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Performance and Spectacle in Early Modern Europe

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Donatella Gavrilovich

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Il sesto numero della rivista “Arti dello Spettacolo / Performing Arts”, intitolato *Festa e Spettacolo agli albori dell’Europa Moderna*, raccoglie una serie di articoli incentrati sul tema della festa e degli spettacoli organizzati presso corti, grandi dimore e città agli albori dell’Europa moderna. La danza, la musica, l’arredamento, i tornei, la progettazione e l’organizzazione di spazi per spettacoli, nonché l’importanza di questi eventi nella vita culturale, politica ed economica dei paesi, delle corti e delle città coinvolti, sono stati esplorati dagli autori dei contributi pubblicati.

A tutti loro e, in modo particolare alle curatrici, vanno i miei più sinceri ringraziamenti per aver affrontato e risolto brillantemente tutte le difficoltà, causate dalle attuali tragiche circostanze. La pandemia ha reso molto difficile l’accesso ad archivi e biblioteche per la ricerca di documenti e immagini; così come veramente complesso è stato mantenere il costante coordinamento e il quotidiano confronto da parte delle curatrici tra loro stesse, gli autori e i revisori.

Il sesto numero della rivista, frutto di un così grande impegno, è il sentito omaggio al Professor Ronnie Mulryne e ne riflette i suoi vasti interessi di ricerca.

Ho avuto l’onore di incontrare il Prof. Mulryne in occasione di un convegno, organizzato dalla

This sixth issue of the journal “Arti dello Spettacolo / Performing Arts”, entitled *Performance and Spectacle in Early Modern Europe*, collects a series of articles focused on the various forms of festivals organized in courts, large residences, and cities in early Modern Europe.

Dance, music, decor, tournaments, design, and organization of spaces for performances, as well as the importance of these events in the cultural, political, and economic life of the countries, courts and cities involved, have been explored by the authors of the articles published in this issue.

I would like to sincerely thank all of them, particularly the editors, for having faced and brilliantly solved all the difficulties caused by the current tragic circumstances. The pandemic has made it very difficult to access archives and libraries to search for documents and images; just as it was truly complex to maintain the constant coordination and daily confrontation between the editors themselves, the authors and the reviewers.

The sixth issue of the journal, fruit of such a great commitment, is a heartfelt tribute to Professor Ronnie Mulryne and reflects his vast research interests.

I had the honour to meet Prof. Mulryne at a



Editorial by
Donatella Gavrilovich

SEFR presso l'Università di Cambridge nel 2018. Mi ha colpito la sua profonda umanità, la vivacità intellettuale e la gentilezza. Quando gli ho donato le pubblicazioni della rivista, si è subito interessato e con entusiasmo ha voluto presentarla ai partecipanti. Sono rimasta sorpresa e sinceramente colpita dal suo interesse. Da qui è nata l'idea di preparare un numero sul tema delle feste dell'Europa moderna. Quando con sorpresa e profonda tristezza ho appreso la notizia della sua scomparsa, ho proposto subito a Margaret Shewring di dedicare al Prof. Mulryne il presente numero.

Quest'omaggio a un uomo dalla grande umanità e a uno studioso di alto profilo è stato possibile, soprattutto, grazie alla entusiasta e immediata adesione di tanti suoi colleghi, collaboratori e amici che ringrazio di cuore.

conference organized by the SEFR at the University of Cambridge in 2018. I was struck by his deep humanity, intellectual vivacity and kindness. When I gave him the previous issues of the journal, he immediately became interested and enthusiastically wanted to show them to the participants. I was surprised and genuinely impressed by his interest. Hence the idea of preparing an issue on the theme of festivals in modern Europe. When, with great surprise and deep sadness, I received the news of his passing, I immediately proposed to Margaret Shewring to dedicate the present issue to Prof. Mulryne.

This tribute to a man of great humanity and a high-profile scholar was possible, above all, thanks to the enthusiastic and immediate support of many of his colleagues, collaborators, and friends who I sincerely thank.

History of the Chivalric Tournament: A New Approach

SYDNEY ANGLO, FBA, FLSW, FSA, Professor Emeritus, University of Swansea, UK

The evolution of the tournament was a pan-European phenomenon which did not everywhere proceed at the same tempo. There has never been a satisfactory history of the subject because the sources for different periods and places are widely divergent. Yet this diversity makes it possible to base a history on the nature of the evidence itself: literary works for the earliest combats; challenges and responses from the thirteenth century; combat treatises from the fifteenth century; and arms and armour from beginning to end. Narratives become useful in the fifteenth century; and pictorial evidence increases with the passage from manuscript to print, illustrating the growing emphasis on ballet, opera and hybrid spectacle, and the decay of the tournament's original martial purpose.

Keywords: combat; narratives; treatises; armour; challenges; opera; ballet.

Crossing Borders: Comparative and Transnational Approaches to Court and Civic Festivals in Early Modern Europe

BRAM VAN LEUVEREN, Lecturer in Arts, Culture, and Media Studies at the University of Groningen, The Netherlands.

This article pays tribute to J. R. Mulryne's cross-national and cross-disciplinary scholarship on festival culture in early modern Europe and seeks to identify and explore avenues for future research on festival occasions in which his pioneering scholarship can be implemented and further expanded. Its focus is on comparative approaches to court and civic festivals. By drawing on insights from cultural and postcolonial studies, the article proposes an all-encompassing comparative approach to festival culture in early modern Europe that seeks to acknowledge both the mediated nature and immaterial and intangible aspects of festive occasions, including beliefs, ideas, institutions, languages, practices, structures, diplomatic solutions and strategies, and spectatorial responses.

Keywords: comparative; transnational; cultural exchange; historical methodology; court and civic festival culture.

Dancing in Late Sixteenth-Century France: The Greek Legacy

MARGARET M. MCGOWAN, CBE, FBA, Research Professor, University of Sussex, UK

The experiments in blending poetry, music and dance in the *Académie de Poésie et de Musique* founded in 1571 have been carefully studied. This article assesses the evidence available for these beliefs, explores how far they were known outside the Academy, and considers the parallels perceived between Greek dancing and sixteenth-century French performances. The principal sources will be examined: the works of Hesiod, Plutarch and – above all – the *Dialogues* of Lucian of Samosata and the *Orations* of Libanius. The role of Blaise de Vigenère in the transmission of such ideas through his annotations of the *Images* of Philostratus and the *Décades* of Livy will be emphasized, and their influence on the practice of late sixteenth-century dancing.

Keywords: Greek choreography; expressive power of dance; Renaissance dance theory and practice.

“Con sinfonie e balli superbi”. Drammaturgia dei balletti alla ‘magnifica corte’ di Lorenzo Onofrio Colonna (Roma 1659-1689)

VALENTINA PANZANARO, PhD, University of Rome ‘La Sapienza’

The aim of this article is to analyse the cultural phenomenon of Baroque dance that emerges from the Roman theatrical production and from the numerous public or private occasions in which dance is often the protagonist in ‘feste’ or convivial parties as reported in the archival sources of the Colonna family in the second half of the seventeenth century. Careful reading and comparison of all sources, librettos, scores, reports, *avvisi* and engravings, allow us to know, even if only through an allusion, a phrase, a word, the dramaturgy of ballets as multifaceted social phenomenon. In them, dance plays a role not only as an accessory or purely decorative element, but also as an ideological and political signifier. Dancing represents an ideal world in which the Roman aristocracy reflected itself, offering the viewer messages that are clearly self-celebrating and easily decipherable.

Keywords: Colonna; *balletto*; dramaturgy; dance master; theatrical engraving.

Celebrating as a Nation. The Festival Life of Foreign Communities and Identity Building in Early Modern Rome

TOBIAS C. WEIßMANN, *Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz*

This paper examines the festival culture of the foreign communities based in early modern Rome in a comparative perspective and discusses how religious ceremonies and profane festivities helped to generate and intensify their collective identities. The analysis of engravings, festival books, libretti and other archive sources will demonstrate how both through performative participation in ritual ceremonies and by means of visual arts and music, individuals and institutions from different local origins asserted themselves as *natio* – in the pre-modern sense of a community that feels connected through common language, traditions and religious rites – and presented themselves to the Roman and European public as a national community.

Keywords: concepts of national identity in the Early Modern period; festival culture; rites; ephemeral art and architecture; music.

Tra festa e spettacolo: un "Sacrificio" accademico per il Carnevale senese

MATTEO TAMBORRINO, *University of Florence, Pisa and Siena*

This paper aims to analyse *Sacrificio*, an ironical and misogynistic ritual collectively celebrated in Siena on the day of Epiphany 1532 by the *Accademia degli Intronati*, as a sort of prologue to the carnival celebrations of that year. Starting from a historical analysis, an attempt is made to frame the event in light of the concept of 'hybridism', one of the main traits of sixteenth century Siennese theatre: *Sacrificio*, in fact, combines different artforms, including poetry, acting, music, and dance. By connecting the bibliography related to the activity of the *Intronati* with the rest of the ceremony (namely, its dramaturgical residue), this paper investigates the poems contained in the *editio princeps* of 1537, reproduced in the anastatic edition by Newbiggin. An extensive knowledge of Petrarchist style, although overturned in a parodistic way, emerges from madrigals and sonnets.

Keywords: Siennese theatre; Accademia degli Intronati of Siena; music; poetry; ritual.

Stretching the truth: festivity, re-enactment and creative invention

H. NEVILLE DAVIES, *Senior Research Fellow, University of Birmingham*

A magnificent feast known to have been hosted by Cardinal Wolsey becomes in Shakespeare and Fletcher's *King Henry VIII*, 1.4, the occasion of Henry's first encounter with Anne Boleyn. The pair dance together, and the play gives significantly greater attention to dancing than does the chronicle source that is being adapted. When, in the 1790s, Thomas Stothard depicted Henry speaking to Anne at the end of the dance he too, exercising similar creative freedom, introduces a new element. It responds, in part, to Veronese's *Mars and Venus United by Love*, and shows in the background the musician Mark Smeton, who will some years later be executed for supposed adultery with Anne, closely observing Anne and Henry from a minstrels' gallery.

Keywords: Shakespeare; Fletcher; Stothard; Henry VIII; Veronese; Boleyn; Smeton.

Performance in French Court Festivals under François I^{er}

RICHARD COOPER, *Emeritus Professor of French, Master of St Benet's Hall, Fellow and former Vice-Principal of Brasenose College, University of Oxford*

This article concerns performances put on at the French Court between 1515 and 1547, excluding royal entries and tournaments, and focusing on two periods, 1515-1520 and 1539-1547. The earlier period saw the construction by Italian artists of special pavilions for banquets and entertainments with the use of machines, as well as mythological and chivalric pageants for carnival. The later saw the introduction of Italian comedy to mark events like baptisms, marriages and carnival, and the introduction of Italian dances, acrobatic displays and masquerades, with the royal family and courtiers vying to dress up in ever more bizarre disguises as trees, chickens and lobsters, or other creations which ambassadors present found impossible to interpret.

Keywords: machines; masquerades; pageant; carnival; Italian comedy; banquets; baptism; weddings; dancing; chivalry; François I^{er}.

La “grande salle du bal” et son rôle dans la formation de la salle de théâtre rectangulaire à la françaiseMONIQUE CHATENET, *conservateur en chef honoraire du patrimoine et membre honoraire au Centre André Chastel (CNRS, Paris)*

The “*grandes salles du bal*” erected for Court Festivals in 16th century France had a relatively brief existence. Inherited in many ways from the medieval great halls, they were built from the 1540s onward by the most famous architects (Delorme, Lescot, Primaticcio) in the main residences of the Valois monarchs, or included in Du Cerceau’s grandiose projects for Caterina de’ Medici. Their fashion spread to the residences of the greatest noble families of the time. It continued a little under the Bourbon kings, the last examples being those of Marie de Medici in Luxembourg Palace. Around 1640, they disappeared completely to make way for the *Salon à l’italienne*. However, they are not without lineage since their shape is undeniably visible in the rectangular theatre hall à la française of the seventeenth century.

Keywords: ballroom; theatre hall; theatre; French court festivals; Du Cerceau; Delorme; Lescot; Primaticcio.

“L’Art du luxe”: Claude-François Ménéstrier et la rhétorique du feu d’artificeNIKOLA PIPERKOV, *PhD (History of Art from Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, associate researcher at CNRS)*

This article examines the theory and the practice of fireworks in the work of C.-F. Ménéstrier. In seventeenth-century Lyons, Ménéstrier teamed with the best painters and engravers, namely T. Blanchet and N. Auroux, with whom he created the splendid *Réjouissances de la Paix* (20 March 1660). This spectacle can be explained through a theoretical piece of writing (*Advis nécessaire pour la conduite des feux d’artifice*) showing that the element of fire plays a crucial role in public celebrations. Its presence in Christian celebrations is derived from the *autodafés*. Ménéstrier also suggests that fireworks can lead to an *inamoramento* and can be thus used as an eloquent luminous language able to ignite the spark of love in the hearts of the viewers.

Keywords: early modern fireworks; symbolic meaning of light and fire; visual rhetoric; history of Lyons.

La messa in scena della “Calandria” di Bibbiena a Lione il 27 settembre 1548CARLO FANELLI, *University of Calabria*

Bernardo Dovizi da Bibbiena’s *Calandria* is one of early Italian Renaissance’s most famous comedies. Successfully staged several times during the Sixteenth century, it became the subject of systematic investigation after the rediscovery of the Renaissance comic tradition. Its first representation, which took place in Urbino on 6 February 1513, drew considerable scholarly interest; other studies focused, and partially shed light, on its representations in Rome the following year. Another significant episode in the staging history of the *Calandria* is its lavish representation in Lyon in 1548, which however remains underexplored. The present essay focuses precisely on this representation, and especially on the interpretation of its intermissions, with the aim to highlight its peculiarities in the dramatic panorama of its time.

Keywords: Renaissance Italian theatre; comedy; Cazzuola Troup; Italian theatre in France; Bibbiena; Peruzzi; scenography.

Il “Paradiso” di Leonardo da Vinci. Politica, astrologia e teatroFRANCESCA BORTOLETTI, *University of Minnesota*

On 13 January 1490, in the ‘Sala Verde’ of the Ducal Palace, Leonardo da Vinci staged a pagan *Paradise*, reproducing the motion of the seven planets orbiting round and hosting the seven gods of Olympus, who came to earth to pay homage to the new duchess, Isabella d’Aragona, and celebrate Ludovico’s political power. By restoring the performing event within the historical, political, and cultural context of Ludovico Sforza’s court, this article explores models, networks, and heritage of Leonardo’s *ingegno*. This study offers a new interpretation of the political significance of the theatrical performance and its impact in the early modern politics and artistic-scientific life, inaugurating a new genre of premodern dramaturgy, which reflects a new idea of theater as a privileged place of *Sapienza* and memorability.

Keywords: Leonardo da Vinci; ephemeral; politics; theatrical *ingegno*; *theatrum mundi*.

A political interpretation of a proscenium arch designed by Francesco Romanelli for the opera "San Bonifazio" (1638)

LEILA ZAMMAR, *Loyola University of Chicago JFRC*

This article offers an interpretation of a drawing held in the Metropolitan Museum of New York, showing an incomplete proscenium arch of a stage with the crest of the Barberini family. Since the drawing is by the artist Francesco Romanelli, who was one of the artists chosen by the Barberini to design works of art that could be a good means of conveying their political propaganda, it is likely that this arch had some hidden political meaning. In the payment records of the operas sponsored by the Barberini, Romanelli's name appears only in the payment records for the opera *San Bonifacio* staged at Palazzo della Cancelleria in Rome for the Carnival season 1638. Therefore, this article aims at revealing the hidden political meaning of this proscenium arch through an original interpretation of the images shown. It also offers a possible reconstruction of the entire arch made according to the analysis of the historical events related to the Barberini family at the time of the performance and the iconography usually chosen by them to convey their political messages.

Keywords: Francesco Romanelli; proscenium arch; scenography; iconography; Barberini family; Francesco Barberini; *San Bonifazio*; Carnival 1638.

Spectacles of Fire and Water: Performing the Destructive Forces of Early Modern Naval Battles

FELICIA M. ELSE, *Gettysburg College, PA*

J. R. Mulryne's study of the naval battle, or *naumachia*, staged in the Palazzo Pitti courtyard in Florence for the 1589 wedding of Ferdinando I de' Medici and Christine of Lorraine points out the vivid, borderline unpleasant experience that audiences would have felt in such an enclosed space. This study takes inspiration from Mulryne's work by looking at the pairing of water and fire in 16th century representations and performances of naval battles. An astounding level of manipulation and choreography was needed to bring together these two unpredictable and dangerous elements of nature. Contemporaries were struck by the wondrous but terrifying displays of fire on water, conveying an impression of destructive power, altogether fitting given the terrifying experience of real maritime warfare.

Keywords: Ferdinand I de' Medici; 1589 wedding; fire; water; *naumachia*; naval battle.

"Ecce Sacerdos Magnus": The Entry of Giovan Francesco Morosini, Brescia 1591

IAIN FENLON, *Emeritus Professor of Historical Musicology, Fellow and former Vice-Provost of King's College (University of Cambridge), Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and of the Royal Historical Society*

In 1591 Cardinal Giovan Francesco Morosini, made his ceremonial entry into Brescia to take possession of his episcopal seat. Many aspects of his illustrious career as a diplomatic in the service of Venice and the Papacy is reflected in the iconography of the temporary arches erected along a *via triumphalis*. Their prominent themes of civic devotion and identity culminated in the final ceremonies at the Cathedral where Morosini was received with the performance of a sixteen-voice motet in the Venetian polychoral manner. This drew music into a complex rhetorical vocabulary, dependent upon historical, classical, and religious themes, which at a time of considerable economic instability resonated with the re-assuring assertion of local traditions.

Keywords: Giovan Francesco Morosini; Marco Publio Fontana; entry; *via triumphalis*; motet; Venice; Papacy; Constantinople; France.

Sens et fonctions de l'ornement dans l'entrée royale en France au XVII^e siècle

MARIE-CLAUDE CANOVA-GREEN, *Goldsmiths' College, University of London*

Louis XIII's entry into Paris, 1628, shows how the royal entry played paradoxically with the notion of ornament. Far from being an accessory, ornament is used in the entry as a necessary event which ensures the good functioning of the ceremony. Everything can be seen as ornament, from the ephemeral architectural structures which line the processional route to the images and devices emblemizing royal power that decorate them to the affection displayed by the crowds, also an 'ornament' – the greatest and most necessary of all. The entry and its record play out a dialectic between the simple and the multiple, in order to translate visually the way in which a discourse, saturated with stylistic figures, offers immediate evidence of the incomparable power and greatness of the monarch who parades before all.

Keywords: royal entry; ornamentation; superfluous vs essential; magnificence; royal power; popular affection; wonder.



Teatro y Escenografía en Florencia en la segunda mitad del Seicento. Mutaciones fin de siglo
ESTHER MERINO, *Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM)*

From the fifteenth century, Florence inaugurated a festive typology of which there was hardly equivalent in other parts, whose best exponent was Brunelleschi. Since the mid-cinquecento Giorgio Vasari and Bernardo Buontalenti are owed the codification of the figure of the “set designer”, in addition to the speculative vertebration of the “Fiesta”, anchored in the Orphic thinking inherent in the symbolic interpretation of the Good Government ideology, codified iconographically from the *Intermezzi*. Although it is Giulio Parigi who best exemplifies the total artist, “through absolute control of entertainment or the royal spectacles. Regarding the copies of several fundamental works of the History of the Scenography - in a sequence that combines continuity from Parigi, through his son Alfonso and Ferdinando Tacca, Stefano della Bella, Giacompo Chiavistelli, Antonio Ferri, Filippo Acciaiuoli - preserved among the funds of the National Library of Spain (BNE), the tour through the analysis of the future of Florence of the last Medici is proposed, at the dawn of a new century and its use of theatrical resources.

Keywords: History of the seventeenth-century stage in Florence; royal spectacles; Ferdinando Tacca; Stefano della Bella; Giacompo Chiavistelli; Antonio Ferri; Filippo Acciaiuoli.

Performance and Intelligentsia around the Inauguration of an Equestrian Statue in the Eighteenth Century

FERNANDO MATOS OLIVEIRA, *University of Coimbra/Portugal*

MARIA LUÍSA MALATO, *University of Porto/Portugal*

This essay proposes a performative reading of the inauguration of the equestrian statue of the Portuguese king D. José I in 1775 as an event, based on the conceptual perspectives of both R. Schechner and E. Fischer-Lichte about culture as performance, specific conditions of mediality and materiality, and also based on the views of J. Rancière about the distribution of the sensible. The set of these celebrations expands socially in the king’s court, in great houses and on the street. They are a frequent example of “bad literature”, because they “vulgarize”, starting from an aristocratic circles, centered on the King and the Court, reaching an emerging popular class that then reorganizing itself sensibly through reading, theater going and the participation in bourgeois salons (“functions”, “assemblies” or “partidas”).

Keywords: Modern Age; cultural performances; spectatorship and participation; literature; science; politics; intelligentsia.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Prayer and Performance in the Middle Ages: Two Unpublished Processional and Animated Sculptures of the Crucified Christ from Piedmont

MELANIE ZEFFERINO, *independent art curator and historian*

Relatively few animated sculptures used for devotional practices in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries have survived to this day. They are remnants of a past in which liturgy and drama conjoined through sacred representations staged envisaging mechanical or manually operated figures, the origins of which date to the thirteenth century if not earlier. Bearing witness to that devotional practice are two early fifteenth-century sculptures of the Crucified Christ once belonging to female oratories of the Third Order Secular in two distinct feuds of fifteenth-century Piedmont, Trinità and Chieri. Through an analysis of the physical and aesthetic characteristics of these processional sculptures, one of which is clearly an animated figure, this paper aims to cast light on the dramatic character of devotional practices envisaging their use amongst laywomen leading a penitential life, thus known as the ‘humiliates’.

Keywords: animated sculpture; Crucified Christ; processional sculpture; Humiliates.

FOCUS***JRM: inspirational colleague, teacher, scholar and friend***

MARGARET SHEWRING, *Emeritus Reader, Theatre and Performance Studies, and Honorary Research Fellow, Centre for the Study of the Renaissance, University of Warwick, UK*

J. R. (Ronnie) Mulryne inspired generations of students and scholars, developing resources and a scholarly framework for the interdisciplinary study of European Renaissance culture and of the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries in performance in their own time and today. My contribution to the Focus section of this “special issue” offers an overview, from a personal viewpoint, of just some of his wide-ranging passions and achievements that can, perhaps, serve to contextualise his contribution to advancing the study of “Performance and Spectacle in Early Modern Europe”.

Keywords: Cambridge; research collaborations; European culture; performance spaces, Shakespeare’s Globe, Stratford-upon-Avon’s Guildhall

An all-round master of arts: working with Ronnie Mulryne

IAN BROWN, *playwright and poet, Professor Emeritus in Drama at Kingston University, London, and Honorary Senior Research Fellow in Scottish Literature at Glasgow University.*

The author explores his working friendship of over half a century with Professor J. R. (Ronnie) Mulryne. After outlining early encounters at Edinburgh University – Mulryne as his tutor, then research supervisor – the author discusses his impact, before moving to Warwick in 1977, on his early playwriting career and on the wider Scottish academic and theatre scene. Mulryne’s role in national academic developments then coincided with the author’s work in English higher-education Drama and, soon after the author became Arts Council Drama Director in 1986, Mulryne joined his advisory panel as a highly influential member. After the Arts Council term of office, Mulryne remained a key figure in British theatre as Chair in the 1990s of the British Council Drama and Dance Advisory Committee. Over the last twenty-five years of Mulryne’s life, his life and the author’s intertwined through personal, professional, research and creative contact.


Keywords: creative friendship; theatre research; British theatre; Arts Council of Great Britain; British Council.

L’orizzonte europeo di J. R. Mulryne. Vent’anni di rinnovamento dei Festival Studies

MARIA INES ALIVERTI, *University of Pisa (retired 2012)*

This article considers the scholarship of Festival Studies from 1998, when the “Europa Triumphans Programme” was launched at Warwick University under the guidance of J. R. (Ronnie) Mulryne, until 2018 when he co-organized “his” last conference in Cambridge. This recognition aims to evidence the role of the “Europa Triumphans” project in promoting Festival Studies as a highly important inter-disciplinary and trans-cultural research field. Major aspects of the project, which accompanied or followed the first great output of two volumes in 2004, are discussed: printed and digitised texts, digitisation projects, the Society for European Festivals Research, conferences promoted by the Society in different European locations, publication of research monographs etc. This complex evolution is also considered in relation to other highly valuable research enterprises and /or research teams and institutions with which the team of “Europa Triumphans” collaborated, in particular the ESF-funded PALATIUM.

Keywords: J. R. (Ronnie) Mulryne (1937-2019); European festival studies, 1998-2018; “Europa Triumphans” project; Society for European Festivals Research (SEFR); Renaissance festivals resources.



This “special issue”, written in response to an invitation from Donatella Gavrilovich to celebrate the work of J. R. (Ronnie) Mulryne (May 1937-January 2019), focuses largely on one particular aspect of his teaching, personal scholarship and collaborative research, an aspect to which he was passionately committed for more than thirty years: “Performance and Spectacle in Early Modern Europe”.

European festivals from around 1400-1700, defined less by period and more by a process of generic evolution, offered a rich and enticing combination, and extension, of many of Ronnie’s life-long interests – including literature, poetry and drama, history, art history, languages (ancient and modern), the performing arts (especially the design and organisation of performance spaces, plays, music, dance and scenography), architecture and material culture. He understood the importance of studying festivals with all the tools of cross-disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity – both in their own right and comparatively – in an attempt to understand their place in documenting, reflecting and shaping local, national and international events and community identities, as well as their own legacy in diaries, letters, festival accounts and engravings, in the work of poets, composers, choreographers and

playwrights and in the records of those engaged in the practical realisation of such festival events.

When invited to be editors of this issue of *Arti dello Spettacolo / Performing Arts*, we understood all too clearly the attractions and hazards of what was inevitably a wide-reaching call for papers, sent out in the late autumn of 2019 – themed not by a particular aspect of festivals research but by Ronnie’s own work and its legacy in relation to the study of what has become such a challenging and inspiring field – with the possibility for contributors to write in the language of their choice and, where appropriate, to integrate within that writing illustrations of the visual languages of the festivals they chose to discuss. Little could we have guessed that much of the world was about to enter a period of increasing restriction and lockdown in the face of what we now know as the Covid-19 pandemic.

We are grateful to all those, from among Ronnie’s long-term collaborators in European festival studies, to members the Society for European Festivals Research, and to scholars, archivists and curators – at all stages of their careers – for contributing to this issue; some working in the true spirit of collaboration to help each other access sources and to navigate the selection of images in the face of the closures of libraries, galleries, and numerous specialist collections of cultural artefacts. Many of those included have

Introduction

Margaret Shewring and Leila Zammar


asked us to make the issue-readers aware that not all the details in the contributors' writing could be developed or checked as they would have wished for the accuracy of references and quotations.

Ronnie would have been delighted with the rich variety of the articles here, from those adding to what we know of specific festivals to those offering challenges for new directions in research methodologies, or contributing to the wider analysis of the place of festivals and their legacies in the context of later centuries, including in relation to twenty-first century socio-political and economic concerns of migration, inclusivity and diversity, the significance of 'cities of culture' and the political resonances of statues. He would have appreciated, too, the articles in the Focus section, for situating his festival research within the wider context of his personal interests including his involvement with the community in Stratford-upon-Avon.

Many of the festival publications in which he was involved had their roots in conferences and study days across Europe, the US and the UK with papers subsequently further researched for publication. He understood that location and context play a crucial part in the contextual understanding of festivals past and more recent. During the last phases of editing this "special issue", while reviewing all the articles received, we came to believe that Ronnie would have

appreciated our collective offering all the more because it could be considered as fulfilling one of the wishes he was not able to realize because of his untimely death: to organize a conference in Rome, the capital city of one of the countries he had loved most.

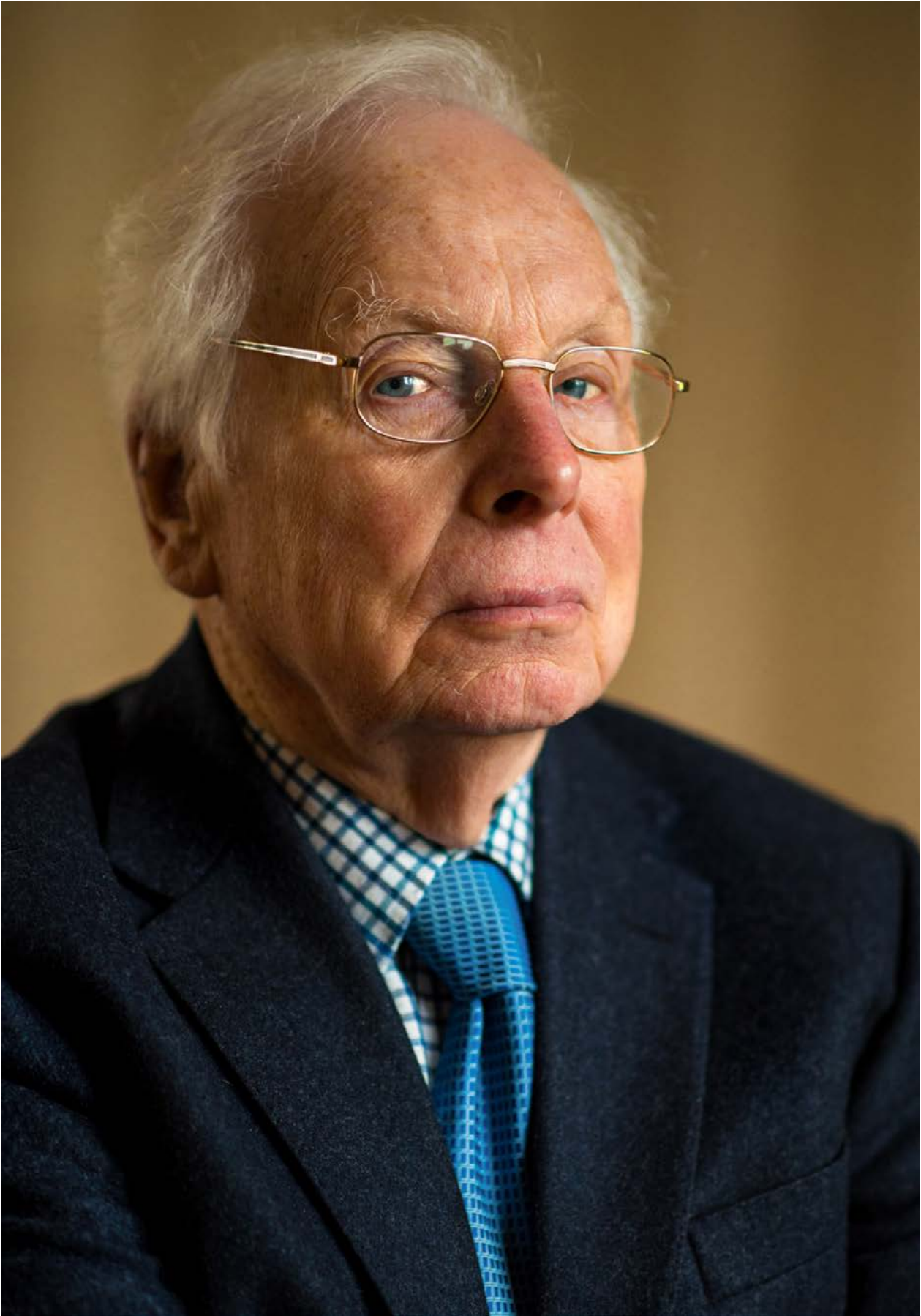
There is a particular synergy between the Focus article in which Maria Ines Aliverti – a long-time friend and research collaborator, writing in Italian, explains the scale and complexity of this field of study from the viewpoint of her own involvement – and Ronnie's own last completed intervention in festivals research, written in English, a chapter in Michele Marrapodi's edited, multi-contributor volume, the *Routledge Research Companion to Anglo-Italian Renaissance Literature and Culture*, published in late 2019. This, we think, may well not yet have been read by those contributing to this issue (again almost certainly as a consequence of Covid-19 and of the restrictions already imposed and continuing to be imposed in attempts to eradicate its threat). In his chapter on "The scholarship of Italian and English renaissance festivals" Ronnie traced the emergence of festival studies within a European context and more widely, from finding lists and bibliographies of resources and printed publications to the scholarship of Italian festival in a much broader context than the one suggested by the *Research Companion's* title, from the proliferation of electronic resources, and from



single 'national or academic-specialist' contexts to large-scale, collaborative, interdisciplinary initiatives. The final sentences of his conclusion serve as both a challenge and an inspiration:

the study of festival must rank among the most demanding academic disciplines, requiring for its satisfactory pursuit a range of interests and competences that include a command of, or at least a reasonable acquaintance with, a set of skills normally sheltered within traditional boundaries. Thus a working knowledge of, or preferably a fluency in several European languages, modern and classical, is desirable, while acquaintance with current if not cutting-edge research in say cultural and political history, economics, architecture and the theory and practice of indoor and outdoor theatre – territories often jealously guarded by accredited practitioners – is almost obligatory. Advances in printed and electronic finding aids will not make these boundaries more porous, but they may well assist the student-scholar in navigating what must seem otherwise a thoroughly intimidating landscape.

It was in 'pursuit of this hope', he explains, that what became his last sole-authored, posthumously-published, chapter was researched and written. He would, as always, have been eager to engage with, and to be a part of, what he perceived to be inspiring new directions.



History of the Chivalric Tournament: A New Approach

Sydney Anglo

Some sixty years ago, Ruth Harvey – in her study, *Moriz von Craûn and the Chivalric World* – boldly declared that the tournament “has always been reckoned the most typical and absolute manifestation of the chivalric outlook” (Harvey 1961: 112). This statement, though in a work sometimes deemed authoritative, raises several major problems. The very word ‘tournament’ comprised many different types of activity throughout its history. How long is ‘always’? And it is hard to know what the ‘chivalric outlook’ might have been, or how the ‘tournament’ was its typical and absolute manifestation. Yet writers on chivalry, from the seventeenth century onwards – with the notable exception of Kenelm Digby – have countenanced notions of this kind. For Richard Barber “the tournament may be fairly described as the central ritual of chivalry” (1980: 155); for Larry Benson it was “the most characteristic expression of chivalric ideals” (1980: 1); and for Maurice Keen its popularity and the way it brought knights together from far and wide made it a “powerful force towards generalising both the standards and the rituals of European chivalry” (1984: 82). Certainly it is in studies of chivalry that we most frequently encounter embryonic histories of the ‘tournament’ and of the various modes of mock combat associated with it. This is because it is much easier to write a brief generalized survey of almost any subject, however complex it may be, than to pursue all its ramifications, incongruities and complexities in a book¹.

Even before the advent of the printing press, and long afterwards, heralds and other interested parties were busy gathering information about

mock combats. When dealing with some specific aspect of their work (such as the Orders of Knighthood, armorial bearings, or the tournament itself) they evidently felt a compulsion not only to set it within an historical framework but more especially to establish how it began. This appetite for discovering antecedents – rather akin to the zeal of modern genealogists – was voracious and uncritical. In 1555, for example, Jean Le Feron’s book on the institution of the heralds scarcely ever reached anything more modern than the age of Charlemagne because the author was an archetypal seeker after origins. For the men largely responsible for organizing tournaments it was a major preoccupation to establish who had ‘invented’ them. Could it have been the ancient Greeks, the Trojans or the Romans? Perhaps Uther Pendragon or his son King Arthur deserved the honour? Or an Angevin baron Geoffrey de Preuilly, active in the mid-eleventh century, who was sometimes thrust forward as the inventor. But eventually it was the German king Henry the Fowler (c. 876-936) who won the most support, and this was thanks to the printing press. Henry’s claims were advanced by Georg Rûxner whose popular *Thurnierbuch* was first published in 1530. Rûxner went further by including a plausible account of 36 major German ‘national’ tournaments between 939 and 1487 which were accepted as genuine and cited by many later writers. Unfortunately, more than half of these tournaments were fabrications but, as the sports historian Joachim Rûhl has observed, Rûxner must have

earned a fortune by entering the antecedents of families of noble descent who were only too proud to see their famous ancestors, along with hitherto unknown progenitors, listed in his book (1990: 166).

An interesting alternative view of the origins of the

tournament was later suggested by the historian Claude Fauchet who maintained that, from about the beginning of the eleventh century, romances came into vogue and inspired knights to defend the weak and oppressed; and it was, he argued, in imitation of those ancients, that knights in the courts of contemporary princes more willingly made profession of valour and virtuous strength. But, because the knights were not always engaged in wars, the great kings and lords sometimes published abroad “*des assembles d'armes: appelez Tournois*” (1606: 9v). On this view the inspiration was deemed to be both romantic and military: but the *ne plus ultra* of romanticism came with Charles Mills in his *History of Chivalry* (1825) when he assured his readers that all their “most delightful imaginings of chivalry are associated with the tournament” where they would see

in fancy's mirror the gay and graceful knight displaying on his plumed steed the nobleness of his bearing, and the lady of his affections smiling upon his gallant skill, while the admiring people in rude and hearty joy shout their loud acclaims (1825: I, 259).

The history of the chivalric tournament poses some seemingly inextricable problems. As I have stated elsewhere, the metamorphosis “from violence to variety show”, although a pan-european phenomenon, did not proceed at the same pace in all countries nor always in the same ways. In France it evolved into the *Ballet du Cour*; in England into the court masque; and in Italy into the opera. Even more problematic is the fact that the sources available at different periods and in different places are often so divergent in type and quantity that we must ask whether it is even *possible* to put together a coherent general history of the tournament? Certainly these difficulties have been tacitly recognised by scholars who have, since the seventeenth century, largely proceeded by writing essays on specific aspects of the subject; by researching local history; by concentrating on regional activities; by publishing and commenting on primary sources; and by delimiting the period under scrutiny. In this way, the subject has been broken up into myriad fragments; and the modern tendency has been to deal with such historical complexities by organising conferences and then publishing the individual contributions as a collection. Much of this work is erudite and interesting, but it is generally very disparate. Even

such a well-known volume as Fleckenstein's *Das ritterliche Turnier im Mittelalter* (1985) is simply a miscellany. It is often cited and it has been described by one otherwise-reliable scholar as “*the* book on the European tournament”. But it is difficult to see how this can be the case when it is wholly confined to the Middle Ages and – of its 20 chapters – 16 relate to Germany. Similarly, the fashionable and very weighty exhibition catalogues which purport to offer a solution to the problem of diversity do no such thing. Any readers who work their way through these handsome compilations might be forgiven for thinking that tournaments were an exclusively German phenomenon. Indeed, the only exhibition (and its associated catalogue) which made a serious attempt at international coverage was Lena Rangström's *Riddarlek och Tornerspell. Tournaments and the Dream of Chivalry* (Stockholm, 1992) in which the essays were necessarily brief. There have, of course, also been some important monographs by scholars such as Martina Neumeyer, Évelyne van den Neste, and Noel Fallows – but they invariably deal with a particular period, area, or type of source; and they do not have the space to pursue the subject as it moves away from the lists and towards the theatre. Given the range, bulk and disparity of the sources involved and the impossibility of organising them into a coherent narrative, it is not surprising that, within the last century, there have been only three attempts to write what purport to be general histories of the tournament. The first was Francis Henry Cripps-Day's *The Tournament in England and France* (1918) which – though limited geographically and despite ending with a cursory chapter on the sixteenth century – remains useful for its solid annotation and appendices of documents and calendars. A year later Richard Coltman Clephan published *The Tournament. Its Periods and Phases* which is one of the most disjointed works ever written on its subject but included German material which was not, at the time, easily found in English sources. And finally, seventy years further on, Richard Barber and Juliet Barker published their *Tournaments. Jousts, Chivalry and Pageants in the Middle Ages* which tackles the intransigent subject by devoting separate chapters to different geographical areas and to some specific topics such as the dangers of tournaments, spiritual condemnation, and tournaments as social occasions. The book ranges

widely but is uneven, sometimes inaccurate and – because it ventures only timidly beyond the fifteenth century – leaves unresolved too many issues concerning the history of ideas.

An Alternative Strategy

These fragmented and partial studies bring me to the principal question. Is it even *feasible* to write a general history of the tournament? Is there any way to harmonize chronology, place, style, the tempo of change, and all the other divergent components of the subject? Perhaps not. But it might still be possible to achieve a more satisfactory result than hitherto if we were to proceed by way of the changing types (and quantities) of evidence available, while relating these to surviving pictorial and artefactual sources.

If we turn first to the ‘pre-history’ of tournament historiography (that is to the greater part of written material produced prior to the mid-eighteenth century), it is obvious that what we have are, for the most part, haphazard collections of materials compiled mainly by the officials who would themselves generally be called upon to organise such events – that is by heralds. Thus we have numerous copies of challenges and formularies from different parts of Europe: “Cries for Jousts of Peace”; “Cries for a tournament”; and “Proclamations for the award of prizes” – augmented by miscellaneous descriptions of individual combats. Such manuscripts relating to what we loosely term ‘tournaments,’ together with rules and regulations for judicial combat and single combats of honour, survive in abundance from the early fourteenth century onwards; and these were often gathered together by later scholars and bound up as miscellaneous volumes. For example, some of the richest collections of original challenges and related materials were put together in the seventeenth century by antiquaries such as François-Roger Gaignières: but they are not arranged systematically. Each is really an independent *omnium gatherum* compiled from whatever documents a particular herald (or antiquary) might have been able to lay his hands upon and each may, therefore, contain unique challenges, responses, and narratives. They are not histories. They are simply materials from which a scholar might have started to write some sort of

history, if he had thought of it. Other manuscript collections comprise documents which have been copied, and re-copied, one from another and thus form clusters (or families) of miscellanea. These, again, constitute an ample class of record; and one of the best-known English examples is Lansdowne MS 285 put together for Sir John Paston from around 1468 and scrupulously analysed, many years ago by G. A. Lester. This manuscript contains many texts relating to the officers of arms, their duties and their fees; to public ceremonial such as knightly creations and coronations; to the proclamation of jousts, along with specific letters of challenge, rules, regulations, and detailed narratives. For scholars, it is a wonderful thesaurus: even though a good many of the items contained therein may be found both in earlier and later manuscripts.

Then there are challenges and responses to challenges which survive from at least the thirteenth to the late seventeenth century (and even beyond), and these yield information not only on rules, regulations, and scoring, but also on changing purposes and social attitudes². And the way that such challenges become increasingly allegorical (and concerned to establish a dramatic setting for a *wholly rehearsed and choreographed* combat) enables us to follow tournaments from open field to theatre – throughout Europe.

The habit of amassing documents continued with the advent of the printing press. In 1535, for example, there appeared *Le fondement et origine des Tiltres de Noblesse* which, though quite short, still manages to include an account of empires, kingdoms, duchies, counties, and other lordships; the manner of creating officers of arms; and miscellaneous information on such subjects as blason, single combat, jousts, the *Bouhort*, the *Pas ou Barriere*, the award of prizes at tournaments, and the organization of a royal funeral. In other words, the author was putting into print precisely the kind of manuscript miscellany heralds had habitually compiled for themselves. With regard to the tournament itself, the greatest example of this agglomerative approach is in the first volume of Marc Vulson de la Colombière’s *Le Vray Théâtre d’Honneur* (1648), compiled when the old forms of contest had finally been transformed into quite different activities.

Another evolution may be traced in what may loosely be described as literary sources. Certainly



for the earliest chivalric mock combats the documentary and financial records are so limited that we are forced to rely on what are known as romances, and we have largely to gamble on their value as evidence of what really happened when knights met in tournaments. Whatever their literary merits the early romances are a hard and stoney soil for the historian to till, even though some episodes of combat are evidently based upon first-hand observation. Indeed Léon Gautier, the industrious nineteenth-century historian of chivalry, was able to reconstruct a credible composite account of an early tournament on the basis of details selected from several romances. On the whole, though, these poems remain proportionately more the products of imagination than of experience and their principal value is, paradoxically, for providing sources for the themes of later tournaments when the contests were evolving as dramatic entertainments. Even a sophisticated study such as that by Ruth Harvey on *Moriz von Craûn* does not, in fact, provide a clear idea either of chronology or of what early tournaments were really like.

On the other hand some poems purport to be biographical and have encouraged extrapolation by historians although they should not inspire the confidence of anyone who has ever had dealings with eye-witness reports - especially as recorded decades later by a third party. The exploits of William the Marshal, for instance, tell us something about tourneying in the twelfth century but, as Larry D. Benson observed, many years ago:

Since the tournaments described by Jean the Minstrel had taken place more than half a century before, and since these accounts were based largely on William's recollections as passed on to the poet by his son and Jean d'Erlée, we must approach this record with considerable caution (1980: 7).

Even this caveat is an understatement and, biographically-speaking, we are not on firmer ground until we reach descriptions of the feats of warriors such as Jacques de Lalaing, Gaston de Foix or Bayard in the lists.

In the same way - apart from remote precursors in the poetic accounts recorded in the *Roman du Hem* and the *Tournoi de Chauvency* towards the end of the thirteenth century - significant narratives of specific tournaments are rare until the fifteenth century when we have detailed descriptions of

the *pas d'armes* of René d'Anjou and the series of Burgundian festivals so fully described by Olivier de la Marche and Matthieu d'Escouchy.

As for fiction? Well some later writers - Spenser for example - are well-nigh useless, apart from demonstrating all too clearly what they *cannot* tell us; but there are others, like Antoine de la Sale in the fifteenth century, and Sir Philip Sidney in the late sixteenth, who are extremely knowledgeable and circumstantial, and convey a good deal of technical information for the historian of chivalric combat. Literary sources cover tournaments from the beginning to the end of their history but are scattered and sporadic. By contrast, treatises on fighting techniques (and lance-play in particular) are very informative but only become prolific from the mid-fifteenth century - after which there is a long sequence of texts (in Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, German, and French) which take us well into the seventeenth century. These text-books were written by men of considerable practical experience - such as Duarte King of Portugal, Ponç de Menaguerra, Juan Quixada de Reayo, Federico Ghisliero, and several others - and allow us to understand a good deal about jousting and foot combat which we cannot find in literary sources. They demonstrate dramatically the changing nature of the combats as they move away from physical danger to the safety of the horse ballets, as we may see exemplified in treatises on horsemanship culminating in Pluvinel's *Le Maneige royal* (1623). Similarly, the works of Bartolomeo Sereno, Giovan' Battista Gaiani, and Bonaventura Pistofilo underline the increasing gentleness of barriers and foot combats as these exercises approximated increasingly to the dance.

A comparative study of the artefacts associated with all the different modes of fighting can also provide valuable information about changes of purpose and habits: from violent conflict until the final transformation into pure theatre: from metal to pasteboard; or from heavy metal-tipped lances to blunted flimsy staves baked in ovens to ensure that they would be brittle enough to shatter at the slightest impact. Unfortunately, apart from inventories and some brief observations in manuscript, there is little analytical treatment of arms and armour in relation either to real warfare or to tournaments until René d'Anjou's *Traicté de la forme et devis d'ung tournoy* composed around 1460. Then again there is almost nothing until

the more comprehensive, though unillustrated, *De exercitiis* of Pero Monte in 1509; followed by the *Inventario iluminado* of the Real Armeria of Madrid; and then, in 1568 by Jeremias Schemel's monumental and magnificently illustrated, *Turnierbuch* manuscript copies of which are preserved in Vienna and Wolfenbüttel. However, what can be done with such sources and with the imaginative examination of surviving artefacts has been demonstrated by scholars such as Boccia, Riquer, and Gamber.

The same is true of factual narratives which become increasingly informative – both in relation to challenges, responses, rules, organization, and the actual combats fought – with some of the fifteenth-century sources being well-nigh exhaustive. I am thinking here, for example, of such chroniclers as Saint Remy, Olivier de la Marche, and Matthieu d'Escouchy; and also of Rodriguez de Lena's extraordinary eye-witness account of the *Passo Honroso* in 1434. But, in these narratives – for all their detailed concentration on arms, armour, and on the fighting itself – there is also an increasing attention to detail on costume, procedure, *mise-en-scène*, and theatrical performance. And many descriptions of contestants 'entering the lists' might just as accurately be described as simply 'listing the entries': with long processions of flashily-clad knights riding in ever-more fantastic and elaborate pavilions and pageant cars. The passage from manuscript to print enables us to trace this aspect of the history of tournaments far into the seventeenth century and even beyond; and some of the published narratives of later combats (enhanced with magnificent engravings) are substantial presentation volumes. Here we can document *with precision* the transformation of the chivalric tournament into pure spectacle; the ways in which they were choreographed as entertainment; and the increasing role of music, dance, and scenography, especially in France, Italy and Germany.

Finally, as I have already suggested, the volume and quality of graphic illustration grew enormously: and pictorial sources merit particular scrutiny. They reveal changing styles and preoccupations in perhaps the most effective manner available to the historian of European tournaments – ranging from crude but suggestive stereotypical manuscript illustrations of the mêlée and joust to masterly representations of mock, choreographed

battles such as the seven engravings illustrating the principal scenes of *the Discordia Superata. Torneo combattuto in Ferrara* in 1635 – a brilliant tournament conceived wholly as a theatre spectacle with a poetic text by Ascanio Pio di Savoia, music composed by Antonio Goretti, and stage machinery created by the architect/engineer Francesco Guitti. The chivalric tournament had come a long way.

A history not merely based upon such materials but using them as a structure would cover the entire history of the subject. It would illuminate the whole of Europe. It would clarify both relationships and irrelation. And it would enable us to understand exactly what we know and what we do not know since, for example, a gap in our knowledge of one geographical area which appears when we use one type of source might be filled simply by considering a different kind of evidence. Certainly, the long journey of the tournament from violent combat to theatrical performance, would be more completely documented and far more subtly gradated than hitherto. But they are neither as mysterious nor unbridgeable as they might at first seem. From the standpoint of the historian of ideas – of chivalry, of the transformation of knights into gentlemen, and of the development of court ballet and opera – the job is well worth doing.

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Notes

1 See Bibliography under Fauchet; Vulson; La Curne de Saint-Palaye; Gassier; Mills; James; Roy; Roy; Warre-Cornish.

2 See, for some examples, Anglo: 1962.

Crossing Borders: Comparative and Transnational Approaches to Court and Civic Festivals in Early Modern Europe

Bram van Leuveren

Introduction

J. R. Mulryne well understood that in order to come to terms with the essentially international and interdisciplinary nature of early modern European festival culture researchers are by definition prompted to cross borders. Those borders are both literal, dividing cities, regions, states, or entire continents, and metaphorical, distinguishing between scholarly disciplines such as anthropology, history of the arts (literature, music, theatre, fine arts), performance, fashion, and material culture studies, and diplomatic and political history. As a co-editor of the book series “European Festival Studies, 1450-1700”, which is now published by Brepols, Mulryne successfully brought together festival scholars who analysed the multiple and converging contexts in which court and civic festivals operated – cultural, economic, political, religious, social, and so on – through the lens of their own expertise. One of the last conferences that Mulryne helped organising for the Society for European Festivals Research, together with Richard Morris and Margaret Shewring, was aptly titled “Crossing Boundaries: Confessional, Political and Cultural Interactions in Early Modern Festivals and Diplomatic Encounters” (30 April-1 May 2018, Trinity Hall, University of Cambridge). The focus of the conference on the transnational and transcultural dimensions of festival culture, such as transnational exchanges between rulers and ambassadors, who frequently travelled between territories to attend or participate in celebratory occasions, or transcultural exchanges between the international designers and participants of

those occasions, was much indebted to Mulryne’s own research as a festival historian.

As an individual researcher, Mulryne pioneered border-crossing approaches to early modern festival culture. His work often examined aesthetic exchanges between national traditions of staging festivals. Mulryne’s contributions on the Medici festivals of the late sixteenth century and the celebrations for the 1613 wedding of the Palatine couple in London, Oppenheim, and Heidelberg, among others, have revealed how festival culture in early modern Europe was the product of both similar and dissimilar national concerns and influences (1992; 2012; [2013] 2016). Mulryne was particularly interested in how political authorities in England and Florence, and occasionally France and the German Protestant States, adapted or borrowed from each other’s aesthetic traditions to develop an iconography that would make audiences in those countries, as well as in other states and regions taking an interest in the spectacle and its politics, receptive to the festivals’ expressions of court and civic hierarchy and community. Although European festivals, as Mulryne succinctly put it, boasted “a wide range of recognisably common elements across national boundaries”, their “ceremonial language [...] [was] nonetheless typically occasional and flexibly adapted to the political and social circumstances of the moment” (2015: 1). He argued that it was precisely the adaptability of this “ceremonial language” that festival designers hoped to exploit in producing messages specific to the national and related dynastic interests of their international spectators, including rulers, diplomats, nobles, magistrates, students, commoners, and a wide range of non-state intelligencers, such as merchants, missionaries, spies, and consuls (*ibidem*).

This article pays tribute to Mulryne's border-crossing scholarship on early modern European festival culture and seeks to identify and explore avenues for future research on the topic in which his pioneering scholarship can be implemented and further expanded. It concentrates on comparative approaches to court and civic festivals which include Mulryne's focus on aesthetic exchanges between states, though extend beyond the exclusively aesthetic and transnational insofar as they enable comparison between any of the contexts in which festival culture operated, including cultural, diplomatic, economic, religious, political, social, as well as local and regional contexts. By drawing on insights from cultural and postcolonial studies, especially Homi K. Bhabha's concept of "newness" ([1994] 2004: 10), it proposes an all-encompassing comparative approach to festival culture. This approach not only takes into account individual artifacts, pageants, artistic styles, or literary source material, but also the mediated nature and immaterial or even intangible aspects of festive occasions, such as beliefs, ideas, institutions, languages, practices, structures, diplomatic solutions and strategies, and spectatorial responses.

This article will first discuss the relevance of comparative history for early modern festival scholarship within the context of Marc Bloch's proposal for an "histoire comparée" of Europe and the recent comparative turn in cultural history (see, e.g., Cohen - O'Connor 2004; Duindam 2010; Duindam - Artan - Kunt 2011; Levine 2014). It will then review some of the most salient challenges of doing comparative research as a festival scholar. Finally, I will indicate further avenues for research to which an all-encompassing comparative approach to festival culture, both with respect to historical sources (printed, material, and visual) and to specific immaterial and intangible "comparables" or aspects of festive occasions, can be applied. It should be noted that most of my examples in this regard relate to my own expertise, that is, the diplomatic context of the court and civic festival cultures of late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century France and the Low Countries.

Why compare?

Comparative approaches to history are by no means new. Already in 1928 Marc Bloch called for an "histoire comparée" of Europe to avoid the essentialism and compartmentalisation of nationalist and monodisciplinary historiography (Bloch 1928; Hill - Hill, Jr. 1980; Dosse [1987] 1994: 60-61). He took his cue from Henri Pirenne who five years before had passionately argued for a "méthode comparative" to counter the nationalist racism that had begun to emerge in response to rising international tensions (Pirenne 1923; Verhulst 2001). Bloch hoped that his – by now famous – proposal for a comparative methodology could equal the rigour of the social sciences and thus offer historians "un langage scientifique commun" (1928: 49). Rather than limiting oneself to a single case study, he encouraged historians to test their hypotheses against a wide range of similar examples from various historical periods and geographical territories. Bloch believed that examining historical phenomena within such a comparative framework constituted a more holistic approach to cultural history that could genuinely acknowledge and tackle the irreducible influences and interpenetrations that existed among Europe's various societies, languages, and institutions. Whereas Bloch's "histoire comparée" was still a novel approach in late 1920s Europe, more than a century later comparative history is thriving and regularly taught at, or frequently referenced in the curricula of, history departments across the Western world. Cultural historians working in fields relevant to the study of early modern festival culture, such as court, diplomacy, religion, rulership, and travel studies, continue to call for, and often consciously advance, a comparative approach to their respective objects and practices of research (e.g., Thomson 2006; Duindam 2010; Duindam - Artan - Kunt 2011; Rubiés - Ollé 2015; Kosior 2019).

Similar to Bloch's vision of an "histoire comparée", such a comparative approach does not study those objects and practices in isolation (for example, a single court, monarch, embassy, journey, or travelogue), but alongside examples that involve similar or shared elements and practices, whether separated in space or time. Its goal is to pinpoint meaningful patterns and divergences that can then be used to nuance or expand well-worn

generalisations. Just like Bloch, modern historians believe that the relevance of a comparative approach consists in its ability to deepen common or trite conceptions of historical phenomena, as well as transcend both national and disciplinary borders. Recent publications on topics of cultural historical importance argue that comparison may challenge nation-centred histories of early modern court and diplomatic culture (Thomson 2006; Duindam 2010; Duindam - Artan - Kunt 2011; van Leuveren 2019), subvert common perceptions of Tudor and Valois rulers as “the European norm” (Kosior 2019: 173), break down conventional barriers between East and West (Rubiés - Ollé 2015; Riello - Gerritsen - Biedermann 2018; Wei 2020), or draw attention to historical phenomena previously overlooked due to disciplinary traditions or prejudices, such as travelling royal and noblewomen (Cremer, Baumann, and Bender 2018) or cultural-religious interactions between Christians, Jews, and Muslims in early modern Europe (Terpstra 2015; Terpstra 2020). Many of these contributions in the field of comparative history are also relevant to scholarship on early modern festival culture and will be discussed more closely below.

The challenges of doing comparative history

Despite the recent popularity of comparative history, relatively few studies are truly comparative in scope, insofar as the approach may not always be systematically pursued, applied to a wider range of objects and practices, or subjected to rigorous analysis, which explains why Bloch’s call for an “*histoire comparée*” is still echoed by historians today. This lacuna is largely due to the inherent difficulty of doing comparative history. Analysing historical phenomena within a genuinely comparative framework often requires the researcher to enter unfamiliar territory. Mulryne was keenly aware that festival scholars faced particular challenges in this respect (see Mulryne 2013). They may have to read manuscript sources in different languages, linguistic varieties, and scribal hands, familiarise themselves with different fields of study that, as seen in the introduction, extend well beyond the history of the arts, and reconstruct an essentially ephemeral event on the basis of frequently contradictory

and sparse fragments of historical evidence in a wide range of early modern media, including commemorative books, financial records, diplomatic correspondence, legal documents, broadsheets, newspapers, pamphlets, and visual artefacts such as emblems, engravings, medals, paintings, painted scrolls, and so on (Watanabe-O’Kelly 2002: 19-23; McGowan 2008: xvi-xix; Nevile 2008: 7-10; van Leuveren forthcoming).

Confronted with similar disciplinary and linguistic challenges in his research on maritime business culture in twentieth-century Europe, Michael Miller has pointed to what he calls “the unresolved flaw in comparative history” (2004: 120). Miller argues that what comparative historians “[gain] in scope is most likely surrendered in depth”, because they can never be fully competent in all aspects and related areas of their research (*ibidem*). The solution, Miller suggests, can be found in limiting one’s research to a restricted number of comparables which he defines as “two, perhaps three countries” (*ibidem*: 123). But even after having narrowed down one’s comparative scope, Miller believes that historians may still be tempted to resort to well-worn observations from secondary literature rather than reveal new insights, because it is virtually impossible to maintain command over the vast literature, both primary and secondary, on more than one comparable (which Miller interprets here as more than one country; *ibidem*). Miller is right to point out that comparative history poses significant challenges to the disciplinary skills and knowledge of researchers, but the dilemma that he identifies is not shared by all comparative research. Whether comparative history is successful – that is, original, insightful, and rigorous – does not necessarily depend on *the number* but rather on *the nature* of one’s comparables and *the overall purpose* of one’s comparative research.

Systematically comparing festival traditions of three, or even two, early modern states over a longer period of time may indeed seem like a daunting task and run the risk of over-generalisation, considering the difficulty of conducting an exhaustive analysis of all the multifaceted and shifting contexts in which those traditions would have operated. Approaching festival culture from more than one national tradition has of course resulted into much valuable scholarship (e.g., Jacquot 1956-1975; Mamone 1987; Watanabe-

O’Kelly - Béhar 1999; the “European Festival Studies, 1450-1700” book series edited by J. R. Mulryne, Margaret Shewring, Margaret M. McGowan, and Marie-Claude Canova-Green, among others), but does not necessarily advance a systematic comparative approach. However, settling on a set of comparables that is more spatially and temporally defined than a *longue durée*-approach may facilitate genuine methodical comparison. Stijn Bussels (2012), for one, has compared different historical interpretations to the same festive occasion, namely the ceremonial entry of Prince Philip of Spain into Antwerp on 10 September 1549. More specifically, Bussels has analysed eyewitness records of Philip’s entry, alongside the “official” accounts of the event, issued by the city fathers of Antwerp, in order to identify contesting views and interpretations of the festivities among participants who wrote in Dutch, French, Spanish, and Latin.

The linguistic variety and cultural-political complexity of the entry’s reception proves challenging indeed, but does not tempt Bussels to generalise on the basis of secondary literature because his comparative framework is tight to a single, one-day event only (see Mulryne 2013). This spatiotemporal focus enables feasible and systematic comparison between a variety of reactions to the entry which nuance and expand, rather than confirm, existing academic literature on civic festivities in the early modern Low Countries. In other words, comparative history is most successful when researchers work with a manageable and clearly defined set of comparables, whether divided in space or time, and combine their close-readings of individual events, objects, and practices with informed knowledge of a wider corpus of secondary literature on the topic. Certainly, oscillating between the particular and the general, as well as between one’s “home” discipline and (potentially) unfamiliar territory, requires hard work and effort, but ultimately enables scholars to study early modern court and civic festivals in all their messy and interlinking contexts and circumstances, from preparation and production to staging and reception.



What and how to compare?

Now that I have discussed some of the general appeals and difficulties of doing comparative history, it is time to look more closely into *what* and *how* we can compare as festival scholars. Bloch (1928) proves instructive here once again. His view of what constitutes a comparison has been partly covered in previous sections, but begs further discussion here. Bloch’s thoughts on the issue allow us to think more deeply about the specific nature of the comparables that we may select for our research on early modern festival culture, particularly with respect to the extent to which those comparables should be similar to, or differ from, each other:

Qu’est-ce, tout d’abord, dans notre domaine, que comparer? Incontestablement ceci: faire choix, dans un ou plusieurs milieux sociaux différents, de deux ou plusieurs phénomènes qui paraissent, au premier coup d’œil, présenter entre eux certaines analogies, décrire les courbes de leurs évolutions, constater les ressemblances et les différences et, dans la mesure du possible, expliquer les unes et les autres. Donc deux conditions sont nécessaires pour qu’il y ait, historiquement parlant, comparaison: une certaine similitude entre les faits observés—cela va de soi—et une certaine dissemblance entre les milieux où ils se sont produits (*ibidem*: 16-17).

In other words, a successful comparison should take on board at least two largely analogous historical phenomena that occur in one or more “milieux” displaying “une certaine dissemblance” (*ibidem*). Bloch did not explicitly comment on the degree to which those phenomena should be different from, or similar to, each other, given the almost unlimited variety of historical factors that can be compared, but believed that they should ultimately enable the historian to retrace “une origine commune” between them (*ibidem*: 19). He interpreted this common origin as a largely definite point in time and place from whence the historical phenomena under consideration had emerged and evolved (*ibidem*).

Whereas Bloch still perceived comparables as relatively stable and fixed categories whose mutual differences and similarities can be more or less neatly detected and separated from the “milieux” in which they operate, cultural and postcolonial studies have since drawn attention to the conflictive and transformative nature of transcultural and transnational processes (*ibidem*:

16). Homi K. Bhabha, for one, has argued that communication across cultures – what he calls “cultural translation” – never presupposes an undistorted and smooth transfer of one culture into the other, but instead creates a “newness” ([1994] 2004: 10). This “newness” refers to the new meanings and interpretative contexts that cultural translation by definition generates, as communication between cultures entails negotiations of, as well as clashes between, differences of language, religion, etiquette, and other cultural products (*ibidem*: 310-11, 324-26). According to Bhabha, this form of translation is key to any culture, and thus cultural products have no common or “pure” origin, as Bloch believed, but are continuously subject to the clashes and conflicts of meaning and interpretation involved in the translation process (Rössner - Italiano 2012a: 12). Bhabha’s concept of “newness” has often been applied to contemporary art and media and to literary fiction in particular (e.g., Bassnett 1993; Weninger 2006; Rössner - Italiano 2012b). Most helpful from the perspective of early modern festival studies is the argument of Sharon Marcus that a comparative approach to one of her fields of expertise, namely nineteenth-century theatre history, should acknowledge “how fluid and porous national borders can be and how easily genres, forms, and works move across them, often changing as they go” (2011: 150). Echoing Bhabha’s emphasis on the conflictive and especially transformative nature of cultural translation, Marcus recommends theatre historians to “not only track discrete cultural products but also map dynamic activities of production, circulation, and consumption” (*ibidem*).

In my view, are precisely those “dynamic activities” that can prove most fruitful for future comparative research on early modern civic and court festivals. Rather than “discrete cultural products” alone, such as individual pageants, artistic motifs or styles, and various adaptations of literary source material, festival scholars may study meaningful differences and similarities between historical interpretations and perceptions of those products, as well as the cultural, diplomatic, religious, and social interactions between participants of the festival which were narrated in, and filtered through, a variety of historical sources written or visualised by as many individuals in a first, second, or even third hand. Comparative research, in other

words, can reveal the often conflictual reception of early modern festival culture, given its dispersed audiences and organising committees made up of different nationalities, socio-economic classes, and politico-religious parties and individuals, while also theorising the mediated and constructed nature of its frequently contradictory, scattered, or genre-specific historical sources. The image of the court or civic festival that emerges from such a comparative approach is less that of a stable and fixed product which scholars can access more or less independently from its many layers of historical reception and more that of a moving “arrow” subjected to, and mediated through, shifting contexts of meaning and interpretation. My comparative approach to early modern festival culture thus agrees with one of the main premises of “histoire croisée”, developed by Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, that historical “entities, persons, practices, or objects” are by definition “in a state of interrelationship” – what Bhabha labels “cultural translation” – and “modify one another reciprocally as a result of their relationship” (Werner - Zimmermann 2006: 38, 35; Bhabha [1994] 2004: 10). Rather than focussing on the specific nature or circumstances of certain historical objects and practices, Werner and Zimmermann encourage historians to examine the continuous intercrossing between them and the extent to which they clash, meet, or form hybrids – a variation on Bhabha’s concept of “newness” (Werner - Zimmermann 2002; ead. 2003; ead. 2004; ead. 2006; Bhabha [1994] 2004: 10). The next section will explore what comparative approaches to court and civic festivals may look like in this regard and how they can reveal new insights into the diverging mental beliefs, ideas, and perceptions, wider contesting contexts of interpretation, and related social, religious, or cultural behaviours and practices that surrounded the events’ production, reception, as well as circulation in material, printed, and visual sources.

Towards a comparative history of festival culture in early modern Europe

My proposal for a comparative approach to early modern festival culture in Europe will focus on two broad types of comparison. The first type

relates to comparisons between different historical sources on court and civic festivals, whether material, printed, or visual; the second type to comparisons between largely immaterial and intangible aspects of festival culture, including beliefs, ideas, institutions, languages, practices, structures, diplomatic strategies and solutions, and spectatorial reactions. Those two broad types of comparison will be discussed here in consecutive order. By having a separate discussion of historical sources on festival culture I seek to emphasise that the mostly immaterial and intangible aspects of the second type of comparison cannot be directly or unproblematically accessed or detected by researchers, but have instead been inevitably filtered through a wide range of media and genres, as well through the – often multilingual and recorded or edited – voices and perspectives of different individuals. Acknowledging and theorising the various degrees of mediation involved in one's corpus of historical sources is key to doing comparative research on early modern festival culture. As Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly reminds us, “we can never discuss the actual festival. We are always discussing the records of that festival, in whatever form they have come down to us” (2002: 20).

Type I: Comparing historical sources

Scholars have perhaps most frequently turned to printed commemorative documents as sources of historical evidence for festival occasions, including *livrets* (pamphlets), *recueils* (anthologies of written accounts), *libretti* (texts or lyrics for a musical performance), and *Festivalbeschreibungen* (festival descriptions). Most researchers in the field have recognised the politically coloured nature of those documents and warned against taking them at face value, given their “expression of wishful thinking” (Prest 2008: 232), tendency “to narrate what the organizers hoped would happen rather than what did happen” (Watanabe-O'Kelly 2002: 22), or strategy to either please or blame certain stakeholders by featuring messages specific to their diplomatic needs, interests, or concerns (van Leuven 2019). In other words, printed commemorative documents communicated an intentionally one-sided, because “official”, interpretation of the festival to ruling elites

across Europe. Comparing those documents with eyewitness or otherwise confidential accounts of the festival may help to reveal the more complicated, and frequently conflictual nature, of spectatorial responses to the event, as well as nuance its propagandistic impact and the purported authority of its organisers as primary interpreters.

Examples of festive occasions that lend themselves particularly well to such a comparative approach, besides the aforementioned entry of Prince Philip of Spain into Antwerp, include the civic festivals staged for the English and French monarchies in the Low Countries from the late-sixteenth to mid-seventeenth centuries (Strong - van Dorsten 1964; Snoep 1975: 25-31, 34-36, 39-76). The festivals coincided with the ceremonial entries of various prominent English and French rulers into major cities across the Low Countries, such as Amsterdam, Dordrecht, and Rotterdam in the north and Antwerp, Ghent, and Namur in the south. Those visiting rulers included Hercule-François, Duke of Anjou (1555-1584), heir presumptive to the French crown and Prince and Lord of the Low Countries from 1579 until his death, and Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester (1532-1588), favourite of Queen Elizabeth I of England and Governor-General of the northern Dutch provinces from 1586 until his demise (Strong - van Dorsten 1964; Snoep 1975: 25-31; Van Bruaene 2007; Peters 2008; Thøfner 2014). Printed commemorative books on the festivals were officially authorised by the Dutch, English, and French authorities and thus often provided a politically desirable interpretation of the proceedings as outwardly peaceful events that promoted diplomatic collaboration between those authorities against the aggressive expansionism of Habsburg Spain in Europe. Besides printed books, the authorities issued numerous material and visual sources, including coins, paintings, and engravings, to boost their idealised interpretation of the festivities to an even wider international audience, particularly to spectators who may not have been able to read or otherwise understand the Dutch, French, or Latin text of the commemorative accounts.

For example, metal coins that were likely distributed among bystanders during the ceremonial entry of the Duke of Anjou into Antwerp on 19 February 1582 depicted the

French overlord as protector of the Dutch people and victor over the Spanish enemy (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum (hereafter RM), NG-VG-1-444 and NG-VG-3-572). Similarly, a commemorative painting (RM, SK-A-4867, Monogrammist MHVH) and a series of engravings on the entry, part of Frans Hogenberg's collection of historical prints (RM, RP-P-OB-78.785), testify to the aim of especially the Dutch city councils to create an internationally accessible iconography that sought to advertise and support their revolt against the Habsburg Spanish crown. Thus comparing various aspects of the festival in a wider constellation of printed, material, and visual sources, issued by different political authorities, helps scholars to understand how images of the festive occasions were selected, produced, and circulated in a wide range of media, and the extent to which those images corresponded to descriptions in commemorative books.

By contrast, confidential accounts of the civic festivals for the visiting rulers, handwritten by ambassadors, treasurers, and civil officers of Dutch, English, and French descent, complicated and regularly contradicted the one-sided interpretation of the events provided in commemorative sources¹. As such, the confidential accounts unearth detailed information about the still largely unknown reception of the civic festivals and bring into focus the diplomatic conflicts, national rivalries, differences of opinion, and occasional misunderstandings that occurred in response to the theatrical entertainments staged for the festivities. Among those entertainments were *tableaux vivants*, largely mute and static theatrical scenes which dramatised the diplomatic collaboration between Dutch, English, and French authorities, triumphal processions of civic guards and magistrates, mock naval battles against Spanish troops, and after-dinner balls and ballets which aimed to produce conviviality among the international participants. Some of the competing reactions to those festivities related to Dutch dissatisfaction over English and French intervention into domestic politics or to disagreements over the symbolism and rhetorical expressions used in dramatic scenes and speeches of individual pageants. Rather than ignoring commemorative sources, however, scholars may compare "official" views of the events as discussed in those printed, material, or visual

sources with competing views of participants in diplomatic, municipal, and financial records. This comparative reading reveals the differences between the political agendas of the national authorities and the European audiences for the pageants, and the extent to which the idealised content of the various commemorative sources functioned as a tool for diplomacy itself in order to anticipate a mixed or negative reception of the events.

Just as festival organisers could use printed, material, and visual media to advertise and enhance the diplomatic content and impact of the festive occasion in question, be it a baptism, wedding, princely visit, or treatise-ratification ceremony, other stakeholders, too, could exploit the global impact of print for largely the same purposes. Helmer Helmers (2016) and William T. Rossiter (2020) have recently demonstrated that throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries diplomatic actors used printed media to influence public opinion and engage international audiences as forms of "public diplomacy". They have shown how ambassadors frequently published libellous pamphlets, written in various languages, to generate international smear campaigns against opponents or leak confidential information "to heap blame upon foreign countries or monarchs with whom their country was at war" (Helmers 2016: 410; cf. Rossiter 2020: 525). Although not mentioned by Helmers and Rossiter, court and civic festivals were popular targets of such libellous pamphlets and regularly served as occasions for other printed publications on topics and events related to the diplomatic content or occasion of the festivities, including diplomatic audiences, conferences, or negotiations over peace treaties. Many such occasions coincided with the festival or, indeed, were held in response to the event (van Leuveren 2019). Comparing printed sources on the festival's wider diplomatic, economic, religious, or social contexts with one another, as well as with officially authored books on the occasion, can reveal the diverging ideas, opinions, and views that existed on the festivities and their wider impact on early modern life, and the extent to which those various perspectives on the event competed for attention by targeting different audiences in a broad range of printed media.

The printed sources that appeared in the wake

of the court and civic festivals for the Habsburg-Bourbon double marriages of 1612-1615 – between Louis XIII of France and Anna of Austria, and between Louis's sister Élisabeth and the future Philip IV of Spain – serve as a case in point. Apart from many commemorative books on the events, published by the French and Spanish monarchies, the festivals witnessed an enormous output of pamphlets, broadsheets, chronicles, diaries, newspapers, harangues, and apologies written by a wide range of stakeholders, including ambassadors, city councils, religious societies, and members of rival noble families in France, Spain, and allied states². In France, pamphlets written in support of the double union were often laudatory and even utopian in style. One author filled his text with references to ancient Roman history to suggest that the matches stood in a long and respected tradition of diplomatic celebration (Dublin, Marsh's Library (hereafter ML), anonymous 1614). Conversely, French pamphleteers who vehemently opposed the marriages were frequently apocalyptic in their assessment of the likely consequences for France of entering a lasting alliance with Habsburg Spain (e.g., ML, anonymous 1615).

A comparative approach may elucidate the extent to which pamphleteers allied to different aristocratic, monarchical, and politico-religious parties used similar or different rhetorical tactics to convince readers of their interpretation of the festival and its broader impact on diplomatic, economic, religious, or social life. By studying ideas, opinions, and perceptions of the festival in various printed, material, and visual media, one is reminded that festive occasions were not the chief “property” of their organisers but frequently became vehicles for the diplomatic agendas and campaigns of other stakeholders, or served as public arenas for fierce debate or conflict over broader diplomatic issues, such as the implications of the Habsburg-Bourbon alliance for international relations. Therefore, comparative research may demonstrate how various media, sources, and perspectives on the festival always circulated “in dialogue” with one another. This dialogue can be understood in both a literal sense, as in one source referring or reacting to the other, and in a figurative sense, insofar as publications on the event were not necessarily consumed hierarchically but communicated diverging views

of the festival to different target audiences.

Type II: Comparing immaterial and intangible aspects

What are some of the immaterial and intangible aspects of early modern festival culture that can be identified in printed, material, and visual sources and which can be subsequently compared? I do not aim to provide an extensive list of comparables here, as this would extend well beyond the scope of my article, but I hope that the following overview will provide an indication of the many fruitful ways in which comparative history can assist and expand current scholarship on festive occasions. The overview may prove useful to both festival scholars and researchers working on related topics and themes, including diplomacy, etiquette, ritual, religion, hospitality, language, court and civic cultures, and the construction of difference between cultural, national, religious, and ethnic communities.

Diplomatic solutions

Court and civic festivals in late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century France have recently been analysed as quintessentially diplomatic events that attracted the attention of diplomatic stakeholders across the continent and beyond (Welch 2015; ead. 2017; van Leuveren 2019). Whereas theatrical entertainments of such events often sought to promote the diplomatic alliances or policies that constituted the *raison d'être* of the festival, official ceremonies formally implemented those alliances or policies in the presence of elite and urban audiences (Watanabe-O'Kelly 2002: 15-16). Eyewitness accounts of entertainments and ceremonies frequently point to conflicts over diplomatic precedence among participants or to difficulties of organising such events while not offending the cultural and religious sensibilities of the parties involved. For example, the official ceremony that wedded Marguerite de Valois, a Catholic Princess, to Henri de Navarre, a Protestant Prince, on 18 August 1572 in front of Notre Dame in Paris was carefully negotiated to satisfy the demands of especially the Huguenot stakeholders (van Leuveren 2019: 99-102). A tapestried

scaffold was erected in front of the cathedral to enable Navarre to partake in the nuptial blessing without having to enter the building himself. The Huguenot ministers of the Parlement de Paris had demanded that Navarre ostentatiously left the portal after the blessing to indicate that he had no desire to participate in the ensuing Mass at Notre Dame (*ibidem*: 100). The festival's diplomatic solution of erecting a walkway and allowing for performances of religious disapproval on the part of its Huguenot participants was copied for the wedding ceremony of the Catholic Henrietta Maria and the Protestant Charles I at Notre Dame on 11 May 1625 (anonymous 1625: 9). A comparative approach may reveal answers to questions such as: how did the organisers and diplomatic engineers of both (and other) festivals find similar or different diplomatic solutions to the problem of cultural and religious difference? How did participants react to the solutions found? How did participants in both (and other) festivals explain or "frame" those solutions to their followers? And, finally, towards what effect?

Cultural disconnects and practices of "othering"
As J. R. Mulryne's research on English, German, and Florentine pageantry has demonstrated, court and civic festivals were important occasions for aesthetic exchanges between different cultures and nationalities. More than aesthetic exchanges alone, however, the presence of international participants frequently led to misunderstandings of other people's cultural beliefs, ideas, and customs – what I call here "cultural disconnects" – and to practices of "othering". I define the latter concept as the attempt to represent another culture, nationality, or ethnicity as markedly different or even inferior to one's own, often through ridicule and travesty. Practices of othering usually resulted from one or more cultural disconnects. An example of a festive occasion at which such practices occurred is the solemn entry of the Spanish extraordinary ambassador, Gómez Suárez de Figueroa (1587-1634), third Duke of Feria, on 8 September 1610 (van Leuveren 2019: 190-91). The entry marked Feria's official proposal of the Habsburg-Bourbon double marriages to the French crown. Contrary to French custom, the Spanish ambassador entered Paris on a mule rather than a horse. Mules were the preferred Spanish mode of transportation given the country's mountainous roads and the

animal's association with Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem (*ibidem*). The Parisians were clearly not used to seeing elite visitors riding mules on such an important occasion because they reportedly could not stop laughing (*ibidem*). The "foreignness" of the Spaniards was apparently not only perceived by commoners, but also by the Florentine ambassador Andrea Cioli who described how members of Feria's embassy wore enormous, heavily starched ruffs, appearing "like dwarfs, almost like Negroes and very ugly" (cited in Carmona 1981: 229). Comparative research on festive occasions like Feria's entry may reveal how both "outsiders" and "insiders" of a certain culture perceived cultural customs within a festival context. How did festival participants try to make sense of cultural disconnects? To what extent did they resort to practices of othering? How did victims of those practices react or otherwise defend themselves? How was the reception of festive occasions controlled to avoid clashes between cultures and nationalities? Questions such as these demonstrate the potential of comparative history to unpack the multifaceted difference underlying the ostensibly celebratory appeal of the festival and enable analysis of the extent to which festival organisers sought to address that difference in the spectacle staged.

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Notes

1 Confidential accounts of the civic festivals are held at London, British Library, Add MS 48127, Leiden, Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken, 0501A, and Amsterdam, Stadsarchief Amsterdam, 5044, among other manuscript collections.

2 The bibliography in McGowan [2013] 2016 gives a good impression of the extensive output of printed sources on the Habsburg-Bourbon marriages (251-79). I have studied French-language sources on the union, not included in the aforementioned bibliography, during my Maddock Research Fellowship at Marsh's Library (Dublin) in October 2019.

Dancing in Late Sixteenth-Century France: The Greek Legacy

Margaret M. McGowan

Margaret M. McGowan

The experiments in blending poetry, music and dance in the *Académie de Poésie et de Musique*, founded in 1571 by Jean-Antoine de Baïf (1532-1589) and Joachim Thibault de Courville (d. 1581) under the patronage of King Charles IX, have been carefully studied: the beneficial effects of such fusion by Frances A. Yates and their influence on the creation of ballets (see Yates: 1947, Bonniffet: 1988 and McGowan: 2008).

It is the purpose of this article to explore the evidence available for these beliefs in the efficacy of the fusing of music, dance and poetry; to assess how far these views were known and discussed outside the Academy; and to consider the similarities and differences perceived by sixteenth-century writers between the nature of Greek dancing and contemporary French performances. In other words, how far did the Greek Legacy influence thinking and practice about dance in France in the final decades of the sixteenth century¹.

In their defence of dancing and in their efforts to enhance the status of this art *vis à vis* music, painting and architecture, sixteenth-century French authors had recourse to Greek sources where they found ample evidence of praise. Two examples will be examined here – Béranger de la Tour's *Choréide, Autrement, Louange du bal* (1556) whose title announces the intent to extol dancing, and Archangelo Tuccaro's *Trois dialogues de l'exercice de sauter et voltiger en l'air* (1599) which suggests more practical preoccupations. Béranger de la Tour's vision of dancing moves from the spectacle of the birth of the universe

*Ce bal divin, et spacieux
Prenant son origine aux Cieux* (1556: verse 7).

That birth is depicted as dance, as the four elements are shown to come alive and move, as leaves and birds are portrayed swirling in the air and as the transformation of the world shifts to the creation of humans for whom dance (Béranger maintains) is essential and integral to their being. He then traces its evolution from the graceful dances of the Muses to the honours accorded to it by the Gods and by the Greeks whose victories came from the physical agility acquired through dancing². He recalls the praise of Socrates: “*Dont jadis Socrate se prit/ A te [the dance] louer*”³, before passing to the Romans who held dance in high esteem and before affirming, at the end of his poem, its virtuous qualities⁴. The commendation throughout is without pause or hesitation. Tuccaro's dialogues between Ferrand and Cosme adopt a different approach. Arguing for and against the significance of the choreographic art, they were deliberately fashioned on the pattern of Socrates' dialogues in Plato. Their discussion is designed to defend the value of dancing for the grace and pleasure it imparts, and – in doing so – they engage in proofs and reminiscences from a myriad of Greek writers: notably Plato, Hesiod and Homer. Authoritative proof of superiority comes from demonstrating how Plato folded dancing into his vision of the Republic (Tuccaro 1599: sig. ã ijv)⁵, how Hesiod acknowledged the inspiration of the Muses in the opening lines of his epic poem (*ibidem* 1599: f. 38v), and how Homer linked dance and music together giving the former pride of place (*ibidem* 1599: f. 42). In his evocation of French contemporary dancing as a close imitation of the movement of the heavens, Tuccaro matches very closely the motion of both:



Fig. 1. The Hours and Seasons from Blaise de Vigenère, *Les Images de Philostrate* (Paris: chez la veuve Abel L'Angelier... et la veuve M. Guillemot, 1615, p. 552, engraved Leonard Gauthier (1560-1612), copyright akg-images Ltd.

Ils [les Grecs] afferment mesmes qu'ils ont esté trouvez à l'imitation du mouvement et tour des cieux et des progresz divins, droits et obliques, des retrogradations et diversitez des conionctions et des aspects de planettes, toutes lesquelles choses si on vouloit considerer parfaitement, on pourroit par aventure cognoistre qu'elles sont iustement imitées et représentées au bal; d'autant que la diversité des mouvements faicts à l'opposite l'un de l'autre par ceux qui dansent, n'est qu'une générale imitation du divers mouvement des cieux, et le retour que l'on fait en arrière au bal et à la dance n'est autre chose que vouloir imiter honnestement la retrogradation des planettes (ibidem 1599: f. 36v).

[The Greeks even affirm that they found [the dance] by imitating the movement and turns of the heavens, and the diverse advances, forward and oblique, from the retreat and diversity of the conjunctions and aspects of the planets; if one considers all these things properly then one could, perchance, appreciate that they are perfectly imitated and represented in dancing; the more so since the diversity of movements made opposite each other by those who are dancing is nothing more than a general reflection of the diverse movements of the heavens, and the withdrawal one makes backward in balls and dances is none other than a wish to imitate accurately the retrogradation of the planets].

In this long, perambulating sentence, the basic movements, forwards and backwards, reflect the harmonious motion of the planets, and Tuccaro goes on to show that the starts and pauses in the steps of the dance, the straight and oblique figures which form its graceful characteristics are shaped by those found in the heavens. Such celestial imitation seemed to guarantee the noble nature of all dancing figures.

While Hesiod had appealed to the dance of the nine Muses and sixteenth-century humanists had shifted the emphasis on harmony to the concord of the sciences⁶, other writers – following Homer – sought to give a fundamental role to the dance in shaping the nature of poetic cadences. It is helpful, at this point, to refer to the recent findings of A. P. David. He has explored Greek poetical composition, and his analysis shows it plainly to have been rooted in the physicality of the dance. In his discussion of Homeric poetic cadences, he has argued that the poet and the dancer, although they are integrated in the epic, the former was only an accompanist “whose speech rhythm was syncopated with the independent rhythm of the dance” (David 2006: 98)⁷. In the lyric, however, the roles were reversed, the dance follows the word. From the recognition of such integration, sixteenth-century writers were

to assert the power of expression which such links encouraged, and (as will be shown) *Le Ballet Comique de la Royne* (1581) was to be, in the sixteenth century, a supreme exemplification of their conviction.

The most influential of Greek writers on sixteenth-century thinking about dance and its practice was, undoubtedly, Lucian of Samosate (c. A D 120) whose dialogue - *De Saltatione, an Apology for the Dance* - was cited by everyone. Not only did Lucian expose in detail the celestial imitative power of this art, he cited all the authorities – Plato, Socrates, Hesiod and Homer – as evidence of the strong support for dancing. Lucian considered dancing “*la plus excellente chose du monde*” (the most excellent thing in the world), reinforcing the notion that this art not only reflected the movement of the heavens, but had imitative qualities not matched by any other art (1583: vol. 1, 359). Lucian’s work, on which Filbert Breton had spent 6 years rendering it into French⁸, had received as many translations into vulgar tongues as Ficino’s renditions of Plato or the numerous interpretations of Plutarch⁹. Like all his other orations, Lucian’s “The Art of the Dance” was complex. He mixed serious observations with satirical diatribes; he deliberately extended criticism of the sensual aspects of dancing only to combat these detractors with a robust defence of the origins of dance, its difficulties and its benefits¹⁰. It is interesting that none of his sixteenth-century interpreters of dance seem to have recognized these contradictory features nor did they fully appreciate the intellectual context in which Lucian cast his thoughts. For him, Dance belonged to Philosophy; it was part of that intelligent design which his forerunners (especially Plato, in Book 5 of the *Republic*) had created to delineate the nature and purpose of philosophy. This is the context in which Lucian cast the heavenly origins of dance; cosmic spectatorship¹¹ opened up views of the movement of the heavens and imitation of that movement brought harmony down to earth.

To achieve such expressive powers claimed by Lucian, the dance required both innate skills and learning. Such knowledge, he argued, was not easily acquired since it involved “*toutes aultres disciplines*” – Music, Arithmetic, Geometry, Philosophy, Rhetoric, Painting – the dancer had to learn and remember these, and exercise

his judgement as to what was appropriate – “*de cognoistre ce qui est convenable*” (1583: vol. 1, 365). In addition, the spectator has a role to play, in that he had to understand the meaning of the dancer’s movements and hear his words although the performer does not speak. Lucian writes:

il faut que le regardant de la danse puisse entendre le danseur ores qu’il soit muet: et louïr qu’il ne dise mot.

Lucian is citing here a well-known prophecy originally foretold in a Pythian oracle, reported by Livy and others and which will be used by Blaise de Vigenère in his annotations upon Livy’s chapter “Des Saliens, et des Danses et Balets antiques” where he is examining the expressive power of dancing:

L’oracle de la Pythienne y put estre adapté: il faut que le spectateur entende le balladin mime, ores qu’il soit muet; et qu’il loye combien qu’il ne parle point (Vigenère 1583: col. 1297).

Many of Lucian’s thoughts on the persuasive power of dancing come from his reading of Plutarch’s *Table Talk* (9. 15) where the main speaker, Ammonius, sets out the principal components of the dance, labelling this art as a “*poësie muette*” (mute poetry) since it was an art that moved the spectator by movement and gesture alone. The dancer was a performer as was the orator, and both overwhelmed the onlooker by the reality of their performance¹². It was, in fact, the good dancer’s responsibility to express all human habits and affections – passion, anger, madness or distress – and he has to do that with economy and modesty. Just like the effects of Mercury’s wand, Lucian maintained that dance can close the eyes at will, just as it can awaken those who sleep:

la danse fait et accomplit tout cela, endormant et esveillant les yeux, et incitant l’esprit à rechercher exactement toutes especes d’actions humaines (1583: vol. 1, 374)¹³.

[Dancing achieves and accomplishes all that, putting to sleep and awakening the eyes, encouraging the mind to seek out precisely all kinds of human action].

However ambitious these views may seem, they were taken very seriously by sixteenth-century writers and no more so than by Blaise de Vigenère (1523-1596) who, in the final decades of the

century, explored them in his annotations to the numerous Greek and Roman texts he rendered into French. This diplomat, who served the duc de Nevers and travelled with him on diplomatic missions across Europe until the latter’s death in 1562 and who then became a secretary to Henri III, was a prolific writer. Expert in festival culture, evident in his detailed account of Henri III’s entry into Mantua in 1574 (Vigenère 1576), he was interested in secrets and cryptography as well as translating and annotating major ancient works: the *Commentaires* of Caesar (1576), the *Images de Philostrate* (1578), and the *Décades* of Titus Livy (1583)¹⁴. In his copious annotations, he turned regularly to Lucian’s “*Dialogue de la danse et du Bal*”, absorbing its meaning and often repeating its arguments. For instance, in his comments upon Venus from the *Images* of Philostratus, linking *vers mesurez* and the steps of the dance (just as A. P. David has shown), he demonstrates how their harmonious proportions filter into the soul and move it with such sweetness that it resembles a fine flow of oil. He bolsters this enthusiasm by reference to Plutarch who, in question 9 of his “*Table Talk*”, had asserted that measured verse:

a une grande convenance et affinité, avec le bal et air de dansser, le tout à cause des cadences qui doivent estre observées en l’une et l’autre (Vigenère ed. used 1597: 518).¹⁵

[has great alliance and affinity with dancing, and with the manner of performing, all because the cadences must be scrupulously observed in both].

Vigenère had developed this affinity in greater detail in his commentaries on Livy where he had linked the cadences of Greek odes to “*quelques branles des nostres*” (some of our branles). As he examines the dance figures moving from right to left, his vision soars (as it does so often) into the stratosphere, evoking the movement of heavenly bodies, the back and forth surging of the waves, and the stillness of the earth¹⁶.

In such a prolific writer, it would be too much to ask for consistency. Having succumbed to the attraction and eloquence of Lucian’s arguments on the noble origin of the dance and on the harmonious links which blended poetry and dance, in *Les Images* Vigenère maintained that the *Saltatio* (the dancing) of the ancients in no

way resembled the simple steps of French social dancing where for the pavane, the branle or even the galliard, dancers merely moved their legs and feet rhythmically keeping a good demeanour for the rest of the body¹⁷. It is true that ancient dancing (as Lucian has so well demonstrated) involved gestures which carried messages to the audience not usually seen in French social dancing and yet, on due reflection, Vigenère thought that perhaps the vigorous dance of the Matachins came closest to Greek and Roman performances, as he noted in *Les Images*:

*le tout si bien ordonné, que sans qu'ils prononçassent aucune chose, on ne laissoit toutefois de comprendre fort bien tout ce qu'ils vouloient donner à cognoistre*¹⁸.

[the whole (performance) so well ordered that without uttering a word, one (the spectator) could none the less understand perfectly everything they wished to convey].

In order to specify more carefully the impact which a dancer's movements could have, Vigenère remembered Aristotle's discussion on the threefold elements which made up pantomime dancing: the gesture and disposition of the body; the figure of what the dancer wishes to portray; and [most importantly], an imitation of what is to be represented. On this last element, he writes:

Les balladins mimes contrefont les choses par le seul geste et mouvement, sans aucune récitation ny musique. Car par la variété de leurs contenance et dispositions mesurées, ils imitent et mettent en evidence les moeurs et affections des personnes (1583: cols 1297-98).

[Pantomime dancers imitate things merely by gesture and movement, without any words or music. Because, through the variety of their measured bearing and disposition, they imitate and bring to light the habits and affections of persons].

To achieve such an effect, Vigenère was aware that such performances were not improvised. They required forethought, practice and planning¹⁹. Lucian had been in no doubt about the pleasure and the benefits that came with dancing. His confidence and enthusiasm are clearly expressed towards the end of his pages on the "Art of the Dance":

Certainement c'est chose asseuree, que le mignard pennader de la danse, les tourdions du corps, les cabriolles, les menus pas et les soubresauts, sont et plaisants aux regardants, et salubres à ceux qui les font (1583: vol. 1, 370).

[Certainly, it is an assured fact that the delicate bouncing power of the dance, the twists and turns of the body, the capriols, the tiny steps and sudden movements, are both pleasing to those who watch, and healthy for those who perform].

Without acknowledging his source, Thoinot Arbeau repeated almost verbatim these words in his *Orchesography*: "Dancing, or saltation, is both a pleasant and a profitable art which confers and preserves health", and he then went on to explore the qualities of the choreographic art in which the dancer (like the orator) can make himself understood by his movements²⁰.

It was his engaging commitment to an art that was well loved at courts in Renaissance Europe that made Lucian a prime source of inspiration not only for those who theorized about dancing, or who attempted to set down its rules, but also for those who created ballets for princes. The poet, Jean Dorat (1508-1588) who taught Pierre de Ronsard (1524-1585) and Jean-Antoine de Baïf a command of Greek, in his *Epithalamium* celebrating the wedding of the duc de Guise to Catherine de Clèves in 1570, imagined two groups of dancers – "Young Men" and "Maidens" – who sing and dance to the same rhythms. Their danced message is to transport harmony into the political arena: "*Danser ainsi pour n'avoïr discordance*" (Dance like this to avoid Discord) (Dorat, 1584, Ed. Marty-Laveaux 1875: 20-60). Some months later, (1 February 1571), Baïf wrote to Charles IX whose love and knowledge of all forms of dancing were much appreciated by choreographers²¹. He wanted to bring the monarch up-to-date with the work of the *Académie de Poésie et de Musique*. He explains that the experiments in the Academy were not only blending together poetry and music in the ways Greek composers had done, but – with his help – they were bringing back to life ancient modes of dancing: "*mais que je remettois en usage leur danse*" (Baïf, [1573], Ed. Marty-Laveaux, vol. 2, 1881-1890: 230). A few weeks later, on 29 March, on the evening of Elizabeth of Austria's (future bride of Charles IX) entry into the court, a masquerade was performed in which 8 triumphal cars representing the planets brought the dancers into the hall. The King represented the sun in charge of the other heavenly bodies, all of whom danced harmoniously and in such good order, that the distinguished guests were

moved – even enchanted²².

In March 1571, Charles and Elizabeth made their state entries into Paris for which Jean Dorat and Pierre de Ronsard provided poems, inscriptions and subjects for the decoration of the triumphal arches and of the Banqueting Hall. The inspiration for the latter came from the newly available epic poem – the *Dionysiaca* of the Alexandrian poet Nonnos, recently published in Antwerp in 1569²³. It was a work which was to have a profound effect on Dorat's interpretation of ballets at the French Court, for Nonnos' poetic art was inspired as a whole by the idea of dancing. His episodic style was designed to capture the transformations of the dancing Proteus where the verbs for leaping, twisting, bending and turning dominate the page; to mirror the choreographic competitions which punctuated the narrative; and to reflect the assimilation of the Muses (who become Maenads) to the Dionysiac overall theme²⁴. Dorat will remember the episodic, soaring style in his own evocations of dance.

For the entry of the Polish ambassadors into Paris (1573), coming to conduct Henri, duc d'Anjou, back to Poland as their new king, Balthazar de Beaujoyeux created an extraordinary ballet filled with “*tant de tours, contours et destours, d'entrelassemens et meslanges, affrontmens et arrêts*” (so many twists, turns and counter-turns, intertwining and blendings, meetings and stops) (Bourdeille, seigneur de Brantôme, 1822, vol. 8: 371); what was amazing was that the dancers were able to control the order of diverse movements and with such equanimity. This was the judgement made by Brantôme who reported his experience of the spectacle confirming the success which the Queen had hoped for from this entertainment. For through this physical demonstration of harmony, Catherine de Médicis had sought to persuade her visitors that peace reigned in the provinces of France; accordingly, the 16 lady dancers representing the provinces never stepped out of the planned routes devised by the choreographer. Jean Dorat, in his “*Scenae description*” (description of the stage) which he incorporated into his account of this show in the *Magnificentissimi spectaculi*, concentrates on the patterned movement. Yet his commentary seeks to rival the impulses of the *Dionysiaca* as it soars way above the earthly performance, visioning the movement of the heavens, the turns of the

dolphins in the seas, the ancient labyrinth of the Troy Game or the sinuous waters of the stream Meander (1573: 115-16).

During the next decade, religious wars engulfed France, and – although dancing never seems to have stopped at Henri III's court²⁵, it was not until 1581 that the King and his courtiers, organized an extravaganza to celebrate the marriage of his favourite (the duc de Joyeuse) to the Queen's sister Louise de Vaudemont. Four weeks of celebration ensued, and among the shows was the *Balet Comique de la Royne* (1581)²⁶. Devised by order of the Queen, Beaujoyeux dedicated his publication of the event to the King himself. In his address to the Reader, he had made clear his plan to fuse dance, poetry and music together so skilfully that they would produce the profound effects enjoyed by similar compositions created by the Greeks. On the one hand, Beaujoyeux points to the unusual character of his work and urges the recipient of his book to acknowledge its newness and its qualities. He stresses that he has mixed together the arts of music and poetry, often fusing them as was done in antiquity:

mesler l'un et l'autre ensemblément, et diversifier la musique de poesie, et entrelacer la poesie de musique, et le plus souvent les confondre ensemble ainsi que l'antiquité.

