



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

The cultural importance of Florentine patricians

Goudriaan, E.J.

Citation

Goudriaan, E. J. (2015, April 30). *The cultural importance of Florentine patricians*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/32883>

Version: Corrected Publisher's Version

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/32883>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Cover Page



Universiteit Leiden



The handle <http://hdl.handle.net/1887/32883> holds various files of this Leiden University dissertation.

Author: Goudriaan, Elisa Johanna

Title: The cultural importance of Florentine patricians. Cultural exchange, brokerage networks, and social representation in early modern Florence and Rome (1600-1660)

Issue Date: 2015-04-30

5

The brokerage activities of Michelangelo Buonarroti the Younger and the exchange of cultural gifts

Introduction

Quando sarò alla sua villa di Settignano le renderò conto per la minuta del viaggio di Napoli della corte et di quanto mi è occorso in quel tempo che sarò stato fuori di Fiorenza città veramente bellissima...⁹⁷²

This is what the painter Cosimo Gamberucci (fig. 14) wrote to Michelangelo Buonarroti the Younger (fig. 1) in July 1606 while residing at the court of Cardinal Acquaviva in Naples.⁹⁷³ The fact that he wanted to visit Buonarroti in his villa on the countryside indicates the good personal relationship the patrician Buonarroti had with this artist. Buonarroti's strong relationship with

972 Gamberucci to Buonarroti, 28 July 1606, A.B. 48, no. 944 (see appendix). Also transcribed by Cole 2011: p. 485.

973 This is Cardinal Ottavio Acquaviva the Elder (1560-1612), nominated as Archbishop of Naples by the Medici-Pope Leo XI in 1605. Acquaviva solved the famine of 1607 and revived convent life. See Knight 2012; Metzler 2004: 67.

Gamberucci and other artists (see also the section about his art patronage in the third chapter) was one of the most attractive aspects of his network for higher patrons. In addition to his contact with artists, Buonarroti was in close contact with Florentine patricians at European courts from Prague and Vienna to Rome and Paris, and he had good relationships with higher patrons from the Barberini and Medici family. This made him the ideal person to operate as a cultural broker, an intermediary between clients and patrons.

The term cultural broker was used for the first time in the field of anthropology in the mid-1900s and is equivalent with the term cultural intermediary. A cultural broker mediates between people who are separated from each other for geographical or social reasons. His function is to reduce conflicts, to promote the social prestige of patrons and clients, and to promote change and innovation in the cultural field. The difference between a go-between and a broker is that a broker deliberately changes the emphasis or content of messages to present patrons and clients to each other in the best way possible. Janie Cole used the term for the first time in the Florentine context in her excellent research into the music oriented brokerage activities of Michelangelo Buonarroti the Younger.⁹⁷⁴

As a cultural broker, Buonarroti sought to promote the social prestige of both patrons and clients, to increase the geographic and social mobility of artists, and to foster cultural innovation in Florence. This is what the second part of this chapter is about, all based on the rich cultural correspondence preserved in the Buonarroti archive in Florence. We will read about the social network of Buonarroti, the exchange of cultural gifts between him and other Florentine patricians at different European courts, and about his brokerage activities. All this becomes clear from many unpublished letters with artists, friends, and patrons and will be presented as an example of the structure of other brokerage networks in early modern Florence.

The first part of this chapter explores some theoretical aspects of social networks, patronage networks, and brokerage networks so that we can better interpret Buonarroti's activities. Attention is given to the difference between friendship and patronage relationships, to the type of social networks to which the Florentine patricians belonged, and to the mechanisms to maintain patron-

974 Cole 2011; See Cole 2007a: 729-88; Cole 2007b. For further details about the history of the term, see Michael Michiel 'The role of culture brokers in intercultural science education: A research proposal', Centre for Research in Science and Technology Education, University of Waikato, Paper presented at the 34th annual conference of the Australasian Science Education Research Association held in Melbourne, 10-12 July 2003.

age relationships. These theoretical aspects are illustrated with examples from Buonarroti's correspondence.

Part I

5.1 Social networks

Jeremy Boissevain wrote a standard book on the analysis of social networks: *Friends of friends. Networks, Manipulators and Coalitions* (Oxford, 1974). Although in his book he analyses social networks in modern times, his observations can be perfectly applied to social networks in the early modern time. This paragraph is based on his description of the functioning of social networks, combined with the theory about weak ties of Granovetter.⁹⁷⁵

In our time of social media it is not difficult to understand what a social network is. It consists of all the different social relations a person has: with close friends, colleagues, vague acquaintances, former schoolmates, sporting mates, and so on. If we should draw our network abstractly in what is called a network diagram, it should consist of ourselves in the middle with star-shaped lines that lead to other people to whom we are directly connected. This is our primary network.⁹⁷⁶ Mostly, the people who belong to our primary network know other people we do not know, and who can be useful for us while searching for a job or other things. We can come into contact with them by contacting the members of our primary network. Boissevain calls these other people 'friends-of-friends'. Together they form our secondary network.⁹⁷⁷

Nowadays, using internet and social media, we can easily reach our friends-of-friends directly, but in the seventeenth century, circumventing the friends in one's primary network was uncommon. It was better to use your friends as intermediators. Even today we use this method. If we have something really important to ask to a friend-of-friend, mostly we ask a direct friend to present us first. If this is a good friend of ours, he will present us in the most favourable way so that the friend-of-friend is willing to help us. For brokerage networks like Buonarroti's these friends-of-friends were very important.

Every person has strong and weak ties in his network.⁹⁷⁸ The strong ties are generally the good friends of our primary network and the weak ties are the

975 Boissevain 1974: 24-30; Granovetter 1973, 1983.

976 Boissevain 1974: 24.

977 Ibid.

978 Granovetter 1983: 201/202.

acquaintances in our secondary network. But while they are in the periphery of our own network, they most likely are members of other strong-tie networks. Thus weak ties can form bridges between networks. This can be very important while looking for a job, in our time, but it was also true in the seventeenth century.⁹⁷⁹ Social distances can often be bridged by using the weak ties of our networks as brokers.⁹⁸⁰

Boissevain calls the messages exchanged between all those weak- and strong-tie contacts within a network social transactions. What is exchanged is not money, as in economic transactions, but 'things' - material or immaterial - with social value. The content of social transactions can consist for example of money, information, help, or affection.⁹⁸¹ The material and immaterial things that are exchanged during a transaction are called the transactional content.

Usually there is a reciprocal exchange of social transactions between two persons. If person A delivers more services with social value than person B can return, person B is indebted to person A. Person A in this case has power over person B. Power differences can originate in this respect from differences in social status and influence between person A and B, but also from the fact that they are indebted to each other.⁹⁸² These power differences can change constantly; therefore we say that social relations are dynamic rather than static.

5.2 Patronage networks

Patrons, clients, and friends

Two types of social networks are relevant for this thesis, namely patronage and brokerage networks.

In the early modern period, a patronage relationship or patron-client relationship was an unequal relationship between two persons or groups who offered each other their services reciprocally.⁹⁸³ The patron in this case had more power, money or influence than the client, and therefore had access to income, jobs, privileges, status, and protection.⁹⁸⁴ In this theoretical analysis the word patron does not mean a Maecenas - a wealthy patron of the arts - but more generally the person with the higher social status in a patronage relation-

979 Ibid.: 203.

980 Ibid.: 208.

981 Reinhard 1979: 26.

982 Boissevain 1974: 26.

983 Pollmann 2006: 216.

984 Ibid.

ship. In the context of cultural commissions, of course the two meanings of the word can be the same.

Patronage networks were omnipresent in the early modern time. Mario Biagioli states that social mobility and a good career in the early modern period were impossible if one did not participate in a patronage network.⁹⁸⁵ Patronage was responsible for the hierarchical organisation of society.⁹⁸⁶ Elite groups like Florentine patricians were suitable to form patronage networks, because they had an internal hierarchy, combined with relations with more and less powerful people outside their group. The individual members were subject to great pressure from different sides (their own family, and patrons like cardinals and members of the Medici family) and this caused their need for favours from others, to fulfil all the requests from patrons, family, and clients.⁹⁸⁷

The fact that every patrician took part in one or more patronage networks led to a phenomenon that Ronald Weissman - in his analysis of social networks in the early Renaissance - calls 'social ambiguity'. This means that every person had double intentions with all his actions. The patricians had such complicated commitments towards various people that no one could expect absolute loyalty of another person.⁹⁸⁸ Although Weissman wrote about the early Renaissance, his views can be applied perfectly to the situation in the beginning of the seventeenth century. Every person played several roles at the same time, as in modern society. Today, for example, a man who lives in a city can play the roles of father, dentist, member of the tennis club, and participant in a bridge course. The difference between the society in our time and the one in the early Baroque is that our society is more fragmented. In all the roles we play, we see different people. The dentist normally does not play tennis with his colleagues and does not attend a bridge course with his teammates from the tennis club. In the early seventeenth century, many of the social roles a man played took place within the same community of people. Florentine patricians saw each other at court, in church, during festivities and ceremonies, in official and informal academies, and during social activities like religious and popular feasts.⁹⁸⁹ Towards every

985 Biagioli 1993: 16.

986 Weissman 1989: 272.

987 Lind 1996: 125.

988 Weissman 1989: 272.

989 Popular and religious feasts could be *San Giovanni* or *calcio fiorentino*.

person in these strongly overlapping circles of people an early modern patrician had certain commitments.⁹⁹⁰

In the early modern period, there was no clear difference between friendship and patronage relations. Patrons and clients did not describe themselves as such.⁹⁹¹ They saw their relationship as a form of friendship between unequal persons. The more vertical the relation was (due to differences in social status, power, and wealth) the more it could be described as a patron-client relationship. If the relation was more horizontal, it could be regarded as a friendship.⁹⁹²

Between two friends the linguistic usage in letters could be very elevated, so it is difficult to make a sharp distinction between friendship and patron-client ties. Nevertheless, historians and sociologists have asked themselves how unequal a friendship relationship has to be to become a patron-client relationship. Sharon Kettering distinguishes four different levels of friendship or patron-client ties. Friends she divides between intimate and social friends, relations between the latter being based on reciprocal benefit. In the early modern period, many friends were social friends whose friendship was based on the exchange of favours.⁹⁹³ Patron-client relationships are divided by Kettering into loyal and normal patron-client relations. Loyal patron-client relations were based on reciprocal devotion whereas normal patron-client relations were based purely on self-interest.

The distinction between loyal patron-client relations and social friends was slight. If one person rose in status, his friends could suddenly become clients. At this moment, the exchange of favours became a requirement for the continuation of the relationship.⁹⁹⁴ This is what happened between Michelangelo Buonarroti the Younger and his friend Maffeo Barberini, who became Cardinal and then Pope Urban VIII. If a client, in his turn, rose in status, in theory he could become a social friend again. Of course, this did not happen in the case of Buonarroti. Once he became Pope, Urban VIII remained always his higher patron.

Even if there were no differences in social status and power, it was not uncommon for friends to have a patron-client relationship, as Weissman states.⁹⁹⁵

990 This is what Weissman (1989: 273) states about patricians in the early Renaissance period, but it was certainly still the case in the seventeenth century.

991 Lind 1996: 123.

992 Kettering 1992: 142.

993 Reinhard 1979: 37.

994 Kettering 1992: 143-50.

995 Weissman 1987: 35.

There could also be differences in access to news, information, useful contacts, political contacts, and technical skills. In the Buonarroti network, we see some examples of this. On 7 October 1621, Jacopo Soldani (fig. 2) wrote Buonarroti that he received erudite questions about a certain inscription from a gentleman called Tommaso Grifoni.⁹⁹⁶ Soldani was in his villa at Pianfranzese and did not have the required books at hand, which were all in his palace in Florence. He asked Buonarroti to redirect the questions to a mutual friend, Piero Vettori.⁹⁹⁷ One week later, on 15 October he wrote that he enjoyed Buonarroti's letters a lot, especially during his lonely days at the villa ("troppo mi son care le lettere di VS, e massimo in questa solitudine") and he thanked Buonarroti for forwarding the questions to Vettori.⁹⁹⁸ He concluded by asking Buonarroti to kiss the hand of all the members of the 'conversazione Segalonica', a genealogical academy they both frequented. In a letter of 27 November, he referred again to the case and said that he heard from Tommaso Grifoni that Piero Vettori had helped him with the questions. He thanked Buonarroti again for his help.⁹⁹⁹

In this case, Grifoni contacted Soldani because of his intellectual knowledge, but this does not mean that Grifoni was socially inferior to Soldani.¹⁰⁰⁰ On another occasion it could happen that Grifoni's role seemed more that of a patron, while Soldani 'played' the client. Neither was it the case that Soldani was socially inferior to Buonarroti or vice versa. Whether the relationship had the character of a friendship or of a patron-client-relationship thus depended on the kind of request. Soldani and Grifoni themselves of course did not see each other as patrons or clients, but as friends and thus equals.

Dyadic, non-corporate groups

Theoretically, patron-client relationships can be classified in different groups. Landé gives several models for this and the model which best suits the community of the Florentine patricians is the one of the dyadic, non-corporate

996 The Grifoni were *uomini nuovi* from San Miniato al Tedesco, near Pisa.

997 A.B. 54, no. 1841, see appendix.

998 Ibid., no. 1842, see appendix.

999 Ibid., no. 1844, see appendix.

1000 An example of a similar situation is found in August 1604, when ambassador Giovanni Uguccioni asked Buonarroti from Prague if he wanted to do research on the antiquity of Florence, because he did not have the right books at hand. Someone he encountered asserted that Florence was not an ancient city, but a *metropoli*, the seat of a bishop. (A.B. 55, no. 2104, see appendix) In October of the same year Uguccioni thanks Buonarroti for clearing up his uncertainties about the antiquity of Florence. (A.B. 55, no. 2105, see appendix).

groups.¹⁰⁰¹ Dyadic, non-corporate groups are networks in which a group of people is not united in an official association, but where the group certainly has a form of organisation. The difference between corporate groups (political parties or sport clubs, for examples) and dyadic, non-corporate groups (a cluster of friends) is that members of corporate groups have common possessions, goals and commitments, whereas in dyadic, non-corporate groups members look after their own needs, capital, and possessions. The relations between the members of dyadic, non-corporate groups are called dyadic relations.

The Florentine patricians can be seen as a cluster of 'friends', if we consider the word friend in its broader seventeenth-century-meaning. The only commitment within a dyadic, non-corporate group is to grant favours to each other. This is exactly what united the patricians, who all took part of overlapping patronage networks. Since not every member could supply the same amount of services (even within the elite group of Florentine patricians there were differences in social hierarchy and access to information, money, and power), the members were not united with each other because of their comparable goals and interest (which should have been the case if they had formed a corporate group). On the contrary, the personal interest of every individual patrician could change depending on his actual influence, power, and capital.

In dyadic, non-corporate groups, like that of the patricians, there are no clear boundaries between one group and another. The only way in which one can define the unclear boundaries of a group is by looking at the frequency with which favours are exchanged between certain members. In the core of the network, the favours that are exchanged between the members are frequent. In the periphery, the members provide help to just one or two other persons and receive help from the same number of people. Of course, it is possible that the same persons who move in the periphery of one network are part of the core of another network. Therefore, we can say that the community of Florentine patricians consisted of several dyadic, non-corporate groups which partly overlapped. Their cores were defined by their familial background, the quarters of the city where they lived, their marriage bonds, their role in patronage networks, their membership of academies and confraternities, their ceremonial activities, their functions for the Medici court, and their bonds with the Medici and other patrons.

1001 Landé 1977: xv-xx.

5.3 Brokerage networks

Brokerage networks in theory

A broker in the seventeenth century was an intermediate person between clients and higher patrons. People, information, and cultural objects could travel through the channels of his brokerage network. A seventeenth-century broker could deliver information, power, products, and services to his clients.¹⁰⁰² In return, the clients delivered loyalty and servitude.¹⁰⁰³

Information could consist of confidential information about a possible future client. A patron could ask a broker, for example, if he could tell him secretly what salary a certain artist earned from another patron and then make a better offer.¹⁰⁰⁴ In this case it was better to use a broker than to approach the other patron or artist directly, because then the situation could become too obvious and create rivalries. The power a broker exercised consisted of his large influence over potential future resources (jobs, privileges) and of the extensive access he had to the people who controlled these resources. The products a broker delivered could be material (books, cloths, or other objects) or immaterial (jobs, promotions, access to important persons, or other favours). Services a broker delivered were recommendations, the forwarding of messages or letters, or practical things the correspondent could not execute, because he was in another city or country.¹⁰⁰⁵

In return for favours, a client offered his loyalty. If he stayed several years in the network of the same broker, this broker could count on him if he needed him for favours in service of other clients or patrons. The service of a client consisted of delivering products like paintings or books, giving his opinion about things (the price or quality of a painting for example) and executing small services when the broker needed them.¹⁰⁰⁶ Moreover, the fact that a broker had a circle of clients around him, for example artists, meant that he could rise in status or at least maintain his actual social status, since he looked successful in the eyes of other clients, brokers, and patrons.

A broker did not decide about jobs and privileges that were controlled by higher patrons; rather, he influenced the quality of the requests of certain

1002 Cole 2007a: 730.

1003 Kettering 1988a: 425.

1004 Janie Cole, interview at Villa I Tatti (Florence), 27 September 2007.

1005 Ibid.

1006 Rasch 2007: 32 describes how Constantijn Huygens (1596–1687) in exchange for his patronage of musicians asked their opinion about his music.

clients or other brokers.¹⁰⁰⁷ He could do this by writing letters, but also by using his own resources (important contacts). So, he was not only an intermediary, who forwarded messages, he could also influence the outcome of a request.¹⁰⁰⁸ To fulfil a request of a client successfully, he could use and manipulate other brokers who were indebted to him. Moreover, he could manipulate higher patrons with his rhetorical skills in letters.

