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The structure and dynamics of scholarly networks between the Dutch Republic and the Grand Duchy of Tuscany in the 17th century

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CHAPTER 1

Confidentiality and secrecy in the epistolary network

INTRODUCTION

Before analyzing networks in a quantitative way, first an impression needs to be given of the nature of the relationships in the scholarly exchange in the networks between the Dutch Republic and the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, two societies on either side of the confessional divide, roughly between 1667 and 1715. Communication between these two societies would seem to test the limits of how much disunity a scholarly community could bear. In fact, many tensions arise due to the different social, cultural, political and confessional paradigms involved. These tensions ranged from restrictions imposed by powerful political and religious institutions, for example by the Inquisition, to scholarly rivalries, jealousy, suspicion and competition. Consequently, people were forced to negotiate carefully between the desire to exchange knowledge and the need to avoid these tensions. This interaction between openness (the liberty to share information) and secrecy (caution to avoid suspicion from others) in epistolary communication could dictate the choices and network strategies early modern scholars adopted. For example, broad measures of confidentiality, dissimulation and self-censorship in communication were required to avoid the pitfalls of social, political and theological control.[44] But before looking at how these strategic measures came to the fore in the networks and letters between the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Dutch Republic, we will briefly take a look at the broader context of secrecy and confidentiality in the field of early modern studies and network theory. This context will underline the delicate atmosphere of caution and vigilance that surrounded the world of early modern letter-writers as well as discuss how each instance of concealment could shape the scholarly network in significant ways.

1. CONFIDENTIALITY IN EARLY MODERN EPISTOLOGRAPHY

The Reformation of the sixteenth century has resulted in deep political and cultural chasms among various religious groups. Consequently, the early modern society became marked by political turmoil, social upheaval and religious controversies in an increasing way, often leading to outright clashes. It goes without saying that these clashes thoroughly affected the lives and behavior of many early modern scholars.[45] They could not shy away from these tensions, which were impossible to ignore, not even in the ideal world of the Republic of Letters. Their activities in various fields of knowledge often led to

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[44] For a detailed account on the role of openness and secrecy in early modern historiography, see Koen Vermeir, 'Openness versus secrecy? Historical and historiographical remarks', *British Society for the History of Science* 45, no. 2 (2012): 165–188. See also, Koen Vermeir and Daniel Margóczy, 'States of Secrecy: an introduction', *British Society for the History of Science* 45, no. 2 (2012): 153-164. Moreover, Noel Malcolm has argued that the German Jesuit Athanasius Kircher's (1602-1680) pursuit of secrecy – and his unfounded claim to mysterious knowledge about ancient Egypt – put him in conflict with the Republic of Letter's principles of openness, transparency and full citation of evidence (Noel Malcolm, 'Private and Public Knowledge: Kircher, Esotericism, and the Republic of Letters', in *Athanasius Kircher: The Last Man Who Knew Everything*, ed. Paula Findlen (New York/London: Routledge, 2004), 457-545).

[45] On the link between the Reformation and scholarly identity see the various contributions in Richard Kirwan, eds., *Scholarly Self-Fashioning and Community in the Early Modern University* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), in particular the work of Kenneth Austin, 'Academic Exchanges: Letters, the Reformation and Scholarly Self-Fashioning', 39-59.

insights or activities that did not correspond with the established opinions of themselves and their superiors. Most intellectuals were dependent on the protection of princes, cardinals, prelates, grand dukes and governments and they were aware of the fact that openness on certain controversial matters could seriously endanger their career. As a result, they often found themselves between extremes: on the one hand, they desired to play a fundamental role in the international exchange of ideas, but, on the other hand, they did not want to cross the boundaries imposed by their superiors or by themselves. Consequently, this entente between scholarly sociability and loyalty inevitably influenced the behavior of early modern letter-writers, who often struggled for control over the circulation of their letters.

Exercising control over one's letters depended primarily on the trust they put in the recipient's promise to maintain confidentiality. For example, on the 6th of May 1675, the librarian Antonio Magliabechi wrote to the Dutch scholar Jacob Gronovius (1645-1716) that he would never have entrusted him with a secret if he would not be sure that Gronovius would have kept his mouth shut:

> "Le scriverò segretissimamente il tutto, ma con condizzione però, che non solamente V.S.Ill.ma mi onori di stracciar subito questo foglio, ma che in oltre mai in tempo alcuno, parlerà di questo ad anima vivente. Di tal cosa ne la supplico per le sante leggi dell'amicizzia, ed mi rendo certo che mi sia per fare tal grazzia. Se non avessi in V.S.Ill.ma tal fiducia, cioè ch'mai, è per parlare di questo, certo che non le lo scriverei in alcuna maniera."[46]

This passage shows that the significance of confidentiality in the Republic of Letters is based on trust and as an expression of friendship – the *sante leggi dell'amicizzia* to use the same words of Magliabechi.[47] These concepts "reflected and strengthened the sense of equality that structured the relations among the citizens of the Republic of Letters",[48] enabling both Dutch and Tuscan scholars to associate themselves with men of different religious thoughts and beliefs, while frequently being faced with repression by those in power, either from, for instance, the powerful Medici family in Florence or from the Holy Office. In other words, confidentiality was essential to foster cross-cultural exchange.

How does the concept of confidentiality comes to the fore in the Republic of Letters? In his study of the correspondence of the Dutch lawyer Hugo Grotius, Henk Nellen has argued that "it was simply not done to procure a wide audience with access to the information that was exchanged" – via handwritten copies and certainly not through publication – "without the express approval of the letter-writer".[49] In the early modern scholarly community, recipients customarily showed their letters to their colleagues, who sometimes copied them out or passed them on to other colleagues. Therefore, in the

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[46] Magliabechi to J. Gronovius, 6 May 1675, LMU, Cod. 4° Cod. Msc 777, ff. 171-174, "I will write you in secret everything, provided however that, Your Illustrious Lordship does not only deem himself to tear up this paper immediately, but also that you will never talk to a single soul about this. I beg you this for the holy laws of friendship, and I am sure that you are about to do me that favor. If I would not have that confidence in Your Illustrious Lordship, namely that you will never talk about this, it is certain that I would never have written to you in any way about this".

[47] See Charles van den Heuvel et al., 'Circles of Confidence in Correspondence. Modeling Confidentiality and Secrecy in Knowledge Exchange Networks of Letters and Drawings in the Early Modern Period', 79-80. About the role of confidentiality and trust in the Republic of Letters, see Franz Mauelshagen, 'Networks of Trust and Imagined Community of the Learned', 1-32; The concept of confidentiality has been extensively studies in the correspondence of the Dutch lawyer Hugo Grotius, for which see H.J.M. Nellen, "In strict confidence': Grotius' Correspondence with his Socinian Friends,' in *Self-presentation and Social Identification. The Rhetoric and Pragmatics of Letter Writing in Early Modern Times*, ed. Toon van Houdt et al. (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2002), 227–245; *Ibidem*, 'The Correspondence of Hugo Grotius', in *Les grands intermédiaires culturels de la République des Lettres. Etudes des réseaux de correspondances du xvie au xviiie siècles,* ed. Christiane Berkvens-Stevelinck et al. (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2005), 127–164. *Ibidem*, 'Codes of Confidentiality in Hugo Grotius's Correspondence (1594-1645)', *Text* 17 (2005): 254. *Ibidem, Hugo Grotius: A Lifelong Struggle for Peace in Church and State, 1583 – 1645*, trans. J.C. Grayson (Leiden/Boston: Brill Publishers, 2015), 337.

[48] See Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment*, cit. 18

[49] Nellen, 'Codes of Confidentiality in Hugo Grotius's Correspondence (1594-1645)', 254.

case a letter contained sensitive information, it was necessary to state explicitly if one wanted a particular letter to remain confidential. There is for, example, a letter of 1675, from Magliabechi to Jacob Gronovius in which he urged not to show his letter to anyone, "ne anche al suo signore Fratello, ne al signore Grevio".[50] In the case Gronovius would break the confidentiality of Magliabechi's letters by showing them to others, this was considered a gross offence.[51] If a recipient sanctioned unauthorized disclosure, the sender had every right to express that his interests had seriously been harmed. In 1674, for example, Magliabechi warned Jacob Gronovius that his Dutch colleague Nicolaas Heinsius wrote disparaging comments about him behind his back. Gronovius, however, had to "finger sempre di non ne saper nulla, per non propalare il segreto, e che non apparisca ch'io abbia violata la segretezza delle Lettere."[52]

The publication of letters was certainly not compatible with their confidentiality and was even considered a taboo without the consent of the author.[53] In 1696, the Dutch burgomaster Gisbert Cuper (1635-1689) informed Magliabechi about all the books that were going to be published in the Dutch Republic. Between the lines of all the books Cuper mentioned, Magliabechi's attention was drawn to one particular publication that could have serious consequences for his reputation and would have caused him difficulties with the authorities. He professed his concerns to Cuper in a letter of the 10th of December 1696:

> "Col solito infinito contento, ricevo l'umanissima, ed eruditissima Lettera di V.S.Ill.ma ripiena al solito di prezziose novità Letterarie, delle quali le rendo grazzie infinite, essendomi più grate di qualsivoglia tesoro. Fra esse leggo, che sieno stampate in 4, le Lettere dell'eruditissimo signore Marquardo Gudio, e che fra esse ve ne sieno alcune mie. Assicuro V.S.Ill.ma che tal cosa mi darebbe un grandissimo dolore, se io non sapesse, che ha date in luce le dette Lettere, il signore Burmanno, il quale è solamente eruditissimo, ma anche prudentissimo, e perciò, per cosa sicura, stimo, che non avrà fatto stampare se non quello che può liberamente vedersi da tutti."[54]

It concerned a publication by the well-known philologist Pieter Burman (1668-1741), who had printed an edition of the letters of the German classical scholar Marquard Gude (1635-1689). In this edition, Magliabechi's letters to Gude were included as well.[55] Magliabechi was certainly not hostile to the idea that others would publish his letters, but he needed to be sure that Burman would only put in print those letters "che possono liberamente vedersi da tutti".[56] Magliabechi went on in his letter to Cuper by saying that he had to answer to hundreds of letters coming from every corner in Europe so that there was hardly any time to control the contents of this letters. Furthermore, added Magliabechi, while answering to all

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[50] Magliabechi to J. Gronovius, 6 May 1675, LMU, Cod 4° Cod. Msc 777, f. 171, "not even to your brother, or to sir Grevio [Johannes Georgius Graevius]."