On the other hand, he has given – he says – the greatest prominence to the dance (“*j'ay toutefois donné le premier tiltre et honneur à la danse*”), just as Lucian had done. The intention, he goes on to explain, and the outcome was to have pleased the eye, the ear and the understanding by such a well-proportioned entertainment²⁷. In choosing for his ballet the theme of Circé and her magical powers, Beaujoyeux was following Lucian's advice. In his “*Art of the Dance*”, he had covered several pages listing all the fables and myths which were appropriate for choreographic representation. His counsel was to prevail for many decades as inspiration for the major court ballets mounted for the delectation of Bourbon kings and their courtiers.

The final performance of the *Balet Comique*, with its 40 geometric patterns displayed in 15 danced figures involved a continuous structuring of forms to many musical rhythms – “*les uns graves, les autres gais*” (some solemn, others full of gaiety). Visibly displayed was the harmony brought down from the heavens so desired by

all. This ballet featured all the elements borrowed from their Greek legacy, which was succinctly summed up by Volusian in his dedicatory poem to the choreographer:

*Tu nous fait voir...
...la façon tant estimée
De nos poètes anciens,
Les vers avec la musique
Le Balet confus mesuré
Démonstrant du ciel azure
L'accord par un effet mystique* (in Beaujoyeux 1581: sigs èijv-èijj)²⁸

[You make us see the much admired mode of our ancient poets who, fusing together music, poetry and dance, re-enact the mystical effects achieved by the harmony in the heavens].

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Notes

- 1 Catherine Ingrassia has expressed doubts about the general wish to attribute sixteenth-century dance forms to Greek origins, but she provides no evidence (1991: 136).
- 2 Much was written in ancient times on dance as a preparation for war, see in particular Lucian of Samosate 1583: vol. 1, 359, “*Or estoit-il [l’art de danser] parvenu en telle autorité et renommée pour sçavoir bien danser que non seulement les Grecs le cognoissoient; mais aussi les Troyens...Et le tout ça je pense, par l’agilité qu’ils voyoient en luy a combattre, et le convenable deport du corps qu’il s’estoit acquis à l’exercice de la danse*”. (The art of dancing achieved such authority and renown, knowing how to dance well was not only recognized by the Greeks but also by the Trojans... And all that, I believe, through the agility which was evident in the fighter, and the appropriate disposition of the body which he had acquired through the practice of dancing.)
- 3 Socrates’ approval of dancing was part of Lucian of Samosate’s defence of that art, see “L’art de la danse”, in *Oeuvres*, 1583: vol. 1, cols 357-74 (especially cols 362-63).
- 4 Béranger most probably derived his information on the benefits of the dance in the Roman theatre [pantomime] from Libanius, *Oratio*, “A Reply to Aristides on behalf of the dancers” (64. 88) analysed by Lada-Richards 2013: 117 ff.
- 5 Reference to Plato’s commendation of dancing in the *Republic* could be found in Vigenère’s annotations on Livy’s *Les Décades de Tite Live* (1583: cols 1294-95).
- 6 Guillaume Budé, for instance (in 1532) had transferred the idea of harmony from poetry to science in *L’Etude des lettres* (1988: 50-52); “*leur danse...et l’espèce de ronde qu’elles [les Muses] forment...signifient avant tout, et représentent manifestement l’harmonie des sciences*” (their dance and the kind of round which the Muses perform ... signify above all and represents clearly the harmony of the sciences).
- 7 For corroboration of the pre-eminence of the dance over other arts in ancient theatrical performances, see Libanius (c. 314-392/3), *Oratio* (64. 88), “For we do not come [to the theatre] to listen and pay attention to noble

songs...but we only insist on this much, that the verbal element supports the dancer’s figures. For it is not dancing that is made complete by means of the songs, but the songs have been created for the sake of the dance. And it is by the beauty and shameful ugliness of the dance that we judge the day, not by the words or the rhythms of the songs”; cited and discussed by Lada-Richards 2013: 117. 8 Breton, Lucian *Oeuvres*, col. 370: “*six ans j’ai travaillé à la traduction de Lucien*”.

9^o In 1484, 1025 copies of Ficino’s translations of Plato were distributed through a Dominican press, S. Jacopi di Ripoli, by Filippo Valori and Francesco Berlinghieri. Jacques Amyot’s translations of Plutarch’s *Lives* and *Moralia* enjoyed a tremendous success, *Les vies des hommes illustres* (Paris, Michel de Vascosan 1559), and *Les oeuvres morales* (Paris, Michel de Vascosan 1572).

10 The provocative nature of Lucian’s work has been well examined by Lada-Richards, 2013: especially chapter 12.

11 For a lucid account of the philosophical and rhetorical contexts of Lucian’s “The Art of the Dance”, see Schlabach 2017: 132-54.

12 For an analysis of Lucian’s debt to Plutarch, see Schlabach 2017: 25-60 where she concludes that, although Plutarch exposes the nature of dance performance, his preference clearly lay in dance as a subject of conversation rather than as an action to be witnessed; see also 75-121 for her demonstration of the parallels between Dance and Eloquence.

13 It is interesting that, a century later, Claude François Ménestrier (wishing to extol the achievements of French ballet) dismissed Lucian’s claims for the origins and imitative power of Greek dancing, but he was nonetheless aware of its force (1682: 35).

14 See also *Traicté des chiffres, ou Secrètes manières d’escrire* (Vigenère 1586). For an overview of Vigenère’s career, see Métral 1939, and Cazauran (Ed.) 2002.

15 Vigenère, *Les Images ou Tableaux de platte peinture de Philostrate Lemnien*, first edition, 1578.

16 An extended development on these affinities is made in Vigenère’s commentaries on Livy, *Les Décades*, 1583: 1289-98. For an assessment of the value of Vigenère’s annotations on Livy’s *Décades* (discovered by Petrarch in 1340 and published in 83 Latin editions and in 77 translations into the vernacular before Vigenère’s own work), see Crescenzo 2014.

17 This view was shared by the elderly Toinot Arbeau, canon of Langres, who – when he was nearly 70 years old – published his *Orchésographie* (1589), where he asserted that we have no knowledge of ancient dances, see Evans’ translation, 1967: 15. However, in the opening paragraphs of his text, Arbeau wrote “Lucian has written a treatise on the subject where you can study his theories more fully” (p. 14), and – as will be demonstrated – he knew the Latin work very well, and used it more than once in his own work.

18 *Les Images*, p. 616. It is interesting to note that Filbert Breton saw affinities between French masquerades and Greek dancing, see his note of Introduction to Lucian’s “The Art of the Dance”, 1583; “*Sommaire: Lucien loüe icy l’art de danser: et le deffend à l’encontre de Craton*

qui le meprisoit comme mol et effeminé. Telle danse toutefois approche plutôt de nos mascarades que de nostre bal ordinaire” (Summary: Lucian here praises the art of dancing and defends it against Craton who despised it as soft and effeminate. Yet such dancing is rather like our masquerades than our ordinary ballroom dancing).

19 Vigenère 1583: col. 1296, “*Et ne faisoient rien en public à l'estourdy ny à l'improviste qu'ils [les balladins] n'eussent auparavant prémédité au logis, de peur d'estre sifflez du public*” (and they [the dancers] did nothing in public without thought or improvised, for fear of being whistled at by the public).

20 *Orchesography*, tr, Evans, 1967: 15-16. As well as Lucian's text, Arbeau has in mind Cicero's thoughts on the expressive and persuasive powers of the orator.

21 See Tuccaro's dedication to the king in his *Trois dialogues*, 1599: sig. ãijv, “*Il [Charles IX] estimoit estre chose très-honorable de sçavoir toutes sortes de bals et danses, esquels par dessus tout la mesure et cadence est nécessaire*”.

22 A detailed description of this performance was given by the Florentine ambassador Giovanni Maria Petrucci writing to Ferdinando I de' Medici, on 2 April, 1571. The letter and the planetary context in which the masquerade was devised, has been carefully analysed by Capodiecici 2011: 527-66 (especially 528-29).

23 Yates discovered Dorat's source and presented the detail of all the canvases painted in the Banqueting Hall for this occasion, see her edition of the *Entrée de Charles IX, Paris 1571*, 1974: 26-29, 34-40.

24 Schlapbach has vividly evoked dancing episodes from Nonnos' poem (2017, chapter 6: 251-81), especially through her analysis of Silenus' performance in book 19 of the *Dionysiaca* where she explains the self-containment of the dance, and the god's performance for its own sake (269-80).

25 Pierre de L'Estoile, in his *Journal*, gives some idea of the frequency of balls and festivities at the court, as do the reports of English ambassadors (L'Estoile, 1574-1611, Eds. G. Brunet - A. Champollion - *et al*, 1875-1883), and *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign*, Elizabeth 1559-1590.

26 An analysis of the accounts of Italian representatives at the French Court in 1581 which capture the extent and variety of the shows organized for this occasion is provided in Chatenet and Capodiecici 2006: 9-54.

27 *Le Balet Comique*, Ed. McGowan, 1982: sigs. êijv-êiv, “*ie puis dire avoir contenté en un corps bien proportionné, l'oeil, l'oreille, et l'entendement*”.

28 See my edition of this text, *Le Balet Comique* (1982). Analysis of this ballet can also be found in Capodiecici, 2011: 600-26, and in my *Dance in the Renaissance*, 2008: 44, 114-18.

“Con sinfonie e balli superbi”. Drammaturgia dei balletti alla ‘magnifica corte’ di Lorenzo Onofrio Colonna (Roma 1659-1689)

Valentina Panzanaro

Premessa: la socialità del ballo nelle fonti d'archivio della famiglia Colonna

Nella seconda metà del Seicento il ballo assume la dimensione dell'intrattenimento sociale in quanto in esso permea la realtà culturale barocca. In questo studio si analizzano gli aspetti multiformi dell'esperienza coreografica che emerge non solo dalla produzione teatrale romana, che vede l'incremento di balli e balletti in prologhi e intermezzi, ma anche dalle numerose occasioni pubbliche o private in cui la danza è spesso protagonista nelle feste o nei conviviali di Lorenzo Onofrio Colonna e della consorte Maria Mancini,

i quali fecero dell'ostentazione un vessillo del casato (Tamburini 1997; De Lucca 2020).

Per ricostruire il variegato mosaico coreutico, facciamo affidamento su tutte quelle fonti, già ampiamente studiate da Tamburini (1997) e De Lucca (2020), che a vario titolo danno conto della presenza del ballo nella vita sociale della famiglia Colonna per meglio comprendere, attraverso una nuova prospettiva, il ruolo che ha rivestito il ballo nella famiglia romana, tenendo ben presente che non vi sono descrizioni di passi coreografici in alcuna testimonianza¹.

Certamente Lorenzo Onofrio Colonna e Maria Mancini, sua consorte, promotori in questa competizione culturale tra le famiglie romane del tempo, si resero protagonisti della scena mondana a Roma all'insegna dello sfarzo in cui molto spesso il ballo era un importante momento di intrattenimento. Nel 1654 si ha

già notizia che Maria Mancini si cimentò nel «Ballet des arts libéraux» (De Lucca 2020: 16) alla fine dell'opera *Les Noces de Pélée et de Thétis*, di Francesco Buti e Carlo Caproli, sotto la guida del celeberrimo Pierre Beauchamps, maestro di danza francese alla corte di Luigi XIV (Christout, 1997; cfr. De Lucca, p. 16). La principessa Colonna eseguì sicuramente passi di danza che possiamo riscontrare anche nell'iconografia di Giacomo Torelli (fig. 1) dove vi sono riprodotte figure di ballerini che, con stile francese riconoscibile nella postura di braccia e gambe, eseguono una coreografia (Sparti 2015: 373).



Fig. 1. Giacomo Torelli, *Les Noces de Pélée e di Thétis*, in *Apotheosis*, Parigi 1654. Fondazione Cini, Venezia. (I-Vgc, ITM, Fondo Povoledo, inv. 56_082)

Il Contestabile, fortemente legato alla corona spagnola, assunse un potere sempre più ampio ma soprattutto un atteggiamento e una posizione di 'sfida contro il governo papale'. Lo stesso d'Estrées riferì le parole del papa il quale definì Lorenzo Onofrio: «capable de réunir la noblesse romaine et qui put apaiser le peuple s'il arrivait quelque émotion» (Perey 1896: 470). Questa attitudine apparteneva un po' a tutti gli aristocratici romani, secondo un'idea di Tamburini (1997), ma ancor di più a Lorenzo Onofrio Colonna il quale perseguì il suo cospicuo programma politico e culturale. La consonanza di interessi culturali – teatrali e musicali – senza precedenti, espressi attraverso importanti committenze artistiche ed esibizioni come feste o mascherate, creò una sorta di spettacolo pubblico in cui i coniugi Colonna dimostrarono il loro status anche attraverso i lussuosi cerimoniali, il modo di vestire esterofilo 'alla francese' e 'alla spagnola' (Panzanaro 2018: 19-58). Le immagini giunte nelle incisioni e dipinti mostrano Lorenzo Onofrio come un personaggio fiero, autoreferenziale e sicuro di sé. Maria Mancini non era da meno, in quanto sono note le sue ostentazioni in merito all'abbigliamento con abiti scollati alla moda romana con accessori preziosi da sfoggiare nelle feste indicative di una mentalità spregiudicata e indipendente, come si evince anche dal ritratto che fece di lei l'artista Carlo Maratta nel 1669. In quegli anni i loro interessi furono orientati verso numerose forme raffinate di intrattenimento: l'opera, il ballo, la poesia e il teatro, partecipando sempre con grande entusiasmo. In ogni occasione, sia privata che pubblica, la danza fu protagonista durante i sontuosi festeggiamenti a Milano per le nozze del Contestabile con la consorte Maria Mancini di rientro da Lione. Nel corso dei cerimoniali nel palazzo del marchese Los Balbases, dove si svolsero conviti, commedie e numerosi balletti con la partecipazione della nobiltà milanese, Maria si cimentò in una leggiadra e raffinata danza 'alla francese' (Nestola 2015: 526-45) in cui riscosse l'ammirazione degli astanti, come recita un *Avviso*:

Fu recitata una bellissima commedia e infine un balletto di maticcini con l'assistenza di dame e cavalieri per ricreazione della sposa colonnese e poi nella sala del palazzo riccamente adobata si fecero diversi bali con suoni di vari istrumenti, danzando anco essa sposa alla francese con ammirazione degli assistenti per la grazia e leggiadria².

Il ballo 'alla francese', come citato nel documento, doveva far riferimento a una danza in voga all'epoca, una possibile corrente o una sarabanda, che permettesse di esprimere alla principessa tutta la sua «grazia e leggiadria». Al contempo Lorenzo Onofrio diede vita a una giostra – detta degli *Elementi contro le stagioni* – in cui si cimentò con maestria «tutto fiorito, con tre compagni, [che] significava la vezzosa gioventù dell'anno» (*ibidem*: ff. 114r-v).

La morte di papa Clemente IX, avvenuta nel 1670, causò una battuta di arresto alla cultura teatrale, ma non alle iniziative dei Colonna sempre alle prese con il divertimento tra «commedie, festini e balli [...] con sontuosità e splendidezza». In effetti, nelle consuete commedie all'improvviso, si ha notizia del *Balletto di quattro ninfe e di quattro venti*, eseguito da Maria Mancini e le sue damigelle e da Filippo Mancini e alcuni gentiluomini di corte, a suggello di una festa sontuosa con «grandine di confetture» (Tamburini 1987: 60). Il balletto messo in atto dalle sorelle Mancini suscitò stupore come si evince da un *Avviso* dell'1/2:

Domenica sera si fece dal contestabile Colonna una comedia di cavalieri all'improvviso che riuscì assai bella massime che fu adornata di tre bellissimi balletti con abiti galantissimi, in uno dei quali ballò madama Colonna, la duchessa Mazzarina con altra dama et cavalieri; cosa a Roma inusitata di veder dame su le scene³.

La presenza femminile risulta significativa dal momento che le donne, e ancor più le nobildonne, erano escluse dalle performance pubbliche poco appropriate alle aristocratiche di rango (De Lucca 2020: 141-42). In tali occasioni, che fossero mascherate, carri allegorici o spettacoli teatrali, i personaggi erano maschili o uomini travestiti da ninfe o dee nei balletti allegorici e mitologici, nei quali dimostravano molto spesso la loro destrezza fisica con salti e capriole⁴.

Drammaturgia dei balli nelle opere teatrali patrocinate dai Colonna

Il panorama cronachistico a nostra disposizione, ampiamente noto agli studiosi, spesso costituito solo da un cenno o da una sfumatura, lascia intendere un multiforme fenomeno sociale in cui il ballo riveste un ruolo denso di motivi culturali, ideologici, politici e religiosi, all'interno

di un contesto aristocratico come quello dei Colonna (De Lucca 2020). Le fonti hanno spesso funzionato da cassa di risonanza, per usare una definizione di Morelli (1996), per quegli spettacoli o eventi promossi da personaggi di grande rilievo, che «balzavano alla cronaca non tanto per le loro implicazioni artistiche quanto e soprattutto per la rilevanza politica che l'evento stesso rivestiva» (*ibidem*: 155-66).

Dalla ricognizione dei repertori di opere teatrali (Franchi 1988; Sartori 1990 e 1994), unitamente a quanto emerge dalle fonti d'archivio, possiamo estrapolare un congruo numero di *balli* menzionati fra paratesti nei libretti e metterli a confronto con le danze strumentali nelle partiture. Purtroppo, si deve anche constatare che a fronte di un elevato numero di libretti d'opera non corrisponde lo stesso numero di partiture che spesso sono andate perdute oppure rimaneggiate con tagli e aggiunte nel corso del tempo (Alm 2003: 224).

Ad ogni modo, la comparazione di tutte le testimonianze a nostra disposizione, pur nella loro natura eterogenea (il libretto, la partitura, lettere e *avvisi*, e le iconografie a corredo delle opere), permette di conoscere alcuni aspetti performativi e drammaturgici. La caleidoscopica varietà di personaggi messi in campo nel ballo teatrale seicentesco, fra i quali paggi, ninfe e pastori, satiri, statue, torce, soldati in combattimento, uomini folli, amazzone, mori, turchi, animali selvatici, (Alm 2003: 237-42) e la gran varietà di situazioni, azioni, ruoli dei ballerini, evidenzia una grande libertà espressiva nello stile e nella tecnica (Cfr. Ambrosio 2016).

Le giustificazioni di spesa degli spettacoli danno conto dei pagamenti non solo di accessori e costumi necessari per allestire i balletti, ma anche di maestri di ballo intervenuti. In effetti, nel dramma per musica *L'Oronthea* (1661) di Antonio Cesti, oltre al pagamento di artigiani, artisti e professionisti di vario genere, vi è il pagamento del maestro di ballo Luca Cherubini, attivo in molti spettacoli colonnesi⁵. In questa occasione sono messi in scena dei balletti negli intermezzi come riportato negli *Avvisi* di Roma:

Martedì sera si terminò il carnevale col corso degli altri palii e fra la gran quantità di comedie e opere rappresentate hanno avuto l'applauso quella del signor contestabile Colonna intitolata *L'Oronthea regina d'Egitto*, l'altra del signor Giovanni Francesco Torre negoziante genovese nominata il *Clearco* ambi in musica, con balli,



intermedi e mutazioni di scena⁶.

La presenza dei ballerini all'interno della complessa compagine di maestranze è ulteriormente dimostrata dalle spese per lo spettacolo in cui si elencano «6 paia di scarpe ai ballerini della commedia» (Tamburini 1997: 84).

Nella folta lista di opere teatrali che hanno segnato la vita culturale dei Colonna vi è *L'Empio punito*, messa in scena a Roma al Teatro di Colonna in Borgo durante il Carnevale del 1669, su libretto di Filippo Apolloni⁷ e Filippo Acciaioi e su musiche di Alessandro Melani⁸ (Weaver 1977: 256). Le notizie sullo spettacolo emergono anche da un *Avviso*, datato 17 febbraio:

Domenica sera si recitò per la prima volta nel Palazzo del Contestabile in Borgo il dramma in musica, alla spesa della quale sono concorsi anche li signori Rospigliosi e Chigi e la Regina [...]⁹.

I notevoli sforzi economici per tale occasione manifestano la smisurata ambizione dei Colonna¹⁰ e il carattere encomiastico della messa in scena¹¹. La testimonianza, data da un *Avviso* del 23 febbraio, evidenzia, infatti, la grandiosità dell'evento di fronte a tutto il Sacro Collegio Romano invitato dalla Regina, in onore del quale si rappresentò per la prima volta:

La sera di detto giorno [domenica] nel salone del palazzo del signor contestabile Colonna in Borgo si diede principio dal signor cavaliere Filippo Acciaioi a far rappresentare da migliori cantori la sua opera regia intitolata *L'Empio* con sontuoso apparato, ricchissimi abiti e bellissime mutazioni di scene e prospettive, sinfonie e balli superbi alla presenza della maestà della Regina di Svezia e di quasi tutti li cardinali ambasciatori principi e nobiltà, essendo riuscita di piena soddisfazione di tutta la corte¹².

Lo spettacolo fu impegnativo con ben dodici mutazioni sceniche, con abiti superbi, musiche e balli di grande spettacolarità, che possono, ancora oggi, essere apprezzate nei disegni di Pierre Paul Sevin¹³. Tali raffigurazioni rappresentano le scenografie che fecero da sfondo ai balletti¹⁴ (in particolare, vedasi la diciottesima scena del I atto, la [scena ventidue] definita *Introduzione al ballo* del II atto e la scena sedicesima del III atto¹⁵).



Fig. 2. Pierre Paul Sevin, *Giardino con arco e vista del Palazzo Regio*, Atto I, scena 18 in *L'Empio punito*, Roma 1669. (BNF, Res 2264, f. 6)

I primi balli, definiti *ballo di Paggi* e *ballo di Mori*, sono inseriti in un contesto dal naturalismo ricercato di epoca classica attraverso gli elementi riprodotti – piante, fiori, statue e fontana – (fig. 2), raffigurati in prospettiva, dai volumi ampi e delle colonne laterali con uno spazio centrale tra le quinte e un fondale sufficientemente ampio, per lasciare spazio di movimento agli attori e ballerini (Zammar 2017: 84).

Nella partitura¹⁶ è presente l'indicazione, seguita dalla danza strumentale definita «corrente per quando si dà a bere» e una *sarabanda*, dal carattere lento e solenne che dà a intendere un contesto in cui regna calma e tranquillità. Dato confermato anche da una postilla a margine della partitura «Qui si riposa il Re et i Paggi cominciano il Ballo, et à mezzo il balletto Atrace segue fra i sentieri di rose» (Fig. 3). La *corrente*, scritta in forma trio sonata, è in 3/8 costituita da due movimenti di 7 battute ciascuno con andamento puntato e ritornelli¹⁷ (Allsop 1998: 86-98).



Fig. 3. Alessandro Melani, *Sarabanda*, in *L'Empio punito*, Roma 1669 (V-CVbav. Chigi Q.VI.57).

Alla fine del II atto, nella partitura è presente il primo Intermezzo dal titolo *Introduzione al ballo / Demonio, Acrimante che dorme, Proserpina e Choro di Demoni*. Questa parte, nel libretto, corrisponde alla scena XXI ultima del II atto dove Demonio annuncia il ballo: «Hor che sopito giace / Il mio fedele amico / Con astutia mendace / Assicurar vogl'io [...] Leggiadri spiriti / Con festè giubilo danzate, / e con diletto eterno / fate, ch'è mulo al ciel goda l'inferno». A seguire ci sono le indicazioni sceniche a chiosa: «Segue il ballo de' Mostri, e si muta la / scena e ritorna la stanza d'Acrimante / dov'èi dorme nell'istesso tappeto». La scrittura musicale, alternando tempi lenti a tempi veloci, si contraddistingue per cambi improvvisi, frasi irregolari e ritmo puntato che di certo doveva accompagnare il ballo di figure mostruose cercando di riprodurre mistero e suspense nella messa in scena (Alm 2003: 257).



Fig. 4. Pierre Paul Sevin, *Regia di Proserpina*, Atto II, scena 22, in *L'Empio punito*, Roma 1669 (BNF, Res 2264, f. 9).

L'iconografia, che raffigura la reggia di Proserpina (fig. 4) racconta in modo significativo il *Ballo delle Furie* accompagnato dal *Coro di Demoni* descritto sia nel libretto che nella partitura. L'inserimento del coro danzante lo si ritrova anche nel trattato di Giovanni Battista Doni che recita: «si doverà fare scelta di persone, che posseggano insieme l'Arte del Ballo, e del Canto»¹⁸. Inoltre, nell'opera anonima *Il Corago* si rintraccia la citazione:

Usasi dai cori fare varii passeggi et intrecciamenti et in questi rappresentare varie figure [...] perciò sarà necessario che mentre arrivano a formare quella tale figura, facciano un tantino di pausa.

Accade accompagnare il ballo con il canto [...] il maestro di ballo confaccia con il canto come anco con le figure

e intrecciamenti [...] dei passeggi dei cori, quali pure per essere spezie di ballo dovranno essere dal medesimo ballerino fatti con le regole sopradette¹⁹.

La cifra stilistica è caratterizzata da un'ambientazione infernale: figure mostruose dalla doppia coda avviluppata a mo' di spira, con le zampe in posizione rampante. Sullo sfondo si notano figure in movimento dalle sembianze diaboliche dal corpo per metà uomo e per metà bestia con corna e coda; alcune di esse hanno in mano il tipico forcione a due punte. Il ballo di mostri rappresenta un *topos* del teatro seicentesco in cui la manifestazione di uomini travestiti che si comportano in maniera licenziosa rovescia le regole del decoro in modo carnevalesco. In definitiva si tratta di un sistema di credenze, basato sui contrari e sulla reale e minacciosa contrapposizione del demonio e del suo culto a Dio e alla Chiesa (Arcangeli 2018: 73-91 e 97). I personaggi, come diavoli o mostri, palesano la volontà di rievocare pratiche ancestrali, rilette in chiave «di degenerazione, da passione ad eccitazioni originarie per la guerra, a sentimenti e comportamenti di più bassa lega» (*ibidem*: 125-26; Kornmuller 2013: 44-45).

Nel dramma musicale burlesco *Il Girello*, di Jacopo Melani (1661) e Alessandro Stradella su libretto di Filippo Acciaiuoli (Tamburini 1997: 58), è inserito un *ballo di Diavoli* annunciato dalle indicazioni sceniche del libretto «Qui si muta la scena in Inferno con una bocca di doue escano cinque Diavoli à ballare, e vestire Girello». In questo frangente la misura performativa è chiaramente parodica nel momento in cui il personaggio, vittima di un incantesimo, è circondato da ballerini travestiti da diavoli che danzano intorno a Girello. La piccola suite, *balletto* e *giga*, è piuttosto vivace nel ritmo puntato, costituita da una prima parte in tempo 4/4 con ritornello e una seconda in 6/8 sempre con ritornello²⁰ (Fig. 5).



Fig. 5. Jacopo Melani, *Ballo di satiri*, in *Il Girello*, Roma 1668. (I-Nc, Rari 6.6.20)

Allo stesso tempo non mancano importanti messe in scena di drammi per musica, con dediche encomiastiche ai Colonna con ragguardevoli balli negli intermezzi. La prima opera, la ripresa dello *Scipione Africano* di Niccolò Minato e Francesco Cavalli data in scena al Tordinona nel 1671, contiene inserti di Alessandro Stradella come il prologo e due intermedi. I balli sono annunciati sin dai paratesti del libretto: *Ballo di Gladiatori*, *Ballo di Ciclopi* e *Ballo di schiavi della bellezza*. Il primo ballo è inserito alla fine del prologo quando un *Choro di gladiatori* canta «Ecco pronto lo stuol dei Gladiatori ad esibir insanamente forti spontanee stragie uolontarie morti», seguito dalla *Comparsa di combattenti* con un brano strumentale costituito da 12 battute in tempo 4/4.

Nel secondo caso il *ballo di Ciclopi* a fine Intermezzo I, il personaggio Vulcano invita al ballo accennando alla postura da assumere «si riposa la man, si mova il piede»²¹. I personaggi in questo punto danno vita ad un balletto accompagnato dalla suite di danze strumentali costituita da un primo movimento di 8 battute in tempo ternario, seguito da un secondo movimento il *Balletto un'altra volta per parte* in 16 battute e, a chiosa, un breve *adagio*. L'ultimo ballo dell'opera, inserito a fine Intermezzo II, è definito *Ballo P.º di Schiavi* ed è composto da quattro movimenti indicati come: *Spagnolo*, *Francese*, *Tedesco*, *Italiano* (Fig. 6). Dalle indicazioni del libretto si legge «Qui li schiavi si staccano dal carro, e si pongono a sedere vicino la scena». Bellezza dopo aver ordinato agli schiavi di arrestare il carro, annuncia la vendetta per Scipione, esortando gli astanti alla festa «Allegrezza, allegrezza / O giorno felice / S'il core mi lice / Dai lacci sprigionar della Bellezza / Allegrezza, allegrezza», e dando vita al *ballo* che si conclude con una *sarabanda*.

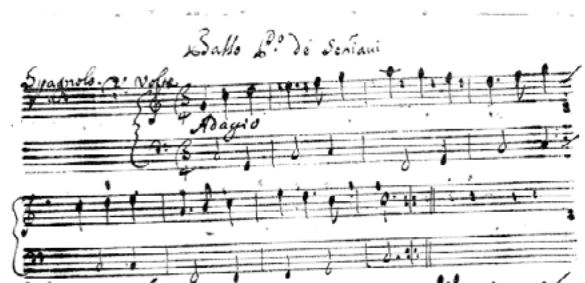


Fig. 6. Alessandro Stradella, *Ballo di Schiavi*, in *Scipione affricano*, Roma 1671 (V-CVbav Chigi Q.V.60).

La seconda opera, *Il Novello Giasone*, andò in scena nella stagione inaugurale del Teatro Tordinona

(1671), nella versione rimaneggiata da Giovan Filippo Apolloni e Alessandro Stradella²². L'opera subì molti tagli, aggiunte e modifiche comprese le musiche da ballo che ritroviamo a fine I atto con una piccola suite costituita da una *sarabanda* in 3/4 di 16 battute e l'indicazione «Sarabanda va replicata due volte». A seguire il *Balletto delle Furie* in 4/4 di 12 battute presenta un'articolata indicazione verbale: «Quando sarà finito il balletto, da capo alla Sarabanda due altre volte, e poi il Balletto un'altra volta, e poi da capo alla Sarabanda fino a che dura di saltare al cavallo» (Usula 2013: 387). Si può arguire, dal punto di vista drammaturgico, che nel primo gruppo di danze vi fosse l'intervento di alcuni cavalli in scena (forse fantocci) con un forte carattere caricaturale e dai connotati erotici (Cfr. Alm 1993: 244-46). Alla fine del II Atto è presente il *Balletto d'Amorini* costituito da un movimento in 4/4 di 11 battute, una *Sarabanda* in 3/4 di 16 battute e un *Presto* in 12/8 di 9 battute.

Questi 'aggregati' di danze strumentali, composti da una semplice linea melodica e il basso sottostante, mostrano una precisa volontà del compositore di proporre la struttura della *suite*, in cui si rispetta la tradizionale tripartizione: una danza svelta in tempo binario adatta a uno stile di danza *en promenade*, una *Sarabanda* più lenta in tempo ternario, e infine una *giga* veloce (*presto*) in 12/8 (Usula 2013: 390-91).

Molti sono gli esempi di opere teatrali in cui il ballo non perse mai quel ruolo rilevante nel contesto socio-culturale del tempo, tanto che nella riproposizione dell'opera *Prosperità di Elio Seiano* ritroviamo l'arricchimento di un prologo «con la giunta di beli balletti per intermedi» (*ibidem* 1997: 132) di cui uno danzato e recitato dal figlio del Contestabile. Lo spettacolo, andato in scena nel palazzo Colonna, ebbe risonanza e successo tali da richiamare la presenza del pubblico di prestigio: la Regina di Svezia con tutte le sue dame e tutto il Sacro Collegio. Una lettera di Settimio Olgiati da Roma del 13 gennaio 1676 recita:

Del resto la nostra opera si va perfezionando tuttavia e si è risoluto che ballino li figli del signor Contestabile per intermedio anzi uno reciterà alcuni versi e credo che fra quindici giorni si farà la prima volta. Ne avremo un'altra che fa fare il signor Pavolo Bernino (Tamburini 1997: 131).

Vi sono anche liste di spesa che concorrono a testimoniare la grandiosità dell'evento con il pagamento di «abiti minutamente descritti, delle tre dame del primo ballo, delle tre Grazie, dei tre 'Romieri' del secondo ballo e dei tre 'palandrani di carrettiere', tutti serviti ai principini» (*ibidem*: 132).

A palazzo Colonna si attesta la messa in scena di una commedia per musica finanziata dal duca Caffarelli in cui i principini si esibirono in un ballo nell'«intermedio di ubriachi» composto da Carlo del Nero Ventura, maestro di ballo, uomo esperto di spettacoli e intrattenimenti a servizio dei Colonna (Cfr. De Lucca 2020: 189, nota 65).

Nel 1677 la commedia burlesca *Il Trespolo tutore*, una delle opere per musica più brillanti di Bernardo Pasquini fu messa in scena «sotto la protezione del Contestabile» il quale, per l'occasione fece modificare il teatro con palchetti in una loggia comune (*ibidem* 2020: 337). Nel dramma per musica su libretto di Giovanni Cosimo Villifranchi²³, sono inseriti come interlocutori personaggi di medio e basso rango – un ottuso tutore, una balia sciocca, due giovani e due giovinette in età da marito – e può essere classificata quale commedia «burlesca» di genere «rusticale», come denota l'ambientazione. La breve *suite* di danze, presente nell'opera, è costituita dalle otto battute iniziali della *corrente* che introducono la successiva *sarabanda* cantata. In questa occasione possiamo riflettere su elementi di drammaturgia del balli nelle parole della protagonista Despina che descrive il ritmo puntato della danza «Non la corrente ohibò, una Sarabandina, simile alla corrente che dice tara, tara, tarara». A questa citazione segue una *sarabanda* strumentale in 8 battute e poi Artemisia risponde «Quest'è la sarabanda che ballaste hier sera, veramente il festino per esser in Villa fu nobile fu uopo». Si tratta di un intermedio coreutico che lascia intendere la vivacità ritmica del momento scenico che si conclude con un'altra *Sarabanda* strumentale. Questo è forse uno dei pochi esempi di relazione stretta tra i versi del canto e il ritmo del ballo che ci invita a riflettere sul fatto che le «due arti calpestando gli stessi palcoscenici, dove si mettono in scena le medesime passioni e magari le medesime vicende, ma lo fanno nel loro diverso codice espressivo, che si acquisisce tramite un apprendistato specifico» (Chegai 2017: 160).

Molto significativi furono gli spettacoli fortemente



voluti dal Contestabile quali *Il Pompeo* con musiche di Alessandro Scarlatti e *Tessalonica* con musiche di Bernardo Pasquini, le cui rappresentazioni sono unicamente romane. Il dramma per musica *Il Pompeo* «del signor Nicolò Minato» vide l'intervento non solo di Filippo Acciaiuoli che si dimostrò un vero *corago* di molte opere romane, ma anche del noto architetto Carlo Fontana che si occupò certamente delle scenografie. Nei documenti compare il nome del maestro di ballo Pietro Paolo Brandolisi in un conto di spesa in cui «sono pagate scarpe, stivali, stivaletti bianchi e ‘alla turchesa’ per i vari personaggi e ballerini: in particolare scarpe con il ‘calcagno di legno’ per il giovine del signor Brandolini» (Cfr. Tamburini 1997: 152). Tale nome ricorre anche nei conti dell’opera *Tessalonica* con musica di Pasquini e testo di Nicolò Minato andata in scena sempre nel carnevale del 1683. Dalle fonti dello spettacolo emergono notizie di «quattro dozzine di sonagli e due maschere per il ballo dell’ombra citato nel libretto» (Cfr. *Ibidem*: 154).

Il nome del maestro di ballo Brandolisi emerge anche nei conti di altre famiglie romane come ad esempio nelle giustificazioni di spesa della famiglia Astalli in cui si riporta il compenso di tre scudi pagato al «M.ro di Ballo delle Signorine» per lezioni di danza in ambito domestico²⁴. Il ballo rappresentava una importante disciplina per l’educazione dei giovani nobili tanto che veniva insegnata nei *Collegia nobilium* romani secondo quanto riportano le relazioni di Accademie dei saggi di fine anno (Lorenzetti 1986: 17-40; Cfr. Mòlica 2000: 107). Sovente erano assunti maestri di ballo per impartire lezioni ai giovani principi come testimonia un conto di spesa colonnese: «Sono documentati preziosi abiti all’armena e alla spagnola per i principini che si esibivano nel ‘ballo della comedia’» (Tamburini 1997: 125).

Il 1685 è segnato dalla rappresentazione nel palazzo Colonna del dramma per musica *L’Arianna* su musiche di Bernardo Pasquini con una significativa compagine coreica che diede vita ai «balli di mostri marini, sileni e bacchetti» (*ibidem*: 163; De Lucca 2019: 92-94). Le liste di spesa riportano consistenti numeri di accessori, tra scarpe e vestiti, per i costumi dei ballerini.

Il teatro Colonna vide anche la messa in scena del dramma per musica *Il silenzio d’Arpocrate* nel carnevale del 1686 con l’intervento dell’architetto Girolamo Fontana e testo del libretto di Nicolò

Minato. Sappiamo, grazie alle liste di spesa colonnesi, che i balli furono diretti e dati in scena dal Brandolisi per il quale si acquistarono scarpe, sciabole e armature per i costumi nelle scene coreografiche: «soldati greci, con pippe di tabacco; di marinari, che suonano scacciapensieri; di discepoli di Arpocrate: ballano taciti, senza strepito e con poco suono»²⁵.

La festa teatrale: una grandiosa messa in scena nel teatro di palazzo Colonna

La dimensione pubblica acquisita negli anni dalla famiglia Colonna è riflessa nella grandiosa ‘festa teatrale’ *La Caduta del Regno delle Amazzoni*, che pur non essendo una committenza del Contestabile, oramai deceduto da un anno, evidenzia lo sfarzo e la retorica auto referenziale raggiunta dalla spettacolarità romana (Morelli 2016: 111-233). Musicata da Bernardo Pasquini su libretto di Domenico De Totis, l’opera è dedicata espressamente alle nozze di Carlo II d’Asburgo con Marianna di Neuburg (Garavaglia 2015: 183-98) e rappresenta una delle più interessanti pubblicazioni librettistiche, in quanto è corredata di pregevoli iconografie e di partitura completa in cui si descrive la presenza dei balletti alla fine del Prologo, alla fine del I e del II atto e in chiusura d’opera. Il più sontuoso balletto presente nell’opera è senza dubbio il *ballo degli Amorini* a fine II atto, in cui si rappresenta l’arrivo di Venere dal mare che si contrappone alla resistenza affettiva delle Amazzoni. Dal punto di vista drammaturgico, Venere accusa il figlio Cupido di non impegnarsi a sufficienza con le «amazzoni ritrose» e per sopperire a questa mancanza chiama a sé un gran numero di amorini per fare festa (*ibidem*: 197) con un gran ballo. L’evento è annunciato già dalle indicazioni sceniche²⁶ «Vengono dal cielo, e da la Terra molti amorini, li quali e per il palco, e per le scale, e per le logge formano un ballo, qual terminato, diuersi di lor volan in aria»²⁷, ed è raffigurato anche nell’iconografia di Girolamo Fontana (Fig. 7) che mostra una imponente quanto complessa scenotecnica tra simboli, emblemi e figure allegoriche caratteristiche della retorica barocca (Cfr. Sardoni 1986: 303). Le statue laterali, di gusto classico, nel sontuoso cortile di palazzo, fanno da cornice alla festosa danza. In fondo, sulla sommità di una scala, si erge Venere

seduta su una conchiglia mentre osserva gli astanti, circondata da numerosi amorini: alcuni scendono dalla scala, altri volteggiano nel cielo, altri ancora suonano strumenti sulla balaustra. Sul palco numerosi amorini sono disposti su due file frontali per dare vita alla danza coreografica (Savage-Sansone 1989: 495-511) con altri quattro al centro che eseguono salti e capriole²⁸. I ballerini, dopo i loro incroci coreografici, avranno assunto varie posture creando possibili figure geometriche astratte (Sparti 2013: 369 e 381; Cfr. Franko 1993). La partitura presenta la piccola *suite* di danze strumentali, dal ritmo puntato e uniformità tonale, suddivisa in due movimenti con ritornelli e con indicazione di *replica*.



Fig. 7. Girolamo Fontana, *Giardino di Venere e amorini*, in *La Caduta del regno delle Amazzoni*, Atto I, fine, Roma 1690. (I-Rn, 34.1.C.23)

Conclusioni

La 'drammaturgia' dei *balli*, annunciata nel titolo di questo contributo, tiene conto non solo dei testi teatrali ma, al contempo, considera il carattere non letterario, fatto di gesti e mimica espressivi (Allanbrook, 1983: 63). I *balli* sono da considerarsi «scritture extracorporee» (Pontremoli, 2017: 70) spesso solamente accennate nei versi dei libretti, nelle descrizioni degli intrattenimenti danzati e nelle partiture. L'analisi di tutte le fonti superstiti – librettistiche, musicali e documentarie –, ci restituisce un quadro, sì eterogeneo, ma sicuramente dotato di una certa coerenza interna che risiede nella natura stessa dei *balli*, ossia quella di essere destinati all'intrattenimento. La mancanza di trattati coreografici coevi, e soprattutto italiani, non ci consente di ricostruire la coreografia dei passi di danza. Possiamo solo fare affidamento

su fonti di primo Seicento che non ci permettono di avere una visione approfondita del fenomeno culturale all'interno del contesto romano.

Ad ogni modo, la fortunata e prolifica esperienza teatrale della seconda metà del Seicento, patrocinata dalla famiglia Colonna, ha una matrice comune di auto referenzialità, un *fil rouge* nella vita pubblica e privata, in cui i *balli* assumono un ruolo sociale importante, divenendo l'espressione viva dell'identità aristocratica.

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Notes

- 1 Le fonti, a disposizione, sono: gli *Avvisi di Roma* e i conti di spesa della famiglia Colonna in cui troviamo numerosi particolari sulla committenza, il riscontro sul pubblico, i costi per l’allestimento, la critica (Tamburini 1997: 79-182).
- 2 Avviso del 11/3, (V-CVasv, Segr. Stato, *Avvisi* 110, ff.114r-v).
- 3 *Avvisi di Roma*, (V-CVbav, Barb. Lat 6404, c. 88v).
- 4 Le fonti toscane di opere come *Hipermestra o Ercole in Thebe* riportano la descrizione di salti e movimenti arditi dei ballerini durante le messe in scena (Sparti 2013: 357-99).
- 5 Si veda *Stati delle Anime*, *ASVic*. 53, cc. 47v-49v (SS. XII Apostoli. Stati delle Anime 53 (1667-1697), Roma Arch. Storico del Vicariato). Luca Cherubini è impiegato dal 1660 al 1661 nell’allestimento dell’opera *L’Oron-tea*, appare negli Stati delle Anime come “maestro di ballo” fino al 1667 (De Lucca 2020, p. 41).
- 6 Avviso del 5/3, (V-CVasv, Segr. Stato, *Avvisi* 110, f.114r).
- 7 Giovanni Filippo Apolloni poeta e librettista. (Morelli G. 1988: 211-64).
- 8 Cfr. Morelli 2009, on line: http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/alessandro-melani_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/ (ultimo accesso 18/08/2020). La commedia costituì il primo esempio composto in musica sul soggetto del Don Giovanni entrato nella storia letteraria ai primi del Seicento, grazie alla versione di Tirso de Molina *El burlador de Sevilla*. L’opera circolata in Italia sotto il titolo *Il convitato di pietra* nel rifacimento di G. A. Cicognini, come è testimoniato da una lettera di Salvator Rosa (Pirrotta 1991: 26-37).
- 9 I-Fas, Archivio di Stato Mediceo del Principato, 3939, c.1226.
- 10 Il teatro, disegnato da Ottavio Mascarini e costruito nel 1682, era ubicato in prossimità del piano nobile di Palazzo Colonna in Borgo (oggi Giraud-Torlonia), ipotesi di ricostruzione di Sergio Rotondi (Tamburini 1997: 397-404).
- 11 Dagli *Avvisi* del Raggi si legge «Fu tutta bella, le apparenze bellissime; sala, galleria, anticamera, selva, giardini capricciosissimi». Sulle «scene fatte a libretti» (Tamburini 1997: 237, nota 167; Cfr. Salerno 2001: 137-64).
- 12 Avviso del 23/2 (V-CVasv Segr. Stato *Avvisi* 115).
- 13 Pierre Paul Sevin, pittore francese attivo a Roma tra il 1666 e il 1669. Oggi raccolte in due serie diverse e conservate una ad Amsterdam e l’altra a Stoccolma. Bjurström, ha rinvenuto a Parigi e, poi, ha identificato in un’altra raccolta di disegni sempre di Sevin dal titolo *Recueil de décors de théâtre*, conservata presso il Musée du theatre de l’Opéra di Parigi con la catalogazione: Rés.2264a, c.n.n., la serie completa dei disegni (Bjurström 1976: n. 660-90 e Fuhring 1989: 72).
- 14 Le tre iconografie, *Giardino con arco e fontana e vista del Palazzo regio* (Atto I,18), *Regia di Proserpina* (Atto II,22) e *Giardino di cipressi con tavola apparecchiata* (Atto III,16), corrispondono alle scene del libretto con balletti.



15 Filippo Acciaioli, socio dell’Accademia degli Immobili a Firenze, lavorò per i Colonna negli allestimenti del teatro Tordinona (Baggio-Marchi 2000: 39-59).

16 La partitura V-CVbav. Chigi Q.VI.88 e il libretto V.CVbav. Stamp.Chigi.VI.1153, int.1 (cf. Franchi 1996: 717-18).

17 Le danze fondano la loro essenza su nuclei ritmico-tematici circolanti e rimaneggiati (Cfr. Allsop 1998: 86-98).

18 Si fa riferimento all’opera *La Rappresentazione di Anima e Corpo* (1600) di Emilio de’ Cavalieri come persona esperta sia nel canto che nel ballo; cfr. GIOVAN BATTISTA DONI, *Trattato della musica scenica* (1633-35).

19 *Il Corago o vero alcune variazioni per metter bene in scena le composizioni drammatiche* (1983: 99 e 102).

20 Libretto: I-Rn, 35.9.I.20.2, partitura: I-Nc, Rari 6.6.20 [I-Tn Giordano 13].

21 Cavalli-Stradella, *Scipione africano*, 1671. Libretto: I-Mb, Racc. Dramm. 1542 e partitura: V-CVvat, Chigi Q.V.60, ff.174v-175.

22 *Il Giasone* data a Venezia nel Teatro di S. Cassiano il 23 gennaio 1649 (Usula 2013: xlvii-xcii e 387-88).

23 Il soggetto è tratto da una commedia in prosa di Giovan Battista Ricciardi e rimaneggiato nella versione romana probabilmente dall’attore-cantante Lorenzo Beatucci. Non c’è dubbio che *Il Trespolo tutore* rientri nel filone toscano della commedia (Morelli 2016: 140, nota 54).

24 Il documento riporta le «Spese Straordinarie fatte nel mese di maggio 1677 a servizio di casa dell’Ill.mo Sig. Marchese A...beno [sic] Astalli». Si veda, «Giustificazioni delli giornali» del Marchese Astalli. Archivio Capitolino Roma, Fondo Astalli, n. 339.

25 Libretto: *Il silenzio d’Arpocrate. Dramma per musica del Signor Noccolò Minato*, [...] Roma 1686 [I-Rn, 34.I.G.12,5] (Cfr. Profeti 1981).

26 Libretti: I-Rn. 34. 1.C.23; I-Rn. 34.1.G.10.1 del 1690; I-Rc. Misc. 1426/6 del 1690; E-Mn. T-1970 del 1690; I-Rc Comm. 240; l’altro è *on line* US-NHub con le incisioni *on line*: <https://brbl-dl.library.yale.edu/vufind/Record/3440826> (ultimo accesso 18/08/2020).

27 Libretto: I-Rn. 34. 1.C.23, p. 37.

28 Per la postura di braccia e piedi si vedano i trattati di Fabrizio Caroso, *Il Ballarino*, Venezia 1581, ff. 3v, 5v. 11r e *Nobiltà di dame*, Venezia 1600, ff. 13-37, dove si parla di «piedi dritti» e/o «punte dei piedi (ben) dritti» e «le braccia calate»; Cesare Negri, *Le gratie d’amore*, Milano 1602, ff. 35-9, dove si cita «punte delli piedi un poco fora» e «le braccia stese apari de’ fianchi»; inoltre anche il trattato di François De Lauze, *Apologie de la dance*, Paris 1623, fa cenno alla postura dei piedi «la pointe des pieds ouverte en sorte que les mouvements [...] precedent de la hanche»; allo stesso modo anche Giovanbattista Dufort, *Trattato del Ballo nobile*, Napoli 1728 (Sparti 2013: 369, nota 37). Si veda anche Gregorio Lambranzi, *Neue und curieuse theatrelische Tanz-Schule*, Nurnberg 1716.

Celebrating as a Nation. The Festival Life of Foreign Communities and Identity Building in Early Modern Rome

Tobias C. Weißmann

An engraving by Antonio Tempesta shows a bird's eye view of a spectacular ceremony in Piazza Navona in the centre of Rome (Fig. 1).

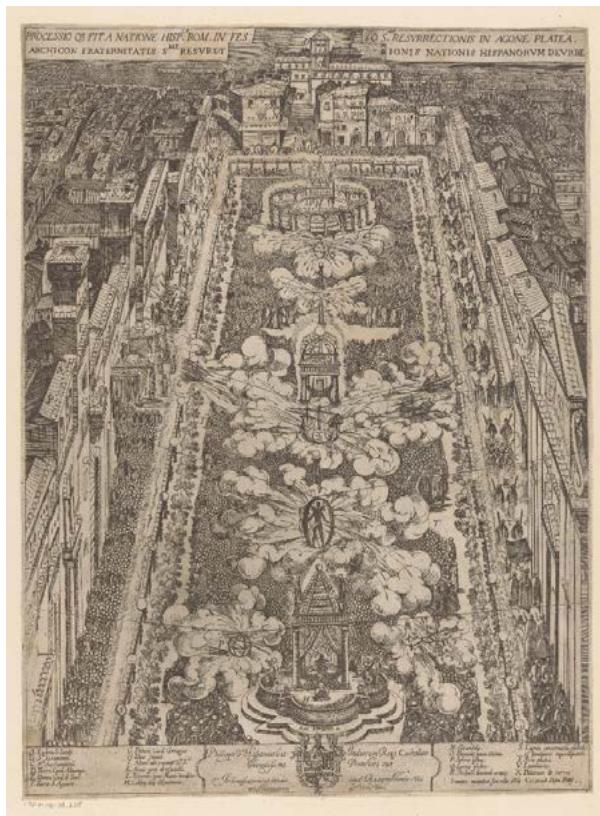


Fig. 1. Antonio Tempesta, *Festa della Resurrezione* of the Spanish Archconfraternity in Piazza Navona on Easter morning 1589, 1603, engraving, 518 x 380 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

The square, on whose central axis three ciborium-like festival architectures are erected, is populated by numerous people. Cord fireworks explode over their heads, representing globes, a demon

and a sea battle. A procession leads around the elongated inner part of the *piazza* of religious and secular dignitaries, who enter in pairs with long candlesticks in their hands, accompanied by seven choirs, positioned in different parts of the square, including three on the festival architectures. The starting and finishing point is the church of S. Giacomo degli Spagnoli, located on the eastern side of the square, in front of which Tempesta depicts the culmination of the procession: the Blessed Sacrament, carried under a baldachin by a bishop (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2. Antonio Tempesta, *Festa della Resurrezione* in Piazza Navona 1589, Detail, 1603, engraving, 518 x 380 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.

As the Latin title indicates, the 518 x 380 mm engraving shows «The Procession made by the Spanish Nation on the occasion of the Feast of the Most Holy Resurrection [of Jesus Christ]», which took place in 1589. The second line specifies the hosting institution, namely the «Archconfraternity of the Resurrection of the Spanish Nation»¹.

How is it that in the heart of Rome, the capital of the papal state, a Spanish archconfraternity organised such an opulent ceremony, and what is meant by the «Spanish nation» in the age before the formation of nation states in the late 19th century? This article focuses on the festival culture of the Rome-based foreign communities, above all the Spanish, French and German, and discusses their significance for the formation of collective identities in the sense of the pre-modern understanding of *nationes*. Before discussing the broad spectrum of regular and extraordinary festivities and questioning the processes of community building, it is first necessary to take a brief look at the social structures of the foreign communities living in Rome.

In the Early Modern period, Rome was a city

of cultural diversity. The presence of the papal court as the centre of Catholic Christianity and the cultural treasures of the *Roma antica* and *Roma moderna* made the city a metropolis of international appeal. People from different countries came as pilgrims, in search of work or to study the artworks of the Eternal City – and many of them stayed (Cabibbo 2017). Particularly numerous were immigrants from the Spanish, French and German speaking countries, who left a lasting mark on the social, religious and political life of the city (Académie de France à Rome 1981; Maas 1981; Dandele 2002; Hernando Sánchez 2007; Fosi 2008; Fosi 2020). Although many families lived in Rome for generations, the individuals of common geographical origin were linked to their compatriots as one *natio* in the sense of a cultural community characterised by a common language, clothing, religious rites, customs and traditions². From the Early Middle Ages they were organised into lay confraternities and other religious associations, which, in addition to planning and practising religious rites and functions, were primarily concerned with

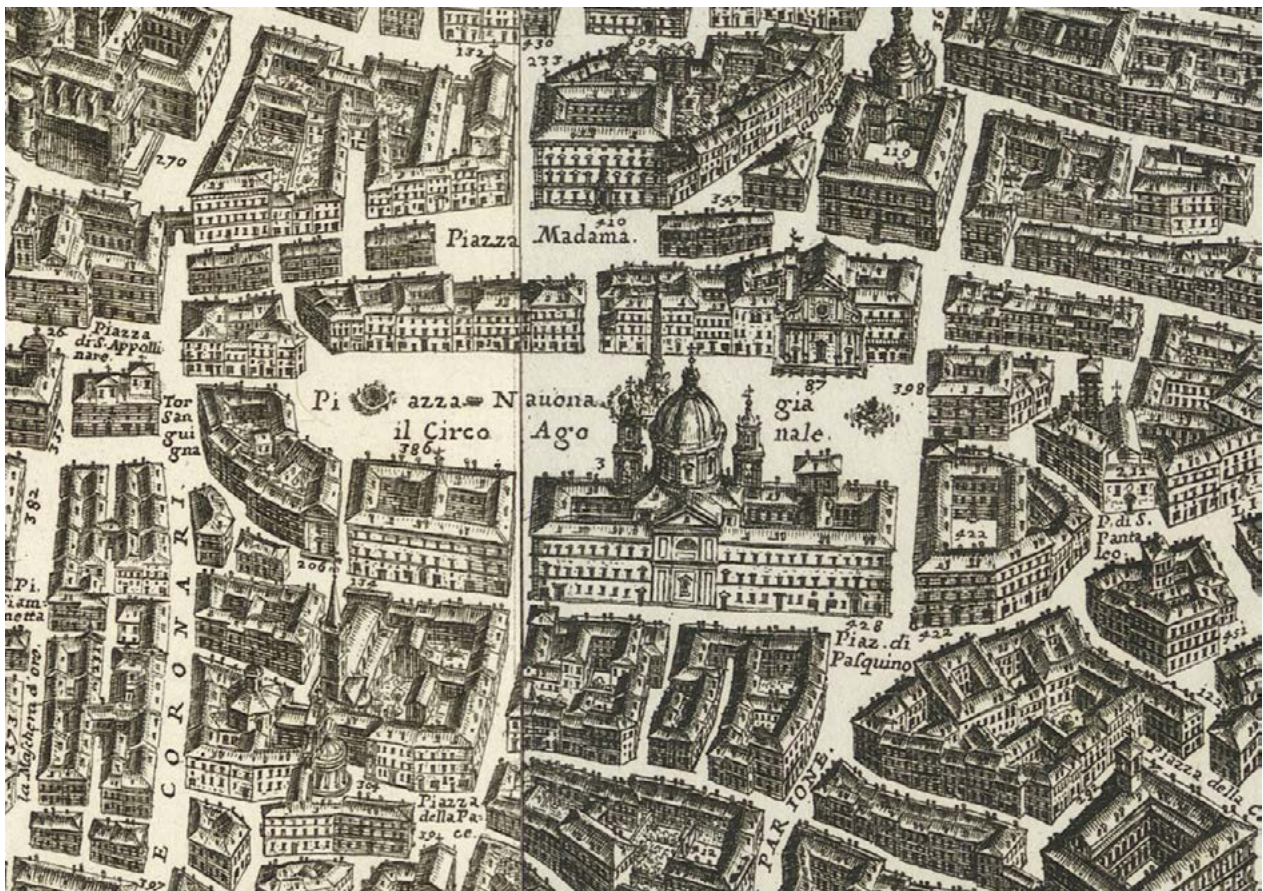


Fig. 3. Giovanni Battista Falda, Piazza Navona surrounded by the national churches S. Luigi dei Franceschi, S. Giacomo degli Spagnoli and S. Maria dell'Anima, Detail of *Nuova pianta et alzata della città di Roma*, 1676, engraving, 1.540 x 1.530 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.

charity work for pilgrims and poor compatriots. Centres of their religious and social life were the national churches run by congregations with affiliated hospitals. From the end of the 16th century onwards, the foreign crowns increasingly assimilated the national churches as a platform for magnificent self-representation, which was reflected in prestigious new church buildings with precious and artistically sophisticated furnishings (Koller - Kubersky-Piredda 2015; Molnár - Pizzorusso - Sanfilippo 2017) and elaborate church music (Heyink 2010; Ciliberti 2016; Berti - Corswarem 2019). The national churches of the Spanish, French and German parishes were grouped around Piazza Navona in direct competition with each other (Fig. 3): S. Giacomo degli Spagnoli, S. Luigi dei Francesi and S. Maria dell'Anima (Anselmi 2013; Roberto 2005; Matheus 2010).

However, the groups that contemporaries generalised as *the Spanish*, *the French* and *the Germans* did not form a homogeneous national unit, but split into smaller regional subgroups, some of which had their own national churches. While S. Giacomo degli Spagnoli primarily functioned as the parish church of the Castilians, S. Maria di Monserrato was mainly frequented by Aragonese, Valencians, Mallorcans and Catalans (Vaquero Piñeiro 1994; Anselmi 2013). The French *natio* included SS. Claudio e Andrea dei Borgognoni, S. Ivo dei Bretoni and S. Nicola dei Lorenesi; the Minimite convent SS. Trinità dei Monti on the Monte Pincio was even a royal foundation (Académie de France à Rome 1981). Religious institutions of the *natione teutonica* were S. Maria dell'Anima and S. Maria della Pietà in Campo Santo dei Teutonici e Fiamminghi, S. Apollinare and the Collegio Germanico-Ungarico seminary (Matheus 2010). Led by the ambassadors and cardinal protectors, national factions had formed in Rome, which included, in addition to their own countrywomen and -men, cardinals and Roman aristocratic families who were bound in a loyal relationship with the respective crown. Due to the high diplomatic presence at the Holy See, Rome advanced in the 16th and 17th centuries to become the central stage for the self-representation of the European powers – especially by means of an elaborate festival culture (Weißmann 2021).

The festive calendar linked to the *nationes* included a large number of celebrations and festivities for

religious and political occasions which took place in the national churches, ambassadorial palaces and in the urban space (Boiteux 1985; Boiteux 1989; González Tornel 2017; Weißmann 2021). Through the participation of individuals and institutions of regional sub-groups, the joint practice of religious rites and other communal performative activities, and the visualisation and articulation of national symbols and figures in the ephemeral decorations and music, the festivities functioned as a motor for the formation of collective identities, as will be discussed below.

The feasts of the national saints, who were usually also the titular saints of their national churches, were an integral part of the festival life of the foreign communities. While other feast days of the ecclesiastical year or the feasts of parish consecration and patron saints were celebrated by the subgroups in their national churches (Dompnier 2019), the feast days of St. James on 25 July in S. Giacomo degli Spagnoli, St. Louis on 25 August in S. Luigi dei Francesi and the Nativity of the Virgin Mary on 8 September in S. Maria dell'Anima integrated the protagonists of different regional origins. The liturgical scheme, which was followed by different national parishes, included a vespers for the vigil the day before, a solemn Mass on the morning of the actual celebration and another vespers in the afternoon. The liturgical functions were attended not only by the members of the congregations, confraternities and parishes of the national church, but also by many other individuals and associations connected with the home country. Among the invited guests were cardinals, nobles and other officials of the faction loyal to the respective crown. On these occasions, the façades and interiors of the churches used to be adorned with extensive decorative programmes of paintings, textiles and lights. Symbols such as towers and lions, lilies or double-headed eagles referred to the ruling house. On the interior façade, portraits of the royal couple, the heir to the throne and the current Pontiff were presented. A rare pictorial representation of such an interior decoration is given by Dominique Barrière's engraving, which shows the nave of S. Luigi dei Francesi towards the main altar at the feast of St. Louis in 1665 (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4. Dominique Barrière, Decoration of S. Luigi dei Francesi with musicians' platforms on the feast day of St. Louis on 25 August 1665, engraving, 655x440mm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund.

According to the design by Giuseppe Zanatta, the nave was covered with precious velvet and damask fabrics and the arcade arches were decorated with canopies with royal coats of arms and crowns at the vertex.³ On the Gospel side, two hanging platforms had been built, on the Epistle side three more for the musicians, who performed during the vespers and the mass in the contemporary polychoral musical practice (Bassani 2008). In addition to the singers of their own chapel, the congregations usually enlisted numerous singers and instrumentalists from other churches or cardinal households (O'Regan 2019; Pietschmann 2019). As the lists of musicians in the archives of S. Luigi dei Francesi show, an ensemble of 42 singers, six organs, four violins, four violoni, a viola, four lutes, a theorbo and a spinet played at the 1665 fest of St Louis (Lionnet 1986: Doc. 157). The costs for the decoration and the elaborate musical performances were usually borne by the congregations and the diplomatic representatives. As recent studies have shown, Roman and

national customs were mixed, in both devotional and liturgical but also musical practices (Berti - Corswarem 2019). In S. Giacomo degli Spagnoli for example, texts and melodies of the Spanish liturgy were practised despite its official prohibition (Hernández Castelló 2019), while the rite celebrated in S. Luigi dei Francesi was a hybrid of the Roman and Parisian, the so-called 'Gallican rite' (Ciliberti 2016: 187-93). Although it is hardly possible to assign concrete compositions to certain masses, specific French masses can be found in the repertoire of S. Luigi's Cappella despite changing fashions (Berti 2019).

On the feast of Corpus Christi, which was always celebrated with great vigour in Rome, the congregations and confraternities organised processions through the Roman city centre, in addition to the first and second vespers and a solemn mass to be held in the national church (Visceglia 2006). The procession, at the end of which the Blessed Sacrament was carried under a baldachin, was attended not only by the clerical and secular members of the congregations and brotherhoods but also by representatives of other national associations and institutions, as well as the ambassador and his entourage. An account of the Corpus Christi procession of S. Maria dell'Anima dated around 1727 allows conclusions to be drawn about the arrangement of the groups of participants in the German procession (Anima, *Ordine della Processione del Corpus Domini*; Heyink 2010: Doc. B.1.4; 131-33): Two candle bearers and a group of trumpeters, whose playing announced the procession audibly from afar, were followed firstly by the servants of the *signori deputati* and the *famiglia* of the imperial envoy, then by the members of the confraternities of S. Maria della Pietà in Campo Santo dei Teutonici e Fiamminghi and of SS. Nome di Maria, a fraternity affiliated to S. Bernardo al Foro Traiano, dedicated to the memory of the help of the Virgin Mary in the liberation of Vienna from the Ottomans in 1683. Next came numerous *cavalieri*, the musicians and the *sacerdoti forastieri*. A separate group was formed by the so-called *zitelle*, impoverished girls of the German *natio*, to whom the community paid a marriage grant. The chaplains of the Anima also appeared as a uniform group, followed by the provisors *secundum ordinem receptionis*. At the end of the procession, eight *cavalieri nazionali* carried the Most Holy Sacrament, marked by a baldachin

and accompanied by four lantern bearers, followed by the cardinals with their entourage.

Since the processions of the German and French communities usually took place at the same time, the participants were forced to demonstrate their affiliation to a *natio* or their loyalty to one of the two powers by means of their physical presence. The processions of the German and Spanish *nationes*, on the other hand, were staggered so that lay people and clerics associated with the House of Habsburg could participate in both events. Contemporary reports show the importance attached to the symbolic presence – especially of the cardinals. Francesco Valesio, for example, reports on the Corpus Christi procession on 29 May 1701 in his diary: «Si fecero in questa mattina le due processioni della nazione francese e tedesca, dalla prima nella chiesa di S. Luigi e dalla seconda nella chiesa di S. Maria dell'Anima con indicibile concorso, essendo tutta la città incuriosita per vedere in quale delle due prevalessesse il numero de' cardinali» (Valesio 1977-1979: vol. 1: 390). Among the French, the diarist counted only two, while among the Germans twenty-two cardinals, «compensavano il numero grande de' cardinali la scarsezza delli prelati, non contandovisene che dui soli, e questi nazionali»

(*ibidem*). The number of cardinals taking part in the processions was considered an indicator of the influence of the foreign powers at the papal court (Fiorani 1997; Visceglia 2006).

The most elaborate annual festival in terms of organisation and finances was the *Festa della Resurrezione* (see Fig. 1), hosted by the Spanish *Arciconfraternita della Resurrezione* during the Easter Vigil (Luisi 1993; Fiorentino 2012: 68-71; Fiorentino 2014: 733-38; O'Regan 2015). This association, attached to S. Giacomo degli Spagnoli, was founded on 15 March 1579 on the initiative of the Spanish ambassador Juan de Zúñiga Requesens with the bull of Gregory XIII *Exposcit debitum pastoralis officii*, initially as a fraternity, and in 1591 it was elevated to the status of archconfraternity (Fernández Alonso 1960). In addition to charitable aims such as the care of mainly Spanish pilgrims, poor and prisoners, the archconfraternity was dedicated to the solemn organisation of the Forty Hours Prayer and the Easter Week festivities. The *Festa della Resurrezione*, which usually attracted countless people from Rome and the surrounding area, began before dawn with a mass in S. Giacomo degli Spagnoli, followed by a two-hour procession across Piazza Navona. As early as 1596 the pompous



Fig. 5. Dominique Barrière, *Festa della Resurrezione* of the Spanish Archconfraternity in Piazza Navona on Easter morning 1650, 1650, engraving, 386x663mm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund.



display of the Spanish community aroused the displeasure of Clement VIII, who expressed his incomprehension of the enormous expense of the festival – also and especially in view of the ‘Spanish arrogance’ in political and religious matters (O’Regan 2015: 252-53). But it was only under the pro-French Pontifex Urban VIII that the Spaniards had to give up their magnificent celebration in the usual form for several years. Finally, in the Holy Year 1650, after the tide had turned again in their favour under his Hispanophil successor Innocent X, the Spanish community celebrated their traditional resurrection feast with particularly great vigour. An engraving by Dominique Barrière (Fig. 5) and a festival book by Francesco Moneta and Francesco Boncori (Moneta/Boncori 1650) report on this.

The decoration, designed by Carlo Rainaldi, with its complex pictorial and textual programme, combined the glorification of the risen Christ with that of Spain and the royal family. While the two festival structures erected above the southern and northern fountains displayed larger-than-life figures of the risen Christ and his mother Mary, the two enormous crowns, illuminated by countless lights, which vaulted over the structure, referred to the Spanish monarchy. The figurative programme of the southern temple featured lions and towers as well as coats of arms of the king and his envoy. On the side facing S. Giacomo degli Spagnoli there was a «meza figura armata con tre picche nella destra, e due dardi nella sinistra con lettere (HISPANIA) cioè Spagna» (Moneta/Boncori 1650: s.P.). The connection between religious and ruling representation is also made clear by the designations in the key of the engraving, which describe the festive architecture as «Arcus Triumphalis à Regno Castellae Christo resurgenti erectus» and «Arcus eiusdem magnitudinis à Regnis Aragonum Christi Matri dicatus». The altar on the west side of the square, designed by Johann Paul Schor, was built by the Portuguese community. On the façade of S. Giacomo degli Spagnoli, under a sun made up of numerous lights, St. James on horseback was depicted, «che combattè in aiuto di Spagna per la fede», flanked by the coats of arms of the Pope, the Spanish monarch and his envoy – and other lions, towers and eagles. As with the artistic, the musical endeavour was enormous: no less than twelve choirs played music from different locations as the procession passed by. Four were positioned

on the towers of the fortress that covered Gianlorenzo Bernini’s *Fountain of the Four Rivers*, which was still under construction in the centre of the square; four ensembles were on the tribunes erected next to the triumphal arches, two inside the temporary architectures and two others moved to the beginning and end of the procession. Drummers and trumpeters announced the arrival of the dignitaries. The fireworks, unlike the representation on Barrière’s engraving, were lit only after the procession from the two obelisks, while in S. Giacomo degli Spagnoli the Blessed Sacrament was exposed (Moneta/Boncori 1650: s.P.). According to the diarist Giacinto Gigli, the feast is said to have cost the enormous sum of 12,000 scudi (Gigli 1958: 357).

The highlights of the sacred festivities of the foreign *nationes* were the canonisations of compatriots who were particularly venerated in their homeland and were raised to the status of saints in view of their exemplary life. Monarchs often forced the canonisation processes and promoted them with great financial and organisational effort. Thus, in the 17th century alone, the Spanish kings achieved the canonisation of 15 countrywomen and -men (Dandele 2002: 170-87; Anselmi 2005; Gotor 2007). The celebrations always consisted of a ceremony in St Peter’s Basilica and a procession with the transfer of the standards depicting the image of the saint to the richly decorated national church, where other liturgical functions took place. An engraving by Giovanni Battista Falda gives a pictorial, albeit monumentalised, impression of the canonisation of Francis de Sales on 19 April 1665, the course and form of which Bartolomeo Lupardi describes in detail in his *Relazione* (Lupardi 1665). The crossing of St. Peter’s had been transformed into a *teatro* with numerous tribunes and boxes, in which leading officials of the curia, Roman society and national factions were placed according to the ceremonial, including Christina of Sweden on a throne. Huge paintings between the pilasters showed the miracles of the new saint, whose image could be seen on large standards hanging from the dome. These had previously been brought to the basilica by French Minim friars in a solemn procession (Lupardi 1665: 4). The ceremony was presided over by Alexander VII on a throne on the west side, surrounded by 37 cardinals, 54 bishops and numerous other prelates. As Louis XIV had

pushed for the canonisation of the religious, it was the French envoy, the Duke of Créquy, who asked the Pope to elevate Blessed Francis to the rank of saint (Lupardi 1665: 6). Upon the confirmation of the Pontiff, the *Te Deum* resounded, which was also proclaimed outside the Basilica to the crowd gathered in St. Peter's Square by drums and trumpets and musket shots, and spread throughout the city by canonades from the Castel Sant'Angelo and the ringing of the bells of all the churches of Rome.

On 21 June the French community celebrated the new saint with a solemn mass in the presence of the college of cardinals in S. Luigi dei Francesi, of which another *Relatione* reports (*Relatione* 1665). While the church was ornamented with precious damask and tapestry thanks to the support of the Francophile Cardinal Virginio Orsini, the façade was decorated with chiaro-scuro paintings by Fabrizio Chiari depicting the twelve miracles of the new saint (*Relatione* 1665: 3). Above the main

portal was a large-format portrait of Francis de Sales, flanked by *Religio* and *Caritas*, brightly lit by chandeliers in the shape of lilies. On the interior façade, as usual, the portraits of the French royal couple and the Pope were displayed. According to a list of musicians preserved in the archives of S. Luigi dei Francesi, 43 specially engaged singers and instrumentalists, including singers from the papal chapel, performed works for four choirs (Lionnet 1986: 126). After the mass the Minim friar Ignatio Savini gave an eloquent speech on the new saint (*Relatione* 1665: 3).

In the evening of the same day the standards with the images of the saint were transferred in solemn processions to the Minimite church of Santissima Trinità dei Monti, to the Convent of Visitation founded by the saint and to the Santissimo Sudario dei Savoiaridi, Piedmontesi, e Nizzardidi (*Relatione* 1665: 3-7). Since Francis de Sales was born in 1567 in Thorens-Glières, which belonged to the Duchy of Savoy, he was also venerated as a compatriot by

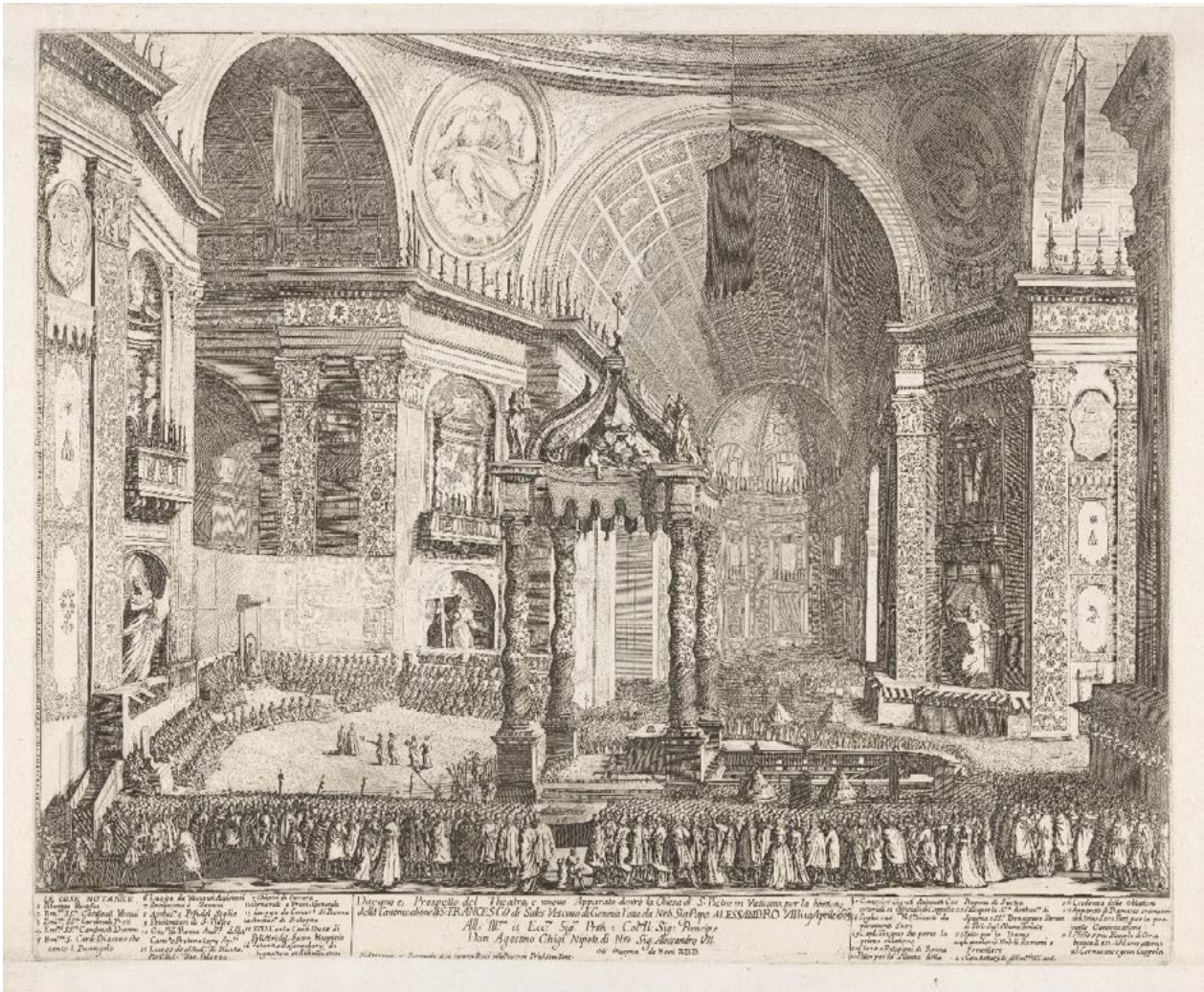


Fig. 6. Giovanni Battista Falda, Canonisation of Francis de Sales on 19 April 1665 in St Peter's Basilica, engraving, 400 x 487 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.



the Savoyards living in Rome and was won over for their *natio*. As demonstrations of joy and loyalty the «Palazzi de Nationali, & affettionati della Corona di Francia e della Real Casa di Savoia» (*Relatione* 1665: 7) were illuminated with thousands of torches and candles.

Among the regular celebrations of the foreign communities with a political cause were the name days of the foreign monarchs. For the French community, since the accession of Louis XIII to the throne in 1610, the king's name day coincided with the feast day of the national saint, which is why the French faction celebrated this occasion with particular effort. In S. Maria dell'Anima, the name day of the Emperor was only introduced following the imperial diploma of 1699 (Heyink 2010: 297-316). The programme again included a vespers the day before and a mass and a second vespers on the actual name day. In the morning, the ambassador received congratulations from high-ranking compatriots and from Roman nobles allied with the crown, and after mass or second vespers he gave a reception at his residence, where he entertained the invited guests with a *rinfrasco* or banquet. In the square in front of his palace, wine fountains delighted the people. From the second half of the 17th century, cantatas and serenatas performed in the *sala grande* or in the *piazza* glorified the monarchs.

This effort by the chief diplomats was intensified at celebrations on the occasion of dynastic, political or military events of their ruling houses. On the occasion of coronations, births and weddings, recoveries and deaths as well as peace treaties and victorious battles, the envoys or cardinal protectors hosted festivities lasting several days, which were accompanied by numerous expressions of joy from other individuals and institutions (Weißmann 2021). In February 1637, the German and Habsburg factions held a veritable marathon of festivities to celebrate the election of Ferdinand III, the son of Emperor Ferdinand II, as Roman-German king. Since the election of Ferdinand I in 1531, the Roman-German king (*re de' romani*) was de facto the designated successor to the reigning Emperor, which is why this election was made public in Rome at considerable expense. As Theodor Ameyden, a Dutch jurist and member of the congregation of S. Maria dell'Anima, reports in his festival book, Cardinal Maurizio di Savoia, the cardinal protector of Germany, and other

leading officials of the German community began planning the event as early as October of the previous year in order to coordinate the numerous festive acts of the various protagonists and institutions (Ameyden 1637: 3-5). The celebrations began on 1 February 1637 with a *cappella cardinalitia* in S. Maria dell'Anima, with music performed by three choirs. At the invitation of the imperial envoy Scipione Gonzaga, Prince of Bozzolo, 24 cardinals and the representatives of Ferdinand III and Philip III – as well as numerous «Sig. nazionali» – took part in the function (Ameyden 1637: 5). In the round window above the portal a 30 palmi (6.7 metres) high, gold-framed double-headed eagle was displayed (Ameyden 1637: 7). «Non mostrò minori segni d'allegrezza la Nazione Spagnuola», Ameyden states, «la quale (per mezzo de gli Amministratori della Chiesa li SS. Don Alonso de Oviedo, e Don Francesco Vacca) ornò la facciata della Chiesa & Hospitale di S. Giacomo [...]» (Ameyden 1637: 18). The Collegio Germanico-Ungarico, S. Apollinare and S. Maria di Monserrato were also decorated with festive façades, while countless German or Prohabsburg individuals illuminated their palaces and residences.

The greatest effort was made by the representatives of the Habsburg rulers, who staged several nighttime firework displays at their residences. As was customary in the first half of the 17th century, these consisted of festival machines with moving parts which depicted a plot during the course of the pyrotechnical spectacle (Weißmann 2021). The festival apparatus of Ferdinand III's representative, Monsignor Cornelius Henricus Motman, presented the newly elected Roman-German king as an Austrian Hercules (*Ercole austriaco*) triumphing over a seven-headed hydra (Fig. 6), symbolising the enemies of the church and the empire (Ameyden 1637: 16).

The cardinal protector of Germany Di Savoia, on the other hand, staged the fight of a double-headed eagle with the hell hound Zerberus, representing the Empire's triumph over the rebellion (Manzini 1637: 32-38). Finally, imperial envoy Gonzaga's firework display showed on two mountains of glory the personifications of Bohemia and Hungary triumphing over the rebellion and the Turks (Fig. 7).



Fig. 7. Festival machine *Hercules defeats the Hydra* from the festivities on the election of Ferdinand III as Roman-German King in Piazza Madama, engraving from Theodor Ameyden's *Relatione* (1637). New Haven, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

Their respective crowns united under a huge imperial crown which descended for the finale of the spectacle (Ameyden 1637: 9-10). The ideators of the decorations and festival machines were mostly painters, sculptors or architects based in Rome, whose designs were executed by local craftsmen and artists (Weißmann 2020). Once fellow countrymen were involved as artists, contemporary observers noted this as remarkable.

Occasionally, national festivities were held in direct competition with each other. Consequently, in the spring of 1638, the French community responded to these festivities of the Habsburg faction with a one-and-a-half week festive marathon to mark the birth of the French dauphin Louis, later Louis XIV (Gerardi 1643).

Led by the French special envoy, François-Annibal d'Estrées, Marquis de Coeuvres, the festivities were attended by, among others, the cardinal protector of France Antonio Barberini, the French Minim friars of the Casa di S. Antonio and SS. Trinità dei Monti and «Diversi altri Curiali, Speditionieri,

Mercanti & Artisti Nationali di Francia, che si trovarono in Roma in quel tempo [...]» (Gerardi 1643: 33). Remarkable was the firework display hosted by the congregation of S. Luigi dei Francesi, which represented a cloud formation populated by angels, with three figures resting on the sides: the personification of prayer, a Fama with the French royal coat of arms and «una Donna, rappresentante la Francia, con Corona Regale in capo, con gli Ordini pendenti al collo, vestita del suo Manto tempestato di Gigli, che con le mani stese riguardando il Cielo» (Gerardi 1643: 10). In the course of the pyrotechnic spectacle, the cloud opened up to reveal a dolphin and a sun, its rays defeating a hydra, with the audience supposedly shouting («VIVA FRANCIA, VIVA IL DELFINO»). According to Antonio Gerardi's festival book, this spectacle symbolised the victory of France over war, famine and plague, which could be identified in the three heads of the monster (Gerardi 1643: 10-13). The procession of the Breton community was particularly splendid, with the *cappella* of S. Luigi dei Francesi singing hymns and motets in honour of the Breton national saint Ivo (Gerardi 1643: 30-31). On the way from the French national church to S. Ivo, the procession passed through three ephemeral triumphal arches honouring both the Breton saint and the dauphin. The two firework displays that were burned at the end in front of the Breton national church represented an atlas carrying the globe from which a sun rose, on which a dolphin was enthroned, blessed by St Ivo.

From the second half of the 17th century onwards, music in the form of the cantata or serenata became a central feature of the festivities in urban space (Weißmann 2021). These music-dramatic works intensified the festive occasion by means of symbolic and historical references, often ending in openly articulated praise of the sovereign. At the celebrations for the recovery of Louis XIV in the spring of 1687, for example, the serenata *La Fama festeggiante* glorified the recuperation of the French king as an act of God. In the course of the piece, *Fama* and another protagonist proclaim that Louis would continue to defeat the heretics, namely the Ottomans («Lune Ottomane»), in the succession of his holy ancestor, the Holy King Louis (Beraud 1687). The serenata was performed on the evening of the 20th April by a large orchestra conducted by Arcangelo Corelli on a stage built in Piazza di Spagna at the foot of Monte Pincio (Fig. 8).



Fig. 8. Simon Felice Delino (draft)/Vincenzo Mariotti (engraving), Cardinal César D'Estrées' festival for the recovery of Louis XIV at the Monte Pincio 1687, engraving from Vincenzo Maria Coronelli's *Roma festeggiante nel monte Pincio* (1687), 105x547mm. Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute.

The artistically illuminated hill and the decorated façade of SS. Trinità dei Monti, whose mythological-allegorical pictorial programme postulated the French royal house as everlasting, formed the stage for the musical performance. No sooner had the music ended than a salvo of saluting guns announced fireworks, which were fired from the church façade and could be seen and heard across large parts of the city with their play of light and noise. An engraving by Vincenzo Mariotti shows the successive moments simultaneously in one image (Fig. 8).

National idioms or nationally-specific festivities played only a marginal role in the foreign communities' celebrations in urban space. These can primarily be observed in Spanish festivals, such as the spring dance *moresca*, which was cultivated by the Spanish community and reminded one of the battles against the Moors, or the *toro de fueco*, a bull apparatus equipped with fireworks,

with which the Spanish special envoy Conde de Siruela impressed the public in Piazza Navona for the election of Innocent X. 1644 (Boiteux 1985). The Spanish ambassador Marchese del Carpio, in turn, had even hosted a bull hunt in 1677, which, however, caused the displeasure of Innocent XI. Although the *caccie de' torri* had been a popular carnival attraction in Renaissance Rome, in the 17th century they were only staged by the Spaniards on the feast day of St. Rochus in the courtyard of the Collegio Romano. When in 1679 the Marchese del Carpio again planned a bull hunt in Piazza di Spagna, an *Avviso* announced in advance, «non si creda li venga permessa tal cosa, più da barbari che da christiani» (Stein 2007: 338). In fact, this bloody spectacle was not supposed to take place. Instead, the diplomat gave a series of Spanish *comedias* and *comedias en música* in his residence.

As these case studies have shown, the festival culture helped to shape and intensify the collective identities of the foreign communities based in Rome. While the immigrants from the Spanish, French and German speaking homelands were separated into smaller subgroups and institutions and often frequented 'regional' national churches corresponding to their regional origins, for the annual celebrations in honor of the national saints and Corpus Christi and for extraordinary religious and political occasions they came together as a community. In the larger festivities they participated with their own religious ceremonies or profane festivities. Through their symbolic presence and their performative actions, the participants demonstrated unity in diversity to Roman society. The union of the different, smaller groups with common regional roots under the guise of a *natio* promised significant advantages: better protection of individuals, a larger social and economic network and, last but not least, a significant gain in prestige – which was a clear advantage in view of the high level of competition from foreign communities in Rome (Fosi 2008; Fosi 2020).

The *Arciconfraternita della Resurrezione* had even constitutionally fixed the integration of the various Spanish subgroups: While the Congregation of S. Giacomo degli Spagnoli only addressed born Castilians, the archconfraternity was open to all 'Spaniards' of the crowns of Castile and Aragon, the Kingdom of Portugal, the islands

of Mallorca, Minorca and Sardinia, and the West Indies (Fernández Alonso 1960: 280). The fact that the Spanish royal family took a keen interest in this reunion is shown by the fact that the first members of the brotherhood were always the King and his envoy. The latter usually contributed financially to the celebration and presided over it as representative of the monarch. In this respect, the «NATIONE HISP[ANI]CA» named on Tempesta's engraving as the organiser of the Easter celebrations in 1589, did indeed include Spaniards from all parts of the Spanish Empire, who came together to form a community and presented themselves to the outside world as such.

The ephemeral decorations and festive machines visualised the common national identity through a multitude of symbols, heraldic elements, personifications and portraits. Already in everyday life, individuals and institutions demonstrated their affiliation to a *natio* by affixing coats of arms of foreign monarchs and heraldic or national symbols on the façades of churches and palaces, residential buildings and shops (Erben 2004: 280-89). They could also be applied to clothing or everyday objects such as trolleys. With this practice, protagonists from different social classes identified themselves as members of a national faction, placed themselves under the protection of the respective monarch or used these confessions as profitable advertising measures. At the festivals on religious or political occasions, the coats of arms and symbols were omnipresent and usually presented in exposed places. In addition, the home countries were visualised by personifications, occasionally also by river gods like the Tagus, Seine and Danube, which represented a country *pars pro toto*. While the rulers were depicted with portraits in the interiors of national churches and ambassador palaces, in urban space they were usually allegorised through ancient deities or heroes, for example as French or German Hercules (*Ercole gallico* or *germanico*). Figures of identification were especially the national saints or newly canonised compatriots, who were venerated as protectors of their homeland and could be seen on the façades of national churches or in processions on standards.

Finally, two complementary aspects can be identified for the process of identity building in the festival culture of foreign communities: internal and external collective identities (Kubersky -

Piredda - Daniels 2020: 13). On the one hand, the liturgical functions in the national churches, which were primarily attended by protagonists from the *nationes* and national factions, aimed to strengthen the internal group identity with specifically national customs in liturgy, music and language. This was based on maintaining cultural attributes and rites from their home countries. On the other hand, the ceremonies organised by competing foreign communities in the urban space were characterised by a high degree of uniformity. Both religious and political festivities drew on established Roman models with similar procedures and programmes. The ephemeral art display and the festival music both built upon an internationally established symbolism and iconography, for the realisation of which the same local craftsmen, artists and musicians were employed. The events were not so much aimed at presenting national specifics as at convincing the Roman and international public of the grandeur and unity of their *natio* and the supremacy of their crown.

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of the concept of *natio* which can be traced back to antiquity. See Gellner 1983; Hobsbawn 1990; Anderson 1991; Smith 1991; Koselleck 1992; Münkler 1994; Petti Balbi 2001; Smith 2008; Tallon 2007; Hirschi 2012.

3 «Joseph Zanattus invenit et disposuit», caption of Barrière's engraving.

Notes

1 «PROCESSIO QE FIT A NATIONE HISP.CA ROM. IN FES: TO S.MAE RESVRRECTIONIS IN AGONE PLATEA. / ARCHICON FRATERNITATIS SME RESVRECTIONIS NATIONIS HISPANORVM DEVRBE.» Title of Antonio Tempesta's engraving.

2 In this article, 'nation' or 'nations' is not used in the modern sense of a collective political connection of nation and state, as has only been assumed since the formation of nation states in the late 19th century, but in the sense

Tra festa e spettacolo: un “Sacrificio” accademico per il Carnevale senese

Matteo Tamborrino

Tra festa e teatro, tra mimesis e oralità. Una premessa

Prima di perdere la propria indipendenza, entrando definitivamente nell'orbita medicea, Siena era una Repubblica indipendente di fervente vocazione antiflorentina; al tempo stesso – come insegnano i numerosi studi di Marzia Pieri¹ sull'argomento – fu una delle più vivaci capitali dello spettacolo accademico, bacino di incubazione del teatro moderno e punto di riferimento per i grandi drammaturghi europei. Bisogna infatti ricordare che la teatralità rinascimentale italiana non si ridusse al solo spazio di corte, germinando anche in assenza di poteri principeschi e accentratori. Nelle repubbliche «la pratica del teatro si [legò] a una diversa sociologia e antropologia festiva, gestita da gruppi di consumatori borghesi e aristocratici in forme meno dispendiose e più intimamente collegate alla loro vita e alla loro storia» (Pieri 2015: 62). Da parte sua, la Repubblica senese, sede universitaria e polo editoriale, era governata politicamente da una riottosa oligarchia, le cui tensioni interne non impedirono alla vita sociale della città di essere una delle più vivaci dell'epoca, con «solidarietà interclassiste altrove inimmaginabili» (Pieri 2010: 264).

Come nella Serenissima Venezia, parimente traboccante di sodalizi, anche qui la dimensione festiva e spettacolare era retta da una borghesia intellettualmente autonoma. Massimi esponenti di questa civiltà teatrale, solo in apparenza eccentrica, furono, a partire dagli anni Trenta del Cinquecento, la Congrega dei Rozzi e l'Accademia degli Intronati, di cui già Seragnoli (1987: 399)

cercava di ricomporre il distacco, esacerbato dalla tradizione critica. Se in epoca medievale le forme di cerimonialità festiva senesi (tanto sacre, quanto profane) chiamavano a raccolta vaste folle di «spettatori partecipi» (Mazzoni 2018: 75), con l'avvento del Rinascimento tale adesione assunse poi proporzioni endemiche, dal momento che la cornice spettacolare si configurava come un luogo di rispecchiamento dei valori e delle storie dell'intera *politeia*, il cui profondo spirito identitario fu reso oggetto – a seguito del collasso repubblicano – di nostalgico e strumentale *repêchage*.

Questa vasta partecipazione pubblica si rifletteva anche su altri livelli. La drammaturgia senese, per esempio, era fluida, carsica, direttamente discendente dalle forme spontanee dell'oralità, della conversazione, del racconto. Formalizzata in strutture dialogico-performative, essa tornava spesso, in un certo senso, “orale”, sottoforma di novella. Non è un caso che il minimo comune denominatore di tutti i teatranti che vivevano a Siena nel XVI secolo fosse il fatto di «essere prima attori che scrittori, anzi [...] di divenire drammaturghi in quanto dicitori e conversatori» (Pieri 2008: 14): questa propensione per la recitazione nasce pertanto dall'amabile dialogo, dalla veglia serale, dalla “cicalata” accademica. Come testimonia la natura assai eterogenea e ibridata dei componimenti di destinazione recitativa a noi, per vie spesso fortunate, pervenuti – ircocervi, invero, assai interessanti, ossia testi di natura narrativa e drammatica insieme – il «potenziale catalizzatore della commedia classicista [...] non [inibì] affatto la sopravvivenza di un arcipelago di forme dialogiche, musicali e narrative *tout court*» (Pieri 2012a: 142), che attingeva a un vasto repertorio di intrecci mitologici, pastorali, cavallereschi o

novellistici.

Si percepisce dunque, in Siena, una performatività diffusa, che si riflette in quell'“insalata di mescolanza” che caratterizza la produzione dell'Accademia degli Intronati. Sono in particolare i grandi eventi – feste goliardiche, nozze, carnevali – a fungere da fucine (e vetrine) di spettacoli. Ciò però non esclude l'esistenza di una committenza da parte delle autorità politiche, che in specifiche occasioni disposero il finanziamento di pubbliche rappresentazioni, affidandosi alle maggiori maestranze cittadine. Città/teatro è, d'altra parte, uno dei grandi binomi del Rinascimento italiano. La commedia nasce infatti come tassello di un più ampio contenitore festivo, fatto di simposi trimalcioneschi, mascherate, cerimonie sacre e profane, cori e danze di confraternite, tornei, prove equestri, arrivando però a sovrastare tutti questi trattenimenti in quanto marchio dell'evergetismo del principe-mecenate o, in sua assenza, della società libera e civile che celebra i propri valori, sullo sfondo di quelle iperuraniche città ideali rese celebri da numerosi pittori e scenografi.

Se davvero il teatro si collega alla forma simbolica degli spazi in cui si produce, come ci ha insegnato Ludovico Zorzi, la forma urbana di Siena, sviluppata a vortice intorno all'ombelico di piazza del Campo, corrisponde perfettamente alla sua drammaturgia polimorfa ad andamento affabulante, labirintico e romanzesco (Pieri 2008: 14)².

Questo è dunque lo scenario del primo trentennio del XVI secolo, «dominato da pratiche di oralità [e] ancora legato alla nozione antica di *ars theatrica* come *scientia ludorum* comprensiva di un insieme di competenze performative e musicali» (Pieri 2018a: 48). Uno dei maggiori strumenti espressivi era a quel tempo il “parlar cantando”, recuperando l'espressione adottata da Abramov-Van Rijk (2009):

il modo di porgere un testo agli astanti con adeguati supporti ritmici si mantiene ai confini tra detto e cantato. [...] Componenti profani amorosi, rusticali e carnevaleschi, si cominciano a combinare in organismi in crescita, magari introdotti da un prologo e conclusi da un *Valete et laudite* (Pieri 2018a: 49).

Ed è questo il caso del *Sacrificio*, al centro del presente contributo, eseguito dalla congrega di Intronati-*prolatores* nella notte dell'Epifania del 1532. Scrive Abramov-Van Rijk (2009: 48-



49): «Though in general the task of the *prolator* – termine cavato dal *De vulgari eloquentia*, nel senso di “colui che proferisce” – was quite similar to that of the *cantor*, the poetic component played a greater part in his professional activity». E in effetti il rito si compone di testi poetici messi in musica.

Il *Sacrificio* rientra dunque a pieno titolo nell'alveo di quelle forme spettacolari di natura ibrida di cui si è detto, difficilmente catalogabili secondo i canoni tradizionali, poiché a cavallo tra *mimesis* e comunicazione; manifestazioni, in altri termini, di un teatro frequentato da “spettatori competenti”, ovvero – chiarisce Pieri (2012: 117), coniatrice della formula – «complici [...], coinvolti, che sanno di che cosa si parla e fruiscono dello spettacolo in modo attivo (prendono partito, danzano, cantano, spesso recitano, magari dopo avere in precedenza scritto i testi o contribuito all'allestimento)».

Ibridismi senesi: musica, danza, poesia

Che la cultura spettacolare del Rinascimento senese fosse pervasa da manifestazioni musicali e danzanti, intrinsecamente legate alla poliritmia del corpo d'attore e alla sua voce, è fatto noto. Per farsene un'idea è sufficiente scorrere le pagine dei *Novellieri* di Pietro Fortini o i *Trattenimenti* e il *Dialogo de' giuochi* di Scipione e Girolamo Bargagli. Anche le novelle dello pseudo-Sermini lasciano intravedere nella vita quotidiana dei cittadini della Repubblica – al di là delle differenze di classe o di censo – un complesso di attività strumentali, che non erano esclusiva prerogativa dei membri del patriziato: l'istruzione musicale, canora e coreica occupava, in altri termini, un ruolo preponderante nell'educazione dei giovani senesi.

Trasferendoci ora sul versante più propriamente teatrale, ricordiamo – come ha avuto modo di segnalare Frank D'Accone (1994: 701-02) – che una qualsiasi indagine condotta anche solo su un ristretto campione di commedie senesi del XVI secolo mostrerebbe facilmente quale fosse il ruolo in esse affidato alla dimensione musicale; purtroppo, di questo ambiente sonoro, ripetutamente evocato in didascalie e battute, non permangono, in molti casi, tracce documentali³. Vari generi di danza e di canzone (dallo

strambotto al madrigale) furono poi impiegati per animare *pièce* e drammi, sebbene spesso la scelta della musica da eseguire fosse affidata agli attori.

Nel caso degli *Ingannati*, per esempio, quando la commedia fu ripresa a Napoli nel 1545, ad allietarne l'accoglienza furono proprio alcuni brani eseguiti dai più famosi musicisti e cantanti dell'epoca, tra cui Scipione del Palla (compositore senese a lungo identificato con Scipione De Vecchi), Luigi Dentice e Antonio Mariconda, tutti e tre impiegati in parti servili. Delle musiche si occuparono anche, in quel frangente, lo Zoppino e Giulio Cesare Brancaccio, quest'ultimo militare e basso, qui nelle vesti dell'innamorato Flamminio (cfr. Seragnoli 1980: 43).

