Federica Favino

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Giovanni Battista Ciampoli (1589–1643), Florentine cleric, scholar, and diplomat, is almost exclusively known as Galileo's friend and disciple who took advantage from his leading position as secretary of pope Urban VIII in Rome to help Galileo obtain the *imprimatur* for his *Dialogo sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo* (1632). The "affaire" of 1633 caused Ciampoli's political fall, since Urban VIII felt deceived by his former secretary. Moreover, Ciampoli was strongly suspected of supporting the pro-Hapsburg faction inside the Roman Curia against the pope himself and his pro-Bourbon policy during the crucial phases of the Thirty Years' War. He spent the rest of his life in perpetual exile from Rome, working on his poems and philosophical writings, which should become part of a never achieved encyclopaedic work in several volumes ranging from natural philosophy to "chymistry", physiology, and medicine, from theology to politics, rhetoric, and poetics. Most of them would be later collected and published by his friend, cardinal Pietro Sforza Pallavicino (1607–1667), but some others would remain unpublished until our present time.

Federica Favino's book is an important update and further development of her previous papers on Ciampoli's personal reappraisal of Galileo's experimental science and attitude towards some key theoretical issues concerning atomism, mathematics applied to natural phenomena, corpuscular nature of light, Copernicanism, plurality of worlds, infinity of the Universe, philosophical foundation of scientific knowledge, and interpretation of the Bible within the framework of Catholic orthodoxy (F. Favino, *A proposito dell'atomismo di Galileo: da una lettera di Tommaso Campanella ad uno scritto di Giovanni Ciampoli*, "Bruniana & Campanelliana", 3 (1997/2), 265–281; Id., *Deux dialogues retrouvés de Giovanni Ciampoli*, in E. Festa, V. Jullien, M. Torrini (eds.), *Géométrie, atomisme et vide dans l'école galiléenne*, Fontenay Saint-Cloud: ENS Ed., 1999, 25–42).

The book provides an intellectual biography of Giovanni Ciampoli "Galilean" scholar and courtier, as well as a detailed reconstruction of the political and cultural milieu of Florence under Grand Duke Ferdinand II de' Medici and Rome under Maffeo Barberini's pontificate, where Ciampoli spent most of his activity as secretary of the pope and cultural promoter to establish a patronage- and affiliation-based network of "new" scientists, philosophers, writers, artists, aristocrats, and clerics both inside and outside the Roman Curia, with the Accademia dei Lincei as its most relevant institution. FF starts from the end of the story, dealing with Ciampoli's late years in exile after the "Galileo affaire"

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(Chapter I, *L'eredità di monsignor Giovanni Ciampoli*, pp. 1–18) and with his manuscripts, partly edited by Sforza Pallavicino between 1648 and 1666 with a sort of precautional censorship on their most sensible contents (Chapter II, *Un principio di censura 'tendenziosa': le edizioni secentesche della filosofia naturale*, pp. 19–40), partly remained unpublished as fragments, some of them mentioned in the inventory of his works written right after his death but probably lost. Chapter III (*Conoscere la natura: scetticismo ed empirismo*, pp. 41–68) goes back to the years 1618–1624, when the nobleman and poet Virginio Cesarini (1595–1624) became member of the Lincei in Rome, taking part to several meetings promoted by Federico Cesi (1585–1630) and attended by Galileo, the future pope Maffeo Barberini (1568–1644), Sforza Pallavicino, the German physician and naturalist Giovanni Faber (Johann Schmidt, 1574–1629), the Scottish priest and diplomat George Conn (died 1640), the Florentine astronomer Mario Guiducci (1583–1646), and Ciampoli himself. The "Lincean circle" was particularly active during the famous controversy on the comets (1618–1626) between Galileo and Orazio Grassi (c. 1590–1654), culminated with the publication of *Il Saggiatore* (1623): a true best-seller of the time, whose divulgation among the Roman intellectual elites was strongly supported by Ciampoli. Chapter IV (*Lucrezio senz'atomi*, pp. 69–86) is entirely devoted to geometry and atomism in the Galilean school (to quote M. Bucciantini and M. Torrini, *Geometria e atomismo nella scuola galileiana*, Leo S. Olschki Editore, 1992): in particular to the philosophical debate on ancient and modern scepticism with regard to the possibility, limits, and foundation of physical knowledge, developed within the Accademia from the well-known pages of *Il Saggiatore* concerning the distinction between primary and secondary qualities, the role of experiments, and mathematics as the only language in which the "book of nature" is written and can therefore be read. Here and in Chapter V (*Carrozzate e conversazioni*, pp. 87–104), FF discusses Ciampoli's peculiar way-out with respect to other Lincei like Cesarini: physical corpuscularianism without metaphysical commitment to atomism in natural philosophy (with all its theologically dangerous implications), as well as a form of "Epicurean/sceptical relativism" in moral philosophy and politics which found an ultimate solution in Christian revealed (political) theology, with the supreme authority of the Roman Catholic Church and its magisterium, according to the canons of the Council of Trent. In this attempt to find a great synthesis between Galilean science, "new" philosophy of nature, and Counter-Reformation theology, Ciampoli is close to both Galileo's "Copernican letters" and Campanella's *Apologia pro Galilaeo* in stating the fundamental unity of Truth, the complementarity between the "two books" (nature and the Bible) as well as between the "libertas philosophandi ac theologizandi" according to human reason and the necessary guidance of

