

Agostino Favoriti

(1624--1682)

He was born in Sarzana (La Spezia) on the 3rd of November, 1624 by Giacomo, Jurisconsult, and by Elisabetta Casoni, both of whom are locally eminent families.

When he went to Rome, FAVORITI undertook the ecclesiastical career, assisted by influential maternal relatives (such as Bishop Filippo Casoni), who introduced him to the environment of the papal Curia, where he will then work for the rest of his life.

Entered at the service of Cardinal Fabio Chigi, FAVORITI was a member of some important city academies, but literary exercise had to be a minor episode in his life, mainly absorbed in the negotiation of Vatican policy. From 1659 (as it is derived from his funeral inscription) he had a series of offices (custodian of the archives of S. Collegio, honorary attendant, secretary of the Consistory), that conferred great power during the pontificate of Alexander VII (precisely Cardinal Chigi, elected Pope in 1655), which he could "be considered his right arm" thanks to his great ability to work and stylistic abilities, which allowed him to compile a huge amount of memorials and shorts in elegant Latin". Personal Secretary of Flavio Chigi, nephew of the pontiff, FAVORITI did not fail to influence his influence even in contemporary literary controversies, in which excessive acrimony and malevolence gave him an unpleasant reputation at that time.

In the years 1652-53 the controversy between FAVORITI on the one hand and the "awkward" artist Salvator Rosa on the other, came to the defense of Constantine's tragedy by his friend G. B. Ghirardelli, subject to sharp criticism and machinations. Prior to the Neapolitan painter's appreciation of the skill, reciting in the Accademia d'Accademia "a sonnet for a battlefield", FAVORITI was later an acrimonious enemy of the Rose to deny it the patriotism of the Satire. In a warm-up opposition shortly after the first representation of the Constantine, of which Rosa had drawn the front page, FAVORITI criticized the choice of prose instead of the verse; and in order to become the "major champion" of the detractors of the new tragedy, Rose would portray him in the fifth satire, Envy, in the form of the cruel and implacable critic who sharpens the weapons of malice, practicing in the most intriguing and slanderous texts: "Fur, always he used the proofs / tender laces, et insidie to the other fame / with unusual inventions, and nine "(vv. 427-429).

Rosa indicated FAVORITI under the pseudonym of Schiribandolo, the same nom de plume he had used in his Opposition, also allowing the true identity of his target to be transposed with a transverse onomastic disclosure ("indeed all / this plebeian infamous son favorites ", vv. 440-441). Sincerely moved by Ghirardelli's death ("I see that I'm in love with you", v. 456), who had failed to restore his fame, despite a tiring and complicated Defense, Rosa has nothing to complain about this "great rattle", the persecutor of the fame of others, which confirms with its lust "the dislike of the serpent and the rogue" (v. 420). A subject of ludibry and caricature for a whole set of physical defects' ("wide shoulders, and a few hips", impudicity painted on his face, "teeth teeth", "vulgar eyes") and morals (especially ignorance), FAVORITI is perhaps also suffocated in sixth satire (Babylon), if in his Latin poems Rosa thought when he complained (vv. 476-477) that they heard "in Carmi aurari / cantar somari".

Outside the controversy with the Rosa, FAVORITI was a highly esteemed person, and in the Roman court he enjoyed a credit and a prestigious reputation, which in 1666 a canon of the basilica of St. Mary Major. The short period of misfortune, referred to by his verses was the consequence of the retaliation of the French ambassador, he wanted to punish him for writing an injurious sonnet to Louis XIV, in conflict with Rome on various fronts (from the affair of guards ran to the succession of the Castro Duchy, etc.). Accompanied by Alexander VII's inclination towards studies, FAVORITI could also be appreciated as a man of the bureaucratic and diplomatic apparatus, even as a privileged interlocutor in matters related to arts and letters. A friend of men like Leo Allacci and Stefano Gradi, like Cardinal Sforza Pallavicino and Bishop Ferdinand of Fürstenberg, as well as Cristina of Sweden, who was a numismatic consultant and a ceremonial singer, is counted among the members of the small circle of literati of Pleias Alexandrina, who gathered around Alexander VII, lover of the pleasures of humanistic conversation in the summer resorts of Castel Gandolfo. In fact, FAVORITI conceived his artistic commitment as an otium and interval, as a delightful break in the middle of offices and cures.

In charge of pronouncing the funeral prayer of Alexander VII in the Vatican Basilica (1667), thanks to his reputation as a Latinist, FAVORITI was able to exercise his proven diplomatic abilities even during the pontificates of Clement IX (who was also commanding commemoration in 1669), Clement X and Innocent XI, who ultimately assigned him important duties in the gift dispute between the Church and Louis XIV. In 1677 he was appointed secretary of the special congregation for the issue of the Regalie, an office that saw him again proud opposition to the claims of the French sovereign, then supported by the Gallic clergy. Author of the Letter from a Curial of Rome to a friend of his own in Paris (Rome, 1680), where the line of the Church was specified in relation to the election of the niece of the nuns of St. Augustine of Charonne, who had been the immediate causes of dispute between Paris and the Vatican, he did not hesitate to support the Jansenists against Louis XIV; and this gave him the diligence of bitterly poodled, but above all the risk of confessional suspicion, which the French could not, however, turn into imputation.

