Philostratus Illustrated: The Reception of the *Imagines* in Renaissance Art and Culture

PhD thesis

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my father Frank L. Williamson and my friend Dott.ssa Maria Fossi Todorow.
Philostratus Illustrated: The Reception of the Imagines in Renaissance Art and Culture

PREFACE

The Imagines of Philostratus the Elder and his grandson Philostratus the Younger, is the only book surviving from antiquity that deals solely with the appreciation of painting. The thesis describes and analyses the ways in which the Imagines has been rediscovered, translated, read and interpreted by humanists, artists and their patrons, from the time of the first printed edition in 1503 to the beginning of the seventeenth century when its popularity with artists diminished. A desire to re-visit the Classical past was generated not only by Philostratus’ vivid descriptions of paintings, but also by the example of a luxurious villa setting and the aristocratic lifestyle it suggested. The thesis is not designed as a catalogue of works of art that illustrate Philostratus’ descriptions; rather, it provides a discussion on the transmission of an artistic taste for the antique that took place from the Renaissance onward. To investigate this, the thesis visits a group of villas in Italy and France where such a transmission of taste occurred when ideas from Philostratus, Pliny and Vitruvius created a new architectural philosophy. The decoration of these villas reveals evidence of the ways in which the Imagines was projected onto the Renaissance imagination. A thorough interrogation of the iconographical programmes the Imagines engendered in these Renaissance villas has


2 This thesis will follow the tradition of referring to Philostratus the Elder as the main creator of the Imagines and using his name as proxy for the text he wrote eg. “illustrating Philostratus”. Reference to “Philostratus’ descriptions” refers to the entire collection of descriptions published by both Philostratus the Elder and Philostratus the Younger and will be used instead of alternatives such as “the descriptions of the Philostratoi”. The seventeen descriptions of paintings attributed to Philostratus the Elder’s grandson, called Philostratus the Younger, are written in imitation of the Elder’s original sixty-five ekphraseis and the two collections appear together, with few exceptions, in the manuscript tradition and since the first printed edition of 1503.
been neglected in the existing critical literature on Philostratus. Scholarly focus traditionally remains on the levels of language in the *Imagines* and its place in the development of Classical ekphrasis. Modern scholarship has been more concerned with assessing the identity of the author and the status of the author in the Second Sophistic, rather than following the re-emergence of the text at a later age. Publications that analyse the literary aspects of the text outweigh those that examine the history of its reception and practical use by artists.\(^3\) The latest study to be published on the *Imagines* is *Le défi de l’art. Philostrate, Calistrate et l’image sophistique* by Michel Constantini, Françoise Graziani and Stéphane Rolet with contributions from other scholars.\(^4\) Again, the focus is on literary theory and the Sophistic movement and little consideration is given to the relationship between the book and the art of the time, or the art it motivated within the Classical tradition. It is hoped that this thesis will make a contribution to the study of the *Imagines* and its influence upon later art and establish a profile for Philostratus as an antique source that inspired artists alongside the more recognized iconographical sources of Ovid and Lucian.\(^5\)

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Structure of the thesis

Adhering to a chronological progression, the first chapter introduces the author and the text, presenting an overview of the transmission of the Imagines from the late Roman era to the fifteenth century, with a discussion on its use in Byzantine education. The examination of the re-emergence of Classical mythology in early-Renaissance painting sets the context for the main body of the thesis which deals with the reception of the Imagines in sixteenth-century European art, architecture and culture. Chapters Three to Five analyse the levels of narrative in the text and set the work in the context of sixteenth-century Renaissance Europe, relating Philostratus to the theory and practice of artists as evidenced by works of art that relate directly to the Imagines.

The resulting definition of the Imagines as a vivid evocation of a Hellenistic art gallery that inspired Renaissance artists to ‘re-create’ antiquity, allows a reconsideration of Philostratus' descriptions within the genre of ancient ekphrasis pertaining to works of art. I would hope to arrive not only at a better comprehension of the works of art and architecture discussed, but also to provide a look at the values of which these works were a synthetic expression. This part of the thesis includes unpublished material on the Renaissance decorative scheme for the Canonica di San Martino al Montughi in Florence, Italy.

The final section of the thesis traces the ways in which the Imagines were adapted to suit the tastes of the Baroque through the lavish illustrated 1614 French translation by Blaise de Vigenère, which changed the way ancient ekphrasis and the art it described, were perceived. The use of Philostratus’ Imagines by Rubens and Poussin provides a context against which to consider the declining reliance upon textual sources from antiquity at a time when the archaeological discoveries at Pompeii and Herculaneum were supplying new evidence of the Classical past.

The main analysis will trace the reception of the Imagines throughout Europe and the methods by which Philostratus reached the attention of patrons and painters. This is also a thesis about the text itself and the forces of inspiration therein that lead to material creation; one art inspiring and giving birth to another.
CHAPTER ONE: THE IMAGINES BEFORE 1500

- The Author
- The Content of the *Imagines*: The Gallery
- Philostratus’ Sources
- The *Imagines* in Late Roman and Byzantine Education
- The *Imagines* from the East to the West: The Manuscripts
- Context: The Rebirth of Mythological Art in Renaissance Italy
- Cosimo dei Medici and Fifteenth-Century attitudes towards Pagan Iconography
- Donatello and Mantegna: Recognizing the Antique
- Philostratus c. 1500: from textbook to historical object
CHAPTER ONE
The Imagines before 1500

The Author

Have you noticed, my boy, that the painting here is based on Homer, or have you failed to do so because you are lost in wonder as to how in the world the fire could live in the midst of the water?

Scamander (7F).

With the Imagines, the author’s aim is not simply to educate his audience as to what should be admired in art but to use the discussion as a platform from which to narrate a wide range of Greek myths. This re-telling of Greek mythology is wrapped up in a virtuoso oral performance intended to be used as an exemplar by pupils of rhetoric. As a result, the Imagines of Philostratus have a threefold academic purpose encompassing art, language and cultural history.

This compilation of formal descriptions, or ekphraseis, which describe a gallery of sixty-five masterpieces of painting, can be read as a captivating literary device by which Roman philhellenes of the third century AD could step back in time to a distant Greek past via Philostratus’ “pure attic Greek” and the exclusively Greek subject matter.

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6 Scamander (K296) ἔγνως, ὦ παῖ, ταῦτα ὀμήρου ὡντα ἢ οὐ πώποτε ἐγνωκας δηλαδή θαύμα ἡγούμενος, ὥσπερ δήποτε ξη τό πῦρ ἐν τῷ ὕδατι; συμβάλλωμεν οὖν, ὃ τι νοεῖ, σὺ δὲ ἀπόβλεψον αὐτῶν, ὅσον ἐκείνα ἑδεῖν, ἀφ᾽ ὧν ἡ γραφή (Imagines I.1). Due to the interdisciplinary nature of this thesis, quotations from the Imagines are given in English in the main body of the text using the Arthur Fairbanks translation: Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1931 (accessable online at http://www.theoi.com/Text/PhilostratusElder1A.html) and will be followed by page reference and F for Fairbanks in round brackets. Larger passages of Greek text will be limited to footnotes. When referring to specific lines in the Imagines and Callistratus, I will give the chapter heading followed by the page number in the Kayser edition, signified by the letter K, in round brackets.

7 In his Proemium, Philostratus the Younger comments on his grandfather’s elegant use of the Attic Greek language in its ancient pure form (λίαν ἄττικῶς τῆς γλώττης) K390 which was rarely used at the time he was writing. By the end of the third century AD, Attic Greek had largely been replaced by koiné a form of Greek which is best explained by R. Webb as “although based on the Greek spoken in Athens in the fourth century BC, incorporated many non-Attic forms and used simpler versions of Classical syntax. The koiné itself varied widely over the Greek-speaking world and between social classes”, 1992, p. 16. (see also S. Swain, Hellenism and Empire. Language, Classicism and Power in the Greek World, AD 50-250, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, 18-19.)
Philostratus excludes any scenes from Virgil’s *Aeneid* or episodes relating to Roman history, despite the popularity of such subjects in the type of Hellenistic painting we presume he viewed in Campania. More specifically, as Philostratus himself tells us, the *Imagines* is written for the children of these affluent philhellenes and the text’s pedagogic nature is central to our understanding of it. The ways in which the *Imagines* were used in the teaching of Classical Greek in Late Byzantium and in fifteenth-century Italy will be described on the basis of evidence from manuscripts, humanists’ letters, commentaries and library inventories.

There is no recorded date for the creation of the *Imagines* although it seems likely that it was written towards the end of Philostratus the Elder’s life, which according to an entry in the Byzantine *Suda* would be around the reign of M. Iulius Philippus, 244-249 AD.\(^8\) As a form of grammatical primer for the learning of rhetoric, the *Imagines* enjoyed its longest success. From the time it appeared in the third century AD till its transmission from the Byzantine East to the Renaissance West, the *Imagines* was used in the teaching of Classical ekphrasis and rhetoric. It was not until the text reappeared in late fifteenth-century Italy that anyone took much interest in its significance as a document of art historical value.\(^9\)

Despite the paintings described in the *Imagines* having no inconsistencies with what we know of Graeco-Roman art, its forensic value as a piece of archaeological evidence for lost Hellenistic masterpieces is minimal because there is little technical commentary and no information on the artists. In fact, the *Imagines* tells us less about Hellenistic painting practices than it does about Roman ways of viewing art. The descriptions of painting are more synthetic than factual and art criticism is limited. It was rather the content, the explanation of ‘what went on’ in Classical paintings that captured the

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\(^8\) *Suidae Lexicon, Φιλοστράτος* (sic.) ed. A Adler, Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner, 1967-71, vol. 4, 734. (ep) 1928-38: hereafter referred to as the *Suda*. Further discussion on the topic of rhetorical training is found under the sub-heading ‘The Imagines’ in Late Roman and Byzantine Education; this chapter.

\(^9\) There is no record of how the first copy of the *Imagines* reached mainland Europe but it could be as early as the first quarter of the thirteenth century when Greek intellectuals were recorded in Northern Italy. Renaissance studies tend to concentrate on the migration of Greeks to Italy after the fall of Byzantium in 1453, however many Greek scholars crossed over to Italy beforehand: Demetrio Chalcocondylas, Alessandro Zenos, Nicolas Leonicos, Marino Becichem, Romolo Amasacus, and Nicolo Caliachi all taught at the University of Padua in the fourteenth century. R. Webb suggests that a manuscript of the *Imagines* probably arrived via the hands of a Greek scholar and possibly as early as the time of Petrarch (1304-1374). As evidence for this argument Webb writes “A curious note written in Petrarch’s copy of the *Iliad*, 1.341 includes a reference to the legend of Palamedes as told only by Philostratus in the *Heroikos* and the *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*.” The *Imagines* generally appears with the *Heroikos* in the manuscript tradition, so it seems likely that Petrarch would have at least been aware of its existence, if not familiar with, the text. See A Pertusi, *Leonzio Pilato fra Petrarcha e Boccaccio*, Istituto Per La Collaborazione Culturale, Venice, 1979, 342 n.1.
Renaissance imagination. The narratives were important and so too, was the model of the seaside palace of many terraces which housed these art treasures. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, when the text was made accessible to artists, patrons and architects, through written and oral translations, the *Imagines* became a source of iconography for painters. Just as the incredibly detailed ekphraseis gave artists a chance to re-enact the feats of, and compete with, the legendary Apelles and Zeuxis, so too did patrons seize the opportunity to emulate Philostratus’ wealthy Roman connoisseur by re-creating versions of his fabulous gallery, within their own palaces and villas.

Fig. 1 First Century AD, wall fresco from the Villa San Marco, Varano Hill, Castellammare di Stabia, showing the type of maritime villa with a grand loggia that Philostratus describes. Courtesy of the Superintendency of Pompei and of the Restoring Ancient Stabiae (RAS) Foundation.

L. Flavius Philostratus variously known as Philostratus the Elder, Philostratus the Lemnian and Philostratus the Athenian, is thought to have been born in Greece some time between 170 to 190 AD.10 Virtually all we know about the author is contained in his own writings. He was a Sophist who gives his credentials for writing about art in the

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10 The birth date of the author of the *Imagines* is not known and estimated dates vary from circa 170 to as late as 200 AD. Dates from scholars include: WC Wright (trans), *Philostratus, The Lives of the Sophists*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass., 1952, ix.: “Flavius Philostratus was born about 170, perhaps in Lemnos” ; Anderson, 296: “a date as late as 180 would not be out of the question”.
Proemium of the Imagines where he claims that he spent four years in Caria learning the art of painting from one Aristodemus, “who painted in the technique of Eumelus”.

Our Sophist studied at Athens with Proclus and Antipater; at Olympia with Hippodromus and at Ephesus with Damianus. He later travelled to Italy where he taught the young men of wealthy Roman families and enjoyed celebrity status as a skilled public speaker. We are given an indication of Philostratus’ high estimation of his own reputation in this passage where in front of the Emperor Antonius Caracalla, the skills of the orator Philiscus are cast into poor comparison:

And when Philiscus said: “You have given me exemption from public services by giving me the chair at Athens,” the Emperor cried at the top of his voice: “Neither you nor any other teacher is exempt! Never would I, for the sake of a few miserable speeches, rob the cities of men who ought to perform public services.” Nevertheless he did, even after this incident, decree for Philostratus of Lemnos, then aged twenty-four, exemption from public service as a reward for a declamation.”

(Philostratus, Lives of the Sophists, ‘Life of Philiscus the Thessalian’ II.30)

This passage provides one of only two early references made to Philostratus’ age, indicating he was already well known whilst still a young man during the reign of Caracalla (211-217 AD). Even allowing for precociousness and the advantages of an

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11 Proemium (K295), ἔγραφε δὲ κατὰ τὴν Ἐὐμήλου σοφίαν πολὺ τὸ ἐπίχαρι ἐς αὐτὴν φέρων


13 Caracalla reigned alone during the period 211-217 AD but commenced a series of joint reign periods earlier with Severus in 198.
Athenian education, it is difficult to reconcile his travels and extensive studies with the knowledge he was already established as a Sophist in Rome by his twenty-fifth year. The truth about our author’s age, origins and career is one of the major problems plaguing Philostratean studies. Evidently, there was a whole dynasty of Sophists from Lemnos carrying the name of Philostratus to which as many as eight different works have been attributed.

However it is generally agreed that the Philostratus from Lemnos known to Caracalla is the author of the first two books of the Imagines which contain descriptions of sixty-five paintings he claims to have viewed firsthand in a luxurious Roman villa near Naples.

I was lodging outside the walls (of Naples) in a suburb facing the sea, where there was a portico built on four, I think, or possibly five terraces, open to the west wind and looking out on the Tyrrhenian sea. It was resplendent with all the marbles favoured by luxury, but it was particularly splendid by reason of the panel-paintings set in the walls, paintings which I thought had been collected with real judgement, for they exhibited the skill of very many painters.

This first group of ekphraseis is what scholars refer to predominantly as the Imagines (or Eikones) of Philostratus. A second group of seventeen ekphraseis describing works

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14 By contrast, Lucian (whom Philostratus is often grouped with and compared to) claimed that a similar career as an orator in Italy had made him famous; but this is mentioned by none of his contemporaries. Lucian speaks as ‘The Syrian’ in The Double Indictment and ’Oratory’, speaks as his wife: “When he decided to go travelling in order to show how happily married he was, I did not desert him even then, but trailed up and down after him everywhere and made him famous and renowned by giving him finery and dressing him out. On our travels in Greece and in Ionia I do not lay so much emphasis; but when he took a fancy to go to Italy, I crossed the Adriatic with him, and at length I journeyed with him as far as Gaul, where I made him rich.” Lucian III, (trans) AM Harmon, William Heinemann Ltd, London; Harvard University Press, Cambridge (Mass.), 1967, 137-139. Philostratus is compared to Lucian mainly because of their use of ekphrasis to describe works of art and this is reflected in the way their works were catalogued during the Renaissance. However, even less is known of Lucian’s early period, than that of Philostratus. Robinson observed that Lucian delivered his orations in Gaul, Macedonia and the Pô valley, which were “hardly the most fashionable parts of the empire”. C Robinson, Lucian and His Influence in Europe, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1979, 2-3.

15 The problem of attribution has been explored by Professor Ludo de Lannoy of Antwerp, in ‘Le problème des Philostrate (Etat de la question)’ in: Rise and Decline of the Roman World, Haase Wolfgang [edit.], e.a., Berlin, De Gruyter, Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt 2.34.3, 1997, 2362-2449.

16 Anderson puts forward a theory that instead of the conventional four members of the Philostratus family thought to be authors of the various known works, that there may only have been two authors, with Philostratus the Elder writing all works in the Corpus Philostrateum except for the second Imagines, which would be assigned to his grandson. Anderson, 292-3.

17 Proemium (K295) κατέλυον δὲ ἐξω τοῦ τείχους ἐν προαστείῳ τεττάμενῳ πρὸς θάλασσαν, ἐν ψ ςτὸι τις ἐξ ἐξωκοδόμητο κατὰ ξέφυρον ἄνεμον ἐπὶ τεττάρων, οἷμα, ἢ καὶ πέντε ὑποφύων ἀφορώσα ἐς τὸ Τυρρηνικὸν πέλαγος. ὡστραπτε μὲν ὦν καὶ λίθως, ὁπόσους ἐπαινεῖ τρυφή, μάλιστα δὲ ἢνθεὶ γραφαῖς ἐνηρμοσμένων αὐτή πινάκων, ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖν οὐκ ἀμαθῶς τις συνελέξατο, σοφία γὰρ ἐν αὐτοῖς ἔδηλοῦτο πλειόνων ζωγράφων.
of art in imitation of the prototype and written by his grandson Philostratus the Younger, normally appear alongside those of the Elder in the manuscript tradition but have generally been considered of secondary importance.18

The Byzantine Suda-lexicon, which is not always a reliable source, places the author of the Imagines as one of three Philostratoi from Lemnos writing at the time of Septimius Severus (193-211 AD) and puts his death in the reign of M. Iulius Philippus (Philip the Arab) 244-249 AD.19 Due largely to conflicting entries in the Suda, the issue is to date unresolved as to whether our Philostratus the Elder is also author of other works in the Corpus Philostrateum;

- Life of Apollonius of Tyana
- Lives of the Sophists
- Nero; a discourse20
- Heroicus; a dialogue on the heroes of the Trojan War21
- Gymnasticus; a treatise on athletics22
- Epistolae; a collection of erotic epistles23

Evidence exists to attribute both the Imagines and the Heroicus to our Philostratus the Elder from Lemnos, with Menander Rhetor of Laodicea referring in the late third or

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18 R. Webb comments: “Although the Younger Philostratos was clearly aware of the qualities of his grandfather’s style, he did not succeed in imitating it. After the condensed urgency of the Elder Philostratos, he gives a feeling of leisurely discursiveness, with nothing of the tension and expectancy of his model.” (1992) p.15. An example of how the descriptions written by Philostratus the Younger have been regarded as inferior to those of his grandfather is to be found in the most lavish edition to date; the illustrated publication of Blaise de Vigenère’s 1578 French translation. All sixty-five descriptions of Philostratus the Elder are accompanied by quarto page illustrations in this edition, whereas the publishers felt only one description by his grandson warranted an illustration; ΑΘΥΡΟΝΤΕΣ (Boys at Play), description 8 in Les images ou tableaux de platte peinture de Philostrate Lemnien Sophiste Grec, Abel l’Angelier, Paris, 1614. This French edition is the subject of Chapter Six of the thesis.

19 Suda, vol. IV, 734. Anderson suggests that the Suda is not the most reliable source regarding the life of our author when he comments: “The Byzantine Suda-Lexicon ranges him as the second of a series of three Philostrati from Lemnos; its indications are impossible to reconcile with the surviving works, and scholars have to content to salvage a likely possibility:” Anderson, 3.


early fourth century AD to both works as being written by the one author\textsuperscript{24}, a view repeated in the \textit{Suda}.\textsuperscript{25}

The earliest mention of Philostratus the Lemnian is found in \textit{Lives of the Sophists}:

“\textit{But of Philostratus of Lemnos and his ability in the law courts, in political harangues, in writing treatises, in declamation, and lastly of his talent for speaking extempore, it is not for me to write}”. This quote from the \textit{Lives} (II.33) ‘Life of Aspasius of Ravenna’\textsuperscript{26}, could be read either as evidence that the author of the \textit{Imagines} and the author of the \textit{Lives} are separate hands that share a family name, or it could indicate that both works share the same author. This passage, which supposedly quotes Aspasius, suggests that whilst the author could expand at length on the virtues of Philostratus of Lemnos, it would not be seemly, since it would be self-congratulatory.\textsuperscript{27} The next mention of Philostratus is by Eunapius (346-414 AD) in his \textit{Lives of the Philosophers} where he further attributes both the \textit{Apollonius of Tyana} and the \textit{Lives of the Sophists} to ‘the Lemnian Philostratus’ (ὁ Λήμνιος ἔπετέλεσε Φιλόστρατος).\textsuperscript{28} Eunapius comments reluctantly on Philostratus’ “agreeable style” and pays Philostratus the compliment of imitation by plagiarizing \textit{Lives of the Sophists}. The entry in the tenth-century \textit{Suda} also seems to rely on the comments of Eunapius.

Contemporary to Eunapius is Menander Rhetor, who also praises Philostratus’ style of writing:

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{25} \textit{Suda}, Adler, 735.
\item \textsuperscript{26} \textit{Lives} (K126-7) τοσαῦτα περὶ ἀσπασίου. περὶ δὲ Φιλοστράτου Λημνίου καὶ τίς μὲν ἐν δικαστηρίοις ὁ ἀνὴρ οὗτος, τίς δὲ ἐν δημηγορίαις, τίς δὲ ἐν συγγράμμασι, τίς δὲ ἐν μελέταις, ὥσος δὲ ἐν σχεδίῳ λόγῳ, καὶ περὶ Νικαγόρου τοῦ Ἀθηναίου, δὲ καὶ τοῦ Ἐλευσινίου ἱεροῦ κήρυξ ἔστεφθη. Aspasius of Ravenna was Philostratus’ contemporary and rival. A sophist in Rome, he was author of \textit{Against Those who are Fond of Slander; Against Ariston} and miscellaneous discourses.
\item \textsuperscript{27} The translator of the \textit{Lives of the Sophists}, WC Wright, offers a third explanation where he puts forward the idea that the author of the \textit{Lives}, is a Flavius Philostratus, the father-in-law of Philostratus of Lemnos; author of the \textit{Imagines}. However, I have found no other source that corroborates Wright’s theory. Wright (trans), 1952, ix.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
“Grace of style may also be derived from studied and ornate language, as with Plato and Xenophon and (among the moderns) Dion, Philostratus, and such of the sophists as have won the reputation of composing in the ‘non-oratorical’ manner with grace.”  

As an author, Philostratus the Elder’s place among the Classics is perhaps best summarised by Anderson who concludes that the Sophist’s unique “angle of vision” affords valuable insight into the high culture of the Greek-speaking world. By means of his obvious “high imperial snobbery” and undisputed elegance of language, Philostratus still provides us with optimal accessibility into the sophistic milieu. Whilst he is best remembered as a biographer through The Lives of the Sophists and Apollonius of Tyana, the informality of Philostratus’ Imagines recreates some of the excitement generated by a Sophist’s live performance and is a valid and effective conduit to the cultural ambience of the second sophistic.

**The Content of the Imagines: The Gallery**

“All, O Damis, the mimetic art is twofold, and we may regard the one kind as an employment of the hands and mind in producing imitations, and declare that this is painting, whereas the other kind consists in making likenesses with the mind alone.”

(Philostratus, Life of Apollonius of Tyana, Book II.22)  

In this passage lies the key to understanding Philostratus’ ambitions with the Imagines to elevate word images to the status of visual images. He is referring to his own ability to create mind pictures or phantasies that he would then compose into ekphrases. The Younger Philostratus terms his grandfather’s Imagines an “ekphrasis of works of art”

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29 Gevnoito δ’ ἂν καὶ ἀπὸ λέξεως ἐπιτυπθευμένης καὶ κεκαλλωπισμενής χάρις ἐν λόγῳ, οίᾳ ἐστὶν ἡ Πλάτωνος καὶ Ξενοφώντος καὶ τῶν νεωτέρων, Δέωνος καὶ Φιλοστράτου καὶ τῶν σοφιστῶν όσοι καὶ αυτήν τιν᾿ ἐπιτύπθη τὸ συγγραφικὸν εἶδος ἐδοξαζαν χαρείντως.

30 Menander Rhetor, Peri Epideiktion, Treatise II, (VII), KATEUNASTIKOS (The Bedroom Speech), Russell & Wilson, 159.

This is the earliest surviving use of the term ‘ekphrasis’ to mean a prose description of a work of art.

The paintings Philostratus describes include the major genres of painting: landscape, portrait, still-life and genre scenes. Landscape paintings set the backdrop for narratives from Homer and the Greek poets or, the “popular and hackneyed themes of heroes, gods and wars”, that Lucian described the great artist Zeuxis as avoiding. The sophist uses his flair for dramatic rhetoric to resurrect events of the ancient past and make them live in front of his audience: “Let us catch the blood by holding out the folds of our robes”, the Sophist urges when describing the sacrificial death of Menoeceus (I.4). The technical quality being praised here is the achievement of mimesis by the artist and the formula follows anecdotal art history from Pliny the Elder who tells of similar viewer reactions when Zeuxis painted a bunch of grapes so lifelike that two birds tried to eat them. A rival artist, Parrhasius, then outdid Zeuxis in perfecting verisimilitude by painting a curtain so believable that he fooled not only birds, but the great Zeuxis himself. A similar story (NH, 35, 95) attributed to Apelles, supreme master of mimesis, when live horses recognised his painting of a horse: “ever since then, this has always been a way of testing artistic quality”, concludes Pliny. This trope was revived in the Renaissance when humanists borrowed ideas from ancient literature to support their own arguments. An example that echoes the Parrhasius story is given by Alamanno Rinuccini in a preface to a Latin translation of Philostratus’ Apollonius of Tyana, wherein this Florentine humanist defends the art of his time: “Nearest to our own period there was Masaccio, whose brush could express the likeness

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32 Philostratus the Younger, Proemium (282F).
33 Lucian’s, Zeuxis or Antiochus, (VI) Lucian, (trans). AM Harmon, William Heinemann Ltd, London; Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass., 1959, 157. The implication being that Zeuxis was far too inventive to use well worn themes. Philostratus must have been aware of Lucian’s ekphrasis on a painting by Zeuxis depicting a family of centaurs, as he included the same subject in the Imagines, II.3. Although the original painting was destroyed, according to Lucian, a copy was to be seen in Athens.
34 Menoeceus (K300) και δεξιόμεθα, ὦ παῖ, τὸ αἷμα κόλπον αὐτῷ ὑποσχόντες, ἐκχεῖται γάρ.
35 Pliny the Elder, Naturalis Historia (trans) The Natural History (eds.) J Bostock, HT Riley, Taylor and Francis, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street, London, 1855, (35.36). This work hereafter abbreviated to NH.
36 Pliny, NH 35.95: Idque et postea semper euenit, ut experimentum artis illud ostentaretur. For a complete study of Pliny’s views on art see J Isager, Pliny on Art and Society, Routledge, London, 1991. In particular, the section on ‘Natural Likeness in Art’ 136-140.
of anything in nature to such perfection that we seem to look not at images of things but at the very things themselves.”

In *Imagines* II.17 *Islands*, Philostratus suggests to the boy that they would better explore the painting if they mentally transported themselves to the deck of a real boat sailing around the scene:

> But you must be willing to forget the land and to accept this as the sea, not roused and turbulent nor yet flat and calm, but a sea fit for sailing and as it were alive and breathing. Lo, we have embarked; for no doubt you agree? Answer for the boy “I agree, let us go sailing.”

This device allows the viewer to create their own form of interactive mimesis, beyond that which the artist has achieved on the painted surface. Crucially, it is the force of the imaginative presence of the subject matter which makes the surface of the painting grow dim in the Sophist’s descriptions. Philostratus is striving to outdo the artistry of the painter with the artistry of his words.

The *Imagines* begins with a brief introduction, the author’s ‘Proemium’ which provides the reader with limited information about the location, the motive and the aims of his address to a group of young boys. Philostratus refers to ‘the games’ of Naples which must be the quadrennial Sebasta, one of the classical world’s leading events that combined athletic competitions with musical and dramatic contests. An inscription found at Olympia describes the games at Naples as the “Italic Roman Augustan Isolympic Games and Festivals”. The games were run along the same lines as the Olympics and were inaugurated in 2 A.D. in honour of Augustus.

Apparently invited to be a guest at the luxurious Neapolitan villa, Philostratus tells us that the stoa housed an open-air gallery, displaying panel paintings by various artists. He specifically uses the word ‘pinakon’ (πινάκων) which implies panel-paintings on

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37 Rinuccini’s preface was first brought to my attention by the late Professor Ernst Gombrich in a tutorial at the Warburg Institute, London: published in EH Gombrich, *Norm and Form, Studies in the art of the Renaissance*, Phaidon, London, 1966, 1. Rinuccini’s astute analysis of fifteenth-century Italian art and architecture has stood the test of time, with his selections of Fra Filippo Lippi, Fra Angelico, Donatello, Alberti and Brunelleschi still praised today as the best of their age. The fact that he wrote the preface for a special 1473 translation of Apollonius of Tyana commissioned by the Duke Federigo da Montefeltre, shows that Rinuccini was familiar with Philostratus and may have also known the *Imagines*. Ideas from Philostratus’ own preface to the *Imagines* are reflected in Rinuccini’s defence of the Liberal Arts. Gombrich also points out that Rinuccini was not the only humanist to write on art in this fashion and that Alberti’s preface to the earlier *Della pittura* has ‘clearly inspired Rinuccini’s letter.’ Gombrich, ibid.

38 *Islands* (K363). ἀλλ’ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔργου λελήξῃ τῆς γῆς καὶ θάλασσά σοι ταύτα δόξει μὴ ἐξηρμένη καὶ ἀναχαίτισουσα μήθ’ ὑπτία καὶ γαληνή, πλωτὴ δὲ τις καὶ οἷον ἐμπνεύσας. ἢ διὸ ἐμβιβάσκαμεν: ἔγχωρες γάρ που. καὶ ὑπὲρ παιδὸς ἀποκρίνοιμαι, ἐγχωρώ καὶ πλέωμεν’.

wood as opposed to frescoes, like the wall paintings later discovered at Pompeii and surrounding areas, which constitute the main surviving evidence we have of Hellenistic painting. Pliny the Elder writes that the art of painting on panels of boxwood was considered such a noble calling that:

*first at Sicyon, and then throughout the whole of Greece, all children of free birth were taught the graphic art, or in other words, the art of depicting upon boxwood, before all others; in consequence of which this came to be looked upon as the first step in the liberal arts. It is the fact, however, that this art has always been held in high estimation, and cultivated by persons of free birth, and that, at a more recent period, men of rank even began to pursue it; it having always been forbidden that slaves should receive instruction in it. Hence it is, that neither in painting nor in the toreutic art has there been any celebrated work executed by a slave.*

Philostratus also tells us that the paintings were collected (συνελέξατο) with great taste by his host and that they displayed the skills of “very many painters” which reinforces the image we receive of a picture gallery made up of portable panel paintings. Pliny also mentions a painting in Rome that was displayed in the open-air Portico of Pompey, by the famous Greek artist Polygnotus.

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40 Pliny, *NH* 35.36.77 huius auctoritate effectum est Sicyonem primum, deinde in tota Graecia, ut puere ingenui omnia ante graphichen, hoc est picturam in buxo, docerentur reciperceturque ars ea in primum gradum liberalium. semper quidem honos ei fuit, ut ingenui eam exercerent, mox ut honesti, perpetuo interdicto ne servitia docerentur. ideo neque in hac neque in toreutice ullius, qui servierit, opera celebrantu.

41 Pliny, *NH* 35.35 Alii quoque post hos clari fuere ante LXXXX olympiadam, sicut Polygnotus Thasius, qui primus mulieres tralucida veste pinxit, capita earum mitris versicoloribus operuit plurimumque picturae primus contulit, siquidem institut a adaperire, dentes ostendere, volutem ab antiquo rigore variare. huius est tabula in porticu Pompei, quae ante curiam eius fuerat, in qua dubitatur ascendendem cum clipeo pinxerit an descendendem. hic Delphis aedem pinxit, hic et Athenis porticum, quae Pœcile vocatur, gratuita, cum partem eius Micon mercede pingeret. Trans. “After these, and yet before the ninetyieth Olympiad, there were other celebrated painters, Polygnotus of Thasos, for instance, who was the first to paint females in transparent drapery, and to represent the head covered with a parti-coloured head-dress. He, too, was the first to contribute many other improvements to the art of painting, opening the mouth, for example, showing the teeth, and throwing expression into the countenance, in place of the ancient rigidity of the features. There is a picture by this artist in the Portico of Pompeius, before the Curia that was built by him; with reference to which, there is some doubt whether the man represented with a shield is in the act of ascending or descending. He also embellished the Temple at Delphi, and at Athens the Portico known as the Pœcile; at which last he worked gratuitously, in conjunction with Micon,5 who received pay for his labours.” *NH.* Bostock (1855).
During his stay at the villa, Philostratus is urged to present one of his famous declamations but instead, agrees to give an informal gallery talk addressed to the host’s ten year old son, with other young guests listening in. As Philostratus could not move around the gallery at the moment of composition, the Imagines can be viewed as a literary reconstruction of the talk after it occurred in the gallery.

By establishing the informal context for his gallery talk, Philostratus is indicating that the Imagines is not a full-scale, public work of the type that an adult audience might appreciate, but rather a work aimed at educating juvenile listeners.

The Proemium of the Imagines states that the author does not intend to provide information about artists; the work is not going to be a biographical ‘Lives of the Artists’ but instead will speak about the different types of painting: “The present discussion, however, is not to deal with painters nor yet with their lives; rather we propose to describe examples of painting”.

Although there have been attempts to give formal structure to the order in which the descriptions are listed by Philostratus, it appears our Sophist has either deliberately listed the subjects at random to give more spontaneity to his young audience or that his thematic code has never been deciphered. Goethe was fascinated by the Imagines and in 1818 published an essay in which he attempted to arrange the descriptions under nine headings:

I. Heroic, tragic subjects
II. Love and Wooing
III. Birth and Education
IV. Deeds of Hercules
V. Athletic Contests
VI. Hunters and Hunting
VII. Poetry, Song and Dance

44 Proemium (K 295) ὁ λόγος δὲ οὐ περί ζωγράφων, οὐδὲ ἱστορίας αὐτῶν νῦν, ἀλλ᾽ ἐκεῖ ζωγραφίας ἀπαγγέλλομεν ὁμώς αὐτὰ τοῖς νέοις συντιθέντες, ἀλλ᾽ ἐκ γεννήσουσί τε καὶ τοῦ δοκίμου ἐπιμελήσουται.

45 As the earliest manuscript of the Imagines dates only from the thirteenth century, it is also possible that the descriptions have not come down to us in their original order. No early commentator remarks on the lack of thematic order.

VIII. Landscapes, including pictures of the sea

IX. Nature-morte.

Goethe’s careful division of the descriptions proved inconclusive as far as demonstrating Philostratus intended a logical viewing programme; however they do give a summary of the range of subjects covered.

Lehmann-Hartleben poured a great deal of energy into reconstructing a route through the imaginary gallery aimed at proving Philostratus was walking through sets of rooms with definitive themes, but not reporting them sequentially. His aim was to verify the existence of the gallery and whilst the Lehmann-Hartleben argument has been admired for its ingenuity, it has never been accepted by other scholars.47

There are however, certain groups of descriptions in the Imagines which appear to ‘belong’ to one another; notably the Hercules series in Book II describing six episodes from the myths of Hercules: Atlas; Antaeus; Hercules among the Pygmies; the Madness of Hercules; Theiodamas; the Burial of Abderus. Even these descriptions defy logic by not appearing in the traditional sequence associated with ‘Labours of Hercules’ cycles.

Other groupings which bring to mind the Hellenistic practice of illustrating extended myths with episodes unfolding across several walls of a room are: Book II.2 and 3; The Education of Achilles (with Chiron the centaur) and Female Centaurs and Book I. 18, 19, and 20 which follow the Dionysian themes of Bacchantes, The Tyrrenhan Pirates and Satyrs. Whilst such sequences appear to flow thematically, Philostratus is consistently arbitrary in linking the descriptions by continuity in the opening and closing lines of text. He is capable of shifting from a grim description of Harmonia and Cadmus’ metamorphoses into serpents Bacchantes I.18 “In astonishment they embrace each other as though holding on to what is left of the body, that this at least may not escape them.”48 (74F) straight into the light-hearted tale of The Tyrrenhan Pirates I.19. Similarly the transition from a tragic burial scene of the “half-eaten body” of Abderus in The Burial of Abderus II.15, to describing a still life painting of game and fruit Xenia II. 26, defies any relational pattern.

Only rarely does Philostratus link descriptions with lines that blend poetically and thematically, as in Pygmies I.5 which ends: “Toward him the river is looking, and it

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48 Bacchantes (K321) οἱ δὲ ἐκπλήττονται καὶ περιβάλλουσιν ἀλλήλους, οἷον ξυνέχοντες τὰ λοιπὰ τοῦ σώματος, ὡς ἐκείνα γοῦν αὐτούς μὴ φύγοι.
prays that his infants may be many” (21F), followed by Erotes I.6 which begins: “See, Cupids are gathering apples; and if there are many of them, do not be surprised.”

Philostratus appears to be unconcerned with a coherent viewing programme for his virtual gallery but rather, seems eager to present as wide and varied a cross-section of subjects as he can, within the limits of the work.

Individual examples of the content of the gallery will be explored in further chapters of this thesis when discussing the application of Philostratus’ ekphrasis to the visual arts.

**Philostratus’ Sources**

Before one delves into the Imagines searching for borrowed passages from Lucian, Hesiod or Latin authors such as Pliny the Elder and Livy, Philostratus’ inherited share in the Hellenistic cultural background of these earlier authors and his own personal history must be given credit for much of the content. From childhood, Philostratus would have heard the Greek myths until they became part of his way of viewing the world. He did not need to read Euripides to learn the story of Perseus and Andromeda (I.28), such myths were integral to his early oral education, just as they would have been to the ten year old schoolboy he addresses, “my boy, you must have heard – the exploit of Perseus who, they say, slew in Ethiopia a monster from the sea of Atlas”.

Philostratus refers to an invisible chorus of nursemaids, mothers and mentors - the “they” in “they say” - and acknowledges the importance of the oral tradition in Ariadne I.15 when he presumes his young audience know the story already: “you must have heard it from your nurse; for those women are skilled in telling such tales and they weep over them whenever they will.”

Apart from the traditional oral transmission of myths, a second non-literary source for our author was visual information processed from viewing works of art. He was a well-travelled sophist, invited into the palaces and villas of powerful and wealthy Romans. Not only did he observe precious paintings, statues, vases and gems in their collections that depicted myths and Homeric tales, he no doubt viewed many public buildings and temples adorned with narrative art works. In this way, the vocabulary of Classical mythology was deeply embedded in his psyche.

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49 (K301) ΠΗΧΕΙΣ. ἐς τοῦτον ὁ ποταμὸς βλέπει καὶ αἴτει τὰ βρέφη αὐτῷ πολλὰ εἶναι. ΕΡΩΤΕΣ. ἡμᾶς ἔρωτες ἱδώ τρυγώσιν, εἰ δὲ πλήθος αὐτῶν, μὴ θαυμάσῃς.

50 Perseus (K336) οἶμαι σε, ὦ παι, μὴ ἀνήκοον εἶναι τοῦ Περσέως, ὃν φασίν Ἀτλαντικὸν ἀποκτείναι κῆτος ἐν Ἀἰθιοπίᾳ πεζεύον

51 Ariadne (K316) τάξα που καὶ τίτθης διακήκοας, σοφαὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖναι τὰ τοιαῦτα καὶ δακρύουσιν ἐπ’ αὐτοῖς, δότην ἐθέλωσιν
By his own admission in the *Lives*, Philostratus the Elder was a learned man with wide experience in reading, which makes literary borrowings inevitable. A rhetorician has also to appeal to his public by playing on his audience’s literary knowledge, so that they too, would recognize the allusion. Perhaps some of the text-books and anthologies Philostratus used have since vanished, making it harder for the modern Classicist to cross-reference his work.

In an attempt to catalogue Philostratus’ sources, the Loeb Classical Library edition of Fairbanks’ English translation provides footnotes that propose citations from earlier authors. In *Islands* II.17 where Philostratus describes a volcanic island in Greece, Fairbanks the translator cites Pindar, *Pyth.* 1.21 and quotes Pindar’s passage describing Mount Etna in Sicily. This leaves little margin for Philostratus’ own powers of invention, if a literary source is so firmly acknowledged. The two descriptive passages of a volcano are similar, but not identical, and it is hard to believe that a Greek author born on the volcanic island of Lemnos, who displays an intimate knowledge of sailing around the Aegean islands and who possibly knew Santorini, would need to rely verbatim on Pindar’s description of Sicily. This forensic approach to illustrating the text in the Fairbanks translation shows the erudition of the modern translator, just as much as it shows the wide general knowledge of the ancient author.52

For Philostratus, his sources are the paintings and he wishes his reader to believe that he is re-telling the myths using art as his primary source. He pays tribute to the “wise men” and poets of antiquity, freely recognizing their works as the inspiration behind the words he chooses to describe the paintings. Where Homer is concerned, he even checks the iconography in the paintings on view, to make sure the artist has used details faithful to Homer’s poem.53 He mentions Homer by name eleven times in the *Imagines* and openly quotes other authors. Anacreon’s “drunk with love” (µεθοδόην ἐρωτί) is used to

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52 The Loeb Classical Library edition of the *Imagines* first printed in 1931 with a translation by Arthur Fairbanks, includes thirty-one illustrations drawn from archaeological findings. For example, Philostratus’ description of a Hellenistic panel painting of *Ariadne*, is illustrated with a black and white photograph of a red-figured vase from the fourth century B.C. (62F). The description of *Amphiaraut* is accompanied by a sketch of a relief from an Etruscan urn (105F). Curiously, there is no explanation for the illustrations given by the publishers or the translator. Fairbanks comments: “The student of late Greek paintings is fully justified in treating these examples as data for his study, whether or not they were actual paintings.” It seems strange to follow this up with illustrations of Greek and Italian art from other periods and of other media without comment or explanation. Presumably the illustrations are there to bring historical credence to the paintings described by the author and lend weight to the possibility that the ekphraseis are describing real works of art.

53 *Amphion* (43F): “Look carefully at the lyre first, to see if it is painted faithfully. The horn is the horn ‘of a leaping goat’, as the poets say” and (K309) πρῶτην οὖν διαθέω τὴν λύραν, εἰ καθ’ οὕτη γέγραπται. τὸ μὲν γὰρ κέρας αἰγός ξέλαλο ποιηταὶ φασι. The quote is from *Iliad*, 4.105.
describe Dionysus’ enthusiasm for Ariadne (Frag. 21, *Lyra Graeca*, II) and Philostratus the Younger quotes Sophocles’ description of Scyros as being “wind-swept” (ἀνεμώδεα καλεί) Soph. Frag. 539 N, in his *Achilles on Scyros* (1). The description of a painting of the beautiful Lydian woman *Pantheia* (II.9) begins by Philostratus the Elder acknowledging Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia* as the source for the main character, before going on to justify his own re-telling of the myth by claiming that Xenophon left out vital details of the narrative54 and omitted to describe Pantheia in sensual terms: “but what her hair was like, what the breadth of her brow, what her glance and the expression of her mouth Xenophon did not describe.” (167F). It took an anonymous painter, Philostratus writes, “not good at writing though very clever at painting” to successfully capture Pantheia’s true likeness.55 The implication in *Pantheia* is that painting has superseded literature in rendering the tragedy plausible to the viewer. He praises the artist’s ability to portray even abstract notions: “Desire, the companion of love, so suffuses the eyes that it seems clearly to drip from them. Love also is represented in the picture, as a part of the narrative of the deed.” (Pantheia 171F)56

Artists were also capable of devising their own compositions, independent of known sources, as Philostratus shows. In *Cupids*, the author describes the numerous putti and the events taking place in the picture before declaring “It is a beautiful riddle; come, let us see if perchance I can guess the painter’s meaning.”57 (*Cupids*, 25F)

The argument that visual art can sometimes surpass the written word appears in the *Imagines* as a means of enriching his opening arguments in the *Proemium*. The opening words “Whosoever scorns painting is unjust to truth,” (Ὠστίς μὴ ἀσπάζεται τὴν ζωγραφίαν, ἀδικεῖ τὴν ἀλήθειαν) announces Philostratus as a champion of painting. The irony is, of course, that he must use words to promote visual art. If it is partly Philostratus’ aim with the *Imagines* to elevate the status of painting to that of poetry, it

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54 Philostratus explains that Xenophon (Cyr. 5.1.1f.) did not mention the funeral pyre erected for Croesus which features in the painting he describes in the *Imagines* (167F). The translator Fairbanks suggests that Philostratus probably knew of this detail from Herodotus (I.86) however Elizabeth Baynham has pointed out that Herodotus is actually not the earliest source for this tradition and Philostratus could have known it from Baccylides’ victory ode written at Olympia in 468 BC (*Odes*, E3.1 29-56) or even from observing red figure vase paintings of funeral pyres that pre-date Herodotus. This supports my argument that it is difficult to pinpoint an exact literary source for anything Philostratus writes, unless he himself uses an attributed quote.

55 *Pantheia* (K353) ὅποια δὲ ἢ κόμη καὶ ἢ διφρύς δὴ καὶ οἶον ἔβλεπε καὶ ὡς εἶχε τοῦ στόματος, οὕτω ὁ Ξενοφῶν ἔγραψεν θεαί τοις ἰδίοις ἄνθρωποι ἔως περιλαλῆσαι ταύτα, ἀλλ’ ἄνηρ ἐνδιαφέρειν μὲν ὡς Ἰκανόν, γράφειν δὲ ἰκανώτατος, αὐτῇ μὲν Πανθεία οὐκ ἐντυχών, ἐνοφώντι δὲ ὡς μικρὸς ἐγράφῃ τὴν Πάνθειαν, ὁποῖαν τῇ ψυχῇ ἐπικρίνατο.

56 *Pantheia* (K355) ὅποτε δὲ ἔρωτος ἔρωτος οὕτω εἴπεται τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς, ὡς ἐπικρίνατα δὴ ἀπ’ αὐτῶν ἀποστάζειν, γέγραψεν καὶ ὁ Ἐρως ἐν ἱστορίᾳ τοῦ ἔργου

57 *Cupids* (K302) καλὸν τὸ αἰνίγμα: σκόπει γάρ, εἰ τι ξυνήμη τοῦ Ἐρωτοφόρου
also appears an enthusiastic effort to elevate the genre of describing works of art to a respectable class of ekphrasis. Treating the genre as a serious rhetorical exercise, the sole premise for a book, promotes it to the level of subjects habitually proposed in the *progymnasmata* and demonstrated by Sophists of the second and third centuries A.D.58

**The Imagines in Late Roman and Byzantine Education**

“we propose to describe examples of paintings in the form of addresses which we have composed for the young”; so proclaims Philostratus in the introduction to the *Imagines*.59

He is speaking as a sophist, an experienced teacher whose role in society was never as secure as it was during his lifetime.60 The early sophists of the fifth century BC initially enjoyed great popularity but critics later blamed them for spreading unorthodox ideas and their popularity plummeted. Plato and Socrates spoke disparagingly about sophistic methods and Aristotle pointedly aimed his *De Sophisticis Elenchis* at them.61

In Plato’s dialogue, *Protagoras* (380 BC), Socrates argues with a revered sophist over the question of whether virtue can be taught. The dominant idea in *Protagoras* seems to be the intention of showing the failure of the sophists in general. Socrates’ low estimation of sophists can be summarized by his remark to Hippocrates in the dialogue: “In Heaven’s name, I said, would you not be ashamed to present yourself before the Greeks as a sophist?”62 Several times, Socrates complains humorously, that he does not like the verbose speeches of the sophist:

**When he had thus spoken, the company acclaimed it as an excellent answer; and then I remarked: Protagoras, I find I am a forgetful sort of person, and if someone**

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58 The *Progymnasmata* were a series of elementary exercises designed to give pupils practice in the skills required of an orator: argumentation, exposition and the use of the appropriate ornament and style. Hermogenes, 2nd century author of a *progymnasmata* defines main subjects for ekphrasis as: persons (πρόσωπα), events (πράγματα), times (καιροί and/or χρόνοι) and places (τόποι). Works of art are nowhere mentioned as subjects. On Hermogenes see GA Kennedy, *The Art of Rhetoric in the Roman World 300BC – 300AD*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1972, 619-632. A study of how the progymnasmata were delivered, see R. Webb ‘The Progymnasmata as Practice’ in *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity*, ed. Y.L. Too (Leiden, 2001) pp.289-316.

59 Preface (K295) ἀλλ᾽ ἐδή ζωγραφίας ἀπαγγέλλομεν ὁμιλίας ἄνα χρονίας νέος συντιθέντες


61 Aristophanes portrays Socrates as a duplicitous sophist in his comedy, *Clouds*.

addresses me at any length I forget the subject on which he is talking. So, just as you, in entering on a discussion with me, would think fit to speak louder to me than to others if I happened to be hard of hearing, please bear in mind now that you have to deal with a forgetful person, and therefore cut up your answers into shorter pieces, that I may be able to follow you.63

The later sophists of the second and third centuries AD were born out of a Greek revival in the Roman Empire and enjoyed a firmer reputation than the model of Protagoras. They were admired for their Atticized prose writing and teaching of rhetoric more than for the educating skills of the earlier movement. As Graham Anderson points out, during the Second Sophistic, skilled speakers who confined themselves to literary pursuits and academic activities (scholasticus tantum), were held in the highest regard.64 Commenting on the elderly sophist Isaeus, Pliny wrote that a sophist’s role in the rhetorical schools was “the sincerest, truest and finest of callings.”65 The aim of the ancient educational system was the formation of an eloquent adult with a solid background in general culture, As Webb points out: “A knowledge of the visual arts and, in particular, an ability to respond to a work of visual art with matching eloquence was expected of an educated man, who should never be lost for words in any circumstances.”67 This model would later be rejuvenated by Renaissance intellectuals like Baldassare Castiglione in his Book of the Courtier.68

Ruth Webb’s thesis of 1992 demonstrates how the series of elementary exercises known as the progymnasmata, consisting of short compositions like the individual descriptions we find in the Imagines, were instrumental in the transmission of Philostratus’ work from the East to the West via the Nachleben of a literary-rhetorical curriculum beyond

63 (Plat.Prot. 334c-d) εἰπόντας οὖν ταῦτα αὐτοῦ οἱ παρόντες ἀνεθορύβησαν ὡς εὖ λέγοι, καὶ ἐγὼ ἐπιτεθεὶς ἁπάντως ἐγὼ τυγχάνονται ἐπιλήσιμον τις ἄνθρωπος, καὶ ἐάν τις τοις μακρὰ λέγῃ, ἐπιλανθάνομαι περὶ οὗ ἄν ἡ δ λόγους, ἣς ἄνοιχτος οὐ εἰ ἐπιλήσθη λόγοι, ἤ τις ἄν καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλους, οὕτω καὶ νῦν, ἐπειδὴ ἐπιλήσθην ἐνέτυχε, σύντεμνε μοι τὰς ἀποκρίσεις καὶ βραχυτέρας ποίει, εἰ μέλλω σοὶ ἐπιλήσει.

64 See Anderson, 77. The term tantum scholasticus is used by Pliny (Letters II. iii. 5-7).

65 Pliny, ibid. Annum sexagensimum excessit et adhuc scholasticus tantum est: quo genere hominum nihil aut sincerius aut simplicius aut melius.


68 After receiving a classical education at Milan, Baldassare Castiglione (1478-1529) pursued a glittering career throughout the courts of Northern Italy. His fame rests mainly on his Il Libro del Cortegiano, a work in four books, describing the accomplishments and moral character of the perfect courtier; the ‘ideal Renaissance man’.
late antiquity. One of the best recent studies on the *progymnasmata* as used by pupils in imperial Greek education, is given by Robert J. Penella (2011) who writes “The *progymnasmata* were graded prose compositional exercises, often begun under the grammarian and continued under the sophist or rhetor.” Penella sees these exercises as preliminary training before a pupil moved on to make full public declamations, of the type our Philostratus was renowned for. In a way, Philostratus is re-visiting his own school days when he wrote this mode of discourse in the *Imagines* as Penella observes, “the *progymnasmata* continue to surface in the writings of adults into whose heads they had been ingrained during their school days.”

In all versions of the *progymnasmata*, ekphrasis was one of the more advanced exercises. Aelius Theon of Alexandria, writing in the first century AD, writes: “Ekphrasis is a detailed discourse (speech) which presents the subject vividly before the eyes.” Today, we know of four versions of *progymnasmata*, surviving from antiquity, although dates and authorship remains unclear.

The most frequently cited example of ekphrasis is Homer’s description of the shield of Achilles (*Iliad*, 18) which Theon uses as an example of an ekphrasis belonging to a

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70 The paintings described in the *Imagines* undoubtedly reflect the visual arts and literary subjects of the time. The masterpieces that decorate the villa, we suppose, had been viewed by his young audience upon numerous occasions. Philostratus’ rhetoric, therefore, draws upon the strength of familiarity and as an imaginative re-telling of traditional themes, set out in pedagogic fashion, the *Imagines* seems ideally suited as a model for the composition of independent pieces by the pupil, to practice his rhetorical skills.


military subject genre wherein the preparation of arms for war is described. Apart from the heavily decorated shield, works of art are not mentioned by Theon, Hermogenes or Aphthonius as appropriate themes for ekphrasis.

The teaching of the *progymnasmata* followed a three stage curriculum where it seems that ekphrasis was first introduced to pupils by the grammatistes who taught them to read. It was then largely up to the grammarian or grammatikos, to teach methods of memorising the fables and invented themes of the *progymnasmata*.

Lastly, the rhetor or sophist would develop these skills with the pupil as he learned “how to argue under increasingly complex headings” until he could arrive at a full declamation.

Nikolaos the Sophist writing some time after Philostratus in the fifth century, is the first to mention paintings and sculptures as possible categories of subject matter for ekphrasis. It is perhaps for that reason and also, because Philostratus too, was a Sophist, that the only extant manuscript of Nikolaos’ *Progymnasmata* (MS London, BL, Add. 11,889) is to be found bound into the same collection containing a manuscript of *Imagines*; ‘Proemium’ and Book I: Descriptions 1-10.

Webb observes that:

“Nikolaos wrote that ekphraseis of works of art should explain the appearance of the figure in terms of the emotions portrayed by the artist, giving the causes of this emotion as they are found in the story; this will result in ‘enargeia’. Nikolaos’ definition of ekphrasis illustrates the development of this type of speech within the rhetorical tradition.”

As the teaching of Greek remained fairly static after the Hellenistic age we can presume that ekphraseis of works of art continued to be included in the curriculum. Between the end of the Classical period and the rediscovery of the text in Renaissance Italy, the most

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77 Penella (2011), 83.


79 MS London BL, Add. 11,889 also contains the *Progymnasmata* of Aphthonius but the *Imagines* is written on different paper from the other works and in a different hand. See British Museum Department of Manuscripts, *Catalogue of Additions*, George Woodfall and Son, London, 1841-1845, Vol.1, 16.

80 Nikolaos the Sophist, *Progymnasmata*, 69. *Enargeia* or ‘vividness’ is closely connected to the achievement of sight through sound in ekphrasis. Hermogenes and Aphthonius also include the word *enargeia* in their definitions of ekphrasis. As Kennedy comments: “Details make the brief pictures vivid, what the rhetoricians would call *enargeia*. (cf., e.g. Ad Her. 4.68-69).” Kennedy (1972) 390.
substantial references to the *Imagines* arise in technical discussions by Byzantine scholars and teachers of Greek literary style and grammar. In his collection of 280 codices in the form of book reviews known as the *Bibliotheca (Bibliotheke)*, the ninth century patriarch Photius is ambivalent in his appraisal of Philostratus. In his review of *Apollonius of Tyana* he finds fault with an “absence of syntax” yet admires Philostratus’ classicizing style: “His style is clear, agreeable, concise, and full of charm, due to his fondness both for archaisms and for novel constructions.” Despite being charmed by Philostratus’ poetic style, Photius’ Byzantine training leads him to detest the fictionalized subject matter in Apollonius: “He tells similar stories, equally foolish and preposterous, and these eight books are so much study and labour lost.” (fig.2)

Photius seems perplexed by Philostratus’ writing style and phraseology:

>This Philostratus has an attractive and varied style and uses vocabulary which suits this mode of expression. His constructions, however, are like that of no other writer. The impression is more of a lack of construction than anything approaching construction. But we know that this man, being highly knowledgeable, would not

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83 (Photius, codex 44). Photius calls the author of *Apollonius of Tyana*, ‘Philostratus of Tyre’, perhaps confusing Philostratus the Lemnian, or Flavius Philostratus or Philostratus the Athenian, as he was variously known, with a separate identity known as the lexicographer Philostratus of Tyre, whom he groups with two other lexicographers: Julian and Valerius Diodorus in codex 150. NG Wilson, 2002, n.1. 35.
have been brought to this degree of idiosyncrasy in syntax through breaking rules, rather, he made abundant use of phrases which were probably used sparingly by some of the older authors. He used these freely, not without purpose, but rather to create an elegant effect, for such expressions are attractive and pleasing (fig.3).  

Michael Psellos, an eleventh-century Byzantine scholar, mentions the *Imagines* in his treatise *Peri Charakteiron* where he discusses Philostratus’ style and classes “the works of the Lemnian Philostratus” with those of Lucian, Achilles Tatios and Heliodorus. An autobiographical essay by Psellos (fig.4) summarises the general relationship between Philostratus and Byzantine thinking that is characterized by a contradictory response whereby Byzantine scholars admit to being seduced by the charm of Philostratus but at the same time, despise him for his lack of ‘gravitas’:

*Readers of the book about Leucippe or Charicleia or any other that gives pleasure and has charm, such as the writings of Philostratus of Lemnos and all Lucian’s relaxed and playful works, seem like men undertaking to build a house. But before*

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laying the foundations, designing and setting up the walls and supports, and completing the roof, they seem to want to adorn it with paintings, mosaics and other forms of decoration. In the opinion of the majority such attempts are successful. Yet I think some have set themselves to write little books that are extravagant in language. Right from the starting point they thunder and make a powerful impact, then like the flash of lightning they are suddenly extinguished.86

Fig. 4 Psellos, De Operatione daemonum, ed. JF Boissonade, Nuremberg, 1838, 48–49.

Viewed as “extravagant”, by Psellos, Philostratus provokes quite a bit of criticism from other Byzantine scholars with his most virulent critic being the fourteenth-century patriarch Ioannes Glykys. As Webb writes: “In a general condemnation of the search for innovation (καινότης) and the marvellous (θαῦμα), Glykys complains of authors who “twist and turn” for the sake of elegance and cheat in their use of figures.”87

86 Michael Psellos : English translation NG Wilson, ibid. Psellos : Greek text from Boissonade edition (fig.4).
“Very many examples will be found in the work of the Lemnian Philostratus, although some older and more serious authors also use such effects, like desserts, thus sacrificing their solemnity for the sake of pleasure and grace.” (Glykys)

Glykys’ disparagement is aimed at a ‘pagan’ author separated from the patriarch by a cultural gulf of more than ten centuries and perhaps also, Glykys forgets that Philostratus was writing with a young audience in mind where a vivid, less solemn style is appropriate.

Being a subject of discussion for Byzantine grammarians shows that the Imagines was far from being the type of Classical text that remained buried for centuries. Evidence suggests that it was in continual use from the third century AD to the thirteenth century as an example to follow for rhetoric. Towards the end of the Byzantine period, focus switched to its value as a textbook for learning a particular style of grammar. In her thesis that ends with the introduction of the Imagines into the Renaissance period, Webb answers the essential question, ‘why did the Byzantine authors not copy Philostratus’ literary style when describing works of Christian art?’ when she says:

“The importance of the ‘Imagines’ in Byzantine culture, in the late thirteenth century in particular, therefore lay in Philostratus’ language, whether as a source of grammatical and lexical paradigms, or as a negative example to avoid. The pictorial
content was of little use to Byzantine authors of ekphraseis who developed their own tradition of describing Christian works of art.”

The Imagines from East to West: the Manuscripts

The Byzantine scholar Maximus Planoudes (c. 1255-c.1305) and his pupil Manuel Moschopoulos (c.1265) are thought to be the authors of detailed grammatical commentaries that accompany most of the known fourteenth century manuscripts of the Imagines. According to Webb, the use of the Imagines in the elementary teaching of grammar during the early Renaissance period in the West appears to be an innovation of the school of Planoudes and Moschopoulos. Webb writes: As well as ensuring the survival of the Imagines, the use of the text in the teaching of grammar seems to have been an important factor in the transmission of the work to the Renaissance West.

Most modern writers on Philostratus begin their study with the medieval manuscripts copied down in Greek by scholars who migrated to Italy. These early manuscripts form

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90 See discussion on ‘Truth and Convention in Byzantine Descriptions of Works of Art’ in H. Maguire, Rhetoric, nature and magic in Byzantine art, Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 1998. I have not found any evidence of a Byzantine illustration or work of art relating to iconographical sources in the Imagines with the exception of a scribe’s margin sketches in the 13th century Laurenziana manuscript, Florence (fig. 9).
95 R. Webb (1992) 111.
the basis of the complete collection of ekphraseis of both the Philostratoi that were eventually published by Manutius in Venice in 1503.96

However there is a papyrus of immense interest in the collection of the Staatlichen Museum in former East Berlin (Berol. no. P.17013), that consists of a fragment from the Eikones of Philostratus the Younger (fig.6). We know that this is the correct identity of the text as the last two lines give the author and the title:

Φιλοστράτου (sic)

Εἰκόνες (sic)

Furthermore, the apparent work of art being described, Pyrrhus or the Mystians, is only found in the book written by the Younger (10) and not in that of the Elder Philostratus.

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96 Entered in the ICCU catalogue as: Tade enestin en tōde tō bibliō. Loukianou. Philostratou eikones. Tou autou ērōika. Tou autou biou sophistōn. Philostratou neōterou eikones. Kallistratou ekphraseis. (Que hoc volumine continetur : Luciani opera. Icones Philostrati ; Eiusdem Heroica ; Eiusdem vitae Sophistarum. Icones Iunioris Philostrati. Descriptiones Callistrati. Loukianou eis ten eautou biblon): the editio princeps of the Imagines was printed in 1503 by Aldus Manutius, Venice, in the same volume as the Imagines of Philostratus the Younger; the Heroica; Lives of the Sophists; Descriptions of Callistratus and the works of Lucian. One possible source for the manuscript of Philostratus used in this Aldine edition could be from Emanuel Attramyttinos, a Greek in the Aldine circle who was also in contact with Poliziano in Florence. Born on Crete (c. 1444), Attramyttinos died in Pavia in 1485 and his signed manuscript of the Imagines is now identified as MS Paris, BN, gr. 1761. His letters to Poliziano and others are published in F Filelfo, Lettres grecques, ed. E. Legrand, Paris, 351-359. However, Nigel Wilson indicates that the manuscripts in the library of Bessarion may not have been readily available to printers in From Byzantium to Italy, Greek studies in the Italian Renaissance, Duckworth, London, 1992, 133 & n.22.
Fig. 6 Fragment of *Imagines* of Philostratus the Younger, papyrus 17013, Staatlichen Museen, Berlin.

The fragment is dated to the early fifth century AD based on stylistic affinities to other papyri found at Hermopolis in Egypt. The leaf of the codex here illustrated as 7b. is the right hand leaf of the remains of one double leaf of a papyrus codex approx. 22.3cm high and 34.8cm wide. The left half of the double leaf is inscribed on both sides and all
together there are ninety lines of text.\textsuperscript{97} There has been no further study made of the papyrus since 1941 and no attempt to translate the inscription into English. From my own examination of a museum-supplied photocopy of the papyrus, it seems that the subject matter relates to the ekphrasis of \textit{Pyrrhus, or the Mysians} (Philo.Younger 10) commencing half-way through the description where the author mentions the Pleiades and the Hyades. This would mean that the Berlin papyrus is a fragment of just one description from the \textit{Imagines} and this makes sense when we consider that the \textit{Pyrrhus} ekphrasis is the longest of the existing eighty-two descriptions in the combined \textit{Imagines}. Due to its length, \textit{Pyrrhus or the Mysians} may even have been treated as a separate piece of text suitable for study as an individual exercise. The existence of this fifth-century papyrus from the \textit{Imagines} demonstrates an ongoing interest in the work of the Philostratoi that bridges the creation of the text in the second to third centuries AD up to the time it became established as a study tool in Byzantine education.

The earliest complete manuscript of the \textit{Imagines} that I was able to locate is in the Laurenziana library of Florence (MS \textit{Laurentianus}, LXIX. (30) F) which dates from the thirteenth century and is illustrated in this thesis (fig.9). This manuscript is unique among all that I encountered in that it contains two pages with margin sketches (figs.6-7) relating to the first four descriptions in Book I by Philostratus the Elder: \textit{Scamander, Comus, Fables} and \textit{Menoeceus}. In 1997 I published a paper that discussed ‘\textit{Philostratus and The Reflex to Illustrate the Eikones}\textsuperscript{98} and I believe the sketches in this thirteenth century manuscript to be precisely that: a response to the vivid ekphrasis by the hand of the inscriber to illustrate the very scenes he was transcribing. They appear to be an almost automatic physical reaction to Philostratus’ words. Interestingly, the hand of the scribe for the text of these descriptions differs from the more authoritative and practised hand which takes over after Book I.5. It is probable that these sketches are the meanderings of a young student given the task of copying out the \textit{Eikones} manuscript. They are not accomplished, but do show a certain basic knowledge of drawing. As there is a small sketch for each of the first four ekphraseis, it is interesting to imagine what illustrations this manuscript would have revealed had the same scribe continued.

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\item The most complete study of the manuscript was made in 1941 by Klara Stahlschmidt, unpublished thesis: ‘Der Schluss der Eikones des Jüngeren Philostratos’, Berlin, 1941. A copy of her findings was sent to me from the current Curator of Papyri at the Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin. Stahlschmidt attempted a transcription of the inscription.
\end{thebibliography}
At the top of the left hand leaf is a scene with the walls of Troy and the river Scamander with quite a fierce demon-like river god.

Fig. 7
In the above sketch Comus (on the right) and his revellers are seen dressed in medieval garb and Comus is depicted in precisely the attitude described by Philostratus: “flushed with wine and, though erect, he is asleep under the influence of drink. As he sleeps the face falls forward on the breast so that the throat is not visible.” In another sketch (below), Menoeceus is seen withdrawing the sword from his side as he stands valiant on the walls of Thebes.

Fig. 8

99 Comus (Κ 297) καὶ ὁ Κῶμος ἥκει νέος παρὰ νέους ἀπαλός καὶ οὔπω ἔφηβος, ἐρυθρὸς υπὸ οἴνου καὶ καθεύδων ὀρθὸς υπὸ τοῦ μεθύειν. καθεύδει δὲ τὸ μὲν πρόσωπον ἐπὶ στέρνα ῥίψας καὶ τῆς δειρῆς ἐκφαίνων οὐδέν
However it is Philostratus’ *Fables* I.3 which commands the most attention of our anonymous artist as he fills the right hand margin with animals including the well known characters from Aesop’s fable of the tortoise and the hare.

Fig. 9 Illustrated margins of the MS *Laurentianus*, LXIX.
Excerpts from the *Imagines* also dating from this period are preserved in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (MS. Barocci 131). Ludo de Lannoy mentions a manuscript in Paris of \(c.1320\) containing the collected works of Philostratus; *Lives of the Sophists, Imagines I and II, Heroicus, Life of Apollonius* and *Letters* (*Parisiensis, gr. 1696, = P*). In most of the fourteenth-century manuscripts the *Imagines* appears as part of an anthology of school texts, copied and bound alongside other grammatical works. The Marciana library in Venice holds three manuscripts containing the text of the *Imagines*. All were documented as belonging to Cardinal Bessarion’s collection in the fifteenth century and it is most probably one of these (or a combination of all three) that was used by the Venetian publisher Aldus Manutius when he printed the first edition of the *Imagines* in 1503 (fig.12).

In addition there are three unpublished Latin translations dating from the fifteenth century as identified by Webb: Heidelberg: MS Pal. Gr. 341; MS Venice, Marc. Lat. IX, 54 and MSS Budapest, Clmiae 417. These translations seem to have been kept in private hands, like precious objects, as demonstrated by the Budapest manuscript by Andrea Bonfini (fig.10). It was presented to Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary, in 1478. We cannot know if the owners valued the *Imagines* because, like their Byzantine predecessors, they admired the Attic Greek or if they harboured keen interest in the content.

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101 Lannoy (ed), *Heroicus* (1977), pp. XV-XVI.
104 Evidence shows that the Cretan Classical scholar Marcus Mousourus (1470-1517) who prepared Greek manuscripts for publishing by Aldus Manutius in Venice, sometimes worked from as many as four manuscripts of the one text. See Reynolds & Wilson, 140-1.
106 The Philostratus Corvina was the subject of an exhibition held in 2006 at the National Széchényi Library, Budapest to celebrate the complete digitization of the codex. [http://www.corvina.oszk.hu/corvinas-html/philostratus.html](http://www.corvina.oszk.hu/corvinas-html/philostratus.html)
Fig. 10 Codex Heroica (Philostratus), title page. Andrea Bonfini, (1478) MSS Budapest, Clmae 417. Illumination by Boccardino il Vecchio
It was not until c.1500 when the wealthy collector Isabella d’Este, the Marchesa of Mantua commissioned a translation into Italian (fig.11) from her resident Greek scholar, Demetrios Moschos, that we see the beginning of the modern association of the *Imagines* with re-creating antiquity through its descriptions of art.109

Two versions of the d’Este translation survive. The original is at Cambridge: MS Cambridge, University Library, Ad. 6007 and a copy is identified as MS Paris, BN, Ital. 1091. The Cambridge manuscript was first published (single page illustrated only) by the present writer: R Le Goff, ‘Greek island paradises: creating a new ‘text’ at the court of Ferrara’ in *Script and Print; Bulletin of the Bibliographical Society of Australia & New Zealand; Paradise: New Worlds of Books and Readers* v.29, nos 1-4, 2005: 144-162. Isabella d’Este (1474-1539) was born in Ferrara, daughter of Prince Ercole I d’Este. She went to Mantua in 1490 when she married Francesco Gonzaga (1466–1519) and there presided over one of the most powerful courts in Italy. She was renowned for her collecting of antiquities.
Fig.11 Philostratus, *Imagines* (Erotes) 1505, Demetrius Moschos, MS Cambridge, University Library, Ad. 6007. folio 11.

For its art historical value, the 1503 Greek edition from the Aldine press is important as it was published not only with Philostratus’ *Heroikos* and *Lives of the Sophists* but also Callistratus’ descriptions of Greek sculpture, *Ekphraseis* and Lucian’s dialogues. This association of Philostratus, Callistratus and Lucian puts the *Imagines* in a very different light from the previous manuscript edition. From now on, it would be deliberately grouped with authors of descriptions of works of art.

Fig. 12 Philostratus, *Imagines*, (Menoeceus, Nile, Erotes) Aldine *editio princeps*, 1503.
Context: The Rebirth of Mythological Art in Renaissance Italy

Prior to the 1503 edition, the *Imagines* was still in the hands of only a few collectors and scholars of Greek. It certainly was not as widely diffused as some Classical texts that retold the ancient myths and could provide likely subjects for paintings, such as Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (fig.13).110

![Illustrated edition of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, (1484) by Colard Mansion, Bruges.](image)

It was the circulation of well known texts like Ovid’s poem, Virgil’s *Aeneid* and Livy’s *History of Rome*, that brought about a revolution in Renaissance painting toward the

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110 Being a Latin text, *Metamorphoses* was popular throughout the fifteenth century and the first printed edition of Ovid's poem adorned with woodcuts was issued as early as 1484 by Colard Mansion in Bruges (fig.12).
close of the fifteenth century with mythological painting gaining popularity with patrons. This movement toward pagan, secular iconography competing in popularity with Christian devotional iconography was fuelled by the growing taste for the antique which would lead to Isabella d’Este commissioning from Mantegna, the first major painting with a subject derived from Philostratus, the *Comus* of 1506.\(^{111}\)

Precisely what was the very first mythological painting commissioned from an important artist in Renaissance Italy, remains undecided. We are conditioned to universal art historical beliefs such as Donatello’s bronze *David* c. 1430 (fig.16) is “the first Classical nude”\(^{112}\) created since antiquity or that Pisanello’s medal (c.1438) of John VIII Palaeologus (the penultimate Emperor of Byzantium) is “the first true portrait medal of the Renaissance”\(^{113}\). However no such generalized statement has claimed the first major mythological painting executed during this period of intense Classical revivalism.\(^{114}\) Ernst Gombrich thought it might be a lost work dated to circa 1460 illustrating the *Aeneid* by the *cassone* painter Apollonio di Giovanni, an artist described by Ugolino Verino as the “Tuscan Apelles”.\(^{115}\) Verino wrote the following ekphrastic description of the painted cassone scene:

*Once Homer sang of the walls of Apollo’s Troy burned on Greek pyres, and again Virgil’s great work proclaimed the wiles of Greeks and the ruins of Troy. But certainly the Tuscan Apelles Apollonio now painted burning Troy better for us. And also the flight of Aeneas and the wrath of the iniquitous Juno, with the rafts tossed about, he painted with wondrous skill; no less the threats of Neptune, as he rides across the high seas and bridles and stills the stiff winds. He painted Aeneas accompanied by his faithful Achates, entering Carthage in disguise; also his departures and the funeral of unhappy Dido are to be seen on the painted panel by the hand of Apollonio.*\(^{116}\)

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111 The iconography of the *Comus* painting and how it relates to Philostratus is discussed in detail Chapter Two of this thesis (pp.84-92) where it is grouped with the other d’Este paintings.
112 Fred S. Kleiner, *Gardner's Art Through the Ages: The Western Perspective*, Volume 2, Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2010, p. 423, is an example of just one popular source that uses this widely accepted example.
114 This is somewhat surprising in consideration of the vast amount of literature devoted to Renaissance mythological painting and the re-discovery of antiquity.
On this evidence, Gombrich attributes to Apollonio “the earliest mythological painting on a monumental scale”. However there is no mention of the size of the work and Verino says it is on panel, which means there is little to distinguish the work he describes from numerous large cassoni panels Apollonio painted that depict multiple episodes from the Aeneid, examples of which survive today in various museums.

The obvious forerunners of these cassone paintings were the narrative scenes carved on ancient sarcophagi, which were visible in churches throughout Italy even during medieval times. The horizontal frieze-like format provided by sarcophagi was ideal for narrating episodes from mythology, allowing numerous figures carved in high relief to occupy the same picture plane. Often, compositions could be read from left to right, with chronological episodes from one myth unfolding across the front panel of the sarcophagus. For the very same reasons, it would be early fourteenth century cassone panels that provided artists with the opportunity to paint the first mythological pictures of the Renaissance. A cassone was a wooden chest, used for the storing of precious garments and linen and was most often created as a wedding gift. In a period when non-devotional easel paintings were not widely used as decoration in homes, with tapestries providing the main wall decoration, cassoni were among the few items an artist could lavish attention on and the finer ones were very expensive, often with elaborate carving and gilding.

Apart from the horizontal format in their favour, cassoni proved ideal objects for the first tentative experiments in pagan iconography as they were private household items which, once delivered to the patron, would rarely be seen outside the bedchamber. Cassoni were not on display in the rooms used for receiving visitors and therefore, would not offend the pious guest by their subject matter. The early Renaissance home was quite austere and the practice of hanging easel paintings on the walls of one’s reception rooms did not really gain popularity until after 1450. Cassoni, bed heads, wedding plates, dischi da parto (commemorative birth trays), pieces of maiolica, small

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117 Ibid.
ivory chests and tapestries\textsuperscript{119} were all seen as suitable items to decorate with mythological scenes. Whilst it is true that many early fifteenth-century cassone panels feature characters from antiquity such as the Amazonian queen Penthesilea\textsuperscript{120} the iconography is often derived from the popular Italian authors Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarch and Pulci who were re-inventing antiquity and did not always quote faithfully from ancient texts.\textsuperscript{121} Classical mythology had entered Renaissance poetry and prose long before it became prominent in the art of painting. Furthermore, whilst the scenes were thematically antique, they were not yet stylistically classicized and little attempt was made to emulate Classical art in the figures portrayed. Characters in a cassone panel painting invariably appeared in contemporary costume and the action took place against a Renaissance backdrop as can be seen in Apollonio’s \textit{The Adventures of Ulysses} (fig.14).

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{Fig14.png}
\caption{\textit{The Adventures of Ulysses}, Apollonio di Giovanni, (ca. 1450), The Art Institute of Chicago}
\end{figure}

\textbf{Cosimo dei Medici and fifteenth-century attitudes toward pagan iconography}

Despite the popularity of these literary based cassone panels among a small group of elite patrons, Christian iconography still dominated Italian art in the first half of the fifteenth century. The slow appearance of Classical mythology in painting ran contrary to the enthusiastic rehabilitation of Classical Greek and Roman texts in humanistic circles. It was typical of a wealthy patron such as Florence’s Cosimo dei Medici (1389–

\textsuperscript{119} A term gaining popularity in Renaissance studies that describes these items is ‘domestic art’, a category usually treated by modern writers as different to the ‘fine arts’ i.e. easel painting, fresco painting, print-making and sculpture. eg. Voorhies, James. "Domestic Art in Renaissance Italy". In \textit{Timeline of Art History}. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000. http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dome/hd_dome.htm (October 2002).


