

8 Fashion

Ancient Clothing

Summary 8.1 Introduction. – 8.2 Renaissance Works *De Re Vestitaria*. – 8.3 Dressing the Ancients (i): Theatrical Costumes. – 8.3.1 Rome 1513. – 8.3.2 Vicenza 1585. – 8.3.3 A Comparison. – 8.4 Dressing the Ancients (ii): The Gallery of Francis I at Fontainebleau.

Vestis virum facit.
εἴματα ἀνὴρ, id est, vestis vir.¹

8.1 Introduction

During the Renaissance many catalogues of clothes and fashion were published throughout whole Europe,² some of which featured ele-

An earlier version of this chapter was published in *La rivista di Engramma* 154 (2018), 111-40.

1 Erasmus 1528a, 638: “Id hodie quoque vulgo tristissimum est. Aiunt enim ad hunc modum: vestitus virum reddit, qui habet, induat [Walther 1963-69, 33268^b]. Idem affirmat Quintilianus lib. Instit. 8. Et cultus, inquit, concessus atque magnificus, addit hominibus, ut Graeco versu testatum est, auctoritatem [Quint. 8 *Proem.* 20]. Hunc autem versum, quem citat Fabius, opinor esse illum apud Homerum *Odysseae* Z. Ἐκ γὰρ τοιούτων φάτις ἀνθρώπους ἀναβαίνει | Ἔσθλή [Hom. *Od.* 6.29-30]. Id est Quippe homini ex istis surgit bona fama decus que. Paulo inferius in eodem libro, quantum momenti cultus vestium adferat, ad conciliandam homini formam dignitatem que, satis indicat, cum Nausicam puellam ita de Ulysses loquentem facit: Πρόσθεν μὲν γὰρ δὴ μοι ἀεικέλιος δόσ’ εἶναι, | Νῦν δὲ θεοῖσιν ἔοικε, τοὶ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσιν [Hom. *Od.* 6.242-3], id est Ante videbatur specie foedissimus esse, | Nunc divis similis, magnus quos pascit olympus. Nam ante nudus, jam vestes nitidas induerat Ulysses, ac protinus alius esse visus est: Ἐζέτ’ ἔπειτ’ ἀπάνευθε κιῶν ἐπὶ θίνα θαλάσσης, | Κάλλει καὶ χάρισι στίλβων [Hom. *Od.* 6.236-7]. Id est Deinde procul, veniens ad littora pontica sedit | Fulgescens forma, atque leporibus”.

2 For a general bibliography on Renaissance clothing and fashion in its most heterogeneous ramifications see McCall 2017. In the major works of the field, the antiquarian aspects of fashion are generally neglected; some studies manifest interest in this pecu-

ments deriving from antiquity. However, this interest in ancient garments, which stemmed from the wider spectrum of antiquarian erudition, can be dated to a precise timeframe when some of the most important scholars and artists of the period produced significant treatises that gave rise to the rich genre *de re vestiaria*. Works focusing specifically on clothing began to appear in the mid-fifteenth century and blossomed during the decades that followed, reaching their zenith in the mid-seventeenth century. During this time, a gradual evolution in the construction of various contents occurred alongside advancements made in archaeological and philological investigative methods. The early modern scholars who studied ancient clothing approached the question from two different starting points: the first was a focus on literary sources, which involved identifying any written references to a specific garment from which its form or function could be understood; the second was a focus on material sources, which were composed mainly of ancient archaeological findings such as statues, bas-reliefs, gems, cameos, fresco paintings, and coins, all of which often featured clothed figures. By merging these two areas of research, they were able to assign names to the garments mentioned or represented and give them shape according to their written description or appearance on an artefact. As could be expected, the rapid change in customs caused the names or functions of many garments to also change over time. The often-unclear representations in ancient findings did not help in this regard. Initially, significant difficulties were encountered even when simply attempting to identify a *toga*, *trabea* or *tunica* or imagine what they looked like.

The purpose of this chapter is to retrace the history of the treatises on ancient clothing written during the Renaissance, to identify as many works as possible and describe their different approaches so as to include them in the broader context of the history of ideas. Two case studies will also be presented in order to demonstrate the influence this knowledge had on the cultural life of the time: the first illustrates its impact on ancient theatrical costumes, specifically in Rome and Vicenza at the beginning and end of the sixteenth century; the second focuses on the pictorial decorations of the Gallery of Francis I at Fontainebleau between 1534 and 1538. These investigations, which attempt to describe the vitality of the overall phenomenon, represent just two samples of a plurality of options from which new studies and analyses on the topic may emerge in the future.

liar aspect of classical tradition, never approaching it in a systematic way; see e.g. Tuffal 1955; Nevinson 1955; Blanc 1995; Davanzo Poli 2001, 65-6; Guérin Dalle Mese 2002; Davanzo Poli 2004; Jones, Stallybrass 2000; Rosenthal, Jones 2010, 15-20; Reolon 2013, 60. Worthy of mention are also the recent works by Riello 2019 and Balistreri 2020.



Stolae mulieris figura ex antiquissimis monumentis, quae etiam hodie Romae inscribuntur.

Figure 48 Woman with stola. Engraving. In Lazari Bayfii *Annotationes in legem 2. De captiuis & postliminio reuersis, in quibus tractatur de re nauali, per autorem recognitae. Eiusdem Annotationes in tractatum de auro & argento legato, quibus vestimentorum & vasculorum genera explicantur. His omnibus imagines ab antiquissimis monumentis desumptas ad argumenti declarationem subiunximus. Item Antonii Thylesii De coloribus libellus, à coloribus uestium non alienus. Basileae, apud Hier. Frobenium et Nic. Episcopium, 1537*



Senatoris Romani figura ex antiquis marmoribus desumpta

Figure 49 Man with toga. Engraving. In Lazari Bayfii *Annotationes in legem 2. De captiuis & postliminio reuersis, in quibus tractatur de re nauali, per autorem recognitae. Eiusdem Annotationes in tractatum de auro & argento legato, quibus vestimentorum & vasculorum genera explicantur. His omnibus imagines ab antiquissimis monumentis desumptas ad argumenti declarationem subiunximus. Item Antonii Thylesii De coloribus libellus, à coloribus uestium non alienus. Basileae, apud Hier. Frobenium et Nic. Episcopium, 1537*

8.2 Renaissance Works *De Re Vestiaria*

Towards the end of the fifteenth century, Angelo Poliziano attempted to embrace the sum of human thought conceived by the ancients. In his *Panepistemon*, one of his most important academic lectures, he tried to classify clothing into a specific group referred to as ἀποχειροβίωτοι, that is to say, those who work with learned hands or, in other words, the artisans. Here, he listed a series of professions (35 in all) related either directly or indirectly to clothing, including those who worked the raw materials, those who tailored the garments, those who were responsible for dyeing the cloth, and many others.³ Since clothing was gradually becoming an area worthy of research in its own right, with specific characteristics that required separate handling and the use of specialised methodological instruments, this sequence served as the basis for all subsequent works on the topic. Poliziano did not spark a real discussion on clothes in the ancient world, but instead introduced specific categories within which these aspects of cultural heritage could be classified for further investigation.

This structure seems to appear ante litteram in the first discussion on this subject, the mid-fifteenth century treatise *Roma triumphans* composed by Flavio Biondo. Biondo dedicated just a few pages to ancient Roman clothing – book IX in a section titled *De vestibus*.⁴

³ Poliziano 1491, 23: “In tertio quasi genere numerentur ἀποχειροβίωτοι illi quales fabri sunt omnes [...] His adice lanarios, sericarios, linteones, braccarios, fullones, textores, infectores, lanificas, lanipendias, carminatores, pannicularios, sagarios, palliones, interpolatores, sarcinatores, patagarios, flamearios, violarios, manuearios, molochinarios, semisonarios, limbularios, plumarios, polymitarios, phrygiones, et qui netum aurum intextunt et netrices, et item funicularios, reticularios, caligarios, cerdones, sutoresque omnes. Celceolarios, crepidarios, solearios, veteramentarios, et item zonarios”.

⁴ Here Biondo provides a first catalogue of clothes worn in antiquity based on literary sources, mostly founded in Nonius; see Biondo 1559, 194-5: “Toga communis habitus fuit et marium et foeminarum, sed praetexts honestorum, toga viliorum, quod etiam in mulieribus servatur. Nonius [Non. 14.540-1]. Tunica vestimentum sine manicis, ideo Virgilius exprobrans: et tunicae manicas [Verg. *Aen.* 9.614] [...] Penula vestis, quam supra tunicam accipimus [Paul. Fest. 506.8]. Stola quae omne corpus tegeret [Non. 14.537]. Palla honestae mulieris indumentum, hoc est, tunicae pallium [Non. 14.537]. Paludamentum vestis, quae postea dicta est chlamys [Non. 14.537]. Praetexta insigne Romanum, quod supra tunicis honorati quique sumunt [Non. 14.541]. Calanticae tegmen capitis muliebre [Non. 14.537]. Aulea genus vestis peregrinum [Non. 14.537], plagae grande linteum tegmen [Non. 14.537], quod postea dictum est; fascia brevis, virginalem horrorem cohibens papillarum [Non. 14.538]. Abolla, vestis militaris [Non. 14.538]. Sagum, militare vestimentum [Non. 14.538]. Regilla, diminutiva vestis [Non. 14.539]. Ralla, dicta a raritate [Non. 14.539]. Rica, quae et sudarium [Non. 14.539]. Caesitium, linteolum purum et candidum [Non. 14.539]. Indusium, quod corpori magis adhaeret vestimentum [Non. 14.539]. Patagium, aureus ornatus vesti additus [Non. 14.540]. Supparum, linteum femorale usque ad talos pendens [Non. 14.540]. Exoticum peregrinum [Non. 14.540]. Mollicina vestis, a mollities dicta [Non. 14.540]. Amphitapae, vestes villos utrinque habentes [Non. 14.540]. Laena, vestimentum militare,

His study began with the origin of clothing followed by a list of ancient names related to ancient garments. Then Biondo tried to reconstruct the fabrics used and moved on to the occasions for which the clothes were worn, and identified the different styles based on gender distinctions (*virilia*, *muliebrilia*), chromatic variations (*vestium colores*) and other characteristics. All these aspects, however, were dealt with very rapidly.

A few decades later, in 1499, Polydor Vergil, an Italian scholar based in Britain, published his *De rerum inventoribus* in which he sought to reconstruct the real or mythical origins of ancient art and knowledge. Among the many aspects he discussed, he also included a section on clothes (III, VI). Polydor adopted a holistic approach similar to that of his predecessors. His investigation started with the raw materials and then went on to examine the art of weaving, the art of fabric dyeing, and the soap used to wash clothes.⁵ Polidoro was the first to define the art of weaving as a cultural development that replaced the previous practise of wearing animal hides.

A similar point of view was adopted by Raffaele Maffei in his *Commentariorum rerum urbanarum libri*, published in 1506. Maffei discusses clothing in the third book of his work, which deals with philology and the basic principles of the arts. In particular, he includes a section about clothes, treated according to types and users. Here the names of the ancient garments are all listed mostly without an explanation and with only a literary source provided as a reference. Preceding this series of words there is a description of various fabrics that is in line with the usual scheme adopted in previous treatises. Maffei concludes with a list of footwear and costumes used for ancient tragedies, comedies, and satires.⁶

Even the *Antiquae Lectiones* published by Celio Rodigino in 1516 and the *Geniales dies* published by Alessandro Alessandri in 1522

quod super omnia vestimenta sumitur [Non. 14.541]. Carbasus, pallium quod amicituntur, aut sericeum, aut lino tenui [Non. 14.541]. Limbus muliebre vestimentum, quod purpuram in imo habet [Non. 14.541]. Flammeum, tegmen quo capita matronae tegunt [Non. 14.541]. Recinium, palliolum foemineum breve, quo mulieres in adversis ac luctibus sumunt [Non. 14.542]. Tapete et culcitra sunt notissima [Non. 14.542]. Subucula, vestis intermedia [Non. 14.542]. Capitia, capitis tegmen [Non. 14.542]. Encimbomata et parnacides, genera vestium puellarium [Non. 14.542]. Barnacidae, quas nunc guarncias dicunt [Non. 14.542]”.

5 Virgili 1499; 1568, 242-53: *Quis primus invenerit linum, retia nendi texendique modum, vel Artem fulloniam et saponem; aut qui lanas infecerint, aut repererint lanificii, vestiumque, ac pallium usum, fusos, aulaea, sutoriam Artem, sericum, et quando eius copia per Europam fieri coeperit, ac bombycinam vestem atque purpuram et quid ipsa sit purpura, ac quanto in honore olim et pretio fuerit.*

6 Maffei 1506, 659-64: *De serico, purpura, cocco, bomicino, bysso, setabo, xylyno, linnisque aliis; Quasquisque populus vestes reperit, et de privatis quorundam; De calcamentis ac tunicis, et vestibus tragicis, comicis ac satyricis; De varietate stragulorum et pellium usu.*

dedicate some pages to ancient clothing. In chapter X of book IX, titled *Vestimenta genera plura*, Ricchieri lists a series of clothes mentioned by classical authors and proposes an etymology and explanation for their specific use.⁷ Alessandri, instead, adopts a different approach: in chapter XVIII of book V, in which he discusses the social disparities in Ancient Rome, with particular focus on the distinctions between patricians and plebeians, there is a section titled *Discrimen in vestibus apud diversas gentes* which includes a detailed list of the various clothes worn by the Ancient Romans and those inhabiting their subjugated provinces, with a final discussion on hairstyle.⁸

In spite of these scholars' writings, ancient clothing became widely known in Renaissance erudite studies only in 1526 when Lazare de Baïf, a French antiquary and ambassador to Venice and Germany, published his *De re vestiaria*. This work,⁹ which represents the first mon-

⁷ Ricchieri 1516, 430-6: IX. *Vestitus quam esse addeceat rationem. Veris, aut pavonis cognomina quibus adhaereant. Vestimenta initiatorum quae dicantur per paroemiam. Item de Atheniensium mysteriis. Quid mysteria, et quid mystae, item mystile et thronon. Vestium repositoria. Rhiscus quid. X. Vestium genera plura, quae variis de causis sortita appellationem sunt. Batrachium color. Oranus illustratur. XI. Lacides vestes quae sint, ac item Pilares et Spira et quae dicerentur Pilae. Cur Tauri Phoeniceis irriterentur, contra Domitium et quae sit eius rei ratio. Problematum genera. [...] Thyfani, Crossi, Tapetes, Strotae.*

⁸ Alessandri begins his digression on clothing and dress codes when he reported that in ancient Rome Patricians and Plebeians wore garments displaying their social conditions - the formers attached a metal pin on their dress (*bullā*) and a small moon on their shoes (*lunula*); see Alessandri 1522, 284^a-292^a: *Patriciorum a plebeis distinctio, lunula. Arcades proselenis. Bulla. Bullam Laribus suspendebant. Vestibus barbarorum. Romuli et Camilli statuae tunicatae. Interula. Subucula. Indusia. Praetexta. Purpura. Tribunorum et plebeios vestes. Purpura plebeia. Endromis. Toga qua aetate sumebatur. Toga vestis promiscua ad utraque sexum. Bacchanalibus toga virilis sumebatur. Toga arcta. Vela protogis. Toga cum purpura. Pallium. Toga rasa. Lacerna. Togae amphitheatrales, Coccineae, Boeticae. Mecoenas Malacinus appellatus. Holoserica vestis. Praetexta qui induebantur. Dibapha. Distinctio vestitus inter patricios et senatores. Toga praetexta, consularis et praetoria. Vestis papaverata. Palmata vestis. Vestes triumphales. Abolla. Trabea. Philosophorum vestis. Trabea triplicis generis. Sagum. Sexticula vestes ex provinciis nominata. Discrimen vestitus in mulieribus. Stola. Cyclas, Palla, Ricinus. Crocoton. Syrma. Vergines. Vittarum duo genera. Strophium. Ancillae. Fasciola crurules. Calcei muliebres. Calceorum species. Mullei. Crepidae. Soleae. Mitra. Mitella. Calantica. Una tantum vestes qui utebantur. Anaxyrides. Bracha. Endromis. Cuculli. Vectones. Monilia ferrea. Corona aurea. Antiquorum vestitus ex animalium pellibus. Paludamentum. Chlamys. Saga. Lacerna. Laena. Comam qui nutriebant. Rodenda barba consuetudo quando introducta. Ramenta aurea in capillis. Qui caput tondebant. Comae cura apud quos. Flava come apud Aegyptios contempta. Atheniensium cicadae in comis. Barbam autem capillum inficere imbelles. Capillorum luxus. Synthesis. Lacernae abae quando sumebantur. In veste pulla ludis interesse non licebat. In calamitate publica luctus iudicia.*

⁹ Baïf 1526. A general overview of his life is given by Sanchi 2013, 203-22 and by Pinvert 1900. Sanchi remarks that Baïf always moved from the juridical aspects of the issues he after developed in monograph treatises - e.g. *de re vestiaria* dealt with *Dig. 34.2. [De auro argento mundo ornamentis unguentis veste vel vestimentis et status legatis]* 23: "Ulpianus libro 44 ad Sabinum pr. Vestis an vestimenta legentur, nihil refert. 1. Vestimentorum sunt omnia lanea lineaque vel serica vel bombycina, quae induendi praecingendi amiciendi insternendi iniciendi incubandive causa parata sunt et quae his acces-

ographic treatise on the matter, met with immediate favour and was quickly reprinted by the most prestigious editors in Europe (the first complete with images was issued by Froben in Basel in 1537) [figs 48-49]. This work eventually became the benchmark for all the treatises on the subject that followed. Even Erasmus of Rotterdam paid extensive attention to this work,¹⁰ as is evident from some of his letters and the reference he made to the French scholar in his *Adagia*.¹¹ Baïf continued to adhere to the ordinary paradigms previously applied to this subject but was able to extend each topic and build a complex and more reliable argument from both a philological and an archaeological perspective. His considerations sprung from the explanation of book XXXVIII of the *Pandects* written by Ulpian, which discussed some restrictive provisions in Roman law regarding clothing. Baïf divides the subject into 21 untitled chapters that deal with the vocabulary of ancient clothing, fabrics, the different types of male and female clothing, and questions about their functions, headdresses, and footwear. The most significant improvement on all previous works was Baïf's cross-examination of various literary sources, both Latin and Greek and from different periods, which at times he matched with ancient findings. This broadening of references allowed him to construct a completely new treatise within the framework of the sixteenth-century editorial scene.

The success of this work can also be measured by the many reprints, revisions and imitations published thereafter. A significant case is Junien Rabier's *De generibus vestium libellus* of 1534, which was openly inspired to Baïf's treatise. Rabier organised the matter differently, from the colours of the clothes to their types and uses, and added to each Latin lemma a French translation, in order to explain the lost meaning of each garment.¹² Similarly, the French botanist

sonis vice cedunt, quae sunt insitae picturae clavique qui vestibus insuuntur. 2. Vestimenta omnia aut virilia sunt aut puerilia aut muliebria aut communia aut familiarica. Virilia sunt, quae ipsius patris familiae causa parata sunt, veluti togae tunicae palliola vestimenta stragula amfitapa et saga reliquaue similia. Puerilia sunt, quae ad nullum alium usum pertinent nisi puerilem, veluti togae praetextae aliculae chlamydes pallia quae filiis nostris comparamus. Muliebria sunt, quae matris familiae causa sunt comparata, quibus vir non facile uti potest sine vituperatione, veluti stolae pallia tunicae capitia zonae mitrae, quae magis capitis tegendi quam ornandi causa sunt comparata, plagulae penulae. Communia sunt, quibus promiscui utitur mulier cum viro, veluti si eiusmodi penula palliumve est et reliqua huiusmodi, quibus sine reprehensione vel vir vel uxor utatur. Familiarica sunt, quae ad familiam vestiendam parata sunt, sicuti saga tunicae penulae lintea vestimenta stragula et consimilia”.

10 Erasmus' praise of Baïf was formulated in his *Ciceronianus* (Erasmus 1528b, 241) and later placed in the frontpage of Baïf 1530: “D. ERAS. ROT. IN CICERONIANO. Superest Lazarus Bayfius, qui unico libello de vestibus eoque non magno, magnam laudem meruit, summamque spem de se praebuit”.

11 De la Garanderie 1985.

12 Reber 1534, 6^a: “Nihil enim minus experienti erit, partim quod incertum quae veterum nomina, quibus nunc respondeant, partim quod pleraque iam recepta pe-

and physician Charles Estienne,¹³ a member of the family of printers and a pupil of Baïf himself, published his *De re vestiaria libellus, ex Bayfio excerptus* in 1535. Estienne produced an original and particularly interesting version of Baïf's work by taking the original and restructuring it so as to make it easier to read: he reordered the text into ten different interpretative categories based on parts of the human body, something that until then had never been done for this subject. He structured his treatise to run from the top of the body to the bottom, i.e. from hats and headdresses to shoes and footwear, and provided the French equivalent for all the Latin and Greek terms for fabrics and clothing, again in order to make it easier to read especially for young students.¹⁴ Moreover, he enriched the treatise by adding, in square brackets, details omitted by Baïf, thereby broadening its interpretative perspectives. It is reasonable to assume that this attitude was influenced by Rebier's booklet.

After the publication of Baïf's *De re vestiaria*, all subsequent treatises on ancient clothing fell under its influence, either adhering to or deviating from it. For example, when Wolfgang Lazius published *Commentaria Reipublicae Romanae illius, in exteris provinciis* in 1551, an important dissertation on the structure of the Roman state in provinces outside of Italy, he dedicated the whole of book VIII to Roman civil and military clothing.¹⁵ His discussions amounted to nineteen chapters that subdi-

regrina ac barbara. Quare Latinorum et Graecorum veterum monumentis adiutus, et maxime nostri Lazari Bayfii, qui in hoc argumenti genere veteres omnes stadiis multis post se reliquit, qua appellatione Latina Gallicanae vestes venire possint, pro ingenii mei infirmitate scribo”.

13 Estienne 1535a; Armstrong 1954.

14 This concept was expressed already in the title with the addition of note *addita vulgaris linguae interpretatione, in adulescentorum gratiam atque utilitatem*, and later reestablished in the letter to the reader; see Estienne 1535a, *lect.*: “id certe cum diligentius perspiceremus, atque audiremus quotidie nonnullos conquirentes, quod Lazarus Bayfius, vir alioqui gravis, non aequè pueris atque eruditioribus consuluisse; ne quid posthac eorum utilitati detractum esse quisquam amplius iudicaret, visum est nobis operae precium, summam eorum quae in libello de re vestiaria continentur, brevibus perstringere, atque in ordinem disponere, ex ipsius auctoris voluntate; praemissa interim vulgari vestium ac colorum interpretatione, ut vel etiam in hac parte adolescentoli bonarum literarum cupidores sibi quoque satisfactum putent, nulla tamen auctoris gravitate imminuta, sed tantum ex ipsius opusculo selectis iis quae ad puerorum utilitatem facere videbantur”.

15 Lazius 1551, 695-745: I. *De romanis vestimentis in genere*. II. *De praetexta, et eius generibus*. III. *De toga, et eius generibus*. IV. *De lato clavo, et eius discrimine*. V. *De tra-bea, et eius discrimine*. VI. *De dalmatica, et eius generibus, et palmata tunica*. VII. *De purpura, et illius generibus ac discrimine*. VIII. *De sago militari, et eius discrimine*. IX. *De chlamyde, et eius generibus*. X. *De paludamento, et eius divisione*. XI. *De lacerna, et eius speciebus*. XII. *De penula, et eius generibus*. XIII. *De campestri subarmalibus, et aliis quibusdam vestimentis*. XIV. *De caligis, ocreis, ac calciamentis*. XV. *De pileorum discrimine, atque cingulorum*. XVI. *De armaturis Romanae Reipublicae in genere*. XVII. *De armis quae corpora tegebant, et ab aliorum iniuriis muniebant*. XVIII. *De armis Romanis quae manu gestabantur*. XIX. *De minoribus armis, quae corpore gestabantur*.

vided Roman clothing into the following categories: daily life; peace and war; religious functions; and social categories, which in turn were embraced, such as patricians and plebeians, or politicians, as senators and equites. A discussion on each specific garment then followed (*toga*, *trabea*, *praetexta*), thereby adhering more directly to Baif's model.

In his *Discours sur la religion des Romains* (1556) Guillaume du Choul limits his discussions to a monographic investigation of ancient religious clothing, drawing attention to the different types of priest and minister (flamines, augures, pontifices, vestales) and linking different sources and ancient objects to his discourse.¹⁶ He also includes images taken from numismatic and archaeological findings, thereby offering a visual counterpart to the theory presented [figs 50a-b].

In the same year, *Hieroglyphica* was published, the most important collection of ancient symbols ever produced by Renaissance antiquarian erudition. Its author, Giovanni Pierio Valeriano, discussed the symbolic interpretation of clothing in two books, XL and XLI, dedicated respectively to garments and jewellery.¹⁷ Almost overlapping Estienne's rewriting of Baif's *De re vestiaria*, which described clothes from the top to the bottom of human body, Valeriano began his dissertation from the most famous headgear of antiquity, the *pileus*, and all its related sym-

16 Du Choul 1556, 216-17: "L'entree du temple de Vesta estoit defendue aux hommes, comme celle des monasteres de noz Religieuses, qui font reformees. Et pour le service de la Deesse furent au commencement ordonnees quatre vierges, depuis six, et dura ce nombre asses longuement, comme la figure des medaillons de Faustine [Johnson/Martin 1729] et de Lucille [Gnecchi 13] le representent, qui nous font congnoistre la maniere de leurs sacrifices, pour estre representees vestues de leurs robes blanches (nommees des Latins *Suffibulae*) languettes, et quarrées. Et de telle longueur, quelles auoyent le moyen de les mettres sus la teste pour se voiler"; 273: "Le Flamine ou le prebtre qui faisoit le sacrifice, estoit vestu d'une robe de toile de lin pure et blanche, que les latins ont nomme Alba vestis, et le vulgaire une aulbe, pource que la couleur blanche est gratuite a Dieu, et se disoit pure et religieuse la robe, celle qui estoit sans macule et sans figure, et de la quelle ceux qui debuoyent faire le divin service, usoyent aux iours des festes solennelles, pource que le lin sor de la terre, et toutes choses que la terre porte sont estimees pures et mundes. Encores auourdhy noz prebtres à la pompe de leurs sacrifices sont vestuz de ligne blanc. Telle coutume lon droit avoir esté translatté des Aegyptiens sacerdots, qui auoyent leurs habits de lin tresaggreables, et de l'espece du lin qui est appellé xylon, et de là fut nommée la robe xyline, comme Pline le monstre au dixneuuième livre de l'histoire naturelle. Et Cicero dit en ses loix, que la couleur blanche est principalement entre les autres agréable à Dieux, et que les teintres ne debuoyent point estre receuues sinon aux accoustrements militaires, qui seruoient pour le gens de guerre. Et tel habit estoit commun aux prebtres des autres temples, qui estoit si large et si long, que sans estre troussé il treinoit iusques à terre, si bien nois regardons l'antique sacrifice cy dessous mis".

17 Valeriano 1556, 293-300 [XL. *De iis quae per vestes aliquot significantur, ex sacris Aegyptiorum literis*] and 301-7 [XLI. *De iis quae per bullam, anulum, insigniores aliquot gemmas, et gestamina quaedam significantur ex sacris Aegyptiorum literis*]

bolic meanings.¹⁸ Then, he paused on garments in general, stressing particularly on the occasions in which and on the categories that wore e.g. the *toga*, the *sagum*, the *tunica*, the *suffibulum*, the *stola*, the *alba* or *nigra vestis*, the *paludamentum*, the *zona*, the *cingulum*, the *praetexta*.¹⁹ From this, Valeriano could digress on the different symbolic meaning of each item. He acted analogously when discussing about jewels.²⁰

Also Alessandro Sardi from Ferrara in his *De moribus et ritibus gentium* of 1557 dealt with ancient clothing, though adopting a different approach compared to his predecessors: in chapter XIX of book I, he focused on the issue of clothing from a geographical perspective, describing the attire of various populations: Asian, European, African, Barbarian and, to conclude, Greek and Roman.²¹ This was the first time this subject matter had been classified according to this criterion, pace Alessandro Alessandri whose study on the clothing of populations conquered by the Romans could be seen as a precursor. What emerges in Sardi's work is not only this author's originality and innovation, but also an increase in the amount of investigative material available after the mid-sixteenth century.