An example of how Buonarroti could influence the quality of a request we can see when one of Buonarroti's relatives, Manfredo Macinghi, recommended a certain Giorgio Trinci, a mathematician and man of letters from Foligno, for a job with the Medici family, in a letter of 27 May 1607. It was customary for the person being recommended to deliver his letters of support in person. Therefore, Trinci went to the house of Buonarroti with the letter from Macinghi, who wrote that Trinci possessed qualities that he wanted to present to the Grand Duke, though it was not clear for which specific job he was applying. Buonarroti was asked to recommend Trinci in a letter to Curzio Picchena, the state secretary of the Medici, and Trinci was supposed to bring this letter in person to Picchena.¹⁰⁰⁹

Buonarroti probably wrote the recommendation letter immediately after Trinci arrived at his house, because it was dated only three days after the letter from Macinghi, brought by Trinci from Terriciola (near Pisa/Livorno). Buonarroti's letter begins by saying that Trinci is recommended by Signor Borghi, a nephew of the former bishop of Borgo San Sepolcro and by his own relative Manfredo Macinghi.¹⁰¹⁰ He notes that Trinci carries letters of recommendation from both of these men and from Buonarroti himself.¹⁰¹¹ In the rest of the letter he recounts that Trinci is talented in artillery and fortifications. As we will see in other cases, Buonarroti prizes the young man not only by naming his qualities, but also by referring to the other important persons who recommend him.

It is not known whether Trinci received a job with the Medici family thanks to Buonarroti's intervention. Two months later, however, the painter Annibale Mancini, who was in the service of Cardinal Alessandro d'Este, asked for information about Trinci, whom he had recently met at Modena.¹⁰¹² Mancini notes

1007 Kettering 1988a: 425.

1008 Ibid.

1009 A.B. 49, no. 1136, see appendix.

1010 The former bishop of San Sepolcro was Alessandro Borghi (1559-1613), who was bishop of Borgo San Sepolcro from 1598 until 1605, when he became vicar of Pope Paul V.

1011 A.B. 39, no. 39, see appendix.

1012 On Annibale Mancini: Pedroia 1997: 371-78.

that Trinci was badly dressed, but that he nevertheless got the impression that he was a man of great erudition, especially in mathematics and astronomy.¹⁰¹³ Maybe Cardinal d'Este was interested in these qualities.

Apart from social networks, Boissevain also writes about the theoretical structures of brokerage networks.¹⁰¹⁴ He stresses that after a broker has delivered a favour, there is never a clear agreement about what the return-favour should be, how much social value it should contain, or when he shall receive it. The only agreement is that something will be exchanged at an unspecified moment in the future. If the agreement should be too clear, Boissevain explains, and every detail about the return-favour should be determined (time, value, kind of object, or service), then the account should be settled and closed, as in monetary transactions. In brokerage transactions, it was very important for both parties, to leave the agreement for the return-favour as vague as possible, to create debt-relations. In that case, the reciprocal commitment and loyalty would continue, because patrons, brokers and clients were indebted favours to one another. In this respect, a social transaction was almost never an exchange of services or favours, which happened at the same time, as is the case with monetary transactions.¹⁰¹⁵ Although the return-favour and when it should be fulfilled were not specified, there were however some invisible rules about the social or material value of the return-favour, and brokers could give clients advice about these.¹⁰¹⁶ Again, Boissevain's theoretical analysis of modern networks can be applied perfectly to the seventeenth-century networks of the Florentine patricians, who functioned in exactly the way Boissevain describes.¹⁰¹⁷

How did a broker make profit?

Although a broker does not earn a salary and in general does not receive a return favour immediately after the original favour is delivered, he does profit. As Boissevain explains, the social capital of the broker consists of his network of relations; his credit is created by how great other people estimate his capital

1013 A.B. 49, no. 1190: uomo molto male in arnese, maar che aveva dato impressione di una grande cultura ed erudizione, soprattutto nelle scienze matematiche e astronomiche. 13 July 1607. On 7 September Mancini wrote a letter of thanks for the information about Trinci: A.B. 49, no. 1191.

1014 Boissevain 1974: 153–61.

1015 We can understand this situation if we think of our own network of friends and acquaintances. If we for example repair a friend's bike or computer, because we have the skills to do so, we normally will not ask immediately for a return-favour. Still, our friend is indebted to us and we feel freer to ask him for a return favour in the future should the need arise.

1016 Blau 1964: 94, writes about these invisible rules.

1017 Boissevain 1974: 153–61.

to be – that is, the number of persons he can influence. For the broker it is more important to seem powerful than to be powerful.¹⁰¹⁸ If he seems powerful, clients are more willing to be part of his network, because they believe he can influence higher-status patrons. Because of his ever-rising status and power a broker also gets other privileges, like jobs for himself and his relatives, access to important persons, donations, and so on. This is his profit, together with other material and immaterial gifts from patrons and clients.

Generally speaking, brokers have larger networks than patrons. A patron has direct control over his resources (for example jobs), which are clearly defined, whereas a broker can use his potential influence to negotiate with more than one patron. The more clients he has, the more patrons he can satisfy, and vice versa. The network of a broker is thus potentially infinite. We can say that a patron works with certainties, while a broker works on speculations: hope, promises, prospects, and probabilities. The Medici for example directly controlled all kinds of jobs, such as positions in their household, in the government administration, in the military, in the magistracy, in the education of their children, in the decoration of their palaces and villas, and so on. Brokers like patricians, who had a good relationship with one or more members of the Medici family, could promise more than one client to intermediate for one of these positions, and could almost guarantee the Medici that they could find the most appropriate candidate for a certain position. Of course they always pretended to have found the best possible candidate, although in reality it could happen that there was just one candidate. In this way, brokers could speculate with the hope of patrons and clients.

To operate successfully, a broker had to develop the ability to decide when he had to deliver a favour and when he could refuse one, without losing his client or disappointing a patron. He had to be sure to fulfil the requests of clients enough times to be sure that they would stay in his network. If he succeeded in fulfilling the hopes of ever changing clients, they would stay in his network and keep delivering him small favours and services. In the same way he could present a good candidate one time to one patron (for example the Medici) and one time to another (for example the Barberini in Rome) and had to be sure to satisfy both families enough times to be kept in their patronage networks. Because none of his clients or patrons knew exactly how large his influence was, they kept hoping for success and speculating on his influence to satisfy their needs and wishes.

1018 Pollmann 2006: 231.

Clients were aware of the fact that a broker got more requests for one job or commission, and they therefore tried to distinguish themselves to get priority over potential rivals. In the seventeenth century, one of the ways for clients to distinguish themselves was to send gifts, which was also a form of credit for the broker. The more requests he fulfilled, the more credit he could get. The more credit he had, the more clients and patrons he would attract, and the more people were indebted to him. Every debt was a new favour or service to be delivered at a time of his deciding (and he could also decide the kind of favour). He could use these favours either for his other clients, or for his own social advantage or that of someone in his family. This flexibility - the possibility to be able to contact the right people at the right moment - gave the broker his power and credit.¹⁰¹⁹

Dyadic chains

Successful brokerage transactions often contained dyadic chains instead of only dyadic pairs. Landé analyses clearly how this works.¹⁰²⁰ If a broker wants to receive a favour from a person who is not part of his primary network, he has to involve an intermediate person who does have a direct contact to this person. In cases when he does not know such an intermediate person, he has to involve another intermediate person who does. A situation in which more than one intermediate person is needed requires what is called a dyadic chain. Since the broker does not have an open balance of exchanged favours with the person at the end of the dyadic chain, they are not indebted to each other. To achieve his goal he has to make sure that he contacts the right intermediaries, who have an active balance of exchanged favours to each other and finally with the person at the end of the dyadic chain. If the favour is granted, the dyadic chain goes the other way round. The person at the end of the dyadic chain shall receive a reward (a return-favour) from the nearest intermediate person. This intermediate person receives his reward from an intermediate person further down the dyadic chain. This process is repeated until it arrives at the broker who provides the last reward. This is how dyadic chains in brokerage networks work in theory.

In practice, we can recognize the pattern of the dyadic chain clearly in the brokerage activities of Michelangelo Buonarroti the Younger. In 1639, for example, Buonarroti wanted his nephew Gismondo Buonarroti to get a job.

¹⁰¹⁹ Kooijmans 1997: 136.

¹⁰²⁰ Landé 1977: xiii-xxvii.

To succeed in this request he sent a letter to Prince Leopoldo de' Medici (see chapter 4, fig. 9), addressed to his chamberlain, Buonarroti's good friend Jacopo Soldani (fig. 2). This letter has been preserved in the two volumes of Buonarroti's drafts in the Buonarroti archive. On 7 May 1639, Buonarroti wrote to Leopoldo that the prince could do him and his nephew a favour by asking the Grand Duke for a job for Gismondo. He writes that they both will forever be indebted to Leopoldo if he succeeds in passing on their request to the Grand Duke.¹⁰²¹

Four days later, Soldani answered and included a letter of recommendation by Prince Leopoldo, who recommended Gismondo for the requested job. Soldani wrote that Prince Leopoldo was eagerly willing to serve Buonarroti and immediately wrote a letter to the Grand Duke ("Non potrei esprimere a V.S. la prontezza che ha mostrato questo Serenissimo Principe in interporre la sua intercessione appresso il Serenissimo Gran Duca"). This proves the good relationship between Leopoldo and Buonarroti. Soldani writes that in his letter of recommendation for the Grand Duke, Leopoldo emphasized the virtues of Buonarroti and the qualities of his nephew Gismondo.¹⁰²² From Leopoldo's recommendation letter, it is clear that Gismondo asked for two posts formerly executed by the historian and poet Alessandro Adimari: *capitano di Parte* and *provveditore dell'arte del Cambio*.¹⁰²³ Apparently, Buonarroti had to see for himself how he handed over the letter of recommendation of Leopoldo to the Grand Duke.

Apart from Leopoldo's recommendation letter and a personal message from Leopoldo to Buonarroti, Soldani added a personal answer to Buonarroti, to whom he writes that it is his dearest desire the request will work out successfully. He thanks Buonarroti for the honour of the request and offers to fulfil many others for him.¹⁰²⁴ This indicates that the patricians felt it an honour and social obligation to serve each other with favours. Although Buonarroti burdened Soldani with a request, he reversed the situation by saying it was an honour to please Buonarroti. Buonarroti will do the same when Soldani

1021 A.B. 40, no. 51, see appendix. For this recommendation and some transcriptions of letters see Cole 2011: 173, 677/678.

1022 A.B. 50, no. 1236 (personal letter from Leopoldo to Buonarroti) and 1236 bis (the recommendation letter of Leopoldo to Grand Duke Ferdinand II), see appendix.

1023 Ibid. On Alessandro Adimari, see 4.4 Patricians, artists, and their literary, linguistic, and theatrical experiments at Florentine cultural academies and confraternities

1024 A.B. 54, no. 1876, see appendix.

asks him for a favour and in this way the communication remains polite and friendly.

In analysing this, we can see how many people were involved in forwarding one request. This was how informal networks functioned. Gismondo asks Buonarroti if he can intervene with the Medici family for a certain job. Buonarroti does not write to Grand Duke Ferdinand II immediately, but passes the request on to Soldani, who passes it on to Leopoldo, who writes a letter of recommendation to his brother, Grand Duke Ferdinand II. So, there is a chain of go-betweens, in fact a true 'dyadic chain'.

The 'transaction' was not finished, however, with Leopoldo's recommendation letter. There was even more correspondence involved in this request. First of all, of course Buonarroti wrote a letter of thanks to Leopoldo, via Soldani.¹⁰²⁵ Soldani replied that Leopoldo was satisfied with the letter of thanks and holds him in great esteem.¹⁰²⁶ Then there was the problem of getting the recommendation letter of Leopoldo into the hands of the Grand Duke. On 16 May 1639, Tommaso Rinuccini wrote Buonarroti that he urged Ferdinand's state secretary, Francesco Coppoli, to present Gismondo's case to the Grand Duke.¹⁰²⁷ Apparently Buonarroti had asked Rinuccini to hand over the recommendation letter for Gismondo to the state secretary of Ferdinand II, in the hope this man would further the request. On 30 May 1639, Rinuccini wrote Buonarroti that he had not yet succeeded in his mission. He explained that Leopoldo and Soldani would be in Florence the next day and this seemed to him a good occasion to bring the request to Coppoli's attention again.¹⁰²⁸

Although the correspondence ends here, without giving any news about the outcome of the recommendation, there is another letter which gives some new information. On 24 September the historian Carlo di Tommaso Strozzi wrote that he was proud that Gismondo was nominated as 'uomo di comune'.¹⁰²⁹

1025 The term "thanks" letter is used by McLean (1998: 60) in his analysis of favour-seeking in the Renaissance period.

1026 A.B. 54, no. 1877, see appendix.

1027 A.B. 52, no. 1593, see appendix.

1028 Ibid., no. 1594, see appendix. On 24 June 1639, Soldani writes Buonarroti from Siena that the recommendation letter of Gismondo has been sent to a man who will hand it over to Monsignor Malaspina [A.B. 54, no. 1878, see appendix]. He heard that Malaspina had received the letter and that the answer would be given to Signor Venturi, who would write Buonarroti. Soldani at that moment expected the Duke of Parma and could not wait for the answer himself.

1029 A.B. 54, no. 1933, see appendix.

In the Archivio di Stato Gismondo Buonarroti is listed among the *provveditori dell'Arte del Cambio* so it seems that he got at least one of the requested jobs.¹⁰³⁰

5.4 Maintaining patronage relationships: exchanging courtesies and gifts

To maintain patronage relationships it was important to exchange letters even in periods when there were no requests for favours, just to convey promises of reciprocity, solidarity and loyalty.¹⁰³¹ This could be done by sending Christmas and New Year's wishes, offering congratulations for promotions or marriages, offering one's condolences at the death of relatives, and simply inquiring about the health of the other person. Although these kinds of letters full of rhetorical sentences seem to be courtesies of no real importance, they were essential in maintaining the relationships and not allowing too much time to elapse between letters.¹⁰³² Buonarroti satisfied these unwritten rules for continuing contacts with his patrons and broker-friends. Two letters illustrate this. In 1610, Giovanni Altoviti (fig. 3) sent a letter to Buonarroti to thank him for his condolences on the death of his mother. In 1629, marquis and banker Bernardino Capponi (1563-1639) thanked Buonarroti for his congratulations on the marriage of his daughter.¹⁰³³

Since client networks often had a pyramidal structure, it was of the utmost importance to congratulate a patron or other broker upon his promotion.¹⁰³⁴ If a patron rose in social status, all his clients could profit from it and rise in status as well. They all ascended another level on the pyramid.¹⁰³⁵ It was not taken for granted, however, that a patron who rose in status continued the relationship with all his former clients. Every client had to make sure the patron was still interested in continuing the relationship. Having a history of exchanged courtesies increased the likelihood for the client that the patron continued the relationship.

Not congratulating patrons or other brokers with promotions or marriages, or offering one's condolences at the death of relatives could cause a rupture in

1030 ASF Arte del Cambio 36, c. 3.

1031 Reinhard 1996a: 8; Eisenstadt/Roniger 1984: 48.

1032 Reinhard 1996a: 8; Biagioli 1993: 27.

1033 Letter from Giovanni Altoviti to Buonarroti: A.B. 41, no. 114, see appendix; Letter from Bernardino Capponi to Buonarroti: A.B. 44, no. 472.

1034 A cleric could for example be promoted to bishop, a cardinal to pope, a prince to (grand) duke and a patrician to ambassador, senator, *maggiordomo maggiore*, marquis or tutor of a prince.

1035 Landé 1977: xxi + xxviii

the patronage relationship. If a client forgot or failed to congratulate a patron, the rupture could only be solved by sending a letter full of humble offers of service and praise.¹⁰³⁶ In this case there was no debt balance anymore and the patron could decide whether the relationship should continue. In the correspondence of Buonarroti, this is illustrated by a letter from Cardinal Orsini, who wrote Buonarroti in 1613 that it was no longer necessary to make apologies and that he wanted to continue the patronage relationship.¹⁰³⁷ In 1625, another patron, Cosimo Manucci, chastised Buonarroti for not congratulating him on his promotion.¹⁰³⁸ This probably had to do with his appointment as bishop of Terni. Manucci forgives Buonarroti his negligence as well and the relationship continues.

Besides writing letters to exchange courtesies, clients, brokers, and patrons could also ask others to pass on their greetings to a certain patron.¹⁰³⁹ This was a way of reducing the social distance between a client and a patron (or broker), since the patron was constantly reminded of the client from different sides. We see many examples of this practice in Buonarroti's correspondence. In 1633, bishop Tommaso Salviati thanked Buonarroti for his greetings that were passed on to him by Signor Deti.¹⁰⁴⁰ Also Buonarroti's own clients frequently conveyed their regards to him by way of others, mostly Buonarroti's cultured friends from the academies. His clients also asked him to pass on their greetings to his friends, their other patrons. In 1590, for example, the painter Gamberucci relayed greetings from the painter Gabriello Ughi and asked Buonarroti to kiss the hands of his patron Marcello Adriani on his own behalf.¹⁰⁴¹ In another letter, he kisses endlessly the hands of Buonarroti and asks him to do the same to count Cosimo della Gherardesca while telling him he is willing to deliver any service this gentleman should wish.¹⁰⁴² Patrons also passed on greetings to

¹⁰³⁶ Biagioli 1993: 27; Biagioli 1990: 12. Also, when a new patronage relationship was started it generally began with letters full of praise of the patron, until the moment the patron had accepted the relationship and wrote that it was no longer necessary to praise him.

¹⁰³⁷ A.B. 50, no. 1368, see appendix.

¹⁰³⁸ A.B. 49, no. 1204, see appendix.

¹⁰³⁹ Biagioli 1993: 41.

