thanks to the votes of Conti, Sclafenati and Medici.[43] Still no one was getting anything near the required number of votes for a result, so the cardinals voted a third time, on 10 August. Borgia still had eight votes, while Carafa and Michiel, who was suddenly the 'Neapolitan' hope, were joint top and closest to reaching the two–thirds majority.[44]

[42] La Torre, *Del Conclave di Alessandro VI*, p. 90.

[43] La Torre, *Del Conclave di Alessandro VI,* p. 90.

[44] La Torre, *Del Conclave di Alessandro VI*, pp. 90–1.

Results from the third scrutiny, 10 August 1492.

Cardinal	**Votes received**
Carafa	10
Michiel	10
Borgia	8
Costa	7
Todeschini Piccolomini	7
G. della Rovere	6
Zeno	5

Borgia's own votes went to Carafa, Todeschini Piccolomini, Domenico della Rovere and Zeno.[45] While most of the electors stayed within their factions, Borgia was notable for dividing his favours between the 'Milanese' and the 'Neapolitans'. That was clearly appreciated, so that although most of his votes came from the 'Milanese', with others from the non–aligned group, crucially he consistently gained that of the Venetian Zeno, from the 'Neapolitan' faction. Indeed, Borgia was the only candidate to receive support from members of both factions and from two of the trio of independents, which he did in all three scrutinies. During the night of 10 August, he began to approach cardinals, offering them benefices, fortresses and money in the division of the spoils that would inevitably follow his election. Details of who was offered what reward can be found in Infessura's account of the conclave, which emphasizes the sensational over the true and should be treated with some caution.[46] For example, Infessura is at pains to point out that Cardinals Carafa, Todeschini Piccolomini,

[45] La Torre, *Del Conclave di Alessandro VI*, p. 91.

[46] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 281.

Giuliano della Rovere, Costa, and Medici declined Borgia's offers, but that can be qualified by the fact that Carafa and Todeschini Piccolomini had already indicated their support for Borgia by voting for him in one or more of the ballots.[47] By the following morning, 11 August, he had gained a two–thirds majority. A fourth ballot was held. Borgia received fifteen votes, the identity of the electors being unclear, but needed one more in order to secure victory. He was so close to a two–thirds majority that an *accessus* was a reasonable way to proceed. At that point even Giuliano della Rovere sensed that Borgia's election could no longer be prevented, so he and his staunchest allies declared vocally for Borgia, who could then boast of being elected unanimously on the morning of 11 August.

The publication of the voting lists by Ferdinando La Torre in 1933 enabled historians to conclude that the cardinals voted for Borgia on his own merit, and that requests for and promises of ecclesiastical preferment were no different from those made in other fifteenth–century conclaves.[48] Moreover, although Pastor echoed near contemporary accusations of simony, no such claims were made at the time by any of the cardinals, not even Giuliano della Rovere.[49] In the context of the conclave, when a compromise candidate was needed to break the electoral deadlock, Borgia was the only candidate who could do that. Most immediately, that was why he was elected. However, that succinct answer cannot account for all the reasons why the cardinals voted for Borgia. Those can be traced back through his and their earlier careers and form the subject of this thesis.

The project evolved during its long gestation. The original intention was to examine Borgia as vice–chancellor, the head of the Chancery, that department of the Roman Curia

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[47] Infessura, *Diario*, pp. 281–2.

[48] La Torre, *Del Conclave di Alessandro VI*, p. 124.

[49] Pastor, *History,* v, p. 123; M. Mallett, *The Borgias* (London, 1969), pp. 106–9.

which undertook the administration of the Church in conjunction with the Camera (finance), Penitentiary (forgiveness of sins) and Rota (justice). Borgia served as vice–chancellor for thirty–five years, which gave him an unparalleled knowledge of the workings of the Church. If his work in the Chancery could be reconstructed, it would surely demonstrate in detail why he was the ideal candidate for the papacy, even if his private life fell far short of the ideal expected of a pontiff. However, it proved difficult to isolate this role, so the thesis now considers him in a range of capacities, as vice–chancellor, but also as papal *nipote*, head of a Roman household, patron of clients, legate, and dean of the College of Cardinals from 1483, all of which offer potential answers to the central question of why he was elected pope unanimously in 1492. Similarly, the thesis also examines the evolution of his relationships with his fellow cardinals, both those who actually went on to vote for him and those who did not live long enough to do so, and his dealings with the five pontiffs under whom he served as vice–chancellor. That enabled his fellow cardinals to observe how he treated the popes and how he might behave as pope himself.

Theoretically, Borgia's invisible hand might be found in any of the mountain of documents produced by the Chancery during the three and a half decades he held the office of vice–chancellor, but that would not be the same thing as pinning down what he actually did. His career up to 1492 could be pieced together from registers in the Vatican Apostolic Archive (until October 2019 the Vatican Secret Archive) and from diplomatic dispatches in the archives of Florence, Mantua, Milan, Modena and Venice, but practical limitations prevented this from happening. In the absence of archival research, this thesis has had to draw all the more heavily on published primary sources. In the light of this, a virtue has been made of necessity, so this thesis also asks a historiographical question: how has appreciation of the life and career of Rodrigo Borgia in the period up to his papal election evolved in the five centuries since his death?

For the most part, the structure of the thesis is chronological, following Borgia's career from the pontificate of Calixtus III to that of Innocent VIII. Calixtus was Afonso de Borgia, a subject of the Crown of Aragon who brought the crusading zeal of the *Reconquista* to the papal office, but who was also easily cast as an outsider in Rome, a foreigner. It was a stigma that went on to blight the posthumous reputation of his nephew Rodrigo. Nepotism was a characteristic feature of the Renaissance and early modern papacy and can be examined through the example of Calixtus and Rodrigo, who was made a cardinal at the age of twenty–five and vice–chancellor of the Church a year later. Although there are contemporary statements about the eminence of the vice–chancellor as the right eye of the pontiff, comments about Borgia's responsibilities are fleeting and information about his career is sparse. Most papal *nipoti* had to face the consequences of their uncles' deaths and Borgia was still only twenty–seven when Calixtus died in 1458, leaving him to face a hostile environment in his first conclave and the uncertainties of a new pontificate that was bound to be a reaction against the previous one.

The prolific author Enea Silvio Piccolomini was indeed a contrast to the first Borgia pope, but in one respect Pius II (r. 1458–64) did offer an element of continuity with the previous pontificate. After the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453, no pope could afford to ignore the threat they posed to the whole of Christendom and Pius was no less committed than Calixtus had been to inspiring and – if necessary – personally leading a crusade. There was no obligation on Pius to keep Borgia in office as vice–chancellor, but he did, even while favouring his own loyal band of new cardinals. Borgia's task was to cultivate the diplomatic arts in order to survive among these new men. Again, there is relatively little surviving evidence to show how he did this, but he proved to be perhaps the greatest survivor of the fifteenth–century Church.

Borgia's second conclave elected the Venetian Pietro Barbo as Paul II (r. 1464–71). Pius had politicised the Church by giving a cardinal's red hat to the son of a secular ruler and by marrying one of his lay *nipoti* into the family of the king of Naples, but Paul developed this trend outside the Italian peninsula, giving hats to the favoured candidates of other kings and princes. It was a lesson not lost on Borgia, who used his continued command of the Chancery to cultivate various monarchs and through the sponsorship of princely candidates to benefices across Western Christendom. Popes could work well with fellow princes, but not with republics and Paul's relations with his own home state deteriorated badly. Borgia could avoid that trap: he was born in a kingdom, cultivated kings and tended to steer clear of the Italian republican states.

Paul was succeeded by the humbly born Ligurian Francesco della Rovere, who took the papal name Sixtus IV. This pope began by cultivating both princely states and republics but came into conflict with Florence in the Pazzi War (1478–80) and then with Venice in the War of Ferrara (1482–4). Borgia steered clear of controversy in both those affairs but continued to cultivate contacts throughout Christendom in his sponsorship of candidates to benefices. He was a safe pair of hands, leading the Chancery with such dexterity that it is difficult to pin down precisely how he operated. On the other hand, his familiars were listed a number of times in the course of this pontificate and those lists reveal that Borgia was easily the most popular patron in Rome. They served him loyally and duly received their rewards, including elevation to the College of Cardinals. That degree of loyalty between patron and clients did pose a threat to Sixtus, who responded by sending Borgia on legation to the Spanish kingdoms of Aragon and Castile (1472–3), thereby undermining his Curial power base while, at the same time, zealously promoting the interests of his own *nipoti,* predominately Pietro Riario. Sixtus was easily the most ardent papal nepotist of the fifteenth century.

Most of Sixtus's kinsmen posed no threat to the experienced and perhaps irreplaceable vice–chancellor, who was also dean of the College of Cardinals from 1483, but some were a threat to each other: the layman Girolamo Riario (1443–88) and the cleric Giuliano della Rovere were involved in a bitter feud and took opposite sides in the long–running hostility between Rome's most powerful baronial clans, the Orsini and Colonna. That hostility broke out again during the papal interregnum of 1484, after which Della Rovere emerged as the power behind the new pope, Giovanni Battista Cibo, who took the papal name of Innocent VIII (r. 1484–92). The volatile Della Rovere was a man of a very different character to Borgia, who was a master of diplomacy. Most of the other cardinals were men of lesser ability, bringing the contrasts between Della Rovere and Borgia into sharper focus as Innocent's pontificate progressed.

For those who like history to be about personalities, the conclave of 1492 was a battle of wills between Borgia and Della Rovere, one with consequences that can be traced throughout their subsequent pontificates and on into the realm of popular culture. It is with regard to the afterlife of Cardinal Borgia and the evolution of historical understanding about his career up to 1492 that this thesis can offer an original contribution to the story of the Borgia family. His life up to 1492 has tended to be dismissed relatively quickly by his biographers, but a careful examination of the sources and a detailed appreciation of the historiography can add a new dimension to what might otherwise appear to be a familiar subject. Whilst attempts to rehabilitate the Borgia family in scholarship continue, there is still a considerable amount of work to be done. By not considering his pontificate or his children, who are usually both the focus and undoing of Borgia scholarship, Rodrigo's career can be analysed in isolation and its merits properly considered. This in turn allows his administrative and diplomatic abilities to shine through, both of which help explain Borgia's unanimous election in August 1492. In order to demonstrate how Borgia's career progressed and how he

moved from a cardinal nephew to papal monarch against the backdrop of five different pontificates and sets of papal priorities, this thesis adopts a chronological approach in chapters 1 to 7. The final chapter breaks the mould of a traditional thesis by examining the historiography relating to the unusually 'long apprenticeship' of Cardinal Borgia before he became pope. Throughout the chapters of this thesis, where there are divergent spellings of Italian names for individuals, the names given in the *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* have been used. In the case of Spanish names, there has been a conscientious effort to distinguish between Aragonese and Castilians by using Catalan or Valencian spellings for the former.

1. 1431–58: Borgia's early life and the pontificate of Calixtus III.

Every great dynasty needs to originate from somewhere. For the Borgia, their beginnings still remain shrouded in mystery, though the consensus is that they were able to raise themselves from humble origins to quasi–noble status through their links with the Aragonese crown, even if more work is required in order to substantiate this. By contrast, the personal rise of Rodrigo Borgia was undoubtedly the result of his uncle's nepotism. This, alongside his own personal merits, ensured that he operated at the beating heart of the Curia.

Rodrigo de Borja y Borja (later Italianised as Borgia) was born on 1 January 1431 in Xàtiva, a town in eastern Spain, in the province of Valencia.[50] Critics of the family asserted that they were descended from poor labourers. However, Rodrigo's father, Jofré, claimed noble ancestry through the previous generations of Borja knights who had supported their kings in the ongoing war against the Moors, and his grandfather, Rodrigo Gil de Borja, had married Doña Sibila de Oms, a member of a distinguished Catalan family.[51] Through his mother Isabel, who was from another branch of the family, Rodrigo was the nephew of Alfonso de Borja, bishop of Valencia (1429–55), and a cousin of Lluís Joan del Milà y de Borja (1432–1510) through Catalina de Borja y Martì, another of the bishop's sisters.[52]

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[50] W. H. Woodward, *Cesare Borgia: A Biography* (London 1913), pp. 3–4.

[51] For a condensed genealogy see Appendix I.

[52] Á. Fernández de Córdova Miralles, 'Vida y empresas del Cardinal Lluís Joan del Milà: promoción eclesiástica y mecenazgo entre Italia y la corona de Aragón', *Aragón en la Edad Media,* xxiv (2013), p. 193.

The first eight years of Rodrigo's education were under Antonio Nagueroles (or Nogueroles) in Valencia.[53] The only one of his early associates who can be identified was nine years his junior: Pedro García, whose family was related to the Borja and who later became part of Rodrigo's *familia* in Rome.[54] In 1444 Pope Eugenius IV (r. 1431–47) elevated the bishop of Valencia to the College of Cardinals, a promotion which duly had a profound impact on his clerical nephews.[55] In order to oversee their education and careers Alfonso took both nephews to Rome, where they initially studied under Gaspare da Verona (d. 1474). Gaspare's other charges included the Venetian Gabriele Marcello (a relative of Cardinal Pietro Barbo), a kinsman of the French cardinal Louis d'Albret (1422–65), and members of leading Roman families.[56] The young Rodrigo Borgia created a favourable impression, Gaspare noting that he was 'gifted with a honeyed and choice eloquence'.[57] Meanwhile, during the pontificate of Nicholas V (1447–55), Alfonso procured a canonry in Valencia for Borgia (1448) and in 1453 Milà was named bishop of Segorbe, though was obliged to hold it in administration until he reached the canonical age of twenty–seven.[58] Critics complained at

[53] A. Ruggeri, *Alessandro VI Borgia: con ampi ragguagli sulla vite di Lucrezia docile strumento e vittima dei disegni politici del padre e del fratello Cesare* (Rome, 2003), p. 28.

[54] V. P. Alós, *Cardenales y prelados de Xàtiva en la época de los Borja* (Valencia, 2006), p. 118.

[55] K. Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica medii aevi*, *sive, Summorum pontificum, S. R. E. cardinalium, ecclesiarum antistitum series…* (3 vols, Regensburg, 1914), ii, p. 9.

[56] E. M. Sanford, 'Gaspare Veronese: Humanist and Teacher', *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association,* 84/1 (1953), pp. 190–209.

[57] Mallett, *The Borgias*, p. 79.

[58] Alós, *Cardenales y prelados*, p. 59.

the number of minor benefices these adolescents received when they were still too young to have cure of souls, but the pope came to their defence.[59]

When Nicholas died on 24 March 1455 Cardinal de Borja entered his second conclave.[60] As the fifteen cardinals prepared to elect Nicholas's successor, the native Romans Latino Orsini (1411–77), Prospero Colonna (1410–63) and Domenico Capranica (1400–58) and the Spaniard Juan de Carvajal (1400–69) were all thought to be *papabile*, but the long–standing division between the Orsini and Colonna families effectively prevented the entirely worthy Capranica, a Colonna partisan, from being elected. None of those present could command the two–thirds majority required for election, though the distinguished Greek exile Bessarion (1403–72) proved so popular that Alain de Coëtivy (1407–74) was later said to have declared, 'So we'll give the Latin Church to a Greek pope, will we? ... But I, and those who think with me, will never accept a Greek as pope'.[61] The College needed a compromise candidate and, at seventy–six, Borja was elected and took as his papal name Calixtus, the idea being that he was not likely to live long and would soon give the cardinals an opportunity to think again. In his *Commentaries*, the acid–tongued Pius II described Calixtus as 'an eminent jurist with considerable experience in many fields, but he was long past his prime, practically decrepit in fact'.[62]

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[59] Miralles, 'Vida y embresas', p. 195.

[60] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, p. 33; A full list of the present electors for each conclave held between 1455–92 is presented in Appendix II.

[61] Pius II, *Commentaries*, ed. M. Meserve and M. Simonetta (3 vols, Cambridge, 2003), i, p. 141.

[62] Pius II, *Commentaries*, i, pp. 142–3.

The choice of a Catalan was bound to be controversial in Rome and among the predominantly Italian clerics in the higher echelons of the Church. In common with the practices of other 'nations', there had been a formal Catalan presence in Rome since the fourteenth century, when Jacoba Ferrándiz and Margarita Pau founded a hospice for pilgrims from their native lands.[63] However, Spain was a region where Christians, Jews and Muslims had enjoyed a period of 'convivenza', and it could never be entirely certain that the blood of those who thought of themselves as Christians was not tainted by non–Christian ancestry. It was certainly a cause for suspicion among Italians, who looked down on Spaniards culturally, as was illustrated by the Neapolitan–born scholar Antonio de Ferraris, who stated that Spaniards 'are certainly uncultivated and desire to remain so ... among them it is a virtue to know how to deceive and to rob one's neighbour with skill and cunning'.[64] There were also genuine concerns behind the election of a non–Roman or non–Italian because the shadow of the Avignonese papacy continued to loom over the fifteenth–century Church. The archbishop of Florence, Antonino Pierozzi (1389–1459), who was sent to Rome as a member of the Florentine embassy to the new pontiff, argued that the papal court might be transferred to Valencia and that 'he (Calixtus) might confide the strongholds of the Church to Catalans', and it might not be recovered.[65]

Rodrigo Borgia was made a protonotary apostolic by his uncle but was soon sent to Bologna to study law. He accompanied his cousin, Milà being charged to combine his studies

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[63] P. M. Kreig, *San Pellegrino: die schweizerische Nationalkirche in Rom* (Zürich, 1974), p. 13.

[64] Quoted in Ferrara, *The Borgia Pope*, pp. 8–9.

[65] Pastor, *History,* ii, p. 331.

with the offices of governor and vicar–general of Bologna, held in succession to Bessarion.[66] The pair arrived on 29 June 1455, accompanied by 'ambassadors and with the usual ceremonies'.[67] Borgia took up residence in the Palazzo de' Pepoli with his large retinue of servants. The two young Spaniards may well have felt more at home in Bologna than in Rome, thanks to the foundation in 1364 of the Real Colegio Mayor de San Clemente de los Españoles, founded by Cardinal Gil de Albornoz.[68] In the fifteenth century Bologna vied with Padua in claiming to be the leading university for arts, law and medicine. When Borgia arrived, there were ninety–three professors and over 1,500 students from across Western Christendom. Although its fortunes had waned in the context of wider fourteenth–century crises, under the recent patronage of Cardinal Bessarion the situation had improved, at least according to the later eulogizing of Bartolomeo Sacchi (1421–81), known as il Platina.[69] During his time in Bologna, Borgia attended the lectures of the prestigious canonist Andrea Barbazza, together with those of Antonio della Volta and Battista Sampieri.[70] A doctorate in civil and canon law usually took between four and five years to complete and the student

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[66] A. Sorbelli, *Corpus Chronicorum Bononiensium* (4 vols, Città di Castello 1906–69), ii, p. 236.

[67] S. Muzzi*, Annali della città di Bologna* (8 vols, Bologna, 1842), iv, p. 442.

[68] M. C. Pascerini, 'El real Colegio Mayor de San Clemente de los Españoles de Bolonia y la Monarquía Hispánica', *Libros de la Corte es 17* (2018), pp. 190–210.

[69] B. Platina, *Panegyricus in laudem amplissimi patris Bessarionis Episcopi Sabini, Cardinalis Nicaeni, et Patriarchae Constantinopolitani,* in *Historia B. Platinae de vitis pontificum romanorum,* ii (1568), p. 80.

[70] G. Mazzanti, 'Rodrigo Borgia e lo Studium bolognese', *La fortuna dei Borgia, Atti del convegno (Bologna, 29–31 October 2000)* (Rome, 2005), pp. 136–7.

faced public examination at the end of it. As the pope's nephew, Borgia was permitted to complete his studies in little more than a year and on 9 August 1456 was examined privately for his degree, which was awarded four days later.[71]

While Borgia was in Bologna, Calixtus established his regime in Rome, filling his household and the various Curial departments with his fellow Catalans. This was designed to provide him with a measure of support and loyalty in a fairly hostile environment. Within the household, the pope's physicians Jaime Quintana and Fernando Lopez de Xàtiva were both from his home country but his closest associate was his former conclavist Cosme de Monserrat, from Tarragona, described by Vespasiano da Bisticci as a very able and wise man of good conscience ('per essere savissimo uomo, e di buona coscienza'), who was appointed controller of the papal household, confessor and custodian of the Vatican library.[72] Calixtus's influence was also apparent in appointments to the papal administration. Bartholomé Regas was made vice–treasurer of the Apostolic Camera, and the Tuscan bankers who had supported Nicholas V's building projects were replaced by men from the pope's native region.[73] In the Sacred Roman Rota three out of five auditors (judges) were Catalans.[74] In the College of Abbreviators, a significant sub–division of the Chancery, twelve out of thirty

[71] Mazzanti, 'Rodrigo Borgia', p. 137.

[72] T. Frenz, *Die Kanzlei der Päpste der Hochrenaissance (1471–1527)* (Tübingen, 1986), p. 299; Mallett, *The Borgias,* p. 76; Vespasiano da Bisticci, *Vite di Uomini Illustri del Secolo XV* (Florence, 1859), p. 215; AAV, Reg. Vat. 457, ff. 158r–9v.

[73] P. Partner, *The Pope's Men* (Oxford, 1990), p. 75.

[74] J. Ruis Serra, 'Catalanes' *Regesto Iberico de Calixto III* (2 vols, Barcelona, 1948), ii, pp. 8–9.

abbreviators were Catalans.[75] At the same time the pontiff did not appoint a successor, Catalan or otherwise, to the late Francesco Condulmer as vice–chancellor, the head of the Chancery. Secular positions were also filled by Catalans: Galceran de Ribs was installed as senator of Rome and, from 1456, the pope's nephew Pere Lluis de Borja, Rodrigo's younger brother, was captain general of the Church and castellan of Castel S. Angelo, Rome's fortress.[76]

On 20 February 1456 Calixtus named his first three cardinals: Lluís Joan del Milà was named first, Don Jaime of Portugal (1433–59) second, and Rodrigo Borgia third, though their names were not published until 17 September.[77] In the interim they were to be regarded as published in the event of the pope's death, meaning that they would be entitled to vote in the ensuing conclave. The personally modest Jaime was the twenty–one–year–old son of the Infante Pedro, duke of Coimbra, and Isabel of Aragon, and Calixtus hoped his elevation would result in Portuguese support for his proposed crusade, which was the central policy and objective of his pontificate.[78] Taken together with the two papal *nipoti*, there was an exclusive emphasis on Iberia's eastern and western kingdoms, with nothing for the Castilians in the centre. This fact was not lost on the Castilian chronicler Alonso de Palencia who was critical of the pope's nepotism: 'pospuso todo al cuidado de sublimar a sus jóvenes sobrinos'.[79] There was already a distinction between the two nephews, Milà being a bishop

[75] Ruis Serra, 'Catalanes', ii, p. 220.

[76] Mallett, *The Borgias,* pp. 75–6.

[77] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 12.

[78] Pastor, *History,* ii*,* p. 457.

[79] Alfonso de Palencia, *Gesta hispaniensia ex annalibus suorum dierum collecta*, ed. B. Tate and J. Lawrence (2 vols, Madrid, 1998–9), i, p. 186.

and Borgia not. The distinction was maintained when Milà was elevated as a cardinal priest, while Borgia and Jaime joined the College of Cardinals as cardinal deacons, the lowest tier in its tripartite structure. Borgia's deaconry was that of S. Nicola in Carcere, a church located between Tiber Island and the Palatine Hill.[80] He retained it until 1484. In the fifteenth century the position of cardinal deacon came to be the choice for princely, absentee or younger cardinals, though there was no hard and fast rule. Both cousins were absent from Rome at the time of their elevation, returning to the city on 16 November. Ten days later their mouths were formally opened.[81] This marked the point from which they could participate in consistories, opening their mouths to advise the pope as a member of his most senior council.

As news of the young cardinals' promotions spread, there was dissatisfaction, not least in Naples, where King Alfonso the Magnanimous (r. 1442–58) harboured antipathy towards the pope and his kinsmen. This tension stemmed from Calixtus breaking with the policies of his predecessors by refusing to agree that Alfonso's illegitimate son Ferrante could succeed him on the throne of Naples, of which the pope was overlord.[82] This, and Ferrante's aggression in Tuscany during Nicholas V's pontificate, had resulted in Calixtus favouring the rival claim to the throne of Naples, that of René, duke of Anjou, and his son Jean. At the same time, control of the papal territories of Benevento and Terracina, enclaves in the kingdom of Naples, was given to his nephew Pere Lluis de Borja.[83] In his *Commentaries*, Pius II noted that Calixtus had toyed with the idea of making Pere Lluis a

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[80] 'Roma I els Borja: San Nicola in Carcere', < https://www.elsborja.cat/rutes/roma-i-els-borja/san-nicola-in-carcere/ > (accessed 15 October 2020).

[81] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 31.

[82] Ferrante had been legitimized in 1440 and declared heir to the Neapolitan throne in 1443.

[83] Miralles, 'Vida y empresas', p. 200.

potential successor to Alfonso, if there was a means of engineering it.[84] Florentine objections to the new cardinals were of an entirely different nature. The cardinalate was supposed to be the culmination of a clerical career and cardinals were supposed to be men of the utmost wisdom, who could advise the pope on both spiritual and temporal matters. Calixtus's young cardinals clearly did not fit that pattern, but in Florentine minds their archbishop Antonino Pierozzi did.[85] He had been chosen to provide spiritual counsel during Eugenius IV's final days and his advice had been regularly sought by many other senior clerics. However, the most aggrieved nation of all was France, as Calixtus had singularly failed to replace Cardinal Guillaume d'Estaing after his death in October 1455. France remained a source of intense suspicion in Rome: the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges (1438) had severely limited papal authority in the kingdom and tensions were mounting at the University of Paris, where there were threats to call another general council of the Church with the aim of removing the pontiff.

In the event, opposition to the first three promotions was soon offset by Calixtus's second creation, of six further cardinals, on 17 December the same year.[86] This time, the first choice was Rinaldo Piscicello (1415–57), archbishop of Naples, followed by the Castilian jurist Juan de Mella (1397–1467), bishop of Zamora, Giovanni Castiglione (1420–60), bishop of Pavia, Enea Silvio Piccolomini (1405–64), bishop of Siena, Giovanni Tebaldi (d. 1465), bishop of Montefeltro, and Richard Olivier de Longueil (1406–70), bishop of Coutances.[87] By means of these choices the pope sought to soothe diplomatic tensions with Naples, Castile

[84] Pius II, *Commentaries*, i, pp. 164–5.

[85] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 171.

[86] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 12–13.

[87] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 221, 298, 234, 259, 169, 150.

and, most importantly, France, Longueil being the candidate of King Charles VII (r. 1422–61). By contrast, Florence had been snubbed in favour of its neighbour Siena. Pavia was in the duchy of Milan, so Castiglione's promotion was a response to pressure from its powerful duke, Francesco Sforza (r. 1450–66). Tebaldi's diocese of Montefeltro fell within the Papal States, over which the fifteenth–century popes struggled to maintain control.

In December 1456, Cardinal Borgia was appointed as legate to another part of the Papal States, the Marche.[88] His mission was to bring peace and stability to the region following a conspiracy in Ascoli. As Borgia was a junior cardinal with little income, Calixtus furnished him with a number of sources of revenue, including a 200–florin annual pension from the Olivetan monastery of S. Chiara in Camerino and another from benefices in the Castilian dioceses of Toledo, Ćuença, Avila, Burgos and Palencia, in total amounting to 1,333 florins.[89] However, whether this windfall actually managed to finance the legation is unclear, because clerical income was often more nominal than real.

Borgia left Rome on 19 January 1457 accompanied by a large retinue, as befitted his status as the pope's personal representative.[90] He arrived in Ascoli in the aftermath of the murder of the governor of the Marche, Giovanni Sforza, by a 'certain Giosia' (potentially the *condottiere* Giosia d'Acquaviva).[91] The Sforza had been active in the Marche since the early 1430s, when the *condottiere* Francesco Sforza, in the employment of the papacy, had taken

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[88] AAV, Reg. Vat. 445, f. 222v–r.

[89] P. Spufford, *Handbook of Medieval Exchange* (London, 1986), pp. 20–4 suggests that by the 1470s a florin was worth just over 29 soldi, and 1 livre tournois equalled 20 soldi. This indicates that 1 florin was equivalent to 1.5 livres tournois: AAV, Reg. Vat. 460, f. 14r.

[90] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 34; AAV, Reg. Vat. 445, f. 295v.

[91] A. S. Piccolomini, *Europe (c.1400–1458),* tr. R. Brown (Washington, DC, 2013), p. 284.

control of Ancona and the surrounding region, installing members of his family in positions of authority.[92] The area returned to direct papal jurisdiction in 1446, but Sforza involvement continued into the 1450s with the installation of Giovanni as governor. Giosia and a small group of bandits then seized control of the fortress in Ascoli and carried out acts of violence against the local populace.[93] Borgia and his troops laid siege to the *rocca* and, after a brief struggle, Giosia and his followers were captured and sent to Rome.

Rather than returning to Rome with his captives, Borgia stayed in the Marche and began to investigate two local problems. The first consisted of reports of fraudulent activity in relation to salt production. One petition to Borgia stated: 'You know how important for the treasury are the taxes on salt and how great our losses will be unless such practices be curbed'.[94] The previous legate, Bartolomeo Roverella (1406–76) had faced similar problems and appealed to Nicholas V for advice.[95] Although the culprits had been caught in 1456, they had been allowed to escape prosecution.[96] The other problem addressed by Borgia concerned the seizure of property worth 1,500 florins from the Chiavelli family of Fabriano, who had

[92] F. Pirani, 'Sunt Picentes Natura Mobiles Novisque Studentes: Francesco Sforza e la città della Marca di Ancona (1433–1447)', *Atti e Memorie della Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Marche*, 110 (2012), pp. 147–188.

[93] P. De Roo, *Material for a History of Pope Alexander VI: His Relatives and his Time* (5 vols, Bruges, 1924), ii, p. 63.

[94] Quoted in De Roo, *Material*, ii, p. 66.

[95] A. Peruzzi, *Storia d'Ancona dalla sua fondazione all'anno 1532 di Agostino Peruzzi* (2 vols, Pesaro, 1835), ii, p. 313.

[96] De Roo, *Material*, ii, p. 66.

rebelled against papal authority.[97] Alongside local demands, Borgia also received petitions from Rome. The newly elevated Cardinal Piccolomini asked for Borgia's help in obtaining the bishopric of Toul in north–eastern France.[98] However, rumours of the bishop's death proved to be false, as Piccolomini was obliged to inform Borgia some weeks after his previous letter.[99] Meanwhile, the lasting consequence of the legation is that Borgia had proved he could be entrusted with a small and limited mission, so had proved he had the potential for something greater.

On 7 May 1457 Calixtus appointed him as vice–chancellor of the Church.[100] The new incumbent was twenty–six years old and had just a year's experience as a cardinal. Cardinals promoted to such an important office tended to be at least a decade older than Borgia was at that point. His predecessor Francesco Condulmer (in office 1437–53) had been forty–seven at appointment, Jean de la Rochetille (in office 1436–7) seventy–one, and Jean de Brogny sixty–seven (in office 1409–26). With age would have come greater experience of the Curia and its workings. The most recent vice–chancellor, Condulmer, had also been a papal *nipote*, raised to the cardinalate at a young age and then put in charge of a Curial department. Nephew to Eugenius IV, he had been made a cardinal in 1431, appointed camerlengo in 1432 and then vice–chancellor from 1437, thereby indicating the superiority of one Curial office over the other.[101] At the time of Condulmer's death in 1453 it was believed that Cardinal

[97] De Roo, *Material*, ii, p. 65.

[98] A. Piccolomini to R. Borgia, 22 Februray 1457, Pius II, *Opera Omnia* (Basel, 1571), p. 775.

[99] A. Piccolomini to R. Borgia, 1 April 1457, Pius II, *Opera Omnia*, pp. 787–8.

[100] AAV, Reg. Vat. 466, f. 8v.

[101] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 7, 69.

Guillaume d'Estouteville (1412–83) was the most the most likely person to fill the vacancy, but he was then on legation in France and did not return to Rome until September 1455. The vacancy remained: it was not the first time in relatively recent experience that the Chancery had functioned without a vice–chancellor. After the death of Francesco Moricotti Prignano in 1394 the office remained unfilled until 1405, and then from 1426 it was vacant for a decade after the death of Jean de Brogny. In both cases *regens* or *locumtenens* had kept the department functioning. With Borgia on legation in the Marche, the same happened in 1457, the experienced Curialist Juan de Mella serving as lieutenant for his fellow Iberian.[102]

As vice–chancellor Borgia was head of the Chancery, one of the major departments of the Roman Curia, the papal administration. The Chancery was modelled on the former Roman imperial chancery and had evolved over time, with its chief office holder being known by different titles. In the twelfth century this had been *cancellarius;* four *cancellarii* in that century were elected pope: Giovanni de'Caetani as Gelasius II (r. 1118–19), Gerardo Caccianemici as Lucius II (r. 1144–5), Rinaldo Bandinelli as Alexander III (r. 1159–81) and Alberto di Morra as Gregory VIII (r. 1187). The following century saw a change of title to *vicecancellarius*, that by which Borgia was known, and one of the *vicecancellarii*, Sinibaldo Fieschi, was elected pope, becoming Innocent IV (r. 1243–54). From 1908 the office became that of 'chancellor' and in 1973 both it and the Chancery itself finally ceased to function, the Chancery's responsibilities being assumed by the Secretariat of State.[103] In terms of administrative responsibility, Borgia was now at least on a par with more senior cardinals, including the camerlengo Ludovico Trevisan (1401–65) who had been head of the Apostolic

[102] N. del Re, *La Curia Romana: lineamenti storico–giuridici*, (Vatican City, 1998), p. 438; Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 12.

[103] Del Re, *La Curia Romana*, p. 445.

Camera since 1440, and Domenico Capranica, who had served as major penitentiary, head of the Apostolic Penitentiary, since 1449. However, neither of those offices was deemed to be as close to the pontiff as the vice–chancellor, who was singled out as the 'eye' of the pope by Innocent VIII in 1486.[104] This gives an idea of how vital the vice–chancellor was to the smooth functioning of the Church's administration.

The work of John F. D'Amico on the Chancery has been invaluable in constructing a picture of the offices and individuals over which Borgia had control.[105] By charting the process a bull took through the Chancery, he demonstrates what the Chancery actually did. When a petition was presented it was taken to the pontiff by a *referendarius*. Once the pontiff had given his decision, the petition was double signed by the vice–chancellor and dated by the *datarius.* An official copy of the petition was entered into the register of supplications by a clerk who also made an additional copy. This additional copy was sent to the Chancery for shortening/abbreviating and for preparation of a final bull. The first stage was headed by the College of Abbreviators, one of the largest divisions within the Chancery. The abbreviators produced a shortened form of the document which stated the main facts of the petition and the pontiff's verdict. Pope John XXII's bull *Extravagantes* (1325) provided clear instructions about how many words were permissible in an abbreviated text and how much an abbreviator could charge for this service, with punishments for those who were found to have overcharged for their service.[106] If any abbreviator was found to be breaking this code, they

[104] AAV, Reg. Vat. 682, f. 12r.

[105] J. F. D'Amico, *Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome: Humanists and Churchmen on the eve of the Reformation* (Baltimore, 1983), pp. 25–7.

[106] P. M. J. Rock, 'Abbreviators', *Catholic Encyclopedia*, ed. C. G. Herbermann (18 vols, New York, 1913), i, p. 28.

were suspended from office for six months; a second violation saw them removed. If they were employed directly by the Chancery, the individual would also be excommunicated. The College was divided into two units: the *abbreviatores de prima visione*, who were responsible for checking the first form of the bull, i.e., that drawn up by the *scriptores*, and the *abbreviatores assistentes vice–cancellerio in expeditione literarum apostolicarum in Cancelleria*. The latter group, along with the vice–chancellor, were responsible for assessing the text in its second reading and, as their name suggests, these abbreviators sat closest to the vice–chancellor in the Chancery. Within this group there were two sub–divisions: the *abbreviatores de parco majori*, who drew up the minutes, and the *abbreviatores de parco minori*, who did likewise but were additionally responsible for calculating the fees that would be charged for examining these documents. The formation of the College underwent a number of changes during Borgia's time as vice–chancellor and will be discussed at the appropriate points in this thesis. Each minute was sent to the *rescribendarius,* one of the 101 *scriptores literarum apostolicarum*.[107] These men were charged with producing a good clean copy of the text which would be checked by the *computator* and *auscultator*. A new copy of the text could be requested if the *computator*, *auscultator* of the abbreviators, found fault with the work of the scriptors. If the text was without fault it was then passed to the *bullatores,* who were usually two illiterate Cistercian monks from the monastery at Fossanova, the largest Cistercian house near Rome.[108] There is no evidence to explain why the Cistercians were chosen, though their emphasis on evangelical poverty and a detachment from worldly affairs perhaps implied they would not succumb to bribery to tamper with or

[107] D'Amico, *Renaissance Humanism*, p. 29.

[108] D'Amico, *Renaissance Humanism*, p. 26; G. Moroni, *Dizionario di erudizione storico–ecclesiastica da S. Pietro sino ai nostri giorni* (103 vols, Venice, 1840–61), v, p. 277.

falsify documents.[109] The *bullatores* affixed the seal to the document, ready for the charges to be calculated. This was overseen by the *collectores taxae plumbi*. This complex, meticulous and confusing process was specifically designed to eliminate any possibility of forging, tampering or falsifying papal documents, which remained a constant source of concern. Accordingly, Borgia and his deputies needed the services of capable and reliable men who would ensure the smooth running of the department. This was of even greater necessity when Borgia was absent, particularly during his legation to Spain in 1472–3.

The vice–chancellor was also president of the Rota, the highest legal tribunal of the Latin Church.[110] As a result of John XXII's apostolic constitution *Ratio juris* (1331), the vice–chancellor oversaw the court's operations and could nominate individuals to vacant notarial positions. In 1380 Urban VI (r. 1378–89) permitted the vice–chancellor to assign individual cases to auditors (judges) of the Rota. The vice–chancellor was not required to have any legal expertise and did not preside over any of the cases brought before the tribunal.[111] Calixtus III confirmed these rights in 1455, so when Borgia was appointed vice–chancellor he could assign cases to the auditors.[112] There is very little surviving evidence of Borgia's interactions with the Rota, suggesting that the role of president was more ceremonial than practical.

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[109] D'Amico, *Renaissance Humanism,* p. 26.

[110] K. Salonen, *Papal Justice in the Late Middle Ages: The Sacra Romana Rota* (Abingdon, 2016), p. 14.

[111] E. Cerchiari, *Capellani papae et apostolicae sedis, auditores causarum sacri palatii apostolici seu sacra romana Rota…ad diem usque 20 Sept 1870* (4 vols, Rome 1919–21), i, p. 19.

[112] Cerchiari, *Capellani papae*, i, p. 153.

It is not entirely clear how much income the vice–chancellor derived from these various roles, though Borgia's contemporary Jacopo Gherardi (1434–1516) estimated it at 8,000 ducats per annum and the historian David Chambers gives a figure of 6,000 ducats.[113] Dietrich of Niem (1345–1418) had stated that 'no cardinal was able to maintain the regal status of that time unless he were daily supported by great sums of money from whatsoever part they came', and that remained true for Borgia.[114] He had the slight advantage over his colleagues of being able to draw on revenue from appointments made to *vacabilia* offices in the Chancery, although how much income this brought Borgia is impossible to ascertain. The greatest potential source of income for cardinals was the benefices which they held either outright, in plurality/*commendam*, or in administration. In the course of his career as a cardinal Borgia accumulated benefices across Western Christendom. Pellegrini calculates that these brought him roughly 10,000 to 14,000 ducats per annum.[115] As long as Borgia was resident in Rome, he also automatically received his fair division of certain taxes, the *servitia communia* and the *servitia minuta*.[116] If there happened to be more Curial cardinals at a particular time each one received less from this pot; if there were fewer cardinals each one

[113] J. Gherardi, *Diario romano*, ed. E. Carusi, RIS, XXIII, (Città di Castello, 1904), pp. 48–9; D. S. Chambers, 'The Economic Predicament of Renaissance Cardinals', in *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, 3 (1966), p. 299.

[114] Quoted in M. Spinka, *Advocates of reform from Wyclif to Erasmus* (London, 1953), p. 168.

[115] M. Pellegrini, *Ascanio Maria Sforza*: *la parabola politica di un cardinale–principe del Rinascimento* (2 vols, Rome, 2002), i, p. 385.

[116] A.V. Antonovics, 'A Late Fifteenth Century Division Register of the College of Cardinals', *Papers of the British School at Rome*, 35, (1967), pp. 87–101.

received a larger proportion. Cardinals needed considerable income because they were expected to maintain larger households and act as generous patrons to the clerics beneath them in the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

On 26 November 1457 Borgia returned to Rome from the Marche and was rewarded with benefices in the cathedrals of Mainz and Palencia and the administration of the Catalan see of Girona.[117] The income from these went towards purchasing an urban palace. At the end of the year, on 11 December, Borgia was appointed commissary general of the papal army, an administrative role that complemented the military responsibilities of his brother Pere Lluis, the captain general of the Church.[118] Borgia finally acquired a Roman residence on 5 April 1458, when he bought the palace on the site of the old mint, the *ceccha* or *zecca*, for 2,000 florins.[119] It was ideally situated in the bend of the Tiber. In his *De cardinalatu* (1510), Paolo Cortesi stated that 'when we bear in mind the importance of the Vatican, it becomes clear that the cardinal's palace should not be so far from it that time will be wasted in coming and going when the College of Cardinals meets for ecclesiastical ceremonies'.[120] His new palace enabled Borgia to operate efficiently on both sides of the Tiber. Building work must have

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[117] AAV, Reg. Vat. 446, f. 19v; Miralles, 'Vida y empresas', p. 200.

[118] AAV, Reg. Vat. 465, f. 152r–3r; AAV, Reg. Vat. 461, f. 95v; Reg. Vat. 465, f. 288v.

[119] De Roo, *Material*, ii, p. 82; 'Palazzo Sforza Cesarini', <http://www.palazzosforzacesarini.it/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=49&Itemid=57 > (accessed 13 November 2016).

[120] K. Weil–Garris and J. F. D'Amico, 'The Renaissance Cardinal's Ideal Palace: A Chapter from Cortesi's *De Cardinalatu*', *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome*, 35, *Studies in Italian Art History 1: Studies in Italian Art and Architecture 15th through 18th centuries* (1980), p. 71.

been in progress before and during the early stage of occupancy, descriptions of the building coming from later dates, when it was at its most impressive. It was evidently designed to suit the requirements of the Chancery, which was housed there until 1523, when the vice–chancellor was allocated the titular church of S. Lorenzo in Damaso and its surrounding palace became known as the Cancelleria.

Just as descriptions of Borgia's palace date from later pontificates, so do lists of his familiars, the clerics who were entitled to dine at his table and who enjoyed his patronage as they sought to establish clerical careers. In some cases, the same men were employed in the Chancery and were identified as Borgia's clients, his familiars, meaning that most aspects of their lives were catered for under one roof. As a body, these men formed his *familia*. Some familiars served the cardinal in a specific capacity, such as chaplain, doctor, secretary or treasurer. In this respect they overlapped with those men – and some woman – who served the cardinal in menial roles and formed his household, which was modelled on the papal household, but existed on a smaller scale.[121]

Now established in Rome and as the pope's right–hand man, it was no wonder that Borgia was flattered by his contemporaries. On 1 April 1458 Cardinal Piccolomini wrote to him:

> It causes me great pleasure to see your courage shine in adverse and difficult circumstances … had that city fallen not only the Marche but the whole of St Peter's Patrimony would have been lost … ('Ego tamen gaudeo quod in adversis & arduis rebus tua virtus elucet…Esculana saluata sit: qua Perdita, non Marchia solum sed omne patrimonium beati Petri ibat pessum'.)[122]

[121] D'Amico, *Renaissance Humanism*, p. 39.

[122] Pius II, *Opera omnia* (Basel, 1571), p. 787.

Borgia had proved his mettle and his ailing uncle, Calixtus, became more reliant on him, rather than on his other clerical *nipote*, Lluís Joan del Milà, who initially appeared to be the more favoured of the two. On 30 June 1458 Borgia succeeded his uncle as bishop of Valencia, a position the pontiff had hitherto retained since his papal election.[123] The bishopric was one of the most lucrative in Iberia: it is no surprise that Alfonso the Magnanimous, in his capacity as king of Aragon, had wanted it for his nephew, Joan de Aragón, and equally unsurprising that Calixtus was determined to thwart him. Instead, Joan was promoted to the archbishopric of Zaragoza, a position of higher status but one that brought in less income.[124] The new king of Aragon, Joan II (r. 1458–79) was conscious of this and in the hope of forging better relations with the new monarch Borgia reportedly suggested that the clerical Joan should receive an annual pension from the revenues of Valencia. If this was indeed advocated it was the first example of a diplomatic theme that can be traced throughout Borgia's career, finding ways and means that were of mutual benefit to the Church and to a secular prince, an arrangement from which Borgia himself could only benefit too. He visited his Valencian bishopric in 1472–3 as part of his Iberian legation, such a direct involvement being all too rare for a Curial cardinal. As in all such cases, the absentee bishop was reliant on his vicars–general. In the case of Valencia, that meant Berengarius Clavel and Mathias Mercader.[125] When Borgia was elevated to the papal throne in 1492, he maintained the family tradition by granting the bishopric to his son Cesare.[126]

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[123] AAV, Reg. Vat. 453, f. 25v; Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 287.

[124] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 126.

[125] A. Torro, *Acta Negotii Perpiniani documentos del Archivo de la Corona de Aragón referentes al encuentro de Perpiñán del anno 1415* (Zürich, 2017), p. 98.

[126] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 287.

The personal antagonism between Calixtus and Alfonso ended on 27 June 1458 with the king's death and Calixtus had the satisfaction of announcing that the snare of Naples had finally been broken. However, a month later Calixtus was also sick. It was the height of the plague season in Rome: Milà was in Bologna, while Borgia was enjoying clean air in Tivoli. Learning of his illness, both *nipoti* headed back to Rome. Borgia arrived on 26 July; Milà left Bologna on 4 August, meaning he was not present when Calixtus died in the Apostolic Palace on 6 August.[127] The interregnum between the death of one pope and the election of his successor was invariably marked by violence. On this occasion it included an eruption of anti–Spanish feeling that even managed to unite the Orsini and Colonna families in a common cause. Violence was not just limited to Rome: in Viterbo, Castelnuovo di Porto and Nepi the Catalan castellans were murdered. Those Catalans who could flee hurried back to Spain. In Rome a commission of cardinals was appointed to bring order to the situation. It consisted of Bessarion, Guillaume d'Estouteville, Alain de Coëtivy and Pietro Barbo, the last of whom also aided the flight from Rome of Cardinal Borgia's brother Pere Lluis.[128] Before he fled, the captain general relinquished control of Castel S. Angelo to Rodrigo in return for 22,000 florins from the papal treasury.[129] Pere Lluis died *en route* to Civitavecchia.

Back in Rome, Borgia and Milà commissioned the sculptor Andrea Bregno (1418–1506) to construct a marble tomb for their uncle in the Vatican chapel of S. Maria delle Febbre.[130] On 16 August the two cousins entered their first conclave. In the course of their

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[127] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 35.

[128] Pastor, *History*, ii, pp. 474–5.

[129] Pastor, *History*, ii, p. 476.

[130] D. Cavallero 'Sculture quattrocentesche provenienti dal vecchio San Pietro: il monumento funebre di Callisto III Borgia' in *Le due Rome del Quattrocento: Melozzo, Antoniazzo e la*

uncle's pontificate, Milà had achieved no particular distinction as governor of Bologna, whereas Borgia had certainly distinguished himself as legate to the Marche. That demonstration of his talents led to his appointment to the hitherto vacant office of vice–chancellor. This put his career on a different trajectory to that of his cousin and opened his eyes to the workings of the Curia. With control of the Chancery Borgia was now at the heart of papal government, second only to the pope in that respect. The office provided him with the opportunity to become one of the most influential cardinals in the College and it is testament to his skills that he was able to stay in office for thirty–five years, across the pontificates of five very different papal masters.

On 16 August 1458 the two cousins entered their first conclave together, but their stories to that point could not have been more different. Whilst Milà had achieved no particular distinction as governor of Bologna, Borgia could look back at the two years he had been a cardinal with the knowledge that he had distinguished himself as legate to the Marche and was making headway in the Chancery. Control of the latter meant that Borgia was now at the heart of papal government, second only to the pope. The office of vice–chancellor provided him with the opportunity to become one of the most influential cardinals in the College and it is testament to his skills that he was able to stay in office for thirty–five years, during the pontificates of five very different papal masters.

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cultura artistica dell' 400 romano ed. Sergio Rossi (Rome, 1997), pp. 236–44; Pastor, *History*, ii, p. 479.

2. 1458–64: Pius II, the frustrated crusader.

The story of the Borgia in Italy could have come to a swift conclusion in April 1458 with the death of Calixtus III. However, Rodrigo's reluctance to leave Rome saved his ecclesiastical career, although this was nearly all for naught when he entered his first conclave and witnessed first–hand the politicking of his fellow cardinals. With the new pontiff's own relatives expecting preferment, Borgia needed to carve his own career without the help of his uncle. As a cardinal–deacon, he was in the lowest tier of the College of Cardinals, so wielded little influence over older and more senior cardinals. He turned his attention to the Chancery, particularly focusing on Sienese business, perhaps in the hope that supporting the site of the new pontiff's former bishopric would safeguard his own position in the Curia.

While Calixtus lay dying discussions about his successor were underway. On 26 July the Milanese ambassador Ottone del Carretto reported the pope's imminent death to Francesco Sforza, who declared his support for the Milanese Cardinal Giovanni Castiglione or Domenico Capranica as candidates for the papal throne.[131] Indeed, the learned and respected Capranica was generally considered to be the best candidate, especially for those of an anti–French persuasion. However, he was also ill and died before the conclave opened. Without revised instructions, the Milanese envoy favoured Cardinal Piccolomini of Siena, who was reportedly friendly towards the duke and also reportedly had the support of the king of Naples.[132] The camerlengo Ludovico Trevisan, who was on legation in the East, was the most notable absentee from the conclave.[133] Of the eighteen cardinals who remained in

[131] Pastor, *History*, ii, p. 482.

[132] Pastor, *History*, iii, pp. 377–8.

[133] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 34.

Rome, five were Iberians (Torquemada, Cerdà, Milà, Mella and Borgia) and formed a substantial minority, though none of them stood any chance of being elected immediately after the reign of a much–detested Catalan pope.

The only source of information for what happened inside the conclave enclosure is the autobiographical *Commentaries* penned after conclave proceedings had concluded by the former Cardinal Piccolomini. The election capitulation drawn up on 17 August followed the established pattern by insisting that the next pope restrict the number of cardinals he created, thereby protecting the interests of the existing cardinals, and that the new pontiff would commit himself to initiating a new crusade. The focus of the *Commentaries* is more on personalities than on procedure and features a xenophobic character assassination of the papally ambitious Guillaume d'Estouteville. Although it is not an impartial source, it does reveal something about the dynamics in the College of Cardinals and Borgia's position in it. More particularly, the *Commentaries* reveal why Borgia was held in such regard by the next pope and why he retained the vice–chancellorship and became more firmly entrenched in the Chancery.

The first ballot, held on 18 August yielded five votes each for Calandrini, the major penitentiary, and Piccolomini, who was then a much–travelled diplomat. No other cardinal gained more than three votes. D'Estouteville didn't receive any. In response to Piccolomini's growing support, d'Estouteville with his Breton ally Cöetivy met cardinals Barbo, Castiglione, Cerdà and Borgia in the privies in order to lobby for their votes.[134] The Frenchman hoped that Borgia was inexperienced enough to be swayed by the assurance that his office of vice–chancellor was safe if he voted for d'Estouteville. The next morning all this was reported by Calandrini to Piccolomini, who thereupon admonished Castiglione for his

[134] Pius II, *Commentaries*, i, pp. 184–5.

part in it: 'after trying the Catalans, are you eager to try the French? . . . What has become of your love for your country?'[135] Piccolomini was equally sharp with Borgia: 'will the Frenchman be friendlier to the Frenchman or the Catalan…Avignon [Cöetivy] will have the Chancery'.[136] However, d'Estouteville's scheming did not result in votes: he gained three at the next ballot while Piccolomini advanced to six. As no cardinal had achieved the required two–thirds majority, another ballot beckoned, but could be avoided if the cardinals made a verbal declaration of support for the strongest candidate: election by *accessus*.[137] Isidore of Kiev and Torquemada attempted to adjourn the voting process, but Borgia intervened, voicing his support for Piccolomini. Others followed his lead, Colonna casting the vote that secured victory for the Sienese.[138] The danger of a French pope had been averted, and a Catalan cardinal had played the crucial part in that process.

On Sunday 3 September Colonna, as the senior cardinal deacon, crowned Pope Pius II on the steps of St Peter's Basilica.[139] Later that day Borgia received his reward in the shape of perpetual administration of the adjacent Roman churches of S. Maria in Via Lata and S. Ciriaco de Camiliano and the accompanying lands and houses.[140] S. Maria in Via Lata provided one of the cardinal deaconries and had fallen vacant at the recent death of Cardinal Capranica. Although Borgia resigned its revenues in 1462, he maintained an interest in the

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[135] Pius II, *Commentaries,* i, pp. 190–1.

[136] Pius II, *Commentaries*, i, pp. 186–7.

[137] M. Dykmans, *Le cérémonial papal de la fin du Moyen Age à la Renaissance* (4 vols, Brussels 1977), iii, pp. 288–9.

[138] Pius II, *Commentaries,* i, p. 195.

[139] Pius II, *Commentaries*, i, pp. 208–9.

[140] De Roo, *Material,* ii, p. 108.

church, donating 300 ducats for building works in 1491.[141] S. Ciriaco, on the other hand, remained in disrepair until its demolition in 1491.[142] Pius's Piccolomini kin fared well with appointments to vacant offices. His nephew Antonio Todeschini Piccolomini succeeded Pere Lluis de Borja as captain general of the Church, castellan of Castel S. Angelo and governor of a number of fortresses close to Rome, where the locals apparently 'greeted with enthusiasm for they were desperate to escape the Catalan yoke and to return to Italian rule'.[143] In 1461 Antonio was also married to an illegitimate daughter of King Ferrante of Naples. Other kinsmen filled offices in the papal household and in the various Curial departments. These included Niccolò Piccolomini, who was given a position in the College of Abbreviators, so was a potential spy for the pope inside the Borgia's Chancery.

In Pius's scale of priorities, nothing was more important than a crusade against the Ottomans. Bound by the election capitulation to mount a new crusade, he announced his intentions in the consistory held on 12 October, the content of his speech being published the following day as the bull *Vocavit non Pius*. This summoned the princes of Christendom to a congress which was to begin in September 1459. Udine was considered as a potential venue but dropped in favour of Mantua, where the ruling Gonzaga family were unusual among Italian dynasties because of their close ties with German states, which complemented Pius's own diplomatic experience of the Empire.

Leaving Nikolaus von Cusa (1400/1–64) as his deputy in the city, Pius left Rome for Mantua on 22 January 1459, accompanied by Cardinals Calandrini, d'Estouteville, Barbo,

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[141] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 268.

[142] L. Cavazzi, *La diaconia di S. Maria in Via Lata e il monastero di S. Ciriaco* (Rome, 1908), pp. 101–5.

[143] Pius II, *Commentarie*s, ii, pp. 224–5.

Colonna and Borgia.[144] The party passed through the pontiff's birthplace, Corsignano, in the Sienese *contado*, in mid–February, shortly after which Pius notified the priors of Siena of his plans to transform the village. On 24 February the pope and his retinue entered Siena, where Cardinals Bessarion, Torquemada, Trevisan, Orsini, Coëtivy, Milà and Mella joined them. There were so many travelling households to be accommodated that private palaces had to be used, in addition to the monasteries which had an obligation to provide hospitality. Borgia was housed in the palace of Giovanni Bichi near the cathedral, which cost the Camera 433 lire.[145] This arrangement clearly worked well, because Borgia expressed a positive desire to stay there again whenever the papal court made its return progress from Mantua to Rome. Pius and his immediate retinue were billeted in the bishop's palace which had, until recently, been his own residence. The bishopric was raised to an archbishopric on 23 April that year, with the papal kinsman Antonio Piccolomini its first archbishop.[146] From Siena, the party travelled to Florence, where it arrived on 17 April and was received with huge splendour as recorded by the record an anonymous notary left of the event.[147] A larger city offered options for temporary accommodation. In a reflection of the links between the Medici family, its bank and the kingdom of France, Cardinal d'Estouteville stayed at the 'casa vecchia' of Pierfrancesco, the nephew of Florence's leading citizen Cosimo de' Medici. Even Borgia, who never seriously cultivated the Italian republics, was not without contacts in Florence and

[144] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 63.

[145] F. Nevola, 'Ritual Geography : Housing the Papal Court of Pius II Piccolomini in Siena (1459–1460)', *Renaissance Studies*, 20/2 (2006), p. 206.

[146] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 235.

[147] N. Newbigin, 'Le onoranze fiorentine del 1459: poema anonimo', *Letteratura italiana antica: rivista annuale di testi e studi*, 12 (2011), p. 61.

was recorded as lodging with 'his friends whose arms consist of crosses between dolphins'. That refers to the Pazzi family, whose bank had branches in Rome, Lyon, Avignon and Marseille, and could rival the Medici in terms of wealth and could have been profitable for Borgia. Their palace is now the Palazzo Pazzi–Quaratesi in the centrally located Via del Proconsolo.[148]

Leaving Florence on 5 May, the papal party headed next to Bologna, before arriving in Mantua from the west via the Porta Pradella on 27 May. The Mantuan chronicler Andrea Schivenoglia recorded their entry. He took a dislike to Borgia who allegedly had an evil air about him ('lo vicechanzelero era anij 25 et d'un aspeto de fare ogne male').[149] This is typical of Schivenoglia's account, which focuses on the cardinals' physical appearances (thin, not ugly, brutish looking), before accounting for the size of their mounted retinues, arranged in processional order:[150]

Cardinal	**Size of retinue**
D'Estouteville	300
Orsini	200
Isidore of Kiev	70–80
Barbo	300
Coëtivy	300–400

[148] Newbigin, 'Le onorazane fiorentine', p. 87.

[149] A. Schivenoglia, *Cronaca di Mantova dal MCCCCXLV al MCCCCLXXXIV*, in C. D'Arco (ed.), *Raccolta di cronisti e documenti storici lombardi inediti* (2 vols, Milan, 1857), ii, p. 137.

[150] Schivenoglia, *Cronaca di Mantova*, pp. 136–8.

Tebaldi	80–90
Borgia	200–250
Mella	150
Calandrini	150
Colonna	120–150
Trevisan	400
Rolin	100
Milà	90–100
Bessarion	100–120
Carvajal	100

What is clear from these numbers is the marked distinction in the retinue sizes between those of the 'worldlier' cardinals – Trevisan, d'Estouteville, Coëtivy, Barbo and Borgia – and the less worldly Bessarion, Carvajal and Isidore of Kiev. As had been the case in Florence, the cardinals were scattered across the city. Borgia found accommodation with 'Signor Giacopino Furga' in his palace near the church of S. Salvatore (now S. Francesco di Paola) on the west side of the city.[151] Furga did not belong to one of Siena's leading families, but nevertheless achieved distinction as a 'ricco Negoziante'.[152]

Pius was then obliged to wait for four months before the congress opened on 26 September. He addressed the delegates for two hours on the necessity of a crusade, the Muslim occupation of the Holy Land and Sultan Mehmed's plans to conquer Western

[151] L. C. Volta, *Compendio cronologico–critico della storia di Mantova dalla sua fondazione sio ai nostri tempi* (5 vols, Mantua, 1827), ii, p. 142.

[152] Volta, *Compendio*, p. 142.

Christendom.[153] However, the congress did not proceed as planned. The princes did not appear, and the ambassadors were, in the pope's opinion, of inferior rank: the entire project was simply not a priority for the emperor, the king of France, the duke of Burgundy or any of the other secular rulers who were not immediately threatened by an Ottoman invasion. The only attendee of note was Francesco Sforza, who attended an open consistory and was seated next to the cardinal deacons, Colonna and Borgia.[154] This was significant because it was a face–to–face encounter between Borgia and one of the most significant political players of that era, the father of future dukes of Milan and of Cardinal Ascanio Maria Sforza, whose actions in the conclave of 1492 resulted in Borgia's election. The death of Jaime of Portugal earlier in the year meant that Borgia now routinely sat next to the protodeacon Colonna, whose experience of Rome and the Curia was unparalleled and from whom Borgia could learn much. The fact that Borgia was later frequently consulted on ceremonial matters shows that he did observe his more senior colleagues.

After seven months of frustration, the highlight of the congress came on 14 January 1460, when Pius called on the memory of his predecessors in the oration *Septimo iam exacto mense* and promulgated the bull *Ecclesiam Christi*, which stated that the new crusade would begin on 1 April that year.[155] Despite the fine words, the papal oratory could make no difference to those who either would not or could not offer any practical support. The king of France and the duke of Burgundy argued that their territories were still recovering from the

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[153] 'Oratio in conventu Mantuano habita', Vat. Lat. 1788, f. 159r–69r.

[154] Pius II, *Commentaries*, ii, pp. 80–1.

[155] 'Ecclesiam Christi', < http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/la/apost_letters/documents/hf_p-xii_apl_19550629_ad-ecclesiam-christi.html > (accessed 5 April 2017).

turmoil of the Hundred Years War, and nothing could be expected from England, where Henry VI was 'a man of less courage than a woman, utterly witless and lacking in spirit' and the political nation was divided between warring Lancastrians and Yorkists.[156]

Borgia had the responsibilities of the Chancery to occupy him while Pius had waited for the congress to begin. On 15 September, in consistory, he recommended the soldier Antonio di Fogliano di Modena ('cum amicus noster sit magnopere nobis gratum erit'), who was already *podestà*, to be made *gonfaloniere* of Siena.[157] Rather more significantly, the vice–chancellor began to court the favour of the Gonzaga family, particularly through Barbara of Brandenburg (1422–81), the wife of Marchese Ludovico Gonzaga (r. 1444–78). The daughter of the margrave of Brandenburg–Kulmbach, she came with the additional distinction of being the niece of the late emperor, Sigismund (d. 1437). The surviving letters between Barbara, Ludovico and their ambassadors in Rome for the years after the congress frequently make note of Borgia's activities.[158] In the meantime, Borgia, Milà, Barbara and her ladies were reportedly seen enjoying boat trips on the lake, and this was perhaps where Borgia and Barbara discussed the clerical career of her second son, Francesco (1444–83), who had been made a protonotary apostolic at ten years old.[159] For Borgia it was a connection that would last until the death of Francesco more than two decades later.