[51] Dirk van Miert, 'Confidentiality and Publicity in Early Modern Epistolography: Scaliger and Casaubon', in *For the Sake of Learning. Essays in Honor of Anthony Grafton*, ed. Ann Blair and Anja-Silvia Goeing, vol. 1 (Leiden/Boston: Brill Publishers, 2016), 19.

[52] Magliabechi to J. Gronovius, 6 May 1675, LMU, Cod 4° Cod. Msc 777, ff. 171-174, "always pretend that you do not know anything about it, in order not to spread the secret, so that it does not appear that I have violated the secrecy of [his] letters".

[53] Nellen, 'Codes of Confidentiality in Hugo Grotius's Correspondence (1594-1645)', 254

[54] Magliabechi to Cuper, 10 December 1696, KB, KW 72 D 10, f. 121-122, "With the usual infinite pleasure, I receive the very humble and learned letter of Your Illustrious Lordship, full, as usual, with precious literary news, of which I thank you infinitely, being more appreciated than any other treasure. Among these I read, that the letters of the very learned sir Marquard Gude are printed in 4, and that amongst these letters there are several of mine. I can assure you how much pain it would have caused me, if I would not have known that Burman had brought to light these letters, who is not only very learned, but also very careful, and therefore, it is sure that he would not have printed them, except for those that can be freely seen by everyone."

[55] Pieter Burman eds., *Marquardi Gudii et doctorum virorum ad eum epistolae : quibus accedunt ex Bibliotheca Gudiana clarissimorum et doctissimorum virorum, qui superiore et nostro saeculo floruerunt* (Utrecht: Franciscus Halma, 1697). Three letters of Antonio Magliabechi to Gude are published in this edition on page 64-67.

[56] *Ibidem*, "Is going to print only those letters that can be liberally seen by everyone".

these letters, he received visits of many friends, who came from different parts of the world to dialogue with him and ask him infinite questions.[57] With all the commotion, there is hardly any time to control the contents of his letters.[58] It is therefore possible that, sometimes, he would have written something that he probably should not have. Yet, this does not matter if the contents of his letters remained amongst friends, because "altro è, come mi pare che in un luogo dica Plinio il giovane, lo scrivere ad un Amico, ed altro lo scrivere al Pubblico".[59] Magliabechi drew here the boundary between private and public in terms of authorial control:

> "Bene spesso si scrivono confidentemente a gli amici varie cose, che in niuna maniera si vorrebbe che fossero note a tutti, perché potrebbero non poco nuocere a chi le scrive."[60]

During the seventeenth century, this distinction between the private and public was omnipresent, as underlined by Dirk van Miert in his study of the French classicist Isaac Casaubon (1559-1614), who heavily condemned the publication of material without the author's consent.[61] Unauthorized circulation and publication, in fact, could have serious consequences for the reputation of a scholar. A similar apprehension surrounded the prospect of letters being published posthumously.[62] For example, in 1699, Magliabechi commissioned Jacob Gronovius to always burn his letters whenever he is called upon to do so because "non si sa in mano di chi doppo della nostra morte sieno per andare, e possono apportare grandissimo pregiudizzio alla fama degli amici".[63]

Besides the letters of Marquard Gude, the same editions also contained the letters of the controversial French scholar Claude Sarrau (1600-1651). This provided another reason for Magliabechi to worry because he absolutely did not want to be associated with a publication of Sarrau's letters! In 1654, he had already received an edition of Sarrau's letters through the Calvinist preacher Alexander Morus (1616-1670).[64] Magliabechi detested this edition so much that he wished that it would never had been published:

> "La prima edizzione mi fu già donata dal signore Alessandro moro, e restai nel leggerle non poco scandolezzato della poca prudenza di chi le aveva date in luce, poiché come V.S.Ill.ma avrà osservato, in alcune di esse il Sarravio grandemente loda l'Einsio Padre, in altre ne scrive

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[57] Magliabechi to Cuper, 10 December 1696, KB, KW 72 D 10, f. 121, "Io come V.S.Ill.ma potrà sapere qua da chi che sia mi riservo due soli giorni della settimana a scrivere, e a rispondere alle Lettere, cioè il Martedì, ed il Sabato. Ne detti solo due giorni, bene spesso, mi conviene rispondere a più di cento Lettere".

[58] *Ibidem*, "Sono per tanto costretto a scrivere non solo correntissimamente, e senza poter rileggere quello che ho scritto, ma in oltre, con mille interrompimenti".

[59] *Ibidem*, "It is one thing, as Pliny the younger (61-c. 113) said somewhere, to write to friends; it is another thing to friends to the public".

[60] *Ibidem*, "Often one writes to friends several things in confidence, which in no way one wants these to be known to all, because these can harm more than a little the ones who writes them".

[61] Miert, 'Confidentiality and Publicity in Early Modern Epistolography', 19.

[62] *Ibidem*, 8-10. See also, Henk Nellen, 'Confidentiality and Indiscretion: The Intricacies of Publishing Grotius' Correspondence Posthumously," in *Produktion und Kontext. Beiträge der Internationalen Fachtagung der Arbeitsgemeinschaft für germanistische Edition im Constantijn Huygens Instituut, Den Haag, 4. bis 7. März 1998*, ed. H.T.M. van Vliet (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1999), 135–44.

[63] Magliabechi to J. Gronovius, 1699, LMU, Cod 4° Cod. Msc 778, f. 13, "one does not know in the hands of whom they will end up after our death, and can bring great damage to the reputation of our friends".

[64] Two letters of Alexander Morus (1616-1670), professor at Amsterdam, are extent in the National Library of Florence (BNCF, Magl. VIII 1183, cc. 7-8), written in 1655 and 1657 from Genova and Amsterdam. No mention of his publication is made in these letters. A correspondence between Morus and Magliabechi never got off the ground, which might have something to do with Magliabechi's aversion to his publication of Saurrau's letters.

A correspondence between Morus and Magliabechi never got off the ground, which could be related to Magliabechi's aversion to his publication of Saurrau's letters. More importantly, Morus, a Calvinist preacher and professor of ecclesiastical history at Amsterdam, wrote Magliabechi shortly after having been introduced to the Florentine scholarly society. In the 1650s, Michele Ermini, librarian of Cardinal Giovan Carlo de' Medici (1611-1663), discovered the intellectual abilities of the young Magliabechi and introduced him to his Florentine colleagues. In these Florentine circles, he had to carve a reputation for himself, and he could not simply allow himself to start his first exchange in the Dutch Republic with a Calvinist preacher. He had to establish a secure and trustworthy network first, before reaching out to more risky contacts abroad. This is a theme that will be central in the fourth chapter of this study.

2. SECRECY: INCLUSION/EXCLUSION

The practices of secrecy have crossed numerous stages throughout history, from rites to mystery cults, from baroque dissimulation to the reason of state, from the emergence of the sphere of intimacy to the idea of privacy. This long and complex history has meant that the nature of the secret is characterized by a plurality of dimensions, ranging from strategies of domination to forms of protection. The philosopher Sissela Bok has offered an overarching framework to denote the significance of secrecy in this wide range of disciplines. She defined secrecy as "intentional concealment" – that is, the deliberate withholding or hiding of information in order to prevent someone else from knowing the truth.[66] Bok's definition of secrecy as intentional concealment is also the form of secrecy Georg Simmel had in mind when he referred to the keeping of secrets as one of humanity's greatest achievements and as a "sociological technique that, among other things, excludes outsiders and gives insiders a sense of possession".[67] This internal role of secrecy is primarily conditioned by confidentiality and trust. This means that secrecy is all about inclusion and exclusion, whereby only a few have access to exclusive and elitist knowledge, which means an increase in social and economic capital.[68] In Simmel's view, secrecy is thus a structural force of society and social hierarchy, something which we have to keep in mind when analyzing the structure and dynamics of networks in general.