Another particularly relevant case is the treatise of Pirro Ligorio on clothing in the ancient world. His *Di alcune varietà di vestimenti di re e di magistrati romani, di privati e dell'altre usanze di diversi popoli*, is included in his antiquarian encyclopaedia, *Libri di Antichità* (BNN ms. XI-II B 3), which remained in manuscript form. The work is normally dated between 1550 and 1567, maybe before 1561.²² In several chapters, Ligorio uses Italian vernacular to retrace a series of features of Roman clothing, taking literary sources and various archaeological findings into account within a project of a broader encyclopaedia of antiquity.²³ The

18 Valeriano 1556, 293-4: "Quemadmodum in unaquaque re nihil est capite prius, ita vestium aliquot significationes dicturi, a pileo, quod praecipuum est capitis integumentum, convenienter incipiemus", devoting specific chapters to its forms and meanings: *Nobilitas*; *Libertas*; *Liberatores Patriae*; *Servilis improbitas*; three chapters based on readings from the *Codex Theodosianus*; *Triplex libertas*; a description of the *Flamines* who wore the *pileus*; the iconography of *Hippocrates* wearing a *pileus*; and the *Forma pilei*.

19 Valeriano 1556, 295-300: "Quantum vero ad reliqua pertinet indumenta, cum multi materiam eam pertractarint, nobis non est consilium singula recensere, sed pauca admodum quae vel remotiora, vel ab aliis diversa videbuntur, et aliquid sapient hieroglyphicum".

20 Valeriano 1556, 301-7: *De bulla*, *De anulo*, *De diademate*, *De titulo*, *De sceptro*, *De torquibus et phaleris*, *Armillae*, *De adamante*, *Sapphirus*, *Smaragdus*, *Uniones*, *Amethystus*. The last part of the chapter collects symbolic meanings of makeup objects: *De pectine* and *De speculo*.

21 Sardi 1557, 37-43: XIX. *Nudi qui sint, aliorum vestes, et Romanorum annulos qui ferrent*.

22 Balistreri 2020, XIV.

23 Balistreri 2020, 1: "Havendo negli altri libri trattato dei costumi et origini delle cose antiche di Roma et dell'altre nationi, come delle cose sacre et delle profane, et degli edificii et imagini di templi, degli altari, di derchi, di theatri et dell'amphitheatri, delle therme et dell'altri edificii publici et privati, et trattato anchora dell'altre mate-

manuscript is autograph and illustrated by Ligorio himself, at times with very detailed drawings, and at other times with only rough sketches [fig. 51]. When observing the layout of the text on the page, it is clear from the abundance of empty spaces that Ligorio's intention was to augment the work with further illustrations.

One should also note that the subject of ancient clothing had garnered significant interest in the erudite circles around 1567. For example, evidence is found in an epistolary exchange between Paolo Manuzio and Fulvio Orsini, where the former requested the latter's opinion on a chapter dedicated to the *trabea*.²⁴ In the same year, Onofrio Panvinio and Carlo Sigonio had analogous interactions. It appears that Sigonio had sought to write a treatise on ancient clothing in response to Baïf, which he considered unsatisfactory; for this reason, he asked Panvinio for some clarifications on the subject. Panvinio, who probably discussed this topic in his unpublished treatises, responded by sending him some sketches of ancient clothes.²⁵

rie et ornamenti fatti da' Romani et dai Greci, et delle misure et pesi et loro monete, hora pare convenevole di dimostrare l'usanze del vestire di tutte le più illustre nationi et principalmente dell'uso di Romani, sotto di quali tutte le gente, per dottrina et per nobiltà conosciute et osservate, dopo le prime usanze, che per necessità furono trovate le difese contro la vergogna et contro al freddo, d'indi poi dall'ingegno e dall'arte humana nobilitate et fatte degne con qualche ornamento et della regale maestà et dell'altra nobiltà di quei che volleno comparire con magnificenza nelli magistrati et nelle piazze della città, per honorar le loro ricchezze con la reputatione delle loro patrie”.

24 Nolhac 1883, 284-6: “Magnifico Signor mio, desidero che V.S. mi faccia saper, come l’ha nel suo libro scritto a mano quel luogho di Servio sopra il verso di Virgilio: Ille Quirinali lituo parvaque sedebat | humilis trabea [Verg. *Aen.* 7.187]; perché mi occorre a regional della trabea nel mio commento. E vedo ch’il Baifio del suo libretto de re vestiaria dice che Servio testifica come Svetonio in un libro che scrisse de restibus su tre sorte di trabea, una de i Dei, l’altra de i Re, la terza de i Auguri; e la prima fu di porpora sola, la seconda de porpora mista di bianco, la terza di porpora e cocco. Queste parole di Svetonio non le trovo in Servio, ciò è nel luogo sopradetto, parendomi che altrove non habbi occasione di parlarne. Se V.S. ha il Servio di Parigi, vega la tavola in trabea o in restis, perché non voglio credere ch’il Baifio habbi recitato le parole di Svetonio senza vederle. E forse sopra il luogo di Virgilio predetto il luogo di Servio e defettoso, perché parla solamente d’una sorta di trabea. E potrebbe il Baifio haver havuto qualche miglior testo. Oltre ciò sarà contento di vedere se è mutatione nel suo Porfirione a penna [BAV Vat. Lat. 3314] sopra quel luogo d’Horatio Cinctus non exaudita Cethegis [Hor. *ars* 50]. Non so se sopra quel cinctus facesse mentione della toga cinta in battaglia come scrive Plutarco in Coriolano” (Paolo Manuzio to Fulvio Orsini, Rome 6 July 1567); 286-7: “Molto Magnifico Signor mio, ringratiavi del luogo di Servio, benché ci sia poca mutatione. Aspetto il luogo di Porphirione, secondo il vostro testo. Mandovi quel che ho scritto della Trabea, sopra qual luogo della ep. 21 del IX libro: Nihil tibi opus est illud a trabea [Cic. *fam.* 9.21]. Sarete contento di aggiugnervi qualche cosa della vostra dottrina; e rimandatemi poi l’istesso foglio. Ho fornita la toga, la quale vederete e correggerete” (Paolo Manuzio to Fulvio Orsini, Rome 21 July 1567).

25 Sigonio 1737, 6: 1023-4: “pregola a scrivermi l’opinion sua circa la forma, et portamento della toga romana, perciocché m’è venuto un nuovo capriccio introno all’habito romano” (Carlo Sigonio to Onofrio Panvinio, Bologna 21 February 1567); 1024: “Mi è intrato capriccio di scrivere a un certo proposito della maniera del vestito romano; né in ciò mi sodisfa punto il Baifio. So che voi mi potete aiutare molto, vi prego a farlo, è

FAVSTINE.

BRONZE.

LVCILLE.

MEDAILLON.



Figure 50a *Faustina Lucilla. Engraving. In Discours de la religion des anciens Romains, escript par noble seigneur Guillaume du Choul... et illustré d'un grand nombre de medailles & de plusieurs belles figures retirées des marbres antiques, qui se treuvent à Rome et par nostre Gaule. A Lyon, de l'imprimerie de Guillaume Rouille, 1556, 217*

Figure 50b *Johnson/Martin 1729. Italy. Medal (Gold, 34.5mm, 36.73 g7), in honor of Faustina II, an original struck example, by Giovanni da Cavino (1500-1570), Padua, c. mid 1550s. L1: FAVSTINA.AVG.ANTONINI.AVG.PII.FIL. Draped bust of the youthful Faustina II to r., her hair bound with pearls and rolled up into a bun at the top of her head. L2: six Vestal Virgins, draped and standing three to either side of a round temple of Vesta with a statue visible within, sacrificing over a burning altar; to the r., togate child standing l., next to one of the Virgins; in exergue, S C*

tutta la spalla et la Toga, et conclusa da un lato tutto esso manello: si come si to,
 ua anche in alcune immagini di huomini clarissimi et et se questo non e' il loro clamo, me
 ne rimetto a miglior' giudicio, restando desideroso di sapere, non essendo illoro clamo, de
 cosa altra puo essere appoianvichi: i quali erano si ingegnosi et osservatori, che non face
 vano le cose loro accusa, come lor noi facemo, che ogni anno ci miriamo la faccia del reffo,
 nel quello dunque che ame par si debba pigliare per lo detto satelano e' fatto di piu doppo
 di panno, con due cusinure puntaggiate di qua e' d'ala della sua Lunghezza, come qui nelle,
 et disegnato. La tabella che si corona tutuolta a' alcune immagini vestite col laticlavio,
 et significa huomo che ha havuto magistrato, come senatori acceti nell'ufficio. con
 cio sia cosa, come dice Livio i consoli quando citencano il consolare sacrificavano
 a Giunone sopra, e' per che faciano sacrificio hanno la Toga orata con
 in mano istrumento da sacrificare.
 Per questo havemo posto l'una et
 l'altra immagine, et con la tabella in
 mano et senza essa accioche sia per
 dichiarazione delle cose che si ovano nell
 antichita. alcuni hanno libelli in mano
 et appiedi che sono fatti a' uso di carte ar
 rotolate le quali sono insegne dell' scrit
 ti delle cure che havemo, del che trattare,
 ma nella immagine del questore, et dell'
 altri officii i quali ciascuno ha il suo se
 gno, et tutte hanno la Toga, o' la tumba
 o' il laticlavio, che tutti sono manelli cin
 ti con qualche poco di diversita come si
 dirra nella parla. Cinto Gabino, nella
 Toga praetesta, nel Ballio, et nel Te
 bano, secondo i greci et secondo i Ro
 mani.



Figure 51 Pirro Ligorio. Man with Laticlavium. Drawing. In BNN ms. XIII B 3 [Di alcune varietà di vestimenti di re e di magistrati romani, di privati e dell'altre usanze di diversi popoli], f. 6

This circulation of letters may have influenced subsequent publications. On one hand, the material sent by Panvinio may have contributed to enrich Sigonio's chapters on ancient clothing attached at the end of book three of his *De iudiciis*, published in 1574 together with *De antiquo iure civium Romanorum*, *De antiquo iure Italiae*, and *De antiquo iure prouinciarum*. This digression on garments appears as a supplement to the previous and more juridical discussions, aiming at giving a full picture of form, use and typologies of the ancient Roman *toga*, *tunica*, and footwear.²⁶

On the other hand, in 1576, it was the turn of Aldo Manuzio the Younger, son of Paolo and nephew of Aldo the Elder, to contribute to the discussion on ancient clothing. In a miscellaneous collection, *De quaesitis per epistolam libri III*, he dedicated three lengthy chapters to Roman clothing, which together form a monograph within the macro-structure of his work.²⁷ There are reasons to believe that part of this material was taken from the unpublished papers of his father, Paolo Manuzio, who died in 1571. From this, it is possible to infer that Paolo, whose papers were used by his son Aldo to arrange his own work, spent several years preparing a treatise on ancient clothing that it had already been at an advanced stage.

cosa da spedirmene presto, et perciò v'entro volentieri" (Carlo Sigonio to Onofrio Panvinio, Bologna Lent 1567); 1024: "Ho ricevuto l'immagine del vostro Romano, il quale se è console, non ha la toga pura in dosso, ma la pretesta, et questa sotto il braccio destro, et credo che detta pretesta non coprisse il braccio destro, et che le statue, che si veggono in questo modo infinite, siano de' magistrati. Però scrivetemi se n'havete viste alcune, le quali habbiano tutte due braccia coperte, come credo, che portassero tutti li privati" (Carlo Sigonio to Onofrio Panvinio, Bologna 7 March 1567); 1024-5: "Le pitture delle toghe mandatemi mi sono piaciute, benché più tosto mi inviluppano il cervello che altramente, vedendo tanta diversità di portatura. Non so che cosa sia quella fascia, se non è la porpora, di che era orlata la pretesta. Ma mi meraviglio che non si veggia quella fascia in tutti li magistrati, essendo tutti pretestati. Ogni cosa però che mi manderete in questo genere, mi farà casa, né io vi mancherò di contraccambio dove possa et sappia" (Carlo Sigonio to Onofrio Panvinio, Bologna 9 June 1567). From these letters, it appears that Panvinio sent to Sigonio a number of drawings or paintings exemplified on statues or other relics, which featured ancient Roman garments. One can assume that part of these images could be the same collected in BAV *Vat. Lat.* 3439, the so-called *Codex Ursinianus*, partly put together by Panvinio himself. For example, f. 151r fn. 4 shows the drawing of an ancient figure, which garments present a caption with each name noted beside (*tunica*, *sagus*). Panvinio also dedicated a few pages to the clothes worn by ecclesiastical prelates, in his *Liber Ritualis* housed in Munich, BSB Clm. 133, ff. 95r-96r: *De coloribus quibus sancta R. E. in sacris vestibus solet uti veterum. Albo, rebro, viridi, violaceo, et nigro quidem tamen hos ultimo pro uno repraesentant.*

26 Sigonio 1574, 569-78; especially 569: "Ac de iudiciis quidem Romanorum hactenus. Nunc, quoniam dum superiora iura tractavimus, vestitus saepe, cultusque Romani meminimus, neque satis in nobis locus praesrtim alio properantibus est purgatus, pauca hoc loca de toga, tunicaque Romanorum subiecere placet. Quae adeo variatae sunt, ut cives a peregrinis, viros a pueris, equites a senatoribus, privatos a magistratibus, ab imperatoribus separarint".

27 Manuzio 1576, 1-38: I. *De Toga Romanorum*; 39-57: II. *De Tunica Romanorum*; 58-62: III. *De Trabea*.



Figure 52 Cesare Vecellio, *Ancient Roman soldier*. Engraving. In *De gli habiti antichi, et moderni di diuerse parti del mondo libri due, fatti da Cesare Vecellio, & con discorsi da lui dichiarati*. In Venetia, presso Damian Zenaro, 1590

A few years later, the German scholar Joannes Rosinus focused on this issue, including an overview on Roman clothing titled *De vestimentis* in book V of his *Romanarum antiquitatum libri*, which was published in 1583. In that work, Rosinus devoted six chapters to various considerations on Roman clothing in general and specific garments (the *toga*, *tunica* and *trabea*), including women's clothing and footwear.²⁸

A work on clothing that features a wide-ranging discussion on ancient clothing is *Degli abiti antichi et moderni* (1590), by the Italian painter Cesare Vecellio.²⁹ The purpose of this work was to gather an extensive compendium of all the clothes known in the history of civilisation. An anthropological consideration on the development of clothing throughout the centuries and according to the customs of various peoples opens this treatise, followed by the engravings and descriptions of each garment by geographical area (Europe, Asia, Africa) and by social level (noblemen, plebeians, artisans, priests). The work begins with a general overview of ancient clothing, where Vecellio discusses the various materials used, the Roman laws that limited the ownership of luxurious clothing, and the names of each garment.³⁰ As a result, his work went on to become the largest fig-

28 Rosinus 1583, 215-26: XXXI. *De vestibis Romanorum in genere*; XXXII. *De Toga et eius multiplici differentia*; XXXIII. *De Tunica*; XXXIV. *De trabea*; XXXV. *De foeminarum vestibis*; XXXVI. *De calceis*. The four images enclosed in the text were directly derived from the illustrations published in Baif 1541. A significant addition to Rosinus's chapters is represented by the paraliopomena added in Dempster 1613, 425-33: *Ad caput XXXI paraliopomena. Primae vestes diversarum gentium, e pellibus iis tentoria tecta, lacerna, fibula, byrrus, vestes sericae, holobericae, pellucidae, herbidae*; 437-41: *Ad caput XXXII paraliopomena. Toga meretricum gestamen, et Byzantinorum, ῥήβεννος, forensis, virilis, libera, militaris, lugubris, tirones in forum deducti, cadaveribus superimposita, domestica, cinctus eius*; 445-53: *Ad caput XXXV paraliopomena. Muliebres vestes, et ornamenta, acus ornatix, et tetrrix, calamistrum, crinium flexura, vittae, institae, fascia, aegis, monile, tunica, palla, mitra*; 454-60: *Ad caput XXXVI paraliopomena. Calceati dentes, mundi, sordidi, eos purgare, ut et ungues, excalceati antiqui, seu nudipedes, calcei sacerdotum, principum, tzacae, senatorum, matronarum, meretricum, militum, servorum, variae deinde species, lignei, ferrei, herbidi, papiracei*.

29 Vecellio 1590; 1598; Reolon 2013.

30 Vecellio 1590, 1^a-5^a: I. *Delle mutationi et varietà de' paesi et città che poi hanno portato seco le mutationi et diversità de gli abiti*; II. *Divisione della terra*; III. *Di quali abiti de' paesi di ragioni nella presente opera*; IV. *Della varietà de' panni et delle materie con le quali si facevano gli abiti ai tempi antichi*; V. *De' colori diversi che sono stati trovati di tempo in tempo per tigner le materie, con le quali si formano i vestimenti*; 7^a-12^a. VIII. *Di Roma capo del mondo*; IX. *Delle magnificenze et superbe spese intorno a gli ornamenti sontuosi de' senatori, e delle donne romane antiche*; X. *Dell'ordine della repubblica romana circa i reggimenti et abiti suoi*; XI. *Ordine della militia romana*; XII. *Nomi de gli abiti, et principalmente di quelli de' Romani*; XIII. *Delle coperte della testa*. After this introduction, Vecellio begins the first book of his treatise, entitled: *De gli abiti, costume et usanze di tutta l'Europa, et particolarmente dell'Italia, cominciando da' Romani così antichi come moderni*. His dissertation begins with a series of synthetic references also to ancient garments, both Greek and Roman, accompanied by its visual representation; see Vecellio 1590, 13^a-27^a: *Habito patritio antico romano*;

urative repertoire of ancient clothing available during the Renaissance [fig. 52]. Fifty years would pass before another work on ancient clothing was written.

A unique case of antiquarian dissertations on garments during the Renaissance is the one carried out by the French scholar Benoît Bauduyn, who published in 1615 the first monograph ever written on ancient footwear, entitled *Calceus antiquus et mysticus*.³¹ The book is divided in 35 chapters, gathered in three macro-areas of interest: the first regarding origins, materials, and typologies of ancient shoes;³² the second regarding the occasion in which each model was worn;³³ the third regarding the symbolic meaning of shoes in the Sa-

Habito antichissimo de' romani, che anco usato prima da' troiani; De i consoli et tribuni romani armati in guerra; Del soldato armato; Dell'huomo d'armi a cavallo; Del soldato armato alla leggiera a cavallo al modo romano antico; Degli alfieri romani; Dei soldati romani a piedi detti veliti; De' frombolatori romani; Delle donne romane illustri dette stolate antiche; Di un habito antico di Roma da donna, il quale era portato per tutta Italia; Habito di Gentildonna romana da dugento anni adietro.

31 Bauduyn in fact focused on this specific aspect of clothing as a result of his early apprenticeship in the workshop of his father, who was an actual shoemaker; see Bauduyn 1615, 45: “memini me iam dudum, cum iunior in patris sutrina conficiendis calceis operam darem – et hinc mihi nata de calceis scribendi occasio”. Against this opinion Moréri 1749, 2.185: “Il n'est pas sûr [...] qu'il fût fils d'un cordonnier, encore moins qu'il ait été cordonnier lui-même, et qu'il ait fait honneur à son premier métier. Les preuves que l'on prétend tirer de cet ouvrage pour appuyer cette opinion, ne la prouvent nullement; et tout ce qu'on en peut conclure, c'est que Baudouin qui avoit fait beaucoup de collections qui étoient le fruit de ses lectures, en avoit tiré tout ce qui regardoit la matière singulière de la chaussure des anciens, et qu'il se plaît à badiner sur le rapport éloigné qu'il avoit avec le métier exercé par les cordonniers”. See Acciarino 2021, 175-95.

32 Bauduyn 1615, 3-9: [I] *Calceorum origo. Adamus primus sutor, imo ispe Deus*; 9-14: [II] *Calceorum materia multiplex, et primum pellicea, eiusdemque concinnatores urbibus olim exclusi*; 14-20: [III] *Calcei papyracei, spartei, iuncea*; 21-4: [IV] *Calcei lintei, serici seu velutei*; 25-31: [V] *Calcei lignei, ferrei, aerei*; 31-8: [VI] *Calcei argentei aurei, gemmati*; 38-43: [VII] *Calceorum forma suae materiae addita, species variae strictim editae, opifices suo domicilio addicti*; 43-51: [VIII] *Calcei Romani vetus forma expressa, color varius pro vario temporum et personarum discrimine*; 51-8: [IX] *Calcei patriciorum lunati, cur, quomodo et ubi*; 58-65: [X] *Mullei unde dicti. Quales regibus, patriciis, imperatoribus et mulieribus usurpati*; 65-73: [XI] *Soleae quid. Earum a crepidis leve discrimen, usus quibus quando, et ubi familiaris*; 73-80: [XII] *De sandaliis*; 80-7: [XIII] *Caligae militum, clavatae, speculatoriae, unde dictae, et qui a Gallicis distinctae*; 87-93: [XIV] *Accurata gallicarum et crepidarum cum veterum, tum recentium descriptio*; 93-103: [XV] *Cothurnorum structura, usus, color, figura, et figurata significatio*; 103-9: [XVI] *De soccis. Quis eorum usus, color, et quae forma*; 109-16: [XVII] *De peronibus, qui rusticis, militibus, praefectis vigilum, plebijs, peregrinis et mulieribus olim usurpati*; 116-23: [XVIII] *De campagis et tzangis, quae propria fuerunt imperatorum calceamenta*; 123-31: [XIX] *De phaecasiis et sicyonijs, quorum alia philosophis et sacerdotibus, alia mulieribus usurpata fuerunt*; 131-6: [XX] *Reliquae calceorum species simul congestae*.

33 Bauduyn 1615, 136-43: [XXI] *Calceandi modus, et ad eum singularia quaedam veteribus observata*; 143-50: [XXII] *In calceatu vana et varia veterum religio*; 150-9: [XXIII] *Nudipedalium varius et multiplex usus*; 159-66: [XXIV] *Ignominiosa calceorum solutio, eademque cessionis, alias fidei firmive propositi signum*.

cred Scripture, especially in the New Testament.³⁴ After this first version, the work came out in three posthumous issues in 1667, 1711 and 1733, to which it was added a number of images engraved by Hendrik Bray [fig. 54], an unpublished dissertation *De caliga veterum* by Giulio Negroni, the commentary on Tertullian's *De pallio* carried out by Claude Saumaise, and five chapters *De calceo senatorio* featuring in Albert Rubens' *De re vestiaria* (see below).³⁵

Investigation on clothing crossed over also in the territories of ecclesiastical antiquarianism, especially in Antonio Bosio's *Roma Sotterranea*, published posthumously in 1632. In fact, from his exploration in Rome's underground cemeteries and catacombs, Bosio found rather extensive representations of clothed figures in the parietal paintings and in the statues. In this light he devoted four chapters to the issue, focusing on the clothes in general, starting from those wore on the head to reach the footwear, with a final digression on the various meanings of the letters stitched on the dresses.³⁶

Ottavio Ferrari, an academic at the University of Padua, published a treatise entitled *De re vestiaria*, in which all the previous positions on ancient garments are revised and corrected. The first edition of his work was printed in 1642 in the form of three books that described the *toga*, the *praetexta* and the *tunica* through a multiplicity of philological references.³⁷ The second edition, which comprised four additional books, each of which discussed *De lacernis*, *De paenulis*, *De veste militari* and *De pallio*, was published in 1654.³⁸ This work is accompanied by a figurative apparatus [fig. 53], which, although meagre, was effective at synthesising general iconographic sources (especially coins and statues).

34 Bauduyn 1615, 166-9: [XXV] *Prolegomenon ad mysticam calceorum interpretationem*; 169-77: [XXVI] *Utrum Christus Dominus pro more calceatus incesserit*; 177-84: [XXVII] *Romani Pontificis calceamenta quae, quo potissimum insignita ornatu, eiusdemque rationes variae*; 184-91: [XXVIII] *Allegorice significata per calceamentum Christi Domini incarnatio*; 191-7: [XXIX] *Tropologice significata per calceamentum Evangelij praedicationis*; 197-203: [XXX] *Tropologice significata per calceamenta sanctorum Patrum exempla*; 203-8: [XXXI] *Tropologice significata per calceamentum mortis meditatio*; 208-15: [XXXII] *Tropologice significata per calceamenta peccatorum sordes*; 215-22: [XXXIII] *Tropologice significata per calceamentum corpus mortale*; 222-6: [XXXIV] *Tropologice significata per calceamentum veniae peccatorum Spes*; 226-33: [XXXV] *Anagogice significata per calceamentum aeternae beatitudinis Spes*. An analogous approach regarding footwear in Sacred Scripture was adopted in Flacius 1567, 1.123-4.

35 Bauduyn 1667; 1711; 1733. See also the latter dissertations openly inspired to Bauduyn's works, *De calceis Hebraeorum libri duo*, Bynaeus 1682, and *Dissertatio philologica de calceis Hebraeorum*, Esselgren 1781.

36 Bosio 1632, 635-8: [XXXV] *Degli abiti che si vedono nelle figure cimiteriali*; [XXXVI] *Delle bracce e saraballe, e della mitra delle donne*; [XXXVII] *Delli sandali degli Apostoli*; [XXXVIII] *Delle lettere nelle vesti*.

37 Ferrari 1642.

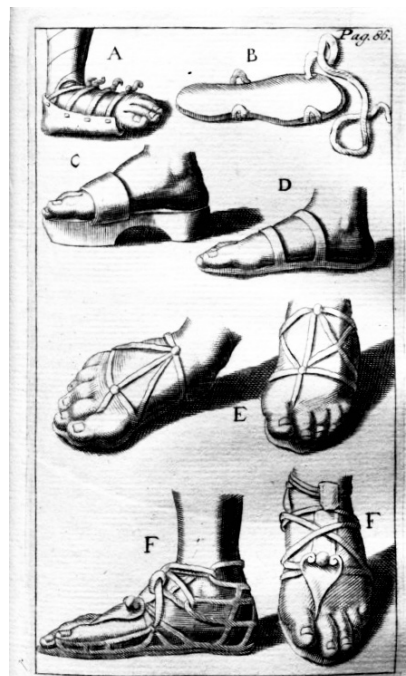
38 Ferrari 1654.



pag. 5. et 49.

Figure 53
Fides. Engraving. In Octavij Ferrarij
De re vestiaria libri tres. Patauij, typis
Pauli Frambotti bibl., 1642, 5

Figure 54
Hendrik Bary, Solae. Engraving.
In B. Balduini Calceus antiquus et
mysticus, et Jul. Nigronus de Caliga
veterum. Accesserunt ex. Cl. Salmasii
notis ad librum Tertulliani de Pallio
& Alb. Rubenii libris de re vestiaria
excerpta ejusdem argumenti.
Omnia figuris aucta & illustrata
observationibus Joh. Frederici Nilant.
Lugduni Batavorum, apud Theodorum
Haak, 1711, 86



Lastly, in 1665 Albert Rubens published his treatise *De re vestiaria*. This work is divided into two books, the first of which is dedicated to clothing and the second to accessories, from headdresses to footwear.³⁹ The genesis of this treatise is clearly rooted in the humanistic culture of his family. In fact, it was inspired both by the experience of Peter Paul Rubens, the famous painter and the father of the author, and by the studies of Philip Rubens, antiquarian scholar at the time who was also Paul's brother and Albert's uncle.⁴⁰ It is well known that the education of Peter Paul Rubens as a cultured painter also included an antiquarian apprenticeship that involved imitating ancient models of every type, including clothing. Among the drawings completed by this great Flemish artist, many feature figures wearing ancient garments, which in part reappeared in his pictorial works. Peter Paul Rubens arranged the iconographic tables for his brother's work [fig. 55], a miscellany of antiquarian erudite works entitled *Electorum libri duo*, the purpose of which was to discuss a variety of controversial philological cases. Seven chapters were dedicated to clothing – especially the *toga* (I, 17), the flag at the circus (I, 30), clothes with images or inscriptions (II 1), military outfits (II, 2), women's footwear (II, 14), the tunic (II, 20) and headdresses (II, 25).⁴¹ The most interesting aspect to note is that all the images in this collection refer exclusively to these chapters, which demonstrates a special convergence of the two brothers' interests on this topic. In this framework, it can be seen how Albert Rubens took inspiration from his family experiences – several drawings by his father were in fact included in his work, and some of the philological readings of his uncle are referred to and discussed in his treatise.⁴² This demonstrates, almost in perfect synthesis, the spirit that guided this research and the pathways that had to be followed in order to make progress in the study of this matter.

In light of the above, it would appear that the discourse for Renaissance works on ancient clothing may have passed through three different phases, according to the periods in which these texts were written.

³⁹ Rubens 1665.

⁴⁰ van der Meulen 1994, 69-128.

⁴¹ Rubens 1608, 20-2: *Quid sinus togae. Quintilianus illustratus*; 32-3: *De circo et mappae missione*; 45-7: *Vestibus olim versus et tituli inscripti, sed et imaginaes intextae*; 47-8: *Mendum e Propertio extritum. Sententia melior et argutior reposita*; 59-61: *Soleis feminarum inserti clavi, gemmae. Calcei purpurei, interpuncti auratis praelati. Crepidae aeratae. Calcei pedum quasi vincla*; 65-7: *De tunica interiore disceptatum. Ovidius, Plutarchus, Agellius explicati*; 71-4: *De sacris apicibus, eorumque materia et forma. Galerus, Albogalerus, Apiculum. Varronis lectio defensa*.

