



February 2022

pp. 264 pp., ill., 15,5x23 cm, hardback  
ISBN: 9788833138510 | € 42,00

#### SERIES

Viella History, Art and Humanities  
Collection, 12

Cover illustration: Titian, Emperor  
Charles V at Mühlberg (detail), 1548.  
Madrid, Museo del Prado.

#### SUBJECTS

HIS020000 HISTORY / Europe / Italy  
HIS037090 HISTORY / Modern / 16th Century

Viella Libreria editrice  
via delle Alpi, 32 00198 ROMA  
tel: 06 84 17 758 | fax: 06 85 35 39 60  
www.viella.it | info@viella.it

Elena Bonora

## Waiting for the Emperor

### Italian Princes, the Pope and Charles V

Translated by Richard Bates

In the 1540s, Italian princes, lords and cardinals wrote to each other using a secret, highly imaginative language. They were waiting for Emperor Charles V to descend on Italy to cut the papacy and Papal States down to size once and for all. Their letters, which have never before been used by historians, were not literary fantasies; behind the fictitious names, metaphors and the ferocious satire against Pope Paul III, there were weapons, money and power. For years, against the background of the battle between the two giants – the pope and the emperor – the courts of Mantua, Florence, Milan and Ferrara pursued a grand plan of containing the pope's power by allying with men of Charles V.

This history of Italy differs greatly from the one we are usually taught. The epoch-making conflict between the 'Italy of the Emperor' and the 'Italy of the Pope' was not merely political: it was mixed with religious problems, it developed in the sphere of communication, and it left traces in Italian cultural life, on the frescoed walls of palaces and in the pages of books. But the daring project drawn up by the Italian princes in the shade of the imperial eagle failed, and failed forever, as the Counter-Reformation advanced and the sun began to set on the Europe of Charles V.

Elena Bonora is Full Professor of Early Modern History at the University of Parma. Her most recent monographs include: *Giudicare i vescovi. La definizione dei poteri nella Chiesa posttridentina* (Laterza, 2007), 1564. *La congiura contro il papa* (Laterza, 2011), *Aspettando l'imperatore. Principi italiani tra il papa e Carlo V* (Einaudi, 2014) and *La Controriforma* (9th ed., Laterza, 2020).

#### CONTENTS

Preface to the English Edition

Introduction

1. The Cardinal of Ravenna, Benedetto Accolti (1497-1549)
  1. "A valiant enemy, wild and wealthy, has died"
  2. "Glory and splendour of the holy consistory"
  3. Vast relations and large means
  4. The historical judgment on the Cardinal of Ravenna
2. The Downfall of the Cardinal of Ravenna (1535)
  1. A past like a prince
  2. Cardinals and imperial agents: Juan de Valdés, Ercole Gonzaga and the Cardinal of Ravenna
  3. The trial of 1535
3. The 1530s and Exile in the Court of Ferrara
  1. Among "lordlings and tyrantcules", "lordlets and dukekins"
  2. Charles V in Italy (1535-1536)
  3. "Distilling frogs in Schifanoia"
  4. "Seeking fellow students, as was his custom"
4. From Diego Hurtado de Mendoza's Venice (1541) to Cosimo de' Medici's Court (1543)
  1. Venice, 1541
  2. Rediscovering Thucydides
  3. "Gozándome del señor don Diego"
  4. "Rather than going to Rome"
  5. "Absent friends"
5. From Italian Intrigues to the Imperial Court
  1. Cosimo de' Medici and the Cardinal of Ravenna
  2. Stories of Romagna
  3. The trial of Virginia Accolti and Carlo Malatesta
  4. "We have to remove this dung from our feet"
  5. The intervention of Cosimo de' Medici
  6. "A lasting poke in His Holiness's eye"
6. Italian Wars and Plans to Invade the Papal States
  1. Political interpretations of the Farnese papacy: neutrality and nepotism
  2. Feudal wars and religious colloquia (1540-1541)
  3. "Empoderarse de Roma": the memos of 1543
  4. The Papal States, "naked and open to all dangers"
  5. "In eight days they will uproot you from Italy"
7. Italian Elites between the Pope and Emperor
  1. "One's soul catches fire speaking in our *gramuffo*"
  2. Metaphorical invention and politics in "*gramuffo*"
  3. "An anti-Cachite Empire"
  4. 1544. "If the whole world had rained down on his head"
  5. "Four barefoot servants of Samson"
8. Ercole Gonzaga
  1. "Not every place is like Mantua"
  2. Ercole Gonzaga and Lombardy
  3. The Cardinal of Mantua
  4. "Being imperial": Ercole Gonzaga and Charles V
9. "*Todos los tumultos de Italia*"
  1. The victory of Mühlberg (1547)
  2. "Shining a light against the growing darkness": the transfer of the Council
  3. The race to arms
  4. "All will be put to the sword and fire"
10. The Italy of the Emperor
  1. The reorganisation of the network
  2. "*Don Fernando y yo*"
  3. The "Ghibelline part in Lombardy"
  4. "One thinks, hears, talks and plots of nothing else"
11. Writing as a Weapon
  1. The sphere of communication
  2. Other writings
  3. "Most unjust and iniquitous father and improperly called universal shepherd"
  4. "For you have outraged all the princes of Italy"
  5. Reception, reactions and intrigues
12. The Conclave of 1549
  1. Political choices and religious implications
  2. "He is supported by our families"
  3. The project for Italy
  4. "They aspire with great ardour to these holy nuptials"
  5. "Time for action and not consultation"

Index of Names