The phenomenon of secrecy in the early modern world has received much scholarly attention. Better yet, the early modern period has often been labelled as the age of secrecy *par excellence*.[69] Daniel Jütte, for example, concluded that "no other period in European history has been marked by so profound

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[65] Magliabechi to G. Cuper, 10 December 1696, KB, KW 72 D 10, f. 121-122, "The first edition was donated to me by sir Alessandro Moro, and I remained not little scandalized in reading the little prudence of the one who had brought it to light, because, as Your Illustrious Lordship would have observed, in several passages Sarravio [Claude Sarrau ca. 1600-1651)] greatly praises Father Heinsius [Daniel Heinsius (1580-1655)] and in other passage he writes bad things about him, etc. etc. Other similar things one can find in these letters, which for the reputation, not only of others, but also for Sarravio himself, was necessary not to publish it".

[66] Sissela Bok, *Secrets: On the Ethics of Concealment and Revelation* (New York: Vintage, 1982), 9.

[67] Georg Simmel, *The Sociology Of Georg Simmel*, trans. Kurt H. Wolf (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1950), 330-332.

[68] Kocku von Stuckrad, 'Secrecy as social capital', in Constructing Tradition. Means and Myths of Transmission in Western Esotericism ed. Andreas B. Kircher (Leiden/Boston: Brill publishers, 2010), 239-255.

[69] For a general overview of the concept of secrecy in the early modern period, see Djoeke van Netten, Geheime praktijken?!' Zeventiende-eeuwse geheimen en waar ze te vinden', in *Jaarboek De Zeventiende Eeuw 2018* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2018), 9-21. See also the various essays in *In vriendschap en vertrouwen: Cultuurhistorische essays over confidentialiteit*, ed. Jos Gabriëls, Ineke Huysman, Ton van Kalmthout and Ronald Sluijter (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2014).

a fascination with secrets and secret sciences".[70] In particular, he has shown that European Jews played a pre-eminent part in the economy of secrets in the early modern period. Specifically, he framed his book around a biography of Abramo Colorni, a Jew from Mantua, to focus on the involvement of Jews in the trade in secrets, which included confidential knowledge as well as exotic objects such as unicorns' horns. Christians accused Jews of concealing their perfidious doctrine and behavior underneath a veil of secrecy, an idea that persisted throughout the early modern period. Jütte's characterization of early modern times as the age of secrecy is not an isolated case. Jon Snyder, for instance, even entitled his book *Dissimulation and the culture of secrecy in early modern Europe*, arguing that "the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have been called "the age of secrecy" in Europe".[71]

Secrecy has received much attention in the context of governance. In early modern Europe, there was keen awareness of the need for governments to control tightly all access to the *arcana imperii* or secrets of the state. Jacob Soll, for instance, focused on the role of state secrecy in France under Louis XIV. According to him, the French politician Jean-Baptiste Colbert (1619-1683) was an innovator of state intelligence and information handling and resorted to a policy of secrecy to run government affairs.[72] Better yet, Colbert saw secrecy as a vital principle to good government. Furthermore, Guido de Bruin examined state secrecy in the Ancient Régime in general, and in the Dutch Republic in particular.[73] He demonstrated that the Dutch Republic was certainly not less efficient than the centralized domains of early modern Europe, such as the Grand Duchy of Tuscany or Venice. As opposed to these centralized states, the Dutch Republic was fragmented and basically federated which caused ramifications in information flow and handling, making it much harder to maintain secrecy inside the walls of the government. Yet, at the same time, the impact of political corruption was lower since it was less easy for foreign regimes to target key decisions makers.

To keep the Florentine grand ducal secretary Apollonio Bassetti informed about the political situation in the Dutch Republic, the Florentine merchant Giovacchino Guasconi (1636-1699) forwarded secret news reports from the diplomat Abraham de Wicquefort (1606-1680).[74] Wicquefort had been commissioned by the Dutch States General to write a national history of the country. He used this position to start a secret news agency, informing other countries about the course of wars and the negotiations that followed. His secret news agency became a great success as a result of the relatively open government culture of the Dutch Republic. Yet, as time passed by, Wicquefort encountered difficulties to obtain the news he needed to satisfy his clients. When Bassetti asked Guasconi why he did not receive any newsletters from Wicquefort, Guasconi replied the latter had told him that it was easier to penetrate the state affairs when these were managed by the various governmental bodies of the Dutch Republic. Now that everything was operated by the Prince of Orange and pensionary Van Beuningen, it became impossible for Wicquefort to obtain the news because "le cose nell'Aija presentemente

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[70] Daniel Jütte, *The Age of Secrecy. Jews, Christians, and the Economy of Secrets, 1400–1800* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 2015), 224.

[71] Jon R. Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy in Early Modern Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 8.

[72] Jacob Soll, *The information master. Jean-Baptiste Colbert's Secret State Intelligence System* (Ann Arbor: the University of Michigan Press, 2009).

[73] Guido de Bruin, *Geheimhouding en Verraad: de geheimhoulding van staatszaken ten tijde van de Republiek (1600-1750)* (The Hague: SDU, 1991).

[74] On Wicquefort's secret news agency see D. Everzwijn, *Wicquefort en zijn proces* (Leiden: Gebroeders van der Hoek, 1857) and Marika Keblusek, 'Book Agents, Intermediaries in the Early Modern World of Books', in *Your Humble Servant. Agents in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Marika Keblusek, Badeloch Vera Noldus, and Hans Cools (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2006), 104.

camminano molto più secrete di quello è seguito per avanti".[75] This example shows that, in order to preserve state secrecy, one needed to disclose one's plan to as few people as possible.

Bassetti exclusively relied on the services of the Florentine merchant Guasconi to obtain the secret news reports of Wicquefort. As will be shown in chapter four of this study, the network of Bassetti in the Dutch Republic was characterized by internal cohesion. He primarily maintained close contact with the community of Tuscan merchants in Amsterdam, who acted as his agents in the circulation of knowledge between the Dutch Republic and the Grand Duchy of Tuscany.[76] This close-knit network of merchants enabled Bassetti to create a wall which other people could not easily penetrate. In this context, Bonnie Erikson's work on secret societies gives an interesting insight that levels of density in networks are an indication of the control of secret resources.[77] Great risks, as is, for example, the exchange of *arcana imperii* in the newsletter of Wicquefort, suggest the use of trusted others, or strong ties, and stronger ties are easier to build in dense, tightly knit networks because they generate confidentiality, trust and control. In the fourth chapter of this study we will see that in a closed network, meaning a network in which everyone knows everyone else (like in the case with the Florentine merchant community in Amsterdam), unusual activities, like misbehavior or treason, are easily discovered.

So, tightly-knit networks are difficult to infiltrate from the outside. It is in this context that the role of espionage comes to light.[78] Most recently, Nadine Akkerman has explored the role of women in espionage practices, examining "the ways in which women escaped suspicion and how they become invisible"[79]. Diana Steward, for instance, was employed to spy on Royalists in exile, "using her sexual availability to infiltrate their close-knit circle".[80] Moreover, Akkerman shows how letters written by women that ostensibly focused on familiar affairs and gossip could be overlooked by interceptors when, in fact, they included important political code and sensitive information.[81] So, elaborate strategies and forms of strategies were needed to infiltrate tightly-knit networks.

Secrecy was also a key concept in early modern artisanal culture. Karel Davids has focused on Dutch craft secrecy and industrial espionage, while Pamelo O. Long has showed that trade and craft secrets and plagiarism were concepts already current in medieval and Renaissance culture.[82] In addition,

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[75] Giovacchino Guasconi to Apollonio Bassetti, 7 July 1673, ASF, Mediceo del Principato, 4261, c. 497, "the things from the Hague are kept much more secret than that happened in the past."

[76] The role of Giovacchino Guasconi as both a merchant and an intermediary of (secret) political news is by no means exceptional, and his multidimensional career as an agent for the Grand Duke of Tuscany is mirrored in the careers of many of his contemporaries. Merchants, artists, booksellers and other cultural players were often enlisted as political agents (sometimes even as spies) for their respective masters and patrons to be involved in negotiations or communications of intelligence and, as such, played a distinctive role in the international politics of their time. About this argument, see Marika Keblusek and Badeloch Vera Noldus, eds., *Double Agents: Cultural and Political Brokerage in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden/Boston: Brill Publishers, 2011); Noldus Badeloch, Marika Keblusek, and Hans Cools, eds., *Your Humble Servant. Agents in Early Modern Europe* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2006).

[77] Bonnie H. Erikson, Secret Societies and Social Structure', *Social Forces* 60, no. 1 (1981): 188-210.

[78] Numerous studies focus on the role of espionage in, for instance, the Venetian Republic or in England under Elizabeth I: Ioanna Iordanou, 'What News on the Rialto? The Trade of Information and Early Modern Venice's Centralized Intelligence Organization', *Intelligence and National Security* 31, no. 3 (2016): 305–26. Stephen Budiansky, *Her majesty's spy master* (New York: Viking (Penguin group), 2006) Stephen Alford, *The Watchers: A Secret History of the Reign of Elizabeth I* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2013); John Cooper, *The Queen's Agent: Francis Walsingham at the Court of Elizabeth I* (London: Faber & Faber, 2011); Robert Hutchinson, *Elizabeth's Spy Master: Francis Walsingham and the Secret War That Saved England* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2006).

