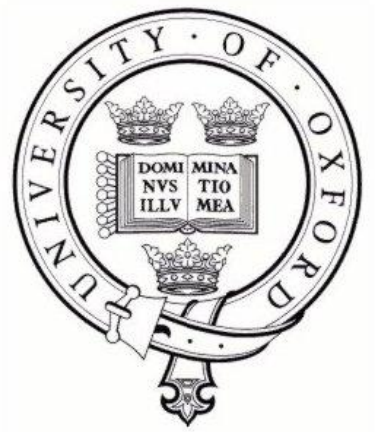
THE THEME OF CONSPIRACY IN FIFTEENTH-CENTURY ITALIAN HUMANIST LITERATURE

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages
University of Oxford
Hilary Term 2017

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates fifteenth-century Italian humanist literature that deals with the topic of conspiracy, focusing on the most important texts that contain accounts of political plots. This thesis identifies for the first time a 'thematic genre' of monographic works devoted to this specific political theme: an output that consists of texts belonging to different literary genres and that enjoyed widespread diffusion in the second half of the *Quattrocento*, when the development of this strand of literature proves to be closely connected with the emergence of a centralized political ideology in Italian states.

The first chapter of the thesis provides a general introduction to the theme of conspiracy in humanist literature, defining this 'thematic' genre and contextualizing it in the historical background of 1400s. Then, the following chapters focus on the most significant works on fifteenth-century political plots which are examined as case studies: Orazio Romano's epic poem *Porcaria* (ch. 2) and Leon Battista Alberti's epistle *Porcaria coniuratio* (1453) (ch. 3); Giovanni Pontano's historical work *De bello Neapolitano* (1465-1503) (ch. 4); and Angelo Poliziano's *Coniurationis commentarium* (1478) (ch. 5). The four main chapters provide an in-depth examination of each work, from a historical, stylistic, and critical perspective, illustrating the circumstances of compositions, the influence of the classical legacy on the texts and the process of imitation performed by the authors. This textual analysis shows the political perspectives that inform these works and the narrative strategies adopted by the humanists to represent the historical events and deal with the burning issue of conspiracies.

The final chapter (Conclusions), as a comparative study, traces the overall evolution of the issue of conspiracies in humanist literature and points out the recurring patterns, narrative approaches and political angles that characterize the literary transfiguration of this topic. These texts reveal the growth of a new princely ideology in that period and unveil the significant interplay between historiographical, political, and literary elements in shaping this aspect of political thought, allowing us to trace the development of a blossoming theory of statecraft that had a significant influence also on the idea of modern state. The texts are published in the *Appendix* of the thesis and are followed by apparatuses which illustrate thoroughly the classical models used by the authors. The texts and apparatuses act as a support for the critical study in the preceding chapters.

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‘Ex hac tanta rerum commutatione saepe ego
de humanae fortunae instabilitate sum admonitus…’

Poliziano, *Coniurationis commentarium*

CHAPTER I

Introduction

1. Fifteenth-century literature on conspiracies: a thematic and political genre

This study investigates fifteenth-century Italian humanist literature that deals with the topic of conspiracy, focusing on the most important texts that contain accounts of political plots. This literary output, which has never been identified and systematically analysed so far, consists of texts belonging to different literary genres and all devoted to this specific political issue. This strand of works enjoyed a considerable diffusion in the second half of the *Quattrocento*, when the development of this literary theme proves to be closely connected with both the emergence of a centralized political ideology in most Italian states and, from a cultural point of view, the growing centrality of narrative of contemporary history as the linchpin of political literature. This critical study provides for the first time a comprehensive and thorough examination of this multifaceted *corpus* of texts, focusing on the most important works, which represent significant case studies and allow us to trace the evolution of the issue of political plots throughout humanist literature, across different rhetorical genres, political centres and historical phases.

In particular, specific attention has to be paid to the prominent role played by the classical legacy in these texts and to the process of imitation performed by the authors. The employment of both traditional genres and specific classical sources reveals a sophisticated and complex process of reworking of manifold literary elements that affects multiple textual aspects and involves classical symbols, narrative techniques, stylistic tools, and interpretative categories of political phenomena. The multiform operation of recasting classical *auctoritates*, typical of humanist culture, in this strand of literature matches and, at the same time, underpins the political and ideological

perspectives that underlie all the texts. As we shall see, the interplay between political and rhetorical elements takes different shapes according to the specific literary genres used and, from a political perspective, turns out to reflect the historical background and the ideological standpoint of each work.

The significant expansion of this monographic literature after the middle of the fifteenth century has to be contextualized in the historical scenario of this period, when many conspiracies took place in the Italian states, so that this epoch can be rightly defined as the 'age of conspiracies'. This periodization has been coined by Riccardo Fubini to label the precise time span between the 60s and 70s of the century and it is based on historical evidence.[1] However, this categorization can also be considered from a literary perspective, since it is in the second half of the *Quattrocento* that a considerable number of works on contemporary conspiracies were composed. Hence, the more restricted 'historical periodization', which defines the years between 1464 and 1478 as 'età delle congiure', can be extended to the realm of literature and, in this case, to the whole of the second half of the century, so as to encompass the parallel widespread production of several literary texts on this issue. This broader 'literary periodization', in particular, accounts for the numerous works that deal with Stefano Porcari's plot against pope Nicholas V in 1453, an historical episode that attracted the interest of several humanists and intellectuals.

This study is based on extensive research into the whole of fifteenth-century humanist literature related to this political topic. Thanks to this wider survey, it has been possible to identify the most significant works, which can be regarded as milestones in the development of this particular kind of literature during the Renaissance and, therefore, have been selected and examined as case studies (all other texts are also

[1] R. FUBINI, 'L'Età delle congiure: i rapporti tra Firenze e Milano dal tempo di Piero a quello di Lorenzo de' Medici (1464-1478)', in ID., *Italia quattrocentesca: politica e diplomazia all'età di Lorenzo de' Medici* (Milano: Franco Angeli, 1994), pp. 220-252.

considered as a source for comparative analysis). This thorough critical investigation focuses on four texts: Orazio Romano's epic poem *Porcaria* and Leon Battista Alberti's epistle *Porcaria coniuratio*, both written in 1453 and devoted to Stefano Porcari's conspiracy against pope Nicholas V of the same year; Giovanni Pontano's *De bello Neapolitano* (1465-1503), the historiographical work on the 'first conspiracy of the barons' (1459-1465) against Ferdinando of Aragon, king of Naples, which includes also the narrative of the war that followed the barons' rebellion and was composed by the humanist through a long process of revision, from 1465 to his death, in 1503; and finally Angelo Poliziano's *Coniurationis commentarium*, the famous literary account of the Pazzi conspiracy written immediately after the attack against Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici, in 1478, a refined literary narration that was the cornerstone of pro-Medici propaganda and can be regarded as a climax in the trajectory of humanistic literature on plots.[2]

These texts belong to different genres and sub-genres (epic poetry, epistolography, historiography, etc.) and, although all of them retain a historical core, they can be ascribed to various literary forms, revealing also, in some cases, the hybrid nature of most fifteenth-century literature in terms of the rhetorical canon. Some of the main features that closely connect all these different works allow us to classify them in a consistent literary category: these traits are their monographic character; the secular, political approach in dealing with historical matters; and, most of all, the strong thematic connection represented by the subject, that is the narrative of a recent conspiracy. For this reason, it is possible to coherently define this literary output as a 'thematic' genre: a monographic literature on a specific theme which enjoyed remarkable fortune in a precise chronological period and is informed by a distinctly

[2] Extensive bibliography on these works is provided in the chapters devoted to them.

political character in the narration of crucial attempts at overthrowing systems of power. The identification of this new 'thematic' genre, based on historical and textual evidence and on an extensive critical analysis, establishes a precise literary category within Renaissance literature, in which the complex interaction between historiographical, political, and literary factors stands out as a distinctive trait. In this *corpus* of works, in particular, the narrative of history, in its different literary forms, plays a key ideological function, which turns out to be perfectly consistent with the burgeoning of the new system of political powers and ends up acquiring fundamental political overtones.

The development of this literary output in the second half of the fifteenth century is closely associated with the emergence of a new centralised political thought (or better, a partially new political thought that will also influence the groundbreaking theories of statecraft in the following century), which reflects the simultaneous process of consolidation of new autocratic governments throughout Italy. Albeit in a few cases these accounts of plots cannot be directly traced back to the intention of celebrating and upholding the current rulers threatened by the conspiracy, in all these works a princely ideology emerges as the bedrock of the humanists' political standpoint. This politically driven narrative retains and enhances the classical interpretation of the idea of 'conspiracy' and of the word itself, which, starting from Cicero's denunciation of Catiline onwards, acquires the unavoidable negative connotation of *seditio* and *insidia*. This semantic evolution shows an irrevocable shift from the neutral meaning of 'an act of taking an oath' (especially a soldier's oath of allegiance) to the negative significance of political crime, coinciding with subversion and treachery.[3] Humanist literature

[3] On this evolution in the meaning of the term 'conspiracy' see V. E. PAGAN, *Conspiracy Narratives in Roman History* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004), p. 7; and D. QUAGLIONI, 'La congiura dei canonisti. *Coniuratio* e *conspiratio* nel commento al *Decretum* di Juan de Torquemada (1457)', in *Congiure e conflitti. L'affermazione della signoria pontificia su Roma nel Rinascimento: politica, economia e cultura*, ed. by M. Chiabò *et al*. (Roma: Roma nel Rinascimento, 2014), pp. 21-38, in which the linguistic and ideological overtones of the terminology employed is analysed from a juridical angle.

intensifies this interpretation: the image of a political regime jeopardised by the conspirators, who are seen as enemies of the state, appears as a fair and just political power, the only one able to keep the state in concord and prosperity, according to classical monarchical principles. But the analysis of the texts, as we shall see, shows that this outlook assumes more complex undertones and results in different outcomes in each work.