\textsuperscript{121} This is discussed by Erwin Panofsky in \textit{Renaissance and renascences in Western art}, New York: Harper & Row; Icon Editions, 1972, p.170ff.
1464) to collect antiquities and stock his library with precious Classical manuscripts, whilst commissioning artists to paint subjects that were exclusively devotional. Art patronage was theocentric rather than anthropocentric. Art was still largely viewed as a manual craft form that served the decoration of churches and chapels. When Cosimo did make his first tentative steps toward commissioning works of art with a Classical mythological content, the pagan iconography was relegated to a subtle supporting role, as in the cameo roundels that decorated the courtyard of his Florentine palace, or the three bacchanalian scenes that adorned the pedestal of Donatello’s bronze of *Judith and Holofernes* (late 1450s).

Both the cameo roundels and the *Judith* statue were displayed in a private, domestic, setting for the enjoyment of Cosimo, his humanistic friends and his learned sons. Cosimo as patron of public art still wished to be identified solely as a benefactor of the Church.

The history of collecting shows that vital changes in the fifteenth century greatly affected art patronage and the choice of subjects. The influence of the Ciceronian *studia humanitatis* with its emphasis in the schools and universities on the study of Latin and Greek texts that dealt with grammar, rhetoric, history, poetry and moral philosophy, meant a shift in thought and expression from the religious to the secular. The ruling class began to commission works that expressed their faith in themselves and celebrated their own deeds rather than those of God exclusively. Precious liturgical books created in earlier centuries bore inscriptions stating the book belonged not to the individual who had commissioned it, but to the family’s patron Saint (‘*Liber Sancti*’); by the fifteenth century, however the earthly patron’s identity had replaced that of the saint.

At the same time, artists were gradually switching from using panel supports, which limited the size of a work of art, to the more versatile canvas. In 1460 Andrea and Piero Pollaiuolo painted three enormous *Labours of Hercules* on cloth framed with gold that hung in Lorenzo di Piero de’Medici’s room on the piano nobile of the Medici palazzo in

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122 Whilst Cosimo relied largely on oral interpretations from humanist scholars of the Classical Greek and Latin texts he coveted, his sons Piero and Lorenzo were given a Classical education by the best humanists available. It is known that Cosimo attended lectures on Plato given by the Greek scholar from Mistra, Georgios Gemistos (1355–1452) known as ‘Plethon’. See NP Peritore, ‘The Political Thought of Gemistos Plethon: A Renaissance Byzantine Reformer’ in *Polity*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (Winter, 1977) 168-19. Cosimo later formed the Platonic Academy in Florence, inspired by these lectures, ibid. 169.

the via Larga. Excluding examples found decorating domestic furniture, I have not found a mythological painting by an artist of established reputation, earlier than this 1460 commission. The *Labours of Hercules* was a theme favoured by humanistic circles. In Florence, Hercules as icon of strength was adopted as the symbol for the state seal at the end of the thirteenth century. Gregorio Dati in his *Istoria di Firenze* explains that the inclusion of Hercules on the seal of the Signoria is meant "to signify that Hercules, who was a giant, overcame all tyrants and evil lords as the Florentines have done."  

Philostratus dramatically describes the struggle between Hercules and Antaeus (II. xxi) and it became one of the descriptions from the *Imagines* most favoured by artists. The wrestling match is shown at the point of victory as Hercules holds his opponent off the ground and “then pressing his own fore-arm against the pit of Antaeus’ stomach, now flabby and panting, he squeezes out his breath and slays him by forcing the points of his ribs into his liver”.

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124 Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574) painter and architect famous for his collection of biographies on artists, records the paintings being painted for “the elder Lorenzo”: *Et in casa Medici dipinse a Lorenzo Vecchio tre Ercoli in tre quadri*, Vasari, *Le Vite de piu eccellenti pittore, scultori e architettori*, Edizione Giuntina, Vol. III, 505. (For the purposes of this thesis, the Giunti edition published in Florence in 1550 and the Torrentini revised and enlarged edition of 1568 will be used. Translations into English are the writer’s own, unless otherwise stated.) The *Labours of Hercules* paintings seem to have been quite renowned in their day as Vasari devotes a lengthy detailed description to them in his biography of the brothers. Now lost, the three paintings each measured 6 square *braccia* (one *braccia* equalled a third of the height of a man i.e. approx. 60cm) and are recorded in the 1492 Medici inventory. The scenes painted by Antonio Pollaiuolo (Florence 1431 - Rome 1498) and his brother Piero (Florence 1441 - Rome 1496) were: *Hercules Killing the Hydra, Hercules Strangling the Lion* and *Hercules Wrestling Antaeus*. See GG Bertela & M Spallanzani, *Libro d’inventario dei beni di Lorenzo il Magnifico* (26), Associazione Amici del Bargello, Florence, 1992. We have some idea of what the originals looked like as two small panel paintings by Antonio, depicting *Hercules and Antaeus,* and *Hercules and the Hydra,* are in the Uffizi Museum, Florence. I would like to thank Dott.ssa Giovanna Giusti, Director of the Galleria Palatina for allowing me to examine the Pollaiuolo panels privately.

125 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York holds a cassone panel dated to the second quarter of the fifteenth century with roundels illustrating the *Labours of Hercules*, but by “paintings” I refer to independent works of art not associated with items of household furniture.


127 Whilst numerous works of sixteenth-century art replicate the main action of the episode with the pose of the two figures as described by Philostratus, none includes all the iconographical details that the text squeezes into the imaginary picture frame. Only very few artists would have been directly inspired by the text of the *Imagines*, most artists probably followed prototypes by earlier Renaissance masters, or perhaps copied surviving antique models, such as the marble Pitti group.

128 *Antaeus* (K375) τὸν ἑτεπήχυν λαγαρᾷ τε καὶ ἄσθημαινούσῃ τῇ γαστρὶ ὑποσχως ἐκθλίβει τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἀποσφάττει τὸν ἀνταῖον ὀξείαις ταῖς πλευραῖς ἕπιστραφείσαις ἐς τὸ ἡπαρ.
Fig. 15 Hercules and Antaeus, Antonio Pollaiuolo, c. 1478, Uffizi, Florence.
A small scale painting on panel (fig.15) and a celebrated bronze both by Antonio Pollaiuolo, capture this moment and are faithful to the precise pose as described by Philostratus.  

Lorenzo de’ Medici owned a copy of the *Imagines* at the time of his death in 1492. If the book had entered the Medici library before 1460 it is possible that Philostratus’ description of Hercules and Antaeus was introduced to Pollaiuolo by either Piero de’ Medici or one of his circle of humanist advisors. Certain details in the landscape of the panel seem to evoke the description of ancient Libya as it appears in the *Imagines* with the scene for the wrestling match being set on a harsh desert landscape and the inclusion of long horned antelope grazing (right foreground).  

A Roman marble after a Hellenistic bronze, in Florence since the sixteenth century, recreates the same version of the struggle. Known as the ‘Pitti Antaeus’, this Roman copy shows that the elaborate pose of the entwined figures was a known formula, the accepted way of representing the myth during Philostratus’ lifetime.  

Whilst Cosimo il Vecchio went to great lengths to appear ahead of his contemporaries by the acquisition of archaeological remnants from the Classical period and by commissioning architects like Michelozzo to classicize the palaces he built, painting and sculpture were still seen by him as vehicles for the veneration of God. Important commissions under his patronage include Fra Angelico’s works for the monastery of San Marco such as the altarpiece *Virgin with Saints Cosmas and Damian* (1438) and Fra’ Filippo Lippi’s *Annunciation* (1449), one of several works Lippi completed for the decoration of Palazzo Medici.

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129 The panel measuring only 16 x 9cm and dated to c. 1475 is now in the Uffizi, Florence and the bronze of a later date, is in the Bargello, Florence. See LD Ettlinger, *Antonio and Piero Pollaiuolo*, Phaidon, Oxford 1978. Although there is quite a rich literary tradition on Hercules and Antaeus, including Apollodorus, it is the description that Philostratus gives of the particular wrestling grip that provides a clear visual reference for Renaissance art.

130 Lorenzo di Piero de’ Medici, called ‘Lorenzo il Magnifico’ (Florence 1449-1492) was the most eminent personality in Florence during the latter half of the fifteenth century. Statesman, humanist and poet, he made Florence the artistic and cultural centre of the Renaissance. An avid collector of antiquities and patron of artists who revived antiquity in their work, the major artists of his day all fell under his protection; Leonardo, Michelangelo, Botticelli and Giuliano da Sangallo. Lorenzo’s humanistic interests were nurtured from an early age at the family villa at Careggi, seat of Cosimo il Vecchio’s Platonic Academy. For biographical details of Lorenzo see M Rowdon, *Lorenzo the Magnificent*, H Regnery Co, Chicago, 1974.

131 The Libyan Oryx was famed for its long horns and was described by Aristotle and Pliny the Elder. If the landscape in the painting was purely Tuscan, it would not include such an animal. Both Philostratus and Apollodorus are specific about the wrestling match taking place in Libya.

132 *Hercules and Antaeus*, at the Palazzo Pitti, Florence since 1564.
Although mythological subjects in painting and sculpture were not yet in fashion, the ancient gods had survived the middle ages in various forms. As Aby Warburg observed, pagan figures had never disappeared from the imagery associated with astrology evident in illuminated manuscripts throughout the middle ages. A more important source remained on show throughout Italy in the form of antique sarcophagi which were often incorporated into the fabric of medieval churches. Artists who visited churches such as Santa Maria in Aracoeli in Rome would have seen the tomb of Luca Savelli integrating a Roman sarcophagus with winged nude ephebes supporting garlands. In the same city at San Lorenzo fuori le Mura two ancient sarcophagi are featured in the portico and inside the church, the Tomb of Cardinal Gugliemo Fieschi displays a Roman sarcophagus of the fourth century AD. Artists could openly view marble reliefs narrating scenes from ancient myths such as Meleager the Calydonian boar hunt (fig.16), the triumph of Dionysus and the wedding of Peleus and Thetis.

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135 The particular sarcophagus illustrated here as Fig.16 was

136 The practice of incorporating ancient sarcophagi into church walls and medieval tombs was widespread even in provincial areas such as the city of Cosenza, where one finds a Roman sarcophagus with the myth of Meleager in the thirteenth century cathedral, at the tomb of Arrigo di Hohenstaufen. Examples of sarcophagi known in the Renaissance are to be found listed in PP Bober & R Rubinstein; with contributions by S Woodford, Renaissance artists & antique sculpture: a handbook of sources, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1986, (eg. cat.no. 134, 170-171: The Labours of Hercules, roman sarcophagus, 3rd Century AD, Palazzo Torloni, Rome - known to artists in the Renaissance when displayed at the house of Cardinal Savelli, later Palazzo Orsini.)
In this way, the myths of antiquity were never truly hidden from medieval eyes. What they lacked was the literary knowledge to decipher the narratives displayed.

Giorgio Vasari writing from the comfort of retrospect during the High Renaissance period, expressed his bewilderment at the previous century for what seemed to him, the crime of not recognizing and utilizing the evidence of the past that lay around them. And although those before them had seen remains of arches, of colossi, of statues, of urns, and of storied columns in the ages that came after the sackings, the destructions, and the burnings of Rome, they never knew how to make use of them or draw from them any benefit, up to the time mentioned above.\(^{137}\)

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\(^{137}\) Vasari: “E se bene gli innanzi a loro avevano veduto residui d'archi o di colossi o di statue, o pili o colonne storiate, nell'età che furono dopo i sacchi e le ruine e gl'incendi di Roma e'non seppono mai valersene o cavarne profitto alcuno sino al tempo detto di sopra” Giuntina, II, 28-29.
Donatello and Mantegna: Recognizing the Antique

Ancient monuments and ruins still standing in the urban environment such as Trajan’s column, the Arch of Constantine and the funerary portraits on tombs by the Porta Maggiore in Rome provided contact with the distant past even if, as Vasari noted, early Renaissance artists took a long time to imitate the evidence that surrounded them. With antique sculpture and architecture readily available it was perhaps logical that the first real attempts at ‘imitating’ rather than assimilating the Antique came from the Florentine sculptor Donatello.\textsuperscript{138} His marble statue of \textit{St. Mark} begun in 1411 for an exterior niche of the church Or San Michele\textsuperscript{139} is perhaps modern history’s first ‘neoclassical’ work of art. Abandoning medieval art’s frozen, flat, attenuated forms that placed saints in the realm of fantastic beings, Donatello’s \textit{St. Mark} gives us a portrait of a man, a human saint inhabiting a realistic body. Here at last was tangible proof that artists would be capable of competing with the poets, humanists and architects who were already actively resurrecting antiquity through their own works. Whilst Donatello’s subject matter remained strictly Christian, a situation imposed by the mere fact that the Church was by far the most powerful patron of art in Italy, his saints and prophets soon became almost indistinguishable from Classical models. Donatello’s \textit{Prophet with Scroll} of 1418 bears the grim expression and hyper-realistic features found on second century portrait busts of Roman statesmen.\textsuperscript{140} Perhaps his most patently Classical work, the bronze \textit{David} of c. 1430 (fig.17) went even further in breaking the ties to the medieval world by representing this biblical hero as an erotic nude adolescent sporting the winged helmet of Mercury. The sixteenth century biographer of artists Giorgio Vasari describes the naturalness and degree of verisimilitude in the \textit{David} in terms not unlike those employed by Philostratus or Callistratus:

\textsuperscript{139} Donatello’s statue of \textit{St. Mark} is now in the Bargello museum, Florence.
\textsuperscript{140} Originally executed for the Campanile of the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore, in Florence, Donatello’s \textit{Prophet with Scroll} is now in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Florence.
In the courtyard in the Palace of the said Signori there is a life-size David, nude and in bronze. Having cut off the head of Goliath, he is raising one foot and placing it on him, holding a sword in his right hand. This figure is so natural in its vivacity and softness, that it is almost impossible for craftsmen to believe that it was not moulded on the living form.\textsuperscript{141}

It has been suggested that Donatello might have seen a Roman coin with the figure of a Hercules leaning on his club\textsuperscript{142}, an Aesclepius resting on his staff, or an Apollo leaning against a tripod, from which he copied the pose for his David.\textsuperscript{143}

The \textit{contrapposto} pose, where the torso is balanced over a straight supporting leg whilst the weight is taken off a relaxed leg producing a sensual “S” curve to the body, was copied by artists whenever ‘grace’ was called for.

\textsuperscript{141} Trovasi di bronzo nel cortile del palazzo di detti Signori un David ignudo quanto il vivo ch’a Golia ha troncato la testa, et alzando un piede sopra esso lo posa, et ha nella destra una spada; la quale figura è tanto naturale nella vivacità e nella morbidezza che impossibile pare agli artefici che ella non sia formata sopra il vivo. Vasari, Giuntina, V.III, 210.

\textsuperscript{142} Whilst it is possible Donatello’s inspiration sprang directly from contact with an antique source, there was also the hexagonal bas-relief of Hercules with his club standing next to the corpse of Cacus (purifying the earth for civilization), on the campanile of Florence Cathedral attributed to Andrea Pisano (1237-1348) and by the same artist; the figure of \textit{Fortitude in the Guise of Hercules} on the pulpit in the Bapistry, Pisa. See E Panofsky, \textit{Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art}, (2\textsuperscript{nd} ed.) Almquist and Wiksells, Stockholm, 1960, Figure 48.

\textsuperscript{143} For a discussion of this coin theory and other possible sources for Donatello’s \textit{David} see M. Greenhalgh, \textit{Donatello and his Sources}, Duckworth, London, 1982, 169.
This quality of χάρις (charis) is something Philostratus refers to in his praise of paintings and the pose for Donatello’s David with his downward gaze is uncannily like
the youth who having just returned from the hunt, pauses by a pool to gaze down at his own reflection as described in Imagines I.23 Narcissus:

The youth, standing erect, is at rest; he has his legs crossed and supports one hand on the spear which is planted on his left, while his right hand is pressed against his hip so as to support his body and to produce the type of figure in which the buttocks are pushed out because of the inward bend of the left side. The arm shows an open space at the point where the elbow bends, a wrinkle where the wrist is twisted, and it casts a shadow as it ends in the palm of the hand, and the lines of the shadow are slanting because the fingers are bent in.\textsuperscript{144}

The figure Philostratus describes is thought to mimic the \textit{contrapposto} attitude found in ancient sculpture, such as that of Oenomaus in the east pediment of the temple of Zeus at Olympia. Whilst it is not possible for Donatello to have seen such sources firsthand and it is unlikely he knew of Philostratus’ descriptions, there is no doubt that this type of statue, showing an adolescent boy in a contrapposto pose, had filtered down from ancient Greece in various forms, such as on ancient coins and in the copies of Polycleitus’ Doryphoros. Donatello’s Prato pulpit of 1433-39 uses figures probably inspired from antique marble reliefs and has been described as “\textit{the most vigorously and blatantly festive of all Donatello’s imitations of the work of the Roman Empire.”}\textsuperscript{145}

Unlike \textit{cassone} painters who concentrated on fidelity to Classical iconography rather than try to emulate Classical style, with his \textit{David}, Donatello is consciously emulating an ancient prototype. It seems probable that Donatello had a youthful Narcissus, Hermes, Dionysus or Eros type in mind. A statue of a Narcissus described by Callistratus,\textsuperscript{147} matches a statue inscribed with the name of ‘Phaedimus’ in the Vatican collection that was known from the fourteenth-century onward in Rome.\textsuperscript{148}

After the \textit{David} of 1430, Donatello went on to re-invent other Classical models such as the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius in the Campidoglio, Rome which he used as

\begin{footnotes}
\item[144] \textit{Narcissus} (K327) ὁρθὸν ἀναπαύεται ἐναλλάξαν τῷ πόδε τὸ μειράκιον καὶ τὴν χεῖρα ὑπέχον πεπηγότι τῷ ἀκοντίῳ ἐν ἀριστερᾷ, ἡ δεξιὰ δὲ περιῆκται ἐς τὸ ἱσχίον ἀνασχεῖν ταῦτά καὶ σχῆμα πράττειν ἐκκειμένω ὁμοίως ἐκκειμένων τῶν γλουτῶν διὰ τὴν ἄκτισιν, χεῖρ ἄερα μέν, καθ ὁ κυρτοῦται ὁ ἄγκων, ῥυτίδα δὲ κεφαλῆ ὁ καρπὸς καὶ σκιὰν παρέχεται συνιζάνουσα ἐς τὸ θέναρ, λοξαί δ’ αἱ ἄκτισις τῆς σκίας διὰ τὴν ἑσω ἐπιστροφήν τῶν δακτύλων.
\item[145] Greenhalgh, 107.
\item[147] Callistratus, \textit{Descriptions}, 5 On the Statue of Narcissus (390-94F). Callistratus is generally thought to have composed his \textit{ekphraseis} in imitation of Philostratus the Elder, which dates his work to the end of the third century. Whilst manuscripts of Callistratus existed during Donatello’s lifetime, it was not until Aldus Manutius published the work along with Philostratus’ descriptions in his 1503 edition, that it became well known.
\item[148] Mentioned by Fairbanks in his translation notes, F390, n.1.
\end{footnotes}
the model for his bronze monument to Gattamelata in Padua. He was the first Renaissance sculptor to wholly embrace the Classical vocabulary but the first important painter to do so, was Andrea Mantegna (1431-1506) who was deeply inspired by Donatello. Mantegna would also become the first painter to attempt a re-creation of one of the masterpieces in the Imagines, a Comus he commenced for Isabella d’Este which is discussed in the next chapter.

Mantegna began his classicized style by introducing archaeologically precise details of antiquities into his devotional compositions. His St. James meets Herod Agrippa in a sumptuous courtyard against a triumphal arch, a painting for Padua’s Ovetari chapel (1448-57) which is dominated by Mantegna’s passion for the antique. The Ovetari works demonstrate Mantegna was already an exponent of antiquity before the time he arrived in Mantua ca. 1460. Whilst there is no hard evidence for an early visit to Florence or Rome, it seems likely, given the details that surfaced in Mantegna’s work prior to the verified journey to Rome in 1488. Felice Feliciano wrote an account of an archaeological expedition begun on September 23rd 1464, which he undertook with Mantegna, the painter Samuele da Tradate and Giovanni Antenorea, an engineer. It seems Mantegna did have the opportunity to study Italy’s ruins in situ then used Classical architecture as the backdrop against which his religious dramas were enacted. His St. Sebastian of 1480 is also painted before his 1488 departure for Rome yet he depicts the saint undergoing martyrdom lashed to Roman ruins.

Despite his love affair with antiquity which according to Bernard Berenson, threatened to lead him astray from concentrating on his art, Mantegna did not paint a subject devoted to the pagan gods until the end of his life, when Isabella d’Este commissioned

149 Mantegna, St. James before Herod Agrippa, formerly in Padua, Church of the Eremitani (destroyed in WWII), reproduced in R Cipriani, All the Paintings of Mantegna, Oldbourne, London, 1963, plate 7.
152 Mantegna, St. Sebastian, c.1474, from the Church of Notre-Dame, Aigueperse (now in the Louvre, Paris).
153 In his influential The Italian Painters of the Renaissance, Berenson describes Mantegna as “Romanizing Christianity” (149) and suggests that Mantegna fails in his aim to be archaeologically correct in his reconstructions of antiquity, offering instead, an idealized version of the antique. Berenson is of the opinion that Renaissance art could only fail in an attempt to reconstruct antiquity: “When the living traditions of a great art have been destroyed, the archaistic imitation of its products will lead no farther towards creation than the naive imitation of nature.” 150. B Berenson, The Italian Painters of the Renaissance, Phaidon, New York, 1952, (ed) Cornell University Press, 1980.
three mythological paintings for her studiolo (private study) in Mantua. The subjects were: Parnassus with “Mars and a Venus in a moment of pleasure, with Vulcan, an Orpheus playing, and nine dancing Nymphs”\textsuperscript{157} of 1498; followed by the Triumph of Virtue, With Minerva Expelling the Vices of circa 1500-02 and finally, a subject that comes from Philostratus’ Imagines; Comus, The God of Revelry, which was left incomplete at Mantegna’s death.\textsuperscript{158}

The Mantegna paintings were originally intended to hang in the studiolo along with Perugino’s Battle of Chastity and Love and another version of a Parnassus by Lorenzo Costa.\textsuperscript{159}

At the time Mantegna started work on the Comus composition, the Imagines had been translated into Italian for Isabella d’Este by Moschos and also published in the original Greek by Aldus Manutius in Venice. It is quite likely Philostratus’ description of the Comus revelry was consulted for the d’Este painting, much the same way that Moschos’ Italian translation of Philostratus was forwarded to Titian years later by Isabella’s brother, in order that he could paint a re-creation of the Worship of Venus (Erotes, I.6).

\textsuperscript{156} Mantegna did include mythological vignettes in his devotional paintings such as the column medallions illustrating mythological figures in the San Zeno altarpiece of 1457-59, however he did not undertake an independent mythological composition until the d’Este commissions.

\textsuperscript{157} The paintings were entered in an inventory of the Ducal Palace at Mantua compiled by Odoardo Stivini in 1542: Parnassus is listed as item 203; Triumph of Virtue as item 208; Comus as item 206. The subject is not identified as Comus in the inventory but as showing “a triumphal arch, many figures making music and the story of Leda”, (un altro quadro a man sinistra della fenestra, di mano di messer Lorenzo Costa, in lo qual è dipinto un archo triomphale, et molte figure che fanno una musica, con una fabula di Leda.) The motif of Leda and the swan is included by Costa in the group that surrounds Comus and is perhaps mentioned by Stivini because Leda was the only unambiguous mythological figure he could identify. The inventory is Codice D.XII.6; Archivio Gonzaga in the Archivio di stato di Mantova and is reproduced in Isabella d’Este: La primadonna del Rinascimento, 2001, 28-39.

\textsuperscript{158} At the time of the Stivini catalogue, all three paintings hung in Isabella’s studiolo in the Corte Vecchia of the Ducal palace at Mantua. They are now in the collection of the Louvre Museum, Paris. The three canvasses are of the same height (160cm) with Parnassus and The Triumph of Virtue forming a pair (160 x 192cm). The Comus is a much longer canvas (160 x 238cm) which supports the belief that all three were meant to be hung together in Isabella’s studiolo creating a frieze-like effect. The composition seems to have been originally conceived by Mantegna, at least in a preparatory drawing, shortly before his death (September 13\textsuperscript{rd}, 1506). The Comus painting was then executed by Lorenzo Costa (1460-1535). It is believed that Costa significantly changed Mantegna’s composition, which may or may not account for digressions from a textual source. Technical examination has not revealed traces of Mantegna’s actual hand on the canvas. Whilst this suggests that the execution is entirely Costa’s; it is nevertheless agreed that Costa’s composition must be based firmly on a design by Mantegna. The evidence for the composition and commission originating with Mantegna is provided by a letter written by Isabella on July 14 of 1506 (Mantua, Archivio di Stato, Busta 2994, Vol. 19, No. 72). See E Verheyen, The paintings in the studiolo of Isabella d’Este at Mantua, New York University Press, New York, 1971. 46-49 particularly note 98, 46-7 and note 39, 20.

\textsuperscript{159} See E Wind, Bellini’s Feast of the Gods: a study in Venetian humanism, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1948, (53) for a hypothetical reconstruction of the arrangement of paintings in the studiolo circa 1530 and a later arrangement circa 1542 when two Correggio paintings were added.
Whilst surviving sketches from artists active in the first half of the fifteenth century such as Pisanello and Mantegna’s father-in-law, Jacopo Bellini\textsuperscript{160} show that artists had already begun to copy antiquities, we never really see a major mythological painting until the last decade of the century. Pisanello’s study after a Roman sarcophagus shows naked maenads dancing, models that would be assimilated and translated into late Gothic women in heavy robes engaged in courtly dances.\textsuperscript{161} This model, of a Renaissance artist using Classical material in non-Classical ways, is prevalent throughout the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. Artists seemed content to borrow from antiquity, but not to fully resurrect it until the advent of Donatello, Mantegna and Botticelli.\textsuperscript{162}

\textbf{Philostratus circa 1500: from textbook to historical object}

The diffusion and utilisation of the \textit{Imagines} in the West up to the end of the fifteenth century represents a gradual development of the Byzantine treatment of the text. In the early \textit{quattrocento} the text seems to have been accessible only to a few humanists with a knowledge of Greek, and they seem to have read it for the similar purposes as their Byzantine predecessors and teachers; to improve their knowledge of Attic language and grammar.

The Cretan scholar Marcos Mousouros who worked for the publisher Aldus Manutius is also recorded as having used the \textit{Imagines} in his lectures given at the university of Padua. What is interesting is that Mousouros gave oral lectures on what was previously a scholastic exercise book, showing that the text was now being taught in a different

\textsuperscript{160} One of the problems with tracing the emergence of the antique in fifteenth-century painting is that we have only a fraction of most artists’ output to work with. The preservation of Jacopo Bellini’s two notebooks full of sketches (Louvre: Paris and BM, London) present clear evidence this artist actively studied and copied antiquities and was interested in mythological subjects, yet there is barely a hint of this keen interest to be found in the handful of his surviving paintings. See M Röthlisberger, ‘Notes on the Drawing Books of Jacopo Bellini’, \textit{The Burlington Magazine}, Vol. 98, No. 643, Italian Paintings and Drawings (Oct., 1956), 358-364.

\textsuperscript{161} Pisanello, \textit{Study after a Roman sarcophagus}, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford University. See Maria Fossi Todorow, \textit{Disegni del Pisanello e della sua cerchia}, Florence, L.S. Olschki 1966.

\textsuperscript{162} The Florentine painter, Sandro Botticelli (1445-1510), was not the first Renaissance artist to paint subjects reliant on Classical mythology but his well known canvas of \textit{The Calumny of Apelles}, (c. 1490) is often cited as the prime example of an artist converting ancient ekphrasis into painting. However it is more likely that the source came from Alberti’s \textit{Della Pittura (On Painting)} where he suggests the \textit{Calumny} as an appropriate subject for artists, rather than Botticelli working directly from the text of Lucian. See Cast, (1981).
way and in a different context. He also compared Philostratus to other prose authors such as Plutarch, Lucian and Theocritus.\footnote{See M Sicherl, \textit{Johannes Cuno Ein Wegbereiter des Griechischen in Deutschland, Eine biographisch-kodikologische Studie}, Heidelberg 1978, 59-64.}

A new interest in the general mythological content of the \textit{Imagines} and in the imaginary pictures, is discernible only at the close of the fifteenth century, as evidenced by Pollaiuolo’s \textit{Hercules and Antaeus} and the \textit{Comus} painting for the d’Este \textit{studiolo} in Mantua.

Mousouros in Padua was addressing a new audience, a western one, who were not satisfied to resurrect the Classical past through language alone, unlike the Byzantine elite. Although Renaissance humanists resembled Greek scholars in their concern to revive Classical language as an elegant and versatile form of expression, the extent of their interest in the material world of antiquity, as preserved in both texts and objects, had no parallel in Byzantium. This antiquarian aspect, manifested in the activities of Isabella d’Este and her brother Alfonso, characterizes the Renaissance treatment of the \textit{Imagines} and will be explored in the next chapter.
CHAPTER TWO

The *Imagines* in early sixteenth-century Italian art

- The Transmission of Classical Texts from Humanists to Artists
- Resurrecting the Classics; the Patron-Humanist-Artist triangle
- Isabella d’Este and the first vernacular translation of the *Imagines*
- *The Battle of Love and Chastity*
- The *Comus* of Mantua
- Re-creating Antiquity; the *camerino d’alabastro* at Ferrara
- Bellini’s *Bacchanal*
- Raphael and Fra Bartolomeo’s involvement with the camerino
- *Erotes*: the ‘Worship of Venus’ 1518-20
- Titian’s *Bacchus and Ariadne* 1520-23
- Philostratus I.25: The *Bacchanal of Andros*
The Transmission of Classical Texts from Humanists to Artists

As shown in the previous chapter, visual stimuli from the antique world were not enough to initiate a stylistic and iconographical metamorphosis in fifteenth-century Italian art. The true voice of antiquity came from Classical texts and the only way artists could commence their emancipation from medieval Christian confines was through the diffusion of those texts, by humanists, to a wider audience. There was a great divide between artists and humanists even though they depended upon the same patrons and visited the same courts, as in the case of Mantegna and Moschos at the court of Isabella d’Este in Mantua. The concerns of the studia humanitatis were intellectual and centred upon Classical texts. Early Renaissance artists were regarded as uneducated craftsmen, concerned with the manual production of paintings and sculptures. When humanists became involved in the creation of a work of art in the capacity of advisers on iconography, it was generally through the request of a patron. This was the case with the first Renaissance paintings of subjects from Philostratus, which I shall explore in this chapter. My main purpose in looking at the Philostratean paintings commissioned by d’Este family members at Mantua and Ferrara, is to examine the material culture that evolved from the transmission of the Imagines and other Classical texts on mythology, in the early Renaissance period as outlined in Chapter One.

After centuries in the profession of creating images, where the only expectation was to illustrate and glorify Christian doctrine, how did artists suddenly access the data necessary to devise secular compositions based on the Classical tradition? Most painters came from the artisan class and did not receive a Classical Grammar school education. Artists were not introduced to the Classics through the same channels as privileged humanists like Alberti, Flavio Biondo and Niccolò Machiavelli. Often regarded as the genius intellect of the Renaissance, Leonardo da Vinci, although born the son of a nobleman, was denied an education fitting his family's status as he was illegitimate. Leonardo alludes to a lack of formal education among artists, in his argument against painting being regarded as a ‘mechanical art’; rather than one of the liberal arts. He wrote:

You have placed painting amongst the mechanical arts. Certainly if painters were

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capable of praising their works in writing, as poets have done, I do not believe that painting would have been given such a bad name.\(^2\)

Frustrated by his own limited literary skills, he later made a concentrated effort to learn Latin, presumably in order to read the Classical books he kept in his library which was an unusually large and erudite one for a Renaissance artist to possess.\(^3\) It was also true that the rise of the artist in society led to a small elite group (including Leonardo), assuming the role of courtier. This meant that artists now aspired to acquire the graces of a natural born courtier, which included knowledge of Latin. In the 1490s at the Sforza court of Milan, Leonardo was just as famous for being a valued courtier as he was for being a painter.

Leonardo gives clues in his notebooks as to which Classical texts he knew well.\(^4\) His comments on celestial phenomena seem to be derived from Book X of Diogenes Laertius whose *Vitae Philosophorum* was published in a Latin translation of 1475. Leonardo’s mention of the Arab philosopher Avicenna (Leonardo writes ‘Avinega’) probably indicates a familiarity with his writings on medicine in a printed edition of 1476: *Avicennae canonum libri V*. Other borrowings in Leonardo’s notebooks taken from Classical texts include: Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*; Plutarch’s *De Gloria Atheniensium*; Pliny’s *Historia naturalis* and Horace’s *Ars poetica*. How much Leonardo was able to decipher from these Latin texts with his grammatical primer in hand, we do not know. Leonardo never reached fluency in Latin and his frustration shows in the following defensive remark:

"I do not have literary learning (...) my concerns are better handled through experience rather than bookishness. Though I may not know, like them, how to cite from the authors, I will cite something far more worthy, quoting experience, mistress of their masters."\(^5\)

Leonardo’s contemporary, the Northern artist Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), also felt bitter about his lack of formal education. Aware of how reading the ancient authors


\(^3\) F Ames-Lewis, *The Intellectual Life of the Early Renaissance Artist*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1989. Wherever possible, Professor Kemp provides sources for Leonardo’s veiled references to Classical works which provide insight into the artist’s earnest attempt to acquaint himself with Classical literature. An example is Leonardo’s opening lines of the Preface for his unfinished treatise on painting where he quotes Demetrius the Cynic (1st C. AD.) as known in the Renaissance from Seneca’s *Epistulae Morales*. Kemp, n.1, 9.

\(^4\) Ibid 9.
could be a vital part of the creative process for an artist attempting to visualize antiquity, Durer wrote that “artists should be taught Latin”. As official court artist to the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I and his successor Charles V, Durer came into contact with some of Northern Europe's most outstanding humanists including Erasmus, Philipp Melanchthon, and Willibald Pirkheimer who seem to have furnished subjects for his Classically-inspired works.

The list of important artists who struggled to acquire Latin in order to read the Classics is not limited to Leonardo and Durer but includes Brunelleschi, Mantegna, Ghiberti, Piero della Francesca, Raphael and Rosso Fiorentino, among others. All are known to have tried self-education in Latin as evidenced by Latin grammar books in their libraries and from confessions in their personal correspondence. When an artist's basic Latin proved inadequate, humanists had to be consulted and sometimes paid, for translations of specific texts. Fabio Marco Calvo translated Vitruvius at Raphael's request and Durer enlisted the help of his friend Konrad Celtis to provide the Latin inscriptions on his paintings. A lack of fluency in Latin meant many ecclesiastical writings were also out of reach to artists. The painter Pietro Lorenzetti paid a Grammar School teacher, Maestro Ciecho, to make a vernacular translation of the text of the life of Saint Savinus for a Birth of the Virgin he was to paint at the Siena cathedral.

With so few artists having any understanding of Latin, those that understood Greek were even more of an exception. The sculptor and engraver Giulio Campagnola was the adopted son of a nobleman and was given the opportunity to learn Latin, Greek and Hebrew. The Florentine sculptor Antonio di Pietro Averlino changed his name to Filarete (Greek for ‘lover of virtue’) in a compliment to the language and culture that he had studied and so admired. Filarete inscribed bronze plaques with Greek which he

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7 Although Durer’s output was largely religious in subject, he showed a significant interest in antique themes. He made sketches of printed graphics by Mantegna such as the Death of Orpheus, c. 1494 (pen drawing, Hamburg) and like Mantegna, his most obviously classicized work was a complex Triumphal Procession, which glorified the deeds of Emperor Maximilian I, executed in woodcuts, 1522. (Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Kunsthalle, Karlsruhe).
executed in a classicizing style.\textsuperscript{10} He also wrote a well-received treatise on architecture, wherein he concentrates on the architectural theory and practice of his day, rather than exploring purely Classical models, as the humanist Alberti does in\textit{De re aedificatoria}.\textsuperscript{11}

However, Filarete and Campagnola were exceptional cases and we must surmise that where Greek inscriptions appear on other Renaissance works of art, the artist has enlisted the help of Greek scholars. The most notable example is Botticelli’s\textit{Mystic Nativity} (National Gallery, London), which features a cryptic inscription in faulty Greek (fig.1) and would have been copied incorrectly by the artist from a hand-written example. Unable to identify the Greek characters, Botticelli has painted the script as if he were copying the decorative border design from a pattern book.\textsuperscript{12} With no comprehension of the Greek script, he sees only lines and curves.

The Greek inscription translates approximately as:

This picture, at the end of the year 1500, in the troubles of Italy, I Alessandro, in the half-time after the time, painted, according to the eleventh of Saint John, in the second woe of the Apocalypse, during the release of the devil for three-and-a-half years; then he shall be bound in the twelfth and we shall see [him burying himself?] as in this picture.

The ‘half time after the time’ has been generally understood as a year and a half earlier, that is, in 1498, when the French invaded Italy, but it may mean a half millennium (500 years) after a millennium (1000 years) i.e. 1500, the date of the painting. Botticelli clearly felt the prestige of humanistic learning associated with Greek as this is the only time he ever signed a painting.

\textsuperscript{10} For example see Filarete’s\textit{Ulysses and Iro}, c. 1445, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum. There is no standard monograph on Filarete but quite useful is P Pierotti,\textit{Prima di Machiavelli: Filarete e Francesco di Giorgio, consiglieri del principe}, Ospedaletto: Pacini, Pisa, 1995.


\textsuperscript{12} The Greek inscription on Botticelli’s painting (fig.1) contains many curious elements (such as the date 1500 written as $\Sigma \Sigma \Sigma \Sigma \Sigma$), which are impossible to explain in terms of conventional Greek as discussed in R Lighthown, \textit{Sandro Botticelli}, Abbeville Press, London 1978, Vol. II, cat.no. B90, 100. The errors would suggest that Botticelli’s adviser was also not fluent in Greek. On the subject of the use of Greek in painting see NG Wilson, ‘Inscriptions on Renaissance Paintings’,\textit{Italia Medioevale e Umanistica}XXXV, (1992), 215-252.
It seems that both humanists and artists could have benefited from direct interaction, with the scholars augmenting their knowledge of antiquity by observing works of ancient art with the same enthusiasm artists did, and in return, artists could have consulted humanists on Classical literature. There is little evidence to suggest that such relationships existed in quattrocento Italy. One individual who attempted to merge the two disciplines was the humanist, art theorist and architect, Leon Battista Alberti. He translated his treatise on painting, written for humanists in Latin, *De pictura* (1435), to produce a vernacular edition accessible to artists: *Della pittura* (1436). Both versions of the treatise circulated in manuscripts before the first printed edition appeared in 1540.\(^\text{13}\)

It appears Alberti’s aim was to make his book more available to artists, as evidenced by a dedication on the opening page to a group of notable artists, sculptors and architects of his day: Brunelleschi, Ghiberti, Donatello, Luca della Robbia and Masaccio. In what

\(^{13}\) There are a prolific number of books and articles on Alberti, but for a discussion on *Della pittura* that is relevant to the arguments in this thesis see, CL Baskins, ‘Echoing Narcissus in Alberti’s Della pittura’, *Oxford Art Journal*, Vol.16 no.1, 1993, 25-33 and also Hope & McGrath, 165-169.
became acknowledged as the first modern treatise on painting, Alberti wrote that artists needed to mingle with intellectuals and be exposed to humanistic ideas in order to broaden their knowledge and make it easier to find ‘worthy subjects’ for painting:

*It would please me if the painter were as learned as possible in all the liberal arts*\(^{14}\)(...) For their own enjoyment artists should associate with poets and orators who have many embellishments in common with painters and who have a broad knowledge of many things. These could be very useful in beautifully composing the “istoria” whose greatest praise consists in the invention. (Alberti, *On Painting*, Book III)\(^{15}\)

Alberti was well aware that artists did not have the education necessary to pursue these goals, which is why he exhorts them to use secondary sources and to seek specialized knowledge by conversing with ‘poets and orators’.

*Della Pittura* is not a ‘practical guide to painting’ for artists like the technical handbook *The Book of Painting*, written by Cennino Cennini.\(^{16}\) Alberti’s treatise is conscientiously Classical in style and is primarily concerned with Classical models. Giotto is the only artist mentioned by Alberti who does not come from antiquity. In essence, Alberti’s main message to artists was ‘copy the techniques of the ancients, use the great scribes of antiquity for subjects and you will be as great as Apelles and Zeuxis’. It is difficult to estimate how many major artists working in Italy during the second half of the fifteenth century would have been familiar with Alberti’s book on painting and followed his

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14 The Renaissance notion of the liberal arts followed the medieval model; seven in number, they were divided into the three-fold Trivium of Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric, and the four-fold Quadrivium of Arithmetic, Geometry, Music, and Astronomy. As vernacular translations of the Classics were rare, one had to have fluency in Latin and ideally in Greek, in order to properly study the essential texts associated with a liberal arts education. For a definition of the liberal arts in the Renaissance see C Hulse, *The Rule of Art*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1990, 66-67 & 123-124.


endorsements to emulate antiquity. The Florentine artist Sandro Botticelli seems to have been familiar with Alberti’s text, having borrowed a description it contains derived from Lucian’s account of Apelles’ painting of Calumny.

Resurrecting the Classics: The Patron-Humanist-Artist triangle

The fact that humanists in Italy who knew the Imagines chose for so long to ignore its value as a source for Graeco-Roman art emphasizes the literary nature of the humanist movement and demonstrates the lack of interest they showed in art in general. The humanists’ link to the distant past was centred on the written word. Theirs was not an archaeological perspective that wanted to physically resurrect antiquity in the way that collectors like Isabella d’Este desired. The opportunity for humanists and artists to work independently of a patron’s involvement therefore, was seldom taken up.

When Philostratus was finally discovered by Renaissance art, it came about due to the pivotal role of the patron. With artists having no hope of conversing on an equal footing with humanists on the subject of antiquity, it was the patron who had to act as intermediary. The patron utilised the intellect of the humanist and the artistic skill and imagination of the artist, to achieve his or her desired results. Circa 1500, there would have been very few professional partnerships between humanist and artist; at least nothing similar to later working practices as evolved between the Venetian poet and literary theorist Cardinal Pietro Bembo and the artist Raphael.

A review of the d’Este family’s patronage at Mantua and Ferrara at the beginning of the sixteenth century shows exactly how the patron controlled the artistic project. Classical texts like the Imagines may have provided the ideas for paintings, but the artist was not the one who selected the subject. Even artists as revered as Perugino and Titian had simply to obey the patron’s instructions. In Titian’s case, descriptions from Isabella d’Este’s privately commissioned vernacular translation of the Imagines were copied out

17 Hope and McGrath argue that the manuscript of Della pittura was unlikely to be well known to Italian artists, with only Filarete making mention of it before 1500. C Hope & E McGrath, 165.
18 Botticelli, Calumny of Apelles, c.1497, Uffizi Gallery, Florence.
19 Hope & McGrath make the observation that one of the best indications to illustrate the gap between art and humanism is to review the role art works played in the personal lives of humanists. They come to the conclusion that: ‘instances of humanists commissioning or acquiring art for themselves are rare, whether for lack of interest, opportunity or resources.’ 179.
and sent to Titian in Venice. This is one of the few documented cases where we have an artist being furnished with a Classical text that he is required to translate into an image.

Modern art history has tended to attribute the first example of Classical ekphrasis converted into a Renaissance painting to Botticelli and *The Calumny of Apelles* c. 1497. However David Cast, in his monograph devoted to the painting, argues convincingly that details in Botticelli’s version derive not from the original text of Lucian but from Alberti’s translation of Lucian in his 1436 treatise *Della Pittura* and also from a manuscript translation in Italian of Lucian’s *Calumny* essay produced in 1472 by the Florentine scholar Bartolommeo della Fonte. It is highly unlikely that the uneducated Botticelli drew inspiration directly from the text of Lucian which was published only in a Latin edition as late as 1496 in Florence. 21

After 1500 artists increasingly felt the pressure of having to provide evermore erudite subjects like the *Calumny*, as humanistic patrons wished to display their own intellectual accomplishments in the paintings that adorned their homes. Giulio de’Medici wrote that in commissioning Giulio Romano to paint some mythological pictures, he did not care what subjects were chosen by the artist as long as they would be instantly recognizable and he added that “interesting scenes by Ovid would do as well as anything.” Giulio de’Medici further instructed Romano to avoid Old Testament subjects as this source of iconography was for the exclusive use of the Pope.22

It must have been enormously frustrating for Renaissance artists, aware of the rapidly developing taste for ‘the antique’ amongst their patrons, not to be able to pick up a volume of Virgil’s *Eclogues*, Vitruvius’ *De Architectura* or Philostratus’ *Imagines* and to comprehend it with ease. Despite Vitruvius being hugely influential on Renaissance

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21 Cast, 42-46. Whilst this event may have renewed interest in Lucian among patrons and humanists, it does not change the fact the artist still would not have had access to the text except via Renaissance sources; Alberti and della Fonte. A contemporary of Botticelli quoted by Vasari, commented that the artist was ‘like a heretic who being poorly educated, unlettered and almost unable to read, dared to make a commentary on Dante and took his name in vain’. (oltre ciò non pare a voi che sia eretico, poi che senza avere lettere o apena saper leggere comenta Dante e mentova il suo nome invano?) Giuntina, Vol.III, 519. Furthermore, there is a drawing by Mantegna of the *Calumny* (as described by Alberti) in the British Museum, which may pre-date the Botticelli painting: reproduced in J Martineau (ed), *Andrea Mantegna*, exh. cat, Royal Academy of Arts, London and Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1992.

22 For Cardinal Giulio de’ Medici’s letter to his agent in Rome, Mario Maffei, see R Lefevre ‘Un prelato del’500: Mario Maffei e la costruzione di Villa Madama’ in *L’Urbe* 32 (1969) 6-7. Giulio’s insistence on a mythological theme shows how far tastes had changed; a century earlier, Giulio’s illustrious forebearer Cosimo de’Medici the Elder, also collected antiquities and Greek manuscripts but commissioned exclusively religious works of art from contemporary artists.
art and architecture and on humanist thinking in general, a translation in Italian was not published until 1520 under Raphael’s direction. Vitruvian ideas had been disseminated throughout Italy largely through Alberti’s *De re aedificatoria* (1485) and Francesco di Giorgio’s *Trattato di architettura civile e militare* (c.1482).

Certainly, Philostratus was out of reach to artists because even the first Latin translations did not appear until circa 1517 (fig.2).  

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23 The first Latin translation of the *Imagines* of Philostratus the Elder is attributed to Stefano Negri in 1517. The Biblioteca provinciale dei Cappuccini in Florence holds a first edition: *Quae hoc volumine continetur. Icones Philostrati. Philostrati Iunioris Icones. Eiusdem Heroica. Descriptiones Callistri. Eiusdem Vitae sophistarum*, published in Florence by Filippo Giunta (Colophon reads: Florentiae sumptu Philippi Iuntae Florentini. Anno a natuitae Domini. XVII Supra mille mense Octob. Leone X, Pontifice.). Translations of the *Imagines* were often bound in the same volume with authors such as Aesop, Lucian and Aphonius. As many library catalogues list composite volumes under the name of one main author (eg. Aesopus), it is possible Latin translations of the *Imagines* were made earlier than 1517, but have been overlooked. The Bibliothèque Mazarine in Paris holds a 1518 Latin translation of the *Imagines*: *Aesopi Phrygis Vita [a M. Planude conscripta] et Fabellae, cum latina interpretatione. Gabriae..., Fabellae tres et quadraginta..., cum latina interpretatione. Ex Aphonii exercitamentis de fabula, tum de formicis et cicadis, graece et latine. De fabula ex imaginibus Philostrati, graece et latine. Ex Hermogenis exercitamentis de fabula Prisciano interprete* published in Basle by Jo. Frobenium. (Code T00139744000010: illustrated fig.2).
Isabella d’Este and the first vernacular translation of the *Imagines*

Unavailability of the *Imagines* makes Titian's paintings for Alfonso d'Este,²⁴ based on descriptions by Philostratus, unique for the period. It was only through an exceptional chain of events that Titian received an Italian translation of the text to work from, two centuries before a *filostrato volgarizzato* was ever published.²⁵

In 1505, Isabella d’Este as Marchesa of Mantua invited the Greek scholar Demetrios Moschos to make the first known vernacular translation of the *Imagines* (fig.3) from a volume that she must have owned in her library.²⁶

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²⁴ Alfonso d’Este, Duke of Ferrara (1486-1534). He was married to Pope Alexander VI’s daughter Lucrezia Borgia (1480–1519). Alfonso’s son Ercole d’Este II, 1508–59, married Renée, daughter of Louis XII of France.

²⁵ The first Italian translation to be published was from Vincenzo Lancetti, *Le opera dei due Filostrati*, Milano, 1828-1831. (2 vols.). Translations in French and German were published in the sixteenth century.

Isabella’s fascination for Philostratus runs parallel to her insatiable thirst for the marvels of antiquity. A historical representational convention portrays Isabella as a precocious student of Classical literature. Rumoured to have been well versed in Latin and Greek from an early age, Isabella stands out among Renaissance women as one of the few,
whose intellect could match that of a learned man.\textsuperscript{27} For me, the question remains as to why Isabella would commission a \textit{filostrato volgarizzato} if she was already fluent in Greek? One possible answer is that the translation was for the express purpose of being able to pass the text on to artists that she wished to commission paintings from. Equicola mentions in his dedicatory letter at the beginning of Moschos’ translation that Isabella had already had a vernacular translation done of Lucian, which also had subjects suitable for painting. Lorenzo de Medici, who avidly acquired the works of ancient authors, was not fluent in either Latin or Greek. Perhaps Isabella’s esteemed collecting activities have resulted in a fictionalized view of her talents. The original Moschos translation of the \textit{Imagines} is at Cambridge (MS Cambridge, University Library, Ad. 6007) and a copy of unknown provenance is in Paris (MS Paris, BN, Itali. 1091).\textsuperscript{28} The Cambridge volume is in good condition and contains a dedicatory letter on the first page written by the hand of Mario Equicola.\textsuperscript{29}

\textsuperscript{27} Even the latest publications on Isabella maintain that she received a Classical education in her birthplace of Ferrara but I have never seen proof of her reputed proficiency in Greek. All her letters to Erasmus and other humanists I have looked at, were written in Italian, not Latin. The latest book to be produced on Isabella is a collection of essays: \textit{Isabella d’Este, La primadonna del Rinascimento}, Mantua, 2001. It is full of conflicting views and inconsistencies and is only to be recommended for the illustrations and for the transcription of the d’Este collection inventories. In a chapter called ‘The Cultural Correspondence of Isabella’, Roberta Iotta supports the view that the Duchess was extremely learned and curiously, cites 20\textsuperscript{th} century writer Maria Bellonci, who penned a romanticized biography of Isabella called \textit{Rinascimento privato} (1985), wherein Bellonci has Erasmus compose a Latin dialogue that praises the intellect of Isabella under the guise of a fictional figure called “Magdalia”. Iotta writes “e davvero ben si intona alla qualità dell’intelletto di Isabella, alla sua libertà di crescere e di educarsi tra i libri, dentro i libri, siano essi antichi o moderni, classici e nuovi.” (and truly this evokes the quality of Isabella’s intellect, as she was free to grow up and be educated amongst books, inside books, of those authors antique and modern, the Classics and the new.) Bellonci’s heroine Magdalia reads the authors in the original Greek and Latin and in \textit{Rinascimento privato}, Bellonci puts these words into the mouth of a priest: “se permettete quest’opera sarà per voi. Perché voi siete Magdalia.” (and if you (Isabella) will allow it, I say this work is dedicated to you, for you are Magdalia). This seems spurious evidence indeed, to authenticate the myth that Isabella d’Este was fluent in Greek and Latin. More reliable on the subject of Isabella is E Verheyen, 1971 and “La prima donna del mondo”, \textit{Isabella d’Este Fürstin und Mäzenatin der Renaissance}, edited by S. Ferino-Pagden, exhibition catalogue (Kunsthistorisches Museum), Vienna 1994. Koortbojian M. and Webb, “Isabella d’Este’s Philostratos,” \textit{Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes}, (JWCI) 56 (1993), 260-67 cite at p.261 an article by S. Kolsky, “Images of Isabella d’Este” Italian Studies. XXXIX. (1984) 47-62 for Isabella’s admission that she was unable to read a Latin text unassisted.

\textsuperscript{28} It is a possibility that the Paris manuscript belonged to Alfonso d’Este and was copied whilst the original was for a long period in his possession at Ferrara. Letters from his sister Isabella request the return of Moschos’ \textit{Imagines} and it is most likely that Alfonso had a copy made before he returned it to Mantua, as the text continued to be central to his iconographical programme for his own picture gallery, the \textit{camerino d’alabastro} (1511-1529), Shearman, 213.

\textsuperscript{29} Many thanks to Dr Patrick Zutshi, Keeper of Manuscripts at Cambridge University Library for kindly allowing me to examine the Moschos \textit{Imagines} at rather short notice. Thanks are due also to the Library’s photographic department for creating a microfilm of the entire manuscript, for my research purposes. See R Le Goff, ‘Greek Island Paradises: Creating a new text at the Court of Ferrara’ in \textit{Script and Print: Paradise New Worlds of Books & Readers}, Bulletin of the Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand, Special issue 29: 1-4 (2005), Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, March 2007, 144-162.
Fig. 4 Dedication to Isabella d’Este, Demetrius Moschos, circa 1505, *Imagines*, MS Cambridge, University Library, Ad. 6007
The dedication reproduced here (fig.4)\textsuperscript{30} is addressed to both the ‘Illustrious Isabella d’Este Marchesa of Mantua’ and to her court humanist, Mario Equicola (M. egrola). Moschos states that he hopes these ‘Athenian myths’ \textit{(i mithi atheni)} will provide subjects for the decoration of Isabella’s ‘golden grotta’ \textit{(della tua aurea Grotta)}.\textsuperscript{31} It is evident that Moschos was not completely fluent in written Italian, as the dedication and the text of the \textit{Imagines} are full of Greek characters, spelling errors and grammatical inconsistencies. It seems to me that a second page of the dedication may be missing as it ends abruptly and is not signed as would be normal practice.

No formal title to the work is provided, nor any introduction to the text. Following Moschos’ dedication, the translation of \textit{Imagines} marked as page number 3, begins with Philostratus’ first line of the \textit{Proem}:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Chi nó ama la pictura, offende la merita offende anchora tutta quella sapientia esperitoia agli poeti. (sic)}\textsuperscript{32}
\end{quote}

The Moschos translation relies on the Manutian edition and does not deviate from the arrangement of the Greek text as printed in Venice in 1503. Moschos’ series of descriptions from the \textit{Imagines} bear Italianized titles, for example: the \textit{Horae} (II, 34) becomes \textit{horo: cioe quarto tempi del anno} and Philostratus’ description of pygmies around the river god Nile, \textit{Picheis} (οί Πήξεις) (I.5) becomes \textit{Nilo}.

It is a copy of this manuscript (or perhaps a transcription of only two selected descriptions: the \textit{Erotes} and the \textit{Andrians}), that was sent to Titian in Venice and possibly to other artists involved in both Isabella and Alfonso d’Este’s projects for

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\textsuperscript{30} A translation of the dedication is given in Campbell (208-209): “To the most illustrious Lady Isabella d’Este, marchioness of Mantua, from Mario Equicola: I thank the heavens who have destined me to be the servant of you, for he who does not praise you is spiteful, and he who does could not be called a flatterer. Free of religious superstition you carry out all the parts of justice with prudence; to better fulfill your duties you devote your leisure to the committed study of Latin literature; you (to whom none of the routes to immortality is closed, since a high and sublime talent is manifest in all of your actions, and since you build things sumptuously but without any trite or common style) you now, for sake of public utility seek to have the Greek text translated, as you have already done with Lucian and are doing with Plutarch’s Moralia. Here now are the Icons of Philostratus, which on account of their nobility and because they are written by the very hand of the translator Demetrios Moschus, should be particularly precious to you, and worthy of your golden Grotta.” Campbell includes a transcription of Equicola’s letter (360 n.15) in his discussion on the manuscript. The most complete investigation into the Moschos translation is by N. Zorzi, ‘Demetrio Mosco e Mario Equicola. Un volgarizzamento delle ‘Imagines’ di Filostrato per Isabella d’Este,’ \textit{Giornale storico della letteratura italiana}, 174, (568) 1997, 522-72.


\textsuperscript{32} I translate Moschos as: ‘He who does not love painting, offends truth and also offends all the wisdom that has been the inspiration of the poets’, which compares to the first modern English translation from the Greek of Fairbanks’: ‘Whosoever scorns painting is unjust to truth; and he is also unjust to all the wisdom that has been bestowed upon poets’ (F3).
creating private picture galleries with an antique theme.

Between 1500 and 1524 at least five paintings based on descriptions from Philostratus were commissioned from Italy’s leading artists by Isabella in Mantua and her brother Alfonso I, in Ferrara:

2. c.1504 Andrea Mantegna/Lorenzo Costa, *Story of Comus* (Comus I.2).34
3. 1514-1517 Raphael (Rafaello Santi), *Hunt of Meleager* (Philostratus the Younger, Meleager 15).35

The last three paintings were among a group commissioned by Alfonso d’Este for his private gallery known as the *camerino d’alabastro* in Ferrara 1513-1529. This Ferrarese group tends to dominate most studies on Philostratus and his connection to Renaissance iconography.36

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34 The *Comus* painting is introduced at the end of Chapter One of this thesis (p.56).

35 Originally, Raphael was asked to paint a *Triumph of Bacchus* and he sent a preparatory sketch to Alfonso d’Este in 1517. The sketch was passed on to a local artist in Ferrara, Pellegrino da San Daniele, who proceeded to use it for a painting of his own. When Raphael learned of this, he changed the subject of the commission for Alfonso to a subject from Philostratus the Younger, the *Hunt of Meleager*. However Raphael died in 1520 before carrying out the commission, see Shearman (1987) 213. Raphael’s design for the *Bacchus* is perhaps recorded in an engraving by Luca Penni, dated 1547 and executed by Leon Davent; reproduced in *The Illustrated Bartsch* vol. 33 (*Le peintre graveur*, vol.16 part 2) ‘Italian Artists of the Sixteenth Century School of Fontainebleau’ (ed) H Zerner, New York: Abaris Books, 1979.

36 Most recently the *Titian* exhibition at the National Gallery London (19 February – 18 May, 2003) provided the platform for a fresh look at the *camerino d’alabastro*. The exhibition brought together for the first time since the dispersal of the paintings in 1598, most of the original canvases from the *camerino* including: Titian’s *Worship of Venus, Bacchus and Ariadne*, and *The Andrians*; Bellini and Titian’s, *Feast of the Gods* and three subjects of the frieze by Dosso Dossi. See D Jaffé, ‘Alfonso d’Este’s Camerino’ in *Titian*, National Gallery London, 2003, 100 ff. *The Worship of Venus and The Andrians* are today in the Prado Museum, Madrid.
However it is not with Alfonso that credit lies for bringing Philostratus to the attention of artists at the beginning of the sixteenth century, but rather with his sister, Isabella. It was Isabella who introduced the text to Alfonso and it was her own celebrated studiolo in Mantua (fig.5) a room designed to hold contemporary masterpieces alongside precious antiquities that Alfonso most probably took as his model for the camerino d’alabastro.

The creation of a studiolo as a place of retreat for private contemplation of works of art, was not an idea original to Isabella but was something of a family tradition with her uncles Leonello d’Este (1407-1450) and Borso d’Este (1413-1471) having earlier constructed the studiolo di Bellefiore at Ferrara with an antique theme under the guidance of the humanist Guarino Veronese. I am suggesting that Isabella’s reading of the Imagines may have inspired her not just to emulate their example, but to arrange the programme more closely to the ideas put forth in Philostratus’ proem. The rooms of Isabella d’Este were originally located in the tower of the Castello di San Giorgio in Mantua and then later transferred to the Corte Vecchia. They included a suite of rooms and a private courtyard garden that were composed to create the ideal humanistic ambience within which to meditate upon her fabulous collection of books, paintings, antiquities and rare objects. The main room was the studiolo where it has been shown that Isabella’s iconographical programme for the paintings was intended to fit in with the surroundings.37

In a letter to Giovanni Francesco Malatesta in September, 1502, Isabella d’Este wrote: “desiderando nui havere nel camerino nostro picture ad historia de li excellenti pictori che sono al presente in Italia” (we desire to have in our camerino pictures with a historical narrative story by the excellent painters now in Italy.)38

37 Hope, 1981, 308-309.

38 A recent study on the Perugino commission is found in SJ Campbell, The Cabinet of Eros: Renaissance Mythological Painting and the Studiolo of Isabella d’Este, Yale University Press, 2004, 169-190. For the letter to Malatesta see Campbell, Appendix 2, no. 34. The letter is also translated in Chambers, 134.
Isabella’s aspiration to gather the best examples of art from various masters comes close to Philostratus’ report of his Roman host’s collection in the villa outside Naples. The Sophist tells us that his host was a connoisseur with excellent judgement, who had selected only the best across a wide range of painters. (I: Proem).

Isabella not only wanted variety in the masterpieces but specifies that the studiolo paintings must be ‘narratives’; the same genre as all but one of the sixty-five paintings she read about in the Imagines.39

Philostratus also tells us that the collecting of paintings was a pastime favoured by aristocrats and rulers of the Classical period; a suitable occupation for the elite:

Now the story of men who have won mastery in the science of painting, and of the states and kings that have been passionately devoted to it, has been told by other writers, notably by Aristodemus of Caria... 40 (I: Proem)

39 The exception being the Xenia, II.26 (F123) which describes a still-life painting. Here, Isabella is also following the guidance of Alberti in Book II of Della pittura when he writes: “La maggior opera de faccia il Pritore, non è una statua grande quanto un colosso, ma è una istoria (...)” (The most important work an artist can do is not a huge statue like a Colossus but to make a history painting). Della pittura e della statua di Leonbatista Alberti. Società tip. de’Classici italiani, 1804, 53.

40 Proem (K295) γόσι μέν οὖν κράτος ἠράντο τῆς ἑπιστήμης καὶ ὅσαι πόλεις καὶ ὅσοι βασιλεῖς ἔρωτι ἐς αὐτὴν ἐχρήσαντο, ἄλλοις τε εἵρηται καὶ Ἀριστοδήμῳ τῷ ἐκ Καρίας
With the *Imagines*, Isabella encountered the idea of a splendid private gallery, owned by a wealthy Roman connoisseur, featuring masterpieces from many artists; each one telling an exciting story derived from Classical mythology and history. It was perhaps with Philostratus’ example in mind, taking his model as signifying ‘good taste’, that Isabella conceived the creation of her own private gallery ‘*all’ antica*. All of the paintings created for the *studiolo* of Isabella are described in the Stivini inventory of 1542 together with other objects in her large collection.\(^{41}\)

Mantegna proved her most reliable artist by providing two finished paintings and designing the *Story of Comus* as well. Disappointed with her failure to get the Venetian master Giovanni Bellini to paint a picture for the *studiolo*, Isabella employed a compliant local Ferrarese artist, Lorenzo Costa (1460-1535), to paint the *Crowning of A Lady*\(^ {42}\) and to finish Mantegna’s *Comus*.\(^ {43}\) Added to these five allegorical paintings in the *studiolo*, were later mythological works by Correggio.\(^ {44}\) Isabella had decided to acquire one work of art from each of the greatest living artists that would represent *cosa antiqua e de bello significato*.\(^ {45}\) Such interests were indicative of an overall desire to revisit the Classical world, a ‘*Rinascimento dell’antichità*’ as Panofsky called it.\(^ {46}\)

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\(^ {42}\) Sometimes known as *The Garden of Harmony* (Wind) or *Allegory of the Court of Isabella d’Este*, the painting (ca. 1504-05) is now in the Louvre Museum, Paris.

\(^ {43}\) In a letter dated 15\(^ {\text{th}}\) September, 1504, Mantegna wrote to Isabella assuring her that he was at work on the painting; see R Lightbown (1986) *Mantegna: With a Complete Catalogue of the Paintings, Drawings and Prints*, Oxford, 1986. 208 and K Christiansen, ‘The Studiolo of Isabella d’Este and Late Themes’, in *Andrea Mantegna: Padua and Mantua*, George Braziller, New York, 1994, 422-23. Again on July 13, 1506 Mantegna wrote about the progress of the commission: I have almost finished the drawing for your excellency’s painting of Comus, on which I shall proceed whenever my imagination inclines me.” in Campbell, 205. Mantegna’s death on the thirteenth of September 1506 provides a *terminus post quem* for the commission and commencement of the existing canvas and coincides with the likely date for Moschos’ vernacular translation of the *Imagines* made for Isabella. Costa came to Mantua in 1506 as court painter soon after the death of Mantegna and completed the *Comus* painting.

\(^ {44}\) The Coreggio paintings are listed as item no. 204 in the Gonzaga inventory ‘il codice D.XII.6 dell’archivio Gonzaga’ compiled by the notary Odoardo Stivini on the 22nd December 1535 and preserved in the Archivio di Stato di Mantova: see Ferrari, 25-39. The paintings remained in the *studiolo* until 1627 when the entire Gonzaga collection was sold to Charles I, King of England.

\(^ {45}\) Quote from a letter written by Isabella to Bellini 28\(^ {\text{th}}\) June, 1501 about the choice of a subject for the studiolo painting: *Qualche istoria o fabula antica aul de suo invenzione ne finge una che representi cosa antiqua e de bello significato*. (Some historical narrative or antique fable of your invention in which is represented things from antiquity and of beautiful meaning). See JM Fletcher, Isabella d’Este and Giovanni Bellini’s ‘Presepio’ in *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 113, No. 825, Venetian Painting (Dec., 1971), 704.

\(^ {46}\) Chapter title: ‘*Rinascimento dell’antichità, the fifteenth century*’ in E Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art*, Almqvist & Wiksell, Stockholm, 1960.
In keeping with the Classical theme, Mantegna painted for Isabella’s studiolo the *Parnassus* (1496-1497) and the *Minerva Chasing the Vices from the Garden of Virtue* (ca. 1498-1502). According to Edgar Wind, the *Parnassus* draws upon the writings of Homer, Virgil, Ausonius and Proclus, by way of the Renaissance Neo-platonist writers, Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola. Wind also finds a reference in Mantegna’s composition to Philostratus’ *Erotes* (*Imagines* I, 6) for the symbolism of the hare (or rabbit) and its connection to the Aphrodite/Venus figure. This elaborate concoction of sources both ancient and modern in the *Parnassus* is thought to be a creation of Paride da Ceresara, a Mantuan humanist and associate of Isabella. For Mantegna’s *Minerva Chasing the Vices from the Garden of Virtue*, Paride has devised a more sedate moralistic subject than the joyful *Parnassus* and the link to the Classical world is blatantly proclaimed with inscriptions in Latin, Greek and Hebrew. Wind makes the observation that Paride and Isabella were fortunate in finding in Mantegna, an artist who could cope with the demands of visualizing a coherent painting out of the complex mélange of Classical literary sources he was given to work with.

By contrast the next commission for Isabella’s studiolo to Giovanni Bellini, Mantegna’s brother-in-law and the most famous Venetian master of the day, was not as smooth a transition from patron’s demands, to humanist invention, to the artist’s workshop. Isabella first approached Bellini in 1496, but the artist did not accept the commission. The poet and courtier Pietro Bembo was then employed by Isabella to tactfully persuade Bellini to contribute to her studiolo scheme. Although a letter from Isabella to Bembo of 6 November 1505 indicates that Bembo had finally reached an agreement with Bellini to paint a “pagan fantasy” that would allow the artist some scope for invention of his own, Isabella never did receive a painting from Bellini. The same letter also shows that Isabella invited Bembo to create the subject, in his own fashion that would also satisfy Bellini (*di fare una inventione a modo suo: che satisfatia al Bellino*). Isabella’s ten-year attempt to acquire a Bellini for her collection is well documented and demonstrates

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47 Both paintings by Mantegna are now in the Louvre Museum, Paris.
48 Wind, 11, n.8.
49 Ibid., 13, n.16.
50 Ibid., 14. Paride da Ceresara (1466-1532), was according to Wind, “the only humanist in Isabella’s circle who is known to have directly witnessed the entire history of her Camerino (studiolo), from the first painting completed by Mantegna in 1497 to the last picture finished by Correggio about 1530-32.” Wind does not speculate to what degree the famously erudite Isabella (see earlier discussion) contributed ideas for the iconography of the Mantegna paintings, seemingly satisfied that it was the work of Paride or another court humanist of similar learning such as the poet, Niccolò da Correggio.
51 Wind, 17.
52 Fletcher, 705.
just how fraught with difficulty, the relationship was between patron, humanist and artist. Each member of this tripartite effort would have carried a very different vision of the finished painting in his or her imagination. Their individual expectations of the work of art could potentially be in conflict to the over-riding aim of an authentic and harmonious re-invention of antiquity.

Like Bellini, the Umbrian artist and master of Raphael, Pietro Perugino, was not content to accept Isabella’s dogmatic instructions. She commissioned a Battle between Love and Chastity (fig.6) from Perugino, which quoted Philostratus among other Classical sources. The commission came with the added burden of sketches from Isabella’s own hand, dictating where the figures should be placed.

**The Battle of Love and Chastity**

Of all the subjects from Philostratus that appear in European art from 1500 onward, the most popular with artists is *Erotes*, I.6. The description relates the antics of cupids in an apple orchard: playing games, wrestling, harvesting fruits and hunting. Perugino’s painting for Isabella is described in the Stivini inventory (no. 202) as having “numerous cupids and various other figures of nymphs incited by these cupids, with trees and greenery.”

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53 *un altro quadro di pittura ...nel quale è dipinto diversi amorini et altre varie figure de nimfe stimulante da detti amori, con alcuni alberi e verdure* (Stivini 202) Isabella d’Este (2001) 37.
Rather than a verbatim interpretation of Philostratus’ *Erotes* such as Titian later attempted, Isabella and her court humanist Paride da Ceresara devised the iconography for Perugino and have populated the picture with numerous deities. They also decided to include elements from another of Philostratus’ descriptions, *A Marsh* (I.9), which relates thematically by illustrating cupids at play.
No wonder that the swans are ridden by Cupids; for these gods are mischievous and prone to sport with birds, so let us not pass by without noticing either their riding or the waters in which this scene lies. Imagines, I.9 (F37)  

Philostratus continues to outline various pranks the cupids get up to in *A Marsh* as they race the swans across the water. He writes in the same humorous style he used to describe the games and competitions between cupids in the *Erotes*.

In a letter dated 19th January 1503, Isabella writes to Perugino commissioning the *Battle of Love and Chastity* and outlining in minute detail the figures that he is to include. Along with the letter she sent Perugino a sketch showing where the figures were to be placed on the canvas. It is clear from this letter that the main story revolves around the four figures of Athena Pallas, Diana, Venus and Cupid and that Philostratus’ *Erotes* provides a backdrop against which the main protagonists act.

Beyond these four deities, the most chaste nymphs in the trains of Pallas and Diana, in whatever attitudes and ways you please, have to fight fiercely with a lascivious crowd of fauns, satyrs and several thousand cupids; and these cupids must be much smaller than the first [the god Cupid], and not bearing gold bows and silver arrows, but bows and arrows of some baser material such as wood or iron or what you please.  

Isabella’s improbable request for ‘several thousand cupids’ reflects the opening words of Philostratus in *Erotes* I.6: *See, Cupids are gathering apples: and if there is a plethora of them, do not be alarmed.* (μὴλα ἔρωτες ἰδοὺ τρυγώσιν, εἰ δὲ πλῆθος αὐτῶν, μὴ θαυμάσῃς)

Philostratus too, chooses four protagonists engaged in battle as the focus of his composition:

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54 *A Marsh* (K307) ἤνιοχεῖσθαι δὲ τοὺς κύκνους ὑπὸ τῶν ἐρώτων θαῦμα οὐδέν, ἀγέρωχοι γὰρ οἱ θεοὶ καὶ δεινοὶ παίζειν ἐς τοὺς ὀρνίθας, οὗ τὴν ἤνιόχησιν ἄργως παρέλθωμεν, μηδὲ αὐτὸ τὸ ὕδωρ, ἐν ὦ ταῦτα.

For here are four of them, the most beautiful of all, withdrawn from the rest; two of them are throwing an apple back and forth, and the second pair are engaged in archery, one shooting at his companion and the latter shooting back.56 (Imagines, I.6)

He goes on to solve the allegorical ‘riddle’ presented by the four figures saying: In a word, the first pair in their play are intent on falling in love, whilst the second pair are shooting arrows that they may not cease from desire.57

There is a definite analogy here between Philostratus’ picture and Isabella’s Battle of Love and Chastity as she has chosen Venus and Cupid to represent lasciviousness (or physical love), which corresponds to the pair of cupids who shoot at one another in the Imagines. On the opposing side of the battle ‘Chastity’ is represented by two virgin goddesses, Pallas Athena and Diana, complementing the two cupids in Philostratus’ description who represent ‘friendship’ (or platonic love). The allegorical themes of Philostratus’ Erotes and that of Isabella’s Battle of Love and Chastity overlap. For Isabella, the plethora of cupids represents carnal love and together with ‘a lascivious crowd’ of fauns and satyrs they are pitted against the chaste entourage of nymphs.

It is a remarkable letter which not only details the iconography but the desired dimensions of the painting, the terms of payment, the period given to Perugino to complete the painting (eighteen months) and the terms for refund: “in the event of the death of the said Master Piero.”

This letter gives us valuable insight into the relationship between patron and artist, confirming that the iconography of complex mythological paintings was considered too important by educated patrons to leave it entirely up to the artist. We also learn in a series of subsequent letters between Isabella, Perugino and Paride da Ceresara, just how impractical it was for an artist to follow such strict, intrusive, instructions. Perugino had to write to Isabella explaining her sketch was out of scale and request a comparative measurement of the figures in Mantegna’s paintings for the studiolo before he could

56 Erotes (K302)
οἱ γὰρ κάλλιστοι τῶν ἔρωτων ἰδοὺ τέτταρες ὑπεξελθόντες τῶν ἄλλων δύο μὲν αὐτῶν ἀντιπέμπουσι μηλὸν ἀλλήλοις, ἢ δὲ ἐτέρα δύας ὃ μὲν τοξεύει τὸν ἑτερόν

57 Erotes (K302)
Ξεύγος ἐμπεδοῦσιν ἕρωτα ἴδη φθάνοντο, καὶ φημὶ τοὺς μενταίζειν ἐπὶ τῷ ἀρξασθαι τοῦ ἔραν, τοὺς δὲ τοξεύειν ἐπὶ τῷ μή λήξαι τοῦ πόθου.
proceed with the *Battle of Love and Chastity*. Isabella herself concedes she may have overcrowded the scene with figures as she writes: *But if you think that perhaps there are too many figures in this for one picture, it is left to you to reduce them as you please, provided that you do not remove the principal basis.* Whether Isabella saw fit to pass on to Perugino translations of the Classical texts quoted in the *Battle of Love and Chastity*, as Alfonso did later for Titian’s *Worship of Venus* (fig.21) is not known. It seems unlikely, given that *The Battle* is a concoction devised between Isabella and Paride da Ceresara; whilst quoting from Classical sources it does not attempt to re-create a painting known in Antiquity. It is a Ferrarese painting impersonating a Graeco-Roman painting and the struggle between chaste love and lascivious love not only arises from the *Erotes* but was also popular in late medieval humanism. Perugino’s rendition of the cupids at play in an outdoor setting differs from all later versions of *Erotes* by Fra Bartolomeo, Titian, Giulio Romano and others, as no worship of a visible Aphrodite in a grotto takes place. It would seem that Paride da Ceresara’s reading of the *Erotes* perhaps using the original Greek text was very different to artists’ reading of the text in Moschos’ vernacular translation. To show the variations that occur between translations I have illustrated the full description of the *Erotes* from the 1503 Aldine

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58 Letter of Perugino to Isabella d’Este, 10 December 1503, “it seems to me the drawing sent to me does not correspond very well with the size of the figures, which seem to me to be very small and the height of the picture seems too great in proportion to them.” Bartlett, 222.

59 Isabella’s request for ‘thousands of cupids’ was not fulfilled by Perugino as there are less than twenty in the painting. Turbulent crowded scenes are not a feature in Perugino’s oeuvre and his subdued, measured, rather stiff and formal quattrocento style did not lend itself to portraying the subject as planned by Isabella. With the conflict between the patron’s desires and the artist’s *modus operandi*, the painting could not be a success and is universally considered the least appealing of Perugino’s mature works.

60 Isabella herself acknowledges that the iconography in *The Battle of Love and Chastity* is unique when she calls the composition “*Our poetic invention*” in the letter to Perugino, (Bartlett, 220). Paride da Ceresara (1466-1532) along with Mario Equicola were the two most important humanist scholars and advisers to Isabella d’Este at the Gonzaga court. Correspondence between Ceresara and Isabella is discussed in Campbell, 172-81.