Like most of the cardinals, Borgia presumably relished leaving Mantua on 19 January. From Florence the protonotary Teodoro da Montefeltro reported to Barbara that Borgia was

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[156] Pius II, *Commentaries,* iii, pp. 176–84.

[157] Senatore, 'Callisto III nelle corrispondenze', p. 168.

[158] Volumes II–V of Pastor's *History of the Popes* contain numerous references to letters between Barbara and her ambassadors.

[159] G. B. Picotti, *La dieta di Mantova e la politica de' veneziani* (Venice, 1912), p. 63.

now enjoying the company of Bianca de' Medici (1445–1505), the wife of Guglielmo de' Pazzi, and other Florentine ladies. Unlike Cardinal d'Estouteville, who had kissed a gathering of ten ladies in the French fashion, Borgia 'touched Bianca's hand, not in the French fashion but in the Italian style, that is without kissing her, even though her relatives begged him to do so'.[160] At Borgia's request Bianca played three songs, 'Fortuna', 'Duogl'angoseus' and 'another, highly unusual one'.[161] The papal party left Florence for Siena arriving on 28 February. There Borgia's retinue was divided between the *palazzi* of Luigi Tegliacci and Bonaventura di Agostino Borghesi. As Pius had a number of matters to occupy him in Siena, Borgia ended up staying in the city for seven months and ten days, which cost him 967 lire for accommodation, 850 for the Tegliacci *palazzo* and 117 for that of Borghesi.[162]

On 5 March, while in Siena, Pius created six new cardinals, taking the College from twenty–seven members at the time of the conclave of 1458 to twenty–nine, although this dropped to twenty–eight the following month with the death of Cardinal Castiglione.[163] Pius had rejected the proposed candidates of Ferrante, Sforza and Charles VII of France (r. 1422–61). According to his own version of events, he did so because he knew men who were more deserving of high office and preferred to surround himself with men who were more likely to be loyal to him. Pius's first choice for a red hat was the bishop of Rieti and governor of Bologna Angelo Capranica (1415–78), the younger brother of his former patron

[160] W. Prizer, 'Games of Venus: Secular and Vocal Music in the Late Quattrocento and Early Cinquecento', *The Journal of Musicology,* 9/1 (1991), p. 4.

[161] Prizer, 'Games of Venus', p. 4.

[162] Nevola, 'Ritual Geography', p. 214.

[163] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 13.

Domenico.[164] Second was the bishop of Spoleto, Pius's close friend Berardo Eroli (1409–79), who had come from humble origins in Narni and had demonstrated his natural ability in a range of roles in the papal administration.[165] The third choice was Niccolò Forteguerri (1419–73), bishop of Teano, who had served as governor of Viterbo and was related to Pius through his mother.[166] The fourth was Alessandro Oliva (1407–63), the prior general of the Augustinian Hermits, who had already enjoyed Pius's favour but was completely surprised by his elevation. The most significant name for Borgia was that of Pius's nephew Francesco Todeschini (1439–1503), who had been granted the right to use the Piccolomini name and was administrator of Siena after the unexpected death of Antonio Piccolomini.[167] In the same way as Calixtus had with Borgia, Todeschini Piccolomini was created a cardinal–deacon, of S. Eustachio.[168] He went on to be the sole survivor of Pius's creations in the conclave of 1492. For the last of his six choices, Pius demonstrated that his personal preference among the secular princes was for his former patron the emperor, Friedrich III (r. 1452–92), whose candidate was the archbishop of Salzburg, Burkhard Weisbriach (1420/3–66).[169] All in all, Pius was conscious of his achievement in creating so many Italian cardinals, including his nephew and two members of his own household, and thought he had done something

[164] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 244.

[165] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 265.

[166] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 274.

[167] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 235.

[168] Pius II, *Commentaries*, ii, p. 240.

[169] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 252.

remarkable.[170] It created an environment within which Borgia was obliged to operate and be diplomatic if he wanted to survive.

While in Siena this second time, Borgia again oversaw routine business. On 17 May he obtained grain for his household and recommended that the knight and *capitano di giustizia* in Siena Pietro degli Albergati was paid. Borgia also asked that Albergati had the banner of the city given to him before he went to Todi. This was later approved by the city's priors on 9 July.[171] However, the most notable – if not notorious – episode came on 8 June when he and Cardinal d'Estouteville attended a post–baptismal party in the house of the Catalan's former host Giovanni Bichi. A report from the Mantuan ambassador Bartolomeo Bonatti notes that Borgia and d'Estouteville had conducted the baptism itself by proxy but attended the party in the garden ('le loro Eminenze non comparirono in chiesa ma fecero tenere a battesimo la bambina da loro procuratori, mentre invece intervennero alla festa che si svolse in un giardino di proprieta di questo signore').[172] These revels reportedly ran from the 'seventeenth to the twenty–second hour' and saw guests 'dancing without restraint and no allurements to love were spared'.[173] Although, as Natalie Tomas states, 'it was quite acceptable for young women to entertain visiting dignitaries outside of their own homes without harming their reputations', this event was clearly of a very different nature to Borgia's encounter with Bianca de' Medici five months earlier and the women were

[170] Pius II, *Commentaries*, ii, p. 234.

[171] Senatore, 'Callisto III nelle corrispondenze', p. 169.

[172] Quoted in La Torre, *Del Conclave di Alessandro VI*, p. 15.

[173] Mallett, *The Borgias*, p. 86.

presumably not as respectable as the granddaughter of the illustrious Cosimo.[174] Word reached Pius, who promptly reminded Borgia of his position: 'You, dear son, are at the head of the see of Valencia, which is the first in Spain (and) moreover, the Vice–Chancellor of the Church and what makes your conduct even more reprehensible is that you sit with the pope among the cardinals, counsellors of the Holy See'.[175] However, just three days later, Pius sent a second letter, in which he took a more conciliatory line: 'what you (Borgia) have done beloved son is not without blame, however it is less disreputable than it first appeared ... you are warned to behave more discreetly in future'.[176] There is no sign that the more mature d'Estouteville received any rebuke. Moreover, Pius did not record the incident in his *Commentaries*, suggesting he was genuinely fond of his vice–chancellor, remembering Borgia's key role in the conclave and mindful of the quality of the work he was undertaking as head of the Chancery.

The papal party departed Siena on 10 September and made next for Corsignano, where Pius fell ill.[177] They finally returned to Rome on 7 October, after an absence of a year and eight months.[178] In the first consistory thereafter, Pius blamed the low standard of the College of Cardinals for the lack of support for the crusade. He drew on the *Tractatus de reformationibus romanae curiae* (1458) by Domenico de' Dominici (1416–77), bishop of

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[174] N. Tomas, *The Medici Women: Gender and Power in Renaissance Florence* (Aldershot 2002), p. 30; R. Fubini and S. L. Raillard, 'Cosimo de' Medici's regime: his rise to power (1434)', *Revue française de science politique,* 64/6 (2014), pp. 81–97.

[175] Quoted in A. Latour, *The Borgias* (London, 1962), p. 21.

[176] Quoted in Latour, *The Borgias*, p. 17.

[177] Pius II, *Commentaries*, ii, pp. 331–2.

[178] Pius II, *Commentaries*, ii, pp. 364–5.

Torcello, who argued that if the pope and cardinals could improve their behaviour, 'the faithful would be prepared to arm themselves for 'Holy War'.[179] The cardinals were an easy target, close at hand, though it is impossible to say whether any of them could have intervened to solve Pius's ongoing disputes with the king of Bohemia, the archduke of Austria or the papal vicar Sigismondo Malatesta of Rimini.

It was December 1461 when Pius made another attempt to reform the character of the College of Cardinals, adding six new members despite only one death (that of Giorgio Fieschi) having occurred since his last creations.[180] This time the emphasis was on cultivating secular princes who might contribute to the crusade. First, Bartolomeo Roverella (1406–76), archbishop of Ravenna, was elevated in order to gain the support of Borso d'Este, the ruler of Ferrara (r. 1450–71), who had an ongoing claim to Rovigo, Roverella's native place.[181] Next, Jean Jouffroy (1412–73), bishop of Arras, was the clear choice of Louis XI of France (r. 1461–83), the most powerful monarch in Western Christendom. At the risk of betraying his anti–French antipathy, Pius insisted that Jouffroy was 'blinded by ambition and avarice and had an ingrained hatred of the Italian race'.[182] He argued that his hands were tied and if he did not accept requests such as that for Jouffroy he risked 'bringing great shame on ourselves and possibly real harm to the Church'.[183] The saintly Jaime Francisco de Cardona i de Aragón (1405–66), bishop of Urgel, was descended from kings of Aragon and was the candidate of

[179] Quoted in R. McNally, *Reform of the Church: Crisis and Criticism in Historical Perspective* (New York, 1963), p. 86.

[180] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 14.

[181] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 244.

[182] Pius II, *Commentaries,* iii, pp. 414–15; Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 110.

[183] Pius II, *Commentaries*, iii, pp. 416–17.

the current king, Joan II, but it didn't follow that the latter was any more disposed to a crusade than his counterpart north of the Pyrenees.[184] As if to underscore the crusading significance of France, Louis was also granted his second choice, that of his kinsman Louis d'Albret (1422–65), bishop of Cahors.[185] With the fifth name, Pius sought to bolster his position in Rome with the promotion of his secretary Iacopo Ammannati (1422–79), bishop of Pavia, who was permitted to use the Piccolomini name.[186] Whereas the first five of the new cardinals had some standing in the Church, the last name on the list was very different: the seventeen–year–old Francesco Gonzaga was elevated as a sign of Pius's gratitude to the boy's father, Ludovico, for hosting the congress at Mantua.[187] The youth was made a cardinal deacon, whereas the others were all cardinal priests. Borgia must have breathed a sigh of relief, for none of the new cardinals were potential rivals for the vice–chancellorship.

Cardinals were not the only promotions made by Pope Pius. On 20 February 1462 he elevated his birthplace, the recently renamed Pienza, to a bishopric. By August the cathedral was ready to be dedicated by Cardinal d'Estouteville, although Pius ensured that he blessed the high altar himself. The broader plan was to create an alternative papal capital, which meant building enough palaces to house the visiting Curia. Although the pope's closest associates bought land there willingly enough, the cardinals were less enthusiastic, sensing that it would be a poor investment. Pius insisted Cardinals Trevisan, Jouffroy, Borgia and Gonzaga each build a palace. Why this quartet was chosen is unknown. The pope may have assumed that they had more money than the men of humbler origin he had recently promoted.

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[184] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 286.

[185] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 137.

[186] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 234.

[187] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 14.

Borgia's was the former episcopal palace which, to limit costs, was slightly remodelled and renovated with an extra floor.[188] It is little wonder that the cardinals took the earliest opportunity to abandon their palaces in Pienza: soon after Pius's death in 1464, Borgia sold his to the bishop of Pienza, Giovanni Campesi, and Gonzaga sold his to Pius's confidant, Cardinal Ammannati.[189]

While Pienza was being transformed, the head of the apostle Andrew arrived in Rome on Palm Sunday 1462.[190] It had been sent from Patras by the brother of the last Byzantine emperor, Thomas Palaiologos, the despot of the Morea, whose territory was now under the control of the forces of Sultan Mehmed. Pius imagined that uniting the relic with those of Andrew's brother, St Peter, would symbolize the unification of Eastern and Western Christendom in the common cause of defending themselves against the Ottomans. Pius recorded the head's arrival in Rome, with comments on the cardinals trudging through the mud with palm fronds in their hands and mitres on their greying hair. Borgia, 'nephew of Calixtus III and an exceptionally capable man', was at the rear of the procession.[191] Clearly the young man's transgression at Siena had been forgiven. As Mallett confirms, 'those who

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[188] C. R. Mack, *Pienza: The Creation of a Renaissance City* (London, 1987), p. 108.

[189] Mack, *Pienza*, pp. 108–12; J. Ammannati Piccolomini, *Lettere (1444–1479)*, ed. P. Cherubini (3 vols, Rome, 1997), i, pp. 363–8.

[190] M. Maskarinec, 'Mobilizing sanctity Pius II and the head of Andrew in Rome', in F. Ruiz, Y. G. Liang (eds) *Authority and Spectacle in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Essays in Honor of Teofilo F. Ruiz* (Abingdon, 2017), p. 191; p. 92 provides a map detailing the procession around Rome.

[191] Pius II, *The Commentaries of Pius II Books VI–IX*, ed. F. Gragg and L. C. Gabel, Smith College Studies in History xxxv, viii, p. 533.

deplored his ostentatious hedonism could not help but admire his intellectual gifts and administrative capacity'.[192] Decorations on the façade of his palace were indeed impressive, for it was 'covered with rich and wonderful tapestries, and besides this he had raised a lofty canopy from which were suspended many and various marvels…. [O]n the walls were hung many poems recently composed by great geniuses which set forth in large letters praises of the Divine Apostle and eulogies of Pope Pius'.[193]

Some weeks later a similar display of Borgia magnificence was seen in the Corpus Christi celebrations in Viterbo, where Pius and seven of the cardinals had retreated to avoid the plague. For the procession Borgia 'decorated not only his own house but those nearby so that the square all about them seemed a kind of park of sweet songs and sounds or a great palace gleaming with gold such as they say Nero's was'.[194] The cardinals also sponsored tableaux. Concealed behind a costly purple curtain, Borgia's tableaux revealed masked boys dressed as angels who genuflected before the Eucharist and could be heard chanting, 'Raise your gates, O Princes and King Pius will enter', a line inspired by Psalm 24: 7–9: 'Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in'. While in Viterbo, Pius elevated his final cardinal, the bishop of Eichstätt, Johann von Eych. The bishop could hardly have made less of an impression on the papal court, for he died on 1 January 1464.[195]

The building or at least renovation of the palace in Pienza, the celebrations for the arrival of St Andrew's head in Rome, and the expense of the Corpus Christi procession in

[192] Mallett, *The Borgias*, p. 79.

[193] Pius II, *Commentaries ... Books VI– IX*, pp. 535–6.

[194] Pius II, *Commentaries ... Books VI–IX*, p. 536.

[195] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 168.

Viterbo all combined to make 1462 an unusually expensive year for Cardinal Borgia. If the extraordinary expenditure was not enough, there was also less income than in previous years because there were only two divisions from the *servitia communia* or common services which provided all the Curial cardinals with regular income.[196] The fact that the number of new cardinals exceeded the number who had died recently meant that Pius had also actively contributed to diminishing their income, and that at the same time as he urged additional expenditure on them. It is therefore little wonder that cardinals often complained about the expansion of the College of Cardinals. Such objections even appear in Pius's *Commentaries*, Cardinal Jouffroy complaining that 'We are cheapened by too great numbers, we have not enough resources for ourselves and you wish to add others to take the bread from our mouths'.[197]

On 24 March 1463 the death of Prospero Colonna meant that Borgia was the most senior of the surviving cardinal deacons. In the papal liturgy it fell to these cardinals to perform the same functions as ordinary deacons did elsewhere, helping to remove and replace the papal mitre, handing over the thurible or pouring water over the pope's hands.[198] However, the protodeacon's most prominent responsibility came after a conclave, when he made the formal announcement of an election. As events turned out, Borgia was too ill to perform that office in 1464 but managed it in 1471. Distinctions between cardinal bishops, priests and deacons mattered for liturgical and ceremonial purposes, but certainly did not dictate their personal and social dealings with one another, as can be illustrated by continuing

[196] Antonovics, 'A Late Fifteenth Century Division Register', p. 88.

[197] Pius II, *Commentaries,* ii, pp. 230–1.

[198] C. Richardson, *Reclaiming Rome: Cardinals in the Fifteenth Century* (Leiden, 2009), p. 238.

evidence of a social relationship between Borgia and Guillaume d'Estouteville, the cardinal bishop of Ostia, perhaps because both were among the College's non–Italian minority and certainly had ample opportunity to become familiar during the twenty–seven years that they served together. On 15 May 1463 the two cardinals were in the party that accompanied Pius on a recreational trip to Ostia. When the papal party retired for the evening, a heavy storm struck. Only Borgia appears to have been lodged in the episcopal palace, his servants and the rest of the cardinals and their respective retinues taking shelter by the town walls. As the *Commentaries* attest, 'there was no one who did not fear for his life except those who had drunk more than usual at dinner or had been lodged in the lowest rooms, they were sunk in deep sleep and heard nothing'.[199] Ever alert to the shortcomings of others, Pius noted that Borgia appeared more concerned about the gold plate he had brought with him than about the men who served him: 'gold is so much more regarded than a man and he refused to be comforted till he learned that it was safe'.[200] Pius continued to denounce the cardinals for their pursuit of wealth and ambition. It was an argument he made in consistory on 23 September 1463 and again, the following year, in the unpublished bull *Pastor Aeternus*, where he wrote that the cardinals were 'to be distinguished from the rest of the faithful by the sanctity of their lives', and not through their opulent living.[201]

At the same time, Pius nevertheless took steps to maximize Borgia's income: on 1 September he was given permission to levy a charitable subsidy on his benefices in the diocese of Valencia and on 1 October to claim in one lump sum revenues from them for the

[199] Pius II, *Commentaries … Books VI–IX*, p. 754.

[200] Pius II, *Commentaries … Books VI–IX*, p. 754.

[201] Quoted in E. McCahill, *Reviving the Eternal City: Rome and the Papal Court, 1420–1447* (Cambridge, 2013), p. 91.

next three years, releasing enough funds for him to regain some relative form of financial security.[202] This apparent inconsistency can be explained with reference to the pope's continued determination to launch a new crusade. With each campaigning season the Ottomans made further gains, whether in the east, taking Bessarion's home city of Trebizond in 1461, or in the west, where the Morea fell in 1460 and Bosnia was swallowed up in 1463.[203] There was a pressing need for united action on the part of the Christian powers which had let him down at Mantua, but no indication of any change of heart. The cardinals were divided on the way forward, for the French were conscious of their king's opposition to any crusade, while those created by Pius expressed support for the pontiff's plans. Borgia was one of the few who 'made the vow of following the pope' by making a sizeable donation from his Valencian see.[204] As another means of raising revenue, in November Pius initiated reform to the College of Abbreviators, reducing from twelve to seventy the number of posts to which Borgia could appoint, the rest bringing income from appointees to the papal coffers.[205]

Even as preparations for the crusade proceeded, the pope himself was clearly in physical decline. He was too ill to hold a consistory at Petriolo in February 1464 and in Viterbo in May he was obliged to keep to his bed.[206] He then rallied sufficiently to make it to Rome five days later. After that, nothing else mattered to Pius apart from the crusade which,

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[202] De Roo, *Material*, ii, p. 138.

[203] K. M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant, 1204–1571* (4 vols, Philadelphia, PA, 1976–84), ii, pp. 237, 221, 240.

[204] De Roo, *Material,* ii, p. 141.

[205] Partner, *The Pope's Men*, p. 128; Bauer, *Censorship and Fortuna*, p. 32.

[206] Pastor, *History,* iii, p. 349.

despite his deteriorating health, he was determined to lead in person. The financial cost of the crusading project took its toll on the Apostolic Camera. As a result, the wealthiest members of the College were urged to provide loans to finance the expedition. Borgia paid for a trireme from the Venetian Arsenale.[207] This put enough strain on his finances for him to consider selling the Cancelleria back to the Camera.[208] That department was in no position to buy, so Borgia mortgaged part of the building, a request that Pius authorized on 10 July, when both men were in Fabriano, *en route* to Ancona.

At the start of June, Pius made clear his intention to travel to the Adriatic coast and meet the Christian fleet. Ancona was the principal papal port, but conveniently located for the vitally important Venetian contingent. In the hope of dissuading the headstrong pope from any action, there was talk of Louis XI supporting a new crusading effort in the spring of the following year. Undeterred, Pius left Rome on 18 June with Cardinals Trevisan, Barbo, Fortiguerri and Ammannati, leaving Todeschini Piccolomini in charge of the city. The intense heat made the journey slow for the pontiff, who was obviously ill and exhausted.[209] At Terni, Cardinals Borgia, d'Estouteville and Eroli joined the papal retinue.[210] Even before he arrived in Ancona, the pope was suffering from a fever. The archbishop of Milan, Stefano Nardini, reported to Francesco Sforza on 11 August that Pius was gravely ill and would not survive much longer.[211] Several cardinals had also fallen sick on the journey, Ammannati at Spoleto, Barbo at Loreto. Nikolaus von Cusa died in Todi on 12 August. Upon the party's arrival in

[207] Mallet, *The Borgias*, p. 87.

[208] Pastor, *History*, v, pp. 537–8.

[209] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 66.

[210] Pastor, *History,* iii, p. 356.

[211] Pastor, *History,* iii, p. 368.

Ancona, Borgia succumbed to malaria. A dispatch from Giacomo d'Arezzo to Ludovico Gonzaga, sent from Ancona on 10 August, reported that Borgia was sick and had a pain under his arm, the doctor who saw him was not hopeful.[212] Giacomo also noted that Borgia did not sleep alone ('non solus in lecto dormiverat'), a detail which has been used by later authors to infer sexual misconduct, even in the context of serious illness.[213]

On 14 August Pius was carried to a window to watch the arrival of the Venetian fleet, under the command of the doge, Cristoforo Moro. Later that evening his health began to decline, and he asked each cardinal to visit him, though it is likely that Borgia's illness prevented him from doing so. Only Ammannati stayed with the pontiff until his death early on the morning of 15 August, the feast of the Assumption. Later that morning the body was carried to the cathedral.[214] Moro was received by the cardinals the following day but plans for the crusade had died with the pope. Although the Venetians returned home, Moro urged the cardinals to elect a pope who would continue Pius's plans, or at least provide financial support towards Venetian crusading efforts, for their *stato da mar* was under attack from the Ottomans and they could not defend Christendom unaided.[215] Most immediately, the cardinals needed to decide upon the location of the conclave. As none of the cardinal bishops were present in Ancona, the papal party left for Rome on 23 August, entering the city a week

[212] Ammannati Piccolomini, *Lettere*, i, p. 493.

[213] Ammannati Piccolomini, *Lettere*, i, p. 493.

[214] Pastor, *History*, iii, pp. 369–70.

[215] Pastor, *History,* iii, p. 370.

later. The late pope's body was taken to St Peter's Basilica and buried in the chapel of St Andrew, which he had embellished to house the saint's head.[216]

Borgia's relationship with Pius had certainly had its vicissitudes, from determining the outcome of the conclave in 1458 to the loss of authority and revenue in Pius's reform of the College of Abbreviators in 1463. In the eyes of posterity and popular history, the most notorious event was the baptismal party in Siena, which has repeatedly been cited as proof of immorality. However, if anyone wanted evidence of Borgia's failure to maintain a celibate life, it existed by the end of the pontificate in the shape of his son Pier Luigi, who was born around 1460. Pius argued that worldly cardinals were responsible for the lack of support for the crusade, but his own additions to the College failed to solve that problem. Only one of Pius's cardinals, Francesco Todeschini Piccolomini, survived long enough to vote in the conclave that eventually elected Borgia as pope. Although there is very little evidence to indicate the nature of the personal relationship between the two men, sheer longevity suggests that Todeschini Piccolomini was better placed than any of his peers to form a judgement of Borgia and his suitability for the papal office. When the opportunity finally came in 1492, they found themselves in the same faction, the 'Milanese', but avoided one another in the first and second scrutinies. In the third ballot they changed tactics and voted for one another, suggesting a pre–arrangement by individuals who knew each other only too well.

That was still twenty–eight years in the future. Most immediately, in August 1464, they were both marginal figures: Todeschini Piccolomini found himself in the unenviable position of being the *nipote* of the late pope, while Borgia, already sick, had to undertake a

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[216] A. Antoniutti, 'Pio II e sant'Andrea. Le ragioni della devozione', in R. Di Paola (ed), *Enea Silvio Piccolomini: arte, storia e cultura nell'Europa di Pio II. Atti dei convegni internazionali di studi 2003–2004*, (Rome, 2006), pp. 340–42.

journey back to Rome that could only leave him even further weakened and unable to make much impact on the conclave. Scholarship on Borgia's career under Pius has for too long focused on the events in Siena in 1460. Whilst Pastor wrote about the incident at length, accepting it at face value, work to unpick it, particularly by La Torre challenged the emphasis. What is apparent is that Borgia willingly followed his papal master and his *modus operandi*, accompanying him to Mantua in 1459 and Ancona in 1464 with little public objection. Pius's crusading attempts, although futile, had provided Borgia with his first chance of publicly engaging with major diplomatic players: notably the Gonzaga family and Francesco Sforza. Such opportunities were crucial to securing Borgia's place in the College of Cardinals.

3. 1464–71: The pontificate of Paul II, the middle parts of fortune.

The fortunes of the Borgia cardinal were once again placed in jeopardy in August 1464, when he was reportedly close to death with fever. Pius had condemned the behaviour of his cardinals for being too worldly, but his successor Paul II was more in line with Borgia's character and had previously helped Borgia's brother (Pedro Luis) flee from Rome in 1458. Historians are still grappling with Paul's pontificate, attempting to move beyond the conspiracy of the Roman academy of 1468 as its defining event. In this void, the first recorded evidence of Borgia's *familia* has come to light. By extension, knowledge of his household feeds into an understanding of the personnel who staffed the Chancery in this period.

Borgia remained sick when Pius II died in Ancona on 14 August 1464, which would severely impact his ability to influence the ensuing election in any way whatsoever.[217] When the cortège entered Rome on 23 August the city's Sienese population was enduring a violent backlash, just as the Catalans had done in 1458.[218] The Mantuan ambassador Giovanni Pietro Arrivabene relayed details of the persecution the Sienese endured: 'li Senesi dove so trovano son a furia perseguitati'.[219] There was, however, an overlap between Sienese and Neapolitan interests, for Antonio Piccolomini's marriage had brought him the dukedom of Amalfi and made him an ally of Ferrante of Naples. He retained possession of Castel S. Angelo and there were fears of violence if a pope hostile to Ferrante were elected. Against the backdrop of violence, the cardinals met at the palace of Ludovico Trevisan, the camerlengo, to discuss

[217] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 67.

[218] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 67.

[219] Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 3.

where the conclave should be held, as there were fears over the safety of the Apostolic Palace. The obvious alternative was the Dominican church of S. Maria sopra Minerva, the site of the conclaves of 1431 and 1447. However, the prevailing view was that Piccolomini and Ferrante would not interfere, and that the conclave should be in the Vatican.

In the absence of a source comparable to that of Pius's *Commentaries*, detailed information about the conclave that followed his death is frustratingly limited. The gap can be partially filled by the dispatches of the ambassadors in Rome. Arrivabene wrote that 'the negotiations regarding the papal election are being carried on in every direction in secret and with great zeal …. God grant that the Holy Spirit, and not human passions, may preside'! [220] The cardinals regarded as *papabile* were Bartolomeo Roverella, Angelo Capranica and Filippo Calandrini, who had been the major penitentiary since 1459, and Juan de Carvajal, the last of whom was the longest serving of this quartet. However, Carvajal was seriously ill and had to be carried into the conclave on a bed. Among the secular powers, Naples favoured Latino Orsini (c. 1410–77), who had crowned Ferrante in 1458, while Francesco Sforza of Milan wanted either Capranica or the Lombard Francesco Gonzaga, believing them to be the most sympathetic to Milanese causes at a time when there was no Milanese representation in the College of Cardinals. Sforza's ambassador Ottone del Carretto also wrote on 14 August of Pietro Barbo's prospects.[221] Borgia remained ill at the opening of the conclave, arriving in the Apostolic Palace with his head bandaged.[222] At the age of thirty–three he was certainly not *papabile*, but he had shown in the previous conclave that he could act as pope–maker. Would he make a second decisive intervention?

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[220] Pastor, *History,* iv, p. 6.

[221] Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 6.

[222] Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 12.

Even with the delay to the conclave caused by Pius's death occurring outside Rome, over a third of the cardinals did not make the journey there. The nineteen cardinals who did vote were predominately from the Italian peninsula and could hope to cancel out the French quartet of d'Estouteville, Coëtivy, Longueil and d'Albret, the four Spaniards, and the Greek Bessarion.

Proceedings began with Pius's stalwart supporter Iacopo Ammannati delivering a eulogy on the merits of the late pontiff. Following this, the bishop of Torcello, Domenico de' Dominici, once again addressed the gathered cardinals on the continued threat posed by the Ottoman Turks and the lamentable state of affairs within the Church, particularly the quality of priests and bishops. Concerns about the latter were included in the election capitulations, with the demand for a general council to be called within three years to assess the condition of the Church.[223] That appears to be a remarkable concession, but Ottone del Carretto explained to Francesco Sforza on 11 September that the 'cardinals adopted them (the demands) as a means of keeping the pope in fear and inducing him to comply with their demands'.[224] The electors also agreed that new cardinals had to be aged thirty or over. This was an explicit reaction against the recent promotions of the twenty–one–year–old Todeschini Piccolomini and the seventeen–year–old Gonzaga, as well as of the slightly more distant elevations of the twenty–one–year–old Don Jaime, the twenty–four–year–old Milà and twenty–five–year–old Borgia, most of whom were present.

The following day, 30 August, the cardinals were ready to vote in the Cappella Paolina.[225] In the first ballot there was the clearest possible reaction against the late pontiff

[223] Pastor, *History*, iv, pp. 7–8.

[224] Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 23.

[225] Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 11.

and his antipathy towards Venetians and Frenchmen. Trevisan – a 'snob', according to Pius – received seven votes, d'Estouteville nine and Barbo eleven, one shy of a two–thirds majority.[226] The following *accessus* brought Barbo three more votes and secured his election. The Mantuan envoy Giacomo d'Arezzo commented on the miraculously straightforward outcome of the conclave: 'facta questa electione al mio parer miraculosamente, perho che tutti dicono non esser mai fatto meno che tre scruptini'.[227] The threats of plague and a Neapolitan–backed force marching on Rome meant the conclave could not be drawn out. Borgia's part in the election can be only a matter for speculation, but the Mantuan Arrivabene reported in the wake of the conclave that Borgia was 'in high standing ... and great influence with the Pope, and he has certainly earned it well'.[228] Barbo and Borgia had served together for eight years, but there is little evidence of contact or cooperation between them, exceptions being when they proposed reconciliation between Pius and Alfonso of Naples in March 1458 and when Barbo aided the flight of Pere Lluis de Borja in August that year.[229] One thing they had in common was playing second fiddle to another *nipote* early in their careers, Barbo to Francesco Condulmer, Borgia to Milà.

The result meant that one extended Venetian dynasty had now produced no less than three popes – the others being Gregory XII (r. 1406–15) and Eugenius IV – in just fifty–eight years. At forty–seven Barbo was the youngest pontiff with whom Borgia had to deal; his predecessor was fifty–two at election and his successor fifty–seven. Barbo's youth presented the possibility of a long pontificate and greater stability than Calixtus and Pius had offered.

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[226] Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 11.

[227] Quoted in Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 12.

[228] Quoted in Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 476.

[229] Pastor, *History*, ii, p. 427.

Barbo had initially embarked on a mercantile career, but this ended when his uncle Gabriele Condulmer was elected pope in 1431. As cardinal priest of S. Marco, Barbo had proved to be a notable builder, changing the cityscape of Rome with his massive palace (now the Palazzo Venezia) and providing much employment in its construction and decoration. At the time of his election Barbo had been a cardinal for twenty–four years, whereas Pius had served for two years and Calixtus for eleven, suggesting that he might be a safe pair of hands. Among the fifteenth–century popes, only Borgia's thirty–six years presented a longer period of Curial service. Barbo credited his victory to the support of those cardinals, including Borgia, elevated before 1458: it was an overt reaction against Pius and his loyal acolytes, not least Ammannati, who informed Francesco Sforza of this electoral division.[230] Barbo's initial choice of papal name – Mark – suggested partiality for Venice and he was obliged to change it to the more diplomatic Paul. Sforza had reason to be wary of a Venetian pope, for his state had borne the brunt of Venetian territorial expansion. However, there was no danger of Paul favouring Venice's interests along the same lines as Pius had favoured those of Siena. His dealings with the republic were difficult and included a serious dispute over his papal appointment to the bishopric of Padua in 1459, contravening the Senate's choice of Gregorio Correr and leading to Barbo's resignation a year later.[231] The contrasts between Pius and his successor did not end there, for Barbo did not 'succeed in literary culture', despite being tutored by the humanists Iacopo Rizzoni of Verona, Lotto degli Agli of Florence, and Georgius Trapezuntius.[232]

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[230] Quoted in Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 475.

[231] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 232.

[232] A. J. Dunston, 'Pope Paul II and the Humanists', *Journal of Religious History*, 7/4 (1973), p. 289.

Borgia was still ill on 16 September, the day of Paul II's coronation, which meant he could not crown him, as was customary for the most senior cardinal deacon. Instead the duty fell to Niccolò Fortiguerri, who had missed the conclave because he was serving with the papal fleet.[233] The new pontiff had a cautious approach to governing the Church, perhaps reflective of his Venetian background, for he told his confidants Stefano Nardini (d. 1484), archbishop of Milan, and Teodoro de' Lelli (d. 1466), bishop of Treviso, that he did not want to be 'reduced to the helpless position of a Doge, controlled by Committees of the Nobles'.[234] The pontiff's desire not to have any limitation on his power was his *modus operandi* throughout his pontificate, conducting the majority of official business from his palace at S. Marco, not the Apostolic Palace. Consistorial business was reduced, ambassadors were snubbed and, if audiences were granted, the pope would filibuster to prevent others from speaking or challenging him.[235] Paul relied heavily on a number of close advisers from his *familia*, including Nardini and Lelli, but more importantly on his kinsman and *maestro di casa*, Marco Barbo (1420–91), who was described by the Ferrarese ambassador Jacopo Trotti as 'the right eye of the pope'.[236] The cardinals also had to deal with Paul annulling the election capitulations, with Alain de Coëtivy interpreting Paul's twenty–four years' Curial experience as 'preparation for destroying the College of Cardinals'.[237] Paul's attempts to pacify the cardinals included promising to increase the amount of money that impoverished cardinals received from the Camera. They continued to have a more or less decorative

[233] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 67; D'Elia, *A Sudden Terror*, p. 18.

[234] Quoted in Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 21.

[235] Dover, '"Saper la mente"', p. 13.

[236] Quoted in Dover, '"Saper la mente"', p. 18.

[237] Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 24; D'Elia, *A Sudden Terror*, p. 34.

function: new regulations for their distinctive dress were introduced and they were encouraged to spend lavishly on the celebration of the traditional pre–Lenten Carnival, riding on 'sumptuous triumphal floats accompanied by trumpeters on horseback and by boys who recited lascivious and pleasing verses'.[238] Borgia's survival as a major Curial operator was guaranteed by the fact that he had not been promoted by Paul's immediate predecessor, for Pius's cardinals could hardly have been further out of favour, and were either removed or removed themselves from Rome, at least on a temporary basis. Fortiguerri was dispatched in 1465 to deal with the Anguillara family in Viterbo; Ammannati went to Pienza, where he purchased the unfinished palace of Ludovico Trevisan.[239]

Plague disrupted the first months of Paul's pontificate and many cardinals remained sick behind the walls of their palaces. As the plague abated in late October, Borgia returned to work, although Giacomo d'Arezzo reported that his scars had not yet healed.[240] Shortly thereafter the pope reinstated Borgia's privileges with regard to appointments to the College of Abbreviators, annulling Pius's changes. Although specific evidence to explain the pope's motives is lacking, one could argue that Paul recognized Borgia's merits in the workings of papal government. Alternatively – and this appears more likely – after Pius' death, the crusading effort was not at the forefront of papal policy, and the need to raise extraordinary revenue was no longer so urgent. Paul's intervention could also be interpreted as the pontiff's attempt to remove some of the Sienese officeholders appointed by Pius.

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[238] D'Elia, *A Sudden Terror*, p. 4.

[239] G. Signorelli, *Viterbo nella storia della Chiesa* (3 vols, Viterbo, 1938), ii, p. 158; Ammannati Piccolomini, *Lettere*, ii, p. 325.

[240] Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 447.

On 9 October Giacomo hailed Borgia's restitution 'al pristino officio', but lamented that it was to the financial detriment of many others, who lost their positions and could be reduced to poverty: 'cum detrimento perho e facta questa restitutione de molti povertti che haviano compero l'officio et io so uno di quelli'.[241] Cardinal Gonzaga informed his mother on 9 October that it would be hard to compensate those who had lost their jobs as their posts had been expensive: 'e perho dato ordine che sieno restituti li denari, che difficil cosa sira perche non e picciola somma'.[242] One of those who lost his position was Gonzaga's client Bartolomeo Sacchi, 'il Platina', who had paid 100 florins on 20 March 1464 to be an abbreviator *de parco minore*. In a papal audience he demanded that Paul reverse the decision, threatening to bring the matter before the Rota. He also penned an open letter, calling on the kings and princes of Christendom to call a general council and depose the pope. According to Platina, Borgia had voted for Barbo on the understanding that the vice–chancellor's authority over the College of Abbreviators would be restored.[243] These outbursts earned Platina a spell in prison, which was commuted when Gonzaga argued that he had virtually gone mad: 'quasi impazito e desperato'.[244] Platina failed to mention that he and others who lost their jobs were reimbursed, and that many of them were reinstated in the remodeled College of Abbreviators.[245] He was blinded by his hatred for the pope and prone to exaggeration,

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[241] Pastor, *History*, iv*,* p. 477.

[242] Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 477.

[243] T. Frenz, 'Die Gründung des Abbreviatorenkollegs durch Pius II. und Sixtus IV.', in *Miscellanea in onore di Monisgnor Martino Giusti* (2 vols, Vatican City, 1978), ii, p. 307.

[244] D. S. Chambers, 'Il Platina, e il cardinale Francesco Gonzaga', in *Bartolomeo Sacchi, il Platina (Piadena 1421–Roma 1481); atti del convegno* (Padua, 1986), p. 11.

[245] Chambers, 'Il Platina', pp. 11–12.

arguing that Paul emulated three of the worst Roman emperors, Tiberius, Claudius and Nero.[246] With the backing of Rome's humanistic community, of whom the pope was extremely suspicious, 'Platina depicts a frightful picture of hypocrites and hypocrisy. He wishes at all costs to depict a duel between himself and the pope as his personal enemy'.[247] In reality, Paul's changes were published on 3 December in the bull *Illa Quorum,* which stated that the vice–chancellor's authority to appoint individuals to vacant positions within the College was restored.[248] Borgia was also permitted to draw on the money generated from their appointments.

Relatively little is known about Borgia's activities during Paul's pontificate, but for the period from April 1466 onwards there is a source of information that sheds some light on the whereabouts, contacts and patronage responsibilities of all Curial cardinals: registers of appointments to bishoprics and abbacies include the names of cardinals who acted as sponsors of candidates to these vacancies.[249] With regard to bishoprics, Borgia's name appears infrequently during Paul's pontificate, first with regard to Digne on 26 September 1466 and then Pamiers on 2 September 1467. The system of using cardinals to sponsor candidates through the consistorial process was evolving at that stage, so that individual cardinals had yet to develop geographical specialisms, but they did receive a fee (*propina*) for

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[246] G. Voigt, *Enea Silvio de' Piccolomini als Papst Pius der Zweite und sein Zeitlater* (3 vols, Berlin, 1856–63), iii, p. 533.

[247] V. Zabughin, *Giulio Pomponio Leto. Saggio critico* (2 vols, Rome, 1909), i, p. 67.

[248] M. Tangl, *Die päpstlichen Kanzleiordnungen von 1200–1500: Gesammelt und Herausgegeben* (Innsbruck, 1894), pp. 189–91.

[249] All information on appointments to bishoprics, here and in the following chapters, supplied in personal communications from Stella Fletcher.

each act of sponsorship they undertook. French bishoprics and French clerics were not obvious clients for a Spanish cardinal. That changed on 29 January 1470, when Borgia sponsored to Huesca and Jacca, in the kingdom of Aragon, his home state.[250]

Between Borgia's French and Spanish interventions, the composition of the College of Cardinals changed quite markedly. The appointment of new cardinals had been discussed as early as Christmas 1464, but no definite promotions were made until September 1467, by which time there had been seven deaths since the conclave, those of Pierre de Foix (le vieux) in 1464, Trevisan, Szécsi, Tebaldi and d'Albret in 1465, von Weisbriach and Cardona in 1466. Paul named eight new cardinals to replace them: Thomas Bourchier (d. 1486), archbishop of Canterbury, István Várdai (d. 1471), archbishop of Kalocza–Bacs, Oliviero Carafa (1430–1511), archbishop of Naples, Amico Agnifili (d. 1476), bishop of Aquila, Marco Barbo, bishop of Vicenza, Jean Balue (d. 1491), bishop of Angers, Francesco della Rovere (1414–84), minister general of the Conventual Franciscans, and Teodoro Paleologo (1425–84), from the ruling family of Monferrato.[251] This list suggests that Paul was genuinely interested in cultivating a number of secular powers on both sides of the Alps. France was still the heartland of Western Christendom, but for three decades in the mid fifteenth century Franco–papal relations were blighted by the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges (1438). Successive popes sought its revocation. Louis XI also had an interest in doing away with it, because it put too much ecclesiastical patronage in the hands of French nobles, rather than his own. The dynamic and scheming Bishop Balue negotiated the revocation and instantly gained his reward in the shape of a red hat. Before the end of the pontificate, he had been discovered in contact with Louis's over–mighty subject and arch–enemy Charles, duke

[250] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 229.

[251] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 14–15; 131, 147, 221, 103, 293, 99.

of Burgundy (r. 1467–77), and cast into prison. The pope knew well enough the importance of balancing his favours towards France and Burgundy, both of which were vital for any crusade, and such was the close alliance between Burgundy and Yorkist England that the promotion of Bourchier, a kinsman of Edward IV (r. 1461–70, 1471–83), could be regarded as a pro–Burgundian promotion. England was a kingdom on the rise, after years of civil war; Hungary was at the peak of its power, and the choice of Várdai was a reflection of that. Borgia went on make a series of interventions in appointments to Hungarian benefices, more than to those controlled by Louis, Charles or Edward, but the geographical balance of Paul's promotions and his thoughtful consideration of the world beyond the Alps were surely not lost on the vice–chancellor, whose own eventual selections for the hat made for a more geographically diverse College than that bequeathed to him by Sixtus and Innocent. On the other hand, neither Balue, Bourchier nor Várdai were resident at the Curia, leaving the illustrious Neapolitan Carafa and the papal kinsman Marco Barbo as the most obvious potential threats to Borgia's position in Rome. Carafa's illustrious ancestry was enough to prevent him ever asserting himself much, while Barbo enjoyed the pope's full confidence and was a man of substance and ability, not the young and experienced papal *nipote* with whom Curial Rome had become all too familiar.

In practice, though, the austerely pious Barbo had no interest in heading a Curial department and Borgia's position in the Chancery was unchallenged. He was also a natural figurehead for Spaniards in Rome and, in 1467, the dedicatee of choice for a treatise by the notable Curialist Rodrigo Sánchez de Arévalo (1404–70), bishop of Oviedo and castellan of Castel S. Angelo.[252] The work, *De monarchia orbis*, is an enthusiastic defence of the papacy's temporal power and its authority over secular princes, which reflected ongoing

[252] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 231.

tensions between Rome and France, and set the scene for worsening relations between pope and emperor, not to mention between the papacy and Venice. The dedication is to 'reverendissimi in xpo patribus dmo. D. Roderico Borja, tt. S. Nicolai in Carcere Tuliano sacro sancta Romane ecc. diacono cardinale apire sedis vicecancellario dignissimo patro et dno. Suo singularissimo eiusdem R. P. obsequntissimo filius ac humilis servitor'.[253] Borgia was rarely chosen as a literary patron, but the connection is obvious enough here, one Spaniard turning to another for support. Pauline Rome is better known for the breakdown in relations between the pope and some of its most notable men of letters.

The Roman Academy was an academic circle of men who shared a collective enthusiasm for classical literature and antiquity. Such studies had flourished under Pius but were of no interest to Paul and a mutual antipathy developed between him and the academicians. Rumours spread of scandalous activities, including the reading of homoerotic poetry and secret pagan ceremonies. These meetings were presided over by a 'pontifex maximus', a title deliberately mimicking that of the pope. Early in 1468 information emerged about an anti–papal conspiracy hatched by members of the Academy. Initially it was claimed that Paul was to be assassinated on Ash Wednesday (4 March) while he marked the heads of worshippers with ash at S. Marco. Following this, according to details given by those who were tortured in Castel S. Angelo, 'forty men in three groups, disguised as drunken revelers were to provoke a fight with the papal guards as a distraction'.[254] This was to distract from the 200 armed men who would fight their way through to the pontiff, killing anyone who blocked their way. It all sounded suspiciously familiar, paralleling the conspiracy of another

[253] R. Sánchez de Arévalo, *De monarchia orbis et de differentia cuiusvis humani principatus tam imprialis quam regalis* (1467). It was subsequently published in Rome in 1521.

[254] D'Elia, *A Sudden Terror*, p. 14.

classical enthusiast, Stefano Porcari, who had plotted to seize Pope Nicholas and his cardinals in St Peter's Basilica as they celebrated Epiphany in 1453, while a band of his followers held Castel S. Angelo. That was only fifteen years earlier and firmly within Paul's memory; he was determined to act as decisively as his predecessor had done. Some of the suspects, including Platina, were arrested on Friday 28 February (it was a leap year), while others, notably the alleged ringleader Filippo Buonaccorsi – 'Callimachus' – were forewarned and escaped from Rome. Cardinals can be linked to the episode in a number of ways. First, several central figures were linked with *Pieschi* cardinals: Buonaccorsi was Roverella's secretary and the connection between Platina and Gonzaga has already been established.[255] In contrast, Paul's loyal lieutenant Marco Barbo was appointed to lead the commission charged with investigating the conspiracy. Its findings have not survived. Borgia's role is limited to an appeal from the incarcerated Platina, who also sent such missives from Castel S. Angelo to Gonzaga, Bessarion, Ammannati and Barbo, as well as to the Venetian ambassador Pietro Morosini.[256] Platina's letters to Bessarion and Borgia in particular are desperate in their tone. Gonzaga was his patron, Bessarion and Ammannati natural choices for a man of letters, and Barbo was best placed to intervene with the pope, but why did Platina also choose Borgia? If Gonzaga had a father figure in the College of Cardinals it was the vice–chancellor, but the most significant connection may well have been via Borgia's secretary Bartomeu Vallescar, described by Platina as 'viro optimo & tui servo fidelissimo'.[257] Vallescar had been mentioned in Platina's *De Honesta Voluptate et Valetudine* (1465), a work dedicated to

[255] Ammannati Piccolomini, *Lettere*, ii, p. 186.

[256] T. A. Vairani*, Cremonensium monumenta Roma extantia collegit atque illustravit T. A. Vairani* (2 vols, Rome, 1778–9), i, pp. 33–7.

[257] Vairani, *Cremonensium monumenta*, i, p. 35.

Cardinal Roverella.[258] From his confinement Platina also sent a separate letter to Vallescar.[259] It was not that he had any meaningful connection with Borgia, more that the vice–chancellor stood as close to the apex of Rome's dense patronage network as it was possible to get without addressing the pope directly. The appeals went unheeded, for Borgia appears to have steered clear of both the conspiracy and its aftermath.

Plague arrived in Rome unusually early that year and many members of the papal household fell sick. Several of Cardinal Ammannati's letters attest to the presence of plague in the city and the disruption this caused to government.[260] On 4 April Paul cancelled all audiences and retired to Sermoneta, leaving three cardinals to maintain order in the city.[261] It was not until October that Curial business resumed in earnest. When it did, Borgia and Milà were called upon by Joan II of Aragon to oversee several appointments to Spanish benefices, the beneficiaries being the king's grandsons Joan and Alfonso. On 15 October a petition reached the two cardinals concerning the archdeaconry of Xàtiva. The king made further requests in March 1469, concerning vacant benefices at Daroca and Roda, which were duly filled.[262] Shortly thereafter Milà left Rome for his diocese of Lleida, never to return, leaving representation of the Iberian peninsula in Borgia's hands, following the deaths of the Castilian duo of Mella (1467) and Torquemada (1468). On 21 November 1468, Paul finally followed the example of his predecessors by elevating to the cardinalate his two young

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[258] B. Platina, *De honesta voluptate et valetudine* (Cividale del Friuli, 1480).

[259] Vairani*, Cremonensium monumenta,* i, pp. 42–3.

[260] Ammannati Piccolomini, *Lettere*, ii, pp. 1095–6, 1106–7, 1114–5, 1120–1.

[261] Andrews, 'The Lost Fifth Book', p. 26; Pastor, *History*, iv, pp. 493–4.

[262] J. Vicens Vives, *Historia crítica de la vida y reinado de Fernando II de Aragón* (Zaragoza, 1962), p. 208.

nephews, Giovanni Battista Zeno (*c*. 1439–1501) and Giovanni Michiel (*c*. 1446–1503), who were the sons of the pope's sisters.[263] Neither was of marked ability and the duo's impact on the College of Cardinals proved to be minimal. The year concluded with a visit to Rome by Emperor Friedrich III.[264] His party was welcomed by the cardinals, including Borgia, at Porta del Popolo, from where a 3,000–strong torch–lit procession accompanied him to the Vatican to meet the pontiff. [265] He stayed until 9 January, when Borgia and Capranica were chosen to escort him as far as Viterbo.

Otherwise, there is again relatively little information about Borgia's activities in 1469. In February he briefly held the archdeaconry of Zaragoza.[266] The same collection of sources reveals that the vice–chancellor also received permission to transfer the remains of his father, Jofré de Borja, brothers and sisters.[267] These presumably included Tecla, who had died of the plague in 1459. Little is known about her, but she had acted as an intermediary for the Parmese humanist Antonio Tridento when he petitioned Borgia for patronage. [268] The relationship between Tridento and Borgia was noted in a letter from Cardinal Ammannati to Tridento at the start of July 1468 where the cardinal asks the humanist to send his best wishes

[263] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 15–16.

[264] Infessura, *Diario,* p. 71.

[265] D'Elia, *A Sudden Terror*, p. 31.

[266] De Roo, *Material,* ii, p. 148.

[267] De Roo, *Material*, ii, p. 550.

[268] M. Carbonell Buades, 'El Sepulcre de Calixt III Borja: hipòtesi atributiva. Una contribució al Vè centenari de la mort d'Andrea Bregno', *Revista Borja, Revista de L'IIEB*, 1 (2007), p. 56.

to Borgia.[269] Tecla's actions resulted in Tridento gaining employment in the Chancery as a notary, his name mentioned in a dispute over the alum mines at Tolfa in 1469.[270]

Patronage was the life blood of fifteenth–century society, but in the ecclesiastical hierarchy it was particularly highly structured. A cardinal's closest clients were his familiars, those clerics entitled to dine at his table. That entitlement was registered with the papal authorities, in the shape of supplications drawn up from time to time which listed those men who were then acknowledged as the familiars of a particular cardinal. One such set of supplications was dated 27 April 1470, its distinctive feature being that only twelve familiars were listed for each of the cardinals: see Appendix III. Among Borgia's dozen, Francesc Borja and Bartomeu Martí were the cardinal's kinsmen, the latter through the marriage of Mateu Martí to Joana de Borja, sister of Calixtus III.[271] The group was overwhelmingly Aragonese, as might be expected, though only one had previously been a member of the household of Calixtus III, but in what capacity it is not known.[272]

Meanwhile, as already noted, in January 1470 Borgia made one of his relatively rare interventions in the appointment of bishops. There followed the usual round of Carnival, Lent and Easter, which seem to have passed without relevant incident. In May the vice–chancellor fell ill and on 18 June he left Rome for the baths at Petriolo, leaving the Chancery in the hands of Šimun Vosić (d. 1482), the archbishop of Bar (Montenegro), an experienced

[269] Ammannati Piccolomini, *Lettere*, ii, p. 1148.

[270] G. Zippel, 'L'allume di Tolfa e il suo commercio', *Storia e cultura del Rinascimento Italiano, Medioevo e Umanesimo*, 33 (Padua, 1979), p. 288.

[271] Alós, *Cardenales y prelados,* p. 79.

[272] M. Vaquero Piñeiro, 'Valencianos en Roma', pp. 185–99.

Curialist.[273] Borgia was still absent from Rome when the news reached the city of the fall of Negroponte to the Ottomans after a month–long siege.[274] Thus it can be assumed that he was not among the cardinals who walked barefoot from the Apostolic Palace to St Peter's Basilica on 8 July to pray for the deliverance of the besieged Christians.[275]

The sources are then silent on Borgia's activities until Easter 1471, when he witnessed the papal investiture of Borso d'Este as the first duke of Ferrara.[276] This act had clear political connotations because Ferrara was contested by the papacy and the republic of Venice, which had developed a military presence down the Adriatic coast as far as Ravenna and Cervia. Paul was defending papal interests as a matter of course, but his promotion of Borso was also calculated to antagonise his compatriots. This came in the wake of a series of deliberately provocative episcopal appointments involving the three Venetian cardinals: on 18 March Barbo was translated to the patriarchate of Aquileia, Zeno replaced him at Vicenza, and Michiel was provided to Verona, all without reference to the Venetian Senate, a breach of established practice.[277] More tentative were Paul's latest plans to reconfigure the College of Cardinals, for he chose four new cardinals but did not publish their names. However, in the event of his death, they were to be considered as published and therefore eligible to vote in the conclave. Though aged only fifty–three, he died suddenly on 26 July.[278] Relations with the Italian states were at a low ebb: the king of Naples, the duke of Milan and their

[273] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica,* ii, p. 213.

[274] Pastor, *History*, iv, pp. 174–83; Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, ii, pp. 292–313.

[275] Infessura, *Diario*, pp. 72–3.

[276] Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 186.

[277] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica,* ii, pp. 103, 293, 291.

[278] Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 190.

ambassadors had not been trusted by the pope, and diplomatic relations with Venice had been completely severed. Posterity has tended to judge Paul harshly, for little reason other than that he was not Pius II, a master of the written word, or Sixtus IV, a generous patron of the visual arts.

Borgia seems to have had a quiet pontificate, afflicted by illness on a number of occasions. He appears to have fared well under a pontiff who had little time for the College of Cardinals, benefiting from not being one of Pius's creations and from the fact that Paul did not promote anyone who represented an obvious threat to Borgia's position as vice–chancellor. However, he did promote three men who survived long enough to vote in the conclave of 1492. Oliviero Carafa was distinctly *papabile* on that occasion and in the three known scrutinies consistently came top or joint top in terms of numbers of votes received. There was evidently a strong bond between him and Borgia, who consistently voted for one another in each of the ballots. Like Borgia and Carafa, Zeno and Michiel were also cardinal bishops by 1492. Michiel was set up as a rival candidate to Carafa and never once exchanged votes with Borgia. Zeno, on the other hand, hedged his bets and voted for both Michiel and Borgia in all three ballots, while Borgia consistently voted for him too.

Although Borgia appears to have had a quiet pontificate, he fared well under a pontiff who had little time for the College of Cardinals. He benefitted from not being one of Pius's creations and from the fact that Paul did not promote anyone who represented an obvious threat to Borgia's position as vice–chancellor. Paul's reversal of his predecessors' changes to the College of Abbreviators demonstrates the support this pontiff showed towards his vice–chancellor. Whilst the pope focused on stamping out the humanist community in Rome, Borgia oversaw ecclesiastical appointments in both France and Spain, increasing both his personal revenue and his spheres of influence. Whereas Pius's pontificate had provided one voting member of the conclave of 1492, Paul's provided three: Cardinals Carafa, Zeno and

Michiel, with Carafa and Zeno voting for Borgia in all four ballots. Thus, it can be concluded that although there is relatively little that can be reported about Borgia's career between 1464 and 1471, he emerged from Paul's pontificate with a net gain in terms of eventual electoral support, meaning that Paul's pontificate can be regarded as something of a success for the Spaniard.

4. 1471–3: From the Vatican to Valencia.

With Paul's death, Borgia entered his third conclave in 1471, this time in good health and able to fulfil his duties as protodeacon. If Borgia had felt that Pius had promoted Piccolomini interests, this was insignificant compared to the manner in which the new pontiff promoted his family's interests. To compensate for this, Borgia used his legation to Spain (1472–3) to lay the foundations for a Borgia dynasty in the duchy of Gandía. Whilst the premature death in 1474 of Sixtus's favourite, Cardinal Pietro Riario, aided Borgia's return to power in Rome, his increasing *familia*, patronage at sites including S. Maria del Popolo and his elevation to the office of dean of the College of Cardinals ensured the Borgia star was in ascendance once more.

The unexpected death of Pope Paul II on 26 July 1471 meant that only sixteen cardinals, including Borgia, were present in Rome for the beginning of the period of mourning, the *Novendiales.* Regulations for the conduct of the Church's business during that period, as well as for the ensuing conclave, had been laid down in Gregory X's bull *Ubi periculum* (1274). By tradition the papal interregnum was also a period of civic unrest and a strong hand was needed to assert order in Rome. The archbishop of Milan, Stefano Nardini, was appointed by the College of Cardinals as governor of Rome.[279] He had previously served as governor of the Romagna under Calixtus and governor of the Marche under Pius. On 28 July tensions initially flared at S. Giovanni in Laterano, where a delegation of Roman citizens drove out the basilica's regular canons, who had been appointed by Paul. The citizens argued that in the future only Romans should be permitted to hold benefices in their cathedral

[279] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 208.

church.[280] On the same day this grievance was brought before the College of Cardinals at S. Maria sopra Minerva. In order to keep the peace, the cardinals agreed to the citizens' demand. Similarly, they also agreed to release from Castel S. Angelo forty prisoners who had committed minor offences, together with two citizens from Ascoli and a baron from Poli who had been arrested on suspicion of heresy.[281] Efforts to keep the peace in the city were supported by the presence of Neapolitan troops, including those under the command of Carlo Carafa, a brother of Cardinal Oliviero Carafa. The cardinals also drew up an inventory of the late pontiff's possessions, including jewels and shells valued at 300,000 ducats, were sold to offset the cost of the late pope's various projects.[282] This would seem to be the most likely time for Borgia to acquire the presentation copy of Konrad Sweinheim and Arnold Pannartz's *editio princeps* of Livy's *History of Rome*, which was dedicated to Paul and had been printed at Subiaco in 1469.[283] Painted decorations, including the Borgia arms on the title page, have been attributed to Gioacchino di Giovanni (or Gigantibus), who worked in Rome periodically up to 1485, suggesting that the Borgia in question was Rodrigo.[284] There is no inventory of Borgia's library and thus no way of substantiating Gherardi's assertion that he possessed 'all

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[280] M. Canesius, *Pauli II. Veneti. Pont. Max., vita ex codice Angelicae Bibliothecae desumpta: praemissis ipsius Sanctissimi Pontificis vindiciis adversus Platinam aliosque obtrectarores* (Rome, 1740), pp. 45–7.

[281] Infessura*, Diario*, p. 69.

[282] Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 211.

[283] Catalogued at the British Library as BL. G. 9030.

[284] Appears as a note credited to 'M. Davies' (Sir Martin Davies, 1908–75) in A. W. Pollard and A. J. K. Esdaile (eds)*, Catalogue of books printed in the fifteenth century now in the British Museum, Part IV Italy: Subiaco and Rome* (London, 1916), p. 8.

the greatest books you wish for of many doctrines', but the evidence of this single volume, when combined with what is known of Borgia's cultural patronage, is that the visual dimension and outward show was of greater importance to him than learning or scholarship.[285]

The geographical profile of the College of Cardinals in the summer of 1471 was largely reflective of the creations of Pius and Paul. Sixteen cardinals were from the Italian peninsula, compared to nine from elsewhere in Christendom. If one compares this with the previous two conclaves, it is clear that the number of non–Italian cardinals had decreased. In 1464 the College had eighteen non–Italian members and twelve Italians. In 1458 there were seventeen non–Italians compared to nine Italians. Cardinals Coëtivy, Rolin, Milà, Todeschini Piccolomini, Jouffroy, Bourchier and Balue were absent in 1471, meaning that twenty–five cardinals entered the enclosure and the 'Italians' were even more dominant than they would have been had all the eligible voters been present. The only non–Italians were Bessarion, d'Estouteville and Borgia. The electors were roughly divided between *pieschi* (those elevated by Pius) and *paoleschi* (those elevated by Paul), with some veterans from earlier pontificates.[286] During the *sede vacante*, two of the veterans, Guillaume d'Estouteville and Latino Orsini, emerged as the most active campaigners in their own interests. Outside the enclosure d'Estouteville enjoyed the support of Galeazzo Maria Sforza, duke of Milan (r. 1466–76), because the Frenchman had promised Sforza a red hat for his sixteen–year–old brother Ascanio Maria if he was elected pope, thereby offsetting any perceived advantage enjoyed by another of Lombardy's ruling families, the Gonzaga of Mantua. A letter dated 29

[285] Gherardi, *Diario romano*, p. 48.

[286] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 15.

July from d'Estouteville's familiar Paolo Gazzuri to the duke confirmed this undertaking.[287] By contrast, Orsini retained the support of King Ferrante of Naples, which he had enjoyed in the preceding conclave. In addition, he could now count on the support of Florence as well, after his niece, Clarice Orsini (1450–88), had married the city's foremost citizen, Lorenzo de' Medici (1449–92), in June 1469.[288] In practice, though, Florentine support was restricted to financial aid as there was no Florentine among the electors. As cardinal bishops of Ostia and Frascati respectively, d'Estouteville and Orsini were clearly *papabile*. Borgia was the senior cardinal deacon but was too young to be a candidate.

The conclave began on 6 August, the feast day of the early Christian martyr Pope Sixtus II (r. 257–8).[289] Before voting began, the electors had to resolve the problem of the four clerics identified by Paul as his next choices for the hat but not formally published: Janós Vitéz (*c*. 1408–72), archbishop of Esztergom, Pietro Foscari (*c*. 1417–85), *primicerio* of S. Marco, Venice, Ferry de Clugny (c. 1430–83), chancellor of the Order of the Golden Fleece, and Giovanni Battista Savelli (*c*. 1422–98), recently governor of Bologna. Between them, they demonstrated Paul's determination to cultivate secular powers, specifically Mátyás (Matthias Corvinus), king of Hungary (r. 1464–90), Charles (the Bold), duke of Burgundy and even the Venetian republic, Foscari being much in favour with its ruling elite. They were strong candidates and the majority of the College was inclined to confirm their status, though it seems unlikely that they were present in Rome. The sticking point was that Savelli was present, but his admission would have negated Orsini's vote, since the Savelli family were

[287] Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 200.