¹⁰⁴⁰ A.B. 53, no. 1721, 19 March 1633. Signor Deti must be Alessandro Deti (d. 1637). Tommaso Salviati was bishop of Colle Val d'Elsa and Arezzo (from 1638).

¹⁰⁴¹ Gabriello Ughi was a military man in the service of Don Giovanni de Medici. He participated in the victory of Ostende in 1602/1603. (Kirkendale 2001: 93.)

¹⁰⁴² A.B. 48, no. 939, see appendix. In a letter from the same year another painter, Piero Medici (1567-1648), says that Gamberucci greets Buonarroti a thousand times. A.B. 50, no. 1239, see appendix.

clients. In October 1602, Piero Strozzi greeted the painter Gamberucci in two of his letters to Buonarroti.¹⁰⁴³

Apart from exchanging courtesies, an ideal way to invest in a patronage relationship and wind one's way into a patron's affections was to send gifts.¹⁰⁴⁴ It was an unequal exchange of material or immaterial things. The patron always had to return a gift with a larger value.¹⁰⁴⁵ A client could send a material gift, like a painting, and a patron could reward him with a certain privilege or favour.¹⁰⁴⁶ Patrons often gave small gifts complemented with immaterial favours.¹⁰⁴⁷ Common gifts were objects like instruments and books and sometimes seeds for exotic plants, food such as fruit, cheese and wine, animals (mostly dogs, but sometimes even leopards), and finally all kinds of favours like hospitality, access to important circles of persons, invitations to ceremonies and parties, or the promise to write letters of recommendation.¹⁰⁴⁸ Paradoxically, if a patron wanted to end the patronage relationship, he could give a relatively large gift in return (for example a jewel). The client could never return this gift and the relationship was ended.¹⁰⁴⁹ These were all unwritten rules everyone knew.

The significance of gifts was not their economic, but their symbolic value. Gifts were signs of friendship and loyalty between patrons and clients and they helped to maintain the patronage relationship.¹⁰⁵⁰

Brokers could help clients to decide if their gift was appropriate or not.¹⁰⁵¹ We can illustrate this with an example from the network of Buonarroti. On 24 October 1629, Carlo Strozzi wanted to send lives of saints on parchment and two other manuscripts to Cardinal Francesco Barberini (fig. 4).¹⁰⁵² He asked Buonarroti if he could forward the manuscripts to the Cardinal, but to notify him

1043 A.B. 54, nos. 1943 and 1944, see appendix. The patrician Piero Strozzi (1569–1625) was secretary of Pope Paul V.

1044 Kettering 1988b: 147.

1045 Biagioli 1990: 19.

1046 Biagioli 1993: 43, 46.

1047 Biagioli 1990: 24.

1048 Butters 2007: 245, 256, 258, 280; Biagioli 1993: 41. In 1612 Buonarroti received an invitation from Bishop Jacopo Giraldi (fig. 13) to be present at a literary reunion in the house of the painter Cristofano Allori. This is an example of an immaterial gift. A.B. 48, no. 968, 3 nov. 1612, see appendix.

1049 Biagioli 1990: 24.

1050 Eamon 1991: 39.

1051 Findlen 1991: 17–18.

1052 One of the two other manuscripts was called *Gervasius Tilleberiensis*. Gervase of Tilbury (ca. 1160 – 1234/1235) was a canon lawyer and writer from Essex, England. Strozzi's manuscript may have been a tractate about this man or one of his works, such as the famous *Otia imperialia*, or his *Vita abbreviata et miracula beatissimi Antonii*, a hagiography on Saint Anthony. On Francesco Barberini, see 2.2.2, *Socializing with cardinals and other prominent persons in Rome*.

if this was not the right gift for a person of such a high status (“e non parendoli cosa degna di tanto *personaggio* avvisimelo”).¹⁰⁵³ Brokers were very important in judging whether gifts were suitable or not. The library of Francesco Barberini, the Biblioteca Barberina, at the highest floor of the Palazzo alle Quattro Fontane, was filled with 40.000 books and manuscripts, so the choice of gift was not that simple.¹⁰⁵⁴ On 21 November 1629, Strozzi wrote he was very thankful for the fact that Buonarroti delivered the books to the Cardinal. (He had just returned from his villa in Valdarno where he stayed for three weeks and had therefore not replied to Buonarroti’s letter sooner.) He praised Buonarroti by saying that it was almost too great an honour for the books to have been presented by Buonarroti’s hands (“e l’essere stati presentati per mano di V.S. tengo per fermo che gl’habbino fatti tenere più il pregio che non meritavano”).¹⁰⁵⁵

Part II

5.5 The social network of Michelangelo Buonarroti the Younger

Like other patricians, Buonarroti had many friends within the academies, some of whom he had met already in college or at the university of Pisa.¹⁰⁵⁶ A letter from the Bolognese senator Ferdinando Ranuzzi Cospi to his son Marco Antonio typifies the principle of social networks such as the one of Michelangelo Buonarroti the Younger. Cospi described to his son how the horizontal bonds he established during his college years in Parma (with boys of the same age and social standing) could later be seamlessly transformed into vertical relationships, as some of his fellow companions will become important men, such as cardinals and ambassadors. The vertical bonds can determine the success of his lineage in future:

pensa che in questo collegio potrai fare amicizia con compagni che ne usciranno insieme a te; e ne usciranno prelati, cardinali, ambasciatori, generali; uomini di tale importanza, che grazie a questi legami d’amicizia potranno essere la fortuna della casa in cui Dio ti ha fatto nascere.¹⁰⁵⁷

¹⁰⁵³ A.B. 54, no. 1912, see appendix.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Schütze 2007: 37.

¹⁰⁵⁵ A.B. 54, no. 1914, see appendix.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Michelangelo Buonarroti the Younger attended the Jesuit School in Florence and most probably the Jesuit Collegio Romano in Rome, together with Maffeo Barberini. See Cole 2007b: 14.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Brizzi 1976: 165.

In the same way, Buonarroti and other patricians met each other – and many artists – at a young age in the cultural academies and confraternities in Florence and built up strong friendships which often lasted their entire lives. When they grew up and attained more important positions, they continued to correspond and exchange cultural news and objects such as information about innovations at the European courts, books, poems, theatre plays, political treatises, music compositions, manuscripts, scientific information, and more. Buonarroti had many cultured friends from the university and the academies who went on to become ambassadors, bishops, cardinals, and even popes (in the case of Maffeo Barberini who became Urban VIII). All these friends were potential patrons for Buonarroti's clients.

We will now shed more light on some of Buonarroti's friendships formed in his college years and later on within the cultural academies.¹⁰⁵⁸ One of Michelangelo's close friends was Piero de' Bardi, an active member of the Accademia della Crusca and the author of the burlesque poem *Avinavoliottoneberlinghieri* (1643), which we spoke of in the previous chapter.¹⁰⁵⁹ De' Bardi and Buonarroti exchanged poetry and corrected each other's works.¹⁰⁶⁰ This was also the case with one of Buonarroti's best friends, Jacopo Soldani (fig. 2), a poet, pupil of Galileo and tutor to Prince Leopoldo de' Medici. In a letter of Soldani, dated 5 February 1602, we see an example of how they exchanged poems and other writings, which apparently were read not only by themselves, but also by their lettered friends and even by higher patrons like Don Virginio Orsini:

Non starò a fare scuse di non aver prima che ora risposto alla sua amorevolissima e ringraziandola della bell'ode sua e di quella del Signor [Lorenzo] Franceschi mandatemi che l'una e l'altra e particolarmente la sua fu letta con grandissimo gusto prima da me e dagl'amici, e pure hiersera si lesse in camera del Signor Don Virginio [Orsini], che si trova inchiodato nel letto dalla sua gotta, con sodisfazione grandissima di quel signore che ha come V.S. sa gusto così esquisito.¹⁰⁶¹

1058 Because Michelangelo Buonarroti chose to portray several of his good friends among the bystanders on the paintings glorifying his great uncle Michelangelo, we now have a good idea of how the correspondents of Buonarroti in this chapter looked like.

1059 Cole 2011: 74, n. 85 writes that Buonarroti and De' Bardi started this poem together, alternating cantos, but Buonarroti quit after his third canto and Bardi finished the poem.

1060 Cole 2011: 88-89; Masera 1941: 13.

1061 A.B. 54, no. 1820, Pisa, 5 February 1602, cited by Cole 2011: 472.

Soldani is not the only one in contact with higher patrons. In 1610, Buonarroti resided for a few months in Rome, during which Soldani imagined him in the middle of cardinals, prelates, and other gentlemen and ironically added that he hoped Buonarroti would not forget his Florentine friends (“Mi immagino vederla in coteste grandezze tra cardinali, prelati e baroni: non si dimentichi intanto di noi...”).¹⁰⁶² During all the months Buonarroti was in Rome, Soldani and other friends kept him up to date about goings-on at the Florentine court. In September 1610, Soldani told him about the memorial ceremony of the French King Henry IV in the San Lorenzo church and in November he wrote about the baptism of the new Medici prince, Ferdinand II, which was celebrated with a ball and a lavishly decorated banquet that included sugar sculptures of a beehive, elephants and giraffes:

Il battesimo si celebrò hieri con 62 carrozze di gentildonne. Di poi si ballò, poi si fece il banchetto che fu sontuoso et pieno di colossi, d'un arnia, liofanti e giraffe, e altre bestie da cappanucce, tutti di zucchero.¹⁰⁶³

De' Bardi and Soldani both frequented the Pastori Antellesi-academy with Buonarroti. Galileo was on friendly terms with all of them and during his problems with the inquisition he stayed for a while in Buonarroti's villa in Settignano.¹⁰⁶⁴

A mutual friend of Buonarroti, Galileo, De' Bardi, and Soldani was the poet and mathematician Mario Guiducci (1583-1646), who was also a member of the Accademia della Crusca and the Pastori Antellesi.¹⁰⁶⁵ Together with Galileo he wrote the treaty *Discorso delle comete* in 1619.¹⁰⁶⁶ To thank Guiducci for his work, Galileo introduced him as a member to the Accademia dei Lincei in Rome. Here Guiducci came into contact with Prince Federico Cesi (1585-1630), which also proved useful for Buonarroti. In 1629, Guiducci arranged a meeting between Buonarroti and Cesi, because Cesi wanted to speak with him about genealogical questions, especially the family tree of the Salviati family.¹⁰⁶⁷ In Florence Guiducci often joined the theatre plays of the academy in Via San Gallo, a

1062 A.B. 54, no. 1834, 18 September 1610, cited by Cole 2011: 529.

1063 A.B. 54, no. 1835, 22 November 1610, cited by Cole 2011: 530.

1064 Masera 1941: 16; Galileo, *Opere* Vol. XII, p. 121.

1065 Cole 2011: 82-83 writes about this friendship.

1066 Cole (2011: 83 n. 119) writes that he published this work under his name to protect his friend Galileo, who was the real author. On Guiducci and the *Discorso delle comete*, see Favino 2003: 488-92.

1067 A.B. 48, no. 1048, see appendix. For the contact between Cesi and Buonarroti, see Cole 2011: 48, 49. (A.B. 48, nos. 1044, 1045 and 1048).

college for young boys he ran together with Buonarroti, Giovan Battista Strozzi the Younger, and Piero Vettori between the late 1620s and the early 1630s.¹⁰⁶⁸ The Collegio dei Giovani Nobili di Via San Gallo, as the academy was officially called, was protected by Cardinal Francesco Barberini and it provided academic tuition to young students as well as training in theatrical spectacles.¹⁰⁶⁹ The young boys were mostly thirteen years old and came from all over Tuscany.¹⁰⁷⁰ In 1628, with Carnival, the students performed the play *La gratitudine* (written by Niccolò Arrighetti with *intermedi* by Buonarroti the Younger) that was attended by the Medici Grand Dukes.¹⁰⁷¹

Niccolò Arrighetti (1586-1639), another good friend of Buonarroti, was an active member of the Accademia Platonica, of which he wrote the inaugural oration. He joined Buonarroti and other patricians in the Pastori Antellesi-academy and in addition wrote philosophical treatises, theatre plays, lyrical and burlesque poems, and official funeral orations for Filippo Salviati, Cosimo II, and Maria Magdalena of Austria, among others.¹⁰⁷² Like Buonarroti, he was in contact with a couple of painters, as is clear from a letter in which he passed on his greetings to Jacopo da Empoli and Francesco Furini.¹⁰⁷³ Buonarroti wrote four poems about the Arrighetti villa, and after Arrighetti's death he paid for the education and upbringing of his children.¹⁰⁷⁴

Thanks to the travels of Piero Dini (fig. 5), a member of the Accademia Fiorentina and Della Crusca, men of letters from other cities and academies were presented to Buonarroti.¹⁰⁷⁵ He was asked among other things to criticize their poems. In 1603, for example Dini writes him that a muse from Perugia wanted to be praised by a Florentine muse ("Una musa perugina vorrebbe esser lodata da una musa fiorentina").¹⁰⁷⁶ He sent Buonarroti some poems by this Lucullo Baffo, a member of the Accademia degli Insensati in Perugia. They had to be sung accompanied by music on the zither. Dini had to stop his letter abruptly,

1068 Favino 2003: 488-92. For the Collegio dei Giovani Nobili di Via San Gallo, see Cole 2011: 83/84 + 113/115.

1069 Cole 2011: 83-84, 118.

1070 Ibid.: 115.

1071 Ibid.: 87.

1072 Dolci 1962: 308-09.

1073 Masera 1941: 83.

1074 Ibid.: 27.

1075 Piero Dini (d. 1625), archbishop of Fermo from 1621, was the cousin of Cardinal Ottavio Bandini who took care of his ecclesiastic career. He was befriended with Galileo, wrote many letters to him and in 1611, he assisted in the garden of the Quirinale at the public telescopic observations of Galileo. See 'Piero Dini' on the website of the Portale Galileo/Museo Galileo Firenze, <http://portalegalileo.museogalileo.it/igjr.asp?c=36930>. Retrieved October 22, 2014.

1076 A.B. 46, no. 791, see appendix.

because, as he wrote, the messenger already has his feet in the stirrups of his horse (“il Procaccio ha i pie nelle staffe”). He added in haste that Baffo would shortly send Buonarroti another volume with sonnets, songs, and madrigals dedicated to Cardinal Alessandro Peretti di Montalto. In this way, new cultural influences from other courts came to Buonarroti in Florence.

One special aspect of Buonarroti’s network was his close contact with artists. Among his good friends were: the painters Ludovico Cigoli, Cosimo Gamberucci, and Cristofano Allori; the architect Luigi Arrigucci; the sculptor Giuliano Finelli; and the singer Francesca Caccini.¹⁰⁷⁷

The painter Cosimo Gamberucci (fig. 14) was among Buonarroti’s closest friends and in his letters he keeps repeating the wish to see him.¹⁰⁷⁸ In 1590, he invited him to come to Pisa, where he stayed with the family Bonvisi.¹⁰⁷⁹ He constantly informs Buonarroti about where he is living. In March 1606, he writes that he is at the house of Piero Strozzi in Rome and is about to leave for Naples to work in the service of Cardinal Ottavio Acquaviva d’Aragona.¹⁰⁸⁰ On 28 July 1606, he writes he is longing to tell Buonarroti all the details of his trip to Naples, when they will be together again at his villa in Settignano, as we could read in the introduction of this chapter.¹⁰⁸¹ In the same letter, Gamberucci asks Buonarroti to send some madrigals or sextets, destined for the famous composer, lute-player and organist Giovanni Domenico Montella (ca. 1570-1607), who works in the service of Cardinal Acquaviva as well and would like to compose music on the text of Buonarroti’s poems:

Il Cardinale Aquaviva - si che mi convien far qualche quadro per altri et così pigliare qualche conoscenza, si come di un cierto [certo] Musico qua molto singulare et molto servitore del Cardinale, questo è simile al Giulio Romano

¹⁰⁷⁷ Masera 1941: 27. For Buonarroti’s brokerage of and friendship with Caccini, see Cole 2011; 2007.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Cosimo Gamberucci (1562-1621) was a pupil of Santi di Tito and was further influenced by the paintings of Cigoli and Jacopo da Empoli. He painted mainly religious scenes, such as *S. Pietro che guarisce lo storpio* in the S. Pier Maggiore in Florence (1599, now in the Museo dell’Accademia), the *Funerali di S. Alessio* for the chapel of the Strozzi family in the church of S. Trinita (1605-1606), the *Miracolo di S. Chiara* in the Ognissanti in Florence, the *Miracoli di S. Margherita* in the S. Maria al Corso in Florence, the *Martirio di S. Lorenzo* in the Basilica di S. Maria all’Impruneta, the *Martirio di S. Andrea* in the Carthusian monastery (certosa) of Florence (1610), the *Convito di Ester e Assuero* in the cathedral of Pisa (1612) and the *Resurrezione di Lazzaro* in the cathedral of San Miniato (1614). Source: Lecchini Giovannoni 1999.

¹⁰⁷⁹ A.B. 48, no. 937, see appendix.

¹⁰⁸⁰ The papal secretary Piero Strozzi (1569-1625) where Gamberucci resided also invites Buonarroti to come to Rome in 1607, A.B. 54, no. 1947, see appendix. A.B. 48, no. 942. Published by Gualandi (1842: 53), see appendix.

¹⁰⁸¹ A.B. 48, no. 944, see appendix. Also transcribed by Cole 2011: 485.

[Caccini] quanto al comporre, et di un ragionamento in un altro mi trovo in necessità di pregar V.S. a degnarsi mandar qualche cosa di suo, cioè qualche madrigale o sestina et cosa che abbia del vago et allegro avendo egli composto assai in cose meste e desidera variare.¹⁰⁸²

In November, Gamberucci sent a “thanks” letter for these poems.¹⁰⁸³ Thanks to his informal contacts with artists who work for famous patrons Buonarroti’s own fame could rise at other courts.

