

Cultural translations and glocal dynamics between Italy and the Low Countries during the sixteenth and seventeenth century

Emma Grootveld & Nina Lamal^{*}

In May 1534, a certain ‘Michele, pittore tedesco’ was admitted to the prestigious Roman Compagnia di San Luca. This entry in the records of the guild of painters and miniaturists refers to Michiel Coxcie, probably the first artist from the Low Countries to receive this honour. After his arrival in Rome in 1530, Cardinal Willem van Enckenvoirt gave him the task of painting several frescoes in the Santa Maria dell’Anima, the church of the German and Netherlandish community.¹ Numerous *fiamminghi* had flocked to the eternal city when the first Netherlandish pope Adrian VI (1522-3) had been elected.² Thanks to this network of compatriots and their Roman connections, Coxcie had access to the major collections of antiquities, became acquainted with the techniques and style of the Italian Renaissance. He met Michelangelo and learned to paint *al fresco*, perhaps under the influence of Sebastiano del Piombo.³ After a period of ten years, Coxcie returned to the Low Countries and became known as the ‘Flemish Raphael’, because he combined Italian Renaissance style with the Flemish visual language. This immersion into the vibrant Roman cultural scene made him an artistic mediator upon his return. Coxcie’s career is illustrative of the ways in which different goods and ideas were transferred from one culture to another, and is therefore a good example of cultural transfer.

Artists like Coxcie were important actors within the large and heterogeneous group of cultural mediators who were responsible for the development of close ties between the Low Countries and Italy. Due to an economic and artistic boom in Italian

^{*} In 2013-2014 Museum M in Leuven organized a large exhibition dedicated to Michiel Coxcie’s life and art. The Italian Studies Working group (Werkgroep Italië Studies) dedicated a seminar to Coxcie’s cultural contacts with Italy, which was the occasion for the present special issue on cultural exchange between both regions.

¹ In early modern Italy the term ‘fiamminghi’ was used to refer to the inhabitants of the Low Countries and not specifically for inhabitants of the County of Flanders. We will refer to people from the Low Countries as Netherlandish rather than Dutch or Flemish. We will use Flemish to refer to the specific artistic style also known as the Flemish school. For the terms used in early modern Italy see: P.J. Kessel, *Van Fiandra naar Olanda. Veranderende visie in het vroegmoderne Italië op de Nederlandse identiteit*, Amsterdam, Noord Hollandse Uitgeverij, 1993. We will use the general term Italian for people coming from the Italian peninsula.

² On the importance of the networks of compatriots in Rome, see: J. Toubert, ‘Willem van Enckenvoirt and the Dutch network in Rome in the first quarter of the sixteenth century’, *Fragmenta*, 4 (2010), pp. 121-143 and A. Gnann, ‘Cardinal Wilhelm van Enckenvoirt as Patron of the Arts in Rome’, *Fragmenta*, 4 (2010), pp. 149-160.

³ E. Leuschner, ‘The young talent in Italy’, in: K. Jonckheere (ed.), *Michiel Coxcie (1499-1592) and the Giants of his Age*, London-Turnhout, Brepols/Harvey Miller, 2013, pp. 56-57.

cities and the Low Countries in the fifteenth century, both regions became vital interactors in the two subsequent centuries. However, despite their shared and interconnected history, the relationship between Italy and the Netherlands in early modern Europe is seldom explicitly studied from a cultural exchange point of view.⁴ Most attention has been dedicated to the beginnings of artistic and economic interactions in the fifteenth century. Therefore, this special issue explores, through a number of case studies, the dynamic processes of cultural exchanges between the Italian states and the Low Countries during the sixteenth and seventeenth century: a period of changing power relations and of wide-scale implementation of Renaissance thought and practices. By focusing on these two centuries, we intend to explore changes in the interactions between the different regions of these complex political entities. In taking this approach, we aim to contribute to the renewed scholarly interest in both regions as well as to the literature on cultural exchange.

Cultural transfer developed as a concept in the mid-1980s following the research conducted by Michel Espagne and Michael Werner; it has since become a popular and much debated term in scholarly literature.⁵ Cultural transfer studies deal with a wide range of phenomena: the movement of people, the circulation of objects, the transmission and influence of ideas, discourses, images, forms and styles. According to Wolfgang Schmale, cultural transfer concerns the multiplicity of acts or processes in which elements of culture, or 'cultural goods', are moved from one cultural space or structure to another.⁶ He compares this system of exchanges to a hypertext, considering history as one uninterrupted flow of cultural transfers in which the boundaries of concepts such as nations, regions or social groups become particularly blurred.⁷ The study of such exchanges yields important insights into the formation and demarcation of groups and collective identities.

While increasingly looking for a dynamic interpretation of the concept of transfer, scholars in Germany and France have stressed the importance of movement and change. Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann have insisted on shifting from notions of transfer and historical comparative studies to *histoires croisées*, taking into account the multileveled, reciprocal and transforming character of exchanges.⁸ In a similar vein, Peter Burke has argued that the term 'cultural transfer' suggests a rather static process whereby elements of one culture move to another. His approach in terms of 'cultural translations' emphasizes the active and dynamic character of reception processes, implicitly connecting a historical approach with a functionalist equation of transfer and translation:⁹

⁴ A recent exception is I. Alexander-Skipnes (ed.), *Cultural Exchange between the Low Countries and Italy (1400-1600)*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2007, in which artistic exchanges between the two regions are examined.

⁵ For a good overview of the literature on this topic for the early modern period see the contributions in W. Schmale (ed.), *Kulturtransfer. Kulturelle Praxis im 16. Jahrhundert*, Innsbruck, StudienVerlag, 2003; M. North (ed.), *Kultureller Austausch. Bilanz und Perspektiven der Frühneuzeitforschung*, Köln, Böhlau Verlag, 2009; R. Muchembled (ed.), *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe*, 4 vols, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007.

⁶ Schmale, 'Das Konzept "Kulturtransfer" und das 16. Jahrhundert', in: Schmale (ed.), *Kulturtransfer*, cit., p. 45,

⁷ Ivi, p. 13.

⁸ M. Werner & B. Zimmermann, 'Beyond comparison: histoire croisée and the challenge of reflexivity', in: *History and Theory*, 45 (2006), pp. 30-50.

⁹ I. Even-Zohar, 'Translation and Transfer', in: *Polysystem Studies, Poetics Today*, 11, 1 (1990), pp. 73-78.

Ideas, information, artefacts and practices are not simply adopted but on the contrary, they are adapted to their new cultural environment. They are first decontextualized and then recontextualized, domesticated or “localized”. In a word, they are “translated”.¹⁰

Michiel Coxcie serves as a case in point for this kind of recontextualizations, as he was one of the first to create an altarpiece in which he combined the “visual idiom” of Italian Renaissance masters such as Leonardo, Raphael and Michelangelo with features of Netherlandish painters like Van Eyck, Van der Weyden, Metsys.¹¹ As a court painter to Charles V and subsequently to Philip II he imported Renaissance visual language *all’antica* which suited the Habsburg desire for a strong Roman imperialist symbolism.

The recent interest in Coxcie’s career stands in a long art historical research tradition dedicated to the study of the formative journeys of artists coming from the Low Countries to Italy. Yet cultural exchanges between the Netherlands and the Italian states did not occur in a one-way direction. Most articles in this number therefore study cases of Italians involved in cultural transfers in the Netherlands. In the complex web of exchanges, mediators – literally, something or someone in the middle between two places or instances – played a crucial role. People, but also texts, ideas or objects transferring a message, are mediators in their own right.¹² The wide range of transfers between Italian and Netherlandish communities involved a great variety of mediators other than artists and merchants. Throughout the contributions to this issue the role played by members of religious orders, publishers, rulers, history writers, diplomats and members of the Republic of Letters are discussed, but one could think of many other examples. Taken as a whole, the different analyses in this number demonstrate the diverse ways in which Italians and *fiamminghi* influenced, observed and used each other’s cultures in the early modern era. In sketching the evolution of their mutual interests and relationships, this introduction argues that their shared history manifests a common thread: the connections between local communities within global, or transnational dynamics, add a “glocal” nature to their transactions.¹³ Moreover, exchanges often occurred thanks to specific institutionalized groups, such as mercantile trading nations and communities or networks like the republic of letters.

¹⁰ Burke, ‘Translating Knowledge, Translating Cultures’, in: North (ed.), *Kultureller Austausch* cit., p. 70.

¹¹ K. Jonckheere & R. Suykerbuyk, ‘The Life and Times of Michiel Coxcie (1499-1592)’, in: Jonckheere (ed.), *Michiel Coxcie (1499-1592)*, cit., p. 29.

¹² For this interpretation see A. De Vries (ed.), *Cultural Mediators: Artists and Writers at the Crossroads of Tradition, Innovation and Reception in the Low Countries and Italy 1450-1650*, Leuven, Peeters, 2008. The introduction does not explicitly discuss the cultural ties between the Low Countries and Italy.

¹³ ‘Glocal’ is commonly used in a twentieth-century context concerning global commercial and sociocultural exchanges. The concept emphasizes the local interests of global traffic and the ‘creation and incorporation of locality’ in a globalizing web of interdependences; see: R. Robertson, ‘Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity’, in: M. Featherstone, S. Lash & R. Robertson (eds.), *Global Modernities*, London, Sage, 1995, pp. 25-44, esp. 40; *Idem*, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*, London, Sage, 1992. The term also stresses the porosity of borders in exchanges and the importance of local rather than ‘national’ interest. See: T. Luke, ‘New World Order or Neo-World Orders: Power, Politics and Ideology in Informationalizing Globalities’, in: Featherstone, Lash and Robertson, *Global Modernities*, cit., 1995, pp. 91-107, esp. 101. For an example of the concept in an early modern context see: D. Freist, ‘Lost in time and space? Glocal memoryscapes in the early modern world’, in: E. Kuijpers, J. Pollmann, J. Müller & J. van der Steen (eds.), *Memory before Modernity: Practices of Memory in Early Modern Europe*, Leiden, Brill, 2013, pp. 203-221.

Cultural mediators

During the Middle Ages Italian states and the Low Countries developed long-standing commercial and cultural ties. Both regions were highly urbanized and the movement of commodities, people and ideas was stimulated by a flourishing international trade.¹⁴ The cities played an essential role in the exchange of cultural practices, tastes and artefacts.¹⁵ Merchants from Genoa, Florence, and Venice settled in Bruges and encountered new artistic styles, exemplified by painters such as Rogier van der Weyden or Jan van Eyck. These merchants functioned as purveyors of art to Italian courts, but also competed with their patrons as art collectors in their own right.¹⁶ Tommaso Portinari, the representative of the Medici bank in late fifteenth-century Bruges who commissioned Hugo van der Goes to paint an altarpiece, is illustrative of this phenomenon.¹⁷

The connections between Italy and the Low Countries have been studied mainly from two perspectives: firstly from an artistic point of view and secondly from an economic one. Art historians have devoted ample attention to the adaptation of Netherlandish taste, style and techniques at Italian courts as well as to the influence of Italian Renaissance ideals in arts produced in the Low Countries.¹⁸ The notion of *cultural or artistic transfer* within the discipline of art history often refers to the idea of an all-encompassing dominant model, such as the one represented by the canon of painters of the Italian Renaissance, influencing other artistic traditions.¹⁹ Although this approach in iconographic and stylistic research still receives broad attention, increasingly the focus is shifting towards the study of networks and the geographic or social mobility of artists.

Shifting our attention to the other traditional cornerstone of Italo-Netherlandish studies we are equally brought back to fifteenth-century Bruges and to the Burgundian court. The commercial contacts, trade and presence of Italian merchants in Bruges have been well examined and documented for this period.²⁰

¹⁴ For literature exploring the similarities between the developments in the Low Countries and the Italian states see: H. van der Wee (ed.), *The Rise and Decline of Urban Industries in Italy and in the Low Countries: Late Middle Ages-Early Modern Times*, Louvain, Leuven University Press, 1988; E. Crouzet-Pavan & E. Lecuppre-Desjardin (eds.), *Villes de Flandre et d'Italie, XIIIe-XVIe siècle: les enseignements d'une comparaison*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2008; B. Boutte & M-A. Visceglia, 'Cultura e prassi politiche tra Fiandra e Italia nel Seicento. Note introduttive', in: *Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica*, 2 (2009), pp. 1-17.

¹⁵ On the importance of urban centres for cultural exchange see: D. Keene, 'Cities and cultural exchange', in: D. Calabri & S.T. Christensen (eds.), *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe, II. Cities and Cultural Exchange in Europe 1400-1700*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007, pp. 2-27.

¹⁶ P. Nuttall, *From Flanders to Florence: The Impact of Netherlandish Painting, 1400-1500*, London-New Haven, Yale University Press, 2004, p. 3.

¹⁷ M.L. Koster, 'New documentation for the Portinari altarpiece', *The Burlington Magazine*, 1200 (2003), pp. 164-179 and D. Wolfthal, 'Florentine Bankers, Flemish Friars, and the Patronage of the Portinari Altarpiece', in: Alexander-Skipnes (ed.), *Cultural Exchange*, cit., pp. 1-23.

¹⁸ Alexander-Skipnes (ed.), *Cultural Exchange*, cit.; E. Parma, *Rapporti artistici tra Genova e le Fiandre nei secoli XV e XVI*, Genova, Compagnia dei librai, 2002.

¹⁹ R. Dekoninck (ed.), *Relations artistiques entre l'Italie et les anciens Pays-Bas (16e-17e siècles): bilan et perspectives. Artistieke relaties tussen Italië en de Nederlanden (16de-17de eeuw): Status quaestionis en vooruitzichten*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2012.

²⁰ R. Doehaerd & C. Kerremans (eds.), *Les relations commerciales entre Gênes, la Belgique et l'Outremont, d'après les archives notariales génoises, 1400-1440*, Bruxelles, Academica Belgica, 1952; G. Petti Balbi, *Mercanti e nazione nelle Fiandre: i genovesi in età bassomedievale*, Pisa, GISEM: ETS, 1996; L. Galoppini, *Mercanti Toscani e Bruges nel tardo medioevo*, Pisa, Pisa University Press, 2009; B. Lambert, *The City, the Duke, and Their Banker: The Rapondi Family and the Formation of the Burgundian State (1384-1430)*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2006; H. Lang, 'Networks and Merchant Diasporas:

Federica Veratelli has unearthed a wealth of documentation concerning these merchants and their relationships to the Burgundian court in the *Chambres des comptes* in the archives of Lille.²¹ They played a significant role in the trade of luxury goods such as cloths, sculptures, animals and works of art to and from the Burgundian court and Bruges. Various scholars have paid attention to the role of merchants as cultural brokers in later periods as well. Marika Keblusek describes the convergence of cultural, political and intellectual mediation in one chameleon-like figure as *double agency*: artists, merchants, diplomats, military men and members of the clergy had multiple and interconnected functions that were not necessarily part of their profession.²² Merchants could at the same time be brokers and collectors, as Maartje van Gelder has shown in her article on the Netherlandish merchant Daniel Nijs, who resided in Venice and organized the sale of the Gonzaga art collection in 1628.²³ Another example of such a cultural broker was Francesco Feroni, one of the wealthiest and most prominent Florentine merchants in Amsterdam.²⁴ Feroni acted as an important agent and broker for the future Cosimo III de' Medici, who stayed in Feroni's house in 1667 and 1668, during his travels through Europe.

In many early modern trading centres foreign merchants were grouped according to the city or region they came from.²⁵ This was the case in Antwerp, which had become the most flourishing trading city of Europe during the first half of the sixteenth century. Attracting merchants from all over the world, Antwerp functioned as an early modern 'world space', where different communities met without losing their cultural identity and practices.²⁶ Italians were not united in one single trading community, but were organised in 'nations' according to their city or region of origin; the Florentine and Genoese, for instance, belonged to separate trading nations. These foreign merchant communities participated in urban life in Antwerp but were at the same time relatively closed groups with their own cultural institutions. The best known example is the *Accademia dei Confusi*, founded in the late 1550s by the Genoese merchants and poet Stefano Ambrosio Schiappalaria according to the Italian literary academy model. Membership of the *Confusi* was

Florentine Bankers in Lyon and Antwerp in the Sixteenth Century', in: A. Caracausi & C. Jeggle (eds.), *Commercial Networks and European Cities, 1400-1800*, London, Pickering & Chatto, 2014, pp.107-120.

²¹ F. Veratelli, *À la mode Italienne. Commerce du luxe et diplomatie dans les Pays-Bas méridionaux 1477-1530. Édition critique de documents de la Chambre des comptes de Lille*, Lille, Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 2013.

²² M. Keblusek, 'Introduction: Double Agency in Early Modern Europe', in: M. Keblusek & B. Noldus (eds.), *Double Agents. Cultural and Political Brokerage in Early Modern Europe*, Leiden, Brill, 2011, p. 7.

²³ M. Van Gelder, 'Changing Tack: The Versatile Allegiances of Daniel Nijs, a Netherlandish Merchant and Information Broker in Early Modern Venice', *Dutch Crossing. A Journal of Low Countries Studies*, 30, 2 (2006), pp. 243-51; Eadem, 'Acquiring Artistic Expertise: The Agent Daniel Nijs and his Contacts with Artists In Venice', in: Keblusek & Noldus (eds.), *Double Agents*, cit., pp. 111-24. See also: C. Andersson, *The Flemish Merchant of Venice: Daniel Nijs and the Sale of the Gonzaga Art Collection*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2015.

²⁴ H. Cools, 'An Italian in the Metropolis: The Amsterdam Career of Francesco Feroni (ca. 1640-1672)', in: D. Vanysacker e.a. (eds.), *The Quintessence of Lives. Intellectual Biographies in the Low Countries presented to Jan Roegiers*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2010, pp. 227-247; *Idem*, 'Francesco Feroni, Broker in Cereals, Slaves and Works of Art', in: M. Keblusek, H. Cools & B. Noldus (eds.), *Your Humble Servant. Agency in Early Modern Europe*, Hilversum, Verloren, 2006, pp. 39-50.

²⁵ On these merchant nations see: B. Blondé, P. Stabel & O. Gelderblom, 'Foreign merchant communities in Bruges, Antwerp and Amsterdam c. 1350-1650', in: Calabri & Christensen (eds.), *Cities and Cultural Exchange*, cit., pp. 154-174.

²⁶ For the notion of 'world space', which was designed in a twentieth century context, see E. Balibar, 'Es Gibt keinen Staat in Europa: Racism and Politics in Europe Today', in: *New Left Review*, 186 (March/April 1991), pp. 5-19.

restricted to Genoese citizens. Schiappalaria praised in his poems above all the Genoese elite, but also local merchants. His works were published in Antwerp by printers such as Christophe Plantin, Andreas Bax and Hans Laet. Schiappalaria played a mediating role in transferring Italian poetic models to the Antwerp poet Jan Baptist Van der Noot, who dedicated a large proportion of his Petrarchist poems to Genoese patrons, and who exceptionally might have been admitted as a member of the *Confusi*. Schiappalaria's cultural activities thus show important ties to local intellectuals. The Genoese trading nation also participated in local events of particular international importance; for example they created a triumphal arch, following Schiappalaria's design, for the joyous entry of prince Philip in 1549. Notwithstanding some scholarly explorations on Schiappalaria and the *Confusi*, recent substantial studies on the cultural roles of Italian merchants in sixteenth-century Antwerp are lacking.²⁷ Christophe Schellekens therefore looks at the Florentine nation's cultural role in Antwerp, zooming in on Florentine correspondence on the conflict over priority with the Genoese nation at the joyous entry in 1549. He shows that the merchants of the Florentine nation requested help from the Medici government in Florence and functioned, at the same time, as a local extension in Antwerp of their hometown, defending the status and prestige of the Duchy of Florence. As mediators between the Medici court and the authorities in the Netherlands, they tried to establish Florentine precedence on a transnational level. The information on recent historical examples of Florentine precedence transmitted between Italy and Antwerp served Florentine 'intracultural' purposes, but it also had an important 'external' function in repeated encounters with rival communities, such as the Genoese nation.

Transfers in Habsburg Europe

The relations between Italian states and the Netherlands transformed profoundly during the sixteenth century. After the peace treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis in 1559, both the Low Countries and a large part of Italy belonged to the Habsburg Empire. This new geopolitical reality shaped the interactions between the two regions. In Habsburg Europe, notwithstanding crucial internal differences and identities, the Catholic Counter-Reformation ideas had a uniting effect. Translators played an important role in spreading shared religious values across the different regions of this vast empire.²⁸ Alexander Soetaert examines the diffusion of Italian texts in late sixteenth-century Cambrai, a French-speaking border region in the Habsburg Netherlands. France, with which the Southern Low Countries partially shared the same language, emerges as an important intermediary in the spreading of 'Italianising tendencies' in the Habsburg Netherlands, highlighting the diffusion of texts as a *transcultural* phenomenon. Translators, however, also had direct contacts with Italy; several of them had studied there. Their interest in translating Italian

²⁷ See C. Beck, *La nation génoise à Anvers de 1528 à 1555: étude économique et sociale*, Doctoral Dissertation, Florence European University Institute, 1982; P. Subacchi, 'Italians in Antwerp in the second half of the Sixteenth Century', in: H. Soly & A.K.L. Thijs (eds.), *Minderheden in Westeuropese Steden (16de - 20ste Eeuw)*, Rome, Institut Historique Belge de Rome, 1995, pp. 73-90; J. Denucé, *Italiaansche koopmansgeslachten te Antwerpen in de XVIe-XVIIIe eeuwen*, Mechelen-Amsterdam, Het Kompas-De Spieghel, 1934.

²⁸ This is a vast and expanding field, see for instance S. Stockhorst (ed.), *Cultural Transfer through Translation. The Circulation of Enlightened Thought in Europe by Means of Translation*, Amsterdam, Brill-Rodopi, 2010; J. Maria Pérez Fernández & E. Wilson-Lee (eds.), *Translation and the Book Trade in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2014; A. Coldiron, *Printers without Borders. Translation and Textuality in the Renaissance*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2015.

texts either came from religious concerns or from a desire to transmit knowledge concerning the latest intellectual developments.

By shifting our focus from the mediators to the transfers, religious and political concerns emerge as dominating themes in the second half of the sixteenth century. In his *Descrittione di tutti i Paesi Bassi*, which was published right before the outbreak of the Dutch Revolt, the Florentine writer Lodovico Guicciardini had made a vivid description of the bustling commercial and cultural atmosphere of the Low Countries, and of Antwerp in particular.²⁹ In contrast, later contemporary observers and writers focused on political and military events of the devastating and Eighty Years war. Numerous Italian soldiers came to fight in the Low Countries, which they regarded as the excellent place to gain military experience. Current scholarship dedicates renewed attention to Italian soldiers and generals of the Habsburg army in the Low Countries during the Revolt, revealing how these military men maintained important ties with their home country as news agents for their Italian patrons.³⁰ This strong non-mercantile Italian presence created new circuits for the circulation in Italy of images and ideas on the Low Countries.³¹

Discourse on the Revolt could serve to inform Italians about the circumstances abroad, to influence decisions of rulers on the international political scene, and also to discuss or criticize internal problems in Italian states. In the latter case in particular, authors 'translated' a distant contemporary conflicts to their own context by narrating it from an Italian perspective. Cees Reijner examines to what extent Italian authors referred in their historical descriptions of the Dutch Revolt to their own issues, heroes and enemies. In his view, Genoese history writers appropriated the Republican ideas propagated in the Dutch Republic, whereas in Florence the Revolt was used to critique Spanish war practices. Reijner argues that the history writers Bocchi, Costa and Conestaggio exemplify how transfers of ideals and ideas were in the first place conditioned by the locally determined political agenda of the authors, as well as by the interest of celebrating heroes who were seen as 'Italian'.

Referring to Netherlandish events in function of a political or personal agenda is also a central theme in Raviola & Bianco's study of the fourth book of Emanuele Tesauro's *Campeggiamenti di Fiandra* (1639). Although Tesauro does not refer directly to circumstances in Piedmont and does not explicitly choose the side of either France or Spain, the narration of the siege of Saint-Omer (1638) did serve the need in Turin for a success story of Thomas of Savoy at a moment when tensions between France and Spain heavily disturbed local politics. The siege of Saint-Omer was not only important in Savoy; in other Italian states the role of their own participating generals was highlighted as well. Stefano della Bella's incision was probably dedicated to the commander of the Habsburg troops Ottavio Piccolomini, member of an important Tuscan family and a fervent art collector.³² Both Tesauro and the incisor of the first frontispiece of his book demonstrate the interest in

²⁹ D. Aristodemo (ed.), Ludovico Guicciardini, *Descrittione di tutti i Paesi Bassi altrimenti detti Germania inferiore*, University of Amsterdam (doctoral thesis), 22 April 1994. See P. Jodogne (ed.), *Lodovico Guicciardini (1521-1589)*, Louvain, Peeters, 1991 for an interdisciplinary volume on Guicciardini's life and works.

³⁰ N. Lamal, 'Le orecchie si piene di Fiandra'. *Italian news and histories on the Revolt in the Low Countries (1566-1648)*, Doctoral Dissertation, University of Leuven and St Andrews, 2014; G. Bertini, *Ottavio Gonzaga di Guastalla. La carriera di un cadetto al servizio della monarchia spagnola (1543-1583)*, Guastalla, Biblioteca Maldotti, 2007; *Idem* (ed.), *Militari Italiani dell'esercito di Alessandro Farnese*, Guastalla, Mattioli, 2013.

³¹ Lamal, *Le orecchie si piene di Fiandra*, cit., pp. 142-181.

³² A. Becucci, 'Ottavio Piccolomini (1599-1656): A Case of Patronage from a Transnational Perspective', *The International History Review*, 33:4 (2011), pp. 585-605.

Flemish artists and artistic discourse. By citing Flemish sources, they opened them to an Italian public: they acted, in this way, as cultural mediators of ideas and artistic styles.

In sum, these contributions demonstrate the extent to which the conflict in the Netherlands articulated the different priorities of Italy's semi-independent states and their changing relationships with the Spanish-Habsburg Empire during the seventeenth century. All Italian states were Catholic, but some were firmer supporters of Habsburg power than others. This is true both for duchies, like Savoy, which was torn between pro-French and pro-Habsburg factions during the 1640s, and republics, like Genoa and Venice, which shared the republican ideals with the Dutch Republic.³³

Glocal differentiation

The Dutch Revolt changed the dynamics of cultural transfer between the Netherlands and Italy significantly. The two separate political entities emerging in the Low Countries had quite different relations with the Italian states. Power balances in Europe shifted with the conclusion of a peace treaty between Habsburg Spain and the Dutch Republic in 1648. The United Provinces, officially and internationally recognized as a state, were now in a better position to establish new relations with Italian states. The new trading relationships and burgeoning cultural life makes the Dutch Republic a popular research subject for scholars. Moorman's, Cools' and Touber's articles in this volume show how the political and cultural relationships with Florence intensified significantly during the 1660s, the period of Cosimo de' Medici's visits to the Dutch Republic.

This princely tour of Cosimo is an example of the Italian curiosity about the prospering commerce and maritime power of this newly established state.³⁴ During his stay in Amsterdam, Cosimo regularly visited the bookshop of the enterprising Amsterdam publishers and booksellers Blaeu. Pieter Blaeu planned the publication of a *Theatrum Italia*, an enormous printing enterprise studied by Gloria Moorman. Blaeu realised his *Theatrum* with the help of a broad Netherlandish-Italian network, as he aspired to base the descriptions and maps of Italy on local and primary sources, *i.e.* correspondence with and accounts given by local inhabitants. In order to obtain such valuable material Blaeu successfully established and maintained contact with the Florentine Grand Ducal librarian Antonio Magliabechi. The actual publication of the volumes was also determined by agreements between Blaeu and local authorities: a contract with the Dukes of Savoy resulted in the publication of a volume on Piedmont in 1682. The Medici also collaborated for the creation of a volume on Tuscany that, however, was never published by Blaeu.

Since scholars have primarily focused upon Cosimo's stay in Amsterdam, Hans Cools explores why Cosimo visited Friesland during his journey. This short trip was an event quite out of the ordinary for Cosimo and his entourage. Cools argues that the excursion reflected the ideas of Dutch intellectuals and politicians about Friesland. In his analysis of various travel accounts, Cools states that the Tuscan courtiers did not interpret what they saw in Friesland in the same vein as their hosts had

³³ On the shared ideals see S. Mastellone, 'Holland as a Political Model in Italy in the Seventeenth Century', *BMGN*, 98 (1983), pp. 568-582 and S. Mastellone, 'I Repubblicani del Seicento ed il modello politico olandese', *Il Pensiero Politico*, 18 (1985), pp. 145-163.

³⁴ See H.Th. van Veen, 'Cosimo de' Medici's reis naar de Republiek in een nieuw perspectief', *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden (BMGN)*, 102 (1987), pp. 44-52 and H.Th. van Veen & A.P. McCormick (eds.), *Tuscany and the Low Countries. An Introduction to the Sources and an Inventory of Four Florentine Libraries*, Florence, Centro Di, 1985, p. 32.

suggested, *i.e.* to see the Frisians as authentic and primitive inhabitants of a rather isolated part of the United Provinces. This case gives an interesting example of incomplete transfer of regionally determined perceptions.

Moorman's and Cools' contributions confirm how stereotypes or images associated with a specific region are, as is typical in glocalizing dynamics, to a large extent created from the outside. Traveller's perceptions are the result of negotiations between different transregional visions.³⁵

Other destinations on Cosimo's journey were the large cities in the Habsburg Netherlands such as Antwerp and Brussels. There he was welcomed by his Tuscan agents, marquis Stefano Spinola and Colonel Alamanni. Like the Tuscan merchants in Amsterdam, Stefano Spinola played an important role in the transmission of goods to the Tuscan court. Scholars have barely taken into consideration the relations between the Southern Netherlands and the several Italian states during the second half of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth century. An important reason for this lack is the tendency to consider both the Habsburg Netherlands and Italy at the periphery of new scientific, economic and cultural developments. Yet this lack of scholarly attention need not imply any absence of close ties between Italians and the Southern Netherlands. More research is needed to understand how the changing ties between these regions, both connected to the Habsburg monarchy, affected the transmission of goods and ideas. In several respects a case can be made for enduring exchanges and transfers between those communities.

One example is the presence of students from the Southern Netherlands at Italian universities in the seventeenth century. During the fifteenth and sixteenth century many Netherlandish students had undertaken a *peregrinatio academica* to Italy, but in the seventeenth century the prestigious Italian universities started to lose their international reputation and appeal.³⁶ In addition it was neither possible nor desirable for Protestant students to study at Catholic universities and certainly not in papal Bologna. As a result of these two trends the overall numbers of foreign students at Italian universities decreased.³⁷ In stark contrast to this downward trend, many students from the Southern Netherlands studied law, medicine, philosophy or theology at Italian universities such as Bologna until the end of the seventeenth century. The *Collegio dei Fiamminghi*, which still exists today, was founded in 1650 by the Brussels goldsmith Jean Jacobs to provide support for citizens of Brabant and allow them to study at the Bolognese Alma Mater.³⁸ Ranging from the selection of suitable candidates in the parishes of Brussels to the observance of the Catholic liturgical calendar in the apartment, university life in Bologna was structured according to shared Catholic values and rules. The connection with their own nation and their organisation in an *universitas ultramontanorum* did not prevent the students at the Collegio from integrating within the Bolognese university culture, as is documented in seventeenth and eighteenth-century booklets collecting poetry in honour of the students' graduation, written primarily by Italian friends and lectors.³⁹

³⁵ Robertson, 'Glocalization', cit., p. 26.

³⁶ H. de Ridder-Symoens, 'Italian and Dutch Universities in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries', in: C. Maffioli & L. Palm (eds.), *Italian scientists in the Low Countries in the XVII-XVIIIth century*, Amsterdam, Atlanta, 1989, pp. 31-64.

³⁷ See De Ridder-Symoens, 'Italian and Dutch Universities', cit.

³⁸ A.M. Bertoli Barsotti, *Joannes Jacobs Bruxellensis (1575-1650). Orefice a Bologna, fondatore del Collegio dei Fiamminghi*, Bologna, Bononia University Press, 2014.

³⁹ *Fiori poetici raccolti in Pindo nel dottorato del molt'illust. & eccell. sig. Gio. van Nyverseel brussellese alunno del Collegio Belgico di Bologna*, Bologna, Gio. Battista Ferroni, 1657 ; *Fiori poetici*

In this period scientific experimentation and research had shifted from universities to academies, such as the Cimento in Florence (1657) and the Royal Society in London (1660). Scientists from Florence, but also from Rome and Bologna, sought to establish contacts with their colleagues in Western Europe in order to keep abreast of the most recent discoveries and discussions.⁴⁰ They participated in those debates by trying to publish their works in journals of learned societies or on the printing presses of London and Amsterdam. Some of Marcello Malpighi's works were republished in Amsterdam in 1669, when he became renowned in learned European circles as an experimental anatomist. The visibility of Bolognese scientists in Malpighi's medical circle in seventeenth century Europe can be attributed to the importance of contacts with Dutch scientists as Jan Swammerdam, Antoni van Leeuwenhoek and Herman Boerhaave.

Although the organization of intellectual institutions, academies and journals facilitated the diffusion of knowledge in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, personal networks remained the cornerstone of cultural exchanges in the Republic of Letters. The aforementioned Florentine librarian Antonio Magliabechi was an important mediator between Dutch correspondents and Italian intellectuals. He played a key role in the transmission of knowledge and news on newly published Italian books to intellectuals abroad.⁴¹ Dutch scholars, like Isaac Vossius and Nicolaas Heinsius, were interested in the intellectual developments in the Grand Duchy and travelled to Florence, in order to visit its illustrious libraries, copy manuscripts and meet Magliabechi.

The Dutch intellectual Gijsbert Cuper, who maintained contacts all over Europe, was one of Magliabechi's correspondents for more than 35 years. Jetze Touber discusses how Cuper's epistolary exchanges on geography, astronomy, antiquities and medieval history with Italians, of which most were active in the Papal orbit, illustrate the participation of Italians in intellectual debates of which the centre of gravity was in Northern Europe. Touber counters the general idea that Italy was closed to scientific innovation in the period between Galileo and Vico. While showing how Cuper functioned as a mediator within his network in culturally distinct areas of Northern and Southern Europe, he also sheds light on the intellectual exchanges as examples of Burkes 'cultural translations': correspondents discussed the same topics from the viewpoint of different political, religious and cultural ideas. Cuper could agree with Vignoli's analysis of medieval coins, but openly refused his political conclusion in favour of papal claims to the authority over Rome. Touber thus demonstrates how a social and political positioning of authors is clearly discernible when erudite debates touched upon contemporary issues. After all, the extent of the transfers continued to be determined by the mind set of authors, which depended in its turn not only on individual positions, but also on the adherence to ideologically marked social circles.

In conclusion, these case studies enable us to look more closely at the meaning of cultural transfer involving Italian or Netherlandish actors and objects. In the multi-faceted web of early modern exchanges, the locally determined perspective of

raccolti in Pindo per la felicissima laurea dottorale in ambedue le leggi conferita dalla celebre Università di Bologna al merito de' signori Francesco Alberto Fiquaert Everardo Pietro Van Veen Pietro Vanden Sande convittori dell'almo Collegio Jacobs detto de' fiaminghi, Bologna, Peri-All'Angelo Custode, 1718.

⁴⁰ M. Cavazza, 'The Editorial Fortune of Bolognese Scientists in Holland (1669-1726)', in: Maffioli & Palm (eds.), *Italian scientists in the Low Countries*, cit., pp. 165-188.

⁴¹ L.C. Palm, 'Italian influences on Antoni van Leeuwenhoek', in: Maffioli & Palm, *Italian scientists in the Low Countries*, cit., p. 159.

mediators or agents is of the utmost importance. When Cosimo visited Amsterdam, he was in the first place the political representative of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and relied on a network of loyal Tuscans who lived and worked in Amsterdam. Perceptions varied according to locally determined cultural differences, counteracting any approach in terms of 'national culture'. The importance of local perspectives is present in the histories written by Francesco Bocchi, Giovanni Costa, Girolamo Conestaggio and Emanuele Tesauro as well. They used the events in the Netherlands in favour of their own political agenda and local viewpoint, as did the Florentine merchant nation in Antwerp during its conflict with the Genoese nation.

The case studies point to the significance of a diverse range of connections of mediators with specific geographical and political entities or regions in the transfer of ideas and goods. In several contributions emerges the reliance on patronage and groups of compatriots and coreligionists in cultural transfers. This importance of networks within which mediators were active gives, to use a contemporary term, a *glocal* character to cultural transfers between Italy and the Low Countries: very often transnational tendencies intersected with a strong attachment to actors and values of the communities with which mediators were associated, and therefore corresponded to a regionally determined 'mental map'.

Keywords

Cultural transfer, Italy, Low Countries, glocal, early modern exchanges

Emma Grootveld works as a PhD-student at University of Leuven (KU Leuven) with a fellowship of the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO). She prepares a thesis on early modern Italian poems about religious wars in Europe, focusing on the interplay between different forms of authority within the texts. A substantial part of her corpus concerns Habsburg-related conflicts in the Netherlands before and during the Dutch Revolt.

KU Leuven, Faculty of Arts
Blijde Inkomststraat 21
3000 Leuven (Belgium)

Nina Lamal works as research assistant for the Universal Short Title Catalogue project at the University of St Andrews. In 2014 she obtained her PhD at the University of Leuven and University of St Andrews. Her PhD examined the Italian news report, political debates as well as histories on the Revolt in the Low Countries (1566-1648). Her research focusses on early modern book and communication history as well as on the political and cultural ties between Italian states and the Low Countries. She is currently working on the first bibliography of Italian newspapers entitled *Late with the news. Italian engagement with serial news publications in the seventeenth century 1639-1700*, which will be published by Brill in 2018.

University of St Andrews, School of History
71 South Street
KY16 9QW
St Andrews (Scotland, United Kingdom)

RIASSUNTO

Traslazioni culturali e dinamiche *glocal* tra l'Italia e i Paesi Bassi nel Cinque-Seicento

Questo contributo serve da introduzione alla sezione tematica del numero di *Incontri* 2015-2, dedicata agli scambi culturali tra l'Italia e i Paesi Bassi nel Cinque- e Seicento. L'articolo offre pertanto una visione d'insieme in cui i casi analizzati nei singoli contributi sono contestualizzati e connessi tra di loro alla luce dello sviluppo cronologico degli scambi. Dall'insieme degli studi emerge un'ampia varietà di connessioni tra l'Italia e i Paesi Bassi, motivate da ragioni letterarie e artistiche, ma anche politiche, economiche, religiose. Un ruolo privilegiato negli scambi è riservato ai mediatori, che partecipano attivamente nel processo transnazionale di trasferimento e di adattamento, ossia di *traslazione*, di elementi culturali. L'appartenenza a un determinato gruppo sociale, religioso o professionale si rivela fattore fondamentale nelle attività di tali mediatori. Spicca, inoltre, la prospettiva locale su cui i contatti tra l'Italia e i Paesi Bassi s'impennano: fiorentini, genovesi, romani, così come i cittadini dei Paesi Bassi meridionali e settentrionali, agivano con interessi divergenti che dipendevano dalla loro comunità di riferimento, e che condizionavano la loro percezione dell'altro. In questo senso, gli scambi riflettono non solo l'espansione geografica degli interessi e delle reti sociali nella modernità, ma anche il loro condizionamento locale.

The Antwerp Joyous Entry of 1549

The Florentine-Genoese conflict as a window on the role of a trading nation in political cultural transfers

Christophe Schellekens^{*}

In 1549, Philip of Spain, son of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, embarked on a tour through his father's empire. It is well known that in the decades beforehand, coincidences of succession, warfare and deliberate efforts to buy support had brought the Low Countries and the larger part of the Italian Peninsula together in an empire with an unprecedented level of integration. Thus far, scholars have concentrated mainly on the transfer of a broad range of cultural knowledge and techniques between these two areas. Yet, apart from Lamal's recent work, research that seeks to trace and understand transfers of political information and culture between the two regions is rare and is dominated by a biographical approach. This is in spite of the flourishing of both research on political culture and on transfer since the 1980s.¹ This article, then, is an attempt to explore the utility and limits of the concepts of cultural transfer and translation in the examination of a sixteenth-century political conflict on ceremonial priority between two Italian communities in the Low Countries.

Amongst the variety of terms defining cultural transfers, exchanges, hybridity and translation, the latter has the metaphorical strength of representing the transfer and accommodation of a cultural object – when reflecting on translation in the strictest sense this object is of linguistic nature – from one culture to another.² In this article I show that processes of both translation and transfer, even when they imply transnational transactions, can have considerable limits. They can be of

^{*} I am grateful to the editors of this theme issue (Emma Grootveld & Nina Lamal) for their generous and helpful comments and correction. This text also benefited from discussions with dr. Luca Molà and dr. Hans Cools. I also thank the two anonymous reviewers, who provided detailed feedback and bibliographical suggestions.

¹ N. Lamal, “‘Le orecchie si piene di Fiandra’. Italian news and histories on the Revolt in the Netherlands (1566-1648)”, Doctoral dissertation KU Leuven & University of St Andrews, 12 December 2014; H. Cools, ‘Philip of Cleves at Genoa: the Governor who failed’, in: J. Haemers, C. Van Hoorebeeck & H. Wijsman (eds.), *Entre la ville, la noblesse et l'état: Philippe de Clèves (1456-1528). Homme politique et bibliophile*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2007, pp. 101-115; C.R. Steen, *Margaret of Parma: A Life*, Leiden, Brill, 2013; On the political aspect and impact of information exchange, see the seminal study of De Vivo: F. De Vivo, *Information and Communication in Venice: Rethinking Early Modern Politics*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007.

² P. Burke, *Cultural hybridity*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2009, pp. 55-61; P. Burke & R. Po-Chia Hsia (eds.), *Cultural translation in early modern Europe*, Cambridge-New York, Cambridge University Press, 2007.

intracultural rather than intercultural nature; they can remain unaccomplished, or, as far as can be deduced from the archival sources, their 'translation' and concrete use within the political context could be limited. The relevance and applicability of the terms depend, in the case presented below, in their delineation of the diachronic and geographically transregional re-appropriation of historical precedents for specific purposes in new political contexts. This delineation has the aim of defending 'national' identity and culture: national, in this case, not referring to the imperialising nation-state but designating, on the contrary, the cultural coherence of a geographically connected but dispersed community.

This article is a case study of a conflict over rank and priority in the Joyous Entry parade of Charles V and Philip of Spain in Antwerp in 1549. During the preparations for this exceptional event, a conflict regarding precedence in the parade occurred between the Florentine nation and the nation of Genoese merchants in Antwerp. Historians have hitherto studied the printed narrative accounts of this event with particular attention to the way the various authors described the conflict.³ In these studies, however, no particular attention is paid to the questions on how and why the conflict occurred. In order to understand the nature of the conflict and its significance more fully, it is important to go beyond narrative sources. Unfortunately Antwerp archival sources seem to lack information on the subject. Interpreting this silence in the Antwerp archives is difficult, especially because a substantial number of her sources were destroyed in the Spanish Fury of 1576.⁴ The existing Florentine correspondence on the subject has not been investigated. Yet the letters exchanged between the Florentine 'natio' in Antwerp, the Duke and his administration in Florence and the Florentine ambassador at the court of Charles V enable us to understand better how the conflict was fought out in the weeks prior to the actual Entry and how the Florentine argument to win the conflict was constructed. Primary sources produced by the Genoese nation have not been investigated for this article and have not been discussed by other authors that have investigated either the Joyous Entry of 1549 or the Genoese mercantile presence in Antwerp.⁵

As I will demonstrate, from the Florentine perspective, the conflict of 1549 in Antwerp was situated within a longer sequence of quarrels over precedence in processions throughout Europe. These previous disputes were transferred and translated into arguments that could endorse the Florentine case in Antwerp. I present the various geographical and temporal origins of these arguments and the process through which they were transferred and translated. Since the creation of the Florentine Duchy, its rulers, in particular the second Duke, Cosimo I, aspired recognition from other European sovereigns.⁶ Cosimo I carefully constructed and reshaped his image as a ruler and had a long lasting dispute on ceremonial

³ S. Bussels, *Spectacle, Rhetoric and Power: The Triumphal Entry of Prince Philip of Spain into Antwerp*, Amsterdam, Rodopi, 2012, pp. 53-59; J.A. Goris, *Étude sur les colonies marchandes méridionales (portugais, espagnols, italiens) à Anvers de 1488 à 1567: contribution à l'histoire des débuts du capitalisme moderne*, Leuven, Librairie universitaire, 1925, pp. 78-79.

⁴ On Antwerp archival sources on the Entry, see Bussels, *Spectacle, Rhetoric and Power*, cit., pp. 33-40.

⁵ Beck discusses the participation of the Genoese nation in the Joyous Entry but does not elaborate on the quarrel with the Florentine nation: C. Beck, 'La nation genoise à Anvers de 1528 à 1555: étude économique et sociale', Doctoral dissertation, European University Institute, 1982, pp. 201-206.

⁶ G. Spini, 'Il Principato dei Medici e il sistema degli stati europei del Cinquecento', in: *Firenze e la Toscana dei Medici nell' Europa del Cinquecento*, Firenze, Olschki, 1983, I, pp. 177-216.

precedence with the Este dynasty of Ferrara.⁷ This article focuses on the way the Florentine nation in Antwerp was involved in Florentine efforts to gain precedence in ceremonies and how this was attempted through cultural transfers and translations of arguments for ceremonial precedence in the context of the Habsburg Empire.

The first part of this article sets the scene by introducing the context of the Antwerp Entry, the conflict and its main actors. The second part introduces the conflict by referring to the two main printed sources that discuss the ceremony: the official account of the Antwerp Entry by Cornelius Grapheus, and the description of Philip's travels by Juan Cristobal Calvete de Estrella. The third and main section closely examines the construction of the Florentine argument by looking at the correspondence between the Florentine nation in Antwerp and the government in Florence, in combination with the description of the conflict in the work of Lodovico Guicciardini. His work and his position as an observer of the conflict were different from those of Grapheus and Calvete de Estrella and with this in mind, I will show that as a member of the Florentine nation Guicciardini's narrative is influenced by insider knowledge.

The analysis of the case for precedence developed by the Florentine *natio* and the ducal secretary reveals that cultural transfers between the Low Countries and Italy included the transfer and translation of complex political information and concepts of power relations within cultural events. These processes should be understood in the context of the overarching political entity which was the Habsburg Empire. The Emperor's decisions affected politics in both the Genoese Republic and the Florentine Duchy. The rulers of these two polities therefor tried to gain favours from the Emperor that would benefit them.⁸

1549: Antwerp, the Entry and the merchant community

The importance of trade for Antwerp was a prominent theme in the Joyous Entry of 1549.⁹ At the time of the Entry, Antwerp was one of the most attractive marketplaces for commerce and banking in Europe and possibly beyond.¹⁰ Antwerp's financial market was an important place for the Habsburg monarchy to obtain credit.¹¹ Although commerce initially was the motor of Antwerp's success and the patrician city government supported an ideology of commerce, merchants were

⁷ H.Th. van Veen, *Cosimo I de' Medici and his self-representation in Florentine art and culture*, Cambridge-New York, Cambridge University Press, 2006; The Medici-Este conflict had started in 1541; for a brief general discussion and references to older monographs on the matter, see A. Contini, 'Aspects of Medicean Diplomacy in the Sixteenth Century', in: D. Frigo (ed.), *Politics and Diplomacy in Early Modern Italy: The Structure of Diplomatic Practice, 1450-1800*, Cambridge-New York, Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 49-94, in particular p. 79. The conflict ran further for more than a decade at other ceremonial occasions; see G. Ricci, *Il principe e la morte: corpo, cuore, effigie nel Rinascimento*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1998, pp. 69 & 161; also see: T. Osborne, 'The Surrogate War between the Savoy and the Medici: Sovereignty and Precedence in Early Modern Italy', in: *The International History Review*, 29 (2007), pp. 1-21.

⁸ A recent insightful analysis of the relation between Florence and the Habsburg empire can be found in N.S. Baker, *The fruit of liberty: political culture in the Florentine Renaissance, 1480-1550*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2013.

⁹ Bussels, *Spectacle, Rhetoric and Power*, cit., pp. 96-101. Based on Bussels' analysis, it seems that commerce of goods received more attention than banking, which was another important aspect of Antwerp's success as marketplace.

¹⁰ The classic account of the rise and fall of the Antwerp market remains H. Van der Wee, *The growth of the Antwerp market and the European economy (fourteenth-sixteenth centuries)*, Den Haag, Nijhoff, 1963.

¹¹ I. Blanchard, *The international economy in the "age of the discoveries", 1470-1570: Antwerp and the English merchants' world*, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 2009.

seldom directly involved in governing the city and did not acquire membership of the urban magistrate.¹²

The commercial and financial importance of Antwerp was not the main motive behind the Joyous Entry in Antwerp. The actual reason for the Entry was a juridical ceremony for the oaths of loyalty by Emperor Charles V's son Prince Philip on the one hand, and by the representatives of the Antwerp city government on the other.¹³ From that *de jure*-perspective, the Entry was primarily an event of local importance. Yet given the commercial and financial role of Antwerp in the Habsburg monarchy, the passage of the Holy Roman Emperor and his future successor also appealed to the numerous merchant communities in Antwerp as a unique opportunity to present themselves. This made the Entry a *de facto* international event.

Antwerp had begun to turn into a truly international city when foreign merchants started to settle in Antwerp at the turn of the fifteenth century. By then, Antwerp was gradually taking over the role from Bruges as a central meeting point for international trade in the Low Countries and North Western Europe. Whereas Bruges was first and foremost a place of encounter between Northern German Hanse merchants and Southern European – mainly Italian – merchant bankers, this was not the case in Antwerp anymore.¹⁴ The three groups of foreign merchants considered as the classic 'pillars' of Antwerp's primacy were the Portuguese, the English and merchants from the South of Germany, while merchants from the Low Countries also contributed strongly to the success of the Antwerp market.¹⁵ Nevertheless, Italian merchants remained a substantially present subgroup of foreign merchants in Antwerp.¹⁶ Groups of these Italian merchant organized themselves in corporative structures and communities: apart from the Florentine nation, also a Genoese nation and a Lucchese community were present.¹⁷

¹² A.M. Kint, 'The ideology of commerce: Antwerp in the sixteenth century', in: P. Stabel, B. Blondé & A. Greve (eds.), *International trade in the Low Countries (14th-16th centuries): merchants, organisation, infrastructure*, Leuven, Garant, 2000, pp. 213-222; Bussels, *Spectacle, Rhetoric and Power*, cit., p. 53.

¹³ Bussels, *Spectacle, Rhetoric and Power*, cit., pp. 79-81.

¹⁴ The debate on the transition from Bruges to Antwerp and the difference between these centres of trade is vast: see J.A. Van Houtte, 'Bruges et Anvers, marchés "nationaux" ou "internationaux" du XIVe au XVIe siècle', in: *Revue du Nord*, 34 (1952), pp. 89-108; B. Blondé, P. Stabel & O. Gelderblom, 'Foreign merchant communities in Bruges, Antwerp and Amsterdam, c. 1350-1650', in: S. Turk Christensen & D. Calabi (eds.), *Cultural exchange in early modern Europe: Cities and cultural exchange in Europe, 1400-1700*, Cambridge-New York, Cambridge University Press, 2007, II, pp. 154-174.

¹⁵ J. Puttevils, *Merchants and trading in the sixteenth century: the golden age of Antwerp*, London, Pickering & Chatto, 2015.

¹⁶ The argument that Italians remained an important group is made in R. Doehaerd, *Études anversoises: Documents sur le commerce international à Anvers, 1488-1514. Introduction*. Paris, SEVPEN, 1963, I, pp. 31-39; A general introduction to Italian trading nations abroad: G. Petti Balbi, 'Le nationes italiane all'estero', in: F. Franceschi, R.A. Goldthwaite & R.C. Mueller (eds.), *Commercio e cultura mercantile*, Treviso, Fondazione Cassamarca, 2007, pp. 397-423.

¹⁷ Lombards were a fourth community, yet we know very little about that group. The most conspicuously absent Italians were the Venetians: trade with Venice had been largely taken over by merchants from the Low Countries. See: C. Beck, 'Éléments sociaux et économiques de la vie des marchands génois à Anvers entre 1528 et 1555', *Revue du Nord*, 64 (1982), pp. 759-784; Beck, 'La nation génoise à Anvers de 1528 à 1555', cit.; R. Sabbatini, "*Cercar esca*": *Mercanti lucchesi ad Anversa nel Cinquecento*, Firenze, Salimbeni, 1985; J.L. Bolton & F. Guidi Bruscoli, 'When did Antwerp replace Bruges as the commercial and financial centre of north-western Europe? The evidence of the Borromei ledger for 1438', *Economic History Review*, 61, 2008, pp. 360-379; J. Puttevils, 'Klein gewin brengt rijkdom in: de Zuid-Nederlandse handelaars in de export naar Italië in de jaren 1540', *Tijdschrift voor sociale en economische geschiedenis*, 6 (2009), pp. 26-52.

The exact modalities of how and when the Florentine *natio* had moved from Bruges to Antwerp at the beginning of the sixteenth century remain unknown. Yet by the end of the fifteenth century, Florentines had already begun to come to Antwerp for the annual markets and increasingly throughout the year. In 1515, the Florentine and other nations had still participated in the Joyous Entry of the young Charles V in Bruges.¹⁸ This indicates a longer tradition of participation of foreign mercantile communities in important festive occasions during visits of rulers to commercial centres in the Low Countries. After their transfer to Antwerp, the Florentine nation never drafted new statutes but continued to govern itself based on its partially outdated Bruges statutes.¹⁹ The official recognition of the Florentine nation in Antwerp came in 1546, when Emperor Charles V recognized the consular rights of the head of the nation and gave other privileges.²⁰

This recognition did not give an impulse to the success of the nation. The perceived decline of the nation in Antwerp and the regionalisation of Florentine trading network stood in strong contrast to the rise of Genoese merchant bankers, which was closely interconnected with the Habsburg monarchy. The Genoese republic provided naval services to the Habsburg Empire and throughout the sixteenth century, Genoese bankers became the primary financiers of the Spanish monarchy.²¹ These two trends seem to have caused conflicts between the Florentine and Genoese nations. Recent research suggests that those occurred in regions where Genoese dominance rose.²²

The nation was organized to a large extent as a community with a high degree of internal discipline, control and boundaries distinguishing Florentine merchants from outsiders. Its regulations were aimed at preserving the reputation of Florentine merchants and at protecting them from duplicitous outsiders. The *natio* was led by a consul and two advisors (*consiglieri*) who all had a mandate for one year and were elected by the enlisted members of the nation.

There are no indications that the Florentine nation and its members were monitored closely by its city of origin before the late 1560s. All the same the position of any mercantile community was affected by political changes in the host- and hometown. In the following sections I will show that the Florentine nation and its participation in the 1549 Joyous Entry were part of and affected by the political and mercantile network of its hometown.²³ I will demonstrate that this network functioned as a repository and as the infrastructure for the transfer and translation of political precedents that had occurred in other political and cultural contexts.

¹⁸ S. Anglo (ed.), *La tryumphante entrée de Charles prince des Espagnes en Bruges 1515*, Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1970, p. 14.

¹⁹ G. Masi (ed.), *Statuti delle colonie fiorentine all'estero*, Milano, Giuffrè, 1941, pp. 3-33.

²⁰ C. Laurent, J. Lameere & H. Simont (eds.), *Recueil des ordonnances des Pays-Bas*, Brussel, Commission royale pour la publication des anciennes lois et ordonnances de la Belgique & J. Goemaere, 1910, V, pp. 296-298.

²¹ T.A. Kirk, *Genoa and the Sea: Policy and Power in an Early Modern Maritime Republic, 1559-1684*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005; C. Dauverd, *Imperial ambition in the early modern Mediterranean: Genoese merchants and the Spanish Crown*, Cambridge-New York, Cambridge University Press, 2014.

²² On the competition between Florentine and Genoese merchants in the South of Italy, see Dauverd, *Imperial ambition in the early modern Mediterranean*, cit., pp. 127-131.

²³ An overview of the qualities of and shifts in the Florentine network can be found in R.A. Goldthwaite, *The Economy of Renaissance Florence*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009, pp. 37-262.

The Antwerp Entry in official printed accounts: the rank conflict and Florentine participation

The Entry of Charles and Philip was an important festive occasion which was rigorously prepared and directed by Cornelius Grapheus, secretary of the city of Antwerp. He also meticulously managed the afterlife of the events by writing an official account of the Entry which was published in Antwerp in 1550.²⁴ This account was illustrated by the renowned painter Pieter Coecke van Aelst. A second account of the Antwerp Entry was written by Juan Cristobal Calvete de Estrella, a member of Charles V's entourage, who integrated the text in his larger description of Charles' and Philip's journey through the Habsburg lands.²⁵ From these two sources we know that the conflict between the Florentine and the Genoese nations had not yet been settled by the time of Charles V's arrival in Antwerp. The Emperor was asked to judge the unsettled dispute and decide which party had the best arguments for precedence. He refused to do so and ordered both nations to withdraw from the parade.

Before turning to the sources that give us most details on the dispute, it is important to briefly investigate how the two most elaborate accounts present and treat the conflict. Calvete de Estrella spends forty folios on the Antwerp Entry, which corresponds to more than 10 percent of his account of Philip's entire journey.²⁶ His detailed description touches only briefly, however, upon the struggle between the Genoese and the Florentines.²⁷ He does include a description of the Florentine triumphal arch at the trajectory of the procession and of how the Florentine and Genoese delegations in the procession would have looked like but neither references comparative cases, nor mentions the arguments of the two nations for claiming priority.²⁸ The Spanish chronicler considered that the decision of Charles V not to settle the conflict in favour of one of the two nations but to expel the two delegations from riding the actual Entry was already more than sufficient as a sanction. In his work, he did clearly did not want to add to that punishment by excluding them from his account as well.²⁹

Grapheus presents the Florentine and Genoese participation and even describes it as if their delegations had actually taken part in the Entry.³⁰ The decision of the Emperor to ban both *nationes* from riding is mentioned, but like Calvete de Estrella, Grapheus does not go into the exact cause of the quarrel, nor does he refer to previous conflicts between the two nations.³¹ The Florentine triumphal arch, which was still included on the processional route after the exclusion of the delegation, is

²⁴ Cornelius Grapheus & Pieter Coecke van Aelst, *De seer wonderlijcke, schoone, triumphelijcke incompst, van den hooghmogenden prince Philips, prince van Spaignen, Caroli des vijfden, keysserssone. Inde stadt van Antwerpen, anno M.CCCC.XLIX*. Antwerpen, Gillis van Diest, 1550.

²⁵ Juan Cristóbal Calvete de Estrella, *El felicissimo viaje d'el... Principe don Phelippe, hijo d'el Emperador don Carlos Quinto Maximo, desde España à... Alemaña, con la descripcion de... Brabante y Flandes*, Antwerpen, Martin Nucio, 1552.

²⁶ *Ivi*, ff. 220-260.

²⁷ 'Dexaron de falir Ginovefes y Florentines por la diferencia, que tuuieron enel preceder los vnos a los otros, y lo mismo los Portugueses, porque no precedieron a los Ingleses, teniendo ya todos hechos los vellidos muy costosos y ricos'. *Ivi*, f. 255 r.

²⁸ *Ivi*, ff. 236 v - 237 r & 255 v - 256 v.

²⁹ Bussels, *Spectacle, Rhetoric and Power*, cit., p. 55.

³⁰ Grapheus & Aelst, *De seer wonderlijcke, schoone, triumphelijcke incompst*, cit., ff. C i v & C ii v - C ii v: 'Ende hun incomen soude geweest hebben aldus'. Also discussed in Bussels, *Spectacle, Rhetoric and Power*, cit., p. 54.

³¹ Grapheus & Aelst, *De seer wonderlijcke, schoone, triumphelijcke incompst*, cit., f. C i v.

described and illustrated in detail, and Grapheus even lists the number of artists – carpenters, painters and image cutters – who had contributed to the arch.³²

These two elaborate accounts of the Entry are of limited value to understanding the nature of the quarrel. They mention the dispute, but do not elaborate upon its build-up. There are no indications of any implicit judgment in favour of one of the two nations. As Bussels remarks, Grapheus' narrative is more an official scenario of the event as it *should* have been rather than a post-factum recount of the actual event.³³ Similarly, Calvete de Estrella's choice not to present details of the conflict and to include the would-be Entry of the two Italian nations, is one example of how the Spanish chronicler did not go into incidents that might be considered a stain on the Entry.³⁴ In order to grasp the quarrel better, we should turn to more detailed sources, all of which have a Florentine background.

Translating arguments for precedence: Florentine correspondence on the conflict

Before going into the correspondence between the Florentine nation in Antwerp and the home government in Florence, it is necessary to investigate a third, less evident but all the more relevant, printed source. Seventeen years after the event, the Florentine Lodovico Guicciardini completed his famous *Descrittione di tutti i Paesi Bassi* and had it published in Antwerp.³⁵ Together with his brother Giovan Battista, Lodovico had arrived in the Low Countries in the 1520s to run the Antwerp branch of the Guicciardini firm. Although the Antwerp branch of his family business was unsuccessful, Lodovico remained in the city and started to engage in intellectual activities.³⁶ However, around the time of the publication of the *Descrittione* in 1567, Guicciardini still played an active role in the Florentine *natio* in Antwerp.³⁷

In his elaborate description and discussion of the city of Antwerp, Guicciardini also goes into the Joyous Entry of 1549, presenting it as one of the three most noteworthy events that had taken place in Antwerp in recent history.³⁸ Guicciardini discusses the leading role of Grapheus in organizing the Entry and its official account, and praises the contributions of Ambrosio Schiappalare to the Genoese arch.³⁹ However, the disagreements on precedence are discussed and contextualized far more substantially in his account than in those of Grapheus and Calvete de Estrella.

Guicciardini begins by indicating that apart from the conflict between the Italians, three other conflicts between merchant communities in Antwerp occurred in

³² *Ivi*, ff. G iii v - H ii r & f. O iii r.

³³ Bussels, *Spectacle, Rhetoric and Power*, cit., p. 55.

³⁴ *Ivi*, 47. Calvete de Estrella also did not discuss an incident of inappropriate behaviour by the crowd at the scene depicting the Mint.

³⁵ Lodovico Guicciardini, *Descrittione di tutti i paesi bassi, altrimenti detti germania inferiore*, Antwerpen, G. Silvius, 1567.

³⁶ D. Aristodemo, 'Guicciardini, Lodovico', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (2004) [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/lodovico-guicciardini_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/>](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/lodovico-guicciardini_(Dizionario-Biografico)/>) (29 June 2014).

³⁷ Lodovico was *consigliere* of the nation in 1568, see A. Grunzweig, 'Les papiers du magistrat des consulats aux archives d'état de Florence', in: *Bulletin de l'Institut historique belge de Rome*, 12, 1932, pp. 5-59, there p. 29.

³⁸ Apart from the Entry, the two other noteworthy events were the siege laid to Antwerp by Maarten van Rossem in 1542 and the riots of 1554: Guicciardini, *Descrittione di tutti i paesi bassi*, cit., pp. 84-88.

³⁹ *Ivi*, p. 86; Like Guicciardini, Schiappalaria was an unsuccessful Italian merchant who became active as an author in Antwerp, see: K. Bostoen, 'Italian Academies in Antwerp: Schiappalaria and Van der Noot as "Inventors" for the Genoese Community', in: D. S. Chambers & F. Quiviger (eds.), *Italian academies of the sixteenth century*, London, University of London Warburg institute, 1995, pp. 195-204.

the run-up towards the Entry. He states that the Italians as a whole group ‘with good reasons’, upon which he does not elaborate, claimed the primary position among the foreign communities. However, because of the absence of a common Italian ‘head’ and the occupation of a substantial part of Italy by foreigners, this was not granted.⁴⁰ Then, Guicciardini briefly sums up the other three disputes on rank between the Danish, the ‘Easterlings’ and the Germans, between the Spanish and the Germans, and between the Portuguese and the English. All these conflicts were either settled before the arrival of the Emperor or decided by the Emperor upon his arrival.

Guicciardini presents the dispute between the Florentines and the Genoese at the end of this discussion, explaining that this was the only one not to be settled in favour of any of the two parties involved. In order to avoid armed conflict between the members of both nations Charles V prohibited both delegations from participating in the Entry and ordered them to return to their homes, even though they were well prepared and ready to ride their horses.⁴¹ Guicciardini adds that the King of France, at that time Henry II, had decided a similar situation in favour of the Florentines the year before in Lyon. According to Guicciardini, this decision had been motivated by the precedence the Florentines held in Rome. The *Descrittione* thus offers more tantalizing clues to the conflict than the two other narrative sources. But it is thanks to the correspondence between the Florentine nation in Antwerp, the government in Florence and the Florentine ambassador at Charles V’s court that we can glean how all these different Florentines were involved in collecting and crafting arguments to gain precedence in Antwerp.

The letters are kept in the State Archives in Florence as part of the ‘Carteggio di Cosimo’ and of the minutes of Cosimo’s outgoing letters.⁴² The exchange of these letters discussing the Florentine position started on 3 August 1549. On that day Nicolo Rondinelli, the consul of the Florentine nation in Antwerp, and his two advisors wrote a lengthy letter to the Duke of Florence informing him that within a month a Joyous Entry will be organised in honour of the Prince of Spain.⁴³ They further explained that the Antwerp government had asked the foreign trading communities to participate in this event.⁴⁴ However, the claim of the Genoese nation that it should have precedence over the Florentine nation had become a cause of trouble between the two nations: ‘et intra l’altri di andati in lor compagnia ad incontrarla et riceverla è nata difficulta che la nazione Genovese pretende dover preceder’ alla nostra, et con ogni industria et diligenza si sforza di rimostrare tale

⁴⁰ ‘& prima gli Italiani di voler’ procurar’ di precedere con bonnissime ragioni a tutte le altre nationi, piu volte fra loro strettamente divisarono: ma considerato poi che Italia non ha un’ capo solo, & che essa per le sue discordie, è in buona parte da gli stranieri suggiugata, altra impresa non ne fecero.’ Guicciardini, *Descrittione di tutti i paesi bassi*, cit., p. 86.

⁴¹ ‘accioche fra loro qualche disordine d’arme non seguisse’, *Ibidem*.

⁴² I retrieved seven letters on the subject. In chronological order these are: Firenze, Archivio di Stato (hereafter ASF), *Mediceo del Principato* (hereafter MdP) 394, carte (hereafter cc.) 15 r - 16 r: the consul and consiglieri in Antwerp to Cosimo I, 3 August 1549; MdP 393, cc. 772 r - 773 r, Niccolò Rondinelli (consul) to Bernardo Antonio de’ Medici (indicated as ‘Vescovo di Forli’), 5 August 1549; MdP 14, cc. 200 r-v, Cosimo I to the consul and consiglieri in Antwerp, 20 August 1549; MdP 14, c 200 v, Cosimo I to Bernardo Antonio de’ Medici, 20 August 1549; MdP 14, c 207 r, Cosimo I to the consul and consiglieri in Antwerp, 20 August 1549; MdP 393, cc. 775 r-v, Consul Niccolo Rondinelli to Bernardo Antonio de’ Medici, 31 August 1549; MdP 393, c 776 r, Consul Niccolo Rondinelli to Bernardo Antonio de’ Medici, 31 August 1549.

⁴³ ASF, MdP 394, cc. 15 r - 16 r.