[288] Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 200.

[289] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 74.

natural allies of the Colonna. In order to block Savelli, Orsini was adamant that none of the four could be admitted. All four remained unpublished.

The first ballot was held on 8 August and, according to the balance of opinion among commentators outside the enclosure, saw Bessarion gain the largest number of votes, including those of d'Estouteville, Calandrini and Capranica, the cardinals who had been elevated by Eugenius IV and Nicholas V and who had therefore served with Bessarion the longest. Added to these were the votes of Ammannati, Carafa and Barbo.[290] The grouping contained a balance of the wealthy and worldly (d'Estouteville), the socially distinguished (Carafa), the highly literate (Ammannati), the able (Capranica), and the pious (Barbo). Clearly Bessarion appealed to cardinals from a variety of backgrounds. The competition came from Roverella, a man who certainly had ample experience of the workings of the Church, having been secretary to Eugenius IV, chamberlain to Nicholas V, an auditor of the Rota, nuncio in England, legate to Naples, and governor of Umbria, the Marche, and Perugia.[291] He received the votes of Orsini, Calandrini, Borgia, Eroli, Carafa, Della Rovere and Zeno.[292] Viewed another way, he attracted the support of Nicholas's cardinals, one of Calixtus's, two of Pius's and two of Paul's, demonstrating a certain breadth of appeal. For Borgia one of the attractions may have been Roverella's support for the Aragonese claim to the kingdom of Naples, exercised by Ferrante, against that of René, duke of Anjou, for Borgia remained consistently loyal to his Aragonese roots and would habitually act in the interests of the ruling dynasty, whether in Iberia or in Italy. Meanwhile, neither d'Estouteville nor Orsini had been able to command much support. The Frenchman had gained four votes

[290] Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 505.

[291] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 34.

[292] Pastor, *History*, iv, pp. 505–6.

(those of Bessarion, Calandrini, Capranica and Gonzaga) the Roman two (those of Michiel and Della Rovere).[293] If anything, the clearest contrast was between the electoral fortunes of Bessarion and d'Estouteville, both of whom had been made cardinals on 18 December 1439. The Greek exile Bessarion was a living reminder of the need for Christendom to unite behind a new crusade, whereas the Frenchman's overt ambition and secular outlook had caused resentment among his fellow cardinals.

There is little evidence that Borgia campaigned for himself in the conclave. No cardinal deacon had been elected pope since Oddone Colonna became Martin V in 1417, but that was not the decisive consideration. He was only in his early forties, some years younger than Paul II had been at the time of his election. Even though Paul had not lived as long as anyone could reasonably have expected, there was no chance that he would be succeeded by someone even younger. Nevertheless, Borgia did gain a single vote in the first ballot, which has traditionally been an opportunity to mark friendship or esteem between cardinals. In this case it was cast by Francesco Gonzaga, expressing loyalty to the man who appears to have been instrumental in his elevation and who remained his mentor.[294] On his side, Borgia's courtship of the Gonzaga was typical of how he operated, cultivating the favour of princes, in this case using the rulers of Mantua as a point of access to some of the major dynasties of the Empire. Gonzaga also voted for d'Estouteville: not the first time that the names of the Spaniard and the Frenchman were bracketed together.

One of the features of papal elections is that successive ballots are used to test the chances of different candidates, to find out which of them can command a two–thirds majority. After seeing Roverella fail, Borgia did not fully abandon him, but was certainly on

[293] Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 505.

[294] Pastor, *History,* iv, p. 507.

the lookout for a stronger candidate. Coordinating his vote with those of Gonzaga and Orsini, the trio approached Bessarion with offers of support if he accepted certain conditions, the details of which are unknown. He refused to agree, and the initiative progressed no further. However, Bessarion was backing the candidature of his confessor, the former Franciscan minister general Francesco della Rovere, cardinal priest of S. Pietro in Vincoli since 1467, and a theologian of a traditional stamp who had made his mark with treatises on the Resurrection of Christ and the Divinity of his Blood.[295] He had not attracted interest in the first ballot, but if the votes of those who had supported Bessarion could be combined with those of the cardinals who had supported Roverella, the two largest groupings, then it was thought that Della Rovere might stand a chance of election. The fact that he was not closely associated with any of the secular powers could even be regarded as a bonus, for Paul had alienated so many of the Italian states that the chance of a clean slate and the opportunity to cultivate a range of secular powers made Della Rovere a particularly attractive candidate.

Della Rovere did not need to lobby in his own cause. His conclavist, young nephew and fellow Franciscan, Pietro Riario (1445–74) did that for him. It was usual for each cardinal to be accompanied into the enclosure by two conclavists. The choice of a nephew as a conclavist appears to have been unusual, the overwhelming majority being cardinals' familiars, their secretaries being the most obvious choice. Borgia's conclavists were Bartomeu Vallescar and Jamie de Casanova, the latter replacing the cardinal's *majordomo,* Bartomeu Martí, for an unspecified reason. Vallescar came from Valencia and appears to have served Calixtus III before becoming an apostolic scriptor and Borgia's secretary in 1458.[296] His significance has already been noted in relation to Platina's imprisonment in

[295] Copies of the treatises can be found in BAV, Urb. Lat. 1023 and Urb. Lat. 151.

[296] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 300.

1468, but Borgia's choice of him as a conclavist is the clearest indication of how crucial Vallescar was to his day–to–day operations. Casanova came from the cardinal's native Xàtiva, became a canon of Valencia, travelled to Rome in 1467, and continued to shadow Borgia by studying at Bologna, where he gained his doctorate *utriusque iuris.*[297] By 1471 he was one of Borgia's familiars and went on to gain employment in the Chancery, as an abbreviator *de parco minore*, in 1479.[298] As the replacement for Martí in the conclave, Casanova's position in the hierarchy of the *familia* is confirmed. Both remained loyal to their cardinal and received the ultimate reward in due course, their positions vis–à–vis one another being maintained by the fact that Martí was given his red hat in 1500, Casanova his in 1503. Unlike Bessarion, Cardinal della Rovere – or his ambitious nephew – accepted the advances of Orsini, Borgia and Gonzaga, who were promised substantial rewards if they voted for the Franciscan, though the nature of the promises can only be inferred from the post–conclave division of the spoils.[299] In the second ballot Borgia played safe, voting for both Della Rovere and Roverella, so that he could be on the winning side whichever way the result went. In the event, neither of them gained two thirds of the votes, though Della Rovere came closest, with ten, and Roverella had a respectable seven. However, rather than waiting for another day and another ballot, the cardinals resolved matters by holding an *accessus*. The sources are united in stating that three cardinals voiced their support for Della Rovere, but are not united on their identity, the Milanese orator Nicodemo da Pontremoli assuring Galeazzo Maria Sforza that Borgia, d'Estouteville and Barbo swung the election, whereas Infessura credits Orsini,

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[297] Á. Fernandez de Cordoba, 'Jaime Casanova', *Diccionario Biográfico Español, Real Academia de la Historia,* (Madrid, 2009), p. 127; Alós, *Cardenales y prelados*, p. 113.

[298] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 354.

[299] E. Lee, *Sixtus IV and Men of Letters* (Rome, 1978), p. 29.

Borgia and Gonzaga.[300] D'Estouteville was the Milanese candidate, so would have been determined to display to Sforza that he had acted as pope–maker. Barbo's integrity meant that he would not have been swayed by Riario's consistent electioneering. However, his friendship with Bessarion brought him into Della Rovere's camp through the Greek cardinal's own support for the former Franciscan. As a Roman cardinal, Orsini would have been keen to assert both his own and his family's interests whilst there was no Colonna presence in the College of Cardinals. Gonzaga stood towards the worldly end of the spectrum and was therefore the type who attracted the interest of Infessura. Whichever source was more accurate, there could be no doubt that Borgia had played a significant part in determining the result.

Recalling the martyred pope Sixtus II, Della Rovere became Sixtus IV. On 9 August, Nicodemo da Pontremoli reported to Galeazzo Maria Sforza that Rome rejoiced at the result and declared that Sixtus 'would be an excellent pastor for the church and for the Christian faith everywhere'.[301] With no prior affiliations with any of the secular powers of Western Christendom, Sixtus sought peaceful relations which he hoped would counterbalance the negative impact of his predecessor. As the Mantuan ambassador Bartolomeo Bonatti reported to Ludovico Gonzaga, 'the Pope evidently intends to be on good terms with everyone'.[302] The quarrels Paul had with Venice and Naples were put aside. As part of this initiative, Sixtus's nephew Leonardo della Rovere (d. 1475), was married to Giovanna d'Aragona, one of Ferrante's illegitimate daughters. Letters of friendship were sent to the Sforza in Milan, backed up by the plan to marry another of the pope's nephews, Girolamo Riario (1443–88),

[300] Pastor, *History,* iv, p. 506; Infessura, *Diario*, p. 74.

[301] Pastor, *History,* iv, p. 204.

[302] Pastor, *History,* iv, p. 214.

brother of Pietro, to Caterina Sforza (1463–1509), the illegitimate daughter of Duke Galeazzo Maria (r. 1466–76). This duly took place in January 1473. Sixtus also promised the duke that he would make the archbishop of Milan, Stefano Nardini, a cardinal in his next set of promotions, Milan having been without representation in the College of Cardinals since 1460. Meanwhile, in August 1471, the Medici in Florence had their bank confirmed as depositary general of the Apostolic Camera and appointed as concessionaries of the lucrative alum mines at Tolfa.[303]

Alongside all this more or less secular business, there was the usual post–conclave division of the spoils.[304] On 9 August Latino Orsini was appointed camerlengo, a position that had been kept vacant since the death of Ludovico Trevisan in 1465, taking the oath of office three days later.[305] This adds weight to Nicodemo's version of the *accessus*. On the other hand, Francesco Gonzaga received the commendatory abbacy of S. Gregorio, Mantua, which is supported by Infessura's version of events. More rewards would follow for those cardinals who had voted for Della Rovere, these would come after the new pontiff's coronation which was held on 25 August. As protodeacon, the most senior of the cardinal deacons, Borgia was responsible for crowning the new pontiff, in front of St Peter's Basilica, a role he had been unable to fill in 1464 due to illness. The event was commemorated on a medal, on which Borgia does not appear, having been replaced by the Franciscan saints Francis and Anthony, who jointly place the tiara on Sixtus's head. Later in the day came the *possesso*, the triumphal procession from the Vatican to the Lateran, where the pope was

[303] R. De Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank, 1397–1494* (Cambridge, 1963), p. 198.

[304] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 74.

[305] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica,* ii, p. 69.

enthroned as bishop of Rome. The grandiose nature of the event could not have been more removed from the simplistic ideals of the Franciscan life. The new pontiff spent 28,000 florins, more than ten per cent of the Holy See's annual income – on horses, banners, canopies and the commemorative coins.[306]

Crowning Sixtus was the last act significant act Borgia performed as protodeacon. On 30 August he was elevated to the rank of cardinal bishop. The seven suburbicarian bishoprics ringed the city of Rome, but the complement of six cardinal–bishops had been incomplete since the death of Cardinal Longueil in 1470. Sixtus filled the vacancy at Porto and S. Rufina by translating Filippo Calandrini from Albano.[307] Borgia became the new bishop of Albano, bringing him into the highest tier of the College of Cardinals and making him of equal rank to Cardinals d'Estouteville (Ostia and Velletri), Coëtivy (Palestrina), Calandrini (Porto and S. Rufina), Bessarion (Sabina) and Latino Orsini (Frascati), all of whom had served longer than him in the College.[308] Although the practical significance of the suburbicarian sees had decreased well before the fifteenth century, they determined rank and hierarchy, and that determined liturgical responsibilities, order in processions, seating arrangements, and the day–to–day organisation of the papal court. Albano itself lay nine miles south–east of Rome, near the lake and amid the hills that bear its name. The bishopric had experienced mixed fortunes in the fifteenth century. Under the non–resident Pierre de Foix le vieux (1431–64) the cathedral had been 'left without [a] roof, [an] altar or doors'.[309] However, the see's

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[306] J. R. Mulryne, *Ceremonial Entries in Early Modern Europe: The Iconography of Power* (London, 2016), p. 113; Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 213.

[307] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 70, 69.

[308] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 37.

[309] Pius II, *Commentaries ... Books VI–IX*, p. 759.

fortunes had improved slightly under the Curial cardinal Ludovico Trevisan, who 'erected splendid houses planted gardens and made the place delightful'.[310] Borgia's appointment meant that his titular church of S. Nicola in Carcere was itself now vacant, as it remained until 1484.

It was also on 30 August that Sixtus appointed cardinals to some of the most significant commendatory abbacies. That of Montecassino went to Giovanni d'Aragona (1456–85), the clerical son of King Ferrante, and Borgia received S. Scolastica at Subiaco, which lay forty–five miles east of Rome. Montecassino and Subiaco were the monasteries most closely associated with S Benedict, the sixth–century father of Western monasticism, so were among Christendom's foremost monastic sites. In the case of Subiaco, pilgrims visited the Holy Cave or *Sacro Speco*, the grotto where St Benedict had retired to live an eremitical life. Pius II visited S. Scolastica in 1462 and recorded in his *Commentaries* that the community then consisted of twenty monks and that the buildings had been built at great expense by earlier priors: 'qua omnia magno sumptu construxere priores'.[311] Before Borgia, the previous commendatory abbot had been another Spaniard, Juan de Torquemada, who had died in 1468, leaving the abbey without a patron for three years, though the Spanish connection presumably had played a part in determining Sixtus's choice of Borgia to act as its patron. It was in 1464, during Torquemada's time, that Subiaco acquired the distinction of being home to the first printing press in Italy, when Sweinheim and Pannartz reportedly came to the abbey at the invitation of several of their countrymen who were members of the monastic community there. Texts, including *Donatus proparvulis Lactantius* (1465) *and De Civitate Dei* (1467), came off their press. By the time Borgia acquired a connection to

[310] Pius II, *Commentaries ... Books VI–IX,* p. 759.

[311] Pius II, *Commentaries*, iii, pp. 320–1.

Subiaco, Sweinheim and Pannartz had moved their press to Rome, to the palace of the wealthy layman Pietro de' Massimo. Two years later, having failed to gain the support of either the popes or the German community in Rome, Sweinheim dissolved the partnership.[312] As indicated above, it should not be assumed that there was any direct connection between Borgia's ownership of the Livy *editio princeps* and his commendatory abbacy.

On the other hand, Subiaco did provide Borgia with a convenient retreat from Rome during plague seasons, of which there were some severe examples in the following two decades, but it also gave him ample scope to exercise patronage. A few months after receiving the abbacy from Sixtus, on 13 March 1472, he granted the adjacent town the right to hold a free fair or public market every week.[313] However, it was not until he had returned from his legation to Aragon and Castile (1472–3) and was once again resident in Rome that his patronage at Subiaco fully took shape. In January 1474 he argued that control of the fortress at Trevi be returned to the abbey, and in September of the same year he ensured that Marano, seven miles north–west of Subiaco, came under the abbey's jurisdiction.[314] In 1476 he ensured that the *rocca abbaziale*, which had fallen into disrepair, was rebuilt and enlarged with a quadrangular tower on the east side, which is still known today vulgarly as Torre Borgiana.[315] In return for patronage Borgia was able to draw on the sources of income from the abbey and its estates, which covered more than twenty–two villages and a substantial vineyard.

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[312] C. Maas, 'German Printers and the German Community in Renaissance Rome', *The Library*, 5/2 (1976), p. 119.

[313] M. Cherubino, *Chronicon Sublacense* (Rome, 1885), pp. 516–17.

[314] Cherubino, *Chronicon Sublacense*, pp. 517–19.

[315] G. Jannuccelli, *Memorie di Subiaco e sua badia* (Genoa, 1856), p. 230.

The calendar year finished with two notable events, both of which had a lasting impact on Borgia. On 16 December, Sixtus elevated two of his nephews – his recent conclavist Pietro Riario, bishop of Treviso, and Giuliano della Rovere (1443–1513), bishop of Carpentras – to the College of Cardinals.[316] The former, who was also from Sixtus's home town of Savona, had followed his uncle's example by becoming a Conventual Franciscan, and had studied at Pavia, Padua, Venice and Bologna. Giuliano della Rovere's career had taken a different route: with his uncle a cardinal, he was made a protonotary apostolic in 1469. Shortly after his election, Sixtus had written to Charles, duke of Burgundy, that nepotism was 'a bulwark against the opposition of the cardinalate'.[317] Here the pontiff directly acknowledged that the only way of overcoming the antagonism of the College of Cardinals was to promote family members who would lessen potential opposition to the pope and his policies. The rise of Pietro Riario, in particular, posed a threat to Borgia's position as vice–chancellor, and may have been meant to do so.

Sixtus's action flouted the standard terms of election capitulations, which stipulated that a pope could create only one cardinal nephew. In a letter of 14 January 1472 to Niccolò Forteguerri, Iacopo Ammannati argued that Sixtus's two new promotions threatened to overshadow the rest of the College.[318] The pope was certainly less cautious than his predecessors with regard to the precise rank to which he elevated family members, because both Riario and Della Rovere joined the College as cardinal priests. Calixtus had faced

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[316] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica,* ii, pp. 16–17.

[317] E. Baluze, *Stephani Baluzii Tutelensis miscellanea: novo ordine digesta et non paucis ineditis monumentis opportunisque animadversionibus aucta*, ed. J. D. Mansi (4 vols, Lucca, 1761–4), iii, pp. 114–15.

[318] Ammannati Piccolomini, *Lettere,* iii, p. 1489.

criticism for the promotion of the young Milà and Borgia but had ensured that only Milà had been elevated as a cardinal priest, while Borgia was placed in the lower tier of cardinal deacon. Pius II had elevated his nephew, Francesco Todeschini Piccolomini, as a cardinal deacon. Paul II had distinguished between his capable but distant kinsman Marco Barbo, who became a cardinal priest, and his younger, undistinguished nephews Giovanni Michiel and Giovanni Battista Zeno, who were made cardinal deacons. On the other hand, Riario and Della Rovere were not incapable adolescents and there were considerably more titular churches than deaconries, so that may have influenced Sixtus's decision. On 21 December Riario and Della Rovere were allocated their titular churches, S. Sisto and S. Pietro in Vincoli respectively.[319] The latter had previously been that of Sixtus himself and remained in the hands of Della Rovere cardinals through to 1520.

The next day Sixtus followed up his creation of two new cardinals with another announcement designed to reconfigure the College of Cardinals.[320] This concerned the appointment of five legates to travel the length and breadth of Western Christendom to preach a crusade and seek practical support for a new campaign against the Ottomans. The five new cardinal legates and their destinations were: Bessarion, to France, Burgundy and England; Borgia, to the Spanish kingdoms; Capranica, to the Italian states; Carafa, to Naples and the papal fleet; Barbo, to Germany, Poland and Hungary.[321] In terms of seniority, there

[319] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 75.

[320] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 44; Pastor, *History*, iv, pp. 218–19.

[321] Bessarion: P. Ourliac, 'Louis XI et le Cardinal Bessarion', *Bulletin de la Société Archéologique du Midi de la France*, 5 (1942–5), pp. 33–52; Capranica: L. Cardella, *Memorie storiche de' cardinali della santa Romana Chiesa* (9 vols, Rome 1792–7), iii, pp.

were two cardinal bishops (Bessarion and Borgia) and three cardinal priests. With regard to age, they ranged from Borgia, who was forty, to the sixty–eight–year–old Bessarion. Their prior experience of the regions to which they were sent varied enormously. Bessarion was an experienced legate and had previously been sent to Germany by Pius II. He had Burgundian and English contacts, which boded ill for his mission to Louis XI due to the antagonism between those powers. Borgia had a natural connection with the Spanish kingdoms and could therefore communicate with their rulers in the vernacular, but it had been nearly thirty years since he left for Italy, so personal connections would need to be established if support for a crusade was to be achieved. Capranica had been legate in Bologna, but there was a marked difference between administering justice in a papal territory and convincing the rulers of neighbouring states to support a new crusading effort. Carafa was an obvious choice for Naples, but not to command the fleet, which was far beyond his previous experience. Barbo would have to pass through the territory of his native Venice in order to reach his destinations, but he had not hitherto developed any clear connections with them. From Sixtus's perspective, what mattered was that these men were all respected and carried weight through their own personal merits. That was essential if support for the crusade was going to be forthcoming. However, it was no less significant for the pope that these men of experience and standing were sent far from Rome, where he and his nephews could take control of papal government without interference. There was 'una certa freddezza' between Sixtus and Barbo, the right–hand man of the previous pontiff.[322] There were also rumours that Bessarion had

136–7; Carafa: Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, ii, p. 316; Barbo: Pastor, *History*, iv, pp. 223–4.

[322] P. Paschini, 'I benefici ecclesiastici del cardinale Marco Barbo', *Rivista di storia della chiesa in Italia*, 13 (1959), p. 343.

fallen out with Pietro Riario during the conclave, presumably over the latter's blatant electioneering, which could explain why the Greek was sent a demanding mission which offered very little chance of succeeding in its aim.[323] As for Borgia, he had been prudent enough to declare for Francesco della Rovere in the *accessus* and as a result had retained the office of vice–chancellor. However, as Riario had secured his uncle's election, there was a strong possibility that the newly elevated cardinal might seek the second most important office in the Curia for himself. Writing to Borgia from Foligno four days after the announcement, Ammannati expressed his concern that Borgia would be absent from the Chancery for a considerable length of time and that there were individuals who desired his office.[324] The following day Ammannati wrote to Barbo and Carafa, wishing them safe passage on their legation and expressing his sadness that they would not see each other for a while.[325] While there was personal regret in those cases, the Chancery was a much more serious matter.

Seen from another angle, Sixtus and his nephews were keen to be rid of the five senior cardinals because they were so important in Rome's patronage networks and enjoyed the benefits that came from acting as sponsors of candidates to vacant benefices. The first time that Borgia acted in that capacity after Sixtus's election was on 16 December, the day that the new cardinals were announced. The client on that occasion was John Foxholes, who became archbishop of Armagh.[326] Foxholes was a Franciscan who had direct connections with Sixtus, whether in Bologna, where the former studied and the latter was master of

[323] Lee, *Sixtus IV and Men of Letters*, p. 30.

[324] Ammannati Piccolomini, *Lettere*, iii, p. 1470.

[325] Ammannati Piccolomini, *Lettere*, iii, pp. 1471–2.

[326] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 95.

studies, or in a debate on divine foreknowledge, contingency and predestination, presided over by Bessarion on 1 June 1470.[327] It was not a natural fit for Cardinal Borgia: Ireland was poor and Foxholes was a poor Franciscan who struggled to pay his common services taxes and received a loan from the Apostolic Camera to cover the cost of the bull of appointment.[328] However, it does suggest that the vice–chancellor was making an effort to engage with members of the religious order to which Sixtus and Riario both belonged. Much more understandable is Borgia's next such act of sponsorship, which was of Pedro de Ocagna to the vacant bishopric of Guadix on 24 February 1472.[329] This tied in with his forthcoming mission, not least because Guadix was in territory captured from the infidel by Christian forces.

Towards the end of 1471 lists of all the cardinals' familiars were again compiled, the resulting supplications being dated 1 January 1472.[330] Whereas a standard dozen names had been listed in 1470, this time it is a complete list, with Borgia boasting an impressive total of 139 individuals. Once again, the overwhelming majority came from the Spanish kingdoms, particularly Aragon, the most notable exception being the Cypriot Ludovico Podocatharo. Forty–two individuals are listed as 'vero dilectorum', indicating those who were most intimate with their patron. Ten of the 139 (15%) had previously been members of Calixtus's

[327] 'Liber de Arcanis Dei', BAV, Vat. Lat. 1056, f. 2r.

[328] B. Millett, O. F. M., 'John Foxholes, Franciscan, Archbishop of Armagh 1471–74', *Seanchas Ardmhacha: Journal of the Armagh Diocesan Historical Society*, 18/1 (1999–2000), p. 26.

[329] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 179.

[330] See Appendix III.

household, and a number of familiars held positions in the Chancery.[331] Borgia was a patron who could guarantee employment in the department of which he was head; he clearly inspired loyalty and this meant that, among all the cardinals, he posed the most obvious challenge to the new papal regime.

On 31 December, a week after the legates' appointments, Sixtus published an encyclical in which he urged the monarchs of Europe to join together in a united force to counter 'the most truculent race of the Turks, followers of the impious dog Mohammed'.[332] He stressed that it was every Christian man's duty to defend 'the Catholic faith, their country (*patria*) and their children and wives'.[333] The faithful were required to make financial contributions to a new crusade effort.[334] Legations themselves involved considerable financial implications, as can be seen in the preparations that Borgia made for his in the early months of 1472. In order to cover the cost of transporting a retinue while leaving a skeleton staff in his palace, Borgia undertook various preparations. On 1 January he reserved for his own use a number of minor Spanish benefices in order to draw on their revenues. This reportedly brought in 1,000 *livres tournois* (666 florins).[335] Similarly, he made arrangements to rent out the vice–chancellorship and thereby gain income while he was on legation. It is

[331] Vaquero Piñeiro, 'Valencianos en Roma', p. 191.

[332] Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, ii, p. 315.

[333] N. Housley, *Crusading and the Ottoman Threat* (Oxford, 2013), p. 35.

[334] Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, ii, p. 321.

[335] AAV, Reg. Vat. 552, f. 95r; P. Spufford, *Handbook of Medieval Exchange* (London, 1986), pp. 20–4 suggests that by the 1470s a florin was worth just over 29 *soldi*, and 1 *livre tournois* equalled 20 *soldi*. Using this, 1 florin was equivalent to 1.5 *livre tournois*, making the revenue equal to around 666 florins.

not known how much revenue this would have given him as there is no surviving evidence to show how much annual income this office generated. Nevertheless, Sixtus agreed to the arrangement on 6 March whilst also acknowledging Borgia's petition for a deputy to oversee the Chancery in his absence. [336] However, the name of his deputy has not been recorded.[337] The uncertainty of how long Borgia's legation would last meant that a second source of revenue, a payment of 2,8000 florins was also advanced to him by the Camera.[338] To place Borgia's legatorial finances in context, we can compare them to those of Cardinal Barbo, who was granted a payment of 2,083 florins with additional payments from the Camera of 541 florins, 48 *baiocchi*, which were deducted from his pension in April 1474, a further 2,000 florins in August of the same year, 1,000 florins on 24 December, and on 23 January the following year a further 100 ducats.[339]

However, when 1472 opened, there was no immediate sign that Borgia was going anywhere, for on 8 January it was his turn to take up the rotating position of camerlengo of the College of Cardinals.[340] In this role he was responsible for dividing certain revenues granted collectively between those cardinals who were resident in Rome. Those who were absent on legation missed out on this income, just as they were not eligible for the *propine*. On 21 March it appeared that his departure for Spain might be imminent: the bull *Omnium Salvatoris* gave Borgia, as legate in Iberia, the right to preach and obtain funds for the

[336] AAV, Reg. Vat. 553, f. 1v.

[337] AAV, Reg. Vat. 553, f. 104r.

[338] De Roo, *Material,* ii, p. 169.

[339] 'Marco Barbo', <http://cardinals.fiu.edu/bios1467.htm > (accessed 24 January 2020).

[340] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 41.

crusade.[341] It noted the necessity of avenging the fall of Negroponte (1470) to the Ottomans and the terrible treatment of Christians on the island. April passed and Borgia was still in Rome, waiting for his ships from Naples to arrive.[342] It was 15 May before he stood down as camerlengo of the College of Cardinals.[343] Then he made his formal departure from Rome and rode to Ostia, where he was received by its bishop, d'Estouteville, who had replaced him as camerlengo and was the most senior cardinal left in Rome once Bessarion had left on his mission.[344] Several days later the legate and his retinue set sail and headed towards Bonifacio, Corsica, which they reached on 8 June.[345] Five days later, Borgia's ships briefly anchored a Palma (Mallorca) and on 18 June, docked at Grao, the port of Valencia. It had been nearly thirty years since he had set foot in his homeland. On 19 June he and his retinue retired to monastery of S. Maria del Puig, seven miles north of Valencia, and waited for the formalities to which he was entitled as a legate *a latere.*[346]

The following day the legate was formally received into what was also his own cathedral city. His reception followed the pattern set out in the eighth–century *Ordo Romanus*, which stated that the legate was to be greeted by a delegation of ecclesiastics and

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[341] M. Toldrà and T. Huget–Termes, 'La Butlla de la legació de Roderic de Borja and Regna Hispaniarum copiada per Joan Feixes, servidor de Calixt III', *Revista Borja, Revista de l'IHEB,* 3, pp. 103–8.

[342] De Roo, *Material*, ii, p. 176.

[343] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 42.

[344] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 42.

[345] Maps of Borgia's legation to Spain are presented in Appendix IV.

[346] K. R. Rennie, 'The Ceremonial Reception of the Medieval Papal Legates', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History,* 70/1 (2019), pp. 18–37.

important laymen outside the walls of the city. He was met by the auxiliary bishop, who carried an image of the Virgin in gilded silver. They all processed through the Torres de Serranos. The municipal government had ensured that the towers were adorned with satin fabrics and that inside the cathedral tapestries covered the walls: 'las torres de Serranos se engalanaron con telas de raso, y en el interior de la Catedral, se cubrieron las paredes de tapices'.[347] Psalms and antiphons were sung, and the litany of the saints intoned before an immense crowd. The legate then took up residence in his own episcopal palace, with a retinue thought to number 200 individuals, including the Bishops Giovanni di Renzo de Tonsis of Fano, Carlo de Nepis of Assisi, and Antonio of Orte and Civita Castellana. There was a splendid banquet on the first evening, the legate and his party being joined by various local dignitaries.[348]

In the days that followed, Borgia visited the Convento de la Trinidad and met the abbess, Sor Isabel de Villena, who was related to past, present and future rulers of Aragon and Castile. It was the most illustrious female religious community in Valencia and Sor Isabel had apparently been chosen as abbess by Borgia, acting in his capacity of diocesan bishop.[349] Sor Isabel was a prolific writer and the convent became one of the city's great cultural centres. On 27 June the legate was joined by his cousin, Cardinal Milà, who had travelled from his bishopric of Lleida. Like so much concerning the other cardinal, it is unclear how long the two kinsmen spent together. On 9 July Borgia addressed a synod of

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[347] J. Sanchis y Sivera, 'El Cardenal Rodrigo de Borja en Valencia', *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia,* 84 (1924), pp. 131–2.

[348] Sanchis y Sivera, 'El Cardenal Rodrigo', p. 135.

[349] A. Sales, *Historia del Real Monasterio de la SSma. Trinidad: religiosas de Santa Clara ... fuera los Muros de la Ciudad de Valencia* (Valencia, 1583).

bishops in Valencia. This was the centrepiece of his time there. His principal purpose was to encourage the clergy and lay faithful to support the pope's call for a new crusade. He consistently reiterated the idea of Christian filial duty to drive his argument, noting that for the clergy it was 'the duty above all ... as shepherds of the flock, that We are set upon the watch tower precisely that we may keep it safe'.[350] They had a duty towards Christians who were suffering under the sword of a ferocious enemy. This sword had subjugated Asia Minor and part of Europe, but its focus now was on the city of Rome, the sanctuary of the Apostles. He emphasized that if Rome fell to the sultan, Western Christendom would be lost: 'if He (the Sultan) were thus able to crush the head, the rest of the Christian body would perish'.[351] The clergy must therefore join together to encourage the secular powers to commit resources to a new crusade. The following day Borgia and his assistants met members of a lay confraternity to discuss how much financial support the city could offer the crusading effort. Four days later a sum of 50,000 *sueldos* (2,500 ducats) was agreed: a small amount for a large city, but there is no evidence that it was ever collected.[352] On 17 July the clergy gathered in the cathedral and signed the document affirming their support for the crusade.

While in Valencia, Borgia was asked to investigate the murder of Nicolás de Echávarri, bishop of Pamplona, which had occurred in November 1469.[353] It had reportedly been committed by Pedro Peralto, the constable of Navarre.[354] Due to the severity of the

[350] De Roo, *Material*, ii, p. 182.

[351] De Roo, *Material*, ii, p. 186.

[352] Sanchis y Sivera, 'El Cardenal Rodrigo', p. 144.

[353] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 233.

[354] J. Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia de los obispos de Pamplona* (11 vols, Pamplona, 1979–9), ii, pp. 147–63.

deed, Borgia dispatched a letter to Sixtus, asking what punishment should be given to the perpetrator. It was March 1473 before the pope's reply reached the legate, when he was celebrating Easter at Alcalá de Henares. Although Sixtus pushed for Peralto to be excommunicated, Borgia argued that this was too severe. Sixtus reduced the sentence to three years in the crusading army.[355] Another issue that reached across the borders of the Iberian kingdoms was that of the validity of the marriage of Luis de la Cerda y de la Vega, count of Medinaceli, a Castilian, and his second wife, Ana de Navarra y Aragón, a granddaughter of King Joan II. He had previously been married to Catalina Lasso de Mendoza, but this union was annulled on the grounds of non–consummation. In the same year that the annulment was decreed, Ana gave birth to their child and they subsequently married. This was precisely the sort of matter on which legates had long been asked to pronounce. On 14 July, Borgia received permission from Sixtus to call witnesses to provide extra details and then pass judgement on the case. This resulted in the second marriage being confirmed.[356]

One of the last things Borgia did in Valencia was to commission the redecoration of that part of the cathedral vault that had been damaged by fire three years earlier. It was to be executed by the Italian artists Paolo da San Leocadio and Francesco Pagano, who had travelled with the legate from Rome. The most concise study of Leocadio's career remains Ximo Company's *Il Rinascimento di Paolo da San Leocadio* (2009).[357] Leocadio's career had started in Ferrara under the auspices of Bono da Ferrara (active 1441–61) and in the workshop of Cosmè Tura, court painter to Borso d'Este, after which he remained in Ferrara throughout the 1450's. By contrast, little is known about the Neapolitan Francesco Pagano

[355] De Roo, *Material*, ii, pp. 190–1.

[356] De Roo, *Material*, ii, p. 173.

[357] X. Company, *Il Rinascimento di Paolo da San Leocadio* (Palermo, 2009).

and as a result there is no study comparable to that of Company's on Leocadio. Together they produced the earliest examples of Italian–style Renaissance art in Spain. Their angel musicians bear a striking resemblance to those of Melozzo da Forli on the apsidal vault of the basilica of SS. Apostoli in Rome.[358] In the assessment by Adele Condorelli, the two artists injected a breath of fresh air into Valencian art, which was still dominated by the late Gothic style: 'lo hizo por medio de estos dos maestros italianos que gozaban de su total confianza, con la precisa intención de inyectar un soplo de aire nuevo en el ambiente artístico valenciano, todavía dominado por el estilo gótico tardío'.[359] They also painted the doors of the cathedral organ, a Madonna in the church of San Miguel at Enguera, and a Crucifixion for the collegiate church in Gandía. Leocadio stayed in Valencia and joined the household of Borgia's future daughter–in–law Maria Enríquez de Luna, duchess of Gandía, while Pagano appears to have returned to Naples, though Condorelli says that a scarcity of information means that we cannot be certain of this.[360]

On 31 July Borgia departed Valencia with his 200–strong retinue and began the journey by sea towards Barcelona. During the journey, they passed the fortress and resting place of the Aragonese anti–pope Benedict XIII (d. 1423) at Peníscola. Another of Borgia's missions was to recover arrears resulting from Benedict's decision to mortgage the revenues of a number of church properties. Attempts to recover the revenues had been initiated during

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[358] I. Frank, 'Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere and Melozzo da Forli at SS. Apostoli', *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 59/1 (1996), pp. 97–9.

[359] A. Condorelli, 'El cardenal Rodrigo de Borja mecenas de Francesco Pagano y Paolo da San Leocadio', Actes II Simposi Borja els fills del senyor papa, 2 (2008–9), *Revista Borja*, p. 360.

[360] Condorelli, 'El cardenal Rodrigo de Borja', p. 362.

the pontificates of Nicholas V and Calixtus III, but nothing had been recovered. Upon his arrival in Spain, Borgia instituted a commission to deal with the issue.[361] However, from this point onwards, the legation acquired a more political dimension and the people with whom Borgia dealt were a mixture of secular princes and prelates.

In Aragon the line of kings from the house of Barcelona (1164–1410) had ended with the death of Martín I.[362] The Compromise of Caspe (1412) saw a junior branch of the Castilian house of Trastámara, in the person of Fernando de Antequera (r. 1412–16) accede to the throne of Aragon. It was the hope that one day the two kingdoms would be united through marriage. Fernando's sons, Alfonso V, the 'Magnanimous' (r. 1416–58), and Joan II (r. 1458–79) succeeded him in Aragon. Joan inherited a different situation: there was rural and urban unrest in Catalonia and when the king attempted municipal reform in Barcelona there was a rebellion against him. Civil war blighted the kingdom of Aragon from 1462 and was still active when Borgia arrived there. Meanwhile, to the west, the neighbouring kingdom of Castile had been mired in a decade–long civil war relating to the royal succession. The king from 1454 was Enrique IV (r. 1454–74), a great–nephew of Fernando de Antequera. By the time of Borgia's legation there were court factions who supported the claims of Enrique's young daughter Juana (b. 1462), his brother Alfonso (1453–68), and half–sister Isabel. A group of disgruntled nobles and magnates, including the Enríquez and Manríque families, along with the archbishop of Toledo, Alfonso Carillo (d. 1482), believed that Enrique was inept, and Juana illegitimate. Tensions escalated further when Enrique sacked his minister

[361] De Roo, *Material*, ii, pp. 171–2.

[362] J. M. Font y Ruis, 'The Institutions of the Crown of Aragon in the First Half of the Fifteenth Century' in J. R. L. Highfield (ed.), *Spain in the Fifteenth Century, 1369–1526: Essays and Extracts by Historians of Spain* (London, 1972), pp. 171–93.

Juan Pacheco, marquis of Villena, from the council and replaced him with Pedro González de Mendoza (1428–95), bishop of Calahorra, and Beltrán de la Cueva who was thought to be Juana's real father. At the ceremony, now known as the Farce of Ávila (5 June 1465), the disgruntled faction of nobles deposed Enrique in effigy and pronounced Alfonso the rightful king. The severity of the situation was such that Paul II sent Jacopo Antonio Veniero (1422–79), bishop of León, to bring peace between Enrique and the supporters of Alfonso.[363] In 1468 Alfonso died in mysterious circumstances and, by the treaty of Los Toros de Guisando (19 September), Enrique acknowledged Isabel as heir presumptive, stipulating that she marry the widower Afonso V of Portugal (r. 1438–81), the idea being to prevent her entering into an Aragonese alliance. Within Castile, vital support for the Aragonese marriage was provided by the wealthy and influential Mendoza family, including Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, count of Tendilla, and Bishop Pedro González de Mendoza. Pope Paul issued a dispensation to permit the marriage of Isabel and Alfonso, who were cousins, but the eighteen–year–old Isabel rebelled against king and pope, taking matters into her own hands and marrying her Aragonese cousin, Ferrando, the son and heir of Joan II, on 18 October 1469, and that without a papal dispensation.[364] In addition to the papal dimension, there was another extra–Iberian consequence, for Louis XI who saw the marriage as Aragonese expansionism. Aragon was his southern neighbour and adversary, so an alliance between Aragon and Castile posed a potential threat to him, prompting him to pressure Enrique to acknowledge the nine–year–old Juana as his heir. It was a diplomatic minefield which had far reaching consequences.

Borgia was sent into a most unpromising situation, for two kingdoms experiencing civil war were most unlikely to send any manpower or other support for a crusade. As far as

[363] J. Fernandez Alonso, *Legaciones y nunciatureas en España de 1466 a 1521* (Rome, 1963), pp. 33, 37.

[364] H. Kamen, *Spain 1469–1714: A Society of Conflict* (Abingdon, 2014), pp. 1–2.

Rome was concerned, the best course of action was to back the marriage of Ferrando and Isabel in the hope that they would succeed the present kings. In turn this would hopefully usher in a period of internal peace and unity between the kingdoms, both of which would then be better placed to undertake crusading endeavours. Thus, Borgia carried with him Sixtus's dispensation sanctioning the marriage of the second cousins.[365]

On 12 August the legate arrived at Tarragona, staying several days. The archbishop, Pedro de Urrea (d. 1489), provided a squadron of men–at–arms to give Borgia some security for the next stage of his journey.[366] On 26 August he met Joan II, and Prince Ferrando at the monastery of Pedralbes, four miles to the west of Barcelona. He was there for only nine days, departing again on 4 September, passing Tortosa on the way back to Valencia. It was no surprise when the king stated that more than a decade of civil war meant he was in no position to support the crusade. A papal legate was the ideal person to attempt to bring the warring parties to the negotiating table and, in an attempt to break the deadlock and advance the crusading cause, Borgia persuaded the civic authorities of Barcelona to allow Joan to enter the city and begin talks.[367] It was not until 17 October that the king and his trusted chancellor Joan Margarit i Pau (*c*. 1422–84), bishop of Girona, entered Barcelona.[368] The peace that brought an end to a decade of civil war was not signed until 22 December, but it was surely significant that the breakthrough coincided with the visit of the papal legate,

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[365] N. Rubin, *Isabella of Castile: The First Renaissance Queen* (Lincoln, 1991), p. 106.

[366] De Roo, *Material*, ii, p. 192.

[367] 'Barcelona's Council During the Catalan Civil War (1462–1472): the Conflict's Management Through Municipal Deliberations', < https://regidel.hypotheses.org/596 > (accessed 24 April 2018).

[368] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 176.

whose nationality ensure that he carried more weight with the warring parties than any other papal representative might have done. Borgia's involvement had consequences that were both ecclesiastical and secular. Not content with having two of his subjects – Borgia and Milà – in the Senate of the Church, Joan sought to have a cardinal of his own choice, to put himself on a par with other kings and with some lesser princes. His candidate was Margarit. The king had tried desperately to get a hat for Margarit from Pius II as far back as 1460. Borgia must have been aware of the candidate from that point onwards, though evidence of this is scarce. In February 1472 he assured Joan that the bishop of Girona was well respected at the Roman court and that his elevation to the cardinalate would not come as a surprise.[369] Whilst Borgia could not offer a cardinal's hat, he promised that he would recommend to Sixtus Margarit's case for elevation. A little further down the ecclesiastical hierarchy he could have more impact, as was seen on 11 December that year, when his eponymous kinsman was appointed to the vacant bishopric of Barcelona.[370] That was surely a measure of the king's gratitude for the legate's part in bringing the city to heel after such a protracted period of civil war. As for the secular consequences of the relatively brief encounter between the king, the prince and the legate, those reached their full fruition after the prince had succeeded his father and the legate had become pope.

In September Borgia made the journey back to Valencia, albeit without the king assuring him of any support for a new crusade. He re–entered the city on 1 October. Three weeks later Pedro González de Mendoza – bishop of Sigüenza since 1467 – arrived there

[369] R. Tate, *Joan Margarit i Pau: Cardinal bishop of Gerona biographical study* (Manchester, 1955), p. 66.

[370] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 115.

with great pomp in order to accompany the legate into Castile.[371] The two prelates left Valencia on 2 November and travelled into the heart of the largest of the Iberian kingdoms, the itinerant court being then at Madrid.[372] It was there that Borgia spent Christmas and persuaded King Enrique to support Isabel's claim to the throne, with all that implied for the future balance of power in the peninsula. In February 1473 the legate moved to Segovia, where he called a synod of all the bishops of Castile and León, the aim of which was to raise a subsidy for the crusade; this was secured after some hard bargaining.[373] Initially, 100,000 florins was negotiated as one common subsidy, however, the diocesan representatives offered to pay an initial instalment of 30,000 florins on the feast day of All Saints (1 November) the following year. Despite this agreement, the matter dragged on for several years and on 1 July 1474, Sixtus lowered the overall amount to 60,000 florins, half of which was to be paid on All Saints Day of that year and the remainder by the Nativity of St. John the Baptist (24 June) of the following year.[374] However, Castile's financial position was weak, and it could not sustain payment of a full tithe. It appears that no money was collected at all.[375] The synod also dealt with reports of ecclesiastical malpractice and how to raise clerical standards. One particular problem was posed by the granting of lucrative benefices to young noblemen with neither religious vocations nor appropriate education. The legate reminded the bishops to

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[371] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 258.

[372] Rubin, *Isabella of Castile*, p. 107.

[373] De Roo, *Material,* ii, pp. 198–201.

[374] De Roo, *Material,* ii, pp. 200–1.

[375] 'La Bula Perdida de Rodrigo de Borja renace en Segovia', <https://elpais.com/diario/2008/01/09/cultura/1199833203_850215.html > (accessed 23 June 2019).

withhold ordination from such individuals. It was an injunction repeated by Archbishop Carrillo at the provincial council held at Aranda towards the end of the year.[376] Meanwhile, in February, Borgia proceeded to Alcalá de Henares, where he and the Infanta Isabel were hosted for three weeks by Carrillo, whose lavish entertainment was said to be designed to secure himself a cardinal's hat. If that was so, his calculation failed.[377]

The legate's journey back to Valencia was slow. He arrived there on 29 July. Several days later he set off again, but only in order to visit his birthplace, Xàtiva, where he stayed for a week, returning to Valencia on 12 August. There his final liturgical set–piece was a Mass at the cathedral on 15 August. His ships set sail from Grao on 12 September, but bad weather forced them back to Dénia, where they anchored for a week. Finally, on 19 September, the storms abated, the cardinal saw his native land for the last time and sailed back to Italy. His (Italian) retinue reportedly resembled a wedding party.[378] What they could not celebrate was a piece of consistorial business that passed in late September, while they were at sea: Borgia's Valencian *majordomo* Bartomeu Martí was made bishop of Segorbe.[379] The appointment frustrated King Joan, whose candidate was Gonzalo Fernández de Heredia, and was all the more notable because Borgia had not been in Rome to press his client's case.

The legate left Iberia without securing the support of the monarchs for a new crusade. The problem of the succession in Castile and the civil war in Aragon were used by their

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[376] P. Ontoria, 'El Concilio de Aranda: aportaciones para su historia externa. notas y bibliografía', *Boletín de la Institución Fernán Gonzalez*, 55/2 (1976), p. 1010.

[377] G. Tremlett, *Isabella of Castile: Europe's First Great Queen* (London, 2017), p. 91.

[378] M. Miralles, *Crònica i dietari del capellà d'Alfons el Magnànim*, ed. M. R. Lizondo (Valencia, 2011), p. 424.

[379] Alós, *Cardenales y prelados,* p. 79.

respective rulers as reason enough for their lack of support. Any benefits accruing from the mission were not felt by Sixtus, let alone by any Christians in need of liberation from the Ottomans. Rather, by ingratiating himself with the heirs to the thrones of Aragon and Castile, Borgia established links that proved to be of greater use to him than to anyone else. In turn, Ferrando and particularly Isabel proved to be genuinely committed to the cause of ecclesiastical reform, which can be traced back to the example set by Borgia in both kingdoms in 1472–3. This turn of events was appreciated by Cardinal Ammannati, who had been frustrated by the vice–chancellor's lack of communications from Iberia and argued that Borgia had used the legation merely to advance his own interests in his native land, a view that was no doubt shared by others in Rome.[380] The first two years of Sixtus IV's pontificate had been decidedly negative for the vice–chancellor. The legation may have appeared to be prestigious, but it removed the cardinal from his power base in the Chancery and from all his familiars. With Sixtus' desire to concentrate power and patronage among his kin, notably Pietro Riario and Giuliano della Rovere, the decision to send Borgia away from Rome appears quite deliberate. Of those two, only the latter lived to vote in the conclave of 1492, but it was as the leader of the faction opposed to Borgia's closest associates. There was a clear distinction in status between the vice–chancellor who was also a long–serving bishop of Valencia and the newly elevated *nipote* whose first bishopric was Carpentras, which he held from October 1471 but with which he had no immediate connection, yet that distinction proved to be crucial, for Borgia went on to be the Spanish candidate and Della Rovere the French candidate in 1492, and that did make a vital difference to the outcome of the election. In Borgia's absence, Sixtus further reconfigured the College of Cardinals, weakening the influence of each individual by adding eight more to their number. Only one of the eight was

[380] Ammannati Piccolomini, *Lettere*, iii, pp. 1072–3.

still alive in 1492, but he was firmly non–Curial, leaving Della Rovere as the only new cardinal to survive from the earliest phase of the Sistine pontificate. In that sense alone, Sixtus was himself among the most significant influences on the conclave but could not determine its result from beyond the grave.

5. 1473–84: Patronage and princes: Borgia returns to Rome.

On 10 October 1473, while returning to Rome, Borgia's ships were caught for four days in another storm, this time off the Tuscan coast near Pisa.[381] One vessel sunk, while that on which the cardinal himself travelled nearly met the same fate. The chronicler Melcior Miralles enumerates the losses, which included seventy–five members of the cardinal's household:

> O great mourning for the death of four bishops, so many men of science, so young as they were to study in Bologna, so many Venetians, so much plate and garments of the senior cardinal! It is said that on the beach of Pisa were about 200 dead men. How many Valencians have perished! Mossen Filip Boil, nobleman, lodger of Master Borrell: the son of Ambros Alegret, the son of Em Prats, the son of Sant Feliu and so many others. (Oh gran dol el mal de quatre bisbes, tants homens de ciência, tant jovent que anaven a estudiar en Bolunya, tanta gente de venecians, tanta veixella, robe del senyor cardenal, tanta mercaderia! Qu es diu que em la platja de Pisa eren pus de dos–cents homens morts.! quants es la gent de Valencia que son perides em lo dit passatge! Mossen Filip Boil, noble, log erma de mestre Borrell: lo fill de n'Ambros Alegret, lo fill d'em Prats, lo fill d'em Sant Feliu e tants d'altres que no es pot dir).[382]

Among the lives reportedly lost were those of Carlo de Nepis, bishop of Assisi, and Antonio d'Epés, bishop of Orte and Civita Castellana. When the cardinals' familiars were listed again,

[381] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 78.

[382] M. Miralles, *Crònica i dietari*, p. 425.

in supplications dated 13 July 1473, Borgia had eighty–three.[383] It is to be assumed, therefore, that the losses at sea came on top of other familiars having drifted away in Borgia's absence, meaning that he had a certain amount of rebuilding to do when he did return to Rome.

Aside from the loss of life, the cardinal also lost a number of expensive items, including clothing, jewels and gifts from the Spanish monarchs. In a letter, dated 12 October, to Lorenzo de' Medici he notes that the substantial sum of 30,000 ducats was also lost.[384] That letter was dispatched from Pisa, where the previous day Borgia had made a new will with a codicil, safeguarding a legacy of 8,000 Valencian reals in favour of his nephew Jofré de Borja, lord of Villalonga and Anna.[385] It was common for cardinals to make several wills throughout their lives, to account for the acquisition of benefices, wealth and possessions. While in Pisa, recuperating from the storm, Borgia was invited to be guest of honour at a banquet, where he met a number of the city's dignitaries.[386] The shipwreck was later immortalized in the satirical *Aposento en Juvera,* which also described his visit to Alcalá de Henares.[387]

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[383] Vaquero Piñeiro, 'Valencianos en Roma', p. 191.

[384] 'Carta de Rodrigo de Borja a Lorenzo el Magnifico', <https://cvc.cervantes.es/actcult/borja/alexander/alexander_01.htm > (accessed 10 October 2018).

[385] De Roo, *Material,* i, pp. 564–5.

[386] J. Sanchis y Sivera, 'El Cardenal Rodrigo de Borja en Valencia', *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, 84 (1924), p. 160.

[387] F. A. Domínguez, 'La sátira del *Aposento en Juvera* y su trasfondo histórico–cultural: La visita del cardenal Rodrigo de Borja a España como legado entre 1472 y 1473', *eHumanista: Journal of Iberian Studies*, 37 (2017), p. 622.

Borgia finally returned to Rome (via Siena) on 24 October, after an absence of one year and five months. He reported on his (limited) achievements in the Spanish kingdoms, but they were not necessarily any more remarkable than those of his fellow legates. Bessarion had faced the biggest challenge, Louis XI had treated the legate with such disdain and the amount of time Bessarion had spent in France meant that he had been unable to visit Burgundy and England. In a letter to Francesco da Toledo, Cardinal Ammannati reflected on the futile nature of the French legation and that only a miracle would have ensured French support: 'Videne, Francisce, ut exitus non boni sint ambitiosis legationibus? Ut etiam Deus nostrae vanitatis nos saepe admoneat? Negamus non fieri miracula, ut prius. Adtendamus operum ultima non rariora esse his, quam illis diebus videbimus'.[388] The legate turned back towards Rome, but got no further than Ravenna, where he died on 18 November 1472. His body was transported to Rome and buried in his titular church of SS. Apostoli. Another story of futility was seen in the outcome of Barbo's two–and–a–half–year Central European legation. He failed to gain any support for the crusade and returned to Rome on 26 October 1474.[389] If there was any success at all, it was achieved by that unlikely crusader, Oliviero Carafa, in his capacity as legate to the fleet, though the military side of things was in the hands of the Venetian commander Pietro Mocenigo. In September 1472 their fleet briefly occupied Smyrna, on the Aegean coast of Anatolia. The cardinal returned to Rome on 23 January 1473 with a band of captive Turkish prisoners and a portion of the chains that had blocked the entrance to the harbour in Satalia.[390]

[388] Ammannati Piccolomini, *Lettere*, iii, pp. 1750–1.

[389] Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 224.

[390] Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 228.

The legates were still absent when the pontiff's thoughts turned to the possible creation of new cardinals. Ammannati was particularly keen to learn Borgia's opinions of the potential candidates, who were thought to be Pietro Guglielmo de Rocha, archbishop of Salerno, and Giovanni Gianderoni, bishop of Città di Castello and papal confessor.[391] Not surprisingly, Borgia supported the case of Rocha, who was a Spaniard and could help to offset the deaths of five Spanish cardinals between 1459 and 1469. He opposed the elevation of Gianderoni for no apparent reason, though the College was certainly not short of Italians.[392] In the event this was all speculation, for neither received a red hat: Rocha remained at Salerno and Gianderoni was translated to Massa Marittima in 1474.[393]

Instead, the men elevated on 7 May 1473 reflected Sixtus's desire to court a number of secular powers, beginning with René of Anjou, whose candidate was Philippe de Lévis (1435–75), bishop of Arles.[394] After the death of Cardinal Giovanni Castiglioni in 1460, Milan had not had representation in the College of Cardinals. Although several of Pius II's cardinals had been friends of Milan, Paul II had snubbed the duchy throughout his pontificate. Sixtus was keen to redress that and did so with his second nomination, that of Stefano Nardini, archbishop of Milan.[395] This had been in the pipeline for some time. On 20 June 1472 the Milanese ambassador to the Holy See, Giovanni Arcimboldi, had informed Galeazzo Maria Sforza that the 'Cardinal of S. Sisto (Pietro Riario) has promised the

[391] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 227.

[392] Ammannati Piccolomini, *Lettere*, iii, pp. 1749–50; Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica,* ii, pp. 130, 187, 227.

[393] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 206.

[394] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 77.

[395] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 208.

archbishop of Milan to have him promoted to the cardinalate' and that the papal nephew 'has the best path to power to obtain this promotion'.[396] After Nardini came Ausias Despuig (1423–83), archbishop of Monreale.[397] He was the king of Aragon's ambassador to the Holy See, but what gave him the closest association with Rodrigo Borgia was the fact that they had both been born in Xàtiva.[398] Sixtus showed resolve by not naming Margarit, whose ability might have constituted a threat if he moved to Rome. Despuig was more acceptable. The fourth name was that of the Castilian power broker Pedro González de Mendoza, bishop of Sigüenza, who had played his cards far more skilfully than had his metropolitan, the overtly ambitious Carrillo.[399] Like Margarit, Mendoza was a man of exceptional ability, but – in the manner of many a French cardinal – he enjoyed greater power and influence by remaining in his native land than he would have done by moving to Rome. Again, that helped to neutralize any potential threat to Sixtus and his *nipoti*. It may be of no significance, but Despuig and Mendoza were named in the order in which Borgia had visited their respective kingdoms. Either way, they were choices which suited him, strengthening the numerical contribution from Iberia but not threatening his position as the foremost Iberian cardinal. An additional Castilian connection was provided by Jacopo Antonio Venieri (1422–79), bishop of Cuenca, who received his Castilian see after serving as Pope Paul's nuncio in the kingdom and King Enrique's ambassador in Rome.[400] The sixth name was that of Giovanni Battista Cibo (1432–

[396] Quoted in J. M. DeSilva, 'Princely Patronage on Display: The Case of Cardinal Pietro Riario and Pope Sixtus IV, 1471–1474', *Royal Studies Journal,* 6/1 (2019), p. 71.

[397] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 216.

[398] Alòs, *Cardenales y prelados*, p. 63.

[399] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 258.

[400] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 148.

92), who was bishop of Molfetta in the kingdom of Naples, where his father had long been resident, but whose associations with Liguria were no less strong, for he originated in Sixtus's home town of Savona and had been bishop there for over five years.[401] By the time of his promotion to the College of Cardinals he was serving as head of the Apostolic Datary. The penultimate name on what turned out to be the largest group of cardinals created by Sixtus at any one time was that of Giovanni Arcimboldi (1426–88), bishop of Novara and – as has been noted – the Milanese orator in Rome, his promotion on top of Nardini's doubling the favour shown to Galeazzo Maria Sforza.[402] The last–named of the new cardinals also came with diplomatic experience, as Charles the Bold's former envoy to Rome and Castile: Philibert Hugonet (d. 1484), bishop of Mâcon, was described by the Roman diarist Gaspare Pontano (1449–1524), described as a 'homo da bene'.[403]

Although none of these individuals posed a threat to Borgia's position as vice–chancellor, the College now boasted thirty–two members, which meant that each cardinal's individual influence and income was reduced. In the wake of the new elevations, Cardinal Ammannati wrote to Borgia, lamenting the poor quality of the men who had been elevated and urged him to return to Rome.[404] The letter provides a useful insight into the politics of the College: 'maio praeterito cardinales octo creavimus, hoc Iunio eramus pene totidem creaturi, nisi benignitas Dei magis quam nostra diligentia subvenisset'. The low calibre of the men chosen shamed the other cardinals: 'dilata tantum, non sublata, est res. Quo autem ex genere hominum nostrum dedecus pararetur, ex aliorum litteris plene intelliges'. The deaths of two

[401] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 209.

[402] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 226.

[403] Pontano, *Diario*, p. 43; Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 207.

[404] Ammannati Piccolomini, *Lettere*, iii, p. 1719.

of Pius's other cardinals– Niccolò Forteguerri and Jean Jouffroy at the end of the year would have left Ammannati feeling ill at ease in Rome as the number of cardinals created by Sixtus threatened to outnumber those created by earlier pontiffs. Similarly, with Riario's star on the rise it appeared unlikely that any other cardinal could hope to benefit from Sixtus's patronage. Whilst for Borgia there was little chance of him being replaced as vice–chancellor, Riario had become the most powerful cardinal in Rome and Borgia was forced to adapt to this new reality. Where the Spaniard had once played a significant role in greeting visiting dignitaries – the Holy See's foreign minister in all but name – he now found himself eclipsed in that role. Riario's palace became a place where festive diplomacy (*politica festiva)* could be exercised. Like Borgia, Riario knew the value of ceremonial splendour and the diplomatic importance such events carried. The most spectacular and best known was his banquet on 7 June 1473 for the Neapolitan princess Eleanora d'Aragona, who was *en route* to Ferrara and marriage with Duke Ercole d'Este (r. 1471–1505).[405]

Parallels can be drawn between Riario's rise and that of Borgia less than two decades earlier, not least because their papal uncles were relative outsiders in Rome and compensated for that by promoting their young kinsmen to key positions. While Borgia was in Spain, Riario had become titular patriarch of Constantinople, following the death of Bessarion, archbishop of Florence, and administrator of the French bishopric of Mende, thereby giving him a foothold in a number of regions.[406] Through his various preferments, the young cardinal's annual revenue was reportedly in excess of 60,000 gold florins and, as a result, he

[405] DeSilva, 'Princely Patronage', pp. 757–7; C. Corvisieri, 'Il trionfo romano di Eleonora d'Aragona nel giugno 1473', *Archivio della Società Romana di Storia Patria*, 1 (1878), pp. 475–91.

[406] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 171, 212.

had become one of the wealthiest members of the College, eclipsing Borgia.[407] Riario's manner of living provoked scandal 'due to his frivolity and arrogance' but, as the man with the ear of the pope, there was very little open criticism.[408] Riario was Rome's most promising patron, so he tended to be flattered, rather than censured.[409] His *familia* reportedly numbered 500 individuals and cost him 15,000 *scudi* per year.[410] Whereas the Cancelleria had previously been a hub of opportunities for patronage, the focus was now on Riario's palace at SS. Apostoli. The grandiose nature of Riario's living was in stark contrast to the Franciscan poverty he had had to embrace prior to his elevation to the College of Cardinals. Similarly, as the della Rovere were of humble origin, their sudden rise to wealth and influence would have been resented by the more noble families including the Borja.

Shortly after his return, Borgia was presented with an opportunity to reaffirm his influence. Giovanni d'Aragona's appointment as commendatory abbot of Montecassino provided Borgia with the chance to court the royal house of Naples which also had an Aragonese background. Giovanni had been accumulating major benefices since before the age of ten. At seventeen he would now proceed to make his formal entrance to Montecassino as its commendatory abbot, with Borgia riding at his side. The two left Rome in October accompanied by twenty–two bishops, and a number of Neapolitan barons.[411] According to the abbey's history, Borgia ordained Giovanni in a solemn Mass in the abbey church.[412] Given

[407] Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 238.

[408] M. Pellegrini, *Il papato nel Rinascimento* (Bologna, 2010), p. 97.

[409] D'Amico, *Renaissance Humanism,* p. 54.

[410] D'Amico, *Renaissance Humanism*, p. 53.

[411] L. Tosti, *Storia della badia di Monte–Cassino* (3 vols, Naples, 1842), iii, pp. 185–6.

[412] Tosti, *Storia della badia,* iii, p. 187.

that he was too young for ordination as a deacon, let alone as a priest, perhaps this elaborate ceremonial was for nothing more than the conferral of minor orders, for which there was no minimum age. What was of consequence was the show of strength, the alliance between Church and State, and Borgia had put himself at the heart of it.