Even when Buonarroti was not present his friends thought about him. Neri Alberti (fig. 6), a patrician who seems to have been a close friend and who joined the Pastori Antellesi with him, wrote in May 1630 that they recently had a dinner in Pisa at the house of Jacopo Nerli, a mutual friend.¹⁰⁸⁴ During the dinner, Alberti had read aloud a letter, in which Buonarroti passed on his greetings to Nerli and his wife Caterina. After these words, Alberti wrote, they decided to give a toast to Buonarroti. Nerli filled a large glass with Florentine wine, as did all the others - Caterina took the largest glass there was. They drank to Buonarroti’s health and hoped he would return soon. They also invited him to come for a couple of days with Ognissanti (All Saints’ Day).¹⁰⁸⁵

Only three months later, in August 1630, Neri Alberti’s son died from the bubonic plague. The sensitive way in which Alberti describes to Buonarroti his sorrow after the death of his son illustrates that certainly not all Buonarroti’s friendships were purely utilitarian. Alberti writes that he lost all his strength and is beyond all consolation. Both he and his wife see the world through a haze because of all their tears. He says he believes that if Jacopo Nerli and his wife had not come to support them, he and his wife would have gone to Heaven as well because of the great sorrow they felt. His only consolation is that his son, who had always been his joy on earth, will now become his intercessor in Paradise. He believes his son must have flown to Paradise immediately, because he had never offended God. He writes that he knows how much also Buonarroti loved his son and that he can imagine how much sorrow he too must feel about the death. Therefore, he writes, he accepts Buonarroti’s tears, which can accompany his own that come continuously.¹⁰⁸⁶ He concludes rhetorically

1082 A.B. 48, no. 944.

1083 A.B. 48, no. 945. Also transcribed by Cole 2011: 487.

1084 The diplomat Neri Alberti (1572-1630) was subsequently governor of Arezzo, Volterra and Pisa. See Vliegenthart 1976: 104.

1085 A.B. 41, no. 53, see appendix.

1086 Ibid., no. 55, see appendix.

by saying he cannot continue the letter, because his tears prevent this (“Qui finisco perche l’abbondanza delle lacrime non mi lascia più scrivere”).¹⁰⁸⁷

On 28 August 1630, almost three weeks later, he thanks Buonarroti for his third consolation letter and says it has trebled his comfort. (“Mi si è raddoppiato triplicatamente il conforto, mediante la sua terza lettera consolatoria”).¹⁰⁸⁸

Two months later, he writes again and announces that he is glad that Buonarroti arrived safe and sound in Pisa. But he does not mean Buonarroti himself, but the statue of Buonarroti, made by Giuliano Finelli (“Ho sentito con molto gusto per la sua gratissima il salvo arrivo di V.S. in cotesta città, cioè della sua statua”).¹⁰⁸⁹ He is happy to see Buonarroti’s likeness, but longs to see him in real life (“piaccia a Dio benedetto di concedermi grazia, ch’io possa vederla, che sarà con mio grandissimo gusto, ma molto più desidero riveder lei”).¹⁰⁹⁰

In the years 1629–30, Buonarroti resided in Rome at the Barberini-court and had many opportunities to meet other men of letters and learn about cultural developments. He belonged in those years to the specific group of *familiari* of the Barberini, which consisted of gentlemen of high social standing from other cities. Often they resided at the Barberini court for three or four years to experience aristocratic life in Rome.¹⁰⁹¹ Among the gentlemen who resided at the court of Francesco Barberini were Cardinal Innocenzio Del Bufalo, Cassiano Dal Pozzo, Carlo Altoviti, Giovan Battista Doni, Federico Ubaldini, Francesco Bracciolini, Tommaso Salviati and Vaio Vai.¹⁰⁹² Some literary *familiari* of Francesco were Michelangelo Buonarroti the Younger, archivist Felice Contelori, professor of rhetoric Agostino Mascardi, and moralist Matteo Pellegrini. Francesco Barberini also had painters and musicians as *familiari*, including the instrumentalists Frescobaldi and Kapsberger and the painters Marziani, Pietro Paolo Baldini, Giovanni Maria Bottala, Giovan Francesco Romanelli, and Andrea Sacchi. Other painters who frequented the palace but were not official *familiari* included Pietro da Cortona, Andrea Camassei, Giacinto Gimignani, Simone Lagi, and Agostino Tassi. Buonarroti could get to know all these men from different cities and with different knowledge and qualities. Francesco Guitti, for example,

1087 This was a standard rhetorical method to end mourning letters in the early modern time.

1088 A.B. 41, no. 57, see appendix.

1089 Ibid., no. 58, see appendix. Buonarroti had commissioned this statue in 1629. See the section about Buonarroti’s patronage in chapter 2.

1090 A.B. 41, no. 58, see appendix.

1091 Völker 1993: 242.

1092 Ibid.: 244.

brought the festive culture of Ferrara to Rome.¹⁰⁹³ Other renowned men who frequented the Barberini palace were Federico Cesi, Giovanni Ciampoli, and Virginio Cesarini.¹⁰⁹⁴

5.6 The exchange of gifts and genealogical information between Buonarroti and Florentine patricians at different Italian and European courts

In patronage relationships between equals like Buonarroti and his cultured friends, it was common to exchange gifts and information as a way of continuing their academic discussions and sharing their cultural knowledge despite geographical distances. Thanks to the exchange of gifts with cultured friends from the academies who resided as diplomats at other courts, many cultural innovations came to Buonarroti in Florence and new Florentine publications were sent to other courts. Besides gifts, Buonarroti and his friends also exchanged genealogical information, as they were all members of the genealogical academy of the Virtuosi.

Books, manuscripts, and genealogical information

Buonarroti's good friend Jacopo Soldani often requested favours and gifts.¹⁰⁹⁵ On 14 July 1629 he asked Buonarroti, who was then in Rome, to send him *Il Principe Cristiano* of Padre Scribonio or Scribanio.¹⁰⁹⁶ This is the Jesuit Carolus Scribani (1561-1629) who resided in Antwerp and had just passed away three weeks before Soldani's letter was dated. Soldani said that in exchange for the book of Scribani Buonarroti could ask him for a favour.

Apart from Soldani, Buonarroti exchanged books and manuscripts with many other correspondents. Already in 1597 Buonarroti sent the recently published funeral oration about the humanist and poet Piero degli Angeli da Barga, written by Francesco Sanleolini, to Piero del Nero, a patrician who was in Paris at the time.¹⁰⁹⁷ Piero del Nero wrote back that he was very pleased to receive

¹⁰⁹³ Ibid.: 260.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Schettini-Piazza 2007: 117.

¹⁰⁹⁵ In 1610, Soldani asks Buonarroti if he could borrow his telescope because he wanted to show it to the women in his house. A.B. 54, no. 1833, see appendix.

¹⁰⁹⁶ A.B. 54, no. 1855, see appendix. On Carolus Scribani see 'Scribani, Carolus (1561-1629)'; on the website Digital Web Centre for the History of Science in the Low Countries, Retrieved January 2015, from: <http://www.dwc.knaw.nl/scribani-carolus-1561-1629/> For other books Buonarroti and Soldani exchanged, see Cole 2011: 79-80.

¹⁰⁹⁷ This is Francesco Sanleolini's *Orazione delle lodi di Piero degli Angeli da Barga*, Firenze 1597. Pietro degli Angeli (nome umanistico Pier Angelio Bargeo) (1517-1596) was a humanist, member of the Accademia

the oration, and went on to praise Sanleoni for borrowing words and sentences from Dante in such a way that they seemed newly invented.¹⁰⁹⁸ This example illustrates how new publications travelled to other European cities using the patricians' cultural networks. Patricians outside Florence continued to follow the intellectual life and publications in their hometown and anxiously looked forward to receive recently published works.

Buonarroti also had a contact in London, Giovanfrancesco Brudenelle or John Brudenell (the brother of Sir Thomas Brudenell, the first Earl of Cardigan), with whom he exchanged books.¹⁰⁹⁹ In June 1614, Brudenelle sent a copy of William Gilbert's treatise on Magnetism (*De magnete*, 1600) to Florence.¹¹⁰⁰ Gilbert was a natural philosopher and a physician at the court of Elizabeth I and James I of England. In a letter of September 1615, Brudenelle greets Girolamo Gherardi and Jacopo Soldani, so apparently he had made the rounds of the Florentine academies during his trip through Italy.¹¹⁰¹ Thanks to these sorts of contacts, new scientific publications could reach Florence. Buonarroti also sent scientific works to London, like a book from Don Benedetto who was a mutual friend of his and Brudenelle.¹¹⁰² Benedetto Castelli was a Benedict monk and pupil of Galileo. He published a treatise of his teacher under his own name in 1615 to protect Galileo, and this may have been the book Buonarroti sent to Brudenelle.

Brudenelle also reported some genealogical information to Buonarroti, as did others of his contacts. He had done some research for Buonarroti to see if there were any Florentine people buried in England. Brudenelle wrote that he found the grave of a Capponi in London and one of a Guicciardini in Sus-

Florentina. See Dolci 1929.

1098 A.B. 46, no. 765, see appendix. 19 May 1597.

1099 John Brudenell (died 1646), the brother of Sir Thomas Brudenell, 1st Earl of Cardigan (1578-1663).

1100 This becomes clear from the letter A.B. 43, no. 431 (see appendix). William Gilbert (1544-1603) was a natural philosopher and a physician at the court of Elizabeth I and James I of England. The full title of the book is *De magnete, magneticisque corporibus et de magno magnete tellure, Physiologia nova*. In 1623, Buonarroti's good friend Mario Guiducci, gave a lesson about *De magnete* in the Accademia Fiorentina. See Favino 2003: 488-92.

1101 A.B. 43, no. 430, see appendix.

1102 In 1615 Benedetto Castelli (1577-1643) published the book *Risposta alle opposizioni del s. Lodouico delle Colombe e del s. Vincenzio di Grazia, contro al trattato del sig. Galileo Galilei, "delle cose che stanno su l'acqua, o che in quella si muouono". Nella quale si contengono molte considerazioni filosofiche remote dalle vulgate opinioni* (Firenze, Giunti), the text of which was actually by Galileo, but published under the name of his friend. In 1613, Galileo had written his *Lettera a Benedetto Castelli in Pisa, 21 dicembre 1613*. <http://galileo.rice.edu/sci/castelli.html>. A.B. 43, no. 432, see appendix.

sex. He also noted that there were Florentines buried in Ireland.¹¹⁰³ The same kind of information was relayed by Piero Dini who in 1602 wrote of finding the tombstone of a certain Signor Francesco di Bartolo from Cafagnino in the Bolognese church of San Giovanni in Monte.¹¹⁰⁴ He said that the grave was in a corner of the church where people seldom walked. Still the marble on the ground was well worn because of its antiquity. He included the coats of arms of this man and the inscription on the tombstone.¹¹⁰⁵ Apparently Buonarroti and his friends who were interested in genealogical matters actively shared this kind of information. Buonarroti was also an active member of the genealogical academy of the *Virtuosi*, founded by Francesco Segaloni in 1605.¹¹⁰⁶ From these letters it is apparent that Buonarroti was already actively interested in genealogical matters well before the foundation of that academy. In this period, Buonarroti and other patricians were busy reconstructing an overview of all the members of Florentine families who had served the city of Florence in previous centuries, with the aim to reclaim their participation in the government.¹¹⁰⁷

Buonarroti probably possessed a large collection of images of coats of arms and copies of family trees at home, or in any case knew a lot about them, because several people appealed to his knowledge. In a letter from 1639, the historian Carlo di Tommaso Strozzi wrote he wanted to know to which family the coat of arms he included belonged. (“La prego a farmi grazia di dirmi di qual famiglia sia l’inclusa Arme”).¹¹⁰⁸ On 12 May 1606, Piero Falconieri, Buonarroti’s agent in Rome, sent a “thanks” letter because Buonarroti had sent him his family tree.¹¹⁰⁹ In 1629, Buonarroti discussed the Salviati family tree with Prince Federico Cesi.¹¹¹⁰

Poems and songs

Buonarroti and his friends continuously exchanged poems and songs, wherever they were, whether in Florence or at other places.¹¹¹¹ Count Camillo della Gherardesca wrote from Castagneto in December 1596 to say that he could not

¹¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹¹⁰⁴ A.B. 46, no. 788, see appendix.

¹¹⁰⁵ The inscription: S Francisci dito Carfagnino sg Bartoli qui fuit d Horintia.

¹¹⁰⁶ For the *Virtuosi*, see Cole 2011: 46-47. On page 48 Cole gives other examples of people who wrote Buonarroti about genealogical matters.

¹¹⁰⁷ See also section 1.2, especially the subchapter ‘The patricians’ counterquest for political recognition’.

¹¹⁰⁸ A.B. 54, no. 1933, see appendix.

¹¹⁰⁹ A.B. 47, no. 838, see appendix.

¹¹¹⁰ See previous paragraph.

¹¹¹¹ Cole 2011:82, n. 118 sums up letters with exchanged poetry.

write earlier because in those wild places there are not many couriers.¹¹¹² He said that he was not very inspired to write poems, because the muses did not want to settle down in those abandoned places (“qua non giova invocare le muse, che non vogliono scendere in questi deserti”).¹¹¹³ In January, he repeated that whole months passed without his writing anything (“passerei mesi interi senza righer foglio”) and complained again the muses did not want to listen to him.¹¹¹⁴

With Giovanni Uguccioni, from 1601 to 1605 the Medici’s ambassador at the court of Rudolf II (1552-1612) in Prague, Buonarroti exchanged a lot of cultural news and objects.¹¹¹⁵ Buonarroti’s former landlord, Uguccioni asked for poems he could not find in Prague and wrote about Prague customs, politics, and religion.¹¹¹⁶ His son Cosimo got lessons in German and Latin at the Jesuit College. In November 1601, he wrote that most of the people in Prague were coldhearted, slowwitted, phlegmatic, and feeble-minded, except for when they were eating and drinking.¹¹¹⁷ In this way Buonarroti got a vivid (if somewhat ironical) description of the customs and people at other courts where his patrician friends resided.

In July 1602, Uguccioni sent a song written by the vicar general of the Capuchin friars, Saint Lawrence of Brindisi.¹¹¹⁸ This man served in the army of Rudolf II in the fight against the Ottoman Turks in 1601.¹¹¹⁹ In exchange (“pregando V.S. a parigliarmi”), he asked for two poems about Camaldoli and Monte della Vernia. In his next letter of August 1602 he sent more songs, and again asked for the songs about Camaldoli and Monte della Vernia. He also wanted to know how much Giunti asked for the *Istoria* of Ammirato and when the *Vocabolario della Crusca* was to appear. He even requested another publication, a volume with poems of Antonio Pazzi and Torquato Tasso in which women

1112 A.B. 46, no. 707, see appendix. The Castle of Castagneto, nowadays called Montepergoli villa, was in the Maremma region. Della Gherardesca undertook the drainage work of the marshland.

1113 Ibid., see appendix.

1114 Ibid., 708, see appendix.

1115 Del Piazzo 1952 sums up the diplomatic missions of Uguccioni: Venice (1592-96), Holy Roman Empire (1601-05).

1116 On 4 February 1595, Uguccioni asked Buonarroti from Venice if he wanted to send him two orations by Scipione Ammirato about the Pope and about the King of Spain. A.B. 55, no. 2048, see appendix.

1117 A.B. 55, no. 2088, see appendix.

1118 Ibid., 2095, 15 July 1602 lo so che VS gusterà più all’acclusa canzone del generale dei frati cappuccini devota pia e concettosa

1119 Saint Lawrence of Brindisi (1559-1619) was a catholic priest who established Capuchin monasteries in the Holy Roman Empire at Vienna, Prague, and Graz. His task was to convert Jews and protestants to the catholic faith. See Candide 1910.

were either despised or defended.¹¹²⁰ On the surprising date of 31 September Uguccioni sent “thanks” for the song about Vernia and wrote he was glad that the song he sent about the Queen of Heaven pleased Buonarroti.¹¹²¹

Food gifts

Not all the gifts the patricians exchanged had an artistic or literary character. In 1601 Bernardo Canigiani, one of the founders of the Accademia della Crusca who served as the Medici’s ambassador in several cities in Italy and abroad, sent Buonarroti a gift of stewing pears, pomegranates, and citrus fruit, together with a poem by Buonarroti that he had corrected.¹¹²² Food gifts were a good way to invest in patronage relationships, because one could always send some regional products, which were not expensive, but nevertheless rare in the regions where the recipient lived. In 1631, Cosimo della Gherardesca (fig. 7) sent Buonarroti twenty bottles of wine from Colle Val d’Elsa, for his approval.¹¹²³ If he liked them, he could receive more (“riceverà venti fiaschi di vino...servino per saggio, che se li piacerà...ce ne farà dell’altro”).¹¹²⁴ The year after, Buonarroti sent Della Gherardesca a copy of the *Rime* of Marini and a sonnet of Adimari about San Siro.¹¹²⁵ It seems that they had an ongoing balance of exchanged gifts and alternated between food and cultural gifts.

Buonarroti’s own works as gifts

Buonarroti often sent copies of his own theatre plays or his orations to his patrons and friends.¹¹²⁶ The reactions were mostly very positive. Piero Dini

1120 A.B. 55, no. 2096, see appendix. The following work is meant: *Stanze inedite di Antonio de’ Pazzi e di Torquato Tasso in biasimo ed in lode delle donne*. Venice 1810. In A.B. 55, no. 2098 he thanked him for the songs and renewed his request for Tasso.

1121 A.B. 55, no. 2097, see appendix.

1122 Troncarelli 1975: 86-89; Del Piazzo 1952. A.B. 44, no. 467, see appendix. The poem was *Quattro leggende della fontana di quel villa*. Published by Masera (1941: 100).

