

Conclusions

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Conclusions

Laurie Nussdorfer

The notaries who worked for the variously named associations of painters in the years 1590 to 1630 filed the instruments and meetings they produced, with few exceptions, in their protocols. As we have seen, these years were marked by a transformation in the way in which notarial protocols, objects of new scrutiny by state and investors, were treated and valued. In these decades, tensions and conflicts among the community of artists and art workers in Rome erupted frequently, and they often targeted the documents that seemed most important to their organizations, whether *universitas*, *collegio*, *congregatio*, *societas*, or *accademia*. Quite apart from the many, largely peaceful revisions of the rules for running the Accademia, assaults on the San Luca archives were not unheard of. Even the obsessive inventorying of the

contents of the cupboards in the academy's rooms betrays some anxiety about its control. In the context of such passions, the most important contributions of the Accademia's notaries were probably to remain in the background: to be present, to witness, to record, to transcribe, to copy, to file, and to bind. In a city marked by men on the move, the notaries too were necessarily fluid. They showed up and disappeared with efficient agility. Avoiding the spotlight, the notaries paid attention, and then slipped away. On their shelves, the protocols that marked their success as venal officeholders silently accumulated. Fortunately, no one had noticed, and the testimony to the early years of the Accademia would keep safely for the next five centuries.