



FONTES  -Quellen und Dokumente zur Kunst 1350-1750
Sources and Documents for the History of Art 1350-1750

BARTOLOMEO MARANTA

*Discorso all'Ill.mo Sig. Ferrante Carrafa Marchese di Santo Lucido
in materia di pittura. Nel quale si difende il quadro della capella
del Sig. Cosmo Pinelli fatto per Titiano, da alcune opposizioni
fattegli da alcune persone (c. 1562)*

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Bartolomeo Maranta's 'Discourse' on Titian's *Annunciation* in Naples: introduction¹



Figure 1: Titian, *The Annunciation*, c. 1562. Oil on canvas, 280 x 193.5 cm, Naples: Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte. Ministero per i Beni e le Attività culturali e del turismo – Fototeca del Polo Museale della Campagna

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Overview

The 'Discourse' on Titian's *Annunciation* is the first known text of considerable length whose subject is a painting by a then-living artist.² The only manuscript of this text is held in the Biblioteca Nazionale of Naples. The translated title is: 'A Discourse of Bartolomeo Maranta to the most ill. Sig. Ferrante Carrafa, Marquis of Santo Lucido, on the subject of painting. In which the picture, made by Titian for the chapel of Sig. Cosmo Pinelli, is defended against some opposing comments made by some persons'.³ Maranta wrote the discourse to argue against groundless opinions about Titian's *Annunciation* he overheard in the Pinelli chapel. Expert judgement, in his view, requires that the viewer understands the artist's intentions as they are conveyed in the painting.

The *Annunciation* was painted by Titian (Tiziano Vecellio, c. 1480, Pieve di Cadore – 27 August 1576, Venice) for the altar of the Pinelli chapel in the Neapolitan church of San Domenico Maggiore.⁴ Maranta's 'Discourse' appears to be the only sixteenth-century consideration of this painting, and the circumstances of obtaining Titian's painting, the date of its installation in the chapel, and even the date of Maranta's 'Discourse', can be determined from texts relating to the author.

According to Maranta, Cosimo desired to have the *Annunciation* painted by 'the hand of Titian', and Cosimo's son Gian Vincenzo began the process of procuring it for the chapel after his relocation to Padua (that is, some time after 3 August 1558).⁵ On 11 October 1558, Ferrante Carafa inherited the noble rank of the 'Marchese di Santo Lucido',⁶ and Maranta refers to him as such in the title of his 'Discourse', so the year 1558 can be firmly established as the *terminus post quem* for both the commission of the painting from Titian and the composition of the 'Discourse'. The relation of the Pinelli *Annunciation* to the painting by Titian in the Venetian church of San Salvador that bears the same title (though it lays emphasis on the Incarnation) establishes August 1563 as a *terminus ante quem* for the creation of this work for the Neapolitan church.⁷ It is most likely that the painting was installed in the Pinelli chapel by March 1562. The

² Angelo Borzelli, *Bartolommeo Maranta. Difensore del Tiziano*, Naples: Gennaro, 1902; Giuseppe Solimene, *Un umanista venosino (Bartolomeo Maranta) giudica Tiziano*, Naples: Società aspetti letterari, 1952; and Paola Barocchi, ed., *Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento*, Milan- Naples: Einaudi, 1971, 3 vols, 1:863-900. For the translation see below.

³ Ms. Branc. II C 5, c. 260r: 'DISCORSO DI BARTOLOMEO MARANTA ALL'ILL^{mo} SIG. FERRANTE Carrafa Marchese di Santo Lucido in materia di pittura. Nel quale si difende il quadro della cappella del sig. Cosmo Pinelli fatto per TITIANO, da alcune opposizioni fattegli da alcune persone'.

⁴ Roberto Longhi, 'Giunte a Tiziano', *L'Arte*, 28.6, 1925, 40-50, drew attention to Titian's *Annunciation* in Naples. A recent study by Anna Chiara Alabiso, ed., *Tiziano per Napoli. L'Annunciazione di San Domenico Maggiore; vicende storico-artistiche, tecnica di esecuzione e restauro*, Naples: Nicola Longobardi Editore, 2010, offers a survey of Titian's other paintings on the same subject.

⁵ See the date in Bartolomeo Maranta, *Methodi cognoscendorum simplicium libri tres, cum indice copioso*, Venice: Vincenzo Valgrisi, 1559, vi.

⁶ Biagio Aldimari, *Historia genealogica della famiglia Carafa*, Naples: Antonio Bulifon, 1691, 3 vols, 2:325-6.

⁷ Daniela Bohde, 'Titian's three-altar project in the Venetian church of San Salvador: strategies of self-representation by members of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco', *Renaissance Studies*, 15, 2001, 466 at 450-72, provides evidence for the

similarities of style between the Angel Gabriel in this painting and the Goddess Diana in the *Death of Actaeon* (London: National Gallery), whose *terminus ante quem* is 1559,⁸ enable this date to be given as a *terminus post quem* for the Pinelli altarpiece, a date that fits neatly with other works Titian painted in the early 1560s.

This essay suggests that a more precise *terminus post quem* for the 'Discourse' is April 1562. The 'Discourse' originated as a consequence of a heated debate on the painting between Maranta and Scipione Ammirato that probably took place on 25 March 1562 after they had heard Mass – as Maranta himself reports – in the Pinelli chapel, consecrated to the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary: 25 March is the Feast of the Annunciation. Maranta describes an uncommon event in his life, because he usually attended Franciscan services and rarely came to San Domenico Maggiore to celebrate major feasts.

The text of the 'Discourse' is catalogued in the Bracciana section of the Biblioteca Nazionale, whereas all his other manuscripts are held in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan.⁹ It was almost certainly included in the collection of Don Camillo Tutini (1594–1670), given to his patron, Cardinal Francesco Maria Brancaccio.¹⁰ The son of the governor of Apulia, Brancaccio collected texts relevant to the Kingdom of Naples and bequeathed his library to the church of Sant'Angelo a Nilo, which stands opposite San Domenico Maggiore. Tutini was on familiar terms with Francesco Imperato,¹¹ a son of Ferrante who collaborated with Maranta in the 1560s. Tutini's notes accurately refer to Titian's painting in the Pinelli chapel.¹² After Maranta's 'Discourse', these notes are the earliest reference to the painting.¹³ The latest date of a *terminus ante quem* for the composition of the 'Discourse' must be before 24 March 1571, when Maranta was buried in the Franciscan church of San Bernardino in Molfetta.¹⁴ In light of documents relating to the author, a scrutiny of certain passages in the 'Discourse' suggests that after April 1562, Maranta left the text in the present form – notwithstanding some stylistic lapses. It was written on the eve of the Tridentine inquiry into the artistic liberty to create images for family chapels.

The 'Discourse' offers insights into several topics: Neapolitan patronage and court etiquette, the meaning of the figures' postures and gestures, the comparison of painting to

statement that Titian painted the San Salvador *Annunciation* between August 1563 and March 1566. Alabiso, 'L'Annunciazione di Tiziano', in *Tiziano*, 11-33, does not mention the article.

⁸ See Francesco Valcanover's detailed entry to *Le Siècle de Titien: l'âge d'or de la peinture à Venise*, exhib. cat., eds, Michelle Laclotte and Gilles Fage, Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1993, 668 (no. 251).

⁹ Bernard Weinberg, 'Bartolomeo Maranta: nuovi manoscritti di critica letteraria', *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*, 24, 1955, 121 at 115-25. On the Pinellian library see, in particular, Massimo Rodella, 'Fortuna e sfortuna della biblioteca di Gian Vincenzo Pinelli: la vendita a Federico Borromeo', *Bibliotheca: rivista di studi bibliografici*, 2, 2003, 87-125.

¹⁰ Bernardo de Domenici, *Vite de' pittori, scultori, ed architetti Napoletani*, Naples: Ricciardi, 1743, 4 vols, 1:51, 78, 97, 240, mentions that Tutini's collection of manuscripts was given to Brancaccio.

¹¹ Stefano De Mieri, *Girolamo Imperato nella pittura napoletana tra '500 e '600*, Naples: Arte tipografica, 2009, 16-7. In 1595, Girolamo, their distant relative, frescoed the chapel bought in 1591 by Maranta's brother Pomponio in the Neapolitan church of Santi Severino e Sossio.

¹² Ottavio Morisani, *Letteratura artistica a Napoli*, Naples: Fausto Fiorentino, 1958, 144: 'la cona dell'Annunciata nella cappella di Cosmo Pinelli in S. Domenico è opra di Titiano' (Ms. Branc. II A 8). Opposite the first page of Maranta's 'Discourse' someone added this notation in two lines: 'Discorso di B. Maranta; l'icona dell'Annunziata'.

¹³ Alabiso, 'L'Annunciazione di Tiziano', in *Tiziano*, 24, cites two seventeenth-century witnesses: Pompeo Sarnelli (1688) and Carlo Celano (1692), but does not mention Tutini.

¹⁴ Michele Romano, *Saggio sulla storia di Molfetta dall'epoca dell'antica Respa sino al 1840*, Naples: Fratelli de Bonis, 1842, 3 vols, 1:134, transcribes the document in the city archive: 'Messer Bartolomeo Maranta fu nostro, e seppellito nella Ecclesia di San Bernardino 24 marzo 1571'.

poetry and music, anatomy and physiognomy as aids to understanding the message of a painting, the concept of beauty as an objective criterion in judging a specific work. Further, the citations from Luke 1.28–38 are pertinent for determining the precise moment of the sacred story Titian portrays.¹⁵ The ‘Discourse’ may also be appreciated as an historical document on cultural life in mid-sixteenth-century Naples. It reports Ferrante Carafa’s highly refined courtliness in life and poetry; relates the artistic taste of the chapel owner, Cosimo Pinelli, a silk merchant and banker; and adds a biographical note about the broad interests of his illustrious son Gian Vincenzo, bibliophile and intellectual. It mentions musicians: ‘Filippo di Monte’ (Philippe de Monte, employed by Cosimo Pinelli from c. 1540 to 1554), ‘Nolano’ (Giovan Domenico Del Giovane da Nola, 1545), ‘Lando’ (Stefano Lando, from 1559 to 1571) and ‘Pietro Vinci’ (c. 1560), who, as the dates indicate, then worked in Naples.¹⁶ It praises Ludovico Ariosto’s ‘unfinished’ cantos.¹⁷ It recounts Giorgio Vasari’s activity in Naples (1544–45); criticizes the paintings of Leonardo Grazia, called il Pistoia (1502–c. 1548); and commends the Neapolitan painter and sculptor Giovan Bernardo Lama (1508–79). Maranta’s ‘Discourse’ is perused by art historians interested in Vasari, il Pistoia and Lama,¹⁸ but it is barely mentioned by scholars of Titian. One possible reason for this neglect may be that the text provides no biographical data about Titian, nor does it mention his other paintings. Several art historians nonetheless recognize that Maranta provides significant points of sixteenth-century criticism, thanks precisely to his meticulous attention to the use of gesture,¹⁹ his adaptation of metaphorical device in discussing painted figures,²⁰ his interpretation of Titian’s particular colour range,²¹ his interest in the relation of portraiture to religious art,²² and his mention of the Pinellis as patrons of Titian.²³ For these and other reasons, Maranta’s ‘Discourse’ merits closer study. The present essay purposefully offers an introduction to the text and an English translation to call the attention of a wider audience.

¹⁵ Maranta anticipates Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy. A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972, 49-51, who uses the sermon of Fra Roberto Caracciolo on the Annunciation for showing how paintings reflect different stations in Luke’s narrative.

¹⁶ On Maranta’s list and for information on each of the mentioned musicians, see Keith Austin Larson, ‘The unaccompanied madrigal in Naples from 1536 to 1654’, PhD dissertation, Harvard University, 1985 (1229 pages), 260-2, 43-4 and 85; 170, 232 and 382n405.

¹⁷ Daniel Javitch, ‘Narrative discontinuity in the *Orlando Furioso* and its sixteenth-century critics’, *Modern Language Notes*, 103, 1988, 50-74.

¹⁸ Andrea Zezza, ‘Per Vasari e Napoli’, in *Giorgio Vasari e il cantiere delle vite del 1550*, eds, Barbara Agosti et al., Venice: Marsilio, 2013, 155n19 at 147-65; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Pittura del Cinquecento a Napoli (1540–1573). Fasto e devozione*, Naples: Electa, 1996, 129n21; Andrea Zezza, ‘Giovanni Bernardo Lama: ipotesi per un percorso’, *Bollettino d’Arte*, 76:70, 1991, 20n1 at 1-30.

¹⁹ André Chastel, ‘L’art du geste à la Renaissance’, *Revue de l’art*, 75, 1987, 15 at 9-16. Caroline van Eck, *Classical Rhetoric and the Visual Arts in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007, 144-50.

²⁰ Ulrich Pfisterer, ed., *Die Kunstilliteratur der italienischen Renaissance. Eine Geschichte in Quellen*, Stuttgart: Reclam, 2002, 19.

²¹ Isabelle Bouvrande, *Le Coloris vénitien à la Renaissance. Autour de Titien*, Paris: Garnier, 2014, 85-8.

²² Elisabeth Joanna Maria van Kessel, ‘The social lives of paintings in sixteenth-century Venice’, PhD dissertation, Leiden University, 2012, 100-2, mistakenly calls him ‘the Venetian’ instead of ‘the Venosian’.

²³ Marco Ruffini, ‘Sixteenth-century Paduan annotations to the first edition of Vasari’s *Vite* (1550)’, *Renaissance Quarterly*, 62, 2009, 779-80 at 748-808. His earlier article, ‘Un’attribuzione a Donatello del *Crocifisso* ligneo dei Servi di Padova’, *Prospettiva*, 130/131, 2008, 31 at 22-49, provides the same information.

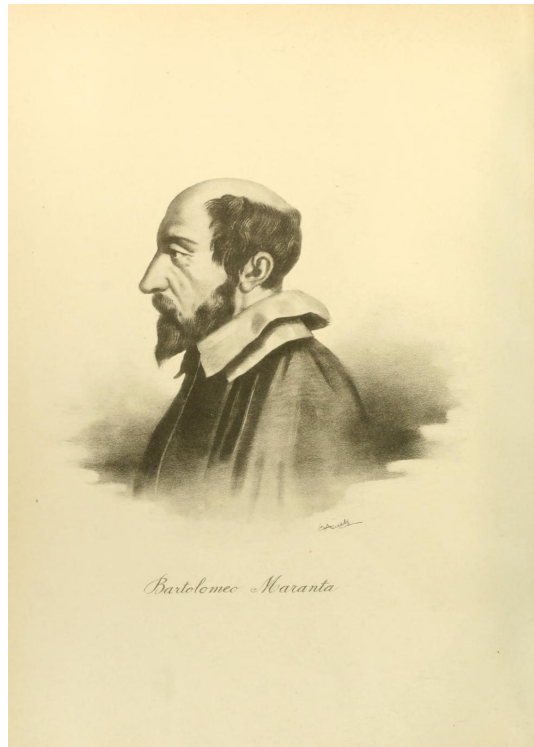


Figure 2: Bartolomeo Maranta (c.1504, Venosa – 24 March 1571, Molfetta), physician, botanist and literary scholar. The portrait, preserved in the Municipality of Venosa thanks to the care of Gerardo Pinto, was engraved by Carlo Biondi. It is here reproduced from Giovanni Briosi, 'Cenno sopra Bartolomeo Maranta (Con ritratto)', *Atti dell'Istituto botanico dell'Università di Pavia*, 2 Series, 16, 1916, ii at ii-viii.

Bartolomeo Maranta: his activities, trial and publications

In his 'Discourse', Maranta proudly declares himself a compatriot of Horace. He mentions this not only because he was a native of Venosa, but also because his mother, Viva Cenna, belonged to one of the city's most ancient, though not most aristocratic, families.²⁴ Her family boasted that they could trace their origins back to ancient Rome to the time of the author of *Ars poetica*, on which Maranta lectured before Neapolitan men of letters. Giacomo (Iacopo) Cenna (1560–after 1640), a chronicler of Venosa, records that Lodovico Dolce (1508–68) – the prolific Venetian writer, translator and editor – spoke of Horace as a poet-philosopher, whose natal city is 'Venusio' [sic].²⁵ Maranta was born c. 1504 (probably after the bubonic plagues that ravaged the city in 1501 and 1503).²⁶ Together with his three younger brothers – Pomponio (future lawyer), Lucio (future Bishop of Lavello in 1561) and Silvio (future soldier) – Bartolomeo began his

²⁴ Giacomo Cenna, *Cronaca Venosina, ms. del sec. XVII della Bibl. Naz. di Napoli*, with preface by Gerardo Pinto, Venosa: Editrice Appia 2, 1982 (first published in 1902), 318.

²⁵ Cenna, *Cronaca*, 330. Dolce's biographical sketch of Horace prefaces his translation of Horace's poetry, published in 1559; the biography mentions Ariosto as the only contemporary poet who is compared with Horace and Ovid. The message of the biography differs from the message of the dedication Aretino prefaced to Dolce's publication of *Ars poetica*, printed in 1535, in which Ariosto is mentioned along with Jacopo Sannazaro and Pietro Bembo as the poets worthy of Horace. See Bernard Weinberg, *A History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961, 2 vols, 1:101-2, and 143-4, for the preface to the *Ars poetica*.

²⁶ Raffaele Nigro, *Poeti e baroni nel Rinascimento lucano*, Venosa: Edizioni Osanna, 1997, 20.

education at home where all four brothers were schooled by their father, Roberto (1476–1539), an eminent lawyer, the author of basic treatises on jurisprudence, a Neo-Latin poet of regional repute and a founder of the law school in Salerno in 1524.²⁷ Bartolomeo continued his education in Naples, where he studied medicine, as had the grandfather in whose honour he was named.²⁸ According to Cenna, Maranta was an extraordinary physician who could assess a patient's health even before checking his pulse, just by looking at his face.²⁹ He was appointed medical doctor to the court of Charles V in Spain, possibly after 1535 (when Charles V visited Naples) and some time before 1539.³⁰ Cenna does not give the dates for Maranta's medical service in Spain but records that afterwards he returned to Naples, where he helped establish an academy.³¹ By 1555 Maranta had been employed for some time in the 'ancient academy of Salerno' (according to Pietro Andrea Mattioli's epistle to Cardinal Cristoforo Madruzzo).³² It is not clear when he started his lectureship in Salerno, nor it is known how long Maranta taught medicine there. In 1568, Nicola Andrea Stigliola (also Stelliola), a medical doctor, was reported to be a pupil of Maranta at this university.³³

From c. 1550 to 1554, Maranta was at the University of Pisa, where he furthered his studies of medical plants with Luca Ghini, the first appointed professor of medicinal botany and founder of the university botanical garden.³⁴ In July 1554 Maranta returned to Naples. It is likely that at this time he established the botanical garden on the Pinelli estate, which became the prototype for the future botanical garden at the University of Naples.³⁵ Based on this garden, Maranta wrote *Methodi cognoscendorum simplicium libri tres*, which he dedicated to Gian Vincenzo in 1558 and published in 1559 in Venice. However, Maranta's stay in Naples was interrupted by a call to serve (from early autumn 1556 to late spring 1557) as physician to Vespasiano Gonzaga, a favourite of Philip II, during the Ostia campaign. Later, Maranta

²⁷ Nigro, *Poeti*, 61; the book cites Roberto Maranta's Latin poetry and praises addressed to him by local poets; hence by studying his writings Nigro reconstructs the Lucanian culture.

²⁸ Cenna, *Cronaca*, 347.

²⁹ Cenna, *Cronaca*, 342. See Salvatore De Renzi, *Storia della medicina in Italia*, Naples: tipografia del Filiate-Sebezio, 1845–48, 5 vols, 3:111-2.

³⁰ Cenna, *Cronaca*, 343: 'fu chiamato in Spagna per medico di Sua Maestà'. Aurelio Espinosa, *The Empire of the Cities: Emperor Charles V, the Comunero Revolt, and the Transformation of the Spanish System*, Leiden: Brill, 2009, 184, mentions that by 1539, Charles V had the services of twelve *medicos*, one of whom could well have been Maranta.

³¹ Cenna, *Cronaca*, 343.

³² Pier Andrea Mattioli, *I Discorsi (...) ne i sei libri della materia medicinale di Pedacio Dioscoride Anazarbeo*, Venice: Vincenzo Valgrisi, 1557, 'messo con honoratissima conditione à leggere & insegnare nella antica academia Salernitana' (n.p.; the letter to Madruzzo is dated 20 January 1555; in this letter Mattioli calls Maranta 'medico Pugliese').

³³ Geoffrey Neal Cassady McTighe, 'The new light of Europe: Giordano Bruno and the modern age', PhD dissertation, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2007, 138.

³⁴ Dietrich von Engelhardt, 'Luca Ghini (1490–1556). Il padre fondatore della botanica moderna nel contesto dei rapporti scientifici Europei del sedicesimo secolo', *Annali del Museo Civico di Rovereto*, 27, 2011, 227-46. Maranta is mentioned on 230 and 233n16.

³⁵ Francesco S. Minervini, *Didattica del linguaggio poetico in un retore del Cinquecento: Bartolomeo Maranta*, Bari, Editrice Adriatica, 2012, 11, states that Maranta was in Naples in August 1554, but in his letter of 5 August, Maranta lets Aldrovandi know that he was in Naples in July and that he received his letter on 22 July. See G. B. De Toni, 'Nuovi documenti sulla vita esul carteggio di Bartolomeo Maranta, medico e semplicista del XVI secolo', *Atti del Reale Istituto Veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti*, 71, 1911–12, 1516 at 1505-64. For the location of the garden, see Pietro de Stefano, *Descrizione dei luoghi sacri della città di Napoli (Napoli, 1560)*, eds, Stefano D'Ovidio and Alessandra Rullo, Naples: Università degli Studi di Napoli "Federico II", 2007, 240. On the importance of this garden for the history of Naples, see Fiona Colucci, 'L'orto botanico di Napoli i progetti di urbanistica e di architettura (1807–1936)', PhD dissertation, Università degli Studi di Napoli "Federico II", 2007, 258-60.

complained to Ulisse Aldrovandi that his real work had remained neglected for an entire year.³⁶ As Maranta's second letter to Gabriele Falloppio suggests, in early August 1558 he accompanied Gian Vincenzo to Padua. During December 1558, in Naples, Maranta finished writing an epistle on some local thermal sources and on medical treatment with mineral waters, *De aquae Neapoli, in Luculliano scaturientis (quam ferream vocant) metallica materia, ac viribus* (published February 1559 in Naples).

On 20 April 1561 Maranta informed Aldrovandi that he had been delighting in writing a book on Virgil for the past three months: he had already finished four parts and would complete the fifth in twenty days. He had embarked on this enterprise because law and medicine did not reveal the world to him in the same way as did poetry.³⁷ Between 1561 and 1563, except for the summer of 1562, Maranta remained in Naples, writing on poetry and art. In July and August 1561, he delivered five lectures in Italian on Horace's *Ars poetica* at the meetings of the Accademia Napoletana, which were held in the monastery of San Pietro a Maiella,³⁸ near San Domenico Maggiore. On 4 March 1562 he expressed his hope of publishing these lectures by Easter of that year, but, as Cenna states, the hefty volume was never sent to a publisher.³⁹ In the same month, following the feast of the Annunciation, while he was occupied by 'cose poetiche', Maranta must have started writing on Titian's altarpiece because his 'Discourse' mentions the fact that two days later, he and Ammirato visited Carafa in his house as he was lying in bed, suffering from 'serious catarrh': in winter and early spring of 1562, an epidemic of catarrh afflicted Naples.⁴⁰ The mention of Carafa's illness strengthens the hypothesis for April 1562 as the date of the 'Discourse'. Maranta reports that the discussion of the painting with Carafa prompted him to write down his thoughts to address 'some other people who, it seems to me, speak about it [the painting] more from a certain habit than from true and firm reasoning'.

In the summer of 1562 Maranta's life suddenly changed. The Inquisition returned to the city on the orders of Pope Pius IV, who convened the conciliar meetings in Trent on 18 January 1562. On 13 June 1562 Maranta was transferred from Naples to Rome, where he was incarcerated, together with ten other persons, all of whom were accused of attending the gathering at which Giovanni Francesco Alois had recited Francesco Maria Molza's poem about Christ, interpreted as having Lutheran sympathies.⁴¹ In the trial it became clear that the Bishop of Montepeloso, the Pontifical Vicar in Naples, believed Maranta had written an oration for his

³⁶ De Toni, 'Nuovi documenti', 1525 (30 January 1557) and 1528 (6 March 1558; 'La mia opera ha dormito per uno anno intiero per li travagli del Regno').

³⁷ De Toni, 'Nuovi documenti', 1558: 'Io per tre mesi continui sono stato impacciato in una fatica piacevole, perché ho composto infino a hora quattro Dialoghi di poesia tutti in discorso di Virgilio Marone (...) ho fatto questa fatica senza dir punto delle cose sue, ma tutte cose nuove per far conoscere al mondo, che i Legisti non sono da più nella poesia, che i Medici'. Maranta was inspired by the publication of Virgil's poetry in two volumes by the lawyer Nicolò Erythro in 1555–56. See Vladimiro Zabughin, *Vergilio nel Rinascimento Italiano da Dante a Torquato Tasso: fortuna, studi, imitazioni, traduzioni e parodie, iconografia*, Bologna: Zanichelli, 1923–25, 2 vols, 2:111n97.

³⁸ Weinberg, 'Bartolomeo', 115. See also Minervini, *Didattica*, 57 and 57n111.

³⁹ De Toni, 'Nuovi documenti', 1559: 'cose poetiche le quali spero a pasqua mandare alla stampa'. See Cenna, *Cronaca*, 343.

⁴⁰ Samuel K. Cohn, Jr, *Cultures of Plague: Medical Thinking at the End of the Renaissance*, Oxford: University Press, 2010, 172, refers to Sebastiano Ajello who, in 1577, discusses 'the example of a coughing disease (*i catarrri*), perhaps akin to bronchitis that broke out in Naples in 1562'.

⁴¹ Luigi Amabile, *Il Santo officio della inquisizione in Napoli*, Ci à di Castello: S. Lapi, 1892, 265. Minervini, *Didattica*, 19–21, discusses Molza's poem recited by Alois.

brother Lucio,⁴² who, having arrived in Trent in February 1562 as Bishop of Lavello,⁴³ participated in the twenty-first session of the Council's meeting (convened on 16 July 1562),⁴⁴ which opened to question the way bishops performed their duties. The lawyer Vincenzo Mancini succeeded in convincing the tribunal judges that the Bishop of Montepeloso harboured a prejudice against Maranta, because he suspected that Lucio's oration would put him in a bad light. Maranta was released from prison, having left a security payment of 500 ducats, with the agreement that he would undergo an additional trial. Cenna, however, presented a different version of Maranta's entrapment by inquisition. According to Cenna, Maranta had composed an *impresa* for a gentleman enamoured of a lady, and the rivalry between their families brought him, slandered as a heretic, before the Office. Cenna was convinced that Maranta escaped punishment thanks to his brother's intervention.⁴⁵ Yet the documentation on Maranta's trial makes no mention of his brother acting on his behalf (see Appendix I). The trial document reports that at some time Alois confessed torture had caused him to libel Maranta. Others in attendance at Molza's recital, including Alfonso Cambi and 'the Provincial of San Pietro a Maiella' (under whose auspices Maranta lectured on Horace), gave contradictory evidence. At the additional trial, sixty-five witnesses attested to the fact that the Pontifical Vicar was afraid of the decisions (and the consequences of those decisions) to be reached at the conciliar meeting,⁴⁶ and their testimonies enabled the lawyer to prove that Maranta was imprisoned unjustly. He returned to Naples certainly before 3 October 1562.⁴⁷ The records surrounding the Council of Trent provide additional clues that confirm Maranta's association with Neapolitan men of letters, his interest in poetry and even the date (April 1562) of his reflection on Titian's painting.

Between the autumn of 1562 and the autumn of 1563, Maranta was engaged in the study of Aristotle's *Poetics*, lecturing and writing Latin paraphrases; in December 1562 he engaged in polemics with Pietro Vettori, a Florentine aristocrat and authority on Aristotle.⁴⁸ The year 1563 was dedicated to four lectures, influenced by Aristotle, including one in Italian on the *Aeneid* and one in Latin on the distinction between the poet and the philosopher.⁴⁹ Maranta might have met with Joannes Sambucus in Naples before he left the city on 18 January 1563.⁵⁰ The following year, in Antwerp, Sambucus published *Emblemata*, in which he dedicated an emblem to Maranta with the title 'Virtute duce' ('Under the guidance of virtue').⁵¹ Also in 1564, Maranta

⁴² Cenna, *Cronaca*, 361, stresses that Lucio was the only author of all the orations. See also Giovanni Caserta, *Storia della letteratura lucana*, Venosa: Edizioni Osanna, 1995, 77-8.

⁴³ De Toni, 'Nuovi documenti', 1560 (Maranta mentions, on 4 March 1562, being busy with his brother on the eve of his departure).

⁴⁴ <https://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent/ct21.html> [accessed June 2015].

⁴⁵ Cenna, *Cronaca*, 343. See, for example, the reference to Cenna in Solimene, *Umanista*, 10, repeated in Minervini, *Didattica*, 16.

⁴⁶ Romeo De Maio, *Riforme e miti nella Chiesa del Cinquecento*, Naples: Guida Editori, 1992, 230.

⁴⁷ Amabile, *Santo officio*, 266 and 266n2.

⁴⁸ Guido Avezù, 'Un inedito di Bartolomeo Maranta: note sulla *Poetica* di Aristotele (circa 1562)', *Atti dell' Istituto Veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti*, 131, 1972-73, 305-29.

⁴⁹ See Weinberg, 'Bartolomeo,' 115, for the list of texts and their dates, and 124-5, for the chronology of his works. See also Weinberg, *History*, 2:1135. The latter lecture was published by Francesco S. Minervini, "Imitazione narrative perfetta": una lezione accademica di Bartolomeo Maranta', *Annali della facoltà di lettere e filosofia*, 46, 2003, 415-43.

⁵⁰ A. S. Q. Visser, *Joannes Sambucus and the Learned Image: the Use of the Emblem in Late-Renaissance Humanism*, Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2005, 15 and 19 with n56.

⁵¹ Johannes Sambucus, *Emblemata: cum aliquot nummis antiqui operis*, Antwerp: Christopher Plantin, 1566, 156; Visser, *Joannes Sambucus*, 270 (this emblem appears in all the editions, whereas the emblem dedicated to Mattioli is not included in the edition printed in 1564).

published with an eminent printmaker, Johannes Oporinus of Basel, his *magnum opus* in the field of literary criticism, *Lucullianae quaestiones*, a discussion in five books of the poetic quality of Virgil's *Aeneid*, written in the form of colloquy with other gentlemen (including Ammirato and Cambi, both of whom are mentioned in his 'Discourse').

After the autumn of 1563 there is no certain record of Maranta in Naples; it is unlikely that he witnessed the shocking beheading of Alois on 4 March 1564 in the Piazza del Mercato.⁵² Maranta was in Rome, quite possibly in 1565, but most definitely in the summer of 1568, when he established a botanical garden, probably for Cardinal Castilioni della Trinità;⁵³ his service to the cardinal was interrupted in the autumn of 1569. In a letter to Aldrovandi, on 9 April 1570, Maranta explained he had planned to remain in Rome permanently, but at the behest of his brothers he had returned to his native region.⁵⁴ At the request of the protophysician Gianantonio Pisano, and inspired by the Neapolitan apothecary Ferrante Imperato, Maranta wrote *Della Theriaca e del Mithridato*. It earned him fame as a specialist on antidotes.⁵⁵ Written on 30 October 1570, the book was published posthumously in Venice on 9 October 1571. Maranta moved to Molfetta, where his brother Pomponio could provide for his care, not least because he had been raised to nobility by his marriage to Beatrice Monna.⁵⁶ That Maranta meant to be buried in Venosa is attested by his purchase of the chapel in the Franciscan church of San Andrea after its consecration as the local cathedral in 1531; he dedicated the family chapel to the Nativity and adorned it with its beautiful *Presepe*.⁵⁷ The chapel served, in the autumn of 1571, as the burial place for Silvio, who fought at Lepanto.⁵⁸

The Pinellis as patrons of Titian

Cosimo Pinelli, born in Genoa into a noble Ligurian family,⁵⁹ followed the path of his business partner and future father-in-law, Germano Ravaschieri, who by marriage and purchase of property (c. 1520) had become a citizen of Naples.⁶⁰ Cosimo took up residence in Naples in 1523, became a prominent citizen and was appointed one of the governors of the Annunziata church in 1530.⁶¹ Most of the information about Cosimo pertaining to Titian's altarpiece is drawn from Maranta's dedicatory letter to his book on the methods of recognizing simples (1559) and from the 'Discourse'. Cosimo is described as a deeply pious man, devoted to the Virgin Mary, and as

⁵² Amabile, *Santo officio*, 364.

⁵³ De Toni, 'Nuovi documenti', 1514 and 1514n5.

⁵⁴ De Toni, 'Nuovi documenti', 1563: 'io pensava di dovere starmene per sempre in Roma, e poi a esortazione de miei fratelli venni a queste parti, donde spero partirmi, e con far quanto sono obligato a fare'.

⁵⁵ Giorgio Micca, 'Il "De Theriaca e del Mithridato" di Bartolomeo Maranta', *Minerva Medica*, 61, 1970, 705-15, includes several facsimiles of Maranta's letters. See David Gentilcore, *Healers and Healing in Early Modern Italy*, Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1998, 113-4.

⁵⁶ Romano, *Saggio*, 133-4. Beatrice was a daughter of the lawyer Gasparo, a distant relative of Isabella of Aragon.

⁵⁷ Cenna, *Cronaca*, 165, on the cathedral consecration, and 176, on the chapel embellishment.

⁵⁸ Cenna, *Cronaca*, 362.

⁵⁹ Uberto Foglietta, *Clarorum Ligurum elogium*, Rome: Antonio Bladio, 1573, 259. In the title of the 'Discourse' his name is spelt 'Cosmo', but in the rest of the text he is called 'Cosimo'; 'Cosmò' is a variant in the Genoese dialect.

⁶⁰ Alfonso Leone, 'Il commercio estero in Italia meridionale dal Quattro al Cinquecento', in *La fortuna dei Borgia: atti del convegno (Bologna, 29-31 ottobre 2000)*, ed. Ovidio Capitani, Rome: Roma nel Rinascimento, 2005, 59 at 57-62.

⁶¹ Giovanni Brancaccio, 'Nazione genovese': *consoli e colonia nella Napoli moderna*, Naples: Guida, 2001, 52; Larson, 'Unaccompanied madrigal', 44n102.

someone who appreciated art. Maranta's comparison of Luke's dialogue between the Angel and the Virgin and its representation by Titian is intended to gratify the devout Cosimo, who is mentioned as admiring this work of art and asserting 'that nothing can be added to it or taken away from it'. Even if this statement is possibly Maranta's rhetorical addition,⁶² the phrasing is typical of that used to praise crafted objects, and for this reason fits Cosimo, who owned the magnificent palace across from San Domenico Maggiore,⁶³ designed in 1544 by the Neapolitan architect Giovanni Francesco di Palma. In 1547 Cosimo bought a chapel in San Domenico Maggiore and in 1557 obtained its consecration to the Annunziata, recorded thus on the portal.⁶⁴ Maranta's 'Discourse' attests that Cosimo assigned the chapel decorations to the care of Lama.⁶⁵ The four ceiling pictures showing scenes from the Virgin's life can therefore be securely attributed to him.⁶⁶ Cosimo, whom Maranta describes as an admirer of Lama, could easily have chosen him to paint the Annunciation for the chapel altar, yet he preferred Titian. Lama was a well-established painter in Naples, but in 1557 he did not have Titian's status as official painter to Philip II, King of Spain and also of Naples and Sicily. The royal connection was of great importance to Cosimo for at least two reasons: in 1557 he was appointed by Philip II to serve as Chancellor of the Kingdom, and from a young age his firstborn son Galeazzo had been on several battlefields with the imperial armies.⁶⁷ This may explain why the Virgin Titian painted in the Pinelli chapel closely resembles her figure in his *Annunciation* of 1537, which he offered to Charles V, who decided to give it as his gift to his Isabella; it became known outside Spain from Jacopo Caraglio's engraving.⁶⁸ (Maranta's awareness of this similarity might have provoked his more intense focus on Gabriel. As he remarks: 'it is not our intention to discuss the Madonna, but only the Angel'.)

The Pinelli chapel served as the burial place for Cosimo who died in 1568, in Padua, as noted on his tomb in the chapel.⁶⁹ His death most probably occurred during a visit to Gian Vincenzo, who lived in Padua from 3 August 1558 until his death on 3 August 1601. Gian Vincenzo fulfilled his father's wish to have Titian's *Annunciation* for his family chapel; the painting was meant 'to heighten its grace and decoration'. According to Maranta, Gian Vincenzo was pleased with the work as he confirmed that 'he likes the invention and the art and all that can be considered in this painting immensely'.

⁶² Compare Leon Battista Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, trans. Joseph Rykwert *et al.*, Cambridge, MA, and London: The MIT Press, 1988, 302: 'I myself believe that form, dignity, grace, and other such qualities depend on it, and as soon as anything is removed or altered, these qualities are themselves weakened and perish'.

⁶³ Pinelli's palace is mentioned as early as 1560 by Pietro de Stefano, *Descrittione*, 43.

⁶⁴ Alabiso, 'L'Annunziata di Tiziano', in *Tiziano*, 13.

⁶⁵ Zezza, 'Giovanni', 2.

⁶⁶ Zezza, 'Giovanni', 5, fig. 8 on 6 and 26n20.

⁶⁷ Biagio Aldimari, *Raccolta di varie notizie storiche non meno appartenenti all'istoria del Summonte, che curiose ...*, Naples: Antonio Bulifon, 1675, 104 (in 1557 Cosimo senior could not be the Duke of Acerenza). On Galeazzo, see Foglietta, *Clarorum Ligurum elogium*, 260; Paolo Gualdo, *Vita Ioannis Vincentii Pinelli, Patricii Genuensis, in qua studiosis bonarum artium, proponitur typus viri probi et eruditi*, Augsburg: Markus Welsler, 1607, 7-9.

⁶⁸ Valcanover, in *Siècle de Titien*, 668, observes the similarity between the works.

⁶⁹ Raffaello Causa, *IV mostra di restauri, catalogo*, Naples: Palazzo Reale, 1960, 59. The epitaph attests to Cosimo's frequent dealings with the Veneto.



Figure 3: Jacopo Caraglio (1500/5–26 August 1565), *The Annunciation*, c. 1538, Engraving, 45.3 x 34.4 cm, London: The British Museum © The Trustees of the British Museum

From his childhood in Naples, where he was born in 1535, Gian Vincenzo showed great passion for his studies.⁷⁰ In Padua, he created a library so encyclopaedic that it gave rise to a kind of academy. Of a fragile constitution, he hardly travelled, so he hosted visitors from all over Europe and encouraged them to discuss matters of language, scientific discoveries and natural sciences, with a special emphasis on botany.⁷¹ He also copied Leonardo's notes on painting in 1575.⁷² No doubt Maranta's lengthy discussions on physiognomy, on the language of gestures and, especially, on the anatomy of the Angel's right arm were directed to Gian Vincenzo. Maranta's first letter to Falloppio describes Gian Vincenzo as a man of acute judgement, erudite in the Greek and Latin languages.⁷³ The 'Discourse' characterizes him as 'learned and competent no less in painting than in philosophy, law and other sciences'. In August 1558 Gian Vincenzo went to Padua to please his father, who insisted on his reading law. Titian had painted portraits of two illustrious lawyers, Sperone Speroni from Treviso and Marco Mantova Benavides from Padua.⁷⁴ Speroni, a frequent visitor to Pinelli's library, was in Padua from 1558 to 1560.⁷⁵ Benavides encouraged Pomponio – in 1545 – to publish his father's treatise on procedural jurisprudence, written between 1520 and 1525. This book became the

⁷⁰ Gualdo, *Vita*, 11, cites both Maranta's introductory letter and his dedication to Pinelli.

⁷¹ Marcella Grendler, 'A Greek collection in Padua: the library of Gian Vincenzo Pinelli (1535–1601)', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 33, 1980, 387 nn3 and 5 at 387-416.

⁷² Adolfo Rivolta, *Contributo a uno studio sulla Biblioteca di Gian Vincenzo Pinelli*, Monza: Editrice Artigianelli, 1914, 28.

⁷³ Maranta, *Methodi*, iv.

⁷⁴ On Titian's portrait of Speroni, see Patricia Nitti *et al*, eds, exhib. cat., *Titien. Le Pouvoir en face*, Milan: Skira, 2006, 176-7, no. 40 (the entry by Andrea Bellieni). On Titian's possible portrait of Benavides, see Charles Davis, 'Titian, "A singular friend"', in *Kunst und Humanismus. Festschrift für Gosbert Schüßler zum 60. Geburtstag*, eds, Wolfgang Augustyn and Eckhard Leuschner, Passau: D. Klinger, 2007, 261-301.

⁷⁵ There is no doubt about Pinelli's acquaintance with Speroni; on Pinelli's collections of manuscripts labelled 'Sperone', see Angela Nuovo, 'Manuscript writings on politics and current affairs in the collection of Gian Vincenzo Pinelli (1535–1601)', *Italian Studies*, 66, 2011, 203 at 193-205. For Speroni's visits to Padua at the time of Pinelli's early sojourn, see Francesco Cammarosano, *La vita e le opere di Sperone Speroni*, Empoli: R. Nocchioli, 1920, 132-3.

standard manual for jurists dealing with prosecutions for libel at the Inquisition trials.⁷⁶ These two lawyers may well have helped the twenty-three-year-old Gian Vincenzo persuade Titian to paint the *Annunciation* for the family chapel in Naples. This painting is the only work that Titian made for a Genoese-Neapolitan nobleman.