1123 Wieland 2004b: 94. Cosimo della Gherardesca (1569-1634) was bishop of Colle Val d’Elsa (1613-34) and Fiesole (appointed in 1633).

1124 A.B. 46, no. 739, see appendix.

1125 Ibid., 743, see appendix.

1126 From “thanks” letters we know that Buonarroti sent his description of the marriage of Maria de’ Medici with Henry IV (1600) to Maffeo Barberini, Giovan Donato Barberini, Piero Falconieri, Jacopo Soldani, Alfonso Pietra, and Camillo Rinuccini. The oration about Cosimo II (1621) he sent to Maffeo Barberini, Giovanni Ciampoli, Piero Falconieri, Francesco Folchi (destined to Claudia and Margherita de’ Medici), Jacopo Soldani, Donato dell’Antella, Niccolò dell’Antella, Piero Dini, Giovanni Altoviti, Giovanni Battista Rinuccini, and Ottaviano de’ Medici. The *Rime* (1623) he sent to Pietro da Cortona, Maffeo Barberini, Giovanni Ciampoli, Giovan Battista Doni, Vieri Cerchi, Giovan Battista Rinuccini, Alessandro Orsini, Lorenzo Magalotti, Vaio Vai, Pietro Velluti, Perreti, and Piero Dini.

writes in November 1608 from Rome that Buonarroti's *Giudizio di Paride* was praised by princes and men of letters and that he really appreciated Buonarroti's courtesy in sending it, because he was not indebted to him.¹¹²⁷ In July of the same year, Alfonso Pietra wrote Buonarroti to say that a copy of Rinuccini's *Arianna* had arrived in Pavia. Everybody in Pavia agreed that Buonarroti's *Il natal di Ercole*, which Buonarroti had sent to him, was of a higher quality and that they were looking forward to reading his *Siringa*:

E comparso qui qualche copia dell'Arianna del Signor Ottavio Rinuccini, ma a me piace molto più quella che V.S. mi favori, e non solo a me, ma a molto altri che hanno visto e l'una e l'altra, parlo del Natale d'Ercole, e se fosse fuori la sua Siringa, so che piacerebbe niente meno di questa.¹¹²⁸

Apparently Buonarroti's work was famous outside Tuscany and was followed by men of letters at other Italian courts. From 1601 Buonarroti was a member of the Accademia degli Intenti of Pavia, which was directed by Alfonso Pietra.¹¹²⁹

Buonarroti's orations also induced reactions. Giovanni Altoviti (fig. 3), resident of the Medici at the Imperial court from 1618 to 1627, thanked Buonarroti in 1622 from Vienna for his oration for Cosimo II.¹¹³⁰ He writes there had been a lot of discussions about it in Vienna.¹¹³¹ He said he was moved while reading it ("Io leggendola, fin di qua veggo quanto ella m'habbia commossi gli animi") and that also other people that passed by continued to praise Buonarroti ("alchuni venuti poi qua (...) non hanno fine in lodarla"). This proved, according to Altoviti, that he liked it not simply because it was written by his friend, but because it was really an outstanding example of the genre.¹¹³²

With all these gifts Buonarroti built up credit to receive favours or return-gifts.

1127 A.B. 46, no. 794, see appendix.

1128 A.B. 51, no. 1482, see appendix.

1129 Cole 2011: 91. Cole suggests that Pietra was also a member of some Florentine academies, as he sent his greetings to many mutual Florentine friends.

1130 A.B. 41, no. 117, see appendix.

1131 Del Piazzo 1952: Giovanni Altoviti made diplomatic missions to the Holy Roman Empire (1618-27), Bayern/Tirol/Salzburg (1623) and Mantova (1631).

1132 A.B. 41, no. 117.

5.7 The brokerage activities of Michelangelo Buonarroti the Younger

Since the patricians were socially and geographically mobile, their social networks contained many weak ties and were therefore well suited to function as brokerage networks.¹¹³³ Normally, migrating people partially broke off relations with their former strong-tie networks, but also created bridges to new strong-tie networks. Cultural innovations could travel through the channels of these bridges, so long as the migrated people kept corresponding with friends from their old strong-tie networks, as was the case with the patricians.¹¹³⁴

In this section about Buonarroti's brokerage activities and contacts, we will recognize the above described situation in which patricians in important positions outside Florence kept on corresponding with their Florentine friends from the academies. We will combine the theoretical concepts of the first sections about social networks and brokerage networks with the brokerage strategies of Buonarroti. The mechanisms we can recognize in his activities as an informal broker can serve as a model for the analysis of similar activities of other patricians at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The reason for choosing Buonarroti as an example, is the fact that a large part of his correspondence has been preserved (2500 letters), whereas the correspondence of other patricians has been lost or only partially preserved.

It is a common pattern that the archives of well-known people tend to hold more letters from others than letters from themselves to others.¹¹³⁵ This is a logical phenomenon, since their own letters have been scattered all over Europe and were sent to members of different social classes. Not all these people had their own archives or felt the need to preserve all the old documents. Luckily, notable people often made copies of their letters or kept their drafts.¹¹³⁶ Two volumes of Buonarroti's drafts have been preserved along with thirty-three volumes of letters he received from others. Some of his original letters can also be found in the Vatican Archives, the Biblioteca Nazionale, and the Archivio di Stato di Firenze, but most of them have been lost, even his letters to other

1133 Tiekens Boon van Ostade 2009: 104; Boon van Ostade writes that networks with many weak ties are often middle-class networks, not networks of high or low social classes. High and low class networks tend to have more strong ties and to be more conservative and less open to new influences.

1134 Ibid. This is in any case the conclusion regarding language transformation, but it is valuable also for cultural transformation.

1135 Rasch 2007: 39. This is the case with the correspondence of Constantijn Huygens, as is described by Rasch. Also the bulk of correspondence of the botanist Carolus Clusius (1525-1609) consists of letters from others to him (1150). Only 350 of the letters he wrote are found. (Egmond 2007: 114-19.)

1136 Rasch 2007: 47.

patricians.¹¹³⁷ Fortunately we can derive a lot of information from the “thanks” letters and other letters received. His brokerage activities become clear by analysing his correspondence and by searching for typical rhetorical structures belonging to cliental language, like requests for patronage, recommendations, promises, rewards, and letters of thanks for services or favours received.¹¹³⁸

Many letters written to Buonarroti were clientage letters. Maczak distinguishes two types of clientage, political clientage and poor man’s clientage. The reason for poor man’s clientage was to find food and accommodation. That is not the form we see in the letters written to Buonarroti. His type of clientage is political, and correspondents were in search of power and upward mobility and asked for favours for themselves or friends.¹¹³⁹ This could be done by sending favour-seeking letters, also called patronage letters.¹¹⁴⁰

The favour-seeking or patronage letters of the fifteenth century, analysed by Paul McLean, often followed a specific pattern.¹¹⁴¹ They started with an opening salutation, followed by a *captatio benevolentiae* to make the reader predisposed to grant the request, perhaps by showing some interest in the recipient’s health. Then the actual request was written, followed by another few lines to make the reader inclined to fulfil the request, by a promise to reciprocate the favour. The same pattern is discernible in all the seventeenth-century letters I analysed.

In his analysis of fifteenth-century favour-seeking letters McLean distinguished several categories¹¹⁴², which we can still recognize in the seventeenth-century brokerage letters to Buonarroti:

- Letters in which the client expresses his loyalty towards the patron.
- Letters in which the client has a problem and asks for help in solving it.¹¹⁴³
- Letters in which clients or members of their family are looking for a job.
- Letters in which clients ask certain privileges for themselves or family-members.

1137 I checked several family archives of frequent correspondents of Buonarroti, but, for the most part, if family archives exist at all, they contain mostly economic documents and no private correspondences.

1138 Bazzano 2001: 134; Kettering 1986: 10. Bazzano states that information about brokerage relations can mostly be found in family-archives instead of state archives.

1139 Maczak 1991: 318.

1140 McClean 2007: xii.

1141 Ibid.: 54.

1142 McLean 1998: 51-60.

1143 A.B. 45, no. 661. An example from Buonarroti’s correspondence is Renato Corsi, who explained Buonarroti in 1626 that he had been betrayed by a corporal from the Cartei family. Thanks to his large network of connections, Cartei was not punished. Renato Corsi wanted him to be condemned and asked Buonarroti’s intermediation to contact the archbishop of Pisa, the son of Raffaello Medici.

- “Thanks” letters, in which the client expresses his gratitude for delivered favours.
- The categories can be complemented by others, depending on the type of broker. Buonarroti stayed in contact with many artists, so to these categories we might add the cultural categories:
- Social and geographic mobility of artists.
- Improving patron-client contacts and bringing commissions to completion.
- Cultural brokerage services.
- In this thesis we concentrate mainly on these cultural categories, job requests and on Buonarroti’s contacts with artists, except for musicians, since Janie Cole has already written about Buonarroti as a music broker.¹¹⁴⁴

5.7.1 Social and geographic mobility of artists (to bring patrons in contact with painters and vice versa)

Buonarroti had a large primary network that included many patricians and artists he knew from the cultural academies. As some of these patrician friends resided at other courts, Buonarroti could use these contacts to reach friends-of-friends, who were often potential patrons. Buonarroti could use this elaborate secondary network to further the career of young talented artists.

Sometimes young painters contacted Buonarroti to be brought into contact with other more established painters or with potential patrons. On 20 March 1618, Buonarroti received a letter from a knight of the Order of San Giovanni in Malta, the patrician Timoteo de’ Ricci, in which he writes that he intended to introduce a certain Giovan Maria, a pupil of Cristofano Allori, in Naples.¹¹⁴⁵ He was searching for possibilities so that the young painter could show his qualities.¹¹⁴⁶ According to De’ Ricci, the fact that he was a pupil of Allori would help a lot, because Bronzino (Alessandro Allori, Cristofano’s father) was well known across Europe. This Giovan Maria may have asked Buonarroti to put him in touch with patrons in Naples, so thanks to Buonarroti’s brokerage, this young painter was able to acquire experience at Naples.

In 1633, a young talented painter was searching for upward mobility. On 25 October, Buonarroti got a letter from Alessandro Venturi from Siena in which

¹¹⁴⁴ Cole 2011; 2007a; 2007b.

¹¹⁴⁵ It is not known which painter is meant. It cannot be the painter Giovan Maria Bottala (Rafaellino), who died in Naples in 1644, because he was only born in 1613. See Baldinucci (1974-75, IV: 461). Timoteo de’ Ricci (d. 1643) was a theologian, and prior of the Convent of Saint Mark in Florence.

¹¹⁴⁶ A.B. 52, no. 1550, see appendix.

he recommended a talented painter from Colle Val D'Elsa named Periccioli, who had expressed his desire to become a pupil of the more established painter Matteo Rosselli in Florence:

Si trova qua un giovane de Periccioli da Colle molto dedito al disegno e alla pittura con gran desiderio di imparare e *perche* egli ha in *grandissima* venerazione le pitture deli Matteo Rosselli, desiderebbe venire a trattenersi costa qualche tempo sotto la sua disciplina per imparare a dipingere.¹¹⁴⁷

Baldinucci mentions a certain Giuliano Periccioli (1600-1649) from Siena, who he describes as '*disegnatore a penna eccellentissimo*' and who later became a famous cartographer.¹¹⁴⁸ This could be the same Periccioli mentioned in Venturi's letter, although he was not quite young anymore in 1633. On 8 November, Venturi repeated his request saying that Periccioli intended to arrive after Christmas.¹¹⁴⁹ If these kinds of brokerage actions were successful, young talented painters could travel from small cities to larger ones to gain experience.

Buonarroti also searched actively for patrons for his painter friends like Gamberucci. From a letter of Jacopo Nerli it becomes clear that Buonarroti asked him in June 1608 to recommend Gamberucci for a commission in the cathedral of Pisa, probably at the painter's behest.¹¹⁵⁰ In 1612, Gamberucci painted the *Convito di Ester e Assuero* in the cathedral, but it is not known if Nerli had arranged this commission.

While in the previous three situations painters used Buonarroti as a broker to come into contact with higher patrons and more famous painters, the reverse situation was also very frequent. It often happened that patrons wrote Buonarroti to make contact with certain painters because Buonarroti had good informal contacts with many of them.

On 7 December 1605, count Camillo della Gherardesca wrote that Signor Filippo Salviati wanted to renovate his *Villa delle Selve* (fig. 8).¹¹⁵¹ He had re-

1147 A.B. 56, no. 2170, see appendix.

1148 Baldinucci, 1974-75, vol. V: 529.

1149 A.B. 56, no. 2171, see appendix.

1150 A.B. 50, no. 1298, see appendix.

1151 Wieland 2004b: 94. Filippo Salviati (1582-1614) was an Italian scientist and astronomer. He was a member of the Accademia dei Lincei in Rome and a very good friend of Galileo. Salviati appears as one of the characters in Galileo's *Dialogue concerning the two chief world systems* (Florence, 1632). In fact he was presented as Galileo's alter ego, as he spoke out Galileo's Copernican ideas. Galileo had written most of his *Letters on sunspots* (Rome, 1613) at Salviati's *Ville delle Selve*. The book was therefore also dedicated to Filippo. See Biagioli 1992 and 'Filippo Salviati' on the website Scientific Itineraries

ceived a design for it from the architect Battista Perini, but he wanted the artist Ludovico Cigoli (fig. 9) to give his opinion about it.¹¹⁵² He asked Buonarroti to forward his request to Cigoli. It seems that Buonarroti could contact Cigoli quickly, because two days later Gherardesca wrote that Salviati would send a carriage to Cigoli to bring him to the villa.¹¹⁵³ Buonarroti had to communicate this to Cigoli. On 18 January 1606, Gherardesca wrote that Cigoli had been at the villa and thanked Buonarroti for his intermediation, which in this case was successful.¹¹⁵⁴ There is a chain of people involved in this brokerage activity. Probably count Salviati asked Gherardesca as a broker to arrange the trip, because he knew that Gherardesca and Buonarroti were good friends and that Buonarroti was in close contact with Cigoli. Around 1611-12, Filippo Salviati hosted his good friend Galileo Galilei in his Villa delle Selve, where the scientist could work on his writings in a healthy environment.¹¹⁵⁵

In August 1632, the bishop of Anglona, Alessandro Deti, asked Buonarroti to contact the painter Francesco Furini.¹¹⁵⁶ Deti wanted to know the price of the cabinet (*studiolo*) and of some tables made of pietre commesse of one of Furini's other patrons, a certain signor Pandolfini.¹¹⁵⁷ One week later Deti sent a "thanks" letter, because after Buonarroti's intermediation he had succeeded in getting in touch with Furini and knew the price of the *studiolo*. He wrote he would pass on this information to his brother, who wanted to buy it.¹¹⁵⁸ In an undated letter, he wrote that signor Pandolfini would visit him that night

in Tuscany, <http://brunelleschi.imss.fi.it/itineraries/biography/FilippoSalviati.html>. Retrieved October 22, 2014. This Filippo Salviati is not to be confused with his cousin, also called Filippo Salviati, who was bishop of Prato (between 1605 and 1619) and Borgo San Sepolcro (between 1619 and 1634). He was the brother of Vincenzo di Antonio Salviati.

1152 A.B. 46, no. 722, see appendix.

1153 Ibid., no. 723, see appendix.

1154 Ibid., no. 724, see appendix.

1155 Biagioli 1992: 90.

1156 Alessandro Deti was bishop of Anglona-Tursi (near Potenza/Lago negro) from 1632 to 1637.

1157 A.B. 41, no. 103, see appendix. For the reference to Pandolfini, there are three possibilities. It can be Domenico Pandolfini (1594-1655), State Secretary of Ferdinand II between 1635 and 1655. Or Niccolò di Pier Filippo Pandolfini (ca.1580-ca.1650), vicar of Lari. But it can also be Senator Filippo di Roberto Pandolfini (1575-1655), a member of the Lincei in Rome and a pupil of Galileo, who translated three of Galileo's treatises into Latin (now lost). This senator commissioned in 1620 to enlarge the garden of Palazzo Pandolfini (Via San Gallo 74, Florence). See 'Pandolfini'. In *Treccani, L'enciclopedia italiana*. Retrieved January 7, 2014 from Treccani: <http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/pandolfini/>; Proloco Signa, "Famiglia Pandolfini", Retrieved January 7, 2014 from <http://www.prolocosigna.it/storia-e-arte/La%20Storia%20che%20non%20conoscevamo/personaggi/la-famiglie-che-hanno-origine-dalla-citta-di-signa/famiglia-pandolfini>

1158 A.B. 41, no. 104, see appendix.

to negotiate about the purchase of the cabinet (“per vedere di concludere la compra”), which he now calls the *cassetta di galleria*.¹¹⁵⁹ In October 1632, he wrote that the cabinet had arrived and he asked Buonarroti if he had some friend who could come to his house to see and value it (“E’ venuta la cassetta, se V.S. ha qualche amico che ce la sappia stimare vorrei pregarla a mandarli a dirlo e che arrivassi sin qua a hora, che la potessi vedere bene”).¹¹⁶⁰ Buonarroti probably sent someone so that Signor Pandolfini could conclude the purchase.