⁴² Rubens 1665, 176: "Sed optime patruus meus Philippus Rubenius l. I Elect. c. XVII per imagines interpretes nos docuit quid sinus esset".

The first phase includes the treatises written before the publication of *De re vestiaria* by Lazare de Baïf. These often deal with this topic in a superficial manner and always in general terms. This group includes the works of Flavio Biondo, Polydor Vergil, Raffaele Maffei, Celio Rodigino, Alessandro Alessandri and the general theory advanced by Poliziano. The guiding principle appears to be a need to define the subject properly before understanding the nature of specific objects, and to identify a general nomenclature. This may have been directly attributable to the fact that this discipline was new and required greater precision in order to better define the object of study and develop new categories for its investigation.

The second group concerns the works published between Baïf's treatise and Cesare Vecellio's illustrated collection. Here the subject acquires greater autonomy and breadth as research into the topic is conducted in detail and with greater awareness of related factors. Aside from Lazare de Baïf's *De re vestiaria*, this group includes the works by Charles Estienne, Wolfgang Lazius, Guillaume du Choul, Alessandro Sardi, Pirro Ligorio, Aldo Manuzio the Younger, Joannes Rosinus and Cesare Vecellio. These scholars sought to broaden and explain clothing nomenclature and to provide reliable descriptions based on ancient literary sources and findings, often employing an iconographic apparatus to provide accompanying images for the explanations.

The third and last group relates to the publication of two wide-ranging and complex treatises in the mid-seventeenth century, which brought the matter to its final peak, thereby concluding the Renaissance approach to the scholarly debate on the issue. Before describing and defining ancient garments, the works of Ottavio Ferrari and Albert Rubens rectify, correct, adjust, or reject the opinions expressed in previous writings, thereby applying a rear-guard approach of sorts. These texts are the richest in terms of sources and references but are tied to a tradition that had exhausted its momentum and required new methodological elements in order to preserve its relevance.

From this general overview, it is clear that the texts in the first group are based exclusively on literary sources, while material sources begin to be used starting only with Baïf. As will be seen from the case studies below, it is very likely that the evolution in the methodology used to develop studies on ancient clothing also fostered a change in the sensitivity of scholars and artists of the period on this subject in other areas.

8.3 Dressing the Ancients (i): Theatrical Costumes

The performance of classical plays in Renaissance theatres represented a cultural point in time when even studies on ancient clothing contributed significantly to the development of antiquarian imagery. Today, there is a lack of data on the construction of these *mise-en-scène* and costumes, the accuracy of erudite details and the relationship with the original models during the sixteenth century.⁴³ Even the spectator's ability to receive and understand the cultural weight of these choices is not sufficiently documented to allow for the formulation of a coherent theory. However, it is clear from the information currently available that the success of a play from ancient drama was not always dependent on its adherence to primary sources, especially when it involved clothing. Actually, excessive philological accuracy could sometime be disorienting for the public, so it was usually replaced by fictional solutions inspired by the international Gothic style.⁴⁴

Plays with ancient themes, such as those performed in the *Academia Romana* under the supervision of Pomponio Leto, were staged in Italy since the end of the fifteenth century.⁴⁵ Even though no specific account survives, some data on the costumes worn can be gleaned from a report published on the carnival of 1513 under Pope Julius II, in which a group of knights is described as being dressed in the ancient fashion: curiously enough, their connotation as ancients consisted merely in a label inscribed with the name of the Roman family to which they belonged and not of a specific dress code.⁴⁶

Nonetheless, in early modern times, there have been at least two cases that demonstrate the increase in awareness of ancient dress codes in theatrical performances, with solutions coming from a variety of erudite environments. These occurred quite far apart in terms of time, but this is what makes them even more significant: they both offer different perspectives on the same issue when considered as part of the same cultural dynamic.

⁴³ Zorzi 1971, 22-9; Jones, Stallybrass 2000, 175-206; Bastianello, Santorio, Torello Hill 2010. However, one must mention a reference to ancient clothing in the prologue of a comedy by Ludovico Dolce, *Fabritia*, in which the author affirmed that to different periods in history corresponded different uses, also in relation to garments, see Dolce 1550, 4.3-4: "Gentilissimi riguardanti, chi sic rede che a diverse età non convengano diversi costume, di gran lunga s'inganna, percioché quell oche fu già prezzato in una, è tenuto a vile in un'altra. Et per incominciare dal vestire, i Romani antichi non usavano né calcie né berretta, et portavano alcuni panni lunghi, che toniche, toghe, preteste et laticlavi addimandavano".

⁴⁴ Newton 1975, 60-94.

⁴⁵ Cruciani 1968.

⁴⁶ Luzi 1887, 581: "vestiti all'antiqua".

8.3.1 Rome 1513

The first case occurred in Rome in 1513 during the pontificate of Pope Leo X and concerns the performance of Plautus's comedy *Poenulus* to celebrate the concession of Roman citizenship to Giuliano and Lorenzo de' Medici.⁴⁷ The organiser and director of the event was Tomaso Inghirami, a scholar from Volterra, disciple of Pomponio Leto.⁴⁸ Inghirami also completed some erudite and philological studies on Roman dramatists, such as Plautus and Terence, and was also a very close friend of Raffaele Maffei, the only scholar to write about ancient theatrical costumes during that period.⁴⁹ Under Leto's supervision, Inghirami also participated in some of the performances staged in the Academia Romana, where he was given the nickname 'Phedra' after having acted as this female character in Euripides's *Hyppolitus*. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that not only did Inghirami possess vast knowledge of ancient clothing, but that he also had the ability to process it in an antiquarian rebirth of sorts.

Regarding the mise-en-scène of *Poenulus*, none of the information that came directly from Inghirami survived; nevertheless, the scenic design and costumes are described in a very detailed report written in Italian by Paolo Palliolo entitled *La narratione delli spettacoli celebrati in Campidoglio da' Romani nel ricevere lo Magnifico Giuliano et Laurentio di Medicii per suoi Patritii*. An abridged version of this text was also translated into Latin by the author himself: *Omnium actorum recitatorumque in Capitolio quum Magnificus Julianus Medices Romana civitate donatus fuit descriptio*.⁵⁰ In the former, a specific chapter is devoted to costumes: here Palliolo gives an account of actors who wore flesh-coloured tights in order to imitate the ancients, who were bare legged.⁵¹ The same paradigm can be deduced also from later documents describing the purchase of the costumes for the French version of the *Sophonisba*, staged in Blois during 1556. This implies it was quite a common expedient in theatre to express nudity by wearing flesh-coloured stockings or tight-fitting garments.⁵²

⁴⁷ Cruciani 1968, XXIV.

⁴⁸ Benedetti 2004.

⁴⁹ Cruciani 1968, LXXIV; Gualdo Rosa 2009.

⁵⁰ Cruciani 1968, XXXVII-XXXVIII.

⁵¹ Cruciani 1968, 61-5: "*Qualitati et habiti dei recitatori*. [...] Portavano tutti calze di colore incarnato per parere che mostrassero la gamba nuda ad imitatione delli antiqui, quali non soleano portarle".

⁵² Leblanc 1972, 178: "Neuf livres quinze solz. Pour six aulnes taffetas blanc incarnal et bleu quatre filz par tiers a XXXII s. VI d. l'aulne pour faire bottines". See also Zilli 1991; Scott, Sturm Maddox 2007, 170-3.

Palliolo also reported that the performers tied their garments with a knot on their shoulder in keeping with ancient Roman fashion.⁵³ This specific assertion could imply that the costumes used in this play were in fact intended to be tunics because the word ‘tunic’ is the only occurrence of a technical term referring to antiquarian vocabulary on clothing in Palliolo’s text.⁵⁴ He frequently refers to a vague ancient style, probably implying that it was generally to be considered Roman; in fact, when the actors dressed in a different way, this was always specified, for example, when they followed the Greek style,⁵⁵ even if no explanation was provided for the differences. On another occasion, a group of soldiers on a chariot are described as being dressed and equipped in ancient Roman style, but no other details are provided.⁵⁶

Palliolo also mentioned that the characters wore ancient footwear that were decorated with jewellery.⁵⁷ This specific aspect can add further details about the concept behind the entire play since it shows which elements were necessary and which were not in terms of reconstructing an antique fiction. In fact, the purpose of these shoes appears to have been to capture the attention of the public, demonstrating that the public and the scenographer himself conferred a particular meaning to this aspect beyond its mere antiquarian evocation. Therefore, in the eyes of a cultured spectator like Palliolo, only a few superficial dress code elements were sufficient to evoke and display a tangible but indistinct Ancient Roman atmosphere.

53 Cruciani 1968, 62: “Uscì poi fora lo recitatore del prologo, vestito de simile camiscia et socci, con manto di damasco bianco foderato di panno de oro, annodato sopra la spalla secondo lo antiquo costume; al capo havea involto un gran velo di seta de varii colori, in modo di turbante”.

54 Cruciani 1968, 65: “Hanno Carthaginese, il quale al fine ritrovò le figliuole et il nepote, havea la barba bianca. Portava in capo un certo capelletto coperto di perle; la sua camiscia era di orteghino al modo de l’altre, il suo habito era una tonica longa di broccato d’oro, coperta di ormesino verde con molti tagli onde lo ora transpareva; non havea altra cintura che quella della simitarra che era di ora et portavala ad armacollo; el fodero di detta simitarra tutto era coperto d’oro”.

55 Cruciani 1968, 63-4: “Duo servi lo seguivano, l’uno vestito al modo Greco et portavali dietro uno bellissimo scudo tondo lavorato in oro alla damaschina, l’altro moro con una gran simitarra, tutta fornita di argento et oro, et una celata coperta de oro lavorata a la damaschina, opera bellissima”.

56 Cruciani 1968, 50: “Roma, Justitia, Fortezza sopra un carro. Finita la musica, intrò nel proscenio un carro accompagnato et menato da VIII militi armati alla usanza antiqua de’ Romani et alquante nimphe”.

57 Cruciani 1968, LXXVI-LXXVII and 61: “Sopra esse haveano certi stivaletti chiamati socci, di somacco azurro, aggruppati dinanzi con bindelle di seta. Questi socci tutti erano coperti di pietre pretiose di varie sorti, cosa stupenda a vedere imperoché in gli ornamenti delle gambe de uno solo delli recitatori era una gran ricchezza”.

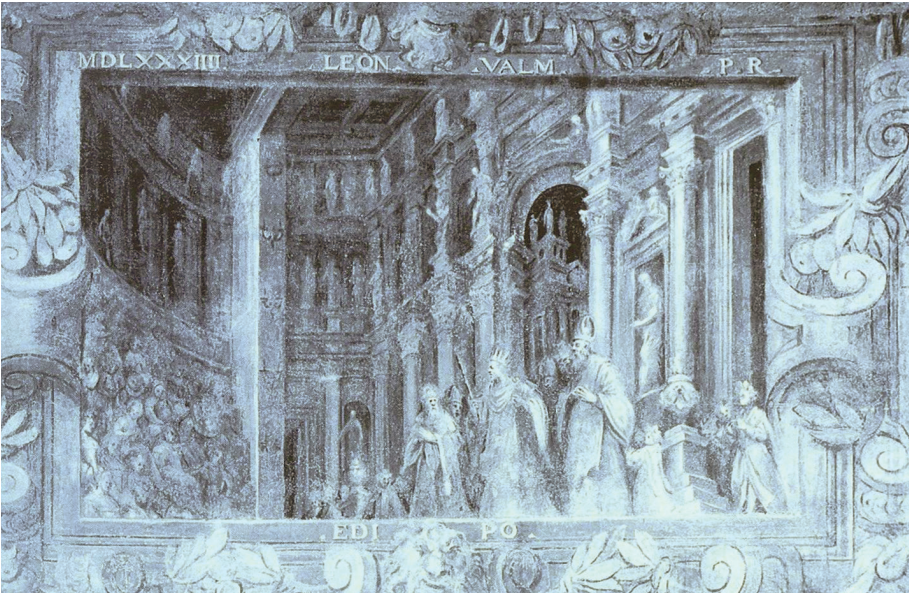


Figure 55 Peter Paul Rubens, *Mapa*. Engraving. In *Philippi Rubeni Electorum libri 2. In quibus antiqui ritus, emendationes, censurae. Eiusdem ad Iustum Lipsium poemata*. Antuerpiae, ex Officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum, 1608, 46

Figure 56 Giovanni Battista Maganza, *Edipo Tyranno*. Fresco painting. Teatro Olimpico. Vicenza. 1585

8.3.2 Vicenza 1585

The second case concerns the staging of Sophocles's tragedy *Edipo Tiranno* at the Olympic Theatre of Vicenza in 1585. The cultural relevance of this event is well known:⁵⁸ the work for this mise-en-scène began in 1579 and was promoted by the members of the Accademia Olimpica; the project for the construction of the theatre was assigned to the renowned architect Andrea Palladio; the text of the tragedy was translated by the Venetian scholar Orsatto Giustiniani; the music for the chorus was composed by Andrea Gabrieli; the costumes were sketched by Giovanni Battista Maganza;⁵⁹ and responsibility for the direction and scenography were assumed by Angelo Ingegneri.

The evolution of these works was thoroughly documented in various reports and printed works, some of which were written directly by the organisers themselves. There are two key sources for all the information available on the actors' costumes and dress codes: the treatise by Ingegneri published in 1598, *Della poesia rappresentativa et del modo di rappresentare le favole sceniche*, wherein he describes the work carried out in organising this performance;⁶⁰ and the manuscript at the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan (BAM ms. 123 sup. ff. 282-328), in which several autograph documents refer to the various organisational phases preceding the play (there is a lengthy text by Ingegneri himself, with significant attention devoted to costumes and clothes) and to the opinions of many prominent figures after the staging, including the philosopher Sperone Speroni (1500-1588), the scholar Antonio Riccoboni (1541-1599), the Spanish ambassador Filippo Pigafetta (1533-1604), and the antiquarian Gian Vincenzo Pinelli.⁶¹

In order to make the scenes more believable [fig. 56], Ingegneri decided to ascribe a specific connotation to the ancient garments according to their geographical origin. Since the drama was set in Greece, the actors were required to wear a *pallium*, a typical Hel-

⁵⁸ Schrade 1960; Gallo 1973; Schiavo 1977, 1-45; Puppi 1987; Mazzoni 2010; 2013.

⁵⁹ Puppi 1987, 199; Mason Rinaldi 1981.

⁶⁰ Ingegneri 1598, 70-4: "Dintorno a i vestimenti l'uso de gli antichi, secondo Giulio Polluce, era assai stretto, consiosa che essi havevano a ciscun personaggio non pur l'habito, ma il colore determinato, e davano all'innamorato il suo, il suo al trasone, et al parasito. Ma noi, usando in ciò maggior libertà, et pigliando le cose più in universale per meglio conformarci al moderno costume, ch'è ito molto avanzando di larghezza, et di pompa, saremo contenti di considerare che come le persone si distinguono fra di esse mediante il sesso, l'età, la conditione, et la professione, così anco i vestimenti in generale si fanno tra dilloro differente".

⁶¹ Gallo 1973.

lenic garment, instead of a *toga*, typically Italic.⁶² He believed it to be necessary to opt for the Ancient Greek dress code in the *mise-en-scène*, avoiding the Roman dress code or any other dress code that could be ascribed to other cultures: Ingegneri was however aware that he could not accomplish a full reconstruction of the clothing worn at the time; therefore, he settled for features that would be easily understood, even if this meant reducing the precision of antiquarian references.⁶³ For example, the king's archers were dressed according to the Turkish style and the king's crown did not adhere to the ancient diadem form.⁶⁴

In spite of Ingegneri's directions, the accuracy of the antiquarian model for the *mise-en-scène* of *Edipo Tiranno* was lacking from the very first performance. This is clear when reading the proposals for the costumes suggested by Speroni, who pressed for higher philological accuracy:⁶⁵ for example, he discouraged the use of ex-

62 Gallo 1973, 8: "Circa i vestimenti è da avvertire che come le persone si distinguono fra di esse per il sesso, l'età, la condizione e la professione, così anch'essi in generale si fanno fra di loro differenti, ma in particolare si variano secondo il costume d'una nazione o d'una provincia, come a dire la toga in Italia, il pallio in Grecia e simili"; Ingegneri 1598, 71: "Più particolarmente etiandio si variano gli abiti secondo 'l portamento della nazione, o della provincia, come a dire, parlando all'antica, la toga s'usava in Italia, e 'l pallio in Grecia. [...] Sarà per tanto da vedere in qual paese si finga la favola che si rappresenta, et secondo l'usanza di quella nazione si dovranno vestire i recitanti: et se l'attione sia tragica, riccamente et superbamente; se comica, civilmente, ma pulitamente; alla fine, se pastorale, humilmente, ma con garbo, e delicatezza, che vaglia quanto la pompa. [...] E io non gli biasimo per la bellezza della vista, et per la ragione detta nella prima parte, ch'è la medesima, onde si conducono nelle tragedie in palco i re con manto, et corona, et scettro, et con compagnia numerosa, et vestita nobilmente, et di vari colori: si come fu fatto in Vicenza l'anno 1584 alla rappresentatione dell'Edipo Tiranno, tradotto dal Sig. Orsatto Giustiniani, clarissimo per la nobiltà venetiana, et chiarissimo per la lirica poesia, et fatto con insuperabile grandezza recitare de i sudetti signori Academici Olimpici nel sopradetto loro superbissimo Theatro".

63 Gallo 1973, 13: "Intorno ai vestimenti delle soprascritte persone non si può veramente dare alcun certo ammaestramento e questo perché, essendo l'istoria tanto vecchia quanto ognun sa, non ha memoria alcuna fra gli scrittori dell'usanza d'allora, senzaché, quando ben se ne potesse aver sicurissima notizia, io temerei per la rozzezza di quei tempi che malamente se ne potesse servire. Però quel che in generale mi par in tal luogo di dover ricordare si è che si fugga più che sia possibile l'imitazione del vestir romano e di qual altro si sia abito conosciuto, eccetto il greco; il se ben lodarò che si faccia più dell'antica che si potrà, non mi dispiacerà però ancora che egli sia alquanto mescolato con la moderna usanza, pur che ciò venga fatto con giudizio e riesca con leggiadria".

64 Gallo 1973, 56: "Gli recitanti sono rarissimi e ornati politamente e con pompa secondo la condizione di ciascheduno. Il re con la guardia di 24 arcieri vestiti al costume dei colachi del Gran Turco, con paggi e persone di conto" (Filippo Pigafetta 4 March 1585).

65 Gallo 1973, 54: "Edippo era nuovo re di Tebe. Il suo abito mi par che debba accomodarsi alla tragedia più che alla regal maestà. La tragedia è di favola mista, perché la peste era in Tebe e si trattava d'intender perché vi fusse, per liberarla; onde il re e tutto il popolo era in stato di supplicare e non di pompeggiare. Il segno regale nelli re barbari era la benda bianca avvolta alla testa; nelli greci non ho veduto che cosa fusse se non lo scettro, e ciò si vede in Omero [Hom. *Il.* 1.430-1]. La guardia di Edippo può esser di armati, ma modestamente e lontana da lui; coloro che l'accompagnano come

cessively luxurious costumes because the tragedy was set during a period of mourning. In another passage, Speroni suggested that missing details in the scenography be reconstructed through the juxtaposition of parallel occurrences: for example, the clothes of Giocasta, the mother (and wife) of Oedipus, could have been aligned with those worn by Penelope, the wife of Ulysses, as described in the *Odyssey*, who wore a long white dress and a sash on her forehead; or the fortune-teller Tiresias could have been made to conform to a biblical prophet.

During the performance, the actors' clothes were very much admired not for their antiquarian accuracy, but for their splendour. Several of the reactions to the play bear testament to this general feeling, although some scholars still disapproved of the unfaithfulness to the original spirit. For example, Riccoboni criticised the character of Tiresias because it contradicted the ancient Greek source, Julius Pollux, who described him as being dressed in rags;⁶⁶ Riccoboni was echoed by Pinelli, who confirmed that this figure was wearing a silk dress, again contrary to the literary source.⁶⁷

8.3.3 A Comparison

By comparing these two cases, it is possible to see that theatrical requirements prevailed over antiquarian details, both in terms of the nature of the play and the audience itself.⁶⁸ However, a substantial difference seems to appear: in the Roman performance, it was possible to deviate from the historical truth to less annoyance from the spectators; in Vicenza, instead, any variation on a theme was perceived as a negative element, both by the scenographer and by the public.

This shift in perspective is likely to have derived from the evolution of the issue *de re vestiaria* in antiquarian scholarship. In the first decades of sixteenth century, when Inghirami was preparing the *mise-en-scène* of *Poenulus*, studies on ancient clothing were still

consiglieri, dui. L'abito loro lungo e così del re; il capo coperto alla greca e forse senza chioma o con poca. Il re comato fino alle spalle. Giocasta madre e moglie di Edippo, donna attempata, vestita di bianco, la benda avvolta al capo, con due compagne. Così fa Omero Penelope [Hom. *Od.* 1.334]. Tornando allo scettro insegna regale, non staria male se ne la cima fusse alquanto rivolto, quasi pastorale; quale Plutarco dice esser stato il scettro di Romolo [Plut. *Rom.* 22.6]. Tiresia vestasi quasi alla forma di Aaron nella Bibbia" [Ex. 29:5-9].

⁶⁶ Gallo 1973, 49: "Nel medesimo episodio apparve Tiresia diversamente vestito da quello che scrive Giulio Polluce: τὸ ἀγρηνόν ἦν πλέγμα ἐξ ἐρίων δικτυῶδες περὶ πᾶν τὸ σῶμα, ὃ Τειρεσίας ἐπεβάλλετο ἢ τι ἄλλο μαντικόν [Poll. *Onom.* 4.116.4-5]" (Antonio Riccoboni to Gian Vincenzo Pinelli, Ash Wednesday 1585).

⁶⁷ Gallo 1973, 59: "Tiresia, contro Polluce, con una sopravveste di seta".

⁶⁸ Newton 1975, 19-35.

too limited to offer a full overview on the matter. By the time Ingegneri prepared his *Edipo tyranno*, not only from a philological perspective, but also from an iconographic point of view, this topic had been thoroughly investigated and a broader and more complex picture of ancient garments was available to the erudite public.

For example, since Turkish archers were described and depicted in many contemporary publications, including the ones by Abraham Bruyn in 1581 and Cesare Vecellio in 1590, they could not be accepted as alternates for the ancients [fig. 57].⁶⁹

Conversely, the hypothesis could be advanced that the growth in early modern theatre also influenced the progress of studies on ancient clothing. In this light, each time an edition or a vernacular translation of theatrical texts was published it would have entailed considerations on its ideal performance and, consequently, on the costumes used. On the one hand, it would be interesting to note whether Lazare de Baïf, the father of Renaissance studies on ancient clothing and the translator of Euripides's *Electra* (1537) and *Hecuba* (1544) into French,⁷⁰ had imagined how they would be presented on stage, including the actors' costumes, given his experience in this area. On the other hand, it would be interesting to understand if the Peacham drawing (1594), an ink sketch at the top of the page of the Longleat manuscript transmitting Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* [fig. 58], represents a reliable theatrical scene performed with some kind of erudite inspiration, or just an outline of the clothing totally unrelated to any antiquarian invention.⁷¹

69 Vecellio 1590, 387^b-388^a: "L'habito de' quali è lungo di dietro et alzato davanti, et cinto di una cinta larga, et ricca alla moresca d'oro, e di seta. Portano anchora in testa un cappello alto di feltro bianco, et un pennacchione di molto prezzo. L'armi lor sono queste: una scimitarra, et in mano un arco teso dorato, e la saetta, come all'hora volesse scoccare; e dietro le spalle poi la faretra".

70 Baïf 1537b; Baïf 1544.

71 Berry 1999; Levin 2002.



Figure 57
 Cesare Vecellio, Turkish Archer.
 Engraving. In *De gli habiti
 antichi, et moderni di diverse
 parti del mondo libri due,*
 fatti da Cesare Vecellio,
 & con discorsi da lui dichiarati.
 In Venetia, presso Damian
 Zenaro, 1590



Figure 58
 Titus Andronicus (?). Peacham
 Drawing or Longleat Manuscript.
 Library of the Marquess of Bath.
 Longleat. c. 1595



Figure 59a
Rosso Fiorentino, *The Unity of the State*.
Fresco painting, Gallery of Francis Ist.
Fontainebleau. 1534-38

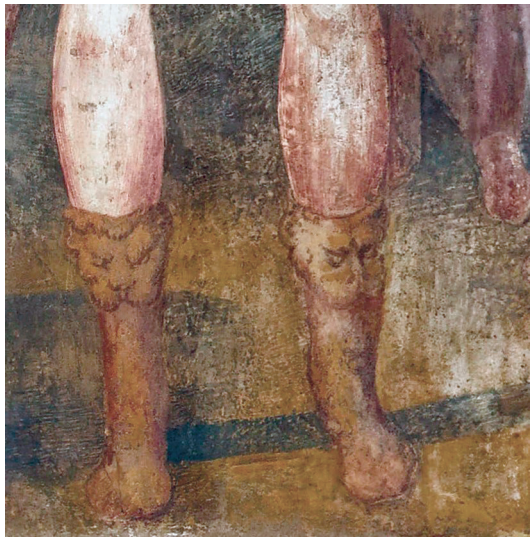


Figure 59b
Rosso Fiorentino, *The Unity of the State*,
detail. Fresco painting, Gallery of Francis Ist.
Fontainebleau. 1534-38

Paludamēti & sagi, ac caligæ militaris figura, ex antiquiss. marmoribus Romæ inuē. is



Figure 60 Roman soldier. Engraving. In Lazari Bayfii *Annotationes in legem 2. De captiuis & postliminio reuersis, in quibus tractatur de re nauali, per autorem recognitae. Eiusdem Annotationes in tractatum de auro & argento legato, quibus vestimentorum & vasculorum genera explicantur. His omnibus imagines ab antiquissimis monumentis desumptas ad argumenti declarationem subiunximus. Item Antonii Thylesii De coloribus libellus, à coloribus uestium non alienus. Basileae, apud Hier. Frobenium et Nic. Episcopium, 1537*

8.4 Dressing the Ancients (ii): The Gallery of Francis I at Fontainebleau

Studies on Roman clothing also had a considerable influence on iconography. A particularly interesting case was the preparation of the pictorial decorations of the Gallery of Francis I in Fontainebleau,⁷² the new residence of the king of France, by the Italian painters Rosso Fiorentino and Primaticcio between 1534 and 1538. An exhaustive iconographic reading was carried out in 1958 by Dora and Erwin Panofsky, who proved that the entire cycle of fresco paintings formed a complex encomiastic structure, where each panel presented a precise allegory of episodes from the political and personal life of the king.⁷³ In recent years, other proposals were added to this opinion:⁷⁴ Marc Fumaroli, for example, recognised the influence of Luigi Alamanni's *Inni pindarici* within the overall structure of the decorations and assumed that the concept behind the entire iconographic programme may have benefitted from the erudite guidance of Lazare de Baïf, conjecturing also that Baïf himself had interceded in bringing Rosso to France.⁷⁵

From this hypothesis, further assumptions can be made. The classical culture of Lazare de Baïf is generally recognised: not only did he study in Italy with Janus Lascaris, enter into correspondence with Pietro Bembo and Erasmus, and collect ancient artworks and findings while he was ambassador to Venice (sent directly by Francis I), but he also brought together a circle of artists and scholars, including the humanist Pietro Aretino, through which he encouraged the circulation and dissemination of ideas.⁷⁶ However, his cultural background cannot be isolated from his antiquarian studies and publications, for which he garnered great fame during the years in which the Fontainebleau frescoes were being completed. In addition to his *De re vestiaria* of 1526, of which there were at least twelve editions, Baïf published a work entitled *De vasculis* in 1531, which discussed the receptacles and vases of the ancient world,⁷⁷ and *De re navali*, published for the first time in 1536, which dealt with the naval principles known in the ancient world.⁷⁸ The edition of this last work was dedicated

⁷² McAllister Johnson 1972; Beguin 1989; Condellier 2005; Capodieci 2013.

⁷³ Panofsky, Panofsky 1958, 113-90.

⁷⁴ Campbell 2002, 473; Natali 2006, 225-55.

⁷⁵ Fumaroli 1996, 102-12.

⁷⁶ Fumaroli 1996, 105.

⁷⁷ Baïf 1531.

⁷⁸ Baïf 1536.

to King Francis I and contained the two previous books in the same volume, creating a practical manual that included all of his antiquarian studies, enriched by an iconographic apparatus perhaps arranged with the drawings of Sebastiano Serlio.⁷⁹ As it was the case with ancient clothing, even *De vasculis* and *De re navali* were immediately revised by Charles Estienne in 1535 and 1537 respectively.⁸⁰

Therefore, if we assume that Baïf participated in the iconographic programme of Fontainebleau, we should focus on finding any influences, coincidences, or real citations of his works in the complex weave of references in the Gallery. On an analysis, no evidence has yet been found to confirm his personal involvement, but his antiquarian knowledge may very well have inspired the development of the programme, even via the medium of Charles Estienne's revised versions, which would allow for some new general statements to be made, such as the following.