⁴⁴ ‘havendo li Signori del governo di detta villa richiesta insieme con l’altre natione forestiere la nostra ancora di volere honoranda Sua Altezza’, MdP 394, c. 15 r. Abbreviations in the original have been written fully and to some extent spelling is modernized (the use of u/v is adapted to modern Italian standards) for a better reading.

precedentia ad essa appartenersi'.⁴⁵ The remainder of the letter details the arguments the Genoese nation has used and the Florentine's counterarguments. Two days later, Rondinelli sent a similar letter to Bernardo Antonio de Medici, Bishop of Forlì and Florentine diplomat in the entourage of Charles V.⁴⁶ With these two letters, the consul of the Florentine nation in Antwerp informed both the highest authority in his hometown, and the most important Florentine agent close to the Emperor. Directly involving them was apparently considered as the best strategy to gain information that could benefit the case of the nation in Antwerp.

Rondinelli's letters give a good insight into the development of the Florentine arguments to counter claims made by the Genoese *natio*. His two letters elaborate upon the Genoese claim and relate it to the precedence the Genoese claimed to have gained from Charles V in Granada in 1525/6, in accordance with the Genoese precedence at the Roman court under the pontificate of 'Julio', Julius II (1503-1513). Then, 17 years later, at the coronation of Charles V in Bologna in 1530, the Genoese also had precedence.⁴⁷ The Genoese case for precedence was thus built on previous concessions given roughly a quarter of a century earlier. Rondinelli and his advisors countered these claims explaining that there had not been any Florentines present in either Granada or Bologna. Moreover, they were critical of the claim of Genoese precedence under Julius II, who was 'of their nation', suggesting that because Julius was born in the Genoese territory of Savona, he was not a neutral arbiter.⁴⁸

Apart from countering the Genoese legitimations for claiming precedence, the Florentine consul also referred to two cases where the Florentine *natio* had gained precedence over the Genoese: at the Roman court in an undated papal procession for Corpus Christi, and in 1548, when they had obtained a confirmation from the French king at his Entry into Lyon.

Ma che possiamo ben noi mostrar', che nella corte Pontificale nel portar' il Baldacchino del Corpus Divino alla processione Papale divine intervengono per grado et per dignità tutte le Nationi che vi si trovano, la nostra Natione doppo la Milanese ha preceduto allo Genovese et la Genovese haver preso il Baldacchino doppo la nostra, come ultimamente nel tempo del presente Pontefice: et frescamente dal Re cristianissimo nella entrata di Lione, que luna et l'altra nation' era punte essere stato dichiarato che la nostra dovesse precedere alla loro.⁴⁹

These two letters from the beginning of August 1549 do not, however, reveal how consul Rondinelli had gathered his information to counter the Genoese precedents and develop a solid argument for Florentine priority. It seems likely that the Entry of the French king to Lyon a year earlier and especially the role the Florentine community played in this context had come to the attention of members of the Florentine nation in Antwerp. Since Lyon was at that time a centre of commerce with an important Florentine mercantile community, the city was well connected to Antwerp and we may assume the nation in Antwerp benefited from that connection.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ ASF, MdP 394, c. 15 r.

⁴⁶ ASF, MdP 393, cc. 772-773. On Bernardo, see: B. Vanni, 'Medici, Bernardo de'', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 2009, [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/bernardo-de-medici_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/>](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/bernardo-de-medici_(Dizionario-Biografico)/>) (consulted 25 January 2015).

⁴⁷ ASF, MdP 394, c. 15 r. In the letter of the consul to Bernardo Antonio de' Medici this argument is also mentioned: 'etche tra li acti delli Ambasciadori, come ultimamente in Bologna nella coronation di S.M il medesimo era stato confermato', ASF, MdP 393, c. 772 r.

⁴⁸ ASF, MdP 393, c. 772 r.

⁴⁹ ASF, MdP 394, cc. 15 r-v.

⁵⁰ G. Iacono & S.E. Furone, *Les marchands banquiers florentins et l'architecture à Lyon au XVIe siècle*, Paris, Publisud, 1999.

It remains far less clear how Rondinelli had obtained his factual knowledge on the other events he referred to in order to repudiate the Genoese arguments. Nevertheless, his two letters and the answers from Florence provide us with some insight in the Florentine means of promoting their case for precedence, which were further crafted in the weeks to follow.

An important aspect of the quarrel was the demand for written proof that supported the respective claims. This was needed, since both the Antwerp city government (referred to as 'gli signori della villa' by consul Rondinelli) and Maria of Hungary, the governess of the Low Countries, were reviewing the case.⁵¹ Rondinelli mentions in his letter that in front of the *signori*, the Genoese nation delivered an oral testimony about their claims.⁵² In reaction to this, the Florentines asked the *signori* for written proof of the Genoese claims.⁵³ In requesting this proof from the Genoese, the Florentines, for their part, were quick and eager to assemble the necessary documents to support their own case. Rondinelli asked Duke Cosimo I for written proof of any case where Florentines had held precedence over Genoese.⁵⁴ Rondinelli had already figured out that the Siennese held precedence over the Genoese, and since Florence held precedence over Sienna, that would be an extra argument in favour of his case. Thus an authentic copy of the document that could prove this claim was requested.⁵⁵ Documents that could prove the hostility of Julius II towards Florence and the preference of the Roman master of ceremonies towards the Genoese in the days of Julius II were also requested in order to further discredit the Genoese position.⁵⁶

Unfortunately, the outgoing correspondence of Bernardo Antonio de' Medici has not been kept in the Medici archive, but the surviving minutes of the outgoing correspondence of Cosimo to the Florentine nation in Antwerp and to Bernardo Antonio demonstrate how the case is followed both in Florence and in Rome.⁵⁷ In Florence, the public records were searched for any relevant documents for the case. A courier was sent to the Florentine ambassador in Rome to notify him that he needed to find proof of the cases where the Florentine had held precedence over the Genoese at the Papal court. The letter detailed how the ambassador had to obtain such documents with the master of the papal household being urged to check his papers. Any document that was favourable for the Florentine case had to be copied by an authorized notary and the copy was to be returned as quickly as possible.⁵⁸ Aside from these instructions to the Florentine ambassador in Rome, Bernardo Antonio de' Medici was also urged to influence the Duke of Alva, a relative of Duke Cosimo I and at that time the *major-domo* of Charles V in his capacity as the King of Spain, to seek for any arguments in favour of the Florentine nation.

⁵¹ 'perche la Majesta della Regina d'Ungheria come Governatrice del paese per la istanza prima fatta à sua Majesta cesare per supplica, dalla nostra natione, che ne fusse conservato la precedenza gia in altri luoghi acquistata, ha scritto qui alli prefati del governo della villa che intendino le ragione delle parti, et à lei riferiscano per deliberarli seconda troverra per consiglia', ASF, *MdP* 393, c. 15 r.

⁵² 'la nation di Genova ha soto verbalmente allegati le cose sopradette in favor suo, ne ha per ancora prodotto per iscritto alcune delle predette ragioni allegate', ASF, *MdP* 394, c. 15 r.

⁵³ 'Per ilche habbiamo ultimamente fatto istanza alli predette signori della villa che dinuovo richieggiano li Genovesi à produrre in scritto quelle chiarezze con le quala intendono valersi et' ricusando la che cene diano un Atto et cosi han detto di fare', ASF, *MdP* 393, c. 15 v.

⁵⁴ ASF, *MdP* 394, c. 15 v.

⁵⁵ ASF, *MdP* 394, c. 16 r.

⁵⁶ ASF, *MdP* 394, c. 16 r.

⁵⁷ ASF, *MdP* 14, cc. 200 r-v & *MdP* 14, cc. 200 v-201 v.

⁵⁸ ASF, *MdP* 14, c. 201 r.

The efforts of the Florentine ambassadors were fruitful. On 20 August, the Duke sent a letter to the heads of the *natio* in Antwerp.⁵⁹ The search in the Florentine archives had not resulted in any relevant findings but the previous night a courier had returned from Rome with a *fede*, a trustworthy document delivered by the master of ceremonies of the Holy See. This document confirmed that for years, the Florentine delegation had held precedence over the Genoese delegation in the annual Corpus Christi procession in Rome. In Cosimo's view, this statement, in combination with the argument that the King of France had granted precedence to the Florentine nation in Lyon a year earlier, strengthened the Florentine case considerably.⁶⁰ The documents were duly sent to Antwerp where they were presumably well received by the consul.

No further correspondence on the case beyond the 31st August can be traced in the archives of the Florentine Duke. This lack of additional correspondence appears to indicate that there was no structural monitoring of the nation by the Florentine government. In his last letter, Cosimo I did not explicitly request any further updates on the matter nor did the *natio* have any routine of continuously reporting on Antwerp affairs to the Duke.⁶¹

More importantly, the lack of correspondence suggests that the process of crafting the Florentine argument happened *ad hoc* with a strong sense of urgency. The various backgrounds of the arguments for Florentine priority make this clear. The Genoese arguments (priority in Granada and at the coronation of Charles in Bologna) were both strongly linked to the Emperor. The Florentine arguments were not related to the Habsburg sphere but to priority granted by the Pope and the king of France, two rulers who challenged the Emperor on every level. The Florentines considered both cases as valid arguments to counter the older cases of Genoese priority.

In his analysis of the Antwerp Entry, Jochen Becker suggests that the Florentine arch, which was nevertheless a feature of the Entry processional route, contained the rhetoric of a Florentine challenge to the Emperor's superior position.⁶² It would, however, be going perhaps too far to interpret the non-Habsburg background of the Florentine arguments for priority in the parade as a similar challenge. The desire to gain priority was too strong to take such a risk. As noted above, in the years before and after the Antwerp Entry, Florentines were involved in several quarrels for precedence in ceremonies. However, the lack of reflections in the correspondence on the different nature and background of the Florentine and Genoese precedents remains revealing. It suggests that the Habsburg political and cultural context was not considered as the only evident framework of reference in which reasons for priority could be found.

Finally, it is important to note that the arguments used by the Florentine nation were judged relevant enough to find their way into Guicciardini's *Descrittione* seventeen years later. For a reader of Guicciardini unfamiliar with the particularities

⁵⁹ ASF, MdP 14, c. 207 r.

⁶⁰ ASF, MdP 14, c. 207 r.

⁶¹ Although much more research on this is required, it seems that these observations are in line with a separation between political and economic affairs that Richard Goldthwaite observed for the fifteenth century: R.A. Goldthwaite, 'The Medici Bank and the World of Florentine Capitalism', in: *Past & Present*, 114, 1, 1987, pp. 3-31; Compare to the strong monitoring practices of the Venetian state: De Vivo, *Information and Communication*, cit.

⁶² J. Becker, "'Greater than Zeuxis and Apelles': Artists as Arguments in the Antwerp Entry of 1549", in: J. R. Mulryne & E. Goldring (eds.), *Court festivals of the European Renaissance: art, politics, and performance*, Aldershot-Burlington, Ashgate, 2002, pp. 180-184.

of the dispute, the single sentence on the Florentine precedence gained in Lyons in 1548 seems odd. It gives the impression that Guicciardini tried to settle the case in favour of the Florentines, thus implicitly criticising the decision of the Emperor. Through Guicciardini's printed text the arguments for Florentine precedence became accessible to a larger audience. In that way, the *Descrittione* became a publicly accessible repository of knowledge about the handling of the dispute in Antwerp in 1549. Later generations of Florentine, and possibly other foreign, merchants throughout Europe could therefore potentially benefit from this knowledge.⁶³

Transfer and translations of precedence: a conclusive reflection

The dispute over rank between the Florentine and Genoese trading nations in Antwerp in 1549 shows that political culture, information and arguments were important matters of transfer between the Low Countries and Italy. The analysis of the correspondence in Florence allows a better understanding of how the gathering of knowledge and information on aspects of political culture occurred and how important it was for the Florentine government to act in such a way.

The Florentine nation and its home government went to great lengths to win the case. The collecting and shaping of the evidence for the Florentine case seems to have been driven more by urgency to find any solid argument than by extensive reflections on the nature and qualities of those arguments. Paradoxically, neither the political context of the city of Antwerp and the Low Countries, nor the overarching Habsburg political context were explicitly taken into consideration in the deliberation on how to gain precedence.

The circumstances of Antwerp as a centre of commerce under Habsburg rule do in particular differ from those of the earlier cases that had taken place in primarily religious (Rome) and non-Habsburg (Lyon) ceremonial contexts. The different conditions of these contexts allow us to consider the process under scrutiny as a one of cultural transfer and translation. Through processes of transfer and translation, earlier cases of Florentine precedence were used in the primarily commercial and Habsburg context of the Antwerp Entry of 1549. The correspondence shows the practical details of collecting relevant information on previous disputes and the transfer of arguments from the government in Florence to the Florentine nation in Antwerp. The actors involved (the members of the nation in Antwerp, the Duke in Florence, the ambassador at the court of Charles V and the Florentine delegation in Rome) were all part of the Florentine network. From a perspective that focuses on infrastructure and actors, the process was primarily intracultural.

By observing how the Florentine argument was crafted in this case, we notice that Florence functioned as a coordinating centre of transfers and translations, or as a storehouse of information coming from outside the region and transferred elsewhere (*i.e.* Antwerp). This is exemplified by the two cases used as arguments for Florentine precedence, which originated outside the Florentine Duchy. The common denominator between Rome, Lyons and Antwerp was that members of the Florentine network were active as diplomats or merchant-bankers in these locations and were involved in a ceremony where they held precedence over the Genoese. Yet, the transfer and translation process was not finished by sending the letter from Florence to the nation in Antwerp. Members of the Florentine nation must have had the intention to translate the two cases to the context of the Antwerp Entry in front of

⁶³ The influence of previous sources on Guicciardini has been studied, see several contributions in P. Jodogne (ed.), *Lodovico Guicciardini, 1521-1589: actes du Colloque international des 28, 29 et 30 mars 1990*, Brussel, Ed. de l'Université de Bruxelles, 1991. The intellectual afterlife and especially the use of the *Descrittione* by travellers and (Florentine) merchants has not yet been investigated.

the Antwerp magistrates, the organizers of the Entry, to the governess, and eventually to Charles V. On that last step, the sources remain silent.

Moreover, the temporal framework of these transfers was layered as well. The correspondence through which the argument for Florentine precedence was transferred took place over a period of about one month. But the temporal framework of the arguments was much longer, tracing cases back over decades. Through Guicciardini's *Descrittione*, in particular, the quarrel also became a potential *future* point of reference after the event had taken place.

Despite the fact that most of the transfer process occurred inside the Florentine network, it is important to stress that this was not a purely intracultural Florentine transfer within that network. The process took place because of an event that was not primarily Florentine. Neither were the parties that had to be convinced. Also, the subject of the transfer – the arguments from Lyon and Rome – originated within a non-Florentine context. The intracultural Florentine nature of the infrastructure and the actors involved was thus transcended by the extra cultural qualities of the all the ceremonial occasions mentioned.

These paradoxical qualities of the process under scrutiny complicate a qualification of the process as a cultural transfer or a cultural translation. Translation implies the transfer of cultural objects from one distinctive cultural setting to another. The case presented in this articles fits into that model only to a certain degree. Translation also entails an effort to adapt those objects (*in casu* the arguments for precedence taken from Lyons and Rome) to the particularities of the context on the receiving end of the process (*i.e.* the Antwerp Entry of 1549), However, none of the actors involved in the process of collecting the arguments reflected on that in their letters. Their agency was limited to transferring activities, not to developing strategies to insert the transferred cases into the context of the Antwerp Entry.

Keywords

Florentine trading nation, Antwerp, Joyous Entry, cultural transfer, precedence

Christophe Schellekens is a PhD-researcher in history at the European University Institute. His dissertation studies the Florentine and Lucchese merchant communities in sixteenth-century Antwerp, with special attention to their relation with their home regions. Before starting his PhD, he worked at the research group for Early Modern history at the University of Leuven. He holds degrees in history and in Medieval and Renaissance studies from the University of Antwerp and the University of Leuven.

Via Boccaccio 121
50133 Firenze (Italy)
christophe.schellekens@eui.eu

RIASSUNTO

La felice entrata ad Anversa del 1549

Il conflitto fiorentino-genovese come una finestra sul ruolo di una nazione commerciale in transfer culturali politici

In quest'articolo sono esaminati vari documenti a proposito delle iniziative che la nazione italiana ad Anversa e il governo fiorentino presero per ottenere la precedenza sulla nazione genovese nel corteggio della felice entrata di Carlo V ad Anversa, nel 1549. Un'analisi della corrispondenza fiorentina vuole offrire una ricostruzione empirica dell'impegno dimostrato dalla comunità fiorentina a questo riguardo. Benché la rete comunicativa sia di carattere transnazionale e la corrispondenza si basi su esempi del passato avvenuti in diversi contesti culturali, l'analisi svela alcuni aspetti che comprometterebbero un'interpretazione in termini di transfer o di traslazione, poiché lo scambio di informazioni ha luogo principalmente all'interno della comunità fiorentina.

Translating and distributing Italian religious literature in the ecclesiastical province of Cambrai (late 16th, early 17th century)

Alexander Soetaert^{*}

Printing in the ecclesiastical province of Cambrai began hesitantly in the first half of the sixteenth century, but by 1590 printing offices were finally established in towns such as Arras, Lille or Saint-Omer.¹ A press had been active in Douai since the foundation of the university there in 1562, but the Douai printers had primarily produced Latin editions for an academic clientele. The newly arrived printers, however, focussed on religious books in French for pastoral purposes. It is remarkable that at least a third of the vernacular editions of religious printed matter in Cambrai over almost a century were translations. Many of these were translated from the Latin, but more than half had an Italian or Spanish original. This article will only deal with translations from the Italian, which made up a quarter of all translations of religious literature published in the ecclesiastical province of Cambrai between the introduction of a printing press in Douai in 1563 and the Treaty of the Pyrenees (1659), which transferred most of the territories of the region to France.² How did Italian religious literature in translation reach the Cambrai province? Why were these books translated, issued in or distributed from the Gallic parts of the Habsburg Netherlands? Who took the initiative to produce, print and spread them and which local actors (printers, translators, clerics, religious or other institutions and bodies) emerge as the driving force behind the translation and distribution of Italian religious literature in Cambrai?

^{*} The research for this article has been conducted as a part of the research project 'The making of transregional Catholicism. Print culture in the ecclesiastical province of Cambrai (1559-1659)' funded by the KU Leuven Research Council. I am grateful to my supervisors Violet Soen and Johan Verberckmoes, the anonymous reviewers, the editors of this thematic issue and my colleagues at the Early Modern History section at KU Leuven for their valuable comments on earlier versions of this text. I also wish to thank Roisín Watson for correcting my English.

¹ The ecclesiastical province of Cambrai was only established in 1559. It encompassed the dioceses of Cambrai, Arras, Saint-Omer, Tournai and Namur and, as such, more or less united the Francophone regions in the south of the Habsburg Low Countries.

² 178 translations from Italian on a total of 702 translations of religious books have been found. The data are gathered from the Universal Short Title Catalogue (USTC; accessed 25 March 2014) and the printed *Répertoires bibliographiques* by Albert Labarre (Bibliotheca Bibliographica Aureliana 40, 44, 86, 111, 133 & 148, Baden-Baden, Koerner, 1971-1996). These data are incomplete and therefore all statistics are approximate, but nonetheless indicative.

French translations from the Italian have been studied quite extensively in recent years and new research is ongoing.³ During the sixteenth century Italian art, architecture and culture in general reached a high degree of popularity in France. In the context of these renaissance influences, translations from the Italian were highly popular. Much attention has been paid to Paris and Lyon, France's largest typographic centres, and most scholars agree that provincial towns did not play a significant role in publishing translations from Italian.⁴ For the most part, the provinces seem to have only reprinted editions that had first appeared in Paris or Lyon. In addition to the editions from Paris, Lyon and French provincial towns, the recent bibliographic repertories also list a considerable (though incomplete) number of books printed in the Habsburg Netherlands, beyond the confines of the French kingdom. Although these editions are mentioned, they have received little scrutiny so far. It is tempting to see them merely as an extension of French and more particularly Parisian or Lyonese developments. However even if the religious and cultural context of the Cambrai region to a certain extent paralleled that in France, the political situation was often quite different, as the region was an integral part of the Habsburg Netherlands. So, it cannot be assumed that the motives for publishing translations from the Italian in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries were the same, for instance, in Douai and Paris.

Studies on French translations from the Italian have often stressed their importance for the development of French language and literature. Especially in the sixteenth century, French translators imitated and emulated the Italian model in order to enrich the French language. They tried to attain the same heights as the Italian original because they wanted to prove that French could reach the same level of elegance and sophistication.⁵ Rather than measuring the linguistic and literary impact of translations from the Italian, this article approaches Italian books from a religious perspective. In fact, almost all translations from the Italian published in the Cambrai province dealt with religious themes. Hence, they should be seen against the background of Counter-Reformation and Catholic renewal.⁶ Therefore, instead of

³ J. Balsamo, *L'amorevolezza verso le cose Italiane: le cose Italiane à Paris au XVI^e siècle*, Genève, Droz, 2015; *Idem*, V. Castiglioni Minischetti & G. Dotoli (eds.), *Les traductions de l'italien en français au XVI^e siècle*, Paris-Fasano, Hermann-Schena, 2009; G. Dotoli, V. Castiglioni Minischetti & P. Placella Sommella (eds.), *Les traductions de l'italien en français au XVII^e siècle*, Paris-Fasano, Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne-Schena, 2001; M. Blanco-Morel & M.-F. Piejus (eds.), *Les Flandres et la culture espagnole et italienne aux XVI^e et XVII^e siècles*, Villeneuve d'Ascq, Université Charles de Gaulle - Lille III, 1998; N. Bingen, *Philautone 1500-1660: répertoire des ouvrages en langue italienne publiés dans les pays de langue française de 1500 à 1660*, Genève, Droz, 1994. The ongoing project EDITEF (*L'édition italienne dans l'espace francophone à la première modernité*) directed by Chiara Lastraioli at the Centre d'Études Supérieures de la Renaissance in Tours can be followed via www.editef.univ-tours.fr.

⁴ J. Balsamo, 'Introduction', in: *Idem*, V. Castiglioni Minischetti & G. Dotoli (eds.), *Les traductions de l'italien en français au XVI^e siècle*, Paris/Fasano, Hermann/Schena, 2009, pp. 16-64, esp. p. 46.

⁵ J. Balsamo, 'Le débat sur la traduction et l'apologie de la langue française à la fin de la Renaissance: François Gilbert de La Brosse et Barthélemy de Viette', in: G. Dotoli (ed.), *Les traductions de l'italien en français du XVI^e au XX^e siècle, actes du colloque, Monopoli, 4-5 octobre 2003*, Fasano, Schena, 2004, pp. 37-52, esp. pp. 37-38.

⁶ On the role of books, translations and reading in these movements, see: R. Po Chia-Hsia, *The world of Catholic renewal, 1540-1770*, Cambridge, University Press, 2005 (2nd edition), esp. Chapter 11, 'The Catholic book', pp. 172-186; C.M.N. Eire, 'Early modern Catholic piety in translation', in: P. Burke & R. Po Chia-Hsia (eds.), *Cultural translation in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge, University Press, 2007, pp. 83-100 and D. Julia, 'Lectures et Contre-Réforme', in: G. Cavallo & R. Chartier (eds.), *Histoire de la lecture dans le monde occidental*, Paris, Seuil, 2001, pp. 297-335. A recent account on the Counter-Reformation in general is given by A. Bamji, G. H. Janssen & M. Laven (eds.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to the Counter-Reformation*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2013, which unfortunately has no chapter on Counter-Reformation books.

mapping the linguistic influences of translations from the Italian, this contribution will search for the place of Italian literature within the religious developments in the ecclesiastical province of Cambrai.

Printing translations in the ecclesiastical province of Cambrai

While printing flourished in Antwerp during the sixteenth century, for a long time the Francophone provinces in the southern parts of the Habsburg Netherlands lacked a successful printing business. Some printers did try their luck in Valenciennes (c. 1500), Hesdin (1512), Cambrai (1518) and Arras (1520) in the first half of the sixteenth century, but their businesses were hardly profitable.⁷ They seem to have produced only a very limited number of editions and most of the presses ceased after a few years. Shortly after the foundation of the university of Douai (1562) the town magistrate convinced the Louvain printer Jacques Bosccard to settle in Douai. Yet, the proximity of major typographic centres such as Antwerp, Paris or Cologne further hindered the establishment of printers elsewhere in the region. It would take until the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century before printers settled in Mons, Arras, Lille, Saint-Omer, Valenciennes, Tournai, Cambrai and Namur. Around 1600 Antwerp was still the leading typographic centre of the Habsburg Low Countries, but its dominance apparently no longer thwarted the emergence of printing businesses elsewhere.

The establishment of new printing offices ran in striking parallel with the rise of religious literature in French. During the 1560s and 1570s in Douai mainly theological treatises in Latin came off the presses, but from the late 1580s an ever increasing number of French books was published in Douai, Mons and Arras. Although Latin remained the so-called universal language of the Catholic church, the Counter-Reformation and movements for Catholic renewal had sparked an interest in vernacular religious books. Already in 1565 Maximilien de Berghes (1518-1570), the first archbishop of Cambrai between 1558 and his death, forced his Provincial Council to accept the decrees of Trent.⁸ Around 1580, while Calvinist rebels controlled most towns in Brabant and Flanders, the ecclesiastical province of Cambrai had blossomed into the more stable and Catholic part of the Habsburg Netherlands, a fact that was also acknowledged by some contemporaries.⁹ As a consequence the region became an attractive refuge for Catholics fleeing the British Isles or Flemish and Brabant towns under Calvinist rule.¹⁰ As will become clear further on, it was no coincidence that the

⁷ On this development, see: A. Pettegree, *The book in the Renaissance*, Yale, Yale University Press, 2010, esp. 53-55.

⁸ A. Lottin, 'La mise en œuvre de la réforme catholique, à travers les conciles provinciaux de Cambrai (1565, 1586, 1631)', in: M. Aoun & J.-M. Tuffery-Andrieu (eds.), *Conciles provinciaux et synodes diocésains du Concile de Trente à la Révolution française. Défis ecclésiaux et enjeux politiques? Actes du colloque tenu à Strasbourg les 4 et 5 mai 2009, organisé par l'Institut de droit canonique de l'Université de Strasbourg*, Strasbourg, Presses Universitaires de Strasbourg, 2010 pp. 167-186, esp pp. 169-174.

⁹ E.g. L. Surius, *La vie de sainte Colette*, Mons, Charles Michel, 1594, 2 voll. (dedication by Michel Notel: 'ceste Ville de Mo[n]s, est l'une des plus catholicques et deuotes Villes, que i'ay rencontré, ny aux Itales, ny aus Allemagnes, ny en France, ny en tous ces pays bas'). For a general account of the Counter-Reformation in Lille and the surrounding regions: A. Lottin, *Lille, citadelle de la Contre-Réforme? 1598-1668*, Villeneuve d'Ascq, Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2013 (2nd edition).

¹⁰ L. De Frenne, 'Professions, prêtres et pensions. Les réfugiés catholiques aux Pays-Bas méridionaux sous l'administration des archiducs Albert et Isabelle (1598-1621/1633)', in: C. Bruneel et al. (eds.), *Les 'Trente Glorieuses'. Pays-Bas méridionaux et France septentrionale. Aspects économiques, sociaux et religieux aux temps des archiducs Albert et Isabelle*, Bruxelles, Archives et bibliothèques de Belgique, 2010, pp. 107-125; G. Janssen, *The Dutch Revolt and Catholic Exile in Reformation Europe*, Cambridge, University Press, 2014, pp. 62-66.

publication of translations from Italian coincided with these evolutions and with the foundation of Jesuit and Capuchin houses in particular.¹¹

Local monks, canons, parish priests and even some laymen did their part in producing original works in the French vernacular of the region themselves, as well as in translating books from Latin, Italian and Spanish into French. In the period 1561-1600 almost 60% of all French editions in the region were translations. Most, however, were issued in the last fifteen years of the sixteenth century, which also saw the steep rise of French religious literature in general.¹² Although during the first decades of the seventeenth century the share of translations dropped to approximately 30%, only in the 1630s, when continuous warfare rendered the printing business more difficult, was the pinnacle of publishing translations over.

Up until the Early Modern period most of the texts of Catholic tradition, of which the importance had been confirmed during the Council of Trent, had remained in Latin. Knowledge of this 'universal language', however, was far from general among Catholics and hence, if the Catholic Church aimed at embedding the foundations of its faith firmly into the minds of the faithful, vernacular translations were of the utmost importance.¹³ Yet in a context of Catholic Reformation which, for a large part, was inspired by Southern European developments translations from Italian and Spanish might have been as essential as those from Latin. In a recent study Philippe Desmette has pointed to some of these Italian influences on religious developments in the Cambrai province. When in 1581 the Soignies canons sought to erect a Confraternity of the Holy Name of Jesus, they seem to have been in direct correspondence with the Roman Dominicans. Possibly the erection of the Mons Sunday school (1584) and the catechism of the archdiocese of Cambrai were directly influenced by Italian precursors through the person of vicar-general François Buisseret. While there is no proof of particular connections with Italy, Italian influences are also evident from the veneration of saints such as Cardinal Borromeo, of which the cult was introduced in the Habsburg Netherlands by the bishop of Saint-Omer, Christophe de France, during a plague epidemic in 1635-1636.¹⁴

While some books by Italian authors were printed in Latin in the Cambrai province, not a single religious book in Italian is known to have been printed there between 1563 and 1659.¹⁵ As a consequence, translations from Italian in particular appear to have played a part in spreading new mystical, spiritual, contemplative and devotional practices originating in Italy. In the ecclesiastical province of Cambrai 38% of the translations published between 1563 and 1659 were from Latin, while translations from Italian and Spanish accounted for 25% each.¹⁶ In the first decades of

¹¹ A. Poncelet, *Histoire de la Compagnie de Jésus dans les Anciens Pays-Bas*, Bruxelles, Hayez, 1927, I, pp. 60-74, 142-149 & 173-196; P. Hildebrand, *De kapucijnen in de Nederlanden en het Prinsbisdom Luik. Deel 1: de tweetalige Nederlandsche Provincie 1585-1616*, Antwerpen, Archief der Kapucijnen, 1945, pp. 100-117, 126-129 & 199-202.

¹² In the 1590s 80% of all French editions in Douai were translations.

¹³ Eire, 'Early modern Catholic piety in translation', cit., pp. 83-84.

¹⁴ P. Desmette, 'Les Pays-Bas, terre de réforme catholique', in: G. Deregnaucourt et. al. (eds.), *Dorsale catholique, Jansénisme, Dévotions. XVIe-XVIIIe siècles. Mythe, réalité, actualité historiographique*, Paris, Riveneuve éditions, 2014, pp. 243-256, on pp. 247-251.

¹⁵ E.g. those works of the Jesuit Giovanni Pietro Maffei (*De vita et moribus Ignatii Lojolae*, Douai, Jean Bogart, 1585) and the Archbishop of Bologna Alfonso Paleotti (*Historia admiranda de Iesu Christi stigmatibus sacræ sindoni impressis*, Douai, Laurence Kellam, 1607). The only editions in Italian printed in the region before 1660 appear to be two or three music books, see: Bingen, *Philautone 1500-1660*, nos. 252, 282 and 683a.

¹⁶ Besides, 6% was translated from French and 5% from other languages (Greek, Dutch, German, Portuguese).

the seventeenth century the presses in the Cambrai province produced an average of five translations from the Italian each year. Although printers in smaller typographic centres (Saint-Omer, Valenciennes, Tournai and Mons) did not wholly neglect such editions, they took an especially important share in the output of Balthazar Bellere in Douai, Robert Maudhuy in Arras and, in later years, Pierre de Rache in Lille.¹⁷

Printers, booksellers and the readership in the Habsburg Netherlands seem to have been particularly fascinated by the works of Italian Jesuits and Capuchin friars, which accounted for 52 editions and 17 percent of all translations from Italian between 1563 and 1659 respectively.¹⁸ The book *De la perfection religieuse et de l'obligation de l'acquiescer* by the Italian Jesuit Luca Pinelli (1542-1607) was issued five times by Bellere between 1603 and 1625. During the 1620s and 1630s the same printer produced four editions of *Le chemin asseuré de paradis*, a book written by the Capuchin friar Alessio Segala (1558-1628). *Le pratique de l'oraison mentale ou contemplative* by another member of the Capuchin order, Mattia Bellintani (1535-1611), and the catechism of the Jesuit cardinal Bellarmine (1542-1621) also had several editions in the Cambrai province. Other books concerned the passion or resurrection of Christ, some also dealt with the sacrament of the communion or told the lives of (Italian) martyrs and saints.

The popularity of these authors and subjects was of course not unique for the ecclesiastical province of Cambrai; most of the books mentioned here appeared in multiple editions elsewhere in Catholic Europe. But, in contrast to Paris, Lyon or Antwerpen, there was little interest in Cambrai to publish translations of Italian poetry or books on architecture and history. Rather than being a part of a humanist and renaissance culture, and the result of the vigour to further enrich the French language, in the Cambrai province issuing translations from the Italian was inseparable from the developments that characterized the Catholic faith in the later sixteenth century.¹⁹

The French Connection

In 1596, Balthazar Bellere, a printer of Antwerp descent who had moved to Douai in the previous years, published a reissue of the *Meditation sur les mysteres de la passion et resurrection de Jesus Christ*, a book written by the Italian Jesuit father Vincenzo Bruno (1532-1594).²⁰ The French translation was composed by the Bordeaux canon Philibert Dusault and printed first in Paris in 1589. Two years before, Bellere had produced a French translation of Saint Bonaventure's meditations upon the passion, made by François Gilbert de La Brosse, one of the most popular French translators of the period. Bellere's close contacts with the French book market are even more obvious from his 1598 edition of the *Excellent traité de la mortification de nos passions*, written by the Italian Jesuit Guilio Fatio (or Fazio, 1537-1596). The French translation by François Solier (1558-1628), a Jesuit professor who acted as rector of the college at Limoges in these years, had been published earlier that year by Guillaume Chaudière in Paris. In total, Bellere printed 47 books translated from

¹⁷ Bellere (printer 1593-1639) issued 47 translations from the Italian on a total of 559 editions (a share of c. 8,5%, an average of approximately one edition a year), Maudhuy (printer 1592-1632) 13 on 52 (25%) and Rache (printer 1611-1647) 15 on 130 (c. 12%).

¹⁸ Other works (but all in comparably small numbers) can be linked to the Dominican, Norbertine, Franciscan, Carmelite, Augustine and Theatine orders and to the Canons Regular of the Lateran.

¹⁹ Compare Balsamo, 'Introduction', cit., pp. 17-18, 49 & 63.

²⁰ For more information about Bellere, see: A. Labarre, 'Les imprimeurs et libraires de Douai aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles', in: F. de Nave (ed.), *Liber Amicorum Léon Voet (= De Gulden Passer, 61-63 (1983-1985))*, Antwerpen, Vereeniging van Antwerpsche Bibliophielen, 1985, pp. 241-260, on p. 245.

the Italian, and at least 22 of these were translated by a French translator or issued first in France (and especially in Paris or Lyon). Similar French connections apply for his colleagues in Douai, Arras or Mons.

The example of Bellere indicates that printers in the ecclesiastical province of Cambrai scrupulously followed developments in the French book market. In 1593 Gilles Bauduyn, bookseller at Arras, even explicitly referred to his associates in Lyon, stating that ‘vn mien ami auait enuoié de Lion, la traduction d’Italien en François’ of a book by Mattia Bellintani.²¹ The data collected by Annie Parent, on the other hand, demonstrate that Parisian booksellers sold their editions to their colleagues in Arras, Cambrai, Mons or Tournai.²² The 1614 catalogue of the Douai printer and bookseller Pierre Borremans († c. 1616), for instance, mentions several books translated from the Italian printed in Paris and Rouen.²³ His stock included, amongst others, Cesar Calderari’s *Conceptions théologiques sur le Miserere mei* issued in Paris in 1601,²⁴ Gabriel Chappuys’s translation of a work on the same topic by Jules Mazarini issued by Chaudière in 1611²⁵ and a *Traicté de penitence* by Vincenzo Bruno, published in Rouen in 1610.²⁶ On a political level, the French-speaking provinces were fully integrated into Habsburg institutions, but on a linguistic level the vernacular was shared with France.²⁷ This ‘language union’ was a major advantage for printers, because they could easily sell editions in French printed across the border in Paris, Lyon or elsewhere in the Kingdom of France.²⁸

Considering the success of translations from the Italian in France, printers in the Habsburg Netherlands, and especially in the ecclesiastical province of Cambrai, must have been keen not only to sell, but also to reissue the Parisian or Lyonese

²¹ Mattia Bellintani, *Pratique de l’oraison mentale ou contemplative ... Première partie*, Arras, Gilles Bauduyn, 1593, *2 r° (dedication to Jean Sarrazin, abbot of the Abbey of St.-Vaast in Arras).

²² A. Parent, *Les métiers du livre à Paris au XVIe siècle, 1535-1560*, Genève, Droz, 1974, maps facing pp. 150, 152, 166, 208, 212 & 214.

²³ *Hortvlvs bibliothecarivs continens Florentissimos flores Librariæ Petri Borremans*, Douai, Pierre Borremans, 1614. The only copy known is preserved in the Bibliothèque Mazarine (8° 34344-7). A. Labarre, ‘Le catalogue de Pierre Borremans à Douai, 1614’, in: *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch*, 56 (1981), pp. 207-209 provides a detailed description of the document.

²⁴ *Hortvlvs bibliothecarivs*, 95v°. This translation by Estienne Alemandi de Saluces seems to have been issued with various imprints within the same year, including those of Abraham Saugrain (copy of the Bibliothèque du Saulchoir, Paris), Dominique Salis (copy of the BNU, Strasbourg) and Laurent Sonnius (copy of the Discalced Carmelite Convent, Ghent).

²⁵ *Hortvlvs bibliothecarivs*, 96r°. Most probably the catalogue refers to the second edition of the *Cent-trente discours ... sur le Psalme 50e Miserere mei Deus, divisez en III parties*. Cfr. Dotoli, Castiglioni Minischetti & Placella Sommella, *Les traductions de l’italien ... au XVIIe siècle*, cit., p. 293.

²⁶ *Hortvlvs bibliothecarivs*, 101v°. I have found no reference to this edition elsewhere.

²⁷ In daily life the inhabitants of these regions spoke various Walloon dialects and although they may have used and preferred other words or grammatical constructions, the written language was essentially the same as that written in, for instance, Paris. As is evident from the circulation of reprints of Parisian or Lyonese editions, works written or translated by Frenchmen could be easily understood in the French-speaking parts of the Low Countries. Contemporary accounts of the difference between the languages as spoken and written in these regions and France are given by the Douai town clerk Paul du Mont (*L’anatomie du corps politique compare au corps humain*, Douai, Jean Bogart, 1581, ‘Advertissement au lecteur’) and the Franciscan writer Philippe Bosquier (in his *Tragoedie nouvelle, dicte le petit razoir*, Mons, Charles Michel, 1589, A3 v°). I am indebted to Alisa van de Haar for directing my attention to Bosquier’s book.

²⁸ Translations of political works, on the other hand, had to fit with the views of local governments and were adapted more frequently, as has been shown by L. Behiels, W. Thomas and C. Pistor, ‘Translation as an Instrument of Empire: The Southern Netherlands as Translation Center of the Spanish Empire, 1500-1700’, in: *Historical Methods*, 47, 3 (2014), pp. 113-127.

editions.²⁹ The position on the border between France and the Netherlands created interesting opportunities for local printers. They were beyond the reach of French authorities and therefore they did not have to comply with French printing privileges. Bellere and his colleagues could easily reprint Parisian or Lyonese translations, with little or no changes and without facing legal difficulties.³⁰ In March 1608 the *Conseil privé* in Brussels even accorded a privilege to Guillaume de la Rivière of Arras with regard to a French translation of a book by Luis Cerqueira, a Jesuit missionary and bishop in Japan. The printer obtained permission ‘de pouvoir luy seul imprimer, vendre & distribuer certain livret, intitulé Histoire veritable de la Glorieuse mort que six nobles Chrestien Japonois ont constamment enduré’ for a period of three years, although this translation from Italian had been issued in Paris the previous year.³¹ In other words, some printers applied for a new privilege that would grant them the monopoly to print and distribute translations across the Habsburg Netherlands that had previously been issued in France. This reminds us of the considerable commercial and financial interests at stake and the existence of competition between the printers of the Habsburg Netherlands in issuing such editions. For printers in the ecclesiastical province of Cambrai, reprinting some of the numerous French editions was the most obvious strategy to enlarge their bookshop’s supplies of popular Italian books in translation in an easy, cheap and legally risk-free way.

Claude de Bassecourt and Antoine Gazet

The production of translations in the Cambrai region, however, was not confined to reprints of Parisian and Lyonese editions. Printers and booksellers could also make an appeal to local *gens de lettres* who knew Italian and were acquainted with Italian literature. Although Bellere published many translations from the Italian produced by French translators, at least eleven of his editions were translated by ‘local’ translators. Claude de Bassecourt was one of them. Bassecourt, born in Mons around 1570, translated two books from Italian by order of Balthazar Bellere and the Arras printer Robert Maudhuy.³² The first book, by the Italian Jesuit Vincenzo Bruno, dealt with the mysteries of the life of Christ; the second, entitled *Jardin spirituel*, was written by Paolo Morigia and first published in Venice in 1581. These translations must have been well-received, for in 1598 the Bruno translation had a second edition and in 1615 and 1623 the text was reprinted by Pierre Rigaud at Lyon. The dedications of both books confirm that the printers had ordered the translations themselves. Robert Maudhuy, printer of Morigia’s book, explicitly stated that he had

²⁹ Balsamo, Minischetti & Dotoli, *Les traductions ... au XVI^e siècle* lists 60 translations from Italian printed at Antwerp between 1532 and 1600. Almost 60% of these editions were published between 1550 and 1570 and many deal with history, architecture or linguistics. The KU Leuven research project entitled ‘The Southern Netherlands as translation centre for the Spanish monarchy in the sixteenth and seventeenth century’ will offer more complete figures.

³⁰ Records concerning a printing privilege accorded to Robert Maudhuy in 1614 suggest that some printers tried to produce cheaper editions than the original French ones, see: Brussel, State Archives, *Conseil privé sous le régime espagnol* [hereafter: CPE], 1276, no. 89.

³¹ L. Cerqueira, *Histoire veritable de la glorieuse mort, que six nobles chrestiens laponois ont constamment enduré pour la Foy de Iesvs-Christ*, Arras, G. de la Riviere, 1608, printing privilege. The Parisian edition, bearing the same title, was published by C. Chapelet.

³² About Bassecourt, see the introduction of: C. de Bassecourt, *Trage-Comédie Pastoralle* (1594). *Publiée avec une introduction et des notes*, G. Charlier (ed.), Bruxelles, Palais des Académies, 1931. A recent account is given by: J.-P. Barbier-Mueller (ed.), *Dictionnaire des poètes français de la seconde moitié du XVI^e siècle (1549-1615)*, Genève, Droz, 2015-, I, pp. 364-377. Nothing has been heard of him after 1598, although Charlier (pp. xxxviii ff.) suggested that he might have worked in Paris in later years.

paid Bassecourt.³³ Even if there is no confirmation of this payment, it seems that he translated for his living. In this case he would be on a par with some French translators for whom translating was becoming a profession in its own right.³⁴

Yet, as the case of Antoine Gazet illustrates, printers were not the only ones who took the initiative to order new translations. Gazet was a physician from Aire-sur-la-Lys, a small town close to Saint-Omer, but was encouraged to spend his spare time translating by his elder brother Guillaume (1554-1612), an Arras priest known as a prolific author and translator himself.³⁵ After presenting his brother with some 'good' Italian books, Guillaume encouraged Antoine in composing and publishing translations, although Antoine himself considered his work 'assez rude & mal polie'.³⁶ In the late 1590s three translations by Antoine were published in Arras and Douai: two books by the Italian Jesuit Fulvio Androzzi dealing with communion and Christ's passion respectively; and a third one by the Capuchin friar Bernardino da Balbano on the flagellation of Christ.³⁷ According to Guillaume, his brother also prepared a fourth translation, again of a book by Bruno. But this translation would never appear in print, since shortly before the text went to press a reissue of a French translation by the aforementioned François Solier was published by Laurence Kellam in Valenciennes. The availability of a recent French edition probably made Gazet's printer doubt the profitability of yet another one.³⁸

At first sight, Gazet and Bassecourt had different motives for translating books from the Italian, though similarities can be seen too. Both translators had learned Italian during a stay in Italy. Around 1588 Bassecourt probably travelled to Italy in the entourage of the nobleman Philippe de Croÿ. Back in the Low Countries he became a law student in Douai. There he participated in a literary competition around 1592. Although he did not win the contest (wrongfully in his opinion), the pieces he wrote on this occasion clearly demonstrate his fascination with Italian writers such as Ariosto and Petrarca.³⁹ Antoine Gazet, for his part, had resided in Italy for five years while completing his studies. During his stay he travelled the whole of Italy and no doubt he also acquired a very good knowledge of Italian. In one of his dedicatory letters Gazet argues that it is the duty of a traveller to observe precisely what he comes across and to relate his experiences to his friends. No doubt, Antoine's views must be seen in a religious perspective, given also the

³³ V. Bruno, *Meditations svr les principavx mysteres de tovtte la vie de nostre Seigneur Iesus-Christ*, Douai, B. Bellere, 1597, *4 and P. Morigia, *Iardin spirituel*, Arras, R. Maudhuy, 1598, §2-§3. Records concerning a privilege granted to Bellere in 1608 also indicate that he commissioned new translations from the Italian (CPE, 1276, no. 130).

³⁴ Balsamo, 'Introduction', p. 7; T. Uetani, 'La naissance d'un métier: traducteur. Jalons chronologiques', in: C. Bénévent, I. Diu and C. Lastraioli (eds.), *Gens du livre et gens de lettres à la Renaissance*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2014, pp. 33-61, esp. p. 59; P. Burke, 'Cultures of translation in Early Modern Europe', in: *Idem* & R. Po Chia-Hsia (eds.), *Cultural translation in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge, University Press, 2007, pp. 7-38, here pp. 12-13.

³⁵ R. Aubert, 'Gazet (Guillaume)', in: *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques* [hereafter: DHGE], Paris, Letouzay & Ané, 1912-, XX, cols. 186-187.

³⁶ F. Androzzi, *Traicté de la freqvente commvnion, et des fruicts qui en procedent*, Douai, J. Bogart, 1599, *2 r°-v° (dedication by Antoine Gazet to his brother Guillaume).

³⁷ F. Androzzi, *Devot memorial des saints mysteres de la mort et passion de nostre Sauueur & Redef[m]pteur Iesus-Christ*, Arras, J. Bourgeois, 1595; B. da Balbano, *Le sacre mystere de la flagellation de nostre savueur*, Arras, J. Bourgeois, 1595 and Androzzi, *Traicté de la freqvente commvnion*, cit.

³⁸ Cfr. G. Gazet, *La bibliotheqve sacree dv Pays-Bas*, Arras, G. de la Riviere, 1610, p. 107 ('il a esté preuenu en l'imprissio[n] par les traducteurs Fra[n]çois'). Most likely he referred to: Vincenzo Bruno, *Abbrege des meditations de la vie, passion, mort et resurrection de nostre Seigneur*, Valenciennes, Laurence Kellam, 1601.

³⁹ Bassecourt, *Trage-Comédie Pastorale*, cit., pp. XIII-XIV & XVIII-XXXI.

encouragement of his brother, one of the most important clergymen of Arras at the time. Antoine acknowledged that he felt obliged to translate Italian literature ‘pour en illustrer & enrichir [la] nation’ and to introduce ‘choses si grandes & excellentes’ to his fellow-countrymen.⁴⁰

Translating the Catholic Reformation

The large number of translations from the Italian printed in the ecclesiastical province of Cambrai cannot fully be explained by the commercial interests of printers and the personal contacts translators had with Italy. As is evident from the case of Antoine Gazet, the religious context must be taken into account. Most translations in the Cambrai region had been composed by either secular or regular clergy; lay translators, such as Gazet and Bassecourt, were in fact in the minority. At least a part of the print run was intended for the libraries of religious institutions, as is apparent from contemporary handwritten notes in many of the existing copies. Translators often expressed the wish that the Italian examples of spiritual, devotional and mystical practices would inspire and be followed by readers in more northern parts of Europe.⁴¹ Most convincingly, the contents of the books - ranging from the mysteries of Christ’s life, his passion, Marian devotions and the sacrament of communion to the lives of Italian Jesuits and Capuchins and letters from the Catholic missions in Asia - definitely place these editions within the parameters of Catholic renewal.

It comes as no surprise that much of the translations can be linked to the Jesuit, Capuchin, Oratorian or Theatine orders, all of which had Italian (or at least southern European) origins and had been established fairly recently. Jesuits and Capuchins were widely respected for their role in education and preaching, but they also supported and facilitated the south-north cultural translation of literature associated with Catholic renewal.⁴² Not coincidentally, the rise of Jesuit and Capuchin literature in the Cambrai province followed the establishment of numerous houses of these orders.⁴³ The interest in translations was most evident within the Society of Jesus.⁴⁴ After being sent to the Jesuit general in Rome first, letters from the missions in the Far East were spread all over Catholic Europe and translated into various vernaculars by local members of the society. From the 1590s these letters regularly appeared in French in Douai, Arras and Lille.

At least a few of these missionary letters were translated from Italian into French by Antoine de Balinghem (1571-1630), a Jesuit born in Saint-Omer who was sent to Novellara, Italy, to complete his novitiate around 1588. By 1592 he had returned to his native region where he applied himself to teaching, preaching and writing. During the early decades of the seventeenth century, Balinghem was the

⁴⁰ Da Balbano, *Le sacre mystere*, b2 r°-v° (dedication by Gazet).

⁴¹ See for instance: V. Cepari, *La vie dv bien-hevrevx Lovys Gonzaga de la Compagnie de lesvs*, Douai, J. Bogart, 1608 (transl. by A. de Balinghem), dedicatory letter to Archduchess Isabella by the translator; Hermanni, *La vie dv bienhevrevx Alexandre Lvzage*, ã2 v° (‘Le tradvctevr av lectevr’).

⁴² Cfr. A. Pettegree, ‘North and South: cultural transmission in the sixteenth-century European book world’, in: *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*, 89 (2012), pp. 507-520.

⁴³ These foundations were supported financially by town magistrates, nobles (arch)bishops, canonical chapters and even powerful Benedictine abbots. On these developments, see: Poncelet, *Histoire de la Compagnie de Jésus*, I, pp. 142 ff., 164-191 & 380-394 and Hildebrand, *De kapucijnen ... Deel 1*, cit., pp. 100-117, 126-129 & 199-202.

⁴⁴ On Jesuit translations, see: P. Burke, ‘The Jesuits and the Arts of Translation in Early Modern Europe’, in: J.W. O’Malley et al. (eds.), *The Jesuits II. Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts 1540-1773*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2006, pp. 24-32.

most prolific Jesuit author and translator in the ecclesiastical province of Cambrai.⁴⁵ His first publication was a translation of the letters from Japan from the years 1589 and 1590. In an dedicatory letter he informs the reader that he was instructed ‘de mettre & coucher succinctement en ma langue naturelle, le contenu & sommaire des dernieres lettres qui du Japon ont esté apportées à Rome, & de Rome en ces quartiers’, illustrating the desire of local superiors to publish these letters in French, as well as the importance of the connection with the Jesuit generalate in Rome.⁴⁶

In later years, Balinghem published translations of the lives of Italian Jesuits and nobles. In 1608 a French edition of the life of the Jesuit Aloysius Gonzaga (1568-1591) was printed by the Douai printer Jean Bogart. Balinghem dedicated his translation to Archduchess Isabella, who had met Gonzaga during his stay at the court of her father, Philips II of Spain. The translator hoped that Gonzaga, who had resided at so many courts without committing any sin, might serve as an example to the courtiers of Isabella.⁴⁷ A similar wish recurs in another of his translations: the life of the Italian nobleman Alessandro Luzzaga (1551-1602). This time Balinghem justified his translation by the fact that he had known Luzzaga personally ‘& ay eu l’honneur de le pratiquer, de luy parler, mesme de manger à sa table; parquoy ie me sentoy comme oblige de donner a cognoistre au monde les vertus de celuy avec lequel i’auoy autresfois traicté familièrement l’espace de presque 4. ans que ie me suis tenu en la ville de Bresce’.⁴⁸ Of course, Luzzaga was a layman, but, according to the translator, his virtues were so ‘excellent and rare’ that his life was of exemplary value to laymen and clergy alike.

Not all translations of Jesuit literature published in the Cambrai province had been composed by local translators. Again a considerable share of 40% of the translations, such as those composed by the mentioned François Solier, was imported from France. Examining the translations of Italian Capuchin books, this ‘French connection’ appears to have been even stronger. For a long time the Capuchin order had been reluctant about reading, writing and the ownership of books and hence Capuchin translators frequently remained anonymous.⁴⁹ Many title pages only mention that the book was translated by ‘a Capuchin friar’. Rarely, if ever, were the editions introduced by a dedicatory letter clarifying the motives for a particular translation. Yet translations of Italian Capuchin books were issued regularly in the ecclesiastical province of Cambrai and their ascent runs in striking parallel with the establishment of new Capuchin houses there.⁵⁰ Between 1591 and 1611 no less than

⁴⁵ On Balinghem, see: W. Audenaert, *Prosopographia Iesuitica Belgica Antiqua: a biographical dictionary of the Jesuits in the Low Countries 1542-1773*, Leuven, Filosofisch en Theologisch College van de Sociëteit van Jezus, 2000, I, p. 71; C. Sommervogel (ed.), *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, Bruxelles, Schepens, 1890-1960, I, cols. 831-841 and E. Lamalle, ‘Balinghem (Antoine de)’, in: *DHGE*, VI, cols. 387-388.

⁴⁶ *Sommaire des lettres du Japon, et de la Chine de l’an M. D. LXXXIX. & M. D. XC.*, Douai, widow J. Boscard, 1592. Another selection of these letters was translated by Michel d’Esne, the future bishop of Tournai and a known supporter of the Society of Jesus (*Lettre du Japon des années 1591. Et 1592*, Douai, Jean Bogart, 1595).

⁴⁷ Cepari, *La vie du bien-heureux Lovys Gonzaga*, cit.

⁴⁸ Hermanni, *La vie du bienheureux Alexandre Luzzaga*, cit., â2 r°. Balinghem was also acquainted with the author of Luzzaga’s life, Ottavio Hermanni.

⁴⁹ On the position of the Capuchin order towards books, see: B. Dompnier, ‘Entre possession collective et usage individuel. Le livre chez les capucins français des XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles’: in: M.-H. Froeschlé-Chopard & B. Dompnier (eds.), *Les religieux et leurs livres à l’époque moderne. Actes du colloque de Marseille, E.H.E.S.S., 2 et 3 avril 1997*, Clermont-Ferrand, Presses Universitaires Blaise-Pascal, 2000, pp. 213-233.

⁵⁰ Approximately 25 translations of Italian Capuchin books were issued between 1595 and the late 1630s.

fifteen convents were founded, more than half of them in only four years (1591-1595).⁵¹ The arrival of large numbers of Capuchin friars, as well as the growing interest in the order, provided Capuchin literature with a new readership and clientele. As a consequence, printing and selling Capuchin books must quickly have become a lucrative activity.

Although the identity, motives and personal Italian connections of Capuchin translators remain obscure, the ecclesiastical approbations (the permission to print a book given by a bishop, his representative, order superiors or theologians) help to uncover the route Capuchin books made from Italy into the Habsburg Netherlands. From these approbations Lyon emerges as an important intermediary centre in transferring Capuchin books to the north.⁵² The editions of Arras and Douai often included the permissions given in Brescia by the Capuchin superiors for the original Italian version, as well as the approval of the French translation, mostly signed in Lyon by the local bishop and the local order superiors. These statements were then supplemented with the approbation by the episcopal censors of Douai and Arras.⁵³ In summary, it may be stated that the Capuchin translations demonstrate how the impetus given by the order itself coincided with, and was often strengthened by, the commercial networks of local printers and booksellers, who closely followed developments in France's major typographic centres.

Conclusions

I would like to propose three main agents that contributed to the transfer of Italian religious literature into the ecclesiastical province of Cambrai and the Habsburg Netherlands in general. First, the cross-border relations linking members of the Cambrai book world with French typographic centres explain how French Italianising tendencies spread into the French-speaking provinces of the Netherlands. Indeed, the publication of translations from the Italian, and in a more general sense the development of the Catholic book in these provinces as a whole, was to a large extent inspired by the transregional exchanges alongside and across borders that characterized the region.

Second, personal connections with Italy were a major advantage in transmitting Italian literature to the north. Antoine Gazet, Claude de Bassecourt and Antoine de Balinghem all temporarily resided in Italy to pursue their studies. They acquired an extensive knowledge of the Italian language and, more importantly, encountered a new type of religious literature, that they would translate and spread among their fellow-countrymen upon their return home. Finally one has to consider the role played by religious orders. As has been shown, the establishment of numerous Capuchin and Jesuit houses largely stimulated the transfer of Italian literature into the Habsburg Netherlands.

These three agents often worked together. Balinghem proves how personal connections with Italy and the incentives of the Society of Jesus could combine. Certainly, the presence of local Capuchin houses had been an important stimulus in

⁵¹ Hildebrand, *De kapucijnen ... Deel 1*, pp. 100-117, 122-129, 199-206, 213-219, 231-239, 248-250. Bellintani's *Pratique de l'oraison mentale ov contemplative*, for example, is dedicated to Jean Sarrazin, abbot of the Benedictine Abbey of Saint-Vaast in Arras, in reward for his financial support for the foundation of a Capuchin convent in Arras.

⁵² The Arras bookseller Jean Bauduyn, for instance, explicitly refers to his contacts in Lyon in one of his dedications (Bellintani, *Pratique de l'oraison mentale ov contemplative*, *3 r°).

⁵³ Among many examples: A. Segala, *La mariade ... Où est enseigné la methode d'aymer & servir et honorer la glorieuse Vierge Marie*, Arras, R. Maudhuy, 1619. The Brescian approbations are dated 1611, those at Lyon 1614. The permission by Guillaume Sucquet, canon and official at Arras, is from 1619.

printing translations of Italian Capuchin literature, but this would not have been possible without the connections printers maintained with Lyon. The commercial way of thinking that guided printers and booksellers and their transregional networks went hand in hand with the impetus provided by religious orders and translators. So, the Cambrai book world demonstrates how printers, translators - clerical as well as lay - and religious orders all contributed to the same enterprise: transferring the literature, and hence the ideas, of Southern European Catholic reform into the Habsburg Netherlands.

Keywords

Translations, Italian religious literature, Catholic Reformation, Arras, Douai

Alexander Soetaert studied history at the KU Leuven and graduated with a study on floods in an urban context in the Early Modern period. From 2013 he is a member of the Early Modern history department at Leuven University. His doctoral research focuses on how transregional contacts and exchanges influenced the evolution of the production of Catholic books in the ecclesiastical province of Cambrai (1559-1659). This research project can be followed via the website transregionalhistory.eu.

KU Leuven

Faculty of Arts, research unit Nieuwe tijd

Blijde-Inkomststraat 21, box 3307 3000 Leuven (Belgium)

alexander.soetaert@arts.kuleuven.be

RIASSUNTO

Tradurre e distribuire letteratura religiosa italiana nella provincia ecclesiastica di Cambrai (fine XVI-inizio XVII sec.)

Tra la fine del Cinquecento e l'inizio del Seicento, centinaia di traduzioni dal latino, dall'italiano, dallo spagnolo e da altre lingue furono stampate nella provincia ecclesiastica di Cambrai (le regioni francofone dei Paesi Bassi asburgici). In questo contributo sono esaminate le traduzioni francesi di opere di letteratura religiosa italiana (1563-1659). Siccome quasi tutte le edizioni stampate a Cambrai riguardavano dei temi religiosi, queste traduzioni vanno lette alla luce della Controriforma e del rinnovamento cattolico. Anziché misurare l'impatto linguistico e letterario delle traduzioni dall'italiano, in questa sede si cerca di collocare la letteratura italiana stampata a Cambrai all'interno degli sviluppi religiosi in quella provincia. Come questi libri raggiungevano Cambrai, chi li traduceva e chi li diffondeva? Dallo studio emergono tre fattori decisivi per la diffusione dei libri italiani a Cambrai. Un primo fattore sono le relazioni transfrontaliere tra il mondo librario di Cambrai e la Francia, le quali spiegano come certe tendenze francesi italianeggianti si diffondevano verso le province francofone dei Paesi Bassi asburgici. In secondo luogo, le reti di conoscenze dei traduttori locali con l'Italia facilitavano la trasmissione di testi italiani verso l'Europa settentrionale. Infine, un ruolo fondamentale era assunto dagli ordini religiosi, in particolare da quelli dei gesuiti e dei cappuccini. Questi tre canali non erano affatto mutualmente esclusivi, ma spesso coincidevano e si rinforzavano a vicenda. Nella provincia di Cambrai gli stampatori, i traduttori, gli ordini religiosi e altre istituzioni partecipavano, nel loro complesso, alla stessa impresa, cioè di trasferire verso i Paesi Bassi asburgici la letteratura, e quindi le idee, della riforma cattolica dell'Europa meridionale.

Il mito dell'Olanda

Politiek en geschiedschrijving in vroegmodern Italië

Cees Reijner

De honger naar het laatste nieuws over militaire en politieke verwickelingen in het door conflicten getroffen vroegmodern Europa was groot. Dat gold ook voor het Italiaanse schiereiland, waar vooral in de zeventiende eeuw een vloed aan pamfletten, nieuwsbrieven en contemporaine historiografie in omloop werd gebracht. De focus van dit artikel ligt op de Italiaanse geschiedschrijving over de Nederlandse Opstand (1568-1648). Volgens de Italiaanse filosoof en historicus Benedetto Croce (1866-1952) kwam de omvangrijke zeventiende-eeuwse Italiaanse productie van geschiedwerken over de verwickelingen in en buiten Europa voort uit pure nieuwsgierigheid. Om zich op de hoogte te stellen van de verschillende internationale brandhaarden, reisden intellectuelen uit verschillende gebieden van het Italiaanse schiereiland naar door onrust en oorlogen geteisterde streken in Europa.¹

Inderdaad speelde de nieuwsgierigheid van de Italianen zeker een rol bij deze historische interesse voor gebeurtenissen in de wereld.² Maar er was meer aan de hand, in elk geval met de Italiaanse belangstelling voor de Nederlandse Opstand. In dit artikel beargumenteer ik dat de historische werken van Giovanni Costa, Gerolamo Conestaggio en Francesco Bocchi, met de Nederlandse Opstand als onderwerp, inhaakten op interne politieke debatten die hoog op de agenda stonden in de stad of streek van de auteurs.³

De Opstand in de Italiaanse historiografie: een inleiding

De Nederlandse Opstand tegen het Spaans-Habsburgse bestuur was een internationale oorlog die overal in het vroegmoderne Europa op de voet werd

¹ B. Croce, *Storia della età barocca in Italia*, Bari, Laterza, 1929, pp. 99-136.

² Voor een uitgebreide studie over de Italiaanse geschiedschrijving in de Renaissance en de Barok zie E. Cochrane, *Historians and historiography in the Italian Renaissance*, Chicago-Londen, The University of Chicago Press, 1981. Over de Italiaanse historiografie in de late Renaissance en in de tijd van de Contrareformatie zie het nog steeds zeer waardevolle essay van G. Spini, 'I trattatisti dell'arte storica nella Controriforma italiana', in: *Contributi alla storia del Concilio di Trento e della Controriforma* (Quaderni di Belfagor), Florence, Vallecchi, 1948. Van meer recente datum is: W.J. Connell, 'Italian Renaissance Historical Narrative', in: J. Rabasa, M. Sato, E. Tortarolo & D. Woolf (eds.), *The Oxford History of Historical Writing* (volume 3: 1400-1800), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012, pp. 347-363; S. Moretti, 'La trattatistica italiana e la guerra: il conflitto tra la Spagna e le Fiandre (1566-1609)', in: *Annali dell'Istituto storico italo-germanico in Trento*, 20 (1994), pp. 129-164.

³ Dit artikel is gebaseerd op bevindingen van mijn promotieonderzoek naar de vroegmoderne Italiaanse historiografie over de Nederlandse Opstand, waarbij de focus in eerste instantie lag op geschiedschrijving in Genua.

gevolgd.⁴ Op uiteenlopende manieren werd bericht over de laatste ontwikkelingen van de Opstand. In de vorm van manuscripten, pamfletten, nieuwsbrieven, de eerste “couranten”, maar ook via geschiedwerken, werd het publiek in Europa geïnformeerd.⁵ Italiaanse geschiedenissen over de oorlogen in de Nederlanden vonden hun bestemming in Zuid-, West- en Midden-Europa. In Spanje zagen tientallen kronieken en *relaciones* over de Opstand het licht.⁶

In haar proefschrift *Le Orecchie si piene di Fiandra* onderzoekt Nina Lamal de Italiaanse nieuwsgaring over de troebelen in de Nederlanden en de rol die deze informatie speelde in de beïnvloeding van de Habsburgse politiek op het Italiaanse schiereiland. Lamal analyseert de verschillende nieuwsvormen, waaronder Italiaanse historische werken, en toont aan hoe contemporaine historiografie deel uitmaakte van de informatiestroom over de Opstand. Deze vorm van historiografie onderscheidt zich van de nieuwsgenres door een hogere mate aan contextualisering, commentaar en beschrijving. Ze kenmerken zich door een min of meer aanzienlijk tijdsverschil tussen de historische gebeurtenissen en het moment van de schriftelijke uitwerking en publicatie daarvan.

Vanaf de veertiende eeuw raakte de eigentijdse geschiedschrijving steeds meer in zwang. Voorbeelden van eigentijdse geschiedenissen in de late Middeleeuwen verschenen in de Nederlanden en Italië.⁷ Volgens de Amerikaanse historicus Anthony Grafton stond de *ars historica* in de zestiende en in de eerste decennia van de zeventiende eeuw voor een groot deel in het teken van de taak om enerzijds de enorme informatiestroom die zich over Europa verspreidde te verzamelen en uit te leggen, en anderzijds de hedendaagse ontwikkelingen in verband te brengen met het verleden.⁸ Het historische verhaal diende waarheid te bevatten en gegrondvest te

⁴ J. Pollmann, ‘Internationalisering en de Nederlandse Opstand’, in: *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 124, 4 (2009), pp. 515-535, inz. pp. 515-516. In Frankrijk was het werk van Jacques-Auguste de Thou (-1617) een voorbeeld van internationale geschiedschrijving. In zijn universele geschiedenis *Historiarum sui temporis*, Paris, Drouart, 1609-1620, beschrijft hij, op relatief onpartijdige wijze, vanuit de achtergrond van de Franse godsdienstoorlogen de religieuze en politieke omwentelingen in de buurlanden.