The vice–chancellor was back in Rome well before the consistory on 17 November, when he sponsored Antonio Massoni to the vacant bishopric at Paphos.[413] At the time of the appointment Cyprus was nominally ruled by Jacques III de Lusignan (r. 1473–4), the infant son of the Venetian Caterina Cornaro, whose home state stood poised to take control of the island. It is possible to trace an Aragonese connection to Cyprus, by means of the queen consort Leonor (1333–1417), but that is surely too tenuous to account for Borgia's involvement. Nine days later he sponsored candidates to the three Venetian–controlled bishoprics: Argos, Capodistria (Koper) and Patrae (Veters). These cases could be viewed as Borgia's desire to cultivate friends and contacts in any quarter he could, even Venice, but there is no indication at any point in his career that he had any genuine interest in Venice or any of the other Italian republics. On the other hand, the Venetian cardinal Marco Barbo was still absent on his Central European legation, and the Pauline *nipoti* Giovanni Battista Zeno and Giovanni Michiel were out of favour in their homeland, so the vice–chancellor could have been approached to act as a neutral sponsor. One other option presents itself. The episcopal candidate for Capodistria was Šimun Vosić, archbishop of Bar, whose status was maintained, making Capodistria temporarily an archbishopric; Patrae was a titular see.[414] Vosić had acted as Borgia's lieutenant in 1470 when the vice–chancellor left Rome to escape the plague. Borgia was not directly interested in the Venetian presence down the eastern coast

[413] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 234.

[414] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 106, 187.

of the Adriatic, nor even indirectly interested in it because Naples regarded it as a threat, but he was interested in rewarding someone who had served him well and needed to remind Curial Rome that he was a reliable patron of long standing, in contrast to Pietro Riario.

It was nothing if not a timely reminder, for 1474 opened with the unexpected death of Riario on 5 January.[415] While Sixtus grieved and for four days refused to meet with any cardinals or conduct any Curial business, for Borgia it was the perfect opportunity to reassert himself. On 24 January he proposed his familiar Pedro Ajosa to the see of Orte and Civita Castellana, which had been made vacant since the shipwreck in October.[416] A politically significant appointment came on 15 March, when Borgia sponsored Johann Beckenschlager (1427–89) to the primatial see of Esztergom in Hungary.[417] Here Beckenschlager succeeded János Vitéz who had been close to receiving a cardinal's hat under Paul II.[418]

Although now back in Rome, Borgia kept his attention turned towards events on the Iberian peninsula. On 11 December 1474 Enrique IV of Castile died.[419] As with the marriage to Ferrando, Isabel and her supporters moved quickly, so that just two days later she was crowned at Segovia as queen regnant of Castile and León. In an attempt to win over the opposing faction, her husband was permitted only strictly limited powers in her realm, but Afonso of Portugal refused to concede defeat, contracted a marriage with Juana 'la

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[415] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 78.

[416] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 145, 184.

[417] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 267.

[418] 'János Vitéz', < https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/vitez-janos_%28Enciclopedia-Italiana%29/> (accessed 13 October 2020).

[419] W. H. Woodward, *The History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic* (2 vols, Philadelphia, 1868), i, pp. 134–6.

Beltraneja' in 1475, and the civil war continued. Borgia had backed Isabel, and now had a clear investment in the new regime and a reason to see it succeed. When, in due course, Isabel sent ambassadors to Rome to profess her obedience, the vice–chancellor hosted a banquet for them and primed them for their meeting with Sixtus.[420] Despite being a former subject of the kings of Aragon, Borgia was clearly positioning himself as the Curial champion of Castile, thereby anticipating the phenomenon of 'Spain' and 'Spanishness' that Ferrando and Isabel were eventually able to create once both kingdoms were securely under their rule. As far as they were concerned, Borgia was their 'father and lord, friend and our compadre'.[421]

The Castilian embassy was only one among many to visit Rome in the course of 1475, for it was a Jubilee year. Since his papal election, Sixtus had spearheaded infrastructure and urban renewal projects designed to prepare Rome for a heavier influx of pilgrims than visited in average years. The Ponte Sisto is the best–known example of this initiative.[422] Sixtus was leading by example and expected all the cardinals to make their own contributions to renewing the fabric of Rome, whether at their titular churches or elsewhere. Borgia's contribution was to commission from the sculptor Andrea Bregno a new marble tabernacle for the church of S. Maria del Popolo.[423] The choice of venue was doubly significant, for not

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[420] A. Paz y Melia*, El cronista Alonso de Palencia, su vida y sus obras* (Madrid, 1914), p. 192.

[421] Á. Fernández de Córdova Miralles, *Alejandro y los Reyes Católicos Relaciones político–eclesiásticas (1492–1503)* (Rome, 2004), p. 242.

[422] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 76.

[423] L. P. Bauman, *Power and Image: Della Rovere Patronage in Late Quattrocento Rome* (Ann Arbor, 1990), pp. 40–52; I. Wardropper, *European Sculpture, 1400–1900 in the*

only was this the first church encountered by pilgrims arriving in Rome from the north, but it was also the one effectively adopted by Sixtus and his kinsmen as their family church in Rome, for they were newcomers and had no Roman roots of their own. Borgia's patronage was therefore very much in the service of the Church and the papacy, but also calculated to demonstrate his loyalty to this particular pope. His tabernacle depicts the Virgin and Child with four saints and the motto 'Ave Maria Gratia Plena'. That was also a wise choice, for Sixtus had a strong Marian devotion: Borgia could reflect that in his patronage without going so far as to endorse the full Franciscan doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, which Sixtus had supported and verbally defended. Borgia's tabernacle is now to be found in the church's sacristy.

S. Maria del Popolo also received patronage from Borgia's mistress, Vannozza Catanei (1442–1518), who maintained a long–term connection with the church, being buried there in due course.[424] 1475 was very much the height of her association with the cardinal, for her son Cesare Borgia was born in September that year. According to Infessura, Borgia argued that Cesare's father was Vannozza's husband Domenico d'Arignano, but this was

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Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, 2011), p. 40; 'Roma i els Borja: Santa Maria del Popolo', < https://www.elsborja.cat/rutes/roma-i-els-borja/santa-maria-del-popolo/ > (accessed 10 October 2020).

[424] C. Stollhans, 'Vannozza Cattanei: A Hotel Proprietress in Renaissance Rome', *Early Modern Women*, 10/1 (2015), pp. 105–113; K. J. P. Lowe, 'Franciscan and Papal Patronage at the Clarissan Convent of San Cosimato in Trastevere, 1440–1560', *Papers of the British School at Rome*, 68 (2000), p. 235.

countered in 1480 when Sixtus legitimized the boy so that he might have an ecclesiastical career.[425] What is less clear is the date of birth of Giovanni Borgia, the future second duke of Gandía, which has been placed in 1474 and 1476. Either way, the tone established by Pietro Riario and condoned by Sixtus was evidently such that a prince of the Church felt able to take his cue from secular princes in matters of personal morality, rather than from the obligations the clerical life stipulated.

Among the most illustrious of the Holy Year pilgrims was King Ferrante. Ironically for Borgia, who was as keen to ingratiate himself with the king as with the pope, Neapolitan visitors who entered the city from the south would not have set eyes on S. Maria del Popolo, let alone on the new tabernacle. Cardinals Borgia and Giuliano della Rovere left Rome on 14 January to meet the king at Velletri.[426] The party entered Rome on 28 January and was received by the rest of the cardinals at Porta S. Giovanni. The ride from Velletri to Rome gave Borgia another chance to improve his relations with the king, building on the visit to Montecassino fifteen months earlier. Ferrante was less than impressed by Rome, noting that the streets were 'narrow and cluttered'.[427] He stayed for three days and was accorded appropriately lavish hospitality. Borgia and Della Rovere were once again charged with accompanying him out of the city on 1 February, the party then also including Federico da Montefeltro (1422–82), the recently created duke of Urbino. 1474 had not only seen Federico raised to that eminence among the papal vicars, but also witnessed the marriage of his daughter Giovanna to Giovanni della Rovere (1457–1501), the cardinal's brother. The transient nature of the papacy meant that families had a small window during which they

[425] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 293.

[426] Infessura, *Diario*, pp. 79–80.

[427] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 79.

were able to exert their influence. This was not lost on Borgia who had already begun to father his own dynasty.

Against the backdrop of the Holy Year and its crowds of pilgrims the day–to–day business of the Church continued. Borgia was never one of the most prolific of sponsors to vacant benefices, as his record in 1475 illustrates, for he took on just three cases. French business tended to dominate and that was Giuliano della Rovere's sphere of interest. Borgia's acts seem to have been more carefully targeted and can generally – but not invariably – be explained by means of geography or existing patronage relationships. On 9 January he acted as the sponsor of Barnaba Benatti to the bishopric of Assisi, which had been vacant a second time since the shipwreck fifteen months earlier.[428] Thereafter, there was nothing until 31 July, when he sponsored Diego d Avellaneda, a cleric of Zamora, to the bishopric of Mallorca.[429] Thirdly, on 15 December he sponsored Orlando Orsini to Nola, in the ecclesiastical province of Naples.[430] Mallorca and Naples were both very much within the sphere that Borgia sought to make his own, cultivating relations with the kings of Aragon and Naples, and their favoured clerics: he and Della Rovere could develop their specialisms quite independently, with consequences that did not follow until the conclave of 1492.

1475 also saw a literary dimension to Borgia's continued patronage of men from the kingdom of Aragon. Jeroni Pau (*c*. 1458–97), a native of Barcelona, was the son of an Aragonese royal councillor. He pursued his studies at various Italian universities and was at Pisa in the academic year 1475–6, but also visited Rome, where Borgia's household provided a natural base. Though a mere youth, Pau composed the patriotic *De fluminibus et montibus*

[428] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 109.

[429] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 203.

[430] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 226.

Hispaniarum and dedicated it to Borgia, taking the opportunity to congratulate the former legate on his achievements in the peninsula: 'Accedit locorum regio numque notitia, quorum te nuper amplissima prouinciae nostrae legatio peritissi mum reddidit. Magnam enim Hispaniae partem feliciter peragrando, immensa tuae dignationis et gloriae monumenta nostrae Hesperiae reliquisti.' He hopes that Borgia may yet achieve even greater success: 'Spero dabuntur tuo nomini aliquando maiora.'[431] Pau was Catalan, but his rivers and mountains were 'Spanish'. His subject matter therefore reflected the ongoing process of integrating the Iberian kingdoms into a new entity, Spain, a revival of the Roman province of Hispania. Borgia was a Valencian who effectively chose to become a Spaniard; when he was elected pope he inherited some aspects of the ancient Roman emperors' far–reaching authority. It was a neat combination that humanists such as Pau – revivers of Antiquity – could be harnessed to express and publicize.

As things worked out, there was precious little 'Spanish' business for Borgia to steer through consistories in 1476. Indeed, his only contribution of that nature came on 8 March, when he sponsored Alonso Enríquez de Lemos to the bishopric of Lugo.[432] Once again the majority of appointments were to French benefices and were overseen by Cardinals d'Estouteville and Hugonet. Meanwhile, Giuliano della Rovere was so convinced that the route to his long–term fortune lay through France that he spent most of the year as legate to the kingdom and to the papal territory of Avignon.[433] However, he had not automatically taken Pietro Riario's place as the all–powerful papal favourite, for Sixtus had effectively chosen Pietro's brother Girolamo Riario to fill that vacancy. Girolamo was a layman, which

[431] Quoted in Miralles, *Alejandro y los Reyes Católicos*, p. 236.

[432] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 199.

[433] Pastor, *History*, iv, pp. 322–3.

had the effect of drawing the papacy further and further into the turbulence of Italian secular politics, while there was such personal animosity between him and Giuliano that it exacerbated factional divisions in Rome, Riario allying with the Orsini, Della Rovere with the Colonna. By contrast, Borgia diplomatically distanced himself from such squabbles as it neither concerned him nor could compromise his relationships with Italian secular powers.

Most immediately, though, 1476 brought a particularly severe plague season in Rome. Accompanied by Cardinals Borgia, d'Estouteville, Carafa, Nardini, Gonzaga and Michiel, Sixtus left the city to seek healthier air elsewhere.[434] The papal party headed first to Viterbo, but when plague arrived there, they moved to Amelia, arriving on 8 July, before settling in Narni. On 18 July Filippo Calandrini died of plague at Bagnoregio, between Viterbo and Orvieto, meaning that there were offices to be redistributed. Calandrini had served as major penitentiary since 1459. With Borgia secure at the Chancery and Orsini at the Camera, this was the opportunity for Sixtus to favour the absent Giuliano della Rovere with headship of a Curial department. Step by step, a future showdown between him and Borgia was becoming more likely. Calandrini had also been bishop of Porto and S. Rufina. On 24 July, Borgia was translated from Albano to Porto.[435] Porto owed its name to the harbour built by Claudius and enlarged by Trajan but had been side–lined with the development of Ostia as the port of Rome. Pius II had written in his *Commentaries* that the harbour 'is now choked with mud and looks like a lagoon... the city was once destroyed and then reduced to a mere fortress, this is also uninhabited'.[436] There was precious little in the way of cure of souls and there is no indication that Borgia visited the bishopric, even though it lay close to Rome. After pausing

[434] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 81.

[435] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 39.

[436] Pius II, *Commentaries ... Books VI–IX*, p. 753.

in Foligno, where it was joined by Giuliano della Rovere, the papal party returned to Rome on 23 October.

After the deaths of Cardinals Roverella (2 May), Calandrini (18 July) and Agnifili (9 November), on 18 December Sixtus made his third set of promotions to the College.[437] The political context in which the pope made his choices for the cardinal's hat was the continuing civil war in Castile, which had seen a major but inconclusive battle at Toro on 1 March: Afonso of Portugal maintained his claim to Castile, while Louis XI would have been delighted by the Aragonese war in Iberia's central kingdom which took the threat away from the Pyrenees. Giuliano della Rovere supported the interests of both Afonso and Louis. Sixtus named five new cardinals. First came the archbishop of Lisbon, Jorge da Costa (1406–1508), who was Afonso' confessor and candidate.[438] Second was Charles de Bourbon (1435–88), archbishop of Lyon and primate of France.[439] Charles could not have been better connected: he was brother–in–law to Louis XI's daughter Anne, and brother to the duke of Bourbon, going on to inherit that title in the final months of his life. Bourbon's exalted social position contrasted with Costa's humble birth and explained why he spent the rest of his life in France, with no question of him ever moving to Rome.[440] Time and again, Sixtus executed

[437] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 18.

[438] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 284.

[439] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 113; A. Péricaud, *Notice sur Charles de Bourbon, Cardinal–Archevêque de Lyon, 1446–1488* (Lyon, 1855), p. 8.

[440] D. S Chambers article 'What made a Renaissance Cardinal Respectable? The Case of Cardinal Costa of Portugal', *Renaissance Studies,* 12/1 (1998), pp. 87–108 offers an analysis of Costa's rags–to–riches story.

balancing acts in his choice of cardinals. On this occasion he felt obliged to offer something to the kingdom of Aragon, so the third name was that of Pere Ferris (1415/16–78), bishop of Tarazona, who originated in Borgia's diocese of Valencia.[441] The Roman Giovanni Battista Mellini (1405–78), bishop of Urbino, was the only Italian on the list.[442] Last came Pierre de Foix *le jeune* (1449–90), bishop of Vannes and Aire, who needs to be distinguished from his eponymous great–uncle, who had himself been raised to the cardinalate in 1414 and died in 1464. If Bourbon was undoubtedly a French cardinal and Ferris undoubtedly an Aragonese one, the younger Pierre de Foix was something of a hybrid, for his father was Gaston, count of Foix, and his mother Leonor of Aragon, who went on to be queen of Navarre for a matter of days in 1479.[443] The political implications of Pierre's appointment turned out to be significant, for he went on to act as regent for his young nephew and niece.

Just eight days after the announcement of the new cardinals, the political stability of the Italian peninsula was upset by the assassination of Galeazzo Maria Sforza as he visited the Milanese church of S. Stefano on its patronal feast.[444] The ducal title passed to his young son Gian Galeazzo (r. 1476–94), while *de facto* power was disputed among the surviving Sforza and their ministers. On 1 January 1477 one of the new cardinals, Mellini, was sent as legate to do what he could to bring order to a difficult situation.[445] Even more momentous

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[441] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 276; Cardella, *Memorie storiche*, iii, pp. 197–8.

[442] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 286. Cardella, *Memorie storiche*, iii, pp. 198–200; M. A. Visceglia, 'The Social Background and Education of Cardinals', in M. Hollingsworth, M. Pattenden and A. Witte (eds), *A Companion To The Early Modern Cardinal,* (Brill, 2020), p. 250.

[443] Cardella, *Memorie storiche*, iii, pp. 200–3.

[444] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 82.

[445] Cardella, *Memorie storiche*, iii, p. 200.

was the death in battle of Duke Charles of Burgundy on 5 January.[446] No legate was sent. Charles's personal realm ceased to exist: Louis XI secured control over those portions that fell within his kingdom, while Charles's daughter Marie (r. 1477–82) was left with the Low Countries. Within months she was married to Maximilian (1459–1519), son and heir of the holy Roman emperor, as a consequence of which the balance of power in north–west Europe was dramatically reconfigured.[447] However, it was not a region in which Cardinal Borgia took much of an interest.

What did concern Borgia was the fate of Castile, still poised between potential unification with either Aragon or Portugal. Borgia had clearly thrown his support behind Ferrando and Isabel, while Della Rovere supported Afonso. This came to a head on 25 January, when there was a debate in consistory over the annulment of the marriage between Afonso and Juana 'la Beltraneja': the king sought to be rid of his wife while nevertheless maintaining his claim to the Castilian throne.[448] The king got his way: the marriage was annulled the following year, Juana entered a convent, but the struggle for power over Castile continued. Whatever Giuliano della Rovere's purpose in intervening in Iberia, it was fleeting compared to Borgia's lifelong commitments there, and his next two acts of consistorial sponsorship can be taken together and interpreted as an attempt to make or keep a number of

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[446] S. Dean, 'Battle of Nancy', *Medieval Warfare: Theme– The Burgundian Wars*, 4/4 (2014), pp. 39–43; D. L. Jensen, 'Charles the Bold', *Brigham Young University Studies*, 7, 3/4 (1966), pp. 189–92.

[447] S. Hankins, 'Mary Magdalen and the Burgundian Question', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 73 (2010), pp. 99–100.

[448] J. Zurita, *Anales de la corona de Aragon* (6 vols, Çaragoça, 1688), iv, pp. 281–2.

friends. First, on 31 January, came the promotion of Joan II's grandson Filip (d. 1488) to the archbishopric of Palermo.[449] Then, the translation of João Manuel Ferras from Ceuta to Guarda on 17 March looks like an attempt to build bridges with the Portuguese monarch and counteract the influence of Della Rovere.[450]

Borgia was on much more familiar territory when, on 25 June, he was appointed as legate to Naples, the purpose of his mission being to officiate at the marriage of the widowed King Ferrante to Joana, the daughter of Joan II, a union that reinforced the existing close dynastic connections between Naples and Aragon.[451] The legate left Rome on 22 August and performed the marriage ceremony on 14 September.[452] Four days later he crowned Joan as queen consort. It was surely the ideal opportunity to discuss how links between Naples and Rome might also be strengthened, perhaps with reference to the king's clerical son Giovanni, but certainly with regard to the export of wheat from the Regno to Rome, where there was a shortage of bread. The legate headed north in early October, but it took more than another month of negotiations before the king contemplated allowing wheat to be transported to Rome. Despite such overtures, no wheat appeared.[453]

By the time Borgia set out on his legation, the Camerlengo Cardinal Latino Orsini had died on 11 August. He was succeeded by the veteran Cardinal d'Estouteville.[454] The death of Orsini removed one of the longest serving cardinals, which in turn lessened the opposition to

[449] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 233.

[450] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 125.

[451] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 40.

[452] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 40.

[453] De Roo, *Material*, ii, p. 220.

[454] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 69.

Sixtus's new set of cardinals. Seven new names were put forward by the pope on 10 December 1477.[455] Whilst the interests of the emperor and the king of Hungary were balanced as too were those of Venice and Naples, it was Sixtus who benefitted the most, ensuring his position was as secure as it had been in December 1471 when Pietro Riario and Giuliano della Rovere had been elevated.[456] Sixtus made his priorities clear by naming first and second Cristoforo della Rovere (1434–78), archbishop of Tarentaise, and Girolamo Basso della Rovere (1434–1507), bishop of Recanati.[457] Girolamo was a papal nephew; Cristoforo happened to bear the Della Rovere name, but any kinship with Sixtus was extremely tenuous. However, he was the more promising and competent of the two. The emperor's candidate was his trusted counsellor Georg Hesler (1427–82), the king of Hungary's the Veronese–born Franciscan Gabriele Rangone (d. 1486), archbishop of Eger/Erlau.[458] Rangone was not displeasing to Venice, but the long–standing Venetian candidate for elevation was Pietro Foscari, who had been named by Paul II in 1471, but then excluded from the conclave at the insistence of Latino Orsini, whose death effectively solved that problem.[459] The penultimate name was that of Giovanni d'Aragona, the Neapolitan prince so carefully cultivated by Borgia. Indeed, when Cardinal Ammannati wrote to Giovanni to congratulate him, he positively urged him to cultivate Borgia, who would be able

[455] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 18–19.

[456] Infessura, *Diario,* p. 83.

[457] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii*,* pp. 270, 242.

[458] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 93.

[459] S. Fletcher, 'The Making of a Fifteenth–Century Venetian Cardinal', *Studi Veneziani,* 31 (1996), p. 33.

to guide him through Curial Rome and support Neapolitan interests there.[460] The final elevation was that of the sixteen–year–old Raffaele Sansoni Riario (1460–1521), making this the most overtly nepotistic of Sixtus's eight separate sets of creations.[461] All did not go according to the papal plan, for the promising Cristoforo della Rovere died on 1 February 1478.[462] Just nine days later Sixtus replaced him with his brother Domenico della Rovere (1442–1501), thereby reinforcing his reputation as an arch–nepotist, even if this was merely a like–for–like replacement.[463]

It was, however, the youngest of the Sistine *nipoti*, Raffaele Sansoni Riario, who soon found himself at the heart of what was arguably the century's most infamous diplomatic incident, when he witnessed the assassination attempt on the brothers Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici in the Florentine Duomo on 26 April that year.[464] The Pazzi Conspiracy may have been executed in Florence, but it is thought to have a strong Roman dimension: Girolamo Riario was party to it, but Sixtus's knowledge of the plans has been heavily disputed. Borgia's earlier career had included contacts with members of the Pazzi family but also with some of the Medici, but in neither case is it enough to let us conclude that he held strong views about the nature and composition of Florentine government. The most one can say is that the Church routinely favoured the established order, instituted by God, rather than rebels

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[460] Ammannati Piccolomini, *Lettere*, iii, pp. 2179–82.

[461] 'Raffaele Sansoni Riario', < https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/raffaele-riario-sansoni_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/> (accessed 10 October 2020).

[462] L. van ter Toolen, 'The Singular tomb of Cristoforo and Domenico della Rovere in Santa Maria del Popolo, Rome', *Incontri Rivista europea di studi Italiani*, 32/44 (2017), p. 45.

[463] Cardella, *Memorie storiche*, iii, pp. 214–15.

[464] Cardella, *Memorie storiche*, iii, p. 212.

against it, and Borgia routinely identified with the Church and its interests. As Central Italy descended into the Pazzi War between Florence and the papacy, Borgia steered clear of controversy and stuck to what he knew, supporting the king of Aragon's ambassador Gonzalo Fernández de Heredia to the bishopric of Barcelona in the consistory of 27 November, following the death of Borgia's kinsman.[465]

At the start of 1479, on 23 January, Borgia gained control of the castles and lands of Nepi and Civita Castellana, the latter in particular sitting on the border between Tuscany and Umbria was strategically important. The fortresses controlled the Via Cassia and Via Flaminia, roads that led towards Tuscany and the pope's new enemies. There is relatively little evidence of Sixtus ever displaying much favour towards Borgia, but this looks like a case of wanting the fortresses to be in safe hands at a time of crisis. As had been the case at Subiaco, Borgia acted as a good lord at Nepi, undertaking a significant remodelling of the *rocca*.[466] In the absence of a Florentine cardinal, there was no senior cleric to feel a conflict of loyalties between Florence and Rome, where Borgia joined nine other cardinals on a commission to discuss peace terms with Florence. Attempts to reconcile the two sides continued throughout the year. Meanwhile, standard Curial business continued unabated: on 19 February he sponsored his familiar Joan de Castro to the Sicilian bishopric of Girgenti,

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[465] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 115.

[466] L. Quilici, *Fortificazioni antiche in Italia: età repubblicana* (Rome, 2001), p. 81; S. Tarquini, 'Nepi e Civita Castellana', in M. Chiabò, S. Maddalo, M. Miglio and A. M. Oliva (eds), *Roma di fronte all'Europa al tempo di Alessandro VI*, (2 vols, Rome, 2001), ii, pp. 705–17; F. Buchicchio and F. Tiziano, 'L'organizzazione del cantiere nelle rocche di Nepi e Civita Castellana in età alessandrina: dati archivistici' in M Chiabò and M. Gargano (eds) *Le Rocche Alessandrine E La Rocca di Civita Castellana* (Viterbo, 2001), pp. 47–8.

and on 16 June the new bishop of Coria in Castile was the Hieronymite Joan de Ortega, from the diocese of Valencia.[467] One way or another, Borgia was helping to shape the episcopate throughout the peninsula. The circumstances could hardly have been more auspicious, for Joan II had died on 20 January, meaning that Ferrando was finally king of Aragon. That inheritance had an impact on the Portuguese claim and the Castilian civil war, which finally reached its conclusion with the peace signed at Alcáçovas on 4 September.

In that Naples had sided with the papacy against Florence, Borgia's cultivation of the Regno and its ruling dynasty had brought some benefits. However, it was also Naples which provided the key to resolving the conflict, for Lorenzo de' Medici travelled there early in 1480 and negotiated a new alliance between Florence and Naples, bypassing Rome and the papacy in every sense.[468] This was the origin of a realignment of the peninsula's five larger states and their allies, albeit one that came to unite so many of the states that they could claim it was a continuation of the Lega d'Italia negotiated by Nicholas V in 1454–5. Ties between states had been strengthened by the marriages of Alfonso, duke of Calabria, to Ippolita Maria Sforza in 1465, and between Ercole d'Este and Eleonora d'Aragona in 1473. Florence already had close connections with Milan, meaning that Naples, Milan, Florence and Ferrara now found themselves aligned. The way inter–state relations worked in later fifteenth–century Italy, there needed to be a balance of power, rather than an attempt to bring everyone onto the same side. Whether commercially or militarily, Venice was feared by the others and had to be counterbalanced. The republic's options were limited by the league, so Pietro Foscari was charged with cultivating Girolamo Riario and negotiating a papal–Venetian

[467] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 94, 138.

[468] Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, ii, p. 338; W. Roscoe, *The Life of Lorenzo de' Medici* (3 vols, London, 1796), i, pp. 224–7.

alliance.[469] According to its terms, Riario was secure in his domains in the Romagna, providing Venice could set its sights on Ferrara, a papal fiefdom.

It was against this rapidly changing backdrop that Sixtus created five more cardinals on 15 May 1480, who were supposed to compensate for the deaths of Cardinals (Angelo) Capranica, Eroli and Ammannati in 1478–9, but left Sixtus with a net numerical gain and an overall loss in terms of ability.[470] Paolo Fregoso (1428–98) was archbishop of Genoa and doubled up as its doge on three occasions.[471] He was a controversial figure by any standards and certainly no diplomat.[472] Cosimo Orsini (d. 1481), archbishop of Trani, was there to fill the gap left by his kinsman Latino in 1477.[473] Ferry de Clugny (*c*. 1430–83), bishop of Tournai, was a close associate of the new rulers of the Low Countries, Marie and Maximilian, and did not move to Rome until 1482.[474] In order to counter the new Orsini cardinal, Sixtus promoted Giovanni Battista Savelli (*c*. 1422–98), a battle–hardened ally of the Colonna, but to more than counter the new Orsini cardinal the pope also promoted the youthful Giovanni

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[469] S. Fletcher, 'Cardinal Marco Barbo as Protector of English Interests at the Roman Curia in the Late Fifteenth Century', *The Downside Review*, 118/410 (2000), p. 35.

[470] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 19–20.

[471] C. Shaw, 'Principles and Practice in the Civic Government of Fifteenth–Century Genoa', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 58/1 (2005), p. 84; V. Molinari, *Paolo Fregoso, Genovese* (Sestri Levante, 2020).

[472] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 184.

[473] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 278.

[474] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 278; R. J. Walsh, *Charles the Bold and Italy (1467–1477) Politics and Personnel* (Liverpool, 2005), pp. 103–6; A. de Schryver, M. Dykmans, (eds) *Le pontifical de Ferry de Clugny, cardinal et évêque de Tournai* (Vatican City, 1989).

Colonna (1456–1508). It was an imbalance disguised as a balance and served the interests of the Colonna ally Giuliano della Rovere. If Borgia picked a side in this longstanding rivalry it tended to be with the Orsini.

Meanwhile, Borgia avoided controversy by taking up the causes of candidates to distant bishoprics. On 22 March Stefano Grube was somewhat surprisingly translated from Troia to Riga and succeeded by Scipione Piscicelli.[475] Borgia was the sponsor of both appointments. On 14 April he turned his attention to Pomesanien/Marienwerder, in the province of Riga, where Johann Christian von Lessen became the new bishop.[476] Thereafter, he was involved in the promotions to Cambrai on 17 May and Messina on 7 July, demonstrating how balanced his sponsorship to benefices were.[477]

That summer was certainly an uncomfortable time, not least for anyone with interests in southern Italy. In July Ottoman forces captured Cutrofiano and Sogliano in Campania.[478] On 11 August the city of Otranto was seized, its archbishop was slain in his cathedral and other churches were destroyed or desecrated. Over 800 citizens were massacred for refusing to convert to Islam.[479] In Rome, Borgia was among the cardinals nominated to a commission to oversee preparations for the recapture of Otranto, while Gabriele Rangone went as legate to Naples and Giuliano della Rovere to seek military aid in France.[480] There was little in the way of a serious Christian response to this much–anticipated disaster, and it was only with the death of Sultan Mehmed II the following year that the Ottoman forces left Italy. In the

[475] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 246, 282.

[476] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 240.

[477] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 129, 210.

[478] Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, ii, p. 344.

[479] Vasco, *Diario,* p. 587; Infessura, *Diario,* p. 85.

[480] Gherardi, *Diario romano*, pp. 122–3.

meantime, Borgia had fleeting connections with the sees of Otanna (Sardinia) in February 1481 and Corfu in March, ensuring that both received new bishops.[481]

Towards the end of the year lists of cardinals' familiars were once again compiled for submission to the pope.[482] By the census date of 18 November, Borgia had 106 familiars, so had recovered from some of his losses whilst away on legation to Spain and the subsequent shipwreck. Not surprisingly, the overwhelming majority of Borgia's familiars were again from the Spanish kingdoms, with Aragon represented more heavily than Castile, and the vice–chancellor's diocese of Valencia most intensively of all. There were even three individuals – Bernat Borrell, Pedro Leopardi and Lluís Torà – who had been members of Calixtus III's household: the degree of loyalty Borgia inspired was clearly remarkable. This is not to say that, out of the 220 familiars who appear in one or more of the lists compiled in 1470, 1472, 1473 and 1481 that Borgia limited his patronage to Spaniards, for there are also Italian, French and German names in evidence, but Borgia was so obviously the natural patron for Spaniards in Rome that they would have been unwise to look elsewhere. Indeed, such was the strength of Borgia's position as vice–chancellor that he acted as a magnet for clerics who might not have even attempted to pursue Curial careers but the combination of his strong hand in the Chancery and charismatic personality had convinced them otherwise. By 1481 Borgia had served as vice–chancellor of the Church for twenty–four years, making him one of the most experienced holders of that office. Perhaps out of respect for this achievement, a Castilian auditor of the Rota, Gonzalo de Villadiego, composed a treatise about the dignity and excellence of the cardinalate and the office of vice chancellor, *De cardinalium excellentia et dignitate ac de officio vicecancellarii*, which the author recognises

[481] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 152, 230.

[482] See Appendix III.

as second only to the pope: 'secundo quero iuxta hoc qs hat amius officiu in Curia post papa'.[483] Villadiego stressed Borgia's ability, noting that 'few were more exalted than him'.[484] It was the conventional language of a client to a patron, and Borgia received more of it in 1482 when his familiar Jeroni Pau turned from his earlier foray into the natural history of Spain and penned sixty–eight verses in elegiac couplets in praise of the cardinal's virtues. They open:

> God reserves for you greater things, because the sacred tiara suits only your head. Oh, may I be allowed to see the desired days! Who will honour you, Rome? (Dios te reserve para cosas más grandes, porque la Sagrada tiara convin sólo a tu cabeza. Oh! Qué me sea permitidio ver los días deseados!. ¿Quién te honrrará, Roma, una vez cambiado el nombre?).[485]

Borgia is compared to several classical figures, including Cato, Cicero and the emperor Augustus. Praise was also showered on his architectural patronage at the Cancelleria and Subiaco. Other literary clients included the Mallorcans Arnau Santacília, and Esperandéu Espanyol.[486] Such examples demonstrate that the Cancelleria was once again the focal point for patronage, the death of Pietro Riario had brought the brief reign of SS. Apostoli to an end. Borgia may not have been overly literate himself, but it seems that he was increasingly aware of the power and legacy cultural patronage provided.

Outside the walls of the Cancelleria, the political situation was tense. The alliances formed in 1480 finally went to war at the beginning of May 1482: Venice invaded Ferrarese

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[483] Vat. Lat. 3183, f. 33v.

[484] Vat. Lat. 3183, f. 2r.

[485] Quoted in Miralles, *Alejandro y los Reyes Católicos*, p. 237.

[486] Miralles, *Alejandro y los Reyes Católicos*, p. 237.

territory and did so with papal permission, while the other 'league' states came to the defence of Ercole d'Este's duchy. There were implications for most, if not all, Curial cardinals, whether they came from states which were involved in the fighting or through peace negotiations at various stages of the conflict. Cardinals Colonna and Savelli were most directly involved in the first stage of the war, when Neapolitan forces entered the Papal States and approached the walls of Rome, for they were arrested on suspicion of aiding the enemy and were imprisoned in Castel S. Angelo.[487] Borgia had strong links with Naples, but at no point does he seem to have been regarded as dangerously close to Ferrante, though he was nevertheless well placed to participate in peace negotiations between the papacy and Naples.[488] In October 1482 two Aragonese envoys, Joan Margarit i Pau, bishop of Gerona, and Bartolomeo Verino, arrived in Rome to discuss peace terms between Sixtus and the League. The committee of cardinals with whom they dealt was comprised of Borgia, Giuliano della Rovere, Costa, Sansoni Riario, Clugny, Gonzaga and the rapidly deteriorating d'Estouteville, who hosted the meeting because he was too infirm to leave his palace.[489] On 24 October, Borgia acted as sponsor to Giovanni d'Aragona– not the cardinal– but a cleric of Palermo– to the see of Patti (Sicily).[490] Towards the end of the year, a peace treaty was signed on 12 December 1482. This realigned the combatants, Sixtus joining the League and leaving Venice isolated. Five months later Sixtus unleashed his unique weapon, placing the republic under an interdict.

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[487] Pastor, *History*, iv, pp. 355–6.

[488] P. Paschini (ed), *Il carteggio fra il Card. Marco Barbo e Giovanni Lorenzi (1481–1490)*, Studi e Testi 137 (Vatican City, 1948), p. 90.

[489] S. Fletcher, 'Cardinals and the War of Ferrara', *Royal Studies Journal*, iv, (2017), p. 70.

[490] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 232.

For Borgia the year 1483 opened with a reconfiguration of the Castilian episcopate caused by the translation of Cardinal Mendoza to the primatial see of Toledo.[491] That allowed Raffaele Sansoni Riario to become administrator of Osma and to be replaced at Salamanca by Diego Meléndez Valdés, both of which were dealt with by Sixtus *motu proprio*.[492] Thereafter, Borgia and Sansoni Riario jointly sponsored the candidates to Seville, Jaen and Cordoba.[493] Perhaps the young *nipote* was being trained to specialize in Spanish matters, because it certainly did not follow that the cardinal protectors who emerged from this period were natives of the states they were obliged to protect.

A week after that sequence of promotions came the death of Guillaume d'Estouteville, the dean of the College of Cardinals. Borgia and d'Estouteville had served together for twenty–seven years and, in spite of the age difference, appear to have enjoyed a measure of friendship, often travelling together, as had been the case in Tuscany in 1459–60, in 1463 and at Ostia in 1472.[494] D'Estouteville's death meant that Borgia, aged fifty–two, was the new dean, the most senior member of the College. This made him first among equals of the thirty remaining cardinals, the first in any procession, the first to cast his vote in a conclave. Although not the first vice–chancellor to hold the position – Pierre Desprès and Jean de Brogny had combined the two – Borgia was the first Spaniard to do so. It did not

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[491] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 277.

[492] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 231, 250.

[493] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 152, 176, 183, 277.

[494] The two cardinals had been at the baptism in Siena in 1460 together, Mallett, *The Borgias*, p. 86; In 1463 Borgia had travelled to Ostia, Pius II*, Commentaries* … Books VI–IX, p. 754 and in 1472 before leaving for Spain Borgia stayed with d'Estouteville in Ostia, Moroni, *Dizionario di erudizione*, xlix, p. 49.

follow that he would be *papabil*e at the next conclave. In fact, from Corrado Demetri della Subarra in the twelfth century to Joseph Ratzinger in the twenty–first, only nine deans have been elected pope, predominately due to their advanced age.

As the Spanish appointments had indicated, the twenty–two–year–old Sansoni Riario seems to have been the favoured papal *nipote* at that point, so it was he who was made camerlengo, head of the Apostolic Camera, in succession to d'Estouteville.[495] In addition to his financial and urban responsibilities, the camerlengo had particular responsibilities during a papal interregnum. Again, that set of Spanish appointments could suggest that Sansoni Riario was being put under Borgia's tutelage in anticipation of such an episode. An additional consequence of d'Estouteville's death was that Borgia was appointed archpriest of Rome's most important Marian church, the basilica of S. Maria Maggiore. This ancient church had been built by Celestine I (422–32) and had received an extensive programme of architectural and decorative alteration during d'Estouteville's time as archpriest.[496] In terms of the visual arts, Borgia's contribution was not made until after his papal election, when he commissioned the spectacular gilded ceiling.[497] As a cardinal, his most notable act of patronage dated from 1489 and provided singing boys and a master of choristers: 'quinque vel sex aut plures si videbitur clerici pueri ac unus eorum eruditus et magister in cantu et arte musice'.[498] A

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[495] Pontano, *Diario*, p. 23; 'Raffaele Sansoni Riario', < http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bsari.html > (accessed 17 April 2019).

[496] M. Gill, "Where the Danger Was Greatest": 'A Gallic Legacy in Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome', *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 59/4 (1996), pp. 498–522.

[497] J. P. Jacks, 'Alexander VI's Ceiling for S. Maria Maggiore in Rome', *Römisches Jahrbuch fur Kunstgeschichte*, 22 (1985), pp. 63–82.

[498] AAS, Reg. Vat. 746, f. 372v.

commitment to liturgical music continued after his papal election: among the first acts as pope was to issue arrears of payments to members of the choir of the papal chapel.[499]

In the course of 1483 Borgia continued to intervene from time to time in Episcopal appointments, but not with the intensity seen at the start of the year. The bishoprics in question were Vaison, on 17 October, Chiusi, on 22 October, and Capaccio, a suffragan see of Salerno, on 14 November.[500] The first two are not easily explained, but the reason for Borgia's involvement in the third could not have been clearer, for the beneficiary was his then secretary Ludovico Podocatharo. The same point could be made with a number of Borgia's other familiars, men who remained loyal to the cardinal and received their rewards when he became pope, rewards that extended to the cardinalate itself, which Podocatharo received in 1500.[501]

The deaths of five cardinals – d'Estouteville, the non–Curial Jean Rolin, Despuig, Clugny and Gonzaga – between January and October was certainly the impetus behind Sixtus's seventh set of additions to the College of Cardinals.[502] Despite being the compatriot of Despuig, the death that Borgia surely felt strongest was that of Gonzaga. On 15 November five new cardinals were elevated: Giovanni Conti (1414–93), archbishop of Conza, Élie de Bourdeilles (*c*. 1413–84), archbishop of Tours, Joan Margarit i Pau, bishop of Girona,

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[499] A. Roth, 'Liturgical Music in the Papal Chapel', in R. Sherr (ed.), *Papal Music and Musicians in Late Medieval and Renaissance Rome* (Oxford, 1998), p. 130.

[500] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 132, 147, 288.

[501] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 25.

[502] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 20.

Giovanni Giacomo Sclafenati (1451–97) and Giovanni Battista Orsini (d. 1503).[503] Margarit had made a positive impression the previous year, but the promotion of the king of Aragon's right–hand man required a French counterweight, which was provided by Bourdeilles, confessor to the recently deceased Louis XI. Conti and Orsini were Roman allies, but rather than posing a threat to Giuliano della Rovere, they were neutralised by the release from prison of Savelli and Colonna on the same day. Sclafenati was from Milan, but was promoted as a papal favourite, not as the candidate of Ludovico Maria Sforza (1452–1508), who was then regent for his nephew Gian Galeazzo and who worked alongside his clerical brother Ascanio Maria.

By 1484 the War of Ferrara had reached a stalemate with neither the League nor the Venetians able to secure a victory. There had not been a theatre of war near Rome since 1482, but Sixtus nevertheless wanted other states to carry on fighting, to which end he created his thirty–fourth and final cardinal, on 17 March, when the regime in Milan finally got the cardinal they wanted, Ascanio Maria Sforza, however this did not guarantee an end to the conflict, but all parties except Sixtus were exhausted and keen to reach a peace.

The first seven months of 1484 saw Borgia undertake a standard range of responsibilities. In Holy Week he resumed his habitual role, washing the feet of thirteen poor men, albeit with the distinction that it was recorded for the first time by the new papal master

[503] For Conti; Cardella, *Memorie storiche*, iii, p. 221, Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 149; Bourdeilles, Cardella, *Memorie storiche*, iii, pp. 221–4, Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 283; Pau, Tate, *Joan Margarit i Pau*, p. 21, Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 176; Sclafenati, Cardella, *Memorie storiche*, iii, pp. 224–5; Orsini, Cardella, *Memorie storiche*, iii, p. 25.

of ceremonies, Johannes Burchard (*c*. 1450–1506).[504] Then between 10 May and 13 July, he was uncharacteristically prolific in the matter of sponsoring candidates to vacant bishoprics, ranging as far afield as Przemyśl in Poland, Riga in Latvia, Caithness in Scotland, Nicosia in Cyprus, and the two Sardinian sees of Cagliari and Doglia.[505] Sardinia was familiar territory, being part of the king of Aragon's realm, in contrast to which Scotland proved to be a welcome addition. Riga was significant because Borgia sponsored two successive archbishops, Stefano Grube having died on 26 December. Nicosia was his second Cypriot sponsorship, and the new archbishop was Benedetto Soranzo (1442–95), who had come to prominence in the context of papal–Venetian relations during the War of Ferrara, but whose connection with Borgia was just as likely to have involved the cardinal's Cypriot secretary Ludovico Podocatharo. By Easter Sixtus was already ailing. His decline continued throughout the early summer, but it was said that the news of the peace treaty signed between Milan and Venice at Bagnolo on 7 August was the final straw for Sixtus, particularly as the terms were clearly advantageous to Venice. The pope's rage at 'faithless' Ludovico Sforza was said to have triggered his death, which occurred – appropriately enough – on the feast of a Franciscan St Clare (12 August).[506]

Sixtus is well known to posterity for his impact on Rome's architectural heritage for commissioning the chapel that still bears his name, and for claiming to be the founder of the Vatican Library. Outside of Rome, there was the notable entanglement, albeit perhaps indirect in the plot to assassinate the leaders of the Medici family in April 1478. After going to war against Florence, he then became so enmeshed in peninsula–wide alliances that he

[504] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 8.

[505] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 128, 136, 161, 224, 242, 246.

[506] Gherardi, *Diario,* pp. 135–7; Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 11.

managed to find himself at war with Naples, Florence and Milan, before switching sides and turning on his former Venetian allies, all in the year 1482. By contrast, Borgia who was clearly a very skilled diplomat had been quietly conducting diplomacy of his own kind. Everything Borgia embarked on, from the legation to Spain, to his patronage of familiars and sponsorship to benefices was designed to support the place of pre–eminence in which he found himself following the death of Guillaume d'Estouteville, the former dean of the College of Cardinals in January 1483. Whilst the legation to Spain had taken him away from Rome for nearly a year and a half which had permitted the brief 'reign' of Pietro Riario in Rome, it is testament to Borgia's own personal skills and Riario's own premature death in 1474 that the vice–chancellor survived unscathed. As far as Borgia's future was concerned, it was the *nipoti* and the other cardinals created by Sixtus who mattered more than the first Della Rovere pontiff himself.

In total, Sixtus created thirty–four cardinals, of whom twelve entered the conclave of 1492. The significance of Giuliano della Rovere is dealt with in the following chapters due to the fact that by August 1492 he had become Borgia's most vociferous competitor.[507] The present chapter has accounted for the creation of the remaining eleven of those electors, some of whom did indeed look to Giuliano as their leader and vote as he directed them. Giuliano's candidate was Costa, one of Sixtus's cardinals and the first of those created in the period covered by the present chapter. His promotion was part and parcel of the war over the Castilian succession, in which Borgia was closely identified with Aragonese interests and Giuliano deliberately intervened on the rival Portuguese side.[508] The fact that Costa's

[507] La Torre, *Del conclave*, p. 22; I. dell'Oro, *Papa Alessandro VI Rodrigo Borgia*: *appunti per chi vorrá scrive la vera storia della famiglia Borgia* (Milan, 1940), pp. 227–3.

[508] Chambers, 'What made a Renaissance Cardinal Respectable', pp. 87, 90.

personal merits made him highly *papabile* was very much a bonus for Giuliano's bid. Giuliano was able to influence the vote of his kinsman Girolamo Basso della Rovere, who obediently voted for Costa in all of the three scrutinies for which we have figures.[509] Giovanni Battista Savelli was an inveterate schemer and so closely allied to Giuliano that he also consistently cast his vote for Costa. The younger Giovanni Colonna was not so subtle and voted with no less consistency, but for Giuliano himself, which was not the plan and went some way to depriving Costa – or, more accurately, Giuliano – of victory. Fregoso did likewise, not sensing his mistake until the third ballot, when he dropped the unelectable Basso and voted for Costa. It was not the most coordinated of efforts.

By 1492 Paolo Fregoso had served as doge of the notoriously unstable republic of Genoa on no less than three occasions, in 1462, 1462–3, and 1477–88. His final deposition came when the Sforza of Milan assumed control of their maritime neighbour.[510] That accounted for Fregoso's presence in Rome as well as for his voting record, because he was implacably hostile to Milan and therefore to the electoral schemes of Cardinal Ascanio Sforza, the last of Sixtus's additions to the College of Cardinals. Sforza would never have been *papabile* in any circumstances, but he was a political operator and set about securing the papacy for his candidate, Oliviero Carafa. Sforza was able to muster five other votes from among the Sistine cardinals, those of Domenico della Rovere, Conti, Sansoni Riario and Orsini. Conti and Orsini represented long–standing rivalry to Savelli and Colonna, but shorter–lived hostility towards Giuliano.[511] The Della Rovere name should not deceive anyone into thinking that there was any meaningful connection between Giuliano and

[509] La Torre, *Del conclave*, pp. 89–92.

[510] S. A. Epstein, *Genoa and the Genoese, 958–1528* (London, 1996), p. 290.

[511] La Torre, *Del conclave*, p. 92.

Domenico.[512] There was no such thing, as their voting patterns confirmed. As for Sansoni Riario, he was from the same branch of the papal family as Pietro and Girolamo Riario, who were intense rivals of Giuliano della Rovere. Conti, Sansoni Riario, Orsini and Sforza all voted consistently for Carafa.[513] For some reason, Domenico della Rovere did not vote for Carafa; nor did the more independently minded Sclafenati, who supported Costa in all three ballots, adding Carafa only in the third. Whereas Giuliano did not have a realistic alternative to Costa, Sforza did: Borgia. Among the Sistine cardinals, Domenico della Rovere, Sclafenati and Sforza all voted consistently for Borgia, Domenico voting for no one else in the first two ballots; this provided the foundation for his eventual victory.[514] In addition, Orsini chose Borgia in the first ballot, Sansoni Riario did so in the second, Conti in the second and third. On the other side of the coin, Borgia cast eleven votes in the course of the three scrutinies, but only one of those eleven was for one of the Sistine cardinals. In the third ballot he expressed his gratitude for the commitment which Domenico della Rovere had given to him.[515] It is ironic that a cardinal who otherwise played so small a part in the Borgia story should assume such significance and perhaps warrants further investigation.

Whilst Borgia's chances appeared to have faltered at the beginning of Sixtus's pontificate, by August 1484 he was the most senior member of the College of Cardinals. During the preceding thirteen years Borgia ensured that he had the beginnings of a dynasty carved out in Spain and a solid platform in Rome. Through increasing his *familia* and

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[512] D. Cerri, *Borgia ossia Alessandro VI papa e suoi contemporanei* (2 vols, Turin, 1857), ii, p. 126.

[513] La Torre, *Del conclave*, pp. 89–91.

[514] La Torre, *Del conclave*, pp. 89–90.

[515] La Torre, *Del conclave*, p. 91.

ensuring that within its ranks were some of the finest minds in Rome, Borgia had become a substantial patron with a household which offered numerous possibilities of employment to its members. A large percentage of his household went on to hold positions in the Curia, a clear indication of just how far his influence had developed since his elevation to the College in 1456.

6. August 1484: Filling the vacant see.

By the time of the conclave of 1484, Borgia was a veteran of three conclaves and dean of the College of Cardinals; the papacy was the only office missing from his illustrious ecclesiastical career. Whilst on this occasion Borgia did not overly pursue his own cause, the conclave provided him with the chance of conducting a trial run, a chance to gauge what reaction his own candidacy might elicit from his fellow cardinals. This was achieved by proposing his fellow countryman Cardinal Margarit. Although Borgia began the new pontificate working collaboratively with Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere to ensure the election of Cardinal Giovanni Battista Cibo, by 1492 the relationship between Borgia and della Rovere had completely disintegrated. The battlelines were drawn and the rivalry that came to define the conclave of 1492 was well established.

In the general course of events, it is only with the death of a pope and the election of his successor that cardinals come to the attention of the wider world, with the intrigue surrounding the clandestine proceedings of conclave. Sources for the papal interregnum – the *sede vacante* – of 1484 happen to be unusually ample, so that the liturgical diary of the papal master of ceremonies, Johannes Burchard, the accounts of other diarists outside the Vatican, and dispatches from various ambassadors to the Holy See can be combined to form a detailed account of a short period of time. From these the contribution of the Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia can be isolated and appreciated. The death of a pope traditionally triggered a period of anarchy in Rome, but the violence unleashed by the death of Sixtus IV on the evening of Tuesday 12 August 1484 was the most intense of the Renaissance period. The twenty–three–year–old camerlengo, Raffaele Sansoni Riario, was obliged to ensure that the pontiff – his uncle – was dead by calling out his baptismal name three times to see if he responded. The late pope's seals of office were destroyed by his young *nipote* in order to prevent any

documents having the papal seal affixed to them during the *sede vacante*. The fragments were then handed to the dean of the College of Cardinals, Borgia, who placed them in a canvas bag ('quo veni ad palatium predictum ad ordinandum que necessaria erant pro sepultura defuncti; sed antea venerat ad palatium reverendissimus dominus vicecancellarius et, ex more, stampam pro bullandis literis apostolicis, nomen pontifices defuncti continentem fregit').[516] As this and the other traditional ceremonies were being carried out, Rome was being pillaged. Sacking during a *sede vacante* had first been recorded in 885, following the death of Pope Adrian III, and had become an integral part of the Roman *mentalité*: it had begun with the goods, *spolia*, of the pope himself, but the more popes advanced the interests of their kinsmen, the more vulnerable they too became, and in terms of sheer numbers of *nipoti* Sixtus's promotion of his kinsmen had been unparalleled.[517] Even as the pontiff's body was moved from the Apostolic Palace to St Peter's Basilica on 13 August, a mob shouting 'Colonna! Colonna!' attacked Girolamo Riario's palace.[518] Together with Paolo Orsini, Riario was at Paliano, forty miles east of Rome, laying siege to the Colonna stronghold there. The Roman diarist Infessura, who was a Colonna partisan and therefore a bitter enemy of Riario and the Orsini, dedicated over five pages of his *Diario* to attacks on properties affiliated with the late pope's family, including palaces of Giuliano della Rovere at SS. Apostoli and Domenico della Rovere in the Borgo. Giuliano had paid for numerous foot

[516] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 14; A. Paravicini–Bagliani, *The Pope's Body* (Chicago, 2000), p. 119; J. Hunt, *The Vacant See in Early Modern Rome: A Social History of the Papal Interregnum* (Leiden, 2016), p. 26.

[517] Hunt, *The Vacant See* p. 17; Paravicini–Bagliani, *The Pope's Body*, pp. 99–107.

[518] G. Pontano, *Il diario romano di Gaspare Pontano*, ed. D. Toni, RIS, III, ii (Città di Castello, 1908), p. 38; Infessura, *Diario*, p. 161.

soldiers to protect his already fortified palace ('multos pedites ac milites stipendio acquisivit, et aiuntesse numero, et domum suam mirabiliter fortificavit et fulcivit').[519] He barricaded himself inside the building for the duration of the *Novendiales* and so missed his uncle's funeral obsequies. In a pattern familiar to the Catalans in 1458 and the Sienese in 1464, Rome's Ligurian community as a whole was vulnerable. The Genoese hospice and warehouses at Ripa Grande were obvious targets for the mob. Genoese families, including the Centurioni, willingly paid protection money in the hope of saving their property.[520] Disturbances were not limited to properties associated with the Riarii, the Della Rovere, or even the Genoese in general. As Antonio de Vasco noted in his diary, there were other disturbances around the Pantheon and S. Maria sopra Minerva, S. Marco and the Campidoglio.[521] Gaspare Pontano's account attests that the majority of cardinals anticipated trouble and had fortified their palaces accordingly.[522] For his part, Cardinal Borgia ensured that the Cancelleria was protected by a band of armed troops and artillery. According to Pontano, the palace already had two sets of ramparts, one at the front and the other in the garden, suggesting that it was better defended than most of its counterparts, as befitted a building from where the business of the entire Western Church was administered.[523]

Against the backdrop of urban anarchy, those cardinals who dared to venture out of doors met twice a day at Sansoni Riario's palace to discuss how to bring a swift end to the

[519] Infessura, *Diario*, pp. 164–5.

[520] Infessura, *Diario*, pp. 155–60; Pontano, *Diario*, pp. 35–6.

[521] Vasco, *Diario*, p. 515.

[522] Pontano, *Diario*, p. 39.

[523] Pontano, *Diario*, p. 39.

violence and conduct the business of the *sede vacante*.[524] In addition to Giuliano della Rovere, Cardinals Cibo, Colonna, Savelli, Sclafenati and Domenico della Rovere absented themselves from the meetings, citing concerns over their personal safety. Sansoni Riario's relative youth and inexperience meant that Borgia, as vice–chancellor and dean of the College of Cardinals, was able to assert himself during the interregnum, as might not have been the case had the camerlengo been a man of greater substance and resolve. Borgia was also the only cardinal who had voted in three previous conclaves. Even Francesco Todeschini Piccolomini had voted only once before, in 1464, because he had been on legation in Germany in 1471. Borgia's wealth of experience made him a natural leader in this time of crisis, though tradition dictated that he could be no more than first among equals, for the government of the Church was in the hands of the cardinals collectively. They agreed that Giacomo Conti would protect the Apostolic Palace and that the recently appointed archbishop of Tarentaise, Giovanni de Compesio (Compeys), would oversee measures to remove the threat posed by Girolamo Riario and his troops.[525]

On 14 August Riario returned to the city's environs with eleven squadrons of horsemen and more than 800–foot soldiers.[526] With such numbers he could easily have made a negative situation many times worse. However, the cardinals asserted themselves and ordered him and his men to remain at Ponte Molle, well beyond the city walls. They then ensured that officers were deployed to protect the streets of Rome. Marshals (*marescalchi*) were appointed to protect each of the *rioni.* The diarist Antonio de Vasco was in charge of

[524] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 17.

[525] Pontano, *Diario*, p. 38; Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 270.

[526] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 164.

Regola and Parione in the heart of the city.[527] However, the most pressing concern addressed by the cardinals was the need to gain possession of Castel S. Angelo.[528] Riario's wife Caterina Sforza, who was seven months pregnant, had made the short journey from her residence on the opposite bank of the Tiber and took possession of the fortress in the interest of her husband and his Orsini allies. Representing the cardinals as a whole, Marco Barbo negotiated terms for both the handover of the stronghold to the care of Francesco Mascardi, bishop of Todi and Sansoni Riario's *majordomo*.[529] Riario was ordered to retire to Virginio Orsini's castle at Isola Farnese, between Rome and Bracciano, and received 8,000 ducats in compensation.[530] The deal was concluded on 17 August, five days after Sixtus's death. In due course this resulted in Riario retiring to the estates he had so carefully accumulated in the Romagna.

With Castel S. Angelo secured and the violence abating, it was finally safe enough to begin the papal obsequies. As dean of the College, Borgia celebrated the first of the funeral Masses, at the altar of the Blessed Virgin in St Peter's Basilica.[531] Following the liturgy, the general of the Augustinian friars preached a sermon and Cardinals Carafa, Barbo, Nardini and Hugonet gave the traditional absolutions. Costa, Sclafenati, Margarit, Conti, Foscari, Basso della Rovere, Rangone, Domenico della Rovere, Sansoni Riario and Orsini were also in attendance, alongside 300 other mourners.[532] Even though it had been perfectly safe for the

[527] Vasco, *Diario*, pp. 513–14.

[528] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 17.

[529] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 283; Infessura, *Diario*, p. 167.

[530] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 189.

[531] Burchard, *Liber notarum,* i, p. 17.

[532] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 17.

camerlengo to undertake his functions and for the other Sistine *nipoti* to play their part in honouring their late patron, Giuliano della Rovere remained conspicuously absent.[533]

That afternoon Ascanio Maria Sforza, the last of Sixtus's elevations to the College, arrived in Rome unannounced. To avoid being recognized, the young cardinal was dressed as a layman rather than a cleric ('brevi habitu indutus, adeo quod potius laicus quam clericus videretur').[534] As was customary, several of the other cardinals, including Borgia, who was temporarily the most senior cleric in the Western Church, Savelli and Colonna, paid their respects to Sforza at his new residence. Borgia had ample experience of cultivating the secular princes of Italy through their clerical kinsmen, and the arrival of Ascanio offered the opportunity for Borgia to cultivate him as he had cultivated Francesco Gonzaga until the latter's death the previous year. Geographically, Ascanio also offered a neat counterbalance to Giovanni d'Aragona in Naples: Ascanio and Giovanni could be Borgia's agents in the north and the south of the peninsula. They were also kinsmen. As has been seen, the Roman baronial families had interests in the kingdom of Naples, but with the Orsini in retreat, it was an ideal time for the Colonna to assert themselves; in the case of the young Cardinal Colonna, that meant under the tutelage of the wily Savelli.

Among the cardinals there was also some discussion as to whether Sforza should be permitted to enter the conclave and cast his vote. He had been named by Sixtus a little over five months earlier, but his absence from Rome meant that his mouth had not been 'opened' by the pope.[535] A letter of 24 August from Guidantonio Vespucci to the Florentine Dieci di Balia noted that Sforza was widely and highly respected: 'perché in questo principio sèdi

[533] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 15.

[534] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 16.

[535] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 45.

mostro Monsignore Ascanio havere una grandissima reputatione et merito, perché quando solum havessi le voce Milanese'.[536] Relations between the Holy See and the secular powers came within Borgia's remit as vice–chancellor but, as had been apparent through his cultivation of Naples by means of Giovanni d'Aragona, were of personal interest to him as well, not least if he entertained papal ambitions at any point. The Sforza cardinal offered similar potential and it was Borgia who used his position as dean to persuade the College to admit Sforza to the conclave.[537] Sixtus had used the marriage of Girolamo Riario to Caterina Sforza as a means of cementing relations between the papacy and Milan, but the significance of that had died with the late pope and an alternative strategy was now required. Ascanio Sforza represented a completely new opportunity – an exclusively clerical one – and it was the vice–chancellor who seized it. The strategy duly reached its fulfillment in the conclave of 1492, when Sforza coordinated what has been described as the 'Milanese' faction and Borgia as the 'Milanese' candidate whose victory was secured by Ascanio. More immediately, other factors were in play.

By August 1484 the Italian powers and their ambassadors in Rome had become conditioned by the war between Venice and the League, and that influenced their thinking on the papal election. As in their military campaigns, the League powers were united in opposition to a Venetian pope but could not unite behind an agreed non–Venetian candidate. Milan and Naples were the League's leading powers, but none of their native–born cardinals were *papabile*. Stefano Nardini was too sick to be considered. Giovanni Arcimboldi might have been a better bet but was unusual in having a legitimate son. Borgia was certainly not

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[536] M. Pellegrini, *Ascanio Maria Sforza: la parabola di un cardinale–principe del Rinascimento* (Rome, 2002), i, p. 124.

[537] Pellegrini, *Ascanio Maria Sforza*, i, p. 123.

the only cardinal to have illegitimate children, who were easier to conceal and dismiss, but a legitimate son would add a completely different dynastic dimension and create new challenges which the papacy could ill afford. The third Milanese cardinal, Ascanio Sforza, was both too young and too close to his nephew, the duke, to be considered an impartial option by any of the observers. On the Neapolitan side, Oliviero Carafa's family was out of favour with the king, putting him out of contention. Giovanni d'Aragona fell into the same unelectable category as Ascanio Sforza: much too close to secular power. Nevertheless, Naples and Milan appeared to favour Carafa, followed by Francesco Todeschini Piccolomini, Arcimboldi, Nardini, Joan Margarit i Pau and Gabriele Rangone. Carafa's age – fifty–four – suggested that he might offer a reasonable degree of stability; no one could predict that he would live for more than quarter of a century, not dying until 1511. Todeschini Piccolomini was only forty–five, so that ruled him out; he lived for another nineteen years. The quartet of Margarit, Acrimboldi, Nardini and Rangone were aged sixty, sixty–three, sixty–four and seventy respectively. On paper, any of them might have been a good bet, but none of them survived long, suggesting that their poor health was obvious to their fellow electors. Margarit and Nardini died later that year, Rangone in 1486 and Arcimboldo in 1488.