From a historical perspective, it is no coincidence that in the second half of the *Quattrocento*, an age characterized by many attempts at conspiracies, there had been a substantial concentration of political power in the hand of newly established leaders, not only in the kingdom of Naples with the Aragonese monarchy, but also in the *signorie* and aristocratic governments throughout Italy, and even in Florence, where, although the republican framework was officially maintained, the Medici gradually became more and more powerful and were the actual rulers of the state. This general historical transition brought about a kind of reduction in republican ideologies, which had been predominant, at least in Florence, between late 1300s and early 1400s, although they were characterized by a prominent oligarchic character and had been adapted to the contemporary historical situation of a republican state committed to military expansion.[4] Moreover, as James Hankins has compellingly pointed out, the distinction between republican and monarchic government in the humanist age does not have to be interpreted as strictly as it was in the past years in relation to Baron's theories on 'civic

[4] J. HANKINS, 'Humanism and the Origins of Modern Political Thought', in J. Kraye, *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 118-141: 129.

humanism'.[5] It is true that a contraposition between these two political forms was perceived and often expressed by humanists, especially with regard to the conflict between Florence and Milan in the early *Quattrocento*, which produced very well-known pieces of literature (such as the famous controversy between Poggio Bracciolini and Guarino Veronese, just to mention one of these).[6] Nevertheless the eulogy of the republic as the fairest form of government was not always grounded on an institutional basis and therefore was considered neither in rigid opposition to monarchic rule, nor in relation with the disapproval of it as illegitimate. Moreover, republican governments were essentially oligarchic and in this scenario the main dichotomy became that between a rightful and a despotic rule (although also the contrast between a just government and tyranny was destined to evolve into a more intricate and ambiguous contraposition).[7] As Quentin Skinner also underlined, humanists were not much concerned about 'constitutional arrangements',[8] rather the central pillars of their political thought became the human sphere, in particular human virtues, which were

[5] See in particular H. BARON, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), and now the important studies by James Hankins: J. HANKINS, 'The "Baron Thesis" after Forty Years and Some Recent Studies of Leonardo Bruni', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 56, 2 (1995), pp. 309-338; ID., 'Rhetoric, History and Ideology: The Civic Panegyrics of Leonardo Bruni', in *Renaissance Civic Humanism: Reappraisals and Reflections*, ed. by James Hankins (New York: Cambridge University Press), 2000, pp. 143-178 (see also the whole collection of essays); ID., 'Exclusivist Republicanism and the Non-Monarchical Republic', *Political Theory*, 38, 4 (2010), pp. 452-482; see also ID., 'Machiavelli, Civic Humanism and the Humanist Politics of Virtue', *Italian culture*, 23, 2 (2014), pp. 98-109; and A. GRAFTON, 'Humanism and Political Theory', in *The Cambridge History of Political Thought 1450-1700*, ed. by J. Burns (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 7-24.

[6] On these political ideologies in the humanist age see the classic studies: N. RUBINSTEIN, 'Le dottrine politiche nel Rinascimento', in *Il Rinascimento. Interpretazioni e problemi*, ed. by M. B. Hall and E. Garin (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1983), pp. 183-237; and also Q. SKINNER, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), vol. I; M. PASTORE STOCCHI, 'Il pensiero politico degli umanisti', in ID., *Pagine di storia dell'Umanesimo italiano* (Milano: Franco Angeli, 2014), pp. 26-84; HANKINS, 'Humanism'. On the famous controversy between Poggio and Guarino on Scipio and Caesar see D. CANFORA, *La controversia di Poggio Bracciolini e Guarino Veronese* (Firenze: Olschki, 2001); G. CREVATIN, 'La politica e la retorica. Poggio e la controversia su Cesare e Scipione. Con una nuova edizione della lettera a Scipione Mainenti', in *Poggio Bracciolini. Nel VI centenario della nascita* (Firenze: Sansoni, 1982), pp. 280-342.

[7] On the issue of tyranny see also D. QUAGLIONI, *Politica e diritto nel Trecento italiano. Il 'De tyranno' di Bartolo da Sassoferrato* (Firenze: Olschki, 1983); and ID. 'L'iniquo diritto. "Regimen regis" e "ius regis" nell'esegesi di I Sam. 8, 11-17 e negli "specula principum" del tardo Medioevo', in *Specula principum*, ed. by A. De Benedictis (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1999), pp. 209-242.

[8] Q. SKINNER, *Visions of Politics.* II. *Renaissance Virtues* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 123.

regarded as the main attributes able to legitimize political power (even papal power) and were seen in close connection with the ancient philosophical tradition.

This complex and gradual process led to the affirmation of a new idea of secular and 'individualized' authority, which mainly coincided with the figure of the prince, or more often with his equivalent and more pristine image of the *pater patriae*. This highly verticalised system is rooted in a political ideology based on the management of consensus and, most of all, on the virtuous nature of the leader. Thanks to the recovery of classical sources that deal with monarchical theory, in particularly Greek *auctoritates* such as Isocrates, Xenophon and Plutarch,[9] this new political thought accommodated a pragmatic view informed by a personalistic idea of power. This approach emerged, for example, in the evolution in the distinction between monarch and tyrant, which is no longer established on juridical criteria, but on the exercise and display of personal virtues by the ruler.[10] Thus, in this political scenario, the idea of tyranny somehow lost its authentic significance and remained relevant only in relation to denunciation of attacks against established governments: as we shall illustrate, in the texts on conspiracies, the image of the tyrant who jeopardizes the state is now the plotter, in light of a propagandistic standpoint that places the political reflection on a moral ground.

So, although early fifteenth-century republican ideologies were already marked by an ambiguous and proto-centralised character, it is around the middle of the *Quattrocento* that autocratic governments consolidated their authority still more and, consequently,

[9] On the re-discovery of Isocrates's work by humanists see L. GUALDO ROSA, *La fede nella 'Paideia': aspetti della fortuna europea di Isocrate nei secoli XV e XVI* (Roma: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, 1984), and now G. ALBANESE, 'L'esordio della trattatistica "de principe" alla corte aragonese: l'inedito "Super Isocrate" di Bartolomeo Facio', in *Principi prima del Principe*, ed. by L. Geri, *Studi (e Testi) Italiani*, 29 (2012), pp. 59-115. On Plutarch see G. RESTA, *Le epitomi di Plutarco nel Quattrocento* (Padova: Antenore, 1962), and M. PADE, *The Reception of Plutarch's 'Lives' in Fifteenth-century Italy* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, University of Copenhagen, 2007). For the contribution made by Francesco Filelfo to the translation and re-appropriation of these Greek authors within the gradual consolidation of monarchical political thought see G. RESTA, 'Francesco Filelfo tra Bisanzio e Roma', in *Francesco Filelfo nel quinto centenario della morte*. Atti del XVII Convegno di studi maceratesi (Tolentino, 27-30 settembre 1981) (Padova: Antenore, 1986), pp. 1-60: 24-25.

[10] HANKINS, 'Humanism', p. 128

had to face new problems of legitimacy and needed to change their cultural politics in order to maintain their power and stability. In the scenario of political equilibrium (though always unstable) brought by the peace of Lodi in 1453,[11] Italian states had to focus more on internal threats, rather than on external conflicts, and, in doing so, they also aimed to spread their powerful image to the outside. Thus, as in the first half of the century (but now with different purposes and outcomes), the humanists' literary activity contributed to creating and strengthening a cultural ideology in support of political rulers, in accordance with the new political situation and, therefore, paying more attention to the issues related to maintaining power rather than conquering it. This fruitful interaction between literature and politics comes to light clearly in two particular literary genres that developed considerably in this period: on the one hand, the monographic works devoted to conspiracies, texts focused on events that had put in danger the political solidity of the state and were intended to support centralized governments; on the other hand, the political treatises *de principe*, aimed at defining the ideal features of the 'perfect prince' and establishing the fundamental ethical and political values for social relationships. As we shall see, these two literary outputs are informed by the same political perspective and are linked by significant connections. In particular, the need for legitimacy by new governments stands out as an even more crucial implication in literature on plots, since it originates from an actual crisis in states and deals with a concrete threat addressed to a specific ruler.

Needless to say, a princely political theory had already played a decisive part in the production of medieval *specula principis*, but it is only in the later *Quattrocento* that this humanist literature *de principe* reached a kind of peak, before developing with

[11] For the impact of the peace of Lodi as a turning point in the political scenario and a factor that led to the development of a new political ideology see in particular RUBINSTEIN, 'Italian Political Thought, 1450-1539', in *The Cambridge History*, pp. 30-66: 30; G. M. CAPPELLI, *Introduzione* a GIOVANNI PONTANO, *De Principe*, ed. by G. M. Cappelli (Roma: Salerno Editrice, 2003), pp. XXXV-XXXVII.

highly original results in Machiavelli's work: some of the most prominent treatises produced in this period are Giovanni Pontano's *De Principe* (1465); Bartolomeo Platina's homonymous work (1470), which was re-worked later in the *De optimo cive* with a less explicit princely perspective and was dedicated to Lorenzo de' Medici; Diomede Carafa's *Memoriale sui doveri del principe* (1476), Francesco Patrizi's *De regno et regis institutione* (1484); and Iuniano Maio's *De Maiestate* (1492).[12] The development of the genre of mirror-for-princes works in the second half of the *Quattrocento* has been traced back to the necessity for tenets on which new established rulers could found their sovereignty.[13] Now, thanks to the identification of a substantial group of literary texts on conspiracies and to the analysis of their recurrent features and aims, we can put these works into relation with the simultaneous diffusion of political treatises on princely theory and, more precisely, to the political perspectives and purposes that underlie them. The growth of this 'thematic genre' is indeed directly connected with the same crucial issue of the creation and organization of political unity and the containment of opposition.