⁵ Recente studies besteden steeds meer aandacht voor transnationale nieuwsgaring en geschiedschrijving in de vroegmoderne tijd. Enkele voorbeelden zijn: H.J. Helmers, *The Royalist Republic: Literature, Politics and Religion in the Anglo-Dutch Public Sphere, 1639-1660*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2015; H. Dunthorne, *Britain and the Dutch Revolt, 1560-1700*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2013; J. Raymond (ed.), *News Networks in Seventeenth-Century Britain and Europe*, London-New York, Routledge, 2006 en A. Pettegree, *The invention of News. How the world came to know about itself*, London, Yale University Press, 2014. Voor de Italiaanse nieuwsgaring over de Opstand zie H. Cools, ‘Some Italian voices on the Dutch liberty, 1560s-1640s’, in: P. Brood & R. Kubben (eds.), *The Act of Abjuration. Inspired and Inspirational*, Nijmegen, Wolf Legal Publications, 2011, pp. 106-117; maar vooral N. Lamal in haar dissertatie *Le Orecchie si piene di Fiandra. Italian news and histories on the revolt in the Netherlands (1566-1648)*, proefschrift KU Leuven-University of St. Andrews, oktober 2014. Mijn dank gaat uit naar Nina Lamal voor het ter inzage geven van haar proefschrift.

⁶ Een uitgebreid overzicht van de vroegmoderne Spaanse geschiedschrijving over de Opstand vindt men in: Y. Rodríguez Pérez, *De Tachtigjarige oorlog in Spaanse ogen. De Nederlanden in Spaanse historische en literaire teksten (circa 1548-1673)*, Nijmegen, Vantilt, 2003.

⁷ Voor de laatmiddeleeuwse historiografie in de Nederlanden zie: A.E.M. Janssen, ‘Kroniek en annalistiek: schakels in een keten’, in: Jo Tollebeek, Tom Verschaffel & Leonard H.M. Wessels (eds.), *De palimpsest: geschiedschrijving in de Nederlanden 1500-2000*, Hilversum, uitgeverij Verloren, 2002, pp. 11-25. Een recent overzicht over de middeleeuwse Italiaanse geschiedschrijving is: Sharon Dale, Alison Williams Lewin en Duane J. Osheim (eds.), *Chronicling history: chroniclers and historians in medieval and Renaissance Italy*, University Park Pennsylvania, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007.

⁸ A. Grafton, *What was history? The Art of History in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007; zie verder G. Cotroneo, *I Trattatisti dell’Ars historica*, Napoli, Giannini Editore, 1971.

zijn op oudheidkundig onderzoek, kerkgeschiedenis en reisverhalen uit de oude en nieuwe wereld.⁹ Geschiedschrijving werd gezien als een interdisciplinaire opdracht die niet alleen een mooie compositie maar ook een systematische, kritische benadering van allerlei bronnen vereiste. Tot in de zeventiende eeuw bleef dit genre van geschiedschrijving in de vorm van kroniekwerken populair, waarbij het accent lag op recente geschiedenis die door de auteur zelf was beleefd of op directe getuigenissen van tijdgenoten was gebaseerd.

Het grootste deel van de vroegmoderne geschiedschrijving was vooral politiek van karakter. In de zestiende eeuw was officiële geschiedschrijving in veel landen een instrument van de autoriteiten om het beleid van de vorst te rechtvaardigen en zijn politiek te propageren.¹⁰ Geschiedschrijving op het Italiaanse schiereiland had door geopolitieke ontwikkelingen een ander karakter. Veel regio's behoorden direct tot het Habsburgse imperium of waren daar nauw mee verbonden. Deze geopolitieke situatie werd gereflecteerd in de geschiedschrijving in Italië, waar, naast pro-Spaanse geschiedenissen, in de loop van de zeventiende eeuw ook werken op de markt verschenen die het Habsburgse beleid bekritiseerden, ondanks de inspanningen van de Habsburgers om de opinie in hun voordeel te doen kantelen. De politieke situatie in Italië was tevens bepalend voor de geschiedschrijving over de rol van de Habsburgers in de opstandige Nederlanden. De *ragion di stato* vormde dan ook de kern van een historiografische trend waarvan de wortels in Italië lagen.

Deze ordenende en politieke functies van vroegmoderne geschiedschrijving in het algemeen moet *in casu* in verband worden gebracht met specifieke factoren die de Italiaanse interesse voor perikelen in de Nederlanden verklaren. Uit onderzoek is gebleken dat deze deels gerelateerd is aan de aanwezigheid van duizenden Italiaanse soldaten in het Spaans-Habsburgse leger.¹¹ Sommige geschiedwerken waren geschreven met het doel om de Italiaanse betrokkenheid bij de oorlogen te benadrukken of om de persoonlijke prestaties van (voormalige) militairen in een mooi uitgegeven boek vast te leggen. Voorbeelden van persoonlijke geschiedenissen zijn het werk van Pompeo Giustiniani en Pier Francesco Pieri, die beiden vochten in het Habsburgse leger onder bevel van de Genuese commandant Ambrogio Spinola.¹²

Een tweede verklaring, die hiermee samenhangt, is het eerder genoemde feit dat een deel van het Italiaanse schiereiland direct of indirect verbonden was met de Habsburgse autoriteiten.¹³ Vroegmoderne auteurs zagen de zwakke structuur van het Habsburgse imperium en de hoge kosten van de oorlogsvoering op veel fronten als een cruciale oorzaken van het standhouden tegen de Spaanse macht in de opstandige

⁹ Ivi, pp. 94-96.

¹⁰ Het geval van Spanje is bestudeerd in R.L. Kagan, *Clio & the crown: the politics of history in medieval and early modern Spain*, Baltimore, The John Hopkins University Press, 2009.

¹¹ Toonaangevende studies over het aandeel van Italiaanse militairen in het Habsburgse leger zijn G. Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road, 1567-1659*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004; G. Hanlon, *The twilight of a military tradition: Italian aristocrats and European conflicts, 1560-1800*, London, Routledge, 2003. Over het verband tussen de Italiaanse bijdrage aan de Nederlandse oorlogen en de Italiaanse interesse voor de Opstand, zie Lamal, *Le Orecchie si piene di Fiandra*, cit.; S.A. Vorsters, 'Oude Spaanse en Italiaanse geschiedschrijvers over het Turfschip', in: *Jaarboek Oranjeboom* 45 (1992), pp. 251-311.

¹² Pompeo Giustiniani, *Delle Guerre di Fiandra*, Anversa, Iacochimo Trognese, 1609; Pier Francesco Pieri, *Nove guerre di Fiandra dalli 21 luglio 1624 sino alli 25 d'agosto del 1625. Con l'assedio, e resa di Breda, col seguito del campo cattolico, e dell'olandese, dal capitano Pier Francesco Pieri fiorentino veduto, scritto, e dedicato all'altezza sereniss. Di Toscana*, Venetia, Alberto Besozzo, 1626.

¹³ Een goed overzicht van de Spaans-Habsburgse invloed in Italië bieden de volgende uitgaven: L. Lotti & R. Villari, *Filippo II e il Mediterraneo*, Bari, Laterza, 2003; T.J. Dandeleit & J.A. Marino (eds.), *Spain in Italy: politics, society, and religion 1500-1700*, Leiden, Brill, 2007.

gewesten. Aan het Spaanse hof was de vrees groot dat de Opstand de Habsburgse invloed in Italië negatief zou kunnen beïnvloeden, en er werd dan ook alles aan gedaan om de welwillendheid van de lokale autoriteiten te winnen. Spaanse diplomaten reisden in opdracht van het Habsburgse bestuur af en aan naar Italië met de opdracht de relaties met Italiaanse vorsten en stadsrepublieken goed te onderhouden.¹⁴ Italiaanse kooplieden en militairen stuurden vanuit de Lage Landen (nieuws)brieven en rapporten naar hun patroons. De onderwerpen hadden, naast het laatste nieuws van het oorlogsfront, betrekking op de religieuze, politieke en economische ontwikkelingen in de Nederlanden en de rest van Europa. Italiaanse geschiedwerken vormden vaak het eindpunt van deze nieuwsgaringsketen.¹⁵

Geschiedenissen over de burgeroorlog in de Nederlanden lagen goed in de Italiaanse markt en waren een belangrijk onderdeel van de communicatie over de Opstand.¹⁶ Het hoogtepunt van dit fenomeen lag in de eerste decennia van de zeventiende eeuw, toen de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden zich stevig had gepositioneerd in het Europese politieke landschap. Een deel van de uitgaven kwam op de Italiaanse markt tijdens het Twaalfjarig Bestand (1609-1621), de wapenstilstand tussen de Republiek der Verenigde Provinciën en Spanje. In deze bijdrage betoog ik dat, naast de militaire, informatieve en commerciële factoren die de discussies rond het Bestand voedden, ook de concrete functie van geschiedwerken binnen de lokale context van de auteurs een belangrijke verklaring kan bieden voor de bloei van Italiaanse historiografie over de Opstand. Behalve een niet te stillen nieuwsgierigheid naar de gebeurtenissen in de Nederlanden, was het schrijven over een buitenlandse oorlog een uitstekend middel om actuele politieke kwesties aan de orde te stellen die in Italië speelden. Publicaties over buitenlandse oorlogen liepen minder in het oog bij de plaatselijke autoriteiten en werden niet snel als een bedreiging voor hun positie gezien. De schrijver kon door zijn verhaal over de ontwikkelingen in de Nederlanden, impliciet verwijzen naar politieke verwickelingen en debatten in zijn eigen stad of gebied.

Aan de hand van drie Italiaanse auteurs beargumenteer ik hoe geschiedwerken over de Nederlandse Opstand konden fungeren als een verkapte bijdrage aan de politieke debatten over interne kwesties in hun stad of in hun streek. Twee van deze auteurs waren afkomstig uit kringen van de aristocratische koopliedenelite in Genua. Zowel Gerolamo Conestaggio (1540-1611) als Giovanni Costa (ca. 1550-ca.1630) behoorden tot de nieuwe Genuese adel. Conestaggio woonde een lange periode als koopman in Antwerpen, waar hij deel uitmaakte van de Genuese handelsnatie. Giovanni Costa stond middenin het politieke en culturele leven van Genua. De belangstelling van beide auteurs voor de ontwikkelingen in de Nederlanden vond vooral zijn oorsprong in de handelsbetrekkingen van de Genuezen met de Lage Landen. Dankzij de uitstekende commerciële én culturele contacten met de Nederlanden hadden beide auteurs toegang tot informatiebronnen die hen in staat stelden werken te schrijven over de Nederlandse Opstand. Ik begin mijn uiteenzetting echter met de derde geschiedschrijver, Francesco Bocchi (1548-1613?), humanist en polygraaf die werkzaam was in Florence tijdens de regeringen van de Medici. Zijn werk waarin de Toscaanse legercommandant Giovan Luigi ("Chiappino")

¹⁴ M.J. Levin, *Agents of Empire: Spanish Ambassadors in Sixteenth-Century Italy*, Ithaca-London, Cornell University Press, 2005.

¹⁵ Lamal, *Le Orecchie si piene di Fiandra*, cit., pp. 54-76.

¹⁶ <http://www.dutchrevolt.leiden.edu/dutch/geschiedschrijvers> geeft een overzicht van Italiaanse geschiedschrijvers. Tot 1648 verschenen twaalf Italiaanse geschiedwerken over de Opstand waarvan sommige edities vele malen werden herdrukt, zoals de uitgaven van Guido Bentivoglio en Famiano Strada.

Vitelli centraal staat, kan tegen de achtergrond van de Nederlandse oorlogen als een politiek getint geschrift worden gelezen. De drie hier besproken auteurs, afkomstig uit gebieden die geen onderdeel waren van het Spaans-Habsburgse rijk maar wel binnen de invloedssfeer van de Habsburgers vielen, schreven hun geschiedenissen over de Opstand met verschillende motieven. Wat deze werken onderscheidt van de meeste andere Italiaanse historiografie, is hun kritische kijk op het Habsburgse optreden in de opstandige Nederlanden en de pragmatische functie van de werken, die mede werden bepaald door de geografisch bepaalde socio-politieke achtergrond van de auteurs.

Nationaal besef en soldatenbelangen in een Florentijns manuscript over de Opstand

In 1585 voltooide de Florentijnse humanist en polygraaf Francesco Bocchi zijn manuscript over de Nederlandse Opstand. Het handschrift dat zich onder de titel *Historia della ribellione della Fiandra, avvenuta sotto la corona del Re Cattolico, Filippo di Spagna* in het omvangrijke archief van de Medici in Florence bevindt, was persklaar.¹⁷ De goedkeuring van de kerkelijke autoriteiten was afgegeven en het 'nihil obstat' werd door de vicarissen van het Florentijnse bisdom en de Inquisitie met een handtekening in het manuscript bekrachtigd. Om onduidelijke redenen is het echter nooit tot een uitgave van het manuscript gekomen.¹⁸ De tekst van Bocchi is voor zover bekend de eerste geschiedenis in een reeks van Italiaanse werken over de Nederlandse Opstand. Behalve de raadselen rondom de vraag waarom het geschiedwerk onuitgegeven bleef, roept ook de inhoud van het manuscript vraagtekens op. Uit correspondentie van Bocchi met Iacopo Dani, secretaris aan het hof van de Medici, kan worden opgemaakt dat de Florentijnse auteur een opdracht verwachtte om een biografisch werk te schrijven over het (militaire) leven van de Florentijnse commandant Chiappino Vitelli. De hoop van Bocchi was vermoedelijk gevestigd op de zoon van Vitelli, Gianvincenzo, of misschien op financiële steun van de Medici.¹⁹

Bocchi was per slot van rekening een broodschrijver die, net als vele andere intellectuelen en kunstenaars in Florence, grotendeels afhankelijk was van opdrachten van weldoeners uit het Florentijnse patriciaat en magistraten ('uomini

¹⁷ Francesco Bocchi, *Historia della ribellione della Fiandra, avvenuta sotto la corona del Re Cattolico, Filippo di Spagna* (Archivio di Stato di Firenze, Carte Stroziane Prima Serie n. 275), hierna in dit artikel vermeld als *Historia della ribellione*.

¹⁸ Er zijn vermoedens omtrent het niet verschijnen van het manuscript. Een zakelijk conflict met zijn huisdrukker Giorgio Marescotti zou de reden kunnen zijn geweest dat Bocchi's geschiedverhaal uiteindelijk in de archieven van de Medici is terechtgekomen. Eventuele correspondentie over dit manuscript tussen Bocchi en de Florentijnse drukker is echter niet te traceren. Over de relatie tussen Marescotti en Bocchi, zie G. Bertoli, 'Autori ed editori a Firenze nella seconda metà del sedicesimo secolo: il "caso" Marescotti', in: *Annali di Storia di Firenze* (2007) II, pp. 77-114. Eric Cochrane vermoedt dat de censor in Florence het manuscript heeft afgekeurd, maar Cochrane beargumenteert zijn vermoedens niet; zie E. Cochrane, *Florence in the forgotten centuries 1527-1800*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1973, p. 151. In het manuscript bevinden zich doorhalingen in de tekst en verbeteringen in de kantlijn, die afkomstig kunnen zijn van de censor. Nina Lamal wijst in haar proefschrift op doorgestrepte passages waarin Machiavelli wordt genoemd; zij verbindt daar echter geen conclusies aan. Zie Lamal, *Le Orecchie si piene di Fiandra*, cit., p. 153.

¹⁹ Correspondentie tussen Dani en Bocchi is bewaard gebleven, zie *Carte Stroziane*, I, CXXXIV, cc 42-49. In brief 48 (9 mei 1582) schrijft Bocchi over zijn moeizame relatie met uitgever Marescotti en over de Vitelli's. Zie bovendien Lamal, *Le Orecchie si piene di Fiandra*, cit., p. 153.

nuovi') die door de Medici van buiten Florence werden aangetrokken.²⁰ Hij behoorde tot de kring van intellectuelen, literatoren en kunstenaars die het cultuurbeleid van de Medici mede vormgaf.²¹ Hij was de auteur van de eerste stadsgids van Florence die als voorbeeld gezien kan worden van de Florentijnse cultuurpolitiek.²² Cosimo's politiek stond vanaf de jaren 1560 niet alleen in het teken van een profilering van het groothertogdom tegenover andere stadstaten op het Italische schiereiland, maar was bovendien gericht tegen een te grote Spaans-Habsburgse invloed in Italië. Florentijnse geschiedschrijvers zoals Benedetto Varchi (1503-1565) en Giambattista Adriani (1511-1579) schreven in opdracht van Cosimo I geschiedenissen van Florence, met het primaire doel de reputatie van het Florentijnse hof te vergroten. Adriani's *Istoria de' suoi tempi* beperkt zich niet tot de historie van Florence, maar schenkt ook aandacht aan militaire en politieke ontwikkelingen in en buiten Italië. Volgens Adriani kan de geschiedenis van Florence beter begrepen worden door ook de internationale verwickelingen en de invloed van het Spaans-Habsburgse imperium in Italië te bestuderen.²³ Ondanks zijn pro-Spaanse opvattingen was Adriani een voorstander van een meer onafhankelijke positie van het groothertogdom tegenover de Spaans-Habsburgse monarchie.²⁴

In het manuscript vormen de wederwaardigheden van Chiappino Vitelli, die aan de zijde van de hertog van Alva deelnam aan de strijd tegen de Nederlandse rebellen, het centrale deel van Bocchi's geschiedenis. Maar *de facto* is het toch vooral een relaas van de eerste fase van de oorlogen in de Nederlanden. Het verhaal in het manuscript loopt van 1566 tot 1577.²⁵ Behoudens de avonturen van de bekwame en bij zijn manschappen populaire Vitelli, gaat de auteur uitgebreid in op het militaire bedrijf, de schermutselingen ten velde en de belegeringen van de steden in de Nederlanden. De Florentijnse veelschrijver heeft op het eerste gezicht een pro-Habsburgs werk geschreven, wat onder meer blijkt uit zijn waardering voor de capaciteiten van Alva en andere hoge (Spaanse en Italiaanse) officieren in het Habsburgse leger. De positie van Filips II wordt nergens in zijn werk ter discussie gesteld. Bocchi toont begrip voor het harde optreden van het koninklijke leger tegen de ketterse beweging in de Nederlanden. Toch bevat het manuscript opvallende passages die het filo-Habsburgse karakter ervan nuanceren.

Dat blijkt onder andere uit de empathie of sympathie ten opzichte van de opstandelingen in Antwerpen in zijn relaas van de verschrikkingen van de Spaanse Furie in 1576, toen muitende en plunderende Spaanse soldaten door de straten van

²⁰ Voor een bijna compleet overzicht van Bocchi's gepubliceerde en onuitgegeven werk, zie R. De Mattei, 'Una inedita "Risposta" al Machiavelli di Francesco Bocchi', in: *Archivio Storico Italiano* 124 (1966), pp. 3-30, inz. pp. 22-30.

²¹ Voor de cultuurpolitiek van Cosimo I, zie H.Th. van Veen, *Cosimo de' Medici. Vorst en republikein*, Amsterdam, Meulenhoff, 1998. Zie ook K. Eisenbichler, *The Cultural Politics of Duke Cosimo I de' Medici*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2001. Overzichten van Florentijnse geschiedschrijvers die aan het hof van Cosimo I verbonden waren, zijn het nog steeds informatieve boek van M. Lupo Gentile, *Studi sulla Storiografia Fiorentina Alla Corte di Cosimo I Di' Medici*, Pisa, Fratelli Nistri, 1905; R. von Albertini, *Firenze dalla repubblica al principato. Storia e coscienza politica*, Torino, Einaudi, 1970; en A. Baiocchi & S. Albonico (eds.), *Storici e politici fiorentini del Cinquecento*, Milano, Ricciardi, 1994, deel I.

²² Francesco Bocchi, *Le bellezze della città di Firenze*, Firenze, Bartolomeo Sermatelli, 1591.

²³ Zie de inleiding: Giovanni Battista Adriani, *Istoria de' suoi tempi*, Firenze, Giunti, 1583, p. 2. Zie ook: Von Albertini, *Firenze dalla repubblica al principato*, cit., pp. 310-311.

²⁴ Von Albertini, *Firenze dalla repubblica al principato*, cit., p. 349.

²⁵ Nina Lamal vermeldt in haar proefschrift dat Bocchi delen van zijn werk heeft ontleend aan twee Spaanse kroniekschrijvers: Pedro Cornejo en Alfonso Ulloa, zie Lamal, *Le Orecchie si piene di Fiandra*, p. 152. Een Italiaanse vertaling van Cornejo's kroniek verscheen in 1582, maar waarschijnlijk was Bocchi ook in de gelegenheid documenten uit het archief van de Medici te raadplegen.

de Scheldestad op zoek waren naar persoonlijke eigendommen en kostbaarheden van de Antwerpenaren.²⁶ Bocchi schenkt als een van de weinige Italiaanse auteurs ruim aandacht aan de Spaanse Furie. Hij erkent dat het meedogenloze optreden van Alba's leger en de zeer strenge maatregelen van de hertog tegen de bevolking, de situatie in de Nederlanden voor het Spaans-Habsburgse bestuur alleen maar hebben verslechterd.²⁷ Het meest opmerkelijke is vooral de onverholen anti-Spaanse toon op sommige plaatsen in het werk. Dit anti-Spaanse beeld wordt men vooral gewaar in de passages waar de capaciteiten van Vitelli en de voortreffelijkheid van de Italiaanse manschappen worden afgezet tegen de kwaliteiten en het gedrag van de Spaanse soldaten.²⁸ In het geval van de gebeurtenissen in 1576 tijdens de Spaanse Furie, schrijft Bocchi nadrukkelijk over het wangedrag van de Spaanse *tercios*. In beeldende zinnen verhaalt hij over de gruwelijkheden, begaan door de Spaanse soldaten: de stad lag vol lijken die de straten versperden; overal stroomde bloed; niemand ontkwam aan de rondtrekkende erop los slaande soldaten; zwaargewonde burgers werden alsnog gedood.²⁹ De auteur noemt in zijn manuscript het aantal van 18.000 doden. In werkelijkheid waren er ongeveer 2000 tot 2500 slachtoffers te betreuren onder de Antwerpse bevolking.³⁰ Het negatieve beeld dat de schrijver hier van de Spaanse soldaten geeft, doet denken aan de stereotyperingen van de zogenaamde 'Zwarte Legende'. Dit negatieve imago van de Spanjaarden is terug te voeren op de slechte reputatie van de Habsburgse troepen tijdens de veroveringsoorlogen van Karel V in delen van het Italiaanse schiereiland.³¹

Het antihispanisme in Bocchi's manuscript wordt vooral duidelijk in de tegenstellingen die de auteur aangeeft tussen de Spaanse en Italiaanse officieren en soldaten in het Habsburgse leger. Op meerdere plaatsen in het werk scherpt de schrijver de verschillen aan tussen 'wij' (Italianen) en 'zij' (Spanjaarden). De superioriteit en deugdzaamheid van de Italiaanse soldaten en het met nadruk verwijzen naar de Italiaanse aanwezigheid in het Habsburgse leger, wijzen op een

²⁶ Bocchi, *Historia della ribellione*, pp. 135-136.

²⁷ *Ivi*, p. 76 en p. 101.

²⁸ *Ivi*, p. 66: 'molti gentilhuomini Italiani riportavano lode di molta virtù, et di gran cuore'; p. 117: 'perche senza biasimare alcuna nazione, egli pure si dee dire, che la virtù Italiana sia delle altre in questo affare più felice, et senza fallo, per dir così' en 110: 'Per lo tempo adrieto si erano conosciuti i consigli degli Spagnuoli poco felici, et non molto efficaci, et per li disordini che piu, et piu moltiplicavano ogni giorno'. De 'wanorde' bij de Spaanse legerleiding en soldaten was, volgens de auteur, de reden dat Filips II Chiappino ('huomo di maggior valore') benoemde tot bevelvoerder (p. 110).

²⁹ *Ivi*, pp. 140-141: na een negatief verhaal over de Spaanse soldaten ('Perche scarsi di amici gli Spagnuoli, privi di danari, abbandonati da tutti, colti in mezzo de' suoi nimici, nelle terre altrui, assaliti dalle maggiori asprezze, in una guerra di ogni altra più horribile, potevano esser vinti da minor numero di certo, se di tanta virtù fossero forniti i Fiamminghi [...] essere invincibili') steekt Bocchi vervolgens de loftrumpet af over de kracht van de Italiaanse soldaten in het Habsburgse leger ('Quanto meno erano i nostri per numero, tanto più cresceva la diligenza, et l'industria per ripararsi dalla furia de' congiurati').

³⁰ *Ivi*, p. 140. In Spaanse en Italiaanse geschiedwerken variëren de aantallen van de dodelijke slachtoffers. Het door Bocchi genoemde aantal is hoe dan ook ongeloofwaardig. Zie E. Rooms, 'Een nieuwe visie op de gebeurtenissen die geleid hebben tot de Spaanse Furie te Antwerpen op 4 november 1576', in: *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis*, 54 (1971), pp. 31-55, inz. pp. 52-53.

³¹ Over de Zwarte Legende, zie S. Arnoldsson, *La Leyenda Negra* (Gotenburg, Elander, 1960); K.W. Swart, 'The Black Legend during the Eighty Years War', in: J.S. Bromley & E.H. Kossmann (eds.), *Some political mythologies: papers delivered to the fifth Anglo-Dutch historical conference* (Den Haag 1975), *Britain and the Netherlands*, vol. V, pp. 36-57. Over het antihispanisme in Italië: A. Spagnoletti, 'Periodizzare l'antispagnolismo', in: A. Musi (ed.), *Alle origini di una nazione: antispagnolismo e identità italiana*, Milano, Guerini e Associati, 2003, pp. 395-405; E. Albertoni, 'Impero e Spagna nel pensiero politico italiano dal XVI al XVII secolo', in: *Il Pensiero Politico*, 22 (1989), pp. 19-37.

zeker ‘nationaal’ besef en een patriottisme dat Italiaans of misschien Toscaans gekleurd was.³² Volgens Bocchi werden de goede Italiaanse eigenschappen, zoals de militaire discipline, meer gewaardeerd dan bijvoorbeeld de daadkracht van de Spaanse militairen. Vanzelfsprekend worden de capaciteiten van Vitelli in het manuscript ten voorbeeld gesteld. De lofprijzingen in het manuscript aan het adres van de Italianen vormen een opvallend contrast met beeldvorming die de schrijver schetst van de Spaanse militairen. Dat negatieve imago wordt nog duidelijker door het contrast tussen Alva en de Italiaanse bevelhebber Alexander Farnese dat in de jaren tachtig in de Zuidelijke gewesten ontstond. Farnese, zoon van de vroegere landvoogdes Margaretha van Parma, was een ervaren en deskundige militair. Vanaf zijn eerste jaren als militair in de Nederlanden werd hij een zeer populaire bevelhebber en landvoogd. Na 1579 wist hij door zijn militair leidinggevende capaciteiten grote delen van de Zuidelijke Nederlanden vrij te maken van de protestantse opstandelingen. Zijn politiek die in het teken stond van verzoening en vergeving maakte hem bij de bevolking in de zuidelijke gewesten geliefd.³³ Toen Bocchi in 1585 de laatste hand legde aan zijn manuscript, had Farnese de verovering van Antwerpen aan zijn zegekar toegevoegd. De beeldvorming van Alva daarentegen was inmiddels in zowel de zuidelijke Nederlanden als in Italië negatief, vanwege zijn excessief strenge beleid.³⁴

Francesco Bocchi legt in zijn manuscript niet voor niets de nadruk op de voortreffelijkheid van de Italiaanse manschappen. De Italiaanse troepen werden traditioneel anders behandeld dan de Spanjaarden. Pas in de jaren 1580, dus precies in de tijd dat Bocchi zijn tekst schreef, kwam daar verandering in. In 1581 kregen de Italiaanse tercios na lang aandringen dezelfde rechten in het leger als hun Spaanse collega's.³⁵ Deze tekst lijkt aan deze lobby te kunnen worden verbonden. De kwaliteiten van de Italiaanse soldaten en officieren worden in alle mogelijke toonaarden beschreven en afgezet tegen de bijdrage van Spaanse militairen.³⁶ Vitelli is voor Bocchi de Italiaanse held en de vele loftuitingen die de Italiaanse bevelhebber ten deel vallen passen in dit verhaal met een politieke agenda.

Lokale politiek en transnationale geschiedschrijving

Ging het bij Bocchi nog om de tegenstelling tussen Italianen en ‘Spanjaarden’, de geschiedenissen over de Nederlandse Opstand van de Genuese schrijvers Gerolamo Conestaggio en Giovanni Costa hebben een meer (verborgen) lokaal karakter. Waarom hadden beide schrijvers een buitenlandse geschiedenis als vehikel nodig om het lezerspubliek te wijzen op ontwikkelingen die zich in Genua afspeelden?

³² *Historia della ribellione*, p. 42, p. 117 en bijvoorbeeld pp. 128-129.

³³ J. Pollmann & M. Stensland, ‘Alba’s Reputation in the Early Modern Low Countries’, in: M. Ebben, M. Lacy-Bruijn & R. van Hövell tot Westerflier (eds.), *Alba: general and servant to the crown*, Rotterdam, Karwansaray Publishers, 2013), pp. 309-325, inz. pp. 319-324; V. Soen, ‘Reconquista and Reconciliation in the Dutch Revolt: The Campaign of Governor-General Alexander Farnese (1578-1592)’, in: *Journal of Early Modern History*, 16 (2012), pp. 1-22; inz. pp. 21-22.

³⁴ M.-J. Rodriguez-Salgado, ‘Il Capo dei Capi: The Duke of Alba in Italy’, in Ebben, Lacy-Bruijn & Van Hövell tot Westerflier, *Alba: general and servant to the crown*, cit., pp. 249-255.

³⁵ F. González de León, *The Road to Rocroi: Class, Culture and Command in the Spanish Army of Flanders, 1567-1659*, Leiden, Brill, 2009, p. 71.

³⁶ De controverse tussen Italiaanse en Spaanse militairen binnen het Habsburgse leger wordt beschreven in B.de Groof, ‘Una questione di priorità: Spagnoli, Italiani e Fiamminghi alla morte di Alessandro Farnese’, in: A. Bilotto, P. Del Negro & C. Mozzarelli (eds.), *I Farnese: corti, guerra e nobiltà in antico regime*, Roma, Bulzoni editore, 1997, pp. 167-187. Voor dit thema, zie ook: A. Spagnoletti, ‘Onore e spirito nazionale nei soldati italiani’, in: C. Donati & B.R. Kroener (eds.), *Militari e società civile nell’Europa dell’età moderna (secoli XVI-XVIII)*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2007, pp. 211-253.

De wegen van de ‘gentilhuomini’ Gerolamo Conestaggio en Giovanni Costa hebben elkaar ongetwijfeld gekruist in kringen van de Genuese stedelijke elite. Beide edellieden waren actief in de plaatselijke politiek tijdens het turbulente eerste decennium van de zeventiende eeuw. Genua had zich vanaf het begin van de zestiende eeuw ontwikkeld tot een satellietstaat van de Habsburgers, al had het een eigen bestuur, eigen regels en wetten.³⁷ De positie van de stad was niet geheel te vergelijken met andere gebieden op het Italiaanse schiereiland, zoals het hertogdom Milaan en het koninkrijk Napels, die onderdeel waren van het Spaans-Habsburgse imperium.³⁸ De Habsburgse dominantie in Genua beïnvloedde de politieke verhoudingen in de stad. Tegen deze achtergrond speelde zich een langstlepend conflict af tussen de adellijke stedelijke facties, tussen de oude en nieuwe aristocratie. Het zwaartepunt van het binnenlandse conflict had met de toenemende economische en financiële bemoeizucht van de Spaans-Habsburgse vorst te maken. De oude rijke adel (*nobili vecchi*), die steunde op het beleid van de Spaanse vorst, maakte de dienst uit in Genua. De Spaanse vorst steunde op zijn beurt op leningen die de oude aristocratie hem verstrekke. De nieuwe adel (*nobili nuovi*), die voor een groot deel was samengesteld uit geledingen van kooplieden, bankiers en juristen, was samen met de Genuese middenklasse van mening dat de stadsrepubliek economisch teveel afhankelijk was van de Spaans-Habsburgse monarchie.³⁹ Maar ook binnen de nieuwe aristocratie ontstonden meningsverschillen over de te volgen koers ten aanzien van het Spaans-Habsburgse imperium.

Het conflict tussen hispanofiele en hispanofobe facties in Genua liep dwars door de oude en nieuwe aristocratische facties heen en kwam duidelijk tot uiting rondom een slepende politieke kwestie die tot in lengte van jaren van de zeventiende eeuw in de stad voor diepgaande discussies zorgde. De splijtzwam in Genua draaide rond het bouwen onder auspiciën van de stadsrepubliek van een marinevloot. Vanaf 1528 beschermden galeien van de koninklijke Spaans-Habsburgse marine de Ligurische kust, met name om zich te verdedigen tegen Ottomaanse invallen. De haven bood de Habsburgers tegelijkertijd een uitvalsbasis voor hun vloot. De Genuese havenfaciliteiten waren voor de Habsburgers bovendien belangrijk voor de verbindingen met het hertogdom Milaan en met de “Spaanse weg” die naar de imperiale gebieden in Noordwest-Europa leidde. Hoewel veel Genuezen tewerkgesteld waren op de Spaanse galeien, was een aanzienlijke groep inwoners voorstander van een eigen vloot. Reminiscenties aan glorieus tijden van de havenstad speelden voor hen een belangrijke rol. De tegenstanders van een Genuese vloot vreesden daarentegen voor de verhoging van allerlei stedelijke belastingen en voor een conflict met de Habsburgers.⁴⁰

Het Genuese stadsbestuur zag de felle polemieken tussen vertegenwoordigers en aanhangers van de verschillende facties in de eerste decennia van de zeventiende

³⁷ Zie: R. Savelli, *La repubblica oligarchia. Legislazione, istituzioni e ceti a Genova nel Cinquecento*, Milaan, Giuffrè, 1981. Verder: A. Pacini, “‘Pignatte di vetro’: being a republic in Philip II’s empire” in T.J. Dandeleit & J.A. Marino (eds.), *Spain in Italy: politics, society, and religion 1500-1700*, Leiden, Brill, 2007, pp. 197-225.

³⁸ Zie J.H. Elliott, ‘A Europe of composite monarchies’, in: *Past and Present* 137 (1992), pp. 48-71. De Engelse historicus beschouwt het Spaans-Habsburgs imperium als een ‘samengestelde’ staat.

³⁹ Over de ‘nieuwe’ aristocratische families in Genua, zie C. Bitossi, *Il governo dei magnifici. Patriziato e politica a Genova fra Cinque e Seicento*, Genua, ECIG, 1990. Een prachtig portret van zo’n familie vindt men in E. Grendi, *I Balbi: una famiglia genovese fra Spagna e Impero*, Torino, Einaudi, 1997.

⁴⁰ Over het bouwen van een eigen zeemacht en discussies over dit onderwerp tijdens de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw in Genua, zie C. Bitossi, ‘Il Genio ligure risvegliato. La potenza navale nel discorso politico genovese del Seicento’, in: F. Cantù, *I linguaggi del potere nell’età barocca. 1. Politica e religione*, Roma, Viella, 2009, pp. 81-112.

eeuw als een bedreiging voor de interne stabiliteit. Met censuurmaatregelen probeerde de stadsregering de politieke debatten het zwijgen op te leggen en de uitgave van politiek getinte geschriften tegen te houden. Deze maatregelen leidden echter tot een stortvloed aan anonieme manuscripten waarmee de oppositie de censuur trachtte te omzeilen.⁴¹

Tegen dit decor van lokale politieke spanningen schreven Conestaggio en Costa⁴² hun werken over een opstand ‘in een verre uithoek van Europa’.⁴³ Beide uitgaves worden gezien als het beginpunt van de belangstelling voor de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden in Genua en in andere delen van Italië.⁴⁴ Conestaggio schreef zijn boek over de Opstand waarschijnlijk in de laatste tien jaren van zijn leven. Het werk dat oorspronkelijk in 1614 verscheen bij Pinelli in Venetië, werd in 1634 herdrukt bij Elzevier in Leiden, gevolgd door een Keulse roefdruk in 1615. In tegenstelling tot zijn succesvolle eerste boek over de annexatie van Portugal door Spanje, werd zijn geschiedwerk over de Opstand niet vertaald.⁴⁵ Costa's traktaat beperkte zich tot één druk, die buiten Genua nagenoeg onbekend bleef.⁴⁶ Conestaggio schreef in zijn *Delle Guerre* over de eerste fase van de Nederlandse Opstand, terwijl Costa's *Ragionamento* een verhandeling is over het Twaalfjarig Bestand dat in 1609 werd overeengekomen tussen de Habsburgers en de Republiek.

Dat de uitgave van Conestaggio's *Delle Guerre* populair was en juist ook buiten Italië werd opgemerkt en gelezen, had te maken met de belangstelling in delen van Europa voor de oorlog in de Nederlanden. Het bijzondere aan deze kroniek was echter gelegen in de kritische toon tegenover het Spaans-Habsburgse beleid in de opstandige Nederlanden. Dit maakte het werk ook populair bij lezers in de Republiek der Verenigde Provinciën, zoals P.C. Hooft en Hugo de Groot, die voor hun geschiedwerken over de Opstand de geschiedenis van Conestaggio raadpleegden.⁴⁷ In tegenstelling tot zijn boek over Portugal werd Conestaggio's geschiedenis over de Opstand in sommige pro-Spaanse publicaties fel gehekeld. Dat er vanuit het Spaanse hof of door haar sympathisanten kritiek kwam op Conestaggio, zegt veel over de (politieke) strekking van zijn boek. Er verscheen zelfs een contrageschiedenis waarin

⁴¹ Zie bijvoorbeeld P. Burke, 'Public and Private Spheres in Late Renaissance Genoa', in: *Idem, Varieties of Cultural History*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1997, pp. 111-123. Over het conflict in Genua tussen het traditionele patriciaat en de nieuwe handelsaristocratie, zie, naast het werk van Carlo Bitossi, E. Grendi, *La repubblica aristocratica dei genovesi*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1987.

⁴² G. Conestaggio, *Delle Guerre della Germania Inferiore*, Venezia, Pinelli, 1614, hierna *Delle Guerre*; G. Costa, *Ragionamento sopra la triegua de' Paesi Bassi, conchiusa in Anversa l'anno 1609*, Genova, Pavoni, 1610, hierna vermeld als *Ragionamento*.

⁴³ Costa, *Ragionamento*, p. 27: 'in un rimoto, e quasi ignoto angulo d'Europa'.

⁴⁴ Zie C. Constantini, 'Politica e storiografia. L'età dei grandi repubblichisti', in: F. Bianchi & F. Arato (eds.), *La letteratura ligure. La Repubblica aristocratica (1528-1797)*, Genova, Costa & Nolan, 1992, deel II, pp. 93-135, inz. p. 123.

⁴⁵ *Dell'unione del regno di Portogallo. Alla corona di Castiglia. Istoria del sig. Ieronimo de Franchi Conestaggio gentilhuomo genovese*, Genova, Pavoni, 1585. Er verschenen in de loop van de zeventiende eeuw vertalingen van dit werk in Engeland, Frankrijk, Duitsland en Spanje. Bovendien verscheen in 1602 een vertaling in het Latijn.

⁴⁶ Costa's traktaat bevindt zich buiten Genua in slechts drie Italiaanse bibliotheken. Van Conestaggio's werk zijn drie edities verschenen die in en buiten Italië een bredere verspreiding vonden.

⁴⁷ P.C. Hooft, *Nederlandse Historiën*, Amsterdam, 1642-1654; H. de Groot, *Annales et Historiae de rebus Belgicis*, Amsterdam, 1657-1658. In een van zijn brieven aan Constantijn Huygens schrijft Hooft dat het geschiedwerk van Conestaggio voor hem zeer nuttig is geweest en dat het een Nederlandse vertaling verdient, zie: P.C. Hooft, *De Briefwisseling van Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft. Deel II: 1630-1637*, brief 422, Culemborg, 1977, Tjeenk Willink/Noorduijn, p. 137.

een auteur onder een gefingeerde naam *Delle Guerre* stevig bekritiseerde.⁴⁸ Het is onbekend of deze contrageschiedenis was geïnitieerd door de omgeving van de Spaanse vorst.

De herkomst van Conestaggio's kritische opstelling ten opzichte van de Spaans-Habsburgse politiek in de Nederlanden moet gezocht worden in zijn achtergrond. Al op jonge leeftijd verbleef Conestaggio in Antwerpen. In de Scheldestad nam hij de zakelijke honneurs waar van zijn vaders handelsonderneming. Hij was er lid van de handelsnatie van Genuese kooplieden en ondernemers en sloot zich aan bij de *Accademia letteraria dei Confusi*, een Genues literaire genootschap dat allerlei contacten onderhield met intellectuelen uit Antwerpen en Genua.⁴⁹ Conestaggio's pragmatische koopmansgeest, ontwikkeld door zijn activiteiten in de internationale handel, en zijn contacten met de culturele wereld van Antwerpen en misschien ook elders in de Nederlanden, droegen bij aan zijn nuchtere en gematigde kijk op de gebeurtenissen tijdens de Nederlandse Opstand. Hij was bovendien getuige van de eerste perikelen van de opstand, en in 1576 maakte hij waarschijnlijk van dichtbij de verschrikkingen van de Spaanse Furie mee, toen plunderende Spaanse soldaten door Antwerpen trokken. Deze gebeurtenissen hebben wellicht zijn kritische visie op het Spaans-Habsburgse beleid in de Nederlanden blijvend beïnvloed. De jaren die Conestaggio aan het begin van de zeventiende eeuw als consul doorbracht in Venetië, waar hij bevriend raakte met leden van de Nederlandse protestantse handelsgemeenschap, alsook zijn huwelijk met een dochter van een protestantse Antwerpse handelaar, hebben zijn tegendraadse kijk op de religieuze en politieke verwikkelingen in de Nederlanden ongetwijfeld versterkt.⁵⁰

Maar niet alleen deze feiten kunnen de kritische opstelling van Conestaggio verklaren. Zijn kritiek op het Spaanse bestuur in de Habsburgse Nederlanden moet in verband worden gezien met de positie van Genua binnen het samengestelde Habsburgse imperium. Conestaggio schreef zijn boek over de Opstand in de tijd dat het conflict tussen de verschillende facties hoog opliep en de Genuese stadsregering maatregelen nam om de onrust in de stad weg te nemen. Via zijn geschiedenis over de Opstand kon Conestaggio zich tot zijn stadsgenoten richten en zijn anti-Spaanse standpunt innemen als min of meer onafhankelijke spreekbuis van de nieuwe aristocratie in Genua, die streefde naar een neutrale en onafhankelijke houding tegenover de Habsburgers. Zijn boek over de Nederlandse Opstand verscheen niet in Genua, maar werd postuum op de markt gebracht door een drukker in de stad die zich het meest verzette tegen de Spaanse invloed in het Middellandse Zeegebied, Venetië.

Giovanni Costa's *Ragionamento* is, in tegenstelling tot het werk van zijn stadsgenoot, geen kroniek van de militaire en politieke verwikkelingen in de Lage Landen. Costa schreef een vertoog, dat in 1610, dus een jaar na het ondertekenen van het Twaalfjarig Bestand, bij een Genuese drukker verscheen. In het traktaat,

⁴⁸ *Avvertimenti sopra l'istoria delle guerre della Germania Inferiore, di Geronimo Conestaggio: fatti da Adriano Stopenro* (1619).

⁴⁹ Voor een bibliografisch overzicht met betrekking tot de Italiaanse handelsnaties in Antwerpen, zie het artikel van Christophe Schellekens in dit nummer.

⁵⁰ Over leven en werk van Gerolamo Conestaggio, zie: C. Reijner, 'Een Italiaanse verdediger van de Opstand?', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 123, 2 (juni 2012), pp. 172-187. Zie ook M. van Gelder, 'In liefde en werk met de Lage Landen verbonden: de Genuese koopman en literator Girolamo Conestaggio (ca. 1530-1614/1615)', in: M. van Gelder & E. Mijers (eds.), *Internationale handelsnetwerken en culturele contacten in de vroegmoderne Nederlanden*, Maastricht, Shaker Publishing, 2009, pp. 43-53. Over de Nederlandse gemeenschap in Venetië: M. van Gelder, *Trading places: the Netherlandish Merchant Community in Early Modern Venice*, Leiden, Brill, 2009, in het bijzonder n.3, p. 152.

geschreven in dialoogvorm, staan dan ook de uitkomsten van het Bestand centraal.⁵¹ Dat de belangstelling zich in Genua sterk richtte op dit akkoord was niet zo vreemd. De Genuese bankier Ambrogio Spinola, financier van de Spaans-Habsburgse monarchie en succesvol legerbevelhebber van het koninklijke leger in de Nederlanden, was nauw betrokken bij de totstandkoming van het Bestand. Bovendien was het Bestand van belang voor Genua wegens de financiële en economische belangen die ze sinds de zestiende eeuw in de Nederlanden had opgebouwd, en zorgde voor verwarring in de stadsrepubliek. Zoals goed is weergegeven in de dialoogstructuur van het traktaat, waren de meningen over de economische gevolgen van het Bestand verdeeld. Op de achtergrond speelde ook de kwestie van de investeringen en leningen die door de Genuese bankiers aan de Spaans-Habsburgse waren verstrekt. Het Spaans-Habsburgse bankroet in 1607 had vérstrekkende gevolgen voor de financiële positie van het Genuese handelspatriciaat en voor de economische positie van havenstad.⁵² Een andere zaak die speelde in de Genuese discussies was de mogelijke openstelling van de Antwerpse haven. De Scheldestad was sinds 1585 afgesloten van haar belangrijkste aanvoerlijn en het Bestand zou misschien – zo was de hoop in Genua – leiden tot een einde van de blokkade door de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden.⁵³

De fictieve gesprekken tussen niet bij naam genoemde hooggeplaatste heren uit het aristocratische koopliedenmilieu van Genua, die volgens de auteur regelmatig bij hen thuis plaatsvonden, gaan in het traktaat dan ook voornamelijk over de economische en financiële positie van de Ligurische stad tegen de achtergrond van de nieuwe politieke situatie in Europa. De heren debatteren over internationale vraagstukken die betrekking hebben op de betekenis van het Bestand en de positie van het Spaans-Habsburgse vorstenhuis in Italië. Het gezelschap bespreekt oorzaken en gevolgen van de Opstand en tijdens de dialoog wordt duidelijk dat er binnen de kring noch over het beleid van het Spaans-Habsburgse bestuur in de Nederlanden, noch en over het bereikte akkoord tussen Spanje en de Republiek eenstemmigheid bestaat.

Onder de heren, zo blijkt uit de discussie, leeft ook bewondering voor de economische en politieke macht van de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden. De Republiek stond in de Ligurische havenstad, net zoals later in de zeventiende eeuw in andere delen van het Italiaanse schiereiland, voor sommige groepen model voor het oplossen van problemen die binnen het kader van het Spaanse imperium waren ontstaan.⁵⁴ In vaak ongepubliceerde geschriften en traktaten werd in Genua

⁵¹ Alles over het Twaalfjarig Bestand vindt men in S. Groenveld, *Het Twaalfjarig Bestand 1609-1621: de jongelingsjaren van de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden*, Den Haag, Haags Historisch Museum, 2009. Biografische gegevens over Costa zijn ontleend aan: G. Nuti, 'Giovanni Costa', in: *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 30 (1984), pp. 186-188. Over Costa en zijn traktaat zie: R. Belvederi, 'Il "Ragionamento di Giovanni Costa, Gentil'Homme Genovese..."', in: *Idem* (ed.), *Genova, la Liguria e l'Oltremare tra Medioevo ed età moderna: studi e ricerche d'archivio*, Genova, Bozzi, 1981, pp. 175-360. Over Costa en andere Italiaanse geschiedschrijvers over het Bestand: A. Clerici, 'Ragion di Stato e politica internazionale. Guido Bentivoglio e altri interpreti italiani della Tregua dei Dodici Anni (1609)', *Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica*, 2 (2009), pp. 187-223.

⁵² T.A. Kirk, *Genoa and the Sea*, cit., pp. 89-99.

⁵³ Over de inspanningen van de Spaanse Nederlanden om de Schelde te heropenen voor de internationale scheepvaart: R. Vermeir & T. Roggeman 'Implementing the truce: negotiations between the Republic and the archducal Netherlands, 1609-10', *European Review of History-Revue européenne d'histoire*, 17, 6 december 2010, pp. 817-833, vooral pp. 823-826.

⁵⁴ De Nederlandse opstand en de vorming van de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden hadden invloed op de revolte in het koninkrijk Napels in het midden van de zeventiende eeuw. Zie onder andere R. Villari, *Un sogno di libertà: Napoli nel declino di un impero 1585-1648*, Milano, Mondadori, 2012, inz. pp. 128-161 en pp. 493-520.

verwezen naar de (zee)macht van de Republiek. Deze geschriften werden ingezet in de polemische strijd die was ontstaan over het oprichten van een eigen marine, zoals ik al hiervoor memoreerde.⁵⁵ De interesse in Genua voor de ‘Hollandse mythe’ hing nauw samen met de uitstekende handelscontacten tussen de Nederlanden en de maritieme stadsrepubliek Genua.⁵⁶ Het model van het commerciële republikanisme in Holland en Zeeland was in ieder geval binnen een deel van de Genuese elite populair, zoals dat in andere delen van Italië het geval was.⁵⁷ In Genua werd met ontzag naar de Venetiaanse en Nederlandse republiek gekeken. Uit Costa’s traktaat blijkt bovendien de bekendheid van de Genuese schrijver met de geschriften van onder andere Hugo Grotius, wiens belangrijkste werk, *Mare Liberum* (1609), wordt geciteerd.⁵⁸ Dat Costa al vroeg op de hoogte was van het befaamde geschrift is een indicatie van de goede contacten tussen Genua en de Nederlanden, die werden bevorderd door de uitstekende handelsnetwerken tussen beide gebieden. Bewijzen daarvan vindt men terug in de bibliotheken, briefwisselingen en vooral privéverzamelingen van aristocratische families.⁵⁹

Het toepassen van de dialoogvorm in werken met een historisch-politieke strekking, naar het voorbeeld van schrijvers uit de klassieke oudheid, was in Genua tijdens de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw populair.⁶⁰ De dialoogvorm gaf de schrijver de mogelijkheid om politiek gevoelige vraagstukken te bespreken die binnen de gebruikelijke vorm van een geschiedwerk niet mogelijk waren geweest. De censuur maakte het voor de intellectuele stedelijke elite bijna onmogelijk om openlijk standpunten in te nemen die diametraal ingingen tegen het Genuese stadsbestuur en tegen de Spaans-Habsburgse invloed in de stad. De vele nooit uitgegeven manuscripten die ondergronds circuleerden in Genua droegen bij aan de politieke debatten in de stad.⁶¹ Costa schreef een politiek getint historisch werk dat, in tegenstelling tot het laatste boek van Conestaggio, wel op de Genuese boekenmarkt verscheen. Met zijn verhoog over een Nederlands onderwerp richtte hij zich tot een breed geïnteresseerd publiek in Genua, dat de intenties van de schrijver maar al te goed zal hebben begrepen.

Tot besluit: lessen van geschiedenis

In mijn analyse heb ik benadrukt dat niet alleen de nieuwsgierigheid naar de gebeurtenissen in de opstandige Nederlanden heeft geleid tot een aantal Italiaanse Opstandsgeschiedenissen. Naast de aandacht in Italië voor de religieus-politieke oorzaken, de betrokkenheid van duizenden Italiaanse soldaten bij de Nederlandse

⁵⁵ Twee anonieme manuscripten over dit onderwerp waarin wordt verwezen naar de Nederlandse scheepvaart: *Trattato delle armi marittime genovesi*, A.S.G. (Archivio di Stato Genova), ms. 709 en manuscript A.S.G./A.S., Politicorum, map 1652, bundel 22.

⁵⁶ C. Constantini, ‘Politica e storiografia’, cit., pp. 93-135, inz. 123.

⁵⁷ V. Conti, ‘Il modello politico olandese in Italia durante la prima metà del Seicento’, in: V.I. Comparato (ed.), *Modelli nella storia del pensiero politico*, Firenze, Olschki, 1987, pp. 145-163, inz. pp. 150-151. Over de Nederlandse straatvaart in het Middellandse Zeegebied tot 1621, zie E. Haitsma Mulier, ‘Genova e l’Olanda nel Seicento: contatti mercantili e ispirazione politica’, in: *Atti del Congresso internazionale di studi Rapporti Genova-Mediterraneo-Atlantico nell’età moderna*, Genova, Università di Genova, 1983, pp. 431-444.

⁵⁸ Costa, *Ragionamento*, p. 46. Zie ook: A. Clerici, ‘Ragion di Stato e politica internazionale’, p. 211.

⁵⁹ Een voorbeeld zijn de honderden brieven uit Antwerpen en uit andere steden in de Nederlanden die zich bevinden in de archieven van Genua, en die nog niet zijn onderzocht.

⁶⁰ Een invloedrijk traktaat in dialoogvorm binnen de Genuese stadsgeschiedenis is: O. Foglietta, *Dialogo della Repubblica di Genova*, Roma, Antonio Blado, 1559.

⁶¹ Zie P. Burke, ‘Public and Private Spheres in Late Renaissance Genoa’, cit.; C. Reijner, ‘Gesprekken in Genua. Giovanni Costa over het Twaalfjarig Bestand’, in: *De Zeventiende Eeuw* 30 (2014) 1, pp. 76-96.

oorlogen, de commerciële belangen en de culturele uitwisseling tussen de Nederlanden en Genua, is één aspect van deze interesse in de Italiaanse historiografie lang onbelicht gebleven, namelijk de betekenis ervan binnen de lokale Italiaanse context van de auteur.

Het is bekend bij historici dat geschiedschrijving die de eigen (nationale) geschiedenis beschreef werd ingezet om binnenlandse politieke kwesties ter sprake te brengen, vaak een onderliggende politieke boodschap bevatte of een bevestiging was van een officieel standpunt.⁶² Ditzelfde effect zien we terug in de drie hier besproken werken, gewijd aan de Nederlandse Opstand. De auteurs bespreken actuele politieke thema's niet aan de hand van verwijzingen naar gebeurtenissen in Italië of naar hun lokale geschiedenis, maar gebruiken de geschiedenis van opstandige gewesten in de verre Nederlanden als medium voor hun kritiek op (politiek onwenselijke) ontwikkelingen in hun eigen stad of land. Het verhaal van de Opstand bood beide Genuese schrijvers de kans om de gang van zaken in hun stad te bekritisieren en het politieke debat over actuele kwesties aan te zwengelen. Conestaggio schreef een actualiteitskroniek die voor een belangrijk deel steunde op herinneringen aan zijn tijd in Antwerpen. Costa schreef zijn traktaat over actuele politieke verwickelingen in een ander deel van Europa die voor zijn stad van direct belang waren. Beiden schreven vanuit de Genuese context, waar Republikeinse (commerciële) denkbeelden uit de Nederlanden, zoals die van Hugo Grotius en Justus Lipsius, een aanzienlijke bekendheid hadden. Het succes van de handel en nijverheid in de Republiek werd een voorbeeld voor de Genuezen.

Voor de Florentijn Bocchi maakte de geschiedenis van de verwickelingen in de Habsburgse Nederlanden, met in de hoofdrol een Italiaanse held, het mogelijk om de Italiaanse bijdrage aan de strijd tegen de opstandelingen te accentueren ten opzichte van de Spaanse soldaten en officieren. Zo zetten Bocchi, Costa en Conestaggio, ieder op zijn eigen manier en binnen een andere context, hun kennis over de Nederlandse Opstand in als een voorbeeld voor het heden, maar ook als een les voor de toekomst van hun stad of land.

Trefwoorden

Gerolamo Conestaggio, Giovanni Costa, Francesco Bocchi, Italiaanse historiografie, Nederlandse Opstand

Cees Reijner is als docent geschiedenis werkzaam op het Mgr. Frencken College in Oosterhout. Hij studeerde geschiedenis en Italiaanse taal- en letterkunde. Sinds drie jaar verricht hij promotieonderzoek aan de Universiteit Leiden naar de Italiaanse geschiedschrijving over de Nederlandse Opstand. In het kader van zijn onderzoeksproject publiceerde hij artikelen in onder andere *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* en *De Zeventiende Eeuw*.

Rustlandstraat 13, 4818 JM
Breda (Nederland)
creyner@xs4all.nl

⁶² H. Dunthorne, *Britain and the Dutch Revolt*, cit.

RIASSUNTO

Il mito dell'Olanda

Politica e storiografia in Italia nella prima età moderna

Nell'Europa della prima età moderna la storiografia era utilizzata di consueto come strumento per ricollegarsi alle questioni politiche locali. Mentre gli storici dei secoli più recenti hanno preso in esame anzitutto gli autori che scrivevano direttamente della propria storia nazionale, nella prima età moderna l'opinione pubblica di un Paese si formava tenendo anche conto di avvenimenti storici stranieri o transnazionali, che portavano un contributo importante al dibattito storico locale. In quale misura la storiografia italiana asservì a tal fine? Questo contributo verifica se la storiografia italiana sulla guerra degli ottant'anni (1568-1648) abbia offerto un contributo, seppur velato, al dibattito politico italiano contemporaneo. La Rivolta dei Paesi Bassi e la Repubblica delle Province Unite erano, non di rado, elevate a modello o a termine di confronto per la situazione politica ed economica dell'Italia. Questo articolo prova ad individuare l'agenda politica sottostante a tre opere storiografiche scritte, rispettivamente, da Francesco Bocchi, Giovanni Costa e Gerolamo Conestaggio. A tal fine i dibattiti che si colgono in filigrana, sullo sfondo della materia storica, vengono interpretati alla luce del contesto politico italiano contemporaneo.

Non solo Roma Torino, i Savoia e le Fiandre nei *Campeggiamenti* di Emanuele Tesauro (1639)

Luca Bianco & Blythe Alice Raviola*

Il contesto storico

Fra le opere meno studiate di Emanuele Tesauro (su cui vi è per il resto una cospicua bibliografia critica)¹ spicca un'opera politica, i *Campeggiamenti*, concepita come una cronaca di guerra nel 1635 e trasformata via via, caso notevole di metamorfosi tematico-concettuale, in una *Istoria del Piemonte* secondo l'edizione ultima del 1674. Per ripercorrere in estrema sintesi le intricate vicende editoriali, compositive e ideologiche dell'intera opera è necessario richiamare alcuni dati fondamentali: nel 1639 compare a Torino per i tipi dell'editore Federico Alessandro Cavalleris 'libraro di S.A.R.' il libro *Sant-Omero assediato dai francesi et liberato dal principe Francesco Tomaso di Savoia nell'anno 1638*.² Il sottotitolo recita *Volume quarto de' Campeggiamenti di Fiandra di don Emanuele Tesauro conte di Salmor* perché il progetto di Tesauro prevedeva originariamente di dar conto delle quattro campagne militari condotte da Tommaso di Savoia nelle Fiandre tra il 1635 e il 1638.³ La guerra civile scoppiata in Piemonte nello stesso 1638 in seguito alla morte del duca Vittorio Amedeo I distolse il principe e il suo scrittore da tale disegno. Tommaso, con il fratello cardinale Maurizio, si pose a capo del partito filospagnolo detto principista

* Il presente saggio è stato scritto di concerto dai due autori; tuttavia, nel rispetto delle competenze specifiche, il primo paragrafo si deve a Blythe Alice Raviola, il secondo e il terzo sono di Luca Bianco.

¹ Con particolare riferimento al nostro studio, quindi più alle opere di ambito storico e meno all'autore del *Cannocchiale aristotelico*, citiamo: E. Dervieux, *Emanuele Tesauro (1592-1675)*, Torino, San Giuseppe degli Artigianelli, 1931; L. Vigliani, 'Emanuele Tesauro e la sua opera storiografica', in: *Fonti e studi di storia Fossanese*, XIV, Torino, 1936, pp. 207-77; M. Zanardi, *Contributi per una biografia di Emanuele Tesauro. Dalle campagne di Fiandra alla guerra civile del Piemonte (1635-1642)*, Torino, Centro Studi Piemontesi, 1979; M. L. Doglio, 'Dalla metafora alla storia: "apologie" e postille inedite di Emanuele Tesauro', in: *Studi secenteschi*, XXXI (1990), pp. 3-28; *Idem*, 'Letteratura e retorica da Tesauro a Gioffredo', in: G. Ricuperati (a cura di), *Storia di Torino*, IV: *La città fra crisi e ripresa (1630-1730)*, Torino, Einaudi, 2002, pp. 569-630; B. Zandrino, *Antitesi barocche*, Alessandria, Edizioni dell'Orso, 2003; L. Giachino, *"Per la causa del Cielo e dello Stato": retorica, politica e religione nei Panegirici sacri del Tesauro*, Alessandria, Edizioni dell'Orso, 2012. Si veda anche l'edizione di E. Tesauro, *Istoria della Venerabilissima Compagnia della fede catolica, sotto l'invocazione di San Paolo, dell'augusta città di Torino*, A. Cantaluppi (a cura di), Prefazione di M. Guglielminetti, Torino, Compagnia di San Paolo, 2003.

² Si tratta, in effetti, di un'opera articolata in sei parti le quali, come spiega Maria Luisa Doglio, nell'edizione torinese di G.B. Zavatta del 1674 furono riorganizzate a partire dalla campagna di Saint-Omer. Cfr. Doglio, 'Letteratura e retorica', cit.: sui *Campeggiamenti* segnatamente le pp. 576-577 e 616-617 e, per l'Indice della stampa Zavatta, la nota 78 di p. 617.

³ Cfr. R. Quazza, *Tommaso di Savoia Carignano nelle campagne di Fiandra e di Francia, 1635-38*, Torino, Società Editrice Internazionale, 1941, p. 251 e Zanardi, *Contributi ad una biografia*, cit., pp. 10-11.

contro quello madamista e francofilo diretto dalla cognata e vedova Cristina di Borbone. I principi presero il controllo di alcune città e nel 1640 difesero con le truppe spagnole i presidi di Ivrea e Casale. In anni così convulsi, la prima, frettolosa edizione dei *Campeggiamenti* del 1639 fu ripresa dallo stesso editore con una seconda versione, più curata tipograficamente ma identica nel contenuto. L'attenzione di Tommaso e di Tesauro da quel momento defletté dalle Fiandre per concentrarsi sulle guerre civili piemontesi; e infatti i successivi *Campeggiamenti* (*Rivolta della fortuna nell'assedio di Casale e Torino assediato e non soccorso*) vennero raccolti in un volume che vide due edizioni contemporanee nel 1643 con il titolo *Campeggiamenti ovvero Istorie del Piemonte*. Entrambi i libri conobbero una successiva riedizione comparsa a Ivrea nel 1646 e, soltanto allora, al *Sant-Omero assediato* fece seguito un opuscolo intitolato *De' campeggiamenti di Fiandra* che conteneva in appena trentanove pagine la narrazione dei fatti militari di Renty, Gueldres e Catelet e serviva, come esplicitamente dichiarato in chiusura, a fare da raccordo con il volume dedicato ai fatti piemontesi. Gli episodi fiamminghi caddero poi nell'oblio fino all'edizione del 1674 di tutti i *Campeggiamenti* composti che, per quanto definitiva, rimane incompleta.

Questo breve contributo si propone di inquadrare, sotto diverse angolazioni, il contesto in cui fu scritto *Sant-Omero assediato dai francesi*: Tommaso di Savoia, i Paesi Bassi spagnoli, il rapporto di Torino con Madrid, e alcune incisioni e antiporte secentesche saranno i nostri punti di riferimento. È un'opera dallo stile piuttosto immediato, cronachistico e piuttosto sobrio nonostante il chiaro intento encomiastico dell'autore che la scrisse da testimone oculare, essendosi recato nelle Fiandre al seguito del principe sabauda. Il punto è cruciale tanto nella biografia di Tesauro quanto nella carriera di Tommaso,⁴ entrambi vacillanti tra sentimenti filospagnoli e filofrancesi secondo una spaccatura interna alla corte di Torino sin dal tempo di Emanuele Filiberto⁵ e inasprita allora dalla morte di Carlo Emanuele I, dall'influenza di Cristina di Borbone, dall'*empasse* in cui versavano i rapporti diplomatici tra il Piemonte e la monarchia spagnola. Che Tesauro, poi cantore del partito madamista e dunque francofilo, scegliesse di sostenere in un primo tempo il figlio guerriero di Carlo Emanuele appare significativo della sua volontà originaria di sostenere la linea maschile del casato di fronte alla crisi di successione provocata dalla morte di Vittorio Amedeo I (1637). Entrato al servizio del capostipite della linea dei Savoia-Carignano dopo aver lasciato, nel 1635, la Compagnia di Gesù in cui militava dal 1611, egli restò con Tommaso nei Paesi Bassi spagnoli tra il 1635 e il 1638. Sono gli anni appena precedenti la guerra civile tra principisti e madamisti e l'impasto fra 'cronaca, storia, celebrazione'⁶ elaborato da Tesauro assume una valenza forte, di schieramento politico oltre che di illustrazione evenemenziale.

La storiografia più recente non ha riservato molta considerazione alla campagna militare di Tommaso nelle Fiandre. L'analisi più classica la vuole come un episodio del suo *cursus honorum* da uomo d'arme al servizio della Spagna dopo che nel 1634, così come la sorella Margherita, duchessa vedova di Mantova e Monferrato,⁷

⁴ Fondamentale per i loro rapporti è Zanardi, *Contributi per una biografia*, cit.

⁵ P. Merlin, *Emanuele Filiberto. Un principe tra il Piemonte e l'Europa*, Torino, Società Editrice Internazionale, 1995, *passim*.

⁶ Doglio, 'Letteratura e retorica', cit., p. 577.

⁷ Sulle sue marcate scelte politiche mi permetto di rinviare a B.A. Raviola, 'The Three Lives of Margherita of Savoy-Gonzaga, duchess of Mantua and Vicereine of Portugal', in: A.J. Cruz & M. Galli

egli si pronunciò risolutamente a favore di Madrid nella Guerra dei Trent'anni mentre il fratello Vittorio Amedeo I, duca di Savoia, sposo di Cristina, era forzato a non dichiararsi neutrale e a parteggiare per la Francia di Richelieu; secondo alcuni commentatori, in realtà, Tommaso e con lui Maurizio presero posizione in segreto accordo con il duca.⁸ La visione tradizionale regge ma pare opportuno sostanziarla con interpretazioni storiografiche nuove e incisive: il concetto di *doble lealtad* introdotto dalla scuola spagnola – e già perfezionato in quello di *fidelidades multiplas* – permette di riconsiderare, accentuandolo, il grado di attaccamento e di obbedienza dei principi al vincolo di sangue con gli Asburgo di Spagna.⁹ Tommaso, specie per le sorelle terziarie francescane Maria Apollonia e Francesca Caterina rimaste osservatrici a Torino, diviene il campione della dinastia, legata a doppio filo al retaggio della madre Catalina Micaela d'Asburgo e della sua ferrea educazione spagnola, contro la minaccia francese incarnata dalla cognata. Scriveva Maria Apollonia al fratello Maurizio:

Il mio senso circa il più sicuro modo di servire V.A. è il medesimo ch'accenai sin da principio, cioè con l'autorità e asistenze del Imperatore e del Re di Spagna, e se si può col prencipe Tomaso, perché importa grandemente questo punto per maggiormente animare i piemontesi [...] Volendo M.R. regnar sola sinché potrà et i francesi aspirando all'acquisto di questi stati non vogliono ch'alcun principe del sangue venga ad impedire i disegni loro prossimi.¹⁰

E ancora, nel settembre del 1638:

‘vedo che V.A. non perde tempo in solecitare il rimedio et la venuta del sig. prencipe Tomaso in Italia per poter unitamente assicurare meglio l'antica libertà della Casa e dei Stati [...] Nondimeno è di necessità che V.A. et il prencipe Tomaso, partendo, fingano solo di volersi abbocar insieme e poi ritornarsene subito a Roma lei e l'altro in Fiandra, procurando anche d'ingannar i suoi medesimi di Casa con dire seco per adesso solo i più necessari [ordini]’.¹¹

Non ne si può dar conto in questa sede, ma tutta la corrispondenza dei principi sabaudi, in quegli anni, è intrisa di preoccupazione e di sentimenti che si potrebbero definire patriottici, assumendo l'aggettivo in chiave non nazionalistica, bensì considerando il Piemonte sabauda una parte dell'immenso impero spagnolo.