Poets, critics and painters

Maranta mentioned several persons in the 'Discourse', discussing their taste in art, as it related to aspects of Titian's painting. Ferrante Carafa (1509–87), the addressee of the 'Discourse', was a scion of a Neapolitan family of ancient origins.⁷⁷ Proud of his noble ancestry and his native city, he used his wealth and connections to foster studies of poetry. In 1546 he established the academies of the Sereni and of the Ardenti, both of which continued the tradition of the Accademia Pontaniana. In 1547, however, following a confrontation with the viceroy, who was intent on introducing the Roman Inquisition into the Kingdom of Naples, the academies were closed.⁷⁸ Discussions of literary topics continued outside the academy framework.⁷⁹ Carafa not only patronized poets, he also wrote poetry himself. His poems are included in Dolce's *Rime di diversi illustri signori napoletani*, whose third and fifth editions, published in 1552 and 1555, were dedicated to Carafa.⁸⁰ He also published thirty-one sonnets under the rubric of *Lode della santissima Vergine Madre della vittoria e Reina del Cielo*.⁸¹ His memoirs, the epic poem *Dell'Austria* celebrating the victory of John of Austria (the illegitimate son of Charles V) at Lepanto, and even his Italian paraphrases of books Nine and Ten of the *Odyssey* – all express Carafa's chivalric ideals of virtue.⁸² In his 'Discourse', therefore, Maranta mentions love poetry, accentuates the Virgin Mary's humility and links the Angel's deportment to the ideal conduct of a young nobleman. All of these issues were dear to Carafa. Maranta's playful tone in several passages of his 'Discourse' and his praise of Ariosto's 'unfinished' cantos and innovations in Neapolitan music are ideally matched to Carafa's poetic style with its play on words and sounds.⁸³ This wittiness creates an auditory effect, not unlike the impression produced by Maranta's description of the Angel's voice.

Carafa is said to have always talked 'honourably both about that painting and about Titian'. His praise of Titian's *Annunciation* is far from incidental, as Dolce, Titian's long-standing

⁷⁶ Thomas F. Meyer, *The Roman Inquisition: A Papal Bureaucracy and Its Laws in the Age of Galileo*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013, 165 and 338n76. See also Nigro, *Poeti*, 59–61.

⁷⁷ My source is Aldimari, *Historia*, 2:331–41. For his literary biography see Giulio Ferroni and Amedeo Quondam, *La 'locuzione artificiosa'. Teoria ed esperienza della lirica a Napoli nell'età del manierismo*, Rome: Bulzoni, 1973, 355–8.

⁷⁸ Sonia Scognamiglio, 'Il colore della statualità: leggi suntuarie, codici estetici e modelli culturali delle élites nella Napoli della prima età moderna', *California Italian Studies*, 3:1, 2012, 10–3 at 1–57.

⁷⁹ Solimene, *Umanista*, 9n1.

⁸⁰ Vincenzo Dola, 'Parole in gioco nella poesia di Ferrante Carafa', in *Del nomar parean tutti contenti. Studi offerti a Ruggiero Stefanelli*, Bari: Progedit, 2011, 245 at 245–79 (references to Dolce's editions).

⁸¹ Dola, 'Parole', 247 (the description of the collection) and 260–1 (the analysis of two sonnets).

⁸² Scipione Volpicella, ed., 'Memorie di Ferrante Carafa, Marchese di San Lucido (secolo XVI)', *Archivio storico per le Province Napoletane*, 5, 1880, 236–7 at 235–61, stresses his commitment to chivalry.

⁸³ Dola, 'Parole', 270.

friend,⁸⁴ was responsible for publishing Carafa's poems with Gabriele Giolito de' Ferrari in Venice.⁸⁵ In 1561, a year before Maranta wrote his 'Discourse', Carafa contributed to the anthology of poems mourning the untimely death of Irene di Spilimbergo (1540–59), a poet and painter who had been trained by Titian.⁸⁶ This anthology was published by Dionigi Anatagi, a colleague of Dolce's.⁸⁷

The 'Discourse', written in defence of Titian's Angel, was primarily an expression of Maranta's debates with Scipione Ammirato (1531–1601), who claimed to voice Carafa's own criticism of the painting. Ammirato descended from a noble Florentine family on his father's side and from the aristocratic Caracciolo family of Naples on his mother's.⁸⁸ Ammirato, born in Lecce, was sent by his father to Naples to study jurisprudence, but instead followed his own literary inclination and chose to write about poetry. He published his first work, *Il Dedalione, ovvero, del poeta dialogo*, in 1560. Two years later, he published *Il Rota, ovvero, delle imprese dialogo*, once again in Naples. This work had been begun on 'the beautiful day' of 10 April 1561 and is constructed as a Platonic dialogue: a sequence of provocative questions and objections.⁸⁹ He names Maranta and Cambi among the interlocutors in this discussion of *imprese*. The style of Ammirato's two books may explain Maranta's decision to address his defence of Titian's *Annunciation* not so much to Carafa as to those individuals of the Neapolitan public who boorishly commented on this painting in the chapel after Mass. Ammirato had stayed for six months in 1554 in Padua and Venice, where he had met Speroni and Pietro Aretino.⁹⁰ In his 'Discourse', Maranta comments on the similarity of Ammirato's opinion of Titian's painting to Carafa's. Ammirato knew Carafa's way of thinking quite closely, because on several occasions Carafa allowed him to use his house across from San Domenico Maggiore for his literary studies.⁹¹ Ammirato spent most of 1563 in Lecce at his father's request; in August he visited Genoa at the invitation of Galeazzo Pinelli, but in September, he briefly visited Rome on his way back to Lecce.⁹² A letter from Annibal Caro in Rome to Cambi in Naples (8 April 1562) documents that both Ammirato and Cambi were then residing in Naples. It praises Ammirato's book on the *imprese* to Cambi, and Caro asks Cambi to show the letter to Ammirato.⁹³

⁸⁴ Carlo Dionisotti, 'Tiziano e la letteratura', in his *Appunti su arti e lettere*, Milan: Editoriale Jaca, 1995, 117–27, at the end of his article singles out Dolce's dedication to Titian of his paraphrases of Latin authors, in which he addresses the artist as 'messer Titiano pittore e cavaliere' (1538).

⁸⁵ Jean Balsamo, ed., *De Dante à Chiabrera. Poètes italiens de la Renaissance dans la Bibliothèque de la Fondation Barbier-Mueller*, Geneva: Droz, 2007, 2 vols, 2:321–4.

⁸⁶ Marsel Grosso, *Per la fama di Tiziano nella cultura artistica dell'Italia spagnola*, Udine: Forum, 2010, 115–9.

⁸⁷ Emm. Antonio Cicogna, 'Memoria intorno la vita e gli scritti di Messer Lodovico Dolce, letterato veneziano del secolo XVI', *Memorie dell'I. R. Istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti*, 11, 1862–64, 95 at 93–200.

⁸⁸ Umberto Congedo, *La vita e le opere di Scipione Ammirato (notizie e ricerche)*, Trani: V. Vecchi, 1904, 10 and 15. See Nigro, *Poeti*, 9–10, on the Caracciolo family as patrons of Roberto Maranta.

⁸⁹ Dorigen Sophie Caldwell, *The Sixteenth-Century Italian 'impresa' in Theory and Practice*, Brooklyn, NY: AMS Press, 2004, 45. Scipione Ammirato, *Il Rota, ovvero, delle imprese dialogo*, Naples: Gio. Maria Scotto, 1562, 4, mentions the day; Congedo, *Vita*, 99, wrongly adds the year 1562.

⁹⁰ Congedo, *Vita*, 25–31.

⁹¹ Congedo, *Vita*, 19, 80n2 and 111 (frequent visits to Carafa's house).

⁹² Congedo, *Vita*, 109 (Gian Vincenzo's brother Galeazzo sought his help in 1563 for acquiring the feudality of Acerenza).

⁹³ Congedo, *Vita*, 106. For the full text of the letter, see Annibal Caro, *Lettere familiari*, ed. Aulo Greco, Florence: Le Monnier, 1957–61, 3 vols, 3:104–6 (no. 657).

Little documentation is available on Alfonso Cambi (1535–70).⁹⁴ His father, Tommaso (1492–1549), a Florentine merchant and banker, was a patron of Tuscan artists in Naples. In 1533 Tommaso settled near San Giovanni Maggiore, where he bought a family chapel for which, c. 1550, Francesco Salviati painted an *Annunciation*.⁹⁵ In this painting the Angel is shown in the manner typical of this artist: a lean youth. This circumstance helps clarify the objections to Titian's presentation of more corpulent Angel. The presence of Salviati's painting in Naples could explain why, in the 'Discourse', Maranta repeatedly mentions the lack of consensus regarding Titian's depiction of the Angel. Tommaso, as fiscal manager of the d'Avalos court, could foster important commissions for Tuscan artists in Naples; he is praised by Vasari for his love of paintings.⁹⁶

Tommaso's close relations with distinguished scholars are documented in his son's correspondence with Paolo Manuzio, with whom he discusses his family collection of letters, several of which were selected for the third volume of the anthology, *Lettere volgari di diversi nobilissimi huomini, et eccellentissimi ingegni, scritte in diverse materie* (1564).⁹⁷ Cambi's letter of 3 October 1562 to Manuzio, then in Rome, records his own presence in Naples and relays Maranta's regards.⁹⁸ Between 1562 and 1564 Cambi exchanged letters with Luc' Antonio Ridolfi, then in Lyon, centring on a discussion about the precise day and hour when Petrarch fell in love with Laura.⁹⁹ Cambi's focus on this issue can be better understood in the light of his sonnet of 1563 addressed to the 'Astrologo eccellente', Giovanni da Bagnuolo, and of a sonnet by an anonymous poet addressed to Cambi, in which the author jokes about the latter's penchant for astrology.¹⁰⁰ Cambi's predictive interpretation of nature's influence on human life is reflected in Maranta's description of Titian's psychological contact between the two characters of Luke's Gospel.

In his 'Discourse', Maranta mentions Cambi as especially competent in the analysis of paintings. The reason for this assertion lies in Cambi's Florentine origins, for in that city 'more than in any other this art has always flourished'. Hence Cambi's praise of Titian's painting is particularly valuable. Maranta emphasizes that Cambi 'gives a detailed reasoning about it, highlighting quite minutely each single aspect on which the artist has focussed'. He praises Cambi for showing that the work can be understood only after considering those details that express the artist's intention. Cambi's attitude to works of poetry, as his letters on Petrarch's sonnet attest, is inevitably transferred to his discussion of Titian's painting. The 'Discourse' intimates that Maranta is prone to argue that an artist's work should be appreciated as representative of both the individual and the region. This stance merits closer attention, for art

⁹⁴ Angelo Borzelli, *Un letterato minore del Cinquecento in Napoli: Alfonso Cambi Importuni con un'appendice: Vasari e Pistoia*, Naples: Libreria antiquaria comm. Raffaele Ruggieri, 1939, 9-17.

⁹⁵ Marina Picone, 'Una Annunciazione di Francesco Salviati a Napoli', *Arte Antica e Moderna*, 2, 1960, 290-3, identified the painting; Leone De Castris, *Pittura*, 123 and 133n74 argues for c. 1550 as the date of the painting against Picone's 1555-60.

⁹⁶ Giorgio Vasari, *Le opere*, ed. and comm. Gaetano Milanesi, Florence: Sansoni, 1878-85, 8 vols, 5:184.

⁹⁷ Tiziana Sterza, 'Paolo Manuzio editore a Venezia (1533-1561)', *Acme*, 61, 2008, 146 at 123-67.

⁹⁸ K. T. Butler, comp, *'The Gentlest Art' in Renaissance Italy: an Anthology of Italian Letters 1459-1600*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954, 296-7.

⁹⁹ On publication of this epistolary exchange, see Brian Richardson, *Print Culture in Renaissance Italy: the Editor and the Vernacular Text, 1470-1600*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, 146.

¹⁰⁰ Pietro Daniel Omodeo, 'Fato, amore e astrologia. Uno scambio poetico tra Francesco Giunti e Alfonso Cambi Importuni', *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*, 127, 2011, 362-3 at 360-6.

historians usually compare Florentine and Venetian artists strictly according to Vasari's frame of reference, based on the binary opposition of *disegno* and *colore*. A few words of explanation then need to be offered about Maranta's discerning criticism of Lama, il Pistoia and Titian.

When Maranta says that Lama is 'feliculously versed in anatomy and perspective', he reveals his familiarity with the major artistic criteria accepted in Florence. For Vasari, as stated in the *Proemio* to his *Vite*, only those artists who were experts on anatomy and perspective excelled in *disegno*, but Maranta shows that Vasari's application of these criteria is too general. In his view, Titian exhibits an expertise in the anatomical structure of the arm by his correct depiction of it in the Angel's gesture of greeting, which ultimately derives from the Roman *adlocutio* seen on imperial reliefs and coins.¹⁰¹ Maranta might have known about Titian's experience in depicting this type of gesture, as it features in the portrait-*istoria* of Alfonso d'Avalos, so enthusiastically described by Aretino in 1540.¹⁰² This same gesture was adopted by Titian's Flemish pupil Jan Stephen van Calcar in one of his engraved illustrations for Andreas Vesalius's *De humani corporis fabrica libri septem*, based on the lectures he gave at the University of Padua.¹⁰³ Maranta's praise of Titian's use of perspective was probably influenced by Paolo Pino's comment on Titian's innovation in representing his settings (*paesi*, which foreshadow the modern *paysage*).¹⁰⁴ In his comment on the background in Titian's Neapolitan painting, Maranta attributes to perspective the same significance it has in Pino's *Dialogo di pittura* (Venice: Paolo Gherardo, 1548). Maranta thus differentiates between Titian's methods of assimilating the sciences of anatomy and perspective, judging the first to accord with the arts of Florence and the second – quite strangely in view of Alberti's exposition – with the arts of Venice. He thus reconciles Florentine *disegno* and Venetian *colorito*.

Aretino and then Dolce praise Titian for the *colorito* of his paintings, or for his skill at mixing and distributing the range of hues.¹⁰⁵ Maranta extends their praises, examining the reasons for Titian's mixture of red and white in the Angel's vestments and the rainbow range of colours in the plumage of his wings. He sees Titian's mode of laying colours on the Angel's figure not as an acclaimed aspect of his art, but as an expedient for highlighting the painting's meaning – the theological message, in this case. By contrast, Maranta disparages the use of colours by il Pistoia, which are devoid of any meaning whatsoever.

Information on the work of il Pistoia in Naples is found in Vasari's biography of Gianfrancesco Penni.¹⁰⁶ Maranta could not have been familiar with Vasari's *Vite* of 1568, where il Pistoia is characterized as a good colourist but a bad draughtsman.¹⁰⁷ (He is not mentioned in the *Vite* of 1550.) This opinion cannot be interpreted as a positive judgement from Vasari, in view of the artist's Tuscan origins and his Roman education under Penni, a pupil of Raphael.

¹⁰¹ Erwin Panofsky, *Problems in Titian Mostly Iconographic*, New York: New York University Press, 1969, 76.

¹⁰² Pietro Aretino, *Lettere sull'arte*, ed. Ettore Camesasca, comm. Fidenzio Pertile, Milan: Milione, 1957–60, 3 vols, 1:162.

¹⁰³ Panofsky, *Problems*, 75, thinks that this resemblance indicates the close cooperation of Calcar and Titian.

¹⁰⁴ Barocchi, ed., *Scritti*, 899n3.

¹⁰⁵ Moshe Barasch, *Light and Color in the Italian Renaissance Theory of Art*, New York: New York University Press, 1978, 104.

¹⁰⁶ Leone De Castris, *Pittura*, 88 and 95.

¹⁰⁷ Vasari, *Opere*, 4:648.

Vasari refers to il Pistoia in his *Vite* because this Tuscan artist received commissions from Tommaso Cambi and his circle.¹⁰⁸

In the early 1560s, when il Pistoia's painting, *The Stoning of St Stephen* (now lost), was to be seen in San Domenico Maggiore,¹⁰⁹ Maranta could contrast its colours with those of Titian's *Annunciation*. Notwithstanding the patronage given to il Pistoia, Maranta finds his works appealing only to 'the mob merely because he had a certain charm in his colours'. He further claims that the artist's paintings convey no profound meaning, nothing beneath the surface, so that 'once seen, his works did not leave the viewer with any desire to see them again'. The artist, who invested no thought in his art, surely used 'ritratti dal naturale' ('portraits from life') for his saintly figures. Maranta cites an example of il Pistoia's art, *The Circumcision of Christ*, painted for the Benedictine abbey of Monteoliveto, which portrays Antonio Barattuccio in the character of Simeon.¹¹⁰ The abbot and monks removed the painting and commissioned a new one from Vasari, who completed it during his sojourn in Naples. Maranta explains the reasons for the decision to remove this painting and to commission a new work. Vasari merely mentions that he painted *The Presentation in the Temple* 'with new invention' ('con nuova invenzione').¹¹¹ Maranta disapproves of il Pistoia's recourse to 'ritratti dal naturale', not only because Barattuccio was a reprehensible tax attorney in his view, but primarily because using the artist's contemporaries as models was a discreditable practice in itself. Similarly he disapproves of another painter, whom he does not name, for rendering his contemporaries in *The Adoration of the Magi* (also in the same abbey), including the Count of Oppido, even though he considered the count a good man. Maranta's disapproval was possibly influenced by Girolamo Savonarola's sermons, in which the Dominican friar spoke vehemently against those people who, while hearing Mass, looked at the paintings and took delight in recognizing familiar faces in the figures of the Magdalene or St John.¹¹² Maranta is of the firm opinion that familiar faces in church paintings deprive the images of their main function, which is to inspire devotion. He admits that Titian had recourse to this practice but only upon the request of his patrons, remarking that this practice facilitates the painter's task. However, the painter abstained from it when he was working on the Pinelli altarpiece, as he wished to bring out 'the personality of the one he depicts according to the mystery'. Titian's Angel, therefore, 'will occasion more devotion since he was formed only by an idea in his mind'.

The way Maranta spells the names of Vasari, Michelangelo and Titian – painters whom he never met – points to his conversations about them with Cambi, Aldrovandi and Carafa. He calls Vasari (whose first name was Giorgio and who was born in Arezzo) 'Giorgino di Arezzo', an affectionate appellation that he could hear from Cambi, whose father was one of the

¹⁰⁸ Leone De Castris, *Pittura*, 86.

¹⁰⁹ Vasari, *Opere*, 4:648 (see Milanese's note on 648); Leone De Castris, *Pittura*, 88.

¹¹⁰ Antonio Barattuccio (1486 – 9 May 1561) is an interesting historical figure. See Michele Broccoli, *Teano Sidicino antico, e moderno*, Napoli: Pasquale Tizzano, 1822, 2 parts, part 2:235-6. It would be worth investigating Maranta's reason for characterizing him merciless. In any event, the year of his death serves as more evidence suggesting that Maranta's 'Discourse' could not have been written long before 25 March 1562.

¹¹¹ Vasari, *Opere*, 7:675. Nicoletta Di Blasi, 'Aspetti della committenza benedettina napoletana nel Rinascimento: il singolare assetto presbiteriale della chiesa di Santa Maria di Monteoliveto,' *Annali/Istituto Suor Orsola Benincasa*, 2010, 520 at 505-29. Zezza, 'Per Vasari', 155-6. Di Blasi and Zezza present different views on the genesis of Vasari's painting, an interesting point, but one which lies outside the scope of this article.

¹¹² Creighton E. Gilbert, *Italian Art 1400–1500. Sources and Documents*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1980, 157 (from *Sermons on Amos*, published in 1496).

painter's most important patrons.¹¹³ Writing the name of Michelangelo, Maranta is not consistent in its spelling. He calls the artist 'Michel' Angelo', 'Michelagnolo' or 'Michelagnelo'. This lack of consistency has its own logic when the contexts of these references are considered. Maranta uses the first form when he refers to the statues in the Medici chapel; this may indicate that he is deriving information from Aldrovandi, as he often corresponded with him. In his book about ancient statues seen in Rome in 1550, Aldrovandi uses only this form to spell Buonarroti's given name.¹¹⁴ The second form suggests a Tuscan influence, though it might have been used by Carafa, as Maranta indicates by his statement about St Michael in the *Last Judgment*. He says that the saint is often represented as holding 'a balance or steel yardstick' (*stadera*), laying emphasis on the object because it stirred up associations with the 'Stadera' branch of the Carafa family, to which Ferrante belonged. However, in Michelangelo's fresco, St Michael is holding the Book of the Chosen Ones, and not the balance.¹¹⁵ Hence Maranta's emphasis on this object might have been intended as a cautious plea to Carafa for a balanced judgement of Titian's painting. This plea was heard as Maranta's statement at the end of the 'Discourse' indicates. Maranta uses the third form – 'Michelagnelo' – twice, both in reference to his allegorical interpretation of the youthful Christ. In contemporary writings on Michelangelo, this rare spelling is found in Vincenzo Borghini's comments to Cicero's *De oratore* (c. 1560–64).¹¹⁶ The comments characterize the artist as one who surpasses nature, indicated by the resourcefulness of the art so fully demonstrated in the Sistine Chapel.¹¹⁷ Through Cambi,¹¹⁸ Maranta could be familiar with Borghini's opinion of Michelangelo, because in defending the Pinelli Angel – in the section on 'disposition' – he applies Borghini's judgement of Michelangelo to Titian.

In his uniform spelling of Titian's name as 'Titiano', Maranta followed Dolce,¹¹⁹ rather than Vasari, who adheres to using the spelling 'Tiziano' in the two versions of his *Vite* printed in 1550 and 1568. More likely, however, Maranta paid attention to the artist's signature on the Pinelli painting bearing the Latinized form of the name – 'Titianus'. His 'Discourse' acclaims Titian as one who knows how to give 'charm to colours', adding that this is 'especially apparent in his portraits from life (of which, more than any other, he made a particular profession)'.¹²⁰

¹¹³ Vasari, *Opere*, 7:677. See Enzo Bentivoglio, 'Un manoscritto connesso al "Memoriale di molte statue et picture" di Francesco Albertini', *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, 24, 1980, 346 at 345-56, qualifies 'Giorgino D'Arezzo' as an affectionate appellation. Luca Signorelli called him 'Giorgino' when urging his father to let his son become an artist. See Vasari, *Opere*, 3:693. See Philip Sohm, 'Giving Vasari the Giorgio treatment', *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance*, 18, 2015, 75 at 61-115, for a different view on this appellation.

¹¹⁴ Ulisse Aldrovandi, 'Tutte le statue antiche, che per tutta Roma in diversi luoghi, e case particolari si veggono, raccolte e descritte (...), opera non fatta più mai da scrittore alcuno', in Lucio Mauro, *Le antichità della città di Roma; brevissimamente raccolte (...) da chiunque ha scritto, è antico, è moderno (...)*, Venice: Giordano Ziletti, 1558, 120, 122, 168, 199, 224, 239, 245, 247, 248, 267, 271, 291 at 115-315.

¹¹⁵ See Barocchi, ed., *Scritti*, 878n1.

¹¹⁶ For the dates of these notes, see Eliana Carrara, 'Il discepolato di Vincenzo Borghini presso Pietro Vettori', *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*, 4:2, 1999, 534 at 519-37.

¹¹⁷ Carmen Dona, "Ut pictura lingua". Efrasi e memoria nelle pagine di Vincenzo Borghini', *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance*, 14/15, 2011–12, 327 at 307-55.

¹¹⁸ See Congedo, *Vita*, 168, for the letter and the reference to the source.

¹¹⁹ For the numerous references to 'Titiano' in Dolce's writings, see Lodovico Dolce, *Diálogo de la pintura, titulado Aretino, y otros escritos de arte*, ed. Santiago Arroyo Esteban, Madrid: Ediciones Akal, 2010, 218, 220, 224, 226, 230, 234, 236 and 242.

¹²⁰ Luba Freedman, *Titian's Portraits through Aretino's Lens*, University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 1995, 12, points out the disproportion between the number of portraits and other types of paintings, in the period between 1537 and 1557.

Maranta points out Titian's fame as the astonishing portraitist, so widespread outside Venice, aiming to put additional emphasis on Titian's Gabriel as a figure shaped conceptually, rather than as a figure drawn from real life.

The tradition of description

Maranta's detailed description of Titian's *Annunciation* (c. 1562) follows epistolary precedents of letters dedicated to a discussion of just one work of art but these earlier discussions are never as exhaustive as is his in the 'Discourse'.¹²¹ In his published letters, as early as 1531,¹²² Aretino describes in detail certain contemporary works – not only Titian's, though they hold central place in his writings. By contrast, only one letter of Dolce describes an artwork: Titian's *Venus and Adonis*, seen in the painter's studio before it was sent to England in 1554.¹²³ Although the descriptions written by Aretino, Dolce and Maranta share a common vocabulary, Maranta is the only author who raises the question of the critical approach to an artwork, setting assessments in the context of the contemporary culture of Naples, thus anticipating a modern-day trend in art criticism.

After Maranta, Francesco Bocchi wrote (1571) and published (1584) his thoughts on Donatello's statue of St George, commissioned by the Florentine armourers' guild (c. 1416) for their niche in the façade of Or San Michele.¹²⁴ The remarkable difference between the two texts, both devoted to a single artwork, is reflected in the choice of discourse versus exposition of arguments. In his *Ragionamento sopra l'eccellenza del San Giorgio di Donatello*, Bocchi mentions the location of the statue but does not describe any particular feature of Donatello's sculpted image of the saint. His goal was to present the saint to his Florentine contemporaries as an *exemplum virtutis*. His text leaves the impression that Bocchi never looked at the statue. This is in stark contrast to Maranta's description of Titian's painting. Even Maranta's text does not escape a certain lack of precision, for example, in his description of the Angel's legs, as he claims: 'it even seems that the distance between the pubis and the knee may be a little less than twice as long as the distance from knee to heel'. Bocchi's *Ragionamento* contains rhetorical exclamations to convey the excellence of Donatello's figure of St George as expressive of the warrior's virtues. Maranta's 'Discourse' transmits his experience of the work when he viewed it in the chapel. Maranta's criticism was novel in that his description both renders the painting visible and raises pertinent questions about what constitutes a critic's expertise, as he suggests to 'make the most accurate study and subject our doubts to people who are competent in this matter'.

Maranta seems to be the only sixteenth-century writer who requires a critic to have a firm grounding in the theory of art prior to evaluating a painting, as he sets as his goal the understanding and explanation of Titian's intentions. For this purpose he not only familiarized

¹²¹ See E. H. Gombrich, 'The leaven of criticism in Renaissance art: texts and episodes', *The Heritage of Apelles: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance*, Oxford: Phaidon, 1976, 111-31.

¹²² Norman E. Land, 'Ekphrasis and imagination: some observations on Pietro Aretino's art criticism', *Art Bulletin*, 68, 1986, 207-17. See David Rosand, "'Pietro picture Aretino'", *Venezia Cinquecento*, 40, 2011, 183-205.

¹²³ Luba Freedman, 'The vainly imploring goddess in Titian's *Venus and Adonis*', in *Titian: Materiality, Likeness, Istoria*, ed. Joanna Woods-Marsden, intro. David Rosand, Turnhout: Brepols, 2007, 83-96.

¹²⁴ Robert Williams, *Art, Theory and Culture in Sixteenth-Century Italy. From techne to metatechne*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, 201-12.

himself with Dolce's *Dialogo della pittura intitolato l'Aretino. Nel quale si ragiona della dignità di essa Pittura, e di tutte le parti necessarie che a perfetto Pittore si acconvergono: con esempi di pittori antichi e moderni; e nel fine si fa mentione delle virtù e delle opere del Divin Titiano* (Venice: Gabriele Giolito de' Ferrari, 1557),¹²⁵ but also sought advice from experts who could help him to judge Titian's painting, among them Lama, who frescoed the Pinelli chapel 1557–58. Unlike Dolce, whose interlocutors did not include any artists, Maranta wants to learn about art from a painter of repute in Naples. Maranta's appeal to Lama may have been influenced by Aretino's letters on works of art, which demonstrate that their author learned from Titian and other artists mentioned in the letters which aspects of the paintings should be highlighted.¹²⁶ Moreover, unlike Aretino and Dolce, Maranta lacks first-hand acquaintance with Titian's paintings and thus relies on others when he says, for example, that 'in giving charm to colours [...] Titian, according to all those whom I have heard reasoning on this, is awarded the palm in our day'. The sentence reflects Maranta's emphasis on 'reasoning' rather than relying upon groundless opinion. Many passages in Dolce's book (dedicated to Aretino) and in Maranta's oration reflect the contemporary principles of art criticism as they were articulated not only in the Venetian but also in the Florentine milieu. His text illustrates how a description, the purpose of which is to interpret a painting, integrates knowledge of the theory that was current in the artist's ambience.

Innovations in discussing Titian's *Annunciation*

Maranta's invocation of contemporary art to justify his praise of Titian's painting was unusual for his time, when it was more common to consider only examples from ancient art to judge the achievements of living artists. Maranta juxtaposes the fleshy Angel Gabriel in Titian's *Annunciation* and the youthful Christ in Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*. In so doing he brings a new perspective to Titian's Angel, one which makes clear the artist's intentions.

Maranta might have seen Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* in 1556/7, while he was at Ostia in the service of Vespasiano Gonzaga (grandnephew of Cardinal Ercole Gonzaga, future papal legate to the Council of Trent). Or he might have had a chance to see an engraving of it.¹²⁷ Notwithstanding his familiarity with the fresco, Maranta directs attention to a few bearded figures, one of whom represents a bishop who so annoyed the artist that he placed him in hell. This character is identified as Biagio da Cesena, the papal master of ceremonies from 1518 to 1544,¹²⁸ not a bishop and clean-shaven. (Bishops customarily wore beards in Maranta's time.) This description shows that rather than caring for accuracy with regard to Michelangelo's fresco as the work that does not hold the central place in his 'Discourse', Maranta uses references to it

¹²⁵ Luba Freedman, 'Bartolomeo Maranta on a painting by Titian', *Hebrew University Studies in Literature and the Arts*, 13, 1985, 199 at 175-201.

¹²⁶ Charles Hope, 'The audiences for publications on the visual arts in Renaissance Italy', in *Officine del nuovo; sodalizi fra letterati, artisti ed editori nella cultura Italiana fra Riforma e Controriforma*, eds, Harald Hendrix and Paolo Procaccioli, Rome: Vecchiarelli, 2008, 24 at 19- 29.

¹²⁷ Bernadine Barnes, *Michelangelo in Print. Reproductions as Response in the Sixteenth Century*, Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2010, 106, refers to Giulio Bonasone's print, 57.2 x 44.2 cm, dated c. 1546.

¹²⁸ Norman E. Land, 'A concise history of the tale of Michelangelo and Biagio da Cesena', *Source: Notes in the History of Art*, 32:4, 2013, 15-9.

– which left none of his contemporaries indifferent – for all kinds of purposes. In another passage of the ‘Discourse’, Maranta observes that painters usually show St Michael holding a steel yardstick, even though this object is absent in the Vatican fresco. The remark may have served as an oblique reference to Carafa. Here he mentions a bearded bishop, perhaps a veiled reference to the events that had agitated him in the spring of 1562. His notice of a condemned bishop, in light of the Pontifical Vicar’s accusation of his having written a speech directed against ecclesiastical officials, strengthens the hypothesis that his ‘Discourse’ was written before he was summoned by the Holy Office (June 1562) and that his experience with the Inquisition caused him to leave the text in its present condition.

The focus on Michelangelo’s Christ reveals Maranta’s attention to the figure in the fresco, central as it is, that gave rise to heated debates on the decorum of images in churches. Michelangelo’s fresco was criticized shortly after it was unveiled on 31 October 1541, just before the Feast of All Souls, on 2 November.¹²⁹ Responding to Cardinal Ercole Gonzaga’s request for a copy of the fresco, his secretary, Nino Sernini – an admirer of Michelangelo’s work – felt compelled to caution the cardinal that it contained more than five-hundred figures. He also pointed out that there was ‘no lack of those who condemn it’. Among the criticisms levelled was that the Christ appeared to be so young that ‘He does not possess the majesty that [should] become Him’.¹³⁰ Although the biographers of Michelangelo, Ascanio Condivi (1553) and Vasari (in both versions of the *Vite*, 1550 and 1568), passed silently over this critical feature, the youthful, beardless Christ continued to disturb Maranta’s contemporaries. The clergyman Giovanni Andrea Gilio considered this detail to rank among the most troubling errors in the fresco. In the winter of 1561, he wrote down his thoughts on painters’ errors with a focus on Michelangelo’s *Last Judgment*;¹³¹ these were published in 1564 as *Dialogo nel quale si ragiona degli errori e degli abusi de’ Pittori circa l’istorie. Con molte annotazioni fatte sopra il Giudizio di Michelagnolo et altre figure, tanto de la nova, quanto della vecchia Capella del Papa. Con la dechiarazione come vogliono essere dipinte le Sacre Imagini*. Shortly thereafter, in a letter to the Archbishop of Milan (6 September 1561), Scipione Saurolo (nephew of Ercole Severoli, future Procurator of the conciliar proceedings) remarked that no painting and no sculpture had ever represented Christ in such a youthful aspect.¹³² These critics reproved Michelangelo for representing Christ as beardless or exceedingly young. However, except for Saurolo, who wished to see Christ portrayed exactly as he appeared while living on earth, they offered no justification for their discomfort. Maranta dares to offer his own interpretation of the detail to justify Michelangelo’s choice.

Maranta makes the provocative statement that because this detail in Michelangelo’s fresco is so unusual it is impossible to consider it an error; rather, it should be treated as a wonder. Maranta makes the point that of those who reproved the artist for Christ’s looks being

¹²⁹ Paola Barocchi, ed. and comm., Giorgio Vasari, *‘La Vita di Michelangelo’ nelle redazioni del 1550 e del 1568*, Naples-Milan: Ricciardi, 1962, 4 vols, 3:1254-68, collects the texts relating to the fresco, not necessarily with a focus on Michelangelo’s Christ, as Vasari does not comment upon the figure’s youthful appearance. Sernini’s letter, dated 19 November 1541, is cited, 1260-1.

¹³⁰ Cited from Melinda Schlitt, ‘Painting, criticism, and Michelangelo’s *Last Judgment* in the age of the Counter-Reformation’, in *Michelangelo’s ‘Last Judgment’*, ed. Marcia Hall, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, 121 at 113-49.

¹³¹ Barocchi, ed., *Scritti*, 866n1, quotes Gilio’s enraged statement.

¹³² Saurolo’s letter is cited by Barocchi in *Vita*, 1264-5.

‘much younger (...) than would be appropriate for his age of thirty-three years’, no one actually called the artist’s choice a mistake. Apparently, at the time Maranta wrote his ‘Discourse’, he was not aware of Gilio’s austere critique. He expresses his conviction that Michelangelo’s central figure was a deliberate choice of the artist, arguing that ‘famous painters very often do this sort of thing in order to provoke people’s thought’. He claims that Michelangelo ‘did what he did because in that way he wanted to express a glorified body and make it appear somewhat different from the body as it was when it lived among us in hardship’. This deviation from artistic convention, strange and novel, causes him to warn against any literal interpretation of the youthful appearance of Christ, and, by implication, of Titian’s Angel. Just as Michelangelo could not have believed Christ to be as young as he is represented in the *Last Judgment*, so Titian could not have believed angels to be as plump as Gabriel is represented in the Pinelli altarpiece. Maranta here expresses an implicit disapproval of the rhetorical exclamation in Dolce’s *Dialogo della pittura intitolato l’Aretino*: ‘What mystical meaning can one extract from his [Michelangelo’s] having depicted Christ without a beard (...)?’¹³³ The scepticism of Dolce’s Aretino prompted Maranta to consider a deviation from the established canons of representation as a basis for proposing symbolic interpretations of unusual details in paintings. He explains that the youthful look of Christ signifies ‘perpetual youth with the force of glory and grace’. In the same manner, he interprets the plumpness of Titian’s Angel as indicating ‘the abundance of the house of God’.

In his exposition, Maranta introduces the pseudo-science of physiognomy and the art of reading gestures as critical to understanding the link between the original narrative and the selected scene. Although Pomponio Gaurico introduced a chapter on physiognomy in his *De sculptura*, paraphrasing the pseudo-Aristotelian *Physiognomonica*,¹³⁴ Maranta is the only author at the time who applies the general discussion of physiognomy to the analysis of a figure in a specific painting. Departing from established convention, he does not rest his observations on the Aristotelian theory of physiognomy, which is founded on the resemblance of human beings to animals and birds, but rests them on the principles of Salernitan medicine, which, in the tradition of Hippocrates and Galen, based itself on the system of relationships between four humours and the corresponding four seasons, four elements, four qualities and four ages. The characteristics of the four temperaments could be easily memorized thanks to the verses known as the *Regimen sanitatis Salernitatum*. The distich on the sanguine temperament – ‘Largus, amans, hilaris, ridens, rubeique coloris, / Cantans, carnosus, satis audax atque benignus’ (‘Generous, loving, joyful, merry, of ruddy complexion, singing, fleshy, rather daring and friendly’)¹³⁵ – illustrates, among other matters, that medical doctors commonly used the word *coloris* in the meaning of ‘complexion’.

Maranta interprets the Angel’s figure as full and fleshy, a body type corresponding to a person of the sanguine humour. His account of his appearance – ‘the colour of the whole body is between white and red, yet a little more red than white; the hair is thick and blonde, with a

¹³³ Mark W. Roskill, *Dolce’s ‘Aretino’ and Venetian Art Theory in the Cinquecento* [1968], Toronto: Toronto University Press. 2000, 167.

¹³⁴ Pomponio Gaurico, *De sculptura*, ed. Paolo Cutolo, Rome: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1999, 277n1 and 278.

¹³⁵ Gustavo Barbensi, ed., *Regimen sanitatis Salernitatum*, Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1947, 22 (the last distich). The translated verses are cited from Erwin Panofsky, Raymond Klibansky and Fritz Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy. Studies in the History of Natural Philosophy, Religion, and Art* [1964], Nendeln: Kraus Reprint, 1979, 18.

medium curliness' – fits the image of a sanguine. So well does the painter transmit all the proper qualities of this temperament, Maranta concludes, that one may think that the Angel is acting under the planetary influence of Jupiter. He finds a correspondence between people who are jovial by nature and Titian's Angel, as he is sure it was the jovial type of person 'whose nature and complexion Titian had in his mind while he was painting him'. Through this association, Maranta sees the Angel as an ideal youthful courtier, a characterization he develops at length. The Angel bears himself so gracefully and reverently in relation to the Virgin that Maranta advises that a Neapolitan youth 'imitates angels' to improve his manners so that these might become 'more moderate and less impetuous'. He then explains by negation why Titian could not represent the Angel as a lean person of the melancholic temperament, influenced by the planet of Saturn. A notion circulated long before Maranta is that man before corruption was of a sanguine temperament.¹³⁶ As Maranta knew well, every discussion of angelology stresses that an angel appears before a virtuous person in the image of the perfect man. So the connection between the angel and a man of the sanguine humour is realized in Titian's Gabriel, who then could serve as an example to the well-bred young man of the sixteenth century.

In his judgement of the painting, Maranta applies the science of physiognomy, auxiliary to him in his daily medical practice, to justify the fleshiness of Titian's Angel. He strives for the maximum of precision in establishing the components of the painted figure – age, temperament, colour of hair, facial expression – all of which belong to the image of an incorporeal being, the Angel Gabriel. Titian's rendition of the Angel was so precise that Maranta could imagine even the melodious timbre of his voice, and Maranta validates his claim by describing the position of the head in relation to the neck, the wavy line of the throat and the slightly open mouth. In his view, the timbre of the Angel's voice fits his sanguine temperament and jovial nature. He creates a verbal image of the Angel from his observation and examination of Titian's painting even if he seems to read too much into it.

Equally striking is Maranta's analysis of the Angel's arm raised to announce the great mystery to the Virgin. In describing the Angel's arm, Maranta makes deliberate use of anatomical terms to illustrate how the surface figure contains hidden elements. His account of the right arm – bare from the elbow to the back of the palm – is medical in its detail.¹³⁷ He specifies that the muscle of the elbow is firm and that of the radius soft. This is an important point for Maranta: only if the radius muscle is soft does it avoid the impression of fatigue, which the arm may express in this suspended position, flung forward with its radius stretched upwards. Titian shows the radius muscle to be soft by hiding the thumb, and Maranta extols Titian for this contrivance, calling it a 'wonder' that Titian performs. Maranta underscores the precise position of the arm as a whole, suspended neither too high so as to express inappropriate pride, nor too low; but rather, decent and appropriate in its location relative to his body. The imperial gesture of forceful allocution is transformed into one that expresses the mystery of the Annunciation. Although writers dealing with painting consider the question of gestures, only Maranta offers a detailed description of just one gesture. He bases his observations on Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* and is aware of the difficulty in finding the perfect gesture to articulate both the figure's character and its role. In Titian's painting, Maranta

¹³⁶ Panofsky, Klibansky and Saxl, *Saturn*, 103.

¹³⁷ Indeed, not even Celsus's description in his *De medicina* (VIII.i.18–21) is as accurate and detailed as Maranta's.

observes, the Angel's arm looks energetic and, at the same time, sensitive and delicate, appropriate to his mission of revealing the sacred words.