In both works on conspiracies and treatises *de principe*, the role played by the classical legacy is fundamental, not only from a literary perspective, but also from an

[12] Bibliography in this field is huge: see at least the classic studies by F. GILBERT, 'The Humanist Concept of the Prince and The Prince of Machiavelli', in ID., *History: Choice and Commitment* (Cambridge - London, Belknap Press, Harvard University Press, 1977), pp. 91-114, and SKINNER, *The Foundations*, vol. I, in particular the chapter 'The age of princes', pp. 113-138; see also more specific studies by HANKINS, 'Machiavelli, Civic Humanism', and ALBANESE, 'L'esordio'. Important contributions on humanist literature *de principe* are published as introductory essays to fundamental editions of texts: G. FERRAÙ, *Introduzione a* Bartholomei Platinae *De principe*, ed. by G. Ferraù (Messina: Il Vespro, 1979), pp. 5-33; CAPPELLI, *Introduzione*, pp. XI-LX; and for the relationship between princely ideology and official historiography see G. RESTA, *Introduzione a* Antonii Panhormitae *Liber rerum gestarum Ferdinandi regis*, ed. by G. Resta (Palermo: Centro di studi filologici e linguistici siciliani, 1968), pp. 5-58. Carafa's text is published in T. PERSICO, *Diomede Carafa, uomo di stato e scrittore del XV secolo. Con un frammento originale dei Doveri del Principe* (Napoli: Luigi Pierro libraio editore, 1899) pp. 261-296, while Maio's work is in GIUNIANO MAIO, *De maiestate*, ed. by F. Gaeta, (Bologna: Commissione per i testi di lingua, 1956). On Platina's two works see N. RUBINSTEIN, 'The *De optimo cive* and the *De principe* by Bartolomeo Platina', in ID., *Studies in Italian History in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. by G. Ciappelli (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2004), pp. 259-272.

[13] See CAPPELLI, *Introduction*, pp. XXXV-XXXVII; and RUBINSTEIN, 'Italian Political Thought', pp. 30-4, and M. S. SAPEGNO, 'Il trattato politico e utopico', in *Letteratura Italiana*, dir. Asor Rosa, 3, II (Torino: Einaudi, 1984), pp. 985-998.

ideological and political point of view. If the contribution made by classical and medieval sources to humanist mirror-for-princes texts has been more extensively investigated,[14] now, building on this scholarship, this study examines thoroughly the function of classical models in this parallel, although more variegated, strand of literature. Moreover, the wide-ranging recovery of the classical tradition was not only at the heart of the gradual construction and of humanist political thought and but also at the basis of the foundation of the fifteenth-century canon of historiography: a multifaceted genre of writing that acquired polychrome forms and enjoyed remarkable success in the Renaissance age, becoming deeply intertwined with political overtones and purposes. The intense critical fifteenth-century debate about the 'theory of historiography' and the classical models to be followed by humanists was carried out in a number of different texts, from Guarino Veronese's *De historiae conscribendae forma* (1446) to Poliziano's *Praefatio in Suetoni expositionem* (1482), to the ultimate comprehensive treatise on the *ars historica* composed at the end of the century by Giovanni Pontano, the *Actius*.[15] This lively discussion resulted in the gradual advancement of this genre towards modern historiographical forms in the following century. In general, specific attention has been paid by scholars to the modes of re-appropriation and re-working of classical models by humanist historians: among Latin *auctoritates*, Livy and Sallust emerge as main sources (followed by Caesar, Tacitus, and

[14] See the editions mentioned in note 12. One of the major classic studies on Medieval political theory is still E. H. KANTOROWICZ, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957).

[15] Guarino's text is published in M. REGOLIOSI, 'Riflessioni umanistiche sullo "scrivere storia"', *Rinascimento*, 31 (1991), pp. 3-37; Poliziano's *Praefatio* is published in *Angeli Politiani Opera quae quidem extitere hactenus omnia*, Basileae, apud Nicolaum Episcopium Juniorem, 1553 [anastatic reproduction: ANGELUS POLITIANUS, *Opera omnia (scripta in editione Basilensi anno MDLIII collecta)*, ed. by Ida Maïer (Torino: Bottega d'Erasmo, 1971)], pp. 499-506: on the text see V. FERA, 'La *Praefatio in Suetoni expositionem* del Poliziano', in *Laurentia Laurus, per Mario Martelli*, ed. by F. Bausi e V. Fera (Messina: Centro interdipartimentale di Studi Umanistici, 2004), pp. 139-160. Pontano's *Actius* is published in GIOVANNI PONTANO, *I dialoghi*, ed. by C. Previtera (Firenze: Sansoni, 1943), pp. 121-239; on his treatise see L. MONTI SABIA, *Pontano e la storia. Dal* De bello Neapolitano *all'*Actius (Roma: Bulzoni, 1995).

by more 'hybrid' forms of historical writings, such as works by Suetonius and Valerius Maximus); while, among Greek authors, gradually rediscovered throughout the century, a crucial position is taken by Lucian of Samosata, as a theoretical model, and Thucydides, as the chief prototype of political historiography.[16]

In a rough classification, humanist historical writing can be divided into three main sub-genres. The most important is the *historia*, generally devoted to the history of a city and mainly inspired by Livy (e.g. Leonardo Bruni's *Historiae Florentini populi*, whose composition started in 1415). This can be divided into different sub-genres, such as commentaries, or monographic works which focus on specific historical events and are mostly related to the model of Sallust, the prototype of monographic history.[17] Alongside *historia* we must place biographical history, represented by works which recall and celebrate the *gesta* of famous figures: this kind of writing had its main area of development in Neapolitan humanism and is best represented by Lorenzo Valla's *De gestis Ferdinandi regis* (1444-145), Bartolomeo Facio's *Rerum gestarum Alphonsi regis libri* (1456) and Antonio Panormita's unfinished *Liber rerum gestarum Ferdinandi regis* (1471).[18] Finally, the third main literary category, although not purely

[16] On humanist historiography and its models see in particular R. BLACK, 'The New Laws of History', *Renaissance studies*¸ 1, 1 (1987), pp. 126-156; REGOLIOSI, 'Riflessioni'; G. ALBANESE, 'A redescoberta dos historiadores antigos no Humanismo e o nascimento da historiografia moderna: Valla, Facio e Pontano na corte napolitana dos reis de Aragao', in *Atti del Convegno Internazionale Antigos e Modernos: diálogos sobre a (escrita da) história* (Universidade de Sao Paulo do Brazil, 2-7 settembre 2007), ed. by F. Murari Pires (São Paulo: Alameda Casa Editorial, 2009), pp. 277-329. On Livy, see G. BILLANOVICH, *Tradizione e fortuna di Livio tra Medioevo e Umanesimo* (Padova: Antenore, 1981); on Caesar see *Caesar, Gaius Julius*, in *Catalogus Translationum et Commentariorum: Mediaeval and Renaissance Latin Translations and Commentaries*, III, ed. by F. F. Cranz and P. O. Kristeller, (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1976), pp. 87-139. In general on Italian Renaissance historiography see E. COCHRANE, *Historians and Historiography in the Italian Renaissance* (Chicago-London: University of Chicago Press, 1981); and the broader study on the European area A. GRAFTON, *What Was History? The Art of History in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

[17] The historical genre of humanist *commentarii* is analysed by G. IANZITI, 'Storiografia come propaganda: il caso dei *Commentarii* rinascimentali', *Società e storia*, 6 (1983), pp. 909-918; ID., 'I *Commentarii*: appunti per la storia di un genere storiografico quattrocentesco', *Archivio Storico Italiano*, CL, 1992, pp. 1029-1063.

[18] On these works see chapter IV. The editions of the texts are LORENZO VALLA, *Gesta Ferdinandi regis Aragonum*, ed. by O. Besomi (Padova: Antenore, 1973); BARTOLOMEO FACIO, *Rerum gestarum Alfonsi regis libri*, ed. by D. Pietragalla (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2004); PANHORMITAE *Liber rerum*

historiographical, is historical-epic poetry that deals with contemporary events, such as Francesco Filelfo's *Sphortias*:[19] a genre whose diffusion was closely related to its clear political undertones and its explicit propagandistic connotations.

Among the classical models, a prominent position in Medieval and Renaissance literature is occupied by Sallust's work, which was pivotal not only in the realm of historical writing, but also in the elaboration of political views, especially those concerning the issue of 'internal' political conflict.[20] Needless to say, this *auctoritas* had a considerable influence also on the expansion of fifteenth-century literature on political plots. In order to better contextualize the development of this output and analyse the particular use of the model of Sallust in it, it is also necessary to consider briefly the reception of this prominent model in the early *Quattrocento*, with a specific focus on Florentine Humanism, which had a considerable impact on the growth of historical and political literature in the following decades. Already in the first half of the fifteenth century, Sallust was one of the foremost sources on which Florentine intellectuals grounded their cultural and political operation aimed at underpinning Florence's republican government and its foreign policies. From this perspective, Florence was represented as the heir and guardian of the ancient values of the Roman republic. Coluccio Salutati, in particular, demonstrated that the foundation of Florence was carried out during the republican age, rejecting the medieval legend that claimed that it

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gestarum Ferdinandi regis. See also GIOVANNI ALBINO, *De gestis regum Neapolitanorum ab Aragonia qui extant libri quatuor* (Napoli: apud Iosephum Cacchium, 1589); for the *De bello Neapolitano* see *infra*. On Facio's work: G. ALBANESE, *Studi su Bartolomeo Facio* (Pisa: ETS, 2000).

[19] On Filelfo's poem see G. BOTTARI, 'La "Sphortias"', in *Francesco Filelfo*, pp. 459-493.