Nulla di tutto questo troviamo in Tesauro, però. Il *Sant-Omero assediato*, ispirato all'idea di informare il lettore su ciò che altrimenti sarebbe stato lontano e

Stampino (a cura di), *Early Modern Habsburg Women. Transnational Contexts, Cultural Conflicts, Dynastic Continuities*, Ashgate, Farnham, 2013, pp. 59-78.

⁸ R. Quazza, *Tommaso di Savoia-Carignano nelle campagne di Fiandra e di Francia*, cit.; F. Cognasso, *I Savoia*, Milano, Corbaccio, 1999, pp. 402-404; C. Rosso, 'Il Seicento', in: P. Merlin, C. Rosso, G. Symcox & G. Ricuperati (a cura di), *Il Piemonte sabauda. Stato e territori in età moderna*, Torino, UTET, 1994, pp. 171-267, p. 234.

⁹ J. Martínez Millán e.a. (a cura di), 'La doble lealtad: entre el servicio al Rey y la obligación a la Iglesia', in: *Libros de la corte*, n. monografico 1 (2014), pp. 136-162. Sulla triplice posizione di Maurizio tra Chiesa, Spagna e Francia cfr. B.A. Raviola, "En el real serbicio de vuestra majestad". El Cardenal Mauricio de Saboya entre Turín, Roma, Madrid y París', *ivi*, pp. 242-259.

¹⁰ Archivio di Stato di Torino (ASTo), Corte, Materie politiche per rapporto all'interno, Real Casa, *Lettere principi diversi*, m. 4, Maria Apollonia di Savoia, n. 1299, lettera del 21 aprile 1638, da Torino. Sulle inclinazioni delle due Infante cfr. B.A. Raviola, 'Venerabili figlie: Maria Apollonia e Francesca Caterina di Savoia, monache francescane, fra la corte di Torino e gli interessi di Madrid (1594-1656)', in: J. Martínez Millán, M. Rivero Rodríguez & G. Versteegen (a cura di), *La Corte en Europa: Política y Religión (Siglos XVI-XVIII)*, II, Madrid, Polifemo, 2012, pp. 887-910.

¹¹ ASTo, Corte, Materie politiche per rapporto all'interno, Real Casa, *Lettere principi diversi*, m. 4, Maria Apollonia di Savoia, n. 1307, 11 settembre 1638.

obliterato ('Veggio ancor questa impresa, com'altre molte, andarne preda al silenzio, nimico della virtù e fratello della invidia'),¹² muove dal racconto dei fatti e rivendica persino un tono di obiettività ('Ch'io scriva le azioni di un mio signore non pregiudica perciò alla fedeltà di buon historiografo').¹³ Preso a modello Giulio Cesare, la narrazione prevede la presentazione dei comandanti militari al servizio della monarchia cattolica – non solo spagnoli, ma genovesi (Spinola, Doria), alessandrini (Guasco) e monferrini (Luigi Gonzaga marchese di Grana) in quel caleidoscopio di appartenenze che furono gli eserciti di Antico Regime e soprattutto quelli impegnati sul fronte fiammingo¹⁴ – e un'immediata descrizione del teatro di guerra. Un teatro che per i contemporanei richiama inesorabilmente lo scenario delle due guerre mondiali (Dunkerque è tra i toponimi più ricorrenti) e che colpisce Tesauro per la compenetrazione tra terre e acque; essa è protagonista quanto gli uomini delle operazioni militari, tutte giocate d'astuzia e sul veloce adattamento dei campi per ostacolare il passaggio delle truppe avversarie. Saint-Omer, 'città dell'Artesia', è il sito dell'assedio 'memorabile',¹⁵ ma non è, per forza di cose, l'unico luogo citato. È evocata la geografia irregolare degli 'Stati olandesi', sono delineati come scenario la Gheldria e la 'Campigna', il 'Lutsemburgo', San Quintino e l'Hannonia', le 'frontiere del Cambresis'; a dominare è Anversa, 'la Fenice de' Paesi Bassi [...], centro delle vene de' fiumi e de' canali che transfondono a tutto il corpo dello Stato gli alimenti e la vita'.¹⁶ Obiettivo del re di Francia era di 'investir Sant-Omero, seconda castellania del paese d'Artoys, [...] indi passare a Dun-Cherche, principalissimo grembo delle flotte e, tagliata fuori Gravelinga, strigner quella piazza unitamente con una parte degli Olandesi'.¹⁷ Attorno a questo piano, messo in atto con truppe sempre fresche in arrivo dal confine francese, si snoda il racconto del faticoso, progressivo avanzamento spagnolo su quel terreno anfibio e popolato da ribelli.

Di Saint-Omer, 'quasi vasto triangolo in forma di cuore', dalla posizione strategica in faccia al temuto 'Mar Britannico', Tesauro scrive:

esser quella città sì vaga per gli edifici privati e pubblici che ne' Paesi Bassi può contarsi fra le prime, o la prima fra le seconde, et alla vaghezza corrispondere l'opulenza sì per la bontà de' terreni come per la servitù delle acque vive che le continuano il commercio dell'Oceano e della Fiandra co' suoi nativi et artificiosi canali.¹⁸

Le tecniche d'assedio, insieme con l'uso di armi spettacolose e terribili come le bombarde, sono l'altro *leitmotiv* del *Sant-Omero assediato*. Tommaso, il Principe, sfrutta abilmente la perizia degli ingegneri idraulici e l'8 luglio 1638 espugna Saint-

¹² Tesauro, *Sant-Omero assediato*, cit., p. 3.

¹³ *Ivi*, p. 6.

¹⁴ È ancora la storiografia spagnola a offrire validi contributi sul punto: cfr. in primo luogo B. Houben, 'Una corte para un Príncipe. La política militar de Olivares y la corte bruselese del cardenal Infante (1634-41)', in: R. Vermeir, M. Ebben & R. Fagel (a cura di), *Agentes e identidades en movimiento. España y los Países Bajos. Siglos XVI-XVIII*, Madrid, Sílex Ediciones, 2011, pp. 151-170, dove, alle pp. 159, 167-69, è evocato anche il ruolo dinastico di Tommaso di Savoia. Cfr. anche G. Hanlon, *The Twilight of a Military Tradition. Italian Aristocrats and European Conflicts, 1560-1800*, New York, Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1998, p. 104. Per la composizione dell'esercito guidato dal principe cfr. Quazza, *Tommaso di Savoia-Carignano*, cit., pp. 141-142.

¹⁵ Tesauro, *Sant-Omero assediato*, cit., p. 3.

¹⁶ *Ivi*, rispettivamente alle pp. 7, 8, 10 e 22.

¹⁷ *Ivi*, p. 10.

¹⁸ *Ivi*, p. 15.

Omer dopo un mese d'assedio appendendo lo stendardo bianco dei francesi sconfitti sulla 'Capella di Nostra Signora de' miracoli, eretta con divota magnificenza sopra la piazza'.¹⁹ Il ricordo, inevitabile, scivola verso le antiche imprese di famiglia e al vicino luogo di 'Hedin-Fort Real, frontiera della medesima provincia che, con le reliquie del vecchio Hedino dal duca Emanuel Filiberto di Savoia fu eretto come trofeo delle armi spagnole et ritegno delle francesi'.²⁰ Tommaso, nel confronto con il maresciallo nemico Châtillon, brilla infine per prudenza: 'l'uno ha mostrato quanto si estenda la possanza di un grandissimo esercito e l'altro quanto vaglia la diligenza del generale con l'opra di pochi ma forti et affezionati soldati'.²¹

Manca ogni appiglio, anche a una lettura fra le righe, per cogliere in *Sant-Omero assediato* un riferimento esplicito ai fatti contemporanei in Piemonte. Per Maria Luisa Doglio risalta comunque 'la scelta di "testimonianza" dei *Campeggiamenti*, stampati fra il 1640 e il 1643, senza indicazione di luogo prima, a Bologna e Venezia poi, comunque lontano dalla corte';²² in realtà l'edizione del 1639 cui ci stiamo riferendo anticipa l'urgenza della cronaca propagandistica e rivela pure la necessità di diffonderla proprio a Torino. Saranno poi le rielaborazioni dell'opera a stemperarne la vis politica fino a stravolgerne il senso, lasciando prevalere lo sguardo di Tesauro madamista e panegirista.²³

I *Campeggiamenti* fecero scuola sin dal titolo (nel 1683, dopo l'edizione ultima del 1674, apparvero *I Campeggiamenti degli scacchi* di Francesco Piacenza).²⁴ Però, possiamo ipotizzare che l'opera tesauriana abbia segnato un passo avanti nella conoscenza delle Fiandre in seno alla cultura sabauda? Nell'edizione Garzoni del 1643 Tesauro lamentava che ormai 'le guerre del Piemonte trovan quasi più lingue che occhi' mentre i fatti olandesi erano rimasti ingiustamente trascurati.²⁵ Certo l'intento conoscitivo del libello era secondario, né la critica sabaudista lo accolse con favore: l'unico merito suo, commentò duro Davide Bertolotti nella sua *Istoria della Real Casa di Savoia*, era di aver posto in risalto Tommaso.²⁶ Né, a un primo e superficiale scavo bibliografico, si trova traccia nella produzione storico-letteraria del Seicento piemontese di testi espressamente riservati al mondo fiammingo.

Eppure, ancora una volta, non dovranno essere trascurati i precedenti legami asburgici, in primo luogo quelli, solidissimi e improntati al più profondo affetto, tra

¹⁹ *Ivi*, pp. 92-97.

²⁰ *Ivi*, p. 98, con riferimento al forte di Hesdin.

²¹ *Ivi*, p. 103.

²² Doglio, *Letteratura e retorica*, cit., p. 576.

²³ Si legga l'osservazione di S. Cerutti in *Mestieri e privilegi. Nascita delle corporazioni a Torino (secc. XVI-XVII)*, Torino, Einaudi, 1992, p. 137: 'Il giudizio complessivo che lo storico Emanuele Tesauro esprimeva nel 1673, stendendo le *Origini delle guerre civili* (di cui già il titolo, con la scelta cronologica che vi è sottintesa, è significativo) risulta, in questo senso, molto lucido. Tommaso e Maurizio non inaugurarono una guerra civile; si trovarono piuttosto a doverla governare e - ma questo ovviamente il principista Tesauro non lo dice - a trarne, almeno momentaneamente, profitto'.

²⁴ *I Campeggiamenti degli Scacchi o sia nuova disciplina d'attacchi, difese e partiti del giuoco degli scacchi si nello stile antico che nel nuovo arciscacchiere. Stratagemme et invenzioni del dottor di legge Francesco Piacenza, accademico immobile...*, in Torino, per Antonio Beltrandi, 1683 (disponibile online: <http://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/010248665>).

²⁵ *Campeggiamenti overo Istorie del Piemonte descritte dal conte don Emanuele Tesauro...*, in Venezia, appresso Marco Garzoni, 1643, con dedica a Walter Vandervoort, l'autore 'a chi vorrà leggere'.

²⁶ D. Bertolotti, *Istoria della Real Casa di Piemonte*, Milano, Fontana, 1830, p. 220, nota 1: 'Emanuele Tesauro scrisse la storia de' campeggiamenti di questo principe in Fiandra e in Piemonte. È un'opera composta nel pessimo stile detto del Secento, che ne' paesi d'Italia signoreggiati dagli Spagnoli guastava i più bei parti dell'ingegno'.

Catalina Micaela e la sua più celebre sorella Isabella Clara Eugenia, governatrice dei Paesi Bassi.²⁷ Lo scambio epistolare tra le due, e dunque tra Torino e Bruxelles, fu costante, intenso, di natura intima e politica insieme, con l'invio reciproco di doni, oggetti curiosi, *exotica*, prodotti di provenienza fiamminga ma pure atlantica e asiatica, ad aprire sull'universo imperiale e sul mondo coloniale la piccola corte subalpina.²⁸ In quel torno di anni, mentre Jan Kraeck vi dipingeva il teorico del pensiero politico Giovanni Botero,²⁹ squadernava l'orbe terracqueo a vantaggio dei principi e dei lettori colti nelle sue *Relazioni universali*: le sue Fiandre vi appaiono fortemente debitrice della descrizione di Ludovico Guicciardini e sono ugualmente vive, ma ormai frementi dal punto di vista dell'eterodossia e dell'insofferenza politica.³⁰ Sono dunque, come già per Emanuele Filiberto e ora per Tommaso di Savoia, una terra di opportunità; sono, per gli storici e per i geografi, un laboratorio di sperimentazione costituzionale e paesaggistica; sono, per Emanuele Tesauro, un campo alternativo in cui decidere i destini della storia sabauda, ma anche della propria storia di autore e di uomo.

Tesauro, le Fiandre, le arti, i libri: alcune osservazioni

Nel 1663, infatti, al culmine della sua parabola letteraria e cortigiana, in chiusura della seconda edizione del *Cannocchiale Aristotelico*, Tesauro rievoca la propria esperienza fiamminga collocandola in un momento per lui 'turbidissimo', quando decise di seguire Tommaso 'quasi io m'andassi a involgere in volontarie tenebre, ignoto in ignoti paesi; sempre ingombrati dalle turbolenze di Marte'. Crea in quel periodo un'impresa insieme al pittore Isidoro Bianchi, il cui 'meraviglioso pennello' anima molte delle grandi imprese decorative sabaude del periodo.³¹

Non è che uno dei rimandi ad esperienze figurative e storico artistiche di cui daremo qualche cenno in queste poche righe, rimandando a studi più articolati già apparsi o che intendiamo compiere in futuro.³² Va detto subito che per lo storico

²⁷ Cfr. M. Sánchez, 'Sword and Wimple. Isabel Clara Eugenia and Power', in: A.J. Cruz & M. Suzuki (a cura di), *The Rule of Women in Early Modern Europe*, Urbana-Chicago, University of Illinois Press, 2009, pp. 64-79.

²⁸ Vari studi sugli scambi di cose esotiche lo testimoniano: cfr. soprattutto A. Jordan Gschwend, A. Pérez de Tudela, 'Exotica Habsburgica. La Casa de Austria y la colecciones exóticas en el Renacimiento temprano', in: *Oriente en Palacio. Tesoros Asiáticos en las Colecciones Reales Españolas*, Madrid, Patrimonio Nacional, 2003, pp. 26-43.

²⁹ P. Astrua, A.M. Bava & C.E. Spantigati (a cura di), *'Il nostro pittore fiamengo': Giovanni Caracca alla corte dei Savoia, 1568-1607*, Torino, Allemandi, 2005.

³⁰ G. Botero, *Le Relazioni universali*, B.A. Raviola (a cura di), Torino, Nino Aragno Editore, 2015, vol. I, pp. 104 sgg.; vol. II, pp. 945 sgg. Qualche traccia di Guicciardini filtrato da Botero è pure in Tesauro, laddove per esempio si parla degli argini denominati *dich* o *dicco* (da cui diga): cfr. *supra*, vol. I, p. 514 e Tesauro, *Sant-Omero assediato*, cit., p. 16.

³¹ E. Tesauro, *Il Cannocchiale Aristotelico*, Venezia, Paolo Baglioni, 1663, pp. 641-642.

³² Per la cospicua bibliografia su Tesauro e le arti figurative, dopo i pionieristici e fondamentali saggi di Andreina Griseri (valga per tutti *Metamorfosi del Barocco*, Torino, Einaudi, 1967), Maria Luisa Doglio (Introduzione e cura di E. Tesauro, *Idea delle perfette Imprese*, Firenze, Olschki, 1975) e Michela di Macco, 'Critica Occhiuta. La Cultura figurativa (1630-1678)', in: G. Ricuperati (a cura di), *Storia di Torino*, IV, cit., pp. 337-430) rinviando qui, per brevità, a pochi contributi recenti che valgono anche come repertori di indicazioni bibliografiche: C. Gauna, 'Pittura moderna a Torino nel secondo Seicento: letterati, libri illustrati e gallerie', in: G. Romano (a cura di), *Sebastiano Taricco e Andrea Pozzo tra la Grande Provincia e la Corte di Torino*, Torino, Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Torino, 2010, pp. 81-105; *Idem*, 'L'"iconomantia" d'Emanuele Tesauro', in: *Dix-septième siècle*, 262 (2014/1), pp. 125-138; su una linea diversa, con alcuni dispareri, L. Bianco, 'Immagini dell'eresia tra arte e letteratura', in: W. Barberis & A. Cantaluppi (a cura di), *La compagnia di San Paolo 1563-2013*, Torino, Einaudi, 2013, I, pp. 379-409.

dell'arte la lettura del *Sant-Omero assediato* è un'esperienza frustrante: qui lo sguardo di Tesauro si costringe a essere quello dell'uomo d'arme e dello scrittore militare, non certo quello del filosofo e regista dell'immagine sabauda che diventerà in seguito. I monumenti e i paesaggi vengono visti esclusivamente come teatri di guerra e ogni altro aspetto viene liquidato quasi sdegnosamente: '[In Saint-Omer] Belli son gli Edifici, ma bellissimo il Tempio Maggiore, il monistero di S. Bertino e il Palagio della città: tutti serviano però più di ornamento che di presidio'.³³

Ma Tesauro all'epoca praticava anche altri registri letterari: lo prova la prima delle sue opere collegate ai soggiorni fiamminghi, il panegirico sacro *L'Aurora* (pronunciato l'8 settembre 1635 nella cappella reale di Bruxelles di fronte a Tommaso e al Cardinale Infante Ferdinando d'Asburgo), ove si leggono molti riferimenti alle arti visive e, in apertura, una felice e visionaria descrizione della notte boreale.³⁴



Fig. 1 Giovanale Boetto (su disegno di Agostino Parentani), antiporta mai utilizzata per E. Tesauro, *Campeggiamenti del Piemonte*, 1641. Torino, Biblioteca Reale.

³³ Tesauro, *Sant'Omero assediato*, cit., p. 16.

³⁴ E. Tesauro, *Panegirici del conte D. Emanuele Tesauro*, II, Torino, Zapatta, 1659, pp. 212-258.

Anche è frustrante la confezione editoriale del libro: l'edizione del 1639 esce infatti stampata malamente e senza antiporta; l'anno successivo l'editore rimedia alla cattiva qualità tipografica, ma non all'assenza della controparte visiva; eppure in questo giro d'anni per Tesauro le immagini sono importanti, tanto che il volume successivo dei *Campeggiamenti* conterà ben tre diverse antiporte: una, mai utilizzata, del 1641 su disegno del pittore e cartografo Agostino Parentani incisa dal grande Giovanale Boetto (fig. 1); una seconda, del 1643, per un'edizione uscita a Venezia 'appresso Marco Garzoni', con un diverso disegno dello stesso Parentani e incisa da Giovanni Paolo Bianchi;³⁵ una terza, uscita a Bologna per Giacomo Monti nello stesso 1643, con un'antiporta brutta e anonima che semplifica l'invenzione di Parentani e rinuncia a qualsiasi effetto tridimensionale, quasi fosse una xilografia.³⁶ Se l'edizione veneziana respira ancora in pieno il clima del tardo manierismo di corte, quella bolognese, nella sua povertà, disvela il tentativo di attenuare le asprezze dell'altra, fino a snaturare l'iconografia classica e umanistica, ma evidentemente troppo *unheimlich* a vedersi, della fortuna calva; su quella via proseguirà Bartolomeo Caravoglia (sodale di Tesauro dagli anni Sessanta almeno) per l'edizione definitiva del 1674,³⁷ quando i giochi politici e letterari sono per Tesauro ormai conclusi e si gode quel portentoso monumento di carta, inchiostro e bulino che è la riedizione delle sue opere maggiori patrocinata dal municipio di Torino.³⁸

La bella invenzione di Boetto, la figura scattante e nervosa del principe appiedato che sguaina la spada per difendere il paese e il *paesaggio*, entro il quale prende posto ma senza dominarlo, tra insistenti reminiscenze classiche e spirali agitate di riccioli e panneggi, non consente se non per differenza un confronto con il più celebre ritratto del principe, quello dipinto da Anton Van Dyck nel 1634: senz'altro il più noto e importante frutto dei rapporti artistici tra i Savoia e le Fiandre nel Seicento, mediati, in quell'occasione, dalla notevole figura di Alessandro Scaglia di Verrua, ambasciatore sabaudo ad Anversa, che di Van Dyck e di Rubens era amico e committente;³⁹ ma va citato anche lo splendido busto marmoreo del cardinale Maurizio, fratello di Tommaso, scolpito da François Duquesnoy, che Tesauro definirà, nel panegirico funebre per Maurizio, una 'perfetta imagine che fe' sudar gli scalpelli del famoso Fiamingo animator de' sassi'.⁴⁰

³⁵ *Idem*, *Campeggiamenti overo I storie del Piemonte*, [...] dedicate al [...] signor Gualtier Vandervuort, Venezia, M. Garzoni, 1643. L'antiporta si può vedere su Google Books (consultato il 25 novembre 2015).

³⁶ *Idem*, *Campeggiamenti overo I storie del Piemonte*, [...] all'illustriss. [...] signor Marchese Cornelio Lambertini, Bologna, G. Monti, 1643. La si vede su Google Books.

³⁷ *Idem*, *Campeggiamenti del Serenissimo Principe Tomaso di Savoia* [...] Torino, Bartolomeo Zapatta, 1674. Anche quest'edizione si trova in rete.

³⁸ Per Giovanale Boetto cfr. A. Griseri, N. Carboneri & C. Morra, *Giovenale Boetto architetto e incisore*, Fossano, Cassa di risparmio di Fossano, 1966 *passim* e p. 76. Per il rapporto Boetto-Tesauro cfr. il bello e importante C. Gorla, *La decorazione del palazzo Taffini d'Acceglio a Savigliano*, in *Idem* & M.B. Failla, *Committenti di età barocca. Le collezioni del principe Emanuele Filiberto di Savoia a Palermo e la decorazione di Palazzo Taffini d'Acceglio a Savigliano*, Torino, Allemandi, 2003, pp. 113-230. Sulle metamorfosi delle antiporte tesauriane si veda C. Gauna, *Pittura moderna*, cit.; alla stessa si devono alcune schede nel labirintico catalogo I. Massabò Ricci e.a. (a cura di), *Il Teatro di tutte le scienze e le arti*, Torino 2012, pp. 381-386; si veda però anche Bianco, *Immagini*, cit., pp. 401-405.

³⁹ Su di lui si rimanda senz'altro a T. Osborne, *Dynasty and Diplomacy in the Court of Savoy. Political Culture and the Thirty Years' War*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002.

⁴⁰ Si vedano le schede di A. Griseri in G. Romano & M. Di Macco (a cura di), *Diana Trionfatrice: arte di corte nel Piemonte del Seicento*, Torino, Allemandi, 1989, pp. 22-24; A.K. Wheelock, S.J. Barnes & J.S. Held (a cura di), *Anthony van Dyck*, Washington, National Gallery of Art, 1991, schede 38, 70, 71, 97.

Molte altre, è ovvio, sono le reminiscenze dei soggiorni fiamminghi nell'opera di Tesauro;⁴¹ una in particolare, finora non segnalata a nostra notizia, ci pare importante. Già nella prima edizione del *Cannocchiale Aristotelico* (1654) viene raccontata la storia del 'più laudato pittore dei paesi bassi, detto il *Maliscalco*; le cui opere son di tanta autorictà, che i soli frammenti valgon tesori'. Si tratta di Quentin Metsys, che secondo la tradizione, da fabbro divenne pittore per amore, spinto dalle esortazioni della fidanzata:

Vedi; io gradisco il tuo amore; et più gradirei la tua persona: ma troppo mi sono a schifo quelle fuliggini della tua sordida fucina; e quel tinnito de' tuoi matutini martelli. Ove dunque potessi tu, di buon maliscalco divenire un buon pittore; io sarei tua.

L'aneddoto biografico-amoroso era facilmente reperibile nel latino delle *Effigies* del Lampsonio; meno agevole ma non impossibile da leggere (comunque scartata da Tesauro) era la confutazione di quell'aneddoto operata da Karel Van Mander, le cui *Vite*, in neerlandese apparvero nel 1604. In Van Mander leggiamo l'osservazione che gli amatori stimavano i piccoli dipinti di Metsys alla stregua di preziosi gioielli; ma non sembra improbabile che Tesauro abbia fatto esperienza diretta *in loco* della rarità e preziosità delle opere del pittore.⁴²

Il Teatro della battaglia: altri sguardi

Torniamo ora all'assedio di Saint-Omer, per affiancare allo sguardo dello scrittore quelli di due artisti. Il primo è il pittore fiammingo Pieter Snayers, specializzato in scene di battaglia, che incontreremo di nuovo tra breve; il secondo è il grande incisore fiorentino Stefano della Bella.

Nell'Archivio di Stato di Torino si conserva un prezioso codice di grande formato che reca l'intestazione *Campagne du Prence Thomas en Flandres*, proveniente da una vendita all'incanto e dunque di cui si ignorano data e modalità precise di assemblamento; contiene numerosi disegni, eseguiti con una grande cura e riccamente colorati, ma anche schizzi a matita e incisioni di carte. All'episodio di Saint-Omer è dedicata una grande carta topografica, accompagnata da una legenda a stampa mutila dell'angolo superiore sinistro. È sormontata da un complesso stemma sabaudo con la consueta e misteriosa iscrizione FERT ed è firmata in basso a destra: 'Le dessin faict par Jacques van Werden archer du corps de S.A.R. / p. Snayers pictor de S. C. F. excudit' (fig. 2).⁴³ Si tratta di una carta molto dettagliata, in cui i diversi tipi di territorio vengono resi con grande minuzia; manca qualsiasi abbellimento

⁴¹ Zanardi, *Contributi*, cit., e *Idem*, 'Vita ed esperienze di Emanuele Tesauro nella compagnia di Gesù', in: *Archivium Historicum Societatis Iesu*, XLVII (1978), pp. 1-97 (segnatamente 79-81).

⁴² E. Tesauro, *Il Cannocchiale Aristotelico*, Torino, Sinibaldo, 1654, p. 131; G.C. Sciolla & C. Volpi (a cura di), *Da van Eyck a Bruegel*. Scritti sulle arti di Domenico Lampsonio, Torino, UTET, 2001, pp. 82-83; Karel Van Mander, *Le livre des Peintres. Vies des plus illustres peintres des Pays-Bas et d'Allemagne*, I, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 2002, pp. 90-91. Nell'originale van Mander scrive: 'Somtijts wort hier en daer by den Const-beminders in hun Const-camers eenigh stucxken ghevonden, daer het als costelijck iuweel in weerden werdt gehouden'. Mi chiedo se il tesauriano *frammenti* possa tradurre *stucxken* nel senso di 'opere di piccolo formato' o non si riferisca effettivamente a dipinti che evidentemente erano parte di opere più ampie (polititici smembrati, lacerti di figure intere ridotti a ritratti ecc.).

⁴³ *Campagne du Prence Thomas de Savoie en Flandre*, manoscritto Torino, Archivio di Stato, biblioteca antica, J. b. III. i. Jacques van Werden è anche autore, nello stesso codice, di un altro disegno, anch'esso preparatorio per un'incisione, raffigurante il 'castello di Gines' e datato al 1636. Nei repertori e negli inventari dei musei fiamminghi è citato un Jacob van Werden che si dice attivo nella seconda metà del secolo; ignoro se si tratti di un'omonimia o se le date vadano riviste alla luce del codice torinese.

compositivo quale personaggi di contorno o altro, fatta eccezione per la curvatura dell'orizzonte, che è cifra stilistica caratteristica delle vedute di Snayers. Mi pare evidente che sia di uso strettamente (o quasi) militare, e non destinata ad una circolazione tra gli amatori d'arte.



Fig. 2 Pieter Snayers (su disegno di Jacques van Werden), *Carta dell'assedio di Saint-Omer*, incisione, ca. 1638-39. Dal codice *Campagne du Prince Thomas de Savoie en Flandre*, Torino, Archivio di Stato, biblioteca antica, J. b. III.

Molto diverso è invece il discorso per l'incisione di Stefano Della Bella, firmata e datata 1638 e dunque perfettamente contemporanea all'elaborazione del libro di Tesauo (fig. 3).⁴⁴ È l'ultimo anno di 'Stefanino' in Italia; come è noto, l'artista è strettamente legato al principe don Lorenzo de' Medici, grande collezionista, tra le altre cose di pittura fiamminga. Figlio di Ferdinando I, e dunque per forza schierato dalla parte degli Asburgo, Lorenzo non è però interessato alla carriera militare, né i suoi gusti in fatto di arte indicano preferenze per i soggetti bellici.⁴⁵ Come committente o destinatario dell'opera, dunque, Lorenzo appare sì possibile, ma non molto probabile. Proviamo a cercarne un altro, partendo dall'incisione.

⁴⁴ Per la biografia e la bibliografia su Stefano della Bella rinviamo alla voce curata da A. Forlani Tempesti in: *Dizionario Biografico degli italiani* ([http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/stefano-della-bella_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/stefano-della-bella_(Dizionario-Biografico)/), consultato il 25 novembre 2015).

⁴⁵ E. Stumpo, 'Lorenzo de' Medici', in: *Dizionario Biografico degli italiani* ([http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/lorenzo-de-medici_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/lorenzo-de-medici_(Dizionario-Biografico)/)); E. Borea e.a. (a cura di), *La quadreria di Lorenzo de' Medici*, Firenze, Centro Di, 1977, pp. 19-26; 37-39; G. Romano, *Itinerario di Stefano della Bella*, in: *Stefano della Bella, Firenze 1610-1664*, Torino, L'arte antica Silverio Salamon, 2000, pp. VII-XIII (è però utile tutto il volume, catalogo di una mostra di incisioni).

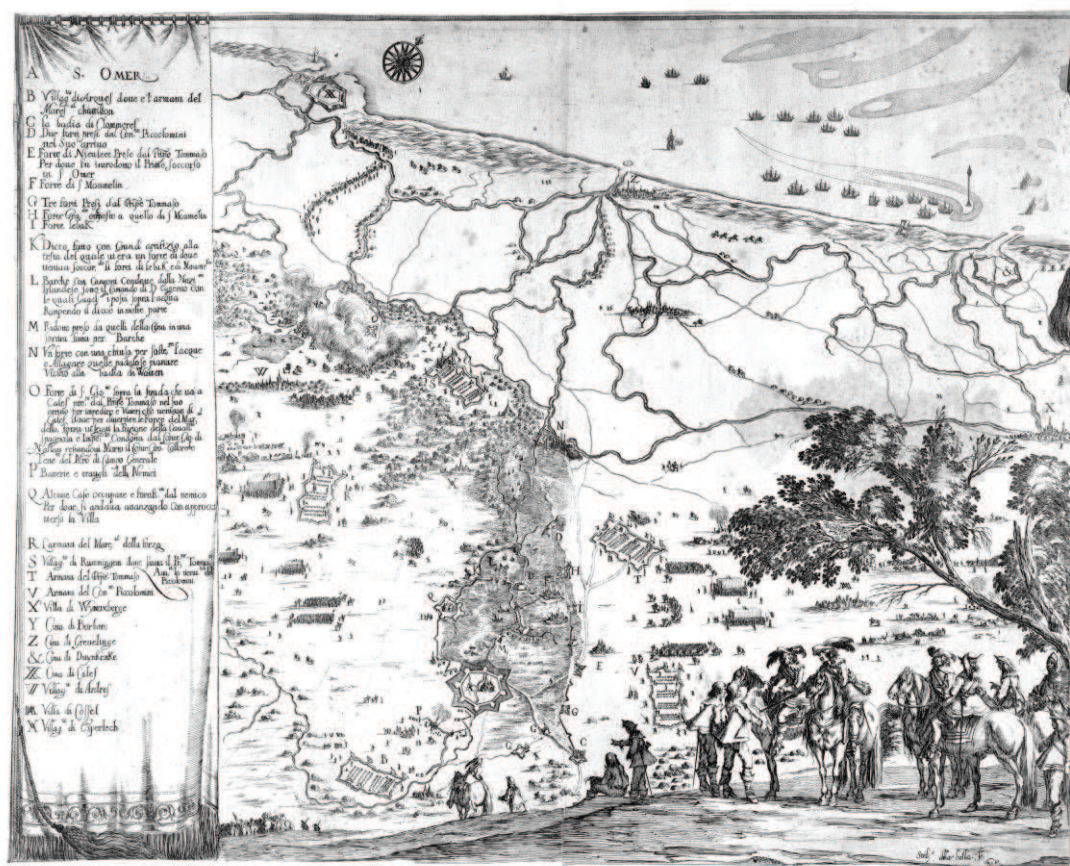


Fig. 3 Stefano della Bella, *Assedio di Saint-Omer*, incisione, 1638.

Della Bella ha dato numerose prove della sua bravura in soggetti militari; più ristretto il gruppo di incisioni topografiche, e tutte diverse da quella che ci interessa.⁴⁶ La più nota riguarda un altro episodio della stessa guerra, cioè l'assedio di Arras del 1640; questa volta però, il committente milita dalla parte avversa: è il cardinale di Richelieu, che come racconta Filippo Baldinucci, mandò Stefano 'prima in quel luogo apposta con nobile trattamento [...] acciò tutto potesse bene osservare e disegnare'.⁴⁷ In effetti la splendida prova *en plein air* dell'assedio di Arras, con il paesaggio che digrada atmosfericamente verso l'orizzonte senza perdere in esattezza, tradisce un lungo studio dal vero. Tutt'altro discorso per *Saint-Omer*, di due anni precedente, che va nella direzione del monumentale *Assedio di Breda* (1625-26) di Jacques Callot, modello indiscusso per il giovane Stefano. Qui il paesaggio si confonde con una vera e propria carta militare; la mappa diventa il territorio, e i protagonisti, sulla destra, sono al contempo spettatori e attori del dramma: attori nel vero senso della parola, visto che tutto si svolge come su un palcoscenico teatrale, e il sipario sulla sinistra dell'incisione funge anche da precisa legenda della carta e dell'azione. Ulteriore e spettacolare virtuosismo, nell'angolo inferiore destro vediamo i condottieri (verisimilmente lo stesso Tommaso e il suo

⁴⁶ A. De Vesme & P. Dearborn Massar, *Stefano della Bella. Catalogue raisonné*, New York, Collectors Editions, 1971, nn. 877-882.

⁴⁷ F. Baldinucci, *Cominciamento e progresso dell'arte d'intagliare in rame*, E. Borea (a cura di), Torino, Einaudi, 2013, pp. 166-167. Per molti dei disegni relativi si veda F. Viatte, *Dessins de Stefano della Bella*, Paris, Inventaire général des dessins italiens, 1974, pp. 79-83. La stessa Viatte nota che non si conoscono disegni preparatori per l'incisione di Saint-Omer.

stato maggiore) che leggono, a loro volta, una mappa, sulla quale si intravede il disegno in pianta di una cittadella: la stessa che campeggia nell'incisione a qualche centimetro di distanza, contrassegnata dalla lettera A.⁴⁸

Tra la pittoricità del tratto e le belle invenzioni compositive (la finzione teatrale, la *mise-en-abîme*) da un lato, e la minuzia cartografica dall'altro, è chiaro che siamo di fronte ad un'opera che accontenta in ugual grado gli amatori d'arte e gli uomini d'arme; e, oltre a Tommaso, sul teatro di guerra di Saint'Omer e nel libro di Tesauro c'era almeno un'altra persona che soddisfaceva entrambi i requisiti.

Intendiamo il generale fiorentino Ottavio Piccolomini, che in quello stesso 1638 venne nominato conte palatino. Non conosco testimonianze dirette di rapporti tra Piccolomini e Stefano della Bella; una serie di indizi sembrano tuttavia puntare nella direzione qui indicata, a cominciare da alcuni riferimenti al Piccolomini che compaiono nel testo del biografo principe per quanto riguarda l'arte fiorentina del Seicento, Filippo Baldinucci. Lo incontriamo, infatti, tra gli allievi che frequentavano la scuola di Giulio Parigi, maestro tra gli altri di Jacques Callot. In questa 'scuola, o vogliam dire Accademia', Parigi 'leggeva Euclide, insegnava le Meccaniche, Prospettiva, Architettura Civile e Militare, e un bello e nuovo modo di toccar di penna vaghissimi paesi [...] Di questa scuola uscì l'invitto cavaliere Fra. Ottavio Piccolomini, che fra l'altre sue rare virtù ebbe quella del disegnare eccellentemente'.⁴⁹ Lo ritroviamo in compagnia di artisti, a Roma, dove incontra e ammira un altro pittore fiorentino, Mario Balassi, discepolo del Passignano, al punto di condurlo con sé a Vienna;⁵⁰ e ancora, nella vita di Jacopo Cortesi, troviamo il Piccolomini come acquirente di un quadro, che originariamente non gli era destinato, di Salvator Rosa; ed è un quadro di battaglie, che Salvatore aveva dipinto per il marchese fiorentino Ferdinando Ridolfi, ma che 'per non essere convenuto nel prezzo, il Rosa [lo] vendé al Piccolomini, duca d'Amalfi, capitano della guardia de' Trabanti del serenissimo duca di Toscana'.⁵¹ Fin qui Baldinucci; ma per altre vie sappiamo che nel 1639 commissionò una serie di quadri di battaglie proprio a quello stesso Pieter Snayers che abbiamo incontrato come incisore nel codice torinese, alcuni dei quali sono conservate a Vienna, nel Heeresgeschichtliches Museum.⁵²

⁴⁸ Clara Gorla mi fa notare una singolare coincidenza tra questo dettaglio e un'incisione di Boetto, riferibile al 1633-34, *Lavori di fortificazione dei nuovi quartieri di Torino*: cfr A. Griseri, N. Carboneri & C. Morra, *Giovenale Boetto*, cit., p. 67. Non saprei spiegarmi la similitudine se non immaginando una comune fonte, magari riconducibile a Callot, che al momento mi sfugge. Il primo episodio finora noto della fortuna sabauda di Stefano è il bel frontespizio disegnato (attribuitogli da Giovanni Romano) per *La prigione di Fillindo il Costante* di Filippo d'Agliè, datato al 1643: si veda V.C. Mandracci, in Di Macco & Romano (a cura di), *Diana Trionfatrice*, cit. pp. 336-337. Intorno al 1645 nelle collezioni del medico torinese Giacomo Francesco Arpino si ritrova la celeberrima 'Entrata in Roma dell'ambasciatore di Polonia di mano di Stefano della Bella' (A. Monetti e F. Cifani, 'I piaceri dei curiosi', in: *Arte e artisti nel Piemonte del '600*, Cavallermaggiore, Gribaudo, 1990, p. 53); una raccolta di *Cartouches* del 1646 testimonia della fortuna di Stefano presso gli specialisti dell'ornato (S. Martinetti, in: Massabò Ricci e.a. (a cura di), *Il Teatro di tutte le scienze*, cit., p. 451); nella seconda metà del secolo si assiste poi ad 'un'alluvione di incisioni di Stefano della Bella, di produzione toscana o, ancor meglio, parigina': G. Romano, in: *Idem* (a cura di), *Sebastiano Taricco*, cit., p. 18.

⁴⁹ F. Baldinucci, *Notizie de' professori del disegno da Cimabue in qua*, F. Ranalli (a cura di), IV, Firenze. Batelli e compagni, 1846, p. 141.

⁵⁰ Cfr. *Ibidem*, p. 588-589.

⁵¹ Cfr. *Ibidem*, V, pp. 209-210.

⁵² H. Lahrkamp, *A portrait by the painter Jan Boeckhorst and the imperial military commander Ottavio Piccolomini's contacts to the art world*, in: K. Bussmann & H. Schilling (a cura di), 1648. *War and Peace in Europe. Essay II. Art and Culture*, Munster, Bruckmann, 1998, pp. 209-214, consultabile online: <http://www.lwl.org/westfaelischer-friede-download/wfe-t/wfe-txt2-20.htm>. Sarebbe interessante, alla luce di questa ipotesi, leggere il *Sant'Omero assediato* e l'incisione di della Bella insieme ad uno storico

Nel 1638 la situazione piemontese precipita: ‘nel medesimo tempo che il Principe Tomaso era occupato nel salvar le piazze degli Spagnuoli, fu dagli spagnuoli involato Vercelli al suo Nipote; et nelle viscere del Piemonte ringorgò la guerra delle due Corone; la qual necessitò il Principe a cambiar Teatro e tralasciar le cose altrui per soccorrere alle dimestiche’.⁵³ In questo contesto, richiamato all’inizio del nostro lavoro, Tommaso e Tesauro decidono di stampare autonomamente, svincolato dal piano complessivo dell’opera, il resoconto di un indiscusso e recentissimo successo guerresco del principe a sostegno della delicata sua posizione politica e militare. Piccolomini non aveva invece simili gatte da pelare: è possibile che, nella sua Firenze, fornisse a Stefano Della Bella le dettagliate carte militari (magari anche quella di van Werden e Snayers...) che servirono per l’incisione di Saint-Omer, dove il tono lucreziano (*Suave est mari magno turbantibus...*) di uno dei passi più belli del *Sant’Omero* di Tesauro sembra trovare un perfetto corrispettivo visivo:

Era spettacolo di spavento e di piacer pieno veder da un luogo eminente a un tempo, et in una pianura tante, sì varie, sì belle attioni. Un combattimento navale nel fiume, un pedestre sopra l’argine, un palustre a Niurletto; guadagnarsi un posto con la prevenzione, riceversene un altro a patti, disputarsene un altro per assedio, ributtarsi da pochi un gran soccorso, disfarsi dal cannone squadroni interi, andarsi confusamente qua e là gli assalitori senza discernere ove prima abbiano a concorrere né a qual cosa recare aiuto; e più per buona economia che per molta forza succedere ogni cosa a disegno.⁵⁴

della cartografia militare, per verificare la corrispondenza tra la narrazione di Tesauro e la mappa e la legenda di Stefano, soprattutto per quanto riguarda le mosse di Piccolomini. Ad un primo sguardo balza all’occhio la differenza nella grafia dei toponimi.

⁵³ È la penultima frase di Tesauro, *De’ campeggiamenti di Fiandra*, cit., p. 39.

⁵⁴ Tesauro, *Sant-Omero assediato*, cit., p. 88. Il toponimo è riconducibile al sito di Niurlet.

Parole chiave

Emanuele Tesauro, *Campeggiamenti di Fiandra*, Tommaso di Savoia, assedio di Saint-Omer, incisioni

Luca Bianco è storico dell'arte, iconografo e traduttore. Ha studiato a Torino e Bologna; collabora con la Giulio Einaudi Editore e altre case editrici. Si occupa dei rapporti tra arti figurative e letteratura, con particolare attenzione ai secoli XV-XVII (Castiglione, Giovio, Tesauro) e alla tradizione delle avanguardie novecentesche.

Via Pinelli 19
10144 Torino (Italia)
lucaxbianco@gmail.com

Blythe Alice Raviola è Dottore di ricerca in Storia della società europea in età moderna (Università di Torino) e svolge attività di ricerca per l'Istituto Universitario "La Corte en Europa" (IULCE) dell'Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. Ha pubblicato e curato vari studi sul Piemonte sabaudo e le sue articolazioni spaziali, fra i quali *Il Monferrato gonzaghesco* (Firenze, Olschki, 2003). Sua l'edizione delle Relazioni universali di Giovanni Botero (Torino, Nino Aragno, 2015).

Corso Racconigi 83
10139 Torino (Italia)
aliravi@yahoo.it

SUMMARY

Not only Rome

Turin, the House of Savoy and Flanders in Emanuele Tesauro's *Campeggiamenti* (1639)

This essay focuses on the siege of Saint-Omer, an episode of the Thirty Years War, as seen through the eyes of several contemporaries. The first part, written by Blythe Alice Raviola, is dedicated to Emanuele Tesauro's *Sant'Omero assediato* (1639). Tesauro followed prince Thomas of Savoy as court historiographer during his Flemish campaign; therefore this book should be read within the political and diplomatic context of the Savoy court. *Sant'Omero assediato* is considered not only as an account of the military operations, but also as a *plaidoyer* for Thomas' political and military activity. The second part of the article, by Luca Bianco, establishes several connections with art historical aspects of the siege and of Tesauro's mission. Bianco examines the subsequent frontispieces of his book and Tesauro's possible knowledge of Karel Van Mander's *Le livre des Peintres*. The final part of the article sheds light on two little-known visual representations of the siege: an artfully drawn map by Pieter Snayers and an etching by Stefano Della Bella. Whereas the first is probably produced for military purposes, Bianco proposes Tuscan Ottavio Piccolomini, Thomas' fellow *condottiero* and a noteworthy collector, as the hypothetic commissioner of Della Bella's etching, which could be considered as a visual counterpart to Tesauro's literary account.

Publishers at the Intersection of Cultures

The significance of Italo-Dutch contacts in the creation process of Joan Blaeu's *Theatrum Italiae* (1663)

Gloria Moorman

In early modern Europe, town atlases provided a means towards discovering cities and regions on paper to both the happy few fortunate enough to travel physically and to those lacking that opportunity. In this way, leafing through Joan Blaeu's *Theatrum civitatum et admirandorum Italiae*¹ or series of town atlases of Italy, readers had the opportunity to familiarise themselves with places and monuments spread over the peninsula without having to leave the comforts of home. Today, the particular publication history of the multi-volume atlas allows us to investigate the relevance of cultural exchange in the seventeenth century from a new and intriguing angle. The aim of this article is to shed light on the shape and significance of the collaboration between the Blaeu publishers (both Joan and his son Pieter) and their Italian partners in the process of accumulating material to be included in the *Theatrum Italiae*. As was pointed out by van Veen and Mirto,² intense contacts between the Blaeu family and various individuals closely connected to the Tuscan De' Medici court were important for the international trade in cultural artefacts such as books and paintings; these same bonds played a very important role in managing preparations for the *Theatrum*'s intended volume on Tuscany. A closer look at the creation process of the *Theatrum Italiae* series from the perspective of the Blaeus themselves may very well serve as a new starting point for gaining a better understanding of the ties through which Joan and Pieter Blaeu were connected to the Italian peninsula.

The Blaeu's Theatre of Italian Cities

The volumes of the *Theatrum Italiae* are part of the ambitious Grand Atlas project as it was first envisaged by Willem Jansz Blaeu (1571-1638), founder of the Blaeu firm, that was later taken over by his son Joan (1598/99-1673). Willem and Joan both pursued the dream to publish cartographical works treating all elements of

¹ The decision to include the term *theatrum* in the title of this work shows the influence of the Flemish cartographer Abraham Ortelius (1528-1598), to whom the Greek definition of theatre - *theatron* - formed the ideological concept underlying the publication of cartographical works. Ortelius considered geography 'the eye of history', a 'theatre of memory' through which events and places of the past could be shown. Cf. J. Brotton, *A History of the World in Twelve Maps*, New York, Penguin, 2012, p. 10.

² H.Th. van Veen & A. Mirto (eds.), *Pieter Blaeu: Lettere ai Fiorentini Antonio Magliabechi, Leopoldo e Cosimo II de' Medici, e altri, 1660-1705*, Amsterdam-Maarssen, APA, 1993; H.Th. van Veen, 'Pieter Blaeu and Antonio Magliabechi', in: *Quaerendo*, 12 (1982), pp. 130-158; H.Th. van Veen, 'A Tuscan Plan of Action for Joan Blaeu's Book of Italian cities,' in: *Lias*, 18 (1991), p. 223.

geography: chorography, or description of the earth, topography, or description of places, hydrography, or description of the sea, and uranography, or description of the heavens. As this immense task proved simply too large for the two of them, only the first geographical section was completed.³ A part of the topography section, however, was also published, including atlases dedicated to the cities of the Low Countries (published in 1649) and the Italian peninsula,⁴ of which various volumes were published in 1663 and in 1682. As Joan grew older, he wanted to devote more and more of his time to completing his father's atlas project. Combined with the growing competition of other publishers such as the Elzeviers,⁵ this was one of the main reasons behind his decision to give up bookselling in 1662 and concentrate on printing and publishing.⁶ This commercial manoeuvre had a rather positive outcome, for around 1667 the printing shop on the Bloemgracht could no longer keep up with the demand; Joan Blaeu subsequently set up a second printing office in the Gravenstraat. He wanted to inaugurate this new establishment by printing an important historical treatise on the lives of Catholic saints, the fourth volume of the *Acta sanctorum*. When, during the night of 22-23 April 1672, the text for part of this work had been typeset, an all-destroying fire broke out in the printing office. Besides the *Acta sanctorum*, part of the stock of paper, maps, copperplates and books was lost as well, including the Spanish edition of the *Atlas major*.⁷ On 10 September of the same year, another disaster occurred: Joan and his oldest son Willem were removed from the Town Council of Amsterdam on the order of the reinstated stadtholder Willem III.⁸ All this probably contributed to the decline of Joan's health; he died in December 1673.

As had been the case for his father before him, Joan Blaeu's death meant he had to leave the Grand Atlas project – including the town atlases of Italy – unfinished. However, Joan had been especially eager to complete that particular part of the venture because of his own general interest in and love for Italy, where he had travelled a lot and met important business relations and friends.⁹ He had

³ From 1662 onwards, Joan Blaeu, following in his father's footsteps, published his *Atlas major* in Latin (11 vols.), French (12 vols.), Dutch (9 vols.), Spanish (10 vols.) and German (9 vols.); despite the existence of such copies, the c.1670 stock catalogue of Joan Blaeu lists only editions with Latin, French, Dutch and Spanish text). The 9 to 11 volumes that were published are not the complete work as Joan Blaeu had planned it; they include only the geography, Blaeu's intended first part, whereas the second (with maps of the seas) and third (with maps of the heavens) parts were never published. P. van der Krogt, *Koeman's Atlantes Neerlandici New Edition*, II, Houten, Hes & De Graaf Publishers, 2010, pp. 316-317; p. 407.

⁴ The general format of both of these works followed lines established by earlier publishers in the Low Countries, Italy and the rest of Europe; town atlases had originally started to appear alongside city descriptions, travel guides and related cartographical works. Cf. E.O.G. Haitzma Mulier, 'De eerste stadsbeschrijvingen uit de zeventiende eeuw', in: *De zeventiende eeuw*, 9 (1993), pp. 97-111; H. Hendrix, 'City Guides and Urban Identities in Early Modern Italy and the Low Countries,' in: *Incontri*, 29, 1 (2014), pp. 3-13.

⁵ In 1651, Joan Blaeu had for the first time printed several books in collaboration with Louis Elzevier, director of the *Officina Elseviriana* in Amsterdam, and in 1664 they founded a company to publish the *Corpus juris* in various formats. The number of new titles issued by Blaeu from this time onwards was relatively low, and Joan's activities as a scholarly publisher were increasingly taken over by the Amsterdam Elzevier firm. See: H. de la Fontaine Verwey, 'Dr. Joan Blaeu and his Sons,' in: *Quaerendo*, 11, 1 (1981), p. 15.

⁶ *Ivi*, p. 16.

⁷ *Ivi*, p. 18.

⁸ C. Koeman, *Joan Blaeu and his Grand Atlas*, Amsterdam, Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1970, pp. 10-11.

⁹ H. de la Fontaine Verwey, 'Dr. Joan Blaeu, schepen, en zijn zonen', in *Idem*, *In en om de "Vergulde Sonneweysen"*, *Uit de wereld van het boek*, III, Amsterdam, Nico Israel, 1979, p. 165.

therefore decided to publish the first volumes of the Italian town atlases series directly after those treating his home country. Joan Blaeu explicitly mentioned his own, personal connection to the peninsula in the introduction to his town atlas of the Low Countries (1649):

Receive then, benevolent reader, this work, and use it, while in the meantime I prepare Italy, also in two parts, in which you will behold the wonders of the past and present. The affection I feel towards this country, since it has for some time been the sweetest sojourn of my youth, obliges me to let it follow my home country directly.¹⁰

The *Theatrum civitatum et admirandorum Italiae* would treat the towns and monuments of Italy. In the preface to the series, Joan confessed that his original idea had been to publish two volumes, but that his plans had changed: he now envisaged a multi-volume atlas of Italian towns, consisting of two parts, with five books each.¹¹ The first part, *Civitates Italiae* or 'the towns of Italy' would consist of books on the Papal State, on the towns of the Italian dominions of the Habsburg King Philip IV (1605-65, King of Naples and Sicily, Duke of Milan), on the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, on the Duchies of Mantua, Modena and Reggio, Parma and Piacenza, on the Republics of Venice, Genoa and Lucca, and on the Duchy of Piedmont and Savoy. The second part, *Admiranda Urbis Romae*, was wholly devoted to Rome: it would comprise books on places where public spectacles had taken place, on public buildings and on the private palaces and the statues to be found in Rome. During his life, Joan Blaeu succeeded in putting three volumes of the Italy atlas in print, all of which were published in 1663, as follows: the first book of the first part, entitled *Civitates Status Ecclesiastici*, consists of 69 maps and plates; the first book of the second part, entitled *Admiranda Urbis Romae*, on the city of Rome, contains 44 plates of the Roman circuses, obelisks and theatres; and ultimately the preliminary (incomplete) edition of the second book of the first part treats the towns of the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily in 33 maps and plates.¹²

In addition, letters written by Pieter Blaeu (1637-1706), on behalf of his father Joan, to various renowned Italians connected to the Tuscan De' Medici court, have revealed that while Joan was still alive extensive preparations were carried out for the publication of town atlases on Tuscany, as well as on Piedmont and Savoy.¹³ In 1666, however, even though earlier that year Pieter had received some thirty sketches for the book on Tuscany,¹⁴ it had already become clear that the Blaeus would have to postpone the project for a town atlas of that region.¹⁵ They were forced to halt this project because of their promise to Duke Carlo Emanuele II (1634-1675) of Savoy and Piedmont that the volume devoted to his territory would be finished first. The Piedmont and Savoy atlas, entitled *Theatrum statuum regiae celsitudinis Sabaudiae ducis*, would nevertheless only be published in 1682 by the next generation of Blaeu publishers, because of the previously mentioned setbacks the family had to deal with in the meantime. Despite the fact that the Tuscany

¹⁰ 'Ontvang dan, gunstige lezer, dit werk, en gebruik het, terwijl ik ondertussen Italië, ook in twee stukken, gereedmaak, waarin u de wonderen van de verleden en tegenwoordige tijd zult aanschouwen. De genegenheid die ik dat land toedraag, omdat het enige tijd de zoetste verblijfplaats mijner jeugd geweest is, verbindt mij dat het terstond op mijn vaderland volg[t].' Joan Blaeu, *Toonneel der Steden van de Vereenighde Nederlanden*, Amsterdam, Joan Blaeu, 1649, p. 3.

¹¹ Van der Krogt, *Koeman's Atlantes Neerlandici*, vol. 4-1, cit., p. 365.

¹² *Ivi*, p. 367.

¹³ van Veen, 'A Tuscan Plan of Action', cit., p. 223.

¹⁴ van Veen & Mirto (eds.), *Lettere ai Fiorentini*, cit., pp. 135-136; 142-145.

¹⁵ van Veen, 'A Tuscan Plan of Action', cit., p. 223.

volume never materialised, the large number of letters preserved in Florence, in which the Blaeus discuss their plans for this part of the venture, does offer unique insights in the strategies and sources that the publishers intended to use for the completion of both this volume and the series in general.¹⁶

Sources and Strategies

In the introduction to the first book of the *Civitates Italiae* (in the first part of the first section, on the Papal State), Joan Blaeu explained his ambitions regarding his atlas of Italy and the, at times difficult, process of completing the work:

Before taking my leave of you, I would like you to know that some learned men's patronage has helped me very much, both with the gathering of precise drawings of the towns and with the descriptions thereof. Amongst them Carlo Emanuele Vizzani deserves the first place. He treated my son [Pieter] in Rome, while he [Vizzani] was still amongst the living, with unusual consideration, and after his return to his country he [Pieter] bestowed this consideration on me as well by supplying several proofs of it when the occasion arose. This is the Vizzani esteemed because of his noble birth, who was famous for his writings, who was consistorial advocate and who because of his versatile erudition was promoted to the dignity of assessor of the Holy Office. I must confess I have gained many things through him, firstly from the Senate of Bologna a very detailed drawing and description of their town [...]. He was to contribute much more, but unfortunately the Fates misgrudged us so great a thing. From Antonio Rota I received [maps of] Ascoli Piceno, and [a description] of Gubbio from Vincenzo Armani. [Maps of] Terni were sent by Francesco Simonetta. I mention their names explicitly to honour and to praise them and to stimulate other people to promote my objectives and above all to avoid the appearance of vanity, as though I would want to gather honour for myself through the efforts of other people.

Forgive me, whoever you are who reads this, if I was wrong in some parts, or if you miss something in my work and smile at my attempt: and so in the execution of my promises I was never afraid of the huge [amount of] work, that I accomplished serving you tirelessly.¹⁷ [...]

November 1662, Your Ioan Blaeu.¹⁸

Joan Blaeu started his introduction by lamenting the fact that he had had to adjust his plans for his atlas of Italy, because the amount of material under consideration seemed to keep on growing and risked overwhelming him. The help of his second son Pieter, his successor as head of the Blaeu publishing firm,¹⁹ was of great importance: Pieter made various journeys throughout Italy which were directly connected to Joan's project of Italian town atlases; he had been instructed by his father to create a series of new markets for the firm.²⁰ First Pieter travelled to southern Italy, where he visited Naples, and in the summer of 1660 he probably went to Rome and then to Florence. From a fellow Amsterdam bookseller, Andries Fries – the Dutch agent of the Venetian booksellers Combi and La Nou –, Pieter had obtained a letter of

¹⁶ Likewise, preparations for the volume on Piedmont and Savoy left traces in letters preserved in the Archivio di Stato, Torino, of which parts were published in the text accompanying a facsimile edition of the atlas; see L. Firpo et al., *Teatro degli Stati del Duca di Savoia*, Turin, Archivio Storico della Città di Torino, 1984. The letters included in this work were discussed by C. Koeman in 'Atlas Cartography in the Low Countries in the Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Eighteenth Centuries' in J.A. Wolter & R.E. Grim, *Images of the World: the Atlas through History*, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1996, pp. 93-102.

¹⁷ Blaeu probably meant this final passage as an allusion to his printer's mark, *Indefessus agendo*, or 'tirelessly at work'.

¹⁸ A translation of the final part of this introduction in Latin, not included in Van der Krogt, *Koeman's Atlantes Neerlandici*, IV-1, cit., pp. 365-366, was provided by Domiziana Francescon.

¹⁹ 'It is clear in every respect that the one intended by his father to succeed him in the business was not the oldest son, Willem, nor the youngest, Joan, who was still far too young, but the middle one, Pieter.' van Veen & Mirto, *Lettere ai Fiorentini*, cit., p. 51.

²⁰ *Ivi*, p. 52.

introduction to Grand Ducal librarian Antonio Magliabechi in Florence.²¹ In a letter to a friend the librarian described the young bookseller Pieter as a 'well-mannered youth, polite, beautiful, and very intelligent'.²² Magliabechi made Pieter promise to keep him informed of what was currently being printed in Holland, a promise that was kept.²³ Thanks to his contact with Magliabechi Pieter was able to obtain an *entrée* to the De' Medici court and could make arrangements with Grand Duke Ferdinando II, his brother Leopoldo, and his son Cosimo on the planned production of the town atlas of Tuscany.²⁴ Through Magliabechi, too, Pieter managed to attract various potential customers from cultural and literary circles within Florence. Magliabechi himself, however, remained Pieter's most important client in Florence, as he ordered books both for himself and for the Medici library.²⁵

Pieter's many trips were, as part of his training as bookseller, no exception: the younger members of all great bookselling families were, in this period, usually sent abroad on this kind of travels to acquire the necessary experience in dealing with international trade partners and local circumstances.²⁶ Pieter's travels are remarkable, however, because of the important part Italy, at the time no longer a truly flourishing nor a leading centre for book production in Europe, played in them. During all his journeys in the region, Pieter actively tried to enlarge the number of Italian customers of the Blaeu firm.²⁷

Because of his great knowledge of Italy and the Italian language,²⁸ Pieter became a popular source for information and contacts to Amsterdam men with commercial interests regarding Italy, especially Tuscany and Florence.²⁹ He was the ideal person to ask for letters of introduction to renowned Italians for the sons of Amsterdam city councillors before they went on their Grand Tours. Likewise, his many Italian contacts made Pieter valuable to literary men, scholars and scientists who wished to become better known in Italy.³⁰ In turn, many Italian tourists, including Cosimo De' Medici between the years 1667-69, visited Pieter's shop in Amsterdam.³¹ Because of these varied efforts regarding the relationships between Italy and the Netherlands, Pieter Blaeu can clearly be recognised as a cultural

²¹ Contacts between Magliabechi and Combi and La Noù date back to the beginning of 1657; from that time onwards, a relationship based on reciprocal respect and friendship had grown between them. The ties connecting Andries Fries, half-brother of Joannes or Giovanni La Noù, Pieter Blaeu, the Elzeviers and Magliabechi are treated extensively by A. Mirto, 'Lettere di Andries Fries ad Antonio Magliabechi, 1659-1675', in: *LIAS*, 14, 1 (1987), pp. 61-65.

²² van Veen & Mirto, *Lettere ai Fiorentini*, cit., p. 53.

²³ *Ibidem*.

²⁴ van Veen, 'Blaeu and Magliabechi', cit., pp. 134-136; *Idem*, 'A Tuscan Plan of Action', cit., pp. 221-227.

²⁵ van Veen & Mirto, *Lettere ai Fiorentini*, cit., p. 54.

²⁶ A. Mirto, *Stampatori, editori, librai nella seconda metà del Seicento*, Florence, Centro Editoriale Toscano, 1989, p. 26.

²⁷ Cf. van Veen & Mirto, *Lettere ai Fiorentini*, cit., pp. 52, 55.

²⁸ Koeman, *Joan Blaeu and his Grand Atlas*, cit., p. 107.

²⁹ van Veen and Mirto, *Lettere ai Fiorentini*, cit., p. 70.

³⁰ *Ivi*, p. 70.

³¹ *Ivi*, pp. 57-58; cf. L. Wagenaar, *Een Toscaanse prins bezoekt Nederland, De twee reizen van Cosimo de' Medici 1667-1669*, Amsterdam, Bas Lubberhuizen, 2014; H.Th. van Veen, 'Cosimo de' Medici's reis naar de Republiek in een nieuw perspectief', in: *Low Countries Historical Review*, 102:1 (1987), pp. 44-52.

mediator between the two European regions; the contacts and knowledge that came with this role were essential for the Blaeus' *Theatrum Italiae* project.

Some of the Italian contacts established through Joan and Pieter's collaboration were mentioned explicitly in Joan's introduction to the *Civitates Italiae*. Whereas Joan Blaeu first referred in general terms to the fact that 'many [...] among those princes' had given him 'drawings and descriptions of their cities',³² towards the end of his introduction he explicitly credited the Italian philosopher and lawyer, Carlo-Emanuele Vizzani (1617-1661) as one of his main sources for images and text. Vizzani was clearly held in high esteem by Blaeu: he was born into a noble family and was recognised by society as a man with remarkable literary qualities. Because of his erudition, Vizzani eventually became assessor to the Congregation of the Universal Inquisition, responsible for matters related to faith, particularly the examination of suspected tenets of persons or books. As assessor, Vizzani held the office next in dignity after the cardinals of the Congregation; it was his duty to write the reports of the Holy Office in all cases treated by its consultors, and to communicate the results of their deliberations directly to the pope. Through the influential network surrounding Vizzani, Blaeu admitted to 'have gained many things,' probably of both a material (images and text to include in his atlases) and immaterial (access to useful contacts and knowledge) nature. The ties between Vizzani and the Blaeus were strengthened by reciprocal support in personal and professional matters; according to the introduction, Vizzani had been especially kind to Joan's son Pieter during his stay in Rome. Joan Blaeu and Vizzani kept in touch for several years and in 1657 Blaeu published a new edition of Vizzani's *De mandatis principum*, followed in 1661 by *De rerum natura*, Vizzani's Latin translation of a work by Ocellus Lukanus, a Pythagorean philosopher from the second century BC.

In his introduction, Blaeu mentioned several other people active in ecclesiastical and public administration, including the renowned intellectual Vincenzo Armanni (1608-1684),³³ who all provided him with maps of specific places. As a young man, Armanni had studied law in Naples, where he eventually became member of the *Accademia degli Oziosi*. In 1631 Armanni had left the city for Rome, where in 1639 he was selected secretary to Carlo Rossetti (1614-1681), a papal diplomat sent to London as a secret *nuncio* by Pope Urban VIII (1631-1685). In London, Armanni and Rossetti collaborated in their defence of the Catholic Church. In 1642, when Rossetti had left England after having suffered severe violations, Armanni decided to follow him, fleeing first to Rome and then to Cologne. In 1644 both Armanni and Rossetti hurried back to Rome, after they had heard about the fatal illness of Urban VIII. Instead of serving the new Pope, Innocenzo X (1574-1655), Armanni, who had become blind by that time, preferred moving back to his native Gubbio, where he entered a new and very productive phase of research and literary activity. With the help of numerous scholars in monasteries, churches and private libraries, he was able to collect great quantities of documents related to the history of the municipality.³⁴ Armanni had thus gained access to an enormous amount of source material, which meant he was in an ideal position to help Blaeu in his quest for information on the towns of the Papal State.

³² Van der Krogt, *Koeman's Atlantes Neerlandici*, IV-1, cit., pp. 365-366.

³³ Umberto Coldagelli in *Dizionario Biografico degli italiani Treccani (DBI)*, IV (1962) on Vincenzo Armanni:

[http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/vincenzo-armanni_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/vincenzo-armanni_(Dizionario-Biografico)/) (September 3, 2015).

³⁴ *Ivi*.

Armanni sent a description of Gubbio, ‘drawn from various historical works’,³⁵ as a supplement to a letter in which he introduced himself to Joan, after ‘he had returned from travels and heard about the Dutchman’s noble occupations.’³⁶ In the letter, Armanni explicitly stated how he provided the material so Blaeu could ‘place it amongst [information on] many other cities competing to find immortality in your [Blaeu’s] precious Volumes’.³⁷ Apart from the textual material mentioned in the letter, Armanni’s contribution consisted of a map of Gubbio that he had obtained through another Italian party. According to a small text block at the top right corner of the map, Ignatio Casetta, active around the 1650s as *priore* of the spiritual community of Coletta di Santa Cristina di Gubbio,³⁸ had produced this map so it could be sent to Blaeu in Holland.³⁹ No further information has come to light on how Vincenzo Armanni and Joan Blaeu got to know each other; some sort of link, however, could have existed between them through Vincenzo’s uncle Giacomo Armanni, a well-known astronomer,⁴⁰ who might have been an acquaintance of both Willem and Joan Blaeu.⁴¹

Blaeu was not the first to provide an atlas based on the help of contemporaries; he chose not to mention, however, that for towns on which he was unable to gather new sources, he copied parts from older works, such as the *Civitates Orbis Terrarum* (1572) of the engraver Frans Hogenberg (1535-1590), or the atlas that had been brought out by Hogenberg and Georg Braun (1541-1622).⁴² Originally, Braun and Hogenberg planned to publish their town atlas in one volume, but its success made them change their minds. They decided to produce a second volume, this time adding a special request to their readers, asking them to provide material on the cities in which they lived if these were still missing. This resulted in so much material that various other volumes followed in the years to come; the sixth and final one appeared in 1617. The Braun and Hogenberg atlas contains a large variety of city depictions, maps and panoramas. Each time the compilers received new depictions of cities, these were added to the already existing material. This explains why several cities - including Rome and Jerusalem - are presented more than once. The depicted cities are mostly those of the Netherlands, the Papal State, central Italy and Andalusia; in comparison, only little space was dedicated to the

³⁵ V. Armanni, *Delle lettere del Signor Vincenzo Armanni scritte a Nome proprio e disposte sotto diversi capi*, Roma, Iacomo Dragondelli, 1663, I, pp. 289-290.