Sebbene Morrocchi (1886: 48) ritenesse che nelle più remote adunanze degli Intronati ben poca parte avrebbe giocato la musica, essendo l'interesse degli eruditi maggiormente rivolto alla letteratura e alla poesia, Pieri (2010: 74), da parte sua, conferma invece, a partire almeno dai *Prigioni* del 1530, traduzione dei *Captivi* di Plauto, la stretta contiguità tra drammaturgia intronatica e musica. E infatti la partecipazione del succitato Luigi Dentice – cantante, compositore, liutista e autore dei *Duo dialoghi della musica* (Roma, 1533) – tanto alla “festa in due tempi” senese, quanto alla recita partenopea, vale come indizio della

presenza di musicisti tra gli Intronati senesi. Come prova anche l'esistenza tra di essi di un Ranieri organista, lo «Sgraziato». La particolarità dei canti nel rito del *Sacrificio* e delle parti in musica della commedia corrobora infatti la probabilità di un non occasionale interesse musicale degli accademici senesi (Seragnoli 1980: 44).

L'interesse per la dimensione musicale si manifestava peraltro non solo a livello di prassi scenica, ma anche di speculazione teorica. *Leader* della congrega fu infatti Alessandro Piccolomini, accolto con il nome di Stordito. Sul suo duplice ruolo di poeta-drammaturgo e corago hanno riflettuto, in tempi diversi, Seragnoli (1980: 93-134) e Riccò (2002: 119-64), mostrando – ci ricorda Vallieri (2018: 308) – «come l'esperienza 'registica' delle commedie intronatiche fu per lui la tappa iniziale di un lungo processo di riflessione che lo portò [...] a meditare “sulle componenti teoriche intrinseche al lavoro di progettazione di un testo per la scena”».

Nelle pagine di *Della istituzione morale libri xii*, del 1560, l'autore delle *Annotazioni* offre una

lettura assai lucida del modo in cui la società a lui coeva concepisse l'istruzione musicale, fondamentale per l'educazione del buon cristiano. Citando ripetutamente le *auctoritates* (lo Stagirita e Platone), arrivava a raccomandare la formazione musicale sia per il piacere, sia per lo stimolo intellettuale che essa avrebbe procurato. La musica darebbe inoltre grande ornamento ai costumi dei giovani, disponendoli verso le azioni più virtuose. Nel capitolo dedicato alla musica *instrumentalis* o pratica (contrapposta filosoficamente a quella *mundana* degli astri e a quella *humana* del corpo e della mente), Piccolomini abbraccia la lezione aristotelica, secondo cui talune melodie e certi ritmi sono in grado di suscitare specifiche passioni nell'animo mortale: ira, eros, pietas. Da buon senese, l'autore predilige la musica locale, toscana, su quella forestiera; con simile pregiudizio, raccomanda poi ai giovani quali strumenti sia opportuno suonare e quali invece risultino biasimevoli: per quanto concerne gli strumenti moderni, Piccolomini aborrisce tutti i fiati – trombe, tromboni, pifferi – giacché contorcerebbero il volto del suonatore a causa dello sforzo di fiato prodotto, rendendolo ben poco disposto a quell'ambita moderazione di costumi. Che Piccolomini avesse in mente il corpo dei trombettieri del Palazzo? Tra gli strumenti meritevoli si annoverano invece – in una selezione che palesa tutta la sua formazione umanistica – viola, gravicembalo e liuto; è da prediligere soprattutto quest'ultimo, per la sua portabilità e per la sua capacità di stimolare nell'animo degli intellettuali, perfino durante una semplice passeggiata campestre, il desiderio di declamare elegie latine o stanze volgari, accompagnandosi musicalmente (cfr. D'Accone 1994: 476-79).

In definitiva, la musica, tratto saliente della formazione aristocratica, fu un elemento centrale anche nella vita delle congreghe e «si collegò di frequente alla messinscena, accademica o di corte, di tragedie, intermedi e pastorali, trovando poi un fulcro espressivo nella nuova forma del melodramma alimentata e divulgata [...] anche dalle accademie» (Mazzoni 2018: 72-73). Come ci ricorda Pieri (2013: 88), gli Intronati – pur rifiutando drasticamente la pratica degli intermezzi⁴, ritenendoli artificiosi e svianti – seppero comunque alleggerire le proprie commedie con sapienti inserti cantati e danzati, basati su repertori di musica popolare, che, senza imporre alcuna cesura al *continuum* dell'azione drammatica, si inserivano

al suo interno in maniera consustanziale. Proprio la danza, intesa come movimento spontaneo generato dalla musica, rivestiva un ruolo di primo piano nella vita sociale, nelle pratiche festive e nelle manifestazioni spettacolari della Repubblica senese fin dal Trecento, come già sembra attestare l'affresco di Palazzo Pubblico *Gli effetti del buon governo in città e in campagna* di Ambrogio Lorenzetti, che immortalava nove dame intente a danzare una carola, mentre una decima suona un tamburello, intonando un canto (cfr. D'Accone 1997: 641). Da parte loro, gli Intronati non erano immuni al fascino della danza e perciò scelsero di inserire numerose moresche, danzate e in versi, all'interno dei già citati *Prigioni*, per «[vivacizzare] il parlato della recitazione a cui il pubblico non era ancora pienamente avvezzo» (Pieri 2010: 273) alla data del 1530.

Nell'ambito di questo serpeggiante ibridismo, strettissimo fu in Siena anche il rapporto tra musica e poesia⁵: come ricorda Maylender (1926: 359), gli stessi Intronati, prima di dedicarsi quasi esclusivamente agli esercizi teatrali, avevano coltivato la lirica in toscano, greco e latino. La prova di spirito cui venivano sottoposti i loro aspiranti novizi era non a caso basata proprio sulla capacità di improvvisare un componimento, sottoposto al vaglio di una giuria (cfr. Iacometti 1950: 4-5). Nel XVI secolo, a essere favorita fu soprattutto la produzione profana, erotica, ludica, composta per diletto di una società, se non cortigiana, quantomeno mondana e conversevole. Scrive a tal proposito, in un datato ma sempre significativo intervento, Cellesi (1934: 104-05):

Gentiluomini e buffoni [...] verseggiavano più per un passatempo di moda che per esprimere sentimenti profondi scaturiti dal tormento d'una passione, dall'ardore d'una fiamma generosa. Ne scaturì un'arte versaiola, più abbondante che pregevole [...]. Trattata con innumerevoli varietà di metri e di rime, ebbe per riscontro una fioritura musicale di tipo leggero, – canzonette, strambotti, frottole, villanelle – in cui affiora e fluttua chiara la melodia su la pluralità delle voci d'una polifonia di concezione accordale, vicina [...] al gusto popolare di marca italiana.

Si cercavano allora nuovi approcci al tema della declamazione testuale, una più perfetta unione tra note e versi, in direzione di una resa espressiva e di un linguaggio musicale che vivificassero innanzitutto la lettura dei madrigali italiani (cfr. D'Accone 1994: 457). Ciò dischiuse

contestualmente tutta una serie di connessioni e cortocircuiti fra detto e intonato, dizione e canto, metrica e performance, binomi che coinvolgevano anche la dimensione vocale e prosodica, oggetti – a quei tempi – di ampia divulgazione e di prime codificazioni⁶. «Alla fine sarà la parola detta (quasi sempre in prosa) a vincere la partita, ma la musica accantonata continuerà sempre a mescolarsi alle recite» (Pieri 2012b: 124).

Il Sacrificio: stile recitativo e cornice carnevalesca

Tornando all'Accademia degli Intronati – per le cui vicende si rimanda agli studi di Petracchi Costantini (1928) e Seragnoli (1980) – ricordiamo che l'adunanza, istituita attorno al 1525, si dotò di leggi solo sette anni più tardi, in occasione della sua prima riapertura. Al tempo della fondazione risalgono però quei sei motti tuttora visibili presso la Sala Storica della Biblioteca degli Intronati, l'ultimo dei quali invoca un

programmatico «de mundo non curare» [...] [che] non stava a significare un vero sganciamento dalla sfera politica: annunciava invece un'ideale visione umanistico-cortigiana di quel mondo; un'utopia accademica di libertà intellettuale, vissuta sul filo di un'elitaria cultura dell'intrattenimento (la festa privata, il gioco, la veglia, il teatro) (Mazzoni 2000: 876).

Ciò che ci preme qui indagare è lo stile recitativo di questi scaltriti dilettranti, che ambivano a «elevare l'attività mondana e letteraria del loro cenacolo al grado di perfezione delle costumanze cortigiane idealizzate nel celebre ritratto di Baldassar Castiglione» (Borsellino 1974: 102). Come ricorda Mazzoni (2018: 72), coesistenza di diletterantismo, semiprofessionismo e mestiere fu una delle cifre caratteristiche dello spettacolo cinquecentesco, accademico e di corte, nelle sue due interrelate direttrici, classicistico-vitruviana e romanza. I gentiluomini Intronati, educati all'*ars* attorica e all'*inventio* drammatica grazie alle prime prove del loro teatro, *I prigioni* e *L'Aurelia* (che diedero loro popolarità tale da indurre il governo senese a contattarli ripetutamente in qualità di maestri in materia di spettacolo), erano aggiornati sulle novità della nascente letteratura e drammaturgia in volgare, che rielaboravano in forme autonome, strizzando l'occhio ai monologhi buffoneschi,

al tragicomico, ai modi dello Strascino o dell'Aretino⁷, membro di quell'Accademia Grande che aveva preceduto gli Intronati (cfr. Pieri 2010: 269-70).

La stampa del 1537, riporta per il *Sacrificio* alcune didascalie di contenuto musicale, su cui torneremo. Mancano tuttavia supporti paratestuali specifici che permettano di ricostruire la dimensione mimico-gestica. Possiamo però assumere quanto Pieri (*ibidem*: 277) scrive per *Gl'Ingannati*, seconda parte di un ideale dittico:

Le battute dei personaggi contengono [...] al loro interno precise indicazioni relative all'azione scenica, che risulta molto varia e spettacolare [...]. La recitazione prevista è dinamica, molto agita, non certo verbale o oratoria; gli attori si muovono sul palco in una girandola di travestimenti, di trovate, di zuffe.

In quanto provetti dicitori e conversatori, gli Intronati possiedono tratti affini a quelli degli attori: naturalismo, disinvoltura, capacità di fronteggiare gli eventuali imprevisti, improvvisando con *sprezzatura* ed entrando in sintonia con gli astanti. Per contro, essi appaiono quasi del tutto incuranti nei confronti dell'*autorship* dei propri testi, tratto – quest'ultimo – comune a molti artisti senesi del Cinquecento, giacché il vero protagonista è il pubblico, produttore e nel contempo consumatore di quelle mescolate occasioni festive. L'enorme mole pervenutaci di materiali d'area senese destinati alla performance (contrasti, veglie, rime, commedie regolari) si configura appunto come un *corpus* di drammaturgie consuntive, che quegli autori assenti o collettivi cucivano su di sé, essendone i primi interpreti (cfr. Pieri 2008: 14-15, 18).

Ora, la notte dell'Epifania del 1532⁸, gli accademici Intronati allestirono in Siena *Il Sacrificio d'Amore*, un rito lirico-musicale, o anzi un *pageant* allegorico ironicamente misogino, con cui essi fingevano di bruciare sull'altare di Minerva gli afrodisiaci doni ricevuti dalle proprie dame, in segno di protesta per la loro durezza e al fine di liberarsi, simbolicamente, dalle pene d'amore. Le celebrazioni culminarono circa un mese più tardi, nel giorno di Martedì Grasso (12 febbraio), con la messinscena degli *Ingannati*, che di quei festeggiamenti costituivano l'acme: la rappresentazione fu offerta al pubblico femminile a mo' di palinodia, di ritrattazione rispetto alle posizioni espresse in precedenza sul tema

amoroso, nel quadro di un più ampio gioco di corteggiamento in pubblico di sapore galante e decameroniano. Come si apprende dal verbale di una Deliberazione di Balia, vergato a due giorni di distanza dal rito festivo, l'8 gennaio 1532 gli Intronati ricevettero pubblicamente l'incarico di allestire un altro testo collettivo, "ad solatium et contentum civitatis et civium" (cfr. Newbigin 1984: x). Fu pertanto stanziato un contributo (poi ridotto) affinché la recita potesse svolgersi "hoc carnis privio" su un palco ligneo, nella Sala Grande del Consiglio del Palazzo Comunale di Siena, nucleo del futuro Teatro dei Rinnovati.

Quello del 1532 fu, nel complesso, un Carnevale gioioso, per via della partenza della guarnigione spagnola posta di guardia a Siena e della nomina del marchese del Vasto al posto dell'inviso don Ferrante Gonzaga, investitura che lasciava ben sperare in un possibile miglioramento del clima politico e culturale (cfr. Concolino 2015: 67). L'occupazione ispanica si era resa necessaria per sedare gli scontri fra filo-papali e filo-imperiali (culminati nel Sacco di Roma del 1527), che avevano indotto la Balia ad azzerare qualsiasi forma di vita associata nella Repubblica fino appunto all'inverno del 1532, quando il sodalizio intronatico poté riaprire i battenti grazie al patrocinio di Alfonso Piccolomini. La situazione generale andò così rasserenandosi, anche per effetto della tregua siglata da Clemente VII e Carlo V con la pace di Bologna.

La comune appartenenza di *Sacrificio* e *Ingannati* al congegno festivo-spettacolare del Carnevale 1532 è confermata anche dal fatto che le edizioni *vetustiores* non distinguono tra *pageant* e dramma, il che causò gravi problemi di catalogazione ai filologi, oscurando per secoli la commedia di Lelia, a lungo tramandata sotto il titolo del rito allegorico, risultandone bibliograficamente inscindibile. Dopo numerose stampe tra Cinque e Seicento – ben diciassette – *Gl'Ingannati* scomparvero dalle tipografie, venendo soppiantati da canovacci e rimaneggiamenti d'Oltralpe. Riapparvero poi nelle varie antologie moderne di commedie rinascimentali. A quel punto, compreso l'errore e astratta la commedia dal suo originario bacino d'incubazione, *Il Sacrificio* fu – quasi per contro – progressivamente obliato. «Il suo significato tuttavia rimane» (Seragnoli 1980: 38)⁹.

Esso si configura come un *tourbillon* di versi raffinati e arguti, più tecnicamente ottave,



sonetti e madrigali¹⁰, che recuperano, al fine di parodiare, il tipico armamentario petrarchista, fatto di fuochi amorosi e crudeltà femminili. Nonostante le notazioni didascaliche presuppongano chiaramente una messa in musica – “Prima viene un con la lira et cantando dice” – allo stato attuale delle ricerche non è stato possibile rintracciare alcuno spartito legato al *Sacrificio*. Ci si accontenterà allora dei soli (e silenti) testi, osservati da vicino in quanto finora poco esplorati nel loro divenire. Ci si avvarrà per l'indagine dell'edizione anastatica fornita da Newbiggin (1984), che riproduce la copia della *princeps* del 1537, rinvenuta dalla studiosa presso la Herzog August Bibliothek di Wolfenbüttel (LK Sammeldb. 53); un'altra copia della *princeps* – data per distrutta durante la seconda guerra mondiale – era già stata descritta, senza dettagli tipografici, dalla marchesa di Soragna Melzi (1905: 123) su «Bibliofilia».

Per un'analisi del rito

Mediante il supporto fornito dall'unica fonte superstite, quella testuale, procediamo a questo punto con un'analisi scenica, linguistica, metrica e stilistica.

Ricordiamo innanzitutto che la documentazione risulta assai lacunosa in merito all'apparato: dalle didascalie si apprende che, la notte della Befana, da un "industriosa zucca" per conservare il sale (emblema intronatico), sarebbero stati estratti a sorte i nomi di alcune donne, oggetto di giocoso ripudio da parte dei membri della congrega. Risulta dunque chiaro, malgrado la penuria di fonti, «il carattere cerimoniale e rituale proprio dei canoni di poetica accademica, [nonché] la progettazione ideologica delle relazioni civili in forma "scenica"» (Seragnoli 1980: 41).

Partiamo dal frontespizio della cinquecentina: al centro campeggia lo stemma intronatico, inventato – pare – da Antonio Vignali¹¹ e composto dalla succitata zucca, sormontata da due pestelli incrociati, su cui si adagia un cartiglio recante il motto *meliora latent*, tratto dal libro primo delle *Metamorfosi*. Una chiara allusione, di vago sapore oraziano, a quel disimpegno (soltanto apparente) nei confronti degli affanni della storia e della politica. Viene presto chiarita la paternità accademica dell'opera, qui presentata

come *comedia* (anche se il termine va più propriamente inteso nel senso di “segmento ludico-festivo”). Il rito si svolge alla presenza del maestro di cerimonie e archintronato – massima carica accademica, della durata di due mesi – Marcantonio Piccolomini, il Sodo¹². Egli fu destinatario di alcune lettere composte da Annibal Caro e figura fra gli interlocutori della *Cazzaria* di Vignali. Come quest'ultimo e insieme a Francesco Bandini Piccolomini (arcivescovo di Pisa), Francesco Sozzi, Giovan Francesco Franceschi e Alessandro Marzi, il Sodo fu fra i *sex vires nobiles* che nel 1525 avevano dato avvio alle adunanze degli Intronati (cfr. Newbiggin 1984: VII-VIII).

Il caso di Marcantonio Piccolomini è assai emblematico, giacché testimonia le implicazioni sociali della congrega senese e la natura assolutamente variegata dei suoi interessi, che trascendevano la semplice drammaturgia d'occasione. Una consuetudine diffusa presso gli eruditi era, per esempio, quella di tenere lezioni accademiche, letture e interpretazioni cioè di testi letterari, per lo più lirici. Le attente ricostruzioni su base documentale operate da Tomasi (2011: 28-34, 35-38) hanno dimostrato la curiosità che il Sodo – «infastidito da chi pratica avventure esegetiche troppo disinvolve» (*ibidem*: 29) – nutriva, così come i suoi compagni, non soltanto per i versi del *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* (fatti oggetto di manierismo nel corso del XVI secolo e perciò spesso recuperati per imbastire riflessioni filosofiche altre), ma anche nei confronti di poeti della linea burlesca, come Burchiello, o di teorici delle “questioni d'amore”, come Leone Ebreo. Il tutto entro una dimensione di magmatico ibridismo formale e di genere, con componimenti che svariavano dal prosimetro neoplatonico sugli effetti della bellezza a dialoghi, non privi di oscenità, contenenti situazioni novellistiche a intarsio e protagoniste femminili.

Un bagaglio di richiami, situazioni e immagini, insomma, a cui gli Intronati attinsero a piene mani, come si evince dalla lettura del *Sacrificio*. Si tenga presente che i versi – pur apparendo tali – non sono affatto seri: «sono una provocazione alle donne, e quando poi il prologo degli *Ingannati* sarà rivolto [a loro], esse dovranno fingersi provocate per continuare il giuoco» (Newbiggin 1984: XVI). Il *divertissement* sarà però, in quel caso, ben più solleticante giacché, anziché rimanere freddamente sullo sfondo, le “nobilissime donne”

verranno direttamente interpellate.

Per quanto riguarda la veste grafica, notiamo come i caratteri a stampa, esemplati sulla scrittura umanistica, offrano un generale effetto di intellegibilità. Le *s* sono sempre in versione lunga (*ſ*), mancando invece del tutto quelle corte o rotonde, tanto a fine parola quanto nelle geminazioni (*deuotiffimi*); ma non a inizio verso (*Spegnendo*). Non vi è poi distinzione tra la vocale e semivocale *u* (*crudeli, duol*) e la labiodentale *v* (*uoti*). Numerosi i casi di *h* etimologica (*hauea, humilmente, honeſti*), mentre assai contenuto è l'uso di compendi e abbreviazioni, che si riducono alla *ſ* (“et”) e a sparuti *tituli* per l'omissione delle nasali (*Nō* per “non”, *cābio* per “cambio”). La nasale palatale è resa con il trittongo *-gni-* anche di fronte a vocali posteriori (*ogniun*). Vezzo grafico è poi la seconda *z* in casi di geminazione, che si presenta come più larga della prima.

La lingua è piuttosto regolare, esemplata su quella tradizionalmente petrarchista: la senesità poteva forse emergere a livello di dizione o pronuncia, elementi che tuttavia – *ça va sans dire* – ci è impossibile ricostruire. Nel vocalismo tonico, notiamo casi di oscillazione tra monottongamento e dittongamento di *ò* ed *è* (*core*, ma altrove *cuor* o *fuoco*) e frequenti latinismi, spesso adottati per ragioni metriche, come *beltade, crudeltade, speme, condotto* (in quest'ultimo, il nesso consonantico latino *-ct-* è già evoluto nella forma volgare effettivamente pronunciata; mentre in *chari* permane il digramma greco *ch-*, così come *rh-* in *Rhodano*). Notiamo altresì l'uso del pronome dativo *gli* per il plurale, ancora altamente oscillante. Molti, infine, i fenomeni di sincope e apocope: *potea, pria, biasmati*, oppure *crude* per “crudeli”.

Un ultimo elemento di interesse tipografico sono le *cruces* (†), poste in basso a destra, con accanto delle *i* di numero crescente, utili per ordinare in successione i vari fascicoli del testo. Già la copia di cui Soragna Melzi (1905: 123) avrebbe disposto presentava una duplice segnatura: una alfabetica (da A a G), mentre l'altra con spadine. Quest'ultima era stata adottata per le pagine collocate prima della commedia e contenenti le poesie del *Sacrificio*. Spiega Cerreta (1980: 58):

La segnatura con le spadine e la collocazione preliminare del *Sacrificio* sono una prova che questo fu aggiunto al volume in un secondo momento, ossia quando il compositore, avendo già [...] avviato la stampa della commedia, ebbe tra le mani nuovi fogli manoscritti, e,

per non rifare tutto daccapo, ripiegò sulle segnature non alfabetiche. Tale procedimento rientrava nella normale prassi compositoriale.

Il *Sacrificio* prende avvio con l'ingresso di un non meglio identificato accademico che, suonando la lira (strumento a corde pizzicate come quel liuto tanto grato allo Stordito Piccolomini), canta nelle prime otto stanze – ottave in endecasillabi piani (ABABABCC) – l'elogio delle “donne leggiadre”, che hanno avvinto grazie alla loro beltà gli animi dei giovani Intronati, presi da passione accecante nei loro “più verd'anni”. L'encomio cede presto il passo all'ammenda, giacché il *prolator* denuncia la protervia femminile nei confronti di coloro che invece, se trattati con pietà e benevolenza, “con la lingua e con l'inchiostro potrebbero fare eterno il nome” loro. Ricorre, a fini ironici, l'intero campo semantico dell'amore infelice, paragonato alla tradizionale *prigion*. Le donne senesi diventano pertanto, nel giro di pochi versi, “asprissime inimiche”, ingrati, sprezzanti nei confronti di quei sonetti scritti per dar loro eterno onore. Confezionando una fiorita antitesi, il recitatore asserisce che da intenzioni così soavi (“di così dolce fior”) è disceso un effetto nefasto (“amaro frutto”). La settima ottava (vv. 49-56) condensa in sé il senso dell'intero rito:

E ogniun ciò che di voi più caro tiene
Di voſtr'amor, di voſtra fede pegno,
Acciò col rimembrar non li dia pene,
E à forza il tenga in l'amoroso regno
Su queſto altare ad abbruciar lo viene
Spinto dal troppo voſtro altero ſdegno.
Che ſ'induol gli ha tenuto il core avvolto,
Dop'un lungo languir gliel renda ſciolto.

Gli Intronati, dunque, in ottemperanza alle proprie linee-guida (*orare, studere, gaudere, neminem laedere, nemini credere, de mundo non curare*), si ritirano dagli affanni di Venere per dedicarsi alla contemplazione del vero. La rinuncia è però ludica, fittizia: «ciascun accademico dichiara [piuttosto] in modo aperto e pubblico l'amore per la sua donna, senza nominarla, ma identificandola, per “coloro che sanno”, con il “pegno”» (Newbigin 1984: XVI). Chiude questa prima sequenza una didascalia, che informa dell'avvio – a quest'altezza della celebrazione – di un dialogo poetico, cantato e in musica. Il madrigale *Alma celeste Dea*, invocazione e *peroratio* a Minerva, è intonato da un altro Intronato non altrimenti identificato. Esso si



compone di undici versi, di cui il primo, il quarto e l'ottavo settenari. Consapevoli della propria acerba e rea passione, i devoti e cari Intronati pregano la divinità di scacciare "l'ingiusto ardor de l'alme" loro, accettando pietosa "i preghi e i pegni amati". Naturalmente un sacrificio che si rispetti – e qui il termine è effettivamente adottato ("e drestate favore al sacrificio") – non può non coinvolgere un sacerdote, verosimilmente agghindato per l'occasione. Egli reitera le precedenti elucubrazioni, estendendo la richiesta di convertirsi agli studi e di "ritirarsi a più lodata vita" alle altre divinità olimpiche: Giove, Giunone e – con dovizia di epiteti – il superbo Marte, Apollo il biondo e il saggio Mercurio. In questa sfilata classicistica, spicca la dea protettrice di Atene, di cui vengono ricordati i natali e quelle caratteristiche tradizionalmente attribuitele dal mito. Vengono nuovamente citati qui, in un processo di generale condensazione lessicale, i "verd'anni" degli Intronati.

Abbondano, nella seconda metà del cosiddetto prego del sacerdote, i richiami petrosi (*doglia*, *pianto*, la diade *forte laccio* o l'ossimoro *giusti deliri*), nonché le immagini di raffinato cesello, tanto iperboliche quanto più comiche. Per esempio:

Queste crude nimiche empie e ritrose
 Ne mai furno i lor studi ad altro uolti,
 Chà lodarle e esaltarle in ogni parte
 Et con l'ornato stile & con la lingua
 lungi e d'apresso l'han già fatte tali,
 Che non pure il gentil'almo paese
 Ch'Appenin parte e'l Mar circonda e l'Alpe
 Ma'l Rhodano l'Ibero e'l Reno insieme.

Particolarmente interessante è il verso "Onde pentiti il lor fallo piangendo", che testimonia la natura sorniona e bifronte dei componimenti intronatici: *fallo* è infatti tanto l'errore di valutazione quanto il membro virile.

Ora, a questo punto l'invocazione si trasforma in partitura, giacché le parole del sacerdote fanno riferimento a tutto un complesso di azioni e movimenti. Con ogni probabilità, gli Intronati sono a questo punto riuniti attorno a un improvvisato altare, forse in cerchio e per mano (si incita infatti il gruppo di accoliti, alla fine, a sciogliere "tutti i nodi"); hanno portato con sé oggetti ricevuti "per furto, o dono, o qualsivoglia caso" dalle proprie dame. È eretta anche una pira, alla quale verranno dati in pasto tali ricordi: un

rito iniziatico, insomma, per ritrovare la retta via. Il prego si conclude con un riferimento, per così dire, scenografico: "Et io con tre color cingo l'altare". Da questi dati – e dalla successiva indicazione "Salendo al terzo grado la prima / Quel che è a man destra offerisce" – intuivamo che si tratta di una cerimonia orchestrata con sensibilità protoregistica: nonostante il suo diletantismo, il sacerdote può considerarsi il corago a vista dell'intera esibizione, evoluzione del medievale *styteleys*.

Le esortazioni del ministro danno l'abbrivo a una selva di componimenti di varia lunghezza; un florilegio di ben trenta liriche, non esenti da un certo e intenzionale manierismo, che rappresentano altrettante variazioni sul tema portante, di ascendenza anche cavalleresca e novellistica, dell'amore infelice, punto di partenza per l'intreccio degli *Ingannati*. Lo schematico dell'intera celebrazione traspare dalla struttura fissa e altamente formalizzata che le diverse poesie possiedono: al pegno offerto in dono (puntualmente individuato nella didascalia iniziale), segue un carne (non sappiamo se intonato o solamente detto) eseguito dall'Intronato di turno, indicato con l'appellativo.

Il primo a deliziare l'uditorio è il patrono della riapertura dell'Accademia, il Desiato Alfonso Piccolomini, nipote di papa Pio II, Capitano del Popolo di Siena e duca di Amalfi. La prima strofa del suo componimento – un sonetto in endecasillabi formato da due quartine (ABBA ABBA) e due terzine (CDE CDE) – presenta l'offerta votiva, un "candido velo"; fuor di metafora, un fazzoletto bagnato – si legge in didascalia – dalle lacrime dell'amata. Dopodiché si insiste sulle immagini topiche della sofferenza erotica, tra pianti, doglie e gran mali. Da un punto di vista grafico, notiamo come, sebbene l'ortografia dell'italiano sia ancora altamente oscillante a questa altezza temporale, l'elisione venga correttamente segnalata mediante un apostrofo, non sempre presente invece nelle stampe cinquecentesche (*trist'occhi*, *quell'humor*). Sotto il profilo stilistico-retorico, spicca invece l'opposizione interna tra *fiamme* (della passione) e *acqua* (le lacrime di dolore).

Dopo l'Affannoso (Mario Bandini), è il turno dello Stordito, Alessandro Piccolomini, provvisto di un anello. Come rammenta Tomasi (2011: 23):

Nel 1549 Piccolomini [diede] alle stampe per i tipi di Valgrisi i *Cento sonetti*, unica sua prova lirica e uno dei suoi ultimi esercizi nel campo della letteratura. Da

questa raccolta [...] emerge, su movenze oraziane e classiche, non solo un consapevole progetto letterario volto a ridefinire il linguaggio lirico, lontano dalle forme più corrive del petrarchismo di mediocinquecento [...], ma affiorano anche, e proprio in virtù della matrice oraziana che governa i principi organizzativi del *liber*, i lineamenti di una sorta di ideale autoritratto del poeta [...] [e] la volontà di offrire un'immagine idealizzata della città natale, una sorta di fondale sul quale si muovono l'io lirico e i suoi sodali.

In questo caso siamo di fronte a un componimento in endecasillabi e settenari, di schema AabB CddC EFF GG hIiH. Piccolomini minaccia di lacerarsi il petto con un coltello per estrarne il cuore. E in effetti, un cuore simulato (di cartapesta o forse d'animale) verrà sacrificato più tardi dal Presuntuoso, Antonio Cerini. Segnaliamo soltanto da un punto di vista linguistico l'enclisi del pronome atono con conseguente geminazione in *porrovvi*, "vi porrò", sebbene non ci si trovi né a inizio verso né dopo le congiunzioni *e*, *o*, *ma*. L'altro membro della famiglia Piccolomini, il Sodo Marcantonio, sacrifica invece una ciocca di capelli (si noti l'uso della *z* in *zocca*: evidentemente, con vezzo lombardo, la parola era pronunciata con affricata dentale sorda anziché con palatale). Recuperando un lessico assai prossimo a *Nel dolce tempo de la prima etade* di Petrarca, il Sodo – promettendo infine di rivolgersi "a più belle et più degne opre" – ammette di essere stato anch'egli avvinto dall'inflazionato laccio d'amore, che ha dipinto nel suo animo il bel volto dell'amata, cuore di ghiaccio.

Giungiamo rapidamente – tra orioli, penne, rami d'arancio e colombe – verso la fine del rito in versi. Fa qui capolino un tal Agnol Malevolti (o Malavolti, storica famiglia senese rivale dei Piccolomini), che reca in offerta un amorino di marmo, un cupido scolpito dalla sua stessa amata. Ricorre nel componimento del messere – forse esterno alla confraternita intronatica, giacché indicato senza soprannome accademico – un lessico tra il dantesco e il provenzale: *mercè* e *mercede*, *desir*, *fien*. Lo segue nella celebrazione quel già citato Luigi Dentice, qui celato sotto il nome di Rispettoso: i suoi quattordici versi – in schema rimico assai libero (ABcBCbDaDEFEGG) – non mostrano grandi particolarità, se non un *deggio* nel settenario centrale, oggi poetismo. Con l'offerta del coltello di Giovan Battista Martini, il Perduto, la funzione ha termine.

Spento il rogo, il sacerdote – come ricorda una didascalia in caratteri capitali – invita coloro che hanno sacrificato i propri doni, la cui "acerba rimembranza" è ora finalmente sopita, a danzare attorno al sacro altare per tre volte, mentre altri Intronati, in veste di ministri, raccolgono dall'urna le ceneri dei pegni bruciati. Torna a questo punto in scena l'autore di *Alma celeste Dea*, che propone agli astanti un nuovo madrigale per congratularsi con i gloriosi Intronati, finalmente liberi e sciolti dai nodi d'amore e pronti per la beatitudine eterna. La musica accompagna i tre giri danzanti attorno alla pira spenta. Terminata la melodia, ciascun partecipante raccoglie le "arse reliquie" dei propri oggetti, gettandole al vento senza voltarsi indietro, con il proposito di non abbandonare più il "bel camin" intrapreso.

Mentre i sacrificanti si allontanano ordinatamente (e con sapienza coreica) dallo spazio del rito, plausibilmente a pianta centrale, fa nuovamente capolino il suonatore di lira, cantando ancora sei stanze di contenuto misogino, che hanno per oggetto l'"adamantino core" delle dame. Si invitano queste ultime – destinatarie privilegiate dell'intera celebrazione – a mostrarsi pietose; monche infatti del favore accademico e del poetare maschile le donne non sono nulla, canta il citaredo. «Sarà sufficiente uno sguardo o una dimostrazione di benignità nei confronti degli Intronati per essere ancora amate o riverite» (Seragnoli 1980: 39). Di questa sezione epilogale, che chiude il *Sacrificio*, ci colpiscono tre elementi: innanzitutto gli occhi – con tutta la loro simbologia freudiana – sono i *rai* attraverso cui il sentimento giunge al cuore. È una situazione non dissimile da quel processo di infatuazione ritratto «dalla lirica provenzale e dalla trattatistica coeva, come contagio d'amore attraverso l'atto del vedere, dove il nesso occhi/ fuoco fissa una lunga tradizione che, partendo da Platone e passando per Lucrezio, abbraccia [...] Ovidio» (Marinai 2015: 227). In secondo luogo, gli Intronati si confermano provetti verseggiatori, come emerge dall'allitterante "D'Amor donate donate donne mie ricetta" (la geminazione di *donate* è dovuta quasi sicuramente a un errore di dittografia). È infine da notare la scaltrezza nell'orchestrazione dell'*ensemble*: se all'inizio, infatti, erano comparsi, nell'ordine, gli anonimi citaredo, madrigalista e sacerdote, questi ultimi, a chiasmo, riappaiono nel finale, ma in sequenza inversa.

Ora, nella stampa rinvenuta in Germania da Newbiggin è posta in calce al *Sacrificio* una dedica ad Alfonso Piccolomini, firmata dal Sornione, Giovan Maria da San Miniato; queste righe, che pure offrono vaghi indizi sulle circostanze di pubblicazione, sembrano oscillare tra la giocosa dichiarazione di umiltà e la verità storica: “certo avrei voluto, [...] poi ch’[il *Sacrificio*] haveva avuto quel fine che fu ordinato, che non restasse altro di lui che quella poca rimembranza che poteva ritenere chi l’haveva veduto, o udito una volta”. Scrive Pieri (2009: 28-29):

La lettera, oltre a porre [...] in primo piano il *Sacrificio* rispetto alla commedia, che non viene neanche nominata, esibisce un totale, signorile disimpegno letterario: la stampa sarebbe soltanto una nuova “mostra” della recita (“in quella istessa forma che gli fu data”), la frettolosa confezione di un oggetto nato e consumato in una circostanza privata e destinato a sopravvivere nella memoria di pochi eletti piuttosto che in un documento scritto rivolto a tutti. Ma si è detto che ci troviamo di fronte a consuetudini e tradizioni dove le dichiarazioni d’ufficio e le interpolazioni sono all’ordine del giorno. Non sappiamo molto di quel Sornione che se ne assunse l’iniziativa con tanta pretesa noncuranza; è probabile invece che costui abbia compiuto semplicemente (per iniziativa propria o per sollecitazione accademica) un’operazione comunicativa e forse commerciale a quel punto raccomandabile e necessaria.

Prima di concludere, ricordiamo che al debutto senese degli *Ingannati* e alla sua ripresa napoletana del 1545, allestita presso il palazzo del principe di Salerno Ferrante di Sanseverino (cfr. Seragnoli 1980: 42-45) e descritta da Antonio Castaldo (cfr. Croce 1966: 23), seguì – come ha recentemente mostrato Vallieri (2018: 312) – una recita bolognese, nel 1556. La commedia, complice la sua fortuna editoriale, funse poi da archetipo per svariati artisti europei, a partire da Bandello, che ne trasse la materia per il suo rimaneggiamento narrativo, la novella di Nicuola e Lattanzio, tradotta in francese da Belleforest; ad essa si ispirò poi Rich per *Apolonius and Silla* del 1581, antecedente della *Twelfth Night* di Shakespeare (cfr. Marinai 2015: 219)¹³. Nulla sappiamo invece, allo stato attuale degli studi, circa eventuali riprese del *pendant* del *Sacrificio*, articolato congegno rituale e scenico legato a filo doppio alla comunità senese, alle sue dinamiche di consumo e alle sue modalità di intrattenimento; caratteristiche – queste – che ne impedirono, di fatto, la riproducibilità al di fuori della Repubblica¹⁴. Bullough (1958: 272)

ha a suo tempo proposto di leggere in Malvolio un richiamo a quel messer Agnolo Malavolti presente alla cerimonia misogina. Tuttavia, il nome potrebbe essere una genuina coniazione shakespeariana o rifarsi al frequente uso bandelliano dell’espressione *male voglie*; peraltro la sua natura “parlante” ha maggiori affinità con un altro cognome, quello di Sir Andrew Aguecheek (dove *ague* è la “febbre malarica” e *cheek* la “gota”: quindi Andrea Guanciaguza).

Del *Sacrificio*, con la sua orditura di sentimentalismo e musica, reca traccia un’altra *play* shakespeariana, *Love’s Labour’s Lost* (cfr. Clubb 1989): l’opera mostra la rinuncia da parte di quattro eruditi nobiluomini «all’amore delle donne per dedicarsi agli studi, e poi i tentativi delle donne di fare crollare questa risoluzione. L’amore trionfa e la commedia finisce con la famosissima canzone a due voci fra la civetta (che è l’inverno) e il cucù (la primavera)» (Newbiggin 1984: XIX)¹⁵. Sarà poi Orsino, nelle sue prime battute, a riecheggiare quel peculiare viluppo di musica e galanteria:

ORSINO. If music be the food of love, play on,
Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting,
The appetite may sicken, and so die.
That strain again! It had a dying fall (Shakespeare 2015: 4).

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Notes

- 1 Si ringraziano le Prof.sse Marzia Pieri e Giulia Giovani per le preziose indicazioni bibliografiche e per il gentile aiuto offerto nel reperimento di alcuni testi.
- 2 Il riferimento è al pionieristico Zorzi 1977.
- 3 È comunque assai ricco il patrimonio musicale prodotto a Siena, come evidenzia la collettanea curata da Giovani (2018). Fra i maggiori luoghi di conservazione e valorizzazione delle fonti musicali e documentarie, Balestracci (2018: 171-186) annovera l’Archivio dell’Opera del Duomo e la Biblioteca Comunale degli Intronati. Numerosi testi e spartiti, di argomento sia sacro sia profano, erano già pubblicati negli studi di Cellesi (1934: 110-119) e Luciani (1942: 25, 33, 38-41, 55, 57, 59-65).
- 4 «Se si pensa ai grandiosi intermezzi buontalientiani che annientarono la *Pellegrina* del 1589, e al prologo dialogato fra Commedia e Intermezzo (che addirittura si sposano insieme) nel corso di quel mitico spettacolo, dove gli Intronati recitanti furono del tutto marginali e deludenti rispetto ai nuovi astri del professionismo attoriale, si misura appieno lo stravolgimento profondo operato dai sovrintendenti medicei sulla drammaturgia originaria dell’opera» (Pieri 2013: 88).
- 5 Molto interessante, a tal proposito, è il recente studio di Irene Tani (2018: 89-100) che indaga i rapporti tra poesia ed esecuzione musicale mediante un *case-study* del Quattrocento senese.
- 6 Uno dei primi tipografi a stampare testi poetici in volgare fu Niccolò di Aristotile de’ Rossi detto lo Zoppino, che come abbiamo avuto modo di segnalare era anche artista. Per quanto riguarda il rapporto fra poesia e musica nella trattatistica cinquecentesca cfr. la tesi dottorale: Arcuri 2009.
- 7 Le aurorali composizioni degli Intronati somigliavano molto alla prima *Cortigiana* e al primo, perduto, *Marescalco*, affollate com’erano di personaggi e di sapidi *sketches*.
- 8 Nel frontespizio delle edizioni a stampa si legge “celebrato nei giuochi del Carnovale in Siena l’Anno MDXXXI Sotto il Sodo dignissimo Archintronato”, Marcantonio Piccolomini. In realtà tale datazione è da considerarsi *ab incarnatione*, giacché – secondo l’uso senese del tempo – l’inizio dell’anno nuovo era posto al 25 marzo, giorno dell’Annunciazione.
- 9 Sulla complessa storia editoriale del dittico *Sacrificio/Intronati* si vedano, in ordine cronologico: Soragna Melzi 1905; Cerreta 1971; Cerreta 1972; Newbiggin 1978; Cerreta 1980; Newbiggin 1984.
- 10 «Nel Cinquecento il madrigale è una forma libera di endecasillabi e settenari, variamente rimati e con ampia possibilità di lasciare rime irrelate. Una delle poche regole fissate riguarda la lunghezza, che non dovrebbe superare gli 11-12 versi, ma anche questa regola ammette numerose eccezioni» (Beltrami 1991: 353). Vista la natura ironica di questi componimenti d’occasione, non sarà

forse scorretto parlare di madrigalesse.

11 Antonio Vignali, l'Arsiccio, fu autore della *Cazzaria* e fondatore dell'Accademia senese, a cui seppe dar lustro anche all'estero. Avrebbe infatti diretto, nel 1548, un gruppo di attori reclutati a Mantova e accodatisi al seguito dell'arciduca Massimiliano d'Asburgo, venuto a Valladolid per sposare l'*infanta* Maria. La *troupe* mise in scena i *Suppositi* di Ariosto.

12 Si rimanda a Seragnoli (1980: 39) e Newbiggin (1984: VII-IX) per l'associazione tra nomi propri e appellativi accademici, ricavati da elenchi e cataloghi conservati presso la Biblioteca degli Intronati e in parte già pubblicati sul «Bulettno Senese di Storia Patria». I partecipanti al *Sacrificio* appartenevano alle più abbienti famiglie senesi del tempo, assai attive nella vita politica della Repubblica.

13 Nel titolo shakespeariano ricorre il richiamo all'Epifania, dodicesima notte dopo il Natale.

14 A ben guardare, la memoria del rito fu presto obliata anche nel luogo stesso che gli diede i natali. Nell'edizione di Matteo Florimi, stampata a Siena nel 1611 e contenente i grandi successi intronatici (cfr. Pieri 2008: 10), non viene per esempio inserito il testo del *Sacrificio*.

15 Potrebbe trattarsi di un riferimento alla *Canzone nella morte d'una civetta*, parodica riscrittura dell'*Alma cortese* di Bembo a opera di Firenzuola o Berni, che comparve nella tradizione testuale a partire dall'edizione di Curzio Navo (1537-1538). Il componimento, senza parentela alcuna né con il *Sacrificio*, né con *Gl'Ingannati*, si allineerebbe comunque alla direttrice portante del dittico, che vedeva contendersi "in singolar tenzone" uomini e donne: la civetta in quanto uccello è simbolo del fallo maschile (come si evince da molti canti carnascialeschi), ma nel contempo allude all'atto del civettare, tipica occupazione femminile.

Stretching the truth: festivity, re-enactment and creative invention

H. Neville Davies

Long before Ronnie and I met, he was known to me by repute, and not surprisingly, for besides respecting his publications I was aware that he had previously occupied the academic post I held at the University of Birmingham's Shakespeare Institute. Times had changed and, with my appointment the post that had formerly been temporary was made permanent. But although Ronnie's tenure had been limited, his energy and innovative thinking had made their mark on both the postgraduate community at Stratford-upon-Avon and on the largely undergraduate English Department at Birmingham. He then moved to another temporary post, this time at Edinburgh, where the University, recognising their good fortune, wisely broke established custom by promoting him to a secure lectureship. After a highly successful Edinburgh career he returned to the Midlands, to live at Shakespeare's Stratford, contributing in many ways to the vibrancy of its celebrated institutions, and to play a leading role at Warwick University where he developed the Graduate School of Renaissance Studies, later the Centre for the Study of the Renaissance, an enterprise that he nurtured with imaginative scholarship and extraordinary vigour. It was after his appointment at Warwick that we first met, when, as new academic neighbour, he revisited the Shakespeare Institute to give a typically lively and well-judged paper focussed on Harold Bloom's illuminating but controversial notion of *Clinamen*, the swerve that distances a fresh successor from its parental predecessor. Thereafter our paths crossed repeatedly. During the 1980s I

organised a series of concerts that supplemented the core programme of the biennial International Shakespeare Conference by the performance of wide-ranging Shakespeare related music of a kind that opened up unfamiliar perspectives. Ronnie, a great lover of music, was a particularly appreciative and enthusiastic supporter of this festive and pleurably revealing innovation. It was just the sort of explorative endeavour that he advocated. But most of my contact with Ronnie was to be at, or under the auspices of, Warwick University. He frequently invited me to participate in seminars or symposia or academic conferences that proved to be immensely enjoyable as well as informative and immensely stimulating occasions. And I remain greatly indebted to him for the warm welcome he always provided, the open-mindedness he displayed, and the meticulous planning that preceded these collaborative, interdisciplinary, and productive gatherings. The publications they gave rise to stand as testimony to how fruitful they were, but successful publication came at a price, and that price was Ronnie's unremitting determination to drive each project forward, turning vision into splendid reality.

"Stretching the Truth" is offered as a small tribute to Ronnie. It is rooted, as was Ronnie's work, in Shakespearian drama, but its focus is on Renaissance courtly festivity, and in particular on the importance of a theatrical danced conjunction of a monarch and his future consort, the parents of Elizabeth I. That focus is, of course, one that impinges, in a modest way, on the field of study that became so important to Ronnie and to which he contributed so much. As he would have expected, my approach is interdisciplinary, with dance and opera and the life (and death) of a Tudor court musician contributing to my

argument, and involved as well is the glorious art of Veronese, so quintessentially Venetian that I am reminded of those magnificent academic conferences in Venice that Ronnie made possible. Perhaps the relationship between a play and its sources, and between a picture and the play scene it illustrates or a precursor that it imitates includes a degree of misreading or misprision that could be categorised as *Clinamen*. Above all, I hope the result is a pleasurable and engaging read. Ronnie would certainly have wanted that, but I regret that much scholarship that I wished to consult, and that ought to have been consulted, was unavailable to me. I wrote during the Covid-19 lockdown of 2020 when libraries were closed to readers.

Shakespeare and Fletcher's *King Henry VIII*, Act 1, scene 4, is set at York Place, Cardinal Wolsey's grand episcopal palace at Westminster, and purports to show the very first meeting of Henry VIII and one of Queen Katherine's ladies-in-waiting, Anne Boleyn (or Bullen). The genuine historical occasion in 1527 was a banquet attended by lords and by many fair ladies who may or may not have included Anne, and at which the king, with his courtier companions, all supposedly incognito, arrived disguised with masks and pretending to be envoys of a foreign court, yet extravagantly and fantastically dressed as idealised shepherds. In the play these masquers each choose a lady as dancing partner, Henry, of course, silently selecting the most beautiful. The compliment he immediately pays, "The fairest hand I ever touched. O beauty, / Till now I never knew thee" (I.4.75-76), uttered as an aside, instantly informs the play's audience that this courtly encounter marks the start of a new amatory relationship. But it is only after dancing and then unmasking that Henry inquires who his partner was, and is informed it was Thomas Bullen's daughter. He responds, "By heaven, she is a dainty one", and turning to Anne addresses her directly for the first time, finding in their having danced together a convenient excuse for kissing her: "Sweetheart, / I were unmannerly to take you out / And not to kiss you" (lines 95-96).

In actual fact the historical Anne's real debut in an English court entertainment was indeed at York Place, but five years earlier, on Shrove Tuesday in March 1522, when both she and Henry participated in the much more spectacular pageant of the assault on the *Château Vert* (Anglo 1997: 119-

21; Ives 1988: 47-49). However, it seems to have been another four years after that before Henry became enamoured of her, probably "sometime in 1526" (Ives 1988: 108). Yet even before she left France in late 1521, Henry was likely to have become aware of this remarkably accomplished young lady either at the Burgundian court of the Archduchess Margaret of Austria in 1513 or at the Field of Cloth of Gold in 1520 (*ibidem*: 31 and 40). But no doubt Shakespeare or John Fletcher (if he, as is now widely thought, was responsible for this particular scene) would have been as little "touched with the desire for [chronological] accuracy" as an unrepentant R. L. Stevenson was when, for the purpose of writing his historically inspired tale of *Kidnapped* – an enthralling read but "no furniture for the scholar's library" – he transposed the crucial and notorious Appin murder from 1752 to 1751, and gave the Jacobite soldier Alan Breck Stewart a memorable life that extends well beyond the historical sources (prefatory "Dedication" to Charles Baxter; Stevenson 2014: 3). With even more flagrant anachronicity, when Walter Scott wrote his 'romance' of *Kenilworth* he was content, despite all his wealth of antiquarian and historical knowledge, to have Amy Robsart, Robert Dudley's first wife, who had died in much publicised dubious circumstances in 1560, present at the Kenilworth Castle festivities of 1575, and content too to credit Shakespeare prematurely with a reputation not gained until much later (Trevelyan 1949: 204). With a similarly relaxed attitude, despite their co-authored play that spans the period 1520-1533 having been known originally as *All is True* and being introduced by a Prologue that almost pugnaciously emphasises a commitment to veracity, Shakespeare and Fletcher wrote for the playhouse and not the schoolroom. They deliberately avoided the unhistorical foolery of Rowley's Henry VIII play, *When You See Me, You Know Me* (1605), but strict adherence to historical record was not their prime concern. In this respect, like the dramatist John Marston in *The Malcontent* (1604), Shakespeare, Fletcher, and their like-minded theatrical colleagues "willingly erred" (see Marston's "To the Reader", line 6).

Edward Hall and Raphael Holinshed

Indisputably the dramatist's principal source for the scene of Wolsey's banquet is George Cavendish's eye-witness account written many years after the event and then incorporated in Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles* (1577, revised edition 1587). There, however, the account is not, as one might have expected, placed chronologically in its appropriate regnal year, but made to provide instead the climax for a retrospective review of Wolsey's career that is prompted by the cardinal's death in November 1530. Consequently, to a reader of Holinshed, the unspecified date of the banquet is not evident. The account – the last and most extensive item in a string of assorted reminiscences, impressions, descriptions, anecdotes and snippets of information about the cardinal and his retainers that collectively constitute the review – is simply introduced by the deliberately imprecise phrase “On a time ...”, a conventional narrative opener or lead-in that reveals no more than that the relevant event happened during the years of Wolsey's prosperity (Holinshed 1587: 921). The purpose of this illustrative account is, therefore, not to chronicle a happening *per se*, but rather to provide a lively instance of Wolsey's former magnificence, and thus contribute to a general assessment of the man and to exemplify the splendour he enjoyed at the height of his power. This in turn means that a dramatist relying on chronicle material might well feel at liberty to regard the undated report as one that could be freely exploited in three ways. It could provide an episode in which Wolsey is shown to advantage as munificent host; it could thereby provide, for a play in which spectacle was to be specially important, a more manageable spectacle than the Shrove Tuesday pageantry of 1522; and it could with some plausibility accommodate the necessarily crucial encounter between Henry and Anne that chroniclers had, understandably enough, failed to put on record.

Neither Holinshed nor the chronicler Edward Hall, to whom Shakespeare had formerly been much indebted, make any explicit reference to Anne Boleyn prior to 1529, by which time the relationship with Henry had clearly been live for quite some while. To locate, for dramatic purposes, the origin of that relationship in one of Wolsey's banquets presented the dramatist with a choice, a

choice between Hall and Holinshed. Hall, but not Holinshed, describes the 1522 Shrove Tuesday feasting and assault on the *Château Vert* in some detail. After supper, as he reports, the company, including visiting ambassadors from the Emperor Charles V, moved to a brilliantly illuminated chamber at one end of which a turreted castle had been constructed. Eight allegorically named ladies of the court commanded this fortress – Beauty, Honour, Perseverance, Kindness, Constance, Bounty, Mercy, Pity – and although Hall does not say so, it is now known from other sources that “Perseuerance” was impersonated by Anne Boleyn. Yet even without that firm knowledge one might reasonably have suspected that Anne would have participated as one of the eight ladies. Below these desirable but unattainable ladies, and guarding them, were eight Children of the Chapel Royal, “[at]tired like to women of Inde”, so presumably in black-face or swarthy, and personating individually the repulsive force typical of Daunger, Disdain, Jealousy, Unkindness, Scorn, “Malebouche” and Strangeness (Hall 1809: 631). Seeking to release the ladies was a company of eight men of whom “the kyng was chief”, their assumed names being Amorous (i.e. Henry), Nobleness, Youth, Attendance, Loyalty, Pleasure, Gentleness and Liberty. Their assault on the castle was led by Ardent Desire, probably played, as Ives convincingly argues, by William Cornish, master of the said choristers (Ives 1988: 48–49). The physical assault, resoundingly reinforced by “a greate peale of gunnes” heard from without, was fought with “Dates, Oranges, and other fruits made for pleasure” thrown by the men, while “Rose water and Comfittes” weaponised the ladies. The choristers, armed with bows and balls, put up stout resistance before being driven out, and the no-longer-defended ladies could thereafter be gallantly captured by their courtly assailants. Then, but still disguised in their allegorically appropriate finery, the ladies and the men “daunced together verie pleasauntly ... and when thei had daunced their fill” were at last unmasked to reveal their true identities before proceeding to “a costly banquet” (i.e. to a luxurious dessert) that awaited them (Hall 1809: 631).

As a potential context for a dramatisation of Henry's first-time encounter with Anne, Hall's account presents obvious drawbacks. For that specific purpose the assault on the *Château Vert* is

an entertainment too overwhelmingly substantial and elaborate, and the 1522 date is improbably early. At that time or thereabouts the king's mistress was, in reality, the aptly cast impersonator of "Kyndnes", Anne's promiscuous elder sister Mary. The other Wolsey banquet, described, as already noted, in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, is unmentioned by Hall and offers an altogether better alternative. Once again there is a magnificent supper hosted by Wolsey at his riverside Westminster palace, and attended by lords and ladies of the court. But on this occasion the proceedings are interrupted by the thunderous sound of gunfire announcing the arrival at the water gate of Henry, masked, and with an entourage of masked companions and a retinue of attendants. This time, instead of genuine foreign envoys being entertained as observers, it is the king and his companions who pretend to be "ambassadors from some forren prince" (Holinshed 1587: 921). They process through the palace to the sound of drums and flutes "such ... as seldom had beene heard the like", and their entry into the presence chamber where, in princely state, Wolsey presided over the banquet, evidently created an impressive spectacle as two by two the fantastically clad and brilliantly illuminated visitors approached Wolsey and courteously, but speechlessly, saluted him. Gesture was all, since they pretended to have no knowledge of English. With them they bring "a great cup of gold filled with crownes and other pieces of gold" so that, with the cardinal's ready consent, they are able to engage the "most worthie" of the ladies by playing mumchance with them, a gambling game in which the masquers could, by remaining "mum", maintain their pretense of not knowing English, and the ladies, by throwing dice, could attempt to win coin from the cup (*ibidem*: 921). After mumchance with eventually all the ladies participating, some as winners, some as losers, it became Wolsey's turn to play. The remaining gold – "aboue two hundred crownes", i.e. recently minted gold coins worth in total more than £50 – was ostentatiously poured out and put at stake. Wolsey's throw of the dice proved lucky, and to general acclaim he won the entire amount, though whether by good chance or by predetermined arrangement is not made clear (*ibidem*: 922). Wolsey's tactful response was to declare a wish to surrender to one of the visitors (i.e. to Henry) his pre-eminent seat as host, since

he imagined that "there should be a nobleman amongst them, who is more meet to occupy this seat" than he himself. After confirmation that his surmise is correct, he is invited to single out that special person, giving rise to great hilarity when he mistakenly selects not the disguised king but one of the other disguised men. Again it is not entirely clear whether this is a contrived joke at his own expense or a genuine, but surely unlikely, blunder. However, whichever it was, the *faux pas* prompted Henry to unmask and speak out, true identities were joyously revealed, and while the banqueting table was being lavishly replenished, the masquers retired to change out of their masquing costumes before returning to the feast where the king *in propria persona* would occupy the chair of state respectfully vacated by Wolsey. "Thus", records Holinshed, concluding Cavendish's account, "passed they fourth the night with banketting, dancing, and other triumphs" (*ibidem*: 922).

To create the banquet scene staged in *Henry VIII*, 1.4., Fletcher simplified the unmasking by excluding the comic *faux pas* and allowing his Wolsey to make the right choice. Further necessary streamlining was achieved by excluding the disruptive change of costume, thereby enabling the dramatic action to flow more smoothly than it otherwise would. But the major alteration was the abandonment of the whole mumchance business and its replacement by dancing that unhistorically brings Henry and Anne together. The change is crucial, and to appreciate the full impact of this unchronicled interpolation play-readers need to remember that in theatrical performance the economical stage direction "*Music. Dance*" (line 76) expands into a significant and extended display exhibiting dance steps that require exemplary virtuosity of the kind expected of the most accomplished courtiers. Modern editions of the playtext that tag this stage direction onto the end of a verse line, where it is further subordinated by being justified to the right, and when it would have been preferable for it to have been set, as it is in the First Folio, as an independent line of print and centred, give a misleadingly weak and marginalised impression of the importance and length of the action alluded to. The mating dance of Anne and Henry is, surely, a spectacular courtship display that needs to be staged with ample regard to its significance¹. According to the Holinshed account the masquers

beg leave to view the “incomparable beautie” of the ladies “as for to accompanie them at mumchance, and then to danse with them” (*ibidem*: 921). Fletcher’s use of dance may have been prompted by this ultimate intention, for while in Holinshed interest is focussed almost entirely on mumchance, and dancing is barely mentioned at all, Fletcher ignored mumchance and made dance of crucial importance in his dramatised scene that so innovatively introduces Anne Boleyn.

In effect, while the earlier part of the scene follows Holinshed closely, the latter part of it, as it diverges from that narrative, seems more consonant with Hall’s *Château Vert* account. There dancing immediately follows the successful storming of the castle, and it is dancing in costume, as in Fletcher’s scene. Furthermore, as we now know, Anne as well as Henry, was among the dancers. Unmasking and the revealing of identities, as in Fletcher, immediately follow the dancing, and the participants in both cases then return to another room (Fletcher’s “in the next chamber”, line 102) to resume the interrupted banquet. Within this

general similarity one small but striking detail is Hall’s observation that Henry and the other assailants “toke the ladies of honor as prisoners *by the hands*” (Hall 1809: 631, *italics added*) as they led them from the castle walls down to the dance floor. Fletcher’s Henry similarly takes Anne’s hand in order to claim her as his dancing partner, and relishes as he does so “The fairest hand I ever touched” (line 75). It is not so much this physical contact in itself that is remarkable but the fact that attention is drawn to it verbally by the artifice of an aside. Although it is not recorded as such by recent editors, Henry’s appreciative exclamation has to be understood as an aside because as long as he remains masked Henry keeps up the pretence that he and his companions “speak no English” (line 65). When the Oxford Shakespeare *Complete Works* editors intrusively assert that his words are addressed “to Anne” they are entirely mistaken, and have failed to visualise the staging required by Fletcher’s text.



Fig. 1. Thomas Stothard, *King Henry the Eighth, Act I, Scene IV*, engraved by Isaac Taylor, 1798 (Boston Public Library, Boston, MA).

The role of the dramatist adjusting, adapting, developing and inventively supplementing his source material may be distantly replicated by imaginative responses to his work when it in turn becomes material for fresh production. A case in point is the artist Thomas Stothard's response to *Henry VIII*, 1.4. Henry's "I were unmannerly to take you out [i.e. to choose you as dancing partner] / and not to kiss you" (lines 95-96), addressed to Anne after learning her identity, was the text that accompanied his *scène galante* commissioned by the London printseller John Boydell for his Pall Mall Shakespeare Gallery, and exhibited there in the 1790s². Although the painting itself is lost, widely dispersed prints of Isaac Taylor's 1798 engraving of it, also commissioned by Boydell, have survived the depredations of time's injurious hand.



Fig. 2. Paolo Veronese, *Mars and Venus United by Love*, 1570-80, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

The nature of the commission means that while Stothard was illustrating a dramatic scene he was also participating in Boydell's ambitious attempt to create a cultural fusion that united the sister arts of painting and poesy and to which historical subject matter, Shakespearian drama and the

recognition of Old Master achievement all contributed. The subject of Stothard's picture, then, is *Henry VIII*, 1.4, but the underlying compositional model is Paolo Veronese's *Mars and Venus United by Love* (Metropolitan Museum, New York), a canvas brought to London in the early 1790s by its French emigré owner François de Laborde-Méréville. Its depiction of a nude Venus clasped in an embrace with an armour-clad Mars turns Ovidian narrative into an exuberant *concordia discors* allegory that Stothard was to rework as a representation of Anne and Henry, with some of the grandeur of Veronese's vastly more magnificently realised conception ennobling the drama of their encounter.

The impressive figure of Henry with powerful, gartered left leg and gorgeously feathered hat, is, however, obviously derived from the famous portrait by Holbein, as had been Reynolds's fancy-dress portrait of Master Crewe as a pint-sized Henry VIII, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1776; but Stothard gives the royal lover a softer face, modifying the mean, piggy eyes and tight lips that Holbein had depicted. Gone too is the hugely assertive codpiece that occupies the central position in the prototype, replaced significantly enough, but more delicately, by the linked hands of the pair whose love affair was now initiated. It is noteworthy, though, that Holbein's sexually emphatic central position has been retained as Stothard's erotically crucial central position, even though Stothard's picture is in other respects organised entirely differently from Holbein's. Furthermore, Stothard's portrayal of the king and his future consort, although it aligns them with the opulent magnificence of Veronese's allegorically treated Mars and Venus, also recalls in contrasting mode a satirical print by Hogarth, *Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn* (c. 1728-1729), that responded to Colley Cibber's 1727 staging of the play by suggesting a parallel between the fall of Wolsey, seen as a consequence of the liaison between Henry and Anne, and the fall of Walpole that some hoped would follow the accession of George II (Bindman 1997: 154-55). Hogarth's grouping of Anne's attendant pageboy, Anne herself, with her hand held by Henry, and Wolsey to one side of them seems to have influenced Stothard, but Henry and Anne are not centrally placed by Hogarth³. Conspicuous in the background, it is a regal Queen Katherine who occupies that position,

and who, like Wolsey and like Anne's former suitor Lord Percy, with whom Katherine converses, is to be a casualty of her husband's new infatuation. Unlike Henry, Stothard's Anne – the Venus of this Veronese-derived composition – is portrayed in a manner utterly unlike anyone, male or female, in any of Holbein's portraits. There is no similarly full-length iconic portrait of Anne that Stothard could have taken as his model. He was thus free – or obliged – to imagine her as he wished. So, in a presentation of her that entirely ignores the unbecoming personal features maliciously reported in Elizabethan times by the recusant exile Nicholas Sander, she appears almost as a pretty Hogarthian coquette responding to a seducer. The style of clothing now usually associated with her – a bodice with distinctive square-cut neckline worn with a close fitting French cap, or alternatively an angular gable hood – is not reflected in Stothard's representation that contrasts the costuming of his two principal figures, and that distantly echoes Veronese's bold juxtaposition of a voluptuously naked Venus and an armour-clad Mars. But whether Anne responds coquettishly or demurely to the king's advances is a moot point. In the play, she gives no spoken answer to him. Indeed, the only time she speaks in that particular scene is prior to Henry's arrival. But her social assurance has already been established by her confident banter with Lord Sands, and this is not the first time in the carefully crafted scene that she accepts a kiss. As in real life, "there was nobody" at the English court, as Eric Ives remarks, "with a tittle of the continental polish of Anne Boleyn" (Ives 1988: 57). Eighteenth-century readers like Stothard were similarly informed by Oliver Goldsmith that "The beauty of Anne surpassed whatever had hitherto appeared at this voluptuous court; and her education, which had been at Paris, tended to set off her personal charms ... while her wit and vivacity exceeded even her other allurements" (Goldsmith 1771: vol. 2, 353). The shimmering silk and the bows of her dress are lavish, and it is reported that Stothard, who had served a seven-year apprenticeship as a draughtsman of patterns for silk brocade and who delighted in shot silk (Bray 1851: 7 and 34; Coxhead 1906: 4-5), borrowed, for the now lost painting, the colouring of Rubens to enhance the beauty of Anne's dress (Pape and Burwick 1996: 367).

On the floor lie the discarded shepherd's crook and

mask relinquished by Henry, but, foregrounded as they are, they seem to have symbolic significance in the picture beyond their narrative justification, with our attention drawn to them by the child who eyes them so meaningfully. Are they on the ground because they have simply been dropped there, or is their "fall" (hinting at the successive falls of Buckingham, of Queen Katherine, of Wolsey, and eventually, though beyond the limits of the play, of Anne Boleyn), more metaphorical than that; and does the abandoned crook represent the abandonment of pastoral innocence? The disregarded child, a Cupid-like infant absorbed in a play-world of his own, may himself symbolize innocence not yet lost. He holds in his hand a rose (the flower associated with Venus) which he seems about to drop, like the rose that already lies on the floor by the handle of the crook. Are these further indications that the beautiful Anne Boleyn has now effectively been plucked, with the roses symbolising transient feminine beauty and feminine frailty? Certainly a process has begun that will lead to Queen Katherine's woeful rejection, and eventually to the execution of Anne herself and of those accused of adulterously and even treasonably enjoying her favours. But besides the intimation that a fall from innocence is involved, we may also observe that Henry has "fallen" in love. Prefigured also, though beyond the compass of the play, is the fall, as will be seen, of a young musician "trying to compete above his station", as Eric Ives has it (1988: 368), and fatally caught up in machinations that would ruthlessly destroy him. He too has fallen in love.

The foregrounded playful child has no precursor in either the dramatic scene being illustrated or in its historical sources, and there is absolutely no reason to think that Henry's pastoral masquing companions could have included shepherd lads of very tender years, or that the child is mature enough to serve as Anne's page, even supposing that Anne merited the services of a page. The child is Stothard's addition, and introduces an allegorical mode that can seem strangely out of place in a picture that purports to represent an imaginatively reconstructed historical event. To understand his presence it is necessary to refer to Veronese's allegory where a winged Cupid, the child's compositional precursor, ties the ribbon that symbolically unites Mars and Venus. Veronese's design moreover includes a pair of

cupids: this one, facing towards the viewer, and on the left of the picture; the other one, with his back to the viewer, and placed on the right, and becoming, in Stothard's adaptation of the design, Wolsey's pageboy, or possibly a rather diminutive gentleman usher. However, there is no textual warrant for either figure, and their presence in Stothard's picture is purely to fulfil the pattern established by Veronese.

To one side of the central couple are courtly revellers, with a bevy of fair ladies emphasising the glittering nature of this social occasion, though Stothard makes no attempt to depict Henry's entourage of male companions or individually to identify named male guests and functionaries. By courtly convention, it is the presence of the ladies that makes "this heaven of beauty" (line 59) the avowed destination of Henry and his companions. On the other side of the picture is a watchful Cardinal Wolsey, corpulent, worldly, and fleshly despite his ecclesiastical dress of scarlet cassock, mozzetta and biretta, and lace trimmed white rochet. Positioned like Mars's tethered horse in Veronese's picture, and accompanied by the Veronese-derived pageboy, he waits, monitoring the encounter, and is just about to propose withdrawing to the banquet in the privy chamber, where Henry will escort the new conquest. Stothard's Wolsey shows no sign of realising that the relationship he observes will imperil his own future, and in this respect is markedly different from Hogarth's scowling and gloomily introspective Wolsey-Walpole who evidently foresees that misfortunes must now engulf him. But while Stothard's pictured dramatis personae are ignorant of what the future holds in store for them, the viewers of the picture have the historically informed knowledge supplied by hindsight that makes possible dramatic irony. It is impossible to see Wolsey observing this fateful meeting without reflecting on how Wolsey's power and prosperity will decline as Anne's influence increases, his conflict with "A knight's daughter ... A spleeny Lutheran" (3.2.94-99) eventually precipitating his fall from favour. Thus the dance that brings Henry and Anne together also initiates a reversal of the cardinal's fortunes. Fletcher too introduces in the final exchanges of the scene ambiguities that look to the future. Wolsey's "Your grace, / I fear, with dancing is a little heated", an observation that prompts Henry's "I fear too much" (lines 99-101), says more than it speaks, its discreet

meiosis bordering on prescience; but drenched with dramatic irony is Henry's "Sweet partner, / I must not yet forsake you" (lines 103-4) addressed benignly enough to Anne. For although spoken as polite gallantry, an infatuation that will extend beyond the immediate occasion is also implied, and, reaching still further into the future, with macabre prolepsis the ominous words 'not yet' and 'forsake' chillingly foreshadow Henry's eventual abandonment of his one-time "Sweet partner".

In a minstrels' gallery above the revellers are performers who have provided dance music and fanfares. One of these musicians, a handsome young man, who distinctively looks down at Anne, seems to be Stothard's portrayal of the non-Shakespearean, non-Fletcherian but real life Mark Smeton (or Smeaton), like the king, encountering Anne for the first time perhaps, and similarly smitten by her.



Fig. 3. Musicians at York Place. Detail enlarged from Isaac Taylor's engraving.

Currently employed in the cardinal's household, he was later to become one of Anne's musicians, and to confess to Thomas Cromwell, probably under torture or through trickery, to having "known the Queen Carnally Three times". But although he publicly acknowledged guilt from the scaffold, "Masters, I pray you all pray for me for I have deserved death", there is more than one way of interpreting this expression of remorse, and, as Bishop Burnet pointed out in a scrupulous and influential account of Anne's prosecution and wrongful conviction, he was never made to

confront Anne with the outrageous confession that had instantly sealed his own fate (1689: 202). Eighteenth-century histories that were readily available to Stothard were heavily dependent on Burnet's work, David Hume, for instance, recording that

Smeton was prevailed on, by the vain hope of life, to confess a criminal correspondence with the Queen; but even her enemies expected little advantage from this confession: For they never dared to confront him with her; and he was immediately executed (1759: 1.206).

Tobias Smollett similarly notes that Smeton "was supposed to have been inveigled into this confession with a promise of pardon" and deduces that "Smeton, in all probability ... had bore false witness" (Smollett 1759: vol. 6, 37). What emerges is that Mark Smeton was the only one of the five men convicted of adultery with Anne who pleaded guilty, yet he seems to have been a devoted, possibly lovelorn admirer of the queen he served. On one occasion, though, he had presumed to take a step beyond what was fitting for a mere employee in a royal household. According to Anne, Mark "was never in her Chamber, but when the King was last at *Winchester*; and then he came in to play on the Virginals." After that, so she claimed, the only time she spoke to him was

on Saturday before *May* day, when she saw him standing in the Window, and then she asked him, why he was so sad; he said, it was no matter: she answered, you may not look to have me speak to you, as if you were a Nobleman, since you are an inferior person. No, no, Madam, said he, a Look sufficeth me (Burnet 1689: 199).

The incident is recounted by Goldsmith (1771: vol. 2, 380), by Hume (1759: 204), by Paul Rapin (1759: vol. 6, 418) and by others.

The identification of Smeton, if he it is, as one of the musicians in Stothard's picture appears to be confirmed by the close interest in the encounter between Anne and Henry that he is shown to take, and because, as the only background figure to be given full-face treatment, identification seems to be intended. His facial features reveal him, much as he is imagined in Hilary Mantel's novel *Wolf Hall*, as a "gapey-faced", "goggle-eyed lover" surreptitiously observing from his servants' vantage point the doings of courtly high society (2009: 345, 506, 598). Stothard draws extra attention to him by means of the light reflected

from the curve of the vault that springs behind his head, but the position that he occupies in the composition derived from Veronese also makes him an interesting successor to Veronese's background figure of a sculpted satyr, a satyr that like Stothard's musician looks down at the figures below, eying them with a statue's unremitting gaze. The chimerical, hybrid form of a satyr along with the statuesque combination of an animate bodily shape and inert stone material sculpted into that shape provide a suggestive parallel with Smeton's disparate combination of narrative importance and social inferiority. Eric Ives, describing him as *declassé*, sees Smeton as a man who "belonged nowhere" in the social hierarchy, neither one thing nor the other (Ives 1988: 367). Above the equally ambiguous figure of the sculpted satyr the leafy canopy of a tree presents a feature that Stothard will develop into the canopy of the chair of state that Wolsey surrenders to Henry (1.4. 77-84), and that here pointedly directs attention to Smeton. Somewhat at odds with authentic sixteenth-century musical practice, Stothard's Smeton is shown playing a horn, of which we glimpse only the mouthpiece and the crook – the tubing that connects the mouthpiece to the main body of the instrument. This constitutes perhaps the strongest evidence that the performer is indeed Mark Smeton, for the musically surprising choice of instrument seems to allude with intrusive dramatic irony to Mark's reckless cuckolding - cornuting - of Henry that would have occurred had Anne really been guilty of the charges brought against her, incredible charges which Henry deludedly chose to believe. Because the instrument is largely hidden from us, a clandestine affair or a future yet to be revealed or even an accusation of dubious veracity seems to be implied. The careful alignment of the concealed bell of the instrument directly above Henry's head adds a deliberate finesse that recalls similarly contrived cornutings in pictures such as Hogarth's "Evening" (*Four Times of the Day*) where the horns of a cow famously cornute Hogarth's cuckolded dyer by being exactly positioned above the wretched man's bared head (Shesgreen 1973: xxiii and plate 44). Such allusions could be made not only verbally and pictorially but also musically by means of the French horn (*cornò*), as they are in the orchestration of Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* (1786); threateningly as in Figaro's Act I cavatina *Se vuol ballare*, and tormentingly as at

the end of Figaro's final Act IV aria *Aprite un po' quegli occhi*. Similarly, in *Così fan tutte* (1790), the words *sempre ascoso* ("for ever hidden") in Fiordiligi's Act II aria *Per pietà* are supplied with a snidely revealing gloss by the orchestra's French horns⁴. The performer alongside Stothard's horn player is, as Anne is said to have been (Ives 1988: 37), a lutenist, his head obscured by the canopy of Wolsey's chair in a manner that may allude to Anne's fate of decapitation or to the report of Smeton's alleged torture by means of a knotted cord tightened around his eyes (Ives 1988:369).

Rather as the dramatist, with some slight stretching of the truth, had manipulated the historical record by inserting an imaginary and fateful first encounter of Henry and Anne into the established framework of an otherwise straightforwardly re-enacted York Place festivity, so, in turn, for the purpose of creating an engaging history painting that offers more to the viewer than servile illustration of a received text, Stothard has added his own distinctively new component. As textual illustration the inclusion of a group of musicians makes suitably visual the sound of festive music at York Place, but the identification of one of these musicians as Mark Smeton goes beyond that conventional objective, and enables Stothard to insert a subplot of his own devising, one that counterpoints Henry's experience with that of a minor, background figure, and that brings significant narrative enrichment to the picture. But because this is done without the least suggestion of any encouragement from the playtext, and because the addition is presented anyway as subsidiary graphic detail, its sharp relevance and its slyly transgressive dramatic irony are easily overlooked. And by being merely suggestive and unassertive it avoids provoking the wrath of Professor Dryasdust who regularly deplores such fanciful assaults upon either historical veracity or the integrity of a canonical text. But by the end of the eighteenth century the time was ripe for Mark Smeton to move from the shadows of historical marginality into greater prominence. Three decades later, given a contralto role in Donizetti's *Anna Bolena* (1830), he was to be memorably put on stage, his well-intentioned ineptitude making him pivotal to the plot of Felice Romani's tragic libretto.

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Notes

1 Alan Brissenden (2001: 104 and 135) suggests that a stately pavan followed by a nimble galliard, or else a lively coranto, or possibly an even more energetic volta would be appropriate.

2 A two-volume *Collection of Prints, from Pictures Painted for the Purpose of Illustrating the Dramatic Works of Shakespeare, by the Artists of Great-Britain*, was published by John and Josiah Boydell in 1803. This collection of 100 prints is reproduced in *The Boydell Shakespeare Prints*, with an introduction by A. E. Santaniello (1979). Fourteen essays, many illustrations, a *catalogue raisonné* of the prints and much other information is gathered in Walter Pape and Frederick Burwick's *The Boydell Shakespeare Gallery* (1997).

3 Hogarth's representation of Anne, Henry and Wolsey may be indebted to images of Henry II holding by the hand his mistress Fair Rosamond, and of the kind reproduced by Sheila O'Connell (1999: 20), but such woodcuts could just as easily be taken to depict Henry VIII as to depict Henry II.

4 To confirm the point, both graphically in the score and expressively in performance, the horn-like tips of a crescent-shaped *fermata* sign are then poised mid-word over the central syllable of *ascoso*.



Performance in French Court Festivals under François I^{er}

Richard Cooper

The term Court Festival embraces a wide range of entertainments, from public events such as royal entries, marriages, baptisms, funerals or tournaments, to more exclusive ones put on at banquets or other court ceremonies. Some were seasonal, associated with the liturgical calendar such as Epiphany or Carnival. Some stemmed from the initiative of the court itself, others were staged by the locality being visited and stamped with municipal tradition. Although essentially ephemeral, they were increasingly recorded in manuscript accounts, in published albums and in reports of memorialists and ambassadors, besides in the archives of the municipality or of the crown. Across the sixteenth century, these entertainments, whilst preserving elements of tradition, also became more elaborate and innovative, as courts and cities grasped the publicity and propaganda potential of spectacle. While there has been extensive research on the festivals of the later Valois (see Knecht 2004: 19-32) insufficient attention has been paid to those of the long reign of François I^{er} (1515-1547), apart from a study of the early years by Anne-Marie Lecoq (1987), and recent exhibitions in the Louvre. This is an important transitional period, when Italian influence increased on court etiquette, blending with chivalric tradition, and leading to the elaborate festivals of the king's son Henri II, whose entries to Lyon, Paris and Rouen of 1548-1550 were to set new standards in interdisciplinarity. This article seeks to bring out the theatrical elements of festival under François I^{er}, excluding tournaments or royal entries, on which more research has been done,

and which would require a separate study (see Guénée - Lehoux 1968; Chartrou 1928). These more private events reveal a wide and evolving range of entertainments staged for diplomatic occasions, for marriages and baptisms, and of course for seasons like Epiphany or Carnival.

One of the favourite pastimes of the Valois court was hunting (Bourciez 1886: 25-36), which was to figure in festival under Henri II in mythological guise with pastoral idylls involving Diana the huntress. But François I^{er} had wanted at the very outset of his reign to offer to his court the authentic spectacle of a hunter overcoming a wild beast, in which he rather than an actor was to be the protagonist. The court was celebrating the marriage of Antoine II, duke of Lorraine, and Renée de Bourbon at Amboise, where the king had set up an arena in which he intended to fight a young boar. Dissuaded from risking his life, he nonetheless wanted, as a diversion for the ladies, to let the beast loose in the courtyard from where, on 26 June 1515, it escaped into the château, terrifying the courtiers, until the king confronted and dispatched it single-handed with his sword (*Combat de François I^{er}* 1841: 281-85; Lecoq 1987: 207-10).

Following his victorious return from Marignan, François made a tour of his kingdom, including Normandy in the autumn of 1517, when his sister Marguerite, as duchess of Alençon, invited the court to her town of Argentan. Three diplomats record the entertainments she devised for the start of the three-week stay¹, the centrepiece of which was a programme starting with the king himself playing a rôle fighting four errant knights, and a scenario involving 12 paladins and 12 damsels dressed in Italian, German and Spanish fashion. Marguerite and Philiberte, duchess of Nemours, took part in



the performance by summoning help for two women imprisoned in the castle: the king on his way to rescue them to the sound of trumpets met a hermit who begged him to free the country from a ravaging lion, giving him a magic wand, with which François neutralised the beast by touching it three times. The lion opened up to reveal a blue interior, symbolising love, and a large *fleur-de-lys*. After a grand battle the following day, a banquet was held at which Montmorency presented the monarch with a golden heart, which he opened to reveal a figure of Cupid standing on a globe, fully armed on one side and ragged and pale on the other. The ladies present puzzled over it, “inanze al quale andavano molte dame che facevano diversi gesti a quel Cupidine, chi gioiosa e chi colma di dolore” (“before which there went many ladies making various gestures to that Cupid, some joyful some overcome with sadness”) (Turrione 1517: busta 634): the ambassador left it to his master to guess the meaning, but we can imagine it might involve the two-fold nature of love, conquest and suffering. The reports make it clear that all this was only the beginning of the various planned diversions: “e cusì finche sua M[ae]s[ta]tà sta qua glie sarà ogni giorno representate cose nove” (“and so, as long as His Majesty is here something new will be performed for him every day”), adding that “tutte sono inventione dela s[igno]ra Duchessa” (“everything has been invented by the Duchess”), Marguerite herself (Ariosto 1517: Modena, busta 5 and Mantua, busta 634).

In the following spring two happy events were celebrated in grand style in Amboise: the baptism of the dauphin François and the marriage in May 1518 of Lorenzo II de’ Medici to Madeleine de la Tour d’Auvergne, the future parents of Catherine de’ Medici. The Ferrarese ambassador reported that the master of the royal chapel, Jean Mouton, together with a singer called Comone, were composing new music, “cosa nova”, to be performed for the baptism (Sacрати 1518: busta 6). Inescapable military elements of court festival were jousting and sword-fighting, which remained current in France right up to the fatal accident of 1559, but of interest here are the ways in which imaginative variations could be introduced. This long festival in Amboise included a *pas d’armes* involving a two-day siege and storming of a fort made of wood and canvas, described in detail in a long dispatch of Stazio Gadio to the duke of

Mantua (1518: busta 634; see Sanuto 1518: cols 412-14). The theatrical dimension on the first day lies not only in the military architecture but in the challenges issued, the speeches, the mock hanging and throwing out of corpses of straw men, the king urging his knights to seek vengeance, and the artillery breaking down the defences. The siege resumed the following day, with the king changing sides and successfully defending the fort: “Et con honore d’il invictissimo et virtuoso Re sono finite li simulacra bellici” (“and thus the mock battles are over, to the glory of the virtuous invincible king”) (Gadio 1518, busta 634; see also Solmi 1914: 407). As a theatre for the celebrations, the king’s Italian counsellor, Galeazzo Visconti, who had moved to France with his family (Bamforth - Dupèbe 1994: 277-82), had introduced an Italian innovation: the creation of a banqueting hall constructed by Domenico da Cortona, over which blue material had been suspended from ships’ masts to keep out the weather, painted and studded with fleurs de lys and hung with tapestries (Sanuto 1518: col. 405). The baptism was celebrated in this arena after dark, “et neantmoins que ledit baptesme fust de nuyt, il y faisoit aussi cler que de jour pour le grant nombre de luminaires qui s’i trouva” (“and though the baptism took place by night, the large number of candelabras made it as bright as day”) (*Le baptesme* 1518: fol. 1r); and following the banquet there was dancing “in maschera cum habiti longhi sin in terra et di diverse sorte” (“in masks and a variety of full-length costumes”), the Ferrarese ambassador specifying that the dancing was “allo modo d’Italia” (“in the Italian style”) (Sacрати 1518: busta 6). This dancing style had been seen the previous January, when Visconti had been asked to put on a banquet and ball in Amboise under a similar blue awning held up by three tall masts and brightly illuminated, under which the king, dressed in German style, danced with the court ladies dressed in Italian, German or Spanish style, followed by a masquerade (Solmi 1914: 407). One critic was convinced that Leonardo da Vinci had had a hand in these celebrations in May, but there is insufficient supporting evidence (Solmi 1914: 407). There is greater likelihood, however, of a role for Leonardo later that summer when, on 18-19 June, he received the court at the Clos de Lucé, the château François had assigned to him. A letter of Galeazzo Visconti, dated 19 June 1518 (Sanuto, col. 510; see also Solmi 1914: 409-10),

the organiser of the Amboise festival and future impresario at the Bastille, described the event, which recreated some elements of Leonardo's *Festa del Paradiso*, put on in the Castello Sforzesco on 13 January 1490. As in Milan, blue material had been stretched over the courtyard of the château, and had been studded with golden stars, with the planets and with the 12 zodiacal signs and ivy festoons hanging down. By the light of 400 candelabra, "illuminati talemente che pareva fusse caziata la note" ("so brightly lit that the night seemed to have been driven away"), the king and courtiers feasted and danced the night away, with the ladies dressed in Spanish, German and Lombard style.

Important work has been done on the reception on 22 December 1518 of the English ambassadors in the Bastille to ratify the Treaty of London and to celebrate the betrothal of Mary Tudor and the dauphin (Lecoq, "Une Fête", 1987: 149-68; Bamforth - Dupèbe 1994: 256-315). Sufficient to note here that, following days of jousting in the rue St Antoine, Visconti had again been commissioned to construct a banqueting hall in the courtyard, covered in blue material as before, studded with stars and planets, the walls hung with tapestries and lit by 500 torches and 30 candelabras reflected in mirrors. Following the banquet there were Italianate musical interludes including pavaues, and displays by masked dancers in long robes, the women performing in Milanese costumes designed by Visconti's daughters, and joined by the leading nobility in masks, including the king himself in an outfit decorated with clocks and compasses. The concluding pavane involved 50 skilled masked dancers, who invited ladies from the court to join in, with forty or fifty couples taking part and the king himself having a prominent role. The reactions of observers are unanimous in their praise of the success and novelty of the evening with its Italian masquerade. The Carnival celebrations of 1520 had a quite different character, and a change of impresario. Louise de Savoie was keen to welcome back her son to his birthplace, Cognac, where she had extensively rebuilt and extended the château. On Carnival Sunday, she chose to stage a triumphal Carnival procession through the hunting grounds in honour of Queen Claude, whose litter was drawn past a series of mythological tableaux, starting with Mercury who acted as her guide

along the route, each scene ending in a military skirmish led by prominent French captains. After tableaux involving Diana and then Apollo, she was treated to the forge of Vulcan (cue for artillery and fireworks), then greeted by the trio of Saturn, Jupiter and Mars, accompanied by bands of warriors, one led by François I^{er} in person, who engaged in fierce combat. Arriving at the river Charente, she was met by boats full of singers and musicians, two boats in the form of Dolphins, two of Sirens and two of Swans, where they were rejoined by the earlier gods, who engaged in renewed skirmishing, before the queen, queen-mother and ladies were able to embark on a Venetian *bucintoro*, with all the various planets, sailing off to the sound of music and singing towards the château, where they arrived, despite an ambush by the gods of the underworld. A banquet followed with the guests all elegantly dressed in Italian fashion, who then donned masks and danced into the night (Cooper 2017: 336-50). The subsequent festivities in 1520 of the Field of the Cloth of Gold are well known, and need no rehearsal here, other than to note aspects which perpetuate recent French festivals: the construction of a vast banqueting hall, held up by a central mast and draped in blue with stars and planets; also of a pavilion 120-feet high, covered in cloth of gold, held up by two more masts; the importance of jousting, fireworks and artillery; the banquets, music, masques and balls (Russell 1969; Massie 2013: 55-79).

Twenty years later, the Italian influence on court festival had greatly increased, in part as a consequence of the arrival in France in May 1540 of Cardinal Ippolito d'Este to take possession of his new archdiocese of Lyon (Pacifi 1920: 62-65). Lyon was the most Italianate city in France, a fact reflected in its festivals, such as those put on for Carnival by Cardinal Niccolò Gaddi in 1541 and 1542. On *lunedì grasso* 1541, the Florentine community staged a performance of an Italian comedy in Gaddi's abbey of Ainay:

Les Florentins jouarent une commedie au Refectoire du Couvent d'Esney et firent un festin aux sieurs et dames de la Ville au souper et après soupper à heure de dix heures commençarent et finirent à une heure après minuict laquelle chose fust honorable et bien ordonnée avec bons joueurs et bonne matière. Et y estoit en personne M le Cardinal Gady florentin et abbé pour lors dudict couvent ensemble la plus grand par des seigneurs et dames de la Ville (Guéraud, Ed. Tricou 1929: 33).

[The Florentines performed a comedy in the Refectory of the Convent at Ainay, and put on a banquet at supertime for the lords and ladies of the town, beginning after supper at 10pm and finishing at 1am, and it was worthily staged and organised with good actors and parts. It was attended in person by the Florentine Cardinal Gaddi, abbot of the Convent at that time together with most of the lords and ladies of the town].

Though it is not known which comedy, the reference to “bons joueurs” suggests the actors were Italian. For the Carnival of 1542, the venue was changed to the archbishop’s palace (which was to be used again for the 1548 entry of Henri II), and another comedy performed in six parts²:

Les Florentins jouarent une comedie en langue tosquane dedans le cloystre de St Jehan à la grand sale où ils font la cour, laquelle salle estoit accoustrée tant magnifiquement et excellement qu’il estoit possible du plus, tant en peintures, tapisserie, antiques médailles, que flambeaux, le tout par l’ordonnance de M^e Benedict Florentin (*ibidem*: 34)³.

[The Florentines performed a comedy in Italian in the cloister of St Jean, in the great chamber where the court meets, which had been decorated with such splendour and magnificence as could not be bettered, whether with paintings, tapestries, ancient coins and torches, all to the design of the Master Benedict the Florentine].

This time the creators are known: the designer being the Florentine artist Benedetto Del Bene, who had worked with Maurice Scève on Ippolito’s entry to Lyon in 1540; and the playwright the Florentine exile, Palla di Lorenzo Strozzi, representative of the Strozzi family in Lyon. A letter from one of his relatives in Lyon, Simone di Ruberto Strozzi, gives news of the preparations:

Qui ci aspexiamo al carnovale, et si apresta una bella commedia composta per il nostro M. Palla, et per chi l’ha vista è tenuta molto bella, et il parato serà bellissimo⁴.

[We are awaiting Carnival here, for which a fine comedy is being prepared written by our own Maestro Palla, and those who have seen it consider it very fine, and the staging will be very beautiful].

The fact that this new Italian comedy was performed in Ippolito’s palace to the design of an Italian artist illustrates the growing Italianisation of festival in France, which was to gather pace in the 1540s with more elaborate Carnival celebrations and after-dinner masquerades.

A foretaste had been given at Epiphany in 1537 for

the wedding of the king’s daughter Madeleine to James V of Scotland, where a week of celebration had included “giostre, feste e maschere” (Feruffino 1537: busta 13; see Occhipinti, *Carteggio*, 2001: 14). At the wedding in the Louvre on 10 January 1539 of François I^{er} de Clèves, duke of Nevers, and Marguerite de Bourbon-Vendôme, a masked ball was put on at which the king appeared dressed as Mars, while his sons, the king of Navarre, the constable and cardinal of Lorraine figured as satyrs (Bendido 1539: busta 638; Chatenet 2002: 130; *ibidem* 2007: 225). A striking contrast was provided between new masques like this and the court’s attendance for Pentecost in Paris, also in 1539, at a passion play – Arnoul Gréban’s extensive *Mistere de la Passion*. The king and his children, together with the whole court, attended the first part of the cycle⁵, performed by the Confrérie de la Passion at their theatre in the Hôtel de Flandre, which had been specially decorated and hung with tapestries to receive the large royal contingent, even impressing the Ferrarese ambassador (Sacracati 1539: busta 15)⁶. This was one of the last public performances of mystery plays in Paris before their final banning in 1548. The king and court ladies also attended a performance by the Basoche in June 1540, which they reportedly enjoyed “per essergli molte buffonarie, e papa, cardinali, re, imperatori, dame e cacciatori” (“because there was so much clowning, with pope and cardinals and kings, emperors, ladies and hunters”) (Sacracati 1541: busta 16)⁷: the content suggests a farce or *sotie* by Gringore or Jean d’Abondance.

The evolution of court entertainment continued at Carnival in 1541. The Ferrarese envoy, Carlo Sacracati, described the masquerade in Fontainebleau (1541: busta 16)⁸, at which the dauphin appeared as Diana (in honour of his mistress), followed by four young men as Nymphs with hunting dogs; the duke of Orleans was in a group disguised as gypsies, three of them female whose headdress sprayed perfumed water; Ippolito d’Este and Henri de Navarre were arrayed in cloth of gold and silver with vases on their heads sprouting palm fronds and heartshaped mirrors on their chests; the king and his fellow-masker the cardinal de Lorraine (see Chatenet 2001: 21-31) were dressed as trunks of trees wreathed in ivy, probably designed by Primaticcio (Cordellier 2004: 121). A month later in Blois, the entertainment involved the maskers dressing in “turbanti alla turchesca”, but the

ambassador had no idea why they suddenly put on this Turkish masquerade (Sacratì 1541: busta 16; Occhipinti, *Carteggio*, 2001: 60).

A climax to the summer of 1541 was offered by the marriage of the duke of Clèves to the very young (and extremely reluctant) daughter of Henri and Marguerite de Navarre, Jeanne d'Albret⁹. The court was at Châtellerault, where a grand pavilion had been built in the château courtyard covered by the usual blue material, held up by a mast sixty feet high, with galleries all around for spectators and a stage for the musicians who played throughout, the whole brightly illuminated by chandeliers. Following the betrothal ceremony on 13 June, the court danced till late, and in the morning the nuptial mass and lunch served as prelude to balls and dinner, before a bizarre series of *mommeries* described in the *Cronique du Roy François*, each entry terminating with dancing which went on till midnight (Chatenet 2007: 224). The first group of four actors were dressed as street vendors carrying a basket and a night-lantern, crying out their wares, "obblis, obblis", a sort of wafer called *oublies*, which they then threw to the assembly (Da Thiene 1541: busta 16)¹⁰. The second group of mummers was dressed in black and white stripes and carried glass clocks on their heads with feathers and wings on their feet. The third group was dressed as rabbis in blue and violet silk, each one wearing a gold horned mitre and carrying sickles. The fourth group in silk with long gold fringes carried spear and shield wearing German-style headgear. The fifth company was disguised as ostriches with feathered wings and tail, each one holding a horseshoe in its beak, as seen in heraldry. The sixth group appeared as Franciscan friars, the seventh as Roman nobles in short tunics wearing swords, the eighth in long robes and tall hats with great tufts hanging before and behind, and the ninth and last dressed as Turks. The Mantuan ambassador gave complementary details, which make clear that prominent courtiers were participating in the *mommeries*, not just actors and dancers. Thus the dauphin and five companions, including the bridegroom Clèves, were dressed

come se depinge il tempo, ma de una bellissima maniera, con le barbe et capelli fatte di piume de struscio, bianche, et altre conciatore, molto belle, essa fu estimata la più bella (Gambara 1541: busta 639).

[to look like Time, but in a very fine way, with beards and hair made of white ostrich feathers and other very attractive disguises, and this was judged the best company].

They must have been in the second group. The duke of Orleans, with his five companions, "era vestito da proffeti molto bene" ("were very well dressed up as prophets"), perhaps in the group of rabbis; then "altri dui da struccio assai bene alla similitudine di tal bestia" ("two others well disguised to look like ostriches"), clearly in group five. Other courtiers took part in the first group of street vendors calling out "obbli, obbli". The envoy also confirmed that two were dressed as Franciscan friars, "d'il che la regina di Navarra era in molta colera per esser Sua Maestà protectrice di quella religione" ("which made the Queen of Navarre very angry, since Her Majesty is protectress of that order"). According to Gambara, the king and his fellow masker, Jean de Lorraine, completed the masquerade dressed in gold and each holding shield and thunderbolt, costumes which not all those present could interpret (1541: busta 639)¹¹, but the Ferrarese envoy does not associate this costume with the pair, writing that they entered just afterwards (Da Thiene 1541: busta 17)¹². The celebrations continued over the following days with jousts and mock battles in a plot modelled on "Tirante il Bianco, et altri cavalieri della tavola rittonda" ("Tirant lo Blanch, and other knights of the Round Table"), with a major role for the dauphin, "imitando Amadis de Gaula" ("imitating Amadis de Gaule") (Gambara 1541: busta 639), not forgetting a part for two hermits:

l'ung vestu d'une grand robbe de velours tanné, lequell portoit une longue barbe blanche, et l'autre estoit vestu de gris qui estoit à l'entrée dudict hermitaige et tenoit un asne sur lequel estoit un singe qui faisoit bonne mine (*Cronique*: 380).

[one of them dressed in a great robe of brown velvet sporting a long white beard, and the other in grey, standing at the entrance to the hermitage holding a donkey on which sat the striking sight of a monkey]

The court was back in Paris to celebrate the Carnival of 1542, in combination with the marriage of Claude de Clermont, baron de Dampierre, and Jeanne de Vivonne, for which there are two ambassadors' reports. The Mantuan envoy Gambara noted that though the young



courtiers had been able to indulge their love of chivalric sports, the king was frustrated to have so little time left before Lent for the costumes to be finished for the planned series of masquerades; this had not, however, prevented him from going around Paris with the cardinal, “con la cappa et una maschera al volto con la guarda dinanti” (“masked, wearing his cape and preceded by his guard”) (1542: busta 639). On the Saturday evening, there were so many entries of maskers that Gambara lost track: “se videro di molte belle, et riccamente vestite mascarate di tante, et si confuse sorte, ch’io non le saprei dire distintamente” (“there were many striking and richly dressed masquerades of so many and varied types that I couldn’t distinguish them”). His colleague from Ferrara had clearer notes: first came the dauphin and companions dressed as Hymen in costumes designed by Primaticcio, carrying wedding torches and draped in white veils representing the virginal hymen (Da Thiene 1542: busta 17)¹³, and accompanying the goddess Nature with Cupid holding two nuptial crowns. His brother Orleans and friends were arrayed as the Five Ages of the World, ranging from gold on their heads to lead at their feet and with wings to represent transience (Occhipinti, *Carteggio*, 2001: 70; Croizat-Glazer 2013: 1212). Another group followed dressed as Patience, before others, which Da Thiene found not worth describing, but which Gambara noted as wearing windmills on their heads, or dressed as dolphins, chickens, or seahorses, followed by others representing Winter or Summer, the sequence culminating in the entry of the king and Lorraine in red satin costumes of prawns or lobsters (*gambari*) designed by Primaticcio (Gambara 1542: busta 639)¹⁴. Da Thiene witnessed the “molte mascarate” on the Sunday, where the dauphin and friends appeared as “morescanti” – acrobatic dancers walking on their hands, with feet appearing to sprout from their heads and fake hands covering their feet (Da Thiene 1542: busta 17; Occhipinti, *Carteggio*, 2001: 70). His brother Orleans was resplendent as a triumphant Caesar, with breastplate and helmet embossed in figures modelled on Roman statuary (Occhipinti, “Un disegno”, 2001: 240-41), others coming in as messengers distributing letters, before the grand entry of the king and his cardinal colleague in outfits of bears (Occhipinti, *Carteggio*, 2001: 71; Croizat-Glazer 2013: 1228). On the Monday, there were many masques, also

designed by Primaticcio (Occhipinti, “Un disegno”, 2001: 239-48), some of which the envoy found meaningless and not worth the effort to describe, including the dauphin’s costume, which involved sprays of fruit and flowers from his head. That of his brother Orleans, however, who with his friends appeared astride dolphins six feet long, caught his attention, and was judged to augur future conquests by land and sea. Following an entry by seven courtiers dressed in senatorial togas, the king came in with Lorraine, each dressed as centaurs with mechanical rear legs, ridden by a female mannequin (Deianira?) gripping the centaur’s neck, the whole costume in the richest materials covered with jewels meriting detailed description (Occhipinti, *Carteggio*, 2001: 72), and again corresponding to a Primaticcio drawing (Occhipinti, “Un disegno”, 2001: 242-43)¹⁵. The remaining evening of Mardi Gras was marked by a group of courtiers dressed as Ceres, sprouting ears of corn and fruit, followed by the dauphin and six friends all dressed as Diana (again in honour of Diane de Poitiers), sitting on a classical car drawn by two dragons. Others came in on horseback dressed as fishsellers (*chasse-marée*), and finally Orleans and friends spinning thread and sitting on a large turtle emblematic of slow but steady progress, another Primaticcio creation (Da Thiene 1542: busta 17)¹⁶.