Maranta is able to speak authoritatively about Titian's *Annunciation* not only because he is familiar with the methods of the contemporary criticism, but also because he uses a wider selection of theoretical tools (among them the five-fold concept of beauty) to produce an objective judgement of an artist's mastery as expressed in a specific work. Maranta proceeds logically, first establishing general tenets, then applying them to a particular example. This thread of Maranta's thought makes his 'Discourse' a meaningful guide on how to look at and judge a painting. Maranta, however, is aware of the difference between general discussions of paintings, as contained in Dolce's *Dialogo della pittura intitolato l'Aretino*, and the specific discussion of one particular painting. He pleads for different approaches to works made by artists of different statures. He stresses the necessity of taking into account the fact that the painting discussed is known *a priori* as the work of the great master, whose fame will last forever and who preserves 'the reputation that he and his talent acquired many years ago'. Titian's fame singles him out from among contemporary painters and adds authority to his representation of the Annunciation in the Pinelli altarpiece. His emphasis on the singular genius of Titian is a central feature of the 'Discourse', for he pioneers the consideration of a painting in relation to its artist. The artist, in turn, knows its determined location. Maranta applies the concept of beauty as the objective criterion of judgement to the examination of the painting, once visible to those who entered the church of San Domenico Maggiore, one of the most important religious institutions of Naples. And yet, he describes the painting, encased by Lama's marble frame and seen above the altar, from various aspects: visually artistic, poetic, musical, theological, medico-anatomical, physiognomic, social and aesthetic. He evidently considered Titian's altarpiece as involving the many-faceted expertise of an urbane gentleman.

The text as a document on sixteenth-century aesthetics

The term 'aesthetics' in reference to the perception of beauty in general and the virtue of an artwork in particular was not used before 1750, when Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten gave the title *Aesthetica* to his book.¹³⁸ And yet by 1562, Maranta had already offered the reasons he judged Titian's Angel Gabriel to be beautiful, applying tools of critical evaluation to the concept of beauty. He knew, from Leon Battista Alberti's highly influential *De pictura*, that the human figure was at the centre of a well-composed painting.¹³⁹ For his part, Alberti was following Pliny (*Naturalis historia*, XXXV.64) when he advised contemporary artists to learn from Zeuxis the device of creating a beautiful figure.¹⁴⁰ Alberti believed that this could be achieved only by a

¹³⁸ Mary J. Gregor, 'Baumgarten's "Aesthetica"', *The Review of Metaphysics*, 37, 1983, 357-85. Richard Woodfield, 'On the emergence of aesthetics', *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, 18, 1978, 217-27, offers a lucid overview on Renaissance aesthetics.

¹³⁹ Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting*, ed. and trans., Rocco Sinisgalli, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011, 78 (3.55). Sinisgalli, 'From Tuscan to Latin, and not vice versa', 3-14, explains why he translates the text from the Basel edition, published in August 1540 (97n17). This is the edition that Maranta most likely would have used.

¹⁴⁰ See the classic study of the subject, Erwin Panofsky, *Idea: A Concept in Art Theory* [1924], trans. Joseph J. S. Peake, New York: Harper & Row, 1968.

painter who has ‘the idea of beauty’.¹⁴¹ However, Alberti did not consider the philosophical concept of beauty for its own sake;¹⁴² rather, he said that in any attempt to create a beautiful figure, a contemporary painter should emulate the ancients. Writing a century later, Maranta focussed on the beauty of the human figure and defined it by examining a particular figure in a specific painting. This special feature of his exposition – the recourse to the concept of beauty to justify the appearance of the painted figure – was motivated by the criticisms of Titian’s painting overheard in the chapel. Maranta uses the definition of beauty – an objective criterion for the evaluation of the human figure – as the tool for refuting subjective criticisms of Titian’s Angel, based simply on personal tastes and preferences. He repeats several overheard statements expressing some speaker’s displeasure about the painting: the dullness of colour, the partial concealment of the face and the wrong proportions of the Angel’s figure. Maranta advises the viewer to ponder the traits of the figure and base his judgement on well-grounded reasons. In his opinion, the philosophic concept of beauty is the only objective criterion by which to judge the figures in Titian’s painting.

Maranta argues the figure of the Angel is not only as beautiful as it should be, but it embodies the very ideal of beauty. Beauty, in Maranta’s judgement, is based on five conditions (‘condizioni’), a successful blend of which is found in the figure of Titian’s Angel: (1) ‘proper proportion’ (‘debita proporzione’); (2) ‘proper quantity’ (‘debita quantità’); (3) ‘appropriate vividness of colour’ (‘convenevole vivacità del colore’); (4) ‘grace’ (‘grazia’); and (5) ‘posture’ (‘disposizione’). His ‘Discourse’ applies the general concept of beauty to the particular form of the beautiful figure – hence his stress on the adjective ‘proper’ to underline the particularity of his application. Here Maranta draws from several philosophical schools: the first three conditions were developed by scholastic thinkers; the fourth was supplied by the Platonists; and the fifth is Maranta’s own concept, resulting from his awareness that his subject is the figure in the painting. He discusses each condition separately and shows how it is embodied in the depicted Angel. Herein lies the ingenuity of his ‘Discourse’: although Maranta’s predecessors and contemporaries discussed the concept of beauty, they had never applied it to a particular painted figure.

Before expounding upon his judgements of how the Angel’s figure responds to the concept of beauty, Maranta reviews the first condition – the figure’s proportions. This beginning shows the influence of Thomistic aesthetics, according to which proportion, the properly determined relation of one member to another, is the major condition without which no figure can be considered beautiful.¹⁴³ He states that a well-proportioned body ‘is divided, among many other divisions, into four equal parts’. The number four is chosen by Maranta as the clue to the figure’s proportions because its symbolic significance was known in his time,¹⁴⁴ as he casually credits the recipient of his ‘Discourse’ with this knowledge. His system of proportions starkly contrasts with the Varronian and Vitruvian systems, mentioned in treatises

¹⁴¹ Alberti, *On Painting*, 78 (3.56): ‘This idea of beauty, that is scarcely perceived by the best, eludes incompetents’.

¹⁴² See the opening of Pino’s *Dialogo di pittura* in Paola Barocchi, ed., *Trattati d’arte del Cinquecento tra Manierismo e Controriforma*, Bari: Laterza, 1960–62, 3 vols, 1:98.

¹⁴³ Władysław Tatarkiewicz, *History of Aesthetics*, The Hague: Mouton, 1970–74, 3 vols, 2:251 and 257.

¹⁴⁴ See Marsilio Ficino’s extensive exposition on the symbolism of the number four in ‘*All things natural*’. *Ficino on Plato’s ‘Timaeus’*, trans. Arthur Farndell with notes and additional material by Peter Blumsom, Wallington: Shephard-Walwyn, 2010, 32-40 and, especially, 44-5.

on visual arts that applied them chiefly to figures standing upright.¹⁴⁵ In Maranta's view, the quaternary system of proportions fits the painted Angel all the more because his figure is shown inclining towards the kneeling Virgin.

The second condition of beauty is 'quantity' – the size of the figure, which makes it visible to the audience. The source is Aristotle's *Poetics* (1450b), but Maranta does not limit his discussion to Aristotle, for whom the 'magnitude' of the figure signifies perceptible Beauty. Maranta suggests that the visual figure must justify its actual form. The figure of the Angel has a child-like quality, prompting enquiry about the age of the human figure chosen to represent the Angel Gabriel. According to a long-standing tradition, the Virgin was a fourteen-year-old maiden at the time of the Angel's salutation.¹⁴⁶ The similarity in age between Gabriel and Mary strengthens the visual correspondence of the two painted figures and implies the angelic nature of the Virgin. Maranta refutes the critics to whom the Angel looks like a seventeen-year-old boy, as if his figure were similar to Mercury's.¹⁴⁷ Ancient theologians spoke of Mercury as a more mature youth 'and made him the father of wisdom and eloquence'. Maranta appeals to the authority of Dionysius the Areopagite (*De coelesti hierarchia*) whose relevant statement about an age range of angels is 'pubescentem vero aciuuenilem etatem' ('of pubescent or juvenile age').¹⁴⁸ He concludes that the Angel does look like a fourteen-year-old boy because his reverential demeanour is associated with purity and obedience – qualities not to be expected from seventeen-year-old boys, midway between pubescence and adolescence.¹⁴⁹

While Maranta is familiar with Thomistic considerations of colour as the third condition of beauty,¹⁵⁰ he is mindful that his account of colours should relate to a specific painting, and so reflects contemporary discussions, influenced by Alberti.¹⁵¹ Maranta focusses on colour as the artist's tool to designate the separation of light and shadow and to imitate the texture of flesh and cloth. He praises Titian's ability to achieve the golden mean in applying colours to the painting, remarking on this artist's selection of colours as imbued with significance relevant to the sacred scene it represents.

¹⁴⁵ Erwin Panofsky, 'The history of the theory of human proportions as a reflection of the history of styles', in his *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1955, 104-5 at 82-138. Alberti, *On Painting*, 57 (2.36-7), discusses the proportions in terms of correct measurement and in terms of the figure's appearance because of the posture it assumes.

¹⁴⁶ Jacobus de Voragine, *The 'Golden Legend': Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993, 2 vols, 1:197.

¹⁴⁷ Besides Maranta, only Giovan Maria Tarsia, *Trattato della natura de gl'Angeli*, Florence: Bartolomeo Sermartelli, 1576, 163-4, mentions Mercury in the discussion of angelology, but he does so in the context of winged figures. These sixteenth-century scholars anticipate Franz Cumont, 'Les anges du paganisme', *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, 72, 1915, 159-82.

¹⁴⁸ Dionysius the Areopagite, *Theologia vivificans, cibus solidus; Dionysii celestis hierarchia; Ecclesiastica hierarchia*, trans. Ambrose Traversari, Paris: Jacobus Faber Stapulensis, 1498, 17v. Compare with the translation of the same phrase by Johannes Scotus Eriugena, *Expositiones in ierarchiam coelestem*, ed. J. Barbet, Turnhout: Brepols, 1975, 198: 'iuvenilem vero et adultam aetatem'. The commentary to *De coelesti hierarchia* by Thomas Aquinas was treasured by the particularly good library which was housed in the monastery of San Domenico Maggiore; see Pietro de Stefano, *Descrittione*, 136.

¹⁴⁹ See the basic study on this subject, Adolf Hofmeister, 'Puer, iuvenis, senex. Zum Verständnis der mittelalterlichen Altersbezeichnungen', in *Papstum und Kaisertum. Forschungen zur politischen Geschichte und Geisteskultur des Mittelalters. Paul Kehr zum 65. Geburtstag dargebracht*, ed. Albert Blackmann, Munich: Scientia Verlag Aalen, 1926, 289-95 at 287-316.

¹⁵⁰ Tatarkiewicz, *History*, 2:252 and 261, nos, 19 and 20.

¹⁵¹ Alberti, *On Painting*, 31-2 (1.9).

In the tradition of ancient *ekphraseis* adapted by Aretino, who flamboyantly describes the *Annunciation* received by Empress Isabella, Maranta notes the mixture of white and red colours but, unlike Aretino, who sees the cheeks trembling ‘under the flesh-tints of milk and blood’,¹⁵² Maranta interprets the two colours in the Angel’s clothing as the agency for creating the illusion that ‘the light does not seem to come from the outside, but rather to be born from within and from the Angel’s illuminated person’. This description illustrates that Maranta observed the painting in the chapel, and not in the painter’s studio, as did Aretino. Maranta mentions the light coming from the Angel’s figure, whereas Aretino’s extraordinary selection of descriptive words evokes ‘the refulgent light shed by the rays of Paradise’ and calls attention to the Holy Spirit ‘surrounded by the light of his glory’ – standard feature of any painting on this subject. Whereas Aretino notes the texture of plumage in the Angel’s wings, Maranta’s account of the colour range in the Angel’s wings contains allusions to the ancient forerunners of the Christian messengers. Maranta recalls Iris, the daughter of Thaumias, ‘whose name, as Plato says, means precisely “wonder”’. (He cites Plato’s *Theaetetus* [155d].) The Angel’s wings are the visible reflection of the concept of ‘meraviglia’ (‘wonder’) so often discussed in treatises on poetics. For contemporary literary critics, the inclusion of novel figures and unexpected actions that evoke ‘meraviglia’ constitutes the essence of epic poetry, with its combination of the real and the imagined.¹⁵³ His perception of the blush on the Angel’s cheek leads him into the discussion of the nature of fire and its theological relation to angels, a discussion which is poetically beautiful and particularly fascinating in light of Titian’s depictions of fire in several of his paintings.¹⁵⁴ Maranta believes that colour has, at the least, a three-fold function: the presentation of an image that is in essence incorporeal, though angels are conventionally given human form, the accentuation on the fiery nature of angels, and the connection of the visible figure, by means of wings radiating like the rainbow, to the upper spheres of the celestial abode.

‘Grace,’ the fourth condition of beauty, is the ineffable quality that must be included in all other conditions for the human figure to be defined as absolutely beautiful. Maranta may have borrowed the function of this concept from Marsilio Ficino’s *De amore* (V.6), wherein beauty is identified with ‘a certain lively and spiritual grace infused by the shining ray of God, first in the angels, and thence in the souls of men, the shapes of bodies, and sounds’.¹⁵⁵ In his application of the concept of grace to Titian’s Angel, Maranta defines it as ‘elegance’ (‘leggiadria’). This suggests Albert the Great’s qualification of the relation of beauty to proportion by the adjective ‘elegans’,¹⁵⁶ meaning that the form is legible to the eye. Maranta combines the Thomistic qualification of beauty with Ficino’s addition of the Platonic concepts of

¹⁵² The letter, dated 9 November 1537, addressed to ‘M. Titiano’, is first made public in Pietro Aretino, *Le lettere, il primo libro*, Venice: [s.n.], 1538 (n.p.); it is cited from Pietro Aretino, *Selected Letters*, trans. George Bull, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976, 124. The modern edition of Aretino’s letters, *Lettere sull’arte*, 1:78, renders the artist’s name ‘Tiziano’.

¹⁵³ Weinberg, *History*, 172-3.

¹⁵⁴ Paul Hills, ‘Titian’s fire: pyrotechnics and representations in sixteenth-century Venice’, *Oxford Art Journal*, 30:2, 2007, 185-204, with focus on Titian’s *Annunciation* in San Salvador.

¹⁵⁵ Cited from Marsilio Ficino, *Commentary on Plato’s Symposium on Love*, trans. Sears Jayne, Woodstock, CT: Spring Publications, 1985, 95. Antonio Sebastiano Minturno, *L’Arte poetica, nella quale si contengono i precetti Heroici, Tragici, Comici, Satyrici, e d’ogni altra Poesia: con la dottrina de’ sonnetti, canzoni, & ogni sorte di Rime Thoscane, doue s’insegna il modo, che tenne il Petrarca nelle sue opere. Et si dichiara a’ suoi luoghi tutto quel, che da Aristotele, Horatio, & altri auttori Greci, e Latini è stato scritto per ammaestramento di Poeti*, Venice: Gio. Andrea Valuassori, 1564, mentions Ficino in the n.p. preface. Published in 1564, the book records the events that developed in October 1557.

¹⁵⁶ Tatarkiewicz, *History*, 2:240 and 242-4, no. 8.

divine beauty and Aristotle's discussion of the perfect type of beautiful human figure. For Maranta, grace is visibly present when the figure is created from 'an idea formed in his [Titian's] mind'. In his opinion, this precious quality of grace is conveyed in the aura (*aria*) of the Angel's expression, which lies 'between joy and astonishment'. Grace, then, is the mysterious quality that, as 'the Platonists say', is received from God alone. For Maranta, it is revealed in God's messenger through the expression of his countenance, appropriate to the message brought by the Angel to the Virgin: 'Spiritus Sanctus superveniet in te', rather than the salutation 'Ave gratia plena', usually transmitted in art, and Maranta explains at length the reasons for his conclusion.

The fifth condition is 'posture', which Maranta sees as a specific trait of a painting since it has the ability to condense an entire narrative into one episode, centring on one action or scene. To illustrate his statement, he cites Albrecht Dürer ('Alberto Durero') whose series of prints representing the mysteries of Christ's Passion illustrate that one print (Maranta calls it a 'picture') could show only one action. Similarly, Maranta claims, a viewer knows the scene rendered in Titian's altarpiece by the way of describing the figures' postures and gestures.

The 'Discourse' sets an example of just such a diligent description: from reviewing each figure's posture in relation to each other, Maranta moves to the account of their mutual interaction, which is the core of the composition. He examines the relation of the swiftly moving Angel to the kneeling Virgin (the general composition) and the gesture of Gabriel as he communicates the divine message (the specific composition of one figure). The 'posture', or 'disposizione',¹⁵⁷ aspires to bridge the disparity between the absolutely beautiful human figure and the specific beauty of a human figure set in the context of the rendered subject. He explains that it means 'the placement, or the position or the attitude of the body in which the artist has shown the man he has depicted'. He cites an example of Michelangelo, who in the *Last Judgment* took care that 'every figure had a different placement and posture', not an example of the ancient artist from Pliny. This condition, therefore, is the crowning quality of the beautiful painting fulfilled by the artist in representing the subject in gracefully related human figures.

Thus, when each of the five conditions of a beautiful figure is applied to a specific figure in the painting – here, the Angel in Titian's painting of the Annunciation – the meaning of the work is clearly illustrated: (1) 'proper proportion' refers to the four equal divisions of the figure as the units which can be assessed by the viewer, who, like Maranta, is familiar with the symbolic connotations of its four-fold division; (2) 'proper quantity' signifies the physical appearance of the Angel, shaped to accord with a pubescent boy; (3) 'the appropriate vividness of colours' reveals the luminescent nature of the Angel and his sanguine temperament; (4) 'grace' is conveyed by the appropriate expression of the face (*aria*) and the lifelike impression (*leggiadria*) of the figure's movements; and (5) 'posture' relates to the interaction between the two figures as revealed by their respective positions and their gestures. Maranta links the concept of beauty to the careful viewer's informed examination of the specific painting in general and of the Angel Gabriel in particular. He states, 'if one is capable of producing only one beautiful thing, when this reaches its perfection, he is seen by everyone many times with

¹⁵⁷ Woodfield, 'On the emergence', 218, demonstrates the inevitable dependence of art treatises on treatises about the art of rhetoric. See also Russel H. Wagner, 'The meaning of *dispositio*', in *Studies in Speech and Drama in Honor of Alexander M. Drummond*, ed. James Winans, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1944, 285-94.

great pleasure and is admired. And this is one of the main reasons why painting, like poetry, is required to have extreme perfection, and mediocrity in them is nowise acceptable’.

ut pictura poesis as a tool in judging Titian’s Gabriel

Claiming that judging a painting is not his profession, Maranta, who is a physician, botanist and literary critic, takes recourse to the ancient authority of his compatriot by recalling the famous dictum, *ut pictura poesis* (Horace, *Ars poetica*, v.361). Horace’s dictum is evasive (not least because of ambiguous use of one conjunctive –‘ut’),¹⁵⁸ with his disapproval of the idea that poetry should resemble painting, made clear from subsequent (usually not cited) verses of his poem. In Maranta’s time, as Dolce’s translation indicates, the dictum was understood as the straightforward comparison between poems and paintings.¹⁵⁹ To add a positive flavour to the Horatian dictum, Renaissance humanists appealed to the equally famous precept of Simonides: ‘A poem ought to be a painting that speaks; a painting ought to be a silent poem’.¹⁶⁰ Rather than citing Horace or Simonides directly, Maranta states: ‘And it is already perfectly clear to everyone that poetry and painting, despite the speaking nature of the one and the mute exterior of the other, are one and the same thing, and that what is said of the one may be applied to the other’.¹⁶¹ He thus proposes this comparative analogy as the guiding principle that can justify Titian’s choice to depict the Angel as having a fleshy figure. ‘The essence of analogy’, as Quintilian defines it in the *Institutio oratoria* (I.vi.4), ‘is the testing of all subjects of doubt by the application of some standard of comparison about which there is no question, the proof that is to say of the uncertain by reference to the certain’.¹⁶² Maranta applies concepts from the field of poetics to the field of visual art. His interpretation of the Angel’s figure in metaphorical terms (a concept incomparably rich in connotations) suggests that he defends Titian’s painting as if it were a poem. His defence is based on the method of allegorical interpretation, which, from the fourteenth-century apologetics of Giovanni Boccaccio and Colluccio Salutati, had been exerted to protect poetry against accusations that it tells lies and has a corrupting influence on the audience.

While arguing with critics of Titian’s Gabriel, Maranta turns to the unusual depiction of Christ in Michelangelo’s *Last Judgment*. In this discussion he intentionally blurs the distinction between metaphor and allegory, writing that the painter transforms Christ’s glorified body into ‘a kind of metaphor, or should we say allegory, tacitly identifying perpetual youth with the force of glory and grace’. In this statement, Maranta, like other humanists of the time, shows the influence of Cicero, who, in discussing different figures of speech – all of which he calls

¹⁵⁸ Wesley Trimpi, ‘The meaning of *ut pictura poesis*’, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 36, 1973, 1-2 at 1-34.

¹⁵⁹ See Lodovico Dolce, *I dilettevoli sermoni, altrimenti satire, e le morali epistole di Horatio, illustre poeta lirico, insieme con la poetica*, Venice: Gabriele Giolito de’ Ferrari, 1559, 303: ‘Qui voglio comparer nostri Poemi / A le Pitture’, which is the translation of the ‘*ut pictura poesis*’.

¹⁶⁰ See Trimpi, ‘Meaning’, 31, about the Renaissance application of Simonides’s precept for understanding Horace’s dictum.

¹⁶¹ See Barocchi, ed., *Scritti*, 259-63; the excerpts illustrate that, in contrast to Equicola and Varchi, Maranta looks only for similarities between the arts of poetry and painting.

¹⁶² Quintilian, *The institutio oratoria*, trans. H. E. Butler, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, and London: William Heinemann, 1979, 4 vols, 1:113.

'transferred words' – remarks in the *Orator* (xxvii.94) that 'Aristotle, however, classifies them all under metaphor'.¹⁶³ Maranta adapts Cicero's approach when he analyses Titian's *Annunciation* as illustrating the artists' use of these figures of speech, considering allegory as an extended metaphor precisely for its play with visual images.

Maranta proposes viewing Titian's Angel as 'a certain pictorial metaphor' ('una certa metafora pitturale').¹⁶⁴ None of the contemporary writers on art, not even Varchi and Dolce in their discussion of the affinities between the two arts,¹⁶⁵ ever had recourse to metaphor (or any figure of speech) as the key to interpreting figures in religious paintings. Maranta does not aim at transferring the metaphor to the painted figure, but suggests that its form veils the meaning that has its place in the artist's intent to make the viewers go beyond the surface of his painting. Maranta's appeal to 'metaphor' as justifying Titian's choice to render the Angel as a corpulent figure becomes clearer in light of his discussion of artistic error and the effect of wonder, two points that were raised in his lectures on Aristotle's *Poetics* and *Lucullianae quaestiones*.¹⁶⁶ Metaphor is most easily subject to error, because it may so easily be misread. As Aristotle writes in *Metaphysics* (IX.10, 1052a), only 'about unchangeable things there can be no error',¹⁶⁷ and he underscores, in his *Poetics* (22, 1459a), the difficulty with which a poet finds an adequate metaphor, because '[i]t is the one thing that cannot be learned from others'.¹⁶⁸ By appealing to metaphor, Maranta hopes to prove that the unusual appearance of this figure will elicit admiration, once the viewers become aware of the theological meaning, as it shows forth 'in his face the abundance of heavenly food; that is to say, of love, grace, splendour and the other supreme gifts in which others participate in greater or lesser measure'. The theological message is the key to the corpulent figure of the Angel.

Maranta considers the artistic licence of the poet and the artistic licence of the painter, in inquiring about the degree of liberty accorded to works of art. This is an important point not least because the very concept of artistic licence was challenged in the course of the sixteenth century. At the Council of Trent, debates over the degree of liberty to be allowed to painters were preceded by discussions on visual arts by literary critics. In 1557, Dolce had cautiously remarked that a painter may enjoy a certain liberty, akin to a poet's, on condition that 'he does not fall into iniquity'.¹⁶⁹ Maranta, however, does not consider the question of whether a painter

¹⁶³ Cicero, *Orator*, trans. H. M. Hubbell, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, and London: William Heinemann, 1971, 375. See Bartolomeo Maranta, *Lucullianarum quaestionum libri quinque*, Basel: Johannes Oporinus, 1564, 363-89, for references to Cicero's *Orator*.

¹⁶⁴ Francisca Pérez-Carreño, 'Looking at metaphors', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 58, 2000, 373-81, draws attention to the concept of 'metaphorical paintings' with reference to Richard Wollheim's *Painting as Art* and his rejection of linguistic interpretations of paintings. However, no mention has been made of the concept of 'pictorial metaphor'; a special study should be given to Maranta's reading of Aristotelian interpretations of metaphors, especially when he relates Aristotle's *Poetics* to his *Rhetoric*. Graziella Travaglini, 'La metafora, l'analogia e le figure dei sensi in Aristotele', *Rivista di estetica*, 49, 2009, 121-48, comes close to the Aristotelian emphasis on putting 'things before the eyes', primarily by reason of her polemic with Paul Ricoeur's *La Métaphore vive*. The author confirms in private correspondence that she has not yet seen mentioned the concept of 'una metafora pitturale'.

¹⁶⁵ For references to their work, see the name index to Rensselaer W. Lee, *'Ut pictura poesis': The Humanistic Theory of Painting*, New York: W. W. Norton, 1967.

¹⁶⁶ See Weinberg, *History*, 493, and Maranta, *Lucullianae quaestiones*, 89.

¹⁶⁷ Aristotle, *The Complete Works*, ed. Jonathan Barnes, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991, 2 vols, 2:1661 (trans. W. D. Ross).

¹⁶⁸ Aristotle, *Complete Works*, 2:2335 (trans. I. Bywater).

¹⁶⁹ Roskill, *Dolce's 'Aretino'*, 131.

may be permitted artistic licence. Rather, he asks where in the painting of the Annunciation such licence can be expressed.

Classical antiquity bequeathed to Renaissance humanists the concept of the poet as a maker.¹⁷⁰ In his notes on Aristotle's *Poetics*, addressed to Vettori, Maranta probes the question of whether the poet is making or simply imitating.¹⁷¹ Maranta offers a rare interpretation of the painted figure as the result of a series of changes made by the artist during the creative process. Maranta reminds the critics that 'Titian chose to portray the Angel with such a full face, since he could have decided to make it just middling or thin'. In this way Maranta says unequivocally that the figure's visual aspect in the discussed artwork results from the painter's own choice. He stresses the point by repeating and expanding his observation: 'He may, in fact, choose to show the Announcing Angel still suspended in the air, or he may make the Angel's feet rest on the floor of the room; he may change his figure and make it either full, or gaunt or middling or some other way'. Titian's choice causes the viewer to ponder his Angel rather than permitting the viewer's hastening to rebuke the figure for its fleshy look. Maranta warns against groundless opinions by demonstrating that Titian invested thought in every aspect of the figure – fleshiness, childlikeness, colouring, posture, gestures – because each could be changed at the artist's will and each is rendered the way he thought right.

Literary critics and artists of the time customarily cast their theories of *istoria* as treatises on art in general, and not as accounts of specific works. Accustomed to Pliny's presentation of ancient works to illustrate his tenets, they regard the figures from a theoretical point of view, and do not consider the figures as a unique product of a unique artist working in response to unique circumstances. Maranta, however, unlike Aretino and Dolce, sees the figures in Titian's *Annunciation* as coming into being by virtue of the painter's own method of working. Maranta boldly reconstructs the painter's creative process, seeing him as a maker, or a 'poet' in the ancient sense of the word, rendering the comparison explicit by saying that Titian 'may vary the manner, as this is analogous to episodes in poetry'. He then discusses a traditional distinction between the fable ('favola'), or plot, and the episodes ('episodi'), or sections, which explain and expand the main action of the plot.¹⁷² Relating the notions of 'fable' and 'episodes' to Titian's painting, Maranta specifies that it was not in the artist's power to change anything in the representation of his main subject of the Annunciation as it is stipulated by the theme of the Pinelli chapel: he was obligated to show the Angel in the act of announcing the mystery to the Virgin. Possibly for Maranta, 'fable' has the same connotation as Alberti's *historia*, but with regard to 'episodes', he relates them to the implied movement of the Angel, that is, he hovers over the ground or swiftly enters the room. The same notion of 'episodes' applies to the changeable aspect of the Angel: whether he is plump or lean. Maranta concludes: 'these features, because of their variety, differ from painter to painter, as do the episodes from poet to poet'. According to Maranta, the painter's poetic licence may be expressed by introducing variations only in the 'episodes', which, in this context, are interpreted as minor details of pictorial composition. Maranta's discussion of variations in a picture has nothing to do with

¹⁷⁰ Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* [1953], trans. Willard R. Trask, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973, 146.

¹⁷¹ Avezzi, 'Inedito', 326.

¹⁷² The relation of the episodes to *fabula* or *favola* is discussed in every literary treatise. For Maranta's discussion in his lectures on *Ars poetica*, see Weinberg, *History*, 1:471-2.

Alberti's request for variety, which is advocated as an important condition for the well-made *historia* (the fundamental purpose of which was to imitate nature).¹⁷³ According to Maranta, the Angel belongs to an invented representation rather than to a portrayal born of imitation of nature – even if, being an ethereal entity, the Angel is conventionally pictured in the form of the perfect man. This convention does not preclude artists from individual conjecture of this form, thus inevitably admitting variations in representations of the Announcing Angel from painting to painting. In this sense, variety, as Alberti promotes it, is not relevant to Titian's painting. Maranta, therefore, has every justification for changing the requirement of variety in the painter's methods to the question of the extent to which variation may be admitted in the representation of the traditional subject.

Maranta's exposition of the notions of 'fable' and 'episodes' is intended to show where precisely in the altarpiece artistic errors may be permitted. An 'error' is permissible on condition that it is the outcome of the painter's quest for an effect of wonder, resulting from his search for new modes and forms. So Maranta underlines that the 'accidental' error occurs in the episodic part of the painting, that is, in the physical portrayal of the figure, and results from the painter's wish to diversify his forms. To quote Dolce, 'without it [diversity] beauty and artistry become cloying'.¹⁷⁴ The need to diversify, which Maranta associates with artistic licence, allows him to justify Titian's rendering a plump Angel of the Annunciation. Aware of the temptations for an artist to think only about the glory of his art and thus to overlook the necessity of conveying the significance of the sacred subject, Maranta draws constant attention to the meaningful messages that Titian allotted to colours and postures of the figures. Only ignorant viewers fail to 'realize that everything is done with great art on purpose'.

The *occultatio* in poetry, music and painting

In his consideration of another severely scrutinized detail, Maranta contemplates the objection that 'a good painter should not have shown only half of the Angel's face, when he could have made him in such a way that the full face were visible, thereby filling the eyes of the viewers much more'. This so-called error results from Titian's decision to render the Angel's face in what Theophile Gautier felicitously called 'profil perdu'.¹⁷⁵ Maranta sees Titian's device in terms of Quintilian's figure of 'occultatio', or 'concealment' (IX.iii.98), which creates a moment of suspense, whose task it was to draw the viewer further into the painting. He approves the artist's choice, because it induces him to see beyond the surface of the painting. Titian employs this device to convey the idea that the Angel's visible image lies between the visible and the invisible realms. Maranta's fascination with 'occultatio' reveals itself in a marginal note, in which he states: 'if sometimes it happens that in painting a certain thing is obscure, this is so in order that it may eventually speak as poetry does'. Maranta evidently planned to incorporate

¹⁷³ Alberti, *On Painting*, 59-60 (2.40). Alberti relates variety to food and music, which please by new and extraordinary things. Maranta, too, mentions food and music in this respect.

¹⁷⁴ Roskill, *Dolce's 'Aretino'*, 145.

¹⁷⁵ For an example of application of Gautier's phrase to paintings, see Peter Humfrey, 'Fra Bartolommeo, Venice and St Catherine of Siena', *The Burlington Magazine*, 132, 1990, 481 at 476-83: 'Very daring is the way in which Fra Bartolommeo shows his principal saint not frontally or in a three-quarter view, but with her face virtually in *profil perdu*'.

these observations into his text at some future date. Responding to the critics, Maranta exclaims: 'I do not see how one can blame the fullness and fleshiness of that Angel's face, or the position that shows only half of it, since a very cautious artist made all this with so much care'. He sees how Titian created the persuasive image of Gabriel by combining in his face the features of fullness, fleshiness and contrivance in showing only half of the face. However, the painter does not simply exhibit the Angel with his face partially obscured, 'but in such a beautiful way did he emphasize the mouth in the act of speaking that, even if we see just that half, it causes us to see also all that is hidden'. The more Maranta is engaged in describing Titian's Angel, the more he is moved to see that the figure 'show[s] the greatness of his [Titian's] talent'.

Maranta recognizes a similar device at play in the apparent fragmentation of Ariosto's cantos and in the evaded cadences of musicians who were then working in Naples: Philippe de Monte, Nola, Lando and Pietro Vinci. These poetical and musical compositions all appeal to the listeners' imagination, causing them to complete in their minds some part of the work that, intentionally, has been left unfinished. Maranta's juxtaposition of Ariosto and Titian may seem quite conventional: Ariosto praises Titian in Canto 33.2 of the *Orlando furioso*, and Dolce remarks that in colouring Alcina's cheeks (7.11–15) Ariosto becomes a Titian.¹⁷⁶ Ariosto was reprimanded by literary critics for the discontinuity in his narration of chivalrous tales and for creating suspense in the readers by sudden interruptions in his cantos. Yet, just as some literary critics were blaming Ariosto for using the rhetorical device of 'occultatio', composers in Venice, and especially in Naples, set to music several of Ariosto's stanzas from the *Orlando furioso*, employing the evaded cadence. In 1558 Gioseffo Zarlino explains this device in his treatise on music, *Le institutioni harmoniche*: 'a cadence is evaded (...) when the voices give the impression of leading to a perfect cadence, and turn instead in a different direction'.¹⁷⁷ The message of his exposition is that the 'evaded cadence' is required when the composer needs to make a transition and avoid harsh tones, while arresting the listener's attention. Among the composers whom Maranta mentions, Lando and Nola created madrigals based on the verses from Ariosto's romance.¹⁷⁸ In poetry and in polyphony, interrupted cantos and evaded cadences caught the listener's mind. By analogy with poetry, the partially obscured face of Titian's Angel has the same effect. In Maranta's eyes, the invisibility of half of the Angel's face not only leads the viewer to see his corpulent figure as a pictorial metaphor of God's abundance, but also to imagine his voice.

Maranta does not confine himself to examples of 'occultatio' from poetry and music. He also recalls the effect of partially hidden faces in some ancient paintings. He has three such pictures in mind. Two of them were often recommended to contemporary painters; the third is mentioned in the post-classical period only by Maranta, attesting to his first-hand knowledge of Pliny's notes on artists.

The first picture is Apelles's *Portrait of King Antigonus*, in which the artist, contriving not to show the king's wounded eye, presents him in profile (Pliny, *Naturalis historia*, XXXV.90). The

¹⁷⁶ Roskill, *Dolce's 'Aretino'*, 133: 'Here Ariosto puts in the coloring, and shows himself to be a Titian in the way he does this'. See David Rosand, 'Ut pictor poeta: meaning in Titian's poesie', *New Literary History*, 3, 1972, 530 at 527-46, and Luba Freedman, 'Titian's *Ruggiero and Angelica*: a tribute to Ludovico Ariosto', *Renaissance Studies*, 15, 2001, 287-300.

¹⁷⁷ Gioseffo Zarlino, *The Art of the Counterpoint: Part Three of 'Le institutioni harmoniche'*, 1558, trans. Guy A. Marco and Claude V. Palisca, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1968, 151.

¹⁷⁸ Larson, 'Unaccompanied madrigal', 233 (Lando) and 281 (Nola).

inclusion of the description in Alberti's book on painting caused this work to become the standard example of an artist's recourse to ingenious expedients.¹⁷⁹ Maranta observes that Apelles hid the king's deformity by portraying him in a pure profile, insightfully commenting that the resulted portrait resembles an ancient medal. (It is worth noting that Maranta does not apply the word 'profile' to the position of the Angel's face.)

The second picture is Timanthes's *Immolation of Iphigenia* (Pliny, XXXV.74), in which the suffering father is shown with a veiled face. Alberti and subsequent authors refer to it: among them are Pino, Dolce and Gilio, who mention it in their discussions on the art of painting.¹⁸⁰ This is not truly an example of a partially hidden face, since Iphigenia's father, Agamemnon, had his face fully covered, but it is recalled here by Maranta because of the different responses it provoked: was Agamemnon's face covered to express the intensity of his paternal grief, or was it covered because Timanthes had reached the limits of pictorial expression? Maranta suggests that Timanthes 'wanted his [Agamemnon's] moan to be heard rather than seen'. He obviously trusts the intelligent viewer's ability to perceive the drama and to imagine hearing the protagonists of the familiar tragedy, *Ifigenia*, which Dolce set to verse, based on the plays by Euripides and Sophocles.¹⁸¹ In turn, Maranta creates a poetic description, allowing the audience to imagine the protagonists' emotions. Considering painting to be akin to poetry, he triggers the technique of synaesthesia.

The third picture is Apelles's *Averted Hercules*, which Pliny (XXXV.95) praises as a difficult achievement because it shows the nude hero from the back but in such a way that the viewer can 'see' the figure's face.¹⁸² This picture is explicitly referred to in post-classical times only by Maranta.¹⁸³ It is possible that Jacopo Sannazaro had the picture in mind when, in his pastoral romance *Arcadia* (*Prosa* 3, 78; Venice: Pietro Summonte, 1504), he had Sincero describe a painting of Venus that displayed the goddess from the back, because her beauty was so perfect that the artist found it impossible to represent her figure in full face.¹⁸⁴ Apelles's *Averted Hercules* is the only work known from antiquity that shows the figure with its face intentionally turned completely away from the viewer. As in the case of Timanthes's *Immolation of Iphigenia*, Maranta suggests a positive interpretation of the *Averted Hercules*. He praises Apelles for the courage to represent Hercules in a novel way, one requiring viewers to engage faculties of imagination. He goes as far as to suggest that this is the artist's achievement, 'which [when it] was not appreciated by the crowd roused the greatest wonder in the most famous painters of that century'. The painting merited the attention of Pliny, who praised it highly. Thus this work became a model for future generations of artists, a fact noticed only by Maranta, even if implicitly, in a note he left on the margin:

¹⁷⁹ Alberti, *On Painting*, 63 (2.42); see Barocchi, ed., *Scritti*, 1:891n2.

¹⁸⁰ Alberti, *On Painting*, 61 (2.40); see Barocchi, ed., *Scritti*, 1:872n4. See also John F. Moffitt, 'Sluter's *Pleurants* and Timanthes' *tristia velata*: evolution of, and sources for, a humanist topos of mourning', *Artibus et Historiae*, 51, 2005, 78-81 at 73-84.

¹⁸¹ Lodovico Dolce, *Ifigenia. Tragedia*, Venice: Gabriele Giolito de Ferrari, 1551, 33r and 50r.

¹⁸² Pliny, *Natural History*, trans. H. Rackham, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, and London: William Heinemann, 1968, 10 vols, 9:331.

¹⁸³ Sarah Blake McHam, *Pliny and the Artistic Culture of the Italian Renaissance*, London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013, 325, lists cited works of Apelles, among which she mentions the *Portrait of King Antigonus* but not the *Averted Hercules*, which further attests to Maranta's original approach to the use of classical sources. This painting, however, is reconstructed in Caraglio's print [B.38], c. 1524/25.

¹⁸⁴ Iacobo Sannazaro, *Arcadia*, ed. Alfredo Mauro, Bari: Laterza, 1961, 19-20.

So, as in Tragedies not all the events take place on the stage but between one act and the other, one sometimes imagines much more than what can be done in an act; and this makes the poem more solemn and dense; likewise in painting the highest minds always considered it a greatly desirable thing that many things should be hidden, but in such a way that they might be understood easily and with wonder.

The reference to Apelles's painting of Hercules allows Maranta to distinguish between artists who avoid erring because they fear censure and therefore create works that satiate most of viewers and those artists who, being 'indifferent to pleasing the mob, make all their compositions in accordance with the dictates of art'. Maranta approves the latter category of artists, among whom are Titian, Ariosto and the musicians of Naples who aimed at deepening emotional sense of their compositions by using elided cadence.¹⁸⁵ Maranta observes that an artwork, be it painting, poetry or music, meets with harsh criticism when its significance is not immediately accessible. He blames critics for a lack of interest in cogitation. Titian's *Annunciation*, Ariosto's *Orlando furioso* and madrigals based on Ariosto's stanzas were of course accessible to all the more-or-less educated public in Naples, but this does not mean that these works could be equally appreciated: appreciation depends on cultural taste, knowledge of artistic, literary and musical devices and awareness of works created by ancient and modern artists.

Subsequently, Maranta distinguishes between viewers who, like himself and his addressee, enjoy the works that engage their imagination and those viewers who want the works to give them immediate satisfaction. Competent viewers savour the details of works, longing to understand the artists' intentions, whereas unsophisticated, even if relatively educated, viewers tend to form an opinion of works facilely, without considering the artists' reasons and without respecting the taste of these artists' patrons, who turned to them specifically to commission works on the desired subject. The 'Discourse' contrasts amateurish and sophisticated viewers, and these are not equal in number, for 'those who enjoy real craftsmanship are few indeed'. Whereas Alberti and then Dolce claim that painting can be understood equally by the ignorant and the educated as each finds something attractive in this art,¹⁸⁶ Maranta objects to the idea of equal perception of art between the distinct groups, and raises questions about what makes a viewer a competent critic.