[79] Nadine Akkerman, *Invisible Agents: Women and Espionage in Seventeenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, 11.

[80] *Ibidem*, 7.

[81] Akkerman, 51.

[82] Karel Davids, 'Openness or secrecy? Industrial espionage in the Dutch Republic', *The Journal of European Economic History* 24 (1993): 333-348; *Ibidem*, 'Public Knowledge and Common Secrets. Secrecy and its Limits in the Early-Modern Netherlands', *Early Science and Medicine* 10, no. 3 (2005): 411-420; Pamela O. Long. *Openness, Secrecy, Authorship: Technical Arts and the Culture of Knowledge from Antiquity to the Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001).

Francesco Martelli has shown that Cosimo III sent the Florentine engineer Pietro Guerrini abroad to spy on the latest technological innovations, a case which will be discussed in more detail in the second chapter of this study. The case of Guerrini will show that it was certainly not always easy to obtain the desired, often secret, information and Guerrini even reports during his espionage tour in the Dutch Republic that he was unable to observe the use of a several machines in the linen industry because the Dutch "non lo mostrano volontieri".[83] Again, close-knit circles are difficult to infiltrate from the outside.

Keeping your circles tightly-knit to guard your secrets for making profit is also central in the context of the Republic of Letters. Dániel Margócsy has argued that secrecy "transformed the honorific, gift-based exchange system of the early modern Republic of Letters into a competitive marketplace".[84] Instead of working together towards establishing a consensus, early modern scientific practitioners hoped to gain an edge over rivals by debunking each other's discoveries and research methods. Margócsy makes the example of the German bibliophile Zacharias Conrad von Uffenbach (1683-1734) who visited the anatomical cabinet of the renowned anatomist Frederik Ruysch (1638-173) in Amsterdam. Uffenbach wondered how Ruysch prepared his preparations to make them appear alive. Ruysch told him that he prepared the specimen's according to his own secret invention of injecting the circulatory system with wax. To reveal his secret, Uffenbach could sit in a lecture against payment.[85] Ruysch might have offered the same business proposal to secretary Apollonio Bassetti, who visited the cabinet in 1668 on occasion of Cosimo's Grand Tour. In the second chapter of this study we will see that Bassetti was stunned by the collection's rich display of anatomical specimens and wondered how the anatomist had prepared the specimens to look so alive, referring to a "cadavero di un Putto così ben conservato, che par vivo."[86]

3. PRACTICES OF DISSIMULATION

An analysis of secrecy needs to be placed in a broader context of phenomena and behavioral practices and strategies, such as dissimulation, which do not necessarily involve secrets that need to be hidden, but that involve practices of secrecy. Jon R. Snyder, for example, discerns dissimulation in particular as an attitude of the courtly world of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century. According to Snyder, courtiers were praised as experts in the art of hiding their thoughts and feelings behind localized displays of etiquette, conversational skills, and rituals of power.[87] The obvious source for this type of dissimulation is Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527), whose Prince was advised to imitate the cunning of a fox, lying and deceiving his own subjects and allies whenever it suits his own interests.[88] Likewise, the Flemish humanist Justus Lipsius (1547–1606) wrote his *Politica* with the express intention of teaching the art of statecraft through political secrecy and dissimulation.[89]

Yet, dissimulation was a phenomenon that reached well beyond the ruling class. It pervaded the whole of any given society, whose subjects frequently resorted to it as a refuge from the repressive power of states. In this respect, the work of Rosario Villari is particularly relevant. Characterizing the seventeenth century as the "great age of dissimulation", Villari argues that Torquato Accetto's book –

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[83] Francesco Martelli, *Il Viaggio in Europa Di Pietro Guerrini (1682-1686): Edizione Della Corrispondenza e Dei Disegni Di Un Inviato Di Cosimo III Dei Medici*, vol. 1 Carteggio con Apollonio Bassetti (Florence: Olschki, 2005), LXXIII.

[84] Dániel Margócsy, *Commercial Visions: Science, Trade, and Visual Culture in the Dutch Golden Age* (Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press, 2014), 6.

[85] Margócsy, 4. About Ruysch see also Harold J. Cook, *Matters of exchange. Commerce, Medicine, and Science in the Dutch Golden Age* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 2007), 281-283.

[86] Biblioteca Moreniana, Bigazzi 32, "Memorie di Bassetti", f. 166, "corpse of a *putto* (chubby male child) that well-perserved, it seems real."

[87] Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy in Early Modern Europe*, 22.

[88] *Ibidem*, 126.

[89] *Ibidem*, 7.

Della dissimulazione honesta (1641) – provided new insights into the justification of dissimulation as an indispensable tool of survival in the face of political oppression.[90] Parallel to political dissimulation, religious dissimulation was a widespread practice. Specifically, Perez Zagorin added the label "age of dissimulation" to the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation, arguing that dissimulation, or "pretending not to be what one actually is", was necessary in the face of repressive Church or state persecution.[91] Accordingly, religious dissimulation was widely practiced throughout early modern Europe, as a means of avoiding exile or worse. This concept is discussed at length in studies on the widespread phenomenon of forced conversions as well as Nicodemism.[92] Nicodemism, a term coined by the French reformer John Calvin (1509-1564), referred to the dissimulation practiced by Protestants-at-heart who hid their faith behind a mask of outward and publicly conformity to Catholic rites because they were not prepared to face exile or worse. The study of Nicodemism, initiated by Delio Cantimori, shows that Italian heretics in the second half of the sixteenth century preferred to adopt the practices condemned by Calvin rather than suffer the inevitable consequences of an open confession of their faith.[93] Moreover, Carlo Ginzburg and Adriano Prosperi have argued that Nicodemism constituted a formal theology of Christian belief, but largely defined Nicodemism as existing completely in the minds.[94] Nicodemism was thus not simply a prudent policy for Protestants in Catholic lands, but a powerful and radically inward religion, the adherents of which regarded all outward religious observance with complete indifference".[95] In this respect, Nicodemism led to the division of society into rival confessional camps, which, in the context of network theory, is related to the concept of homophily. The principle of homophily – the tendency of individuals to associate and bond with similar others – can divide a social network into densely connected clusters that are weakly connected to each other.[96] In this social network between Protestant and Catholic groups, two such divisions in the network can become apparent.

Religious dissimulation was often necessary during travel. The dominant religious culture in Italy affected the behavior of numerous Protestant travelers, who often needed to hide their religious identity and motives.[97] In fact, those who were travelling in Italy without safe conduct or protection, or those who fomented scandal by attacking the Catholic Church or promoting Reformed doctrines, could risk prosecution for a range of crimes related to heresy and to an eventual abjuration.[98] Magliabechi, for

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[90] Rosario Villari, *Elogio della dissimulazione. La lotta politica nel Seicento* (Bari: Laterza, 1987).

[91] Perez Zagorin, *Ways of Lying. Dissimulation, Persecution, and Conformity in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge/London: Harvard University Press, 1990), 3-6. For more about the act of dissimulation to circumvent the strict laws of the Inquisition, see also Giorgio Caravale, 'Le ambiguità della parola: eresia e ortodosia tra oralità e scrittura nella predicazione italiana del cinquecento', *The Italianist* 34, no. 3 (2014): 478-492.

[92] Stefania Pastore, 'From 'Marranos' to 'Unbelievers': The Spanish Peccadillo in Sixteenth century Italy', in *Dissimulation and Deceit in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Mariam Eliav-Feldon and Tamar Herzig (London: Palgrave macmillan, 2015), 79-95. See also Giorgio Caravale, 'Dissimulation and Conversion: Francesco Pucci's Return to Catholicism' in the same volume. Howard Louthan, *Converting Bohemia. Force and persuasion in the Catholic reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[93] Delio Cantimori, *Eretici italiani del Cinquecento e altri scritti* (Turin: Sansoni, 1992).

[94] Carlo Ginzburg, *Il nicodemismo: simulazione e dissimulazione religiosa nell'Europa del'500* (Turin: Einaudi, 1970). 159-81; Adriano Prosperi, *L'eresia del Libro Grande: Storia di Giorgio Siculo e della sua setta (*Milan: Feltrinelli, 2000), 322-37. Yet, Carlo Eire had interpreted Nicodemism as a response to fear rather than a coherent doctrine, see Carlo Eire, *War against the Idols: The reformation of Worship from Erasmus to Calvin* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

[95] Thomas A. Brady, 'Il nicodemismo: Simulazione e dissimulazione religiosa nell'Europa del'500' by Carlo Ginzburg', *Renaissance Quarterly* XXVI, no. 2 (1973): cit. 194.

[96] Easley and Kleinberg, *Networks, Crowds, and Markets: Reasoning About a Highly Connected World*, 77.

[97] On this subject see Kim Siebenhüner, 'Conversion, Mobility and the Roman Inquisition in Italy around 1600', *Past & Present*, no. 200 (2008): 5–35; Peter A. Mazur, *Conversion to Catholicism in Early Modern Italy* (London/New York: Routledge, 2016); P. Schmidt, 'L'inquisizione e gli stranieri', in *L'inquisizione e gli storici. Un cantiere aperto* (Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 2000), 365-72; P. Simoncelli, 'Clemente VIII e alcuni provvedimenti del Sant'Uffizio (De Italis habitantibus in partibus haereticorum)', *Critica Storica* XIII /1976): 129-72; Isabel Karremann, Cornel Zwierlein, and Inga Mai Groote, *Forgetting Faith?: Negotiating Confessional Conflict in Early Modern Europe* (Berlin/Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2012), 15.