Despite the next day being Ash Wednesday, and therefore a time of abstinence, the king and cardinal of Lorraine persevered in masking, appearing dressed as two very large and convincing prawns or lobsters, whilst the dauphin and seven friends cross-dressed as French women (Occhipinti, *Carteggio*, 2001: 74). The Thursday also saw another performance; that of the battle on the bridge or Ponte d’Orazio, borrowed from the Venetian carnival (Ponte dei Pugni), which the Ferrarese envoy thought unsuccessful, and unnecessary to describe anyway, since his duke had seen it many times before. As often at Carnival, the celebrations could also include elements of disorder. Gambara records that the younger courtiers in 1542 indulged in carnivalesque mischief, picking a quarrel with the students of the University, who reciprocated by killing a pageboy of the dauphin, and risking public scandal (1542: busta 639). One Carnival saw the intervention of matachins, masked acrobatic dancers associated with Carnival and with the *commedia dell’arte* (Mcdowell 2012: 659-

70): in this case they borrowed ambassadors' costumes from the Venetian envoy and others (at the request of the Strozzi brothers, and on the understanding that the king was to take part), and having performed on muleback, returned the outfits in a ruined state, provoking a diplomatic incident (Gambara 1542: busta 639).

The baptism of the dauphin François at Carnival in 1544 was the occasion for yet more performances, to the extent that the Ferrarese envoy complained that this court was "più adatta alli piaceri et alle mascare e feste, che alle faccende, e fin qui non s'è ateso ad altro che a far gran ciera" ("more intent on pleasure, masquerades and celebration than on business, and till now they have paid attention to nothing except having a good time") (Calcagnini 1544: busta 19; Occhipinti, *Carteggio*, 2001: 89). These celebrations involved a relatively new element for France, though well known in Venice, the human pyramid of acrobats or Forze d'Ercole, which was put on after the dancing (Calcagnini 1544: busta 19; Occhipinti, *Carteggio*, 2001: 88), and had already been seen in Lyon at a banquet offered to the court in September 1541: during the meal "vene una moresca de tre nudi [...] e fecero le forze de Hercule et altri giochi" ("there entered three naked men dancing a *moresca* [...] and they did a human pyramid and other stunts"), much enjoyed by the king, who took part wearing a mask (Da Thiene 1541: busta 17; Occhipinti, *Carteggio*, 2001: 67-68). The newly completed château of Fontainebleau also had a lake, on which a sea-battle took place, with three galleys attacking a bastion (Cooper 2013: 23).

The final Carnival celebrated in style before the death of François Ist was in 1546 in Fontainebleau, where a new colouring was added to the iconography. Instead of the earlier Greco-Roman inspiration of masque costumes, drawn partly from classical statuary currently being copied for the palace, this Carnival marked a more exotic shift. Once again, the season coincided with a wedding, that of Mademoiselle d'Avrilly, which culminated in a ball "alla italiana al sono de trombone, piffari e corneto" ("in Italian style to the sound of trombones, pipes and cornet"), and an elaborate masquerade (Alvarotti 1546: busta 43; Occhipinti, *Carteggio*, 2001: 124-26). Six courtiers entered dressed as the victorious young David with sling, "mascarati in abito di Davit, con cazafrusto in mano e la testa di Golia attaccata

alla cintura" ("disguised as David, holding a sling and the head of Goliath hanging from his belt"), an outfit designed by Primaticcio¹⁷. The next entry was thematically linked and designed by the same artist, namely that of the dauphin and others dressed as either the giant Holofernes or Goliath (observers were unsure which), holding his own decapitated head (Occhipinti, *Carteggio*, 2001: 126). This theme of gigantism had been announced by the costume of the king, who had entered first with the cardinal de Lorraine, each arrayed in identical baffling outsize costumes, which the ambassador was at a loss to identify, reporting that some thought it represented a faun or satyr. It was in fact a polymastic sphinx, designed by Primaticcio (Coizat-Glazer 2013: 1208, 1209, 1214; Cordellier 2014: 132, n° 30), an outfit inspired partly by the sphinx statues in Rome which François was having copied for Fontainebleau, partly by images of Artemis of Ephesus with her many breasts, and partly by a growing passion for Ancient Egypt following the publication in 1543 of the first French translation of Horapollo (tr. Martin; Coizat-Glazer 2013: 1208-09). That summer saw yet more masques performed in Fontainebleau over a number of days in July to celebrate the birth of the dauphin's daughter, Elisabeth. At one the dauphin entered fully armed "alla macedonica" (like Alexander?), and Orazio Farnese cross-dressed as a Nymph (Alvarotti 1546: busta 23; Occhipinti, *Carteggio*, 2001: 145). Two days later, after much jousting and dancing "a passameggi alla italiana", several bands of maskers came in wearing outfits on a maritime theme of fish, or the dauphin and friends disguised as large clams in their stucco shell, or a more fantastic creation of a twoheaded sea creature covered in mirrors and painted fish supporting a large green empty cage: the envoy found this to smack "più del mostro che d'altro" ("more of the monstrous than anything else") (Alvarotti 1546: busta 23; Occhipinti, *Carteggio*, 2001: 148).

It is evident that performances in the last years of the king's life were becoming ever more obscure and recherché (McGowan 2011: 47). Whilst the king and cardinal's disguise in August 1546 was relatively intelligible – weather-beaten hermits covered in foliage, fruits and vegetables¹⁸, another in the parade of three masquerades on the same occasion of a "mascherata con tre statue in testa



che sostenevano una fontana la quale gettava acqua profumata” (“masking costume with three statues on the head supporting a fountain spraying perfumed water”), was less so (Alvarotti 1546: busta 44; Occhipinti, *Carteggio*, 2001: 153). The Mantuan envoy reported that such strenuous efforts at novelty and bizarrerie were leading to “tanta confusione che no si può discernere bene gli habiti loro et hormai si son tutti di tante man[i]ere che sono fastiditi per non sapper più trovar nuove inventioni di farsi” (“so much confusion that you can’t tell their costumes apart, so that by now they have so much variety as to be frustrated at not being able to think up new ideas”) (Gambara 1542: busta 639; Chatenet 2002: 224). This pursuit of the fantastical, in which the desire the amuse or astonish outweighed concern for intelligibility, contrasts with the contemporary plays being written by Marguerite de Navarre and performed by members of the court and of her entourage in the last dozen years of her brother’s life (Millet - Hasenohr 2002). Like the grand court festivals, her playlets corresponded to the liturgical calendar, Christmas, Epiphany, Mardi Gras, and they involved music, dance and even figures like shepherds and court ladies. But in the remarkable simplicity of their language and costume (horns, big ears), they belong to a very different world of performance at court.

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- 3 See also Saulnier, 1948: vol. II, 93.
- 4 AS Florence, Carte Stroziane, série III, CXLIII, fol. 4; and see Bryce 1991: 55-60.
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- 7 See Occhipinti 2001: 47-48; cfr. Bouhaïk-Gironès 2007.
- 8 See also Pacifici 1920: 66-67; Occhipinti, *Carteggio*, 2001: 57.
- 9 *Cronique du Roy François I^{er}*: 365-69; Ruble 1877: 113 sgg; Da Thiene 1541: busta 17; Occhipinti, *Carteggio*, 2001: 63-64.
- 10 See also Occhipinti, *Carteggio*, 2001: 64; *Cronique*: 371.
- 11 See also Châtenet, 2002: 224-25; Croizat-Glazer 2013: 1232.
- 12 See Occhipinti, *Carteggio*, 2001: 64.
- 13 See Id., 69-74; Croizat-Glazer 2013: 1212; McGowan 2011: 43-49.
- 14 Occhipinti, "Un disegno del Primaticcio", 2001: 239-48; Croizat-Glazer 2013: 1231.
- 15 See also Cordellier, *Primatice*, 2004: 128, n° 28; Croizat-Glazer 2013: 1212, 1231.
- 16 Cordellier, *Primatice*, 2004: 130-131, n° 29; Occhipinti, *Carteggio*, 2001: 73; Croizat-Glazer 2013: 1236.
- 17 Cordellier, *Primatice*, 2004: 131-32, n° 30; Id., *Masques, mascarades, mascarons*, 2014: n° 38.
- 18 Sandrini 1546: busta 640; Chatenet 2007: 225 and 231, n. 49; Croizat-Glazer 2013: 1229.

Notes

1 Zuan Badoer - Venetian Senate, 3 October 1517, in Sanuto, *Diarii*, 1879-1903, vol. 25: col. 32; Fra Anastasio

La “grande salle du bal” et son rôle dans la formation de la salle de théâtre rectangulaire à la française

Monique Chatenet

La brève existence de la “grande salle du bal” des résidences royales françaises de la Renaissance est tributaire de deux faits qu’il est nécessaire de rappeler au préalable. Le premier est qu’au XVI^e siècle, la cour de France, si fastueuse soit-elle devenue, est encore itinérante, en particulier durant les soixante premières années du siècle. François I^{er} séjourne moins d’un mois par an en moyenne dans ses châteaux favoris de Fontainebleau, de Saint-Germain et du Louvre. C’est sans doute la raison pour laquelle il attend 1539 pour entreprendre la construction, à Saint-Germain-en-Laye, d’un espace permanent exclusivement destiné à abriter ses fêtes. Le second fait est qu’avant 1560, les seules occasions requérant des pièces plus vastes que les salles ordinaires des châteaux royaux sont les festins des grandes cérémonies (couronnements, baptêmes ou mariages princiers, réception de souverains étrangers...), repas servis avec un cérémonial particulier, dit “à la royale” (Fig.1), accompagnés d’entremets, de mascarades, danses, bals et autres “triumphes”.

Salles médiévales, salles éphémères

Le théâtre ne se développe à la cour comme un divertissement autonome qu’à partir du règne d’Henri II¹, et encore est-il concurrencé par d’autres passe-temps, tels les tournois et le ballet de cour qui s’établit à la fin du siècle et au début du suivant comme le divertissement royal par excellence.

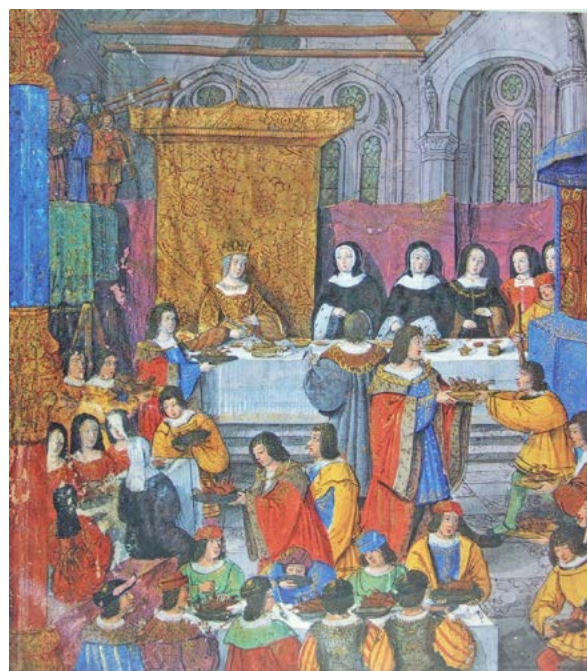


Fig. 1. Festin du couronnement d’Anne de Bretagne dans la Grande salle du Palais de Paris (Waddesdon Manor).

Avant la construction de la salle de bal de Saint-Germain, où François I^{er} abritait-il ses fêtes? De temps à autre, il avait la possibilité d’utiliser, au hasard de ses pérégrinations, une “grande salle” médiévale, somptueux espace qui pouvait atteindre 1000 m² comme au château de Montargis (Fig. 2).

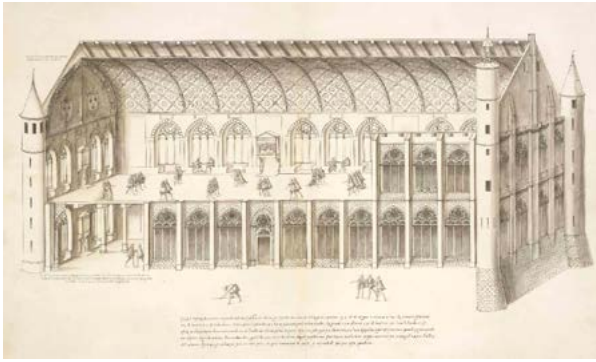


Fig. 2. Jacques Androuet du Cerceau, Grande salle du château de Montargis, (dessin, British Museum).

Mais si à Paris (Grandes salles du Palais (Fig. 1) et de l'hôtel de Bourbon) et à Blois (la salle dite des États), le roi disposait de pièces de ce type, tous ses châteaux n'en possédaient pas, tant s'en faut. Le roi était alors amené à faire élever une construction éphémère. La solution la moins coûteuse et la plus fréquente consistait à jeter un velum au-dessus d'une cour. Ce vieil usage est adopté au Clos-Lucé en janvier 1518 (voir Sammer [online edn] 2019: 240-251), au château d'Amboise printemps suivant², à La Bastille en décembre 1518 (Fig. 3), à Cognac en 1520 et à Châtelleraut en 1541³ pour ne citer que quelques exemples.

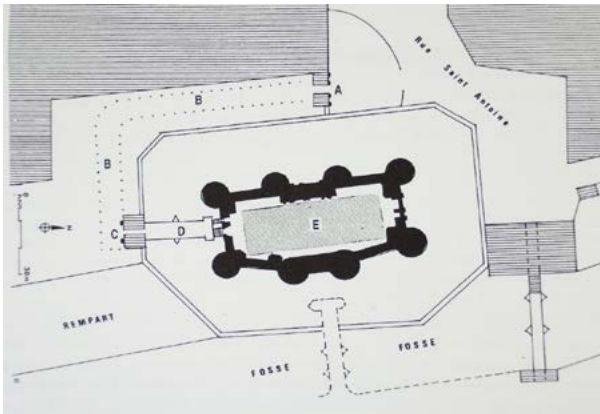


Fig. 3. Plan de la cour de La Bastille lors de la fête de 1518 (dessin de Jean Blécon).

Le roi pouvait aussi, formule plus coûteuse et plus exceptionnelle, construire une salle de charpente, comme ce fut le cas aux Tournelles en 1549 pour l'entrée d'Henri II à Paris⁴ et dix ans plus tard pour le mariage de sa fille Élisabeth⁵, ou encore en 1573 dans le jardin des Tuileries à l'occasion de l'élection d'Henri de Valois au trône de Pologne (voir Chatenet 2002: 233; Strong 1991: 211-14) (Fig. 4).

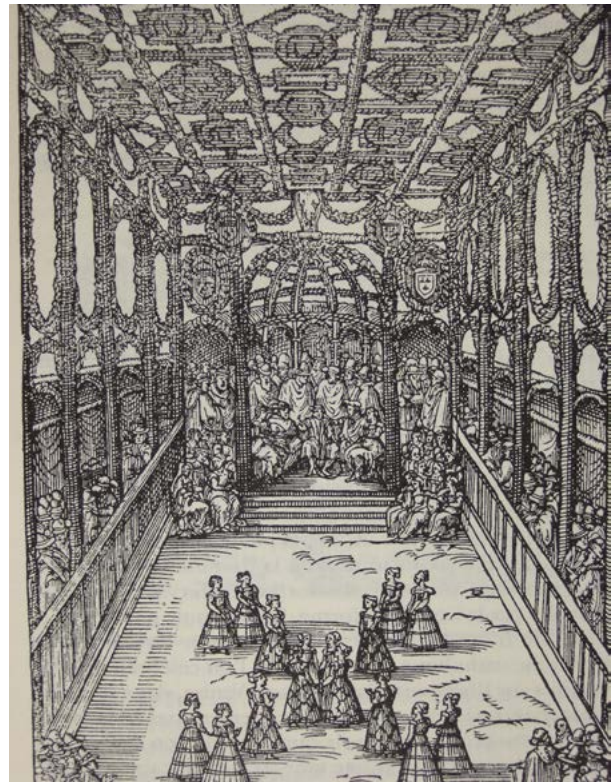


Fig. 4. Ballet des provinces de France donné dans le jardin des Tuileries en 1573.

L'utilisation des grandes salles médiévales et des salles éphémères perdure d'ailleurs tout au long du XVI^e siècle en concurrence avec les salles nouvellement construites. Ainsi, pour les fêtes des noces du duc de Joyeuse en septembre-octobre 1581, on utilisa à la fois la grande salle de bal du Louvre créée par Henri II (Fig. 5), la grande salle médiévale de l'hôtel de Bourbon située juste en face (Fig. 6), les cours des hôtels de Guise et de Lorraine et le cloître de l'abbaye Saint-Germain-des-Prés couverts de velums pour l'occasion (Chatenet - Capodiceci 2006: 9-54).

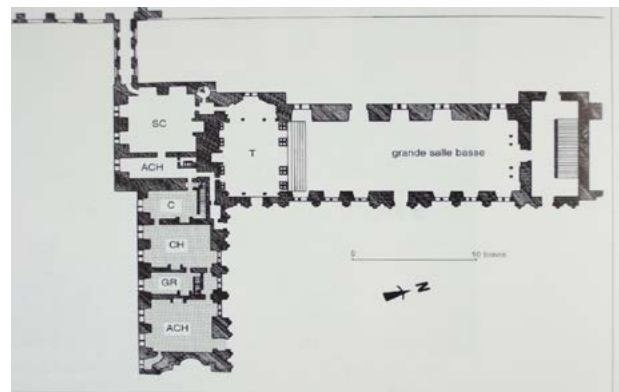


Fig. 5. Plan de la Grande salle basse du Louvre, gravure de Jacques Androuet du Cerceau.

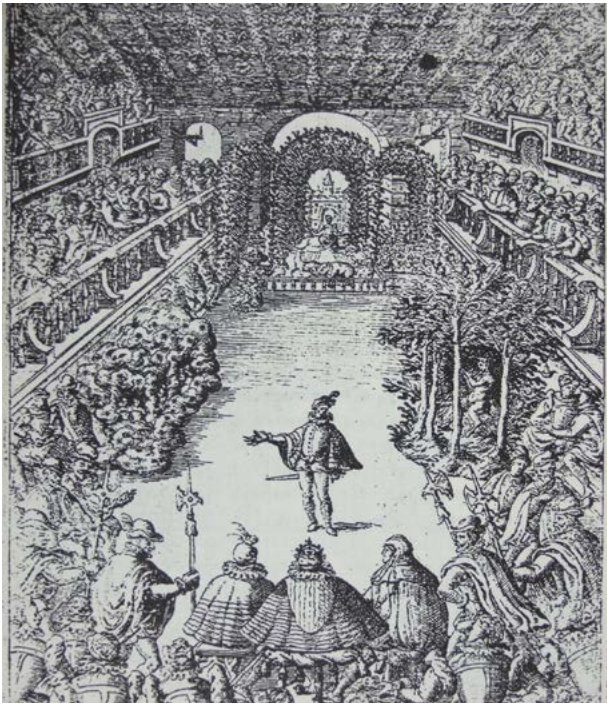


Fig. 6. La grande salle de Bourbon lors de la représentation du *Ballet comique de la reine*.

Henri III avait aussi fait élever un amphithéâtre de bois dans le jardin du Louvre destiné à des ballets équestres, et l'on aurait utilisé la magnifique salle de charpente ovale que Catherine de Médicis avait entrepris d'édifier dans le jardin de son hôtel parisien, si elle avait été achevée à temps (*ibidem*:14).

Breve existence de la "grande salle du bal"

C'est donc seulement en 1539 à Saint-Germain (Fig. 7) que vient apparemment l'idée d'établir dans les châteaux royaux n'en possédant pas une grande salle pérenne destinée aux fêtes qui prend désormais dans tous les textes le nom de "salle du bal" ou de "grande salle du bal".

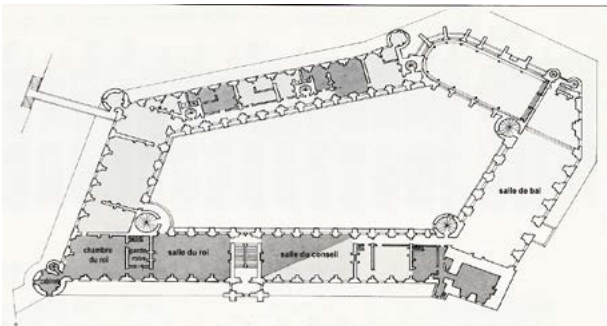


Fig. 7. Plan de la grande salle de bal du château de Saint-Germain-en-Laye, dessin de Jean Blécon, Centre André Chastel.

Le terme est défini en 1567 par Philibert Delorme dans son traité d'architecture. L'auteur, qui "sait du grec"⁶ (ou en tout cas le prétend) explique que la pièce communément appelée "salle de bal", mais que lui-même nomme "basilique" parce qu'elle est "royale", est destinée à "un roy ou un prince" pour "faire triomphes ou grands festins"⁷.

Même définition en 1624, par Louis Savot qui distingue lui aussi les salles de bal "qui ne sont propres qu'au logis des grands seigneurs, destinées seulement à faire noces, grands festins, bals, balets et autres grandes assemblées" ("which are only appropriate for the dwellings of great lords, and destined only for weddings, elaborate banquets, balls, ballets and other important gatherings") des salles ordinaires qui "conviennent aux personnes inférieures en qualité et sont propres à recevoir les survenants ou y manger avec ses amis" (Savot 1624: 76).

Sauf erreur de ma part, les premières mentions d'une "salle du bal" permanente concernent les trois principales résidences de François I^{er} et Henri II: Saint-Germain-en-Laye (conçue en 1539 et dont les voûtes sont lancées à partir de 1544, voir Fig. 7), Fontainebleau (v. 1548-1550, Fig. 8) et, au rez-de-chaussée de l'aile neuve du Louvre la pièce alternativement appelée "grande salle basse", et "grande salle du bal" (à partir de 1549, voir Fig. 5).

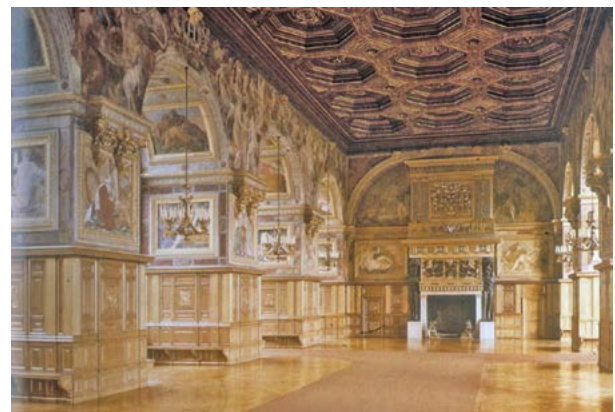


Fig. 8. La grande salle de Bal de Fontainebleau, (author's photo).

A ces œuvres majeures où se croisent les noms de Pierre Chambiges, Philibert Delorme, Primatice, Pierre Lescot et Jean Goujon, succèdent les projets encore plus grandioses — mais restés dans les cartons de Jacques Androuet du Cerceau — élaborés pour Catherine de Médicis et Charles IX à Chenonceau, aux Tuileries et à Charleval.



Enfin, à Fontainebleau encore, la reine et son fils commencent à aménager en 1570 dans l'aile de la Belle Cheminée une "grande salle neuve" plus vaste que la "salle de bal" d'Henri II, qui devait être achevée par Henri IV (Boudon - Blécon 1998: 73). La vogue de la "salle de bal" gagne les princes et les grands de la cour. Après Claude de Guise qui, dès 1540, avait construit dans son Grand Jardin de Joinville une "grande salle" qui, en réalité, répond plutôt à la typologie de la *Lusthaus* germanique (Musso 1993), Diane de Poitiers commande en 1555 à Philibert Delorme une "grande salle du bal" pour son château de Limours couverte d'une charpente à petit bois⁸. Elle est suivie en 1557 par Anne de Montmorency dans son hôtel parisien⁹ et en 1576, par Jacques de Savoie, duc de Nemours, dans son château de Verneuil-en-Halatte (voir Coope, 1962 n°1: 291-318). Enfin, en l'absence de textes, mais en raison de leur grande parenté formelle avec les précédentes, on ajoutera à cette liste la "salle devant les baigneries" (Delorme 1578: chap. XX) d'Anet pour Diane de Poitiers, couverte d'une charpente à petit bois, et la salle du Petit Château de Chantilly (1557-1560)¹⁰, sans doute elle aussi sous charpente, pour Anne de Montmorency.

L'histoire de la "salle de bal" perdure sous les Bourbons, mais pas très longtemps. Avant 1607, Marie de Médicis fait ajouter, sans doute par Jacques II Androuet du Cerceau, une salle de bal au château de Montceaux¹¹ et la reine mère est encore responsable de celle que Jacques Lemercier projette d'élever pour elle vers 1630 dans la basse-cour du palais du Luxembourg (Gady 2003: 247; Galletti 2012: 133-140)¹², projet abandonné remplacé par une salle de bal plus modeste établie en 1642 à l'étage de l'ancienne volière de la reine (Gady 2003: 247). Symptomatiquement, la dernière salle de bal que j'ai pu identifier – celle dessinée par François Mansart pour Gaston d'Orléans à Blois – appartiendrait, si l'on suit Claude Mignot, à "l'architecture de papier" ("architecture drawn on paper") et n'était pas destinée à être réalisée (Babelon - Mignot 1998: 170-73; Mignot 2016).

L'héritage médiéval

Composante essentielle de la demeure souveraine, la "grande salle" médiévale, directement liée à

l'expression du pouvoir royal, ducal, comtal, ou seulement seigneurial, était avant tout un lieu de festins, rôle que la grande salle du palais de Paris devait d'ailleurs conserver épisodiquement tout au long du XVI^e siècle en dépit de son affectation judiciaire : c'est là que se déroulaient les festins des sacres des reines, des entrées royales, des entrevues de souverains, et des mariages des enfants de France – ainsi que les divertissements et danses qui accompagnaient ou suivaient le repas. La salle de bal apparaît donc à bien des égards comme l'héritière de la grande salle médiévale dans ses fonctions de représentation et de divertissement. Formellement aussi, l'héritage médiéval est bien visible. Précisons les points communs entre ces deux espaces.

Les dimensions tout d'abord : pour les salles royales, entre 350 et 750 m² pour les modernes, entre 400 et 900 pour les anciennes avec quelques exceptions : 170 m² seulement pour la grande salle de Charles VIII à Amboise, 1000 m² pour celles de Montargis (voir Fig. 2) et de l'hôtel de Bourbon (voir Fig. 6), 1600 m² au palais de Paris. Les salles seigneuriales sont naturellement plus petites (200 à 380 m²)

La grande hauteur de la pièce, parfois directement couverte par une charpente (voir Fig. 2), ou en tout cas, s'élevant sur la hauteur de deux étages. Cette question de la hauteur est essentielle en raison des problèmes d'acoustique que pose nécessairement une pièce trop basse de plafond, sans parler du problème de l'éclairage de nuit et de l'évacuation des fumées. Fait exception la salle de bal du Louvre qui s'inscrit dans la hauteur du rez-de-chaussée, de même que la salle du roi qui la surmonte au premier étage. Toutefois la hauteur des pièces du Louvre – 8 mètres sous plafond – est tout à fait exceptionnelle. Quant à l'usage de ces deux salles qui pouvaient servir conjointement lors des fêtes (l'une pour le festin, l'autre pour la danse), il avait été établi dans le bâtiment médiéval du Louvre où festin et danse se tenaient déjà dans des lieux séparés (Chatenet 2002: 242).

L'éclairage très abondant : les salles de Saint-Germain et de Fontainebleau sont, comme celle de Montargis, de véritables chasses de verre éclairées sur les deux longs côtés par d'immenses baies.

Dans leur très vaste espace, deux éléments architecturaux prennent une valeur particulière : la porte d'entrée et la cheminée. Comme l'écrit Philibert Delorme: "la porte d'une grande salle de

bal pour un Roy ou un Prince (...) doit être plus large et plus haute (...) pour autant que quand il faut faire quelques triomphes ou grands festins aux salles royales, il y entre quelquefois plusieurs sortes de masques à cheval ou autrement” (“the door of this great ballroom for a king or prince must be longer and higher ... so that when one is obliged to have some triumphs or great banquets in Royal halls, there enters – sometimes – several kinds of mounted masks and others”). Toutes ne répondent pas cependant à cet impératif, en particulier celle de Fontainebleau qui présente un seul vantail. La cheminée du “haut bout” de la salle est, elle aussi, un ornement essentiel car, occupant le fond de la pièce, elle constitue face aux spectateurs une image ostensible de la magnificence des princes qui s’y tiennent.

La pièce comprend aussi plusieurs estrades ou tribunes. La principale est souvent maçonnée et fixée à demeure: c’est “haut dais” ou “tribunal”, situé au haut bout, devant la cheminée, et sur lequel est dressée la table royale. On le trouve notamment au palais de Paris, placé sous la célèbre “table de marbre”, au palais de Poitiers, à Saint-Germain, au Louvre (Fig. 9A) et dans les grandioses projets de la reine mère pour les Tuileries et Charleval, alors que la salle de bal de Fontainebleau disposait seulement d’une estrade de bois.



Fig. 9 A. La grande salle du Louvre, dessin de Jacques Androuet du Cerceau: Le tribunal.

De même peut être maçonnée, comme à Poitiers, à Saint-Germain, à Fontainebleau ou au Louvre (Fig. 9B) une tribune plus petite et plus élevée (située parfois à l’opposé du tribunal, parfois du même côté), destinée aux musiciens.



Fig. 9B. La grande salle du Louvre, dessin de Jacques Androuet du Cerceau: La tribune des musiciens.

Cette tribune pouvait aussi être dressée pour l’occasion, comme c’était le cas au palais de Paris, de même qu’était dressé de manière éphémère le grand buffet d’orfèvrerie inséparable des festins (voir Fig.1).

D’autres estrades encore, fabriquées pour la circonstance par les charpentiers du roi, occupaient souvent les longs côtés de la salle, là où étaient dressées les tables des dames et grands personnages de la cour. Parfois ces estrades latérales étaient complétées par des tribunes de charpente. Ainsi, les salles éphémères élevées en 1507 à Milan (Auton 1889-1895: IV, 307-13; Godefroy 1649: I, 726), en 1518 à La Bastille (Lecoq 1987: 149-68) et en 1559 aux Tournelles (Grodecki 2000: 31-32), comportaient des tribunes sur les côtés, destinées “aux dames” ou “aux seigneurs” qui assistaient à la fête sans y participer directement. Car si le centre de la pièce était théoriquement laissé libre pour le service des tables et les divertissements, danses et mascarades, les “lices” ou “barrières” de protection que l’on disposait à cette fin étaient régulièrement renversées par les foules. Ainsi à Paris en 1389 la “presse” empêcha la progression des chars de triomphe prévus pour fêter Isabeau de Bavière (Froissart, *Chroniques*, ed. Buchon 1835: III, 365), et l’une des tables latérales où étaient assises les dames fut renversée. A Milan en 1507 et à Fontainebleau en 1546 (Chatenet 2002: 140)¹³, le roi en personne, armé d’une hallebarde, dut prêter main forte à son service d’ordre.

A partir du règne d’Henri II, les spectateurs sont définitivement rejetés du parterre de la salle, lieu désormais dévolu à des spectacles très élaborés, comme on le voit sur une gravure représentant la salle éphémère érigée en août 1573 dans le jardin

des Tuileries pour la réception des ambassadeurs de Pologne (Fig. 4).

Salle à l'Antique

La tradition médiévale, on le voit, influence considérablement la forme de la salle de bal. Néanmoins le principe de la *Renovatio antiquitatis* se devait d'être appliqué à l'espace d'apparat par excellence du château. C'est ainsi que dans la grande salle basse du Louvre (Figs 9 A-B), Pierre Lescot a multiplié les références à la Rome impériale. Je ne m'étendrais pas sur le décor de cette pièce somptueuse à laquelle ont été consacrées de si belles pages (Pauwels 1996: 9-15; Guillaume 2016: 151-62); je voudrais seulement insister sur l'utilisation de la lumière qui mettait l'accent de manière très spectaculaire sur la famille royale placée sur le tribunal grâce aux grandes fenêtres dissimulées derrière l'arc de triomphe à l'Antique qui formait une sorte de front de scène. A Fontainebleau (Fig. 8), Philibert Delorme s'est, quant à lui, inspiré de l'Italie contemporaine et de ses somptueux plafonds à caissons, en dépit des copies en bronze des satyres Della Valle¹⁴ ornant la cheminée.

Il est difficile de juger dans le détail des projets de Catherine de Médicis dont on ne connaît que les plans, ou les constructions éphémères qu'on ne connaît en général que par les textes. En tout cas, celle dessinée par Jacques Androuet du Cerceau pour les Tuileries devait être particulièrement grandiose si l'on en juge par le nombre des colonnes et des degrés du Tribunal (Fig. 10).

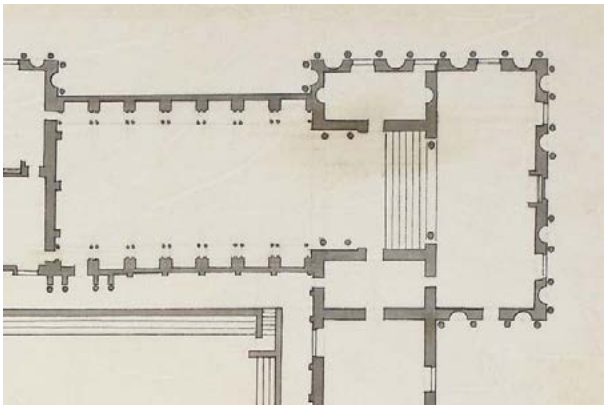


Fig. 10. Projet pour les Tuileries, dessin de Jacques Androuet du Cerceau, détail: plan de la Grande salle de bal.



Naissance de la salle de spectacle

L'aménagement de la grande salle de Bourbon, connu par deux gravures, est d'une tout autre nature (Fig. 6). La salle avait été construite à la fin du XIV^e siècle par Louis II de Bourbon, mais elle fut réaménagée dans la seconde moitié du XVI^e, sans doute en 1581 pour les noces du duc de Joyeuse, ou peut-être un peu auparavant puisqu'elle servit dès 1553 pour les noces d'Orazio Farnese et de Diane de France (Lettre de l'ambassadeur de Ferrare du 15 février 1553, publ. par Occhipinti 2001: 285-86), et en 1572 pour celles de Marguerite de Valois et du futur Henri IV (Chatenet - Capodiecchi 2006: 15-18). La disposition des tribunes latérales appartient à cet aménagement. Certes, on l'a vu, les tribunes latérales trouvent des précédents dans plusieurs salles éphémères. Il en est de même du tribunal en hémicycle, pour lequel on peut citer au moins deux précédents : en juin 1549 (*Histoire générale de Paris* 1886: III, 180-81) lors de l'entrée d'Henri II à Paris, à l'occasion d'un dîner offert à Catherine de Médicis par le corps de ville dans la salle du palais épiscopal, et en 1573, aux Tuileries si l'on en croit la gravure qui la représente (Fig.4). Néanmoins le fait que ces dispositions soient devenues pérennes est en soi très significatif. Les gradins et balcons ne laissent plus de place pour installer les tables des festins (les festins ont lieu au Louvre), et l'objet n'est plus tant de se préserver des foules que d'avoir vue sur les combats, triomphes ou ballets se déroulant au parterre. La salle de bal est en train de se transformer en véritable salle de spectacle - en salle capable d'abriter toute sortes de spectacles, accessoirement le théâtre, mais avant tout les grands divertissements de la cour, avec leurs chars de triomphe, leurs combats factices, chants et danses.

Il est intéressant de noter aussi que sous l'effet de ces spectacles, non seulement les tribunes des spectateurs s'organisent plus efficacement, mais qu'aussi le rôle du tribunal commence à évoluer. La famille royale s'y tient toujours, mais, s'il garde tout son rôle dans les cérémonies comme le montrent les gravures de 1581 et 1614, lors de la représentation du *Ballet comique de la reine*, le « haut dais » n'est plus le seul point à attirer les regards. Au bas bout de la salle — du côté de l'entrée — entre les deux grandes portes qui donnent accès aux chars, se dresse l'un des trois éléments principaux du décor : l'antre de Circé.

Il se crée donc une sorte de compétition visuelle entre la famille royale et le spectacle — qui doit-on regarder ? — comme le montre à l'évidence la manière dont le roi, la reine mère et Joyeuse sont représentés de dos au premier plan sur la gravure accompagnant le livret de Balthasar de Beaujoyeux en 1581 (Beaujoyeux, *Balet comique*, ed. McGowan 1982), voir Fig. 6.

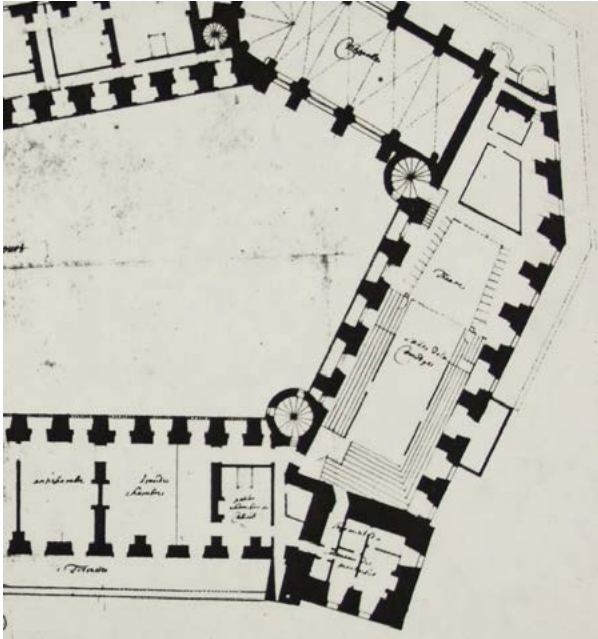


Fig. 11. Saint-Germain en Laye. Transformation du la grande salle de bal au XVIIe siècle, plan, BNF.

Ce n'était pas tout à fait la première fois que se produisait ce type de compétition entre le décor scénique et la famille royale. En 1570, à l'occasion du récent mariage de Charles IX et d'Elisabeth d'Autriche, un combat se tint dans la grande salle du château de Villers-Cotterêts et un témoin, Henri de La Tour d'Auvergne¹⁵, raconte que "l'on fit un fort beau combat à la barrière dans la grande salle, où, sur le haut dais" ("there was a very good tilting at the Barriers in the Great Hall, where on an elevated dais") se dressait un fort où le roi s'était retranché avec huit compagnons. Ainsi, le haut dais, autrement dit le tribunal, portait désormais le décor du spectacle. Malheureusement le narrateur ne nous dit pas où se tenait la reine. Deux ans plus tard, en août 1572, un combat analogue se tient dans la salle de Bourbon à l'occasion des noces d'Henri de Navarre et Marguerite de Valois. Les récits de Simon Goulard et Luc Geizkofler¹⁶ sont moins clairs, mais il semble qu'une extrémité (appelée "un bout" par Goulard et "la partie supérieure de la

salle" par Geizkofler) et donc peut-être le tribunal, portait une partie du décor représentant le Paradis et les Champs-Élysées.

La nécessité de trouver un espace scénique doté d'un décor tout en conservant un *lieu d'exposition* si l'on peut dire, pour la famille royale, jointe à bien d'autres préoccupations, allait définitivement modifier les anciennes grandes salles de bal au XVIIe siècle, à la manière de celle de Saint-Germain, transformée par Louis XIII (Fig. 11).

Symptomatiquement, au moment où, sur la rive gauche de la Seine, s'élève au Luxembourg la dernière salle de bal, le tout puissant cardinal-ministre construit dans son palais de la rive droite la première salle de théâtre parisienne.

Annexe

Représentation du Mystère de la Passion dans une salle éphémère À Paris en juin 1539

Lettre de Fabrizio Bobba au duc de Mantoue.
A. S. di Mantova, A. G. 638. Paris, 13 juin 1539
(orig. autogr., extrait).

(...) Qui se giocano quelli giochi per venir a rappresentare la Passione. Hanno incominciato alla creatione di Adam et Eva per dimostrare la progenie de David. L'apparato he bellissimo. He in forma d'amphiteatro, tanto grande che comodamente he capace de 25^M persone, coperto di padiglione. Gli è figurato il Paradiso in bella forma et artificiosa, et a l'altra parte a l'opposito gli è l'Inferno, molto ben fabulato. Dove si fanno le rappresentationi nel meggio he un gran sito et ben composto, cum il Tempio et altri ornamenti di case et misterii molto ben appropriati, che certo he cosa degna da esser vista. Li personagii si rappresentano cum bonissima gratia, ben vestiti secondo che comporta il subiecto, ma li acti et le parolle non correspondeno. Recitano cum malissima gratia, et non shanno dir parolla che non gli sii imbocata per uno il quale gli va drieto, mo' a l'uno mo' a l'altro, cum il libbro in mano, dandogli la lectione, et he il piú bel vedere del mondo, che questo dal libbro corre hor qui hor là secondo che hanno a parlare li personagii. Gli è un misterio da non esser tacciuto, che mai si vedde altro che andare fiaschi in volta, dico nel medemo tempo che fanno la soa presentatione, di modo che 'l Dio Padre, li profetti, li angeli, li diavoli, sacerdoti, pontifici et ogniuno mai fanno altro che bere. Pensai morir della risa

vedendo il Dio Padre pigliar suo vino. Soa M^{ta} gli è stata tre volte, et le doe gli ha cenato cum le dame, essendo loco molto delevole, et doppo la cena pigliatosi piacere di andare a spasso per quelli locci, chi in Paradiso, chi per li Campi elisii, chi nel Tempio, chi ne l'Inferno, chi per le stanze de l'amphiteatro simili ad un labirinto, di modo che he reuscito molto satisfatorio a Soa M^{ta} et a tuti questi signori et signore (...)

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Notes

1 Après une représentation de *La Calandra* donnée à l'initiative d'Hippolyte d'Este lors de l'entrée d'Henri II à Lyon en 1548, une lettre de Stefano Guazzo du 9 mars 1555 (AS Mantova, AG 647) signale des lectures de *I Lucidi* d'Agnolo Firenzuola et de *Flora* de Luigi Alamanni devant toute la cour réunie à Fontainebleau.

2 A l'occasion du baptême du dauphin et du mariage Laurent de Médicis avec Madeleine de la Tour d'Auvergne (Chatenet 2002: 231-46; Lecoq 1994: 83-95). Pour le baptême du dauphin François le 25 avril 1518 et le mariage du duc d'Urbino le 2 mai suivant, voir aussi Solmi 1904: 398 sq.. Noter que la "grande salle" d'Amboise construite par Charles VIII, était trop petite (environ 170 m²) pour se prêter aux plus grandes cérémonies.

3 La Bastille: Lecoq 1987: 149-168; Fête de Cognac: AS Mantova, AG 1897, 24 février 1520; la fête eut lieu "sotto un aparato e coperto de una corte assai grandetta [dove] se cenette e ballette" ("beneath a covered stage in a fairly large courtyard were music and dancing"). Fête de Châtellerault: *Cronique*, Guiffrey, 1860: 367-68.

4 Pour la salle de 1549: Roy 1929-1934: 190-91; Grodecki 2000:31.

5 Salles de 1559: Grodecki 2000: 32.

6 Molière, *Les Femmes savantes*, III, 3 (v. 941-45).

7 Delorme 1567, Liv. VIII, chap. V: "Cecy est bien convenable pour la porte d'un Temple ou Basilique (j'entends d'une grande salle Royale, que nous appellons Salle de bal)" ("This is well suited for a Temple or Basilica (I mean a large Royal Hall which we call a Ballroom)").

8 Grodecki 2000: 28 - L: 14 t.; l: 5 t. 1 p. (27,42 m. x 10,12 m. = 277,53 m²).

9 Archives nationales, Minutier central, VIII, 82. 1557 (n. st.), 5 avril, Paris. Devis et marché de maçonnerie pour l'hôtel de Montmorency, fol. 739: "une salle du bal et estuves dessoubz, dont ladicte salle sera de douze toises quatre piedz de long dedans œuvre et vingt huit piedz de large aussi dedans œuvre ainsi et en la manière qui s'en suit" ("A ballroom with baths beneath, which hall will be twelve toises and four feet long within the structure and also within, eight feet wide there, and in the following manner [toise = 6 feet]") (24,81m. x 9,142 m. = 226 m²). Je remercie Ronan Bouttier de m'avoir fait connaître ce document.

10 Pour Chantilly, voir Chatenet 2008: n° 1, 8-10.

11 Châtelet-Lange 1992: 442-48, propose la date de 1608, date récusée avec de forts arguments par Etienne Faisant



que je remercie vivement pour ce renseignement oral.

12 Parmi les projets non réalisés, on peut déceler peut-être une salle de bal dans l'immense pièce formant l'aile droite de l'avant-cour du plan d'agrandissement du château Grosbois étudié par Liliane Châtelet-Lange, "Deux architectures théâtrales: le château de Grosbois et la cour des offices à Fontainebleau", *Bulletin monumental*, 1982: 15-39, fig. 16. Voir aussi Marie-Charlotte Borkott, *Le château de Grosbois aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles. Un état de la question*, Mémoire de maîtrise à l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne sous la direction de Claude Mignot, octobre 2002.

13 Archives Nationales, 21 Mi 90 (Archives de Simancas), Lettre de l'ambassadeur Saint-Mauris à Charles Quint, 16 juillet 1546, à l'occasion du baptême d'Isabelle/Elisabeth de France.

14 Aujourd'hui au musée du Capitole, dont les moulages avaient été effectués sous la direction de Primatice.

15 'Mémoires de Henri de La Tour d'Auvergne, vicomte de Turenne, depuis duc de Bouillon, adressés à son fils le Prince de Sedan', Michaud - Poujoulat (eds), *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de France*, (Paris: chez l'éditeur du Commentaire analytique du Code civil, 1836-1839), 1e série, t. 11 (1838).

16 Cimber - Danjou (eds), 'Relation du massacre de la Saint-Barthelemy', *Archives curieuses de l'histoire de France*, 1ère série, t. 7 (Paris: Beauvais, 1835), p. 87-89; Luc Geizkofler, *Mémoires*, trad. Edouard Fick (Genève: Jules-Guillaume Fick, 1892).

“L’Art du luxe” Claude-François Ménéstrier et la rhétorique du feu d’artifice

Nikola Piperkov

Le feu d’artifice, composé de ‘poudre noire’ et souvent associé à l’alchimie, est un spectacle lumineux qui fascine le Français du Grand Siècle. A cette époque encore, il était d’une grande nouveauté: le premier bien documenté à Paris est celui de 1606 tiré à l’occasion du baptême de Louis XIII (selon Königson 1956: 247). De manière exceptionnelle, le jésuite d’origine lyonnaise Claude-François Ménéstrier (1631-1705) nous a laissé un bref traité sur la conception des feux d’artifice: *Advis [sic] nécessaire à la conduite des feux d’artifice* (1660). Cet ouvrage doit, en effet, être fortement distingué de ses prédécesseurs. Contrairement à la *Pirotechnica* de Vannoccio Biringuccio (1540) et au *Traité des feux artificiels pour la guerre et pour la récréation* de Francis Malthus (1629), il ne s’agit pas d’un essai sur la technique de projection de feu. Ménéstrier s’intéresse peu à la chimie, ni, d’ailleurs, à l’application militaire des “feux artificiels”. Son intérêt porte sur leur signification, c’est-à-dire sur la ‘rhétorique du feu’ capable ‘d’écrire’ en ‘lettres lumineuses’ sur la toile de la nuit.

L’élaboration de ce traité n’est compréhensible que dans un cadre historique précis - les décorations éphémères faites à Lyon en l’honneur de la proclamation de la Paix des Pyrénées (attributions, bibliographie et étude par Piperkov 2019: 121-40; Piperkov 2018: 123-38). A cette occasion, l’archevêque de Lyon Camille de Neufville de Villeroy (1606-1693), nommé sous la régence d’Anne d’Autriche, souhaite présenter son allégeance à Louis XIV quelques mois avant l’avènement de son règne personnel. C’est la raison pour laquelle la ville de Lyon, qui n’a que peu souffert du conflit franco-espagnol, marque l’événement

de manière somptuaire: par un festival de feux d’artifice, du 20 au 23 mars 1660.

La publication de ces décorations est comprise en deux ouvrages séparés. Le premier ouvrage, titré *Les Réjouissances [sic] de la Paix faites dans la Ville de Lyon le 20 Mars 1660*, sort des presses de Guillaume Barbier, imprimeur ordinaire du roi. Il doit être assimilé à un discours officiel proche d’un guide iconographique, dont le but est de rendre l’éphémère permanent. Le second ouvrage, épais déjà de deux cents pages, est une entreprise bien plus commerciale vendue rue Mercière (du lat. *via mercatoria*, rue du commerce). Son titre – *Les Réjouissances [sic] de la Paix avec un Recueil de diuerses pièces sur ce sujet* – reprend l’orthographe spécifique du premier ouvrage¹ et l’exploite, semble-t-il, comme un jeu de mots: la ‘réjouissance’ devient alors une ‘ré-ouïssance’, une redite. L’ouvrage contient, effectivement comme une redite, la description complète des trois jours de feux d’artifice (20 mars, 22 mars et 23 mars 1660), ainsi qu’une liste de pièces de théâtre, épigrammes, devises, poèmes et toutes autres manifestations liées aux festivités. Il contient aussi une description du feu de joie à la Saint Jean ce qui permet de dater sa publication après le 23 juin 1660. Le traité *Advis [sic] nécessaire pour la conduite des feux d’artifice* est placé à la fin du premier ouvrage. Son texte est également repris parmi les pièces qui composent le second ouvrage. Dans son ensemble, cet opuscule contient un bref essai sur la composition des décorations éphémères accompagnées d’un feu d’artifice. Soulignons d’emblée que Ménéstrier s’intéresse uniquement à ce genre de feu d’artifice ; et fait une nette distinction entre les feux d’artifice dénués de sujet et les feux d’artifice dotés d’un sujet. Seulement les derniers sont concernés par l’ouvrage. Cette œuvre est, à notre connaissance, le premier manuel iconographique de Ménéstrier. Malgré sa taille modeste, son importance théorique peut

être comparée à celle de ses œuvres majeures, notamment à l'*Art des emblèmes* (1662) presque contemporain à l'*Advis* (1660). Également, cet ouvrage montre que Ménestrier utilise très tôt la décoration éphémère et le feu d'artifice comme un véritable laboratoire de recherche, dont l'expérience pratique – à savoir le maniement des devises, emblèmes et figures – aboutit plus tard à la réflexion et à la publication théorique². L'exemple magistral de ce *modus operandi* est la genèse de notre traité que nous proposons de suivre en étudiant la décoration éphémère qui sert de 'laboratoire' à l'écriture de l'*Advis nécessaire à la conduite des feux d'artifice*.

De Rubens à Ménestrier: le feu d'artifice comme une "arme de paix"

Les Réioüissances de la Paix, parues chez Guillaume Barbier, commencent par une *ekphrasis* du feu tiré sur le Pont de Saône le 20 mars 1660 que nous ne devons pas borner à une simple description détaillée³.



Fig. 1. Nicolas Auroux, d'après le dessin de Thomas Blanchet, *La Fermeture des portes du temple de Janus*, eau-forte (n.p.) in Claude-François Ménestrier, *Les Réioüissances de la Paix faites dans la ville de Lyon le 20 mars 1660*, Chez Guillaume Barbier, Lyon 1660 © Bibliothèque Municipale de Lyon, Rés 148776

Il s'agit plutôt d'un manifeste théorique en bourgeois inspiré de la très-célèbre *Pompa introitus Ferdinandi*, notamment de l'Arc de Janus.



Fig. 2. Jean Gaspard Gevaerts, *Pompa introitus Honori Serenissimi Principis Ferdinandi Austriaci Hispaniarum Infantis S. R. E. Card. Belgarum et Burgundionum Gubernatoris etc. a S. P. Q. Antverp. decreta et adornata [...]*, Anvers, chez Theodoor van Thulden 1641 (exemplaire aux armes de Camille de Neufville de Villeroy probablement utilisé par C.-F. Ménestrier) © Bibliothèque Municipale de Lyon, 5042

Imaginé par Rubens et rendu public dans la description complète des décorations en 1641 par Gevaerts (source J. G. Gevaerts, *Pompa introitus honori Ferdinandi [...]*, Anvers, 1641; études Knaap & Putnam, 2013; Martin 1972: 248-51), l'Arc de Janus montre déjà l'élément du feu au centre de toute la composition.



Fig. 3. Theodoor van Thulden, après le dessin de Pierre-Paul Rubens, *Templum Iani* (*Le Temple de Janus*), eau-forte, p. 117 in Jean Gaspard Gevaerts, *Pompa introitus Honori Serenissimi Principis Ferdinandi Austriaci Hispaniarum Infantis S. R. E. Card. Belgarum et Burgundionum Gubernatoris etc. a S. P. Q. Antverp. decreta et adornata [...]*, Anvers, chez Theodoor van Thulden 1641 (exemplaire aux armes de Camille de Neufville de Villeroy probablement utilisé par C.-F. Ménestrier) © Bibliothèque Municipale de Lyon, 5042

Le feu d'artifice sur le Pont de Saône reprend manifestement le sujet de la décoration anversoise, notamment le temple de Janus⁴. Il reprend également son ingénieuse mise en figures de la devise militaire EX BELLO PAX (de la guerre [vient] la paix), déjà habituelle dans la numismatique française (Jacques de Bie 1634: 88, n°33), qui renvoie au lieu commun selon lequel le même feu qui sert à forger les armes de la guerre peut servir à forger les armes de paix, notamment de l'agriculture. La même devise semble avoir aussi inspiré Rubens pour sa *Minerve protège Pax de Mars* de la National Gallery, où la Bonne Guerre est différenciée de la Mauvaise Guerre; et où Minerve (l'ordre) chasse Mars (la destruction) afin de protéger une Paix aux allures de Cérès⁵. Cette invention picturale de Rubens doit évidemment être 'luë' dans le contexte de la Guerre de Quatre-

Vingt Ans qui sert, tout autant, de toile de fond à la *Pompa introitus Ferdinandi*. Le dessin de l'Arc de Janus transforme juste Mars et Minerve en d'autres personifications dichotomiques: à droite, la Paix brûle les armes de la guerre; à gauche, se tient la Guerre, dont le feu est tenu par la Mort.

La relation du feu d'artifice sur le Pont de Saône à la devise *De la Guerre la Paix* semble évidente, puisque Ménestrier reprend sa structure nominale distinctive pour créer une nouvelle devise *De mes flammes la joie*⁶. Selon le commentaire de Ménestrier, cette dernière ne se réfère pas à l'occasion politique dans le sens strict; elle sert d'allégorie au feu d'artifice lui-même. Ainsi, pouvons-nous comprendre que l'auteur considère personnellement *Les Réjouissances de la Paix* comme un 'brouillon théorique' qui précède l'écriture de l'*Advis nécessaire pour la conduite des feux d'artifice*. Et, en effet, le début de l'ouvrage, loin de toute description, présente une longue présentation de la symbolique du feu divisée en trois arguments principaux, tel un traité qui commencerait par une étymologie.

D'abord, Ménestrier explique le feu d'artifice comme un spectacle de nature politique qui remplace les "feux de guerre" par les "feux de paix"⁷.

Ensuite, Ménestrier suggère que le feu d'artifice est convenable pour accompagner les décorations éphémères françaises. Il ne convient que trop à un roi-soleil et incarne l'image du "monarque désarmé" qui a su remplacer "les armes de la guerre" par "les armes de la paix"⁸.

Enfin, Ménestrier avance curieusement que le feu d'artifice serait capable de générer l'amour dans le cœur du spectateur. Il conduit même à l'*inamoramento*, c'est-à-dire à l'impression de l'être aimé dans l'esprit par le biais de la vue:

Son éclat apporte dans les yeux des étincelles de lumière, qui sont les premières avances du plaisir, et sa chaleur ouvre le cœur aux plus belles saillies de la joie. [...] Il n'est rien de plus agissant [...] il travaille sur toute sorte de matière, et transforme en sa substance tout ce qu'il pénètre. Ses opérations font les miracles de l'Art et de la Nature. Il change le sable en cristal [...] et la terre en or. Il nous empêche d'être aveugles la moitié de notre vie [...] Mais il est aimable à présent qu'il ne sort de la bouche des canons que pour annoncer le repos, et qu'il ne paraît dans les places publiques que pour y dissiper les ténèbres de la discorde, et pour allumer dans les cœurs des Citoyens des étincelles d'amour et de reconnaissance (*ibidem*: 7-8).

[Its brightness brings sparks of light to the eyes, which are the first signs of pleasure, and its heat opens the heart to the most beautiful flashes of joy [...] There is nothing more active [...] it works on every sort of material, and transforms into its substance all that it penetrates. Its activities are the miracles of Art and of Nature. It changes sand into crystal [...] and earth into gold. It prevents us from blindness for half our lives [...] But it is good, at present, that it comes out of the mouth of canons only to announce repose, and that it only appears in public places to dissipate the shadows of discord, and to set fire to the hearts of Citizens with sparks of love and gratitude].

Dans le contexte précis des décorations lyonnaises du 20 mars 1660, cette conception du feu [d'artifice] comme un outil de l'*inamoramento* est non seulement théorisée. Elle est aussi pratiquée et mise en images dans la construction symbolique de la "machine allégorique". En son centre, notamment sur la frise du tétrapyle, figure l'inscription lumineuse VIVE LE ROI censée allumer le feu de l'amour dans les cœurs lyonnais. Au-dessus de ces 'lettres de feu', Ménestrier place trois figures en flammes ou, peut-être, trois tirs de feux différents qui composent les devises suivantes:

La première était une fusée avec ces mots italiens *Quel che m'avviva m'affoga*, celui qui m'allume me détruit, pour dire que Sa Majesté après une illustre guerre qui lui a été avantageuse, la fait cesser pour donner la Paix à ses sujets, comme le feu, qui allume la fusée, la consume et la détruit. La seconde était un phénix qui sort de son bûcher [...] pour aller s'exposer aux rayons du soleil, et ces mots en espagnol lui servent d'âme *D'unas flamas a otras*. D'un feu à l'autre. Le feu de l'amour ayant enfin trouvé entrée dans le cœur de notre Monarque, en a fait sortir celui de la guerre. La Troisième était un éclair accompagné de ces mots TERRET SED NON DIU. Le feu de la fierté n'a pas longtemps duré dans notre Monarque, il lui fait succéder le feu de l'amour, qui est un feu plus tranquille et plus serein (*ibidem*: 12).

[The first was a rocket with these Italian words *Quel che m'avviva m'affoga*, he who lights me up destroys me, to mean that His Majesty after an illustrious war which was advantageous to him, made it cease in order to give Peace to his subjects, as the fire which lights a rocket, consumes and destroys it. The second was a phoenix which comes out of its pyre...to expose itself to the rays of the sun, and these works in Spanish serve as its [emblematic] soul *D'unas flamas a otras*. From one fire to another. The fire of love having finally found entry into the heart of our Monarch, makes the fire of war go away. The third was a flash accompanied by these words TERRET SED NON DIU. The fire of Pride no longer dwells in our Monarch, it is succeeded by the fire of love which is a more tranquil and serene fire].

La première signification de ces devises est clairement politique. La seconde, en revanche, est fondée sur la comparaison du feu de joie, capable de changer la guerre en paix, au processus de la transmutation, capable de changer une substance en une autre. Ainsi, la première devise sert de métaphore à la destruction causée par la guerre. Le corps de la seconde – un Phénix – est un symbole manifeste de résurrection. La troisième met en image l'étincelle d'un feu d'amour naissant. Cette suite de devises suit alors le schéma destruction-résurrection-crétion utilisé habituellement dans les ouvrages [al]chimiques sous la dénomination *nigredo-albedo-rubedo*⁹.

Si la connaissance de Ménestrier en matière de chimie reste quelque peu incertaine, nous pouvons chercher les racines de sa théorie sans grande crainte dans l'emblématique moderne. Là, l'image de l'amour est fréquemment rapprochée à celle d'un feu ardent¹⁰ qui peut produire la "maladie d'amour". Certaines théories médicales contemporaines, notamment celle du médecin toulousain Jacques Ferrand publiée en 1623 sous le titre évocateur *De la maladie d'amour, ou mélancholie [sic] érotique*, comparent même l'amour à une véritable affliction physique et psychologique. Il s'agit d'une maladie grave qui appartient à l'âge jeune, qui pervertit l'imagination, qui trouble le discours, qui égare les sens et qui connaît, comme toute autre pathologie, des symptômes et un mécanisme d'infection. Selon Ferrand, le désir, ou *cupido*, est produit par l'objet de l'amour qui s'imprime dans l'esprit par le regard au moment de l'infection appelé *inamoramento*. Ensuite, l'excès du désir provoque une maladie de l'âme, dont la transmission clinique correspond exactement au fonctionnement sensoriel que Ménestrier attribue au feu d'artifice.

La pratique chrétienne du feu d'artifice

La suite des *Les Réjouissances de la Paix* parues chez Guillaume Barbier, fidèlement reprise dans la seconde publication de 1660 (*Les Réjouissances [sic] de la Paix avec un Recueil de diverses pièces sur ce sujet*), est consacrée à une compilation des feux [d'artifice] organisés le 21 mars et le 22 mars par des particuliers, des corporations ou des quartiers (liste détaillée de ces festivités par Piperkov 2019: 130-32). Cette compilation permet d'attester que, en l'espace de trois jours, Lyon devient littéralement

une ville en feu; elle accueille un véritable festival de vingt-huit décorations éphémères, où le feu d'artifice est imaginé sous toutes ses formes diverses et variées. Nous ne nous attarderons pas sur leurs sujets, qui restent plus ou moins proches de celui choisi pour la décoration publique sur le Pont de Saône. Ce qui retiendra notre attention est la grande variété de décorations lumineuses, dont certaines dépassent notre idée préconçue. Ménestrier apparente à un feu d'artifice toutes sortes de sources de lumière, dont des lanternes, des éclairages de façade à la bougie, des éclairages de clochers d'église, et même des automates lumineux (*Les Réjouissances de la Paix avec un Recueil de diverses pièces sur ce sujet: 33-34*)¹¹.

De ce fait, l'*Advis [sic] nécessaire pour la conduite des feux d'artifice* peut être considéré comme la mise en théorie de l'expérience réelle faite par Ménestrier lors de la conduite et lors de la description de ce festival de lumière. Son argument est rendu explicite dans un avis au lecteur qui semble avoir deux fonctions essentielles.

La première est de présenter le feu d'artifice, dit encore "feu de joie", comme une pratique chrétienne, dont l'histoire est ancrée dans l'*autodafé* (acte de foi), c'est-à-dire dans la destruction des idoles par les premiers chrétiens (*Advis: 1-2*)¹². La thèse de Ménestrier est évidemment loin d'une quelconque vérité historique, puisque le feu est un élément clef dans les cérémonies antiques et dans le sacrifice païen. En rhétoricien, Ménestrier vise surtout à justifier l'emploi du feu d'artifice à Rome qui, en tant que capitale diplomatique de l'Europe moderne, est le témoin d'une suite presque continue de spectacles lumineux organisés pour toutes sortes d'occasions politiques. La thèse de Ménestrier justifie aussi pourquoi un membre du clergé peut organiser des décorations éphémères et des feux d'artifice, dont les sujets, dans la grande partie des cas, sont profanes et, de surcroît, tirés de la mythologie. Autrement dit, en montrant que le feu d'artifice est une pratique par excellence chrétienne, Ménestrier définit *de facto* que tout sujet proposé dans un feu d'artifice ne peut être conçu que comme un sujet chrétien¹³.

La seconde fonction de l'avis au lecteur est didactique. Il s'agit de présenter l'ouvrage comme un manuel destiné à l'usage de l'iconographe ou du particulier qui souhaiterait organiser des feux d'artifices et des décorations éphémères. Son but est de prévenir d'éventuelles erreurs rhétoriques

qui, selon Ménestrier, sont très fréquentes dans l'organisation de ce genre d'événement.

Le corps de l'ouvrage est constitué d'une introduction et d'un développement qui confondent entièrement décoration éphémère et feu d'artifice dans le lieu commun suivant: la décoration éphémère brûlée dans un feu d'artifice. L'introduction ouvre sur une brève, mais très intense, théorisation du feu d'artifice comme un art "réglé" du "luxe"¹⁴ qui sert d'expression à la joie publique. Selon Ménestrier, cet art de la lumière procède du génie, sert de véhicule à des idées et peut même rivaliser avec l'écriture. En revanche, à la différence des autres arts d'esprit, le feu d'artifice – et ceci constitue apparemment son grand intérêt et sa particularité – possède les qualités d'une sensation proche de l'amour, sans pour autant en avoir les désavantages. Son but est, d'abord, de "plaire" et, par la suite, "d'éblouir" (*Advis: 6*). Les termes choisis par Ménestrier ne sont pas le fruit d'un heureux hasard. "Plaire" évoque le regard comme sensation matérielle, celle du plaisir qui conduit à l'amour du spectateur. "Éblouir" se réfère au dépassement de cette sensation par la contemplation toute spirituelle d'un monde outre la matière. Ainsi, devons-nous comprendre que, selon Ménestrier, le feu d'artifice doit être vu deux fois. La première fois, il est saisi par le regard sensitif, c'est-à-dire par la vue humaine. Il constitue alors un spectacle plaisant, dont le but est de divertir. La seconde fois, le feu d'artifice doit être vu par le regard de l'esprit, puisqu'il contient des idées qui dépassent par définition le regard sensoriel.

Le développement du traité présente une composition tripartite commune aux traités sur les images, à savoir **sujet-artifice-ornement**. Ménestrier n'envisage pas ces parties comme des chapitres destinés respectivement à l'iconographe (le faiseur du sujet), à l'artificier (l'artisan de la poudre) et au peintre (le dessinateur de figures). Selon Ménestrier, toutes ces parties doivent être maîtrisées par l'iconographe qui est censé inventer le sujet, rendre l'artifice convenant à l'occasion et veiller à la bienséance de l'ornement.

Le sujet, divisé en cinq catégories selon sa nature – historique, mythologique, emblématique, naturel ou mixte¹⁵ – occupe la place majeure dans l'invention d'un feu et dépend entièrement de l'occasion politique et du public concerné (*Advis: 7-20*). Ainsi, à la différence d'un poème

ou d'une peinture, le sujet d'un feu d'artifice n'a jamais une signification universelle. Il est soumis aux exigences d'un public et d'une topographie urbaine spécifiques. Pour cette raison, certains sujets, même très attractifs pour les spectateurs, ne doivent pas être choisis si l'occasion ne s'y prête pas. Ménéstrier note, par exemple, que l'histoire de Jason et les argonautes se prête bien à une ville comme Paris, à la fois bâtie sur une rivière et ayant un navire dans ses armoiries. En revanche, le même sujet ne convient pas à une ville qui n'a pas de rivière.

L'artifice concerne l'utilisation du feu comme un instrument rhétorique doué de parole (*ibidem*: 22-26). Selon Ménéstrier, l'iconographe doit, d'abord, être pleinement conscient de la valeur symbolique d'un bûcher public. Il doit distinguer ce qui doit brûler de ce qui ne doit pas brûler, car la maladresse du choix peut provoquer le ridicule et peut aboutir à une perversion de la joie en moquerie. Autrement dit, le feu doit être contrôlé: seulement les dispositifs du feu d'artifice doivent brûler, tandis que la structure en bois, les figures et les peintures doivent être épargnées et rester visibles. Ensuite, selon Ménéstrier, les formes du feu d'artifice, dont les noms proviennent des différents dessins lumineux laissés dans le ciel nocturne, parlent un véritable langage. Et, s'il est courant de mêler diverses figures dans un même projet de feu d'artifice, l'iconographe doit être conscient que leur place et leur ordre repose sur des règles. Par exemple, les fusées (Malthus 1640: 60-69), les "saucissons" (*ibidem*: 83 & 114), les lanciers de feu et les mortiers (*ibidem*: 4-8), qui font beaucoup de bruit, doivent être placés au début de la représentation, car ils symbolisent le conflit, la guerre et le chaos. Les "serpenteaux" (*ibidem*: 7), qui serpentent dans le ciel, symbolisent l'ordre de la nature et la création divine. Enfin, les girandoles (*ibidem*: 104), ou feux tournants, peuvent signifier les choses du ciel, comme les astres et les planètes. Ménéstrier pose aussi la question du début et de la fin du spectacle lumineux, c'est-à-dire comment allumer et éteindre le feu. Il mentionne deux méthodes de mise en feu. La première exige que l'artificier soit à l'intérieur ou à proximité du feu d'artifice et qu'il allume successivement ses charges. La seconde consiste dans un dispositif de ficelles qui se communiquent successivement le feu. Ce dispositif peut être allumé à distance au moyen d'une figure allumée descendue sur le feu d'artifice

et qui en donne la première charge lumineuse. La fin du spectacle est tout aussi délicate, puisque la destruction de la décoration éphémère doit être rapide sans transformer le tout en bûcher.

Enfin, Ménéstrier met sous l'appellation "ornement" les inscriptions, les figures et les symboles de la décoration éphémère. L'ornement de Ménéstrier n'a pour ainsi dire plus rien à avoir le feu d'artifice en soi. Il concerne plutôt le travail de l'iconographe qui doit connaître, afin de réaliser une décoration éphémère, le langage pictural de l'époque moderne, à savoir "les inscriptions, les devises, les emblèmes, les chiffres et les hiéroglyphiques" (*Advis*: 26).

Nous ne savons pas dans quelle mesure la théorie de Ménéstrier est applicable à tous les feux d'artifice. En revanche, elle permet de comprendre très bien le feu d'artifice sur le pont de Saône tiré le 20 mars 1660. Sa gravure, exécutée par Nicolas Auroux d'après un dessin de Thomas Blanchet, comporte en particulier trois dispositifs de feu d'artifice décrits par Ménéstrier, à savoir les fusées à feu, les fusées à étoiles et les "serpenteaux". Ces trois feux ne sont pas tirés en même temps, tandis que la gravure doit être considérée comme une somme du spectacle lumineux et non pas un état de ce spectacle. Ménéstrier décrit lui-même l'ordre successif des effets lumineux. L'allumage est fait par la figure enflammée de Mercure descendue sur une ficelle. Après des mortiers et des "saucissons", qui incarnent les fracas de la guerre, retentissent dans le registre inférieur. Puis, la lancée de "serpenteaux" et de fusées à partir du registre médian incarne la transformation des feux de la guerre en feux de joie. Enfin, la lancée de fusée d'étoiles sert de métaphore lumineuse à la paix. La fin du spectacle n'est pas figurée sur la gravure, mais, tenant compte des commentaires du Ménéstrier, elle aurait dû consister en la destruction de la décoration éphémère, dont les débris sont tombés dans la Saône¹⁶.

Conclusion

Les Réjouissances de la Paix, produites à Lyon entre le 20 et le 23 mars 1660, ainsi que leur publication qu'on peut dater entre mars 1660 et juin 1660, sont l'objet d'une intense recherche sur la décoration éphémère et sur le feu d'artifice. A cet occasion, Claude-François Ménéstrier organise sa première grande œuvre d'iconographie éphémère et publie

son premier traité sur les images. La conduite et la publication de ces *Réioïssances* semblent même déterminants dans la carrière d'un homme d'Église qui sera destiné à produire par la suite presque annuellement des décorations et des feux d'artifice, soit pour l'archevêque de Lyon, soit pour le duc de Savoie, soit pour le roi de France. En ce sens, la date 20 mars 1660 inaugure une véritable carrière de "faiseur de feux d'artifice"¹⁷ que Ménestrier revendiquera jusqu'à son décès en 1705.

L'importance des *Réioïssances* est surtout théorique. Le feu d'artifice public et les feux d'artifices privés produits à cette occasion proposent une concentration presque étonnante de décorations éphémères dans un seul et même endroit. Ils permettent à Ménestrier d'avoir d'emblée une vision globale et spécialisée d'un genre de divertissement public qui, à l'époque, n'a ni règles, ni manuels. En leur absence, Ménestrier se propose lui-même comme un théoricien du feu d'artifice et de la décoration éphémère. Bien évidemment, le bref opuscule, titré *Advis nécessaire à la conduite du feu d'artifice*, ne peut être considéré comme un travail abouti. Nonobstant, il inspire une panoplie d'ouvrages plus tardifs, où les questions posées ne divergent pas ou peu de celles posées lors d'un projet iconographique pour un feu d'artifice.

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Notes

- 1 Le terme ‘réjouissances’ est propre à Ménéstrier. D’autres auteurs préfèrent généralement ‘description’ ou ‘relation’.
- 2 L’idée est déjà défendue par Piperkov 2011: 19-40.
- 3 Il s’agit de la première décoration éphémère bien documentée de Ménéstrier. Elle est surtout la première d’une longue lignée de décorations mises sous le signe de la lumière et du feu pour lesquels le jésuite lyonnais développera un véritable goût. Parmi elles les plus marquants sont: *Description de la machine du feu d’artifice, dressé pour la naissance de Monseigneur le Dauphin par la communauté des maîtres imprimeurs de la Ville de Lyon*, le 20 Novembre 1661, chez Pierre Guillimin, Lyon 1661; *Description des cérémonies et réjouissances faites à Chambéry, à la publication du bref de la béatification du glorieux évêque de Genève, François de Sales*, 12 mars 1662, Lyon, chez Pierre Guillimin, 1662; *Dessein de la machine du feu d’artifice pour les nopces de Leurs Altesses Royales [Charles-Emmanuel II de Savoie et Françoise d’Orléans-Valois, à Chambéry]*, Lyon, chez Pierre Guillimin, 1663; [L] *Illumination de la Galerie du Louvre, pour les reioüissances de la naissance de Monsieur Duc de Bourgogne*, Paris, 1682; *La Statue de Louis le Grand placée dans le Temple de l’Honneur, dessein du feu d’artifice dressé devant l’Hôtel de Ville pour la Statue du Roy, qui y doit estre posée*, Paris, chez Nicolas et Charles Caillou de l’impr. D’Etienne Chardon, 1689. Plusieurs titres contiennent le terme ‘réjouissance’ qui fait ouvertement référence à la décoration éphémère de 1660.
- 4 “Le Temple de Janus fermé est le sujet qu’elle [la ville de Lyon] a choisi pour apprendre à tous les Français qu’il n’en fallait pas moins qu’un Auguste pour le fermer.” (“The closed Temple of Janus is the subject which the town of Lyon chose to teach all Frenchmen that, at the very least,

an Augustus was needed to close it.”) (*Les Réjouissances de la Paix*: 8) L'ouverture et la fermeture des portes du temple de Janus permettait, selon les auteurs anciens, d'afficher l'état de guerre et de paix à Rome.

5 Pierre-Paul Rubens, *Minerva Protects Pax from Mars (War and Peace)*, 1629-1630, huile sur toile, 203,5 x 298 cm, Londres, National Gallery, Presented by the Duke of Sutherland, 1828, NG46.

6 “Toute la machine faisait le corps d'une autre devise, dont l'âme était conçue en ces mots espagnols *De mis flam[a]s el gozo. De mes flammes la joie*. En effet, la cessation de la guerre et sa ruine est la joie des peuples, comme nous appelons feux de joie ces machines que nous réduisons en cendres dans les réjouissances publiques.” (“The whole machine was a body with another device, of which the centre was conceived in these Spanish words: *De mis Flam[a]s el gozo*. From my flames [comes] joy. In fact, the end of war and its ruin is the joy of the people, as we call fires of joy these machines which we reduce to ashes in public shows.”) (*Les Réjouissances de la Paix*: 12)

7 “Nos craintes sont enfin changées en autant de belles espérances, que nous avons senti de maux durant une longue et cruelle guerre, qui a épuisé le sang le plus pur de deux royaumes, et enlevé la fleur de la plus vaillante noblesse. Les acclamations publiques succèdent aux larmes et aux soupirs; et les trompettes, dont l'air retentit en tant de lieux, ne sont plus les funestes bouches d'airain, qui ne présageaient que la mort et le carnage. Les feux que nous allumons ne font plus la désolation des villes et des provinces, et le plus des canons donne à présent plus de joie que de terreur.” (“Our fears are changed into as many beautiful aspirations, we who have endured the ills of a long and cruel war which reduced the purest blood of two kingdoms, and removed the flower of the most valiant nobles. The public acclamations replace the tears and sighs; and the trumpets, whose sound echoes in so many places, are no longer the dire mouths of bronze which foretold only death and carnage. The fires which we light no longer bring desolation to towns and provinces, and the largest of the canons, at present, only give forth joy not terror.”) (*Ibidem*: 7).

8 “Le Feu, tout ardent qu'il est, avoue qu'il est moins agissant que ce jeune prince, et les mouvements qui l'agitent sont des marques irréprochables de l'empressement qu'il a de s'employer au service d'un Héro, qui fait les délices du monde. Cet auguste triomphateur les destine à de meilleurs usages, il en fait des Hérauts de paix [...] Il ne s'en sert plus pour donner de la terreur, il en fait les interprètes des joies publiques, et ce Monarque désarmé commande qu'on adoucisse leur fierté pour en faire les instruments innocents de la félicité de ses sujets.” (“Fire, however fiery it is, admits that it is less active than this young prince, and the movement which agitates it are the irreproachable marks of the eagerness with which it is employed in the service of a hero, who is the delight of the world. This august triumphantor destines them to better uses, he makes them into Heralds of peace... He no longer uses them to produce terror, he makes them into the interpreters of public joy, and this unarmed Monarch commands that their pride be softened to make

them into innocent instruments of the happiness of his subjects.”) (*Ibidem*: 7).

9 Nous ne suggérons pas que Ménestrier a donné une signification occulte aux décorations. Nous soulignons juste que, à une époque où entre chimie et alchimie existe une grande porosité, un spectacle de poudre noire produit par le biais d'un processus chimique ne peut que nourrir sa substance allégorique dans des théories élémentaires; des théories, qui plus est, sont bien connues et enseignées par Ménestrier, alors professeur au Collège de la Trinité.

10 Nous pensons aux emblèmes amoureux, par exemple: “Dites-moy ce que c'est ? qu' est-ce que l'on appelle? / Vn feu perpetuel, vne ardeur eternelle, /Vn volontaire vol, vn larcin sans retour, / Vn aigle en ses regards, vn arc à blesser ames, / Vn ancre à les tenir, vn soleil plein de flames? / Le voulez vous sçauoir? c'est le diuin Amour.” (“Tell me what is it? what is it called?/ A perpetual fire, and eternal ardour,/ A voluntary flight, a theft without return,/ An eagle in its looks, a bow to wound souls,/ An anchor to hole them, a sun full of flames?/ You want to know? it is Divine Love”) (Ludovicus van Leuven 1629: 5, Embl. II. Θεοφιλια).

11 Les machines semblent avoir piqué particulièrement la curiosité de Ménestrier qui met en honneur, en lui confèrent la première place dans sa description, celle d'un certain Pelletier. Elle fonctionne comme une sorte d'horloge, avec un cadran tournant, et adapte à un usage lumineux la devise militaire de Louis XIV *Nec pluribus impar* (*ibidem*: 34-35).

12 Nous utilisons la version publiée dans *Les Réjouissances de la Paix avec un Recueil de diuerses pièces sur ce sujet* qui reprend exactement celle des *Réjouissances de la Paix faites dans la Ville de Lyon le 20 Mars 1660*.

13 Cette même idée est défendue dans *ibidem*: 16.

14 Ce terme comporte le double sens du latin, à la fois ‘lumière’ et ‘magnificence’. La formulation exacte de Ménestrier est la suivante: “La joie n'est pas seulement magnifique dans ses profusions; elle y paraît ingénieuse et quelque empressée qu'elle soit dans ses failles, elle n'est jamais déréglée. Il y a de la bienséance dans ses mouvements, et son luxe attache autant l'esprit que les mains de ceux qui le servent” (“Joy is not only magnificent in its profusion; it appears ingenious and assiduous even in its faults, it is never out of order. There is propriety in its movements, and its luxury attached as much to the mind as to the hands of those which it serves.”) (*Ibidem*: 4).

15 Cette division n'est pas inhérente au feu d'artifice. Elle constitue la première manifestation de ces catégories que nous retrouvons dans la plupart des traités de Ménestrier, notamment dans l'*Art des emblèmes*.

16 La description de ce déroulement est donnée dans *Les Réjouissances de la Paix avec un Recueil de diuerses pièces sur ce sujet*: 28-29.

17 Le terme apparaît dans la rubrique nécrologique de Ménestrier publiée dans le *Mercuré historique et politique* (1705: 183-87, VIII): “faiseur d'Inscriptions, d'Emblèmes, de Divises, de Décorations, de Feux d'Artifice”.

La messa in scena della “Calandria” di Bibbiena a Lione il 27 settembre 1548

Carlo Fanelli

La commedia

La *Calandria* di Bernardo Dovizi da Bibbiena è tra le più rappresentative commedie del canone rinascimentale. La derivazione e, allo stesso tempo, il superamento del modello di Plauto e Terenzio, le reminiscenze ariostesche e i prestiti da Boccaccio, ne fanno un esempio della pratica di ‘contaminazione’¹ messa in atto dagli autori della prima metà del Cinquecento. La commedia divenne presto un modello per i commediografi coevi, poiché presentava già concretamente affermati tutti quei caratteri divenuti canonici nel teatro comico rinascimentale: lo sciocco, il servo astuto, il finto negromante, l’inefficace pedagogo e temi come quello del doppio, già plautino ma risolto da Bibbiena in modo ancor più iperbolico.

Urbino e Roma sulla scena

Nella storia degli allestimenti teatrali rinascimentali, le messinscene conosciute della *Calandria*, si segnalano per alcuni elementi distintivi. La prima rappresentazione della commedia, a Urbino il 6 febbraio 1513, succede alla prima ‘grande stagione’ degli spettacoli plautini a Ferrara², voluti dai Gonzaga tra la fine Quattrocento e i primi anni del Cinquecento, in cui si mette a punto un primo modello rappresentativo (oltre che drammaturgico), nonché la contestualizzazione con la materia encomiastica della *festa*, cui seguirà l’esperienza della *Cassaria* ariostesca (1508) precedente «all’ideazione e conduzione del piccolo teatro di corte tra il 1529 e il 1532», di cui fu protagonista l’Ariosto (Zorzi 1977:

27). La commedia ariostesca, primo tentativo di rielaborazione drammaturgica in volgare del modello plautino-terenziano, segna il passaggio dal volgarizzamento ad una forma drammaturgica più definita poi fissata dal Bibbiena. Lo spettacolo ferrarese, con la scena dipinta da Pellegrino da Udine³, evolve la concezione figurativa della città, con una scena fissa che propone l’immagine «dipinta di una contrada, ovvero una via circondata da case, con una veduta della città sullo sfondo: una città di fantasia [...] indicata da edifici comuni di tipologia non specifica» (*ibidem*: 27). Precedute da tale retroterra di esperienze che stabilisce il codice drammaturgico e scenico del teatro rinascimentale, della *Calandria* si contano svariate rappresentazioni nel corso del secolo (Padoan 1985; Moncallero 1968) che ne attestano l’acquisita notorietà. Non tutte sono sufficientemente documentate come quella del 6 febbraio 1513 nel Palazzo Ducale di Urbino che fu, notoriamente, la prima (Ruffini 1986; Ruffini 2015).

Due documenti descrivono la sistemazione della sala, dello spazio scenico e degli intermezzi. Una lettera di Baldassar Castiglione a Ludovico di Canossa (13-21 febbraio 1513) nella quale leggiamo che:

La scena era finta una contrada ultima tra il muro della terra e l’ultime case. Dal palco in terra era finto naturalissimo il muro della città con dui torrioni, da’ capi della sala: su l’uno stavano li pifari, su l’altro i trombetti: nel mezzo era pur un altro fianco di bella foggia. La sala veniva a restare, come il fosso della terra, traversata da dui muri, come sostegni d’acqua [...]. La scena poi era finta una città bellissima, con le strade, palazzi, chiese, torri, strade vere: et ogni cosa di rilievo, ma aiutata ancora da bonissima pittura, e prospettiva bene intesa. Tra le altre cose ci era un tempio a otto facce di mezzo rilievo, tanto ben finito, che con tutte l’opere del Stato d’Urbino non saria possibile a credere che fosse fatto in quattro mesi:

tutto lavorato di stucco, con historie bellissime, finte le finestre d'alabastro, tutti gli architravi e le cornici d'oro fino ad azzurro oltremarino, et in certi lochi, vetri finiti di gioie, che parevano verissime; figure intorno tonde, finte di marmo, colonnette lavorate. Saria longo a dire ogni cosa. Questo era quasi nel mezzo. Da un de' capi era un arco triomfale, lontano dal muro ben una canna, fatto al possibil bene. Tra l'architravo et il volto dell'arco era finto di marmo, ma era pittura, la historia delli tre Horatii, bellissima. In due cappellette sopra li dui pilastri che sostengono l'arco, erano due figurette tutte tonde, due Vittorie con trofei in mano, fatte di stucco. In cima dell'arco era una figura equestre bellissima, tutta tonda, armata con un bello atto, che feria con una hasta un nudo che gli era a' piedi: dall'un canto e dall'altro del cavallo erano dui come altaretti, sopra quali era a ciascuno un vaso di foco abundantissimo, che durò fin che durò la Comedia [...]. Finita poi la Comedia, nacque sul palco all'improvviso un Amorino di quelli primi, e nel medesimo abito: il quale dichiarò con alcune poche stanze la significazione delle intromesse, che era una cosa continuata e separata dalla Comedia [...]. Dette le stanze e sparuto l'Amorino, s'udi una musica nascosa di quattro viole, e poi quattro voci con le viole, che cantorno una stanza con un bello aere di musica, quasi una oratione ad Amore (Ruffini 1986: 307-10).

E la descrizione di Urbano Urbani, segretario di Francesco Maria I della Rovere, duca di Urbino:

Fu bellissimo l'apparato di Urbino, ricca, et artificiosa la Sciena. Però che bella architettura di Palagi, Portici, Tempj, Strade et Archi Triumphali, cum vaghe pitture, et altri adornamenti di ingenuosa prospettiva, la fece fare di mezzo rilievo et la parte di nante, per non levare dil palcho la vista al Populo, la fece tirare come per muraglia battuta, cum di Torroni in l'una e l'altra testa dilla Sciena, in l'uno di quali vi erano molti eccellenti Trombetti, et in l'altro Pivi, Corni et Tromboni⁴.

Se la sistemazione della sala rimanda encomiasticamente alle vittorie del ducato dei Montefeltro, tra fine Quattrocento e primo Cinquecento, nonché alla sua relazione con la città eterna, la progettazione e realizzazione dello spazio scenico, accreditata a Girolamo Genga, viene definita integrando il modello della cosiddetta "città ideale" di matrice urbinata e la sua riproduzione prospettica, la «città cintata» ferrarese (*ibidem*: 5-59)⁵, con una scenografia a volumi, con quinte praticabili, di originale invenzione.

La dimensione della festa, come si sa, ingloba quella autoriflessiva della messinscena, l'immagine gloriosa del duca è palesata nel 'magnifico' apparato; il luogo dell'azione è «finto» per accogliere lo svolgimento verosimile della commedia, lasciando spazio, poi, allo sviluppo immaginifico degli intermezzi: «una

cosa continuata e separata dalla Comedia».

Nella descrizione proposta nella lettera di Castiglione è posta in essere la sintesi tra la dimensione illusionistica e quella visiva, nella quale la plasticità dei piani architettonici è proposta allo sguardo dello spettatore attraverso la pittura superando, tuttavia, la mera dimensione figurativa⁶. La prospettiva, in quanto «forma simbolica» (Panofsky 2007), coniuga gli elementi pittorici di un'immagine, raffigurata utilizzando la tecnica della «perspectiva»⁷, con la sua funzione di rappresentazione e osservazione del reale (Marotti 1974: 21-36). Tale dinamica si configura come un *unicum continuum* fra la mimesi drammaturgica e quella della scena. Lo sguardo dello spettatore è potenziato dalla sua adesione alle ragioni della *festa*, quel dispositivo autoriflessivo che si attiva all'interno della corte e che pone in relazione parola e immagine.

La scenografia, quindi, «finge una città bellissima, con le strade, palazzi, chiese, torri, strade vere», la Roma «sì ampla, sì spaziosa, sì grande che, trionfando, molte città e paesi e fiumi largamente in se stessa riceveva; ed ora è sì piccola diventata che, come vedete, agiatamente cape nella città vostra» (come recita l'*Argumento*), nella quale è ambientata la commedia e dove l'autore sta celebrando i suoi personali successi, accompagnando Giovanni de' Medici al soglio papale, con il nome di Leone X. Ricostruzione urbana che si estende oltre, poiché: «La sala veniva a restare, come il fosso della terra, traversata da dui muri, come sostegni d'acqua»⁸. Scena e spettatori occupano un «vero teatro»⁹ e sono posti metaforicamente in contatto dal muro-transenna che solo fisicamente li separa. Tale dinamica ingloba lo spettatore nella messinscena, egli ne condivide gli spazi in cui l'azione si svolge, ne diviene 'attore'.

Negli intermezzi di Urbino, incentrati sul tema dei Quattro Elementi: Terra, Fuoco, Acqua e Aria, personificati rispettivamente da Giasone, Venere, Nettuno e Giunone, il tono faceto e burlesco della commedia si dissolve nella dinamica visiva di questa epitome del neoplatonismo che tramuta il suo pittoricismo in azione scenica. Le allegorie incarnate sfilano sul palcoscenico e il loro simbolismo si svela agli occhi dello spettatore che ne coglie significato e meraviglia. La metafora si palesa dopo il quarto intermezzo: «questa era: che prima fu la battaglia di quelli fratelli terrigeni. [...] Et in questo si valse della favola di Jason. Dipoi venne Amore: il quale del suo santo foco accese prima gli huomini e la terra, poi il



mare e l'aria, per cacciare la guerra e la discordia, et unire il mondo di concordia».

Come sappiamo, la continuità metaforica tra commedia e intermezzi: «una cosa continuata e separata dalla Comedia», è riconosciuta già da Castiglione, artefice degli intermezzi stessi. La macchina del doppio che investe l'azione comica, elegge quale immagine significante quella del «barbafiorito» e «merdafiorito»¹⁰, deformazione comica e destituzione dell'immagine neoplatonica esemplare e sublime dell'ermafrodito. All'edonismo carnale si oppone l'*amor divinus* che trionfa, rappresentato da Venere «con una facella sulla mano nuda» che, nel secondo intermezzo, interviene a placare il caos inducendo nuova concordia tra gli elementi¹¹. Dopo «tanti scambiamenti», l'agnizione riunisce i due gemelli e anche nella commedia giunge il canonico lieto fine.

Roma: l'idea, il luogo.

La genesi della scena di città e i suoi sviluppi, soprattutto quella tridimensionale della *Calandria* urbinata, è da ricondurre al «clima di fervore culturale alimentato dal pontificato di Leone x» (Ventrone 2003: 145). Anche da questo punto di vista, pertanto, risultano interessanti le due messinscene romane della commedia di Bibbiena, non ultimo per il collegamento diretto esistente tra l'autore e il pontefice – residente a Roma e per questo assente a Urbino, poiché investito della carica vescovile da papa Leone x – nonché per l'ambientazione stessa della commedia che rimanda alle relazioni tra Roma e Urbino (la prima “contenuta” nella seconda, come recita l'*Argomento* della commedia), celebrate nel salone del ducato marchigiano: «Tutto l'orientamento mentale della festa è verso Roma: l'associazione con la città eterna è evocata in ogni elemento dell'apparato [...]. Il muro di cinta con i due torrioni laterali è un'immagine forte della città e, in particolare, di Roma» (Ruffini 1986: 267). L'immagine dell'Urbe diviene paradigmatica nel Rinascimento, il suo «codice figurale [...] coincide con l'idea antonomastica della città, intesa come aggregato di edifici e di funzioni specificatamente urbane» (Zorzi 1987: 111).

Le rappresentazioni romane furono due, la prima si tenne nel dicembre 1514, la seconda nel gennaio 1515 alla presenza di Leone x e in onore di Isabella d'Este. Bibbiena si fece carico della messinscena del

1514, in Vaticano (*ibidem*: 342), cogliendo il successo del debutto urbinata, facendone espressa richiesta al duca di Urbino («dil Rolo, et dillo ordine secondo l'era stata data fuora Urbino», riporta il Ms. 490). Dello spettacolo urbinata, si suppone «si volessero mutuare gli elementi di maggiore impatto [...] il doppio muro con il fiume (Tevere) in mezzo, le due torri che limitavano il proscenio, il tempio ottagonale al centro, e l'arco trionfale» (*ibidem*).

Giorgio Vasari attribuisce la scenografia delle rappresentazioni romane a Baldassarre Peruzzi, riconoscendogli anche il primato nella scenotecnica:

Fece Baldassarre l'apparato e la prospettiva che non fu manco bella, anzi più assai che quella che aveva altra volta fatto, come si è detto di sopra; et in queste si fatte opere meritò tanto più lode, quanto per un gran pezzo addietro l'uso delle commedie e conseguentemente delle scene e prospettive era stato dismesso, facendosi in quella vece feste e rappresentazioni. Et o prima o poi che si recitasse la detta Calandra, la quale fu delle prime commedie volgari che si vedesse o recitasse, basta che Baldassarre fece al tempo di Leone x due scene che furono meravigliose et apersono la via a coloro che ne hanno fatto poi a' tempi nostri. Né si può immaginare come egli in tanta strettezza di sito accomodasse tante strade, tanti palazzi e tante bizzarrie di tempii, di loggie e d'andare di cornici, così ben fatte che parevano non finte, ma verissime, e la piazza non una cosa dipinta e picciola, ma vera e grandissima. Ordinò egli similmente le lumiere, i lumi di dentro che servono alla prospettiva e tutte l'altre cose che facevano di bisogno con molto giudizio, essendosi, come ho detto, quasi perduto del tutto l'uso delle commedie, la quale maniera di spettacolo avanza, per mio creder, quando ha tutte le sue appartenenze, qualunque altro quanto si voglia magnifico e sontuoso (Vasari 1879: 600-01).

Più complesso è il riconoscimento del progetto per la scenografia di questa rappresentazione, in alcuni disegni di Peruzzi, quindi l'attribuzione allo stesso architetto della scenografia in questione. In un primo momento, seguendo le indicazioni di Gaetano Milani, alla messinscena romana del 1514 è stato associato il disegno Uff. A 291¹², ipotesi «oggi definitivamente abbandonata» (Ruffini 1986: 343) e sostituita da altre due tesi. La prima, di Fabrizio Cruciani, che ha indicato in uno schizzo di scenografia (Uffizi A 30), il progetto peruziano per la scenografia romana (Cruciani 1974: 157). La seconda ipotesi è di Ruffini, il quale ha individuato come possibile modello per la messinscena del 1514, un altro disegno dello stesso artista¹³, con: «L'argine in muratura come ad Urbino, ma con la rientranza dell'attracco per evidenziare le due ali di marca peruziana; l'arco di trionfo “da un de' capi”

come ad Urbino, ma sopraelevato come in Uff. A 30 [...] Tutto lascia supporre che i due disegni siano collegati come elaborazioni diverse (o successive) di una scena basata sulla stessa idea di fondo» (*ibidem*: 342), con riferimento alla facciata della Villa Farnesina di Roma, progettata da Peruzzi, a sostenerne l'ipotesi. Elena Povoledo, intervenuta nel dibattito, ha escluso che i bozzetti del Peruzzi (Uff. A 291 e Uff. A 30) siano da ascrivere alla scena della *Calandria* romana, poiché «o posteriori al 1514, o non collegabili al testo del Bibbiena» (Povoledo 1975: 384).

La messinscena romana della *Calandria* rappresenta un passaggio importante nella trasformazione della scenografia rinascimentale e della relativa macchina spettacolare che la ingloba (Hara 2016), insieme ad altri allestimenti romani che definiscono la dimensione evolutiva della scenografia rinascimentale, come il *Poenulus* plautino messo in scena da Tommaso Inghirami al Campidoglio nel 1513 (Cruciani 1968), i *Suppositi* di Ariosto, con scene di Raffaello e le *Bacchides* di Plauto, con una scenografia attribuita al Peruzzi (Stäuble 1987: 77). Nonostante la paternità del Peruzzi non sia stata confermata per la scenografia romana della *Calandria*, non si può del tutto decontestualizzare dalla sua influenza figurativa sulla scena di città questa prassi che dalla Roma medicea dei primi del secolo, riecheggia nella codificazione serliana del 1545 (Ault 2007: 33-49).