³⁶ *Ibidem*; the travels Armanni mentions in this letter probably refer to his return from Cologne to Rome, and later to Gubbio.

³⁷ *Ibidem*.

³⁸ Cf. M. Gualandi (ed.), ‘Ricordo (2) del Priore Ignatio Casetta sopra un Quadro del suddetto Michelini’, in: *Idem, Memorie originali italiane risguardanti le belle arti*, IV, Bologna, Tipografia Sassi nelle Spaderie, 1843, p. 66.

³⁹ The text on the Gubbio map, found directly after a six page textual description of the city, in Blaeu’s volume on the Papal State, reads: ‘Al sig.[no]r Vincenzo Armanni; Il Priore Ignatio Casetta [,] Per servire V.S. ho fatta la presente pianta della città di Gubbio, acciò ch’ella possa mandarla in Olanda al sig[no]r Blaeu che vuole stamparla col suo discorso. Ho in essa distinto i luoghi pub[bli]ci per alfabeto, e per numeri le Chiese’. Curiously enough, this text does not appear on the same map in the later Mortier edition (The Hague, 1704-1705) of Blaeu’s *Theatrum Italiae*. Joan Blaeu, *Civitates Status Ecclesiastici*, in *Idem, Theatrum civitatum et admirandorum Italiae*, Amsterdam, Joan Blaeu, 1663, p. 85.

⁴⁰ Armanni, *Delle lettere del Signor Vincenzo Armanni*, cit., pp. 110-111.

⁴¹ Willem Jansz had been destined to become a herring merchant like his father and grandfather, but preferred studying mathematics and spent some time as an apprentice to the famous Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe (1546-1601), before he started trading in globes, seaman’s instruments and maps. Cf. D. van Netten, *Koopman in kennis: De uitgever Willem Jansz Blaeu (1571-1638) in de geleerde wereld van zijn tijd*, Zutphen, Walburg Pers, 2014, pp. 27-48; pp. 213-252.

⁴² Van der Krogt, *Koeman’s Atlantes Neerlandici*, IV-1, cit., p. 366.

British Isles, France and the rest of Spain. For each of the treated cities a text on its history, etymology, special buildings and famous inhabitants, was provided.⁴³

No further indications were given in Blaeu's introduction on the strategies underlying the process of gathering new material. A document published by van Veen,⁴⁴ however, does partly reveal the approach adopted by the Blaeus. Van Veen has cautiously identified the document as a draft memorandum for the De' Medici court, written by an unknown author, probably shortly after Pieter Blaeu's visit to Florence following urgent requests for drawings which Pieter wrote on behalf of his father.⁴⁵ In the text, which is clearly related to the ill-fated atlas on Tuscany, Joan Blaeu's plans for this volume are mentioned, together with the need for the Tuscans to provide relevant material. The information on the geography and history of the Grand Duchy should be gathered orderly; prospective collectors of the material therefore should work methodically, in accordance with a system described meticulously.⁴⁶ According to the document, the book on Tuscany should contain 'all that can be put together relating to the ancient and modern writings' on this region, meaning that '[its] plants should be selected, panoramas, reliefs and drawings of the principal villages and cities, together with extensive commentaries by the writer on these places'.⁴⁷ Since the work would have to contribute positively to the honourable reputation of the Grand Duchy, the compilers of the volume should preferably rely on inhabitants of the places to be described, because of their attachment to and knowledge of their birthplace.⁴⁸

Firstly, 'the name of each place, its origins and etymology' should be examined, followed by a concise description of the town and the surrounding countryside.⁴⁹ What follows is a minute description of all the details to be included on the selected places: first aspects such as 'the quality of its location' and 'air'; its 'width and the distance to the most important city' should be treated, together with descriptions of public buildings and their architectonical style; after accounts of these, and many other details, the history of the place should be discussed.

After a few general considerations on the quality of the sources to be used, the author of the text explicitly mentions the types of material he considers most trustworthy and how their contents should be elaborated in the Tuscany volume. If printed works are lacking, manuscripts can be used; chronicles, papal bulls, imperial and juridical texts, public announcements and the like should be consulted, 'always adding their date, the period related to the [used] script type, whether they are original or copies and by whom they are being conserved'.⁵⁰ For printed books,

⁴³ P. van der Krogt, 'Wereldsteden uit de zestiende eeuw: de "Civitates orbis terrarum" van Braun en Hogenberg (T fol 212 Rar)', in: M. van Egmond, B. Jaski & H. Mulder (eds.), *Bijzonder onderzoek: Een ontdekkingsreis door de Bijzondere Collecties van de Universiteitsbibliotheek Utrecht*, Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliotheek, 2009, pp. 148-155.

⁴⁴ The memorandum is preserved in the Biblioteca Riccardiana in Florence, MS. 2122, f. 392r-397v.; van Veen, 'A Tuscan Plan of Action', cit., p. 224.

⁴⁵ Cf. *ivi*, pp. 221; p. 223.

⁴⁶ *Ivi*, p. 221.

⁴⁷ *Ivi*, p. 224.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*.

however, only the author and place needed to be cited.⁵¹ The author then adds that it is necessary to treat the renowned inhabitants of each place.⁵²

Since the details mentioned in the document are so closely related to the volume on Tuscany, it is of course difficult to draw more general conclusions on how the information on the other parts of the Italy atlas was collected based on this source. It is reasonable to assume, though, that if the Blaeus adopted a roughly similar approach in the process of gathering information for all the intended volumes of the atlas, their design would have been just as well thought out and organised. This hypothesis seems to be confirmed by the very systematic structure found in the *Admiranda Urbis Romae*,⁵³ the *Civitates Status Ecclesiastici* and the *Theatrum statuum regiae celsitudinis Sabaudiae ducis*. This is evidenced, for instance, by the fact that the general introduction on *Roma Vetustas*, or 'Ancient Rome,' provided in the *Admiranda Urbis Romae* roughly follows the format outlined above, starting with a treatise on the city's name, after which various parts of ancient Rome and their main monuments are described.

Conclusions

Departing from their predecessors, the Blaeus thus structured the process of gathering material, taking it to a new, more elaborate stage. The publishers wished to provide their readers with a wealth of information on the Italian peninsula, through both text and images that were to the largest possible extent newly gathered and sent to them by erudite collectors in Italy. Inhabitants of the towns themselves were regarded the most appropriate sources of information, implying the wish to provide readers with a perspective on the region that was as authentic as possible, showing Italy, as it were, through the eyes of those that knew her best. Joan and Pieter Blaeu were only able to add modern material to the information that was already circulating, in works such as the Braun and Hogenberg atlas, thanks to numerous individuals, spread across the Italian peninsula, who contributed to the project by submitting material, as is illustrated by the case of Armani and Casetta in Gubbio, or by bringing the Blaeus in contact with relevant other parties, for instance in the case of Fries, the Amsterdam-based agent of Venetian booksellers Combi and La Nouë.

The cases treated above show once again that much still remains to be discovered on the creation of what De la Fontaine Verwey has called the most beautiful, but also least known of Joan Blaeu's works.⁵⁴ Further study on the individuals mentioned explicitly by Blaeu in his atlases and on parties whose contributions are revealed through other types of source material could certainly lead to new insights into this intriguing process; in turn, this would help appreciate more fully the importance of international collaboration in seventeenth century publishing.

Keywords

Blaeu firm, History of the book, publishing, town atlases of Italy, cartography

⁵¹ *Ibidem*.

⁵² *Ibidem*.

⁵³ On this particular volume in the Blaeu series of town atlases of Italy, see G. Moorman, 'A Changing Perspective on the Eternal City Revealed: Blaeu's *Admiranda Urbis Romae* (1663) Compared to Later Editions of the Town Atlas of Rome', in: *Quaerendo*, 45, 1-2 (2015), pp. 112-116.

⁵⁴ De la Fontaine Verwey, 'Dr. Joan Blaeu and his Sons', cit., p. 17.

Gloria Moorman is PhD Candidate at the University of Warwick's Centre for the Study of the Renaissance. She has studied Italian Language and Culture and Book and Digital Media Studies, with a specialisation in Book History, at the University of Leiden. After finishing her master's, she has spent time in Florence and Rome preparing her current research project, in which she investigates the town atlas genre in early modern Europe, with Blaeu's *Theatrum Italiae* series as a main focal point.

Dale Street 37
CV32 5HL Leamington Spa (United Kingdom)
G.Moorman@Warwick.ac.uk

RIASSUNTO

Editori all'incrocio di culture

L'importanza di contatti italo-olandesi per la creazione del *Theatrum Italiae* (Joan Blaeu, 1663)

Sfogliando le pagine di atlanti urbani come il *Theatrum Italiae*, pubblicato per la prima volta nel 1663 dalla casa editrice Blaeu di Amsterdam, si è sempre potuto fare un viaggio mentale alla scoperta della penisola italiana. Focalizzando la nostra attenzione sul processo editoriale sottostante la creazione dell'atlante, analizziamo che tipo di contatti esistevano tra i Blaeu e i loro partner italiani. Il ruolo di Pieter Blaeu, figlio di Joan, fu essenziale per la fortuna dell'atlante urbano, in particolare per gli interventi culturali da lui svolti tra le parti italiane e olandesi coinvolte nel progetto. I Blaeu hanno voluto offrire ai loro lettori informazioni approfondite sulla penisola italiana attraverso testi e immagini che avevano – per quanto possibile – collezionato e ricevuto dai loro corrispondenti italiani. È stato grazie ai vari contributi offerti da contatti internazionali come lo scrittore Vincenzo Armani, o il libraio Andries Fries, attivo tra Amsterdam e Venezia, che Joan e Pieter Blaeu hanno potuto ampliare il materiale già pubblicato in precedenza, in special modo il *Civitates Orbis Terrarum* (Braun e Hogenberg, 1572).

A Tuscan travel party amongst the Frisian natives The day trip of prince Cosimo to Stavoren and Molkwerum, 26 June 1669

Hans Cools*

A princely visit to Stavoren and Molkwerum

In the early morning of Wednesday 26 June 1669 a travel party of about forty people headed by the twenty five year old Tuscan prince Cosimo (1642-1723) boarded a yacht in Enkhuizen, a town in northern Holland.¹ Propelled by a gentle breeze already a few hours later the vessel reached the eastern shores of the Zuiderzee at Stavoren in Friesland.² In this little town the prince and his company had lunch. In the afternoon they visited the village of Molkwerum, a few miles to the east. The next day the party sailed back to Enkhuizen and continued its journey through the county of Holland. Prince Cosimo and his fellow travellers only spent a day and a night in Friesland. However brief the stay of the Italian party in Friesland was, their excursion was an exceptional event. In the seventeenth century, visitors hardly ever visited Friesland on purpose. At best, they stopped over in some of the Frisian towns on their journey from Amsterdam to Northern Germany or the other way round.³ This is hardly surprising given the fact that Lodovico Guicciardini in his famous *Description of the Low Countries* had only paid scant attention to Friesland. More in particular Guicciardini's description of the antique ruins to be seen at Stavoren

* I wish to thank the two anonymous reviewers for their stimulating comments. I extend that gratitude to the editors of this volume, Emma Grootveld and Nina Lamal and to my dear colleagues at the Fryske Akademy, in particular Pieter Duijff, Eric Hoekstra, Peter van der Meer, Hans Mol and Oebele Vries who all commented upon an earlier version of this article. Obviously all remaining errors are mine.

¹ For accounts of Cosimo's visit to Frisia see G.J. Hoogewerff (ed.), *De twee reizen van Cosimo de' Medici prins van Toscane door de Nederlanden. Journalen en documenten*, Amsterdam, Johannes Müller, 1919, pp. 226 and 267-272 (original Italian texts) and L. Wagenaar & B. Eringa (eds.), *Een Toscaanse prins bezoekt Nederland. De twee reizen van Cosimo de' Medici, 1667-1669*, Amsterdam, Uitgeverij Bas Lubberhuizen, 2014, p. 159 and pp. 209-213 (Dutch translations). In the late 1980s and early 1990s a group of Italian historians restored the up to then rather paltry reputation of Cosimo. The results of their work have been presented in the volume F. Angiolini, V. Becagli & M. Verga (eds.), *La Toscana nell'età di Cosimo III*, Firenze, Edifir, 1993. More on Cosimo's visits to the Republic in H.Th. van Veen, 'Cosimo de' Medici's reis naar de Republiek in een nieuw perspectief', in: *The Low Countries History Review*, 102 (1987), pp. 44-52.

² The court physician Gianbattista Gornia claimed in his diary that the party crossed the Zuiderzee in two and a half hours. That seems an exaggeration. Even in case of favourable winds, local shipmasters needed four hours to sail from Enkhuizen to Stavoren. Cf. Hoogewerff (ed.), *De twee reizen van Cosimo de' Medici*, cit., p. 314 and C.D. van Strien, 'Buitenlandse toeristen over Friesland, 1600-1850' in: Ph.H. Breuker & A. Janse (eds.), *Negen eeuwen Friesland-Holland. Geschiedenis van een haat-liefde verhouding* Zutphen, Walburg Pers, 1997, p. 173.

³ Van Strien, 'Buitenlandse toeristen', cit., pp. 173-183 and B. Wander, 'Frysk en frjemd. Buitenlanders in kontakt met de Friese taal', in: *It Beaken*, 40 (1978), pp. 241-255.

remained very vague.⁴ Although the first edition of Guicciardini's account had been published already a century earlier, the book remained until the end of the seventeenth century one of the most influential travel guides for foreign visitors to the Low Countries and especially for Italians.⁵ Most likely Cosimo and his courtiers had read Guicciardini before they left for the Low Countries. Their brief visit to Friesland did not alter the standard image of Friesland. In 1683, Pietro Guerini, one of his agents who visited the Low Countries in his wake, travelled from Amsterdam to Hamburg via Friesland. According to him nothing particular was to be seen or learned there.⁶

In this article I shall argue that although the Tuscans were fascinated by what they read, heard and saw in Friesland, their visit turned out to be somewhat disappointing. This excursion had been highly recommended to them by Grand Pensionary Johan de Witt (1625-1672).⁷ According to this mighty Dutch politician, in Molkwerum Cosimo could observe 'the language and the habits of the old Frisians'.⁸ Subsequently he advised Cosimo to travel to Amsterdam via the Beemster, a then recently drained lake.⁹ The Tuscan prince conformed to the suggestions of his Dutch host. In effect, the straight canals, fertile right-angled meadows and impressive farm houses made a far bigger impression upon him than Friesland had done. In the official journal of the journey, the ride through the Beemster was recorded as 'the most beautiful and delightful' part of their trip in the United Provinces.¹⁰ In De Witt's opinion and by consequence also Cosimo's, the primitive nature of Molkwerum stood in contrast to the well-organized character of the Beemster. Molkwerum thus functioned for the Tuscan visitors as a prism that mirrored the marvels of the Dutch Republic.¹¹

In what follows I shall first describe how Cosimo's excursion to Friesland fitted into his travel pattern. Subsequently, I shall analyse the descriptions courtiers made of his visit to Molkwerum and Stavoren. Their observations reflected to some extent stereotypes that were cultivated by the political and cultural elites in the Dutch Republic. This opens up questions on the origins of such received ideas and on their impact on the fashioning of regional identities. In fact the political and cultural

⁴ D. Aristodemo (ed.), Ludovico Guicciardini, *Descrittione di tutti i Paesi Bassi altrimenti detti Germania inferiore*, University of Amsterdam (doctoral thesis), 22 April 1994, p. 360.

⁵ Wander, 'Frysk en frjemd', cit., p. 248.

⁶ F. Martelli, 'Sulle orme del principe. Viaggi di tecnici toscani in Europa negli ultimi decenni del Seicento', in: *Idem* (ed.), *Il viaggio in Europa di Pietro Guerini (1682-1686). Edizione della corrispondenza e dei disegni di un inviato di Cosimo III dei Medici*, Firenze, Leo S. Olschki Editore, I, 2005, pp. 159-160.

⁷ The best biography in English on Johan de Witt remains H.H. Rowen, *John de Witt. Statesman of the True Freedom*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003 (first edition 1986). A more recent overview in Dutch can be found in L. Panhuysen, *De Ware Vrijheid. De levens van Johan en Cornelis de Witt*, Amsterdam, Atlas, 2005.

⁸ Egli (= de Witt) consigliò l'A.S. (= Cosimo) a andare a Malquerum per la curiosità di veder preservati e l'antica lingua e i costumi degli antichi Frisoni. Cf. Hoogewerff (ed.), *De twee reizen*, cit., p. 248.

⁹ *Ed a Bemster per vedere quel gran lago industriosamente dagli abitanti seccato e reso oggi fertilissimo*. Cf. *Ivi*, p. 248. The Beemster was the first of a series of lakes in the North of Holland that were drained in the first half of the seventeenth century. Up to these days the original, planned lay-out of the landscape has been preserved. For that reason in 1999 the Beemster has been listed on the UNESCO world heritage register. Cf. J. de Vries, *The Dutch Rural Economy in the Golden Age, 1500-1700*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1974, pp. 160 and 194.

¹⁰ 'Il cammino del giorno 27 fu senza dubbio il più vago e il più delizioso di tutta l'Olanda'. Cf. Hoogewerff (ed.), *De twee reizen*, cit., p. 272.

¹¹ Cf. K. Davids & J. Lucassen, *A Miracle Mirrored. The Dutch Republic in European Perspective*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995.

antagonism between Holland and Friesland dated back to the Middle Ages, when at several instances the counts of Holland had tried to conquer Friesland. Although from about the 1590s the Frisian economy had become ever more dependent upon the growth of Amsterdam, such tensions were revived in the seventeenth century.¹² Nevertheless, within the framework of the United Provinces Friesland was considered to be the second-richest province after Holland. Therefore, it was perceived, not least by Johan de Witt, as the most important of the 'lesser provinces'.¹³ Even though Cosimo was interested in administrative matters and he studied the institutional framework of the United Provinces, he might not have fully grasped these subtleties.¹⁴ However, the myth that in the towns such as Stavoren, Molkwerum and Hindeloopen, aspects of the primitive Frisian culture would have been preserved flourished well into the nineteenth century.¹⁵ Therefore that myth shall be briefly discussed in the last section of this article.

Cosimo's travel pattern

Cosimo's whistle-stop visit to Friesland was part of a greater tour that the prince and his entourage made through Western Europe. In September 1668 they had sailed the Mediterranean from Livorno to Barcelona. The following months, the prince and his courtiers visited the Iberian Peninsula, the British Isles, the Dutch Republic and the health resorts of Aix-la-Chapelle and Spa. Subsequently, after a spell of nearly two months in Paris, the party travelled south to Lyon. From there the travellers navigated down the Rhône River. In Marseille, they were awaited by grand ducal galleys, which brought the party back home. In October 1669, more than a year after Cosimo and his courtiers had left, they arrived once again in Florence.¹⁶

Cosimo loved to travel. In his early twenties he had made several trips to northern Italy and already in 1667-68 he had embarked for a first visit to the Dutch Republic, the Southern Low Countries and Northern Germany.¹⁷ Apparently, Cosimo

¹² Breuker & Janse, 'Beelden', cit., pp. 29-37.

¹³ H. Spanninga, *Gulden Vrijheid? Politieke cultuur en staatsvorming in Friesland, 1600-1640*, Hilversum, Verloren, 31-51; J. de Vries, 'De economische ontwikkeling van Friesland na het einde van de Friese Vrijheid', in: J. Frieswijk e.a. (eds.), *Fryslân, staat en macht. 1450-1650*, Hilversum, Verloren, 1999, pp. 140-157 and A.Th. van Deursen, 'De plaats van het gewest Friesland in de Republiek', in: *Ivi*, pp. 219-220.

¹⁴ Cf. See for instance van Veen, 'Cosimo de' Medici's reis', cit., p. 52 and Hoogewerff (ed.), *De twee reizen*, cit., p. 273.

¹⁵ A. de Jong, *De dirigenten van de herinnering. Musealisering en nationalisering van de volkscultuur in Nederland. 1815-1940*, Nijmegen, SUN, 2006², pp. 41-62 (translated into German as *Die Dirigenten der Erinnerung. Musealisierung und Nationalisierung der Volkskultur in den Niederlanden 1815-1940*, Münster, Waxmann, 2007).

¹⁶ On the different stages of Cosimo's European tour see, apart from the text editions by Hoogewerff and Wagenaar quoted above, A. Body, 'Le duc Côme III de Médicis à Spa (1669)', in: *Bulletin de l'Institut archéologique liégeois*, 16 (1881), pp. 47-65; A.M. Crinò, *Un principe di Toscana in Inghilterra e in Irlanda nel 1669. Relazione ufficiale del viaggio di Cosimo de' Medici tratta dal 'giornale' di L. Magalotti*, Roma, Abate, 1968; H. Graillot, 'Un prince de Toscane à la cour de Louis XIV en 1669', in: *Mélanges de philologie, d'histoire et de littérature offerts à Henri Huvette*, Paris, Les presses françaises, pp. 213-223; *Idem*, 'Un prince de Toscane dans le Midi de la France en 1669', in: *Mélanges de philologie et d'histoire offerts à Joseph Vianey*, Paris, Les presses françaises, 1934, pp. 321-328; J. Boutier, 'Les visiteurs italiens du Roi-Soleil: Alliances princières, apprentissages aristocratiques et fidélités nobiliaires', in: C. Zum Kolk e.a. (eds.), *Voyageurs étrangers à la cour de France. 1589-1789: regards croisés*, Rennes, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2014, pp. 91-116; C.M. Radulet, 'Cosimo III Medici and the Portuguese Restoration: A Voyage to Portugal in 1668-1669', in: *E-Journal of Portuguese History*, 1.2 (2003), pp. 1-8 and A. Sanchez Rivero & A. Mariutti de Sanchez Rivero (eds.), *Viaje de Cosme de Médicis por España y Portugal (1668-1669)*, Madrid, Sucesores de Rivadeneyra, 1933, 2 vols.

¹⁷ Radulet, 'Cosimo III', cit., p. 2 and Martelli, 'Sulle orme del principe', cit., pp. xxviii-xxxiii.

was so fascinated by what he had seen in the United Provinces on his first voyage that already within a few months after his return to Tuscany, he left for his Grand Tour through Europe. In contrast to what historians have argued until a few decades ago, these travels cannot be considered any longer as attempts by Cosimo to escape his unhappy marriage with Marguerite Louise d'Orléans (1645-1721), a cousin of Louis XIV. Rather, the prince travelled to learn how to become a ruler.¹⁸ In doing so Cosimo conformed to a recent Medici tradition. Four decades earlier, at the outset of his personal rule, Cosimo's father Ferdinand II (1610-1670) had visited amongst other places the imperial court at Vienna and Prague. Three decades later, in 1698, Cosimo's son Gian Gastone (1671-1737) on his turn went from Reichstadt in Bohemia, where he resided with his recently wed spouse, Anna Maria from Saxe-Lauenburg (1672-1741) to Paris, Brussels and Amsterdam.¹⁹

Nevertheless Cosimo's travels differed in one important aspect from those of his father or his son. Whereas the latter basically limited themselves to shorter or longer stays at the courts of friendly dynasties, where they learned how to behave in such courtly environments, Cosimo also wandered around.²⁰ This prince thus did not only strengthen the ties with the monarchs of Spain, Portugal, England and France, he also got to know their realms.

A similar pattern occurred in the Dutch Republic. Taking his two trips to the country together, Cosimo spent thirty six days in the economic and cultural metropolis Amsterdam (42 % of his total time in the Republic) and fifteen days (or 17 %) in the political capital The Hague. In the latter town the prince met several members of the Orange-Nassau family and he talked to various foreign ambassadors. On 7 February 1668, the young William of Orange (1650-1702), the future king-stadholder, even impressed his peer Cosimo of his talents as a dancing and thus virile prince during a ballet performance staged to celebrate the Peace of Breda.²¹ But Cosimo did not only spend time in government and diplomatic circles as he also extensively toured the United Provinces. From Alkmaar in the North, to Dordrecht in the South, he stopped in nearly all the important towns in Holland. From the traditional six towns which had dominated the county in the Middle Ages, decaying Gouda was the only one that did not receive a princely visit. In contrast, Cosimo went twice to booming Rotterdam, where he spent four days in total.²² Moreover, during his first Dutch journey the princely party hopped as well for a short visit to Zeeland. In contrast, land towns in the provinces of Guelders and Utrecht only served as stopovers on Cosimo's travels back and forth to the maritime Western part of the country. Cosimo mainly concentrated on Holland, the powerhouse of the country.

¹⁸ See for the traditional explanation of Cosimo's journeys for instance E. Cochrane, *Florence in the Forgotten Centuries. 1527-1800. A History of Florence and the Florentines in the Age of the Grand Dukes*, Chicago-London, The University of Chicago Press, 1973, pp. 259-262. H.Th. van Veen has detected in his 'Cosimo de' Medici's reis', pp. 44-52 training and education as more convincing motives.

¹⁹ Cf. J. Boutier, 'L'institution politique du gentilhomme. Le 'Grand Tour' des jeunes nobles florentins en Europe, XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles', in: *Istituzioni e società in Toscana nell'età moderna. Atti delle giornate di studio dedicate a Giuseppe Pansini*, Roma, Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato, 1994, I, pp. 269 and Martelli, 'Sulle orme del principe', cit., p. xxix.

²⁰ Cf. A. Spagnoletti, *Le dinastie italiane nella prima età moderna*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2003, pp. 310-314.

²¹ I. Bésanger, 'Ballet de la paix: staging a seventeenth century theatre performance', in: J. Bloemendal, P.G.F. Eversmann & E. Strietman, *Drama, Performance and Debate. Theatre and Public Opinion in the Early Modern Period*, Leiden and Boston, Brill, 2013, pp. 333-346.

²² Cf. A. van der Schoor, *Stad in aanwas. Geschiedenis van Rotterdam tot 1813*, Zwolle, Waanders, 1999, pp. 271-303 and N.C. Sluijter-Seijffert e.a., 'Bladgoud bladdert af', in: P.H.A.M. Abels e.a. (eds.), *Duizend jaar Gouda. Een stadsgeschiedenis*, Hilversum, Verloren, 2002, p. 456.

Short excursions to Zeeland and Friesland completed his impressions on an essentially maritime Republic.²³ This travel pattern is visualized in the table underneath.

Table I. Travel pattern of prince Cosimo and his train in the Dutch Republic. December 1667-February 1668 and June-July 1669.²⁴

Region	Days	Percentage
State Brabant (Generality Land)	2	2,3
Guelders	4	4,7
Holland	69	80,2
Friesland	1	1,2
Overijssel	3	3,5
Utrecht	5	5,8
Zeeland	2	2,3
Total	86	100

Cosimo insisted on travelling as a private person. Nevertheless everywhere he met various dignitaries. This formula implied that Cosimo's princely status was recognized by his hosts, while enabling him to choose his own travel destinations. It conferred a personal touch to his journeys, which should not be considered as diplomatic missions, but rather as private princely experiences. His excursion to Friesland is a good example of that practice. The directors of the admiralty of Northern Holland provided their yacht to ferry the Tuscan party to the east bank of the Zuiderzee.²⁵ It is hard to imagine that they would have conferred a similar honour to visitors of lesser rank. But once he had arrived in Friesland, the prince toured Stavoren and Molkwerum as a simple tourist. In this sense, Cosimo was a trendsetter. Later onwards in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, a long incognito journey became a fashionable element of princely education projects. The best known example is that of Czar Peter the Great's (1672-1725) first trip to the Dutch Republic in 1697-1698.²⁶

²³ Cosimo's itineraries in the Low Countries are reconstructed in Wagenaar & Eringa (eds.), *Een Toscaanse prins*, cit., pp. 32-33 and pp. 160-161. Already in February 1668 when Cosimo toured the Republic for the first time, he had wished to visit Friesland on his way from Holland to Hamburg. However, winter storms and floods forced the prince to travel over land via Westphalia. Cf. Hoogewerff (ed.), *De twee reizen van Cosimo de' Medici*, cit., pp. 140-142.

²⁴ This table is based on the itineraria provided by Wagenaar & Eringa (eds.), *Een Toscaanse prins*, cit., p. 32 and 162. Calculations are made on the basis of the number of nights the party spent in a certain place.

²⁵ In the United Provinces five regional admiralties paid for and commanded each a navy escadre of the Dutch fleet. The one of Northern Holland was based in the ports of Hoorn and Enkhuizen. Cf. O. van Nimwegen & R. Prud'homme van Reine, 'De organisatie en financiering van leger en vloot van de Republiek', in: P. Groen e.a. (eds.), *De Tachtigjarige Oorlog. Van opstand naar geregelde oorlog. 1568-1648* (Militaire geschiedenis van Nederland. 1), Amsterdam, Boom, pp. 377-378. Cosimo had a great interest in naval matters. For instance, in February 1668 he had visited the central navy basis at Hellevoetsluis, where also the *Royal Charles*, the main prize that the Dutch fleet had won at the Battle of the Medway in June 1667, was anchored. Also in Amsterdam he visited the admiralty headquarters twice. Cf. Hoogewerff (ed.), *De twee reizen van Cosimo de' Medici*, cit., pp. 141-142 and 189.

²⁶ Cf. van Veen, 'Cosimo's reis', cit., p. 48; L. Bély, *La société des princes. XVI^e-XVIII^e siècle*, Paris, Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1999, p. 469 and D. Roche, *Les circulations dans l'Europe moderne. XVII^e-XVIII^e siècle*, Paris, Librairie Arthème Fayard, 2003, pp. 675-676. See on Peter the Great's first journey to the Dutch Republic R. van Vliet, 'Tsaar Peter de Grote: identiteit en imago', in: *Literatuur*, 13

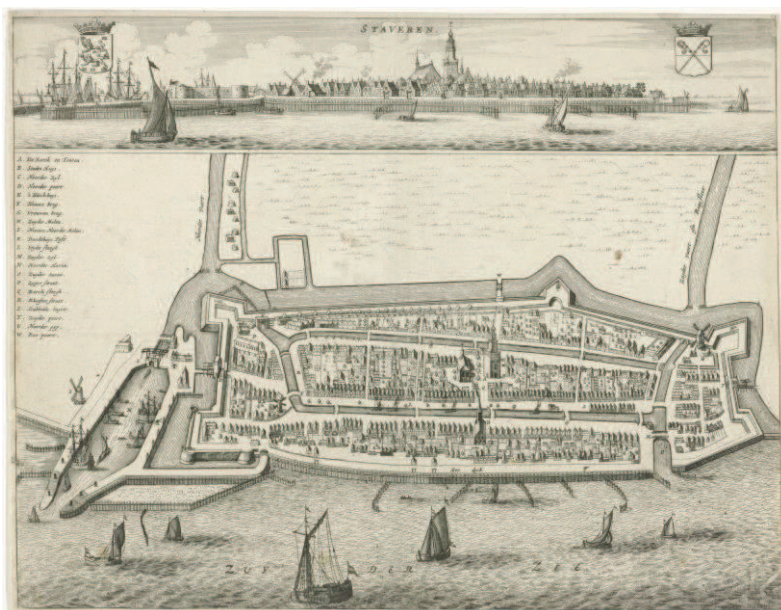


Fig. 1 map and view of Stavoren in the mid seventeenth century. Etching by Jacob van Meurs (1619/'20-1680).

© Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

In order to keep memories alive of what the prince had seen on his journeys, some of his courtiers wrote a diary. Subsequently their texts were edited by Cosimo's chamberlain marquis Filippo Corsini (1647-1706). The final copy was bound in beautiful parchment covers and stored in the Medici library. One of the sources of that official account was a text that has been labelled by Godfried Hoogewerff²⁷ (1884-1963) as Corsini's private journal.²⁸ However, most likely the main author of the official account was the learned Lorenzo Magalotti (1637-1712) who had already visited the United Provinces on an earlier occasion.²⁹ During that first visit Magalotti had made several friends who were connected to the Republic of Letters, such as the scholars Nicolaas Heinsius (1620-1681),³⁰ Isaac Vossius (1618-1689)³¹ and Jacobus Gronovius (1645-1716).³² Probably these three men supplied him with the historical, institutional and topographical details that abound in the text. Pier Maria Baldi (c. 1630-1686) provided eighteen large pen and ink drawings on additional sheets of the most noticeable Dutch sites as a visual addendum to the text. Sights of both Stavoren

(1996), 344-349 and L. Toorians, 'An eager apprentice. Peter the Great and the Dutch Republic', in: *The Low Countries*, 4 (1996), pp. 275-276.

²⁷ For a biographical entry on Hoogewerff see H. Cools & H. de Valk, *Instituut Neerlandicum. MCMIV-MMIV. Honderd jaar Nederlands Instituut te Rome*, Hilversum, Verloren, 2004, pp. 29-32.

²⁸ Hoogewerff (ed.), *De twee reizen van Cosimo de' Medici*, cit., pp. LVII-LVIII and 224-225.

²⁹ Radulet, 'Cosimo III', cit., p. 3 and E. Cochrane, *Florence in the Forgotten Centuries*, pp. 256-259 and 535-537. See as well the biographical entry by C. Preti & L. Matt, 'Magalotti, Lorenzo', in: *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani (DBI)*, Roma, Treccani, LXVII, 2006. The assertion of these authors that Lorenzo Magalotti travelled directly from London to Paris and did not take part in the Dutch stage of Cosimo's journey is wrong. In fact, in June and July 1669 Magalotti reported in several letters from The Hague and Amsterdam about the journey to the Tuscan court. Cf. Hoogewerff, *De twee reizen*, cit., pp. 292-298.

³⁰ For a biographical entry, see Kan, 'Heinsius, Nicolaus', in: *Nieuw Nederlands Biografisch Woordenboek (NNBW)*, Leiden, A.W. Sijthoffs Uitgeversmaatschappij, II, 1911, pp. 557-560.

³¹ The most recent biographical entry is H. Nellen & D. Imhoff, 'Isaac Vossius', in: J. Bloemendal & C. Heesakkers (eds.), *Bio-bibliografie van Nederlandse Humanisten. Digitale uitgave*, Den Haag, DWC/Huygens Instituut KNAW, 2009. To be consulted on <http://www.dwc.knaw.nl/vossius-isaac-1618-1689/>; last retrieved on 18 November 2015.

³² For a biographical entry see Bierma, 'Gronovius, Jacob', in: *NNBW*, Leiden, A.W. Sijthoffs Uitgeversmaatschappij, I, 1909, pp. 986-989.

and Molkwerum figure amongst them.³³ A more informal diary of Cosimo's second Dutch trip that has survived, is the one kept by his court physician Giovanbattista Gornia (1633-1684).³⁴ Often this trained scientist and rather practical man rendered his impressions in a few keywords and with an emphasis on physical details. The difference between these various authors becomes clear when we compare their descriptions of Cosimo's visits to Stavoren (Fig. 1) and Molkwerum (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2 map of Molkwerum in 1718. The caption emphasizes that this ‘notorious village’ was known as ‘the Frisian maze’. Engraving by Johannes Hilarides.

‘L’antica lingua e i costumi degli antichi Frisoni’

Giovanbattista Gornia seems to have been disappointed by what he had seen in Stavoren. In his eyes only the skulls and claws of bears that decorated the town gates and the remarkably small size of the port were deemed noteworthy.³⁵ Such vivid

³³ Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, ms. Med. Pal. 123. Cf. R. Chiarelli, ‘Baldi, Pier Maria’, in: *DBI*, Roma, Treccani, V, 1963.

³⁴ Archivio di Stato a Firenze, Miscellanea Medicea, filza 836. L. Spruit, ‘Gornia, Giovanbattista’, in: *DBI*, Roma, Treccani, LVIII, 2002. Both the official journal and Gornia’s diary have been edited by Hoogewerff, *De twee reizen*, cit., pp. 221-291 and translated into Dutch by Wagenaar & Eringa, *Een Toscaanse prins*, cit., pp. 159-241.

³⁵ ‘Si sbarcò a Steveren, porto piccolissimo e fatto con palificate ... Et alle porte di Staveren vi sono i teschi e artigli d’orsi incisi per trofeo’. Hoogewerff, *De twee reizen*, cit., pp. 314-315.

details lack in Lorenzo Magalotti's official travel account. Nevertheless, this author also emphasized that the heydays of Stavoren were over. Although the ramparts and bulwarks were in good condition, the town had lost its previous splendour and had become quite small. However, once Stavoren had been the capital of the Frisians, where their kings resided and ships coming from all northern seas anchored. But floods had destroyed the palaces and churches, whereas the new port had been silted.³⁶ Magalotti, who just as Cosimo had a keen interest in religion,³⁷ concluded his description with some brief historical notes on the struggles between the Frankish and the Frisian kings and on the chapters of canons and cloisters that had existed in the town and in its neighbourhood until they had been swept away by the Reformation.

Although no physical remnants of its heydays had been preserved, the Tuscan visitors valued Stavoren for its antiquity. However, various opinions circulated about its precise age. According to Corsini's private diary, the first king of the Frisians had established himself there about 300 BC. In the official account of the journey Lorenzo Magalotti was more cautious. He thought that Stavoren had been founded one year after the birth of Christ.³⁸

These different opinions reflected the uncertainty that reigned amongst humanists about the origins of the Frisians. According to the early sixteenth-century chronicler Worp of Thabor (-1538), the Frisians originally came from Asia, but he proposed three different possible arrival dates. A generation later Suffridus Petrus (1527-1597) acknowledged that five different opinions circulated on this matter. Personally Suffridus preferred to date the Frisian history back as far as possible, in order to enhance the status of Friesland within the young Republic. In any case according to him Frisians could boast an older history than the Hollanders.³⁹ However, Nijmegen, where the Tuscan party passed on its way from Amsterdam to Spa, had even stronger claims on a respectable antiquity. Lorenzo Magalotti reported that locals supposed their town had been founded by the troops of Julius Caesar, and Filippo Corsini thought the legacy of the Romans was still present in that town.⁴⁰

At Molkwerum, the Tuscans encountered similar difficulties to interpret what they saw. In the middle of the seventeenth century this large village must have counted about 1,500 inhabitants. Most of them did not belong to the privileged Reformed Church. The largest religious community in the village was those of the relatively isolated Anabaptists.⁴¹ Houses in Molkwerum were built on a series of small

³⁶ 'La città di Staveren è la più antica di tutte le città della Frisia, giacchè fu fabricata, secondo alcuni autori, un'anno dopo la nascita di Cristo [...] ma avendo le inondazioni del mare sommersa la maggior parte di questa medesima città fu rifabricata in altro luogo più sicuro. [...] Era anticamente Staveren una città potentissima, ricca, molto popolata, ed il porto di mare più famoso di tutte le coste settentrionali, ma le frequenti inondazioni l'hanno talmente sminuita, che in paragone di quello che era viene stimata poco, benchè ne resti delle sue rovine ancora a bastanza per formarne una buona città. Vi sono grosse muraglie e gran bastioni circondati da paludi. Vi si vedono molte belle strade, e vi è ancora un gran molo avanzato nel mare, sostenuto da puntelli per impedire che le arene non turbino l'entrata di questo porto. Gli antichi re di Frisia abitavano in questa città'. G.J. Hoogewerff, *De twee reizen*, cit., p. 268.

³⁷ Cochrane, *Florence in the Forgotten Centuries*, cit., p. 261 and Radulet, 'Cosimo III', cit., p. 6.

³⁸ Hoogewerff, *De twee reizen*, cit., p. 268. Cf. Johan Picardt, *Korte beschryvinge van eenige vergetene en verborgen antiquiteten ...*, Amsterdam, Tymon Houthaak, 1660, pp. 93-94 who in his description of Stavoren avoided to speculate about the year of foundation of the town.

³⁹ Breuker & Janse, 'Beelden', cit., pp. 23-26.

⁴⁰ Magalotti speaks of 'Un' antica fortezza volgarmente chiamata 'Valch-Hof', che si crede fabricata dal tempo di Giulio Cesare', whereas Corsini reported that: 'Vi sono diverse memorie del tempo de' Romani'. See Hoogewerff, *De twee reizen*, cit., p. 288.

⁴¹ C. Trompetter, *Eén grote familie. Doopsgezinde elites in de Friese Zuidwesthoek, 1600-1850*, Hilversum, Verloren, 2007, pp. 193-194.

islands. Narrow, stinking canals connected the different parts of the settlement with each other. Therefore the village resembled a maze (Fig. 1). The tall and bearded male inhabitants somehow looked like Germans. The women dressed strangely; according to Gianbattista Gornia, they wore strange bonnets with large (metal?) ties on top on their heads. Moreover, they wore two pairs of stockings: large ones that reached their ankles, and above those small socks that just covered their feet. Both sexes behaved rudely and their language was not understood by outsiders.⁴²

Reading these descriptions it seemed as if Cosimo and his courtiers had ventured in some exotic destination, where barbarians lived. The minds of these cultivated Italians had been influenced by their reading of Tacitus' *De origine et situ Germanorum*, a classic of each serious humanist training since its rediscovery in the mid fifteenth century by Enea Silvio Piccolomini (1405-1464).⁴³

More in particular, the idea as if Molkwerum, together with the nearby town of Hindeloopen, was a place where somehow the customs and the language of the old Frisians would have been preserved, may date back to the late sixteenth or the early seventeenth century.⁴⁴ However, in the mid-1640s this myth became fashionable in learned circles. In those years, both Janus Vlitius (1620-1666) and Franciscus Junius (c. 1590-1677) wandered around in Friesland, noticing the folklore costumes and studying the local language.⁴⁵ They were attracted by the fame of the poet Gysbert Japix (1603-1666),⁴⁶ who had conferred once again literary status on Frisian, after the virtual disappearance of the written variant of the language since the 1580s. Independently of each other Vlitius and Junius tried to establish the affinity between the various Germanic languages. Vlitius and Junius belonged to the same intellectual circle as Gronovius, Heinsius and Vossius. One may suppose that Johan de Witt picked up his suggestion for Cosimo to visit that part of Friesland from these men.⁴⁷ Obviously prince Cosimo and his company did not understand Frisian. However, in line with the fashionable ideas of his learned friends, Lorenzo Magalotti must have

⁴² According to Lorenzo Magalotti: 'Malqueren (è) villaggio di circa 300 case [...] in modo che formano fra di loro una certa specie di laberinto [...] La gente che l'abita è rozza, incivile e salvatica, et ha una certa lingua particolare, che da alcuno, ne meno de' più vicini luoghi è intesa [...] e nelle donne si vede qualche stravaganza nel vestirsi'. Whereas Gornia was struck by the: 'Canali piccolissimi e quasi asciutti e fetenti passandosi fra casa e casa strettissimamente. Gente villana e rozza e che porta in capo, cioè le donne, una cuffia nera coll'apertura in dietro per tirarla al viso in caso di pioggia, e detta è cinta sopra un cingolo largo e le calze arrivano fino alle noci, e lontano un dito i calcetti compagni tutto chiusi con ancineletti piccoli e in oltre le pianellette [...] Ha gente grande, barbe a spazzola, e che comincia a rappresentare il tedesco'. Hoogewerff, *De twee reizen*, cit., pp. 269 and 314-315.

⁴³ D.R. Kelley, 'Tacitus noster. The Germania in the Renaissance', in: T.J. Luce & A.J. Woodmann (eds.), *Tacitus and the Tacitean Tradition*, Harvard, Princeton University Press, 2014, pp. 152-167.

⁴⁴ K. Dekker, 'Sibbrandus Siccama on the Lex Frisionum (1617): Frisian identity as a philological construct', in: R.H. Bremmer jr. e.a. (eds.), *Advances in Old Frisian Philology*, Amsterdam-New York, Rodopi, 2007, p. 85.

⁴⁵ See on Vlitius and his interest in the Frisian language: Ph.H. Breuker, 'On the Course of Franciscus Junius's Germanic Studies, with Special Reference to Frisian', in: R.H. Bremmer jr., *Franciscus Junius F.F. and His Circle*, Amsterdam-Atlanta, Rodopi, 1998, pp. 139-143; K. Dekker, *The Origins of Old Germanic Studies in the Low Countries*, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 1998, pp. 58-159 and 240-337 and M.A. Weststeijn, *Art and Antiquity in the Netherlands and Britain. The Vernacular Arcadia of Franciscus Junius (1591-1677)*, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2015, pp. 12, 22, 65, 154 and 160. For a description of Molkwerum by Vlitius (in Italian) see J.H. Brouwer & A. Campbell, 'The Early Frisian Studies of Jan van Vliet', in: *The Modern Language Review*, 34 (1939), p. 156.

⁴⁶ More on Gysbert Japix in Ph.H. Breuker, *It wurk fan Gysbert Japix*, Ljouwert, Fryske Akademy, 1989, 2 vols.

⁴⁷ Cf. W. Frijhoff, 'Volkskundigen voor de volkskunde?', in: *Volkskundig Bulletin*, 20 (1994), p. 247 and *Idem*, 'Het zelfbeeld van de Nederlander in de achttiende eeuw: een inleiding', in: *Documentatieblad Werkgroep Achttiende Eeuw*, 24 (1992), p. 12.

been one of the first foreign visitors to assert that in Molkwerum a particular variant of that language was spoken.⁴⁸ Nearly simultaneously another acquaintance of Johan de Witt, the English ambassador sir William Temple (1628-1699), remarked in his *Observations upon the United Provinces* that:

the Friezons old Language (has) still so great affinity with our Old English, as to appear easily to have been the same; most of their words still retaining the same signification and sound; very different from the Language of the Hollanders. This is most remarkable in a little Town called Malcuera, upon the Zudder Sea.⁴⁹

Subsequently nearly all early modern English travellers who visited Friesland described Molkwerum as a labyrinth. Nevertheless, they recognized its inhabitants as 'distant cousins'.⁵⁰ For prince Cosimo and his courtiers in contrast, Friesland remained a strange and somewhat primitive region.

Conclusion

Cosimo de' Medici greatly admired the Dutch Republic. Within two years he and his courtiers twice toured the United Provinces. Although, they spent most of the time in Amsterdam and The Hague, the economic and the political capital of the country, the Tuscans made as well a brief excursion to the somewhat more peripheral region of Friesland, where they visited Stavoren and Molkwerum. However, these places did not meet up to their expectations. In the Middle Ages Stavoren had been an important economic, political and religious centre. But from the twelfth century onwards the town had been regularly flooded. Subsequently, due to political turmoil it had been burned down at several occasions in the fifteenth century. By then, the port had been silted up. Although, some prosperity returned in the seventeenth century, the town never returned to its former glory.⁵¹ In contrast, Molkwerum reached its demographic heyday only in the middle of the seventeenth century, more or less at the moment Cosimo and his courtiers visited the village. In subsequent decades, that place was hit by a severe crisis as well. However, the village lacked the political and economic privileges of a chartered town.⁵² Geographical isolation, religious peculiarities and remaining antiquities may have turned Molkwerum and Stavoren into attractive travel destinations for learned Dutchmen, but Cosimo and his fellow Tuscans were hardly interested in such frivolities. They had come to the Republic to discover thriving cities, with their wealth of recently constructed palaces

⁴⁸ Wander, 'Frysk en frjemd', cit., pp. 243 and 245. Cf. K. Dekker, *The light under the bushel. Old Germanic Studies in the Low Countries and the Motivation and Methods of Jan van Vliet (1622-1666)*, Leiden University (doctoral thesis), 25 June 1997, p. 252.

⁴⁹ As quoted by R.H. Bremmer jr., *Late medieval and early modern opinions on the affinity between English and Frisian: the growth of a commonplace* (Dutch Working Papers in English Language and Linguistics 9), s.l., 1989, p. 12. William Temple published the first edition of his *Observations* in 1672. The book was based on his extensive travels in the Dutch Republic before and during his spell as the English ambassador in the country between 1668 and 1672. Cf. L. Brummel, 'William Temple als schrijver, denker en historicus', in: *Bijdragen en Mededelingen van het Historisch Genootschap*, 70 (1956), pp. 31-58.

⁵⁰ C.D. Van Strien & Ph.H. Breuker, 'Friesland in de reisverslagen van Britse reizigers omstreeks 1700', in: *It Beaken*, 52 (1990), pp. 196-197 and 201.

⁵¹ G. Eenling, 'Middeleeuwse handel en de Hanze', in: P. de Haan (ed.), *Stavoren, o Stavoren. Een geschiedenis van Stavoren*, Stavoren, Commissie Het Staverse Boek, 2002, pp. 37-38. Cf. J.A. Faber, *Drie eeuwen Friesland. Economische en sociale ontwikkelingen van 1500 tot 1800*, Leeuwarden, De Tille, 1973, I, pp. 170-176.

⁵² Trompetter, *Eén grote familie*, cit., pp. 193-194.

and warehouses.⁵³ In Holland, they found these things. In Friesland on the contrary, they were introduced to strange customs, an incomprehensible language and a legendary past, without physical remnants that could make it trustworthy.

Keywords

Cosimo De' Medici, Friesland, early modern travelling, regional identities

Hans Cools obtained his PhD in 2000 at the University of Amsterdam. Currently he holds a position as senior researcher at the Fryske Akademy - Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences in Leeuwarden and he lectures early modern history at Leuven University. He has published on a variety of subjects such as nobilities, warfare, state formation and political and cultural brokerage in the Low Countries, France and Italy between the fifteenth and the seventeenth centuries. Currently he prepares a biography on Francesco Feroni, a Tuscan merchant in seventeenth century Amsterdam.

Fryske Akademy - KNAW
Postbus 54
8900 AB Leeuwarden (Netherlands)
hcools@fryske-akademy.nl

RIASSUNTO

Una compagnia di viaggio toscana tra i frisi

La gita di Cosimo a Stavoren e Molkwerum (26 giugno 1669)

Quest'articolo esamina la percezione della Frisia attestata in alcuni resoconti dell'escursione a Stavoren e Molkwerum compiuta nel 1669 da Cosimo de' Medici. Il principe toscano visitò la Repubblica delle Province Unite negli anni 1667-1768 e 1669 per studiare le strutture politiche ed economiche di un paese che in alcuni decenni era diventato una grande potenza. Benché la comitiva principesca fosse prevalentemente interessata a vedere le grandi città olandesi, il suo ospite Johan de Witt le aveva consigliato di visitare anche la Frisia, regione piuttosto isolata e reputata per aver conservato gli antichi usi e costumi. Il 26 giugno 1669 la comitiva compì un'escursione al sudovest della Frisia. Sebbene la cittadina portuale di Stavoren fosse nota come la capitale degli antichi Frisoni e gli intellettuali olandesi apprezzassero Molkwerum per l'urbanistica labirintica, la religione anabattistica e l'uso della lingua antica, i viaggiatori toscani sembrano essere stati colpiti più dal declino e dalla stranezza della zona che dal suo fascino culturale e storico. Dai resoconti di viaggio non pare che la comitiva, venuta nei Paesi Bassi per scoprire novità, abbia valutato positivamente il contrasto della primitiva Frisia con l'Olanda moderna. Questo studio illustra pertanto come i toscani non adottavano automaticamente l'immagine della Frisia propagata dagli olandesi, ma esprimevano invece una percezione diversa, motivata da obiettivi di viaggio non necessariamente storico-culturali.

⁵³ van Veen, 'Cosimo de' Medici's reis', cit., p. 47.

‘I am happy that Italy fosters such exquisite minds’

Gijsbert Cuper (1644-1716) and intellectual life on the Italian peninsula

Jetze Toubert*

Gijsbert Cuper (Hemmen 1644-Deventer 1716) was a Dutch statesman and scholar, with three great qualities: he was a tireless communicator, an efficient organizer, and a versatile savant. His paper legacy testifies to all three qualities. He had over a hundred manuscripts, on topics as diverse as antique navigation, a newly discovered manuscript of Church Father Lactantius, and the nature of the Palmyrene alphabet.¹ The remaining correspondence contains thousands of incoming and outgoing letters which Cuper exchanged with learned and influential men all over Europe, and beyond. Cuper experimented with ways of archiving this immense correspondence.² Historians have studied only parts of Cuper’s extensive network of correspondents: his prolonged exchange with the Amsterdam merchant and burgomaster Nicolaas Witsen (1641-1717), his Swedish contacts, his correspondents in the Huguenot diaspora, and his exchanges with the Levant.³ Virtually unexplored, however, are Cuper’s numerous epistolary contacts on the Italian peninsula.

The letters exchanged by Italian scholars with an intellectual jack-of-all-trades such as Cuper enrich our understanding of how minds south of the Alps related to international debates about rationalism, experimental science, biblical criticism and world religions, debates which modern historians consider proper to the Early

* This article is part of a wider investigation of Dutch-Italian intellectual exchange around 1700, centred on Gijsbert Cuper. See also: J. Toubert, ‘Religious Interests and Scholarly Exchange in the Early Enlightenment Republic of Letters: Italian and Dutch Scholars, 1675-1715’, in: *Rivista di Storia della Chiesa in Italia*, 50, 2 (2014), pp. 411-436.

¹ The majority of Cuper’s manuscripts, as well as his correspondence, are kept in the Koninklijke Bibliotheek (Royal Library), The Hague (henceforth: KB). See for a recent assessment H. J. Cook, *Assessing the Truth: Correspondence and Information at the End of the Golden Age*, Leiden, Primavera Pers, 2013.

² M. Peters, ‘*Mercator Sapiens*’ (*De Wijze Koopman*): *Het wereldwijde onderzoek van Nicolaes Witsen (1641-1717), Burgemeester en VOC-Bewindhebber van Amsterdam*, proefschrift Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 2008, 194-195.

³ P. Rietbergen, ‘C.C. Rumpf, G. Cuper and Cultural Relations between Sweden and the Dutch Republic during the Last Quarter of the 17th Century’, in: J. Lemmink & J. van Koningsbrugge (eds.), *Baltic Affairs*, Nijmegen, s.n., 1990, 315-42; A. Goldgar, *Impolite Learning: Conduct and Community in the Republic of Letters, 1680-1750*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1995; Peters, ‘*Mercator Sapiens*’, cit.; B. Chen, ‘Politics and Letters: Gisbert Cuper as a Servant of Two Republics’, in: M. Keblusek & B. Noldus (eds.), *Double Agents: Cultural and Political Brokerage in Early Modern Europe*, Leiden, Brill, 2011, pp. 71-93.

Enlightenment.⁴ The fact that Cuper's Italian contacts have been overlooked seems representative of a more general neglect of Northwestern European fascination for the Italian peninsula as an intellectual resource in this period. Within the context of the Dutch Republic, historiographical excitement over Cartesian and Spinozist philosophy, experimental sciences and non-Western overseas imports have eclipsed the continued engagement of Dutch academics with Italian classical scholarship in the later seventeenth and early eighteenth century.⁵ Whereas the Grand Tour as an extension of elite character building has been in the limelight, the continued scholarly engagement with classical culture and its intellectual custodians among Dutch intellectuals has been left virtually unexplored.⁶

In this article I examine the intellectual exchange transpiring from the correspondence of Gijsbert Cuper with Italian scholars. Rather than a programme of scientific experimentation or political reform, the matters discussed often concern specific books and objects: new publications, enigmatic antiquities, at first sight endless and, at times, rather pointless ruminations on new editions and classical inscriptions, coins and other artefacts. By working out the personal interests of the participants involved, we can appreciate how both gained from exchanges of knowledge – each for different reasons, determined by their proper intellectual habitats. Instead of reading the letters exchanged between Cuper and his Italian pen friends in terms of the correspondents' stronger or weaker integration in international intellectual developments, it may be profitable to consider the distinct effects of their communications locally, on either side of the correspondence. This article suggests that whereas on the Dutch side epistolary exchange advanced the standing of the scholar among his peers, in the vein of the '(im)polite learning' explored by Anne Goldgar, on the Italian side the same exchange fuelled an intricate struggle for recognition within a hierarchical courtly culture, in line with the 'instruments of credit' reconstructed by Mario Biagioli.⁷

Intellectual progress and backwardness

The intellectual climate of the Italian Peninsula in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries has a bad press. In general, the image of intellectual paralysis in the wake of the Galileo trial still persists. Institutionalised suppression of new ideas supposedly closed off Italian scholars from developments abroad.⁸ Grand synthetic theories about the structure of the universe and of matter were reputedly eschewed, in favour of specific observations and experiments, of little value in the absence of a broader programme – suggesting that Italian natural philosophy in the Baroque period was myopic and fragmented.⁹ Likewise, the metaphysical and

⁴ See for a broad panorama of Europe-wide intellectual developments in this period: J. I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650-1750*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001.

⁵ J. Price, *Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*, London, Reaktion Books, 2011, pp. 154-159; M. Prak, *The Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century: the Golden Age*, trans. Diane L. Webb, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005, pp. 222-250.

⁶ J. Black, *Italy and the Grand Tour*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2003, pp. 1-16; M.G. Brennan, *The Origins of the Grand Tour: The Travels of Robert Montagu, Lord Mandeville (1649-1654), William Hammond (1655-1658), Banaster Maynard (1660-1663)*, London, The Hakluyt Society, 2004.

⁷ Goldgar, *Impolite Learning*, cit., pp. 1-11; M. Biagioli, *Galileo's Instruments of Credit: Telescopes, Images, Secrecy*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2006, pp. 21-44.

⁸ A. Del Col, *L'Inquisizione in Italia*, Milan, Mondadori, 2006, pp. 639, 666-686, 688-689.

⁹ W. B. Ashworth Jr, 'Catholicism and Early Modern Science' in: D.C. Lindberg & R.L. Numbers (eds.), *God and Nature: Historical Essays on the Encounter between Christianity and Science*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1986, pp. 136-166.

epistemological innovations of the seventeenth century of the likes of Descartes, Spinoza and Locke, hardly seemed to permeate Italian circles.¹⁰ The experience of an open-minded scholar such as the Florentine librarian Antonio Magliabechi (1633-1714) partly seems to corroborate this – he lamented the poor distribution in Italy of foreign titles, as well as the mediocre quality of scholarly publications originating from the peninsula.¹¹

An important characteristic of intellectual life in Italy was the continued proliferation of specialized scholarly societies, the *accademie*, which were often organized locally. In Florence, for instance, the *Accademia della Crusca* kept watch over the literary and linguistic patrimony, while the *Accademia del Cimento* kept interest in natural experimentation alive after the condemnation of Galileo – until its disbandment in the second half of the seventeenth century. In Rome there were similar gatherings. The *Accademia dell’Arcadia* brought together the fine fleur of Roman erudition and literary taste. The *Accademia Fisicomatematica* was an informal circle of experimentalists in Rome. Yet according to Hanns Gross, the dominance of the *accademie* is illustrative of the ‘sad state of the Italian universities of the day’, without taking into consideration that contemporary academies in France and England are often considered as the embodiment of scientific advancement, rather than sclerosis.¹²

Cuper’s epistolary dealings with Italians testify to the importance of the academies. Cuper had read the travelogue of François Maximilien Misson (1650-1722), who had travelled the Italian peninsula in 1688.¹³ Cuper was struck by Misson’s opinion that the curious names adopted by Italian academies were bizarre and worthy of horses rather than scholars:

La Bizarrerie des noms, que ces gens la affectent, est une chose toute particuliere. En France nos Ecuers en donnent a peu pres semblables a leurs chevaux de manège. Je vous nommeray seulement une douzaine de ces Academies. Les Addormentati de Genes; les Ardenti de Naple, les Immobili d’Alexandrie, les Fantastici de Rome [etc.].¹⁴

Curious as he was about the Italian culture of learned academies, Cuper asked his earliest and most long-standing correspondent in Italy, Antonio Magliabechi, librarian to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, what the origins of this custom were. In response, Magliabechi explained that, while the names of the Italian Academies might sound ignominious, membership was, on the contrary, very honourable. The *Accademia della Crusca* (‘Academy of the Chaff’), for instance, was so named because its members separated the wheat from the chaff in lexicographic and idiomatic matters.¹⁵ Cuper’s interest was aroused: he later sounded out the intellectual society around Giovanni Giustino Ciampini (1633-1698), founder of the *Conferenza dei*

¹⁰ H. Gross, *Rome in the Age of Enlightenment: The Post-Tridentine Syndrome and the Ancien Regime*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 253, 259.

¹¹ F. Waquet, *Le modèle Français et l’Italie Savante: Conscience de soi et perception de l’autre dans La République Des Lettres (1660-1750)*, Rome, École française de Rome, 1989, p. 63; Magliabechi lamented about the few books arriving from abroad, and the meagre scholarship of his own compatriots, in letters to Cuper, e.g. A. Magliabechi to G. Cuper, 2 December 1692, KB ms. 72 D 10, ff. 78ro-78vo.

¹² Gross, *Rome in the Age of Enlightenment*, cit., pp. 247-248.

¹³ François Maximilien Misson, *Nouveau voyage d’Italie, fait en L’année 1688*, 2 vol., The Hague, H. van Bulderen, 1691.

¹⁴ G. Cuper to A. Magliabechi, March/April 1692, KB ms. 72 D 11, ff. 42vo-43ro. See Misson, *Nouveau voyage*, II, p. 216.

¹⁵ A. Magliabechi to G. Cuper, 12 April 1692, KB ms. 72 D 10, ff. 68vo-69ro.

Concili and the *Accademia Fisicomatematica* in Rome, about the possibility of himself becoming a corresponding fellow.¹⁶

This very interest of Cuper in associating himself with the Roman intellectual elite is indicative of his ambition to gain acknowledgement of his scholarly standing in as wide an area as possible. However, scholarly associations on the Italian peninsula tended to be fickle and short-lived, dependent as they often were on local patrons who supported them to procure cultural capital for themselves rather than social utility for their subjects. Ciampini's gatherings were no exception, fading away after their founder's demise, precluding the formal inclusion of Cuper as an associate.¹⁷

Cuper and Magliabechi exchanged letters during a period of thirty-five years. During the first twenty-five years the letters often amounted to bibliographic bulletins, containing lists of worthy publications which had recently appeared in their respective home regions. Despite the novelty of literary journals, which started to appear in Italy as well as in Northwestern Europe, the circulation of such letters remained an important medium of access to literary news for decades. Repeatedly, Magliabechi forwarded Cuper's letters to fellow scholars all over Italy. Consequently, Florentine and Roman scholars took note of Cuper's communications with great interest. This becomes apparent from the response of the Roman curial officer Giusto Fontanini who had received a letter of Cuper from Magliabechi around New Year 1705. Fontanini replied to Magliabechi that the pope himself, Clement XI, had devoured Cuper's epistle, as had Fontanini's own patron, Cardinal Giuseppe Renato Imperiali (1651-1737).¹⁸ Later Cuper clearly took great pride in the pope's interest, boasting about it to his visitor Zacharias Uffenbach in 1710.¹⁹

What did these men write about? In principle, the range of topics was boundless. Geography, for instance, was of great interest in an age in which increasing overseas travel stimulated interest in foreign peoples and cultures. One longstanding friendship cherished by Cuper was with Nicolaas Witsen (1641-1717), an Amsterdam patrician active in commerce, who sat on the board of directors of the Dutch East India Company.²⁰ Witsen's family had commercial connections with Russia and he himself had travelled there in 1664-1665. For the rest of his life he would draw on his experiences in an ever expanding description of Russia, which included a detailed map of 'Tartary' (covering a large part of Asia), first published separately in 1687. This map was in demand, and in 1690 Magliabechi wrote to Cuper that he would be delighted to obtain a copy. After a year and a half Magliabechi received a package with maps of Tartary from Cuper.

This valuable source of geographical information soon made its way to those in power, and to those in the know. For instance, Magliabechi forwarded one copy to Enrico Noris (1633-1704), an eminent Augustinian, who was First Custodian of the Vatican Library and created cardinal in 1695. In Rome, Noris had cardinals and other

¹⁶ H. Copes to G. Cuper, 15 may 1696, KB ms. 72 C 38, f. 220ro; G. Cuper to H. Copes, 6 / 16 june 1696, KB ms. 72 C 38, f. 207vo.

¹⁷ On Ciampini and his intellectual entourage, see K. Middleton, 'Science in Rome', 1675-1700, and the *Accademia Fisicomatematica* of Giovanni Giustino Ciampini', in: *The British Journal for the History of Science*, 8 (1975), pp. 138-154; V. Ferrone, *Scienza natura religione: mondo newtoniano e cultura italiana nel primo settecento*, Napoli, Jovene Editore, 1982, pp. 11-23.

¹⁸ A. Magliabechi to G. Cuper, 14 February 1704, KB ms. 72 D 12, f. 94ro.

¹⁹ M. Peters, 'Nicolaes Witsen and Gijsbert Cuper: Two Seventeenth-Century Dutch Burgomasters and Their Gordian Knot,' in: *Lias: Sources and Documents Relating to the Early Modern History of Ideas*, 16, 1 (1989), pp. 111-150 (116).

²⁰ See for Witsen: Peters, "Mercator Sapiens", cit.

distinguished Romans admire the map. In Florence, Magliabechi himself showed it to the household of the Grand Duke and to fellow scholars. A Swedish diplomat arranged for the map to be lent to Giacomo Cantelli (1643-1695), ducal cartographer of Modena, who returned it a few days later, after copying it so as to make a reduced reproduction.²¹ Thus, within two years some of the major intellectual centres on the Italian peninsula gained access to this cartographic representation of Russia, through the correspondence of Cupper and Magliabechi.

Besides geography, scholars shared a lively interest in astronomy and physics. The letters exchanged between Magliabechi and Cupper bears witness to this, as well. In the years 1680 to 1682, for instance, Europeans were repeatedly held in awe by the appearance of bright comets in the sky, which led to a torrent of publications.²² In Italy, several astronomers partook of this flurry of editorial activity. Geminiano Montanari (1633-1687), professor of astronomy and meteorology in Padua, published several essays which he had sent as letters to Magliabechi, who sent Cupper copies of these works. Magliabechi also informed Cupper that the professor in Padua was composing another treatise on the subject, and asked for anything Dutch scholars might have written on the same topic.²³

Cupper reacted enthusiastically: he was impressed with the clever and profound way in which Montanari discussed the comet. 'I am happy that Italy fosters such exquisite minds', he wrote to Magliabechi.²⁴ However, when Magliabechi requested information from the Dutch Republic, Cupper responded with the news that a French book by an anonymous author had appeared which was highly critical of the interpretation of comets as bad omens, an interpretation endorsed by Montanari.²⁵

This anonymous author – as Cupper knew very well – was Pierre Bayle (1647-1706), who had rejected any interpretation of natural phenomena as portents of catastrophe in his *Lettre à M.L.A.D.C., docteur de Sorbonne* (1682).²⁶ This is one of the first publications in which Bayle expressed his skeptical attitude *vis-à-vis* traditional beliefs about natural phenomena, in favor of philosophical reasoning. The different viewpoints of Bayle and Montanari might seem to confirm the relative backwardness of Italian astronomy.²⁷ However, Cupper himself was no convert to the new, rational investigation of the regularities of nature, either. In 1684 he congratulated Bayle with his work, but not without adding that ancient authors corroborated his interpretation. After all, they allowed for comets to presage

²¹ A. Magliabechi to G. Cupper, 26 February 1690, KB ms. 72 D 10, ff. 44vo-45ro; 11 September 1691, KB ms. 72 D 10, ff. 56vo-57ro; 28 June 1692, KB ms. 72 D 10, f. 77ro; 28 October 1692, KB ms. 72 D 10, f. 81ro; 2 December 1692, KB ms. 72 D 10, ff. 78vo-79ro. See for Noris and his controversial theological career: M. Wernicke, *Kardinal Enrico Noris und seine Verteidigung Augustins*, Würzburg, Augustinus-Verlag, 1973.