[98] Mazur, *Conversion to Catholicism in Early Modern Italy*, 77.

example, discussed in his letters to Jacob Gronovius the case of a "svezzese" who "per essere stato trovato se non erro a parlare ad una Monaca senza di averne la Licenzia, fu fatto prigione."[99] Given the dangers of persecution, Protestants travelling through Catholic territories would do best to follow the advice of Justus Lipsius. In 1578, Justus Lipsius in his famous *Epistola de fructu peregrinandi et praesertim in Italia* (Letter on the benefit of traveling, especially in Italy) advised his readers to follow three basic rules while travelling in Italy, and especially in the city of the Popes: "*frons tibi aperta, lingua parca, mens clausa*".[100] Lipsius himself had spent quite some time in Italy, particularly in Rome where he worked as a secretary to cardinal Granvelle from 1568 to 1570.[101] Here, he must have learned that it was better to keep one's eyes open and one mouth and mind shut.[102]

Lipsius' advice is all the more convincing in the very particular context of conversions in early modern Italy. As shown by Peter A. Mazur, by the end of the seventeenth century an infrastructure of institutes of conversions and missionaries had been created in Italy that had proven surprisingly effective at intercepting and converting Northern European Protestants.[103] This on-going effort to convert Protestant and defend the Catholic faith was especially present at the Medici court under Cosimo III. In the third chapter of this study, we will briefly encounter the tensions raised by the Danish scientist Niels Stensen (1638-1686). In 1668, Stensen converted to Catholicism and became obsessed with converting Protestants in Florence. In his letters to his Dutch correspondents, Magliabechi secretly discussed the strategies adopted by Stensen. If travelling Protestants were not willing to become a Catholic, Stensen reported them to the Congregation of the Holy Office with the result that they had to abandon the Italian territory immediately. In 1676, Magliabechi advised the Dutch philologist Laurens Gronovius (1647-1724), who was on this way to Florence, to study manuscripts in the *Bibliotheca Medicea Laurenziana*, to watch out for Stensen. In the case Laurens would meet Stensen, it was best, according to Magliabechi, that he "gli fingerà visceratissimo".[104]

Carlo Ginzburg has shown that people dissimulated their confession and faith for purposes of economic prosperity. In the third chapter of this study we will discuss the travels of the Utrecht scholar Jacob Tollius (1633-1696) in 1688. In Florence, he approached Cosimo III who promised him a financial reward if he would convert to the Catholic faith. This event is critically described by the Huguenot printer from Amsterdam, Henry Desbordes, who informed Magliabechi that he could absolutely not trust Tollius because he is "capable de vendre sa religion pour de l'argent".[105] This example shows that the unstable

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[99] Magliabechi to J. Gronovius, 1702, LMU, Cod 4° Cod. Msc 778, f. 21, "Swede"; "was found, if I am not mistaken, talking with a nun without permission, was made prisoner".

[100] J. Lipsius, *Epistola de peregrinatione Italica* (Leiden: Franciscus Hegerus, 1633), discussed in A. Frank-van Westrienen, *De Groote Tour. Tekening van de educatiereis der Nederlanders in de zeventiende eeuw* (Amsterdam: Noord-Hollandsche Uitgeversmaatschappij, 1983), 19-42.

[101] See Gloria Moorman, *Discovering Rome through Joan Blaeu's Admiranda Urbis Romæ: the creation of the town atlas of Rome (Amsterdam, 1663) in the light of Italian-Dutch relationships in the seventeenth century* (Master Thesis, Leiden University, 2014): cit. 9. Retrieved from http://hdl.handle.net/1887/28635, last accessed 1 April 2019. Moorman's observation refers to page 42 of Anna Frank-van Westrienen, *De Groote Tour: Tekening van de educatiereis der Nederlanders in de zeventiende eeuw* (Amsterdam: Noord-Hollandsche Uitgeversmaatschappij, 1983), 42.

[102] Christopher Brooke, *Philosophic Pride: Stoicism and Political Thought from Lipsius to Rousseau* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2012), 12.

[103] Peter A. Mazur, *Conversion to Catholicism in Early Modern Italy* (New York/London: Routhledge, 2016), 55-56. About this argument, see also Irene Fosi, "'Procurar a tutt'huomo la conversione degli heretici": propaganda e conversioni nell'Impero nella prima metà del Seicento', in Studi in memoria di Cesare Mozzarelli, vol. 1 (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 2008), 699-711; *Ibidem*, "'Roma patria comune". Foreigners in Rome in the early modern period', in *Art and Identity in Early Modern Rome*, ed. J. Burke and M. Bury (London: Ashgate, 2008), 27-43; *Ibidem*, "'Con cuore sincero e con fede non finta": conversioni a Roma in età moderna fra controllo e accoglienza', in *Les modes de la conversion confessionelle à l'époque moderne. Authobiographie, altérité et construction des identités religieuses*, ed. M.C. Pitassi et D. Solfaroli Camillocci (Florence: Olschki, 2010), 215-232.

[104] Magliabechi to Gronovius, 1676, LMU, Cod 4° Cod.Msc 778, f. 8, "you pretend to be genuine to him".

[105] H. Desbordes to Magliabechi, 20 September 1689, BNCF, Magl. VIII 1163, "capable of selling his religion for money." Carlo Ginzburg underlined that people dissimulated their confession and faith not only to fall into the hands of the persecuting

behaviour of Tollius, who was willing to change his faith in exchange for money, could have serious consequences in the balance of a relationship: conversions could have very real effects, negatively, in the formation of a network, in creating distrust and making social relations unstable, and possibly even crumble. This is a theme that will be central in discussing the structural balance theory in chapter five.

According to Koen Vermeir, "the mystery around secrets and dissimulation gives their bearers an aura of superiority. Secrets can be icons and indices of power, used for controlling people."[106] Although Jacob Tollius convinced Cosimo III about his inclination towards the Catholic faith, he did not manage to persuade Cosimo's oldest son, prince Ferdinando III (1663-1713) about his true intentions. He then pretended to have "segreti ammirandi in materia Chimica", which aroused the interest of Ferdinando who was willing to compensate him if he would reveal his secrets. Yet, soon Ferdinando discovered that Tollius had lied about everything and ordered him to leave the Grand Duchy of Tuscany immediately. So, practices of secrecy, especially when revealed, could lead to suspicion and distrust. For example, on the 1st of December 1682, the Italian scholar Giovanni Cavoli Cinelli (1625-1706) warned Gisbert Cuper about the secretive behaviour of Enrico Noris, who was "il ritratto della simulazione, del tradimento".[107] Therefore, he advised Cuper not to praise him in his newest publication, the *Apotheosis vel consecratio Homeri* (1683) because his name would only bring "gran danno della sua reputazione".[108]

4. SELF-CENSORSHIP IN EARLY MODERN EPISTOLOGRAPHY

Leo Strauss pointed out that religious or political persecution gave rise to a peculiar type of writing because (persecuted) writers had to develop the capacity of "writing between the lines" by using various self-protective and deceptive techniques of writing.[109] These writings were addressed primarily to intelligent and trustworthy readers, those who will respond to the challenge and use the knowledge and insights gained discreetly. Likewise, Jean-Pierre Cavaillé has argued that the seventeenth century is full of individuals in inner revolt against the absolutist system, and that we, therefore, need to "listen for the wounded cry in the text that keeps silent".[110] Furthermore, Ann Goldgar has argued that "we must read between the lines, and ask whether scholars' world view was really entirely structured around the subject matter discussed."[111] Though a structural analysis of the early modern correspondence can direct our attention to moments of tensions and closure in a network, these kind of statements are impossible to check without the close reading of letters.

This note of caution characterizes much of Magliabechi's surviving correspondence, as we shall see throughout this study. In many cases, Magliabechi knew that unless he practiced a form of secrecy or self-censorship, the authorities would persecute him. The following case sheds light on this practice. In the 1670s, Magliabechi found the manuscript the *De Bello Italico* in the collections of the *Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana*, a case which will be recalled in the sixth chapter of this study. The manuscript, written by the Florentine Bernardo Ruccelai around 1510, was written on account of Charles VIII's 1494 military campaign into Italy and his conquest of the Kingdom of Naples. Magliabechi clearly saw the value of this manuscript for the scholarly community and desired that the manuscript would be published. Yet, he

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institutions, but also for purposes of political and economic prosperity, see Carlo Ginzburg, *Il Nicodemismo: Simulazione e Dissimulazione Religiosa Nell'Europa Del '500.* (Turin: Giulio Einaudi Editore, 1970).

[106] Vermeir and Márgóczy, 'States of Secrecy: an introduction', 163.

[107] Cinelli to Cuper, 1 December 1682, KB, KW 72 D 10, f. 1, "the portrait of the dissimulation and betrayal".

[108] *Ibidem*, "Non s'impegni a nominarlo nel suo dottissimo libro dell'Apotheosi d'Omero, perché primo non succederà che con gran danno della sua reputazione, e di nuovo la reverisco." [great damage to your reputation].