Borgia had kept his distance from the essentially Italian disputes of 1482–4. According to Pastor, that helped to make him an attractive candidate to the League, which had a preference for a politically neutral pope.[538] If each pope is chosen in reaction to the excesses of his predecessor, then political neutrality would be the most obvious way to react against the excesses of Sixtus IV. If, on the other hand, stability and continuity are required, then the election of the dean of the College can provide precisely that, though the fact that only five previous popes – Anastasius IV (r. 1153–4), Lucius III (r. 1181–5), Gregory IX (r.

[538] Pastor, *History*, v, p. 236.

1227–41), Alexander IV (r. 1254–61) and John XXI (r. 1276–7) – had previously been deans suggests that the desire for change generally outweighed that for continuity. In reality, Borgia's chances of being elected were slim. At the age of fifty–three, he presented the possibility of a long pontificate. He also lacked a substantial body of support in the College. Yes, he could count on that of Sansoni Riario, d'Aragona and Sforza, all of whom were under the age of thirty and looked up to him as something of a mentor, but wiser heads were not so impressed by simple longevity or by the essentially worldly nature of his skills and experience. When observers considered Borgia's candidature, the faults they found with him were not political, but personal. As early as 18 August, well before the cardinals entered the enclosure, the Florentine envoy Guidantonio Vespucci wrote to Lorenzo de' Medici that the vice–chancellor was seeking to corrupt all the electors, some by bribes, some by offers of offices and benefices ('il vicecancelliere cercha di corrompere el mondo, chi con danari, chi con uficii et chi con beneficii').[539] Borgia's familiarity with Naples and its ruling dynasty was reinforced by an appreciation that Rome was more vulnerable to attack from the south than from any other direction, as the events of 1482 had proved. He therefore concentrated on securing that border and did so by means of offering Giovanni d'Aragona the vice–chancellorship in return for his vote.[540] With the benefit of hindsight, it can be said that the offer to Giovanni d'Aragona was a dress rehearsal for the next conclave, when Borgia made the same offer to Ascanio Sforza, and secured the papacy on the strength of it. Infessura's account provides further details of what was offered to whom in 1484: Giovanni Colonna was

[539] Quoted in F. Somaini, 'Il Cardinale Rodrigo Borgia ed il conclave del 1484', in M. Chiabò, S. Maddalo, M. Miglio and A. M. Oliva (eds), *Roma di fronte all'Europa al tempo di Alessandro VI*, (2 vols, Rome, 2001), i, p. 155.

[540] Pastor, *History*, v, p. 236.

promised 25,000 ducats and the prized abbey of S. Scolastica at Subiaco, Giovanni Battista Savelli the fortress at Monticelli (100 miles north of Rome) and the Bolognese legation, Philibert Hugonet the castle at Capranica and the archbishopric of Avignon … which, as Giuliano della Rovere could confirm, was not even vacant.[541] If all this was true, and not a case of Infessura rehearsing his anti–Borgia arguments ahead of 1492, then the vice–chancellor's actions suggest that he considered himself *papabile,* even if none of the ambassadors shared that opinion. For his part, Vespucci maintained his negative assessment of Borgia on 21 August: he had the reputation of being so proud and false that there is no danger of him being elected ('ma è tenuto si superbo et di mala fede che non se ha paura').[542] On the same day the Ferrarese envoy Bonfrancesco Arlotti reported to Ercole d'Este that Borgia was working hard for support and was certainly one of the most active competitors, but it was hard to give a firm opinion of his chances were ('sopra tutti piu forza de pratica fa el vice–cancelliero per se, ma certamente perfin a qua non se può firmare el iudicio').[543]

If the ambassadors were in their element, then so was the papal master of ceremonies, Burchard, keenly recording the name of the celebrant at each of the funerary Masses for the late pope: Hugonet on 19August, Costa on 20 August, Scalfenati on 21 August, Rangone on 22 August, Cibo on 23 August, giving opportunities for them to celebrate the pope who had raised them to the cardinalate, and Carafa 24 August, the sequence being brought to its conclusion by one of the most highly respected of their number.[544] The omissions are no less

[541] Infessura, *Diario*, pp. 171–2.

[542] Quoted in Pastor, *History*, v, p. 237.

[543] Quoted in Pastor, *History*, v, pp. 236–7.

[544] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, pp. 15–16.

significant: Venetians had all too recently been Rome's enemies and there is no indication that any of the Roman cardinals had received priestly ordination.

Ordination was not a prerequisite for being elected pope, and Venetian birth was not necessarily a bar to the same in the political circumstances of August 1484, though only Marco Barbo was considered *papabile*. On 15 August the Mantuan envoy Stefano Guidotti wrote to Francesco Gonzaga (r. 1484–1519), the new marquis of Mantua, that Barbo would make an excellent pope 'because of his noble character, his ability, and the general esteem in which he is held'.[545] Barbo had received much of the credit for the successful negotiation over Castel S. Angelo and remained a key figure as the *sede vacante* continued. Obvious though his merits were, would the electors really settle on a fourth Venetian pope in less than eighty years, and elect him so soon after a war that had pitched the papacy against the republic?

On 22 August Barbo and Borgia held a meeting with the three Conservators of Rome in the sacristy of St Peter's, both sides being equally keen to determine how order was to be maintained in the city during the imminent conclave, when there could be no (official) communication between those within and without the enclosure. Speaking for his colleagues, the *primo conservatore* Paolo Vangelista di Renzo appealed for the Roman baronial families to put aside their differences so that peace could prevail. Barbo and Borgia were in a position to deal with Cardinals Orsini, Colonna and Savelli, in the hope that they could induce their families to agree to a pact.[546] The peace stipulated that their respective forces were to withdraw from the city, the Orsini to the north, the Colonna to the south. The less powerful

[545] Quoted in Pastor, *History*, v, p. 234.

[546] E. Rodocanachi, *Histoire de Rome : une cour princière au Vatican pendant la Renaissance : Sixte IV, Innocent VIII, Alexandre VI Borgia :1471–1503* (Paris, 1925), p. 76.

Savelli appear to have been permitted to remain.[547] In the usual course of events, dealings between the Holy See and the Roman civic authorities were the preserve of the camerlengo, so this episode illustrates how the more experienced cardinals filled the gap effectively left by Sansoni Riario's inexperience and lack of authority. Where the Sistine *nipote* fell short, it took the *nipoti* of two earlier pontiffs to salvage the situation, Borgia's worldly diplomacy combining with the Barbo's unworldly qualities to bring about the desired result. Although Borgia and Barbo had served together in the College of Cardinals for seventeen years, there is no surviving evidence of a friendship or much of a working relationship between the two men. With their divergent outlooks on the world, it would not be surprising to think that Barbo had no interest in how Borgia operated, particularly with his cultivation of secular princes, and could easily have disapproved of it. Pietro Barbo had protected Borgia and his brother during the purge of the Catalans in 1458, but Marco Barbo was not cut from the same cloth as his kinsman.

With Carafa's Mass on 24 August the *Novendiales* reached their natural conclusion. However, as the building of the wooden cubicles for the cardinals' accommodation in what is now known as the Sistine Chapel had not been completed, an extra Mass was celebrated the following day by Cardinal Hugonet.[548] The chapel had been constructed on the site of the old Cappella Magna, retained that designation, and was consecrated on the feast of the Assumption (15 August) the previous year; a week later it hosted the celebration to mark the thirteenth anniversary of Sixtus's coronation.[549] However, it was with the conclave of 1484

[547] Rodocanachi, *Histoire de Rome,* p. 76; Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 132; Vasco, *Diario*, p. 517.

[548] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 19.

[549] Paschini, *Il carteggio,* p. 90.

that the rarely broken tradition was established of holding conclaves in that location, even if the increasing size of the College of Cardinals meant that there were few elections in which the cardinals were housed there in temporary cubicles. In 1484 Cardinal Barbo was responsible for overseeing construction of those structures, while Borgia appointed the individuals who were to guard the Apostolic Palace and the conclave enclosure.[550] Working in conjunction with the master of ceremonies, Borgia compiled a list of the names of those prelates and ambassadors whose presence was designed to act as a buffer between the enclosure and the outside world.[551] The former included Eustache de Lévis, archbishop of Arles and brother of the late cardinal Philippe de Lévis, and Rinaldo Orsini, archbishop of Florence, who was a nephew of Cardinal Orsini. The ambassadors were those of the emperor, the kings of England and Naples, Florence, Milan and Siena.[552] Diplomatic relations between Venice and the papacy had not resumed after being broken off during the War of Ferrara, so the absence of a Venetian ambassador was rather glaring. In the case of the diplomats they represented states which had preferred candidates in the conclave, but their collective presence was designed to cancel out separate interests and ensure the election was conducted fairly and without any external interference. Borgia reminded them that they were duty bound to guard the conclave faithfully: 'Rmus D. vicecancellarius, tamquam prior cardinalitum, recita viteos ad custodiam conclaves deputatosesse, propterea de fideliter custodiendo conclave ipsum, et collegium, et palatium, et non permittendo cardinalibus, aliquam inferri violentiam'.[553]

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[550] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 18.

[551] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, pp. 19–20.

[552] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 21; Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 105.

[553] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 25.

On 26 August Cardinal Barbo celebrated the Mass of the Holy Ghost in St Peter's Basilica and Guillaume de Perrier, an auditor of the Rota, delivered the sermon.[554] After that, the cardinals promised not to break the secrecy of the conclave, swearing on a breviary that Borgia held open.[555] Borgia then led twenty–four of his fellow cardinals into the conclave, the dean walking with the holders of the other suburbicarian sees: Carafa (Albano), Barbo (Palestrina), Giuliano della Rovere (Ostia and Velletri) and Zeno (Frascati).[556] Then came the cardinal priests: Michiel (S. Marcello), Nardini (S. Maria in Trastevere), Cibo (S. Cecilia), Arcimboldi (S. Prassede), Hugonet (SS. Giovanni e Paolo), Costa (S. Marcellino e Pietro), Basso della Rovere (S. Crisognon), Rangone (SS. Sergio e Bacco), Foscari (S. Pietro fra le Immagini), d'Aragona (S. Sabina), Sansoni Riario (S. Lorenzo in Damaso), Domenico della Rovere (S. Clemente), Conti (SS. Nereo ed Achilleo), Margarit i Pau (S. Vitale) and Sclafenati (S. Stefano al Monte Celio), and finally the cardinal deacons, Todeschini Piccolomini (S. Eustachio), Savelli (S. Nicola in Carcere), Colonna (S. Maria in Aquiro), Orsini (S. Maria Nuova) and Sforza (SS. Vito e Modesto). The absentees were Milà, Bourchier, Balue – who had been sent as legate to France – Mendoza, Bourbon, Foix, and Fregoso, meaning that the geographical imbalance towards the states of Italy was even more pronounced than the raw numbers indicate.

Sixtus's generosity with the cardinal's hat meant that there were more electors in 1484 than there had been in the other conclaves in which Borgia had voted, for there had been fifteen in 1455, eighteen in 1458, nineteen in 1464 and eighteen again in 1471.[557] That

[554] Pontano, *Diario*, p. 41.

[555] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 25.

[556] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 26.

[557] Pastor, *History*, v, p. 233.

same generosity meant that only five of the electors – Borgia, Carafa, Barbo, Zeno, Michiel and Todeschini Piccolomini had actually voted before, though in the case of the last named it had not been since 1464. Whittling down their expertise yet further, only Borgia had experience of more than one conclave, 1484 being his fourth. That placed him head and shoulders above all the others in terms of personal experience of conclave machinations.

As was customary, the cardinals were accompanied into the conclave by their *conclavisti*.[558] The norm was to be served by two conclavists, though their infirmity caused Nardini and Margarit to have three, the third man in each case presumably being a doctor. This proved to be a prudent measure, as Nardini and Margarit died later that year, on 22 October and 21 November respectively. Nardini complained that one of his conclavists, Giovanni Gualbes (or Gualves), an abbreviator and solicitor of apostolic letters, was not serving him well and should be replaced by Giustiniano Amerino.[559] Burchard had to seek approval for this from the dean. Borgia gave his consent.[560] Nardini was presumably a good judge of character: in 1497 Gualbes was found guilty of falsifying papal documents.[561] Some conclavists came to their task with experience of the previous conclave, thereby offsetting the inexperience of some of the cardinals. Thus Pedro de Segovia had accompanied Angelo Capranica in 1471 but served the youthful Giovanni Colonna in 1484.[562] Similarly, Giovanni Pietro Arrivabene had served Francesco Gonzaga in 1471; that cardinal's recent death had

[558] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, pp. 51–2.

[559] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, pp. 26, 45.

[560] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, pp. 44–5.

[561] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 26 fn. 7.

[562] B. Flug, M. Matheus and A. Rehberg (eds), *Kurie und Region*: *Festschrift für Brigide Schwarz zum 65. Geburtstag* (Stuttgart, 1965), p. 144.

caused Arrivabene to seek patronage from another of the Lombards, Giovanni Arcimboldi, who he accompanied in 1484.[563] Another variation on the theme was provided by Matteo Mannus, who had supported Cardinal Eroli in 1471, lost his patron in 1479 and transferred to Oliviero Carafa, who was also a veteran of the previous conclave, so needed no instruction. The strength of Borgia's patronage relationships was reflected in his choice of conclavists, for he was joined by Jaime de Casanova (*c*. 1435–1504), who had served him in the conclave of 1471.[564] In the meantime, Casanova's loyalty to his patron had been rewarded in 1479 with appointment as an abbreviator *de parco minore*.[565] In 1483 he was joined in that capacity by the Valencian Joan López (*c*. 1455–1501), who served as Borgia's second conclavist the following year.[566] During Borgia's pontificate, both men reached the pinnacles of their ecclesiastical careers, being elevated to the College of Cardinals, López in 1496 and Casanova in 1503.[567] In a variation on that theme, the relationship between Borgia and Ascanio Sforza was duly reflected in one of Ascanio's conclavists from 1484, Bernardino Lunati (1452–97) of Pavia, being made a cardinal by the Borgia pope in 1493. Two other conclavists would become cardinals, Lorenzo Cibo de' Mari (1450/1–1503) by his uncle, Giovanni Battista Cibo/Innocent VIII, in 1489, and Fazio Santori (1447–1510) by Giuliano della Rovere/Julius II in 1505.[568] The examples of Cibo, López, Casanova and Santori illustrates that serving as a conclavist was a clear route to the highest promotion and that

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563 Flug, Matheus and Rehberg, *Kurie und Region*, p. 144.

564 Flug, Matheus and Rehberg**,** *Kurie und Region*, p. 144.

565 Alós, *Cardenales y prelados*, p. 115.

566 Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, pp. 354, 378; Partner, *The Pope's Men*, p. 48.

567 Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 80.

568 Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 21, 11.

Borgia's patronage was part of a pattern, being no different to that of the popes who came before and after him.

As the cardinals disappeared from view, Arlotti made one last prediction about the result, speculating that the competition might become so intense that, in the end, a neutral candidate like Margarit, Costa or Todeschini Piccolomini, all of whom were worthy, could be elected: 'et tanta poteria essere la concurrentia tra costoro che la sorte poteria achadere supra uno de questi tri Gerunda, Portugallo o Sena che sono tenuti neutrali, et persone digne'.[569]

The business of 26 August was concluded with a congregation – a business meeting of the cardinals – inside the enclosure. Burchard's account of 27 August is relatively brief but deals with the essentials of the liturgy celebrated that day.[570] By 28 August work on the election capitulations was completed. These were drafted by Carafa, Costa, and Sansoni Riario, and signed by all the cardinals, led by Borgia.[571] In the main, the demands repeated or reflected those of past capitulations, and aimed to be comprehensive. Among other things, it was agreed that, providing they were not themselves elected, the camerlengo (Sansoni Riario), vice–chancellor (Borgia), and major penitentiary (Giuliano della Rovere) were all to retain their offices, along with their respective privileges.[572] The new pontiff could elevate no more than one nephew to the cardinalate and was obliged to restrict the size of the College to twenty–four members. In the light of Sixtus's generosity, that would require eight deaths before the base line could be reached. Financial support was to be provided for those

[569] Quoted in Pastor, *History*, v, p. 235.

[570] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 29.

[571] These are quoted in full in Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, pp. 30–45.

[572] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 38.

cardinals who did not receive a yearly income of 4,000 ducats from their benefices.[573] Management of the lucrative alum mine at Tolfa was also among others matters covered by the capitulations.

After discussing and signing the capitulations, the cardinals were finally ready to begin voting, with Todeschini Piccolomini, the senior cardinal deacon, as *scrutator*.[574] After praying for a short time, Borgia, as dean, had the privilege of voting first, setting the example to be followed by all those who were new to a conclave. He advanced to the altar with his ballot paper in his hand, kissed it and placed it in the chalice. He was followed by Carafa and then Nardini, although the latter's infirmity meant that he could not walk to the altar and his ballot paper was presented by Borgia.[575] Thereafter, the process continued in time–honoured fashion.

Activity immediately outside the enclosure was fevered. Seeking to be first with the news, the Florentine ambassador Vespucci wrote to Lorenzo de' Medici after the first ballot and declared emphatically that Marco Barbo had been elected pope.[576] The excitement was not due to the potential election of an entirely worthy pontiff, but because Barbo was a Venetian. His election would have been interesting, to say the least, but the reality was that he had not been elected. Vespucci's letter was written in haste, but it nevertheless contained a grain of truth, for Barbo had gained the largest number of votes, followed by Giuliano della Rovere, who had good cause to lobby on his own behalf, especially now that Riario was cast

[573] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 34.

[574] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 44.

[575] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 45.

[576] Text in J. Burchard, *Diarium*, ed. L. Thuasne (Paris, 1883–5), Appendix, 1: p. 514 (nn. 20–5).

into the political wilderness of the Romagna. Barbo was already admired for his integrity, but his constructive actions during the interregnum had also impressed, suggesting that he might have a range of qualities that would be suitable for a pope. Borgia had also helped to bring the recent violence to an end, but his worldly outlook had not won him comparable support.

Prior to voting, the cardinals had agreed not to hold an *accessus* after the first ballot. Such an action prevented Barbo from being elected in the same straightforward manner his kinsman Pietro had been after a single scrutiny in 1464. Instead, the anti–Venetian elements among the cardinals sought to block Barbo's ascendancy by seeking a compromise candidate. Borgia was fully involved in the politicking. According to Vespucci, he chose his compatriot Margarit as his candidate: in the light of Barbo's failure to gain enough votes, it was clear that no one could win without the support of the League, and Margarit was undoubtedly favourable to Naples.[577] On the plus side, as already indicated, the bishop of Girona was the ideal age for election. In order to provide the desired contrast with Sixtus, the Church needed nothing better than a diplomat, and Margarit had the perfect credentials, having served as Pope Pius's nuncio to Aragon and as chancellor of successive rulers in that kingdom, and having recently played a crucial role in negotiating peace between Sixtus and Naples.[578] In spite of being a recent addition to the College of Cardinals, elevated in November 1483, he possessed a clear understanding of the workings of papal government. On the other hand, there was no guarantee that the League states were so interested in a politically neutral pope that they would consent to the election of a Spaniard. Nor could Margarit's poor health be concealed. If he was too ill to function properly the vice–chancellor could fill the gap. From

[577] Pastor, *History*, v, p. 237; Tate, *Joan Margarit i Pau*, p. 101.

[578] Tate, *Joan Margarit i Pau*, p. 31.

Borgia's perspective, it would at least be interesting to see the reaction to a Spanish candidate.

What actually happened during the night of 28–29 August cannot be established for certain. What is said to have happened comes from the pen of Stefano Infessura and paints a deliberately scandalous picture. A Spaniard lobbying for another Spaniard was not a winning combination, and it came up against the more thorough scheming of Giuliano della Rovere, who was in the frustrating position of having come second to Barbo in the first ballot. While Borgia pursued his own initiative, Della Rovere approached Barbo with an offer of the three extra votes he needed in order to secure the two–thirds majority. Della Rovere evidently accepted that he himself could not win, but he was determined to be the power behind the throne of whichever cardinal was elected. The identities of the three voters can only be a matter of speculation, but Della Rovere reportedly promised his palace to Giovanni d'Aragona, who was, in turn, close to Borgia.[579] Barbo did not let such an offer sway him and rejected it on the grounds that such an election would be uncanonical. Thinking fast, Della Rovere then approached Borgia, the most senior member of the College, in the hope that they could agree on a candidate. According to Infessura, both of them had identified Giovanni Battista Cibo as the most likely to secure the required majority. He was reasonably well known in Rome, having been a cardinal since 1473 and left in charge of the city during the plague season in 1476, but not ambitious and no threat to anyone.[580] For Della Rovere the opportunity was clear: if Cibo could be elected, he would be a nothing more than a puppet. Infessura claimed that the vice–chancellor approved of Della Rovere's scheme because he

[579] Infessura, *Diario,* p. 170.

[580] Pastor, *History*, v, p. 240; Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 39; Infessura, *Diario*, pp. 77, 81.

wanted to prevent Barbo's election, apparently out of spite and hatred for the Venetian cardinal … a comment more typical of Infessura than of the habitually smooth and diplomatic vice–chancellor.[581] Infessura continues: Della Rovere and Borgia then approached eight of the other cardinals, reportedly promising them valuable rewards 'pro habendis vocibus'.[582] The eight did not include the more pious cardinals, Barbo, Carafa, Conti, Costa, Todeschini Piccolomini and Margarit, the last of whom had been quickly dropped by Borgia in a heartbeat.[583] The intense bargaining meant that on the morning of the 29 August, Cibo's candidacy had strong backing and Barbo's chances had disappeared. When the second ballot was held Cibo gained eighteen votes, which took him over the required figure.

Reports differ about the extent of Borgia's involvement in the election of Pope Innocent VIII. Infessura claims that the election was 'simoniacal and managed by Giuliano della Rovere and Rodrigo Borgia'.[584] That statement is quickly qualified: 'all this has been said, but since it has been found not to be altogether true, we just believe that it was said from envy'.[585] The diarist was relying on rumour and gossip and his account must be treated with caution. The later accounts of the conclave by Onofrio Panvinio (1529–68), *Vita romanorum pontificum* (1557) and the anonymous author of the *Elettione e descrizione delle qualità d'Innocenzo VIII* credit Cibo's election to the efforts of Borgia and Della Rovere, but there is no mention of any simoniacal practice. [586]

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[581] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 171.

[582] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 173.

[583] Infessura*, Diario*, p. 171.

[584] Infessura, *Diario,* p. 171.

[585] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 172.

[586] BAV, Urb. Lat. 1660.

Whatever machinations went on during the night, order was restored by daylight. The master of ceremonies related that the cardinals, led by Borgia as dean, paid homage by kissing the pontiff's right foot and then his hand, and the senior cardinal deacon, Todeschini Piccolomini, announced the election of a new pope to the world beyond the enclosure.[587] The formalities completed, Innocent set about repaying the support Della Rovere had secured for him during the conclave, promising him that the latter's brother Giovanni, who was already prefect of Rome, would also be made captain–general of the Church.

Vespucci immediately informed Lorenzo de' Medici of the election result, portraying the new pontiff as someone who 'gave the impression of a man who was guided rather by the advice of others than by his own lights'.[588] Another Florentine, Giovanni Tornabuoni, later remarked that the pontiff was 'as rigid as a corpse'.[589] In the course of his eight years on the papal throne, Innocent increasingly came to display his own initiative, but it frequently resulted in hostility with one or another of the Italian states. He was not such a complete contrast to Sixtus after all.

Sixteen of the electors from the conclave of 1484 voted again in 1492. Nine of them – Carafa, Zeno, Sansoni Riario, Domenico della Rovere, Conti, Sclafenati, Todeschini Piccolomini, Orsini, Sforza – voted for Borgia in one or more of the three scrutinies, when they were perfectly free to vote for whoever they liked. Of the sixteen, only five voted for Giuliano della Rovere in 1492. Two of the five – Zeno and Domenico della Rovere – were hedging their bets, voting for both Borgia and Giuliano della Rovere on that occasion, leaving only Michiel, Costa and Colonna as both pro–Della Rovere and anti–Borgia. If the sixteen

[587] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 48.

[588] Quoted in Pastor, *History*, v, p. 242.

[589] Quoted in De Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank*, p. 221.

were influenced by their memories of 1484, then more were repelled by what they had seen of Della Rovere as an arch–manipulator than by what they had seen of Borgia, the negative account of whose activities on the earlier occasion comes from Infessura, not the most reliable of witnesses. The ambassadors also presented negative assessments of Borgia, but without sensationalizing. On the other hand, the most detailed source for the few days covered by the present chapter, Burchard's liturgical diary, depicts the dean of the College performing his duties correctly and assiduously. Whatever his personal faults may have been, his fellow cardinals observed him at close quarters and saw a man who maintained the dignity of the Church and of the Holy See.

7. 1484–92: From apprentice to master: the pontificate of Innocent VIII.

At seventeen days, the *sede vacante* of 1484 had been slightly longer than the average in the mid to late fifteenth century. It was two days longer than the gap between the death of Nicholas V and the election of Calixtus III, three days longer than the time between the death of Paul II and the election of Sixtus IV in 1471, and four days more than the period between the death of Calixtus III and the election of Pius II in 1458. In the conclave itself the electoral initiative had been taken by Giuliano della Rovere, who masterminded Innocent's election, with Rodrigo Borgia following his lead once his own plans had been frustrated. Hardly had the result of the election been announced than Guidantonio Vespucci wrote to Lorenzo de' Medici, stressing that it would be advisable to be on good terms and to write favourably to Della Rovere, for he was now the power behind the papal throne, pope and more than pope ('papa et plusquam papa').[590] The cardinal renounced his Bolognese legation in order to remain in Rome, and indirect command of papal forces was secured by ensuring that his brother Giovanni was made captain–general of the Church.

Responsibility for organizing Pope Innocent's coronation on the steps of St Peter's Basilica and the subsequent procession to Rome's cathedral church, S. Giovanni in Laterano, was given to five cardinals: Giuliano della Rovere, Barbo, Costa, Todeschini Piccolomini, who bore a lot of the liturgical duties, and Sansoni Riario, the camerlengo, whose standard responsibilities included various aspects of urban government and administration.[591] The vice–chancellor had no such role, so Borgia was not part of this committee. The coronation was planned for 11 September but had to be postponed for twenty–four hours on account of

[590] Quoted in Pastor, *History*, v, p. 242.

[591] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 53.

the death of Cardinal Hugonet.[592] Meanwhile, Innocent ordered that his cathedral church undergo a measure of repair in preparation for his enthronement there.[593]

Burchard's *Liber notarum* records everything in meticulous detail. Borgia had been the most senior cardinal deacon at the time of the last papal coronation, so it was his example that Todeschini Piccolomini followed when, together with Sansoni Riario, he placed the pallium on Innocent's shoulders with the words:

> accipe pallium, plenitudinem scilicet pontificalis officii, ad honorem omni potentis Dei, gloriose virginis Marie ejus genitricis, beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli, et S.R.E. (Accept the pallium, representing the plenitude of the pontifical office, to the honour of Almighty God, and the most glorious Virgin Mary, his Mother, and the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and the Holy Roman Church).[594]

Borgia's example was then followed when the cardinal of Siena crowned the new pope.[595] Finally, Todeschini Piccolomini and Sansoni Riario proclaimed the plenary indulgence for the faithful, first in Latin and then in the vernacular. The coronation complete, the pope and cardinals all retired to the palace of Giovanni Battista Zeno, the archpriest, adjacent to the basilica, where refreshments were served in the garden.[596]

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[592] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 71.

[593] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 61.

[594] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, pp. 76–7.

[595] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 78.

[596] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 78.

In the afternoon, the huge papal retinue began its procession to the Lateran. Their route started in the piazza in front of St Peter's, moved towards Castel S. Angelo, across Ponte S. Angelo to the vicinity of Monte Giordano, on to the church of S. Marco, round the Capitoline Hill, past the Arch of Constantine, through the Forum, past the Colosseum, and then by way of S. Clemente and SS. Quattro Coronati to the Lateran.[597] The cardinals rode horses with coverings of white taffeta which nearly reached to the ground.[598] Each was also accompanied by at least eight servants, 'according to [his] desire'. As Borgia was the most senior member of the College, he had the honour of leading the cardinals in the procession, which, given the number of participants, must have been vast. At the age of fifty–three, he did not project the usual image of the dean of the College of Cardinals, who might have been expected to be its oldest member. He must have provided quite a contrast to his two predecessors, Bessarion, who had been sixty–nine at the time of the last papal coronation, and d'Estouteville, who had been almost eighty at the time of his death in 1483. Later contemporary reports state that, at sixty years of age, Borgia was known for having an imposing figure and an affable character, so at fifty–three he must have presented a marked contrast to the new and feeble pontiff. Innocent was met at the Lateran by Stefano Nardini, archpriest of the basilica, but Burchard informs us that the cardinal of Milan was aided in his responsibilities as he was ailing and, indeed, did not have long to live.[599] Once inside, the cardinal bishops, Borgia, Carafa and Barbo had the responsibility of reciting prayers over the

[597] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, pp. 82–3.

[598] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 80.

[599] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 83.

pope. Barbo recited the *Deus qui adesse*, Carafa the *Supplicationibus nostris, Deus omnipotens*, and Borgia the *Deus qui apostolum tuum*.[600]

By 19 September news had reached Milan that the coronation and the *possesso* had been accomplished successfully and that Rome remained quiet after the tumult of the *sede vacante*. The duke, Gian Galeazzo Sforza, wrote to his envoy Filippo Antonio Talenti of his great pleasure that the coronation had taken place 'con tanta solemnita et quiete'.[601] Indeed, immediately after his coronation Innocent and the College of Cardinals tackled the problem of urban security, instituting commissions that heard complaints and concerns over how justice was currently being administered in the city.[602]

Whereas Giuliano della Rovere had been sure to stake his claim to rewards for securing the election at the very beginning of Innocent's reign, Borgia was obliged to wait until 18 September, six days after the coronation, to receive his share of the spoils. They proved to be surprisingly modest, but that is explained by the fact that Giovanni Battista Cibo came to the papacy with few benefices to redistribute. His Neapolitan diocese of Molfetta was not wealthy and went to Angelo Lacerti on 17 October 1484.[603] He retained it until his death in 1508 and made no particular impact beyond its bounds. Cardinal Cibo's titular church was S. Cecilia, so his election did not free up one of the suburbicarian bishoprics. The church went to Sclafenati on 17 November 1484 and was retained by him until his death in 1497. Instead of an Italian bishopric, Borgia received the Orsini fortress at Soriano nel Cimino, which lay forty–three miles north–west of Rome. The record of his appointment

[600] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 73.

[601] Pastor, *History*, v, p. 244.

[602] Infessura, *Diario,* pp. 177, 246.

[603] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica,* ii, p. 209.

states that he excelled all other cardinals by his virtues and his constant and careful labours to help the supreme pontiff in the defence and government of the whole Church.[604] The fortress and the settlement adjacent to it were strategically located close to the border between Lazio and Umbria. Proximity to Viterbo, where the pontiffs frequently travelled in times of plague, provided Borgia with a private retreat should the papal court head in that direction. As has been observed with regard to Subiaco, Borgia understood the significance of being a good patron, and he ensured that the fortress was well maintained in his absence. As has been seen repeatedly, he was a particularly good patron to his fellow Valencians, two of whom were rewarded by being given charge of Soriano. They were both clerics: Guillaume Raymund de Contelles and Gaspar de Pertusa.[605]

On the same day Borgia was also granted the administration of the Cistercian monastery of S. María in Simat de la Valldigna (diocese of Valencia), which lay 13 miles from his birthplace of Xàtiva, and which brought him an annual income of 300 florins.[606] The standard explanation was provided for giving him a source of income without cure of souls: although holding the dignified position of a cardinal, he had not the means to carry the burden of expenses which he was constantly obliged to make. However, as Borgia knew after the shipwreck in 1473, transporting such funds was precarious and he could hardly expect anything to materialize.

Innocent had ascended to the papal throne following a time of conflict between most of the Italian states. The dispute over the Polesine had been taken as far as it could, but it did not follow that there were no outstanding disputes over other border territories. Nicholas V's

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[604] Mallett, *The Borgias*, p. 83; De Roo, *Material*, ii, p. 243.

[605] De Roo, *Material*, ii, pp. 244–5.

[606] De Roo, *Material*, ii, p. 243.

birthplace, Sarzana, was strategically located on the cusp of Liguria and Tuscany.[607] At the beginning of Innocent's pontificate, it was disputed by Genoa and Florence, with Milan and Naples also expressing interest. The pope was the obvious arbiter and, as a Ligurian himself, Innocent was particularly conscious of the problem. On 17 September he met with the envoys from Naples, Florence and Milan.[608] This was the focus of diplomatic interest at that stage, but there is no indication of any involvement on the part of Cardinal Borgia. At the heart of the dispute was rivalry between two republics. At no point in his long career did Borgia ever concern himself much with any of the Italian republics, and the dispute over Sarzana was no exception.

Five days after meeting the ambassadors Innocent announced which cardinals were to be sent on which legations. Again, that had nothing to do with Borgia, for dispatching the vice–chancellor on such a mission in 1472 had been highly exceptional. However, one of the beneficiaries on that earlier occasion was Giuliano della Rovere, and now it was (presumably) his turn to decide which of the cardinals should be dispatched from Rome. Nardini was to go to Avignon, Margarit to the Campagna, Savelli to Bologna, Orsini to the Marche, Sforza to the Patrimony of St Peter and Arcimboldi to Perugia.[609] Nardini and Margarit were both highly regarded and, in that sense, potentially posed a threat, but both of them were also ill and died before they could go anywhere. There was no expectation that any of the legates would go anywhere immediately, though the departure of Savelli and Orsini would have lessened tensions in Rome and have left Della Rovere to capitalize on his close association with the Colonna. The appointments of Sforza and Arcimboldi, in addition

[607] Pastor, *History*, v, pp. 246–7.

[608] Pastor, *History*, v, p. 246.

[609] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 96.

to that of Nardini, suggest that there was a conscious decision to minimize Milanese influence in Innocent's Rome. If the Milanese were out of favour, where did the Neapolitans stand?

The pope was sick at the start of October, but rallied in time to receive Alfonso, duke of Calabria, on 20 October, when he arrived to pay homage for the kingdom of Naples on behalf of his father, Ferrante.[610] Predictably enough, the cardinals who chose to accompany the duke into the city included Neapolitans or those that were most friendly towards Naples: Borgia, Carafa, d'Aragona and Sclafenati.[611] During his stay Borgia hosted a banquet for him at the Cancelleria, an event which Ascanio Sforza described to his brother Ludovico as honourable, well ordered and sumptuous ('la quale fu honorevole et ben ordinata et sumptuosa').[612] Sforza's report also reveals how sumptuous Borgia's residence had become:

> The palace is splendidly decorated, the walls of the great entrance hall are hung with tapestries depicting various historical scenes…beyond this there were two more rooms, one hung with fine satin, carpeted and with another canopied bed. (La casa era apparata molto superbemente et haveva la prima sala tutta ornate de tapezarie historiate in circa et Areto. Ad la sala uno altro salotto circondato tutto de altratapazaia molto bello con tapedi in terra ben correspondenti ali altri ornamenti con uno lecto et capo celo tutto parato de raso cremesile.)[613]

At the following day's public consistory there was tension between Borgia and Burchard when Alfonso was accorded the seat usually reserved for visiting monarchs. In his

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[610] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 86.

[611] Infessura*, Diario*, p. 86.

[612] Quoted in Pastor, *History*, v, p. 529.

[613] Quoted in Pastor, *History*, v, p. 529.

diary account the master of ceremonies argued that this arrangement was not customary and that the duke should not have been afforded such a privilege. However, with Innocent desiring to cultivate Naples and Borgia keen to assert his pro–Neapolitan credentials, the duke retained his place.[614] There were, however, long–standing issues between the rulers of Naples and their papal overlords. During the consistory, Alfonso raised a bone of contention when he requested that the papal enclaves of Benevento, Terracina and Porto Corvo be subsumed into the kingdom of Naples.[615] Naturally enough, Innocent denied the request and then placed the disputed territories in the care of his right–hand man Giuliano della Rovere, which would have antagonised not just Alfonso but also Borgia. Frustrated, the duke left Rome on 26 October. This time he was escorted by Borgia, Della Rovere, Carafa, Savelli and Colonna. Again, Burchard pointed out that the visitor was being treated with excessive respect. The duke was permitted to ride between the two cardinal bishops, Borgia and Della Rovere, an honour usually reserved for a monarch; as a prince Alfonso should have ridden between the cardinal deacons, Savelli and Colonna. Once again the master of ceremonies was put in his place by the vice–chancellor, who insisted the duke rode with him (tamen quia ita placuit vicecancellario, non potui aliter ordinare).[616] Borgia had every reason to be as close to Alfonso as possible: his smooth tongue could be all there was preventing open hostility between Rome and Naples, and with Della Rovere asserting himself on the Neapolitan front Borgia had more personal reasons to ensure that he was not outmanoeuvred by his rival. In retaliation for not making any progress over the disputed territories, Alfonso moved his

[614] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 87.

[615] Pastor, *History*, iv, p. 249.

[616] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 86.

troops up to the border between Naples and the Papal States.[617] Innocent retaliated by seeking Venetian support, promising to lift the interdict that Sixtus had placed on the republic.

In Rome itself there was finally a distribution of lucrative benefices, courtesy of Stefano Nardini's death on 22 October. Three days later it was Borgia who sponsored Giovanni Arcimboldi to the commendatory abbacy of S. Ambrogio in Milan. Arcimboldi was also translated to the archbishopric of Milan on the same day.[618] With Borgia's help, Sforza became administrator of Arcimboldi's former bishopric of Novara, indicating that it was a temporary arrangement. This was confirmed in April 1485, when Girolamo Pallavicini was appointed to the bishopric, not merely to its administration.[619] Sforza was compensated with an annual pension of 800 florins from the episcopal coffers.[620] If one examines Sforza's career he was consistently made administrator of bishoprics – Pavia in 1479, Cremona in 1486, Eger in 1492 and Elne in 1494 – indicating that he always drew income from benefices without performing any spiritual functions: indeed, there is no evidence of him ever proceeding beyond minor orders.

On 24 November, Cardinal Margarit also died, leaving Borgia as the only representative of the Spanish kingdoms in Rome. Burchard recorded Borgia, along with Carafa, Barbo, Girolamo Basso della Rovere, Rangone, d'Aragona, Todeschini Piccolomini and Orsini, as reciting the office for the dead at the cardinal's palace.[621] Margarit had been a respected member of the College, and those who prayed for him were not limited to any pro–

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[617] Pastor*, History*, v, p. 250.

[618] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica,* ii, p. 208.

[619] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica,* ii, p. 226.

[620] Pellegrini, *Ascanio Maria Sforza*, i, p. 146.

[621] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 89.

Aragonese faction. Nevertheless, when it came to accompanying the late cardinal's body to S. Maria del Popolo, it was only Carafa, his executor, who attended.[622] The funerary Mass for the cardinal on 11 December did see Borgia return and he gave one of the absolutions, along with Barbo, Domenico della Rovere and Rangone.[623]

The calendar year ended with the ambassadors from Florence and Naples journeying to Rome. As Florence was without representation in the College, Cardinals d'Aragona and Sforza shouldered the majority of the ceremonial obligations. More surprisingly, Burchard's record suggests that Borgia did not feature prominently in the Christmas liturgy of the papal chapel, though his fellow cardinals took on their traditional responsibilities, Todeschini Piccolomini proclaiming the Gospel at the first Mass of Christmas and Arcimboldi acting as celebrant on St Stephen's day, the anniversary of the assassination of his former patron, Galeazzo Maria Sforza.[624]

On 8 February 1485 Jean Balue returned to Rome from his sixteenth–month legation to France. Like Borgia, he was the only representative from his native country resident in Rome, after the death of Philibert Hugonet the previous September. Balue's loyalty to Giuliano della Rovere never wavered, so his return can only have bolstered that cardinal's position, while potentially diminishing that of Borgia. In Balue's wake came a French embassy whose mission was to exploit Franco–papal rapprochement by pressing the enduring French claim to the kingdom of Naples. This was a direct threat to Borgia's carefully cultivated dealings with the House of Aragon. However, discussions were derailed the following month when Innocent fell ill with a bout of colic so serious that it had caused the

[622] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 89.

[623] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 90.

[624] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i. p. 95.

condottiere Virginio Orsini to mobilise his troops to protect the bridges spanning the Aniene to the north of Rome.[625] Fearing that an interregnum was imminent, Giuliano della Rovere again took precautions to forestall an outbreak of anarchy and assumed control of Castel S. Angelo.[626] There is no indication that Borgia took any corresponding measures: he had less to fear because his political power was less.

The pope survived, but his contribution to the celebration of the first Easter after his election was minimal. In 1485 Holy Week fell between 5 and 12 April. On Palm Sunday Balue was the celebrant in St Peter's. On Holy Thursday Borgia assumed his usual functions, celebrating Mass and washing the feet of the poor. [627] Likewise, on Good Friday the major penitentiary, Della Rovere, presided over the veneration of the Cross.[628] Giovanni Lorenzi, Marco Barbo's secretary, delivered the sermon that day.[629] With the altars stripped, a more junior cardinal appeared in the papal chapel on Holy Saturday. That year it was Sclafenati.[630] The pontiff was still absent on Easter Sunday, when Borgia celebrated Mass in St Peter's, Burchard providing little supplementary information.[631] Although Innocent had been absent throughout Holy Week, following Borgia's Mass on Easter Sunday he appeared at a window and blessed the faithful.[632] The following day Burchard recorded his presence for

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[625] Vasco, *Diario,* p. 520; Infessura, *Diario*, p. 178.

[626] Vasco, *Diario*, p. 520.

[627] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 111.

[628] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 112.

[629] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 112.

[630] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 112.

[631] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, pp. 111–12.

[632] Pontano, *Diario*, p. 46.

Arcimboldi's Mass in the Sistine Chapel.[633] After that he seems to have been too exhausted to make any further appearances. The Church was being led by a part–time pope.

As the summer approached, Borgia was not a celebrant at any of the main liturgical celebrations. Costa presided at the Mass for Ascension Day, Barbo officiated in St Peter's at Pentecost, and Rangone celebrated the Mass for Corpus Christi at the start of June.[634] The annual outbreak of plague hit Rome severely and Curial business slowed, although consistories were still held on 18 July, 12 and 26 August, 11 and 16 September. On 6 August, Burchard notes there were just six cardinals present: Carafa, Giuliano della Rovere, Balue and the native Romans Savelli, Colonna and Conti.[635] Ascanio Sforza had fled to Velletri after three members of his household died from the plague. Marco Barbo wrote to Giovanni Lorenzi from the abbey of S. Severo, just outside Orvieto, on 16 August, then from Orvieto itself on 14 September, and on 30 October from his bishopric of Palestrina.[636] His retreat from Rome was sensible, for his fellow Venetian, Pietro Foscari retired to baths near Viterbo and died there on 11 August.

Barbo's absence had consequences for Borgia. If Della Rovere and Balue really were intent on installing a French king in Naples, then Borgia, who had thrown in his lot with the House of Aragon, might need to cultivate friends elsewhere. By that stage there was an increasing level of geographical specialization with regard to the sponsorship of candidates to vacant benefices. Barbo had come to specialize in English and Welsh appointments, some of

[633] Pontano, *Diario*, p. 112.

[634] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, pp. 113–14, 116.

[635] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, pp. 118–19.

[636] Paschini, *Il carteggio*, pp. 108, 122, 132.

which emerged during his lengthy absence.[637] Although Borgia had overseen some former appointments in England in 1463, the vacancies in 1485–6 were of much greater standing and came at a time when Borgia needed to set himself apart from his colleagues, particularly Giuliano della Rovere, who remained a prolific sponsor to French benefices. As the most senior cardinal, Borgia was an obvious choice to oversee appointments, and also had a reputation for being a supportive and reliable patron. He may have met two of his candidates in 1485, when Thomas Langton, a former chaplain to Edward IV, and Robert Morton, a former master of the rolls, were in Rome seeking a second dispensation for the marriage of the new king, Henry VII (r. 1485–1509) and Edward's daughter, Elizabeth of York.[638] At Rennes on 14 December 1483 Henry had sworn an oath to marry Elizabeth.[639] A dispensation had then been issued by the Apostolic Penitentiary on 6 April 1484 to 'Henry Richmond a man of the York diocese and Elizabeth Plantagenet a woman of the London diocese… request similar favour from the relationship in double fourth degree of consanguinity'.[640] However, this proved to be faulty, meaning that Morton and Langton found themselves in Rome in the quest for a dispensation with irrefutable legal backing. A second dispensation was issued on 16 January 1486 by the bishop of Imola, Giacomo Passarella.[641] Meanwhile, on 9 February 1485, Borgia acted as prosper for Langton when he was translated from St

[637] Fletcher, 'Cardinal Marco Barbo', p. 41.

[638] Fletcher, 'Cardinal Marco Barbo', p. 41.

[639] S. B Chrimes, *Henry VII* (London, 1972), p. 65.

[640] P. Clarke, 'English Royal Marriages and the Papal Penitentiary in the Fifteenth Century', *English Historical Review*, 120/488 (2005), p. 1025.

[641] Clarke, 'English Royal Marriages', p. 1025.

David's to Salisbury.[642] Barbo had acted as cardinal proposer for Langton to St David's on 4 July 1483.[643] With St David's again vacant, Borgia proposed Hugh Pavy to it on 16 May 1485.[644] At that stage Borgia was acting in the interest of Richard III (r. 1483–5). When he returned to English matters, with the sponsorship of Morton to Worcester on 6 October 1486, he was then serving the interest of the new king, Henry.[645] Whereas Edward IV, Richard III and the House of York in general had been allied with Burgundy, Henry gained the English throne with French backing. It is therefore not altogether surprising that Borgia was not the only cardinal involved in English business and that he had to share it with Balue in the consistory of 6 October. On that occasion Borgia got the lesser prize, while Balue was entrusted with the sponsorship of Robert Morton's uncle, John, to the archbishopric of Canterbury.[646]

There is no indication that England and Wales were of any particular interest to Cardinal Borgia. Castile was a very different proposition and the death of the archbishop of Seville, Iñigo Manrique de Lara, in April 1485 triggered an extensive reconfiguration of the Castilian episcopate, seven sees receiving new bishops on a single day, 26 August.[647] The consistorial sponsorship was divided between Borgia and Carafa, with the former taking the first four moves, those of Diego Hurtado de Mendoza y Quiñones from Palencia to Seville, the Dominican Alfonso de Burgos from Cuenca to Palencia, Alfonso de Fonseca from Ávila

[642] Fletcher, 'Cardinal Marco Barbo', p. 41; Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica,* ii, p. 253.

[643] Fletcher, 'Cardinal Marco Barbo', p. 41; Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica,* ii, p. 209.

[644] Fletcher, 'Cardinal Marco Barbo', p. 41.

[645] Fletcher, 'Cardinal Marco Barbo', p. 41; Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica,* ii, p. 294.

[646] Fletcher, 'Cardinal Marco Barbo', p. 41; Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica,* ii, p. 131.

[647] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica,* ii, pp. 88, 148, 165, 232.

to Cuenca, and the Hieronimite Hernando de Talavera filling the vacancy at Ávila. This sequence gave Borgia a patronage relationship with men who went on to be among the most distinguished clerics of their generation. In the case of Mendoza, that relationship reached its zenith when he was among the cardinals created by the Borgia pope in 1500. However, all was not quite as straightforward as the written record suggests, for Innocent's immediate reaction to news of the vacancy at wealthy Seville was to appoint Borgia to it. This was typical of Innocent's desire to assert himself vis–à–vis a secular power and repeatedly led to breakdowns in relations with states that had previously secured the privilege of nominating episcopal candidates for papal confirmation. In the case of Seville, the Spanish monarchs did indeed have their own candidate, Diego Hurtado de Mendoza being the nephew of Cardinal Mendoza. Fortunately for all concerned, fate then intervened. In May the cardinal's eldest son, known in Castile as Pere Lluis (Pier Luigi in Italy), distinguished himself at the battle of Ronda – a significant episode in the war against Granada – and was rewarded by being made a grandee of Spain. By the end of the year he had been confirmed as duke of Gandía.[648] His duchess was to be María Enríquez de Luna (1474–1539), a first cousin of both the Spanish monarchs.[649] This gave Cardinal Borgia precisely the sort of connection he needed to counter anything that Giuliano della Rovere might have been able to engineer and, as events turned out, went some way to compensate for the death of Giovanni d'Aragona, who succumbed to the plague on 17 October. In the light of all that, there was no difficulty at all in overlooking Innocent's hasty action over Seville.

Borgia appears to have retreated to Subiaco after the Castilian promotions in order to avoid the plague. In October news reached Innocent that Borgia had fallen ill. The vice–

[648] A. Mizumoto–Gitter, 'From Rome to Gandía: Family Networks in the Early Modern Mediterranean World', *Royal Studies Journal*, 7/1 (2020), pp. 57–76.

[649] Mizumoto–Gitter, 'From Rome to Gandía', p. 61.

chancellor was served by a number of Valencian doctors, including Pere Pintor and Gaspar de Torella (Gaspard de Toriglia). Pintor had been one of the most accomplished surgeons in Valencia and, in 1485, appears to have been a relatively new member of Borgia's household, joining earlier that year after fleeing Spain out of fear of anti–Jewish persecution.[650] Torella left Borgia's household two years later and was ordained as a priest in 1487; in 1494 became bishop of S. Giusta in Sardinia.[651] During his ecclesiastical career, he maintained an interest in medicine, writing *De praeservatione curatione que pestilentiae,* which he dedicated to Borgia's son Cesare. Regardless of the medical services available to the cardinal, Innocent thought the illness was so serious that he sent one of his own physicians, the Cypriot Ludovico Podocatharo, to care for the vice–chancellor.[652] At a time when the pontiff's own health was fragile, such a decision reflected the enormity of the situation and Innocent's desire for one of his most important lieutenants to return to full health. On 30 October he wrote to Borgia:

> We have learned of your indisposition at which we feel very much grieved.... We trust that it will be of little consequence and soon pass away.… Put aside all other

[650] J. Arizzabalaga, 'Los medicos Valencianos Pere Pintor y Gaspar Torella, y el tratamiento de mal francés en la corte papal de Alejandro VI Borja', in M. González Baldoví (ed), *El hogar de los Borja*, (Xàtiva, 2001), pp. 141–58.

[651] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 169.

[652] E. Parlato, 'Memorie romane del cardinale cipriota Ludovico Podocataro e dei suoi eredi', in B. Arbel (ed), *Cyprus and the Renaissance (1450–1650)* (Turnhout, 2012), p. 69; Pastor, *History*, v, p. 248.

occupations to apply yourself to the recuperation of your health and to send back the said bishop (Podocatharo) to us as soon as possible.[653]

Podocatharo was already well known to Borgia: he had been a member of the College of Abbreviators from 1479 to 1483, and then a member of the cardinal's household, acting as both secretary and doctor.[654] In 1483 Innocent appointed Podocatharo bishop of Capaccio in Campania.[655] The climax of Podocatharo's career came in 1500 when Alexander elevated him to the College of Cardinals.[656] So closely did Podocatharo come to identify with the Borgia family that he purchased a palace on Via di Monserrato, in the heart of Rome's Aragonese community.[657]

As the plague abated, relations between the papacy and the Italian states deteriorated once more, confirming that the change of pontiff did not mark a complete change in attitude. In September 1485 the outbreak of the Barons' War in Naples initiated a conflict that Pastor called 'the most appalling of all the tragic dramas of the fifteenth century'.[658] The war began after several of the most influential Neapolitan barons, including Antonello Petrucci, Francesco Coppola and Girolamo Sanseverino, rebelled against the infringements of their

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[653] Quoted in De Roo, *Material*, ii, pp. 246–7.

[654] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 401; Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 82.

[655] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 132.

[656] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 25.

[657] T. Raschiatore, 'Palazzo Podocataro, La casa–museo del cardinale di papa Borgia', <https://www.academia.edu/36118808/Palazzo_Podocataro._La_casa-museo_del_cardinale_di_papa_Borgia >(accessed 30 January 2020).

[658] Pastor, *History*, v, p. 251.

powers and privileges by a centralizing royal government and a 'foreign' ruling dynasty that inspired no depth of affection among its subjects. In Rome, Giuliano della Rovere and Jean Balue tried to persuade Innocent to support the barons, capitalizing on Borgia's absence. Such a move put Della Rovere and Balue in opposition to Borgia, whose association with the ruling dynasty has been well established. Borgia had not returned to Rome by the time Ferrante sent his son Giovanni to intercede with the pontiff about rising tensions with Naples. That was in early October. According to a letter of Bonfrancesco Arlotti to Ercole d'Este, the young cardinal soon fell ill and was already in bed with a fever by 8 October.[659] He died of the plague eight days later, though there were also rumours of poisoning.[660] His death left Carafa as the sole Neapolitan representative in the College, but for Borgia it left him without a valuable and well–connected ally.

Exactly a week after the death of Giovanni d'Aragona, Innocent revoked the act by which Ferrante had been invested with his kingdom; war was declared on Naples the following day, 24 October. In Borgia's absence, Innocent had relied – perhaps exclusively – on the misguided information of Giuliano della Rovere, who showed himself to be a poor diplomat. In time–honoured fashion, the other Italian states took sides. In the pattern established in 1480, Florence came to Ferrante's aid. The king also looked for support from the family of his daughter–in–law in Milan, as well as from his son–in–law in Hungary.[661] Again echoing the early part of the decade, Innocent could muster only the support of Genoa, though Venice sent the *condottiere* Roberto Sanseverino (1418–87) to the pope's aid.[662] Roberto had a foot in each camp as he was related to the Sforza of Milan by way of his

[659] Pastor, *History*, v, p. 253.

[660] Burchard, *Liber notarum,* i, pp. 121, 128.

[661] Pastor, *History*, v, p. 255.

[662] Pastor, *History*, v, pp. 250, 256.

mother Elisa, a sister of Francesco Sforza, but following the assassination of Galeazzo Maria in 1476 he had made himself an enemy of the briefly powerful Cicco Simonetta and had been exiled from Milan. Thereafter he had fought for Genoa (1478) and Venice (1482) and was killed at the Battle of Calliano in 1487.[663]

After spending several months in Subiaco recovering from the plague, Borgia returned to Rome in time for the feast of St Andrew (30 November), when Roberto was invested as *gonfaloniere* of the Church.[664] The new liturgical year opened, Advent ran its usual course, as did the season of Christmas. Ever fastidious about precedent and correct practice, on Christmas Eve Burchard had an argument with Cardinals Borgia and Barbo over whether or not the cardinals should be already vested when they arrived in the basilica for Vespers. The two cardinals could claim twenty–nine and eighteen years of experience in papal ceremonies and argued that they always arrived in their vestments.[665] Burchard maintained that this had never been the case. Matters did not improve, and the liturgy was fraught with errors, two of which during the antiphon Burchard admitted were due to his own carelessness: 'qui mea negligentia in duobus errant'.[666]

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[663] M. M. Bullard, 'Storying Death in the Renaissance: The Recapture of Roberto di Sanseverino (1481–1487)', *MLN, Italian Issue Supplement: Studia Humanitatis: Essays in Honor of Salvatore Camporeale*, 119/2 (2004), p. 181.

[664] Paschini, *Il carteggio*, p. 133; Burchard, *Liber notarum,* pp. 131–2; Infessura, *Diario*, p. 188.

[665] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 134.

[666] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 134.

Borgia began 1486 by gaining a 700–ducat Portuguese pension on the occasion of Don Afonso of Portugal becoming bishop of Évora.[667] That was a minor detail, for it was the war with Naples that dominated consistorial business. Tempers flared on 6 March, when an argument between Cardinals Balue and Sforza became so heated that Innocent was forced to demand silence from both of them.[668] Sforza had reacted against Balue's attempt to summon French troops into the conflict in support of the rebel barons, because that would advance the Angevin claim to Naples and prevent Sforza's brother–in–law ever becoming king. Balue's role in this scheme can be seen in the fact that he received a 2,000–*livre* French pension from March 1486 onwards.[669] Cardinals Sclafenati, Rangone and Borgia, who claimed to speak on behalf of the interests of Milan, Hungary and the Spanish kingdoms respectively and opposed Balue's ideas, were caught in the fray.[670] As Marco Pellegrini argues, this marked the start of a split between Balue and Sforza; while the former attempted to cling to Innocent, Sforza became the focal point in the College for opposition to Balue and Della Rovere's designs.[671] Borgia was automatically on the Aragonese side of the longstanding dispute over Naples, which now meant that he found himself siding with Sforza and against Balue.

After his minimal contribution to Holy Week and Easter the previous year, Innocent was much more prominent in 1486. On Palm Sunday (19 March) Burchard recorded Borgia presenting the pope with his palm. According to Burchard's account, it was also on the Sunday that Borgia and Giuliano della Rovere discussed the liturgy for the next few days,

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667 Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 165.

668 Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 205.

669 H. Forgeot, *Jean Balue : Cardinal d'Angers (1421 ? –1491)* (Paris, 1895), p. 130.

670 Pellegrini, *Ascanio Maria Sforza*, i, pp. 187–97.

671 Pellegrini, *Ascanio Maria Sforza*, i, p. 198.

agreeing that Borgia would preside on Holy Thursday and Della Rovere on Good Friday, all of which followed the established pattern.[672] This put everyone off the scent, because Della Rovere used this as his cover to disappear from Rome altogether at some point before the Holy Thursday liturgy. Burchard wrote in his *Liber notarum* that

> unknown to everyone, unless to the pope or to the cardinal of Avignon (Balue) he was going to travel or sail to Genoa and Avignon because of wars that are projected between the Roman Church on the one hand and King Ferrante of Sicily and Virginio Orsini, captain of the League and adherent of Ferrante on the other. (nemmine, vel papa tantum, aut forte etiam r.mo. d. cardinale Andegavensi id sciente, iturus deinde seu navigaturus Januam et Avinionem pro rebus bellicis que inter romanam Ecclesiam et Ferdinandum Sicilie regem ac Gentilem Virginium Ursinum, lig capitaneeum, parts regis Frdinandi defendentm, aguntur.)[673]

Della Rovere's unforeseen absence meant that Borgia also had to take charge on Good Friday.[674] With the major penitentiary *en route* to France, it was left to Balue to secure Innocent's support and maintain the Angevin cause in Rome. This brought him up against Borgia, and Balue was no diplomat. At this point the relative restraint of Burchard's account gives way to the sensationalism of Infessura, who relates that in early May differences between them boiled over when Balue, playing on traditional anti–Spanish insults, called Borgia 'a Marrano, the son of a whore and of low repute'. In return, Borgia declared Balue to be a drunk and that no one should pay any attention to what he said: 'protulit verba

[672] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 142.

[673] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 142.

[674] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 143.

vituperosa, videlicet illum esse marranum et filium meretricis et vitam suam dehonestabatur, propter quod maximus tumultus factus fuit in dicto concistorio ita quod unusquisque credebat, eos venturos ad manus, dictumque consistorium fuit expeditum quasi in meridie'.[675]

Order returned to the papal court for the celebration of Corpus Christi on 25 May, though not until Innocent had summoned Borgia and Sansoni Riario to discuss the sequence for the festal procession. Burchard's account reveals a rare moment of humility on his part when he readily deferred to Borgia's opinion.[676] Following precedent, the procession started from Castel S. Angelo and made its way to St Peter's, where Mass was celebrated by Domenico della Rovere.[677] Shortly after Corpus Christi, Borgia and Sforza left Rome and travelled to the Orsini fortress on the southern shore of Lake Bracciano, a detail not lost on Infessura, whose account of the next conclave relies heavily on the existence of a close working relationship between the two cardinals.[678] They had returned to Rome by 9 July, the octave of the Visitation, when Borgia 'and twelve other cardinals' were present at the church of S. Giacomo degli Spagnoli on Campo Agonale (now Piazza Navona) to celebrate the latest Christian victories – at Alora and Loja – in the ongoing war against Granada.[679] For Borgia, the only Curial cardinal from the Spanish kingdoms, it must have been a moment of great pride. The celebrant was Borgia's childhood friend Pedro García, bishop of Ales in Sardinia since 1484.[680] His addition of a collect for the victorious king of Aragon and Castile vexed

[675] Infessura, *Diario,* pp. 202–3.

[676] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 154.

[677] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, pp. 154–5.

[678] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 206.

[679] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 156.

[680] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 286.

Burchard, who naturally thought it was inappropriate.[681] The festivities continued in the evening with celebratory bonfires outside the Apostolic Palace and a number of the cardinals' palaces, and a second Mass at S. Giacomo the following day.[682] Once again Borgia was present, along with Cardinals Carafa, Balue, Rangone, Conti, Sclafenati, Todeschini Piccolomini, Sansoni Riario and Savelli. Burchard also attended, 'at the request of the chaplain of the Church', and was again critical of the collect for the king, though conceded that it was customary to do so at what was the national church of the Castilians.[683] With Giuliano della Rovere absent in France, the Spanish king's victories presented Borgia with the perfect opportunity to impress on the pope and Rome in general the important role that his nation was playing in defending Christendom, which could certainly not be said of France.

The purpose of Della Rovere's mission was to open negotiations with Duke René II of Lorraine (1451–1508), the current holder of the Angevin claim, about intervening in the Neapolitan conflict. Della Rovere hoped that the duke would send a fleet against Ferrante and in support of the rebels.[684] No fleet materialized, René confining himself to the minimum that could be expected when he sent orators to present his case to the Italian states. The French regency government was also unable to mount a military invasion. In short, Della Rovere knew his campaign was not succeeding and, by implication, that Borgia was quietly backing the winning side with Ferrante. After a five–month absence, the cardinal returned to Rome on 12 September. He was met by his closest associates ('tamquam particulares amici') among the cardinals – Balue, Girolamo Basso della Rovere, Domenico della Rovere, Scalfenati, Savelli and Colonna – who escorted him to the Apostolic Palace to provide the pontiff with a

[681] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 156.

[682] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 156.

[683] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 157.

[684] Pastor, *History*, v, pp. 260, 263.

report on his activities.[685] The following day the ambassadors of the Spanish monarchs arrived in Rome to pay homage to the pontiff. Despite the fact that Borgia championed Spanish business in Rome, Burchard's *Liber notarum* makes no mention of the vice–chancellor either welcoming the ambassadors or entertaining them while they were in the city.[686] It was the plague season, and Borgia had a history of succumbing, so he may have been acting with appropriate caution.