61 Whilst the scene Philostratus described in *Erotes* I.6 was later interpreted by Fra Bartolomeo, Titian and subsequent artists as representing cupids worshipping and making offerings to a statue of Aphrodite, the original text does not actually state that this occurs within the painting on view. Philostratus in fact, implies that Aphrodite is but an unseen presence in the picture when he asks the question “*But where is she and what part of the orchard yonder?*”. He once more infers the goddess is not visible when he tells his audience “*Be sure that Aphrodite is there, where the nymphs, I doubt not, have established a shrine to her.*” What we are meant to see is not a statue of the goddess, but a grotto that acts as her shrine and is hung with tributes brought by the nymphs and the cupids. Philostratus relates these details at the very end of this long description after he has finished explaining all the activities of the cupids taking place in the picture. When he tells us that “*the Cupids bring first-fruits of the apples, and gathering around they pray to her that their orchard may prosper*” he seems to be speaking of an event that takes place in time out of the pictorial present. It is one of those ambiguous moments in the *Imagines* where Philostratus goes off on a tangent referring to events which are related to the subject at hand, but do not occur within the picture space. In this respect, because Perugino’s cupids are not gathered around a statue of Aphrodite as they are in Fra Bartolomeo’s sketch, it could be argued that Paride da Ceresara’s reading of the text is more accurate.
The *COMUS* of MANTUA

The *Battle of Love and Chastity* was delivered to Mantua in 1505 and placed in the *Studiolo* next to the two paintings by Mantegna, who by this point, had most likely started the second painting for Isabella to be based on a description from Philostratus, the *Comus* (I.2). Mantegna’s painting (fig.7) is not a faithful reconstruction of that described by Philostratus (Book I, II) for it contains elements such as the scene to the right of the arch where Janus and Hermes prevent a family from entering the golden gate. Iconographical contributions to Philostratus’ *Comus* painting appear to have been added from Virgil’s *Aeneid*, among other sources.\(^2\) *Comus* is the second description in Book I of Philostratus’ *Imagines*. It follows the torrid opening description of Hephaestus scorching the river god *Scamander*; a subject from Homer (*Il.* XXI, 330-382). In contrast *Comus* is a joyful Dionysian passage which would have been appealed to Isabella as the scene described bears resemblance to a Renaissance masque of the type held in celebration of a wedding.

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\(^2\) Janus Bifrons was the double-faced Roman god of gates and doorways. Roman gods are not used by Philostratus in the *Imagines*, so the artist has borrowed this figure from another antique source. The origins for Janus seem to come from ancient Greece where statues of Hermes were positioned at the doorways of houses to mark the boundary from the public and the private worlds and herms featuring the heads of two deities (possibly Hermes and Athena) have been found. One likely source for the inclusion of Janus in the Mantegna/Costa composition is found in Ovid’s *Fasti* Book I: *January 1: Kalends*: (63-70)

*See Janus comes, Germanicus, the herald of a lucky year to thee, and in my song takes precedence.*

Two-headed Janus, opener of the softly gliding year,
Thou who alone of the celestials dost behold thy back,
O come propitious to the chiefs whose toil ensures peace to the fruitful earth, peace to the sea
And come propitious to thy senators and to the people of Quirinus,
And by thy nod unbar the shining temples.

The last line implies that Janus is guardian of the entrance to “shining temples” (Ecce tibi faustum, Germanice, nuntiat annum inque meo primum carmine Janus adest. Iane biceps, anni tacite labentis origo, solus de superis qui tua terga vides, dexter ades ducibus, quorum secura labore otiâ terra ferax, otiâ pontus habet: dexter ades patribusque tuis populoque Quirini, et resera nutu candida templâ tuo.)

Ovid, *Fasti*, Loeb Classical Library, trans. J.G. Frazer, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1931. Janus is also mentioned by Virgil, *Aeneid*, I. V. 291 and *Aeneid*, I. V. 198. Verheyen writes of the involvement of the humanist Paride da Ceresara in developing the iconography for this series of paintings and Paride no doubt, would have been familiar with Ovid’s *Fasti* as well as with the *Imagines* (Verheyen 23-29). For a discussion on the *Comus* iconography see Wind, 47, who suggests that Philostratus’ *propylaia* be translated as “monumental entrance” rather than Stivini’s description of a “triumphal arch”.

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editio princeps, the ca. 1505 Moschos autograph vernacular translation, and the Greek text with corresponding English translation from the modern Loeb Classical Library 1979 edition (Appendix I).
Newlyweds are reclining in a sumptuous setting marked by golden doors, a youthful gathering of guests ‘flushed with wine’ cavort by torch light and the scene is made riotous with music, laughter, dancing and singing. The event takes place at night with Comus, the god of ‘revelry’, adolescent in appearance, standing by the doors and sleepily keeping watch over the festivities. In Graeco-Roman art, Comus is most often depicted as a satyr-like boy, who is attendant upon Dionysus in drinking bouts (fig.8). This is a very different personification of ‘revelry’ from that given by Philostratus which resulted in the more mature, elegant figure of the Costa painting where Comus is assimilated to the traditional representation of Dionysus.

The Greek word komos means ‘revelry’ and the figure of Comus is therefore not a deity, but a personification.
Despite the pleasant subject matter germane to the customs of the time, *Comus* is not a subject readily found in Renaissance art before this commission, which further indicates it was chosen purely as a result of Isabella’s contact with the *Imagines*. Furthermore, Comus was a minor Greek mythological figure and does not appear often in Classical literature. Philostratus indeed, is cited as the primary Classical source.64 The *Comus* painting contains the core elements of Philostratus’ description. The cast of characters and action taking place has been elaborated upon, no doubt at the insistence of Isabella,

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64 *The Oxford Guide to Classical Mythology in the Arts*, for example, lists the Classical source for the subject entry under Comus, as Philostratus: J D Reid, vol.1. Oxford, 1993, 308. The absence from late 15th century art of this subject peculiar to Philostratus, shows how little the *Imagines* was known before it was published in book form. The only other example I know where *Comus* is depicted in Renaissance art before Isabella’s commission was completed by Costa c. 1510 is in a painting by Mantegna’s brother-in-law, Giovanni Bellini: *Comes Virtutis*, c. 1505 (?), Venice, Accademia and reproduced in Wind, 48. The family connection corresponding to the only two known paintings of *Comus* for this period may indicate that Mantegna and Bellini shared iconographic sources at times.
but there is certainly enough content to link the picture to the text. Comus is sitting at a short distance from a golden arch which could be interpreted as the golden doors of the text (θύραις χρυσαῖς).

Night is suggested in the painting only in the respect that Comus and Mercury (and perhaps Janus) hold torches; otherwise, the scene seems to take place in subdued daylight. Philostratus tells us specifically that Comus holds a torch on his left side, as

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65 The subject seems to have been obscure even to Stivini as the picture is identified in his inventory of 1535 (no. 206) as a painting in which is painted a triumphal arch and many figures that make music, with a story of Leda: (in lo qual è dipinto un archo triomphale, et molte figure chef anno una musica, con un fabula di Leda.) Leda and the swan seen in the centre foreground are by no means the major figures in the composition but are perhaps the only ones readily identifiable to Stivini (no. 206). Ferrari, 37.

66 The painting of night scenes at this point was uncommon in Italian art and there are only very few examples before 1510. Even if the original idea of Mantegna was to create a night scene, something within his range as an artist, it is quite possible Costa felt it beyond his own capabilities to attempt a night scene with so few precedents as models. Correggio, a far more competent and experimental artist than Costa from whom Isabella later commissioned paintings for her studiolo, began to paint night scenes around 1522 such as Adoration of the Shepherds (or The Holy Night), Dresden, Gemäldegalerie.
seen in the Costa painting, and proceeds to describe a very intricate placement of Comus’ limbs to explain his posture.67

Twice, Philostratus stresses the importance of the doorway calling it “the splendid entrance” (τὰ προπύλαια) and goes on to describe “newlyweds lying on a couch” (νυμφίους μάλα ὀλβίους ἐν εὐνῇ κεῖσθαι). The painting follows this description with two reclining figures in the foreground, lying on turf, shaped into the form of a couch (fig.10).

Philostratus tells us that the features of Comus are irrelevant as “this Comus has little need of a face at all, since his head is bent forward and the face is in shadow”.68

Having described the main protagonist, Philostratus moves on to describe the revellers that follow in the god’s retinue. The emphasis is on music (a subject very dear to the patron) with revellers playing castanets and the flute, whilst others clap in time to the music and sing.69 Costa’s painting has a prominent group of musicians and singers in the centre of the composition and various other figures scattered across the landscape engaged in musical pursuits. A figure blows a trumpet pointed skywards and in the distance, a seated circle of figures appear to be listening to a figure playing the pan pipes.

If Costa’s composition and the figures within it appear strained and uneasy, it could simply be that in trying to follow Mantegna’s original design, the lesser artist has not been able to resolve problems. Overall, it seems that Costa was not following the Moschos translation closely but working over a sketch or unfinished canvas by Mantegna. Details are in place, but are imprecise. Philostratus mentions that Comus is wearing a delicate “crown of roses” (ὁ στέφανος τῶν ῥόδων) yet Costa has painted a crown of what appears to be olive sprigs or laurel.

It has been suggested by Leandro Ventura that the reclining figure in the foreground is the Phrygian naiad Nikaia, who was raped by Dionysus whilst in a drunken sleep, as described by Nonnos in Dionysiaca.70

67 The description of Comus sleeping upright (though erect, he is asleep under the influence of drink) with his legs crossed over the torch to keep it from falling, would also explain the attitude of Comus’ head in the painting which nods sideways against the torch. Either trying to follow the complicated text, or trying to follow Mantegna’s original sketch, could account for the awkward posture of the figure as painted by Costa.

68 Comus (K297)

69 Music was of central importance to the d’Este court and Isabella was well known for her patronage of musicians and composers; see C Gallico, ‘Appunti sulla musica all’epoca di Isabella’ in Isabella d’Este, 209-224.

70 L Ventura, ‘Committenza e collezionismo’ in Isabella d’Este, 95. Nonnus of Panopolis (c. 400AD) is the reputed author of Dionysiaca, a poem in hexameters. "He [Dionysus] remembered the bed of the Astakid Nymphe [Nikaia, of Lake Astakos] long before, how he had wooed the lovely Nymph with a
part of the Dionysian entourage, might have seemed appropriate to one of Isabella’s court humanists.\(^7^1\)

![Ariadne Sleeping, statue, Roman, 2nd Century AD, Vatican, Galleria delle Statue](image)

The male figure supporting the head of the Nikaia wears a crown of vine leaves and a small grape vine grows up a lattice where they sit in the landscape, indicating that the figure could well be the god of wine. However the way Nikaia and her partner are crammed awkwardly into the bottom centre of the composition and thus, attract too much attention away from the main figure of Comus, suggests that they were a later addition made by Costa. It is unlikely Mantegna would have made such an inharmonious error in the first place.

\(^7^1\) The figure of a sleeping nude female, associated with Dionysian festivals is not uncommon in Renaissance art. In particular, a similar figure dominates Titian’s painting of another Philostratus description, *The Andrians* I xxv. (fig.24) painted for Alfonso d’Este’s *camerino* in 1523. Titian’s figure, however, has not been linked to Nikaia, but to ancient models of a sleeping Ariadne known in the Renaissance from sculpture groups and sarcophagi reliefs. In the first decade of the sixteenth century, a Roman 2nd century AD copy of a Hellenistic Pergamene statue (fig.11) was known in the possession of the Maffei family in Parione before it was acquired by Pope Julius II and added to his collection of antiquities in the Belvedere, Rome. It was copied by Leonardo and Raphael and was famous throughout the Renaissance. Bober & Rubinstein, cat.no.79, 113-114. This statue, or a sketch of it, may have also inspired Giovanni Bellini when he painted the figure of Lotis, in *The Feast of the Gods* (fig.16) painted 1514-1516 for Alfonso d’Este’s *camerino* in Ferrara.
Isabella’s correspondence with Perugino provides strict and lengthy written instructions concerning the iconography for *Battle of Love and Chastity* and tells us that this patron liked to exercise an unusual amount of control over the content of her paintings and in acknowledging the involvement of her court humanists, she clearly thinks that Classical iconography is beyond the intellect of artists. Providing Mantegna with a copy of Moschos’ translation for the *Comus* commission would have been in keeping with her rationale.

We know that the maiolica painter Nicola da Urbino created a series of large dishes featuring mythological subjects for Isabella derived from Classical texts and it has been shown that at least in one case, the artist quoted an actual illustration from the woodcuts in the 1497 edition of Ovid.72 An expensive book such as a fully illustrated Ovid would more than likely have been in Isabella’s library, not that of a maiolica painter and is evidence that she was in the practice of passing on Classical texts to her artists.

The moralizing element in the *Comus* painting of the figures being chased from the scene (fig.12) and not permitted to enter through the splendid golden portal, whilst absent from Philostratus’ description, can be accounted for as probable additions requested by Isabella, who introduced a moralizing theme of Vice versus Virtue in all the paintings for the *studiolo*. In the *Comus* painting, these figures appear to be mortals not permitted access to the realm of the gods, recalling fifteenth century scenes of the eviction of Adam and Eve from the gates of Paradise.

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As for the inclusion in Costa’s painting of supplementary figures such as Leda and the swan, the two Venuses with their cupid sons and the bearded figure standing behind Comus, this is also typical of Isabella’s tendency to crowd her *fantasias* with characters at the risk of sacrificing compositional harmony. This is what so annoyed Perugino when she ordered him to fill his canvas with a large host of figures, all the same height, in the *Battle of Love and Chastity*. Whether it was Isabella alone or with the assistance of a court humanist, they boldly re-wrote Classical mythology by including Janus, the Roman god of gates, doorways and of the New Year and beginnings in general. Janus has no equivalent in Greek mythology and is one of the most important native Italian gods. He certainly does not appear in Philostratus’ purely Hellenic descriptions and whilst it is clear Janus was selected for his correlation to the all important golden door, his presence in the composition is incongruous.
 Whilst the paintings were conspicuous confirmation of Isabella’s wealth, status and intellectual aspirations, the studiolo was only one of a series of rooms that held Isabella’s collection and linked up to a beautiful courtyard garden (fig.14). Known as “il giardino segreto” (the secret garden), this elegant green oasis with its fountains and statues was for Isabella’s exclusive use and only accessible from her golden grotta, adjacent to the studiolo. The garden was an integral part of her design to convert an entire area of the palace into a private realm within a realm, where she could immerse herself in the art and literature of antiquity. The courtyard walls have slim ionic columns and niches with a long inscription running along the cornice that reads:

ISABELLA ESTENSIS, REGUM ARAGONUM NEPTIS, DUCUM FERRARIENSIMUM FILIA ET SOROR, MARCHIONUM GONZAGARUM CONIUX ET MATER, FECIT A PARTU VIRGINIS MDXXII. (Isabella Estense, niece of the kings of Aragon (Naples) daughter and sister of the dukes of Ferrara, consort and mother of the marquises of Gonzaga, constructed this garden in the year of the Virgin birth 1522)
To have a picture gallery within close vicinity to a classically-designed garden area seems to be a common feature of all the villa galleries discussed in this thesis. All the paintings in the studiolo feature subjects that take place in an outdoor setting and the inclusion of a green area seems essential to the ideal type of domestic contemplative space that was seen as evoking the lifestyle of the ancients. The most complete description of a formal garden that Philostratus writes about is found in *Erotes* (I.vi):

_But listen carefully; for along with my description of the garden the fragrance of the apples also will come to you._

*Here run straight rows of trees with space left free between them to walk in, and tender grass borders the paths, fit to be a couch for one to lie upon._

(F21-23)\(^{73}\)

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\(^{73}\) *Erotes* (K301-02)

άλλα προθύμως ἄκουε, προσβαλεῖ γὰρ σε μετὰ τοῦ λόγου καὶ τὰ μῆλα. ὃς χρόνο ὡς ὁ υἱὸς φυτῶν ὁρθοίπορεύονται, τοῦ μέσου δὲ αὐτῶν ἔλευθερα βαδίζειν. πόα δὲ ἀπαλῇ κατέχειτος δρόμος ὡς οῖα καὶ κατακλιθέντι στρωμνή εἶναι.
Philostratus’ garden also features a drinking fountain and a statue of Aphrodite and Isabella was well acquainted with this passage in the Imagines, having borrowed from it for Perugino’s painting in the studiolo.

**Re-creating Antiquity: the camerino d’alabastro at Ferrara**

Isabella sent Moschos’ translation of the *Imagines* to her brother Alfonso, in Ferrara. It was whilst recovering from an illness in 1511 that Alfonso formulated plans to create his own personal picture gallery. Isabella had sent her Latin tutor, Mario Equicola to visit Ferrara in order that he could report back on the condition of her brother's health. Whilst there, Equicola wrote to Isabella: *The Duke is pleased that I have stayed here eight days; the reason is the 'pictura' of a room in which six fables, or stories, are to go: I have found them and given them [to him] in writing.*

Unlike his sister who wanted to show her erudition by devising her own compositions that assimilated elements from Philostratus and other Classical authors, Alfonso aimed at creating actual surrogates for the lost Greek masterpieces he read about.

As early as *ca.* 1350 Petrarch had hoped that future generations would be able to “walk back into the pure radiance of the past” and the *Imagines* along with other Classical texts that described works of art, became a vehicle through which this could be achieved. Titian’s paintings of *The Worship of Venus* (fig.21) and *The Andrians* (fig.24) both created for the *camerino*, remain our most accurate transliteration from text to image that arose from the *Imagines*. These paintings might never have been realized had Isabella not had the initiative to commission a vernacular translation of Philostratus that could be read by artists. It would have been far easier to select subjects from Ovid, which had been circulating in printed editions since 1480.

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76 Alfonso was so concerned about ensuring Titian would execute his painting of the *Worship of Venus* precisely as he envisaged it, that not only had he sent Fra Bartolomeo's original sketch and a copy of the Moschos translation, together with detailed instructions, but also the canvas and stretcher upon which Titian was to paint. (Holberton, 59).
77 The first illustrated printed edition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* adorned with woodcuts was issued by Colard Mansion in Bruges in 1484 followed by an illustrated *Ovid Volgarizzato* published in Venice, 1497. See J Monfrin, ‘La connaissance de l’antiquité et le problème de l’humanisme en langue vulgaire dans la France du XVe siècle’ in: *The late middle ages and the dawn of humanism outside Italy.* (eds) G Verbeke & J IJsewijn, University Press, Louvain, 1972, 131-170.
At the beginning of the *Imagines*, Philostratus writes that the villa gallery where he saw these paintings featured rare and expensive examples of marble that complemented an eclectic compilation of ‘splendid’ panel-paintings. It is these principles which guided Alfonso in the creation and decoration of his own private gallery which became known as the *camerino d'alabastro* because of the precious marble carvings it contained. We know that Alfonso had paid the Venetian sculptor Antonio Lombardo for a series of alabaster panels in 1508 and it is thought that Alfonso could have had them installed in a separate *camerino di marmo* before utilising them later in the decorative scheme of his picture gallery.\(^78\) These panels were inlaid with various coloured marbles (as seen to the left of Vulcan in fig.15). David Jaffé observed that the relief-like structure of Bellini’s *Feast of the Gods* (fig.16) resembled the typical arrangement of figures on a sarcophagus and was perhaps designed to visually connect to Lombardo’s pseudo-antique marble panels, whereas Titian’s later paintings signify a break with this Lombardo connection.\(^79\)

\[\text{Fig.15 Antonio Lombardo, ca 1508-1510, } \textit{Vulcan at his Forge, Hermitage, St. Petersburg.}\]

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\(^79\) NG catalogue 2003, 108.
Alfonso commissioned paintings from Raphael, Fra Bartolommeo, Titian (and possibly from Michelangelo), for this *camerino*, that were based on the descriptions from Philostratus. By doing this, Alfonso was consciously identifying with the anonymous collector and owner of the third century Neapolitan Gallery; assimilating a patrician Roman taste in the process. The duke was a passionate collector of art as acknowledged by Mario Equicola in a letter to Isabella where he commented that the duke “*cared only for commissioning pictures and seeing antiquities*”.  

**Bellini’s ‘Bacchanal’**

Fig.16. Giovanni Bellini, 1514, *Bacchanal (Feast of the Gods)*, National Gallery, Washington.

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80 Letter dated 9 October 1511, see Holberton, 57.
The first artist Alfonso commissioned to paint pictures *all'antica* was the Venetian painter Giovanni Bellini, who completed a *Bacchanal* signed and dated 1514, two years before his death. For ten years (1501-1511) Isabella had been waiting for Bellini to deliver a *Bacchanal* to Mantua, but he never completed a picture for her. It is ironic that her brother should then obtain a *Bacchanal* from Bellini in relatively little time and it is a possibility that the painting Alfonso received may have been the very one intended for his sister. The date and signature helps disprove Vasari’s theory that Bellini was “too old” to complete the picture and Titian was asked to finish it.81

Technical investigation has revealed the true genesis of the composition and by looking at the x-rays of the *Bacchanal* (now in Washington), we can see the painting was not finished by Titian but altered by him, as Bellini’s original finished landscape is evident beneath Titian's overpaint.82 In fact, it may not even be correct to say that ‘Titian altered Bellini’, for there appears to have been a third intermediate hand involved, possibly that of the local Ferrarese artist Dosso Dossi. This presents a further possibility that Titian was asked to correct Dossi’s inadequate repainting of Bellini’s landscape. Philipp Fehl has shown that the literary source for Bellini’s *Bacchanal* was inspired from an illustrated translation of Ovid's *Fasti* which was published in Venice in 1497.83 This Renaissance *ovidio volgarizato* differs somewhat from the original Latin text. When it tells the story of the god Priapus’ desire for the nymph Lotis, it changes the Olympian Gods into mortal Thebans and we know from the x-rays of Bellini’s painting, that this popularized version of the myth is the one first painted for Alfonso. However in the finished painting, we see that all the figures have been given the attributes of Gods, thus changing them from mortals to immortals in an attempt, perhaps, to reflect a more authentic alliance to Ovid’s Latin text. These divine attributes were added later and in most cases, such as Jupiter's eagle, they are awkwardly placed, to the point of appearing incongruous. According to Fehl’s hypothesis, this is due to Dossi tampering with the figures, as he also did with the landscape. Not only does Dossi’s intervention betray

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81 Vasari, Giuntina, VI, 158: “La quale opera non avendo potuta finire del tutto, per essere vecchio, fu mandato per Tiziano, come più eccellente di tutti gli altri, acciò che la finesse.”
83 P Fehl, *Decorum and wit: The poetry of Venetian painting: essays in the history of the Classical tradition* (Bibliotheca artibus et historiae), IRSA, Vienna, 1992, 223-229. Fehl argues that the composition is a hybrid narrative taken from two episodes in the *Fasti*; I, 391-440 which relates the story of Priapus seducing Lotis “*But crimson Priapus, glory and guard of gardens, lost his heart to Lotis, singled out of the whole bevy*” and VI, 319-48 where Priapus attempts to seduce the goddess Vesta.
Bellini’s original intentions but it confuses the viewer by modifying the more popular version of the Ovidian narrative.

As patron, Alfonso himself may have orchestrated these later alterations to Bellini’s picture, having been advised by some court humanist that the painting was not faithful to Ovid’s original words. The viewer is asked no longer to see this as a gathering of Theban mortals in the countryside, but to interpret it as a ‘Feast of the Gods’, taking place on Olympia. Gathered about for an outdoor feast, the Gods observe the action of Priapus stealthily trying to remove the clothing of Lotis/Vesta in the guise of a sleeping nymph under the tree. Next to the couple are seated Apollo and his consort Ceres; then there is Neptune who caresses the thigh of Gaea, whilst Jupiter sips wine from a goblet with his eagle beside him. The reclining figure in front is Mercury, a simple shepherd in Bellini’s original painting, he now holds the celestial caduceus. The childlike Bacchus draws wine from the barrel, whilst Silenus and his ass look on and behind the barrel is Sylvanus, a spirit of the forest. Maenads and satyrs weave in and out of the group distributing wine and food and providing musical accompaniment, whilst Pan plays his pipes in the background. The scene we witness is the prelude to an attempted rape but soon the ass will bray, awaken Lotis/Vesta and she will escape from Priapus. The female Theban figures in Bellini’s picture were fully-clothed and gestures were less provocative. The later alterations ensure that breasts are exposed and the overall tone is more lascivious, in tune with Ovid’s poetry and perhaps more in line with Alfonso’s taste.
Lotis’ pose echoes the reclining Ariadne pose which is repeated throughout Graeco-Roman art (fig.18) and if the mosaic from Thessaloniki (fig.17) or the Vatican statue (fig.11) is compared to the figure of Lotis/Vesta in the Bellini/Titian Bacchanal, it lends support to the probability that Venetian artists were familiar with antique models. Titian repeated the pose for his reclining nude in the Andrians at Ferrara.
Raphael and Fra Bartolommeo’s involvement with the camerino

Bellini’s Feast of the Gods served as a stylistic and thematic reference point for the rest of the camerino paintings. The next commission was given to Raphael in Rome for a Triumph of Bacchus which the artist promised to do for Alfonso, but failed to complete before his death six years later. Raphael had sent a preparatory drawing of the Bacchus to Alfonso, which the Duke passed on to a local artist, Pellegrino da San Daniele. When Raphael heard that Pellegrino was now painting this Triumph of Bacchus he informed Alfonso that he would change the subject of his own painting for the camerino to a Meleager and the Calydonian Boar Hunt (Imagines, ‘Hunters’ I.28 & Philo.Younger,
‘Meleager’ 15). Had Raphael completed this picture, it would have resulted in at least three out of the intended six paintings for the *camerino* being based on descriptions from Philostratus.

The third artist to be approached by Alfonso was the Florentine, Fra Bartolomeo (1472-1517) who was asked to paint a *Worship of Venus* as an illustration of Philostratus’ *Erotes* (I.6). However the frieze only managed to execute a preparatory drawing (fig.20) for the painting before his death in 1517 and like the Bellini painting, the commission was once again passed on to Titian.

There is also a story that on a trip to Rome in 1512, Alfonso was so impressed by the Sistine Chapel ceiling that he asked Michelangelo to paint a picture for the *camerino* and although Michelangelo agreed, nothing more is known of the commission. Several of Michelangelo’s drawings for projects never realized (or of works now lost), have been linked to subjects in Philostratus, with the most notable being (fig.19) the *Fall of Phaeton* (*Imagines*, I.11).
At this point, Alfonso had still managed to procure only one painting for his camerino; a project which had been evolving over six years. Frustrated with the delays and disappointments plaguing his commissions to artists, he decided to re-construct the entire camerino.89

The original structure accommodating the camerino dated from 1471 and consisted of a two storey corridor crossing the street (via coperta) to connect the d’Este palace and castle in Ferrara. It was a very narrow structure, as after two renovations by Alfonso, the ceilings still only measured some eleven and a half feet in width. Enlarged in 1499, it was widened again by Alfonso in 1505 in order to accommodate a series of rooms which were to become his private apartments (referred to in early documents as the

89 For a complete history of the camerini including a hypothetical reconstruction of the rooms, see C Hope, ‘The 'Camerini d'Alabastro' of Alfonso d'Este I’ in The Burlington Magazine, CXIII, 1971, 820, 641-650.
When Federigo Gonzaga visited his uncle in 1517, the Duke moved out of the camerini for Federigo to be able to stay in this suite of luxurious rooms that included the camerino d'alabastro with its one lonely Bellini bacchanal; *The Feast of the Gods*. However in 1518, records indicate that Alfonso entirely rebuilt, perhaps even pulled down and began again, the complete structure. When Isabella visited her brother in 1520 the internal decoration was still unfinished and as late as 1524, Alfonso was writing to the Marchesa to boast of the new marble floors he was installing throughout the camerini.

Alfonso's agents in Rome implored Raphael constantly to complete his *Calydonian Boar Hunt* whilst Titian was in Venice painting the *Worship of Venus*. When Raphael died in 1520 his heirs offered to have Raphael's studio complete the picture, but Alfonso refused. Dosso Dossi ended up filling the sixth space on the wall that should have been Raphael's, with a painting described by Vasari as a *Bacchanal of Men*.

**Erotes: The Worship of Venus 1518-1520**

With the commissions to Raphael, Michelangelo, Fra Bartolomeo for the camerino not forthcoming, Alfonso was concerned about ensuring Titian would execute a painting within the promised period of six months. Not only did he send (as mentioned earlier) Fra Bartolomeo’s sketch for the *Worship of Venus* and a copy of the Moschos translation of *Erotes* from Philostratus together with detailed instructions; but he also sent the very canvas and stretcher upon which Titian was to paint. Despite taking these precautions to expedite the commission, (echoing the actions of his sister Isabella when she commissioned the *Battle of Love and Chastity* from Perugino), it was eighteen months

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90 Hope explains how the rooms of Alfonso I where this group of paintings hung, were sometimes referred to in the plural camerini or the singular camerino; resulting in confusion as to the arrangement of the gallery. Mention of a singular camerino containing the Philostratean paintings is found in a letter from Annibale Roncaglia to Cesare d’Este dated 1st December 1598, wherein Roncaglia indicates that there is more than one camerino d'alabastro but that the first one alone (del primo Camerino d’Alabastro) contained all of the five bacchanal paintings. Hope (1971) 641.

91 Ibid. 649. The inclusion of expensive marble floors for the camerini relates back to the description of Philostratus’ gallery in the Proem to the Imagines.

92 Mention should be made of a painting known as *Bacchanal of Cybele*, ‘Ferrarese school’ in London’s National Gallery which for a long time, was associated with Dossi’s lost picture (despite being the wrong size). It was not included in the National Gallery’s 2003 exhibition on Titian which attempted to reunite all surviving works from the camerino for the first time since their dispersal in 1621.
before Titian took the *Venus* to Ferrara in October 1519 after repeated invitations from the Duke. Titian completed it at the Ducal palace in Ferrara during a three-month stay.\(^9^3\)

![Worship of Venus, preparatory sketch, Uffizi Museum](image)

**Fig.20** Fra Bartolommeo, ca. 1516, *Worship of Venus*, preparatory sketch, Uffizi Museum

It could be argued that no subject in the *Imagines* is as contrary to the solemn medieval mindset from which the Renaissance sprang, than the *Erotes* (ς’ ΕΡΩΤΕΣ I.6). Often referred to simply as ‘a Bacchanal’, this ekphrasis appealed to artists despite the difficulty of technically reproducing the complicated composition as described by Philostratus. One of the longest descriptions in the *Imagines*, the action-packed scene in *Erotes* is full of frivolity and describes the worship of Aphrodite by a swarm of cupids in an apple orchard.\(^9^4\)


\(^9^4\) Mentioned in numerous antique sources, *Erotes* were childlike winged gods of love. The most famous of these were the frequently depicted triad of gods: Eros, Himeros and Pothos. The Erotes were depicted as winged boys usually in the company of Anteros, god of unrequited love. “Eros” *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, GMA Hanfmann, JRT Pollard, KW Arafat, (eds) S Hornblower & A Spawforth, Oxford University Press, 2003. In the Classical period, the Erotes are most often depicted as *ephebes* (athletic adolescents) but by the late Hellenistic period, the adolescent-type had devolved into the ‘putto’ a plump, winged, mischievous toddler, which is the model adopted by Titian and many Renaissance artists.
It follows the description in the *Imagines*, of *Dwarfs* (ἕ ΠΗΧΕΙΣ), another innocuous painting wherein numerous children, (rather than dwarfed adults as modern readers may expect), cavort over a giant river god. In the traditional sequence of the descriptions in the book, both *Erotes* (I.6) and *Dwarfs* (I.5) are hemmed in by bloody battle scenes, with Menoeceus describing the siege of Thebes (I.4) and the death of Memnon (I.7). The two bucolic ekphraseis of *Dwarfs* and *Erotes*, linked by the characters that populate them and by the underlying themes of abundance, fertility and agriculture, are related to a further group of ekphraseis in the *Imagines* which include *Andrians* (I.25), *Centaur families* (II.4), and random passages dealing with poetry, song and dance.
Relatively few of Philostratus' scenes provided appropriate subjects for paintings in the Renaissance, involving as they did, incredibly intricate compositions often containing multiple episodes relating obscure literary themes; Titian’s *Worship of Venus* is an example of this. Philostratus is describing how actual paintings looked and this would inhibit the artistic licence of a person trying to create the image, in a way that the more abstract poems of Ovid, did not. Another reason why Philostratus may have been overlooked by artists is that many of the themes in the *Imagines* are violent and bloody and therefore, less desirable images for display in a *camerino/studiolo*; a place designed for happy retreat and contemplation. The *Erotes* is a difficult composition with a large cast of characters engaged in diverse actions, but unlike a battle scene, it is a theme of leisure and fun, giving Titian the chance to paint a plethora of nude cupids. Such figures were already familiar to Renaissance eyes in the shape of heavenly angels or the naked Christ child, in religious painting and in the sculpture works of Donatello. It is evident that Titian read closely the text as his *Worship of Venus* is a slavish realization of the ekphrasis. It was the impact of the opening sentences that caught Titian’s imagination when Philostratus emphasises the great number of cupids:

*See, Cupids are gathering apples; and if there are many of them, do not be surprised. For they are children of the Nymphs and govern all mortal kind, and they are many because of the many things men love.* (*Erotes* I.6)

Inevitably, Titian's visualization of Graeco-Roman painting is more revealing of the mind of an Italian artist of the sixteenth century than it is of what evidence we have since discovered on ancient Campanian walls. His reading of Philostratus is conditioned by a set of aesthetic values belonging to Titian's own cultural climate. Unable to escape from the time in which he lived, Titian has placed picturesque country cottages in the landscape and a church spire on the horizon. Rather than attempting to interpret Philostratus from an archaeological or historical point of view, Titian's approach is

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95 *Erotes* (F20)

μήλα ἔρωτες ἰδοὺ τρυγῶσιν, εἰ δὲ πλῆθος αὐτῶν, μὴ θαυμάσῃς, γυμφῶν γὰρ δήπαιδες οὗτοι γίγνονται, τὸ θυητὸν ἄπαν διακυβερνώντες, πολλοὶ διὰ πολλά, ὄνερῳσιν ἄνθρωποι
philological and *The Worship of Venus* relies on the ekphrasis as a guide to his own artistic creativity.96

Yet by recreating the *Erotes* painting, he is responding not only to the power of the ekphrasis, but is consciously establishing a link between himself and the ancient masters who painted the pictures in Philostratus' Neapolitan gallery. In this sense, both Alfonso's and Titian's ambitions for the camerino reflect a Renaissance tendency to see their own civilization as the direct continuity of the Classical past as opposed to standing at a fixed distance from antiquity. Alfonso, at least, must have been well convinced by this reconstruction of a Graeco-Hellenic masterpiece as he immediately asked Titian to paint another one.

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96 Titian went away from the philological viewpoint a little more toward an archaeological approach for his later painting illustrating Philostratus' *Andrians*, where it seems that Titian was evidently acquainted through drawings and prints with various antique sculptures in Rome such as the *Sleeping Ariadne* already mentioned.
Titian’s *Bacchus and Ariadne* 1520-3

Although the literary source for the *Bacchus and Ariadne* does not come from Philostratus it does come from a text that contains a description of a work of art from Classical antiquity.\(^97\) The ekphrasis in a poem by Catullus, a Roman poet of the 1st century B.C., tells of a luxurious tapestry that adorned the royal marital bed of Peleus and Thetis.\(^98\) The scene woven into the tapestry showed Ariadne turning towards the ocean and looking after the ship on which Theseus had departed, and on the other side of the tapestry; "*looking for you, Ariadne, and inflamed by your love*", came Bacchus and his retinue of satyrs, sileni and maenads. It was Titian’s task to integrate the two scenes onto the one canvas. Having won Alfonso’s confidence, Titian seems to have been given more of a free hand with the design for the *Bacchus and Ariadne* than with the *Worship of Venus* as it is more the artist’s invention rather than a re-visualization of a painting described in antiquity, as we find in Philostratus. Yet there is one factor that leads me to believe that Alfonso had not relaxed his control of the artist as much as supposed.

97 Titian’s *Bacchus and Ariadne* is now in London’s National Gallery.
98 Gaius Valerius Catullus, *Carmina*, (LXIV)

at parte ex alia florens volitabat Iacchus
cum thiaso satyrorum et Nysigenis silenis
te quaerens, Ariadna, tuoque incensus armore.
... quae tum alaces passim lymphata mente furebant
euhoe bacchantes, euhoe capita inflectentes.
harum pars tecta quatiebant cuspide thyrsos,
pars e divulso iactabant membra iuvenco,
pars sese tortis serpentibus incingebant,
pars obscura cavis celebrabant orgia cistis,
orgia quae frustra cupiunt audire profani,
plangebant aliae proceris tympana palmis
aut tereti tenuis tinnitus aere ciebant,
multis raucoisos efflabant cornua bombos
barbaraque horribili stridebat tibia cantu.
talibus amplifice vestis decorata figuris
pulvinar complexa suo velabat amictu.

‘The Wedding of Peleus and Thetis’ But on another part [of the tapestry] swift hastened the flushed Iacchus with his train of Satyrs and Nisa-begot Sileni, seeking you, Ariadne, and aflame with love for you. ... These scattered all around, an inspired band, rushed madly with mind all distraught, ranting “Euhoe,” with tossing of heads “Euhoe.” Some with womanish hands shook thyrsi with wreath-covered points; some tossed limbs of a rended steer; some girded themselves with writhed snakes; some enacted obscure orgies with deep chests, orgies of which the profane vainly crave a hearing; others beat the tambours with outstretched palms, or from the burnished brass provoked shrill tinklings, blew raucous-sounding blasts from many horns, and the barbarous pipe droned forth horrible song.

Fig. 23 Titian, ca. 1520-3, *Bacchus and Ariadne*, National Gallery, London
Another Classical text is paraphrased in Titian's painting, the source being Ovid's \textit{Ars Amatoria} (1. 525-566)\textsuperscript{99}, which also relates the meeting of Bacchus and Ariadne on the Greek island of Naxos, but describes specifically the God's mighty leap from his chariot. The painting is clearly a hybrid of the two sources and is more likely to be the result of implicit instructions from Alfonso with the assistance of his humanist advisers, rather than Titian's own free \textit{invenzione}. Charles Hope even points out that Philostratus was another source consulted for the painting as he is the only author to specifically include leopards in the retinue of Dionysus; \textit{‘and a leopard, though but just visible, is a symbol of the God.’} (F63)\textsuperscript{100}

Combining such a melange of Classical sources was beyond Titian who was not a Classical scholar intimately familiar with Latin and Greek texts. It shows once again the necessity of having humanist advisers at court. Titian's next painting for the \textit{camerino} was based on the \textit{Andrians} (I.25) from Philostratus, for which no doubt, he would have had to rely on the Moschos vernacular translation. After Ferrara and without Alfonso's patronage, Titian would never again would paint such complicated erudite mythological compositions. He did go on to paint a famous series of mythological scenes for King Philip II of Spain, but they were perhaps less ambitious in the use of Classical sources

\textsuperscript{99} Ovid, \textit{Ars Amatoria} (The Art of Love, Book I): \textit{Meanwhile from his lofty chariot with vine branches all bedecked, the god, handling the golden reins, drives on his team of tigers. The girl, in losing Theseus, had lost her colour and her voice. Thrice she attempted flight, thrice did fear paralyse her steps; she shuddered, she trembled like the tapering stem or the slender reed that sways at the slightest breath. “Banish all thy fears,” cried the god. “In me thou findest a tenderer, more faithful lover than Theseus. Daughter of Minos, thou shalt be the bride of Bacchus. Thy guerdon shall be a dwelling in the sky; thou shalt be a new star and thy bright diadem shall be a guide to the pilot uncertain of his course.” So saying he leapt from his chariot lest his tigers should affright her.} English translation by J Lewis May, London, 1925. (web text : http://www.sacred-texts.com/cla/ovid/lboo/lboo58.htm)

\textit{Ars Amatoria} (1.547-560)

iam deus in curru, quem summum texerat uvis,
Tigribus adiunctis aurae lora dabat:
Et color et Theseus et vox abiere puellae:
Terque fugam petit, terque retenta metu est.
Horruit, ut graciles, agitatis quas ventus, aristae,
Ut levis in madida canna palude tremit.
Cui deus 'en, adsum tibi cura fidelior' inquit:
'Pone metum: Bacchi, Cnosias, uxor eris.
Munus habe caelum; caelo spectabere sidus;
Saepe reges dubiam Cressa Corona ratem.'
Dixit, et e curru, ne tigres illa timeret,
Desiluit; inposito cessit harena pede:

\textsuperscript{100} Hope (1971) 67. \textit{Ariadne}

(K316) Διόνυσον δηλοί, καὶ πάρδαλις ύπεκφαινομένη αὖ τοῦθεον σύμβολον
than the pictures for the ducal palace at Ferrara as they were selected from the readily available editions of Ovid.

At the end of 1521 the *Bacchus and Ariadne* was still far from completion. Alfonso tried to get Titian to Ferrara as it was thought he would work faster under the surveillance of his patron. Alfonso's agent in Venice, Tebaldi, offered Titian a trip to Rome with the Duke as an enticement and Titian initially accepted but later feigned illness. Tebaldi went to visit him and reported the problem was actually due to ‘women trouble’. He suggested to the Duke that an advance on payment would lure Titian to Ferrara as money seemed to be the only thing the artist cared for but although money was duly sent, it was not until January 1523 that Titian took the painting to Ferrara.

It seemed by now that Alfonso had found his very own ‘Apelles’ in Titian. Deterred by the deaths of Raphael and Fra Bartolommeo, the Duke was not going to risk engaging a new painter and commissioned another painting from Titian, even though he was exasperated by the artist’s slow pace. The structural works to his *camerino* were nearly finished and he now had three paintings to hang in the five spaces he had allotted. The *camerino* being small with one entire wall taken up by two windows and a large fireplace, the original number of six paintings conceived at the beginning of the project in 1511 had shrunk to five large canvases with a series of smaller pictures to run as a frieze above. It is recorded that the Dossi brothers were working on decoration of the *camerini* in the 1520's and they are the likely authors of the frieze featuring scenes from the *Aeneid*. Several sections of this frieze have come to light in various collections.102

The Bacchanal of Andros: Philostratus I.25

With The Andrians\textsuperscript{103} (fig.24), Titian's final painting for the camerino, the iconography becomes even more convoluted. Philostratus tell us:

*The stream of wine which is on the island of Andros, and the Andrians who have become drunken from the river, are the subject of this painting. For by the act of Dionysus the earth of the Andrians is so charged with wine that it bursts forth and sends up for them a stream [of wine].* Andrians, I.25, (F96)\textsuperscript{104}

\textsuperscript{103} Titian's *The Bacchanal of the Andrians* is now in the Prado museum, Madrid.

\textsuperscript{104} Andrians (K329)
It is a picture celebrating the gift of wine from Bacchus, whose ship is moored in the harbour. Laughter, song and revelry seduce the Andrians in their never-ending drinking bout. The words of a popular contemporary French song are indicated by Titian on a sheet of music in the foreground: *he who drinks and does not drink again, does not know what drinking is.* The most intriguing figure is the reclining beauty who despite the blatant display of naked flesh, is totally ignored by the revellers. One man caresses the bare foot of a clothed girl, but nobody is the slightest bit interested in the sleeping nude. In *The Andrians* Philostratus lists some of the most famous rivers of the ancient world; the Nile, Ister, Achelous, Peneius and Pactolus. There is much talk of streams,

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105 The words as they appear in the painting are: *Qui boyt et ne reboyt il ne siet que boy re soit.*
rivers and flowing waters. The girl is explained by modern scholars as an Andrian who
has drunk too much wine and fallen asleep, but I believe that this figure is a female
personification of ‘the source’.\(^\text{106}\) Her long hair flows in rippled waves over the
upturned bronze vase she uses as a pillow, the vase being a traditional attribute of the
source. Titian would have been aware of this from studying prints and drawings of
Classical statues such as the *Fountain Nymph Sleeping* (fig.25) once in the Galli
collection along with Michelangelo's *Bacchus* at Parione in the early sixteenth
century.\(^\text{107}\)

![Fig.25 Nymph of a Spring, Roman statue, 2nd century AD, ex-Galli collection (now lost)](image)

In Titian's picture, the river itself is portrayed as an old river-god lying in the distance
‘on a couch of grape-clusters’ (*Imagines* I. 25).\(^\text{108}\) Yet it is a stream of wine which the
river produces to succour the Andrians and in ancient Greek mythology, the

\(^{106}\) Most recently David Jaffé writes in the catalogue entry for this painting in the 2003 exhibition of
Titian at London’s National Gallery (cat. no. 14), that the recumbent figure of the female nude is simply
there to contrast with the exuberance of the dancers in the picture. See discussion on sleeping nympha in

\(^{107}\) Bober & Rubinstein, cat. no. 62. 98.

\(^{108}\) *Andrians* (F98) ὁ μὲν ποταμὸς ἐν βοτρύων εὖν ἦν κεῖται
personification of a stream is always female.109 The connection between the spring nymph and the river-god is further emphasized by their position to the extreme right of Titian’s canvas and their recumbent poses. Philostratus states that the Nile and Ister would be greater rivers if they had a stream like this one. The stream and its wondrous qualities remains the focus of the ekphrasis and Titian has made her the focal point of his picture. This female personification of a spring is the first figure the viewer’s gaze is drawn to, largely due to the amount of white pigment used against a dark background which throws the figure into relief and also the light which the artist has bathed her in. Even the fluid rhythms of her body and the way it is posed are mimetic of the sinuous movement of water. Her toes point the way of the direction the source flows into the ewer of a man taking his fill of wine at the stream. She is an allegorical figure invisible to the Andrians and displayed purely for the sensual enjoyment of we, the beholders. To be more specific; for the delectation of the Duke of Ferrara.

With the Andrians in place and Titian's final visit to Ferrara in 1529, the decoration of the camerino came to an end. It had taken Alfonso some eighteen years from conception to completion and he had just five years to enjoy the treasures of the camerino before his death in 1534.

With his Renaissance concept of ‘the antique’, Alfonso most likely thought he had managed to re-capture antiquity by way of imitation, yet by a series of accidents his original Philostratean plan of having examples of different schools of Italian painting was replaced by a scheme dominated by the work of one artist, Titian.

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109 One example is the personification of a spring in Thebes, as the nymph Arethusa or Dirke (or Dirce). Dirce’s waters were sacred to Dionysus who transformed the nymph into the spring on account of her being one of his devoted followers. Pseudo-Hyginus, *Fabulae* 7, VII (trans. *The Myths of Hyginus*, M Grant, University of Kansas Publications in Humanistic Studies, no. 34., University of Kansas Press, Lawrence, 1960.): Lycus married Dirce. She, suspecting that her husband had secretly lain with Antiopa, ordered her servants to keep her bound in darkness. When her time was approaching, by the will of Jove [Zeus] she escaped from her chains to Mount Cithaeron, and when birth was imminent and she sought for a place to bear her child, pain compelled her to give birth at the very crossroads. Shepherds reared her sons as their own, and called one Zetos … and the other Amphion … When the sons found out who their mother was, they put Dirce to death by binding her to an untamed bull; by the kindness of Liber [Dionysus], whose votary she was, on Mount Cithaeron, a spring was formed from her body, which was called Dirce.
A painting that attempts to re-invent a lost Hellenistic masterpiece superimposes a host of associations onto those who were involved in its creation. The patron becomes Philostratus’ Roman connoisseur, the artist aspires to become a new Apelles and the humanist adviser takes on the role of the Sophist himself. For the Renaissance viewer, the painting becomes a conduit to the Classical era which at least two centuries of humanistic culture had convinced them was mankind’s defining moment. There was no doubt in the Renaissance mind that Philostratus’ Neapolitan Gallery was real; that the paintings he described had existed. I see this period after 1500 as a departure point in the reception of Graeco-Roman culture in Renaissance Italy.

Preceding generations, epitomized by the Florentine figure of Lorenzo ‘il Magnifico’, believed that preservation of the written word was the priority. With Isabella and Alfonso d’Este on the other hand, we see a stronger need to materially resurrect and appropriate the past. It is true Lorenzo Medici also collected antiquities and the d’Este siblings also hunted down manuscripts, but their pursuit of artists all over Italy to decorate their private apartments with mythological paintings speaks of a new direction in Renaissance patronage that reached its zenith in the collecting activities of Lorenzo dei Medici’s son, Pope Leo X in Rome, which I shall explore in the next chapter.

**Philostratus beyond the d’Este**

There are of course possibilities that artists prior to Titian in other parts of Italy were also ‘hand fed’ translations of Philostratus. In Chapter One of this thesis I refer to the case of the Pollaiuolo brothers and their 1460 painting of *Hercules and Antaeus* for the Medici in Florence and we must allow for the likelihood that Isabella d’Este shared Philostratus with local artists in Mantua. Similarly, Alfonso could have circulated the translation amongst his Ferrarese artists, as it has been shown that he passed on Raphael’s original sketch for a *camerino* painting to local artist Pellegrino da San Daniele and involved Dosso Dossi of Ferrara in the project as well.

Since Isabella, or a humanist in her court circle such as Demetrius Moschos, had a copy of the *Imagines* in their possession before 1505, other copies seem likely to have circulated in the courts of Italy at the turn of the century. It is feasible manuscripts of the *Imagines* existed in the rich libraries of Padua, Venice, Florence and Rome if not entire translations, perhaps individual descriptions circulated that were further
transmitted to artists by hand-written or oral translation. Further research would be required to substantiate a hypothesis for which there is as yet, little material evidence.

The first explicit mention of Philostratus from an external modern source comes from Pomponius Gauricus, in his treatise *De Sculptura* published in Florence, 1504.\(^\text{110}\) This makes *De Sculptura* contemporary with the 1503 Aldine edition of the *Imagines* and it seems certain Gauricus knew this edition as passages in *De Sculptura* utilize concepts expressed by Philostratus.\(^\text{111}\)

Gauricus, born near Naples in 1480, is a little known figure in Italian humanism. He appears to have studied at Padua, published some eclogues in Latin, made translations and written a commentary to Horace’s *Ars poetica*. He taught at Naples and became known as a Hellenist. Like the *Imagines*, Gauricus’ treatise is addressed not to practitioners of art but to the amateur, the reader who is learning to appreciate art. Other similarities to the *Imagines* come in the form of a Ciceronian style dialogue, between the author and his two protagonists, Regius and Leonicus, professors of Rhetoric. This places the reader in a conversational atmosphere similar to that evoked in the *Imagines*. Gauricus also uses ekphrasis to describe works of art. *De Sculptura* was the only treatise solely devoted to art, apart from Alberti’s *De Pictura*, to be published in Italy prior to Paolo Lomazzo’s *Trattato dell’arte della pittura* of 1584.\(^\text{112}\)

Whilst interest in the *Imagines* generated by the celebrated d’Este paintings initiated a series of versions of the *Erotes* by Italian artists and print makers, the efforts to convert ancient ekphrasis into images at Ferrara seems to be an isolated case. After the camerino d’alabastro project, the obvious place to look for more subjects in art from Philostratus would be in Venice among the followers of Titian. However the main evidence for any continuation from Ferrara is to be found in Rome among the pupils of Raphael who, surrounded by the material verification of the past in Rome, was a more enthusiastic proponent of studying the antique.

A further evolution in the transmission of text to image with the *Imagines* in the Renaissance is that rather than the ekphrasis itself providing direct inspiration, as


\(^{111}\) Gauricus wrote *De sculptura* in Padua circa 1503-04 and as I have already suggested, Philostratus’ *Imagines* would probably have been known to humanists in Padua; if not in manuscript form, then from the Manutian edition of 1503. Gauricus was only twenty years old at the time and under the tuition and influence of the Paduan humanists. See R Klein, ‘Pomponius Gauricus on Perspective’ in *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (Se, 1961), 211-230.

\(^{112}\) I exclude here such works of a biographical nature as Vasari’s *Lives of the Artists* (1550) and Lodovico Dolce’s *Aretino* (1557) which cannot be defined as art treatises.
directed by the humanistic interests of learned patrons like Isabella and Alfonso, most subsequent examples in art seem to be cases of artists copying the models created by Titian and Raphael. This would account for the proliferation of works of art after ca. 1520 including tapestries, prints and paintings that follow Philostratus’ *Erotes* (I.6).

Whether Raphael had access to the complete translation of the *Imagines* in the vernacular, from the time it was circulated to artists by Alfonso for the *camerino* project, can only remain conjecture. Given Raphael’s demonstrated interest in the study of ancient art and architecture, and his appointment in 1517 as ‘Commissioner of Antiquities for the City of Rome’, the possibility of discovering more about ancient paintings from Philostratus would certainly have been attractive to him. There is evidence to support Raphael read passages from the *Imagines* when we look at a record of his design for the *camerino* in the *Meleager and the Boar Hunt* by Luca Penni (1500-1556) one of Raphael’s pupil in Rome.\textsuperscript{113}

The legacy of the paintings at Ferrara and Mantua has been widely recognized by art historians as evidenced by the works I have cited by Hope, Fletcher, Kolsky, Wind, Shearman and many others. Whilst it is not known how frequently artists were permitted access to the d’Este and Gonzaga galleries in the sixteenth century, the body of material evidence which lies in the countless reproductions and versions of the d’Este paintings suggests that access was freely granted. What artists saw there was copied down into sketches, incorporated into mythological paintings and formulated into prints, which were easily circulated across Europe.

In the next chapter, I will examine the legacy of the d’Este commissions which remain the most important works of art in relation to Philostratus’ text. I will also look at the continuation of the *studiolo* and private picture gallery tradition that builds on the example of the Neapolitan gallery as described by Philostratus. The most significant influence seems to manifest itself in the frescoes by Rosso Fiorentino and Francesco Primaticcio for Francois I at the Chateau Fontainebleau from 1530 onward. On a more intimate scale, my research in Florence has led me to discover a small loggia *ca. 1539* at the home of humanist and Medicean statesman, Francesco Campana, which has a ceiling in polychromic stucco with scenes derived from the *Imagines* exclusively. The revelation of such a coherent decorative programme dependent upon Philostratus *in situ*

\textsuperscript{113} Engraving by Luca Penni, dated 1547 and executed by Leon Davent. Reproduced in *Illustrated Bartsch* 33, (vol.16 part 2). ‘Italian Artists of the Sixteenth Century School of Fontainebleau.’
at the home of a prominent Florentine, allows for speculation on the possibility of a wider use of the *Imagines* in Renaissance art.
CHAPTER THREE
A Case Study: Francesco Campana’s Loggia
at San Martino al Montughi, Florence

• Introduction

• Francesco Campana
  1. Ambassador to London
  2. First Secretary to the Dukes of Tuscany
  3. Campana as Humanist

• Campana’s Villa: the ‘canonica’ as Accademia Platonica
  1. The Decoration of the Loggia: Re-creating Antiquity
  2. The Loggia Design
  3. The Grottesche

• The Three Scenes from the ‘Imagines’
  1. The Choice of the Text: Philostratus
  2. Andromeda rescued by Perseus
  3. Hercules in Swaddling Clothes
  4. The Death of Ajax or the Gyraean Rocks

• Cosimo Medici and the Capricorn Impresa
  1. Cosimo as Hercules
  2. Cosimo as Perseus
  3. Cosimo as Poseidon

• The Stucco Artist

• Conclusion
Introduction

This chapter presents the results of original field research on a re-discovered Florentine loggia dated c. 1539. To my knowledge, this chapter constitutes the first written study on the loggia decoration.\(^1\) The iconographical programme is based wholly on Philostratean subjects and consists of narrative stucco decoration (*stucchi*) on the vault of the loggia. It is located in a currently disused building attached to the church of San Martino a Montughi, on the outskirts of Florence. I discovered the loggia by chance in 1999, when visiting the Stibbert Museum which is situated opposite the attractive church of San Martino a Montughi in via Stibbert.\(^2\) Upon entering the church, the caretaker offered to show me “la panorama stupenda” of Florence from the terrace of the *canonica*, which is approached from the garden.\(^3\) The view which Vasari himself had enjoyed, was indeed splendid, but it was the fine sixteenth-century stucchi which caught my attention. Recognizing the mythological subjects were from Philostratus, I later returned to photograph the stucco decoration and measure the loggia. Soon after I took the photographs, the loggia was declared unstable by the Department of Archaeology and is currently closed to all visitors with the stucchi obscured by scaffolding.

In the course of my research into the origins of the *canonica*, I found that little is known about the life and personality of the original owner of the building, Francesco

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\(^1\) The *canonica* was documented by German architectural historians C Von Stegmann and H Von Geymüller at the end of the nineteenth century, when the building underwent restoration. However they do not attempt to decipher the iconography of the *stucchi* and do not mention Philostratus as the source. The entry on the canonica in Von Stegmann and Von Geymüller’s work, *Die Architektur der Renaissance in Toscana*, vol. VII, Munich: F. Bruckmann, (1885-1908) is to my knowledge the only published study on the canonica or on the architect who was responsible, Giuliano di Baccio d’Agnolo.

\(^2\) My thanks go to the caretaker of the church and canonica, Signor G Conti, who lived in a house on the church grounds. Signor Conti gave me access to the canonica on two occasions and related what he knew about the history of the building, including its most recent use as a scout hall. My second visit to the canonica was in July of 2005, but it was not possible to get a close look at the loggia decoration. By then, the building was no longer accessible due to the danger of the loggia and terrace collapsing and had been closed by the Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici per la Toscana until the Opificio delle Pietre Dure could proceed with a restoration attempt. Work had not yet commenced on the loggia at the time this thesis went to print (November 2009). The church of San Martino was originally established by the Cappuccine order. Erected in the thirteenth century, the church building was given its present neo-Renaissance appearance by a complete restoration 1910-1926. A new campanile was also erected at that time, after the model of one that had been destroyed in the sixteenth century. The interior of the church which suffered bomb damage and looting during World War II, has very few works of art of any quality to evoke the church’s early Renaissance origins apart from a fine *Pietà* in maiolica from one of the della Robbia family and a wooden crucifix from the late thirteenth century. Information on the church and canonica is to be found in J Lami *Sanctae Ecclesiae Florentinae monumenta*, Florence, 1758, II, 1022 and E Repetti, *Dizionario geografico-fisico storico della Toscana*, Florence, 1833, III, 604-05.

\(^3\) There is no direct translation in English for ‘canonica’ but it carries the same connotation as ‘vicarage’. However at the time it was built, the canonica was not intended to house a member of the church.
This chapter contains a biographical outline for the main events in Campana’s extraordinary life and briefly discusses his role as humanist/statesman, in Florentine and Roman Clementine culture. As the *canonica* loggia was in an advanced state of deterioration when I first examined it in 1999 and as nothing protected it from exposure to the elements, I felt it imperative to conduct this case study and include it as part of my thesis.\(^5\) The loggia has since been listed with the Soprintendenza of Florence as an item for urgent restoration, scaffolding was erected, but no restoration or conservation work has yet taken place. Therefore, due to the continued exposure to the elements, I do not know how much of the decoration I photographed in 1999, is still intact today. As such, this chapter necessarily includes a detailed compilation of data relating to the visual evidence existing at the time of my initial inspection of the loggia. This report should be read in close association to the photographic data included.

Campana’s loggia allows a unique look at an isolated example of a Renaissance decorative programme in a domestic context that relies on the *Imagines* as the literary source. I have deciphered the iconography of the programme and will discuss this in relation to the descriptions of both Philostratus the Elder and Younger.

Re-creations of paintings in the *Imagines* already mentioned in previous chapters have been the exclusive fantasy of dukes, duchesses and popes. It is all the more intriguing then, to discover Philostratus in the modest setting of a Florentine suburban villa (fig. 1).

Described by Vasari as “*a small house placed next to a church, but very ornate and of a superb position to dream of, there was quite an amount to take notice of, all of the city...*”\(^4\)

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4 There remains only one critical assessment of Campana; an article written in 1899, by F Dini, ‘Francesco Campana e i suoi’, in *Archivio Storico Italiano*. s.V, t. XXII, no. 2, 289-323. The major early sources for Campana are Benedetto Varchi, *Storia Fiorentina*, Florence, 1527-1530: edition Dalla Società Tipografica de’Classici Italiani, no. 2536, Milan, 1803 (particularly Vol. III) and AF Marmi, *Vite d’Accademici Fiorentini*, Biblioteca nazionale centrale di Firenze, Mgl. Cl. 27, cod.2. We have little information on Campana’s early life in Tuscany or how he came to know Latin and Greek. Campana’s entry in the *Enciclopedia italiana di scienze, lettere ed arti*, states ‘practically nothing is recorded of his (Campana’s) activity between 1523 and 1527’: Giovanni Treccani, edition E Bestetti, Milan, 1948. These were vital years in Campana’s career when he held the post of Chamberlain to Pope Clement VII and witnessed the Sack of Rome. It is my aim to make Campana the subject of my next research project.

5 Personal note: the date of 1999 represents the first year of my Doctoral research on Philostratus which I began at Oxford University, under the supervision of Professor Martin Kemp. I then had a break of several years to raise a family and transferred to the University of Newcastle in 2003 resuming my research on Philostratus. My last visit to the canonica was in 2005.
of Florence and of the surrounding area”, the canonica of San Martino a Montughi was the treasured suburban residence of Francesco Campana, confidant and influential advisor of Duke Cosimo I Medici.

Fig. 1 Photograph of the Campana residence (canonica) ca. 1910. (Photo: Alinari, Florence)

**Francesco Campana**

Given the uniqueness of this Philostratean decorative programme, it is pertinent to examine the person behind it and the circumstances which led to the loggia’s creation. Francesco Campana was born c.1490 at Colle di Val d’Elsa which lies 45 kilometres from Florence which is why the historian Benedetto Varchi refers to him as Francesco Campani ‘da Colle’. Considering his later achievements, it is surprising to learn Campana came from a family of unremarkable origins. It is thought his father was a

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6 Fuor di Fiorenza, a Montughi, fece il medesimo a messer Francesco Campana, già primo segretario del duca Alessandro e poi del duca Cosimo de’ Medici, una casetta piccola a canto alla chiesa, ma ornatissima e tanto ben posta che vagheggia, essendo alquanto rilevata, tutta la città di Firenze et il piano intorno: G Vasari, Le Vite... Giuntina, IV, 609, in Vita di Baccio d’Agnolo. Giuliano di Baccio d’Agnolo the architect who designed the canonica, was the son of the more famous figure Vasari wrote about.

7 Varchi, xii, 567.
doctor and his mother Caterina di Niccolo Staccini was descended from an old, but impoverished family.\(^8\)

It is surprising that so little is known about this figure who would become highly influential at the Medici court. His political career seems to have begun around 1516 in service to Lorenzo dei Medici, Duke of Urbino (1492–1519). In a short time he managed to become indispensable to the Medici family and went to Rome where he became 'camerario' or chamberlain, to Cardinal Giulio dei Medici before and after his election to the pontificate as Clement VII in 1523.\(^9\) On this occasion, Campana recited before the new pope a panegyric he composed in Latin, commemorating the death of Hadrian VI: *Ad Adrianum Sextum pontificem maximum oratio panegyrica per Franciscum Campanam Collensem*.\(^10\)

**Ambassador to London**

Following the Sack of Rome in 1527, Clement VII entrusted Campana with a delicate mission to the English Court.\(^11\) Henry VIII had requested that the Pope acknowledge annulment of his marriage to Catherine of Aragon in order to take Anne Boleyn as his new wife. Campana was sent as papal envoy to examine the matter and convey the Pope’s answer. Arriving in London on 11\(^{th}\) January 1529, Campana and Vincent Casale, were received by the King and Cardinal Wolsey, Henry’s chief advisor in the ‘Great

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\(^8\) All information on the life of Campana is my own translation from Italian sources: ocit. no.3 and entry for Campana, Francesco in MG Cruciani Troncarelli, *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 17, edition, Roma 1974, 342-345. The description of Campana by his contemporary Benedetto Varchi emphasises the mystery surrounding the origin of Campana’s talents and his rise to power: ‘Mess. Francesco Campana, essendo di basso stato salito, ne sapendo egli come, a quel grado altissimo, non capiva in se stesso, ed aspirando a cose maggiori, governava fedelmente, e non insufficientemente la segretaria, aspettando però la risoluzione di tutte le cose dalla bocca di Cosimo solo.’ (Mess. Francesco Campana, having risen from lowly origins, it is not known how he climbed to such a high degree, and perhaps he himself did not understand it yet he did aspire to great things and governed faithfully, and not insufficiently as Secretary, however waiting always for the resolution of everything from the mouth of Cosimo alone.) B Varchi, *Storia Fiorentina*: edition 1857-58, iii, 238.


\(^10\) Francesco Campana (Papiaie, (Pavia): Iacob de Burgofranco, 1523). Biblioteca Riccardiana, Florence (FI0094).

\(^11\) Clement VII escaped the imperial troops on 6\(^{th}\) May of 1527 and took refuge in the Castel Sant Angelo in Rome. On 6\(^{th}\) December he left the city to take up residence in the fortified papal city of Orvieto. It was not until 6\(^{th}\) October of 1528 that Clement was able to return to Rome. Nothing is known of Campana’s own movements during this time, however as he was still in service to Clement VII, it is likely he stayed on as a member of the Pope’s entourage throughout this troublesome time and departed for England from Rome some time toward the end of 1528. See A Chastel, *The Sack of Rome, 1527*, Eng. Trans. Bollingen Series XXXV – 26, Princeton, 1977, 34-35.
Matter’. Campana’s main mission seems to have been to placate the King with reassurances of the Pope’s support in Henry’s favour without actually promising anything. According to Wolsey, Campana had assured the King that Clement was England’s staunch ally and that as Pope, he would not only do all he could for Henry according to law, justice and equity but that he would go even further and act on Henry’s behalf ex plenitudine potestatis; from the fullness of his power.

Campana’s words and the correct interpretation of the Pope’s message were the subject of dispute at Henry’s court. What Henry did not know, was that Clement had also entrusted Campana with a secret mission to order Cardinal Lorenzo Campeggio, Bishop of Salisbury, to destroy the decretal commission. Campeggio was further instructed by Campana to continue a policy of postponing the Legatine Trial that would see Catherine’s marriage annulled in England.

On the 18th May, Campana was called to Windsor for a final audience with the King during which Henry tried to intimidate the Pope’s representatives with much blustering and threats. Campana would not move from his policy of equivocal but non-committal assurances to the King. Henry’s last words to Campana before he left the court to return to Clement were “Be good friends to me,” he begged, “and have pity on me”.

First Secretary to the Dukes of Tuscany

Campana handled the English matter brilliantly and upon his return to the Pope in Rome, he was appointed as a kind of mentor to Clement’s illegitimate son, the young

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13 Correspondence Wolsey to Knight, L & P, IV, iii, 5163 and IV, iii, 5719.

14 ibid.

15 L & P, IV, iii, 5572.
Alessandro dei Medici. On the 1st May 1531 the Republic was dissolved and on the 6th July, Alessandro was proclaimed governor of Florence, thanks largely to the influence of Clement and the Florentine politician, Francesco Vettori. On 27th April 1532, the Balìa wrote the Medici into Florence’s constitution as its hereditary rulers. The Signoria was abolished and Alessandro who was then twenty years old, was proclaimed first hereditary Duke of Tuscany. Campana was given the honour of reading the imperial decree of Charles V in the sala dei duecento of the Palazzo Signoria. Reflecting the rise of his protégé, Campana’s own political status was elevated. He is recorded in the Libro del Priorista di palazzo as holding the post of First Secretary to the Duke, during the period Simone Tornabuoni was Gonfaloniere of Justice. The historian Bernardo Segni remarked that although Campana was a provincial from Colle di Val d’Elsa, he was “in charge of the greater part of the important activities of the duke.”

We do not know more of Campana’s precise activities during these years, only that on the 3rd January 1536, he accompanied the Duke to Naples to meet Alessandro’s betrothed, Margaret of Austria (1522-1586), illegitimate daughter of Charles V.

Despite the death of his main benefactor, Pope Clement VII in 1534, Campana’s status in Florentine politics remained secure. His position as leading advisor to the Medici Duke meant he was, in effect, the second most authoritative figure in Florence. This is why, when the unpopular ‘il Moro’ was assassinated in his bed on January 6th 1537, Campana played a central role in deciding who would replace Alessandro. It is thought that Campana together with Cardinal Cibò, were the first ones to discover the body of the Duke in his bed chamber.

The question of which Medici family member fathered Alessandro (1510-1537) is not resolved. The official version circulated by Clement was that Lorenzo II de Medici was the father. However Clement showed an unusual interest in Alessandro and many scholars believe it was Clement (as the then seventeen-year-old Giulio dei Medici), that fathered Alessandro on a servant woman working in the Medici household. Hale suggests that Clement may have tried to protect his reputation, by circulating the rumour that Lorenzo II was the father of this mixed race child (JR Hale, Florence and the Medici: The Pattern of Control, London, 1977. Only the identity of the mother seems certain, as documents reveal Alessandro was born to a black serving-woman called Simonetta da Collavecchio. Hence, the popular name for the Duke was ‘il Moro’ (the Moor) due to his dark appearance. On the short life of Alessandro see M Rastrelli, Storia d’Alessandro dei Medici primo duca di Firenze, Florence: A. Benuuci, 1781.


Varchi, xii, 537.

B Segni, Storie Fiorentine, Classici Italiani, Milan, 1805, vol.1, 345.

Sometimes referred to as ‘the marriage of the bastards’ eg. in Chastel, 207.

Varchi, iii, 240. Alessandro was murdered by a distant relative, Lorenzino dei Medici.
After the assassination Campana continued his role as first adviser to the new Medici Duke, Cosimo I, a position he would hold until his death nine years later. Campana had proven a staunch Medici loyalist and this was recognised by Cosimo. There is a portrait of Campana by Vasari (fig.2) painted in a roundel on the ceiling of the Sala dei cinquecento in the Palazzo Vecchio, Florence which represents him in the act of reading, once again, the privilegio imperiale concesso to Cosimo I.

Campana and his contemporaries; Lelio Torelli, Ugolino Grifoni, Pierfrancesco Ricci, Angelo Marzi and Lorenzo Pagni, formed a nucleus of stability around the new Duke. Well versed in practical politics, a creative administrator and totally loyal, Campana became a trusted father figure to Cosimo who rewarded him with various important honours and posts. With Campana’s appointment came numerous benefits and privileges and the church of San Martino at Montughi was amongst a list of churches he received annuity from.

Particularly important was the work Campana accomplished of internal politics 1538-1539. He succeeded in making an outcast of Cardinal Cibò who, in an effort to promote
his own power and influence in Florence, had pressed forward the case for Giulio dei Medici succeeding to the Dukedom after Alessandro’s murder, instead of Cosimo.\textsuperscript{23} As the child Giulio was only six years old, this would have resulted in Cibò controlling Florence in his place until Giulio reached a suitable age.\textsuperscript{24} Campana discovered that accusations had been made against Biagio della Campana of a threat to the life of the young Giulio dei Medici and exposed the plot as an elaborate ruse by Cibò, to point blame at Giulio’s rival, Cosimo I.\textsuperscript{25}

It is recorded that Campana died at the beginning of September 1546 and was buried at the church of San Romolo in Tuscany. Giovan Battista Cini composed a eulogy in his memory which was read to the Florence Academy on the 25\textsuperscript{th} March 1547.\textsuperscript{26} No contemporary has written about Campana’s personal life and it is not known if he ever married or left heirs.

**Campana as Humanist**

Campana was not just a statesman but was also regarded by his contemporaries as a ‘letterato’ (a learned man of letters) with interests in the *studia humanitatis*. Varchi described him as *Francesco Campani da Colle, uomo che amava sommamente e favoriva le lettere e i litterati* (a man that loved above all great works of literature and those that wrote it).\textsuperscript{27} In 1526 Campana wrote the *Questio Virgiliana* (fig.3) and dedicated the text to Ercole Gonzaga. This treatise on Virgil ran into numerous editions.\textsuperscript{28} In the preface of the Milanese edition of 1540 Campana wrote that he had the intention to write other *quaestiones virgiliane* although he died before realizing this ambition.

\textsuperscript{23} Giulio (c.1532-1600) was the illegitimate son of the deceased Duke Alessandro de’ Medici (il Moro).
\textsuperscript{24} Varchi, iii., 246.
\textsuperscript{25} ibid.
\textsuperscript{26} The Cini manuscript is preserved in Florence: Biblioteca Nationale Centrale di Firenze, Mgl. cl. 9 cod. 42, G.B. Cini, *Orazione recitata da Giovan Battista Cini nell’Accademia Fiorentina pubblicamente nella morte di Francesco Campana*, 25 Marzo, 1547.
\textsuperscript{27} Varchi, xii, 567.
\textsuperscript{28} First published Bologna, 1526: *Questio Virgiliana*, per Franciscum Campanum Collensem (Bononiae: Ioannis Baptistae & Benedictii quodam Hectoris de Faellis calcograforum acuratissimorum. (Giovanni & Benedetto Faelli, publishers). Re-printed in various editions: Milan 1542; Paris 1542; Geneva 1567. A first edition is held in Florence: Bibl. Nazionale Centrale di Firenze (MAGL.21.4.151) *Virgiliana quaestio*, per Franciscum Campanum Collensem. It is more commonly listed as *Virgiliana Quaestio*. 
The *Quæstio Virgiliana* was a meticulous examination of two themes in the *Aeneid*; the fury that took control of Aeneas when he found Helen in the Temple of Vesta on the night that Troy fell (Verg. *Aen.* 2.567-88) and the meeting between Aeneas and Deiphobus, last husband of Helen, in the underworld (Verg. *Aen.* 6.509-30).

In his analysis of these verses, Campana quotes amply in Greek and Latin from Homer, Aristotle, Horace, Aristarchus, Plutarch, Cicero and Seneca. This would seem to indicate that as well as Latin, Campana had some understanding of Greek, although it is not recorded how this came about or who his teacher might have been.

Pier Vettori dedicates to Campana his work: *Posterores Petri Victorii Castigationes in Epistolas quas vocant familiares*, Lugundi 1541.²⁹ In the dedication he praises Campana’s work on Virgil: *I certainly know how effective you are in this branch of*

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²⁹ *Posterores Petri Victorii Castigationes in Epistolas quas vocant familiares*: (The later studies of Petrus Victorius on the letters which they term ‘domestic’; a reference to Cicero’s *Letters ad Familiares*).
letters, in that you imitated men of the greatest learning and acumen, and wrote many subtle and scholarly questions relating to the poem.\textsuperscript{30}

In 1538 Campana accepted the post of editor of the press for the \textit{Studio fiorentino} (the university of the Florentine Republic) that carried an annual provision of 300 \textit{scudi}.\textsuperscript{31}

Evidence of his reputation as a learned patron of humanistic interests is provided by the dedications made in his name by contemporary authors and poets. Campana put his intellectual pursuits to practical use when he hosted the first meetings of the re-formed Academy of Florence at his villa in Montughi for an interim period, until the Academy could find an official seat. Salvini mentions that on the 7\textsuperscript{th} February 1545, Campana hosted the inaugural meeting of the Academy at Montughi.\textsuperscript{32} In July of the following year, Campana gave a lecture to the Academy members on the subject of a sonnet by Petrarch.\textsuperscript{33}

Campana also undertook the difficult task of re-organizing the major cultural institutes in Florence under the new Medici rule. Apart from his involvement with the \textit{Studio fiorentino}, he also oversaw the re-launching of the \textit{Studio pisano} (between 1543-1544), which had been inactive since 1494.

He was friend to many learned men of the time including Guglielmo Pazzi who dedicated his \textit{Poetica} on Aristotle to Campana. Leonardo Giacchini also dedicated a translation of Galen to Campana and the historian Benedetto Varchi dedicated his \textit{Dichiarazione} on the second part of canto XVI of Dante’s \textit{Purgatorio} to him.\textsuperscript{34}

In October of 1545 after using all his powerful contacts and connections, even asking the Duke personally for assistance, Campana managed to publish the vernacular edition of Aristotle’s \textit{Rhetoric} as translated by his friend Bernardo Segni.\textsuperscript{35} This would be one of the last important projects he was to oversee before his death the following year.

\\textsuperscript{30} Scio enim in hoc litterarum genere quantum valeas qui doctissimos et acutissimos viros imitatus multas subtiles et eruditas quaestiones in Virgilii poema confeceris.

Campana seems to have been fluent in Latin, as mentioned previously, he also wrote a panegyric in Latin upon the death of Pope Hadrian VI in 1523. Campana’s correspondence with Pier Vettori is preserved in the British Museum; Add. Mss. 10.265; 10.276.

\textsuperscript{31} The \textit{scudo} was the Italian currency in use till the nineteenth century.

\textsuperscript{32} S Salvini, \textit{Fasti Consolari dell’Accademia Fiorentina}, Florence, 1717, 59.

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{34} Benedetto Varchi, (1503-1565). \textit{Lezioni sul Dante e prosa varie di Benedetto Varchi}, la maggior parte inedite; tratte ora in luce degli originali della Biblioteca Rinucciana per cura e opera di Guiseppe Aiazzi e Lelio Arbib ... (A Spese della Societá editrice delle storie del Nardi e del Varchi, Florence, 1841.)

\textsuperscript{35} Bernardo Segni, (1504-1558). \textit{L’Ethica d’Aristotile} tr. in lingua vulgare fiorentina et comentata per Bernardo Segni. (Lorenzo Torrentino, impressor’ ducale, Florence, 1549.)
Campana’s villa: the canonica as ‘Accademia Platonica’

The building now known as the canonica was intended as the semi-rural Florentine residence of Campana. The loggia we are concerned with formed the main entrance to the building and was approached from the garden. As a private residence independent from the church, the canonica was not restricted to Christian iconography in the decorative scheme. The overall architectural design and the decoration relies on Classical models chosen by Campana. The villa of this cultivated letterato, a place of repose and otium, a temple consecrated to the Muses, was open to all his friends and dedicated, as we shall see, to his successors. At Montughi, on the green hills of Florence, Campana entertained the fantasy of creating an informal Academy modelled on that of ancient Athens, where men of various talents could gather and pay homage to the mythic inhabitants of Parnassus. His objectives are clearly inscribed in a carved stone tablet (fig.4) above the entrance to the loggia:

FRANCISCUS CAMPANUS ANTIQUA LOCI RELIGIONE AMOENITATE ATQUE OPPORTUNITATE INVITATUS AD SUUM AMICORUM SUCESSORUMQUE OMNIUM USUM QUI CUM MUSIS COMMertiUM HABERINT A FUNDAMENTIS AEDIFiCAViT MDXXXIX (Francesco Campana attracted by the ancient sanctity of the place and its pleasantness and ease of access (re)built it from the foundations for the use of his friends and all his successors who will have dealings with the Muses in 1539.)

