

THE MARCELLO PAPINIANO CUSANI SILVER CHANDELIERS. A unique pair of ten lights silver and ormolu mounted Sicilian Rococo chandeliers stamped by Consol Nunzio Gino, executed in Palermo between June and December 1758. With two orders or five branches at two c-scrolls headed by a central baluster, still in standard of Louis XIV Style in their misty linear form the whole surmounted by the ormolu Archbishop Cap (the "galero") of Marcello Papiniano Cusani on his coat of arms surmounted by a crown on a elaborate rocaille motif marking the transitional style moment, with central iron rod, drilled for electricity and later closed, most components with assay scrapes, each lettered NGC58 (Nunzio Gino Console 1758).

Height: 43,30 in. (110 cm)
Width: 35,43 in. (90 cm)

Marcello was born in Frasso Telesino, now province of Benevento (please see below the coat of arms of the city), Principato Ultra, in 1690, from a family of Neapolitans notaries and jurists. After his law studies in Naples in 1709 started the seminary and theology studies, becoming priest in 1713 at Vico Equense Cathedral. As important jurist in 1723 he took the place of teacher and *prefetto degli studi* of the newly founded law university in Turin under Vittorio Amedeo II of Savoy, King of Sardinia, after been King of Sicily between 1713 and 1720. In 1734 comes back to Naples to take the civil law chair than also reviewer of legal texts. In 1746 becomes Archpriest of Altamura where he founded the University of the city about studies of physics, botany, surgery, agriculture, biology, ethics, law and philosophy until 1752 when he became bishop of Otranto Cathedral one year later and in 1754 Archbishop in Palermo, immediately later *Principe della muratoriana accademia del buon gusto*. Cusani was a great illuminated reformer always against Jesuits power, he introduced Locke (*il divin filosofo britanno*) the olive oil and wheat free trade in Sicily, in 1755 was nominated Vicere' di Sicilia by King of the two Sicilies Carlo III (but only 47 days) because against the sicilian barons politics monopoly, sick and blind he left Palermo in 1762 to coming back to Naples, he died in 1766 and he was buried in Santa Maria della verita' in Naples.

The Italian late baroque exuberance present in the design of these chandeliers which no doubt is the consequence product of the Sicilian architect and stage designer Filippo Juvarra (1678-1736) who came from a family of silversmiths in Messina. A number of his designs for silver are preserved in the collection of the Museo Civico in Turin, he was in fact the Vittorio Amedeo II Royal Architect. But must also be related to the designs of the Italian silversmith Giovanni Giardini as a possibly influence, engravings of his drawings having been published in Rome in 1714 (*Designi Diversi inventati e delineati da Giovanni Giardini*), later reprinted by Limpach of Praga in a latin version in 1750 (*Promptarium Artis Argentarium*).

Literature:

"I marchi degli argenti e orafi di Palermo" Silvano Barraja; Ed. Publieditor 1996; pag.34; pag.77; pag.92.



Filippo Juvarra, Pensiero per un Lampadario, Torino, Biblioteca Nazionale, ris.59.21,c.23.