La macchina scenica di Lione (27 settembre 1548)

Sebbene la rappresentazione di Urbino della *Calandria* rivesta «carattere di esemplarità», una «linea di continuità» ne accompagna gli «spostamenti» lungo un asse geografico, culturale e territoriale rappresentativo non solo della fortunata commedia, ma anche delle contingenze fra continuità e innovazioni nella prassi teatrale del tempo connesse alle dinamiche politiche coeve, che segue il percorso delle rappresentazioni romane (e quella mantovana del 1520), raggiungendo, infine, quella del 27 settembre 1548 a Lione. L'occasione è congiunta a un importante evento celebrativo, l'entrata in città di Enrico II e Caterina de' Medici, celebrato con una sontuosa festa intrisa di richiami alla tradizione classica, con parate, naumachie e giochi gladiatori¹⁴. Questo *jocundus adventus* è parte di una tradizione che interessa la città

francese già dal 1515, con le entrate per il giovane Francesco I e le feste del 1532-1533 in onore della regina Eleonora (Cooper 2019: 340). Della festa del 1548, episodio saliente della penetrazione del teatro italiano in Francia, fu promotore Ippolito d'Este, cardinale di Ferrara e Arcivescovo di Lione¹⁵, futuro *arbiter elegantiae* alla corte dei Valois, il quale intervenne direttamente finanziando le naumachie e investendo diecimila scudi per il banchetto finale, grazie all'intervento di banchieri e mercanti fiorentini della «Nazione Fiorentina»¹⁶. A due umanisti francesi si deve l'ideazione dell'entrata trionfale, Maurice Scève e Guillaume Du Choul, con la collaborazione di Claude De Taillemont, mentre le xilografie dell'«*élégant livret de fêtes*, in quarto» (Cooper 2019: 345) indirizzato agli spettatori francesi e a quelli italiani (Fig. 1), pubblicato nel 1549¹⁷, si devono a Bernard Salomon (cfr. Vinet 1874: 47; Mortimer 1964: 201; Sharrat 2005)¹⁸.



Fig. 1. Maurice Scève e Guillaume Du Choul, con la collaborazione di Claude De Taillemont, Frontespizio dell'edizione italiana de: *La Magnifica et Triumphale Entrata Del Chri stianiss. Re di Francia Henrico secondo di questo nome fatta nella nobile & antiqua città di Lyone a luy et à la sua serenissima consorte Chaterina alli 21 di Septemb. 1548. Colla particolare descrizione della Comedia che fece recitare la Nazione Fiorentina à richiesta di Sua Maestà Christianissima | In Lyone, appresso Guglielmo Rouillio 1549. | Con Privilegio.* Opuscolo a stampa, Editore: Guglielmo Rovillio (Guillaume Rouillé o Rouville – Editore: Dolus, Touraine, 1518 circa - Lione 1589). The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (CA) Stati Uniti.



Fig. 2. Maurice Scève e Guillaume Du Choul, *ibidem*, Prospettiva del Cambio.

L'entrata trionfale, svoltasi lungo le principali strade della città, con strutture posticce la cui descrizione e i relativi disegni sono contenuti nel libretto del 1549, si concluse con la messinscena della commedia, nella «Gran Salle Saint Jean» (Lalanne 1867: 256) del palazzo arcivescovile, ospitante un *teatro da sala*, d'impianto classicheggiante che rimandava alla «struttura delle sale d'apparato italiane», nella cui progettazione si ipotizza l'intervento di Sebastiano Serlio¹⁹. La sala, con tetto dipinto di «azzurro con alcuni nugoli», come da prassi consolidata nell'architettura teatrale cinquecentesca, che scendeva su una decorazione a sfondo rosso e vari fregi, sui tre lati, era munita di «cavea con gradinata, sormontata da un colonnato corinzio che spartiva le pareti in una serie di nicchie»²⁰. Parte integrante della decorazione è la «rievocazione visiva di Firenze», con rimandi alle principali città toscane che «completava lo schema iconografico dell'ornamento della sala, concepito per celebrare, attraverso opportuni richiami alla storia culturale fiorentina, l'immagine più prestigiosa della patria [...] evitando qualsiasi allusione al regime mediceo, non sostenuto ideologicamente da tutti i Fiorentini residenti nella città francese» (Mamone - Testaverde 2005: 71-72). Quella che si celebrava, attraverso la memoria di «uomini illustri» (condottieri, letterati e artisti), infatti, era la «Firenze illustrissima» del passato²¹. Il palcoscenico era munito di sipario calante,

con i due lati estremi aggettanti sugli spettatori (caratteristica che rimanda a Peruzzi e a Serlio), sormontati da balaustre dorate su cui poggiano torce bianche, colore anche utilizzato per illuminare la scena. La scenografia era costituita da un fondale raffigurante la città di Firenze, con richiami ad alcuni monumenti memorabili della città, anch'essi tipici della prassi coeva, come la cupola e il campanile del Duomo (Santa Reparata) e la torre del Palazzo «Ducale» (così denominato dal 1540, sotto Cosimo I, detto «Vecchio», dopo il 1565) che si concludeva con la canonica riproduzione pittorica di gradoni che, idealmente la mettevano in comunicazione con la porzione praticabile della scena. Autore della scenografia è Giovanni Capassini, detto Nannoccio²² assistito, nella decorazione della sala da «mastro Zanobi scultore»²³.

Nell'entourage dei comici chiamati dalla Toscana a rappresentare la commedia è attestata la presenza di Domenico Barlacchi²⁴, noto animatore della fiorentina Compagnia della Cazzuola²⁵, quasi certamente impegnato nel ruolo dello sciocco Calandro (Salza 1901: 27-33). La commedia piacque molto ai presenti tanto che, su esplicita richiesta, fu replicata due giorni dopo²⁶. Particolare interesse suscitavano gli intermezzi, composti e concertati da Piero Mannucci²⁷, sia per il tema mitologico che per le innovazioni tecniche della loro rappresentazione. Fu scelta l'allegoria delle Quattro Età dell'uomo (Oro, Argento, Bronzo e Ferro), echeggiante il tema presentato nella festa di Urbino²⁸.

L'ingresso del carro dell'Aurora, trainato da due galli, sancì l'inizio dello spettacolo. Aurora spargendo al suo incedere fiori d'oro, identici al ricamo del suo abito, intonò una «canzona» (madrigale) accompagnata da «due spinette e quattro flauti d'Alamagna»:

Io son Nuntia del Sol, che la prim'ora / Imperlo, e egli in dora: / Spenga il Cielo ogni stella, / Rend'al Mondo i color, che'l vespro invola: / Ch'homai gelata, e sola / All'opre usate appella / Ciascun la casta Aurora: / E'n vita à sospirar chi Amore adora²⁹.

Di seguito apparve Apollo (nume tutelare degli arcieri) armato di arco, freccia e faretra, nell'atto di suonare la lira e «coronato di verde lauro»³⁰, accompagnato dalle allegorie delle Quattro Età dell'uomo. Rivolgendosi al re, Apollo declamò alcune «stanze», illustrando il tema degli intermezzi:

Phebo son io, per cui s'alluma il giorno: / Per cui splende la Luna, e l'altre stelle: / Per cui sta il Mondo, e visi mostra adorno / D'animai d'erbe, e d'altre forme belle: / Sceso hoggi sol dall'immortal soggiorno / Come cui cosa desiata appelle, / Per voi vedere altissimo mio Henrico / Al Cielo, à i fatti, à ciascun buono amico. // Et per farvi l'honor, che mai non soglio / Ad altri far, che cosa sia mortale: / Quant'oprar'hò gia mai mostrar vi voglio / Da poi che per l'Olimpo apersi l'ale / En un momento innanzi à voi raccoglio / Quel che gran tempo à ripensar non vale, / Le tre passate eta con quella, ch'hora / (Ben che dispiaccia à voi) qua giu dimora. // Hor le mirate adunque, e questa prima / E l'ultima ond'io parlo, che si chiama / Ferrea crudel però che vive in cima / D'ogni bruttura, el vizio cole, e ama / Quel sol pregiando che'l suo troppo schiva / Si ch'altrui morte, e altrui danno brama / La quale io spero (e Phebo mai non erra) / Che per vostro valor degg'ir sotterra. // L'altra che prime fu dal Bronzo detta / Impia non era tal, ma i figli suoi / Hebbero in troppo honor forza, e vendetta, / In questa fur quei che chiamaste Heroi, / Iasone, Hercol, Theseo, con quella setta / Che Troia, e Thebe consumo tra voi: / Et di lodata vita al fin divisi / Godono il bel seren de i campi Elisi. // L'argentea è questa in cui con meno affanno / Et con miglior voler vivea la gente, / Solo haurea cura alle stagion dell'Anno / Di ben condurre al fin le sue semente, / Ciascun vinca del suo senza far danno / Al buon vicin poi con tranquilla mente / Questi morti alla fin spirti restaro / Divini habitator dell'aer chiaro. // Letade Aurata è quella ove nullo era / Dolor, tema, fatica, caldo, o gielo, / Sempre haveva ciascun la forza intera, / Ne si cangiavan mai voglie, ne pelo, / Spesso vede la sua mortale schiera / Seco gli Dei sotto terrestre velo / Poscia in dolce dormir venendo à morte / Ha in Ciel con Giove la medesima sorte³¹.

Seguirono, in sequenza, la rappresentazione del Prologo³², dell'*Argomento*³³, recitati rivolgendosi al sovrano, e l'inizio della commedia. Terminato il primo atto, fece nuovamente ingresso l'Età del Ferro, accompagnata dalla Crudeltà, colta nell'atto di assalire un fanciullo e con la veste ricoperta da immagini di rettili. Seguirono due allegorie dei sette vizi capitali: Avarizia, pallida e vestita di cenci³⁴; Invidia, figura femminile di orribile aspetto e con un serpente che le usciva dalla bocca. Al termine dell'intermezzo, l'Età del Ferro recitò alcuni versi replicati con il canto³⁵:

Questi finiti, si ritirarono due da una parte della scena, e due dall'altra per non tenere la vista agli spettatori di alcune persone che ritratte in pittura al naturale erano fatte passare dinnanzi al foro, la qual cosa segui sempre alla fine di tutti à quattro li atti, dico di passare alcuni simili personaggi i quali erano la maggior parte ritratti di alcune folle buffoni e Nani che seguitano la Corte i quali personaggi mentre che passavano era dentro

da quattro voci cantato in Musica quei versi che poco innanzi haveva recitati l'età del ferro, e nel medesimo tempo sonata la medesima Musica da quatro viole da gamba e da quatro flauti d'Allemagna: Et finita la Musica l'età del Ferro fatta di nuovo reverenza al Re (si come feccion sempre al venire e al partirsi tutte quelle persone che uscivano per intermedii riservato Apollo) se ne ritornò con le compagne dentro³⁶.

La sfilata di figure dipinte che occultava musicisti e cantanti impegnati a fare da contrappunto sonoro alle allegorie visive³⁷, crea un effetto straniante dei "suoni celati", come accaduto con la «musica nascosa» della messinscena urbinata³⁸.

Dopo il secondo atto apparve l'Età del Bronzo³⁹, accompagnata da Fortezza⁴⁰, Fama⁴¹, con acconciatura arricchita da orecchi e occhi e Vendetta, con emblematica veste rossa e in mano un coltello insanguinato.

Al termine del terzo atto comparve in scena l'Età d'Argento, con Cerere, dea greca dell'agricoltura e simbolo della madre terra che, essendo fonte primaria di fertilità con particolare riferimento al grano, era abbigliata con una veste ricoperta di spighe e cornucopia; seguiva Pales, dea latina degli armenti, coperta di pelli animali e: «uno zaino di gatti di Spagna [...] una testa di vitello, e in una delle mani un agnello e nell'altra un baston pastorale»⁴²; infine Agricoltura, dalla veste scura «sparsa d'alberi e d'erbe intagliate su raso verde [...] una acconciatura bellissima, tutta piena di detti alberi e erbe intagliate [...] in mano portava una vanga e una marra, e in spalla uno aratolo»⁴³. Dopo l'atto quarto fu rappresentato l'intermezzo dell'Età dell'Oro che giunse in scena accompagnata da Pace, vestita di bianco, con una «verga in cima della quale erano due mani che s'impugnavano»⁴⁴; Giustizia, una delle quattro virtù cardinali, ornata da: «un paio di bilance argentate, e nell'altra una spada ignuda co' fornimenti d'argento», suoi simboli canonici; Religione, elegantemente e castamente abbigliata, nell'atto di mostrare «le tavole di Mosè», suo peculiare emblema, il capo coperto da «velo bianchissimo» e la veste decorata con «molti calici intagliati su raso giallo», alludenti all'eucarestia⁴⁵.



Fig. 3. “La Pace” nel *Discours de la religion des anciens Romains* di Guillaume du Choul (1556).

Dopo l'atto quinto ritornò in scena Apollo che recitò alcuni versi, accompagnato dall'Età dell'Oro che portò in dono alla regina «un giglio d'oro massiccio». Il prezioso oggetto era decorato con immagini simboliche, aveva una base triangolare (probabile allusione ai Quattro Elementi o alla Trinità) uno scudo su due lati, con inciso un «giglio rosso fiorito», simbolo araldico di Firenze (nonché di Francia, sebbene con differente colorazione). Sui due lati della parte inferiore del giglio, insieme alle radici (le «barbe») erano raffigurate, rispettivamente, una ruota rotta e una vela stracciata, tipiche allegorie della Fortuna⁴⁶, possibile rimando a Caterina d'Alessandria e riferimento encomiastico alla sovrana. Sulla cima delle tre foglie era rappresentato il Globo che, posto sotto i piedi della Fortuna ne simboleggiava l'instabilità, in contrasto con la saldezza del piedistallo cubico, simbolo della Fede e della Storia. Sulle tre foglie campeggiavano altrettante figure, recanti rispettivamente: un serpente e uno specchio, due bilance e una spada, una colonna spezzata⁴⁷. Associando meraviglia visiva e stupefazione olfattiva, da alcuni fori «posti maestrevolmente nella parte sopra della palla», il Globo «esalava suavissimo odore [...] tratto da un

vasetto di profumiere».

A conclusione dell'allegoria mitologica comparve in scena la Notte, in abito scuro e «acconciatura stellata», seduta su un carro trainato da due guffi⁴⁸, che sancì la fine della messinscena.

Come da prassi i costumi utilizzati per la personificazione delle divinità e quelli indossati dagli attori, erano di foggia sfarzosa. Il ciclo mitico inscenato, indicato nell'*Iconologia* di Cesare Ripa come modello di questa allegoria (Ripa 2012: 682-83), fu rappresentato con una sequenza invertita rispetto alla tradizione ovidiana (*Metamorfosi* I, 89-150); necessità scaturita, probabilmente, dal contesto encomiastico della festa.

Facendo seguito a una pratica introdotta anche in altri spettacoli⁴⁹, venne concepito un intervallo temporale tra giorno e notte inglobante l'intero tempo della messinscena, ma non comprendente il 'giro di sole' della commedia⁵⁰. Il catalogo delle allegorie scalza il primato della commedia nella morfologia dello spettacolo. La centralità dell'evento si sposta dal gioco comico-erotico del testo, alla visualità straniante degli intermezzi⁵¹, giunti a compiutezza formale anche nella loro componente musicale, aprendo la strada alla prassi scenica di fine secolo che vedrà tra i protagonisti – lungo una traiettoria ispirativa comune, con «l'episodio festivo di Lione a rivelarsi il significativo punto di riferimento» (Mamone - Testaverde 2005: 77) – il genio “registico” e tecnico di Bernardo Buontalenti messo in atto nella ristrutturazione del teatro mediceo degli Uffizi (1583-1586)⁵² e nella macchina spettacolare de *La Pellegrina* di Girolamo Bargagli. Questa messa in scena si tenne nel rinnovato teatro fiorentino, il 2 maggio 1589, per le nozze di Ferdinando de' Medici con Cristina di Lorena (Warburg 1966: 59-102; Testaverde 1991 e 2016; Mamone 1987; Morel 1993), nei cambi scena a vista e nella rappresentazione dei sei intermezzi, l'architetto fiorentino propose una mediazione tra la scena *versatilis*, con l'utilizzo dei perianti e la scena *ductilis* con quinte scorrevoli, poi pienamente svipuppata nella scenografia barocca. Un apparato di voci, suoni e immagini che idealmente si incontrano, richiamandosi vicendevolmente e proiettandosi verso la spettacolarità futura.

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Notes

1 Il riferimento è alla *contaminatio* praticata da Plauto e Terenzio sui testi greci.

2 La prima commedia plautina ad essere rappresentata fu i *Menecmi*, il 25 gennaio 1486. Per l'occasione il cortile del palazzo ducale fu trasformato in sala teatrale, con una platea di panche per gli spettatori, mentre le spettatrici seguivano da balconi e finestre. Frontalmente, il palco ospitava uno spazio scenico elementare, tuttavia già recante la raffigurazione di una città con cinque case merlate, con porta e finestra. Ulteriore effetto scenografico era costituito dall'attraversamento del cortile di una nave con remi e un equipaggio di dieci persone (Falletti 1994: 135). «Altre commedie plautine vengono inscenate con un dispositivo analogo nel 1499, nel 1500 e nel 1501; fino a culminare

nella celebre sequenza del 1502, quando, in occasione delle nozze del duca Alfonso con Lucrezia Borgia, vengono rappresentate nell'arco di una settimana cinque commedie di Plauto (*Edipicus, Bacchides, Miles gloriosus, Asinaria, Casina*), voltate in volgare e rallegrate da intermezzi musicali» (Zorzi 1977: 19).

3 La scenografia è descritta da Bernardino Prosperi, in una sua lettera indirizzata a Isabella D'Este: «una contracta et prospectiva de una terra cum case, chiese, torre, campanili e zardini, che la persona non se può satiare a guardarla per le diverse cose che ge sono, tute de inzegno e bene intese» (*ibidem*: 27).

4 Ms. Vat. Urb. Lat. 490 (cc. 193v-196v) (Ruffini 1986: 311-15).

5 «La visione concreta della città [...] Parte soprattutto dall'immaginazione di pittori-architetti che rappresentano lo spazio urbano come reale o metaforico teatro della vita quotidiana [...] Il teatro fornisce i mezzi per l'organizzazione di strade e piazze come compiuti, reali spazi architettonici. Al tempo stesso la finzione teatrale tende ad escludere da essi la concreta vita degli uomini. Lascia il posto a tipi, a simboli, umani e architettonici [...] come per l'architettura e per le arti figurative, il disegno è lo strumento di controllo della città. Strumento che diviene comprensibile e comunicabile perché basato sulla visione prospettica dello spazio, cioè su di una strutturazione, che appare univoca, controllata dalla ragione e chiaramente intellegibile: e che ormai assimilata, divenuta una seconda natura, per tutti: artisti, esecutori, committenti» (Bruschi 1969: 635-47).

6 «Lo spazio scenico risulta quindi condizionato da due istanze divergenti. Da una parte deve, per ragioni di analogia con gli oggetti dell'azione, che in esso deve aver luogo, porsi come plastico: è il momento reale che si manifesta nella configurazione prevalentemente architettonica delle scene e nella commensurabilità postulate tra il "vuoto" scenico e la presenza volumetrica (scultorea) di corpi; dall'altra deve, per mantenere rapporti dimensionali accettabili, simulare un volume maggiorato: è il momento illusionistico, che si realizza mediante l'elaborazione pittorica degli elementi costitutivi dell'impianto scenico. La progettazione e la realizzazione di un impianto scenografico pongono dunque il problema della convivenza tra uno spazio fisico, *oggettivo*, e uno spazio scenico illusionistico, *soggettivo*. (Marotti 1974: 167-68).

7 Si sviluppa quella prassi che in pittura aveva visto proliferare tale tecnica dai primi tentativi intuitivi ed empirici di Filippo Brunelleschi, sistematizzati nel *De Pictura* di Leon Battista Alberti (pubblicato in latino nel 1435 e l'anno successivo in volgare) e poi ulteriormente ampliati nella *Institutionem geometricarum Libri quatuor* di Albrecht Dürer (1525).

8 In modo più elaborato, nella messinscena fiorentina del *Commodo* del 1539 di Antonio Landi, Bastiano da Sangallo poneva fuori dalla prospettiva, nel corridoio denominato da Serlio 'Piazza della scena', situato tra il palcoscenico e la sala, «uno spatioso canale, dipinto dentro e d'intorno in tal modo che pareva l'Arno», che divideva gli spettatori dal palco fingendo l'Arno, adoperato per lo sgombramento di intermezzi acquatici.

9 Sulla 'trasformazione' della sala in un «vero teatro» (Moncallero 1968: 828; Povoledo 1975: 419; Fontes-Baratto 1974: 47; Ruffini 1986: 197).

10 Così in *Calandria*, atto terzo scena vxi.

11 È nota una particolare tipologia nella rappresentazione di Venere che distingue le tre diverse nature che incarnano le rispettive differenti figurazioni, regolate dalle variazioni del mito della sua nascita. Esiste, infatti, una Venere Pandemia, figlia di Giove e Dione, simbolo dell'*amor ferinus*, una Venere Saturnia, nata da Saturno, alla quale si attribuisce l'*amor humanus* e una Venere Urania, nata dalla castrazione di Urano da parte di Saturno, associata all'*amor divinus* (Ruffini, 1986: 236-39). Si deve precisare che quest'ultima è una variante successiva dell'origine classica delle due precedenti, introdotta nel tardo Quattrocento. Si ricordi, infatti, che le prime due genealogie sono quelle stesse accolte da Platone nel *Simposio* (Hall, 2007: 412-14; Kerényi, 1962: 63-72; Wind, 1971: 159-73; Gombrich, 1978: 105-08).

12 Nella sua edizione delle *Vite* del Vasari, Gaetano Milani include, nel novero delle «Prospettive sceniche di Roma» del Peruzzi, un «Grande disegno a penna o a matita rossa con sue misure di un apparato in prospettiva, servito, forse, per le scene fatte dal Peruzzi, come dice il Vasari, per la rappresentazione della "comedia della Calandra" del cardinale Bibbiena». (Vasari, 1879: 640). Più recentemente Annamaria Petrioli Tofani ha attribuito il disegno a Giorgio Vasari stesso, il quale lo avrebbe utilizzato per la messinscena della *Talanta* a Venezia nel 1542 (Petrioli Tofani 1994: 167; 1995-1996: 204-05).

13 N. 441 del Taccuino Rothschild al Cabinet des Dessins del Louvre (Coll. Rothschild) (Ruffini, 1986: 339).

14 Riferimenti alla rappresentazione lionese si trovano in (Fontanini 1803: 389; Bandini 1758: 64; Tiraboschi 1833: 204; Baschet 1882; D'Ancona 1891: 456; Solerti 1901: 693-99; Moncallero 1968: 100-03; Ruffini 1985: 325-30; Mamone - Testaverde 2005: 65-77; Cooper 2018: 339-53).

15 Il quale si fece inviare da Venezia le edizioni di otto commedie, al fine di scegliere quella da rappresentare nel corso della festa lionese (Cooper 2019: 350).

16 «In questo incarico la colonia aveva impiegato tutta l'influenza e il peso economico e intellettuale che da lungo tempo deteneva a Lione, città notoriamente aperta agli influssi artistici e culturali del tempo. Ma se i rapporti culturali con Firenze erano intensi e produttivi, altrettanto non lo erano quelli politici per la presenza di molti fuoriusciti repubblicani. La necessità, quindi, di evitare qualsiasi imbarazzante allusione al regime attuale fiorentino, dichiaratamente filoimperiale e all'epoca non in buoni rapporti con il re francese, fu determinante nella definizione dell'immagine della natia patria, presentata al re e alla regina dai Fiorentini». (Mamone - Testaverde 2005: 70). Cooper ritiene dichiaratamente antimedicca la festa lionese: «Je reviendrais ailleurs sur la pièce, et sur les intermèdes, qui ont pu être interprétés comme anti-médicéens, ce qui n'a rien de suprenant quand on pense que le public était composé de fuoriusciti» (*ibidem*: 351).

17 *La | Magnifica et | Triumphale Entrata Del Chri | stianiss. Re di Francia Henrico secondo di questo nome |*



fatta nella nobile et antiqua città di Lione a luy et | à la sua serenissima consorte Chaterina alli 21 | di Septemb. 1548. | Colla particolare descrizione della Comedia che fece | recitare la Nazione Fiorentina à richiesta di Sua | Maestà Christianissima | In Lyone, appresso Gulielmo Rouillio 1549. | Con Privilegio. «È in 4°; segn. A-0 quaderni, e P duerno; con belle iniziali figurate e con incisioni in pagina intera degli apparati fatti per le vie della città in occasione dell'ingresso degli sposi reali. Sul verso del frontespizio è il Privilegio; la cc. A₂v contiene una lettera d'invio del traduttore F. M. al Signor Francesco Vissino di Padova, in data di Lione 1° marzo 1549; le cc. A₂r-L₄v, contengono la descrizione dell'ingresso e della festa fatte. Segue a c. M1r il nuovo titolo: Particola- | re Descripio | ne della Come- | dia fatta recitare in Lione dalla Na- | tione Fiorentina a richiesta | di Sua Maestà Chri- | stianissima; fino al termine dell'opuscolo». Solerti, 1901: 693-99. Guglielmo Rovillio (Guillaume Rouillé o Rouville – Editore: Dolus, Touraine, 1518 circa - Lione 1589). Dopo un soggiorno giovanile a Venezia, dove si formò presso Gabriele Giolito de' Ferrari, ottenne il suo primo impiego a Lione nel 1546, dopo un inizio di attività a Parigi, presso i librai De Portonariis di origine italiana, in buone relazioni con lo stampatore veneziano, col quale stampò la sua prima edizione italiana a Lione nel 1546. La versione francese del testo si deve a: *La magnificence de la superbe et triumpante entree de la noble et antique Cite de Lyon faite au Tres-chrestien Roy de France Henry deuxiesme de ce Nom, Et à la Roynne Catherine son Espouse, le XXIII de Septembre M.D.XLVIII. 1549* (Brunet 1810: 996-97; Murray 1910: 151), si deve a Scève, Du Choul e De Taillemont, e le xilografie di Bernard Salomon (cfr. Vinet 1874: 47; Mortimer 1964: 201). I due autori furono anche tra gli organizzatori dell'accoglienza; Scève (Lione, 1501-1564 circa), fu autore di *Delie, object de plus haulte vertu*, e capofila del gruppo di poeti della Pléiade, De Taillemont (Lione, 1506-1588) autore di sonetti e poemi caratterizzati da un linguaggio ermetico, fortemente influenzato dalla cultura italiana cui fu profondamente legato. Bernard Salomon, noto anche come il Piccolo, Bernard B. Gallus o Gallo (1506-1561), fu pittore, disegnatore e incisore, ispirato dall'elegante manierismo della Scuola di Fontainebleau, incaricato delle decorazioni per Ippolito II d'Este, nel 1540, per la festa lionese del 1548 e per Jacques Dalbon, signore di Saint Andre nel 1550. Ebbe una lunga collaborazione con lo stampatore Jean de Tournes, incidendo e illustrando documentari, opere scientifiche e letterarie, compresa una *Bibbia* e *Le Metamorfosi* di Ovidio (1557). Necessario rilevare che il testo francese non comprende la descrizione della commedia, presente invece in quella italiana, che non viene neanche citata nel frontespizio; per Richard Cooper: «L'analyse des différences entre la description de l'entrée royale à Lyon en 1548 faite par Scève et les descriptions italiennes conservée va révéler quelaques surprises» (Cooper 2019: 339). Confrontando la cronaca pubblicata da Scève con alcune testimonianze di ambasciatori presenti all'avvenimento, emergono alcune manomissioni dello stesso Scève nella descrizione del percorso dell'entrata trionfale e del corredo iconografico della festa. Il programma iconografico di Scève prefigurava la *Lugdunum* romana e si sviluppa-

va lungo un trionfo dell'età antica, nel quale si rendeva manifesta l'influenza di Du Choul. Le discrepanze nelle descrizioni di Scève sono più evidenti nel confronto con i monumenti raffigurati da Salomon, nonostante i due avessero collaborato strettamente. Esempio significativo è la rappresentazione della "Prospettiva del Cambio" (Fig. 2), che Scève descrive come una rappresentazione della città di Troia, mentre il disegno di Salomon presenta una immagine analoga alle vedute prospettiche italiane, sulla scorta delle figurazioni presentate da Serlio. Peraltro, lo stesso architetto si stabilirà a Lione nel 1548-1549 dove, nel 1551, pubblicherà l'*Extraordinario libro* dedicato a Enrico II (Fournel 3) e dove disegnò il nuovo progetto della Loggia del Cambio, luogo delle attività commerciali della città francese e dimora di banchieri italiani come Tommaso Guadagni. (Cooper, 2019, 346-47). Guillaume du Choul (1496 ca. - 4 novembre 1560), proveniva da una famiglia di giuristi lionesi. Studiò diritto all'Università di Valence e, dal 1522, ricoprì la carica di bailli delle Montagne di Delfinato con sede a Lione; fu di fatto uomo di corte di Enrico II. Cugino di Scève, fu anche imparentato con Claudio Tolomei. La sua attività di antiquario e numismatico è documentata tra il 1536-1538 e il 1546-1556. Importanti le sue collezioni di immagini riproducenti la vita dell'antica Roma e di sicuro interesse documentario, insieme alla sua biblioteca, nella quale era presente un nutrito numero di pubblicazioni di antiquari italiani. (Cooper 2003: 261-86).

18 Così Cooper: «es tune première européenne qui dépasse même ce qui s'est fait pour les prochaines entrées, Paris, Rouen, et Anvers» (Cooper 2019: 345). Per la sua redazione Scève richiese una sovvenzione di dodici scudi, facendo affidamento sulla sua consolidata esperienza nella combinazione fra poesia e immagini (*ibidem*).

19 Secondo Cooper: «ici le role de Serlio est, à mon avis, manifeste. Ippolito fait transformer radicalement l'intérieur de son palais pour aménager une grande salle pour les banquets, comme Fontainebleau. Au Grand Ferrare dessiné par Serlio, et un théâtre à l'italienne, un *teatro da sala*. Scève donne peu de details sur le théâtre car je suppose qu'il tient à mettre en vedette uniquement, ou principalement, la contribution de la Municipalité, et non celle des Italiens; mais il lui aurait fallu tout un vocabulaire technique architectural, et je me demande s'il le possédait» (*ibidem*: 349).

20 Richard Cooper riconduce la struttura del teatro lionese all'influenza serliana, ipotizzando l'intervento dell'architetto nella realizzazione del teatro lionese (*ibidem*: 62). «Serlio vivait chez Ippolito, pour qui il venait de participer à la transformation de Chaalis et de construire le Grand Ferrare. Mais, en 1548, son nome ne figure plus dans les comptes de ces deux propriétés, et je pense que le cardinal l'à envoyé à Lyon pour préparer l'entrée du roi, annoncée depuis mai 1548, d'abord fixée pour juin ou julliet, puis retardée jusqu'à la fin de septembre. Si certains monuments accusent d'influence de Serlio, c'est qu'il est présent à Lyon. Et il y restera pour préparer le livre VI, pour dresser des project d'urbanisme pour une ville restée medievale, et pour participer à la preparation de l'entrée a Lyon le 28 septembre 1552 du cardinal François de Tournon» (*ibi-*

dem: 348). Tuttavia, è altresì probabile che le maestranze fiorentine giunte a Lione per l'occasione, abbiamo voluto proporre un teatro simile a quello presente a Firenze, nella Sala del Papa in Santa Maria Novella, animate in quegli anni dall'attività teatrale cittadina. (Mamone - Testaverde 2005: 70). L'eco della festa lionese "ritorna" nella memoria di Vincenzo Borghini, allorché il dotto priore si dedica all'organizzazione dei festeggiamenti fiorentini per le nozze tra Francesco de' Medici e Giovanna D'Austria, nel 1565. Nella progettazione delle architetture temporanee che costituiscono il viatico dell'ingresso in città degli sposi, Borghini mette a frutto la memoria di «una decina di avvenimenti spettacolari "europei" organizzati tra il 1548 e il 1549 per celebrare la regalità di Enrico II e di Filippo II» (*ibidem*: 65-66), regolarmente e puntualmente appuntati su un prezioso taccuino, nel quale particolare rilievo è riservato alla festa lionese del 1548.

21 «Questa immagine retorica, secondo l'analisi condotta da Cooper, avrebbe avuto come modello un celebre precedente nella galleria di ritratti affrescati da Andrea Del Castagno tra il 1449 e il 1451 nella Villa Carducci a Legnaia, nei pressi di Firenze» (*ibidem*: 72; Cooper 2002: 63).

22 Giovanni (Nannoccio) Capassini (Firenze dopo il 1510-Tournon circa 1579). Pittore fiorentino al servizio del cardinale di Tournon e poi a Lione e ad Aix en Provence, attivo in Francia nel terzo venticinquennio del Cinquecento. Dopo avere curato la scenografia per la *Calandria* e dopo la morte del cardinale di Tournon, nel 1562, lavorò agli apparati per l'ingresso di Carlo IX e di Caterina de' Medici ad Aix-en-Provence nel 1564; si stabilì successivamente a Lione, dove è documentato fra il 1565 e il 1568 (Bellosi 1994: 93-95).

23 Si tratterebbe di Zanobi Lastricati (1508-1590), che fu Provveditore generale dell'Accademia del Disegno e sostituì Benvenuto Cellini nel gruppo degli artisti designati per la realizzazione delle onoranze funebri di Michelangelo (Mamone - Testaverde 2005: 73).

24 *La | Magnifica et | Triumphale Entrata* cit., P3r. Sulla figura del Barlacchi: (Salza 1901: 27-33; Petrini 1996: 59-64).

25 Singolare accademia, attiva a Firenze dal 1512, chiamata compagnia della "Cazzuola" per uno scherzo di cui fu vittima un socio, al quale fu offerta una cazzuola di calce facendola passare per ricotta. In questa scanzonata congrega, della quale fecero parte letterati come Iacopo da Bientina e Battista dell'Ottonaio, Barlacchi, conosciuto per le sue facezie e spiritosaggini, maturò un'esperienza di attore nelle rappresentazioni di diverse commedie tra cui la *Calandria*.

26 «Circa la soddisfazione della Comedia, non pur sua Maestà che lo disse più d'una volta, ma ancora i Signori e Gentiluomini di Corte per una voce tutti gl'altri dissero quello che veramente ne sentivano, poi che videndo due giorni appresso come quella sera la si faceva a preghiera di questi della terra, che non vi erano potuti la prima volta entrare sua Maestà in aspettata vi venne (si come anco fece la Regina e tutta la Corte) non ostante, che fusse l'hora a punto della sua cena: laquale prolungò per dopo la Comedia, che durò quatro hore, ò davantaggio e andò

sempre tanto bene che non vi segui mai pure un minimo errore dalla quale poi partendosi sua Maestà disse essersi piaciuta ancora piu che la prima volta. Piacque à sua Maestà la seconda volta stare con alcuni Signori à vedere sul palco ove innanzi che cadesse la cortina volle (fattisi venire avanti tutti lii strioni) esser da coloro che haveveno la cura della Commedia di tutto particolarmente informata. Alla sua partita poi di questa terra, fece donare alli strioni cinquecento scudi d'oro, e la Regina trecento, di modo che il Barlacchi, e gli altri strioni che di Firenze si feciono venire in giu se ne tornarono con una borsa piena di scudi per ciascuno». *La | Magnifica et | Triumphale Entrata* cit., P2r-P2v.

27 «tutte le musiche furono composte e gli strumenti consertati da Messer Piero Mannucci qua organista della Natione Fiorentina in nostra Dama» (*ibidem*: P1r), Notre Dame-du-Confort, luogo di riunione della "nazione fiorentina", a Lione. Nel 1548 l'incarico di «organista in Nostra Donna» era passato al fiorentino Mannucci dopo la morte del suo predecessore, Francesco Aioli, anch'egli fiorentino.

28 Come ha precisato Ruffini sussiste una «intima corrispondenza tra la quaterna degli elementi e quella delle età dell'uomo. Nella cultura simbolica del platonismo esse sono, di fatto, la stessa cosa. E marcano un identico itinerario» (Ruffini 1986: 329). Il contenuto neoplatonico degli intermezzi rimanda a una inclinazione comune tra Urbino e Lione verso tali connotazioni simboliche. La stessa Caterina de' Medici si era mostrata proclive nei confronti della simbologia esoterica, così come la cultura lionese coeva (Ruffini 1986: 327; Yates 1947; Leclerc 1959).

29 *La | Magnifica et | Triumphale Entrata* cit., N1v.

30 Il «verde lauro» è una variante dell'aureola di raggi luminosi, tipica delle divinità solari. Nella pittura del XV e XVI secolo Apollo è spesso rappresentato nudo, così come appare nella recita lionese, mentre suona la lira accompagnato da nove Muse (Hall 2007: 53).

31 *La | Magnifica et | Triumphale Entrata* cit., N2v.

32 Per come si evince dalla descrizione, dopo un *incipit* rivolto direttamente al sovrano, il prologo utilizzato fu quello recitato a Urbino (*ibidem*).

33 «vi voglio avvertire come lo argomento della Commedia fu fra l'altre mutato in questa parte, che dove lo authore finge (come sapete) la favola essere avvenuta in Roma si disse essere accaduta in Firenze e però tutti li istrioni furono (eccetto il Negromante che vesti alla Grechesca) vestiti ricchissimamente (secondo però il grado di ciascuno) alla Fiorentina» (*ibidem*: N3v).

34 Iconografia discordante rispetto alla tradizione, in cui è raffigurata bendata e recante una borsa di denari.

35 Per il simbolismo dell'Età del Ferro si veda Hall 2007: 66, 88, 167, 236.

36 *La | Magnifica et | Triumphale Entrata* cit., O1r.

37 Si tratta, con ogni probabilità delle «figurette» indicate da Sebastaino Serlio nel *Secondo libro di prospettiva*, nel quale l'architetto raccomanda: «Mentre la scena è vota di dicatori, potrà l'architetto aver preparato alcune ordinanze di figurette di quella grandezza che si ricercherà dove averanno passare, e queste saranno di grosso cartone co-



lorite e tagliate intorno, le quali posaranno sopra un regolo di legno a traverso la scena [...] e tal fiata dimostrare che siano musici con istrumenti e voci, onde dietro alla scena sarà una musica a somossa voce» (Marotti 1974: 204).

38 (Ruffini 1986: 310). Anche negli intermezzi della boccacciana *Danae* di Baldassarre Taccone (1496) si allude al suono di strumenti: «ascosi dietro e quelle macchine de la scena».

39 Per l'Età del Bronzo e la sua simbologia si veda Hall 2007: 167, 171, 180.

40 Una delle quattro virtù cardinali, assimilata a Minerva, simbolo di coraggio, sopportazione e forza, valori che, nell'iconografia del Rinascimento, erano incarnati da eroi biblici e mitologici.

41 La quale, in eccezione all'iconografia classica, recava con sé l'attributo della tromba.

42 La latina Pales, dea protettrice degli armenti, delle greggi e della pastorizia, in epoca storica fu confusa con Cerere, sicché ne rimase vivo soltanto il nome, che senza alcun fondamento scientifico fu collegato con quello di Palatino (Messina 1958: 226).

43 *La | Magnifica et | Triumphale Entrata* cit., O2r. Figurezioni che incarnano il tema del lavoro nei campi, complementare all'Età d'Argento durante la quale, secondo il mito, terminava l'eterna primavera e l'uomo doveva costruirsi rifugi primitivi per ripararsi dal freddo e imparare ad arare e seminare. Per la simbologia di questo intermezzo si veda (Hall 2007: 99, 167).

44 Probabile variante della torcia accesa, propria dell'iconografia rinascimentale e barocca. Come compare, peraltro, nel *Discours de la religion des anciens Romains* di Guillaume Du Choul edito a Lione da Rouillé nel 1556, ma già in parte pubblicato nel 1546 (Du Choul 1556: 18), dettaglio (Fig. 3) che indurrebbe a considerare il miniaturista l'ideatore dell'impianto iconologico lionese, nel quale talune raffigurazioni non paiono confrontabili con quelle proposte nell'*Iconologia* di Cesare Ripa.

45 Per l'Età dell'Oro e i suoi attributi si veda Hall: 167, 220, 313. L'uso del calice, oggetto di devozione è sancito dalle parole di Cristo nell'Ultima Cena (*Marco*, 14, 23). In alcune rappresentazioni questo è attribuito alla Fede personificata e a diversi santi (Hall 2007: 220).

46 Esistono due aspetti della Fortuna: la dea incostante dell'Antichità riesumata nel Rinascimento, che distribuisce imprevedibilmente i suoi favori, e la Fortuna del Medioevo che fa girare la sua ruota: il suo attributo più consueto è il Globo, sul quale siede o sta in piedi; questo era in origine indice d'instabilità, ma per la mentalità rinascimentale divenne simbolo del mondo sul quale essa estende il suo dominio. La volubilità è connessa al vizio, perciò alla Fortuna sul suo Globo è spesso contrapposta la personificazione della Virtù, sorretta invece da un cubo simbolo di stabilità (il Globo è anche attributo dell'Occasione che può essere vista come un prodotto della Fortuna). In Orazio (*Odi*, I, 35) la Fortuna è signora del mare, i cui flutti incutono timore ai naviganti; pertanto i suoi attributi comprendono il Timone e la Vela, quest'ultima con allusione alla volubilità del vento (Hall 2007: 180).

47 Secondo Padoan si tratterebbe di rappresentazioni del-


la Verità, della Giustizia e della Pace menzionate nei versi di Apollo (Padoan 1985: 231).

48 La presenza dei gufi, uccelli dal significato negativo (come le civette, di cui rappresentano una variante iconografica), nel carro della Notte potrebbe anche essere giustificata dal fatto che nel Rinascimento sia questa sia il Giorno erano considerate due forze distruttive perché scandivano lo scorrere perenne del tempo che conduceva inesorabilmente al corrompimento e alla morte. Questa concezione è comunque soggetta a variazioni per quanto riguarda il tema degli intermezzi della recita lionese (Hall 2007: 303-04).

49 Così come realizzato nei sei intermezzi composti in occasione del carnevale 1566, per la rappresentazione a Firenze del *Granchio* di Leonardo Salviati, ideati dall'accademico Bernardo de Merli e con il patrocinio della Nazione fiorentina. In quell'occasione fu rappresentata l'allegoria delle quattro età dell'uomo: Fanciullezza, Gioventù, Virilità e Vecchiaia, inserita in un contesto temporale scandito, anch'esso, dall'alternarsi del giorno e della notte, con la sovrapposizione simbolica del tempo: «La commedia dura poco meno, che un giro di Sole; cominciando quasi in sul mezzo giorno, & avanti il tempo predetto nel seguente di terminando: & perché in così fatto spazio di tempo si considerano, e ci hanno quattro hore realment diverse, la Mattina, il Mezzo di, la Sera, e la Notte [...] & perché ciascuna di quest'età (le quattro età dell'uomo) s'assomiglia a una dell'hore predette; [...] ciascuna età si introduce nella sua hora propria [...] simile a lei» (Pirrotta 1975: 203). Così come, nella già menzionata rappresentazione del *Commodo*, a Firenze nel 1539, il «primo dei grandi spettacoli di corte cinquecenteschi [...] gli intermedii rappresentarono il *non plus ultra* del raffinamento e della magnificenza dell'avvenimento teatrale», i sette intermezzi furono concentrati in un arco temporale scandito dall'alternanza tra l'Aurora e la Notte (*ibidem*: 173-87).

50 «Ma tra il primo e l'ultimo intermedio (che è poi l'ottavo!) non vi fu, come vi era stato ne *Il commodo*, un continuo richiamarsi al progresso delle ore del giorno; il concetto di “continuità” del tempo sembra ormai essersi irrigidito in quello di “unità”, cioè la prescrizione di un termine temporale definito dall'inizio e fine del giorno solare [...] La rappresentazione lionese della *Calandria* raggiunse il numero di otto intermedii sdoppiando quello innanzi al prologo e l'altro dopo la fine del quinto atto. Si può dire che Aurora e Notte facessero da cornice alla cornice; o meglio, che la cornice ampliata consistesse di più fasce concentriche. Apollo che si presenta nel secondo e nel settimo intermedio (anch'essi prima del prologo e dopo l'atto v) rinnova la figura dell'“uno che canta sulla lira”; canta infatti una serie di “stanze” e si assume l'incarico di rendere omaggio agli spettatori di maggior riguardo e di presentare lo spettacolo [...]» (Pirrotta 1975: 187-89).

51 Lo scollamento fra carnalità comica del testo e idillio cortigiano della messinscena è presente anche nello spettacolo urbinato. Il «giubileo della carne e dell'intelligenza, non riesce a identificarsi con la scena splendida realizzata a Urbino [...] e la Roma monumentale in stucco e prospettiva, non era tanto la città di Calandro, quanto la sede di Giulio II» (*ibidem*: 380-81). Così come negli intermezzi



della stessa recita, oltre ai motivi allegorici presentava, in modo encomiastico, evidenti allusioni politiche agli avvenimenti della Lega di Cambrai e della Lega Santa (1508-1512) (*ibidem*: 381, 406). Allo stesso modo, la recita lionese si installa nel dispositivo festivo allegoricamente più ampio e articolato dell'entrata trionfale dei sovrani nella città francese.

52 «Le sorprendenti analogie strutturali e tipologiche del nuovo arredo, posto a confronto con quello realizzato dalla “nazione fiorentina” a Lione, il desiderio di una internazionale “citazione storica”, il recupero di un episodio che celebrava visivamente sia i fasti fiorentini che le origini dinastiche della sposa Cristina, nipote della regina Caterina de' Medici [...] rinviano ad una nuova lettura del teatro mediceo degli Uffizi e quindi ad un nuovo capitolo della storia dello spettacolo mediceo». (Mamone-Testaverde 2005: 77).

Il “Paradiso” di Leonardo Da Vinci. Politica, astrologia e teatro

Francesca Bortoletti

Il 13 gennaio 1490, a Milano, nella Sala Verde del Castello Sforzesco, Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) mette in scena la prima, per quanto a noi noto, rappresentazione teatrale da lui firmata, conosciuta con il nome di *Festa del Paradiso*. Il committente è Ludovico Sforza (1452-1508), il Moro, reggente di Milano per il nipote Gian Galeazzo, divenuto duca della città lombarda all'età di 7 anni. L'occasione è la festa nuziale tra il giovane Gian Galeazzo (1469-1494) e Isabella d'Aragona (1470-1524), nipote di Ferdinando I (1431-1494), re di Napoli. L'autore dei dialoghi è il poeta fiorentino Bernardo Bellincioni (1452-1492). Per l'occasione, Leonardo, regista e scenografo della *festa*, elabora un *ingegno*, riprodotto il moto dei sette pianeti, secondo le conoscenze del tempo, e ospitante i sette dei dell'Olimpo: un soggetto astrologico, mitologico ed encomiastico, elaborato in un complesso spettacolo multimediale di musica, danza, poesia e arti figurative e meccaniche, portando sulla terra, alla corte sforzesca, un *Paradiso* - pagano - in onore dei novelli sposi¹.

Il *Paradiso* di Leonardo fu, in realtà, una sorta di continuazione dei festeggiamenti per le nozze Sforza-d'Aragona, celebrate un anno prima a Tortona, e tuttavia interrotte a causa della morte della madre di Isabella. È un evento prima di tutto politico, con il quale Ludovico il Moro intende omaggiare la giovane coppia, Isabella, ma soprattutto affermare il suo potere, *de facto* ma non *de iure*, e suscitare l'ammirazione della corte e degli ospiti, facendo loro apprezzare la sua grandezza e magnificenza. La festa, il teatro, la musica, la danza, l'arte e la poesia sono pensati

e praticati dal Moro come strumenti del potere e come nuovi linguaggi della comunicazione politica². Una progettualità propagandistica, diremo oggi, sulla quale, a fine Quattrocento, si stagliano nuove forme di sperimentazione drammaturgica, fondative di nuovi valori, segni e concetti della cultura moderna e di una memoria collettiva.

Il ruolo di questi eventi nella creazione di consenso e carisma nella prima società moderna rimane una delle principali questioni storiche e storiografiche degli studi europei sulla festa³, di cui il 'laboratorio Italia' tra Quattro e Cinquecento rappresenta un caso di studio unico e privilegiato. Cuore della storia europea e della diplomazia internazionale dall'Europa alle città del Mediterraneo, l'Italia premoderna - con le sue città-stato, repubbliche, ducati e marchesati - è un territorio politicamente e culturalmente articolato e composito. Le strategie politiche di alleanza perseguite da ciascuna famiglia regnante, compresi i matrimoni politici, contribuiscono a cementare le relazioni diplomatiche tra le varie corti e, al tempo stesso, stimolano un ricco calendario di festeggiamenti, favorendo la sperimentazione nelle arti e la creazione di un linguaggio di potere, ispirato alla cultura classica, che sostanzia una dimensione partecipativa e rituale della storia politica e sociale del Rinascimento.

Leonardo non può sfuggire al fermento del suo tempo intorno al cerimoniale festivo pubblico e privato. Le sue radici fiorentine e la familiarità con la politica festiva di Lorenzo de' Medici (1449-92) gli consentono di comprendere subito le ambizioni politiche del suo nuovo mecenate. L'apertura del Moro al connubio tra saperi scientifici e sperimentali con la tradizione poetica e visiva classica, inoltre, gli offrono

l'opportunità di proseguire le sue ricerche tra arte, scienza, astrologia medica e teatro, inaugurando un nuovo genere di spettacolo teatrale e invenzione ingegneristica per la meraviglia della corte sforzesca e i suoi ospiti, *a futura memoria*.

Prendendo, dunque, le mosse dal contesto storico e politico della corte milanese e dalla ricostruzione dell'evento, questo articolo mira a rileggere il noto e memorabile *ingegno* leonardesco della *Festa del Paradiso* illustrandone valori simbolici, le forme e le tecniche che lo compongono, ricostruendo il suo 'backstage', i suoi modelli nella tradizione pagana e cristiana e, infine, i suoi epigoni, la sua memoria. Vedremo ricomporsi uno straordinario esempio di mediazione e sintesi tra culture diverse e funzioni politiche, attraverso l'elaborazione di una complessa 'meraviglia' iconografica, scenica e performativa, che nutrendosi delle forme e matrici del nuovo sapere filosofico e scientifico, trova nel teatro e nelle arti uno dei suoi momenti più alti di progettualità e memorabilità.

L'Evento. La politica delle stelle: terra, cielo e mito

Nel cuore della residenza ducale degli Sforza, in uno spazio intimo e privato del Castello, Leonardo mette in scena il suo *Paradiso*. La sala era stata progettata non per matrimoni o grandi cerimonie, ma per eventi informali e familiari. Le dimensioni erano modeste. In fondo alla sala stava la cappella del duca Gian Galeazzo, davanti alla quale fu posto, quel giorno, il maestoso *ingegno* leonardesco, coperto da un grande telo alla vista degli illustri ospiti e ambasciatori, accorsi per assistere alla celebrazione delle nozze del giovane Sforza con Isabella.

La documentazione sulla messinscena non è molto ricca, specie se comparata alla rilevanza politica dell'evento. Nessun disegno di Leonardo sembra direttamente riferibile alla progettazione della scena, sebbene alcune ipotesi siano state avanzate - ma su questo torneremo a breve. Oltre al libretto di Bellincioni, *Festa ossia Rappresentazione chiamata Paradiso*, rimangono una cronaca narrata da Giacomo Trotti (1423-95), ambasciatore del duca di Ferrara Ercole d'Este (1431-1505), e una descrizione del segretario del Moro, Tristano Calco (1455-1515)⁴. Tuttavia, questi racconti sono stati sufficienti per consentire agli storici di percepire l'eccezionalità di questo evento, la meraviglia degli

spettatori e la complessità dell'ingegno scenico e di tutto il cerimoniale che precede e segue la rappresentazione teatrale vera e propria⁵.

Isabella, vestita alla spagnola, apre la festa con due danze napoletane al suono di tamburini. Seguono una serie di danze diplomatiche, eseguite da attori e danzatori, simulando l'arrivo di ambascierie, che portano doni preziosi e parole di omaggio alla sposa Isabella da parte dei signori delle più importanti corti d'Europa e del Mediterraneo: gli ambasciatori del re di Polonia, Spagna, Ungheria, del Gran Turco e infine degli imperatori di Germania e Francia.

e cosi' poi ogni homo balo' mesedatamente insieme spagnoli, polachi, ungari, todischi et franzosi et altre maschere, et cosi' se balo' multi balli [...] (Trotti, in Solmi 1904: 86).

Entro la finzione coreografica le principali potenze del 'mondo terrestre' giungono, dunque, nella piccola sala privata degli Sforza e omaggiano la coppia ducale, che siede, insieme a Ludovico, agli ospiti illustri e ('veri') ambasciatori, su un tribunale da cui potevano vedere lo spettacolo e, al tempo stesso, essere visti come parte integrante dell'azione teatrale e coreutica (Ventrone 2013: 269). Non semplice preludio alla *festa*, ma atto primo di uno schema tripartito di ordine cosmico e drammaturgico tra terra, cielo e mito, che quella sera stava prendendo forma, suono e moto.

Terminata la sequenza musicale e coreografica, un angelo annuncia il nuovo esordio:

Attenti! Udite tutti, incliti viri,
El ciel vostro triunfo par che miri,
E 'l gran Monarca le sue spere move.
Tace l'inferno, e posansi i martiri:
Per vostra festa in terra qui vien Giove;
E gran cose vedrete mai vedute
Per onor d'Isabella e sue virtute.

Immerso ancora nell'oscurità, come racconta Trotti, l'ingegno del *Paradiso* di Leonardo si rivela finalmente agli occhi degli astanti. Era fatto a forma di un mezzo uovo, dorato all'interno, e circondato dai segni dello zodiaco e dai sette pianeti e dei dell'Olimpo, decorato di luci suggestive - candele come stelle - e avvolto da una musica sublime:

con certi lumi dentro il vetro, che facevano un galante et bel vedere: nel quale Paradiso erano molti canti e suoni molto dolci e soave [...] et fu tanto si grande hornamento et splendore che parse vedere nel principio uno naturale

paradoxo, et così' ne lo audito, per li suavi et canti che v'erano dentro [...]. Nel mezo del quale era giove con gli altri pianeti apreso, secondo el loro grado (Trotti, in Solmi 1904: 86-87).

Al 'mondo terrestre' delle maschere degli ambasciatori fa seguito, dunque, l'apparizione del 'mondo celeste' e del 'mondo divino' nel microcosmo della stanza privata degli Sforza. Atto secondo dell'intera *fiesta*. Giove (al centro del palco), Apollo (Sole), Mercurio, Luna, Venere, Marte e Saturno uno ad uno, disposti secondo l'ordine 'astrologico' e mitico, cantano della bellezza e delle virtù di Isabella d'Aragona, intonando i versi composti dal Bellincioni. Inizia Giove e introduce agli altri pianeti e dei la giovane sposa:

Sento sì gran dolcezza nella mente,
O figliuoli, o ministri delle spere,
Per Isabella, che all'uman gente
Risplende sì, che or, per mio piacere,
In terra voglio andate personalmente
Per onorarla, e farvela vedere:
La notte al mondo fa parere el die;
Ell' è l'onor dell'altre opere mie.

Le sue parole suscitano il disappunto di Apollo, sorpreso da "tanto lume". Seguono le lodi di Mercurio e degli altri pianeti, inviati da Giove a rendere omaggio alla nuova duchessa. Apollo è ora persuaso dal canto, omaggia Isabella offrendole in dono il libretto della festa, come il libretto stesso narra, sovrapponendo la sua voce a quella del poeta fiorentino:

Dono a te sol le mie poche faville
Versi che di te scrisson le sibille.

Ricordando l'antica correlazione tra Diana con la Luna e Apollo con il Sole, la rappresentazione mitologica multimediale di suoni, versi e immagini simula magistralmente un moderno Paradiso pagano, celebrando Isabella come prima luce della terra, così come Apollo è il primo del firmamento:

Salve, diletta, gloriosa e bella,
Oggi in tuo grembo tanta grazia piove;
O lume d'Aragon, di Sforza stella,
A te mi manda il gran tonante Giove,
E dice che tu sei mia sorella,
[...]
Tu primo lampo al mondo, io primo in cielo.



Al canto di Apollo si alterna poi quello delle tre Grazie per Isabella e, infine, delle Sette virtù in lode a Giove e, come in un gioco di specchi e sovrapposizioni, a Ludovico il Moro. Atto terzo e *grand finale*.

O summo Jiove, o summo Jiove,
Fatto hai il mondo oggi felice
Dando a quel questa Fenice
La qual mal si vide altrove.

Il trionfo del *Paradiso* di Leonardo e Bellincioni, voluto dal Moro per celebrare la nuova duchessa Isabella, glorifica, nel suo epilogo, Ludovico stesso come sovrano giusto e potente, colui che ha fatto – come Giove – "il mondo oggi felice"⁶. Il risultato fu la creazione di una drammaturgia visiva, poetica e sonora capace di attivare un gioco speculare tra finzione e realtà politica e sociale della corte. Fu una 'meraviglia' di potere, ma anche di arte scenica e sapere umanistico, che merita ancora qualche nuovo affondo analitico per poter riconoscere segni, relazioni e valori.

Pratiche per la scena

Nella sua creazione del *Paradiso*, Leonardo aveva in mente un modello straordinario: l'ingegno che Brunelleschi inventò a Firenze per le messinscene teatrali di drammi religiosi, e che Leonardo adatta al soggetto mitologico ed encomiastico del dramma di Bellincioni, sostituendo la figura centrale di Cristo con quella di Giove e le figure degli angeli con quelle dei pianeti e degli dei⁷.

Se il modello tecnico di scena era il 'Paradiso cristiano' brunelleschiano, il modello simbolico, encomiastico e propagandistico che abbiamo visto comporsi nella drammaturgia multimediale della *Festa*, guarda invece ai poeti e artisti neoplatonici-ficiniani medicei e si rinnova nelle parole poetiche (sebbene di modesta qualità) del concittadino Bellincioni.

Dobbiamo, perciò, tornare per un breve istante ai tempi dell'apprendistato di Leonardo presso la bottega di Andrea Verrocchio (1435-1488) a Firenze per recuperare qualche pezzo del nostro mosaico. Dobbiamo guardare alla corte di Lorenzo il Magnifico, che – come *primus inter pares* – aveva tracciato le linee programmatiche di una nuova cultura politica della festa e trasformato radicalmente, insieme alla sua cerchia di poeti e

artisti, la sua sostanza culturale e funzione nella *cives*. In questi anni Leonardo doveva aver assistito anche alle memorabili giostre medicee del 1469 e del 1475, organizzate rispettivamente in onore di Lorenzo e del fratello Giuliano (1453-1478), a cui collaborò anche il suo maestro Verrocchio, insieme – fra gli altri – a Sandro Botticelli (1445-1510), Angelo Poliziano (1454-1494) e a Luigi Pulci (1432-1484)⁸. Presto conobbe anche il rinnovato assetto laurenziano delle cerimonie civiche di San Giovanni o della Festa dei Magi, che facevano del teatro un sistema di linguaggi simbolici e comunicativi per la creazione di consenso, autorità e carisma del potere mediceo nel contesto urbano fiorentino, pubblico e privato, centrale e periferico (Ventrone 1992; ibidem 2016: 221-72; Trexler 1980). Lorenzo non aveva modificato il tradizionale calendario festivo, ma sul terreno della tradizione civica aveva usato il teatro per costruire la propria immagine regale, arricchendo le feste dei Medici di valori politici, che poeti e artisti riattivarono poi attraverso la loro opera letteraria e figurativa, garantendo una memoria eterna di questi eventi sia a livello locale che nei potentati italiani.

Tuttavia, come sottolinea Carlo Dionisotti, “non i Toscani conquistano il resto dell’Italia, bensì il resto dell’Italia conquista esso la Toscana” (Dionisotti 1967: 42), riadattando il patrimonio linguistico e letterario fiorentino, nonché la sperimentazione artistica e performativa, nei propri contesti politici e calendari festivi. Fu questo il caso di Milano e della politica di Ludovico, che nel sostenere le arti e diffondere i nuovi valori della cultura festiva come forma di competizione sociale e comunicazione politica, incoraggiò artisti, musicisti e poeti – *in primis* fiorentini – a raggiungere e risiedere presso la sua corte. Tra questi, i ‘nostri’ Leonardo e Bernardo.

La politica artistica e culturale di Ludovico segna una svolta rispetto alle inclinazioni culturali del fratello Galeazzo Maria (1444-1476), sin dai tempi della reggenza per conto del nipote Gian Galeazzo. Quando Leonardo arriva a Milano nel 1482, accompagnato dal musicista Atalante Migliorotti (1466-1532) come racconta l’anonimo Gaddiano (Biblioteca Nazionale di Firenze, Mgl XVII. 17. Cfr. Winternitz 1982), trova un fervido *entourage* culturale e artistico. Incontra e collabora con Bramante (1444-1514) e i fratelli De Predis (Evangelista, 1440-1491 e Giovanni Ambrogio, 1455-1508) e altri artisti, umanisti e medici, noti e

meno noti, i cui nomi – tra i molti, Ambrogio Varesi (1437-1522), Luca Pacioli (1447-1517) e Gabriele Pirovano (metà XV secolo) – stanno popolando il nostro Atlante permettendoci di ricostruire le reti sociali delle attività festive milanesi di Leonardo, nonché di rileggere l’evento del *Paradiso* alla luce di nuovi dati e sistemi associativi di ‘materiale’ umano e insieme testuale e visivo.



Fig. 1. Johannes de Sacrobosco, *Sphaera Mundi*, Bonetus Locatellus for Octavianus Scotus, Venice 1490.

Quelli milanesi sono anni proficui per Leonardo per proseguire i suoi studi sulla musica, sulle proporzioni e sul ‘microcosmo’ anatomico del corpo umano in relazione a postura e movimento, ma anche per quelli che Leonardo dedica al sapere astrologico, medico e magico-alchemico sul macrocosmo, di cui la biblioteca del Castello di Pavia – “delle più belle che a quei tempi si potessero vedere in Italia” (Bologna 1983: 32-33) – offriva una copiosa collezione⁹. È ben documentato l’uso politico-simbolico dell’astrologia alla corte sforzesca sin dai tempi di Gian Galeazzo Visconti (1351-1402), e ora praticato dal Moro per consolidare e costruire potere e consenso e persino come guida profetica di azioni politiche,



diplomatiche e militari (Azzolini 2010: 135-45; Eadem 2013: 100-34 e 167-209). Gli studi sull'astrologia occupavano, infine, un posto di primo piano nei *curricula* dello *Studio* di Pavia, dove frequentemente Leonardo si recava, come si apprende nelle sue stesse note. Fra i libri che l'artista fiorentino annota come propri nel Codice Atlantico, e anche in altri scritti, ne compaiono alcuni vicini alla cultura ermetica e astrologica, tra cui un volume intitolato *Sphera mundi*, che potrebbe riferirsi ad un'edizione del lavoro dell'astronomo medievale Giovanni Sacrobosco (1195-1256), listato anche nel *corpus astrologico* del curriculum universitario pavese (Azzolini 2013: 22-23).

Sono questi gli anni in cui Leonardo disegna l'*Uomo Vitruviano* (1490 c.), pratica le dissezioni e inizia il suo progetto di atlante anatomico, *De figura umana*, che, come noto, non porterà mai a termine. In questi anni, Leonardo si reca sovente alla biblioteca del Castello di Pavia, dove al secondo piano della Torre può ammirare – e con buona probabilità studiare – l'*ingegno* di Giovanni Dondi (1330-1388): un astrarium acquistato dal duca Visconti nel 1381: un "globo delle sfere celesti [...] un lavoro di divina speculazione", come commenta l'amico Giovanni Manzini (1362- 1420 c.) in una lettera allo stesso Dondi (Bedini-Maddison 1966: 20-21).

Alcune delle note di Leonardo durante le sue visite alla biblioteca ducale di Pavia risalgono proprio agli anni tra il 1489-90: gli anni dell'*ingegno* del suo *Paradiso*. L'ipotesi che Leonardo si sia ispirato all'astrario del Dondi per ripensare al modello di scena brunelleschiano per il dramma religioso fiorentino e progettare il suo paradiso pagano per lo spettacolo milanese è, dunque, altamente probabile. Da uno studio di J. Price, ripreso poi da Silvio Bedini e Francis Maddison, è stato riconosciuto un quadrante di un astrario – quello di Venere e del Sole – in uno dei disegni leonardeschi raffigurante un meccanismo con tre ingranaggi montati su una ruota dentata (foglio 92 verso di MS L della Bibliothèque de l'Institut de France). Recentemente Luca Garrai, ha avanzato l'ipotesi che il disegno di Leonardo del codice Atlantico 956 *recto* documenti il meccanismo di un orologio astronomico. Sul foglio ci sono alcune note autografe: accanto alla sezione di un mezzo uovo, compare la scritta "zodiaco"; all'interno dei cerchi è scritto "Terra" e, ancora, "Mercurio",

"Luna" e "Venere". Lo schizzo potrebbe, in effetti, rappresentare un modello di riferimento anche per il sistema di rotazione del paradiso leonardesco, se – propone Garrai – sostituiamo la "Terra" con "Giove" e aumentiamo il numero di cerchi da 3, come risulta nello schizzo, a 7, come narrato nelle cronache della festa leonardesca per il Moro (Garrai 2014). Tuttavia, il riferimento al noto astrarium del Dondi (o altro orologio astronomico) come modello del *Paradiso* leonardesco, trova, a mio avviso, la sua significanza non tanto, o non solo, alla luce della possibilità di svelamento delle forme meccaniche e sceniche dell'*ingegno* di Leonardo (sia pure importanti), ma primariamente per il valore concettuale e simbolico che questo modello implica nella società e vita politica e culturale del tempo e nel definirsi di una nuova idea di teatro e dei suoi sistemi di memorabilità, che merita ancora qualche indugio nel passaggio conclusivo di questo breve racconto.

La memoria. Il progetto del *Theatrum mundi*

Il *Paradiso* pagano di Leonardo consolidò un'usanza e allo stesso tempo la rinnovò, ispirando nuovi modelli per la scena che traducono in azione un'idea emergente di teatro. La tradizione degli *intermezzi* durante i banchetti e dello spettacolo mitologico aveva già avuto esempi illustri. Memorabile fu, ad esempio, il banchetto nuziale di Costanzo Sforza (1447-1483) con Camilla d'Aragona a Pesaro nel 1475: similmente al *Paradiso* di Leonardo, Giove, Apollo (Sole) e gli altri dei dell'Olimpo vennero a rendere omaggio alla coppia reale in una sequenza di atti performativi documentata dal prezioso codice miniato Urbinate Latino 899 (Guidobaldi 1993: 25-35 e Bridgeman 2013). A Firenze nel 1480, il trionfo dei sette pianeti e degli dei fu organizzato per le strade della città (Ventrone 2001). Nella stessa Milano un paradiso pagano aveva dato vita ad una serie di apparizioni sulla soglia del sagrato del Duomo nel 1423 (Mazzocchi Doglio *et al.* 1983: 41-42).

Nel caso del *Paradiso*, tuttavia, Leonardo, introdusse questi elementi performativi, letterari e figurativi adeguandoli alle convenzioni della cerimonia diplomatica, separando, da un lato, la rappresentazione teatrale dal banchetto nuziale e introducendo, dall'altro, l'iconografia

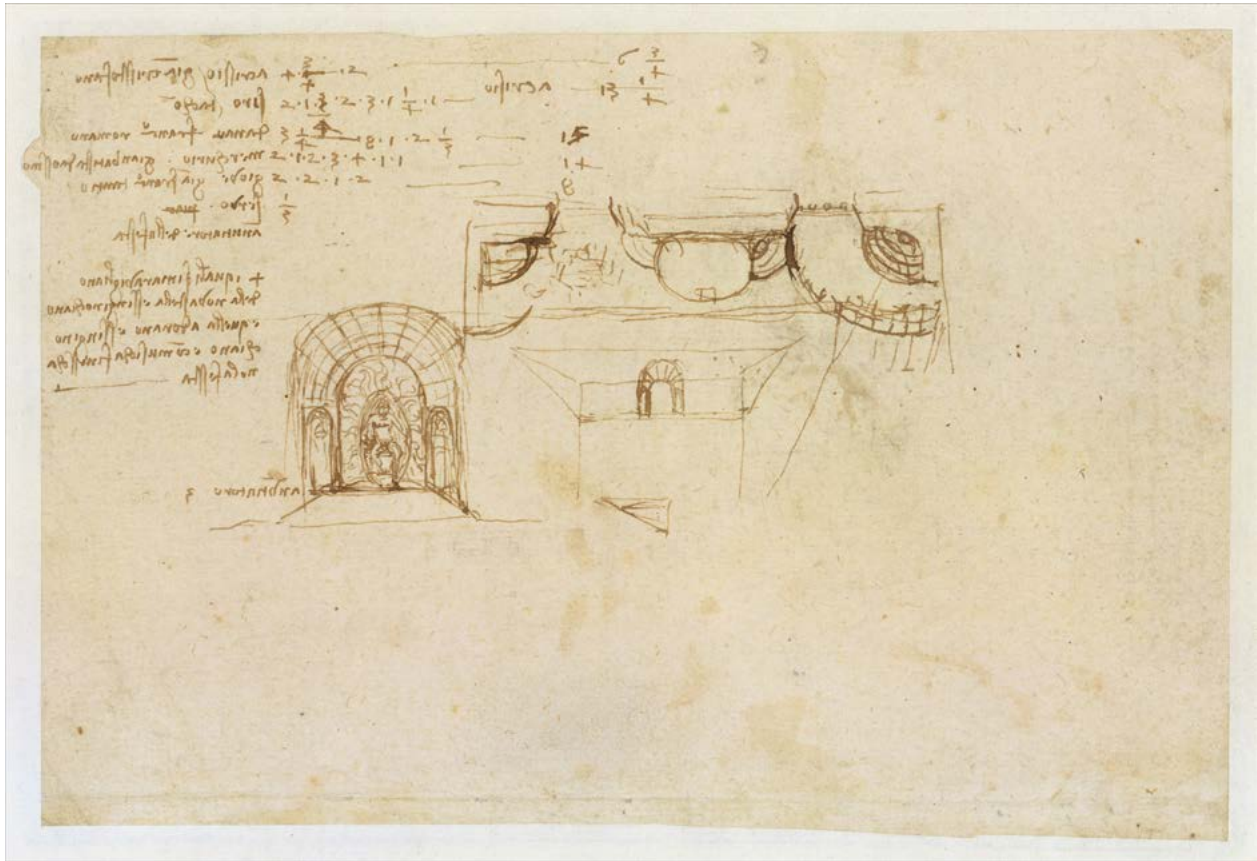


Fig. 2. Disegni e appunti per la *Danae* di Baldassarre Taccone. New York, Metropolitan Museum.

degli spettacoli di strada nell'intimità della sala 'privata'. Ne risulta un programma complesso sia a livello drammaturgico e nella sequenza simbolica-antiquaria delle apparizioni che, infine, nell'invenzione e uso delle macchine sceniche, che Leonardo sembra includere come parte di un suo 'repertorio' di scena, nelle riprese del *Paradiso* ad Amboise (1515) e a Cloix (1518), ma anche in occasione delle nuove altre messinscene milanesi da lui firmate.

È nota la collaborazione dell'artista fiorentino con Baldassarre Tacconi (1461-1521) per la *Danae* allestita il 31 gennaio 1496 a Milano, nella casa del Conte di Caiazzo Francesco Sanseverino (1450-1501). Per l'occasione Leonardo crea un ingegno meccanico che doveva essere molto simile a quello del *Paradiso* del 1490, con Giove al centro della scena, come illustrato nel disegno conservato al Metropolitan Museum di New York.

Secondo Pedretti, ruote di elevazione, ingranaggi meccanici e appunti per la messinscena della *Danae* sono inclusi pure nel f. 358 verso del Codice Atlantico, dove compare anche uno studio di scena prospettica comica classica: una delle prime scenografie umanistiche, successivamente codificata da Sebastiano Serlio (1475-1554) e

Bramante (Pedretti 1978: 291).

Un altro paradiso – il "paradiso di Plutone" – è tratteggiato da Leonardo nei disegni del Codice Arundel f. 231 verso legati probabilmente, come noto, alla rappresentazione della *Fabula de Orpheus* di Poliziano: un grande palcoscenico girevole, rotante su un asse centrale, rivela al suo interno "il paradiso – per l'appunto – di Plutone", dove Euridice è imprigionata (Povoledo 1975: 343; Marzocchi Doglio *et al.* 1983: 55-62).

E ancora il moto dei pianeti prende forma e vita in occasione dell'ingresso trionfale di Francesco I a Lione (1507), per il quale Leonardo inventa anche il famoso leone meccanico, simbolo di forza e regalità, che muove alcuni passi verso il sovrano e poi apre la cassa, da cui sgorgano i gigli di Francia. In cielo, un sole illumina la scena grazie ad un ingegno meccanico, che sposta il sole e le nuvole da est a ovest per scandire le ore del giorno misurate durante il corso della rappresentazione teatrale, al suono di una musica sublime e celeste. Similmente, un sole sorge e tramonta nella sala del Senato del palazzo sforzesco a Milano nel 1548, in occasione del passaggio del figlio di Carlo V (1500-1558), Filippo II (1527-1598), segretamente investito l'anno precedente del titolo di duca di

Milano. Il movimento meccanico del sole segna il passare del tempo nella finzione teatrale della commedia, per mezzo, anche in questo caso, di un ingegno scenico che muove insieme sole e nuvole e dirige la discesa di Mercurio annunciatore della commedia, firmata da Nicolò Secco (1510-1560). Una scena di città – Venezia – è descritta per la rappresentazione teatrale, a cui Maria Ines Aliverti associa un disegno di scena comica, a lungo attribuito a Serlio, ma ritenuto dalla studiosa di mano di Secco (Aliverti 2008).

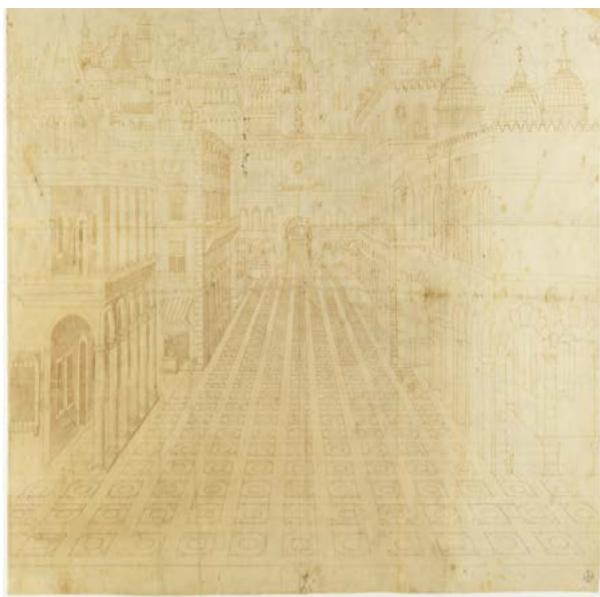


Fig. 3. Veduta prospettica della Piazzetta San Marco a Venezia, Gabinetto dei Disegni e delle Stampe degli Uffizi, Inv. GDSU n. 5282 A. Su concessione del Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali e per il turismo con divieto di ulteriori riproduzioni o duplicazioni con qualsiasi mezzo.

L'ingegno dei moti dei pianeti si era con buona probabilità ispirato, come ho proposto in altra sede, all'orologio del Dondi, di cui Carlo V aveva fatto costruire in questi anni una copia riveduta per la sua collezione imperiale (Bortoletti 2020 *in press*). L'interesse di Carlo V per i mappamondi e per le sfere celesti gli orologi astronomici aveva contribuito alla creazione del suo mito. L'orologio astronomico, legato al tema della *concordia principum*, era una delle varianti dell'iconografia imperiale di Carlo V, rintracciabile in molti ritratti ufficiali dell'imperatore, immediatamente prima o dopo il 1548.

Leonardo è morto da quasi trent'anni e l'intero assetto politico europeo e nel Mediterraneo ha registrato nuovi – drammatici – eventi e stabilito nuove alleanze. Ma nello spettacolo milanese del 1548, il *Paradiso* di Leonardo per gli Sforza, le

elaborazioni dei suoi modelli concettuali e tecnici per la scena, le sue ricerche tra sapere umanistico, scientifico e medico, sembrano prendere nuova forma e vita, attivando nuovi segni, simboli, significati nelle nuove situazioni di spettacolo e di rituali politici e sociali.

Questi apparati effimeri sono esempi di eccellenza e al tempo stesso di eccezionalità, ma su questa effimera eccezionalità prende sostanza la materialità del teatro¹⁰.

Nella giornata del 13 gennaio del 1490, a Milano, nel 'microcosmo terrestre' della sala privata degli Sforza, Leonardo aveva animato un 'globo delle sfere celesti' in un'armonica unione di moti, suoni e luci e, tenendo a mente i modelli brunelleschiani del dramma religioso fiorentino e adattando con la poesia del Bellincioni la materia antica del mito, aveva proposto a celebrazione del suo nuovo mecenate una nuova visione del mondo in forma di drammaturgia: un nuovo *theatrum mundi*. Un teatro che riappare sotto nuova forma nella nuova scena politica milanese di metà cinquecento. Un teatro che nella Venezia cinquecentesca si stava materializzando come edificio teatrale reale, sebbene ancora provvisorio, di forma circolare, decorato esternamente e internamente di segni celesti e del globo, fluttuante nelle acque della laguna da piazza San Marco lungo il Canal Grande per le occasioni speciali di celebrazione e spettacolo. Questo teatro porta con sé l'idea di un complesso programma poetico, sonoro, visivo e insieme politico, che seleziona e riattiva l'eredità del mondo antico nei segni di un nuovo sapere, che mirava ad essere universale, e in uno spazio scenico, che si poneva come luogo privilegiato di memorabilità.

Questo fu il *Paradiso* di Leonardo tra terra, cielo e mito.

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Notes

- 1 Il presente articolo è parte di uno studio sulle messinscencine leonardesche all'interno del progetto sull'Atlante digitale della festa e dell'effimero rinascimentale diretto da chi scrive (<https://italianacademy.columbia.edu/frida>). Bortoletti *et al.* 2018-19; Bortoletti *et al.* 2020 *in press*.
- 2 Sulla cultura milanese nell'età di Ludovico il Moro e sugli interventi leonardeschi come 'maestro di cerimonie', scenografo, architetto, si rimanda, tra gli altri, a Pedretti 1978; Angiolillo 1979; Mazzocchi Doglio *et al.* 1983; Atti 1983; Tissoni Benvenuti-Mussini Sacchi 1983: 9-26; Bongrani 1986; Pontremoli-LaRocca 1987; Cordera 2010; Ventrone 2013: 247-82 e bibliografia interna.
- 3 A partire dagli studi pionieristici di Warburg e Burckhardt gli studi sulla festa hanno trovato un momento di riflessione importante nei lavori di Jacques Jacquot, Francis Yates e della 'nuova' storiografia teatrale e, ancora, nei progetti promossi dalla Society for European Festivals Research (SEFR Book Series) diretta da Ronnie Mulryne.
- 4 Bellincioni 1493: 148; Idem 1876-78: 208, da cui si cita. La cronaca di Trotti è trascritta in Solmi 1904: 75-89 (80-89) dal Cod. Ital. n. 521, segn. A J. 4, 21 della Biblioteca estense. La descrizione di Calco è pubblicata in Mazzocchi Doglio *et al.* 1983: 41-76.
- 5 Sulla *Festa della Paradiso* si vedano oltre a Solmi 1904; Angiolillo 1979; Ventrone 2013: 247-82. Sull'analisi dell'apparato scenografico si sono concentrati anche La Rocca 1997; Pontremoli 2011; Garrai 2014.
- 6 Quattro anni dopo, nel 1494, Gian Galeazzo muore (in circostanze incerte), Ludovico diviene duca di Milano e continua la sua politica festiva usando il teatro e la festa come strumento di affermazione del suo potere nel ducato e sulle altre città-stato.
- 7 Sul paradiso brunelleschiano cfr. Ventrone 2001: 30-51 e la bibliografia ivi contenuta. L'ipotesi di ripresa degli ingegni del Brunelleschi da parte di Leonardo era stata avanzata da Povoledo 1975: 335-460 (346-48).
- 8 Sulle giostre mediche del 1969 e 1975 sono state scritte molte pagine. Mi permetto di rimandare al mio recente studio su questo 'dittico medico' e alla bibliografia interna: Bortoletti 2018: 91-127.
- 9 Già a Firenze Leonardo ebbe occasione di familiarizzare con i testi del *Corpus Hermeticum*, giunti da Costantinopoli e apprezzati da Cosimo il Vecchio, quindi tradotti da Marsilio Ficino. Sugli studi anatomici di Leonardo da Vinci la bibliografia è molto ampia e ci limitiamo a rimandare all'edizione Keele-Pedretti 1978-80.
- 10 Sui temi dell'effimero si veda Lin 2012: 3-22; Smith *et al.* 2020: 78-131.

A political interpretation of a proscenium arch designed by Francesco Romanelli for the opera “San Bonifazio” (1638)

Leila Zammar

Some years ago, while I was looking for information about the artists who were hired by the Barberini to stage their operas in Rome for the Carnival season 1638, I found an interesting drawing by the painter Giovanni Francesco Romanelli (c.1610-1662). The drawing, held in the Metropolitan Museum of New York, shows an incomplete proscenium arch of a stage with the crest of the Barberini placed at the centre of the architrave.

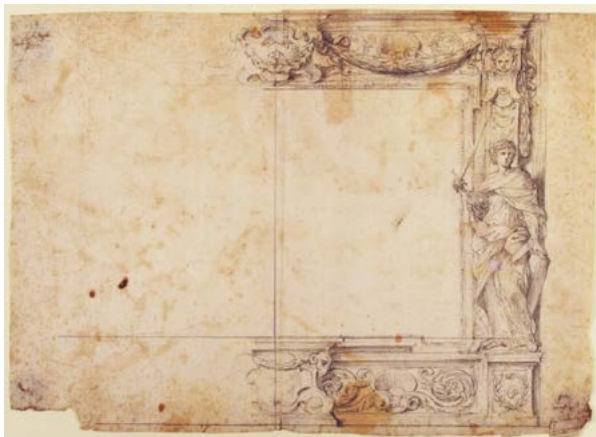


Fig. 1. Giovanni Francesco Romanelli (c.1610–1662). Medium: Graphite or black chalk on cream laid paper. Dimensions: 10-1/16 x 14 in. (25.6 x 35.6 cm). Classification: Drawings. Credit Line: Gift of Leon Dalva Sr., 1965. The Metropolitan Museum. Accession Number 65.654.120: public domain. (See: <<http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/90007522>>)

The caption illustrating the picture on the on-line page of the museum describes the character on the right as “a Figure of Justice.” Even if this

description might fit in part to the character as some of its attributes are usually associated to the personification of Justice, I will propose another reading, which better matches the programmatic meaning the Barberini family wanted to convey with the opera *San Bonifazio* for which his arch was very likely designed. Romanelli was in fact one of the artists chosen by the noble family to design works of art that could be a good means of conveying their political propaganda (about the role of Francesco Romanelli see Oy-Marra 2007: 303-16).

Born in Viterbo, Romanelli, also known as Il Viterbese, from his birth city, or Il Raffaellino, after Raffaello, was trained in Rome where he studied with Il Domenichino (Domenico Zampieri, 1581-1641) first, and then with Pietro da Cortona (Pietro Berettini, 1596-1669). It is probable that the latter introduced him to the court of the Barberini family since Romanelli was his collaborator in painting the frescos for the chapel inside Palazzo Barberini (1631-32). Moreover, both Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680) and Cardinal Francesco Barberini (1528-1600) acted as his patrons and helped him in having important commissions (Bruno 2017). It must be considered that Bernini was very influential in the choice of the artists to be hired for stage performances at the Barberini court since, when not directly involved in making the backdrops and inventing new machines, he supervised most of the operas patronized by the noble family during the seventeenth century, as attested by his biographer Filippo Baldinucci (Baldinucci 1682: 45).

Considering the above, it is not surprising that Romanelli's name appears in the payment records of the artists and masons hired by Francesco Barberini for the Carnival season 1638, when

the cardinal sponsored the performance of two operas: *La pazzia d'Orlando* and *San Bonifazio*¹. In the payments there is evidence that Romanelli was involved only in the staging of the latter for which he designed the scenes, painted numerous canvases probably used to make side-wings and perspectives, and supervised the construction of the stage. He also ordered the colours for himself and for the other painters as well as cardboard used to make some clouds (Giust. I: fol. 271r).

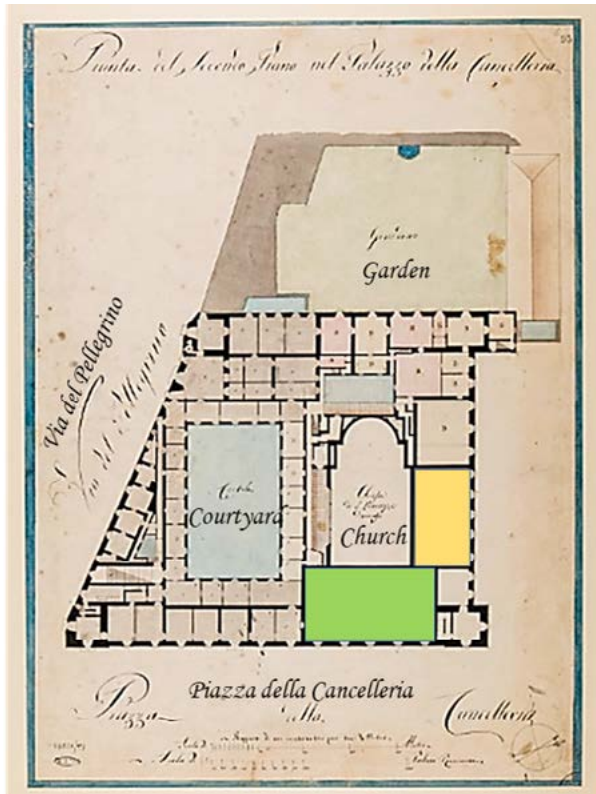


Fig. 2. Giuseppe Valadier (1762-1839). Medium: drawing on paper, orthographic projections. Dimensions: Width: 383 mm x Height: 537 mm. Inventory numbers: 58821_93 and Roma XI.100.93. Repository: Biblioteca di archeologia e storia dell'arte (Rome, Italy). On-line location: <http://purl.stanford.edu/jp933tz4188> (the image has been modified by the author to make it more accessible to the reader).

Since this was also the only occasion attested in the payment records held in the Archivio Barberini of the Vatican Library in which the artist was involved in the staging of a theatrical performance, I suggest that the drawing shown in fig. 1, might refer to the proscenium arch built for the performance of *San Bonifazio* for the Carnival 1638. A further confirmation is that when the opera was staged again in November 1638 on occasion of the visit to Rome of Johann

Anton Furst von Eggenberg, Imperial envoy of Ferdinand III, the responsibility of staging the performance was given to other artists even if it is likely that most of the scenography was reused, as was common at that time (Zammar 2017: 80-90). The opera was staged in a *salone* on the *piano nobile* of the Palazzo della Cancelleria, which had been Francesco Barberini's residence since 1632. The *salone* is on the side facing Piazza della Cancelleria, just above the porch of the Church of San Lorenzo in Damaso (see room evidenced in green in fig. 2).

The stage would have been built along the south wall corresponding to the short-left side in the above picture (Murata 1981: 35). The access to the hall was achievable through five doors, but almost certainly the guests who attended the opera entered from the door in the north corner of the west wall, which leads to the room known as the *Salone dei Cento Giorni* (the room indicated in yellow in fig. 2). The reason for choosing this room was probably because it is the largest of the palazzo and is three stories high. The availability of space offered the artists several opportunities. They could build a raised platform, which allowed the positioning of theatrical devices under the stage to move part of the set design and they could place pieces of machinery under the ceiling. To prevent the audience from seeing the mechanisms it was necessary to erect a proscenium arch that allowed them to be hidden, and this task was most probably given to Romanelli, who designed the proscenium arch displayed in fig. 1.

Even if the drawing by Romanelli shows only a part of this proscenium arch, some of its details are of great interest in light of a political interpretation of the opera it was designed for. When the spectators entered the hall, the stage was not visible because a curtain covered it. This is made clear by the following lines from a request for payment written by an artisan who helped the other artists every time that they staged the 1638 performance of *San Bonifazio*:

per aver sparato e parato di taffettani per la rappresentazione di San Bonifazio ed essere stato assiduo giorno e notte per appicciare le lampade e tirare i taffettani ogni volta che si faceva la rappresentazione con due uomini.

[for placing and removing the cloths for the performance of San Bonifazio and for being present day and night to

set the lights and for pulling, together with two men, the cloths every time that the performance was staged] (translated by the author from Giust. I: fol. 205r).

Since the frontstage was furnished with six vases, holding the torches to illuminate the proscenium, it is clear that the intention of the Barberini was to draw the attention of the public to it and its decoration. That is why it is important to analyse the message the noble family wanted to convey.

According to my interpretation, the character represented on the right (see fig. 3 below), despite its similarity with a personification of Justice as suggested by the curators of the Metropolitan Museum, can be better identified with the god Apollo. Some of the god's attributes are in fact easily recognisable.



Fig. 3. Detail from fig.1

Both the laurel crown and the tree trunk, on which the character leans his left hand, allude to the myth of Apollo and Daphne as reported in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. According to the myth, the river god Peneus, Daphne's father, transformed the nymph into a laurel tree to help her escape from Apollo's lascivious desires. Unable to possess his beloved physically, Apollo decided to decorate his attributes with the laurel to maintain a contact with Daphne's substance forever (Parker and

Stanton 2006: 39). In Ovid's account, Apollo, shocked by the transformation of Daphne, started embracing the laurel tree, which truncated at his kisses (De Girolami Cheney 1993: 135-76). Hence the meaning of the tree trunk in the drawing and in several other images representing Apollo. Less common is the representation of the god holding a sword instead of the most familiar lyre. This attribute dates to the epic of Homer, where Apollo is referred to as χρυσόορος (goldsmith) and the god by the golden sword who, sent by Zeus, protected the city of Troy against the Achaeans (Viscardi 2014: 39-61).

The choice of asking the artists to employ Apollo in decorating works commissioned by them was not new to the Barberini as the god was very dear to both Francesco, and to his uncle, pope Urban VIII (Maffeo Barberini, 1631-1658), for whom the god had a non-pagan significance. Although Maffeo had often condemned the use of mythological images as one of the main reasons of poetry's loss of power, Apollo was an exception (Scott 2007: 127-36). Since the beginning of his pontificate, Urban VIII had liked to identify himself with the sun-god and his virtues as a poet, being himself a writer of poems and music lover. For example, the lost fresco by the painter Andrea Camassei (1602-1648/49), who decorated the ceiling of one of the rooms on the ground floor of Palazzo Barberini was entitled *Apollo e le Muse sul Parnaso* and showed the Pope disguised as Apollo. A further confirmation of the devotion of the Barberini to the god is that in their heraldic deeds they often used the image of the sun to represent the pope as the sunny centre of a constellation made up of the other members of the family. There are also several other paintings, tapestries, and decorations commissioned by the Barberini referring in some way to Apollo or his attributes (Negro 2007: 447-52). One of the most elaborate allusions to the mythological character and to his relation with Urban VIII can be found in Pietro da Cortona's fresco *Triumph of Divine Providence* decorating the ceiling of the big *salone* on the *piano nobile* of Palazzo Barberini alle Quattro Fontane (Scott 2007: 127-36).

But which was the meaning given to Apollo holding a sword on the proscenium arch of an opera dedicated to a saint? To answer this question, it is fundamental to consider the plot and the aim of the staging of this opera, considering the historical



events of the period. Evidently the subject is based on the life of Saint Boniface, following the path inaugurated by one of the most popular operas staged by the Barberini, *Sant'Alessio*. The plot revolves around the relationship between the young Boniface and his lover Aglae. The prologue of the opera is sung by the muses Calliope and Urania and states the moral of the performance: mortals should follow Virtue rather than Love, because the former is the only source of peace. The presence of two muses in the prologue creates a first link to the image of Apollo on the proscenium arch since traditionally Apollo was identified as the leader of the muses. The choice of Calliope, the muse of epic and Urania, the muse of astrology is because the two muses are related to two topics very dear to the pope: poetry and astrology (Marshall Miller 2008: 49-72).

Act I opens with Boniface and Aglae celebrating their life of pleasure by singing and dancing together. Once Boniface leaves, the allegorical character Penitence enters on stage and convinces Aglae to give up her life of pleasure and foolishness. Penitence, as most allegorical characters appearing in operas staged by the Barberini, is meant to remind the audiences to focus their attention on the teachings of the Catholic Church and its leaders, who represent their spiritual and moral guide (Christy Lamothe 2009: 44). The message here is that there is still time for everyone to change their mind because, thanks to repentance, it is possible to be forgiven by God and be absolved of one's sins. The reference to the position of France in support of the Protestants in the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) and an appeal to Cardinal Maurizio of Savoy (1593-1657), guest of honour of the performance, seem to be clear. The intention was to warn Savoy on the consequences of betraying the true Christian faith and inducing him to exert any diplomatic deed possible to put pressure on French leaders to change their European policies.

At this point of the opera, the comedic character Captain Dragonivampasparaparapiglia is introduced². He wants to court Aglae and sends his servant Fagotto with a message to the girl, in which he boasts his military glories hoping to impress her. Aglae is not impressed at all by the Captain and decides to reach Boniface. She finds him speaking with his servants and tries to convince him to leave for Tarsus to fight for the

Christians. At first, the young man is confused, but finally Aglae persuades him. This decision provokes the reaction of the Devil, who does not want to lose the power he has long had over the couple and tries unsuccessfully to tempt them.

Act II opens with Boniface, who, alone, is thinking about his future, when his guardian angel arrives to reassure him. The Devil tries to convince Boniface to renounce his purposes and go back to his beloved Aglae. Boniface defeats him and the Devil decides to look for Aglae to tempt her. In the meantime, the Captain tries again to conquer Aglae singing her a serenade. The Devil tries unsuccessfully to convince Aglae to ask Boniface to reach her in Rome. The fact that the actor playing the Devil wore Arab clothes seems to be a reference to the Islamic Turks, a way to identify them with the enemies of the true faith and to warn the audience on the potential consequences of their gaining power in Europe.

Act III opens with Boniface, who is being taken captive by the Romans, but, despite to surrender to them, prefers to be martyred. As soon as Aglae receives the news from Boniface's servant, two allegorical characters, the Church Militant and the Church Triumphant, appear to declare their victory and the opera ends with a rejoicing ballet (see Hammond 1994: 232 and Christy Lamothe 2009: 69). Very likely the curtain was closed once more, leaving the audience to contemplate the two characters on each side of the proscenium arch.

The programmatic intention of the opera is apparently in contrast to its poor setting, which gives the impression of an opera staged without a great display of machinery and scenographic effects, compared to other operas sponsored by the Barberini. In fact, the only piece of machinery was a cloud to lower the actor playing the Angel, and the only device used to change the scenes consisted in sliding flats treetops-shaped, which covered the fixed scene (Giust. I: fol. 216v, transcribed in Bruno 2005: 67-88). However, the organization of two contemporary performances for the Carnival season 1638 can be considered as an incredible effort to react to conditions adverse to the family. The presence of Maurizio of Savoy, one of the most powerful noblemen in Rome, at the first performance of the opera indicates the intention of the Barberini to support the authority of the French faction in a period in which Spain was gaining more and more power, but also to

find a balance between the two factions as Savoy had supported his brother Tommaso of Carignano in promoting a pro-Spanish policy in opposition to the ruler of the Duchy of Savoy, Christine of France. Savoy had long been familiar with the Barberini since he first arrived in Rome in 1621 and stayed there for a few months. When he returned in May 1623, he had a great influence in the election of Maffeo Barberini to the papal see. Therefore, the Barberini had a special devotion to him, which is why Maurizio was the guest of honour of the performance (Mörschel 2001: 147-78)³. This is attested by the payment records for the opera that report that 1500 *argomenti* were bound for this performance with *carta colorita*, while a special copy with a binding of parchment and golden threads was made for him (Giust. I: fol. 238r). The special copy of the *argomento* was very likely given to the cardinal on occasion of a banquet Cardinal Francesco organized for the guests who attended one of the performances of the opera. In fact, an *avviso* dated 13 February 1638 reports that, on that date, Francesco gave a banquet for Cardinal of Savoy, which was probably the occasion to give him the special copy⁴. It is credible that he offered this banquet in the large *Salone dei Cento Giorni*, because it was the only room next to the hall where *San Bonifazio* was staged that would have been capable of hosting numerous people.

The main intention of the Barberini in inviting Savoy to attend a performance of this opera was to make him reflect on the possible consequences the position of France in support of the Protestants in the Thirty Years War might have had. But the presence of Maurizio of Savoy as a guest of Cardinal Francesco also attests that during a period of turmoil in Rome between the Spanish and the French parties, which had started in 1635, it was important for the pro-French Barberini family to demonstrate their impartiality towards both factions. Since Cardinal Maurizio had long promoted a pro-Spanish policy, his acceptance to attend a banquet organized by a member of the Barberini family must have had an important significance for the pro-Spanish party in Rome.

Not less important was the meaning the opera acquired when it was given in a more elaborate version to honour Ferdinand III's ambassador, Johann Prince Eckembergh, in November 1638 (Rietbergen 2006: 181-216). The opera was staged after a luxurious banquet organized once more

by Francesco Barberini. In this renewed version of the opera the appeal, once addressed to Savoy, was directed to the ambassador who was supposed to report to the Emperor that it was important to make any effort to renovate the true Christian faith, because it was the only means to conquer the deceitful attempts of the demon and to gain eternal glory. The Catholic Church was in fact at risk of losing its moral authority over most European countries for several reasons. On the one hand, the events related to the Thirty Year's War (1618-1648) were turning in favour of Protestantism; on the other, the growing Islamic power in the East menaced Europe. For these reasons the pope had favourably hailed the election of the Catholic Habsburg Ferdinand III as King of the Romans (December 1636) because both of them had to face two common enemies – the Protestants, who were increasing their power in Europe, and the Islamic Turks, who menaced their stability from outside. In his turn, Emperor Ferdinand soon sent his ambassador to Rome. News spread in Rome early in January 1637, and when the Prince arrived, he was invited to attend the numerous events organized for the occasion, including the new version of *San Bonifazio* (Rietbergen 2006: 181-216). The Prologue of the renewed opera was then modified to praise the politics of Ferdinand III and his important role among the European powers in an attempt to gain his favours and to push him to support the Pope in his policy.

Following what has been discussed above, the image of the god Apollo rising his sword, acquires a completely new meaning. Apollo, alias Maffeo Barberini in his role of leader of the Catholic Church, is ready to defend his followers and protect the true Christian faith from the insidious attempts of both the Protestants and the Islamic Turks to contrast and destroy its power. The reference to the Barberini family is then evident in the crest at the centre of the proscenium just above the stage. As well illustrated by Peter Rietbergen, the bees on the emblem of the Barberini assume a specific connotation if we consider them according to the meaning they had acquired thanks to the Jesuits during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For the Jesuits, the image of the bees had a religious significance and was associated with the Virgin Mary and her chastity, while honey became a symbol of Divine Wisdom (see also Rice 2007: 181-94). So, the use of the bees in their crest was



Fig. 4. Hypothetical reconstruction of the proscenium arch of the opera *San Bonifazio* designed by the author. The figure of David is after Gian Lorenzo Bernini's drawing for the frontispiece of Maffeo Barberini's collection of poems entitled *Maphaei S.R.E. Card. Barberini Nunc Urbani PP. VIII Poemata* and published in Rome in 1631.

a means of propaganda, a way for the Barberini to suggest that they ruled by Divine Wisdom protected by the Virgin Mary.