[20] Fundamental studies on the reception of Sallust in the Middle Ages and Renaissance are A. LA PENNA, 'Il significato di Sallustio nella storiografia e nel pensiero di Leonardo Bruni' and 'Brevi note sul tema della congiura nella storiografia moderna', in ID., *Sallustio e la 'rivoluzione' romana* (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1968), pp. 409-439; SKINNER, 'The Vocabulary of Renaissance Republicanism', in *Language and Images of Renaissance Italy* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), pp. 87-110; B. SMALLEY, 'Sallust in the Middle Ages', in *Classical Influences on European Culture. A. D. 500-1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 165-175; P. J. OSMOND, '"Princeps Historiae Romanae": Sallust in Renaissance Political Thought', *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome*, 40 (1995), pp. 101-143; EAD., 'Catiline in Fiesole and Florence: The After-Life of a Roman Conspirator', *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*, 7 (2000), pp. 3-38.

was due to Julius Caesar, and he based his statement on Sallust's *De coniuratione Catilinae*, 28. Later, in the *Invectiva in Antonium Luschum* (1403), Salutati ascribed more precisely the foundation of city to the age of Sulla, so as to highlight again and, more directly, the close and ennobling link with ancient republican Rome.[21] After Salutati, Leonardo Bruni in his *prohoemium* to the *Historiae Florentini populi libri* (whose composition began in 1415) evoked Sallust's thought to celebrate the *libertas* of Florence as a continuation of the Roman republic, though the political perspective that underlies the text conformed to the oligarchic principles at the basis of the Florentine state. The connection drawn by Bruni was aimed at showing that all states flourish and prosper under republican governments (as in the age of the city-state), while they decay if oppressed by despotic rulers (as during the imperial age of Rome):[22] a standpoint that permeates still more clearly his *Laudatio Florentinae urbis* (1403-1404) and the *Oratio in funere Iohannis Strozzae* (1428).[23] These political ideas (briefly summarized here) represent part of the fulcrum of political thought in early Florentine Humanism

[21] See R. G. WITT, 'Coluccio Salutati and the Origin of Florence', *Il pensiero politico*, 2 (1969), pp. 161-172; and OSMOND, '"Princeps"', p. 107. In the second half of the fifteenth century, Poliziano placed the foundation of Florence in the time of Augustus, claiming this theory in the second letter of the first book of his *Libro delle Epistole*, addressed to Piero de' Medici: see N. RUBINSTEIN, 'Poliziano e la questione delle origini di Firenze', in *Il Poliziano e il suo tempo.* Atti del IV Convegno internazionale di studi sul Rinascimento, Firenze, Palazzo Strozzi, 23-26 settembre 1954 (Firenze: Sansoni, 1957), pp. 101-110 (Rubinstein underlined the political implications that this new theory had for the legitimacy of government of the city, ruled by the Medici and far from the republican ideology that had been predominant in early *Quattrocento*). For the text of the letter, see A. POLIZIANO, *Letters*, books I-IV, ed. by S. Butler, I Tatti Renaissance Library, 21 (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), I, pp. 8-17.

[22] This thought is emblematically shown by the simile in the *prohoemium* of the *Historiae*, which represents the empire as a huge tree that 'suffocates' new plants: 'ut enim ingentes arbores novellis plantis iuxta surgentibus officere solent, nec ut altius crescant permittere, sic romanae urbis moles sua magnitudine vicinitatem premens, nullam Italiae civitatem maiorem in modum crescere patiebatur'. LEONARDO BRUNI, *History of the Florentine People*, edited and translated by J. Hankins and D. J. Bradley (Cambridge, Massachusetts; London: Harvard University Press, 2001-2007). The main source is Sall. *Cat*. 7: 'Nam regibus boni quam mali suspectiores sunt semperque iis aliena virtus formidulosa est. Sed civitas incredibile memoratu est adepta libertate quantum brevi creverit: tanta cupido gloriae incesserat', a passage that is often quoted during the humanist period as a symbol of anti-tyrannical thought. On Bruni's works: G. IANZITI, *Writing History in Renaissance Italy: Leonardo Bruni and the Uses of the Past* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press, 2012).

[23] The *Laudatio* is published in LEONARDO BRUNI, *Laudatio florentine urbis*, ed. by S. U. Baldassarri (Firenze: Sismel-Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2000); the *Oratio* is published in ID., *Opere letterarie e politiche*, ed. by P. Viti (Torino: UTET, 1996), pp. 720-721. On the influence of Sallust in Bruni's works see LA PENNA, 'Il significato', pp. 432-439; and OSMOND, '"Princeps"', pp. 108-110. See HANKINS, 'The "Baron Thesis"'; and 'Rhetoric'.

and, in the following years, were retrieved and elaborated by other humanists who used even more extensively the model of Sallust, such as Poggio Bracciolini in his *Historiae Florentinae* (1459) and in the famous controversy with Guarino on Caesar and Scipio (1435), already mentioned.[24] Sallust was a prominent model also in Matteo Palmieri's *De captivitate Pisorum liber* (1448), the account of the conflict between Florence and Pisa, in which the Latin historian is the source used to strengthen the celebration of the *concordia civium* of the Florentine republic against the attempts at rebellion.[25]

Thus in the first half of the fifteenth century, although a specific literature on conspiracies had still to appear, many historical and political texts celebrated the value of political unity and condemned conflicts and subversion, mostly on the basis of Sallust's work and the ideology put forth in it. However, it is only around the middle of the century that the re-appropriation of the Latin historian became complete and affected not only ideological aspects, but also the literary dimension and, therefore, gave birth to the specific strand of monographic literature specifically devoted to political plots. This was also due to a broader gradual change in the historical and cultural background, where political ideas deriving from the classical republican tradition were evoked by the humanists only to denounce the threat coming from seditions. Now these attempts at subverting the political *status quo* are often represented in literature as provoked by the corruption and amorality of plotters, usually described with the traits of Sallust's Catiline. Consequently the legacy of the classical tradition relating to this topic resulted in a new, or more precisely 'renewed', monographic genre of literary texts on contemporary conspiracies (like the *De coniuratione Catilinae* itself). Nevertheless, alongside the predictable source of Sallust, which takes specific

[24] Leonardo Bruni, Poggio Bracciolini, *Storie Fiorentine*, introduction by E. Garin (Arezzo: Biblioteca della città, 1984). For the controversy between Poggio and Guarino see *supra*.
[25] On Palmieri's historical work see OSMOND, '"Princeps"', p. 110; the text is published in *Matthei Palmerii De captivitate Pisarum liber*, ed. by Gino Scaramella, in *Rerum Italicarum scriptores* (Città di Castello: S. Lapi, 1904), vol. 19, part 2.

forms and results in different outcomes in each work, manifold classical models are employed in accordance with the specific kind of writing. All texts display a complex process of *imitation* that affects structural, thematic, stylistic and ideological aspects and that will be specifically analysed in the following chapters.[26]

Despite the conflation of multiple sources and the adoption of various literary genres, the cornerstone of all these texts is history. This emerges in both the use of classical historical *auctoritates* and the historiographical and political interpretation of the episodes. The growth of a specific strand of humanist political historiography, as the foremost component of fifteenth-century historical writing, has been pointed out and extensively illustrated by scholars with regard to the cultural areas of Florence, at least for the first half of the century, Milan and Naples.[27] It is within the political systems of the princely governments of Naples and Milan that a particular genre of official political historiography was brought forth. This output is the expression of a well-articulated operation of cultural politics which involved the most distinguished intellectuals, who were appointed as 'official' historians, and were committed to providing new rulers with an authoritative support.[28] Needless to say, this political historiography was closely

[26] On imitation in the Renaissance see in particular M. MCLAUGHLIN, *Literary Imitation in the Italian Renaissance: The Theory and Practice of Literary Imitation in Italy from Dante to Bembo* (Oxford: Clarendon press, 1995), and N. GARDINI, *Le umane parole: l'imitazione nella lirica europea del Rinascimento da Bembo a Ben Jonson* (Milano: Mondadori, 1997).

[27] On Florentine historiography and its development in the sixteenth century: F. GILBERT, 'The Theory and Practice of History in the Fifteenth Century', in ID., *Machiavelli and Guicciardini. Politics and History in Sixteenth Century Florence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), pp. 203-236. See now, IANZITI, *Writing History*. On Milanese political historiography the fundamental study is G. IANZITI, *Humanistic Historiography under the Sforzas. Politics and Propaganda in 15th Century Milan* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988); while on Neapolitan official historiography see in particular J. H. BENTLEY, *Politics and Culture in Renaissance Naples* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987) and G. FERRAÙ, *Il tessitore di Antequera. Storiografia umanistica meridionale* (Roma: Istituto storico italiano per il MedioEvo, 2001). On humanist historiography in general see also the studies mentioned in footnote 16 and M. MIGLIO, *Storiografia pontificia del Quattrocento* (Bologna: Patron, 1975); F. TATEO, *I miti della storiografia umanistica* (Roma: Bulzoni, 1990); R. FUBINI, *L'Umanesimo italiano e i suoi storici. Origini rinascimentali-critica moderna* (Milano: Angeli, 2001); ID. *Storiografia dell'Umanesimo in Italia da Leonardo Bruni ad Annio da Viterbo* (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2003).

[28] On Neapolitan works see chapter IV on Pontano. For official historiography see G. FERRAÙ, 'La storiografia', in *Lo spazio letterario del Medioevo* 1. *Il Medioevo latino*, III, *La ricezione del testo*, ed. by G. Cavallo, C. Leonardi, E. Menestò (Roma: Salerno Editrice, 1995), pp. 661-696. IANZITI, *Humanistic Historiography*, claimed that Neapolitan historiography influenced works produced in Northen Italy.

associated with eulogistic and propagandistic aims, but it was also grounded on well-thought out historiographical tenets that were discussed and gradually established through the lively fifteenth-century debate on the theory and practice of historiography. It is no coincidence that the production of this political historiography within Neapolitan Humanism is interconnected with the significant development, in the very same area, of a theoretical literature *de principe* (from the first 'hybrid' work by Bartolomeo Facio, who wrote in 1444 the rhetorical triptych *Super Isocrate*, to more canonical treatises).[29] Both these literary strands were intended to enhance monarchs' authority and to define an ideal rule by looking at the concrete political issues of the kingdom. Thus, the strong relationship between politics and historiography emerges as one of the distinctive trait of fifteenth-century literature, not only in the area of pure historical writing, but also in other literary texts (treatises, poems, epistle, dialogues etc.), and in particular in the multiform monographic genre of literature on conspiracies.

As we shall see at length, the close relationship between literature *de principe* and texts on plots appears clearly if we consider Giovanni Pontano's work. In 1465 he wrote the *De principe* and in the very same year started to compose the *De bello Neapolitano*, texts that, if read in conjunction, reveal the humanist's intention to establish a coherent system of values for an ideal monarchy. But the crucial implications that the issue of conspiracy had in the literary debate on princely power will emerge clearly also in the following century in Machiavelli's thought. In his view, the matter of political subversion is closely linked to the building of political consensus and the management of power. In particular, as is well known, he focused on this political subject in his long chapter *Delle congiure* in the *Discorsi sulla prima deca di Tito Livio* (III, 6), which can be considered a comprehensive treatise on plots. Significantly, this chapter also had an

[29] Facio's work consists of three orations, two eulogies of king Alfonso and his son Ferdinando, and the translation into the vernacular of Isocrate's *Ad Nicoclem*; the texts are preserved in the manuscript of the University Library in Seville (ms. 443) and are edited now in ALBANESE, 'L'esordio', pp. 59-115.

independent diffusion in manuscripts and printed editions throughout Europe in the sixteenth century, a circulation that proves the importance of this issue not only in Machiavelli's work, but also in Renaissance European political thought. In particular, it was published in Paris in 1575 with the title *Traité des conjurations*, along with the *Histoire de la conjuration de Catiline*.[30] Moreover, specific attention to this topic is paid in chapter XIX of *Il Principe*, and in the *Istorie Fiorentine*, where Machiavelli narrates many conspiracies that took place in Italy.