The proper way to judge a painting

Maranta's approach to the theme of critical assessment is innovative and unusual. Even when he cites the familiar anecdote of Apelles's remark to the cobbler, he interprets it in a new and sophisticated way. The opinion, prevalent in Naples, that Titian's altarpiece contains faults – the most prominent of which were the fleshy figure and the partially obscured face – resulted from the lack of the viewers' wish to ponder the details of Titian's work. Maranta admonishes people

¹⁸⁵ Larson, 'Unaccompanied madrigal', 255-61, with a citation from Maranta's 'Discourse'.

¹⁸⁶ Alberti, *On Painting*, 48 (2.28); Barocchi, ed., *Trattati*, 1:156.

who boorishly criticize the painting to be more cautious in voicing their opinion lest someone – not necessarily the artist – repeat to them what Apelles said to the cobbler. This saying: ‘Ne sutor ultra crepidam’ (‘Let a shoemaker stick to his last’) in the form of the proverb became common in post-classical times thanks to Giovanni Battista Gelli’s inclusion of it in *La Circe*, published in 1549.¹⁸⁷ Maranta addresses this anecdote to critics, because he knew that those whom he overheard in the chapel were familiar with its story, *inter alia*, from Pliny (XXXV.85). Similarly, in his *Dialogo della pittura intitolato l’Aretino*, Dolce pleads to distinguish ‘between the learned and the ignorant’ and, like Alberti, implicitly refers to Cicero’s *De officiis* (I.47).¹⁸⁸ He interprets Cicero’s instructions to his son Marcus (I.65) as a caution to distinguish among opinions so as not to fall into traps set by ignorant critics.¹⁸⁹ In this context Dolce mentions Apelles as the exemplary painter who exposed ‘his figures to the criticism of all comers’ in the hopes of getting some expert opinion.¹⁹⁰ Dolce realizes that not all critics are professionals; he is clearly suggesting that a painter is not required to pay attention to every judgement.

Dolce believes that, notwithstanding the pitfalls, a painter should learn from the critics of his works. Maranta does not even raise this question; rather, he questions the critics’ qualifications. He takes at face value Aristotle’s statement in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (I.3, 1094b) that it is necessary for a good critic to be educated in a subject, for ‘each man judges well things he knows’.¹⁹¹ Maranta warns his readers against a petty and narrow approach to art. In this, Maranta’s attitude differs drastically from that of Gilio, who praises Apelles’s prudence in accepting the cobbler’s remark, but who, significantly, omits any mention of the artist’s reprimand.¹⁹² Maranta explains that for the proper judgement of Titian’s work, one should consider it from many different angles. For his part, Maranta uses several resources: the comparison between painting and poetry, the comparison between Titian and Apelles, the juxtaposition of Titian’s Angel and Michelangelo’s Christ as most controversial figures discussed c. 1562, the interpretation of Titian’s Angel according to the canon of the beautiful figure, the rules of physiognomy and the rhetorical art of gestures. He also searches out the advice and opinion of the people who know about Titian and appreciate his art. Among them are Cosimo Pinelli, a cultivated patron; his son Gian Vincenzo, a philosopher-scientist; Cambi, an esteemed gentleman, who was Florentine in culture; and Lama, a Neapolitan painter, who was chosen by Cosimo to fresco his family chapel. At the end of his ‘Discourse’, Maranta concludes that, to judge a work of art properly, it is necessary to obtain the judgements of experts from diverse fields. Thus, the old question of the importance for a painter to consider the opinions of his public receives a new twist, centring on a critic’s capacity to assess a painter’s work.

¹⁸⁷ Pliny, *Natural History*, 9:324 (Rackham’s note). On Gelli, see Christiane J. Hessler, ‘“Ne supra crepidam sutor!” [Schuster, bleib bei deinem Leisten!]: Das Diktum des Apelles seit Petrarca bis zum Ende des Quattrocento’, *Fifteenth-Century Studies*, 33, 2008, 139 at 133-50.

¹⁸⁸ Roskill, *Dolce’s ‘Aretino’*, 103. Cicero’s passage is too lengthy to be included here; see Cicero, *De officiis*, trans. Walter Miller, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, and London: William Heinemann, 1957, 151.

¹⁸⁹ Compare with Cicero, *De Officiis*, 67: ‘he who depends upon the caprice of the ignorant rabble cannot be numbered among the great’. For the different reading of Dolce, see Roskill’s note in *Dolce’s ‘Aretino’*, 244.

¹⁹⁰ Roskill, *Dolce’s ‘Aretino’*, 103.

¹⁹¹ Aristotle, *Complete Works*, 2:1730 (trans. W. D. Ross, revised by J. O. Urmson). Hessler, ‘Ne supra crepidam sutor!’, 138, emphasizes that Pontano’s *Charon* refers to Aristotle in relation to the issue of proper criticism.

¹⁹² Barocchi, ed., *Trattati*, 2:73.

Maranta brings together the opinions of experts in diverse fields, helping him form a composite judgement of Titian's painting which, Maranta believes to be an objectively correct evaluation of the work. He then has recourse to his own medical background when he considers the Angel's complexion and assesses, from the standpoint of anatomical structure, the appropriateness of the speaking hand's gesture to the scene represented. In his wish to communicate admiration for Titian's *Annunciation*, he also calls on his experience as a literary critic to highlight similarities between poetry and painting.

The 'Discourse', then, argues that the painting can be correctly judged only if the critic aims at a comprehensive consideration of all its aspects. The points he emphasizes are worthy of repetition as statements of Maranta's credo: valid criticism evaluates artwork according to tenets found in contemporary writings on the art of painting; it takes into account other contemporaneous works of art; it goes beyond the commonplace recitation of ancient examples from Pliny; it considers the subject represented in the painting; it studies the painting in relation to its specific location; it strives to explain the artist's intentions. Only when Titian's *Annunciation* is studied in relation to the context for which it was created – a family chapel in a church – and through the comprehension of reasons that influenced it aesthetically and theologically, can this painting be evaluated objectively.

Art historians and Maranta's 'Discourse'

The manuscript of the 'Discourse' was first noticed in 1902 by Angelo Borzelli, a literary scholar and art historian, who summarized its contents in a small book of twenty-four pages. His objective was to use the text as a way to focus on mid-sixteenth-century Neapolitan culture. Borzelli's initiative was taken up in 1952 by Giuseppe Solimene, a historian of Basilicata, who paraphrased the 'Discourse' in forty-two pages, with annotations on historical figures, offering biographical information on the Pinelli and Maranta families and adding reproductions of Maranta's portrait and Titian's painting (then located in the Pinelli chapel). When, in 1956, Tommaso Pedio, also a historian of Basilicata, reviewed Solimene's publication,¹⁹³ he corrected the information on the Maranta family. Both Solimene and Pedio missed some inaccuracies concerning the Pinelli and Maranta families, primarily the result of a confusion of grandfathers with their namesake grandsons. This current essay corrects those mistakes to the extent possible and attempts to establish more precisely the circumstances surrounding the production of Maranta's 'Discourse' and the date of its composition.

The 'Discourse' received new life in 1971, with its publication in Paola Barocchi's monumental collection, *Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento*. Barocchi deliberately used Solimene's annotations and made clear that the questions raised by Maranta were familiar to his contemporaries. The spellings of the names of Italian artists (e.g., 'Titiano' for 'Tiziano', 'Michel Angelo' for 'Michelangelo') as well as some Greek and Roman names (e.g., 'Orazio' for 'Horatio', 'Omero' for 'Homero' and 'Ercule' for 'Hercule') were changed for the sake of consistency within the three volumes of the *Scritti*. In the current translation of the text, the names of Michelangelo, Giorgio Vasari and Albrecht Dürer (as well as the word 'Angel', spelled

¹⁹³ The review is published in *Archivio storico pugliese*, 9, 1956, 167-72.

with capital 'A') accord with the original spellings of the manuscript. The rest are given in the standardized English form, including of course 'Titian'.

Barocchi overlooked Maranta's marginal note (c. 262r),¹⁹⁴ which sheds light on his interpretation of the *paragone* between poetry and painting. The note in the present transcription and translation is appended to the text of the 'Discourse' translated by Viviana Tonon. A paperback reprint of the *Scritti* followed in 1978, published in separate sections: the section 'Pittura' contains the 'Discourse'. In 1985, the present author, then working on the topic of Titian's portraiture, took note of Maranta's 'Discourse'. Her published study sets Maranta's art of description in the context of the ancient and modern ekphrastic tradition, suggesting to see the 'Discourse' as pioneering in its descriptive interpretation of Titian's painting. Some imprecision of facts regarding the circumstances that led Maranta to discuss Titian's *Annunciazione* have been corrected in the present essay.

In 2002, Ulrich Pfisterer brought together a series of excerpts from treatises on art to form a history of *Kunsthistorie*. For the introduction Pfisterer chose to discuss Titian's two *Annunciazione* paintings. In "Fleischwerdung": Tizians *Verkündigungsbilder* und die Macht des Wortes', Pfisterer presents the first *Annunciazione*, reporting some historical facts – its price, its initial commission and its final destination – and recalls the relief of the Annunciation related to by Dante in the mode of the 'visibile parlare'. Pfisterer then discusses the second *Annunciazione* and draws attention to Maranta's 'Discourse', familiar to him from Barocchi's edition. He is particularly impressed by Maranta's expression 'una certa metafora pitturale', which leads him to recall salient points of the topic of 'ut pictura poesis'. In his view, Titian's Neapolitan *Annunciazione* does much to enrich discussions of the beholder's perception of the painting, for artworks are rarely perceived through the lens of their contemporaries. Ulrich Rehm's review of Pfisterer's book concentrated on the expression 'pictorial metaphor' as applied to the interpretation of the Angel's corpulent figure; this shows Rehm's admiration for both sixteenth- and twentieth-century authors in their use and exposition of this attractive concept.¹⁹⁵

In 2007, Caroline van Eck concentrated on Maranta's description of gestures, which converted the flat plane of the picture into the three-dimensional stage of the theatre. This is in keeping with the theme of her book, *Classical Rhetoric and the Visual Arts in Early Modern Europe*, a discussion of the tangible devices borrowed from rhetoric by visual artists to transform a painting into the representation of a mental image. In drawing an analogy between the works of poets and painters, Maranta, as van Eck claims, applies the orator's art of gesticulation, described by Cicero and Quintilian, to the analysis of depicted postures, seeing its expressive power as the link between the two arts.

In 2008, Marcel Grosso found Maranta's 'Discourse' on Titian's painting attractive, as a consequence of his interest in Titian's connections with the Neapolitan milieu under the rule of the Spanish viceroys. He later expanded this article, based on his dissertation research, into the book (*Per la fama di Tiziano*), but the original article, first published in 2004 and reprinted in 2008,¹⁹⁶ remains the most detailed study of the background that shaped Maranta's aesthetic

¹⁹⁴ The handwriting and syntax leave no doubt that this note is Maranta's.

¹⁹⁵ Ulrich Rehm, review of *Die Kunsthistorie der italienischen Renaissance. Eine Geschichte in Quellen*, ed. Ulrich Pfisterer, Stuttgart 2002, *Wolfenbütteler Renaissance-Mitteilungen*, 29, 2005, 74 at 72-4.

¹⁹⁶ Marsel Grosso, 'La fama di Tiziano nella cultura artistica meridionale (tra letteratura e scienza)', in *Dal vicereame a Napoli: arti e lettere in Calabria tra Cinque e Seicento*, ed. Ippolita di Majo, Naples: Paparo, 2004, 71-112; Marsel Grosso,

evaluation of Titian's painting. According to Grosso, Maranta's attention both to Titian's use of the rainbow colours in the Angel's wings and to the artist's representation of vivid and lifelike figures was indebted to Bernardino Telesio's philosophical doctrines. Grosso, independently of Freedman and van Eck, suggests that Maranta's 'Discourse' may be read as a response to Dolce's analysis of Titian's art. In 2008, the Pinelli painting was shown in an exhibition that focussed on Titian's late style. In the entry on this painting to the exhibition catalogue, *Late Titian and the Sensuality of Painting*,¹⁹⁷ Grosso mentions Maranta's text as evidence of the history and provenance of the painting; he also updates the information about some earlier literature that questioned the attribution of the painting to Titian, arguing for the workshop intervention. Grosso, highlighting Titian's innovative approach to the representation of the sacred scene, is convinced that this *Annunciation* is indeed by the master himself.

Grosso's use of Maranta's text, in his study of Titian's fame in Spanish Naples, stimulated an interest in both the painting and the 'Discourse'. Grosso's article (2004) provided the background for Marco Ruffini's exposition of a sixteenth-century document on the provenance of Titian's Neapolitan *Annunciation*.¹⁹⁸ Ruffini came across a copy of Vasari's *Vite* of 1550 (in the Beinecke Library at Yale University) that had been annotated by an anonymous reader sometime between 1560 and 1568. As Vasari mentions Titian in several passages of his book, the annotator, most likely of Paduan origin, decided to add a biographical note on Titian. This note contains precious information about the painter's works, though not without some imprecision. For example, regarding the Neapolitan *Annunciation*, the anonymous author writes that it was located in Santa Maria Maggiore (which incidentally houses the Pontano chapel and, for this reason, would have been more familiar to him). It also says that the painting was commissioned by the King of Spain, Philip II, as the only altarpiece ever made for him by Titian. Ruffini makes use of Maranta's text to explain that the work was actually commissioned for the family chapel in San Domenico Maggiore by Gian Vincenzo Pinelli, who, as Ruffini learns from Grosso, moved to Padua in 1558. Ruffini confuses Cosimo senior and junior, thinking wrongly that Cosimo senior was granted the noble rank of the Duke of Acerenza. It was Galeazzo who, in 1563, purchased the feudality of Acerenza,¹⁹⁹ and received the title of Duke of Acerenza on 12 April 1593;²⁰⁰ his eldest son, Cosimo, inherited it in 1600. Ruffini supports his information with a reference to a text by Carlo De Lellis that cites a sepulchral epitaph in the Pinelli Chapel.²⁰¹ The Cosimo mentioned in this epitaph, however, is the grandson, not the founder of the chapel. Ruffini mentions that Cosimo senior was Great Chancellor of the Kingdom of Naples in 1557; but it was Cosimo junior who, in March 1601,

¹⁹⁷ 'Per la fama di Tiziano nella cultura artistica meridionale tra letteratura e scienza', *Venezia Cinquecento*, 36, 2008 (2009), 5-42.

¹⁹⁸ See Marsel Grosso's detailed entry to *Late Titian and the Sensuality of Painting*, exhib. cat., ed. Sylvia Ferino-Pagden, Vienna and Venice: Marsilio, 2008, 254 and 256, no. 3.3.

¹⁹⁹ Ruffini, 'Sixteenth-century Paduan annotations', 779-80.

²⁰⁰ On the purchase of Acerenza see <http://distoriadistorie.blogspot.co.il/2013/12/acerenza-e-i-suoi-feudatari-in-eta.html>, accessed June 2015.

²⁰¹ For the document regarding the conferment of the dukedom on Galeazzo Pinelli, see 'Secretarías Provinciales, Libro 152, folios 90 v^o y ss', Departamento de Referència, Archivo General de Simancas (Valladolid).

²⁰¹ Carlo De Lellis, *Aggiunta alla Napoli sacra dell'Eugenio Caracciolo Napoli, entro il 1689. Napoli, Biblioteca Nazionale "Vittorio Emanuele III", ms. X.B.21*, eds, Elisabetta Scirocco et al., Naples and Florence: Edizione Memofonte, 2013, 2 vols, 2:265-6.

acquired the office of Great Chancellor.²⁰² Ruffini perceptively notes that the Paduan annotator knew well that Titian's painting of the Annunciation was familiar to Philip II, because in 1537 this work belonged to the king's mother, and for this reason the annotator states that Philip II commissioned Titian's *Annunciation*. At the same time he indicates Naples as the location of the painting on this subject, to be identified, as Ruffini observes, with the altarpiece in the Pinelli chapel.

By 2010, the Pinelli *Annunciation* had been fully restored, revealing the colours as they undoubtedly were intended to look by Titian. This is noted by Grosso in his catalogue entry as the restoration was begun prior to the exhibition of 2008. The book on the Pinelli *Annunciation*, edited by Anna Chiara Alabiso, though dedicated primarily to the restoration of the work, includes a brief account of the historical and artistic context that led to the creation of the painting. Bruno Arciprete gently corrects Valcanover, Freedman and Grosso in pointing out that Titian's signature on the base of the Virgin's lectern reads 'Titianus P', and not 'Titianus F'.²⁰³ Arciprete's description of the painting after its restoration indirectly highlights Maranta's accuracy in writing his impressions about the Angel's hair, face, arm and wings. Arciprete and the painting's restorers, Marco Cardinali and Maria Beatrice De Ruggieri, date the work to the early 1560s.

In her study, Alabiso derives most of her information on the Pinelli family from Grosso's article of 2004 and his entry to the catalogue of 2008, using Maranta's 'Discourse' merely as testimony to the commission of Titian's work for the altar in the chapel. Alabiso speculates that it was through Fulvio Orsini that Gian Vincenzo became acquainted with Titian. Pierre Nolhac, whose classic study on Orsini Alabiso cites, suggests that their connection could not have existed before 1565.²⁰⁴ Gian Vincenzo would have needed a mediator to facilitate the task of procuring the painting, given Titian's social standing. As shown here, it was the lawyers Benavides and Speroni who could help him in fulfilling this task. Only Benavides, who had connections with the Spanish court and the Maranta family, and Speroni, who was a friend of Aretino, could have assisted Gian Vincenzo in urging Titian to find time to paint the *Annunciation* for his family chapel. It is sufficient to recall the Venetian case of the Massola chapel,²⁰⁵ in which the altarpiece of the Martyrdom of St Lawrence was installed in 1559 – almost ten years after it was commissioned on 18 November 1548 – to appreciate the relative

²⁰² Jacopo M. Paitoni, *Lettere d'uomini illustri, che fiorono nel principio del secolo decimosettimo*, Venice: Baglioni, 1744, 1n1, includes the letter from Lorenzo Pignoria in Padua, dated 8 October 1602, to Paolo Gualdo in Venice, and Paitoni mentions in the note Cosimo Pinelli, the Duke of Acerenza, Marquis of Galatina and Great Chancellor of the Kingdom of Naples, who was the eldest son of Gian Vincenzo's brother Galeazzo (Gualdo wrote Gian Vincenzo's biography). See Rodella, 'Fortuna', 91 and 91n29.

²⁰³ Bruno Arciprete, 'Il restauro dell'*Annunciazione* di Tiziano a San Domenico Maggiore', in *Tiziano*, 50 at 49-60. In this regard, see E. H. Gombrich's useful observations on the inscriptions in paintings indicating the patron who makes the work by commissioning the painter or giving him an idea of his work, and the painter who paints it. See his 'The early Medici as patrons of art', in *Norm and Form. Studies in the Art of the Renaissance*, London: Phaidon, 1978, 40 at 35-57. Maranta notes that Gian Vincenzo is 'Egli che di far fare quell quadro ha avuto il pensiero' (Gian Vincenzo is 'He, who had the thought of having this picture made'). See Michele Polverari, ed., *Tiziano. La pala Gozzi di Ancona. Il restauro e il nuovo allestimento espositivo*, Bologna: Grafis Edizioni, 1988, 100, for the inscription which states that this work is made by Alvise Gozzi and painted by Titian.

²⁰⁴ Pierre de Nolhac, *La bibliothèque de Fulvio Orsini, contributions à l'histoire des collections d'Italie et à l'étude de la Renaissance*, Paris: F. Vieweg, 1887, 75.

²⁰⁵ Lionello Puppi, 'Peripezie della committenza: il contesto, i protagonisti, le occasioni', in *La notte di San Lorenzo. Genesi, contesti, peripezie di un capolavoro di Tiziano*, eds, Lionello Puppi and Letizia Lonzi, Crocetta del Montello: Terra Ferma, 2013, 65-7 at 64-89.

efficiency with which Titian completed the painting for the chapel of the Pinelli family. Alabiso mentions an important fact relating to the presence of the painting in the city: when Pietro de Stefano described the sacred places of Naples in his book, published in 1560, he mentioned neither the Pinelli chapel, nor the presence of Titian's painting in San Domenico Maggiore. He did, however, mention Cosimo Pinello [*sic*] as the magnificent nobleman from Genoa in front of whose garden stood the Franciscan monastery of San Girolamo (on the Pinelli botanical garden, see above).

In 2014, Isabelle Bouvrande, in a short separate chapter of her book on Venetian colour, emphasizes that Maranta includes 'the appropriate vividness of colour' as a necessary characteristic of a 'beautiful' painting. Bouvrande lays stress on Maranta's medical profession and his Aristotelian background. Maranta, however, was no less a Platonist than he was an Aristotelian, as his literary studies confirm.²⁰⁶ She links the notion of the celestial rainbow, mentioned in Aristotle's *Meteorology* and discussed by Anne Merker, to Maranta's analysis of the Angel's wings.²⁰⁷ Bouvrande suggests that his mention of the celestial rainbow is meant to underline the 'spiritual and incorporeal nature' of Titian's Angel. Inspired by his 'Discourse' and Barocchi's annotations, Bouvrande names Maranta in several passages of her book – for example, in the passage about the fleshiness of Titian's figures, previously noted of course first by Aretino and then by Dolce. She draws attention also to Maranta's pairing the two terms 'complexion' and 'physiognomy'. Her book demonstrates how Maranta's text can be used to enhance understanding the contemporary assessments of Titian's art. It is quite likely that other art historians will follow suit, for the 'Discourse' is an exemplary text, not just for the commentary on Titian's *Annunciation*, but for the analysis of the aesthetics of painting in general.

Luba Freedman

²⁰⁶ María José Vega Ramos, *El secreto artificio. Qualitas sonorum, maronolatría y tradición pontaniana en la poética del Renacimiento*, Madrid: Universidad de Extremadura, 1992, 64-78, calls Maranta 'El Virgilio Platónico'.

²⁰⁷ Bouvrande, *Coloris*, 88n2.

Bartolomeo Maranta's 'Discourse' on Titian's *Annunciation* in Naples: translation

Note on the state and language of the manuscript

The prose of Maranta's 'Discourse' sustains the vividness and immediacy of oral delivery. Maranta gives his opinion on Titian's painting and often addresses Ferrante Carafa ('Your Lordship' or 'Signor Marquis'), appealing to his sophisticated sense of life and art. The oration contains arguments for and against the painting, and raises questions that, on the one hand, express amazement at the witlessness of the outspoken critics of the painting whom he overheard in the Pinelli chapel, and, on the other hand, offer for consideration new approaches to, and salient aspects of, Titian's *Annunciation*. The formulation of these questions attests to Maranta's initial education as a lawyer and reflects the language of his father's treatises on jurisprudence concerning libels at court.¹

The style is often unpolished, to the point of containing sentences that start with a long subordinate clause and continue without producing a main clause. Yet, the logic of Maranta's exposition is such that these plaited sentences do not prevent understanding the text. By way of example here is one such problematic passage:

But since man has not been permitted to see a more beautiful appearance than the one he has himself, and (knowing that angels are exceedingly beautiful) has, in depicting them, made them similar to the most beautiful things that have ever been seen in the world and so has given them a human aspect, connoting by their wings not only speed and a ready willingness to serve with all celerity, but also the Angels' nature, by virtue of which, being free from all corporeal weight and having no such admixture as the earthly body has, they, who are far from this inferior part, climb ever up the path of celestial life towards that high and sublime seat where the Creator of all things dwells.²

This passage reflects Maranta's frequent structure of concatenating long clauses without a main clause and weaving one descriptive clause with another. The syntax also indicates a desire to persuade the reader or listener that by looking at the represented Angel, one should go beyond the visible surface to the theological discussion of angelic nature and thus grasp the meaning of the beautiful human features and the wings as auxiliary to the ladder that leads to the higher, celestial realms. For Maranta, Titian's painting could be perceived as theological doctrine on the subject of the Annunciation made visible – the doctrine to which the Pinelli chapel was dedicated. Maranta's vocabulary in the description of the painting was intended for the reader and listener to understand the excellence of Titian's transmission of the mystery so significant for Cosimo Pinelli, the patron of the chapel. Hence, the prose resembles a sermon when Maranta translates the visual image into the theological message. This is why the effort was made to

¹ Meyer, *Roman Inquisition*, 165. See also Andrea Marchisello, 'Il principio del processo: osservazioni sull'origine del iudicium nello *Speculum aureum* di Roberto Maranta (1476–1534?)', *Historia et ius: rivista di storia giuridica dell'età medievale e moderna*, 1, 2012, 1-16.

² Barocchi, ed., *Scritti*, 1:867-8: 'Ma perché all'uomo non è stato concesso di veder più bella vèsta di quella dell'uomo istesso, e sapendo che li angeli sono bellissimi, gli hanno nel dipignerli rassebrati alle più belle cose che nel mondo si siano vedute e così gli hanno dato figura umana, denotando per le ali non solo la velocità e la prontezza del voler con ogni celerità servire, ma eziandio la natura loro, la quale è che, liberi da ogni corporal peso e senza mescolanza di terrena salma, lontani da questa nostra inferior parte s'inalzino sempre per lo camino della celeste vita a quell'alta e sublime sede, nella quale il creator del tutto dimora'.

respect the author's phrasing, his lexicon, his syntax, his complexity, even his stylistic flaws, as much as possible.

The text contains blank spaces. These lacunae have their own consistency: they relate to the lack of precise information about some works and their location. There are three such lacunae. Two relate to Michelangelo's allegorical statues *Night* and *Day*, as the sculptor actually called them,³ wrongly named by Maranta *Sleep* and *Night*. Saying that both are in the shape of masculine figures, he reveals that he is unfamiliar with the visual aspect of these statues in the Medici chapel. The third lacuna relates to the chapel of the Magi in the abbey of Monteoliveto. In this case Maranta fails to record the name of the chapel's owner, Antonio Phiodo.⁴ Nor does he mention Girolamo Marchesi da Cotignola, who painted the altarpiece c. 1515 and who was also patronized by Tommaso Cambi.⁵ The placement of the lacunae in the text indicates that at the time of composing his 'Discourse', he hoped to fill them in at some future date. Notwithstanding the blank spaces, there is no reason to suspect that Maranta left the text unfinished, as the last page of the manuscript contains the calligraphic triangle turned with the upper angle towards the bottom of the page, marking the end of his 'Discourse'.

Its language is Tuscan Italian set in accordance with the standards established by Pietro Bembo,⁶ similar to Dolce's in *Dialogo della pittura intitolato l'Aretino*, with Latin quotations from Jerome's Bible and Horace's *Ars poetica*. Rarely was a sixteenth-century treatise on visual art composed in Latin. In his dialogue on painting, Pino notes that Gaurico wrote his book on sculpture in Latin,⁷ but it was composed c. 1500. Dolce recommends Alberti's book, noting that it was translated from Latin into Italian by Lodovico Domenichini (in 1547),⁸ typical of the vernacular trend of writing treatises on visual art. Latin was the language of serious scientific, philosophical or literary treatises; hence Maranta wrote the book on botany and the hefty volume on Virgil in the poet's native language. His Italian book on antidotes was translated into Latin in 1577 by Stigliola precisely because his authority came under question, not least because of his choice of the vernacular for a scientific study.⁹ Nonetheless, it is not clear why Maranta wrote the 'Discourse' in Italian, though he also delivered lectures on Horace in Italian. It may well have been that Carafa, an ardent Petrarchist, set the style in Naples by writing poetry only in Italian.¹⁰ Also, although Gian Vincenzo was an expert in ancient languages, the language he chose for his correspondence, at least in his surviving letters, is Italian.¹¹ Maranta could then have been expected by his upper class patients and patrons to write on Titian's *Annunciation* in Italian. The 'Discourse' is a pleasure to read, because it reflects various tones: it is solemn when Maranta

³ Charles De Tolnay, *The Medici Chapel*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1948, 138 and 134.

⁴ Barocchi, ed., *Scritti*, 1:885n4.

⁵ Vasari, *Opere*, 5:184.

⁶ See Carafa's poem dedicated to the memory of Bembo in Lodovico Dolce, *Rime di diversi illustri signori napoletani: e d'altri nobiliss. intelletti: nuovamente raccolte et non piv stampate*, Venice: Gabriele Giolito de' Ferrari, 1552, 70. Maranta, *Lucullianae quaestiones*, 32, cites Bembo as the authority on the subject of language, as he claims that the vernacular style should match in excellence the Latin.

⁷ Barocchi, ed., *Trattati*, 1:136. Barocchi, ed., *Scritti*, 894n1.

⁸ Roskill, *Dolce's 'Aretino'*, 159. Alberti has the text in Italian, dated 1436, but the manuscripts were poorly circulated versus manuscripts of the Latin text, on which he worked till 1460.

⁹ Cassidy McTighe, 'New light', 123-4 and 252. José Ricardo Sánchez Baudoin, 'The methods of natural inquiry during the sixteenth century: Bartolomeo Maranta and Ferrante Imperato', PhD dissertation, Università degli Studi di Padova, 2013, 121.

¹⁰ See Minturno, *Arte poetica*, 282-451, for the fourth book which discusses Tuscan poetry with Carafa. See Maranta, *Lucullianae quaestiones*, 31, on Bembo as the authority on Petrarch.

¹¹ See remarks by William McCuaig in his review of Anna Maria Raugei, ed., Gian Vincenzo Pinelli and Claude Dupuy, *Une correspondance entre deux humanistes, Renaissance Quarterly*, 56, 2003, 819 at 818-20.

discusses the religious mystery represented in the painting, humorous when he writes on the power of love and on contemporary mores, ironic when he comments on the results of hasty judgement, furious when he attacks the attitude of the witless mob, elated when he discusses the Angel's sanguine temperament and the gesture of his speaking hand.

Maranta is consistent in using certain Italian words in different contexts to indicate, for example, nuances of beauty: *bellezza* (beauty), *venustà* (loveliness), *leggiadria* (elegance) and *vaghezza* (charm),¹² while some other words, like *grazia* (grace) and *aria* (aura), designate nuances of grace, with the second visible only in faces. He adheres to the meaning of some other words, among them, *ingegno* (ingenuity), *meraviglia* (wonder), *quadro* (picture), *variare* (vary) and *volgo* (mob). As much as possible, this consistency has been kept in the English text.

On the whole, the effort was made to preserve Maranta's voice faithfully, while at the same time to phrase his thoughts in English. The author's lexicon has been respected as much as possible, but not to the detriment of the meaning in the translation, which is deliberately literal. Some liberty, however, is inevitable in rendering important nuances. Although the language of the translation is modern English, attempts have been made to avoid anachronistic words like 'genre' and 'model'. Because the translation is largely based on Barocchi's printed transcription, the page numbers from her edition are kept to help the reader navigate between the original manuscript and the translated text. Digital scans are now obtainable for study upon request from the Biblioteca Nazionale in Naples (Ms. Branc. II C 5, cc. 260r-70v).

Viviana Tonon with Luba Freedman

¹² The synonyms for beauty can be found in Agnolo Firenzuola's *Discorsi delle bellezze delle donne*, Florence: Bernardo di Giunta, 1548, but Maranta's interpretation of them deviates from Firenzuola's.

Discorso all'Ill.mo Sig. Ferrante Carrafa Marchese di Santo Lucido in materia di pittura. Nel quale si difende il quadro della cappella del Sig. Cosmo Pinelli fatto per Titiano, da alcune oppositioni fattegli da alcune persone¹³

863

Ritrovandomi, ill.mo Signor mio, l'altrieri per udir messa a San Domenico col signor Scipione Ammirato,¹⁴ capitammo nella cappella del signor Cosimo Pinelli, la quale avendo egli di preciosissimi marmi e di finissimi lavori e d'altre leggiadrie a ciò appartenenti adornata, per più di grazia e più di ornamento le dare, ha voluto che 'l quadro nel quale dovea il meraviglioso e stupendo misterio di Maria Vergine annunziata dall'angelo per sua particolar devozione mostrarsi, fusse fatto per mano di Tiziano,¹⁵ il cui nome e la cui fama, come quella che è assai ben conosciuta dagli uomini, non richiede che io altrimenti ne favelli. E ragionando di quella pittura e varie cose (come si fa) intorno ad essa discorrendo, fummo di contraria opinione in alcune cose, perciò che non potea egli con tranquillo animo sostener l'estreme lodi che io a quella pittura assegnava, e più che mezzanamente dimostrava dolersene, allegando per ingagliardir le sue ragioni la autorità e giudizio di V. S., il quale col suo diceva esser conforme. Il che quando io udi', ancorché per buono spacio mi rimanessi sospeso, alla fine ripreso ardire e credendomi

It so happened, my most illustrious Lord, that the day before yesterday, while I was with Signor Scipione Ammirato at San Domenico's to hear Mass, we found ourselves in the chapel of Signor Cosimo Pinelli. Having embellished it with most precious marbles and most exquisite works¹⁶ and other ornaments of that kind, he decided to heighten its grace and decoration with a painting that, owing to his special devotion, was to represent the wonderful and amazing mystery of the Virgin Mary receiving the Angel's annunciation, which should be made by the hand of Titian, whose name and fame are so well known to everybody that there is no need for me to elaborate on them. And discoursing on that painting and debating various things about it (as so often happens), we found ourselves to be of opposite opinions on some points, for he could not endorse with a serene mind the highest praise that I bestowed on that painting, and he more than just mildly showed his disapproval of it, invoking in his support, to invigorate his arguments, Your Lordship's authority and opinion, which he claimed to be like his own. On hearing this, I remained silent for a good while, yet in the end I regained my courage and, being

¹³ The transcription of the manuscript and footnotes base on: *Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento*, a cura di P. Barocchi, Milano 1971, I, p. 863-900.

¹⁴ Cfr. G. TIRABOSCHI, *Storia della letteratura italiana* [1787-93], secondo l'edizione Venezia 1824, VII, 4, pp. 1244 sg.: «L'ultimo in questo secolo a scrivere la storia fiorentina fu Scipione Ammirato, nato in Lecce nel regno di Napoli verso il 1531 ... L'Ammirato dopo aver fatti in diverse città del regno i primi suoi studi, fu dal padre mandato a Napoli, perché vi studiasse leggi. Ma lo studio della giurisprudenza ebbe anche nell'Ammirato quello sfavorevole accoglimento che da tanti altri uomini di raro ingegno abbiam veduto ad esso fatto nel decorso di questa storia. Le riprensioni del padre non ebber forza bastevole a fare ch'ei non anteponesse al frequentare la scuola de' severi giureconsulti il trattarsi in erudite e piacevoli conversazioni...».

¹⁵ 2. R. LONGHI, in «L'Arte», XXVIII (1925), pp. 40 sgg., riscoprendo il dipinto, ricorda che C. D'ENGENIO, *Napoli sacra*, Napoli 1623, p. 287, riporta la iscrizione della cappella: «D. Mariae Dei Matri sacellum hoc in qua per singulos dies sacrum fiat Cosmus Pinellus dicavit anno 1557», e conclude: «Con ogni probabilità questa dedizione della cappella può servire anche come datazione molto approssimata per il nostro quadro.»

¹⁶ The dull phrase 'most exquisite works' stands for 'finissimi lavori' meaning all kinds of works done in the process of the chapel construction.

di certo che egli, non tanto perché ciò vero fusse, quanto per voler vincermi in ogni modo (per ridersene poscia con meco) avesse in sua difesa oppostomi lo scudo dell'autorità vostra, gli dissi: "Vedi bene già, Ammirato mio, di quinci ciò che tu di', perciocché io non so quanto stia bene, per dar riputazione ai tuoi detti, far dire una così strana openione al signor Marchese. Ma quando per avventura pure così fusse, assai volentien ascolterei le ragioni per le quali Sua Signoria si muove a dir che errore o pecca si possa a quella pittura attribuire. Che dove altre, di quelle che voi dette mi avete, non si ritroveranno, mi darebbe l'animo di pienamente alle sue proposte rispondere."

Venuti insieme dunque due di appresso a visitar V. S. allora che da un grave catarro oppresso in letto giacea, e rientrandosi di quella pittura in ragionamento, trovai esser vero quanto l'Ammirato riferito mi avea. E perché ora motteggiando et ora con piacevole sorriso favoreggiandomi andò V. S., molte cose dintorno quella pittura accennando, dal mio primiero proponimento non dipartendomi, ho fermamente creduto, e tuttavia a me giova di credere oggimai, che tutto quello ch'ella ne disse, fusse stato più tosto per provocare gli altrui giudicii et in particolare per ischerzar con meco (e ciò per favorirmi com'ella suole), che perché così da vero giudicasse. Il che ben assai mi ha confermato il saper poi che l'un dei principali difetti a quella pittura assegnati sia stata giudicata nell'angelo Gabriele la soverchia grassezza; la quale se a bruttura imputar si dee, di Federico vostro securamente m'incresce, il quale non dubito che non diciate che grasso e pieno di volto non sia.¹⁷ Ma dura cosa pare a me il credere che ambedue voi, che intendenti siete e giudiciosi, vogliate per brutto tenere un fanciullo che da tutti più considerati cavalieri e più accorte signore di questa città è stimato di commun parere la più bella creatura fra tutte quelle che oggi si veggono in Napoli di così tenera etade. Se pure a ciò fare pungimento di modestia non la inducesse per non dimostrare di essere un di quelli che, ingannati et adombrati dalla paterna affezione, le proprie fatture, quali che elleno si siano, sovra modo lodano et in loro trabocchevolmente si compiaciono. Perciocché, lodando lei

convinced for certain that he had proposed the shield of your authority in his defence, not so much because he was telling the truth, but rather because he wanted to get the better of me at all costs (to laugh with me afterwards about it), I said to him: 'My dear Ammirato, be careful from now on about what you say, since I do not know that it is a good thing to attribute such a strange opinion to the Signor Marquis merely to give more importance to your words. However, should it by chance be as you say, I would quite gladly listen to the reasons motivating His Lordship to say that either error or defect may be attributed to that painting. And if no others are found in addition to those you have reported, this would give me the heart to answer his arguments in full'.

Two days later, the two of us having come to visit Your Lordship, who in consequence of a serious catarrh had taken to your bed, I found, having reopened the discussion on that painting, that what Ammirato had told me was true. And since Your Lordship, now rallying me, now favouring me with a genial smile, mentioned many things about that painting, I, who would not leave off my first opinion, was firmly convinced and am still glad to believe even now that whatever you said was meant rather to provoke the opinions of others and above all to jest with me (and this to express your favour towards me as is your wont) than because you yourself did so reason. And of this I was quite convinced on learning that one of the main defects attributed to that painting was the Angel Gabriel's excessive plumpness; if this must be deemed unsightly, I feel truly sorry for your Federico,¹⁸ because I am sure you would never say that he is not plump and full in countenance. But it is quite hard for me to believe that both of you, who are so competent and sensible, should think unsightly of a child who by all the most esteemed gentlemen and wise ladies of this city is unanimously considered to be the most beautiful creature of all persons of such a tender age to be seen in Naples today. Unless it was the stimulus of modesty that induced you to this, to show that you were not like those who, misled and mystified by paternal love, overpraise their own offspring, whatever they may be, and take immoderate pleasure in them. In fact, were you to praise

¹⁷ G. SOLIMENE: *Un umanista venosino (Bartolomeo Maranta) giudica Tiziano*, Napoli 1952, p. 14 nota I: «È l'unico figlio di Ferrante Carrafa che sarà, divenuto adulto, ritenuto "il più nobile e grazioso cavaliere della città, così avvenente e così valoroso, che ora l'avresti stimato un Adone ora un Marte" [BOZZELLI, *Notizia de' mss. Corona*, 1891, p. 30]».

¹⁸ Federico, named after his grandfather, who died on 11 October 1558, was born from Ferrante's marriage to Beatrice della Marra (his previous wife, Beatrice di Loffredo, died childless in October 1554). See Aldimari, *Historia*, 340. The year of Federico's birth is not mentioned in any text, but it is suggested here on the basis of the tradition of naming the firstborn male children in honour of paternal grandfather.

la pienezza nell'angelo, tacitamente verrebbe a lodare Federico suo, che pieno è. Ma se gli è vero che maggiore è la grazia e la venustà sua che non sarebbe se così pieno non fusse, e quello, onde ciascuno che una sola volta il vede stupisce et impazza, è il non avere variazione alcuna delle parti che egli ha, so che si contenterà di non tener per bruttezza l'esser grasso negli angeli et intanto schiverà di provocarsi incontro tutta la nobiltà di questa città, la quale ammira questo suo terreno angelo.

Et io, riputandomi a segnalati favori gli scherzi che intorno a questa materia ha V. S. meco usati, me ne resterò contentissimo. Ma perciocché questo medesimo ho inteso da alcuni altri dire, non già per burla, ma perché così da vero si credono, i quali, per quanto a me ne paia, più per una certa consuetudine che per saldo e vero giudizio ne parlano, mi sono risoluto con questa occasione, più con loro che con V. S. parlando (la quale so bene quanto onoratamente dall'altro canto e di quella pittura e di Tiziano sempre ragioni, sì come l'Amirato, che il medesimo ancor egli sente, ne ha fatta poi fede), dirne quanto mi pare in difesa di Tiziano. Et ancor che il giudicare della pittura mia professione non sia stata giamai, non sono io però del tutto fuor di speranza (poiché con esso loro ne parlo, che non ne sono per avventura molto più di me miglior maestri) che, la verità dinanzi agli occhi ponendogli, agevole mi sia i loro groppi snodare.

