

Arts and artists in the pontifical diplomacy network between Pius II and Pius XI

International congress - Rome, October 15th 2021

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Faculty of History and Cultural Heritage of the Church (Pontifical Gregorian University) invites to submit proposals for an international congress that aims to reflect upon the role of the arts and artists in the context of diplomatic relationships promoted by the Papal Curia.

This thematic area suggests the beginning and the end of two pontificates as the chronological framework. On the one hand, the election of Pius II Piccolomini (1458-1464) that, due to his humanistic culture, diplomatic skills and his effort for the affirmation of papal authority, determined the beginning of numerous artistic experimentations that few decades later led to the most mature results of the Renaissance. On the other hand, the end of the pontificate of Pius XI Ratti (1922-1939) together with the effects of the constitution of the Vatican City State on the papal territorial sovereignty and the outbreak of the Second World War, events that had significant repercussions on the arts.

Papal diplomacy is here understood, in a broad perspective, as the complex network of international relationships gravitating around the pope and his Curia, in an amalgam of religious and political interests which included not only European powers but also political realities more distant in cultural and geographical terms. The arts and artists often played a decisive role in the dense network of diplomatic relationships of popes, sovereigns, curial councilors, ambassadors and ministers that manifested itself in a variety of ways: artworks gifted during negotiations, the mobility of artists from or to Rome and the use of art to celebrate the memory of diplomatic events. This line of research paves the way to a fruitful interdisciplinary perspective in which Art History provides the opportunity establishing a privileged dialogue between micro-history and macro-history.

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The relationship between art and pontifical diplomacy has been mainly approached from the study of individual artistic personalities or from the sidelines of ecclesiastical and/or diplomatic events. This congress provides an opportunity for a broad discussion on the topic, investigating it in its many aspects and in relation to the different social, political and cultural contexts in which it developed. The aim of the congress is to provide an extensive review through presentations that span over a vast geographical mapping and an extended chronological period so as to ponder upon mechanisms and typologies within the relationship of art and diplomacy in the pontifical sphere whilst considering transformations and continuities of such phenomena throughout time.

The congress will be divided into three sessions: Early Modern Age (from Pius II to Gregory XV), Second Modern Age (from Urban VIII to Pius VI) and Early Contemporary Age (from Pius VII to Pius XI).

The presentations can address both unexplored and already studied themes, based upon an innovative approach and/or unpublished documentation, as well as proposing broader interpretative frameworks. Please submit an abstract (max. 2000 characters) with a short CV and a list of publications to artediplomazia@unigre.it no earlier than December 15th, 2020 until March 15th, 2021. Papers can be presented in Italian, English or French. Proceedings of the congress will be published.

Scientific coordinators

Ilaria Fiumi Sermattei (Pontifical Gregorian University), Roberto Regoli (Pontifical Gregorian University).

Organizing committee

Marco Coppolaro (Sapienza University of Rome), Giulia Murace (National University of San Martin), Gianluca Petrone (Sapienza University of Rome).

Scientific committee

Stefano Andretta (Roma Tre University), Giovanna Capitelli (Roma Tre University), Cristiano Giometti (University of Florence), Silvano Giordano (Pontifical Gregorian University), Laura Iamurri (Roma Tre University), Massimo Moretti (Sapienza University of Rome), Simonetta Prosperi Valenti Rodinò (University of Rome Tor Vergata), Roberto Regoli (Pontifical Gregorian University), Alessandro Zuccari (Sapienza University of Rome).