Although there has been more research on Machiavelli's interest in this matter,[31] the parallel and crucial correlation between political plots and the issues concerning princely rule within fifteenth-century literature has been almost completely neglected by critics so far. Thus, the analysis of these monographic works in the *Quattrocento* lays the ground for a more in-depth investigation on the relationship between Machiavelli's work and humanist literature. In particular, he almost certainly knew most of these texts on plots. If it is true that he mainly developed his reflections on the topic of conspiracy as a substantial theorization (which was never produced in the humanist age), this is based on concrete historical *exempla* that were mainly provided by historical narratives of the previous centuries, along with classical sources; and it is from fifteenth-century texts that he also drew information in order to write the frequent accounts of contemporary political plots included in his *Storie fiorentine*. Humanist political thought has been too often cursorily looked at as the expression of a naive and merely ethically-

[30] *Traité des conjurations extraict du troisième livre des Discours*, in *Histoire de la conjuration de Catiline. Ceux qui usurperont le glaive periront par le glaive*, trad. J. Chomedey (Paris: pour Abel L'Angelier, 1575). The autonomous circulation of this chapter is proved by some manuscript copies in the Archivio di Stato in Florence, *Dieci di Balia*, *Carteggio*, Resp. 119, and in the Biblioteca Nazionale di Firenze, *Palatini* 1104: cfr. E. FASANO GUARINI, 'Congiure "contro alla patria" e congiure "contro ad uno principe" nell'opera di Niccolò Machiavelli', in EAD. *Repubbliche e principi* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2010), pp. 155-207: 158.

[31] See FASANO GUARINI, 'Congiure', pp. 155-207; NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI, *Sulle congiure*, introduzione, note, commento e cura editoriale di Alessandro Campi (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2014). On the topic of social conflict, but not on conspiracies: GABRIELE PEDULLÀ, *Machiavelli in tumulto: conquista, cittadinanza e conflitto nei 'Discorsi sopra la prima deca di Tito Livio'* (Roma: Bulzoni, 2011).

based ideological system, too 'immature' in comparison with the theorizations of the following century. But recently this view has been partially reconsidered[32] and now the extensive critical study of this literary *corpus* can shed new light on humanist political theory, presenting it in its actual features, aims, contradictions and innovations.

Despite the significant expansion of fifteenth-century literature on conspiracies, only a few studies have addressed the subject from the partial angle of the reception of the model of Sallust, but no systematic study on this output has been produced.[33] Only texts related to Porcari's conspiracy have received more attention: in particular, Anna Modigliani in 2013 devoted a monographic study to this event, examining carefully documents and sources from a historical perspective; and, one year later, a collection of contributions on political conflicts and plots in (or related to) fifteenth-century Rome was published.[34] This previous research highlights the centrality of these works in the political history of the *Quattrocento* and shows that there is a need for new studies which address the subject considering also literary and cultural aspects, with the purpose of providing a comprehensive critical analysis of the ideological perspectives in the texts as interconnected with the rhetorical tools employed to deal with such a burning historical issue. Thus, this thesis broadens the angle of analysis investigating all components which contribute to framing this complex output, and exploring the interplay between historical, political, literary, and stylistic elements.

[32] In particular see PASTORE STOCCHI, 'Il pensiero politico', pp. 26-84.

[33] The first brief reflections on this matter were provided by LA PENNA; and more recently Patricia Osmond has conducted research on the role of Sallust in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, with specific attention to the figure of Catiline: OSMOND, '"Princeps"', and EAD., 'Catiline in Fiesole'. The only more comprehensive study on the topic of conspiracy in literature has been devoted to classical authors: PAGAN, *Conspiracy*.

[34] A. MODIGLIANI, *Congiurare all'antica. Stefano Porcari, Niccolò V, Roma 1453* (Roma: Roma nel Rinascimento, 2013); *Congiure e conflitti*.

2. The literary works on political plots: a multifaceted *corpus*

Besides the most important texts selected as case studies in this thesis, a considerable number of monographic works on the topic of conspiracy were composed in the same period throughout Italy, disclosing the remarkable fortune enjoyed by this kind of literature (not to mention the numerous narratives of these events included in more general historiographical works, which, however, are not strictly relevant to the diffusion of this specific 'thematic' genre).

In particular, in 1453, Stefano Porcari's attempt at overthrowing papal government attracted the interest of several intellectuals and can be regarded as the event that inaugurated to this literary output. In addition to Alberti and Orazio Romano's works, the conspiracy was narrated in other literary works (as well as in historical documents): the *De coniuratione Porcaria* (1453 ca.),[35] a dialogue by the jurist Pietro Godi, mainly focused on the issue of the legitimacy of ecclesiastical power; an epistle written some years after the plot, in 1459, by Alamanno Rinuccini, the famous Florentine humanist who was an upholder of republican tenets and, therefore, interpreted the events from this specific political outlook, producing the only text in this *corpus* which sympathizes with the conspirator;[36] and the *Conformatio Curiae Romanae* (1453 ca.), an invective in hexameters composed by Giuseppe Brivio and aimed at both condemning Stefano Porcari and celebrating the pope Nicolas V.[37] If we consider Orazio Romano's *Porcaria* and Brivio's poem, it is noteworthy that the poetic genre – and in particular its sub-categories of epic and eulogistic short poems – is used as the literary vehicle for dealing

[35] M. LEHNERDT, *Horatii Romani Porcaria…accedit Petri de Godis Vicentini De coniuratione Porcaria dialogus e codice vaticano erutus* (Lipsiae: in aedibus B. G. Teubneri, 1907).
[36] A. RINUCCINI, *Epistole e Orazioni*, ed. by Vito R. Giustiniani (Firenze: Olschki, 1953) pp. 39-46.
[37] The text is published in O. TOMMASINI, 'Documenti relativi a Stefano Porcari', in *Archivio della Società romana di storia patria*, 3 (1880), pp. 111-123, and now in MODIGLIANI, *Congiurare* (the dedication to Pier Candido Decembrio is published in M. MIGLIO, 'L'umanista Pietro Edo e la polemica sulla donazione di Costantino', *Bullettino dell'Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo*, 79 (1968), pp. 171-172). Cfr. M. MIGLIO, *Giuseppe Brivio*, in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, ed. by A. M. Ghisalberti, M. Pavan, F. Bartoccini e M. Caravale (Roma: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1960-) (from now on DBI), 14 (1972), pp. 355-358.

with the political issue of conspiracies, and it will be employed by other authors in the following years. More generally, as is well known, epic poetry was traditionally linked with propagandistic intentions, and this political overtone was further enhanced in the humanist age, when historical-epic poems were mostly devoted to contemporary events and focused on celebrating *signori* or princes.[38]

Another significant example is the poem *Tarentina* (1464) written by Fosco Paracleto Malvezzi, a little-known humanist bishop of Acerno.[39] This work deals with the first conspiracy of the barons against Ferdinando of Aragon and its purpose is to exculpate the king of Naples from the allegation of having murdered Giovanni Antonio Orsini, prince of Taranto, the leader of the rebel barons. Significantly, as we shall see, some elements seem to connect this poem with the *Porcaria*, which was composed about ten years earlier and could have influenced this late bizarre epic work. In particular, both have an infernal setting and rotate around the figure of a negative hero, the conspirator, on whom the title of both texts is similarly based.

The connection between poetry and the historical topic of conspiracy does not end with the *Porcaria* and the *Tarentina*. Even if this study does focus on the *Quattrocento*, it is worth mentioning that in the sixteenth century Ludovico Ariosto wrote an eclogue in the vernacular on the conspiracy plotted in Ferrara, in 1506, by Giulio and Ferrante d'Este against their brothers, the duke of Ferrara, Alfonso d'Este, and the cardinal Ippolito.[40] In Ariosto's eclogue, composed immediately after the conspiracy in 1506, the historical events are dealt with in an imaginary and poetic perspective, by means of the creation of the bucolic setting. The conspiracy is narrated through the dialogue of two shepherds, Melibeo and Tirsi, who meet in a pastoral location, and all real

[38] These issues are extensively discussed in the next chapter on Orazio Romano's poem.
[39] GIOVANNI MARTUCCI, *Un poema latino inedito del sec. XV sulla tentata restaurazione angioina* (Roma: Giovanni Balbi, 1899).
[40] The eclogue is published in L. ARIOSTO, *Le opere minori*, ed. by G. Fatini (Firenze: Sansoni, 1961), pp. 313-329. See also R. BACCHELLI, *La congiura di Don Giulio d'Este* (Milano: Mondadori, 1983[2]).

characters are called by fictional pastoral names, yet under these concealing pseudonyms it is still possible to recognize the actual identities of the historical figures.