Et in prima mi dispiace, in loro, che non hanno riguardo a quello che i più savii hanno avuto: cioè che quelle cose che a noi paiono essere errori, appresso i valenti uomini non si debbono così di leggieri colpare e bandire; imperoché può essere che ciò proceda dalla ignoranza nostra, che non l'intendiamo. Et essendo la fama di Tiziano conosciuta non solo per la Italia, ma per tutto il mondo, non doviamo noi, che della sua professione non siamo così dotti, riprenderlo se prima non facciamo diligentissima considerazione e muoviamo i nostri dubbi a persone di ciò intelligenti, accioché non si dica a noi quello che Apelle disse a quel calzolaio: che egli non dovea impacciarsi oltre la scarpetta.¹⁹ E chi bene considererà il meraviglioso arteficio di quella pittura et i particolari e sottilissimi riguardi che in ogni menomma particella di essa si veggono, giudicherà senza dubbio veruno che non senza cagione abbia Tiziano

the Angel's fullness, you would tacitly praise your Federico, who is actually plump. But, if it is true that his grace and loveliness are greater than they would be if he were not so full, and this, about which anyone who sees him even just once marvels and raves, is due to his having no irregularity in any of his features, I know that you will agree not to consider plumpness in angels as an ugly thing and, at the same time, you will avoid attracting the censure of all the nobility of this city, who greatly admire this earthly angel of yours.

And I will most contentedly accept the pleasantries on this subject that Your Lordship has addressed to me, construing them as special marks of your favour. But since I have also heard this, not in jest but seriously, from some other people who, it seems to me, speak about it more from a certain habit than from true and firm reasoning, I have decided on this occasion, speaking more to them than to Your Lordship (who on the contrary, as I very well know, always talks so honourably both about that painting and about Titian, as Ammirato, who feels the same way, has since testified), to say all that I think in defence of Titian. And though the judging of painting has never been my profession, I am not completely without hope (since I am speaking with persons who are no better experts than I am) that, by putting the truth in front of their eyes, it will be easy for me to undo the tangles they have made.

And, in the first place, I am displeased that these people do not have any regard for what the wisest men did know: namely that what might appear to us to be an error, must not, in men of great talent, be so easily faulted or dismissed, for the fact that we do not understand it might proceed from our ignorance. And since Titian's fame is bruited not only throughout Italy, but throughout the world, we, who are not so learned in his art, must not find fault with him if at first we do not make the most accurate study and subject our doubts to people who are competent in this matter, thereby avoiding being told what Apelles said to the cobbler: that he had no business making comments above the shoe. And whoever accurately considers the wonderful craftsmanship of that painting and the special, extremely subtle, care evident in even the most minute of its details, will unquestionably judge that it was for some good reason that Titian

¹⁹ Cfr. PLINIO, XXXV, 85; L. B. ALBERTI: *Della Pittura*, a cura di L. Mallè, Firenze 1950, p. 113; *Leziona di BENEDETTO VARCHI, nella quale si disputa della maggioranza delle arti...*, in *Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento*, a cura di P. Barocchi, Milano 1971, I, p. 266; *Dialogo di Pittura di Messer PAOLO PINO, nuovamente dato in luce*, Venezia 1548, in *Trattati d'arte del Cinquecento*, a cura di P. Barocchi, Bari 1960-62, I, p. 134; *Dialogo della Pittura di M. LODOVICO DOLCE*, Venezia 1557, in *Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento*, a cura di P. Barocchi, Milano 1971, I, p. 295; *Due dialogi di M. GIOVANNI ANDREA GILIO da Fabriano*, Camerino 1564, in *Trattati d'Arte del Cinquecento*, II, p. 73.

voluta far nell'angelo quella faccia così piena, potendola egli fare di mediocre abito o magra. La quale se da per noi non siamo bastevoli a trovarla, fia molto meglio andarla cercando di sapere, che riprendere l'opera e la diligenza dell'artefice. Come è avvenuto eziandio in quella miracolosa dimostrazione del Giudicio Universale dipinto da Michelagnolo nel Vaticano, nella quale ha fatto Cristo, giudice de' buoni e de' cattivi, molto più giovane di quello che alla età di trentatré anni per avventura non si converrebbe e che da ciascun altro famoso pittore, anzi da lui stesso, altre volte non è stato dipinto.²⁰ La qual cosa ancorché sia paruta strana non solo a diverse genti, ma a tutti quasi pittori che di ciò hanno avuto notizia, non di meno niuno si è assicurato di dire che quello sia error, avendo egli in tutto il rimanente pieni gli occhi di ciascuno d'infinita meraviglia.²¹ E non pare verisimile che nella persona più segnalata di tutta l'opera avesse fatta minor considerazione che nelle altre. Fanno ciò bene spesso i famosi pittori per dar da pensare alle genti; per esser stata sempre celebrata quella pittura, nella quale più vi si intende che non vi si dimostra, ancor che assai eziandio vi si dimostri. E si come nella poesia sono le similitudini, le metafore, le figure e l'allegorie, così ancora sono queste medesime cose nella pittura, benché in un modo tacito et alla mutola, come in quella col parlare e con l'azzioni.²²

E di già è cosa chiarissima a ciascuno che la poesia e la pittura, dall'esser l'una parlante e l'altra mutola in fuori, sono una cosa medesima, e ciò che dell'una si dice si può all'altra applicare.²³ Saranno dunque la grassezza di quell'angelo e la giovinezza del Cristo

chose to portray the Angel with such a full face, since he could have decided to make it just middling or thin. And if we are incapable of finding this reason, we would do better to attempt to find it rather than criticize the work and the diligence of the maker. This is also what happened in the miraculous representation of the Last Judgment painted by Michelagnolo in the Vatican, in which Christ, as the judge of the virtuous and the wicked, has much younger looks than would be appropriate for His age of thirty-three years, and no other famous painter, nor he himself, had ever portrayed Him like this. Though this thing seemed strange not only to various people, but also to almost all the painters who heard about it, nonetheless no one rose up to say that that was a mistake, since in the rest he had filled everybody's eyes with infinite wonders. And there is little likelihood that he should have accorded to the most prominent figure in the work less consideration than to the others. Famous painters very often do this sort of thing to provoke people's thought and because painting in which more is to be understood than is made explicit (though much is indeed explicit) has always won the highest praise. And just as in poetry there are similes, metaphors, figures and allegories, so are these same things present in painting, though here in a silent, mute way, while in poetry there is speech and action.

And it is already perfectly clear to everyone that poetry and painting, despite the speaking nature of the one and the mute exterior of the other, are one and the same thing, and that what is said of the one may be applied to the other. The plumpness of that Angel and the youth of Michelagnolo's Christ

²⁰ Sul Cristo michelangiolesco del *Giudizio Finale* cfr. la lettera di NINO SERNINI a Ercole Gonzaga del 19 novembre 1541: «Altri dicono che ha fatto Cristo senza barba e troppo giovane e che non ha in sé quella maestà che gli si conviene», in L. v. PASTOR, *Geschichte der Päpste seit dem Ausgang des Mittelalters*, Freiburg i. Br. 1885 sgg., V, pp. 842 sg.; DOLCE [cfr. la nota 19], p. 822; GILIO [cfr. la nota 19], pp. 72 sg.: «Un altro capriccio anco io noto, il quale è Cristo senza barba, il che, se è ben fatto o no, insino a' ciabattini lo sanno giudicare... Ben mi maraviglio che non l'abbia voluta emendare, ché intendo esserli stato detto da molti, imitando in ciò il grande Apelle, che poneva le sue opere in publico per conoscere gli errori et ammendarli, caso che fussero stati notati da chi conosciuti veramente gli avesse per professione, come fu quello d'una scarpa, notato da un calzolaio».

²¹ I censori (cfr. la nota precedente) parlano di *capriccio* più che di *errore*.

²² Il letterato Maranta è incline ad un *ut pittura poësis* non ammesso dal GIOVANNI ANDREA GILIO, *Degli errori e degli abusi de' pittori circa istorie*, in *Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento*, a cura di P. Barocchi, Milano 1971, I, pp. 318 sg. (per cui Michelangelo nel *Giudizio* avrebbe dovuto imitare i teologi e non i poeti), ma poi rivalutato dal G. COMANINI, *Il Figino*, Mantova 1591, in *Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento*, a cura di P. Barocchi, Milano 1971, I, pp. 425 sgg.

²³ Cfr. VARCHI [cfr. la nota 19], pp. 263 sgg.; DOLCE [cfr. la nota 19], 290 sgg.; GILIO [cfr. la nota 22], 303 sgg., e le note relative.

di Michelangelo due allegorie della pittura mutole, le quali non si possono ancora sciorre da ciascuno. Ancorché si potrebbe per avventura dire che Michelagnolo abbia ciò fatto per voler così esprimere un corpo glorificato e farlo parere alquanto diverso da quello che fu mentre tra noi visse a disagio, riducendo quel fingimento in una certa qualità di metafora, o vogliamo dire di allegoria, chiamando tacitamente perpetua giovinezza la forza della gloria e della grazia. Ché se di quella istessa figura che ebbe mentre fu patibile l'avesse dipinto, lo avrebbe di facile ridotto nella mente di alcuno patibile ancora; il che era fuor della sua intenzione. Da questa somiglianza potremmo noi andar cercando qual sia il discioglimento di quest'altra fizione di Tiziano, e potremmo dire che abbia voluto per questo dinotarci figuratamente che grassi e pieni debbon esser coloro che secondo il profeta godono nell'abondanza della casa di Dio, e per far conoscere alle genti che quello agnolo era dei più cari al Signore, dimostrando nel volto quella abondanza del cibo divino, cioè l'amore, la grazia, lo splendore e gli altri supremi doni, de' quali altri più altri meno sono partecipi.²⁴ Ma quando questa soluzione non fusse accettata, non per questo biasimaremo l'artefice, ma di ragione siamo tenuti a gir pensando se meglio di questo si può dire in esplicazione della mente di Tiziano.

Consiste la pittura, come eziandio la poesia, nella imitazione; et imitar non si possono se non le cose che abbiamo vedute. E perché non si ritruova pittore alcuno che si vanti di aver veduto un angelo, segue che niuno potrà dipignerlo come sta, non essendo gli angeli corporei se non quanto, pigliando un corpo, se ne servono.²⁵ Ma perché all'uomo non è stato concesso di veder più bella veta di quella dell'uomo istesso, e sapendo che li angeli sono bellissimi, gli hanno nel dipignerli rassembrati alle più belle cose che nel mondo si siano vedute e così gli hanno dato figura umana, denotando per le ali non solo la velocità e la prontezza del voler con ogni celerità servire, ma eziandio la natura loro, la quale è che, liberi da ogni corporal peso e senza mescolanza di terrena salma, lontani da questa nostra inferior parte s'inalzino sempre per lo

are, then, two mute allegories of painting, which no one has yet been able to decipher. However, one could possibly say that Michelagnolo did what he did because in that way he wanted to express a glorified body and make it appear somewhat different from the body as it was when it lived among us in hardship, making that transformation into a kind of metaphor, or should we say allegory, tacitly identifying perpetual youth with the force of glory and grace. For, if he had painted Him with the same aspect He had when He was suffering, then he would have easily reduced Him, in people's minds, to someone who was still suffering, which was not his intention. With reference to this comparison we could try to find the solution to the other contrivance, that of Titian's, and we could say that, by it, he meant to affirm figuratively that those who, according to the prophet, enjoy the abundance of the house of God must be plump and full, and also to make it clear to the people that this Angel was one of Our Lord's most precious, showing forth in his face the abundance of heavenly food; that is to say, of love, grace, splendour and the other supreme gifts in which others participate in greater or lesser measure. However, if this solution were not accepted, still there is no good reason why we should blame the artist, but we are in good conscience bound to consider whether we can find something better than this to explain the mind of Titian.

Painting, like poetry, consists of imitation, and we can imitate only the things that we have seen. And since no painter can be found who can say he has seen an angel, it follows that no one can paint angels as they look, since they are not corporeal, except in the measure they use the body, when they assume one. But since man has not been permitted to see a more beautiful appearance than the one he has himself, and (knowing that angels are exceedingly beautiful) has, in depicting them, made them similar to the most beautiful things that have ever been seen in the world and so has given them a human aspect, connoting by their wings not only speed and a ready willingness to serve with all celerity, but also the angels' nature, by virtue of which, being free from all corporeal weight and having no such admixture as the earthly body has, they, who are far from this inferior part, climb ever up the

²⁴ Nell'abbinamento delle presunte allegorie di Michelangelo e di Tiziana gioca una scherzevole ironia, riduttiva delle censure dei teologi (cfr. ancora GILIO [cfr. la nota 19], pp. 186 sgg.).

²⁵ Il medico e botanico Maranta, nonostante la sua inclinazione alla sperimentazione, è costretto ad accettare la distinzione tra *pittore storico* e *pittore poeta* (cfr. GILIO [cfr. la nota 22], pp. 303 sgg.).

camino della celeste vita a quell'alta e sublime sede, nella quale il creator del tutto dimora. La faccia puerile, non solo perché è più bella, ma eziandio per dimostrare la purità loro e la ubidienza, per le quali sono accetti a Dio. Per queste cagioni et altre simili è stato già da tutti accettato che gli angeli così si abbiano a dimostrare.²⁶

La qual pittura non sarà vera imitazione, ma finta, accettata però per vera, perché migliore non si può fare.²⁷ Come è la imagine della Guerra, o vogliamo dire la idea, la quale era un uomo ferocissimo con le mani legate dietro le spalle; descrissela Virgilio aggiugnendovi la bocca sanguinosa e cento catene che li strigevano le mani di dietro con cento nodi, e facendola tutta terribile e fiera, sedente sopra molte armi offensive.²⁸ Aristide fu il primo che dipinse l'animo et i cinque sensi, cosa certo assai difficile a immaginarsi, non che a farsi, ma come li si facesse non ritrovo io scritto; e quando altri volesse far questa pruova, potrebbe sicuramente farlo a suo modo e di nuovo fingere la pittura, per non ve ne essere altra per inanzi accettata.²⁹ Michelangelo scolpì in marmo il Sonno e la Notte...

path of celestial life towards that high and sublime seat where the Creator of all things dwells. They have childlike faces, not only because it is more beautiful that way, but also to highlight the angels' purity and obedience, which qualities make them agreeable to God. For these and other similar reasons it has been accepted by everybody that angels should be portrayed in this way.

This portrayal will not be a true imitation, but an invented one, which will however be accepted as true because it is not possible to do better. An example of this is the image of War, or should we say the 'idea' of War: a very ferocious man with his arms tied behind his back. When Virgil described it, he added a bloody mouth and a hundred chains, which held the hands behind with a hundred knots, and he made it most terrible and fierce, and sat it upon many offensive weapons. Aristides was the first to paint the soul and the five senses, something very difficult both to imagine and to do, but I have not found it written anywhere how he actually made this. And, if someone else should wish to make this attempt, he could surely do so in his own way and produce a new invented representation, since a previously accepted one is not available. Michel' Angelo sculpted Sleep and Night in marble (...)

²⁶ Sugli attributi dell'angiolo cfr. GILIO [cfr. la nota 19], pp. 111 sg.: «L'antica consuetudine è di dipingere gli [le ali] per dimostrare la sua velocità e la prestezza in eseguire i precetti di Dio; e poi così sono ne la Scrittura figurati [cioè secondo Isaia ed Ezechiele]... E per non voler allegare tutte l'auttorità de la Scrittura che in molti luoghi si prova e specialmente ne lo Apocalisse, basta a concludere che per ogni rispetto si deve agli angeli far l'ali, sì perché non paiano puri uomini, sì per mostrare la loro velocità; e si deve dipingerli anca giovini bellissimi, perché così sono appariti e per farli differenti dai demoni, che vogliono essere bruttissimi, acciò sparentino, sì come quelli consolano».

²⁷ Cioè una pittura vera per tradizione; cfr. anche G. PALEOTTI, *Discorso intorno alle imagini sacri e profane*, Bologna 1582, in *Trattati d'arte del Cinquecento*, a cura di P. Barocchi, Bari 1960-62, II, p. 246: «Noi diciamo che in due modi, cioè con due intenzioni, si possono formare le imagini degli spiriti beati e sostanze celesti: l'una per isprimere la divinità come è in sé stessa, e questa saria pazzia, non essendo capace materia alcuna di simile espressione, né sendo la divinità cosa che si possa ritrarre; l'altra è per figurare quelle cose ne le forme che ritroviamo nella sacra Scrittura o che dai santi nostri Padri a noi sono state lasciate, come seria il dipingere lo Spirito Santo in forma di colomba et Iddio Padre con faccia di vecchio e gli angeli giovini et alati con diadema o altri misteri che se li convengono ». Cfr. anche COMANINI [cfr. la nota 22], p. 398.

²⁸ Dalle immagini cristiane a quelle pagane (cfr. GILIO [cfr. la nota 19], pp. 101 sgg.). Cfr. VIRGILIO, *Aen.*, I, 294-6.

²⁹ Cfr. PLINIO, XXXV, 98: «Is [Aristides Thebanus] omnium primus animum pinxit et sensus hominis expressit, quae vocant Graeci ethe, item perturbationes, durior paulo in coloribus» (PLINIO IL VECCHIO, *Storia delle arti antiche, testo*, traduzione e note di S. FERRI, Roma 1960, p. 175: «Costui, primo di tutti dipinse l'anima dei suoi personaggi ed espresse i sentimenti umani, ciò che i Greci chiamano ethe, ἠθη, o perturbazioni; era però un po' troppo duro nei colori»); ALBERTI [cfr. la nota 19], pp. 93 sg.: «Dicono che Aristide Tebano . . . molto conosceva questi movimenti [dell'animo], quali certo e noi conosceremo quando a conoscerli porremo studio e diligenza», e VARCHI [cfr. la nota 19], p. 265. Il Maranta sembra intendere come allegoria quella che per Plinio è una capacità espressiva.

ma in imagine di uomini, che più tosto si ponno dire l'uno uomo che dorme e l'altro... ma così anticamente furono accettati,³⁰ come anco la descrizione della Fama appresso Virgilio, la qual dice essere un mostro orribile e grandissimo con le ali e con el corpo pieno d'infinite piume, infiniti occhi aperti, infinite bocche, lingue e orecchie.³¹ E come di molti altri si può vedere nell'inferno di

but he made them in the image of man, so that the one may be said to be a sleeping man and the other (...), but this is how they were originally accepted, as is the description of the Fame, which, as Virgil says, was a huge, horrible winged monster with a body full of numberless feathers, numberless open eyes, numberless mouths, tongues and ears. And as many other similar characters that can be seen in Virgil's Inferno,

³⁰ I punti di lacuna, esistenti nel manoscritto, indicano nello scrivente una incertezza poi non superata. Il *Sonno* è un evidente fraintendimento del *Giorno* che, tra l'altro, non dorme. Si ricordi che la prima descrizione delle due Allegorie maschili della Cappella Medicea risale al *La Bellezza della città di Firenze. Scritta già da M. FR. BOCCHI ed ora da M. GIOVANNI CINELLI*, Firenze 1677, pp. 524 sg., 529 sgg. (cfr. G. VASARI, *La Vita di Michelangelo*, curata e comentata da P. BAROCCHI, Milano 1962, III, pp. 983 sgg.), mentre la *Notte* era già famosa prima delle *Vite* torrentiniane (cfr. ad esempio la lettera di ANTON FRANCESCO DONI a Michelangelo del 12 gennaio 1543: «Ho visto poi in quella Notte il più saporoso sonno che si gustasse giamai, o leggiadramente vedessi dormire a creatura vivente: e pur l'ho trovata pietra, se ben mille volte io mi son messo, come per una Dea che dormisse formata in Paradiso, a destarla», in *Le tre di lettere del DONI*, Venezia 1552, p. 6). Cfr. anche *Le Vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori, scritte da M. GIORGIO VASARI*, Firenze 1550, p. 977: «E che potrò io dire della Notte, statua unica o rara? Chi è quello che abbia per alcun secolo in tale arte veduto mai statue antiche o moderne così fatte? conoscendosi non solo la quiete di chi donne, ma il dolore e la maninconia di chi perde cosa onorata e grande ... Nella qual figura quella sonnolenza si scorge che nelle imagini addormentate si vede».

³¹ Per la *Fama* virgiliana cfr. *Aen.*, XV, 173-90: «Fama malum qua non aliud velocius allum: mobilitate viget viresque acquirit eundo, / parva metu primo, mox sese attollit in auras / ingrediturque solo et caput inter nubila condit. / Illam Terra parens, ira inritata deorum, / extremam, ut perhibent, Coeo Enceladoque sororem / progenuit pedibus celerem et pernibus alis, / monstrum horrendum ingens, cui quot sunt corpore plumae, tot vigiles oculi subter – mirabile dictu – / tot linguae, totidem ora sonant, tot subrigit auras. / Nocte volat, caeli medio terraeque per umbram / stridens, nec dulci declinat lumina somno; / luce sedet custos aut summi culmine tecti / turribus aut altis, magnas et territat urbes, / tam ficti pravi que tenax quam nuntia veri. / Haec tum multiplici populos sermone replebat / gaudens et pariter facta atque infecta canebat» (CARO, IV, 171-90: «È questa fama un mal di cui null'altro / è più veloce; e com' più va, più cresce, / e maggior forza acquista. È da principio / picciola e debbil cosa, e non s'arrischia / di palesarsi; poi di mano in mano / si discuopre e s'avanza e sopra terra / sen va movendo e sormontando a l'aura, / tanto che 'l capo infra le nubi asconde. / Dicon che già la nostra madre antica, / per la ruina de' giganti irata contr' a' celesti, al mondo la produsse, / d'Encèlodo e di Ceo minor sorella; / mostro orribile e grande, d'ali presta / e veloce di piè; che quante ha piume, / tanti ha sotto occhi vigilantissimi, e tante / (meraviglia a ridirlo) ha lingue e bocche / per favellare e per udire orecchi. / Volà di notte per l'oscure tenebre / de la terra e del ciel senza riposo, / stridendo sempre e non chiude occhi mai. / Il giorno sopra tetti e per le torri / sen va de le città, spiando tutto / che si vede e che s'ode; e seminando, / non men che 'l bene e 'l vero, il male e 'l falso, / di rumori: empie e di spavento i popoli. / Questa'gioiosa, bisbigliando in prima, / poscia crescendo, del seguito caso / molte cose dicea vere e non vere»).

Virgilio simili a questi, come la Fame e la Egestà, che chi vi va ben considerando, troverà questa esser quasi una prosopopeia della pittura.³²

Ho voluto dire questo perché sappiamo dove può il pittore aver la licenza di variare a suo modo e dove no, e così vediamo quanto abbia Tiziano errato. E ciò dall'esempio della poesia si può pigliare, nella quale (come Aristotele ne insegna) sono gli errori appartenenti all'artificio, i quali scemano la riputazione al poeta, et altri sono accidentali, de' quali se ne fa passaggio. E come un poeta non può alterare né variare la favola già così accettata da tutti, come per caso che Laio sia stato ammazzato da Edipo suo figliuolo, ma ben può variare gli episodi, cioè il modo come questa morte sia accaduta, così il pittore non può dipingere l'angelo in altro modo che in quello che è stato accettato di tutti.³³ Ma il modo il può variare, ché ha proporzione con l'episodii della poesia. Imperoché può a sua posta far che l'angelo mentre annunzia stia ancor sospeso in aria, può farlo toccare il suolo della camera co' piedi, può variar la sua figura di farla piena o scarna o mediocre et altre cose simili, le quali per la varietà loro fanno differenza da pittor a pittore, come gli episodii da poeta a poeta. E quando in queste cose si pecca, sono errori accidentali e che non guastano la sostanza della invenzione.³⁴ In modo che non diremo che Tiziano abbia errato altresì per aver dimostrato questo mistero in una loggia e per avervi fatta dimostrazione di uno edificio molto più soperbo di quello che alla bassa condizione di Maria per sventura non si convenisse; da che queste cose il poeta et il pittore le può variare e mutare à suo modo.³⁵ Percioché Apelle dipinse l'immagine della Guerra aggiugnendovi Alessandro trionfante in un carro, senza metterle le armi sotto; ma non per questo fu da lui diverso Virgilio, senon nel modo.³⁶ Così dunque diremo che non si può Tiziano riprendere perché abbia di volto pieno dipinto quell'agnolo: primo,

like the Fame and the Poverty, so clearly that, if one thinks well about it, he will find that this is almost a prosopopeia³⁷ in painting.

I have decided to say all this so that we know where the painter has the licence to vary as he likes best and where he does not; we will thereby be able to see the extent to which Titian has erred. In this case poetry can serve as an example: in it (as Aristotle teaches) errors pertaining to craftsmanship are those that lessen the poet's reputation, while others, the consequence of accident, are passed over. And just as a poet cannot alter or vary a universally accepted story (for example the killing of Laius by his son Oedipus) yet may vary the episodes (for instance, the manner in which this death occurred) similarly the painter cannot depict the Angel in a way that is not already accepted by everyone. However, he may vary the manner, as this is analogous to episodes in poetry. He may, in fact, choose to show the Announcing Angel still suspended in the air, or he may make the Angel's feet rest on the floor of the room; he may change his figure and make it either full, or gaunt or middling or some other way; and these features, because of their variety, differ from painter to painter, as do the episodes from poet to poet. And when someone errs in these things, the error is accidental and does not spoil the substance of the invention. So that we will not say that Titian erred by setting this mystery in a loggia or by depicting an edifice much more superb than one suitable to the low condition of Mary, since both the poet and the painter can vary and change these things as they wish. Likewise, Apelles presented the image of War, adding to it a triumphant Alexander in his chariot, without pinning War's arms under it; but not for this reason was Virgil any different from him, except in the manner of his representation. So we shall say that Titian cannot be reproved for painting that Angel with a full face: first because,

³² Cfr. *Aen.*, VI, 276 sg.

³³ Sulle possibili *licenze* del poeta e del pittore cfr. GILIO [cfr. la nota 22], pp. 313 sgg., 321.

³⁴ Il caso dell'angiolo segue dunque le regole della *storia* e della *favola* (cfr. ancora GILIO [cfr. la nota 19], pp. 313 sgg., 321) e la istanza teologica si stempera in una più serena cultura letteraria.

³⁵ Per casi affini cfr. GILIO [cfr. la nota 19], pp. 314 sgg.

³⁶ Per Apelle cfr. PLINIO, XXXV, 93, e GILIO [cfr. la nota 19], p. 103: «Il medesimo [Apelle] in un'altra tavola dipinse Alessandro Magno con l'immagine de la Guerra, con le mani dietro legate, innanzi al carro». Per Virgilio cfr. p. 868 e la nota relativa.

³⁷ Personification.

che non essendo egli inventore della forma, ha potuto variare quello che è accidentale; appresso, che quando bene fusse errore (il che io non confesso già), sarebbe nondimeno di quelli che si concedono ai pittori, de' quali parlava Orazio quando dicea: «Sunt delicta tamen quibus ignovisse velimus».³⁸

L'altro di che è ripresa quella pittura, è che non par loro cosa da buon pittore avere mostrato dell'angelo mezzo volto solo, potendolo fare di modo che tutta la faccia paresse, perciocché così empie molto più gli occhi de' riguardanti. Ma di qua si può accorgere V. S. quanto costoro nelle lor ragioni (si come quelli che nel buio dimorano) vadino a tentone. E certamente che l'essere altrui alle volte molto concesso, toglie loro gran parte del debito conoscimento; il che forse a questi è in cotali giudicii intravenuto, i quali errore battezano quello che a somma lode attribuir si deve. Perciocché, avendo Tiziano voluto mostrar la grandezza del suo ingegno, non volle mostrar dell'angelo se non mezzo il volto, ma di sì bel modo fe' spiccar la bocca in atto di parlare, che in vederne quel mezzo solo vi par vedere anco tutto quello che si nasconde; e parmi portarsi costoro da volgari che non si fidano di penetrare più addentro di quello che il senso li mostra nella superficie: simili del tutto a quelli i quali a guisa di femmine richieggono la musica tutta piena di consonanze e piace loro più una canzone fatta per cervello di un pretuzzo ignorante, perché empie l'orecchie, che non una composizione di un valent'uomo,³⁹ come per caso di Filippo di Monte, del Nolano, del Lando o di Pietro Vinci,⁴⁰ i quali con la vaghezza delle fughe e col fuggir alle volte le cadenze e con lo inasprire la troppa dolcezza delle consonanze, le quali non altrimenti che i bocconi grassi stuccano a primo, e con lo aspettare e rientrare a tempo delle voci et accompagnar l'aria alla qualità delle parole, e con altre infinite belle varietà piacerono a quelli che dell'artificio della musica sono intendenti e, per molte che se ne ascoltino, pur fanno restare un desiderio di volerne più sentire. E se alle volte discendono anche loro alle consonanze, ponendo da parte l'artificio,

not having himself invented the form, he was free to vary all that was accidental; next because, even if that were an error (which however I do not admit), still it would be of the kind one concedes to painters, the kind of error that Horace meant when he said: 'Sunt delicta tamen quibus ignovisse velimus'.

The other point on which some people criticize this painting is that in their opinion a good painter should not have shown only half of the Angel's face, when he could have made him in such a way that the full face were visible, thereby filling the eyes of the viewers much more. But from this Your Lordship can see to what extent these people proceed gropingly in their reasoning (like those who dwell in darkness). And certainly the fact that sometimes much is conceded by others, depriving them of a great part of the proper judgement – which is what possibly happened to them in giving such opinions, so that they baptize as errors what ought to be highly praised. Therefore Titian, wishing to show the greatness of his talent, chose to show only half of the Angel's face, but in such a beautiful way did he emphasize the mouth in the act of speaking that, even if we see just that half, it causes us to see also all that is hidden. And it seems to me that those who do not venture to penetrate more deeply into what their senses show to them on the surface comport themselves vulgarly, entirely similar to those who, like sissies,⁴¹ ask for a music full of consonance and prefer a song suited to the sensibilities of an ignorant priestling because it fills the ears rather than a composition of a talented man, like Filippo di Monte, for example, or Nolano or Lando or Pietro Vinci, who with the charm of their fugues (and, at times, their rejection of cadences) or with the making discords in overly sweet consonance (which, like fatty morsels, is cloying from the outset) and with the waiting and re-entering of voices in tempo, and with matching the tune to the quality of the words, as well as with an infinite number of other beautiful variations best satisfy those who are connoisseurs in the art of music and, however much they hear, still feel a desire for more. And if at times they, themselves, yield to consonance, putting their artifice aside,

³⁸ *Ars poet.*, 347 («Ci sono tuttavia difetti che vorremmo perdonare»); cfr. GILIO [cfr. la nota 19], pp. 61 sg.

³⁹ Per simili paralleli tra pittura e musica cfr. *Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento*, a cura di P. Barocchi, Milano 1971, I, pp. 235 sgg.

⁴⁰ Philippus de Monte (Malines 1521-Praga 1603), uno dei maggiori maestri della scuola fiamminga, compose polifonie sacre e profane. Pietro Vinci (Nicosia 1535 circa-1584), maestro di cappella nella chiesa di Santa Maria Maggiore a Bergamo dal 1568 al 1580, autore di madrigali, mottetti, messe e altre composizioni sacre.

⁴¹ When Maranta characterizes these listeners as 'i quali a guisa di femmine', he thinks least of all about women, as he juxtaposes them and priestlings. See, however, Larson, 'Unaccompanied madrigal', 261, who thinks the opposite.

fannolo per alquanto sodisfare al popolo, poiché vedono che ben pochi sono coloro che gustino il vero artificio, et in questo a me piace molto lo stile di quelli i quali, non curandosi di piacere al volgo, fanno tutte le loro composizioni secondo l'arte richiede, perciocché senza dubbio veruno queste saranno più durabili et eterne. Et Aristotele biasma i poeti che compongono i loro poemi a compiacenza del popolo,⁴² e questo li dispiacque eziandio in Omero, il quale nella Odissea mescolò con le persone illustri ancora quelli di bassa fortuna; la qual cosa è fuora del vero artificio tragico et epico.⁴³ Apelle dipinse Ercole mostrando del capo solo la parte di dietro, ma così ben tirato, che patta a chi lo mirava anco di vedere tutta la faccia intera; e quello che non piacque alla turba, diè meraviglia estrema a' più famosi pittori di quel secolo.⁴⁴ Parimente per cosa assai rara e di bel soggetto fu la Ifigenia posta al sacrificio, dipinta da Timante; il quale avendo con diverse effigie di mestizia dipinti tutti i circostanti e per voler mostrar maggior dolore nel padre, il dipinse col viso velato, volendo che 'l pianto suo s'intendesse più che non si mostrasse.⁴⁵ Quelli adunque che in tutte le loro pitture si sforzano di mostrare tutto il volto, dimostrano di aver poco animo e, mentre che han paura di non inciampare, si cautelano solo con lo astenersi dal non errare. Ma questi, se bene fuggono la colpa, non per questo meritano lode.⁴⁶ Et in questo pensiero fu sempre il Pistoia, pittore de' nostri tempi, il quale fu stimato per uomo raro dal volgo, per aver solo una certa vaghezza

they do so to satisfy the crowd, as they see that those who enjoy real craftsmanship are few indeed. For this reason I very much like the style of those who, indifferent to pleasing the mob, make all their compositions in accordance with the dictates of art, since without question, such works will be more durable and eternal. And Aristotle blames the poets who compose their verse according to the taste of the mob; he even disliked this trait in Homer, who in his Odyssey mixed the illustrious and the base, a practice that is alien to the real art of tragedy and epic. In depicting Hercules, Apelles showed only the back of his head, but he made it so perfectly that those who looked at it felt as if they saw the full face as well, and that which was not appreciated by the crowd roused the greatest wonder in the most famous painters of that century. Likewise, an extremely rare thing and a beautiful subject was Timanthes's Iphigenia poised for sacrifice; in it the artist, who had painted all the surrounding characters with different mournful faces, chose to express a greater sorrow in the father by showing him with a veiled face, as he wanted his moan to be heard rather than seen. Therefore, those who in all their paintings strive to show the entire face reveal their lack of courage and, being afraid of stumbling, they protect themselves only by refraining from erring. But the fact that they avoid censure does not make them worthy of praise. This was always the attitude of il Pistoia, a painter of our time, who was esteemed a great man by the mob merely because he had a certain charm

⁴² Cioè senza ordine. Cfr. ARISTOTELE, *Ars poet.*, 1450b, e DOLCE [cfr. la nota 19], p. 796.

⁴³ Diversamente GILIO [cfr. la nota 19], p. 89: «Del che [del pittore misto] l'esempio potiamo pigliare da Omero e da Virgilio, i quali ne' lor poemi fecero sì dolce, vaga, leggiadra e bella mescolanza...»; PALEOTTI [cfr. la nota 27], p. 450: «Il verisimile concesso a pittori e poeti, sì come dichiara Aristotele, si intende secondo il senso popolare e certa capacità del vulgo; e però dice egli che il sapere fingere accomodatamente non è impresa di ciascuno, ma ricerca gran perizia, giudizio et intelletto, e per questo effetto egli propone Omero da imitarsi, come quello che ha servato grandemente il decoro et accomodatosi graziosamente al verisimile».

⁴⁴ Cfr. PLINIO, XXXV, 94: «Eiusdem arbitrantur manu esse et in Dianae tempio Herculem aversum, ut, quod est difficillimum, faciem eius ostendat verius pictura quam promittat» (FERRI [cfr. la nota 29], p. 171: «Pensano che sia di mano dello stesso artista, nel tempio di Artemis, anche lo Herakles visto di dietro in modo che, cosa difficilissima, la pittura mostri in realtà il viso di lui, piuttosto che lasciarlo immaginare»). Il commento all'esempio antico convalida nel Maranta la carenza di quegli interessi pedagogici che invece prevalgono negli scrittori controriformistici.

⁴⁵ Esempio ben più famoso del precedente: cfr. VARCHI [cfr. la nota 19], pp. 266; GILIO [cfr. la nota 22], p. 315 sg.

⁴⁶ Cfr. DOLCE [cfr. la nota 19], p. 807.

nel colorire. Ma nelle sue pitture non vi s'intendea più di quello che mostrava, e di loro potean ugualmente dar giudizio il volgo e gli artefici; e, veduta una volta, una sua opera non lasciava desiderio alcuno di ritornarvi, non altrimenti che fanno quelli che con empir una volta ben bene il corpo di qualche cibo, l'hanno dopo per lungo tempo in abominazione.⁴⁷ E fu di bell'arte eziandio appresso l'Ariosto il finire i suoi canti con lasciar il lettore sempre con desiderio di leggere appresso.⁴⁸ Ma chi sarà stato innamorato (come credo che sia V. S.) non gli parrà strano il non vedere nelle pitture tutto quello che si potrebbe vedere; ché ben sanno loro come col pensiero si passi adentro, malgrado delle vesti, in quelle parti che si nascondono, col vederne solo alcune di quelle che si mostrano; la qual cosa dona loro maggior diletto e fa più crescere le fiammelle amorose, che non farebbe se ogni parte mirassino. Ché, come non si comporta senza affanno il lungo digiuno delle cose dell'anima, così la sazietà nelle cose belle si schifa e si fugge da ogni nobile spirito. Non vedo dunque come si possa in quell'angiolo biasmare né quella pienezza e carnosità di volto, né quel sito in mostrarne il mezzo solo, poiché tante avvertenze vi ha avuto un così circospetto artefice.

Ma quello che per avventura si potrebbe in esso riprendere è che non par che abbia Tiziano bene intesa la proporzione di tutto il corpo dell'angelo: perciocché dal ginocchio insino al piede è così poco spazio a rispetto di tutto il corpo, che pare una cosa assai fuori della naturalità. E se in altri soggetti si deve osservare la proporzione, molto più necessaria pare a doversi osservare negli angeli, i quali sono di tutta bellezza e più simili a Iddio di tutte le altre cose visibili a invisibili. E come mi rendo certo che V. S. Ill.ma sappia molto bene, il corpo ben proporzionato si divide, infra

in his colours. But in his paintings nothing was understood more than what was shown, and they could be judged both by artists and the mob; and once seen, his works did not leave the viewer with any desire to see them again, just as it happens with those who, having stuffed themselves to the gills on a certain food, hold it long afterwards in abomination. And it was indeed great artistry in Ariosto to finish his cantos by always leaving the reader with a desire to go on reading. But anyone who has been in love (as I believe Your Lordship has) will not find it strange not to see in a painting all that could be seen; lovers, in fact, know only too well how, just by seeing some of the parts that are revealed, they can, in spite of the clothes, go with their thoughts into those parts that are hidden, which gives them greater pleasure and feeds the flames of love more than if they could see all the parts. Because, just as a long abstinence from the things of the spirit does not come without some suffering, so every noble mind loathes and shuns satiation with beautiful things. Therefore, I do not see how one can blame the fullness and fleshiness of that Angel's face, or the position that shows only half of it, since a very cautious artist made all this with so much care.

But something that might possibly be blamed in it is the fact that Titian does not seem to have correctly understood the proportion of the Angel's whole body: from the knee to the foot there is, in fact, so little distance in comparison with the whole body that this seems something quite unnatural. And if proportion must be respected in other subjects, so much the more necessary is it to respect it in angels, who are absolutely beautiful and closer to the likeness of God than any other visible or invisible thing. And a well-proportioned body, as I am certain that Your Illustrious Lordship knows very well, is divided

⁴⁷ Cfr. *Le Vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori, scritte da M. VASARI*, Firenze 1568, II, p. 147 [IV, pp. 647 sg.]: «Fu discepolo di Giovanfrancesco [Penni] Lionardo, detto il Pistoia, per esser pistoiese, il quale lavorò alcune cose in Lucca, et in Roma fece molti ritratti di naturale, ed in Napoli per il vescovo d'Ariano, Diomede Caraffa oggi cardinale, fece in San Domenico una tavola della Lapidazione di Santo Stefano in una sua cappella; ed in Monte Oliveto ne fece un'altra, che fu posta all'altar maggiore e levatane poi per dar luogo a un'altra di simile invenzione di mano di Giorgio Vasari aretino. Guadagnò Lionardo molti danari con que' signori napoletani, ma ne fece poco capitale, perché se gli giocava di mano in mano: e finalmente si morì in Napoli lasciando nome di essere stato buon coloritore, ma non già d'aver avuto molto buon disegno».

⁴⁸ L'Ariosto torna ad essere esemplare per i pittori (cfr. DOLCE [cfr. la nota 19], pp. 298 sgg., 830), dopo i rigori tridentini.

molte altre divisioni, in quattro parti uguali:⁴⁹ l'una è dalla sommità della testa insino al mezzo delle mammelle, l'altra insino alla infima parte del pettignone, o vogliam dire alla piegatura dell'interoscio; e da questa parte alla fine del ginocchio sotto la padella è la terza, e l'ultima poi insino alla stremità del tallone. Dovendo dunque lo spacio che è dalla inferior parte del ginocchio insino al basso del piede essere uguale a quello che è dal medesimo luoco del ginocchio alla piegatura della coscia, chi ben consideri, in quell'angelo non par che truovi questa corrispondenza, anzi par che sia poco meno che doppio intervallo quello che può essere dal pettine al ginocchio a quello che è dal ginocchio al calcagno. O se pure ne volessimo immaginare questa misura ben proporzionata (perciocché il corpo è vestito e per congettura giudichiamo il segno dell'interoscio), ne segue poi un altro disordine: che lo spacio che è da questo interoscio alla parte di dietro, dove l'angelo viene a piegarsi, sarebbe assai più di quello che il suo diritto richiede. Questo medesimo difetto par che sia nella Madonna, la quale, oltre al ginocchio, poco più di niente le resta per denotare la lunghezza della gamba, oltreché, col stare inginocchiata su quel taglio dello scabello, par che stia molto a disagio, né potrebbe uno durarvi così senza sentire estremo dolore. Ma questo non è di molto momento, ché chi è rapita dallo spirito e posta in un certo modo fuori di sé, non è meraviglia che non miri come si ponga a ginocchione e che non senta dolore, ancorché vi sia la cagion di esso. Il braccio dritto ancora dal gomito insino alla estremità della mano par che pecchi del troppo lungo, perciocché tre di quei gomiti sopravanzerebbono la lunghezza del corpo suo dal capo al ginocchio, dovendo il gomito essere di uguale spacio che è una delle misure dette di sopra, che fanno la quarta parte di tutto il corpo. Ma perché non è l'intento nostro ragionare della Madonna, ma dell'angelo solo, per questo non starò a dilungarmi in essa, riserbandomi solo nella fine di questo mio discorso rispondere a tutti questi dubbi.

