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Edizioni **SETTE CITTÀ**
Via Mazzini 87 – 01100 Viterbo
t. +39 0761 303020 – info@settecitta.eu

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EASTERN EUROPEAN HISTORY REVIEW: LA RIVISTA

Il Comitato redazionale e scientifico è lieto di presentare al pubblico la rivista scientifica *Eastern European History Review*.

Con un carattere internazionale e interdisciplinare, una cadenza annuale e una fruibilità *open access* la rivista focalizza i propri interessi sulle dinamiche occorse nell'Europa Orientale durante tutta l'età moderna (XIV-XIX). *Eastern European History Review* è espressione del Centro Studi dell'Università della Tuscia CESPoM (Centro Studi sull'età dei Sobieski e della Polonia Moderna) nato nel 1997 per intuizione del Prof. Gaetano Platania, Direttore Emerito della Rivista.

L'iniziativa editoriale che presentiamo nasce dall'evidente mancanza in Italia di una rivista scientifica relativa alla storia dell'Europa centro-orientale in Età Moderna, nonostante la penisola abbia giocato un ruolo fondamentale per la Storia e la Cultura di una parte integrante del continente, a torto considerata come lontana e periferica.

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EASTERN EUROPEAN HISTORY REVIEW: THE JOURNAL

The Editorial and Scientific Board are proud delighted to present the *Eastern European History Review* under the aegis of Sette Città Editore.

The *Eastern European History Review* is an international and interdisciplinary annually online and open access peer-reviewed journal about studies on Central and Eastern Europe in the Modern Age (XIV-XIX). The Journal is also the expression of the Study Center CESPoM (Centro Studi sull'età dei Sobieski e della Polonia Moderna – Center Study on the Age of Sobieski and Modern Poland) of the University of Tuscia, born in 1997, from an idea of Prof. Gaetano Platania, today Director Emeritus of this journal.

It publishes articles with significant approaches and original interpretations in all research fields concerning Central and Eastern Europe, with specific attention to the History sciences.

The editorial initiative we present comes from the obvious lack of a journal, in Italy, concerning the history of Central and Eastern Europe during the Modern Age, this despite its fundamental role in the history and culture of that part of the continent, wrongly considered distant and peripheral.

Quite the contrary is true, in fact. Main objective of the journal is to create a space for reflection and discussion on topics pertaining to Central and Eastern Europe, but also relations with Continental Europe, encouraging dialogue between scholars and experts in the field, and between different approaches of scientific research.

The Editorial and Scientific Board

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LIVIO ODESCALCHI AND HIS CANDIDACY FOR POLISH THRONE BETWEEN 1696 AND 1697

ABSTRACT

In historiography, the circumstances of Prince Livio Odescalchi's candidacy have been recalled, but so far there has been no comprehensive approach to the topic. The period after the death of King John III Sobieski was a time when many competitors appeared among the candidates for the royal crown. The nephew of Pope Innocent XI, he was undoubtedly associated with the great idea of the anti-Turkish campaign and the involvement of the Papacy in financing the activities of the Holy League. Therefore, it potentially enjoyed fame and became a guarantee of further assurances from the Holy See regarding subsidizing the war. However, malicious people whispered that he was unable to offer anything to the Republic of Poland except an art gallery or saints' relics. The work aims to determine what the actual plans of the Papacy and Prince Odescalchi himself to claim the Polish crown were. Did the papal or imperial diplomacy really want to support his candidacy? The analysis of Vatican and Polish sources created during the interregnum of 1696/1697 will probably provide answers to the question of how the European powers responded to his candidacy, how the agitation was conducted to support him and what the Polish nobility thought about his candidacy.

KEYWORDS: Odescalchi family; Livio Odescalchi; Election; Candidacy; Interregnum.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to outline the circumstances of the candidacy of Prince Livio Odescalchi, during the *interregnum* following the death of king John III in 1696–1697. This matter has already been the subject of several works¹ but in the Author's opinion it has not been thoroughly discussed or fully exposed. Therefore, I would like to consider such issues as the reasons behind the Prince Livio Odescalchi's claims to the Polish throne, and then discuss his agents' methods of winning the favour of Polish magnates and government officials, as well as representatives of foreign diplomacy, i.e. of the Emperor, Pope and Brandenburg. A not insignificant role was also played by Queen Marie Casimire d'Arquien Sobieska, whose favour

1 Ludwik Boratyński, "Don Livio Odescalchi kandydatem do korony polskiej", *Przegląd Polski*, 42 (1908), 11 (t. 169, nr 503): 207-39; 12 (t. 169, nr 504): 484-513; Gaetano Platania, "La candidatura di Livio Odescalchi al trono di Polonia e "l'acquisito" del Ducato di Sirmio", in *Scritti minori (Saggi di storia sobieskiana)* (Viterbo: Sette Città, 2021), 285-323; Roberto Fiorentini, *Livio Odescalchi, nipote di papa Innocenzo XI. Interessi famigliari e strategie di ascesa nella stagione dell'antinepotismo* (Heidelberg: Heidelberg University Publishing, 2022) 239-49.

and assistance were sought by the prince's deputies. Next, I would like to look at two important factors in winning votes, i.e. money, through which supporters were hoodwinked and support was bought, and occasional literature, a form of propaganda which created the candidate's image in the minds of the nobility. Finally, I would like to consider the reasons for the defeat of the prince's candidacy in the electoral contest.

ITALIAN CANDIDACIES TO POLISH THRONE IN XVI AND XVII CENTURIES

According to the principle of free election (*viritim*), which was a key element of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth's political system, every nobleman had the right to participate in the electoral convention and election². The passive right to stand for the Polish throne included not only nobles born from the Polish Crown and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, but also the aristocracy and representatives of European ruling houses. The freedom and independence of the vote meant that any candidate could be elected king, unless there was an exclusion of either foreigners or "Piast"³. Candidacies of Italian princes for the Polish throne were usually treated as a curiosity, or even an exotic phenomenon. Meanwhile, although such endeavours were always inferior to the politically stronger Habsburg, French, Swedish and Muscovite endeavours, they were by no means episodic. In the first phase of the 1574–1575 election, the candidacy of Cosimo I, Grand Duke of Tuscany, was discussed and, emboldened by this, Alfonso II d'Este, Duke of Ferrara, Modena and Reggio, put forward his own proposal, supporting his efforts with generous gifts⁴. During

2 See: Dariusz Makieła, *Artykuły henrykowskie (1573–1576). Geneza–obowiązywanie–stosowanie. Studium historyczno-prawne* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Wyższa Szkoła Finansów i Zarządzania, 2012); Adam Szabelski, "Projekty elekcji vivente rege w Rzeczypospolitej, a węgierskie doświadczenia z elekcją vivente rege", in *Wolna elekcja w dawnej Rzeczypospolitej. Procedura–przebieg–publicystyka*, ed. Aleksandra Ziober (Wrocław: Wyd. Piotr Kalinowski, 2014), 96–108.

3 From the wording of the first provision of the "Henrician Articles", it should literally be inferred that the elect was guaranteed the election of one of his descendants, since it was envisaged that neither Henry de Valois nor his descendants would seek to crown his successor during his lifetime and use the title of heir. This provision was later changed by removing the wording on royal successors in favour of successors (following kings) in the *pacta conventa* of Ladislaus IV Vasa in 1632. In this way, the assumption was made that any candidate could be elected king of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, unless an exclusion was made, whether of foreigners or of "Piast", see: Urszula Augustyniak, *Wazowie i "królowie rodacy". Studium władzy królewskiej w Rzeczypospolitej XVII wieku* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Semper, 1999), 45–52; Iwona Lewandowska-Malec, "Prawo do elekcji króla Rzeczypospolitej w latach 1587–1648", in *Historia testis temporum, lux veritatis, vita memoriae, nuntia vetustatis: księga jubileuszowa dedykowana Profesorowi Włodzimierzowi Kaczorowskiemu*, eds. Ewa Kozerska, Marek Maciejewski, and Piotr Stec (Opole: Wyd. Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, 2015), 255–69; Ewa Kozerska, "Wolna elekcja króla Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów", *Z dziejów prawa*, 12 (2019): 147–62.

4 Zbigniew Cieszkowski, "Don Alfonso d'Este kandydatem do korony polskiej i jego poseł poeta Guarini w 1575 r.", *Przegląd Polski*, 11/10 (1887): 195–211; Vincenzo

the ensuing interregnum of 1587, Vincenzo Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua sought the Polish crown, wishing to become independent of imperial influence. Despite immense financial support from his agent Leone de' Sommi, he failed to create a unified party and his person came to the attention of the wider circle of noble electors gathered on the electoral field⁵. In the same third election, the possibility of the Polish throne being taken by the Duke of Ferrara – Alfonso II d'Este, then by the Duke of Parma and Piacenza – Alessandro Farnese, and finally by the Grand Duke of Tuscany Francesco de' Medici. The ruler of Ferrara was considered somewhat elderly, while the Duke of Parma was young and brave soldier. The Duke of Farnese, however, lacked the political standing and cash to do so. He could therefore not be considered as a serious candidate. Medici was favoured because of his personal qualities: his goodness, his many qualities, his just rule and his wealth⁶. In the 17th century, during the election of 1668/69, another Medici, Ferdinand II, appeared among the candidates for the Polish crown and won the favour of the nobility because of his wealth. Panegyric literature pointed out that his wealth could be turned to cover the costs of recovering the lands lost by the Republic and paying the arm⁷. The disadvantages of this choice were also recognized. Among these, a lack of commanding talent was pointed out, and, as Samuel von Pufendorf wrote: «The Tuscan would bring us again that evil, that French disease which afflicts him and from which we have barely freed ourselves [i.e. the short reign of Henry de Valois and the interference of Louis Marie Gonzaga d'Nevers in matters of politics – author's note]. Abroad, as if in voluntary exile, he seeks a peace that he does not have at home. An excellent prince indeed, but what has an Italian – a compatriot of Machiavel, a Florentine accustomed to despotic rule with a secretive disposition, fond of a comfortable life»⁸. The idea, therefore, was to discredit the Tuscan ruler by threatening his dependence on France, his attempt to introduce absolutism and to perpetuate the stereotypical image attributed to Italians as lazy, greedy, power-hungry and intriguers by nature. Alternatively, the possibility of the candidacy of the Grand

Pacifici, "La candidatura di Alfonso II d'Este al Regno di Polonia", in *Résumé des communications présentées au Congrès VII*, ed. Tadeusz Manteuffel (Warszawa: Comité organisateur du Congrès, 1933), 148-53.

