

Humility at court.

The House of Savoy, noblewomen and networks in Turin between XVI and XVII century

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Abstract

The paper aims to examine the feminine network that emerged in Turin, the capital of the Duchy of Savoy, around the figure of Catalina Micaela of Habsburg, daughter of Philip II and wife of Charles Emmanuel I of Savoy, focusing on some particular noblewomen at court and chamber-ladies as Bona of Savoy-Racconigi, Benedetta Spinola and the Countess of Polonghera Eleonora Madruzzo Costa. A network that interacted as cultural, devotional and also political agent between the francophile party and the Spanish faction both active and struggling in the Sabaudian capital. Some hints of suggestion are given by the Company of Saint Elisabeth of Hungary also called Compagnia dell'Umiltà (Company of Humility), founded during the Seventies in the XVI century and surviving until 1922: some ladies-in-waiting of the Infanta were part of it and the same Catalina's daughters - Margherita, Maria Apollonia and Francesca Caterina - were admitted in 1624.