²² A. Fix, 'Bekker and Bayle on comets', in: *Geschiedenis van de Wijsbegeerte in Nederland*, 11 (2000), pp. 81-96; E. Jorink, *Het 'Boeck der Natuere'. Nederlandse geleerden en de wonderen van Gods schepping 1575-1715*, Leiden, Primavera Pers, 2006, pp. 172-183.

²³ A. Magliabechi to G. Cupper, 4 March 1680, KB ms. 72 D 10, f. 16ro; 17 October 1682, KB ms. 72 D 10, f. 9ro.

²⁴ G. Cupper to A. Magliabechi, 31 May / 10 June 1681, KB ms. 72 D 11, f. 6ro.

²⁵ G. Cupper to A. Magliabechi, 15 / 25 December 1682, KB ms. 72 D 11, f. 9ro.

²⁶ Pierre Bayle, *Lettre à M.L.A.D.C., docteur de Sorbonne*, Cologne [= Rotterdam], P. Marteau [= Reinier Leers], 1682; the letter is better known by the title of the second edition of 1683, Pierre Bayle, *Pensées diverses, écrites à un docteur de Sorbonne, à l'occasion de la comète qui parut au mois de Decembre 1680*, Rotterdam, Reinier Leers, 1683.

²⁷ Jorink, *Het 'Boeck der Natuere'*, cit., pp. 172-185.

fortunate events, as well as disasters.²⁸ That was hardly the disenchanted view of celestial phenomena which Bayle has come to represent nowadays.

Classical antiquities

The majority of the information which Cuper and Magliabechi exchanged, concerned historical and antiquarian scholarship. They seem to have pursued different objectives with their epistolary communication. Magliabechi strove, first and foremost, to keep abreast of the latest scholarly publications. His letters testify to an unquenchable thirst for news about works published north of the Alps. Cuper, on the other hand, seems to have had a more narrowly defined interest, determining the circumscribed subject matter of their correspondence. Cuper devoted his scholarly life to the reconstruction of ancient history to the minutest detail. This alerted him to publications appearing in Italy, but also to newly discovered antiquities, and to people whose expertise might be of interest. Thus, the correspondence benefited Magliabechi because of Cuper's close connections with the European book market, while it benefitted Cuper because Magliabechi could procure him books, but also contacts and news pertaining to antiquarian studies.

One antiquarian project that illustrates how both sides profited from this epistolary exchange within their own particular frame, concerns the *Apotheosis Homeri*. The *Apotheosis* was a Hellenistic relief sculpted in marble, about which Cuper published a treatise in 1683. The relief had been discovered in 1658 near Rome, in the countryside of Marino, a property of the Colonna family. The Colonna obtained the relief and moved it to the Palazzo Colonna in Rome. The first to study the relief was Marcello Severoli (1644-1707), an official in the Roman Curia in the

orbit of Colonna patronage, and later a member of the *Accademia dell'Arcadia*. Severoli never got round to publishing his findings, but he did produce an engraving of the original. The Jesuit Athanasius Kircher got hold of this engraving and inserted it in his book *Latium* (1671), adding a chapter in which he explained the figures represented on the sculpture (Fig. 1). The engraving was in fact a visual re-interpretation of the original, currently in the British Museum, which is damaged in many details (Fig. 2).



Fig. 1 artist unknown, Apotheosis of Homer, engraving, reproduced in Athanasius Kircher, *Latium, Id Est Nova et Parallela Latii Tum Veteris Tum Novi Descriptio*, Amsterdam, J. Janssonius à Waesberge, 1671, as well as in Gijsbert Cuper, *Apotheosis Vel Consecratio Homeri*, Amsterdam, Boom, 1683 (photo public domain).

²⁸ G. Cuper to P. Bayle, 2 August 1684, in: P. Bayle, *Correspondance de Pierre Bayle*, E. Labrousse (†) & A. McKenna (eds.), Oxford, Voltaire Foundation, 2007, V, nr. 309.



Fig. 2 Archelaus of Priene, Apotheosis of Homer, marble relief, third century BCE, British Museum, registration number 1819,0812.1 (photo public domain).

The relief is a rather complex composition which led to many scholarly debates. According to Kircher's interpretation, it represents a mountain, with figures on three levels. Kircher interpreted this as a representation of Mount Parnassus, with Jupiter sitting on top. In the lower left corner Homer sits enthroned, while behind him a figure crowns him with laurels, and personifications of the poet's virtues approach him with offerings.²⁹

Kircher dedicated only a few pages to the *Apotheosis Homeri*, and antiquarians were tempted to improve on the Jesuit's interpretation. As Cuper noted in the book he published twelve years later, several scholars were involved in a more extensive explanation of the relief. He justified his own publication on the marble relief by pointing out that others - notably the aforementioned Severoli, Ezechiel Spanheim (1629-1710), and Ottavio Falconieri (1636-1675) - had died, or lacked the time to publish their observations.³⁰ Therefore Cuper

published his own interpretation, which differed greatly from that of Kircher. The figure sitting on the mountain top was Homer himself, holding the god's attributes - except for the thunder bolt - and reclining in a sublime position on Mount Olympus.³¹

At the end of his survey of the *Apotheosis*, Cuper added some considerations which others had communicated to him just before his manuscript was sent to the printer. One of these was a short illustrated commentary written by Abbot Raffaele Fabretti (1618-1700), forwarded in 1682 by Magliabechi to Cuper.³² Fabretti claimed that more than once he had inspected the marble personally, together with Severoli, at the Palazzo Colonna, which had induced him to emend Kircher's analysis in several aspects. For instance, according to Fabretti, Kircher had falsely identified the figure who stood behind Homer's throne and crowned the poet, as the 'genius Eumelia'. Fabretti's improved reading identified the figure as 'Mother Earth', also known in

²⁹ A. Kircher, *Latium, Id Est Nova et Parallela Latii Tum Veteris Tum Novi Descriptio*, Amsterdam, J. Janssonius à Waesberge, 1671, pp. 81-87. See H.B. Evans, *Exploring the Kingdom of Saturn: Kircher's "Latium" and Its Legacy*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2012. The British Museum acquired the marble relief in 1819 from French art dealers (registration number 1819,0812.1). For Severoli's abortive plans, see KB ms. 72 D 10, f. 3ro.

³⁰ Cuper knew of Severoli's abandoned endeavour (see below); Spanheim sent Cuper some of his own observations, to be inserted in Cuper's publication: Gijsbert Cuper, *Apotheosis Vel Consecratio Homeri*, Amsterdam, Boom, 1683, pp. 193-194; already in 1673 Nicolaas Heinsius (1620-1681) had inquired on Cuper's behalf if Falconieri had anything on the *Apotheosis* which might appear in print: N. Heinsius to O. Falconieri, 2 June 1673, Leiden University Library ms. BUR Q 14, ff. 13vo-14vo.

³¹ *Ibid.* 14-15, 25.

³² KB ms. 72 D 10, ff. 6ro, 8ro.

Antiquity as Cybele, Rhea, or Isis. To prove this, he pointed to the headgear which the figure was wearing, a kind of tower, which Kircher had failed to explain: Egyptians used to depict Isis with a bushel on her head. Gratefully Cuper reproduced these and other corrections, unaltered, in his *Apotheosis Homeri*, as well as the accompanying drawings.³³

There is a hint of scholarly machinations in the dealings with the marble relief. Both Fabretti and Severoli were protégés of the powerful Cardinal Gaspare Carpegna (1625-1714), and both were to become members of the famous literary circle of the *Arcadia*.³⁴ Severoli, who provided Kircher with the engraving, and who joined Fabretti in examining the relief, had been preparing his own commentary on the *Apotheosis Homeri*. In Florence, Magliabechi had found out through an intermediary that Severoli had never come very far with his treatise and confided to Cuper that he did not think that Severoli had ever actually put a word on paper.³⁵ More generally, the posthumously published biography of Severoli implied that he had not lived up to expectations either as a scholar or as a curial officer.³⁶

With Severoli underachieving both scholarly and professionally, it may not be surprising that Fabretti resorted to Cuper to have his remarks on the *Apotheosis* published. By sending his remarks to The Hague, by mediation of Magliabechi, at least Fabretti ensured that his own observations saw the light, circumventing the delicate web of patronage and precedence proper to the Roman world of scholarship.³⁷ In that way, indirectly Fabretti's notes would come to the attention of the icon in the history of art Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-1768). Winckelmann consulted Cuper's *Apotheosis Homeri*, as is clear from excerpts he wrote down in a notebook, currently in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.³⁸ In fact, Cuper's observations on the coiffure of the figure of Tragedy on the Apotheosis prompted Winckelmann to compare that figure with a sculpture found in Stabia, near Pompeii and Herculaneum.³⁹ Fabretti may not have had a profound influence on Winckelmann's appraisal of Greek sculpture, but at least through Cuper's book Winckelmann must have been aware of the Urbinate's corrections of Kircher.

The case of the *Apotheosis* shows a certain asymmetry in the way antiquarians operated in Italy and in the Dutch Republic. Cuper who was internationally active, profited from his Italian connections to make himself indispensable in the European

³³ Cuper, *Apotheosis*, pp. 194-200; the original commentary of Fabretti is in KB ms. 72 D 3, ff. 75ro-75vo.

³⁴ G. Romeo, 'Carpegna, Gaspare' in: *DBI*, XX (1977), pp. 589-591.

³⁵ A. Magliabechi to G. Cuper, 22 March 1677, KB ms. 72 D 10, ff. 2ro-3ro; for Carpegna's antiquarian programme: C. Benocci, 'Il cardinale Gaspare di Carpegna tra rinnovamento religioso e collezionismo archeologico illuminato: una figura di mediazione attenta al mondo spagnolo,' in: José Beltrán Fortes, ed., *Iluminismo e ilustración: le antichità e i loro protagonisti in Spagna e in Italia nel XVIII secolo*, Roma, Erma di Bretschneider, 2003, pp. 65-83.

³⁶ G.M. Crescimbeni, 'Vita di Monsignor Marcello Severoli Romano' in: *Idem, Le vite degli Arcadi illustri*, Rome: A. De' Rossi, 1710, II, pp. 275-294.

³⁷ See for Fabretti's combative modus operandi in antiquarian scholarship: I. Herklotz, 'Bellori, Fabretti and Trajan's column' in: J. Bell & T. Willette (eds.), *Art History in the Age of Bellori: Scholarship and Cultural Politics in Seventeenth-Century Rome*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 128-44.

³⁸ J.J. Winckelmann, 'Notes sur les antiquités grecques et romaines' in: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. Allemand 63, ff. 22vo-27ro ('Gisberti Cuperi apotheosis Homeri'). On Winckelmann see D.J. Boorstin, *The Discoverers: a History of Man's Search to Know His World and Himself*, New York, Random House, 1983, p. 584; T. DaCosta Kaufman, 'Antiquarianism, the History of Objects, and the History of Art before Winckelmann', in: *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 62 (2001), pp. 523-541 (523).

³⁹ J.J. Winckelmann, *Johann Joachim Winckelmann on Art, Architecture, and Archeology*, trans. D. R. Carter, Rochester, Camden House, 2013, p. 209.

Republic of Letters. His expanding network of Italian correspondents increased his importance to local academics, such as the orientalist Jacobus Rhenferd (1654-1712) and Adriaan Reland (1676-1718), and put him on a par with the likes of Ezechiel Spanheim (1629-1710) and Mathurin Veyssière de La Croze (1661-1739).⁴⁰ Fabretti's engagement with the *Apotheosis* initially had a much more local scope, like his works on the topography of Lazio and on the Roman aqueducts. Having inspected the marble relief together with Severoli at the Palazzo Colonna, it would have been more straightforward to pass on his observations to this fellow protégé of Cardinal Carpegna, who after all was supposed to publish a commentary on the *Apotheosis* anyway. When it was clear that that would lead nowhere, once informed that Magliabechi corresponded with the Dutch scholar, Fabretti seized on the opportunity to work around Severoli and to get his notes published abroad.

Biblical criticism

The interest in *Apotheosis Homeri* concerned the identification of the deities depicted on the relief, and the interpretation of their allegorical significance. Italian and Dutch scholars tended to be reticent in their communications about historical and antiquarian issues with more acute cultural and social implications. It is therefore significant to find one reference to debates about the authenticity of the Bible in Cuper's letter to Magliabechi, which subsequently circulated in other circles due to its publication in a journal.

In 1692 Magliabechi passed on a letter from Cuper to Benedetto Bacchini (1651-1721), a Benedictine who had just started to publish the *Giornale de' Letterati*, based in Parma and Modena.⁴¹ In the third issue of the Parma/Modena *Giornale de' Letterati* Bacchini included an excerpt from this letter, translated into Italian.⁴² Cuper mentioned a set of publications and projects which dealt plainly with the status and authenticity of the Bible. He signalled the appearance of a work by the Utrecht professor of theology, Herman Witsius, which sought to 'protect the authors of the Sacred Books, Moses and others, against the arrows of Spinoza, Simon and others, who would wish for nothing more than shattering the authority of those men.'⁴³ This work was Witsius's *Miscellaneorum sacrorum libri IV* (1692), in which the author railed against the critics who infamously speculated about authorship of the first books of the Old Testament, capitalising on problems with the traditional attribution to Moses: Hobbes, Spinoza, Simon, as well as the Amsterdam based Remonstrant from Geneva, Jean Le Clerc (1657-1736).⁴⁴ In the same letter, Cuper

⁴⁰ Goldgar, *Impolite learning*, pp. 30-33; for the contacts Cuper inherited from Nicolaas Heinsius, Johann Friedrich and Jacobus Gronovius, see: Toubert, 'Religious Interest and Scholarly Exchange', *Rivista della Storia*, 68 (2014), pp. 411-436.

⁴¹ Another journal with that title had appeared in Rome between 1668 and 1681, edited from 1675 onward by Ciampini; see Gardair, *Le "Giornale de' Letterati" de Rome (1668-1681)*, Florence, Olschki, 1984, p. 30; B.M. Dooley, *Science, Politics and Society in Eighteenth-Century Italy: The Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia and Its World*, New York, Garland, 1991, pp. 37-61.

⁴² A. Magliabechi to G. Cuper, 12 April 1692, KB ms. 72 D 10, ff. 68ro, 71ro-72vo; the extract appeared as 'Estratto d'una dottissima epistola latina scritta dal Sig. Gisberto Cuperò sotto li 2. di Gennaio del presente anno al Sig. Antonio Magliabechi, e da questo con la solita incredibile sua bontà comunicatoci, con altre molte novità letterarie, che riserbiamo à seguenti Giornali' in: *Giornale de' Letterati* 1 (1692), pp. 97-100.

⁴³ 'Sacrorum Voluminum conditores, Mosen, et alios tuetur a telis Spinosae, Simonis, aliorumque; quibus nihil antiquius videtur, quam eorum virorum auctoritatem pessundare', G. Cuper to A. Magliabechi, 2/12 January 1692, f. 40ro.

⁴⁴ Herman Witsius, *Miscellaneorum sacrorum libri IV* (Utrecht, F. Halma, 1692); for Witsius's attack on the biblical critics, see M. C. Pitassi, *Entre croire et savoir. Le problème de la méthode critique chez Jean le Clerc*, Leiden, Brill, 1987, pp. 28-29; more generally for the issue of the Mosaic authorship of

observed that parts of Pierre Bayle's *Dictionnaire* began to be published, and noted plans of the Oxford biblical scholar John Mill (1644/5-1707) to publish the New Testament.

Critical reflection on the history and constitution of the biblical text was one of the main lines along which the intellectuals during the seventeenth century debated the nature of the Christian religion and its claims to truth. In these debates, the importance of the interventions of controversial thinkers, such as Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), Benedictus de Spinoza (1632-1677) and Richard Simon (1638-1712), are central in current historiography.⁴⁵ This is typically depicted as a development in early modern intellectual culture in which England and the Dutch Republic seemed to take centre stage, and to a lesser extent France and the German territories. Judging from current historiography, Italians hardly played a role in early modern debates on biblical criticism.

In fact, the extent to which biblical criticism, and in particular the works in this area of Spinoza, Simon and Le Clerc, provoked discussion among Italian clergy and laity, is not quite clear. The prevailing idea is that there was little public debate over the authenticity and divine inspiration of biblical texts before 1725, when Giambattista Vico (1668-1744), the representative of the Neapolitan Enlightenment, published his *Principi di una scienza nuova*.⁴⁶ In this complex work Vico suggests that religious imagery functioned as cognitive aids in various cultures and religions, Christian and otherwise, before they fully developed rational modes of explaining phenomena. This implied that biblical histories, precepts and parables were of no more spiritual or moral value than other religious texts – a suggestion which was reminiscent of biblical criticism of Hobbes and Spinoza, even though the actual correspondence between the hermeneutics of these authors is debated.

As for the French Oratorian Richard Simon – the other critic whom Cuper mentioned explicitly, known for the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, 1678 – his work was present in many Italian libraries. There it tended to stand shoulder to shoulder with the famous works of 'Gallican erudition', which included the Patristic editions of the Maurists of Saint-Germain, Jean Mabillon (1632-1707) and Bernard de Montfaucon (1655-1741).⁴⁷ Simon thus appears to have been ranged by Italian librarians with French clerical historiography, rather than with biblical criticism.

Through a reference such as Cuper's, pressing controversies from Northwest European intellectual culture were signalled south of the Alps, after all. Cuper drew attention to the turmoil caused by biblical criticism, propounded, among others, by Spinoza and Simon. However, it was rendered inconspicuous by the fact that the *Giornale de' Letterati* truncated Cuper's notice about Witsius's book against

the first five books of the Old Testament in Hobbes, Spinoza, Simon, Le Clerc and Calmet: J. Bernier, *La critique du Pentateuque de Hobbes à Calmet*, Paris, Honoré Champion, 2010.

⁴⁵ The bibliography on biblical criticism in the early modern period is vast, see e.g. J. Sheehan, *The Enlightenment Bible: Translation, Scholarship, Culture*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2005; P. Gibert, *L'invention critique de la Bible: XVe-XVIII siècle*, Paris, Gallimard, 2010; M. C. Legaspi, *The Death of Scripture and the Rise of Biblical Studies*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2010; D. Levitin, 'From Sacred History to the History of Religion: Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity in European Historiography from Reformation to "Enlightenment"', in: *The Historical Journal*, 55 (2012), pp. 1117-1161 (1123-1141).

⁴⁶ Israel, *The Radical Enlightenment*, cit., pp. 664-683; cf. J.C. Morrison, 'Vico and Spinoza', in: *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 41 (1980), pp. 49-68 and E. Nuzzo, 'Between Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy in Italian Culture in the Early 1700s: Giambattista Vico and Paolo Mattia Doria', in: S. Mortimer & J. Robertson (eds.), *The Intellectual Consequences of Religious Heterodoxy 1600-1750*, Leiden, Brill, 2012, pp. 204-234.

⁴⁷ Waquet, *Le modèle Français*, cit., pp. 90, 93, 95.

‘Spinoza, Simon, etc.’,⁴⁸ omitting the qualification ‘who would wish for nothing more than shattering the authority of [the biblical prophets]’. The editor of the journal, Bacchini, apparently had no wish to emphasise the central contention of the biblical critics to whom Witsius responded. If this seems an unprepossessing reference to pressing intellectual concerns, it is crucial to keep in mind that the more contentious biblical critics were discussed with great reservation by northern scholars, as well.

One debated aspect of the authority of the Old Testament that left traces in Italian philosophy, was the extent to which Moses’s laws derived, not from divine command, but from Egyptian precedent. This was a theme expounded in anti-clerical circles, famously in the tradition of the ‘three impostors’, the subject of a partly legendary treatise which staged Moses, Christ and Muhammed as political frauds.⁴⁹ However, it also elicited heated debate among members of ecclesiastical establishments, notably the Anglican divines John Spencer (1630-1693) and John Marsham (1602-1685).⁵⁰ The same Utrecht theologian Witsius, whom Cuper mentioned as defending Moses’s authority against ‘Spinoza, Simon, etc.’, wrote extensively against Spencer and Marsham, arguing that all claims of Egyptian seniority were based on late, Roman sources, and therefore invalid. A few decades later, Giambattista Vico, referred to this debate in his *Scienza Nuova*, claiming that he could improve on Witsius in countering the chronological reconstructions of Marsham and Spencer.⁵¹ The letter of Cuper published in the *Giornale de’ Letterati* in 1692 was one channel through which Vico might have become acquainted with the work of the Reformed theologian from Utrecht.

The decades around 1700, which tend to be regarded as relatively poor in terms of Italian participation in European intellectual life, the correspondence of Cuper and Magliabechi ensured continued access to each other’s topical debates. At the same time, Bacchini’s treatment of Cuper’s letter raises the question whether, just like in the case of the *Apotheosis*, with regard to biblical criticism, there was an asymmetrical situation. It would require further detailed study of similar editorial interventions by the Benedictine journal editor, to be able to give a substantiated answer. As a professor of History, Bacchini served the educational institute of the duke of Modena, whose cartographer two years earlier had taken care to obtain the map of Tartary of Witsen for his patron. It would be worthwhile to explore the extent to which Bacchini’s output was conditioned by his proximity to the princely court. The entanglement of intellectual and socio-political interests would have been stronger in his case than for someone like Cuper. The latter also depended for his social position on his loyalty to an aristocratic ruler, but in his case it was William III, whose influence on intellectual life was diluted by the accumulation of intermediate administrative layers of the decentralised Dutch Republic.⁵²

⁴⁸ ‘Spinosa, e di Simone, &c.’ Cuper, ‘Estratto d’una dottissima epistola latina’, cit., p. 99.

⁴⁹ See for the complex history of the treatise, on the levels of both history of the book and intellectual history: S. Berti, F. Charles-Daubert, R.H. Popkin (eds.), *Heterodoxy, Spinozism, and Free Thought in Early-Eighteenth-Century Europe: Studies on the Traité des Trois Imposteurs*, Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1996.

⁵⁰ D. Stolzenberg, ‘John Spencer and the Perils of Sacred Philology’, in: *Past and Present*, 214 (2012), pp. 129-164; D. Levitin, ‘John Spencer’s *De Legibus Hebraeorum* (1683-85) and “Enlightened” Sacred History: a New Interpretation’, in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 76 (2013), pp. 49-92.

⁵¹ G. Vico, *Principi di una scienza nuova*, 2nd ed., Napoli, F. Mosca, 1730, p. 100.

⁵² S. Bertelli, *Erudizione e storia in Ludovico Antonio Muratori*, Napoli, Istituto italiano per gli studi storici, 1960, pp. 16-25; A. Veenendaal sr., *Het dagboek van Gisbert Cuper, gedeputeerde te velde, gehouden in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden in 1706*, Den Haag, Nijhoff, 1950, pp. IX-XIII.

Medieval history

In the course of his life, Cuper acquired several other Italian correspondents besides Magliabechi. For many of them, Magliabechi served as a go-between. We already encountered Raffaele Fabretti, the papal antiquarian, and Enrico Noris, the custodian of the Vatican library, with whom Cuper exchanged letters before 1700. After 1700, Cuper's list of acquaintances grew. He exchanged letters with, among others, Gian Domenico Passionei (1682-1761), a Papal diplomat who visited Cuper in Deventer when he resided in the Dutch Republic to observe the peace negotiations leading up to the Treaty of Utrecht (1713).⁵³ Francesco Bianchini (1662-1729), celebrated both for his astronomical and antiquarian investigations;⁵⁴ and Giusto Fontanini (1666-1736), a curial officer known for his scholarly defence of papal rights in Comacchio, a small seaport town on the Adriatic coast occupied by imperial troops in the War of the Spanish Succession.⁵⁵

In the case of Fontanini, the political dispute between Pope Clemens XI and the ducal house of D'Este, backed by the Austrian emperor Joseph I (1678-1711), motivated a prolonged technical debate over medieval history.⁵⁶ A similar conflict between secular rulers and papal authority lay at the heart of another issue of medieval history, which involved the Tuscan Giovanni Vignoli (1667-1733), a little known correspondent of Cuper. Vignoli was a native of Pitigliano who embarked on a career as a lawyer and personal secretary to a number of Roman nobles before becoming Second Custodian of the Vatican Library in 1712.⁵⁷ Vignoli's work came to the attention of Cuper when the latter saw a 1703 prepublication of the former's antiquarian treatise, *De columna imperatoris Antonini Pii dissertatio*. Despite the fact that Vignoli intended to criticise Cuper, the Deventer antiquarian was eager to see the result of Vignoli's investigations.⁵⁸ Through mediation of Magliabechi and Fontanini, Cuper and Vignoli started a correspondence which lasted for about a decade.

In 1709 Vignoli published a book on the earliest known coins minted in Rome after the fall of the Roman Empire: *Antiquiores pontificum Romanorum denarii*. Cuper received a copy out of the hands of the diplomat Passionei.⁵⁹ The book contains a succinct overview of coins dating from the papacies of Hadrian I (pope 772-795) through Benedict VII (pope 974-983). As such it is in line with a renewed interest in the medieval history of Italy, famously pioneered by Ludovico Antonio Muratori (1672-1750), the antagonist of Fontanini in the dispute over Comacchio.⁶⁰ And, as in the case of the diplomatic techniques developed by Muratori, this survey of early medieval coins served an acute political issue. In the midst of the War of the

⁵³ A. Caracciolo, *Domenico Passionei tra Roma e la Repubblica delle Lettere*, Rome, Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1968, pp. 75-121.

⁵⁴ B. Sölch (ed.), *Francesco Bianchini (1662-1729) und die Anfänge öffentlicher Museen in Rom*, Munich, Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2007; L. Ciancio & G.P. Romagnani (eds.), *Unità del sapere molteplicità dei saperi: Francesco Bianchini (1662-1729) tra natura, storia e religione*, Verona, QuiEdit, 2010.

⁵⁵ Bertelli, *Erudizione e storia*, pp. 148-160.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 100-174.

⁵⁷ M. Rubino, *Per la storia della Biblioteca Vaticana: le carte di Giovanni Vignoli a Pitigliano*, Unpublished PhD thesis, Università degli Studi di Udine, 2008, pp. 28-29.

⁵⁸ G. Cuper to A. Magliabechi, 13/23 August 1704, KB ms. 72 D 12, ff. 63ro-63vo; the treatise appeared in 1705: Giovanni Vignoli, *De columna imperatoris Antonini Pii dissertatio*, Roma, F. Gonzaga, 1705.

⁵⁹ Giovanni Vignoli, *Antiquiores pontificum Romanorum denarii nunc primum in lucem editi notisque illustrati*, Roma, R. Bernabò, 1709; G. Cuper to G. Vignoli, 29 October / 8 November 1709, KB ms. 72 G 23-1.

⁶⁰ Bertelli, *Erudizione e storia*, cit., pp. 161-174; P. Von Moos, 'Muratori et les origines du médiévisme italien', in: *Romania*, 114 (1996), pp. 203-224.

Spanish Succession, such historical and antiquarian discussions served as intellectual weapons to justify military and diplomatic manoeuvres.

Vignoli attacked François Le Blanc, who had published his *Dissertation historique sur quelques monnoyes de Charlemagne, de Louis le Débonnaire, de Lothaire (...)* three decades earlier. Le Blanc's book had a revealing subtitle: 'Which Refutes the Opinion of Those Who Claim, that These Princes Have Never Had Any Authority in This City, Except by Consent of the Popes'. He aimed to prove that Charlemagne and his successors had been the sovereign rulers of Rome.⁶¹ Le Blanc appealed to coins of Charlemagne, Louis the Pious and Lothaire, which had the inscription 'Sanctus Petrus', claiming that the emperors who allowed the minting of these coins must have held full sovereignty over Rome.⁶²

Vignoli countered with his modest survey of early medieval papal coins. In the preface Vignoli justified his book on early medieval coins, which, despite being ugly, were still very useful. He relied on these coins since authentic written documents justifying the pope's territorial power were lacking and opponents of the temporal power of the papacy therefore had an easy job drawing the papal claims to authority in doubt. The authenticity of coins, however, was above any suspicion. Vignoli's intention was to show that in the Early Middle Ages the Bishop of Rome had held the right of mintage, in an uninterrupted line of succession which spanned the Carolingian and Ottonian ages. This would prove that the popes had always enjoyed full temporal sovereignty in Rome. In fact, he considered Le Blanc to have been completely mistaken in some of his attributions of early medieval Roman coins to Carolingian rulers. In reality, the 'S. Petrus' on the reverse indicated that they were really minted under papal authority.⁶³ Vignoli's numismatic interpretations thus served to buttress papal claims to temporal authority.

Cuper thanked Vignoli politely for sending him a copy of the numismatic treatise. He agreed with Vignoli that Le Blanc's attributions had been faulty. However, Cuper gently but resolutely rejected Vignoli's conclusions. Even if coins had been minted on the pope's initiative rather than the emperor's, the fact that they had the emperor's face and name stamped onto them, suggested that the pope recognised the emperor's ultimate sovereignty.

That notwithstanding, I also think it is beyond doubt, that the Roman, then the Greek, and in the end the German emperors, as well as the kings of Italy, had the ultimate authority in the City of Rome, as the ancient historians testify, as well as those of your own community afterwards. And I would surmise that it was for no other reason that the Roman pontiffs put the names and the faces of the emperors on their coins.⁶⁴

Cuper realised that his answer might not be welcomed by his Italian friends. He anticipated as much in a letter to Mathurin Veyssière de La Croze (1661-1739), librarian to the King of Prussia:

⁶¹ François Le Blanc, *Dissertation historique sur quelques monnoyes de Charlemagne, de Louis le Débonnaire, de Lothaire, et leurs successeurs, frappées dans Rome. Par lesquelles on refute l'opinion de ceux qui prétendent, que ces Princes n'ont jamais eu aucune autorité dans cette ville, que du consentement des Papes*, Paris, J.-B. Coignard, 1689.

⁶² Le Blanc, *Dissertation historique*, cit., pp. 1-4, 72-74.

⁶³ Vignoli, *Antiquiores pontificum Romanorum denarii*, sig. a1ro-a6ro, pp. 7-17.

⁶⁴ G. Cuper to G. Vignoli, 29 October / 8 November 1709, KB ms. 72 G 23-1.

I do not think that this will please those in Rome, especially not the Pope, who honours me with his esteem, and who loves to read the letters which I send to the scholars of Rome and Italy [...] but for me the truth always has priority.⁶⁵

What followed was a polite but inconclusive debate between Cuper and Vignoli. The latter considered Cuper's arguments a mere rehearsal of the *communis opinio* concerning imperial sovereignty in Rome, which deserved adjustment in light of the new numismatic evidence. However, Vignoli died before a new edition of the *Antiquiores pontificum Romanorum denarii* was printed, and his intention to include part of his correspondence with Cuper in the edition was never realised.⁶⁶

The Vignoli-episode is the most poignant illustration of how one antiquarian issue – in this case the interpretation of numismatic features – had a very different import on either side of the correspondence. The appeal to coins, in the absence of reliable written documents, is typical of this period in which skepticism about historical texts drove scholars to search for solid evidence about the past in the form of material antiquities.⁶⁷ Vignoli partook of the 'antiquarian' turn in the study of the past, in the service of an acute political problem: the historical justification of the sovereignty of the popes in the Papal State. This issue which also involved the young medievalist Muratori – albeit in the enemy's camp. Vignoli was part of the curial machinery, and therefore directly touched by the issue of clerical authority, one of the key themes of the Early Enlightenment. In the Catholic context this issue led to discussions on the earliest history of the Papal State and early medieval history rather than on biblical matters, which is an important difference to anticlericalism in Northwestern Europe.⁶⁸ Thus for the Protestant Cuper, the discussion concerning the Carolingian coins was merely about numismatic virtuosity, offering an occasion to show his intellectual peers how well versed he was in the historical interpretation of coins. For the Catholic Vignoli it had a strong political significance.

Conclusion

The epistolary contacts of Gijsbert Cuper with scholars on the Italian peninsula examined above, first of all with the Florentine librarian Antonio Magliabechi, but also with Giusto Fontanini, Raffaele Fabretti, Giovanni Vignoli – all scholars active in one way or another at the Papal court –, create an impression of intellectual life on the Italian peninsula which was anything but stagnant. Even if the Italian scholars tended to be on the receiving end, eager to know what happened on the other side of the Alps rather than themselves producing scholarship which made an impact, at the very least the epistolary communication shows that Italians were eager to now and to follow intellectual developments in the rest of Europe. The circles emanating

⁶⁵ G. Cuper, *Lettres de Critique, D'histoire, de Littérature, Etc. Écrites À Divers Savans de l'Europe*, Justinus de Beyer (ed.), Amsterdam, H. du Sauzet and W. Smith, 1742, pp. 46-47.

⁶⁶ G. Vignoli to G. Cuper, 8 January 1710, KB ms. 72 G 23-1. The new edition was G. Vignoli, *Antiquiores pontificum Romanorum denarii olim in lucem editi*, B. Fioravanti (ed.), Roma, R. Bernabò, 1734; cf. G. Vignoli to G. Cuper, 20 December 1709 [i.e. 1710], KB ms. 72 G 23-1.

⁶⁷ A. Momigliano, 'Ancient History and the Antiquarian', in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 13 (1950), pp. 285-315; C. Borghero, *La certezza e la storia: cartesianesimo, pirronismo e conoscenza storica*, Milano, Franco Angeli, 1983; M. Völkel, 'Historischer Pyrrhonismus und Antiquarismus-Konzeption bei Arnaldo Momigliano', in: *Das achtzehnte Jahrhundert*, 31 (2007), pp. 179-190; I. Herklotz, 'Arnaldo Momigliano's "Ancient History and the Antiquarian": A Critical Review', in: P. Miller (ed.), *Momigliano and Antiquarianism: Foundations of the Modern Cultural Sciences*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2007, pp. 127-153.

⁶⁸ S.J. Barnett, *The Enlightenment and Religion: The Myths of Modernity*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2003, pp. 178-185.

from the *Accademia Fisicomatematica*, the scholars aggregating as the *Accademia dell’Arcadia*, as well as the networks responsible for the various versions of the *Giornale de’ Letterati*, all testify to a lively interest in debates across Europe. Despite the limited scope of their actual interests, some of their communications would feed into ground breaking projects of the eighteenth century, such as the aesthetical revolution of Johann Joachim Winkelmann, and the philosophical history of Giambattista Vico.

Ancient culture was the topic most present in these exchanges, as was to be expected from Cuper, ‘le plus savant homme de notre temps dans les antiquités’ as Leibniz characterised him.⁶⁹ The issues Cuper discussed with his Italian correspondents often concerned specific details related to classical history and antiquities. By examining the correspondence more closely we manage to see wider social and political implications of some of the issues broached, such as the marble relief of the Colonna family, or the pontifical coins of Vignoli. Local circumstances dictated the immediate interests inspiring the communications. Magliabechi hungered for up-to-date bibliographic information. Fabretti needed an outlet for his critique of Kircher’s iconography. Vignoli sought authoritative backing for his procurialist arguments against a representative of Gallican autonomy. Cuper strengthened his position as an acknowledged agent in the international circulation of antiquarian knowledge. Societal and political concerns could be kept at a distance relatively easily from this virtual community – in accordance with the characteristics considered as proper to the Republic of Letters.⁷⁰

Every participant thus made use of the exchanges to advance their own interests within their proper social contexts. The Italian correspondence of Cuper – of which we have merely scratched the surface – thus has the potential to show how single epistolary exchanges functioned differently in distinctive systems of knowledge management: a hub of the Republic of Letters located in the Dutch Republic, the court of the Grand Dukes in Florence, and the Papal court. Cuper used the novelties which came to his attention, as well as Italian appeals to his expertise, to his advantage in a competitive large-distance network of intellectual peers. Cuper’s Italian correspondents tended to work within more tight-knit, compact and hierarchical societies. Knowledge, politics and social standing were more heavily entangled at the courts of the Pope and the Grand Duke of Tuscany. Consequently, new scholarly input generated more complex and delicate interactions.

⁶⁹ G.W. Leibniz to L. Bourguet, December 1714, Leiden University Library ms. BPL 293 B, nr 8.

⁷⁰ A. Grafton, ‘A Sketch Map of a Lost Continent: The Republic of Letters’, in: *Republics of Letters*, 1 (2008), http://arcade.stanford.edu/rofl_issue/volume-1-issue-1, accessed 21 October 2015.

Keywords

Gijsbert Cuper (1644-1716), Antonio Magliabechi (1633-1714), Raffaele Fabretti (1618-1700), transnational correspondence, antiquarian scholarship

Jetze Touber wrote his doctoral thesis on the cult of the saints in Counter Reformation Rome, defended at the University of Groningen in 2009, published with Brill (Leiden 2014). Subsequently he has held research fellowships at Utrecht University, studying biblical criticism and antiquarianism in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Currently he is teaching at the Department of History at the University of Amsterdam.

Faculty of Humanities, University of Amsterdam
Spuistraat 134, 1012 VB
Amsterdam (Netherlands)
tjetze@gmail.com

RIASSUNTO

‘Sono lieto che Italia coltiva menti talmente squisite’

Gijsbert Cuper (1644-1716) e la vita intellettuale nella penisola italiana

I contatti epistolari e gli scambi culturali tra l'Italia e i paesi dell'Europa del Nord-ovest a cavallo tra Sei- e Settecento – anni di gran fermento intellettuale – rischiano di passare in secondo piano, rispetto al vivo interesse storiografico per gli sviluppi settentrionali di questo periodo, il cosiddetto ‘illuminismo precoce’. Il fascino esercitato dalle filosofie razionaliste, dalle attività scientifiche e dalla consapevolezza crescente del mondo d'oltremare ha soppiantato l'interessamento per gli scambi continui tra studiosi di ambo i lati delle Alpi. In questo articolo si percorrono alcuni episodi di tale scambio, concentrandosi sulla rete epistolare di Gijsbert Cuper (1644-1716), un antiquario olandese orgoglioso dei suoi contatti italiani. Dall'analisi emerge come Cuper e i suoi corrispondenti – tra cui Antonio Magliabechi (1633-1714) e Raffaele Fabretti (1618-1700) – si sforzavano di far circolare informazioni editoriali e antiquarie, nonostante i ritmi diversi della vita intellettuale nei loro rispettivi territori. Risulta allo stesso tempo che gli interessi di Cuper e dei suoi corrispondenti italiani divergevano tra loro. Bisogna tener presente il contesto culturale di ogni singolo partecipante a questi scambi epistolari, per capire come le informazioni editoriali e antiquarie agivano in modo diverso, a seconda dell'individuo che le adoperava.

Invisible Presence The Nuns' Choir at Santa Maria di Monteluca in Perugia

Julie Beckers

*'La sudetta copia fu di publica universale soddisfazione' 'Magra consolazione'*¹

With this entry in the chronicle of the Monastery of Santa Maria di Monteluca, abbess Maria Taccini welcomed, with some bitterness, the new altarpiece of the *Coronation of the Virgin*. The original altarpiece had been confiscated by the French during the Napoleonic invasion of the late eighteenth century, and the painting returned to the community of Perugian nuns in 1830 was a copy: a small consolation for the Raphael that, after Napoleon's defeat, was kept by the Pope in his ever-expanding Vatican collections.²

Raphael's altarpiece, originally commissioned by Abbess Battista Alfani in 1505, has since the nineteenth century onwards received ample scholarly attention, mostly because of the fame of its author and the extant complete contract for the work, not to mention the still unresolved question of the motivation for the division of its panels.³

The Poor Clares' struggle to obtain the altarpiece in the first place (it took over two decades to reach their church) and the failure to recover it in the nineteenth century, are critical aspects of its controversial history, but have remained on the

¹ *Memoriale di Monteluca: Cronaca del monastero delle Clarisse di Perugia dal 1448-1838*, ed. U. Nicolini, transcr. Sr. Lainati, Santa Maria degli Angeli, Porziuncola, 1983, p. 604 (in what follows as *Memoriale*). I would like to thank my supervisor Prof. Barbara Baert, Prof. Giovanna Casagrande, Emma Grootveld and the community of S.M. di Monteluca at S. Erminio, especially sister Monica Benedetta Umiker, for their advice during the writing of this paper.

² *Memoriale*, p. 587.

³ A.M. Sartore, "'Begun by Master Raphael': The Monteluca Coronation of the Virgin", in: *The Burlington Magazine* 153 (2010), p. 387. The information available in primary and secondary documents regarding this painting is extensive. For the original contract(s) see *Memoriale*, pp. 39, 86, 96, 103-104, 115, 127, 133, 149 and, p. 755. For the earliest writing on the painting, see U. Gnoli, 'Raffaello e la Incoronazione di Monteluca (nuovi documenti)', in: *Bollettino d'arte* 11 (1917), pp. 133-154. For the contract see J. Shearman, *Raphael in Early Modern Sources, 1483-1602*, London, Yale University Press, 2003, pp. 752-55. For the importance of the contract in relation to patronage see C. Gardner von Teuffel, 'Clerics and Contracts: Fra Angelico, Neroccio, Ghirlandaio and Others: Legal Procedures and Renaissance High Altarpieces in Central Italy', in: *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 62, 2 (1999), pp. 190-208. For an explanation of the division of the altarpiece to better accommodate the carrying of the work to Florence when Raphael moved there from Perugia later in the year 1505, T. Henry, 'Raphael's Siege of Perugia', in: *The Burlington Magazine* 146 (2004), pp. 745-748. For the specification of certain colours by the nuns of Monteluca, T. McGrath, 'Color and Exchange of Ideas between Patron and Artist in Renaissance Italy', in: *The Art Bulletin* 82 (2000), pp. 298-308. The most extensive bibliography was published by Shearman, *Raphael*, cit.

fringes of academic research. Nonetheless, the recurrent struggle provides an interesting insight into the Perugian community; the long awaited arrival of the painting in 1525 was the crowning achievement of both the advent of observance (strict adherence to the Franciscan rule) at Monteluca itself, and the success of its activities as a reforming convent in its own right. The subsequent loss of the painting to the French and the many efforts described in the chronicle to retrieve it display both the determination to regain what was rightfully theirs and an ultimate acceptance, albeit with regret, as hinted at by Taccini, of the control of the Papal authority that had governed these enclosed women since the founding of their order.⁴ The Raphael, at the centre of the altarpiece controversy, casts a looming shadow; one that Monteluca has had difficulty escaping. It has created an invisible boundary, preventing further and more thorough scholarly research on periods earlier than the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, periods that, when unwrapped, reveal a rich visual history, reaching back to the origins of the thirteenth-century Perugian convent.

This article, combining iconographical observations and a close reading of the Monteluca chronicle, an important primary document that was written from 1448 onwards,⁵ aims to take a first step in unwrapping this visual history, delving deeper into the contemplative, devotional and art historical past of a convent that has, since the mid thirteenth century, played a crucial role in Franciscan monastic life in Umbria.⁶ More generally, it seeks to contribute to an active body of research on

⁴ For the notion of the nuns as patrons, see Shearman, *Raphael*, cit., p. 752-55 and also Sartore, 'Begun by Master Raphael', cit., p. 387. For the efforts to retrieve the painting from the Vatican see *Memoriale*, p. 594, 602 and 604. Also mentioned by G. Briganti, 'Due Opere Pittoriche di Raffaello Sanzio e Notizie Storiche nelle Cronache delle Clarisse dell'Umbria', in: *Studi Francescani* 85 (1988), p. 84. The nuns requested the return of the painting in 1824 and were promised that the authorities would occupy themselves with the request. In 1830 they received an offer of three thousand scudi for the painting. The nuns refused. The answer was a new offer of one thousand scudi and a copy of the painting. The nuns, prompted by fear of losing everything, finally accepted the offer and the copy arrived at Monteluca on 18 August 1831. Although the nuns are mentioned as the patrons of the Raphael, none of the authors has examined the community as patrons of the arts.

⁵ In her book on conventual chronicles, Kate Lowe elaborates on the importance of the chronicle, in which conventual communities meticulously noted down their daily activities including financial matters, entries of novices, visitations, etc. K.J.P. Lowe, *Nuns' Chronicles and Convent Culture in Renaissance and Counter Reformation Italy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998.

⁶ For further reading on the façade and other Umbrian religious houses, such as S. Francesco al Prato, see: F. Grispo, 'Il Quadrellato Perugino nelle facciate gotiche delle chiese di Perugia', in: P. Messa and M.B. Umiker (eds.), *Non un grido, non un lamento: La soppressione del Monastero di Monteluca di Perugia* [Atti della V giornata di studio sull'osservanza Franciscana al femminile, 12 maggio 2010 Monastero Clarisse S. Maria di Monteluca in S. Erminio, Perugia], Assisi, Edizione Porziuncola, 2011, pp. 127-134. Nuns have become a topic of great interest to scholars since the 1990s in various disciplines. Examples, by no means exhaustive are: J. Hamburger, *Nuns as Artists: The Visual Culture of a Medieval Convent*, London, University of California Press, 1997; J. Hamburger and S. Marti (eds.), *Crown and Veil: Female Monasticism from the Fifth to the Fifteenth Centuries*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2008; K.J.P. Lowe, *Nuns' Chronicles and Convent Culture in Renaissance and Counter Reformation Italy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998; A. Thomas, *Art and Piety in the Female Religious Communities of Renaissance Italy: Iconography, Space and Religious Women's Perspective*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003; G. Zarri, *Women and Faith: Catholic Religious Life in Italy from Late Antiquity to the Present*, Cambridge (MA), Harvard University Press, 1999; C. van Wyhe, *Female Monasticism in Early Modern Europe: An Interdisciplinary View*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2008. For the Poor Clares in particular, see the work by Caroline Bruzelius, among others, C. Bruzelius, 'Nuns in Space: Strict Enclosure and the Architecture of the Clarisses in the Thirteenth Century', in I. Peterson (ed.), *Clare of Assisi: A Medieval and Modern Woman*, St. Bonaventure, Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, 1993, pp. 53-74.

monastic life and the arts, whilst looking further than the over-studied centres of Rome, Venice and Florence.⁷

The focus of this paper lies beyond the medieval façade of Monteluce, in the space that used to function as the nuns' choir. This space, I will argue, more than any other within the convent, should be seen as a post-reform area further encouraging *clausura*. The fresco cycle in the choir, which precedes the Reform of 1448, exemplifies how the devotional mission of the Clares is mirrored not only in the texts they read, but also in the pictorial art embellishing their space of religious practice. The continuity of space and practice was further enhanced by adaptations after the Reform, which demonstrate how devotional developments were also followed by architectural modifications.

Reading and Seeing: The Nuns' Choir at Santa Maria di Monteluce, 1330s-1451

Invisible yet present, the choir, where sacred and lay were separated by no more than a wall, presented the weakest link in terms of accessibility to the inner realm of the convent. The nuns, who gathered here for Divine Office, would experience a highpoint in their daily devotions by observing the elevated host, at times seen or unseen, through an opening in the altar wall. In turn, the lay audience in search of weekly salvation would be accompanied in their contemplation by the beautiful singing voices from within the choir. Music constituted both an act of prayer for these devout women and an element of prestige: musical skills were valuable to convents in that they could profoundly influence the urban interest in religious houses, attracting patronage and raising the bar when it came to the price of dowries for entry.⁸ Because of the almost shared experience of lay and sacred, it was paramount that the choir, of all places within the internal layout of the conventual space, emphasised the nuns' identity as 'Brides of Christ', not only through spiritual texts that were read and sung, but also through images, as will briefly be explored below.

The *Coro delle monache* at Monteluce appears as a retro-choir, found also at the early fourteenth-century grand convent of S. Chiara in Naples, behind the outer church and the shared altar wall. The choir at Monteluce is about one third of the size of the lay church, and functioned as a gathering place for the nuns at least since the fourteenth century.⁹

In the frescoes on the south wall of the choir space, packed against the East wall, a number of saints considered important to the Franciscan faith can be recognized, accompanied by miniature Poor Clares. Here, compassionate and affective devotion to the passion of Christ and the commitment to lead a simple, poor life is essential. Among others SS. Francis, Anthony Abbott, John the Baptist and Michael remind us of the profound messages religious women may have had to contemplate during the hour of Divine Office - issues of death, sin, rebirth, and

⁷ The recent conference 'Sister Act: Female Monasticism and the Arts across Europe, ca. 1250-1550' held at the Courtauld (London, 13-14 March 2015) attests to the continued interest in this particular field. Visual culture denotes both the traditional tripartite of painting, sculpture and architecture, and decorative arts.

⁸ S. Evangelisti, *Nuns, A History of Convent Life, 1450-1700*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007, p. 133. On religious women as witnessing or being kept by seeing the elevated host: C. Bruzelius, 'Queen Sancia of Mallorca and the Convent Church of Sta. Chiara in Naples', *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 40 (1995), p. 80. On music in the convent: C. Monson, *Disembodied Voices: Music and Culture in an Early Modern Italian Convent*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1995. I further elaborate on this significant topic in my doctoral thesis.

⁹ The outer church of Santa Maria di Monteluce is 34 meters long, 12,65 meters wide and 11,80 meters high, see Messa and Umiker, *Non un grido*, cit., p. 127.

humility. The female martyrs, SS Catherine and Euphemia, connect the Poor Clare community of Monteluce to ancient saints, martyrs from the earliest centuries of Christianity. They offered an example to the community but also a certain prestige.

The reason for the inclusion of an Annunciation scene in the set of frescoes is evident, as Mary befits the community of Monteluce, dedicated to the Virgin, and was at the centre of an elaborate civic procession that gathered at the church each year on the fifteenth of August on the Feast of the Assumption.¹⁰ The choir space is decorated on the back of the altar wall with many other embellishments, but it is worth mentioning a poignant fresco of the apt Saint Clare guarding her flock, juxtaposed with a large central crucifixion, likely accompanied by figures at the foot of the cross and an Assumption at the right side of the crucifixion.

These fourteenth-century frescoes in the nuns' choir at Monteluce were certainly there before the reform of the fifteenth century. They were preserved during and after the Reform, reflecting the importance these frescoes had in this space for the contemplative nuns.

Ugolino Nicolini has shown that the space had a number of functions, serving, among others, as a scriptorium in the later fifteenth century, thus underlining the important presence of text in spaces of devotional practice.¹¹ The scribal qualities of several nuns are apparent throughout the Monteluce chronicle, especially the skilful talents of Sr. Battista Alfani, abbess of Monteluce (who was elected multiple times between 1491 and 1506). Battista wrote one Legend of Saint Clare with which she 'consoled' the sisters, as noted in the chronicle.¹² Battista's activities indicate what was at stake in a reformed community: through her writing she wanted to bring the sisters together and create unity at Monteluce. The inventory of documents taken away after the convent had been suppressed in the 1860s, found in the chronicle of Monteluce, counts thirty-nine folios containing spiritual and devotional volumes by authors such as the Franciscan Bernardino of Siena (1380-1444), Angela of Foligno (1248-1309), Ubertino of Casale (1259-1329) and Catherine of Bologna (1413-1463), as well as copies of work by Gregory the Great (540-604), and, among others, a prayer manual for the 'use of the sisters' dated to the fifteenth century.¹³ It is more than plausible that these treatises would have been used, in combination with an observance of the pictorial programme, to enhance contemplation and affective devotion within the choral area.¹⁴

As noted, text and image could illuminate the devotional behaviour of conventual women. One example of such text and image juxtapositions as an aid to the nuns' affective devotion could be derived from a reading of, for example, da

¹⁰ For the iconography: G. Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1954; For the procession: J.M. Wood, *Women, Art and Spirituality: The Poor Clares of Early Modern Italy*, Cambridge, 1996, Cambridge University Press, p. 106. A complete list of the frescoes on the South wall reads from left to right: Saint Francis receiving the stigmata, Saint Anthony Abbot, Saint Michael the Archangel, Saint John the Baptist, Saint Catherine of Alexandria, Saint Euphemia, Saint Eustace, and an Annunciation scene. On the back of the altar wall: a Deacon Saint, a Bishop Saint, Saint Clare and her flock, an Assumption of the Virgin with Christ, and what appears to be a Crucifixion. The frescoes have been tentatively dated by Todini, who attributes them to the Maestro dei Dossali di Subiaco; F. Todini, *La pittura umbra del Duecento al primo Cinquecento* vol I, Milan, Longanesi, 1989, p. 135.

¹¹ U. Nicolini, 'I Minori Osservanti di Monteripido e la scriptorium delle Clarisse di Perugia nei secoli XV e XVI', in: *Picenum Seraphicum* 9 (1971), p.120.

¹² *Memoriale*, p. 124.

¹³ *Ivi*, XXVII.

¹⁴ For the meaning of affective contemplation, S. McNamer, *Affective Meditation and the Invention of Medieval Compassion*, Pennsylvania, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010.

Casale's *Arbor Vitae*, present in Monteluca's library, in which the Franciscan author offers graphic descriptions of Christ's torn body and offers the figure of the Virgin as a model for the reader's response: 'Christ (remained) naked in full sight of the crowd and those who mocked him; as naked as he was when he came forth from the Virgin's womb'. The Virgin's suffering, in seeing her son, is used to provoke a literal, compassionate response from the reader, in this case a religious woman. As a Poor Clare, the nun was a spouse of Christ especially vulnerable to being moved by Christ's shaming.¹⁵ In 'partaking' in the Virgin's emotive response, the reader almost 'steps' into the scene through image and text. At Monteluca, the Virgin's image is pictorially represented in the choir on at least two occasions: in the Annunciation scene and the Assumption scene at the back of the altar wall. It is likely she also features at the foot of the cross, where she would allude to strong Marian devotion at Monteluca, but more research needs to be done to ascertain this.

Another example can be found in *On the Perfection of Life, addressed to Sisters*, written by the renowned thirteenth-century Franciscan theologian, Saint Bonaventure. Probably written at the request of a Poor Clare (likely Isabella, sister of Louis IX and abbess of the convent of Longchamp), the *Perfection* boasts scenes of the Passion, a Franciscan favourite, which are graphic. These scenes also introduce some of the images, key for the Poor Clares, which cross the threshold of the textual and the pictorial: the cross, the wood and the wounds of Christ. The reader is urged to vividly image the crucifixion and to identify with the suffering Christ with full emotional effort:

There (imaginatively at the foot of the cross) transformed into Christ by your burning love for the Crucified, pierced by the nails of the fear of God, wounded by the spear of super abounding Love, transfixed by the sword of intimate compassion, seek nothing, desire nothing, wish for no consolation, other than to be able to die with Christ on the cross.¹⁶

The pictorial division between the frescoes in fictive architectural barriers seen in the nuns' choir at Monteluca naturally resulted in a cartoon-like 'reading' of these images as 'scenes' in conjunction with the nun's consultation of the above mentioned literature.¹⁷ Text, image and devotion, as an important feature of Clarissan religious space, constitute a perfect circle in the choir of Monteluca.

Reforming the Poor Ladies: Architecture in Times of Clausura

This continuity between space and devotion in Monteluca evolved along with the changing vision of worship in the convent, and was reinforced during the reform of 1448. Reform of convents occurred for a variety of reasons. Corrupt abbesses, general misconduct, and lax behaviour were all factors, but equally reform could be deemed necessary due to a breach of *clausura*, the perpetual enclosure of all nuns across the Latin Church as ordained by Boniface VIII in 1298. Recent and enticing scholarship such as Monson's *Nuns Behaving Badly*, examines the 'outrageous' behaviour of a few Italian communities and gives a good impression of the scandals

¹⁵ McNamer, *Affective Meditation*, cit.; For the *Arbor Vitae*, see: U. da Casale, *Arbor Vitae Crucifixae Jesu*, transl. C.T. Davis, Turin, Bottega d'Erasmus, 1961.

¹⁶ S. Bonaventura, *On the Perfection of Life, Addressed to Sisters*, in: *The Works of Bonaventure*, transl. J. De Vink, Paterson, St Anthony Guild Press, 1960, pp. 209-255; Also quoted in McNamer, *Affective Meditation*, cit., p. 91.

¹⁷ A. Hoch, 'The "Passion" Cycle: Images to Contemplate and Imitate amid Clarissan Clausura', in: J. Elliott and C. Warr (eds.), *The Church of Santa Maria Donna Regina: Art, Iconography and Patronage in Fourteenth-Century Naples*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2004, pp. 129-153.

to which reforms would have been a natural reaction.¹⁸ At Santa Maria di Monteluca, however, reform was a more timid venture and seemingly not connected to scandal. The convent, deemed in need of change, was reformed in 1448, although the word scandal, as in some other communities, was never mentioned.

At Monteluca, it is likely that the convent was reformed because of a wish to return to the roots of the nuns' faith, in particular to the form of life that their founder, Santa Chiara, had envisioned for her 'poor ladies' as early as 1253.¹⁹ It could equally be argued that the reform at Monteluca took place in order to acquire the prestige that such reforms held for a community that since 1218 had governed much of the female religious life in Perugia. Additionally Monteluca, akin to a second Poor Clare motherhouse in the capital of the region, had attracted the pious attention of John of Capistrano, the charismatic Franciscan preacher who had initiated a wave of Franciscan reform, which commenced in Foligno and steadily made its way through Umbria in the fifteenth century.²⁰

Although primary documents on the Reform of 1448 remain scarce, we can measure the impact of the reform by exploring three historical elements. Firstly, Monteluca would become one of the great reformers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, sending off a number of their own flock to reform communities across the peninsula, which could point to Monteluca's pivotal and exemplary model. Secondly, some of the consequences and implications of the reform are displayed in the Monteluca chronicle, highlighting the internal concern for reflection on its importance. Thirdly, the reform was followed by an immediate reorganisation of the internal architecture of Monteluca, altered shortly after 1448 in order to better accommodate *clausura*.

After her arrival at Monteluca, the reforming abbess Margherita da Sulmona, accompanied by a number of other sisters such as the literary Cecilia Coppoli, was given the keys and seal of the convent and embarked on a major internal reform. This reorganisation would have a profound effect on the spatial and private existence of the Perugian nuns. Da Sulmona was well placed to carry out this type of project: she was the foundress and first abbess of Santa Lucia in Foligno, and would, after her term as abbess of Monteluca, move onto S. Cosimato in Rome, where she equally reformed that community of Poor Clares.²¹ Da Sulmona occupied herself with promoting the idea of community over individuality to her new flock. She pointed out to the reformed community that sleeping in a shared environment was necessary to live according to the rule of the order. Several small windows, still visible on the outside of the convent, between the cloister and the piazza, could be markers of what were originally single cells, as that external part of the thirteenth-century convent, albeit renovated in 1451, remains unaltered. This area was most probably knocked through into one continuous dormitory space, presumably with a separate area for the abbess, as the rule also dictated.²² Similarly the abbess instructed the sisters to dismantle several partitions in their garden. Rather than nuns 'owning'

¹⁸ C. Monson, *Nuns Behaving Badly: Tales of Music, Magic, Art and Arson in the Convents of Italy*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 2010.

¹⁹ L.S. Knox, *Creating Clare of Assisi: Female Franciscan Identities in Later Medieval Italy*, Leiden, Brill, 2008, pp. 19-35.

²⁰ For the institutional history of Santa Maria di Monteluca: P. Höhler, 'Il Monastero delle Clarisse di Monteluca', in: R. Rusconi (ed.), *Il movimento religioso femminile in Umbria nei secoli VIII-XIV*, Perugia, Regione dell'Umbria, 1984, pp. 61-82; and also *Memoriale*, pp. 9-22.

²¹ A.E. Scandella (ed.), *Ricordanze del Monastero di S. Lucia in Foligno (Cronache 1424-1786)*, Assisi, Porziuncola, 1987, p. 5-6.

²² *Memoriale*, p. 9. Also see Messa and Umiker, *Non un grido*, cit., p. 129.

separate plots of land to cultivate their own produce, the abbess wanted to achieve a community in its daily labours and considered a communal garden another expression of this unity.²³

Many other changes noted in the chronicle create a clear image of the spatial divides that regulated relationships between 'us' and 'them', the 'inside' and the 'outside': the installing of grilles, specifically 'a small and round one' in the confessional area (1451-1453) and a grille with window in the choir (1509) so the nuns 'could see the Holy Sacrament' elevated by the priest behind the altar in the lay church; wheels, or *ruote*, mentioned as, for example, 'a small one in the confessional chapel controlled by the bishop' (1451-1453), for exchanging goods between the sacred world of the nuns and the earthly world outside.²⁴ These descriptions reflect a control of relationships that were framed by clausura.

Nowhere else is this division more clearly felt as in the nuns' choir, where the community, in the case of the Poor Clares and taking local variations into account, would gather to celebrate the Divine Office up to nine times a day. Several scholars have pointed to the symbolic importance of architectural division in clausura, which enhances the idea of bodily preservation. Dawn Hayes has eloquently described this division by opposing images of sacred versus earthly, as the inside of the nuns' choir contains the sacred bodies of the virgin nuns, whilst the outside contains the lay church as comprised of the sexual bodies of lay worshippers.²⁵ Caroline Bruzelius, in her discussion of thirteenth-century Poor Clare communities, speaks of the danger of the 'permeability of the female body', a body that was, in essence, considered as fragile and little able to 'manage a wide range of stimuli'. The need for bodily enclosure of religious women was therefore clear: in order to be perceived as 'sacred', nuns required control and supervision in an enclosed space.²⁶ This controlled built space could signify the female body itself. The relationship between body and architectural openings had been explored by Jerome, who, as Bruzelius mentions, 'refers to the five senses as the windows through which vice has access to the soul'.²⁷

Helen Hills equally reminds us that the architecture of enclosure could function as a metaphor for the performance of the virginal bodies that were hidden beyond the outsider's view. Architecture represents behaviour, Hills argues; as such the penetration of the enclosure would effectively signify the penetration of the nuns' body. Hills quotes Mary Douglas in her argument, stating that 'we should expect the orifices of the body to symbolize its specifically vulnerable points. [...] The same holds true for architecture'.²⁸ Portals, the heavy wooden doors at the front of the convents, the grille in the *parlatoria*, the *ruote* through which goods were exchanged highlight the need, and probably desire, for the convent to retain contact with the

²³ Ivi, pp. 9-10

²⁴ For the grilles in the chronicle of Monteluce; *Memoriale*, p. 16, 96, 107, 120, 128. For the doors, p. 328, 343 and the *ruote*, p. 16 and p. 251.

²⁵ D.M. Hayes, *Body and Sacred Place in Medieval Europe, 1100-1389*, London, Routledge, 2003, pp. 18-23.

²⁶ Bruzelius, *Nuns in Space*, cit., p. 68.

²⁷ Ivi, p. 69; For the female body in terms of architecture, Bruzelius quotes R.H. Bloch, *Medieval Misogyny and the Invention of Western Romantic Love*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1991, p. 32.

²⁸ H. Hills, *Invisible City: The Architecture of Devotion in Seventeenth-Century Neapolitan Convents*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 166; for Douglas, who was quoted by Hills: M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, London, Routledge, 1966, p. 121. Also see C. Bruzelius 'Hearing is Believing: Clarissan Architecture, ca. 1213-1340', *Gesta* 31/2 (1992), pp. 83-91.

outside world. These orifices through which legitimate parties could enter were controlled by an architecture that focused on the elements symbolic of enclosure.²⁹ Although the separation of the choir was already common in medieval monastic churches, in this case it seems to respond to a particular attention for bodily reform in the fifteenth century.

This is, in short, an architecture of bodily imprisonment.³⁰ It equally served the male authorities, always on the look out for 'scandal', since the architecture enclosed and guaranteed, as it were, the sexual fidelity of nuns.³¹ The purity of the community was necessary to guarantee the continuing prestige of Perugia's civic elite such as the Alfani, Degli Oddi and Baglioni families, all of whom sent their daughters to Monteluce during its long history. It should equally be mentioned, as Marilyn Dunn has recently argued, that the inside/outside division was also an issue for visitors or viewers from the outside. The public or lay church represented the space between the cloister and the secular world. The art and architecture of this space, as Dunn explains, served to represent the public face of the convent. Metaphorically, the nuns, who were hidden from view, were present in the fabric of the lay church through commissions made by them, such as a Sacrament tabernacle from the Florentine sculptor Francesco di Simone Ferrucci.³² This tabernacle, together with a number of other object commissions ranging from reliquaries to mantles for Madonna statues, likely relate to the 1448 reform as well, representing change, as it were, to the civic community and the lay perspective. Reform hereby was not merely internally experienced but also externally perceived through the altered visual reality of the convent's appearance.³³

Returning finally to the commission that symbolises Monteluce in the most elaborate manner, we find again the image of the Coronation of the Virgin by Raphael. The Coronation, a celebratory subject for a conventual high altar, praises Mary as the Queen of Heaven and the pure Bride of Christ. The landscape below the crowning scene reminds us of the green belt of Italy that is Umbria. On the fifteenth of August every year at the Feast of the Assumption, the high altar of Monteluce reflects the abundance of flowers also found in the sarcophagus depicted by Raphael. The embellishments of the outer church in which the Assumption is the main 'actor' promote an image of the Virgin as 'Bride, Mother and Spouse', and so the outlook of the outer church becomes an expression of the ideology of the order of Poor Clares, Virgins consecrated to God's service and devoted both to Our Lady and their founder, Saint Clare.³⁴

And yet, when examining Monteluce beyond 'the' Raphael, a wealth of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century information can be uncovered, complementing current scholarship on female religiosity on the Italian peninsula in interesting ways. The combination of text, image and devotion, as well as the implications of the ideology of reform and clausura, have gained a physical form in the architectural fabric of Monteluce post 1448. As I have attempted to show, the complexity and art

²⁹ Hills, *Invisible City*, cit., p. 166

³⁰ *Memoriale*, p. 13.

³¹ R. Dressler, 'Gender as Spectacle and Construct: The Gyverney Effigies at St. Mary's Church, Limington', in: *Different Vision a Journal of New Perspectives on Medieval Art* 1 (2008), pp. 1-24.

³² M. Dunn, 'Invisibilia per visibilia: Roman Nuns, Art Patronage and the Construction of Identity', in: K. McIver (ed.), *Wives, Widows, Mistresses and Nuns in Early Modern Italy: Making the Invisible Visible through Art and Patronage*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2012, pp. 182-183

³³ For commissioned objects at Monteluce: *Memoriale*, pp. 330, 108, 167, 177, 201, 147.

³⁴ Wood, 'Women and Art', cit., p. 106.

historical wealth of this community has remained 'covered' by its principal masterpiece for too long.

Keywords

Nuns, choir, Late Medieval, Italy, devotion

Julie Beckers left Belgium in 2006 for the UK to focus on a degree in History of Art and Visual Culture, which she obtained in 2010 from the University of Oxford. Her interests focus on Late Medieval and Early Modern Culture in Europe. Her thesis in Oxford examined fourteenth-century Florentine fresco cycles in San Miniato al Monto. She has a key interest in women and visual culture, historiography and iconography. She is currently working toward a PhD on female devotion and the visual arts in fifteenth century central Italy. She also writes for *Studio Art International*, a New York based magazine that produces exhibition and literary reviews.