- 5 Cecil Roth, "Un consorzio ebraico mantovano e l'elezione al trono di Polonia nel 1587", *La Rassegna Mensile di Israel*, 28/11 (1962): 494-99; Daniel Jütte, *Das Zeitalter des Geheimnisses Juden, Christen und die Ökonomie des Geheimen (1400-1800)* (Göttingen-Bristol: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012) 2nd edition, 246.
- 6 Aleksandra Barwicka-Makula, *Od wrogości do przyjaźni. Habsburgowie austriaccy wobec Polski w latach 1587-1588* (Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2019), 88-90; Danuta Quirini-Popławska, "Dwór medycejski i Habsburgowie a trzecia elekcja w Polsce", *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce*, 42 (1998): 121-32.
- 7 Mirosława Chmielewska, *Sejm elekcyjny Michała Korybuta Wiśniowieckiego 1669 roku* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 2016), 118-19.
- 8 Samuel de Puffendorf, *De rebus gestis Friderici Wilhelmi Magni, electoris Brandenburgici, commentariorum libri novendecim* (Berolini: Impensis Jeremiae Schrey [et] hered. Henrici Johannis Meyeri, 1695), 710.

Duke's son Cosimo III or the Duke of Parma, Ranuccio III Farnese, was asserted⁹. Towards the latter, it has been ridiculously said that Parmesan, recommends its authority because of its milk, cheese and butter, but these are not dishes worthy of a king or the delicacies that Italy can offer¹⁰. At the very end, the candidacy of the Duke of Mantua, Charles IV Gonzaga, was submitted for consideration, but due to his small income, he was not seriously considered¹¹. After the death of King Michał I in 1673, the Duke of Modena, Rinaldo d'Este, joined the competition for the Polish crown, and although he was supported by papal diplomacy and his candidacy was presented as a remedy to calm the feuds in the Republic, he was unsuccessful¹².

LIVIO ODESCALCHI – ESSENTIAL BIOGRAPHY

Livio Odescalchi, was born in Como in 1655 as the only son of Carlo Odescalchi and Beatrice Cusani. His uncle was Cardinal Benedetto Odescalchi, to whose he cared, along with his sibling brother Giovanni and sister Paola Beatrice, passed after his father's death in 1670. Four years later, Livio Odescalchi left Lombardy for Rome to complete his education. With his uncle's election to the throne of Peter in 1676, Livio, as papal nepot, received the Ceri estate, which was elevated to the status of a duchy. From then on, Innocent XI floated plans for his marriage first to Giovanna, daughter of Carlo Borromeo Arese and then Giovanna Gallio. Over time, in order to raise his nephew's status and establish him in the circle of Roman aristocracy, the names of representatives of the Cusani, d'Adda, Pamphilli, Barberini, Ludovisi, Gonzaga and Salviati families began to be mentioned, but none of these plans lived to see fruition. Throughout the years 1677–1679, the Pope sought to send him to the Spanish court as his representative, and when this plan failed, he sought to confer on him the cardinal purple. Both of these plans failed badly, in view of the strong

9 Chmiewlewska, *Sejm*, 119.

10 Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Wzorzec dowodów politycznych*, ed. Waldemar Voisé (Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków: Świadectwo, 1969), 124.

11 Chmielewska, *Sejm*, 119.

12 Gaetano Platania, "Włoska dyplomacja i nieudany 'interes' Rinalda d'Este księcia Modeny, kandydata do tronu polskiego (1674)", *Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny. Sobótka*, 47/1-2 (1992): 99-115; Miguel Conde-Pazos, "La misión diplomática de don Pedro Ronquillo en Varsovia con motivo de la elección de Juan Sobieski como rey de Polonia en 1674", *Pedralbes*, 38 (2018): 187-227; Krystyn Matwijowski, *Pierwsze sejmy z czasów Jana III Sobieskiego* (Wrocław: Wyd. Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1976), 18; Anna Czarniecka, "Informacja i propaganda podczas kampanii elekcyjnej 1673/1674 roku", in *Studia z historii kultury staropolskiej. Studia ofiarowane Urszuli Augustyniak*, eds. Agnieszka Bartoszewicz, Adam Karpiński, Maciej Ptaszyński, and Andrzej Zakrzewski (Warszawa: Wyd. Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2020), 135-54. The circumstances of the Duke of Modena's candidacy were reminded to Don Livio Odescalchi by his agent Michelangelo del Negro regarding his intentions, see: B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, Michelangelo del Negro to Livio Odescalchi, Vienna 18 III 1697, 113-18 [Excerpts from the Archivio Odescalchi in Rome made by Ludwik Boratynski in the 1930s from references 11/D/1, 11/D/4, 11/D/8, 11/D/9, 29/D/6]. 11/D/1, 11/D/4, 11/D/8, 11/D/9, 29/D/6].

anti-nepotistic tendencies then taking shape within the Roman Curia¹³. Even before his uncle's death in 1689, the Livio had acquired the title of "Gonfaloniere di Santa Sede", which meant giving him command of the troops of the Apostolic State¹⁴. The duke's good fortune was linked to his immense fortune, which was calculated at 60,000 Roman skuds of annual annuity in 1685, and his participation in commercial transactions, which he continued after his father with contractors in Milan, Rome, Naples, Genoa, Venice, Amsterdam, London and Madrid¹⁵. This allowed him, after the death of his uncle, to continue accumulating landed possessions, as exemplified by the purchase of the Marquisate of Roncofreddo and the County of Montiliano between 1683 and 1685, and the estate of Bracciano and the fortress of Palo purchased from the Orsini in 1696, thanks to the support of Pope Innocent XII¹⁶. It is calculated that his immovable and movable assets brought him around 20 million Roman scuds¹⁷. His uncle's fame, and probably his attempt to keep the Church State in the Holy League against the Turks, led Emperor Leopold I to grant him the title

- 13 Antonio Ippolito Menniti, "Nepotisti e antinepotisti. I conservatori di Curia ei pontefici Odescalchi e Pignatelli", in *Riforme, religione e politica durante il Pontificato di Innocenzo XII (1691-1700)*, ed. Bruno Pellegrino (Lecce: Congedo, 1994), 233-48.
- 14 Fiorentini, *Livio Odescalchi*, 35-171. See: Sandra Costa, "Livio Odescalchi", in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 79 (2013), [[https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/livio-odescalchi_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/livio-odescalchi_(Dizionario-Biografico)/) dostę: 27.03.2024].
- 15 Livio Odescalchi, together with his uncle Innocent XI, financially supported the actions of the imperial army against the Turks between 1683 and 1689 and the armed action of the stadtholder of the United Provinces of the Netherlands, William III of Orange, against James II Stuart between 1686 and 1689, for more on this see: Gaetano Platania, *Mamma li Turchi! La politica pontificia e l'idea di crociata inetà moderna* (Viterbo: Sette Città, 2009); Id., "Innocenzo XI Odescalchie l'idea di "Crociata" al tempo della liberazione di Vienna", *Est Europa*, 2 (1986), 69-106; Id., "L'Europa "di centro" e il pericolo turco nella seconda metà del XVII secolo tra conflitti e compromessi, attraverso alcune carte d'archivio inedite/o rare", in *Conflitti e Compromessi nell'Europa di centro fra XVI e XX secolo*, ed. Id. (Viterbo: Sette Città, 2001), 185-222; Jan Jerzy Sowa, *Nervus belli czy finansowe jarzmo Ligi Świętej? Skarb hibernowy a finansowanie wysiłku wojennego Korony 1685-1700*, in *Jarzmo Ligi Świętej? Jan III Sobieski i Rzeczpospolita w latach 1684-1696*, ed. Dariusz Milewski (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2017), 137-61; Stefano Villani, *Un papa "protestante". Innocenzo XI e l'Inghilterra di Giacomo II Stuart*, in *Innocenzo XI Odescalchi. Papa, politico, committente*, eds. Richard Bösel, Antonio Menniti, Ippolito, Andrea Spiriti, Claudio Strinati, and Maria Antonietta Visceglia (Roma: Viella, 2014), 145-66.
- 16 Vincenzo Celletti, *Gli Orsini di Bracciano. Glorie, tragedie e fastosità della casapatrizia più interessante della Roma deisecoli XV, XVI, XVII* (Roma: Fratelli Palombi, 1963); Fernando Bucci, *Il castello Orsini-Odescalchi di Bracciano. Storia, tesori e segreti* (Vecchiarelli: Roma, 2017), 118-31; Eugenio Mariani, *L'acquedotto Odescalchi di Bracciano* (Ronciglione: Centro Ricerche e Studi di Ronciglione, 2003); Platania, *La candidatura*, 290-91.
- 17 Boratyński, *Don Livio*, 212.

of Prince of the Holy Roman Empire in 1689¹⁸.

Livio Odescalchi was undoubtedly one of the greatest collectors of fine arts, including paintings, sculptures, engravings, books, gems and a medal, which he acquired from purchases made by agents in the cities of Italy, Madrid, Paris, Amsterdam and Vienna. In addition, Prince Odescalchi played the role of a great patron of artists such as Gian Lorenzo Bernini, Salvatore Rosa, Gaspar van Wittel, Jacob Ferdinand Voet, Carlo Fontana, Andrea Pozzo and Ottone Hamerani. Moreover, after 1685, Odescalchi, following the example of Cardinals Ottoboni and Pamphilli, became the patron of musicians and authors of musical dramas performed at l'*Oratorio del Santissimo Crocifisso in Chiesa Nuova, Arciconfraternita dell'Annunziata nell'Ospedale di Santo Spirito in Sassia a Roma*, Odescalchi's palace in Rome and the Duke's villa behind the Porta del Popolo and the castle of Bracciano. His library collection was augmented by volumes from the library of Queen Cristina of Sweden, who died in 1689, worth 2,500 Roman skuds. Finally, it is worth mentioning that Duke Livio Odescalchi was the patron of one of the most important organisations for Roman intellectuals, namely the *Accademia dell'Arcadia*, and from 1701 the *Arcadia Nova*¹⁹.