[109] Leo Strauss, 'Persecution and the Art of Writing', *Social Research* 8, no. 1/4 (1941): 490-491.

[110] Jean-Pierre Cavaillé, *Jean-Pierre Cavaillé, Dis/Simulations. Jules-César Vanini, François La Mothe Le Vayer, Gabriel Naudé, Louis Machon et Torquato Accetto: Religion, Morale et Politique Au XVI e Siècle* (Paris: Honoré Champion Éditeur, 2002), 341.

[111] Goldgar, *Impolite Learning*, 5.

soon realized that the book could not be printed in "Rome, ne in altro luogo d'Italia" because Ruccellai "scrive con grandissima libertà, parlando per la verità, come si dee, da sinceri Istorici, malissimo d'alcuni, e fra gl'altri del Pontefice Alessandro VI".[112] To overcome this obstacle, Magliabechi made use of his network in the Dutch Republic, where the conditions of the book trade were a lot more tolerant. He asked in confidence his most trusted correspondent, Jacob Gronovius, to find someone in Amsterdam who was willing to print the book. To conceal the message, Magliabechi asked Gronovius to tear up the letter immediately after reading. If Jacob would have been unable to find a printer, wrote Magliabechi, he would write a letter to the Amsterdam printer Pieter Blaeu (1637-1706). He would do this in secret "perché non voglio che da niuno si sappia che sia stato io che abbia mandato costà il manoscritto, poiché avrei de' fastidi di Roma dagl'Inquisitori."[113]

In addition, Magliabechi had often to navigate between conflicting demands and loyalty to his own beliefs. This interior conflict becomes apparent from the following case, which will be discussed in the sixth chapter of this study. In 1670, Magliabechi had promised the Florentine scholar Lorenzo Panciatichi (1635-1676) to inform him about several Protestant books that circulated in Florence. He urged Panciatichi to destroy the letter immediately after reading "perché veramente sono libri empisissimi, e perniciosissimi".[114] Reluctantly, Magliabechi started to list the names of the books, but strictly limited himself to discussing only a few in order to come to terms with his own faith:

> "Mi presto in questo principio, che tutto quello, che scriverò di bene di essi, sarà circa alla Letteratura, giacché per altro, come buon Cattolico Romano, gli detesto con tutta l'anima, e perciò non parlerò, se non di quattro solamente."[115]

This passage shows that there were certainly limitations to scholarly openness. To clear his own conscience, Magliabechi imposed rigorous censorship on himself. Even though he understood the scholarly value of these Protestant publications, he, as "buon cattolico romano" deliberately omits information he possesses about more books than "quattro solamente". Self-censorship was thus not always prompted by the threat of external repression, but the result of an interior conflict. Although Magliabechi desired to offer transparency to promote scholarship and did understand the scholarly value of these publications, confessional divisions did evidentially cut through the ideal of the Republic of Letters. Accordingly, he often chose the way of moderation, which in this case took the form of a half-truth. This interior conflict becomes also apparent from his frequent use of the term 'eretici dottissimi'. For example, despite the fact that theologian Jean Le Clerc (1657-1736) "inserisce ne' suoi Libri bene spesso delle empietà contra i noi Cattolici Romani" Magliabechi calls him a "eretico dottissimo" because "ne' nemici si puo lodare la virtù".[116] Magliabechi remained a fervent Roman catholic, while appreciating the scholarly value of these controversial publications, and therein lay a potential conflict. It was therefore

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[112] Magliabechi to J. Gronovius, undated, LMU, Cod 4° Cod. Msc 778, f. 1, "Rome, neither in another place in Italy", "writes con great liberty, sincerely speaking ill, as one should as a sincere historian, about several men, among which Pontiff Alexander VI (1431-1503).

[113] *Ibidem*, "because I do not want that anybody knows that I have sent the manuscript there [the Dutch Republic, otherwise I would receive trouble from Rome from the Inquisitors."

[114] Magliabechi to L. Panciatichi, undated, in Carlo Dati, *Prose fiorentine raccolte dallo Smarrito [pseud.] accademico della Crusca*, ed. Giovanni Gaetano Bottari, Rosso Antonio Martini, and Tommaso Buonaventura, vol. quinto, parte seconda (Florence: Stamperia di S. A. R., Per li Tartini, e Franchi, 1716), 180-181.

[115] *Ibidem*, "My pretext is that, in everything that I write good about these books, this is because of its literature value, because for another reason, as a good Roman Catholic, I detest them with my entire soul, and therefore I will talk about four books only."

[116] Magliabechi to L. Panciatichi, undated, in Carlo Dati, *Prose fiorentine raccolte dallo Smarrito [pseud.] accademico della Crusca*, 183.

necessary that Magliabechi kept as much control possible over the things he wrote. This was especially true given that their letters risked interception, duplication and even, as noted earlier, publication.

The insecurity of the epistolary medium promoted a degree of secrecy or self-censorship among writers distrustful of letters going astray and falling into the wrong hands.[117] After entrusting the mail to the courier, there was always the chance that curious outsiders would remove the seals and read their letters. The correspondence of Antonio Magliabechi contains many examples of threats of letters miscarrying, being intercepted and falling into the wrong hands. For example, in a letter of 1674 to Nicolaas Heinisus, Magliabechi urged him not to send his letters to the Medici court in the case he wanted to write him "qualcosa che avesse caro che fosse segreta" because the grand ducal secretary Apollonio Bassetti would open and read all his incoming correspondence from the Dutch Republic.[118] Likewise, on the 30th of September 1675, he advised Jacob Gronovius to be careful in drafting his letters because "in Corte le approno, come è succeduto dell'ultima di V.S. Ill.ma".[119]

To cover himself against the consequences of letters going astray or falling into the wrong hands, Magliabechi used several techniques that attest to a general obligation to be discreet. We have already seen before that he often asked his recipients to burn or destroy his letters. This admonition was frequently used in early modern epistolography.[120] Another example of this practice concerns a letter between Magliabechi and Cosimo III. On the 28th of December 1683, Magliabechi made a complaint against several high officials of the Grand Duke, in particular the Florentine physician Giovanni Andrea Moniglia (1625-1700), who tried to do everything to get rid of him. He, therefore, asked Cosimo's permission to retreat to a place in the countryside "per cercare riparo alla persecuzzioni" he received from his enemies.[121] To conceal his plans, Magliabechi asked the grand duke to tear up his letter:

> "Suplico anche umilmente V.A.S. che quando per sua bontà si sarà certificata esser più che vero ciò che ho scritto voglia degnarsi di stracciar questo foglio perché essendo in Corte molti poco miei Amici, e molti parzialissimi de' miei Nemici non capitasse nelle loro mani e tanto maggiormente mi perseguitassero."[122]

Other forms of control come to fore in Magliabechi's letters. In the practice of early modern epistolography, letter-writers typically included when they received a certain letter before the main text so their correspondents could check whether the reciprocal epistolary sequence was still intact.[123] This helped not only to understand which letters were lost in transit, especially in view of the many conflicts and wars that tormented Europe, it was also to confirm whether a letter was intercepted. There is, for example, a letter from Magliabechi to Jacob Gronovius in which he urged him to report the receipt of

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[117] Nellen, 'Codes of Confidentiality in Hugo Grotius' Correspondence (1594-1645)', 254, "Often included in his books ungodly things against us Catholics"; "learned heretic"; "in our enemies one can praise virtue".

[118] Magliabechi to N. Heinsius, 25 September 1674, UBL, BUR F 8, "which you would like to keep secret".

[119] Magliabechi to J Gronovius, 30 September 1675, LMU, Cod 4° Cod. Msc 777, f. 181, "At the [Medici] Court they will open them, as happened with the last one of Your Illustrious Lordship"

[120] Nellen, 'Codes of Confidentiality in Hugo Grotius's Correspondence (1594-1645)', 253; Miert, 'Confidentiality and Publicity in Early Modern Epistolography', 3.

[121] Magliabechi to Cosimo III, 28 December 1683, BNCF, Autografi Palatini Magliabechi, n. 131, "to find shelter against the persecutions".

[122] *Ibidem,* "I humbly beg your Illustrious Lordship, when you, for your kind heart, have certified that which I have written you is true, to tear up this sheet because at court there are many few of my friends, and many partials of my enemies, so that it will not end up in their hands which make them to persecute me even more".