37 With thanks to Elizabeth Baynham and Brian Bosworth for this translation.
Whilst Plato’s Academy provides the ancient ideal, no doubt Marsilio Ficino’s ‘Platonic Academy’ provided a near-contemporary model. The Florence (or Platonic) Academy was initially founded by Ficino under the patronage of Cosimo il Vecchio at the Medici villa at Careggi, c. 1462. The Academy was dissolved in 1527 when the Medici were expelled from Florence for the second time. Campana hosted the first meetings of the newly re-formed Florence Academy (also known as the Accademia Platonica) which had traditionally met at various villa locations surrounded by gardens in, or close to, Florence. The idea seems to have been that for great minds to be inspired, a restful, leafy and tranquil environment was needed. Only a locale with an *al fresco* venue for meetings and the opportunity to commune with nature was desirable, in imitation of Plato’s own outdoor school of philosophy founded in 387 BC in the Athenian suburb of Academos.

The first venue was the Medici Villa at Careggi, given by Cosimo il Vecchio to Marsilio Ficino for the use of the Academy in 1459. In a letter dated 1462, Cosimo wrote to Ficino:

> Yesterday I arrived at the Villa Careggi, not to cultivate my lands, but to attend to my soul. Marsilio, come here to meet us as soon as possible and bring Plato’s ‘De summo bono’…I desire nothing more than learning the best route to obtaining happiness.

This gives us a clear idea of the type of humanistic activity that went on at the Academy which would have set the model for those who met at Campana’s Montughi villa much later.

Lorenzo il Magnifico continued Medici patronage of the Florentine Academy and after his death in 1492, Bernardo Rucellai (who was married to Nannina de’ Medici) permitted the Academy to meet at their home in the beautiful gardens called the Orti

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38 The Academy could not function without Medici patronage and in 1527, as a result of the conspiracy against Cardinal Giulio dei Medici, for whom Campana was working at the time, the Platonic Academy was dissolved.

39 *Ieri sono arrivato a Villa Careggi, non per coltivare i miei campi, ma la mia anima. Raggiungici, Marsilio, appena ti è possibile e porta De summo bono di Platone... Non desidero nulla di più che conoscere la via migliore per raggiungere la felicità.*

http://brunelleschi.imss.fi.it/genscheda.asp?appl=LST&xs=approfondimento&chiave=730549. The Villa Careggi is today a hospital and is situated in the via G. Pieraccini at Careggi, five kilometres North of Florence.
Campana probably thought it fitting that his modest but pleasant villa and its gardens should continue this tradition until a worthier home for the Academy was offered. Campana’s excellent dining hall became renowned as being “conducive to rapport with the Muses”.

Building the canonica towards the end of his career, Campana chose Giuliano di Baccio d’Agnolo as architect. Giuliano was the son of the better known Baccio d’Agnolo who had worked in Rome and whom Vasari dedicates a biography to in volume IV of the Vite. Campana’s choice of an architect with such a meagre reputation as Giuliano’s was perhaps an economic one, but also personal as he had already commissioned Giuliano to work on a project for a palazzo in his hometown of Colle Val d’Elsa in 1532.

The main approach to the Florentine villa was from the bottom of the hill of Montughi and through substantial gardens. The visitor would then mount one of three large staircases to arrive at a sweeping terrace. The formal entrance to the building consisted of a small loggia (approx. 4 metres x height; 2.77 metres x depth; 5.5 metres x length), which was the central element of the whole structure. The low vault of the loggia is densely decorated in white stucco on a polychromic background featuring medallions containing mythological scenes (fig.5).

I propose that these stucco scenes are realizations of descriptions of paintings mentioned in the Imagines of both Philostratus, the Elder and Younger. I also submit the hypothesis that the entire decoration programme is intended to be read as a display of Campana’s allegiance to the Medici and more specifically, to Cosimo I, newly appointed Duke of Tuscany.

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40 The Orti Oricellari are still to be found at via della Scala, 85, Florence.
41 Salvini, (1717) 59.
42 On Giuliano di Baccio d’Agnolo (1491-1555) also known as Giuliano Baglioni, see Von Stegmann & Von Geymuller, vol. VII.
43 Baccio D’Agnolo (born Bartolomeo Baglioni c. 1460-1543), trained as a sculptor in Florence. Examples of his wood carving can be found in Santa Maria Novella and the Palazzo Vecchio. His reputation as an architect seems ambiguous as although he was chosen in 1506 to work on the Duomo of Florence, his commission was later cancelled. A maquette for the base of the drum of the Duomo, the design of which he shared with Giuliano and Antonio da Sangallo, is to be seen in the Museo del Duomo, Florence. He is perhaps best remembered for the bell tower of Santo Spirito in Florence and for his work on the Villa Borghese, Rome. (Vasari, Giuntina, Vol. IV, 609 ff.)
Fig. 5 Composite image of the loggia ceiling showing all three narrative panels
The Decoration of the Loggia: Re-creating Antiquity

The design and decoration of the loggia show that those responsible were well versed in the Classical language of architecture. It was probably a collaborative effort between Giuliano and his erudite patron, Campana, who had spent many years admiring the Classical buildings of Rome and the neo-antique decoration of Raphael and his School. As a humanist, he was possibly familiar with Vitruvius’ *De architectura*.\(^\text{44}\) No doubt, Giuliano also benefited from his architect father’s advice on the project. The qualification of the architectonic elements with the two elegant windows and doorway featuring surrounds in carved *pietra serena* can be described in Vitruvian terms. The plan is symmetrical and follows Vitruvius’ definition that Classical architecture consists of: Order, Arrangement, Proportion, Symmetry, Propriety and Economy (*De Architectura*, I. ii. 1).

\(^\text{44}\) By 1539, Vitruvius’ ten books on architecture had not only been re-interpreted in several treatises (including Alberti’s *De re aedificatoria* (*editio princeps* 1485, Florence) and Filarete’s *Trattato di Architettura*, 1464) but the original Latin text had been published in Rome in 1486 and the first illustrated edition with commentary was printed in Venice, by Fra Giocondo in 1511. An Italian translation was made by Cesare Cesariano in Como, 1521 which engendered others by Lutio (Venice, 1524) and Caporali (Perugia, 1536). Campana could have had access therefore, to both the Latin and the vernacular editions of Vitruvius. See P Murray, *The Architecture of the Italian Renaissance*, London, 1986, 239.
Not only is the concept of a vaulted loggia decorated with stucches authentic in its imitation of the antique, but every element of the decorative scheme from the pattern of colours and textures to the accurate reproduction of enrichments, is the result of a profound familiarity with the language of Classical architecture. It is with the loggia that we must introduce a third, unknown author to the *canonica* design. Campana would have engaged the services of a stucco artist, one who obviously had acquired skills working on commissions for *stucchi* in the popular *all’antica* fashion. The loggia *stucchi* show great affinity with the work of artists from the late studio of Raphael in Rome: Giovanni da Udine, Luzio Romano and Perino del Vaga. I will move on to a discussion of the possible author of Campana’s *stucchi*, after a close analysis of the loggia programme.
The Loggia Design

The vault of the loggia is geometrically partitioned into three large picture spaces (*riquadri*) that repeat the tripartitioning of a loggia originally situated directly above on the first floor of the canonica (fig. 7).

Fig. 7 The canonica loggia façade as it appeared in 1999 before the restoration project erected scaffolding.
Traces of pilasters that divide the loggia façade into a tripartite scheme matching the three scenes on the vault clearly indicate that the entrance to the loggia was at one time divided by slender columns. This would be more in keeping with the Classical ambitions of the patron and is typical of villa architecture of the time, with examples in the work of Palladio at Villa Godi, Loneto (c.1538) with its staircase leading up to a triple-arched entrance (fig.8) and on a much grander scale, the temple colonnade loggia entrance to the Medici villa at Poggio a Caino by Giuliano da Sangallo (1480s).

A similar villa design was favoured by Baldassare Peruzzi whose Villa Farnesina in Rome (1509-1511) would have been familiar to Francesco Campana as it had belonged to Agostino Chigi, treasurer to pope Julius II and was a celebrated venue for entertaining the high society of Rome.\(^45\) The Farnesina also had an open entrance loggia that featured mythological frescoes by Raphael and his followers including subjects

\(^{45}\) Agostino Chigi died in 1520, which is when Campana arrived to take up residence in Rome as chamberlain to Cardinal Giulio dei Medici. The villa only became known as the ‘Farnesina’ after later ownership by the Farnese family in 1577.
taken from Philostratus. Peruzzi’s Palazzo Massimo alle Colonne in Rome (c. 1523) has a courtyard loggia with tripartite partitioning and rich decoration on the upper order, as befits the *piano nobile*. Solutions for marrying the grand Classical vocabulary to a villa setting were a trademark of Peruzzi’s work and reflect what Campana and Giuliano di Baccio d’Agnolo later achieved on a small scale at Montughi.

*The Grottesche*

The central picture frame is rectangular whilst the two extreme spaces are squared. In each frame is contained one scene, set like an antique cameo and framed by a white band pierced with four stars. The frame is oval for the central picture and circular for the two end scenes. The panels inserted between the rectangular outer frames and the inner circular frames, define four segments. The border is decorated with a continuous line of bead and reel enrichment accommodating fantastic figures.

![Fig. 9 Drawing of the vault from C. Von Stegmann & H. Von Geymüller.](image)

The simple partitioning of the vault, finished at its extremes by a frame with protruding beading of egg and dart design, is enhanced by a narrow banded panel. The exceptional stucco decoration is echoed geometrically in a beautiful wooden coffered ceiling in the room adjoining the loggia, decorated with an identical frame-like motif punctuated with eight-point stars and circles, repeated outside, on the bands that divide the *stucchi*. These geometric elements, the *riquadri* and the end panels are all enveloped by a border frieze with an exuberant procession of mythological creatures and decorative motifs variously borrowed from the classical repertoire of grotesques. Pairs of sinuous griffins,

46 Raphael’s frescoes in the loggia of Agostino Chigi’s villa, now called the Villa Farnesina, will be discussed at the beginning of Chapter 4 of the thesis.
some with menacing claws and some with aquiline heads are seen in elegant profile. Beneath the centre of each scene, winged females and males squat obscenely. Precise anatomical details are accentuated by the plastic modelling, as seen in the treatment of the harpies' wings (fig.10). The female satyrs are hideous in appearance, their female anatomy prominently displayed (fig.11). All figures are rhythmically linked with decorative amphoras, festoons, rosettes and other rich foliate decoration that merge with the griffin tails. In between the three scenes, intricate baskets filled with fruits placed at the end of the sloping side walls serve as pedestals for pairs of satyrs that act as caryatids supporting roundels containing the eight-pointed star.

Fig.10 (above) Loggia; detail of *Perseus & Andromeda* panel, showing a male harpy.

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47 The griffins may hold special symbolism relating to the Medici Duke as on a bust of Cosimo by Baccio Bandinelli (circa 1556-58) in the Pitti, two large griffins are sculpted on his breastplate and appear directly inspired from Roman antiquity. See exhibition catalogue: *Palazzo Vecchio: committenza e collezionismo medicei 1537-1610*, Centro Di, Florence, 1980.
Fig. 11 Detail of central panel surround, showing a female satyr, Capricorn heads, red medici *palle* and eight-pointed stars.

On the lateral walls of the loggia are two crowning lunettes also decorated with stucco ornamentation, representing satyrs; male and female (fig. 12). Bound and seated upon grimacing masks, they both look over their shoulder toward a central basket of fruits. Two slender volutes unwind to form the base of the composition. The bottom of the stucco frame which outlines the lunette is interrupted by a small recessed oculus. At present, the Eastern oculus is made of *pietra serena* and the other is in grey painted stucco; probably the result of a later restoration. The lateral walls are covered by plaster with a masonry design of isodomic blockwork from under which has emerged traces of previous grotesque decoration only visible by 1999 in a few fragments.
The crowded sequence of grotesques in this frieze does not seem to have any explicit relationship to the mythological scenes represented in the frames of the vault, but constitutes an appropriate *all’antica* decorative surround that complements the linear and geometric partitioning of the ceiling with a vigorous and sculptural density of motifs and ornamental elements.

The bound satyrs in the lunettes have a tentative association to Philostratus in his description of Midas capturing a satyr (*Midas* I.22) or with the story of Pan being captured by nymphs (*Pan* II.11):

> today he is very angry for the nymphs have fallen upon him, and already Pan’s hands have been tied behind his back, and he fears for his legs since the Nymphs wish to seize them.\(^48\)

According to Philostratus, satyrs in Graeco-Roman painting usually conformed to a standard formula and his description of their appearance (*Midas*, I.22) coincides with

\[^{48}\text{Pan (K357) ἐκάθευδε δ’ ἄρα πρότερον μὲν ἄνειμένος τε καὶ πρόσος τὴν ῥίνα καὶ τὸ ἐπίχολον αὐτῆς λεαινῶν τῷ ὑπνῷ, τῆμερον δὲ ὑπερχολά, προσπέπηκται μὲν ἥδη τῷ χείρε ὃ Πάν, δὲ δὲ ἐπὶ τοῖς σκέλεσιν, ἐπειδή βούλονται αἱ Νύμφαι περιῆκται μὲν ἥδη τῷ χείρε ὃ Πάν, δὲ δὲ ἐπὶ τοῖς σκέλεσιν, ἐπειδή βούλονται αἱ Νύμφαι περιῆκται μὲν ἥδη τῷ χείρε ὃ Πάν, δὲ δὲ ἐπὶ τοῖς σκέλεσιν, ἐπειδή βούλονται αἱ Νύμφαι. Callistatus describes a Greek statue of a satyr with legs and a horse tail, who is playing the flute. (F379) It appears that the goat-leg representation is a Roman conflation of satyrs and fauns and appears in Latin literature (Horat. *Carm.* ii. 19. 4; Propert. iii. 15. 34; Ov. *Met.* i. 193, vi. 392, xiv 637).\]
that of the satyrs in the loggia with the exception that the Renaissance type favoured goat legs:

they are represented in paintings as hardy, hot-blooded beings, with prominent ears, lean about the loins, altogether mischievous, and having the tails of horses.

(F84-86)\textsuperscript{49}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{maenad-satyr.png}
\caption{A maenad uses the thyrsus against a satyr, Euphronios Painter, Berlin Museum}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{49} This description fits very well with the depiction of satyrs in Greek vase painting, see (fig. 13). \textit{Midas} (K325) κἀκεῖνο αὐτῶν ἔτι: σκληροὶ γράφονται καὶ ἄκρατοι τὸ αἷμα καὶ περιττοὶ τὰ ὄωτα καὶ κοῖλοι τὸ ἰσχίον, ἀγέρωχοι πάντα καὶ τὸ ἐπὶ τὰ οὐραῖα ἵπποι.
Chapter Three (contd.)

The choice of Philostratus

A decade after Duke Alfonso I had completed his camerino d’alabastro at Ferrara, this learned Florentine, also attempted to recapture the past through Philostratus, albeit on a much more unassuming scale. By the time Francesco Campana commissioned the loggia decoration around 1539, the Imagines had been published several times in Italy. Regardless of the extent of Campana’s knowledge of Greek, he certainly had Latin, as we have seen by his authorship of Hadrian VI’s panegyric and the Quæstio Virgiliana. If he had not acquired one of the Latin translations of the Imagines published after 1518, he could have consulted manuscripts in the Laurenziana library. The text of Philostratus the Elder and Younger (Icones Philostrati Iunioris) was present in a range of codices dating from the twelfth century onward in the Medici library, to which Campana probably had access. The first Latin edition to be published in Basle by Johannes Frobenium in 1518 was quickly followed by the more popular edition of Stefano Nigro, published in Milan in 1521 and again in Basle in 1532. Campana could have acquired one of these Latin translations. If, as seems likely, Campana was also literate in Greek he could have obtained a copy of the editio princeps Manutian 1503 edition or the revised editions of 1522 and 1535.

This cycle of episodes that decorate the loggia of the villa of this cultivated secretary to Cosimo I represents a refined adaptation of the text of Philostratus and does not rely on treatments of the subjects popular in sixteenth century Florentine art. The choice of stucco as opposed to the more common method of fresco and the reliance upon the Imagines represents Campana's highly individual taste for the antique; most likely cultivated in Rome during his ten years there as secretary to Giulio dei Medici, later Clement VII.

It is also worth considering that Campana, eager to appear a learned man of letters, deliberately selected Philostratus in order to display his erudition because it was a relatively 'obscure' and authentic Greek source. In a photograph from the late nineteenth

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1 In 1487 Antonio Bonfinio was entrusted by Matthias Corvinus, the King of Hungary with the Latin translation of all the works of Philostratus the Elder: Heroica, Imagines, Vitae Sophistarum, Epistolae. This splendid manuscript in the Biblioteca Corvinana is richly illustrated with miniatures from the Florentine bottega of Boccaccino Vecchio (or possibly, according to Berkovits, to the bottega of Attavante). Corvinus died in 1490 and a considerable quantity of manuscripts ordered from the Florentine copyists of his library found their way onto the shelves of the Medici library.
It is possible to see that low stone benches in pietra serena (now missing) were attached to walls at either end of the loggia, inviting the visitor to sit and admire the decoration on the vault. Perhaps it amused Campana to see who, among his learned friends, could suggest a source for the iconography beyond Ovid.

Furthermore, a demonstrated preference for the purity of Greek subjects as opposed to the increasingly complex allegorical art of his day which mixed Greek and Roman sources, could be a conscious rebellion against contemporary taste. The loggia may even be inspired from Philostratus' introduction to the *Imagines* where he commends the owner of the Campanian villa for his excellent taste and judgement on a collection of paintings wholly of Greek subject matter. Throughout his discourse, Philostratus constantly extolls the virtues of all things Greek.

The *Imagines* of Philostratus the Elder describe a splendid collection of paintings decorating the portico of a sumptuous Roman-built villa overlooking Naples; there may be an intentional association between Campana's placement of these images in his own retreat on the hill overlooking Florence. His villa may be an audacious attempt to emulate the very lifestyle of the ancients as nobles like Alfonso and Isabella d’Este sought to do on a richer scale.

None of the three subjects chosen by Campana would have been out of place on the walls of a Roman villa of late antiquity, which generally featured copies of Greek old masters. Perseus and Andromeda was a favoured theme for Neapolitan villas with its maritime setting and central figure of a beautiful near-naked heroine as seen in the House of Fabius Amandus, Pompeii (fig.14).

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2 Early photographs of the building are reproduced in Von Stegmann & Von Geymüller *op.cit* n.1.

3 Perhaps the best known example of a wall painting featuring the myth of Perseus and Andromeda is from the House of the Dioscurii, now in the Archaeological Museum of Naples.
The choice of medium is also authentic as there is material evidence to demonstrate that stucco decoration was highly desirable in Classical art. Although Pompeii would lie uncovered for another two centuries after the construction of the canonica, the so-called Domus Aurea or Golden House of Nero (fig. 15) had already been examined in Rome by 1500 and was known to Raphael and the master of stucco and grotesque decoration, Giovanni da Udine.

As an avid admirer of the antique, Campana could have acquired permission to visit Nero's house, through his contacts in Rome. There, he would have seen stucco and painted vault decoration executed between A.D. 64-68 showing episodes from the Trojan cycle.
The Three Loggia Scenes from the ‘Imagines’

If Campana's motive in choosing the ancient Greek commentator on art, Philostratus, is relatively clear when commissioning this complex decorative scheme, it remains unclear why Campana chose these particular three descriptions. The trio seem to have no obvious connection other than all relate episodes from the lives of Greek heroes; Hercules, Perseus and Ajax.
The scenes featured on the stuccoed medallions represent from the left; *Andromeda rescued by Perseus*, (I.29), the *Infant Hercules struggling with the serpents*, (Younger, V) and the *Death of Ajax* (II.13).

Although the subjects were well known in Italy from readings of Ovid and Homer, the way they are represented seems to have no precedent in Italian art. This is because they appear to be specifically faithful reconstructions of the composition described in the *Imagines*. Rather than rely on well known representations generated by Renaissance artists, such as Piero di Cosimo’s painting of *Perseus and Andromeda* c. 1500, the stucco artist at Montughi has taken a philological approach and relies solely on the Philostratoi for guidance. If this is the case, then the stucco artist must have been working from a vernacular translation, perhaps supplied by Campana himself, as no Italian edition had yet been printed. In Chapter Two I discussed the methods by which artists ignorant of Greek and Latin, could interpret Classical texts, the primary example being Titian’s use of the Moschos translation of the *Imagines* from Mantua. As the details for the Montughi cameos adhere so closely to the text of the Philostratoi and were not extrapolated from other versions of the myths. The only conclusion to draw is that hand-written translations were made available to the stuccoist. Either that, or he was supplied sketches by someone who could read the text in Latin. Oral transmission, perhaps from Campana to the stuccoist, would have to leave a very strong impression upon the listener to achieve this degree of detail in the narrative depicted.

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4 Perhaps because of its maritime setting *Perseus and Andromeda* was particularly popular with Venetian artists and was interpreted by Giorgione (Venturi Collection, Rome); Carpaccio, (Standish Collection, Paris); Tintoretto (see Rossi, 1982, no. 470, plate 752) and later on; Veronese c. 1540 (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rennes); and Titian c.1554 (Wallace Collection, London). There is a frescoed frieze of *Perseus and Andromeda* attributed to the studio of Perino del Vaga circa 1545, in the Sala di Perseo of the Castel Sant’Angelo in Rome. The subject was also painted in a series of frescoes (1525) at the Casino del Bufalo in Rome, by Polidoro da Caravaggio, a follower of Raphael. The works do not survive but are known by by a preparatory drawing in the Louvre and an engraving from Volpato (reproduced in J Maynard, *Browning’s Youth*, Cambridge University Press, Mass. 1977, 160-2). Representations of the *Infant Hercules and the Serpents* earlier than 1539 were Filarete’s relief for the bronze door of St. Peter’s Rome, c. 1433-45 and Giulio Romano’s painting known by an engraving by Agostino Veneziano, 1533 (Bartsch, no. 315). *The Death of Ajax* (or the *Gyraean Rocks*) is a less common subject for in Renaissance art.
Andromeda rescued by Perseus (I. 29) fig.17

The scene on the left of the vault (fig.17) shows the liberation of Andromeda as described by Philostratus the Elder in *Perseus (κθ' ΠΕΡΣΕΥΣ)* Book I.xxix. Surrounding the circle are four figures of an unidentified mythological creature half man and half bird, a type of male harpy. In this stucco panel the artist has paid particular attention to the representation of Perseus, striving to follow the text of Philostratus:

*He, not far from the maiden, lies in the sweet fragrant grass, dripping sweat on the ground and keeping the Gorgon's head hidden lest people see it and be turned to stone. Many cow-herds come offering him milk and wine to drink (...) Perseus welcomes their gifts and, supporting himself on his left elbow, he lifts his chest, filled with breath through panting, and keeps his gaze upon the maiden, and lets the wind blow out his chalmys...*³ (F116)

³ (K337-38) ὁ δὲ οὐ πόρρω τῆς κόρης ἐν ἡδείᾳ καὶ λιβανώδει πόᾳ κεῖται στάζων [p. 337] ἐς τὴν γῆν ἱδρῶτα καὶ τὸ δεῖμα τῆς Γοργοῦς ἐχιν ἀπόθετον, μὴ ἐντυχόντες αὐτῷ λαοὶ λίθοι γένωνται. πολλοὶ δὲ οἱ βουκόλοι γάλα ὀρέγοντες καὶ οἶνον ἐπισπάσαι. (...) ὁ Περσεὺς δὲ ἀσπάζεται μὲν καὶ ταῦτα, στηρίζων δὲ ἐσωτέρον ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀριστεροῦ ἀγκώνος ἀνέχει τὸν θώρακα ἐμπνεοῦς ὑπὸ ἄσθματος, ἐμβλέπων τῇ κόρῃ, καὶ τὴν χλαμύδα
The importance of the gaze between the maiden and the hero is poetically stressed by Philostratus and the stucco artist has adhered to this element of the description emphasizing Andromeda's downward glance by the placement of two cow-herds who come bearing cups of wine and milk (fig. 18).

Philostratus praises in particular the beauty of the naked shoulder of Perseus which is perhaps why the artist has shown him as a nude figure reclining on his discarded tunic and armour, exhausted from his contest with the monster:

*Let the children of Pelops perish when it comes to a comparison with the shoulder of Perseus! For beautiful as he is and ruddy of face, his bloom has been enhanced by*
his toil and his veins are swollen, as is wont to happen when the breath comes quickly. 

In Renaissance art Perseus is usually portrayed in an upright pose of victory, rather than exhausted on the ground. The way Perseus has been positioned emphasizes reliance upon Philostratus’ description. The figure of Eros, in the loggia tondo, frees Andromeda from her bonds (fig.18); an act which again is peculiar to Philostratus and has been used by later critics as evidence to show that an artist had knowledge of the Imagines. In the Montughi stucco Eros appears "with wings as usual" but the artist seems not to have understood precisely what was meant by "but here, as is not usual, he is a young man". In the painting Philostratus describes Eros as more of an ephebe, an adolescent figure as seen typically in early Greek art. In the stucco, he appears in the guise of a muscular child as he was frequently depicted in late Antiquity and subsequently, in the re-invented Classicism of the Renaissance. This cherubic type of Cupid is also a natural evolution from the Christ child as portrayed in Italian religious art prior to the re-emergence of mythological painting in the fifteenth century.

**Hercules in Swaddling Clothes** (fig.19)

The central scene is contained within an oval medallion and is placed directly in front of the entrance door. Philostratus the Younger refers to the subject as Hercules in Swaddling Clothes (ε ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΕΝ ΣΠΑΡΓΑΝΟΙΣ).

You are playing, Hercules, playing, and already laughing at your labour, though you are still in swaddling clothes; and taking the serpents sent by Hera one in each hand you pay no heed to your mother, who stands near by crazed with fear. 

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6 (K337) ἐρρώσθων Πελοπίδαι παρὰ τὸν τοῦ Περσέως οὖμον, καλὴ γὰρ ὁντὶ αὐτῷ καὶ ύφαιμῳ προσήνθηκε τὸ τοῦ καμάτου καὶ ὑπῳδήκασιν αἱ φλέβες ἐπιλαμβάνον τοῦτο αὐτάς, ὅταν πλεονεκτήσῃ τὸ ἄσθμα. πολλὰ ἀδἒ καὶ παρὰ τῆς κόρης ἄρνυται.


The description of Hercules handling the snakes and Alcmene looking horrified match the figures in a well preserved Pompeian wall painting (fig.20) Another version exists in the same villa where the father figure of Amphityron is seen in the act of drawing his sword to defend the infant, as Philostratus also describes.

9 (K398) ἄθρεις, Ἡράκλεις, ἄθρεις καὶ γελᾶς ἡδη τὸν ἄθλον ἐν σπαργάνοις ὕν καὶ ταῦτα, καὶ τοὺς Ἑρας δράκοντας ἑκάτερον ἑκατέρα χειρὶ ἀπολαβὼν οὐδὲν ἐπιστρέφῃ τῆς μητρὸς ἐκφρονος παρεστώσης καὶ περιδεοῦς
Fig. 20 *Hercules Strangling the Snakes*, wall painting, 60-79 AD, House of the Vettii, Pompei, interior, Room of Pentheus (Maenads), north wall, central picture.

Philostratus’ narrative concentrates on the drama of the moment when parents, servants and friends having rushed to the cradle of the infant Hercules, are horrified to find that he is struggling with two deadly serpents, sent by the jealous Hera. The child kills the serpents revealing the first signs of his divine nature and supernatural strength:

*Here are men in armour, and one who stands ready with drawn sword; the former are the chosen youth of the Thebans, come to the aid of Amphityron; but Amphityron has at the first tidings drawn his sword to ward off danger and has come with them to the scene of action; nor do I know whether he is overcome with fear or rejoices; for his hand is still ready to act...Here, in fact, is Teiresias near at hand, foretelling, I think, what a hero the babe in swaddling clothes will become;* (F307-308)

\(^{10}\) (Κ399) οἱ δὲ ἐν ὅπλοις ὡς καὶ ὁ γυμνῷ τῷ ἔχει ἐτοίῳ οἱ μὲν Θηβαίων ἐκκριτοὶ βοηθοῦντες Ἀμφιτρύωνι, ὁ δ᾽ ὑπὸ τὴν πρώτην ἄγγελιαν σπασάμενος τὸ ἔξοφος ἐς ἡμναν ὁμοὶ ἐπέστη τοῖς δρωμένοις, καὶ οὐκ οἶδ᾽, εἶτε ἐκπέπληγεν, εἶτε χαίρει λοιπὸν: ἡ μὲν γὰρ χεὶρ ἐτ᾽ ἐν τῷ ἕτοιμῳ, ἡ δὲ τῶν ὀρθαλμῶν ἔννοια χαλινὰ τῇ χειρὶ ἐφίστησιν, οὐδὲ ἔχοντος, ὃ τι καὶ ἄμυναι, καὶ χρησμοῦ προμηθείας δεόμενα τὰ παρόντα ὀρῶντος, ταύτα τοι καὶ ὡδὶ πλησίον ὁ Τειρεσίας θεσπίζων, οἴμαι, ὡπόσος ὃ νῦν ἐν σπαργάνωι ἔσται

\(^{10}\)
Amphityron is the virile naked figure who has dashed to the child's assistance, hand ready at the hilt of his sword and next to him stands a man in armour, come to assist his leader. Leaning in from the doorway is the bearded soothsayer Teiresias. With the male characters on the left side of the composition, the females dominate the right. A ghostly female figure lurks in the doorway and she is the personification of Night, her luminous form highlighted by the darkness:

*Night also, the time in which these events take place, is represented in human form; she is shedding a light upon herself with a torch that the exploit of the child may not lack a witness.* (F309)\textsuperscript{11}

The placement of the three figures in three doorways (fig.21) neatly emphasizes the dimensions of the room which has a tripartite stage-like appearance. To some extent, it echoes the actual loggia design. Whilst the other two dramas depicted correspond in that they are both set in similar marinescapes featuring rocky outcrops, this central scene of Hercules presents a sectioned view of a triclinium in a noble house. The figure

\[\text{γέγραπται καὶ ἡ νύξ ἐν εἴδει, ἐν ἕ ταυτα, λαμπαδίῳ καταλάμπουσα ἑαυτήν, ὡς μὴ ἀμάρτυρος τοῦ παιδὸς ὁ ἄθλος γένηται}\]

\textsuperscript{11} (K399)
of Hercules’ mother standing in the doorway is unfortunately eroded, but the silhouette remains to give sufficient idea of her appearance that matches closely the description of Philostratus:

*Alcmene, if one looks carefully at her face, seems to be recovering from her first sight, and her fright has not permitted her to remain in bed even though she has lately given birth to a child. For doubtless you see how, leaping from her bed, unsandalled and only in her shift, with disordered hair and throwing out her arms she utters a shout, while the maidservants that were attending her in her travail are in consternation, talking confusedly each to her neighbour.* (F307)\(^\text{12}\)

The artist has been careful to emphasize Alcmene and her “disordered hair” whilst the two graceful and animated maidservants turn to each other “in consternation”.

Four triton figures surround the *Hercules* oval and are situated in the corners of the frame (fig.22). They almost certainly represent the sea divinity Glaucus Pontius (*Imagines* II.15).\(^\text{13}\)

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\(^{12}\) (K399) τὸ δὲ τῆς Ἀλκμήνης εἴδος ἀνασκόποῦντι ἀναφέρειν μὲν ἀπὸ τῆς πρώτης ἐκπλήξεως δοκεῖ, ἀπιστεῖ δὲ νῦν ὅις ἢ ὅθ᾽ ὡς [p. 399] ἢ δ᾽ ἐκπλήξεις αὐτήν οὐδὲ λεχῶ κείσθαι ἐξευγεύρησαν: ὅρας γὰρ ποι, ὡς ἄβλαυτος καὶ μονοχίτων ἀναπετάσασα τῆς εὐνής ξύν ἀπάτησι τῇ κόμῃ τὰς χεῖρας ἐκπετάσασα βοᾷ, θεράπαιναί τε, ὡσαί παρῆσαν τυκτούση, ἐκπλαγεῖσαι ἄλλη ἄλλο τι προσδιαλέγονται τῇ πλησίον.

\(^{13}\) It is interesting that the figure of Glaucus at Montughi re-appears in the same pose as illustrated later in Vincenzo Cartari’s, *Imagini* 1556. This may indicates a later illustrator actually copied the Campana design. The description of Philostratus is precisely re-quoted in the mythography manuals of the sixteenth century, in particular that of Giraldi, (L.G. Gyraldi) *De Deis gentium varia et multiplex historia*. Basle, per Ionnem Oporinum, 1548, liber V, 167.
Philostratus the Elder recounts the story of the fisherman in connection to the quest for the Golden Fleece which features Hercules as a passenger on board the Argo. The ship is sailing through the Euxine sea when Glauclus rises from the waters presenting a terrifying apparition. The oarsmen are stilled and only Hercules remains unmoved at the sight as Philostratus tells us that the hero acts “as one who has met with many like monsters” (F188).14

In the loggia panels Glauclus upholds a long plant which may represent the sea grass he ate that resulted in his metamorphoses into a creature, half man-half fish. He is accompanied by small painted birds with long beaks which are the Kingfishers in Philostratus that “sing the deeds of men for they like Glauclus have been transformed from the men they once were” (F190).15 Sea centaurs are also discussed by Philostratus in *Amymone* (I.8), as being in the retinue of Poseidon:

*And the sea is calm, escorting him with its sea-horses and its sea-monsters; for in Homer they follow Poseidon and fawn upon him as they*

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14 *Glauclus Pontius* (K361) Ἡρακλῆς μὲν ἄτρεπτος μένει τοῦ θαύματος, ὥστε δὴ πολλοῖς ὁμοίοις ἐντυχών

15 *Glauclus Pontius* (K362) περιβέβλησε δ᾽ αὐτὸν καὶ ἀλκυόνες ὁμοῦ μὲν ἄδουσαι τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ἐξ ὥν αὐταί τε καὶ ὁ Γλαύκος μεθηρμόσθησαν
do here in the painting. There, I imagine, your thought is of dry-land horses – for Homer maintains that they are ‘bronze-hoofed’, ‘swift-flying’, and ‘smitten by the lash’ – but here it is hippocamps (ἱππόκαμποι) that draw the chariot, creatures with web-footed hoofs, good swimmers, blue-eyed, and by Zeus, in all respects like dolphins. (F33)\(^{16}\)

Variations on Philostratus’ description of a hippocamp also feature in the work of Raphael (design for a salver, Oxford) and Perino del Vaga and his followers, in stucchi for the Sala Regia in the Vatican which was completed shortly after Campana’s loggia, c.1540.\(^{17}\) One del Vega sketch in particular, now in the Uffizi collection (fig.23) is similar to the Glaucus figure in the loggia.\(^{18}\) Martin Clayton writes that “It is likely Perino’s drawings served as samples on which the experienced stuccoists could improvise, rather than patterns to be followed precisely.” (F32)\(^{19}\)

\(^{16}\) Amymone (K305-6) καὶ ἡ θάλαττα γαλήνην ἄγει παραπέμπουσα αὐτὸν αὐτοῖς ἵπποις καὶ αὐτοῖς κήτεσι, καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖνο ἔπεται καὶ σαίνει τὸν Ποσειδῶνα ὡς ἐντρύβα. ἐκεῖ μὲν οὖν ἥπερ ὑπερτῶν οἶμαι τῶν ἵππων αἰσθάνη, χαλκόποδάς τε γὰρ αὐτοὺς ἀξιοῖ εἶναι καὶ ὑκυπέτας καὶ μάστιγι πλήττεσθαι, ἐνταῦθα δὲ ἵπποκαμποί τὸ ἅρμα καὶ ἔφυδροι τὰς ὀπλὰς καὶ νευστικοί καὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ὑπόγλαυκοι καί, νή Δία, ὅσα δελφῖνες

\(^{17}\) There is a connection here to Campana’s architect Giuliano da Baccio d’Agnolo, as Perino del Vaga was employed to design the stuccoes for the Sala Regia by Pope Paul III and the architect was Antonio da Sangallo, who had collaborated with Giuliano’s father on projects. It may even be possible that Giuliano lived in Rome with his father and was immersed in this milieu of artists working on stucco projects that imitated the antique. See M Clayton, Raphael and his Circle, Drawings from Windsor Castle, Merrell Holberton, London, 1999, Raphael fig. 36, 84 and del Vega cat. no.58, 194.

\(^{18}\) It is interesting that this triton drawing has been pricked for transfer, either to a fresco or perhaps to form the outline of a stucco figure. Ibid. fig. 85, 195.

\(^{19}\) Ibid. del Vega cat. No. 58, 194.
Fig. 23 Perino del Vega, *A triton*, pen and ink, 225 x 314mm. Florence, Uffizi.

Fig. 24 Perino del Vega, c. 1530, drawing for ceiling decoration with hippocamps and nereids (centre) for Palazzo Doria, Genoa, (drawing now in Musée Condé Chantilly).
The positioning of the grotesque figure of Glaucus next to the central Hercules medallion at Campana’s loggia is explained by the prominent part Glaucus Pontius plays in one of the ten descriptions connected to Hercules in the *Imagines*. At the same time, the fantastic figure also belongs to the repertory of characters which inhabit the visual vocabulary of *grottesche* decoration. Glaucus thus fulfils both iconographical and purely decorative functions in the overall programme.

Fig. 25

*The Death of Ajax Locrian or ‘The Gyraean Rocks’*
The third scene is the most dramatic episode depicted in the loggia, showing the death of the Trojan hero Ajax, taken from the description Philostratus calls *The Gyraean Rocks* (ιγ’ ΓΥРАΙ) *Imagines* II.13.

Derived from Homer, it relates the tragic tale of Ajax son of Oileus generally known as the ‘lesser Ajax’. Philostratus’ *Gyraean Rocks* follows Homer’s account in *Odyssey* 4.449-511 where on his way home from Troy, Ajax is punished by the gods for having dragged Cassandra from the temple of Athena. His ship was wrecked but Ajax survived and feeling lucky to have cheated death a second time, he boasts that the gods cannot kill him, which leads to his downfall:

> Poseidon heard the boastful speech and straightaway took his trident in his mighty hands and smote the rock of Gyrae and clove it in sunder. And one part abode in its place, but the sundered part fell into the sea, even that on which Aias sat (…) and bore him down into the boundless surging deep.\(^{21}\)

As opposed to the other crowded scenes in the loggia, Philostratus furnishes the artist with only two figures: Ajax and Poseidon. They are placed against a simple background of black and the white plaster is modelled vigorously to emulate precisely the description of Philostratus:

> the sea is whitened by the waves; the rocks are worn by the constant drenching; flames leap up from the midst of the ship, and as the wind fans the flames the ship still sails on as if using the flames as a sail.\(^{(F183)}\)

Perhaps not content with the large unfilled background space the artist has taken the liberty of adding the figure of Athena directing the action from a cloud. Although Philostratus does not mention the goddess in the text, it would be apparent to anyone

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1. The third scene is the most dramatic episode depicted in the loggia, showing the death of the Trojan hero Ajax, taken from the description Philostratus calls *The Gyraean Rocks* (ιγ’ ΓΥΡΑΙ) *Imagines* II.13.

2. Derived from Homer, it relates the tragic tale of Ajax son of Oileus generally known as the ‘lesser Ajax’. Philostratus’ *Gyraean Rocks* follows Homer’s account in *Odyssey* 4.449-511 where on his way home from Troy, Ajax is punished by the gods for having dragged Cassandra from the temple of Athena. His ship was wrecked but Ajax survived and feeling lucky to have cheated death a second time, he boasts that the gods cannot kill him, which leads to his downfall:

> Poseidon heard the boastful speech and straightaway took his trident in his mighty hands and smote the rock of Gyrae and clove it in sunder. And one part abode in its place, but the sundered part fell into the sea, even that on which Aias sat (…) and bore him down into the boundless surging deep.\(^{21}\)

3. As opposed to the other crowded scenes in the loggia, Philostratus furnishes the artist with only two figures: Ajax and Poseidon. They are placed against a simple background of black and the white plaster is modelled vigorously to emulate precisely the description of Philostratus:

> the sea is whitened by the waves; the rocks are worn by the constant drenching; flames leap up from the midst of the ship, and as the wind fans the flames the ship still sails on as if using the flames as a sail.\(^{(F183)}\)

4. Perhaps not content with the large unfilled background space the artist has taken the liberty of adding the figure of Athena directing the action from a cloud. Although Philostratus does not mention the goddess in the text, it would be apparent to anyone

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20 Called the ‘lesser Ajax’ to distinguish from Ajax ‘the Great’, son of King Telamon of Salamis who fights for the Achaeans at Troy and after a dispute with Odysseus which he loses, dies of shame by throwing himself on his sword (*Iliad* 7.66-219). The suicide of Ajax is often the end of *The Iliad*, dispute over the divine armour of Achilles as Sophocles suggests…


22 *The Gyraean Rocks* (K359) λευκή μὲν ὑπὸ κυμάτων ἥθαλαττα, σπιλάδες δ’ αἱ πέτραι διὰ τὸ ἀεὶ ὑποζεύσθαι, πῦρ δὲ ἐκ μέσης ἀττεὶ τῆς νεώς, ἔς δ’ ἐμπνέων ὁ ἄνεμος τπλεὶ ἡ ναῦς ἐτι καθάπερ ἰστίῳ χρωμένη τῷ πυρὶ
who had read Homer such as Francesco Campana, that Athena was held responsible for the death of Ajax which she demanded in retribution for the rape of Cassandra. The Greek warrior is seen in his last act of defiance, ready to strike the God who approaches with his trident. Poseidon rides the waves on a kind of sleigh with what appears to be a figurehead in the form of a goat, perhaps an allusion to the astrological motif of Capricorn which punctuates the decorative frame. A fierce-looking dolphin accompanies the God, the speed at which he travels across the waters indicated by the billowing chlamys.

Contained within a tondo, this scene is pendant to *Andromeda and Perseus* and is framed by the same mythological creatures, half man and half bird. The artist has taken care to differentiate between the two tondos by surrounding the harpy figures next to the Ajax scene with birds instead of plant fronds. These finer details of birds and plants are not rendered in stucco but painted. In the loggia's central panel with Glaucus, the painted details of birds and grasses create a setting that serves to make each panel a complete scene on its own, rather than secondary ornamental elements in the overall scheme.

**COSIMO MEDICI and the CAPRICORN ‘IMPRESA’**

To find the key to the iconographical programme it is necessary to look at the vault as a whole, rather than concentrate exclusively on the three scenes. Subtle clues lie in the surrounding ornamental details.

The frames around the medallions are decorated with a continuous motif of alternating Capricorn heads, stars and spheres of a (now faded) red colour. These spheres are possibly the red *palle* of the Medici, whilst the stars seem to be symbolic of the crown of Ariadne, which together with the Capricorn constellation, make up the personal *impresa* of Cosimo I.

Identical eight-pointed stars are to be seen representing the crown of Ariadne and forming an arc over a rearing Capricorn on the shield of a statue of Grand Duke Cosimo dei Medici as the Roman Emperor Ottaviano Augustus, by Vincenzo Danti, now in the Bargello.

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23 It is difficult to say precisely what the stucco artist intended for the vehicle or creature supporting Poseidon on the waves and it could also be a sea serpent.
Capricorn is also the astrological sign belonging to Augustus, traditional founder of the principality of Tuscany. Cosimo identified strongly with the Emperor, using the Augustan denarius as the model for a medal he commissioned showing the Capricorn impresa. In addition, Capricorn was the astrological sign for Emperor Charles V, whom Campana was later to serve in an ambassadorial role.

In Giovio's *Dialogo dell'imprese* (1555), the Capricorn is depicted in the sky over a view of Florence, which expresses Cosimo's rulership of the city (fig. 26).

Astrology was taken seriously in the sixteenth century and it is this astrological aspect of the decorative scheme together with the particular choice of mythological subjects from Philostratus which prompts me to believe that Campana has honoured his patron, Cosimo I, in a sycophantic manner not untypical for the time.

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24 Although Augustus is thought to have been born on September 23rd, under the astrological sign of Libra, he publicized his association with the zodiac sign Capricorn in items of personal imagery such as the Gemma Augustea. The reasons for this, based on an examination of Classical sources, is discussed by Tamsyn Barton in 'Augustus and Capricorn: Astrological Polyvalency and Imperial Rhetoric', *The Journal of Roman Studies*, Vol. 85, (1995) 33-51.


26 Examples in Florentine art where obvious tribute is made to the Medici are numerous all throughout the sixteenth century. One example relative to the case discussed is the “peducci” of the vault in the vestibule.
The Capricorn and the crown of Ariadne is a relatively common element in the figurative Florentine culture of the second half of the sixteenth century, particularly in relation to the iconography of the Duke as shown in the marble busts of Cosimo I by Bandinelli. Capricorn heads alone (fig. 27) became almost a stylistic monogram (or cifra) of the grotesques of Cristofero Gherardi in Palazzo Vecchio and they also appear on the fountain of Venus in the Villa Medici at Castello.²⁷

**Cosimo I as Hercules**

Other clues connecting Cosimo Medici to the decorative programme at Montughi can be found in Renaissance medals. In the same year Campana was designing his new villa, Cosimo I had a medal struck with his portrait and on the reverse was shown Hercules and Antaeus with the inscription: “last attempt of Herculean virtue”. This is one example in a long line of works on Herculean themes commissioned by the Medici, beginning with Pollaiuolo's three Labors of Hercules painted for the Palazzo Medici in 1459. The antique model may spring from Alexander the Great who promoted Hercules as a personal emblem. Coins minted by Alexander show him in the guise of Hercules and were known to collectors in the Renaissance.²⁸ Hercules was adopted by the Medici as a symbol of virtue and became commonplace in Florentine art. It seems logical then, that the central scene of Campana's loggia should depict an episode from the life of this hero as related by Philostratus.


²⁸ Pollitt argues that Alexander the Great had a silver tetradracm struck on his accession in 336 B.C. that features a head of Hercules on the obverse, which may or may not be intended as a portrait of Alexander. JJ Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age*, Cambridge University Press, 1986, 25.
The killing of the serpents was Hercules’ first act that demonstrated his power. In 1539 when the loggia was completed, Cosimo at age twenty-one, had only been head of the Florentine state for under two years and was at the beginning of his long tenure in office. Herein may lie the reason that Campana chose this particular episode from Philostratus, rather than one of the descriptions explaining events later in the life of the demi-god. Richelson comments in his doctoral thesis on Cosimo:

*Without any precisely definable course of development in their relationship, he (Hercules) was one of Cosimo’s most faithful emblematic companions. Eventually Cosimo’s own personality would even come to be presented in Herculean terms.*

**Cosimo I as Perseus**

Associating Cosimo with Perseus is more problematic, as little research has been done on the significance this Greek hero held for Cosimo. Like Hercules, he seems to have been regarded as a general Renaissance model of virtue (*exemplar virtutis*). However Perseus must have had some special meaning for Cosimo as Cellini tells us that upon his arrival back in Florence in 1545 and during his first audience with the Duke, the following was discussed:

*The Duke replied that for a first essay, he would like me to produce a Perseus; for some time he had longed for such a monument, and he begged me to begin a little model for it.*

Cellini went on to produce the famous bronze statue placed in the Loggia dei Lanzi. The base of the statue features a panel depicting the same scene as found in Campana’s loggia; the rescue of Andromeda. It has been suggested by John Pope-Hennessy that Cosimo chose the subject of Perseus because it symbolised his own victory over the

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29 Paul William Richelson, *Studies in the Personal Imagery of Cosimo I dei Medici Duke of Florence*, Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1973, 79 Richelson also points out that another reason Cosimo adopted Herculean imagery was to emulate the example of his “ostensible protector” the emperor Charles V whose own motto PLVS VLTRA appeared with the impresa of the double columns of Hercules.

30 For the importance of Hercules as a model of virtue see K Galinsky, *The Herakles theme: the adaptations of the hero in literature from Homer to the twentieth century*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1972. Perseus and Hercules were both ancestors of Alexander the Great, another rold model for Renaissance princes.

31 A questo mi rispose, che arebbe volute da me, per una prima opera, solo un Perseo: questo era quanto lui aveva di già desiderato un pezzo; e mi pregò, che io gnene facessi un modelletto. B. Cellini, *Vita di Benvenuto Cellini*, Florence: Guglielmo Piatti, 1829, Book II, 320.
Gorgon of tyrannicide and Republican partisanship.\textsuperscript{32} Donatello’s \textit{Judith}, symbolising justifiable regicide, and Michelangelo’s \textit{David}, symbolising the might of innocent right against an overbearing usurper, already decorated the same Florentine piazza where the \textit{Perseus} was erected.\textsuperscript{33} Vasari also mentions a colossal statue of Cosimo as \textit{Perseus} in the Boboli Gardens.\textsuperscript{34}

\textbf{Cosimo as Poseidon}

In the final scene of the \textit{Gyraean Rocks} (II.13) at Montughi, it is surely the mighty Neptune that Cosimo is intended to be associated with and not the fallen Trojan hero Ajax. Like Hercules, Neptune was adopted by the Medici as a personal exemplum, for it is under Neptune’s influence troubles at sea are calmed, a metaphor for the Medici rulers’ suppression of civil disharmony and Cosimo’s reform of Florentine naval power. Neptune features large in the \textit{Imagines} and it can only be guessed as to why this particular episode with Ajax was chosen by Campana and not any of the other ekphraseis where Neptune is a protagonist: \textit{Amymone} (I.8); \textit{Pelops} (I.30); \textit{Thessaly} (II.14); \textit{Palaemon} (II.16). It may be that the single combat scenario reflects Cosimo’s military victory over Bernardo Salviati at the battle of Montemurlo in 1537 as the Homeric story above all, illustrates the punishment of one who arrogantly defies a higher law.

Two representations of Neptune in marble \textit{capisaldi} (reliefs) reproduce medals by Galeotti and are mentioned by Vasari as relating episodes of the life of Cosimo.\textsuperscript{35} The Neptune fountain in Piazza della Signoria by Ammannati celebrates the hydraulic works carried out by Cosimo to improve the water supply of Florence. From these few

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{33} Although Pope-Hennessy has written extensively on the \textit{Perseus} by Cellini, he admits he cannot discern the actual reason behind the commission. (ibid). The political solution I have mentioned appears in the notes by John Addington Symonds of the fifth edition of his 1901 translation of Cellini’s autobiography, \textit{The Life of Benvenuto Cellini}, London 1914, 348 n.2. Although Symonds does not give his source for this idea, it does seem worth further consideration if the \textit{Perseus} can be looked upon as a pendant to Donatello’s \textit{Judith}.
  \item \textsuperscript{34} Begun by Vincenzo Danti and completed by the workshop of Giambologna, the marble statue mentioned by Vasari (Giuntina, V, 274) perhaps destined as a ‘virtu’ triumphant over deceit, was left unfinished by Danti and did not take on the form of Cosimo as Perseus until the 1560’s.
  \item \textsuperscript{35} Vasari (Giuntina, VI, 204). The marble medallion plaques (capisaldi) decorated the court of the Pitti Palace and reproduce 12 medals by Pietro Paolo Galeotti circa 1569 the year in which Cosimo became Grand Duke of Tuscany. The first of the two Neptune medallions shows the Neptune fountain in Piazza Signoria and the second tondo shows the port of Porto Ferraio on the island of Elba where the Duke carried out fortifications in 1548.
\end{itemize}
Neptune examples and the others mentioned in connection with Perseus and Herculean imagery, it seems evident that Francesco Campana's criteria for selecting scenes from the *Imagines* for his loggia centred around their explicit association to the personal imagery of Duke Cosimo. Lastly, I would point out the analogy to the programme for the Piazza della Signoria that includes sculptures commissioned by Cosimo during his lifetime representing all three of Campana’s chosen protagonists: Bandinelli’s *Hercules and Cacus* (1534); Cellini’s bronze *Perseus* (commissioned 1545) and Ammannati’s *Neptune Fountain* (1561-75).

*The Stucco Artist and the Clementine style*

Having tackled the problems of deciphering the iconography of the loggia and proposed a political and personal motive for Campana’s selection of subjects, the question of the stucco artist remains. The quality of the stucco panels and the surrounding *grottesche* suggests a master of the art such as Giovanni da Udine or someone closely associated with him. The invention of the design certainly, is not the work of a second-rate artist as the scenes rely on no known models and call for a sensitive interpretation of the text, even considering that the artist most likely relied closely on his patron for iconographical guidance. It seems feasible that a man of Francesco Campana’s standing in Florence could commission an artist of high reputation to execute the designs.

The most obvious stylistic analogy is to the work of Giovanni da Udine, brilliant assistant to Raphael in Rome and considered master of the art of designing and executing *grottesche*. In particular, the stucco decoration in cameo style that he carried out on the apse of the loggia in the Villa Madama, Rome between 1520-25 depicting scenes from the story of *Polyphemus and Galatea*, a subject also retold in Philostratus, II. 18. (fig.28).
There seems to have been some kind of chain reaction with Philostratean themes originating in Rome with Raphael. From his involvement with the commissions for the Ferrara paintings, Raphael may have passed on sketches and perhaps extracts of text from the *Imagines* to his pupils. It was his pupil Giulio Romano who next incorporated the *Imagines* into his iconography followed by Giovanni da Udine and his circle. Philostratus was then transported to the French court at Fontainebleau via Rosso and Primaticcio to surface later in the work of Luca Penni, Giovanni da Udine and Perino del Vaga.

Vasari tells us that Giovanni da Udine devoted much time to studying the formation and composition of the stucco decorations in Roman antique ruins and after many experiments succeeded in solving the secret of the lost technique.

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36 Vasari, Giuntina, Vol. V, 449: *Ma finalmente fatto pestare scaglie del più bianco marmo che si trovasse, ridottolo in polvere sottile e stacciatolo, lo mescolò con calcina di trevertino bianco, e trovò che così veniva fatto senza dubbio niuno il vero stucco antico con tutte quelle parti 15 che in quello aveva disiderato.*
Francesco Campana was in Rome during this same period as da Udine, acting as ‘camerario’ to cardinal Giulio dei Medici, between 1520-25. Just as da Udine’s lavish decoration of the Cardinal’s Villa Madama imitates that of Pope Leo X’s loggia, so too, Campana’s loggia may be considered an echo of what he saw at the Cardinal’s summer retreat on the slopes of Monte Mario.

Fig. 29 Reconstruction of the Villa Madama (loggia garden entrance) by M Renard.
There is also a bay in the vault of the garden loggia at Villa Madama with four scenes in fresco which depend upon the text of Philostratus as revealed by Foerster.\textsuperscript{37} Perino del Vaga’s fresco and stucco decoration of Clement VII’s bathroom in the Castel Sant’Angelo (fig.30) conscientiously imitate the antique and were contemporary with Campana’s period in Rome. Such exposure to the grotesque style in Rome would explain how this artistic ideal followed Campana to Florence.

![Fig.30 Perino del Vega, detail from the frescoes of Clement VII’s bath, Castel Sant’Angelo, Rome](image)

Da Udine was in Florence working on the decoration of a room (now lost) of Palazzo Medici between 1521 and 1522 that was to have a loggia designed by Michelangelo with his celebrated ‘ingincchiate’ (prie-dieu) windows. He was again in Florence a decade later to work on the decoration of the New Sacristy at San Lorenzo between 1532 and 1534 but this work is also lost and only recorded by contemporaries.\textsuperscript{38} The


\textsuperscript{38} These Florentine works of Giovanni da Udine are well described by Vasari in the Vite... (Giuntina, V, 447 ff.) and are the subject of a study by A.Cecchi, ‘Le perdute decorazioni fiorentine di Giovanni da Udine’, in Paragone, no. 339, May 1983, 20-44. Also see mention of da Udine by Vasari in his Life of Michelangelo, Giuntina VI, 65 ff.
stuccoes of the loggia of San Martino a Montughi were completed only a few years after the last Florentine intervention of Giovanni da Udine in the cupola of the New Sacristy. The almost sculptural quality of these stuccoes is reminiscent of da Udine's Roman works and may point to the paternity of the decoration as belonging to one of the Florentine assistants who Vasari mentions collaborated with da Udine on the New Sacristy:

*the final touches were achieved by the divine Giovanni da Udine, who worked on the stuccoes of the Tribuna together with other workers of his own, and also Florentine masters, who all worked arduously to complete the project.*

Amongst these *maestri fiorentini* it may have been possible to find Silvio Cosini, who in 1532 offered his services to Michelangelo to work on the New Sacristy and with whom he was known to have collaborated between 1524 and 1525. Cosini had carried out the decoration in Genoa of the palazzo belonging to Andrea Doria, under the direction of Perino del Vaga, who had completed the stuccoes there in the Salone dei Giganti and the Salone del Naufragio, works that have been criticized as being more Florentine in style than Roman, distinct from the Raphalesque style of Giovanni da Udine and Giulio Romano. At the beginning of the fifth decade of the sixteenth century, still in Genoa, Silvio Cosini erected the Sepolcro di Andrea Doria in the church of San Matteo together with Giovanni Angelo da Montorsoli whose work is marked by more vigorous and flowing forms, accentuated by the same plastic treatment already evident in the work at Palazzo Doria.

Cosini’s formal stylistic elements are present in the figurative imagery of the loggia at Montughi. In substance, the artistic personality of this work expresses a refined sculptural quality, matured in the cultural climate of Florence of the fourth decade of the sixteenth century and bearing the signature of the eloquent hand of ‘il divino’ Giovanni da Udine. The canonical stuccoes are permeated above all by a persistent 'florentinitas' that finds expression in the high relief of the human figure that we see in Cosini, in da

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39 Vasari, *Vita da Giovanni da Udine*, ibid. 457: *per darvi ultima fine fu condotto in Fiorenza Giovanni da Udine, divino, il quale per lo stucco della tribuna insieme con altri suoi lavoranti, ed ancora maestri fiorentini, vi lavorò, laonde con sollecitudine cercarano di dare fine a tanta impres.

Montorsli or in such *maestri fiorentini* that worked with the Udinese artist on the New Sacristy.

**CONCLUSION**

Francesco Campana's loggia contains the only decorative programme I have found that relies solely on Philostratus as a source. The frescoes that Giulio Romano and da Udine worked on at the Villa Madama only feature scenes that borrow components from Philostratus. Unlike those at Montughi or Titian's pictures for Ferrara, the Villa Madama scenes are not entirely faithful to the text of the *Imagines*.

Due to the drastic changes the *canonica* has undergone, it is now impossible to tell whether Campana continued the decorative scheme in other parts of the villa, possibly extending the Philostratean theme. We already know that the walls of the loggia were originally covered in *grottesche* frescoes of which traces remain. Although the building was deemed worthy of praise by Vasari, I have yet to discover any other early account of its appearance.

Apart from the fine coffered ceiling in the room adjacent to the loggia, these stucco decorations constitute the only remaining visible evidence of any fine decoration that existed at the *canonica*. The original appearance of the *canonica* has been altered extensively by various modern interventions as the Church remodelled to suit its needs, especially at the time of the reconstruction in the early twentieth century. The ornate house Vasari may have visited, has been converted into a functional assembly place for parishioners with structural adjustments made to accommodate toilet blocks and utility rooms. Walls have been knocked down and re-plastered and the elegant loggia on the first floor, from which Campana would have enjoyed an elevated view of Florence, has been crudely cemented over. The stucco decorations escaped destruction because they were an exterior feature of the building, although they have been left to the elements and are in a dilapidated condition. Another reason for their survival in obscurity is that the original approach to the *canonica* through the gardens and up the staircase to the loggia had long ago been supplanted by a modest side entrance adjacent to the church. Accessibility is further made difficult as the garden is walled off without access to the street. Campana's grand tripartite staircase leading to the gardens is cordoned off, regarded as too dangerous to use.
In modern times, the loggia was used infrequently as an exit to the large terrace and could only be accessed from inside the church. Tall trees surround the perimeter and the facade of the canonica is not visible from the street. In a city profuse with Renaissance art and architectural treasures which all demand conservation, Francesco Campana’s hidden loggia escaped notice.

The very existence of Campana’s loggia presents the possibility of the use of the Imagines in other non-noble homes and opens the way for research in this direction. It is remarkable also as an example of a truly private commission, conceived of by the patron. This approach contrasts with the higher profile works of art at Ferrara where a scholarly advisor has been the protagonist in deciding upon Philostratus as a means of satisfying his patron’s fashionable desire to re-create antiquity. If we are to believe the report of the humanist Mario Equicola, it was he who worked out the programme for the camerino d’alabastro of Duke Alfonso I of Ferrara. Similarly, at the Villa Madama in Rome and in Francois I’s gallery at Fontainebleau (1533-40) it was the artists in charge of the decoration and working in liaison with scholars, who selected Philostratus (along with a whole host of Classical sources) to achieve their ends.

Moreover, Campana’s visualization of Graeco-Roman art is quasi-authentic in execution and spirit. Titian’s Bacchanals or Giulio Romano’s frescoes tend to reveal more the mind-set of an Italian artist of the sixteenth century rather than mimic the evidence we found on first century AD Campanian walls. Unable to escape from the time in which they lived, their reading of Philostratus is conditioned by a set of aesthetic values homogeneous to their own cultural climate. Campana’s treatment of the Imagines has not tried to include every single one of the numerous details mentioned in the descriptions, as Titian attempted to do. Complex compositions would not have been possible, given the dimensions of the stucco medallions, the height of the vault and the limitations of the medium used. Yet the metamorphosis of the ekphrasis into plastic reality is marked by a smooth and convincing transition of essential elements and characters. In the Perseus medallion for example, the text actually calls for many cow-herds in the scene to come and offer the hero gifts. The artist has included only two such figures without the narrative losing anything in the translation.

This neat correspondence with Philostratus re-captures antiquity more succinctly and more successfully than any other attempt at visualizing the Imagines I have found in the course of my research into the nachleben of Philostratus. The stucchi express more of a
familiarity with the Classical psyche and reveal firsthand knowledge of the
archaeological discoveries revealed by that time. Of course, this is mainly due to the
skill and imagination of the artist involved and it would be rewarding to discover the
identity of the artist in order to see if the *Imagines* was elsewhere quoted in his oeuvre. I
strongly suspect he was an artist trained in antique-rich Rome, perhaps a pupil of
Giovanni da Udine.

These first three chapters have concentrated on those particular re-creations of the
*Imagines* in the first half of the sixteenth century which I think demonstrate most
intensely, the compulsive leap from the intangible to representation that the vivid
ekphrasis provokes. So far, I have cited just a narrow selection of reconstructions
relating to only ten descriptions from the *Imagines*; but artists forming the school of
Fontainebleau, the Carracci of Bologna and others at the end of the century continued to
re-create their own versions of Philostratus which I will discuss in the following
chapter. By 1600 Philostratus had been in print for almost one hundred years and
interest in the *Imagines* was accelerating as it became available in more languages and
more accessible editions.

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CHAPTER FOUR

Raphael, Romano, Roman Villas and Philostratus

- Rome re-discovers Philostratus: Raphael and his School
- Sources for Raphael’s ‘Galatea’ 1511: a comparison of texts
- Unrequited Love: the Polyphemus fresco of the Farnesina
- Raphael’s bottega and the transmission of Philostratus in later Renaissance culture
- The Villa Madama, Rome
- Post-Raphaelism: Giulio Romano at the Palazzo Te, Mantua
- One Greek Myth and its survival in the Renaissance: Marsyas
- Conclusion
Introduction

The initial three chapters of this thesis have outlined how Renaissance humanism prepared the way for the *Imagines* to be diffused to a wider audience throughout Western Europe. The first turning point arrived at the end of the fifteenth century when Isabella d’Este took an interest in Philostratus which prompted the earliest works of art to be modelled on the text. The Este family’s responsiveness to the *Imagines* spread to other cities in Italy via the artists that were involved in re-creating mythological paintings at Ferrara and Mantua. Raphael explored material in the *Imagines* and by the time of the Sack of Rome in 1527, descriptions from Philostratus had infiltrated the body of work produced by Raphael’s followers. This Raphaelesque period represents a second turning point in the fortune of the *Imagines*, whereby responsibility for the transmission of Philostratus’ descriptions is almost removed from the hands of the humanists and wealthy learned patrons. Instead, the *Imagines* circulated amongst the workshops of Italy’s leading artists who created their own interpretations of the ancient pictures described; each painting, print, sketch or tapestry creating a new ‘text’.

Francesco Campana’s Philostratean loggia at Florence (Chapter 3) is most likely connected to the legacy of the d’Este patronage of Raphael. The major part of the present chapter will examine the appearance of the *Imagines* in works of art by Raphael and his followers. Three examples that follow in the tradition of suburban villa decoration *all’antica* will be examined: the Villa Farnesina¹, Rome; the Villa Madama, Rome and the Palazzo Te in Mantua. These villas feature wall paintings and *stucchi* based on Philostratean themes.² The final section constitutes a case study of just one Greek myth, *Apollo and Marsyas*, and follows its treatment in works of art by Raphael and his followers that show affinities with the way the same myth is portrayed in *Imagines*. This close look at just one description from the *Imagines* is aimed at bringing into focus reasons for the unquestionable supremacy of the Ovidian texts over that of the Philostratoi, when text was translated into image for the sixteenth century.


² Much of the evidence gathered from the three Renaissance villa locations is based upon my firsthand observations and my own photographs taken upon research trips to Italy 2000-2005, provide illustrations.
Rome re-discovers Philostratus: Raphael and his School

The evidence for Raphael’s awareness of the *Imagines* is lies mainly in the works produced by his Roman *bottega* after his death in 1520 and in prints published posthumously attributed to Raphael’s invention. In the works of Raphael’s successors: Giulio Romano, Perino del Vaga, Francesco Penni, Polidoro da Caravaggio, Giovanni da Udine and their circle, we can trace subjects from Philostratus the Elder and Younger. We do not know for certain if Raphael owned a manuscript translation of the text in his personal library or if, like Titian, he received copies of descriptions from Moschos’ 1505 d’Este translation. The latter seems likely, considering Alfonso d’Este did commission a mythological painting for his *camerino d’alabastro* at Ferrara from Raphael c.1514. A drawing in the Ashmolean museum showing *The Death of Meleager* by Raphael recalls, in part, the description of Philostratus the Younger (*Meleager* 15).3 This was the subject Raphael chose instead of the *Triumph of Bacchus* that Alfonso d’Este originally requested, however he died in 1520 before carrying out the commission. There is also a 1544 chiaroscuro woodcut of the *Erotes* (I. 6) by the monogramist Master NDB considered to be after a lost design by Raphael.4

*Erotes* was the subject given firstly to Fra Bartolommeo by Alfonso c. 1514 who completed a sketch (Ch.2 fig.20) for a *Worship of Venus* for Alfonso d’Este. Upon the friar’s death in 1517, the sketch and the commission were passed on to Titian whose canvas eventually hung in Ferrara.

Vasari tells us that Raphael was:

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especially fond of Fra Bartolommeo of San Marco, who was among his circle of friends in Florence and whose use of colour he greatly admired and tried hard to imitate. In return, Raphael taught this good priest the principles of perspective, of which the friar had formerly been ignorant. However, when their friendship was at its height Raphael was recalled to Perugia.\(^5\)

Fra Bartolommeo submitted his design for the *Worship of Venus* c.1516 and as he and Raphael were close friends, it seems likely they discussed their commissions for the *camerino* paintings either by correspondence or during Bartolommeo’s visit to Rome in 1514. This sketch of Fra Bartolommeo’s is the first Renaissance rendition of Philostratus’ *Erotes*, with a mass of playful cupids adoring Venus. The theme would prove to be the most popular of all ekphraseis from the *Imagines* to be explored by artists throughout the sixteenth century. Of all the artists approached by Alfonso for his *camerino d’alabastro* project, Raphael demonstrated the greatest interest in antiquity and would seem the most logical choice to be receptive to Philostratus’ ekphrasis and to the overall concept of creating a virtual antique gallery.

Raphael was appointed “*Praefectus*” of “*marmorum et lapidum omnium*” by Leo X in a decree (*motu proprio*) dated August 27, 1515\(^6\) and was charged with the task of overseeing all excavations of ancient remains in and surrounding Rome. The Pope’s motive behind this was not entirely one of conscientious conservation; annoyed that antiquities were constantly mutilated by stone-masons who re-used them for modern buildings, Leo X forbade the destruction of any inscribed stone. He ordered Raphael to acquire any “suitable” antique stones and marble to be used in the construction of St. Peter’s. This put the artist in a perfect position to witness the unearthing of antique Rome and to sketch any new discoveries that could inspire his painted compositions. For designs like the *Death of Meleager* Raphael undoubtedly borrowed elements from

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\(^5\) Vasari, *Vite*, Giuntina ed. Vol. IV, 163-4. “Ebbe oltre gl'altre, mentre stette Raffaello in Fiorenza, stretta dimestichezza con fra' Bartolomeo di San Marco, piacendogli molto e cercando assai d'imitare il suo colorire; et all'incontro insegnò a quel buon padre i modi della prospettiva, alla quale non aveva il frate atteso insino a quel tempo. Ma in sulla maggior frequenza di questa pratica fu richiamato Raffaello a Perugia (…).”

\(^6\) “Te, quo magistro eius aedificationis utor, cuiusque tum artis peritiam tum probitatem et perspexi multis in rebus, et probavi, marmorum et lapidum omnium qui Romae, quique extra Romanum denum milium passuum spatio, posthac eruentur, praefectum facio ea de causa ut quae ad eius phani aedificationem idonea erunt, mihi emas.” The temple in question was to be the new St. Peter’s of Rome. This document is preserved in the Vatican City Library, BAV, MS Vat. lat. 3364, fols.223v-24v. See Shearman, 2003, 207-8, Vol.1.
reliefs on ancient sarcophagi that he was familiar with in Rome. Bober and Rubinstein list a relief of the *Meleager and the Calydonian Hunt* as being in Rome prior to 1550 where it was easily visible over the exterior portal of the house of Giulio Porcari. Even before Rome, Raphael encountered antiquity in Florence where a Roman sarcophagus displaying Meleager’s hunting scene was used as a 14th century tomb in the Baptistry, another was located in nearby Pisa.

It was no doubt Raphael’s reputation not just as a brilliant artist but also as a diligent student of the antique, that led him to befriend collectors in Rome. The Sienese banker Agostino Chigi, considered the richest man in Rome at the time, was one such collector and engaged Raphael to use his knowledge of Classical art in the decoration of his new suburban villa. There were several sarcophagi friezes known to Raphael with a maritime theme, as marine deities, hippocamps and sea monsters held a special popularity in Greek and Roman funerary art. It is possible to link some of the sarcophagi figures to the creation of Raphael’s most recognized mythological subject, the *Galatea* (fig.1) painted c. 1511-13 for Chigi’s Villa Suburbana on the banks of the Tiber.

**The Villa Farnesina**

The villa was used chiefly for entertainment on a lavish scale but Chigi also demonstrated his more humanistic alliances by converting the basement of the villa into a printing press, the first in Rome to publish Greek texts. Raphael’s fresco of the sea nymph *Galatea* follows the second part of Philostratus’ description *Cyclops* (II.18) and should be read as a pendant to Sebastiano del Piombo’s *Polyphemus* (fig.4) on the adjacent wall space.

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8 Ibid. 146-7.
One early Antonine sarcophagus showing nereids, sea-centaurs and sea-creatures was visible in Raphael’s day at the church of San Francesco a Ripa in Trastevere, very close to the Villa Farnesina. It is now in the Louvre Museum, reproduced in Bober and Rubinstein (1986) no. 103. Kenneth Clark was one of the first art historians to write on the subject of nereids on sarcophagi: K Clark, ‘Transformations of Nereids in the Renaissance’ *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 97, No. 628 (Jul., 1955) 214-219.
11 The villa was called “Farnesina” after later owners, the Farnese family.
Fig.1 Raphael, *Galatea*, fresco, Villa Farnesina, Rome. c.1511-1513

Philostratus was probably chosen by Chigi for the same reasons we saw at Ferrara with Alfonso d’Este, as Chigi’s aim was to decorate a private gallery in the style *all’antica* with appropriate themes drawn from Classical literature. Once again, we can also
speculate that Philostratus’ description of a connoisseur’s rich suburban villa featuring a loggia decorated with paintings by “very many artists” had by now, become a model for wealthy Renaissance patrons like Chigi. The location of the *Galatea* fresco was in an open-air loggia facing the river Tiber which was later enclosed. (fig.2).
The vault of the loggia had already been painted by the Sienese artist Baldassare Peruzzi (who was also the villa architect) with mythological scenes allegorizing Chigi’s personal horoscope. The young painter Sebastiano del Piombo had been brought from Venice to execute the lunettes. The subjects of the lunettes were: the myth of Zephyrus; Philomela and Procne; Aglauros and Herse; Daedalus and Icarus; Juno; Scylla; The Fall of Phaeton and the myth of Orithyia. Two of these subjects appear in the Imagines; the myth of Zephyrus (I.9) and of Phaeton (I.11). For reasons unknown, work was abandoned on the loggia after the three artists had worked on it. The remaining fresco spaces next to the Galatea and the Polyphemus were never executed and the subjects selected for them, are unknown. Jones and Penny hypothesize that a severe flood of 1514 may have rendered the walls too damp for further fresco work or deterred Chigi spending more money on the decoration of what had become an ‘ill-placed’ loggia.\(^{13}\) Raphael dedicated the creation of his Galatea to Baldassare Castiglione, the Classical scholar and influential author of Il Cortegiano.\(^{14}\) Together, Raphael and Castiglione wrote to Leo X in 1519 pleading with the Pope to preserve the ancient ruins of Rome.\(^{15}\)

The Galatea Fresco

- **Sources for Raphael’s ‘Galatea’ 1511: a comparison of texts**

Due to the many variations on Philostratus’ Erotes theme that proliferated among Raphael’s followers and imitators and because Raphael himself left no completed painting of the Worship of Venus, the subject from the Imagines more closely associated with Raphael is the story of Galatea. The myth of a sea nymph in love with the handsome young Acis but pursued by Polyphemus the Cyclops, is told by: Hesiod,

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\(^{15}\) The letter famously begins “*Sono molti, Padre Santissimo, i quali misurando col suo iudicio le cose grandissime che de li Romani circa l’arme, e di Roma circa el mirabile artificio, richezze, ornamenti e grandezza de li aedifici si scrivono, quelle più presto estimano fabulose che vere.*” The autograph MS is held in the private collection of the Castiglione family at Mantua and a facsimile is reproduced in Francesco Di Teodoro, ed. *Raffaello, Baldassar Castiglione e la Lettera a Leone X* (Bologna: Nuova Alfa Editoriale, 1994) 65-6. Translation: “There are many men, Most Holy Father, who, since they measure with their own feeble judgement the great things written of the Romans – of their arms, their city of Rome with its wonderful art, riches, ornament and the grandeur of its buildings – believe these things to be more fable than truth.”
At the time that Raphael was working on the Villa Farnesina practically all these texts except the Imagines, were available in Latin editions and the Metamorphoses had been printed in an Italian illustrated edition (Venice 1497). There had already been interest in the Galatea myth in Florentine humanistic circles at the end of the preceding century as seen in poems by Angelo Poliziano and Lorenzo dei Medici and also in a painting by Sandro Botticelli (now lost). Poliziano’s unfinished poem of c.1475-78, Stanze per la giostra di Giuliano dei Medici, contains a description of a work of art that follows in the tradition of Classical ekphrasis by describing a pair of magnificent carved palace doors in Venus’ realm of love on Cyprus.

Thousands and thousands of colors form the doors, splendid with gems and with such vivid carvings that all other works would be vulgar and inert by comparison, to make nature ashamed of herself:

Mille e mille color formon le porte,
di gemme e di sí vivi intagli chiare,
che tutte altre opre sarian roze e morte
da far di sé natura vergognare:

(Poliziano, Stanze...I. 97)

The scene with Galatea (I.117-118) appears on the palace doors along with many other mythological scenes. The humanist Lodovico Dolce was the first to propose that Raphael had been inspired by the description of Galatea in Poliziano’s poem. “The same may be said of his (Raphael’s) Galatea, which contends with Politian’s beautiful

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18 I would like to thank Dr. Christopher Allen for help with this translation.
poem, and of many other of his elegant inventions.”

19 Dolce’s suggestion for Poliziano as the textual source has been accepted by modern scholars of Raphael, including Dussler and Kinkead.

It also reveals Dolce was aware of the Classical contest between art and poetry that Philostratus describes in his Proem.

This is how Poliziano describes the *Galatea* scene sculpted on the doors of Venus’ palace:

Two well-formed dolphins pull a chariot:
on it sits Galatea who handles the reins;
as they swim, they breathe in unison;
a more lascivious group circles around them:
one spews forth salt waves, others swim around,
one seems to frolic and play for love;
with her devoted sisters, the beautiful nymph charmingly laughs at such an uncouth singer.