Epic had been the main poetic vehicle for the topic of conspiracy in the fifteenth century, however bucolic poetry achieves the same stylistic results of placing the contemporary historical episode in an imaginary and distant setting, which allows the author to treat this thorny political issue. Although since the classical age the bucolic background stands for a peaceful retreat from war and civic involvement, politics, as is well known, frequently creeps into the Arcadian world. This intrusion is conventional in the literary tradition and it is amplified in fifteenth-century pastoral poetry, especially in the eclogues composed in the cultural environment of Ferrara.[41] Ariosto seems to follow this strand, since his work is totally imbued by a political dimension, though veiled by the pastoral disguise, and reveals the flattering purposes that subtend it. Ariosto's ultimate aim is to celebrate the duke of Ferrara, Alfonso, and to condemn the conspirators, whose plans are described as an attempt to put in danger the peaceful conditions that the current government has secured: a perspective that is also the keystone of fifteenth-century literature on the same topic. Thus the eclogue turns out to be to some extent connected with humanist works on plots, in terms of eulogistic aim, literary transfiguration of history, and political intents. From this perspective, Ariosto's poem and humanist texts should be regarded as works composed by committed *letterati*, who were willing to support their patron's cultural politics, especially in crucial historical situations such as threats to their power, but could also maintain a space for intellectual freedom. This autonomy emerges either in the personal way in which they decide to treat political issues, or, in some cases, in the evolution of their personal

[41] Beside Ariosto's work, another eclogue was composed on the same conspiracy in Ferrara: the author is Antonio Valtellino, chancellor of Niccolò da Correggio, who was one of the main political advisors of Alfonso d'Este. This eclogue is published in C. DIONISOTTI, 'Documenti letterari d'una congiura estense', *Civiltà moderna*, 9 (1937), pp. 327-340. On this text and, more in general, on the bucolic literature produced in the North of Italy see BACCHELLI, pp. 6, 8.

political thinking in relation to a specific historical event: for instance, some years after writing the eclogue, Ariosto would mention the conspiracy in the *Orlando furioso* (III, 60-62), presenting the episode in a less biased perspective and urging the duke to be merciful. The insistence on the concept of clemency which comes to light in the *Furioso* is another recurrent thematic element in literature devoted to conspiracies, as we shall illustrate. So, also from this point of view, Ariosto's eclogue can be placed in the tradition of monographic works related to this political issue, and, along with Machiavelli's works (in the area of prose and historical writing) it represents the sixteenth-century development of this political literature in the vernacular.

Going back to the *Quattrocento*, another historical event that contributed to the literary definition of the 'age of conspiracies' is the political plot planned in 1465-66 in Florence by Dietisalvi Neroni, Agnolo Acciaiuoli and Niccolò Soderini, against Piero de' Medici, Cosimo's son, who succeeded his father in 1464. This episode was narrated by the Florentine humanist Benedetto Colucci da Pistoia in the *De discordiis Florentinorum* in 1468:[42] the historical account results in an accolade and tribute to the Medici regime and is totally focused on eulogizing Cosimo, his son Piero and his grandson Lorenzo. One year later, in 1469, another literary work devoted to a conspiracy was composed in Ferrara: the *Commemoratione del tradimento facto verso il clarissimo et excellentissimo principe duca Borso*.[43] The text, in the vernacular, was composed by a little known humanist, Carlo di San Giorgio (called Polismagna), in order to denounce the abortive attack plotted in 1469 against Borso d'Este, duke of

[42] BENEDETTO COLUCCI, *De discordiis Florentinorum liber*, ed. by L. Mehus (Florentiae: apud Ioannem Paullum Giovannelli, 1747). Cfr. R. RISTORI, *Benedetto Colucci da Pistoia*, in DBI, 27 (1982), pp. 494-498. On this plot see chapter 3 in L. MARTINES, *La congiura dei Pazzi: intrighi politici, sangue e vendetta nella Firenze dei Medici*, translation by Nadia Cannata (Milano, Mondadori: 2005), pp. 47-56.

[43] CARLO DI SAN GIORGIO, *Commemoratione vel tractato del tradimento facto verso il clarissimo et excellentissimo principe duca Borso per li sceleratissimi homini Ioan Ludovico Impio et Andrea da Varegnana*, in A. CAPPELLI, 'La congiura dei Pio signori di Carpi contro Borso d'Este signore di Ferrara', *Atti e Memorie delle Reali Deputazioni di Storia patria per le provincie modenesi e parmensi*, 2 (1864), pp. 3-52. See M. A. MASTRONARDI, 'Una congiura alla corte di Borso d'Este', in *Confini dell'Umanesimo letterario. Studi in onore di Francesco Tateo* (Roma: Roma nel Rinascimento, 2003), II, pp. 921-935.

Ferrara and Modena, by Giovanni Ludovico Pio - son of Galasso, one of the rulers of Carpi together with his brothers, Alberto e Giberto - with the support of Galeazzo Maria Visconti, duke of Milan, and Piero de' Medici. Carlo di San Giorgio was the secretary of the Ferrarese court and the librarian of the ducal library. As the prologue of his work states, the text had been previously written in Latin, but since the dedicatee, the duke, was not familiar enough with the classical language, it was translated and re-worked in the vernacular (this is the only version still extant today and is contained in the manuscript of the Estense Library in Modena, α.G.6.12). The author's choice of translating his work is also due to the purpose of reaching out to an audience that was as wide as possible. The need for a pro-ruler account of the events was urgent especially if we consider that the revenge against whoever was believed to be a plotter was ruthless: not only was Giovanni Ludovico Pio beheaded in the public square, but his sons were deprived of their properties and his brothers, unaware of the plan, were detained in jail for many years.[44] However the narration, although totally oriented to support the duke's standpoint and to present his rule as being under the auspices of God, seems not to have had a wide circulation. This is probably attributable to the rather naive political approach that underlies the text in some crucial passages. For example, the author openly mentions the foreign political forces involved in the attack, in particular Florence and its leader Piero de' Medici; but reference to the 'external' instigators of the conspiracies is usually prudently avoided by humanists in their texts on plots, as we shall see, since it could risk exacerbating the political and diplomatic relationships with foreign enemies and bring about military conflicts. Thus, despite the fact that the text displays many descriptive and narrative elements in common with the other works on conspiracies (the eulogy of Borso d'Este, the description of the condition of prosperity

[44] On the whole event see L. CHIAPPINI, *Borso d'Este*, in DBI, 13 (1971), pp. 134-143.

he brought to the people, and the depiction of conspirators as isolated criminals) these rather incautious observations might account for the work's restricted diffusion.

Another text in the vernacular in this *corpus* is the *Lamento in morte di Giuliano*, a poem on the Pazzi conspiracy written by an anonymous author in 1478. Besides this work and Poliziano's *Coniurationis commentarium*, other monographic texts were composed as part of the all-embracing system of pro-Medici propaganda. In particular, the most explicitly political documents were produced by both Bartolomeo Scala, the chancellor of Florence, who wrote the *Excusatio Florentinorum* (1478), and Gentile Becchi, the bishop of Arezzo, who composed the complex *Florentina Synodus* (1478), both based on juridical interpretations of the event and aimed at underpinning the Medici's defence against pope Sixtus IV, one of the main instigators of the assault in Florence. Thanks to the new revolutionary invention of the printing press, all these texts devoted to the burning political issue of a conspiracy, for the first time were immediately published in printed editions and enjoyed a more extensive diffusion. Also the *Lamento* in the vernacular, whose target was mainly an audience of common people, was printed at once, in order to let it have the same far-reaching circulation as the other texts oriented towards a more educated public: it was published in autumn of 1478 and was edited by Bartolomeo Fonzio, another humanist of Lorenzo's entourage.[45]

Only two years before the Pazzi conspiracy, one of the most famous fifteenth-century plots took place in Milan: the attack against Galeazzo Maria Sforza, fatally stabbed on the 26th December 1476 in front of the church of Santo Stefano. This is a rare example of a successful conspiracy, but the plotters eventually were not able to achieve their political purposes and were condemned and executed. The leader of the plot was Giovanni Andrea Lampugnani, a Milanese noble who had also involved in his plan

[45] On all texts on this conspiracy see chapter V on Poliziano and the bibliography mentioned.

Gerolamo Olgiati and Carlo Visconti, along with supporters belonging to the town's aristocracy.[46] Although this was a crucial historical episode in the history of the *Quattrocento*, the monographic texts devoted to it did not enjoy much success: the most important was Gian Mario Filelfo's *Consolatoria dedicata alla duchessa di Milano Bona di Savoia* (by the son of the more famous Francesco), a work in the vernacular written in 1477 as a consolatory oration-treatise that significantly includes as its third and last section a sort of theory of princely government viewed from the perspective of a female ruler, in this case Bona of Savoia.[47] Other texts composed to commemorate the assassination of the Duke are the *Threnodia* (1476), by Bonino Mombrizio, a humanist who was part of the entourage of the Sforza's court, and the *Lamento di Gian Galeazzo* composed by an unknown author (1476).[48] But the most comprehensive narratives of the events can be found in more extensive and wide-ranging historical texts, such as Bernardino Corio's *Historia Patria*[49] (whose composition started in 1485, but it was published in 1503) and the *Diari* of Cicco Simonetta (1473-1479), the secretary of the dukes of Milan and the ruler in charge *pro tempore* after Galeazzo's death.[50]

Despite the lack of major monographic literary works on this event, this conspiracy has a substantial bearing on the general affirmation of the fifteenth-century cultural and

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[46] On this conspiracy see B. BELOTTI, *Storia di una congiura (Olgiati)* (Milano: Dall'Oglio, 1965); V. ILARDI, 'The Assassination of Galeazzo Maria Sforza and the Reaction of Italian Diplomacy', in *Violence and Civil Disorder in Italian Cities. 1200-1500*, ed. by L. Martines (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), pp. 72-103; R. FUBINI, *Italia quattrocentesca*, pp. 107-135, 220-252, 327-350; F. M. VAGLIENTI, 'Anatomia di una congiura. Sulle tracce dell'assassinio del duca Galeazzo Maria Sforza tra scienza e storia', *Atti dell'Istituto lombardo. Accademia di scienze e lettere di Milano*, 4 (2002), pp. 237-273; and F. M. VAGLIENTI, *Giovanni Andrea Lampugnani*, in DBI, 63 (2004), pp. 272-275.

[47] GIAN MARIO FILELFO, *Consolatoria: dedicata alla duchessa di Milano Bona di Savoia, per la morte del duca Galeazzo Maria Sforza (1477)*, ed. by A. Schoysman Zambrini (Bologna: Commissione per i Testi di Lingua, 1991).

[48] BONINO MOMBRIZIO, *Threnodia*, ed. by Alessandro Minuziano (Milano, 1504); *Lamento di Gian Galeazzo*, ed. by Giovanni Baleni (Firenze, 1538).

[49] B. CORIO, *Storia di Milano*, ed. by A. Morisi Guerra (Torino: UTET, 1978), II, pp. 1370-1413; on Bernardino Corio and his *Historia*, composed between 1485 and 1503 see F. PETRUCCI, *Bernardino Corio*, in DBI, 29 (1983), pp. 75-78.