[123] See, for example, the letter from Magliabechi to J. Gronovius, dated the 3rd of October 1704, " Risposi la passata Settimana, all'umanissima, ed elegantissima Lettera di V.S.Ill.ma, de' 3 di Settembre, ma perché mi è per esperienza noto, che in riguardo di queste Guerre, le Lettere bene spesso vanno male, e si perdono, per sua quiete, ho stimato mio obbligo, il riscriverle di nuovo anche questa sera, alcune delle medesime cose, acciocche se per disgrazzi, una di queste due mie Lettere andasse male, le capiti sicura almeno l'altra (LMU, Cod 4° Cod. Msc 777, f. 93).

the last three letters that he had sent to him "già che per esservi alcune cose che estremamente desidero che sieno segrete, mi dispiacerebbe infinitamente che andassero in mano di altri".[124] This habit to report the receipt of letters helps us to tackle the bias in correspondence networks for it allows us to record those letters that have not come down to us, a theme that will be discussed in more detail in the context of multimodal networks in chapter six.[125]

Moreover, correspondents were loath to confide everything to a piece of paper. Many conversations were held to be more appropriate for personal discussions and delicate news was withheld for meetings face-to-face. Magliabechi, therefore, often awaited the opportunity that someone would visit the Dutch Republic to communicate sensitive information. On the 25th of September 1674, for example, Magliabechi restrained himself from telling Heinsius the reason why Jacob Gronovius had left the Grand Duchy of Tuscany because "da esso medesimo sentirà, V.S.Ill.ma, in breve, il tutto, poiché, tra due mesi, spera infallibilmente di dovere essere costà."[126]

Furthermore, Magliabechi often used veiled references that were clear for the recipient, who was aware of the silent context, but that would not be immediately clear to outsiders. Thus in a letter to the grand ducal secretary Apollonio Bassetti in which Magliabechi complained about his enemies, Magliabechi refrained from mentioning their names, and limited himself to the following:

> "Da bambino, un Astrologo mi disse, che sempre tutto il male mi sarebbe derivato dalle Bestie.
> Io me ne risi, ma adesso veggo avverato il suo pronostico, già che un Mulo, un Asino, ed un
> Frate che va contato per Bestia e mezzo, son coloro che in oggi sotto mano mi perseguitano,
> con imposture, furfanterie. Con ragione posso dire di essere condannato ad Bestias."[127]

Magliabechi frequently replaced names with asterisks, examples of which run through this study, and deliberately concealed the end of his sentences with the word "eccetera". For example, a letter from Magliabechi to Jacob Gronovius shows that he withheld his negative views out of concern of the reaction of several high-profile officials of the Grand Duke: "Torno a replicarle, il che è verissimo, che il Padron Serenissimo è un Angiolo, ma i Ministri ecc".[128] If he had published his views candidly, and his letters would have ended up in the wrong hands, it would have been highly likely that he would have faced prosecution.

Because the letter remained a highly insecure medium, its secure transmission entirely depended on the trustworthiness of intermediaries. While "this could lead to degrees of self-censorship or messages being conveyed orally by dependable intermediaries, efforts were also made to have letters transmitted through secure means".[129] Recent scholarship has highlighted the importance of materiality in epistolary research. In particular, paying close attention to the materiality of a letters is crucial to the understanding of secrecy, an approach that is strongly advocated by James Daybell.[130] Moreover, Jana Dambrogio and Daniel Starza Smith have analyzed the techniques used to fold and manipulate paper and coined the term

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[124] Magliabechi to J. Gronovius, 30 October 1674, LMU, Cod 4° Cod. Msc 777, f. 151, "Because there are several things that I extremely desire to be kept secret, I would infinitely regret if they will end up in the hands of others".
[125] See Chapter 6, paragraph 3.2.
[126] Magliabechi to Heinsius, 25 September 1674, UBL, BUR F 8, "from him himself you will soon hear about it all, because he unerringly hopes to be there [in the Dutch Republic]".
[127] Magliabechi to A. Bassetti, 1681, ASF, MdP, Carteggi dei Segretari, 1526 (1681), "When I was a kid, an astrologer said to me, that all evil would always come to me from beasts. I laughed about it, but now I see that his prognosis has come true, now that a mule [?], a donkey [Giovanni Andrea Moniglia?] and a friar [Henry Noris] which are to be counted as one beast and a half, are the ones who persecuted me, with fraud, villainy. With reason I can say that I am condemned to the beasts".
[128] Magliabechi to J. Gronovius, 5 October 1677, Cod 4° Cod. Msc 778, f. 216, "I continue to repeat, which is true, that the Serene Lord is an angel, but the ministers, etc."
[129] Daybell, *The Material Letter in Early Modern England*, cit. 170.
[130] *Ibidem,* 10.

'letterlocking' to refer to the act of folding and securing a letter to function as its own envelope.[131] The more intricate the manner in which the letter was prepared for delivery, the more difficult it was to open the letter without damaging it. Seals would break, corners would cut off, the paper would slit; each damage might indicate any potential interference by individuals.[132] That letterlocking techniques functioned as useful means of detecting interference by individuals becomes apparent from a letter written by Magliabechi to Cosimo III. In February 1685, Magliabechi informed the Grand Duke that he had sent him several letters to express his anger towards the court physician Andrea Giovanni Moniglia. For the utmost secrecy, he had repeatedly "più volte disigillate" his letters to make sure that they "arrivassero sicura alle mani di V.A.S."[133] Moreover, tight folding that suggests a very small package may also be indicative of secrecy. As shown by Nadine Akkerman and James Daybell, many techniques were employed by these intermediaries to have correspondence secretly conveyed: letters were often carried sewn into collars, sleeves or other clothing; they were hidden in barrels and other merchandise.[134] The letters sent by Magliabechi provide a very important cross-section to understand the ways letters circulated and the techniques used to avoid that they ended up in the wrong hands. For example, in March 1681, Magliabechi lamented the unreliability of the postmasters in Florence, who frequently opened his letters, or detained them without notice. Therefore, he wrote to Bassetti "per non mettere in sospetto queste arpie, scrivo in questa poca carta, perché il piego riesca minore."[135] Moreover, on the 5th of October 1677, Magliabechi wrote a letter to Jacob Gronovius in which he told him how he got tired of being powerless against the oppressive forces of the Medici court. Cosimo's influential officials and secretaries continuously checked what he was doing and even sent the police to his house to search for anything that could be used against him.[136] Magliabechi, then, told everything what happened to Vittoria Della Rovere (1622-1694), the Grand Duchess of Tuscany and the wife of Ferdinando II, father of Cosimo III. She made sure that the policemen responsible for the inspection ended up in prison.[137] However, Francesco Redi (1626-1698), physician of Cosimo III, went to the latter and told him "mille bugie, cioè che io mi ero doluto con la Serenissima Gran Duchessa Vittoria, di ......"[138] The next day the policemen were released. This episode had disturbed Magliabechi so much that he deemed it necessary that Jacob became aware of what was going on in Florence:

> "Mai mi sono ardito a scriverle quello che adesso le scriverò, per dubbio che le mie Lettere
> sieno aperte, ma è pur necessario che una volta io le faccia consapevole il tutto, e che sappia,

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[131] A full definition of letterlocking can be found in the *Dictionary of Letterlocking* (DoLL): 'Letterlocking: Dictionary', accessed 30 January 2019, http://letterlocking.org/dictionary/. A similar project is carried out by Ineke Huysman: 'Letterlocking - Huygens Instituut Voor Nederlandse Geschiedenis', accessed 30 January 2019, https://www.huygens.knaw.nl/letterlocking/.

[132] Akkerman, *Invisible Agents: Women and Espionage in Seventeenth-Century Britain*, 98.

[133] Magliabechi to Cosimo III, February 1685, BNCF, Autografi Palatini Magliabechi, 126, "repeatedly sealed", "securely arrive in the hands of Your Illustrious Lordship".

[134] James Daybell, *The Material Letter in Early Modern England* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2012), cit. 170; Akkerman, *Invisible Agents: Women and Espionage in Seventeenth-Century Britain*, 28-29.

[135] Magliabechi to Bassetti, Marc 1681, ASF, MdP, Carteggi dei Segretari, 1526 (1681). In his letters, Magliabechi commonly referred to the postmasters as *arpie* or harpies, mythical monsters in Greek mythology, having the form of a bird and a human face. The creatures "were sent down by Zeus to punish, most famously Phineus. Phineus, a king of Thrace, had the gift of prophesy. Zeus, angry that Phineas revealed too much, punished him by putting him on an island with a buffet of food which he could never eat. The Harpies always arrived and stole the food out of his hands right before he could satisfy his hunger, and befouled the remains" ('Harpy', in New World Encyclopedia, http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/p/index.php?title=Harpy&oldid=941857 , last accessed 3 April 2019).

[136] Magliabechi to J. Gronovius, 5 October 1677, LMU, Cod 4° Cod. Msc 778, f. 116-119, "Rappresentai a S.A.S. che i Birri senza ordine di alcuno mi erano venuti in Casa; che mi avevano infamissimamente cercata tutta la Casa".

[137] *Ibidem*, "La Serenissima Gran Ducchessa Vittoria, benché io ne gliene avessi parlato, ne fattogliene parlare, vedendo che i Birri in tanto tenoi non avevano avuto gastigo alcuno, spontaneamente fece ella mettergli in Segrete".

[138] *Ibidem*, "thousand lies, that I have been complaining by the Serene Grand Duchess Vittoria, that...."

che adesso, non è più paese per V.S.Ill.ma, per me, o per niuno altro che se ne voglia vivere pacificamente, a se medesimo, ed a' suoi studi."[139]

To ensure that the letter arrived safely in the hands of Gronovius, Magliabechi sent the letter to Abraham de la Fontaine, the Dutch consul in Livorno.[140] The Dutchman in Livorno recurred to the following strategy to ensure the delivery of the letter: "per scippar ogni inconvenienza, l'ho mescolata con un pieghetto libri ben accomodato in carta legato, e soprascritto all'medesimo signore Gronovio".[141] Since books were transported as loose, unfolded sheets, letters could be easily covered up. Once the letter arrived in the hands of Gronovius, he had to "stracciare il tutto, e ora, e sempre".[142] Throughout this study we will see other examples of how Magliabechi penned on small sheets of paper to share secretive news with his correspondents in the Dutch Republic.