Ora, tornando all'angelo, per esser la pittura una di quelle cose che si lodano co l'epiteto del bello, vediamo quante cose si richieggano a far la bellezza, acciò possiamo conoscere se in quell'angelo vi siano. La bellezza umana (perché di questa è il nostro ragionamento) alla sua perfezione richiede debita proporzione, debita

among many other divisions, into four equal parts: one, from the top of the head to the middle of the breast; another, down to the lowest part of the pubis, or rather, should we say, to the joint of the thigh and the hip; the third one extends from this place to the bottom of the knee under the patella, and the last one goes to the extreme end of the heel. Then, if the distance between the lower part of the knee to the bottom of the foot must be equal to the distance from the same spot in the knee to the connection of the thigh, on close observation one does not find this correspondence in that Angel: it even seems that the distance between the pubis and the knee may be a little less than twice as long as the distance from knee to heel. Now, supposing we were willing to think that this distance is indeed well-proportioned (since the figure is clothed and we imagine the spot of the thigh-joint only conjecturally), then another disproportion emerges: in fact, the space from this thigh-joint to the back of the Angel, there where he bends, is much wider than it ought to be. This same flaw seems to be present in the Madonna, on whom little more than nothing, apart from the knee, is left to give an indication of the length of her leg; moreover she appears to be in great discomfort, in consequence of her kneeling on the edge of the stool, and no one could maintain this posture for long without feeling extreme pain. This is not so important, however, since if a woman is rapt by the Spirit and is in a certain way out of herself, it is no wonder that she is unaware that she is kneeling and she does not feel any pain, though there may be a good reason for it. The right arm, from the elbow to the end of the hand, seems faulty by being too long, since three of those elbows would surpass the length of her body from the head to the knee, as the length of the elbow should be equal to one of the divisions mentioned above, each of which is the fourth part of the whole body. However, it is not our intention to discuss the Madonna, but only the Angel. Therefore I will not elaborate upon her, though I reserve the option to give an answer to all these doubts at the end of my discourse.

Now, returning to the Angel, if painting is one of those things that are lauded with the epithet 'beautiful', let's see how many things are required to make up beauty, so that we may know whether they are present in that Angel. In order to be perfect, human beauty (for this is what we are talking about) requires proper proportion, proper

⁴⁹ Divisioni semplicistiche rispetto a quelle vitruviane o pseudo-varroniane (cfr. PINO e DOLCE [cfr. la nota 19], pp. 104 sg., pp. 800 sgg.).

quantità e convenevole vivacità di colore et [oltre a] ciò una certa grazia in tutte tre queste cose, che per altro nome siamo usi dir leggiadria.⁵⁰ La pittura che imita questa bellezza deve anco essa avere tutte queste quattro cose, anzi di più, separatamente, la disposizione, la quale se bene nei corpi viventi si truova e si richiede al compimento della bellezza, nondimeno s'intende sotto la quarta; che è la grazia e la venustà. Ma nella pittura si mette come a condizione separata, perciocché, consistendo la grazia negli atti e ne' movimenti de' membri, non può la pittura mostrarne più di uno, e questo uno basta a darli bell'aria e farla parer meravigliosa.⁵¹ Ma nei viventi la leggiadria è in più atti e più movimenti, perciocché, se uno che nel resto fusse bello facesse una sola azione con grazia, ancorché sempre quell'una dimostrasse e non altra, non per questo si terrebbe nel numero de' graziosi, ma più tosto de' goffi, e la cagione è che una sola cosa bella in un soggetto che è atto a poterne avere infinite belle, saria in guisa che non si desidera di vedere spesse volte. Ma chi non può darne se non una, ogni volta che sia giunta alla sua perfezione, si vede da ciascuno volentieri spesse volte e si ammira, e questa è uni delle cagioni principali perché la pittura, come la poesia, si richiede di estrema perfezione, e la mediocrità in loro in niun conto è tollerabile, come suole essere nelle altre scienze e professioni, e, per dirla col mio cittadino: «Si paulum summo discessit, vergit ad imum».⁵² Imperoché, dovendo quella mostrare un atto solo di una favola o di una istoria, e questa una azione sola di favola e non più, se non sarà scelta e senza pecca alcuna, ancorché menoma, non si comporta né si tiene per buona. E questo tanto più nella pittura si richiede, quanto che nelle azioni è molto più semplice della poesia.⁵³ Come, per esempio, Alberto Durero

quantity and appropriate vividness of colour, and [in addition to] that certain grace in these three things, which, by another name, we are also used to calling 'elegance'. The kind of painting that imitates this beauty must have itself all four of these things and also, separately, posture, which, though it is present in living bodies where it is required for the accomplishment of beauty, is nonetheless included in the fourth thing, which is grace and loveliness. In painting, however, it is considered a separate quality; in fact, since grace consists in actions and in the movements of the limbs, painting cannot show more than one of them, and this one will be sufficient to give a beautiful air to painting and make it look wonderful. But in human beings elegance results more from actions and movements, because, if one who were beautiful in everything made only a single action with grace, and showed grace only in that one action and in no other, this would not be enough to let him be numbered among the graceful, but rather among the clumsy, and the reason is that a single beautiful thing in a subject who is potentially capable of producing an infinity of them would be something that we would not wish to see very frequently. But if one is capable of producing only one beautiful thing, when this reaches its perfection, he is seen by everyone many times with great pleasure and is admired. And this is one of the main reasons why painting, like poetry, is required to have extreme perfection, and mediocrity in them is nowise acceptable, as it usually is in the other sciences and professions, and, in the words of my compatriot, 'Si paulum summo discessit, vergit ad imum'. In fact, since painting is to show only one action of a tale or a story and poetry only one action of a tale and no more, if it is not excellent and free from even the smallest flaw, it does not function, nor is it regarded as good. And this is even more expected in painting, since in representing actions it is much simpler than poetry. Alberto Durero, for example,

⁵⁰ Sui requisiti della *bellezza* umana cfr. B. VARCHI, *Libro della Beltà e della Grazia*, in *Trattati d'arte del Cinquecento*, a cura di P. Barocchi, Bari 1960-62, I, pp. 86 sg.: «Dicono che la bellezza non è altro che la debita proporzione e corrispondenza di tutte le membra [tra] loro; e così vogliono che la bellezza consista e risulti nella debita quantità e della convenevole qualità delle parti, aggiuntovi la dolcezza o soavità de' colori. E di questa sentenza par che sia Aristotele, il gran filosofo, e nel terzo della Topica e nella Retorica et ancora nella Etica... Ma... un corpo il quale non abbia grazia, ancora che sia grande, ben disposto e ottimamente colorato, non si può.. chiamare bello veramente», *Dialogo di Pittura di Messer PAOLO PINO*, Venezia 1548, in *Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento*, a cura di P. Barocchi, Milano 1971, I, pp. 98 sg.; DOLCE [cfr. la nota 19], pp. 293 sgg., 800 sgg.

⁵¹ La retorica disposizione già tradotta in *disegno* da PINO e DOLCE [cfr. la nota 19], pp. 758, 792.

⁵² ORAZIO, *Ars poët.*, 378: «si pauluxn summo decessit, vergit ad imum» («sé un po' declina dalle vette, si dirige al fondo»).

⁵³ Sull'azione nella pittura e nella poesia vedi il parere ben diverso di LEONARDO, *Trattato della pittura*, in *Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento*, a cura di P. Barocchi, Milano 1971, I, pp. 235 sgg., 241 sgg.; cfr. DOLCE [cfr. la nota 19], pp. 290 sgg.; GILIO [cfr. la nota 22], 303 sgg.; COMANINI [cfr. la nota 22], 388 sgg.

volendo dipingere tutti i misteri della Passione di Nostro Signore, gli fu forza fare diciassette quadri per mostrare altrettante azioni, perciocché un quadro non potea esprimere se non una azione.⁵⁴

Metteremo dunque la disposizione nella pittura per quinta condizione e per cosa diversa dalla quarta, et intenderemo per essa il sito, o vogliamo dire la positura o l'attitudine del corpo, nella quale l'artefice ha fatto l'uomo dipinto.⁵⁵ La quale, quando è fatta con arte e con grazia, acquista lode grandissima al pittore più che di altra cosa che vi sia, et in questo modo diremo che Michelagnolo nella pittura del Giudicio fra l'altre meraviglie abbia osservato che tutte le figure sono di vario sito e disposizione,⁵⁶ e questa viene a essere parte della grazia, la quale contiene molto più, come da quello che appresso di essa diremo si potrà comprendere.

Tornando dunque a quel che dicevamo, perché della proporzione di quell'angiolo se ne è detto quello che ne potea far dubio, diremo ora delle altre condizioni della bellezza, e primo considereremo la quantità, la quale in tutte le cose (come ne ammonisce Aristotele) deve essere né così grande e smisurata che al primo incontro della vista non se ne possa vedere il principio et il fine, né così picciola che le parti sue appena si discernano et in esse non si possa fare conveniente discorso;⁵⁷ e questo non solo per la quantità apparente, ma eziandio per rispetto di quello che in quella quantità si può velatamente intendere, come mi dichiarerò or ora. E come che a prima vista l'angelo di quella pittura mostri di avere questa condizione, per essere tutto il suo corpo né molto grande né estremamente picciolo, nondimeno il discorso che si può fare sopra di quella grandezza può ricevere alcuni dubbi. Tra' quali sarà che, dipingendosi l'angiolo in forma puerile, come disopra abbiam detto, per denotar frall'altre cose la purità sua, bisognarebbe pigliar quella parte di puerizia che non potesse generar nella mente di chi 'l riguarda immaginazione alcuna d'impurità, da che questo corpo di angelo è una certa metafora pitturale di quello che nel vero non

wanting to depict all the mysteries of Our Lord's Passion, was forced to make seventeen different paintings in order to show as many actions, since one picture could show only one action.

Therefore, in painting we will add posture as a fifth condition, distinct from the fourth, and by it we will mean the placement, or the position or the attitude of the body in which the artist has shown the man he has depicted. This, more than anything else, when done with art and grace, earns the painter the highest praise. Accordingly, we shall say that Michelagnolo, in his painting of the Judgment, among all its other wonders, saw to it that every figure had a different placement and posture, and the latter is part of grace, which contains much more, as it will be clear from what we shall say below.

Returning then to what we were saying, since we mentioned all that might seem perplexing about the proportion of that Angel, we shall now speak about the other conditions of beauty. And to start with, we shall discuss quantity, which in all things (as Aristotle warns) must neither be so large and outsized that one cannot at the first sight of it see both the beginning and the end, nor so small that its parts are barely discernible and it is impossible to make a proper comment about them. And this is true not only regarding the visible quantity, but also regarding what we may covertly perceive, as I shall say hereafter. And I shall say how at first glance the Angel in that painting shows to have that quality, as his body is neither very large nor extremely small, although the comments that can be made about that size may raise some doubts. One of these doubts will be that, since the Angel was depicted with a childlike aspect (as we said above) in order to denote his purity, among other things, we should focus on that part of childlikeness that cannot cause the viewer's mind to imagine any impurity, as this Angel's body is a certain pictorial metaphor of something that

⁵⁴ Per le stampe del Dürer cfr. VASARI [cfr. la nota 30], p. 658; DOLCE [cfr. la nota 19] qui pp. 794 sg.

⁵⁵ Cfr. p. 875 e qui le note 50 e 51. È evidente il disagio con cui il dilettante Maranta cerca di orientarsi sulla teoresi figurativa del tempo.

⁵⁶ Maranta è quindi d'accordo col VASARI [cfr. la nota 30], p. 984.

⁵⁷ Nel l'impaccio lo scrivente chiede soccorso alle definizioni aristoteliche. Per la *quantità* cfr. ARISTOTELE, *Poët.*, 1450b-1451a, nonché *Il primo libro del trattato delle perfette proporzioni.. Di VINCENZO DANTI*, Firenze 1567, in *Trattati d'arte del Cinquecento*, a cura di P. Barocchi, Bari 1960-62, I, p. 216.

si può con pittura esprimere, cioè della natura e dell'esser suo. Ma chi ben guarda l'età che dimostra quell'angelo, ciascuno il giudicherà di dicessette anni poco più o meno, nella quale età può l'uomo essere impuro e disonesto. Per levar dunque questa rappresentazione dalle menti di ciascuno era forse più convenevole mostrarlo in età da quattordici anni in giù, nella quale età si mostra la sicurezza e la semplicità più chiara senza pur un picciolo sospetto di disonestà. Ma a questo dubbio si può facilmente rispondere, concedendo che così si debbia fare ogni volta che cosa di maggior importanza non ne forzi a fare il contrario, come è avvenuto in questo disegno. Imperoché, dovendosi esprimere uno ambasciatore del supremo e glorioso Iddio e che abbia in commessione da rivelare il più gran misterio che mai fusse nel mondo avvenuto, non pareva verisimile al decoro, che si fusse fatto di quella età che non ha il giudizio fermo e la quale è instabile, discordevole e stracurata, e che potrebbe fare star sospeso il signore se saprà fare l'imbasciata di quello istesso modo ch'egli gliel'ha commessa.⁵⁸ E per questa cagione gli antichi teologi in far ambasciatore degli dèi Mercurio, il feciono di matura età e padre della sapienza e dell'eloquenza.⁵⁹ Ma i nostri, come quelli che delle cose del cielo erano meglio informati, presero l'età fanciullesca, sì perché in questa forma o puerile o pubescente si legge nella Scrittura che Dio gli abbia mandati in terra,⁶⁰ si ancora che con quest'età più chiaramente si descrive la ubidente volontà degli abitatori del cielo, dimostrata principalmente ad am-maestramento nostro, perché, specchiandoci in loro, li imitiamo e siamo, come loro, servi ubidenti di Dio. Ma la pubescente età è più conforme per un'altra ragione, che, per esser più ferma, così si denota la costanza e la perpetuità della virtù vitale, che eternamente in un essere ha da durare. Il che il divino Dionisio Areopagita ne insegna⁶¹ e noi nel Cristo del Giudicio di Michelagnolo di sopra accennammo.⁶² Aggiùgnesi a questo che così più apertamente

we are unable to express realistically in painting; that is, his nature and his being. But whoever considers the age that the Angel seems to be will judge that he is more or less seventeen, an age at which a man can be impure and dishonest. To remove this impression from the viewers' minds, it would possibly have been more appropriate to give the Angel an age of fourteen or younger – an age at which self-confidence and simplicity are most evident without the slightest suspicion of dishonesty. We can easily give an answer to this doubt, conceding that this is what should always be done unless something of greater importance causes one to act to the contrary, as was the case for this invention.⁶³ Since, having to show the supreme and glorious God's ambassador, who was commissioned to reveal the greatest mystery that ever was in the world, it did not seem true to decorum according to which he should be given an age that is not endowed with mature judgement, that is unstable, fickle and careless, and that could make the Lord hesitate about the Angel's capability to perform his task in precisely the way he was commissioned to do it. And for this reason, when the ancient theologians chose Mercury as the ambassador of the gods, they attributed to him a mature age and made him the father of wisdom and eloquence. Our theologians, on the contrary, as the ones who were better informed about heavenly things, chose the age of childhood both because we read in Scripture that God sent the angels on the earth in the form of a childlike or pubescent creature and also because this age represents most clearly the inclination to obedience of Heaven's inhabitants, which is shown mainly to serve as a teaching for us, so that, by using them as a mirror for us, we may imitate them and, like them, be the obedient servants of God. But the pubescent age is more appropriate for another reason: its being more stable denotes, in fact, the constancy and perpetuity of the vital virtue that in a being must endure eternally. This is what the divine Dionysius the Aeropagite teaches and what we pointed out above with reference to the Christ in Michelagnolo's Judgment. Additionally, in this way

⁵⁸ Dalla *quantità* aristotelica si passa a divertite preoccupazioni controriformistiche, degne dell'ironia dello stesso GILIO [cfr. la nota 22], pp. 859.

⁵⁹ Cfr. invece V. CARTARI, *Le immagini, con la spositione de i dei de gli antichi* [1556], Venezia 1647, p. 166: «Nel libro delle anticaglie raccolte da Pietro Appiano si vede che fu già fatto per Mercurio un giovane senza barba, con due alette sopra le orecchie, tutto nudo ... ». Gli *antichi teologi* sembrano uno scoperto espediente per porre in luce il senno dei cristiani.

⁶⁰ Cfr. qui la nota 26, e ancora G. COMANINI, *Il Figino*, Mantova 1591, in *Trattati d'arte del Cinquecento*, a cura di P. Barocchi, Bari 1960-62, III, p. 337.

⁶¹ La cui autorità per le immagini sacre è invocata più volte dal *De imaginibus liber D.* CONRADI BRUNO *iureconsulti*, in CONRADI BRUNI *iureconsulti opera tria nunc primum aedita*, Moguntiae 1548, e dal PALEOTTI [cfr. la nota 27], pp. 226, 361, 409, 457.

⁶² Cfr. qui la nota 20. L'ardito abbinamento conferma una divertita disinvoltura.

⁶³ The word 'invention' stands for 'disegno'.

si dimostra la spirituale et incorporea natura loro, perciò che quasi da ognuno è stata dipinta l'anima in forma puerile, o sia stata di vecchio o di giovane barbato o senza barba, e ciò non solo per le ragioni dette, ma ancora per darci a intendere che dopo morte non è differenza di persone, ma tutti siamo uguali senza eccezione. Così le ha depinte Michelagnolo nella pittura del suo Giudicio, così tutti quelli che fanno l'angelo Michele contrapesare le anime nelle bilancie o nella statera.⁶⁴ E se alcune ve ne sono nel Giudicio di Michelangelo con la barba (che ben pochi sono), sonosi così da lui dipinte per altre ragioni che a così far lo ritraevano, come fu il ritratto di quel Vescovo, il quale, mentre era a Michelagnolo importuno, si vide ritratto nell'Inferno che appena se ne accorse.⁶⁵

Della grandezza della Madonna non vo' ragionare a pieno. Ma perché alcuni altri dicono lei essere troppo picciola di persona, risponderò solo che così molto meglio si esprime la umiltà, la quale fu sempre sopra ogni stato esaltata da Nostro Signore, che, come non volle nascere in Roma o in altro paese celebre e soperbo, ma nella umile e bassa Giudea, così era da credere anco che volesse fare elezione d'un chiostro virginale umile, disegnato così della picciola statura, la quale non è però estremamente picciola, dimostrando in essa la età di quattordici anni o poco più. Oltre che le donne generalmente, per rispetto del sesso, sono molto più degli uomini picciole, senzaché il sito in che ella sta viene a farla parere molto più bassa di quello che, se così piegata non fusse per umiliarsi

their spiritual and incorporeal nature is more openly evident, so that the soul, whether it was that of an old man or of a bearded youth or of a beardless one, was painted by almost everyone in a childlike form, and not only for the reasons I have mentioned, but also to make us understand that after death there is no difference between one person and another, as we are all equal without exception. This is how they were depicted by Michelagnolo when he made his Judgment and by all those who show the Angel Michael weighing the souls on a balance or on a steel yardstick. And if in Michelagnolo's Judgment some (very few) are depicted with a beard, they are portrayed like this for other reasons that pushed him to do so, as is the case of the portrait of that Bishop who, being bothersome to Michelagnolo, found himself put in Hell, almost without being aware of it.

Of the size of the Madonna, I do not want to speak at length. But, since some say that her person is too small, I will only respond that this so much better represents her humility, which was always lauded by Our Lord above every other virtue. And since He chose to be born not in Rome or in some other superb and celebrated place, but in low and humble Judea, it is also to be believed that His preference would be for a humble virginal vessel, indicated by the small size, which, however, is not extremely small, since in her it indicates an age of fourteen or a little older. Moreover women, because of their sex, are generally much smaller than men are, not to mention the fact that the way in which she is positioned makes her seem much smaller than she would be were she not so bent over in order to humble

⁶⁴ Sulle caratteristiche della risurrezione cfr. GILIO [cfr. la nota 19], p. 66: «L'istesso Agostino tiene che tutti risusciteranno ne l'età di trenta tre anni e ne la grandezza di persona che fu vivendo, o sarebbe stato; ne la quale età morì il Salvator nostro, la quale da Paolo è chiamata età d'uomo perfetto. Quanto a la grandezza de la persona, già v'ho detto e di più vi dico, che a' fanciulli piccoli, ancora a quelli che con l'anima sono morti nel corpo de la madre, si accrescerà la statura tanto, quanto fussero morti di trenta tre anni; a coloro che sono morti vecchi e decrepiti si scemeranno gli anni tanto, che mostrino quella istessa età ne la quale morì il Salvator nostro; il qualè è stato il primo a darci la regola et a mostrarci il modo de la resurrezzione. E sì come esso risuscitò immortale, immortali anco noi risusciteremo». La immagine dell'arcangelo Michele con le bilancie è naturalmente estranea all'affresco michelangiolesco e può essere stata suggerita dal ricordo di opere anteriori. San Michele pesatore di anime ebbe infatti una fortuna medievale e fu scelto quale patrono dei commercianti e dei farmacisti.

⁶⁵ Cfr. VASARI [cfr. la nota 30], 1550, pp. 981 sg.: «In questo tempo Sua Santità volse vedere la cappella [Sistina], e perché il maestro delle cerimonie [Biagio da Cesena] usò prosunzione et entrovvi seco e biasimolla per li tanti ignudi; onde volendosi vendicare Michele Agnolo lo ritrasse di naturale, nell'inferno, nella figura di Minos fra un monte di diavoli».

alla volontà divina, mostrar non potrebbe. E con questo sarà risposto forse a quel dubbio che noi lasciammo insoluti di sopra della proporzione della Madonna.⁶⁶

Ma torniamo all'angelo e poiché abbiamo detto a bastanza delle due condizioni necessarie alla pittura: cioè della proporzione e della quantità, diciamo delle altre. Era la terza cosa la vivacità convenevole del colore.⁶⁷ Veggonsi i lumi e le ombre di quell'angelo così attamente poste che danno meravigliosa vivacità all'opera per la rassombranza che hanno le parti ignude con la carnatura umana, e parimente le vestite con li panni naturali. Talmente che, non già colori o pur tela colorita par vedere, ma veri e vivi membri umani, verissimile naturalissimi panni. E, quel che pochi ponno assequire, sono i colori svegliati e vivi, ma non tanto lucenti che offendano la vista; della qual cosa solo si gloriò a' suoi tempi Apelle, il quale, dopo avere finita ciascuna sua opera, quella con una certa tintura nera dolcemente copriva per affievolire i colori troppo lucidi et eccitare gli smorti, oltre che li defendeva dalla polve. La qual cosa gli riuscì così felicemente che da niuno fu mai saputo imitare.⁶⁸ E per venire più al particolare, sono i capelli dell'angelo di sì bel colore e con tanto artificio adombrati e di così vaga disposizione, che fanno parere il capo fuor del quadro e paiono i capelli di potersi da vero con le mani apprendere; oltre che, con averli fatti 'spessi e

herself to the Divine Will. And this will probably be the full answer to the doubt that, above, we have left unresolved regarding the size of the Madonna.

But let us return to the Angel, and since we have said enough about two of the conditions necessary to painting, i.e. proportion and quantity, let us speak of the others. The third thing was the appropriate vividness of colour. We see that lights and shadows are applied so aptly in this Angel that they give a wonderful vivacity to the work, thanks to the resemblance of the bare parts to human flesh and, equally, of the vestments to natural clothing, to such an extent that one seems to see not mere colours or a painted canvas, but true and living human features and the most real and natural clothing. And that which few others are capable of achieving are the vibrant and vivid colours, which however are not so glossy as to offend the eye. In his day, only Apelles could boast this achievement, he who, after finishing each of his works, gently covered it with a certain black glaze to soften excessively shiny colours and enliven the muted ones, besides protecting them from dust. In this he was so successful that no one has ever been able to imitate him. And to come to particulars, the Angel's hair is of such a beautiful colour and represented with such great art and so charmingly arranged that it seems as if the head were emerging from the picture and one could actually touch the hair with one's hand; moreover, by making it thick and

⁶⁶ Anche per la Madonna il Maranta propone una interpretazione simbolica (cfr. pp. 866 sgg.), non senza accennare alle proprie conoscenze mediche.

⁶⁷ A modo suo il Maranta riecheggia la triplice ripartizione della pittura del PINO [cfr. la nota 50], pp. 757; e del DOLCE [cfr. la nota 19], 792 sgg.

⁶⁸ La scarsa adesione all'opera d'arte induce lo scrittore a ricorrere ad uno dei soliti esempi pliniani; cfr. PLINIO, XXXV, 97: «Inventa eius et ceteris profuere in arte, unum imitari nemo potuit, quod absoluta opera atramento inlinebat ita tenui ut id ipsum, repercussum, claritatis colorem album excitaret custodiretque a pulvere et sordibus, ad manum intuenti demum appareret, sed et tum ratione magna, ne claritas colorum aciem offenderet veluti per lapidem specularum intuentibus, et e longinquo eadem res nimis fioridis coloribus austeritatem occulte daret» (FERRI [cfr. la nota 29], pp. 173 sgg. : « Le sue [di Apelle] invenzioni giovarono anche agli altri artisti; una sola cosa nessuno poté imitare, l'uso cioè di verniciare le opere ultimate con una mano di *atramentum* così leggera, che esso stesso *atramentum*, costituendo una superficie riflettente, provocava un color bianco di luminosità e custodiva la pittura dalla polvere e dal sudiciume; lo si vedeva, se uno guardasse da vicino, ma anche allora, con grande accorgimento, serviva a che lo splendor dei colori non offendesse la vista – pareva di vedere la pittura dietro una lastra di talco –; invece, per chi guardava da lontano, questa vernice dava inavvertitamente una certa austerità ai colori troppo vistosi e accesi»). Cfr. anche DOLCE [cfr. la nota 19], p. 812.

folti ha voluto dinotare la vaghezza loro essere senz'arte e senza fuco. Il viso poi ha colorito di una mescolanza che non esprime lascivia né effeminazione (come appresso più distesamente diremo, quando della fisonomia si ragionerà), ma più tosto venerazione e rispetto, tingendolo tutto di un certo rossore simile a quello che suole apparire nel volto di chi per un buon tratto di via arà con gran fretta caminato o corso, per darci ad intendere con questo la velocità grande ch'era verisimile ch'usasse l'angelo per eseguir prestissimo il mandato dell'eterno Iddio. E chi ben considera quel volto, gli rassemblerà uno che pur dianzi si abbia rasciugato il sudore. Non perché angeli si affatichino per lo camino e si angoscino, ma per esprimere con questi umani accidenti le particolarità del misterio. Ma se vorremo noi più adentro passare nella profondità delle cose divine, troveremo che quel rossore non ne dimostra altro se non il fuoco, il quale da' teologi figuratamente è attribuito agli angeli.⁶⁹ Anzi gli troni e gli serafini dicano essere di fuoco et a loro assegnano le istesse proprietà che ha il fuoco, e vogliono per questo farci conoscere che la faccia delli celesti spiriti sia per lo fulgore della faccia di Dio illuminata a guisa di fuoco. Perciò (come l'Areopagita ne insegna) coloro che santissimamente hanno di Dio parlato, per farne le menti de' mortali capaci, hanno la sua sostanza eterna, immateriale, e di nulla forma o figura ricetto, con le varie proprietà del fuoco disegnata; perciò che il fuoco contiene in sé molte somiglianze et immagini delle proprietà di Dio, se così ne sia lecito il parlare. Come, per esempio, il foco è luminosissimo, semplice, immescolabile, e ciò che tocca converte nella sua natura. Va sempre in alto velocissimo, ogni cosa abbraccia et esso abbracciar non si può, si comunica a tutti senza patir diminuzione alcuna, et altre infinite proprietà possiede, simili alle azioni divine. In quanto alle sembianze umane, è lecito il rassemblerle a quelle. Fingono dunque i celesti spiriti essere di fuoco per farci conoscere che la natura loro divina non fa altro che imitare (quanto per loro possibile è) Dio eterno e santo, il quale è attamente al fuoco assomigliato; e per questa cagione anco si suol fare negli angeli vestiti la vesta di color rosso e luminoso.⁷⁰ Il che ha Tiziano,

abundant, he wanted to show its charm to be artless and undyed. The face, then, he has coloured with a mixture that expresses neither lasciviousness nor effeminacy (as we shall soon say at greater length, when we discuss the physiognomy), but rather veneration and respect; he has in fact coloured the whole of it with the kind of blush that is wont to appear on the face of one who has walked or run for a goodly distance with great urgency. This is to convey the great velocity that very likely the Angel used to accomplish the mandate of the eternal God as swiftly as possible. And whoever studies this face will be reminded of one who has just wiped off his sweat. Not because angels are fatigued by a journey or are grieved, but to express by means of these human accidents the particularities of the mystery. But if we want to penetrate more deeply into the profundity of divine things, we will find that this blush represents nothing other than the fire that theologians figuratively attribute to angels. The thrones and the seraphim are rather often said to be of fire, and to them are assigned the same properties that fire has, and they in this way want to let us know that the visage of a celestial spirit is illuminated in the guise of fire by the refulgence of the face of God. In fact (as the Areopagite teaches us), in order to make the humans' minds capable of understanding, those who have spoken about God in the holiest way have used the various guises of fire to portray His eternal and immaterial substance, which has no form or figure, because fire contains in itself many likenesses and images of God's properties, if we are allowed to speak in this way. As, for example, fire is extremely luminous, simple and unmixable, and what it touches is transformed into its nature. It always rises upwards very swiftly, it embraces all and cannot be embraced, it can give its substance to all without diminishing itself, and it possesses an infinity of other properties similar to the divine actions. As for human features, it is licit to liken them to those. Celestial spirits, then, show that they are of fire so we may understand that their divine nature does nothing but imitate (insofar as they are capable of doing so) the holy and eternal God, who is appropriately likened to fire; and for this same reason it is usual to choose a luminous, red colour to make the robes of the angels that are shown wearing clothes, which Titian,

⁶⁹ Dalle notazioni naturalistiche a quelle simboliche, con una certa predilezione o fiducia per queste ultime. Sul valore della corsa cfr. BRUNO [cfr. la nota 61], pp. 48 sg., sul valore del fuoco cfr. BRUNO [cfr. la nota 61], p. 39.

⁷⁰ Cfr. ancora BRUNO [cfr. la nota 61], pp. 33 sgg., 39 sg.

ricordevole di quanto bisognava, assai bene osservato; nella quale vesta ha di tal maniera il bianco col rosso mescolato, che non pare che venga dall'esterior lume, ma più tosto nasca di dentro e dalla persona sua illuminata, il qual lume, riflettendo anco nelle ali, fa nascere quella varietà di colori nelle sue penne di giallo, azzurro, verde e rosso e discambianti a similitudine dell'arco celeste, la cui varietà de colori si fa dalla istessa causa. E quei colori nelle ali ne danno una certa meraviglia, per non gli aver noi veduti ancora in animale alcuno volatile; e ben conviene ciò, poiché la Iride fingono i poeti essere figliuola di Taumante, che non vuol dir altro che «meraviglia», come espone Platone.⁷¹

Delle altre parti dell'angelo e della Madonna, per quello che alla vaghezza de' colori appartiene, io vo' tacerne, tra per fuggire la lunghezza del dire e perché è cosa che chiaramente appare a ciascuno quanto ben sia stata fatta. E venendo alla quarta condizione, la quale è la grazia, dico che, come nel dar vaghezza a' colori, se bene non avanza ogniuno, non cede però a niuno, così in questa sola cosa in tutte le sue opere Tiziano, a giudizio di quanti ne ho udito ragionare, ottiene la palma ne' nostri tempi.⁷² Questo si vede specialmente ne' suoi ritratti dal naturale (di chi egli ha fatta particolar professione, più che di altro). A' quali, oltre il fargli i membri alla viva imagine similissimi, gli dà poi l'aria di così bella maniera, che vi par esser dentro lo spirito. Altri pittori somigliano il naso al naso, la bocca alla bocca, gli occhi agli occhi del vivo, et in somma ogni membro da per sé considerato dimostra rassombranza col vero. Ma riguardando poi tutta la composizione di tutti i membri, dalla quale nasce e risulta varia, non so come non par d'essa, ma alquanto diversa et a punto si somiglia a colui, il quale, non avendo per diece anni veduto un suo amico, vedendolo poi sta tra sì e no che sia desso e non si assecura di fargli motto. Perciòché, se bene gli pare che abbia quelli istessi membri e quei medesmi segni che

mindful of what was appropriate, has very well observed, and in the clothing he has mixed the white with the red in such a manner that the light does not seem to come from the outside, but rather to be born from within and from the Angel's illuminated person, which light, reflected also in the wings, originates that variety of hues in his feathers, yellow, blue, green and red, and iridescent, like those of the celestial rainbow, whose array of colours is created by the same cause. And those colours in the wings produce a certain wonder, since we have never seen the like in any flying animal; and this is quite fitting, as the poets imagine Iris to be the daughter of Thaumatas, whose name, as Plato says, means precisely 'wonder'.

About the other parts of the Angel and the Madonna, as to what concerns the charm of the colours, I have chosen to say nothing, both to avoid the length of such a speech and because it is clearly apparent to everyone in what an excellent way it was achieved. And now, coming to the fourth condition, which is grace, I will say that, as in giving charm to colours, though he does not surpass anyone, he is not surpassed by anyone, so in this one thing, as in all his works, Titian, according to all those whom I have heard reasoning on this, is awarded the palm in our day. This is especially apparent in his portraits from life (of which, more than any other, he made a particular profession). To these portraits, besides making their features extremely similar to the living person, he then imparts an aura in such a beautiful way that one seems to be within the spirit. Other painters make the nose look like the nose, the mouth like the mouth, the eyes like the eyes of the living person, and, in short, each feature considered by itself bears a resemblance to life. But then, looking at the whole composition with all its features, from which it originates and gets a varied aspect, I do not know how, but it does not seem to be the same, it seems something quite different, it is like the case of one who, on seeing a friend he has not seen for ten years, is undecided whether this is he, yes or no, and does not dare to talk to him. So, although it does indeed seem to him that he has the same features and the same marks that

⁷¹ Dalla simbologia biblica a quella mitologica. Su Iridé cfr. CARTARI [cfr. la nota 59], p. 199.

⁷² Cfr. *Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento*, a cura di P. Barocchi, Milano 1971, I, p. 790 e la nota 2; *Dialogo della Pittura di M. LODOVICO DOLCE*, Venezia 1557, in *Trattati d'arte del Cinquecento*, a cura di P. Barocchi, Bari 1960-62, I, p. 200: «In costui solo [Tiziano] veramente ... si veggono raccolte a perfezione tutte le parti eccellenti che si sono trovate divise in molti, essendo che d'invenzione né di disegno niuno lo superò giamai. Poi di colorito non fu mai alcuno che a lui arrivasse. Anzi a Tiziano solo si dee dare la gloria del perfetto colorito, la quale non ebbe alcun degli antichi, o, se l'ebbe, mancò, a chi più a chi manco, in tutti i moderni: perciòché, come io dissi, egli camina di pari con la natura, onde ogni sua figura è viva, si muove e le carni tremano».

aveva, nondimeno, perché non vi vede quell'istess'aria che avea prima (conciosia che questa per lo progresso della età si suol variare), sta, in dubio di chiamarlo et abbracciarlo.⁷³ È questa aria quella cosa che altramente vien detta leggiadria, la quale nei corpi belli fa maggior bellezza et alle volte si vedono in un corpo tutte le tre prima già dette condizioni; cioè la quantità e la proporzione debita de' membri e la vaga qualità de' colori; ma perché questa quarta non vi è, cioè la leggiadria e la venustà, ne pare in un certo modo insipido e la sua vista ne sazia a primo. E questa è che per ogni minimo accidente si perde o si debilita, come da malattia, da tristezza, da collera e dalle altre perturbazioni che ne sogliono accadere, mi più dalla età. Percioché un anno fa tal donna ne sarà paruta bellissima che ora pare si noi altrimenti, ancorché in essa non abbiano fatta mutazione o alterazione veruna la quantità, la corrispondenza de' membri o pur il colore. Questo ho voluto dire per dichiararmi che cosa io intendo per la grazia o venustà nella pittura, la quale dicono Platonici che è uno influxo che immediatamente viene dal volto di Dio e si sparge nei volti umani a chi più e a chi meno, e noi non sappiamo come ella sia fatta e quale sia la sua sede principale, ma solamente la conosciamo negli altrui visi e l'occhio più che ogni altra cosa se ne rallegra e con grandissima sodisfazione dell'animo la guarda et ammira, e ben pare che non da altro possa procedere che da Dio.⁷⁴ Percioché questa parte divina nascosta nel volto di una donnicciuola di bassa fortuna sforza gli animi de re e d'imperadori a farsi non solamente amare, ma riverire et adorare come a cosa santa. Il che veggiamo ben spesso ne' veri e cortesi amanti.

Come dunque questa grazia, la quale in ciascuno è diversa e che noi chiamiamo aria, è dono di Dio e da Dio solo a noi s'influisce non altrimenti che l'anima che ne dà la forma e l'essere, senza che la natura vi abbia parte come ha nelle altre tre parti dette di sopra, le quali risultano dall'ottimo temperamento naturale, così di divino spirito bisogno è che sia quel pittore, il quale nelle sue opere la saprà attamente dimostrare, imitando in questa una cosa il magistero ch a Dio solo (eccettuandone eziandio la natura) è concesso a poter fare. Questa leggiadria o si ritrae da qualche vivente, et allora il pittore ha quell'obbligo di farla somigliare particolarmente

he bore, nonetheless, since he does not see in him the same aura that he once had (which, however, usually changes with the passing of the years), he is unsure whether to call him and embrace him. Precisely this aura is the very thing that is alternatively called 'elegance', which in beautiful bodies produces more beauty, and sometimes in a body we can see all the three conditions that I have mentioned earlier, i.e. the quantity and proportion of the features and the charming quality of the colours, but, because this fourth (i.e. elegance and loveliness) is not present, the body seems in some way insipid and the sight of it is cloying to us right away. And this is the thing that is lost or damaged in consequence of the slightest accident, such as sickness, melancholy, choler or some other unbalance that may usually occur, but most of all in consequence of age. Thus, that woman who might have looked very beautiful a year ago now appears to us quite different, though neither the quantity nor the correspondence of her limbs nor the colour have changed or altered at all. I have wanted to say this to make it clear what I mean by grace or loveliness in the painting,⁷⁵ which the Platonists say is an influx that comes directly from the face of God and spreads over human faces, to some more, to some less, and we do not know what it is like and which is its principal site; we only experience it in the faces of others and the eye, more than any other thing, rejoices at its presence and looks at it with the greatest satisfaction of the soul and admires it, and it does indeed seem that it can proceed from nothing else but God. Thus this divine part hidden in the face of an ordinary woman of humble origin forces the hearts of kings and emperors not only to love her, but also to revere and worship her as if she were a holy thing. We very often see this happen in true and courtly lovers.

Then, just as this grace, which is different in each person and which we call 'aura', is a gift from God and only from God flows into us, not unlike the soul which gives it form and being, without nature having any role in it as it has in the other three parts mentioned above, which result from an optimal natural mixture, so it is necessary that the divine spirit be a quality of that painter who in his works will then be able to reveal grace in the appropriate way, imitating in this one thing the mastery that God alone (also excepting Nature) has the right to have. This elegance is either depicted by looking at a living person, in which case the painter has the obligation to make the portrait resemble

⁷³ Sui ritratti di Tiziano cfr. VASARI [cfr. la nota 30], p. 581; DOLCE [cfr. la nota 72], p. 145.

⁷⁴ Sul valore della *grazia* in senso platonico cfr. VARCHI [cfr. la nota 50], pp. 88 sgg.

⁷⁵ Maranta clearly refers to the Annunciation painting in the Pinelli chapel.

a quello, o si fa a beneplacito dell'artefice nelle figure che egli da sua posta ha fatte ritraendo una idea formata nella mente sua;⁷⁶ et in questo si mostra maggior ingegno, perciocché quivi ha da far maggior numero di considerazioni, in far mostrare i costumi di colui che dipigne secondo il misterio o la favola o la istoria, che quel loco e tempo richiede, dove si mostri o persuasione o dissuasione, o accettare o negare, e queste cose o con ira o con pietà o con piacevolezza o rigidità, ovvero con allegrezza o tristezza et altre simili, et alle volte mostrar in un tempo due di queste cose insieme o più. Le qual cose non solo nel volto si hanno da fare apparire, ma eziandio in tutti i membri. E negli viventi si ragiona con grazia, si camina con grazia, si guarda, si ride, si mangia, si bee, si dorme, si muore, et insomma tutti i movimenti si possono fare con una certa leggiadria che addolcisce gli occhi de' riguardanti.⁷⁷ Et è ciò di tanto momento che da questo solo acquistò Apelle particolar gloria e vinse tutti gli altri famosissimi pittori, del che egli stesso se ne soleva vantare dicendo che le opere di quei famosi pittori del suo tempo erano degne da ammirarsi e da lodarsi assai, ma mancava loro poi quella venere e quella grazia di [che] abbiamo parlato, et in questo si gloriava di non trovar pari, ancorché nelle altre cose sconfessava di esser pareggiato e forse arco avanzato.⁷⁸ Anzi invero egli cedeva nella disposizione ad Anfione e nella proporzione ad Asclepiodoro e nella diligenza a Protogene,⁷⁹ ancora che in costui fosse ripreso quella soverchia diligenza, dicendosi che non sapea levare la mano dalla tavola.⁸⁰

that person in particulars, or it is represented at the artist's pleasure in those figures that he has made to give shape deliberately to an idea formed in his mind. And in this he shows greater talent, since in that case he must make many more considerations in bringing out the personality of the one he depicts according to the mystery, the tale or the story that the place and time require, and in showing persuasion or dissuasion, acceptance or rejection, and these with either anger or sympathy, gentleness or rigidity, joyfulness or sadness, and so on, or showing two or more of these things at the same time. These things must be made apparent not only in the face, but also in all the other parts of the body. And human beings may talk with grace, walk with grace, or with grace they may look, laugh, eat, drink, sleep and die; in short, any movement can be accomplished with a certain elegance that mellows the eye of the viewer. And this is of such a great importance that from it alone Apelles derived special renown and triumphed over all the other most famous painters, an achievement of which he used to boast, saying that the works of those famous contemporary painters might well deserve great admiration and praise, but they lacked that appeal and that grace of [which] we have been speaking, and in this he vaunted that he had no peer, although he admitted that in the other aspects he was equalled and even, perhaps, surpassed. Indeed, he yielded to Amphion in posture, to Asclepiodorus in proportion and to Protogenes in diligence, whom however he blamed for an excess in that diligence, which, he said, prevented him from ever taking his hand off his work.