[50] *I Diari di Cicco Simonetta*, ed. by A. R. Natale (Milano: Giuffrè, 1961); Simonetta, the secretary of the dukes of Milan, after Galeazzo Maria Sforza's death ruled Milan on behalf of the young Gian Galeazzo, until the duchess Bona di Savoia decided to support the faction of Ludovico il Moro, and Simonetta was imprisoned and decapitated in 1480. On Milanese historiography see IANZITI, *Humanistic Historiography*.

political viewpoint in the interpretation of political plots. The conspirators against Galeazzo hoped to gain legitimacy for their plot presenting themselves as followers of the anti-tyrannical classical tradition and clearly intended to adopt the model of the assassination of Julius Caesar. In the same years, this ideology rooted in the ancient culture had been celebrated by the Bolognese humanist Nicola Capponi, called Cola Montano, professor of Latin in Milan, whose lectures were attended by the conspirators themselves. Montano did not only praise Roman *virtus* and anti-tyrannical thought, but in his speeches he also associated the image of duke Galeazzo with the negative figure of Tarquinius Superbus, while the most famous conspirators of the classical tradition, Brutus, Cassius and Catiline, were celebrated as positive models to follow. Significantly, the relationship between the classical republican tradition and Cola Montano's anti-despotic ideals was underscored in Machiavelli's *Istorie Fiorentine* (VII, 33), where the narration of this plot has a pivotal position and Montano is described in a telling depiction:

> Insegnava a Milano la latina lingua a' primi giovani di quella città Cola Montano, uomo litterato e ambizioso. Questo, o che gli avesse in odio la vita e i costumi del Duca, o che pure altra cagione lo movesse, in tutti i suoi ragionamenti il vivere sotto un principe non buono detestava, gloriosi e felici chiamando quegli a' quali nascere e vivere in una republica aveva la natura e la fortuna conceduto.[51]

What is most noteworthy is that the interpretation of this event that prevailed in the aftermath, not only in the state of Milan but more broadly in Italy, was totally opposite to the conspirators' views and intentions. Although they tried to justify their actions in the anti-tyrannical ideology deriving from the classical tradition, the standpoint that generally ended up triumphing and dominating coincided with an autocratic view, and was focused on bringing to the fore the principles of political unity, which were

[51] NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI, *Istorie fiorentine,* in ID. *Opere storiche*, ed. by A. Montevecchi e C. Varotti, supervision by G. M. Anselmi, Edizione Nazionale delle opere di Niccolò Machiavelli (Roma: Salerno Editrice, 2010): VII, 34. Machiavelli recalls Sallust to describe the republican ideas of the conspirators, who are not represented as similar to Catiline, but are put in a negative light because of the outcome of the plot. See P. ORVIETO, *Nicola Capponi detto Cola Montano*, in DBI, 19 (1976), pp. 83-86.

presented by humanists as linked with classical political tenets as well. Conversely, the stance that looked at these rebellions as driven by the disapproval of despotic regimes was not fostered by the political and intellectual circuits and therefore was in the end suppressed and defeated.

Hence, the reading of these subversive events that prevailed was focused on condemning the attacks presenting the plot as a subversive despotic threat against a legitimate government. In general, the major contribution to the predominance of this pro-ruler political outlook was made by literature and, in particular, by the narrative of the facts produced and disseminated in humanist works: texts that are also the expression of the emerging of a specific political ideology.

The study presented in this thesis has a tripartite structure. After this first chapter, which consists in a general introduction to the theme of conspiracy in humanist literature and defines the 'thematic' genre of monographic works on political plots, the analysis concentrates on the most significant texts selected as case studies. These works allow us to explore at length the growth of this literary subject, across different literary genres and the most prominent political and cultural centres. The four chapters of this second section provide an in-depth examination of each text, from philological, historical, stylistic, and critical perspectives, placing it precisely in its historical context and illustrating circumstances of composition, the influence of the classical tradition and the process of *imitatio* performed by the authors. This investigation discloses the political perspectives that match the specific narrative strategies adopted by the humanists to represent the historical events, pointing out how the interplay between ideological and rhetorical elements conforms to the different literary genres. Finally, a

closing comparative chapter traces the overall evolution of the issue of conspiracies in humanist literature and points out the recurring patterns, narrative approaches and political angles that characterize the literary transfiguration of this topic. A thorough analysis is also devoted to the similarities between this overall output and works on princely statecraft, and to the significant interaction between historiographical, political, and literary elements in these texts. As is clear from this introduction, the main aim of this work is to explore the role, the implications, and the development of this prominent political theme in texts that have never been studied from this perspective so far. Thus, the purpose is also to define more precisely the complex facets of fifteenth-century political thought and its relationship with the cultural dimension, so as to write a missing chapter on the background of Machiavelli's work.

The texts are published as an *Appendix* to the thesis and are followed by apparatuses which illustrate systematically the classical models used by the authors and aim to complement the critical study. The texts are quoted from the most reliable and recent editions, or in other cases, thanks to the new philological examinations I have conducted, are published in a new edition (as specified in the specific chapters and in the *Appendix*).

CHAPTER II

Orazio Romano, *Porcaria:*
Epic poetry and classical legacy as a vehicle for papal-princely ideology

1. Orazio Romano and the *Porcaria*: the composition of the poem and the manuscript tradition

The *Porcaria* is the first epic poem in the fifteenth century that deals with the topic of conspiracy. It represents one of the most important literary works related to Stefano Porcari's plot against pope Nicholas V, which took place in 1453. This original and sophisticated poem was composed by Orazio Romano, a not very well known humanist who lived in the little city of Viterbo. While Porcari's conspiracy against Nicholas V has been more extensively studied from a historical point of view, less attention has been paid to the literary works devoted to this plot, in particular to the *Porcaria* and its author.[1] Thanks to the new analysis I have conducted on the manuscript of the text, the *codex* of the University Library in Utrecht, 5. M. 22, which is the only copy of the *Porcaria* which is still extant, it has been possible to outline more precisely the circumstances of the composition of the poem and its tradition.[2] Moreover, the text published in the Appendix of the thesis is based on a new examination of this manuscript.

Unfortunately, we have little information on Orazio Romano's biography. He lived and worked around the middle of the fifteenth century in the cultural and political environment of the Roman Curia (and he probably died before 1467). He worked as a *magister* in Viterbo, as shown by archival documents relating to the year 1448, and he was also assigned the role of papal secretary, as recounted by Enea Silvio Piccolomini

[1] See in particular MODIGLIANI, *Congiurare*.
[2] On the manuscript see LEHNERDT, p. IX; H. S. LANDOBRE, 'Horatius Romanus. Un poeta en la corte papal renacentista', *Helmantica*, 40 (1989), pp. 445-451; and A. M. OLIVA, 'Orazio Romano', *Roma nel Rinascimento* (1994), pp. 23-29: 26, which is the most complete, although brief, study on Orazio Romano so far.

in his *In Europam sui temporis varias continentem historias* written in 1458.[3] More generally, from the papacy of Nicholas V (1447-1455) to that of Pius II (1458-1464), Orazio was one of the humanists who took an active part in the cultural politics of the Curia and collaborated with the clergy. He carried out official commitments and composed literary texts mostly dedicated to popes Nicholas V and Pius II. The role of teacher in Viterbo given to Orazio is also significant as a telling example of the close relationships between the Curia and intellectuals in that period. Humanists were often assigned important positions (as officials, chancellors, or teachers) in the territories of the papal domain, in particular in Viterbo, a town that had a key function as an administrative and cultural centre in the Papal State under Nicholas V. During his papacy, this connection between Rome and Viterbo became stronger: so, in this peripheral city, many humanists started to have a considerable commitment to papal cultural politics, supporting it both with their official and literary activity and by collaborating in the creation and reinforcement of papal political ideology.[4]

Orazio Romano is also known as the author of a translation of the *Iliad* from Greek into Latin, carried out for Nicholas V: this work was appreciated by several humanists, such as Pius II,[5] but unfortunately only 58 lines of this translation are still extant nowadays, in a manuscript of the Vatican Library (Vat. Lat. 3908) originally owned by the humanist Giovanni Tortelli, the librarian of the Vatican library under Nicholas V.[6]

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[3] For the date of death and for Piccolomini's reference to Orazio Romano, cfr. OLIVA, p. 23. For the documents in the Archive of Viterbo cfr. M. MIGLIO, 'Cultura umanistica a Viterbo nella seconda metà del Quattrocento', in *Cultura umanistica a Viterbo, Atti della giornata di studio per il V Centenario della stampa a Viterbo (Viterbo 12 novembre 1988)* (Viterbo: Associazione Roma nel Rinascimento, 1991), pp. 11-46: 14-21.

[4] MIGLIO, 'Cultura umanistica', pp. 23-24.

[5] 'In Homeri vero poemate quod heroico carmine latinum fieri magnopere cupiebat, cum plurimi morem ei gerere conarentur, unus tantum inventus est, qui acri eius iudicio satis faceret, Horatius Romanus, qui scribatum apostolicum ea de re consecutus, magnis pollicitationibus illectus, Iliadem aggressus nonnullos ex ea libros latinos fecit, dignos, quos nostra miraretur, prisca non improbasset aetas': AENEAS SILVIUS PICCOLOMINI, *In Europam sui temporis varias continentem historias*, in *Opera Omnia* (Basileae, 1571), p. 459.

[6] See M. REGOLIOSI, 'Nuove ricerche intorno a Giovanni Tortelli', *Italia Medievale e umanistica*, 9 (1966), pp. 124-125; R. FABBRI, *Nuova traduzione metrica di Iliade, XIV. Da una miscellanea umanistica*

This ambitious work demonstrates Orazio's deep knowledge of both classical languages and prosody. He had been a pupil of the elder humanist Giannantonio Procelio, who recalled him in a couplet in one of his poems: 'Huc ades, Orati, veterem qui vertis Homerum,/ Pegaseos latices cui mea Musa dedit'.[7] Orazio's literary work mainly consists of eulogistic and occasional poems, mostly related to historical issues. Besides the texts transcribed in the Utrecht manuscript along with the *Porcaria* (which I shall list shortly), Orazio's literary work includes four epigrams dedicated to pope Pius II[8] and a longer poem in hexameters, entitled *Persuasio contra Turchum* (1456) and addressed to the Aragonese king Alfonso the Magnanimous: another poem on a burning political issue and one that was aimed at urging the king to wage a crusade against the Ottomans.[9]

Although Orazio Romano's life is still mostly obscure, it is possible to deduce more about him and the cultural scenario in which he composed the *Porcaria* by a careful analysis of the manuscript of the poem, taking into consideration also the historical context of that period. Firstly, it is worth highlighting that all the texts transcribed in the manuscript are Orazio Romano's works, among which the *Porcaria* is the main text (it covers 24 folios out of 32, ff. 5r-29r). Besides the poem on the conspiracy, the codex includes three elegies: the first is dedicated to Nicholas V and can be regarded as a preface to the *Porcaria*, focused as it is on celebrating papal politics and his renewal of

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di Agnolo Manetti (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1981), p. 16: here are also mentioned Carlo Marsuppini's translation of the *Iliad* (made around 1452) and the *recusatio* of Basinio Basini, who was asked to translate the Greek epic by Nicholas V but declined.