5. DIGITAL SECRECY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

As online corpora suggest, the advent of digital humanities has brought new capacities for representing and analyzing confidentiality and practices of secrecy in early modern correspondence. This is however, still in its early stages. Charles van den Heuvel and Henk Nellen, for example, have attempted to research the concept of openness and confidentiality in digitized scholarly correspondence. In a small-scale experiment, they used keyword and similarity search of words related to confidentiality in the web-application called ePistolarium. With this application, developed by the Huygens Institute for the History of the Netherlands, researchers can browse, analyze and visualize around 20,000 letters that were written by and sent to 17th century scholars who lived in the Dutch Republic.[143] Their question was whether "the theme of confidentiality, which recurs regularly in the letter of the Dutch lawyer Hugo Grotius […] could be retrieved automatically from the corpus of correspondence in the Circulation of Knowledge project".[144] It turned out that the use of implicit language significantly distorted their results. If letter-writers asked the recipient to keep certain knowledge secret or to exert confidentiality, they almost never use these words themselves, using sentences like 'nobody is allowed to know this' or 'please burn after reading'.[145]

Secrecy and confidentiality depended on the nature of the relationships between correspondents. For example, the stronger the relations between correspondents became, the greater the confidentialities exchanged. These relationships were primarily strengthened through mutual respect and reciprocity.[146] Letters were meant to be answered and gifts reciprocated which resulted in an ongoing correspondence. Books, for example, were often sent as gifts that could encourage reciprocity in the form of a response

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[139] *Ibidem*, "Never I dared to write you what I will write you now, doubting that my letters were going to be opened, but it is also necessary that once I make you aware of everything, and that you know that, for now, this is not a country anymore for Your Illustrious Lordship, as well as for me, or for everyone else who wants to live in peace, to himself, or in his studies".
[140] Questa mia, per maggior sicurezza, la mando a Livorno al Signore De la Fontaine, che è stato eletto Console della Nazzione, ed esso avrà cura che pervenga nelle mani di V.S.Ill.ma per mia quiete, come l'avrà avuta, si degni con un solo verso di avvisarmene la ricevuta".
[141] De la Fontaine to Magliabechi, 19 October 1677, BNCF, Magl. VIII 299, f. 15, "To avoid any inconvenience, I have mixed it up with a box of books nicely wrapped in paper, and addressed to sir Gronovius himself".
[142] Magliabechi to J. Gronovius, 5 October 1677, "tear up everyting, now, and always".
[143] Ravenek, Van den Heuvel and Gerritsen, *The ePistolarium: origins and techniques*, 317.
[144] Van den Heuvel et al., 'Circles of Confidence in Correspondence', cit. 81.
[145] Henk Nellen and Charles van den Heuvel, 'The Nature of Scholarly Communication and Networks of Confidentiality', accessed 30 January 2019, http://ckcc.huygens.knaw.nl/?page_id=1100.
[146] On the ideal of reciprocity in the historiography of the Republic of Letters, see Goldgar, *Impolite Learning*, 21–26; Van Miert, 'What was the Republic of Letters. A brief introduction to a long history (1417-2008)', 207; Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment*, 18.

or a counter-gift, examples of which will be discussed in the sixth chapter of this study. Failure to reciprocate any service was associated with bad manners, resulting often in distrust and an unnecessary conflict between people.[147] For instance, on the 28th of October 1692, Magliabechi wrote to Gisbert Cuper that he remained "non poco scandalezzato della poco civiltà del Padre Noris nel non rispondere alle lettere che gli sono scritte dopo tanto, e tanto tempo".[148] As a result, the correspondence between Cuper and Noris, which took off in 1687, came abruptly to an end.[149] Based on the assumption that correspondent reciprocity could provide insight into aspects of confidentiality and trust in the Republic of Letters, a second small experiment was carried by Van den Heuvel et al. to determine the degree of confidentiality by using a network study of the incoming and outgoing correspondence of Grotius. In this experiment, they set up a pilot study of 7,725 letters written by or addressed to Grotius to enable an analysis of the concept of reciprocity in his personal and professional network. The degree of reciprocity corresponded to the number of letters that were answered on every one hundred letters sent. They found out that, on average, for every hundred letters exchanged in Grotius' personal network, 48 were answered, while in his professional network only 31 in 100 were answered. They concluded that these results were very inconsistent for "a large amount of correspondence in Grotius' network showed virtually no reciprocity".[150]

Although their experiments were tentative, and although they were made on a relatively small number of correspondences, the work of Van den Heuvel and Nellen provides us some interesting points of departure. The implicit use of confidentiality in epistolary exchanges, which "lies too far hidden in between the lines, underneath the text", conditions the use of text-analytical methods such as topic modeling and makes it very difficult to look for these general words in large datasets. Moreover, reciprocity is not a sufficient indicator of confidentiality, especially taking into account that most outgoing correspondence has not survived. To overcome these difficulties, a close reading approach may be a necessary, additional method to explore how references to confidentiality and secrecy come to the fore in early modern letters, which are brought to our attention by a distant reading to reveal the topological structure of the epistolary network under study. Secrecy and confidentiality are not simply methods of protecting knowledge that people want to keep hidden for security reasons or for making profit, they are also a dynamic social practice that has a strong effect on group formation. Network properties such as structural balance, closure and brokerage can provide insight into aspects of confidentiality and secrecy in the Republic of Letters.

Structural balance affirms that signed social networks (i.e. networks with relationships indicating positive (like trust) and negative (mistrust) interactions among individuals) tend to be organized so as to avoid tensions or conflictual situations. It highlights how interacting agents, for example, letter-writers, constantly evaluate the quality of their relationships in order to achieve a balanced position in a network. In the Republic of Letters, scholars often developed distrust relationships towards each other, caused by, for example, the differing cultures, scholarly rivalries and religious conversions. Moreover, they had to deal with many tensions like those imposed by the Roman Inquisition. Each of these tensions shaped the scholarly network in a significant way, and the structural balance theory can be used as a set of dynamics mechanisms to explain and shed light on these tensions. Consequently, the moments of tension often caused people to rely on secrecy, adopting strategic measures of confidentiality and dissimulation to

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[147] This descriptions of reciprocity fits in with the concept of reciprocity as a moral virtue, as defined by Lawrence C. Becker, *Reciprocity* (Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

[148] Magliabechi to Cuper, 28 October 1692, KB, KW 72 D 10, f. 80, "more than a little scandalized by the little effort of civility of Father Noris [Enrico Noris] for not responding to the letters that are written to him a long, long time ago."

[149] The correspondence between Gisbert Cuper and the theologian Enrico Noris (1631-1704) is extent in the National Library of the Netherlands and lasted from 1687 until 1692 (KB, KW 72 D 2).

[150] Van den Heuvel et al., 'Circles of Confidence in Correspondence', 100.

stabilise their network. I will come back to this aspect in the fifth chapter of this study. Specifically, I will show how a distant reading approach enables us to capture moments of tensions and instability implicated in a large body of correspondence, as well as identify the letters that require closer examination. A close reading will then produce a deeper understanding of the strategies used to avoid imbalance in the scholarly network, showing how methods of self-censorship, dissimulation and confidentiality were used to avert tensions in the network.

In the domain of social network theory, there is clear evidence of confidentiality being "more likely in a strong than in a weak relationship, especially when this strong relationship is embedded in a closed network".[151] Secrecy served to reinforce the intense closeness of a group, giving them a bond of shared knowledge from which outsiders were excluded. In this closed network, it is more likely that misbehavior will be detected because everyone keeps an eye on each other. This form of control generated trust and ensured the circulation of confidential and secretive information, which was needed in particular at times of tension, when people needed to look for stability, a sense of structure and safety. On the other hand, open, more decentralized networks, with more relations distributed throughout the network and no clustering around given individuals, are riskier when it comes to keeping a secret. Yet, a more open network is needed when one wants to obtain a brokerage position which allows someone to have access to new knowledge and contacts.

Network closure is particularly relevant in the context of introductions, a theme that will be central in the fourth chapter of this study. As correspondents became part of an epistolary network, they did not so in a world where anyone can just write a letter to join the network, "but in a world regulated by social norms and rules of etiquette".[152] This means that letters of introduction were needed to get admitted into an epistolary network. These letters were often written by mutual contacts which made it is easier for individuals to trust one another and to have confidence in the integrity of exchange that would take place between them.[153] If we trust a friend, we also tend to trust the friend of our friend. For example, if Magliabechi trusts Gronovius and Gronovius trusts Graevius, then Magliabechi can derive some conclusions about the degree of trust he can have about Graevius when Gronovius recommends him. Network closure infers thus new trust relationships and plays an important role in transferring confidentiality through introductions.

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[151] Burt, *Brokerage and Closure an Introduction to Social Capital*, cit. 97.
[152] Van den Heuvel et al., 'Circles of Confidence in Correspondence', 95.
[153] This is also known as *embeddedness*, see Easley and Kleinberg, 59.