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Geological relationships between Italian and Austrian scientists in the 18th century

The aim of this paper is to evaluate some significant examples of 18th century Austrian-Italian geological relationships, in the former Duchy of Milan (south-western Lombardy, incorporated within the Habsburg Monarchy since 1714), as well as in other ancient Italian states, such as the Republic of Venice and the Kingdom of Naples.

Some distinguished Italian naturalists who worked in Lombardy and were involved in geo-mineralogical studies, had several contacts with Austrian personalities and institutions, as in the case of Lazzaro SPALLANZANI (1729-1799), Ermenegildo PINI (1739-1825) and Giovanni Antonio SCOPOLI (1723-1788).

During the Austrian domination in the Kingdom of Naples (from 1707 to 1734) some attempts were made by the government of Vienna for increasing the mining exploitations in Calabria and Sicily. At the end of the 18th century, the reference to the Austrian mining tradition was still highly considered in the Kingdom of Naples by the Bourbon government. Six young Neapolitan scholars were sent first to Vienna to learn the German language and the mining dialects spoken in the various territories of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and later to study at the Mining Academy of Schemnitz in the early 1790s. After their return in Italy they held important positions for the development of mineralogical science in the Kingdom of Naples.

In the Republic of Venice individual scientific relationships, based on common geological interests, were established between Venetian and Austrian scientists particularly in the second half of the 18th century. This was the case of the correspondence between the distinguished geologist Giovanni ARDUINO (1714-1795) and the Austrian mineralogists Ignaz VON BORN (1742-1791) and Benedikt Franz Johann HERMANN (1755-1815) in Vienna.

Also the Venetian naturalist and polymath Francesco GRISELINI (1717-1783) was in contact with Ignaz VON BORN and benefited from the patronage of some HABSBURG authorities. GRISELINI undertook an extensive naturalistic travel, with several geological observations, in the Imperial territories of the '*Bannat of Temeswar*' (in southern Hungary, recently in Romania). In 1780 he published in Italian and in German the report of this travel. Particular attention will be given to the analysis of this scientific work, whose German edition was translated by Ignaz VON BORN and published in Vienna.

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