University of Leuven
Blijde Inkomststraat 21-3307
3000 Leuven
Belgium
j.beckers@wolfson.oxon.org

RIASSUNTO

Invisibile presenza

Il Coro delle Monache della Santa Maria di Monteluca a Perugia

Il presente articolo esplora il passato contemplativo, devozionale e storico-artistico delle Clarisse di Santa Maria di Monteluca a Perugia. La prestigiosa comunità in cima al monte è spesso stata menzionata alla luce del quadro 'La Coronazione della Vergine' di Raffaello. Tuttavia, questo *tour de force* artistico a parte, Monteluca è stato poco studiato dagli storici, sia nella sua qualità di principale riformatore quattrocentesco di monasteri femminili nella penisola italiana che per quanto riguarda la sua cultura visiva anteriore. Il presente articolo esaminerà brevemente le fonti testuali usate nella contemplazione quotidiana delle suore di Monteluca in giustapposizione con gli affreschi trecenteschi, finora trascurati. Nella seconda parte dell'articolo è studiata la concezione del coro del monastero alla luce dell'idea di clausura, la quale fu implementata ulteriormente nell'architettura dell'edificio dopo la riforma del 1448.



Fig. 1 Church of Santa Maria di Monteluca, 2014, image by author, Perugia.

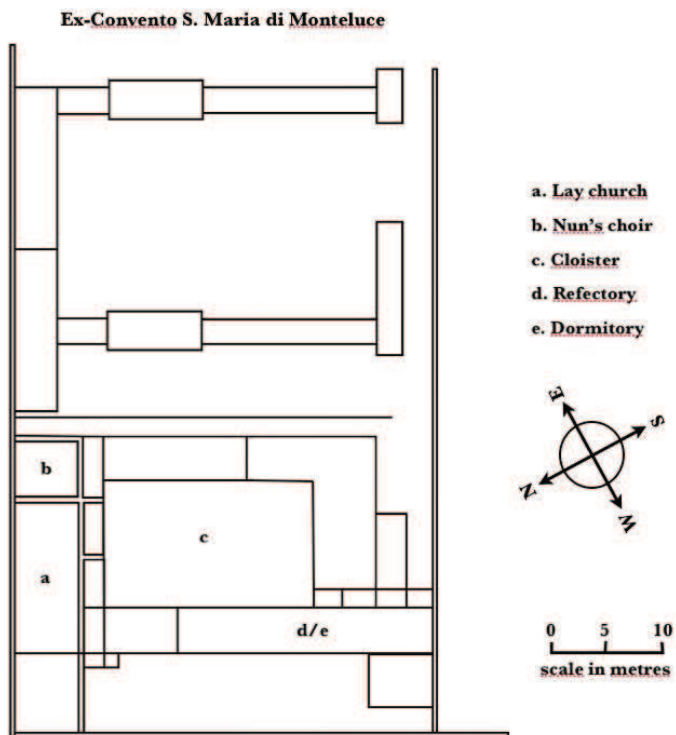


Fig. 2 Map of former convent of Santa Maria di Monteluca, 2014, plan by author, Perugia.



Fig. 3 Perugian School, Saint Anthony Abbott with a Poor Clare, c.1330-1350, fresco, Perugia/Santa Maria di Montelucente.



Fig. 4 Perugian school, Saint Catherine of Alexandria, c. 1330-1350, fresco, Perugia/Santa Maria di Montelucente.

Seborga / Prunetti: storie operaie a confronto nell'Italia del secondo dopoguerra

Claudio Panella

Oltre cinquant'anni separano la pubblicazione de *Gli innocenti* (1961) di Guido Hess Seborga da quella di *Amianto. Una storia operaia* (2012)¹ di Alberto Prunetti. I due scrittori appartengono a generazioni distanti e hanno anche un diverso statuto di 'testimoni-auctores'² in relazione ai fatti narrati: il primo raccolse da chi l'aveva vissuta le cronache della grave crisi siderurgica degli anni Cinquanta a Savona, il secondo ha ricostruito la vita del proprio stesso padre morto nel 2004. Le opere di Seborga e Prunetti si basano però sull'intento transitivo comune di raccontare storie ai cui protagonisti – vittime innocenti di una ristrutturazione industriale decisa dall'alto o dell'amianto respirato in una vita di lavoro – mancò quella possibilità di parola e di denuncia di cui entrambi gli autori si sono invece fatti carico.

Guido Hess nacque a Torino nel 1909 da una famiglia di origini tedesche (discendente di Moses Hess, ammirato dal giovane Marx) e si formò negli ambienti antifascisti cittadini al fianco dei compagni di scuola Norberto Bobbio, Cesare Pavese, Leone Ginzburg e Giulio Einaudi. Dopo avere viaggiato e lavorato per l'Europa, negli anni Trenta esordì come poeta e cronista iniziando con la fine della seconda guerra mondiale a farsi chiamare Seborga in omaggio all'omonima cittadina della Liguria, una regione che molto amava e in cui ambientò quasi tutte le sue opere. Col nome d'arte firmò i primi due libri editi da Mondadori, *L'uomo di Camporosso* (1948) e *Il figlio di Caino* (1949), un romanzo in prosa e uno in versi che lasciò la critica italiana del tempo stupita e spaesata. Se questi testi erano dedicati alla presa di coscienza antifascista e alla lotta di Liberazione di alcuni personaggi di lavoratori liguri, i successivi *Amori capitali* (1959), il cui primo titolo era *Morte d'Europa*, *Gli innocenti* (1961) ed *Ergastolo* (1963) raccontano invece la crisi degli ideali resistenziali nell'Italia degli anni Cinquanta.

Gli innocenti è un romanzo corale che ha per protagonisti Matteo e la sua squadra di operai dell'Ilva di Savona in lotta per non restare senza lavoro contro un antagonista 'astratto' ma implacabile, il temuto Piano Schuman cui l'Italia aderì nel 1950 e che riorganizzava la produzione europea di carbone e acciaio. Sugli obsoleti impianti savonesi gravava inoltre il piano di razionalizzazione degli stabilimenti della Finsider (di cui l'Ilva era parte) voluto dal presidente Oscar Sinigaglia, che ne

¹ G. Seborga, *Gli innocenti*, Milano, Ceschina, 1961 poi Savona, Sabatelli, 2006; A. Prunetti, *Amianto. Una storia operaia*, Milano, Agenzia X, 2012 poi Roma, Alegre, 2014. Nel testo si citano le ultime edizioni di entrambi i volumi.

² Cfr. la distinzione, ripresa da Agamben, tra testimoni-*superstites* e testimoni-*auctores* proposta da B. Manetti, 'Esperienze che non sono la mia. Vissuto dell'io e memoria dell'altro in Helena Janeczek e Andrea Bajani', in *CoSMo*, I, 1 (2012), pp. 137-143.

prevedeva il ridimensionamento a vantaggio di quelli di Cornigliano, Bagnoli e Piombino e che influenzerà anche le sorti della famiglia Prunetti.

Infatti, Alberto Prunetti è nato proprio a Piombino il 16 luglio 1973, nello stesso giorno in cui suo padre era nato nel 1945, poche settimane dopo la fine della guerra, e questi, saldatore trasfertista sempre in viaggio di fabbrica in fabbrica, lavorò per un periodo anche in quella città. Da ragazzo, l'autore è invece cresciuto a Follonica dove c'era una fonderia Ilva definitivamente dismessa nel 1960, in modo analogo a quanto accadde a Savona, nei cui ex locali³ il futuro scrittore e traduttore ha studiato e giocato. Quando la madre gli rivela che è stato concepito a Casale Monferrato, sede della famigerata Eternit, Prunetti comprende di essere nato sotto il segno dell'"acciaio ascendente amianto"⁴ e iscrive così la sua stessa esistenza in una parabola che ha portato la classe operaia da una posizione di centralità nella società italiana all'emarginazione e all'annichilimento della sua forza conflittuale, fino all'annientamento definitivo simboleggiato dalla malattia ai polmoni e dalla morte del padre.

Amianto è quindi 'una storia operaia' che coinvolge diverse generazioni di lavoratori italiani successive a quella dei personaggi di Seborga. Per questi ultimi si potrebbe citare il quindicesimo verso della nota poesia *Una visita in fabbrica* di Vittorio Sereni che evocava una voce 'operaia, nella fase calante' riferendosi proprio all'affievolirsi dell'empito rivoluzionario di metà anni Cinquanta. La generazione del padre di Prunetti, Renato, operaio tubista orgoglioso del suo mestiere, trovò invece negli anni Sessanta e Settanta una rinnovata solidarietà di classe e un maggiore potere contrattuale, andati però nuovamente peggiorando negli Ottanta al punto da costringere Renato stesso a lavorare con la Partita Iva (trappola dell'auto-imprenditorialità oggi quanto mai diffusa). La generazione di Alberto è infine quella dei lavoratori intellettuali precari di oggi, non in grado di ricomporsi in classe a causa della frammentazione dei lavori flessibili e inevitabilmente privi di illusioni come quella che qualsiasi lavoro nobilita l'uomo o quella che i figli staranno per forza meglio dei padri. D'altronde, come affermò Paolo Volponi, 'la crisi, poi, è la condizione perenne della supremazia capitalistica'.⁵

Se Seborga non avesse dato voce alle vite sfruttate e dismesse dall'Ilva savonese, l'unica traccia letteraria di quella vicenda sarebbe rimasta l'evocazione ambigua che ne fece Guido Piovene nel suo *Viaggio in Italia* (1957) ricordando 'il triste pittoresco di qualche sciopero veramente totale' e di essere 'stato accerchiato da un gruppo di donne stizzose che [gl]i esponevano con voce stridula le loro miserie' per poi concludere con fatalismo: 'Molti di quelli che erano scesi a Savona per finire nell'Ilva rifluiscono alle industrie delle colline'.⁶ Quelle colline e le industrie chimiche della valle di Vado, detta ne *Gli innocenti* 'anticamera del cimitero', appaiono il luogo emblematico della 'morte lenta'⁷ che è il destino di troppi lavoratori in un sistema di sfruttamento che Seborga accusa amaramente, chiosando alcuni episodi tra i più tragici del romanzo con parole quali: 'Ma tutto sembrava naturalissimo'.⁸

³ Cfr. Prunetti, *Amianto*, cit., pp. 29-34.

⁴ *Ivi*, p. 110.

⁵ P. Volponi in *Idem* e F. Leonetti, *Il leone e la volpe. Dialogo nell'inverno 1994*, Torino, Einaudi, 1995, p. 115.

⁶ G. Piovene, *Viaggio in Italia*, Milano, Mondadori, 1957, pp. 181-182.

⁷ Seborga, *Gli innocenti*, cit., pp. 76, 78.

⁸ *Ivi*, p. 144.

Se Prunetti non avesse scritto *Amianto* non avrebbe recuperato la memoria del padre, *working class hero* sconfitto ma pur sempre eroe al pari di Steve McQueen (che morì per la stessa malattia), rivelandoci al contempo con vivida chiarezza quale miseria hanno 'creato il capitale e i suoi armigeri, che hanno vinto lasciando la terra desolata e sciapa, perché il sale della terra eravamo noi, loro sono solo gli utilizzatori finali di un mondo al collasso'.⁹

Di seguito, si possono leggere l'incipit de *Gli Innocenti* e le ultime pagine di *Amianto*.

Intervista a Massimo Novelli

Abbiamo chiesto a Massimo Novelli, giornalista di la Repubblica e scrittore con la vocazione a far riemergere figure ed episodi dimenticati della storia italiana, dal Risorgimento alla Resistenza, come ha contribuito alla riscoperta di Guido Seborga cui ha dedicato L'uomo di Bordighera (2003).

Diversi anni fa, mentre pensavo a un libro sullo scrittore dimenticato Stefano Terra che ho poi concluso soltanto nel 2013, mi trovavo a San Fruttuoso dove c'è il Cristo negli abissi e mi è tornato in mente Guido Seborga, che aveva dedicato un testo teatrale a quella statua del Cristo nelle profondità marine. Di Seborga avevo scritto su *la Repubblica* in occasione della sua morte avvenuta nel 1990 perché al giornale ero uno dei pochi che si ricordava chi era. Mi sono quindi convinto della necessità di fare riemergere una figura importante di scrittore, partigiano e militante socialista precipitata nell'oblio. Così è nato *L'uomo di Bordighera* (2003), una vera e propria indagine 'poliziesca' per capire come fosse scomparso dalle storie letterarie un romanziere che aveva esordito nel dopoguerra per la prestigiosa Medusa degli Italiani di Mondadori con *L'uomo di Camporosso* (1948) e *Il figlio di Caino* (1949). Grazie al contributo della figlia Laura, di amici di Guido quali il compianto Francesco Biamonti, Giorgio Loreti e Ciacio Biancheri ho rimesso insieme i fili di questa esistenza in una biografia un po' singolare ma ben accolta dalla critica. Ho poi fatto ripubblicare da Spoon River i due romanzi succitati, *Morte d'Europa* con *Ergastolo* (2009) e il diario *Occhio folle occhio lucido* (2012): una volta tanto, in un panorama editoriale difficile come quello italiano, l'operazione è riuscita e di Seborga si è ricominciato a parlare sui giornali e sulle riviste.

Nel 2006 la Società Savonese di Storia Patria ha promosso una nuova edizione de Gli innocenti, premiato a Peagna come Miglior Libro Ligure dell'Anno. Come si può inquadrare questo romanzo nell'ambito della letteratura italiana d'ambientazione industriale?

Seborga aveva pensato e scritto *Gli innocenti* già alla metà degli anni Cinquanta per raccontare la crisi dell'industria siderurgica savonese giostrandola però sulle condizioni esistenziali individuali di ciascuno dei lavoratori protagonisti del romanzo, e precedendo quel filone in verità non molto longevo di letteratura così detta 'operaia' che lasciando ingiustamente da parte il libro di Guido si declinò in *Tempi stretti* (1957) e *Donnarumma all'assalto* (1959) di Ottieri e in *Memoriale* (1962) di Volponi. *Gli innocenti* resta l'unico romanzo italiano sulle lotte operaie di quel decennio, che sono narrate senza perdere di vista la condizione umana dei lavoratori. Il libro fu pubblicato nel 1961 dopo varie vicissitudini editoriali e il critico Giancarlo Vigorelli, a lungo presidente del Centro Nazionale di Studi Manzoniani e della Casa del Manzoni, scrisse sul settimanale *Tempo* che Seborga era rimasto forse l'unico a scrivere romanzi di 'rivolta sociale'. Effettivamente, il romanzo uscì nel

⁹ Prunetti, *Amianto*, cit., p. 164.

cuore del miracolo economico italiano ed era in controtendenza rispetto alle sorti presuntamente magnifiche e progressive della condizione operaia e dei lavoratori, presto disilluse da una lunga crisi che persiste tuttora. Era un romanzo coraggioso e attuale e lo è anche oggi.

Intervista ad Alberto Prunetti

*Tuo padre ha lavorato come trasfertista in tutt'Italia e anche in Liguria. Hai ritrovato ne *Gli innocenti di Seborga*, ambientato negli anni Cinquanta, qualche corrispondenza con le esperienze che Renato ebbe nei decenni successivi?*

So che Renato ha lavorato molto tra La Spezia, Genova e Savona. Raffinerie, acciaierie, centrali elettriche. Certe atmosfere di Seborga mi hanno aiutato a riflettere su come doveva essere quel mondo prima di un'accelerazione tecnologica che ha moltiplicato i profitti senza ridurre le nocività, i rischi per la salute e l'ambiente. Il cuore della condizione operaia è già descritto al meglio nelle pagine de *Gli innocenti*. È un grande merito: la vita degli operai spesso non arriva sulle pagine della narrativa italiana, mentre 'i colpevoli' dettano le proprie agiografie di grandi capitani d'industria.

Cos'hai scoperto del mondo del lavoro di oggi ripercorrendo tutta la storia di Renato e della sua generazione per scrivere il libro?

Sono due modi completamente diversi di lavorare. Oggi non è possibile apprezzare niente del lavoro che si fa perché bisogna intanto cercarsene un altro. Vi è però una continuità che sta nella causalità: è sconfiggendo le resistenze della generazione dei lavoratori come Renato che è stato possibile precarizzare la generazione di lavoratori successiva.

*Prima o dopo la scrittura di *Amianto* ti sei confrontato con altri autori di romanzi su padri operai rimasti vittima del lavoro quali Emanuele Tonon (*Il nemico*, 2009) e Stefano Valenti (*La fabbrica del panico*, 2013) o con le loro opere?*

Mi è piaciuto molto il libro di Stefano Valenti, che è uscito alcuni mesi dopo il mio. Con lui mi sono incontrato nel dopolavoro della Breda a Pistoia, quando entrambi i nostri libri erano usciti, anche se mi aveva scritto dopo aver letto il mio. È interessante come si stia formando una generazione di *hijos*, di figli di lavoratori stroncati dal lavoro nocivo che stanno raccontando il lavoro dei genitori nelle loro opere. Tra queste un posto di rilievo lo conserverei per *Ferriera* (2014) di Pia Valentinis, un *graphic novel* straordinario scritto dalla figlia di un operaio friulano.

Partendo da una storia familiare, il tuo romanzo riesce a trasmettere l'universalità del problema amianto. Sai se c'è una storia simile di patologie legate all'esposizione all'amianto in Olanda?

Ho percepito la gravità della situazione olandese parlando con alcuni esperti del settore.¹⁰ In Italia siamo vicini ad avere 3000 mesoteliomi all'anno su una popolazione di più di cinquanta milioni di abitanti. In Olanda ci sono circa 1500 mesoteliomi all'anno su una popolazione di circa sedici milioni. Il rapporto tra mesotelioma e tumore polmonare è di 1:3. Le conclusioni sono evidenti. C'è un grosso problema con l'asbesto in Olanda, una situazione grave quanto quella italiana. Assieme a Inghilterra e Belgio, l'Olanda è uno dei paesi più problematici in Europa.

¹⁰ Alberto Prunetti ringrazia Yvonne Waterman per le informazioni sulla situazione olandese delle patologie legate all'amianto.

Temo che il senso comune però non sia molto informato al riguardo. Gli attivisti dovrebbero lanciare delle campagne, a partire proprio dalla memoria delle vittime.

Claudio Panella è dottore di ricerca in Letterature e Culture Comparete e docente a contratto di Italiano presso l'Università degli Studi di Torino.¹¹ Si occupa prevalentemente di letteratura italiana e francese del Novecento. È autore con Stefano Tubia del volume *Pistoia in parole* (ETS, 2013), edito nella collana 'Città firmate' curata da Alba Andreini, e ha pubblicato numerosi saggi in volume e in rivista sulle interazioni tra la parola e le arti visive, sulla rappresentazione letteraria del paesaggio e della città e su quella del mondo del lavoro industriale e post-industriale.

Corso Galileo Ferraris 69
10128, Torino (Italia)
claudio.panella@unito.it

¹¹ Ad aprile del 2015 la sede della Scuola di Scienze Umanistiche dell'Università di Torino è stata chiusa per la sospetta presenza di amianto nell'edificio. Non sarà riaperta per intero almeno fino alla fine del 2016. In Piemonte sono stati ufficialmente censiti circa 125000 interventi di bonifica necessari per eliminare l'amianto dal territorio regionale, ma mancano i fondi per realizzarli.

Seborga en Prunetti: noot van de vertaler

Dennis Smit

Het idee om in deze rubriek een fragment uit *Gli innocenti* van Guido Seborga naast een fragment uit *Amianto. Una storia operaia* van Alberto Prunetti te plaatsen, is afkomstig van de in Nederland woonachtige Ligurische auteur Marino Magliani, die voor de vereniging Dante Alighieri de cursus ‘Scrittori contemporanei e i loro maestri’ heeft opgezet, waarin hij het werk van een hedendaagse schrijver vergelijkt met dat van een overleden auteur aan wie de eerste schatplichtig is.

Uit *Gli innocenti* is het begin gekozen, omdat het meteen de toon zet. We maken kennis met vermoeide, soms zelfs verminkte arbeiders in een treurigstemmende omgeving: fabrieken als grotten langs een ‘costa brulla, severa’ met ‘casoni grigi e tristi’ waar het daglicht goed verstopt is. Versleten blauwe kielen en een glimp van de hemel zorgen nog voor een beetje kleur. Ondanks de harde omstandigheden is Matteo vergroeid met zijn werk en vervult het hem met trots; op het arbeidsethos van zijn collega’s en hem is niets aan te merken. Meteen wordt een van de bedreigingen van hun bestaan aangestipt: het Schumanplan, de voorbode van de Europese Gemeenschap voor Kolen en Staal.

Seborga bedient zich in overeenstemming met het milieu waarin het boek zich afspeelt van een alledaags, beschrijvend taalgebruik zonder franje. Het taalgebruik leverde over het algemeen geen al te grote vertaalproblemen op; wel vroeg ik me af wat een ‘rigola di ghisa liquida’ is. Andrea Tullio Canobbio noemt het in zijn conceptartikel *La lingua nei romanzi di Seborga*¹ een sectorale, regionale term met de betekenis ‘canale di colaggio’, waardoor ik ben uitgekomen op de vertaling ‘gietskanaal’. De uitweiding over de ligging van Savona en de bebouwing langs de kust nodigde uit tot een zoektocht naar oude ansichten en foto’s op internet.

Uit *Amianto* is hier de ‘grande finale’ vertaald, een sleutelscène waarin de aan kanker overleden arbeider Renato - gemodelleerd naar Prunetti’s vader - samen met collega’s en Hollywoodacteur Steve McQueen op het filmdoek verschijnt om het heft postuum in eigen hand te nemen. Hier kunnen ze helden zijn, ongeschonden en in de kracht van hun leven. Daarbij blijkt dat het lot niemand ontziet: filmster McQueen, ooit arbeider, is net als Renato ten prooi gevallen aan asbest, alle luister van de filmwereld ten spijt. Net als bij Seborga wordt beschreven hoe het zware werk tot fysiek verval heeft geleid en ook hier is blauw (van de ogen en de overalls) de enige kleur die eruit springt tussen de grauwigheid. Prunetti illustreert de harde werkelijkheid met een reeks pasfoto’s van zijn vader door de jaren heen: de eens zo krachtig ogende jongeman ziet er na 35 jaar uitgeput en getekend uit, zijn mondhoeken hangen omlaag.

¹ A.T. Canobbio, *La lingua nei romanzi di Seborga*, Academia.edu, http://www.academia.edu/3750174/La_lingua_nei_romanzi_di_Seborga (29-06-2015).

Tijdens het vertalen vroeg ik me af waaruit het werk van de *catafalcatori* bestond die worden opgevoerd in de arbeidersstoet. Wat heeft asbest te maken met katafalken, verhogingen voor doodskisten? Google kwam op één treffer: het citaat uit het gekozen fragment. Prunetti liet weten dat het een drukfout betrof: het waren *calafatori*, breeuwers. Bij de verwijzingen naar films heb ik steeds gekozen voor de in Nederland bekende titel. In één geval zou daardoor een speelse verwijzing verloren gaan: ‘non accetteranno rimborsi. Neanche *Un dollaro d’onore*’. Die laatste film is in Nederland uitgebracht als *Rio Bravo*. Mijn keuze kwam uiteindelijk uit op ‘Zelfs geen dollar voor de eer, zoals in *Rio Bravo*’.

Het taalgebruik van de ik-verteller is staccato en beeldend en past bij het visioen dat hij ervaart in de bioscoopzaal. Typisch zijn zinnetjes met geconcentreerde taal, zoals ‘Un ultimo stacco nella bobina’ (‘Een laatste overgang in de spoel’), ‘Fotogrammi serrati come bulloni stretti’ (‘Beelden beklemmend als strak aangedraaide bouten’) en ‘Gli stacchi di montaggio si fanno più serrati’ (‘De overgangen volgen elkaar steeds sneller op’). Ik heb geprobeerd het associatieve karakter en de vaart van het origineel, die onder meer tot uiting komen in opsommingen en de afwisseling van lange en korte zinnen, in de Nederlandse vertaling te behouden.

Dennis Smit rondde in 2010 zijn master Italiaanse taal en cultuur af aan de Universiteit Utrecht en is sinds 2011 secretaris van het Regieorgaan Geesteswetenschappen. Hij is bovendien actief als freelance vertaler, met name voor het Europees Parlement, en als docent Italiaans. Hij is algemeen bestuurslid van de Utrechtse afdeling van de Società Dante Alighieri.

Othellodreef 55
3561 GT Utrecht
dennissmit84@gmail.com

Guido Seborga, *De onschuldigen*¹

Vertaling: Dennis Smit

I. Matteo, die al uren in de fabriek aan het werk was, voelde zich uitgeput, maar mocht zijn aandacht geen moment laten verslappen. Hij moest de lange, roodgloeiende metaaldraden die de oven uitspuwde snel en behendig naar de schermen geleiden, waarbij ze vervaarlijk kronkelden in de lucht. Met nauwkeurige bewegingen hield hij de draden op hun plek; zijn voorhoofd was nat van het zweet, zijn markante gezicht zag rood van het vuur.

Zijn collega's Milano, Flico en Giovanni gingen zeer nauwgezet te werk en stemden de afmattende bewegingen van hun werkzaamheden op elkaar af. De geopende ovendeur deed denken aan een brandende vuurkorf en straalde een ondraaglijke hitte uit. Hun versleten blauwe kielen met zwarte vetvlekken gaven hun lichamen een eenvormige uitstraling, maar hun gezichten verschilden. Hun ogen gaven uitdrukking aan hun persoonlijkheid – de blik op scherp vanwege het gevaar: als iemand één draad losliet, kon die hun huid grijpen, verbranden, verminken. Twee werkers liepen de afdeling binnen: Carlo, die nog maar één arm had, en Mario, die mank liep. Ze waren op verschillende dagen verminkt geraakt, maar allebei tegen het einde van hun dienst, wanneer een moment van onoplettendheid als gevolg van de vermoeidheid een arbeider fataal kan worden. Ze begonnen een uitgeschakelde oven schoon te maken.

Karrenvrachten ijzerschroot werden aangevoerd en de brandende oven slokte al het materiaal op. Het werk was in volle gang, de mannen gaven alles zonder een moment pauze.

De fabriek stond tussen de oude forten van Savona, aan de rand van de zee. Aan de overkant van een grote binnenplaats bevonden zich kantoren die grensden aan de havenkade, het terrein werd doorkruist door rails voor de wagons die van het station kwamen en er waren bruggen en kranen om ijzer van de schepen en treinwagons te lossen. Een hoge muur onttrok het land aan het zicht; aan de andere kant lag de open zee. Door de ligging hadden de mannen het gevoel zich diep in de grond te bevinden. Alleen boven hen was de blauwe hemel zichtbaar.

Het was een heldere winterochtend, de zee was donkerblauw, de lucht koud. De arbeiders beseften niet dat er ook een buitenwereld bestond. Vooral Matteo had zijn handelingen geperfectioneerd door zijn bewegingen steeds efficiënter te maken en tot het noodzakelijke te beperken: hij was de beste arbeider van de oven geworden.

¹ G. Seborga, *Gli innocenti*, (1961), Savona, Sabatelli, 2006, pp. 45-51.

Hij maakte er volledig deel van uit, zijn leven speelde zich daar af, tussen de schoorstenen, de hoogovens, de gashouders, het schroot, de zakken met cokes, de stapels kolen, het bruisend staal, het gietkanaal met vloeibaar ijzer en de oven tijdens het gietproces. Elke dag begon het leven opnieuw voor iedereen die zich tussen die muren bevond, een hard en moeilijk leven zonder ontsnappingsmogelijkheden.

II. Savona lag er blinkend bij in de koude winterochtend. Een paar dagen eerder was er sneeuw gevallen op de heuvels en bergen in de omgeving. Het stadje spreidde zich uit, geklemd tegen de bergen waarvandaan de spoorlijn uit Piëmont naar beneden loopt. Aan de andere kant de zee en de baai, de haven, als een dichte blauwe zak, met de Leon Pancaldo-toren die te midden van het moderne leven herinnert aan een oude wereld, die vreemd aandoet in een omgeving vol schepen, opslagplaatsen en fabrieken. De huizen strekken zich langs de kust uit tot aan Spotorno, dat er bekoorlijk bij ligt na de Kaap. Maar bij Savona is de kust kaal en streng met zijn fabrieksschoorstenen, zonder afgrenzing tussen Vado en Savona: het is er een aaneenschakeling van treurige grijze huizenblokken. Wanneer tegen de avond de fabriekssirenes door merg en been gaan, vullen de straten en trolleybussen zich met horden arbeiders en komen ook vele fietsen tevoorschijn. Op dit uur toont de stad zijn aard misschien beter dan op elk ander tijdstip. Overdag zijn de grote wegen haast uitgestorven, alleen op de Aurelia blijft het verkeer stromen.

Dit is een industriestad, waar nationale en internationale bemoeienis een spoor heeft getrokken dat vele menselijke drama's teweeg heeft gebracht. Veel mannen, ook uit de omliggende dorpen, waren naar hier gekomen in de hoop om een waardig werkend bestaan op te bouwen.

Het was een koude, glasheldere avond, de arbeiders verlieten na gedane arbeid de fabriek en vervolgden na een korte groet hun weg, de een te voet, de ander op de fiets of met de trolleybus. Matteo liep langzaam langs de havenkade. Hij hield ervan om een stukje te wandelen en een luchtje te scheppen voordat hij naar huis ging. Hij droeg een oude, zware legerjas en dus had hij het niet koud, maar ervoer hij wel de verkwikkende werking van frisse lucht na het vuur en het stof van de fabriek. Al jaren legde hij deze weg tweemaal per dag af. Hij kende er vele mensen, ook onder de zeelieden en dokwerkers, en had niet het gevoel een al te eentonig leven te leiden. Het was hem tot zijn innerlijke tevredenheid gelukt om een gespecialiseerd arbeider te worden, hij had steeds zijn plicht gedaan als er zich problemen voordeden. Wat er nu gebeurde was niet zijn schuld, maar de schuld van anderen, of van iets anders, een moeilijk te begrijpen mysterie. Hij zou echter nooit stoppen met zoeken naar de waarheid, betrokken als hij was bij ieder feit en elke gebeurtenis. Wat hield het Schumanplan eigenlijk in? En had juist dit plan Savona in een crisis gestort? Velen gaven gratuite antwoorden die niets verklaarden, anderen vonden het een natuurlijk gegeven dat de productie steeds verder afnam en dat er elke dag meer ontslagen vielen. Het is een feit dat de geesten rond 1950 onrustig waren. Ook de internationale context verhardde, en dat moest wel overal een uitwerking hebben.

Matteo keek naar de haven, waar twee grote schepen lagen. Eén schip loste kolen die via een kabelbaan werden afgevoerd, het andere was een wrak dat wel een flinke opknapbeurt kon gebruiken. Op het dek waren mannen aan het werk, er klonken hamers op metaal, geluiden die voor een haven net zo natuurlijk zijn als die van het water. Niet ver weg lag een pijpleiding die olie doorpompte naar Piëmont en Lombardije; sinds kort lag er een groot zwart-rood schip aangemeerd voor de kust bij Vado.

Matteo kende dit werk en keek er met een deskundig oog naar alsof het zijn werk was. Hij keek er elke avond naar, elke morgen, het maakte deel uit van zijn leven. Er waren maar weinigen die zo'n natuurlijk instinct voor de werkelijkheid hadden als Matteo. Hij vereenzelvigde zich meteen met wat er gebeurde, en misschien was hij daarom zo'n graag geziene figuur geworden in Savona. Door zijn bedachtzame en serieuze manier van spreken vond menigeen hem sympathiek en velen begroetten hem als ze hem zagen.



Anno 30, 2015 / Fascicolo 2 / pp. 128-129 - <http://doi.org/10.18352/incontri.10126>
Content is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported License - © The author(s)
Werkgroep Italië Studies in cooperation with Utrecht University Library Open Access Journals

Alberto Prunetti, *Net als Steve McQueen*¹

Vertaling: Dennis Smit

Een laatste overgang in de spoel. Twee lange seconden staat het scherm op zwart. Beelden beklemmend als strak aangedraaide bouten. De soundtrack wordt gedomineerd door mondharmónica's. IJzige, blauwe ogen, meedogenloos en rechtvaardig. Een personage uit *The Magnificent Seven*. Steve McQueen. Goddelijk mooi, Renato's held. Een man die wist hoe je een slijptol en een lasapparaat hanteert. Die als tegelzetter en als isolatiemonteur op vrachtschepen kon werken. Een harde jongen uit de arbeidersklasse, een Amerikaanse mythe die de fabriek was ontvlucht en de toppen van de Californische filmstudio's had bereikt.

Maar één zucht is genoeg, een diepe ademhaling, en een microvezel glipt door het filter van je neus, passeert je luchtpijp en zet koers richting je longen. Vervolgens gaat er twintig jaar voorbij en weet je haast niet meer hoe je een hamer vasthoudt. Terwijl je voor een western een scène zonder tegenspeler draait, merk je dat je niet meer de slechterik van weleer bent: je bent benauwd en ademt oppervlakkig. Wat doen de schijnwerpers van Hollywood er nog toe? Die vezel heeft de wedstrijd gewonnen en het maakt niet uit of je acteur bent of tegelzetter. Kijk naar jezelf in de spiegel. Je hebt nu de huid van een oude man, alleen je ogen zijn een metaalblauwe explosie. De rest is leer, een tanige huid, nagels die zwart uitslaan door de slechte doorbloeding. En je longen worden zwart. Wanneer de schijnwerpers doven is de oude Steve weer een arme proletarische stakker met o zo mooie ogen, die als kleine jongen op de grond sliep en zijn leven lang steeds wist te ontkomen. Zoals *Papillon*, zoals in *The Great Escape*, zoals in *The Getaway*. Zoals Steve McQueen.

Als je dan ook nog niet eens Steve McQueen bent, is de ramp compleet. Want jij hebt de asbestvezels 35 jaar ingeademd en jouw leven was een tocht van lening naar uitkering. Voor jou klonk niet 'Klaar? Actie!', jij reed niet met ontbloot bovenlijf op de motor naar de stranden van Florida. Misschien werkte je bij de Cooperativa Vapordotti en bracht je in de Hoge Maremma, waar bij Larderello en Pomarance borax werd gewonnen, asbest aan op het wijdvertakte buizenstelsel dat de stoom vanuit het binnenste van de aarde vervoerde. Dat bedrijf gaf de buizen een 'jasje' van asbest, cement en ijzerdraad. Van de twintig mannen zijn er zestien dood. Een voor een ondergaan ze een longoperatie, worden volgestopt met cortisonen, raken blind en gaan dan heen. Heel wat anders dan Vasco, dan een roekeloos leven – zij omwikkelden het metaal met bros asbest, ze stoven het rond en ademden het in. En in hun vrije tijd toerden ze echt niet rond op een Harley-

¹ A. Prunetti, 'Come Steve McQueen', in *Amianto. Una storia operaia*, Edizioni Alegre, Roma, 2014, pp. 141-143.

Davidson. Ze hielden een moestuin bij, sommigen gingen op jacht, op de soos hadden ze het over Baggio en Batistuta. Ze verbrandden olijftakken en boven het vuur grilden ze worstjes, net als wij. En toch zijn ze dood, net als Steve McQueen.

De films met Steve keek ik samen met Renato. We hebben ze allemaal gezien, de westerns en de actiefilms. *Nevada Smith*, *The Sand Pebbles*. Kilometers actiefilm. Het Maltezer kruis van de projector flikkerde tijdens de zomerse voorstellingen in de mijndorpen van de Colline Metallifere, waar een deel van onze familie vandaan kwam - heuvels vol geothermische dampen, waar de kracht van de bodem moest worden beteugeld met een sterk en kwaadaardig vezelrijk mineraal: asbest. Zou Renato weten dat hij net zo aan zijn einde zou komen als Steve McQueen?

En toch is de man op het scherm de echte Steve. De overgangen volgen elkaar steeds sneller op. De operator is nog niet terug, we zien dat de varkens nog steeds op de vlucht zijn. *The Getaway*, op de vlucht. *The Great Escape*. Zoals *Papillon*, zoals *Junior Bonner*. De film gaat echter door en de stoelen in de zaal worden bezet voor de grote finale: een voor een komen er vele mannen in blauwe overalls. Ik kijk beter in het donker. Er zijn de mannen uit Casale en die uit Taranto. De treinwerkers uit Pistoia en de mannen van de scheepswerven in Monfalcone. De mannen uit Bagnoli en die uit Rubiera. Ook hun vrouwen zijn er, die zakken naaiden van asbest en de overalls van hun mannen wasten. De mijnwerkers uit de Maremma en van de mijnen in Sulcis op Sardinië. Ook Angelo is er. En naast hem loopt Renato. De lassers zijn er, de pijpfitters, de isolatiemonteurs en de breeuwers. De blinden kijken met een gelukzalige blik naar de film en wie een vinger is kwijtgeraakt telt ze weer alle tien en balt zijn vuist. Hier zijn ze allemaal bij elkaar, *working class heroes* die zijn teruggekeerd om een rekening te vereffen, als in een film van Peckinpah, zoals in *The Wild Bunch*. Ze zullen door de straten van onze steden lopen, met hun Texaanse hoeden laag over het voorhoofd getrokken, zij aan zij, Renato en de mannen van de Vapordotti en alle andere cowboys van het metaal. Ook Steve. Ze zullen terugkeren met hun ijzige ogen en hun overalls waar hun geur nog in zit, de geur van geknipt ijzer en gestolde elektroden. Ze zullen een glas wegklokken op de soos en de zaken op hun eigen manier regelen, geld is geen genoegdoening voor hun levens, omdat ze geen vergoeding zullen aanvaarden. Nog geen dollar voor de eer, zoals in *Rio Bravo*. Ze weten best dat geld niet alles is, zij die – aan elk mogelijk gevaar blootgesteld – hun leven lang extreem schadelijk, belastend en dodelijk werk hebben verricht. Een leven vol risico's, een en al ellende. Een roekeloos leven. Walgelijke Maremma! Juist! Een leven als Steve McQueen.

Reconstructing a lost library

The last marchese of Finale and his lost books

Recensione di: Anna Giulia Cavagna, *La biblioteca di Alfonso del Carretto Marchese di Finale. Libri tra Vienna e la Liguria nel XVI secolo*, Finale Ligure, Centro Storico Finalese, 2012, 430 p., ISBN: 9788890166921, € 20,00.

Nina Lamal

In this study Anna Giulia Cavagna, an established book historian at the University of Genoa, describes the book collection of the last ruler of Finale, Alfonso II del Carretto (1525-1583), departing from a sixteenth-century manuscript entitled 'Nota de varij libri delle libreria de Marchesi di Finale' (List of the various books in the library of the marquis of Finale). This list records the different parcels of books sent by del Carretto from Vienna to Finale between 1558 and 1583 in exceptional detail. Cavagna provides a full transcription of this unique document and a bibliographic description of the 1,083 entries. Yet her work is more than a bibliographic study; in additional chapters Cavagna discusses the *Nota* in detail and reconstructs the particular story of del Carretto's career and his books.

Alfonso II del Carretto was the marquis of Finale, a small imperial fief in Liguria bordering the Republic of Genoa. In 1558 the Genoese supported a popular uprising against Alfonso II, who subsequently fled to the imperial court in Vienna. He briefly returned to Finale in 1564 but in 1566, after another revolt against his authority, he returned to Vienna. He spent the rest of his life trying to reclaim his territory with the help of the Holy Roman Emperors. Hoping to create his own library, Alfonso II started to acquire many books in Vienna which were then subsequently sent to Finale. But he never returned; he remained in exile in Vienna until his death in 1583. The marquisate was then sold to the Spanish, who moved the documents and presumably also the library to nearby Milan. The list of shipments of the books is the only document left for a reconstruction of the library.

Cavagna describes the physical characteristics of the document at great lengths. The document was compiled in Vienna by different secretaries. They recorded the books with a particular eye to detail, which was rather unusual for inventories of libraries at that time. The compilers transcribed the information from the title pages and colophons fully and carefully and often gave information on the book bindings. Due to this wealth of information Cavagna is in most cases able to identify the specific editions del Carretto acquired. When the entries in the *Nota* are less specific she still tries to identify the potential editions he might have bought, but it is not entirely clear on which grounds some of the editions are included and others are not. The list has brief inserts on how these parcels of books were sent and gives us information about agents and intermediaries involved in the transportation

of the books. Other objects, such as armour, weapons and paintings were sent along with the books, but these objects are not described in as much detail.

An interesting and unique characteristic of the *Nota* is that it records paratextual elements such as the patrons and dedicatees, as well as the printing privilege and indexes of the books. According to Cavagna, the dedicatees are only mentioned in the *Nota* when it concerns noblemen. In many ways Carretto's preoccupation with social status reflected his own struggle for political recognition at the Habsburg court in Vienna. Cavagna argues throughout her study that Carretto built a princely and learned library as a crucial instrument to represent his authority. He was particularly interested in accumulating material on the illustrious military deeds of his forbearers. He also bought many books on genealogy, recent history and law. Unfortunately a thorough and detailed analysis of content is not part of this book. Cavagna writes that this will be the subject of another separate study. Nevertheless, this is a fascinating study of an exiled well-educated marquis, who bought books as part of a campaign to re-establish his political authority, and presents us with interesting perspectives on the mechanisms of buying, recording and collecting books.

Nina Lamal
University of St Andrews - School of History
71 South Street
KY16 9QW
St Andrews (Scotland)
nl48@st-andrews.ac.uk

La ricezione dell'*Orlando Furioso*

Recensione di: Christian Rivoletti, *Ariosto e l'ironia della finzione. La ricezione letteraria e figurativa dell'Orlando Furioso in Francia, Germania e Italia*, Venezia, Marsilio, 2014, 433 p. ISBN: 9788831721110, € 35,00.

Gian Paolo Giudicetti

Nel libro di Rivoletti *Ariosto e l'ironia della finzione. La ricezione letteraria e figurativa dell'Orlando Furioso in Francia, Germania e Italia* si incrociano due prospettive: la visione del poema ariostesco come di un testo che si distingue per il modo in cui allude al proprio carattere fittizio e la convinzione che lo studio della ricezione dell'opera permetta di illustrarne meglio la natura, una convinzione condivisa prima di lui da altri critici (per esempio Hempfer, che in *Lecture discrepanti* [1987, poi Modena, Panini, 2004] affermava che 'le discrepanti letture' del *Furioso* 'rimandano a una potenziale struttura discrepante del testo stesso' [p. 197]). Rivoletti si propone di individuare le modalità con cui alcuni elementi tipici e innovatori del *Furioso* sono stati tradotti da diversi 'ricettori attivi' del *Furioso*, artisti che hanno usato il *Furioso* come fonte di ispirazione per le loro opere.

L'approccio di Rivoletti è a volte teoricamente problematico, nella misura in cui sembra fare uso di alcune interpretazioni che si sono susseguite nei secoli per dimostrare la validità della propria lettura del *Furioso* – una versione indiretta dell'*argumentum ab auctoritate* – ma ha la virtù di mettere in luce aspetti a tratti inediti della ricezione secolare del *Furioso*. Nella sua interpretazione del poema lo studioso si concentra sull'ironia, più precisamente sul modo in cui la narrazione comunica al lettore l'idea che la storia che sta raccontando non vada presa troppo sul serio; si tratta di un narratore dall'identità multipla, di un narratore che costituisce una 'presenza divertita che accompagna la narrazione epica' (p. x). Rivoletti dedica un capitolo ciascuno a La Fontaine, Voltaire e Wieland, che hanno ripreso nelle loro opere alcuni aspetti del *Furioso*. Un altro capitolo è volto a descrivere la lettura del poema da parte di pensatori tedeschi (F. Schlegel, Schelling, Hegel) della prima metà del XIX secolo. Gli ultimi due capitoli sono concentrati sulla ricezione italiana (De Sanctis, Pirandello, Calvino) e sulla ripresa di motivi ariosteschi nelle arti figurative.

A partire dalla Controriforma i critici del *Furioso* furono, a lungo, raramente in grado di percepire l'ironia ariostesca. Rivoletti nota come, a conclusione di un quarantennio di forte interesse per il *Furioso* in Germania, 'furono i romantici tedeschi, e in particolare Friedrich Schlegel, il teorico del romanticismo, a scoprire l'ironia ariostesca' e a fare del *Furioso* un modello per l'ironia romantica, che si distingue per il fatto di svelare 'continuamente al lettore la natura fittizia della narrazione' (p. xxi). I riferimenti letterari di questi pensatori furono, oltre ad Ariosto,

Sterne, Diderot e Jean Paul. Rivoletti mostra anche come durante i secoli intercorsi tra la pubblicazione del *Furioso* fino all'interpretazione dei romantici, diversi 'singoli lettori e artisti' (p. XXIII) abbiano anticipato la lettura romantica.

Per esempio La Fontaine, nella prima novella che scrisse, *Joconde*, per la quale ebbe come modello, significativamente, Ariosto, rielaborò il gioco ariostesco con Turpino, che serve, attribuendo a una fonte inesistente alcune tra le inverosomiglianze maggiori del racconto, a fare riflettere il lettore sul rapporto tra finzione e verità, un procedimento che riprenderà Voltaire, che nella *Pucelle* sostituì a Turpino l'abate Tritemio (pp. 66-7). Distinguendosi dalle riduzioni classicheggianti del *Furioso* a questioni di genere – Boileau condannò Ariosto per avere inserito in un poema eroico l'episodio burlesco di Astolfo e Giocondo e avere così mescolato, partorendo un *mostro*, generi letterari diversi (p. 87) – Voltaire individuò nel poema un'idea quasi romantica di ironia e fece 'una delle sue scoperte capitali sul *Furioso*' constatando la 'presenza dell'autoironia' e un atteggiamento che si distingue da quell'ironia illuminista, critica e polemica, a cui Voltaire ricorreva spesso nei suoi scritti (pp. 95-6). Mentre da giovane condannò la mistura di generi diversi nel *Furioso*, nel *Dictionnaire philosophique* Voltaire lodò Ariosto per 'aver allargato i confini del genere epico' e unito 'alto e basso, serio e comico, eroico e quotidiano' (p. 100). Nella *Pucelle* cercò a sua volta di unire elementi di generi letterari diversi, l'ironia illuminista a quella della finzione (p. 107), recuperando molti stilemi ariosteschi.

Anche i romantici tedeschi dovettero superare una diffidenza verso il *Furioso* che aveva marcato i decenni precedenti. Gli illuministi tedeschi vedevano il poema di cattivo occhio; Gottsched ne accusava la 'mancanza di verosomiglianza, il disordine strutturale [...], la presenza sovraffollata di maghi ed eventi soprannaturali' (p. 172). Meinhard, che in un suo libro gli dedicò un capitolo di 270 pagine, fu il primo a cambiare orientamento e, rifiutando le regole classiciste, difese una 'visione italiana' nella quale il genio individuale si porrebbe al di sopra delle regole (pp. 175-7); similmente Schlegel considerava ormai impossibile scrivere opere tragiche o comiche come quelle classiche e rivendicò un genere misto, un cui modello era il poema epico-ariostesco, un modello che influenzò i letterati della sua generazione (p. 269). Al capitolo sulla ricezione italiana bisognerebbe dedicare una recensione a parte. Da discutere è soprattutto l'idea che Pirandello, grazie anche alla conoscenza dei teorici tedeschi del Romanticismo, ha compiuto 'forse il tentativo più importante [...] di rileggere il poema ariostesco attraverso il principio dell'ironia della finzione' (p. 342).

Nell'ultimo capitolo del libro Rivoletti usa la sua interpretazione del *Furioso* per riflettere su alcuni quadri dai motivi ariosteschi. Un buon esempio è lo studio di un quadro di Bilivert, *Angelica si cela a Ruggiero* (1623-4), in cui Ruggiero è osservato da Angelica mentre si sveste con il fine di violentarla. Lo spettatore osserva la scena dalla prospettiva di Angelica, che gli volta quasi le spalle e che sa, come lo spettatore, che fra poco, inghiottendo l'anello, befferà Ruggiero. L'interpretazione di Rivoletti è che il modo in cui il pittore presenta Angelica è una forma di allusione ironica allo spettatore e che la posizione e l'atteggiamento di Angelica sostituiscono la funzione del narratore nel poema. Il pittore riesce a infrangere l'illusione della finzione per instaurare una relazione tra interno dell'opera ed esterno, tra mondo della finzione e lettore (pp. 391-92).

Gian Paolo Giudicetti
SAMD
Guggerbachstrasse 2
CH - 7270 Davos Platz (Svizzera)
gianpaolo.giudicetti@uzh.ch

Ungaretti fra poesia, musica e pittura

Recensione di: Teresa Spignoli, *Giuseppe Ungaretti. Poesia, musica, pittura*, Pisa, ETS, 2014, 308 p., ISBN: 9788846739384, € 28,00.

Valentino Baldi

Il libro di Teresa Spignoli tiene dentro più universi ed è capace di offrire angolazioni inedite nello studio di Giuseppe Ungaretti, poeta fra i maggiori del Novecento eppure meno “centrale” nel canone italiano contemporaneo rispetto a quanto accadeva fino alla fine del secolo scorso. La ricerca della Spignoli coniuga perizia filologica e interessi multidisciplinari, restituendo l’immagine di un poeta coltissimo e molto curioso, influenzato non solo dalle proprie letture, ma anche da ascolti musicali e collaborazioni con intellettuali e pittori. La poesia è onnipresente nel libro, ma sempre osservata “di sbieco” e la prospettiva di soglia da cui scrive la Spignoli è un motivo di interesse metodologico non secondario. Nelle tre sezioni che strutturano il libro, musica e pittura occupano le posizioni iniziale e finale, mentre al centro la Spignoli si dedica soprattutto a *Un grido e paesaggi*, raccolta minuscola ma intrisa di forti reminiscenze autobiografiche ed in cui svetta il poemetto *Monologhetto*. La Spignoli è attenta esegeta testuale, ma ricorre ad un ampio apparato filologico per ricostruire le fasi di composizione dei testi in modo da gettare luce su questa produzione più meditativa, personale e apocalittica. Il *Monologhetto* assume il ruolo di spartiacque, un momento di meditazione e ‘ricapitolazione’, ma anche il segno di ‘una nuova fase di ricerca poetica’ (p. 118). Analisi testuale, ricostruzione filologica e storicizzazione sono gli strumenti del critico che la Spignoli impugna sempre nelle giuste dosi.

Le due lunghe sezioni “estravaganti” su musica e pittura permettono all’autrice di ripercorrere prosa e versi dell’Ungaretti letterato, alla ricerca di un filo a volte tenue, altre volte molto ben percepibile. Molto convincenti sono le riflessioni della Spignoli su musica, pittura ed universo onirico attraverso cui le fonti ungarettiane sono restituite con una complessità non consueta: ‘Al recupero colto di una programmatica unione di poesia e musica, sulla scorta della sperimentazione di Rimbaud e Verlaine, come delle arie d’opera gluckiane, si sovrappone l’altro versante su cui si colloca la poesia, ossia la dimensione onirica e favolosa del dettato poetico’ (p. 90). Lo spazio onirico e la logica dell’inconscio sono sempre al centro del lavoro e riemergono anche nella sezione sulla pittura, dove De Chirico e Savinio occupano una posizione di preminenza. Ed è in questi casi che torna anche l’Ungaretti “maggior”, quello dell’*Allegria* e del *Sentimento del tempo*. Molto interessanti sono i punti della sezione in cui la Spignoli segue le collaborazioni ungarettiane con pittori del Novecento: nel paragrafo dedicato all’Informale spiccano i nomi di Fautrier, Burri e Fontana, oltre a quelli di Cagli, Capogrossi e Dorazio. La poesia recupera dalle arti visuali soprattutto la luce, che si fa contenuto, ma anche motivo attorno a cui ruotano opere importanti, come ad esempio il *Porto Sepolto*. La

lingua diventa immagine e suono, in una ricerca che, appropriatamente, predilige lo studio delle forme: 'La luce quindi si fa figura e parola, laddove testo e immagine si integrano vicendevolmente, concorrendo a creare, attraverso la doppia valenza iconica e linguistica, un vero e proprio emblema della luce' (p. 272).

Valentino Baldi

University of Malta

Italian, Faculty of Arts

Room 317B

Old Humanities Building (OH)

Msida (Malta)

Valentino.baldi@um.edu.mt

Morante la luminosa

Recensione di: Laura Fortini, Giuliana Misservielle e Nadia Setti (a cura di), *Morante la luminosa*, Guidonia, Iacobelli editore, 2015, 210 p., ISBN: 9788862522496, € 14,90.

Hanna Serkowska

Questo libro nasce come frutto dell'incontro organizzato a Roma dalla la Società Italiana delle Letterate nel centenario della nascita di Elsa Morante. Ne emerge – sottolinea nell'introduzione Giuliana Misservielle – un profilo diverso di Elsa Morante rispetto a quello tramandato dalla 'vulgata' morantiana. Il volume riflette una rosa di approcci nuovi non ovvi e non tutti sdoganati, alcuni perfino perturbanti per la vulgata. Niente stupore, da anni la SIL è impegnata a svolgere un lavoro critico 'decostruttivo e propositivo, interdisciplinare e transdisciplinare'.

Si constata da qualche anno che lo sguardo rivolto a questa scrittrice, è meno di soggezione, e più di pacata e attenta disamina. Ne emerge una Morante diversa da come lei stessa si pensava. Non più un Narciso infelice perché non amato (Ludovica in *I tre Narcisi*) e non più 'elisa dall'amore' (come la protagonista di *Menzogna e sortilegio*), ma, luminosa! Il titolo della raccolta, fortunatamente scelto, richiama l'attenzione sulla luce che emana la scrittura e sulla bellezza che incarnano i personaggi morantiani.

L'idea di definirla così, brillante in sé, è spiegata nella microanalisi del racconto incipitario de *Lo scialle andaluso*, 'Il ladro dei lumi' da Laura Fortini che addita la luce come nesso, nell'opera di Elsa Morante, tra vita e scrittura: 'con il lume della propria parola poetica [Morante] cerca di porre riparo al "furto dei corpi"' (p. 49), cioè alla morte. Il lume 'si configura come possibilità di accostare la vita alla morte, non in forma contrappositiva di *aut aut*, quanto piuttosto in forma giustappositiva, quella di *et et*: perché [...] la morte non è che un altro movimento della vita'. Il ricorso al furto dei lumi permette di declinare diversamente il racconto mitico del furto del fuoco da Prometeo (p. 45). Morante ha elaborato secondo Fortini una forma poetica capace di tenere insieme gli opposti: 'L'opera poetica e letteraria di Morante nulla ha di mortifero se non in quanto vuole tenere insieme anche la morte, ma accanto alla vita' (p. 55).

Graziella Bernabò, mentre rischiarava l'immagine cupa tramandata della scrittrice e della sua opera, giustifica le ragioni di quella biografia letteraria che lei stessa ha scritto nel 2012. Una biografia in fieri perché continuano ad affiorare sempre nuovi spunti: l'archivio, manoscritti, lettere, biblioteca di proprietà della scrittrice. Che non si tratti di indiscrezioni o curiosità indebita da parte della biografa, lo dimostra la volontà espressa della scrittrice di consegnare gli inediti, manoscritti e lettere, alla Biblioteca Centrale Nazionale di Roma. Grazie al cambiamento del clima a distanza di trent'anni dalla scomparsa della scrittrice, *La fiaba estrema* non ha suscitato reazioni ostili, come avrebbe potuto. Scrivere la vita di una donna sembrava sino a pochi anni fa scandaloso, precisa Bernabò, mentre

nessuno si scandalizzava per le numerose biografie di Pavese, Moravia, Pasolini. In più, scrivere la vita di una donna occorre non solo tramite il rimando alle vicende della storia ufficiale, adesione a movimenti, correnti e poetiche di volta in volta dominanti. È fondamentale ricostruire le reti di relazioni (124) — concetto che Bernabò ha imparato dal gruppo di storia della Libreria delle donne di Milano — e le reti intellettuali e di amicizia, in Elsa Morante, formano tutt'uno. Ne sia un esempio il fatto che Morante, solitamente parca di giudizi, opinioni o interventi nelle questioni della contemporaneità, in privato ne discuteva comunque ampiamente e nell'ambito di quelle conversazioni, importanti seppur informali, sicuramente ispirava altri ad agire, da sola rifugiandosi in quella che Pasolini definì la camera delle favole.

Dacia Maraini spiega i pessimi rapporti di Morante con il femminismo allora il non ancora sviluppato in Italia. Dire la letteratura femminile era quasi un'offesa (p. 172). Riluttante a essere ghettizzata, etichettata come minore rispetto a scrittori *tout court*, e avversa a ideologie che dividono e segregano le persone umane secondo qualsivoglia categoria, non era filo-femminista nella sua opera. Il personaggio maschile, più accreditato nella letteratura mondiale e più passibile di scattare meccanismi di identificazione, era da lei preferito sin dal secondo romanzo, ma nulla batte le splendide madri e matrigne (Nunziata, Ida, Giuditta, Anna), come se tutta la simpatia per le donne fosse confluita nella figura della madre, una sorta di 'vetta siderale della vita'. Vi si accodano: una spettacolare Antigone della morantiana *Serata a Colono*, posta a fianco del padre, e la Carlottina che compare in conclusione *Il mondo salvato dai ragazzini*.

I saggi raccolti in questo volume si possono schematicamente suddividere in due gruppi. I saggi-testimonianza includono i contributi di Dacia Maraini, Maria Vittoria Tessitore, Maria Rosa Cutrufelli, Elena Stancanelli. Altri esaminano diversi aspetti della sua opera, tra cui: i luoghi, gli aspetti paesaggistici e topografici dei testi morantiani che vanno dall'interno piccolo-borghese alla grotta del figlio rifiutato al castello, al carcere senza concessioni a una geografia verista; l'importanza degli animali che attingono a un grado di sapienza e di conoscenza che non è dato a nessun altro personaggio (ergo si può amare quello che è brutto, quello che è stato rifiutato, che era ai margini della vita); il corpo gaudioso e dolente al contempo esaminato a partire dalle teorie femministe francesi e statunitensi; la passione morantiana per il cinema o per il teatro. Il cinema è esaminato da Stefania Parigi secondo la quale i materiali di cui disponiamo documentano un'idea di rapporto (non il rapporto stesso) di Elsa Morante con il cinema (p. 142). Il materiale citato è stato però nel frattempo raccolto in volume da Marco Bardini (*Elsa Morante e il cinema*, 2014), di cui Parigi ha potuto quindi solo menzionare dei saggi sul cinema (peccato siano poi scomparsi dalla bibliografia a fine volume). Il punto di vista registico, ossia la regia teatrale, della scrittrice (soprattutto nella *Serata a Colono*) è stato scrutato da Maria Inverso.

Paradossalmente, solo quando è venuta meno la soggezione verso questo grande classico — nell'accezione di Calvino lo è un autore non nuovo in cui troviamo del nuovo; è chi deve ancora essere — ne abbiamo potuto vedere un aspetto mai esplorato: il suo volto solare.

Hanna Serkowska
Uniwersytet Warszawski
Katedra Italianistyki
Oboźna, 8
00927 Warszawa (Polonia)
duenovembris@gmail.com

Per un nuovo approccio della critica leviana Viaggi alle radici dell'opera leviana

Recensione di: Raniero Speelman, Elisabetta Tonello & Silvia Gaiga
(a cura di), *Ricericare le radici. Primo Levi lettore-Lettori di Primo Levi*, Utrecht, Igitur Publishing, 2014, 282 p., ISBN: 9789067010382, pubblicazione OA.

Sara Vandewaetere

Sin dall'introduzione del volume *Ricericare le radici. Primo Levi lettore-Lettori di Primo Levi*, Raniero Speelman esprime il desiderio di un nuovo approccio all'opera di Primo Levi, a distanza di oltre 25 anni dalla morte dell'autore avvenuta nel 1987. Il tema comune di tutti i contributi è imperniato sulle radici, in particolare quelle letterarie, che hanno influenzato l'opera di Levi. Il volume raccoglie ben diciannove saggi e un'intervista inedita, presentati in occasione del convegno tenutosi a Ferrara il 4 e 5 aprile 2013.

In virtù dell'auspicio espresso da Speelman di rinnovare la critica leviana, il volume si apre con un saggio di Luca De Angelis, che prende spunto da una poesia del 1984 intitolata *Pio*, a prima vista una parodia piuttosto innocua dei versi carducciani de *Il bove*. Partendo da questi versi De Angelis induce a una rilettura dei testi leviani, dei concetti del mondo ebraico e delle analisi letterarie dell'opera leviana per dimostrarci come nella poesia dall'aspetto innocente si celi in realtà la rabbia di Levi. Quella di De Angelis è, in definitiva, un'arringa contro i 'levismi', ovvero contro una 'rappresentazione canonico-istituzionale e artefatta di Levi' (p. 15).

L'invito di De Angelis di guardare al di là dei levismi trova subito riscontro nel secondo saggio dalla mano di Sophie Nezri Dufour, che, riprendendo il suo tema prediletto, ovvero le letture ebraiche di Levi, ricostruisce, a partire dai testi e dalle testimonianze di chi lo ha conosciuto, il viaggio di Levi nell'ebraismo in quanto spirito curioso e lontano dalla voglia di sacralizzare.

Dato il tema e il titolo del convegno, *Ricericare le radici*, è naturale che diversi contributi vertano proprio sull'antologia leviana *Alla ricerca delle radici*. Non manca, appunto, l'attenzione per il legame di Levi con i filosofi illuministi, evidente nella stessa composizione dell'antologia. Particolarmente degno di ulteriori approfondimenti è l'idea del 'senso del meraviglioso', concetto di Samuel Delany qui usato da Eleonora Conti come un filo che lega le radici e i testi di Levi (p. 47). Ma l'ampiezza del volume permette anche analisi di radici letterarie leviane finora meno studiate. Il lettore leviano non può che essere affascinato dai riferimenti agli autori tedeschi preferiti: Bertolt Brecht, Thomas Mann e Alfred Döblin (si vedano i saggi di Giovanna Neiger e di Martina Mengoni).

Dalle fonti di ispirazione e i casi di intertestualità, si passa poi alle traduzioni leviane. Prima Federico Pellizzi, e quindi Maria Grazia Cossu, si soffermano sull'influenza di due testi di antropologi, vale a dire Mary Douglas e Claude Lévi-Strauss, entrambi tradotti da Levi. Pellizzi sottolinea come l'atteggiamento da

antropologo di Levi subisca in realtà mutazioni importanti, passando da quello del naturalista a quello dell'etologo, per arrivare all'antropologo vero e proprio, che non solo osserva, ma in cui è la letteratura a divenire un 'prisma consapevole per cercare di comprendere' (p. 129).

Centrale nella prassi traduttiva di Levi, e addirittura nella sua opera come viene dimostrato dai contributori del volume, è la traduzione de *Il Processo* di Kafka. Più che di traduzione dovremmo parlare di risemantizzazione, ci spiega Silvia Ferrari, poiché il traduttore arricchisce il 'linguaggio manchevole' del testo sorgente con 'lo sfondo dell'esperienza concentrazionaria, scrivendo dopo la *Shoah*' (p. 157), anche se Levi non perdeva occasione per ribadire che in realtà la traduzione gli era stata richiesta da Einaudi e non era una sua iniziativa. Secondo Antonio Castoro è stato proprio accettando questo compito che Levi ha visto la propria scrittura-traduzione entrare in conflitto con l'imperativo etico del comunicare e del comprendere che si era sempre autoimposto.

Da una traduzione fondamentale e particolarmente studiata si passa a un caso che si potrebbe definire un'anomalia nell'opera leviana: la traduzione di Levi di un libro in lingua olandese, *La notte dei Girondini*, viene portata all'attenzione da Bert de Waart. Contrariamente al caso de *Il Processo*, le circostanze in cui Levi fece questa traduzione sono meno note. De Waart ribadisce la tesi che Levi abbia tradotto il testo basandosi in parte sulla traduzione tedesca.

Due saggi sono più difficili da legare alla grande tematica delle radici, centrale nell'opera. Giuliano Mori rilegge i testi di Levi dal punto di vista di una nostalgia per una lingua che non distingue tra oggetto e nome, come avveniva - ci spiega Mori - al tempo di Adamo. Attraverso tutta l'opera dello scrittore, Mori va alla ricerca di segni della nostalgia leviana verso una 'lingua adamitica'. L'analisi di Mori è affascinante benché non sia sicura la possibilità di arrivare a una 'teoria del linguaggio leviano' (p. 64), come Mori si augura, se al centro di una tale teoria non sono proprio la complessità e le contraddizioni interne all'opera. Tutt'altro tema viene affrontato da Raniero Speelman, il quale discute la posizione di Levi rispetto allo stato di Israele, all'evoluzione del suo pensiero nel corso della vita e fino alla reazione critica dello scrittore italo-ungherese Giorgio Pressburger alle idee di Levi su Israele.

Il volume si conclude con una parte riguardante la ricezione di Levi in vari paesi. Sanja Roic prende in esame le traduzioni dei testi leviani in alcuni paesi balcanici. Il suo contributo è arricchito da un'intervista rilasciata da Levi in serbocroato, finora pubblicata solo in questa lingua. Un saggio sulla ricezione in Grecia dell'opera leviana e una lettura dell'interpretazione cinematografica de *La Tregua*, per la regia di Francesco Rosi, concludono il volume.

È evidente: siamo di fronte a un'opera particolarmente ricca in cui le prospettive si moltiplicano. Il punto di forza del volume, pertanto, non sta tanto nella sua coerenza, quanto nella varietà di analisi, con chiari sforzi, più o meno riusciti, di rinnovare gli approcci precedenti. Possiamo solo augurarci che i diversi autori vogliano sviluppare ulteriormente le loro ricerche, possibilmente sotto forma di contributi ancora più approfonditi o monovolumi.

Sara Vandewaetere
Groot-Brittanniëlaan 45
9000 Gent (Belgio)
sara.vandewaetere@ugent.be

Mimesis e il giallo

Recensione di:

- Ilaria Marzia Orsini, *Donne in giallo: la detective story tra genere e gender*, Milano/Udine, Mimesis/DeGenere – USB Ultra Slim Books, 2014, 128 p., ISBN: 97888575245680, € 11,00.
- Bruna Durante, *Specchio delle mie trame: la vita secondo dieci scrittori italiani. Con interviste a Eraldo Baldini, Gianni Biondillo, Giancarlo De Cataldo, Giorgio Faletti, Marcello Fois, Carlo Lucarelli, Raul Montanari, Santo Piazzese, Andrea G. Pinketts, Gaetano Savatteri*, Milano/Udine, Mimesis/DeGenere, 2014, 180 p., ISBN: 9788857518176, € 13,60.
- Carlo Oliva, *Giallo popolare: il poliziesco alla radio*, a cura di Nicoletta Di Ciolla e Nicoletta Vallorani, Milano/Udine, Mimesis/DeGenere, 2013, 150 p., ISBN: 9788857518183, € 12,00.

Minne G. de Boer

In questa recensione tratterò tre libri apparsi nella stessa collana, che si occupa di letteratura di genere. Si tratta di tre approcci diversi, che discuterò separatamente. I tre titoli della collana DeGenere della casa editrice *Mimesis*, appartengono alla paraletteratura sul giallo, e così approfondiscono un aspetto non centrale della letteratura su questo genere. Il primo riguarda un aspetto del contenuto del genere, il secondo l'intervista agli autori, il terzo la recensione stessa.