⁷⁶ Si ricordi la lettera di RAFFAELLO al Castiglione, pubblicata per la prima volta dallo DOLCE, in *Lettere di diversi eccellentissimi uomini*, Vinegia 1544, p. 228.

⁷⁷ Si torna ai problemi della *convenevolezza*, sui quali cfr. *Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento*, a cura di P. Barocchi, Milano 1971, I, la nota I di p. 782.

⁷⁸ PLINIO, XXXV, 79: «Praecipua eius in arte venustas fuit, cum eadem aetate maximi pictores essent. Quorum opera cum admiraretur, omnibus conlaudatis, deesse illam suam Venerem dicebat, quam Graeci Charita vocant: cetera omnia contigisse, sed hac sola sibi neminem parem» (FERRI [cfr. la nota 29], p. 163: «Superò tutti in arte per la sua venustà e grazia, pur vivendo in quell'epoca i pittori più famosi. Egli mentre ammirava le loro opere, dopo averli lodati tutti diceva che mancava loro quella sua speciale leggiadria, che i Greci chiamano charis; potevan possedere tutte le altre qualità, ma in questa sola nessuno era pari a lui»). Cfr. anche DOLCE [cfr. la nota 19], p. 829.

⁷⁹ Cfr. PLINIO, XXXV, 80: «Fuit [Apelles] autem non minoris simplicitatis quam artis. Melanthio dispositione cedebat, Asclepiodoro de mensuris, hoc est quanto quid a quoque distare deberet» (FERRI [cfr. la nota 29], pp. 165: «La sua semplicità fu pari all'arte sua: riconosceva di essere inferiore a Melanthios per la composizione delle figure, ad Asclepiodoros in fatto in misure nella prospettiva, cioè nello stabilire le distanze tra un elemento e l'altro»).

⁸⁰ PLINIO, XXXV, 80: «Et aliam gloriam usurpavit [Apelles], cum Protogenis opus immensi laboris ac curae supra modum anxiae miraretur; dixit enim ornata sibi cum illo paria esse aut illi meliora, sed uno se praestare, quod manum de tabula sciret tollere» (FERRI [cfr. la nota 29], pp. 163 sgg.: «E si conciliò altra gloria ancora, quando ammirando un'opera di Protogenes, frutto di smisurata fatica e di meticolosità eccessiva, disse che Protogenes in tutto era pari a lui o forse anche superiore, però in una cosa egli lo superava, nel saper mettere la parola "fine" a un quadro»). Vedi anche PINO [cfr. la nota 19], p. 119; e DOLCE [cfr. la nota 19], p. 816.

E quando io volesse far comparazione di Tiziano con alcuno degli antichi, non saprei a chi meglio somigliarlo che ad Apelle, perciocché l'uno e l'altro fu felicissimo nel ritrarre dal naturale i viventi.⁸¹ E fu così proprio ad Apelle, che Alessandro Magno vietò per publico editto che ninuo altro lo potesse ritrarre,⁸² ancorché in quel tempo fussino valentissimi uomini, come Protogene, Asclepiodoro, Anfione,⁸³ Aristide, di chi si legge che Attalo re comprò un quadro, dove era dipinto il padre Libero, seimila sesterzii.⁸⁴ Vi furono eziandio degli altri, co' quali postosi a gara a dipignere un cavallo, fu il suo così meraviglioso, che ad esso solo i cavalli annitrirono.⁸⁵ Ma che Tiziano sia oggidì nel ritrarre il primo, è noto a ciascuno; l'uno e l'altro nel colorire felicissimi, et amendue hanno avanzato nella grazia e venustà tutti i pittori del suo tempo. E se non fusse ch'io temo di non offender qualcuno che per famoso si tiene, direi delle altre somiglianze che fra questi duo possono cadere.

Ora vediamo quanto riluca in quell'angelo questa leggiadria et aria, e credomi che quel volto non sia ritratto da persona alcuna vivente, ma formato nella mente sua e poi posto nella tela, ancor che abbia alle volte Tiziano (per quanto da altri mi è stato riferito) fatto ciò forse a compiacenza di chi ha fatta far l'opera, peroché, come questo è più facile, così anco nelle pitture religiose non genera molta devozione; perciocché il vedere il volto di uno uomo da noi conosciuto per peccatore e forse anco per cattivo e segnalato tra gli uomini, vestirsi dell'abito di un santo, ne rappresenta la vita sua et in un certo modo ne fa parere quel santo di mala vita, o vero ne parrà un ritratto della ipocrisia, e par che in guardarlo vi dà cagione di dubitare che d'ora in ora non siate da lui dannificato.⁸⁶ E per questa cagione quei reverendi padri di Monte Oliveto levorno

And if I wanted to compare Titian to one of the ancients, I would not know who better to compare him to than to Apelles, as both of them were excellent in portraying living persons from life.⁸⁷ And this is so true in the case of Apelles that Alexander the Great decreed that none other else should paint a portrait of him by a public edict, even though in those days there were many excellent painters around, such as Protogenes, Asclepiodorus, Amphion and Aristides, from whom, we read, King Attalus purchased a picture in which Father Liber was depicted at the price of six thousand sesterces. There were also others, against whom he placed himself in competition for painting a horse, and his was so wonderful that before it alone the horses neighed. But that Titian today excels in portraiture is known to everybody; both the one and the other are excellent in the use of colours, and both have surpassed all the painters of their times as regards grace and loveliness. And if I were not afraid of offending someone who thinks himself famous,⁸⁸ I would mention some other similarities that might exist between these two.

We now see how this elegance and this aura shine in the Angel, and I believe that this face was not painted from a living person, but took shape in the mind of the painter, who then put it on the canvas, though Titian has at times done that (so have I heard from others),⁸⁹ perhaps to please him who ordered the work, but, although this is easier, in religious paintings it does not inspire great devotion. In fact, when we see that the face of a man whom we know to be a sinner and maybe even a very evil sinner, marked out as such among men, is wearing the robes of a saint, as a matter of fact he is representing his own life, and in a certain way he makes that saint appear as a bad man himself, and he will seem a portrait of hypocrisy, so that in looking at him we have a good reason to fear that he might any moment bring about our damnation. And for this reason the reverend fathers of Monte Oliveto removed

⁸¹ Ancora una volta la casistica pliniana sembra soccorrere lo scrivente. Su Apelle ritrattista cfr. PLINIO, XXXV,89.

⁸² Cfr. PLINIO, VII, 125; *Il libro del Cortegiano, del conte BALDESSARE CASTIGLIONE*, in *Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento*, a cura di P. Barocchi, Milano 1971, I, p. 491; VARCHI [cfr. la nota 19], p. 538; PINO [cfr. la nota 19], p. 110; DOLCE [cfr. la nota 72], p. 157.

⁸³ Cfr. qui la nota 79.

⁸⁴ Cfr. PLINIO, XXXV, 24; PINO [cfr. la nota 19], p. 111; e DOLCE [cfr. la nota 72], p. 160.

⁸⁵ Cfr. PLINIO, XXXV, 95; e PINO [cfr. la nota 19], p. 111: «Dipinse Apelle un cavallo a concorrenza di alcuni fatti da altri pittori, e volendo quelli giudici conoscere il più perfetto tra quelli, fecero condurre alcuni cavalli vivi al cospetto de' dipinti e, vedendo quello d'Apelle, cominciarono a nitrire, et alterarsi, ma per gli altri non fecero alcun segno».

⁸⁶ Il Maranta ha per il ritratto una divertita diffidenza, che sarà seriamente avvalorata dai controriformisti (cfr. soprattutto PALEOTTI [cfr. la nota 27], pp. 332 sgg.).

⁸⁷ The phrase 'in portraying living persons from life' stands for 'nel ritrarre dal naturale i viventi'.

⁸⁸ Maranta's reference remains unclear.

⁸⁹ The word 'that' refers to the widespread practice of using a real person as a model for a figure in a painting of a sacred story.

dall'altar maggiore quel quadro della Circoncisione⁹⁰ nel quale era ritratto il Barattuccio⁹¹ in abito di Simeone, e fu in quel tempo che, essendo egli avvocato fiscale, interveniva a dar fune, fuoco, ceppi et altre sorti de tormenti. Faceva scopare, strascinare, impiccare et altre specie di pene, et ancor che fusse di aspetto venerando per quella gran barba canuta, nondimeno era per crudel uomo tenuto, e non per misericordioso, come richiedeva la grandezza del misterio. La levorno dunque quei buoni padri dal maggiore altare e da Giorgino di Arezzo feciono farvi quell'altra che ora vi sta.⁹² Nel medesimo luoco è la cappella de ... de' tre Magi, dove tutte le figure sono da uomini viventi al natural ritratte, tra' quali colui che proferisce l'oro è la imagine della buona memoria del conte di Oppido.⁹³

Quell'angelo dunque maggior devozione daranne, poiché sarà formato solo dalla idea della mente sua.⁹⁴ Il che si può conoscere all'aver

from the main altar that picture of the Circumcision in which Barattuccio was portrayed in the guise of Simeon; this happened at the time when he, being tax attorney, meted out such punishments as the rope, the fire, the stocks and other kinds of torture. He ordered flogging, dragging, hanging and other types of punishments, and even though he had a venerable appearance (owing to his large, hoary beard), yet he was held to be a cruel man, not a merciful one, as was actually required by the grandeur of the mystery. So those good fathers removed it from the main altar and commissioned Giorgino di Arezzo to make the one that stands there now. In the same place there is the chapel of (...) of the Magi, where all the figures are painted from living men, portrayed from life; among them, the one who offers the gold is the image of the good Conte di Oppido, God rest his soul.

The Angel, then, will occasion more devotion since he was formed only by an idea in his mind. We can realize this from the fact that

⁹⁰ Dipinta da Leonardo da Pistoia (cfr. qui nota 47), ora a Capodimonte.

⁹¹ SOLIMENE [cfr. la nota 17], p. 29: «Un tal Antonio Barattuccio, avvocato fiscale».

⁹² VASARI [cfr. la nota 47], II, p. 993 [VII, pp. 675 sg.]: «Dopo feci all'altar maggiore di quella chiesa una tavola alta otto braccia, dentrovi la Nostra Donna che presenta a Simeone nel tempio Gesù Cristo piccolino con nova invenzione». Il dipinto, eseguito tra il 7 novembre 1544 e il 2 febbraio 1545 (*Der literarische Nachlass Giorgio Vasaris*, herausgegeben und mit kritischem Apparat versehen von K. FREY, München 1923, I, pp. 137, 144), è ora a Capodimonte. Cfr. SOLIMENE [cfr. la nota 17], pp. 29 sg. e la nota 2, che rinvia a C. CELANO, *Notizie del bello, dell'antico e del curioso della città di Napoli* [Napoli 1692], Napoli 1792, Giornata III, p. 18: «Questo quadro [di Leonardo da Pistoia] stava nell'altare maggiore collocato, e perché le figure che in esso si vedono erano state prese dal naturale, nel rappresentare il mistero della Purificazione, essendo che il volto di S. Simeone era ritratto di Antonio Barattucci, allora avvocato fiscale di Vicaria; quello della Vergine di Lucrezia Scaglione, quello dell'altra donna era copiato dal volto di Diana di Rago, donna in quel tempo stimata di gran bellezza. Nell'altre figure si riconoscevano i sembianti di Lelio Mirto Vescovo di Caiazzo e Cappellan maggiore, di Gabriele Altilio Vescovo di Policastro e di un monaco olivetano, in quel tempo sagristano. Essendo stato chiamato a dipingere il refettorio Giorgio Vasari, diede ad intendere a i Padri, ch'era molto sconvenevole che nel quadro del maggiore altare di una chiesa così nobile e frequentata vi si riconoscessero nella Vergine un volto di una dama così nota ed in quello di S. Simeone un avvocato fiscale di Vicaria; che però ne fu rimosso e vi si collocò un'altra tavola simile, cioè coll'istesso mistero, dipinta da esso Giorgio».

⁹³ I punti di lacuna sono nel manoscritto e concernono evidentemente il nome di famiglia della cappella. Cfr. C. CELANO, op. cit., p. 23: «In questa [nella cappella di Antonio Phiodo] vi era una bellissima tavola, nella quale stavano espressi i santi Magi... opera del famoso Girolamo Cotignola, che fiorì circa gli anni 1515: questa sì bella tavola già quasi era marcita per l'umido del muro che le veniva da dietro; la pietà di un abate ne prese quel che poté, ch'è là Vergine, un de' Magi ed una parte di S. Giuseppe, e l'ha ridotta e conservata nella forma che oggi si vede. Al presente però sta riposta nell'appartamento del p. abate».

⁹⁴ Cfr. p. 883 e qui la nota 76.

egli una aria et una grazia, con tante circostanze che non par che sia possibile a potersi ritrovare in corpo vivente. Perciòché e' mostra uno aspetto mezzano fra lieto et attonito; lieto per la buona nuova che recava, aspettattissima per le migliaia di anni addietro da tutto il genere umano e particolarmente da Maria istessa; attonito e stupefatto per l'importanza del meraviglioso misterio, quasi all'improvviso a lui rivelato e commesso da rivelarsi a Maria. Mostrasi in quel volto non solo ubidienza grandissima di eseguire il mandato di Dio, ma eziandio non piccola riverenza mentre fa l'imbasciata. Anzi a chi ben mira, vi vedrà una attenzione grande per far che non si dimentichi e varii in qualche modo quello che aveva da dire, et insieme con la attenzione una sicurezza et un esser certo di non potere in parlando inciampare, e questo vuoi significare quella fronte alquanto corrugata e l'occhio renitente a bene aprirsi contra el moto del ciglio che, calando giù, il faceva mezzo serrare; motivo commune di tutti coloro che di cosa di gran momento ragionano. E mentre sta in atto di dire *Spiritus Sanciti superveniet in te* e quel che segue (perciòché in dire queste parole lo ha dipinto, come diremo), par che pensi se altro gli restarà da sopra giugnere. Ha oltre queste cose un certo che di divinità nell'aspetto, la quale non si può bene con le parole esprimere, ma l'occhio solo di chi attentamente il considera lo conosce et in un certo modo oscuro lo comunica al pensiero; perciòché insieme con la umiltà e riverenza vi si vede una certa maestà et una imagine d'imperio che trae i riguardanti a farsi riverire e temere. E par che nasca da dentro un certo spirito che mostri la divinità in lui naturale et innata e la umiltà volontaria e (per così dire) artificiale, che così bene si possono insieme mostrare, perciòché l'artificio non può covrire affatto la naturalità.⁹⁵ Un simile atto si vedea nell'aspetto della felicissima memoria di D. Pietro di Toledo,⁹⁶ al quale, per festevole et allegro che e'

he has such an aura and such grace, as well as many other features that do not seem possible to find in a living body. This is why his expression is between joy and astonishment: joy for the good message he was delivering, awaited for thousands of years by all of mankind and especially by Mary herself; astonishment and bewilderment for the importance of the wonderful mystery, almost suddenly revealed to him and commissioned to reveal to Mary. His face shows not only the greatest obedience in fulfilling the commands of God, but also no small reverence while he delivers his message. And even, whoever looks carefully will see his great concern not to forget or change in any way all that he was to say, and together with this concern a confident certainty that it would be impossible for him to stumble in his speech; this explains his furrowed brow and the reluctance of his eye to open wide, countering the movement of the eyelid which, dropping down, causes it to half close, a feature common to all those who are speaking about something of great moment. And while he is in the process of saying '*Spiritus Sanctus superveniet in te*' and that which follows (because he has been depicted in the act of saying these words, as we shall say below) he seems to be wondering whether there is not something else he must add. Moreover, there is in his aspect a certain divinity that words cannot very well express; only the eye of someone who observes him intently will perceive it and in a certain obscure way will pass it on to the thought;⁹⁷ because, in addition to humility and reverence, one sees also a certain majesty and an image of authority that inspire awe and reverence in the viewer. And it seems as if inside him a certain spirit is born that reveals his natural, innate divinity and his voluntary, artificial (so to speak) humility, which can both appear together so well, since artifice can in no way cover over what is natural. A similar effect can be seen in the countenance of the blessed late Don Pedro of Toledo, in whom, as festive and cheerful as he

⁹⁵ L'interesse per i contenuti induce il letterato ad una minuta ricognizione psicologica e sentimentale.

⁹⁶ Cfr. SOLIMENE [cfr. la nota 17], p. 30 nota I: «... il poeta Luigi Tansillo ritiene don Pietro di Toledo anche incarnazione delle virtù politiche spagnole e di lui scrisse: "S'io desio di saper come si regga / un regno ed un esercito e impararne / ciò che nei libri antichi se ne legga, / come s'orni una terra, come s'arme, / come possa un signor, s'egli è discreto, / farsi immortale, ancor che cessin Tarme, / mirerò l'opre del maggior Toletto, / ne le cui man può Cesare deporre / mille regni non che uno, e star quieto". E altrove, nell'indirizzarsi a lui notava: "Perché tutte le cose di voi nate / elle son con misterio e la prudenza / guida ciò che voi dite a ciò che fate"».

⁹⁷ Maranta refers to the viewer's mind.

fusse, non si gli toglieva però in tutto un certo che di spaventevole, per lo quale sforzava ad abbassar gli occhi a chi 'l mirava. Di qua si viene a sciogliere la oppenione di coloro che voleano il viso dell'angelo tutto allegro e ridente e che riprendevano Tiziano di non averlo così dipinto, perciocché con l'atto dell'allegrezza sola non si dava saggio veruno dell'altezza del misterio. Anzi di più dico che, quando ben non vi si fusse richiesto considerazione alcuna di stupore e di meraviglia, ma che tutto il misterio fusse da dinotarsi con la sola allegrezza, che né anco sarebbe convenuto far l'angelo tutto allegro e con ridente faccia, perciocché non deve il servidore ridere di cosa alcuna insieme col suo signore, ché così mostrerebbe soperbia e mala creanza, parendo di volere con lui trattare alla domestica e dar mostra di fratellanza, il qual atto è abominevolissimo a tutti signori et altri amici superiori. E si bene Maria era per l'adietro stata agli angeli inferiore, in quel modo che i mortali sono da meno che gli immortali, non di meno in quel punto che l'angelo cominciò salutandola a parlare, divenne chiostrò e ricetta di colui che signoreggia gli angeli e tutto il mondo, e meritava per questo non solo spogliarsi della inferiorità che aveva, ma farsi di gran lunga superiore. Fu dunque con arte fatto l'angelo non così allegro.

Ora resta a veder l'artificio che nella disposizione dell'angelo ha Tiziano usato, che è la quinta et ultima condizione della pittura, avendo di sopra a bastanza mostrato quel che sia essa disposizione.⁹⁸ Egli l'ha fatto col piè manco avanti, in forma di uom che camini con la mano dritta cacciata in fuori per accompagnar con questo atto il suo parlare, con la vita alquanto piegata e con la testa che mostra di rilevarsi un poco indietro. Sta in atto di camminare più avanti, perciocché è verisimile che, essendo egli giunto da quella parte dove tenea la Madonna rivolte le spalle, era per andare a incontrarla dalla parte dove avea il viso rivolto. Ma ella, sentito il rumore, lasciò l'orazione e rivoltossi verso quella parte donde l'angelo veniva. Il quale, vedendosi già da faccia a faccia con lei in quel modo che in quel punto si ritrovò fermandosi, la salutò, et aspettata et intesa già la risposta, che fu *Quomodo fiet istud* e quel che segue, sta in atto di dire *Spiritus Sanctus superveniet in te* con quel che viene appresso; e mentre questo diceva l'angelo, la Madonna, postasi in quell'atto di umiltà che conveniva per avere a

might be, it was impossible to ignore totally a certain frightfulness that forced those who looked at him to lower their eyes. This disproves the opinion of those who thought that the face of the Angel should be all cheerful and smiling, and reprimanded Titian for choosing not to paint him that way, because the presence of cheerfulness does not, by itself, prove the loftiness of the mystery. Indeed, I will add that even if it were not at all necessary to worry about intimating astonishment and wonder, and if the whole mystery were to be signified with cheerfulness only, even in that case it would not have been appropriate to make the Angel fully cheerful and with a smiling face, as the servant is not supposed to laugh about anything together with his master, since in that way he would display arrogance and bad manners, seeming to want to treat him with familiarity and to show off a fraternizing attitude, which is an absolutely abominable thing in the eyes of all masters and of other friends from a higher class. And if Mary had formerly been inferior to the angels, in the way that mortals are inferior to immortals, nevertheless, at the very moment when the Angel started speaking in greeting her, she became the vessel for and receiver of Him who rules over all the angels and all the world, and for this reason she deserved not only to divest herself of the inferiority she had, but also to become in fact far superior. It was then on purpose that the Angel was not made all that cheerful.

Now there is one more point to consider: that is, the artifice used by Titian in the Angel's posture, which is the fifth and last condition of painting, and above we have shown at length what posture is. He has made him with the left foot forward, in the shape of a man who is walking with his right hand held out in order to accompany his speech with this gesture; he is quite bent forward at the waist and his head appears to be slightly tilted backwards. He is in the act of moving forward, since it is possible that, having arrived from that side towards which the Madonna was turning her back, he was going to meet her from the other side, towards which she was facing. But she, having heard the noise, left off her prayer and turned towards the side whence the Angel was coming. He, finding himself in that way face to face with her, stopped in that place and greeted her, and, once he had heard the expected answer (which was '*Quomodo fiet istud*' and all that follows) he was about to say '*Spiritus Sanctus superveniet in te*' and so forth; and while the Angel was saying this, the Madonna, having assumed that posture of humility that was appropriate for

⁹⁸ Cfr. p. 875 e qui la nota 51, p. 876 e qui la nota 55.

dire *Ecce ancilla Domini* con el rimanente, aspettava con le braccia in forma di croce, e con quel maggior inchino che in quella positura, così all'improvviso e quasi in fretta presa, le fu lecito a poter fare, che l'angelo finisse. In maniera che Maria in quella pittura non parla e per questa cagione è fatta con la bocca serrata. L'angelo sta con la bocca aperta, e dal segno della mano sua e dalla disposizione in che sta Maria et anco dall'aria del volto d'amendue detta di sopra, si può agevolmente comprendere che egli stia dicendo *Spiritus Sanctus superveniet in te* etc. Perciò, s'egli stesse dicendo *Ave gratia plena*, non conveniva che il braccio stesse in quel modo che si suol fare quando si dice cosa di grande importanza. Perciò il saluto non ha seco né poca [né] molta importanza e nella pronunzia o non richiede atto veruno di mano o almeno un altro che dia segno di maggior piacevolezza. Conosci, come ho detto, eziandio dal sito o disposizione di Maria, perciò, avendo due volte parlato l'angelo e due volte Maria, ciascuna delle volte in amendue richiedeva diverso atto, et essendo la prima risposta di Maria tutta piena di meraviglia e di stupore in dicendo *Quomodo fiet istud* etc., altro gesto di mani e di braccia e di tutto il corpo richiedeva, che non quello in che ella sta, come ciascuno può da sé conoscere. Perciò, quando alcuno si meraviglia, ritira ambedue le braccia in sé stesso e mostra le palme verso il luoco dove egli guarda, sta ritto con la vita, abbassa le ciglia e comprime la bocca e corruga la fronte. Non ci essendo dunque veruno segno di meraviglia in essa, segue che stia apparecchiata per dire la seconda risposta; e se ciò è (come veramente è), necessariamente si conchiude che l'angelo stia anco esso dicendo la seconda sua proposta.⁹⁹

Da questo si possono accorti rendere dell'error suo coloro a' quali non piace che la Vergine stia in atto di non parlare alcuna delle due risposte, perciò richieggono dalla pittura l'impossibile; ché non potendo ella mostrare se non uno atto solo (come più a lungo di sopra abbiam detto),¹⁰⁰ vorrebbero che ne mostrasse due. Et ancor che sia vero che in quel misterio l'angelo parlasse e Maria parlasse, non di meno non conveniva far ambedue parlanti, ché così sarebbe fatta mostra che tutti due parlassero in un tratto. Ma essendo cosa ragionevole che, mentre l'un parla, l'altro taccia et intenda, bisognava,

the words she was to say ('*Ecce ancilla Domini*') with all the rest, waited until the Angel had finished his speech, keeping her arms in front of her in the shape of a cross and bending as deeply as in that posture, so unexpectedly and almost hastily assumed, allowed her to do. So in this painting Mary does not speak and for this reason she is shown with her mouth closed. The Angel stands with his mouth open, and from the gesture of his hand and from the posture of Mary, as well as from the looks on both of their faces, as we said above, it is easy to understand that he is saying '*Spiritus Sanctus superveniet in te*' etc. In fact, if he were saying '*Ave gratia plena*', there would be no reason for his arm to be stretched out in the way it usually is when one says something of great importance. Since the greeting in itself has neither little [nor] great importance, and the pronouncing of it requires no motion whatsoever of the hand or, if any, one that would express greater pleasantness. One knows this, as I have said, also from the placement or posture of Mary; because, since the Angel had spoken twice and so had Mary, each of the two times necessitated in both of them a different motion, and, as Mary's first response, full of wonder and astonishment, when she said '*Quomodo fiet istud*' etc., it required another gesture for the hands and the arms and the posture of the whole body to be different from the posture she has, as everyone can understand for himself. Because, when you are wondering, you press both your arms to your body and open the palms towards the direction in which you are looking, you keep your torso erect, lower your eyelids, close your mouth tightly and wrinkle your brow. Since there is no sign of wonderment in her, it follows that she is preparing to make her second response; and if that is so (as it truly is), one inevitably concludes that the Angel is himself speaking his second proposal.

From this, those who do not like to think that the Virgin is not making either of her responses can realize their error; in fact, they ask the impossible of the painting, since, though it can only show one single action (as we explained at greater length above), they would want it to show two. And even though it is true that in this mystery the Angel spoke and Mary also spoke, nonetheless it was not appropriate to show both of them in the act of speaking, for in that way both of them would have appeared to be speaking at the same time. But since it is more rational that while one speaks, the other is quiet and listens,

⁹⁹ Minuziosa didascalia scenica di *Luc.*, I, 28-38.

¹⁰⁰ Cfr. p. 875 e qui la nota 53.

introducendo l'angelo a parlare che la Vergine mostrasse d'intendere. Ma la grandezza dell'ingegno di Tiziano, in questa particolarità senza dubbio veruno meravigliosa, fe' che ancor che la Vergine stesse cheta, non di meno si comprendesse dall'atto in che ella stava non solo che già le restava a rispondere, ma eziandio che cosa, subito che l'angelo tacesse, a rispondere avesse. Ora, tornando all'angelo, dico che sta con quel piede inanzi per la cagion detta, et insieme ancora vi si vede una riverenzia senza molta arte, fatta col piè destro, perché in quel sito si truovò al rivolgersi della Vergine e per far vedere che non è meno bell'arte il mostrar di voler fuggir l'arte, che l'artificio istesso. Ora diciamo della mano, la quale è sì importante all'atto, che non senza gran fatica et ingegno è il disporla nel sito che si richiede, per accompagnare con essa quella forma di parlare e di voce che al proposito si richiede. E ciò nasce per la varietà de' gesti che con essa si possono fare; e dove è gran numero, è difficile lo scegliere quell'uno che per allora convenevole sia. Perciòché, ancor che con i movimenti dell'altre parti del corpo si soglia accompagnare il parlare, non è però membro che a tutte le varietà del dire (che sono infinite) possa i suoi atti accomodare, se non le mani, che in un certo modo si possono dire che veramente parlino. Il che si vede nei mutoli, i quali tutti i loro concetti con esse chiaramente esprimono. E mi ricordo di aver letto che un non so chi diceva di doversi in un certo modo più alla mano che al sermone attribuire, perciòché i sermoni appresso varie lingue sono sì varii che l'un l'altro non s'intendono.¹⁰¹ Ma la mano fa un certo parlare commune a tutte le lingue, col quale ogni barbara nazione può farsi intendere dalle greche e latine, e queste da tutte quelle. É dunque così difficile il far la scelta del gesto che alla mano conviene, che gli oratori famosi e gli istrioni, che in questo studio attendono più. che ad ogni altro, sogliono bene spesso fallirlo. Or, quanto sarà più difficile a potersi puntalmente e così a minuto ritrovare da un pittore? E tanto più che non basta bene collocare la mano et il braccio, se non vi è la corrispondenza della disposizione

inevitably, having introduced the Angel in the act of speaking, the Virgin was to be shown in the act of listening. But the greatness of Titian's ingenuity, undoubtedly wonderful in this particular case, is that, even though the Virgin remains quiet, it was nonetheless apparent from her posture not only that it would soon be her turn to respond, but also what she would respond, as soon as the Angel left off speaking. Now, turning back to the Angel, I will say that he is shown with his foot forward for the reason that I mentioned above, and also we see a reverence made rather artlessly with the right foot, because he found himself in that posture as the Virgin turned round, and because he wanted to point out that showing the intention of avoiding art is just as good an artifice as art itself. Now let us speak about the hand, which is so important to the action that not without great labour and ingenuity can it be placed in the required gesture to accompany with it the kind of speech and voice appropriate to the situation. And this stems from the variety of gestures that can be made with it; and where there is a great number of options, it is difficult to choose the one that is suitable in that particular case. Since, even though it is a usual practice to accompany speech with the movements of the other parts of the body, there is no limb, if not the hand, capable of adapting its gestures to all the variety of statements (which is infinite), so that we can, in a certain sense, say that the hands actually do speak. This can be seen in mute persons, who clearly express every concept by the use of their hands. And I remember having read that someone (I do not know who) said that more could, in a certain sense, be attributed to the hands than to the words, because words are so different from language to language that one cannot understand the other. The hand, on the contrary, uses a language common to all tongues, and with it any barbarous nation could make itself understood by the Greeks and the Latins, and the latter by the former. It is then so difficult to select the appropriate gesture for the hand that even famous orators and actors, who to this aspect devote greater study than to any other, often fail in their choice. Now, how much more difficult will it be for a painter to find it with precision and care? And so much the more difficult because it is not enough to choose a good position for the hand and the arm, if there is no correspondence between the way they are placed and

¹⁰¹ Per l'elogio della mano cfr. ad esempio il *Dialogo di M. NICOLÒ FRANCO, dove si ragiona delle bellezze*, Venezia 1542, s. p.: «La dignità delle mani è tale e tanta, che poscia che a dirne tanto son qui trascorso, ardire mi porge a dirvi ch'ella di tutti i membri la più eccellente si può nomare, perché per la struttura de le mani l'uomo è sapientissimo giudicato, laonde si pare le mani altro non essere a l'uomo che ministre de la sapienza e de la ragione et ornamento et accrescimento insieme de l'universo».

di tutto il corpo. Ma se noi ne ridurremo a memoria quali parole ha in bocca l'angelo, e tutto quello che della grazia e dell'aria fu detto di sopra, conosceremo che non in altro sito potea porsi il braccio e la mano, che in quello. Percioché, avendo l'angelo annunziato alla Vergine che già avea da ingravidarsi del Signor del mondo, fu assai poca meraviglia rispetto a quello che ne traeva con seco il saperne il modo come sella doveva essere ingravidata. Il perché quando questo le discopre, era necessario scegliere quella disposizione nella mano, la quale può accompagnare un parlare pieno della maggior meraviglia fra tutte le meraviglie passate, presenti e future. E questo mostra il braccio dritto cacciato in fuori, e non il sinistro, come a quello che è più debole e nel quale non si può mostrare quella forza e quella veemenza di pronunzia che nell'altro si vede.¹⁰² Il dito grosso similmente, raggiunto con l'indice nella mano alzata un poco verso l'esterior parte del braccio, accompagna quel medesimo atto et in questa collocazione appunto ha l'angelo il braccio dritto, lasciando il sinistro in ufficio di poca importanza, che è il tenere il giglio; e per questa cagione non si curò di farlo parer tutto. Sta dunque il braccio dritto mostrando ignudo poco più sopra del gomito insino al rovescio della mano, e l'osso lungo che viene dall'articolo del gomito alla prima parte della mano, chiamato per proprio nome dagli anatomisti osso del gomito, resta riguardando verso terra et apparisce assai bene in quel braccio, percióché questo osso non è coverto da muscolo alcuno, ma solo dalla pelle, e volendolo così esprimere Tiziano, vi si vede una certa sodezza in quella parte, come nell'altra una morbidezza, dove i muscoli si richieggono, e l'altro osso che soprasta a questo quasi della medesima lunghezza, che per nome de'anatomici vien detto radio, resta nella parte che riguarda il cielo. Il qual osso non avendo più che un muscolo per coverta, se ben rende il braccio in quella parte di vista non così sodo come il gomito, resta nondimeno in una mezzana morbidezza, avendo rispetto al resto del braccio. E perché la distensione delle quattro dita . (non intendendo il pollice) vien fatta dal maggior muscolo de' tre che hanno origine da quella esterior parte dell'osso detto umero o braccio, la quale si congiunge con la parte suprema dell'osso del gomito, e questo muscolo è, superficiale et ingombra quasi tutto il mezzo per lungo dell'ulna,

the rest of the body. But if we bear in mind the words that are coming from the Angel's mouth, with all that has been said about grace and aura above, we will know that it would have been impossible for the arm and the hand to be positioned in any other way than in this one. In fact, since the Angel had already announced to the Virgin that she would become pregnant with the Lord of the world, compared to what this implied, knowledge of the way in which she would become pregnant created very little wonder. When he revealed her the reason for this, it was then necessary to choose that disposition of the hand that could accompany explicit speech about the greatest wonder of all wonders, past, present and future. And this is what the thrusting forward of the right arm signifies – the right, not the left, since the left is weaker, and in it one cannot show the force and the vehemence of speech that are evident in the other one. Similarly, the thumb, joined with the index finger of the hand that is slightly raised towards the external part of the arm, accompanies this same action, and in precisely this configuration the Angel has placed his right arm, while leaving his left one in a role of little importance, that of holding the lily; and for this reason he [Titian] has not taken the trouble to show it entirely. The right arm, then, is shown bare from slightly above the elbow down to the back of the hand, and the long bone that extends from the elbow joint to the first part of the hand, to which the anatomists have assigned the name of 'elbow bone', remains face down, towards the ground and is quite visible in this arm, as this bone is not covered over by any muscle, but only by the skin, and since Titian wanted to show it this way, one can see a certain firmness in this part, just as there is softness in the other, where muscles are required, while the other bone, which lies above this one and is almost the same length, the one that the anatomists call 'radius', remains in the part that faces upwards towards the sky. If this bone, which is covered by one single muscle, prevents the arm from being as firm in this part as it is in the elbow, nonetheless it preserves a medium softness in comparison with the rest of the arm. And since the stretching of the four fingers (I am not counting the thumb) is produced by the largest of the three muscles that originate from the external part of the bone called 'humerus' or 'arm bone', which joins with the upper part of the 'elbow bone', and since this muscle is on top and covers almost the whole half occupied lengthwise by the ulna,

¹⁰² Il medico non tralascia l'occasione per una minuziosa divagazione anatomica, con la quale cerca di avvalorare l'*artificio* del pittore.

e dapoi, diviso in quattro tendini, ciascuno alza in sù il suo dito, fu necessario che questo muscolo apparisse, poiché la mano dell'angelo sta con le quattro dita distese e per così dire risupinate. E per questo si vede nel mezzo di quel braccio spiccare un muscolo dolcemente dal principio del gomito, ma più spiccante poi quanto più verso la mano si va e massimamente verso la parte del radio. Perciò, avendo alquanto calato l'indice, la qual mozione si fa da uno de' muscoli interiori dell'ulna, e questo per accoppiare insieme l'indice col pollice, come sogliono quelli che di cosa di molta importanza hanno a ragionare, venia necessariamente a mostrare maggior concavità verso quella parte dove questo dito s'abbassava. E perché quel muscolo che muove il pollice obliquamente e l'accoppia all'indice, avendo la origine dalla suprema parte di tutto l'osso del gomito, obliquamente passa per disotto all'altro già detto muscolo, genera maggior concavità e divisione verso il corpo, e per questa cagione si vede in quel braccio quella obliquità di muscolo più apparente. E di qua nascono due meraviglie di Tiziano: l'una è che da questa disposizione di muscoli mette inanzi agli occhi quello che la pittura nasconde, cioè che il pollice sia accoppiato con l'indice, ancor che del pollice non vi sia pur un segno. L'altra egli è che, quando si accoppiano queste due dita, si mostrerebbe forse in loro alcuna bruttura, la quale gli parve bene a non far vedere, ma solo far intendere l'atto della mano. Dal che si vede ancora chiaramente quanto sia maggior artificio il nascondere alle volte i membri che il non mostrarli.¹⁰³ Questa fu invenzione di Apelle, di nascondere le brutture et i vizii della persona o de' gesti, perciò che ritrasse dal naturale Antigono re, il quale era privo di uno occhio. Ma egli il dipinse in profilo a uso di medaglia e mostrò solo la parte dell'occhio sano, nascondendo il cieco, acciò paresse che quello che mancava per difetto del vivo paresse che fusse nascosto per ragion della pittura.¹⁰⁴ Mostra dunque quel braccio quei muscoli soli che bastavano a fare quell'atto di stendere le cinque dita nel modo che abbiam detto, e non era necessario fargli apparere tutti, perciò che questo si fa quando la mano fa maggior forza e fatica. Et ancor che vi siano gli altri che alzano l'articolo di tutta la mano o vogliam dire metacarpo, non di meno, perché quelli sono non così superficiali

and is then divided into four tendons, each of which raises its respective finger, it was necessary that this muscle should be apparent, as in the Angel's hand the four fingers are extended and, so to speak, resupinated. And because of this we see a muscle flexing mildly in the middle of that arm from the beginning of the elbow, but becoming more evident as it reaches closer to the hand and bulging markedly towards the part occupied by the radius. So, having let the index finger droop clearly down, a motion that is produced by one of the inner muscles of the ulna in order to join the thumb with the index finger, as those who have something very important to discuss are wont to do, it inevitably happened that a greater concavity was shown in the place towards which this finger moved down. And since the muscle that moves the thumb obliquely and joins it to the index finger (because it originates at the very top part of the elbow bone) passes obliquely under the other muscle we have already mentioned, it generates a greater concavity and division towards the body, and for this reason we see in this arm that more apparent obliqueness of the muscle. And in this there are two wonders performed by Titian: the first is that with this arrangement of the muscles he puts before the eyes that which the painting hides, i.e. the joining of the thumb with the index finger, although of the thumb there is not the slightest trace. The other wonder is that the joining of these two fingers might show in them some sort of ugliness, which he judged a good thing not to display, but he chose to give only the intuition of such a movement of the hand: from which we see again quite clearly that sometimes there is greater artistry in hiding a limb rather than in showing it. This is something Apelles invented, to hide the ugliness and defects of a person or a gesture, because he made a live portrait of King Antigonus, who was missing an eye. He depicted him in profile, as one does in a medal, and only showed the side with the healthy eye, hiding the blind one, so that it seemed as if the one that was missing, due to a defect of the real person, was hidden because of the demands of the painting. In the arm, then, only those muscles are shown that were needed to make that extension of the five fingers in the manner we have described, and it was not necessary to show them all, which is done when the hand is using greater force and making an effort. And even though there are the others that raise the articulation of the whole hand, or we could say of the metacarpus, nonetheless, because they are not so superficial

¹⁰³ Sulle abbreviazioni dell'artista cfr. p. 871 e qui la nota 39.

¹⁰⁴ Uno degli esempi pliniani più celebri; cfr. VARCHI [cfr. la nota 19], pp. 265 sg.; GILIO [cfr. la nota 22], p. 78.

et il moto non è forzato e l'angelo è grasso, non si mostrano spiccanti, ma solo per una certa aria et a vista da' periti della notomia si possono considerare.