*Duo formosi delfini un carro tirono:*
*sovresso è Galatea che ’l fren corregge,*
e quei notando parimente spirono;
*ruotasi attorno più lasciva gregge:*
*qual le salse onde sputa, e quai s'aggirono,*
*qual par che per amor giuochi e vanegge;*
*la bella ninfa colle suore fide*
*di sì rozo cantor vezzosa ride.*

(Poliziano, *Stanze* I, 118)

Homer, Ovid and Theocritus are suggested by Kinkead as Poliziano’s main Classical sources for the Galatea verses. Kinkead only mentions Philostratus as the probable sources for the Galatea verses. Kinkead only mentions Philostratus as the probable

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21 Translations from the Italian in this Chapter are my own unless otherwise stated. Standard editions of original texts have been referenced separately.
source for the detail of Galatea’s sea-chariot, a motif he observes, is absent from the other sources.\textsuperscript{22} Charles Dempsey, who has written extensively on Botticelli’s mythological paintings, is certain Poliziano knew of the \textit{Imagines}. In particular he writes of the poet’s dependence upon Philostratus’ description of the \textit{Horae} (II.34) for lines 210-21 in his poem \textit{Rusticus} published in 1483, which helped inspire Botticelli’s painting of \textit{Primavera}.\textsuperscript{23} Poliziano was primarily a Classical scholar, a translator of Greek and Latin texts, and his poetic output in Latin far surpasses his vernacular works. As the outstanding Classical scholar of his age, we can accept that Poliziano was familiar with the \textit{Imagines}, a text he may have encountered as early as adolescence, when learning Greek at Florence University. He famously translated Book II of the \textit{Iliad} into Latin hexameters at the age of sixteen.

It is possible to identify ideas perhaps borrowed from Philostratus, throughout Poliziano’s creative oeuvre, although nobody has yet made a critical study of this. In the \textit{Stanze}, Poliziano describes Galatea surrounded by an entourage of ‘loyal sisters’ (\textit{la bella ninfa colle suore fide}) nereids or hand-maidens swimming in the sea, which are also found in Philostratus: “and maiden-daughters of Triton, Galatea’s servants, guide them (dolphins) curbing them in if they try to do anything mischi evous or contrary to the rein.” (F214) \textsuperscript{24}

Explicit details like these are not to be found in the other literary sources Kinkead suggests. Homer only mentions Galatea briefly once (\textit{Iliad}, XVIII, 37), Ovid creates a dialogue with Scylla in which Galatea is described solely in abstract terms (\textit{Met.} XIII.719-897) and Theocritus plants his nymph firmly on the seashore.

Further symbiosis between Philostratus and Poliziano is that they share the same context: the description of a work of art. None of the other Classical authors use this form of ekphrasis to describe \textit{Galatea and Polyphemus}. Poliziano’s mode of expression becomes latently Philostratean when emphasis is placed on the mimetic qualities achieved by the artist. Here is Poliziano’s verse on the image of the sea goddess Tethys from \textit{Stanze} (I.100):

\footnotesize{
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid. n.3.  
\textsuperscript{24} \textit{Cyclops} (K370) καὶ ταύτῳν πνεύτων, παρθένοι δ᾽ αὐτοὺς ἁγούσι Τρίτωνος αἱ ἰμαῖ τῆς Γαλατείας ἐπιστομίζουσαι σφᾶς, εἰ ἀγέρωχόν τι καὶ παρὰ τὴν ἡνίαν πράττοιεν }
You would call the foam real, the sea real,
real the conch shell and real the blowing wind;
you would see the lightning in the goddess's eyes,
the sky and the elements laughing around her;
the Hours treading the ground in white dresses,
the sea-breeze curling their loosened and flowing ringlets;
their faces appear as one, not differing, as befalls sisters.

Vera la schiuma e vero il mar diresti,
e vero il nicchio e ver soffiar di venti;
la dea negli occhi folgorar vedresti,
e 'l cel riderli a torno e gli elementi;
l'Ore premer l'arena in bianche vesti,
l'aura incresparle e crin distesi e lenti;
non una, non diversa esser lor faccia,
come par ch'a sorelle ben confaccia. (I.100)

Elements in this verse such as the first line praising verisimilitude, correspond closely to any one of numerous passages in Philostratus praising mimetic qualities in a work of art, for example in *Hunters* 1.28:

How have I been deceived! I was deluded by the painting into thinking that the figures were not painted but were real beings, moving and loving – at any rate I shout at them as though they could hear and I imagine that I hear some response. (108F)25

The major difference in iconography between the text of Philostratus and the design of Raphael is that Philostratus specifically mentions there are four dolphins to pull the chariot of Galatea, whereas Raphael only includes two dolphins. Secondly, the pose of the upper body of the nymph diverges from Philostratus’ detailed description: “her right elbow stands out and her white forearm is bent back, whiles she rests her fingers on her delicate shoulder”.26 Instead, Raphael has twisted Galatea’s torso into an exaggerated

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25 *Hunters* (K333) οίον ἔπαθον: ἐξήχθην ὑπὸ τῆς γραφῆς μὴ γεγράφθαι δοκεῖν αὐτούς, εἶναι δὲ καὶ κινεῖσθαι καὶ ἐράν, διατυθαζόμενον γοῦν ὡς ἀκουόντας καὶ δοκῶ τι ἀντακούσθεσθαι
26 Cyclops (F214) Greek text in Table 1.
**contrapposto** with both arms extending away from her body as she strains to control the leaping dolphins by holding the reins in both hands. However this Galatea does follow her literary model when she holds one foot “lightly touching the water as if it were a rudder”.\(^{27}\)

The billowing shawl which acts as a sail for her chariot is rendered in a strong dark red in the fresco, whereas Philostratus describes the colour as ‘sea-purple’. This may be an artist’s idiosyncratic Renaissance interpretation of the original Greek *avliporphyros* (ali-porphyryos) synonymous with the deep-red stone commonly known as porphyry, a material used in fine Roman antiquities known to Raphael. Whilst the Latin “porphyry” was commonly translated as “purple”, in reality the material verges on a deep-red colour rather than a blue-purple, in the sense that a modern artist may interpret the colour. Beloved of the Roman emperors, the blood-coloured Imperial porphyry marble became the colour of royalty and was widely used in sculpture, floor paving, sarcophagi, baths and monuments.\(^{28}\) Augustus brought an Egyptian porphyry obelisk to Rome which was erected in the Circus Maximus. An enormous IVth century porphyry sarcophagus (fig.3) was recycled to accommodate Pope Anastasius IV (1153-54). It was decorated with playful *erotes* and could be seen during the Renaissance in the Basilica of S. Giovanni in Laterano.

\(^{27}\) Ibid.
Mantegna used porphyry to lend an antique background to his *Madonna and Child* from the San Zone altarpiece, Verona. The scarcity of the material in Renaissance times and the latent sixteenth century taste for the antique, meant porphyry was revered as a precious material that conjured up Imperial Rome. Its rich distinctive deep red colour passed into the repertoire of devices used by artists to best evoke antiquity. The question of the intended tones of Galatea’s ‘sea-purple’ scarf as painted by Raphael, is further complicated by the fresco being damaged and corrupted by time and restorations. It is very difficult today to determine the original appearance of the fresco.

Why not Ovid?

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30 When I visited the Villa Farnesina in 2000, the loggia was under restoration. The conservator Maria-Giovanna Piaggi showed me traces of purplish hues (which she described as silver-grey; “argento-grigio”) on the mantle of Galatea.
What evidence is there for deciding that Raphael’s fresco or Poliziano’s *Galatea* ekphrasis relies upon Philostratus rather than the more popular Ovid? The first obvious answer is that Philostratus’ text is the only Classical re-telling of the *Galatea* myth that also describes a painting. Philostratus’ ekphrasis was seen as an eye-witness report of a Hellenistic painting and would therefore hold the strongest appeal to a Renaissance artist (or poet) attempting to re-create a Graeco-Roman work of art. However there is no dispute that c. 1514, Philostratus’ version of the myth was not as well known or as available as that of Ovid and Virgil. The date coincides with the commission from Alfonso d’Este for a Philostratean painting from Raphael. If we read Ovid’s version of the *Galatea* story, being the most popular of the day, we see that no details about the appearance of the nymph are revealed. The context is different as Ovid’s voice is a love-sick entity trying to describe his beloved and the other, Philostratus, is describing a work of art. Ovid concentrates on unravelling the drama at hand and his narrative is related by Galatea herself.

In Philostratus, Galatea is an inanimate figure on a picture surface and the narrator is the viewer, who describes what his eyes see. In Ovid, Polyphemus sings the praises of Galatea in the form of a love paean and little description is given of her actual appearance apart from the fact she is tall and white. The following table allows us to compare the texts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ovid</th>
<th>Philostratus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fair Galatea, whiter than snowy privet-leaves,</td>
<td>She holds over the head against the wind a light scarf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More blooming than the meadows, surpassing the alder in your tall</td>
<td>of sea-purple to provide shade for herself and a Sail for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slenderness, more sparkling than crystal, more frolicsome than a</td>
<td>her chariot, and from it a kind of radiance falls upon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tender kid, smoother than shells worn by the</td>
<td>her forehead and her head, though no whit more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>charming than the bloom on her cheek; her hair is not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tossed by the breeze, for it is so moist that it is proof</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31 I should mention that not every author on Raphael mentions Philostratus as the iconographical literary source, but it is the latest consensus that the *Imagines* did provide the main textual source. Gianfranco Malafarina points out that other versions of the *Galatea* myth have the romance ending happily between the nymph and the Cyclops, whereas the *Imagines* emphasizes the sadness of Polyphemus’ plight and his violent murder of Acis. G Malafarina, *La Villa Farnesina a Roma* = The Villa Farnesina in Rome, Modena: Franco Cosimo Panini Editore Spa, 2003.

32 Virgil is not suggested as a literary source by Kinkead for the *Galatea* ekphrasis in Poliziano’s poem, but Virgil’s account of the myth in *Eclogue 9* was well known at the time.
constant waves, more welcome than the winter’s sun and summer’s shade, more goodly than orchard-fruit, fairer than the tall plane-tree, more shining-clear than ice, sweeter than ripened grapes, softer than swan’s down and curdled milk, and, if only you would not flee from me, more beauteous than a well-watered garden.

‘Candidior folio nivei, Galatea, ligustri, floridior pratis, longa procerior alno, splendidior vitro, tenero lascivior haedo, levior asiduo detritis aestiva conchis, solibus hibernis, aestiva gratior umbra, nobilior pomis, platano conspectior alta, lucidior glacie, matura dulcior uva, mollior et cygni plumis et lacte coacto et, si non fugias, riguo formosior horto: against the wind. And lo, her right elbow stands out and her white forearm is bent back, while she rests her fingers on her delicate shoulder, and her arms are gently rounded, and her breasts project, nor yet is beauty lacking her thigh. Her foot, with the graceful part above the foot, is painted as on the sea, my boy, and it lightly touched the water as if it were the rudder guiding her chariot. Her eyes are wonderful, for they have a kind of distant look that travels as afar as the sea extends.

Cyclops (F214)

In Ovid, Galatea is described in abstract terms, a string of similies, which makes it difficult for any artist to form a real picture of what the nymph looked like. Philostratus on the other hand, provides details about the nymph’s physical attributes, the grace of her pose and her gestures; even the precise colour of her scarf is provided.
• Unrequited Love: the Polyphemus Fresco of the Farnesina

The Polyphemus fresco executed by Raphael’s rival Sebastiano del Piombo between 1512-1514 has been neglected in discussion of Raphael’s celebrated Galatea, perhaps
because of its less appealing subject matter and inferior quality of execution. Although it has been argued that the two compositions are not in harmony and that Raphael went out of his way to make his fresco autonomous by creating a frame around it, there is an intended connection between the two. Raphael could have chosen to direct Galatea’s gaze away from her admirer, or out of the picture toward the viewer, but he directs her eyes across to the figure in Sebastiano’s painting. Conversely, if we believe Vasari’s report that the Galatea was completed first, then it appears Sebastiano is the one who has been obliged to position his Cyclops to follow Raphael’s lead.

Afterwards, Raffaello having painted the story of Galatea in the same place, Bastiano painted by the side of it a Polyphemus in fresco as Agostino wanted. Spurred by rivalry with Baldassare [Peruzzi] of Siena and then with Raphael, Sebastiano strove his utmost to surpass himself.

Didactically, the two frescoes can be read almost as one image with the giant Cyclops painted on a giant scale, gazing down at Galatea and her entourage cavorting on the waves. In return, the gaze of the nymph is directed behind her shoulder and upward toward the Cyclops, almost as if she is taunting him. A strong correlation between the text and the image occurs in the closing lines of Philostratus’ ekphrasis: “Her eyes are wonderful, for they have a kind of distant look that travels as far as the sea extends.” This faraway dreamy gaze created by Raphael for the nymph was much copied by artists when painting single female figures, like a Magdalene or a Lucretia. When the gaze was directed between a pair of figures, it helped to determine gender relations for the viewer. This was also the case in Roman wall painting that match Philostratus’ version (fig.5).

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33 Another reason that Raphael’s works obtained instant widespread popularity in the Renaissance is the circulation of prints replicating his paintings. Raphael had a very successful working relationship with the master print-maker, Marcantonio Raimondi, see Elizabeth Broun’s essay ‘The Portable Raphael’ (20-46) in The engravings of Marcantonio Raimondi, ed. Innis H. Shoemaker, Lawrence: Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas ; Chapel Hill : Ackland Art Museum, University of North Carolina, 1981.

34 My own translation from Vasari, Giunti, V.87 Dopo quest’opera, avendo Raffaello fatto in quel medesimo luogo una storia di Galatea, vi fece Bastiano, come volle Agostino, un Polifemo in fresco allato a quella, nel quale, comunche gli riuscisse, cercò d’avanzarsi più che poteva, spronato dalla concorrenza di Baldassarre Sanese e poi di Raffaello.

35 Greek text, see Table 1.
The latest research on the Farnesina has not resolved the issue as to which fresco was executed first. Modern scholarship tends to take a skeptical approach to Vasari’s credibility and in this case, his chronology has been disputed. The patron Agostino Chigi brought Sebastiano from Venice to Rome in 1511 expressly to decorate his villa suburbana and Sebastiano’s first job was to paint the lunettes in the loggia. This fact has led several scholars to believe that Vasari was mistaken and that Sebastiano’s

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Polyphemus, like the lunettes, pre-dates Raphael’s Galatea. However there are no records to substantiate this.\(^{37}\) Agostino had formed a working relationship with Raphael prior to Sebastiano’s arrival in Rome as evidenced by a contract written in Latin and dated 10 November 1510, wherein Agostino made a down-payment of twenty-five ducats to the goldsmith Cesarino Rossetti for two large bronze *tondi* to be designed by Raphael.\(^{38}\) Recent research has connected the *tondi* to a fresco depicting four Sibyls accompanied by angels, painted by Raphael for Agostino in the Chigi Chapel, S. Maria della Pace, Rome.\(^{39}\) Cesarino was a close friend of Raphael’s whom he knew from Perugia. Such an early collaboration between Chigi and Raphael, pre-dating Sebastiano’s arrival in Rome, would seem to lend support to Vasari’s statement.

Costanza Barbieri puts forward a hypothesis for the Farnesina frescoes that Agostino “may have decided to stage a confrontation between Sebastiano’s and Raphael’s compositions, creating a scenario for their competition”.\(^{40}\)

Regardless of whether Raphael’s Galatea was the first fresco completed or not, the iconography for the intended program of the loggia seems to have been pre-determined by the patron Agostino Chigi and his advisors. It has been suggested by Gianfranco Malafarina that the features of Polyphemus resemble those of Agostino himself and that the theme of unrequited love transfers to the patron’s personal situation as he, a merchant, played suitor to the aristocratic Margherita Gonzaga.\(^{41}\) Chigi’s humanist associates undoubtedly suggested some of the more erudite Classical references and motifs in Raphael’s mythological works. Pietro Bembo records in a letter to Cardinal Bibbiena, that Raphael has asked him to request more subjects be sent by the Cardinal in order that Raphael could create drawings from the texts. Bembo calls the texts “la scrittura delle historie” and explains that they are needed before Raphael can complete the decoration of the Cardinal’s bathroom (*stufetta*).\(^{42}\) This contradicts the view often taken, that Raphael’s inventions for the *stufetta* were shaped by his firsthand response to


\(^{40}\) Barbieri, 153.

\(^{41}\) Malafarina (2003) 91.

Correspondence with Bembo and others shows that Raphael depended upon their scholarship as much as he relied upon the antiquities of Rome, in his attempts to re-create Classical paintings.

Kinkead discusses *Galatea* as an isolated work by Raphael within the Farnesina loggia when it was clearly conceived as a pendant to Sebastiano del Piombo’s fresco of *Polyphemus* on the same wall. It is really only because *Polyphemus* is represented in the adjacent picture space (fig.6) that we can identify the sea nymph as *Galatea* and not *Amphitrite, Thetis, Aphrodite* or *Doris*.

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We also interpret the two protagonists as counterparts within a single narrative in both Philostratus’ *Cyclops* and Poliziano’s *Stanze*. A critical look at the two texts reveals Poliziano’s imitation of Philostratus when describing the relationship between *Polyphemus* and *Galatea*. The physical features and actions of Philostratus’ *Cyclops* are matched in detail, by Poliziano’s *Polifemo* (Cantos 116 and 117) almost paraphrase Philostratus as can be seen in this comparison:

Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poliziano: Canto I.116</th>
<th>Philostratus: II.19</th>
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<tr>
<td>His hairy brow makes an arch six spans long from ear to ear; beneath his brow lies a broad nose, his fanglike teeth seem white with foam; his dog rests between his feet, and under his arm a shepherd’s pipe of over a hundred reeds lies silent: he regards the waving sea, he seems to sing a mountain tune, as he moves his shaggy cheeks, Canto I.117 saying that she is whiter than milk, but even prouder than a heifer, that he has made her many garlands, that he keeps for her a very beautiful doe and a bear-cub that already can fight with dogs; Canto I.116</td>
<td>Polyphemus son of Poseidon, the fiercest of them, lives here: he has a single eyebrow extending above his single eye and a broad nose astride his upper lip…Showing a set of jagged teeth in his voracious jaw, shaggy all over;…And though his shepherd’s pipe is still under his arm and silent, yet he has a pastoral song to sing that tells how white she is and skittish and sweeter than unripe grapes, and how he is raising for Galatea fawns and bear-cubs. (Cyclops, F212)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dall’uno all’altro orecchio un arco face il ciglio irsuto lungo ben sei spanne; largo sotto la fronte il naso giace, paion di schiuma biancheggiar le zanne; tra' piedi ha 'l cane, e sotto il braccio tace una zampogna ben di cento canne: lui guata il mar che ondeggia, e alpestre note par cantì, e muova le lanose gote, (I. 117) e dica ch'ella è bianca piú che il latte, ma piú superba assai ch'una vitella, e che molte ghirlande gli ha già fatte, e serbali una cervia molto bella, un orsacchin che già col can combatte; e che per lei si macera e sfregella, e che ha gran voglia di saper notare per andare a trovarla insin nel mare.
Whilst it seems likely that Philostratus has drawn on Ovid (Met. XIII) and Theocritus’ Eleventh Idyll to compile his own interpretation of the myth, Poliziano’s fifteenth century version bears more similarity to the Sophist’s pictographic description, than to that of the earlier authors. Given the parallels between Poliziano’s verse and the Imagines in at least two of his works, the Stanze and Rusticus, I think there is a strong case for arguing that Poliziano was familiar with the Imagines which he could have had access to in the Medici library. In turn, Poliziano’s Stanze, already known to artists such as Botticelli, became one of the catalysts for Raphael’s fresco in the Farnesina. Poliziano’s four short verses on the Galatea myth are a mélange of ideas from the three Classical authors mentioned, but as Philostratus had already edited Ovid’s and Theocritus’ versions down to a brief rendition that suited the pedagogic Imagines’ format, it was perhaps more logical for the Medici poet to follow that example.

The Farnesina Polyphemus is unquestionably Philostratean if compared to other sixteenth century treatments of the theme in which the Cyclops is seen not as a passive, lovelorn creature to pity, but an aggressive giant hurling rocks into the sea as he condemns the object of his love. Annibale Carracci depicted such a Polyphemus for the Palazzo Farnese in Rome (fig.7) 1595-1600, following closely the text of Ovid.

Philostratus does not mention this violent episode in the story of Polyphemus and Galatea, concentrating only on the pastoral aspect of the scene and on the theme of unrequited love. In particular, physical features of the Cyclops portrayed by Philostratus seem to have inspired the preparatory sketch by Sebastiano del Piombo (fig.8).

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44 Anderson makes the interesting observation that Philostratus’ two main departures from Theocritus’ text; the inclusion of a Syrinx and Philostratus’ description of the Cyclops’ hair, straight and thick “like pine needles”, are possibly due to visual as opposed to literary sources. Anderson (1986) 265.

45 Carracci also painted in the same Gallery the prelude to this scene with a passive Polyphemus serenading Galatea who is sporting alone on the sea.
The most notable correspondence between Sebastiano’s drawing and the text is the shaggy hair of the giant which Philostratus describes as “wind-tossed”, standing erect and as dense “as the foliage of a pine tree” and also the intense expression of longing for the unapproachable nymph. The sketch is more refined than the fresco and the artist creates a poignant image of the monster in love, “He thinks, because he is in love, that his glance is gentle, but it is wild and stealthy still, like that of wild beasts subdued under the force of necessity.” In his sketch, Sebastiano has shown Polyphemus naked and not primly draped in a toga as he appears in the fresco today. Philostratus’ Polyphemus is also a naked wild creature, “shaggy all over – breast and belly and limbs even to the nails.” In the drawing, the pen strokes are cross-hatched to describe a torso which is rough and gnarled with a lot of attention given to the curly beard and thatch of chest hair.

46 For the Greek text see Table 2.
The blue tunic that covers the Cyclops in the fresco was added in an act of censorship at a later date, a common practice toward the end of the sixteenth century. Sebastiano’s sketch provides us with some idea of the original appearance of Polyphemus when the fresco was completed circa 1514; a more sensual figure, unified with the naked figures in the corresponding Galatea composition.

**Galatea and Polyphemus summary:**

Raphael’s fidelity to the text of Philostratus indicates that some time around the 1511-1513 commission from Agostino Chigi, the artist was introduced to the Imagines. Whether it was from a Roman humanist at the papal court or a scholar associated with Chigi, or whether it followed a request by Alfonso d’Este (as in the case of Fra Bartolommeo and Titian), it is not possible to determine. What is evident is that the Medici pope, Julius II, had a passion for antiquity which led him to commission from Raphael what are regarded as the most classicizing paintings of the High Renaissance; the Parnassus and The School of Athens. These monumental works were commissioned c. 1511 to decorate the walls of the Stanza della Segnatura inside the Vatican. This major fresco cycle is the first project Raphael started in Rome after arriving from Florence in 1508. Pope-Hennessy points out that prior to 1508, in the artist’s last years in Florence, no painted Classical scenes by Raphael survive and that we have only drawings to trace the beginnings of Raphael’s interest in antique themes. The frescoes of the Stanza della Segnatura are so crammed with literary allusions and are in such stark contrast to Raphael’s Florentine works that their creation clearly points to substantial involvement from his erudite patron. Julius II aspired to be more than the head of the Christian church, he envisaged himself as a type of Platonic philosopher-king. Classically educated, Julius required little input from court humanists when deciding on the Classical subjects for Raphael to execute. The School of Athens attempted to bring together in one scene, all the great figures of philosophy and science from Antiquity. Raphael used contemporary figures as models; Plato has the face of Leonardo da Vinci, Heraclitus that of Michelangelo and Euclid resembles the architect Bramante. Poetry was exalted in the Parnassus, with Apollo the central figure surrounded by a host of poets including Homer, Alcaeus, Corinna, Petrarch, Dante, Anacreon and Sappho.
Also for the Stanza della Segnatura Raphael painted a ceiling fresco of Marsyas and Apollo (fig.32) which relates to Philostratus the Younger’s description (II). These papal commissions solidified Raphael’s reputation in Rome as the supreme interpreter of antiquity and led to the commissions from Agostino Chigi. Raphael’s Philostratean themes were adopted by his favourite pupil, Giulio Romano (c. 1496-1546) who painted a Polyphemus in fresco for the Villa Madama in Rome and later for the Sala di Psiche in the Palazzo Te, Mantua around 1528. Another pupil of Raphael’s, Perino del Vaga, painted a Galatea in fresco for the Villa Doria-Pamphilj in Rome.

**Raphael’s bottega and the transmission of Philostratus**

As a type of ‘custodian’ of Roman antiquities, Raphael obtained permission to take his pupils along to examine the ancient sites and marbles. Nero’s house, the Domus Aurea, still bears the signatures of Raphael’s pupils on its walls. The frescoes found there and also at the Baths of Titus, provided the first important evidence of graeco-roman painting.

A spate of archaeological discoveries such as the unearthing of the Apollo Belvedere, the Venus Pudica of the Vatican and the Laocoon group, gave new inspiration to the works of Michelangelo, Raphael and other artists working in Rome.

When Raphael died at the age of thirty-seven in 1520, he left several works unfinished which were completed by his followers. Chief amongst his successors were Giulio Romano and Gianfrancesco Penni who had worked with the master on the Vatican Loggia. Raphael’s pupils also inherited his drawings and in this manner, the Classical interests of Raphael were kept alive by his pupils for decades after.

**Many earlier artists had endeavoured to establish contact with the world of the antique, but it was Raphael who first worked out a means whereby the antique could be assimilated, integrally and without distortion, into the fabric of the art of his own day (J. Pope-Hennessy).**

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47 Raphael’s *Apollo and Marsyas* for the Stanza dell Segnatura will be discussed at the end of this chapter in a study that traces Philostratus’ role in the development of the Marsyas figure in Renaissance art.

48 Different versions of the *Galatea* fresco by Raphael’s workshop are known from engravings by Giorgio Ghisi e.g. *Galatea or Thetis Seated with a Triton*, after Perino del Vaga, 16th century engraving, Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco.

49 Raphael, 1970, 36
The *Erotes*

As early in his career as 1502-03, Raphael was drawing *putti* for the decoration of the Piccolomini library in Siena.50 A fragment of a drawing at Chantilly with *putti* jousting on boars is also dated to this early period.51 Neither of these drawings is derived from Philostratus’ description of *Erotes* at play, however they show that Raphael was familiar with this antique motif in his pre-Roman period and would later elaborate on the idea of having small naked children act out amusing scenes.

![Fig.9 Bernardo Daddi, after Raphael, *Putti Playing*, c. 1512 engraving.](image)

In Florence 1504-08, Raphael would have seen the works of Donatello, master of rendering lively putti in bas-reliefs as seen in the *cantoria* of the Florence Cathedral ca. 1433-1439.

Raphael’s drawings of putti in Vienna and Oxford attest to his study of erotes at play on antique friezes. Whilst they do not necessarily rely on the lengthy description by Philostratus of Erotes, these drawings show that Raphael saw cupids as an essential idiom in the visual vocabulary of antiquity. Cupids provided Classical authenticity for his compositions particularly in the decoration of Cardinal Bibbiena’s bathroom in the Vatican palace.

There is an engraving of The Worship of Venus by the monogramist NDB after Raphael, providing evidence that at some point, Raphael attempted a full scale interpretation of Philostratus’ Erotes description. Shearman believes that the Daddi print (fig.9), together with an uninscribed pendant of the Erotes, constitute composite designs derived from cartoons for a series of tapestries ordered for the basamento of the Sala di Constantino in the Vatican. Called the Giochi di putti (games of the cupids) series, the project was worked on by Giulio Romano 1521-30 following the death of Raphael but due to the evidence of the NDB prints, is likely an original concept by Raphael. Giulio Romano revived the Vatican tapestry designs in 1540 when he made cartoons for six tapestries also known as the Giochi di putti or Puttini series, woven at the workshop of the Flemish master Nicolas Karcher and owned by Cardinal Ercole Gonzaga. Brown and Delmarcel observed: “A chapter in Philostratos’s Imagines served as the point of departure for these compositions.” The chapter they refer to is Erotes (I.6), however I have found that one of the surviving tapestries, The Barque of Venus (fig.10) combines elements from the hunt for the tunny fish in Bosphorus (I.13).

53 Raphael, Children playing with a lamb, Albertina, Vienna, Ioannides cat.no. 144r, p.168 and Raphael, Seven putti playing judge and prisoner, Christ Church, Oxford, Ioannides cat. no. 147, p.169, and Raphael,146r Children playing with a lamb watched by a woman and child, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, Ioannides cat.no.146r, p.169.
54 Johnn Shearman, Raphael’s Cartoons in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen, and the Tapestries for the Sistine Chapel, London: Phaidon, 1972, Figs.16 and 56-57.
56 Ibid. Part II, cat. 179.
The last major decorative scheme Raphael completed before his death in 1520 was the Loggia of the Vatican which epitomizes the successful ‘hybrid’ style that Pope-Hennessy spoke of. Also known as ‘Raphael’s Bible’ the Loggia is a seamless marriage between biblical narrative and pagan decoration. Fifty-two biblical scenes unfold down a narrow gallery sixty-five metres in length. Surrounding the scenes, every available surface has been decorated in the *grottesche* style *all’antica*. Furthermore, whilst the iconography of the scenes is biblical, the figures remain stylistically Classical; the Egyptian women in the *Discovery of Moses* appear to be wearing Grecian garments. Whilst Raphael was responsible for the overall design of the loggia and did preparatory drawings for the scenes, most of the decoration was left to his pupils under the leadership of Giulio Romano and Gianfrancesco Penni. It was the former, who would move on to greater fame by perpetuating the Raphaelesque style and technique mainly in fresco decoration of patrician suburban villas in Italy.
**Philostratus in the work of Giulio Romano (1520-1546)**

The Villa Madama in Rome and the Palazzo Te in Mantua are two projects where Romano worked at re-creating antiquity in painting, decoration, garden-design, architecture and ambience. Subjects from Philostratus appear on the walls of both villas. The most compelling evidence for Romano’s familiarity with the *Imagines* are two detailed pen sketches or modelli of the *Erotes*. The first, in the Chatsworth collection (fig.11) is associated with a project at Palazzo Te and the other, in the Ellesmere collection is a modello for a tapestry also from Romano’s Mantuan period. frederick hartt suggests that romano was following the text quite closely for the chatsworth drawing, omitting only philostratus’ motifs of the hare and the archery contest and he writes:

The spring mentioned by the ancient narrator gushes here from the mouth of the goddess’ dolphin. Best of all, Giulio has managed to capture the gorgeous abandon of Philostratus’ word picture, through the impetuosity of his drawing style and the translucent gold of the bistre. The drawing must have been intended for a larger picture, but whether this was to have been a panel, a fresco, or a tapestry is not clear.

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58 *Erotes of Philostratus*, Pen and bistre wash. Chatsworth Collection no. 107, Hartt cat. no. 215. *Erotes* Tapestry modello, Mertoun House, Roxburghshire, Scotland, Collection of the Earl of Ellesmere. Hartt cat. no. 257. The modello is probably associated with the *Giochi di putti series* of six tapestries made c. 1540 for Cardinale Ercole Gonzaga with three complete tapestries and two fragments now preserved in the collection of the Museu Calouste Gubenkian, Lisbon, Portugal (see Brown & Delmarchel op.cit. and *Barque of Venus* fig.10).

On the strength of decorations featuring putti that were made by assistants from Romano’s bottega, Benedetto Pagni da Pescia and Rinaldo Mantovano, in a room near the secret garden of the Palazzo del Te, Hartt speculates that an Erotes painting was destined for the same location. Whilst Hartt discusses the relationship to Philostratus for the Chatsworth drawing, he does not mention the Imagines in connection to the Ellesmere drawing which includes the hare motif Hartt was looking for and combines also some putti riding swans from Imagines (I.9 ‘A Marsh’). The Ellesmere drawing does not however, include a figure of Venus, although the drawing appears unfinished and there is the faint outline of a grotto in the background which may have been intended to feature a statue of Venus.
The Ellesmere tapestry modello (fig.12) is set in an apple orchard and is undoubtedly inspired by Philostratus. Hartt also includes in his catalogue raisonné drawings, paintings and engravings by Romano on other subjects presented in the *Imagines* including: *Semele and the Birth of Bacchus* (I. 14); *The Birth of Athena* (II. 27); *Death of Aiax* (II 13.); *Achilles and Chiron* (II. 2); *Apollo and Marsyas* (Younger, 2); *the Boar Hunt* (I. 2) and *Fishermen on the Bosphorus* (I.13). The lost painting of a *Hercules Wrestling the Serpents* (Younger, 5) together with a painting linked to the *Semele* drawing and a painting of the *Boy Achilles Presenting His First Slain Boar to Chiron* (II. 2) are grouped by Hartt with other works depicting ‘the infancy of the Gods’ which made up a cycle of twelve paintings possibly intended for the Palazzo Te at Manuta.\(^6\) However Hartt does not make any association between these subjects and Philostratus’ text as the iconographical source. It does seem a coincidence that three of the twelve ‘infancy of the Gods’ paintings feature subjects from the *Imagines* and would indicate

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\(^6\) Hartt’s hypothesis for a dating for the cycle to the Palazzo Te period revolves around a celebration of birth, childhood and motherhood that coincided with the birth of Francesco III Gonzaga, 1533. Hartt (1981) 212.
that Giulio was consulting the descriptions of the Philostratoi for more than just the *Erotes* theme.

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**Cardinal Medici’s Villa ‘Madama’**

The *Erotes* also played an important role in the iconographical programme for the decoration of the Villa Madama; another project that Romano had to complete after Raphael’s untimely death.

Raphael, who had studied architecture under Bramante, proved his talent as an architect with plans for the new St. Peter’s but his grandiose plans for the suburban Roman villa of Cardinal Giulio de’ Medici take his Neo-classical ideology to a new level.\(^{61}\) Whilst Chigi’s Farnesina was perhaps ill-placed on the banks of a river prone to flooding, Cardinal Medici’s building site was well situated high on the green slopes of Monte Mario, on the outskirts of Rome. The plans (fig.13) were made by Raphael in 1518 and Antonio da Sangallo the Younger took over as chief architect of the project in 1520.

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\(^{61}\) A set of drawings by Antonio da Sangallo (1483-1546) for the villa are preserved in the Uffizi, Florence. It is presumed that the drawings were executed under Raphael’s direction as da Sangallo was already a pupil of Raphael working under his instruction on the new St. Peter’s. Heinrich Adolf Gëymuller, *Raffaello Sanzio studiato come architetto con l’aiuto di nuovi documenti* (Milano: U. Hoepli, 1884) 62 ff.
after Raphael’s death when the villa was at the early stages of construction. Documents show that da Sangallo faithfully followed Raphael’s designs with Giulio Romano carrying out the decorative scheme according to the late maestro’s wishes. Romano worked alongside his colleagues from Raphael’s *bottega*: Gianfrancesco Penni and Baldassare Peruzzi. Equally important was the involvement of Giovanna da Udine who was in charge of the *stucchi* at the Villa Madama, as he had been for the Vatican Loggia.  

Cardinal Giulio dei Medici (who became Pope Clement VII and employer of Francesco Campana: Chapter 3), conceived of the idea of building this residence in direct imitation of the villas of antiquity, as described by Philostratus and Pliny. Existing models such as Hadrian’s villa at Tivoli would also have provided ideas for the morphology of the Cardinal’s villa. A long and detailed letter written by Raphael reveals the artist’s ambitions for the villa and clearly states his primary sources: Vitruvius, Alberti and Pliny the Younger (notably from descriptions of buildings in Pliny, *Letters* V.6; II.17; IX.7). Incorporated into Raphael’s plans were allowances for summer and winter quarters, the importance of the villa’s symmetrical relationship to the garden and the construction of Roman baths and a hippodrome. As it stands today, incomplete, the Villa Madama is still remarkable for its large semi-circular exedra which was to be the focal point of the design. The over-riding intention of Raphael was to imitate the ancients and this is expressed in his vision for the villa throughout the letter to the Cardinal, eg.

the vestibule should conform in lay-out and destination with the usage of Antiquity, and feature six Ionic columns complete with their antae, as Your Lordship would expect. From the vestibule one passes into an Atrium in the Greek style, similar to what the Tuscans call an ‘androne’

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and also: ‘Above the tower which is on the right-hand side of the entrance, in the corner is placed a very beautiful ‘dyeta’ as the ancients called it.’

It is evident from the letter that Raphael intended to surround the villa with a series of terraces descending to the river Tiber, much like the mult-tiered Campanian villa near the water’s edge described by Philostratus. The probable model though, was Pliny the Younger’s description of his own villa at Laurentum. Raphael’s letter is an important document for understanding enthusiasm for the Classical tradition in the Renaissance.

No letter remains that describes Raphael’s intentions for the interior, but we can be fairly certain that in the two years he worked upon the Villa Madama, he formulated plans for the decorative scheme. Several autograph drawings exist that can be linked to the Villa Madama and Giulio Romano’s frescoes on Philostratean themes: *Cyclops* (II.18), *A Marsh* (I.9), *Pasiphae* (I.16) and *Erotes* (I.6). Sketches also survive to suggest Raphael’s ideas for the stucchi decoration carried out by Giovanni da Udine contain references to the *Imagine* including: *The Horae* (II.34), *Cyclops* (II.18) and *Achilles on Skyros* (Younger, 1). The decoration of the Villa Madama loggia was begun shortly after Raphael’s death, as confirmed by two letters of 4 and 17 June 1520 from Cardinal Giulio dei Medici to Mario Maffei.

The main decoration of this incomplete villa is concentrated in the great North loggia facing upon a private garden. Divided into three vaulted spaces, the ceiling decoration was completed before work on the villa came to a halt. The finely executed *grottesche* with many variations on *amorini* together with diverse Olympian divinities comprise the fabric of the overall decoration punctuated by Giulio Romano’s oval framed frescoes.

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64 “tra li quali una bellissima porta dorica fa intrata in un cortile lungho 22 cane e largho 11. In testa del quale cortile vi è il vestibulo a modo et usanza antiqua con sei colonne tonde hyoniche con le lore ante, come recerca la ragione sua. Da questo vestibulo s’entra nel atrio fatto alla greca, come quello che li thoscani chiamano androne” and Sopra il turrione che è da man dritta della intrata, ne l’angulo, una bellissima dietha vi è conlochata, che cosi la chiamano li antiqui.” Dewez, 22-23.

65 Letters, 2.17 and 5.6 in particular.

The North Loggia: Eastern Vault

The Polyphemus and Galatea narrative is played out across ten finely executed quadretti (small framed picture spaces) in white stucco on a blue background that create a cameo effect. This is the ideal of the stucco style all’antica that Campana was striving for in his hillside retreat at Montughi, Florence. Each scene links in some way to the Galatea myth and all extraneous figures of nereids, hippocamps and tritons that populate the borders belong to the maritime theme. The narrative of the vault is anchored by a large fresco by Giulio Romano of Polyphemus in the lunette at one end of the loggia. Galatea’s portrayal in the fine stucchi is counterpart to the gigantic Polyphemus depicted slumbering in his cave.
The North Loggia: Central Vault

Surrounding the centrepiece of the Medici Coat of Arms are four medallions by da Udine representing *The Four Seasons* executed in white stucco figures on a gold background. Philostratus the Elder’s final description in the *Imagines* is of *The Horae* (the Seasons) II.34. Philostratus’ emphasis is on showing the different stages of agricultural activity with the harvest of wheat in the Summer and grapes in the Autumn.
His *Horae* are dancing female figures imbued with grace (*hora*) that visit the seasonal fields in the painting. The *stucchi* medallions in the vault differ from Philostratus in that they portray just one main figure as the embodiment of each season: *Winter* is evoked by a hooded male figure warming himself by a tripod fire whilst a woman prepares food; the god Dionysus personifies *Autumn* with the help of cupids who harvest the vine; *Summer* is an Aphrodite figure with a cornucopia and cupids in attendance and *Spring* is a Demeter or Persephone figure with flowers, wheat and a cupid bringing fruits in a basket.

Giulio Romano’s frescoes which alternate with da Udine’s *stucchi* medallions in the central vault contain scenes of the most senior Gods in Olympus: Zeus, Hera, Poseidon and Hades, in align with the temporal importance of the Medici.

A further connection to the *Imagines* is established by an octagonal cameo of white stucco on a green background that decorates the arch beneath the *Bacchus* (*Spring*) medallion. It shows *Apollo and Marsyas* (Philo. Younger, 2) and resembles the Augustan Carnelian gem attributed to Dioscurides that was famous in Renaissance Italy (more fully discussed below).
The North Loggia: Western Vault

Fig. 16 Raphael/Romano/da Udine, Villa Madama, North Loggia, Western Vault

This section of the decoration scheme relies closely on the *Imagines* with all four main frescoes relating to the activities of cupids at the court of Aphrodite. The artist has
drawn upon three descriptions from Philostratus *Erotes* (I.6), *A Marsh* (I.8) and *Pasiphae* (I.16). A multitude of cupids fills each composition and the arrangement of the four scenes is too coincidental to exclude Philostratus as the literary source. The selection of themes connected to the worship of Aphrodite that once adorned the noble Campanian villa of the *Imagines* is entirely faithful to Raphael’s overall ambitions for the Villa Madama.

In a clockwise direction the ovals read, 1) *A Marsh*, with cupids riding swans 2) *Erotes*, 3) *Erotes*, 4) *Pasiphae*.

*A Marsh* (I.9)

![A Marsh](image)

Fig.17 Raphael/Giulio Romano, *Putti riding swans*, Villa Madama, North Loggia, Western Vault.

A cameo stucco frame containing a fresco (fig.17) showing six putti riding and playing with swans in Philostratus’ ‘swimming-pool of exceeding beauty’ (kolumbhvqran
Achim Gnann has identified a drawing (fig. 18) in the Berlin Kupferstichkabinett, showing a putto figure sitting astride a swan, as a preparatory sketch by Raphael for this fresco. On the recto of the same sheet is a sketch for a putto encircled by the Medici ring, a motif which features in the stucco decoration of the eastern exedra of the Villa Madama.

Fig. 18 Attributed to Raphael, *Putto riding swan*, c. 1519, Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin.

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67 *A Marsh* (F39).
68 Achim Gnann, ‘A New Attribution to Raphael’, *Master Drawings*, Vol. 36, no. 2 1998, 198-204. Gnann cites Philostratus’ *A Marsh* as the iconographical source for this drawing and for the Madama fresco and suggests that whilst the putto on the Berlin sheet does not correspond precisely to a figure in the finished fresco, “one cannot exclude the possibility that Raphael provided drawings for the decoration before his death.”
Within the limited space of the ceiling oval, which had to be clearly read from a
distance as the viewer stood below, Romano has dispensed with secondary characters in
Philostratus’ narrative; Zephyrus, the goatherds and shepherds. The design concentrates
on the cupids:

It is among these clusters that Cupids are riding sacred birds with golden bridles, one
giving free rein, another drawing in, another turning, another driving around the
goalpost. Just imagine that you hear them uring on their swans, and threatening and
jeering at one another – for this is all to be seen in their faces. (F38)\(^69\)

Particular attention has been paid to Philostratus’ description of the landscape:

The earth is wet and bears reeds and rushes, which the fertile marsh causes to grow
unsown and untilled…The place is encompassed by mountains heaven high, not all
of one type; for some that are covered with pine trees suggest a light soil, others
luxuriant with cypress trees proclaim the soil is of clay, and yonder fir trees.
(F34)\(^70\)

Romano has attempted to show a variety of vegetation in accordance with the text and
high mountains are featured in the distance. The detail most telling of the relationship to
the text is the inclusion of date palms which cross the river in the middle distance on the
left margin of the composition,\(^71\) Philostratus writes:

Wherein, then, lies its cleverness? The painter has thrown a bridge of date plams
across the river, and there is a very pretty reason for this; for knowing that palms are
said to be male and female, and having heard about their marriage, that the male trees
take their brides by bending over toward the female trees and embracing them with

\(^69\) A Marsh (K307) περὶ τούτους ἡγιοχοῦσιν ἔρωτες ἱεροὺς καὶ χρυσοχαλίνους ὄρνης ὁ μὲν
πάσον ἡγίαν ἐνδιδούς, ὁ δὲ ἄνακτπττων, ὁ δὲ ἐπιστρέφων, ὁ δὲ περὶ τὴν νύσσαν ἑλαύνων –
καὶ παρακελευμένων τοῖς κύκνωσις ἄκουες δόκει καὶ ἀπειλούντων ἀλλήλους καὶ
τωθαζόντων, ταύτα γὰρ τοῖς προσώπωσ ἑπεστιν

\(^70\) A Marsh (K306) ὡς οἰκομβρος μέν ἡ γῆ, φέρει δὲ κάλαμον καὶ φλοιόν, ὃ δὲ ἀσταρτα καὶ
ἀνήρτων δίδωσιν ἡ τῶν ἑλῶν εὐφυία, καὶ μυρίκη γέραται καὶ κύπειρον, καὶ γὰρ ταύτα ἐστι
τῶν ἑλῶν, ὡς δὲ ὁμοφονήμη ἐπεριβληται φόεσως οὐ μίας, τὰ μὲν γὰρ τὴν πίτυν
παρεχόμενα λεπτόγεως τιβεῖ, τὰ δὲ κυπαρίστων κομώντα τῆς ἀργιλώδους

\(^71\) Unfortunately the illustration here included, does not allow for a close detail of the date palms but they
are more apparent in the engravings done after the fresco, eg. Bartsch, da Udine.
their branches, he has painted a palm of one sex on one bank and one of the other sex on the other bank. (F40)\textsuperscript{72}

Pliny the Elder describes the phenomenon of mating palms in Book XIII of *Historia Naturalis*\textsuperscript{73} and Raphael uses the motif again for his fresco of *Joseph Reveals His Dreams to his Brothers* in the Vatican Loggia, 1519.

Philostratus’ *A Marsh* provided a background for Perugino’s 1505 painting of *The Battle of Love and Chastity* (discussed in Chapter 2) and here, Perugino’s pupil, Raphael, has seemingly chosen it as a light-hearted evocation of childish play, in harmony with the other cameo scenes on the vault.

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*Erotes I.6 (Worship of Venus)*

\textsuperscript{72} Λ *Marsh* (K308) τίς οὖν ἡ σοφία; ζεύγμα φοινίκων ἐπιβέβληκε τῷ ποταμῷ καὶ μάλα ἡδύν ἐπ’ αὐτῷ λόγον: εἰδὼς γὰρ τὸ περὶ τῶν φοινίκων λεγόμενον καὶ ὅτι αὐτῶν ὁ μὲν ἄρσην τις, ἡ δὲ θῆλεια, καὶ περὶ τοῦ γάμου σφῶν διακηκούς καὶ ὅτι ἀγονται τὰς θηλείας περιβάλλοντες αὐτὰς τοῖς κλάδοις καὶ ἐπιτείνοντες αὐτοὺς ἐπ’ αὐτὰς ἄρ’ ἐκατέρου τοῦ γένους δύο φοινικας, ἐνα κατὰ μίαν ὥθην, γέγραφεν

The following two fresco ovals in the vault show scenes from *Erotes* which, being one of the lengthiest descriptions by Philostratus, contains many figures and simultaneous narratives. Titian has been criticized for trying to incorporate all the figures Philostratus described into his painting of 1520. Aware of how difficult it was to read the scenes clearly from ground level, Romano has taken this into consideration and split the *Erotes* into two ovals. The first (fig.19) shows an allegory of love as described in the painting Philostratus calls “a beautiful riddle” (kalo;n to; a[i]nigma:) that has a group of cupids at play. This allegory is personified by a pair of cupids throwing an apple back and forth, they are among “the most beautiful of all, withdrawn from the rest”. (F22) The pendant fresco to this oval shows the well-known scene in the orchard of “cupids gathering apples” (F20) (μῆλα ἔρωτες ἱδοὺ τρυγῶσιν) with Aphrodite present, except here, Philostratus’ statue of the goddess is replaced with a live Aphrodite.

74 *Erotes* (K302) οἱ γὰρ κάλλιστοι τῶν ἔρωτων ἱδοὺ τέτταρες ὑπεξελθόντες τῶν ἄλλων δύο μὲν αὐτῶν ἀντιπέμπουσι μῆλον ἀλλήλοις
The fourth oval shows the story of *Pasiphae* (fig.20), selected for the vault because Philostratus has populated his re-telling of the myth with a host of Aphrodite’s cupids. It is a myth that held some fascination for Romano who explored erotic subjects in his *I Modi* series (*The Sixteen Pleasures*) 1525, also based on antique paradigms. Later he would choose to paint *Pasiphae* again for his own fresco project at Mantua’s Palazzo Te. Daedalus is seen sculpting the bull “and he uses the Cupids as his assistants in the device so as to connect with it something of Aphrodite.” (F64) Pasiphae is quite explicit in assigning the various cupids manual tasks in Daedalus’ workshop and in this instance, Romano may have been working from an Italian translation of the text as he includes very precise details, including the two putti sawing wood on the left of the composition that Philostratus describes: “The saw has attacked the wood and is already

76 *Pasiphae* (K318) καὶ τοὺς Ἐρωτας ξυνεργοὺς ποιεῖται τοῦ μηχανήματος, ὡς Ἀφροδίτης
passing through it, and these Cupids keep it going, one on the ground, another on the staging, both straightening up and bending forward in turn.” (F66)77

The *Erotes* theme continues beyond the Villa Madama loggia as you pass under the lunette with Romano’s giant *Polyphemus* into two rooms with a deep, richly painted frieze imitating graeco-roman decoration. Festoons and garlands are being decorated by a host of playful cupids. Elaborate winged male and female figures, perhaps personifications of *Fame* and *Victory*, act as pillars for the garlands to rest upon. The frieze is thought to be contemporary with Romano’s work on the Villa Madama but attribution is problematic and art history is still undecided if Romano was responsible for this part of the decoration or not.78

Raphael’s designs for the Villa Madama as executed by Romano and da Udine represent the culmination of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century impulse toward the resurrection of Classical villa decoration. The architectural project itself, according to Sangallo’s drawings of Raphael’s original designs, shows increasing comprehension of Classical domestic architecture and comes close to physically recreating Philostratus’ luxurious Neapolitan villa.

 Giulio Romano’s Palazzo Te, Mantua

77 *Pasiphae* (K318) σκόπει γάρ: πρίων ἐμβέβληται τῷ ξύλῳ καὶ διήκται αὐτοῦ ἥδη, διάγουσι δὲ αὐτὸν ὁὗτοι οἱ Ἐρωτες δὲ μὲν ἐκ τῆς γῆς, ὁ δὲ ἀπὸ μηχανῆς ὀρθουμένω τε καὶ προνεόντε.

The last villa project to be discussed in this chapter connected to the transmission of the *Imagines* is Giulio Romano’s Palazzo Te (Fig. 21), for Federico Gonzaga of Mantua, son of Isabella d’Este. Romano moved to Mantua in 1524 and formed his own *bottega* of assistants to carry out his audacious designs.\(^{79}\) Having worked on all of Raphael’s major projects since 1516, Romano had become familiar with his sources, both literary and archaeological and as his principal heir, may have even inherited the maestro’s personal library. Romano’s work on the fresco decoration at the Roman villas previously discussed, confirms he knew of Philostratus’ *Imagines*. This knowledge was then carried over into his post-Raphael career which assured him pre-eminence in Mantua until his death. The construction of the Palazzo Te according to Giulio’s plans commenced in 1525. Once again, as we have seen with the Villa Farnesina and the Villa Madama, the overall concept was for a suburban pleasure palace, constructed after antique models. With the Palazzo Te, Giulio Romano was able to assimilate all the

\(^{79}\) Hartt suggests that as early as 1521 Federigo Gonzaga approached Giulio Romano and his colleague Gianfrancesco Penni in Rome, trying to entice the two heirs of Raphael to work for him in Mantua. Baldassare Castiglione acted as intermediary between the patron and the painter, eventually persuading Giulio to depart Rome shortly after October 4th, 1524. Hartt (1981) 67.
historical appreciation of antiquity he had accumulated in his Roman years with Raphael and take it in a new direction. He had also acquired an impressive collection of antiquities in Rome, some of which he carried to Mantua and some of which he sold to collectors en route. Vasari neatly summarized the character of the Palazzo Te, when he wrote that Romano’s style was: “sempre anticamente moderna, et modernamente antica”. The interior decoration of the Palazzo commenced in 1527 and continued on and off throughout Giulio’s lifetime.

The main Palazzo Te frescoes that relate to the Imagines are:

- *Cyclops*, with the myth of Polyphemus and Galatea (II. 28)
- *Pasiphaë* (I. 16)

In the *Imagines*, the two descriptions set on the Bosphorus are linked by Philostratus’ ironic question to his juvenile audience “Why do you not go on to another painting? This one of the Bosphorus has been studied enough for me.” (F54)
The first commentator to link the Bosphorus/Hunters themes with the *Imagines* was Goethe in his essay of 1818.\(^8\) Goethe lists both descriptions of hunting on the Bosphorus in his classification of group ‘VIII: *Landscapes, including Pictures of the Sea*’ in a scholarly attempt to bring order to the arrangement of Philostratus’ descriptions.

Philostratus describes the animated hunt for giant fish on the Bosphorus. A riotous scene takes place as a large group of fishermen shout and struggle to net the fish. He is very precise in noting the posture of individual fishermen in the scene: “One binds his oar in its place, another rows with swelling muscles, another cheers his neighbour on, another strikes a man who is not rowing.” (F56)\(^8\) Given the confined space of the composition in the ceiling medallion, Romano has made an effort to incorporate these actions into the scene. The series of medallions in the *Sala dei Venti* (fig.22) which include a scene of gladiators fighting, a hunt for exotic beasts and a hunting scene on a

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\(^8\) Goethe, *Philostrats Gemaêlde* (Cotta, 1868) Vol. XXVI, 276 ff.

\(^8\) *Bosphorus* (K315) καὶ ὁ μὲν τὴν κώπην ζεύγνυσιν, ὁ δὲ ἔρεττει μάλα διεξωθηκότι τῷ βραχίονι, ὁ δὲ ἐπικελεύεται τῷ πέλας, ὁ δὲ ποίει τὸν μὴ ἐρέττοντα
lake, indicate the general theme desired was to evoke the hunt or ‘the chase’ of antiquity.

Sala di Psiche: Polyphemus

![Fig.23 Giulio Romano, 1528, Polyphemus, fresco, Palazzo Te, Mantua](image)

The loggia at the Palazzo Te is impressive but it is the large-format mythological sequences of frescoes by Giulio Romano in the main entertaining rooms that have attracted the most commentary. They were created between 1526 and 1535 and were intended as the visual climax of this Gonzaga Summer palace. In the principal room of the palazzo, the Sala di Psiche, Romano’s painting of a Cyclops with Acis and Galatea pointing to him from the seashore (fig.23) represents an obvious continuation of the

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Polyphemus Romano had painted at the Villa Madama and also recalls that of Sebastiano del Piombo at the Villa Farnesina, which Romano would have known well. The vault of the Sala di Psiche is divided into framed octagonals and lunettes painted and embellished with stucchi. The walls are covered in a continuous fresco from ceiling to the dado, creating a fictive environment that results in a horror vacui sensation. All figures in this gigantic garden of Venus are meant to relate in some way to the myth of Psyche and Romano has incorporated a host of deities and mythological figures including countless playful cupids, which no doubt derive from his encounters with Philostratus’ Erotes. The room is as much a celebration of Eros as it is of his mortal lover, Psyche and the idea for the theme unquestionably originates with Raphael’s Loggia of Psyche (1517) at the Villa Farnesina, Rome.

The Polyphemus fresco is the largest single figure in the room and occupies a strategically important space in the central arch of the North wall. It is thought that Giulio Romano was under instruction to complete the fresco decoration in time for the arrival of Emperor Charles V in 1530. The inscription GONZAGA II appears on the border above Polyphemus’ head and the association between the powerful ruler of Mantua, Federico Gonzaga II and the mighty Cyclops is implicit, even though Polyphemus is a monstrous figure.

In the same room, Romano has painted the fresco showing Daedalus in his workshop with Pasiphae entering the surrogate cow (fig. 24). A cupid seems to be wrestling with the desired bull which Pasiphae gazed upon:

thinking to draw him to her by her beauty and by her robe, which is divinely resplendent and more beautiful than any rainbow. She has a helpless look – for she knows what the creature is that she loves – and she is eager to embrace it, but it takes no notice of her, but looks at the heifer. (F66)

Romano’s rendition is comical as we see the eager Pasiphae being helped inside the dummy cow by its creator, Daedalus. In keeping with the erotically-charged frescoes in the Sala di Psiche Romano does not shrink from illustrating the graphic aspects of sex in Classical mythology. He was to become notoriously celebrated for his 1525 series of

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87 Pasiphaë (K318) οἰομένη προσσέξεσθαι αὐτὸν τῷ εἴδει καὶ τῇ στολῇ θεόν τι ἀπολαμπόση καὶ ύπερ τάσαν ἱριν, βλέπει τε ἀμήχανον, καὶ γὰρ γιγνώσκει, ὅποιων ἐρή, καὶ περιβάλλειν τὸ θηρίον ὃρμηκεν, ὁ δὲ τῆς μὲν οὐδὲν ξυνίση, βλέπει δὲ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ βοῦν
pornographic prints *I Modi*, mentioned earlier, which accompanied erotic poems composed by his friend Pietro Aretino.

The most famous room at Palazzo Te is the *Sala dei Giganti* (fig.25) which Vasari devotes a long and detailed ekphrasis to in his *Life* of Giulio Romano, praising the work for its startling illusionistic effects, beauty and innovation. Modern writers often quote the *Sala dei Giganti* as an ultimate example of Mannerism. However I have not found

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88 Vasari visited the Palazzo Te twice and the first time in 1541, Giulio Romano himself was his guide and explained all the works to Vasari. Paula Carabell in her essay ‘Breaking the Frame: Transgression and Transformation in Giulio Romano’s Sala dei Giganti’, points out that Vasari’s laudatory description of Romano’s masterpiece goes beyond the normal Renaissance art criticism and “provides the reader with an intimate understanding of the nature of response”, which I feel is akin to the ambitions of Philostratus in writing the *Imagines*. Article in: *Artibus et Historiae*, Vol. 18, No. 36 (1997) 87-100. It is also interesting that Vasari identifies all the numerous gods and goddesses present yet makes no literary references. This demonstrates that the Classical authors, the originators of the characters in the narrative, were of less importance to Vasari (and perhaps Romano) than the immediate concern of what was happening in the painting before him.

one who associates the iconography of the room with Philostratus’ description of a painting that refers to the story of the giant Typho overthrown in the battle of the ‘Gods and the Giants’ as told originally by Hesiod (Theog. 820f). Philostratus describes this painting, mid-way through Islands (Book II.17):

A giant, namely, was once struck down there, and upon him as he struggled in the death agony the island was placed as a bond to hold him down (…) Yonder figure, they say, would represent Typho in Sicily or Enceladus here in Italy, giants that both continents and islands are pressing down, not yet dead indeed but always dying. (…) look at the peak of the mountain; for what you see there are thunderbolts that Zeus is hurling at the giant…

*Islands* (F199-201).90

Having established Giulio knew the *Imagines*, it seems that he may well have had Philostratus’ exciting description of an authentic Hellenistic painting of the battle of the Giants in mind when planning the *Sala dei Giganti* narrative although as usual, all authors refer only to Ovid (Met. I.151). We must not forget that Giulio’s patron was Federigo Gonzaga, the son and heir of Isabella d’Este who was still living in Mantua when Giulio worked on the Palazzo Te and this means, he would have had access to Isabella’s vernacular translation of the *Imagines*. If this was the case, Giulio was more in a better position to realize Philostratus’ Hellenistic masterpieces than any other artist in Italy at the time.

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90 *Islands* (K365) γίγαντα μὲν βεβλήσθαι ποτε ἐνταῦθα, δυσθανατοῦντι δ᾽ αὐτῷ τὴν νῆσον ἐπενεχθῆναι δεσμοῦ ἑνεκεν, εἴκειν δὲ μὴπὶ αὐτόν, (…) τοιτὶ δὲ καὶ τὸν Τυφῶ φασίν ἐν Σικελία βουλεσθαί καὶ τὸν Ἐγκέλαδον ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ ταῦτη, αὖς ἥτειροί τε καὶ νῆσοι πιέζουσιν οὖτω μὲν τεθνεῶτας, ἀεὶ δὲ ἀποθνήσκοντας,(…) ἀποβλέψαντι, τὰ γὰρ ἐπ᾽ αὐτῆς φαινόμενα οὗ Ζεὺς ἀκρίσασι κεραυνοὺς ἐπὶ τὸν γίγαντα,
In addition to the Polyphemus, Pasiphae and Fall of the Giants frescoes, various elements from the Imagines are assimilated into other mythologies at Palazzo Te, rather than appearing as realizations of individual ekphraseis. With the responsibility of time-
consuming execution of his designs removed by the luxury of having his own team of artists in Mantua, Romano was free to concentrate on formulating ideas and has left hundreds of drawings from his Mantuan period. Among these were designs that relate to other descriptions from the *Imagines* including; *Semele* (I.8), *Antaeus* (II.11), *Phaeton* (I.11), *Olympus* (I.21), *Midas* (I.22) and countless variations on *Erotes* (I.6).

Raphael also attempted most of the abovementioned subjects in his *oeuvre* but Romano expanded upon his teacher’s ideas and looked to Philostratus with fresh eyes. Romano’s overall approach to the depiction of Classical mythology is less scholarly than Raphael’s, displaying less fidelity to precise literary details than Raphael demonstrated. Romano’s reaction to Philostratus was more emotional, more imaginative and the results were more spontaneous. The best way to measure Romano’s accomplishment as an interpreter of the *Imagines* is to not to gauge our reaction to his work, but to assess his contemporaries’ reaction through Vasari’s appraisal:

After passing the great loggia, which is adorned with stucco-work and with many arms and various other bizarre ornaments, one comes to some rooms filled with such a variety of fantasies that the brain reels at the thought of them. For Giulio, who was very fanciful and ingenious, wishing to demonstrate his worth, resolved to make, at an angle of the palace which formed a corner similar to that of the room of Psyche described above, an apartment the masonry of which should be in keeping with the painting, in order to deceive as much as possible all who might see it. […] In this work, moreover, in order to render it the more fearsome and terrible, Giulio represented the Giants, huge and fantastic in aspect, falling to the earth, smitten in others in the background, some dead, others wounded, and others again covered by mountains and the ruins of buildings. Wherefore let no one ever think to see any work of the brush more horrible and terrifying, or more natural than this one; and whoever enters that room and sees the windows, doors, and other suchlike things all awry and, as it were, on the point of falling, and the mountains and buildings hurtling down, cannot but fear that everything will fall upon him, and, above all, as he sees the Gods in the Heaven rushing, some here, some there, and all in flight. And what is
most marvellous in the work is to see that the whole of the painting has neither
beginning nor end...  

Like Islands, Pasiphae and the Erotes, most of the descriptions discussed in this thesis
up to now are drawn from the Imagines of Philostratus the Elder. However the
seventeen descriptions by the author who claims to be his grandson, Philostratus the
Younger, were often read as part of the same collection in the fifteenth century and were
regarded as an integral whole since they were published together in one volume by
Aldus Manutius in 1505. Although later commentators criticize the style of the Younger
Philostratus and neglect his descriptions in their analysis, no such preference was
chosen by Renaissance artists who were merely looking for exciting subject matter and
not concerned about syntax and literary style.  

92 The Younger’s first description, Achilles on Skyros, was interpreted by artists in the sixteenth century with interest in the
subject culminating in the seventeenth century with two well known versions by
Nicolas Poussin.  

93 The myth of Apollo and Marsyas was even more popular as a subject
to paint for artists and the distinguishing elements of Philostratus the Younger’s
description survive in several paintings, prints and sculptures. Most scholarship that has
undertaken analysis of the myth and its significance in later cultures is related to the
Ovidian tradition in the mythography of Apollo and Marsyas. My particular approach is
to examine those works of art which indicate a familiarity with the lesser known version
of the myth: Philostratus the Younger’s version.

91 Giorgio Vasari, Lives of the Artists, English translation by Gaston C. DeVere, 1912/1915, Book III.
92 A recent publication from Padua constitutes the only major study devoted to Philostratus the Younger
exclusively: Francesco Ghedini, Le Immagini di Filostrato Minore: la prospettiva dello storico dell’arte
(Qasar: Rome, 2004).
93 Sarcophagi with carved reliefs of Achilles on Scyros existed in the Renaissance and there is evidence
that Raphael and his followers copied them. A drawing by Girolamo da Carpi replicates the freeze from a
sarcophagus previously mounted on the staircase wall of Santa Maria in Aracoeli, Rome (now in Woburn
Abbey, UK) and a very fine Attic sarcophagus, ca. 240 AD with another version of the myth that inspired
Raphael for his Parnassus fresco, is in the collection of the Louvre. Examples in painting of Achilles on
Skyros in the 16th century include: Achilles among the daughters of Lycomede, by Francesco Primatuccio,
Ulysses Room, Fontainebleau and a version by his pupil Niccolo dell’Abate in the collection of Wilton
House, UK. Two versions by Poussin are: Achilles and Daughters of Lycomede, 1656. Oil on canvas. The
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and Achilles with the Daughters of Lycomede. 1656. Oil on canvas.
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond. The subject is dealt with by PJ Heslin, The Transvestite
One Greek Myth and its survival in the Renaissance: MARSYAS

The Phyrgian has been overcome; at any rate his glance is that of a man already perished, since he knows what he is to suffer, and he realizes that he has played the flute for the last time, inasmuch as inopportune he acted with effrontery towards the son of Leto.

(Philostratus the Younger, Imagines 2. ‘Marsyas’ F294)\(^94\)

The myth begins with a musical competition between Marsyas the silen and the God Apollo and is depicted on several Hellenistic sarcophagi.\(^95\) Echoes of this figure group survive in numerous replicas as well as in sarcophagus reliefs, gems, and wall decorations.

Most of the Marsyas sarcophagi show the narrative from beginning to end; starting on the left hand side of the frieze where Marsyas is playing the aulos, a woodwind instrument of Phrygian origin and Apollo plays his kithara (fig.26).

Xenophon’s account from about 390 BC is the first significant mention of the myth:

*It was here (in Celaenae), according to the story, that Apollo had Marsyas flayed, after having defeated him in a contest of musical skills; he hung up the skin in the cave from which the sources issue, and it is for this reason that the river is called Marsyas.*

(Xenophon, Anabasis, 1.2.8.)\(^96\)

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\(^94\) Marsyas (K394) καθῄρηται ὁ Φρύξ, βλέπει γοῦν ἀπολωλός ἢδη διὰ ξύνεσιν ὑών πείσεται, καὶ ὃστατα δὴ αὐλῆσαι πεπίστευκεν οὐκ ἐς καιρὸν ἐς τὸν τῆς Λητοῦς θρασυνάμενος

\(^95\) Edith Wyss counts twenty-two existing sarcophagi with reliefs that relate the myth of Apollo and Marsyas. One example that relates particularly well to the Imagines description is in the Museo Conservatori, Rome. Edith Wyss, *The myth of Apollo and Marsyas in the art of the Italian Renaissance: an inquiry into the meaning of images*, (Newark: University of Delaware, 1996) 32.

\(^96\) Xen.Anab.1.2.8. Xenophon. *Xenophonis opera omnia*, vol. 3. Oxford, Clarendon Press. 1904 (repr. 1961) ἐνταῦθα λέγεται Ἀπόλλων εκδείξαι Μαρσύαν νικήσας ἐρίζοντα ὧν περί σοφίας, καὶ τὸ δέρμα κρεμάσαι ἐν τῷ ἄντρῳ ὃθεν αἱ πηγαί: διὰ δὲ τούτῳ ὁ ποταμός καλεῖται Μαρσύας. Xenophon was writing at the beginning of the 4\(^{th}\) century BC, although black figure vases of the 5\(^{th}\) century depict the contest and punishment, demonstrating that the subject was already popularized in Greek art.
Fig. 26 Sarcophagus relief with *Apollo and Marsyas*, 290-300 AD, (region: Chiarone, Tuscany), Louvre.

Athena and a muse sometimes provide the audience although they are not always present in late Roman representations of the myth. On most friezes, the drama unfolds in the centre of the composition as Apollo strikes a regal pose and looks at, or points to, the defeated Marsyas. The narrative changes from a pleasant musical contest to the scene of execution with the introduction of the Scythian slave who sharpens his knife in readiness, or as in the case of the Louvre sarcophagus, a second servant assists in binding Marsyas to the tree.

Philostratus the Younger concentrates on the grim end of this sequential narrative by describing the brutish appearance of the barbarian as he kneels to sharpen his blade. Our author constructs his drama around a group of only three main figures; the God, the victim and the executioner, that re-creates a famous group of Pergamene bronzes of the 3rd century B.C. later known to Renaissance artists through copies (fig. 27). This three-dimensional tragic group creates a totally different dynamic to the crowded scene of the

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97 Athena is present because she is the inventor of the flute (Pausanias I.24). Myron sculpted a group with Athena and Marsyas caught in the moment when the satyr advances to pick up the flute Athena has discarded. Roman copies are in the Vatican Museum (Lateran BS 225).

98 Nearly all the extant Hellenistic and Roman depictions of the Marsyas and Apollo myth in sculpture descend from two types of monumental sculpture groups thought to have originated in Pergamon. See JJ Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age*, Cambridge University Press, 1986, 118-119. Pollitt does not cite an antique source for description of the Pergamene group but suggests “the number of surviving copies of the Marsyas suggests that it too was widely admired in Antiquity.” Marble copies exist as: *Hanging Marsyas*, Roman copy, Istanbul, Archaeological Museum; *Kneeling Scythian*, Roman copy, Florence, Uffizi (fig. 28); *Apollo with Kithara*, original found in Pergamon and now in Altes Museum, Berlin. See also Wyss (1996) 48.
sarcophagus’ continuous narrative. This three-figure punishment group corresponds closely to the description in the *Imagines* particularly with the knife-grinder who appears with “hands on the whetstone and the iron, but that he looks up at Marsyas with glaring eyes.” (F294)

![Fig.27 Berlin Altes Museum, reconstruction of the Marsyas group, from copies of Pergamene originals.](image)

Representations of the Marsyas myth in ancient art show what a vital role the executioner plays in this visual drama with Apollo the golden God, seemingly content to distance himself from the grisly task of flaying Marsyas’ suspended body. This is important when we look at the very different way Ovid relates the myth (*Metamorphoses* vi.383-400); not mentioning the executioner at all and having Apollo himself carry out the flaying. It demonstrates how, unlike Ovid, Philostratus’ descriptions are confined to a re-telling of the myth through the traditions locked into Hellenistic art making.

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99 *Marsyas* (K394) ὡς αἱ μὲν χεῖρες ἐς τὴν ἀκόνην αὐτῷ καὶ τὸν σίδηρον, ἀναβλέπει δὲ ἐς τὸν Μαρσύαν γλαυκῶν τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν
Despite being a macabre subject, the *Flaying of Marsyas* enjoyed wide popularity with Renaissance artists and into the following centuries.\(^{100}\) This print (fig. 29) after a composition by Raphael and engraved by the Master of the Die, circa 1517, corresponds to Philostratus’ ekphrasis, with the exception of the figure on the right, a female that appears in sarcophagi reliefs and represents Athena, or a muse.

\(^{100}\) For a discussion on the Neoplatonic allegorical interpretation of the Marsyas myth see E. Wind (1958)...Dante used this interpretation of poetic inspiration as divine gift, in the opening stanzas of *Paradiso*, Wyss (1996) 35ff.
Philostratus describes the moment full of tension just before the flaying is about to commence and focuses attention on the barbarian executioner who is meticulously sharpening his blade on a whetstone. Whilst we are given a vivid portrayal of the malevolent knife-grinder, Philostratus mentions Apollo only superficially as a relaxed figure, resting on a rock and strumming his lyre lazily with one hand.

Philostratus the Younger ends the description not with Ovid’s gruesome rendition of the flaying, but on a comic-tragic note as he reminds us that Marsyas will live on in his new form as a river and that a band of satyrs “are represented as bewailing Marsyas, but as
displaying, along with their grief, their playful spirit and their disposition to leap about.” (F296)\textsuperscript{101}

In Raphael’s composition, it is possible to match the figures he has used not only to Philostratus’ text but also to antique sculptures known to the artist in Rome. On the left of Raphael’s composition the figure of the suspended Marsyas is identical to several Roman copies of a Pergamene original much copied in the Renaissance (fig.30).\textsuperscript{102}

\textsuperscript{101} Marsyas (K395) ὃρα μοι καὶ τὴν τῶν Σατύρων ἀγέλην, οἷα θρηνοῦντες τὸν Μαρσύαν γεγράφαται, ὡς ἐπιφαίνοντες τὸ ἀγέρωχον καὶ ἀνεσκιρτηκὸς ξὺν τῷ ἀνιᾶσθαι. Pausanias (10.30.9) describes the earlier relationship of Marsyas and Olympus as forming the subject of part of a monumental painting called the \textit{Underworld} or \textit{Nekyia} by Polygnotus. Pausanias saw the work of Polygnotus in a building he calls the \textit{Lesche} (place of talk or ‘clubhouse’) of the Knidians within the precinct of Apollo at Delphi:

\textit{Above him is Marsyas, sitting on a rock, and by his side is Olympus, with the appearance of a boy in the bloom of youth learning to play the flute. The Phrygians in Celaenae hold that the river passing through the city was once this great flute-player, and they also hold that the Song of the Mother, an air for the flute, was composed by Marsyas. They say too that they repelled the army of the Gauls by the aid of Marsyas, who defended them against the barbarians by the water from the river and by the music of his flute.}


\textsuperscript{102} Marble copies of two types of Pergamene bronze \textit{Marsyas} statues are in the Uffizi, Florence. Another antique copy of a Pergamene original of the knife-grinder (fig.28) known affectionately in the Renaissance as ‘\textit{l’Arotino}’ (or, the pasta maker, because he looks like he is rolling out pasta) also remains in the Medici collection today in Florence. It is thought that this sculpture group originally included an Apollo seated in a languid pose, as Philostratus the Younger describes, one example of which survives in porphyry and marble in the Museo Archeologico, Naples.
Fig. 30 *Marsyas*, Roman copy of a Greek original (2nd century BC), marble, Capitoline Museum, Rome.
The figure of Apollo seated or standing, with his kithara is present in several sarcophagi reliefs, marble statues and small bronzes known in the Renaissance and Raphael would not have had to look far in Rome to find a prototype.103 Also known to Raphael and his contemporaries were the ceiling decorations, now lost, of a Roman funerary building, near the Porta Salaria in Rome and fortunately recorded in sketches by one of his pupils in the Codex Pighianus, Berlin. Philostratus the Younger’s triple punishment group is clearly reproduced in the drawing (fig.31).

Fig.31 Unknown artist, first quarter of 16th century, Codex Pighianus. Berlin Staatsbibliothek

We know that Raphael was familiar with the *Imagines* and it seems likely he has amalgamated the archaeological evidence available to him with the details supplied by Philostratus the Younger to create his own adaptation of antiquity. The subject of the flaying of Marsyas obviously fascinated him as he featured it again, for an important commission in the Stanza della Segnatura of Pope Julius II’s Vatican apartments. Here, Raphael has included two male figures with the knife-grinder now holding the blade against Marsyas’ chest and a second figure crowning Apollo with a wreath (fig.32). This fresco reveals Raphael’s study of Rome’s antiquities, as several of

103 For a list of Apollo prototypes known in 16th century Italy see Bober & Rubinstein, cat. nos. 35 & 36.
the sarcophagi reliefs (like that in the Louvre, fig.26) feature two barbarians standing next to a suspended Marsyas or in the process of tying him up with ropes.104

![Fig.32 Raphael, Apollo and Marsyas, fresco, Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican.](image)

The *Apollo and Marsyas* myth took on allegorical meaning in the Renaissance and in the Stanza della Segnatura, the victorious Apollo with his sacred kithara and laurel wreath, embodies the ‘*summa*’ and source of the divine poetic inspiration. The conquered Marsyas, however, lacked the divine gift; his foolish challenge was doomed. Hence, the Renaissance made the myth an allegory of ‘the triumph of Poetry’ which constitutes one of the four faculties of knowledge represented in four tondi on the Vatican ceiling; Theology, Jurisprudence, Philosophy and Poetry. The Marsyas allegory

104 Edgar Wind associates Raphael’s *Flaying of Marsyas* fresco in the Stanza della Segnatura with a Roman sarcophagus as recorded in a drawing (Eton College collection) rather than suggesting a literary-based model as provided by Philostratus the Younger (*Marsyas*, II). Wind (1958) 171.
is therefore directly connected to the prominent figure of the poet Dante in *The Parnassus* situated below.

The scene Philostratus the Younger relates surfaces in works of art throughout the Graeco-Roman world, not only on sarcophagi reliefs, but on mosaic floors, tomb plaques, gems, monumental sculpture groups and wall paintings. Most extant examples show the point in the myth before the actual flaying takes place and emphasise the non-involvement in the execution of Apollo. One of the liveliest renditions of the scene before the flaying is found on the mosaic floor of the House of Aion, Paphos, Cyprus (fig.33).

![Fig.33 Apollo condemns Marsyas, mosaic, 3rd century AD, House of Aion, Paphos, Cyprus.](image)

Most examples from antiquity were intent upon making clear that a professional executioner was about to lay hands on Marsyas, not Apollo himself. This point is really not made clear in Ovid (Met.6.382) and translators sometimes interpret the verse as
meaning that the God Apollo himself, is meting out the punishment. Only Hyginus and Philostratus the Younger, guided by the Hellenistic art they viewed, mention the Scythian executioner and his sharp knife. This difference between visual and verbal evocations of the punishment points to a stronger tolerance for violence in literature. Since the visual arts practice a more tangible mode of representation, perhaps they exercised more restraint in the depiction of Apollo’s bloody revenge.