In August 1639 Tommaso Rinuccini wrote Buonarroti that Signora Ortensia Salviati wanted the painter Fabrizio Boschi (1572-1642) to paint a fresco for the nuns of the convent of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Via Colonna. Whether Boschi would accept the commission depended on Buonarroti’s intermediation. Buonarroti had to assure Boschi that if he agreed to the commission, the Salviati would reward him with many favours.¹¹⁶¹ In February 1638, Alessandro Berti, chaplain of Carlo de’ Medici and the benefactor of the convent Santa Maria degli Angeli, died and in his will he expressed the wish that his money should be used to build a new chapel for the nuns, the *cappella dell’orto*.¹¹⁶² The decoration campaign of this chapel, which is now called *cappellina dell’orto*, began in 1641 and was arranged by the nuns. Other parts of this new decoration phase were the loggia of the refectory (for which Lisa Bartoli paid 100 scudi in 1639) and five lunettes in the arches of the church in 1639. The frescoes on these lunettes with scenes of the life of Mary are attributed to Francesco Curradi.¹¹⁶³ Fabrizio Boschi may have been responsible for some of these commissions, although he retreated to the countryside in the last decade of his life and no longer accepted many commissions. In any case, no commission by him in Santa Maria degli Angeli is known today.¹¹⁶⁴

1159 Ibid., no. 105, see appendix.

1160 Ibid., no. 106, see appendix.

1161 A.B. 52, no. 1595, see appendix. Baldinucci mentions that Francesco Boschi (1619-1675), Fabrizio’s son, made an effigy of Saint Mary Magdalene of Pazzi for the nuns of Santa Maria degli Angeli, but this happened probably around the date of her canonization, only in 1669, during the pontificate of Clement IX. Baldinucci, 1974-75, vol. 5: 228. The convent of Santa Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi in Borgo Pinti was called Santa Maria degli Angeli until 1699. In the Via degli Alfani, parallel to Via Colonna, is the ex-church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, now the seat of the Faculty of Arts of the Florentine University. In Savelli 2008 no decoration campaign in 1639 is mentioned.

1162 Lapucci 2006: 36.

1163 Ibid.: 37-40. On the lunettes Curradi painted: *Lo Sposalizio della Vergine*, *L’assunzione della Vergine* (twice), *L’annunciazione* and *La Visitazione*. The works were attributed to Curradi by Richa (1755) and Fantozzi (1842).

1164 Spinelli 2006: 54.

In the cases described above, patrons searched for specific painters. But because of his large network, cultural patrons also asked Buonarroti to look around for unspecified painters who could execute a commission for them. On 29 September 1607, for example, Piero Strozzi wrote Buonarroti from Rome to say that he was satisfied with one of the paintings that was made by one of the painters recommended to him by Buonarroti.¹¹⁶⁵ And in 1634, Buonarroti received a request from a certain Guido Del Palagio to find a painter who could paint the family tree.¹¹⁶⁶

In this section we have seen how Buonarroti promoted upward mobility of painters together with artistic innovations in Florence and how he facilitated contacts between patrons and painters. The transactional content of all this brokering consisted of help in the form of contacting people. The tariff is a favour in return at a later time. In this way, Buonarroti profited.

5.7.2 Cultural brokerage services and arranging gifts

One way of maintaining patronage networks was to deliver services to each other. Due to geographic distance, patricians often used each other as brokers to arrange or buy things. Moreover, patrons used their broker-clients to please other clients or higher patrons.

On 15 June 1601, Soldani wrote from his Villa Casanuova to ask Buonarroti if he wanted to go to the editor Giunti and buy a copy of *The reign of Tiberius* by Tacitus, translated by the patrician Bernardo Davanzati (1529-1606).¹¹⁶⁷ The book was destined for his brother in Naples who wanted to give it in his turn to the nuncio of Naples, Jacopo Aldobrandini. Soldani stressed that he was ever ready to return the favour. In this case Buonarroti's help was asked to arrange a gift for a patron in Naples, which meant social mobility for Soldani's brother.

Brokers could also mediate when clients asked for mercy, which could be given by higher patrons. In an undated letter the musician Giovanni Brocelli thanked Buonarroti for his help in securing a pardon from the Grand Duke for his exile. He said that in return he would like to serve Buonarroti in whatever capacity he wishes, as a tenor in a comedy, as a falsetto, or with the violin, the lute, or on the clavier.¹¹⁶⁸ In this way, Buonarroti could profit from his delivered favours.

¹¹⁶⁵ A.B. 54, no. 1947, see appendix.

¹¹⁶⁶ A.B. 46, no. 767, see appendix.

¹¹⁶⁷ A.B. 54, no. 1811, see appendix.

¹¹⁶⁸ A.B. 43, no. 429, see appendix. Cole 2011: 153 calls this musician Giovanni Brovelli. According to Cole there is a Giovanni Broelli recorded as organist of S. Pancrazio in 1600 (Kirkendale, *The Court Musicians*,

The brokerage services could also be very practical. On 17 November 1615, Piero Dini (fig. 5) asked Buonarroti if he wanted to guide the lettered Frenchman Jérôme Bignon through Florence and in particular the Biblioteca Laurenziana. He had also written Jacopo Soldani a comparable letter, to be sure that at least one of the two could help the Frenchman.¹¹⁶⁹ On 5 December, Dini thanked Buonarroti (whom he knew from the Accademia Fiorentina and the Accademia della Crusca) for serving Bignon in many ways.¹¹⁷⁰ From 1611, Dini lived in Rome and frequented the circles of the Accademia dei Lincei (Galileo, Prince Federico Cesi, and Giovanni Ciampoli).¹¹⁷¹ Buonarroti could use these kinds of contacts (people he knew from Florence and who rose in status in Rome) to enlarge his network and influence in Rome. He could profit from their position by asking them for favours. In return, he offered them services as described above.

The most important patrons in Rome were the Barberini. Buonarroti was willing to please them to secure privileges in future. When asked to buy a table of *pietre dure* for Cardinal Francesco Barberini in April 1627, he tried to fulfil this request in the best possible way. In the first letter about the table, written 17 April, Luigi Arrigucci, the architect of the Barberini whom they used as a broker, asked Buonarroti to go to a workshop near Santa Maria in Campo and buy the table he thought most appropriate.¹¹⁷² He was advised not to say it was destined for Cardinal Barberini, for fear the seller would raise the price (“e dica non volerlo per il signor Cardinale, ma per sé, si perche con più vantaggio nel prezzo, si anco perche di così ha gusto il signor Cardinale”). Arrigucci wrote also that the Cardinal was thinking of taking two tables instead of one and Buonarroti had to wait until his final decision before sending the first table. Three days later, Arrigucci wrote that Barberini had indeed decided to take two tables.¹¹⁷³

p. 333, n. 5). But she was not able to identify this musician and did not find him among the musicians in one of Buonarroti's plays.

1169 A.B. 46, no. 814, see appendix.

1170 Ibid., no. 815, see appendix.

1171 Formichetti 1991: 158–59. In 1621 Dini was nominated bishop of Fermo by Pope Gregory XV.

1172 A.B. 41, no. 139, see appendix. Cole (2001: 398, n. 103) speaks about these tables but does not cite or transcribe the letters. The patrician Luigi Arrigucci (1575–1647) worked as an architect in Rome (mainly for the Barberini) from 1630 until 1647. His commissions included the Palazzo del Quirinale, the façades of S. Anastasia and S. Giacomo alla Lungara in Rome, the enlargement of the convent Santa Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi in Florence, the renovation of S. Sebastiano al Palatino and SS. Cosma e Damiano in Rome, and finally the renovation of the interior of the Cathedral in Spoleto. See Belli Barsali 1962: 323.

1173 A.B. 41, no. 140, see appendix.

On 7 May, Arrigucci asked Buonarroto to make haste with the tables, because Barberini wanted to donate one of them to a Spanish ambassador, who had just arrived in Rome for a temporary mission.¹¹⁷⁴ Buonarroto was urged to send the tables as quickly as possible, without regard to the costs of dispatching them. Arrigucci therefore advised that they be sent by land, instead of by sea, but by that time, Buonarroto had already shipped them in Livorno. On 22 May, Arrigucci wrote that the tables had still not arrived, possibly due to the bad weather.¹¹⁷⁵ One week later Arrigucci wrote that the tables had finally arrived.¹¹⁷⁶ Francesco Barberini was very pleased and satisfied with Buonarroto's services and the fact that thanks to Buonarroto he could pay a good price for them ("I tavolini, la Dio gratia, arrivorno in Roma mercoledì mattina benissimo conditionati, e son piaciuti in estremo al Signor Cardinale Padrone il quale è satisfatissimo e della diligentia di V.S., e del vantaggio procuratogli nel prezzo"). The tables probably arrived in time to donate one of them to the Spanish ambassador, so Cardinal Barberini could make a good impression on him thanks to Buonarroto.

When Buonarroto resided in Rome in 1629-30, thanks to his close contacts with the Barberini and other patrons the number of requests from clients and broker-friends increased considerably. Some Florentine patricians sent books or letters to Buonarroto requesting him to pass them on to cardinals and other important people. Others asked him to arrange licences for forbidden books that were on the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*. On 16 February 1630, Neri Alberti (fig. 6) sent Buonarroto a list of books for which he wanted permission to consult.¹¹⁷⁷ On 9 March, Alberti thanked Buonarroto for the licences for three books, though he still expected some more.¹¹⁷⁸

Arranging a diplomatic gift for the Cardinal Infante Ferdinand of Austria

Back in Florence, Buonarroto continued to serve his Roman patrons and contacts. On 23 December 1634, his brother-in-law and official agent in Rome, Piero Falconieri¹¹⁷⁹, wrote Buonarroto that he had seen a painting of *pietre dure* in the palace of Cardinal Giulio Sacchetti that had been created in the Galleria

1174 Ibid., no. 142, see appendix.

1175 Ibid., no. 143, see appendix.

1176 Ibid., no. 144, see appendix.

1177 Ibid., no. 50, see appendix. Alberti will die in the same year. Apart from the list, in his letter he adds three other books he would like to consult, by Boccaccio, Lucera and the commentary on the *Tetrabiblos* or *Quadripartitum* of Ptolemy by Gerolamo Cardano (1501-1576).

1178 A.B. 41, no. 51, see appendix.

1179 Although Piero Falconieri was Buonarroto's official agent in Rome, they did not have any contract and there is no evidence that Falconieri was paid by Buonarroto for his services. Probably he benefitted

dei Lavori of the Grand Duke. He was thinking of buying or commissioning a similar work. Giulio Sacchetti (1587-1663) was born in Rome to Giovanni Battista Sacchetti and Francesca Altoviti, Florentine anti-Medici patricians who had emigrated to Rome at the beginning of the Medici principate. With the anti-Medici Farnese they found a supportive environment in Rome in which they built up their capital.¹¹⁸⁰ Giulio's brother Marcello (1586-1629) was a famous banker and patron of arts. He had the functions of *depositario generale* and *tesoriere segreto* of Pope Urban VIII and patronized Galileo and many artists.¹¹⁸¹ He discovered Pietro da Cortona, and his brother Giulio introduced him to the Barberini-family. Before starting work in the Barberini palace, Cortona painted frescoes in the villa of the Sacchetti at Castelfusano, in the years 1627-29.¹¹⁸²

The Falconieri were uomini nuovi in Florence and did not belong to the old patrician families. In Rome, therefore, they could rise in prestige more easily than in Florence. They formed alliances with Roman noble (patrician) families by means of marriages. In 1589, the merchant Paolo Falconieri (1532-1602) moved to Rome and married the sister of Cardinal Albizzi and his son Orazio Falconieri (1578-1664) married Ottavia Sacchetti, the sister of Cardinal Giulio Sacchetti.¹¹⁸³ In 1628, Orazio bought Villa Rufina, formerly owned by the Peretti di Montalto (from 1603) and by count Alessandro Sforza.¹¹⁸⁴ In 1638, the Falconieri-family bought a palace from Mario Farnese, the Palazzo di Via Giulia, which had formerly been in the possession of the Odescalchi-family.¹¹⁸⁵ In 1639, the brother of Giulio Sacchetti, Matteo Sacchetti, bought a villa very close to the Falconieri's, the Villa Ruffinella.¹¹⁸⁶

Orazio Falconieri worked as a distributor of salt in the papal state and enriched the family considerably in this way.¹¹⁸⁷ He bought and commissioned many works of art, and an inventory of 1694 lists the work of many renowned painters, a considerable number of which were bought by Orazio. This inventory contains paintings of Michelangelo, Giorgione, Correggio, Raphael, Guido

from the relationship by having access to important figures and other immaterial favours, as was explained to me by Janie Cole.

1180 Fosi 2006: xxxi.

1181 Ibid.

1182 Beldon Scott 1998: 101.

1183 Sassone 2002: 43.

1184 Ibid.: 44

1185 Hetényi 1998: 127. The Odescalchi sold the palace in 1608 to Mario Farnese (for 16500 scudi) and the Falconieri bought it in 1638 from Mario Farnese for 19000 scudi.

1186 Sassone 2002: 44.

1187 Ibid.: 46.

Reni, Annibale Caracci, Jacopo Bassano, il Borgognone, Andrea del Sarto, and Salvator Rosa.¹¹⁸⁸ His Palazzo di Via Giulia was restored and designed by Borromini.¹¹⁸⁹ Two of Orazio's brothers were Piero (the agent of Michelangelo Buonarroti the Younger) and Lelio Falconieri. Piero was the first-born, but he had no male descendants and therefore did not inherit the family capital, which was passed to Orazio.¹¹⁹⁰ Lelio studied law in Perugia and Pisa together with Giulio Sacchetti and Maffeo Barberini.¹¹⁹¹ These useful contacts helped him to become a cardinal.

In December 1634, when Piero wrote to Buonarroti, Lelio Falconieri had just been nominated as nuncio by Sacchetti and was going to serve as nuncio of Flanders in the following years. As a present for the Cardinal Infante Ferdinand of Austria (governor of the Spanish Netherlands), they had thought of a painting of *pietre dure*, a very original but not too expensive present.¹¹⁹² According to Falconieri, only princes could afford to give expensive presents that were worth the standing of other princes, so it was better for his brother Lelio, who was not a prince, to give something that was rare in the region where the prince lived ("A Principi grandi non possono far presenti ricchi se non gran principi, gli altri bisogna che s'appeghono a cose di galanteria o qualche gentilezza nuova").¹¹⁹³ We can read this in his letter, in which he asks if Buonarroti can see if there is a painting of *pietre commesse* (*pietre dure*, hard stone carving) in stock or if he can commission one:

a vedere se in essa si trovasse o si potesse far lavorare qualcosa che havesse del gentile e non fosse di gran spesa. Però desiderebbe di esser favorito da lei, di vedere se vi fosse qualcosa di fatto che li paresse a proposito secondo la sua intentioni di qualche quadretto di pietre commesse o simili, che cosa sia, e di che spesa, e grandezza, che quando fosse cosa che dessi gusto a V.S., so che sarebbe di piacere ad ognuno, e che sarebbe cosa garbata¹¹⁹⁴

¹¹⁸⁸ Ibid.: 50.

¹¹⁸⁹ Ibid.: 51.

¹¹⁹⁰ Vicioso 2003.

¹¹⁹¹ Sassone 2002: 58.

¹¹⁹² Lelio Falconieri (1585-1648) was nuncio from Flanders from 1635-37. He was nominated nuncio by Giulio Sacchetti. The Cardinal Infante was Ferdinand of Austria (1610-1641), the brother of Philip IV, governor of the Spanish Netherlands.

¹¹⁹³ A.B. 47, no. 881, see appendix.

¹¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

As is clear from this fragment, Falconieri trusts Buonarroti's judgement in choosing an appropriate subject, material, and price. Falconieri says his brother will not leave for Flanders before March, so there are two months to execute the painting. Three weeks later, on 13 January 1635, Falconieri writes that after considering some paintings that Buonarroti apparently proposed in his reply-letter, his brother had chosen a painting with the scene of *Tobiolo and Arcangelo Raffaello (Tobias and the angel)* in *pietre dure*. Before placing the final order, Lelio still wanted to know what kind of precious stone was to be used for the painting and which colour.¹¹⁹⁵ Furthermore, he wanted to be sure that the painting was considered rare and special and would not be seen as some ordinary painting. And, finally, he asks if Buonarroti thinks the painting is worthy of a prince ("e se pare a V.S. che sia cosa da passar per gentilezza conveniente ad un Principe").

On 27 January, Falconieri writes that his brother is satisfied with the elaborate account Buonarroti had given him about the painting with *Tobias and the angel* and had now decided to order it.¹¹⁹⁶ They also ask Buonarroti to reduce the price as much as possible ("tirare il prezzo al manco che si può") and to pay some extra to provide for the adornment of the frame and for a mechanism for hanging the painting on the wall. In February, Falconieri writes some more letters dealing only with the little ring to hang the painting on the wall. Instead of gilded iron, they decide it has to be of silver, decorated according to the richness of the painting.¹¹⁹⁷ In March, Falconieri writes that his brother is about to leave for Flanders and will pass through Florence to collect the painting. He adds that abbot Degli Albizi has recently seen the painting in Florence and has convinced the Falconieri of its refinement and rare quality ("havera meglio ricognosciuto la finezza et eccellenza dell'opera").¹¹⁹⁸ Falconieri is not at all surprised by this judgment and says that they did not expect anything else from a work that was chosen by Buonarroti, on whose knowledge and taste they rely totally ("et in questa non ci era bisogno d'altro testimonia che dell'essere stato eletto da V.S. nel cui sapere e gusto, si riposò da principio tutta la confidenza").

On 14 April, in his last letter about this painting, Falconieri writes that he is glad that Buonarroti has packed the painting so meticulously, because it has to travel by boat most of the trip and in this way it will survive the rolling of the boat on the waves. Despite all the efforts of Falconieri to give an appropriate present and of Buonarroti to arrange this, the painting never arrived in Brus-

1195 Ibid., no. 882, see appendix.

1196 Ibid., no. 883, see appendix.

1197 Ibid., nos. 884, 885 and 886, see appendix.

1198 Ibid., no. 887, see appendix.

sels. Lelio travelled from Rome to Florence in May 1635 and during his trip to Brussels he passed Bologna, Modena, Parma, Milan, Turin, Lyon, Paris, and Liège. In the end, however, the Cardinal Infante did not want to receive him as nuncio because of his presumed ties with the French Kingdom. After waiting for almost two years to be received and begin his service in Brussels, Falconieri went to Cologne in March 1637 to work in the service of the Cardinal Legate Marzio Ginetti.¹¹⁹⁹ The German climate however was bad for his health and in November 1639 he returned to Rome. In 1643, the Barberini nominated him as a cardinal. What happened to the painting of *pietre dure* is unknown.