In the panel entitled *The Unity of the State* [fig. 59a], some relevant links with both Baïf's and Estienne's *De re vestitaria* treatises can be identified through the central figure, King Francis I, whose clothing recalls antiquarian details, such as the cape over his shoulder (*sagum*),⁸¹ his leather or linen chest armour (*lorica* or *thorax*),⁸² his long-sleeved tunic (*tunica manicata*),⁸³ the belt for his sword

⁷⁹ Baïf 1537a; Sambin De Norcen 1997.

⁸⁰ Estienne 1536b; 1537.

⁸¹ Baïf 1526, 48: "Ait Ulpianus, *et saga*. Sagum militum erat, quod et inter familiaria adcribitur ab Ulpiano. Tullius: itur ad saga [Cic. *Phil.* 6.9; 14.1-3]. Nostri milites g litera sublata vocabuli Latini vestigia retinent, Saum vel Sayon appellantes id genus vestis, quod armis superinduitur, alii acoustramentum, ut praetoriani"; Estienne 1535a, 25: "Sagum, ung sayon, genus tunicae militaris quae armis superinduebatur; alii accoustramentum vocant, ut praetoriani. Militare erat indumentum, unde Tullius: itur ad saga, hoc est, ad arma. Et saga parare apud eundem pro bellum instruere [Cic. *Phil.* 6.9]".

⁸² Baïf 1526, 23: "De armis quae tegendi causa oarari solent, dubium videri potest. Movet quaestionem, primum, quod loricae antiqui lineam gestabant, ac ipse Magnus Alexander, qui Asiae imperium obtinuit, lorica lineae usus dicitur, ut memini me legisse apud Plutarchum in Alexandro [Plut. *Alex.* 32.5]. Et thoracibus lineis antiquos pugnasse testis est Homerus [Hom. *Il.* 2.529 and 830]"; Estienne 1535a, 12-13: "Thoracem appellatur veteres une piece qui couvre le stomach, a denominatione pectoris, quod pectus et thoracem tegat, unde thoracibus lineis antiquos pugnasse testis est Homerus".

⁸³ Baïf 1526, 40: "Manicatis tunicis indui non sine probro solebant, ut autor est Gellius, qui eas graeco vocabulo χειριδωτάς appellat [Gell. 6.17]. Politianus in Herodiano, manuleas vertere, Plautum imitatus [Plaut. *Pseud.* 738], maluit, quam cum Cicerone dicere manicatas. Qui cum in grege Catilinae invehit, sic ait: Quos pexo capillo nitidos, aut imberbes, aut barbatos videtis, manicatis et talaribus, ac strictis tunicis amictos, non togis [Cic. *Cat.* 2.22]. Vergilius quoque videtur non sine probro dixisse: Et tunicae manicas, et habent redimicula mitrae [Verg. *Aen.* 9.614]" the reference to Herodianus' translation is in Poliziano 1513, 54^a: "Huic igitur deo sacer erat Bassianus, quippe natu maior, ipse potissimum sacerdotio fungebatur, incedens barbarico cultu, tunicas in-

(*baltheus*),⁸⁴ his woollen belt (*fascia*) and his sandals (*caligae*) adorned with the head of a lion on their upper part [fig. 59b].

However, the last two features coincide only with Estienne's version: the *fascia*, in fact, was added in his section on belts,⁸⁵ and the *caligae* were described in a chapter devoted to footwear, which was completely ignored in Baif's original,⁸⁶ even though this last feature appears in one of his illustrations in the 1536 edition that was printed under the supervision of Charles Estienne himself [fig. 60].⁸⁷ Of course, since this last detail features in many ancient statues, as also specified in the caption of the illustration, it could easily have been present in the imagery of the Renaissance artists of the time; however, within this cultural context the strong similarities between the text and the pictorial output cannot be deemed mere coincidence.

Another consideration must also be made. In their essay, the Panofskys identified an alternative image to that realised by Rosso Fiorentino in an engraving by Antonio Fantuzzi:⁸⁸ it was a prototype of the figure of a king with a crown and a pomegranate in his hand, just like the figure featured in the fresco, but in this case credibly recalling Vercingetorix, leader of the Gauls against the Romans. This identification was also supported by elements deriving from the clothes worn: in fact, the character wore trousers, a typical Gaulish garment, instead of the Roman tunica or toga. Panofsky attributed this iconography to the famous adage *Gallia bracata*, reported by Pliny and other ancient sources. There is no intention of questioning the trustworthiness of this identification, but the distinction between *Gallia bracata* and *Gallia togata* also appears in Ba-

dusus, intextas auro, ac manuleatas, et ad pedes usque demissas, cruraque tota convelans ab abunginis ad femora, vestis similiter auro, purpuraque variis, capite coronam gestans preciosorum lapidibus coloribus florentem"; Estienne 1535a, 21-2: "Tunica manicata, ung saye a manches".

84 Baif 1526, 57: "De baltheo dubitari potest, an vestimentorum appellatione veniat. Et magis est, ut armorum nomine comprehendatur, quandoquidem baltheum Varro inter arma adscripsit, dictum quasi bullatum cingulum [Varr. *ling.* 5.24.116]. Tacitus quoque XVII recenset inter armorum ornamenta, in haec verba: Manipuli quoque et gregarius miles viatica sua et baltheos phalerasque insignia armorum argento decora, loco pacuniae tradebant [Tac. *hist.* 1.57.2]. Graeci ζωστήρα appellant. Plutarchus in Camillo: ἀπολυσάμενος τὴν μάχαιραν ἄμα καὶ τὸν ζωστήρα προσέσθηκε τοῖς σταθμοῖς [Plut. *Cam.* 28.6.3], hoc est: Gladium una cum baltheo exutum lancibus apposuit"; Estienne 1535a, 53: "Baltheus sive balteum une ceinture a espee".

85 Estienne 1535a, 54: "Fasciam autem vulgus vocat, une bande, latum aliquod vinculum, seu laneum, seu lineum fuerit, quo partes aliquae corporis revinciebantur".

86 Estienne 1535a, 15: "Quinetiam militaris caligae forma ex antiquis marmoribus deprehenditur, tantum enim attingebat mediam tibiam, atque in extrema parte superiori, cuiusdam animalis ceu leonis caput prae se ferebat".

87 Baif 1536, 64.

88 Panofsky, Panofsky 1958, 128-30.

if's and Estienne's treatises,⁸⁹ which opens to the possibility that these were taken into consideration during the preparation of the apparatus.

Moreover, always in *The Unity of the State*, while on the right side of the fresco figures with caped and hooded togas appear, perhaps identifiable with the *lacerna*,⁹⁰ several characters dressed in Roman

89 Baif 1526, 27: "A tofa quoque dictae comoediae togatae, quae Romanorum, palliatae vero quae Graecorum" and 62-3: "Erant autem brachae Gallorum transalpinorum, Britonumque. Martialis: Quod veteres brachae Britonis pauperis [Mart. *epigr.* 11.21.9]. Quibus pudenda tegebantur. Iuvenalis: Mittentur brachae, cultelli, frena, flagellum [Iuv. 2.169]. Tacitus XVII: Ornatum ipsius municipia et colonaie in superbiam trahebant, quod versicolore sagulo brachas, tegmen barbarum indutus, togatos alloqueretur [Tac. *hist.* 2.20.1]. Plutarchus in Othone: ἐκείνων δὲ Κεκίνας μὲν οὔτε φωνὴν οὔτε σχῆμα δημοτικός, ἀλλ' ἐπαχθὴς καὶ ἀλλόκοτος, σώματος μεγάλου, Γαλατικῶς ἀναξυρίσι καὶ χειρῶσι ἐνεσκευασμένους [Plut. *Oth.* 6.3.5]. Quibus verbis eadem fere quae apud Tacitum retulisse videtur Plutarchus. Unde brachati dicti Narbonenses, ut ait Plinius [Plin. *nat.* 3.31]. Iuvenalis in octava: Ut brachatorum pueri, Senonumque minores [Iuv. 8.232]. Nunc vero etiam brachatis et transalpinis nationibus. Scitum est illud Tranquilli: Gallos Caesar in triumphum ducit. Idem: In cura Galli brachas deposuerunt, latum clavum sumpserunt [Suet. *Iul.* 80.2]. De brachis, etiam ut opinor, dictum preverbiale, ut de re insolita, Ἀμαθὴς ἀναξυρίδα περιθέμενος πᾶσι ταύτην ἐδείκνυ [Mich. Apostoli. *Collect. Paroemiarum* 2.75.1] hoc est: imperitus bracham indutus, omnibus eam ostentat". The proverb to wich Baif refers is discussed in detail by Erasmus 1559, 719: "IMPERITVS ANAXYRIDE INDVTVS OMNIBVS ID OSTENTAT. Ἀμαθὴς ἀναξυρίδα περιθέμενος πᾶσι ταύτην ἐδείκνυ, id est Imperitus subligaculum siue brachas indutus passim eas ostendit. In eum congruit, qui propter insolentiam etiam ineptissimis rebus effertur. Nam rerum imperitis, quicquid peregrinum ac nouum est, videtur elegans. Eruditi quidam putant anaxyridem Graecis dici, quas Latini vocant brachas siue foeminalia, quae tegebant mediam corporis partem vna cum foeminibus. Brachae igitur barbaricae vestis genus erat, sed praecipue Gallorum quorundam. Vnde et Gallia Brachata dicta est. Anaxyridem vero et Persis in vsu fuisse declarat Strabo [Str. *Geogr.* 15.19] Vidimus et Venetiae patritios iuuenes, si quando peregrinantur, gaudere Gallicis subuculis absque veste superiore, quod idem domi non faciunt. Quadrabit et in eos, qui sibi videntur aliquid, quod Gallice loquantur inter Germanos, aut qui vocibus obsoletis, obscuris aut peregrinis venditant sese. Subolet hoc ab Apostolio additum ex huius aetatis adagiis". See also Estienne 1535a, 14: "Feminalia et brachae, hault de chausses. Unde Gallia brachata et brachati Galli dicti, quod feminalis uterentur (quae femoralia appellare videtur Tranquillus in August. Vulgus Italorum coxalia hodie vocat). Suidas, Hisychius, et Eustathius in Homerum, vocant ἀναξυρίδες [Suid. *Lex.* ε 2838; Hesyc. *Lex.* β 1043], quas nos brachas dicimus, quod facile coniiicitur ex loco Diiodori in quinto: καὶ ἀναξυρίσιν, inquit, ἃς ἐκείνοι βράκας προσαγορεύουσιν. Hoc est, et anaxirides, quas illi brachas appellant [Diod. *Bibl.* 5.30.1]" and 28: "Caeterum etiam a togae frequentius vsu Gallia togata dicta est, quae est nunc Italiae pars intra Padum, Rubiconumque et Appenninum montem. Dicti quoque Hispani togati et stolati".

90 Baif 1526, 51: "Lacerna, quasi lacera, quod capite minus sit Sexto Pompeio [Paul. Fest. 105.4]. Quam militum quod fuisse constat. Propertio in quarto: Textitur in castris quarta lacerna tuis [Prop. 4.3.17]. Ovidius Fastorum secundo: Mittenda est domino, nunc nunc properate puellae | Quamprimum nostra facta lacerna manu [Ov. *fast.* 2.742-3]. Erant et lacernae, quibus uterentur Romani cum spectaculis operam sedentariam praestarent, et togae superindebantur as arcenda frigora". An interesting explanation of Festus' passage mentioned by Baif is given in Scaliger 1575, 71: "*Lacerna* Verba sunt Pauli, Lacerna, quod minor caputio sit. Ultimis temporibus Capitium significabat capitis tegmentum. Antiquitus autem mamillare feminarum. Neque unquam boni auctores pro cucullione acceperunt, ut posterior aetas Barbara, quae epomidas monarchorum capitia vocat. Nos olim adolescentes docuimus in Coniectaneis Nonium errare, qui putarit a veteribus in eum significatum accipi, in quem accipiebat sua aetas [Non. 14.542.23-5]. Quin locus Varronis,

clothes can be seen on the left side, including a soldier wearing metal chest armour (*thorax plumbeus*),⁹¹ in contrast to the leather armour donned by the king, and a short-sleeved tunic. Such a type of tunic takes on greater significance if the presence of sleeveless tunics is observed, suggesting that this was ascribed meaning by the painters, as can be seen on the right part of the panel titled *The Elephant* [fig. 61].

On the left side of the same painting, there is also a figure descending the stairs, wearing clothes similar to those worn by the king in the aforementioned fresco (*tunica manicata, sagus, thorax, fascia*), but with some differences: for example, the caligae, which are made of intertwined lace, seem very similar to Estienne's description.⁹² Furthermore, one should note that the tunic is always the garment worn 'closest to the body' by all male figures and serves almost as an equivalent to a modern vest. This peculiarity is also reported in the work of the two French antiquarians (*tunica ima*),⁹³ strengthening the link between the information provided in *De re vestiaria* and the arrangement of this artwork.

qui ab eo producitur, manifesto contra eum facit [Varr. *ling.* 5.30.131]. At Hieronymus antiquitatis et linguae Romanae peritus scriptor Capitium non aliter accipit, quam Varro et veteres, in Epistola de veste sacerdotali [PL 22.0615 (Hier. *epist.* 64.54.14)]. Scaliger argued that *lacerna* and *capitium* were synonyms, against Nonius, in his emendations on Varro; see Scaliger 1565, 63-4: "191. *Capitium, quod capiat pectus* Idem de vita populi Ro. Lib. IIII. Neque id ab orbita matrum familias institute, quod eae pectore, ac lacertis erant apertis, ne capitia habebant. Plane hic capitia pectori tegendo non capiti, ut voluit Nonius [Non. 14.542.23-5]. Videtur esse, quem Graeci *μασχαλιστήρα* vocabant. Erant et ad vincendum pectus strophia et fasciae, de quibus Terentius intellexit, de puellis loquens: quas matres student esse | demissis humeris, vincto pectore, et graciles fient, | si qua est habitior paulo, pugile esse aiunt, deducunt cibum [Ter. *Eun.* 312-14]. Nam fasciis illis *όμαλοῖς* et aequos humeros reddebant, cum contra in pugilibus sint torosi. Xenophon, *ώσπερ οἱ πύκται τοῦς ὤμοις παχύνονται, τὰ δὲ σκέλη λεπτόνονται* [Xenoph. *Symp.* 2.17.7]. Ergo strophio tumorem papillarum cohibebant: fasciis illis humerorum castigabant superfluum, et quasi luxuriantem, καὶ σφριγώντα habitum. Itaque apud Ovidium: Conueniunt humeris tenues ameletides altis [Ov. *ars* 3.271]. Ego lego omaletides. *όμαλήτιδες* enim videntur vocatae esse, quod iis aequabantur himeri, et complanabantur". See also Estienne 1535a, 39-40: "Dicta lacerna quasi lacera, quod capite minus sit. Et autem non utebantur illustriores, nisi pluvio tempore, quas autem in spectaculis deferebant, albas fuisse conicimus ex Martiale [Mart. *epigr.* 14.135.1-2], qui in Horatium ludit, quod nigra lacerna opertus spectaculis adfuisset [Hor. *sat.* 2.7.53]".

91 Estienne 1535a, 13: "Thorax plumbeus, Plin. libr. VII cap. XX. Nos quoque vidimus Athanatum, nomine prodigiosae ostentationis quinquagenario thorace plumbeo indutum, cothurnisque ducentorum pondo calciatum per scenam ingredi [Plin. *nat.* 7.83]. Neque vero fortassis omnino ineptum fuerit, si quemadmodum iureconsulti stragula bubalina dicunt: ita quoque nos thoracem bubalinu, appellemus eum, qui vulgo a militibus gestari solet. Ung colet de cuir de buffle. Bubalum enim vocabant antiqui bovem sylvestrum quem hodie adhuc Itali bufalum, ung buffle".

92 Estienne 1535a, 15: "Caeterum a latere ipsius tibiae fascicola quadam revinciebant atque claudabatur, quam vulgus lassetum appellat: nos etiam corrigiam appellare possumus, nisi mavis dicere clavis potius a dextra parte suffigi solere, qui interdum aurei erant, cum clavi caligares dicti".

93 Baif 1526, 40: "Mulieres tunicis utebantur longe, lateque diffusis ad ulnas cruraque adversus oculos protegenda, quorum ima erat carni proxima, unde locus Martialis in

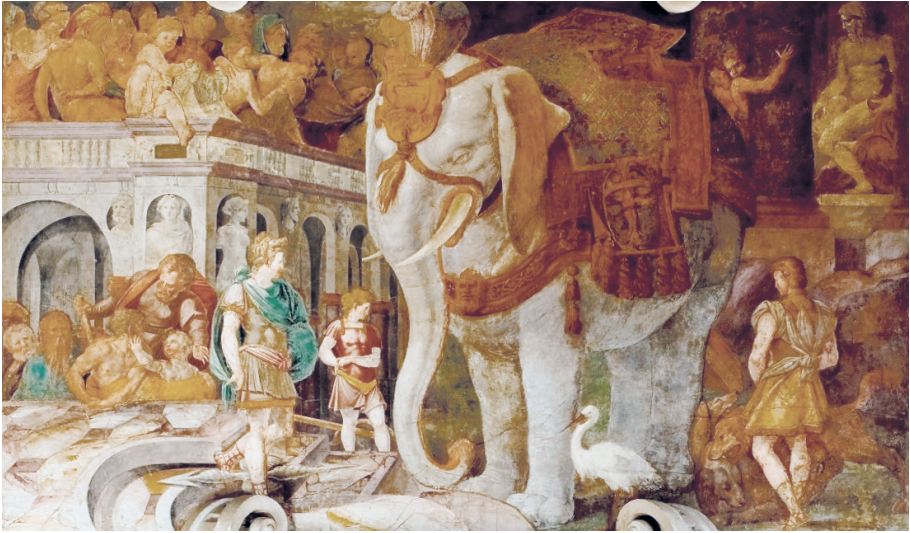


Figure 61 Rosso Fiorentino, *The Elephant*. Fresco painting. Gallery of Francis Ist. Fontainebleau. 1534-38

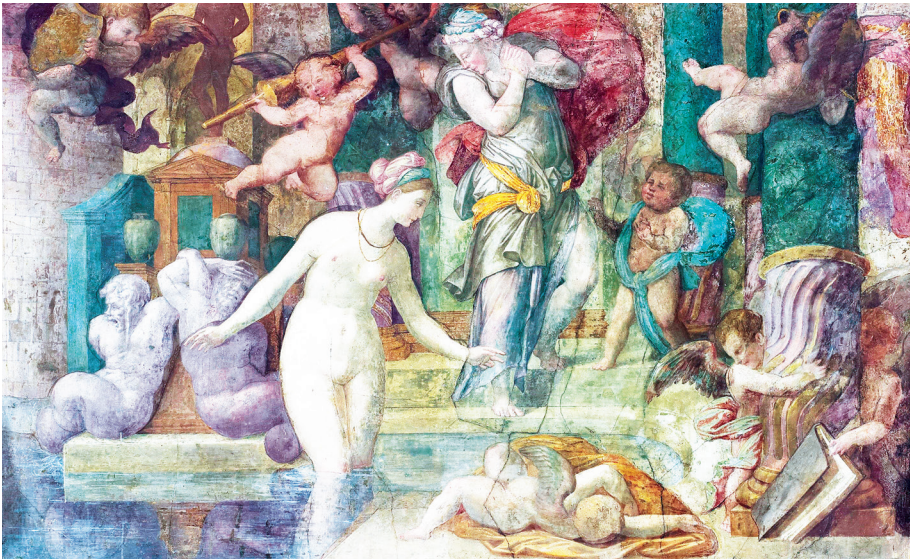


Figure 62 Rosso Fiorentino, *Bath of Pallas*. Fresco painting. Gallery of Francis Ist. Fontainebleau. 1534-38

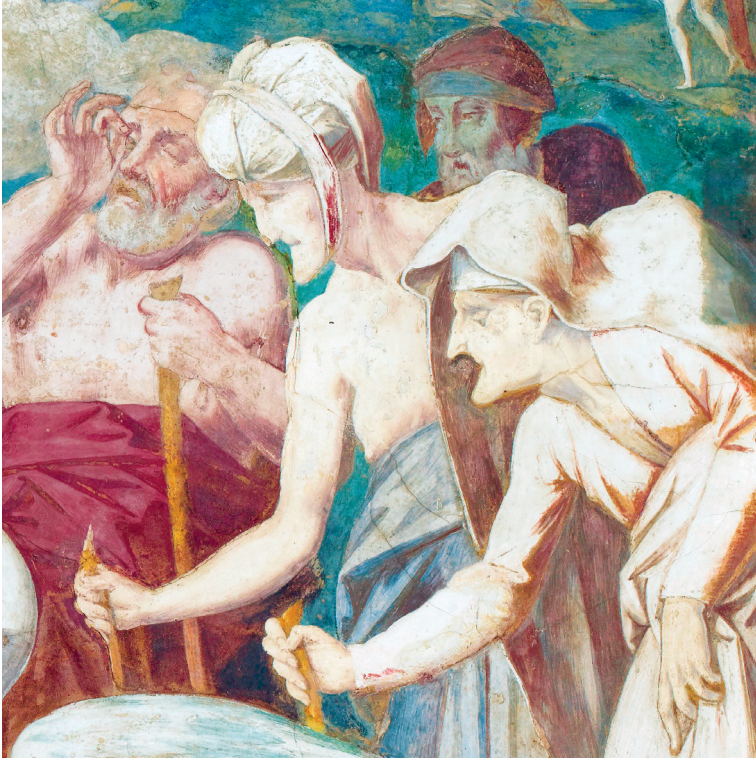


Figure 63 Rosso Fiorentino, *Cleobis and Biton*, detail. Fresco painting. Gallery of Francis Ist. Fontainebleau. 1534-38



Figure 64 Rosso Fiorentino, *The loss of eternal Youth*. Fresco painting. Gallery of Francis Ist. Fontainebleau. 1534-38



Figure 65 Rosso Fiorentino, *The Sacrifice*. Fresco painting. Gallery of Francis Ist. Fontainebleau. 1534-38

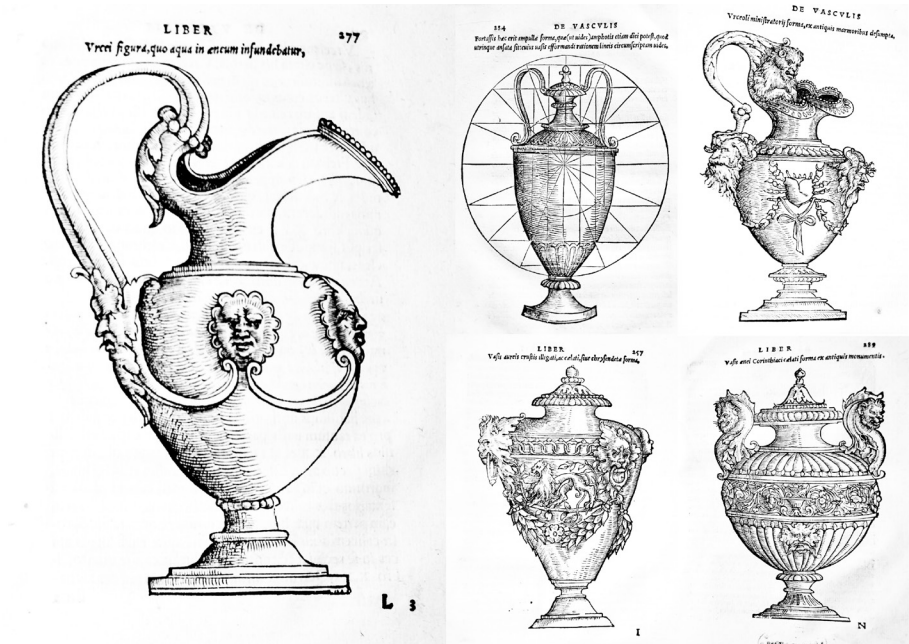
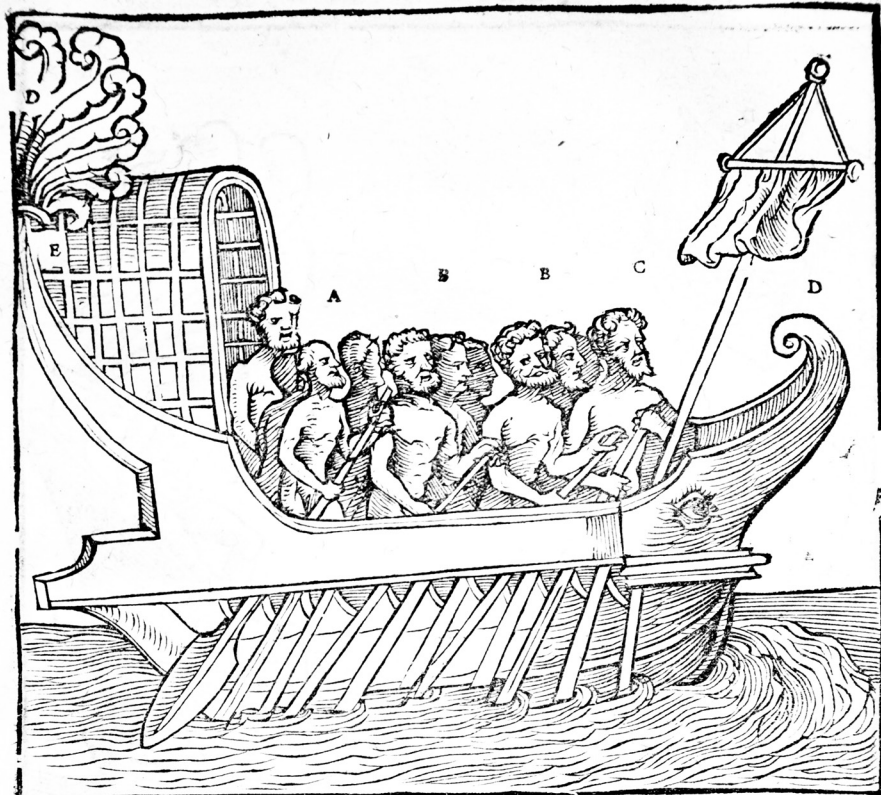


Figure 66 Roman vases. Engraving. In Lazari Bayfii Annotations in legem 2. De captivis & postliminio reuersis, in quibus tractatur de re nauali, per autorem recognitae. Eiusdem Annotations in tractatum de auro & argento legato, quibus vestimentorum & vasculorum genera explicantur. His omnibus imagines ab antiquissimis monumentis desumptas ad argumenti declarationem subiunximus. Item Antonii Thylessii De coloribus libellus, à coloribus uestium non alienus. Basileae, apud Hier. Frobenium et Nic. Episcopium. 1537

Figure 67 Rosso Fiorentino, Nauplius's Revenge. Fresco painting. Gallery of Francis Ist. Fontainebleau. 1534-38



- A Gubernator, κυβερνήτης
- B Remiges, Nautæ, ὄρετοι.
- C πρῶτος καὶ πρῶατος, Latinis proreta, qui
proram regit. Iureconf. in lege, Cotem.
•§. Dominus. ff. De publicanis.
- D Acroteria.
- E Thronus.

Figure 68 Roman ship. Engraving. In Lazari Bayfii *Annotationes in legem 2. De captivis & postliminio reuersis*, in quibus tractatur de re nauali, per autorem recognita. Eiusdem *Annotationes in tractatum de auro & argento legato*, quibus vestimentorum & vasculorum genera explicantur. His omnibus imagines ab antiquissimis monumentis desumptas ad argumenti declarationem subiunximus. Item Antonii Thylesii *De coloribus libellus*, à coloribus uestium non alienus. Basileae, apud Hier. Frobenium et Nic. Episcopium. 1537

Another garment that reveals this type of erudition is the headdress of women. For example the two female characters in the *Bath of Pallas* [fig. 62] have their hair gathered in a bonnet similar to a *restis* or *reticulum*;⁹⁴ moreover, the old mother in the panel *Cleobis and Biton* [fig. 63] is perhaps wearing a *rica* because of the sacrificial setting of the scene,⁹⁵ just like the female figure with a white headdress is perhaps wearing a *vitta*,⁹⁶ in *The loss of eternal Youth* [fig. 64].