18 Fiorentini, *Livio Odescalchi*, 171.

19 David Armando, "Aristocrazia e vita culturale a Roma alla fine del Settecento: il caso degli Odescalchi", in *Alfieri a Roma. Atti di Convegno nazionale. Roma 27–29 novembre 2003*, eds. Beatrice Alfonzetti, and Novella Bellucci (Roma: Bulzoni, 2006), 71–106; Sandra Costa, *Dans l'intimité d'un collectionneur. Livio Odescalchi et le faste baroque* (Paris: Comité Des Travaux Historiques Et Scientifiques, 2009); Ead., "Livio Odescalchi (1658–1713). Un appassionato d'arte alla corte pontificia", in *Innocenzo XI Odescalchi. Papa, politico, committente*, Richard Bösel et al., 411–27; Jasminka Najcer Sabljak, "Tracing the Collection of Duke Livio Odescalchi – from Rome to Ilok and Zagreb", *Scrinia Slavonica: Godišnjak Podružnice za povijest Slavonije, Srijema i Baranje Hrvatskog instituta za povijest*, 15/1 (2015): 57–87; Cristiana Canuzzi, "Livio I Odescalchi, Gaspare Vanvitelli e il Galata Ludovisi", *Studi di Storia dell'Arte*, 17 (2006): 197–200; Stefano Pierguidi, "Monnot, Livio Odescalchi e il "Gladiatore" dei Musei Capitolini", *Bollettino dei Musei Comunali di Roma*, 28 (2014): 53–60; Marco Pizzo, "'Far Galleria'. Collezionismo mercato artistico tra Venezia e Roma nelle lettere di Quintiliano Rezzonico a Livio Odescalchi (1676–1709)", *Bollettino del Museo Civico di Padova*, 89 (2000): 43–84; Marco Pizzo, "Livio Odescalchi e i Rezzonico. Documenti su arte e collezionismo alla fine del XVII secolo", *Saggi e memorie di storia dell'arte*, 26 (2003): 119–53; Marcel Roethlisberger, "The Drawings Collection of Prince Livio Odescalchi", *Master Drawings*, 23/24 (1985–86): 5–30; Michael Mahoney, "Salvator Rosa Provenance Studies: Prince Livio Odescalchi and Queen Christina", *Master Drawings*, 3/4 (1965): 383–89; Stefanie Walker, "The sculpture gallery of prince Livio Odescalchi", *Journal of the History of Collection*, 6 (1994): 189–219; Saverio Franchi, "Il Principe Livio Odescalchi e l'oratorio "politico", in *L'oratorio musicale italiano e i suoi contesti (sec. XVII–XVIII)*, *Atti del Convegno Internazionale (Perugia, 18–20 settembre 1997)*, ed. Paola Besutti (Firenze: Olschki, 2002); Enrico Noè, "Le medaglie di Livio Odescalchi", *Medaglia*, 17/24 (1989): 83–6; Ivan Mirnik, "Livio Odescalchi on medals", *Medals*, 25 (1995): 50–5.

LIVIO ODESCALCHI'S CANDIDACY TO POLISH THRONE

At the outset, it is important to ask when and why the candidature of Prince Livio Odescalchi was proposed. Let us note that the affairs of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and its struggle against the Turks were very well known to the Prince²⁰. In addition, he maintained contact with Cardinal Jan Kazimierz Denhoff, who sent the prince courteous, occasional greetings²¹. In 1691, Giovanni Arrigo Baron Piccinardi, who was used by the Prince in his contacts with the Imperial Court and thus resided permanently in Vienna, pointed out to another advisor of the Duke, Michelangelo del Negro, that if Prince Jakub Sobieski or Prince Charles Philip Wittelsbach of the Pfalz-Neuburg line or Prince Friedrich Casimir Kettler were unsuccessful, the person of Prince Odescalchi would gain support. In his opinion, the prince's strengths were the living memory of Pope Innocent XI, as the initiator of the Crusade, financially supporting the victories of the Polish army, the fact of the family's wealth and Odescalchi's celibacy, which made it possible to hope that he would marry the widow of King Michał and Duke Charles of Lorraine, Eleonora Habsburg. For this reason, Piccinardi was already suggesting the preparation of promissory notes granting money to the Polish nobility in exchange for votes of support²². In 1696 the prince was again advised to enlist the support of Primate Michał Stefan Radziejowski, although the latter was a declared supporter of the French candidacy²³. Meanwhile, after the death of John III in June 1696, the possibility of reaching for the Polish crown was brought to the Prince's attention by the Jesuit Father Carlo Maurizio Vota, the late King's confessor²⁴. Prince Livio Odescalchi continued to adopt a wait-and-see attitude and indecision, despite the fact that his name – as a potential winner – was mentioned in November 1696 in one of the occasional writings of literary works. At the time, he was considered to have a chance as one not linked to the interests of any European power²⁵, opponent

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20 Platania, *La candidatura*, 291.

21 B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, Jan Kazimierz Denhoff to L. Odescalchi, Rome 1687/1689/1690, p. 278, [orig. ASR, FO, 29/D/6].

22 B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, M. del Negro to L. Odescalchi, Vienna 18 III 1691, pp. 113-18, [orig. ASR, FO, 11/D/1].

23 Boratyński, *Don Livio*, 217.

24 Vota provided information on the general course of political events in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, including the attitude of Queen Marie Casimire d'Arquien Sobieska and her relations with Prince Jakub Sobieski, his journey to Silesia and further to Passau, the activities of the military confederations of Piotr Bogusław Baranowski in the Crown and Grzegorz Ogiński in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the activities of foreign diplomats, among others, the Bavarian father Pompeo Scarlatti, and the chances of the other candidates, including the Duke of Neuburg and the Duke of Baden. Only once, in April 1697, did illness prevent him from following events, see: ASR, FO, 11/D/7, C.M. Vota to L. Odescalchi, Warsaw 27 I 1697, ff. nn. For more on his activities, see: Maria Letizia Sileoni, "Politica e religione nell'Europa centro orientale: la figura del gesuita Carlo Maurizio Vota tra luci e ombre", in *Politica e religione nell'Europa centro-orientale (sec. XVI–XX)*, ed. Gaetano Platania (Viterbo: Sette Città, 2002), 235-55.

25 Like Rinaldo d'Este in 1674, Livio Odescalchi was portrayed as someone willing to

of absolutism and the eventual husband of Queen Eleonora. According to the anonymous author, in a Polish climate, the prince would become familiar with the craft of war and acquire a warrior spirit: «[...] and such is his love for us that he will take care of our customs and language with immeasurable diligence. He speaks and lives in Polish, as the Italians are capable, and nothing is difficult for those who want it. Why should the *Rzeczpospolita*, mindful of the benefits of Innocent XI, not repay him by returning the sceptre to his nephew? He is of similar customs, equal piety and magnanimity, a faithful image of his uncle»²⁶. Baron Piccinardi assured Prince that relations were going extremely well and that a plan should be made for full action on the royal election in Poland. In addition, he indicated that he had come into possession of letters about arrangements between the Prince Françoise Louise de Bourbon Conti and the Turks through Bishop Melchior de Polignac, with which he was prepared to discredit his rival²⁷.

Prince Livio Odescalchi was not initially convinced to take part in the electoral struggle. Even his immediate family was not certain of his success in confronting Prince Jacob Sobieski, Duke of Neuburg, Louis William Duke of Baden and Leopold of Lorraine. His sister pointed out with caution that: «In truth, the notices have spoken a great deal about Your Lordship, and the nomination of Poland has caused much talk in Milan, and in Como they say that Your Lordship has received letters, some say from the Queen widow and some only from the Cardinal, but I do not know what they believe me because Your Lordship does not give me reasons. When, as I believe, there is nothing else, it is a great honour, and one that I hope will be to your credit. Your Lordship only see to it that you keep it at all costs, because God makes you do it, but it takes study even to keep it well»²⁸. Arguably, two factors

reconcile the feuding magantes, see: ASR, FO, 11/D/7, Giovanni Arrigo Piccinardi to L. Odescalchi, Vienna 10 III 1697, ff. nn.

26 Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich in Wrocław, sign. A2, *Nobilis Poloni epistoloa ad Dnum Regis Galliarum in Polonia legatum, refutans ipsius responsum datum Illum. Episcopum Cuiaviensi, Posn.[aniae] 20. Decembris M.DC.XCVI.* (Varsaviae: Druk. Schol. Piarum, 1696).

27 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, “Informazione da barone Giovanni Arrigo Piccinardi”, 23 III 1697, ff. nn.; B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, G.A. Piccinardi to L. Odescalchi, Vienna 10 III 1697, p. 205-209. Piccinardi had been persuading the duke since late 1696 to submit his candidature, see: Ibid., G.A. Piccinardi to L. Odescalchi, Königsberg 14 XII 1696, and 24 XII 1696, ff. nn. In March 1697 Piccinardi met with the lawyer Montecatini and Magliabeck in Warsaw in order to present them with instructions on how to proceed during the election, to recruit supporters, to weaken the candidacy of the Duke of Conti, to work for the exclusion of the “Piaś”, and finally to concretise the possible proposals of the Duke, see: Ibid., G.A. Piccinardi to L. Odescalchi, Warsaw 23 III 1697, ff. nn.

28 «Veramente li avvisi hanno parlato assai di Vostra Signoria, e la nomina di Polonia fa fare gran discorsi in Milano, ed in Como dicono che Vostra Signoria habbia havuto lettere, chi dice della Regina vedova e chi solo del cardinale, però non so quello mi creda perché Vostra Signoria non me lo motiva. Quando come credo non ci sia altro è un honore grande, e che spero che sia per farle credito. Vostra Signoria procuri solo di conservarselo a tutto costo, perché Dio lo fa fare,

influenced the Prince's change of this decision in March/April 1697²⁹. The first was the mirage of a royal crown that would give the prince an advantage over other Roman families and the second was encouragement from his agents operating in Vienna and Warsaw. Cesare Borsatti, who wrote, was the most prominent of those who tried to seduce the prince with the glitter of the crown and the glory of it: «Serene Prince, please heard the news about your election to the Kingdom of Poland and I pray to God that your head will be crowned with a crown of laurel and that you will be crowned with a royal crown»³⁰. In a similar vein, Gabriele Vecchi expressed himself by giving the Duke's election a mystical form: «The crown being destined in Heaven, of God and the Holy Spirit is expected you»³¹.

“The staff” preparing the prince's candidacy and working to secure his support consisted of many people³². In the first place, mention should be made of Baron Giovanni Arrigo Piccinardi, secretary to the nuncios Galeazzo Marescotti and Francesco Nerli from 1668 to 1671³³, then an imperial agent, used in secret missions at the Viennese and Brandenburg courts, including in connection with arranging the marriage of Charles Philip Wittelsbach to Ludwika Karolina Radziwiłłówna in 1691³⁴. Other important persons were the Genoese Angelo del Negro, the main

ma ci vuole del studio anche proprio per ben custodirlo», see: ASR, FO, 3/F/9, Paola Beatrice Odescalchi to L. Odescalchi, Como 8 X 1698, ff. nn.

29 This date is supported, inter alia, by a letter written by Duke Livio Odescalchi to the Italian princes requesting assistance and free passage for his deputies to Poland-Lithuania, see: B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, p. 203 [orig. ASR, FO, 11/D/9 and a passage from Piccinardi's stating: «Si deve applicare [...] almeno alla strepitosa e plausibile condotta e ben incaminata, che sia plaudito, ricevuto e non rifiutato [...] almeno si facci comparire con plauso, che sia discorso [...] e giovara à miei interessi quà [...] si habbia tutti li atti di maggior gloria, che si possono essigere» [It must be applied [...] at least to the sensational and plausible conduct and well examined, that it be applauded, received and not rejected [...] at least let it appear with applause, that it be discoursed [...] and be useful to my interests here [...] let it have all the acts of greater glory that can be demanded] see: ASR, FO, 11/D/7, “Informazione”, ff. nn.

30 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, Cesare Borsatti to L. Odescalchi, Vienna 10 V 1697, ff. nn, «Ser.^{me} Princeps hic incubuit rumor de tua electione in Poloniae Republicem et Deum curixe praecor tuum caput lauri diademe te pedimetur et regia corona exornatus merecor rezenazi Vivat Rex Poloniae D. Livius Odescalcus ubique laureum elementis celebrat».