A fortnight later the College of Cardinals suffered its second loss of the year, following the death of Thomas Bourchier on 30 March. Bourchier had been consistently non–Curial, but Gabriele Rangone had lived in Rome and died there on 27 September. Despite originating in Venetian territory, he had remained an agent of the Hungarian king, Ferrante's son–in–law, so he naturally sided with Sforza and Borgia in the division of opinion over Naples. Sforza and Borgia were both executors of Rangone's will and also headed the funeral procession to S. Maria in Aracoeli.[687] Borgia in particular took his role as executor seriously, to the extent that Burchard recorded him as unimpressed about the size of the cloth portraying the late cardinal's arms and the placement of torches, ordering that both problems should be rectified.[688]

The death of Rangone created a vacancy for a cardinal to champion Hungarian interests at the Curia, including the sponsorship of the king's candidates to vacant bishoprics. In view of the fact that the king was married to Ferrante's daughter Beatrice, this appeared to be a Borgia–shaped hole. He could serve the interests of Naples and Hungary at one and the

[685] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 159.

[686] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, pp. 159–60.

[687] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 161.

[688] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, pp. 164–5.

same time. On 27 April 1487 he acted as sponsor to two Hungarian clerics. The bishopric of Eger/Erlau had been vacant since the death of Rangone and was filled by the royal treasurer and favourite of the queen Orbán Dóczy von Nagylúcse, who was translated from Gyor/Raab.[689] The vacancy there was filled by Tamás Bakócz (1442–1521), again with Borgia as sponsor.[690] Borgia maintained a close eye on both of these. With Dóczy's death in 1491 Borgia became administrator of the see. It became a bargaining chip in the next conclave, promised by Borgia to Sforza in return for his vote. Sforza did indeed become administrator on 31 August 1492.[691] Bakócz went on to be one of Pope Alexander's choices for the cardinalate.[692]

The following month, on 21 May, Borgia sponsored to another Hungarian benefice, the primatial see of Esztergom, which had been vacant for two years since the death of Cardinal d'Aragona in 1485. The new administrator was the late cardinal's eight–year–old nephew Ippolito [I] d'Este (1479–1520), son of Duke Ercole of Ferrara and Eleonora d'Aragona, so a grandson of King Ferrante.[693] It was his aunt, Beatrice, the queen consort of Hungary, who had pushed for the promotion, with Borgia as the willing instrument of the House of Aragon. The young Ippolito left Ferrara for Hungary in company with his cousin Niccolò Maria d'Este, bishop of Adria.[694] He studied at the Hungarian court and formed his own court of 245 persons at Esztergom. In due course, in 1493 and aged just fourteen, he was

[689] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 93, 185.

[690] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 185.

[691] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 93.

[692] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 25.

[693] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 267.

[694] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 90.

made a cardinal deacon by the Borgia pope.[695] More immediately, Borgia's interest in Hungarian benefices continued for the next two years with his sponsorship of János Vitéz (the younger) to Veszprém and Stjepan Crispo to the bishopric of Bosnia, which at the time was part of Hungary, on 3 June and 21 November 1489 respectively.[696] Borgia also acted as sponsor to Crispo's successor, Lukács Szegedi Baratin on 10 January 1491.[697] This is a very clear illustration of how geographical specialization had developed with regard to such sponsorship, but also demonstrates how Borgia adapted to changing circumstances and developed a genuine commitment to a region of Christendom which had only the most tenuous of connections with his Spanish ancestry.

The case of Ippolito d'Este set a convenient precedent for other dynasts: major benefices could be granted to mere children and the practice was creeping lower down the social scale. Lorenzo de' Medici was a mere citizen of Florence, but he was its leading citizen and consciously aped the behaviour of the nobility. In the mid to late 1480s he was engaged in a campaign to accumulate benefices for his second son, Giovanni (1475–1521), and to stop at nothing short of a cardinal's hat. Giovanni Lanfredini was acting as his agent in Rome. On 30 August 1488 Lanfredini wrote to Lorenzo about certain members of the College of Cardinals, and began by identifying d'Estouteville, Borgia and Gonzaga and the three most significant in the time of Pope Sixtus. By 1488 d'Estouteville and Gonzaga had died, leaving Borgia who was

> an expert diplomat, perfectly aware of the situation, a tireless worker, prudent and astute at the same time, well–liked by the people of Rome, esteemed and

[695] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 24.

[696] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 292, 122.

[697] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 122.

> appreciated by the greatest rulers and governments, (he) was one of the most cardinal qualified to receive the tiara (esperto diplomatico, petfettamente al corrente della situazione, lavoratore instancabile, prudente ed astuto allo stesso tempo, ben voluto dal popolo di Roma, stimato e apprezzato dalla maggior pmie dei regnanti e dei governi, [egli] era uno dei cardinali piùqualificati a ricevere la tiara.)[698]

This was useful information, because Lorenzo needed a good idea of which cardinals to cultivate and how to approach them if he wanted them to act as intermediaries with the pope on behalf of young Giovanni.

Patronage relationships required much cultivation and could be lost in an instant. The strength of Borgia's position in Rome depended on the pope's favour, but also on his relationship with the Spanish monarchs. In the second half of 1488 that was suddenly in jeopardy because Borgia's eldest son, the duke of Gandía, died on 3 September. All was not lost, for the title passed to his half–brother Giovanni/Joan/Juan who married María Enríquez de Luna which protected Borgia's dynastic link with the Spanish monarchs. If Curial Rome were in any doubt about his relationship with the monarchs, it was dispelled on 23 January 1489, when Borgia sponsored a trio of Spanish prelates: Pedro Ximenez de Prexamo to the bishopric of Coria, Bernardino López de Carvajal (1456–1523) to Badajoz, and Juan Ruiz de Medina to Astorga.[699] Of these it was Carvajal who went on to enjoy an exceptionally notable career and was elevated to the cardinalate by Alexander in 1493.[700] A fourth Spanish

[698] Quoted in F. Somaini, 'Il Cardinale Rodrigo Borgia', p. 119.

[699] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 138, 231, 110.

[700] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 23.

promotion was handled by Borgia at the end of the year, on 18 December, when he sponsored Antonio Rodrigo Bacallari to S. Giustia (Sardinia), which was under Aragonese rule.[701]

On 9 March 1489 Innocent made his only set of elevations to the College.[702] It was a measure of his personal weakness that he had waited so long, each of the surviving cardinals becoming individually more powerful as time passed. First to be named was Lorenzo Cibo de' Mari, archbishop of Benevento, the illegitimate son of Innocent's brother, Maurizio Cibo, the governor of Spoleto in the Papal States.[703] Described positively by Cardella ('dotato di molta letteratura') and Moroni ('dottisimo, e di angelici costume'), the thirty–nine–year–old did not excite opposition from the College, who positively expected each pope to elevate at least one kinsman. [704] If Cibo de' Mari was meek, Innocent's second choice Ardicino della Porta (1434–93), bishop of Aleria in Corsica, was certainly more forceful.[705] During his time as governor of Norcia, Terni, Perugia, Todi and Città di Castello he had made a number of enemies while undertaking his duties. Following Della Porta was Antonio Gentile Pallavicini (1441–1507), bishop of Orense, who had served in the pontiff's household and had been put in charge of the Datary shortly after Innocent was elected.[706] Then came the Breton André d'Espinay (*c.* 1451–1500), archbishop of Bordeaux, whose career provided an interesting counterpart to the converging relationship between the duchy of Brittany and the kingdom of

[701] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 187.

[702] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica,* ii, pp. 21–2; Infessura, *Diario*, pp. 238–41.

[703] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 117.

[704] Cardella, *Memorie storiche*, iii, p. 229; Moroni, *Dizionario di erudizione*, xiii, p. 126.

[705] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 95; Cardella, *Memorie storiche,* iii, pp. 231–3.

[706] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 112; Cardella, *Memorie storiche,* iii, pp. 233–6.

France.[707] The fifth choice, Pierre d'Aubusson (1423–1503), grand master of the Order of St John of Jerusalem, came with the heroic reputation of having defended the island of Rhodes from the Ottomans over a long period of time, most particularly in 1480.[708] There was little prospect of him ever being a Curial cardinal. The sixth name was that of Maffeo Girardi, the eighty–four–year–old patriarch of Venice.[709] In his case both age and the reluctance of the secular government in Venice to allow its prelates to reside in Rome suggested that he would be another absentee. The existing cardinals could have no objection to men who were so unlikely to come to Rome and share their corporate income. On the other hand, there were distinct objections to the last two names on Innocent's list.

Giovanni de' Medici was there because Innocent's negative relations with Naples had obliged him to seek friends elsewhere in the peninsula and had found them in Florence, most particularly in Lorenzo de' Medici, whose daughter Maddalena (1473–1528) was married to Innocent's illegitimate son Franceschetto Cibo (c. 1450–1519) in 1487. Lorenzo played on Innocent's need for allies by pressing the case for a hat for Maddalena's brother Giovanni.[710] This divided opinion among the existing cardinals. Barbo and Giuliano della Rovere attempted to block the elevation. While Barbo's objection was based on Medici's immaturity, Della Rovere's was about stifling Florentine territorial ambitions and to shore up his own position in the College, which had faltered since his misguided advice over French interests in Naples. On the other side, Sforza proved to be the biggest champion of Giovanni's cause.

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[707] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 125; Cardella, *Memorie storiche,* iii, pp. 236–8.

[708] Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, ii, pp. 346–8.

[709] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 290; Cardella, *Memorie storiche,* iii, pp. 238–9.

[710] Cardella, *Memorie storiche,* iii, pp. 240–2; W. Roscoe, *The Life and Pontificate of Leo the Tenth* (4 vols, London, 1805), i, pp. 28–9.

He turned to Borgia, who again found himself on the opposite side of an argument to Della Rovere.[711] Sforza and Borgia visited each cardinal in order to gain their support for Giovanni's promotion. Their efforts worked: Carafa, Balue, Michiel, Costa, de Foix, Domenico della Rovere, Colonna, Conti, Sclafenati and Orsini all assented to it.[712] Giuliano della Rovere still had enough sway over Innocent to force a compromise: the young Florentine was instructed to study at Pisa for three years, after which his name would be published and he would be able to function as a cardinal. It is well known that his Pisan contemporaries included Borgia's clerical son Cesare. The last of the eight names on Innocent's list was that of another youngster, Federico Sanseverino, one of the many sons of the *condottiere* Roberto, whose family were related to the Sforza and had thrown in their lot with the ducal family in Milan.[713] Thus, it was Ascanio Sforza who led efforts for Federico to be admitted to the College. However, he was the same age as Giovanni; if one was too young, so was the other. His publication was also deferred.

A week after the new cardinals were revealed, on 13 March 1489, Djem (1459–95), the brother of Sultan Bayezid II, arrived in Rome as a prisoner.[714] Djem and his elder brother had fought for the throne of their father, Mehmed II, after his death on 3 May 1481. Djem was defeated, fled from his brother's realms and eventually sought sanctuary with the Knights of St John on Rhodes. Thereafter, his journey took him to France, and from France to Italy. The day after his arrival in Rome he met the College of Cardinals and 'saluted them in

[711] Pellegrini, *Ascanio Maria Sforza*, i, p. 320.

[712] Pellegrini, *Ascanio Maria Sforza*, i, p. 329.

[713] Cardella, *Memorie storiche,* iii, pp. 243–4; Pastor, *History*, v, p. 356.

[714] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 337.

order according to their rank'.[715] His story became intimately bound up with that of the second Borgia pope, but dealings between them were of no particular significance in the years before 1492.

The records for Borgia's life in 1489 are of a more dynastic nature. On 18 May his son Cesare was granted permission to enjoy the income from his benefices even if he was absent from them. It was the same privilege that Nicholas V had extended to Rodrigo Borgia in 1455.[716] The fact that Cesare was aged only fourteen was clearly no impediment; he had expenditure and thus required income. Two days later, Cardinal Borgia's palace was the venue for the wedding of Orsino Orsini and Giulia Farnese. The bridegroom was the stepson of Adriana del Milà, Borgia's third cousin, and was a year older than his fifteen–year–old bride. Giulia's name is central to the Borgia legend, for she became Alexander's mistress and her brother was one of his cardinals. With Cesare earmarked for a career in the Church, in July Borgia sought to advance his career by gaining the bishopric of Mallorca for him.[717] However, the vice–chancellor ran into opposition from the king of Aragon, who objected to Cesare on the grounds of his youth. Instead, on 9 October Cardinal Borgia claimed the bishopric for himself. To offset the disappointment over Cesare, on 16 September Borgia was again indulged by Innocent, who granted the archdeaconry of Valencia to the eight–year–old Gioffre Borgia. The pontiff's trust in his vice–chancellor was again in evidence on 4 January

[715] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 337.

[716] De Roo, *Material*, i, p. 251; R. Sabatini, *The life of Cesare Borgia: a history and some criticisms* (London, 1912), pp. 48–9.

[717] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 203.

1490, when Borgia baptized the daughter of Innocent's son Franceschetto Cibo and Maddalena de'Medici.[718]

The year 1490 has become synonymous with the assertion of the Florentine historian Francesco Guicciardini (1483–1540) that Italy had never previously known such prosperity or such a desirable condition. What was the reality in Rome? In May there was a flurry of diplomatic activity as new ambassadors of the kings of Naples, Scotland, Venice, Milan and Florence all arrived there.[719] All was not peaceful and harmonious. Burchard recorded that there were scuffles among the ambassadors about precedence and seating, to the extent that the Venetian and Florentine ambassadors withdrew, leaving those from Naples and Scotland locked in argument. Innocent told the ambassadors to retire and not to attend the liturgy in the papal chapel. However, on 29 May Burchard was informed of the intentions of the Neapolitan ambassador to take his place at Vespers on the eve of Pentecost, by using force if necessary.[720] The severity of the threat saw Burchard consult Cardinals Borgia, Balue, Costa and Michiel. The matter was brought before the pontiff the next day, but Innocent's lack of diplomatic skill meant that the situation deteriorated further, and more squabbles occurred, the problem taking some days to rectify.

By 1490 the Christian forces had been enjoying success after success in their campaign against Granada, gaining territory which was divided up into new dioceses. On 21 May, Borgia sponsored Juan de Ortega to Almeria and García de Quijada to Guadix.[721] There was also business relating to other parts of the peninsula. On 14 June Gonzalo Fernández de

[718] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 291.

[719] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 308.

[720] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 308.

[721] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 97, 179.

Heredia was translated from Barcelona to the archbishopric of Tarragona, which he held until his death in 1511.[722] Borgia had met the previous archbishop, Pedro de Urrea, during his legation. The vacancy at Barcelona involved an even more personal connection for Borgia, because the new bishop – whom he sponsored – was his old friend Pedro García.[723] The latter had recently made a name for himself as a controversialist, taking issue with some of the 900 propositions advanced by the young nobleman Giovanni Pico and rejected by the Church. García's *In determinationes magistrales contra conclusiones apologeticas Ioannis Pici Mirandulani* had been published in Rome in 1489.

By August, the peace that Guicciardini had described appeared to be well and truly over as Innocent fell seriously ill. A report of 21 September from Giovanni Catanei to Francesco Gonzaga noted that the pontiff had a continual and violent fever.[724] Five days later it was reported that he was dead. Bonfrancesco Arlotti informed Ercole d'Este of mounting hysteria in Rome as that rumour circulated.[725] Infessura's diary entry for the following day presents an equally dire state of affairs: 'hora decima nona factus est tumultus maximus in Urbe'.[726] Ludovico Sforza mobilised on all fronts, instructing his brother Ascanio to raise money and troops in the event of Innocent's death and sending Federico Sanseverino to Rome to swell the Lombard vote.[727] Milan's candidates for the conclave were Oliviero Carafa

[722] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 273.

[723] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 115.

[724] Quoted in Pastor, *History*, v, p. 281.

[725] Pastor, *History*, v, p. 531.

[726] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 260.

[727] Pellegrini, *Ascanio Maria Sforza*, i, pp. 274, 336.

and followed by Ardicino della Porta, in that order.[728] For his part, Ascanio felt certain that he would be able to command the votes of Borgia, Carafa, Sclafenati, Della Porta, Savelli, Conti, Zeno and Orsini, and possibly those of Sansoni Riario, Todeschini Piccolomini and Pallavicini.[729] However formidable that grouping might appear, it nevertheless came up against a rival faction headed by Giuliano della Rovere and backed by Naples as a counterweight to Milan; its candidate was Cardinal Costa.

If Innocent had died in 1490, Borgia's chances of becoming the next pontiff were considered high. The Florentine ambassador Lanfredini noted that he 'could be the next Pope if he wants to be'.[730] Borgia was confident of support from the Spanish monarchs, had successfully cultivated Ferrante of Naples through his sons Alfonso, duke of Calabria, and Cardinal Giovanni d'Aragona, and understood the significance of Milan, where Ludovico Sforza ruled in the name of his nephew and Cardinal Ascanio remained influential. The last was of particular significance to Borgia's candidacy.

Innocent survived, but illness plagued him into the autumn. A letter of 3 October from Giovanni Lorenzi to Marco Barbo, who was at Palestrina, presents the gravity of the situation in Rome with the greatest clarity. Lorenzi had clearly spoken to Innocent's doctor, Podocatharo, and informed Barbo of the severity of the situation and the despair of the papal doctors: 'Pontifex, omnium palatinorum iudicio et presertim medici, melius habet; idest quod res ex ultima desperatione ad aliquam spem devenit'.[731] He also comments on the vice–

[728] Pellegrini, *Ascanio Maria Sforza*, i, p. 371.

[729] Pellegrini, *Ascanio Maria Sforza*, i, p. 274.

[730] G. B. Picotti, 'Nuovi studi e documenti intorno a papa Alessandro VI', *RSCI*, v (1951), p. 181.

[731] Paschini, *Il carteggio*, p. 213.

chancellor's candidature: it appeared that Borgia and Ascanio planned to divide the world between them, with Borgia as pope and Sforza as 'archpope' (archypapa), the latter presumably reflecting the role that Giuliano della Rovere had created for himself in 1484.[732] Lorenzi's letter ends with the hope that peace would soon prevail: 'speramusque omnes, omnia tranquilla futura'.[733]

The pontiff rallied and travelled to Porto d'Anzio and Ostia, but on his return to Rome he sickened once more. On 21 November he had a fever, after being taken ill the night before, following a hunt and dinner with Cardinal Sforza.[734] Once again Rome descended into chaos. On 28 November Cardinals Giuliano della Rovere, Savelli, Colonna and Sforza met to discuss plans should Innocent die.[735] He remained conspicuously absent over the Christmas liturgy, but was restored to health on 3 January 1491. However, he was absent once again two days later.

There was every chance that Innocent would not survive his next bout of sickness, and over the course of 1491 Borgia sought to strengthen his position by making further use of his illegitimate children. On 30 April his daughter Lucrezia was promised in marriage to the Neapolitan nobleman Gaspar de Prócida.[736] The fortunes of another Borgia child also prospered. Cesare, who was at Pisa, studying law under Filippo Decio, was made bishop of Pamplona on 12 September.[737] However, neither of these moves was of direct use in a

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[732] Paschini, *Il carteggio*, p. 213.

[733] Paschini, *Il carteggio*, p. 213.

[734] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 245.

[735] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 321.

[736] F. Gregorovius, *Lucrezia Borgia* (London, 1948), p. 26.

[737] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 233; Infessura, *Diario,* p. 293.

forthcoming conclave. Within the enclosure, the only people who really mattered were the electors. That body evolved again in 1491. First, on 2 March, Marco Barbo died. Given the fact that Barbo did not share the same worldly outlook as Borgia and had seen the lengths to which Borgia was prepared to go to flatter secular princes in order to gain what he wanted, it is not surprising that the two men had not seen eye to eye. By contrast, the fact that Barbo had come out of the first ballot in the conclave with the most votes demonstrated the respect that he had among his colleagues. One can only speculate whether he would have done any more than vote for Borgia as a last resort, for the good of the Church. Jean Balue gained Barbo's bishopric of Palestrina, but he survived only a few more months, dying on 5 October. This was definitely in Borgia's interest, for it removed one of his harshest and most vocal critics in the College of Cardinals, a man who would certainly have worked hard to prevent his election. Balue's death meant that there was no longer a French cardinal resident in Rome. By default, that left Giuliano della Rovere as the only 'French' cardinal: a position worth holding between conclaves, but something of a poisoned chalice in the enclosure. Balue's death meant another reshuffle among the cardinal bishops. Borgia and Della Rovere held the most senior posts, so remained untouched; Giovanni Michiel moved to Palestrina and Costa replaced Michiel at Albano.[738]

1492 opened with a momentous event: the fall of Granada to the forces of the Spanish monarchs on 2 January, thereby extinguishing the last embers of Muslim rule in Iberia. News of this triumph reached Rome on 1 February. There were appropriate celebrations throughout the city, including rival offerings by Rome's Aragonese and Castilian communities. Borgia hosted the Aragonese celebrations at his palace, while those of the Castilians were orchestrated by Bernardino López de Carvajal outside the church and hospice of S. Giacomo

[738] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 70, 69.

degli Spagnoli.[739] For a Spaniard with papal ambitions it was the perfect opportunity to present his nation and, by implication, himself as the standard–bearer of Christendom, but whereas the more numerous Castilians had the edge over the Aragonese in military terms, it was Aragon that had a Curial cardinal, a potential pope.

On 22 March the composition of the College of Cardinals changed again when Giovanni de' Medici finally made his appearance in Rome. His mouth was formally opened four days later.[740] As was customary, the new cardinal made a round of visits to his more senior colleagues.[741] Giovanni visited Borgia on 11 April, the same day that he also visited Todeschini Piccolomini, Carafa and Sforza.[742] Social interaction soon gave way to the solemnities of Holy Week, Palm Sunday falling on 15 April that year. Borgia had traditionally presided at the papal liturgy on Holy Thursday, but this time he and Giuliano della Rovere appear to have arranged matters so that Della Rovere would preside on both the Thursday and the Friday, and Borgia would be the celebrant on Easter Sunday.[743] Hardly had Florence finally gained a cardinal than he was gone again, for his father, Lorenzo, died on 8 April and Giovanni was sent as legate to Tuscany and Florence in an attempt to provide an element of continuity and stability. He left Rome on 11 May.[744] While Florence mourned its loss, Rome remained in celebratory mood. On 31 May the Holy Lance, with which Christ's

[739] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 338.

[740] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 343.

[741] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 346.

[742] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 347.

[743] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 351.

[744] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 358.

side had been pierced when he hung on the Cross, arrived in Rome.[745] It had been sent by Sultan Bayezid to Innocent as a sign of good will and to ensure that Djem remained in Rome.[746] Burchard argued that the Lance should be received with all solemnity and reverence and in the same manner as the head of St Andrew in the time of Pius II ('nam quibusdam sentientibus cum omni solemnitate et veneratione ac eo ordine, quo caput sancti Andree apostoli a fel. rec. Pio papa II receptum fuerat').[747] Unlike many of those present, Borgia could compare the two episodes from memory.

On 9 July Borgia acted as sponsor to the Benedictine Mathis Knutsson when he became bishop of Gardar (Greenland).[748] It was Borgia's last nomination before his papal election. Shortly after his elevation on 11 August, the now pontiff ratified Knutsson's nomination and wrote to the bishops of Hólar and Shálholt (Iceland) about the problems of shipping victuals to the far north and of providing a bishop to a region that was impassable for a large part of the year.[749] Between them, these two pieces of information confirm that Borgia possessed a breadth of knowledge about the Church such as his fellow cardinals were unlikely to have possessed. That breadth was entirely appropriate for a potential pope. Less than a week after Gardar received its new bishop, Innocent fell ill again. This time he did not survive, dying on 25 July. The twentieth–century historian Giovanni Soranzo concluded that he was a good and mild pope, but he had a weak temperament: 'si era spento un papa buono, mite, conscio della sua dignità e della sua responsabilità ma che, essendo di tempra piuttisti

[745] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, pp. 365–8.

[746] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 274.

[747] Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 357.

[748] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 175.

[749] Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, p. 183.

debole'.[750] His legacy to the Church was no better than those of his predecessors. He left the papal finances in a parlous state, even though he had not followed Sixtus in being a significant cultural patron and was no more of a diplomat than either Sixtus or Paul, making the strategic error of supporting the Neapolitan rebels against their king and repeatedly appointing to bishoprics in overt defiance of the wishes of the secular powers. None of these shortcomings feature strongly in a Borgia–centred account of the pontificate because the vice–chancellor was adept at smoothing relations between Rome and various monarchies, while avoiding contact with many–headed republics. On the other hand, at least some of the problems which emerged in the course of the pontificate can be directly linked to the interventions of the less diplomatic and more assertive Giuliano della Rovere.

What Innocent also bequeathed were six more papal electors, André d'Espinay and Pierre d'Aubusson being firmly non–Curial. Indeed, Maffeo Girardi and Federico Sanseverino had also been non–Curial until Innocent's death and their arrivals in Rome brought up the familiar question of whether or not they could be admitted to the conclave if their mouths had not been formally opened by the pope. Ascanio Sforza had been in that very situation eight years previously and took the initiative in persuading the College to admit his young kinsman Sanseverino, who could be depended on to vote as Ascanio instructed.[751] The appearance of Girardi, the eighty–six–year–old patriarch of Venice, helped because of the long history of conflict between Venice and Milan: the two new arrivals provided an electoral balance.

Once they were inside the conclave enclosure Innocent's cardinals did not form a united bloc. The influence of Giuliano della Rovere can be seen most clearly in the voting

[750] G. Soranzo, *Studî intorno a papa Alessandro VI (Borgia)* (Milan, 1950), p. 3.

[751] Infessura*, Diario*, pp. 278–9.

pattern of the papal *nipote* Lorenzo Cibo de' Mari, who voted for Michiel in all three scrutinies and Costa in the first two, before dropping him and asserting himself a little by voting for Girardi and Todeschini Piccolomini. Girardi himself was a remarkably consistent voter; age and infirmity presumably prevented him from being an imaginative one.[752] For the most part he voted in line with Venetian interests, for Zeno and Michiel. As a Venetian, he was hostile to Milanese interests, so found himself in Della Rovere's camp and also voted for Costa in all three scrutinies.[753] Among Innocent's cardinals, those were the only two electors who could be relied on to vote as Della Rovere desired. The clearest trend among Innocent's cardinals was that they favoured Carafa for the papacy. Della Porta, Medici and Sanseverino all voted consistently for Carafa in each of the three ballots. In the case of the Florentine, it appears that Giovanni was heeding the famous advice of his father, who warned him against the worldlier cardinals and recommended those who were more pious and learned.[754]

Della Porta and Sanseverino seem to have regarded Todeschini Piccolomini as their second string. Only Antoniotto Pallavicini proved to be an enthusiast for Borgia, voting for him consistently. That connection can presumably be explained by Pallavicini's career in papal administration, which gave him a closer working relationship with the vice–chancellor than the others experienced. Borgia acknowledged his thanks by voting for Pallavicini in the second scrutiny. Turning to votes received, rather than votes given, only one of Innocent's cardinals was a serious contender for the papal throne and that was Della Porta. Borgia recognized this and voted for him twice.[755] At the opposite end of the spectrum, it is no

[752] La Torre, *Del Conclave*, pp. 89–92.

[753] La Torre, *Del Conclave*, pp. 89–91.

[754] Roscoe, *The Life of Lorenzo de' Medici*, ii, pp. 146–51.

[755] La Torre, *Del Conclave*, pp. 89–90.

surprise that Cibo de' Mari and the youths Medici and Sanseverino received no votes whatsoever.[756]

Had it been up to the newest batch of electors, Oliviero Carafa or Ardicino della Porta might have been the next pope. On the other hand, Borgia had long been distinguished as Curial Rome's most successful patron and, as the conclave approached, he drew on his network of clients. Even before Innocent died there were discussions about security during the interregnum. Borgia was involved in them. 100 crossbowmen and 800 other troops were employed to maintain order.[757] They were under the command of two officers, one for the city and one assigned to the Vatican, the latter being Gonzalo Fernández de Heredia, archbishop of Tarragona.[758] This was the man who had succeeded Borgia as bishop of Barcelona in 1478 and who had been sponsored by the cardinal when he was translated to the archbishopric in 1490. It was time for Borgia's investment in him to pay off, suggesting to the electors that they would also benefit if Borgia was elected to the pontifical throne. Likewise, when the cardinals assembled for the conclave on 6 August, it was Giuliano della Rovere who celebrated the Mass of the Holy Spirit, but another Spaniard, Bernardino López de Carvajal, the Spanish monarchs' ambassador to the Holy See, who delivered the oration *De eligendo Summo Pontifice.*[759] Borgia had sponsored him to the bishopric of Astorga in 1488 and to that of Badajoz the following year. In time–honoured fashion, Carvajal urged the cardinals to elect an individual who was outstanding in morals and learning, who would return the Church to a pure state, and purge it of its present sinfulness. With the final victory

[756] La Torre, *Del Conclave*, pp. 89–90, 92.

[757] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 276.

[758] M. J. Ollivier, *Le Pape Alexandre vi et les Borgia* (Paris, 1870), p. 210.

[759] B. Carvajal, 'Oratio de eligendo summo pontefice' (Rome, 1492).

over Granada only seven months earlier and the expulsion of the Jews announced on 31 March, it was only natural that he used the oration to praise the actions of the monarchs in conquering the infidel and actively promoting the Christian faith. Again, the implication was that Borgia's Spanishness was an asset to the Church, not a liability.

When Rodrigo Borgia led his fellow cardinals into the conclave on 6 August 1492 he was not regarded as *papabile*, but – at least on paper – had much to recommend him. At sixty, he could potentially have a pontificate that was neither too long nor too short. He was the most experienced of the electors, a cardinal for thirty–six years, dean of the College since 1483, and a veteran of four previous conclaves. As vice–chancellor of the Church for thirty–five years, his knowledge of its workings was unparalleled. As his contemporary Girolamo Porzio eulogized, by his conduct he had preserved the high position of his office and even enhanced it: 'designatur cujus cancellariae amplissimum officium annis XXVI omni cum dignitate servavit et auxit'.[760] Innocent's shortcomings had indicated that his successor ought to be a diplomat. Borgia had ample experience of cultivating princes everywhere apart from France, which was jealously guarded by Giuliano della Rovere but also extremely suspect as the land of the Avignon papacy and conciliarism. Additionally, as the most successful patron in later fifteenth–century Rome he had proved that he could generate loyalty among his clients and ensure that they received due reward. All that was remained was to secure the votes.

By August 1492 Borgia's final chance had arrived. Of an age which suggested that his pontificate would be neither too long nor too short, he offered the possibility of some stability. Having served as dean for nine years and vice–chancellor for thirty–five, there was no doubt that he was well qualified, with an unparalleled knowledge of the Chancery and the

[760] Quoted in Burchard, *Liber notarum*, i, p. 608.

ceremonial and diplomatic responsibilities of the pontiff. Despite this, Borgia's route to the papal throne had been paved with obstacles, his nationality being the prime hinderance. However, it is testament to both Borgia's abilities and ambition, that he was able to overcome all impediments and on the morning of 11 August was elected unanimously by his colleagues.

8. Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia and the historians.

Few families have been vilified as much as the Borgia, few individuals as much as Rodrigo Borgia/Alexander VI and his children, most particularly Cesare and Lucrezia. Cesare's ruthlessness in governing the Romagna earned him the admiration of Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527) in *Il principe* (published 1532); the posthumous reputation of one fell or rose with the other. Lucrezia's life as a pious and industrious consort to the duke of Ferrara is now appreciated but was for centuries obscured by a version of events that cast her as *femme fatale* who reportedly poisoned one of her earlier husbands with *cantarella*.[761] In comparison with either the ruthless soldier or the dynastic pawn, more was expected of Rodrigo because he was a man of the cloth, a bishop and cardinal who was supposed to lead the Christian faithful by his teaching and his example, and a pope who was nothing less than Christ's vicar on earth. However, for over five centuries he has been cited as one of the most infamous men ever to sit on the throne of St Peter. This negative reputation, shared by the unholy trinity of father, son and daughter, constitutes the 'black legend' of the Borgia and has found representation in an increasing number of genres, from the diaries compiled by their contemporaries to twenty–first–century graphic novels and video games.[762]

As far as information about Cardinal Borgia is concerned, whether it comes from accounts written by his contemporaries or those of subsequent authors, it is at least coloured by the authors' assumptions, which have tended to be negative. To gain a better, less prejudiced understanding of the thirty–six years when he served the Church as a cardinal, it is often necessary to read between the lines of works by both his contemporaries and later

[761] M. Bihan, 'Des poisons des Borgia à la toxicologie', *Historia* (1975), pp. 1–6.

[762] Y. Higuri, *Cantarella* (Tokyo, 2001); *Assassin's Creed II* (Montreal, 2009).

historians. Scholarship has mostly interpreted his career up to the conclave of 1492 as nothing more than a prelude to his later pontificate. Although there have been some attempts to focus on Borgia as a cardinal by studying aspects of his career, including his role as a patron of the arts, there is much more work to be done if we are to understand how the man who was made a cardinal at twenty–five, vice–chancellor of the Church a year later and held these positions for thirty–six and thirty–five years respectively came to be elected unanimously at a time when observers did not regard him as *papabile*.

First as a cardinal and then as pope, Rodrigo's life and career have a significant part to play in other histories aside from that of the Borgia family itself. The papacy has long been a popular choice of subject matter, the sequence of one pontificate succeeding another lending itself to the chronicle genre, most notably in the long–running official history of the popes, the *Liber pontificalis*, as well as to political histories, but the history of the cardinalate is now appreciated in its own right, and Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia's years as a cardinal cover a not insignificant proportion of that history. Most popes have been Italian, but Borgia's Spanish birth makes him part of a number of other narratives, including the Spanish presence in Italy before and after 1494 when the French army invaded Italy. The Vatican Archive has been open to scholars since the late nineteenth century and other Italian repositories were heavily mined around the same time, but Italian historians did not venture to Spanish archives, meaning that the life of a man whose career took him from Spain to Italy was not fully appreciated, though a Spanish pope and close associate of the almost mythical Ferrando and Isabel was a source of pride to his pious fellow–countrymen. In some senses, two versions of Rodrigo Borgia evolved independently of one another, with the Spanish hero deliberately fostered to counter the Italian villain, but this was hampered by the political history of Spain and the popular appeal created by notoriety of any kind.

By adopting a chronological approach to the historiography relating to Rodrigo Borgia as a cardinal, this chapter traces its evolution from the views of his contemporaries through each subsequent generation of scholars, identifying those aspects of his career and personal life which attracted attention and seeing how, over time, the availability of different sources has influenced understanding of the man behind the infamous reputation.

The story starts with a figure who has already featured in chapter 2 of the present study. Although references to Borgia as a cardinal are fleeting in the *Liber de vita Christi ac omnium pontificum* written by Bartolomeo Sacchi (il Platina) and published in Venice by Johannes de Colonia and Johannes Manthen in 1479, that work nevertheless constitutes the first attempt to write a history of the fifteenth–century papacy.[763] This was not Platina's first attempt at a papal biography: in 1464–5 he had written a biography of Pope Pius II, during whose pontificate (1458–64) he first experienced life in Rome. Platina's career was closely entwined with the Mantua's ruling Gonzaga dynasty and he travelled to Rome in 1462 with the newly elevated Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga.[764] Proximity to a member of the College of Cardinals gave Platina his initial perspective on the workings of the papal government, which he subsequently translated into his papal narrative. In March 1464 he was brought into the heart of papal government when he purchased a position in the College of Abbreviators, a division of the Chancery, the Curial department headed by Cardinal Borgia.[765] The first volume of the *Liber* to be published covered the most recent events, detailing the life of Pope Paul II and presenting an entirely unflattering picture of that pontiff, who is portrayed as manipulative, greedy, vain and wildly ignorant, a depiction coloured by the author's negative

[763] B. Platina, *Liber de vita Christi ac omnium pontificum* (Venice, 1479).

[764] Bauer, *Censorship and Fortuna*, pp. 4–14.

[765] Bauer, *Censorship and Fortuna,* p. 31.

personal experience, for Paul dissolved the College of Abbreviators and Platina lost his employment. Borgia also appears in a semi–villainous light, as partly responsible for the changes. Disquiet among the displaced humanists fed into the 'conspiracy' of 1468, in which members of the Roman Academy were alleged to have plotted to kill the pope. Between 1479 and 1664 there were over twelve Latin editions of the *Liber* and from 1519 to 1685 the work was translated into French, Italian, German, Dutch, and English. Platina's frank critique of Paul's behaviour meant that, in the course of the early modern period, it attracted interest from both Catholic censors, who could permit no criticism of a pope, and Protestant anti–papists. Platina died in 1481; his unfinished project was initially taken up by Raffaele Maffei (1451–1522), who added lives of Sixtus IV, Innocent VIII, Alexander VI and Pius III. It then remained dormant until it was continued by Onofrio Panvinio, who extended the text to include papal history from Sixtus IV to Pius V (d. 1572), and by Antonio Ciccarelli, who added the lives of Gregory XIII and Sixtus V, thereby taking the story to 1590.

As the different editions of Platina's text were being published, the first edition of the treatise *De cardinalatu* by Paolo Cortesi (1471–1510) was published in 1510.[766] The text was designed to be instructive for cardinals, describing in detail what their responsibilities were and the manner in which they were expected to live, tempering with moral restraint the luxury to which princes were entitled. The text does not specifically refer to Borgia as a model for any aspect of a cardinal's life. This can be explained by the fact that it was written for Pope Julius II who, as Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere, had been Borgia's greatest adversary. Julius seems to have taken any and every opportunity to blacken the reputation of his predecessor–but–one and that of Cesare Borgia, but no author is more directly associated with that process than Raffaele Maffei, best known as the author of the encyclopaedic

[766] P. Cortesi, *De cardinalatu* (Rome, 1510).

Commentarium rerum urbanorum (1506). It was from this that the lives of the popes from Sixtus to Pius were extracted and added to Platina's text, but also published separately, the latter (the separate histories) being printed in Venice in 1518. Maffei was the first author to allege that Borgia gained the papacy by means of a diabolic pact, though this merely reflected gossip and popular culture. The notion had surfaced in Paris as early as 1500, albeit in an anonymous trick–fold woodcut which involved the viewer moving an image of Borgia in pontifical regalia towards an image of a grotesque and withered devil.[767] Otherwise, such assertions had to wait until after Alexander's death on 18 August 1503. Only a month had passed when the marquis of Mantua, Francesco Gonzaga (r. 1484–1519), stated in a letter to his wife that Borgia had 'bought the papacy' through a pact with the devil and had been promised that he would 'hold it for twelve years'. Gonzaga continued, claiming that when Borgia expired, seven devils were present around him and his 'mouth foamed, like a cauldron on a fire'.[768] By 1506, or whenever Maffei wrote his life of the Borgia pope, the accusation had gained some currency and further dissemination of it was nicely calculated to please Pope Julius. Subsequently, in the context of the religious divisions that came to blight Europe in the sixteenth century, the idea soon took hold among Protestant writers outside of Italy, featuring in the narratives of Francesco Negri (1550), John Bale (1558) and Philippe de Mornay (1600), the last of whom developed it by arguing that Borgia had spent his whole life

[767] K. Fellows, 'Depictions of Pope Alexander VI', p. 130.

[768] Quoted in J. N. Hillgarth, 'The Image of Alexander VI and Cesare Borgia in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 59 (1996), p. 119.

as a cardinal working towards the single aim of becoming pontiff.[769] It was not long before the idea was dramatized, this time in England in *The Devil's Charter* by Barnabe Barnes (1571–1609), a work performed at the court of James VI and I in 1607.

Setting aside that tradition of popularizing sensationalism, the earliest substantial insight into the College of Cardinals of the mid–fifteenth century, the period of Rodrigo Borgia's long Curial service, came through the publication of the letters of Cardinal Iacopo Ammannati (1422–79), published in Milan in 1506 by Alessandro Minuziano.[770] Ammannati had been a favourite of Pope Pius II, so much so that Pius not only gave him his own family name of Piccolomini but also raised him to the cardinalate in 1461. For seventeen years thereafter the careers of Cardinals Ammannati and Borgia overlapped, and the former's extensive correspondence provides periodic insights into the Spaniard's activities and how he was perceived by his colleagues. Ammannati's former secretary Jacopo Gherardi – whose own diary has also been of significance for studies of the later part of Borgia's time in the College of Cardinals – collected his master's letters and presented them to Minuziano. The detail and range of topics covered by the letters is unparalleled among the surviving correspondence of Renaissance cardinals. After the death of his patron, Pius, Ammannati chose to spend considerable periods of time in his native Tuscany, distancing himself from subsequent papal regimes and communicating candidly with his contacts in Rome and

[769] F. Negri, *Della tragedia intitolata libero arbitrio* (Geneva, 1550); J. Bale, *Acta romanorum pontificum* (Basel, 1558); P. de Mornay, *Mysterium iniquitatis seu historia papatus* (Saumur, 1611).

[770] *Epistolae et commentarii Jacobi Piccolomini cardinalis papiensis* (Milan, 1506).

elsewhere. Although Ammannati presents himself as a faithful commentator on the world around him, the 1506 edition exercised relatively little impact on appreciation of either Borgia's career as a cardinal or on that of the fifteenth–century College of Cardinals as a whole. In 1614 the letters were combined with Pius II's *Commentaries* and published in the free imperial city of Frankfurt, home of the famous book fair, indicating that, between them, these two sources constituted the essential reading for an understanding of fifteenth–century papal history. A modern edition of Ammannati's letters edited by Paolo Cherubini adds another 300 letters to those published in 1506, annotates the entire corpus to a high standard, and was published in 1997.[771] Insights into Borgia's career are easier to glean from Cherubini's reader–friendly edition than from the original. While Borgia was on legation in Spain in 1472–3 Ammannati repeatedly expressed his frustration about the lack of replies he had received from the legate. That was around the time of Pietro Riario's dominance in Rome and of Giuliano della Rovere's role in subduing rebellion in the Papal States. Ammannati despaired of declining standards in the College of Cardinals and became all the more appreciate of Borgia and his administrative competence. Among other things, from the enlarged corpus of letters Cherubini constructs a list of Ammannati's familiars – those clerics entitled to dine at the cardinal's table – numbering 114 individuals and acting as a model that could potentially be followed in studies of other later fifteenth–century cardinals, not least Borgia, whose *familia* can be reconstructed with greater certainty than most.

When the history of fifteenth–century Italy was first written, it was only the final decade that was of interest. The historian was Francesco Guicciardini (1483–1540), but it was not until 1561 that the first sixteen books of his *Storia d'Italia* were published in his native

[771] J. Ammannati Piccolomini, *Lettere (1444–1479)*, ed. P. Cherubini (3 vols, Rome, 1997).

Florence, the remaining books following in 1564. Guicciardini was a lawyer by profession but served the Florentine government as ambassador to the Spanish court in 1512 and transferred to papal service under the Medici pope Leo X (r. 1513–1521), acting as governor of a number of papal territories. He began working on his *Storia d'Italia* in 1534; from 1539 poor health obliged him to dictate to an amanuensis. The subject matter of this monumental work begins two years before Borgia was elected pope and does not provide details of his earlier career, though Guicciardini's opinion of the Spanish cardinal may be implied from his famous depiction of the Italian peninsula in 1490, before there was either a Spanish pope on the throne of St Peter or invasions by French, Spanish or other armies: 'Italy had never enjoyed such prosperity, or known so favourable a situation as that in which it found itself so securely at rest in the year of our Christian salvation, 1490'.[772] When the narrative moves to 1492 three defining events change that situation dramatically: the deaths of Lorenzo de' Medici (8 April) and Innocent VIII (25 July), and the election of Borgia (11 August). Although Guicciardini had no illusions about Innocent, who had done relatively little for Western Christendom, his death 'brought about a great change in the affairs of the Church'.[773] At that point Borgia is described 'an ancient cardinal and one of the most considerable prelates in the court in Rome'.[774] For Guicciardini, it was not Borgia's skill and experience that resulted in his election but the fact he had been able to capitalize on the discord between Cardinals Ascanio Sforza and Giuliano della Rovere and the candidates they proposed for the papacy. Alongside this, the historian states that Borgia had 'openly corrupted many of the cardinals', apparently by a combination of money, offers of lucrative

[772] F. Guicciardini, *The History of Italy*, ed. Sidney Alexander (New York, 1972), p. 4.

[773] Guicciardini, *History of Italy*, p. 10.

[774] Guicciardini, *History of Italy*, p. 9.

benefices and other offices.[775] This certainly won over Sforza, who was swayed 'by hopes of preferment and his immoderate thirst of riches'.[776] For Guicciardini, Borgia's personal immoralities were a source of both fascination and revulsion. As the narrative continues, the 'calamities of Italy' multiplied under the Borgia pope and it was surely no coincidence that they did so while the bishop of Rome was not even an Italian. This foreign–born pope allowed the French to invade Italy and march virtually unchallenged down the peninsula, including into the very heart of Rome, while the pontiff himself sought refuge in Castel S. Angelo. To be fair, in the wake of the 1527 sack of Rome even the Florentine Clement VII (r. 1523–34) came off no better in Guicciardini's *Oratoria accusatoria*: 'because of you Rome was so cruelly sacked … You are the plague, the ruin, the fire of the whole world ... enemy of God and of man, enemy of the *patria'*.[777] In this instance Guicciardini accepted that he had a part to play in Clement's actions by advising him to form the League of Cognac against France, in contrast to which he presents the French invasions of Italy in 1494 and 1498 as Borgia's fault alone.

Although the *Storia d'Italia* provides the first narrative history of Italy in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, Guicciardini was nevertheless writing about events from a distance and without the personal experience of political affairs that added authenticity to other portions of his text. Nor was he an impartial interpreter of later fifteenth–century Rome for, as Michael Mallett states, he allowed Florentine patriotism and anti–clerical feelings to cloud his judgement, meaning that he accepted at face value the most

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[775] Guicciardini, *History of Italy*, p. 9.

[776] Guicciardini, *History of Italy*, p. 9.

[777] Quoted in M. Phillips, *Francesco Guicciardini: The Historian's Craft* (Toronto, 1977), pp. 15–16.

virulent and least authenticated legends about the Borgia.[778] Moreover, as far as that family is concerned, there are significant discrepancies between what Guicciardini actually wrote and what was published at the height of Counter–Reformation censorship.

As the *Storia d'Italia* stood alone in terms of its scope, it was little wonder that a number of editions were published in Latin, French and English in rapid succession, clearly showing that there was a burgeoning appetite for the history of the Italian peninsula.[779] The French translation (*L'histoire d'Italie*) by Jérôme Chomedey was available as early as 1568 and reprinted with corrections in 1577. Chomedey's 1568 edition was used by the writer and privy councillor Geoffrey Fenton (1539–1608) for his English translation, which was published the following year (1578) and dedicated to Queen Elizabeth.[780] Further editions followed in 1599 and 1618, between which Barnes used Fenton's translation as a source for *The Devil's Charter* and cast Guicciardini as the Chorus of his play.

Whereas Guicciardini's history had covered Borgia's career as a cardinal in the most fleeting terms, the next general history of the peninsula, *Dell'istoria d'Italia* by Girolamo Briani (1581–1646), published in Venice in 1632, paid much more attention to the period before 1492, the author covering a vast sweep from Hannibal to 1527.[781] Although many states jostle for attention, the papacy is a constant feature. Among the episodes covered, those with direct consequences for Rodrigo Borgia include the outbreak of discord in Ascoli in

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[778] Mallett, *The Borgias*, p. 12.

[779] P. Bondanella, 'Francesco Guicciardini in Modern Critical Literature', *Annali d'Italianistica*, 2 (1984), pp. 7–18.

[780] V. Luciani, 'Le tre edizioni della "Historie of Guicciardin" del Fenton', *La Bibliofilía*, 53 (1951), pp. 121–5.

[781] G. Briani, *Dell'Istoria d'Italia* (18 vols, Venice, 1624), ii, p. 868.

1456 and the Congress of Mantua in 1459, though there is no actual mention of the cardinal. Similarly, there is no mention of Calixtus III's promotion of his two nephews to the College of Cardinals, of Borgia's promotion to the office of vice–chancellor or of any scandalous behaviour in Siena in 1460. Indeed, the only one of Calixtus's kinsmen to be mentioned is Rodrigo's brother Pere Lluis/Pier Luigi, in relation to his offices in Naples and Spoleto.[782] By contrast, the author does discuss the promotion of Pietro Riario and Giuliano della Rovere to the College of Cardinals, the distinction between one set of *nipoti* and the other presumably deriving from their nationality.[783] The first mention of Rodrigo Borgia is following the election of Sixtus IV in 1471, when he was rewarded with the commendatory abbacy of Subiaco.[784] Other cardinals, including Francesco Gonzaga, are also listed as recipients of favours from Sixtus, but the extra–peninsular dimension of cardinals as legates, as Borgia was in Spain, is beyond this author's remit. The longest examination of Borgia comes in 1492 with his election to the papacy, which Briani declares he obtained after bribing Ascanio Sforza and making other irregular promises: 'il cui ufficio egli diede dopò l'havere ricevuto le chiavi di Pietro da Ascanio Sforza uno de' Cardinali di Santa Chiesa, che subornato da gros somma di danari, e da altre inusitate promesse l'elesse in Sommo Pontefice'.[785] Briani is dismissive of the new pontiff, his avarice and immoderate ambition, traits which he argues were well known to Borgia's contemporaries, and finishes his account of the conclave by citing Guicciardini on the reaction of King Ferrante of Naples to news of Borgia's election and noting that Borgia's adversary Giuliano della Rovere was so appalled that he went into a

[782] Briani, *Dell'Istoria d'Italia*, ii, pp. 872, 876.

[783] Briani, *Dell'Istoria d'Italia*, ii, p. 973.

[784] Briani, *Dell'Istoria d'Italia*, ii, p. 961.

[785] Briani, *Dell'Istoria d'Italia*, ii, p. 1018.

voluntary exile.[786] In short, it is a version of events that has become familiar to every succeeding generation.

General histories were only one genre accounting for the period of Borgia's cardinalate. Between the appearance of Guicciardini's history and that of Briani, the *Commentaries* of the Sienese pope Pius II were published in 1584. Until the publication of John XXIII's *Journal of a Soul* (1965), which has very different priorities, these *Commentaries* were the only papal autobiography. For the Renaissance period there is no other source that provides comparable inside knowledge of the workings of papal government. Pius's record offers an eyewitness account of notable events from the 1430s to the 1450s, including his travels as far afield as Scotland, Strasbourg and Vienna, and of assemblies from the Council of Basel to the Congress of Mantua. Borgia was in his late twenties when he became part of Pius's subject matter and, despite holding the office of vice–chancellor, was certainly not one of the more prominent players in the College of Cardinals. The first printed edition of the *Commentaries* (1584) was taken from a manuscript in the hand of Johannes Gobellinus, a scribe, and was heavily edited by Pius's kinsman Francesco Bandini Piccolomini (1505–88), archbishop of Siena, in order to remove passages which he 'deemed impious or otherwise unflattering to the majesty of the Holy See'.[787] The archbishop withheld Pius's name from the title page, leaving an attribution to Gobellinus. However, Ludwig von Pastor (1854–1928) confirmed that the Vatican's Codex Reginensis 1995 was actually the original, partly written by Pius himself, with the rest dictated to the pontiff's

[786] Briani, *Dell'Istoria d'Italia*, ii, p. 1019.

[787] G. Ianziti, 'I Commentari: appunti per la storia di un genere storiografico quattrocentesco', *Storico Italiano,* 150/4 (554), Studi su Lorenzo dei Medici e il secolo XV (October–December 1992), p. 1029.

secretary Agostino Patrizi (d. 1495).[788] This manuscript had previously belonged to the library at the Roman church of S. Andrea della Valle, which was built on the site of the Piccolomini palace and had housed Pius's tomb since 1614. A second edition was published in 1589. As already noted, there followed the Frankfurt edition of 1614, which combined the *Commentaries* with the letters of the pope's protégé Iacopo Ammannati as a way of extending the story beyond the point at which the autobiography stops. Numerous editions of the Latin text have been published, including those of Adrianus van Heck (1984) and of Ibolya Bellus and Iván Boronkai (1993–4), together with translations into various vernaculars.[789] In the case of English translations, the popular edition by classicist Florence Gragg and historian Leona C. Gabel is in the process of being superseded by the dual Latin/English scholarly edition of Margaret Meserve and Marcello Simonetta.[790]

The humanist pope Pius II could be said to have embodied the Renaissance papacy, but the classical revival did not save Rome in 1527 and did not prevent the Western Church being rent by religious reformers throughout the early modern period. It responded with reforms of its own, associated with the Council of Trent (1545–63) and the foundation of new religious orders and congregations. The Spain of Felipe II (r. 1566–98) was in the vanguard of this reform. Among Spanish scholars of that era was the Dominican Alfonso Chacón

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[788] Pastor, *History*, ii, p. 323.

[789] Pius II, *Il Commentarii rerum memorabilium que temporibus suis contigerunt,* ed. A. van Heck, Studi e Testi 312–13 (2 vols, Vatican City, 1984); *Pii secundi pontificis maximi Commentarii*, ed. I. Bellus and I. Boronkai (2 vols, Budapest 1993–4).

[790] *The Commentaries of Pius II*, ed. F. Gragg and L. C. Gabel (Northampton, MA, 1937), p. 883; Pius II, *Commentaries,* ed. M. Meserve and M. Simonetta (3 vols, Cambridge, MA, 2003–).

(1530–99), who resided in Rome and made a lasting contribution to ecclesiastical history by compiling the *Vitæ, et res gestæ pontificvm romanorum et S. R. E. cardinalivm ab initio nascentis Ecclesiæ vsque ad Vrbanvm VIII. Pont. Max***.** As the title indicates, in addition to the lives of the popes, this work includes a sequence of short biographies of all those clerics who had been elevated to the College of Cardinals since the time of the foundation of the Church until the pontificate of Urban VIII (r. 1623–44). These are listed in the precise order of elevation and provide the reader with a clear sense of the hierarchy within the College, which dictated so many practical aspects of their subsequent lives and careers. By featuring cardinals alongside popes, Chacón's work illustrated their significance in the functioning of the Church as previous histories of the papacy had not. With regard to Borgia, Chacón charts his elevation to the College of Cardinals but, naturally enough, pays particular attention to his time as legate to Spain and his papal election, the second and last time that a Spaniard had achieved that distinction. For his discussion of Borgia's legation to Spain, Chacón uses the relevant letters of Ammannati.[791] He also rises above the sensationalism of anti–papal writers, dealing only in straight facts: in his coverage of conclaves there is no mention of simony or any other misbehaviour on Borgia's part. This monumental work was edited by Francisco Cabrera Morales and Andrea Vittorelli (both in 1630); however, it was only with Agostino Oldoini's 1677 edition that the work became a staple of historical studies, being reprinted several times in the following century, by Mario Guarnacci (1751) and Giovanni Paolo de Cinque and Michele Fabrinio (1787). The text was also updated and expanded with new biographies, taking its range up to the pontificate of Benedict XIV (r. 1740–58).

[791] A. Chacón, *Vitæ, et res gestæ pontificvm romanorum et S. R. E. cardinalivm ab initio nascentis Ecclesiæ vsque ad Vrbanvm VIII. Pont. Max***.** (4 vols, Rome, 1677), i, p. 991.

While the majority of sources relating to the Renaissance papacy – including the work of Chacón and his continuators – were published in Italy, Borgia's personal history was not confined to that peninsula, and a separate corpus of relevant material began to be published in Spain, including in Borgia's former diocese of Valencia. 1613 saw the publication of the *Anales del Reyno de Valencia*, compiled by the Dominican friar Francisco Diago (1562–1615). This work provided a grand historical narrative of the kingdom from its earliest days, through its incorporation into the kingdom of Aragon, and on to Diago's own era, by which time Aragon and Castile were more or less united as the kingdom of Spain. The friar had been reader in theology at the convent of S. Caterina in Barcelona and subsequently, from 1603, prior of San Onofre in Valencia. In the history of Valencia, no family loomed larger than the Borja. From 1429 to 1511 the bishopric (archbishopric from 1492) of Valencia was held by five successive members of the family: Valencia did well from the association and it was something to be celebrated. The fact that the newly elected Pope Alexander made his illegitimate son archbishop administrator in 1492 might have been a matter for censure for other historians but was patriotically overlooked by Diago.

Popes either side of Alexander – Innocent VIII and Julius II – had also fathered illegitimate children before their elections, but none of those children made much impact politically. Cesare Borgia was different and attracted interest from seventeenth–century authors outside Spain. The Pesaro–born cleric Tommaso Tomasi (1608–58) produced the first study of the life of Rodrigo's most infamous son in *La vita del duca Valentino* (1655), 'Valentino' deriving from Cesare's French duchy of Valentinois, rather than from his Spanish archbishopric. It was dedicated to Vittoria della Rovere (1622–94), grand duchess of Tuscany, the last surviving relative of Rodrigo's greatest enemy Julius II, and published

under a fictitious imprint.[792] While Tomasi certainly intended to conceal the true place of publication and the actual publisher, he nevertheless hoped that the book would be seen as a 'clear and true' history.[793] He stated that his aim was to demonstrate how, since the death of Alexander VI, the nature of the Catholic Church and the behaviour of its clergy had improved significantly. Tomasi's portrayal of Rodrigo Borgia as a cardinal and then as pontiff presents him as ingenious and ambitious, using his skills not merely to obtain the papacy but also to carve out an empire for his children, particularly for Cesare.[794] The caution demonstrated by Tomasi with regard to publication was soon justified, his work being placed on the Roman Index of prohibited books the following year. This made it attractive to Protestant authors keen to exploit any information that might excite hostility towards the papacy, past or present. In 1670 the Milanese–born religious exile Gregorio Leti (1630–1701) revised Tomasi's text in such a way as to scandalize Protestant audiences.[795] Before long that fed into the mania of the Popish Plot in England, at the height of which Nathaniel Lee wrote and staged *Caesar Borgia, son of Pope Alexander the Sixth a Tragedy* (1679–80) as a piece of entertainment.[796] As its title indicates, nothing may be gleaned about the pope's earlier career apart from the fact that he fathered a son. That detour into popular culture was of no lasting significance, and Tomasi's original work became a standard source for authors in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

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[792] T. Tomasi, *La Vita di Cesare Borgia, detto poi il duca Valentino* (Monte Chiaro, 1655).

[793] Quoted by Hillgarth, 'The Image of Alexander VI', p. 123.

[794] Tomasi, *La Vita di Cesare Borgia*, p. 3.

[795] G. Leti, *Vita di Cesare Borgia detto il duca Valentino* (Milan, 1853).

[796] N. Lee, *The Works of Nathaniel Lee*, ed. T. B. Stroup, 2 vols (New Brunswick, 1955).

Another standard source for historians of the Renaissance papacy is the liturgical diary of the papal master of ceremonies Johannes Burchard. He was born in Niederhaslach (Alsace) and made his way to Rome in 1467 after losing his position in the household of the prince–bishop of Strasbourg. He became a familiar of the Venetian cardinal Marco Barbo, before moving to the household of the Milanese cardinal Giovanni Arcimboldi and then serving Tommaso Vincenzi, bishop of Pesaro, who lived in the Vatican.[797] As papal master of ceremonies from 1483, it was Burchard's responsibility to organise the liturgy of the papal chapel, which could extend to St Peter's Basilica and, on occasion, to other churches in Rome, if the pope and cardinals were involved. In order to record precedence and make sure that it was routinely maintained in each annual liturgical cycle, he kept a diary. It opens on 29 November 1483, ten months after Borgia became dean of the College of Cardinals (22 January 1483), with Burchard explaining that he would record events that occurred in his time and that appeared to be connected with ceremonial, with at least some consideration of external affairs. It goes on to record the last nine years of Borgia's career as a cardinal, when he led the College of Cardinals into two conclaves and acted as arbiter in a number of disputes over precedence. Burchard's German origins account for the fact that excerpts from the diary were edited by Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716), a Protestant, and published in 1696.[798] The purpose of the exercise was to present the source material for Leibniz's life of the Borgia pope. It was not the last time that the two exercises have been attempted in

[797] 'Johannes Burckhard', < https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/johannes-burckard_(Dizionario-Biografico)/> (accessed 15 October 2020); Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, ii, p. 389.

[798] J. Burchard, *Specimen historia arcanae, sive anecdotae de vita Alexandri VI papa; seu Excerpta x diario Johannis Burchardi,* ed. G. W. Leibniz (Hanover, 1696).

tandem, though the key point here is that Leibniz's edition was the means by which eighteenth–and nineteenth–century authors, including Alexander Gordon and William Roscoe, obtained their knowledge of Burchard and his diary. On the other hand, Leibniz was not interested in the early years of the diary, so his edition did not advance knowledge of Rodrigo Borgia's career as a cardinal.

It was also due to German scholarship, specifically that of Johann Georg von Eckhart, that the diary of Stefano Infessura was first published, in 1723.[799] Written partly in Latin and partly in Romanesco, this narrates the history of Rome from 1303 to 1494. It is of particular importance for its first–hand reports of the pontificates of Paul II, Sixtus IV, Innocent VIII and the beginning of Borgia's pontificate. Born in Rome, Infessura had an allegiance to the Colonna family, was a professor of civil law at the Sapienza, and was secretary to the Roman Senate. The last of these offices placed him at the heart of civic affairs. His anti–papalism can be traced to involvement in the 1453 conspiracy of Stefano Porcari against Nicholas V and through to accusations of sodomy against Sixtus IV and emphasis on Borgia's simony.[800]

Between them, Tomasi and Leibniz could be said to have told the same story, for how could Cesare's life be related independently of his father's career and, equally, how could Alexander's pontificate be related without giving due weight to Cesare? The challenge of writing a joint biography was taken up by the Scottish antiquary Alexander Gordon (*c*.1692–1755), whose *Lives of Pope Alexander VI and his son Cesare Borgia* was published in 1729.[801] It is worth examining this text in detail because hitherto it has received no more than

[799] J. G. von Eckhart, *Corpus historicum medii aevi* (2 vols, Leipzig, 1723), ii, pp. 1863–2016.

[800] Eckhart, *Corpus historicum*, pp. 1940, 2009.