Priest since 1658, FAVORITI did not delay to manifest those rigorous and anti-gayanistic feelings that attracted him for the whole of life the cunning of the fuzzy faction, led by the cardinal titular of St. FAVORITI Albizzi's office: cause along with the action of ' the French embassy, his failure to advance in ecclesiastical career, including the non-granting of purple.

The dispute began with the controversial revocation of privileges at the University of Leuven, accused of philogianism, and the mission in Rome of its delegates, with the head of whom Belgian Augustinian C. Lupus, regent of the university, FAVORITI entertained a long and friendly correspondence. While supporting the papal thesis that exhorted lovers to greater moderation, through Lupus he came into contact with the most well-known rigorist authors, including certain suspects of Jansenism. Consequently, after the death of Alexander VII, in 1669 he was forced to give up the secretariat of St. Collegio because of the "storm" raised against him by the Filipino cardinals. However, he retained that of the consistory congregation until death, along with the benevolence of the following pontiffs up to Innocent XI, whose asceticism had many points of contact with the F.'s antelopeism and the opposition party of the Jesuits.

The new pope had no confidence in his Secretary of State A. Cibo and to balance the philosophical tendencies of this he appointed F., in 1676, secretary of the Figures. This degree

allowed him to organize the work of the State Secretariat so that he could leave the final signature of the documents prepared by him, and handle in person the correspondence with the nunciature, according to the ideas of the "zealots" they considered their leader. In 1677, with the conferral of the Secretariat of the Congregation of the Gifts, FAVORITI was able to dispose of the Pope's main weapon in contending with Louis XIV on the extension of the royalty to France.

The aggravation of that confrontation intensified FAVORITI's ties with the French rigorists closest to Port-Royal. He positively judged their hostility to real claims while on the other, they hoped to induce Rome to adopt a more favorable attitude towards Jansenist doctrines, presenting them from an anti-regalist perspective. Thus, again in 1677, FAVORITI received in Rome S.-J. du Cambout de Pontchâteau, sent by the bishop of Alet N. Pavillon, and together with him he presented to the pope the problem of gifts according to Jansenist instances. To maintain contact with them and with other Dutch Jansenists, among them J. Neercassel, he used his cousin Lorenzo Casoni, who introduced himself into the ecclesiastical career with the intention of becoming his heir and continuer.

The results of this convergence of interests were the condemnation of the sixty Jansenist moral propositions denounced by the University of Leuven in 1679, the protection that, as long as he lived, accorded to Gilles Gabrielis's *Specimine morale*, the French impossibility of pass the thesis that all the enemies of the law of regalia were Jansenists and the Italian translation - at the expense of FAVORITI - of the *Traité général de la Régale* (Amsterdam 1681) by L.-P. du Vaucel. But it was not enough to undermine the repeated condemnation of Jansenism.

Moreover, as L. Ceyskens has shown, FAVORITI did not express himself clearly in favor of this doctrine: rather distinguished between those who professed Giansenio's thesis and those who were considered Jansenists only by the accusations of the Philogenesis, condemning, hence, the first and trying to protect the latter: "Giansenists are the ones who do not allow the condemnation of the five propositions of Cornelio Giansenio's book. The others who know her for heretics can not deserve this clue, though in other subjects hold controversial views ". Only Albizzi openly accused FAVORITI of Jansenism, failing to prove it, and not even the French (when they discovered in 1680 that the letters of their hostile Food were his work) had credible evidence to discredit him. FAVORITI was a defender of the Curia, who, like Innocent XI, hoped to be able to reform in a rigorous way, and an anti-Turkish. As for the Jesuits, he esteemed their founder, but he said that the Order, because of too many frequentations with the principles, had lost the moral certainty of its beginnings. This is also apparent from the slow detachment of FAVORITI from the extremist positions, starting from 1680, first, for political reasons, in the matter of gifts in order not to reach the full block of negotiations, then in the relationship with lovers, cooled when they did not respond with the unanimity he wished to appeal against the decisions of the assembly of the French clergy, and finally in the evolution of their own spirituality which, with the influence of Molinos, with the years assumed a growing calming connotation .

At the same time as the problems of faith and relations with France, FAVORITI worked a long time on the alliance against the Turks brought forward by Innocent XI. It is so important for him to induce him to sacrifice part of his rigorism in an attempt to widen his anti-Ottoman face. He sought to support the Venetians during and after the Candia War and promised the Republic to grant some tenths of the ecclesiastical fortification of Corfu, but did not want to consider the request for the suppression of some religious Orders advanced by Ambassador A.

Barbaro . After the peace of Nijmegen in 1679 the circumstances seemed to him to be propitious and his letters with the nuncio in Vienna FAVORITI Buonvisi (of which he will support the cardinal's nomination in 1681) show his attention to imperial politics and the entry of the Poles in the alliance, although death will prevent him from attending the siege of Vienna.

In the autumn of 1682 FAVORITI waited for Vaucel's visit, sent to Rome by A. Arnauld. to reunite again with anti-regalist action. He could not receive it because, feverish in early November, died three days after arriving in the French town, assisted by Molinos.

A friend of M. de Molinos, of whom at first he had managed to avoid arrest, FAVORITI was unable to accept the purple cardinality, which seems to have been destined for the sudden death on Nov. 13. 1682. He was buried in the Basilica of St. Mary Major and honored with a sumptuous monument, for which friend FAVORITI of Fürstenberg dictated the epigraph.

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