Né lascierò di dire un'altra bella avvertenza intorno a quel poco che si mostra ignudo del braccio dal gomito in sù: che, avendo da far parere il distendimento del braccio nella piegatura di esso, il qual moto si fa da due muscoli dei quattro che sono destinati a piegare e stendere questo articolo, i quali due nascono dall'umero et obliquamente passando si piantano all'osso del gomito, volse mostrarne solo una parte, cioè quei capi che s'inseriscono a questo articolo, acciòché dal processo di quel poco si andasse col pensiero nell'altra parte di essi, e sono così attamente et al suo loco posti che ogni perito anatomista se ne può contentare. E perché abbiam detto che, se il motivo e la disposizione del braccio non è accompagnata da quella di tutto il corpo, non ha punto dell'artificioso; dico questo solo, che non bisognava che l'angelo, per mostrare maggior umiltà, s'inclinasse più di quello che sta, perciòché questi grandi inchini, che smisuratamente piegano il mezzo del corpo inanzi, necessariamente fanno che fuor di misura anco si sporgano in fuori le parti di dietro. Ma molto più brutto è l'atto che si fa poi nel rizzarsi sù, perciòché è necessario con gran forza, volendo ritornare alla drittura dello stare in piè, fare un atto non meno sconcio del primo. Laonde, signor Marchese mio, io vorrei che queste creanze che s'usano oggidì in Napoli fra signori e cavalieri fussino in loro (in questa parte specialmente e fra donne) più moderate e meno impetuose, sapendo di fermo che non può farsi errore ogni volta che s'imitano gli angioli.¹⁰⁵

Della disposizione del collo e della testa vorrei dir molte cose, ma mi accorgo che la grandezza dell'opera mi ha tirato a dir molte cose che io non credevo di dire, e perciò me ne passerò leggermente; e lasciando da parte la ragion de' muscoli, è degno di considerazione e di meraviglia insieme il veder la testa talmente dal collo rilevata, che par che la voce ne possa uscir chiara e ritonda e senza veruno impedimento. Ché quando ella fosse più china, si sarebbe suffogata in gran parte, come fanno alcuni che fan sentir la voce più nel gorgozzule che nella bocca, cosa molto fastidiosa a sentire;

and the motion is not forced and the Angel is plump, they are not visibly shown, but they can be recognized only because of a certain aspect and by the eye of an expert in anatomy.

Nor shall I omit to mention another beautiful expedient used in that small bare portion of the arm visible above the elbow: since he had to show the extension of the arm in the bending of it, which motion is made by two of the four muscles that are capable of flexing and extending this articulation, which two take their origin in the humerus and, crossing obliquely, anchor the elbow bone, he chose to show only a part of them, and precisely those ends that fit into this joint, so that from the process going on in this small part one could think of the other part, and they are so appropriately and correctly placed that an expert anatomist would be satisfied with them. And since we have said that, if the motif and posture of the arm is not accompanied by that of the whole body, there is nothing contrived in it at all. I say only this: that in order to show greater humility it was not necessary for the Angel to bend more than he does, because great bows, which immoderately bend half of the body forward, inevitably cause an immoderate jutting out of the parts behind also. But then the act of raising oneself up again is much uglier, since, if one wants to recover the uprightness of the standing posture, he must use remarkable force to make a movement no less inappropriate than the first one. This is why, my dear Signor Marquis, I would like these manners which are now common in Naples among gentlemen and gallants (especially in this class and among women) to be more moderate and less impetuous, knowing for certain that no error can possibly be committed when one imitates angels.

On the position of the neck and the head I would like to say many things, but I realize that the greatness of the work has led me to say many things that I did not think I would, and therefore I will touch only lightly on these aspects; and, leaving aside the question of the muscles, what is worthy of both consideration and admiration is seeing the head emerge so much from the neck that one has the impression that the voice is issuing forth, clear and round, without any impediment whatsoever. Now, if the head had been more bent over, the voice would have been much more strangled, as happens with some people who make their voices come from the throat rather than from the mouth, a most irritating thing to have to hear,

¹⁰⁵ L'ironica osservazione di costume ha qualche affinità con le riserve puristiche e controriformistiche sugli *scorci* michelangeloeschi; cfr. DOLCE [cfr. la nota 19], pp. 808 sgg.; GILIO [cfr. la nota 22], pp. 859 sg.

o come altri, che risuonano a guisa di coloro che minacciano. E se fusse il capo collocato più alto ovvero col collo distorto, sarebbe la voce come di quelli che la fanno uscire così acuta e sottile, che par una punta di ago che penetri altrui nel cervello; ovvero sarebbe interrotta, disuguale et oscura et effeminata. Quella dunque pare che in quel sito possa con facilità uscire e con fermezza articolata poi dalla bocca, che non gli dà grande iato et apertura, sì che paia che primo sia come suavità che intesa, né così chiusa che le parole riflettano di nuovo alla origine loro, ovvero (come si vede in molti) che non se ne sentano le ultime sillabe, ma si dimostra che il suo parlare sia uguale, uniforme e corrente, le labbra che non molto si muovano, ma (come il decoro richiede) la bocca par che pigli l'ufficio del parlare più che non esse, le quali stanno uguali e non distorte, né mostrano i denti. Et in somma par che sia un vivente che parli di lontano e che per la lontananza non si senta la voce; e la respirazione par che sia facile e senza fatica. E nella gola, a chi ben vi mirerà, parrà dalla parte di fuori vedere quel lieve tremolar di pelle che superficialmente si fa per lo rimbombo della voce; cosa senza dubbio, non dirò a fare, ma a immaginarsi quasi impossibile.¹⁰⁶

Debbovi dir anco della disposizione del naso? dell'occhio? della orecchia? de' capelli? della fronte? de' piedi? delle ali? della vesta? dell'altra mano e d'infinite cose altre? In verità, signor Marchese, che questa è una materia di cui, come facile mi fu trovare il principio, così non veggo dove mi debbia ritrovare il fine. Perciòché, appena ho finito di dire una cosa, che mi trovo assalito da infinite altre, onde a me pare di essere fra due mali, de' quali necessariamente non potrò mai fuggir l'uno: ché s'io ne dico tutto ciò che posso, sarò così lungo che non senza estremo fastidio potrà V. S. passarsene, s'io ne taccio, da che ho pigliata questa impresa, in lasciandola imperfetta parmi che torto si faccia a Tiziano. Ma forzerommi, con prendere la via del mezzo, schivare in parte e l'uno e l'altro. E tra tante cose che mi si rappresentano nella mente una cosa pigliandone, di quella vedrò cercarne meno che distesamente, e sarà la fisionomia, delle cui regole par che s'abbia Tiziano curiosamente servito in questa dipintura per mostrare ai segni del viso e della complessione, et anco di tutta la vita dell'angelo e della Madonna,

or with those other people who sound as if they were threatening you. And if the head were held more highly, with a twisting of the neck, then the voice would come out as it does from those who make it so thin and piercing that it has the effect of the point of a needle penetrating into the brain; or it would be broken, uneven, obscure and effeminate. It seems, on the contrary, that in that position this voice may issue forth easily and be then articulated with firmness by the mouth, which does not give it too wide a hiatus and opening, so that one seems to hear a melodious sound, nor is the mouth so closed that the words will be reverberated back to their point of origin, or (as we see in many cases) that the last syllables will remain unheard: instead his speaking is shown to be even, uniform and fluent: his lips do not move too much, but (as decorum demands) the mouth seems to assume the office of speech more than the lips, which are even and undistorted, and do not let the teeth be seen. In sum, it seems as if a living being were speaking from some distance away and, because of that distance, his voice could not be heard; and his breathing seems to be easy and effortless. And in his neck whoever looks attentively will sort of see that gentle vibration of the skin that occurs on the surface with the reverberation of the voice, which is undoubtedly almost impossible to imagine, much less actually to depict.

Shall I also talk of the configuration of the nose? of the eye? of the ear? of the hair? of the forehead? of the feet? of the wings? of the clothes? of the other hand and of another thousand things? In truth, Signor Marquis, this is a subject for which, however easy it was to find the beginning, I cannot see where I would ever find the end. For, hardly have I finished saying one thing, when a thousand others come to assail me, so that I feel as if I were myself between two evils, one of which I will never, perforce, be able to avoid: in fact, if I say about this everything I can, I will be so long that not without enormous nuisance will Your Lordship succeed in getting through; on the other hand, if I do not speak about it, I feel that, having embarked on this enterprise,¹⁰⁷ I am doing wrong to Titian by leaving it imperfect. But I will force myself, by taking a middle course, partly to avoid both the one and the other. And among the many things that come to my mind, I will choose one, which I will try to treat less than in full, and that thing is physiognomy, of whose rules Titian seems quite curiously to have availed himself in this painting to show through the traits of the face and the complexion, and also the whole bodies of the Angel and the Madonna,

¹⁰⁶ La solita iperbole della resa pittorica; cfr. VASARI in *Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento*, a cura di P. Barocchi, Milano 1971, I, pp. 496 sg.; DOLCE [cfr. la nota 19], 814 sg.

¹⁰⁷ The phrase 'having embarked on this enterprise' stands for 'pigliata questa impresa'.

i costumi e l'animo loro punto non discordante da quanto di sopra abbiamo detto.¹⁰⁸

E per voler dire della complessione, o vogliamo dire temperamento, il quale dimostra di avere l'angelo, in prima degno di considerazione è che non è da ottimo artefice far i segni nel viso o nella persona, per li quali si possa conoscere l'intrinseco dell'animo, se non vi si accompagnano anco i segni della temperatura che abbiano corrispondenza con quelli. Perciò quei primi nascono da questa, e secondo la variazione di questa, che può essere infinita, così variano quelli. Onde i medici, che della fisionomia non molto si curano, col conoscimento della complessioni sola, se non così minutamente, almeno in gin parte possono dell'animo di ciascuno congetturare.¹⁰⁹ I poeti illustri nel descrivere qualche persona segnalata s'hanno alle volte servito dell'una e l'altra sorte de' segni, acciò più credibili fussero stati i movimenti e le azzioni a loro assegnate. Alle volte dalla fisionomia sola i segni prendendo, come quelli che ogni minuzia ne possono dell'animo palesare, dell'altra non si sono curati; come fece Omero, il quale descrisse Tersite guercio di un occhio e zoppo di un piede, di capelli rari col capo nella sommità acuto e lungo, stretto nelle spalle e quasi nel petto rinchiuso. Laonde non era meraviglia se nel suo poema, dovunque di lui accade parlarne, il finge poi un uomo che assai parla e poco sappia, sporco, contenzioso e senza considerazione; perciòché a quei segni queste azzioni corrispondono, si come ciascuno che della fisionomia s'intenda può tra sé stesso discorrere.¹¹⁰ Ma Tiziano, al qual non meno che a' poeti fu bisogno questo osservare, non contento dei segni della fisionomia nell'angelo, vi ha eziandio dimostrato quelli che dalla complessione pigliar si possono e ciò ha fatto di sì bel modo, che questi dichiarano quelli, e quelli corrispondono a questi felicemente, di maniera che non vi si vede discordanza veruna. Perciòché, se noi miriamo alla complessione che ne dimostra, si vedrà esser quella che dal predominio del sangue sanguigna vien detta, la quale s'è calda et umida. Perciòché, come ne insegnano i

that their habits and soul were in no way discordant with what we have said above.

And to speak of the complexion or should we not rather say the 'temperament' that the Angel shows he has, the first aspect worth considering is the fact that it is unlike an excellent artist to put marks on the face or the body by which one can know the depth of a soul without accompanying them also with the corresponding marks of the temperament, because the former originate in the latter, and according to the variation in the latter, which can be infinite, so do the former vary. Physicians, who do not care much about physiognomy, with their knowledge of the complexion only, can speculate, if not quite so minutely, at least to a good extent, about a person's character. In describing an important person, illustrious poets made use now of the one type of marks, now of the other, so that the movements and the actions assigned to their personage were more credible. At times they had recourse only to physiognomic signs, considering them as capable of revealing all the minutiae of the soul, while they completely disregarded the other type. This is what Homer did when he described Thersites as being lame in one foot and having a squinting eye, sparse hair on the top of his long, pointed head, narrow shoulders and an almost concave chest. Therefore it is no wonder that, whenever he is mentioned in the poem, he is then represented as a man who talks very much but knows very little, who is dirty, quarrelsome and disrespectful. These actions correspond, in fact, to those signs, as anyone who understands physiognomy can conclude. But Titian, who no less than the poets needed this kind of observation, being not content with just the signs of the Angel's physiognomy, has also shown those that can be found in the complexion, and has done so in such a beautiful way that the latter manifest the former, and the former correspond felicitously with the latter, in such a manner that we cannot see any discordance at all. For, if we look at the complexion as it is depicted, we shall recognize it as the one that, in consequence of the dominance of blood, is called 'sanguine', and is warm and moist. As physicians have it,

¹⁰⁸ L'esperienza medica dello scrivente lo induce a soffermarsi sulla *fisionomia*, che non interessa né il Dolce, né i controriformisti, ma che era stata ritenuta, importante per il pittore ancora dal PINO [cfr. la nota 19], p. 136: «Parte onorata et utile del nostro pittore sarebbe la fisionomia, come anco vuole Pomponio Gaurico . . . ». Sul rapporto fisionomia-arte cfr. POMPONIO GAURICO, *De Sculptura* [1504], a cura di A. CHASTEL e R. KLEIN, Paris 1969, pp. 121 sgg.

¹⁰⁹ Una fisionomia quindi non meramente teorica.

¹¹⁰ Cfr. ad esempio GAURICO [cfr. la nota 108], pp. 137 sgg., 159 sgg., 151.

medici, questo temperamento fa gli uomini nell'abito mediocri o alquanto all'essere carnoso inclinati; e quella pienezza non viene da soverchio grasso, ma da soverchia carne. Il colore di tutta la vita è tra bianco e rosso, ma un poco più rosso che bianco; i capelli folti, biondi e mezzanamente crespi. Da questa complessione ne nasce un animo pronto et audace, irascibile ma non furibondo. Ora, chi ben mira quell'angelo, non vi vedrà egli tutti questi segni? E se noi vorremo parlare della inclinazione de' pianeti, che hanno sugli umani corpi, ritroveremo esser quell'angelo sotto il pianeta di Giove, dal quale gioviale verrà la sua natura detta.¹¹¹ Perciò questi dicono i fisonomi essere di carnatura fra la durezza e la morbidezza mediocre; di bello e grato aspetto, di color bianco, di folti capelli, di occhi vaghi et allegri, anzi loro tutti allegri, e festevoli, politi e netti; i quali segni, senza che io ne favelli, ciascun può vedere ritrovarsi tutti in quell'angelo, la qual natura e complessione avea Tiziano nella idea della mente sua quando il dipingeva. E discorrendo poi della natura ove questi segni si ritrovano, dicono cotali uomini essere di grande e pellegrino animo, liberalissimi sopra le lor forze, desiderosi di regnare, dispregiatori della mediocrità, gentilissimi, onesti, avidi di gloria e di fama, fedeli, amici veri e senza frode, pacifici i e per lo più amatori della sapienza, di gran consiglio et eloquenti, et insomma di tutte le cose buone imitatori diligentissimi. Ora, vedete se questa natura e non altra doveva Tiziano eleggere, per intenderla in uno angelo. E ritornando a quel dubbio già con altri snodamenti disciolto prima,¹¹² chi sarà colui che voglia l'angelo più allegro di quello che egli mostra, e quale altro sarà che' il desideri manco rosso o manco pieno? Non conosceva egli che non vi si potranno intendere gran parte di queste virtù? Perciò che l'esser solamente bianco senza niuno rossore, e soverchiamente

this temperament causes men to be of a middling constitution or rather inclined to fleshiness, and that fullness does not come from excessive fat but from excessive flesh. The colour of the whole body is between white and red, yet a little more red than white; the hair is thick and blonde, with a medium curliness. This complexion produces a prompt and bold temperament, which is irascible but not furious. Now, if one observes the Angel carefully, will he not see all these signs? And if we want to talk about the influence that the planets have over the human body, we shall find that the Angel is under the planet of Jove, from whose name his nature is called 'jovial'. As regards this type, physiognomists say that his flesh is between firmness and softness, that he has handsome and pleasing looks, a white skin, thick hair, charming and cheerful eyes, that in fact his entire person is cheerful and festive, clean and neat – which traits, without my having to say more, anyone can easily notice in the Angel, whose nature and complexion Titian had in his mind while he was painting him. And, furthermore, to speak of the nature in which these signs are present, a man of this type is said to have a great and wandering spirit, to be exceedingly generous beyond his limits, eager to rule, intolerant of mediocrity, extremely polite, honest, hungry for glory and fame, faithful, a true friend without fraudulence, peaceful, in general a lover of wisdom, eloquent and of great counsel, and, in short, a very diligent imitator of all good things. Now, see if Titian were to choose this nature and no other to suggest it in an angel. And returning to that doubt that we have already solved earlier from some other angles, who would want the Angel to appear more joyous than he has been shown, and who would prefer him to be less ruddy and less full? Does he not know that many of these virtues cannot be implied? In fact, being totally white, without any ruddiness,

¹¹¹ Sulle caratteristiche della *natura gioviale* cfr. *Trattato dell'arte della pittura, scoltura et architettura*, di GIO. PAOLO LOMAZZO, Milano 1585, pp. 121 sg.: «La disposizione ch'egli [Giove] dà e gli affetti, ovvero moti, che causa sono la faccia allegra et onesta, i gesti d'onore, congionger di mani, come suoi chi fa festa et allegrezza, ovvero chi loda alcuno, inginocchiarsi con la testa elevata, a guisa di chi adora. Quanto alla disposizione del corpo fa l'uomo di color bianco, mescolato coi rosso, di bellissimo corpo, di buona statura, calvo, cioè di fronte alta, gl'occhi alquanto grandi, non del tutto neri, la pupilla larga, le nati brevi et inequali, i denti interiori un poco grandi, la barba crespa; fallo d'animo grato e di buoni costumi. Queste corrispondenze tra le qualità dell'animo e la costituzione del corpo et i moti esteriori, se saranno considerate e ben intese da' pittori, gli saranno di gran diletto e faranno grandissimo onore alla sua professione».

¹¹² Cfr. qui pp. 886 sg.

allegro e ridente, conviene a coloro che, stando sotto il dominio di Venere, sono perciò venerei chiamati, in maniera che, così facendolo, ne sarebbero nati due errori: l'uno, che avrebbe fatta una mescolanza di due nature sotto due pianeti inchinate, donde ne nascerebbe confusione et oscurità; l'altro, che per quei segni dovendosi intendere la natura de' venerei (i quali sono a giuochi e balli et alle vanità e disonestà deditissimi), avrebbe di queste qualità l'animo dell'angelo dimostrato.¹¹³ Ora, quanto più grave errore sarebbe stato se, con averlo dipinto smagrito, avesse in lui dinotato la malignità e tardanza delle azzioni che ne viene dall'influsso di Saturno,¹¹⁴ o la garrulità e le bugie che ne apporta Mercurio,¹¹⁵ se bene eloquente e d'ingegno versatile ve lo avesse per questo dimostrato, o la crudeltà di Marte,¹¹⁶ o la instabilità e pigrizia della Luna!¹¹⁷ E chi non avrebbe poi (penetrando sempre col suo pensiero più adentro) immaginosi che, mentre l'angelo parlava, come essendo egli gioviale la voce necessariamente dovea uscire sonora, chiara, lieve et uniforme, degna veramente di uno angelo, così da Venere sarebbe stata effeminata, molle, enervata e senza vigore, e così parimente da Mercurio e dal Sole? sarebbe da Saturno tarda stata, e simile a quella delle oche roca et ostrepente? e da Marte stridente e noiosa? Ora devrò io rientrare nella fisionomia di ciascun membro particolarmente? e se in questo altro così ampio campo rientro, quando poi ritroverò il guado da uscirne? Sarà meglio dunque tacerne, essendo io più che certo che questo può, non che a uomini intendenti, ma ad ogni cervello di grosso e materiale ingegno bastare.

Ora vegnano coloro che, senza più considerare, dicono: «Questa pittura non mi piace. Quel colore è troppo smorto; quel viso non si mostra tutto; la proporzione di quell'angelo non è giusta», et altre cose dette più a caso che con conveniente discorso. E perché,

and excessively cheerful and smiling is only appropriate for those who, being under the dominion of Venus, are therefore called 'venereal'. So, had he depicted him in this way, two errors would have resulted: first of all, he would have created a mixture of two natures subjected to two planets, which would produce confusion and obscurity; secondly, since those signs are referred to the nature of the venereal type (who is very much dedicated to games and balls and all sorts of vanities and deceits), he would have shown the Angel's nature to have these traits. Now, how much graver would the error have been if he had shown a leaner angel, implying in this way the malignant nature and tardiness in actions that come from the influence of Saturn, or the garrulous and untruthful character deriving from Mercury – even if, in this case, he would have shown in him eloquence and a versatile ingenuity – or the cruelty of Mars, or the instability and indolence of the Moon! And who would not then have imagined (penetrating even deeper with his thought) that, while the Angel was speaking, his voice, since he was jovial, was to be inevitably sonorous, clear, light and even – worthy indeed of an angel – whereas from Venus it would have been effeminate, soft, enervated and lacking in vigour, and likewise would it have been from Mercury and from the Sun? And that from Saturn it would have been sluggish and similar to the hoarse and obstreperous voice of a goose? And that from Mars it would have been shrill and boring? Now, shall I have to go into the physiognomy of each part individually? And if I venture into this other field, which is so vast, when shall I find the ford to come out? It will be better, then, to say nothing on those aspects, since I am more than sure that this can suffice not only for knowledgeable men, but also for minds of a coarse and material stuff.

Now let those come forward who, without pondering more deeply, say: 'I do not like this painting. That colour is too dull; that face is not shown entirely; the proportion of that Angel is not right', and other things said more at random than with suitable reasoning. And since,

¹¹³ Sulla natura dei *venerei* cfr. LOMAZZO [cfr. la nota 111], p. 123: «I suoi atti e moti [di Venere] sono piacevoli e festanti, come di giuochi, scherzi, danze, abbracciamenti. Fa i volti amabili, piacenti, dilicati et allegri, e fa l'uomo mediocrementemente bianco per rispetto della sua natura che è fredda et umida come è l'acqua, la quale quando s'agghiaccia, divien bianca, ma tinto e confuso col rosso lo fa bello di corpo, di bella e rotonda faccia, di occhi vaghi e neri, di bei capegli, d'animo lo fa amorevole, gentile, benefico, umano, affabile e grazioso».

¹¹⁴ Sulla natura dei *saturniani* cfr. LOMAZZO [cfr. la nota 111], pp. 121 sg.

¹¹⁵ Sulla natura dei *mercuriani* cfr. LOMAZZO [cfr. la nota 111], pp. 123 sg.

¹¹⁶ Sulla natura dei *marziani* cfr. LOMAZZO [cfr. la nota 111], p. 122.

¹¹⁷ Sulla natura dei *lunari* cfr. LOMAZZO [cfr. la nota 111], p. 124.

se ben si ricorda V. S., circa la proporzione dell'angelo e della Vergine lasciammo certi dubbi insoluti,¹¹⁸ bastarebbe, per coloro che pienamente le ragioni apprendere non panno, dire: «Poiché Tiziano ha in quella pittura avute tante e tali avvertenze, noni è da credere che quella proporzione buona non sia, e dovrebbe invece di ragione sodisfar loro l'autorità di Tiziano». Ma per non parere che questo fusse un trafugire lo sviluppamento dei dubbi, dico che, per esser cinto l'angelo alquanto più sopra del mezzo, inganna la vista e fa parere molto più lungo quello che è dalla cintura in giù di quel che per avventura non par che si convenga, e perciò non pare uguale l'intervallo che è dal piede al ginocchio a quello che è dal ginocchio alla piegatura della coscia. Ma chi vorrà di ciò chiàrirsi, troverà con la misura in mano che, con altri tre tanti quanto è dal ginocchio al piede, giugnerà alla estremità della testa, con tanto più di avanzo quanto l'inchino ne potea ragionevolmente nascondere. Del gomito della Vergine, che par troppo lungo, dirassi che quel dubbio nasce dal non considerarla bene la disposizione nella quale ella sta. Percioché, essendo inchinata quasi tutta su l'umero dritto et il manco quasi tutto ritirato in sù, e cacciando in fuori quasi tutta la dritta parte, viene il braccio a essere aiutato nella lunghezza d'essa. Onde il gomito dritto si mostra tutto quanto è, e il sinistro non tutto; e se bene pare che quel gomito triplicato avanzi la lunghezza del corpo dalle ginocchia in sù, ciò nasce dall'essere ella molto inchinata, ma imaginandocila noi alzata, ogni buon giudizio dirà che possa a misura giusta cadere.¹¹⁹ Devrò anèa rispondere a quel che ne dicono, che delle gambe non mostra quella lunghezza che bisognerebbe. E qual cieco non vede che con quel sito naturalmente mostrar non si possono integre, perciò che, stando ella rivolta con la parte dinanzi, viene necessariamente dietro la tavola a essere gran parte del restante del corpo? la qual parte, dal proprio corpo suo occupata e coverta, si toglie dalla vista di chi la mira. Oltre che ciò vien fatto ancora dal non immaginarne noi in essa altezza artificiale de pianelli o di zoccoli, che ne sogliono mostrar le donne dispòse, ancor che siano assai basse, ché questo potrebbe rappresentarci figura di vanità. E certamente che questi sono dubbi fanciulleschi più tosto che da uomo di qualche discorso, come è quello anco che dicono che una certa

if Your Lordship will remember, we left some doubts unresolved concerning the proportions of the Angel and the Virgin, it would be enough to say, for those who cannot fully grasp the reasons: 'Since in that painting Titian has shown such and so much subtlety, it is not to be believed that the proportion is not good, and Titian's authority, rather than some other reason, should be enough to satisfy them'. But not to give the impression that this is a way of fleeing an examination of the doubts, I will say that the placement of the belt quite above the middle of the Angel's body deceives the sight and causes the part below the belt to appear much longer than probably would seem appropriate, and therefore the distance from the foot to the knee does not appear to be equal to that from the knee to the joint of the thigh. But he who wants to see all this clearly will find, measuring stick in hand, that adding three more segments as long as the one from the knee to the foot he will reach the top of the head with only so much in excess as the bending forward could plausibly hide. As for the Virgin's elbow, which seems to be too long, I will say that this doubt results from not paying enough attention to her posture. In fact, as she is bent almost entirely on to the right humerus: with the left one almost totally folded upwards, so that the right part is very much thrust forward: the arm's length is emphasized by this posture. So, the right elbow is visible in its entirety and the left one only partially, and even if it seems that this triple-sized elbow exceeds the length of the body from the knees upwards, this is due to the fact that she is very much bent, but should we imagine her upright, any good judgement will find that her proportions are correct.

I shall also respond to those who say that her legs do not appear to be as long as they ought to be. And what blind person does not see that in such a posture they obviously cannot be shown completely, since, her body being turned with the front part outwards, most of the rest of it must necessarily be behind the table? This part, occupied and covered by her body, is hidden to the sight of one who looks. Besides, this also happens because we do not imagine in her any artificial tallness added by slippers or clogs, like those that married women are used to showing when they are quite small, since for us this could represent an image of vanity. And these, rather than the doubts of a man with some reasoning faculty, are certainly childish doubts, such as is the comment of one who says that a certain

¹¹⁸ Cfr. qui pp. 873 sgg.

¹¹⁹ La giustificazione si vale di fanciullesche ipotesi naturalistiche, prescindendo da più pertinenti notazioni stilistiche.

piega grande, che è nella inferior parte della vеста dell'angelo, non sta attamente fatta, né accompagna il sito de' piedi, et è quella che comincia dal piè dritto nel basso e va attraversandosi in sù verso il sinistro. Come se l'angelo non avesse avuto altro pensiero che di mirar che piegatura facea la vesta mentre che con la Vergine ragionava! E non s'avede tutto esser fatto con arte grande, per mostrare l'attenzione che l'angelo dovea tener in quello che importava. Il che con la stravaganza delle pieghe si può bene in un certo modo accennare.¹²⁰

Ma lasciando le ragioni da parte, che mi hanno oggimai stracco se bene non ancora sazio, vediamo quel che veramente se ne giudichi da persone intendenti. E non saprei per uomo di questa professione scegliere in Napoli miglior giudizio di quel di messer Giovan Bernardo Lami;¹²¹ il quale, oltre che dipigne tutto ciò che vuole meravigliosamente e nel ritrarre dal naturale non ritrova pari, come ne fanno fede la maggior parte de' signori e signore di questa città, che di sua mano e non d'altri han voluto ritrarsi, è anco sottilissimo intagliatore in rame, le cui stampe fra poco spacio di tempo appariranno, et in nuovo modo scolpisce in creta et in stucco lavori da far istupir le genti, né trova chi nell'opra di miniatura l'aggiunga, senzaché nella notomia e nella prospettiva e nelle altre parti rare alla pittura appartenenti è felicemente versato. Et il signor Cosimo Pinelli, il quale non mira in altro, se non in far tutte le sue cose perfettissime¹²² e che migliorar non si possano, ha voluto che il cielo di questa cappella e le altre parti dove pittura conveniva, fusse tutto di sua mano lavorato; e quanto bene gli sia riuscita quest'opra, ciascuno che di sano giudizio è potrà in vedendola saperlo. Costui dunque non solo loda estremamente quella pittura, ma non si sazia giamai di ammirarla e di stupirla, confessando et alla libera sgridando con alte voci che in essa non vi si può né aggiugnere, né diminuire. E dove lascio io il giudizio del signor Giovan Vincenzo Pinelli, figliuolo del signor Cosimo? le cui rare parti, già bene agli uomini conosciute, non si possono da ogni gentile spirito giamai bastevolmente lodare. Egli, che di far fare quel

large pleat, which is in the lower part of the Angel's robe, is not properly made, nor does it accord with the placement of the feet, and this is the one that starts at the right foot, at the bottom, and rises across and upwards towards the left foot. As if the Angel had had no other thought than to see what kind of pleat his robe would form as he was speaking to the Virgin! And he does not realize that everything is done with great art on purpose, to show the attention that the Angel had to pay to what was really important, which can in a certain sense be quite well alluded to by the peculiarity of the pleats.

But leaving aside the reasons, which have already exhausted me, without yet satisfying me, let us see how this is really judged by competent people. And I would not know what better judgement I could choose in Naples than the one of Master Giovan Bernardo Lami, a man of the requisite profession, who, besides painting most wonderfully anything that he likes and having no equal in portraiture from life, as will be attested by most ladies and gentlemen of this city,¹²³ who have wanted their portraits to be made by him and by none other, is also an exquisite copper engraver, whose prints will appear very shortly, and he sculpts in clay and plaster in a new way that is absolutely astonishing to people, nor can we find anyone capable of equalling him as a miniaturist, if he is not felicitously versed in anatomy and perspective, and in the other special skills pertaining to painting. And Signor Cosimo Pinelli, who has no other aim than doing all his things in the most perfect way so that they can nowise be improved upon, has willed that the ceiling of this chapel as well as the other parts that could be appropriately covered by paintings should all be made by his hand. And anyone who has a healthy judgement will realize, on seeing it, how well he has succeeded in his work. Not only does he heap praise upon this painting, but is never tired of admiring it and being amazed by it, acknowledging and asserting unrestrainedly in the loudest voice that nothing can be added to it or taken away from it. And do I leave aside the judgement of Signor Giovan Vincenzo Pinelli, son of Signor Cosimo? His rare qualities, already well-known to men, can never be enough praised by every noble spirit. He, who

¹²⁰ La *stravaganza* diviene in tal caso una efficace dimostrazione e non altera la consuetudine (cfr. GILIO [cfr. la nota 22], p. 861).

¹²¹ Sulla cronologia e l'attività di Giovan Bernardo Lama cfr. A. VENTURI, *Storia dell'arte*, IX, 5, 1932, pp. 729 sgg.; e F. BOLOGNA, *Roviale spagnolo e la pittura napoletana del Cinquecento*, Napoli 1959, pp. 69 sgg.

¹²² Cfr. qui p. 863.

¹²³ Maranta means Naples.

quadro ha avuto il pensiero, per ritrovarsi negli studi di Padova, ove per lo molto suo valore è divenuto a tutti riguardevole e meraviglioso, et è non meno della pittura che della filosofia e delle leggi e d'altre scienze ammaestrato et erudito, dice e conferma piacerli sovra modo l'invenzione e l'artificio e tutto ciò che considerarsi può in quella pittura.¹²⁴ Né posso tacere il signor Alfonso Cambi, il quale in ogni sorte di lettere in sin da fanciullo è profittevolmente versato. Ma nel dar giudizio della pittura ha fatta particolar professione, per essere egli gentiluomo di quella città nella quale più che in qualsivoglia altra è sempre fiorita quest'arte. Costui non manco degli altri detti di sopra inalza insino al cielo quell'opera e di essa dà particolar ragione, segnando minutamente ogni avvertimento che in essa è stato dall'artefice considerato.

Concludiamo dunque che gran torto aranno coloro che di essa meno che onoratamente parleranno. Ché io per me dirò sempre che, mentre Tiziano in questa pittura (a guisa de' poeti che scrivono) era tutto trasformato, come quelli dal furore assaliti¹²⁵ si scordano di loro medesimi mentre scrivono, così questi ispirato da Dio, e non tanto dalle sue forze aiutato, ha ridotto questo misterio in quella estrema perfezione che par cosa impossibile a potersi da umana industria imitare. Or che sarebbe stato s'io avesse nelle regole della prospettiva voluto entrare, le quali ha sì bene osservato Tiziano, che bene ha dimostrato essere in quella scienza dottissimo maestro?¹²⁶ Ma di quelle io non vo' parlarne, sì per fuggir il lungo dire e sì perché, per esserne cose che richieggono grande astrazione di mente, sarebbero fastidiose a udirle nella fine di così lungo discorso. Anzi di molte altre cose mi resterebbe a dire molto più di

had the thought of having this picture made, while he was studying in Padua, where his great worthiness made him distinguished and wonderful in everybody's eyes, and who is learned and competent no less in painting than in philosophy, law and other sciences, says and confirms that he likes the invention and the art and all that can be considered in this painting immensely. Neither can I ignore Signor Alfonso Cambi, who since his youngest years has been profitably versed in all sorts of humanities.¹²⁷ But it is he who was particularly competent to give an opinion of this painting, since he is a gentleman of that city wherein more than in any other this art has always flourished.¹²⁸ He, no less than the others mentioned above, praises this work to the skies and gives a detailed reasoning about it, highlighting quite minutely each single aspect on which the artist has focussed.

Let us conclude, then, that they who speak of it less than honourably will be deeply mistaken. As for myself, I will always say that Titian was (like a poet when he writes) completely transformed in this painting; as they, when seized by the poetic *furor*, forget themselves while they write, so he, inspired by God rather than helped by his own forces, has made this mystery into such a supreme perfection that it seems impossible for human industry to imitate. Now, what would have happened if I had wanted to broach the rules of perspective, which Titian has so well observed that he has fully proved himself to be a highly learned master in that science? But I do not want to speak of them, both to avoid going on to a great length and because these things, requiring great mental abstraction, would be most tedious to be heard at the end of such a lengthy discourse. Actually, about many more things I could say much more than

¹²⁴ Giovan Vincenzo Pinelli (1535-1601), nato a Napoli da famiglia genovese, si stabilì a Padova nel 1558, dove attese a studi di scienza e di letteratura. Famoso erudito e bibliofilo formò quel museo scientifico e quella biblioteca che fu poi acquistata dal cardinale Federico Borromeo per l'Ambrosiana (1609).

¹²⁵ Cfr. per gli artisti VASARI [cfr. la nota 30], p. 74: «E per che questi [disegni] dal furor dello artefice sono in poco tempo espressi, universalmente son detti schizzi, perché vengono schizzando o con la penna o con altro disegnatoloio carbone, in maniera che questi non servono se non per tentare l'animo di quel che gli sovviene». Per le più importanti testimonianze sul *furor* platonico in campo letterario cfr. B. WEINBERG, *A History of literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance*, Chicago 1961, I, pp. 271 sgg., 281 sgg., 286, II, pp. 716, 737, 768 sgg.; e *Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento*, a cura di P. Barocchi, Milano 1971, I, pp. 346, 354.

¹²⁶ Sulla *prospettiva* tizianesca come *paese* cfr. PINO [cfr. la nota 19], p. 134: «Io ho veduto di mano di Tiziano paesi miracolosi e molto più graziosi che li fiandresi non sono»; e anche VASARI [cfr. la nota 47], II, pp. 807, 809 sg., VII, pp. 429, 437, ecc.

¹²⁷ The phrase 'in all sorts of humanities' stands for 'in ogni sorte di lettere'.

¹²⁸ Maranta means Florence.

quanto ho detto, e massimamente s'io volessi entrare nelle parti-colarità della Madonna. Della quale più per trascorso di parlare che per volerlo pensatamente ne ho quelle poche cose accennato; di maniera che mi pare assai più convenevole tacerne, che fastidirla più di quello che ho fatto con così lunga diceria. Basterammi solo, da quel tanto che ho di quell'angelo ragionato, aver risposto, in quanto per me si è potuto, all'opinioni di coloro i quali niuno altro prezzo mercano, niuno altro appagamento, che biasmare le cose buone, e Dio voglia che, del loro ardimento ravedutisi et in loro stessi ritornando, comincino a confermare il vero, sbandite già le vanità, delle quali hanno sì grande et infinita dovizia che per ogni piazza le dispensano e distribuiscano a larga e capevole misura.

V. S., che con ischerzar con meco per provar le forze del mio ingegno ha voluto prendersi noia di così lungo volume, temperi il fastidio della lezione con la buona volontà che io ho dimostrato di favorire la verità, della quale ella è in tutte le cose oltremodo vaga et amica, rendendomi sicuro che, sì come nell'opera della poesia ha quel gusto che ciascuno sa, così avendolo purgato et eccellente nella pittura, non potrà se non comendare il mio buon animo, et allo 'ncontro biasmare la semplicità e [po]co sapere di coloro che, di tutto il lor senno di quella pittura questionando, non han per avventura saputo che cosa sia pennello. Così durerà la fama di Tiziano appresso lei con quella riputazione che egli e la virtù sua si ha acquistato molti anni fa et io, vedendomi con sì dolci e leggiadri modi favorito, potrò a me stesso et al mondo chiarire che io sia uno de' suoi più cari. Il che ho, molti anni sono, più di tutte le cose desiderato.

what I have said, especially if I wanted to enter into the details of the Madonna. About whom, more in consequence of my speaking so long than from a deliberate decision, I have mentioned only few things, so that I judge it more appropriate now to remain silent than to trouble you more than I have done with my long chatter. It will be enough for me if, with what I have said about the Angel, I have responded, insofar as I was capable, to the opinions of those who aim at no other price, no other payment except the chance of criticizing things that are good. And would to God that they, repenting of their boldness and coming to their senses, may start confirming the truth, once they have given up all the vanities that they have in such great, infinite abundance that they dispense and distribute them in every square in a large, capacious measure.

Will Your Lordship, who has benevolently taken the trouble for such a long time to joke with me in order to test the strength of my ingenuity, please temper the tedium of this lesson with the good will I showed to favour the truth, which you pursue and love to the highest degree in everything, leaving me secure in the conviction that, just as in poetry you have taste as everybody knows, so, having the same, purified and excellent, in painting, you can only commend my good intention and blame, on the contrary, the simplicity and limited knowledge of those who, while discussing that painting with all their intellect, did not even know what a paintbrush was. So Titian's fame will last with you preserving the reputation that he and his talent acquired many years ago, and I, seeing that you grant me your favour with such sweet and elegant manners, will be able to make it clear to myself and to the world that I am one of your dearest. This is what I have, for many years, above all else desired.

Appendix:

I. Maranta's Trial

... Alois mentioned Maranta's name 'because of an impious sonnet by Molza that was recited in front of him by the above-mentioned Alois and that contained the justification of Christ made in the Lutheran fashion, and also because he was suspected of some other similar matters concerning Religion: some time later they recanted their depositions spontaneously, saying they had been made for fear of the torture, with which they were threatened by the Ministers of the Inquisition, and the Provincial of San Pietro a Maiella, as well as the other witnesses, Don Bernardino de Bernardini, Alfonso Cambi, Gabriele Mercurio, De Blasio, Raimo and Paduano were considered unreliable and false in their depositions. And the Roman Congregation of the Holy Office admitted that it was on account of some personal resentment that the Bishop of Montepeloso, then Vicar of our city, had proceeded against Maranta, appropriating this case on the strength of only one suspicion that he had, namely that Maranta had possibly written an Oration, which was read at the Council of Trent by the Bishop of Laviello (*sic*), against the ecclesiastical Officials of the Kingdom and, consequently, against the Vicar himself, for which reason Maranta was taken here by order of the said Congregation with his own assent and a security payment of only five hundred ducats: and when the trial was repeated with the examination of a number of witnesses up to sixty-five, it revealed the excessive zeal of the denouncer, the resentment of the Vicar and the unreliability of the witnesses, as testified in a deed drawn up already in that year MDLXII by the lawyer Vincenzo Mancini in favour of the said Maranta, in which information is given about the reported facts, and the names of the above-mentioned witnesses are published'.¹²⁹

II. Maranta's note on the margin

'So, as in Tragedies not all the events take place on the stage but between one act and the other, one sometimes imagines much more than what can be done in an act; and this makes the poem more solemn and dense; likewise in painting the highest minds always considered it a greatly desirable thing that many things should be hidden, but in such a way that they might be understood easily and with wonder. And if sometimes it happens that in painting a certain thing is obscure, this is so in order that it may eventually speak as poetry does'.

In Italian:

'Percioche come nelle Tragedie non tutto cio che si fa si produce in scena ma tra l'uno atto et l'altro, vi si presuppone alle volte molto più di quello che in uno atto si può fare; et questo rende il poema più grave et più pieno; così nella pittura di grande auspicio fu sempre tra svegliati ingegni molte cose nascondere: ma in guisa che facilmente et con meraviglia si possano comprendere. Et se alle volte avviene che alcuna cosa sia oscura nella pittura, è che ella riesca parlar come la poesia'.

¹²⁹ For the original text see Amabile, *Santo officio*, 266.

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