The last request in this category of brokerage services is from bishop Alessandro Deti. On 25 October 1635, this gentleman wrote Buonarroti to say that he wanted to decorate his house with copies of famous paintings. He asked Buonarroti to deliver some colours, because in the region of his diocese (near Potenza) he cannot find colours of good quality.¹²⁰⁰ On 14 January 1636, he sent a “thanks” letter for the colours he received and expressed his confidence that all the other colours he was still to receive would be of excellent quality because they had been selected by Buonarroti (“Le rendo particolari grazie de colori che mi ha fatto provvedere, e tutto che non mi sian ancora arrivati son certissimo et saranno esquisiti per esser stati veduti da V.S.”).¹²⁰¹

In this section, we have seen how important brokers were in arranging appropriate gifts, which also meant upward mobility for those who gave them. Soldani’s brother could impress the nuncio of Naples, Cardinal Barberini the Spanish ambassador and indirectly the Spanish King, and Falconieri (or at least he intended to) the Cardinal Infante. Buonarroti’s brokering could promote the diffusion and exchange of knowledge, as in the case of providing guidance to the Frenchman Bignon and arranging licences for forbidden books. The transactional content in these situations consisted of help in buying objects, arranging licences, and guiding foreign guests.

5.7.3 Improving patron-client contacts and bringing commissions to completion

The social and geographic distances between patrons and clients were sometimes too large for direct contact. If a client should refuse the requests of a high patron like a cardinal, the patron could be insulted and the client’s image

¹¹⁹⁹ Sanfilippo 1994.

¹²⁰⁰ A.B. 41, no. 110, see appendix.

¹²⁰¹ Ibid., no. 111, see appendix.

damaged. Using a broker helped keep the relationship stable. Thanks to his informal contacts with artists, Buonarroti often had access to their workshops. In this section, we show that higher patrons made use of Buonarroti's informal contacts with artists to pass on messages, to communicate prices and opinions about paintings, and to negotiate commissions.

Often Buonarroti was asked to pass on messages to other patrons. In 1590, when Buonarroti lived in Pisa, the painter Gamberucci asked him from Florence if he could tell Uguccioni (Buonarroti's landlord) that his paintings were ready to be shipped.¹²⁰² One year later, Uguccioni asked Buonarroti in his turn to contact Gamberucci, because he wanted to know where the head of plaster of his father was, so he could make a mould of it.¹²⁰³

Brokers were also used to pass on the opinion of patrons about recently finished paintings. In October 1602, Piero Strozzi asked Buonarroti if he wanted to tell Cosimo Gamberucci that Cardinal Alessandro de' Medici was satisfied with a certain painting.¹²⁰⁴ Patrons were not always satisfied. In April 1625, canon Lorenzo Ubaldini asked Buonarroti to let the painter Fabrizio Boschi know that canon Medici had not changed his mind about a certain painting and therefore did not want to pay for it.¹²⁰⁵

Although it was less common, clients could also use brokers to convey messages to patrons in a way that would not create too large conflicts. In 1609, the painter Cigoli asked Buonarroti if he could explain to the family Serristori that he needed more time to finish the altarpiece with the scene of the *Entry of Christ into Jerusalem* for their chapel in the Santa Croce church.¹²⁰⁶ He was in Rome and could not travel to Florence to finish the altarpiece, but he assured them that his brother would send it to Rome and that he would finish it there.¹²⁰⁷ He knew Buonarroti had a good relationship with the Serristori and therefore asked him to intervene and ask for more time, because 'from hasty activities will come monstrosities' as he writes (*non sono cose da farle in fretta, la quale partorisce gli aborti*).¹²⁰⁸

1202 A.B. 48, no. 939, see appendix.

1203 A.B. 55, no. 2031, see appendix.

1204 A.B. 54, no. 1943, see appendix.

1205 A.B. 55, no. 2008, see appendix.

1206 Matteoli 1964/65: 34. This was the altarpiece *The entry of Christ into Jerusalem*.

1207 Cigoli did not keep his promise. At his death in 1613 the altarpiece was not finished and was completed by his pupil Giovanni Biliverti. In Rome he was working on *Il seppellimento dell'apostolo* (1609), which was lost in the fire at San Paolo fuori le mura in 1823.

1208 Published by Gualandi 1842: 48, see appendix.

The commission of 'Judith' (Cristofano Allori) for Cardinal Alessandro Orsini

Sometimes certain commissions for paintings were so complicated that brokers were needed to keep things on track. In one such case, Buonarroti acted during several months as intermediary on Cardinal Alessandro Orsini's commission for the *Judith* (1612-16) by Cristofano Allori (figs. 10 and 11).¹²⁰⁹

Allori was probably recommended to Cardinal Alessandro Orsini by Cardinal Francesco Maria Del Monte, an important patron of the arts.¹²¹⁰ At the marriage of Ferdinand I with Christine of Lorraine in 1589, Del Monte got to know the painters Cigoli, Passignano, Andrea Comodi, Anastasio Fontebuoni, Filippo Tarchiani, Jacopo da Empoli, Andrea Boscoli, and Gregorio Pagani, and helped some of them with commissions in Rome.¹²¹¹ In 1608, he met Cristofano Allori and his circle of pupils and contracted Allori to work for him in Rome, where he executed a painting of *Santa Caterina da Siena*.¹²¹²

The relations between the Orsini and the Medici were very close. Already in 1469 there was a marriage between Clarice Orsini and Lorenzo de' Medici (the Magnificent). One century later, Virginio Orsini was born in 1572 to Isabella de' Medici and Paolo Giordano Orsini I. Isabella died in 1576, presumably killed by her husband because of adultery.¹²¹³ Paolo Giordano returned to Rome and his son Virginio was raised in the Florentine court and married Flavia Peretti Orsini.¹²¹⁴ When she died in 1606 her children were raised and educated together with the Medici princes.¹²¹⁵ When Virginio Orsini died in 1615, his son Paolo Giordano Orsini II, the Duke of Bracciano, inherited his capital and possessions. Paolo's brother was our Alessandro Orsini, who was named a cardinal on the same day as Prince Carlo de' Medici. This nomination had to emphasize the relation between the Medici, Orsini and Borghese.¹²¹⁶

1209 Shearman 1979: 4-5 writes that the painting was commissioned by Orsini in 1612 and was one of the first versions of the Judith. The painting is now lost, but we have a good idea what it looked like, from looking at other early versions of the Judith like the one in the Royal Collection (1613), which came from the Gonzaga collection and is known as the Hampton Court version. Another unfinished version is in the Pitti palace in Florence (Chiarini 2003). Chappell (1984: 78) writes that Holofernes resembles Allori's self-portrait. Judith resembles Mazzafra, the woman Allori loved.

1210 Wazbinski 1994: 107.

1211 Ibid.: 86.

1212 Ibid.: 103.

1213 Murphy 2008.

1214 Boyer 1934: 301.

1215 Wieland 2002: 503

1216 Ibid.: 506. Paolo Giordano II, however, married a woman from the Aldobrandini family, enemies of the Medici. This was the reason that their good relationship flagged afterwards.

In a letter of 22 January 1616, Alessandro Orsini ordered Buonarroti to send Allori's *Judith* to Rome. He wrote that he was very glad the painting was in Buonarroti's house now, because Allori had completed it with much delay and he had wondered if he would ever receive it. He said Buonarroti could hand it over to Buonaparte, chamberlain of his brother, Paolo Giordano II, who would send it to Rome.¹²¹⁷ He concluded by saying that, in the future, he would spend his energy on anything Buonarroti should need.¹²¹⁸ The fact that Buonarroti could use the favours of the Cardinal at a later time could be seen as his personal interest in the case.

Unfortunately for Orsini, however, the painting was not sent to Rome, as planned. Allori asked for the return of the painting, because according to him it was not finished yet. Orsini had already been waiting four years for the painting and he was not happy with this new development. In a letter of 13 February 1616, he issued an ultimatum to Allori, giving him until Lent to finish his work.¹²¹⁹

When that term expired and Allori still had not returned the painting to Buonarroti, Orsini's patience was wearing thin. In a letter of 3 April, he asked Buonarroti to go to Allori's workshop and take the painting, finished or not ("Bisogna hora che V.S. in quello stato che si troverà se la pigli d'autorità").¹²²⁰ He warned Buonarroti that he would accept no more excuses. He also wrote he believed Buonarroti wished to serve him and that he therefore expected him not to allow himself to be persuaded by Allori with new arguments. Buonarroti, however, was also friends with Allori and more generous in his judgments. He listened to Allori's requests and in the meantime tried to please Orsini in the best possible way. On 6 April, Buonarroti received a letter from Allori saying he would send the painting, even though it was not yet finished, explaining his reasons for the delay.¹²²¹

On 9 April Buonarroti sent a letter to Orsini, a draft of which is preserved in the Buonarroti archive, in which he explains that he let Allori promise from week to week to finish the painting ("E di settimana in settimana più volte ne ho avuta da lui promessa di perfezionarlo").¹²²² Although he showed Allori the letter in which Orsini said that Buonarroti should take the painting away now

1217 On Paolo Giordano II Orsini, see Benocci 2006.

1218 A.B. 50, no. 1371, see appendix.

1219 Ibid., no. 1372, see appendix.

1220 Ibid., no. 1373, see appendix.

1221 A.B. 41, no. 113 Because of Allori's difficult handwriting, the reasons for the delay are illegible.

1222 A.B. 39, no. 86, see appendix.

that the term had expired, Buonarroti could not take it away out of respect to Allori. He saw him working frequently on the painting, seriously improving it. He tried to convince Orsini that was really to everyone's advantage that Allori took more time for it. He made Allori promise that he would give it to him as soon as possible. Even so, it is not certain that Allori worked on it as much as Buonarroti claimed, Buonarroti may simply have written that to protect his friend.

On 16 April Buonarroti sent another letter defending Allori and explaining why the painting had not been sent yet, namely that they wanted to wait for Orsini's answer to Allori's explanation for the delay.¹²²³ On 22 April, Orsini ordered Buonarroti again to send the painting and included a letter to Allori. He said Buonarroti could read this letter before forwarding it so that he knew what to do with the painting and help him to convince Allori.¹²²⁴ He concluded by saying that he was asking Buonarroti for a favour and that he hoped Buonarroti would ask a favour in return.

On 30 April, Buonarroti sent a letter to Orsini in which he explained that just at the moment he wanted to hand over the painting to Buonaparte, a message reached him from the Grand Duchess Maria Maddalena of Austria that she wanted to show the painting to the Grand Duke.¹²²⁵ Although they had promised to return the painting afterwards, the next morning Buonarroti discovered there were now some discussions between the Grand Duke and his wife about whether the painting was finished. They were arguing over whether Allori should be given more time to finish it before the painting was sent to Rome. The Grand Duchess thought it was finished enough. Buonarroti explained to her Allori's obligations to Orsini, but the Grand Duchess answered that from that moment on the Grand Duke should decide about it. When hearing this Buonarroti tried to convince the Grand Duchess again that Orsini really wanted the painting, but she said that according to the Grand Duke it was not finished yet. Buonarroti felt sad that he had served Orsini so badly, but he could not go against the request of the Grand Dukes.

In a letter of 14 May 1616, it turns out that the painting still had not been sent to Orsini, who sent a new letter to Allori stating that if he delayed sending the painting any longer, he would write to the Grand Duke.¹²²⁶ Buonarroti re-

¹²²³ *Ibid.*, no. 97, see appendix.

¹²²⁴ A.B. 50, no. 1374, see appendix.

¹²²⁵ A.B. 39, no. 98, see appendix.

¹²²⁶ A.B. 50, no. 1375.

plied on 22 May saying that the Grand Duchess had read Orsini's letter.¹²²⁷ The rest of this letter is unfortunately illegible because of ink corrosion. Orsini really did write the Grand Duke that Allori had not sent the painting yet. Much to Orsini's frustration, the Grand Duke decided that Allori should get even more time to finish it.

In 1618 Allori was diagnosed with cancer and after the work for Orsini, he created nothing but copies of his famous works, painted by his pupils and finished by him. In all probability he was already ill when this whole correspondence took place in 1616.¹²²⁸ It is obvious from his involvement in the long negotiations between Allori and Orsini that Buonarroti was constantly trying to please both parties, but sometimes had to manage with stronger authorities.

In 1621, Giulio Mancini wrote that Allori received 300 scudi for the painting *Juditta* 'dell'illustrissimo Orsino' and that the painting was 'bellissima e finitissima'.¹²²⁹ In the same year Allori died. It is not known when exactly did the painting arrive in Rome. Orsini himself died in 1626. According to a 1657 inventory of the Orsini palace at Monte Giordano, it appears in any case that the *Judith* finally reached the palace in its finished state and was still there in that year.¹²³⁰

The commission of 'Latona and her children' (Domenico Pieratti) for Cardinal Francesco Barberini

In 1634, Buonarroti was asked again to mediate between a cardinal and an artist. Cardinal Francesco Barberini had commissioned the sculptor Domenico Pieratti to make a sculpture group of *Latona and her children* (*Apollo and Diana*) (fig. 12).¹²³¹ Barberini wrote via Luigi Arrigucci, who asked Buonarroti on 16 December if he wanted to go to Pieratti's workshop to ask what he wanted to be paid for the sculpture group.¹²³² Between 1628 and 1632, Pieratti had made

1227 A.B. 39, no. 100, see appendix.

1228 Pizzorusso 1982: 29.

1229 See Mancini 1956: 228, cited by Shearman 1979: 4. Giulio Mancini (1559-1630) was a physician, art dealer, and art collector. He was a member of the Accademia degli Umoristi in Rome and between 1617 and 1621 he wrote his *Considerazioni sulla pittura* about the four different artistic trends in Rome at that moment, which included many biographies of artists. See Sparti 2007: 500-509.

1230 Shearman 1979: 4. In 1670, after the death of Ferdinando Orsini, the painting was moved to the Palazzo Orsini at Pasquino in Rome [the Palazzo Braschi]. After this date there is no trace of the painting anymore.

1231 This is the sculpture group of Latona (Leto) and her children Apollo and Diane.

1232 A.B. 41, no. 147, see appendix. On Luigi Arrigucci, see 5.7.2 Cultural brokerage services and arranging gifts.

two sculptures - personifications of the active and contemplative life - for the Galleria Buonarroti.¹²³³ Buonarroti and Pieratti had remained in contact and Buonarroti apparently had easy access to his workshop.

Buonarroti visited the workshop, but Cardinal Francesco thought the price Pieratti was asking was far too high. Half a year later, on 1 September 1635, Arrigucci asked Buonarroti to put pressure on Pieratti to lower the price saying that if he did not agree, Pieratti risked losing the commission.¹²³⁴ At the end of the month, he repeated this request. In the meantime he had tried to reach Pieratti through the architect Gherardo Silvani, who had handed over a letter, and he was waiting for an answer. Pieratti told Buonarroti that he had already answered, but apparently his answer did not reach Rome.¹²³⁵

In the Buonarroti archive there is a draft of a letter from Buonarroti to Cardinal Francesco about this case. The letter is undated but it must have been written in the beginning of October 1635. Buonarroti wrote that Pieratti came to visit him a couple of times and wanted 1500 scudi for the group; he did not understand why his letters had not arrived in Rome.¹²³⁶ On 20 October, Arrigucci wrote that Pieratti wanted at least 1400 scudi for the group and was waiting for the reaction of the Cardinal.¹²³⁷ In the end, the mission was successful and the sculpture group was displayed in the garden of the Palazzo Barberini (via Quattro Fontane). Later it was moved to the stairs, where it stands until today.

From these brokerage actions it appears that brokers were important for the successful development and completion of commissions. Painters could use brokers when they needed more time for a certain commission while patrons could use brokers to communicate their opinion about finished commissions or to negotiate with painters about ongoing commissions. By using a broker, conflicts could be avoided and Florentine art works could travel to Rome or other cities, which contributed to cultural diversity in Italy and promoted the Florentine influence abroad. The transactional content in this case were services, mostly visits to painters' workshops and passing on messages, to increase pressure on them and to negotiate the terms of their commissions.

¹²³³ Cole 2011: 35.

¹²³⁴ A.B. 41, no. 154, see appendix.

¹²³⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 156, see appendix.

¹²³⁶ A.B. 40, no. 34, see appendix.

¹²³⁷ A.B. 41, no. 157

5.7.4 Job requests

Because of his high social status, Buonarroti was sought after not only for his cultural connections, but also for his socio-political influence.¹²³⁸ A good number of the letters to Buonarroti are requests for jobs and for clerical, juridical, and educational assignments. Sometimes Buonarroti could arrange the favour himself by sending a letter directly to the appropriate person, but more often Buonarroti sought the help of other broker-friends. The two volumes of Buonarroti's draft letters contain several recommendation letters that demonstrate the strategies Buonarroti used to recommend people.

If more than three people were involved in a request (for example according to the model *client-broker-broker-broker-patron*), we speak of a dyadic chain, an example of which we have already seen in the recommendation of Buonarroti's nephew Gismondo. We can see such a dyadic chain in a request from Francesco Segaloni, a good friend of Buonarroti and a fellow member of the Accademia dei Virtuosi. In 1622, Segaloni recommended an acquaintance, Bastiano Speziali, who wanted to be considered for a job as Poggibonsi's chancellor. To succeed in this, he asked Segaloni to act as a broker. Segaloni wrote a letter of recommendation for Bastiano Speziali to the state secretary of the Medici, Curzio Picchena. But he also wrote his good friend Buonarroti asking him to second his recommendation of Bastiano Speziali to Curzio Picchena.¹²³⁹ Segaloni probably thought his efforts would be more successful if Buonarroti enforced his message by writing a letter. Picchena, in his turn, would then contact the Medici, thus completing the chain.