In addition to these hypotheses on clothing, other elements stemming from the other treatises by Baïf and Estienne on ancient vases and vessels can be found. In the panel of the *Sacrifice* [fig. 65] the vases brought towards the altar could be identified with the various sacrificial ornaments of different forms and materials used also for transporting water (*aquaria*), wine (*vinaria*), oil, and various ointments (*unguentaria*).⁹⁷ The poor state of conservation of the paintings and the heavy re-touching carried out in later periods do not aid this analysis to advance any further, however, it is possible to imagine from the few traces of colour left that the first was a crystal vase, the second a golden *urceus*⁹⁸ and the third a silver or lead amphora. The images here do not match perfectly those found in Baïf's

Lesbiam: De cathedra quotiens surgis, iam saepe notavi, | Praedicant miseram, Lesbia te tunicae [Mart. *epigr.* 11.99.1-2]"; Estienne 1535a, 11: "Camisiam quam vulgus appellat chemise, nos recte et latine imam sive intimam tunicam dicere possumus. Quidam interulam vacant. Est quando tunica absolute idem significet, ut apud Ovidium multis in locis, et Ciceronem act. VII in Verrem [Cic. *Verr.* 2.5.21]. Unde tunicatus a Martiale, pro eo qui barbare dicitur in camisia. Et tunicata quies ab eodem dicta [Mart. *epigr.* 10.51.5], hoc est, libera ad opera togata. Athenaeus χιτῶνιον ἐχέσακρον appellat tuniculam carni proximam [Athen. 13.59.17]".

94 Baïf 1526, 57: "Utebantur et reste, hoc est fasciola, qua capillum in capite colligatur. Erat autem reticum, quod capillum contineret, nos cophiam vocamus"; Estienne 1535a, 9: "Reticulum, une coeiffe, tam virorum quam mulierum fuit, quod capillum contineret. Ita dictum fortassis a forma retis, vel piscatorii, vel venatorii. Iuvenalis: Reticulumque comis aratum ingentibus implet [Iuv. 2.93]. Restis, ung ruband. Fasciola, qua mulieres capillos involuebant. Retiolum Servius appellare videtur, super illud Virgilit IIII Aeneid.: Crines nodatur in aurum [Serv. *Comm. Aen.* 1.4.138]. Erat enim retiolum, instrumentum suve fascia quaedam qua comas colligebant matronae. Italicae virgines cordellam vocant. Cicero redimiculum appellare videtur act. V. in Verrem: Haec civitas mulieri redimiculum praebeat, haec in collum, hoc in crines [Cic. *Verr.* 2.3.76]".

95 Baïf 1526, 57: "Sic rica a Romano ritu, quod, ut inquit Varro, Romano ritu sacrificium foeminae cum faciunt, capita velant [Varr. *ling.* 5.29 130]"; Estienne 1535a, 10.

96 Baïf 1526, 60: "Vitta tegimen capitis matronarum"; Estienne 1535a, 9: "Tegimen capitis matronarum, quo capillos coercebant, et costringebant ac colligebant".

97 Estienne 1535b, 8-23, 33-46.

98 Baïf 1531, 47: "Urceoli. Urceus cuius diminutivum urceoli vas aquarium, ut tamen urceus esset vas ad frigidam, urceoli ad caldam. Inde urceoli ministratorii apud Martialem: Frigida non desit, non deerit calda petenti | Sed tu morosa ludere parce sitti [Mart. *epigr.* 14.105.1-2]. Urcei meminit Iureconsul. in l. cum de lanionis, saepe citata, his verbis: urcei quoque, quibus aqua in aeneum infunditur, in idem genus rediguntur [Dig. *Iust.* 33.7.18]"; Estienne 1535b, 40.

illustrated publications; however, at least general archetypes [fig. 66] that could link these vases to this work can be found in the pages of Baïf's 1541 edition of *De vasculis*.

To conclude, a marginal consideration must be made regarding the panel with *Nauplius's Revenge* [fig. 67]. In this fresco depicting an ancient naval battle, a series of vessels appear in a chaotic composition. Even in this case it is possible to find a general link with Baïf's and Estienne's *De re navali*, and some paradigmatic referrals to the nautical universe:⁹⁹ in fact, visual referrals to each part of the ancient ship can be identified in the final tables of these treatises, which could have been easily used in order to increase the philological reliability of the ancient naval imagery [fig. 68].¹⁰⁰

Given these assumptions, it could be argued that Lazare de Baïf exerted an influence on the development of the iconographic programme of the Gallery of Francis I at Fontainebleau and could even have been directly involved. If it is taken as a given that this French scholar was one of the court iconographers, then his antiquarian works must be considered to be intrinsically linked to the images depicted, which would include not only his most famous work *De re vestitaria*, but also his other works on ancient vessels and vases. It would be more difficult to explain the iconography of the palace if Baïf's role were excluded from consideration.

Some of the links that emerge from this antiquarian knowledge and these paintings lead to the formulation of a further proposal: the data recorded on ancient clothing, vases, and vessel could well have derived from the works of Charles Estienne rather than directly from those of Baïf. And there are at least two reasons to believe this. First, in addition to all the other coincidences involved, the *caligae* (both with lions and laces) can be found only in Estienne's treatise, since Baïf never dealt with the subject of Roman footwear. Second, Estienne's works were handbooks and therefore easier to consult. They could have been used by the reader to a greater extent than those of Baïf, mainly because of the new structure.

Moreover, the presence of a French translation for each Latin term could have aided a more rapid comprehension of the object not only by the young students to whom these treatises were originally addressed, but also by painters and artists. The assumption could therefore be made that Baïf's knowledge may have contributed to the development of this iconographic programme, but through the revisions carried out by Estienne between 1535 and 1537 when the Gallery at Fontainebleau was being decorated.

99 Concina 1990.

100 Baïf 1537, 145-8; Estienne 1537, 77-90.

9 Art Grotesques in the Counter-Reformation

Summary 9.1 Introduction. – 9.2 Reformation and Images. – 9.3 Counter-Reformation and Images. – 9.4 The Counter-Reformation and Grotesques. – 9.5 Symbols and Grotesques.

9.1 Introduction

Gots hewser seind hewser daryn Got allein gecheret, angeruffen und angebet soll werden. Als Christus spricht: Mein haus ist ein haus des gebets unr ir macht ein gruben der morder daraus [Mt 21:13]. Betrügliche bilder ermorden alle yre anbeter und brenser als geschrien steht. [...] Drumb mogen unsere tempell billich morders gruben genenth warden, das unser genst in yenen ertodt und erschlagen wirt.

This is the opening of a short treatise on the removal of images, *Von Abtuhung der Bylder*,¹ written and published in 1522 by Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt (1486-1541),² one of Luther's fellow theologians in Wittenberg. His work expressed iconoclastic views and

An earlier version of this chapter was published in *Paradigms of Renaissance Grotesques*, edited by Damiano Acciarino, Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2019, 29-54.

1 Karlstadt 1522, 1-2.

2 On his thought in general, see Sider 1974.

formally gave birth to the controversy over figurative art during the Reformation.³ Karlstadt's statement is extremely effective:

God's houses are buildings in which God alone should be glorified, invoked, and adored. As Christ says: My house is a house of prayer, and you make it a murderer's cave. Deceitful images bring death to those who worship them [...] Therefore, our temples might be rightly called murderer's caves, because in them our spirit is stricken and slain.⁴

Owing to the presence of deceitful images ("betrüglische bilder") that lead to the death of the spirit, churches can be compared to murderers' caves ("gruben der morder"). This concept is drawn from the gospel of Matthew, even if the biblical text does not directly refer to images but more generally to corruption in the episode of the *Cleansing of the Temple*. With the German word *grube* (cave), Karlstadt translated the Greek σπήλαιον (cave), from which the Latin term *speluncam* (cave) is derived. During the sixteenth century, *grube* and *spēlaion* had a strong semantic relationship with the Italian *grotta* (cave), from which the word *grotesche* was coined.⁵ This lexical con-

3 Scavizzi 1981, 51-63.

4 Mangrum, Scavizzi 1991, 19-20.

5 The etymology of the word *grotesca* was widely investigated during the Renaissance, at the point that it became a sort of hermeneutical device used by scholars to first understand, and later criticise, role and function of grotesques within art. Since the first attempts to identify its origins, scholars tended to link the signifier of the Italian word *grotesca*, which meant a specific type of paintings, with *grotta*, which was the environment in which these paintings were originally found. Albeit the first occurrence of the word, today dated back to year 1500 and found in the *Antiquarie prospettiche romane*, apparently demonstrates some kind of etymological awareness, alluding to a link between the paintings and the place in which they were rediscovered (v. 373: "Hor son spelonch'e ruinate grotte" and 380: "per essere più bizzarri alle grotesche"), its first explicit etymology is found in Philandrier 1544, 228 ("Picture genus Italis dictas grotescas, credo quod in terra obrutis veterum aedificiorum fornicibus, quas Grottas, quasi Cryptas appellant, primum invenerint"), where *grotta* and *grotesca* were connected to the Latin term *crypta*. This pattern was expanded in following years, for example by Pirro Ligorio, who connected these forms to the Greek κρυπτή (hidden) and γρόνη (cavernous), see Acciarino 2018, 108: "Grotta, dunque, viene dal nome greco per voce corrotta da' vulgari usata, perché in due modi l'usano scrivere, ΚΡΥΠΤΗ, onde i latini *crypta*, che deriva dalla voce ΚΡΥΠΤΑΛΙΟΣ o vero ΚΡΥΠΤΑΔΙΟΣ, che suona a noi occulto o riposto luogo o segreto, donde il verbo ΚΡΥΠΤΩ o ΚΡΥΠΤΥΨΩ, che suona nel latino *ABSCONDO*, *locus secretum*, o vero *habeo arcanum teneo*, là onde nella nostra ci significa ascondo et nascondo, per cosa segreta o ascosa e occulta. Altri la fanno venire dalla voce ΓΡΩΝΗ, ch'è foramine, luogo scavato et speco, come in tal parola detta fu da Nicandro, dicendo egli ἐνιγρόνην ἄν' ἔαυσαν μύδοκοις [Nicand. *Theriac.* 795], che non è altro a dire che forame et speco et grotta et spelunca. ὁ σπήλαιον κοίλη πέτρα, ὅπη τῆς πέτρας διῆς τὰ σχοινία πρὸς τὴν τῶν νεῶν στάσιν ἠφαλίζοντο [Aelian. *VH* 13.1.30; Hesych. γ 965], in maniera, dunque, grotta non è altro che luogo segreto et sicuro, o di fabrica o di pietra scavata, perforata et posta in qualche uso et fatta per addito, et luogo fatto nella parte bassa della casa et per ripostorio

vergence creates a perfect (and unexpected) bond between the two movements developing simultaneously during the Renaissance: grotesques in ornamental art and iconoclasm in worship.

Since its origins, Christianity has had a controversial and unstable relationship with imagery.⁶ This is in part due to two contrasting tendencies in its ideology: one deriving from its Jewish roots that forbade any kind of representation of the divine; the other deriving from its Gentile legacy which instead made ample use of images of the gods for its cults. This inherited tension produced an extensive and abundant literature on the matter throughout the centuries. This often engendered reformations of style and iconography based on a changing ideal of appropriateness; at times it resulted in the destruction of statues and other types of figurative representation. Tertullian, Lactantius, and Bernard of Clairvaux are just some of the most eminent authorities involved in this long-lasting debate. They greatly influenced the nature of sacred art and inspired later religious re-

et per tempio, o per luogo e fondo di una nave, et fatto sotto delli alberghi per commodità". Ulisse Aldrovandi noticed affinity between the Italian noun *grotta* and the Dutch verb *crupen* (to creep), also drawing connections with Hebrew and Aramaic; see Acciarino 2018, 94-5: "la grotta è una caverna, o vero una volta sotto terra in qualche monte escavata detta dalli greci κρυπτή, dal verbo κρύπτειν che significa occultare, quasi che dicessi occulta o vero loco occulto. Dal qual verbo greco gli Barbanti dicono crupen, che vuol dire andare carponi, rampare per terra, imperoché quelli che cercano di occultarsi pare che vogliono andare in groppone, et spesse volte, quando vogliono nascondersi nelle spelonche et caverne, sono sforzati andare con le mani et piedi per terra, et così andare (come si dice) in gattone, il che fa argomento che le grotte sono basse. Questo nome grotta è formato da κρυπτή cangiando il cappa nella sua media gamma et mutando l'ypsilon (che secondo i più dotti si deve pronunciare non come *i*, ma come la *u* appresso francesi) in *o*, il π in *t*, sì come in tutte le voci volgari si vede farsi, come da *scriptum* latino 'scritto', et βαπτισμός 'battesimo', et così formaremo da κρυπτή *γροττα 'grotta'. [...] Da gli Hebrei è detta la grotta מְהָרָה (meharah), il qual nome vogliono alcuni che deriva dal verbo infinito עָרוּה (haroth), che significa dinudare, perché la spelonca over grotta sia in luoco denudato et voto; il che mostra che sia inetta alla pittura essendo priva della luce, non potendo vedere gli colori se non per mezzo del lume del sole o del fuoco. 'Haroth' non solamente è verbo, come habbiamo detto, ma nome del numero del più de עָרָה (harah), che significa loco pieno di verdura et gramigne, da' latini chiamato *graminetum*, di modo che 'haroth' dinotarà *gramineta*, cioè luochi di gramigna et herbe verdeggianti adorni. Però alcuni per questo vocabulo vogliono che si intenda le rive de' fiumi, per causa della nudità et cavità che per l'onde sono di sotto escavate, ma di sopra con bellissime herbe vestite, sì come veggiamo alcune volte le fontane ave, che mostrano una bellissima verdura". Aldrovandi also proposed to rename grotesques with a different term coming from Greek language, τερατογραφία to focus on their monstrous essence, even if it was not compatible with their meaning, because monsters existed in nature, but grotesques did not; see Acciarino 2018, 93: "Aristofane chiama la pittura mostruosa τερατογραφία, dal verbo Greco τερατογραφέω, che significa dipingere mostri over cose mostruose. Questo vocabolo τερατογραφία converrebbe giustamente alle pitture stravaganti, che hoggi con uso cioè moderno nome sono chiamate grotesche, percioché sono pitture veramente mostruose, anzi più che mostruose non havendo corrispondenza con le cose istesse, come di sopra habbiamo accennato, ma le mostruose hanno per corrispondenza i mostri istessi, da' quali sono state ritratte".

6 Bettetini 2006; Lingua 2006, 27-80.

formers such as John Wycliff, the Lollards, Jan Huss, Bernardino da Siena, and Girolamo Savonarola.⁷

In the early modern period visual art became not only a fundamental tool to investigate and understand creation, but also an instrument to help idealise and imagine the spiritual universe. It was just a matter of time before this influenced the Reformation. Protestant ideas in this regard combined the traditional critique against figurative art (drawn by Sacred Scripture and patristic texts) with the abuses denounced in Luther's 95 theses. As a result, throughout the entire sixteenth century the removal of images and the issue of idolatry became battlefields where Catholics and Protestants engaged each other in an effort to promote and re-establish doctrine and a liturgy of the Primitive Church.⁸

Grotesques were never explicitly mentioned by Protestants or Catholics in any of these polemics, at least until the end of the sixteenth century. As far as written sources are concerned, it appears that Protestants did not take this ornamental style into consideration at all in their attacks against imagery. However, grotesques ended up entering into Protestant polemics against images 'naturally'. This was because of their widespread presence in almost all decorated buildings of the time, including churches. It is thus reasonable to assume that, even if Protestants did not directly address their critique against decorations of this type, their rhetoric could also be construed by Catholics as an attack on grotesques, which were present and visible in Catholic imagery (especially in Italy).⁹

7 Palmer Wandel 1995, 38; Boespflug, Fogliadini 2017.

8 Scavizzi 1981, 130-43.

9 Some convergences among the iconoclastic tendencies of the Reformation and the polemics against the grotesques, which contributed to anger the reaction against the Renaissance rebirth of Pagan art (Saxl 1939, 346-67; Wind 1957; Gombrich 1975, Monfasani 1992, 45-61; Warburg 1999; Godwin 2002; Bull 2005), could be found in several literary sources of the first half of the sixteenth century; see e.g. Catharinus 1542, 61-73 especially 64, or the letter of Olaus Magnus bishop of Uppsala dated 8 June 1552 on the decorations of cardinal Marcello Crescenzi's palace in Rome (Hipler-Zakrzewski 1886, 211: "Doleo super certis abusibus illius cardinalis, quos admisit fieri Romae. Vidi enim in palatio eius, dum floreret, super ianuas eius spectra, faunos, satyras et nudarum imagines mulierum [...] sed forsitan haec sunt gentilium antiquitatum, ut habetur in bella videre Belvedere, in quo nullus securior est quam caecus", also in Roggero 1969, 153 fn. 18), as well as the interesting analysis of the vocabulary related to images and their doctrinal meaning in Protestant contexts given by Flacius 1567, 543-4, where images and likenesses were deemed as unfaithful dreams and groundless projections of imagination ("Longe alia igitur significatio est, cum imago pro rebus imaginaries, aut evanidis crebro usurpantur, cuius significationis exempla adscribi non est opus. Ab hac vero significatione venit, quod saepe res existentes ob suam levitatem imago dicuntur, sicut Latini somnium hominis, pro nihil homine dicere solent"). Also interesting in this regard are the two dedicatory letters by Giovanni Francesco Pico della Mirandola for the two editions of his poem *De Venere et Cupidine expellendis*, addressed respectively to Lilio Gregorio Giraldi and to Konrad Peutinger. These letters

In humanistic circles, grotesques stimulated a heated debate among those who sought to understand their nature and function within art, whether their figurations carried any symbolic, hidden, or arcane meanings, or whether they could be dismissed simply as deceitful images, as maintained by classical sources such as Vitruvius and Horace. In this regard, some of the positions advanced on the Reformation side of the debate on images aligned with those used in the debate on grotesques, creating unexpected reactions against this artistic category on the Catholic side. Curiously enough, this outburst of Protestant polemics against images coincided with the universal diffusion of grotesques in Renaissance art. In fact, just a few years before Karlstadt's book, Raphael completed the decorations of the Vatican Loggias (1516-19) with a series of grotesques. This would go on to become one of the most famous and renowned examples of this style during the Renaissance.¹⁰

described the ancient statues placed in the Belvedere Garden as Pagan abnormalities not acceptable anymore in Christian times, the imagery of which evoked that of the grotesques (see Pico 1513a, vv. 187-96: "Linquite fallacem Babylona, relinquite molles | Illius illecebres permistaque mella veneno. | Huc etenim nimium nimiumque nocentia monstra | Migravere truces Scyllaeque et Gorgones, atque | Harpyiae in mediis posuere sedilia templis. | Nec non quae Atlantem olim, et quae Titana parentem | Agnorunt, artis nec dedicere vetustas, | Semiferaeque etiam caprearum rupe recentis | Mutavere domos Babylonis, et aurea tecta | atque super sacra sidunt Acheloides aede"). According to recent studies (Piana 2020), the letter to Giraldo pointed out that this imagery had a negative influence on the spectators, who were deceived by their imagination and transformed into animals (Pico 1513a, *Ep.*: "Nam bruta esse iis in locis non parum multa dicuntur ac bellvas cum notas tum ignotas per hosce colles expatiantur, Ianiculum aliquas, aliquanto plures colles, caeteros: at Vaticanum et plurimas alere et ingenteis, | quarum id insitutum, | ut nisi flante Zephyro mansuescant. Cunctum habentur veluti cicures ipsis esse omnino ferociores. Quod genus bruti nec Aristoteli nec Aeliano nec Cnidio Ctesiae copertum: Novisse id aliqua ex parte Magnum Albertum: sed non prodidisse nondum eius satis explorata natura: Nec enim ferae illius tempestatis tam noxi[e] tamque efferate degebant vitam"), establishing a parallel with the enchantress Circe and her cave in which Ulysses' crew was transformed into pigs (Pico 1513a, *Ep.*: "Nec te admiratio nedum stupor teneat tot in bellvas homines trasformatos: quando iis in oris non unica solum est Circe ternaque Siren sed sirenum solisque filiarum Myriaden numerares bene plane integram"); in the letter to Peutinger, he underlined the fragmentary aspect of these artworks, which signified the victory of the light emanated by true religion against the darkness of the false gods (Pico 1513b, *Ep.*: "Sed sane eo in simulacro simul et artificii ingenium licebat suspicere: et simul admirari vanae superstitionis tenebras verae luce religionis ita fugatas, ut nec ipsorum Deorum imagines nisi truncae, fractae et pene prorsus evanidae spectarentur").

10 For a general overview on Raphael's Loggias, see Edwards 1989; Nasselrath 1984; Dacos 1986; 1988; Torriti 2014; Lapraik Guest 2015, 536-51; Karafel 2016; Zamperini 2019.

This Old Testament injunction was corroborated by several examples in the New Testament, where passages from Paul's letters were used to demonstrate the absolute convergence between the Old and the New Law on the use of images in liturgy. This was especially evident in 2 Cor. 5:16, which specified: "itaque nos ex hoc neminem novimus secundum carnem et si cognovimus secundum carnem Christum sed nunc iam non novimus". In this light, if the understanding of Christ was impossible through the human senses - tied irreparably to a material dimension (that is, the flesh) - images in religious contexts lost any actual function, becoming only a deceitful device fostering idolatry.¹³

This led to a more significant and impactful conclusion: that images were no longer considered suitable for teaching religion:

Dieweil nun dye bilder stum | vnd taub seind | konden weder sehen noch horen. weder lernen oder leren. vnd deuten | auff nichts anders dan vff lauter vnd blos fleisch | das nicht nutz ist. Volget vestiglich. das sie nicht nutz seind. Aber das wortt gottis ist geystlich | vnd allein den glaubigen nutze.

By affirming that "images are deaf and dumb, can neither see nor hear, neither learn nor teach and point to nothing other than pure and simple flesh which is of no use", and that "the Word of God is spiritual and alone is of use to the faithful",¹⁴ Karlstadt targeted one of the strongest criteria for the admissibility of images in churches and cults ever developed on the Catholic side: the *Biblia pauperum* or Bible for the poor or illiterate.¹⁵ Its acknowledged creator was Pope Gregory I (r. 590-604), who formulated this theory in a pastoral letter of ca. 599 to Bishop Serenus of Marseille (*PL* 77, 1128 C), stating that it is one thing to worship a painting, another thing to teach through paintings what should be worshipped. In fact, a painting presents to an illiterate person what a text transmits to a reader, since people who do not know how to read could understand and actually 'read' what should be followed.¹⁶

¹³ Mangrum, Scavizzi 1991, 6-11.

¹⁴ Karlstadt 1522, 24-5; Mangrum, Scavizzi 1991, 27.

¹⁵ Nellhouse 1991; Corsi 1995.

¹⁶ Gregory's letter to Serenus was included in the *Decretum Gratiani* and circulated in its many editions with glosses published along the Renaissance. It was placed in book III [*De consecratione*] distinctio III canon xxvii [*De imaginibus sanctorum non violandis*]: "Perlatum ad nos fuerat, quod inconsiderate zelo succensus sanctorum imagines sub hac quasi excusatione, ne adorari debuissent, confregeris. Et quidem, quia eas adorari uetuisset, omnino laudauimus, fregisse uero reprehendimus. Dic, frater, a quo factum sacerdote aliquando auditum quod fecisti? Aliud est enim picturam adorare, aliud per picturae historiam quid sit adorandum addiscere. Nam quod legentibus

To undermine this deeply rooted justification, Karlstadt focused on two main aspects of Christian doctrine extrapolated from the Scriptures.¹⁷ On the one hand, he wanted to re-establish the superiority of the word (*logos*) over the image (*eikona*), because transposing

scriptura, hoc idiotis praestat pictura cernentibus, quia in ipsa etiam ignorantes vident quid sequi debeant, in ipsa legunt qui litteras nesciunt. Unde et praecipue gentibus pro lectione pictura est". However, according to its glosses, the passage could bare a two-fold meaning. At the beginning, Gregory seems to praise the prohibition of adoration of sacred images, but at the same time he blames their destruction; see e.g., *Decret. Gratian.* 1612, 2147-8: "Casus: Severus [*sic*] episcopus sanctorum imagines vetuit adorari, et ira motus eas fregit, unde Gregorius eum commendat, quia eas vetuit adorari, sed redarguit eum, quia eas fregit. Nam quod facit scriptura legentibus, hoc faciunt imagines et picturae illiteratis. *Laudavimus*] Hic colligitur, quod intentio approbetur, reprobatur tamen ipsum factum, [...] Item est argumentum quod in uno facto potest reprobari quiddam, et aliud approbari". Canon xxvii is strictly connected with the following two canons xxviii [*Imagines sactorum memoria sunt et recordatio praeteritorum*] and xxix [*Non in agni sed in hominis specie Christus est figurandus*]. Canon xxviii expanded the memorial and historical function of sacred images: "Venerabiles imagines Christiani non deos appellant, neque seruiunt eis, ut diis, neque spem salutis ponunt in eis, neque ab eis expectant futurum iudicium: sed ad memoriam et recordationem primitiuorum uenerantur eas et adorant, sed non seruiunt eis cultu diuino, nec alicui creaturae", also through the glosses, which established a distinction between *latría* / λατρεία (supreme veneration of God) and *dulia* / δουλεία (veneration dedicated to the saints); see *Decret. Gratian.* 1612, 2149: "Casus: quaesitum fuit quare Christiani uenerentur imagines et picturas, cum deitatem in eis esse non credant, nec spem salutis in eis ponant. Et responderetur, quod hoc faciunt in memoriam sanctorum et ad recordationem primitiuorum olim factorum, id est, rerum gestarum. *Et adorant*] s. prox. c. contra. Sed aliud est adorare latría, quod ibi prohibetur, aliud *dulia*, quod hic permittitur. *Cultu*] scilicet latría, in qua tria exiguntur, charitas dilectionis, et multitudo sacrificorum, et ueneratio. In *dulia* uero unum solum, scilicet ueneratio; et in hoc sensu possumus quamlibet rem sacram adorare, idest uerentiam exhibere". Canon xxix instead touches an issue of iconography, establishing that Christ should be represented only through a human figure, and not through symbols, i.e., the lamb: "Sextam sanctam sinodum recipio cum omnibus canonibus suis, in quibus dicitur: In quibus scripturis sanctarum imaginum agnus precursoris digito ostensus depingitur, qui in figuram transit gratiae, uerum nobis per legem Moysi premonstrans agnum Iesum Christum Dominum nostrum [*Ex.* 12:1-14]. Antiquis ergo figuris et umbris, ad ueritatis prefigurationem ecclesiae sanctae traditis, uale dicentes, gratiam et ueritatem preferimus, et sicut plenitudinem legis recipimus. Verum igitur agnum Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum secundum imaginem humanam amodo etiam in imaginibus pro ueteri agno depingi iubemus". This last article is particularly significant in terms of admissibility of symbols in sacred art, in that it excludes all non-human figures to depict Christ. As it emerges from the glosses, this statement attempts to overturn John Chrysostom's claim that Christ were to be portrayed as a lamb [*Chrysost. Catech.* 3.13-19]; see *Decret. Gratian.* 1612, 2149: "Casus: Quia Ioannes Chrysostomum demonstrans ait: ecce agnus Dei, ideo quidam pingebant Christum sub specie agni, uerum quia umbra mortis transiuit, et Christus uerus homo, in forma humana debemus ipsum depingere"; on this issue, see Agustín 1587b, 73: "C. Sextam sactam synodum recipio cum omnibus canonibus suis, in quibus dicitur: in quibus scripturis sanctarum imaginum. A. Scripturis positum est pro picturis, est enim hoc caput XXCIII Trullianum, in quo est, ἐν τισι τῶν σεπτῶν εἰκότων γραφαῖς [*Conc. Oecum. Nicen. Secund. (787)* 81.9]". Canon xxvii was also used to comment upon John of Damascus's works, especially on orthodox faith IV. 17 [*De sancto- rum imaginibus*]; see Billy 1577, 323^b-324^b.

¹⁷ Mangrum, Scavizzi 1991, 9-12.

God's message in images would have meant converting it into a different semiotic vehicle, thereby distorting the original sense of the message. On the other hand, the use of images to teach Scripture meant that the clergy and laity were not equally placed; the former had some sort of pre-eminence over the latter, and this would break the unity of Christianity itself, creating two categories of the faithful: one that could directly access the message of salvation and another that instead was subjected to false rituals:

Bildnis seind der Leyhen bucher | alß hette er gesprochen. Die Leihen sollen kein Junger Christi sein | sollen auch nymer frey werden vons teuffels panden | sollen auch nit in gotlich vnd Christlich weßen kumen.¹⁸

Karlstadt's positions were clear: "saying that likenesses are the books of the laity is precisely the same as saying that the laity ought not to be disciples of Christ, should never be free from the bonds of the Devil and should also not enter into godly and Christian life". The influence of his words can be found mostly in reformed environments, where he had a powerful impact on the ensuing debate on images and idolatry. It gave birth to a tradition of works by both Catholics and Protestants that either aligned with or contradicted his ideas.¹⁹

The first response is perhaps one of the most meaningful. It was written in German in 1522 by the Catholic apologist Hieronymus Emser who, in his *Das man der heyligen Bilder yn den Kirken nit abthon, noch unheren soll. Und das sie in der Schriff nyndert verboten seyn*, literally explained the reasons why images should not be removed from churches and other religious buildings, should not be dishonoured, and were not forbidden in Scripture.²⁰ In Emser's view, images were allowed for three main reasons: first, because served as a reminder

18 Karlstadt 1522, 9; Mangrum, Scavizzi 1991, 27-8.

19 After *Von Abtuhung der Bylder*, the works published in sequence are the following: a short Latin treatise by Johannes Eck on the same topic (1522); Luther's eight sermons *Invocavit* (1522) and his *Widder die hymmelischenn Propheten, von den Bildern und Sacrament* (1525), in which he opposed iconoclastic positions and proposed a judicious use of images together with a reformation of iconography; Johannes Stumpf's collection of sermons (1523) and Huldrych Zwingli's *Vorschlag wegen der Bilder und der Messe* (1524) that is, literally, proposal concerning images and the Mass; up until Jean Calvin's chapter XI of the first book of his *Institutio Christianae Religionis* (1536) and Heinrich Bullinger's *De origine erroris* (1539), especially the chapter IX. *De deorum falsorum religionibus et simulachrorum cultu erroneo* [Bullinger 1539, 38^a-42^a]. For further Protestant positions, it was later re-proposed in Flacius 1569, 12.863.16. For a Catholic response in the first half of the sixteenth century, see Scavizzi 1981, 130-53.

