

brilliant summaries of arguments. The reader who would most profit from it, however, is one who is approaching the period for the first time, but not as an undergraduate. This makes its best audience difficult to discern, but anyone would profit from the read.

Caroline Castiglione. *Patrons and Adversaries: Nobles and Villagers in Italian Politics, 1640-1760*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. ix + 254 pp. + maps and illustrations. \$19.95 Paper. Review by R. BURR LITCHFIELD, BROWN UNIVERSITY.

Studies of eighteenth-century France have shed light on the nature of peasant communities and their increasing litigiousness, which erupted in the *Cahiers de doléances* of 1788 and in the Great Fear, the peasant uprising in the first month of the French Revolution. There has been less study of village politics in Italy, especially for readers of English. Thus Caroline Castiglione's well researched, well written, and insightful study is welcome. The relationship between feudal landholders and peasant communities was a very important one. Who could forget the scenes in 1860 at the Prince of Lampedusa's Sicilian estate of Donnafugata in Luchino Visconti's film, *The Leopard*? Castiglione focuses on estates of the Barberini family in the countryside north-east of Rome. This is not a demographic or agricultural history. Instead it treats the family history of the Barberini, village politics, and the Papal government. The Barberini bought feudal jurisdiction over several villages in the last year of the pontificate of Matteo Barberini, Pope Urban VIII (1623-44). The Barberini came from an un-remarkable Florentine family, and at the end of his pontificate, Urban VIII attempted to secure the family's permanence in the upper ranks of Roman society by obtaining a landed endowment. He tried unsuccessfully to wrest the fiefs of Castro along the papal border with Tuscany from the Farnese family (*nipoti* of Pope Paul III) in 1641, which produced the brief War of Castro between the Papacy, Tuscany, and Venice in 1642-44. Frustrated, his nephew, Taddeo, bought, at huge expense, a collection of villages earlier assembled by the old Roman feudal Orsini family.

This was not one estate. The family had earlier bought the nearby Principality of Palestrina. In the new property, Monte Libretti carried the title of a duchy, Nerola of a principality, and Montorio of a marquisate. In the 1740s

the separate populations ranged from about 550 to 850. One generally thinks of the plain around Rome as being depopulated and little cultivated, but these villages were on higher ground in the Sabine hills—one of their sub-products was ice to cool summer meals of the Papal court and the Roman nobility. It has been recognized that the communal life of villages such as these (they had statutes, communal councils, priors, and established procedures) was one of the sources of modern Italian civic life. Having acquired the villages, Urban VIII's final heir, his grand-nephew, Matteo Barberini (1631-1686), had to get sufficient revenue from them. He lived, of course, in Rome, and probably seldom visited his estates; he worked through agents. The villages came replete with an assemblage of feudal rights: civil and eventually criminal jurisdiction (exercised through an *auditore*), inns, mills, and feudal rents. The family owned only part of the territory directly; from the rest they collected feudal dues and participations in the harvests. But the villagers also claimed civic rights: hunting rights, grazing, and wood gathering. Other players in the local scene were Papal agents from Rome who pressed to collect taxes, both from the Barberini and from the village communal councils.

The problems began at Nerola in 1653 when Matteo Barberini attempted to ban the village's hunting rights to the family's advantage. The dispute dragged on into the 1680s: the communal council exhibited their statute, disregarded Barberini edicts, hired lawyers, and appealed to Papal courts in Rome, which eventually ruled in the Barberini's favor. At Monte Libretti there were a variety of problems: grazing rights, appointment of the communal physician or surgeon, the schoolmaster, renting the inn, even the church bell. The archpriest and local Confraternity of S. Niccolo became involved. There were disputes about the communal statute, about record keeping, and about communal indebtedness. Further lawyers were hired. The communal council was not always united, and factions appealed directly to the Barberini. Castiglione leads us skillfully through the detail of these disputes (gleaned from communal, Roman, and Barberini family archives) into the eighteenth century. She argues that the villagers evolved in practice a kind of "adversarial literacy" based on their statutes, the communal councils, appeal through lawyers to Papal courts (which often ruled against them), and dogged tactical and verbal skill. They wanted traditional rights and ultimately "the common good." The Barberini wanted respect for their paternal authority and peaceful local acquiescence.

Complications emerged through the Barberini family history. Matteo Barberini's heir was Urbano Barberini (1664-1722), a spendthrift who sold a part of the estate to pay his debts. His brother, Cardinal Francesco (1662-1738), worked to save the rest. His only daughter, Cornelia Costanza (1716-97), was married to a member of the Colonna family who assumed the Barberini name. Francesco and Cornelia paid much attention to local matters; their agents were insufficiently diligent, the streets were not clean, the Lenten trout were not arriving promptly, and the "infamous vice" of card playing was rife in "taverns or other local haunts ... for money or for drink ... for recreation or for conversation" (121). Eventually (in the 1740s and 1750s) the family tried to influence the composition and voting procedure of the communal council at Monte Libretti.

Increasingly, the Papal bureaucracy in Rome intervened more directly in the countryside through what was called the Congregazione del Buon Governo, which was reorganized in 1704. This was interested chiefly in the collection of taxes due to Rome. (It must be admitted that the control of feudal holdings was much less in the Papal States than what was introduced in the Hapsburg-ruled, more progressive states of Lombardy and Tuscany, where similar problems existed.) Papal visitors arrived in the villages to complain about local record keeping and communal indebtedness, and to impose annual budgets. The Buon Governo seems largely to have favored the interests of the Barberini, but it sometimes favored the communal councils, and it left communal institutions in tact.

This study does not tell us about how developments came out under the French inspired Roman Republic of 1798-99 or the Napoleonic occupation. Presumably adversarial bargaining between landowners and villagers continued through the nineteenth century. Siding with E. P. Thompson, Castiglione neatly concludes: "The challenge of the seigneurial regime in the law courts of Rome, sustained by villagers working through their communal institutions [and adversarial literacy] was quite old by the time the French Revolution came to Italy via Napoleon.... Villagers like those of the *stato* of Monte Libretti were leading the way in the mid-eighteenth century, but found no elites yet ready to follow" (180).