31 «La corona essendo destinate nel Cielo, di Dio e del Spirito Santo s'aspettano», see: B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, Gabriele Vecchi to L. Odescalchi, Vienna 1 VI 1697, p. 105 [orig. ASR, FO 11/D/8].

32 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, “Relazione al Serenissimo Principe Odescalchi del maneggio de' suoi Ministri per la corona del Polonia dove fu nel 4 loco nomato per candidato fra gli ingfrascritti pretendenti al soglio nella Dieta”, ff. nn..

33 Alessandro Boccolini, *Viaggio politico, viaggio materiale: Monsignor Galeazzo Marescotti nunzio a Varsavia* (Viterbo: Sette Città, 2015), 125.

34 Boratyński, *Don Livio*, 215-16.

promoter of the duke's candidacy, and the duke's resident Antonio Feliciano Montecatini, a priest and consistory lawyer³⁵, who was assisted by an Italian with Polish indigeneity, Gabriele Vecchi, and Magliabecchi, brother of the former auditor during the nunciature, Francesco Martelli, and librarian at the Grand Duke's court in Florence, Cesare Borsatti, titled *gimnasium gramaticus Braccianensi*, author of propaganda writings and letters and participant in talks with Polish magnates, the court administrator of Gdańsk and former servant of William III of Orange, Gotrhyd Keckenbart³⁶, sent to represent Gdańsk at the election and his son Charles Henry and the nephew of Baron Giovanni Arrigo the young Angelo Piccinardi, as *cavaliere d'honore*, both in the retinue of Montecatini³⁷. The persons responsible for conveying messages to Prince Odescalchi were Marco Bellini³⁸ and acting independently of the other Members was an Italian settled in Warsaw, Racchetti³⁹. The aforementioned Jesuit Carlo Maurizio Vota was of separate assistance and information to the Prince, although he was treated with reserve. On the basis of preserved archives, it is known that he sent news until the end of September 1698 and also later, episodically acting as an intermediary between Augustus II and Prince Odescalchi⁴⁰.

The primary thing was to make a proposal to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Baron Piccinardi advised the Duke to appeal constantly to the feelings of the Poles and their adoration of glitter and exoticism, to pay lavishly for their votes, to recall the assistance rendered by Pope Innocent XI in connection with funds for the fight against the Turks, which would have the additional advantage of winning the support of the Republic of Venice⁴¹. The Duke promised that he would marry in accordance with the will of the states and place the reformation due to his wife at the disposal of the *Rzeczpospolita*, pay the Queen's widow Marie Casimire d'Arquien Sobieska her due, furthermore that he would establish a college in Rome for 50 (later 25) sons of

35 ASR, FO, 7/G/1, "Relazione dell'elezione a Re di Polonia nella persona di Livio Odescalchi", ff. n.n.; Ibid., 7/E/6, "Procura fatta da Don Livio I Odescalchi duca di Bracciano Principe del Sacro Romano Imperio nella persona del conte Antonio Feliciano Montecatini a rappresentarlo nei comizi della nazione polacca onde fosse eletto in Re di Polonia", ff. nn.

36 B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, Keckenbart to L. Odescalchi, Gdańsk 15 II 1697, pp. 282-83; Boratyński, *Don Livio*, 229-30.

37 Boratyński, *Don Livio*, 499.

38 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, G.A. Piccinardi to L. Odescalchi, Königsberg 14 XII 1696, ff. nn.

39 Platania, *La candidatura*, 297-299.

40 After acquiring the duchy, Sirmio Odescalchi wrote to Augustus II congratulating him on his royal election and requesting that he be titled "Highness". The Polish king agreed, but on condition that the duke in Rome celebrate his coronation with fireworks display in front of the family seat. In 1702, the prince renewed his solicitations for the titular title by showing a copy of the imperial letters in which the title was used against him. The Polish king also sought to borrow money from the prince and even hoped to buy one of his galleys, see. ASR, FO, 11/D/7, C.M. Vota to L. Odescalchi, Warsaw 12 X 1697, ff. nn., and C.M. Vota to L. Odescalchi, Warsaw 2 II 1704. ff. nn.

41 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, "Informazione", ff. nn.

nobility and donate to the Commonwealth the sum of one million Roman scuds. Probably just before his election, in June 1697, the Duke agreed to set aside 200,000 thalers, then 550 red golds, and the bequest of the estates of Bracciano, Ceri, the fortress of Palo, the marquisate of Roncofreddo and the county of di Montiliano, as donations to the Republic. For this reason, the Monte Catino asked for copies of the property deeds and the donation bequest to be sent from Rome, to be issued to the Polish side after the election. He also promised to pay the army a sum of eight million zlotys, to free Elbląg at his own expense from the pledge of the Elector of Brandenburg, to recover Kamieniec and other properties seized by the Turks, to reform the currency, and – in the event that there were no descendants – to bequeath the equipment that had once belonged to Queen Christina of Sweden, his own arsenal and a private collection of works of art⁴². As Ludwik Boratyński summed it up: «These proposals may have made a certain impression, for it is evident from them that the candidate, whole with soul and body, with all his property, and even with his celibacy, which he sacrificed on the altar of the Republic, was giving himself to Poland»⁴³. The duke's fortune, estimated at 20,000 zlotys, did not, however, attract the applause of the Polish nobility.

However, before the battles on the electoral field took place, representatives of Prince Livio Odescalchi sought to build a party associated with the most prominent personalities of the *Rzeczpospolita*. To begin with, he was advised to write letters to the Polish nobility assuring them of his knowledge of their customs and bravery, and assuring them of his respect for the Most Serene Republic, and further expressing his desire to make his own sacrifice and to wear the crown only for the benefit of those who would assign it to him with their free votes. With this, the prince assured that he wanted only the favour of the *Rzeczpospolita* and would not be dependent

42 B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, A.F. Monte Catino to L. Odescalchi, b.m. i. d., p. 235-36 [orig. Archivio Odescalchi, 11/D/9]. *Conf.* Biblioteka Kórnicka Polskiej Akademii Nauk w Kórniku, 00398, "Xiążę Odeschalki [Livio Odescalchi] kandydat. Propositiones illius ad [...] Pol. Remp. [...] ", ff. 230r-31v. Apostolic Nuncio Gioavanni Antonio Davia summed them up as generous but insufficient: «The proposals are received with great applause by many of the lesser nobility, although most read them with derision, as it seems unheard of that Poland should, for the sole reason of having some money, resolve to accept a king who has not yet made himself known in any part of Christianity» [Da molti della nobiltà minore vengono gli propositioni ricevute con grand'applauso, benche da i più sieno lette con derisione, parendo inudito che'l solo motivo d'haver qualche denaro debba la Polonia risolversi ad accettar un Ré, che finoranon si è fatto conoscere in veruna parte della Christianità] and in other letter: «Prince Don Livio's application is heard with contempt and derision, who they say has neither the necessary substance to raise the Republic, nor the appropriate capacity to govern it» [Vien udità con disprezzo e derisione la domanda del principe Don Livio, che dicono non haver nè le sostanze necessarie per sollevar la Republica, nè la capacità opportuna per governarla], see: AAV, Segr. Stato. Polonia, vol. 118, G.D. ad Secretarium Statum, Avviso, Warsaw 28 V 1697 and 18 VI 1697, ff. 281r-82v. Gaetano Platania, on the other hand, considered the sum offered by Prince to be small, see: Platania, *La candidatura*, 305.

43 Boratyński, *Don Livio*, 495.

on any foreign influence. Piccinardi listed 31 important personalities, secular and clerical officials, singling out those who had the greatest influence on political life. Piccinardi believed that 50 letters should be issued with the title “Excellency” and an equal number with the title “His Lordship”, and that 25,000 skugs should be distributed to each, as a form of generosity⁴⁴.

In the second half of May, Father Vota began talks with Primate Michał Stefan Radziejowski, and although the hierarch assured his respect for his papal nephew, he was not – in the eyes of the Jesuit – interested in supporting his candidacy⁴⁵. It was no secret that the Primate had remained a supporter of the French candidacy even before John III's death, and remained true to his convictions. However, this did not deter Prince Odescalchi's deputies from renewing their efforts to win Radziejowski's favour, who was tried to convince him with gifts: «Cardinal Primate Ragiozcki [Radziejowski – author's note], who owes a fortune to Your Highness, who was a party to the event of Monday, but who would have been pleased, my lawyer Montecatini, I have a direct card with a stick in my hand in admiration of the court, and he came too late to make this offer, so that it might be [--] ingenious. If the ministers will be able to assent to this, they will see to it that the Cardinal is told that on the day of the arrival at the palatine election the name and merit of Your Serene Highness is worthy of it. But that it is certain that the king will leave at midday to give the palatine as you can see from my gazette and the fact that it will be invoked by many of the world's leaders is undoubtedly indulged, that Serene Cardinal would have made a great impression and the crown would belong to Your

44 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, “Informazione”, ff. nn. Copies of letters to dignitaries of the Republic dated 29 IV 1697, see: ASR, FO, 11/D/7, ff. nn.

45 B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, C.M. Vota to L. Odescalchi, Warsaw 27 I 1697, p. 59 [orig. ASR, FO, 11/D/1]. During the election on 26 June 1697, Radziejowski omitted the Prince Odescalchi altogether: «At least out of gratitude it was held to be undoubted by all the purer nobility of Poland that the Card. Primate [...] was to appease so many differences by merely reflecting [...] the generous proposals of the aforesaid Prince Odescalchi [...] The Holy Cardinal had to make the appointment, as promised, at the fatal point» [Almeno per gratitudine si teneva per indubitato da tutta la nobiltà più purgata della Polonia, che il Card. Primate [...] fosse per acquietare tante differenze con solo mettere in riflesso [...] le generose propositioni del sudetto principe Odescalchi [...] Dovea il S. Cardinale sul fatto e nel punto fatale fare la nomina, come promises], see: B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, C.M. Vota to L. Odescalchi, Warsaw 27 VI and 7 IX 1697, p. 79, 81, [orig. ASR, FO, 11/D/1]. The same information was sent by Cesare Borsatti: «If the ministers [...] had endeavoured to insinuate to the Holy Cardinal that he would deign, at least on the day of the election, to remember (sic!) the name and merit of Your Highness Serma [...] there is no doubt that the Holy Cardinal would have made a great impression and the crown would belong to Your Highness» [Se i ministri [...] havessero procurato d'insinuare al S. Cardinale, che si degnasse, almeno nel giorno della elettione arricordare (sic!), a palatinate il nome e il merito di V. A. Ser.ma [...] è indubitato, che il S. Cardinale havrebbe fatto gran colpo e la corona sarebbe di V. A.], see: ASR, FO, 11/D/7, C. Borsatti to L. Odescalchi, Warsaw 1 IX 1697, ff. nn.