20 Mangrum, Scavizzi 1991, 41-88; Emser 1522.

and kept track of events; second, because they could teach illiterate people, according to the scheme of the *Biblia pauperum*; and, third, because they inspired faith in the observer.²¹

Of course, Emser had to admit that images were occasionally misused, specifically in the iconography of the Virgin Mary and the saints.²² He attributed the origin of this misapplication to the Devil, who created a series of deceitful idols with the intent of being worshipped in place of the real God (“Den missbrauch dises obgenanten und and heydischen bilder | hat der teuffel im selber gotliche Herz zu zuzihen | angericht”).²³ In addition, Emser stated that “these pagan images and idols through which the Devil is invoked, and God is robbed of his divine honour, are an abomination before God and have been condemned not only by the canonical Scripture but also by wise and intelligent pagans themselves”.²⁴

Dise heidische bild und abgoet | darinnen der tauffel angeruffen | und Got seyn Goetliche her entfromdet wirt | sint ein grewel vor Got | unnd nit alleyn von der Canonischen schrift | sonder | ouch von den clugen und weysen Heyden selber vornicht worden.

Karlstad, Emser and all their followers had precise targets in mind when they formulated their respective attacks or attempted defences of the *status quo*. They referred mostly to statues and licentious paintings, but also in more general terms to artworks and furnishings that distracted people’s attention from the Word of God or endangered the administration and reception of the liturgy.²⁵

If all these debates are considered retrospectively, they are perfectly compatible with the critique on grotesques advanced in the second half of the sixteenth century in Catholic environments: the deceitful nature of images, the impossibility of teaching or transmitting a message through them, and the veneration of infernal divinities. Given the above, one can further extrapolate that the attacks against grotesques developed during the Counter-Reformation came about as a direct consequence of the Protestant polemics against images.

21 Mangrum, Scavizzi 1991, 12-14.

22 Mangrum, Scavizzi 1991, 14.

23 Mangrum, Scavizzi 1991, 46.

24 Mangrum, Scavizzi 1991, 51.

25 Simpson 2002, 383-457.

9.3 Counter-Reformation and Images

Even if sporadic attempts to oppose the growing iconoclastic impulses developing in Protestant regions can be seen during this time, no official Catholic response emerged prior to the decrees on invocation, veneration of the relics of Saints, and the sacred images (*de invocatione, veneratione et reliquiis sanctorum et sacris imaginibus*) promulgated by the Council of Trent in 1563.²⁶ The Tridentine pronouncements sought to restore the honour of figurative art in Christian cults and worship, adopting the traditional arguments that sacred art promoted memory, learning, and faith. These decrees also encouraged an improvement to the iconography to help increase the effectiveness of the images and reinforce the reasons for their use – “in such wise that no images, (suggestive) of false doctrine, and furnishing occasion of dangerous error to the uneducated, be set up”.²⁷

The Tridentine decrees set the ground rules for the bishops to re-interpret images; they did not, however, discuss specific cases, thereby leaving bishops free to apply the regulations as they saw fit for their dioceses. Guidelines, however, soon followed. The first work that gave a series of concrete examples for what should and should not be depicted in sacred art was composed by the Flemish scholar and theologian Jan Vermeulen (1533-85), also known as Johannes Molanus. In 1570 he published *De Picturis et Imaginibus Sacris*, a treatise on the correct use of images that sought to give shape to the Council’s more general procla-

²⁶ In the first half of the sixteenth century, Catholic polemicists did not give a systematic response on the issue of veneration of images. Among the most eminent figures of the catholic side, worthy of mention are Erasmus and Alberto Pio da Carpi, Ambrosius Catharinus and Konrad Braun, and of course the discussions carried out at the Colloquy of Poissy, which were capable to deeply influence the outcome at the Council of Trent. In this regard, see Jedin 1935; Alberigo 1958, 239-98; Roggero 1969; Firpo 2010; Noyes 2013; Prodi, 2014; Pigozzi 2015; Firpo, Biferali 2016; Hecht 2016, 30-70.

²⁷ *Concilium Tridentinum*, session XXV (3-4 December 1563) [*De invocatione, veneratione et reliquiis sanctorum et de sacris imaginibus*]: “In has autem sanctas et salutaris observationes si qui abusus irrepserint: eos prorsus aboleri sancta Synodus vehementer cupit ita ut nullae falsi dogmatis imagines et rudibus periculosi erroris occasionem praebentes statuatur. [...] Quodsi aliquando historias et narrationes Sacrae Scripturae cum id indoctae plebi expediet exprimi et figurari contigerit: doceatur populus non propterea divinitatem figurari quasi corporeis oculis conspici vel coloribus aut figuris exprimi possit. Omnis porro superstitione in sanctorum invocatione reliquiarum veneratione et imaginum sacro usu tollatur omnis turpis quaestus eliminetur omnis denique lascivia vitetur ita ut procaci venustate imagines non pingantur nec ornentur; et sanctorum celebratione ac reliquiarum visitatione homines ad commessiones atque ebrietates non abutantur quasi festi dies in honorem sanctorum per luxum ac lasciviam agantur. Postremo tanta circa haec diligentia et cura ab episcopis adhibeatur ut nihil inordinatum aut praepostere et tumultuarie accommodatum nihil profanum nihil que inhonestum appareat cum domum Dei deceat sanctitudo. Haec ut fidelius observentur statuit sancta Synodus nemini licere ullo in loco vel Ecclesia etiam quomodolibet exempta ullam insolitam ponere vel ponendam curare imaginem nisi ab episcopo approbata fuerit”.

mations. It also referred to the former tradition of treatises on art and iconography stemming from humanistic circles and to the strong iconoclastic tensions that had erupted in previous decades in Protestant areas.

Molanus never mentioned grotesques openly in his work, despite occasionally alluding to their ornamental figurations. He referred, for example, to those mysterious hieroglyphs of the ancient Egyptians (“aenigmata pingebant Aegyptij”) that were often associated with the enigmatic print of grotesques after the fifteenth century discovery of Horapollo and Hermes Trismegistus.²⁸ Molanus stated that these depictions had never been admitted in ecclesiastical contexts (“Numquam item Ecclesia approbabit Aegyptiorum morem”) because they could serve as idols of the pagan gods (“inter Aegyptios, quosdam aenigmatum artifices qui idolis serviebant”). In fact, if hieroglyphs were considered to be profane idols bearing some kind of obscure meaning, then they should be excluded from Christian temples.

In chapter 30, entitled *Prophana non esse sacris intermiscenda, nec in templis, nec in monasterijs*, Molanus connects the exclusion of profane iconography from churches or sacred buildings with the pronouncements of the Council. This openly recalls the words of the decrees stating that nothing profane or indecent should appear, because only sanctity is appropriate in the house of God. Such a statement in fact was against those who mixed the sacred with the profane in churches.²⁹ Molanus concluded this discussion by quoting Bernard of Clairvaux’s famous invective against the strange figures (*curiosas depictiones*) that were ubiquitous in medieval monasteries:³⁰

Quid [in claustris] facit illa ridiculosa monstrositas, mira quaedam deformis formositas, ac formosa deformitas? Quid ibi immundae simiae? Quid feri leones? Quid monstrosi centauri? Quid semihomines? Quid maculosae tigrides? Quid milites pugnantes? Quid venatores tubicinantes? Videas sub uno capite corpora mul-

²⁸ Molanus 1570, 3^p.

²⁹ Molanus 1570, 62^b-63^a: “Nihil prophanum, nihiloque inhonestum appareat cum domum Dei deceat sanctitudo: contra eos, qui in Ecclesijs prophana sacris admiscunt”. The bibliography on Molanus’s work is limited, one can rely mainly on Hecht 2016, especially 287-99 and Freedberg 1971, 229-45.

³⁰ Molanus 1570, 63^b-64^a. The passage of Bernard’s *Apologia ad Guillelmum Abbatem*, chapter XII. *Luxum et abusum in templis et oratorijs exstruendis, ornandis, pingendis, arguit* [PL 182 0916A-B] cited by Molanus is anticipated by a reference to Ps. 25:8 (“Domine dilexi decorem domus tuae et locum habitationis gloriae tuae”), which very much recalled Karlstadt’s beginning of his iconoclastic pamphlet. Even if Molanus probably used this reference to attack grotesques in churches, Bernard invective was generally evoked to attack excessive decorations of churches, as it emerges from the use that other scholars made of it, for example in the Magdeburg Centuries (Flacius 1569, 864 [XII.6. DE CEREMONIIS – *Quae contenta in templis*]), or in other treatises on sacred art and architecture (see Paleotti 1582, 237^b; Hospinianus 1603, 42; Junius 1694, 148).

ta, et rursus in uno corpore capita multa. Cernitur hinc in quadrupede cauda serpentis, illinc in pisce caput quadrupedis. Ibi bestia praefert equum, capram trahens retro dimidiam, hic cornutum animal equum gestat posterius. Tam multa denique, tamque mira diversarum formarum ubique varietas apparet, ut magis legere libeat in marmoribus, quam in codicibus: totumque diem occupare singula ista mirando, quam in lege Dei meditando.

Bernard asked himself: why is this ridiculous monstrosity represented [in cloisters], this marvellous deformed beauty or beautiful deformity? Why are foul monkeys found here? Why fierce lions? Why horrific centaurs? Why half-men? Why speckled tigers? Why soldiers in battle? Why hunters sounding their horns? You see many bodies under one head and again one body with many heads. You can see on one side a four-legged-animal with a snake as a tail, on the other side the head of a four-legged-animal on a fish. Here, a beast is half horse in the front and half goat in back; there, a horned animal gives birth to a horse. This surprising and rich variety of heterogeneous forms appears everywhere, so much so that people prefer to 'read' statues rather than books: they prefer to waste their time staring at these images rather than contemplate the Law of God's words helped Molanus give a precise shape to those 'mixed' figurations present in churches.

His detailed description reflected imagery comprised of dynamic figures. These combined vegetal, animal, and human features that, in the 1570s, inevitably evoked the usual iconographies of grotesques. However, beyond this significant coincidence, greater attention should be paid to his final statement, which suggested that these images distracted the faithful from Christian truth. Bernard's remark, though originally written in the twelfth century, echoed Karlstadt's polemic against the *Biblia pauperum* and Gregory the Great. It identified for the first time the deceitful images that were to be excluded from the canon so as to avoid confusing and ambiguous messaging.

Carlo Borromeo followed up this position by adding further details in his *Instructionum fabricae et suppellectilis ecclesiasticae libri duo*, a Counter-reformation work on images published in 1577. In chapter 17, *De sacris imaginibus picturisve*, Borromeo devoted several passages to the appropriateness of the imagery within religious environments.³¹ In the first section on what kind sacred images should be avoided and saved (*Quae in imaginibus sacris cavenda, quae rursus servanda sunt*), he set a first parameter in order to reject figurations from the iconographic system still in use during his time.³²

³¹ Borromeo 1577, 42-5.

³² Borromeo 1577, 42: "Praeterea sacris imaginibus pingendis sculpendisque, sicut nihil falsum, nihil incertum apocryphumve, nihil superstitiosum, nihil insolitum adhiberi

Borromeo reported that in painting and sculpting sacred images, nothing false, uncertain, apocryphal or superstitious must be displayed; and that everything profane, depraved or obscene, shameless or impudent must be avoided; similarly, everything unusual, which does not educate the people at devotion or can offend the minds of faithful, again, must be forbidden. Borromeo then specifically explained what should be excluded from the canon of sacred images. In the section on side-works and marginal apparatus for ornament (*De parergis et additamentis ornatus causa*), he issues his famous sentence on marginal decorations, thereby condemning the imagery that was typical of grotesques, though he does so without mentioning them explicitly.³³

Parerga, utpote quae ornatus causa imaginibus pictores sculptoresve addere solent, ne prophane sint, ne voluptaria, ne deliciose ne denique a sacra pictura abhorrentia, ut deformiter efficta capita humana quae *mascaroni* vulgo nominant, non aviculae, non mare, non prata virentia, non alia id generis, quae ad oblectationem deliciosumque prospectum atque ornatum effinguntur.

Borromeo thought that the *parerga* [accessories],³⁴ which painters or sculptors usually add to images as ornaments, should not depict any-

debet, ita quicquid prophanum, turpe vel obscaenum, inhonestum procacitatemve ostentans, omnino caveatur; et quicquid item curiosum, quodque non ad pietatem homines informet, aut quo fidelium mentes oculique offendi possint, prorsus vitetur item”.

33 Borromeo 1577, 44-5.

34 The definition ‘accessory’ is drawn from Passignat 2017, 428. Borromeo cites the term *parerga* (from the Greek πάρεργον), attributing to it the meaning of ‘marginal decoration’, and adds a rather broad number of iconographies that should be excluded from its imagery. The word πάρεργον is extensively attested in Greek literature, in Latin literature instead *parergum* is extremely rare. In order to understand Borromeo’s use of the term, one must consider its etymology, i.e., παρα-, implying an addition, and ἔργον meaning ‘work’ (also of art). Hesychius attributed to it a negative connotation, by defining it as something spurious or unnecessary (*Hesyc. Lex. π 847*: πάρεργον· νόθον, ὡς μικρόν τι τῶν ἀναγκαίων). In Latin, *parergum* is utilised as a technical term in the field of art in just one occasion, i.e., when Pliny reports that the painter Protogenes represented some ships in margin of a picture of Nausicaa (*Plin. nat. 35.10.36*: “adiecit parvas naves longas in iis, quae pictores parergia appellant”). Renaissance scholars were fully aware of this shift, as e.g., Vincenzo Borghini’s definition of *parerga*, attested in the so called *Selva di notizie* [Kunst. ms. K 783.16] dated approximately 1564; see Carrara 2000, 266: “Quae pictores parerga appellant etc. chiaman così quelle cose che sono per ornamento, ma fuori della historia, come città, fiumi, campagne, monti etc”. The Greek word was known during the Renaissance thanks to Guarinus Favorinus’s Greek *Thesaurus*, who cited Hesychius’s exact definition (Favorinus 1523, 413^b), and to Guillaume Budé’s *Commentaria* on Greek language, which connected it to Pliny, hence postulating the existence of painters specialised in the realisation of these decorations (Budé 1529, 710: “παρεργογραφεῖν ἐστὶν πάρεργα γράφειν καὶ ζωγραφεῖν. Sunt autem πάρεργα, quae praeter praecipuam et destinatam imaginem ornatus gratia adduntur, ut flores, ut arbores et similia, ut apud Plinium libro XXXV”).

thing related to nature (he mentions: birds, seas, green prairies, and in general anything that might seek to produce a pleasant landscape or delightful ornament) in order to be neither profane, nor voluptuous, neither luxurious nor abhorrent of sacred art, such as those human heads usually depicted that the people call *mascaroni* [big masks].³⁵

Budé created a first list of iconographies which recurred in the *parerga*, such as flowers, trees etc., and again, by relying on Pliny, he added also ships. This input was received by Robert Estienne's *Thesaurus* of Latin language, which appears to improve Budé's definition (Estienne 1531, 611^b: "PARERGVM, parergi, n.g. Quod alicui rei praeter propositum additur, ut si Pictor lunonem pingens, ornandae tabellae gratiae, arbusculas et aviculas, sive naves mariaque, aut aliquid aliud huiusmodi addiderit"). Borromeo clearly drew his statement on *parerga* from this latter author ("non aviculae, non mare, non prata virentia"), also combining it with the monstrosities and deformities typical of grotesques. The fact that *parerga* and *grottesche* were strongly linked in Renaissance perception of art – in light of their function and their aspect – is proven by the French translation of Pliny [*nat.* 35.10.36] Pinet 1566, 649: "et neantmois fit en la *Crottesque, de petites fustes, pour monstrer le petit commencement de son art. [*Parergon]". The term *crottesque* recalls inevitably Michelle de Montaigne's later (1580) passage of the *Essais* (1.28: "Que sont-ce icy aussi, à la vérité, que crottesques et corps monstrueux, rapiecez de divers membres, sans certaine figure, n'ayants ordre, suite ny proportion que fortuite?"). No Renaissance vernacular translation of Pliny goes that far in interpreting *parerga* (e.g. Landino 1476, [766]: "egli v'arrose picciole navi lunghe tra le cose, le quali e' pittori chiamano *parerga*, perché sono per ornamento"; and Holland 1634, 542: "he devised certain borders without, wherein hee painted among those byworks [which painters call *parerga*] certaine small gallies and little barkes"), but this is due to Antoine Du Pinet's translation technique, see Tomlinson 2012. It is important to notice that *πάρεργα* entered the artistic vocabulary only in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, again thanks to the mediation of Budé and Estienne, and perhaps also thanks to Du Pinet's mediation; see Vigenère 1578, 272^b: "Ny plus ne moins que les peintres parmy leurs ouvrages sont des perspectives, figures d'arbrisseaux, de bestions, vieilles ruines, et demolitions d'edifices, montaignes et valees; ebsemble tel autres accessoires et incidens, qui servent pour enrichir, et donner grace a leur besongne, et replir ce qui sans cela demourrot inutilement desnue et vuide, en danger d'offencer la veuë. Les Grecs les appellent *πάρεργα*, ou adioustemens supernumeraires, outre ce qui fait besoin".

35 The word *mascaroni* (or more commonly *mascheroni*) mentioned by Borromeo in this passage refers to the technical term meaning 'a sculpture or any other artwork representing a human or animal face as an ornament'. With this sense, it was used e.g. by Benvenuto Cellini (*Vita* XIX: "Era questo vaso ornato con dua bei manichi, con molte maschere piccole e grande, con molti bellissimoi fogliami, di tanta bella grazia e disegno, quanto immaginar si possa" [*GDLI*, 9: 865]) or by Giorgio Vasari (*Vite* [1550], *Intr.* I: "e fontane con teste di varie maschere intagliate con grandissima diligenza" [*GDLI*, 9: 865]). However, Borromeo confers to the word a negative connotation, implying that these ornamental masks were actual grotesques. This position is probably rooted in the idea that the mask as a decorative feature was an allegory of deception and falsity, e.g., the idiom 'dipingere le maschere' current in ancient Italian meant 'to lie' (see Luca Pulci's *Ciriffo Calvaneo* VII. 81.6: "Non vo' che più le maschere dipinga" [*GDLI*, 9: 868]). Parallely, if one considers that grotesques depicted dreamlike figures, which were considered false and deceiving as well (on grotesques as dreams see Zagory 2018a; 2018b), and not founded in any real model (see Lapraik Guest 2015, 257 and 276-7), the link between mask-shaped ornaments and grotesques intended as dreamlike images emerges clearly. This becomes explicit in the famous letter addressed by Annibal Caro to Taddeo Zuccari on 11 November 1562, in which the iconographic programme of Palazzo Farnese in Caprarola is described. Here, Caro says that Morpheus, one of the gods of sleep, should be portrayed in the act of making masks, re-interpreting a pas-

In Borromeo's view, *parerga* should feature only that which pertains appropriately to the sacred history represented.

If Borromeo's passages are read alongside those of Molanus, it becomes clear that Catholic apologists sought to weaken Protestant positions on imagery after the decrees of the Council of Trent. Attempting to break the Protestants' unity, they argued that not all images were deceptive or distracting – as Karlstadt and most of his followers suggested – but only those that did not conform to precise iconological patterns. In this light, images could still be included in Christian liturgy; however, Catholics needed to remove those that had been improperly used and preserve those that served their purposes (memory, education, inspiration) and safeguard them from future attacks.

9.4 The Counter-Reformation and Grotesques

Even if both Molanus and Borromeo alluded to those representations that were, in their words, enigmatic and undecipherable, hybrid and monstrous, false, uncertain, apocryphal, superstitious, profane, depraved, obscene, shameless, impudent, unusual and deceitful, a definitive scapegoat for Catholic figurative art was identified only in 1582 by Gabriele Paleotti in his *Discourse on Sacred and Profane Images*.³⁶

sage of Ovid [*met.* 11.631-47]; see Greco 1957-61, 3: 138: “Morfeo è chiamato da Ovidio artefice, e fingitor di figure, e però lo farei in atto di figurare maschere di variati mostacci, ponendoli alcune di esse a' piedi” and Frangipani 1869, 83: “Lungi dal suo letto vedesi Morfeo, portentoso fabbricatore di maschere, di che dicesi fosse l'inventore”. The word *mostaccio* utilised by Caro literally means ‘face’, sometimes with a negative sense. Caro's letter was certainly renowned in the last decades of the sixteenth century, in that it was published by Giorgio Vasari in his 1568 edition of the *Lives*, specifically in the one of *Taddeo Zuccherò*. The same passage of Ovid mentioning Morpheus is cited by Paleotti, in the attempt to prove that, if caves (*grotte*) were an allegory of night due to their darkness, then the paintings found in caves (*grottesche*) were comparable to false dreams (see Paleotti 1582, 231^b: “Al che si puotero muovere ancor per altra ragione, considerando essi che queste grotte per la loro opacità rappresentano a certo modo la notte et il luogo del sonno coi parti suoi, che sono aggramenti in aria, chimere, fantasmi e bizzarie molto stravaganti; onde finsero quella esser figlia del Chaos e moglie d'Erebo, e questo, tra una gran schiera de figli, averne tre principali, de' quali ciascuno si mutasse in varie forme, chi d'uomini, chi di fiere, d'ucelli, di serpenti, di sassi, di tronchi, et altre loro fantasie, come lascio scritto Ovidio dicendo: At pater e populo natorum mille suorum | Excitat artificem, simulatoremque figurae | Morphea, sed solos homines imitatur, et alter | Fit fera, fit volucris, fit longo corpore serpens: Hunc Icelon superi, mortale Phobetora vulgus | Nominat; est etiam diversae tertius artis | Phantasos: ille in humum saxumque undamque trabemque | Quaeque vacant anima, fallaciter omnia transit. | Regibus hi ducibusque suos estendere vultus | Nocte solent, populos alii plebemque pererrant”). See also Giraldis 1548, 431: “Primum Morphea, artificem simulatoremque figurae, μορφή quippe formam et figuram significat”. On the grotesque masks in Renaissance art and their negative reception, see Winkler 1986.

³⁶ For a general overview on Paleotti's role in Counter-Reformation art theory and his *Discorso*, see Bianchi 2008; Prodi 2014; Hecht 2016, 306-22; Morrison 2019.

It was here that grotesques (*grottesche*) appeared to embody all the negative aspects of art that should be excluded from the canon, both in sacred and profane contexts.³⁷

Paleotti devoted six chapters of the second book to this ornamental style (XXXVII-XLII) – the most extensive section of his treatise. This part is preceded by twelve chapters (XXV-XXXVI) in which he discussed single negative aspects of art. Here, he gradually deleted any features that required condemnation and a thorough reformation of others to not be censured. He indicated precise categories that were to be rejected and others that could be acceptable if aligned with certain fixed parameters. As indicated in his subsections, he focused on lying and false pictures [XXV], on nonverisimilar pictures [XXVI], on inept and indecorous pictures [XXVII], on disproportionate pictures [XXVIII], on imperfect pictures [XIX], on vain and otiose pictures [XXX], on ridiculous pictures [XXXI], On pictures that bring novelty and are unusual [XXXII], On pictures that are obscure and difficult to understand [XXXIII], On indifferent and uncertain pictures [XXXIV], on fierce and horrendous pictures [XXXV], on monstrous and prodigious pictures [XXXVI].³⁸ Grotesques seemed to embody all these imperfections simultaneously:

37 Paleotti took active part in the Council of Trent during the years 1562-64 (Prodi 1959, 121-92 and 1967, 527-36 where the genesis of his *Discorso* is dated back to 1578); this means that he could access directly the discussion on images (1563) and bear in mind the guidelines established during these sessions, from which he then developed his *Discourse* in line with the spiritual and political needs that emerged during the Council.

38 McCuaig 2012, viii. See Paleotti 1582, 172-221 [XXV. *Abusi communi alle pitture sacre et alle profane. E prima delle pitture bugiarde e false*]: “Questa falsità dunque potrà considerarsi in due modi, o perché l’immagine rappresenterà uno oggetto falso, o perché, essendo l’oggetto vero, ella lo figurerà falsamente”; 177-81 [XXVI. *Delle pitture non verisimili*]: “non verisimili si diranno quelle che repugnano non alla certezza, che non si sa, ma alla credenza e commune opinione che si ha delle persone o delle cose di quei luoghi”; 182-5 [XXVII. *Delle pitture inette et indecore*]: “ma intendiamo trattare di quello errore che si commette col non darsi alla condizione della persona quello che se li deve”; 185-8 [XXVIII. *Delle pitture sproportionate*]: “sproportionate saranno quelle [figure] che mancheranno di questa tacita intelligenza tra loro”; 188-90 [XXIX. *Delle pitture imperfette*]: “Diciamo dunque che si formano talora alcune opere che mancano o nelle parti sue integrali, o nel numero delle cose da esprimersi, o in altra circostanza necessaria”; 191-6 [XXX.* *Delle pitture vane et oziose*]: “chiamiamo in questo proposito vane quelle pitture che [...] né mirano cosa rilevante, ma solo a pascere gli occhi senza sodo frutto”; 196-202 [XXXI. *Delle pitture ridicole*]: “A queste pitture dunque, che peccano nei principii e fondamento dell’arte, talche non solo sono sconvenevoli, ma ancora causano deriso”; 202-9 [XXXII. *Delle pitture che apportano novità e sono insolite*]: “onde, quando si pecca in simili pitture, se bene il difetto e proprio della invenzione, che non figura la imagine come deve, si dimanda nondimeno errore dal tempo che si pubblica al popolo, perché inanzi non era conosciuto, e però si chiama peccato di novità rispetto agli occhi del popolo”; 209-13 [XXXIII. *Delle pitture oscure e difficili da intendere*]: “Così nella pittura, chi possederà bene e fondatamente quello che e per ritrarre, e saperà il fine a che e ordinato quel misterio, o a che mira quella figura, non e dubbio che lo porgerà molto più chiaramente, e con maggiore espressione per le particolarità che vi inserirà, che non farà un altro poco intendente”; 213-15 [XXXIV. *Delle pitture*].

Se ciascuno dei difetti discorsi in questo trattato in varij capi deprime assai la dignità di quest'arte, che avverrà in questa sorte d'opera, dove tutti insieme o la maggiore parte d'essi concorrono, non potendosi chiamare simili pitture se non bugiarde, inette, vane, imperfette, inverisimili, sproorzionate, oscure e stravaganti? Per tal causa scrive Philone, come altrove abbiamo detto, che Moisè scacciò dalla sua republica li artefici di statue e pitture che con bugie corrompessero la verità.³⁹

Paleotti affirmed that “if each of the defects discussed in various chapters of this treatise greatly lowers the dignity of this art, what will be upshot of this kind of work [i.e. grotesques], in which all, or the greater part of them come together? What else can one call such pictures but lying, inept, vain, imperfect, nonverisimilar, disproportionate, obscure, and extravagant?”⁴⁰ This position is perfectly in line with Renaissance critiques on the grotesques that began almost from their re-discovery in the Domus Aurea (ca. 1479) and continued throughout the entire sixteenth century. Pomponio Gaurico (1504 and 1531), Guillaume Philandrier (1544), and Daniele Barbaro (1556 and 1567) are some of the most significant figures who questioned these decorations with the aim of rejecting any anti-naturalistic or irrational figuration from the artistic canon.⁴¹

re indifferenti et incerte: “Si trovano anco pitture che per altra ragione rendono confusione a molti, e ciò nasce perché si veggono diversamente fatte in varii luoghi, onde lo spettatore, trovando questa diversità, sta sospeso tra sé se sia il medemo soggetto, o se questo o quello sia falso”; 215-17 [XXXV. *Delle pitture fiere et orrende*]: “in quelle che chiamiamo orrende, perché esprimono senza alcun fine virtuoso certi atti che la natura degli uomini aborrisce”; 217-21 [XXXVI. *Delle pitture monstruose e prodigiose*]: “Questi mostri dalla natura diciamo che si possono dipingere, pero con occasione quando ricerchi così il soggetto che s’ha per le mani; et allora non solo non averanno deformità, ma più tosto commendazione, per rappresentare la verità di quello che è stato”.