A question remains unsolved: who was the character represented on the left of the stage balancing the figure of Apollo on the right? A possible answer might be either Jupiter or David. Jupiter could be possible since this god was one with whom the pope liked to identify himself. Evidence for this is to be found in the *Allegoria della nascita di Urbano VIII* by Andrea Sacchi (1599-1661) and Charles Audran, kept in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, in which the pope/Jupiter is fed by Melissa the nymph, who is associated with the bee and is surmounted by the three bees, symbol of the Barberini family (Faedo 2007: 381-92). However, in my opinion, a more likely possibility might be David, another character dear to the pope, as is well attested by the two editions of his poems whose frontispieces were engraved with images showing David killing the lion (Rietbergen 2006: 181-216). This interpretation can better fit the political aim of the opera and match the meaning conveyed by the two allegorical characters of the final scene since Apollo, holding the golden sword, might represent the Church Militant whereas David, with his victory over the lion, might represent the Church Triumphant on the enemies of the true Christian

faith. The latter reading can find some evidence in a cartoon designed by Pietro da Cortona for a series of tapestries commissioned by the Barberini to illustrate the Life of Constantine showing the emperor struggling with a lion. The link to the first Christian emperor, despite being based on the false document known as the "donation of Constantine", was often used by Maffeo Barberini as a means to reaffirm his legal authority over the Papal States and it might well have been the counter-part image of Apollo on the other side of the proscenium arch analysed in this article (Rietbergen 2006: 129). According to the above analysis, the full view of the proscenium arch as it appeared to the audience of *San Bonifazio*, while entering the *salone* soon after leaving the *Salone dei cento giorni* of Palazzo della Cancelleria, could have been like the reconstruction proposed in fig. 4. Once more the faithful artists of the entourage of the Barberini had agreed to subjugate their craft to please their patrons and once more art was a means of subtle propaganda for the noble family.

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Notes

1 Vatican City, B.A.V, Arch. Barb., Giust. I, vol. 71, Francesco Barberini seniore, Giustificazioni 2951-2993, year 1638. Further references to this source will be given in brackets in the text of this article as follows: Giust I: folio number. I would like to thank the archivists Luigi Cacciaglia and Antonio Schiavi for their help and support during my research at the Vatican Library.

2 The Barberini were fascinated by the actors of the *commedia dell'arte* and loved to attend their improvised performances. A confirmation is that they dedicated a space in their property at the Quattro Fontane to stage *commedia dell'arte* plays. This was known as the *Casino delle Quattro Fontane* (see Tamburini 2012: 47-48).

3 See also "Savoia, Maurizio di", in *Dizionario di Storia* [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/maurizio-di-savoia_\(Dizionario-di-Storia\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/maurizio-di-savoia_(Dizionario-di-Storia)/) (last accessed 11/07/2020).

4 Avvisi di diverse parti nell'anno 1638. Di Roma, 13 February 1638, fol. 43. The document is transcribed in Murata 1981: 290, note 2.

Spectacles of Fire and Water: Performing the Destructive Forces of Early Modern Naval Battles

Felicia M. Else

When it comes to the expressive power of performance and spectacle in Early Modern Europe, the naval battle, sometimes dubbed with its ancient moniker, *naumachia*, was surely one of the most complex and arduous, speaking to pretensions of political power in this age of territorial expansion and conflict. Tuscany serves as a good case in point, exemplified by the famous *naumachia* set in the Palazzo Pitti courtyard put on for the 1589 wedding of Ferdinando I de' Medici and Christine of Lorraine and reproduced in a well-known

engraving by Orazio Scarabelli (Fig. 1).

Scholars of art and festivals have rightly emphasized the manipulation and visual splendor of water in such impressive maritime displays, and J. R. Mulryne's fine study of this Medici spectacle points out the vivid, borderline unpleasant sensual experience that audience would have felt in such an enclosed space¹. This study takes inspiration from Mulryne's work by looking specifically at the pairing of water and fire in sixteenth-century representations and performances of naval battles, efforts that required an astounding level of manipulation and choreography to bring together two unpredictable and dangerous opposing elements of nature. Spectacles staged

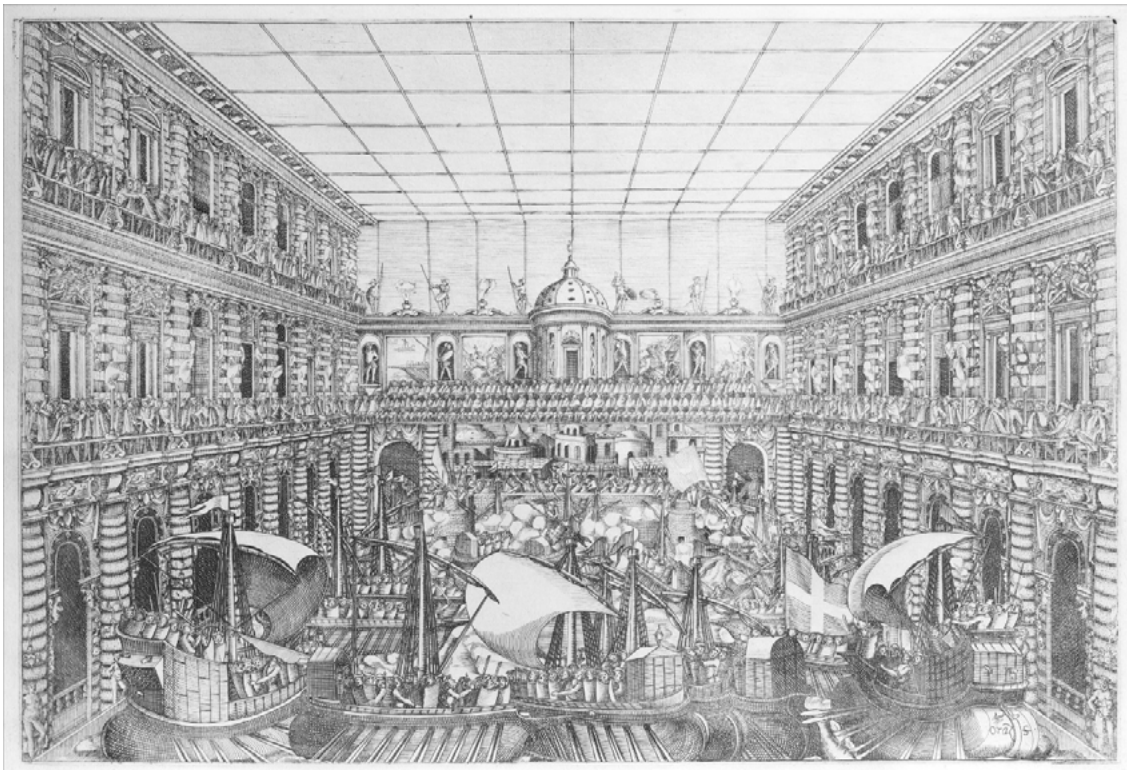


Fig. 1. Orazio Scarabelli, *Naumachia in the Courtyard of Palazzo Pitti*, 26.1 x 38.6 cm, engraving, 16th century, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. (Work in the Public Domain via Creative Commons and Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).



Fig. 2. Giorgio Vasari, *Emperor Maximilian Lifting the Siege of Livorno*, fresco, Salone dei Cinquecento, Palazzo Vecchio, Florence, 1563-65 (Alinari/Art Resource, NY).

in Reims, Lyons, Nantes and Ferrara, among others, present vivid examples. Naval battles in festivals struck contemporaries in their wondrous but terrifying displays of fire on water, whether in the form of fireworks, firearms or, in some cases, water literally set on fire. Sources reveal how such spectacles of water and fire conveyed a performance of destructive power, one altogether fitting given the terrifying experience of real maritime warfare underway at this time.



Fig. 3. Andrea Vicentino, *The Battle of Lepanto*, Palazzo Ducale, Venice, 1595-1605, (Scala/Art Resource, NY).

The sixteenth century saw a great many important naval battles as Western forces fought the Ottoman Turks and each other. Accounts of actual naval battles provided contemporaries with an impression of destructiveness wrecked by the forces of fire and water – ships afire tossed in a watery landscape – visible in dramatized painted representations like Giorgio Vasari's *Emperor Maximilian Lifting the Siege of Livorno* in the Palazzo Vecchio and Andrea Vicentino's *Battle of Lepanto* (Figs. 2-3)².

In real naval battles, ship combatants faced the perils of artillery fire and unfriendly seas. In the Battle of Lepanto of 1571, historian Niccolò Capponi references the Ottomans' use of flaming pots and fire tubes and how the relentless fire of the Venetian galleasses appeared as "all one flame". A passage he cites by Giovanni Battista Contarini references how men fell by the forces of fire and water:

There happened a mortal storm of harquebus shots and arrows, and it seemed that the sea was aflame from the flashes and continuous fires lit by fire trumpets, fire pots and other weapons [...] many Turks and Christians had boarded their opponents' galleys fighting at close quarters with short weapons, few being left alive. And maces, daggers, axes, swords, arrows, harquebuses and fire weapons. And besides those killed in various ways, others escaping from the weapons would drown by throwing themselves into the sea, thick and red with blood (Capponi 2007: 267 and 273-74)³.

Throughout the foreground of Vicentino's painting can be seen bodies strewn about the water; another painting by Vasari, *The Defeat of the Turks at Piombino*, shows the head of a drowned Turk next to a classicizing personification of the Tyrrhenian Sea in the foreground (Figs. 3-4).



Fig. 4. Giorgio Vasari, *The Defeat of the Turks at Piombino*, 1563-65, Salone dei Cinquecento, Palazzo Vecchio, Florence (Alinari/Art Resource, NY).

Erudite Latin poems about the Battle of Lepanto similarly evoke death and slaughter among the forces of fire and water, sometimes hailing classical subjects. One epic poem composed by Juan Latino, a black African former slave who worked his way to become a professor of Latin in Granada, praised the deeds of one of the battle's key commanders, Don Juan of Austria, likening him to Neptune. Latino describes the battle scene with the Genoese commander Andrea Doria: "Culverins sank countless ships with sulfurous fire while the arquebus issues a stream of bullets... Volleys of flaming tow launched with Vulcan's art scatter sparks at the Turks to ignite their ships." At one point, John of Austria gazes at the torches and firestorms on the water, decrying "What of the lightning that bursts from the cannons and flashes across the water?" In addition to the expected glorification of the Christian forces, scholars have also noted Latino's sympathetic portrayals of the Muslim adversaries, including the Ottoman admiral Ali Pasha. He described the point of

view of Pasha in the face of Don Juan's ships – "he [Pasha] shudders at the powers of the sea, the fickle dieties, Neptune's realm turned against him". Latino then has the Ottoman admiral, if faced with survival but defeat, boldly proclaim "if as leader and Pasha, I survive the battle, I pray... Let Scylla crush me, let merciless Charybdis herself swallow me alive in her whirlpool, and drown me in her massive vortex"⁴. Another similar poem brings out the violent spectacle of the dead in the water: "See how in retreat the infidel's ship was plowing stained with blood that the drowned barbarian corpses had shed... Phoebus dipped his light and Neptune sank bodies under the red waves"⁵.

In the realm of festivals, staging naval battles formed an important part of the idealized political image promoted by such spectacles, and it was a genre especially tied to violence and danger as well as loud noises and showy pyrotechnics. Several examples, particularly in France, struck viewers with their juxtapositions of the destructive forces of water and fire. In Richard Cooper's study of French festivals, he described a scene of acrobatics among fire and water at the coronation of Henri II at Reims in 1547. A boat manned by dark-skinned sailors of African origin, dubbed by contemporaries as "Sauvages", engaged in a precarious river battle, and Cooper cites a French contemporary:

they finally came into his Majesty's view, and secured the ships to each other with grappling irons to allow hand to hand combat; they performed wonders of defending themselves, each side firing flames and rockets like spears, and other fireworks, with the result that the ship's mast, its top and its pilot were all artfully shot into the air, whilst the Sea monsters and the Savages were suddenly diving underwater one after the other, so as not to be harmed by the flames (translation by Cooper (Cooper 2013: 23-24)).

The *naumachia* performed for Henri II at Lyons in 1548 was described in terms that, as Margaret McGowan points out, "simulated real warfare". She points out how the description by the festival organizer Maurice Scève highlighted the pandemonium, the noise of trumpets and firearms, the flames erupting across the water and the intense emotions, including fear, felt by the spectators from this violent spectacle whom, she points out "expected fatalities, their feelings vying between intense joy and overwhelming fright". Scève made sure to conclude his description with

a reassurance that “thus ended the naval battle without hurt to any person whatsoever”, a state that, of course, could not apply to real naval battles (translation by McGowan (McGowan 2013: 44)). Henri was so impressed that he ordered another naval battle for his entry into Paris in 1549. In this case, no less than thirty large galleys were launched to attack a bastion on the Isle of Louviers on the Seine. Defenders wound up setting the tower on fire to block the entrance to the port, and the noise of the artillery was so strong that, according to a contemporary, the stained-glass windows of a nearby church fell out, and, despite safety precautions, there were several casualties⁶. River battles were featured on several occasions at Nantes, and one staged in 1551 deserves special attention because of its reference to a noteworthy fire-related naval weapon. Magnificently-decorated galiots, galleons and a rowing barge pitted Bretons against “moors and other foreigners”. A contemporary Bonaventure Coppegorge described the combat:

Then the trumpets sounded and those combatants began to dart about and rush at each other, firing artillery and, rowing hard, to engage, grapple, attack, sound the alarm, throw spears, light flares and Greek fire, which burned as well on the water as it would have done in dry straw, not without danger to these combatants...all of which was very good to see and hear⁷.

Greek fire references a material developed and used by Byzantine naval forces. As Coppegorge’s description suggests, Greek fire was a liquid substance that once ignited, could burn on water, and in fact attempts to douse it with water only intensified its burning. Historians have pointed out that the formula for Greek fire was lost in the sack of Constantinople in 1204, and even today some believe its exact composition remains uncertain⁸. However, a source from Venice provides some clues to what sixteenth-century audiences might have known. As Paul Hills observed in his study of the Venetian fascination with the interplay of fireworks and water, Girolamo Ruscelli sought to take advantage of this interest by publishing in 1572 a compilation drawn from earlier texts on the pyrotechnics of weaponry, including a section on “Making a type of fire ball that can burn in water”. Woodcut illustrations feature a variety of fearsome flammables, including incendiary barrels, balls and arrows (Fig. 5)⁹.

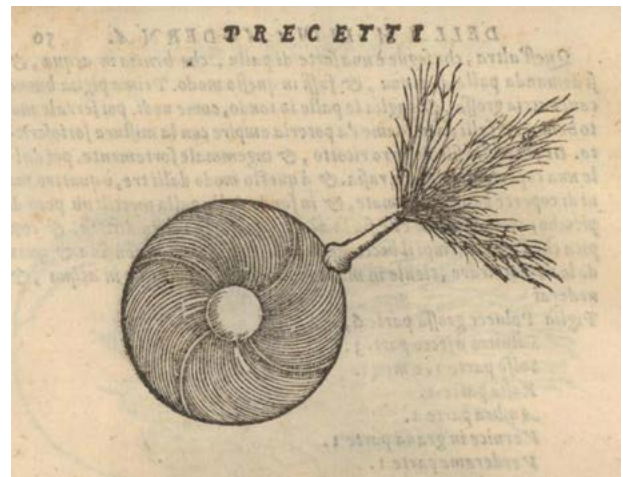


Fig. 5. Woodcut illustration of artillery ball that can burn in water from Girolamo Ruscelli, *Precetti della militia moderna, tanto per mare, quanto per terra*, Marchiò Sessa, Venice 1572: 50r (Opal Libri antichi, University of Turin, Work in the Public Domain via Creative Commons and Internet Archive at <https://archive.org/details/imageAVII436MiscellaneaOpal>)

What the festival organizers at Nantes had used remains unknown, but it clearly drew on a fascination that audiences felt about such unusual weapons, ones that allowed for fire and water to co-exist beyond their natural boundaries. Such spectacles of water and fire and the panoply of sensory overload that accompanied them had an appeal well beyond France. For the wedding of Prince Elector August of Saxony and Anne of Denmark at Torgau in 1548, ships stormed a fortress on the Elbe with combatants dressed as “Turks”, “Tartars” and “Germans” and an astonishing display of pyrotechnics – over 2,000 charges in the castle alone – which, as Mara Wade emphasizes, was enhanced by the water’s surface¹⁰. In Edinburgh for the wedding of John Fleming to Elizabeth Ross in 1562, Mary Queen of Scots included a naval assault on a fort on Duddingston’s Loch complete with fireworks and artillery shots, intended to evoke the 1560 Siege of Leith where Scottish and French forces were successful against the English¹¹. Closer to Florence, Alfonso II d’Este staged an elaborate aquatic tournament in Ferrara for Archduke Karl of Austria in 1569. On a moat outside the walls of Ferrara, fifteen “monster-boats”, that is, water vessels constructed to resemble hybrid mythological figures such as Glaucus, Tritone and Forco, contained seamen with devices to shoot fire for an attack on a castle on an enchanted island. The spectacle presented

a fantastic panoply of fire and water – the boats appeared lit from inside with colored flames scattering around them as well as from the island (Marcigliano 2003: 60-63; 74-75; and 106-08).

When Grand Duke Ferdinand I de' Medici planned for his wedding to Christine of Lorraine, a French royal princess of the house of Valois and granddaughter of Catherine de' Medici, he would have been building on a robust legacy of naval battles and waterworks in festival celebrations. Florence may have been a sophisticated player in the arts, but when it came to maritime displays of power, like naval battles, this inland city was very much a newcomer¹². The political incentives were considerable – as Arthur Blumenthal argues, “more blatantly than any previous festival, the occasion was used for political ends: to impress the royalty of Europe with the status of the house of Medici” (Blumenthal 1990: 97). An impressive staff of humanist writers, artists, musicians and organizers was brought together, and the result was a landmark achievement that was copiously documented and disseminated. Mulryne's study of the *naumachia* builds on an equally copious record of scholarship on this event – the *intermezzi* alone dubbed by Paul Kafno as “the most described theatrical production in history”¹³.

Two naval battles were staged, both differing in their settings but both building on the earlier traditions that featured the forces of fire and water together. As Christine journeyed from Marseilles to Pisa, she was treated to a sumptuously-outfitted flagship and impressive displays of naval power, waterborne floats, magnificently-adorned ports and a battle between Christian and Turkish fleets on the Arno. The naval battle in Pisa, referred to as the Battle of the Galleon was a deliberately public affair, set along a popular course of the Arno, and it broke new ground in the tradition of festivals put on by the Medici, the first of its kind in Tuscany¹⁴. Descriptions by contemporaries such as Giovanni Cervoni and Raffaello Gualterotti noted how the audience ranged from members of the court on balconies to untold numbers of boats (“infiniti Navicelli”) loaded with all sorts of persons, all encouraged not just to watch the proceedings but to participate (Cervoni 1589: 17 and Alberti 2010: 6). At nightfall, two galiots (a vessel smaller and faster than a galley) manned with figures dressed in Turkish clothing and weaponry simulated a pirate attack by firing artillery at the Torre del Ponte a

Mare (Cervoni 1589: 17 and Alberti 2010: 7)¹⁵. Sailing to the rescue was a large, magnificently-equipped Galleon bearing the *impresa* of the House of Lorraine and the Medici. The fight took dramatic turns, as the Turks proved masterful in defending their galiots from boarding and carried out four attacks on the Galleon. As Maria Alberti has shown in detail, the naval battle combined fictive scenography with verisimilitude, an elaborate display of staged combat resembling a kind of “nautical choreography” (“coreografia nautica”) but using maneuvers based on the practices of real maritime warfare as well as authentic costumes, armaments and sailors. Cervoni emphasized the lifelike quality of the event to actual battles, and Alberti highlights details such as the tactics of on-board combat, the sending of parties by small boats to confer over terms, the taking of prisoners and the use of heavier artillery by larger ships (Alberti 2010: 6-14). As summed up by Maria Ines Aliverti, the festival was part of “the Grand Duke's strategic plan...to win regal sovereignty for Tuscany...counting precisely on maritime ports and shipyards and on the prestige of the Order of Santo Stefano, that is, on Livorno and Pisa respectively” (Aliverti 2013: 124-25). Fire and water were part of this remarkable, politically-charged display. Gualterotti describes the veritable transformation of the course along the Arno by torchlight, noting how the “many lights” (“molti lumi”) made shine the Arsenale, the tower and the whole city so that “it seemed that the rooves, the windows and the terraces all burned so that the beautiful sight...extended along the Arno” and the many artificial fires (“fuochi artificiosi”) and fireworks (girandole) served “to drive away the night” (“discacciar la notte”). In addition, artillery fire was abundant, one episode lasting for an hour. As the battle reached a climax, Gualterotti described a dangerous maneuver, resulting in “shots and flames worked up in such abundance and so large that the galiots, Galleon and the river seemed entirely one flame (tutto un fuoco)” (Author's translation from Gualterotti 1589: 17-18).

After Christine made her procession through Florence, she and select wedding guests were treated to another naval battle, this one in the private courtly residence of the Palazzo Pitti courtyard. This *naumachia* began with an element of surprise. Guests dining inside the



Palace were interrupted by the sounds of military instruments and artillery fire. Abandoning their meals, they returned to their places to find the courtyard, which only hours before was empty and host to a land-based tournament, had somehow been transformed into a veritable “sea” (“veramente il mare”), the entire grounds filled with approximately four feet of water and bearing eighteen ships, both large and small¹⁶. Orazio Scarabelli’s engraving of the Florentine *naumachia* of 1589 shows densely-packed rows of spectators, lit torches, and, along the central wall facing the viewer, a fortified Turkish castle. As Mulryne points out, Scarabelli’s “motorway pile-up” of ships may have evoked a general sense of the violence, noise and congestion described by chroniclers, but it is a far from accurate rendering of the event. The image, created a few years after the wedding, does not give any sense of the different types of ships, relying instead on a generic “stock of images” used in prints in general. The sails billow in contrary directions; the depth of the water is insufficient; the varied costumes and armaments of the participants are indistinguishable and the crammed arrangement of ships gives no indication of any credible maneuver or assault. With regard to the dynamics of fire and water, the lack of color and atmosphere is particularly misleading. Scarabelli’s crisp, linear panorama would have been shrouded in nocturnal darkness punctuated by cannon blasts, smoke and the flickering lights of over 80 torches, all set below a rose-tinted canvas covering above and the reflective surface of water below (Saslow 1996: 96; Mulryne 2013: 160-62 and 169-70).

Scholarly documentation on the Pitti *naumachia* has been rich and extensive with research from scholars like Mulryne, Alberti, James Saslow and Annamaria Testaverde among others, showing the effort that went into producing a magnificent and vividly lifelike display¹⁷. The sailors themselves comprised actual seamen, many professionals employed at Pisa but also some from locales across the Mediterranean. Contemporaries noticed authentic details such as the cries in Turkish during the battle (Saslow 1996: 169; Alberti 2010: 23-24). The vessels themselves were actual functioning ships as opposed to superficial ephemeral crafts¹⁸. Scholars agree that the setting of this watery field of battle put this event on the map. Despite the pleas of his provveditore to host the battle on the

Arno like at Pisa, Ferdinand insisted on placing it inside the courtyard, thus recreating of one of the most incredible water-related feats of Ancient Rome, the flooding of inland structures, most notably the Colosseum, for naval battles. This was very much a culmination of the Medici’s efforts to harness the forces of water in the realms of art, water management and festivals¹⁹. Not only was this new to Florence, but the Pitti *naumachia* may be one of the first, if not the first European naval battle spectacle since antiquity in which a full – scale architecturally – defined space on land was flooded in a brief period of time. As Alberti suggests, Ferdinand must have wanted the Pitti *naumachia* not to repeat the publically-oriented event at Pisa but to show Florence as a distinct centre of power, staging a more technically and visually innovative version to a more restricted, elite audience²⁰.

The battle itself was suitably dramatic, as Turkish and Christian forces took turns dominating the field, and the spectacle swirled with the destructive forces of fire and water. Contemporary Giuseppe Pavoni describes one engagement with the enemy galleys that suggests the effects of Greek fire, where “artificial fire was employed which burned all the way to the water”, and one heard “cries in Turkish of those who were wounded and fell into the water” where they continued to battle with Christians who had fallen earlier (Pavoni 1589: 40-42 and Alberti 2010: 24). When the Christian armada attacked the castle, a great cacophony of artillery fire followed – “noise so great that it seemed the heavens might fall and fill up the sea, and the air was filled with smoke so that no one could see anything, and it was judged that...in this assault had been fired off over three thousand shots”. In the din and the smoke, the Christian forces scaled the walls with rope ladders and faced off against Turks who used intense firepower to repel them back into the water. In the end, the Christians finally persevered, seizing the fortress²¹.

In this and other examples, it is certainly clear how such spectacles of water and fire in sixteenth-century naval battles were performances of destructive forces and expressions of political power. This final example would have especially highlighted these effects being set within an enclosed space. As Alberti put it, Ferdinand and his team of artificers were “shutting the Mediterranean within the interior of a princely

palace courtyard” (“rinchiudendo il Mediterraneo all’interno del cortile del palazzo principesco”), intensifying the effects of light, sound and water (Alberti 2010: 25 and Mulryne 2013: 170). As Mulryne astutely pointed out, the awning above, the torches and the flames and artillery within would have been reflected by the water-filled courtyard below, casting shades of red and yellow throughout, and “the damp atmosphere [that] must have created conditions that made an audience uneasy”. Mulryne rightly surmised that Christine was surely thinking about such an unpleasant experience when she decided to set the next *naumachia* in Florence, not in the Pitti courtyard but in daylight and “on the less potentially threatening confines of the river Arno” (Saslow 1996: 96 and Mulryne 2013: 160-62 and 169-70).

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Notes

1 Mulryne and Else provide analyses and bibliographies on the use of water in this event (Mulryne 2013; Else 2019: 163-79).

2 On the Vasari, see Allegrì-Cecchi, 1980: 260-61 and Muccini 1990: 147-49. For the Vicentino, see Fenlon 2007: 172-73 and Crowley 2008: plate 16.

3 Crowley also cites similar passages, titling his chapter on Lepanto "Sea of Fire" (Crowley 2008: 266-77).

4 Wright - Spence - Lemons 2014: ix-x; 296-97; 312-15; 344-45; 356-57; 360-61; 428 and 484.

5 Wright - Spence - Lemons 2014: 108-9.

6 McGowan 2013: 44-45 and Chatenet 2013: 54-55. On galleasses, see Konstam 2002: 18-19.

7 Translation by Cooper (Cooper 2013: 24-26). Other naval battles at Nantes took place in 1548 and 1565.

8 Likened to napalm, substances such as red phosphorus, pine resin or naphtha, a petroleum-type material, have been suggested but still remain speculative (Guilmartin 1980: 60). John Pryor illustrates a manuscript from the twelfth century showing a Byzantine dromon with a siphon spewing this Greek fire on to another ship (Pryor 1995: 105).

9 Author's translation from Ruscelli, "A fare una sorte di palle d fuoco, che bruciano in acqua" (Ruscelli 1572: 31v). On Ruscelli and the woodcut illustration, see Hills 2007: 194-99 and Ruscelli 1572: 54r.

10 Wade 2013: 338-40.

11 Bandara 2013: 203-05.

12 Else discusses the theme of water, art and festivals in Medici Florence (Else 2019).

13 The Kafno quote appears in a study by Katritzky on Aby Warburg's influence (Katritzky 2001: 213). Primary sources include Gualterotti 1589; Cavallino 1589; and Rossi 1589. Major secondary sources include Warburg 1969: 259-300; Nagler 1964: 70-92; Petrioli Tofani 1969: 67-85; Strong 1973: 172-96; Blumenthal 1980: 2-27; Blumenthal 1990: 97-106; Testaverde Matteini 1991; Saslow 1996; Garbero Zorzi - Sperenzi 2001: 169-89; and various essays and catalog entries by Anna Maria Testaverde, Silvia Castelli, Monica Bietti, Margherita Cinti (Bietti - Giusti 2009: 50-125).

14 Saslow gives an overview of the various stages of Christine's journey (Saslow 1996: 121-32). See also Cervoni 1589; Gualterotti 1589: 17-18; Alberti 2010: 1-33; Aliverti 2013: 123-25; and Poole 2011: 405-08.

15 On the Barbary galiot in the sixteenth century, see

Konstam 2002: 45.

16 The exact height of the water remains unclear because sources give contradictory figures (Pavoni 1589: 36 and 40; Cavallino 1589: 44). Testaverde Matteini proposes a dramatically lower height of just under one meter based on the quantity of wood requested to support the enclosure as well as a reference in an anonymous description (Testaverde Matteini 1991: 141-42). Mulryne cites Gherardo Silvani's biography of Buontalenti which claims the courtyard was flooded to the depth of a man's height. This study accepts the approximate figure of four feet put forth by Mulryne, as anything too much lower would not have allowed the ships to maneuver (Mulryne 2013: 156-60 and 166).

17 Alberti notes, the 'alla greca' style references not classical but contemporary Greece under Ottoman control (Alberti 2010: 21-22). Saslow discusses the different sources for the event as well as the costumes and fabrics for the wedding in general (Saslow 1996: 3-5; 58-72 and 169). Testaverde Matteini supplements her analyses with a transcription of Seriacopo's *Memoriale* (Testaverde Matteini 1991: 146 and 176-249).

18 Some of the new vessels are identified as being built at Livorno and some in a Florentine workshop, possibly under the carpenter Fossetta, as recently proposed by Aliverti and Lucia Nuti in Mulryne's study (Mulryne 2013: 164-65). Alberti identifies six boats used at Pisa, including Osmeo's Galleon serving as the Galleon with three masts and the corsair galleys, two of the Turks and two of the Moors serving, as the four large galleys. Alberti and Aliverti discuss the important links between the naval spectacles at the two cities, calling the Pisa battle an 'anteprima' to that of Florence (Alberti 2010: 22-25; Aliverti 2013: 123-25).

19 Mulryne notes that even modern scholars could not conceive of how a vast space like the Colosseum could be flooded for such a temporary event though recent archaeological work has shed light on the credibility of this feat (Mulryne 2013: 152-56). Butters argues that the *Pitti naumachia* was Ferdinand's own invention, drawing on his earlier experience in Rome (Butters 1999: 40-41; Butters 2010: 408).

20 Entry to the event was heavily guarded and required a ticket made from porcelain (Saslow 1996: 165; Testaverde Matteini 1991: 146 and Alberti 2010: 19).

21 Author's translation from Pavoni, "un romore d'artiglierie tanto grande, che pareva il ciel cadesse, empiendosi il mare, e l'aria di fumo, che più non si scorgeva cosa alcuna: e fù giudicato che...in questo assalto fosse sparato più di tre mila tiri" (Pavoni 1589: 42-43).

“*Ecce Sacerdos Magnus*”: The Entry of Giovan Francesco Morosini, Brescia 1591

Iain Fenlon

In June 1591, Cardinal Giovan Francesco Morosini made his ceremonial entry into Brescia as the city’s new bishop, arguably the most elaborate such event since that of Caterina Cornaro almost a century earlier. The powerful *Consiglio generale dei nobili cittadini* had gone to great lengths to welcome its distinguished visitor, the latest incumbent of a see which had been occupied by distinguished churchmen during the course of the century, including the leading Borromean reformer Domenico Bollani (see Cairns 1976 and Gamba 2016). Its deliberations resulted in the appointment of ‘cinque prestantissimi cittadini’, presided over by the jurist Alfonso Capriolo, a learned man with a specialised knowledge of mathematics and science; he was also a poet, and the co-founder of the *Accademia degli Occulti*, the city’s most prestigious academy (see Rossi 1620). His principal collaborator, Marco Publio Fontana, a naturalized Brescian from Bergamo, was a priest with interests in literature, painting, sculpture, music, and classical literature (*ibidem* 1620: 441-43). Between them Capriolo and Fontana could muster many of the skills and much of the erudition that was eventually expended on Morosini’s entry and its subsequently published description (Fontana 1591)².



Fig. 1. Marco Publio Fontana, *Il sontuoso apparato fatto della città di Brescia nel ritorno dell'illu. & reverendiss. vescovo suo il Cardinale Morosini* (Brescia, Vincenzo Sabbio [1591]), titlepage.

The general model for the *via triumphalis* was that of Imperial Rome, with temporary arches constructed of wood and gesso and then ornamented with painted canvas, stucco, trompe l'oeil decorations, sculpture, inscriptions, and gilding. The route, similar to that followed by earlier Brescian bishops including Francesco and Andrea Corner, had evolved in the course of the sixteenth century (Giustina 2016:183-86)³. In the intervening period this seemingly immutable ritual, designed to confirm authority, had acquired new emphases according to fresh

political realities, much as had the papal *possesso* (Fosi 2002: 31-52). It is these elements, as well as the affirmation of civic and religious identity, which are so clearly present in the design of the temporary arches, placed in the hands of an equippe of painters and craftsmen, including Pietro Maria Bagnadore and Pietro Marone, working under the direction of the architect Giulio Todeschini and the artist Tommaso Bona⁴. Neither of the two Venetian officials, the *podestà* Lorenzo Priuli, who was in charge of civil and judicial matters, nor the *capitano* Niccolò Gussoni, responsible for military affairs and finance, seem to have played any part in the arrangements beyond offering general approval and reading through Fontana's inscriptions (Fontana 1591: 3). This is consonant with the emphasis upon the honest, conscientious but detached government which had characterised Venetian attitudes towards Brescia since the fifteenth century (Law 1992: 171).

In designing the arches for Morosini's entry, Fontana and his associates could have been influenced by printed *descrizioni* of other entries, and particularly by de-luxe accounts such as that of Prince Philip's official visit to Antwerp in 1549 put together by the secretary to the city, Cornelius De Schrijver (1550). Illustrated with 31 woodcuts by Pieter Coecke van Aelst, this is one of the most sumptuous of all sixteenth-century festival books⁵. It is also likely that the 28 single sheets by Orazio Scarabelli and Epifanio d'Alfiano showing perspective elevations of the temporary arches designed by Bernardo Buontalenti for the entry of Christine of Lorraine in 1589, would have been known to the Brescians (see Saslow 1996: 189-97). Permanent structures in the immediate area, such as the Porta Gemonia in San Daniele del Friuli, or Palladio's Arco Bollani in Udine, might also have provided inspirational models (Giustina 2016: 177).

Specially-composed polyphony is a distinctive feature of Morosini's entry. According to Ottavio Rossi, Capriolo was an accomplished practical musician who "sonava eccellentemente di ogni sorte di stromento", and although none of it has survived, some older bibliographies describe Fontana as a "composer of much vocal and instrumental music" (Warren 1845: 123). The civic and religious musical life of Brescia was focused on the cathedral, and it was natural that Lelio Bertani, who had been *maestro di cappella*

there for more than fifteen years, should have been chosen to compose two motets for the occasion. Also involved in the arrangements was Costanzo Antegnati, organist of the cathedral since 1584, who had worked closely with Bertani throughout the 1580s. There is some slight evidence that Morosini may have had an interest in music, since Giuliano Paratico's *Canzonette a tre voci libro secondo* is dedicated to him (Paratico 1588)⁶. Morosini had expressed the wish for his entry to coincide with the season of Pentecost, which would have given him the opportunity to celebrate a solemn mass at which the members of the congregation would receive papal indulgences (Fontana 1591: 73-76). Such manipulations of the liturgical calendar were common. When Archbishop Alessandro de' Medici made his entry into Florence in 1584, the event was deliberately planned to occur one week before Palm Sunday, as if to emphasise his role as Christ's successor (Miller 2007: 247)⁷. Enormous efforts, hampered by the inclement weather which had often brought work to a halt, had been expended in Brescia to complete the construction and decoration of the *via triumphalis* in time; even so one of the six arches remained incomplete (Fontana 1591: 47). On the day before the entry the skies were clear, allowing the many 'foreigners' from elsewhere in the Veneto, together with both 'nobili' and 'popolani' to admire the temporary structures and their decoration. Some sketched their appearance, while others copied down their inscriptions. Many merchants had closed their shops even though it was market day, and in a matter of hours the palaces along the route had been transformed, with rugs and tapestries hung from balconies. Four ambassadors were despatched to meet Morosini to conduct him to Rezzato, close to the city (*ibidem*: 73-75). Here he stayed overnight at the Villa Chizzola, the country residence of an important local noble family and the seat of an academy dedicated to the study of agriculture, religious, and social issues, and the classics⁸. Its activities are reflected in the writings of Agostino Gallo, another local landowner, whose treatise *Le venti giornate della vera agricoltura* (Venice, 1569) is regarded as the cornerstone of modern Italian agronomy. Gatherings at the Villa Chizzola were also connected to the Occulti, of which Gallo was a member⁹. Significantly, he was also one of the 'cinque praestantissimi cittadini'.



Fig. 2. Brescia, from *Theatrum urbium italicarum* (Venice, [Pietro Bertelli], 1599).

On the morning of his entry, Morosini was joined by six new ambassadors who had ridden out to accompany him to the Porta San Nazzaro, where a temporary pavilion had been erected so that he could robe in pontificals before making his ceremonial entry.

As both a sign of welcome, and to advise the citizenry that the spectacle was about to begin, ordinance was let off from the ramparts of the castle, and the large bell of the Torre della Pallata was rung. Crowds had been gathered for several hours, but now that the moment had arrived there was a surge of activity, as many clambered onto roofs, balconies, and temporary platforms to assure themselves of a good view of the proceedings. Others lined the route, which began at the Porta San Nazzaro, passed close to the church of San Francesco, ran to the Torre della Pallata, and then turned east past the Broletto to descend into the historic centre of the city. Before arriving at the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, it passed close to the palaces of some of the oldest and wealthiest established families of Brescia. The route effectively presented an ideal reading of the urban texture of the city, emphasising its identity, history, and power structures.

At the city gate, where the official procession had been drawn up, Morosini was met by Giacomo Luzzago together other members of the cathedral chapter. In an important ritual act, the new bishop knelt on a cushion and kissed a wooden cross, a symbolic act which emphasised not only his responsibility for the spiritual health of Brescia and its citizens, but also his role as its principal intercessor in times of crisis. In essence this was a religious adaption of the traditional secular gesture of submission, when the keys of the city were offered to a monarch or prince¹⁰. The choreography of this moment recalls the reception of Christine of Lorraine in a temporary 'theatre' constructed in front of the Porta del Prato in Florence just two years earlier, which Fontana and his colleagues could have known about from Raffaello Gualterotti's account (Florence, 1589: 5-8). It was at this juncture that the first of the pieces composed for the occasion, Lelio Bertani's setting of the antiphon 'Consolamini populi meus' for six-voices, was performed with voices and instruments¹¹. Specially-composed motets played an essential role in the politics of spectacle, and in the Italian tradition the encounter at the gate of the city was invariably accompanied by

a large-scale polyphonic piece written for the occasion (see Fenlon 2015: 135-48)¹². Instruments were often added to the texture both to increase its sonic power and to ensure that the music would carry in the open air (Fontana 1591: 75)¹³. Once the performance had finished, Morosini remounted his mule, and he entered the city under a ceremonial *baldacchino* of white damask worked with gold fringes carried by six local citizens, to the sounds of trumpets and artillery from the castle and the bells of the city churches which rang out “che la città tutta ribombo pare” (*ibidem*: 75-76). Representatives of the colleges of notaries, lawyers, and physicians, the most politically powerful professional associations of the city, walked in the parade, as did prominent merchants, the confraternities, and the religious orders of the city. The first arch, the *Arco di Accogliamento* immediately outside the Porta San Nazzaro, was designed to demonstrate the city’s affection for Morosini and the desire of its citizens for his return (*ibidem*: 4)¹⁴. The iconography of its comparatively plain design emphasised the virtues, natural resources, and wealth of Brescia and its surrounding territories, while a panel immediately above the entrance bore an inscription welcoming Morosini on his arrival in Brescia after his labours in France. This thematically connected the first arch to the second, the *Arco delle Legationi*, the first of three devoted to a celebration of Morosini’s diplomatic career in the service of the Venetian Republic. Its main purpose of was to represent the qualities of wisdom and faith which had sustained Morosini during his three legations to Savoy, France, and Spain¹⁵. These articulated the *cursus honorem* of his career as a diplomatic representative of the Republic (Davis 1962: 29-30). Statues of his three legations decorated the façade of the arch; its reverse prophesied that Morosini’s achievements, acknowledged in his own lifetime, would enter into the collective memory and be celebrated in the future through the agency of History, Poetry, Sculpture, and Painting. A canvas placed above the central opening of the arch depicted this concept through an image of Janus; elsewhere History placed its foot on a clock to assert its superiority over Time. This was balanced by Polyhymnia, the muse of poetry, dance, music, and eloquence, holding a *barbita*, with its lyre-shaped body; Fontana knew about this from his reading of Horace and Theocritus. Statues of Sculpture and

Painting followed on either side of the opening, while on the frieze above ran the explanatory legend ‘AETERNITATI MAUROCENAE’.

The following arch, the *Arco di Costantinopoli* situated close to the ancient church of San Francesco, built after a visit to the city by the founder of the order, celebrated the qualities of Piety and Religion, which had sustained Morosini during his three years as Bailò in Constantinople. This brought with it prime responsibility for the political and economic affairs of Venetians living in the city, a task which had become of enhanced importance after the wars of 1571-1573 and the constant threat of a Turkish advance¹⁶. An enormous dragon, with terrible staring eyes and a raised tail, stood above the archway. Clamped between its jaws were two chains to signify both Turkish command of the Straits of Hellespont, as well as the virtues of Prudence and Fortitude with which Venice confronted the perennial peril of Turkish invasion. The figures of Religion (symbolized by the symbolic Elephant supporting Piety) stood above the architrave; Faith and Peace were elevated on nearby pedestals¹⁷. It was during his time at Constantinople that Morosini, while still a layman, had been selected as Bishop of Brescia. His appointment, following consultation with the local regular clergy, was generally welcomed and to some extent celebrated in print in Brescia (see Podavinio 1585 and Cesareni 1586)¹⁸, but it was his diplomatic career, now in the service of the Church rather than the Republic, that took precedence over his episcopal duties.

Close to the Torre della Pallata, near the civic centre of the medieval city, the *Arco della Francia* was saturated with references to Morosini’s official diplomatic activities in France. These had begun as early as the 1570s when he was appointed as a Venetian ambassador, despatched to congratulate Henry III on his election as King of Poland in 1573, witnessed his return to France in late 1574, and attended the king’s coronation in Rheims in the following year (see Albéri, *Relazioni*, vol. 14). After Morosini’s return from Constantinople, he was again sent to France as Apostolic Nuncio, when the Wars of Religion were at their most disruptive and politically complex. The turbulent condition of the country was symbolized on the arch by a statue of *Francia travagliata*, placed on a pedestal placed at its summit, a modification of the figure of ‘*Italia travagliata*’ familiar from the literary genre

of the *Lamento d'Italia* (see Locati 1576). The official papal ceremony confirming Morosini's appointment was depicted in a large painting above the central arch; nearby stood the statues of Labour and Vigilance. Further statues of Deceit and Calumny represented two of the principal obstacles facing Morosini's mission in his dealings with the bitterly opposed French factions, while a painting represented Paris identified by the Seine, and another showed Hope, her besieged condition represented by a fierce rainstorm (Fontana 1591: 43).

The fifth arch in the sequence, the *Arco della Giustificazione*, erected between the Torre della Pallata and the Broletto, was dedicated to the twinned and interlaced themes of civic and family history. The closely related clans of the Morosini and the Cornaro had produced three doges and many procurators over the centuries, a matter of considerable family pride that was often rehearsed in print (Podovinio 1585: 13-15). A sequence of seven statues sheltering under a loggia articulated by Corinthian columns featured Cornelia Cornara, Morosini's mother, presiding over an assembly of recent holders of high ecclesiastical office including Marco Cornaro, Patriarch of Constantinople, Federico Cornaro, Bishop of nearby Bergamo, and other members of the family who had served as Bishops of Brescia. On the facade of the arch itself the figures of Fortitude and 'la grandezza dell'animo' appear to complement and bolster the catalogue of Morosini's qualities elucidated by the paired figures of the previous arches: Prudence and Faith, Piety and Religion, and Knowledge and Patience, all heroic virtues which, Fontana assures the reader, the new bishop possessed to perfection.

The cathedral was not just the final destination, but also the site of rituals of re-sacralization. Morosini was received there with a second, monumental motet by Bertani, a setting of the post-Pentecost responsory 'Ego te tuli de domo patris tui'¹⁹. As so often with such occasional pieces the music has not survived, but since Fontana's account describes it as having been written for four choirs of instruments and voices it was clearly in the grand Venetian polychoral style exemplified by the *Concerti* recently assembled by Andrea Gabrieli and published in Venice (1587). Rossi may have had this kind of magisterial sound in mind when he wrote about Bertani in the

Elogi, and it is even possible that he was present at the performance before Morosini thirty years earlier (1620: 491)²⁰. That took place inside the old Romanesque cathedral, whose circular plan would have encouraged spatial separation of the four choirs²¹. Quite unusually for such accounts Fontana gives details of the instrumentation: the first choir consisted of voices accompanied by Costanzo Antegnati on the organ which his father had built in 1539, the second of voices and *viole* accompanied by a regal, the third of just trombones and *cornetti*, and the fourth of violins and voices supported by a portative organ. The ceremonies concluded, Morosini was escorted to the Palazzo Vescovile, having passed under the *Arco della Felicità*.



Fig. 3. Arco della Felicità, from Fontana, *Il sontuoso apparato fatto della città di Brescia* (Brescia, Vincenzo Sabbio, [1591]).

The day had been overcast, but now it rained and the crowds dispersed.

Some episcopal entries were distinct from secular *entrate* in being comparatively austere, but Morosini's entry was distinctly princely in style. Its elaborate nature is partly to be explained by his distinguished diplomatic career both before and after entering the service of the Church, and partly by the sense of anticipation that had built up in the city in the six years that separated his election from

his final arrival, a sentiment forcefully expressed in the inscription of the *Arco di Accogliamento*: 'IO FRANCISCO MAVROCENO. S.R.E. Card. Amplissimo Episcopo nostro...maximo omnium desiderio, ab extrema utrusque Gallia ad nos reditum' (Fontana 1591: 7). Morosini's restoration to his diocese had not been without difficulty. His attempts to mediate between the warring factions in the French Wars of Religion had ended in failure with the assassination, in December 1588, of the Duke of Guise and his brother Cardinal Louis of Lorraine²². Having realised the futility of further attempts at reconciliation, Morosini returned to Italy in October 1589 in disgrace. Accused of having failed to act over the cardinal's murder, he was deprived of the traditional ceremonial entry into Rome that was normally accorded to Papal Legates (Fosi 1997: 89-115). Confined to the Palazzo San Marco, where he was interrogated by the Inquisition Morosini was not allowed to attend the Consistory until March 1590. Subsequently reprieved and invited by the Pope to represent the Holy See in Germany and Hungary, Morosini expressed a preference to return to his diocese.

Fontana's description of Morosini's entry was printed by Vincenzo Sabbio, a member of the most prominent dynasty of Brescian printer-publishers, presumably at the expense of the Brescian Council which would have wanted a permanent record of the occasion (see Vaglia 1973: 59-87). Fully-illustrated accounts of entries, showing all the triumphal arches, are rare, even by the end of the century when the most lavish of all such books, describing Clement VIII's entry into Bologna in 1598, with engravings by Guido Reni, was published (see Mitchell 2004: 47)²³. It is even more unusual that the 12 engravings commissioned by Sabbio from Leone Pallavicino show both sides of the arches; this, together with the frontispiece by Giacomo Franco, makes the result a truly luxurious publication. Sabbio had a keen sense of the local book market, which he catered for with medical texts, local histories, and chronicles, all presumably aimed at the professional classes congregated in the three 'colleges' of the city, together with liturgical books for the local clergy. He also printed a certain amount of polyphonic music, often in partnership with two other printers, Tommaso Bozzola and Pietro Maria Marchetti; in the course of the years 1579-1588, a slack period for the Milanese trade, the *Compagnia editoriale bresciana*, in which these

three collaborated, printed 40 editions of music (Sirch 2003: 7-30). Among them are Florentio Maschera's much reprinted *Libro primo de canzoni* (1584), whose individual pieces are dedicated to women from prominent Brescian families²⁴. This gives it a similar social feel to the *Rime* of the Occulti, which contains sonnets addressed to a number of high-born Brescian women famed both for their beauty and as the inspiration of poetic and literary ideals²⁵. The earliest in a sequence of local publications of the kind, the *Libro primo* is also testimony to the Brescian taste for domestic instrumental music (Toffetti 2016: 457-512).

Apart from the architectural design of the arches themselves, Fontana drew upon a wide range of literary sources both ancient and modern, together with his knowledge of ancient coins and medals, in devising inscriptions and justifying iconographical choices. The majority of his citations are from the classics, particularly Homer and Sophocles, and above all from the Latin tradition beginning with Virgil and Horace. In a world that did not distinguish between scientific and literary culture, there was also space for citations from astronomical, hermetical, and medical texts. Noticeably little is drawn from medieval authors (there is no mention of either Augustine or Aquinas), and in general Fontana's choices are concentrated on authors from antiquity together with recent or contemporary writers including locals such as Lorenzo Gambara, Antonio Tagletti (another member of the Occulti), and Vincenzo Maggio's commentary on Aristotle's *Poetics*²⁶. Fontana also made considerable use of Pierio Valeriano's *Hieroglyphica*, from which the Elephant, Religion, and Clemency on the *Arco di Constantinopoli* are derived. His other major source of ancient medals and coins (the sixteenth century did not distinguish between the two), was Guillaume du Choul's *Discours* (1580)²⁷.

Published accounts of entries are often idealistic and propagandistic vehicles for princely self-representation, seen only from the standpoint of the organisers and their ambitions. It is generally acknowledged by historians that they are often re-written versions of what actually took place²⁸. Many different figures were involved in the planning and execution of Morosini's entry, all of whom were invested in the festive process. For all those involved the most participation in the planning and execution of Morosini's entry was an explicit way of demonstrating privilege and

underlining the expectations of those who paid for the event. In this sense the triumphal arches and their inscriptions, immortalised by Fontana, were not merely rhetorical flourishes but constituted a dialogue between the various beneficiaries of urban power. The final result was not the celebrative expression of a single and uncontested collective point of view, but rather the product of a number of individual efforts, all of which imparted significant and differing emphases to the outcome. The ambassadors who were charged with escorting Morosini to Brescia, all of whom are individually named by Fontana, were drawn exclusively from the ranks of the local aristocracy, as were the eight similarly identified *palafranchieri* who walked in the procession (Ferraro 1993: 76). In such a rigidly structured society this was hardly accidental, neither was the fact that a number of the thirteen *case* from the old rural nobility that had transferred to the city in the middle ages, and who effectively controlled the executive committee in the second half of the sixteenth century, also participated in the parade and are memorialised in print (*ibidem*: 1993: 95).

Many of the images and inscriptions that decorated the arches emphasise the antiquity of Brescia, its connections to Imperial Rome, and its relationship to Venice, all enveloped within the assertion of a universal Church revitalized by Trent. Episcopal entries inevitably provided the opportunity for underlining the authority of Rome. The design of the pediment of Fontana's *Arco di Costantinopoli* for example incorporated episcopal symbols, while to the right stood Prudence, and to the left Religion, characteristics that Morosini was evidently to bring to the souls under his care (1591: 35). The theme of Venetian power, no matter how illusory it may have been by the final decade of the sixteenth century, was also visible in the decoration of this same arch. The main field was occupied by the figures of Concord and Peace submerged in a sea of tritons and marine deities, accompanied by Neptune, the monarch of the sea, together with the traditional figure of Venice as Queen of the Adriatic. In the lowest register Diligence was shown surrounded by a swarm of bees to indicate sustained activity, and Counsel, the latter dressed as a Venetian senator with a book in one hand and the head of Medusa in the other.

As a mainland state subservient to Venice but conscious of its own needs, Brescia was constantly

engaged in a process of mediation between the requirements of its political masters, both temporal and spiritual, and a keen sense of its own identity. This matter was made complex by the uneasy division between political realities and Brescia's spiritual affiliation as a suffragan of the Archdiocese of Milan. The inevitable tension between these two forces is neatly encapsulated in the career of Morosini, a high-ranking Venetian diplomatic who served the Republic in a number of prestigious roles, and who became a bishop, then Papal Legate to France, and finally a cardinal. In formulating the iconography of his formal entry into the city, the 'cinque prestantissimi cittadini' not only drew upon these twin elements but also added a third, which relied on the long established tradition of incorporating the local version of civic religion into the construction of a *terraferma* state shaped not only by the history of Venetian rule, but also by the assertion of local identity. This is clearly expressed in the iconography of the last-minute addition to the *via triumphalis*, the *Arco di Accogliamento*, devised at the suggestion of Capriolo, who had overall control of the project (Fontana: 1591: fol. A²). This, which would have been the first of the temporary arches to be seen by Morosini, which places a relentless emphasis upon the natural resources and wealth of Brescia, something of a standard trope in encomiums of the city (Podavino 1585: 23). Helmeted, and with an array of weaponry at her feet, her image drew upon the familiar theme of the city as Pallas Athena, the goddess of wisdom, artisanal activity, and warfare. Together with Milan, the area around Brescia was at the heart of Italian production of swords and firearms of all kinds; while production of the constituent parts of portable hand-held firearms was concentrated in the forges along the River Mella, the finished items were assembled in the city's workshops (see Belfanti 1998: 266-83). In addition to munitions, Brescia was famed throughout Europe for the manufacture of the sumptuously engraved and damascened suits of ceremonial and parade ground armour so prized by European princes and monarchs; it was also the main supplier of armour used by the Venetian forces, an arrangement explicitly referred to in Palma Vecchio's painting 'Doge Francesco Venier Presents the Subject Cities to Venice' of 1595 (see Wolters 1983: 132-33)²⁹. The militaristic and artisanal theme of the arch was further amplified

by an upturned urn disgorging water, a symbolic representation of the Mella which flowed close to the Porta San Nazaro, close to where the entry began, from the Val Trompia, where billets of smolten ore were produced (Williams 2012: 218-19). The appropriation of classical prototypes is evident not only in the adoption of the figure of Pallas Athena, but also in the incorporation of two ancient river gods, familiar elements of sculptured fountains and the 'all'antica' arches of triumphal entries since the statues of Tiberinus and Nilus from the sanctuary of Isis and Serapis had been recovered from the Tiber at the beginning of the century (see Haskell - Penny 1981: 272-73); their potential as vehicles for political messages about territorial domination was well established (Lazzaro 2011: 70-94). Although Brescian examples of the type did not exist, Fontana provided appropriate classical bolstering through a citation (duly amplified and corrected), from Catullus, along with the references to modern writers including Pietro Bembo, Jacopo Sannazaro, and the Brescians Lorenzo Gambara and Giovanni Antonio Taglietti, the latter yet another member of the Occulti. Provided with long unkempt hair and beards to denote their age, these two reclining semi-nude male figures, their back legs raised and slightly crooked, their front ones arranged on the ground in the standard Hellenistic pose, functioned as references to places outside the city but subject to it, areas which provided its citizens with grain and other agricultural necessities. Cynical observers might well have commented on the contrast between these authoritative images of abundance and fecundity, fashioned at a time when the famine which had been afflicting north Italy since the mid-1580s, was reaching its peak (Segni 1591). Although traces of the designs of the arches for Morosini's entry such as preparatory drawings are lost, leaving Fontana's account as the only witness to their visual appearance, there is an echo of the *Arco de Accogliamento* still to be seen in Brescia. The Fontana della Pallata, designed by Bagnadore and constructed a few years later, features allegorical statues representing the rivers Mella and Garza flanking a triton disgorging water, while above the fray the figure of Brescia as Pallas Athena holds the traditional attribute of a cornucopia to represent the agricultural richness of the surrounding countryside.



Fig. 4. Pietro Maria Bagnadore, Fontana della Pallata, Brescia (1597).

But the reality was somewhat different. Behind the gilt and gesso of Morosini's entry and the splendour of Bertani's polyphony, the exceptionally unfavourable weather conditions to which Fontana occasionally refers as a hindrance to the preparations, were partially responsible, together with institutional failure and changes in agrarian production, for what has been described as probably the worst famine to strike Northern Italy since the Black Death (Alfani 2010: 13-16).

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2 See Irene Giustina, ““Un arco grande, e magnifico, che tutto marmo parea”. Ingressi trionfali, apparati effimeri e cultura architettonica a Brescia nel pieno Cinquecento”, *Annali di storia Bresciani*, vol. 4, 2016: 162-88.

3 A reconstruction of the route can be found in Giustina 2016: 179.

4 Stefano Fenaroli, in *Dizionario degli artisti Bresciani*, Brescia, 1877: 33, 240-42, and Giustina 2016: 171-73.

5 See Landwehr 1971: 25; and Bussels 2010.

6 The dedication is dated 26.i.1588. See Cozzando 1694: 141-42.

7 See also Miller 2002: 5-28.

8 *Commentari della academia [...] per l'anno MDCCC-VIII*, Brescia, 1808: 9-12; see also Maylender, *Storia delle accademie*, Bologna, 1926-30: vol. IV, 87-91; and Ambrosoli 1997: 121-22.

9 See *Rime de gli Academici Occulti [...]*, Brescia, 1568: fols 40-43, with a suitably agricultural *impresa* for Gallo on fol. 40.

10 For some contemporary French instances see Murphy 2016: 50-61.

11 Isaiah 14, 1-8.

12 Welcome motets were usually inserted into the third of the key organisational phases of the episcopal entry as defined in Paiva 2006: 138-61, namely organisation, welcome, reception, urban procession, spiritual consecration, and final celebrations, a typology consonant with the architecture of Morosini's entry.

13 “suono di cornetti & trombini concertato”.

14 The simplicity of its programme is emphasised by the placing of its description and accompanying illustration before Fontana's essay on the use of symbolism in triumphal arches, which then precedes the discussion of the remaining five arches.

15 For Morosini's *relazione* of Savoy of 1570 see Albéri, 15 vols, 1839-1863: vol. 5.

16 See Simon 1985: 56-69; Dursteler 2001:1-30 and, for Morosini's *relazione* of 1585 see Albéri, *Relazioni*, vol. 9.

17 Elephants were mostly exchanged as presents between European rulers, the most celebrated example being that of Annone, presented to Leo X in 1514 by Manuel I of Portugal; see Bedini 1998.

18 Podavinio, a *mansionario* of Brescia Cathedral, speaks of Morosini as “desideratissimo nostro pastore & padre”.

19 Second Book of Kings, 19, 20-23.

20 “nissuno maggior maestà nel comporre una Musica piena, & di quelle nelle quali risplende la maestà congiunta con mirabilissimo affetto di Sinfonia”. None of Bertani's large-scale music for voices and instruments has survived, but his colleague Costanzo Antegnati published a good deal of sacred music in the polychoral manner including *Liber IIII* (1603).

21 Bertani's music was performed again, but with different instrumentation, on the following day during a so-

lemn sung mass (Fontana 1591: 76).

22 In *Delle lettere...libro primo* (1591), Giovanni Andrea Viscardo remarked that the bishop had arrived in Italy “in persona...quasi di un mare tempestoso in porto” (78-79). The dedication, to Morosini, is dated 15.v.1591.

23 Reni's engravings in the *Descrittione de gli apparati fatti [...] Clement VIII* (1598) had a separate existence as single sheets.

24 For details of some of the families of the dedicatees, which included members of the Martinengo, Averoldo, and Capriolo, see Ferraro 1993: Appendix 1.

25 The *Rime* is dedicated to Barbara Calini Fenaruola, as are a number of other printed collections of music; see Bizzarini 2016: 575-99.

26 *Vincentij Madij et Bartholomaei Lombardi in Aristotelis librum de poetica communes explanationis* (1550). For Maggio, who taught natural philosophy at Padua, see Bisanti 1991).

27 For the importance of this text see McGowan 2001, 67-80 and Cooper 2003: 261-86.

28 See, for example, Richard Cooper's introduction to [Maurice Scève], *The Entry of Henry II into Lyons, September 1548* (1997: 128-29), which identifies examples of inscriptions on the arches that were altered for publication.

29 In Palma's painting the figure of Brescia, identified by the emblem of the lion rampant, is surrounded at her feet by armour.



Sens et fonctions de l'ornement dans l'entrée royale en France au XVII^e siècle

Marie-Claude Canova-Green

Dans la langue courante au XVII^e siècle, 'ornement' est synonyme de parure, d'embellissement. Furetière le définit comme "ce qui pare quelque chose, ce qui la rend plus belle, plus agreable" (Furetière 1690: n. p.). On orne ainsi par amour pour le beau, par souci esthétique de l'apparence, dans le but de satisfaire et de réjouir l'œil par un travail sur la surface extérieure. Dans cette recherche de l'enrichissement et de l'éclat, l'idée de quelque chose de rajouté et donc de détachable, et par conséquent d'accessoire, voire de superflu, domine. Or, si l'on s'en tient à l'étymologie, le premier sens du verbe latin *ornare*, d'où sont tirés en français le verbe 'orner' et son substantif 'ornement', est "équiper, outiller, préparer", en d'autres termes "munir de tout le nécessaire" (Gaffiot 1934: 1093). Le sens d'"embellir", de "rehausser" n'est qu'un sens second, qui d'ailleurs n'exclut pas le premier. L'espace urbain en fête des entrées royales du premier XVII^e siècle français est un bon exemple de ces emplois contradictoires du mot et de la chose. En effet, à lire les relations de ces entrées, l'ornement au sens le plus large, car tout est ornement dans l'entrée solennelle, du décor urbain des architectures éphémères au plus petit feston décorant arcs et pyramides, est un ajout qui transforme et embellit les lieux de la ville, quelque chose d'adventice et de luxueux qui vient se superposer à des structures physiquement ou du moins conceptuellement complètes, et partant d'inessentiel à leur fonctionnalité. Toutefois, parce qu'il ne saurait y avoir d'entrée solennelle sans 'ornements' de l'entrée, sans ces "ornemens

de la Gloire" habituels aux triomphes (Machaud 1629: 2), l'ornement est aussi, paradoxalement, ce qui permet le bon fonctionnement de l'entrée et qui en marque à la fois la complétude et la perfection¹. Dans la mesure où il reste un ajout, un fait second, à première vue accessoire, l'ornement est certes un accident, mais c'est un accident nécessaire, parce qu'il est autant un schème interprétatif que le cadre à l'intérieur duquel se révèle le sens.

Qu'entend-on par 'ornement'?

Les remarques du père jésuite Claude-François Ménestrier sur *La pratique et l'usage des décorations* dans les entrées solennelles vont nous permettre de préciser le champ d'application des termes d'ornement et de décoration en France au XVII^e siècle. "Appareil" de l'entrée, les diverses architectures éphémères, arcs de triomphe, portiques, pyramides, obélisques et autres *apparati*, qui jalonnent le parcours du prince dans la ville comme autant de "pièces" de son triomphe (Ménestrier 1838: 153), sont des 'ornements' de l'espace urbain qui doivent en faire un espace d'apparat tout à la gloire du royal visiteur². Nulle utilité fonctionnelle ne leur est reconnue. Pour le Jésuite, elles "ne servent qu'aux décorations" (*ibidem*: 143). Puisqu'elles ne "sont destiné[e]s [qu']au plaisir", aussi n'est-on pas "obligé de suivre les règles exactes de l'architecture, qui sont nécessaires pour élever des bâtimens solides pour la durée, et commodes pour les usages" (*ibidem*: 143). Décorations de la ville, elles forment en quelque sorte le décor – au sens moderne d'"aspect extérieur du milieu dans lequel se produit un phénomène" (Robert 1976: 416) – à l'intérieur duquel va se dérouler l'entrée

avec sa toute pompe et sa magnificence, celle-ci fonctionnant dès lors tel un cadre transformant qui requalifie le lieu en espace-temps singulier pour la cérémonie et engage par là une lecture spécifique de ce lieu urbain transformé. En effet, comme toute fête, l'entrée

ne reconfigure pas seulement une réalité spatiale pour en construire une autre, elle suspend aussi la temporalité traditionnelle et marque le passage d'une frontière, dont la porte ou l'arc de triomphe constitue le dispositif fondamental (Heering 2013: 23).

Pour le père Ménestrier, ces architectures éphémères représentent les "corps solides" des décorations des entrées (*ibidem*: 153). Elles incarnent pour ainsi dire un principe 'porteur' face au principe de 'revêtement', qu'incarnent, eux, les "ornements des décorations", au rang desquels sont placés les inscriptions, qualifiées d'"âme" des décorations (*ibidem*: 153), les statues, les peintures, les emblèmes, les devises, les symboles, les médailles, les chiffres et autres armoiries. La Fable et les inventions des poètes leur serviront de source d'inspiration étant donné que

les fictions donnent des moyens de trouver le merveilleux que l'on cherche en ces décorations, et présentent une plus agréable variété d'ornemens bizarres et nouveaux qui frappent les yeux (*ibidem*: 149).

S'y ajoutent tous ces "autres petits ornemens" (*Le Soleil au signe du Lyon* 1623: 27) ou "ornemens de fantaisie" (Ménestrier 1838: 144), tels que feuillages, fleurettes, festons et autres "enjolivemens" censés "enrichir & orner" (*La Joyeuse Entree* 2001: 98), non répertoriés dans le traité du Jésuite, mais minutieusement décrits par les plus prolixes des auteurs de relations dans leur souci du détail et de la précision.

On remarquera par ailleurs qu'à l'instar de Vitruve, nombre de ces auteurs, érudits pour la plupart et souvent pères jésuites, continuent d'appeler "ornemens des colonnes" l'ensemble des parties supérieures horizontales correspondant le plus souvent à l'entablement, telles la corniche, l'architrave ou encore la frise. Pour Claude Perrault, il s'agit là évidemment d'une "signification bien différente de la signification ordinaire" (Perrault 1684: 6) et plus en rapport avec des notions d'ordre et de mise en ordre qu'avec une idée de beauté³. Car ornement en ce sens n'est pas un "élément périphérique, un habillage destiné à enjoliver" (Gros 2006: 396), mais plutôt une partie essentielle du point de vue

de la structure utile, sans laquelle "les colonnes mesmes n'y sçauroient estre" (Perrault 1684: 110). Pour Perrault, 'ornement' ne se peut proprement entendre que de

toutes les choses qui ne sont point des parties essentielles, mais qui sont adjoutées seulement pour rendre l'ouvrage plus riche & plus beau, qui sont les sculptures de feuillages de fleurs & de compartimens que l'on taille dans les moulures, dans les frises, dans les plafonds, & dans les autres endroits qu'on veut orner (*ibidem*: 6).

De fait ces "ornements", propres à l'ordre porté par les colonnes et supposés les "enrichir" ou les "embellir", correspondraient, eux, plutôt à *l'ornatus* vitruvien, quoique leur aspect en apparence purement esthétique soit ce qui permette en réalité de distinguer les différents ordres d'architecture entre eux (Gros 2006: 394-95).

Il est enfin un autre 'ornement' de l'entrée sur lequel les auteurs des relations aiment à s'attarder et qui touche, cette fois, non plus à l'architecture et à sa décoration, mais à la composante humaine du rite de l'entrée. En effet, pour Annibal Géliot et Jean-Baptiste Machaud, à qui l'on doit les relations des entrées avignonnaise et parisienne de 1622 et de 1628 respectivement, "le plus bel ornement des villes en semblables solemnitez" (Géliot 1623: 119) est à chercher dans l'amour des peuples et dans sa manifestation tangible, la foule, à l'image de ce "monde infiny de personnes de toutes conditions, qui ne bordoit pas seulement, mais tapissoit des plus hauts estages jusques en bas la ruë Saint Jacques" (Machaud 1629: 56). Cet ornement moral figuré de l'entrée, devenu élément décoratif à l'instar des tentes et autres "tapisseries exquisés" pavoisant l'espace urbain, se fait même ornement architectural à Paris, en 1628, et cela de deux manières: une première fois, symboliquement, dans le semis de roses emblématiques qui revêt différentes parties du quatrième arc de triomphe, justement consacré à l'amour du peuple; une seconde fois, de manière plus réaliste, dans la représentation en trompe-l'œil, de chaque côté de l'ouverture de l'arc, de spectateurs attentifs à voir passer le roi:

Aux deux costez du Portail estoient deux feintes de maçonnerie, [...] chacune soustenant une balustrade de colonnes, entre lesquelles le peuple estoit représenté en diverses postures, pour monstrer l'ardeur qui estoit par tout à voir passer le Roy; tesmoignage certain de l'Amour que les subjects portent à leur Prince (*ibidem*: 57).



Source: gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

Fig. 1. Paris, 1628, 4^e arc de l'Amour du Peuple.

Des fonctions de l'ornement

Il ressort des occurrences variées du terme dans les textes des relations que l'ornement assume des fonctions diverses dans l'entrée. Il se charge tout naturellement d'une fonction esthétique de décoration. Le mot est alors l'équivalent des termes d'"embellissement", d'"enjolivement" et surtout d'"enrichissement". Certains des ornements portés par les architectures éphémères paraissent même n'avoir qu'une fonction décorative et servent à remplir un espace autrement laissé vide de ce que l'on a jugé être agréable à l'œil⁴ et susceptible de plaire au monarque, appelé à passer sous les arcs et les portiques érigés en son honneur. Qu'on en juge: à Bordeaux, en 1615, "parce qu'elle[s] donnoit[en]t passage à leurs Majestés", les portes Médocque et du Chapeau Rouge avaient été "embelli[e]s" d'"entrelas, fueillages, L coronnées, & autres gayetés", "car tout cela donnoit du delice à la veüe" (Morillon 1616: 350, 362). À Arles, en 1622, des emblèmes "embellissoient les vuides de l'arc"

(Saxy 1623: 26), interrompant par là l'uniformité de ses espaces lisses⁵, comme si esthétiquement parlant la nature aussi abhorrait le vide. Ailleurs c'étaient des "fueillages arabesques" et quelques autres "enrichissemens" qui se surajoutaient "à l'entour" d'un "grand marbre gentil bien ouvrage" (Géliot 1623: 237)⁶. Plaisante à regarder, d'autant plus qu'elle est variée et ingénieuse⁷, cette ornementation des architectures éphémères vise donc en premier lieu l'agrément, le plaisir visuel du spectateur et surtout celui du royal visiteur, car c'est de sa satisfaction à lui que va dépendre en grande partie l'avenir de la ville. Au plaisir immédiat de l'abondance et de la variété, la *copia* chère à l'esthétique renaissante, s'ajoute pour les plus instruits le plaisir d'une curiosité piquée par le besoin de déchiffrement de ce qui tient inévitablement de prime abord d'un fouillis visuel. Ainsi conçu, l'ornement se donne bien pour quelque chose d'ajouté ultérieurement, voire de rajouté, à la structure de l'œuvre qu'il orne. Alberti ne recommande-t-il pas du reste que l'ornement ne vienne qu'en dernier, lorsqu'il écrit que l'"on doit achever le corps de l'ouvrage avant de le vêtir; l'orner sera ta dernière tâche" (Alberti 2004: 454)? Devant être construite nue, l'œuvre ne sera habillée que plus tard. L'ornement apparaît dès lors comme un motif facilement détachable de son support, avec lequel il n'entretient aucun rapport. Aussi en est-il facilement détaché, ce dont témoignent les planches gravées qui servent à illustrer la relation de l'entrée lyonnaise de 1622 et où ne sont reproduites que les architectures nues. L'auteur précise avoir donné

une véritable représentation de l'Architecture desdits Portiques, Colonne, Pyramide, Fontaine, Temple, Theatre, & autres principaux ornemens de ladite Entree, ne manquant rien en icelles que les devises & emblemes, que l'on n'a pas estimé avoir besoin d'y estre adjoustees, puis que par le discours particulier de chacun d'iceux, on en peut prendre une entiere & parfaite cognoissance, comme de mesme pour le revers desdits Portiques, que l'on s'est, pour la mesme raison, contenté de faire cognoistre par la description qui en est faite (*Le Soleil au signe du Lyon* 1623: 12).



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

Fig. 2. Lyon, 1622, 1^{er} arc de la rue du Pont.

Seule est intrinsèque la structure, l'ordre d'architecture retenu pour le temple ou le portique. Rajouté, l'ornement est accessoire, inessentiel. Il ne s'attache qu'à l'apparence et semblerait même ne véhiculer aucune signification, aucune intentionnalité, sinon celle du simple plaisir de la vue. Il s'apparenterait alors à la parure et, comme elle, attirerait moins l'attention sur ce qu'il orne et magnifie qu'il ne la détournerait à son profit par un excès de visibilité (Golsenne 2012: 21).

Pourtant, à supposer qu'on ne lui reconnaisse qu'une fonction de décoration, l'ornement est déjà en soi le signe d'autre chose. Parce qu'il est un ajout par rapport à ce qui lui sert de support, parce qu'il a en outre tendance à se multiplier dans une recherche évidente de l'abondance et de la profusion, marques de quantité qui tiennent parfois lieu de palliatifs à un manque d'ingéniosité dans la conception, dû peut-être au manque de temps⁸, il est à la fois un excès et un luxe. Accessoire mais ostentatoire, il est une fin en soi, un exemple de dépense improductive, de cette "dépense inconditionnelle", dominée par un principe de

perte, qu'à analysée George Bataille dans *La Part maudite* (Bataille 1967: 3). Toutes les relations et notamment celle de l'entrée de Louis XIII à Toulouse insistent sur la dépense "magnifique", "grande & somptueuse" (Alard 1622: 13, 5), faite par la ville pour la venue du roi. Toutefois, lorsque la finalité du décor planté dans l'espace urbain est la magnificence, c'est-à-dire un luxe légitime, qui doit en même temps marquer la grandeur du prince reçu par la ville et manifester par l'excès de dépense publique la loyauté et l'affection de celle-ci à son égard, tout en affichant sa richesse et sa prospérité, il apparaît que le capital symbolique de l'ornement est également à prendre en compte⁹, ne serait-ce que par sa "convenance", en d'autres termes, son adéquation à l'événement, au lieu ou à ses acteurs¹⁰. De fait tout dans les architectures éphémères, de l'ordre d'architecture retenu jusqu'au plus infime détail de son ornementation, concourt à en proclamer la nature et la fonction.

Il apparaît par conséquent que l'embellissement des arcs de triomphe et autres architectures éphémères des entrées est la moindre des fonctions reconnues à l'ornement. Pour Quincy, celui-ci est, dans les mains de l'artiste, "moyen d'ajouter une signification plus claire à celle du caractère déjà établi dans un édifice par son style, ses formes et ses proportions" (Quincy 1832: 180). Dès lors est-ce sans surprise que l'auteur du *Dessein des Arcs triomphaux* rappelle en 1629 que la décoration de la corniche du troisième arc dijonnais est "tant pour l'ornement que pour la signification" (*Dessein*:14, 15). De même, à Aix-en-Provence en 1622, les statues de Sextius, de Marius et des premiers Césars qui ornent la façade du second arc de triomphe, n'ont point été "logé[s] icy pour servir d'ornement, ny en Perses vaincus, ou en Cariatides pour soutenir la masse" (Chasteuil 1623: 9-10). Elles l'ont été en revanche pour transmettre un sens par un ensemble de signes porteurs, coulés ici dans des formes figuratives. Et ce sens, c'est en l'occurrence celui de la gloire et de la grandeur du monarque que proclame toute la décoration de la ville en fête, de l'ornement le plus structurel à l'ornement le plus décoratif, chacun explicitant le sens de l'autre dans une hiérarchie signifiante des formes ornementales, transformées en vêtement de la gloire royale. Or l'ornement lui-même a besoin d'un plus petit que soi pour que soient perçues toutes les nuances de sa signification. Les roses qui ornent l'arc de triomphe dédié à l'amour du peuple

à Paris en 1628 ne sont ainsi que le dernier maillon de cette chaîne ornementale qui va de l'inscription sur la table d'attente à la représentation "feinte" des spectateurs de chaque côté de l'ouverture de l'arc, et de cette représentation "feinte" à la structure érigée dans la rue St Jacques en témoignage de cet amour des peuples qui sous-tend le rituel, "ornement [avec lequel] il n'est pas possible qu'ils [les rois] ne soient reçus dignement" (Machaud 1629: 55).

Qu'il soit emblème ou devise, tableau apposé sur la table d'attente, ou encore statue ornant le faite, l'ornement est ce langage codé, allégorique, qui se surimpose à la structure de base, l'arc nu, non seulement pour l'adapter à son nouveau contexte et par là l'y ancrer, par la mise en valeur de sa forme et grâce à un gain de caractère et de présence, mais surtout pour la faire parler en quelque sorte aux yeux et à l'esprit du spectateur en emblématisant le pouvoir royal sous toutes ses faces. En témoignent ces emblèmes et ces tableaux qui, sur les architectures éphémères de l'entrée parisienne de 1628, "font esclatter" l'une après l'autre les douze qualités du roi et exaltent tour à tour "[s]a force & [s]a vertu", voire "[s]es proüesses" (Machaud 1629: 98, 126). Pour James Trilling, "*The power to beautify is also the power to glorify*" (2001: 12)¹¹. L'ornement n'a pas pour seule fonction d'embellir, il contribue aussi à glorifier. C'est à lui qu'il appartient de développer le sujet de l'entrée dans toute son étendue, comme de lui donner force, éclat et puissance, afin d'agir autant sur le monarque qui défile, tout scintillant d'or et d'argent, que sur le peuple qui se presse dans les rues, ébahi et plus encore ébloui par cet étalage de richesse et de luxe, qui traduit la grandeur du personnage désigné comme "magnifique". Du moment qu'on adopte ce qui frappe l'œil, ce qui impressionne par son ampleur, sa profusion ou son caractère extraordinaire, l'émerveillement et l'admiration populaires devant le faste déployé, que cherche à susciter l'ornement, ne favorisent-ils pas une adhésion totale à l'ordre du pouvoir ? À l'instar de l'ornement du discours, son proche parent, l'ornement architectural aurait davantage pour but de "se concilier les esprits ou [de] les exciter" que d'"éclaircir un point" (Cicéron 1971: 41). En effet, dans sa recherche de l'effet, celui-ci ne s'adresse en définitive aux sens que pour provoquer une réaction émotionnelle, où le plaisir né du sentiment esthétique se transcende dans

une vénération renouvelée pour le royal visiteur. C'est qu'indice déjà de rang et de dignité, l'ornement intensifie et légitime à son tour celui à qui il s'adresse, et "contribue à un accroissement d'être" (Heering 2014: 14).

À vrai dire, Katie Scott a bien vu que si l'ornement est une sorte de langage, il n'en reste pas moins que "son contenu n'[est] véritablement transmis que par sa traduction dans les conventions absolues du langage écrit" (Scott 2010/2011: 7), appuyé des ressources de l'éloquence, du moment que ce n'est que grâce aux relations et autres descriptions sorties des plumes des concepteurs ou des témoins de l'entrée que sa signification est comprise et explicitée. À l'*amplificatio*, alors, ce procédé oratoire consistant à "amplifier le sujet par les ornements de la diction" [*amplificare rem ornando*] (Cicéron 1971: 41), de mimer dans l'écrit l'excès décoratif visuel. L'association de l'ornement avec le genre épideictique passe autant par la rhétorique que par la forme plastique.

Parce qu'il illustre le sujet de l'entrée et qu'il lui donne corps jusque dans ses moindres détails, parce qu'il permet de faire le rapport du décor à la vie, aux vertus ou aux actions du monarque, l'ornement est donc ce qui donne toute sa signification à l'architecture éphémère qui lui sert de support, par la mise en contexte et l'approfondissement du sens générique de l'ordre d'architecture retenu, qu'il soit dorique, ionique ou encore composite¹². Il est ce qui permet aux spectateurs de l'entrée, ainsi qu'aux lecteurs de la relation qui en est faite, de s'élever à la pleine compréhension du sens ultime de cette étape du parcours et par extension de l'entrée dans son ensemble. Figure explicative, qui demande elle-même à être expliquée pour être comprise (c'est ce à quoi s'emploient les discours publiés à la suite de l'entrée, souvent par les concepteurs), l'ornement revêt dès lors une fonction de communication symbolique qui peut englober aussi bien des formes en soi insignifiantes, tels ces ornements "indifférens" relevés par Charles d'Aviler (Aviler 1710: sig. vj), que des formes "significatives", parfois chargées ailleurs d'un sens autre, étant donné que l'ornement circule et qu'il s'inscrit dans un réseau de signes dont les relations avec leurs signifiés varient en fonction des lieux et des temps.

Accessoire ou nécessaire ?

L'ornement est bien un lieu agonistique où s'affrontent des forces contraires. Qu'il soit l'"expression d'une force excédentaire de la forme", comme pour Wölfflin (Wölfflin 1996: 77), ou qu'il soit une "lumière auxiliaire de la beauté" et "comme complément" de l'édifice, comme pour Alberti (Alberti 2004: 279), l'ornement relève du domaine de l'accessoire, pour ne pas dire du superflu. Et pourtant! Esthétiquement, il est ce sans quoi aucune architecture éphémère ne saurait être visuellement complète. On ne saurait imaginer un arc de triomphe ni une colonne votive sans leur décoration. Symboliquement, l'ornement est le vecteur du sens, ne serait-ce que par un excès de décoration, symbolique d'une "dépense inconditionnelle" appropriée à la grandeur du visiteur qu'elle honore. Ou plus exactement, il est le "filtre" (Grabar 1992: 227) par lequel s'opère la transmission d'un sens qui, sans lui, ne saurait être communiqué de manière efficace. Par le plaisir visuel que suscite la contemplation du beau, par l'appel aux sens et à l'imagination, l'embellissement que représente l'ornement est ainsi, pour Oleg Grabar, ce qui "facilite ou même force l'accès à l'œuvre" et à son sens (*ibidem*: 230)¹³. L'ornement est de ce fait l'intermédiaire obligé entre le décor de l'entrée, le monarque qui défile et le peuple qui regarde. Loin d'être du domaine de l'inutile, il relèverait même de l'essentiel.

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Notes

- 1 Ainsi, pour l'entrée de Louis XIII et d'Anne d'Autriche dans Bordeaux, en 1615, ce sont les armes de la ville et les arabesques de corail qui constituent «la perfection & le dernier trait» de la structure en forme de grotte érigée sur les puits de Saint Projet (Morilhon 1616: 364).
- 2 Morilhon rappelle par préterition: "Je ne parlerai point icy des fontaines d'eau & de vin, Pyramides, Grottes, Portiques, & Arcs Triomphaux, qui furent la dorure & l'ornement de ceste solemnité" (*ibidem*: 312).
- 3 Cette notion d'ordre est suggérée par l'étymologie du terme ('ornare' appartient en effet au groupe 'ordo'). Remarque faite par Heering 2014: 12.
- 4 Selon Morilhon, tout cela "paroissoit bien plus agreable à l'œil" (Morilhon 1616: 364).
- 5 Fonction du reste signalée par Quatremère de Quincy dans l'article "ornement" de son *Dictionnaire historique d'architecture* (Quincy 1832: vol. II, 181).
- 6 On retrouve là deux des principes d'organisation de l'espace relevés par Ernst Gombrich, celui de *filling* ou de remplissage, ainsi que celui de *framing* ou d'encadrement (Gombrich 1984: 75).
- 7 Quincy constate à l'article "décoration" de son *Dictionnaire* qu' "il y a dans la *décoration* architecturale une part à faire au génie ou à l'instinct de la variété" (Quincy 1832: vol. I, 502).
- 8 Alard reconnaît que "l'arrivée inopinée de sa Majesté ne permit d'embellir d'autres ornemens que de ceux d'une magnifique despense" (Alard 1622: 13).
- 9 Sur cette question, voir Katie Scott 2010/2011: 8.
- 10 On lit, par exemple, dans la relation de l'entrée de Louis XIII dans Dijon, en 1629, que "le tout [estoit] enrichy d'ornemens convenables" (*Dessein des Arcz triomphaux* 1629: 6). C'est moi qui souligne.
- 11 Ainsi, pour Machaud, les ornements du douzième arc "pretendoient [...] travailler à la gloire du Roy" (Machaud 1629: 160).
- 12 Pour le père Méneestrier, "Il n'est pas tout-à-fait indifférent de choisir les ordres dont on veut se servir pour ces décorations. Le toscan, qui est le plus simple, siérait mal pour des palais de rois; le dorique est un ordre mâle qui convient aux héros; le corinthien, aux divinités molles; l'ionique, aux sujets graves; le composite est le plus propre pour ces fêtes, à cause de la liberté que l'on a de le charger de divers ornemens de fantaisie" (Méneestrier 1838: 144).
- 13 Ou pour citer la remarque dans son intégralité: "These intermediary agents facilitate or even compel access to the work of art by strengthening the pleasure derived from looking at something".

Teatro y Escenografía en Florencia en la segunda mitad del Seicento. Mutaciones fin de siglo

Esther Merino

Preámbulo.

Los florentinos tenían un sentimiento elevado de vocación cívica y dentro de ésta, las celebraciones oficiales ya se empezaron a multiplicar exponencialmente desde finales del siglo XIV, porque respondían a una necesidad e intención publicitaria con una magnitud “exagerada”¹ y fundamentalmente porque “las novedades de la cultura se desplegaban allí en el marco de las tradiciones locales”. A partir del siglo XV, Florencia inauguró una tipología festiva de las que no había apenas equivalente en otras partes, ni de Italia ni en el resto del mundo. Ya en la centuria siguiente, a Cosimo II (1590-1621) le sucedió el largo *reinado* de Ferdinando II (1610-1670) y a éste, a su vez, lo hizo Cosimo III (1642-1723), cuya fama ha sido asociada, no tanto a la de mecenas cultural, como a la de devoto rigorista, en detrimento de sus antecesores, considerados como intelectuales de amplio espectro. Pese a ser un magnífico coleccionista, sin embargo, en su faceta de promotor de eventos festivos su orientación se escoró hacia los de carácter piadoso, de manera que la lúdica áulica perdió brillo y exuberancia más allá de las brumas de los cirios empleados en las celebraciones oficiales del calendario religioso. El hijo mayor de Cosimo, Ferdinando III (1663-1713), ya respaldado con el título de Príncipe, había heredado de la madre francesa, Margarita Luisa de Orleans, el amor por el placer) y el gusto por los entretenimientos lejos de los reclinatorios y el misticismo con que se rodeó la corte paterna (Lankheit 1974: 19-24). Sólo hay que ver los bustos de los distintos miembros de la familia, alguno realizado por

Bernini, para percibir las diferencias con respecto a los antecesores, retratados por Cellini, Bandini o Tacca y mucho más con respecto a los más lejanos de los fundadores de la estirpe, de quienes apenas nada queda de los endurecidos rasgos rectilíneos, casi cortados a bisel, frente a la mollicie que desprenden los rasgos redondeados, de fatua morbidez de los últimos Medici.

Un año especialmente significativo para la estirpe fue 1675. El 12 de julio se embarcaba Margarita Luisa de vuelta a su país de origen. Al parecer, la repulsión entre ambos cónyuges (Cosimo) había sido instantánea y desde el mismo momento en que se vieron, así que ella decidió que no permanecería mucho tiempo en Toscana, lo que no les impidió concebir tres hijos desde 1663, que nació el primogénito, Ferdinando, después Anna Maria Luisa (1667), dejando a Giangastone (1671) muy joven cuando la madre emprendió el camino de retorno. Pero, no sólo esto, sino que en esta misma fecha murió el cardenal Leopoldo, uno de los más apreciados hermanos, junto a Mattias y Giovan Carlo², del anterior gran duque, reputado mecenas artístico, que dejaba si cabe un poco más huérfano de tutela al heredero, quien olvidaba sus penas en Venecia (1685), una de las capitales del entretenimiento europeo, donde se había impuesto un eficiente sistema de espectáculo comercial en forma de teatros públicos, mientras se dirimían las relaciones del gran ducado en la intrincada *geoestrategia* europea de poder (entre Francia, el Imperio y Roma).

Epicentro del comercio mediterráneo, custodio de un enorme patrimonio artístico, puerta de acceso a las cortes del nordeste centroeuropeo, la capital del Véneto mantenía la vigencia de las diversiones polivalentes de tradición renacentista y ya había acogido anteriormente a

otros viajeros de la misma aristocrática familia. Lo cierto es que, con el encuentro de las producciones venecianas, el Príncipe de Medici pudo establecer contactos con el dinámico ambiente empresarial del espectáculo, quedando “afectado” por la misma pasión de aquél “secolo cantante” (Spinelli 2010: 36), que animó el espíritu vital de los tres hermanos de su padre, del que el sobrino se reveló ferviente continuador, hasta el punto de que dos años después seguía en la ciudad de los canales, donde hubo de ser reclamado perentoriamente para que volviera a Florencia.

En Venecia pudo Ferdinando asistir y conocer de primera mano algunos de los festejos habituales del calendario celebrativo oficial (Spinelli 2010: 35-37), empezando por la “masividad” de la implantación cultural del concepto barroco de “Teatro del Mundo” implícito en los distintos repertorios del Carnaval (mascaradas, danzas, representaciones teatrales propiamente); o de las fiestas conmemorativas con motivo de la apertura del Arsenal una vez al año, en el Campo de *Santa Maria Formosa*, para ovacionar el imperio comercial de la República, todo lo cual incluía grandes luminarias sobre el Gran Canal, repleto de góndolas, además del episodio central de la *naumaquia* o batalla naval ficticia, con la que se canalizaba la agresividad ciudadana, argumentos que le servían, a la postre, a las autoridades de la Serenísima para explicitar visualmente la semiótica del “Buen Gobierno” y que solía terminar con la entrega de premios, recreación en miniatura de una decoración conocida como “Reggia di Nettuno”, obra de Gaspare Mauro, escenógrafo que colaboraba habitualmente en los montajes de los Teatros Grimani. El 16 de marzo de 1688 emprendió camino la comitiva que llevaba de vuelta a Florencia a Ferdinando, quien solo regresaría en otra ocasión a Venecia, en 1696, en el curso de cuya visita contraería la enfermedad fatal que le llevaría a la tumba.

La estancia veneciana marcó de forma notable la personalidad del príncipe mediceo, quien apenas retornado a su patria de origen tomó la decisión de crear una pequeña corte en torno a su persona en el marco de una de las villas familiares, en Pratolino, así como de emprender la modernización del Teatro de la Pérgola, ideado y construido por Ferdinando Tacca³, quien asimismo se había ocupado de las decoraciones de la *Hipermestra* – con vestuario⁴ de Stefano della Bella⁵ – con las que

se inauguró uno de los primeros recintos teatrales fuera del ámbito arquitectónico palacial, más parecido al gusto y a la experiencia de los teatros comerciales del Véneto.

Della Bella, prolífico grabador (de quien se contabilizan más de mil estampas), provenía de una familia de artistas, su padre Francesco había trabajado en la órbita del estudio de Giambologna, de la misma forma que él mismo fue ahijado de Pietro Tacca, el escultor, lo que explicaría su cercanía desde la infancia, con quien sería frecuente colaborador con posterioridad, el hijo de aquél, Ferdinando. Desde época temprana su vida está ligada a la de los Medici. Gracias al mecenazgo de Lorenzo (tio del gran duque Ferdinando II) se instaló en Roma entre 1633 y 1636.



Fig. 1. Stefano della Bella, Diseño de vestuario de Apolo-Sol, para el Prólogo de la ópera de Francesco Cavalli, *Hipermestra*, 1658. British Museum, Londres.

Formado en la tradición de Callot y Remigio Cantagallina, parece innegable la influencia de este grabador sobre los artistas franceses – también vinculados con el mundo de la estampa – a su vez implicados en el mundo de la fiesta regia, como Israel Silvestre y el magnífico Jean Lepautre. La Fiesta, la lúdica cortesana ya se había convertido para esas fechas en un *corpus* integral, del que forman parte aspectos sustanciales como la indumentaria y el vestuario de los integrantes.

Su origen se remonta a la Antigüedad, como otros tantos relacionados con determinadas fechas del calendario celebrativo, por ejemplo las saturnales, pero se recuperan para el discurso caballeresco a través de las “innovaciones decorativas” de las armaduras y de la ciudad efímera que se levanta como emplazamiento de los Torneos, devenidos, desde los encuentros de la caballería pesada más bien en espectáculos cortesanos, de los que terminaron derivando tipologías específicas como las mascaradas o los ballet ecuestres o carruseles. A este respecto, el repertorio del artista florentino es especialmente fértil en lo que a diseños de indumentaria para espectáculos se refiere, caracterizados por sus numerosas anotaciones, con derroche de imaginación y cierta hipérbole que recuerda a los del contexto manierista de finales del siglo XVI y su influencia se vislumbra en los diseños de sus sucesores en los festejos tardíos de la corte de Luis XIV, o sea Henri de Giessey y Jean Berain. En este ámbito han de resaltarse sus trabajos para las representaciones de *Mirame* (1641) y

de la *Finta Pazza* (1645) de cuyas decoraciones escenográficas se encargó el escenógrafo de Fano, Giacomo Torelli, conocido como “el gran mago”, casi recién llegado a Francia. Fue en Roma donde entabló relación con grabadores franceses como Collignon y a impresores especializados en la edición estampada como Israel Henriet (1590-1661), Pierre Mariette (1603-1657) y François Langlois (1588-1647), responsables de la rápida difusión de los trabajos del florentino en el mercado francés y en el europeo. Todos ellos habrían influido en su decisión de viajar a París, donde empezaba a apreciarse su obra y donde, desde la muerte de Callot en 1635 “il campo dell’incisione di capriccio” había quedado huérfano. Allí se trasladó, por tanto, en 1639, formando parte del séquito del embajador florentino en la corte de Luis XIII, Alessandro del Nero, comisionado por los Medici para asistir a los festejos conmemorativos del nacimiento del Delfín, el futuro Luis XIV y donde, Della Bella permaneció bajo protección del cardenal Richelieu primero y de Mazzarino

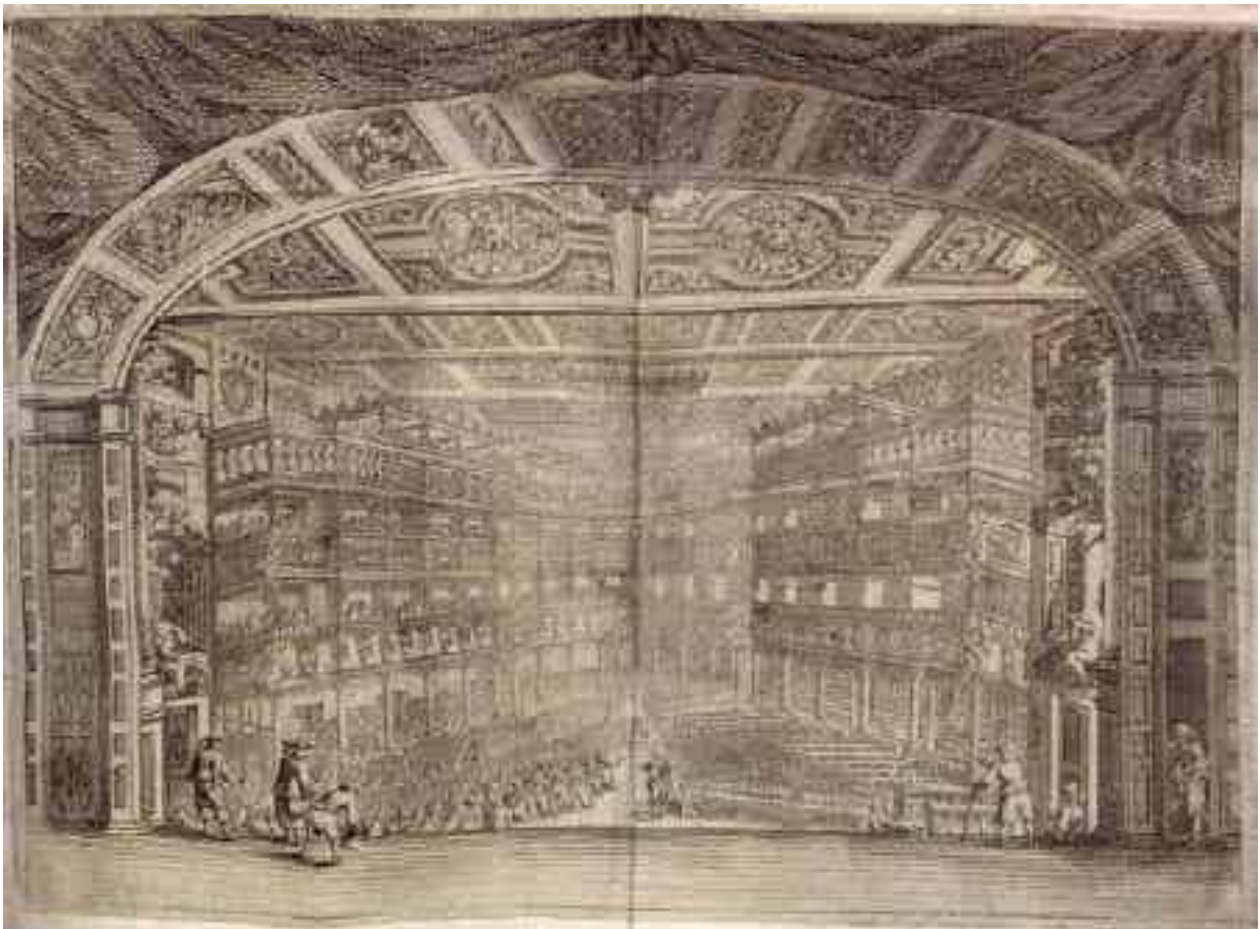


Fig. 2. *Hipermestra*, Ferdinando Tacca escenógrafo y autor del diseño del Teatro de La Pergola, que aparece en una de las ilustraciones del interior del libreto de la obra, con la que se inauguró el edificio en 1657, en las celebraciones con motivo del nacimiento de Felipe Próspero, por entonces heredero del rey de España, Felipe IV. Ejemplar de la Biblioteca Histórica de la Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM), “Marqués de Valdecilla”.