Ovid’s is the most melodramatic report of the myth, Apollodorus, Nonnus and Hyginus mention Marsyas’ death only briefly. In *Metamorphoses*, Ovid launches into the high point of the drama with Marsyas screaming and pleading for his life as he is stripped of his skin:

*Marsyas cried ‘Why do you peel me out of myself? ‘Aah! I repent’, he screamed in agony. ‘Aah! Music is not worth this pain!’ As he screams, the skin is flayed from the surface of his body, no part is untouched. Blood flows everywhere, the exposed sinews are visible, and the trembling veins quiver, without skin to hide them: you can number the internal organs, and the fibres of the lungs, clearly visible in his chest*.

It is almost scientific in detail and this captured the imagination of many Renaissance and Baroque period artists who tackled the more sensational aspects of the myth. Raphael, whose abiding passion for antiquity meant he adhered to the surviving models he found in Rome and to Philostratus’ ‘eyewitness’ account of a Hellenistic painting, meant he did not choose to portray the actual flaying of Marsyas, unlike many of his followers. Renaissance art split the myth into episodes, choosing either the scene of the

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105 One example being the 1922 translation by Brookes Moore, who translates the Ovid passage as:

*His life was forfeit; for, they had agreed the one who lost should be the victor’s prey. And, as Apollo punished him, he cried, “Ah-h-h! why are you now tearing me apart? A flute has not the value of my life!”*


*“Quid me mihi detrahis?” inquit: “a piget a non est” clamabat “tibia tanti.” Clamanti cutis est summos direpta per artus, nec quicquam nisi vulnus erat; crur undique manat, detectique patent nervi, trepidaeque sine utta pelle micant venae; salientia viscera posses et perlucentes numerare in pectore fibras.*
musical contest between the God and the silen or the more gruesome scene showing Marsyas’ punishment.

The most influential version of the myth available to Renaissance artists in the vernacular was a corrupt paraphrasing of the Classical sources by Giovanni del Virgilio written in popular Latin in 1320 and translated into Italian in 1497.\textsuperscript{107} This version mixes up Ovid’s narrative with that of the mythographer Fulgentius of the 5th to 6th centuries, who has King Midas judge the competition between Apollo and Marsyas. Giovanni del Virgilio has confused Ovid’s \textit{Marsyas} verses with those that describe a different competition that took place between Apollo and Pan in \textit{Metamorphoses} (11.146-193).\textsuperscript{108} The iconography of several Renaissance paintings shows that some artists bypassed Classical primary sources and followed del Virgilio’s narrative instead, Titian’s painting of 1575 (fig.34) would seem to follow del Virgilio’s direction. Possibly the most famous Renaissance image of the myth, Titian’s execution scene is far removed from the traditional Pergamene three figure punishment group of the \textit{Imagines} that Raphael followed. Titian’s canvas is crowded with figures including King Midas, the barbarian in his Scythian cap assisting Apollo in peeling back the skin and a figure playing the \textit{lira da braccio} to the left of the composition, which has been variously identified as Orpheus or Apollo. What looks like one of Marsyas’ fellow satyrs attends the scene holding a bucket to the right, perhaps to catch the blood as it flows. There is also a child satyr with two dogs in the foreground sniffing around the scraps of flesh. Titian has made an error in featuring Pan’s syrinx hanging from the tree, supposedly the instrument of Marsyas’ downfall, when it should be an aulos or at least, a single reed flute. Marsyas too, is no longer the silen of antiquity but a fully formed satyr with the torso of a man and the legs of a goat, like Pan. In this painting, the myth of \textit{Midas, Pan and Apollo} (Philostratus the Elder, \textit{Imagines}, Midas I. 22) becomes fused with that of \textit{Apollo and Marsyas} and as Titian was such an influential artist, his example was copied by others for generations.\textsuperscript{109}


\textsuperscript{108} Philostratus the Elder describes a painting of the Myth of Apollo, Pan and Midas, \textit{Imagines} ‘Midas’ I.22.

\textsuperscript{109} Examples are too numerous to mention, here are just a few: Palma Giovanni, Brunswick Collection, Germany, print by Melchior Meier, 1582; Guercino, 1618, Pitti Palace, Florence; Johann Liss, c.1627 Galleria d’Accademia, Venice.
Also instrumental in perpetuating a distorted version of the Marsyas myth were the early illustrated editions of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. A woodcut from the *Ovidio metamorphoseos vulgare* printed in Venice 1497 by the Florentine publisher Giunta, is possibly the first depiction of the myth that shows Apollo flaying Marsyas (fig.35).\(^{110}\)

The text was taken from Giovanni Bonsignori’s Tuscan translation of 1377 and perverts

\(^{110}\) I still have not found a version of the flaying of Marsyas in ancient art that has Apollo as the executioner laying hands on the silen.
the Classical sources somewhat. The 1497 Ovid illustration contains five episodes related to the *Marsyas* myth:

1. The banquet of Olympians in a cloud with Athena playing the aulos.
2. Athena playing the bagpipes sitting on the edge of a pond.
3. The competition with Apollo playing a *lira da braccio* in the centre and Marsyas playing Athena’s set of bagpipes which she discarded in a fit of pique having seen her reflection in the pool and noticed the way her cheeks puffed out.
4. Apollo flaying a seated Marsyas
5. The aftermath; a temple in the distance with Marsyas’ hide hanging up.

Fig.35 Giovanni Buonsignori, ‘Marsyas and Apollo’, *Ovidio metmorpheos vulgare*, Giunta, Venice, 1497.

This illustrated edition of *Metamorphoses* was such a success that it was re-printed six times within the first two decades of the sixteenth century and the illustration blocks wore out. The influence of Giunta’s woodcut can be seen eighty years later, when Titian painted his picture, especially with the inclusion of a standing figure with the *lira da*
braccio. Other illustrated editions followed and retained the scenario whereby Apollo flays Marsyas as in the 1557 edition, printed in Lyons (fig.36).

Fig.36 Bernard Salomon, Apollo flaying Marsyas, Ovid, Métamorphose Figurée, Lyons, 1557.

Apart from the important Pergamene models another antique source helped to circulate imagery associated with the Marsyas myth in the Renaissance and that was the Augustan carnelian gem representing the triumphant Apollo with his lyre, the bound Marsyas and the boy Olympus. The gem was celebrated in Renaissance times and recorded as early as 1447 by the Florentine sculptor Ghiberti. It was owned by the Patriarch of Aquileia and Pope Paul II; elected to the throne of St. Peter in 1464. The gem then found its way into the collection of Florence’s Lorenzo de’ Medici around 1472 and eventually ended up belonging to the Bourbons of Naples where it is housed today in the Museo Nazionale. Along the way it sired a host of copies in the form of cut gems, plaquettes, reliefs, drawings, paintings and book illuminations and knowledge of the image travelled to artistic circles in France and Flanders.

A portrait of 1480 attributed to Botticelli, shows Simonetta Vespucci the most celebrated beauty of her day and Botticelli’s favourite model, wearing a replica of the
This demonstrates just how widely fashionable the vogue for antiquity was in the Renaissance and proves it was not confined to humanist scholars and Popes. The gem is also reproduced on the frontispiece (fig. 37) of Boccaccino Il Vecchio’s 1487 illuminated manuscript of a Latin translation of Philostratus’ *Imagines* made for King Matthias of Hungary.\footnote{112}{\textit{Imagines}}
Fig. 37 Codex Corviniana, *Imagines*, Boccardonio II Vecchio, 1487, Hungary.

Book illustration, sculpture, sarcophagi, gems and the Classical texts from Ovid and Philostratus are just some of the methods by which the myth of *Apollo and Marsyas* survived into the Renaissance.
More than the Classics though, the essential guide to ancient mythology for any Italian was their national poet Dante, who implores Apollo in his opening stanzas to the *Paradiso* for divine inspiration so that he may conclude the awesome task of writing the *Divine Comedy*:

*Enter into my breast; within me breathe*

*The very power you made manifest*

*When you drew Marsyas out from his limbs’ sheath.*

Such references to the mythological past by Dante, expanded upon by his commentators, awakened curiosity in the ancient myths throughout the Renaissance. However once artists of Titian’s reputation took hold of the myth and produced their own versions, subsequent generations of artists need not look exclusively to Dante or to the distant past for inspiration. Works of art produced in the sixteenth century became the primary source for works of art produced thereafter and it was the Ovidian tradition that flourished and transformed alongside innovations in art.

The spiritual and intellectual crisis that gripped Italian culture after the first quarter of the sixteenth century leading up to the Reformation, provided the background for the new severity in the conception of the myth. Examples of the *Flaying of Marsyas* in seventeenth century art are numerous; created at a time when the myth was seen as evidence of God’s concern for, and intervention in, human affairs. Baroque sculpture in particular illustrated how the sedate drama of the antique model was replaced by an emphasis on expressing pain and punishment and the shocking graphic aspect of the flaying. At times, the pagan silen character is almost translated into that associated with the tormented deaths of Christian martyrs. There is a strong link between *Marsyas* imagery in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the portrayal of the martyrdom of Saint Sebastian, a favourite of Diocletian before he converted to Christianity and died a martyr at Rome in 288AD. Tied to a tree and sentenced to execution by archery, the

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*Entra nel petto mio, e spira tue*

*si come quando Marsia traesti*

*de la vagina de le membra sue.*

114 There is a correlation in the way seventeenth century artists portrayed the *Death of Marsyas* and the Crucifixion of Saint Peter: Titian painted the silen suspended upside down as he underwent a type of ‘martydrom’ and Saint Peter also, was crucified upside down. The artist Luca Giordano painted both subjects: *Crucifixion of Saint Peter*, 1692 (Galleria dell’Accademia, Venice) and *Marsyas and Apollo* 1660 (Naples, private collection), repeating the same pose.
bound and naked Saint wearing an agonized expression, is immediately reminiscent of Marsyas in works by Hans Holbein, Luca Giordano, Giovanni Antonio Bazzi (il Sodoma) among many others.

An explicit link between the fate of the Christian martyr and that of the pagan silen seems to be present in a curious painting by the minor Italian artist, Amico Aspertini (fig.39). Dated to 1505, it shows Saint Sebastian tied to a ruined classical column and propped against an antique sarcophagus with a sculpted frieze which contains elements from the myth of Marsyas.

On the frieze, there is the seated figure of a God that mimics the traditional pose of Apollo and a figure stands next to him holding Apollo’s lyre. Or, is the seated figure
Midas and Apollo himself holds the lyre? A satyr, possibly Marsyas seems to be crying and is seen pleading with the two figures next to a dead tree. This seems likely to be the tragic figure of Marsyas pleading for his life.

**Summary**

As mentioned in the first chapter, there has always been the question if the Philostratoi were really describing works of art, or just using the picture gallery device as an elegant means of relating the Greek myths. Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* would have been known to an educated Greek like Philostratus the Younger. He could have pretended to be describing a painting and inserted into that description the iconographic elements as related by Ovid. However he did not: he chose to depict the scene that we see most commonly portrayed in the surviving examples of art from the Graeco-Roman period which was the version of the story he knew best from visual sources. I have yet to find a representation of the myth dating from antiquity that depicts the actual flaying.

The contrast between *Marsyas and Apollo* imagery in Hellenistic art and in the literature available at the time, supports an argument that the Philostratoi were in fact describing works of art known to them, whether statues, mosaics or paintings. This point stands quite apart from the question of whether the gallery near Naples existed.

Research into the images of the *Flaying of Marsyas* has also shed light on the reception of Philostratus in the Renaissance. Raphael’s Philostratean composition that drew upon Marsyas imagery exclusively from antique models survived in only a few later decorative schemes carried out by his pupils, while Italian artists logically turned to the most accessible narratives for inspiration: del Virgilio’s text and the illustrated translations of Ovid. This applies not only for the *Apollo and Marsyas* myth but for the majority of the Greek myths retold in the *Imagines*. From the death of Giulio Romano onward, examples of art where Philostratus is identifiable as the source become rare and it would take the newfound interest in antiquity and the *Imagines* which occurred outside Italy in the courts of France toward the end of the sixteenth century, to ensure the survival of Philostratus’ ekphraseis as a viable resource for artists and humanists. The transmission of the *Imagines* in the culture of late Renaissance France forms the discussion of the following Chapter.
CHAPTER FIVE

Philostratus: From Italy to France

- Introduction: The court of François I
- Budé, Lascaris, Greek scholars & the formation of the library at Fontainebleau
- L’École de Fontainebleau: artists at the French court and their use of Philostratus
- After Fontainebleau: Greek myths in prints and drawings

This chapter deals with the transmission of the Imagines in sixteenth century France and will follow a group of Italian artists to the royal residence at Fontainebleau, where recreations of paintings described by Philostratus were chosen to decorate the remarkable Galerie of François I.¹ This investigation, which also explores the humanist interests of the King credited with ‘classicizing’ France, is a prelude to the following chapter which looks at the influential French translation of the Imagines by the Late Renaissance scholar, Blaise de Vigenère.²

Whilst unambiguous examples of the use of Philostratus at Fontainebleau are few, the paintings there are important in representing the third successive generation of artists from Italy to use the Imagines. The hegemony of Italy over the visual arts in France during the sixteenth century is widely acknowledged.³ However Italy lost much of its talent after the Sack of Rome in 1527 when artists migrated abroad. In 1530, the Florentine master Rosso Fiorentino arrived at the French court followed by Francesco

¹ François I (1494-1547) was the heir presumptive of Louis XII, who died in 1515. François reigned until 1547 and was succeeded by his son, Henri II cf. Robert Jean Knecht, The Rise and Fall of Renaissance France: 1483-1610, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001) chapters 6-12.
Primaticcio, a pupil of Guilio Romano who had worked on the Palazzo Te in Mantua.\textsuperscript{4} The two Italian masters brought with them to France many of their workshop assistants. They painted Philostratus the Elder’s \textit{Education of Achilles} (II. 20) and \textit{Semele} (I. 14) on the walls of the King’s Galerie.\textsuperscript{5} Their work for François I gave rise to an entire movement in European art known as the School of Fontainebleau (\textit{L’École de Fontainebleau}) which is seen as responsible for bringing Classicism to France. François I’s transformation of the old medieval fortress of Fontainebleau into a rich Italianate palace is central to any study of art in this era and important for the understanding of the survival of the Classical tradition in Northern Europe. Other subjects from the \textit{Imagines} worked their way into the decorative scheme at Fontainebleau and provided the themes for mythological prints produced by the influential Fontainebleau printing press after the death of Rosso in 1540. The works produced by this colony of Italian artists at the court of the Valois proclaimed a taste for Classical antiquity which set the standard for French artists to follow, although France would have to wait until Nicholas Poussin to produce an artist deemed worthy of this inheritance.\textsuperscript{6} Rather than native French artists, it was a group of Flemish artists living in France who profited from the availability of Italian masters at Fontainebleau. Léonard Thiry joined the Fontainebleau studio in the early Rosso days and several notable Flemish artists followed Thiry in 1566, to live and study in the Paris area; creating the first centre of Italian art instruction outside Italy.\textsuperscript{7}

\textit{The émigrés}


\textsuperscript{5} The \textit{Semele} painting by Primaticcio, does not survive in the present Galerie but is known from an engraving by Léon Davent. See Sylvie Béguin, \textit{Two Notes on Decorations in the Galerie François I at Fontainebleau}, \textit{Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes}, Vol. 57. (1994), 270-278. A third fresco subject in the Galerie with possible connections to Philostratus is the \textit{Death of Ajax the Locrian} (‘The Gyraean Rocks’, \textit{Imagines}, II xiii.). It has been suggested this Homeric theme forms part of the iconography for Rosso’s shipwreck fresco, although Panofsky connects it to Hyginus’ \textit{Fabulae} (CXVI) and do not mention Philostratus’ treatment of the same subject. Dora and Erwin Panofsky, ‘The Iconography of the Galerie François Ier at Fontainebleau’, \textit{Gazette des Beaux-Arts}, 6\textsuperscript{th} ser. i.ii, Se 1958, 145.

\textsuperscript{6} The nineteenth century art historian Louis Dimier summarizes the lack of native artistic talent in Renaissance France in his book \textit{French Painting in the Sixteenth Century} (London: Duckworth, 1904). Dimier uses the \textit{Artemisia} series of drawings executed by Antoine Caron and others (Louvre, Paris) as an example of how French artists aspired to emulate the Italian masters but failed, calling the series “a monument of the feebleness of the whole school” \textit{ibid}. 192. Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665) studied Classical art in Rome and painted several subjects from the \textit{Imagines} that are mentioned in the following chapter of this thesis.

\textsuperscript{7} \textit{ibid.} 229.
On the 6th May 1527 the Duke of Bourbon marched on Rome and was killed in the first assault, not living to see his troops victorious. Pope Clement VII fled to the Castel San Angelo whilst his city fell victim to a prolonged and ruthless sacking.\(^8\) Vasari wrote “In 1527 disaster fell upon Rome; the city was sacked, many artists fled, many artworks were destroyed or carried away.”\(^9\) When the occupying army finally withdrew from Rome in February of the following year, the beautiful city as it was known to Raphael and to Francesco Campana, was destitute and its citizens were in shock. The troops employed by the German Emperor and King of Spain, Charles V, had looted many art works and destroyed or defaced others. Raphael’s fresco of the *Disputation* in the *Stanze* of the Vatican was scarred with graffiti by the Lutheran troops and André Chastel describes how a portrait of the Pope had been attacked as an expression of anti-papist sentiment.\(^10\)

Isabella d’Este was present in Rome at the time and did what she could to provide refuge at the Palazzo Colonna for escapees from the papal court. However the Marchesa did not shirk at trying to profit from war when she attempted to purchase works of art that had been displaced in the fray. Chastel refers to the well known example of Isabella instructing her son Ferrante to purchase the stolen Raphael tapestries for 500 crowns.\(^11\) Rome was anxious to save its treasures and when the Pope barricaded himself in the Castel San Angelo, it seems his main concern was to stop the invaders getting hold of his gold and jewels. Benvenuto Cellini, another Italian artist and craftsman who later worked for François I in France, was a witness to the Sack of Rome. In his famous autobiography, Cellini describes how he found the desperate Pope alone in a room with one servant and “the tiara and the whole collection of great jewels of the Apostolic Camera”.\(^12\)

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\(^10\) Chastel (1983) 92. The portrait was of the Pope when he was still Cardinal Guilio de’Medici. Pope Clement VII lived through the sack of Rome paying a ransom of 400,000 ducats in exchange for his life. He made the concordant with Charles V at Bologna. Peace was concluded on December 23rd 1529 and ratified on January 6th 1530.

\(^11\) ibid. 97.

\(^12\) *The Autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini*, trans. John Addington Symonds (New York: F. Collier and Son Company, 1910) 38. Goldsmith, painter, sculptor, soldier and musician, Cellini (1500-1571) claims to have fired the shot that killed the Duke of Bourbon. Describing the scene when he discovered the Pope in hiding, Cellini writes:

...his Holiness ordered me to take all the gems out of their gold settings. This I accordingly did; afterwards I wrapt them separately up in bits of paper and we sewed them into the linings of the Pope’s and the Cavaliere’s clothes. Then they gave me all the gold, which weighed about two hundred pounds, and bade me melt it down as secretly as I was able.
With their patrons in hiding and the city in chaos, the once flourishing artistic community of Rome had to look elsewhere for work. It was Charles V’s habitual adversary, François I, italophile and King of France, who would extend a hand of friendship to the leading artists and humanists of Rome.

To decorate his new Classical-revivalist architecture François decided to invite the most famous artists of Italy to his Court. Michelangelo was approached and declined the offer, but perhaps the greater prize was Leonardo da Vinci who spent 1516-19 at the French court residing in the Manoir de Cloux, near the King’s château at Amboise. A popular legend propagated by Vasari has it that Leonardo was so beloved of the King, the artist died in François’ arms at the Château of Blois; however, this story has been discredited by historians. No paintings produced from Leonardo’s French period are known, but Carlo Pedretti believes that Leonardo had been commissioned to build a new chateau for the King’s mother at Romorantin, a project of which traces remain in sketches of the ‘Codex Atlanticus’.

Unfortunately François was not as successful politically and militarily as he was in his cultural pursuits and after leading his troops across the Alps into Lombardy, he suffered a crushing defeat at Pavia on 25th February 1525. Overpowered in the country which he so admired, he was then imprisoned in Spain before signing the treaty of Madrid with Emperor Charles V in January of 1526. After his release and little deterred by his defeat in Italy, François resumed his search for Italian talent to enrich France and over the next two decades welcomed a host of painters, sculptors, architects and decorators to his country. The Florentine ceramist Girolamo della Robbia arrived in 1528 and set up a ceramics factory at Suresnes, near Paris and helped design and build the Château de Madrid in the Bois de Boulogne. In the list of Italian painters and craftsmen that came to Fontainebleau, was the prominent architect Sebastiano Serlio (1475-c.1554), another émigré to escape Rome after 1527 and one who played a major role on the project for the Palace of Fontainebleau after Rosso’s death in 1540. In Rome, he had worked

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13 According to Knecht, Leonardo died not at Blois but at the Manoir de Cloux (Clos-Lucé near Amboise) on 2 May, 1519 and records show that the King was away at Saint-Germain-en-Laye on that date. R.J. Knecht (1984) 264.
16 Serlio designed several châteaux in France but the only one to have survived, despite alterations, is that of Ancy-le-Franc (c.1546), near Tonnerre in Burgundy.
with Baldassare Peruzzi, one of Raphael’s collaborators on the Villa Farnesina and was an exponent of the revived Classical style. In a tribute to Vitruvius, Serlio had written an illustrated treatise in five books originally entitled *Regole generali d’architettura* (General Rules of Architecture) and published in five volumes of an intended seven, in Venice and Lyons between 1537 and 1551 as *I sette libri dell’architettura* (The Seven Books of Architecture) in which he set about clearly defining the orders of Classical architecture.

![Design for a loggia for the Chateau de Fontainebleau](image)

Fig.1 Sebastiano Serlio, Design for a loggia for the Chateau de Fontainebleau (from *Il settino libro d’architettura*, 1545.

Serlio’s treatise was well received throughout Europe and proved influential in France. It was largely due to the success of the first two volumes that Serlio caught the attention of François I and was invited to France.

**Bringing back the ‘Golden Age’: François I, “Père des Arts et Lettres”**

Depictions of the king frequently portray him as the caretaker of antiquity, a champion fighting for the preservation and promotion of a Classical past. Images such as Rosso Fiorentino’s *The Enlightenment of François I* (fig.2) where the king is seen entering a dazzling Classical temple dressed like an ancient warrior, as the blindfolded populace of France grope their way in the darkness of ignorance, became a common part of royal

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Serlio is quite often described as ‘Mannerist’ although his training was quite firmly related to the Classical tradition as interpreted through Raphael and his School. Later in life, he was influenced by Mannerist tendencies. See the first English translation of Serlio’s complete works, *Sebastiano Serlio on Architecture*, Vol.2, Books VI-VII of *Tutte l’opere d’architettura et prospective*, trans. Vaughn Hart and Peter Hicks. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001.
propaganda.\textsuperscript{18} The Boyvin print (below) shows the details better than the damaged fresco of the Galerie.

François is seen here, not only as temporal leader of his people but cultural leader. This is also made explicit in a miniature, Fr\'ancais I listening to Antoine Macault Reading his Translation of the Antiquities of Diodorus Siculus, where Fr\'ancais appears as the enlightened sovereign, setting an example for the courtiers, clergy and children that surround him.\textsuperscript{19} Much has been written about the legend of Fr\'ancais I as “father of the


\textsuperscript{19} Unknown miniaturist, Chantilly, Mus\'ee Cond\'e. Reproduced in Janet Cox-Rearick (1996), Fig. 17. 12.
arts and letters” a title which first appeared in a eulogy written by Pierre Gallan.20 The King’s contemporaries avidly supported the concept that he had single-handedly ushered in “the Golden Age” which brought France closer to the nobleness of antiquity. “You defeated the vile monster Ignorance/ You brought back the Golden Age/Through you, first in the world, has returned/The Beautiful Virgin known in ancient times.”21 François came from the Visconti line of the Royal family and had learned Italian and Latin as a child. His mother was a Princess of Savoy and had special text books commissioned for the Royal classroom that reflected a Classical sensibility, including a work on ancient mythology; the Commentaire sur le livre des échecs amoureux and a discourse on wisdom; Archiloge Sophie, translated from the Latin by the Augustine, Jacques Legrand.22 As a child’s text book the Commentaire was illustrated with “superbes miniatures, grandes et petites, vignettes autour des grandes miniatures et initiales”, indicating that François would have had some basic visual introduction to the ancient myths via such books. Works of art depicting mythological subjects would not yet have been in evidence at the royal residences François spent his childhood in.

Although François’ father, Charles d’Angoulême, had been a collector of fine art, Charles died when the prince was only two years old and cannot be regarded as a direct influence on the great collector and connoisseur that François became. When Raphael’s friend, the diplomat Baldassare Castiglione met the young François at the court of Louis XII in Bologna ca. 1506, he was impressed by the boy’s intellect.23 In the guise of Giuliano di Medici, he put down his impressions of François as heir presumptive to the throne, in The Book of the Courtier:

if good fortune has it that Monseigneur d’Angoulême, as is hoped, succeeds to the throne, then I believe that, just as the glory of arms flourishes and shines in France, so also with the greatest brilliance will men of letters ornament France. For when I was at that Court not so long ago, I set eyes on this prince… and among other things I

21 Eulogy (1549) Joachim Du Bellay, as quoted in Cox-Rearick (1996) 400. The act of dispelling Ignorance was the subject of one of the frescoes in the King’s Galerie.
was told that he greatly loved and esteemed learning and respected all men of letters, and that he condemned the French themselves for being so hostile to this profession.24

Acceding to the throne at the age of twenty, François saw the revival of the arts in France as a means of revolutionizing the way the monarchy ruled. He had undoubtedly been impressed by the art and architecture he saw in Milan when he defeated that city in the first year of his reign. Although Leonardo da Vinci was in Rome at the time, he was still considered Milan’s leading artist and the Leonardesque style dominated art in Milan circa 1515 and had also greatly influenced Raphael in Rome. It is thought Leonardo first met the young French king at Bologna that year, when he was commissioned to create a mechanical lion for the peace talks between the French king and Pope Leo X. Other leading artists in central Italy at the time included: Bernardino Luini, Giovanni Antonio Boltraffio, Lorenzo di Credi, Bramantino, Andrea Solario and Fra Bartolommeo. A response to the work of Leonardo is discernible in the work of all these artists and François no doubt thought, that if he could attract the greatest master to France, he was gaining the very essence of what constituted the pure and graceful Italianate style he so admired.

François saw the adoption of the Leonardesque style as instigating an overall refinement of Royal life in France, although he was not the first monarch to have imported Italian artistic talent. Andrea Solario had already been to France at the behest of Louis XII’s prelate, Cardinal d’Amboise, who built and decorated a château at Gaillon in the Italianate style as early as 1507. The Cardinal invited Solario from Milan to fresco his chapel and the artist stayed in France for nearly two years. Louis XII himself had tried

unsuccessfully to entice Leonardo to France, so for Cardinal d’Amboise to secure the
great master’s close follower Solario, must have seemed a prestigious surrogate.25

Even earlier than Solario, the prominent architect Giuliano da Sangallo who worked for
the Medici in Florence, was invited by Charles VIII in 1495 to work on the château at
Chambord and some of Sangallo’s pupils had remained in France, notably Domenico da
Cortona who later also worked for François.26 Regardless of these early collaborations
with Italian talent, no French monarch had been as passionate about Italian culture as
François, nor attempted to change the style of France on such a wide scale and in such
an extravagant fashion. His building and renovation frenzy went far beyond
Fontainebleau and was aimed at converting fifteenth century functionality into High
Renaissance aesthetics. Fortresses with narrow windows and massive defence towers
were being replaced with more comfortable palaces that let in light and warmth and
were elegant from all angles, such as the Château de Chambord (1519-1547) that
underwent construction for almost the entire length of François I’s reign. The King also
added Renaissance wings to existing royal residences at Amboise and Blois creating
models that were quickly embraced by his courtiers, particularly in the famous ‘floating
chateau’ of Azay-le-Rideau (1518-1527) by Gilles Berthelot, state treasurer of François
I and mayor of Tours. Across France the Classical influence was gradually replacing the
Gothic style and the inspiration was purely Italianate. Whilst these buildings were
regarded by the French as capturing the ‘antique style’, they still incorporated
recognizably French features and to the modern eye, seem far removed from the
rigorously Classical palaces built by Italian nobles of the same period.

The king also set about creating a collection of master paintings of such high quality
that they form the core of today’s collection at the Louvre museum and include six
paintings by Leonardo, which represents a third of the artist’s known output. The Mona

26 Charles VIII should not be confused with his contemporary Charles d’Angouleme, the father of François, mentioned previously. King Charles VIII (reigned 1483-1498) initiated the Franco-Italian wars when he invaded Italy in 1494. However it was as a result of his expedition to Italy that Charles attracted da Sangallo to the French court and opened the way for cultural exchange between the two countries, although it was not until François I took the throne, that Italian art and learning freely flourished in France.
Lisa came with Leonardo to France in 1516, François bought the painting and kept it on display in the ‘Salle du bain’ at Fontainebleau.27

The Library at Fontainebleau

As shown in earlier chapters, the creation of Classically-inspired art and architecture relied heavily on knowledge transmitted by the written word. This would be especially pertinent in France where, unlike Italy, very little material evidence of the Classical world remained. François I’s interest in collecting antiquities and emulating the Classical style was fundamentally linked to his passion for books and in the tradition of the Medici patrons and of his own predecessors, the bibliophile King set about acquiring a magnificent library.

Charles V (1338-1380) was the first king of France to think about establishing a library at the chateau of Fontainebleau.28 Initially, he had established a library in one of the towers at the Louvre consisting of books that had previously been housed at the Palais de la Cité. Following the custom of the day, books were chained and laid flat on lettrins which meant that space was a problem. Not satisfied with the awkward arrangement of his library over three floors of the Louvre tower, he decided to transfer a section of the library to Fontainebleau. However Charles’ idea was never realized and was abandoned by his successors. The idea of creating a royal library at Fontainebleau was not revived till a century and half later by François I who around 1522, began to move books into the château.29

The King’s editions of Imagines

27 Vasari, (1555). Prese Lionardo a fare per Francesco del Giocondo il ritratto di mona Lisa sua moglie; e quattro anni penatovi, lo lasciò imperfetto; la quale opera oggi è appresso il re Francesco di Francia in Fontanableò. Le Vite, Giuntina, Vol. IV, 30 (9-12). This information seems to be correct because in c. 1542 Leonardo’s ‘Mona Lisa’ and other paintings of Italian artists embellished the ‘Salle du Bain’ at Fontainebleau.


29 Bruno Blasselle La Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1989) 11. See also Antoine Coron, ‘Collège royal et Bibliotheca regia: la bibliothèque savante de François Ier’, in Les origines du Collège de France (1500–1560), ed. M. Fumaroli (Paris : Collège de France, 1998), 143–83. more recently, the biographer of François I, R.J. Knecht has revised traditionally-held views on the life and works of the French king in an online article, R. J. Knecht (2003) ‘An Update on the Reign of Francis I’, History Compass 1 (1), doi:10.1111/1478-0542.040 where he argues: “There is no indication of a library at Fontainebleau before 1546, when Nicander of Corcyra, a Greek copyist and publisher, reported that the king had established close to his lodging a library containing books in Greek, Latin, Hebrew and Arabic. They may have been kept in the attic above the Galerie François Ier, but this is mere supposition. The assertion made in 1668 by Père Dan that a library existed above the Galerie at Fontainebleau must be treated with caution.”
François owned a rare fourteenth-century manuscript of the *Imagines* of both Philostratus the Elder and Younger, associated with the Byzantine grammarian Manuel Moschopoulos. The 1518 catalogue of forty-seven Greek, Hebrew and Arabic manuscripts in the great library at Blois, lists the *Imagines* as item no. 39, *Philostrati heroica et ymagines* (sic) and may have been acquired by Louis XII. 30 On the occasion the Blois library was transferred to Fontainebleau in 1544, the same manuscript is identified as no. 5, *Heroica et imagines Filostrati*. 31 It is later identified as a fourteenth century manuscript in the 1550 catalogue of Greek manuscripts at Fontainebleau, as by the hand of Moschopoulos and appears as No. 118: ΠΡΑΜΜΑΤΙΚΑ ΤΙΝΑ. A. (fig. 3).

In the 1550 Fontainebleau catalogue the *Imagines* is no longer a single volume as entered in the 1518 Blois inventory, but is included in a volume that also contains Plutarch’s *Ethics* and it is possible that the *Imagines* (no. 39 Blois) was simply bound with the inventory’s consecutively listed fifteenth century manuscript of Plutarch (no. 38

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32 Henri Omont, *Catalogue des Manuscrits Grecs de Fontainebleau sous François Ier et Henri II* (Paris : Imprimerie Nationale, 1889) 43. Listed in 1740 catalogue as no. 2596. I have not had an opportunity to examine the manuscript in person, however Omont includes a note that Angelos Vergikios (Ange Vergèce), employed as a scribe in the library at Fontainebleau, observed that a part of the manuscript was copied, by a “Jean” (possibly a Gallicized version of a Greek scribe called Ioannis) and dated 1475, which makes it a later addition to the fourteenth century manuscript in the same volume. Omont does not mention which section the *Imagines* belongs to, however if as described, it is a Moschopoulos (active 1282-1328) copy of Philostratus, then this would place the *Imagines* in the fourteenth century part of the manuscript.
Blois). What is certain, is that Philostratus was one of the very first group of Classical authors to be collected by the French royal family and entered the library at Blois some time between 1495 and 1518. Delisle believes that the first Greek manuscripts to appear in the royal collection were brought from the Aragonese collection at Naples by Charles VIII after the campaign of 1495. The 1503 Aldine editio princeps of the Imagines and the 1518 edition printed in Basle together with Aesop’s Fables, also belonged to the King’s library. Other books which could be consulted in the design and decoration of Fontainebleau were acquired for the library, including the 1521 Italian edition of Vitruvius’ Ten Books on Architecture and Colonna’s Hypnerotomachia Poliphili. “The great king” as François was called by the seventeenth century bibliophile Père Jacob wanted to found a French “Parnassus of the Muses” and in 1527 issued orders to his architects and librarians to enrich and enlarge the royal collection of books and to create a suitable home for them at Fontainebleau. Although Charles V and Charles VI had collections rich in Latin and French manuscripts, there are no Greek manuscripts mentioned in the inventories of 1373, 1380, 1411 or 1423. Louis XII had created the royal library at Blois building on a collection established by Charles, duke of Orléans in 1440. Louis’ collection contained over 1,600 items according to the 1518 inventory with 1,222 titles in Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Arabic.

33 Ferdinand I of Naples had been a bibliophile who owned at least fifty Greek manuscripts largely acquired for him by his court minister, Antonello de’Petrucci. Omont, (1889) ii.
35 The Italian edition of Vitruvius: Di Lucio Vitravio Pollione de Architectura libri dece (Como : Gotardus de Ponte, 1521) FRBNF31594926. The King may also have acquired the fifteenth century Latin manuscript now in the BnF : Vitruvii Pollionis de Architectura libri decem, editor Johannes Sulpiatus Verulanus, (Romae : G. Herolt, ca 1486) FRBNF36043969. A French translation by Renouard of part of Vitruvius was published between 1526 and 1537 by Simon de Colines in Paris under the title Raison d’architecture antique extraite de Victrave et autres anciens architecteurs. FRBNF31594937 Ref.http://catalogue.bnf.fr. The works by Italian authors held in François I’s library are listed by Quentin-Bauchart in his catalogue as : Colonna (41); Poliziano (45); Boccaccio (7); Bembo (48). Quentin-Bauchart (1970) 63-70.
36 Le Père Louis Jacob de Saint-Charles Traité des plus belles bibliothèques (Paris, 1644) 457.
Budé, Lascaris, Greek Scholars and Scribes at the French Court

The Greek scholar Ioannis Lascaris helped organize the library at Blois bringing together the largest collection of Greek manuscripts known in the sixteenth century, surpassing that formed by Pope Nicholas V in Rome, the Medici in Florence and Cardinal Bessarion in Venice.39

François sent agents to the Orient looking for rare books primarily in the Greek, Latin and Hebrew languages. The king had secured the services of the brilliant humanist Guillaume Budé, a correspondent of Erasmus and Thomas More, who was appointed the Chief Librarian (Maître de la Librarie du Roi).40 Père Jacob also mentions the simultaneous creation of a college “of the three languages” (Collège de trois langues) formed under the guidance of Budé.41 Little had been done about the study of Greek in France up to this point and when Budé began his study of the language ca. 1494, there was only one mediocre teacher, George Hermonymus of Sparta, available in Paris.42

François began planning the college in 1517, inviting Erasmus of Rotterdam to take the Directorship of the college. However Erasmus declined the offer and Ioannis Lascaris who was already head of Leo X’s college in Rome, accepted instead.43 Plans for the

39 G. Di Stefano, ‘L’Hellénisme en France a l’aorée de la Renaissance’, in Humanism in France at the End of the Middle Ages and in the Early Renaissance, ed. A.H.T. Levi, (Manchester: 1970) 29. Ioannis Lascaris (c. 1445-1535) was born at Constantinople and sought refuge initially at Venice before coming under the protection of Lorenzo de Medici in Florence. He first worked in France ca. 1494 for Charles VIII, organizing the library at Blois. He founded a college in Milan ca. 1520 for the study of Greek at the request of François I but did not take up his appointment as Director of the Collège de Trois Langues (Collège de France) in 1529.
40 Guillaume Budé (1467-1540) was a humanist scholar who studied Latin and Greek. Erasmus called him “the greatest transapline scholar” (Novum Instrumentum, annotations on Luke I, 4, quoted by Marie-Madeleine de La Garanderie, La correspondance d’Erasme et de Guillaume Budé, Paris, 1967, 269-70.) Budé was author of Annotationes ad Pandectas (1508) and De Asse et Partibus (1514) a treatise on ancient coins and measures. His Commentarii Linguae Graecae contributed greatly to the interest in France of Greek literature. Budé seems to have been influential in most humanistic endeavours undertaken in Paris at the time and also induced the king to refrain from prohibiting printing in France, which had been advised by the Sorbonne in 1533. In 1522 Budé was appointed maître des requêtes (Master of Requests) an important public post later held by Rabelais, which carried duties of residing with the Court and travelling through the country to examine petitions. He also several times was elected by the city of Paris to the title prévôt des marchands (Provost of Purchases). A bust of Budé is displayed at the entrance of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. cf. David O. McNeil, ‘Guillaume Budé and Humanism in the Reign of Francis I’, Travaux d’Humanisme et Renaissance, CXLI (Geneva : Librairie Droz, 1975) and Knecht, (1984) 135-136.
41 Today the same college is known as the Collège de France and occupies the site originally dedicated for Budé’s college by François I at place Marcealin Berthelot in Paris’ 5th arrondissement.
43 Letter dated 14th February 1519, from Erasmus to Etienne de Poncher declining the king’s offer. Opus epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami, ed. S. Allen and H.M. Allen (Oxford, 1906-34) ii. 454-8. Ioannis Lascaris would have seemed an eminently suitable replacement for Erasmus as by 1513 he was running a college for the teaching of Greek under the patronage of Pope Leo X.
college in Paris were delayed when François was distracted by politics and war and it did not become a reality until after the return of peace in 1529, when François set up four royal lectureships in Greek and Hebrew, known as the *lecteurs royaux*. Budé’s disappointment in the delay with the foundation of the college is discernible when he wrote in a letter of 1518: “The energy and goodness of the French king have been directed elsewhere by some sinister fate.” He kept working on the project despite the delay, corresponding with Erasmus to persuade him to accept the directorship and keeping the idea of a Classical college alive by frequently mentioning it to the King and to high ranking members of the court. Slowly, Budé helped the king gather together the finest scholars: Pierre Danès and Jacques Toussaint (Tusanus) were awarded the Greek posts and François Vatable and the Italian, Agathio Giudacerio (Agathias Guidacerius) were to teach Hebrew. Toussaint was the favourite pupil, and later, rival of Budé who had already been made a professor of Greek at the University of Paris in 1526. Failing the arrival of Erasmus or Lascaris to take over the directorship, Budé was eventually placed in charge of the college which was based on the model of academies that existed in Italy and became known simply as, the *Collège de France*. The chair of mathematics was given to a Spaniard, Poblacion who was succeeded by Oronce Finé. The Florentine, Vidus Vidius was named Professor of Medicine in 1542 and the Milanese, Vico Mercato was Professor of Philosophy, Greek and Latin in 1543. Hebrew, Latin, Greek, Medicine, Mathematics and Philosophy were taught freely at the college.

It was perhaps in reaction to this revival of learning that Rabelais wrote in 1532:

> Now is it that the minds of men are qualified with all manner of discipline, and the old sciences revived which for many ages were extinct. Now it is that the learned languages are to their pristine purity restored, viz., Greek, without which a man may be ashamed to account himself a scholar, Hebrew, Arabic, Chaldaean, and Latin. (*Pantagruel and Gargantua II*).

Rabelais was a friend of Budé who helped the brilliant writer to learn Greek. The five books of *Pantagruel and Gargantua*, a work begun in 1532 and left unfinished at Rabelais’ death in 1553, championed the writers of antiquity and links Classical

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learning with the idea of progress in sixteenth-century France.\textsuperscript{49} A political consequence of François’ interest in promoting and defending belles lettres in France was his edict ensuring the protection of Erasmians and proto-Reformers against prosecution by the Sorbonne or Parliament. Erasmus of Rotterdam had arrived in Paris as early as 1495 to study theology at the Collège de Montaigu. He was responsible for some of the first printing of Greek texts in France, beginning with a small collection of Greek proverbs in 1499.\textsuperscript{50} We are given an indication of François’ sincere interest in humanistic endeavours when at the tender age of thirteen, as Duke of Valois and Count of Angoulême, he facilitated the printing in Greek of François Tissard’s edition of Liber Gnomagycricus.\textsuperscript{51}

The creation of François’ royal college of the three languages was interconnected to the king’s ambitions for his library at Fontainebleau, which as mentioned above, he succeeded in making the largest and richest in Europe. The library was installed no later than 1546 on the second floor of the château above the Galerie François I. In a sense, the chateau at Fontainebleau became a museum, an architectural setting for the display of beautiful objects. François’ library also grew rapidly apace with his collecting of antiques. The library at Fontainebleau provided the core collection of today’s Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.

Guillaume Budé travelled to Italy on many occasions to seek out manuscripts for the library and to enlist the collaboration of ambassadors from Venice and Constantinople.\textsuperscript{52} Over five hundred Greek manuscripts were found and added to the collection between 1518 and 1540.\textsuperscript{53} From Venice, François was able to acquire the greater part of Gian Francesco d’Asola’s collection of Greek manuscripts, significant in that d’Asola was the brother-in-law of Aldus Manutius. Also in Venice was Antonios Eparchos, a refugee from Corfou, who acted as an agent finding Greek books for the French king. By 1546 the Fontainebleau library also housed the Blois collection and was open to scholars from across Europe. The Cretan scribe Angelos Vergikios (Ange Vergèce) and Constantine Palaeocappa worked at Fontainebleau completing an inventory of the Greek books. The Greek book binder, Symeon Metaphrastes, created

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{49} cf. A.F.Chappell, ‘Rabelais and the Authority of the Ancients’ in Modern Language Review, xviii, (1923) 29-36.
\item \textsuperscript{50} Knecht (1984) 135.
\item \textsuperscript{51} McNeil (1975) 11.
\item \textsuperscript{52} Henri Omont, Catalogues des manuscrits grecs de la Bibliothèque de François Ier au chateau de Blois 1518 et 1544, (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1886).
\item \textsuperscript{53} ibid.
\end{itemize}
elaborate bindings in red leather with gold tooling redolent with François’ personal imagery and featuring a cartouche with the king’s personal chifre of a salamander in flames. Now added to the contingent of Italian émigrés working on the decoration of the château, were this second group of mainly Greek scholars, working on the assemblage and the transcription of the books. To what extent these two ethnic groups at the French Court interacted or co-operated professionally, is not known. François himself had no Greek, but encouraged his resident scholars to translate works and read them out aloud to him. No doubt, the Greek scholars at Fontainebleau were viewed by the French court as a tangible hereditary link to the great names of the Classical past. Their physical appearance, their manners, their clothing and their language, would have served to accentuate a genuine Hellenistic connection.

**L’École de Fontainebleau: artists at the French Court and their use of Philostratus**

**Introducing Antiquity: Rosso and Primaticcio in France**

From this world of manuscripts and fables that lay in the hands of Fontainebleau’s scribes and scholars came the impetus to materialize antiquity in the form of lavish decoration for the château. Yet by 1530, the humanistic desire to purely re-create antiquity would have been less important to François I, than the competitive desire to impress Europe with a demonstration of French royal wealth and pride that would match anything in Italy, or anything being built abroad. His rivals Henry Tudor of England and Charles of Habsburg, were planning and building their own magnificent residences; the whimsical Nonsuch Palace in Surrey (1538) and Charles V’s Mannerist palace (1527) in Granada, built close to the Alhambra palaces. This triumvirate of “enlightened” princes was also highly competitive in the status of foreign artists their respective courts attracted. Henry was the patron of Hans Holbein and Charles could boast a long association with Titian. François I had arguably outdone them both, when Leonardo da Vinci came to France, but this glory was short-lived. The advantage Holbein and Titian had as court artists over Rosso and his associates, is that the former were great portraitists and their paintings of Henry and Charles achieved lasting fame. Portraiture was not Rosso’s strong point and there remain very few portraits of François

54 Knecht mentions that the king actually created a post called the lecteur du roi held by scholars with the specific duty of reading out loud to him. Jacques Colin, the translator of Castiglione’s *Il Cortegiano* held the post in 1529 as did Pierre du Chastel, in 1537. Such men were part of a “mobile library” that moved around the country with the king. Knecht (1984) 271.
I of comparable quality to those of Henry and Charles.\textsuperscript{55}

Chastel also refers to a “French superiority complex” reinforced by military victory at Marignano (1515) and little damaged by defeat at Pavia (1525).\textsuperscript{56} He asks the question “how were the French able to put up with the massive influx of Italian culture which occurred at that time and which we usually identify with the Renaissance?\textsuperscript{57} This can perhaps be answered by understanding the relationship between patrons and artists in the first half of the sixteenth century. Very few artists in Europe had reached celebrity status by the time of Fontainebleau and certainly those who had, like Leonardo and Titian, would have been offered more generous terms than Rosso and Primaticcio. The French king did not have to beg for Italian artists to come to France after the Sack of Rome. His ability to lure respected artists away from their country to Paris, where they would live and work for the rest of their lives, was largely due to his ability to provide steady employment. The treasury of France was able to compete favourably with the monetary rewards offered by Italian nobles and this in itself is an extension of the French national pride that Chastel alludes to. Italy may have Roman ruins, antiquities in abundance and Raphaelesque villas, but France could pay its artists. Cox-Rearick writes how “the king’s largesse in relation to his artists was legendary...in 1539 Francis offered to pay Cellini 1,000 scudi d’oro for his expenses in coming to France, and in the early 1540s he offered Michelangelo 3,000 scudi if he would come”.\textsuperscript{58} Rather than acknowledging any cultural superiority of Italy over France by hiring Italians, François was in fact, adorning Fontainebleau with artists whose presence at court would contribute to his own glory.

Rosso Fiorentino came from Florence in 1531 and was followed by the Bolognese artist Francesco Primaticcio in 1532. A famous drawing by Rosso of Mars Disarmed by Cupid and Venus Disrobed by the Graces, is reported by Vasari to be the cause of

\textsuperscript{55} Art criticism has never placed the French court portrait painters Jean and François Clouet in the same category as Holbein and Titian. In 1529 François summoned the Flemish painter Joos van Cleeve from Antwerp to Fontainebleau to paint the royal family (Portrait of François I, Philadelphia, Museum of Art) but again, van Cleeve could not be considered, even by contemporary estimation, as an equal of Holbein and Titian. (Cox-Rearick, 1996) 7-11. One of the best portraits of François I is by Titian who painted it c.1538 using only the portrait medal of Cellini as a model (Louvre Museum, Paris).

\textsuperscript{56} Chastel (1981) 78. A nationalistic ambition to raise the profile of French humanism also seems prevalent, for example in 1507, Francois Tissard’s edition of Liber Gnomagryicus published by Giles de Gourmont in Paris under François’ patronage, advocates the learning of Greek by all cultured Frenchmen in order that they may equal and even surpass Italian examples. See McNeil (1975) 11.

\textsuperscript{57} ibid. 80.

\textsuperscript{58} Cox-Rearick (1996) 27.
François I inviting the artist to Fontainebleau.\textsuperscript{59} The subject is an allegory of the peace of Cambrai and alludes to the second marriage of the king, with \textit{Mars} representing François I and \textit{Venus}, Eleanor of Portugal (Eléonore d’Autriche). Vasari records the drawing as being given to Pietro Aretino in Venice. The art historians Adhémar (1954) and Cox-Rearick (1996) agree that because Aretino was an art agent for the French king, Vasari is probably right and that Aretino provides a logical solution as to how \textit{Mars Disarmed} ended up in the royal collection.\textsuperscript{60} François I had also written to Federigo Gonzaga in Mantua asking for a suitable artist to be sent to France to work on his château and it is thought that Giulio Romano promptly recommended Primaticcio be sent, in order that his own position with the Gonzaga remain unthreatened by the precociously talented Primaticcio. Other Italians arrived later to Fontainebleau: Luca Penni, Antonio Fantuzzi, Benvenuto Cellini and Niccolò dell’Abate.\textsuperscript{61} This assembly of foreign talent working on the king’s châteaux became known as \textit{l’École de Fontainebleau}. Much of their work has been destroyed by successive sovereigns: at Fontainebleau the immense Galerie of \textit{Ulysses} in the south wing of The White Horse Court was destroyed by Louis XV, the private bathing house on the ground floor was demolished by Louis XIV and Napoleon I destroyed the west wing.\textsuperscript{62} The major decorative programme at Fontainebleau to survive from the time of François I is the Galerie where subjects from Philostratus are found.

The room of the King’s official mistress Anne, the Duchess of Étampes, where Primaticcio painted a \textit{History of Alexander the Great}, also survives. Decorated mainly by Rosso and Primaticcio the Galerie François I was inspired by the Roman works of Raphael and Giulio Romano. What they achieved at Fontainebleau was not only an amalgamation of the neo-antique styles they had seen in Italy, but a seamless fusion of fresco painting and sculpture. This was a new style which brought the School of Fontainebleau fame and was in turn, copied in Italy.

\textit{locus classicus}: Château de Fontainebleau

In his youth, François had hunted deer in the forest of Bièvre and visited Fontainebleau,

which was then little more than a hunting lodge. After the grandeur the young prince was accustomed to at the châteaux of Amboise and Blois, Fontainebleau would have seemed relatively bare. When he became King in 1515 at the age of twenty he decided to reconstruct and enlarge Fontainebleau, a project that would occupy the King up to his death. It became a palace of pleasure constructed in the style à la moderne which at that time, meant in the ‘style antique’. François undertook a prolific building and restoration programme during his reign including projects for Blois, Chambord, the Louvre, Les Tournelles, Vincennes, Villers-Cotterêts, Boulogne saint-Germain, La Muette and Folembray but it was Fontainebleau that he was to lavish the most attention upon. The date of 1528 is carved into the lintel of La Porte Dorée (the Golden Gate) and commemorates the first works on the new Fontainebleau.

Gilles Le Breton, a master builder from Paris, was appointed architect for the project. The new additions included La Porte Dorée which gives way to a large oval court at the heart of the château, a long gallery (Galerie François I) and two short wings that would house the private apartments of the king. The entrance features a lunette over the lintel with a portrait bust of the King and his personal emblem of a salamander in flames, flanked by the figures of Minerva and Juno in sculpted relief. It may be that the two goddesses protecting the King stand for his sister Marguerite d’Angoulême and his mother, Louise de Savoie.

The finest pieces of the King’s collection were sent to Fontainebleau: statues, medals, marbles, paintings and tapestries. Primaticcio acted as agent in many of the King’s acquisitions from Rome, still the market for the best antiques. François established a foundry at the chateau where he commissioned bronzes after antique models including: the Ariadne, the Laocoon (fig.4), Hercules Resting, the Venus of Cnidus and the Belvedere Apollo.
The statues were housed on the ground floor of the Pavillon des Armes and the foundry was established in the west wing of the Cour du Cheval Blanc. This seems all the more remarkable when at the time François acceded to the throne, there was not a single piece of sculpture ancient or modern in the royal palaces.

Pope Clement VII gave François I a ‘unicorn horn’ which he added to his collection of curiosa, highly valued at the time, and among his art treasures were Leonardo’s *Mona Lisa*, Raphael’s *La Belle Jardinière* and a statue of *Hercules* by Michelangelo (now lost). It is reasonable to say, that François I single-handedly built up the royal collection

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63 Knecht (1984) 260. The foundry was later converted to a tapestry workshop
that would become the envy of Europe.

Inspired by the descriptions of Egypt in Herodotus, François commissioned the Egyptian Gate with sculptures of Isis and Osiris, for the entrance to the Oval Court from his gardens. He also erected a pyramid of nine stories high in the Oval Court upon which he would sit and hold audience once a month, covered with a canopy of blue silk embroidered with gold stars. The gardens too, were splendid works of art and François liked to occupy himself with planting and cultivating vines. Music was also a part of this lavish daily pageant at Fontainebleau with concerts and dances to entertain the court with music from Claudin de Sermizy.

**The Galerie François I (1530-1547)**

Like all architectural monuments discussed in this thesis, the present Galerie has undergone extensive damage, re-structuring and multiple renovations. Despite such a history, it still has the power to impress and this is mainly due to the unique combination of fresco painting and stucco work which was developed at Fontainebleau under Rosso. The Galerie walls are divided into two parts with the dado of carved wood panelling by Francesco Sibecco da Carpi and the upper register containing the stucco and painting decoration (fig.5).

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64 The most recent description of the Galerie is to be found in Jean-Pierre Samoyault, *Guide du Musée national du Chateau de Fontainebleau* (Paris: Editions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 2002).
Cox-Rearick has developed a timeline for the work on the Galerie with construction completed by 1533, the stucco work being completed by the spring of 1537, followed by the paintings finished by 1539 and finally, da Carpi’s wainscoting was in place by December 1539 when Charles V made a state visit to Fontainebleau. Analogies to Michelangelo’s Sistine Chapel ceiling in Rome (1508-11) have been made in the literature on the Galerie, as the bays contain frescoes framed by sculptured nudes and Rosso purposely quotes Michelangelo in his decorative scheme.

The Enigmatic Iconographical Programme of the Galerie François I

According to Zerner, no art historian has adequately proven a coherent theme lies behind the selection of subjects for the Galerie. The Panofskys claim to have unearthed a rich library of Classical sources that Rosso has referred to, yet reach the

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65 Cox-Rearick (1996) 43.
66 One example is the central figure in Rosso’s *The Revenge of Nauplius*, with the Panofskys giving credit to Guy de Tervarent for discovering it is derived from the figure of *Charon* in Michelangelo’s *The Last Judgement*, Sistine Chapel, Vatican. Panofsky (1958) 153.
conclusion that: “The whole decoration of the Gallery is, as it were, a running commentary rather than the realization of a pre-established blueprint.”  

However they were certain that the paintings could be linked to episodes in the King’s life, forming a visual roman du roi. Zerner, a French art historian who has had the opportunity to study Fontainebleau intensely, discredits this hypothesis and decides that we may never know the true intentions behind the iconographical programme. Zerner further suggests that the Galerie was deliberately indecipherable so that the king could flaunt his erudition by personally explaining the programme to his illustrious visitors.  

Supporting his argument, Zerner quotes a letter from Marguerite, the king’s witty sister:

Thanking you humbly milord that you agree that I should be able to see Fontainebleau, which I had myself decided, although you spent Christmas in Paris. But I praise God that you will stay there until then, because to see your buildings without you, it is a dead body and to look at your buildings without hearing your intention about them, it is like reading Hebrew.

Given the prototypes known to Rosso of frescoed rooms in Italian palazzi which generally followed a coherent literary-based programme, it is unlikely that the Galerie of François I is a confusion of random subjects. Whilst we may never learn the essence of that programme, it has been possible to re-construct the placement of frescoes and paintings in the Galerie and to name the individual subjects portrayed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>North Wall (anti-clockwise)</th>
<th>South Wall (clockwise)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Venus Frustrated</td>
<td>The Battle of the Centaurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Education of Achilles</td>
<td>Perpetual Youth Lost by Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Shipwreck or Revenge of Nauplius</td>
<td>The Death of Adonis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semele</td>
<td>Danae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Burning of Catania</td>
<td>Cleobis and Biton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Elephant</td>
<td>The Unity of the State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sacrifice</td>
<td>Ignorance Dispelled</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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68 Panofsky (1958) 159.
In addition, two large canvas paintings by Rosso adorned the ends of the long narrow space with the subjects of *Venus and Amour* (west) and *Venus and Bacchus* (east). Only the painting which hung above the eastern entrance survives today at the museum of Luxembourg.\(^71\)

A general convergence of mythological subjects drawn from antique literary sources dominates the scheme. Titles of the paintings vary according to author, such is the degree of uncertainty attached to the iconography by modern scholars: eg. Zerner’s *The Burning of Catania* is called *The Twins of Catania* by Cox-Rearick.\(^72\) The inclusion of allegorical and historical subjects: *The Unity of the State* and *Ignorance Dispelled*, is not so unusual a practice as we saw earlier (Chapter Two) in the *studiolo* of Isabella d’Este. Isabella included herself in a painting known as *Allegory of the Court of Isabella d’Este* by Lorenzo Costa, placing it amongst a cycle of mythological works by Mantegna. Renaissance patrons liked to include representations of themselves, or of favourite moralistic subjects, in an otherwise dominant mythological theme.

It has been established by André Chastel that Budé acted as advisor to the decorative programme at Fontainebleau and that the creation of the monumental Galerie with its complex mythological subjects, was the first example of its kind, outside Italy.\(^73\) Guicciardini records Budé being sent to Rome in 1515 as special envoy to Pope Leo X, where he would have seen the magnificence of the Vatican apartments decorated by Raphael and Romano.\(^74\) An expert on ancient coins and a learned scholar of Greek and Latin, Budé no doubt would have been sensitive to the antique references in the frescoes and stucco decoration he witnessed in Rome, and this would have made him a useful consultant for iconography when François was designing his great Galerie.

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\(^{71}\) *Venus and Bacchus* (with Cupid and a satyr) c. 1532, oil on canvas, (209 x 161.5cm) attributed to Rosso Fiorentino (Cox-Rearick 1996, cat.no. VIII-3, fig. 301, 274); copy after Rosso Fiorentino (Zerner, 2003, figs. 84, 86) Musée national d’art et d’histoire, Luxembourg.

\(^{72}\) For the present, I will use the titles bestowed by Zerner which appear in the above table.

\(^{73}\) André Chastel and W. McAllister-Johnson, *La François Ier au château de Fontainebleau*, *Revue de l’Art*, 16-17, 143 ff.

\(^{74}\) Francesco Guicciardini, *Storia d’Italia*, XII, xi, vol. III, (Bari: G. Laterza, 1929) 344-345. Whilst Eugène de Budé, a descendant and biographer of Budé, wrote that Guillaume definitely went to meet the Pope but was annoyed by the Pope’s treatment and requested to be withdrawn from the mission (Eugène de Budé, *Vie de Guillaume Budé, fondateur du Collège de France*, Paris, 1884, 30-33), McNeil (1975) considers it too early for Budé to have acted as an ambassador for the king. There is no date given for the visit to Rome but it was at the very beginning of François I’s reign and if so, would be considered Budé’s first official act of service to the new king.
For the purposes of the present discussion I will explore only the subjects represented in the Galerie that are associated with Philostratus. The main study of the Galerie’s iconography was made by Dora and Erwin Panofsky in 1958 and despite revisions by Béguin, Zerner, Joukovsky and Cox-Rearick, remains the fundamental point of reference. The Panofskys write that the *Imagines* was definitely “one of Rosso’s sources” and associate Philostratus with the fresco of *The Education of Achilles*. They also believe the shipwreck scene to be a combination of *The Death of Ajax the Locrian* and *The Revenge of Nauplius* that quotes a chapter (CXVI) from Hyginus’ *Fabulae*, wherein the two maritime myths are already conveniently merged. However, a possible reading of the Philostratus text by Rosso, that also describes the death of the hero Ajax on the Gyraean Rocks, cannot be ruled out. Lastly, the lost *Semele* fresco which was a pendant in the Galerie to the *Danae* and survives only in a print, was not known to the Panofskys and its iconography has therefore not been discussed in detail.

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**Education of Achilles (Imagines, II.2)**

Fig. 7 Léonard Thiry, (after Rosso Fiorentino) *The Education of Achilles*, École des Beaux-Arts, Paris

Fig. 8 *The Education of Achilles*, Rosso Fiorentino, fresco, Galerie François I, Fontainebleau
and the boy out on the plain, the one who is sporting on the back of the centaur as if it were a horse, is still the same boy; for Chiron is teaching Achilles to ride horseback and to use him exactly as a horse.

Philostratus the Elder, The Education of Achilles II. 2 (F136)76

Panofsky associates this fresco with Philostratus’ ekphrasis on the theme of Achilles and Chiron and validates this with reference to: “a particularly charming incident, half-hidden by the flight of stairs on the landing of which the music lesson takes place, can be explained only as a literal illustration of the Philostratus text: “(Achilles) has just caught a fawn and comes to Chiron to claim his reward” (F135).77 Subsequent authors have accepted the Panofskys’ attribution to Philostratus, although the fresco does not correspond in every detail to the Imagines, and may also be loosely linked to Statius’ Achillēis (382-451). The Panofsky article stresses the notion that Rosso was a painter “so original, almost to the point of eccentricity” and that the artist “knew, and imaginatively paraphrased, not only such well-known Latin sources as Ovid’s Metamophoses, but also Greek texts today familiar only to Classical scholars. And in the iconographical organization of the individual travées he exhibits virtues and vices analogous to those which Roger Bacon found in Scholastic philosophy.”78 From what we know of the basic level of schooling typical of Rosso and other Renaissance artists of his time, as discussed in Chapter Two of this thesis, it seems doubtful to credit this artist with such a high level of erudition. If the Panofsky article is to be believed, Rosso has interpreted in paint, sources as diverse as the Adonidos Ephitaphios by Bion of Smyrna and Nicander of Colophon’s Theriaca. That such texts were consulted for the Galerie programme, only underlines the significant involvement of humanist scholars at the French Court, such as Guillaume Budé.

The drawing by Rosso’s assistant (fig.7) the Flemish artist Léonard Thiry, documents the fresco as initially planned by Rosso and shows the composition unaltered, unlike the fresco (fig.8) with its numerous restorations.79 It would be difficult for Rosso to fit into the one picture frame, the sequence of scenes described by Philostratus illustrating the

76 The Education of Achilles (K343) ὁ δὲ ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ παῖς ὁ ἵππηδὸν ἐπὶ τοῦ κενταύρου ἀθύρων ὁ αὐτὸς ἔτι: διδάσκει ὁ Χείρων τὸν Ἀχιλλῆα ἱππάζεσθαι καὶ κεχρῆσθαι ὁπώ ὡσα ὑππω
77 Achilles (K342) καὶ νεβροῖς συμπέτεσθαι: νεβρόν γοὺς ἄρτι ἡρκώς ήκει παρὰ τὸν Χείρωνα καὶ ἀπαίτετο τὸ ἄθλον. See also music lesson detail in the Thiry drawing (fig.4).
78 Panofsky (1958) 116.
lessons of the centaur: playing the lyre, riding horseback and hunting fawn and hare on the plains, for which the teacher rewards his pupil with apples and honey. Taking the same multifaceted approach as Philostratus, Rosso has tried to combine a variety of scenes showing the tuition of Achilles. On the right, Chiron teaches horsemanship and hunting with the boy mounted on his own back and on the left, they practice sparring with sword and shield whilst a crowd of people look on. In the foreground, the pair take to the river to swim and on the staircase, they play music together. All of this takes place within a Classical architectural setting. External to this palatial loggia, in the distance on the right edge of the composition, the centaur is riding out on the plains and raises his spear to show the boy more techniques of hunting. In the foreground, Chiron appears to stand up to his haunches in the same river the pair swim in, a detail more apparent in the drawing, than in the fresco. Teacher and pupil both aim spears, or long poles, at the water and perhaps Rosso intended to represent a lesson in catching fish.

A new narrative has been invented by Rosso composed of elements taken from Philostratus’ ekphrasis and additional motifs of his own design, such as the centaur teaching Achilles to swim in the foreground. The swimming lesson might have been incorporated solely for the opportunity to paint a young boy naked in the homo-erotic tradition of antique models, particularly statues of Eros. The boy’s buttocks raised provocatively above the water add a licentious element to the iconography, consistent with the predominance of nude figures in the gallery linked to themes of seduction: Rape of Ganymede, Rape of Semele, Danae, Venus and Cupid. Philostratus does tell us that there are many scenes within the painting and all relate to the teaching of sports with Achilles appearing as “a delicate, sport-loving child and already light of foot.” This is followed by lengthy praise of the boy’s physical attributes.

The text begins with a description of one of the cameo scenes in Philostratus’ painting where Achilles has been hunting and displays his catch of a fawn and hare. Hunting and horseback-riding are explained as necessary skills needed in preparation for the exploits of adulthood, when he will become the hero “Achilles who fights at the trench, who puts the Trojans to rout merely by shouting, and who slays men right and left.” The river depicted in the foreground where the boy swims, is perhaps Rosso’s allusion to Philostratus’ prediction that Achilles “at Ilium will capture cities and horses and the

80 E. Brugerolles (1995), cat.no. 32, 92-94.
81 Achilles (K342) γράφειν ἁπαλὸν καὶ ἀγέρωχον καὶ ἤδη κοῦφον
82 Achilles (K341) ὁ μὲν οὖν ἐπὶ τῆς τάφρου καὶ ὁ κλίνας τοὺς Τρώας ἐκ μόνου τοῦ βοήσαι καὶ ὁ κτείνων ἐπιστροφάδην. This is Philostratus paraphrasing the words of Homer from Iliad 10.483.
ranks of men, and rivers will do battle with him when he refuses to let them flow” (F133)\(^{83}\) and that he shall slaughter men in such quantities at Troy, that the water of the Scamander will run red with blood. It could be that Rosso has read Homer, or the *Imagines* and chosen to hint at the future exploits of the boy by showing him in training for conquering rivers, cities and men.

There is another rendition of the subject at Fontainebleau (fig.9) by Toussaint Dubreuil a French artist working at the end of the sixteenth century who is associated with what is called the ‘Second School of Fontainebleau’. The theme of *Chiron and Achilles* became very popular in French painting of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when artists were looking for erotic subjects and took the opportunity to contrast the pale nakedness of adolescence with the powerful, masculine, animality of the centaur.\(^{84}\)

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\(^{83}\) *Achilles* (K341) Ἀχιλλέως, ὃ δὲ γε ἐν Ἰλίῳ πόλεις αἱρήσει καὶ ἱπποὺς καὶ ἀνδρῶν στίχας, καὶ οἱ ποταμοὶ αὐτῷ μαχοῦνται μὴ ἐῶντι αὐτοὺς ῥεῖν

\(^{84}\) Paintings of *The Education of Achilles* are known in several public collections in France, including those by the following artists: Pierre Puget ca. 1675, (Marseille; Musée des Beaux-Arts); Nicolas Bernard Lepicie ca. 1769, (Troyes; Musée des Beaux-Arts); Baron Jean-Baptiste Regnault ca. 1782, (Louvre).
SEMELE (*Imagines* I.14)

At the centre of the North wall of the Galerie, Primaticcio painted a large oval of the myth of Zeus and Semele in a recess over the fireplace. The fresco was destroyed in 1766, but the explicitly erotic composition is recorded in a print by Léon Davent that shows the already limp body of the dying Semele, the daughter of the king of Thebes, as Zeus mounts her.
The Panofskys identify the subject of this fresco erroneously in their diagram of the Galerie programme as “The Nymph of Fontainebleau”. Writing more than thirty years later, Cox-Rearick points out that Rosso’s *Nymph of Fontainebleau* was never meant to occupy the oval space where the *Semele* was painted, but was planned for a south cabinet in the Galerie that did not eventuate. Philostratus describes the bedroom scene taking place when “A cloud of fire encompassing Thebes breaks into the dwelling of Cadmus as Zeus comes wooing Semele; and Semele apparently is destroyed”. (F59)

Primaticcio has Zeus curiously directing the divine fire down toward the supine body of

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85 Panofsky (1958) 119. The Panofsky article only offers a complete analysis of the twelve frescoes in the bays of the Galerie and does not include the two paintings in the centre, or the two Venus paintings at each end. It is quite clear, by their note. 10, that they were unaware of a *Semele* fresco ever being in the Galerie and instead, were disorientated by a modern *Nymph of Fontainebleau* exhibited in that position in the 1950s. If the article is an attempt to decipher the effective principle of organization in the Galerie, it seems vital to have included the four major works that existed among the twelve narrative bays.

86 *The Nymph of Fontainebleau* is known from an engraving by Pierre Milan and René Boyvin, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, illustrated in Cox-Rearick (1995) fig. 65. 47.

87 *Semele* (K315) πυρὸς νεφέλη περισχοῦσα τὰς Θήβας ἐς τὴν τοῦ Κάδμου στέγην ῥήγνυται κωμάσαντος ἐπὶ τὴν Σεμέλην τοῦ Διός, καὶ ἀπόλλυται μὲν
Semele, assisted by a wind god fanning the flames with his breath, as if to expedite the girl’s death. The Davent print is very faint, but in the background it seems a woman servant pours urns of water onto her mistress to extinguish the fire and an indistinct cloaked figure hunches over the head of Semele. This is a scene of death giving way to life, as the infant Dionysus was born simultaneously and Philostratus devotes most of his ekphrasis to relating the subsequent infancy of Dionysus on Cithaeron. There is no indication of Dionysus’ birth in Primaticcio’s composition and the emphasis is solely on sex and death.88

Pliny describes Apelles as being able to paint “things that cannot be represented in pictures” 89 such as thunder (Bronte) and lightning (Astrape) and Philostratus places both deities in his picture, beginning the Semele description with: “Bronte stern of face, and Astrape flashing light from her eyes”. (F59)90 It is hard to determine whether the two female figures which appear to emerge from the smoke in Primaticcio’s composition are meant to be Bronte and Astrape and whether the urn is pouring liquid fire rather than water.

If a case cannot be argued for the link to Bronte and Astrape, then it seems more likely to this writer that the source for Primaticcio’s Semele is Ovid, rather than Philostratus. In Metamorphoses (III:273-315) Ovid recounts the anger of Juno as she plots the death of Semele and enters the girl’s bedchamber:

cloaked in a dark cloud she came to Semele’s threshold. But before she removed the cloud she disguised herself as an old woman, ageing her hair, ploughing her skin with wrinkles, and walking with bowed legs and tottering steps. She made her voice sound old and was herself, Beroë, Semele’s Epidaurian nurse.

(Ovid, Met.III: 273-315) 92

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88 According to several traditions, Zeus rescued the infant Dionysus from Semele’s womb and sewed him up in his own thigh until the foetus reached full term. For this version of the myth see Apollodorus, Library, III.4. Most of the illustrated Ovid’s at the time, show Zeus escaping with the infant Dionysus in his hands.
89 Pliny the Elder, N.H., 35:36-37: pinxit et quae pingi non possunt, tonitra, fulgetra fulguraque; bronten, astrapen et ceraunobolian appellant. (He also portrayed some things, which in reality do not admit of being portrayed—thunder, lightning, and thunderbolts, in pictures which are known by the respective names of Bronte, Astrape, and Ceraunobolia.) Trans. The Natural History. Pliny the Elder. J. Bostock & H.T. Riley, Taylor and Francis, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street, 1855.
90 Semele (Κ315) βροντή ἐν εἰδείς σκληρῆς καὶ Ἀστραπή σέλας ἐκ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἰείσα
If the figure is Ovid’s aged nurse Beroë, this would explain the attendant female with the sagging breasts in the background of Primaticcio’s composition. Stylistically, the Fontainebleau Semele is reminiscent of the previously mentioned series of erotic prints I Modi by Giulio Romano which would have been known to his pupil, Primaticcio. After François I died in 1547, Primaticcio stayed on at Fontainebleau working for Henri II and then for his sons, François II and Charles IX. His style was

Surgit ab his solio fulvaque recondita nube
limen adit Semeles nec nubes ante removit
quam simulavit anum posuitque ad tempora canos
sulcavitque cutem rugis et curva trementi
membra tulit passu; vocem quoque fecit anilem,
ipsaque erat Beroe, Semeles Epidauria nutrix.
perpetuated by primarily two artists; Nicolo dell’Abate and the Flemish engraver, Léon Davent who left behind over two hundred prints which record works of the Fontainebleau school. There are several drawings by dell’Abate of the Semele myth, very different in composition to the Rosso painting for the Galerie, which nevertheless are a good example of how Rosso’s ideas were re-worked by his followers (fig.11).93

The Shipwreck of Ajax (Imagines II. 13)

The rocks rising out of the water and the boiling sea about them, and on the rocks a hero glaring fiercely and with a certain proud defiance toward the sea – the ship of the Locrian has been struck by lightning. Imagines II. 13 (F181)"
Undoubtedly Philostratus is describing a shipwreck scene and proceeds to recount a struggle against the sea for survival. The problem is, that the Fontainebleau shipwreck painting has been associated mainly with *The Revenge of Nauplius* and the story Philostratus relates is that of *The Revenge of Poseidon upon Ajax, The Locrian*, also known as *The Death of Ajax* or (*ιγΥΡΑΙ*) *The Gyraean Rocks*. The only two protagonists in Philostratus’ ekphrasis are Poseidon and Ajax, whereas the Fontainebleau fresco has numerous sailors fighting the elements and each other. An anonymous drawing in the Louvre (fig.12) after Rosso Fiorentino, records the original design more clearly than the fresco in its current state (fig.13). The centrally located beacon tower on the rocky shore of Rosso’s composition would appear to relate specifically to the tale of Nauplius, when he lit false beacon fires along the coast of Euboea and caused the destruction of the Greek ships which were returning home from Troy. Apollodorus writes that the Nauplius tale is the aftermath of an initial episode of shipwrecking provoked by Athena (*Epitome* 6.6), when she persuaded Zeus to send a tempest against the Greeks causing many ships to wreck at Tenos. This incident is immediately followed by the death of Ajax (*Epitome* 6.7):

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For an introduction to the *Gyrae* as treated by Philostratus see the discussion on the stucco of the same subject at the Canonica al Montughi, Chapter 3.

95 Nauplius in this case, refers to one of the Argonauts who swore revenge against Greeks sailing home from the Trojan War when his son Palamedes, was betrayed and killed. According to Apollodorus, (*Epitome* 6.7-11) Nauplius lit beacon fires along the coast of Euboea and caused many of the Greek ships to be wrecked. This Nauplius was the subject of a tragedy by Sophocles. See *The Fragments of Sophocles*, ed. A. C. Pearson, vol. ii. 80ff.


97 Euripides, *Helen*, v. 767 Menelaus speaks of “the Euboean wrecking fires Nauplius set” and the chorus sings of Nauplius as “one of the Achaeans, that had but a single ship, did light a blazing beacon on sea-girt Euboea, and destroy full many of them, wrecking them on the rocks of Caphareus and the shores that front the Aegean main, by the treacherous gleam he kindled” v.v. 1126-30 (trans. E. Coleridge, New York: Random House, 1938).
But Poseidon smote the rock with his trident and split it, and Ajax fell into the sea and perished; and his body, being washed up, was buried by Thetis in Myconos. The others being driven to Euboea by night, Nauplius kindled a beacon on Mount Caphareus; and they, thinking it was some of those who were saved, stood in for the shore, and the vessels were wrecked on the Capherian rocks, and many men perished.\textsuperscript{98}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{fig13.jpg}
\caption{Rosso Fiorentino, 	extit{Revenge of the Nauplius}, Fresco, Galerie François I, Fontainebleau}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{98} Apollodorus 	extit{Epitome} 6.7-11

\begin{quote}
Ἀθηνᾶ δὲ ἐπὶ τὴν Αἴαντος ναῦν κεραυνὸν βάλλει, ὁ δὲ τῆς νεώς διαλυθείσης ἐπὶ τινα πέτραν διασωθεῖς παρὰ τὴν θεοῦ ἔφη πρόνοια σεσῶσθαι. Ποσειδῶν δὲ πλήξας τῇ τριάνῃ τὴν πέτραν ἔσχισεν, ὁ δὲ πεσὼν εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν τελευτᾷ, καὶ ἐκβρασθέντα βάπτει θέτες ἐν Μυκόνῳ τῶν δὲ ἄλλων Εὐβοία προσφερομένων νυκτὸς Ναύπλιος ἐπὶ τοῦ Καφηρέως ὄρους πυραῖν ἀνάπτει: οἱ δὲ νομίσαντες εἶναι τινας τῶν σεσωσμένων προσπλέουσι, καὶ περὶ τὰς Καφηρίδας πέτρας βραύεται τὰ σκάφη καὶ πολλοὶ τελευτῶσιν.
\end{quote}
It is easy to see how the two shipwreck scenes can be confused and lead to viewers of the fresco at Fontainebleau, even ones familiar with Classical literature, identifying the subject incorrectly. Whilst Rosso or the court humanist who selected the subjects may have sourced this shipwreck scene from Homer, Hyginus or Euripides directly, it is tempting to believe the subject is connected to the *Imagines* because it is a text which reinforces the shipwreck as a suitable subject for a Classical painting.  