³⁹ Paleotti 1582, 235^a.

⁴⁰ McCuaig 2012, 274

⁴¹ Pomponio Gaurico never mentioned the word *grotesche* in his works, but apparently refers to the imagery proper of grotesques in Gaurico 1504, [13] (see also Chastel, Klein 1969, 16, 60-3, 246) and in Gaurico 1541, [3]. See Philandrier 1544, 228 (and the French edition Lemerle 2000), Barbaro 1556, 187-8 and Barbaro 1567, 242-4 (the former is the Italian edition, the latter the Latin one), and Gilio 1564, 75^a-77^a (also published in Barocchi 1961, 1: 305-7). For a general overview on the Renaissance literature about grotesques, see Barocchi 1977, 3: 2621-98.

Paleotti's originality can be found, however, in his final statement where he attempted to overturn the very strict Mosaic condemnation of images (*Ex. 20:4-5*)⁴² – he said: “this was the reason, as Philo

42 Paleotti had the chance to discuss this passage of the Old Testament in bk. I ch. XIII [*Che cosa siano idoli, simulacri, sculptili et altri simili nomi*], see Paleotti 1582, 42^b-45^a. His intent was to mitigate the restrictions that could be drawn by the Scripture in terms of images and idolatry by enlarging its interpretation. This entire passage is founded on Origenes's homilies (Origen. *Hom. Ex. 6.217-23*) and annotations on Exodus (*PG 17.16-17*), in which it was stated that not all images had the same value, establishing a duality between εἶδωλον (*idol*) and ὁμοίωμα (*likeness*) – Paleotti had in mind its Latin translation carried out by Jerome and published during the Renaissance in several editions, included Origenes 1503, 41^a [VIII]: “Non facies tibi idolum, neque omnem similitudinem eorum, quae sunt in coelo et quae subtus terram. Longe aliud sunt idola, et aliud dii, sicut ipse Apostulus docet. Nam de diis dixit: sicut sunt dii multi et domini multi [1 *Cor. 8:5*]. De idolis autem dicit, quia nihil est idolum in mundo. Unde mihi videtur non transitorie haec legisse quae lex dixit. Vidit enim differentiae deorum et idolorum et rursum differentiam idolorum et similitudinum. Nam qui de idolis dixit quia non sunt, non addidit quia et similitudines non sunt. Hic autem dicit non facies tibi ipsi idolorum, neque similitudinem omnium. Aliud est ergo facere idolum, aliud similitudinem. Et siquidem Dominus nos ad ea, quae dicenda sunt, inluminare dignetur. Ego sic arbitrator accipiendum quod (verbi causa) siquis in quolibet metallo auri, vel argenti, vel ligni, vel lapidis faciat speciem quadrupedis alicuius, vel serpentis, vela vis, et statuat illam adorandam, non idolum, sed similitudinem fecit. Vel etiam si picturam ad hoc ipsum statuat, nihilominus similitudinem fecisse dicendum est. Idolum vero facit ille, qui secundum Apostolum dicentem, quia idolum nihil est [1 *Cor. 8:4*], facit quod non est. Quid est autem quod non est? Species quam non vidit oculis, sed ipse sibi animus fingit. Verbi gratia, ut si quis humanis membris caput canis, aut arietis formet, vel rursum in uno hominis habitu duas facies fingat, aut humano pectori postremas partes equi, aut piscis adiungat: haec et iis similia qui facit, non similitudinem, sed idolum facit. Facit enim quod non est, nec habet aliquem similem sui, et idcirco haec sciens Apostolus dicit: quia idolum nihil est in mundo [1 *Cor. 8:4*]. Non enim aliqua ex rebus extantibus adsumitur species, sed quod ipsa sibi ociosa mens et curiosa repererit. Similitudo vero est, cum aliquid ex his quae sunt vel in coelo, vel in terra, vel in aquis formatur, sicut supius diximus. Veruntamen non sicut de iis, qui in terra sunt, vel mari similitudinibus in promptu est pronuntiare, ita etiam de coelestibus, nisi siquis dicat de Sole et Luna et stellis hoc posse sentiri. Et horum namque formas exprimere gentilitas solet. Sed quia Moyses eruditus erat in omni sapientia Aegyptorum, etiam ea quae apud illos erant in occultis et reconditis prohibere cupiebat, [...] vel etiam ad vitanda mala, quae nunc sermo Dei universa complectens simul abiurat et abiicit, et non solum idolum fieri vetat, sed et similitudinem omnium, quae in terra sunt, et in aquis, et in coelo”. The clue aspect of Origenes's thought lay in the fact that, while ὁμοίωμα (*similitudo*) found a model in the natural world, εἶδωλον (*idolum*) instead was completely detached from reality. Despite Origenes affirmed that Moses condemned both idols and likenesses – also because the latter could recall hieroglyphics – this duality allowed Paleotti to differentiate images that were idols and images that were not. The features of idols in fact, consisting of hybrid figurations, could easily overlap grotesque imagery, and could be condemned in consideration of their nature and their aim (veneration of false gods); the latter instead were condemned in a Jewish context, but could be vice versa accepted in a Christian one, given the renovated perception of the Word – in fact, these images were admitted as long as they were not venerated; see Paleotti 1582, 43^b-44^a: “Ma il nome di idolo et simulacro et sculptile et conflatile ordinariamente si piglia in cattiva parte, come di cosa reprovata dalle leggi; et questo in due modi: overo perché rappresenta cosa che non è né mai è stata, overo perché la rappresenta con altra ragione da quello che è stata. Nel primo modo si figura una sfinge o tritone, o uomini con la faccia di cane, o altre cose che mai non si sono vedute. Onde s. Paolo disse, quod idolum nihil est in mundo [1 *Cor. 8:4*]. E Teodoreto lo dichiarò dicendo: Idolum nullam habet

writes and as we have already mentioned, that Moses drove out of his republic makers of statues and pictures who corrupted the truth with their lies". By relying on Philo of Alexandria's allegorical reading of the book of Genesis (*De gigantibus*), Paleotti argued that Moses drove away artists from his community because they depicted "useless and fabulous" things and "because they vitiate truth with falsehoods, visually deluding easy and credulous souls".⁴³ According

subsistentiam; et quoniam gentiles ea, quae nusquam forent, effingebant, ut Sphinges, Tritones et Centauros, Aegyptii vero homines sub effigie canina et bovina, ea Sacrae Literae idola solent appellare [Theodoret. *Quest. in Oct.* 127.9]; dalla voce εἶδος, come dice Tertulliano [PL 1.0665A (*De idololatria* III)], che vuole dire forma, et il diminutivo εἶδωλον, *idest formula*, che significa la forma di una cosa apparente, ma che manca di subsistenza et verità, ancor che altri dicano Idolum, idest εἶδοςδύνη, che vuoi dire species doloris, per la ragione che da essi è scritta [Fulgent. *Myth.* 1.1 (*Unde idolum*)]. Nel secondo modo si figura la effigie di qualche uomo, o di alcun animale, o del sole, o delle stelle, perché abbiano da essere adorate, et però cadono sotto nome d'idolo; perché, se bene esse quanto alla sostanza et forma loro sono state vere, il fine però a che ora si formano è molto diverso dalla condizione di esse. Onde s. Agostino disse: Pagani ea colunt quae sunt, sed pro Diis colenda non sunt [PL 42 0371 (*Contra Faustum Manichaeum* XX. V)]. E queste tali cose Teodoro le comprende sotto il vocabolo di similitudine, qual nome anticamente la legge proibiva, dicendo: Non facies tibi sculptile, neque omnem similitudinem; il che si intendeva ad effetto di adorarle, perché dice: ut adores ea [Lv. 26:1], si come dai dottori santi è stato dichiarato [Thomas Aquinas ST I. II. q. 100. a. 4 (37871)]". In discussing about idols, Paleotti makes reference also to Sonnius 1557, 71^a [I. XVII. *De usu legitimo imaginum*], Alexander Halensis 1575, 388^{a-b} [II q. CLVIII. *De idololatria* m. I. *Quid sit idolatria?*] and probably kept into consideration also Thomas Aquinas ST II. II. q. 94. *De idololatria* a. 1-4 (43008-44). The Greek word εἶδοςδύνη is not attested in Greek literature; it is a transliteration from the Latin form *idodin* attested in Renaissance editions of Fulgentius (e.g., Fulgentius 1535, 136 or Fulgentius 1543, 17). Among these, only Fulgentius 1521, [I. *Unde Idolum dicatur*] offers an interpretation of the term according to its Greek origins: "Idodin: lege idodynin, εἶδος species dicitur, δύνη dolor, ἀδύναω dolore affligor; quails dolor etiam feminis parturientibus ascribere potest". Modern critical editions instead read *idos dolu*.

43 McCuaig 2012, 237; Paleotti 1582, 194: "sì come parimente non vietamo al pittore o scultore qualunque disegno, benché non sia di istoria sacra, anzi molte ne accettiamo delle etniche, molte delle moderne, che non si contengono nei libri sacri, purché da quelle ne possa uscire probabilmente giovamento, come più chiaramente altrove si è esplicato. Altrimenti come vane meglio seria il tralasciarle, peroché qual utile renderà a chi mirerà una facciata piena di grottesche? che utile la trasfigurazione di Dafne? che utile Acteone convertito in cervo? che utile una danza? che utile quei mascheroni et animali contrafatti? E di qui scrisse Philone che, per solere i pittori dipingere spesso cose inutili e favolose, *ideo Moyses laudatus elegantesque artes, picturam atque statuariam, e sua republica eicit, quod veritatem mendacis vicent, illudentes per oculos animabus facilibus et credulis*". The Latin translation of Philo of Alexandria's original Greek text [Philon. Jud. *Gigant.* 59-60: παρὸ καὶ εὐδοκίμους καὶ γλαφυρὰς τέχνας, ζωγραφίαν καὶ ἀνδριαντοποιίαν, ἐκ τῆς καθ' αὐτὸν πολιτείας | ἐξήλασεν, ὅτι τὴν τοῦ ἀληθοῦς ψευδόμενα φύσιν ἀπάτας καὶ σοφίσματα δι' ὀφθαλμῶν ψυχᾶς εὐπαράγωγους τεχνι τεύουσι] quoted by Paleotti comes from the version carried out by the Czech humanist Gelen 1552, 192: "Ideo ludatas elegantesque artes picturam atque statuariam e sua republica reiecit, quod veritatem mendacis vitent, illudentes per oculos animabus facilibus et credulis". One must notice that the Latin word *picturam* rendered the Greek ζωγραφίαν, which literally means 'painting after nature' or 'live painting', given the etymology ζωός (alive) or ζωή (living) + γράφος (painter / writer). The word ζωγραφία was directly linked to the debate on grotesques, as Ulisse Aldrovandi, in

to this interpretation, the function of images prevailed over the images themselves. It is not by chance that Paleotti accompanies these words with an attack on grotesques, affirming “how could it possibly benefit anyone to look at a façade full of grotesques? [...] Where is the utility [...] in all those masks [*mascheroni*] and counterfeit animals?”.

By linking a typically profane art (grotesques) with the reception of sacred art during the Reformation (idolatry), Paleotti brought the profane dimension of grotesques directly into the debate on idolatry. In so doing, he succeeded in mitigating the inflexibility of the Mosaic precepts by orienting his focus toward the Protestant interpretation of the Old Testament, while at the same time identifying a category of profane painting on which to centre the iconoclastic fears that had emerged in the previous decades. Thus, not all sacred art was to be excluded from the liturgy, but only art that appeared deceitful – that is to say, the grotesques.

Then Paleotti went even further and addressed a question that implicitly pervaded his entire treatise; if images could be realised according to incorrect parameters that ended up deceiving the observer, which were the correct ones to follow? The answer was straightforward: those imitating nature as accurately as possible.⁴⁴ His position, rooted both in Aristotelian precepts and scriptural passages, emerged after a long epistolary exchange with Ulisse Aldrovandi.⁴⁵

a letter to Paleotti dated 20 January 1581, explained that ‘painting after nature’ was opposed to the hybrid and dreamlike imaginations typical of grotesques, which had no model in nature; see Acciarino 2018, 92-3: “Laonde la pittura si chiama γραφή, (che ancor significa scrittura); et non solamente con questo nome vien detta la pittura ζωγραφία, dal verbo Greco ζῶ, che vuol dire vivere, et da γραφέω over γράφω, che significa dipingere, come dicesimo pittura fatta al vivo. Da qui si chiama ζωγράφος il pittore, et quivi si vede che le grotesche immeritamente sono chiamate pitture, percióché non sono fatte dal vivo, ma secondo il vario capriccio del pittore, né hanno alcuna corrispondenza con le cose naturali, né furono né sono né saranno mai in natura, come ben disse il prencipe de gli architettori Vitruvio. Platone chiama la pittura, cioè quello che è dipinto al vivo et secondo il naturale, ζωγράφημα”. Paleotti, by quoting Philo of Alexandria’s Latin translation, which had *pictura*, argued that Moses banished from society all those artists that depicted and portrayed unnatural or antinaturalistic figurations, while Philo, by using the term ζωγραφία in the original, intended that Moses banished from society all the artists, including those who imitated nature, for covering the truth (ψευδόμεναι) and illuding (ἀπάτας) the spectators. In this light, it is clear that Paleotti filtered Philo’s words through Aldrovandi’s reading of the term ζωγραφία, which was opposed to grotesques also in reason of Plato’s *Cratylus*, where the term ζωγράφημα signified a painting having a concrete object (πραγμάτων τινῶν) as a model [Plat. *Cratyl.* 430b.3: Οὐκοῦν καὶ τὰ ζωγραφήματα τρόπον τινὰ ἄλλον λέγεις μῆμηματα εἶναι πραγμάτων τινῶν;]. Paleotti’s interpretation was possible only because the source was cited in its Latin translation, in that *picturam* offered a more generic connotation compared to ζωγραφίαν, which allowed Paleotti to overturn the sense of the former in order to adjust the latter to its needs.

⁴⁴ Prodi 1967, 527-9.

⁴⁵ Acciarino 2018, 83-107; for a general overview of Aldrovandi’s method, including his vision of figurative art, see Olmi 1992.

The point of his argument gravitated around a statement found in Paul's letter to the Romans [1.20] that proclaimed that through the visible world it was possible to see and understand the idea of the invisible ("invisibilia Dei, per ea quae visibilia sunt, conspiciuntur").⁴⁶ In this light, Paleotti could easily affirm: "if art imitates nature, then grotesques fall outside the bounds of art".⁴⁷

This was directly related to the real function of art itself. Thanks to this position, Paleotti could present the argument in favour of the *Biblia pauperum* in a new light.⁴⁸ The imitation of nature created an alphabet that the public could understand perfectly and it developed a language that could not transmit fraudulent or dishonest messages. In this regard, Paleotti's exchange with Aldrovandi is essential for our understanding of the development of Paleotti's positions. This is because it points to Aldrovandi as the person who provided the scientific knowledge that was to be applied to a visual art. Aldrovandi assembled a multiplicity of biological categories that could be drawn directly from nature and a source for iconographies, thereby showing how the immense variety of natural phenomena could offer orig-

⁴⁶ The passage of the Letter to the Romans cited by Aldrovandi is not literal, both Jerome's and the Sixtine and Clementine *Vulgate* read: "Invisibilia enim ipsius a creatura mundi per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspiciuntur". Other patristic sources attest closer versions to the one mentioned by Aldrovandi, such as Gregory the Great's *Commentarii in librum I Regum* (III. iv. 20 [PL 34 0020]: "In ista etenim vita, cum ad contemplanda aeterna sustollimur, supernarum rerum similitudines capere de rebus istis infimis et visibilibus nitimur: ut iuxta egregii doctoris vocem, Invisibilia a creatura mundi, per ea quae visibilia facta sunt, cognoscamus"), in his *Epistulae* (IX. 52 *ad Secundinum* [PL 77 0991A-B]: "Imagines quas tibi dirigendas per Dulcidum diaconum rogasti misimus. Unde valde nobis tua postulatio placuit, quia illum toto corde, tota intentione quaeris, cuius imaginem prae oculis habere desideras, ut te visio corporalis quotidiana reddat exercitatum, ut dum picturam illius vides, ad illum animo inardescas, cuius imaginem videre desideras. Ab re non facimus, si per visibilia invisibilia demonstramus"), and in Augustine of Hippo's *De doctrina Christiana* (I. iv. 33 [PL 79 0194C]: "ut invisibilia Dei, per ea quae facta sunt, intellecta conspiciantur, hoc est, ut de corporalibus temporalibusque rebus aeterna et spiritualia capiamus"). The references to Gregory's and Augustine's works were clear to Paleotti, which he cited in his *Discorso* (respectively Paleotti 1582, 75^a and 128^a). This verse of Paul's letter to the Romans was thoroughly discussed in all the commentaries of the New Testament (e.g., *Gloss. Ord.* 1617, 24-6; Erasmus 1516, 420; Martin Luther in Buzzi 1991, 209-12; Beza 1559, 434; 1565, 137; 1589, 137-8).

⁴⁷ McCuaig 2012, 274; Paleotti 1582, 235^a: "Se l'arte imita la natura, dunque le grottesche non sono secondo l'arte; se le pitture hanno da servire per libri agl'idioti, ch'altrò potranno essi imparare da queste, che bugie, menzogne, inganni e cose che non sono? L'anima della pittura è il giovare, e dove non è questo fine è come un corpo morto, che diremo di queste, che non solo non giovano, ma possono intricare le menti de' semplici in mille errori?".

⁴⁸ Paleotti expresses his vision of the *Biblia Pauperum* at chapter XXIII [*Che le immagini cristiane servono grandemente per ammaestrare il popolo al ben vivere*] and chapter XII [*Abusi delle pitture profane, e se elle cristianamente debbono essere admesse*] respectively of the first and the second book of his *Discorso*; see Paleotti 1582, 71-3 and 126-30.

inal figurative patterns that released artists from resorting to anti-naturalistic imagery.⁴⁹

To support this position, Paleotti was forced to assume that drawing, and hence painting, preceded writing in human history.⁵⁰ This assumption was necessary to break down the hierarchy of the written word over the image. The written word was indeed considered a more complex system of communication than imagery, and hence more proper to God. However, Paleotti attempted to prove that writing had been developed by man from drawing in a subsequent phase of civilisation, even if this did not exclude the existence of the written word in some early cultures. This hypothesis entailed the idea that God's message could be conveyed beyond its vehicle, such as when God himself spoke directly to his people at a time when writing (and books) were not yet available to mankind.⁵¹ To sustain this

49 This is clear in a letter dated 3 November 1581, where Aldrovandi explicitly mentions all the categories of the natural world from which artists could gain inspiration; see Acciarino 2018, 103-7 [*Enarratione di tutti i generi principali delle cose naturali et artificiali che ponno cadere sotto la pittura*] and Barocchi 1961, 1: 923-9.

50 This in book II chapter V [*Se la introduzione delle immagini sia stata anteriore ai libri, e che convenienza abbia con essi*]; see Paleotti 1582, 17^b-18^a: "E però da questo si verria a concludere che le immagini fossero anteriori alle lettere, perché di due cose significanti un'altra cosa, quella che immediatamente significa è prima di quella che mediamente la mostra, come sanno i dotti". Aldrovandi did not agree with Paleotti on this point. In a letter dated 20 January 1581, he argued that writing preceded painting since the origins of communication (Acciarino 2018, 92: "le lettere siano antichissime et molto più antiche che non è la pittura"). In order to support this statement, Aldrovandi relied on Pliny the Elder [*Plin. nat. 7.56*] and the Epistle of Jude [*Jd 1: 14-15*], which reported some of the earliest examples of writing, and mentioned a more extensive analysis of the subject he carried out in his so called *Bibliologia* (BUB Aldrov. 83 I [*Farrago historiae papyri ab Ex. mo viro Ulysse Aldrovando* dated 1580] and II, ff. 1-317 [*De Academiis et de linguis*]). However, both Aldrovandi and Paleotti were aware of the semantic interchangeability between writing and painting, which was proven by the words signifying these concepts in ancient languages such as Greek and Hebrew; see Acciarino 2018, 42-3 and 92-5, and Paleotti 1582, 16^a.

51 Paleotti 1582, 18^a: "Ma sopra tutto stimiamo d'importanza quello che si cava dalle Lettere Sacre, vero fondamento delle cose, perché, essendo commune consenso de' dottori santi, che il primo autore de' libri ch'oggi si trovano al mondo sia stato il profeta Moisè, superiore a tutti gli altri scrittori gentili di gran spazio di tempo, chiaro è che molto inanzi a lui si trova essere stato l'uso delle immagini, sì come di sotto a' suoi luoghi si mostrerà [...] Al che serve molto a proposito quel che scrisse S. Giovanni Crisostomo [*PG 49.105-6*], ricercando la cagione perché la sacra Scrittura fosse pubblicata così tardi, come fu dopo la creazione del mondo almeno 2370 anni; ove egli risponde che ne' primi tempi volse Iddio ammaestrare gli uomini per l'istesse opere sue e cose create, che potessero essere universalmente apprese da tutti, allegando il detto del salmo [*Psal. 18:2*]: *Caeli enarrant gloriam Dei et opera manuum eius annunciant firmamentum*. [...] E si serve a questo proposito del versicolo del salmo detto di sopra: *Non sunt loquelae neque sermones quorum non audiantur voces eorum*, intendendo egli che voglia dire: Non ci è gente o lingua o condizione di persone, che non possa intendere bene quelle voci tacite [*PG 49.106.12-15*: καὶ πᾶς ἄνθρωπος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς βαδίζων ταύτης ἀκούσεται τῆς φωνῆς; οὐ γὰρ δι' ὠτων, ἀλλὰ καὶ δι' ὀψεως εἰς τὴν διάνοιαν ἐμπίπτει τὴν ἡμετέραν] ch'escono dall'opere create d'Iddio, le quali rappresentano la grandezza e maestà sua, come scrisse ancora il Nazianzeno [*PG 36.612.2-11*]; la quale ragione ciascun

strong declaration – which overturned Protestant beliefs regarding the pre-eminence of the written word over images – Paleotti relied on John Chrysostom and Gregory of Nazianzus. They both defended the view that images were far more intelligible than writing as a means of communication because they were closer to the original that they represented. Thus, Paleotti could easily affirm: “there is no people or language or class of persons that cannot easily understand the unspoken words uttered by God’s created works, which [...] represent his grandeur and majesty. Anyone can see how well this line of reasoning applies to images, which represent God’s very creatures in their form, and consequently make themselves known to and understood by all, which books certainly cannot do”.⁵²

This argument helped to consolidate his critique on grotesques: if the Word of God could be understood through his creation (i.e., the natural world), then whatever images fell outside of this category should be excluded from the list of admissible images. In other words, if nature could transmit God’s message, then all images that closely imitated nature were suitable for this task.

Yet, one additional problem connected to this theory had to be solved to protect the entire figurative system of sacred art in Catholic environments from future attacks. It was proposed by one of the apologists of grotesque paintings, Pirro Ligorio, in a letter he sent to

vede quanto ben faccia al proposito delle imagini che rappresentano l’istesse creature di Dio nella loro forma [PG 36.612.6-11: αἷς καταμερίζεται τὰ γινόμενα, λόγοις ἀρήτοις τασσόμενα, καὶ οὐκ ἀθρόως ἀναδιδόμενα τῷ πάντα δυνατῷ Λόγῳ, καὶ ᾧ τὸ νοῆσαι μόνον, ἢ εἰπεῖν, ἔργον ἐστὶ παριστάμενον. Εἰ δὲ τελευταῖος ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀνεδείχθη, καὶ ταῦτα χειρὶ Θεοῦ καὶ εἰκόνι τετιμημένος, θαυμαστὸν οὐδέ ἐν], e conseguentemente si fanno conoscere et intendere da tutti: il che così non possono fare i libri”. Here Paleotti refers to the Latin translations of these two Greek Church Fathers: for John Chrysostomus, see Brixianus 1521, 45 [*Homilia IX*]: “Quod et Propheta demonstrans dicebat: Coeli enarrant gloriam dei. Quomodo igitur narrant? Dic mihi. Vocem non habent, os non possident, ipsis non est lingua, quomodo igitur narrant? Per ipsum aspectum. [...] Tacet coelum, sed ipsius aspectus vocem tuba clariorem emittit, per oculos, non per aures nos docens : hic enim sensus a natura est illo certior et manifestior. Si enim per libros docuisset et literas, literarum quidem peritus scripta didicisset, nesciens vero nihil inde adiutus abijisset, siquis alius non induxisset. [...] Visibilium autem participatio eadem, neque differens sicut linguarum. In hunc pariter librum et idiota et sapiens intueri poterunt, et pauper et dives, et quocunque quis venerit, in coelum respiciens, sufficientem capiet doctrinam ex aspectu, quod quidem et ipse Propheta, innuens et demonstrans quod vocem creatura Barbaris emittit, et Graecis et omnibus universaliter hominibus sic intelligi facilem, dicebat: Non sunt loquela neque sermones, quorum non audiantur voces eorum. Quod autem dicit, tale est: Non est gens neque lingua, quae hanc vocem intelligere non possit”; for Gregory of Nazianzus, see Billy 1569, 536 [*Oratio in novam Dominicam*]: “quae creata sunt dividuntur et distinguntur, arcanis rationibus ordinata atque constituta, nec confertim in rerum naturam ab omnipotenti illo Verbo producta, cuius sola cogitatio vel solus sermo confectum opus repraesentat”.

52 McCuaig 2012, 68.

Paleotti while his *Discourse* was still in progress.⁵³ Ligorio was one of the theorists of the symbolic and hieroglyphic dimensions of grotesques, actually made for symbolic display (“nondimeno, non si può, se non per consideratione de tutte le cose, che non siano fatte et accettate in essa pittura per symbolica ostentatione”),⁵⁴ which represented a cryptic alphabet that could be decoded by initiates and which transmitted the secrets of nature. As Ligorio points out, although grotesques appear supernatural, they reflect nature, and they were tools utilised by the ancient poets to cover the secrets of physics:⁵⁵

Quantunque parano come false fuori di natura, sono pure cose che dichiarano le cose della riflessa natura, per la vaghezza sono agli occhi grate, per la acutezza dell’ingegno delle figure delle favole, muoveno l’animo, dan materia di parlare [...] et havemo da credere che non siano altro che cose coperte dell’antichi poeti in le cose della physica.

Furthermore, the fact that grotesques represented a sort of ‘language’ allowed Ligorio to establish a meaningful parallel between their iconographic apparatus and libraries, as if they were a type of book to be read by the spectator.⁵⁶

ma furono fatte et ornate de tale pittura per cosa morale da edificare gli ingegni et l’animi di tutti coloro che vi dimoravano, percioché nelle ville non mancavano le librerie et le cose necessarie alle bisogne delle eruditione che edificano questa vita de’ mortali.

53 Acciarino 2018, 108-28. Ligorio sent three letters at the beginning of year 1581 to Giulio Masetti and Alessandro Manzoli to discuss the issue of grotesques: the first one to Masetti, dated 9 January 1581; the *terminus ante quem* for the second and the third, addressed to Manzoli, is 22 February 1581. The first and the second letter are actually taken from the extensive section on grotesques Ligorio already composed for his *Libri di Antichità*, in the book on ancient painting entitled *Trattato di alcune cose appartenente alla nobiltà dell’antiche arti, e massimamente de la pittura, de la scoltura e dell’architettura* (ASTo ms. a, II, 16 [vol. 29]), which was published in Barocchi 1977, 3: 2666-91. The third letter instead features many original elements. This because it was written in response to another letter written to Alessandro Manzoli by the scholar Giovanni Battista Bombelli, who attacked Ligorio’s positions on grotesque painting in general and especially on his beliefs on the cryptoporticus; see Acciarino 2018, 129-34.

54 Acciarino 2018, 117; Garton 2019, 546.

55 Acciarino 2018, 117; Garton 2019, 547. On the issue, see also Hansen 2018, 219-40 who very cleverly connects grotesques with the philosophical notion of “nature as a creator of images and the artist as a person who accomplishes nature’s latent imagery” (222). In this light, grotesques represent the link between “nature and culture”, where forms combined themselves in a “semiabstract” (226) dimension in an interplay between the idea and its final realisation.