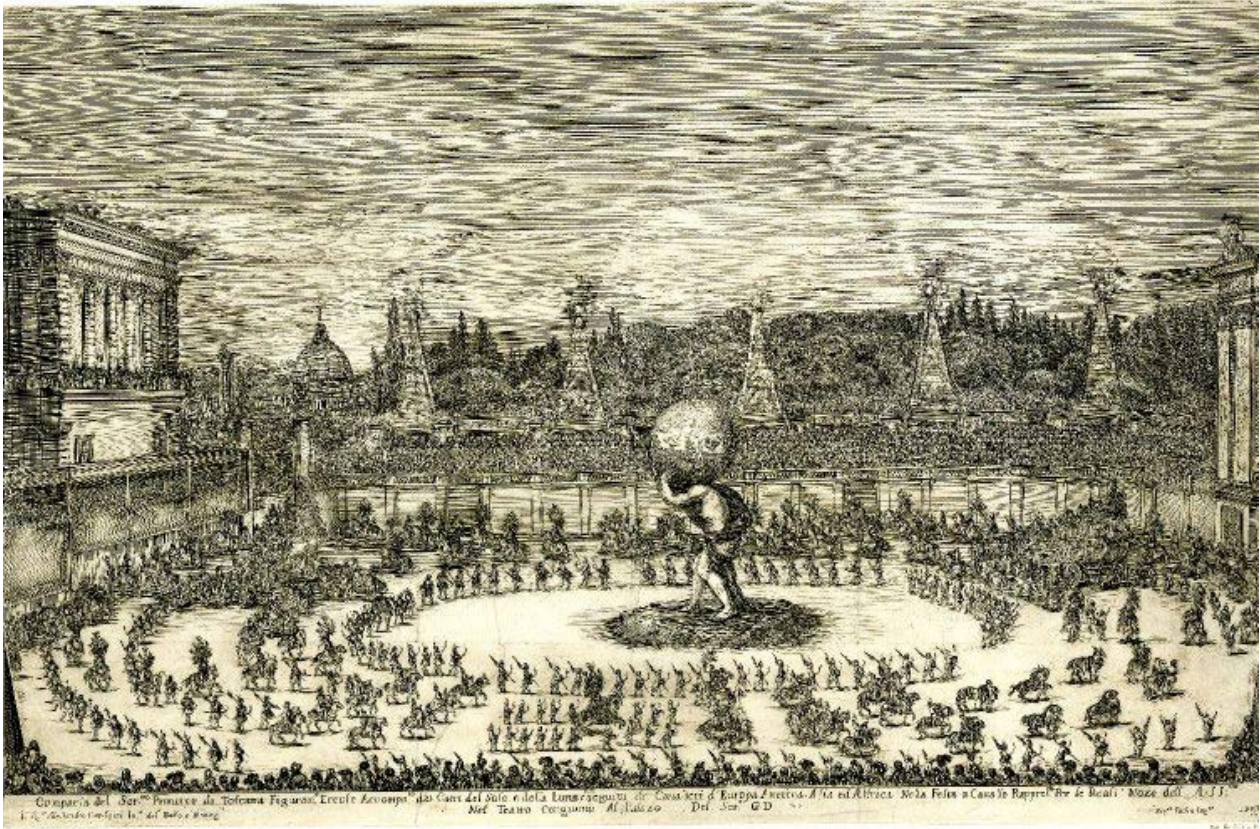


Fig. 3. Stefano della Bella (1610-1664), *Il mondo festeggiante*, Carrusel o ballet ecuestre en el “Teatro di verzura” de los Jardines Boboli con la cúpula del *Duomo* al fondo, para los esponsales de Cosme III y Margarita Luisa de Orleans (hija de Gastón de Orleans y nieta de Luis XIII), Florencia 1661. British Museum.

después.

Antes de marcharse de Florencia, el joven *Stefanino* se había formado en el entorno de los Parigi (Giulio y Alfonso, en su función de escenógrafo o “superintendente de festejos”), centrándose su labor en la de la ilustración de los distintos eventos de la celebración civil oficial, a la manera de lo que hiciera anteriormente Jacques Callot. En 1637 ya dejó muestras de su labor como ilustrador gráfico de la vida cortesana florentina, con el grabado del aparato fúnebre del emperador Leopoldo II celebrado en la iglesia de San Lorenzo – diseñado precisamente por Alfonso Parigi – y ese mismo año, fue autor de la iconografía representativa de los fastos de las *Nozze* o Esponsales de Ferdinando II de Medici y de Victoria della Rovere.

En 1649 Della Bella volvió a Florencia desde Francia (a donde había llegado en 1639) huyendo de las revueltas de *La Fronda*, donde retomó una no menos fructífera carrera en el diseño de los festejos mediceos y el ámbito teatral, empezando con su participación en los diseños de vestuario de *La Hipermestra*, el montaje llevado a cabo en el *Teatro della Pergola*, ideado y construido por Ferdinando Tacca, el hijo del escultor Pietro,

autor de la escultura ecuestre de Felipe IV, que precisamente fue quien la acompañó en su viaje a España.

Es en esta última fase en la que Della Bella diseñó el vestuario de algunos de los montajes más impresionantes de las décadas centrales del siglo XVII, como la comedia de G. A. Moniglia, *Il Podesta di Cognola* (1657), el mismo año de la *Hipermestra* (1658), con música de Monteverdi, además de ocuparse de vestir a los personajes de espectáculos como los de *Ercole in Tebe* (1661), con ocasión del matrimonio de Cosimo III y Margarita Luisa de Orleans.

Por esas fechas se estaba haciendo ostensible en Europa el clima de tensión entre los posibles herederos del rey de España Carlos II, es decir la Francia de Luis XIV y los Habsburgo austriacos encabezados por el emperador Leopoldo, ambos casados con sendas infantas españolas y en dicho contexto beligerante, Florencia y las relaciones familiares de los Medici estaban intrincadas en uno y otro bando desde antaño, si bien en esos últimos tiempos se habían escorado un tanto hacia el bando francés. Sin embargo, en estos momentos se decidió establecer un vínculo imperial, con el

acuerdo de matrimonio entre Violante, hermana de Clemente Gaetano Giuseppe de Baviera, candidato al Electorado de Colonia, frente al preferido del rey de Francia, el cardenal Guglielmo di Fürstemberg, ninguno de los cuales se impuso en una primera vuelta, lo que a la postre propició la invasión del Palatinado por las tropas francesas, llegando casi al mismo corazón de Alemania.

Por estas razones se hacía imprescindible estrechar relaciones, pero en este caso centrando el foco de interés en el escenario centroeuropeo, si bien Ferdinando de Medici no debía estar muy contento con el matrimonio, puesto que, para empezar, no salió al paso para conocer a la novia de Wittelsbach, como ya era tradición en la formalización de este tipo de contratos morgánicos y al parecer prefirió quedarse en compañía de un conocido cantante, Francesco de' Castris, a cuyo arte era aficionado. No obstante, al final tuvo que plegarse al ceremonial, participando unos días después en la solemne entrada triunfal que discurrió por la *Porta San Gallo*. En los días sucesivos, coincidiendo con la estación del Carnaval, hubo numerosas representaciones de la activa cultura escénica florentina, en homenaje

de los contrayentes, auspiciadas por las distintas Academias, cuyos eruditos eran los quienes elaboraban el ideario del gobierno mediceo, como *L'Adelaide*, compuesta por el poeta de la corte, Giovanni Andrea Moniglia, dedicada a la madre de la novia y representada en el Teatro del *Cocomero*, donde tenía su sede la Academia de los *Infuocati*.

Festejos de 1661. *Ercole in Tebe*.

Una de las ubicaciones oficiales de los festejos matrimoniales fue precisamente el Teatro de la Pérgola (desplazado el centro de la actividad teatral desde primigenio Teatro de los *Uffizi*), desde su construcción entre 1652 y 1657 por Ferdinando Tacca – sucesor de Giulio Parigi, junto al hijo del maestro, propio Alfonso –, mencionado anteriormente, donde se localizaba asimismo la sede de la Academia de los *Inmobili*, núcleo en torno al que se agrupaban los intelectuales más significativos de la semiótica florentina al servicio de los Medici, como Giovanni Andrea Moniglia autor de buena parte de los libretos escritos en torno a las décadas centrales de la centuria o



Fig. 4. Ferdinando Tacca, *Ercole in Tebe* (1661), *Plutone, Proserpina, Aletto. Coro di Mostri Infernali*, Acto Tercero, Escena Sexta. Biblioteca Nacional de España (BNE)

Antonio Cesti (autor del celeberrimo montaje para las celebraciones del matrimonio imperial de Leopoldo y Margarita Teresa de Austria en Viena, *Il Pomo d'Oro* en 1668), o del compositor Jacopo Melani, el superintendente de la maquinaria escenográfica por entonces Leonardo Martellini, es decir el mismo grupo o el equipo especulativo y creador del festejo con el que se celebraron otros esponsales, precisamente los de los padres del ahora contrayente, que se tituló como *Ercole in Tebe*⁶: *festa teatrale rappresentata in Firenze per le reali nozze de' serenissimi sposi Cosimo terzo, principe di Toscana, e Margherita Lvisa, principessa d'Orleans* (1661), igualmente de índole argumental basado en la mitología grecolatina, luego representado en Venecia después de su estreno, en el Teatro público Vendramin, con libreto revisado por Aurelio Aureli y música de Giovan Antonio Boretti.

Fue Ferdinando Tacca, el mismo “arquitecto con ingenio” del recinto teatral, el encargado a su vez de la organización y supervisión del montaje escénico, en el que tuvo especial importancia la labor del “superintendente de maquinaria” Leonardo Martellini, “...per acomodar la favola alla capacità di molte machine...per stravaganti accidenti della natura imitati quiui si videro con gran puntualità dell'arte...”, tal como figura en la descripción de la fiesta, al final del texto del libreto. El argumento hilvanaba una historia en el marco de las hazañas de Hércules, en la que se narraba la dilación en el matrimonio de *Ilo*, el hijo que había tenido el héroe mítico con *Megara*, la hija del rey de Tebas *Creonte*, mientras acudía al rescate de Teseo del mundo del Hades y de paso finiquitaba la guerra contra *Gerione*, rey de Baleares. La unión venía a ser remedo de la que se celebraba en Florencia, entre Cosme III y la princesa francesa Margarita Luisa de Orleans, con la que el gran duque buscaba la alianza francesa en el difícil equilibrio de fuerzas del escenario europeo de la Guerra de los Treinta Años. Y, el objeto era “propagar la prole” del “tronco” del árbol genealógico florentino, equiparando a la contrayente con Flora, a los monarcas de Tebas con los de Toscana y Florencia como “parainfo” para el mundo.

Si bien, a lo largo de la primera mitad del siglo XVII, había dominado el panorama de la escena cortesana la figura del florentino Giulio Parigi⁷, como exponente del “Valido” cultural

(adaptando la terminología hispana del personaje plenipotenciario en las funciones delegadas de gobierno por parte del monarca absoluto) en la creación, diseño, organización y montaje de los espectáculos para los Medici, lo cierto es que en la segunda mitad, incluso sobre su modelo de influencia, fueron apareciendo otros focos italianos alternativos en la aportación de artistas polivalentes, con no pocas dosis de genialidad y un estilo muy definido dentro del Barroco, en la línea de las “Quadratturas” o decoraciones pictóricas que permitían una prolongación ilusionística del espacio real pero aplicado a la Escenografía. A partir de esos momentos, la figura del “escenógrafo” profesional parece desdoblarse en un modelo de colaboración entre el pintor de escenas, especialmente preocupado por las posibilidades del uso heterodoxo de la perspectiva múltiple y por otra, el arquitecto técnico, con habilidades sobresalientes para manejar una maquinaria escénica de progresiva complejidad a la hora de solventar las crecientes de sorpresa hasta la estupefacción de un público ávido de agilidad y movimiento en el escenario. Esta simbiosis o binomio de actuación parece ser la que se impuso en Florencia a lo largo del último cuarto del siglo XVII, visible en la coordinación habitual entre Giacomo Chiavistelli y Antonio Ferri, con la inclusión en el flujo artístico de las influencias provenientes de Bolonia, donde se estaban ensayando esas nuevas fórmulas pictóricas en la línea de la ampliación del espacio ilusorio⁸.

Precisamente de Bolonia procedía el libreto boloñés del *Cromuele*⁹ del mismo año (1661) del *Ercole in Tebe*, en el que se narraba el episodio que tanta impresión causó en Europa – con el ajusticiamiento de un rey ungido y representante de Dios en la tierra, adelantándose cien años a semejantes acontecimientos derivados de la Revolución Francesa – y que personificaba en Cromwell todos los miedos de las monarquías absolutistas en la figura de un súbdito ascendido socialmente al amparo del mismo régimen monárquico al que pondría dramático fin. Es una de las primeras ocasiones en las que aparece la escena de la prisión, que alcanzaría su amplificación apoteósica en la serie de las *Cárceles* de Piranesi.



Fig. 5. Ferdinando Tacca, *Ercole in Tebe* (1661), Acto Tercero, Escena Primera, *Ercole, Alceste e Caronte*, con la imagen de la prisión de Teseo. Biblioteca Nacional de España (BNE).

capital del mundo infernal, protagonista principal de la representación tipológica del elemento ígneo en la escenografía moderna –, para rescatar a Teseo, otro de los héroes que conforman el panteón de referentes morales de la Antigüedad grecolatina. La originalidad del Renacimiento se caracterizó por la importancia concedida a las artes plásticas – *ut pictura poesis* – como elemento imprescindible del Humanismo y el Neoplatonismo, para lograr la inmortalidad del alma derivada de la búsqueda de la perfección de lo bello. Eso explica el ambiente especulativo, filosófico e intelectual diferencial florentino, en el que se creía que la calidad de la expresión de nuevas formas importaba tanto o más que la doctrina de la Escolástica y las manifestaciones de arte medieval, como en la orientación hacia un progresivo esteticismo y la afirmación del elogio del hombre como artista y a la meditación más atenta de la iconografía artística, capaz de excitar el alma humana. Estos son los principales argumentos de la insistencia de Marsilio Ficino sobre el valor metafísico y la plenitud de la belleza, dado que todas las actividades humanas y todas las artes se ordenaban por tanto en la búsqueda de la armonía

ideología simbólica, codificada a través del género teatral de los *Intermezzi* de Bernardo Buontalenti, ya en el marco de la mentalidad manierista, a finales del siglo XVI (Chastel 2003). El Humanismo florentino, en su originalidad específica, hizo de Orfeo referencia mística especialmente atractiva, de la misma forma que la fábula de Hércules, casi tan compleja como la de Orfeo, se convirtió en manos de los mitógrafos del siglo XV en modelo moral por excelencia. La narración de *Los Trabajos* se leían en clave de “purgación de las pasiones”. Salutati, Landino, Ficino, entre otros, citaron a Hércules profusamente como uno de los héroes que mejor explicitaban la razón en acción, en quien se imponía la virtud vengadora, teniendo en cuenta además el precedente de que dicho personaje figuraba entre los protectores legendarios de Florencia al menos desde 1277, cuando aparecía su efigie en el sello oficial de la ciudad e incluso se mencionaba una escultura antigua de Hércules en el jardín del casino de San Marcos (Chastel 1982: 276-77). En la obra teatral, al final Hércules recuperaba el trono de Tebas para su hijo y el espectáculo de carácter épico culminaba con la celebración de

Imeneo, la divinidad del matrimonio, con la unión de Cosme y Margarita Luisa, en un ambiente ajardinado paradisiaco, específicamente vinculado con los de Citera, recordando los otros idílicos recreados en la novela arqueologizante de la literatura del temprano Renacimiento, la *Hypnerotomachia* también conocida como el *Sueño de Polifilo* (1499) de Francesco Colonna.

Festejos de 1688. *Il Greco in Troia*.

El Teatro de la Pérgola se había erigido, por tanto, en escenario principal y neurálgico de la celebración urbana y, además, se convirtió en lo que puede entenderse como “centro de operaciones” de los espectáculos dramáticos de ópera promocionados por los llamados “príncipes empresarios”, o sea Giovanni Carlo, Mattias y Leopoldo, tíos paternos del heredero. El grandioso festejo – que tomaba como modelo de referencia el de 1661– en este caso para de la conmemoración del nuevo matrimonio, de Ferdinando y Violante, remató con la representación de *Il Greco in Troia*¹⁰ en 1688, calificado como “drama heroico”. En una monografía sobre la temática de la

Antigüedad recuperada para la escena moderna, se menciona el “placer de la catarsis” como motivo de la frecuente elección de los personajes de la literatura panhelénica, situados en el epicentro protagonista de los nuevos espectáculos eclécticos y de la ópera barroca posterior, como forma de remover las emociones de los espectadores. Así, cuando libretistas de ópera veneciana, como Giacomo Badoaro, Giovanni Francesco Busenello, Michelangelo Torcigliani o Pietro Paolo Bissari eligieron para sus argumentos temas de la tragedia antigua, estaban “participando de una larga y venerable tradición de la literatura italiana, en la línea de Ariosto, Tasso o Guarini” (Brown-Ograjensek 2015) o más bien estaban decantándose por una exégesis historiográfica de rango antropológico tanto como ético. Lo que aporta el teatro de la época moderna es la configuración espacial verosímil en base a las reglas de la perspectiva, que inauguraron una nueva forma de mirar, además de las nuevas posibilidades de movimiento gracias una maquinaria, que permite “vuelos” en picados vertiginosos, todo lo cual ayudaba a remover las emociones de los espectadores, en casi éxtasis continuo y a la estupefacción, en sentido literal



Fig. 6. Westerhout (1651-1725). *Il Greco in Troia*, 1688, BNE.



del término que se utilizaba habitualmente en la sociología del Barroco.

Los festejos de 1661 ya fueron impactantes y de las celebraciones del nacimiento del propio Ferdinando en Livorno se decía que habían sido más espectaculares, si cabe, que las del Delfín de Francia, pero la característica general de los montajes de las últimas décadas del fin de siglo parecen estar impregnadas de un carácter ciertamente delirante y grandilocuente en la retórica de su puesta en escena, apodado como “magnificencia”, que, en esta ocasión se canalizaba a través del texto elaborado por el veneciano Matteo Noris. La representación de *Il Greco in Troia* se hizo en el mismo Teatro de la Pérgola inaugurado por Tacca, ahora remodelado bajo la dirección y diseños de Filippo Sengher¹¹ con ayuda del arquitecto Antonio Ferri (1651-1716)¹², en manos de quienes la anterior estructura de pisos de la grada en forma de logias incorporó un quinto orden de palcos, los cuales a su vez crecieron de cincuenta a ochenta y siete, prolongados hasta la misma boca de proscenio. Por su parte, Jacopo Chiavistelli¹³, especialista en esa pintura cuadraturista conocida como “arquitectura del engaño” a la manera de los pintores boloñeses, se ocupó de la escenografía y de las decoraciones teatrales, con la ayuda del fresquista veneciano Federigo Cervelli y de los pintores Francesco Sacconi, Bartolomeo Bimbi y Lucca Bocci (Spinelli 2010: 54), quienes prepararon los bastidores en la cercana iglesia de *Santa Maria Nuova*, donde se les habilitaron algunas salas amplias para que pudieran trabajar con comodidad.

Así que, con decoración escénica ideada por Chiavistelli, maquinaria de Ferri y de Acciaiuoli¹⁴, música de Giovanni Maria Pagliardi (Maestro de la Capilla Medicea) se creó un montaje con escenografía que intentaba emular la narración épica de uno de los episodios trascendentales de la cultura homérica, con sentido moralizante, en la que los gobernantes de ahora buscaban la identificación con los del pasado mitológico como forma de legitimación dinástica. Los grabados de Arnold Van Westerhout (1651-1725), con taller en la *Via del Parione* en Roma, para *Il Greco in Troia* muestran ese neoclasicismo “olímpico” poético que parece impregnar buena parte del repertorio de la escenografía de esta temática hegemónica en las últimas décadas de la centuria, aún sin las distorsiones ópticas derivadas del uso

de la perspectiva angular, en el que terminaron de consagrarse los primeros miembros de la familia Galli Bibbiena.

Muchos otros son los motivos iconológicos emanados de la cultura homérica que se pueden mencionar a partir de la trama del *Juicio de Paris*, porque de lo que se trataba, en fin, era de justificar el criterio del monarca absoluto frente al resto de los mortales, imbuidos de intelecto *a grosso modo*, pero carentes del discernimiento regio, el mismo del que hizo gala el troyano, eligiendo la Belleza por encima de cualquier contención racional, equilibrio, que a la postre fue la causa de la desgracia que llevó a la guerra y a la desaparición de la metrópoli que lideraba toda la ruta comercial de los metales en el Helesponto, a favor de los Aqueos y que les condujo irremediamente a la *Hybris*¹⁵. Porque la Belleza artística *per se* no tenía lógica a menos que fuera instrumento al servicio de un propósito de mayor altura y miras. Ya lo apuntaba Aristóteles cuando decía que las Artes debían reflejar la esencia y no sólo la apariencia. E igualmente en la época moderna se recupera la interpretación ética de la representación teatral cuando Filarete formulaba su “*Teatro de della Virtù*”, aquél teatro da “*predicare*” o “*per ludiré messa*” del que hablaba Leonardo (Guarino 1988: 324).

El resto de celebraciones – fundamentalmente *giostra* o torneo temático y carruseles – se fueron disponiendo en el marco de la geografía urbana, convertida la ciudad entera en escenario (Fagiolo 1980), en espacios especialmente señalados para la ubicación de los distintos episodios festivos y que se habían ido estipulando dentro del protocolo oficial desde mediados del siglo XVI (Strong 1988), como el patio porticado del Palacio *Pitti* y la siempre muy transitada plaza de la iglesia de *Santa Croce* (en el que ya era uno de los escenarios urbanos consolidados de la celebración popular, desde tiempos remotos, en que allí solían ambientarse los distintos espectáculos de la Antigüedad romana), de la misma manera que era imprescindible el género acuático con la celebración de la *naumachia* de origen romano, emplazado en este caso en un ámbito natural en el curso del Arno (Ventrone 2010), de fuerte carácter simbólico, puesto que, por una parte, aludía a uno de los elementos básicos en la creación del mundo según los preceptos de Tales de Mileto, que debían estar presentes junto a los otros tres necesarios, en base a la ideología

emblemática de la representación barroca que explicaba la alegoría del “Buen Gobierno”. Pero, por otra y casi la más relevante, el río aludía a las conexiones de los Medici con el mar, con desembocadura natural a través del puerto de Livorno, verdadero objeto de interés estratégico de las distintas potencias europeas, a la hora de establecer los vínculos dinásticos, puesto que ya se reveló importante desde los tiempos en los que Toscana era el territorio originario de Etruria, de quien los Medici pretendían ser sucesores o por lo menos ese había sido el propósito de toda la argumentación de legitimación de la familia a lo largo de la época moderna, como queda patente en la codificación gráfica que Giulio Parigi hiciera en *La Liberazione di Tirreno*¹⁶, escenificado en el Teatro de los *Uffizi* en 1618, haciéndose eco a su vez del texto del cardenal Bibbiena, Bernardo Dovizi, *La Calandria*, representada por vez primera en Urbino en 1513 (dado que los Duques de Montefeltro también reivindicaban para sí el legado etrusco) en aquel caso con escenografía de Girolamo Genga, de la misma forma que era el argumento inherente de la reformulación doméstica de Vasari en el montaje de *La Cofanaria* de Francesco d’Ambra (1566).

En todo caso, buena parte de los artistas que participaron en el montaje de *Il Greco*, integraron el círculo más cercano al príncipe y fueron los responsables de hacer posible las fantasías (quizás un tanto más libertarias del propio gusto personal íntimo), para escapar de la rigidez oficial que se concentraban en el ámbito de su residencia favorita en la villa de *Pratolino*, convertida en refugio, el lugar donde podía aislarse de la red de intrigas cortesanas en torno a Cosimo III, gracias a los numerosos espectáculos que allí se organizaron en las últimas dos décadas del siglo. La villa era, desde la construcción de Buontalenti para Francesco I, una de las delicias de la mentalidad manierista, en uno de cuyos salones solía improvisarse una estructura teatral de carácter provisional en función de las necesidades varias ligadas a las celebraciones familiares privadas. Con el nuevo mecenazgo se intentó recuperar el entramado ajardinado de cascadas, órganos hidráulicos y sorpresas, que aparecían recopilados en los frescos de Giusto Utens, asociados al carácter terapéutico de las villas suburbanas, desde los tiempos de aquéllas de los patricios romanos. En 1680, el ahora ya príncipe, con diecisiete años,

tomó la decisión de ubicar el espacio teatral de forma provisional en uno de los salones del *piano nobile*, para, apenas tres años después, transformar dicha estructura en otra de carácter permanente¹⁷, asentada en el tercer piso, dejando su ejecución en manos de Antonio Ferri (Garbero Zorzi 1986: 93-99) quien figuraba ya a esas alturas como especialista en “arquitectura teatral y cenotafios funerarios” y quien, casualmente, fuera nombrado Académico de San Luca en la misma promoción que Filippo Juvarra – a quien se le debe adjudicar tanto la reformulación de la nueva escenografía “arcádica” del *Settecento* como la puntilla de ésta “de la maravilla”, de cuyo agotamiento empezaban a vislumbrarse destellos con algunas innovaciones como las llevadas a cabo por Lodovico Burnacini en *Il fuoco eterno custodito dalle vestali* (1674) – y no son las únicas conexiones entre el ámbito florentino de la escenografía teatral y el romano, en el que desarrolló su actividad el arquitecto mesinense, porque su mecenas, el cardenal Pietro Ottoboni¹⁸ precisamente había asistido a alguno de los festejos celebrados en tiempos en los que Ferdinando de Medici ostentaba la promoción del entretenimiento en Florencia, en gran medida como forma de evasión de la atmósfera de opresión piadosa creada por su padre. La presencia en 1701, además, en Florencia de Ferdinando y Francesco Bibbiena (de quienes el príncipe había conocido su trabajo de renovación del Teatro *Malvezzi* en Bolonia, en su viaje de camino a Venecia), dispensados temporalmente – y con no poco esfuerzo diplomático – de su trabajo para el Duque de Parma y para el Virrey de Nápoles, indica el profundo grado de conocimiento de las técnicas escenográficas de vanguardia del momento por el principal mecenas de la corte florentina de finales del siglo XVII, heredado de sus predecesores, siempre atentos a esta disciplina como forma de propaganda y glorificación dinástica, por medios lúdicos, aparentemente intrascendentes pero, sin embargo, de enorme calado como útil instrumento ideológico y didáctico.

No obstante, con la muerte del Príncipe quedó truncada la herencia medicea (que hubo de recaer obligatoriamente en su hermano menor Gian Gastone) pero sobre todo la carrera en el proceso de elaboración de la semiótica áulica, ensayada durante varios siglos en el ámbito de la escenificación de la tradición del ritual celebrativo político florentino, que, a partir de entonces se

desplazó a otros entornos cortesanos y a otros protagonistas de la escenografía.

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Notes

1 Chastel 1982: 194-95. Se recoge información sobre el impulso dado por Lorenzo a la preparación de, entre otros, canciones para Carnaval. En los desfiles de las carrozas, que se articulaban a manera de los triunfos romanos, se empezaron a incluir cuadros históricos, que recreaban precisamente los de Pablo-Emilio, realizado en 1491 por Granacci y escenificación de cuadros vivos mitológicos, todo lo cual contribuyó a la gloria póstuma del personaje, luego recordado por la organización de los espectáculos oficiales de mediados del siglo XVI, por Giorgio Vasari. En esas mismas fechas tempranas ya se hacía mención de la importancia de la indumentaria, para la "vistosidad" del espectáculo, de forma que diseñadores y modistos se mostraban atentos a las modas borgoñonas, para incrementar la espectacularidad de las fiestas.

2 Mamone 2001: 119-38; Mamone 2001: 83-99; Mamone 2003.

3 Merino 2010. En este artículo se recogen noticias de

dos ejemplares de *La Hipermestra*, que se conservan, uno en la Biblioteca Nacional de España sin ilustraciones y el otro, sin embargo con todos los grabados íntegros, en la Biblioteca Histórica de la Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM) "Marqués de Valdecilla".

4 "El vestuario deja de ser un disfraz. Se convierte en un elemento esencial del movimiento dramático", Pavis 2000: 185, partidario de un análisis integral del espectáculo, dentro del que se refiere a la semiótica del vestuario, por otra parte, el enfoque más interesante para abordar función, sentido y significado de esta disciplina estética y artística, dentro del ámbito de la concepción celebrativa y teatral.

5 Pese a la relevancia del personaje, de su ingente obra – de gran parte de la cual se encuentran ejemplares entre los inestimables y nunca bien ponderados fondos de la Biblioteca Nacional de España (BNE) – no se le ha dedicado mucha atención en la investigación de la historia del arte en castellano, ni siquiera con una biografía más o menos completa de quien fuera heredero en la crónica gráfica, entre otras de los espectáculos de la corte medicea y de las fórmulas escenográficas vinculadas a la lúdica cortesana del mediados del siglo XVII. Blunt 1954, Mamone 1998: 18-21, Forlani Tempesti 1973. Ver también Petrucci 1953 y Marly 1978: 48-52.

6 *Ercole in Tebe. Festa teatrale rappresentata in Firenze per le reali nozze de' serenissimi sposi Cosimo terzo, principe di Toscana, e Margherita Luisa, principessa d'Orleans (1661)*, de Moniglia, Giovanni Andrea, 1624-1700: 129. Recientemente localizado un ejemplar conservado entre los importantes fondos de la Biblioteca Nacional de España (BNE), Signatura R/10167.

7 Sobre Giulio Parigi fue pionero el trabajo de Blumenthal, 1986, de lo que fue su Tesis para la obtención del título de Doctor en Filosofía por la Universidad de Nueva York en 1984. Y, en castellano, la figura de Parigi se aborda en distintas publicaciones: Merino-Blázquez 2014; Merino 2011.

8 Guccini 2006, 2: 208-27.

9 Merino 2013.

10 Spinelli 2013: 105-25; Merino 2015, vol. 25: 189-211. Con las referencias ER/1171(92)-ER/1171(108) figura entre los fondos de la Biblioteca Nacional de España (BNE), la obra titulada *Il Greco in Troia* (material gráfico): *Festa teatrale. Rappresentata in Firenze per le Nozze de Serenissimi Sposo Ferdinando Terzo...e Violante Beatrice Principessa di Baviera, Firenze 1688*/ Arnold V. Westerhout fec.

11 Se documenta la actividad de Filippo Sengher, natural de Augsburgo, en Florencia, desde 1673, en el entorno de la corte de Ferdinando de Medici, donde su trabajo como arquitecto fue muy apreciado.

12 Zanghieri 1972: 115-35; Zanghieri 1972, 6: 45-56. Ferri se había formado con Ferdinando Tacca, quien había sucedido en las labores de escenógrafo y supervisor de los espectáculos mediceos, junto a Alfonso, hijo de Giulio Parigi, el gran "regista", sumo creador de la ideología de los espectáculos "de la maravilla barroca" de la primera mitad de la centuria, a quienes terminó relevando Giacomo Chiavistelli.



13 Farneti 2007: 205-33. Ejemplos de su trabajo de pintura al fresco se pueden ver en la sala de la planta baja del lado derecho del *cortile ammannatiano* del Palacio Pitti. En 1653 se localiza también a Chiavistelli como pintor al servicio de los Corsini y esta cercanía con la alta aristocracia florentina, le facilitó una cartera de clientes, entre los que se contaban Riccardi, Niccolini, Rinuccimi, Franceschi, y Giovan Carlo de Medici, quien le contrató para trabajar en el emergente Teatro *Cocomero*, en la actual *Via Ricassoli*. Se cuentan entre las características de sus obras la “lógica estructural, la fidelidad a los perfiles arquitectónicos de los órdenes” sin estridencias, sin excesos insustanciales, a la manera de ese Barroco clasicista florentino, en el que persistía la herencia de Buontalenti no excesivamente recargado, jugando más con los elementos tectónicos que con las florituras decorativas.

14 Filippo Acciaiuoli o Acciaiuoli (Roma 1637-1700) era descendiente de una antigua familia florentina, trabajó en varios de los montajes del Teatro de La Pérgola hasta 1659, fecha en la que se desplazó a Roma, junto al condestable Colonna, en cuyo entorno escribió libretos de cuatro obras, luego representadas en el *Palazzo Colonna in Borgo*, la primera de las cuales fue *Il Girello*, con música de Jacopo Melani. Se suele atribuir a Filippo Acciaiuoli la creación del teatro de marionetas, como forma de animación cultural del eclecticismo romano en el marco de los espectáculos del *Seicento*, luego requerido para los entretenimientos de la Florencia de Ferdinando III de Medici. Parece que sus conocimientos de la maquinaria teatral eran amplios, razón por la cual se le atribuye el mecanismo para el movimiento del caballo troyano, protagonista del episodio principal de la trama originaria de la literatura homérica, en la representación de *Il Greco in Troia*. Así se habla de que fue el creador del aparato para “el funcionamiento del bellissimo caballo troiano che per via di suste e puleggie doveva muoversi”. El ya “Gran Príncipe de Toscana”, después de infructuosas tentativas hechas por ingenieros venecianos, a quienes se les hizo tal encargo, terminó por adjudicarle la empresa a Acciaiuoli. Tamburini 1989: 617-80, 628.

15 *Hybris* entendida como arrogancia, ambición desbordada y sin freno, que arrastra consigo *atè* o locura y finalmente *nemesis* o justo castigo. Esquilo, por ejemplo, en su obra *Los Persas*, se refería a ello cuando decía que “el hombre no debe tener orgullo en demasía [...] Pues Zeus está en su puesto castigando a los que tienen orgullo excesivo, juez severo”. Pollit 1984: 27.

16 Material gráfico, del que también se localizan ejemplares en la BNE. En este sentido, sobre todo este fondo documental y bibliográfico, conservado en las bibliotecas madrileñas, fundamentalmente la Biblioteca Nacional de España y la anteriormente mencionada Biblioteca Histórica de la UCM, conocida con el sobrenombre de “Marqués de Valdecilla” (cuyo origen se remonta a los fondos transferidos desde el Colegio Imperial de los Jesuitas), se puede observar la mayoritaria procedencia florentina, de lo que se deducen varias conclusiones que ahondan, en primer lugar, en las magníficas relaciones diplomáticas existentes entre la monarquía de los Habsburgo y los Medici, intensificadas desde el matrimonio de Leonor Álvarez de Tole-

do, hija del Virrey de Nápoles y Cosimo I, ya a mediados del siglo XVI; de la misma forma que también se puede concluir del análisis de ese extenso material, la notable influencia que ejercieron protocolos celebrativos, modelos iconográficos y polisemia simbólica de la lúdica áulica como instrumentos de consolidación absolutista en la España de los Austrias del siglo XVII.

17 Para cuyo montaje se describía el teatro “compuesto por *Proscenio* y *Orchestra*, rodeado de una grada en forma de palcos, todo revestido de oro reluciente, con arquitrabe y friso con medallones de plata, sostenido de columnas”, Garbero Zorzi 1986: 94. Coordinado por Ferri y Sengher, el teatro de Pratolino se completó en 1688, donde se representó la ópera *Il tiranno di Colco*, con texto de Andrea Moniglia y música de Giovanni Maria Palliardi.

18 A comienzos del siglo XVIII, los espectáculos promocionados por Violante de Baviera en Florencia, incluyendo los de su residencia en la Villa Imperial, pretendían de nuevo volver a ser instrumento de prestigio de la corte medicea y por allí pasaron embajadores, como el de España, artistas y emitentes representantes de la vida cultural e intelectual italiana y queda constancia del conocimiento que tenía Ottoboni de este panorama, a través de distintas cartas dirigidas por el cardenal al también cardenal Francesco Maria de Medici. Además de que el propio Ottoboni visitó Florencia en 1709. Spinelli 2010: 147.

Performance and Intelligentsia around the Inauguration of an Equestrian Statue in the Eighteenth Century

Fernando Matos Oliveira and Maria Luísa Malato

Festivals are synaesthetic artworks designed to appeal to all the senses. [...] As multimedia productions of political, social, and economic power, festivals attempt by way of ostentatious pageantry to display and to justify a culture based on conspicuous consumption (Korsch 2013: 79-80).

The inauguration of the equestrian statue of King Joseph (José I) of Portugal, on the King's birthday, on 6 June 1775, was the festivity with the utmost impact and resonance in the Portuguese culture of the eighteenth century. Numerous poetic compositions were then written, during and after the festivities that lasted for three days, extending to the whole kingdom for a much longer period of time. Although they involved many government institutions, the festivities were thoroughly organised by the Marquis of Pombal, minister of the King, who was also portrayed in effigy, on the pedestal of the statue. How was it possible for the inauguration of a statue in the city of Lisbon to stimulate the public imagination in such a way: the written and artistic production of an entire era, mobilising poetry, theatre, music, opera, and statuary itself, now raised to an unprecedented scale? A known satirical author, Nicolau Tolentino de Almeida, even though he was part of the list of poets who wrote about the theme, identified the reading of such poems with a certain "minor" reader, poet by taste and barber by trade, compulsively attracted by popular compositions, of questionable taste, sold in the street: "This master tyrant was a scourge/Of the ears and faces of the costumers./All verses he read about the Equestrian Statue/And all the famous plays,/Sold in the Arsenal to the vagrant wanderer/On a string" (Almeida 1861: 278)¹. How did the torrent

of poems, printed and in manuscript, become the very image of the compulsive reader, a member of a social class that usually remained on the fringes of literary circles? This essay proposes a culturalist and performative reading of this singular inauguration as a *happening*, resorting to historical and literary studies, as well as to the detailed analysis of the symbolic topography, the choreography of gestures, and inscriptions that defined the staging of this major event of the seventeenth century.

As a cultural performance, the inauguration of the statue represents a *liminal* event, with a broad meaning in Portuguese culture. It was a moment of public acclamation of the enlightened power, not only of King Joseph I, but also of his minister plenipotentiary, Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo (1699-1782), known as Marquis of Pombal (Marquês de Pombal), the title which was conferred on him in 1769. King Joseph's minister sees his range of action strengthened and performs the exercise of power in a quasi-absolute manner. Until the king's death in 1777, he controls the high nobility's pretensions, expels the Jesuits from the kingdom and its colonies, enacts reforms concerning education, and stimulates commerce. The earthquake of 1755 had destroyed Lisbon, the symbol of an Empire that had spread, since the end of the fifteenth century, to four continents: from South America (to the West) to Asia (to the East), including the holdings in Africa. But the reconstruction of Lisbon is the affirmation of a culture planned by the "enlightened despotism", more cosmopolitan and liberal. The statue was designed to occupy the centre of the square, to which Sebastião Carvalho e Melo contributed decisively, planning and building on the rubble of the earthquake. Located in the old "Terreiro do Paço" (Palace Terrace), now converted into the

“Praça do Comércio” (Commerce Square), it pays “tribute to the new bourgeois class that supported the minister’s reformist policy”, thereby creating a new royal square in Lisbon (José-Augusto França, in Machado de Castro 1975: 337).



Fig. 1. Ribeira Palace in the 18th century, before the Great Lisbon Earthquake of 1755, still with a defence structure (anonymous painting).

A letter written by the Marquis of Pombal to the King, one week after the inauguration of the statue, explicitly refers the Marquis’s plan to show a new society, open to commerce, showing that the disregard foreigners had for our internal and external commerce – the suspicion of social insubordination, or the rumours that the country was living in the most dire poverty, after the earthquake – was unfounded (Pombal 1861: 12-14). The letter testifies to the care the Marquis put into staging a “theatre” prepared mainly for foreign spectators/observers: effectively, the profusion of jewellery, tableware, dresses, carriages, tables, and local currency disbursements, led the same foreigners to publicly confess that they had never realised that Portugal, in just a few years, had accumulated so much wealth (Pombal 1861: 21). If a “performance” is characterised by the coexistence of actors and spectators, the ephemeral character of the performance, its status as an event, and the rhetorical intention of persuading through non-explicit meanings, the inauguration of the equestrian statue of King Joseph, both from the perspective of the reception and from the perspective of the production, represents a performative act. It seems pertinent to us, therefore, to take into consideration here the way Erika Fischer-Lichte referred to the “liminality”,

which manifests itself simultaneously in the “social performance” and in the “aesthetic performance”, two complementary processes of transition and transformation in human communities:

When characterizing the particular “event-ness” of performances, we differentiated between the possibility of liminality in aesthetic and non-aesthetic experience. Aesthetic experience makes the state of liminality its goal, while non-aesthetic liminal experience can be understood as a means to an end – be it to obtain a new social status or identity, to create or affirm communities, or to legitimate claims to power. There is no clear correlation between aesthetic experience and artistic performance, or non-aesthetic experience and non-artistic performance – both kinds of experiences mix in any given performance. In artistic performances, liminality can be experienced both as an end in itself and as a means to another end (Fischer-Lichte 2014: 164).

The contiguity between the instrumental dimension and the aesthetic dimension is undeniable in this event of 1775. And the analogy with the theatrical space is found right in the letter’s first paragraph, even in its first words:

The great curtain which, in the most joyous 6th day of the current month of June 1775, uncovered the royal statue of my lord the king, has come to reveal that, in the following days, to the clear knowledge of all those who, not stopping at the surface of the objects which are presented to them in sight, begin to investigate and understand the substance of things, Your Majesty has not only entirely dispelled the darkness, and repaired the ruins in which you have found your kingdoms buried; but also that you have brought out again, in Portugal, the blissful century of the lords Manuel I and John III (Pombal 1861: 12)².

It is an enactment that requires the participation of “all those who, not stopping at the surface of the objects which are presented to them in sight, begin to investigate and understand the substance of things”. But it is something that is not explicit, even though the Marquis of Pombal makes it explicit for the king. Ten principles (generally linked to the excellent state of the economy, finances, to the climate of social harmony, important to respond to the observations made in countries with a greater economic deficit or a greater social conflict, with that material state accompanying the encouragement of sciences and arts) are staged. It is important to underline that the first of those principles mentioned by the Marquis of Pombal has to do precisely with the rise of a new social

group, consisting of readers and authors: “It is the first of the said examples, the common nature of handwriting, because when, until the year 1750, it was rare for a person to write a letter with good handwriting, there is today, it seems, the same rarity of finding someone who writes badly in Lisbon” (*ibidem*: 12-13)³.

And five targeted effects are listed (almost all linked to the external effect the display of wealth and power will have). But, once again, the first chosen effect is the one that will change the cultural perception of Portugal as a “barbaric, fierce, and unsociable” nation (*ibidem*: 20). As a liminal and festive event, the inauguration programmatically establishes a temporality of its own and defines the transition of senses and experiences that is played out between the court, the subjects, the social classes, the spectators, and the actors – “the liminal dimension is the precondition of the transformative dimension” (*ibidem*: 174). The festivities overflow the public space of the square and are extended into the convivial space of Lisbon’s elite, in the aristocratic and the bourgeois house, or further still into the secular stage of the theatre. They involve the whole nation, gathering in the same square, from the terrace to the balconies, an ecstatic crowd of over one hundred and fifty thousand people, of both sexes and of all classes (*ibidem*: 20-21). The printing of Gaetano Martinelli’s libretto, entitled *L’Eroe Coronato* (Lisbon 1775), still gives an account of the musical activities linked to poetry⁴. And this symbolic dynamics results from the performativity of the diverse actions and senses that converge in the celebrations associated with the inauguration.

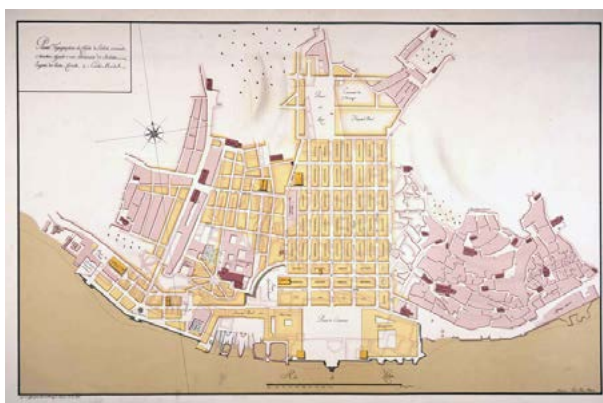


Fig. 2. Topographical plan for the rebuilding of the Baixa Pombalina, with the future Commerce Square open to the river, by Eugénio dos Santos e Carlos Mardel, 1758.



Fig. 3. Commerce Square with the equestrian statue of King Joseph in the centre, in the beginning of the 20th century, Lisbon Municipal Archive.

It is not, therefore, a unique festivity, in the manner of the ritualistic passage, structured in a linear manner, being celebrated in this case by many poets, dedicated, more or less explicitly, to various personalities: the King, the Marquis of Pombal, or the son of the Marquis, the Count of Oeiras, the author of the project of the statue, the sculptor Machado de Castro, or even the technician who cast the statue in bronze, Bartolomeu da Costa. There are, certainly, in these circumstantial relationships between poets and their patrons, obvious signs of a financial dependency between the protectors and the protégés. But it is interesting to see, even in this kind of writing, the upsurge of a new kind of authors and corresponding readers. In fact, what keeps us busy in this reading is not so much the *archive* as heritage, or the legacy of the written and the artistic production of the period, but mainly the *repertoire* of texts, readings, and performative gestures performed during the festivities (see Taylor 2003). This compulsive production, at the moment when writing asserts itself as the dominant technology of public communication (see Oliveira 2008), includes the proliferation of poetic compositions of all sorts, in classical and popular forms, in favour of and against the statue and the extravagant event of its inauguration. However, the poetics of praise, ranged from lyric to satire, from theatre to compositions such as *L’Eroe Coronato. Serenata per musica da cantarsi in occasione delle pubbliche feste per la inaugurazione della statua equestre di S. M. Fedelissima D. Giuseppe I* (1775).



Fig. 4. Arrival of the equestrian statue of King Joseph at the Terreiro do Paço, 1775. MNAA.

A text that we believe to be credited to José Daniel Rodrigues da Costa (author of so many string booklets sold in the street) clearly identifies the Commerce Square as a scenic space, in a “*mise-en-abîme*” structure, in which the real event is confused with the theatrical event (“the scene is in the Great Commerce Square”), with the boards, balconies, boxes, arches and curtains, and, obviously, spectators, focused on that “ecstasy of objects” they saw installed in the square or parading in front of them. This is a sensorial anticipation of the “atmosphere” referred to by G. Böhme in his essay on the aestheticization of the real (Böhme 1995: 49-66), invading the body of those who observe and comment on the statue: “For we are in the theatre/In the most pleasant scene” ([Costa] 1775: s.p.)⁵. The event, therefore, presents itself with a complexity that escapes the ritualist script, from the outset, because the historical period, at the end of the eighteenth century, confronts us with a society undergoing a process of modernisation and secularisation, giving signs of the emergence of a public space (The Public Promenade, *Passeio Público*, opened in 1760), a new civility that disputes the symbolic dominance, the modes of representation and subjectivisation. Significantly, the modern cult of statues, established from the renaissance imitation of this

classical precept, had only become commonplace in the eighteenth century with the affirmation of the bourgeois society. At the end of the Modern Age, the statue begins to glorify military figures, statespersons, and scientists and artists as well. The moment of this generalisation coincides, paradoxically, with the iconoclastic dispute over public statuary.

It will not be necessary to wait until the toppling of the statues that today, in the twenty-first century, celebrate colonial figures or heroes of dubious character. The controversy against the presence of the great figures of society in public spaces was already a reality in the words of the sculptor Joaquim Machado de Castro (1732-1822), when he published, at the end of his life, a long *Analytical description of the execution of the equestrian statue erected in Lisbon*. The sculptor begins by showing himself aware of the late moment that his greatest work had occupied among modern nations (Machado de Castro 1975). The enumerative rhetoric, which was common in the celebratory writing of the time, leads him to include in the book a final “Catalogue”, where he enumerates some of the statues placed in public squares in the Europe of Lights, information he collected from the treatise by the French architect Pierre Matte (1723-1814), which he quotes profusely (*Monumens érigés en France à la gloire de Louis XV, précédés d'un tableau du progrès des arts et des sciences sous ce règne, ainsi que d'une description des honneurs et des monumens de gloire accordés aux grands hommes, tant chez les Anciens, que chez les Modernes, Paris, 1765*). In his “Catalogue”, Machado de Castro estimates the number of statues dedicated to great figures at sixty-six, but he is aware that the counting is precarious, due to the iconoclast impulse provoked by the Revolution of 1789 and the “resentment” that marked the toppling of the many works that reminded of Louis XIV: “All of these French Statues, its Revolution has either annihilated or extinguished them; and for this reason it seems that in their enumeration I should mention them in the past” (1975: 326)⁶. An example of the disputes of the time is the ambiguity of the dedications of the poetic compositions, often making it difficult to tell the main object of the poet’s veneration: whether the king or the marquis, from the political perspective; whether the project designer, Machado de Castro, or Bartolomeu Costa, the technician, from the

artistic perspective.

From the political perspective, the symbolic dispute became clear by the placement of a medallion with the bust of the Marquis of Pombal on the pedestal of the equestrian statue representing King Joseph: a boldness that did not go unnoticed. In 1775, an anonymous sonnet, dedicated to the Marquis, does not fail to have a jibe: in the statue to King Joseph “[...] I see here also Your Memory/Subdued to the Monarch, and this looks,/You hold Him the throne (it is a notable voice)”⁷. A few years later, in 1777, when the Marquis of Pombal fell into political disgrace, the opening of a sonnet that integrates the anti-Pombaline lyric (which was also to circulate profusely) calls for the removal of the medallion: “Lord, to exalt our good fortune/Remove from the pedestal of the Augustan Statue/The ugly and rugged image of the Marquis,/That by seeing it still at its feet, it stirs up hatred” (Pimenta 1982: 54)⁸.

From the artistic perspective, the dispute is between patrons and artists, and also between theorists and practitioners, authors of the project and technical adjutants. As an anonymous poet was to write, in a sonnet dedicated to Bartolomeu Costa, “each in his own state,/You in second, Him, the King, first”⁹. A poem by the sculptor himself, Machado de Castro, would not fail to contain some irony about the praises given to the technician Bartolomeu da Costa: “[...] should the ones that I utter not have the lowest place, because I have more reasons to know the excellence with which the Foundry expressed everything that the sculpture did” (Machado de Castro 1775: 10n)¹⁰. The equestrian statue of King Joseph was the first, in Portugal, to be associated with this modern cult, a reason for the sculptor to congratulate himself on his personal achievement. His *Analytical Description*, dated 1810, even tries to settle the score with the building process of the statue. The creator laments the little time he had, the unprecedented and solitary nature of the project, and even the physical absence of the king, during the design of the statue, which forces him to figure an absent body. He now laments, more explicitly, the fact that, at the time, the person responsible for the casting *technical performance*, Bartolomeu da Costa, deserved more recognition than his contribution as the artist responsible for the *aesthetic performance* of the work, for the

movement of the horse, for the gestures of the horseman, from the direction of the eyes to the bare hands that he ends up maintaining. In fact, the act of casting represented a technical challenge that impelled the Marquis of Pombal himself to personally watch the process, at the Santa Clara Foundry. Machado de Castro disenchant the Literati who erroneously presumed this, in the thousands of praises written at the time of the celebration:

In the multitude of verses and some prose that will appear at the festive Inauguration of this Royal Statue, about this subject, many of their Authors will call our commendable Engineer, Statuary; thinking that this is the same as making it, and, therefore, praising him. I sympathize with the fact that those Literati were so solemnly mistaken; being led to this grief by the lack of knowledge of Arts and of drawing (Machado de Castro 1975: 231)¹¹.

Realising the poor quality of many of the statues in European cities, he reaffirms the importance of ingenuity and art for the memorable dignity of the represented person¹². The statue he describes, in successive chapters, aspires to the condition of art. Hence, ingenuity should triumph over matter “that the bronze should look tender, and in such a way lively, that imagination should care to see both man and horse breathing and moving” (*ibidem*: 279)¹³.

The performative superiority of his artistic practice shares the characteristics and the different stages of what we call today “creative process”. The sculptor Joaquim Machado, studied, compared, sketched, and drew the various parts of his work. Over dozens of pages, he describes in detail how he got to the position of the horse, the outline of King Joseph’s body, the position of the bare hands, the direction of the eyes, even to the symbols to include in the figures of its monumental pedestal. On the whole, he intended to confer on his work the qualities of the “Epic action”: “If the Epic action should not only be great, but wonderful, useful, and interesting, for an Equestrian Statue, one should choose which ornaments of these predicates represent the Hero’s most brilliant virtue” (*ibidem*: 8).

The lexicon used by Machado de Castro aspires to the “magic of Art” and to a “*Je ne sais quois*”, syntagms that surely express the category of the “sublime” that, in this and other compositions about the subject, runs through the aesthetic



thought of the seventeen hundreds. The ode that Machado de Castro dedicates to the king, in 1775, began precisely by stating that he only allowed himself to address such a “sublime matter”, excited (Machado de Castro 1775: 3)¹⁴. The poets of the Equestrian statue have written many times under the fascination of a happy age, in which politicians practice the great art of making mankind fortunate: they rejoice, because they sing happiness for the first time, and not war. The poet Cruz e Silva believes that the fair fantasy brought to Portugal a Golden Age. The compositions, symbolically signed by Antonio Alberto Paradiz, are particularly detailed, when he describes the tables set for the festivities, with paradisiacal foods and drinks, served in tableware made of national silver (also strategically referred to by the Marquis of Pombal in his letter to the king)¹⁵.

The construction of the equestrian statue was, thus, marked by a relevant set of political, material, and aesthetic tribulations, but the structuring of the social and cultural event of its inauguration expanded, in detail, the performativity of this historical episode. We can perhaps get an even better idea of the “staging process” of the festivities from the reading of a document with a revealing title: *Narração dos aplauzos com que o juiz do povo e casa dos vinte-quatro festeja a felicissima inauguração da Estatua Equestre. Onde também de Expoem as Alegorias dos Carros, Figuras, e tudo o mais concernente ás ditas Festas* [trad. *Narration of the applause with which the judge of Lisbon and the house of the twenty-four celebrate the most blissful inauguration of the equestrian statue. Where also the Allegories of the Floats, Figures, and everything else concerning the said Festivities are exhibited*] (Lisbon 1775). In the opening chapter, the seven majestic floats that, then, paraded in the festivities, are described. The first four represented the four best known parts of the Earth (Europe, Asia, Africa, and America), symbolising the power of the Empire and the universal tribute paid to the King of Portugal. After the floats of Apollo and Oceanus have passed, the parade ends significantly with the float representing Triumphant Portugal. The depiction of each of the seven floats illustrates how they present themselves at the Commerce Square as true stage machines, accommodating an enormous amount of figures, props, visual and sound effects, and other technical devices. The procession of the four floats with details about the

fauna and flora of each part of the World, would resemble a small World Exhibition. There being no room, here, for their exhaustive description, take the case of the float devoted to Europe, as an example: “One sees a boisterous horse over the prow of the Car: in it, ten instrumentalist Musicians, and the same number of Dancers, all in costumes, richly dressed” (*Narração*: 5). The same document contains a section devoted to the “Regulation of the Dances that accompanied the Cars, and their garments” (*ibidem*: 24-25), where the movements, the costumes, and the colours of the diverse outfits, are listed in detail. The text also includes the choreography of the inauguration, in the section entitled “Description of the Order, in Which the Floats will March, and Dance to the Commerce Square” (*ibidem*: 26-28). The procession of the floats and other figures has a protocol stopover by the statue, for the spectacular production of a bow to King Joseph, leaving, after this gesture, under a “continuous symphony” (*ibidem*: 29). The feast and the many delicacies are the corollary of these actions, followed by dances and contradances, that will only “end at the break of Dawn”, repeating such bustle for two more days. Immediately before the feast, at eight o'clock in the afternoon of June 6, after listening to a sonata, the Judge of Lisbon reads a “gratulatory prayer” (*ibidem*: 30), which is followed by the reading of verses by the scribe and two deputies of the House of the Twenty-Four. The verses that are heard at the moment of the inauguration represent, however, a small part of the written production and of the reading of the verses. One should only remember that, from Apollo's float, where the poets and the musicians were, verses were constantly being poured out:

In the lower part of the float there will be six openings, from where verses of every existent quality will be thrown down the Streets and Squares. And from each of the other floats, in the same way, their respective Allegories and Explanations will be thrown (*ibidem*: 16-17).

Hence, a remarkable similarity can be seen between the persuasion that Goffman attributes to the social performance¹⁶ and the inauguration of the statue as a major device of self-representation not only of King Joseph, but of the Marquis of Pombal, as well, suggesting a new urban conception for the city of Lisbon, and the symbolic projection of their authoritarian governance. The

compositions about the equestrian statue have very often captured the memorable impression of the event. The very (paradoxical) absence of the King at the inauguration seems to stimulate the imagination of the royal power (see Faria 2012). And the fact that the statue is completely covered by a red curtain seems to have increased the excitement of finally seeing it uncovered. A sonnet by Manuel Coelho de Carvalho is entitled: “Feelings of a spectator who comes to admire the equestrian statue” (Lisbon 1775: [s.n.]). An anonymous print, the *Letter or Concise Narration of the Festivity held in the City of Lisbon During the Placement of the Equestrian Statue*, refers to the excitement of the first moments, when the Marquis of Pombal and the Count of Oeiras “made the hearts jump with excitement”, “[...] uncovering that majestic artefact”, leaving on hold for a long time the admiration for the “singularity of the object” (1775: 4)¹⁷. The author of the Letter exemplifies the Ovation, also describing the happy feeling caused by the luminaries that were lit at night, the dances until dawn, the relaxed presence of the ladies in the windows, or the children who hugged each other in a continuous hullabaloo. The information is confirmed by another description, that of Jacinto Saldanha: he also celebrates the unusual “grandeur of the pomp and ceremony”, and ensures that the spontaneous acclamations of the spectators were often interrupted by the sincere tears which well showed the happiness and pleasure of the crowd (Saldanha 1776: 25).



Fig. 5. Equestrian Statue of King Joseph, early 20th century, photo of Augusto Bobonne, Lisbon Municipal Archive.

In our view, among the many compositions about the equestrian statue, this text by Jacinto Saldanha, which contains a political poison disguised by the sugary taste of the praises, should be read more carefully. Unlike the others, it dates from 1776, perhaps already from that time when the illness and eminent death of King Joseph foretells the banishment of the Marquis of Pombal and the partial destruction of his political project, when “the wheel came off the axle”, in the words of a courtesan (Malato-Borrvalho 2008: 74). Saldanha calls for a new reflection which should also stem from the individual conscience and not only from the collective practices, used in conversations, classes, or academies (Saldanha 1776: 5). For their effectiveness, in 1776, the poems from 1775 are useless and insufficient:

The public actions that have shown your excessive pleasure in praising our Sovereign have already come to an end [...]. The poetry is not the most capable one, it is not worthy of such high matters (*ibidem*).

It is now a matter of saving whatever of the Pombaline period could now be deemed memorable: the appreciation of manual labour, the interest in the commercial activity, the education reform that goes beyond erudition, the usefulness of a permanent army which assure peace to a new civility. Those are the pillars for a more just world. It reminds him of some of the legislation left, still incomplete in its intention, such as the Charter of 19/09/1761, which abolished slave trade to and within mainland Portugal. It had, then, been discovered that perpetual slavery is a punishment of innocents, worse than death, that can only be enforced by the right of force and never that of reason.

I get confused, I get afraid seeing the little that I have been saying, and the much I have yet to say (...) In this blissful time, one acknowledges that Vassals should not be slaves” (*ibidem*: 14-15)¹⁸.

Saldanha ends up praying for the health of the King, whose body was the necessary evidence for the actions that remained undone.

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Notes

1 “Era um flagello este tyranno mestre/ Dos ouvidos e faces dos freguezes;/ Todos os versos leu da Estatua Equestre/ E todos os famosos Entremezes/ Que no Arsenal ao vago caminhante/ Se vendem a cavallo n’um barbante” (Almeida 1861: 278).

2 “A grande cortina, que no felicissimo dia 6 do corrente mez de junho de 1775, descobriu a régia estatua del rey meu senhor veio manifestar nos dias sucessivos, ao claro conhecimento de todos aquelles que não parando na superficie dos objectos que lhes presentam á vista, passam a investigar e compreender a substancia das cousas, que s.m. não só tem inteiramente dissipado as trévas, e reparado as ruinas em que achou sepultados os seus reinos; mas que além disso tem feito aparecer outra vez em Portugal o

seculo feliz dos senhores D. Manuel e D. João III” (Pom-
bal 1861: 12).

3 “É o primeiro dos ditos exemplos, o character commum
da letra de mão, pois quando até o anno de 1750, era rara
a pessoa que escrevesse uma carta com boa letra, há hoje,
parece, a mesma raridade de achar quem escreva mal em
Lisboa” (*ibidem*: 12-13).

4 Such intention does not go unnoticed by many poets
who sing the inauguration of the equestrian statue, in-
cluding, among them, mainly Italians. Many poetic or
poetical dramatic compositions refer to the eye of the
“Foreigner”, or the Portuguese who emigrated after the
earthquake. For example the anonymous sonnet “To
the fair and much esteemed craftsman of the Equestrian
Statue of His Majesty” (Book Collection of The National
Library of Portugal, L 567/ 3 A), the sonnet by Domingos
Maximiano Torres that begins “Oh Pilgrim, who looks
respectfully” (BNP, L 567/ 17 A), or the “Dialogues in
which the Magnificent Festivity with which the Splen-
dorous Inauguration of the Equestrian Statue was cele-
brated is described [...] A Traveller and a Courtier are
interlocutors” [by José Daniel Rodrigues da Costa] (BNL,
L 1166// 16 A). As a dramatic curiosity worthy of note is
the publication, in 1899, of a five-act play, *A Inauguração
da Estátua Equestre* (*The Inauguration of the Equestrian
Statue*), by Joaquim da Costa Cascaes (BNP, L 3857// A).

5 “Pois estamos no theatro/ Na mais agradável scena”
([Costa] 1775: s.p.).

6 “Todas estas Estatuas de França aniquilou, ou extinguiu
a sua Revolução; e por esta causa parece que na sua enu-
meração deveria falar dellas em pretérito” (1975: 326).

7 “[...] cá vejo também Vossa Memoria/ Submetida ao
Monarca, e isto soa,/ Lhe sustentais o throno (he voz no-
tória)”, Book Collection of The National Library of Por-
tugal, L 567// 2 A (Anon 1775: s.p.).

8 “Senhor, para exaltar a nossa dita / Tirai do Pedestal da
Estátua Augusta / A imagem do Marquês feia e robusta,
/ Que ao vê-la ainda a seus pés o ódio excita” (Pimenta
1982: 54).

9 “cada hum no seu estado,/ Vós sem segundo, Elle o Rey
primeiro” (Book Collection of The National Library of
Portugal, L 567/ 3 A).

10 “[...] não devem os que eu proferir ter o menor lugar,
porque tenho mais razões para conhecer o primor, com
que a Fundação exprimio tudo quanto a escultura fez”
(Machado de Castro 1775: 10n).

11 “Na multidão de versos, e algumas prosas que appa-
recêrão na festiva Inauguração desta Real Estatua sobre
este assumpto, muitos de seus Authores chamarão Esta-
tuario ao nosso recomendável Engenheiro; cuidando ser
isto o mesmo que fazella, e que deste modo o elogiavam.
Eu me compadeço de se haverem enganado tão solenem-
emente aqueles Literatos; sendo conduzidos a este pesar
pela falta de conhecimento das Artes e do desenho” (Ma-
chado de Castro 1975: 231).

12 “This proves that whoever makes similar favours, and
expenses, in choosing skilful Artists, so that the monu-
ments are visitable, should be careful; because if they are
not, it results in the contempt of the same monuments,
and the forgetfulness (against what is intended) of the

Heroes that they represent” (referring to Alexander the
Great who “prohibited by an Edict, that no one could
paint him, except for Apelles; nor sculpt him in bronze
other than Lysippo” (Machado de Castro 1975: 323).
“Isto prova do cuidado que deve ter quem faz semelhan-
tes obséquios, e despesas, em escolher Artistas hábeis,
para que monumentos sejam atendíveis; pois que de não
o serem, resulta o desprezo dos mesmos monumentos, e
o esquecimento (contra o que se intenta) dos Heroes, que
eles representam (refere que Alexandre Magno, “prohibio
por hum Edicto, que ninguém o retratasse em Pintura, à
excepção de Apelles; nem o esculpissem em bronze outro
que não fosse Lysippo” (Machado de Castro 1975: 323).

13 “[...] que o bronze pareça tenro, e de tal sorte anima-
do, que a imaginação cuide ver-se respirar, e mover, tanto
o homem, como o cavallo” (*ibidem*: 279).

14 Longinus is quoted in the *Analytical description*, and
Joaquim Machado de Castro shows his knowledge of the
neoclassical treatise, topically presenting painting and
sculpture as silent poetry (Machado de Castro 1775: 3n
e 1975: 7).

15 Quotes from the anonymous ode that begins “If, until
now, you have been” [1775], the “Ode to the Inaugura-
tion of the Equestrian Statue”, by António Dinis da Cruz
e Silva [1775], and the ode “In praise of the great day of
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lection of The National Library of Portugal, respectively
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567//30 A.

16 “A performance may be defined by all the activity of
a given participant on a given occasion which serves to
influence in any way any of the other participants” (Gof-
fman *apud* Schechner 2006: 29).

17 *Carta ou Narração Conciza da festividade feita na Ci-
dade de Lisboa na Collocação da Estatua Equestre* [trad.
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of Lisbon During the Placement of the Equestrian Statue*],
Lisbon, Off Antonio Rodrigues Galhardo, 1775, included
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with the call number L 3344//1 A.

18 “Confundo-me, atemorizo-me vendo o pouco que ten-
ho dito, e o muito que me falta que dizer [...] Neste feliz
tempo se conhece que os Vassallos não devem ser escri-
vos” (*ibidem*: 14-15).

Prayer and Performance in the Middle Ages: Two Unpublished Processional and Animated Sculptures of the Crucified Christ from Piedmont

Melanie Zefferino

This brief writing is meant to be a small contribution to the special issue of *Performing Arts* honouring the memory of Ronnie Mulryne, who generously shared his passion for history, drama, and the arts with eminent and early-career scholars alike. He gave me precious advice and engaged me in the activities of the Society for European Festival Research while I was still a PhD student. I am not the only one remembering him as an untiring, brilliant man and scholar. It is especially with those who loved and admired him that I wish to share a knowledge of two unpublished, early fifteenth-century sculptures of the *Crucified Christ* which I recently discovered while conducting a research on the iconography of Elizabeth of Hungary and its relation with Third Order Franciscans and Humiliates in Piedmont. The fact that the two sculptures in question – one processional, the other animated – were found in chapels used by female confraternities in two contexts that were different, yet shared some connections with the German cultural area as well as the French one, makes those rare pieces of work even more intriguing. Should other examples be related to similar contexts, it might be possible to grasp a better understanding of how animated figures of that kind were used in rituals that conjoined prayer and performance within a sphere where the lay and the secular overlapped. My research on the sculptures in question, the history of which has not been reconstructed entirely because of the current restrictions to accessing archives, is still in progress.

Relatively few animated sculptures used for

devotional practices involving performance in medieval Europe have survived to this day. They are remnants of a past when liturgy and drama conjoined, and later gave ground to sacred representations that were performed envisaging mechanical or manually operated figures. Although recent study has questioned definitions such as 'liturgical drama' and some theories on the evolvement medieval theatre (Norton 2017), it is generally believed as plausible that the earliest forms of dramatization developed from the Christian liturgy in the tenth century, more particularly from the *Quem quaeritis* of the Easter liturgy that formed the kernel of liturgical drama, which might have given ground to medieval theatre (Nicoll 1931: 176-77; Kobialka 1999: 1-34).

Later sculptures used for the dramatization of salient moments in the Passion of Christ survive in different contexts, including Piedmont. More particularly, preserved in Turin's Royal Museums, at the Palazzo Madama, is a group of lime wood figures representing the *Lamentation over the Dead Christ*, dated around 1480 and attributed to the Master of Santa Maria Maggiore (*Il Museo Civico di Arte Antica di Torino* 2006: 28, Inv. 1020/L). Similar coeval groups survive in Lombardy, Tuscany, Umbria, and the Veneto – most notably in the church of Santa Toscana in Verona (Tameni 1999: 60). We know that statues of that kind were used to re-enact the *Depositio* and *Entombment* of Christ while singing a *Planctus Marie* (Cattin 2005: 87-110).

A very small number of animated sculptures of the *Crucified Christ* dating to the fifteenth century are also treasured in today's Piedmont. They are little known, and not recorded in Kamil Kopania's 'catalogue of medieval animated sculptures of the *Crucified Christ*' in Europe,

which is a precious scholarly work shedding light on renowned and forgotten examples (Kopania 2010: 245-87). They add to earlier *Crucifixes* whose nature and origins are at times controversial. Preserved in Turin's Galleria Sabauda, for instance, is a twelfth-century sculpture of the *Crucified Christ* once in the Gualino Collection. Lionello Venturi tentatively related it to the Rhine region (Venturi 1926; pl. LXXX), whilst other scholars suggested other attributions (Cervini 2008: 9-32). In their study focusing particularly on German areas, although exploring other contexts as well, Gesine and Johannes Taubert argued that, the dramatised *paschal triduum* ceremonies, including the *Adoratio Crucis*, *Depositio Crucis* and *Elevatio Crucis*, started to be enacted using a movable sculpture of the crucified Christ instead of the cross as symbol in order to enable a deeper connection to the mystery of death and salvation through the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ (Taubert Taubert 1961: 79-121; Kopania 11-27). The construction of that type of sculptures, to which medieval sources often refer as *imago crucifixi* and *imago salvatoris* or *imago resurrectionis*, envisaged mechanisms allowing certain parts of the figure to move while detaching it from the cross to depose it as a dead body in the sepulchre, and later take it out as a resurrected being (Kopania 2010: 98-106; Bino 2016: 277-311). Although a recent study has questioned, to some extent, earlier theories on the involvement medieval theatre (Norton 2017), it is generally acknowledged that a devotional practice combining rite and dramatization with animated figures spread across Europe in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Text was already present in collective memory as the *Adoratio*, *Depositio*, *Elevatio crucis*, and *Visitatio sepulchri* liturgical offices were contained in missals, thus had long been included in the annual cycle of ceremonies observed in a given diocese, monastery, cathedral, and parish church. The dramatized rites in question were officiated by male clergy members in procession. Nonetheless, they would gain momentum in nunneries and also monastic complexes housing pious women of the Third Order in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (Weaver 2002: 3). The use of animated sculptures of the Crucified Christ for devotional and processional practices within nunneries and confraternities of lay women of the Third Order would persist well into the sixteenth century

in some contexts, perhaps inspired by earlier traditions¹.

That is likely to have happened with two medieval sculptures of the *Crucified Christ* preserved in two ancient towns of Piedmont. One is the small processional crucifix dating to the early fifteenth century which is preserved in the sixteenth-century oratory of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary at Trinità (Fig. 1), originally a place of worship in the diocese of Asti.



Fig. 1. *The Crucified Christ*, early XVth century. Processional wooden sculpture. Chapel of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, Trinità (Cuneo, Italy).

In 1412, Amadeus VIII, Duke of Savoy, Prince of Acaja, assigned Trinità as a feud to Ludovico Antonio Costa, Count of Bene and Carrù. The latter would marry Paola Gambarà (1463-1515) from Verola Alghisi (near Brescia), who descended from a noble family with Bavarian origins. Once widowed, Paola Gambarà joined the Third Order Franciscan, whose patron saint is Elizabeth of Hungary. The cult of the Blessed Paola Gambarà Costa started long before her

canonization (officialized in 1845) in the context where she lived, which would see the members of the female confraternity of Saint Elizabeth (also known as 'Humiliates') wear a straw-yellow vestment while performing a processional ritual that must have been very close to the one depicted by Antoine Sallaert in his *Procession of the Maids of the Sablon in Brussels* (c. 1621) now in Turin, Musei Reali. Clearly, the pious lay women also prayed before the processional crucifix that is still in the chapel where they used to gather (Zefferino - Bellini 2017: 213-43).

The ownership of similar objects of devotion, as happened with other treasured artefacts and even the buildings that housed them, was subject to change over time. Reconstructing their provenance may therefore be difficult, at times. That is the case of the early fifteenth-century animated sculpture of the *Crucified Christ* which is now in the Collegiate church of Santa Maria della Scala at Chieri (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2. *The Crucified Christ* (detail), early XVth century. Processional animated wooden sculpture. Collegiate church of Santa Maria della Scala, Chieri (Turin, Italy).

More particularly, that *crocifisso deposto* is in the chapel of St Thomas, where a painting depicting *Saint Elizabeth of Hungary* by Vittorio Amedeo Rapous (1729-1800) has been on display since the seventeenth century, when that chapel was destined to the Humiliates (Bosio 1878: *passim*). The provenance of the Gothic sculpture in question is unknown. It might have been brought there by the confraternity, whose original seat was in the Santuario dell'Annunziata, erected on the foundations of a chapel that had been built in 1401 next to a hospice (*spedale*) founded in 1278 and now part of the Ospedale Maggiore. Originally, it

could also have been in the Franciscans' church, demolished in the early nineteenth century. That is an option to consider, given that some sculptures of the *Crucified Christ* with movable arms surviving in other Italian contexts were once preserved in Franciscan convents or places of worship, including those attributed to Giovanni Tedesco in the lower basilica of St Francis at Assisi and in the church of St Francis at Terni; the one attributed to Agostino di Duccio once in the church of St Francis at Prato; and the famous one related to the circle of Donatello in the Basilica of Santa Croce in Florence (Kopania 2010: 38, 260, 264, 272).

The authorship of the *Crucifix* in Chieri is still open to question, and yet its stylistic features allow us to compare it with a coeval and very similar sculpture of the *Crucified Christ* of unknown provenance, dated 1456, which is now in the chapel of the Ospedale Maggiore². That piece of work has been attributed to an unknown sculptor, possibly German yet active in the workshop of the Surso family from Pavia (Lombardy), some of whose works survive in Asti and Chieri (Pirretta 2002: 52-53; Pirretta 2007: 102).

It is not clear whether the sculpture of the *Crucified Christ* in the Ospedale Maggiore had movable arms because of its restoration which, as happened with other artefacts, might have caused the loss of articulation in that detached limbs were glued back to the torso. Although movable sculptures of the crucified Christ are one of the most interesting manifestations of religious culture of the Middle Ages, in fact, the aspects relating to their construction as objects of ritual performance, rather than merely objects of cult, have been overshadowed by aesthetics and iconography in scholarly literature until recent years. It appears that in the Western world all kinds of figures crafted in a design that made them perceivable as animated beings able to 'move' and/or 'speak', shared the destiny of being overlooked by historians until recently, perhaps because of their nature of objects in between the visual and performing arts. Luckily, an interdisciplinary conference aimed at fostering a better approach to the study and conservation of movable wooden sculptures from the middle ages was held in Venice, at the Accademia Galleries on 18 May 2012³. Also, some recent publications have drawn particular attention on sculptures of the crucified Christ with movable limbs and other peculiarities in Italian contexts (see Saporì

- Toscano 2004; Mor - Tigler 2010; and Cervini 2019).

As retaining its original features and articulated limbs, the animated sculpture of the *Crucified Christ* in the Collegiate church of Santa Maria della Scala at Chieri can thus be regarded as an intriguing dramatic figure embodying tangible and intangible heritage. Indeed, it conjoins fine art, craftsmanship and performance traditions of bygone times. From a dramatic perspective, it may therefore remind us of Maurice Sand's observation that 'several fantastic and religious types indispensable to all the scenario of mystery plays performed with puppets may not 'pass in silence' over the centuries (Sand 1915: 173-74).

To conclude this insight into an ongoing research which is far from being concluded, I would cast light on the multifaceted nature of sculptures used in ritual, either for processional display or religious drama within contexts where laity and devotion entwined. Further research might allow us to reconstruct the origin and history of the artefacts in question, and also to know more about how they were used and perceived by the female confraternities who preserved them over at least two centuries. That entails exploring issues of identity and gender while inquiring how ritual and performance conjoined through religious dramatization with animated figures – a process triggering aesthetic experience. Indeed, the two sculptures of the *Crucified Christ* presented here can be regarded as objects treasuring the sacred and the secular, the visual and the performative, material culture and transcendence. Their fragmented history and aura of sacredness make the contemporary viewer eager to investigate their inner mystery.

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Notes

- 1 A lost miniature dating around 1175-1185 from the *Hortus deliciarum* by Herrade von Landsberg testifies to the use of jiggling puppets (possibly taken into Europe from the Holy Land) for recreational puppets at Hohenburg Abbey in Alsace. See Green 1979.
- 2 Reproduced in Cappelletto 1961. See also Tirsi 1969, 6-78 (13). I am grateful to Vincenzo Tedesco for giving me these references.
- 3 The proceedings of this symposium were within the framework of the exhibition "L'uomo della croce: l'immagine scolpita prima e dopo Donatello" in Padua, at the Museo Diocesano, on 28 November 2013. See Francescutti 2013.



© William Mulryne Photographer www.WilliamMulryne.com

This image, of Ronnie in his study at home, was taken by Ronnie's grandson, currently establishing himself as professional photographer. We have chosen the image because it encapsulates so much of Ronnie's life and work. His love of books is clearly evident, ranging from poetry and plays, theology, history, art history, architecture and the creative and performing arts, to remembrances of the many places that he visited in his insatiable quest for, and enjoyment of, new places as well as his desire to understand the contexts which informed his research, catalogues from galleries and theatre exhibitions, as well as numerous texts in ancient and modern languages, and many volumes by his own mentors, as well as colleagues and friends. Beside Ronnie, in a pile in the floor, are books among those in which his own writing and research played a major role in their inception and publication. The painting on the end wall of the study was painted by Michael Sofroniou, artist in residence with the Royal Shakespeare Company (1991-1992), at the time when Ronnie was working on a collaborative volume on the design and early years of the new Swan auditorium at the RST. The books include, too, many on the places where he lived and worked, and where he came to play active roles in the lives of their communities: schools, universities, churches, theatres and festivals, celebrations and commemorations. Each detail is capable of evoking different memories amongst those who knew and worked with Ronnie, allowing the image to complement, visually, the three Focus articles that follow.

JRM: inspirational colleague, teacher, scholar and friend

Margaret Shewring

Ronnie was a generous and distinguished contributor to academic teaching, research and publication as well as to the theatre community more widely. He inspired generations of students and scholars, developing resources and a scholarly framework for the interdisciplinary study of European renaissance and early modern culture and of the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries in performance in their own time and today. My contribution to the Focus section of this “special issue” offers a necessarily selective overview, from a personal viewpoint, of some of his wide-ranging passions and achievements that can, perhaps, serve to contextualise the Focus contributions from Ian Brown and Ines Aliverti below as well as Ronnie’s tireless contribution to advancing the study of “Performance and Spectacle in Early Modern Europe”.

An overview

Born in Belfast in 1937 Ronnie attended the Methodist College, becoming the first pupil from his school to gain entry to the University of Cambridge where he was both an undergraduate and postgraduate. He later talked about his opportunity to study Yeats under the guidance of T. R. Henn, an experience that nurtured Ronnie’s love of poetry of all periods, while M. C. (Muriel) Bradbrook was to inspire his engagement with the study of Elizabethan and Jacobean performance. Under her supervision, his postgraduate studies focused on Thomas Middleton, his research taking him to Florence, Venice and Siena as well as more widely around Italy – inspiring his fascination

with the Italian language as well as that country’s art, architecture and, of course, performance. On completing his doctorate at St Catharine’s College, Cambridge, Ronnie’s first university post was as a Fellow of the Shakespeare Institute of the University of Birmingham (1960-1962), before joining the staff of the English Department at the University of Edinburgh, becoming head of the department in 1976-1977 – a time recollected, in this Focus section, by Ian Brown. Ronnie moved to Stratford-upon-Avon, with his wife Eithne and their children, when he joined the Department of English and Comparative Literature at the University of Warwick in 1977 as a Professor and then Chair. He served on numerous academic committees within Warwick including years as Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Arts and as Pro-Vice-Chancellor (1982-1987). He was Chair of the School of Theatre Studies for two years and Director of the Centre for the Study of the Renaissance (originally the Graduate School of Renaissance Studies) for many years from the 1980s to the late 1990s. He also took up roles as a visiting research fellow at Jesus College, Oxford (1987) and Magdalen College, Oxford (1991).

Ronnie’s love of theatre permeated his teaching and research and was reflected not just in his numerous publications and editorial roles but in his contribution to the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA), the Drama Panel of the Arts Council of Great Britain, chair of the Arts Council’s Drama Projects Committee and member and then chair of the British Council’s Drama and Dance Advisory Committee. (See Ian Brown’s article.) He was a member of the academic committee for the reconstruction of Shakespeare’s Globe in Southwark, London, a trustee of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, a member a member of the Board of the

Birmingham Repertory Theatre, a Governor of the Royal Shakespeare Company, and a member of the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council (formerly Board).

As Director of the Centre for the Study of the Renaissance, Ronnie was determined that postgraduate students would benefit from being a part of an interdisciplinary grouping for teaching and research at MA and doctoral level. I joined Theatre Studies at Warwick as an early career lecturer in 1978, following doctoral research at the Shakespeare Institute, and was soon asked by the department to represent them in the development of the then Graduate School of Renaissance Studies. I worked alongside colleagues from a wide range of humanities disciplines to develop this MA and doctoral research grouping. As the Graduate School became the Centre for the Study of the Renaissance I worked alongside Ronnie to convene numerous interdisciplinary conferences at, among other venues, Warwick, Warwick in Venice, and Columbia University New York. Ronnie actively promoted international partnerships with the University of Venice, Ca' Foscari, the University of Paris-Sorbonne and the University of Tours. Under his directorship, the Centre developed European academic exchange programmes (ERASMUS and SOCRATES) with colleagues and postgraduate students in Venice and Paris. Ronnie's own frequent contributions to conferences of the Société Internationale de Recherches Interdisciplinaires sur la Renaissance (S.I.R.I.R) at Paris-Sorbonne, and his subsequent publications on aspects of Renaissance literature and performance, were recognised by the French Ministry of Education and Culture in 1992 when, much to his delight, he was made a 'Chevalier' of 'l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques'.

Developing resources for research

The brief overview above conceals much for which Ronnie came to be appreciated within the scholarly community at all levels. He worked to teach and inspire, to guide and encourage and to develop a strong sense of collegiality among students as well as among academic staff. He was constantly ready to embrace new developments in scholarship, realising that any research could only be reliable if the resources upon which it drew were themselves

developed to the best possible standards – whether in terms of access to, and the ability to decipher, manuscript sources or in the application of sound editorial principles to texts. Beyond this, in the wider context, Ronnie saw as a necessary basis for study and research an interdisciplinary perspective that, for example, sought to understand dramatic texts in the context of performance in their own time as well as reaching different audiences across later centuries with the same urgency of debate that the innovative texts originally engendered.

It is not surprising, then, that Ronnie's work on renaissance theatre built on the approach of G. K. (George) Hunter (a founding professor of English at Warwick), with Hunter's insistence on editorial and scholarly standards, and on the internationalism of theatre practice. This led to Ronnie's detailed editorial work as a general editor of the multi-volume Revels Plays editions of Elizabethan and Jacobean texts (Methuen and Manchester University Press). He was also a founding editor of the *Shakespeare's Plays in Performance* series (Manchester University Press), on which I worked with him on many volumes as associate editor – volumes that looked increasingly to international performances. Ronnie was convinced that study of theatre and performance should be interdisciplinary and international – and that no academic study could replace engagement with live performances and with the people who made them, both on stage and behind the scenes. Together we taught international summer schools during the Edinburgh Festival in the late 1980s and early 1990s, as the Festival itself invited increasing numbers of companies – large-scale and small – from international touring shows to experimental fringe performances. The summer schools were open to the general public as were the Open Studies courses we taught about Shakespeare in Performance for Warwick in Stratford-upon-Avon.

Making space for theatre and performance

It is important, here, to realise that the discipline of Theatre Studies, emerging in the mid-1950s, was itself evolving through the years in which Ronnie was working at the University of Edinburgh, becoming a structured discipline (as indicated by Ian Brown) and challenging a more conventional,



long established tradition of the analysis of play texts in departments of literary studies. Both Ronnie and I saw the advantages of performance studies in an academic environment as a way of crossing what were often perceived as rigid disciplinary boundaries within (as well as beyond) faculties of arts and humanities. We were fortunate that the University of Warwick developed its own Arts Centre as well as being in close proximity to towns and cities with a strong theatre heritage. Ronnie embraced all these developments with his customary energy and enthusiasm.

In the late 1980s and into the 1990s we collaborated with theatre practitioners and creative teams, consultants and curators on various exhibitions exploring theatre spaces and performances. The first of these was with the Royal Shakespeare Company and the curatorial team of the Mead Gallery in the Arts Centre at the University of Warwick on an exhibition celebrating the development and construction of the RSC's Swan auditorium in Stratford (consultant architect Michael Reardon) and of the first three years of performances in that space. To document the process and to make it accessible we co-founded a small publishing company, Mulryne and Shewring Ltd., with its first publication being *This Golden Round: the Royal Shakespeare Company at the Swan* (1989). In 1995 we published *Making Space for Theatre: British Architecture and Theatre since 1958*, with consultant editors Iain Mackintosh and Michael Reardon, to accompany a major British Council touring exhibition on theatre spaces to document the exhibition of the same name launched at the National Theatre, London (June 1995), and subsequently seen at the Quadriennale in Prague before touring in two versions across the world. In 1997 we worked with Andrew Gurr as advisory editor to document the many years of research and practical process that led to the opening in that year of the fulfilment of Sam Wanamaker's vision to reconstruct Shakespeare's Globe in Southwark: *Shakespeare's Globe Rebuilt* (Cambridge University Press in association with Mulryne & Shewring). In 1999 we published *The Cottesloe at the National: 'Infinite Riches in a Little Room'*, with technical editor Jason Barnes and very much in collaboration with Iain Mackintosh and the National Theatre; Iain, working with John Bury and Richard Pilbrow, brought this studio theatre into being and Jason,

as Production Manager, nourished its work through many iterations of the space. During these years Ronnie's increasing engagement with Shakespeare on the international stage was reflected, too, not just in his active contribution to the International Shakespeare Association and its World Congresses but in our edited collection of essays from Japanese, UK and international contributors in *Shakespeare and the Japanese Stage* (Cambridge University Press, 1998).

Making space for festival

All of these performance-related activities sat naturally alongside Ronnie's engagement with European Festival Studies. In the late 1990s Ronnie led Warwick's successful application for funding from the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Board for Warwick's Centre for the Study of the Renaissance to host the AHRB (later AHRC) Centre for the Study of Renaissance Elites and Court Cultures, chairing this Centre for three years and leading one of its interdisciplinary research programmes with a focus on court and civic festivals of the European Renaissance, a project that resulted in a 2-volume, large-format publication making available to readers the texts of court and civic festivals, transcribed, translated and annotated with scholarly introductions, *Europa Triumphans: Court and Civic Festivals in Early Modern Europe*, General Editors J. R. Mulryne, Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly and Margaret Shewring, Associate General Editors Elizabeth Goldring and Sarah Knight (Aldershot, UK and Burlington VT: Ashgate in collaboration with the Modern Humanities Research Association, 2004; e-book 2010). He also led the creation of a website, in collaboration with the British Library, to make more than two hundred and fifty festival books from the Library's collection available in searchable, digital format [www.bl.uk/treasures/festivalbooks/homepage/html]. Again Ronnie prioritised resource enhancement and accessibility from the outset, developing and co-organising conferences at Warwick and at the Warburg Institute (University of London) as well as two EURESCO-funded conferences in Lucca, Tuscany.

On his retirement from Warwick in 2004 Ronnie was made Professor Emeritus. He

remained an active scholar, editor, conference convenor and participant. As a co-founder of the Society for European Festivals Research he continued to collaborate in conferences in Warwick, Venice, London, Bergamo, Mons and Trinity Hall, Cambridge. He particularly enjoyed collaboration with the European Science Foundation's PALATIUM research network. As a founding general editor of the European Festival Studies, 1450–1700 series of publications, with Margaret Shewring, Margaret M. McGowan and, more recently with Marie-Claude Canova-Green, he encouraged interdisciplinary research in an increasingly international context for students, doctoral and early career researchers and more senior scholars, collaborating in research networks with curators, archivists and performance practitioners. Ines Aliverti's Focus article documents in detail the range of research networks, groups and individuals with whom Ronnie was involved and among whom he was much trusted as generous, loyal, tireless and inspirational.

Stratford-upon-Avon: King Edward's School, Guild and Guildbuildings

In Stratford he continued in his various roles at Holy Trinity Church, where he was involved in the leadership of services, a church warden, a Chair of the Friends of Shakespeare's Church and a President of the Choral Society as well as actively engaged in the restoration of the Beckett Chapel and the creation and development of St Peter's Chapel. He continued, too, his role as Chairman of Governors and later as a Trustee of King Edward VI School in Stratford. His enthusiasm and determination also resulted in a collaboration between scholars of history, archaeology, education and performance studies, archivists and experts in architecture and restoration, to publish an edited collection of research into *The Guild and Guild Buildings of Shakespeare's Stratford: Society, Religion, School and Stage* (Ashgate, 2012), while working tirelessly to secure funding to enable the Guildhall to be restored and historic elements within it conserved. As the process began he worked with everyone involved, hosting seminars and devising and contributing content to a DVD and accompanying notes that could be used to help the volunteers,

enabling Shakespeare's Schoolroom and the Guildhall itself to become a significant heritage destination in the town (opened 2016). Much of his research into this building is summarised in its guidebook, *Shakespeare's Schoolroom & Guildhall*, by J. R. Mulryne and Andrew Burnet with Margaret Shewring, designed by Jamieson Eley and published by Jarrold Publishing, a division of Hudson's Media Ltd., Peterborough, UK.

See: <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/ren/centrestaff/rmulryne/publications>, for a selective list of Ronnie's many, diverse publications.

Ronnie's energy, his generosity in encouraging others and his love of theatre and performance, music, dance, scenography, poetry, languages, architecture, art, history and material culture have been an inspiration to many.

Notes

In the days before communication between colleagues in academic contexts became shaped by the requirements of emails, Ronnie usually signed off on correspondence with colleagues as JRM. The memory of this persists amongst some who worked with him.

An all-round master of arts: working with Ronnie Mulryne

Ian Brown

Initial encounters

I first met Ronnie when I was an undergraduate at Edinburgh University. There, I studied English Literature and Language from 1963 to 1967, a particularly fruitful time in the department's history. In 1963, the Regius Professor was John Butt, who was sadly to die prematurely in 1965. An expert on Augustan literature, Butt also had an acute eye for rising talent and a nurturing personality. When he arrived in 1959, his department included established figures like the medievalist John MacQueen, the modernist Ian Gregor and Andrew Rutherford, later Regius Professor at Aberdeen and Vice-Chancellor of London University, all of whom became professors of the highest distinction, all encouraged by Butt's mentoring skills. Butt was also committed to developing the work of younger academics, sustaining the early work of such later professorial luminaries as Mark Kinkead-Weekes, Stephen Fender and John Sutherland. Some of those, like Kinkead-Weekes, were already at Edinburgh when Butt arrived; others were Butt recruits like Ronnie. Although the terminology was beyond my ken at the time, when I came across Ronnie Mulryne for the first time, he was, in modern terminology, an early career researcher. Having graduated with his doctorate from Cambridge in 1960 and spent two years as a Fellow at the Shakespeare Institute in Stratford, he took up a Junior Lecturer post at Edinburgh University in 1962. Little did I know my luck when I arrived in the Edinburgh department in the next year to be taught by the team in which Ronnie was soon making his mark.

It is a token of Ronnie's distinction and its early recognition that, even in this context of rich and high-achieving talent, he stood out. Within two years of his arrival, still only in his late twenties, he was assigned to lead the second year English Literature course. In the Scottish system this is a crucial year. It represents the concluding course of students taking a three-year Ordinary degree and the rigorous preparation for those who will go on to undertake the two subsequent years for an Honours degree. For the course to be entrusted to someone just achieving promotion from the grade of Junior Lecturer was a mark of considerable esteem. Colleagues of Ronnie's have since observed to me that not only was his appointment to this role evidence of the respect in which he was already held, it reflected an element of self-doubt felt by more established colleagues faced by the challenges of leading such a critically important course. Ronnie grasped the challenges, made a success of the course and, for me and I know for many of my fellow-students, provided an educational experience that has enriched a lifetime.

The second-year lecture course was focused on dramatic texts, a key interest of Ronnie's, both as a scholar and as, later, an important figure in professional theatre development, although at the time he was also developing a reputation as a Yeats expert. The course he led focused – it might seem naturally for him – on Shakespeare and his contemporaries, but began with study of classical drama and concluded with a modern drama section. Ronnie allocated plays to individuals with a special interest, while himself doing the heavy lifting of delivering the more routine lectures over the year. Ronnie's perceptive 'casting' of colleagues brought about a phenomenon I've never since experienced. At

the end of 'guest' lecture after 'guest' lecture those delivering them were applauded by four hundred students. This was particularly remarkable: the lectures took place at noon and those students were desperate to rush for a place near the front of various refectory lunch queues. When the moment came for Ronnie's own 'feature' slot – my memory may be playing tricks, but I think there were two lectures on *King Lear* – he raised the roof, yet again holding back the stampede for pie and chips. Reflecting on this course earlier this year, an old colleague of Ronnie's, Roger Savage, remarked that in some weeks students were being asked to study three substantial plays in depth; we both recognised that such was the zest of the course and its teaching most buckled to and got down intensively to reading, thinking and exploring ideas. In many ways, this was a course designed by a young man: it was very demanding where an older course leader might have allowed more time for study of each play by reducing the number engaged with. Ronnie could certainly set challenges, but that course remains one of the highlights of my learning life.

Closer encounters

In my third year I had the fortune to have Ronnie as my year tutor. From being to me the more remote figure of a course leader, he became someone who had a responsibility for me as part of his small tutorial group. This was the beginning of his mentoring of me – and our life-long friendship. He was inspirational, supportive of a gauche laddie from a housing scheme peripheral to a small central Scotland town. The two Honours years at Edinburgh in those days were structured chronologically. The Junior Honours – third – year was concerned with medieval and renaissance literature, a course that played very much to Ronnie's strengths. Early in the course key texts to be studied included the work of the great early modern Scots makars, James I, Robert Henryson and William Dunbar. During preliminary reading over the summer I had fallen in love with James's *Kingis Quair*, the language, the brilliancy of the imagery, the way, as I can now see, it pushed the envelope of dream allegory structure. I volunteered to present a paper on the poem, which Ronnie commended. He was

so positive about it he asked me later to let him pass it on to John MacQueen, the great scholar of early modern literature. MacQueen invited me to meet him before the new academic year and, after giving me a typically rigorous cross-examination on the piece, advised me to do some redrafting and submit it to *Studies in Scottish Literature*, then just being established as the prominent journal in the field it now is. I don't know if Ronnie had this outcome in mind. The opportunity to ask him never quite arose, but the article was peer-reviewed and accepted and, so, my undergraduate paper for Ronnie became, when it appeared, revised, in late 1967, my first scholarly article. For reasons we will come to, this was a very important breakthrough for me.

In my final year, Ronnie ran a year-long module on contemporary drama. This opened our, and, later he would say, his, eyes to the then still rather new work of such playwrights as Beckett, Ionesco, Adamov and Pinter. The course went smoothly, except for one day when we turned up for class to find a note on the door explaining the class was cancelled at short notice: Eithne had just had their second child, Kevin, following their daughter Grania. During the course, Ronnie was rather dubious of my high claims in a paper for Harold Pinter's dramatic importance. Later, he would smile ruefully when, after Pinter was awarded the Nobel Prize, I teased him with this. One of the joys for me of Ronnie was his gift of the rueful smile whether at others' over-enthusiasm (often mine) or his own – rare – misjudgement. I found him more than indulgent of my enthusiasms. My term paper on Pinter stretched well beyond a reasonable length, amounting to 20,000 words or so. Instead of flinging the paper back and suggesting I note the length restriction everyone else observed, he made a point of coming in to his office on a Sunday to read the paper before the class at which it would be discussed. What is more, he engaged with my deep interest in Bernard Shaw's plays, even allowing me to present a paper on Shaw as part of this course. Shaw was never, in fact, part of the module prospectus and, rather than disrupt the peace of mind of the other students, Ronnie called a tutorial on my paper at his own house on a Saturday morning comprising him, me and one of his earliest and most brilliant PhD students, Linda Jo Bartholomew, to discuss the paper. Further, he ensured that in the module's

finals paper, there was a question on Shaw. Ronnie demanded much – of himself and his students – but, when his intellectual interest was piqued, he gave much. He was without side, genuine, giving.

A third kind of encounter

His generosity was extended to me in more personal ways. After my juvenile efforts, I had begun by the middle years of my undergraduate time at Edinburgh to try to write plays. Beyond the call of duty, Ronnie agreed to read some of what I was writing. He supported me in producing and directing two short plays of mine in a double bill in 1967 in what is now Edinburgh University's Bedlam Theatre. Afterwards, he invited me to keep him up to date with my attempts at playwriting. He also supported me through a difficult conclusion to my undergraduate career. By accident, I saw before the final examination board that I was being awarded a first-class grade for my paper on his module. Overall, however, I failed to achieve the degree award anticipated, obtaining a 2:2. Given expectations, it was hard to identify what had gone astray, although a fellow member of my final year tutorial who, like me, was to become a full professor with a wide range of publications, also failed to achieve in a similar way and only in that tutorial was such a failure rate found. Ronnie had arranged for me to be interviewed for a place on the MA in Drama at Birmingham University and I had been offered a place. My degree result meant that place was lost. In response to this personal debacle, Ronnie wrote a letter I still cherish. In this, he encouraged me to move on, reassured me of his faith in my ability, but suggested that perhaps an academic life was not for me. Perhaps that particular prediction was a little off-beam, later cause for one of his rueful, positive smiles. The acceptance of my article by *Studies in Scottish Literature* was at that time a particular reassurance to me of future possibilities.

In my graduation summer I returned to a summer job I had had previously, working in the Stores department of the Coal Board HQ in my home town, Alloa. During that summer, when I got back from work, I started writing a play, as many Scottish playwrights feel compelled to do, about Mary, Queen of Scots. In that September, I went to London to teach. I kept contact with Ronnie and he

visited me once in my little two-room-kitchen-and-loo flat in Highbury on the top floor of a Victorian house, which, in an unusual arrangement, had the bath in the kitchen. Ronnie later told me he had thought it was a 'garret'. I suppose that was a fair assessment – and makes it sound more romantic than it actually was – but it was my first place away from home that wasn't digs. I was very proud of it. Ronnie, though, however diplomatically, liked to call things as they were, though he did so in this case tactfully later...