Il volume *Donne in giallo* di Ilaria Marzia Orsini consiste in tre saggi sul poliziesco, di natura e valore molto diversi. Il primo saggio riguarda la storia del genere, limitato al contesto inglese. Esso comincia con un breve riassunto di parecchi testi sul genere, dall'onnipresente Todorov fino ad Umberto Eco, producendo un certo numero di asserzioni sul giallo, a cui poi si attinge liberamente nel resto del volume. L'ultima sezione di questo saggio, che giustifica il sottotitolo del libro, *Detective story fra genere e gender*, desidera proporre una lettura femminista del giallo, cominciando con una discussione etimologica fasulla su questa famiglia di parole, che risale al matrimonio infelice tra femminismo e approccio decostruzionista nella teoria letteraria degli anni Settanta del secolo scorso. Poi approda ad una diatriba contro il razionalismo e l'arroganza del detective tipo Sherlock Holmes e la convinzione che le gialliste donne riusciranno a invertire le parti. Sotto questo aspetto all'investigatore Poirot della Christie che viene attribuita la qualifica onorifica di 'autorità femminilizzata'.

Il secondo saggio si concentra sulle figure delle vittime femminili in Poe e Conan Doyle e una scrittrice meno nota, Mary Elisabeth Braddon, mettendo in luce la natura passiva delle donne descritte e il loro ruolo di oggetto dello sguardo voyeuristico, tema che nonostante tutto ci sembra un po' marginale nell'opera di questi autori.

Il terzo saggio invece è un piccolo gioiello: riguarda la figura di Miss Marple nell'opera di Agatha Christie, e l'approccio femminista, pur non essendo assente,

non dà fastidio e magari aiuta a rivelare meglio l'importanza di questa figura di investigatrice. Il trattamento si appoggia in parte sull'*Autobiografia* della Christie, la quale viene presentata come una moralista intenta a difendere il Bene contro il Male. Lo farebbe come in una moralità medievale, inizialmente con Poirot come difensore degli oppressi, dall'esterno per così dire, ma più tardi servendosi di Miss Marple come vendicatrice che fa parte della comunità stessa. Il personaggio, che avrebbe certi tratti di una nonna della scrittrice, è in continuo sviluppo: laddove in *Murder in the Vicarage* sembra ancora una figura parodistica, più tardi si sviluppa fino a diventare una delle Erinni, soprattutto Megera, dea della vendetta. S'insiste sulla scelta problematica di una vecchia zitella come investigatrice e si discutono i rimedi necessari per ovviare agli handicap della vecchiaia e dell'assenza di conoscenze professionali, insistendo sulla nota abitudine del personaggio di riconoscere tipi di malvagità nella vita quotidiana di un piccolo paese e la sua abilità di raccogliere informazioni mediante pettegolezzi. Il saggio è riccamente illustrato con citazioni dai vari romanzi in cui la Marple appare, che vengono commentate e anche illustrate linguisticamente. L'analisi presentata rientra chiaramente in una discussione esistente nell'ambito delle ricerche giallistiche anglosassoni, ma si legge con piacere e costituisce addirittura uno stimolo per approfondire la discussione.

In *Specchio delle mie trame* (sottotitolo *La vita secondo dieci scrittori italiani*) di Bruna Durante, dieci autori maschi di gialli vengono intervistati da una donna, che ovviamente viene apostrofata con *Bella mia*. Ho l'impressione però che sia l'intervistatrice stessa a provocare gli atteggiamenti maschilisti degli scrittori. Si tratta di interviste che s'interessano più della personalità dello scrittore che della sua opera, come succede anche in programmi televisivi pieni di *human interest*. L'intervistatrice dispone di un gran numero di domande standard, che vanno da 'com'eri da bambino?' fino a 'cosa pensi dei *Promessi Sposi*?', e per rendere l'intervista più vivace ci informa continuamente sulle reazioni degli intervistati (*ridacchia, fa la smorfia, mi guarda sorridendo, eccetera*). Gli autori appartengono grosso modo alla stessa generazione, quella affermata intorno al 1990, e il risultato complessivo delle interviste diventa una specie di immagine generazionale, con esperienze tipiche, letture simili, musica dello stesso tipo, esperienze scolastiche comuni, ribellioni contestatrici e insofferenze rispetto all'Italia di oggi che vanno tutte nello stesso senso. Trattandosi di una generazione che spesso rilascia interviste, gli autori nondimeno riescono a dare risposte interessanti malgrado le domande stereotipate.

L'intento principale della Durante è quello di capire come sono diventati scrittori di gialli. Un filo rosso nelle risposte è l'importanza del giallo italiano della generazione precedente: Scerbanenco, Fruttero e Lucentini, Gadda o Sciascia. Spesso gli autori partono da un'idea di 'letteratura alta' scoprendo poi per caso che tale giallo italiano è un capolavoro che riesce a trattare la realtà del paese. In quei casi la rivelazione funge da stimolo per il proprio lavoro. Chi è interessato allo sviluppo del giallo italiano può trovare qui molti filoni di continuità. Inoltre una cosa che colpisce è il grande senso di solidarietà tra gli autori di questa generazione, che spesso si conoscono bene, leggono i libri degli altri con piacere e ammirazione, contrariamente a quanto succede con altri autori italiani, che si suppongono guardarsi in cagnesco. Per parecchi autori il loro movente è il contrasto tra il mondo da cui provengono e l'Italia attuale. Così Marcello Fois sottolinea l'importanza del contrasto tra la società nuorese arcaica da cui viene e la Bologna in cui ha fatto i suoi studi: così si è reso conto dell'impatto che lo stato italiano ha avuto sulle società preesistenti. Ne viene il suo interesse per i 'latitanti' sardi, di cui si conoscono due tipi: i veri criminali odiati da tutti, e quelli che si sono ribellati allo stato con la connivenza di tutti. E Santo Piazzese si ricorda il paesaggio della costa palermitana di

prima che fosse stato distrutto dalla speculazione edilizia: sembra che sia uno dei principali moventi della sua opera.

Sul terzo libro di Mimesis posso essere breve. Si tratta di *Giallo popolare*, sottotitolo *Il giallo alla radio* di Carlo Oliva, recensore di gialli alla radio, recentemente scomparso. Il libro raccoglie quasi settanta dei suoi interventi, su autori di gialli nel senso più ampio possibile, appartenenti a varie culture nazionali, ed è diviso in quattro sezioni tematiche. Di particolare interesse è la prima parte, preceduta da un saggio di Nicoletta Di Ciolla, una delle curatrici, che dà anche un'utile presentazione della figura del recensore. Sono testi di una pagina all'incirca, che riescono a intavolare molti aspetti dei libri recensiti: il tipo di giallo a cui appartengono, le caratteristiche di tale tipo, i rapporti con la società su cui parlano, i pregi stilistici e persino una valutazione comparativa. Ognuna di queste pagine potrebbe essere citata per mostrare la ricchezza degli spunti. Prendo come esempio la pagina su *I sotterranei di Bologna* di Lorian Macchiavelli, che porta la data dell'11 febbraio 2002. Comincia a situare il libro, come esempio della terza vena di Macchiavelli, dopo i suoi gialli 'normali' e la serie 'più commerciale' scritta insieme con Francesco Guccini. Questa vena viene caratterizzata come segue:

quel difficile territorio a mezza via tra la narrativa, la rievocazione, la riflessione critica e l'invettiva morale, che richiede inevitabilmente al lettore uno sforzo di comprensione e approfondimento cui non tutti i cultori di narrativa di genere, a quanto si dice, sono avvezzi.

Una frase complessa che allude allo sviluppo del genere da quello di lettura di evasione — a cui l'autore non crede — a un nuovo tipo rappresentato dai quattro epiteti menzionati, insistendo anche sulla partecipazione del lettore. Segue una descrizione del libro recensito 'che sembra proprio un giallo'. C'è un'altra frase complessa che riassume il libro:

C'è il cadavere di un poliziotto ripescato da un canale, ci sono certi misteriosi vigili urbani che vanno in giro a maltrattare gli extracomunitari, a onta delle più vigorose smentite del Comando della polizia metropolitana, c'è un complicato intrigo finanziario che coinvolge una nobile famiglia, la Curia cittadina e la direzione del partito (e non chiedetemi di che partito si tratti, visto che, nonostante tutto, siamo a Bologna), e ci sono persino delle oscure (e sanguinose) trame politiche.

Un riassunto efficacissimo volto a invogliare il lettore a comprare il libro, che contiene all'inizio anche un piccolo, prezioso omaggio di Tecla Dozio a Carlo Oliva. Segue una spiegazione del titolo, in cui i sotterranei di Bologna assumono un senso letterale e un senso figurato. Il romanzo viene poi definito 'una storia bolognese [...] che può riferirsi senza sforzo a tutta la realtà nazionale dell'era berlusconiana', e infine l'autore, il 'decano' del *mystery* nazionale, viene messo in testa alla graduatoria nazionale.

Tre titoli che rappresentano un interessante contributo all'ormai vasta letteratura sul giallo, italiano o meno.

Minne G. de Boer

Klaas de Rookstraat 58

7558 DK Hengelo (Paesi Bassi)

minne.g.deboer@planet.nl

‘Oltre lo steccato’ Subaltern Italian Studies

Recensione di: *Subalternità italiane. Percorsi di ricerca tra letteratura e storia*, a cura di Valeria Deplano, Lorenzo Mari e Gabriele Proglgio, Roma, Aracne, 2014, 300 p., ISBN: 9788854877351, € 15,00.

Daniele Comberiati

Riprendo il titolo della recensione dalla dedica posta in calce al bel volume curato da Valeria Deplano, Lorenzo Mari e Gabriele Proglgio che da ormai diversi anni, partendo da discipline e punti di vista diversi (dalla storia fino all’anglistica) si occupano della nebulosa indefinita del ‘postcoloniale italiano’. ‘Dedicato a chi ha avvertito la necessità di condurre la propria ricerca oltre lo steccato (e a chi non l’ha ancora avvertita)’, c’è scritto nella citazione, a cui segue, nella pagina successiva una frase di Barthes sull’interdisciplinarietà. È questo il punto cruciale della miscellanea, eccezione per fortuna non più isolata che germoglia in un contesto come quello italiano dove la rigida divisione fra discipline si è rivelata negli ultimi anni una spada di Damocle altamente deleteria, che ha tagliato carriere e ridotto spazi di dibattito e riflessione.

Fin dall’introduzione (e persino dal titolo, si potrebbe pensare) emergono i riferimenti teorici dei curatori e dei collaboratori, da Spivak a Guha, passando per Said, Minh-Ha, Gramsci e Chatterjee, senza tralasciare i contributi italiani, sia storici (Del Boca, Labanca) che filosofico-antropologici (Mezzadra, Agamben). Un contesto, quello della subalternità, che permette di associare spunti sulla ormai sviscerata ‘letteratura italiana della migrazione’ con riflessioni sulla rivolta degli immigrati a Rosarno, lasciando un occhio aperto sulle dinamiche di inclusione/esclusione a Lampedusa e al tempo stesso sulla costruzione di razza e colore nella società italiana, riflettendo anche su ciò che hanno significato per il meridione l’unità e le politiche nazionali.

L’indice del volume è composto da dodici articoli più un’introduzione e un’appendice (l’intervista di Simone Brioni a Wu Ming 1, pp. 275-292): i dodici articoli sono equamente divisi fra la rappresentazione letteraria della subalternità, le analisi di storie “marginali” del fascismo, le riflessioni su razza e colore. Tale breve presentazione ci porta immediatamente all’interno del nucleo centrale del libro: l’analisi a trecento sessanta gradi della subalternità italiana, a partire dalla letteratura migrante e postcoloniale (Valentina Dogao, Laura Lori, Romina Lavia, Martina Martignoni e Gabriele Proglgio), continuando con le riscritture dei classici (Goffredo Polizzi, su cui ritorneremo, e il Pasolini “africano” di Cesare Casarino), il concetto di razza e bianchezza declinato attraverso lenti d’ingrandimento diverse (Gaia Giuliani, Nicola Spagnolli & Marta Villa, Angelica Pesarini) e la rivalutazione

dell'esperienza coloniale regia, fascista e repubblicana fino agli anni Sessanta (Valeria Deplano e Tatjana Perusko).

Sono questi ultimi probabilmente i contenuti più originali e interessanti, sicuramente in misura maggiore rispetto agli articoli sulla letteratura migrante e postcoloniale italiana – anche se è notevole il tentativo di Romina Lavia di ragionare indirettamente sul canone e sul concetto di letteratura nazionale accostando alla pluricitata Igiaba Scego un'autrice complessa e di non facile lettura come Kim Ragusa – poiché ci obbligano a rileggere e a riconsiderare tutta una serie di autori e testi che sono stati analizzati sempre in maniera diametralmente opposta. Penso in particolare al bel lavoro di Goffredo Polizzi su *I Vicerè* di De Roberto (*Federico De Roberto e la nascita mostruosa della nazione. Razza e degenerazione ne I Vicerè*, pp. 181-202), nel quale l'autore rilegge lo scrittore siciliano sotto la lente di Spivak, generando un cortocircuito conoscitivo rispetto a tutte le interpretazioni precedenti: dietro inoltre, a livello teorico, vi sono le letture di Verdicchio e Gramsci sulla questione meridionale, oltre che i recenti contributi teorici di Cristina Lombardi-Diop e Gaia Giuliani, senza dimenticare un'opera fondamentale, a spesso citata a sproposito o mal interpretata, sulle costruzioni nazionali, quel *Comunità immaginate* di Benedict Anderson che già dal 1983 (anno dell'edizione inglese) poneva l'accento sui ferrei e razzisti meccanismi di inclusione/esclusione alla base di ogni storia nazionale. Come si può notare le premesse (e ovviamente lo saranno anche le conclusioni) sono ben diverse dall'apologia del De Roberto “fra” i padri nazionali presentato dai recenti studi, almeno dal 2011 in poi. Il testo ci mostra in filigrana la complessità e le contraddizioni di una nazione che, nel suo farsi, crea di fatto una “questione meridionale” destinata a rimanere irrisolta nella formazione identitaria comune.

Un altro testo importante è il contributo di Casarino su Pasolini, che segue un tracciato recente sempre più propenso a rileggere il Pasolini “orientalista” e a sviscerarne contraddizioni e i fervidi punti scoperti, soprattutto per quanto riguarda la produzione “africana” dell'autore. In effetti l'opera pasoliniana si presta al tempo stesso ad una grande innovazione (tematica e concettuale) e ad alcune ingenuità nella maniera di approcciarsi all'altro che certamente possono essere messe in luce attraverso le linee teoriche di Said, Spivak e Moe. Va dato però il merito a Casarino di non pendere né dalla parte degli apologeti di Pasolini, al quale dedicano un culto acritico che poco ha a che vedere con la ricerca scientifica, né da quella dei detrattori “post-litteram”, pronti a criticarne l'opera senza prendere minimamente in considerazione il contesto in cui è stata prodotta. Casarino con misura si muove tra le pieghe meno note della produzione pasoliniana, mettendo il dito proprio sulle zone più contraddittorie e mostrandone in tal modo, paradossalmente, la ricchezza attuale.

Altra sezione interessante del volume, anch'essa da considerare all'interno di un recente e proficuo dibattito recente in ambito italiano, è quella dedicata allo studio della razza e del razzismo. Il contributo di Gaia Giuliani (*La zona d'ombra. Genere, agency e bianchezza nell'Italia contemporanea*, pp. 223-246), una delle maggiori esperte in Italia di Race Studies, si interroga sul ruolo della bianchezza nell'Italia contemporanea, sgretolando una ad una tutte le certezze che mostrano come nell'Italia contemporanea la questione del razzismo non solo non sia ancora risolta, ma il più delle volte non venga nemmeno affrontata, aggiungendo un nuovo tassello all'ampia area del rimosso coloniale e postcoloniale. La “zona d'ombra” citata nel titolo del suo contributo rivela proprio la difficoltà del sapere tradizionale ad indagare la problematica della razza e la conseguente razzializzazione della società e della cultura italiane. E non è un caso che un altro contributo sul tema, *Madri nere, figlie bianche: forme di subalternità femminile in Africa Orientale*

Italiana (pp. 161-180) di Angelica Pesarini, ponga l'accento proprio sull'invisibilità dei soggetti subalterni, che oltre a non aver avuto per lunghi anni una propria voce per raccontare le esperienze vissute, nella percezione comune vengono di fatto "privati" del corpo, laddove l'epidermide, che di fatto potrebbe divenire il segno più evidente della loro alterità, viene "schiacciata" e cancellata in funzione di una costruzione culturale di bianchezza nella quale vengono forzatamente fatti rientrare. In entrambi gli articoli, alla questione della razza e del colore è associata la funzione del genere, mostrando come il problema della razzializzazione attraversi e enfatizzi la divisione di genere.

Leggendo i contributi presenti, inoltre, non si può fare a meno di notare come ricorrano termini ed espressioni quali "fantasma", "invisibilità", "rimozione", "silenzio", o avverbi quali "fuori", prefissi come "sub": un segnale linguistico evidente, a mio avviso, di come tutta quell'area del rimosso – non del cancellato né del dimenticato, attenzione, ma proprio del rimosso, come se vi fosse stato uno spostamento, ma non un annullamento totale – sia stata esplorata solo in minima parte e necessiti oggi, proprio grazie alla trans-disciplinarietà che questo volume propone come metodologia applicabile, di una ricerca più accurata, della quale si intravedono in Italia le radici e alla quale appartiene a pieno titolo *Subalternità italiane*.

Daniele Comberiati

Université Paul-Valéry-Montpellier

25a rue Ernest Michel

34000 Montpellier (Francia)

daniele.comberiati@univ-montp3.fr

The uncanny memory of Nazi euthanasia, the Risiera di San Sabba and the *foibe*

Review of: Susanne Knittel, *The Historical Uncanny: Disability, Ethnicity, and the Politics of Holocaust Memory*, New York, Fordham University Press, 2015, XII + 350 p., ISBN: 9780823262786, \$55,00.

Emiliano Perra

The friction between dominant memory culture and the alternative or counter-memories of marginalised groups is the subject of this excellent study. Knittel investigates two sites of World War II and Holocaust memory in Germany and Italy: Grafeneck and the Risiera di San Sabba. These two sites are apparently disparate, the former being one of the main centres of the Nazi ‘euthanasia’ programme and the latter a camp on the outskirts of Trieste in which thousands of Jews, Yugoslavs and Italians were exterminated. However, they have key features in common. Firstly, they, and their victims, are situated towards the margins of the dominant Holocaust topography of memory. Secondly, both sites have important historical connections in the transnational eugenics movement, as exemplified by the figure of Christian Wirth: he first supervised the gassing at Grafeneck, then became commandant of the Belzec death camp, and was eventually tasked with operating the Risiera in Trieste (p. 40). Thirdly, and related to the previous point, the construction of both as memory sites in their post-war history displayed a significant level of selectivity and a lack of ‘critical engagement with the perpetrators’ (p. 166). As a result, the continuity in personnel between the two sites (Wirth and fifteen of his collaborators) and their specific place in the Holocaust chain is unmentioned. Equally unmentioned and unrepresented in the case of the Risiera are the Fascists and their crimes (p. 165).

As an antidote to such sanitised presentations of the tragic history of these two sites, Knittel advocates the ‘historical uncanny’, a term she appropriates from Freud that has been recently deployed in the discussion of German and Italian memory culture.² In Knittel’s reading, a site of memory is ‘uncanny when it unexpectedly extends into the present, forcing a person or group to re-evaluate their understanding of who they are and where they come from’ (pp. 9-10). In order to do this, the author quite rightly conceives sites of memory as being more than their simple geographic locations, including the range of ‘cultural artefacts and discourses

² A. Fuchs, M. Cosgrove, & G. Grote (eds.), *German Memory Contests: The Quest for Identity in Literature, Film, and Discourse since 1990*, Rochester, NY, Camden House, 2006; L. Accati & R. Cogoy (eds.), *Das Unheimliche in Der Geschichte: Die Foibe: Beiträge Zur Psychopathologie Historischer Rezeption*, Berlin, Trafo, 2007.

that accumulate around a given event or memory' (p. 7). This is particularly important in the case of sites of memory that involve a plurality of voices that are barely audible in, and sometimes actively contest, the official narrative. This theoretical framework informs the entire volume. The book is symmetrically structured into two parts of three chapters each, bridged together by an interlude. Within these two parts, chapters 1 and 5 discuss the history before and after 1945 of Grafeneck, the Risiera and the *foibe* sites; chapters 2 and 6 examine the dominant narratives concerning these themes; and chapters 3 and 7 offer examples of counter-narratives.

Grafeneck was the first institution to be outfitted with a gas chamber and crematorium, and over 10,000 people were gassed there (p. 34). However, as with the rest of Nazi Euthanasia, post-war acknowledgement of the crime was selective and belated, and justice was faulty. Moreover, victims were left without a voice and their victimisation was repressed, incorporated into other narratives or otherwise selectively represented. The selective representations of Nazi euthanasia in German culture and beyond are discussed in chapter 2. NBC's miniseries *Holocaust* (1978) exemplifies these ambiguities. Euthanasia is put on screen, but it is presented as something 'somewhat separate from the Holocaust' (p. 79), and even more significantly, its mentally and physically disabled victims are presented as innocent but also as an anonymous mass deprived of subjectivity and voice (p. 81). Knittel convincingly shows how this neglect is the result of deeply ingrained cultural reasons synthesised with the fact that victims of euthanasia could not constitute themselves as a community of memory in the same way other victims groups did, especially in the case of severe mental disability (p. 45). Here the book asks some probing questions of memory studies and disability studies, arguing that both are somewhat unprepared to engage with Nazi euthanasia: the former because it does not see mentally disabled subjects as agents of memory (p. 45), and the latter because it relies on clear-cut distinctions between physical disability and 'madness' (p. 48). For this reason, the examples of vicarious witnessing discussed in chapter 3 are particularly important. Often based on perpetrators' files, as in the case of Helga Schubert's *Die Welt da drinnen*, they 'create a space in which the silenced other may speak' (p. 131). These works not only challenge conventional victim-based Holocaust literature (p. 106), but also force us to rethink 'the assumptions about what the Holocaust was and how it relates to broader historical and contemporary mechanisms of othering, exclusion, and prejudice' (pp. 132-133).

The same structure gives shape to the second part of the book on the Risiera and the *foibe*. Chapter 5 provides a well-informed reconstruction of the history of the Risiera and Basovizza sites of memory from before 1945 to the present, with a postscript on the physical memorial of the Parco della Rimembranza. The chapter offers a refreshing analysis that does not limit itself to bemoaning the use of the *foibe* as a counter-memory to the Risiera, but convincingly argues that this zero-sum logic ends up marginalising 'the Fascist politics of Italianization [...] and the Cold War tensions after the war' (p. 181). Knittel continues that '[t]he competition between the Risiera and Basovizza thus serves ultimately only to divert attention away from Italy's role in World War II and the Holocaust - and thus masks the fact that both sites present version of history with significant gaps' (*Ibidem*). Chapter 6 discusses popular cultural products that constitute the discursive context around these sites, and focuses in particular on a clinical analysis of *Il cuore nel pozzo* (Alberto Negrin 2005). Knittel pointedly sees the miniseries as 'an attempt to create a uniform memory at the center of which lies the suffering of the Italians to the exclusion of the suffering of the Slovenes and Croats' (p. 235). The counter-memory developed in reaction to the imposition of a supremely selective narrative centred on "good" and

innocent Italians as the only victims of “evil” Nazis (Risiera) or Yugoslavs (Basovizza and *foibe*) is discussed in chapter 7. The work of Istrian, Slovene and Triestine authors Fulvio Tomizza, Boris Pahor and Carolus Cergoly offers a necessary counterpoint to the all-Italian narrative put forward in official memorials and museums. Multidirectionality is for them part and parcel of their liminal identity and a political statement against the forced Italianisation of memory. As Knittel argues convincingly, the very language in which these authors write (Istrian-inflected Italian for Tomizza, Slovene for Pahor, Triestine for Cergoly) is a form of resistance (p. 253).

These are just some of the key lines of inquiry of an extremely rich and thought-provoking book. Carefully structured, well researched and lucid throughout, the volume is essential reading for any scholar interested in Italian, German and transnational memory culture. Its argument for the importance of improving representation of, and scholarship on, the role of perpetrators in memory sites is a timely addition to a field often reluctant to undertake such endeavours.

Emiliano Perra

University of Winchester

Sparkford Road

Winchester

SO22 4NR (UK)

emiliano.perra@winchester.ac.uk

‘Quanto è diversa la pratica dalla teorica!’ Due strumenti per l’insegnante di (italiano) L2

Recensione di:

- Marina Chini, Cristina Bosisio (a cura di), *Fondamenti di glottodidattica. Apprendere e insegnare le lingue oggi*, Roma, Carocci, 2014, (Manuali universitari), 380 p., ISBN: 9788843073214, € 27,00.
- Pierangela Diadori, Massimo Palermo, Donatella Troncarelli, *Insegnare l’italiano come seconda lingua*, Roma, Carocci, 2015, (Studi Superiori), 392 p., ISBN: 9788843077328, € 31,00.

Claudia Bonsi

Quanto è diversa la pratica dalla teorica! Quanti sono che intendono le cose bene, che o non si ricordano o non sanno metterle in atto! E a chi fa così, questa intelligenza è inutile, perché è come avere un tesoro in una arca con obbligo di non potere mai trarlo fuori. [F. Guicciardini, *Ricordi*, C35]

Così Guicciardini tematizzava efficacemente il problema del trattamento del materiale cognitivo in deposito nel magazzino mentale di ciascun essere umano pensante (il ‘tesoro in una arca’): non basta aver compreso una nozione o un insieme di nozioni, bisogna anche che queste siano accessibili e, soprattutto, che siano spendibili operativamente. In altre parole, occorre che la conoscenza si traduca in competenza, il ‘sapere’ in ‘saper fare’. È questa l’ambizione che da sempre si pongono i manuali pratici di qualsiasi disciplina. In questo caso, mi soffermerò su due strumenti rivolti ai futuri docenti di lingua straniera (LS) e/o di italiano come lingua seconda (L2), entrambi recentemente pubblicati da Carocci: *Fondamenti di glottodidattica* e *Insegnare l’italiano come seconda lingua*. Trattandosi di manuali di didattica, disciplina eminentemente pratica, sarà a maggior ragione necessario vedere come, nei due volumi, il nesso base teorica/conseguenze applicative sia sviluppato a tutto vantaggio del fruitore. A tal fine, si interrogherà l’impianto strutturale di ciascuno dei due testi, cercando quindi di rispondere a tre quesiti: a) chi è il fruitore ideale dello strumento? b) quali sono le direttrici di ricerca maggiormente percorse dagli autori (punti di forza)? c) quali sono invece quelle meno battute (punti di debolezza)?

Per sgombrare il campo da ogni possibile equivoco, si tenga presente sin da subito che le due pubblicazioni, lungi dal costituire due monadi isolate, dialogano con un ampio ventaglio di strumenti analoghi, che, nell’ultimo ventennio, sono venuti incontro alla crescente domanda di formazione in ambito glottodidattico, in particolare per quanto riguarda l’insegnamento dell’italiano L2, in seguito ai massicci

flussi migratori che hanno interessato e che sempre di più interessano la nostra penisola: basti pensare, per citarne solo alcuni relativi all'italiano come lingua seconda, a quello – tra i primi – di Paolo Ernesto Balboni *Didattica dell'italiano a stranieri* (Roma, Bonacci, 1994), titolo significativamente ripreso –con *variatio* – in *Didattica dell'italiano come lingua seconda e straniera* (Torino, Bonacci-Loescher, 2014), volume riformulato *ex novo* a distanza di vent'anni per rispondere alle sollecitazioni di un paesaggio linguistico radicalmente mutato, a quello curato da Pierangela Diadori, *Insegnare italiano a stranieri* (Firenze, Le Monnier, 2001), nonché alle utili riflessioni svolte da Massimo Vedovelli in *L'italiano degli stranieri. Storia, attualità e prospettive* (Roma, Carocci, 2002), e, in relazione alle linee guida dettate dalla politica linguistica comunitaria, in *Guida all'italiano per stranieri. Dal Quadro comune europeo per le lingue alla Sfida salutare* (Roma, Carocci, 2010), senza contare le esperienze di ricerca e di didattica condivise all'interno di riviste specializzate (*Italiano e oltre*, *Italiano LinguaDue*, *Itals* – ora *EL.LE* – etc.)

Un tale fermento teorico (e pratico) ha portato, in ambito italiano, alla piena maturità dell'ambito di ricerca, e di conseguenza, prendendo in prestito la formula recentemente proposta da Vittorio Coletti per l'italiano *tout court*,³ possiamo parlare di italiano L2 'adulto', nella misura in cui la messe di dati raccolti e la loro interpretazione, nonché gli apporti teorici mutuati da discipline affini, hanno permesso di perimetrare più precisamente le caratteristiche e i possibili sviluppi dell'oggetto prescelto di ricerca e didattica. È con questa condizione di 'adulità' che i lavori qui presi in considerazione – in ragione soprattutto della recente data di pubblicazione – si sono confrontati.

Per una linguistica educativa

Il primo strumento è frutto della collaborazione tra l'*équipe* di linguistica pavese e il gruppo di glottodidattica dell'Università Cattolica di Milano: la suddivisione in capitoli e – implicitamente – in due macrosezioni, una linguistica, focalizzata sui poli soggetto (discente) e oggetto (lingua) del triangolo didattico, l'altra glottodidattica e pedagogica, incentrata sul polo agente (insegnante), riflette la suddivisione dei compiti tra i vari collaboratori.⁴

Il volume si apre con un'ampia panoramica di taglio storico-epistemologico a firma della glottodidatta Bona Cambiaghi: dopo aver situato geograficamente e storicamente le radici della definizione dell'ambito d'interesse, di cui si sottolinea a più riprese la dimensione inter- e metadisciplinare, un rilievo particolare è assegnato ai pionieri della glottodidattica in Italia, Giovanni Freddi e Renzo Titone. Al magistero dei due autori ci si riallaccia idealmente, a dire il vero, fin dal titolo: l'etichetta 'glottodidattica' viene infatti preferita a 'educazione linguistica', al fine di distinguere la specificità di questa 'scuola' rispetto ad altre esperienze, per esempio quelle che discendono direttamente dal laboratorio teorico-pratico della Giscel degli anni Settanta (si pensi alla puntuale ripresa terminologica di Maria Lo Duca, *Lingua italiana ed educazione linguistica. Tra storia, ricerca e didattica*, Roma, Carocci, [2003] 2013), non mancando tuttavia di porre l'accento sulla dimensione educativa della stessa, 'scienza (interdisciplinare) dell'educazione (pluri) linguistica' (p. 33).

Grande spazio viene quindi riservato agli apporti che ricerche di stampo schiettamente linguistico hanno dato e danno alla costellazione interdisciplinare

³ V. Coletti, *Grammatica dell'italiano adulto*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2015.

⁴ Il volume accoglie i contributi di: Cecilia Andorno, Cristina Bosisio, Bona Cambiaghi, Marina Chini, Elisabetta Ježek, Ivan Lombardi, Pietro Maturi e Gianfranco Porcelli.

appena tracciata. Il secondo capitolo, scritto da Marina Chini, espone i lineamenti della linguistica acquisizionale, mettendoli in relazione con le loro implicazioni didattiche: vengono illustrati i vari approcci all'apprendimento della L1 (innatista, cognitivo-funzionale, ambientalista), per poi introdurre il concetto di interlingua e la nozione di errore, e approdare così ai vari modelli di interpretazione dell'apprendimento di L2 e alle sue varietà, con un'attenzione particolare alle sequenze acquisizionali dell'italiano L2. Si forniscono quindi, nel capitolo successivo, nozioni fondamentali di analisi e didattica del livello fonetico-fonologico, lessicale, testuale e pragmatico, spiegate per venire incontro al lettore che voglia penetrare i meccanismi dell'acquisizione di una L2. Una menzione speciale merita la riflessione sulla grammatica come diasistema condotta da Andorno, particolarmente utile al futuro docente per la chiarezza con cui presenta e scioglie i nodi critici che la nozione stessa di grammatica porta con sé. La studiosa sottolinea infatti l'importanza, nell'ideazione e nella stesura di una buona grammatica didattica, dell'adozione di una terminologia descrittiva 'coerente, esplicita e rigorosa', nonché 'potente', ovvero 'in grado di spiegare il maggior numero di fenomeni con il minor numero di concetti' (p. 129), e invita a lasciare la 'preoccupazione normativa' (p. 140) in secondo piano, promuovendo invece lo sviluppo congiunto della competenza linguistico-comunicativa e di quella metalinguistica, affinché operino al potenziamento delle abilità linguistiche del discente in generale e gli consentano così di distinguere le differenti varietà di lingua e di intendere correttamente la norma come 'descrizione di una varietà di lingua esemplare' (*ibid.*).

L'idea forte che regge questa prima sezione del manuale è, nel suo insieme, quella di mettere a disposizione della glottodidattica gli strumenti della linguistica nelle sue varie declinazioni, per mettere capo a una 'linguistica educativa' – nozione mutuata da un recente contributo di De Mauro e Ferreri – intesa come 'settore delle scienze del linguaggio che ha per oggetto la lingua (una lingua, ogni lingua) considerata in funzione dell'apprendimento linguistico e del più generale sviluppo delle capacità semiotiche':⁵ in questa preminenza della prospettiva linguistica sta la differenza con l'educazione linguistica di ambito italiano, di taglio prevalentemente pedagogico-educativo.

La seconda parte del volume è più specificamente dedicata alla didattica: nel quarto capitolo, di natura descrittiva e storico-epistemologica, Bosisio si sofferma sui metodi operativi dell'insegnamento della L2, illustrando il concetto di curriculum, descrivendo i vari approcci che presiedono alla programmazione didattica, presentando le tecniche per lo sviluppo della competenza comunicativa e le tecnologie per l'educazione linguistica (audio-orali, audiovisive, multimediali, interattive). Gli ultimi due capitoli si incentrano infine, specularmente, sull'accertamento delle competenze del discente e sulla formazione dell'insegnante di lingua: vengono da una parte descritte le diverse modalità di misurazione del profitto in L2, passando in rassegna in un secondo momento le principali certificazioni europee di competenza linguistica e didattica in L2 (inglese, francese, tedesco, spagnolo, italiano), dall'altra si presentano il quadro normativo italiano in materia di formazione per l'insegnamento secondario, gli obiettivi perseguiti dalla politica linguistica europea e i modelli per il monitoraggio e l'autovalutazione delle competenze linguistiche e didattiche (*Profilo europeo per la formazione degli insegnanti di lingue*, PEFIL). In generale, appare eccessivo, nell'ottica del fruitore, il

⁵ T. De Mauro, S. Ferreri, *Glottodidattica come linguistica educativa*, in: M. Voghera, G. Basile, M. R. Guerriero (a cura di), *E.LI.CA. educazione linguistica e conoscenze per l'accesso*, Perugia, Guerra, 2005, pp. 17-28, cit. qui a p. 103.

peso specifico attribuito alla descrizione dettagliata delle certificazioni linguistiche di ognuna delle quattro lingue prese in considerazione – le quali, riferendosi tutte al *Quadro comune europeo di riferimento*, presentano la medesima scala di valutazione suddivisa in sei livelli di competenza, da A1 a C2 – e al susseguirsi diacronico delle varie raccomandazioni europee, con lunghe citazioni testuali che affaticano il lettore e che tendono a ripetere gli stessi contenuti.

Rispondendo alle tre domande formulate in apertura, il volume: a) si rivolge al futuro docente (o al docente in formazione) di LS o L2, non specificamente al docente di italiano L2, benché quest'ultimo possa trarne il maggior profitto, data la speciale attenzione prestata all'italiano L2 nel corso di tutta la trattazione; b) propone uno scambio biunivoco tra la linguistica e la glottodidattica, offrendo un apparato utilissimo di conoscenze linguistiche orientate alla didattica delle lingue moderne, e, grazie alla restituzione ragionata dello spessore storico-epistemologico del variegato ambito disciplinare in oggetto, si configura anche come 'metamanuale' di una glottodidattica consapevole; c) lascia poco spazio alla discussione critica di esempi concreti di progettazione didattica, intavolabile a partire dall'esaustiva panoramica sulle tecniche per lo sviluppo della competenza comunicativa (pp. 223-236); inoltre, a ben vedere, l'impianto nettamente bipartito è d'ostacolo all'omogeneità dell'insieme, e l'incontro, tanto auspicato, tra scienze dell'educazione e scienze del linguaggio, riesce solo parzialmente.

Italiano lingua 'plurale'

Il secondo strumento è una rivisitazione del manuale curato dalla stessa coesa triade di autori – Pierangela Diadori, Massimo Palermo e Donatella Troncarelli, tutti provenienti dall'Università per Stranieri di Siena – per l'editore Guerra nel 2009,⁶ di cui si conserva sostanzialmente la struttura, apportando i necessari aggiornamenti bibliografici e qualche ricalibratura strategica: viene snellita l'impostazione più spiccatamente manualistica del volume precedente, eliminando sia gli esempi autentici posti a fine paragrafo (lettere, interviste etc.), sia parte del corredo illustrativo e sussidiario (cartine, grafici, tabelle etc.)

La prima parte è dedicata al vaglio dei contesti di insegnamento-apprendimento dell'italiano L2: si tratta, s'intende, del settore più mobile dell'introduzione alla didattica di una lingua seconda, bisognoso di un continuo aggiornamento in relazione ai mutati profili degli apprendenti. Nel caso dell'italiano L2, si è assistito a uno slittamento dello *status* della lingua obiettivo, da lingua di cultura e lingua etnica (studiata dai discendenti degli emigrati italiani all'estero), a lingua veicolare sui luoghi di lavoro – per esempio, nelle sedi di aziende italiane all'estero – e, soprattutto, lingua necessaria ai migranti per inserirsi nel nuovo contesto socio-culturale. Diadori (capp. 1-2) e Troncarelli (3-4) rendono ragione dell'avvenuto cambiamento, distinguendo le caratteristiche degli apprendenti – definite a seconda degli specifici bisogni di apprendimento –, della natura dell'input fornito dal docente o dall'ambiente circostante, dell'output del discente lungo diverse fasi di apprendimento, e dei tipi di interazione, connessi di volta in volta all'italiano come lingua straniera fuori d'Italia, come lingua seconda sul territorio nazionale, come lingua d'origine, come lingua di contatto – settore in costante espansione in ragione delle migrazioni, transitorie o stabili, che passano per l'Italia. Il capitolo quinto fornisce invece un sintetico quadro diacronico e sincronico delle varie teorie dell'apprendimento, dalla stagione comportamentista alla prospettiva

⁶ P. Diadori, M. Palermo, D. Troncarelli, *Manuale di didattica dell'italiano L2*, Perugia, Guerra, 2009.

neuro- e psicolinguistica, attirando più volte l'attenzione del lettore sull'importanza dei fattori legati alle motivazioni personali, all'età e alla posizione sociale dell'apprendente, ovvero delle componenti psicoaffettive dell'insegnamento-apprendimento di una L2.

La seconda parte, affidata a Massimo Palermo, si concentra invece sull'oggetto dell'apprendimento, la lingua, scandagliata a partire da tre diverse angolazioni: quella grammaticale (cap. 6: 'Riflessione grammaticale e apprendimento'), quella dello sviluppo della competenza linguistica dell'apprendente (cap. 7: 'Le competenze per l'apprendimento dell'italiano L2) e quella delle diverse varietà dell'italiano (cap. 8: 'Quale italiano insegnare?'). Viene quindi messo a fuoco, dal punto di vista dell'apprendente, il rapporto tra grammatica cartacea e grammatica mentale, sollecitando a tenere sempre presente che lo scopo di un buon insegnamento metalinguistico è quello 'di accelerare lo sviluppo dell'interlingua e di aiutare a trasformare più efficacemente l'input in *intake*' (p. 175); successivamente, a partire dai suggerimenti contenuti nel *Quadro comune europeo di riferimento*, la competenza comunicativa viene scomposta nelle sue varie componenti prettamente linguistiche (fonologico-ortografica, morfologico-sintattica, sociolinguistica e pragmatica), con indicazioni precise sulla progressione dei contenuti da sottoporre all'apprendente, in relazione alle fasi comuni di apprendimento e ai bisogni comunicativi specifici; infine, viene problematizzata la questione dello standard e delle varietà dell'italiano – a partire da un consistente affondo storico-linguistico –, dettagliando i vari aspetti della ristandardizzazione in atto nell'italiano contemporaneo: il docente avrà il compito di guidare il discente all'uso consapevole dei diversi registri comunicativi, mirando all'acquisizione di un 'italiano comune' o 'tendenziale' – Palermo adotta l'etichetta proposta da Mioni,⁷ 'sia per la sua semplicità sia perché evoca più di altre le idee di normalità e neutralità suggerite dagli estensori del QCER' (p. 236, n. 7) –, in cui si intersecano fenomeni dell'italiano standard, messi nero su bianco dalle grammatiche normative, e tratti entrati nel neostandard.

La progettazione e la successiva realizzazione di percorsi didattici concreti sono quindi oggetto della terza e ultima macrosezione del manuale. Troncarelli (cap. 9) si sofferma innanzitutto sulla definizione della progettazione didattica, sui suoi obiettivi, sui diversi modelli di riferimento e sulla suddivisione in fasi a partire dall'analisi del contesto di insegnamento-apprendimento e dei bisogni comunicativi, per poi dedicare un paragrafo alla progettazione dei percorsi di apprendimento online. Diadori (cap. 10) espone quindi criticamente i modelli operativi a disposizione del docente, proponendo di sistematizzare la 'pluralità di casi concreti (dalla lezione all'unità didattica al modulo)' nel modello dell'unità di lavoro (UDL), 'micropercorso di apprendimento guidato, unitario, in sé concluso, valutabile e accreditabile' (p. 305) – elaborato dall'autrice stessa in altra sede –,⁸ che alla concezione sequenziale dell'apprendimento ne sostituisce una reticolare e cooperativa. Tale concezione si traduce in un'attenzione specifica rivolta alle interazioni asimmetriche e tra pari e alla densità comunicativa nelle specifiche situazioni di insegnamento-apprendimento, nonché alle caratteristiche del parlato del docente di italiano L2 nella gestione della

⁷ A. Mioni, *La situazione sociolinguistica italiana: lingua, dialetto, italiani regionali*, in: A. Colombo (a cura di), *Guida all'educazione linguistica. Fini, modelli, pratica didattica*, Bologna, Zanichelli, 1979, pp. 101-114; A. Mioni, *Italiano tendenziale: osservazioni su alcuni aspetti della standardizzazione*, in: AA. VV., *Scritti linguistici in onore di Giovan Battista Pellegrini*, vol. I, Pisa, Pacini, 1983, pp. 495-517.

⁸ P. Diadori, *La DITALS risponde 4*, Perugia, Guerra, 2006.

classe, aspetti che vengono illustrati con dovizia di esempi concreti (cap. 11). La trattazione è completata da una discussione ragionata delle modalità di misurazione delle competenze linguistico-comunicative in L2, seguita da una breve rassegna delle certificazioni linguistiche e glottodidattiche dell'italiano L2 e dei relativi strumenti per l'autovalutazione (cap. 12).

In risposta ai tre quesiti iniziali, il volume: a) si rivolge specificamente al futuro docente (o al docente in formazione) di italiano L2; b) si focalizza efficacemente sulle varietà di italiano, non solo mettendo in luce la dimensione 'plurale' della lingua, ma cercando anche di offrire una risposta concreta al docente che si interroghi su 'quale italiano insegnare': a tal fine, mostra con chiarezza opzioni applicative di progettazione didattica, configurandosi complessivamente come uno strumento in cui le varie parti sono in equilibrio fra loro, specchio della collaborazione fattiva dei tre compilatori; c) sottodimensiona lo spazio concesso alla cornice storico-epistemologica di riferimento – della quale vengono offerte solo concise, seppur pertinentissime, coordinate in funzione orientativa –, a fronte della disamina capillare e specifica di tutti gli aspetti coinvolti nell'insegnamento-apprendimento dell'italiano L2.

Conclusione

Ritornando circolarmente allo spunto di riflessione da cui si sono prese le mosse, non sembra scorretto affermare che, per quanto la 'pratica' sia indubitabilmente molto diversa dalla 'teorica', quest'ultima, se compresa e assimilata anche ricorrendo a strumenti complessivi come quelli analizzati, può offrire chiavi di accesso privilegiate alla comprensione dell'esperienza didattica 'sul campo'. L'elaborazione e la messa a punto di un approccio integrato e – almeno nelle intenzioni – sempre più funzionale alla didattica della lingua seconda, infatti, sono l'obiettivo della manipolazione eclettica e informata delle costruzioni teoriche di riferimento, le quali non si escludono reciprocamente, bensì concorrono, da diverse angolazioni, alla realizzazione di un modello tendenzialmente esaustivo per la comprensione dell'acquisizione di una lingua non materna.

Visti nel loro complesso, entrambi i manuali incontrano le esigenze del futuro docente di LS: l'uno, *Fondamenti di glottodidattica*, getta solide basi teoriche, - storico-epistemologiche e linguistiche - da cui lo studente può partire per costruire il proprio percorso di glottodidattica, l'altro, *Insegnare l'italiano come seconda lingua*, entra più nel vivo della questione delle modalità di insegnamento-apprendimento dell'italiano L2 e della gestione della classe, esibendo due diverse interpretazioni della polarità teoria/pratica su cui ci si è interrogati.

Claudia Bonsi

Sapienza Università di Roma (Italia)

Dipartimento di studi greco-latini, italiani, scenico-musicali

claudia.bonsi@yahoo.it

SEGNALAZIONI - SIGNALEMENTEN - NOTES

Il romanzo degli anni Trenta in una nuova (e inedita) prospettiva

La tesi di dottorato di Carmen Van den Bergh esplora un filone relativamente poco studiato della narrativa italiana degli anni Trenta, eppure decisivo per comprendere la storia del romanzo modernista in Italia. Il lavoro si suddivide in tre parti: la prima ricostruisce il dibattito delle poetiche; la seconda analizza dettagliatamente un corpus di ben otto romanzi; la terza ritorna infine sugli stessi testi per evidenziarne costanti tematiche, e soprattutto formali, trasversali, in una prospettiva comparatistica che non si limita ad un confronto con la grande letteratura modernista europea, ma si estende anche al cinema e ad altre forme d'arte visive. L'obiettivo è quello di comprendere la narrativa degli anni Trenta (e in particolar modo la narrativa "realista" di quel periodo) *iuxta propria principia* e al di là degli schematismi storiografici che le hanno sinora riservato un ruolo marginale (oppure funzionale alla costruzione del concetto di "romanzo neorealista"): Van den Bergh mostra invece la peculiarità di questa produzione narrativa e la qualità specifica del suo "realismo", in uno studio d'insieme che tiene conto dei vari aspetti della questione (contesto storico, componente generazionale, dibattito intellettuale, soluzioni formali), adottando la cornice teorica costruita e problematizzata negli ultimi anni dal gruppo di ricerca lovaniense MDRN.

Il corpus di otto romanzi è ampiamente rappresentativo della situazione del romanzo *lato sensu* realista negli anni Trenta. Raccogliendo e approfondendo alcuni suggerimenti bibliografici molto recenti (L. M. Rubino, R. Ben-Ghiat, S. Guerriero), Van den Bergh vi include anche alcuni titoli a torto considerati "minori" e invece decisivi per comprendere la reale situazione del romanzo in Italia tra il 1929 e il 1936 al di là del luogo comune che vuole la cultura dell'epoca fascista impermeabile alle suggestioni allogene e interamente votata a costruire una "via italiana" alla modernità letteraria. Ne risultano pienamente valorizzate opere straordinarie ma quasi dimenticate (e mai veramente canonizzate dall'editoria o dalla critica), come *Quartiere Vittoria* di Ugo Dèttore, un grandissimo romanzo döbliniano, realista ed espressionista, oggi totalmente scomparso dal dibattito critico, che meriterebbe di figurare accanto agli *Indifferenti* di Moravia o al *Garofano rosso* di Vittorini (anch'essi inclusi nel presente studio) nei syllabi dei corsi di Letteratura italiana contemporanea. E risultano adeguatamente messi in luce anche testi esteticamente forse meno riusciti, come *Luce fredda* di Barbaro o *Radiografia di una notte* di Emanuelli, ma che tuttavia hanno svolto un'importante funzione di moduli letterari del modernismo europeo resi funzionali a un nuovo realismo capace di rappresentare la frammentarietà e il carattere traumatico dell'esperienza nella città moderna.

Un filone interno della ricerca riguarda il sottogenere del *Bildungsroman*, nel quale Van den Bergh include *Adamo* di Eurialo De Michelis, *Il garofano rosso* di Vittorini e *Il capofabbrica* di Bilenchi. È una scelta rischiosa, dato il carattere (più psicologico ed esistenziale che realistico in senso stretto) che il romanzo di formazione ha avuto in Italia - e certamente il rischio è altissimo nelle pagine dedicate ad *Adamo*, il meno coraggioso e il più tradizionalista tra i testi presi ad esame. E tuttavia sia Vittorini sia Bilenchi mediano appunto i caratteri tipici del

Bildungsroman italiano con i conflitti ideologici della contemporaneità, con modalità che solo un decennio dopo (si pensi, di Bilenchi, a *Conservatorio di Santa Teresa*) diventeranno del tutto impensabili.

Giustamente più preoccupata di fornire una fenomenologia esaustiva del realismo degli anni Trenta, Van den Bergh non si interroga mai direttamente sul problema del canone, e tuttavia fornisce molti dati utili per iniziare a farlo. Cosa ha determinato la rapida emarginazione e la mancata assunzione nel canone di alcuni di questi romanzi? Perché oggi nessuno conosce quello che (secondo chi scrive) è un capolavoro assoluto, come *Quartiere Vittoria* di Dèttore? Come si spiega questo lungo e precoce oblio? Dare una risposta esaustiva a queste domande sarà possibile solo quando qualcuno si proverà a fare uno studio completo e dettagliato della *ricezione* del romanzo anni Trenta. E tuttavia qualche ipotesi si può già avanzare, anche grazie alla tesi di Van den Bergh e di altri giovani studiosi che stanno lavorando sullo stesso periodo. Anna Baldini, ad esempio, in un saggio del 2013 sulla genesi del concetto di neorealismo, ha dimostrato come l'affermazione di una letteratura del Neorealismo del dopoguerra, marcatamente eteronoma e incentrata sulla proposta di una narrativa eticamente e politicamente orientata, abbia spinto critici e lettori degli anni Quaranta e Cinquanta (e per forza d'inerzia anche le generazioni successive) a considerare il "neo-realismo" di Barbaro e soprattutto quello, artisticamente assai più maturo di Bernari e Dèttore, come un'anticipazione sì della nuova letteratura (del "vero" neorealismo), ma molto imperfetta e ancora troppo intrisa di elementi che i critici di orientamento marxista chiamavano "decadenti" (e che noi oggi definiremmo "modernisti"): proprio questi ultimi avrebbero costituito un ostacolo alla comunicazione letteraria che nell'Italia del dopoguerra doveva essere semplice, nazionalpopolare e in grado di parlare alla gente comune trasmettendo soprattutto valori positivi. Credo che l'ipotesi sia valida e che si possa estendere all'intero romanzo realista degli anni Trenta, incompreso perché schiacciato da un lato (e nell'immediato) dalla censura fascista e dall'altro da necessità di politica culturale legate alla ricostruzione.

Per concludere, il lavoro di Carmen Van den Bergh apre nuove strade alla conoscenza del romanzo italiano degli anni Trenta del Novecento, inserendosi con maturità e intelligenza nel dibattito critico italiano ed internazionale e raggiungendo risultati di indubbia rilevanza, che costringono a rivedere molti luoghi comuni. E per quanto mi riguarda, devo ammettere che la nozione di "realismo modernista" da me proposta alcuni anni fa necessita ora, grazie a questo studio una parziale revisione quantomeno relativamente alla questione della periodizzazione, che per i motivi esaurientemente esposti nella tesi deve necessariamente includere anche gli anni Trenta.

- Carmen Van den Bergh, *Il rinnovamento del romanzo 'realista' intorno al 1930. Fra dinamiche contestuali e tendenze giovanili (1926-1936)*, Leuven, KU Leuven, 2015, 366 p.

Riccardo Castellana

Dipartimento di filologia e critica delle letterature antiche e moderne

Università di Siena

via Roma 56

I-53100 Siena (Italia)

castellana@unisi.it

~

Rapporto della giuria del premio di traduzione Nella Voss-Del Mar, edizione 2015

Il premio di traduzione Nella Voss-Del Mar è stato istituito dal Werkgroep Italië Studies per stimolare e sostenere i giovani traduttori che con il loro lavoro contribuiscono a diffondere la cultura italiana nei Paesi Bassi e quella olandese in Italia. Il premio dell'edizione 2015 verrà assegnato alla migliore traduzione inedita in olandese di un testo letterario italiano. Secondo paragrafo.

Alla giuria, composta da Linda Pennings (Università di Amsterdam), Inge Lanslots (Università Cattolica di Lovanio) e Maria Bonaria Urban (Università di Amsterdam), sono pervenute cinque traduzioni. La giuria desidera esprimere innanzitutto viva soddisfazione ai traduttori – o meglio alle traduttrici, visto che tutti i partecipanti sono donne – per la qualità dei lavori e la passione che da essi promana.

Nella valutazione delle prove si è tenuto conto dei seguenti criteri:

1. la qualità della traduzione, sia per quanto riguarda l'uso dell'olandese che la fedeltà al testo di partenza in termini di complessità linguistica, stile, ritmo e punteggiatura.
2. la strategia traduttiva
3. la scelta del testo, per quanto riguarda l'originalità e l'interesse dal punto di vista traduttivo.

Segue un breve giudizio sulle singole traduzioni seguendo l'ordine alfabetico delle candidate.

Mara Baldi ha partecipato al concorso con la traduzione di tre brevi racconti di Sebastiano Vassalli e di un frammento tratto dal volume *Viaggi e viaggietti* di Sandro Veronesi. Si tratta di due autori molto diversi che mettono in luce la versatilità della traduttrice, ma forse l'abbinamento dei testi non convince completamente. Particolarmente apprezzata è stata la scelta del racconto *Il doge* di Vassalli: un testo molto ricco dal punto di vista linguistico, in cui abbondano i *realia* e le espressioni tipiche del veneziano. Dalla traduzione si evince il grande lavoro fatto dalla traduttrice che si è confrontata con un testo particolarmente complesso; in alcuni casi però la strategia traduttiva adottata non appare sempre efficace, come quando, per esempio, si apportano delle modifiche a livello di struttura sintattica che si sarebbero potute evitare o la traduzione di alcuni versi di una canzone in veneziano, seppur costituisce una vera e propria sfida traduttiva, non appare sempre riuscita. In alcuni casi infine si notano delle imprecisioni nell'olandese.

Linda de Vrij ha proposto la traduzione di dieci racconti tratti da *Boccacce* di Marco Lodoli. Un'opera molto interessante che ha richiesto un grande sforzo alla traduttrice per trovare delle soluzioni creative alle sfide lanciate dal testo. La strategia traduttiva adottata tuttavia non convince la giuria; la scelta dell'adattamento della storia al contesto olandese non restituisce veramente il messaggio di partenza, anzi si tende forse ad abbassare il livello del testo. Eliminare Roma dal racconto, in particolare, significa perdere una parte significativa della poetica di Lodoli. Inoltre non si comprende il motivo della modifica dei tempi verbali nel primo racconto. L'impressione generale è che Linda de Vrij sia stata particolarmente creativa ma il risultato non convince per una possibile pubblicazione.

La traduzione di Ana Duker di un frammento del romanzo *La vita accanto* di Mariapia Veladiano ha colpito la giuria per la qualità dell'olandese. L'accurata introduzione mette in luce l'attenzione con cui l'autrice ha affrontato il lavoro. Pur non trattandosi di un testo letterario particolarmente complesso e con limitate sfide traduttive, la traduzione è molto leggibile e di buona qualità: in essa si riconosce lo stile dell'originale, anche se in alcuni passaggi è troppo libera, per cui si perdono le

sfumature di significato. Sarebbe stato meglio costruire frasi più complesse per restituire appieno il senso del testo di partenza.

La traduzione proposta da Lies Lavrijsen era composta da due racconti di Leonardo Sciascia, *Arrivano i nostri* e *La laurea*. In generale la traduzione ha convinto la giuria per quanto riguarda l'uso dell'olandese. Il racconto *Arrivano i nostri* era il più complesso fra i due dal punto di vista traduttivo: nel commento ci soffermeremo in particolare su di esso. Pur essendo ben tradotto, sorprende la scelta di modificare profondamente la punteggiatura; ciò contribuisce alla perdita del ritmo del periodare tipico in Sciascia, allontanandosi in questo modo dallo stile dell'autore. Inoltre, cambiando il registro si perde un po' anche l'aspetto poetico del testo.

Il testo *Geologia di un padre* di Valerio Magrelli, tradotto da Emilia Menkveld, è particolarmente complesso dal punto di vista linguistico e stilistico, rimanendo sospeso fra prosa e poesia. La traduzione si contraddistingue per la qualità dell'olandese, la coerenza nelle strategie adoperate e la fedeltà al testo di partenza, anche se si perdono alcuni dettagli ed elementi poetici; inoltre, forse si sarebbe potuto fare uno sforzo ulteriore per essere ancora più creativi. Infine, la giuria ha apprezzato la buona contestualizzazione del testo fornita dalla traduttrice.

Da questa breve carrellata si comprende che anche in questa occasione il concorso ha messo in luce la complessità del lavoro di traduzione; i testi sottoposti al giudizio della giuria, anche se necessitano di essere perfezionati per un'eventuale pubblicazione, sono nel complesso di buona qualità e sono di buon auspicio per il futuro della traduzione letteraria in lingua olandese. Fra i testi proposti tuttavia, uno se ne distingue nettamente per la qualità della traduzione, per il coraggio mostrato dalla traduttrice nell'affrontare un'opera di grande complessità intellettuale e stilistica. Dalla traduzione si evince non solo il gusto e la passione per l'arte del tradurre ma anche un grande talento, soprattutto se si tiene conto della giovane età della traduttrice.

Sulla base di questo giudizio, la giuria ha unanimemente deciso di assegnare il premio Nella Voss-Del Mar 2015 a Emilia Menkveld, per la traduzione di *Geologia di un padre*.

Het bestuur van de Werkgroep Italiëstudies
werkgroep@italiestudies.nl

~

Juryrapport WIS Onderzoeksprijs Kunstgeschiedenis 2014

Zoals gebruikelijk presenteert de WIS in het jaar na de *bando* van de Onderzoeksprijs haar resumé van de kandidaten, en haar keuze van de winnaar. Dat zou misschien sneller kunnen, ware het niet dat deze periode ons als juryleden de gelegenheid geeft om meer afstand te nemen van de verschillende publicaties, en te zien welke de meeste resonantie opgeleverd hebben in het betreffende veld. U begrijpt, we gaan niet over één nacht ijs bij het identificeren van de beste publicatie op het gebied van de Italiëstudies.

De discipline van de WIS Onderzoeksprijs over 2014 is die van de Kunstgeschiedenis, en de publicaties die dit keer voorlagen aan de jury zijn verschenen in de periode 2011 tot en met 2013. Net als bij de voorgaande editie, die de discipline van de Italianistiek oftewel de Italiaanse taal- en letterkunde betrof, kunnen we terugkijken op een rijke oogst waarin zowel bekende academici als ook

jong talent te ontwaren is. Voorwaar een teken dat de studie van de Italiaanse kunst, ondanks de afnemende ondersteuning van de zijde van de Nederlandse universiteiten, waar de aandacht steeds meer uitgaat naar moderne en contemporaine kunst die hetzij Nederlands, hetzij Angelsaksisch is, en de toenemende concentratie op Nederlandse kunst bij gremia als NWO, nog steeds een levende traditie is met onderzoekers die hun tijd hieraan wijden. Daarnaast maakte deze uitgebreide oogst de keuze waar de jury voor stond zoals gebruikelijk moeilijk, maar ook uitdagend.

Een aantal publicaties van formaat kwam van de hand van bekende onderzoekers op dit terrein. We noemen hier mensen als Bernard Aikema, die publiceerde over onder andere Titiaan en Lorenzo Lotto; Sible de Blaauw, die in een aantal belangrijke studies bijdroeg aan het inzicht in de liturgische aspecten van vroegchristelijke kerken in Rome; Lex Bosman, die studies wijdde aan vroegchristelijke fases van Romeinse basilica's als de Sint Jan van Lateranen; Bram Kempers, die onder andere publiceerde over de veranderingen aan de Sint Pieter in de tijd van Julius II; Bert Meijer, die samen met enkele collega's een nieuw deel publiceerde in de serie van inventarissen van Nederlandse en Vlaamse werken in Italiaanse collecties; en Jan L. de Jong, die een studie publiceerde over pauselijk opdrachtgeverschap in de late vijftiende en zestiende eeuw. In deze groep vinden we ook eerdere winnaars van de WIS Onderzoeksprijs, zoals Gert Jan van der Sman en Maarten Delbeke, die beiden hun productiviteit op niveau wisten voort te zetten, en Arnold Witte, die recent benoemd is als staflid van het Koninklijk Nederlands Instituut in Rome.

Naast deze 'steunpilaren' van de Italiaanse kunstgeschiedenis in Nederland en Vlaanderen heeft zich ook een jongere generatie aangediend van promovendi en net gepromoveerden die reeds hun sporen hebben verdiend met interessante bijdragen aan het veld. Onder hen bevinden zich Klazina Botke die, in het kader van een door Henk van Veen opgezet project, publiceerde over Florentijnse patriciërs als opdrachtgevers, Eelco Nagelsmit, die de totstandkoming van boek zes van Serlio aan een onderzoek onderwierp, en Martijn van Beek die schreef over de interpretatie van Guarino Guarini door de architectuurhistoricus Sigfried Giedion.

Twee zeer productieve en veelbelovende jonge kandidaten ontwaren we onder de *studiosi* die uit Leiden afkomstig zijn - dat is bij deze editie überhaupt een opvallend aspect, de Leidse impact op de Italiaanse kunstgeschiedenis, via de onderzoeksgroep van Caroline van Eck - namelijk Elsje van Kessel en Joris van Gastel, die beiden in 2011 promoveerden. Elsje van Kessel publiceerde onder andere in *Studiolo* en *Art History* over Venetiaanse schilderkunst en poëzie, en droeg hoofdstukken bij aan twee belangwekkende bundels over vroegmoderne cultuur. Zeker net zo productief was Joris van Gastel, die verschillende opstellen over beeldhouwkunst, materialiteit en de effecten op de beschouwer schreef voor tijdschriften als *Word & Image* en daarnaast ook een bundel co-redigeerde over de Paragone-kwestie. Daarmee kunnen we vaststellen dat in Leiden de aandacht voor de Italiaanse kunst gelukkig voortzetting heeft gevonden in een actieve groep onderzoekers en promovendi, hetgeen de WIS zeer toejuicht.

Bij het kiezen van de winnaar van de WIS Onderzoeksprijs hanteren we altijd twee criteria die op zichzelf ongelijksoortig zijn, maar elkaar wel aanvullen: met het onderscheiden van de beste publicatie willen we tegelijkertijd ook de 'beste onderzoeker' belonen. Daarmee willen we enerzijds jong talent stimuleren, maar we vinden het ook belangrijk om mensen die al langere tijd een bijdrage leveren aan het vakgebied daarvoor erkenning te verlenen. Dit jaar hebben we daarom gekozen om een 'steunpilaar' van de Italiaanse kunstgeschiedenis lof toe te zwaaien voor een belangrijke bijdrage aan het vakgebied; daarnaast is de persoon in kwestie ook de

auteur van de publicatie die internationaal de meeste aandacht heeft getrokken. Uit de rijke oogst heeft de WIS na rijp beraad namelijk besloten om Jan de Jong aan te wijzen als winnaar van de WIS Onderzoeksprijs van 2014. Naast zijn vele bijdragen in de vorm van artikelen over verschillende aspecten van de beeldende kunst in zestiende-eeuws Italië publiceerde hij namelijk ook, bij de belangrijke uitgever Pennsylvania State University Press, in 2013 het boek *The power and the glorification: papal pretensions and the art of propaganda in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries*, over de wijze waarop verschillende pausen, van Alexander VI tot en met Gregorius XIII (de periode tussen 1492 en 1585), hun politieke doelen ten aanzien van andere Europese heersers, de stad Rome, of hun familie, visualiseerden door middel van kunstopdrachten. Het boek is de weerslag van de jarenlange onderzoekservaring van Jan de Jong op het gebied van de zestiende-eeuwse kunst in Rome.

Centraal staat de vraag welke autoriteit de paus nu precies heeft over wie (de kwestie van de wereldse en religieuze *plenitudo plenitatis*), en hoe je een mechanisme organiseert dat die autoriteit continu legitimeert. De Jong beantwoordt deze vraag door zich te richten op propaganda die plaatsvindt via beelden - een exercitie van de pausen die hij in het licht van de Reformatie een 'achterhoedegevecht' noemt. Er worden, bekeken door de ogen van contemporaine bezoekers, vijf decoratieprogramma's bestudeerd waarvan de propagandistische inhoud in expliciete toeneemt: Pintoricchio's fresco's voor het Castel Sant'Angelo, de fresco's van Ripanda in het Conservatorenpaleis, de Zaal van Constantijn in het Vaticaanse Paleis, de anticamera del Consiglio in Palazzo Farnese in Caprarola, en de Sala Regia in het Vaticaanse Paleis.

Het boek is een zeer rijke versmelting van kunstgeschiedenis, kerkgeschiedenis en politieke geschiedenis, op een toegankelijke en innemende wijze geschreven. Het werd vrijwel direct door internationale recensenten opgemerkt en geprezen, en de WIS sluit zich daar nu van harte bij aan. Daarnaast wil de WIS de grote inzet waarmee Jan de Jong in Groningen al meer dan 25 jaar zijn ervaring en kennis met veel enthousiasme aan studenten overbrengt, met deze prijs, bestaande uit een oorkonde en een geldbedrag van € 1000, belonen.

Het bestuur van de Werkgroep Italiëstudies
werkgroep@italiestudies.nl

~

Alessandro Baricco, Eredactor KU Leuven

Naar aanleiding van haar Patroonsfeest bekroont de KU Leuven jaarlijks personen met bijzondere verdiensten op wetenschappelijk, maatschappelijk of cultureel vlak. Op 10 februari 2016 worden eredoctoraten uitgereikt aan vijf mensen die uitblinken in hun domein. Alessandro Baricco is één van hen. Promotor van het eredoctoraat is professor Bart Van Den Bossche (Italiaanse literatuur KU Leuven, onderzoeksgroep MDRN).

Met romans als *Oceaan van een zee* en *Zijde* wist Baricco, schrijver en cultuurcriticus, de literaire kritiek én een breed literatuurminnend publiek voor zich te winnen. In zijn essays toont hij zich een scherp waarnemer en gevat chroniqueur van de hedendaagse samenleving. In zijn boek *De Barbaren* haalt Baricco de

populaire mythe van de culturele Apocalyps onderuit. Hij argumenteert dat onze cultuur niet verwoest wordt, maar gewoon verandert.

Om kennis te maken met Baricco's werk, zullen er tijdens de maanden januari en februari activiteiten worden georganiseerd waarop iedereen welkom is. Zoals een filmreeks of een reeks leesworkshops waarop telkens ook een of twee gastsprekers uitgenodigd zijn (vertalers, journalisten, specialisten van Italiaanse literatuur, de rector) die hun ervaringen met de boeken van Baricco delen met het publiek.

Meer informatie omtrent de evenementen en concrete data vindt u alvast op de websites van de KU Leuven en van het Centrum voor Italiaanse studies.

Centro di Studi Italiani (KU Leuven)

<https://www.arts.kuleuven.be/italianistica>