56 Acciarino 2018, 115.

This passage gave strength to concerns that grotesques were a potential target for Protestant polemicists, especially since they incorporated a parallel medium for reading creation, one which required knowledge of a mystic and oneiric language from which it was impossible to deduce a clear message. Paleotti strongly rejected these positions by stating that ancient authors themselves did not recognise allegorical meaning in these extravagant paintings. However, he also conceded that, even if they had, it would have been so impenetrable that they would have been deceptive rather than didactic:⁵⁷

Ma noi, lasciando per ora scrittori grandi, che simili favole hanno giudicato non dovere essere tollerate sotto pretesto d'alcuna allegoria, et altri c'hanno scritto chiaramente che questo è stato un modo di colore o di velame imaginato da alcuni per coprire in qualche modo la bruttezza o sciochezza di quelle favole, e che i Romani non volsero mai admettere simili allegorie; noi, quanto al

57 Paleotti 1582, 241^a; here Paleotti makes reference to Plato and to Theodoret of Cyrus. For the former, Paleotti alludes to the second book of the *Republic*, in which it was stated that Greek mythology had to be censured in order to represent a useful tool for schooling the youth with wisdom; this because the youth was not able to clearly distinguish reality from allegory (ὑπόνοια) – argument that fitted very well within the critique against grotesques [Plat. *Resp.* II. 378 d: Ἦρας δὲ δεσμούς ὑπὸ ὑέος καὶ Ἥφαιστου ῥίψεις ὑπὸ πατρός, μέλλοντος τῆ μητρὶ τυπτομένη ἀμυνεῖν, καὶ θεομαχίας ὅσας Ὅμηρος πεποίηκεν οὐ παραδεκτέον εἰς τὴν πόλιν, οὐτ' ἐν ὑπονοίαις πεποιημένας οὐτε ἄνευ ὑπονοιῶν. ὁ γὰρ νέος οὐχ οἶός τε κρίνειν ὅτι τε ὑπόνοια καὶ ὁ μῆ, ἀλλ' ἂ ἄν τηλικούτος ὢν λάβῃ ἐν ταῖς δόξαις δυσέκνιπτά τε καὶ ἀμετάστατα φιλεῖ γίγνεσθαι]. For the latter, he refers to Zenobi Acciaiuoli's Latin translation of Theodoret's *De graecarum affectionum curatione*, in which Theodoret compared two different positions held by Plato on the use of ancient myths to educate people, [*Tim.* 40 d-e, here myths were considered as a fundamental aspect of the imagery of a community, and *Resp.* II. 378 d]. Theodoret noted that Plato contradicted himself; see Acciaiuoli 1519, 28^b-29^b: “Puto autem ego haec quae modo attuli, Platonis verba, vel ab iis etiam qui literarum prorsus ignari sunt, manifeste cognosci quam sint penitus illis contraria quae idem Plato in Timaeo conscripsit. Ibi enim pracepit sine ulla disceptatione et controversia Poetis credendum esse, quamquam nec signis nec demonstrationibus necessariis ad faciendam fidem uterentur. Hoc autem loco impudenter eos accusat, ut qui falsa figmenta et probrosa quaedam commenti sint”. Theodoret carried out this digression while talking about Paul the Apostle's *Rom.* 20: after having commented upon the statement for which the creation (i.e., the natural world) reflected its creator (i.e., God) [Acciaiuoli 1519, 27^b: “Sapienter igitur quidam nostrorum atque argute inquit, e creaturarum magnitudine ac specie, proportione quadam, generationis authorem spectari. Neque enim qualia sunt opera, talis continuo ipse est opifex, nec quanta haec sunt, tantus et ille est [...] Per ea enim quae videntur, factorem insivibilem cogitamus”], Theodoret warned the readers to avoid the risk of making idols from those elements of the natural world, through which the faithful intended representing God [Acciaiuoli 1519, 28^a: “Quique devm incorruptibilem nominabant, imaginem sibi corruptibilem corporum extruxerunt. Neque vero cum immortalis animae ideam scirent, divinos honores animae tribuerunt, suam ve ad impietatem satis haec illis fuit insania, quod humana corpora, non animas, adorabant, sed ut idem inquit Apostolus, et volucrum et quadrupedum et serpentium simulachra sibi componens, haec etiam deos esse dixerunt”]. On the cultural background in which Zenobi Acciaiuoli's translation of Theodoret took place, deeply penetrated by Girolamo Savonarola's thought, see Assonitis 2006, 55.

proposito delle grottesche, diciamo che esse ordinariamente, come ognuno sa, non hanno ascoso alcuno senso giovevole, ma sono fatte a salti et a capriccij; e quando pure ve ne fosse alcuno, viene ad essere tanto recondito et abstruso, che serve per pochissimi et inganna moltissimi, e però si ha da tralasciare.

As a result, Paleotti admitted that, even if the pagans sometimes needed these paintings as a means to approach wisdom, Christians should follow a completely different path, because for them truth was manifested through Revelation.⁵⁸

9.5 Symbols and Grotesques

With these words, constituting an actual *pars destruens*, Paleotti provided the elements to replace grotesque imagery, with all its cryptic suggestions, and establish a *pars construens*. In the following section of his *Discourse*, he devoted a chapter entitled *On pictures of symbols* to describing the correct method for portraying enigmatic imagery. Here, the guidelines for arranging symbolic figurations were set according to a specific (and regulated) iconographic repertoire based on a realistic naturalism.⁵⁹ A symbol, properly defined, consisted of “several different images joined together to make a certain corpus

⁵⁸ Paleotti 1582, 241^b: “Sì che concludiamo che, se bene gli antichi, involti nelle tenebre, ebbero qualche probabile ragione di figurare in quei luoghi sotterranei queste grottesche, a noi però, ai quali è apparso il sole della verità, più non convengono simili invenzioni; le quali maggiormente disdicevole sarà di fare nei luoghi pubblici et aperti, per le ragioni già dette, perché, quanto alle chiese, pensiamo che non sarà alcuno così privo di ragione che non confessi che, adorando noi in esse quella suprema maestà, per partecipazione della quale tutte le cose hanno l'essere e sono vere, nessuna cosa più le è repugnante che rappresentare in esse cose de sogni e de falsità”.

⁵⁹ Paleotti 1582, 249^a-252^a [XXXXV. *Delle pitture dei simboli*]: “col rappresentare alcune cose naturali et artificiali come arbori, piante, fiumi, metalli, stelle, uomini, animali edificii, torri, machine et altre simili cose, nelle quali riluce qualche vestigio del sommo creatore e sianovi riposti non piccioli semi per essercizio della virtù” (249). The reformation of symbols fostered by Paleotti is particularly meaningful also because it was formulated in Bologna. Bologna was the city of Achille Bocchi (1488-1562), founder of the *Academia Hermathena* and author of the *Symbolicae Quaestiones* (1555), one of the most influent scholars in theory of symbolism. Bocchi postulated that symbols represented an alphabet, constituted by a varied imagery including at once naturalistic and non-naturalistic figurations capable of interpreting the physical and the metaphysical world, and expressing both sacred and profane mysteries. Members of this circle included many scholars and artists of the city, among the others Ulisse Aldrovandi, Prospero Fontana, Alessandro Manzoli, and Gabriele Paleotti himself. One could indeed assume that, twenty years after Bocchi's death, Paleotti tried to rethink and overturn the ideas of symbolism developed in the *Academia Hermathena* by preserving those symbols created according to the natural world and by removing those that drifted away from this purpose. See Bocchi 1555, *ad. lect.* [*Symbolum Symbolorum*] and Angelini 2003, 27-37.

of figures, whether they be humans or animals or plants, [...] which represent some acts, true or verisimilar as it may be, or even feigned, from which there inwardly results another good and moral sense”.⁶⁰

If one compares the elements normally used to arrange symbols, it becomes clear that they could be easily overlapped with those constituting grotesques.⁶¹ The substantial difference lay in the way these figures were formed. In other words, whether they carried some kind of ‘reality’ or ‘verisimilitude’, and accurately reproduced nature by avoiding any kind of supernatural hybridity. Paleotti, in fact, postulated that

a symbol should not, however, be so obscure and difficult that it always requires a subtle interpreter, [...] so, for the greater ease of whoever wishes to make use of them, we see fit to warn the reader that, as well as avoiding a few well-known abuses like depicting lasciviousness or monstrosity or false gods or anything else we have mentioned above.⁶²

The aim of this decision was to equate the symbolic dimension of art with the symbolic discourse used by Jesus Christ in the Gospels: the parable, which always conveyed a moral message. In fact, this was the sole rhetorical expedient that avoided sophistry and obscure language in forming symbols. In Paleotti’s view, this must be the model to follow when adopting allegorical patterns, in that “the symbol should convey instruction and utility for living well”:⁶³

⁶⁰ McCuaig 2012, 287; Paleotti 1582, 250^a: “questo ch’oggi chiamiamo simbolo consiste ordinariamente di piu e varie imagini unite insieme, che fanno un certo corpo di figure, siano d’uomini o d’animali, di piante o d’altre cose dette di sopra, le quali rappresentano alcun atto vero, o verisimile che sia stato, o altro che sia finto, dal quale ne risulta interiormente un altro senso buono e morale”.

⁶¹ Paleotti 1582, 222^{a-b}: “per levare ogni equivocazione che potesse nascere, diciamo che sotto questo nome di grottesche non intendiamo quei lavori de fogliami, tronchi, festoni o altre varietà di cose che talora si pingono e possono essere secondo la natura; ne quelle invenzioni degli artefici, che nei fregi, nei tavolati, nelle opere dette arabesche, nei recami et altri ornamenti proporzionati alla ragione sogliono con vaghezza rappresentarsi; né manco intendiamo di quei mostri, o marini, o terrestri, o altri che siano, che dalla natura talora, se bene fuori dell’ordine suo, sono stati prodotti. Ma solo comprendiamo sotto questa voce quelle forme d’uomini o d’animali o d’altre cose, che mai non sono state, né possono essere in quella maniera che vengono rappresentate, et sono capricci puri de’ pittori et fantasmi vani et loro irragionevoli immaginazioni”.

⁶² McCuaig 2012, 288-9; Paleotti 1582, 251^a: “Il che però non fosse tanto oscuro e difficile, che avesse bisogno sempre di sottile interprete, ne manco tanto triviale e volgare, che non apportasse ne meraviglia, né novità, né trattenimento alcuno all’intelletto; il quale tanto più suole eccitarsi et apprendere le cose, quanto più sono state da lui apprezzate per la loro dignità. Laonde, per qualche maggior agevolezza di chi vorrà servirsene, ci pare di ammonire il lettore che, oltre il fuggire alcuni abusi assai noti, come il dipingere cose lascive, o monuose, o di falsi dei, o di altro da noi di sopra notato”.

⁶³ McCuaig 2012, 289; Paleotti 1582, 251^a.

Ma quello che principalmente si avrà da avvertire è che il simbolo porti seco istruzione et utilità al ben vivere; onde, per assicurarsi da questi scogli e camminare senza intoppo, lodiamo noi grandemente quei che sogliono valersi delle parabole evangeliche riferite dal Salvatore nostro.

In this light, a further assumption can be made. The *Hieroglyphica* published in 1556 by Giovanni Pierio Valeriano served as a sort of encyclopaedia of sacred and profane symbols inherited from ancient cultures and intertwined with the creative tension of the Renaissance – from which many artists and iconographers often benefited. In the same way, the renewed Catholic policy on images required analogous tools capable of providing similar iconographic solutions based on Counter-Reformation guidelines.⁶⁴

64 Valeriano 1556; Pellegrini 2002; Perale 2008; Giehlow 2015, 208-35. Paleotti himself touched briefly upon hieroglyphs during his discussion on symbols, creating an actual semiotic bond between the two forms of significance; however, he decided not to examine in depth the issue, because of the elevated complexity of the issue, which would divert the mind of the readers; see Paleotti 1582, 249^b: “I simboli dunque vogliono alcuni che abbiano avuta origine dalle note ieroglifiche degli Egizzii, dei quali è stato scritto ampiamente da’ Greci et da’ Latini. Altri dicono che le ieroglifiche erano di due sorti, l’una detta semplicemente ieroglifica, l’altra simbolica; et che della simbolica vi erano parimente tre specie tra sé diverse, una, come dice Clemente Alessandrino, *per imitationem, altera per tropos, tertia per aenigmata* [Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 5.4.20-1: ὑστάτην δὲ καὶ τελευταίαν τὴν ἱερογλυφικὴν, ἣς ἡ μὲν ἐστὶ διὰ τῶν πρώτων στοιχείων κυριολογικὴ, ἣ δὲ συμβολικὴ. τῆς δὲ συμβολικῆς ἡ μὲν κυριολογεῖται κατὰ μίμησιν, ἣ δ’ ὡσπερ τροπικῶς γράφεται, ἣ δὲ ἄντικρυς ἀλληγορεῖται κατὰ τινὰς αἰνιγμοὺς [...]. Τροπικῶς δὲ κατ’ οἰκειότητα μεταγόντες καὶ μετατιθέντες, τὰ δ’ ἐξαλλάττοντες, τὰ δὲ πολλαχῶς μετασηματιζόντες χαραττοῦσιν. [...] Τοῦ δὲ κατὰ τοὺς αἰνιγμοὺς τρίτου εἴδους δεῖγμα ἔστω τόδε]. Ma a noi non importa di fermarci in questo [...]”. The reference to Clement of Alexandria was probably drawn from the Latin translation carried out by Hervet 1551, 153: “Ultimam autem ἱερογλυφικὴν, id est, sacramque insculptur scripturam, cuius unam quidem est per prima elementa κυριολογικὴ, id est, proprie loquens, altera vero symbolica, id est, per signa significans. Symbolicae autem una quidem proprie loquitur per imitationem, alia vero scribitur veluti tropice, alia vero aperte sumitur allegorice per quaedam aenigmata”. Also Erasmus attempted to understand origin and nature of hieroglyphs, defining them as an enigmatic language aimed at expressing the secrets of natural world; see Giehlow 2015, 197-201 and Erasmus 1538, 348: “Sic enim vocantur aenigmaticae sculpturae, quarum priscis seculis multus fuit usus, potissimum apud Aegyptios vates, ac theologos, qui nefas esse ducebant, sapientiae mysteria literis communibus vulgo prophano prodere, quemadmodum nos facimus, sed si quid cognitu dignum iudicassent, id animantium rerumque variorum expressis figuris ita repraesentabant, ut non cuivis statim promptum esset conijcere, verum si cui singularum rerum proprietates, si peculiaris cuiusque animantis vis ac natura cognita, penitusque perspecta fuisse, is demum collatis eorum symbolorum coniecturis, aenigma sententiae deprehendebat [...] Porro hoc scripturae genus non solum Dignitatis plurimum habet, verum etiam voluptatis non parum, si quis modo rerum, ut dixi, proprietates penitus perspectas habuerit; id quod partim contingit solerti contemplatione rerum causarumque naturalium, partim liberalium cognitione disciplinarum”. Echoes of this last statement (i.e., hieroglyphs represent a symbolic means to contemplate nature) could be perceived in Pirro Ligorio’s reference to grotesques as a symbolic language displaying the truth of physics. The contamination between hieroglyphs and grotesques appeared to be delicate at the end of the fifteenth century also because hieroglyphs (or

Valeriano added a plethora of meanings to traditional and innovative symbolic patterns drawn from a raft of ancient literary and material sources (statues, coins, epigraphs). He moved from the statement that hieroglyphs were used in ancient times to record all the mysteries of nature (“*omnem naturae obscuritatem*”); and, to do so, the elements used for this kind of description were constituted by figures of animals and other things (“*descriptionem huiusmodi, animalium ceterarumque rerum figuris constituisse*”) in which philosophers, poets and historians saw hidden theological messages (“*divinarum etiam disciplinarum sententias delitescere viderunt*”).⁶⁵ It comes as no surprise, then, that his work became one of the points of reference in conferring significance to mysterious and cryptic images and grotesques.⁶⁶ However, Valeriano then added that this legacy served to

grotesques) were thought to be discovered in catacombs or cemeteries of early Christianity, as pointed out not only by Ligorio (Acciarino 2018, 118: “*Erano da’ gentili nelle grotte dipinte, che, se esse sono state simili a quelle de’ christiani, di grottesche l’ornarono, al contrario che fecero dipoi i nostri christiani, come veggiamo nel coimeterio di San Callisto papa, secondo egli havendo occupate le gentili cathatymbe, ch’hora si dicono catacombe, gli tolse ogni pittura gentile et le smaltò semplicemente, l’usò per dormitorio delli santi martiri, le quali sono nella via Appia nella chiesa di San Sebastiano. Così similmente fu fatto nelle grotte di via Salaria nel coimeterio della Diva Prisca et anchora nella via Tiburtina nelle grotte di San Lorenzo estramuraneo*”), but also by another anonymous correspondent of Paleotti, who recognised these ornaments in the hypogeum of Priscilla in Rome (Acciarino 2018, 139: “*Quanto al quarto, le grotte [di S. Sebastiano] et S. Lorenzo si crede che fussero fabricate da’ christiani per fugir le persecutioni et ivi habitavano e celebravano le sinasi, e sepeivano i morti. Et io ho veduto in questo cimiterio scoperto alcuni giorni sono, che vogliono sij di Priscilla, in un loco dipinto un huomo con alcuni leoni che pareno a modo di grottesche, ancorché alcuni vogliono che sia S. Ignatio*”). Was it Antonio Bosio to solve this conflict, potentially dangerous for the cavernous (or grotesque) implications on sacred art, in his book on the underground Rome, when he established that those paintings found in early Christian cemeteries, which resembled hieroglyphs and grotesques, were nothing but Pagan symbols loaded with Christian messages; see Bosio 1632, 599 [IV. III. *Delle figure indifferenti sospette di gentilità*]: “*Altra difficoltà pareva che fosse circa alle figure indifferenti, sospette di gentilità, che si vedono in alcuni cimiterii. Questa però può essere superata da quello, che si disse nel primo libro, cioè che nella primitiva Chiesa, essendo li Christiani piante novelle traspiantate dal Gentilesimo o Hebraismo nel terreno della medesimo Chiesa, conservavano ancora qualche proprietà dell’antico solo, e per ciò permisero gli Apostoli stessi, e successivamente li Sommi Pontefici, che ritenessero alcune cose usate nella gentilità, le quali non ripugnavano alla nostra religione, convertendole in usi ecclesiastici, con più misteriosi sensi. [...] Così parimente volendo esprimere li concetti loro, si servivano di varii simboli e ieroglyphici, ancorché delli medesimi si fossero serviti i Gentili*”. Bosio devoted the following chapters of his book to explaining the Christian meanings of all the Pagan symbols adopted by early Christians (Bosio 1632, 599-656), which included animals, plants, and various objects.

65 Valeriano 1556.

66 Morel 1985; Morel 1997, 115-37. A convergence between hieroglyphs and grotesques was clear to Renaissance scholars and artists; see Pirro Ligorio’s letters of 1581, in Acciarino 2018, 112 and 118: “*onde ad uso di lettere hieroglyphiche fatte*”, and Paleotti 1582, 227^a: “*Altri le derivano dalle guglie egittiacce ripiene di figure hieroglyphice, ch’havcano sensi alti nella loro lingua*”. However, the changing perception throughout the sixteenth century towards symbolic and cryptic languages also impacted on the

interpret and understand the Bible and other sacred texts, merging the profane dimension of the symbols he collected with the truth of Christian wisdom. Valeriano expounded on this idea: by comparing the reading of hieroglyphs with the parables in the Gospels he created a very dangerous contamination between two extremely delicate areas:⁶⁷

relationship between the two. A clear example of this could be found in the description of the Castello San Martino in Soverzano, near Bologna, by the scholar Giovanni Battista Bombelli. In this treatise, dated 1585, Bombelli said that the symbolic decoration of the castle could be interpreted “hieroglyphically”. This allowed Bombelli to separate grotesques from hieroglyphs, avoiding any potential overlapping; see BUB ms. 2059, f. 70v: “di più emblemī, e simboli, apologi e imprese abbellirano il luogo, e con molte pitture l’ornarono, ma però tutte morali et giuditiose, nelle quali, sopra tutta, et la noia et il contento del perduto e recuperato San Martino si conoscono hieroglicamente”. Bombelli was one of the correspondents of Paleotti on grotesques in 1581 and contrasted Ligorio’s positions; see Acciarino 2018, 53-61 and 129-34.

67 Valeriano 1556, *Nuncup.*; Giehlow 2015, 229. In this passage, Valeriano quotes *Psalms* 78. However, Jerome’s Vulgate features a different reading [“Aperiam in parabola os meum; loquar propositiones ab initio”], opting for the term *propositiones* rather than *aenigmata*. A similar choice was apparently made by the Greek version of the Old Testament carried out by the Seventies, who adopted προβλήματα (instead e.g., of αἰνίγματα), which inferred, from an etymological point of view, a question unresolved: ἀνοιξω ἐν παραβολαῖς τὸ στόμα μου, φθέγξομαι προβλήματα ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς. The Hebrew version of the Bible, from which both Jerome and the Seventies translated, has הִיחָדָה, which literally means riddle - in this light αἰνίγμα / *aenigma* appears to be more proper than προβλήματα / *propositiones* (also considering that הִיחָדָה was translated with αἰνίγμα / *aenigma* in other cases both by the Seventies [e.g., *Nm.* 12:8] and Jerome [e.g., *Ez.* 17:2] - even if Jerome used *problema* more often [e.g., *Jd.* 14:12]). Why Jerome in *Ps.* 78:2 opted for *propositiones* rather than *problemata* or *aenigmata* is still uncertain. One can assume that Jerome considered *propositio* as an equivalent of *aenigma*, as it emerges from his treatise on the *Psalms* (*PL* 592): “eloquar propositiones ab initio. Pro propositionibus in hebraico habet ‘aenigmata’. Ergo omne, quod dicitur, aenigma est. Aenigma non est hoc quod dicitur, sed aliud quod significatur aenigmatē”. The equivalence of *propositio* and *aenigma* is later confirmed by Gerhoh of Reichersberg (*PL* 193 1588C-D), in his commentary of *Ps.* 78:2: “Propositio est aenigma, quod proponitur ad solvendum”. This semantic variability, perceivable in the Hebrew word הִיחָדָה, was already clear in the Renaissance, as it emerges in Pagnini 1529, 563-4: “הוּרָה est aenigmatice loqui, seu aenigma, aut problema proponere, obscure loqui. Iudicum 14 versu 13: הִיחָדָה הִיחָדָה הִיחָדָה Aenigmatice loquere aenigma tuum. Hierony. *propone problema tuum*; et versu 16: הִיחָדָה הִיחָדָה i. aenigma aenigmatice locutus es filijs populi mei, et mihi non indicasti. Iechez 17 versu 2: Fili hominis הִיחָדָה הִיחָדָה i. aenigmatice loquere aenigma. Hierony. *propone aenigma*. Iudicum 14 versu 12: הִיחָדָה נָא לְכֶם הִיחָדָה id est, aenigmatice loquar nunc (vel quaeso) vobis aenigma. Hierony. *proponam vobis problema*, et Nomen הִיחָדָה ut habes in Verbo, et cum Pronomine. Iudicum 14 versu 18: Non invenissetis הִיחָדָה id est, aenigma meum; et plurale Chabba 2 versu 6: Et interpretationem הִיחָדָה id est, aenigmatum; Psalmum 78 versu 2: Eructabo (loquar) הִיחָדָה aenigmata; Numeri 12 versu 7: Et non הִיחָדָה i. per aenigmata; Prover. 1 versu 6: הִיחָדָה i. et aenigmata eorum”. In quoting *Ps.* 78:2, Valeriano very likely relied on the only source accessible at his times which attested *aenigma* in contrast with *propositio*, i.e., the polyglot edition of the *Psalms* (Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, Latin and Arabic) completed by Agostino Giustiniani, in which the translation attests: “Aperiam in parabola os meum, loquar aenigmata, quae fuerunt ab antiquo” (Giustiniani 1516).

In nova vero lege novoque instrument, cum Assertor noster ait, Aperiam in parabolis os meum, et in aenigmate antiqua loquar [Ps. 78:2], quid aliud sibi voluit, quam, hieroglyphice sermonem faciam, et allegorice vetusta rerum proferam monumenta?

This obscurity could no longer be tolerated in Counter-Reformation times, especially since it was too convergent with the imagery of grotesques, to the extent that it could be misread and confused with it. Therefore, a thorough rethinking of the concept of a symbol and its crafting was required. This was the case for Antonio Ricciardi's *Commentaria Symbolica* (1591) and Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (1593).⁶⁸ Despite both moving from different premises, they provided a first detailed alphabetical list of iconographies compatible with the figurative reorganisation imposed by the Council of Trent.

According to the Flemish scholar Jan van Gorp van der Beke, also known as Johannes Goropius, hieroglyphs were nothing but symbols; and, if symbols were analogous to words, they must refer to a precise, clear and defined object to serve their purposes: they therefore needed to conform to visible images, and express the name signified by the figure.⁶⁹ This assertion led to a new way to perceive hieroglyphs: all symbols had to respect the object to which they referred, adapting their features to their original model. Ricciardi, for example, stated that symbols should have some kind of likeness with what

⁶⁸ Ricciardi 1591; Ripa 1593. For the relations between Ripa and Valeriano, see the introduction of Maffei 2012, LXXXVIII-XC.

⁶⁹ Two works, both posthumous, expressed this opinion, see Goropius 1580 [*Hermathena*], 21: "nomina symbola esse, non solum secundum nudam pactionem, sed iuxta rerum etiam convenientiam et cognationem. Neque vero nota quaevis symboli nomen meretur, sed ea dumtaxat, quae apte convenienterque rei cuiusdam significandae applicatur. At quae hic est convenientia spectanda, si non illa quae de naturae quadam affinitate apta est, ita ut signum congruens et appositum rei denotandae, symbolum vocetur, at notae solo arbitratu nostro nulla naturae cognatione positae, in symbolorum albo minime censeantur. Num quisquam est, qui Aegyptios putet temere, citra omnem delectum, quasvis notas quibusvis rebus dedisse? Non equidem opinor, sed contra diligenter rerum inter se similitudine animadversa, sculpturas sacras, sive hieroglyphicas, notas excogitasse. Iam quae aetatis nostrae homines emblematum nomine litteris mandarunt, ea nihil aliud sunt, quam symbola sententiis quibusdam notandis accommodata"; and Goropius 1580 [*Hieroglyphica*], 13: "Et haec quidem vera est norma ad quam sacra veterum simulacra sive hieroglyphicae notae sunt examinandae: et rursus ea vera est nominum interpretatio, quae vetustissimis sacrorum respondet figuris. Si enim nomina symbola sint, necesse est ut cum ipsis adspectabilibus imaginibus consentiant, et illud exprimat nomen quod figura demonstrat. Hoc igitur sit nobis omnium hieroglyphicum principium et solidum fundamentum, cui omnia nostra quae de id genus imaginibus trademus, innitentur". Curiously enough, Johannes Molanus was the censor who approved the publication of Goropius' works on 21 June 1574 – as it emerges from a note at the end of the *Hermathena*.

they attempt to express, in order to allow an internal understanding through an external perception.⁷⁰

A similar approach can be found in Ripa. In his preface, he details the methodological approach that should be followed in arranging symbolic images. Beyond the principle of similarity, which implied a relationship with the object evoked (“vedendosi che questa sorte d’imagini si reduce facilmente alla similitudine della definitione”),⁷¹ Ripa established four criteria for crafting any type of figuration, clearly referencing Aristotle’s *Physics* (2.3) and *Metaphysics* (5.2): a material cause, an efficient cause, a formal cause, and a final cause.⁷² Respecting these norms would ensure a clear understanding of the symbol, without creating confusion for the spectator.⁷³

con tutto ciò, dovendosi haver riguardo principalmente ad insegnare cosa occolta con modo non ordinario, per dilettere con l’ingegnosa inventione, e lodevole, farlo con una sola, per non generare oscurità, et fastidio in ordinare, spiegare et mandare a memoria le molte.

This new rational approach to symbolic iconography, which can ideally be opposed to the ‘chaos of the mind’ of grotesques,⁷⁴ created a multifarious alternative to those irrational and imaginary figurations. It also set a newly re-established tolerance threshold for sacred art in Catholic environments through rationality and naturalism. This was still a shifting phase, which would lead to a completely renovated style in the application of ornamental art for the following centuries; nevertheless, it guaranteed the survival of a ‘language’ with an age-old tradition that had been questioned by renewed spiritual tensions and religious needs.

70 Ricciardi 1591, *ad lect.*: “Symbolum est nota cuiuspiam aricanioris mysterii significativa, ut cum Ciconiam dicimus esse symbolum pietatis, et papaver fertilitatis. Et symbolum ea est natura ut similitudine quadam ad alia quaedam intelligenda, quam quae sensui exterior offerunt, animum nostrum deducunt”.

71 Ripa 1593, *ad lect.*; for Ripa’s method of making symbols, see Maffei 2009.

72 Ripa 1593, *ad lect.*: “quattro sono i capi, o le cagioni principali, dale quali si può pigliare l’ordine di formarle, et si dimandano con nomi usitati nelle scole, di Materia, Efficiente, Forma, et Fine, dalla diversità de’ quali capi nasce la diversità, che tengono gli Autori molte volte in definire una medesima cosa, et la diversità medesimamente di molte imagini fatte per signicare una cosa sola”.

73 Ripa 1593, *ad lect.*

74 Scholl 2004, 95-6. A wonderful example of the symbolic interpretation and use of grotesques during the Renaissance is found in Conticelli 2018.