Returning to Edinburgh

Towards the end of my time in London, or, rather, bringing it to a close around Easter of my second year down south, was my mother's succumbing to severe illness. We made family arrangements, my sister looking after matters back home till I could complete my notice and return to Scotland to help out. I found a place on a PGCE (Postgraduate Certificate of Education) at Moray House in Edinburgh, found a flat in the New Town and got to know Ronnie and Eithne better than had been possible as simply one of Ronnie's undergraduates. Meantime, I had sent Ronnie *Mary, Queen of Scots*. This was impossibly romantic, Lawrentian, in blank verse and Scots language. On my return, I discovered Ronnie had sent it to Alan Brown, then Literary Manager of the Royal Lyceum Theatre. He had liked it, but been unable to contact me about it because, in my naivety, I hadn't thought of including my contact details on the script. Ronnie put us in touch when it emerged that Alan wanted to meet me to discuss the play. He, while positive, thought it too sexually explicit and generally raunchy for the Lyceum at that time. After we had met, he sent it to Max Stafford-Clark, then Artistic Director of the Traverse Theatre. Max liked it, but didn't think it was for him, though he encouraged me to keep on writing for the stage. That summer, 1969, I wrote a version of *Antigone*, whose production by Strathclyde Theatre Group in that autumn, Ronnie and Max took the trouble to travel over to Glasgow to see. Max was then negotiating his departure from the Traverse as Director in order to establish the Traverse Workshop Company, launched in 1970, when it pioneered the methods later associated with its successor company, Joint Stock. Max invited me to participate in the company's

first project, contributing to the devising of and helping write the company's first play *Mother Earth*. It must be clear from this concatenation of events that Ronnie was key to my introduction to and acceptance in professional theatre circles.

Meantime, Ronnie's contribution to the work of his department above and beyond any simple job description continued. In 1968 he helped direct and in 1969 directed the Scottish Universities International Summer School, demonstrating administrative and persuasive powers in replacing its hitherto peripatetic nature by permanent settlement in Edinburgh around Festival time. His skills meant the reservations of other universities that might have been envious of this settlement were amicably overcome. Ronnie used the Festival timing creatively to link the SUISS to the enriching opportunities the Festival offered participants, something he continued to encourage over the years. Very soon after, Ronnie became Chair of the Royal Lyceum Theatregoers Club, which he revitalised into a key part of what now we would call the audience engagement of Edinburgh's main producing house.

Wider encounters

In the autumn of my year at Moray House, I became involved, in common with nationwide activity, in organising anti-apartheid protests against the Springboks rugby tour. With colleagues at the university, we organised a series of protests. I, for example, organised a petition signed by the artistic community and – somewhat to my own surprise – a pray-in at New College, Edinburgh's theological college, which was picked up by television news. The more radical members of the organising group thought these matters were trivial, but I reasoned that every means of legitimate protest contributed to the cause. As part of the protests I also organised with an Edinburgh colleague, Aileen Christianson, a then-popular combination of protest with intellectual inquiry: a day-long teach-in in one of Edinburgh's major lecture halls. I asked Ronnie to chair the final evening session. This he did with grace and authority. Teach-ins were certainly passionate, but they were designed to be, and this one, under Ronnie's chairing, was rational and constructive. He wasn't involved in the Murrayfield demonstration on

the day of the Scotland international, when there was considerable police violence against demonstrators. Policemen who had removed their identity numbers grabbed demonstrators, often by the hair, and threw them out of the ground, usually with a booted kick. (I had to take one young woman to hospital afterwards.) My role that day was to work with a team based at Heriot-Watt Students Union co-ordinating legal support to those arrested.


Out of this tumultuous day two consequences arose. One was that of those twenty or so demonstrators actually formally arrested, all but one (a university lecturer who turned up with a car aerial as a weapon!) was found not guilty of public order offences, as collusive police evidence collapsed in the face of defence cases for which we were able to raise funds. The second was that the more radical wing of the organisers decided to occupy university buildings, particularly the careers office. They organised a public meeting in the enormous entrance hall of Edinburgh University's Appleton Building. I wasn't involved in this phase of the protest which, in truth, had nothing to do with the anti-apartheid events, but I had cause to call in to see Ronnie on the morning the Appleton Tower meeting. He asked me if I was planning to go. I said I wasn't. He explained he'd been asked by the university principal, Michaël Swann, to observe what was happening and report back. I asked Ronnie why him? He said, in effect, that he thought he was thought young enough looking to not to stand out. I think I, who was then very hairy, helped the process of blending in. The meeting involved a lot of rhetoric, but the emphasis had changed from the South African situation to generalised protest at the world's iniquities. The meeting's atmosphere was generally lively, but not aggressive, though not helped by the presence of a clique from the university Conservative club, led by its then-president Malcom Rifkind, which sneered at proceedings from a balcony. Ronnie told me afterwards of the debriefing process in the principal's office, where Swann was calm, trying to understand what issues were being raised and how they might be resolved, while the University Secretary, Charles Stewart, stomped up and down, expostulating. As Ronnie told it, Stewart added comic spice to a rather matter-of-fact discussion.

Supervision

When I'd completed my studies at Moray House, I was appointed to teach at Craigroyston High School in north Edinburgh. The housing areas it mainly serves are Pilton and Muirhouse, still severely deprived areas, part of whose claim to fame is that these were where the leading characters in *Trainspotting* would have grown up. During the year, I talked to Ronnie about returning to my interest in Shaw. He encouraged me to think about doing a postgraduate research degree and what my research question would be. Once that was clear in our minds, he arranged for me to meet Kenneth Fielding, then head of department, who told me, in effect, that, although my first degree did not suggest I was an appropriate candidate to undertake a research degree, Ronnie had recommended I be admitted. And, so, I was. In my work, financial and domestic circumstances, I could only think of doing the two-year Masters part-time and it turned out Ronnie who I anticipated would supervise my research was due to go on an exchange year at the University of California, San Diego at La Jolla in 1971-72. Nonetheless, he arranged that my first year of research would be supervised jointly by Roger Savage with his drama expertise and John Sutherland with his period knowledge. In any case, in those days, in the first year one was designated a supervised postgraduate student. Admission to the Masters itself would be confirmed only after that first year of research was satisfactorily completed. When Ronnie returned with a new wardrobe of striking American clothes, I had successfully completed that year and he took over from John, while Roger, who has become another lifelong friend, remained my joint supervisor. Some team. Their rigorous, warm and witty support saw me through on schedule to graduation in 1975.

During that supervision period, I remember going in for a consultation to find Ronnie in an atypical fluster. I asked what the problem was. He held out a piece of paper he'd just taken out of an envelope addressed to him and asked me to look at it. It was poem, or at least an attempt at one, apparently written by two anonymous female students. It began:

Dear Doctor Mulryne
We think you're divine.



It continued in similar vein. I smiled and asked him what the problem was. After all, it was a rather gentle compliment and the rest of the poem to my memory remained gently admiring rather than lustfully outspoken about his charms. Ronnie protested that, when he lectured, he wanted to think students were taking what he said seriously, not sizing him up. I did suggest that he should count his blessings, when most of lecturers were considered much too old by their students to be fanciable. I got the sense he thought I was being frivolous.

Support

Before that episode, just as Ronnie was planning his visit to the States, I had applied for my first HE post, at Dunfermline College, now part of Edinburgh University. There, the appointment would involve setting up the first drama courses within a pioneering Dance and Related Arts department. Ronnie was one of my referees. The day of my interview, I had confirmation that Prospect Theatre Company was buying the rights to my first original play, *Carnegie*. Along with Ronnie's reference, that news did me no harm in the interview. Whatever setback my finals had caused was now quite expunged, while my engagement with professional theatre was by now deeper than I suspect it would have been had I proceeded in 1967 straight from undergraduate study to the MA.

Through the 1970s, although Ronnie had less directly to do with my playwriting, he was always supportive of it as I had work performed by companies like Prospect, the Royal Lyceum, the Edinburgh Festival, Scottish Ballet, Gay Sweatshop, the Traverse, the Bush and Borderline Theatre and became a client of the legendary play agent, Peggy Ramsay. I even wrote the words for a choral work by the composer John Maxwell Geddes, a colleague in the remarkable staff at Dunfermline College. As he was leaving for Warwick in 1977, a version with a shortened title of *Mary*, much-revised and in a form which I believe made it the first play about its subject to be deliberately a comedy, was about to be performed by the Royal Lyceum as part of their Edinburgh Festival programme. There, it would sell out. Ronnie's schedule meant he couldn't see the play in performance. Against some

resistance from the director, Stephen MacDonald, I smuggled Ronnie into the rehearsal room to see a late run. He had, after all, sent its earliest draft to the Royal Lyceum and supported its development. I dedicated the play to him.

Career changes

By this time, I had, again with Ronnie's support, made an important career change. Wanting to broaden my perspectives I had been appointed in 1976 to the British Council. I hoped to see the world. Initial hopes dashed, my first appointment was back to Edinburgh as Assistant Representative, Scotland. In that position I was able to brief Drama department in London of Ronnie's having been elected Chair of the Drama and Theatre in Education Council (DATEC), which in time merged with the British Theatre Institute. Meanwhile, for my growing family, the posting back to Edinburgh worked: my second child, a boy this time, was born in February 1977. Being in Edinburgh was also helpful to the production of *Mary*. As that run closed, we moved to Turkey where I became Assistant Regional Director, Istanbul. Ronnie and I kept up a regular correspondence while I was there. Soon, it was clear that, while the position was working for me, it was not so positive for my family, particularly my first wife. And I should have foreseen there might professionally be other problems. I had one of my plays, *Runners*, produced by the Bush Theatre and, in the event, there was no issue in my having leave in May 1978 to return to Britain for the first week of rehearsals. Nonetheless, as that time approached, it was clear working abroad would present longer-term difficulties. I wrote to Ronnie that, although we were having many richly satisfying personal experiences, I was beginning to doubt I had made the right decision. He replied straight away.

As well as his role with DATEC, Ronnie had been appointed Chair of the Drama and Theatre Committee of the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA), responsible for the rigorous nurturing of new drama degrees in the polytechnic sector. Many of the best and most innovative degrees in our current university sector had their first inklings under Ronnie's knowledgeable eye. He wrote that Crewe and Alsager College, one of

the livelier of the non-university HE institutions, had been looking for a new Head of Drama. In his CNAA role, he was part of the interview process. Twice they had failed to appoint and they were about to interview again. He said there was a strong field, but the panel might again decide it was not prepared to appoint. The College had a notoriously strong-minded director. She would only appoint if she was satisfied she had absolutely the right candidate. In fact, they didn't appoint and I was interviewed in the fourth round in May 1978. Although the British Council required of London-appointed staff serving overseas six months' notice, I found the college prepared to wait as they appointed me with effect from the 1 December 1978, soon to be promoted to Head of Performance Arts. That department, in dance alone, contained two future professors, Stephanie Jordan and Tess Buckland, and a future head of the London Contemporary Dance School at the Place, Veronica Lewis.

Council for National Academic Awards

One of the objectives set me on appointment, apart from restoring morale in a talented department that had been through a long frustrating process of finding a new leader, was to extend degree-level drama provision. While Ronnie was full of wise counsel, and on his committee such distinguished figures as Jean Benedetti were supportive, this was no easy path. Especially given our long-term relationship, there could be no question of there appearing to be favourable treatment. After initiating planning in the spring of 1979, the major new drama degree at Alsager was validated in the late winter of 1981-2, allowing the first cohort entry for 1982-3. By then, Ronnie had stood down and the chair was Jan MacDonald of Glasgow University. An appropriate distance stood between Ronnie and me in terms of the CNAA by the time validation was achieved, but his tough-minded input to our earlier discussions was indispensable.

Although in the early 1980s we maintained friendly contact and even collaborated in offering a visiting fellowship based at Alsager to Ernest Schier, long-time theatre critic of the *Philadelphia Bulletin* and Director of the US National Critics Institute, it was another adjustment in my own

career that inaugurated what is surely the closest of our several working relationships.

The Arts Council

When I was appointed ACGB (Arts Council of Great Britain) Drama Director in 1986, Ronnie was kind enough to make it clear he would be willing to help out in some role. The moment was critical. My predecessor had had to resign after a vote of no-confidence by an assembly of theatre directors. The work of the ACGB Drama department was to assess the theatre companies it funds artistically, financially and managerially. Sometimes tough decisions have to be made for positive effect or faced by negative situations. In those days, constitutionally, the role of the panel had come to be strictly advisory, while recommendations to Council, which were vanishingly rarely overturned by it, were formally the responsibility of officers, chiefly the relevant director. My view was that, given the prestige and expertise of panel members it would be foolish to ignore or contradict panel advice. This I never did in my eight years of office, while only once did Council resist a panel decision and then only to delay it by a year. Even when Council tried in 1993 to carry out a smash-and-grab raid on the drama budget, it was obliged in short order to reverse in its tracks. So, at least in my time, service on the panel carried great responsibility for the health of English theatre. By definition, one could not satisfy everyone. It was critical, therefore, that the systems and people in place were as credible and rigorous as possible.

One of the first things I did was work with colleagues and the newly-appointed Chair, Brian Rix, to break the old-pals act by which Drama Panel members had been being appointed. Rix is often remembered as a famous farceur and consummate low comedian, when it is forgotten he was a formidable theatre manager and campaigning cultural politician with an outstanding record on disability rights. We set up a system of seeking nominations from wider constituencies to ensure a properly wide spread of expertise and a balance of gender, theatrical interest and regional representation. It was, therefore, a pleasure to see Ronnie become a Panel member in 1987 through that more consultative process. Very quickly, he was recognised by officers and his fellow panel

members as a knowledgeable and shrewd voice of reason, seen not only as an academic, but someone who had a deep understanding of professional theatre, worth listening to. When, in less than a year of his appointment, a new Chair of the crucially important Projects Committee was needed, the question arose whether the new Chair should be a practitioner in the Committee's innovative field.

Drama projects

Project meetings in those days often dragged on from lunchtime until well into evening, as tempers frayed and tired judgments might become flawed. There could easily be 130 applications while the number of available grants was usually between twenty and thirty. The work of the committee was critical to the future health of theatre. It was through this committee's support of companies like Shared Experience, Joint Stock or Tara Arts when they were starting out that they developed to the point at which they could move to regular funding. Without the projects phase of their development, they would never have been able to make the important long-term contributions to theatre they have. The committee was busy and the pace of discussion often hectic. Those discussions needed insight, but there was a danger of overload in its business so that judgements might be made by fractious members. After departmental discussions we formed the view that there was plenty of specialist expertise among the Committee membership and what was needed was a reliable Chair who could allow that expertise full effect by steering discussion more effectively. The Projects Officer of the time was the brilliant Jenny Waldman, who later became Public Programmes Consultant to Somerset House (1999-2011), Creative Producer of the London 2012 Festival – the finale of the Cultural Olympiad for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games – Director of 14-18 NOW, the UK's official arts programme for the First World War Centenary and now Director of the Art Fund. Jenny was not quite convinced that we didn't need a practitioner as chair to ensure the credibility of decisions. After Ronnie's first meeting as chair, where he [arrived fully prepared, having clearly digested the essence of that pile of applications, reduced the issues to clear choices and managed the business – to the

satisfaction of Committee members and officers – in under three hours, Jenny came to my room, full of Ronnie's praise. In step with this ACGB role, Ronnie was key in helping then-underfunded companies like *Complicité*, *Cheek by Jowl* and *Tara Arts* to a sound working footing.

As a panel member Ronnie was regularly asked to form part of appraisal teams. In the late 1980s and early 1990s. These were teams of panel members, advisers and officers who on a five-year cycle visited regularly funded companies to assess their operation in detail and offer advice to both company and Council as to future policy, management and funding. These were demanding exercises professionally, intellectually and in time and Ronnie gave unstintingly. I remember being a member with him of a particularly complex appraisal: *South West Theatre Consortium*, a creative alliance of a very large theatre, both producing and receiving, *Plymouth Theatre Royal*, a regional rep, *Exeter Northcott*, a rural touring company, *Orchard*, and an experimental children's company, *Kneehigh*, which has now developed into one of Britain's most exciting companies. We wouldn't just visit a company; we'd see it in action, something which in this case involved rendezvousing at *Exeter St David's* railway station to take the train across rural Devon to attend an *Orchard* show in the now-replaced *Pavilion Theatre*, *Ilfracombe*, before staying overnight in a less-than-glamorous bed and breakfast establishment. That team included other luminaries like *Genista McIntosh*, then *RSC Associate Producer* and, if I recall correctly, *Roger Chapman*, long-time *National Theatre Touring Director*.

Board memberships

Ronnie's fixed term of office as an ACGB panel member concluded in 1991, the year I completed my PhD after six years of part-time study still inspired by him. Such was the acuity of Ronnie's contribution to the *Drama Panel's* work that I recommended to the *British Council Drama and Dance Director*, an observer at ACGB panels, that he at once invite Ronnie to join his *Drama and Dance Advisory Committee* as a member. I too was a member of that committee and can confirm Ronnie was again highly effective,

becoming its chair from 1993 to 1997. As with the ACGB *Drama Panel*, the work of the *British Council Committee* was highly influential. Not to put too fine a point on it, Ronnie's leadership of that committee was central during his term of office to the promotion of UK theatre and dance worldwide, and, so, to the country's international cultural reputation. His wisdom, enhanced by the experience gained from such public service roles, led to his being appointed a *Governor of the RSC* and a *Board member of Birmingham Rep*. His deep knowledge of theatre and its practice allowed him to form with *Margaret Shewring* a firm which produced beautiful studies, written by them, of important theatres including the *Swan at Stratford* and the *Globe on London's South Bank*. He always considered that drama and theatre study should be interdisciplinary and international and engage with live performance in all its aspects.

More career change

After I returned to Scotland in 1994 to be professor and head of drama at *Queen Margaret*, we remained in regular contact and Ronnie and Eithne were often welcoming hosts on my visits to their area. And, indirectly, he had one final crucial impact on my career. In early 2010, I received an email from *Margaret Shewring* saying, in summary, not to tell Ronnie, but at a major conference held in the *University of Warwick's Venice palazzo*, the dinner would, unbeknownst to Ronnie, be a delayed farewell retiral dinner in his honour. I and many of his colleagues who would not be attending the conference were invited to attend the black-tie dinner, preceded by a concert of renaissance music. My wife and I duly turned up at the palazzo, I having travelled from our flat in a vaporetto in formal Highland dress, standing in the bow as Italian passengers pretended not to be staring at this kilted figure. Ronnie was more sophisticated. As it happened, we were standing at the head of the stair when he arrived. He didn't turn a hair, greeted us warmly and engaged with the company.

We had made a weekend of our trip to honour Ronnie, but when we arrived at the airport on the Monday, we found our flight was cancelled. There was a four-hour lightning strike of ground

crew, designed to cause maximum disruption with minimum salary loss. Our airline could not get us back via Gatwick as planned for at least three days, while we had both to be back earlier. So, we booked a flight the next day via Stansted, which involved a much longer than planned stopover. Stuck in the café at Stansted, to pass the time we bought a *Guardian*. Having read everything that interested me and much that did not, and still having time to pass, I turned to the education advertisements. There, Kingston University was advertising five professorships, one in Drama. In 2002, Queen Margaret, where by then I was Dean of Arts and, in effect, Pro-Vice Chancellor with responsibility for Registry, Accommodation and Hospitality, restructured and I had taken the opportunity to leave and set up my own academic and cultural consultancy which had prospered. Though I had continued peer-reviewed publication, I had not thought of returning to academic work. I knew, however, and respected the drama staff at Kingston and thought that perhaps I might re-engage with the sector for one last time. Somehow, I was appointed and spent four happy years there before becoming emeritus in 2014.

Last encounters

Not only did the chance of Ronnie's celebratory dinner lead to my finding this post, but finding that position led to the last of my external examinations, apart from doctorates. This was from 2011 to 2015 for the University of Warwick MA in Theatre Consultancy, led by Margaret Shewring. After examiners' meetings Ronnie would join us for lunch and we would continue that lifelong conversation, which through this final appointment had achieved a positive circularity. After the end of my term as examiner, I spoke to Ronnie frequently on the phone, learning of his final diagnosis, and met him several times in Stratford. I also had more cause to be grateful to him. In 2018, Glasgow University awarded me a DLitt on the basis of my study *History as Theatrical Metaphor*. Prominent among the many to whom I acknowledged a debt was Ronnie. The last time I spoke to him was in December 2018, a month before he died. He was proud of my achieving a DLitt and I was more than touched when he spoke warmly of 'what we had achieved together 'over

the years', not least because I know, however much we shared projects over the last half-century and more, I remain his debtor.

Roger Savage, our old mutual friend, remembers one last-night SUISS celebration party when that year's special subject had been 'The Eighteenth Century', on which Rachel Trickett had recently published *The Honest Muse*. Among the speeches of thanks one bright US student rose and read aloud another student poem about Ronnie. It included the unforgettable couplet:

Now, as we turn our thoughts to things sublime,
Rise, Honest Muse, and sing of Dr Mulryne.

Ronnie was many things: energetic, tireless, distinguished. One could run out of adjectives. He loved theatre, music, poetry, architecture and history. He contributed to academic teaching, research and publication; to the theatre community; to developing resources and an interdisciplinary framework for scholarly study of European Renaissance culture and Shakespeare's and his contemporaries' plays in performance, both in their time and now. But however much he achieved in research, management and public life, I will always remember his gifts – sometimes under-rated in our REF age – as a great teacher, dear friend and generous collaborator. He would demur at that American student's 'sublime' as he did at the adolescent Edinburgh women's 'divine'. Let us settle, even if the rhymes are lost, for calling this outstanding all-rounder, unpretentious, inspirational and masterly.

L'orizzonte europeo di J. R. Mulryne: Vent'anni di rinnovamento dei Festival Studies

Maria Ines Aliverti

Though leaves are many, the root is one...

Chi ha avuto la fortuna di conoscere il prof. Mulryne, Ronnie per molti di noi, e soprattutto quella di collaborare con lui in uno degli importanti contesti di ricerca che ha lanciato e diretto, ne ricorda certamente con gratitudine le grandi capacità professionali, l'energia inestinguibile che neppure la grave malattia riuscì del tutto a flettere, l'entusiasmo per l'indagine scientifica, l'intelligenza dispiegata nella concezione e nella cura dei grandi programmi, il grande rispetto per il lavoro che lo guidava nelle relazioni con i colleghi e che ne animava la passione di scopritore di talenti giovanili. A me, che venivo da un'Università italiana, Ronnie ha insegnato molto, e mi sia quindi consentito di ricordarlo come amico oltre che come studioso. Ma non solo. Preparando queste poche pagine dedicate con stima e affetto alla sua memoria, mi sono resa conto che era necessario non solo ricordarne i meriti, ma anche capire il senso del suo lascito intellettuale. Esso mi appare oggi, alla vigilia dell'uscita definitiva del Regno Unito dall'Unione Europea, in tutto il suo intrinseco valore, come un monito che non riguarda solo il nostro campo di ricerca dei Festival Studies.

Ronnie concepiva la sua missione di studioso con uno slancio profondamente europeo, comparatista e interdisciplinare.

Questa straordinaria apertura era dovuta alla sua formazione in letterature comparate, ma a mio avviso essa si era particolarmente rafforzata in ambiti di ricerca che, per la loro stessa centralità nel discorso culturale europeo, richiedono inevitabilmente di travalicare l'ambito nazionale, quali gli studi su

Shakespeare e quelli sul Rinascimento. E ancora, benché io non abbia purtroppo avuto occasione di collaborare con lui su temi specificamente teatrali, ritengo che la sua visione di storico, saldamente interdisciplinare, molto fosse tributaria dello studio del teatro, secondo una linea di metodo che, in Italia, Fabrizio Cruciani ha contribuito a chiarire con i suoi studi: il teatro cioè come l'oggetto assente per eccellenza e quindi da ricostruire attraverso la pluralità di reperti e testimonianze, e sulla base dell'intertestualità delle pratiche e dei discorsi che lo compongono. Certo la "ricostruzione" del Globe, esplorata da Ronnie nell'ambito di uno studio collettivo, pubblicato poco prima del lancio di "Europa Triumphans", non lo interessava solo come studioso del teatro elisabettiano, ma anche per la possibilità di sperimentare l'"archeologia" del teatro con tutti i limiti che in quel caso, come in altri, tale ricostruzione poteva avere¹.

C'erano poi altri aspetti teatrali in Ronnie: la sua bella voce, la compattezza e l'energia fisiche, il gestire calcolato, ma ampio ed "affettuoso", come avrebbe detto Flaminio Scala se lo avesse visto. E infine c'era il suo pragmatismo, che non era semplicemente quella benedetta qualità che tanto invidiamo agli anglosassoni, ma che era una capacità peculiare di fare mettendo insieme e organizzando le forze a disposizione, proprio come un capocomico rinascimentale, fosse appunto il nominato Scala o il grande Shakespeare. In fondo che differenza ci può essere, in linea di principio, tra organizzare una ricerca di gruppo o una performance teatrale? Bisogna concepire e allestire il set, bisogna che ognuno impari bene il proprio ruolo, rispetti quello degli altri attori e sappia, quanto meno, far fronte ai mille imprevisti che possono capitare. Ronnie era un inesauribile maestro di scena.

I primi passi di Europa Triumphans

Il mio incontro con Ronnie Mulryne e con Margaret Shewring avvenne a Coventry nella primavera del 1998. Il 16 e 17 aprile di quell'anno ebbe luogo all'Università di Warwick l'*Europa Triumphans Workshop Conference*, lancio ufficiale del progetto Europa Triumphans², basato al Centre for the Study of the Renaissance Elites and Court Cultures, un'istituzione interdipartimentale, allora diretta da Mulryne, che riuniva gli specialisti di studi rinascimentali di vari dipartimenti della Faculty of Arts. Il progetto era sostenuto in gran parte dall'Arts and Humanities Research Centre, ma vi contribuirono, oltre alle università di Londra e di Warwick, anche la British Academy e il British Council. Inizialmente elaborato da un gruppo nutrito di studiosi, provenienti da vari ambiti disciplinari e istituzioni universitarie e di ricerca inglesi³, esso mirava a un orizzonte transnazionale di partecipazione e ben presto si sarebbe arricchito dell'apporto istituzionale dell'European Science Foundation (d'ora in poi ESF). Quanto a me, vi ero stata cooptata da Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly (Exeter College, Oxford) che avevo avuto modo di conoscere nello Steering Committee, del Network di ricerca dell'ESF-1112 (1997-2000) dedicato all'*European Theatre Iconography*. In quel contesto avevo intuito che avevamo comuni interessi scientifici: un approccio estensivo, oltre che intensivo, allo "Spectaculum Europeum", per echeggiare il titolo di un libro di Helen, e un'attenzione puntuale verso le fonti iconografiche e la loro rilevanza storica.

Nelle estati che avevo trascorso a Oxford mi era capitato di conoscere Richard Cooper, con cui scoprii di condividere un'amicizia nel circuito di iconografia teatrale, la Margaret Katritzky a noi tutti nota per il suo lavoro basilare sull'iconografia della commedia dell'arte. Richard come me aveva la passione di curiosare tra le incisioni in vendita da Sanders, un negozio piuttosto noto di High Street, in cerca di pezzi interessanti e accessibili a tasche universitarie. E per caso, proprio in quel negozio, mi ero imbattuta in lui e nel suo fluente italiano.

In quel mio primo laboratorio a Warwick conobbi anche Margaret Shewring che teneva già saldamente le fila del progetto appena varato. Margaret è stata per Ronnie una collaboratrice eccezionale, e per noi tutti, ancor oggi, un grande

punto di riferimento. Come me, praticava gli studi teatrali e di scenografia anche in ambito otto-novecentesco e questi interessi comuni contribuirono nel tempo a far crescere il nostro legame. Ci siamo infatti trovate a collaborare nel programma di studio Erasmus di un nostro studente, Diego Passera, che stava allora preparando una tesi di laurea su E. G. Craig, e li ho potuto apprezzare le doti umane e pedagogiche di Margaret come insegnante.

Per la sua ampiezza, il progetto di ET ricordava quello messo in campo e diretto principalmente da Jean Jacquot con i pionieristici convegni organizzati tra il 1955 e il 1972. Come il progetto francese, anche quello di ET era rivolto allo studio degli accadimenti festivi in ambito europeo definiti come contesti di indagine multidisciplinare. Il progetto inglese tuttavia, almeno nella prima fase, era orientato da uno scopo diverso e forse più pragmatico. Si può dire oggi che il suo maggior risultato non fu la messa in campo di una strumentazione teorica di analisi della complessa intertestualità festiva: si pensi soprattutto alla nozione stessa di *fiesta* rivisitata in chiave storiografica durante gli anni Sessanta, o a quella di *lieu théâtral*, introdotta con i convegni di Royaumont nel 1963, che avevano nel frattempo rivoluzionato l'approccio allo spettacolo e al teatro rinascimentali. Gli obiettivi della ricerca lanciata a Warwick erano altri. Già nella sua intitolazione ET intendeva enfatizzare il carattere pan-europeo, e anche trans-europeo, della cultura festiva. Non a caso Margaret e Ronnie avevano iniziato lavorando sull'influenza delle feste rinascimentali italiane in Europa, tema su cui avevano organizzato nell'aprile 1990 un seminario a Warwick⁴.

Helen stava ultimando, con Pierre Béhar, il coordinamento editoriale di una grande silloge dedicata allo spettacolo europeo: *Spectaculum Europeum*⁵. L'impresa bilingue (francese e inglese) traeva origine da un colloquio tenuto a Tours nel 1989, dove da parte dei partecipanti era stata confermata la necessità di un approccio interdisciplinare e comparatista, che superasse i confini tra le diverse tradizioni nazionali. È interessante ricordare oggi quanto Margaret McGowan scriveva recensendo su *Dance Research* quel ponderoso volume, sia sottolineando l'utilità di una prospettiva paneuropea sullo spettacolo di corte, sia ribadendo rilevanza e motivi delle tradizioni nazionali, sia infine prendendo atto

delle numerose testimonianze dalla periferia dell'Europa:

The pan European approach is extremely valuable allowing, as it does, cross referencing from one genre to another; tracing influences across national borders; establishing time lags for the introduction and evolution of new elements in music, choreography and decor; and noting the remarkable similarities in the staging of opera and ballet: the lavish scenery, its architectural purity and its wonderful symmetry could be admired as easily in Vienna or Paris, in Naples or Brussels [...] Despite this international exchange which encouraged one court to emulate the entertainments and luxurious display of another, national characteristics do emerge from this survey, either because entrenched traditions continued in a particular place, or because individual contributors have chosen to emphasise an aspect. Thus, in accounts on the Iberian peninsula, the emphasis is on Church festivities; in England, it is the role of dramatic companies; in France, the development of dramatic genres; and in the Empire, the importance of Dresden and Vienna as cultural centres. Around the periphery of mainland Europe, in this handbook there is plenty of evidence of festival traditions, although it is apparent that entertainments here tended to be less frequent, on a smaller scale, and without the innovatory impulse present in Italy, France and in some parts of the Empire⁶.

Proprio con lo scopo di completare il panorama festivo paneuropeo in epoca rinascimentale, con un'estensione inevitabile dei termini cronologici che comprendesse i più tardivi rinascimenti del nord Europa, il comitato scientifico di ET preferì tralasciare quei contesti geopolitici maggiori le cui manifestazioni festive, dagli anni Sessanta in poi, erano già state ed erano oggetto di diversi studi, dando invece la preferenza a contesti periferici, meno indagati o meno noti al di fuori dei confini delle lingue e culture nazionali. Si guardava ad allargare la base di conoscenza delle fonti storiche (soprattutto le descrizioni a stampa, e in alcuni casi manoscritte), mettendole a disposizione del pubblico vasto di studiosi che aveva ormai accesso alle banche dati. In base a questi criteri non ci si deve quindi stupire di alcune assenze. Sia per motivi di abbondanza di studi, ma forse anche per altre ragioni di opportunità editoriale, non era compresa nel progetto una sezione dedicata ai regni di Inghilterra o di Scozia. Non vi erano poi sezioni dedicate a cerimonie e feste del mondo ispano-asburgico. Non solo perché quel mondo era già stato in passato affrontato in molti studi, ma perché proprio in quel torno di tempo era oggetto dell'immensa operazione culturale dei centenari

di Carlo V (1500-2000) e di Filippo II (1598-1998), dislocata sugli anni 1998-2000 e promossa dalla Sociedad estatal para la conmemoración de los centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, che andava producendo una messe straordinaria di convegni e pubblicazioni. A fronte delle risorse messe in campo con il V Centenario asburgico e di quelle per il di poco successivo progetto ESF, PALATIUM (vedi oltre), le risorse del progetto ET furono certo inferiori. La forza di Ronnie come leader e la più generale determinazione dei membri del gruppo permisero tuttavia di raggiungere un risultato notevole in questo campo di ricerca in rapida evoluzione, ponendo l'accento su un quadro geopolitico variegato e a tratti inaspettatamente ricco.

L'articolazione del progetto

All'inizio la determinazione geopolitica nell'organizzazione dei temi di ricerca, ognuno affidato a un gruppo (*cluster*) di studiosi, costituì quindi il principale criterio orientativo. Lo Steering Group pensò di puntare su alcuni contesti "rinascimentali" meno indagati: il regno di Polonia unito al tempo al Granducato di Lituania, con un'ampia selezione di cerimonie di stato e di entrate solenni (a Varsavia, Cracovia, Danzica) e in un arco cronologico da metà Cinquecento a metà Settecento; tra gli stati italiani la Repubblica di Genova che comprendeva cerimonie di stato (l'incoronazione di un Doge), feste civiche (la prima pietra delle nuove mura) ed entrate solenni in occasione dei passaggi di principi (soprattutto Asburgo, ma escludendo le soste genovesi di Carlo V, già affrontate da Ezia Gavazza e da George L. Gorse in studi precedenti degli anni Ottanta); i regni scandinavi di Danimarca-Norvegia e Svezia con una significativa serie di cerimonie di stato tra fine Cinquecento e fine Seicento (incoronazioni, funerali, matrimoni reali) e la festa cavalleresca del torneo per l'incoronazione di Carlo XI (1672). Ad essa era stato dedicato il più importante *festival book* pubblicato in Svezia (Stockholm, 1685), già descritto e riprodotto in una monografia tedesca, reso accessibile in versione digitale, ma mai fino ad allora tradotto in inglese⁷. Infine i Paesi Bassi si presentavano con una selezione concentrata soprattutto su due principali entrate: Guglielmo d'Orange a Ghent, 1577 ed Ernesto d'Asburgo ad

Anversa nel 1594, entrata quest'ultima che anticipa, anche per la descrizione a stampa superbamente illustrata, edita dai Plantin-Moretus, quella famosa e trionfale di Ferdinando d'Asburgo del 1635⁸. La dimensione trans-europea del progetto era limitata al Nuovo Mondo ispanico e in particolare a due importanti occasioni festive nei viceregni di Messico e Perù nella seconda metà del XVII secolo: la solenne entrata a Città del Messico del viceré, Marchese della Laguna, nel 1680, esposta in maniera diffusa tramite l'importante descrizione del *Neptuno alegórico*, ad opera di colei che aveva contribuito al progetto della cerimonia, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, e la processione a Cuzco seguita al terremoto del 1650.

La scelta di dedicare due gruppi di lavoro alle feste dell'Unione protestante nell'arco del primo trentennio del XVII secolo, e alle celebrazioni in Francia per la disfatta del Protestantismo dopo la presa de La Rochelle (1628), rispondeva invece visibilmente a un intento più monografico: da una parte si delineava l'importanza della funzione festiva nell'ambito geopolitico transnazionale anticattolico, dall'altra la si evidenziava nel contesto politico e religioso cattolico in relazione a un unico avvenimento e in un ambito nazionale. Se le feste religiose erano state in prima istanza escluse in quanto tali dalla selezione dei temi oggetto di studio, la matrice religiosa era tuttavia determinante in più di uno dei contesti festivi e cerimoniali trattati. Tale determinazione non si poteva mantenere nel caso delle feste ispaniche nel Nuovo Mondo per la "sostanziale impossibilità nelle Americhe di applicare la separazione tra feste secolari e religiose mantenuta altrove". Inoltre come faceva sempre osservare Peter Davidson nella sua Preliminary Note, ciò dava la misura di come le divinità delle Ande venissero assunte e accomodate nel culto cattolico, in sintonia con lo scopo ultimo di articolare il discorso identitario dell'America Spagnola come parte del mondo cattolico⁹.

Ubbidiva a un intento monografico anche la selezione dedicata a Henri III, che riguardava soprattutto il viaggio dalla Polonia alla Francia, attraverso l'Italia, tra il 1573 e il 1574. Benché a un viaggio reale fossero riferibili molti dei testi selezionati – in particolare quelli di molte entrate – solo in questa sezione, coordinata da Robert J. Knecht e da Margaret M. McGowan, il tema in sé trovava uno sviluppo specifico. I viaggi reali, in

particolare quelli dei sovrani francesi, erano stati oggetto negli anni precedenti di importanti studi in quanto sequenza di accadimenti cerimoniali e festivi, in buona parte tributari della *koiné* del classicismo rinascimentale e leggibili sotto questo aspetto come insiemi coerenti dal punto di vista politico, culturale e artistico¹⁰. In una dimensione nazionale, e secondo un'indicazione di metodo storiografico più aggiornata, il viaggio reale nel secondo Cinquecento era stato indagato anche in relazione ai linguaggi – dell'organizzazione, del cerimoniale e dell'etichetta, dell'informazione e della descrizione territoriale – che strutturano l'identità simbolica di uno stato e di colui o colei che lo incarna¹¹. In linea con lo scopo di ET, l'insieme del panorama festivo di Henri III era considerato sia nel significato politico (retorica della regalità e rito monarchico), dall'incoronazione a Cracovia, nel 1574, alla trionfale entrata di Orléans nel 1576, e ai ricevimenti a Rouen nel 1588, sia nella dinamica transnazionale e nell'itinerario del suo celebre viaggio (nella fonte italiana *Le attioni d'Arrigo Terzo re di Francia [...]* di Tomaso Porcacchi, Venezia, 1574) come una sequenza di forme festive diverse con i loro temi e simboli politici e morali¹².

I saggi che nella pubblicazione di ET servirono di introduzione a questo importante corpus facevano il punto su alcuni temi fondamentali quali le varie istanze storiografiche connesse ai libri festivi (Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly)¹³, le feste di corte come spettacolo politico, soprattutto incentrate sui grandi esempi francesi cinquecenteschi (Robert J. Knecht), la forma specifica della festa di corte barocca in area germanica attorno al 1700 (Ute Daniel), il ruolo della musica nella festa, la messinscena nel teatro di corte, con una riflessione comparata su Italia, Francia e Inghilterra tra 1560 e 1640 ca. (Robert Savage), e da ultimo l'illustrazione dei libri festivi come fonte primaria per ricostruire l'immaginazione festiva in epoca rinascimentale e l'esperienza visiva ad essa collegata (Henri Zerner).

L'edizione delle fonti e lo sviluppo delle risorse digitali

La tradizione di studio dei testi a stampa festivi vantava certo precedenti illustri in vari contesti nazionali. Sappiamo tutti bene che gli studi italiani sulle feste, basati sulla raccolta minuziosa delle fonti delle descrizioni, erano stati numerosi

e fondamentali sin dalla fine degli anni Sessanta : nel mio dipartimento (allora Istituto di Storia dell'Arte) a Pisa era nata la ricerca pionieristica di Cesare Molinari poi confluita nel volume *Le Nozze degli Dei* (1968), a Torino si erano sviluppati gli studi di Mercedes Viale Ferrero e poi di Franca Varallo, a Venezia quelli di Elena Povoledo e Maria Teresa Muraro, a Firenze, con la famosa esposizione del 1975, quelli di Ludovico Zorzi e successivamente di Sara Mamone con i loro allievi, a Roma quelli di Maurizio Fagiolo dell'Arco, di Marcello Fagiolo, di Silvia Carandini, a Napoli quelli di Franco Mancini. E da Roma erano arrivati anche i lavori di Fabrizio Cruciani che presentavano, con l'esposizione storica riguardante le varie occasioni festive, anche la disamina critico-filologica delle principali fonti, nonché la trascrizione delle stesse¹⁴.

E particolarmente si deve qui ricordare il contributo di Bonner J. Mitchell, sia per aver prodotto un modello di bibliografia descrittiva delle fonti a stampa italiane riguardanti le entrate trionfali¹⁵, sia per il suo lavoro sui viaggi reali in Italia basato anch'esso su un'attenta e sistematica esposizione bibliografica e documentaria¹⁶, e infine per l'importante studio dedicato alle cerimonie e feste ferraresi nel 1598, che riuniva in un unico contributo monografico la presentazione storico-critica degli eventi di quell'anno cruciale, seguita dalla pubblicazione facsimilare di ben cinque *livrets*¹⁷.

Gli orientamenti di ricerca potevano variare, ma in comune tutti questi studi riconoscevano l'importanza documentaria delle descrizioni festive e la necessità di stabilire dei criteri di metodo tagliati sulla particolare tipologia di questo genere di fonti e adatti a esplorarne limiti intrinseci e valenza testimoniale. Certamente lo studio delle fonti critiche della storia dell'arte e dell'architettura, con le grandi imprese editoriali portate avanti in anni di poco precedenti dagli storici dell'arte italiani, era di stimolo e i testi editi di concreto aiuto (si pensi alle *Vite* vasariane), sia per la messe di notizie storico-artistiche sia per la possibilità di confronti tematici, semantici e lessicali accurati.

Alcuni membri dello Steering Group iniziale di ET, così come diversi partecipanti alla ricerca, avevano accumulato esperienze significative per l'analisi dei testi festivi. In particolare Margaret McGowan aveva iniziato negli anni Settanta, in

qualità di general editor, la pubblicazione di una collana di *livrets* festivi in edizione facsimilare, preceduti da ampie introduzioni storiche¹⁸. La sua grande esperienza, la sua formazione di francesista, di storica della cultura, di studiosa dello spettacolo di corte, le conferivano quel sicuro dominio sulla materia festiva che Margaret seppe mettere con generosità al servizio del gruppo. Per me, che avevo amato molto anche i suoi lavori sul ballet de cour e sulle feste di corte in Savoia – è stata, assieme a Marie-Françoise Christout, prima fra le storiche della danza e del balletto – Margaret rappresentava già allora un mito e conoscerla fu una gioia, non ultima di quelle per cui sono grata a Ronnie. In ET il gruppo degli studi in area francese era particolarmente ben rappresentato e poteva contare sull'apporto di ricercatori di grande prestigio ed esperienza per l'analisi delle fonti rinascimentali quali lo storico Robert J. Knecht, già chairman della Society of Renaissance Studies e della Society of French History, il già menzionato Richard Cooper, storico della letteratura, che aveva curato per la serie "Renaissance Triumphs and Magnificences" la descrizione di Maurice Scève per l'entrata di Henri II a Lione (1548). Anche Marie-Claude Canova-Green apparteneva a questo gruppo e la sua expertise sommava alla solida preparazione di francesista quella di storica dello spettacolo (in particolare per il *ballet de cour*) nel Grand Siècle.

Per le fonti di area germanica la ricerca poteva avvalersi in prima istanza della competenza di Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly. Al momento della formazione del primo Steering Group, Helen stava ultimando con Pierre Béhar il già citato imponente lavoro sullo spettacolo europeo¹⁹, ma soprattutto di lì a poco avrebbe pubblicato, assieme ad Anne Simon la sua monumentale bibliografia delle feste di cui parlerò più oltre. Sempre in questo settore degli studi germanistici, con una specializzazione sull'emblematica, pratica testuale di grande rilievo per l'analisi dei libretti festivi, c'era la collega americana Mara Wade.

Nel caso di ET, l'edizione delle fonti in lingua originale, doveva essere accompagnata dalla traduzione inglese, lavoro di per sé non semplicissimo per testi, spesso confusi e oscuri, che in alcuni casi non erano stati ancora studiati, né perciò adeguatamente interpretati. Dover editare i testi festivi in vista della traduzione in inglese imponeva tuttavia un lavoro di esegesi



supplementare e, soprattutto, imponeva di affrontare soglie di “intraducibilità” che oggi, con il libero accesso in internet a moltissime edizioni antiche, sarebbero più facilmente risolvibili, ma che alla fine degli anni Novanta potevano essere risolte solo ricorrendo all’uso comparato dei dizionari storici. E tutti coloro che hanno avuto veramente a che fare, in termini di esegesi, con i testi delle descrizioni festive antiche sanno quanto limitato, seppur in sé efficace, possa essere l’aiuto dei dizionari, mentre la possibilità di uno studio comparato dei libretti dà a volte risultati molto significativi, non solo in termini di ricorrenze lessicali e semantiche, ma anche di strutture narrative, di spunti iconografici e celebrativi, di emblemi e iscrizioni, e in generale di figure retoriche.

Uno dei grandi meriti di ET è stato senz’altro quello di aver puntato con decisione sullo studio “a tappeto” delle descrizioni festive a stampa, offrendo così a tutti gli studiosi, europei e non, ampie possibilità di una conoscenza comparata delle fonti e, con lo sviluppo delle prime banche dati, di accesso alle stesse in forma digitalizzata. Grazie a Helen Watanabe e a Ronnie Mulryne due imprese importanti affiancarono infatti in quegli anni l’opera di ET. La citata bibliografia prodotta a Oxford da Helen Watanabe e Anne Simon²⁰, condotta secondo criteri di descrizione bibliografica materiale semplificata, si basava su un censimento accurato dei *livrets* festivi conservati in cinque principali raccolte bibliotecarie europee. Ricordo la prima impressione quando Helen mi inviò le bozze, perché potessi dare una mano nel rileggere la sezione italiana: quel mare immenso di voci bibliografiche si materializzò ai miei occhi in una sorta di grande e monumentale biblioteca delle feste europee, una biblioteca delle biblioteche, come poteva essere uscita dall’immaginazione di Borges, che sarebbe molto piaciuta anche a Gordon Craig con la sua passione per i libretti festivi. Nella sua scansione geografica e cronologica, nelle ricorrenze dei suoi nomi illustri e delle più svariate occasioni cerimoniali e festive, essa veniva non solo a sancire materialmente la consistenza del discorso festivo paneuropeo, ma apriva anche piste di ricerca inesplorate²¹. In parallelo a *Festivals and Ceremonies*, presso la British Library veniva varato da Ronnie Mulryne, Margaret Shewring, e Kristian Jensen, e con la collaborazione di Sarah Cusk e Alex Samson, il database *British Library Treasures*

in Full – Renaissance Festival books (<https://www.bl.uk/treasures/festivalbooks>). Creato grazie al contributo dell’Arts and Humanities Research Board/Council (UK), esso contiene attualmente la versione digitale di più di 250 libri di feste, introdotti e annotati, e costituisce un fondamentale strumento di indagine sulla cultura festiva in Antico Regime.

Il rinnovamento degli studi festivi al cambio del millennio

In quegli anni intorno al 2000 il panorama degli studi festivi europei riceveva un potente slancio, complice l’intensificarsi dei rapporti internazionali, e del dialogo scientifico, grazie alla nuova cultura digitale e ai rapidi scambi della posta elettronica. Un po’ dovunque in Europa e anche oltre ai confini europei istituzioni di antica tradizione andavano “riscoprendo” e rinnovando gli studi festivi con nuovi obiettivi (le banche dati, la digitalizzazione delle fonti, la ricostruzione in 3D), e altre istituzioni nascevano sulla scia di questi nuovi interessi e possibilità. Mi piace qui ricordare il Centro Studi Mantova Capitale Europea dello Spettacolo (www.capitalespettacolo.it) nato per volontà di Umberto Artioli (Università di Padova) nel gennaio 1999 e divenuto Fondazione nel 2000, non solo per il suo database che offre un’importante risorsa documentaria per lo spettacolo dei Gonzaga dal 1480 al 1630, ma anche per l’attività di convegni e pubblicazioni che negli anni ha riunito numerosi studiosi stranieri tra cui, in diverse occasioni, Iain Fenlon, membro del comitato direttivo di ET e “mantovano” per scienza e per gusto²².

E intorno agli anni Duemila iniziava a dare frutti, presso il Département d’Études Françaises dell’Université Concordia (Canada), il “Groupe de recherches sur les entrées solennelles (GRES) dans les villes françaises à la Renaissance (1484-1615)” diretto da Marie-France Wagner, un’equipe canadese che si proponeva di studiare il rituale dei reali di Francia (re, regina e delfino) e in particolare le entrate reali, e dedita alla costituzione di un corpus di fonti riguardanti le entrate, grazie a una ricerca su 5 anni (CRSH Conseil de Recherches en Sciences Humaines, nel quadro dei Grands Travaux de Recherche Concertée, 2002-2007). L’antologia di fonti sulle entrate reali *Le Roi dans la ville; Anthologie des Entrées Royales (1615-*

1660)²³, curata insieme da Marie-France Wagner e Daniel Villancourt (Université Western Ontario) usciva nel 2001. L'attività del GRES (convegni e pubblicazioni) si incrociò non poche volte con la vita di ET, anche per la presenza in quei contesti di molti studiosi attivi nel comitato lanciato da Mulryne. In particolare Marie-Claude Canova-Green contribuì a quelle attività sin dall'inizio: nel 1999 al colloquio internazionale con la direzione scientifica di Wagner e Villancourt: *L'Entrée solennelle dans la ville ou Urbanité et Société au XVIIe siècle*²⁴, e allo "storico" numero di "XVIIe Siècle" dedicato alle *Entrées royales*²⁵, sempre diretto dagli stessi. Nel 2007, Canova-Green e Wagner organizzarono insieme a Londra un convegno internazionale, con un approccio critico che era evidente già dal titolo e praticato dall'inizio nel contesto del gruppo canadese: *Writing Royal Entries in Early Modern Europe (1500-1800)*²⁶: si trattava di fare il punto, in una prospettiva storiografica, sul genere testuale delle descrizioni. Il gruppo di ET partecipò numeroso tra i relatori: oltre a Ronnie Mulryne e a Margaret Shewring, Margaret McGowan, Sydney Anglo, Richard Cooper, Elizabeth Goldring, Sara Smart, Jean Andrews, David Sanchez. Anche io presentai la mia relazione e debbo essere davvero grata alle due organizzatrici perché grazie a loro mi sforzai di analizzare attentamente le descrizioni generali del viaggio italiano di Margherita d'Austria (1598-1599), considerando sia l'organizzazione testuale di quei libretti, che le modalità discorsive degli autori, rapportandole alle specificità della produzione editoriale d'occasione.

La grande attività di mediazione promossa da Ronnie Mulryne e da Margaret McGowan ha prodotto nel tempo diversi contatti con centri di ricerca francesi di primario interesse per lo studio delle feste di corte: il Centre des Études Supérieures de la Renaissance (CESR, Tours), il Centre de recherche du Château de Versailles (CRCV) e il Centre André Chastel (presso il CNRS, Paris). Ricordo qui l'apporto di Chantal Grell e di Monique Chatenet ai convegni promossi dalla Society for European Festivals Research successivamente all'uscita di *ET*.

Sempre all'inizio del nuovo millennio grazie all'iniziativa di Helen Watanabe, e alla sua consolidata collaborazione con Jill Bepler (Herzog August Bibliothek di Wolfenbüttel) si tennero a Barga dei convegni supportati dall'ESF. Era stata

Helen a scoprire la bella "location" italiana de Il Ciocco (Castelvecchio Pascoli), che piaceva molto ai nostri colleghi d'Oltremarica, e lì si tenne nel settembre 2000 il convegno *Court Festivals of the European Renaissance and After: Performance and Permanence*²⁷, con il coordinamento di Mulryne, che raccolse un buon numero dei partecipanti al progetto di ET, e che ebbe l'opportunità di aggregare tra gli ospiti anche Bonner J. Mitchell e Robert Oresko. I contatti nel gruppo di ET, in preparazione della grande pubblicazione che ci vedeva coinvolti furono assai frequenti.

Per parte mia, rammento l'incontro con Ronnie e Margaret Shewring a Pisa assieme all'amica e collega Lucia Nuti, alcune riunioni in Inghilterra, a Oxford e a Londra, e l'incontro a Genova con i nostri cari colleghi genovesi che partecipavano al Cluster Genoa: Lauro Magnani, Franco Vazzoler e Carlo Bitossi. Tra i ricordi più vivi che mi sono rimasti di Ronnie c'è una passeggiata con lui e Margaret Shewring nei vicoli e in Strada Nuova. Genova, grandiosa e austera, ma anche riservata e misteriosa, li stupiva e il nostro scarso senso dell'orientamento ci portò una volta, vagabondando, a sconfinare in Pré in un contesto non del tutto rassicurante: colsi allora della preoccupazione sul volto di Ronnie, il quale stava bene in guardia per le sue dame, e mi resi conto che il suo spirito cavalleresco e combattivo non si limitava alla intraprendente e perseverante tenacia della sua tempra morale e di studioso, ma all'occorrenza avrebbe potuto offrire una ben più materiale manifestazione di sé. Fortunatamente non ce ne fu bisogno. Nel maggio 2002 terminai la raccolta dei contributi del Genoa Cluster. Iniziava a quel punto l'impegnativo lavoro dei General Editors, e, sulla sezione italiana, quello di Ronnie in particolare. Dissentimmo almeno una volta, e piuttosto duramente, sulla traduzione di un'iscrizione latina e fummo in grado di correggere l'errore solo nella versione digitale. Avevo ragione io e, passato il dispiacere, affetto, stima e reciproco riconoscimento restarono immutati.

Tra il 2001 e il 2004, l'ambito delle ricerche sulla cultura festiva rinascimentale e barocca si andava espandendo a macchia d'olio, grazie alla creazione delle biblioteche digitali e inglobava diversi settori di studio, non ultimo quello degli studi di storia del libro e di bibliografia materiale stimolati anch'essi da quella straordinaria "concorrenza" o meglio convergenza di interessi. Nella mia esperienza di

lavoro nel Cluster Genoa ero stata particolarmente colpita dalla massa di pubblicazioni a stampa dedicate al viaggio di Margherita d'Austria in Italia. Una enormità sparsa ovunque nelle biblioteche storiche di conservazione e che meritava senz'altro di essere considerata anche dal punto di vista della storia del libro. Ne tentai una prima presentazione a un importante convegno dell'Instituto de Historia del Libro y de la Lectura che si tenne a Salamanca nel 2004 e poi vi ritornai sopra in occasione del citato convegno di Londra del 2007.

Fu lì che cominciai il mio lungo lavoro di ricerca sul viaggio di Margherita d'Austria in Italia (1598-1599), e sulle feste e cerimonie che costellarono quel regale itinerario. Alla ricerca, finanziata nell'ambito di un programma nazionale del MIUR coordinato da Maria Grazia Profeti, dedicai due giornate di studio a Pisa nel 2006 (22-23 settembre), che si tennero nella affascinante sede della Fondazione Cerratelli, allora collocata nella antica Tabaccaia di Agnano (San Giuliano Terme)²⁸. Gli amici della Fondazione, coordinata dalla bravissima direttrice Florida Benedettini, ci fecero trovare, allestita in quel periodo, una mostra di splendidi costumi teatrali anche in sintonia col tema del convegno, e ambientati tra le raffinate realizzazioni di Carla Tolomeo. Benché molti contributi a stampa afferenti a quella ricerca siano nel frattempo usciti, sia a opera mia che di altri che ne facevano parte (Fabrizio Fiaschini, Licia Mari, Bruna Niccoli), sto solo ora ultimando il contributo generale collettivo definitivo, ovviamente aggiornato e arricchito rispetto ai primi stadi della ricerca. Ronnie Mulryne e Margaret Shewring vennero a Pisa in occasione del convegno e la loro presenza, attenta e affettuosa, fu di grande incoraggiamento per il lavoro. E devo dire che oggi il ricordo di Ronnie in quella occasione non è esente dal senso di colpa di non aver ancora chiuso completamente quell'impresa che gli deve tanto, sia nella sua origine che negli sviluppi successivi.

Nuovi obiettivi dopo il 2004

L'elegante presentazione dei due volumi in-folio di *Europa Triumphans. Court and Civic Festivals in Early Modern Europe*, che avvenne il 25 novembre 2004 presso la sede londinese dell'editore Ashgate in Mecklenburgh Square, fu certamente per noi tutti un'occasione di festa e di gioia, e certo lo fu

per Ronnie che di tutto quel gran disegno era stato il mentore e in non pochi momenti il trascinatore risolutissimo. Lo era anche per Rachel Lynch, Managing Director di Ashgate, che aveva con scrupolosa pazienza seguito tutto quel lavoro editoriale, lo era infine in particolare per tutti i giovani studiosi che avevano partecipato con dedizione alla redazione dei testi, sotto la guida dei curatori, e molti dei quali avrebbero, a partire da quella esperienza, spiccato il volo nel mondo della ricerca. Presentando la versione in formato E-book di *ET*, uscita nel febbraio 2010, Ronnie poteva a buona ragione rivendicare alla ricerca da lui diretta e al programma di digitalizzazione condotto presso la BL un ruolo di guida e di stimolo:

Happily, the Scholarship of Festivals has moved on since the print publication of *Europa Triumphans*, a development stimulated, we like to think, by the appearance of the two printed volumes, and by the on-line publication of more than 250 festival texts on the website of the British Library, under the designation "Renaissance Festival Books" [...].

Pensiamo infatti come in anni recenti, nell'ambito della storia delle corti, si siano moltiplicate le ricerche sulla diplomazia e i suoi protagonisti, sul cerimoniale e sull'etichetta; o ancora come siano evoluti e si siano raffinati gli approcci di indirizzo transculturale che vedono protagoniste le donne, regine o reggenti, il loro ruolo strategico sulla scena politica europea, l'organizzazione delle loro "case", la loro fondamentale funzione di mediatrici culturali nella letteratura, nell'arte, nella moda, il loro ruolo di protettrici delle arti, committenti e collezioniste.

Infine lo studio delle pratiche abitative principesche e degli spazi palatini, con tutte le funzionalità legate al cerimoniale e allo spettacolo, ha portato a leggere anche le pratiche festive – dalle entrate, ai ricevimenti dei sovrani, alle feste e ai banchetti, agli intrattenimenti teatrali e spettacolari di vario genere – in un'ottica che ingloba gli spazi di corte o di palazzo e ne marca la loro evoluzione architettonica²⁹. Questi non sono più letti come "luoghi" o contenitori, seppure qualificati in sé e in rapporto all'assetto urbano, che contribuiscono a produrre il senso effimero dell'accadimento cerimoniale e/o festivo, ma ne sono parte strutturale in quanto concepiti e realizzati in molti casi con questo fine.

Grazie a questi nuovi percorsi di ricerca, gli studi di storia della cultura e della mentalità sono evoluti in una prospettiva transculturale e di genere, che inevitabilmente tocca da vicino le pratiche festive, obbligando gli studiosi a riletture significative e all'individuazione di nuovi temi e ambiti di lavoro.

Per mantenere viva la ricerca di ET e quella microsocietà di studiosi in piena evoluzione, Ronnie, assieme a Margaret Shewring e a Margaret McGowan, mise in campo una serie di programmi che estesero ulteriormente i contatti del gruppo, collegandone le iniziative con quelle di altre istituzioni e gruppi di ricerca.

Nel 2008 venne presentata all'ESF la proposta di un Research Networking Programme dal titolo assai promettente e dal ben riconoscibile taglio di metodo che dava la preminenza allo studio delle strutture architettoniche di corte, sia come spazi investiti dalle pratiche cerimoniali e dai relativi codici sociali, che come luoghi di scambio e di interazione culturale: *Palatium. Court Residences as Places of Exchange in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe (1400-1700)*³⁰. PALATIUM, così l'acronimo del programma, veniva lanciato da tre studiosi Krista De Jonge (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven), Herbert Karner (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften) e Bernardo J. García García (Universidad Complutense de Madrid e Fundación Carlos de Amberes) con il supporto dei più importanti centri europei di studio delle corti. Non è insensato dire, e si trattava di una evoluzione inevitabile, che con questo programma il tema ispano-asburgico riprendeva la sua priorità e in un certo senso l'egemonia dell'orizzonte europeo degli studi festivi: Spagna, Borgogna, Fiandre, Europa centrale asburgica, con l'altrettanto inevitabile dilatarsi dell'arco cronologico di riferimento. L'Italia, e soprattutto l'Italia spagnola, risultava – ahinoi – quasi del tutto assente in quel programma³¹. Il lancio e il susseguente avvio di PALATIUM³² costituirono uno stimolo importante anche per ET. Con la pubblicazione digitale del 2010 si chiudeva il grande progetto lanciato più di dieci anni prima e si doveva aprire una nuova fase.

Convegni e pubblicazioni della SEFR

Anche questa volta l'operazione culturale lanciata a Warwick tra il 2009 e il 2010 fu complessa, e

articolata in una serie di iniziative interdipendenti. La più importante fu la creazione della Society for European Festivals Research (SEFR), nata dallo sforzo congiunto di Ronnie Mulryne, di Margaret Shewring e di Margaret McGowan che ne formarono anche il primo gruppo organizzativo, e ospitata nel sito web dell'University of Warwick³³. La SEFR fu dall'inizio destinata a riunire studiosi di varia formazione, provenienti da paesi diversi (europei ed extraeuropei), e con diverso livello di esperienza, ed era intesa come un contesto particolarmente favorevole allo sviluppo dell'area di ricerca dei Festival Studies e alla definizione di un programma regolare di pubblicazioni. Assieme a questa venne infatti lanciata, presso la casa editrice Ashgate, e sempre con l'efficiente collaborazione della brava Rachel Lynch, la collana "European Festival Studies 1450-1700", in cui era prevista la pubblicazione dei volumi basati sui convegni che la Società avrebbe promosso annualmente grazie a diverse qualificate collaborazioni istituzionali. Nel corso della primavera 2010 il programma ebbe il suo varo ufficiale a Venezia, presso la prestigiosa sede di Palazzo Pesaro Papafava (University of Warwick in Venice). Dal 18 al 20 marzo si tenne qui il convegno fondatore di quella che doveva essere la serie in programma, un vero e proprio meritato tributo "in honour of Professor Ronnie Mulryne", dedicato a *Waterborne Pageants and Festivities in the Renaissance*³⁴. Margaret Shewring ne fu l'infaticabile e perfetta organizzatrice. Fu un convegno particolarmente interessante, ben riuscito ed elegante negli intrattenimenti, ma soprattutto fu un convegno pieno di affetto, di amicizia e di solidarietà, sentimenti che in tanti anni avevano cementato i rapporti personali nel gruppo. Nei giorni successivi (21-22 marzo) ebbe luogo un Exploratory Workshop sostenuto dall'European Science Foundation: *The Future of Research in Renaissance Festivals Resources and Collaboration*³⁵. Vennero discussi molti aspetti utili all'espansione del nostro campo di studi, in particolare relativi alle risorse digitali (reti istituzionali con progetti già avanzati³⁶, supporti e competenze tecnici, digitalizzazione di materiali a stampa e cartacei, ricostruzioni in 3D), agli archivi di immagini, ai problemi di lingua e di traduzione, alle prospettive di analisi critica e di studio, al coinvolgimento di giovani ricercatori con borse post-dottorato. Arianna Ciula, rappresentante dell'ESF, illustrò le iniziative



e i propositi della Fondazione e presentò il programma PALATIUM, appena iniziato e aperto agli studiosi sia attraverso i convegni, sia attraverso adesioni istituzionali in corso d'opera³⁷. Anche Monique Chatenet (Conservateur en chef du Patrimoine, Centre André Chastel, INHA), già nello Steering Committee di PALATIUM, si propose in un ruolo cerniera.

Il convegno che si tenne il 6 e 7 luglio 2010 a Edimburgo (University of Edinburgh) fu coordinato da Laura Fernández-González, allora ancora una dottoranda in Architettura, e introdotto da una key-note lecture di Fernando Checa Cremades (Universidad Complutense de Madrid e già direttore del Prado), era supportato dalla neonata SEFR di Warwick e riconosceva anche nel programma il suo debito nei confronti della ricerca di ET³⁸. Il titolo *Recreating Renaissance and Baroque Spectacle: the Hispanic Habsburg Dynasty in Context*, ne rivelava il tema portante: “ricreare” ovvero “ricostruire” gli eventi festivi sia attraverso l'approccio teorico interdisciplinare ai contesti, sia attraverso l'elaborazione virtuale con i software 3D.

Quella fu l'occasione per la presentazione dei programmi di ricerca internazionali: l'appena nata Society for European Festivals Research. (Ronnie Mulryne e Margaret Shewring, Warwick University); il progetto PALATIUM (Bernardo García García, Universidad Complutense de Madrid); il progetto portoghese *City and Spectacle: a vision of pre-earthquake Lisbon*, sostenuto dall'Universidade Aberta di Lisbona e dal CHAIA presso l'Universidade de Évora (Alexandra Gago da Câmara e Helena Murteira).

Il convegno successivo, organizzato da Margaret McGowan, Ronnie Mulryne e Margaret Shewring, fu promosso dalla SEFR in collaborazione con il Warburg Institute (University of London), e si svolse a Londra nel 2011. Stavolta, e a mio avviso molto propriamente, si era puntato su un *case study* omogeneo e di particolare rilevanza politica: la doppia unione dinastica che ebbe compimento, tra il 1612 e il 1615, tra le due maggiori potenze cattoliche dell'epoca (la Francia di Louis XIII e la Spagna di Felipe III)³⁹. Il lavoro preparatorio di Margaret McGowan fu notevole e particolarmente attento a disegnare la geografia delle celebrazioni nei diversi stati in cui le doppie nozze vennero festeggiate, assegnando ad alcuni di noi il compito di integrare la raccolta delle descrizioni festive.

Se ne ricavò una bibliografia ricca ed esauriente che figura in calce al volume e delinea l'ampia mappatura internazionale degli eventi festivi indagati nei diversi interventi, mentre il significato storico e politico di quelle doppie nozze viene esposto nei contributi introduttivi di J. H. Elliott e Nicolas Le Roux sui due versanti spagnolo e inglese. Assai significativa, per l'opportunità che offre di una analisi comparata tra due grandi avvenimenti dinastici europei coevi, uno nel mondo cattolico e l'altro nel mondo protestante, è la pubblicazione uscita dal convegno tenuto a Wolfenbüttel nel 2013 sulle nozze che unirono l'Elettore Palatino Friedrich V a Elizabeth Stuart, figlia di James VI/I di Scozia e Inghilterra, e le feste che si tennero a Londra e a Heidelberg. Un parallelismo assai significativo anche per la storia di ET, poiché a curare in questo caso sia il convegno che la pubblicazione furono Mara M. Wade e Sara Smart qui nominate più volte tra i membri di ET⁴⁰.

Il convegno di Bergamo nel 2012 fu organizzato da Ronnie Mulryne e dalla scrivente, con la collaborazione generosa di Annamaria Testaverde e dell'Università di Bergamo e del Centro Studi sul Territorio “Lelio Pagani” (Bergamo)⁴¹. Il tema, non particolarmente originale nella sua ampiezza, riguardava la comunicazione del potere e l'iniziale proposta di Linda Briggs, la quale collaborò all'organizzazione del convegno, prevedeva una griglia di approccio alle varie istituzioni di potere: regale, civico, ecclesiastico. Una griglia istituzionale che poi non venne mantenuta, per dare la preminenza alla griglia geopolitica, e nella prima parte del volume, al contesto delle guerre di religione francesi. Devo dire che ho qualche perplessità oggi riguardo a una distribuzione di ricerche che faccia prevalere la partitura nazionale (la cui applicazione per l'Italia di Antico Regime è piuttosto problematica), su tematiche più specifiche. Essa risulta tanto più prevalente quando si raccolgono interventi di studiosi che non hanno lavorato insieme sul tema, poiché la selezione delle fonti, i criteri di lettura e gli approcci di metodo sono inevitabilmente diversi. Queste osservazioni, che possono suonare come un'autocritica, sono piuttosto una raccomandazione per l'avvenire. Poiché oggi il panorama di studi è, soprattutto grazie all'opera iniziale di Ronnie e di ET, ampio e articolato e la collaborazione tra i vari centri è piuttosto rodada, sarebbero possibili tagli di

metodo più coraggiosi che superino la prospettiva transnazionale pura e semplice e che facciano emergere con più forza tematiche transculturali e di ibridazione. Ripercorrendo i contributi di *Iconography of Power*, si deve tuttavia notare che ciascuno di essi offre una prospettiva tematica su cui vale la pena di riflettere⁴². E vorrei qui sottolineare le acquisizioni del settore “italiano”, sia per i documenti inediti presentati da Annamaria Testaverde per Firenze e da Lucia Nuti per Roma, sia per l'altrettanto originale impostazione del lavoro di Iain Fenlon⁴³. A diversi studiosi giovani (e la presenza italiana fu significativa) Bergamo offrì l'occasione di presentare le loro ricerche in tre *Poster Sessions*⁴⁴. Venne anche illustrato il progetto di ricerca internazionale supportato dall'Accademia Belgica di Roma e finanziato da Belspo: “Cultures of Baroque Spectacle Between Italy and the Southern Netherlands”, che riuniva ricercatori di quattro Università del Belgio (Université Catholique de Louvain, Ghent University, Université de Liège e University of Leuven)⁴⁵. La presenza a Bergamo di Veronika Sandbichler e di Andrea Sommer-Mathis, entrambe attive partecipanti anche ai convegni promossi da PALATIUM costituì un primo assaggio dell'incontro che sarebbe avvenuto l'anno successivo. *Iconography of Power* fu il III volume della collana “European Festival Studies: 1450-1700” e l'ultimo uscito con l'editore Ashgate, che ci aveva accompagnato per più di dieci anni.

La collaborazione con PALATIUM

Nel 2013 avvenne la programmata convergenza tra la SEFR (Society for European Festivals Research) e il progetto PALATIUM nel contesto di un convegno congiunto che si tenne a Venezia sempre nella sede di Palazzo Pesaro Papafava (21-24 marzo), con il sostegno delle università di Warwick, e di Lovanio. I contributi del convegno, vennero pubblicati in due volumi, rispettivamente il quarto volume e il sesto della collana “European Festival Studies: 1450-1700” con la coedizione dell'ESF⁴⁶. Uscirono presso Routledge, perché nel frattempo, nel corso del 2015, la casa editrice Ashgate era stata assorbita dal Taylor & Francis Group. Credo che Ronnie, il quale teneva molto che i volumi della serie presentassero caratteristiche di qualità editoriale elevata, si sia battuto con tutte le sue forze per preservare il più possibile una buona

qualità anche presso il nuovo editore, e ottenere un numero consistente di illustrazioni.

L'influenza dell'impostazione tematica e metodologica di PALATIUM, che guardava all'organizzazione degli spazi in rapporto alle funzioni cerimoniali e alla costituzione di un discorso politico e sociale nazionale è palese sin dal titolo del convegno: *Making Space for Festival 1400-1700: Interactions of Architecture and Performance in Late Medieval and Early Modern Festivals* (marzo 2013). I due volumi dei contributi – entrambi con le introduzioni di Ronnie Mulryne (*Making space for festival* e *The power of ceremony*) – sottolineano l'interdipendenza di festa e architettura. Il primo esplora il potenziale significativo dell'ambiente spazio-architettonico e urbano, artificiale e naturale, permanente o effimero, mostrandone i diversi adattamenti alle pratiche rituali e performative nei vari contesti cerimoniali e/o festivi esaminati. Il secondo legge quell'interdipendenza come agente di un *image-building* politico e di controllo statale che attraverso la cerimonia festiva promuove identità nazionale e forme associate di coesione politica e sociale: particolarmente mirato a questo aspetto è il contributo di Richard L. M. Morris.

Dalla prospettiva geopolitica transnazionale che promuoveva l'analisi e il confronto di pratiche festive sostanzialmente assimilabili nel comun denominatore della cultura umanistica rinascimentale, e dai più tradizionali temi monografici⁴⁷, il mondo uscito da ET andava muovendo verso la prospettiva cross-cultural che divenne centrale nel convegno di Cambridge del 2018⁴⁸, grazie al lavoro dello stesso Morris (University of Cambridge)⁴⁹, che ne fu l'organizzatore assieme a Ronnie Mulryne e a Margaret Shewring. I Festival Studies si interrogano infatti oggi in modo più aperto e meno schematico sull'interazione tra le varie culture (religiose, politiche, linguistiche, visive, musicali, letterarie, teatrali ecc.) e tentano di delineare i contesti di ibridazione tra pratiche sociali e culturali delle élites di matrice “alta” e internazionale, e pratiche ideologicamente più circoscritte e/o orientate secondo parametri “locali”.

Quello di Cambridge fu l'ultimo convegno della Society for European Festivals Research cui Ronnie poté assistere. Di questo lungo percorso scientifico il prof. Mulryne poteva a buon titolo portarne vanto e certamente ne era orgoglioso.



Ma conoscendo la sua determinata capacità di scopritore di nuovi talenti e di istigatore di giovani energie per la ricerca, credo che di una cosa andasse particolarmente orgoglioso: l'aver sempre valorizzato nei convegni e nelle pubblicazioni, accanto al lavoro degli studiosi avanzati, quello dei giovani esordienti nella carriera della ricerca. Fece a tempo a seguire il passaggio della "sua" collana da Routledge a Brepols, nel 2019⁵⁰, un cambio di casa editrice che apriva prospettive più consone per questo genere di pubblicazioni. E fece a tempo a vedere in stadio avanzato la preparazione del convegno di Torino, in collaborazione con l'Archivio di Stato⁵¹ e quella delineata per il convegno nel 2021 a Coventry, città che in questo prossimo anno sarà capitale della cultura del Regno Unito.

Caro Ronnie, in cambio di quanto mi hai insegnato e dell'affetto di cui sono orgogliosa, in cambio della bella festa che con il tuo spirito generoso hai organizzato per me a Oxford in un momento particolarmente difficile della mia vita⁵², queste pagine a te dedicate possono sembrare a una prima lettura una lunga lista bibliografica. Ma dietro a questi titoli c'è stato il mondo delle relazioni vivissime e calorose tra gli studiosi provenienti da tutta Europa che tu sapevi incoraggiare e sostenere, ci sono state le tante occasioni di confronto e di ricerca che hai creato e organizzato sapientemente, ci sono state le case editrici e le biblioteche, ci sono stati i libri antichi e moderni, c'è stato infine il "tuo" teatro che come il mago Prospero hai saputo suscitare e animare...

*Now my charms are all o'erthrown,
And what strength I have's mine own...*

Notes

1 *The design of the Globe*, Eds. Andrew Gurr - Ronnie Mulryne - Margaret Shewring, Warwick - International Shakespeare Globe Centre, 1995; *Shakespeare's Globe Rebuilt*, Eds. J. R. Mulryne e Margaret Shewring, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press - Mulryne & Shewring, 1997. Si veda pure, a cura degli stessi, *The Guild and Guild Buildings of Shakespeare's Stratford*, Aldershot and Burlington VT, Ashgate, 2013.

2 "Europa Triumphans" in caratteri normali (d'ora in poi abbreviato ET) si riferisce al progetto, *Europa Triumphans* in corsivo alla pubblicazione: *Europa Triumphans. Court and Civic Festivals in Early Modern Europe*, general

editors: J. R. Mulryne, Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, Margaret Shewring, Aldershot and Burlington VT, Ashgate, 2004, 2 vols.

3 Così come esposto nella brochure di presentazione (7 p., 1998), distribuita a Warwick, il primo Steering Group che si incaricò di sviluppare il progetto ET, di reperire i fondi e allargare la base dei collaboratori con sede in altri paesi europei e americani, era formato, oltre al prof. Mulryne, dai seguenti studiosi: dr. Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly (studi germanici, University of Oxford, Exeter College), prof. Margaret M. McGowan (studi francesi, University of Sussex, emerita), dr. Marie-Claude Canova-Green (studi francesi, University of London, Goldsmith's College), dr. Margaret Shewring (studi teatrali, University of Warwick), dr. Karin Friedrich (studi slavistici, University of London), prof. J. B. Trapp (storia dell'arte, The Warburg Institute), prof. Robert J. Knecht (storia della Francia, University of Birmingham, emerito), dr. Iain Fenlon (studi musicologici, University of Cambridge, King's College), dr. H. Neville Davies (studi anglistici, University of Birmingham), dr. Peter Davidson (studi anglistici, University of Warwick). A questi membri si unirono poi nel gruppo definitivo: Elizabeth Goldring (studi rinascimentali, Centre for the Study of the Renaissance Elites and Court Cultures, University of Warwick) dr. Mara R. Wade (studi germanistici, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), Maria Ines Aliverti (storia dello spettacolo, Università di Pisa).

4 *Italian Renaissance Festivals and their European Influence*, Eds. J. R. Mulryne e Margaret Shewring, Lewiston NY- Lampeter UK, Edwin Mellen, 1992. Questo seminario del 1990, faceva seguito ad altri sempre tenuti a Warwick, pubblicati nella collana Warwick Studies in the European Humanities dell'editore Macmillan, con il supporto dell'European Humanities Research Centre di quella università, fondato per promuovere la ricerca interdisciplinare e comparativa in campo umanistico europeo; va qui ricordato in particolare quello del 1987, ancora dedicato all'influenza italiana, stavolta nel teatro inglese, *Theatre of the English and Italian Renaissance*, a cura degli stessi, Basingstoke - London, Macmillan, 1991.

5 *Spectaculum Europaeum: Theatre and Spectacle in Europe. Histoire Du Spectacle En Europe (1580-1750)*, "Wolfenbüteler Arbeiten Zur Barockforschung", Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 1999. I vari contributi con le relative bibliografie, sono divisi in sezioni dedicate a dramma, opera, tornei, entrate e festival.

6 *Dance Research*, vol. 17, 2 (Winter 1999) Book Reviews: *Spectaculum Europaeum: Theatre and Spectacle in Europe (1580-1750) / Histoire du Spectacle en Europe (1580-1750)*, recensione di Margaret McGowan, pp. 102-05.

7 Lena Rangström, cooptata nel progetto ET, era allora senior curator della prestigiosa raccolta dell'Armeria Reale di Stoccolma, nonché curatrice di mirabili mostre (ET, II, p. 297), basate su ricerche che avevano visto il contributo di diversi studiosi, e opere di restauro degli straordinari manufatti di quella collezione. Per una visione di insieme e le indicazioni bibliografiche si rimanda al catalogo di Ann Grönhammar e Sofia Nestor, *The Royal Armoury in the Cellar Vaults of the Royal Palace*,

Stockholm, Livrustkammaren, 2007.

8 Gli apparati di Rubens avevano peraltro già avuto una completa presentazione nel volume XVI del *Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard*, Ed. John Rupert Martin, London, Phaidon Press, 1972. Si veda pure la pubblicazione recente *Art, Music and Spectacle in the Age of Rubens*, Eds. Anna C. Knaap e Michael C.J. Putnam, Turnhout, Brepols, 2013.

9 *ET*, II, p. 345; ma anche Peter Davidson, "The Cuzco Procession of 1650", *ET*, II, p. 429. Davidson, studioso del Cattolicesimo britannico dopo la Riforma, avrebbe poi fatto della prospettiva transnazionale – e forse meglio anti-nazionale, se rapportata allo stato-nazione – il punto dipartenza per una rilettura radicale del Barocco nel suo *The Universal Baroque*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2007. Lo scozzese Stevenson e sua moglie, la straordinaria Jane Stevenson, da me soprannominati "i cari Iperborei" furono i nostri compagni di strada per diversi anni.

10 Si pensi a *The Royal Tour of France by Charles IX and Catherine de Medicis: Festivals and Entries 1564-1566*, Eds. Victor E. Graham e William McAllister Johnson, Toronto - London, University of Toronto Press, 1979; agli importanti contributi di Robert W. Scheller incentrati sui percorsi italiani di Carlo VIII e Luigi XIII pubblicati tra il 1981 e il 1985 sulla rivista "Simiolus: Netherlands quarterly for the history of art"; e a Sara Mamone, *Firenze e Parigi due capitali per una regina Maria de' Medici*, Cinisello Balsamo, Amilcare Pizzi, 1987.

11 È ancora il celebre *tour* di Caterina de' Medici e di Carlo IX al centro dello studio di Jean Boutier, Alain Deweppe, Daniel Nordman, *Un tour de France royal: Le voyage de Charles IX (1564-1566)*, Paris, Aubier Montaigne, 1984. Nel 1999 sarebbe poi uscito anche il volume di Mary Hill Cole, *The Portable Queen: Elizabeth I and the politics of ceremony*, Amherst, University of Massachusetts Press, 1999, sui circa quattrocento viaggi compiuti da Elisabetta I nel territorio del suo regno dal 1558 al 1603.

12 Tutti questi *clusters* diventarono naturalmente altrettante sezioni monografiche che di seguito indichiamo nell'ordine della voluminosa silloge di *Europa Triumphans*. Vol. I: "The Festivals for Henri III in Cracow, Venice, Orléans and Rouen" (R. J. Knecht *CE*, Mark Greengrass, Nicolas Le Roux, Margaret M. Mc Gowan); "Festivals in Genoa in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries" (Maria Ines Aliverti *CE*, Carlo Bitossi, Lucia Nuti, Lauro Magnani, Bruna Niccoli, Franco Vazzoler); "Festivals in Poland-Lithuania from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century" (Karin Friedrich *CE*, Almut Bues); "Festivals in the Netherlands" (Peter Davidson *CE*, Jochen Becker, Jane Stevenson, Werner Waterschoot, Adriaan van der Weel); Vol. II: "Festivals of the Protestant Union" (Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly *CE*, Sara Smart *CE*, Pierre Béhar, Jill Bepler, Anna Linton); "Festivals Commemorating the Defeat of Protestantism in La Rochelle" (Marie-Claude Canova-Green *CE*, Christian Jouhaud, Véronique Meyer); "Festivals in Scandinavia" (Mara R. Wade *CE*, Lena Rangström, Mårten Snickare, Birgit Oehle); "The New World: Seventeenth-Century Festivals in the Viceroyalties of Mexico and Peru" (Peter Davidson *CE*, Jean Andrews, D.A. Brading, Linda A. Cur-

cio Nagy, Carol Morley, Jane Stevenson). L'abbreviazione *CE* indica i *chief editors* delle varie sezioni. Non sono compresi in questa lista i collaboratori alle trascrizioni e traduzioni, laddove non coincidenti con gli autori, per cui si rimanda a *ET* (frontespizi di sezione). Per le afferenze accademiche degli studiosi rimando alla List of Contributors, *ET*, I, pp. 13-18.

13 Questo saggio era già *in nuce* nel contributo presentato da Helen al secondo convegno del sopracitato Theatre Iconography ESF Network, tenuto a Poggio a Caiano, 20-22 luglio 2000: *Official images of Official Theatre: The presentation of court festivals in 17th century festival books* (non pubblicato).

14 Fabrizio Cruciani, *Il teatro del Campidoglio e le feste romane del 1513*, Milano, Il Polifilo, "Archivio del Teatro", 1968; Id., *Il teatro a Roma nel Rinascimento*, Roma, Bulzoni, 1969.

15 Bonner J. Mitchell, *Italian Civic Pageantry in the High Renaissance: A Descriptive Bibliography on Triumphal Entries and Selected Other Festivals for State Occasions*, Firenze, Leo S. Olschki, 1979.

16 Bonner J. Mitchell, *The Majesty of the State: Triumphal Progresses of Foreign Sovereigns in Renaissance Italy (1494-1600)*, Firenze, Leo S. Olschki, 1986.

17 Bonner J. Mitchell, *A Year of Pageantry in Late Renaissance in Ferrara*, Binghamton, Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1990.

18 La serie "Renaissance Triumphs and Magnificences" pubblicata inizialmente ad Amsterdam, Theatrum Orbis Terrarum; in collaborazione con Johnson Reprint Corporation, New York - Tempe Arizona, Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies dal 1974, cui fece seguito la New Series basata presso il Binghamton Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, State University of New York dal 1982, sempre pubblicata a Tempe. A questa serie avevano contribuito alcuni studiosi che poi si ritrovarono nel comitato di *ET*.

19 *Spectaculum Europaeum: Theatre and Spectacle in Europe. Histoire Du Spectacle En Europe (1580-1750)*, op.cit.

20 Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly e Anne Simon, *Festivals and Ceremonies. A Bibliography of Works Relating to Court, Civic and Religious Festivals in Europe, 1500-1800*, London, Continuum, 2000). Bibliografia di 2862 libri di feste in 13 lingue, conservati nelle seguenti biblioteche: The British Library, London; Bibliothèque nationale de France - Arts du Spectacle (Fonds Rondel), Paris; Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel; Victoria and Albert Museum - British National Art Library (Piot Collection). La suddivisione per paesi presenta eventuali sottodivisioni per stati e città, e per governanti (in ordine cronologico). Per l'Italia e i suoi vari stati si veda dalla voce bibliografica n. 373 alla n. 1545. Mentre Gallica, la biblioteca digitale della BnF, associata a una serie di biblioteche partner (in rete dal 1997), e Google Books, lanciata dai fondatori dell'omonimo motore di ricerca Sergey Brin e Larry Page già nel 1996, avrebbero progressivamente offerto nuove possibilità di accesso a libri di feste digitalizzati. Il lavoro di valorizzazione dell'importante collezione dei livres de fêtes della collezione Jacques Doucet, depositati presso l'INHA (Paris), iniziò invece nel 2004.



21 Una versione digitale (*Early Modern Festivals Books Database*) è oggi disponibile e interrogabile online: <http://festivals.mml.ox.ac.uk>. Creata nel 2011 grazie al contributo di Oxford University Press - John Fell Fund (Oxford University), è stata sempre coordinata da Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, con l'assistenza di Madelaine Brook e la consulenza informatica di Andrew Slater. Contiene le voci bibliografiche di più di 3000 libri di feste pubblicati tra il 1500 e il 1800, e fornisce i link alle versioni digitali, laddove esistenti. Ai fondi delle biblioteche censiti nella versione a stampa si aggiunge quello della Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, München.

22 Si deve ricordare, nel contesto dello sviluppo degli studi festivi intorno al Duemila, un altro importante progetto italiano: l'*Atlante del Barocco* sui teatri e le feste, diretto da Maurizio Fagiolo e finanziato dal Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca con la partecipazione delle Unità di ricerca universitarie e dei Centri di studi sul Barocco (Siracusa, Lecce, Napoli, Malta, Foligno, Pescia) coordinati dal Centro di Studi sulla Cultura e l'Immagine di Roma. Del 2007 è la pubblicazione dei due volumi dedicati a *Le Capitali della Festa*, a cura dello stesso Fagiolo, che offre la prima rassegna sistematica sulle feste in Italia.

23 Paris, Honoré-Champion, Sources Classiques n. 33, 2001.

24 Centre canadien d'architecture de Montréal 7-8 ottobre 1999, con la contemporanea esposizione dei *livres de fêtes* conservati presso il Centre.

25 N. 212, III (2001).

26 London, Institute of Germanic & Romance Studies, 13-15 dicembre 2007. Gli atti vennero pubblicati, a cura delle due studiose menzionate e di Jean Andrews, Turnhout, Brepols, 2013.

27 Vedi, *Court Festivals of the European Renaissance: Art, politics, and performance*, Eds. J. R. Mulryne, e Elizabeth Goldring, Aldershot and Burlington VT, Ashgate, 2002.

28 Il programma del convegno è ancora oggi accessibile online: <http://mdaustria.arte.unipi.it/margheritahome.html>. Oltre ai relatori il convegno fu arricchito dalla presenza di altri amici studiosi: Mulryne e Shewring, come dico oltre nel testo, ma anche Sara Mamone, Bernardo J. García García, Giovanni Muto, Francesco Cotticelli e altri ancora.

29 Si veda, nell'ambito del programma PALATIUM, il convegno *Le prince, la princesse et leurs logis: Logis masculins et féminins dans l'élite de l'aristocratie européenne (1450 - 1650) / Princes, Princesses and their Lodgings A comparison of men and women lodgings among the elite of European aristocracy (1450 - 1650)*, VIIe Rencontres d'architecture européenne, Paris, INHA Centre André Chastel, 27-30 juin 2011; atti pubblicati col titolo *Le prince, la princesse et leurs logis: Manières d'habiter dans l'élite aristocratique européenne (1400-1700)*, Eds. Monique Chatenet e Krista de Jonge, Paris, Picard, 2014. E si deve qui riconoscere in questa impostazione di metodo il carattere pionieristico delle ricerche avviate a suo tempo dallo storico dell'architettura Jean Guillaume presso il Centre d'Études supérieures de la Renaissance di Tours, e culminate nel convegno *Architecture et vie sociale* del 1988.

30 *Proposal for an ESF Research Networking Programme - Call 2008*, documento pdf, 15 p.

31 La proposta prevedeva interazioni sia con il menzionato progetto Herla, sia con il Centro Studi Europa delle Corti, quest'ultimo attraverso la Society for Court Studies, fondata nel 1995 a Londra. Nello svolgimento successivo non mi pare tuttavia che queste interazioni siano state davvero operative. La partecipazione degli studiosi italiani nei vari convegni è stata limitatissima. Anche la qualificata presenza di Franca Varallo (Università di Torino), prevista nello Steering Committee iniziale del 2008, non mi risulta confermata in sede definitiva di approvazione del progetto.

32 ESF Palatium Research Networking Programme (<http://archives.esf.org/coordinating-research/research-networking-programmes/humanities-hum/palatium.html>) si è svolto dal 2 giugno 2010 al 1 giugno 2015, condotto da Krista de Jonge e Bernardo J. Garcia Garcia, con il coordinamento di Pieter Mårtens (d'ora in poi Martens secondo la grafia standard delle ultime pubblicazioni). Si rimanda anche al sito di PALATIUM <http://www.courtresidences.eu/> per i dettagli del programma, l'elenco dei convegni - in particolare per quelli dedicati alla ricostruzione digitale *Virtual Palaces* Part I (Leuven 18-19 Novembre 2011) e Part II (Monaco, 13-14 Aprile 2012) - e per le relative pubblicazioni nella serie PALATIUM e-Publications Series (Eds. Krista De Jonge e Pieter Martens) o edite nelle diverse sedi, molte delle quali accessibili online.

33 www.go.warwick.ac.uk/festivalsresearch

34 Per il volume: *Waterborne Pageants and Festivities in the Renaissance*, Ed. Margaret Shewring, con l'assistenza di Linda Briggs, Aldershot and Burlington VT, Ashgate, 2013.

35 Margaret Shewring (University of Warwick, Convegnor), Arianna Ciula (ESF), Maria Ines Aliverti (Università di Pisa), Sydney Anglo (University of Wales, Swansea), Camilla Cavicchi (Université François-Rabelais, Tours), Monique Chatenet (CNRS, Paris), Evelyn Korsch (Technische Universität Dresden/Venice), Margaret McGowan (University of Sussex), Ronnie Mulryne (University of Warwick), Lucia Nuti (Università di Pisa), Lena Rangström (Royal Armoury, Stockholm), David Sánchez-Cano (Studioso indipendente e traduttore, Madrid), Dr. Mårten Snickare (University of Stockholm), Mara Wade (University of Illinois), Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly (University of Oxford), Melanie Zefferino (studiosa indipendente e curator, Torino). In questo workshop Lucia Nuti (Università di Pisa) illustrò con un intervento l'importanza di sviluppare le ricerche sulle feste rinascimentali in rapporto allo studio degli assetti urbani e della cartografia storica. Nuti, con Denise Ulivieri, aveva lanciato, presso l'allora Dipartimento di Storia delle Arti dell'Università di Pisa, nel 2006, l'*Atlante storico iconografico delle città toscane*, un database consultabile online all'indirizzo: <http://asict.arte.unipi.it/index.html/index.php>

36 Tra i progetti con sede in Italia il Medici Project (Firenze), e l'Archivio Herla (Mantova).

37 Assieme alla collega Lucia Nuti nell'aprile 2010, quando ancora ci si poteva aggregare al programma una volta

finanziato, tentammo invano di sollecitare il Rettorato di Pisa (nella persona del Prorettore per l'Internazionalizzazione, prof. Alessandra Guidi) per ottenere il cofinanziamento indispensabile all'adesione della nostra Università. Non merita qui di menzionare l'incomprensibile risposta che ci venne data per giustificare un altrettanto incomprensibile diniego. Sono assenze italiane che meriterebbero una riflessione, almeno col senno di poi.

38 <http://www.recreatingearlymodernfestivals.com/> Il convegno era parte di un progetto (*Iberia Triumphant: the reconstruction of Lisbon on the triumphal entry of Philip II of Spain in 1581*), diretto da Fernández-González presso l'Architecture Department, con il sostegno economico del Consolato di Spagna. Fernández-González, attualmente Senior Lecturer presso l'University of Lincoln, ha molto contribuito con le sue pubblicazioni successive allo sviluppo dell'approccio digitale. Ha inoltre organizzato ed è ancora attualmente Forum coordinator dell'International Network for the Early Modern Festival Study. Gli atti del convegno di Edimburgo vedi *Festival Culture in the World of the Spanish Habsburgs*, a cura della stessa Fernández-González e di Fernando Checa Cremades, furono "vittima" del passaggio da Ashgate a Routledge (Taylor and Francis Group) e furono prodotti nel 2015 presso il primo editore e nel 2016 presso il secondo.

39 Doppio fidanzamento nel 1612 e doppie nozze nel 1615, tra l'Infante Filippo, poi Filippo IV di Spagna, con Elisabetta di Francia e Luigi XIII, re di Francia, con Anna d'Austria, Infanta di Spagna (*Spanish/French Marriage Festivals and Politics, 1612-1615: Dynastic Marriages and their Social, Political and Cultural Reverberations*, London, The Warburg Institute, 18-19 marzo 2011). Per la pubblicazione si veda *Dynastic Marriages 1612/1615: A Celebration of the Habsburg and Bourbon Unions*, Ed. Margaret M. McGowan, "European Festival Studies: 1450-1700", Farnham & Burlington, VT, Ashgate, 2013.

40 Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, in collaborazione con Wolfenbütteler Arbeitskreis für Renaissanceforschung, *The Palatine wedding of 1613: Protestant alliance and court festival*, edited by Sara Smart and Mara R. Wade, Wolfenbütteler Abhandlungen zur Renaissanceforschung, vol. 29, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 2013.

41 *The Iconography of Power: Ceremonial Entries in Renaissance and Early Modern Europe*, Università di Bergamo - Chiesa di Sant'Agostino, 25-27 maggio 2012. Per quanto riguarda l'Università di Pisa, il finanziamento proveniva dai fondi personali di ricerca a me assegnati.

42 Mi riferisco al volume che racchiude i contributi del convegno: *Ceremonial Entries in Early Modern Europe: The Iconography of Power*, J. R. Mulryne, Maria Ines Aliverti, Anna Maria Testaverde, "European Festival Studies: 1450-1700", Farnham & Burlington, VT, Ashgate, 2015.

43 Avevo anch'io presentato un paper (*Inconspicuous observers or significant presence? Women spectators in 16th-century Italian triumphal entries*) che purtroppo non potei rielaborare per la pubblicazione, a causa di gravi problemi famigliari.

44 Linda Briggs curò l'editing dei poster presentati da Jennifer Halton (Department of Music - National University

of Ireland), Emma Kennedy (University of York); Simone Bardazzi (Università di Firenze) Leonardo Spinelli (Università di Firenze); Alejandra Franganillo Álvarez (Universidad Complutense de Madrid), Francesca Barbieri (Università Cattolica di Milano), Alessandra Mignatti (Università Cattolica di Milano).

45 Il progetto era diretto da Annick Delfosse (Université de Liège /Transitions), Ralph Dekoninck (Université Catholique de Louvain), Maarten Delbeke (Ghent University), e Koen Vermeir (University of Leuven). Il volume di recente pubblicazione a cura degli stessi, raccoglie studi presentati nel quadro del programma: *Cultures du spectacle baroque: Cadres expériences et représentations des solennités religieuses entre Italie et anciens Pays-Bas*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2019.

46 *Architectures of Festival in Early Modern Europe*, Eds. J. R. Mulryne, Krista De Jonge, Pieter Martens e R. L. M. Morris, Abingdon Oxon e New York, Routledge - European Science Foundation, 2018. *Occasions of State: Early Modern European Festivals and the Negotiation of Power*, Eds. J. R. Mulryne, Krista De Jonge, Pieter Martens e R. L. M. Morris, Abingdon Oxon e New York, Routledge - European Science Foundation, 2019. Il quinto volume della serie era in stampa dal giugno 2017, Felicia M. Else, *The Politics of Water in the Art and Festivals of Medici Florence: From Neptune Fountain to Naumachia*, Abingdon Oxon, Routledge, 2019.

47 Si veda il viaggio di "formazione" alla sovranità di Filippo d'Asburgo intrapreso nel 1548 e l'insieme di feste nei vari stati e territori attraversati e in particolare nel territorio di Mons, al centro del convegno tenuto a Mons nel 2015 (12-13 ottobre), in occasione di Mons 2015 European Capital of Culture e in collaborazione con la Low Countries Sculpture Society. *Charles V, Prince Philip, and the Politics of Succession: Festivities in Mons and Hainault, 1549*, Eds. Margaret M. McGowan e Margaret Shewring, in pubblicazione: Turnhout, Brepols, 2020.

48 *Crossing Boundaries: Confessional, political and cultural interactions in early modern festivals and diplomatic encounters*. Trinity Hall, University of Cambridge, 30 aprile - 1 maggio 2018. Gli atti sono in uscita a Turnhout, presso l'editore Brepols.

49 La ricerca di dottorato di Morris, terminata nel 2017 è confluita in una monografia della collana "European Festival Studies 1450-1700", *Court Festivals of the Holy Roman Empire, 1555-1619. Performing German Identity*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2020.

50 La collana "European Festival Studies 1450-1700" è oggi diretta da Margaret Shewring, Margaret McGowan e Marie-Claude Canova-Green. Guy Carney ne è il direttore editoriale presso Brepols.

51 *Il ruolo dello spettacolo di corte nelle politiche e nelle relazioni diplomatiche di Casa Savoia dal Rinascimento all'età moderna (1450-1750) / The Role of Courtly Spectacle in the Politics and Diplomatic Entanglements of the House of Savoy in the Renaissance and Early Modern Periods (1450-1750)*, Torino, Archivio di Stato, 18-20 settembre 2019. Melanie Zefferino ha svolto in questa occasione il lavoro di relazione tra la SEFR e l'Archivio di Torino, per la preparazione del convegno.

52 “Words and Music for Ines: A Celebration of her work”, University of Oxford, Brasenose College, 2-3 aprile 2014. A questo incontro, organizzato grazie all’ospitalità del Brasenose College e di Richard Cooper parteciparono tutti gli amici carissimi di ET: oltre a Ronnie (J. R. Mulryne), e a Richard Cooper nostro anfitrione, Margaret Shewring, Sydney Anglo e Margaret M. McGowan, Marie-Claude Canova-Green, Iain Fenlon, Robert J. Knecht, Lucia Nuti, Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly e infine H. Neville Davies, che non ho potuto specificamente nominare in queste pagine, ma della cui competenza e gentilezza mi sono giovata, ottenendo pareri e suggerimenti utilissimi per le mie ricerche. Grazie ancora una volta Neville!