**Iconography Related to Philostratus in works from the School of Fontainebleau**

It would be a long and tedious task to compile a list of all Philostratean drawings, tapestries, prints, sculptures and *objets d’art* which were generated as a result of the work at Fontainebleau and undertaken from the arrival of Rosso to the death of Niccolò dell’Abate in 1571. By this late stage of the sixteenth century, we are presented with re-inventions of earlier Philostratean inventions by Titian and Romano and observe works of art far removed from any literary citation. Exercises in translating ancient texts into images such as Rosso’s *Evadne* listed (9) below, were increasingly rare and seem designed to go no further than the engraver’s tool. Rather than try to re-create Philostratus’ complex paintings in fresco or oils, the Fontainebleau prints such as *Evadne* and *Amphiaraüs* (3) seem to be produced as solitary illustrations of the myths, show-pieces that demonstrate the engraver’s skill as much as they recognize the invention of the artist. These mythological prints which had the advantage of being easy to circulate, bring the whole depiction of the ancient world closer to the genre of book illustration. Instead of Titian’s lush oil painting in Ferrara which follows the *Imagines*, there are countless variations of the *Erotes* (I. 6) in the graphic arts of Fontainebleau. Subjects of a wholly new fiction begin to emerge, which typically transplant elements from diverse ancient authors and overlay it with contemporary allegory. A good example given by the Panofskys, is the influence of a composition by Raphael, known from a print by Marcantonio Raimondi illustrating *The Plague of Crete*, which is re-interpreted by Primaticcio or Rosso in a roundel on the right of the

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99 Pliny N.H. 35:36 mentions a painting by the early Athenian painter Apollodorus showing ‘Ajax stuck by lightning’, which was on display at Pergamus.

100 A good example of this genre is a painting from the School of Fontainebleau, in the Louvre, *Allégorie de l’eau*, anonymous and undated. It combines the playful *putti* in a bountiful garden of the *Erotes* with figures that seem drawn from the myths of *Pan and Syrinx* and *Diana and Actaeon*. 
This trend away from a text-based humanistic approach was nourished by a genre of publication known as *emblemata* or, emblem manuals. The first to obtain widespread popularity was Andrea Alciati’s *Emblematum libellus* published in Paris, 1534. Guillaume de la Perrière’s first emblem book, *Le théâtre des bons engins*, was presented to the king’s sister Marguerite d’Angoulême in 1535, closely followed by Corrozet’s *Hecatomgraphie* in 1540.

To give an idea of the aims of this mode of book, which uses images to engage and entertain the reader, we can look to the title page of Geoffrey Whitney’s emblem book published in Leyden 1586 which reads:

*A Choice of Emblemes and Other Devices* for the moste parte gathered out of sundrie writers, Englished and Moralized and divers newly devised by Geoffrey Whitney. A worke adorned with varietie of matter, both pleasant and profitable: wherein those that please, maye finde to fit their fancies: Bcause herein, by the office of the eie, and the eare, the minde maye reape dooble delighte throughe holsome preceptes, shadowed with pleasant devises: both for the vertuous, to their incoraging: and for the wicked, for their admonishing and amendment.

In his *foreword*, Whitney readily admits to modelling his work on “sundrie writers” being the emblem books of Alciati, de la Perriere and Achilles Bochhius. Once this publishing phenomon had begun, there were a flood of emblem manuals produced throughout Europe, a fad that lasted well into the nineteenth century. Philostratus was an obvious source for the writers of this genre and is mentioned by Alciati and at least two other of the more successful emblem books: Vincenzo Cartari’s *Imagines* (1571) and Cesare Ripa’s *Iconologia* (1593). Piero Valeriano’s *Hieroglyphica* (Basle, 1556) also cites Philostratus (eg. Book 50, *The Marsh*) and a French edition of Valeriano’s book (1615) was commercial competition for the illustrated Philostratus of 1614 and further blurred the boundaries between true ancient iconography and myths re-interpreted in Renaissance/Baroque iconography.

Against this background of digression and multiplicity, it is still evident that the stories told by Philostratus survived in diluted form, in works produced by the French and

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101 Panofsky (1958) 138. The Fontainebleau subject if identified by Panofsky as *The Plague that killed the Oxen of Cylippe*.
103 Geoffrey Whitney, *A Choice of Emblemes* (Leyden: Christopher Plantyn, 1586)
Flemish exponents of the Fontainebleau School. In fact, by the end of the sixteenth century, I believe that most subjects in the *Imagines* had been tackled by artists whether as intentional reconstructions of Philostratus’ ekphrasis, or as isolated motifs borrowed to augment other versions of a myth. Listed below is a small selection of works related to the School of Fontainebleau that indicate the type of Philostratean subjects favoured by later artists.

1. ca. 1547, Francesco Primaticcio, *The Nile*

*About the Nile the Dwarfs are sporting, children no taller than their name implies.*

*Imagines*, I.5 (F19)

The *Nile* was one of four river god frescoes painted in the vault of the Ulysses gallery at Fontainebleau, now destroyed. The design for the *Nile* fresco remains in a preparatory drawing by Primaticcio (fig.14) and etchings by Étienne Deleune and Jacques Androuet du Cerceau and Théodore Van Thulden. The Primaticcio drawing resembles the famous Hellenistic sculpture in the Vatican which includes the same sphinx. Primaticcio went to Rome in 1540 on behalf of the King to make moulds of the most notable antiquities there, including the *Nile.*

Emmanuelle Brugerolles does not associate the subject with Philostratus or with any other Classical source in her catalogue (1995) however the correspondence to the *Imagines* would appear intentional. Primaticcio recalls this antique grouping of River God with *erotes,* in a drawing at the Louvre.

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104 Dwarfs (K300) περὶ τὸν Νεῖλον οἱ πήχεις ἄθοροι σπανία ξύμμετρα τῷ ὄνόματι

105 As previously mentioned, the *Galerie d’Ulysse* was destroyed in 1739. A complete series of engravings by Théodore Van Thulden made in 1633 record the frescoes and decorations. For the antique sculpture that inspired Primaticcio, see Frederick A. De Armas, *Ekphrasis in the age of Cervantes*, Rosemount: New Jersey, 2005. 37 and Cox-Rearick, 325-346.


107 Primaticcio Francesco *Plafond Fontainebleau,* Musée du Louvre, INV36580.
2. Hercules and Antaeus, *Imagines*, II. 21

A tapestry of the *Unity of the State* shows the figures of Hercules and Antaeus locked in a wrestling match, in a cartouche flanking the left hand side of the main scene. Cartoons were executed by Charles Badouin and others, after Rosso Fiorentino and Francesco Primaticcio, ca. 1539. The pose of the figures recalls a drawing of the same subject by Michelangelo which belonged to the king, now in the Louvre museum. *Hercules and Antaeus* remained one of the most popular subjects with painters and sculptors into the next century.

The tapestry was one from a six-piece set woven at Fontainebleau, ca. 1540–47 and now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. These tapestries were the only certain product of the tapestry workshop François I established at Fontainebleau in the 1540s. The set comprises a *trompe l’œil* reproduction of six of the fourteen bays in the Galerie François I.

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108 Illustrated in *L’École de Fontainebleau* (1972) no. 335, 276. cat.no. 448, 342.
3. *Amphiaraüs* (*Imagines I. xxvii*) “The two-horse chariot – is bearing Amphiaraüs on his way back from Thebes at the time when the earth is said to have opened up to receive him, in order that he may prophesy in Attica – the painting bids you to look at Amphiaraüs alone as in his flight he sinks beneath the earth”.

Fig. 15 *Amphiaraüs*, Domenico del Barbiere, ca. 1550.
This tour de force engraving by the Florentine artist, Domenico del Barbiere (Dominique Florentin) is thought to be after an original unknown design by either Rosso or Primaticcio (fig.15). Half of Philostratus’ description precisely fits the action occurring within this engraving and yet, the description of what the hero should be wearing and the identity of the figures in the background, does not agree with the text. Aeschylus refers to Amphiaraüs in *Seven Against Thebes* and Pausanias (9.8.3) describes the place “on the way from Potniae to Thebes”, where this King of Argos was devoured by the earth. There is no way to know what combination of source material inspired this composition, but as it does not quote Ovid’s popular texts, the possibility that the *Imagines* was consulted, seems likely. One anomaly in the print seems to point to a mis-reading of Philostratus who states “Amphiaraüs otherwise is in full armour, but he has left off his helmet, thus dedicating his head to Apollo”. It is possible that an incorrect translation of the Greek, given to the artist, suggested the exact reverse, for the Amphiaraüs in Domenico’s print is naked except for his helmet. The emphasis on the absence of the helmet in Philostratus’ painting and the emphasis on the helmet as the only item of armour in Domenico’s print, seems more than coincidental. Once again, it is also the fact that Philostratus is presenting this subject as suitable for a Hellenistic masterpiece that reinforces an argument toward the choice of the *Imagines* as a source for the artist rather than Aeschylus or Pausanias.

4. *Narcissus* (*Imagines* I.23)

There is a fresco at Fontainebleau, circa 1550, attributed to Niccolò dell’Abate after a design by Primaticcio. Recorded in an engraving by Bétou (RD 44) and a watercoulour by Percier, C 1. A sketch also survives of a *Narcissus* by Primaticcio at Fontainebleau; inventory number F 1986.2.3.

5. *Comus* (*Imagines* I.2)

Another fresco at Fontainebleau, circa 1550 attributed to Niccolò dell’Abate after a design by Primaticcio. Recorded in an engraving by Bétou (RD 27) and a watercoulour

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109 Henri Zerner is undecided as to the inventor of the composition, in the exhibition catalogue, *L’École de Fontainebleau* (1972) no. 335, 276.

110 Félix Herbet, *Le château de Fontainebleau* (Paris: Librairie ancienne Honoré Champion, 1937). 336. References to ‘Percier’ allude to the vitally important series of drawings that record in detail the decoration at Fontainebleau as it was at the end of the 18th century, by the eminent architect Charles Percier (1764-1838). The drawings, which were commissioned by the city of Paris in 1793, appear in the manuscript collection of the Bibliothèque de l’Institut de France, Paris, under the title, *Releves du Chateau de Fontainebleau*. 
by Percier, C 1 & C 2.\footnote{ibid. 335.}

6. Fall of Phaethon, fresco and drawing by Primaticcio


An etching by Jean Mignon (fig.16) records the design of the fresco painting by Primaticcio which is extremely close to Philostratus’ description. Variations on the same subject appear in prints by Mignon’s associates, Lèon Davent and Antonio Fantuzzi.
There is also a drawing that portrays a different episode of the same myth, *Phaethon asking Apollo for permission to Drive the Chariot of the Sun*, in the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge. It is thought to be a preparatory drawing by Primaticcio for a painting on the chimney above the fire place in the Salon of François I at Fontainebleau. *Phaethon* was a popular subject in France during the mid-sixteenth century and variations on the theme are widespread, with the most common interpretation featuring only the figure of Phaethon falling from the chariot. (Further interpretations of the Phaethon myth form part of the discussion in the following chapter.) There is also a
tapestry in the Fontainebleau style, *La Chute de Phaethon* ca. 1540 (fig.17) that like the Mignon engraving, has the kind of complex composition that suggests an effort to follow Philostratus’ ekphrasis.

Fig.17 Tapestry, *La Chute de Phaethon* c. 1540 (after Primaticcio) Musée National de la Renaissance, Château d’Ecouen, France.

7. Erotes (*Imagines I.6*)

There are countless variations on the theme of the court of Venus in a landscape with large numbers of playful *putti*, evident in all forms of the visual arts during this period. The *putti* as figures from antiquity are commonly used to inject charm and a sub-narrative into mythological subjects. They were important characters in the iconography of Fontainebleau from the very start, as they are featured in the presentation drawing of *Mars and Venus* which Rosso sent to the French king, before leaving Italy. One of the Fontainebleau versions of *Erotes* more faithful to Philostratus is *L’Abondance* by Niccolò dell’Abate (fig.18). It is interesting that the subject is no longer identified with either of the traditional titles, *Erotes* or the *Worship of Venus*, but is seen as an allegory of “Abundance”, due to the number of *putti* harvesting fruits and made explicit by the
inclusion of a cornucopia. This shows how the importance of a classical literary source is being replaced by the demand for innovation and a more complex allegorical meaning.

An etching by Léon Davent after Primaticcio, shows a crowd of putti throwing apples at one another and wrestling playfully. These are specific actions which take place in Philostratus’ *Erotes* and demonstrate the artist’s familiarity with the text. French artists also seem to have adapted this Italianate theme with elaborate drawings attributed to Jean Cousin the Elder featuring putti cavorting among classical ruins and in idyllic landscapes. One drawing entitled *Jeux d’enfants* (Children at Play), features a putto in the foreground urinating in the same position as a child in Titian’s *Andrians*. A similar drawing, *Enfants Jouant près d’une Fontaine* demonstrates putti engaged in wrestling matches and exercises which recall Philostratus’ description. Both drawings are illustrated in the exhibition catalogue, *L’École de Fontainebleau* (Paris: Éditions des Musées Nationaux, 1972) nos. 61 & 62.
8. The Andrians (Imagines, I.25)

This surprising composition in a print by Antonio Fantuzzi (fig.19) is most likely after a drawing by Primaticcio. It is unusual in that most mid-sixteenth century versions of the subject would have been derived from Titian’s famous painting at Ferrara.\textsuperscript{114} Instead, the Fontainebleau artist has started anew and included the classic form of a reclining river god in the foreground, bridging the stream of wine with one foot on either bank. The river god is surrounded by females and children only and Philostratus’ “men crowned with ivy and bryony” are absent. (F97)\textsuperscript{115} Several women hold musical instruments and two hold Greek theatrical masks.

\textsuperscript{114} Titian, \textit{Bacchanal of the Andrians} (1523-25) see discussion this thesis Chapter Two, pp.114-117.
\textsuperscript{115} Andrians (K329) ἐστεφανωμένοι κιττῷ τε καὶ σμίλακι
The artist seems to be concentrating on the Dionysian aspect of Philostratus’ description but without including the actual figure of Dionysus in the background of Philostratus’ painting who is described as leading “a mixed throng of Satyrs and Bacchantes and all the Seileni. He leads Laughter and Revel, two spirits most gay and fond of the drinking-bout”. (F99)\textsuperscript{116} The female bacchantes are represented in the engraving perhaps because they fall into the category of subjects favoured at Fontainebleau which exploited the chance to display numerous naked women.

The artist seems to have merged a few myths here, with the only other male figure included apart from the River God, being what looks like an exhausted naked Perseus (or Bellorophon?) with Pegasus, in the distant background (upper right corner). Perseus sits in a curious position with his leg straddling the head of Medusa which has been transformed into the font of a stream. Using the Medusa’s head as a fountain ornament was an antique motif, quite popular in Renaissance formal garden design. An alternative reading of the male figure and winged horse would be Bellorophon and Pegasus on Parnassus, in which case, the Medusa fountain head could be the lion’s head of the slaughtered Chimera. Lion’s heads were also commonly used in Renaissance formal garden design. It is even possible the artist was borrowing figures from a composition of the \textit{Muses on Parnassus} which was sacred to Dionysus and traditionally features the Muses singing and dancing to the music of Apollo’s lyre. After the Muses won a musical contest against the Pierides, they returned to Mount Helicon to rejoice and sang a song so loud that Pegasus kicks the mountain with his hoof and out flowed the Hippocrene spring.\textsuperscript{117}

Whatever the true identity of the figures and the themes in Fantuzzi’s print, the overriding concern would have been for the artist to create a pleasant composition “after the antique” rather than adhere to any textual source. The bacchante/muse figures recall those on a Roman sarcophagus known to Fantuzzi, who made etchings of the ancient sculpture whilst at Fontainebleau.\textsuperscript{118}

9. Evadne (\textit{Imagines II. 30})

\textsuperscript{116} \textit{Andrians} (K 330) Σατύρους δὲ ἄνωμίξ καὶ Ληνᾶς ἀγεῖ καὶ Σειληνός οἱ τὸν Γέλωτά τε ἀγεῖ καὶ τὸν Κώμον ἀλαφωτάτω
\textsuperscript{117} Pausanias, \textit{Description of Greece} 9.31.3.
The pyre and the victims sacrificed upon it and the corpse, laid on the pyre, which seems too large for that of a man, and the woman who takes so mighty a leap into the flames, make up a picture, my boy, to be interpreted as follows.

*Imagines, II. 30 (F255)*

Euripides tells the story of the death of Evadne (*The Suppliants*, 990f.) however Philostratus relates a different version for his picture, wherein the hero is not buried by Athenians but by his kinsmen: “Capaneus is being buried in Argos by his kinsmen, having been slain at Thebes by Zeus”. (F255)

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119 *Evadne* (K384) ἡ πυρὰ καὶ τὰ ἐς αὐτὴν ἐσφαγμένα καὶ ὁ ἀποκείμενος ἐπὶ τῇ πυρᾷ μεῖζων ἢ ἄνθρωπῳ δόξαι νεκρὸς ἢ γυνὴ τε ἡ σφοδρὸν οὕτω πήδημα ἐς τὸ πῦρ αἴρουσα ἐπὶ τοιοῖσδε, ὃ παι, γέγραπται:

120 *Evadne* (K384) τὸν Καπανέα οἱ προσήκοντες θάπτουσιν ἐν τῷ Ἀργεί, ἀπέθανε δὲ ἄρα ἐν Θήβαις ὑπὸ τοῦ Διὸς
The nude figures of three mourners in the foreground recall several prints of male bathers emerging from the water by Raphael and Romano. Primaticcio has arranged these figures on steps that lead up to the pyre and may have intended the scene to take place next to a river. The three nudes face away from the observer and are also variations on the pose of the river god in Fantuzzi’s print of Rosso’s *The Andrians* (8, above). The emphasis on the large broken body of Capaneus which does not seem to fit well on the pyre and has one foot projecting into the picture space beyond the step, may indicate the artist was following Philostratus’ critique of the ancient painter making a distortion of the body which seemed “too large for that of a man”.

The sacrifice of Evadne is a rare subject in art and without a history of works by other artists to borrow from, the choice of this subject at Fontainebleau undoubtedly refers to Philostratus’ description of a Hellenistic painting or to another Classical author who describes the death in detail, such as Euripides (Eur. Supp. 1034).

10. Nessus and Deianeira (*Imagines* Philo. the Younger, 16)

Philostratus the Younger tells the story of the death of the centaur Nessus as he tries to escape with Deianeira, the wife of Hercules. Rosso’s interpretation of the theme survives in a print by Giovanni Jacopo Caraglio.\(^{121}\) In addition, *Déjanire tenant la tunique de Nessus* is listed as a wall mural circa 1550, by Niccolò dell’Abate (after Primaticcio) at Fontainebleau.\(^{122}\)


\(^{122}\) cf. Félix Herbet: *Le château de Fontainebleau* (Paris: Librairie ancienne Honoré Champion, 1937) 335. The Musee de Fontainebleau retains copies of the composition as follows: Engraving by Bétou (RD 35); watercolour by Percier, C 1 et C 2 ; Painted by Alaux, 1844 (INV. 497).
11. Hercules Defeating the River God Achelous in the Form of a Bull (*Imagines* Philostratus the Younger, 4).

This subject survives in a print by Giovanni Jacopo Caraglio, after Rosso Fiorentino.\(^{123}\)


Perhaps most fitting for a royal hunting lodge were the scenes of boar hunts and fishing described in paintings by both Philostratoi. The 1547 series of four hunting compositions (which may also be an allegory for the four seasons), engraved by Léon Davent borrow many details from hunting pictures described in the *Imagines*. In particular the engraving of the *Calydonian Boar Hunt* (fig.21) which describes a scene we find in Philostratus the Younger’s *Meleager*.\(^{124}\)

![Fig.21 Calydonian Boar Hunt, Léon Davent (after Primaticcio), 1547.](image)

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\(^{124}\) The *Death of Meleager* was also the subject of a tapestry commissioned by Henri II, for the Château d’Anet (1549-1552).
The Legacy of Fontainebleau

The French response to Philostratus is less the product of an interest in copies of the text held in the Fontainebleau library, than the metamorphosis of Philostratean iconography adapted from the art of Titian, Raphael and Romano. The mythmaking in the *Imagines* was in fact, highly suitable to the French taste for complexity and ornamentation. If the text had been available in the vernacular at the time of Fontainebleau’s decoration, as was Ovid, it seems likely that visualization of the paintings from the lost Campanian art gallery would have been more evident in sixteenth century French art. The examples seen in the Galerie François I and those among the graphic works generated by the School of Fontainebleau, indicate that as in Titian’s case, humanist scholars like Guillaume Budé have stepped into the creative process to provide translations of the Greek text to artists.

Philostratus’ propensity toward juxtaposing themes within a theme and developing a synthesis of contrasting texture and rhythm in his ‘word-pictures’ seems to be accurately mirrored by the ambitions of Rosso and Primaticcio in their gallery decoration. It is not hard to imagine Philostratus’ detailed description of the ancient painter’s technical mastery with colour and form in *The Education of Achilles* capturing the imagination of Rosso:

The cloak he wears is probably his mother’s gift; for it is beautiful and its colour is sea-purple with red glints shading into a dark blue. *Imagines* II.2 (F135) \(^{125}\)

and in lines 27-35:

Now Chiron is painted in every respect like a centaur; yet to combine a horse and human body is no wondrous deed, but to gloss over the juncture and make the two into one whole and, by Zeus, cause one to end and the other to begin in such wise as to elude the eye of the observer who should try to detect where the human body ends, this seems to me to demand an excellent painter. *Imagines* II.2 (F135-6) \(^{126}\)

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\(^{125}\) *The Education of Achilles* (K342) ἡ χλαμὺς δέ, ᾗ ἀμπέχεται, παρά τῆς μητρός, οἴμαι: καλὴ γάρ καὶ ἀλιπόρφυρος καὶ πυραυγὴς ἐξαλλάττουσα τοῦ κυανῆ εἶναι.

\(^{126}\) *The Education of Achilles* (K342) ὁ δὲ Χείρων γέγραπται μὲν ὡσε κένταυρος; ἀλλὰ Ἴππον ἀνθρώπῳ συμβαλεῖν θαύμα οὐδέν, συναλεῖσαι μὴν καὶ ἐνώσαι καὶ, νὴ Δία, λήγειν ἄμφω δοῦναι καὶ ἀρχέσαι καὶ διαφεύγειν τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς, εἰ τὸ τέρμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἑλέγχοις, ἀγαθοῦ, οἴμαι, ζωγράφου.
This sends a direct challenge to the Renaissance artist to emulate, or surpass, the ancient master’s virtuosity with a brush. As for the suitability of the subject, the figure of a handsome juvenile Achilles sporting and hunting may be intended to recall the young François as a prince, being trained as a future ruler of France in the grounds of Fontainebleau. Curiously, no author has commented on a possible link between the theme of hunting and riding in *The Education of Achilles*, the King’s own love of hunting and the purpose of Fontainebleau as a hunting lodge. When iconographical material was being assembled for the Galerie programme, it is possible that these ideas of Achilles’ princely education transmitted comfortably into the modern world of François I.

Ironically, the Italian colony of art makers at Fontainebleau ended up influencing art back in Italy, with French prints being forged in Venice and artists copying engravings, as noted by Vasari. Giorgio Montavano came to Fontainebleau in 1550 just to make engravings of the frescoes which he then printed in Italy and spread the fame of the School of Fontainebleau style across Europe.

After Rosso died in 1542, his ideas were immortalized and circulated throughout Europe by a group of printmakers working at Fontainebleau. The most important among these etchers and engravers were Antonio Fantuzzi, Léon Davent, Geoffroy Dumoustier, Jean Mignon, Pierre Milan, Domenico del Barbiere and Juste de Juste. Not only did they record designs by Rosso but they produced a phenomenal number of prints after works by Raphael’s pupils Giulio Romano and Luca Penni. They made prints of contemporary works by Primaticcio and Parmigiano and also invented their own compositions inspired by the frescoes of mythological subjects found at Fontainebleau.

French artists finally broke from their Gothic heritage and began to emulate the Italian artists, with Jean Cousin the Elder beginning to paint nudes circa 1540. Jean Clouet’s son, François Clouet who succeeded his father as Royal Portrait Painter under the

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128 Jean Cousin, the Elder (ca. 1490-ca. 1560) painted a naked Eve as the first Pandora, in a reclining pose that mimics classical statues of Ariadne; illustrated in the exhibition catalogue, *L’École de Fontainebleau* (Paris: Éditions des Musées Nationaux, 1972) no. 56. 58.
appointment of François I in 1541, seems to have been highly influenced by the Italian art he saw at Fontainebleau, painting the nude portrait of a noble lady c. 1550 and producing half-length portraits that mimic those of Moroni and Bronzino. His *Diana Bathing* combines the elongated female nudes of the Galerie with a landscape decidedly influenced by the Venetian School of painting.¹²⁹ One of the new generation of French artists who came to Fontainebleau to work under Primaticcio was Antoine Caron, who is a significant figure in the next chapter of this thesis as he was in charge of the prints for the first illustrated edition of the *Imagines*.

¹²⁹ François Clouet (1510?-1572) *Le Bain de Diane*, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rouen, France; illustrated in *L’École de Fontainebleau* (1972) nos. 54, 55.
CHAPTER SIX

Philostratus Illustrated: Blaise de Vigenère & the 1614 edition

*If you eye wel and marke these silent poesies,*

*give eare to these speaking pictures.*


This epigraph, from an English emblem manual, reflects sensory reading experiences activated by the first complete illustration of the *Imagines.* Is translation of text into image, the ultimate act of comprehending? The culmination of the sixteenth-century interest in Philostratus or more specifically, in the Neapolitan gallery he described, was this 1614 deluxe illustrated edition of the first French translation.¹ The purpose of this chapter is to examine the engravings in *Les images ou tableaux de platte peinture de Philostrate Lemnien Sophiste Grec* with the aim of discovering how the Classical world was perceived by artists at the close of the Renaissance and how this unique edition transported the *Imagines* into the Baroque era.²

In late sixteenth-century France during the reign of Henri III, the *Imagines* of Philostratus attained popularity in the 1578 translation by the humanist, Blaise de Vigenère.³ Published by Nicolas Chesneau, this edition was the first vernacular translation in any language and inspired the rival Parisian publisher, Abel l’Angelier, to undertake the formidable task of producing the only fully illustrated edition of the *Imagines.* The project was initiated by l’Angelier around 1594 and completed by his widow, Françoise de Louvain.

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³ Jacques Amyot (1513-1593), well known at the time for his translations of Plutarch, was originally commissioned by Henri III to do the translation of *Imagines* but was incapable of completing it. Denyse Métral, *Blaise de Vigenère, archéologue et critique d'art* (Paris : E. Droz, 1939) 209.
The differences between the illustrations in *Les images* and earlier representations of Philostratus’ ekphrasis will be brought out in this chapter. Where the same scenes are depicted in both the 1614 edition and a Renaissance painting (or drawing), how is the treatment similar or different? What episodes from the *Imagines* were allotted the greater significance by both the amount of commentary added by Vigenère and the quality of draughtsmanship seen in the engravings? Does this seventeenth-century process of selection relate to any theme connected to the political or moral climate of the day? What effect, if any, did these illustrations have on seventeenth century art?

These are some of the questions which will be addressed.

**The Translator: Blaise de Vigenère**

The best contemporary source on **Vigenère** is the author himself. Writing in 1589 toward the end of his life, he penned his résumé in the introduction to *Les trois livres de la guerre civile de Jules César*. Born on the 5th April 1523 in the small town of Saint-Pourçain near Vichy in the Auvergne, Vigenère was the son of a mounted officer in the army of François I. He spent his boyhood close to his father before being sent to Paris at the age of twelve, to further his education. At fourteen, this precocious child was enrolled at the University of Paris but he left three years later, without having obtained a diploma. Between 1539 and 1545 he worked as an assistant to Gilbert Bayard, First Secretary to the King and at the age of twenty-two he accompanied Louis Adhémar de Monteil, Count of Grignan who represented the King of France at the Diet of Worms. **Vigenère**’s role at Worms may have been to read the speeches in Latin on behalf of Ambassador Grignan. In the same year he also went with Grignan to Brussels and then on to Germany.

Through these important contacts at the French Court **Vigenère** obtained a position as Secretary and Tutor for the noble house of Nevers. In 1547 he entered the service of François de Clèves and it was through his work for this family that his association began with his most important patron, the cultured Duke Luigi Gonzaga of Mantua. The Italian Duke built a magnificent house in Paris in 1552 that became known as the Hôtel

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de Nevers when he married into the Nevers family, through Henriette de Clèves in 1565. The Hôtel became an important symbol for the meeting of French and Italian cultures in Paris and Vigenère who was also fluent in Italian, was a leading figure of the Gonzaga-Nevers scene.

A trip to Rome in 1549 had been the beginning of Vigenère’s Italian connection and his patron at the time was the Cardinal of Tournon, a celebrated diplomat and admirer of the arts. During his two year stay in Rome Vigenère made friends among the cardinals, ambassadors, intellectuals and artists attached to the court of Pope Julius III. He made a second sojourn to Rome 1566-1570 as the ambassadorial Secretary in charge of a mission for Catherine de Medici. Vigenère travelled through the major cities of Italy and profited from these opportunities not only to study the Classical art and archaeology, as most visitors did, but he also met with celebrated rabbis to satisfy his taste for Hebraic culture and for kabbalistic learning. Vigenère was by now fluent in Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Italian but not until he reached fifty years of age did he begin to publish his studies. When he did begin to publish, he was prolific; producing sixteen titles between 1573 and 1595 and a further six titles were published posthumously.

In 1581 Vigenère carried the title of Secretary to the Chamber of King Henri III and was given a residence on the rue Saint-Etienne-des-Grès in Paris where he lived with his wife and daughter, working on his publications right up till his death on 19th February 1596. He showed more interest in Philostratus than any Renaissance scholar beforehand and translated all works attributed to Philostratus at the time. In the tradition of humanistic scholarship which ideally meant that a scholar was accomplished in not one, but many fields, Vigenère also wrote on the subjects of Geography, History, the Natural Sciences, Alchemy, Archaeology and Classical Literature. His profound interest in the work of

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5 The Hôtel de Nevers, which stood opposite the Louvre, was demolished in 1614 and in its place stands today the French Institute on the quai de Conti cf. David Thomson, Renaissance Paris: Architecture and Growth 1475–1600 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985) 137-140.

6 Richard Crescenzo suggests that it was in Italy that Vigenère was introduced to the Imagines by way of the Aldus Manutius printed edition of 1503. He says that the Imagines was “not known in France” (inconnu en France). Crescenzo offers no evidence to support this claim and it seems a little extreme given that the royal library contained a 14th century manuscript, the Manutian edition and the 1518 Basle Latin translation. The Manutian edition would also have been present in numerous other libraries of France by 1570. Métral claims it was Henri III who commissioned Vigenère to translate the Imagines into French, raising the possibility that it may have been royal initiative that introduced Vigenère to the text. op.cit. note 2.

7 He is buried in the church of Saint-Etienne-du-Mont near the Panthéon in Paris and a plaque bearing his name marks the place in the third chapel on the right of the entrance to the church. (Observation from my research trip to France, 2005).
Philostratus and Callistratus can also be explained by his interest in the art of his time. Denyse Métral maintains that Vigenère was the only contemporary to leave behind a critical account of sixteenth-century French art.\(^8\) Years in Italy gave him an eye for art and led him to become a great admirer of Michelangelo, whom he met in Rome. He placed Michelangelo above all other artists and believed it was only through him, that the plastic arts of antiquity could be resuscitated.\(^9\)

Despite de Vigenère’s effectiveness as an art critic and as a specialist in other diverse areas, it was as a translator of Classical texts, that he achieved the greatest renown during his lifetime. Conversely, Vigenère is best remembered today not for his work on Philostratus or as a translator of the Classics, but as a cryptographer. In his 1586 *Traicté des chiffre* (Treatise on Codes) he explains a method of encryption using a polyalphabetic cipher which is still used today.\(^10\)

It is ironic that Vigenère is remembered for the posthumous edition of the *Imagines* rather than his earlier un-illustrated volume, for he would have most likely disapproved of the lavish 1614 ‘picture-book’ edition. In the *Epistre* of his original 1578 edition, Vigenère states that he believes the material to be found in his translation is rich enough and includes many 'belles fantaisies' for artists to use as inspiration. He adds that, “Moreover, alongside this are the arguments and annotations which I have included to serve as a framework that will help them more than a little”.\(^11\) It is interesting that

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\(^8\) Denyse Métral, (1939) 210. Vigenère did not publish a work solely on French art in the manner that Vasari wrote about Italian art, however he inserted passages of art criticism into his commentary on the *Imagines*. For example, he discusses the work of sculptor Jean Goujon in the introduction to his translation of Callistratus in *Les Images*, (1614), 855.

\(^9\) In the introduction to his translation of Callistratus, Vigenère relates how he had the pleasure of meeting Michelangelo in his studio and he formed this high opinion of the artist: “un bon peintre comme en Michel l’Ange qui a surpassé en l’une & l’autre toute cette derniere volée d’excellens Maitres, depuis que les bonnes arts et sciences commencèrent à se réveiller”. *Les images*, ibid. 853.

\(^10\) According to Simon Singh in his discussion of de Vigenère’s *Le Chiffre Indéchiffrable* (the undecipherable cipher) real credit for the invention of this particular autokey cipher should go to the work of the Italian, Giovan Batista Belaso and a 19\(^{th}\) century attribution to Vigenère is erroneous. It is quite probable that de Vigenère, the master translator, re-invented *La cifra del. Sig Giovan Batista Belaso* (1553) for his 1584 book on code-breaking. Simon Singh, *The Code Book*. (London: Anchor Book, Random House, 1999).

\(^11\) ‘Joint que les arguments et annotations que nous y avons apposés pour servir comme de vollets en enchassements ne leur aideront pas de peu...’. Blaise de Vigenère, *Les images ou tableaux de platte peinture de Philostrate Lemnien Sophiste Grec*, Paris, Chez N. Chesneau, 1578, ’Epistre’. De Vigenère's lengthy ‘Epistre’ was omitted from the 1614 illustrated edition. One reason for this may be that the publishers, l’Angelier and Louvain, were sensitive to printing de Vigenère's views on illustrating Philostratus. Neither Crescenzo or Métral are clear on whether the translator was involved in the illustrated edition which was published eighteen years after his death.
Vigenère is addressing artists in particular, hoping that his book can be of use to the visual arts now that he had made it accessible in a common language.

The Publishers

In view of this argument, it seems apparent that the illustrated edition of *Les images* was not the inspiration of the translator, but of the Parisian publishers. The preface is written by l’Angelier’s widow who justifies the inclusion of the illustrations with the following argument:

the illustrations seemed greatly required by this rich work, to make it more acceptable to the public: it also seems defective to want simply to reduce to a discourse what depends entirely on the sight and to want to write or speak of paintings without the painting...\(^\text{12}\)

The publishers’ motives are thus clearly determined by commercial value and by the conviction that the *Imagines* is an actual record of a visual experience and consequently, the paintings can justifiably be reconstructed. Such an approach leaves no room for scepticism as to the existence of the gallery nor appreciation of the literary purpose of the work.

As can be determined from the list of Vigenère’s publications, Abel l’Angelier developed an interest in the work of this French humanist/translator as early as 1584 when he published Vigenère’s history of the crusader Geoffrey de Villehardouin. Up to then, Vigenère had published mainly through Nicolas Chesneau and it must have been considered a coup for l’Angelier to attract to his publishing house, not only such an important author/translator, but a well-regarded figure at Court. L’Angelier became Vigenère’s exclusive Paris publisher up till his death and subsequently on 22\(^\text{nd}\) February 1597, secured a ten year privilege of exclusivity to publish the posthumous titles of Vigenère’s work.\(^\text{13}\)

\(^{12}\) *dehors la splendeur des belles conceptions qui l’illustrent en son interieur, & par la parole ou par la plume ne fait connoistre au public: Aussi semble il defectueux de vouloir simplement reduire en discours ce qui despend entièrement de la veuë, & vouloir escrire ou parler des tableaux sans peinture...*, F. de Louvain, veuve d’Abel L’Angelier, ‘Advertissement’ sur les images ou tableaux de Philostrate in the 1614 edition, ocit.

\(^{13}\) Balsamo & Simonin (2002) 285.
L’Angelier (c. 1550-1610) was born into a publishing family and ran one of Paris’ leading houses printing more than five hundred editions over four decades. It was Chesneau who first published Vigenère’s translation of the *Imagines* in 1578 but it was l’Angelier who commissioned Vigenère to add to this series with a translation of Philostratus’ *Heroikos* (*Les Heroïques*) and Callistratus’ *Descriptions* published in 1597. L’Angelier also published Vigenère’s vernacular translation of Philostratus’ *Apollonius of Tyana* in 1599 and wrote that he intended to publish many more of the manuscripts left behind by de Vigenère. The translations of *Heroikos*, Callistratus and *Apollonius of Tyana* met with commercial success and provided the incentive for the idea of a fully illustrated edition of the *Imagines*. L’Angelier would also have been eager to emulate the widespread success of several vernacular editions of the illustrated Ovid, in particular *Le Metamorphosi*, translated by A. dell’Anguillara and illustrated by Giacomo Franco (Venice, B. Giunti, 1584).

L’Angelier’s widow, Françoise de Louvain took charge of the publishing house upon her husband’s death in 1610 and it was Françoise who ensured the completion of the 1614 illustrated edition of *Les images*.

*Les Images: The 1614 edition as a ‘virtual gallery’*

This formidable volume consists of 985 pages and weighs approximately five kilos. Three different fonts are used in each description to distinguish the *Argument* from the translated passage of text and the annotations. The pages measure 39.6 cm height and 24.5 cm across, approximating what is known in British book binding terms as size ‘Crown Folio’. There are a few irregularities in the print layout and a page number has been omitted on at least two occasions.

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14 “Le libraire annonce d’autres ouvrages que Vigenère a laissées manuscrits et qu’il se propose de publier.” ibid. 299

15 The main volume used for research in this study is a 1614 first edition in the Le Goff family library, Villa Triton, Hydra Island, Greece. Reproductions from *Les images* included in this chapter were scanned or digitally photographed from this volume. In Australia, I relied on the University of Sydney’s facsimile edition published by Garland: *Les Images, Philostratus translated by Blaise de Vigenère*, The Renaissance and the Gods; no. 22 (New York: Garland Publishing, 1976).
In the two copies of the first edition that I have examined there is evidence that artists, or perhaps just amateur draughtsmen, have squared the plates with a ruler and pencil. This technique was commonly used to transfer a smaller scale design with some accuracy onto a larger surface and demonstrates that Les images may have been used directly as a type of pattern book for creating other works of art. At the very least, it shows that readers of Les images with graphic skills copied the 1614 illustrations.

Although Les images, by its use of illustration and French epigrams, is clearly aimed at appealing to a wider audience beyond Classically educated scholars of Vigenère’s ilk, the publishers have catered to both parties by retaining all of Vigenère’s meandering academic annotations. At times, the erudition of this polymath borders on pedantry and Vigenère the literalist, is capable of delivering a six page excursus on swamp botany to accompany Philostratus’ description of a marsh in Les Marescages (pp.70-75). Had the publishers wanted to make a simple picture-book in the style of Giunti’s Le Metamorfosi aimed at the general reader, it would have been more practical and economical to dispense with the translator’s scholarly annotations and Arguments. The 1614 edition begins with a thoroughly baroque frontispiece showing a fanciful hybrid Classical/seventeenth-century building populated with philosophers and adorned with statues (fig.1).

16 Another 1614 copy of Les images that showed pencil grids drawn over the plates was found by the present writer at the antiquarian booksellers, E. Gini and E. Papakyriakou of Monastiraki, Athens in 1996.
On the left, a winged Mercury as Fame trumpets the banner VSQVE AD FINES ORBIS TERRARVM (As far as the ends of the Earth) and on the right, another winged figure produces the banner IN ETERNVM (For eternity). Behind them stand two statues: on the left, the figure of Mars offering an olive branch; and on the right, the female allegorical figure of Rhetoric. In the middle of the courtyard, the Muses are seated on
Mount Parnassus with the winged horse Pegasus. A portrait bust of a sixteenth-century gentleman is seen in the middle niche of the dome, which is probably meant to be Blaise Vigenère. There is no attempt on the frontispiece to re-create a portrait of the Sophist, Philostratus, such as found on the frontispiece to the 1487 Corvine manuscript.

An aerial map of Paris is presented as a framed painting on the left with a pendant view of Athens on the right. The composition is symmetrical with the two cultures, seventeenth-century France and Classical Greece, reflecting one another and given equal importance. Care has been taken so that the philosophers holding a dialogue on the left wear contemporary costume and the Greeks on the right wear oriental headdresses and Classical robes. Playful cupids decorate the frame holding feathers and wreaths. This pseudo-antique treatment of Paris is discussed by Frances A. Yates who wrote about Paris during the reign of the last Valois kings when: “Artists and architects laboured to transform Paris into an antique city, with triumphal arches, theatres, perspectives, obelisks, erected along the routes of the royal processions.”17 The main artist Yates refers to is Antoine Caron, who was also in charge of the illustrations for the 1614 edition of Les images. Among Yates’ sources is a contemporary report of the entrée into Paris of Charles IX in 1571 and of his bride, the Emperor Maximilian II’s daughter, Elisabeth of Austria.18 In celebratory verses composed for the occasion by the poet Prevostan, the river Seine becomes the Tiber and Charles IX becomes Caesar.19 This comparison of Paris as the new Rome sets the model for Antoine Caron, who was heavily involved in decorating Paris for the Valois dynasty, to create his image of Paris as the new Athens in the 1614 frontispiece.20

The lengthy title on the frontispiece reflects the ambitious nature of the project, it reads:

Les images ou tableaux de platte peinture des deux Philostrates Sophistes Grecs et les statues de Callistrate/Mis en Francois par Blaise de Vigenère Bourbonnois Enrichis d’Arguments et Annotations/Revues et corrigez sur l’original par un docte personnage de ce temps en la langue Greque et representez en taille douce en cette

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18 S. Bouquet, Bref et Sommaire recueil de ce qui a esté faict et de l’ordre tenue à la joyeuse triumphant entrée de très puissant, très magnanime et très chrestien prince Charles IX...Paris, 1572.
19 Yates, 133.
20 Although the frontispiece first appeared long after his death, we know that Caron was involved with the project from the start, c. 1594. Yates also makes mention of Caron’s involvement in 1573 of Henri III’s entrée into Paris as King of Poland. Records show that Caron was the official painter employed for the decoration of four triumphal arches erected in the city. Yates, ibid.

Translated as:

The *Imagines* or paintings of the two Philostratoi, Greek Sophists and the *Statues* of Callistratus./Translated into French by Blaise de Vigenère of Bourbon and enriched with arguments and annotations. The original, revised and corrected by a learned personage of today in the Greek language and represented in copperplate engraving in this new edition/with epigrams for each plate written by Artus Thomas Sieur d’Embry with the privilege of the King. Jasper Isaacs engraver./((and on the cartouche): At Paris, at the printing house of the widow Abel l’Angelier located at the first pillar of the grand Salle du Palais and also the printing house of the widow M. Guillemot in the Gallerie des Prisonniers, 1614.)

The title mentions, in order of appearance: the three Classical authors, Philostratus the Elder, Philostratus the Younger and Callistratus; the scholar who first translated the Greek into French; the composer of French epigrams which further illustrate the original text; the King who approves the publication; the engraver; and lastly, the two widows who complete the publication of the volume begun by their late husbands.

Following the frontispiece is a dedication addressed to Monseigneur Henry de Bourbon, Prince de Condé et Premier Prince du Sang (First Prince of the Royal Blood). Louis XIII (reigned 1610–1643) was a child King at the time the 1614 edition came out. It is not absolutely clear why Madame F. de Louvain chose to dedicate this prestigious work to Henry II de Bourbon and not to the young King (or even to the Regent Marie de Medici) but it may just be a case of political loyalty as emphasis is placed in the dedication on Henry II’s noble lineage: “Dieu a donné la naissance du Sang de France, le plus illustre & ancien sans contredit qui soit veu du Ciel” (God-given birth of the blood of France, the most illustrious and ancient blood without contradiction in the view of Heaven). This strongly suggests that Madame may have harboured Huguenot

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21 The frontispiece is dedicated to Henry II de Bourbon (1588-1646). Heir presumptive to the French throne during his childhood, the birth of Louis XIII in 1601 meant that Henry was never to be crowned king. However, because he had initially been the true heir, he became known to Bourbon loyalists as ‘First Prince of the Royal Blood’. 
loyalties, as Henry II led a revolt against the Regency in 1614 which secured him an alliance with the Protestant leadership.\textsuperscript{22}

The dedication to Henri de Bourbon is followed by the \textit{Advertissement}, signed “LES” and it is only in the last paragraph when he speaks of “my epigrams” that the author is revealed as Artus Thomas Sieur d’Embry. He is also likely to be the “learned person” (\textit{docte personnage de ce temps}) mentioned on the frontispiece who has revised Vigenère’s 1578 translation. His short \textit{Advertissement} is a preamble to the lengthier \textit{Preface} and gives justification for the publishing of this luxurious volume by applauding firstly: “the splendour and glory of antiquity”; secondly, the achievement of Vigenère who has elevated France through his translations of the ancient authors; and lastly, the entrepreneurship of Abel l’Angelier for undertaking this task. In an extraordinary claim, the author finishes by stating that the language of Philostratus sounds well enough, but the images in the book represent the words “in a manner sometimes more lascivious than good sense and modesty requires” and that Artus Thomas has added the epigrams to restore modesty in case “a chaste eye is offended by the view of the picture”.\textsuperscript{23} The epigrams ignore the erotic nature of Greek myth through the imposition of moral allegory.

This concept seemingly aimed at protecting the gaze of women and children from corruption, is demonstrated in Book I, \textit{Ariadne} where the artist has featured a half naked Ariadne in a position of sexual abandonment as Bacchus leaps off his ship to claim her (fig.2). A satyr embraces a bacchante on the ship in the background. The pose used for the \textit{Ariadne}, is similar to that of \textit{Leda} in Correggio’s painting or his \textit{Danae} in another of

\textsuperscript{22} After the assassination of Henri IV in 1610, Marie de Medici took over as Regent because Louis XIII was only 8 years old. Henri de Bourbon (Condé) was an advocate for the Huguenots and published a manifesto against the proposed marriage of Louis XIII to a Catholic princess, Anne of Austria. Knecht (2001) 492.

\textsuperscript{23} \textit{Mais d’autant que Philostrate s’est bien sonnent emancipé de représenter ses tableaux d’une façon quelquefois plus lascive, que la bien seance & la modestie ne sembloient requiser, i’ay pensé de convertir ses intentions à bonne fin, par quelque moralité qu’on pourroit adjoister au pied de chacune figure, afin que si la pudeur d’un œil chaste est offencée par la veuë de la peinture, il puisse rencontrer au mesme endroit dequoy satisfaire sa vertu. Artus Thomas Sieur d’Embry, \textit{Les Images}, ‘Advertisissement’, (1614). As noted in the list of Vigenère’s works, Artus Thomas’ epigrams were first published by Claude Cramoisy in a non-illustrated edition of the French translation in 1609, although it seems the epigrams were originally commissioned by l’Angelier and intended to accompany the illustrations, most of which were probably completed by 1609 if we can be guided by that date on Caron’s, \textit{Les Cupidons}.}
the series of mythological paintings from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* commissioned around 1531 by Frederick II Gonzaga in Mantua as a gift for Charles V.\textsuperscript{24}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{ariadne.png}
\caption{‘Ariadne’, *Les images* (1614)}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{24} Correggio’s paintings would have been well known to artists of the early seventeenth century as they were circulated in prints. The *Danae* is now at the Borghese Gallery, Rome and the *Leda* is at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.
Artus Thomas has attempted to moralize this scene of Ariadne’s seduction by his epigram at the foot of the image:

The ungrateful one is always unfaithful,
The lustful one always wants change,
If Theseus forgets his beautiful one,
And the good he received from her,
Having safeguarded him from danger,

Bacchus has no less fickleness,
For he likes change,
Neither Ariadne for the imprudence,
To have chosen such a lover:
Her voluptuous pleasure was the strongest,
Although pain was at her door.

It is questionable how successful this verse is in lending virtue to the scene depicted. On one level it is a warning to all young women that “pain waits at the door” for those who give themselves over to lust and on another level, it suggests that no man is to be trusted, whether he be the rescued or the rescuer. One wonders what layout the book would have employed had there not been allowance made on each illustrated page for two verses from Artus Thomas. The verses have little connection to Philostratus either in content or concept, and prudishness is not a quality associated with Philostratus’ writing, or antiquity in general. The epigrams are a reflection of French proto-Baroque sensibilities set against a climate of religious conservatism. With the assassination of Henri IV in 1610 and Marie de Medici in power, Artus Thomas may have been conscious of not offending her Florentine morality.
Certainly there seems cause at the time for authors and publishers in France to be cautious about indecent content if the case of the Huguenot poet Théophile de Viau, is considered. His collection of licentious poems published in 1622 as *Le Parnasse satyrique* which included work from other writers as well, led to the Jesuits denouncing his work and de Viau was sentenced to burn at the stake.\(^{25}\)

There was a definite tension in France at the time, between relinquishing the Renaissance Classical world of rationality as represented by the poet and scholar François de Malherbe and embracing the less restrained Baroque world to which de Viau belonged. This places Philostratus in an ambiguous position being a text that is at the same time Classical, but can also be seen as answering to the more emotional and dramatic imagery of Baroque.\(^{26}\)

An indication of how a publisher had to consider the sensibilities of a patron and the public is given by Françoise Louvain, in her address to Antoine Séguier de Villiers at the beginning of the 1610 edition of Vigenère’s translation of Philostratus’ *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*:

> On y verra des Annotations, qui convertissent à la piété les resveries du Paganisme contenus au corps du livre, rendans au fils de DIEU l’honneur qui luy est deub; et que le presomptueux discours de cet Idolatre Apollonius s’estoit efforcé de luy arracher.\(^{27}\)

(One will find the *Annotations*, that convert to piety the pagan reveries contained in the body of this book, returning to the son of God the honour that is due to him; that the presumptuous discourse of this idolatrous Apollonius attempted to take away from him.)

The widow Louvain’s justification for the annotations expresses real, or feigned, disapproval of the very author she is publishing. Seventeenth-century publishers recognised the need to publish Classical works yet they had to pretend at least, that they considered their own Christian society was morally superior to that of the pagan Greeks.

\(^{25}\) Théophile de Viau (1590-1626). Imprisoned in 1622, he was given a reprieve and sentenced instead to perpetual banishment. De Viau came under the protection of the Duke of Montmorency but his years in prison had weakened his health and he died at the age of 36 in Paris. Antoine Adam, *Théophile de Viau et la libre pensée française en 1620* (Geneve: Slatkine Reprints, 1966) 21.


\(^{27}\) ‘Epître’ *La Vie d’Apollonius Thyanéen.* (veuve Abel L;Angelier, Paris 1611).
From a publisher’s point of view, Artus Thomas’ epigrams in the 1614 *Les images* achieve the purpose of lessening the impact of unadulterated text and image, in what could have been received as a mildly pornographic book, given the conflicting moral and religious climate of the day. The rhyming verses, ridiculous as they may seem to a modern reader, inject a genteel, mannered and contemporary French voice into the wild and lascivious Greek past. It is possible that the publishers decided to add the epigrams, only after the illustrations had been completed, although the images used in the plates of the 1614 edition were no more erotic than works of art being produced at the time by painters and sculptors across Europe such as Domenichino, Rubens, and Simon Vouet.28

The engravings by the school of Caron are not ‘pornographic’ in the sense that Giulio Romano’s sexual positions were considered to be in the prints for *I Modi* (1527); however many passages in Philostratus are erotic and with the added stimulus of images of nude figures, the publishers may have been wary of causing a scandal.29

**The Illustrations**

The widow Louvain tells how no expense was spared in seeking out the most talented painters and engravers to contribute their designs for the sixty-eight plates that are reproduced in *Les images*. All of the sixty-five descriptions in the Imagines of Philostratus the Elder are illustrated. The other three texts (Philostratus the Younger; *Heroikos*; Callistratus) are grouped under the title *La Suite de Philostrate* and warrant only one introductory illustration per text. Antoine Caron (c.1521-1599) painter to the King at Fontainebleau, executed designs for l’Angelier before the publisher’s death. Stylistic guidelines and drawing technique evidence Caron’s participation in the *Les images* project, but it is not known exactly how many drawings he contributed to the final publication.30

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29 The Italian painters Agostino Carracci and Camillo Procaccini reworked Romano’s sexual positions in later prints.
30 William McAllister Johnson suggests that plans to illustrate *Les Images* were underway around 1594, which is before the death of Vigenère in 1596. He also comments that there is no way to determine how many preparatory drawings Caron finished before his death in 1599. see nos. 47 & 48 in exhibition catalogue *L’École de Fontainebleau* (Paris: Éditions des Musées Nationaux, 1972) 47-48.
holds that the finished product relies mainly on inventions by lesser known French and Flemish artists. Of the 68 illustrated plates only 10 bear Caron’s name and they are:

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<th>Title</th>
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<td>Les Fables</td>
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Of these ten Caron plates, only *Les Cupidons* is dated with the year 1609 which appears next to the engraver’s name *L. Gaultier*. Caron’s name only appears on a small number of plates for the simple reason that he died at the beginning of the publishing project. It is not known exactly how many designs, like *Les Cupidons*, he left behind for the engravers to execute posthumously but his distinctive École de Fontainebleau style can be seen in anonymous plates such as: *Le Nil* (p. 31), *Memnon* (p.56) and *La Chasse des Bestes Noires* (p. 231).31 Judging by the plates that bear his name, Caron’s choice of subjects to initiate the project reveals no propensity toward one particular theme as there are the dramatic scenes of *Ajax, Scamander and Palemon* among the gentler scenes of *Aesop’s Fables* and *Neptune with Amymone*. His most accomplished design seems to be for *Les Cupidons*, the penultimate plate in the book which introduces the descriptions by Callistratus and in particular, relates to the description of a statue of Cupid by Praxiteles. The composition of *Les Cupidons* (Callistratus) borrows heavily from

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Philostratus’ *Erotes* (I.6) and credit must be given to the engraver Léonard Gaulthier who has added a lively Baroque elegance to Caron’s somewhat dry, Mannerist style. Another factor which would have affected the production and quality of the illustration project after Caron was no longer in charge, was the death of the other artistic director, Abel l’Angelier. It was the publisher whose original vision it was, to create this virtual paper gallery of Hellenistic paintings. It is not clear who took over as senior artist on the team when Caron died, although the name of the engraver Gaspar Isac (Iaspar) appears on seventeen plates; more than any other person involved in the production of the illustrations.\(^{32}\)

**CARON INTERPRETS ANTIQUITY**

Given the continuing status awarded to foreign artists in France at the end of the sixteenth century, Caron stands out as one of only a small group of native artists favoured by the French court. Caron worked under Primaticcio at Fontainebleau as a young apprentice and his main teacher was another Italian emigrée to the French court; Niccolò dell’Abate who died in 1571 in the same year Charles IX returned to France.\(^{33}\) This meant that Caron was elevated to the leading painter at court and he adopted the elongated Mannerist style of his Italian teachers when painting figures but often set them against fantastic *capriccio* settings that transgressed the academic norms of Classical architecture (fig. 3).

\(^{32}\) Not much is known about Isac (or Isaacs), but one volume he designed an elaborate frontispiece for was *L’inventaire de l’histoire generalle des Turez...depuis l’an 1300 jusques en l’année 1617*, by Michel Baudier (1589-1645).

Caron further distanced himself from Italian-inspired Classical imagery when he painted subjects connected to occultism and tragedies taken from French literature. One logical reason he would have been asked to illustrate Philostratus is that Caron had already begun work on illustrating Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* based on the translation of Nicholas Renouard.  

The differences between earlier interpretations of Philostratus’ mythological paintings by Renaissance artists and those of the 1614 French illustrators are immediately apparent across content, style and viewpoint. Sixteenth-century Italian artists such as Titian and Rosso are more concerned with re-creating antiquity than the French illustrators, whose overriding concern is with the detail of narrative; of following the text verbatim. Whereas earlier artists often chose to omit many details and concurrent

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34 Nicholas Renouard translator: *Les metamorphoses d’Ouide. À De noueau traduittes en francais. Avec XY. discours. Contenant l’explication morale des fables...*, ill. Jean Mathieu, (Paris : Chez Matheiu Guillemot, 1614). It appears that the unillustrated edition first came out in 1614 and was re-published by the widow l’Angelier with illustrations five years later. The involvement of Caron in what must have been the earliest stages of this project, is mentioned by Jean Erhmann, ibid. 38.
episodes so as not to overcrowd the picture plane and concentrated instead on revealing the pivotal characters in the narrative, the French illustrators have been directed, no doubt by the publisher, to include as many details as possible.\textsuperscript{35} This comparison is best explored through the study of one description from the \textit{Imagines,} the myth of Phaethon, which was treated by several Renaissance artists before Antoine Caron attempted to visualize Philostratus’ ekphrasis.

\textit{Phaethon} (I. 11)

As seen at Fontainebleau, the story of Phaethon falling to his death from Helios’ chariot was well known and popular with artists throughout the sixteenth century. Vigenère has honoured Philostratus’ emotional and poignant account of the tragedy with a seven page analysis. In the 1614 edition, Caron has complemented the scholarly commentary on the text with a dramatic chiarascuro retelling of the myth (fig.3). Philostratus begins his description with “Golden are the tears of the daughters of Helius”\textsuperscript{36} and Caron has emphasised the sisters of Phaethon in the foreground of his composition. The girls stand on the riverbank with their arms upstretched as they metamorphose into poplar trees and their tears solidify into amber. The figures are drawn in a manner that resembles the elongated female caryatids in the gallery at Fontainebleau.

\textsuperscript{35} Another reason for the level of detail included in the book illustrations as compared to previous examples in paint, is a purely technical one, given that the black and white graphic medium of printing allows for more accuracy in detail.

\textsuperscript{36} \textit{Phaethon} (F44)

Crusa' tw'n JHiavdwn ta; davrua.
Following Caron’s illustration is Vigenère’s *Argument* which provides background information on the characters in Philostratus’ myth picture. The translator, who was a devout Catholic, reacts to the audacity of Phaethon in trying to harness the sun, with the following comment: “But according to moral Philosophy, this is a very good admonishment to divert us from ambition and vain glory, and not to ask God for things
that are beyond our reach.” With Vigenère’s moralizing input, it is tedious also to encounter Artus Thomas’ moralizing epigram that adopts the antique motif of a dialogue:

D. *Filles que pleurez vous?*
R. *Nous pleurons l’imprudence Ou plustost l’arrogance."
D. *Mais pourquoi falloit il pour une ambition Telle punitjon?*
R. *D’autant que c’est un feu qui causant mille maux, Doit perir dans les eaux.*
D. *Mais pour quelle raison ou bien quel nouveau spectre, Vous changera en Electre?*
R. *C’est que pour un mortel que prend si haut essor, Il faut des larmes d’or.*

Artus Thomas demonstrates knowledge of ancient Greek by substituting the word “Electre” rather than Vigenère’s “l’ambre iaune” as used in the *Argument* to describe the phenomenon of amber. Electron (Ἠλέκτρον) is the ancient Greek word for amber, although curiously, Philostratus does not use the word, even though he dwells on the spectacle:

While the welling tide of tears in their eyes gleams in the bright pupils and seems to attract rays of light, and the tears on the cheeks glisten amid the cheek’s ruddy glow, yet the drops trickling down their breasts have already turned into gold. (F48)

Philostratus describes the solidification of the tears into stone (λιθουργήσει) without indicating the stone is amber (electron):

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37 “Mais selon la Philosophie morale, c’est un tres-bel admonnestement pour nous divertir de l’ambition et vaine gloire, et ne demander à Dieu chose qui soit outre nostre portée;” Les images, 91.
38 *rendent de l’ambre iaune en lieu de larmes: Les Images,* 91. Little is known about the figure of d’Embry or his skill with Greek although Balsamo and Simonin refer to him once in their book on l’Angelier in reference to d’Embry’s work on the 1612 edition of Laonicos Chalocondylas’ *Histoire de la Décadence de l’empire grec* (Balsamo & Simonin, 2002, 91.) He could equally have retrieved the word *Electre* from de Vigenère’s discussion on Philostratus’ sources, particularly those versions of the myth by Lucian, Tacitus and Pliny, as printed in the *Annotation* of the 1614 edition (98). Artus Thomas Sieur d’Embry is thought to be the author of a satire on the court of Henri III titled *Description de l’Isle*...*L’isle des Hermaphrodites Nouvellement Découverte...* first published in 1605 and more recently as *L’isle des Hermaphrodites*, edited by Claude-Gilbert Dubois (Geneva: Droz, 1996). Artus also provided commentary for l’Angelier’s 1611 edition of Philostrate (Flavius), *La Vie d’Apollonius Thylæen.*
39 *Phaethon* (K311) καὶ τὸ μὲν πλημμυρόν ἐν τῇ τῶν υψαλῶν ἔδρα χρυσάεις ἐπαυγάζει ταῖς κόραις καὶ οἷον ἀκτίνα ἔλκει, τὸ δὲ ταῖς παρειαῖς ἐντυγχάνον μαρμαίρει περὶ τὸ ἐκείνη ἔρευθος, τὰ δὲ στάζοντα κατὰ τοῦ στέρνου χρυσός ὦδη.
and soon it (Eridanus) will harvest the tears of the daughters of Helius; for the breezes and the chills which it exhales will turn into stone the droppings of the poplar trees, and it will catch them as they fall and conduct them through its bright waters to the barbarians by Oceanus. (F48)40

Although we now define electrum as an alloy of gold and silver, Pliny shows how electrum and amber were considered one and the same in the ancient world when he cites its usage by Greek poets:

After Phaethon had been struck by lightning, his sisters, they tell us, became changed into poplars, which every year shed their tears upon the banks of the Eridanus, a river known to us as the “Padus” (Po). To these tears was given the name of "electrum," from the circumstance that the Sun was usually called "elector." Such is the story, at all events, that is told by many of the poets, the first of whom were, in my opinion, Aeschylus, Philoxenus, Euripides, Satyrus and Nicander.

(Pliny, N.H. L. 37, 9.31)41

In his translation Vigenère also avoids stating that the solidified tears are amber, even though he would have been well aware of the Classical references to electron in the myth of Phaethon. He translates the act of the tears turning into stone as ‘convertissant en pierre’ and calls them ‘les pieces & lopins des Peupliers’ (the pieces and fragments of the Poplar trees).42

40 Phaethon (Κ311) τὰς δὲ Ἡλιάδας γεωργήσει αὐτίκα, αὖρας γὰρ καὶ κρυμοῖς, οὖς ἀναδίδωσι, λιθοφηγησέ καὶ πεσόντα ὑποδέξεται καὶ δίὰ φαιδροῦ τοῦ ὕδατος ἀπάξει τοῖς ἐν Ὡκεανῷ βαρβάροις τὰ τῶν αἰγείρων ψήγματα.
The Heliades (Ἠλιάδες) or daughters of Helius, are referred to in: Hyginus Fabulae 154; Ovid Metamorphoses 2.340; Apollon. Rhod. iv. 604; Virg. Eclog. vi. 62. The term "elektron" means "bright or shining thing". Elektron was the first term used to indicate amber, as reported in Homer, Od. XV.460 and Strabo, IV.6.2. In ancient Greek, "Elektor" (shining) was one of the several names used to define the sun. Therefore it is believed that the mineral amber was called "elektron" originating from these terms in Greek and later was used by Latin writers to refer to the metallic version, an alloy of gold and silver. From William Smith, A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities, (London: John Murray, 1875) 450.

41 Occasio est vanitatis Graecorum detegenda: legentes modo aequo perpetuantur animo, cum hoc quoque intersit vitae scire, non quidquid illi prodidere mirandum. Phaëthontis fulmine icti sorores luctu mutatas in arbores populos lacrimis electrum omnibus annis fundere iuxta Eridanum amnem, quem Padum vocavimus, electrum appellatum, quoniam sol vocitatus sit Elector, plurimi poëtae diixere primique, ut arbitror, Aeschylus, Philoxenus, Euripides, Nicander, Satyrus. trans. Pliny the Elder, The Natural History, eds. John Bostock., H.T. Riley. (London: Taylor and Francis, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street. 1855.) Pliny also uses “electrum” not to describe amber, but for its link to the metallic alloy in his perhaps, erroneous interpretation of the word as it appears in Homer (Od. IV.73), indicating that the word had two different meanings in Classical writing: Omni auro inest argentum varió pondere, aliubi decima parte, aliubi octava. in uno tantum Callaeciae metallo, quod vocant Albucrarenses, tricensima sexta portio inventur; ideo ceteris praesat. ubicunque quinta argenti portio est, electrum vocatur. scobes hae reperiuntur in canaliensi. fit et cura electrum argento addito. quod si quintam portionem excessit, incudibus non resistit, vetusta et electro auctoritas Homero teste, qui Menelai regem auro, electro, argento, ebore fulgere tradit. (H. N. XXXIII.4 s23)

42 Les Images, 93.
Vigenère’s annotations to his translation of the *Imagines* are primarily aimed at revealing the author’s sources and quote liberally from verses in Greek and Latin, which presumes a certain level of erudition in the reader. As a result, Vigenère’s own humanistic scholarship is prominent and reinforced by the insertion of his translations into French of citations from other ancient authors including Virgil, Ovid and Plutarch.

**Comparison to other contemporary interpretations**

The degree to which the Renaissance re-formulated antiquity’s *Phaethon* can be revealed by comparing Caron’s illustration to the following images:

2. Illustration for *Phaethon*, in *Metamorphoses*, 1617, Paris. (fig.5)
3. Santo di Tito, *The Creation of Amber*, (1572) for the *studiolo*, PalazzoVecchio, Florence. (fig.6)

Caron’s visualization of Philostratus’ text shows knowledge of the Michelangelo drawing in several aspects: the reclining river god Eridanus almost casually gazing up at Phaethon; the figure of Zeus riding his eagle in the sky and wielding thunderbolts; the weeping Heliades in the foreground already turning into trees; the downward plunge of Phaethon’s body. Michelangelo has also included a swan as Cycnus, another relation of Phaethon. Caron may have been familiar with Michelangelo’s drawing, thanks to the engraving (ca.1540) by Fontainebleau print-maker Nicolas Béatrizet, after the version at Windsor Castle. Caron’s figure of Eridanus also mimics the iconic reclining Adam in Michelangelo’s Sistine Chapel ceiling, Rome.

Whether Michelangelo was following the text of Ovid or Philostratus, is not confirmed, although his drawing takes place within a time frame, as described in the *Imagines*. In Ovid, the transformation of the Heliades occurs four days after Phaethon has fallen to earth and was laid to rest in a tomb (*Met.* 2:413-443). This is made explicit by the tomb of Phaethon (*Le tombeau de Phaethon*) in a 1617 illustrated edition (fig.5) of Nicolas

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43 Ioannides (1996) 57 fig.50.
Renouard’s translation of *Metamorphoses*; also published by l’Angelier’s widow following the success of the 1614 *Les images*.44

Michelangelo has not depicted Ovid’s mourning scene of women around a tomb, but fixed his protagonists within a cataclysmic moment in Philostratus’ *Imagines* when Phaethon falls from the chariot as his sisters transform into poplar trees and strain their heads upward to witness the fall.

A comparison between the *Phaethon* illustration for *Les images* and the 1617 Ovid, reveals the different concerns of the artists responsible. The Ovid illustrator has taken literalism to another level by naming all the characters and elements within the picture plane, and antiquity is now presented to the seventeenth-century spectator in a pedagogic fashion that deconstructs the myth.

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The popularity of the 1614 *Les images* seems to have resonated in French painting. A revival in Philostratean themes appears to reject Mannerist allegories in favour of a return to the unambiguous narrative of early sixteenth-century painting. In the case of *Phaethon*, the subject was painted by the leading artists of France, including: Nicolas Poussin, Eustache Le Sueur, Claude Lorrain and Sébastien Bourdon. The choice of solar-themed myths such as *Phaethon* in the sixteenth century is often informed by the requirements of the composition space and the demand for a subject suited to the perspective of ceiling vaults. The iconography of *Phaethon* allows a perspective of a scene being viewed from below with Philostratus asking the viewer to observe the heavens: “Look! Night is driving Day from the noonday sky, and the sun’s orb as it plunges towards the earth draws in its train the stars.” (F46)

Ovid describes the myth of *Phaethon* in the beginning of Book II of the *Metamorphoses* and Filarete, mentions the subject as being fitting for the decoration of ceiling vaults in noble houses as early as 1436.

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46 Examples of the *Phaethon* myth in ceiling paintings include: Sodoma, ca. 1505, for Palazzo Chigi, Siena; Giulio Romano, Palazzo Te, Mantua; Daniele da Volterra, ca. 1544, Villa Trivulzio, Rome; Pellegrino Tibaldi, ca. 1550, Sala di Fetonte, Palazzo Poggi, Bologna; Giovanni de’Vecchi, ca. 1574, Palazzo Farnese at Caprarola.

47 *Phaethon* (K310) σκότεις γάρ: νυξ μὲν ἐκ μεσημβρίας ἐλαύνει τὴν ἡμέραν, ὁ δὲ ἥλιος κύκλος ἐς γῆν ἐλκει τοὺς ἀστέρας.

Finally, in looking at Santo di Tito’s painting of 1572 (fig.6) we can see that the artist has eliminated Phaethon from his own myth and concentrated solely on the description of his lovely sisters weeping amber tears. The swan and the river god are still present, but Phaethon’s death is only alluded to in the faintest terms by the outstretched arms of one of the Heliades as she looks away from the scene. This division of the myth into episodes was common to sixteenth-century illustrated translations of Ovid including the
Bernard Saolomon woodcuts reproduced in the 1559 Italian edition where the Pleiades are seen by themselves, in the presence of Phaethon’s tomb (fig.7).  

Di Tito’s re-shaping of the myth follows the illustrated editions of Ovid known to readers of his time. The Palazzo Vecchio panel was also designed to suit the artistic

space provided; in this case, the small wall panels of a secret Medicean studiolo (fig.8) which are better suited to scenes with single narratives. The barrel-vaulted studiolo of the Francesco I de Medici is a direct descendant of Isabella d’Este’s studiolo in Mantua; a small secret chamber richly decorated with mythological and allegorical paintings by twenty-four artists and bronze statuettes by eight of the best sculptors of the day. Like Isabella’s studiolo, the Florentine model which has survived to us completely intact, has hidden wall cupboards that contained Francesco I’s precious books, curiosities, gems and scientific instruments.
The Creation of Amber became a subject for painting disconnected from the Phaethon myth and demonstrates the Mannerist tendency to veer away from original narrative. The 1614 Les images, actually re-establishes Philostratus’ narrative in all its complexity and provides “speaking pictures” for artists to re-visualize.

As the Erotes has been established in this thesis as the most popular subject to emerge from the Imagines with artists from Titian onwards, a brief review of the 1614 illustration (fig.9) and treatment of Erotes follows.
In *Erotes* (I.6) Philostratus goads his audience into believing they smell the painted apple orchard: “Do you catch aught of the fragrance hovering over the garden, or are your senses dull?” (F20)\(^{50}\) This constant haranguing by the Rhetor to be alert, to stretch

\(^{50}\) *Erotes* (K301) μῶν ἐπῆσθι τι τῆς ἀνὰ τὸν κήπον εὐωδίας ἢ βραδύνει σοι τούτο
the imagination, forces the audience to participate in the moment described and not only to enter the text, but to enter the picture.

The artist who illustrated the *Erotes* remains unidentified and his handling of the subject is quite different to those previously mentioned. The cupids are no longer Titian’s plump comical infants, but athletic well-developed boys like the ancient Greek’ ephebe’ type of sculpture\(^{51}\) with one group offering the goddess first fruits of the orchard, as indicated in the text. Aphrodite is once more depicted as a statue in a shrine, albeit an elongated Mannerist goddess rather than a Classically-proportioned one. The composition has none of the crowded vivacity of Titian's painting, for the artist has chosen to make the hare the centre of attention with the cupids forming a wide circle around it. The shift in focus reveals something about the way that ekphrasis works. For the artist of the Vigenère translation, it was the invitation to the hunt that captures his imagination rather than the profusion of *putti*. The phrase “And let not the hare yonder escape us, but let us join the Cupids in hunting it down” (F26)\(^ {52}\), becomes pivotal to his design, proving that no two realizations by separate artists of any one of the *Imagines*, will be alike.

Philostratus is 'decoding' the iconography and interpreting it to his pupils; but the artists must do the reverse, they must reconstruct in their minds what he disassembles. By realizing the abstract images that are expressed in the text, the artist is led by an intuitive perception of Philostratus.

Our own attitude reflects our own aesthetic experiences within our own historical situation; hence, the Baroque age reviewed and restored the *Imagines* largely in its own image. Page after page of the 1614 edition is redolent with imagery that reflects the trends in art at the time and even the annotations to the text give a seventeenth-century gloss to the sixteenth-century translation of Vigenère. Thus, the contemporary readers and viewers of this book received a ‘version’ of antiquity they approved of.

The epigram for *Erotes* is in the form of a dialogue echoing the roles of Philostratus and his boy pupil:

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\(^{51}\) In ancient Greek art the ephebos (ἔφηβος) is a type of nude male sculpture where the figure presents as a well-developed adolescent in appearance. Examples survive in the *Agrigento Ephebe* (5\(^ {\text{th}}\) century BC), Agrigento Museum, Sicily, the so-called ‘Kritios Boy’ (c.480BC) Acropolis Museum, Athens and the bronze *Ephebe of Marathon* (325-300BC) National Archaeological Museum, Athens.

\(^{52}\) *Erotes* (K302)
D. Mais pourquoi prennent ils des pommes pour leurs armes?
R. Dautant que ce fruict là represente leurs charmes.
D. Et ce livre qui fuit & qui a tant de peur?
R. C'est qu'un homme lascif ne peut avoir de coeur.

D. But why are they taking apples for their weapons?
R. Because the fruit represents their charms.
D. And this hare which flees and is so frightened?
R. This means that a lascivious man cannot have a heart.

The *Imagines* was now illustrated in three ways, for not only were there pictorial representations and the epigrams, but Vigenère's comprehensive *Argument* to the text is in effect, 'words that illustrate the words' of Philostratus. The reflex to illustrate the *Imagines* is not confined to artists. Vigenère could have published the translated text alone, but he felt he had to explain it, to make an exegesis of the ekphraseis. Vigenère's preoccupations in his translation are revealed by the twelve pages of *Argument* that accompanies the two-page translation of *Erotes*. He begins with Plutarch's definition of love and moves on to the iconological meaning of the apples, arrows, quivers and wings of Eros. Porphyry, Plutarch and Lucian are then quoted on the three stages of Love and the symbolism of the hare. The painting has been accepted by Vigenère as 'real' and becomes the focus of the discussion rather than Philostratus himself and the text he wrote. Vigenère is mostly concerned with deciphering the iconology which allows for liberal interaction with antique literary sources. This format is followed throughout the translation and it is easy to criticize the whole as an elaborate display of personal erudition. Vigenère is first and foremost a Classicist and his concerns are not for art criticism, nor for the history of art, despite evidence of his genuine interest in contemporary art. For him, Philostratus is an instrument to explore the Classics; specifically Greek mythology, Homeric themes, and ancient philosophy. Such an approach is not unusual if one considers the Renaissance
tradition of humanistic scholarship to which Vigenère belonged. Never has anyone led such a highly sophisticated discussion into the iconology and literary sources of the Imagines. Vigenère's aim was surely to raise the Imagines to the highest level of antique literature, something which later translations do not pretend to do.

**Modern Editions of the ‘Imagines’ (1828-1995)**

The illustrated Vigenère was a commercial success and some eight editions were published in the seventeenth century. It remained the standard French translation of the Imagines until Auguste Bougot set about to correct what he saw as Vigenère's “fort inexact” translation in 1881. Bougot omitted the descriptions of Philostratus the Younger, who fell victim to the translator’s nineteenth-century academic snobbery; the Younger’s writing was considered ‘inferior’. As shown in this thesis, different groups of readers extract different rewards from the Imagines and artists demonstrated that they considered the archaeological value of evidence for authentic subjects to replicate more important than literary style when they chose to paint versions of Philostratus the Younger’s: Achilles on Scyros, Marsyas, Meleager, Hyacinthus and Hunters.

Continuing the division between what we today call ‘academic publishing’ and the ‘popularized Classics’ is the bifold tradition in publications of the Imagines whereby Greek editions are published without illustrations and translations of the text are mostly illustrated. An exception to this tendency in translations is the first Italian edition which was published as late as 1828: Le Pitture dei Filostrati (fatte in volgare la prima votta da Filippo Mercuri con le varianti lezioni tratte da MSS Vaticani), with an introduction by V. Lancetti. The translator and publisher treated the Imagines purely as a literary work; no illustrations were used and no reference in the notes was made to any corresponding existing works of art from antiquity. The ‘proem’ by V. Lancetti, is

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53 Vigenère did not seize upon Philostratus as a singular advertisement to found his fame upon, he had already translated and published works by Cicero and Tacitus, the commentaries of Julius Ceasar and was perhaps best known for his translation of Laonikos Chalkokondylès’ L’Histoire de la Decadence de l’Empire Grec in ten books published the year before his translation of Philostratus. For a full bibliography see D. Métral, Blaise de Vigenère, archeologue et critique d’art, Paris, 193 249 ff.