[801] A. Gordon, *The Lives of Pope Alexander VI and his son Caesar Borgia* (London, 1729).

passing notice by historians of either the Borgia or the Renaissance papacy. Gordon's interest in Italy was fostered during his travels, working first as a tutor and then as a singer. He returned home to Britain with a solid knowledge of the Italian language, art and antiquities. A jack–of–all–trades, without a scholar's command of the discipline, Gordon turned his hand to constructing a narrative history of both Borgia men. In his unpaginated preface he guides his reader through the sources used to construct his history. Those for Borgia's life up to 1492 were Platina, Panvinio, Chacón and Tomasi. In Gordon's assessment, Guicciardini was 'the prince of all Italian historians, both for veracity and judgement'.[802] He demonstrates knowledge of the different editions of the *Storia d'Italia* and emphasizes the suppression of controversial details in order to satisfy sixteenth–century censors: the Florentine's text had been 'castrated', but it had been 'recovered out of the rapacious hands of the Jesuits' and, Gordon stated, his own account finally made the truth known.[803]

For the pre–1492 portion of his text, Gordon's most intriguing source was an anonymous 'yet authentick Copy of a manuscript taken from the original at Rome, said to be in the Vatican Library and brought hither by a gentleman of my acquaintance'.[804] The manuscript, 'being so full, from his birth to his pontificate, where the others are most defective, I should therefore think my good fortune complete in having it for my guide, could I give any account of the anonymous author'.[805] Attempts to identify the manuscript and its author have proved fruitless, but its emphasis on Borgia's private life in Rome, most particularly his relationship with Vannozza Catanei, suggests a well–placed source with

[802] Gordon, *Lives*, p. 12.

[803] Gordon, *Lives*, p. 12.

[804] Gordon, *Lives*, p. 12.

[805] Gordon, *Lives*, p. 15.

direct access to the individuals concerned. As Burchard's diary does not cover Cardinal Borgia's private life, it is clear that this anonymous source formed the basis of Gordon's preliminary chapter. It relates that the young Borgia studied law; however, his 'mind being too fickle and inconstant, for notwithstanding, his practice in the law was, as is said, become very profitable, yet impatient of his present condition and his mind soaring at higher matters, all of a sudden he shew'd a great desire for war'.[806] His elevation to the College of Cardinals is presented as contrary to his own ambitions, which revolved around a more worldly pursuit:

> The dignity however of cardinal was not entirely suitable to Roderic's inclinations, because he knew he should thereby be too much confin'd to Rome, under his uncle's more immediate inspection so that he had much rather have been made General of the Church, in which office he knew he might have taken more liberty.[807]

According to Gordon, Borgia's principal objection to receiving the cardinalate was that it hindered him from visiting Vannozza, who was only fourteen when they first met. Gordon confesses that he found no material for Borgia's activities during the pontificates of Pius II and Paul II, confirming that his sources did not include the former's very memorable *Commentaries* and explaining why there is no emphasis on his activities as vice–chancellor, and also why he is presented as a soldier rather than an administrator.[808] Gordon's misunderstandings are even more glaring for the pontificate of Sixtus IV, reflecting the paucity of his sources. Borgia's legation to Spain is presented not from a Roman perspective, as an attempt to gain the support of the Spanish monarchs for a crusade, but in terms of Iberian power politics, the purpose of his mission being 'to adjust matters between the kings

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[806] Gordon, *Lives*, p. 18.

[807] Gordon, *Lives*, p. 6.

[808] Gordon, *Lives*, p. 7.

of Aragon and Portugal with regard to their mutual pretensions on Castile'.[809] Gordon also has Borgia returning to Rome only after the death of Sixtus in August 1484, suggesting that he was absent from the city for over twelve years.[810] The cardinal's activities during Innocent's pontificate are also given fleeting treatment, and the factual information is so wide of the mark that he is said to have been 'sent to several courts of Europe to treat abut some important affairs'.[811] Gordon argues that this was because 'Pope Innocent shew'd very little regard for the cardinal'.[812] In reality, Borgia spent the last three decades of his life in Italy. With regard to Borgia's papal election, the mules or to the five cardinals who told Borgia that they would have no part in any bribery, Gordon's information and emphasis comes from Infessura, even if indirectly, because Gordon seems to have no knowledge of Eckhart's edition.[813] The moment of victory is then savoured with the declaration 'I am now the Pope, the Vicar of Christ.'[814]

Gordon balances Borgia's talents, which included quick judgement, eloquence and an incredible memory, with the fact that 'these good qualities were obscured and eclipsed with such a plurality of horrid vices, that a recital of them is really shocking and superfluous to relate any more'.[815] To place these in context, Gordon contrasts Borgia with his immediate successor on the papal throne, Pius III (r. 1503), who was 'a man indeed of an excellent

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[809] Gordon, *Lives*, p. 7.

[810] Gordon, *Lives*, p. 8.

[811] Gordon, *Lives*, p. 8.

[812] Gordon, *Lives*, p. 8.

[813] Gordon, *Lives*, p. 24.

[814] Gordon, *Lives*, p. 24.

[815] Gordon, *Lives*, p. 221.

character, nor by any mortal judged unworthy of the great dignity they had conferred upon him'.[816] More nuanced is his treatment of Pius's successor and Borgia's adversary Giuliano Della Rovere, Julius II, who is described as having a 'turbulent disposition', but also 'singular greatness of soul'.[817] Following the main narrative, an appendix sheds further light on Gordon's source material and includes portions of texts by Guicciardini and Machiavelli, some of them with English translations. Although Gordon's work has not been republished in English, it was translated into French in Amsterdam in 1751.

Gordon was an enthusiast rather than a scholar. For eighteenth–century scholarship relating to the second half of the fifteenth–century and appreciation of the sources produced in that period, one must turn to the monumental achievements of Ludovico Antonio Muratori (1672–1750) and the publications collectively known as Rerum Italiarum Scriptores (RIS): twenty–eight volumes of source material, from chronicles and diaries to legal works, written during the millennium from 500 to 1500.[818] In 1733–4 Muratori published a number of sources that finally shed light on Borgia's career as a cardinal. First came the Roman diary of Jacopo Gherardi.[819] Gherardi was a Tuscan, from Volterra, who served in the College of Abbreviators from 1463. From the same year he was also private secretary to Cardinal Ammannati, remaining so until the cardinal's death in 1479. As has been noted, he stayed

[816] Gordon, *Lives*, p. 227.

[817] Gordon, *Lives*, p. 227; I. dell'Oro paints a similar damning picture of Cardinal della Rovere, *Papa Alessandro VI Rodrigo Borgia*, p. 273.

[818] P. von Moos, 'Muratori et les origines du médiévisme italien', *Romania*, 11, 453/454 (1/2) (1996), pp. 203–24.

[819] J. Volaterrani [Gherardi], *Diarium romanum ab anno MCCCCLXXII usque ad annum MCCCCLXXXXIV*, ed. L. A. Muratori, RIS, XXIII (Milan, 1733).

loyal to Ammannati's memory. The diary survives as a fragment, covering the years 1479 to 1484; the entire work reportedly continued to 1503 but has been lost. Gherardi was a perceptive and knowledgeable commentator. As a long–time member of the papal court he was an almost ideal informant, simultaneously engaged and reflective, knowledgeable and critical. Gherardi's strength lies in the fact that he does not dwell on gossip and rumour to drive his narrative. In the case of Borgia, it is the vice–chancellor's versatile intellect and brilliance at conducting the business of the Church that is emphasized, rather than any moral lapse or weakness of character. The following year Muratori brought out two other sources for the same period of Roman and papal history: the diary of the notary Gaspare Pontano, which covers the period 1481–92 and for the purposes of the present study is of greatest utility for its account of the *sede vacante* in 1484, and that of Infessura, which had recently been edited by Eckhart.[820] In contrast to Gherardi and Pontano, Infessura displays a weakness for gossip and scandal, but Muratori edited the text in such a way as to diminish that characteristic feature.

A few years later Muratori met a young man from Rimini, Giuseppe Garampi (1725–92), when the latter spent time in Modena. Garampi effectively acted as the link between Muratori, editor of sources featuring Cardinal Borgia, and the next historian of the cardinalate, Lorenzo Cardella (1734–1822), who was permitted to consult material in the

[820] *Diarium romanae Urbis ab anno MCCCCLXXXI ad MCCCCXCII, auctore anonymo synchrono notario de Antiporto*; ed. L. A. Muratori, RIS, III, ii, (Milan, 1734), pp. 1063–1108; *Diario della città di Roma di Stefano Infessura scriba del Senato e del popolo romano e da' sui antenati*, ed. L. A. Muratori, RIS, III, ii (Milan, 1734), pp. 1111–1252.

Vatican Archive, of which Garampi had become prefect in 1786.[821] His *Memorie storiche de' cardinali della Santa Romana Chiesa* were published in 1793, the year after Garampi's death. Following the model established by the *Liber pontificalis* and first applied to cardinals by Chacón, Cardella's *Memorie* provide condensed biographies of every cardinal there had been and were designed to be a reference work. Again, the strict hierarchy is maintained, so that the section for the cardinals elevated by Calixtus III opens with Lluís Joan del Milà, moves on to Jaime of Portugal, and then deals with Borgia. Cardella notes that Calixtus had encouraged Borgia's studies and recognized his penetrating mind ('penetrante ingegno').[822] The main focus for the entry on Borgia is on his relationship with Ascanio Sforza, whom he enticed by means of luxury, worldly pomp, avarice and vanity ('che dare argmenti di lusso, di fasto mondano, di avarizia, di vanita') in relation to his campaign for the papacy.[823]

What Cardella effectively celebrated was the triumph of the *ancien régime*, or at least its ecclesiastical dimension, cardinals being princes of the Church. The reaction against that social structure began in France in 1789 and had consequences the length and breadth of Europe, including for scholars, who could no longer travel to undertake research. The British Italophile William Roscoe (1753–1831) came to the late fifteenth century by way of poetry, so was not especially constrained by lack of access to archives. In the context of Anglo–French war he published what became a phenomenally successful biography of Lorenzo de' Medici (1796) and was then urged to follow it with a study of Lorenzo's son Giovanni, Pope

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[821] 'Giuseppe Garampi' in 'The Archives: The Past and the Present', <http://asv.vatican.va/en/arch/garampl.htm > (accessed 12 March 2020).

[822] Cardella, *Memorie storiche*, iii, p. 126.

[823] Cardella, *Memorie storiche*, iii, p. 126.

Leo X, a task that included literary patronage, but obliged Roscoe to venture much further into political and ecclesiastical history. The result was published in four volumes in 1805. As Roscoe never visited Rome, he relied on published materials that could be consulted at his home in Liverpool. In his preface he also acknowledges the 'friendship and liberality of several distinguished characters both at home and abroad' who supplied him with many valuable communications and original documents.[824] In introducing his topic, Roscoe declares that 'it was a noble period, and full of those most important events which have had the greatest influence on human affairs', chief amongst them the discovery of the Indies by the Spaniards, the invention of printing, and the development of the printing press.[825] Among his sources he lists Alexander Gordon's Borgia biography. It is little wonder, therefore, that in the preface Roscoe notes that the elder Borgia was distinguished by the 'atrocity of his character' and that he goes on to provide considerable detail on the cardinal's relationship with Vannozza Catanei.[826] In connection with the early career of Giovanni de' Medici, Borgia first appears in 1488, when Lorenzo launched his campaign to have his son made a cardinal.[827] However, at age thirteen, there was little chance of Giovanni being promoted. In order to bolster his campaign Lorenzo 'addressed himself to all the members of the sacred college, whose interest he thought essential to his success.'[828] The next time the reader encounters Borgia is in Roscoe's analysis of the conclave of 1492, the first such episode experienced by the young Medici cardinal. As both the most experienced cardinal and as the

[824] Roscoe, *Leo the Tenth*, i, p. vi.

[825] Roscoe, *Leo the Tenth*, i, p. xiii.

[826] Roscoe, *Leo the Tenth*, i, p. x.

[827] Roscoe, *Leo the Tenth*, i, p. 57.

[828] Roscoe, *Leo the Tenth,* i, pp. 21–2.

victor on that occasion, Borgia receives considerably more attention than any of the other electors, Roscoe examining his private life and concluding that he was 'a perpetual disgrace to his ecclesiastical functions'.[829] It did not follow that Roscoe, a Protestant of the Unitarian variety, automatically condemned all members of the Borgia family, for his life of Leo X is supplemented by what turned out to be an influential defence of Lucrezia, whose reputation, he maintained, had been sullied without due cause.

Roscoe's career as a historian of Renaissance Italy coincided with Napoleon Bonaparte's campaign to make Paris the undisputed cultural capital of Europe. The armistice of 23 June 1796 stipulated that Pius VI (r. 1775–99) had to hand over one hundred pictures, busts, vases or statues and five hundred manuscripts. Sometime later, the years 1810–13 saw the transfer of the Vatican Archive – catalogued by Garampi but still out of bounds to most scholars – to Paris. However, when those materials began to be returned to Rome in 1814, a number of documents that could be considered useful in mounting a political attack on the papacy were missing.

After decades of war and social upheaval, the post–Revolutionary and post–Napoleonic era was not noted for advances in Borgia–related scholarship. The void was filled by the historical fantasies of Victor Hugo (1802–85) and a host of imitators. Genuine historical scholarship entered a new phase with the work of Leopold von Ranke (1795–1886), whose methodology was centred on archival research. Among the diverse subjects he addressed was the history of the papacy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. However, falling when it did, the second Borgia pontificate is peripheral to the main thrust of that narrative and Ranke's treatment of it is sketchy, assuring the reader that Alexander was devoted to a life of pleasure and motivated by ambition: 'Alexander hatte all sein Lebtage nur

[829] Roscoe, *Leo the Tenth*, i, p. 40.

die Welt zu genieen, vergnügt zu leben, seine Gelüste, seinen Ehrgeiz zu erfüllen gerachtet'.[830] His earlier, fifteenth–century incarnation as Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia fell completely outside Ranke's purview.

In 1839 Jacob Burckhardt (1818–97) travelled from his native Switzerland to study under Ranke in Berlin. Just as Ranke had raised the study of political history to a new level, so did Burckhardt for the study of cultural history. His best–known work, *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien* (1860), traces a number of themes across the period from 1300 to 1600, at the heart of which was the lifetime of Rodrigo Borgia.[831] Drawing heavily on archival research, Burckhardt set cultural achievements and innovations against the backdrop of political and ecclesiastical history. Under the heading of 'The Papacy and its dangers' he discusses the Borgia family, but Rodrigo appears only as pope, not as a cardinal. This is little wonder, considering that the pontificates of Calixtus III, Pius II and Paul II are swept past in order to tackle the 'terrible Sixtus IV', who was guilty of simony, corruption, nepotism and avarice.[832] The account then proceeds to argue that Sixtus's nepotism and alleged crimes paled in comparison to those of Alexander VI and Cesare Borgia, which are related at some length. Burckhardt accepts the black legend of the Borgia, arguing that in Alexander 'ambition, avarice and sensuality were combined with strong and brilliant

[830] L. von Ranke, *Die römischen Päpste: ihre Kirche und ihr Staat im sechszehnten und siebzehnten Jahrhundert* (3 vols, Berlin, 1834–6), i, p. 47.

[831] J. Burckhardt, *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien* (Basel, 1860).

[832] J. Burckhardt, *The Renaissance in Italy*, trans. S. G. C. Middlemore (Old Saybrook, CT, 2002), p. 105.

qualities', and denounces certain events, notably the murder of the duke of Gandía in 1497 as 'utterly appalling'.[833]

It is significant that Burckhardt took the whole of 'Italy' as his canvas, for his research was undertaken in the context of the peninsula's political unification. In the year that his essay was published Giuseppe Garibaldi launched what turned out to be a triumphant campaign through Sicily and onto the mainland. The Papal States could not be defended as an independent entity and Pius IX (r. 1846–78) was left with nominal control over a much–reduced territory. Cesare Borgia is often cited as a source of inspiration for those who led the Risorgimento, but it was surely no coincidence that a notable ten–volume edition of Guicciardini's *Storia d'Italia*, edited by Giuseppe Canestrini, was published in 1857–67, from which it can be implied that the historian of Renaissance Italy played his part in the awakening of Italian consciousness.[834] Meanwhile, all eyes turned to Rome: how long could the temporal power of the papacy survive and, if it fell, what would be the consequences for the pope's spiritual authority? When the end came, in 1870, it was surprisingly sudden. French forces were defeated by Prussia at Metz and Sedan, the Third Empire gave way to the Third Republic, and the fall of Emperor Napoleon III meant that the pope could no longer rely on his support against Vittorio Emanuele of Savoy, whose forces entered Rome in September. That was the context in which an ambitious history of Rome issued from the press, most volumes published before 1870, but the portion dealing with Rodrigo and Cesare Borgia following shortly afterwards.

Its author, the Prussian Ferdinand Gregorovius (1821–91), met Burckhardt in the Vatican Museums in 1854: they reportedly exchanged pleasantries about the drapery on a

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[833] Burckhardt, *The Renaissance in Italy*, pp. 111–12.

[834] G. Canestrini, *Opere inedite di Francesco Guicciardini* (Florence, 1857–67).

statue.[835] Gregorovius had come to Rome two years earlier and stayed for twenty, became its historian, and was made an honorary citizen in 1876, the first German to be accorded that honour. His study of Roman history appears to have stemmed from a vision he had while overlooking the Tiber in October 1854. Thereafter he launched into a thorough consultation of Muratori's Rerum Italicarum Scriptores, before exploring archives across Italy, this being the very period in which they were becoming more accessible to scholars.[836] The result of his labours is the *Geschichte der Stadt Rom im Mittelalter* (1859–72), the first 'modern' account of the city of Rome.[837] On the other hand, it is not the easiest work to use: in the words of David Chambers, it is a 'bibliographical nightmare because of the author's successive revisions and later editors' further revisions, excisions, and abbreviations', the effect being to blunt its impact on subsequent generations of scholars.[838] Towards the end of the narrative Rodrigo Borgia is introduced in a discussion of the nepotism of Calixtus III, as one of the 'the Borgias of Valencia who were a race like that of the Claudii in ancient Rome, almost all constitutionally vigorous, handsome, sensual and high–handed'.[839] Neither the pope nor his *nipoti* emerge positively, the latter being 'youthful and inexperienced … but suddenly proclaimed and adopted by their weak uncle'.[840] Their promotion is interpreted as part of a

[835] D. S. Chambers, 'Ferdinand Gregorovius and Renaissance Rome', *Renaissance Studies*, 14/4 (2000), p. 412.

[836] Chambers, 'Ferdinand Gregorovius and Renaissance Rome', p. 414.

[837] F. Gregorovius, *Geschichte der Stadt Rom im Mittelalter* (Stuttgart, 1859–72).

[838] Chambers, 'Ferdinand Gregorovius', p. 409.

[839] F. Gregorovius, *The History of Rome in the Middle Ages*, trans. A. Hamilton (7 vols, Cambridge, 2011), vii, p. 156.

[840] Gregorovius, *History of Rome*, vii, pp. 156–7.

Catalan takeover of Rome, in which the Borgia controlled all military power, exercising a 'despotic authority'.[841] In contrast to many previous historians, Gregorovius shed light on Cardinal Borgia during the election and pontificate of Pius II through his use of the pontiff's *Commentaries*. Borgia is seen again during the *sede vacante* of 1464, at which point he is described as 'a handsome and jovial man, possessed of a magnetic attraction for women'.[842] Thereafter, he features as legate to Spain, that experience acting as a prelude to his future relations with the Spanish monarchs.[843] For the most part, though, it is Borgia the pope, not Borgia the cardinal, who attracts the author's interest, as was confirmed by two spin–off publications, the well–known 1874 biography of Lucrezia and the posthumously published *Papst Alexander VI. und seine Zeit*, but neither of these shed much light on the career of Cardinal Borgia.[844]

In 1494 Alexander VI retreated into Castel S. Angelo when the French king Charles VIII appeared in Rome, but it was only a temporary move; Pius IX remained a 'prisoner in the Vatican' from 1870 until his death in 1878, when his successor, Leo XIII (r. 1878–1903) assumed that dubious distinction. The temporal power had been well and truly lost, creating a host of practical problems, but the worldwide spiritual power of the papacy remained intact. Either way, it kept the international focus on Rome, and more histories of Italy, Rome and the papacy were published. Significant cases in point are provided by the British historians John Addington Symonds (1840–93) and Mandell Creighton (1843–1901). Symonds' contribution

[841] Gregorovius, *History of Rome*, vii, p. 158.

[842] Gregorovius, *History of Rome*, vii, p. 219.

[843] Gregorovius, *History of Rome*, vii, p. 243.

[844] F. Gregorovius, *Lucrezia Borgia*, *Nach Urkunden und Korrespondenzen ihrer eignen Zeit* (Stuttgart, 1874); *Papst Alexander VI und seine Zeit* (Berlin, 1942).

began as a relatively modest 'essay' and ended as a seven–volume series on *The Renaissance in Italy*, published from 1875 to 1886.[845] Although the work does not dwell on Borgia's life and career before his election in 1492, Symonds notes that the pontificate of Calixtus III 'prepared for the greatness of his nephew'.[846] Factual inaccuracies appear in Symonds' treatment of the conclave of 1492, as he states that Borgia was the only cardinal not created by Sixtus IV and Innocent VIII, thereby overlooking four of the other electors.[847] Symonds takes a practical view of the 'offers' made to the cardinals, in a way that portrays Borgia as entirely in tune with his fellow cardinals. However, Infessura's story of the four mules is also included. Given Symonds' influence on the reading public, it became reasonably common knowledge.

In contrast to Symonds' cultural history, Creighton, the first occupant of the Dixie chair in ecclesiastical history at Cambridge and subsequently an Anglican bishop, specialized in the Church. His history of the papacy from 1378 to 1527 began to appear in 1882. Throughout his analysis of Borgia's time as a cardinal, Creighton portrays him as vain, ambitious, and guilty of sexual misconduct. The elevations of both Rodrigo Borgia and Lluís Joan del Milà at such a young age caused concern for Creighton: 'both men were remarkable for nothing except their personal strength and vigour'.[848] In Creighton's account, Calixtus delayed their elevation until September 1456, when there would be least opposition because the other cardinals had left Rome to avoid the heat and the plague. In the conclave that followed his death in 1458, Borgia is said to have voted for Piccolomini not on account of

[845] J. A. Symonds, *The Renaissance in Italy* (7 vols, London, 1926).

[846] Symonds, *The Renaissance in Italy*, i, pp. 312–3.

[847] Symonds, *The Renaissance in Italy*, i, p. 340.

[848] Creighton, *History of the Papacy*, ii, p. 347.

that cardinal's merit but because he wished to avoid being on the 'losing side', meaning the loss of the vice–chancellorship.[849] Concluding his thoughts on Calixtus, Creighton declares that 'the evil deeds of his nephew Rodrigo and his race have made the name of Borgia a byword, and Calixtus is remembered as the founder of a race whose actions marked the papacy with irretrievable disgrace.[850] He goes on to accept the salacious interpretation of the baptismal party in Siena in 1460 without questioning the timing or nature of the event.[851] For Borgia's career under Paul, he focuses on the changes made to the College of Abbreviators, whereby Paul reversed the decision of his predecessor Pius II which had reduced the vice–chancellor's patronage.[852] In the next chapter Borgia's legation to Spain is presented as enabling him to 'delight in displaying his magnificence in his native Valencia … but was scarcely likely to kindle spiritual zeal by the exhibition of his vanity and self–seeking'.[853] Thereafter, Borgia does not feature in Creighton's analysis of Innocent's pontificate until he assists the ailing pope in holding aloft the relic of the Holy Lance for the faithful to see.[854] Creighton's treatment of Borgia in the conclave of 1492 initially presents the reasons why Borgia was theoretically an acceptable candidate, including his nationality, which is interpreted as evidence that Borgia would be a neutral arbiter in dealings with the Italian states.[855] However, when Creighton addresses the riches Borgia offered to the cardinals, his

[849] Creighton, *History of the Papacy*, ii, p. 366.

[850] Creighton, *History of the Papacy*, ii, p. 364.

[851] Creighton, *History of the Papacy*, ii, pp. 404–5.

[852] Creighton, *History of the Papacy,* iii, pp. 9–10.

[853] Creighton, *History of the Papacy,* iii, p. 59.

[854] Creighton, *History of the Papacy,* iii, p. 152.

[855] Creighton, *History of the Papacy*, iii, p. 159.

judgement changes, to the extent that 'the former objections to his personal character disappeared in the low tone of morality which was now almost universal'.[856] As Creighton was largely dependent on published sources and relatively little detailed information was available to him, there is no mention of Jorge da Costa or Oliviero Carafa being considered *papabile* or that Borgia managed to gain the support of all the cardinals. Instead, Creighton presents Borgia as the candidate of Cardinals Sforza and Orsini from the beginning of the conclave.[857] The College of Cardinals 'looked no further into his private life; and Italy in general was quite satisfied with the choice which they had made'.[858]

After the publication of Creighton's history there was an exchange of forty–three letters between him and Lord Acton, beginning in 1882.[859] In the earliest letter Creighton thanks Acton for his review of the first two volumes. They were both devoted to scrupulous research, but Acton was critical of Creighton's reluctance to condemn worldly excesses on the part of Renaissance prelates. As a rule, Creighton took the line that political figures should be judged for their public acts, not on their private lives, such as that led by Rodrigo Borgia as a cardinal. Neither he nor Acton broke with the tradition of concentrating on the apex of papal government, rather than the workings of the Chancery and other departments of the Roman Curia headed by cardinals.

The Anglican Creighton and the Catholic Acton addressed each other across a confessional divide, but any intellectual differences between them were relatively subtle.

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[856] Creighton, *History of the Papacy*, iii, p. 159.

[857] Creighton, *History of the Papacy*, iii, p. 160.

[858] Creighton, *History of the Papacy*, iii, p. 164.

[859] F. Engel de Jánosi, 'The Correspondence between Lord Acton and Bishop Creighton', *The Cambridge Historical Journal*, 6/3 (1940), pp. 307–21.

There was, however, no denying the existence of culture wars during the long pontificate of Pius IX, when it was assumed in some quarters that non–Catholic historians such as Ranke and Burckhardt were determined to write negatively about the history of the papacy and could therefore not be trusted with access to the Church's archives. There was also mutual suspicion among Catholics, divided as they were over the definition of papal infallibility, with Acton among the most prominent of the anti–infallibilists. Pius IX had made so many enemies that the cardinals of 1878 had little option but to elect as his successor a diplomat who would build bridges within and beyond the Church. As archbishop of Perugia, Cardinal Vincenzo Gioacchino Pecci had argued that the Church must engage with the modern, urbanised, industrialised world; as Leo XIII Pecci hoped to broaden the range of Catholic teaching while also engaging constructively with non–Catholics.[860] The cultural sphere offered opportunities for what has since come to be called 'soft power', and the late nineteenth–century trend for increasing scholarly access to archives presented a great opportunity for the papacy to engage with intellectuals, both Catholic and Protestant. An additional consideration was that the capital of the new kingdom of Italy had been moved from Florence to Rome in 1871 and a state archive founded on the opposite side of the Tiber, thereby creating competition for the Vatican Secret Archive. Such was the situation when Leo became pope in 1878. The following year he chose for the cardinalate Professor Joseph Hergenröther (1824–90) of the University of Würzburg, who was given charge of the Vatican Archive and Library. One of Hergenröther's first acts was to recommend that the archive should open to scholars. The process began in 1881 and reached its conclusion with the *motu*

[860] O. Chadwick, *Catholicism and History: The Opening of the Vatican Archives* (Cambridge, 1978), p. 91.

proprio Saepenumero considerantes (1883).[861] In 1892 records from the Apostolic Datary were transferred from the Lateran Palace to the Vatican, along with the Archivum Bullarum of the Chancery from 1389 and the Registers of the Petitions from 1417.[862] The cumulative result was that the Vatican became one of the most important historical research centres in the world. More specifically, for a scholarly community that tended to work in one location and not search sources in different cities, never mind different states, the Vatican was the destination for anyone seeking out material on the pontificates of the Renaissance popes.

When Andrea Leonetti wrote his three–volume life of Alexander VI he used archival resources in Rome, Naples and Milan, supplementing them with the published works of contemporaries including those of Pius II, Cardinal Ammannati, Platina, and the diaries of Gherardi and Infessura, but the fact that his work was published in 1880, just before the opening of the Vatican's collection, meant that it was almost instantly redundant.[863] Nevertheless, it may be noted that he included a chapter on Borgia's life from his birth to 1473 and for the first time in scholarship an analysis of the legation to the Marche in 1457.[864] On the other hand, Leonetti features no extracts for the period from 1473 to 1492, even though the Roman diaries offered him suitable material.

Alexander VI posed an interesting test case for Leo's policy of openness and letting the past speak for itself. As we have seen, since 1696 there had been a printed edition of the

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[861] Chadwick, *Catholicism and History*, pp. 100–3.

[862] P. Murphy, 'The Vatican Secret Archive: A History', *Seanchas Ardmhacha: Journal of the Armagh Diocesan Historical Society*, 24/1 (2012), p. 243.

[863] A. Leonetti, *Papa Alessandro VI: secondo documenti e carteggi del tempo* (3 vols, Bologna, 1880).

[864] Leonetti, *Papa Alessandro VI*, i, pp. 100–3.

liturgical diary of Johannes Burchard, the papal master of ceremonies, but it consisted of extracts and was ripe for modern editorial treatment. By reputation, the diary was thought to contain damning material about Alexander and his family: Leo was initially hesitant about making it available for scholars, thinking it best to lock it away. However, after a closer inspection by the prefect, Augustin Theiner (1804–74), he concluded that 'Borgia was not such a monster and the contents of the Diary are not so romantic, as people think'.[865] A new edition was allowed. It was undertaken by the young historian and literary critic Louis Thuasne (1854–1940) and appeared in three volumes shortly after the opening of the Vatican Archive.[866] Unlike Leibniz, Thuasne had as much of an interest in the years before 1492 as in those after Borgia's election, which meant that readers could gain more of an idea about the contributions of individual cardinals in the earlier period. When there were differences of opinion between Burchard and a cardinal, or even differences between cardinals over matters of precedence, the reader can even begin to glimpse something of their individual characters. For the most part the diary records the routine acts of the papal chapel between 1483 and Burchard's death in 1506, exceptional events such as funerals, the comings and goings of distinguished visitors, the convening of consistories and the formalities of conclaves. For present purposes, its only serious shortcoming is the gap in Burchard's record between 14 June and 2 December 1492, which denies us his angle on the death of Innocent VIII, the *sede vacante*, conclave, election and coronation of Alexander VI.

The opening of the Vatican Archive, the foundation of the Archivio di Stato di Roma, and similar later nineteenth–century initiatives in other Italian cities resulted in a steady

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[865] Chadwick, *Catholicism and History,* p. 111.

[866] J. Burchard, *Diarium sive rerum urbanarum commentarii (1483–1506)*, ed. L. Thuasne (3 vols, Paris, 1883–5).

stream of publications relating to the fifteenth–century and of relevance to the biography of Rodrigo Borgia. One of the first to be printed, with Latin and Italian texts in parallel, was the *Le storie de' suoi tempi* of Sigismondo Conti, which drew on manuscript copies found in collections including the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan and others in Foligno and Perugia.[867] From a noble family in Foligno, Conti had settled in Rome in 1460, worked as an apostolic secretary during the pontificates of Sixtus IV, Innocent VIII and Alexander VI, and became a domestic secretary to Julius II. Such positions brought him into the heart of papal government and meant that he could observe events at close quarters. It was to Julius that Conti dedicated his *Storie*. Borgia's appearances in the narrative are most obvious during the *sedi vacanti* of 1484 and 1492, but predominately in the conclave which saw his papal election. Conti was given to adding literary flourishes to his text. Thus, at the time of his election Borgia was not simply sixty years of age; he was the age identified by Aristotle as that at which men are at their wisest: 'erat praetera id aetatis, qua, ut Aristoteli placet plurimum homines sapient, annum agens circiter sexagesimum'.[868] For thirty–six years he had been tireless in his work as a cardinal, only missing consistories when illness had prevented him attending and that was rare indeed: 'senatui praeterea nunquam defuerat, nisi valetudine impeditus, et id quidem perraro'.[869]Another aspect of his pre–1492 life is reflected in the subsequent careers of his children, for had he not indulged them, he would have left behind a better reputation: 'haec memoratu digna gesta sunt, Alexandro Sexto Pontifice

[867] Conti, *Le storie de' suoi tempi*, i, pp. vi –viii.

[868] Conti, *Le storie de' suoi tempi*, ii, p. 54.

[869] Conti, *Le storie de' suoi tempi*, ii, p. 53.

Maximo; qui si filios non habuisset, aut filiis tan tum non indulisset, maius sui desiderium reliquisset'.[870]

From Conti's Roman history it was a short step to a new edition of Infessura's Roman diary. Although the original manuscript had been lost, Oreste Tommasini had before him the editions of Eckhart and Muratori, consulted over fifty versions of the text dating from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, and produced the dual–language *Diario della città di Roma/Diarium urbis Romae* in 1890.[871] Previously edited material was restored and the result has become a staple source for all modern accounts of the Borgia story. Michael Mallett labels Infessura a 'violent anti–papalist, whose writing did much to tarnish Borgia's reputation'.[872] However, for all that Infessura's narrative adds colour to the story, he was evidently conscious of the accusations that could be levelled at him and was careful to defend himself. For example, he states that Giovanni Battista Cibo's election was simoniacal and managed by Giuliano della Rovere and Borgia, but then covers himself by insisting all this has been said, but since it has been found not to be altogether true, one should believe that it was said from envy.[873] It is in his account of the conclave of 1492 that simony is most significant. It is the source of the well–known assertion that Borgia sent four mules laden with silver to the palace of Ascanio Sforza in return for his vote.[874] The mule episode is juxtaposed with Borgia divesting himself of titles, offices and gifts, the diarist quickly adding

[870] Conti, *Le storie de' suoi tempi*, ii, p. 282.

[871] *Diario della città di Roma di Stefano Infessura scriba senato*, Oreste Tommasini (Rome, 1890).

[872] Mallett, *The Borgias*, p. 11.

[873] Infessura, *Diario*, pp. 171–2.

[874] Infessura, *Diario*, p. 282.

that not all the cardinals accepted the bribes.[875] He names Oliviero Carafa, Francesco Todeschini Piccolomini, Giuliano della Rovere, Jorge da Costa, and Giovanni de' Medici, all of whom lived long enough defend themselves and potentially destroy the humble diarist.

Racioppi's edition of Conti and Tommasini's edition of Infessura were produced as free–standing works, but illustrated the potential for new scholarly editions of source material from fifteenth–century Italy. In 1900 an entirely new series of *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores* was founded, reviving Muratori's title but producing work of an altogether higher scholarly standard. The first text of relevance to the career of Cardinal Borgia began to appear in 1904 with the first part of Gherardi's diary. For comparative purposes, it is accompanied by the Roman diaries of Antonio de Vasco, and Sebastiano di Branca Tedellini, covering the years 1481–92 and 1485–1517 respectively.[876] A critical edition of Burchard's diary was edited by Enrico Celani and is distinguished from its predecessors by the title *Liber notarum.*[877] In his preface Celani provides an extensive commentary on the different manuscripts of the diary, explaining the limitations of the choices made by the previous editor, Thuasne. Although Thuasne's appendixes include useful supplementary materials, particularly diplomatic correspondence, Celani's edition observes higher critical standards. It may be no more than

[875] Infessura, *Diario*, pp. 281–2.

[876] J. Gherardi, *Il diario romano*, ed. E. Carusi, RIS, XXIII, iii (Città di Castello, 1904–11); A. de Vasco, *Diario della città di Roma*, ed. G. Chiesa, RIS, XXIII, iii (Città di Castello, 1908); S. di B. Tedellini, *Il diario della città di Roma*, ed. P. Piccolomini, RIS, XXIII, iii (Città di Castello, 1908).

[877] J. Burchard, *Liber notarum ab anno MCCCCLXXXIII usque ad annum MDVI*, ed. E. Celani, RIS, tomo XXXII, (2 vols, Città di Castello, 1907–42).

coincidental, but the RIS edition appeared soon after the break in the diplomatic relations between the Third Republic and the Holy See, and the formal separation of Church and State in France on 9 December 1905. An Italian edition of such a significant source for the history of the papacy superseding a French one could hardly have been more timely. Text by text, the early part of Rodrigo Borgia's career was coming into focus and being appreciated as a period worth studying in its own right, not merely as a prelude to events from the 1490s onwards. Celani's work was swiftly joined by Diomede Toni's edition of Pontano's diary.[878] Another relevant work in the series is the Roman diary of Paolo dello Mastro, covering the years 1422–82.[879]

RIS was not the only major series launched in 1900, which also saw the first of the Vatican Library's Studi e Testi series. Of the 535 volumes published to date, arguably the most relevant for the study of Cardinal Borgia is no. 137, the 1948 edition of the correspondence between Cardinal Marco Barbo and his secretary Giovanni Lorenzi, edited by Pio Paschini (1878–1962) and published in 1948.[880] The minimal annotation is perhaps a reflection of the difficult circumstances in which the volume was prepared, but its 119 letters, written between 1481 and 1490, when Barbo was regularly absent from Rome and Lorenzi kept him informed of developments there, effectively fill the gap left by Cardinal Ammannati's death in 1479.

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[878] G. Pontano, *Diario romano* ed. D. Toni, RIS, III, ii (Città di Castello, 1908).

[879] P. dello Mastro, *Diario e memoriale delle cose accadute in Roma (1422–1482)*, ed. F. Isoldi, RIS, XXIV, ii (Città di Castello, 1910–12).

[880] P. Paschini (ed), *Il carteggio fra il Card. Marco Barbo e Giovanni Lorenzi (1481–1490)* Studi e Testi 137 (Vatican City, 1948).

Individual sources from particular libraries and archives were the stock in trade of nineteenth– and twentieth–century Italian scholars, who tended to study and publish the contents of their local collections. It took another non–Italian, in the tradition of Burckhardt, to construct a history from the contents of the Vatican, the various Italian archives and repositories beyond the Alps, publishing many of those texts in a multi–volume history of the papacy. In the 1870s Ludwig von Pastor read Burckhardt on the Italian Renaissance and Ranke on the early modern popes. Whereas Burckhardt and Ranke were Protestants, Pastor was a devout Catholic who reacted against the *Kulturkampf* and devoted his life to compiling a history of the papacy. The first volume of his *Geschichte der Päpste seit dem Ausgang des Mittelalters* was published in 1886 and the finished product remains the most comprehensive history of the papacy from the early Renaissance to the French occupation of Rome in 1799. The pontificates of Calixtus III and Pius II are covered in the second and third volumes respectively, both of which were published in 1891, those of Paul II and Sixtus IV in the fourth, and Innocent VIII in the fifth, those appearing in 1899.[881] The format is such that there are elements of repetition from volume to volume. In the case of Borgia, Pastor first tells the story of the young cardinal attending the baptismal party in Siena at the appropriate point in the chronology – 1460 – but there are three further allusions to it in subsequent volumes, which creates a more negative impression than the episode might warrant, though Pastor is extremely sensitive to any lapse into worldliness on the part of the Renaissance popes. The continuing value of his monumental achievement is to be found as much in the collection of source material included in each volume as in the comprehensiveness of his narrative. The present study relies heavily on those sources, not least diplomatic dispatches.

[881] L. von Pastor, *Geschichte der Päpste seit dem Ausgang des Mittelalters* (16 vols, Freiburg i. B.,1886–1933).

In the fifteenth century Rome was the most important diplomatic hub in Europe. As Antonio Guidobono wrote to his master, Francesco Sforza, duke of Milan, on 8 July 1457, 'at the court of Rome there are always envoys and ambassadors from the lords of the world, who evidently have nothing better to do than keep an eye on what papers are crossing the table'.[882] In the period 1456–92 most of the surviving diplomatic correspondence sent from Rome was dispatched by the Ferrarese, Florentine, Mantuan, and Milanese ambassadors, material from the Venetian ambassadors having been lost. In the course of Borgia's career Mantua, Milan, Florence and Ferrara all acquired cardinals who belonged either to the ruling dynasties, in the case of princely states, or to a leading family that aped princely behaviour, in the case of republican Florence. Thus the elevations of Francesco Gonzaga in 1460, Ascanio Sforza in 1484, Giovanni de' Medici in 1489 (in practice, 1492) and Ippolito d'Este in 1493 created another strand of correspondence between Rome and the relevant states, especially when the cardinals were served by conscientious secretaries, as Gonzaga was by Bartolomeo Marasca, who corresponded with the young prelate's parents in Mantua, as did Francesco himself. In the case of Florence, the republic's ambassadors in Rome wrote official dispatches to the government and a parallel set of correspondence to the heads of the Medici family, who were also in contact with the officials of the Roman branch of their bank. All of these lines of communication have generated material which came to be published at various points and, piece by piece, contributed to a more nuanced appreciation of the world in which Cardinal Borgia operated.

Pastor's history was translated into a number of vernaculars, thereby increasing its impact on generations of readers. For the period up to the death of Julius II, it was translated

[882] Quoted in E. Mahnke, 'The Political Career of a *Condottiere*–Prince: Ludovico Gonzaga 1444–1466', Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1974, p. 205.

into English by Frederick Ignatius Antrobus, S.J. and published in six volumes from 1891 to 1898, the later volumes being dealt with by other translators and published at later dates.[883] There was, therefore, an entirely respectable and perfectly useable account of the Renaissance papacy when the Borgia acquired their next British historian. 1901 saw the publication of *Chronicles of the House of Borgia*, by the former seminarian Frederick William Rolfe (1860–1913), styled Baron Corvo. According to Rolfe, that title was bestowed on him by the British–born Caroline Shirley (1818–97), Duchess Sforza–Cesarini, who became his patron after his expulsion from the Scots College, Rome, in 1890. Her Roman residence, the Palazzo Sforza–Cesarini, had previously been Rodrigo Borgia's palace and the seat of the Chancery. For Rolfe, that connection clearly made Borgia stand out from the historical crowd. The fact that Borgia was also much maligned presumably contributed to the attraction for an outcast from the clerical fold. Rolfe returned to Britain in 1899 and had spent some time in the Holywell workhouse before he received a commission for a Borgia book. What he had not managed to acquire in the course of his (mis)adventures was experience of history as an academic discipline. Discipline of any sort is rather absent from the *Chronicles*, the purpose of which is to dismantle negative interpretations of the Borgia and restore the family to what Rolfe considered their proper dignity. In his preface he is dismissive of the sources relevant to the career of Rodrigo Borgia as a cardinal: Infessura (edited by Tommasini) left himself 'open to suspicion' and Burchard's text, which Rolfe read in Thuasne's edition, is 'careless, Teutonic and petty'.[884] Consequently, he takes Infessura's account of the mules and gives it an imaginative twist, arguing that the silver was moved to Ascanio Sforza's palace in order to

[883] L. von Pastor, *The History of the Popes, from the Close of the Middle Ages*, trans. F. I. Antrobus (vols 1–6, London, 1891–8).

[884] F. W. Rolfe, *Chronicles of the House of Borgia* (London, 1901), p. ix.

keep it safe from the mob in the event of the vice–chancellor being elected and the Cancelleria being pillaged.[885] It appears that Rolfe had more sympathy for the views of Mandell Creighton, for he maintains the argument that the election of a Spanish pope in 1492 was good for the balance of power in Italy, though with Spanish fortunes on the rise it was also sensible to make friends in Iberia.[886] Rolfe's research was limited to what he could access in the library of the British Museum, and appreciation of Borgia's early career was severely limited. Thus he posits that Borgia was a passive recipient of the vice–chancellorship in 1458, rather than it being a reward for his pacification of Ascoli in 1457.[887] On the matter of the party in Siena in 1460, he seeks to limit the damage to Borgia's reputation, explaining fifteenth–century terminology relating to time, so that d'Estouteville and Borgia attended the revels only from the midday meal until an hour and a half before sunset, which might have been indiscreet but certainly was not a source of notoriety. The story of Borgia's behaviour in Siena was interpreted by his critics as a clear case of promiscuity inappropriate in a cardinal, let alone a pope. As Rolfe continues, presumably with an autobiographical nod, 'when the careless or wilful calumniator sets out to ruin a reputation he finds it an easy thing to twist a fault into a crime'.[888] Borgia, the reader is assured, was a 'gallant handsome prince and man of the world of the 15th century in no wise differing from his antitype of the twentieth century'.[889] It might not be rigorous scholarship,

[885] Rolfe, *Chronicles*, pp. 85–6.

[886] Rolfe, *Chronicles*, p. 84.

[887] Rolfe, *Chronicles*, p. 52.

[888] Rolfe, *Chronicles*, p. 65.

[889] Rolfe, *Chronicles*, p. 62.

but it has got as far as undergraduate reading lists and has taken its place in Borgia historiography.

Rolfe's idiosyncrasies left plenty of scope for more disciplined English–language accounts of the Borgia family, two of which duly appeared in 1912–13. Arnold Harris Mathew (1852–1919) came to the task after producing a biography of Pope Gregory VII (r. 1073–85) and an edition of Burchard's diary which was intended to reach 1506, but got no further than 1492.[890] He used Thuasne's edition of the diary and declared that it 'afforded much trustworthy information at first hand', while nevertheless insisting that it was by no means a 'chronique scandaleuse'.[891] With regard to his Borgia biography, Mathew declares that his motive in writing was 'merely to present as accurate a sketch of the life and times of the principal member of Borgia family as it seems possible to produce', but that proves not to be the same thing as having no opinion.[892] For Borgia's apologists he was no worse than his predecessors and some of his immediate successors, but Mathew is not satisfied by such excuses and declares that 'no pope could ever have been so completely ignorant of the life and teaching of his Divine Master'.[893] In the insular tradition of Roscoe and Rolfe, Mathew had no opportunity to use the Vatican Library or Archive, but thanks the Vatican archivist

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[890] A. H. Mathew, *The life and times of Hildebrand, Pope Gregory VII* (London, 1910), *The Diary of John Burchard of Strasburg, Bishop of Orte and Civita Castella, Pontifical Master of Ceremonies to their Holinesses Sixtus P.P. IV, Innocent P.P. VIII, Alexander, P. P.VI; Pius, P.P III, and Julius P.P. II AD. 1483–1506* (London, 1910).

[891] A. H. Mathew, *The Life and Times of Rodrigo Borgia, Pope Alexander VI* (London, 1912), p. 6.

[892] Mathew, *Rodrigo Borgia,* p. 5.

[893] Mathew, *Rodrigo Borgia*, p. 7.

and future cardinal Franz Ehrle (1845–1934) – a sometime refugee in Britain – for 'furnishing items of information for which I applied'.[894] In his preface, Mathew regards the Borgia family as 'so appallingly conspicuous in the criminal annals of Europe'.[895] This began under Alfonso de Borja who, when elevated to the papacy, 'proceeded to satisfy the cravings of his ambitious relations'.[896] However, for the young Rodrigo this was 'an obstacle in the way of his intercourse with Vannozza', and in order to fool his colleagues and the Roman populace, 'he began to display a most unwonted piety and humility'.[897] It is precisely the same sort of emphasis found in Alexander Gordon, with no indication that the first duke of Gandía was not Vannozza's son. Unlike Gordon or other previous historians, who made no connection between Borgia's suppression of the insurrection at Ascoli in 1457 and his appointment as vice–chancellor, Mathew discusses the 'reward for his services in connection with the disturbances in central Italy'.[898] Moving on to Pius's pontificate, the baptismal party in Siena is likened to 'a 'bacchanalian orgy'.[899] Mathew includes the letter of rebuke from Pius in its entirety, taking up three pages. Moving through the text, the pontificate of Paul II and the role Borgia played in the elevation of Sixtus IV are glossed over. The next mention of Borgia comes with Sixtus's appointment of the legates in December 1471. Mathew's account includes the thoughts of Cardinal Ammannati, implying that the first edition of his letters had

[894] Mathew, *Rodrigo Borgia*, p. 9.

[895] Mathew, *Rodrigo Borgia*, p. 21.

[896] Mathew, *Rodrigo Borgia*, p. 24.

[897] Mathew, *Rodrigo Borgia*, p. 32.

[898] Mathew, *Rodrigo Borgia*, p. 32.

[899] Mathew, *Rodrigo Borgia*, p. 35.

been consulted.[900] Mathew's third chapter opens with a glaring factual error, for he states that Borgia only returned from Spain to Rome in 1484; in fact he was back in Rome by the autumn of 1473.[901] Again, it is straight out of Alexander Gordon. Aside from the relationship with Vannozza, coverage of the later 1480s revolves around Borgia's plans for what might happen in the event of Innocent's death: 'with an eye to the approaching election, [he] did all he could to ingratiate himself with the other Cardinals'.[902] As for the conclave of 1492, the damning assessment continues, the election resembling 'a banker's counter'.[903] Then Sigismondo Conti is quoted to the effect that Alexander was 'a thoroughly capable man with remarkable intellectual gifts'.[904]

The year after Mathew's biography came W. H. Woodward's of Cesare.[905] This author's explicit aim was to counter partisan or romantic treatments of the subject. For the period immediately either side of Cesare's birth, which are the only ones of relevance to the present study, Woodward's sources include Ammannati.[906] On Rodrigo himself there is the unsurprising comment that he was an 'uomo carnalesco', was of a warm, affectionate nature,

[900] Mathew, *Rodrigo Borgia*, p. 50.

[901] Mathew, *Rodrigo Borgia*, p. 61.

[902] Mathew, *Rodrigo Borgia*, p. 64.

[903] Mathew, *Rodrigo Borgia*, p. 68.

[904] Mathew, *Rodrigo Borgia*, p. 70.

[905] W. H. Woodward, *Cesare Borgia: A Biography* (London, 1913).

[906] Woodward, *Cesare Borgia*, p. 18.

devoutly attached to his own flesh and blood.[907] With regard to his associates, Woodward refers to Francesco Gonzaga's 'dog–like fidelity' to the older cardinal.[908]

The fashion for books about the Borgia exposed gaps in the knowledge of authors who did not enjoy access to archives. As far as Borgia's papal election was concerned, a revealing and hitherto overlooked source then known as Vat. Arch. Miscell. Arm. XV, 109, 43v–48r (now BAV Vat. Lat. 12518, 43v–48r). This accounts for how individual cardinals voted in the three successive scrutinies in August 1492, listing votes cast and votes received. In the first scrutiny (43v–44r) Borgia received seven votes, in the second (45r–46r) he moved up to eight and stayed on eight in the third (47v–48r). The BAV manuscript does not record a fourth ballot nor the *accessus* which took place on the morning of 11 August and sealed Borgia's election. What material it does contain was published by W. Schweitzer in 1909.[909] In due course, Ferdinando La Torre analysed this material in a book–length study of the conclave and the power politics that lay behind each vote cast and received, presenting it in tables for convenient study.[910] Thus, in two stages – 1909 and 1933 – the conclave narrative of Stefano Infessura, featuring the silver–laden mules, was finally countered by a more mature and sophisticated interpretation of events. La Torre is adamant that simony did not play a large part in the conclave and maintains that Borgia's fellow cardinals appreciated him as a competent vice–chancellor of the Church: 'Il Borgia appariva a gli altri porporati non certo come un cardinale dedito solamente alle cure spirituali del suo ministero ma come un

[907] Woodward, *Cesare Borgia*, p. 38.

[908] Woodward, *Cesare Borgia*, p. 14.

[909] W. Schweitzer, 'Zur Wahl Alexanders VI', *Historisches Jahrbuch*, 30 (1909), pp. 809–32.

[910] F. La Torre, *Del conclave di Alessandro VI* (Rome, 1933).

buon vicecancelliere della Chiesa'.[911] This reinterpretation of the conclave subsequently informed Michael Mallett's account of Borgia's election.[912]

Elsewhere, the focus remained on publishing sources, though the 470 *Documenti inediti sulla famiglia e la corte di Alessandro VI* edited by Mario Menotti are not much help for the period up to 1492.[913] The Belgian priest Peter De Roo (1839–1926) initially worked on the Borgia alongside an enthusiastic *History of America before Columbus*, a work dismissed by one reviewer for its 'utter lack of the historic sense'.[914] Undeterred, De Roo was similarly obsessive in searching out *Material for a History of Pope Alexander VI: His Relatives and his Time*, which was eventually published in five volumes in 1924 (vol. II covering the period up to 1492), together with the said history: *Pope Alexander VI as Supreme Pontiff*.[915] The latter has sunk almost without trace, but the *Material* stands as testament to decades of labour, reflected in the telling statement that 'ordinary duties have not only retarded the publication of this our work, but also prevented us from becoming acquainted, these last thirty years, with new writings on Pope Alexander VI'.[916] On the other hand, the archival materials are extensive and come from the Vatican, other Roman collections, Munich, Paris, Subiaco, and Vienna. The interpretation of these sources needs to

[911] La Torre, *Del conclave*, p. 2.

[912] Mallett, *The Borgias*, pp. 107–10.

[913] M. Menotti, *Documenti inediti sulla famiglia e la corte di Alessandro* (Rome, 1917).

[914] P. De Roo, *History of America before Columbus* (2 vols, Philadelphia, 1900); reviewed by H. W. H., *The American Historical Review*, 6/4 (1901), pp. 799–802.

[915] P. De Roo, *Material for a History of Pope Alexander VI: His Relatives and his Time* (5 vols, Bruges, 1924); De Roo, *Pope Alexander VI as Supreme Pontiff* (Bruges, 1924).

[916] De Roo, *Material*, ii, p. xvi.

be treated with extreme caution, for De Roo came to his task with the unscholarly objective of casting Rodrigo Borgia as little short of saintly, 'a man of good moral character and an excellent Pope'.[917] It is reminiscent of the version crafted by Rolfe, possibly around the same time. This positive view of Rodrigo Borgia was achieved through wilful misinterpretation of the sources. For example, because Machiavelli did not pass judgement on Borgia, De Roo regards this as evidence that there was nothing negative to say.[918] Michael Mallett concluded that any useful information that could be gleaned from De Roo's work is 'almost undetectable under the coat of whitewash'.[919] The scholar is on considerably safer ground with another work from the 1920s, G. B. Picotti's detailed monograph on the early career of Pope Leo X, from which much valuable material may be gleaned on his fellow cardinals, including Borgia.[920]

Twentieth–century studies of the Renaissance popes could be found just about anywhere on the scholarly–popular literary continuum, with Picotti's study of Leo as a fine example of the more scholarly variety. In 1939 Rodrigo Borgia received more accessible treatment at the hands of the Neapolitan–born Cuban citizen Orestes Ferrara (1876–1972).[921] English and Spanish editions followed in 1942 and 1943 respectively.[922] Ferrara's literary skills enabled him to create a well–documented study which married historical facts from

[917] De Roo, *Material*, ii, p. xi.

[918] De Roo, *Material*, v, p. 325.

[919] Mallett, *The Borgias*, p. 329.

[920] G. B. Picotti, *La giovinezza di Leone X* (Milan, 1927).

[921] O. Ferrara, *Le Pape Borgia* (Paris, 1939).

[922] O. Ferrara, *The Borgia Pope: Alexander the Sixth* (London, 1942); *El Papa Borgia* (Madrid, 1943).

sources such as Ammannati's letters with a pen portrait of Borgia as more fully–rounded, more human, than De Roo's quasi–saint, albeit with an eye to contemporary, non–specialist readers. For Ferrara, therefore, Borgia was a 'political priest, thoroughly versed in the politics of his day and the needs of the church, he tried to prevent evils which were to affect Italy for four centuries after'.[923] According to Ferrara, Borgia was conscious of the Church's weakness in temporal affairs and resolved to strengthen its position vis–à–vis the secular powers, arguing

> that there was no man who had a loftier idea of the liberty of the church, of states and of individuals. There was no man who had a truer appreciation of the evil to be feared from the powers of the period which aimed at hegemony, no man who used more strength and skill than in the effort to preserve Italy from the disaster of foreign domination.[924]

They were certainly lessons that Borgia had learnt during his time as cardinal as he witnessed five successive pontiffs attempt to maintain order on the Italian peninsula.

History has often been written by journalists such as Ferrara and the Borgia family has been so popular a subject for such authors that it would be superfluous to identify all such works. In 1969 the anglophone tradition of writing about them gained a new dimension when their story was written by a professional historian of Renaissance Italy. Michael Mallett (1932–2008) had been a student of J. R. Hale (1923–99) and the Borgia book was his first foray outside Florentine history. It came into existence because Mallett served as assistant

[923] Ferrara, *The Borgia Pope*, p. 34.

[924] Ferrara, *The Borgia Pope*, p. 4.

director and librarian at the British School at Rome (BSR) from 1962 to 1965 and needed a suitably Roman project to occupy his time. He had no interest in ecclesiastical history, but his time in Rome coincided with the Second Vatican Council and the eyes of the world were on its deliberations and pronouncements, and that helped to determine his choice of subject.[925] Unlike many previous authors, he was not in the business of denouncing the Borgia, nor of rehabilitating them.[926] The result is a straightforward piece of history. One chapter is devoted to Rodrigo Borgia's career as a cardinal. Mallett stresses that Borgia discharged his duties as vice–chancellor with a 'great deal of distinction' and considers earlier treatments of the baptismal party in Siena to have been over–exaggerated.[927] On the other hand, Mallett is no different from previous authors in basing his account on published primary sources: he used the resources of the BSR library, rather than those of the Vatican Archive. The distinction lay in his treatment of that material. After his time in Rome, Mallett returned to Florentine themes, editing three volumes of the letters of Lorenzo de' Medici, a heavily annotated series that can be used to reconstruct relations between the Italian states during the period that Borgia was vice–chancellor.[928]

Although Mallett was rare in ranging so widely over the Italian peninsula, he rarely ventured into Spanish history, an exception being a visit to Simancas to read the papers of Gonzalo de Córdoba.[929] Spanish studies of the Borgia ran on a completely different track. The story of Spanish Borgia studies, which we left with Chacón in the sixteenth century, can

[925] Personal communication from Stella Fletcher.

[926] Mallett, *The Borgias*, p. 9.

[927] Mallett, *The Borgias*, pp. 82, 86.

[928] L. de' Medici, *Lettere*, ed. R. Fubini et al (16 vols to date, Florence, 1977–).

[929] Personal communication from Stella Fletcher.

be picked up on 21 December 1940, when Buenaventura Pascual y Beltrán, a native of Xàtiva, delivered a lecture on Alexander VI in Valencia, published the following year as *El gran papa español Alejandro VI en sus relaciones con los Reyes Católicos*.[930] It was arguably an opportunity to engage with Orestes Ferrara, but the emphasis on the Borgia pope's greatness, a feature all too rarely found in non–Spanish authors, is a reminder that neutral Spain was also Francoist and staunchly Catholic: the Spanish pope was a source of pride. However, in Rodrigo Borgia's lifetime 'Spain' was nothing more than a rough geographical term. He himself was a subject of the kings of Aragon, not those of Castile, so his literary afterlife has become part of the culture war waged by Catalan nationalists and separatists against the government in Madrid. Catalan nationalism, suppressed until Francisco Franco's death in 1975, has burst out of its constraints in recent decades. It has had implications for the study of Rodrigo Borgia, the most significant of whose twentieth–century historians was the fervent Catalan nationalist Miquel Batllori, S.J. (1909–2003).

Born in Barcelona, Batllori's religious formation took him south to the Borja stronghold of Gandía and his university education took him to Italy, meaning that he followed in the footsteps of Rodrigo de Borja. In Rome he joined the Historical Institute of the Society of Jesus, serving as its head in the mid 1950s. From 1952 to 1980 he taught in the Faculty of Ecclesiastical History at the Pontifical Gregorian University. Throughout his career he identified as a Catalan and was an advocate for Catalan culture, publishing on the Majorcan mystic Ramon Llull (1232–1316), the physician and religious reformer Arnau de Vilanova (1240–1311) and the Borja family. The last was in large measure inspired by Lluís Cerveró y Gomez (1902–83), whose knowledge of Valencian archives introduced Batllori to

[930] B. Pascual y Beltrán, *El gran papa español Alejandro VI en sus relaciones con los Reyes Católicos* (Valencia, 1941).

relevant sources, many of which he went on to publish. His first work relating to the Borja was a paper read at the Real Academia de la Historia; it was published in 1958.[931] Among subsequent and very numerous publications, the second Borja pope is central to *De València a Roma: cartes triades dels Borja* (1998), an edition of sixty–four letters sent to Alexander from the kingdom of Aragon in 1493–4, supplemented in 1992 by an expanded edition of Mario Menotti's 1917 collection in Catalan translation.[932] There is a marked absence of correspondence from the Borja cardinal, meaning that posterity never hears his voice or learns about anything from his perspective. On the other hand, Batllori's perspective on the Borja was stated in an interview in 1989, with the shared language clearly a matter of particular significance:

> If the insincere critics of the Borgias are annoyed because I show no anger to their anticritical fantasies, then I shall rejoice with a contemptuous silence. And if those who oppose the Borgias accuse me of excessive sympathy for the pope who at the height of the Renaissance dignified his language, which is also mine, then forgive me my slight sympathy for their profound, impassioned antipathy.[933]

Batllori's achievements effectively reached their climax with celebrations to mark the fifth centenary of the second Borgia pontificate. The man himself made numerous contributions to conferences and exhibition catalogues, but the anniversary was an

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[931] M. Batllori, *Alejandro VI y La Casa Real de Aragón 1492–98* (Madrid, 1958).

[932] M. Batllori (ed.), *De València a Roma. Cartes triades dels Borja, Barcelona* (Crema, 1998); M. Menotti, ed. M. Batllori and X. Company, *Els Borja* (Valencia, 1992).

[933] Miquel Batllori interview: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/39083967.pdf> (accessed 18 April 2020).

opportunity to showcase the research of various scholars.[934] The exhibition *El hogar de los Borja*, held in Xàtiva in the winter of 2000–1, was a case in point, the accompanying collection of essays including examinations of Rodrigo Borgia's time in Valencia in 1472–3 and his patronage of Valencians in Rome either side of that legation.[935] The latter, by Manuel Vaquero Piñeiro, analyses lists of Borgia's familiars compiled on four separate occasions. The raw material presented by Vaquero Piñeiro offers immense potential for the study of Rodrigo Borgia as a Curial patron. The fifth centenary was no less of an academic – and, indeed, commercial – opportunity in Rome, where conferences were organized by Roma nel Rinascimento, the research institute founded in 1984 on the initiative of Massimo Miglio, which also published the proceedings. In the case of *Roma di fronte all'Europa al tempo di Alessandro VI*, three papers dealt with Borgia as a cardinal: those of Paulino Iradiel and José M. Cruselles on ecclesiastical patronage, Annibale Ilari on Burchard's *Liber notarum*, and Francesco Somaini on Borgia's role in the conclave of 1484.[936] Somaini's article is the most

[934] For example, *Xàtiva, els Borja: una projecció europea* (Xàtiva, 1995) and *Sucre & Borja. La canyamel dels ducs* (Gandía, 2000).