Serene Highness because the ministers would be aroused by the *companiere*»⁴⁶. The vote of Primate Radziejowski was also sought through the presentation of rich gifts – perfumes and Roman accessories – to a person closely related to him in terms of family and emotions, i.e. the castellan of Łęczyca, Katarzyna Towiańska, née Niszczycka, the cardinal's cousin⁴⁷.

In a similar way, attempts were made to win the votes of other allies of the Prince de Bourbon-Conti, including the Grand Marshal of the Crown Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski, his brother Hieronim Augustyn Lubomirski, the Treasurer of the Crown, and their wives, who had a considerable influence on political life and agitated for the French candidate⁴⁸. Separate talks were held by Racchetti, but these took place without the knowledge or consent of Baron Piccinardi. Among those persuaded to side with the Prince of Odescalchi were Franciszek Załuski, Voivode of Czernichów, Jan Chryzostom Odrowąż-Pieniążek, Voivode of Sieradz, Kazimierz Szczuka, Abbot of Paradyż, Franciszek Prażmowski, Bishop of Łuck, Kazimierz Michał Pac, scribe of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Mikołaj Wiktoryn Grudziński, Starosta of Golub, Jan Jakub Potulicki, Starosta of Borzechów, and Izabela Sapieżyna, née Tarłów Sapieżyna, wife of the Treasurer of Lithuania⁴⁹. The latter, in the plans of Italian agents, could persuade her husband Benedykt Paweł, brother-in-law of the Vilnius voivode and Grand Hetman of Lithuania Kazimierz Paweł Sapieha, and brother Karol Tarło, the Crown Vice-Chancellor, to leave the camp of the Duke of

46 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, “Relazione al Serenissimo Principe Odescalchi del maneggio [...]”, ff. nn.

47 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, ff. nn., L. Odescalchi to Katarzyna Konstancja Towiańska, without place and date. *Conf.* Jarosław Pietrzak, “Kobieta z drugiego planu. Katarzyna Konstancja z Niszczyckich Towiańska i jej polityczna działalność w burzliwych czasach przełomu XVII i XVIII w.”, *Przegląd Historyczny*, 64/3 (2023), 326.

48 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, “Instrumento per il S. March. Angelo del Negro per Vienna a di 22 Marzo 1697”, ff. nn.; B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, G.A. Piccinardi to L. Odescalchi, Vienna 10 III 1697, p. 208-09. Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski assured his confidence and congratulated Prince Odescalchi on his merits, but these were merely courteous assurances of support, see: B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski to L. Odescalchi, Warsaw 1 V 1697, p. 284 [orig. Archivio Odescalchi, 11/D/9]. More on the pro-French faction, see: Aleksandra Skrzypietz, *Francuskie zabiegi o koronę polską po śmierci Jana III Sobieskiego* (Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2009), 117-22, 136-42; Ead., *Franciszek Ludwik, książę de Conti – “obрани król Polski”. Saga rodu Kondeuszów* (Katowice: wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2019), 281-94; Ead., “Damy polskie wobec kandydatury księcia Conti podczas elekcji w 1697 roku”, in *Dyplomacja, polityka, prawo. Księga ofiarowana profesorowi Henrykowi Kocójowi w siedemdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, red. Idzi Panic (Katowice: Wyd. Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2001), 117-23.

49 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, “Vera e giusta relazione”, ff. nn.; B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, Keckenbart to L. Odescalchi, Gdańsk 15 II 1697, pp. 282-83 [orig. Archivio Odescalchi, 11/D/9].

Conti⁵⁰. Particularly much was promised after Baron Piccinardi met with Jan Jerzy Przebendowski, Castellan of Chelmno, in April 1697 and gave him the sum of 1,000 ducats in exchange for the issue of propaganda prints⁵¹. It is difficult to believe that any of the above-mentioned magnates would have been convinced by Odescalchi's candidacy, although, as Gabriele Vecchi reported, in Poland it was possible to find noblemen dedicated to the Duke's cause and willing to support his efforts⁵². However, it is thought that these were poor and middle-income nobles whose support was bought with Italian skugs. Closer to the start of the election, most of the governors declared their support for Wettin⁵³.

Italian diplomats also tried to gain the support of Queen Marie Casimire d'Arquien Sobieska. The importance of her favour was already pointed out by the Jesuit Carlo Maurizio Vota in January 1697⁵⁴. In mid-May of that year, the envoy travelled to Gdańsk and the intention was certainly to make contact with the Queen and to conclude a deal with her. Prince Odescalchi was keen to secure the votes of Prince Sobieski's party, which would stand behind his candidature in the event of his defeat. Probably connected with this was the secret visit of the lawyer Montecatini to Prince Jakub Sobieski before he left for Gdańsk⁵⁵. The price of support was to host the queen in Rome at the Odescalchi palace, in connection with her plans to leave the Republic after the election⁵⁶. As reported later by an unnamed sender, the prince was willing to comply with the prince's request and encourage his partisans to flip

50 Aleksandra Skrzypietz, "Sapiehowie wobec elekcji księcia Conti (1697)", in *Sapiehowie epoki Kodnia i Krasieczyna*, ed. Krzysztof Stępnik (Lublin, Wydawnictwo UMCS, 2007), 357-72; Mariusz Sawicki, "Partia francuska na Litwie w latach 1696-1697 w świetle dokumentów i rachunków dyplomatów Ludwika XIV. Przyczynek do dziejów elekcji Augusta II", in *Wokół wolnych elekcji w państwie polsko-litewskim XVI-XVIII wieku. O znaczeniu idei wyboru między prawami a obowiązkami*, eds. Mariusz Markiewicz, Dariusz Rolnik, and Filip Wolański (Katowice: Wydaw. Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2016), 373-88.

51 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, G.A. Piccinardi to L. Odescalchi, Warsaw 18 VI 1697, ff. nn.

52 B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, G. Vecchi to L. Odescalchi, Vienna, 1 VI 1697, p. 103 [orig. ASR, FO 11/D/8].

53 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, C. Borsatti to L. Odescalchi, Warsaw 7 VII 1697, ff. nn.

54 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, C.M. Vota to L. Odescalchi, Warsaw 27 I 1697, ff. nn. Vota paid a visit to the Queen at the beginning of the month, as reported by Prince Aleksander Sobieski's informant, and may have discussed Prince Odescalchi's case with Marie Casimire d'Arquien Sobieska, see: Biblioteka Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego w Warszawie, 76, Jan Kosmowski to Prince Aleksander Sobieski, Warsaw 7 I 1697, f. 158v.

55 B. PAU-PAN, Teki Augusta Cieszkowskiego, 8706, Girolamo Alberti to Republic of Venice Senate, Warsaw 4 VI 1697, pp. 140-42. Prince Odescalchi sent a separate letter to Queen Marie Casimire d'Arquien of Sobieska, asking for support, see: B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, L. Odescalchi to Marie Casimire d'Arquien Sobieska, without place, 29 IV 1697, pp. 251-53 [orig. ASR, FO, 11/D/9]

56 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, "Relazione al Serenissimo Principe Odescalchi del maneggio", ff. nn.

votes to him, especially as the plan met with the queen's approval: «The Most Serene Prince Jakub promised to donate his party to Your Highness in the event that he saw that the Crown was in despair for him: and the Queen made a similar promise, but His Majesty was not revered by them when they returned from Warsaw, and one of them, through Father Vota, was trying to be auditor to His Majesty when he came to Rome, and this was the main negotiation»⁵⁷. This announcement seems unlikely, as it is not supported by other source data. However, such a scenario is not entirely impossible, given the Queen's previous frequent changes of mind in relation to her support for the candidates vying for the crown⁵⁸.

In addition to the support of the nobility and the Queen, the envoys of Prince Odescalchi tried to appeal for help from foreign courts. Baron Piccinardi was not initially sympathetic to this idea, trying to convince his principal that it was only necessary to secure the favour of the Imperial, Brandenburg and Swedish courts, assuring them of his friendship but not to enter into any dealings with them⁵⁹. However, the prince's agent realized that the support of the imperial envoy and the papal nuncio would make a great impression on the multitude of nobility. He suggested that it was necessary to enlist the help of imperial envoys and promise them significant sums. Moreover, it was believed that Emperor Leopold I, for the sake of former friendly relations related to Odescalchi's efforts to acquire the principality of Carinthia and the loan, eventually granting him the title of Prince of the Reich,

57 «Il Serenissimo Principe Jacopo haveva promesso di donare a Vostra Altezza il suo Partito, in caso, che havesse veduto disperata per lui la Corona: e simile promessa fece pure la Regina, ma Sua Maestà nel ritorno che fecero di Varsavia l'Intervenienti di Vostra Altezza non fu da essi riveriti, e pure uno di essi per via del Padre Votta procurava di essere Auditore di Sua Maestà cosa fosse venuta a Roma, e questo era il maggior Negozio», see: ASR, FO, 3/B/6, Unknow to L. Odescalchi, without place, 15 XI 1697, p. 1.

58 Let us recall that the queen was in conflict with Prince James from the time of John III's death in June 1696 until April 1697. At that time, it was claimed that Marie Casimire d'Arquien Sobieska supported Prince Aleksander Sobieski or her brother-in-law – Maximilian II Emanuel Wittelsbach, Elector of Bavaria, see: Aleksandra Skrzypietz, *Królewscy synowie. Jakub, Aleksander i Konstanty Sobiescy* (Katowice: Wydaw. Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2011), 249-93; Ead., *Królewicz Jakub Sobieski* (Poznań: Wydaw. Poznańskie, 2015), 221-34; Zbigniew Goralski, "Zur Kandidatur des bayerischen Kurfürsten Maximilian Emanuel für die polnische Krone (1696-1697)", *Zeitschrift für Bayerische Landesgeschichte*, 34/1 (1971): 390-96; Michał Komarzyński, "Die Kandidatur des bayerischen Kurfürsten Maximilian Emanuel im polnischen Thronfolgestreit", *Zeitschrift für Bayerische Landesgeschichte*, 53/2 (1990): 313-27; Stanisław Orszulik, "Kandydatura elektora bawarskiego Maksymiliana II Emanuela do korony polskiej po śmierci Jana III", *Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka*, 29/2 (1974): 231-48. This was also noticed by the representatives of Prince Odescalchi, as was the fact that the imperial, Brandenburg and French diplomacies were seeking the Queen's vote, see: B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, A. del Negro to L. Odescalchi, without date and place, p. 127 [orig. ASR, FO, 11/D/9]; ASR, FO, 11/D/7, "Informazione", ff. nn.

59 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, "Informazione", ff. nn.

through his efforts to the Polish throne. Disappointment came with the news of Gabriele Vecchi, who arrived in Vienna from Genoa in May 1697 and found that the emperor had only offered Odescalchi words of well-being, but nothing more⁶⁰. Over time, Piccinardi, who was convinced of the support of the imperial court for Prince Jakub, came to a similar conclusion⁶¹. However, hope was not lost as it was believed that some imperial diplomats, such as Count František Oldřich Kinsky and Karl Ernst von Waldstein, were able to serve the prince's cause and mediate in contacts with the court of Elector Frederick III of Hohenzollern⁶².