Revelation against intellectual arrogance from which heresy and even atheism originate. Chapters VI (*Metafisica e politica della luce*, pp. 105–128) and VII (*Epilogo. La filosofia 'invisibile' di Galileo*, pp. 129–140) discuss more in detail Ciampoli's natural philosophy, his corpuscular theory of light and matter, his commitment to heliocentrism despite its formal condemnation in 1616 and 1633, with a Neo-Pythagorean, somehow Keplerian theory of the Sun as the main source of light, heat, and planetary motion, as well as the "natural place" and main repository of fire (at least in our solar system) as made by igneous corpuscules shaped like microscopic pyramids (according to a long-lasting Platonic tradition): something that leads him to a physico-philosophical metaphysics of the Sun which does not differ too much from that developed by the Copernican theologian Paolo Antonio Foscarini (1565–1616) in his famous and controversial letter of 1615. FF also underlines Ciampoli's intellectual debt to Pierre Gassendi, his main source of criticisms against Aristotelian and scholastic as well as Descartes' philosophy in the light of a religiously orthodox reinterpretation of Epicurus' physics and ethics. Ciampoli's ambition was definitely to make explicit and further develop what he regarded as Galileo's "invisible" philosophy, also concerning Urban VIII's argument on the purely hypothetical status of Copernicanism that played a so crucial role in Galileo's condemnation.

In the appendix (Testi, pp. 141–352), FF provides a full critical edition with introduction, notes and apparatus of four texts from Ciampoli's extant works: I. His testament and the 1643 inventory of his writings (pp. 169–180). II. The dialogue *De intellectione* on human cognition and the foundation of scientific knowledge (pp. 181–250). III. The dialogue *Del Sole e del fuoco* on his theory of the Sun and the corpuscular nature of light/fire and matter, where George Conn, Virginio Cesarini, and Pietro Sforza Pallavicino are put on the stage as characters, like Simplicio, Sagredo, and Salviati in Galileo's *Dialogo* (pp. 251–302). IV. The first (and only) book of Ciampoli's *Filosofia naturale*, which was supposed to be part of a much larger treatise, here completely published for the first time. FF's analysis of the surviving fragment of the *Filosofia naturale* reveals the original, autonomous, somehow surprising dimension of Ciampoli's scientific thought with respect to his master Galileo, who differently from him did not feel comfortable with metaphysics and refrained from physico-philosophical speculations. Galileo definitely believed that only by means of "sensate esperienze" and "necessarie dimostrazioni" the human mind could achieve the same degree of certitude in knowledge as God's mind, not in extension but in intension. On the contrary, Ciampoli maintained that only an (isomorphic) image of the truth was accessible to our finite intellect, which always had to adjust its knowledge through time according to the increase of empir-

ical evidence and experimental investigation. In Ciampoli's view, the "book of nature" constantly needed to be (re)interpreted as well as the Scriptures, although both sources of truth must ultimately converge.

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