55 The translations that followed the 1614 Les images were only partially illustrated with many later editions printing photographs of antiquities and Roman wall paintings. There has never been another attempt to fully illustrate the Imagines.
mostly concerned with the Greek and Latin manuscripts in the Vatican library used for the Italian translation and the importance of the edition in the place of the historiography of Philostratus. This infers that publishers suppose readers of the Greek text are looking for different things from Philostratus than those who read translations. Goethe refers to an unrealized project in Weimar to fully illustrate the *Imagines* with reconstructions conceived in the light of the discoveries made in the eighteenth century and guided by the influence of Wincklemann, although another full-scale attempt to illustrate the *Imagines* with artists' impressions was never carried out. The discoveries made at Pompeii, Herculaneum and surrounding sites since the early eighteenth century meant that translators could now draw on a wide range of archaeological sources to illustrate Philostratus.

Bougot concentrates heavily on the debate over the authenticity of the gallery in his preface and wherever possible, cites antique examples of art works that correspond to the text. His translation may well be answering the nineteenth-century call for a closer examination of Philostratus, coming as it does at the denouement of the debate on the authenticity of the gallery between the German classicists, Friederichs and Brunn which was revived in the next century with K. Lehmann-Hartleben believing wholeheartedly in the existence of the gallery and setting out to prove it with a systematic reconstruction.

As in Vigenère, Bougot's commentary far outweighs the text. In the case of *Erotes* three pages of translation are supplemented by five pages of commentary which includes a

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56 The Loeb Classical Library series embraces both publishing traditions by printing the Greek original text on one side of the page and the English translation on the other. This is one of the reasons I chose to use the Loeb edition of *Imagines* as I am researching the transmission of the text and Loeb's little green books reach the widest readership.


58 K. Friederichs published a study against the possible existence of the gallery *Die Philostratischener Bilder* (Erlangen, 1860), which Brunn counteracted point to point in a polemical article favouring authenticity the following year: Brunn, 'Die Philostratischener Gemalde gegen K. Friederichs vertheidigt' in *Revue de Fleckaise*, 1861. Friederichs retaliated with fresh ammunition against Brunn in 'Nachträgliches zu den Philostratische Bildem', *Jahrbüch für classische Philologie*, Suppl.5 Liepzig, 1864 and was joined by F. Matz who also concluded that the *Imagines* were indeed imaginary paintings: F. Matz, *De Philostratorum in describendis imaginibus fide*, Bonn, 1867. Brunn tried to have the last word on the matter with an article published in 1873, 'Zweite Verteidigung der Philostratische Gemalde', *Jahrbuch für classische Philologie*, 17/103. His conclusion was that there was nothing in the paintings that was incompatible with the evidence found at Pompeii and Herculaneum. In the twentieth century, K. Lehmann-Hartleben argues that Philostratus described the pictures in the gallery in the order in which he found them, as he walked around the rooms and did not pay attention to the true thematic relationships between the paintings. He maintains that this explains the recurrence of themes at various intervals. The only evidence that could substantiate such a theory would be the discovery of the Neapolitan gallery itself. 'The Imagines of the Elder Philostratus', *The Art Bulletin*, 23, 1941, 16-44.
discussion on the validity of the illustration he uses, a drawing variously attributed either to Raphael or to Giulio Romano (ill. Ch.4 fig.12). The drawing is criticized by Bougot for not strictly following the text: “Again he (Raphael) has modified the sentiment and the subject to suit himself. All the allegorical meaning has disappeared: these are children who play with each other; nothing more.”

Bougot's inclusion of Raphael's drawing for the Erotes is an anomaly amongst the 'archaeologically-correct' images he uses and reflects the contemporary opinion of the Academies that Raphael, author of paintings such as The School of Athens and Parnassus, was the best interpreter of antiquity in the visual arts.

After the advent of photography, translators of the Imagines were able to provide 'hard evidence' as they placed photographic images side by side with the text. The 1931 English translation by Arthur Fairbanks features photographic reproductions of antique sculpture and vase paintings but curiously, Campanian wall paintings are only represented by archaeological sketches. Erotes is illustrated with a sketch of a sarcophagus relief with cupids boxing and wrestling, an object which reappears in the 1968 German translation by Kalinka and Schönberger alongside a photograph of a wall-painting from Pompeii with cupids hunting.

Does this ongoing concern to match existing images of antiquity to the descriptions of Philostratus indicate a subconscious need to authenticate the Imagines? What really is the aim of Bougot, Fairbanks and Kalinka-Schönberger in illustrating Philostratus in this manner and how does it differ from the artist's reflex to re-create the paintings?

The Imagines is problematic because the reader's interest in the text is upstaged by the interest in the 'phantasia' it provokes. Philostratus is describing panel pictures ("aujth' pinavkwn" Proem), which are solid objects and so the element of form is present in every description and there is no way to avoid visualizing this form. Artist's impressions are irrational and so do not appeal to editors with a Cartesian approach who tend to treat the Imagines as a source of archaeological data. Nevertheless they are responding to the

59 Raphael/Romano, Worship of Venus, drawing, Chatsworth Collection, UK (currently attributed to Giulio Romano).
60 ‘Encore a-t-il modifié le sentiment et le sujet lui-même. Toute allegorie a disparu: ce sont des enfants qui jouent entre eux; rien de plus.’ Bougot (1881) 228.
62 ‘The student of late Greek paintings is fully justified in treating these examples as data for his study, whether or not they were actual paintings.’ A. Fairbanks, Loeb Classical Library edition, London 1931, xxvi.
63 E. Kalinka, O. Schönberger, Philostratos Die Bilder, Munich 1968, is similar in format and aim as the 1931 Loeb Classical Library Greek/English edition.
urge to illustrate when they include images in their publications. Their motives are unified with those of the artist who restores Philostratus in the respect that perhaps they provide supporting visual evidence because they want to believe the paintings existed and not just because an illustrated translation has more commercial appeal.\(^{64}\) The artist however, is distinct from the historian in that he responds to an affinity with the ancient masters who are responsible for the gallery of pictures.

It could be argued that the very nature of the *Imagines*, which is subjective, inventive, almost ‘oneiric’, lends itself to be better illustrated by the outcome of the artist’s *phantasia*. These illustrations, in their idealistic style and form evoke the visionary descriptions Philostratus gives us, where all paintings are masterpieces, each one more perfect than the next in which figures try to speak and escape the frames. At one point, the painter of the *Horae* fell into his own painting and “was caught up by them into their dance.”\(^{65}\) The imaginary world that the *Imagines* creates as a whole, may have more affiliation with Antoine Caron's “fantastic antiquity” than with the reality of Roman wall paintings. It is perhaps for this reason that the latest French translation of the *Imagines* to be published, has reverted to using artists' inventions.\(^{66}\)

Our minds, we like to think, are no longer soggy with unacknowledged subjective responses. We have escaped from that state of innocence which led the Renaissance to embrace the reality of the gallery and lament the loss of so many fine paintings, into a more complex appreciation of Philostratus. Yet the 1991 edition of the *Imagines*, an edited version of Bougot's 19th century translation, cannot resist the urge to illustrate. The tradition has come full circle for the editor has chosen not to furnish his edition with an up-to-date catalogue of archaeological finds but uses the Late Mannerist/Baroque vocabulary supplied by the illustrations of Vigenère's translation. Finally, in a revised 1995 edition of the 1614 *Les images*, Françoise Graziani creates the most complete editorial presentation of Philostratus’ gallery to date.\(^{67}\)

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\(^{64}\) Commercial appeal would hardly be the primary motivation for the Loeb Classical Library edition of 1931, for example.

\(^{65}\) *Horae* (F 270) tou' zwgrafou' dokei' gav moj coreouvsai' tai". {Wrai' ejntucoveri sai seisq'nhai uJp/E aujtun' ei" th:nh tevcnhn.

\(^{66}\) F. Lissarrague, Hadot, *Philostrate, la galerie de tableaux*, Paris 1991. In the preface, the editor says that they have chosen to include illustrations from Vigenère because reproduction of antiquities requires more extensive commentary. This would then suggest that they look upon the artist's illustrations as being more succinct and possibly more 'apt' images for the text.

commentary and reproduce all illustrations. It is a complex layering of translation, argument, criticism and visual representation that encompasses three epochs and seems aimed primarily at restoring the virtues of Vigenère’s work, rather than glorifying the original author. What is interesting is that at the end of the twentieth century, the *Imagines* is still being explored by publishers and new editions continue to intrigue Classical scholars, artists and art historians alike. It seems there is a special affection for Philostratus in modern French scholarship generated from the memory of Vigenère’s translation, as Graziani is also a contributor to the most recent publication on the *Imagines*, again published in France.

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68 A Modern Greek translation published in a paperback edition of 1995 is aimed at the general reader and is one in a series that presents works of ancient Greek authors in an affordable, easy-to-read format. It is printed without illustrations but still retains the Ancient Greek text on alternating pages. *Filostravtou Eixovne* – *Filostravtou toî Newtevrou Eijcovne*, APANTA 6, Athens: Cactus Editions, 1995. Another Modern Greek translation was made by Dimitris Plantzos from the University of Ioannina, Greece, that offers a translation of the descriptions by Philostratus the Elder only, with an introduction and commentary: *Eijcovne*, Athens: Katarti, 2006.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Imagines: into the Baroque and Beyond

One question that I tried to address in this thesis was: Is translation of text into image, the ultimate act of comprehending?

The problem with publishing any illustrated version of the Imagines is that the creative role of the reader is almost ignored. In 'restoring' Philostratus' lost gallery to the world, the whole ekphrastic nature of the Imagines is destroyed which surely is antithetic to Philostratus' intentions. Illustration means we are not comprehending Philostratus at all.

In his very first description, Scamander (I.1) Philostratus the Elder instructs his pupils to “turn your eyes away from the painting itself so as to look only at the events on which it is based.” (F7) He is saying that the ‘phantasia’ created by Homer's familiar words provides enough stimulus to create one's own mental picture of The Iliad’s narrative and that the image their eyes take in, is secondary to their understanding of it. We could transpose these instructions to the Imagines and ask modern readers of illustrated editions to 'turn your eyes away from the engravings so as to listen to, or read, only Philostratus'.

The danger with including illustrations in a publication of the Imagines is that the process of repetitive viewing means the illustration becomes synonymous with the description. This problem of association between text and image can result in a misleading notion of antiquity. In effect, the ekphraseis now become descriptions not of Graeco-Roman paintings, but of the images illustrating the publication. This is particularly true with the 1614 edition of de Vigenère's translation.

Although intended to guide the reader to a more realistic association with the images Philostratus describes, the antique fragments and damaged wall paintings used in modern publications are also misleading. How can a black and white photograph of a fifth century BC Attic pottery shard justifiably elucidate the complete vision of a Hellenistic panel painting described by a third-century AD Sophist?

Equally, the popularization of painted images identified with Philostratus impinges upon a reader's objectivity. How many art historians reading the description of Erotes

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1 Scamander (K296) συμβάλλωμεν οὖν, ὃ τι νοεῖ, σὺ δὲ ἀπόβλεψον αὐτῶν, ὃςον ἐκείνα ἱδείν, ἀπ’ ὧν ἡ γραφή.
2 Example used in Fairbanks edition: fig. 18, Head of Female Centaur, from a Red-figured vase painting. Boston, inventory 13.306. to illustrate Book II, iii. Centaurs (F139).
(I.6) would simultaneously picture Titian’s famous painting in their minds? The *Imagines* is thus, a victim of its own faculty to activate the process of reconstruction. There shall always be the temptation to look for paradigmatic representations from the material world, even by those who are ambivalent about the existence of the gallery; as we can see in the Loeb Classical Library’s 1931 edition of the Fairbanks translation.³

Treating the *Imagines* as a primary art historical source by attempting to correlate these verbal paintings to archaeological evidence is futile, for these are emotional (as distinct from analytical) descriptions. Philostratus does not present history; rather, he embellishes the historical record. He says as much himself: “If we examine this scene as a drama, my boy, a great tragedy has been enacted in a brief space of time, but if as a painting, you will see more in it than a drama.” *Cassandra* II.10 (F173)⁴. Applying the same syllogism, if Philostratus had wanted to simply record pictures in a Neapolitan Gallery in the way that Pliny described statues in a temple, he would not have needed to use ekphrasis in the manner he did, with constant digressions and literary cross-references; he would not have had to make it philosophical and ‘entertaining’, as opposed to plainly instructive. As long as we try to force a genuine visual source onto Philostratus, we are perpetrating a catachresis of the *Imagines* because what mattered to Philostratus as a sophistic writer was that the paintings he describes should be conceivable, but that words alone should be able to convey them. Philostratus has challenged the skilled craft of the painter with his own art as a rhetorician. Ekphrasis as practised by Philostratus is aimed at making the reader feel he is seeing a painting, whether an actual or a fictitious one, it does not matter.

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³ In his ‘Introduction’ Fairbanks points out that whilst he is willing to accept that Philostratus could “be describing paintings that were figments of his imagination”, he also feels that “there is little or nothing to indicate any inconsistency between the paintings existing in his day and the paintings he describes.” F26.

⁴ *Cassandra* (K356) καὶ εἰ μὲν ὡς δρᾶμα ἔξετάζομεν, ὦ παῖ, ταῦτα, τετραγώδηται μεγάλα ἐν σμικρῷ, εἰ δ’ ὡς γραφήν, πλείω ἐν αὐτοῖς διψεῖ.
The Baroque Age looks at Philostratus

Chapter Six of this thesis concentrated on illustrations that appear alongside the text in de Vigenère’s translation. This juxtaposition of text and image emphasises forcefully the compulsive leap from the intangible to representation. However, this does not mean to say that artists’ representations ended with the 1614 edition of the Imagines. We need only consider six reconstructions of the Erotes (I.6) attempted by Poussin, Rubens, Testa, Albani, Guercino and Boucher to confirm the continuity in the seventeenth century and beyond, for artists to recreate their own versions of Philostratus.5

The 1614 de Vigenère translation seems to best embody the twin reflex to illustrate the Imagines with its total compulsion not only to re-capture antiquity via visualization but

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5 Poussin, Bacchanal of Putti, 1626, Galleria Nazionale d’Arte Antica, Rome; Rubens, Feast of Venus, c. 1632, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna; Francesco Albani, Worship of Venus, 1618-22, Galerie Borghèse, Rome; Pietro Testa, The Garden of Venus, c.1631-37, etching (fig.1); Guercino, Worship of Venus, 1622-23, Private Collection; François Boucher, Genies, Musée des Beaux-Arts d’Angers. Testa was one of a group of artists who were fascinated by Titian’s Worship of Venus, then in the Aldobrandini collection in Rome.
with its desire to see French culture as a continuation of the Classical world; clearly propounded by pendant images of Paris and Athens on the title page.

In modern times, the *Imagines* has been of interest to iconologists and art historians looking at the re-invention of antiquity in Renaissance culture. Scholars examine how Philostratus was used to re-create old worlds within the new world of the Renaissance as I have shown with examples from the work of the Panofskys, Edgar Vind and Charles Seznec. Due to the well-documented works of art at Ferrara, Mantua and Fontainebleau, the sixteenth century still commands the most attention from scholars looking at the transmission of the *Imagines*. As mentioned, in 2003 Titian’s Philostratean paintings for the d’Este were the focus of a major exhibition at London’s National Gallery and Charles Hope’s study of Alfonso d’Este’s use of Philostratus for his *camerino d’alabastro* was featured in the important d’Este exhibition at Ferrara in April 2004.6 These exhibitions help to reinforce the role of the patron in the creative process and show that the rehabilitation of ancient, especially Greek, texts was a preoccupation not only with sixteenth-century humanist publishers like Aldus Manutius in Venice, but also with educated nobles like the d’Este. As the discussion on Ferrara’s *camerino d’alabastro* and Fontainebleau’s Galerie François I has shown, Renaissance artists responded to the text by reconstructing a number of the presumably Graeco-Roman paintings Philostratus describes and patrons also responded by emulating the noble Roman connoisseur who we are told has collected this gallery of masterpieces “with excellent taste and judgement”.

After the waning of the Renaissance humanistic era, seventeenth and eighteenth-century artists continued to consult the *Imagines* using a combination of the widely dispersed 1614 illustrated edition and observation of earlier paintings by Mantegna, Titian, Romano and Carracci. The descriptions of Philostratus were further disseminated through the spate of popular emblem manuals published from the sixteenth century onward.8 Artists were able to experiment working with some of the more difficult ekphraseis in the *Imagines* as new translations of the text appeared. This demonstrates how the profound reflex to illustrate the *Imagines* is an intrinsic quality within the text

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7 Proem. 7.

8 Blaise de Vigenère’s translations of the *Imagines* are listed as ‘emblem books’ by inclusion in the recent publication: *A bibliography of French emblem books of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries*, eds. A Adams, S Rawles, A Saunders, Librairie Droz, 2002.
that applies to artists, patrons and readers across the modern period. This is brought about by two forces: the inevitable psychological process of mental imaging of the ekphrasis and secondly, the desire to identify with our Classical past. The *Imagines* is translated and transmuted time and time again by those who wish to ‘recapture’ antiquity. The Roman Empire was founded on the ruins of the Hellenistic kingdom, and the concern to identify with a Classical Greek past was just as important in the Second Sophistic as it was in Titian’s time, or as it became for Poussin and Rubens in the early seventeenth century.

When looking at the comparison between a Roman wall painting of *Landscape with Polyphemus and Galatea* from the ‘Mythological Room’ of the Imperial Villa at Boscotrecase dated to the last decade of 1st century B.C. and a painting by Giuseppe Chiari c.1732 of the same subject, we see that the created image is inseparable from personal, and by extension, cultural perception. As Aby Warburg observed; “*Each age gets the antiquity it deserves.*”

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Fig.2 (Left above) *Galatea and Polyphemus*, wall painting, from Villa Boscotrecase, now in the Metropolitan Museum, NY & Fig.3 (Right above) *Galatea*, Giuseppe Chiari, c. 1700, private collection.

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There is a sense of immediacy in Philostratus that facilitates the mind’s journey from one’s own era to the third century after Christ and beyond to a mythical Greek past. Even though we are provided with minimal information about his physical surroundings, thanks to the lively rhetoric, we are able to take a virtual walk through an ancient gallery with a Greek sophist and ‘view’ sixty-five lost Graeco-Roman masterpieces. Philostratus himself, a Sophist writing for Roman Philhellenes, is revisiting a Classical Greek past by choosing exclusively Greek themes, and his nostalgia for this ‘golden past’ permeates his descriptions.

Philostratus’ canon of female beauty is fastidiously Greek: Andromeda “would surpass a Lydian girl in daintiness, an Attic girl in stateliness and a Spartan girl in sturdiness” (I.29 F117) and of Rhodogoune’s most perfect mouth he says, “if we care to listen attentively, perhaps it will speak in Greek.” (II.5 F149).10

But what is implicit in the Imagines for the third-century reader is not likely to be the same for a reader of the seventeenth century. The descriptions have their existence only in the minds of the readers, so it is they, rather than Philostratus, who create the painting for their time. Hence, a painting by Rubens of the Fall of Phaeton (fig.3) is not a physical substitute for the textual image of Philostratus, but simply an object of individual experience.

When we look at Rubens’ Phaeton, we admire it not because it reminds us of a lost masterpiece from antiquity but because it is an impressive product of Baroque art.

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10 *Perseus* (K336) ἡδίων δὲ αὐτὸ τὸ εἴδος: παρέλθοι ἂν καὶ Λυδὴν ἁβράν καὶ Ατθίδα ύπόσεμνον καὶ Σπαρτιᾶτιν ἐρρωμένην. and *Rhodogoune* (K347) κάν παρακούσαι βουληθώμεν, τάχα ἔλληνεϊ.
By the beginning of the seventeenth century leading artists seemed confident that they could truly resurrect artistic wonders of the ancient world; that the golden age of antiquity once lost, could be re-forged. This had been the earnest intention of Titian and his contemporaries who wholeheartedly believed in the existence of Philostratus’ gallery. By circa 1600 it seems the emphasis had shifted from the importance of the literary source to a heightened awareness of the physical evidence and a diligent archaeological approach. Certainly Poussin had the opportunity to study antiquities in more depth than Titian. During his long years in Rome from 1624 onward, Poussin’s sketches (fig.5) record Rome’s ancient sculpture for the learned antiquarian, Cassiano del Pozzo.11 This gave Poussin excellent access to collections and the time to develop a repertoire of figures that re-appear in his Philostratean paintings. Rubens too was an avid student of the antique and sketched many antiquities in Rome (fig.6).

Rubens also made copies of Titian's Philostratean paintings: *The Worship of Venus* (fig. 7) and *The Bacchanal of the Andrians* (fig. 8) which are both now in the Stockholm Museum. A 1611 edition of de Vigenère's translation of the *Imagines* published at Tournon, is listed in the English inventory of Rubens' possessions but even after making a diligent and scholarly study of antique art; Rubens came to the conclusion that it was useless to try and re-create antiquity. One hundred years beforehand, Titian embraced the challenge to visualize Philostratus and take on the mantle of the ancient masters – to be a ‘new Apelles’ - but Rubens is more hesitant. In a letter to the philologist Franciscus Junius dated August 1, 1637 Rubens wrote:

> When we render visible in its proper dignity a famous painting by Apelles or Timanthes that Pliny or other authors describe in detail, who among us will not produce a work that is insipid or alien to the grandeur of the ancients? Each,

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indulging his own genius, makes a new wine instead of the bittersweet Opimian of the ancients and injures those great shades whom I honor with profound veneration. I adore their very footprints, as it were, rather than that I claim to come near them, even in my imagination.\textsuperscript{13}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{laocoon}
\caption{Rubens, sketch of the \textit{Laocoon}, c. 1608, Ambrosiana, Milan.}
\end{figure}

Rubens realized that the ancient world had become irrevocably detached from his own. Instead he looked to the Italian masters, mainly Titian, as the true and only heirs to art’s royal throne left vacant by the ancient Greeks so long ago. The two Bacchanals from the camerino d’alabastro he copied are listed in an inventory of Rubens’ possessions compiled after his death simply as: “two paintings after Philostratus” and Rubens kept them in his bedroom for over thirty years until he died. So profound was his admiration of Titian, that when Junius was compiling his Catalogus, a Vasarian-style list of ancient painters, Rubens suggested he also include a list of great Italian Renaissance masters.14

But now that we can more or less respond to the exempla of the ancient painters in our imagination—as well as each of us is able—I, for my part, would like it if at some time it were possible to compose with the same diligence a like treatise on the paintings of the Italians.15

Rubens goes on to explain that descriptions of antique painting are intangible and “to such an extent overlaid with words” that we need rather, to concentrate on the great works of art that exist and can be seen with our own eyes.

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15 Ibid. 12
Philostratus was revered by Franciscus Junius who viewed the author as a credible voice from antiquity to assist him in his scholarly endeavours. However Junius died in 1694 and Philostratus’ credibility was soon to crumble as the next century brought archaeological discoveries that overwhelmed the sophist’s ‘late’ Roman voice. The 1614 illustrated edition of Les images along with Junius’ Catalogus and De pictura veterum would be viewed as hopelessly ‘Baroque’ by philologists and a new breed of antiquarian: the archaeologist.
The ‘Virtual Gallery’ created by Illustrated Editions

Whilst Philostratus’ effusive rhetoric was to be shunned by eighteenth century Neo-classicism, it is difficult to analyse the enduring influence upon artists of the *Imagines* leading up to the discoveries in Campania of the 1740s. The 1614 edition had provided art with a complete ‘paper museum’ of antique subject matter, but no artist of any standing would simply copy book illustrations. A diligent art historian may well trace figures and details lifted from the engravings of Caron among the multitude of mythological paintings, prints and sculpture that were produced across Europe in the seventeenth century; but only isolated examples arise where the book plates were used as a prototype.
If duplication was never to be expected, a definite increase in the use of Philostratus as an iconographical source in painting is discernible after 1614, with some of the more unusual subjects from the *Imagines* making an appearance. Examples include:

- Nicolas Poussin: *Achilles on Skyros*, (1656), Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (fig.9).
- Nicolas Poussin: *Birth of Bacchus*, (*Imagines* I.14), 1657, Fogg Museum, Cambridge, Mass. (fig.10).\(^{16}\)

In all probability, these artists found their subjects in de Vigenère’s translation of the *Imagines* as details in the paintings are specific to Philostratus’ descriptions.

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It is no surprise that most of the subjects appear in French painting of the seventeenth century as the 1614 album would be most accessible to this group. Poussin’s lessons were passed down to French court painters like Coypel whose legacy of painting pretty mythological scenes for a royal clientele would survive in the Rococo expressions of François Boucher under the patronage of Louis XV and Madame de Pompadour.

**Herculaneum and Pompeii: reality versus ‘phantasia’**

Given the dramatic development in artistic taste for the Neo-classical which represents almost a backlash against the generation of Boucher and Carle Van Loo; what place did the *Imagines* hold in the eighteenth century and beyond? When a Philostratean subject appeared in painting after 1740 did it follow the sophist’s vision or did it follow the newfound evidence of the Campanian excavations? The reliability of early written testimony from Philostratus, Pliny, Lucian, Vitruvius and others, did not cease as soon as Herculaneum’s wall paintings were exposed in 1738. It was a long time before the Bourbons permitted artists to visit the Campanian sites and see for themselves, the frescoes and mosaics that pre-dated Philostratus. Artists like Boucher, were therefore
free to continue exploring their Rococo path and refer back to mythological paintings by Titian, Poussin and Rubens.

Leaking of the evidence at Herculaneum was carefully controlled and edited with the publication of *Le Antichità di Ercolano Esposte* in 1758 (fig.11). Even then, the information was only circulated among an elite minority with artists generally excluded from the preview list. Artists could only be influenced by the discoveries at Herculaneum by looking at prints and publications that came out in economical editions of *Le Antichità* from 1773 onwards; just after Boucher’s death. Previous to that, the only artists able to have access to the site and the antiquities were the fifty or so engravers working on the 1758 publications as appointed by the Accademia delle Ercolano of the King. Boucher’s pupil, Jacques-Louis David who would lead the Neoclassical movement, was one of the first notable artists to visit Pompeii as late as 1779.¹⁷

Fig.11 *Chiron and Achilles*, ‘Le Antichità di Ercolano Esposte’, c. 1758, Tomo 1: Tavola VIII: 43

If the Renaissance was initiated by the study, translation and dispersal of Latin and Greek books, then the Neo-classical age can also claim genesis from paper publications. Books that sought to record archaeological evidence proliferated in the second half of the eighteenth century beginning with Comte de Caylus who travelled to Greece as early as 1714 and published seven volumes based on his own collection of antiquities; *Le Recueil d'Antiquités égyptiennes, étrusques, grecques, romaines et gauloises* (1752) which preceded the first volume of *Le Antichità de Ercolano* (1758). In 1767-68 came Wincklemann’s *Monumenti inediti, spiegati ed illustrate.*

Among other important publications to appear during this time were D'Hancarville's four volumes devoted to the collection of Greek, Roman and Etruscan vases in the collection of the British collector and antiquary, William Hamilton, published in 1766 and 1767. They contained full-page and some double-page illustrations in colour of the vases. In 1780 twelve volumes of *Antiquites d'Herculanum* with engravings by F. A. David and text by Marechal came out, followed in 1782 by the early folios of the Visconti devoted to the Museo Pio-Clementino at the Vatican; volumes which continued to appear until 1808.

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18 Neo-classical is not a term that the artists of the eighteenth century were familiar with. It was a term applied by art historians of the early twentieth century like Jean Locquin (1912) and Walter Friedlander (1930).

19 In 1764 Wincklemann published *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums* (History of Ancient Art) which is likely the first time that the words ‘art’ and ‘history’ appear together.
Archaeological accuracy aside, nothing captures the fervour for antiquity of the mid-eighteenth century better than Panini’s fictitious museum where he has crammed all the well known ruins and antiquities into one gallery (fig.13). Aristocrats on the Grand Tour are shown admiring the ‘Wedding’ fresco (1st Century BC) then in the Aldobrandini collection; one of the few examples of Hellenistic wall-painting known before the excavations in Campania.\textsuperscript{20} The Pantheon, the Colosseum, Trajan's Column, the \textit{Farnese Hercules}, and the \textit{Laocoön} can be readily identified in Panini’s composition.

\textsuperscript{20} In 1601 the ‘Aldobrandini Wedding’ fresco was cut from the reticulate masonry of a late 1\textsuperscript{st} - century BC Roman house near the Arch of Gallienus on the Esquiline. On the Aldobrandini wedding fresco see F. Cappelletti and C. Volpi, trans. Charles Hope.'New Documents Concerning the Discovery and Early History of the \textit{Nozze Aldobrandini}.' \textit{Journal of the Warboung and Courtauld Institutes} 61(1993): 274-279.
Le Goût Grec: "noble simplicity and quiet grandeur"²¹

Just as Serlio, Palladio, Panini and Piranesi had recorded Rome’s architectural glories so too did two English architects James Stuart and Nicholas Revett set out to record Greece’s relatively unknown treasures. A note to their preface for the first volume of *Antiquities of Greece* (1762) explained that they wanted to preserve the memory of Greece’s finest buildings and statues of antiquity in the same way that generations of artists and antiquarians had preserved those of the Roman world. They had no doubt, they wrote, that:

...a Work so much wanted will meet with the approbation of all those Gentlemen, who are Lovers of Antiquity, or have a taste for what is Excellent in the Arts, as we

are assured that those Artists, who aim at Perfection must be infinitely more pleased, and better instructed, the nearer they can draw their Examples, from the Fountain-head.\(^{22}\)

Greece was basically un-explored by 1750 when Stuart and Revett went to Athens. The French aristocrat De Caylus had visited in 1714 but had not yet learned to draw and did not record the ruins in situ.\(^{23}\) Under Ottoman control, Greece was considered a dangerous destination and although the Society of Dilettanti backed Stuart and Revett on their venture, no Society members had dared to travel there. Once again, any artist interested in reaching a pure Greek source of inspiration, had to rely on Stuart and Revett’s drawings, watercolours and engravings which inevitably presented a ‘restored’ version of antiquity.

In competition to Stuart and Revett came J.D. Le Roy’s *Les ruines des plus beaux monuments de la Grèce*, Paris, 1758.\(^{24}\) At the same time the Doric temples of Paestum had been re-discovered and published (Dumont, 1764).\(^{25}\) These Greek-informed publications appeared concurrently with lavish volumes illustrating Roman ruins by Piranesi, who was known for his prejudice against Greek art and architecture.\(^{26}\)

Distinct from this genre of archaeological publication but equally influential on Neoclassical artists were the illustrated editions published by the English sculptor, John


\(^{23}\) De Caylus spent a year in Italy and travelled through Greece to Constantinople and the Near East. Returning to Paris in 1717 he took drawing lessons from Watteau (of whom he wrote a life in 1748), learned engraving, and threw himself with enthusiasm into the reproduction of old master drawings, coins and gems, and antiquities.


\(^{25}\) GPM Dumont, *Suitte de plans, coupes, profils, élévations...de trois Temples Antiques...dans la Bourgade de Poesto qui est la ville Poestum de Pline*, Paris, 1764. Dumont’s drawings were inaccurate and the first scholarly and accurate publication of Paestum was in English: Thomas Major, *The Ruins of Paestum, otherwise Posidonia in Magna Graecia*, London, 1768. James Curl explains how the temples of Paestum and the Doric architecture of Agrigentum in Sicily were largely ignored until the second half of the eighteenth century in JS Curl, *Georgian Architecture*, Newton Abbott: David & Charles, 2002.

\(^{26}\) Piranesi resisted Paestum until the end of his life, eventually publishing his powerful drawings of the Doric ruins in *Différentes vues de quelques restes de trios grands édifices qui subsistent encore dans le milieu de l'ancienne ville de Pesto,autrement Posidonia*, 1778. However Piranesi voiced his patriotic prejudice for Roman art when he wrote: “...l'ancienne ville de Pesto, appelée par les Grecs Possidonia . . . fut anciennement sous la domination des Lucaniens, et ensuite sous celle des Romains ...” Piranesi artfully avoids recognizing that Paestum was a Greek city with buildings built by Greeks: ”... de tels monuments font connaitre que l'on avait des lors une grande connaissance des arts, et qu'ils ne fleurissent pas moins dans l'Italie que dans l'Egypte et dans la Grèce.” Piranesi, *Différentes vues...* P1.2.
Flaxman of the *Iliad* (1793), *Odyssey* (1794) and the tragedies of Aeschylus (1795). Evidence derived from many of Ingres’ works confirms that Flaxman’s imagery became a vital source for Ingres’ Classical Greek iconography.27

A major difference between evidence unearthed in Campania and evidence found by eighteenth-century enthusiasts like Stuart and Revett in Greece, was in the field of painting. The stunning mythological panel paintings described by Philostratus were no longer to be found and artists had no choice but to resuscitate Greek painting through their imaginations and what evidence they could extract from bas-relief friezes, mosaics and pottery. The Campanian discoveries may have delivered colour and narrative in abundance to those who could visit and witness, but the source was still essentially Roman. One way that eighteenth-century artists could become more rigorously ‘Classical’ was to select unquestionably Greek subject matter. This high ambition of Neo-classicism was realized in David’s early paintings: *Antiochus and Stratonice* (1774); *The Funeral of Patroclus* (1778); *Andromache Mourning Hector* (1783); *The Death of Socrates* (1787); *The Love of Paris and Helen* (1788), culminating in his *Leonidas at Thermopylae* (1814) fig11. David’s pupil, Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres followed this trend with: *The Ambassadors of Agamemnon before Achilles* (1801); *Oedipus and Sphinx* (1808); *Aphrodite Wounded by Diomedes* (1802); *Thetis Beseeching Zeus to Honour Achilles*, (1811); *The Apotheosis of Homer* (1827); *Antiochus and Stratonice* (1840); *Birth of the Muses* (1856); *The Golden Age* (1862).28

None of these subjects are drawn from Philostratus or Ovid and derive straight from translations of Homer or from French literature that assimilated the work of Greek authors.

I have shown in this thesis that artists favoured descriptions from the *Imagines* on the more pleasant themes of *Galatea, The Erotes, Ariadne on Naxos, Bacchanals* and *Perseus and Andromeda*. However fragments of text surface in works of art that embrace a much broader iconography right through to the nineteenth century. I would

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conclude that the influence of the *Imagines* on art from the Renaissance onward seems more evident than previously thought, but that Pompeian painting becoming more and more the leading resource for Classical pictorial art into the nineteenth century. It is unlikely that a Greek text could compete against the twin advantages of actually seeing Campanian wall-paintings; that of the genuine aesthetic appeal and the immense sentiment being an eye-witness generates.

The *Imagines* has ended up where it began in the early Renaissance; as an esoteric academic concern of interest to humanist scholars, now called ‘Classicists.’ I know of very few examples where Philostratus was used as an iconographical source for works of art in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and it seems that the *Imagines* has left the hands of artists to be returned to philologists, art historians and Classicists.

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Fig. 14 Jacques-Louis David, *Leonidas at Thermopylae*, preparatory drawing, 1813, Louvre.
Philostratus in the Digital World: From Print to Screen

It has been suggested by Doctor John Bonnett of the Institute for Information Technology in Canada, that: “historians will need to re-think the aesthetics of their discipline and transform their practice in order to remain valid as conduits for transmitting information in this age of evolving technology.” This is a valid argument given the growing presence technology has in our education system and in our everyday lives. Philostratus can be included in this technological revolution and find a new audience and a new validity in the twenty-first century.

No-one before or since de Vigenère has made such an exhaustive study of Philostratus. Aware of the power of images on the Web to attract and hold the reader’s attention, I chose to initiate a ‘Digital Philostratus’ project utilizing the illustrated 1614 edition. A free digital version of the illustrated Philostratus would be a useful tool for scholars across a wide spectrum of disciplines and would provide mobile access to a key text for my own research purposes. I decided to use the personal experience of being a postgraduate who has used digital technology to provide a medium for private study as the basis for creating a public-access resource based on my own research. This allowed me to explore the aesthetics and mechanics of delivering a low-budget online edition suitable for students and scholars across a wide range of disciplines. To date, I have published online the complete catalogue of images from the 1614 edition and am currently digitizing 560 pages of essential text from the fragile 1,000 page volume. Added to the website eventually will be a facsimile of the 1503 first printed edition by Aldus Manutius and a full English translation. It is my aim to build and maintain an internet-accessible collection of works by Philostratus with texts and images that will preserve the meaning of the work whilst engaging the attention of future readers.

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30 An electronic version of a primary source can be either a scanned image of the original document (a facsimile) or an ASCII text or word processed version, created by re-keying the content of the document or by using optical character recognition (OCR) to convert the image of the document into text. Ideally, a primary source on the Web should be made available in both forms when originals are difficult to read and to provide keyword searching of the text. Facsimiles reproduce the layout, illustrations and other non-verbal information contained in the original document, and they allow the researcher to check the accuracy of other editions or versions of the document. ASCII text versions such as you might find on the Classical studies Website Perseus.org can be searched, quoted from, (by copying into word-processing software) and they provide a back-up for illegible portions of facsimiles.
Like Rubens, I do not believe that anyone can successfully re-create antiquity, especially not on the Internet. The degree of authenticity that we need to draw upon as viewing participants involves all our five senses. This total immersion in the fabric of antiquity seems to have been the goal for Isabella d’Este surrounded by antiquities in her Mantuan studiolo or for Paul Getty with his replica of the Villa Papyri serving as a museum in Malibu.

My vision for a Digital Philostratus accessible over the Web would be that anyone finding an image, for example, of Titian’s *Bacchanal of the Andrians* might then be able to type the title into a search engine and find themselves at the Digital Philostratus which would reveal the original Classical source for the iconography and show them comparative text and images. It is no mistake that most online libraries choose to reproduce illustrated books or compilations of drawings and prints ahead of purely textual material. It is still tedious to read a text on a computer screen in whatever format, from whatever provenance and text alone cannot attract the website visitors in the same numbers that images can. The strong visual appeal of the illustration simply outshines the significance of the text. Just as Gutenberg had to carefully select texts for publishing when he invented the moveable type printing press in the 1450s, e-publishers today are required to select texts with the greatest readership potential in order to justify the investment.

So what purpose does presenting digitized versions of illustrated manuscripts on the Web serve; if sometimes the textual knowledge remains inaccessible? This unfortunately has become the case with the *da Vinci codice* digitization by Milan’s Ambrosiana Library where the scanned images do not allow for a clear reading of the text, but allow a clear image of da Vinci’s illustrations. This has deprived the primary source of its literary value and deconstructed its instructional capability. What remains is the text as ‘object’ with the primary function of advertising the prestige of a collection. Initiating interest in the author and disseminating information via the borrowing and circulation of the purely visual data it contains are secondary functions.

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31 The Biblioteca Digitale project for the Ambrosiana began in 2002. The three volumes currently reproduced digitally on the internet are a *Comedies* of Terrence, Codice Ambrosiano H 75 inf. Terenzio, *Commedie* (Reims, ca 900); 400 leaves of the *Codice Atlantico* (drawings and notes of Leonardo da Vinci), Italian, compiled in the 16th century; *Codice Settala*, Codici Ambrosiani Z 387–388–389 sup., an inventory of scientific instruments in the Museum of Manfredo Settala (1600-1680). At this stage, only the *Codice Atlantico* is searchable by folio number, title or keyword. Also in the process of being fully digitized is the *Ilias picta*, a 5th century manuscript of the *Iliad* consisting of 51 fragments of parchment illustrated with 58 miniatures. It belonged to Petrarch in the fourteenth century. Milano, Biblioteca Ambrosiana 1 ('Ambrosiana picta') = 1019, olim F.205 inf.
Such a purpose, has affected the accuracy of the primary source material the item contains, which often happens across the Web when the material has been altered or manipulated in some way to change or influence its meaning. Websites can use primary source material to persuade the reader to a particular point of view, distorting the contents in obvious or subtle ways and can use primary source material haphazardly, without appropriately choosing, inspecting, or citing the work.

I have used one example here, but the practice of reproducing texts on the internet in digital images which render the text illegible is common. The Ambrosiana example proves despite funding and the top technology being in place, the result is far from satisfactory. If we wish to use digitization to preserve early and fragile primary sources such as early editions of the Imagines alternatives to this kind of presentation need to be tested. An advantage of digitized manuscripts and early books is their worldwide accessibility, facility of copying and low cost storage. The possibilities for enhancing traditional teaching techniques for the historian are incalculable. Students today graduate in Classics having ingested Euripides and Homer from Penguin paperbacks, never having seen or handled prototype early editions. Digitization will at least offer a second-hand experience of viewing early editions and allow students to trace the genesis of a text.

There are numerous ‘virtual recreations’ of antiquity and the Renaissance on the Internet, from a virtual tour around the ruins of Pompeii to the virtual Vatican. Eventually there may be a virtual Philostratus gallery; a hypothetical reconstruction of the Neapolitan villa with all its sixty-five paintings in situ and a walking, talking, Sophist as narrator. This attempt to reconstruct lost worlds in our new digital world, is admirable but can lead to a misleading interpretation of antiquity, especially for the young viewer. The key element here is that a real person is needed to be seen and heard standing in the ruins of Pompeii or before the Pyramids before antiquity can be rendered believable. In the same sense, I hope scholars will continue to be patient and request to handle rare volumes like the 1614 illustrated Philostratus and not simply be complacent to consult it on the Internet. The two experiences need to be linked.

The truth is, we are at the earliest stages of learning how to produce scholarly publications in digital form: just as early printed works (incunabula) mix habits from the world of manuscripts with original publishing experiments, authors of ‘digital

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Virtual Vatican http://mv.vatican.va/3_EN/pages/MV_Visite.html
incunabula’ in the early twenty-first century are still struggling to develop appropriate methods and materials for work in a radically new medium. I think at best, that cyberspace can create a dialogue between old worlds and new worlds and that is all I can hope for with the Digital Philostratus project.33

**Continuity: Recent Studies on Philostratus**

In response to a revival of interest among Classicists and art historians, several publications relating to the *Imagines* have surfaced in the last two decades and following in the tradition of de Vigenère, the majority are French. The most important of these, as mentioned in the previous chapter, is a complete new edition of Blaise de Vigenère’s translation based on the illustrated 1614 version and edited by Françoise Graziani.34 Her comprehensive introduction to this edition presents a reappraisal of de Vigenère as a humanist ‘par excellence’ of the Renaissance and emphasizes the place of the *Imagines* in the Classical tradition of ekphrasis. Graziani also retracts the philological history of the book from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries and concludes by mentioning the influence of ekphrasis (via the 1614 edition) on seventeenth-century writers like Le Moyne and Michel de Marolles. Graziani also contributes to *Le défi de l’art*,35 a book which looks at the nachleben in the literary tradition of the *Imagines* of both Philostratus the Elder and Younger and the descriptions of Callistratus. The majority of contributions to this volume are devoted to literary problems and there is little discussion on the text in relation to the history of art. An unusual addition to Philostratean studies is offered by Nantes University’s professor of Greek, Jackie Pigeaud; entitled *Les loges de Philostrate*, it takes the shape of a dialogue between the author and “the other” (l’Autre) who discuss the levels of poetry and voice in the *Imagines*.36 Also in this group of new studies is a collective effort from

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33 The Digital Philostratus project was published online 2003-2006 with the assistance of Dr.Ross Woodrow of the Fine Arts School, University of Newcastle, on the university server. Hopefully, funding will be forthcoming to re-launch the e-edition in its new format.
the Renaissance department of Padua University that has produced a study exclusively around the descriptions of the Younger Philostratus.\textsuperscript{37}

Recently, several digital resources have appeared on the Internet with the Bibliothèque Nationale de France publishing a complete digital edition of de Vigenère’s unillustrated translation (1602) \textit{Imagines} of Philostratus the Younger; \textit{La Suite de Philostrate} and the University of Toulouse-Le Mirail has uploaded a selection of illustrations from the 1614 edition of \textit{Les images} on their image database Utpictura18.\textsuperscript{38} In addition, the independent website Theoi.com has uploaded the full English translation of Fairbanks from Loeb Classical Library (without the Greek text). Perseus the Classical website from Tufts University is the most widely-used free website for Classical texts and has its own search engine, but has not yet included the \textit{Imagines} in its online collection.\textsuperscript{39}

Increasingly, national universities and public libraries tap into their country’s cultural DNA to produce websites devoted to “furthering the reach of Hellenic culture...” Philostratus and other Greek authors can find new patrons here, but just as in the Renaissance period, Ovid remains the most accessible voice of ancient mythology and many more websites are devoted to his \textit{Metamorphoses} than any other text. La Sapienza University of Rome features some descriptions from the \textit{Imagines} in Italian on its ICONOS website which is aimed at presenting iconography and iconology associated with Ovid’s \textit{Metamorphoses} (www.iconos.it).

The \textit{Imagines} has been viewed as literature, document and monument to the ancient world. It is treated as both something to investigate and something to help us investigate. Yet perhaps the most remarkable quality of the \textit{Imagines} is its ability through ekphrasis to compel the reader to create images, as demonstrated in this thesis. It is a paradox that would have appealed to Philostratus as a Sophist that the proof of his consummate ability in making the pictures conceivable, lies in the body of visual representation that the \textit{Imagines} inspired.

\textsuperscript{37} Le \textit{Immagini di Filostrato Minore : la prospettiva dello storico dell’arte / a cura di Francesca Ghedini, Isabella Colpo, Marta Novello ; con la collaborazione di Elisa Avezzà. Università degli studi di Padova, Dipartimento di scienze dell’antichità. Antenor quaderni ; 3 Roma : Quasar, 2004.}

\textsuperscript{38} The online project Utpictura18 is an iconographical research program developed in 2009 at the Centre Interdisciplinaire d’Étude des Littératures d’Aix-Marseille: http://galatea.univ-tlse2.fr/pictural/. At the time this thesis went to print, there is still no complete digital version of the 1614 edition \textit{Les images} on the Internet.

\textsuperscript{39} www.Perseus.tufts.edu an evolving database with Latin and Greek texts and images on art and architecture.
Appendix I

Editio princeps:
Tade enestin en tode to biblio. Loukianou. Philostratou eikones. Tou autou 'eroika. Tou autou bioi sophiston. ...

(Frontispiece)
Ε Ρ Ο Τ Ε Ζ.

Η λαξ ἐφασίζεται ἵδιον ἱππανεῖν. ἔ ι δὲ τῶν ἀποκεφαλών τῶν μυθικῶν μισόσχεν. ὁμιχλῆς ράχε τὸν μὲν ἕτερον ὁμιχλῆς, καὶ οὕτως ᾧτε ἔχον τὴν τελείαν ἀποκεφάλωσιν. Φάντασμα οὖν τοῦ ἁθροιστήριου τοῦ ὁμιχλῆς λέγεται. ὁμιχλῆς δὲ τὸν ἀναφοροῦντος τοῦ ὁμιχλῆς 

Αλδυς Μανουτίου Βενετία

Πάσης ηὐγείας

Παραβιάστηκε συμβουλή οὕτως ράχε τὸν ἀναφοροῦντος τοῦ ὁμιχλῆς.
The Erotes (I vi.)

1503: editio princeps (page 453)
Aldus Manutius Venice
Courtesy of: George A. Smathers Library, University of Florida
Ca. 1505
Demetrius Moschos
Italian translation for Isabella d’Este
MS Cambridge, University Library, Ad. 6007 Page 10

Amori

ecco li amori che rendemano pomi ma si sono multi night dar maraviglia p cio che sopra nasce no filotid nymphg gi berando tutti li mortali multi y multe
Ca. 1505
Demetrius Moschos
Italian translation for Isabella d’Este
MS Cambridge, University Library, Ad. 6007 Page 10
Page 11

cose in quali ti homeni si ammoran. ma
lo celeste secondo ch’è dice tralba in cielo
le cose divine. senti cu lodo, ch’è difuside
lo lodo: o vero anch’ov na n’ha sentuto.
ma sia pronto ad ascolta; e ciò ch’è da ch’
posso te percatavano i possess o le parole
in sieme. questi vanni de piante crescono in
dritto. tra quale piante e’ beliro pasteggia
et herba tenera copre le sue. la qual non man-
cho ch’è loco potrebbe dare comodità di re poffo.
ma ne la cima de li vanni pomi de colorc
auveo, et igneo; et salve i tizano in sa cultivo
una grande compaglia d’amori. i quali
tutti sono spogliati et le piante de aurate
e auree piene et pralli. et havendo suspe
se quelle sopra li pomi et spolverano l’aur.
mente; et li vanni formenti sono de
depressi sopra la herba, et mostrano infiniti
PHILOSTRATUS: IMAGINES

tau̱ṯḻ g̱a̱ṟ ἕ̱να̱υλα̱ ἐ̱κ̱ε̱ίν̱φ̱ τ̱ῷ̱ ϊ̱δα̱τ̱i̱.  (2) κροκο̱-̱δε̱ιλα̱ μέ̱ν̱ ὦ̱ν̱ κα̱i̱ ὁ̱ι̱ ποτά̱μω̱ι̱ τ̱ῶ̱ν̱ ἵ̱ππω̱ν̱, ὁ̱δ̱ς̱
10 τ̱ῷ̱ Νέ̱ι̱λ̱ω̱ τι̱ν̱έ̱ς̱ προσγράφο̱υ̱σ̱ι̱ν̱, ἀπ̱θά̱κε̱ι̱τ̱α̱ ν̱ῦ̱ν̱ ἐ̱ν̱ βαθείᾳ̱ τ̱ῇ̱ δύ̱ν̱ῃ̱, μὴ̱ δε̱ὸ̱ς̱ το̱ῖ̱ς̱ παιδίο̱ι̱ς̱ ἐμπέ̱σ̱ο̱ι̱.

γεοργίας̱ δ̱e̱ κα̱i̱ ναυτιλίας̱ σύμμβολα̱ δη̱λ̱ο̱ι̱ τ̱ὸ̱ν̱
Νέ̱ι̱λ̱ω̱ν̱ ἐ̱κ̱ τοιο̱ύ̱δ̱ε̱, ὦ̱ πα̱i̱, λό̱γ̱ο̱ν̱. Νέ̱ι̱λ̱ω̱ Αἰ̱γ̱υ̱π̱τ̱ω̱ν̱
πλω̱τ̱ῆ̱ν̱ ἐ̱ργασά̱με̱νος̱ ἐ̱ν̱κάρ̱π̱ῳ̱ τ̱ῇ̱ γ̱ῇ̱ χρῆ̱σ̱θ̱αι̱
15 ὑ̱δό̱σ̱ο̱ν̱ ὑ̱π̱ὸ̱ τ̱ῶ̱ν̱ πε̱δ̱ῶ̱ν̱ ἐ̱κ̱ποθ̱ε̱ι̱ς̱, ἐ̱ν̱ Αἰ̱διο̱π̱ί̱α̱
δ̱e̱, ὅ̱θ̱ε̱ν̱ ἄρ̱χ̱ε̱τα̱, τα̱μ̱ί̱α̱ς̱ αὐ̱τ̱ῷ̱ δα̱ί̱μ̱ο̱ν̱ ἐ̱φ̱ε̱σ̱τ̱η̱κε̱ν̱,
ὑ̱φ̱  ὦ̱ν̱ πέ̱μ̱π̱τ̱ε̱τα̱ τα̱ῖ̱ς̱ ὀ̱ρ̱α̱ί̱ς̱ σύ̱μμμετρο̱ς̱. ἡ̱-
γρα̱π̱τα̱ δ̱e̱ ὀ̱υ̱ρανομομη̱κ̱η̱ς̱ ἐ̱π̱ι̱ νο̱η̱σ̱α̱ι̱ κα̱i̱ τ̱ὸ̱ν̱
πό̱δ̱α̱ ἐ̱π̱έ̱χε̱i̱ 1  τα̱ῖ̱ς̱ πη̱γ̱αι̱ς̱ ὀ̱ι̱ο̱ν̱ Πο̱σε̱ι̱δ̱ῶ̱ν̱ προ̱σ-
20 νε̱ῦ̱ο̱ν̱. εἰ̱ς̱ το̱ῦ̱τ̱ο̱ν̱ ὁ̱ πο̱τα̱μ̱ῶ̱ς̱ βλέ̱π̱ε̱ι̱ κα̱i̱ αἴ̱τ̱ε̱
τὰ̱ βρέ̱φ̱η̱ αὐ̱τ̱ῷ̱ πολλὰ̱ ἐ̱ἰ̱ναι̱.

5' ΕΡΩΤΕΣ

(1) Ἔ̱ρωτες̱ ἵ̱δου̱ τρυγο̱ῶς̱ εἰ̱ δ̱ὲ̱ πλήθος̱ αὐ̱τ̱ῶ̱ν̱, μὴ̱ βαμμάς̱η̱ς̱. Νυμφῶν̱ γάρ̱ ὅ̱̱π̱ δα̱ί̱δ̱ε̱ς̱ οὖ̱τ̱ό̱ι̱ γί̱νο̱νται̱, τὸ̱ ὑ̱θ̱η̱τ̱ῶ̱ν̱ ἀ̱π̱α̱ν̱ διακυ̱-
25 βερνύ̱ντες̱, πολλο̱ι̱ διὰ̱ πολλά̱, ὃ̱ν̱ ἐ̱ρω̱σ̱ι̱ν̱ ἀνθρω̱-
ποι̱ν̱, τὸ̱ν̱ δ̱ὲ̱ οὐ̱ρανῶ̱ν̱ φασ̱ι̱ν̱ ἐ̱ν̱ τ̱ῷ̱ οὐ̱ρανῶ̱ν̱ πρῶ̱τ̱-
τε̱ι̱ν̱ τὰ̱ θεῖ̱α̱. μῶ̱ν̱ ἐ̱π̱η̱σ̱θ̱ο̱ν̱ τι̱ τ̱ῆ̱ ὀ̱ν̱ τῶ̱ν̱ κή̱π̱-
πον̱ εὐ̱ω̱δία̱ς̱ ὁ̱ βραδύ̱νει̱ σοι̱ το̱ῦ̱τ̱ο̱; ἀλλά̱ προθύμω̱ι̱ ἄ̱κονε̱ προ̱-
σβαλε̱ι̱ γάρ̱ σε̱ με̱τ̱α̱ το̱ῦ̱
30 λό̱γ̱ο̱ν̱ κα̱i̱ τὰ̱ μῆ̱λα̱.

(2) ὄρχο̱ι̱ μὲ̱ν̱ οὖ̱τ̱ό̱ι̱ φυτῶ̱ν̱ ὄρθο̱ι̱ πορεύ̱νται̱,

1 ἐ̱π̱έ̱χε̱i̱ Jacobs, cf. Phil. iun. 405. 6: ἐ̱χε̱ι̱ FP, ἐ̱χε̱ι̱ πρὸ̱ς̱ X.

1 Cf. Philostratus, Vita Apollon. 6. 26, where the allusion is based on Pindar (Bergk, Frag. 282).
PHILOSTRATUS IMAGINES

τοῦ μέσου δὲ αὐτῶν ἐλευθερία βαδίζειν, πόνα δὲ
302 Κ. ἀπαλή κατέχει τῶς δρόμους οίᾳ καὶ κατακλυ-
θέντι στρωμὴ εἶναι. ἀπ’ ἄκρων δὲ τῶν ὄξων
μῆλα χρυσὰ καὶ πυρὰ καὶ ἡλιόδῃ προσάγονται
tὸν ἐσμὸν διόν τῶν Ἐρωτῶν γεωργεῖν αὐτά.

5 φαρέτραι μὲν οὖν χρυσόπαστοι καὶ χρυσὰ́1 καὶ
tὰ ἐν αὐτάς βέλη, γυμνὴ τούτων ἡ ἁγέλη πᾶσα
καὶ κούφοι διαπέτονται περιαρτήσαντες αὐτάς́
tαῖς μηλέαις, αἰ δὲ ἐφεστρίδες αἰ ποικίλαι κεῖναι
μὲν ἐν τῇ πόσῃ, μυρία δὲ αὐτῶν τὰ ἄνθη. οὐδὲ
10 ἐστεφάνουνται τὰς κεφαλὰς ὡς ἀποχρώσθησι αὐτοῖς
tῆς κόμης. πτερὰ δὲ κυάνεα καὶ φοινικά καὶ
χρυσὰ ἐνίοις μόνον οὐ καυτὸν πλήττει τόν ἀέρα
ξὺν ἄρμονια μυστικῇ. φεύ τῶν ταλάρων, εἰς
οὗς ἀποτίθενται τὰ μῆλα, ὡς πολλὴ μὲν περὶ
15 αὐτῶν ἡ σαρδῶ, πολλὴ δὲ ἡ σμάραγδος, ἀληθῆς
δ’ ἡ μάργηλα, ἡ συνθῆκη δὲ αὐτῶν Ἕφαιστου
νοείσθω. οὐ δὲ κλιμάκων δέονται πρὸς τὰ
dένδρα παρ’ αὐτοῦ ὑψὸς ἥρα καὶ ἐς αὐτὰ
pέτονται τὰ μῆλα.

20 (3) καὶ ἵνα μὴ τοὺς χορεύοντας λέγωμεν ἡ
tοὺς διαδέοντας ἡ τοὺς καθεύδοντας ἡ ὡς γαίνω-
tαι τῶν μηλῶν ἐμφαγόντες, ἰδὼμεν ὃ τι ποτὲ
αὐτοῖν νοοῦσιν. οἱ γὰρ κάλλιστοι τῶν Ἐρωτῶν
ἰδοὺ τέταρτες ὑπεξελθόντες τῶν ἄλλων δύο μὲν
25 αὐτῶν ἀντιπέμπουσι μηλὸν ἄλληλοις, ἡ δὲ ἐτέρα
dυάς ὁ μὲν τοξευεὶ τῶν ἄτερον, ὃ δὲ ἀντιτοξεύει
cαὶ οὐδὲ ἀπειλή τοῖς προσώποις ἐπεστὶν, ἄλλα
καὶ στέρνα παρέχουσιν ἄλληλοις, ἕν δὲ καὶ τά

1 χρυσᾷ Olearius: χρυσάτ.
2 αὐτάς Rohde: αὐτά.
PHILOSTRATUS: IMAGINES

βέλη περάση, 1 καλὸν τὸ αἵνεκα: σκότει γάρ, εἰ
30 τοῦ ἐξυνήμι οὐογράφου. φιλία ταῦτα, ὃ
παῖ, καὶ ἄλληλον ἵμερος. οἱ μὲν γὰρ διὰ τοῦ
μὴλον παίζοντες πόθου ἀρχονταὶ, ὅθεν ὁ μὲν
ἀφίησι φιλίσας τὸ μήλον, ὁ δὲ ύπτιας αὐτὸ
ὑποδέχεται ταῖς χερῶν δήλον ὡς ἀντιφιλήσων, εἰ
35 λάβοι, καὶ ἀντιπέμψων αὐτῷ τὸ δὲ τῶν τοξοτῶν

303 K. ξενόφος ἐμπεδοῦσιν ἔροται ἦδη φθάνοντα. καὶ
φημὶ τοὺς μὲν παίζειν ἐπὶ τῷ ἀρξασθαὶ τοῦ ἔραν,
toûs δὲ τοξεύειν ἐπὶ τῷ μὴ λήξαι τοῦ πόθου.
(4) ἔκεινοι μὲν οὖν, περὶ οὐς οἱ πολλοὶ θεαταί,

5 θυμῷ συμπεπτᾶκασι καὶ ἔχει τῖς αὐτοὺς πάλη.
λέξο καὶ τὴν πάλην καὶ γὰρ τὸ τό ἐκλιπαρεῖς.
ὁ μὲν ἱρηκε τὸν ἀντίπαλον περιπτᾶς αὐτῷ κατὰ
tων νέων καὶ εἰς πυργωμα ἀπολαμβάνει καὶ
καταδεί τοὺς σκέλεσιν, ὁ δὲ οὔτε ἀπαγορεύει καὶ

10 ὀρθὸς ὑπανίσταται καὶ διαλύει τὴν χείρα, ὑφ’ ἦς
ἀγχεται, στρεβλώσας ἕνα τῶν δακτύλων, μεθ’
δυν οὐκέτι οἱ λοιποὶ ἔχουσιν οὔδε εἰσίν ἐν τῷ
ἀπρίξ, ἄλγει δὲ ὁ 3 στρεβλούμενος καὶ κατεσθίει
tοῦ συμπαλαιστοῦ 4 τὸ οὐς. ὅθεν δυσχεραίνου-

1 περάση Hercher: πετάση F, πελάση cet.
2 εἰ που Schenkl: δπού F, εἰ τὶ P.
3 ὁ added by Reiske and Jacobs.
4 συμπαλαιστοῦ Schenkl: παλαιστοῦ.

1 For Cupids engaged in athletic sports, see the sarcophagus relief in Florence, Baumeister, Denkmäler I, p. 502, fig. 544 (Fig. 2).
PHILOSTRATUS: IMAGINES

15 σιν οἱ θεώμενοι τῶν Ἑρώτων ὥς ἄδικοντι καὶ ἐκταλαίοντι καὶ μήλοις αὐτῶν καταλιθοῦσι.

(5) μηδὲ ὁ λαγὸς ἡμᾶς ἐκείνος διαφυγέτω, συνθηράσσωμεν δὲ αὐτὸν τοῖς Ἑρώσι. τούτῳ τὸ θηρίον ὑποκαθήμενον ταῖς μηλέαις καὶ σιτοῦμεν τὰ πίπτοντα εἰς γῆν μῆλα, πολλὰ δὲ καὶ ἡμίβρωτα καταλεῖπτον διαθηρώσωμεν οὕτω καὶ καταράσσωμεν ὁ μὲν κρότῳ χειρῶν, ὁ δὲ κεκραγῶς, ὁ δὲ ἀνασείων τὴν χλαμύδα, καὶ οἱ μὲν ὑπερέπτονται τοῦ θηρίου καταβοῦντες, οἱ δὲ μεθέπουσιν αὐτὸ πεζῷ κατ’ ἱχνος, ὁ δ’ ὃς ἐπιπρήσῳ έαυτῶν ὧρμῃσε. καὶ τὸ θηρίον ἄλλην ἐτράπετο, ὁ δὲ ἐπιβουλεύει τῷ σκέλει τοῦ λαγῶ, τὸν δὲ καὶ διωχθῆσαι ἕρηκότα. γελῶσιν οὖν καὶ καταπεπτώκασιν ὁ μὲν ἐς πλευράν, ὁ δὲ πρῆνης, οἱ δὲ ὑπὶ πάντες δὲ ἐν τοῖς τῆς διαμαρτίας σχήμασι. τοξεύει δὲ οὐδεὶς, ἀλλὰ πειρώνται αὐτὸν ἐλείν ξώντα ἱερεῖον τῇ Ἀφροδίτῃ ἡδιστον. (6) οἶμοι γάρ που τὸ περὶ τοῦ λαγῶ λεγόμενον, ὡς πολὺ τῆς Ἀφροδίτης μετέστιν αὐτῷ. λέγεται 30 οὖν περὶ μὲν τοῦ θήλεος θηλάζειν τε αὐτὸ δὲ 304 Κ. ἐστεκε καὶ ἀποτίκτειν πάλιν ἐπὶ ταύτῳ γαλακτίν καὶ ἑπικυνίσκεις 1 δὲ καὶ οὐδὲ εἰς χρόνος αὐτῷ τοῦ τοκετοῦ κενός. τὸ δὲ ἄρρεν ὑπείρει τε, ὡς φύσις ἄρρενων, καὶ ἀποκυνίσκει παρ’ ὁ πέφυκεν. οἱ δὲ

1 Herod. III. 108 ἑπικυνίσκεται μοῖνον πάντων θηρίων; quoted by Athenaeus 400 E with the reading ἑπικυνίσκει.
PHILOSTRATUS: IMAGINES

5 ἀτοποὶ τῶν ἑραστῶν καὶ πειθῶ τινα ἐρωτικὴν ἐν αὐτῷ κατέγρωσαν βιαίῳ τέχνῃ τὰ παιδικὰ θηρώματον.
(7) ταύτα μὲν οὖν καταλίπομεν ἀνθρώποις ἁδίκοις καὶ ἁνάξιοις τοῦ ἀντερᾶσθαι, σὺ δὲ μου
10 τὴν Ἀφροδίτην βλέπε. ποῦ δὴ καὶ κατὰ τὸ ἄλλον μήλων ἔκειν; 1 ὡρᾷς τὴν ὑπαντρον πέτραν, ἡς
νάμα κενωτατον ὑπεκτρέχει χλωρον τε καὶ πότιμον, δὴ καὶ διοχετεύεσται ποτὸν εἶναι ταῖς
μηλεῖσι; ἐντελθά μοι τὴν Ἀφροδίτην νοεῖ, Νυμ-
15 φῶν ὁμιλεῖ αὐτὴν ἱδρυμένων, ὅτι αὐτὰς ἐποίησεν
'Ερώτων μητέρας καὶ διὰ τοῦτο εὐπαιδεῖσας. καὶ
κατοπτρὸν δὲ τὸ ἀργυροῦν καὶ τὸ ὑπόχρυσον
ἐκεῖνο σαφάλιον καὶ αἱ περόναι αἱ χρυσαῖ,
ταῦτα πάντα οὐκ ἄργως ἀνήπται. λέγει δὲ
20 Ἀφροδίτης εἶναι, καὶ γέγραπται τοῦτο, καὶ
Νυμφῶν δῶρα εἶναι λέγεται. καὶ οἱ 'Ερώτες δὲ
ἀπάρχονται τῶν μήλων καὶ περιστῶτας εὐχοῦ-
ται καλὸν αὐτοῖς εἶναι τῶν κῆπων.

ζ' MEMNON

(1) Ἡ μὲν στρατιὰ Μέμνωνος, τὰ ὀπλα δὲ
25 αὐτοῖς ἀπόκειται καὶ προτίθενται τῶν μέγιστον
αὐτῶν ἐπὶ θρήνῳ, βεβληται δὲ κατὰ τὸ στέρον
ἐμοὶ δοκεῖν ὑπὸ τῆς μελίας. εὐρών 2 γὰρ πεδίον
ἐυρύ καὶ σκηνάς καὶ τείχος ἐν στρατοπέδῳ καὶ
πόλιν συμπεφραγμένην τείχεσιν οὐκ οἶδ᾽ ὡς
30 οὐκ Ἀθλιτίπος ὁμοίοι καὶ Τροία ταῦτα, θρηνεῖται

1 ἐκεῖνος Olearius: ἐκεῖνος. 2 Rohde conj. ὥρων.
which is familiar to that river. Crocodiles, however, and hippopotami, which some artists associate with the Nile in their paintings, are now lying aloof in its deep eddies so as not to frighten the children. But that the river is the Nile is indicated, my boy, by symbols of agriculture and navigation, and for the following reason: At its flood the Nile makes Egypt open to boats; then, when it has been drunk up by the fields, it gives the people a fertile land to till; and in Ethiopia, where it takes its rise, a divinity is set over it as its steward, and he it is who sends forth its waters at the right seasons. This divinity has been painted so as to seem heaven-high, and he plants his foot on the sources, his head bent forward like Poseidon. Toward him the river is looking, and it prays that its infants may be many.

6. CUPIDS

See, Cupids are gathering apples; and if there are many of them, do not be surprised. For they are children of the Nymphs and govern all mortal kind, and they are many because of the many things men love; and they say that it is heavenly love which manages the affairs of the gods in heaven. Do you catch aught of the fragrance hovering over the garden, or are your senses dull? But listen carefully; for along with my description of the garden the fragrance of the apples also will come to you.

Here run straight rows of trees with space

\[\text{\textsuperscript{2}}\text{ Cf. the gem published by Overbeck, }\textit{Kunsmymthologie, Poseidon, Gemmentafel III. 3}; \text{ Poseidon bending forward and Nymph.}\]
left free between them to walk in, and tender grass borders the paths, fit to be a couch for one to lie upon. On the ends of the branches apples golden and red and yellow invite the whole swarm of Cupids to harvest them. The Cupids’ quivers are studded with gold, and golden also are the darts in them; but bare of these and untrammelled the whole band flits about, for they have hung their quivers on the apple trees; and in the grass lie their broidered mantles, and countless are the colours thereof. Neither do the Cupids wear crowns on their heads, for their hair suffices. Their wings, dark blue and purple and in some cases golden, all but beat the very air and make harmonious music. Ah, the baskets⁴ into which they gather the apples! What abundance of sardonyx, of emeralds, adorns them, and the pearls are true pearls; but the workmanship must be attributed to Hephaestus! But the Cupids need no ladders wrought by him to reach the trees, for aloft they fly even to where the apples hang.

Not to speak of the Cupids that are dancing or running about or sleeping, or how they enjoy eating the apples, let us see what is the meaning of these others. For here are four of them, the most beautiful of all, withdrawn from the rest; two of them are throwing an apple back and forth, and the second pair are engaged in archery, one shooting at his companion and the latter shooting back. Nor is there any trace of hostility in their faces; rather they offer their breasts to each other, in order that the missiles may pierce them there, no

¹ Cf. the wool basket of Helen which was the work of Hephaestus, Od. 4, 125 ἀργυρίων τάλαντων.
doubt. It is a beautiful riddle; come, let us see if perchance I can guess the painter's meaning. This is friendship, my boy, and yearning of one for the other. For the Cupids who play ball with the apple are beginning to fall in love, and so the one kisses the apple before he throws it, and the other holds out his hands to catch it, evidently intending to kiss it in his turn if he catches it and then to throw it back; but the pair of archers are confirming a love that is already present. In a word, the first pair in their play are intent on falling in love, while the second pair are shooting arrows that they may not cease from desire.

Fig. 2.—Erotes boxing and wrestling.

As for the Cupids further away, surrounded by many spectators, they have come at each other with spirit and are engaged in a sort of wrestling-match. I will describe the wrestling also, since you earnestly desire it. One has caught his opponent by lighting on his back, and seizes his throat to choke him, and grips him with his legs; the other does not yield, but struggles upright and tries to loosen the hand that chokes him by bending back one of the fingers till the others no longer hold or keep their grip. In pain the Cupid whose finger is being bent back bites the ear of his opponent. The Cupids who are spectators are angry with him for
this as unfair and contrary to the rules of wrestling, and pelt him with apples.

And let not the hare yonder escape us, but let us join the Cupids in hunting it down. The creature was sitting under the trees and feeding on the apples that fell to the ground but leaving many half-eaten; but the Cupids hunt it from place to place and make it dash headlong, one by clapping his hands, another by screaming, another by waving his cloak; some fly above it with shouts, others on foot press hard after it, and one of these makes a rush in order to hurl himself upon it. The creature changes its course and another Cupid schemes to catch it by the leg, but it slips away from him just as it is caught. So the Cupids, laughing, have thrown themselves on the ground, one on his side, one on his face, others on their backs, all in attitudes of disappointment. But there is no shooting of arrows at the hare, since they are trying to catch it alive as an offering most pleasing to Aphrodite. For you know, I imagine, what is said of the hare, that it possesses the gift of Aphrodite to an unusual degree.\footnote{This tradition of the fertility of the hare is frequently mentioned by ancient writers; cf. Herod. III, 108; Arist. 
\textit{de gen. anim.} 777 a 32, \textit{Hist. anim.} 542 b 31, 574 b 30, 585 a 5; Plut. \textit{Mor.} 829 e; Aelian. \textit{Hist. anim.} 13. 12.} At any rate it is said of the female that while she suckles the young she has borne, she bears another litter to share the same milk; forthwith she conceives again, nor is there any time at all when she is not carrying young. As for the male, he not only begets offspring in the way natural to males, but also himself bears young, contrary to nature. And perverted lovers have found in the
have a certain power to produce love, attempting to
secure the objects of their affection by a compelling
magic art.\footnote{\textit{i.e.} by making a present of a hare they exercise a sort of
constraint upon the beloved.}

But let us leave these matters to men who are
wicked and do not deserve to have their love
returned, and do you look, please, at Aphrodite.
But where is she and in what part of the orchard
yonder? Do you see the overarchin\textgreek{g} rock from
beneath which springs water of the deepest blue,
fresh and good to drink, which is distributed in
channels to irrigate the apple trees? Be sure that
Aphrodite is there, where the Nymphs, I doubt
not, have established a shrine to her, because she
has made them mothers of Cupids and therefore
blest in their children. The silver mirror, that
gilded sandal, the golden brooches, all these objects
have been hung there not without a purpose. They
proclaim that they belong to Aphrodite, and her
name is inscribed on them, and they are said to be
gifts of the Nymphs. And the Cupids bring first-
fruits of the apples, and gathering around they pray
to her that their orchard may prosper.

7. MEMNON

This is the army of Memnon; their arms have
been laid aside, and they are laying out the body of
their chief for mourning; he has been struck in the
breast, I think, by the ashen spear. For when I
find a broad plain and tents and an entrenched
camp and a city fenced in with walls, I feel sure
that these are Ethiopians and that this city is Troy
Appendix ii

The following list of titles in the published oeuvre of Blaise de Vigenère, has been compiled here, to demonstrate the eclectic range of subjects this scholar became accomplished in and to place the translations of Philostratus in context.

1573 - Les chroniques et annales de Poloigne. Par Blaise de Vigenère, secrétaire de feu monseigneur le Duc de Nyvernois (Paris, Jean Richer).


1576- La somptueuse et magnifique entrée du très-chrestien roy Henri III, de ce nom, roy de France & de Pologne, grand duc de Lithuanie,...en la cité de Mantoüe, avec les portraicts des choses les plus exquises. Par Blaise de Vigenère. (Paris, Nicolas Chesneau).(The sumptuous and magnificent entry of the very Christian King Henri III, King of France and of Poland, Grand Duke of Lithuania....into the city of Mantua, with portraits of those persons most ‘delightful’.)

1577 – L’Histoire de la décadence de l’empire grecet establishment de celuy des turcs, comprinse en dix livres par Nicolas Chalcondyle, de la traduction de Blaise de Vigenère (published posthumously in folio illustrated edition, Paris, Abel l’Angelier, 1612).(A translation and commentary of the work in ten books written by the Byzantine scholar Laonikos Chalkokondylas (1430- ca.1480) that retraces the history of the Balkan peninsula between 1298-1463.)

A second, enlarged edition was printed in 1597 by Abel l’Angelier in Paris, which included Blaise’s complete commentary. In the same year, l’Angelier put out a third edition which included Blaise’s translations of Philostratus’ Heroikos (Les Heroïques) and Callistratus’ Descriptions. This edition was reprinted in 1602.

In 1609 the Paris publisher Claude Cramoisy published the descriptions of both Philostratus the Elder and Younger with the addition of epigrams composed by Artus Thomas, Sieur d’Embry.

In 1611 Claude Michel of Tournon published an edition in three volumes which included Blaise’s translations and commentaries of Les images, the Life of Apollonius of Tyana and the Lives of the Sophists.

In 1614 l’Angelier’s widow brought out the most successful version of Les images in a fully illustrated folio edition that included Blaise’s extensive commentary, the 1609 epigrams of Artus Thomas and the 1597 translations of Heroikos and Callistratus.

1578 – Traicté des Cometes ou estoiles chevelues, apparoissantes extraordinairement au ciel. Avec leurs causes et leurs effects. (Paris, N. Chesneau). (A Treatise on Comets or Hairy Stars, extraordinary apparitions of the sky. With their causes and effects.)


1580 – Les annotations de Blaise de Vigenère sur la première dècade de Tite-Live, par luiy mise en langue française. (Annotations by Blaise de Vigenère on the first ten books of Titus-Livius’ (The History of Rome) translated into French by him.) (Paris, Nicolas Chesneau). Another edition was published in 1583 which included a description of the principle persons mentioned by Livy and a general chronology for despots of the land.
Posthumous editions of the Livy followed in 1606, 1615 and 1617 published firstly by Abel l’Angelier and then by his widow.¹


1586 – Traicté des chiffres, ou secretes manieres d’escrire par Blaise de Vigenère Bourbonnois (Paris, Abel l’Angelier). (Treatise on ciphers (codes), or the secret manners of writing.)

1587 - Traicté de la penitence et de ses parties par Blaise de Vigenère Bourbonnois (Paris, Abel L’Angelier). (A treatise on the penitence of the parties, addressing different questions of penitence in different religions including the Catholic church, the Jewish faith, the Muslim faith, Greek and Ethiopian Orthodoxy and the Kabbalah.)


1589 - Les Commentaires de Iules Cesar : des guerres de la Gaule, plus ceux des guerres ciuiles, contre la part Pompeienne. [With the supplementary commentaries ascribed to

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¹ The translation of the Livy was a massive undertaking with the 1606 edition consisting of 1,786 pages.
² Geoffrey de Villehardouin (ca.1154-ca.1213) played a major role in the Fourth Crusade. In 1207 he wrote an account in French prose of the Crusade, De la Conquête de Constantinople which Blaise de Vigenère translated into a French edition described as “plus moderne et intelligible” (more modern and intelligible). Bibliothèque nationale.
³ Born Giovanni di Ridanza (1221-1274) the Franciscan theologian Saint Bonaventure was canonized in 1482. Blaise de Vigenère translated Bonaventure’s major work Stimulus divini amoris.

1594 – *Histoire mémorable des grands troubles de ce royaume soubs le roy Charles VII.* (Nevers, Pierre Roussin). (The memorable history of the great troubles of the reign under King Charles VII.)


**Posthumous Titles:**

1597 - *La suite de Philostrate. Les images, ou tableaux de platte peinture du jeune Philostrate.* containing the descriptions of Philostratus the Younger; the *Heroikos* and the *Descriptions* of Callistratus. (Paris, Abel l’Angelier).


(The military art of Greek author Onosander or a treatise of the office and work of a master of warfare. Translated into the French language and illustrated with annotations by Blaise de Vigenère Bourbonnois.)


(Treatise on fire and salt). A kabbalistic study that came out in later editions of 1622 and 1642.

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4 Tasso’s *Gerusalemme Liberata* was an epic poem published in 1581 which immediately enjoyed widespread popularity. Blaise made the first translation into French of the poem in the same year that Tasso died. It was also the last publication Blaise brought out before his own death one year later in February, 1596. The poem became a rich iconographical source for 17th century painting.
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