The main point of support was sending envoy to the court in Berlin, because the consent of the elector Frederick III to the candidacy of the Prince Odescalchi – in Baron Piccinardi's calculations – could influence the possible help from England, the Northern Netherlands, Sweden and Moscow, which then remained neutral towards the electoral events in Poland⁶³. This was probably the purpose of Piccinardi's departure to Königsberg in May 1697 and his subsequent return to

60 B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, G. Vecchi to L. Odescalchi, Vienna 11 IV 1697, p. 122 [orig. ASR, FO 11/D/8]

61 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, "Informazione", ff. nn.; Ibid., C. Borsatti to L. Odescalchi, Wrocław 1 VII 1697, ff. nn. Prince Jakub Sobieski sought the support of Emperor Leopold I and his wife Eleonora. Many believed that Sobieski would receive real help from Vienna. Marie Casimire assumed that Habsburg could support her candidates for the crown, first of all Charles Philip von Pfalz Neuburg or Leopold of Lorraine, and then Louis of Baden. Meanwhile, imperial diplomacy supported Prince Jakub in the decisive phase of the election, see: Skrzypietz, *Królewscy synowie*, 293-95; Ead., "Królewicz Jakub Sobieski i jego kontakty z dworami europejskimi do wybuchu wielkiej wojny północnej", *Wieki Stare i Nowe*, 4/9 (2012): 34-5; Adam Perłakowski, "Dyplomatyczne aspekty bezkrólewia po śmierci Jana III Sobieskiego (1696–1697) w świetle doniesień i relacji Andrzeja Choyanckiego", in *Polska wobec wielkich konfliktów w Europie nowożytnej. Z dziejów dyplomacji i stosunków międzynarodowych w XV–XVIII wieku*, ed. Ryszard Skowron (Kraków: Societas Vistulana, 2009), 443-56; Jacek Staszewski, "Elekcja 1696/1697 r.", *Acta Universitatis Nicolai Copernici. AUNC. Nauki Humanistyczno-Społeczne. Historia*, 259/28 (1993): 73-92; Kazimierz Piwarski, "Das Interregnum 1696/1697 in Polen und die politische Lage in Europa", in *Um die polnische Krone. Sachsen und Polen Während des Nordischen Krieges 1700–1721*, eds. Johannes Kalisch, and Jan Andrzej Gierowski (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1962), 9-44.

62 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, "Informazione", ff. nn.; Ibid., "Instrumento per il S. March. Angelo del Negro", ff. nn.

63 Piccinardi attached importance to careful contacts with Sweden, fearing that the Polish nobility would accuse the candidate of trying to fraternize with the enemy, as was done in the case of Prince Jakub's contacts with the court of Charles XI, see: Michał Komarzyński, "Zabiegi królewicza Jakuba o pomoc Szwecji w walce o tron po Janie III", in *Strefa bałtycka w XVI–XVIII w. Polityka–społeczeństwo–gospodarka. Ogólnopolska sesja naukowa zorganizowana z okazji 70-lecia urodzin Profesora Edmunda Cieślaka*, ed. Jerzy Trzoska (Gdańsk: Gdańskie Towarzystwo Naukowe, 1993), 105-15; Gustav Jonasson, "Polska i Szwecja za czasów Jana III Sobieskiego", *Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka*, 35/2 (1980): 237-43.

Vienna at the end of the same month. Piccinardi's mission must have pleased him, since the elector's ministers Nikolai Danckelman and Paul Fuchs told the Italian that if the candidacy of Prince Louis of Baden encountered difficulties, their lord would support the Italian. They also assured that the elector's envoy in Warsaw – Johaness von Hoverbeck – would receive instructions on this matter⁶⁴.

Papal diplomacy was characterized by hostility towards the candidacy of Prince Livio Odescalchi. Although the former papal nepot had extensive contacts in the Roman Curia, Innocent XII's pro-French policy was in opposition to the prince's intentions⁶⁵. This did not mean that the prince's envoys completely gave up trying to convince nuncio Giovanni Antonio Davia to support the Italian's efforts. Conference with the representative of the Papal States were started in May by Carlo Maurizio Vota and then in June 1697 by the lawyer Montecatini⁶⁶. However, both failed to convince the diplomat, who believed that Odescalchi's efforts were consistent with the candidacy of the Elector of Saxony: «[...] like the reason of money, they can't think about it. You couldn't believe how much spirit S.[ignor] Avvocato Montecatini works with, of which I don't have enough. To give me the attention that he appreciates from the Royal Household and every other respect, so that even if it

64 B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, A. del Negro to L. Odescalchi, without date and place, p. 1 [orig. ASR, FO 11/D/8]; Ibid., 8 V 1697, p. 134; Ibid., A.F. di Monte Catino to L. Odescalchi, b.m. i d., p. 234. Even during John III's lifetime, Brandenburg invariably declared support for the election of Jakub Sobieski. Seeing Austria's inclination towards Jakub Sobieski, Frederick III did not have the courage to openly oppose him. However, he was afraid of cooperation between Austria, Sweden and Russia in this matter. The Brandenburg court, through Johann von Hoverbeck, closely monitored the situation, but did not interfere in the course of events. Frederick III did not betray his sympathies. For this reason, he was credited with acting on behalf of Louis of Baden, Charles of Neuburg or Jakub Sobieski. He tried to consolidate his influence in Poland-Lithuania by reaching an agreement with the Sapieha family and possibly the Lubomirski family. For Brandenburg, the best ruler would be someone very weak – Louis of Baden, with strong ties to Berlin, or 'Piaś', i.e. one of the Polish lords. Let us add that Jakub Sobieski, apparently supported by Frederick III, did not actively seek his help. The ruler of Brandenburg finally accepted Wettin's choice, see: Skrzypietz, *Królewscy synowie*, 293-94; Stanisław Salmonowicz, "Związki polsko-niemieckie 1697/1701-1763", in *Polacy i Niemcy wobec siebie. Postawy, opinie, stereotypy (1697-1815): próba zarysu*, ed. Stanisław Salmonowicz (Olsztyn, Ośrodek Badań Naukowych im. W. Kętrzyńskiego, 1993), 9; Andrzej Kamiński, *Polska a Brandenburgia-Prusy w drugiej połowie XVII wieku. Dzieje polityczne* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2002), 377-78; Skrzypietz, *Królewicz Jakub Sobieski*, 35-6; Maciej Swobodziński, "Gdańsk a Brandenburgia-Prusy w latach 1697-1698. Misja gdańskiego sekretarza Johanna Georga Schimmelpfenniga na dworze Fryderyka III w Królewcu w 1698 roku w sprawie tzw. 'negotium gallicum'", *Komunikaty Warmińsko-Mazurskie*, 4/314 (2021): 570-97.

65 The times of Innocent XI's pontificate were marked by conflict with France and Louis XIV, see: Fiorentini, *Livio*, 148-64.

66 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, C.M. Vota to L. Odescalchi, Warsaw 21 V 1697, ff. nn.; Ibid., A.F. de Montecatini to L. Odescalchi, b.m. i d., p. 229 [orig. ASR, FO, 11/D/1].

happens that D.[on] Livio remains excluded, His Honor must have the obligation to have brought things with great decorum to leadership of the ranks of his rank, I as much as I value competing with applause for this crown in the company of so many Serene Candidates, is much more than being General of Pontifical Galleries»⁶⁷. Right after the election of Frederick Augustus I, Davia recognized the validity of his conversion, which made it clear that he had previously been involved in the election of the Saxon elector and did not maintain the expected neutrality⁶⁸.

To gain support required an appropriate fee, hence the envoys of Prince Odescalchi presented various amounts and forms of remuneration. An Italian aristocrat with a high income could successfully pay his supporters. Baron Piccinardi conservatively estimated that approximately 25,000 scuds should be spent on noble votes⁶⁹. He considered it an expression of great generosity, just like the silver pledges that he was to distribute among the Poles⁷⁰. In turn, another representative of Prince Angelo del Negro counted every penny. Because of this, there was irritation among the servants. Piccinardi also asked the prince to issue his bond for the amount of 100,000 scuds, which is higher than the forecast, so that he could start paying supporters before the election⁷¹. The problem was that neither this sum nor the money that Prince

67 «[...] si como l'intessa ragione del denaro, ne posono, che pensano al. Sig. D. Livio Odescalchi. V.M. non potrebbe credere con quanto spirito s'adopra lui S. Avvocato Montecatini, di cui non poso bastante. Lo darmi l'attenzione, che egli gratia visi la Casa Regia e l'ogni altro rispetto, onde quando anche succeda che il Sig.e D. Livio resti escluso dovrà Sua S. havergli obbligo d'averlo portate le cose con gran decoro à dirizione degli alli del suo grado stimande, io quant à me il concorrere con applauso à questa corona in compagnia di tanti Sere.mi Candidati, sia più assai che l'essere Generale di S. Chiesaò delle Galere Pontifici», see: AAV, Fondo Albani, 193, "Copia d'articolo di lettera in data de 25. Giugno da Varsavia", ff. 15r-v.

68 Wojciech Kęder, "Tajemnice dyplomacji watykańskiej–udział nuncjusza Giovanniego Antonia Davii w elekcji Fryderyka Augusta Wettyna na króla Polski", *Rocznik Filozoficzny Ignatianum*, 28/1 (2022): 77-88. More on the attitude of nuncios in the last interregnum and the Catholic faith as a condition of support for the candidate, see: Dorota Gregorowicz, "The Role of Papal Diplomats in the Interregnum's Parliamentary Practice of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (16th–17th centuries)", *Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica*, 1 (2016): 119-48; Ead., "Problem papieskiej neutralności wobec rywalizacji o tron w Rzeczypospolitej w wyniku abdykacji Jana Kazimierza Wazy", in *Sztuka roztropności. Dyplomacja Stolicy Apostolskiej wobec Rzeczypospolitej, Europy i świata*, eds. Krzysztof Ożóg, and Ryszard Skowron (Kraków: Societas Vistulana, 2020), 141-61; Paweł Duda, "Nuncjatura apostolska w Warszawie i w Wiedniu wobec elekcji Władysława IV Wazy–przyczynek do badań nad czwartym interregnum", in *Wokół wolnych elekcji*, 257-78; Aleksandra Ziober, "The Role and Use of Religion in the Politics of Candidates to the Polish Throne in the 17th Century", *Biuletyn Polskiej Misji Historycznej*, 13 (2018): 115-32.

69 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, "Relazione al Serenissimo Principe Odescalchi del maneggio", ff. nn.

70 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, "Informazione", ff. nn.

71 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, "Informazione", ff. nn.