Buonarroti wrote that he considered Bastiano an appropriate candidate for the appointment, in particular because he was recommended by Segaloni, whose good qualities were well known ("perche è raccomandato dal Segaloni, la cui bontà e integrità è nota a tutto lo Stato").¹²⁴⁰ So, Buonarroti prizes the jobseeker, but also the more prominent man who recommended him. Bastiano himself went to Picchena armed with Segaloni and Buonarroti's recommendation letters. This was the usual way of proceeding, because without a recommendation, there was much less chance that Picchena would even consider his case. Unfortunately, it is not known if the mission was successful or not.

In the early modern period, there were no standard methods of recruitment. Most people obtained new jobs thanks to their connections. There were

1238 Janie Cole studied especially his cultural brokerage.

1239 A.B. 53, no. 1761, see appendix.

1240 A.B. 39, no. 134, see appendix.

often more than one person recommended for one job, and some people could have several recommendations. The more recommendations one person could arrange, the more serious the patron would consider him.¹²⁴¹

In April 1625, Francesco Segaloni approached Buonarroti again. This time he wanted to recommend a certain Raffaello Ciaperoni for an appointment to the Prepositura of Empoli. On 22 April, Buonarroti wrote a letter to Don Carlo Barberini, a draft of which I found in the Buonarroti archive, in addition to the definitive letter (in the Vatican Library Archive) he sent to Carlo Barberini on the same day.¹²⁴² There are some subtle differences between the two letters, and from the words he changed we can see how Buonarroti thought of the right words to manipulate the Cardinal in the best way.

Buonarroti starts by writing that Jacopo Soldani, who went to Rome for the Holy Year bearing his letter, will kiss the Cardinal's robe in his name as well. He says he is writing for Francesco Segaloni, who will write another letter himself. After explaining the appointment that Raffaello Ciaperoni is seeking, Buonarroti praises Segaloni. In his draft, he goes on to say that he is adding this request to the pile of many other requests for which he is already indebted to Carlo Barberini.¹²⁴³ In his final version he changes this and writes that he is adding this request to the *infinite* pile of requests for which he is indebted to the Cardinal.¹²⁴⁴ So, he reinforces his message just by changing one word. He continues by writing some things about Raffaello Ciaperoni, but stresses that Segaloni will write more definitively about his qualities. Thus it seems that Buonarroti's letter is meant to draw the Cardinal's attention to Segaloni's letter. But Buonarroti also praises Ciaperoni, writing that Ciaperoni is a respectful person and is so considered by other respectable men. In his final letter, he also adds that Ciaperoni is an intelligent person, so again he reinforces his message.¹²⁴⁵

Despite Buonarroti's efforts, the recommendation failed. On 26 April, Carlo Barberini apologises that he could not nominate Ciaperoni for the post in Em-

1241 Reinhard 2001: 66.

1242 Don Carlo Barberini (1562-1630) was the eldest brother of Maffeo Barberini, Pope Urban VIII and the father of Cardinal Francesco Barberini (1597-1679). He was married with Costanza Magalotti, the sister of Lorenzo Magalotti. From 1623, he was Gonfalonier of the Church and became Duke of Monterotondo. See Merola 1964a: 170-71.

1243 A.B. 39, no. 170, see appendix.

1244 BAV Barb lat 6460 f39, 22 April 1625.

1245 Apart from the words that are crossed out, which he did not copy in his final version, he even changed sentences, so while writing his final version he continued to make subtle changes. Another difference is that in his final version all the abbreviations are written out.

poli because the Pope had already nominated another person eight days before Buonarroti's letter arrived.¹²⁴⁶ He urges Buonarroti and Segaloni to write sooner the next time, so that he can see what he can do for them ("altra volta sia un poco più sollecito, che io procurerò fare la parte mia").

This kind of letters shows how people used brokers to apply for jobs. Personal qualities were not what counted most, it was important to have the right connections. The job seeker could not always be assured of good results. Also, when Buonarroti did his best for his candidate, things could go differently, because there were already other candidates for the requested jobs, the vacancy had been filled, other candidates had more recommendations, or they were proposed by people with more influence than Buonarroti.

Sometimes friends or brokers capitalized on Buonarroti's patronage balance with other patrons. On 2 May 1626, Jacopo Nerli wrote from Pisa that he had heard of a vacancy at a seminary of Rome.¹²⁴⁷ He wanted to present his family member Francesco for the opening. Nerli alluded to the fact that Buonarroti had many contacts with important people who could influence this case and who were still indebted to him ("so che ha molti amici suoi che vi resteran obbligati"), and because of his acquired social credit Buonarroti could ask them for a favour.

In 1629, Buonarroti received many job requests because he was then residing in Rome in close proximity to many important patrons.¹²⁴⁸ On 17 May, Agostino Franceschi, a monk of Santa Croce in Florence, asked for help on behalf of his nephew Francesco Maria Franceschi, who was going to Rome. Agostino hoped Buonarroti could recommend him to Bernardino Capponi so that this marquis and banker of Florentine patrician origin could help him find a job ("desiderai da lei un favore che lo raccomandassi al Signor Bernardino Capponi accio lo impiegassi in qualche cosa per poter vivere").¹²⁴⁹ This case is

¹²⁴⁶ A.B. 42, no. 190, see appendix.

¹²⁴⁷ A.B. 50, no. 1305, see appendix.

¹²⁴⁸ In 1629 Segaloni turned to Buonarroti another time for a job request, this time for himself. On 13 May, he asked Buonarroti to intercede with Pope Urban VIII, because he heard that Francesco Accolti might die soon and that there could be a vacancy in the parish church of San Giovanni a Petriolo in Galatrona. Segaloni wanted to receive this appointment. (A.B. 53, no. 1764, see appendix.) Soon after, Segaloni wrote another letter to say that he had decided not to try to become the priest of Galatrona, despite Buonarroti's intermediation, for which he was very thankful. He thought it would cost too much to send all the requested documents for the procedure (because of the stamps). Moreover, if he accepted the post, he would have to renovate the church and houses in the parish and restore the ruins of a mill, and he did not have the means to do so (A.B. 53, no. 1766, see appendix).

¹²⁴⁹ A.B. 47, no. 921, see appendix.

an example of how people in Florence could use fellow citizens living in Rome to help them or their relatives with upward mobility.

On 12 September 1629, Buonarroti received a letter from Mario Guiducci, who asked him to intercede with Cardinal Francesco Barberini to beg for a favour for the priest, organist and composer Antonio Brunelli (1577-1630).¹²⁵⁰ Brunelli was the caretaker of the Collegio dei Giovani Nobili di Via San Gallo, the college founded by Buonarroti together with Guiducci and others, so Buonarroti certainly would want to favour him.¹²⁵¹ Guiducci knew there was a vacancy in the parish church of San Frediano di Sommacolonia, in the diocese of Lucca, near Barga, caused by the death of M. Francesco Pellegrini da Barga, and that Brunelli would like to have this job. Guiducci wrote that all the directors of the Accademia would like Brunelli to have a new appointment too, as a reward for his long service to the Accademia, and that Jacopo Giral di (fig. 13) and Jacopo Soldani (fig. 2) would also write recommendations for him.¹²⁵²

On 22 September, Guiducci repeated his request, writing that all the directors were waiting anxiously for good news about Brunelli's prospective job. He thought Buonarroti must have received his previous letter, because it had been taken to Rome by Signor Orazio Magalotti. He stressed that he did not want to rush him, but repeated the request to reassure the priest that the message would reach Rome.¹²⁵³ A week later he wrote that he regretted that it had taken so long for his first letter to reach Buonarroti and expressing the hope that in the meantime no one else had requested the job they had in mind for Brunelli.¹²⁵⁴

In the archive I found the draft of Buonarroti's recommendation for Brunelli, so it seems that he fulfilled Guiducci's and the others' request. Buonarroti reiterated Brunelli's wish to work in the church of San Frediano and

1250 A.B. 48, no. 1046. Antonio Brunelli wrote motets, canzonette, madrigals, and other works, and he published some theoretical treatises about early baroque music: the method for voice *Regole utilissime per i scolari che desiderano imparare a cantare* (Florence, 1606) and *Regole e dichiarazione de alcuni contrappunti doppii* (Florence, 1610). For more information about Brunelli, see Meloncelli (1972: 552-53). Cole 2011: 115 n. 50 writes about this intermediation and sums up the letters. Cole 2007b: 96-98, 98 n. 13 (with a short transcription of one of the letters). Brunelli participated also in the play *Il Passatempo* (1613/14) of Buonarroti. He wrote the music for *Balletto della Cortesia* together with Jacopo Peri and Francesca Caccini. In 1613 he was nominated Maestro di cappella of the Grand Duke to the knights of St. Stephen at Pisa. See Cole 2007b: 96.

1251 On the Academy of San Gallo, see Cole 2011: 83-84. Gargiulo 1999a: 16-20: Brunelli was in Tuscany as organist of San Miniato from 1603-1608 and as maestro di cappella di Prato from 1608-1613.

1252 A.B. 48, no. 1046, see appendix.

1253 Ibid., no. 1047, see appendix.

1254 Ibid., no. 1048, see appendix.

recommended him for the job.¹²⁵⁵ He did not add any special messages, as he did in Ciaperoni's case. The letter is not dated, but must have been written in September 1629, after he received Guiducci's first letter.

In the last letter regarding this case, written 15 October 1629, Guiducci wrote he was very sorry their request was in vain. Maybe they discovered that Barberini had already promised the position to someone else. Guiducci regretted that Buonarroti had put so much energy into it and that they had bothered Cardinal Barberini. He nevertheless thanked Buonarroti for everything, as did Brunelli.¹²⁵⁶ He noted that Brunelli had gone to Lucca, but his competitor was a more experienced priest who was the servant of the bishop. Although they chose the other priest, the Monsignore was nevertheless impressed with Brunelli and promised he would look for another parish church.

So although the request had not been successful, Buonarroti and the others helped advance Brunelli his career. The following year, however, Brunelli died in Pisa. It is not known which function he occupied at that time.

When he moved back to Florence, Buonarroti got a letter from the poet Francesco Rovai (1605-1648) from Sansepolcro in which he asked Buonarroti to support his effort to get a chair as lecturer in Humanities at the Studio di Firenze.¹²⁵⁷ On 6 May 1637, Rovai wrote that getting the chair really depended on Buonarroti ("depende in gran parte dal suo Patrocinio"), because he knew that Buonarroti was part of the group responsible for selecting new employees. He begged Buonarroti to help get this promotion and promised him he and his family would always be indebted to him.

In his next letter of 30 May, he wrote that he could not find the words to describe how thankful he was that Buonarroti had recommended him to Signor Fantoni for the Studio. Fantoni communicated to Rovai he was willing to please Buonarroti and Piero de' Bardi, whose assistance Rovai had apparently sought, too. He said that although his qualifications were somewhat less than what the position called for, he still hoped to get the job and that he would make up for his deficiencies through studying. He repeated that his family would be eternally indebted to Buonarroti.¹²⁵⁸ I cannot find the name of Rovai connected to the university, so it seems that he ultimately did not get the position.

Brokers like Buonarroti promoted the social and geographical mobility of employees across Tuscany and from Tuscany to Rome. The transactional content

1255 A.B. 40, no. 228, see appendix.

1256 A.B. 48, no. 1049, see appendix.

1257 A.B. 52, no. 1611, see appendix.

1258 Ibid., 1612, see appendix.

consisted in this case of recommendations and of power in the form of access to higher patrons. Although not all recommendations ended successfully, this section enlarges our insight into the recruiting processes and the strategies for recommending people.

Conclusion

If we consider the patricians' relations with artists and higher patrons in- and outside of Florence we can conclude that the networks of the Florentine patricians were well suited for brokerage networks. Thanks to their travels and forms of more permanent migration, some patricians created new strong-tie networks in other cities, while they maintained contacts with their old strong-tie networks, which they formed mostly within the cultural academies. For their patrician friends who stayed in Florence, these ties formed bridges to other Italian and European courts. They could use the friends-of-friends in their large secondary networks to satisfy their clients and patrons and in this way improve their social prestige. Moreover, cultural information, persons, objects, and innovations could travel through these channels.

The situation described above is illustrated by the brokerage activities of Buonarroti. Using mechanisms like favours and reciprocal favours, gifts and counter gifts, debt relations were created that promoted cultural exchange. Cultural and genealogical information and objects like books, poems, songs, treaties, and food travelled through Buonarroti's network. Moreover his brokerage activities led to the upward mobility of people who could further their careers with Buonarroti's help. Buonarroti's brokerage activities can be divided into four categories, each of which indicates the importance of brokerage networks.

In the first category, dealing with the social and geographic mobility of artists, we have seen how artists could acquire experience at other courts (Giovan Maria, Naples) or with more established painters (Periccioli, Matteo Rosselli). In other cases, Florentine patrons from Rome searched for painters to execute commissions for them and asked Buonarroti to recommend some. This could be a chance for young painters to show their qualities. For all the painters, it meant upward mobility and with his brokerage actions Buonarroti created new patronage relationships and in this way promoted the social and geographical mobility of artists.

Delivering services was another category in which brokers could be useful. To start with, they could advise about and arrange for gifts from friends to higher patrons or from higher patrons to representatives of other high patrons. Other services a broker could deliver were to help foreign scholars and in this

way create cultural bonds between Florence and their countries of origin. In the case of Buonarroti in particular, one of his services was to arrange for licences for books on the Index, which promoted the diffusion of knowledge.

The third category in which brokers were important was in favouring the communication between geographically remote patrons and artists who were already in a patronage relationship. By exchanging messages and negotiating between patrons and clients about prices and time schedules brokers could increase the chance that commissions were completed. Conflicts were avoided or solved, if necessary.

The last category in which brokers were influential was in job requests. We analysed Buonarroti's strategies in recommending people, which can be regarded as a model for other comparable situations. On the whole the recommendations of Buonarroti provided for a large social and geographic mobility of employees. Not all the individual intermediation actions were successful, but in any case they give insight in recruiting processes and recommendation mechanisms.

In conclusion, this chapter has proved that brokerage networks like Buonarroti's were of the utmost importance for improving the cultural exchange between Florence and other Italian and European cities, and for promoting the social and geographic mobility of artists and other people. Researches into elite individuals or groups in seventeenth-century Florence are still scarce, and the brokerage mechanisms discussed in this chapter can be used perfectly in researches into other seventeenth-century nobles. A more elaborate research to socio-cultural networks of Florentine patricians can lead to new conclusions, by shedding light on informal structures that were responsible for cultural exchange between Florence and other courts and for the cultural attainments of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. Of course, Buonarroti's position between so many artists and higher patrons was quite unique, but there were certainly other patricians from the cultural academies with comparable networks and influence, notably members of the Bardi, Corsi, and Strozzi families. The challenge is to discover of whom of these patricians archival sources are preserved, which present a rich cultural correspondence such as the one of Michelangelo Buonarroti the Younger, which gives insight not only in individual commissions or requests, but also in the whole range of persons that is involved in the successful completion of them.

Figures - Chapter Five



Figure 1: Cristofano Allori, *portrait of Michelangelo Buonarroti the Younger*.



Figure 2: Jacopo Soldani, portrayed on the panel *Michelangelo è accolto a Venezia da una delegazione inviata dal Doge e dal Senato nel 1529*, Casa Buonarroti, Florence (see Vliegenthart 1976: 121).



Figure 3: Giovanni Altoviti, portrayed on the panel *Michelangelo presenta a Pio IV il modello di S. Pietro*, Casa Buonarroti, Florence (see Vliegenthart 1976: 135).



Figure 4: Upper right: Francesco Barberini, portrayed on the panel *Michelangelo presenta a papa Giulio III, in presenza di alcuni cardinali, il modello per il "Palazzo di Strada Giulia per la Ruota (1522)"*, Casa Buonarroti, Florence (see Vliegenthart 1976: 131)



Figure 7: Cosimo della Gherardesca, Cosimo Minerbetti and Francesco Nori, portrayed on the panel *Michelangelo presenta a papa Giulio III, in presenza di alcuni cardinali, il modello per il "Palazzo di Strada Giulia per la Ruota (1522)"*, Casa Buonarroti, Florence (see Vliegenthart 1976: 129-30)



Figure 5: Piero Dini, portrayed on portrayed on the panel *Michelangelo presenta a papa Giulio III, in presenza di alcuni cardinali, il modello per il "Palazzo di Strada Giulia per la Ruota (1522)"*, Casa Buonarroti, Florence (see Vliegenthart 1976: 129)



Figure 6: Neri Alberti, portrayed on the panel *Michelangelo, nelle vesti di ambasciatore di Firenze, davanti a Giulio II a Bologna nel 1506, mentre presenta al papa le sue scuse per essere partito da Roma l'anno prima*, Casa Buonarroti, Florence (see Vliegenthart 1976: 104)



Figure 8: Villa delle Selve, Lastra a Signa



Figure 9: Ludovico Cigoli, *self-portrait*, 1606, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.



Figure 10: Cristofano Allori, *self-portrait*, 1606, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.



Figure 11: Another version of the *Judith* by Allori in the Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti, Florence (1613).



Figure 12: Domenico Pieratti, *Latona and children*, 1634-36, Palazzo Barberini, Rome.



Figure 13: Jacopo Giraldi, portrayed on the panel *Michelangelo è accolto a Venezia da una delegazione inviata dal Doge e dal Senato nel 1529*, Casa Buonarroti, Florence (see Vliegenthart 1976: 121).



Figure 14: Cosimo Gamberucci, *self portrait*, Galleria degli Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe, Florence. Black chalk on white paper.