[935] M. González Baldovi (ed.), *El hogar de los Borja* (Valencia, 2001): V. J. Escartí, 'El cardenal Rodrigo de Borja en Valencia (1472–1473): representación social y poder', pp. 109–23; M. Vaquero Piñeiro, 'Valencianos en Roma durante el siglo xv una presencia en torno a los Borja', pp. 185–99.

[936] *Roma di fronte all'Europa al tempo di Alessandro VI, atti del convegno Città di Vaticano–Roma 1–4 December 1999*, ed. M Chiabò, S Maddalo and M. Miglio (3 vols, Rome, 2001); P. Iradiel and J. M. Cruselles, 'El entorno eclesiástico de Alejandro VI. Nota sobre la formación de la clientela politica borgiana (1429–1503), pp. 27–58; A. Ilari, 'Il Liber

comprehensive analysis of Borgia's actions in the conclave and provides meticulous detail on the *sede vacante*, the scrutinies and the immediate aftermath of Giovanni Battista Cibo's election. Among the other fifth–centenary conferences, the only relevant paper seems to have been Giuseppe Mazzanti on Borgia's time as a student at Bologna.[937]

His life's work complete, Miquel Batllori died a few months before the five–hundredth anniversary of Pope Alexander's death and was commemorated by a service in the chapel of the palace of the Borja dukes at Gandía. His abiding legacy can be found in the work of the Institut Internacional d'Estudis Borgians, founded in Valencia in 2002 to promote, co–ordinate and spread research on the Borja family, by means of monographs, the journal *Revista Borja*, and an online presence.[938] Among the larger publications is the five–volume *Diplomatari Borja* of documents from 1299 to 1505, of which the fifth is of most direct relevance to the career of Cardinal Borgia, being an edition of the papers of his notary Camillo Benimbene.[939] A few angles on Cardinal Borgia can be found in the papers published in *Revista Borja*, including that of Maria Toldrà and Teresa Huguet–Termes on a

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Notarum di Giovanni Burcardo', pp. 249–323; F. Somaini, 'Il Cardinale Rodrigo Borgia ed il conclave del 1484', pp. 99–177.

[937] G. Mazzanti, 'Rodrigo Borgia e lo Studium Bolognese', in *La fortuna dei Borgia, atti del convegno, Bologna, 29–31 ottobre 2000*, ed. O. Capitani and M. Chiabò (Rome, 2005), pp. 131–46.

[938] Website of Institut Internacional d'Estudis Borgians: <https://www.elsborja.cat> (accessed 24 June 2020).

[939] M. Batllori et al, *Diplomatari Borja* (5 vols, Valencia, 2002–14), including vol. 5, ed. I. Parisi, *Archivio di Stato de Roma: Documents dels protocols de Camillo Beneimbene (1479–1505)*.

bull relating to the cardinal's Spanish legation, and those of Adele Condorelli and Ximo Company on frescoes commissioned by the legate in Valencia.[940]

Outside Spain, interest in the Borgia flourished in Ferrara to mark the fifth centenary of Lucrezia Borgia's marriage to Alfonso d'Este in 1502 and, more recently, in a volume of conference papers on the afterlives of the Borgia family, though neither offered any fresh angles on Rodrigo's pre–papal career.[941]

Approaching Cardinal Borgia through his family may be logical, but it makes little sense for the period before 1492, when relatively few of his kinsmen were in Italy and his children were still young. The later decades of the twentieth century witnessed the publication of an increasing number of studies of Renaissance Rome and its leading clerics, each of which potentially contributed to a more well–rounded appreciation of the long–serving vice–chancellor. Non–Italians Denys Hay, Jean Delumeau, Peter Partner, and Egmont

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[940] M. Toldrà and T. Huguet–Termes, 'La butlla de la legació de Roderic de Borja ad regna Hispaniarum, copiada per Joan Feixes, servidor de Calixt III (BC, ms. 482)', *Revista Borja*, 3, (2010–11), pp. 85–111; A. Condorelli, 'El Cardenal Rodrigo de Borja mecenas de Francesco Pagano y Paolo da San Leocadio', *Revista Borja*, 2, (2008–9), pp. 359–78; X. Company, 'Àngels borgians amb música i policromia de Déu', *Revista Borja*, 2, (2008–9), pp. 379–407.

[941] J. M. De Silva (ed.), *The Borgia Family: Rumor and Representation* (Abingdon, 2020), a collection in the tradition established by M. Hermann–Röttgen, *Die Familie Borgia Geschichte einer Legende* (Stuttgart, 1992) and continued by Capitani and Chiabò, *La fortuna dei Borgia*.

Lee proved to be pioneers.[942] As director of the Canadian Academic Centre in Rome, Lee exercised influence over burgeoning research into later fifteenth–century Rome, mostly by Italian scholars. Lee's study of foreigners in *quattrocento* Rome sheds light on the city's sizeable non–Roman population, clerical or lay, and how they helped shape the city's cosmopolitan character through their establishments of households, hospitals and other institutions.[943] Lee also considers the backlash such a group received from the Roman population. As Borgia falls into this category, Lee's work is of particular significance for perceptions of 'otherness' in fifteenth–century Rome. The impact of Lee and others can be seen in the weighty volume of conference papers *Un pontificato ed una città* (1986), though its detailed studies do no more than provide context for the life of Rodrigo Borgia.[944] The same year saw the publication of a major study of the papal Chancery, the curial department headed by Borgia from 1457 to 1492. In *Die Kanzlei der Päpste der Hochrenaissance 1471–1527* Thomas Frenz includes short biographies of 2,223 individuals who were employed in the Chancery.[945] An examination of their careers is arguably the best way to reconstruct Rodrigo Borgia's Curial patronage. To a markedly lesser degree, Borgia was connected with

[942] D. Hay, *The Church in Italy in the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1977) J. Delumeau, *Vie économique et sociale de Rome dans la seconde moitié du XVI siècle* (Paris, 1957–9); P. Partner, *Renaissance Rome* (Berkeley, CA, 1977), E. Lee, *Sixtus IV and Men of Letters* (Rome, 1978).

[943] E. Lee, 'Foreigners in Quattrocento Rome', *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme,* 7/2 (May, 1983), pp. 135–146.

[944] M. Miglio, *Un pontificato ed una città: Sisto IV (1471–1484): atti del convegno, Rome, 3–7 December 1984* (Città del Vaticano, 1986).

[945] T. Frenz, *Die Kanzlei der Päpste der Hochrenaissance (1471–1527)* (Tübingen, 1986).

the court of the Rota. This body is the subject of a recent monograph by Kirsi Salonen, but Borgia does not emerge as an influence on its day–to–day workings.[946]

If studies of the Curia and curialists have the potential to shed light on the career of Rodrigo Borgia as vice–chancellor of the Church, then studies of his fellow cardinals are no less relevant for piecing together the career of the man who rose to become their dean. The works of Chacón and Cardella provided points of departure for more recent historians and biographers, of whom there have been an increasing number since Denys Hay dismissed the Renaissance cardinals as a 'mixed bag, a poor bunch'.[947] Hay's compatriot D. S. Chambers began his career with a study of the sixteenth–century English cardinal Christopher Bainbridge, which led him to consider Renaissance cardinals in general and then to focus on Borgia's younger contemporary Francesco Gonzaga, with a foray into Portuguese history, thanks to the 'largely neglected' cardinal Jorge da Costa.[948] Gonzaga was thoroughly distracted by worldly preoccupations, but the Costa article sought to challenge Hay's assumption that the cardinals of the fifteenth century were lacklustre in their religious beliefs and motivated by secular ambition. A similar message was reinforced in Melissa Bullard's

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[946] K. Salonen*, Papal Justice in the Late Middle Ages: The Sacra Romana Rota* (London, 2016).

[947] D. Hay, 'The Renaissance Cardinals: Church, State and Culture', *Synthesis*, 3 (1976), p. 37.

[948] Various articles reproduced in D. S. Chambers, Renaissance Cardinals and their Worldly Problems (Aldershot, 1997); *A Renaissance Cardinal and his Worldly Goods: The Will and Inventory of Francesco Gonzaga (1444–1483)*, (London, 1992); 'What made a Renaissance Cardinal Respectable? The case of Cardinal Costa of Portugal', *Renaissance Studies*, 12/1 (March 1998), pp. 87–108.

study of Marco Barbo.[949] Renaissance cardinals who went on to be elected pope have received appropriate treatment from historians, a case in point being Christine Shaw's 1993 life of Julius II, which is political in emphasis and does not get distracted by culture wars.[950] Borgia does not loom large in her account of Innocent's pontificate. Cardinals who were men of letters in their own right and those who were cultural patrons have also attracted attention, with examples of the former including the work of Thomas M. Izbicki on Juan de Torquemada and John Monfasani on Bessarion.[951] For cardinals as cultural patrons there are monographs, such as that of Isidoro Liberale Gatti on Pietro Riario, and conference papers, such as those on Oliviero Carafa, Gabriele Rangone and Guillaume d'Estouteville in *The Possessions of a Cardinal: Politics, Piety and Art, 1450–1700.* [952] There is no emphasis on Borgia in any of these publications, either because his cultural patronage was insignificant or because, in the case of the Gatti volume, Riario's brief career as a cardinal largely coincided

[949] M. M. Bullard, 'Renaissance Spirituality and the Ethical Dimensions of Church Reform in the age of Savonarola: The Dilemma of Cardinal Marco Barbo', in S. Fletcher and C. Shaw (eds), *The World of Savonarola: Italian Elites and Perceptions of Crisis* (Aldershot, 2000), pp. 65–89.

[950] C. Shaw, *Julius II: The Warrior Pope* (Oxford, 1993).

[951] For example, T. M. Izbicki, *Protector of the Faith: Cardinal Johannes de Turrecremata and the Defense of the Institutional Church* (Washington, DC, 1981); J. Monfasani. *Byzantine Scholars in Renaissance Italy: Cardinal Bessarion and Other Émigrés. Selected Essays* (Aldershot, 1994).

[952] I. L. Gatti, *Pietro Riario da Savona francescano cardinale vescovo di Treviso (1445–1474)* (Padua, 2003); M. Hollingsworth and C. Richardson (eds), *The Possessions of a Cardinal: Politics, Piety and Art, 1450–1700* (Pennsylvania, 2010).

with Borgia's Spanish legation. In terms of monograph–length studies of Borgia's contemporaries in the College of Cardinals, there is nothing to compare with Marco Pellegrini on Ascanio Sforza, which provides a model for the sort of study that could be made of his predecessor as vice–chancellor, and on the back of which Pellegrini has also written some general surveys of the Renaissance cardinalate.[953] Cardinal Filippo Calandrini has a considerably lower posthumous profile than Sforza but the fact that he was half–brother to Pope Nicholas V has brought him to scholarly attention, as Antonio Manfredi's 2007 pen portrait of him illustrates.[954] At the time of writing (2020), most of the fifteenth–century cardinals have received suitable biographical treatment in the *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* and all have online profiles in Salvador Miranda's online resource *Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church*.[955]

The importance of online resources was felt acutely in the final months of work on this thesis. With the outbreak of Covid–19, historians had to contend with archives and libraries closing across the world and had to find ways to continue working. This thesis therefore became an exercise in seeing what can be achieved under these constraints and whether enough material now exists electronically to facilitate a reassessment of Rodrigo Borgia's pre–papal career.

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[953] Pellegrini, *Ascanio Maria Sforza*.

[954] A. Manfredi, 'Profilo del Calandrini all'ombra di Niccolò V', in A. Manfredi and P. Sverzellati (eds), *Da Luni a Sarzana, 1204–2004: VIII Centenario della traslazione della sede vescovile: atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Sarzana, 30 settembre–2 ottobre 2004* (Vatican City, 2007), pp. 431–83.

[955] 'The Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church', <http://cardinals.fiu.edu/cardinals.htm> (accessed 24 June 2020).

Conclusion.

The unanimous election of Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia on the morning of 11 August 1492 was the fitting completion to a career spanning thirty–six years and five pontificates. As vice–chancellor Borgia had exercised more Curial patronage than anyone other than the popes and observed how the Church functioned and interacted with secular powers in every province and diocese of Western Christendom. His influence in Rome was strengthened from 1483 when, additionally, he became dean of the College of Cardinals, *primus inter pares*. No elector in the conclave of 1492 could rival Borgia for the amount of time he had been a prince of the Church, his length of service ensuring that his fellow cardinals had ample opportunity to observe what sort of pontiff he might become. All of this experience had been applied and had finally seen him move from apprentice to papal master.

The original aim of this thesis was to analyse Borgia's career and responsibilities as vice–chancellor (1457–92), the office second only to the pope in the hierarchy of the Church in Rome. However, as the project progressed and that role proved difficult to isolate, the thesis came to consider Borgia in a range of capacities, as vice–chancellor, but also as a papal *nipote*, head of a Roman household, patron of clients, legate, and dean of the College of Cardinals, all of which offer potential answers to the central question of why he was elected pope unanimously in 1492. That long apprenticeship is generally dealt with in a cursory fashion in narratives that concentrate on his pontificate, but by devoting analysis to this, the 'black legend' of the Borgia which has long appeared on the printed page, in art, and on stage and screen, can be unpicked. A crucial gap in the otherwise detailed and authoritative diary of Johannes Burchard meant that Stefano Infessura's accusations of simony long held sway, at least in popular histories. Among scholars their impact has been muted for some generations,

so that Borgia's behaviour has been regarded as typical of his era and the prevailing mentality.

The route to Borgia's electoral success in 1492 can be traced throughout each of the previous five pontificates. His road to the papacy began with his uncle's election as Calixtus III and the standard practice of popes favouring their clerical kinsmen. Borgia then distinguished himself as a man of genuine ability, his early success in subduing unrest in Ascoli (1457) playing a crucial role in his appointment to the office of vice–chancellor. That took him into the heart of papal government, where he remained for the next thirty–five years. Borgia was twenty–six at the time of that appointment and had been a cardinal for scarcely a year. It was a meteoric rise. By way of comparison, his immediate predecessor as vice–chancellor, Francesco Condulmer, was forty–seven and had been a cardinal for six years at the time of his appointment.

The death of Calixtus III in 1458 meant that Borgia had to be diplomatic and flexible in order to retain his position in the Curia. It also meant cultivating support beyond Rome, among the secular princes, without whom the Church could not survive in the form it had developed since the time of Constantine. During Pius II's pontificate this cultivation was relatively modest in scope. When the papal entourage resided in Mantua in 1459–60 for the crusading congress, Borgia began to pursue the ruling Gonzaga family who were related, through the marquis's consort Barbara of Brandenburg, to various German princes. Borgia oversaw the elevation to the cardinalate of the youthful Francesco Gonzaga in December 1461. From the next pope, Paul II, he learned to extend his vision beyond the Italian peninsula, for Paul made so many enemies there that he had little option but to cultivate the king of Hungary, the duke of Burgundy and other powerful figures. Sixtus IV began by courting all the major Italian states, even if relations with Florence and Venice subsequently declined so far as to lead to open war. Borgia was not familiar with republican regimes and

chose to champion the kingdom of Naples, which was ruled by the same dynasty as his native kingdom of Aragon. In 1477 he acted as papal legate to Naples and, at the end of that year, acquired another youthful supporter of exalted birth when King Ferrante's son, Giovanni d'Aragona, was made a cardinal. The ruling houses of Naples and Milan were connected by marriage and Borgia applied the same strategy in his dealings with that duchy: shortly before Sixtus died, in 1484, Ascanio Maria Sforza, uncle of the reigning duke and brother of Milan's *de facto* ruler, was also elevated to the College of Cardinals. Neither Francesco Gonzaga nor Giovanni d'Aragona lived long enough to vote for Borgia when he was finally of an age to be *papabile*, but Ascanio did and proved to be the pope–maker in 1492. In the meantime, Borgia had to navigate the difficulties posed by Giuliano della Rovere acting as the power behind Innocent VIII's throne. This called for patience, diplomacy and a cool head, in contrast to Della Rovere's fiery temperament. In a straightforward choice between those candidates in 1492, Borgia would surely have won hands down. It was not that straightforward as Della Rovere he was still not old enough to be seriously considered for election to the papacy itself and had to operate through proxies.

From the 1460s onwards, Borgia took opportunities to act as sponsor to candidates to major benefices across Western Christendom. All Curial cardinals were involved in such activity, and the practice steadily evolved in specializing in certain geographical areas, an evolution that duly led to the designation of cardinal protectors of each nation. This provided a small source of income, but terrific potential for cultivating and maintaining links with the secular powers whose candidates required sponsorship by cardinals. In both respects the practice was useful for Borgia, but not all cultivated princes as assiduously as he did, though his geographical specialism was in the mainland and islands ruled by the House of Aragon. This was reinforced by a number of personal connections. In 1472–3 he undertook a legation to the Spanish kingdoms. Its principal purpose was to inspire crusading initiatives. It failed in

that, but in terms of forcing a personal relationship between the cardinal and the future king of both Aragon and Castile it was a huge success. A marriage was subsequently arranged between Borgia's eldest illegitimate son, who was granted the duchy of Gandía, and María Enríquez de Luna, a cousin of the Spanish monarchs.

Another consequence of the legation was that it encouraged younger Aragonese clerics to further their careers in Rome, where Borgia's palace offered them a convenient base and his patronage was crucial to finding them employment. He was an attractive patron, whose *familia* was more numerous than that of any other cardinal, many of his clients benefiting from the fact that he could offer them employment in the Chancery, an option not readily available to others, as well as in his household. Those clients remained loyal to him and he to them, as was confirmed when their careers climaxed from 1492 onwards, with six individuals being elevated to the College of Cardinals. Although the original focus of the thesis was on Borgia as vice–chancellor, the patronage aspect of that role was not appreciated. It has been woven into the present text, but its potential has not been exhausted and it offers scope for further research.

Circumstances dictated that archival research was not possible in the preparation of this thesis. Thus, the resources of the Vatican were not exploited with a view to building up a picture of Borgia as a Curial operator, nor those of the various Italian State archives to piece together his dealings with the secular powers. In the light of these drawbacks, the thesis seeks to make an original contribution to the study of Rodrigo Borgia's career as a cardinal by emphasizing the relevant historiography. Thanks to the work of Marco Pellegrini and others, the careers of Borgia's contemporaries in the College of Cardinals are now appreciated in their own right, rather than as background for papal elections and the resulting pontificates. However, the emphasis in such studies is very much on Italian history. Neither as history nor as historiography can Borgia be made to fit that pattern. His name may have been Italianized,

but he never ceased to be a 'foreigner' in Italy, even a potential *marrano*, and it is his Spanish heritage that creates a distinct historiographical thread. More than that, he has been cast as a heroic figure for Catalan speakers, in stark contrast to the negative image created in Italy and picked up with relish by antipapalists beyond the Alps.

Whether in terms of history or historiography, this thesis constitutes work in progress. Consequently, its conclusions are provisional. With regard to Rodrigo Borgia's papal election on the morning of 11 August 1492, it suggests that an examination of his career to that point provides ample explanation for the electors' unanimous decision. In the long term he had gained as great a wealth of experience as any candidate could possibly boast and had distanced himself from the Italian power politics to which successive popes and their cardinals had succumbed. More immediately, he offered a clear contrast to Pope Innocent, who had not only made enemies on the peninsula but also had the reputation of being the puppet of Giuliano della Rovere. Borgia was neither Innocent nor Della Rovere. Moreover, Della Rovere was the archbishop of Avignon and the French candidate, with all that implied for the spectres haunting the fifteenth–century Church. If Borgia was the Spanish candidate, it was easily the lesser of two evils. From an Iberian perspective, he was no villain at all, but a hero, after his uncle only the second Spanish pope there has ever been, one who has found himself at the centre of a long–standing culture war that shows no sign of abating.

Appendix I: The Borgia Family.

Cardinal.

Domingo de Borja
c. 1340-c.1400
m. Francisca Martí

Rodrigo Gil de Borja
c. 1370-1419.
m. Sibila de Oms
c.1332-1409

Catalina
1385-1460.
m. Juan del Milà

Joana
c. 1375-1464.
m. Mateo Martí
c. 1334-?

Alfonso 1378-1458 (Calixtus III)

Francisca
1360-1444

Isabel
1400-62

m.

Jofrè de Borja y Doms
1390-1435

Rodrigo
c. 1425-?

Galceran
c. 1376-?

Joan
c. 1377-?

Francisco de Borja
1441-1511

Joana
c. 1379-?
m. Bartomeu Serra

Jaume Serra i Cau

1427-1517

Pere
?-?

Baron del Milà
m. Cuvella del Dolce

Lluís Juan del Milà

1432-1510

Pere Lluis
1432-58

Rodrigo 1431-1503 (Alexander VI)

Damiata
?-?

Beatrice
1430-1504

Tecla
1435-62

m. Vidal de Villanova
1430-?

Joana
?-?
m. Pere Guillem Lanzol de' Romani.
c. 1450-?

Adriana del Milà
1469-1502.
m. Ludovico Orsini-Migliorati.
(1425-85)

Orsino Orsini-Migliorati

1473-1500

m. Giulia Farnese (1475-1524).

Children from relationship with an unidentified woman

Children from relationship with Vannozza Catanei (1442-1518).

Juan Borgia Lanzol de Romaní
1470-1500.

Jofré
?-?
m. Joana de Moncada
?-?

4 other children

Pier Luigi/Pere Lluis/Pedro Luis

1462- 88

1st Duke of Gandía
m. betrothed to María Enríquez de Luna

Girolama

1469-83

Isabella

1470-1540

Cesare/César

1475-1507

m. Charlotte d'Albret.
(1499-1507).

Giovanni/ Joan/Juan

1476-97

m. María Enríquez de Luna
(1493-97).

Lucrezia

1480-1519

m1. G.Sforza
(1492-97)

m2. A. d'Aragona
(1498-1500)

m3.A.d'Este.
(1505-1519).

Gioffre/Jofré

1481-1517

m1. Sancha d'Aragona
(1494- 1506)

m2. Maria de Milà (1507-1517).

Juan Borgia Lanzol de Romaní

1470-1500

Pere Lluís Borja Lanzol de Romaní

1472-1511.

Appendix II: Cardinal and Conclaves: 1455–1492.

Abbreviations:

CB– Cardinal Bishop

CP–Cardinal Priest

CD– Cardinal Deacon.

Table I: Conclave 1455: Elected Alfonso Borgia, Calixtus III (r. 1455–1458).

Dean of the College: Giorgio Fieschi.

Camerlengo: Ludovico Trevisan

Protodeacon: Prospero Colonna.

Elector	**Elevated by**
Giorgio Fieschi (CB)	Eugenius IV
Isidore of Kiev (CB)	Eugenius IV
Bessarion (CB)	Eugenius IV
Alfonso Borgia (CP)	Eugenius IV
Juan de Torquemada (CP)	Eugenius IV
Ludovico Trevisan (CP)	Eugenius IV
Pietro Barbo (CP)	Eugenius IV
Juan de Carvajal (CP)	Eugenius IV
Antoni Cerdà Lloscos (CP)	Nicholas V
Latino Orsini (CP)	Nicholas V
Alain de Coëtivy (CP)	Nicholas V
Filippo Calandrini (CP)	Nicholas V

Guillaume d'Estaing (CP)	Nicholas V
Domenico Capranica (CP)	Martin V (confirmed by Eugenius IV)
Prospero Colonna (CD)	Martin V

Table II: Conclave 1458: Elected Aeneas Piccolomini, Pius II (r. 1458–1464).

Dean of the College: Giorgio Fieschi.

Camerlengo: Ludovico Trevisan (absent).

Protodeacon: Prospero Colonna.

Elector	**Elevated by**
Giorgio Fieschi (CB)	Eugenius IV
Isidore of Kiev (CB)	Eugenius IV
Basilios Bessarion (CB)	Eugenius IV
Guillaume d'Estouteville (CP)	Eugenius IV
Juan de Torquemada (CP)	Eugenius IV
Pietro Barbo (CP)	Eugenius IV
Antoni Cerdà Lloscos (CP)	Nicholas V
Latino Orsini (CP)	Nicholas V
Alain de Coëtivy (CP)	Nicholas V
Filippo Calandrini (CP)	Nicholas V
Lluís Joan del Milà (CP)	Calixtus III
Juan de Mella (CP)	Calixtus III
Giovanni Castiglione (CP)	Calixtus III
Enea Silvio Piccolomini (CP)	Calixtus III
Giacomo Tebaldi (CP)	Calixtus III
Prospero Colonna (CD)	Martin V

Jaime of Portugal (CD)	Calixtus III
Rodrigo Borgia (CD)	Calixtus III

Table III: Conclave 1464: Elected Pietro Barbo, Paul II (r. 1464–1471).

Dean of the College: Basilios Bessarion.

Camerlengo: Ludovico Trevisan.

Protodeacon: Rodrigo Borgia.

Elector	**Elevated by**
Basilios Bessarion (CB)	Eugenius IV
Guillaume d'Estouteville (CB)	Eugenius IV
Juan de Torquemada (CB)	Eugenius IV
Juan de Carvajal (CB)	Eugenius IV
Ludovico Trevisan (CP)	Eugenius IV
Pietro Barbo (CP)	Eugenius IV
Latino Orsini (CP)	Nicholas V
Alain de Coëtivy (CP)	Nicholas V
Filippo Calandrini (CP)	Nicholas V
Juan de Mella (CP)	Calixtus III
Giacomo Tebaldi (CP)	Calixtus III
Richard Longueil (CP)	Calixtus III
Angelo Capranica (CP)	Pius II
Bartolomeo Roverella (CP)	Pius II
Louis d'Albret (CP)	Pius II
Iacopo Ammannati (CP)	Pius II
Rodrigo Borgia (CD)	Calixtus III

Francesco Todeschini Piccolomini (CD)	Pius II
Francesco Gonzaga (CD)	Pius II

Table IV: Conclave 1471: Elected Francesco della Rovere, Sixtus IV (r. 1471–1484).

Dean of the College: Basilios Bessarion

Camerlengo: Filippo Calandrini.

Protodeacon: Rodrigo Borgia.

Elector	**Elevated by**
Basilios Bessarion (CB)	Eugenius IV
Guillaume d'Estouteville (CB)	Eugenius IV
Latino Orsini (CB)	Nicholas V
Filippo Calandrini (CB)	Nicholas V
Angelo Capranica (CP)	Pius II
Berardo Eroli (CP)	Pius II
Niccolò Fortiguerri (CP)	Pius II
Bartolomeo Roverella (CP)	Pius II
Iacopo Ammannati (CP)	Pius II
Oliviero Carafa (CP)	Paul II
Amico Agnifili (CP)	Paul II
Marco Barbo (CP)	Paul II
Francesco della Rovere (CP)	Paul II
Rodrigo Borgia (CD)	Calixtus III
Francesco Gonzaga (CD)	Pius II
Teodoro Paleologo di Monteferrato (CD)	Pius II

Giovanni Battista Zeno (CD)	Paul II
Giovanni Michiel (CD)	Paul II

Table V: Conclave 1484: Elected Giovanni Battista Cibo, Innocent VIII (r. 1484–1492).

Dean of the College: Rodrigo Borgia.

Camerlengo: Giovanni Battista Cibo.

Protodeacon: Francesco Todeschini Piccolomini.

Elector	**Elevated by**
Rodrigo Borgia (CB)	Calixtus III
Giuliano della Rovere (CB)	Sixtus IV
Oliviero Carafa (CB)	Paul II
Marco Barbo (CB)	Paul II
Giovanni Battista Zeno (CB)	Paul II
Giovanni Michiel (CB)	Paul II
Stefano Nardini (CP)	Sixtus IV
Giovanni Battista Cibo (CP)	Sixtus IV
Giovanni Arcimboldo (CP)	Sixtus IV
Philibert Hugonet (CP)	Sixtus IV
Jorge Costa (CP)	Sixtus IV
Girolamo Basso della Rovere (CP)	Sixtus IV
Pietro Foscari (CP)	Sixtus IV
Giovanni d'Aragona (CP)	Sixtus IV
Raffaele Riario (CP)	Sixtus IV
Domenico della Rovere (CP)	Sixtus IV
Giovanni Conti (CP)	Sixtus IV

Juan Margarit i Pau (CP)	Sixtus IV
Giovanni Sclafenati (CP)	Sixtus IV
Francesco Todeschini Piccolomini (CD)	Pius II
Gabriele Rangone (CD)	Sixtus IV
Giovanni Battista Savelli (CD)	Sixtus IV
Giovanni Colonna (CD)	Sixtus IV
Giambattista Orsini (CD)	Sixtus IV
Ascanio Sforza (CD)	Sixtus IV

Table VI: Conclave 1492: Elected Rodrigo Borgia, Alexander VI (r. 1492–1503).

Dean of the College: Rodrigo Borgia

Camerlengo: Raffaele Riario

Protodeacon: Francesco Todeschini Piccolomini**.**

Elector	**Elevated by**
Rodrigo Borgia (CB)	Calixtus III
Oliviero Carafa (CB)	Paul II
Giuliano della Rovere (CB)	Sixtus IV
Giovanni Battista Zeno (CB)	Paul II
Giovanni Michiel (CB)	Paul II
Jorge Costa (CB)	Sixtus IV
Girolamo Basso della Rovere (CP)	Sixtus IV
Domenico della Rovere (CP)	Sixtus IV
Paolo di Campofregoso (CP)	Sixtus IV
Giovanni Conti (CP)	Sixtus IV
Giovanni Giacomo Sclafenati (CP)	Sixtus IV
Lorenzo Cibò di Mari (CP)	Innocent VIII
Ardicino della Porta (CP)	Innocent VIII
Antonio Pallavicini (CP)	Innocent VIII
Maffeo Girardi (CP)	Innocent VIII
Francesco Todeschini Piccolomini (CD)	Pius II

Raffaele Riario (CD)	Sixtus IV
Giovanni Battista Savelli (CD)	Sixtus IV
Giovanni Colonna (CD)	Sixtus IV
Giambattista Orsini (CD)	Sixtus IV
Ascanio Sforza (CD)	Sixtus IV
Giovanni de'Medici (CD)	Innocent VIII
Federico Sanseverino (CD)	Innocent VIII

Appendix III: Rodrigo Borgia's familiars: 1470–1481.

- **Vd= '**vero dilectorum', the most intimate of the familiars.
- Familiars of Calixtus III are highlighted in bold.
- Additional information is recorded the first time an individual is recorded in a petition.
- Information reflective of that compiled by Manuel Vaquero Piñeiro in 'M. Vaquero Piñeiro, 'Valencianos en Roma durante el siglo xv una presencia en torno a los Borja', in Mariano González Baldovi (ed), *El hogar de los Borja: Xàtiva: Museu de l'Almodí, Antic Hospital Major, del 16 de diciembre de 2000 al 28 de febrero de 2001* (Valencia, 2001), pp. 185–99.

I. 1470

Petition presented to Paul II on 24 April 1470.

Name	**Additional Information**
Juan de Alfaro	
Francesc de Borja	Canon of Valencia, castellan of Ostia (1456), sollicitator (1491–6), treasurer (1493–1500), protonotary apostolic (1493–5).[956]
Bernat Borrell	Priest of Valencia, **familiar of Calixtus III**.
Lluís Borrell	

[956] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 326.

Francisco Cabañas (Cabanes)	Apostolic sollicitator (1496–1506).[957]
Pedro Carranza	Cleric of Calahorra, abbreviator (1492–99), sollicitator (1493–99).[958]
Pere Casanova	
Jamie Cerdà(n)	
Francisco Antonio Fay	
Bartolomeu Martí	Apostolic scriptor, bishop of Segorbe (1473–1498), cardinal (1496).[959]
Vincenzo Micola	
Miguel Oliva	

[957] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 327.

[958] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 426.

[959] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 298; Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica*, ii, pp. 258, 24.

II. 1472

Petition presented to Sixtus IV on 1 January 1472.

Name	**'Vero dilectorum'**	**Additional Information**
Mateu Albert		
Pere Albert		
Juan de Alfaro		
Alvaro Alfonso		Canon of Segovia.
Juan Alfonso	Yes	
Luca Anselmi		
Pedro Antonio Angeli		
Ioannes Angeuolten		
Rodrigo de Aryasco		
Ioannes Ardenna	Yes	
Mateu Artigó		**Familiar of Calixtus III**, cleric of Vich, apostolic notary (1471–8).[960]
Bernat Assensi		Abbreviator (1476), sollicitator (1482–3).[961]
Pedro Fernando Badajoz		
Bartolomé de Baena		Notary of the Sacred Roman Rota (1493–8), scriptor of

[960] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 402.

[961] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 303.

		brief (1503–7), apostolic notary, notary and administrator of the Church of Santiago de los Españoles de Roma.[962]
Guillelmus Baligari	Yes	
Giovanni Bagliotti		Apostolic abbreviator (1453–5), chaplain to Rodrigo Borgia (1473).[963]
Ioannes Bauxani de Baux	Yes	Finance general for Renè of Anjou.[964]
Alfonso de Borja		Canon of Vich and of St Peter's Basilica.
Francesc de Borja		Canon of Valencia, castellan of Ostia (1456), sollicitator (1491–6), treasurer (1493–1500), protonotary apostolic (1493–5).[965]
Juan de Borja		Cleric of Valencia, protonotary apostolic (1479–

[962] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 297.

[963] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 363.

[964] La Torre, *Del Conclave*, p. 94.

[965] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 326.

		83), abbreviator (1479–82), bishop of Ferrara (1494–1503).[966]
Bernat Borrell		Priest of Valencia, **familiar of Calixtus III.**
Lluís Borrell		
Jamie Gonzalo Botafogo	Yes	Abbreviator (1471–6).[967]
Ioannes Bourgonius		
Francisco Cabañas (Cabanes)		Apostolic sollicitator (1496–1506).[968]
Francisco Calderón		
Nicolau Callar		
Pere Miquel Cardona		Secular, diocese of Urgel.
Pedro Carranza		Cleric of Calahorra, abbreviator (1492–99), sollicitator (1493–99).[969]
Juan Casada	Yes	
Pere Casanova		
Pedro de Castro		
Jamie Cerdà(n)		

[966] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 364; Eubel, *Hierarchia*, ii, p. 170.

[967] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 353.

[968] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 327.

[969] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 426.

Juan Cerezo		
Juan Colini		Apostolic notary (1483), sollicitator (1483–93) apostolic scriptor (1483–1509).[970]
Joan Cortesiis		
Jaume Cubels		
Georgius Curificis		
Juan Denarii		
Pere Despuig		
Luis Dezplà		
Ramón Dusay	Yes	
Jaume Eixarch		**Familiar of Calixtus III,** vicar general of Valencia.
Domingo Erla (Etla)		
Guillem Falcó		
Baptista de Fantinellis		
Francisco Antonio Fay		
Diego Fernández		Apostolic scriptor (1459).[971]
Antonio Ferrer		
Bonant Ferrer		
Guillem Ferrer		

[970] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 370.

[971] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 315.

Alvaro Fogaca		
Sancho de Francia		
Juan de Vicalada Fuente	Yes	
Gonzalo de Fuentes	Yes	Apostolic scriptor (1461).[972]
Alfonso Gaston		
Juan Ginoch		
Miquel Gómez		**Familiar of Calixtus III.**
Pedro de Gormaz		
Miguel Guillermo		
Pedro Guitel	Yes	
Miguel Guiu		**Familiar of Calixtus III.**
Arnoldus Helie		
Conradus Hiren		
Marco Jaime		
Domingo Joan		
Ioannes Jofré		
Francisco Julio		
Pedro Ledesma		
Pedro Leopardi		**Familiar and chaplain to Calixtus III**, apostolic scriptor (1471), abbreviator (1478).[973]

[972] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 342.

[973] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei* p. 429.

Willelmus Lesueur		
Miguel del Liadena		
Simón Lobera		
Alesio Lobo de Madrid		
Pedro de Losilla		
Fernando Lucas		
Robertus Lucingio		
Alexander de Magnis		
Francesc Malla		
Miguel Marí		
Pedro Martí		**Familiar of Calixtus III**.
Juan de Massón		
Alfonso de Medina		
Guillermo Miguel		
Francesc de Miralles		**Familiar of Calixtus III**
Juan Mondich		
Juan Monserrat		
Jaime Moragrega		Procurator of the master of the order of Montesa (1485), sollicitator (1482–5).[974]
Bernardo Moraguas		
Martí Morera		
Antonius Mucius		

[974] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 356.

Armagillus de Olla		
Juan de Ollalde		
Juan Pedro de Oquedo.		
Alfonso Rodrigo d'Orgaz		
Rodrigo de Osma		Chaplain (1472), apostolic notary (1494).[975]
Bartolomé de Paneja		
Antonio Parelli		
Luis de Peñafiel	Yes	Sollicitator (1482–8), apostolic scriptor (1483), abbreviator (1494).[976]
García Pérez		
Ludovico Podocataro		Abbreviator (1479–83), secretary (1494–1500), Cardinal (1500).[977]
Baltasar Portadora		
Pedro de Ponte		
Balthasar Pertadera		
Bartolomé Reyna		
Joan Ripoll	Yes	
Cristóbel Rodríguez		

[975] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 440.

[976] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, pp. 400–1.

[977] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, pp. 401, 25.

Domingo Rodríguez		
Francisco Ruella		
Jaime Sabater		
Juan de San–Martín	Yes	
Gaspar Sanç		
Martí Sanç		
Pere Lluís Sanç		
Petrus Sperger Schaffinan		
Jaime Segur		
Jofré Serra		
Joan Serra		Cleric of Gerona. **Familiar of Calixtus III.**
Alvaro de Solares		
Sebastianus Stetner		
Juan Suelbes		
Bartolomé Suerda		
Iohannes Tilmane		
Guillermus Therardi		
Onofrio Thierosoni		
Lluís Torà		**Familiar of Calixtus III.**
Andrés Torres		
Hurtado de Torres	Yes	
Antonio Total		
Alfonso de Valdivielso	Yes	

Juan Gonzalo de Valdivielso	Yes	
Francisco De Valladolid	Yes	Apostolic scriptor (1471–86), sollicitator (1482).[978]
Bartomeu Vallestar		Apostolic Scriptor (1458) apostolic notary (1470–92).[979]
Miguel Valverda		
Cristóbal Velva	Yes	
Francisco Villamizar		
Juan de Zamora		
Martī Zapata		

[978] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 334.

[979] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 300.

III. 1473

Petition presented to Sixtus IV on 13 July 1473.

Name	**'Vero dilectorum'.**	**Additional Information**
Mateau Albert		
Pere Albert		
Juan de Alfaro		
Alvaro Alfonso	Yes	
Juan Alfonso		
Luca Anselmi		
Pedro Antonio Angeli		
Iohannes Angeuolten	Yes	
Rodrigo de Aryasco	Yes	
Iohannes Ardenna	Yes	
Mateu Artigó		**Familiar of Calixtus III**.
Bernat Assensi	Yes	
Pedro Fernando Badajoz		
Bartolomé de Baena		
Guillelmus Baligari	Yes	
Giovanni Bagliotti		
Ioannes Bauxani (De Baux)	Yes	
Alfonso de Borja		
Francesc de Borja		
Juan de Borja		
Bernat Borrell		**Familiar of Calixtus III.**

Lluís Borrell		
Jamie Gonzalo Botafogo	Yes	
Ioannes Bourgonius		
Francisco Cabañas (Cabanes)		
Francisco Calderón	Yes	
Nicolau Callar		
Pere Miquel Cardona		
Pedro Carranza		
Juan Casada	Yes	
Jaime Casanova		Canon of Xàtiva, abbreviator (1479–84), apostolic scriptor and auditor (1493), apostolic sub deacon (1497), Cardinal (1503).[980]
Pere Casanova		
Pedro de Castro		
Jamie Cerdà(n)		
Juan Cerezo		
Juan Colini		
Joan Cortes	Yes	
Jaume Cubels		
Georgius Curificis		
Juan Denarii		

[980] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, pp. 354, 26.

Pere Despuig	Yes	
Luis Dezplà		
Ramón Dusay	Yes	
Jaume Eixarch		**Familiar of Calixtus III**.
Domingo Erla (Etla)		
Guillem Falcó		
Baptista de Fantinellis		
Francisco Antonio Fay		
Diego Fernández		
Onoratus Ferrari		
Antonio Ferrer		
Bonant Ferrer		
Guillem Ferrer		
Alvaro Fogaca		
Sancho de Francia		
Juan de Vicalada Fuente	Yes	
Gonzalo de Fuentes	Yes	
Alfonso Gaston		
Juan Ginoch		
Miquel Gómez		**Familiar of Calixtus III**.
Pedro de Gormaz		
Miguel Guillermo		
Pedro Guitel	Yes	
Miguel Guiu		**Familiar of Calixtus III.**

Arnoldus Helie		
Conradus Hiren		
Marco Jaime	Yes	
Domingo Joan		
Ioannes Jofré		
Francisco Julio		
Pedro Ledesma		
Pedro Leopardi		
Willelmus Lesueur		
Miguel del Liadena		
Simón Lobera		
Alesio Lobo de Madrid		
Pedro de Losilla		
Fernando Lucas		
Robertus Lucingio		
Alexander de Magnis		
Francesc Malla		
Miguel Marí		
Pedro Martí		
Juan de Massón		
Alfonso de Medina	Yes	
Guillermo Miguel		
Francesc de Miralles		**Familiar of Calixtus III.**
Juan Mondich		

Juan Monserrat		
Jaime Moragrega		
Bernardo Moraguas		
Martí Morera		
Antonius Mucius		
Miguel Oliva		
Armagillus de Olla		
Juan de Ollalde		
Juan Pedro de Oquedo.		
Alfonso Rodrigo d' Orgaz		
Rodrigo de Osma		
Bartolomé de Paneja		
Antonio Parelli	Yes	
Luis de Peñafiel	Yes	
García Pérez		
Ludovico Podocataro		
Baltasar Portadora	Yes	
Pedro de Ponte		
Balthasar Pertadera		
Bartolomé Reyna		
Joan Ripoll	Yes	
Cristóbel Rodríguez		
Domingo Rodríguez	Yes	
Francisco Ruella		

Jaime Sabater		
Juan de San–Martín	Yes	
Gaspar Sanç		
Martí Sanç		
Pere Lluís Sanç		
Petrus Sperger Schaffinan		
Jaime Segur	Yes	
Jofré Serra		
Joan Serra		**Familiar of Calixtus III.**
Alvaro de Solares	Yes	
Sebastianus Stetner	Yes	
Juan Suelbes		
Bartolomé Suerda		
Iohannes Tilmane		
Guillermus Therardi		
Onofrio Therosani		
Lluís Torà		**Familiar of Calixtus III.**
Andrés Torres		
Hurtado de Torres	Yes	
Antonio Total		
Alfonso de Valdivielso	Yes	
Juan Gonzalo de Valdivielso	Yes	
Francisco De Valladolid	Yes	
Bartomeu Vallestar		

Miguel Valverda		
Cristóbal Velva	Yes	
Francisco Villamizar		
Juan de Zamora		
Martī Zapata		

IV. 1481

Petition presented to Sixtus IV on 18 November 1481.

Name	**'Vero dilectorum'**	**Additional Information**
Antoni d'Aguiló		Solicitor (1482–4), apostolic notary (1483).[981]
Joan d'Aguiló		Cleric of Zaragoza (1455–9), scriptor of the register in the Chancery.
Joan de Bonet		
Gabriel Boner		
Francesc de Borja		
Juan de Borja		
Bernat Borrell		F**amiliar of Calixtus III.**
Filiberto Buroti		
Francisco Cabañas (Cabanes)		
Jeróni Calatayud		
Pere Caldes		
Pere Miquel Cardona		
Pedro Carranza		
Diego de Carvajal.		
Melcior Castelvi		
Guillem Ramon Català		

[981] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 284.

Pedro Cavallier		
Roberto Cerso		
Juan Cerezo	Yes	
Henelco Cohatigno		
Onofrio Cola		
Jaume Conill		Borgia's procurator, vicar in the diocese of Valencia for bishops C. Borgia (Cesare) and Pere Lluis (Borgia–Llançol.[982]
Bartolomé Crespella		
Maurizio Damaro/Damart		
Gabriel Despont		
Francisco Desprats		
Pedro Egera.		
Domingo Erla (Etla)		
Francisco Antonio Fay		
Benedicto Feltro.		Sollicitator (1482–6).[983]
Domingo Ferrer		
Guillem Ferrer		
Alfonso Forias		
Salida Fuente		

[982] Piñeiro, 'Los Valencianos', p. 195.

[983] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 302.

Juan de Vicalada Fuente		
Gonzalo García		
Francesc Gasset		Abbreviator (1480), sollicitator (1493), scriptor (1498).[984]
Juan Ginoch		
Domingo Gorell		
Pedro de Gormaz		
Rafael Grunneriz		
Fernando Guitar(ri).		
Antonio Jaime		
Antoni Joan		
Battista Joan		
Gregori Joan		
Vincenzo Joan		
Gabriel Jofré		
Laurentius Kazeldorfer		
Silvestro Legacon		
Pedro Leopardi		
Miguel de Liadena		
Juan Lobera		
Bartolomé de Luna		
Alexander de Magnis		

[984] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 329.

Cristòfol Marí		
Llorenç Martí		
Esteban Martí		
Lluís Martí		
Ausiàs Mas		
Juan de Massón		
Rodrigo Mesera		
Juan de Molina		
Juan Monalde		
Juan Morales		
Jaime Moragrega		
Juan Morales		
Miguel Navarro		
Juan de Ollalde		
Pedro Guillermo Olmes		
Jaume Olzina		
Juan Osma		
Rodrigo de Osma		
Juan Pages		
Fernando Pérez		
Angel de Pichinis		
Pere Pujades		
Bartolomé Reyna		
Juan Ribes		

Pere Rotla		**Familiar of Calixtus III.**
Pedro Ruiz de Aragón		
Gaspar Sabater		
Jaime Sabater		
Pedro de Sancho Ginnea		
Gaspar Sanç		
Pere Lluís Sanç		
Petrus Sperger Schaffinan	Yes	
Iohannes Scortigill		
Jaime Segarra		
Jaume Serra		Bishop of Oristano (1492), cardinal (1510).[985]
Juan de Soldevilla		
Jaume Soler		
Pedro de Solis		
Sperando Spaniel		
Iohannes Stroiuntino		
Onofrio Therosani		
Lluís Torà		**Familiar of Calixtus III.**
Nicolau Trullench		
Bartomeu Vallestar		Apostolic Scriptor (1458), apostolic notary (1470–92).[986]

[985] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 359; Alós, *Cardenales y prelados*, pp. 88–93.

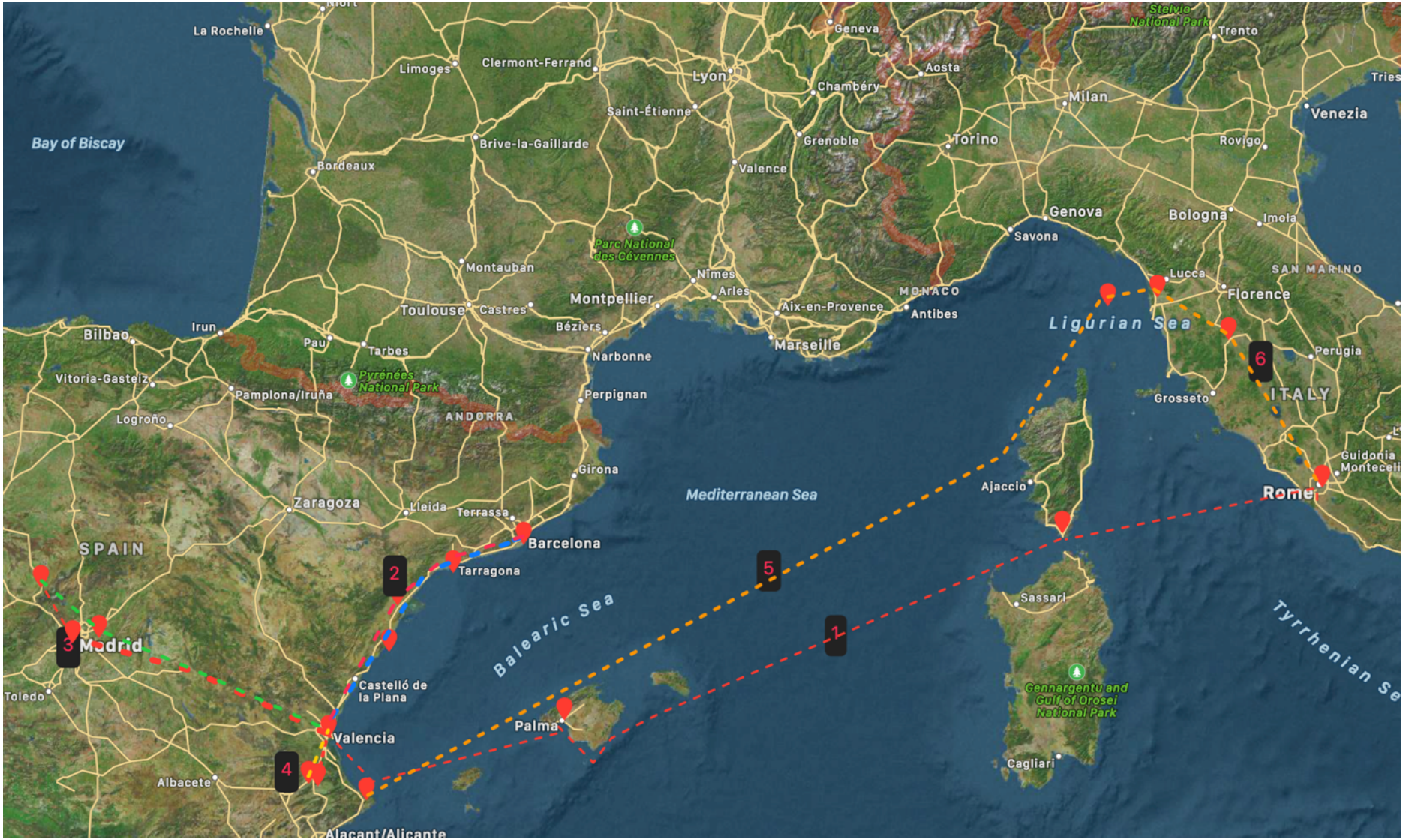
[986] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 300.

Pere Vallestar		Sollicitator (1482–8), notary of the Sacred Roman Rota (1493).[987]
Joan Vidal		
Pedro Vigolde		
Juan Virani		

[987] Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, p. 433.

Appendix IV: Rodrigo Borgia's legation to Spain: 1472–3.

Figure I: An overview of Rodrigo Borgia's legation to Spain: 24 May 1472–24 October 1473.



Key.

1. **Journey 1 Borgia to Spain:** Leaves Ostia on 24 May 1472, arrives Bonifacio (Corsica) 8 June 1472. Fleet moves to Palma (Mallorca), arriving on 13 June. Boriga's ships arrive at Grao, the port of Valencia arriving on 18 June, the retinue spends the night of 19 June at the monastery at El Puig (outside the walls of Valencia). The retinue enters Valencia the following day.
2. **Journey 2 Borgia to Barcelona**: Leaves Valencia 31 July 1472, sails north past the castle at Peníscola. On 12 August arrives in Tarragona, stays for several days and then moves to the monastery at Pedralbes, four miles outside Barcelona. Leaves on 4 September, passes Tortosa on the way back to Valencia. Re–enters Valencia on 1 October 1472.
3. **Journey 3 Borgia to Madrid**: Leaves Valencia on 2 November 1472. Spends Christmas with the court in Madrid. Early February moves to Segovia for the diocesan synod. Same month, Borgia moves to Alcalá de Henares where he meets Isabel and stays with Archbishop Carrillo. The legate returns to Valencia on 27 July 1473.
4. **Journey 4 Borgia travels to Xàtiva**: Leaves Valencia on 3 August 1473 arrives in Xàtiva on 5 August. Leaves Xàtiva on 11 August for Anna. Leaves Anna on 12 August and arrives in Valencia shortly after.
5. **Journey 5 Borgia leaves Valencia:** Leaves Valencia for the port of Grao on 11 September 1473. A storm blows them south down the coast to Dénia for a week. On 19 September 1473 sails for Ostia but on 10 October 1473, the fleet are shipwrecked off the coast of Pisa.
6. **Journey 6 Borgia has to travel back to Rome:** From Pisa Borgia travels through Siena on the way to Rome, enters Rome on 24 October 1473.

Figure II. Rodrigo Borgia's journey to Spain: 15 May 1472–20 June 1472.



Key

1. Departs Rome for Ostia 15 May 1472.

2. Departs Ostia for Bonifacio (Corsica) 24 May 1472, arrives 8 June 1472.

3. Departs Bonifacio for Palma (Mallorca) arrives 13 June.

4. Arrives in Grao (Valencia) 18 June. Moves to El Puig monastery 19 June and enters Valencia 20 June.

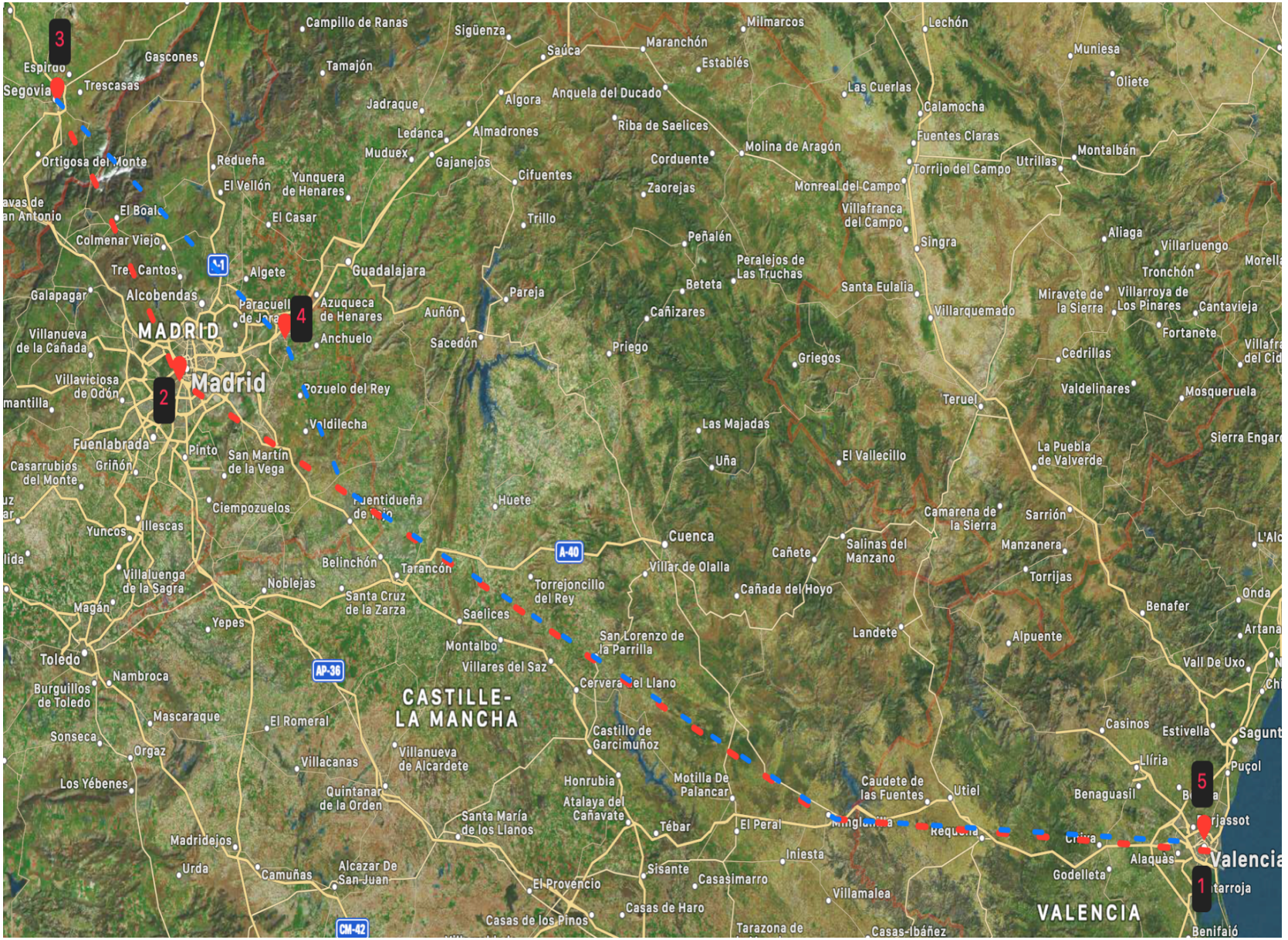
Figure III: Rodrigo Borgia's journey to Barcelona: 31 July 1472– 1 October 1472.



Key.

1. Borgia leaves Valencia on 31 July 1472 for Pedralbes (Barcelona).
2. The party travels north up the coast by the castle at Peníscola, the fortress of the anti–pope Benedict XIII.
3. On 12 August 1472, the party rests at Tarragona.
4. As Barcelona is still divided by civil war, discussions between Borgia and Enrique meet at Pedralbes, four miles outside the walls of Barcelona.
5. Borgia leaves on 4 September and passes by Tortosa on the way back to Valencia. The legate and his party re–enter Valencia on 1 October 1472.

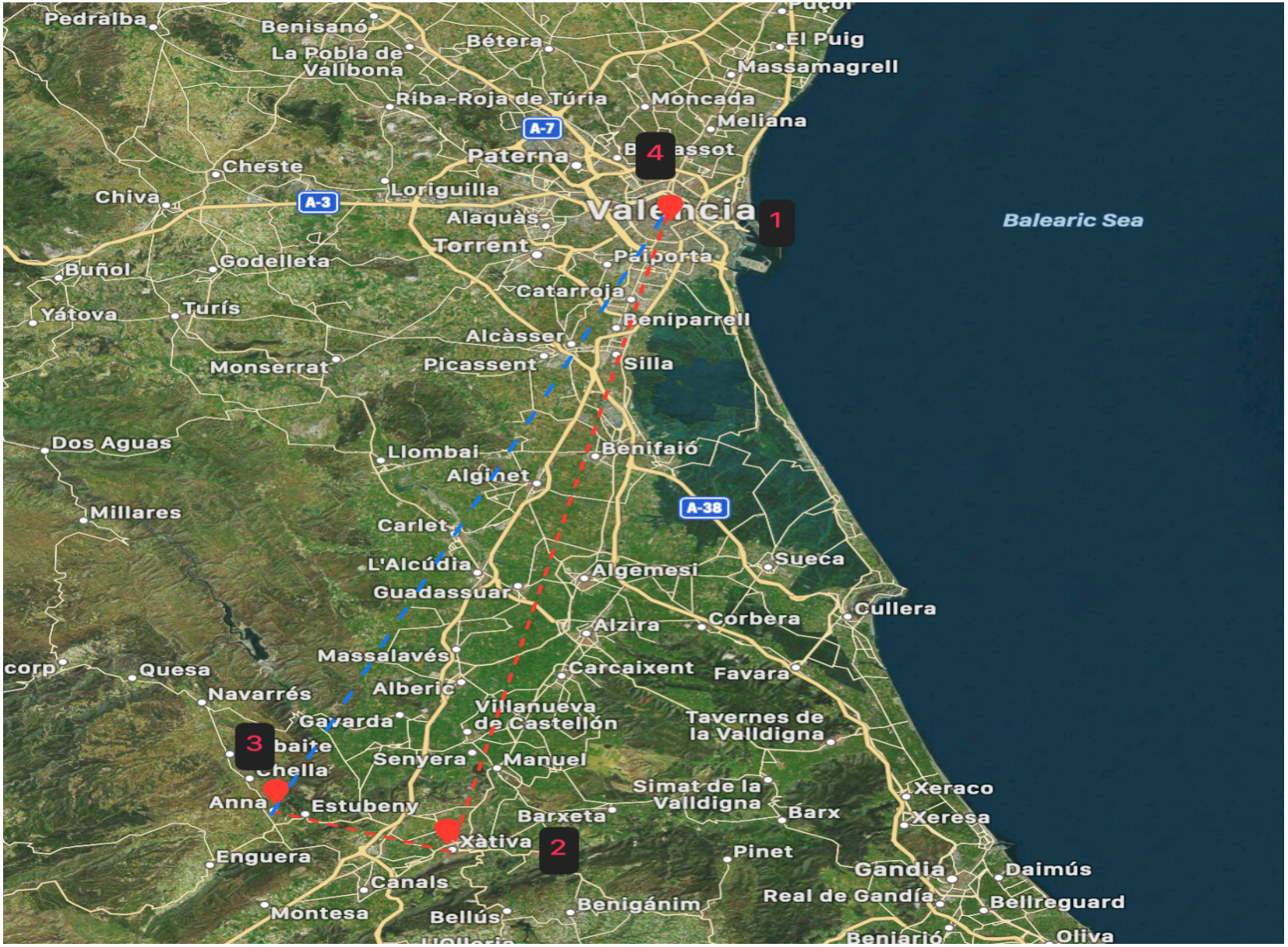
Figure IV: Rodrigo Borgia's journey to Madrid 2 November 1472–29 July 1473.



Key.

1. Borgia and Archbishop Carrillo depart Valencia on 2 November 1472.
2. Party arrives in Madrid (date unknown), spends Christmas at the court.
3. In early February Borgia and his retinue travel the 59 miles north–west to Segovia for the diocesan synod.
4. Same month Borgia moves to Alcalá de Henares and stays with Isabel and Carrillo.
5. On 27 July 1473, Borgia returns to Valencia. It is his longest absence from the city since arriving in June 1472.

Figure V: Rodrigo Borgia's journey to Xàtiva 3 August 1473– 12 August 1473.



Key.

1. Departs Valencia 3 August 1473 for Xàtiva.
2. Arrives in Xàtiva on 5 August 1473.
3. Leaves Xàtiva for Anna, arrives on 11 August 1473.
4. Arrives back in Valencia on 12 August 1473.

Figure VI: Rodrigo Borgia's journey back to Rome 17 September 1473–24 October 1473.



Key.

1. Borgia departs Valencia for the port of Grao on 11 September, arrives on 12 September.
2. Borgia's ships leave Grao but due to bad weather are swept down the coast to Dénia, the ships finally leave a week later on 19 September.
3. On 10 October 1473, Borgia's ships are caught in bad weather of the Tuscan coast and are shipwrecked.
4. Borgia is hosted in Pisa.
5. Borgia's party rests in Siena en–route to Rome
6. Borgia returns to Rome on 24 October 1473.

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