Odescalchi promised to transfer to Poland-Lithuania could be realized, because no banking house could fulfill the transfer. Innocent XI's nephew considered three paths. The first was a loan from Genoese bankers, in particular the del Grillo family, and the payment of sums by Amsterdam and Gdańsk merchants to the prince's envoys in Warsaw⁷². The second one was the execution of the transfer by the Rezzonico family banking house, but they had no branches or contacts in the Commonwealth⁷³. The last, third solution was the withdrawal of money by bankers residing in Vienna - Bartolomeo Tinti and Karol Bertolo, but they also had no contacts with Warsaw banking houses⁷⁴. The prince's money finally arrived in Warsaw, but on June 29th, 1697, so after the election thanks to Marco Bellini⁷⁵. Meanwhile, it is worth adding that Angelo del Negro issued a bond for representatives of nine voivodeships in the first days of the election for a total amount of 50,000 zlotys. For this reason, after the election, even though the prince's candidacy was lost, interested parties approached del Negro, who resided at the Rachetti inn, demanding payment. Moreover they regularly visited the place and threatened to use sabers to enforce the payments and even surrounded the house, del Negro and his servants slipped out of the inn to – as planned – sail down the Vistula to Toruń and from there to Brandenburg. To confuse his pursuers, the Italian rented a carriage belonging to Johann von Hoverbeck and got out of Warsaw⁷⁶.

The last factor influencing the candidate's choice was the propaganda contained in leaflets sketching the image and presenting the candidate's figure and character. The writings took various forms: panegyrics, lampoons, letters, prophecies, the so-called mirrors, political poems, etc. Those dedicated to Prince Odescalchi, as well as to Maximilian II Emanuel, Charles, Duke of Neuburg, or the princes of Lorraine or Baden, belonged – also in terms of quantity – to the minority in the total number of works of the interregnum. When sketching the ideal image of a candidate for the Polish crown, many elements were pointed out, including: origin, character, military merits, political achievements, attitude towards law and freedom, fidelity to the Catholic faith, etc⁷⁷.

72 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, G.A. Piccinardi to L. Odescalchi, Vienna 10 III 1697, ff. nn.

73 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, Unknown to L. Odescalchi, Rome 27 IV 1697, ff. nn.; M. Pizzo, *Livio Odescalchi e i Rezzonico*, 119-53.

74 B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, Carlo Bartelo to L. Odescalchi, Vienna 8 VI 1697, pp. 285-86 [orig. ASR, FO, 11/D/9]; Ibid., Bartolomeo Tinki to L. Odescalchi, Vienna 8 VI 1697, p. 287, [orig. ASR, FO, 11/D/9].

75 ASR, FO, 3/C/11, Marco Bellini to L. Odescalchi, without place, 3 VII 1697, b.p.

76 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, G.A. Piccinardi to L. Odescalchi, Vienna 14 XII 1697, ff. nn.

77 Aleksandra Skrzypietz, "Portret kandydata do tronu polskiego w pismach politycznych z lat 1696/1697", in *Hominem quaerere. Człowiek w źródle historycznym*, eds. Stanisław Rosik, and Przemysław Wiszewski (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2008), 151-65; Stanisław Orszulik, "Kultura polityczna szlachty w świetle pism politycznych bezkrólewia 1696/97", *Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny. Sobótka*, 37/3-4 (1982): 207-18; Henryk Suchojad, "Wizerunek cudzoziemskich kandydatów do korony polskiej w czasie bezkrólewia z lat 1572–1573 w oczach szlachty", in *Między Lwowem a Wrocławiem*.

At the beginning of his thoughts about the prince's attempts to win the Polish crown, his advisors tried to create a literary image of the nephew of Pope Innocent XI in order to present him to the Polish nobility society. At the request of Baron Piccinardi, a brochure was prepared and printed in Königsberg, which "depicted" the advantages of the Italian candidate. The "Letter of a Polish Nobleman" points out the prince's manners and dignity, as well as the fact that he lent the Apostolic Chamber the sum of 50,000 piasters to finance the activities of the Holy League against Ottoman Empire⁷⁸. Subsequent prints were created as the election date approached. With letters addressed to Poles, he showed the prince as a rich and generous aristocrat who spared no expense on his magnificent residences, where – according to the author – he created residences worthy of Julius Caesar himself⁷⁹. Antonio Feliciano Montecatini tried to portray the prince in an equally laudatory tone in the commissioned work *A Conversation of a Pole with the Imperial Ambassador about Don Livius* [orig. "Rozmowa Polaka z ambasadorem cesarskim o Don Liwiuszu"]⁸⁰. The prince's fame and the desire to elect him were also proclaimed in works written in Polish circles. A short poem written in the sylva of Jan Stanisław Jabłonowski is undoubtedly worth attention: «Whoever wants a soldier will take a Lorraine, whoever wants a devil will take Conte, whoever is proud and a flask will take Baden, whoever is careless will take a Neuburger, whoever wants a man will take Odescalchi»⁸¹. The prince's few supporters also composed an unsophisticated couplet: "Duke Odeschalch / good this time"⁸².

However, not all writings and works were favorable to the Italian prince, regardless of his wealth, kinship with the pope and independence from European powers. Satirical works used Odescalchi's love of art as an argument against his candidacy, contrasting Mars with Apollo, and in the context of the ethos of the Sarmatian knight, it disqualified the Italian. In the song "Speculum candidatorum ad coronam Regni Poloniae" he was accused of not following the camp of Mars, but following art: "Not the camp of Mars/ I followed but of art"⁸³. In turn, the prince's proposals

Księga jubileuszowa Profesora Krystyna Matwijowskiego, eds. Bogdan Rok, and Jerzy Maroń (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 2006), 393-408.

78 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, G.A. Piccinardi to L. Odescalchi, Vienna 25 III 1697, ff. nn.

79 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, C. Borsatti to L. Odescalchi, Vienna 10 V 1697, ff. nn.

80 B. PAU-PAN, sign. 8461, vol. 121, A.F. di Montecatini to L. Odescalchi, without date and place, p. 231 [orig. ASR, FO 11/D/1] In the same letter, Montecatini asked for four medals with the prince's image to be sent to strengthen visual propaganda.

81 «Kto chce mieć żołnierza, to weźmie Lotaryngczyka, kto diabła, to Contego, kto pysznego i flaszę, to Badena, kto niedbałego, to Neuburczyka, kto człowieka, to Odescalchiego», see: "Ułamki Dziennika Jana Stanisława Jabłonowskiego", *Kronika Rodzinna*, 14 (1889), p. 443.

82 «Dux Odeschalch/ Dobrybyvice hac», see: Biblioteka Czartoryskich w Krakowie, 142, p. 256.

83 «Non castra Martis/ Sequi sed artis», see: Biblioteka Narodowa w Warszawie, 6646/III, "Dux Odeschalcus Lechicum diadema petendo", f. 124r.

to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth mocked all forms of material assistance addressed to Poles: «Wanting to win the scales over to the Polish side,/ The power of Italy promises, Prince Odeschalci / Millions and silver, students in Rome, / Pictures and mirrors, other secular items / Estates in Naples, Rome and Madrid, / Which are worth nothing when he will turn her upside down. / The Italian's character is very sophisticated, but they know him here, / because the Poles won't pay a crown for it»⁸⁴. As mentioned above, the prince's proposals were not welcomed by the Poles. Perhaps the minor nobility had some hopes of bringing the prince's significant and rich estate to the not very wealthy farm of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, but for the magnates this was not a condition at all. It seems that ridicule became a weapon in the hands of French diplomacy, which tried to discredit the prince⁸⁵. In March 1697, a letter circulated around Poland stating that Odeschalchi was giving the Republic of Poland 30 million Polish zlotys, but that this estate consisted only of paintings and sculptures of the most beautiful Italian works of art – Giulio Romano, Titian, Annibale Caracci⁸⁶.

On June 26, 1697, in the electoral field, contrary to the later claims of the prince's envoys, there were a few votes in favor of Prince Odeschalchi, but it was a really small group⁸⁷. Many people, out of a sense of loyalty and solidarity with their principal,

84 «Chcąc zemknąć na swą stronę polskich zdania szalki,/ Siła Włoch obiecuje, książę Odeschalcki/ Miliony i srebra, w Rzymie alumnaty,/ Obrazki i zwierciadła, inne świeckie graty/ Zapisy w Neapolim, w Rzymie i Madrycie,/ Które za nic, kiedy jej wywróci na nice./ Frant Włoch bardzo misterny, ale go tu znają,/ Bo Polacy korony za to nie przydają», see: Biblioteka Narodowa w Warszawie, 6646/III, «Na propozycyje księcia jmci Liviusza Odeschalckiego, wnuka (sic!) s<ancti> p<atris> Innocentego XI papieża», f. 424r.

85 The secretary of the French embassy wrote directly that: «The mockers said that this prince offered to Poland 20 bodies of saints and over 20 million, which were settled as follows: 100,000 for an original painting by Raphael, 200,000 for another one, a million for an ancient statue, etc. The fact is that in the proposals that the priest Montecatini printed on his behalf at the end of the Diet, Don Livio pledged, among other things, to leave his goods to the Republic in the event of his childless death, mentioning the countless statues, paintings, vases and other extraordinary curiosities, difficult to count, of which he boasted of possessing. His envoy could also prove conclusively that he had goods worth over 20 million Polish livres», see: Michelle de Mongrillon, *Pamiętnik sekretarza ambasady francuskiej w Polsce pod koniec panowania Jana III oraz w okresie bezkrólewia i wolnej elekcji po jego zgonie (1694-1696)*, ed. Łucja Częścik (Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków: Ossolineum, 1982), 83-4. Conf. Grzegorz Trościński, *Okolicznościowa poezja polityczna okresu bezkrólewia po śmierci Jana III Sobieskiego* (Rzeszów: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego, 2019), 414-15.

86 Boratyński, *Don Livio*, 495-96.

87 Biblioteka Jagiellońska w Krakowie, 3522, f. 56v; Archiwum Państwowe w Toruniu, Akta miasta Torunia, kat. II, XIII-34/1, Andrzej Chojnacki to Daniel Krzysztof Janitzen, Warsaw 18 VI 1697, f. 45b; ASR, FO, 11/C/7, «Copia di articolo lettera in data de' 25 giugno da Varsavia», ff. nn.; Opis elekcji w dniach 26-28 VI 1697, in *Theatrum Europeum*, vol. 15 (Frankfurt am Main 1707), 303. Conf. Francesca de Caprio, «Varsavia, l'Europa e l'interregno nella Rzeczpospolita del

expressed their regret over the prince's defeat, although they did not deny that the Poles were impressed by his conservative actions⁸⁸. Gabriele Vecchi even stated that it was wickedness on the part of the Pope to recognize the election of the Elector of Saxony, Frederick Augustus, as a fresh convert, with such open disapproval of the nephew of Innocent XI. The same author was certainly interested in Saxony and resolutely asked Davia in Poland for the favor of Saxony and excluding any other sign such that he had already been elected King⁸⁹. However, there are many indications that the prince's envoys themselves neglected the matter of choosing the prince, especially Montecatini, who was no longer summoned to any meetings before the election, among others to the French embassy, because he had run out of funds to privateer supporters.

There are many reasons for the defeat, but at the very beginning it is worth taking a look at the attitude of the prince's deputies themselves, who began to look for people among themselves responsible for the electoral defeat. Baron Piccinardi left Warsaw just before the beginning of the election session, seeing that the deputies were acting against his recommendations and slandering him, calling him a traitor and even an

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dopo Sobieski”, in *L'Europa di Giovanni Sobieski. Cultura, politica, mercatura e società*, ed. Gaetano Platania (Viterbo: Sette Città, 2005), 376; Urszula Kosińska, “W kręgu mitów, czyli o tym co nie zdecydowało o wyborze Augusta II na tron Polski w 1697 roku”, *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, 79/4 (2022): 800.

88 ASR, FO, 11/D/7, C.M. Vota to L. Odescalchi, Varsavia, 27 VI 1697, ff. nn.; B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, A. del Negro, Warsaw [?] VII 1697, p. 140 [orig. ASR, FO 11/D/1]; ASR, FO, 3/C/11, M. Baellini to L. Odescalchi, without date and place, ff. nn. Stanisław Dąbski, the bishop of Kujawy, was the only one to send his letter, full of compliments to the prince, he tried to console him after the loss, see: B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, Stanisław Dąbski to L. Odescalchi, Warsaw 15 VII 1697, pp. 292-93 [orig. ASR, FO 11/D/9].

89 «The Pope [Innocent XII – Author's note] himself declared to Davia in Poland that he was in favour of Saxony and excluded any other sign such that he was already elected King» [Il Papa [Innocent XII–Author note] medesimo dicerto s'interesse per Sassonia mento ad esso risoluti dichiereti al Davia in Polonia ci favore di Sassonia e escluso d'ogni altro il segno tale ch'era giú eletto Ré], see: B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol. 121, G. Vecchi to L. Odescalchi, Vienna 6 VII 1697, p. 161 [orig. ASR, FO 11/D/8]. For more on the Pope's recognition of the election of Augustus II, see: Jacek Staszewski, *August II Mocny* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1998), 60-5; Jacek Staszewski, *Stosunki Augusta II z Kurią Rzymską w latach 1704–1706 (Misja rzymska)* (Toruń: Towarzystwo Naukowe w Toruniu, 1966); Gaetano Platania, *Gli ultimi Sobieski. Fasti e miserie di una famiglia reale polacca tra Sei e Settecento* (Viterbo: Sette Città, 1990), 43-56; Wojciech Kęder, *Tajemnice*, 77-88; Kęder, “Kardynał Giovanni Antonio de Via (Gianantonio de Via)–nuncjusz w Rzeczypospolitej (1696–1700)”, *Studia Sandomierskie*, 26 (2019): 42-4; Bela Vilmos Mihalik, “Catholics, heretics, and “common enemy” Papal diplomacy and the Great Turkish War during the papacy of Innocent XII, 1691–1700”, in *Confessional Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Roberta Andersson, and Charlotte Backerra (London, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group 2020), 39-54; Id., “The King's Cousin, the Emperor's Bishop. Christian August of Saxe-Zeitz as Mediator between Poland and the Holy See”, *Eastern European History Review*, 4 (2021): 241-54.

intruder. Del Negro resented him for granting a loan of 200 ducats to purchase silver. Del Negro brought a lawsuit against the baron for both the sum and the printing of the ephemera. Moreover, the Genoese accused Keckenbert of spending money intended to pay the prince's supporters on luxurious goods purchased in Toruń. In turn, Piccinardi complained about del Negro's stinginess. Similar accusations were made against him by Cesare Borsatti, who after the election, together with Montecatini, went first to Gdańsk, then went to Wrocław and then to Vienna. After many adventures and almost complete poverty, due to attacks and robberies of his belongings, he managed to return to Bracciano. Livio Odescalchi for his service, obtained for him the position of canon of the collegiate church. The prince also did not believe Piccinardi's and Borsatti's revelations about del Negro's stinginess. It even seems that the prince could have been grateful to him for saving his estate from ruin⁹⁰.

There was also much resentment towards the lawyer Montecatini. Cesare Borsatti and Baron Piccinardi mocked him for being more suitable for the consistory process than for the electoral fight for the Polish crown. They both claimed that Montecatini was too proud and extremely cowardly and therefore incapable of performing such an important function. He was blamed for his ignorance of languages, ceremonies and even drunkenness, which he fell into during a feast at the Primate's, so much so that he attacked the bishop of Kujawy and tore his cassock. However, it is difficult to say whether this event took place at all or whether it was created to discredit Montecatini in the eyes of the prince. The fact is, however, that del Negro's miserliness contributed to the modest presentation of the prince's representative during the parliamentary hearing of foreign delegates. According to Borsatti, Montecatini could only purchase a miserable carriage driven by lame horses. Placing his page in the carriage next to the envoy was also said to cause scandal. Montecatini, who probably did not have a very clear conscience and was not very energetic in agitating for his master, was neither accused of anything else nor punished by Livio Odescalchi.

Prince's Odescalchi form of consolation after losing the election was to grant him the principality of Sirmio (Sremska Mitrovica), located in the Kingdom of Hungary in the basins of the Drava, Sava and Danube rivers, near Belgrade, on the border with the Ottoman Empire⁹¹. Agreements regarding the granting of the duchy to Livio

90 After the election, various amounts were given that the prince was to spend to pay for his election. It was mentioned that it was 15 or 20,000 or even 50,000, see L. Odescalchi, *Don Livio*, 510.

91 Angelo Tamborra, "Gli studi di storia dell'Europa Orientale in Italia nell'ultimo ventennio", in *La storiografia italiana negli ultimi venti anni*, ed. Luigi De Rosa, vol. 2 (Milano: Laterza, 1972), 1042; Raoul Guèze, "Livio Odescalchi e il Ducato di Sirmio", in *Venezia, Italia, Ungheria fra Arcadia e Illuminismo*, eds. Béla Köpeczi, and Péter Sárközy (Budapest: Fondazione Giorgio Cini di Venezia, 1982), 45-7; Marco Pizzo, "Il Sirmio, gli Odescalchi e la seta: un tentativo imprenditoriale non riuscito", in *Conflitti e compromessi nell'Europa di centro fra XVI e XX secolo*, ed. Gaetano Platania (Viterbo: Sette Città, 2001), 211-22; Ulrike Seeger, "Quellen zu Schloss Ilok aus dem Archiv der Familie Odescalchi", *Radovi Instituta za povijest umjetnosti*, 38 (2014): 93-102; Marco Jacov, *Il Ducato di Sirmio tra il Regno d'Ungheria, gli Ottomani, gli Absburgo, e gli Odescalchi* (Kraków: Księgarnia Akademicka, 2014).

Odescalchi were made already in 1687, and a year later he sent his representative Giovanni Giani to Vienna to finalize them⁹². Due to the negotiations over the sum of the sale, the resistance of the subjects to the rule of the foreigner and the still uncertain status of the lands that had just been taken from the Turks, the case ended in success only in 1697⁹³. On August 21, for the price of 300,000 ducats, the prince formally acquired the new estate and received a diploma from Emperor Leopold I confirming his ownership rights to the estate of Arva, Tersacz in Croatia and the principality of Sirmio⁹⁴. However, only after losing the election in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the prince was able to develop his economic plans in the newly acquired estates. For this purpose, he delegated two of his representatives, the abbot Giovanni Boini and Gabriele Vecchi, to search, prepare inventories of goods and take possession of the Ilok fortress, which tasks they performed in the years 1698/1699–1702⁹⁵. The purchase of the principality should be considered not only in terms of the prince's attempt to enrich himself and his good contacts with the imperial court, but above all in terms of plans to revive the anti-Ottoman crusade, the visible symbol of which, immediately after the Vienna victory, was the retaking of Belgrade in 1689.

CONCLUSION

The candidacy of Prince Livio Odescalchi was one of the weakest one among the group of stronger candidates. It is difficult to even assume that the prince's envoys would be able to harm Prince Conti or Prince Jakub Sobieski with their actions. In this respect, the prince's position did not differ compared to the candidacies of other Italian princes during previous elections. The prince waited too long to officially declare his candidacy, wavering between the dream of a crown that would raise his status and his disbelief in the success of the venture. Certainly, the fate of Rinaldo d'Este, a faithful servant of Prince Angelo del Negro, was not a clear warning to the Prince Odescalchi. At this point, it is necessary to briefly enumerate what contributed to the electoral defeat of Prince Livio Odescalchi. First of all, we should mention the lack of support from Emperor Leopold I, who was involved in supporting Prince Jakub Sobieski. Secondly, the actions of the prince's envoys were chaotic. Giovanni Arrigo Piccinardi's ideas and designs were met with complete criticism from other representatives of the prince, including: Angelo Feliciano Montecatini

92 B. PAU-PAN, 8461, vol 121, Giovanni Gianni to L. Odescalchi, Vienna, 12 IX 1688, p. 254 [orig. ASR, FO, 11/D/9].

93 Fiorentini, *Livio*, 233–38.

94 Jacov, *Il Ducato*, 13. The diploma granting the estates of the Duchy of Sirmio was received in Vienna by Queen Marie Casimire d'Arquien Sobieska in December 1698 and handed to Prince Livio Odescalchi after his arrival in Rome in March 1699. More about contacts between Prince Livio Odescalchi and Imperial court in Vienna and their officers, see: Gernot Mayer, "Das Geschäft mit der Ehre. Bildergeschenke von Don Livio Odescalchi an Dominik Andreas von Kaunitz zwischen Freundschaftsgabe und Bestechung", in *Travelling Objects. Botschafter des Kulturtransfers zwischen Italien und dem Habsburgerreich*, eds. Gernot Mayer, and Silvia Tammaro (Wien/Köln/Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 2018), 65–88.

95 Platania, *La candidatura*, 309–21.

and Michele del Negro. The Jesuit Carlo Maurizio Vota and the merchant Racchetti also acted autonomously. The action of printing propaganda magazines and buying noble votes was uncoordinated. It was therefore difficult to expect positive effects of such actions. Disagreements between the prince's envoys, their own interests and disputes not only excluded joint actions, but also resulted in mutual accusations. In this atmosphere, the prince's proposals, apart from the fact that they were ridiculed, were not taken seriously, just like the envoys themselves. The last third issue was the indecision of Prince Livio Odescalchi himself, who hesitated for too long and the intensification of the electoral campaign just before the actual election turned out to be his serious mistake.

ABBREVIATION

AAV: Archivio Apostolico Vaticano.

Segr. Stato: Segreteria di Stato.

ASR: Archivio di Stato di Roma.

FO: Fondo Odescalchi.

B. PAU-PAN: Biblioteka Polskiej Akademii Umiejętności-Polskiej Akademii Nauk.

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