[7] The quotation is in R. AVESANI, 'Epaeneticorum ad Pium II, Pont. Max. Libri V', in *Enea Silvio Piccolomini. Papa Pio II. Atti del Convegno per il quindicesimo centenario della morte*, ed. by D. Maffei (Siena: Accademia degli Intronati, 1968), p. 25. See also S. MARIOTTI, 'Note su alcuni epigrammi di Orazio Romano', in *Studi classici in onore di Quintino Cataudella* (Catania: Facolta di Lettere a Filosofia, 1972), pp. 657-660; OLIVA, p. 28; LEHNERDT, p. IX.

[8] On these poems, published by LEHNERDT, see AVESANI, pp. 25, 34, 49, 68-69.

[9] The edition of this poem is in *Nuovi documenti per la storia del Rinascimento*, ed. by T. De Marinis and A. Perosa (Firenze: Olschki, 1970). On the humanist literature devoted to this historical topic see G. ALBANESE, 'La storiografia umanistica e l'avanzata turca: dalla caduta di Costantinopoli alla conquista di Otranto', in *La conquista turca di Otranto (1480) tra storia e mito. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Otranto-Muro Leccese (28-31 marzo 2007)*, ed. by H. Houben (Galatina: Congedo, 2008), I, pp. 319-352.

the architecture of Rome (ff. 3r-4v); the second is a short poem called *Venus aurea* (ff. 29v-31r); and the last is again a eulogistic work, devoted to Francesco Sforza, and intended to encourage him to protect the pope and maintain Italy in peace (ff. 31v-32v; this poem was probably written in 1451).[10] However the most significant text in the manuscript to be considered in relation to the *Porcaria* is the dedicatory epistle transcribed on the first folio of the *codex* (f. 1r): this is a letter written by Orazio Romano to Pietro Lunense, the dedicatee of Orazio's literary works. Lunense has been identified with Pietro Putomorsi from Fivizzano, a humanist who lived and worked in Viterbo and had a close relationship with the Curia.[11] He was assigned the role of papal secretary by both Eugene IV and Nicholas V, and he was a loyal collaborator of Nicholas V, from whom he received several privileges, due probably to their common origin from Luni, a little village in Tuscany.[12] Moreover, Lunense was given the permanent post of chancellor of Viterbo by Nicholas V, and this official commitment sheds light on the bond between him and Orazio Romano. Putomorsi was also a correspondent of some of the chief Italian humanists of that period, such as Leonardo Bruni, Poggio Bracciolini and Antonio Panormita. In particular, Panormita wrote Putomorsi a metrical epistle and asked him for a 'recommendation' in order to obtain emoluments from the pope.[13] This is a significant letter to be read in conjunction with the dedicatory epistle in the manuscript of the *Porcaria*, since it shows the influential position that Pietro Lunense had in the Curia and, therefore, it makes clearer that Orazio

[10] LEHNERDT, pp. VI, IX-X.
[11] Cfr. L. GUALDO ROSA, 'Pietro Putomorsi da Fivizzano, detto Pietro Lunense: un corrispondente di Leonardo Bruni a Viterbo', in *Filologia umanistica. Per Gianvito Resta*, ed. by V. Fera e G. Ferraù (Padova: Antenore, 1997), II, pp. 1057-82.
[12] For instance, the papal bull promulgated by Nicholas V to assign him the role of papal secretary, in 1448, exempted him from tax payments: on this humanist and his relationship with the pope see MIGLIO, 'Cultura umanistica', pp. 20-21.
[13] GUALDO ROSA, 'Pietro Putomorsi da Fivizzano', p. 1060.

Romano's intent in offering his own works to him was to reinforce his relationship with one of the leading figures in the papal environment.

Hence, it is not surprising that Orazio opted to dedicate his poems, as a homage, to the secretary of Nicholas V. In his letter, he celebrates Lunense's talent as a writer and asks him to read and correct, if necessary, his own works, the *Porcaria* and the elegies:

> Vereor ne summi pontificis aures offenderim, qui fulgorem suae maiestatis attingere ausus sim, cum vix illa ingenia, quorum praestantia laudes maiores efficiuntur, digna satis esse iudicentur. Nihil enim tam altum, nihil tam spectatae virtutis, quod summi pontificis meritum possit aequare. Verum otiosus pudoris fines volui praeterire et ex arenti ingenio versiculos cudere, quos ad te destinare decrevi, ut illos tuo iudicio damnares, ex parte saltem vel honestiores redderes. Tantum etenim tibi lumen eloquentiae ac litterarum doctrina refulgent, ut natus ille tuus ex tuo fonte liquores abunde potuerit haurire. […] Si quis virtutem felicitatem ac sapientiam pontificis digna extimatione pensaverit, profecto nullius antiquitatis memoriam sibi fatebitur comparari.[14]

It is easy to recognize in these words a conventional *topos modestiae*, but it is also noteworthy that Orazio Romano declares that his ultimate aim is to offer his literary works to pope Nicholas V. So, the letter confirms the flattering intentions of Orazio's dedication and his purpose of getting closer to the papal environment and more involved in the Curia, where Lunense was one of the chief humanists: thus, he decided to address his texts to Putomorsi and, through him, to Nicholas V, for whom Orazio had composed the ambitious epic poem on the conspiracy. Therefore Lunense was likely to be seen as an intermediary between the less famous *letterato* and the pope himself.

As already mentioned, Orazio Romano and Putomorsi were probably linked because of their activities in Viterbo, as *magister* and chancellor respectively; but an additional connection can be revealed by Putomorsi's son, Battista Lunense, who almost certainly was a pupil of Orazio Romano. It is also worth underlining the fact that the relationship between Orazio and Lunense's son provides us with important information concerning the date of composition of the *Porcaria*. Indeed, Battista Lunense mentioned both

[14] The quotation is taken from the manuscript: Utrecht, University Library, 2.M.5, c. 1r. Cfr. LEHNERDT, p. 1.

Orazio Romano and his epic poem in the speech he gave for his graduation, in 1453: therefore, this reference in the speech proves that the *Porcaria* was composed by 1453 (the *terminus ante quem*), soon after the conspiracy, which took place at the beginning of January of the same year (the *terminus post quem*).[15]

It is not possible to know if Nicholas V owned a copy of Orazio Romano's work. Some scholars argued that the *corpus* of texts does not seem consistent with the author's purpose of bestowing a gift on the pope, since the manuscript also contains the transcription of the elegy dedicated to Francesco Sforza.[16] Nevertheless, it seems not too surprising that Orazio chose to include this text in the *corpus*, since the elegy is an *exhortatio* to the duke of Milan to protect the pope, who is still celebrated, although indirectly, in this short poem. In addition, while we do not know if Nicholas V eventually received the collection of Orazio's poems, the preface-letter in the manuscript shows clearly that his works, and above all the *Porcaria*, were offered to Pietro Lunense in the first instance. The letter addressed to Lunense states that Orazio Romano presented his poems to him, seeing Putomorsi as a sort of intermediary between him and the pope. Furthermore, according to the account of the conspiracy given by the historian Nicola della Tuccia, Pietro Lunense had been himself one of the targets of Porcari's plot, since he was one of the principal assistants of the pope, together with his brother-in-law Pietro da Noceto, the personal secretary of Nicholas V.[17] So the dedication to Lunense reveals Orazio's main purpose of celebrating both the pope and his right-hand man, by writing a poem aimed at condemning the conspiracy against the Curia.

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[15] P. PARRONI, 'Il codice Oliveriano 23 di Marziale e il suo copista Battista Lunense', *Studia Oliveriana*, 2 (1963), pp. 15-22, where the text of the speech is published; for the chronological reconstruction see OLIVA, p. 25.

[16] In particular, see OLIVA, p. 26.

[17] Cfr. *Cronache e statuti della città di Viterbo, pubblicati ed illustrati da Ignazio Ciampi* [serie: Documenti di storia italiana, 5] (Firenze: Cellini, 1872), p. 226; cfr. also GUALDO ROSA, 'Pietro Putomorsi da Fivizzano', p. 1070.

It is also worth mentioning that there is no evidence to assert that the manuscript in Utrecht was the same *codex* sent by Orazio to Lunense, since it does not have any notes written by Pietro or his son (Battista worked as a scribe and, for this reason, his handwriting is known and identifiable). This manuscript can be more probably recognized as a copy derived from the dedicatory *codex* sent to Lunense. Besides, we have to consider that the manuscript is written in an elegant humanist hand of the fifteenth century, so it may be supposed that it was transcribed in a humanist *scriptorium*, possibly in the cultural environment of either Rome or Viterbo.

What is most remarkable is that the story of the manuscript of the *Porcaria*, and therefore the story of the tradition and reception of the poem, actually ends neither in the area of Rome, nor even in Italy. It must be connected with Dutch humanism and thus considered in relation to the spread of Italian culture in Northern Europe in the sixteenth century. The handwritten note on the last folio of the manuscript shows that one of the owners of the *codex* was 'Arnoldus Buchiellus', who has been identified with Aernout Van Buchel (1565-1641), a humanist and collector of ancient books who lived in Utrecht.[18] The note reveals that he bought the book in the auction of the 'noble family of Saint Aldegonde in 1599': thanks to this detail, I was able to discover that the previous owner of the manuscript was Philippe de Marnix of Saint Aldegonde (1540-1598), one of the most important figures in Dutch humanism, who was the secretary of William I of Orange (leader and founder of the independent state of the Netherlands) and was also active in the diffusion of the Protestant Reformation in Europe. I have conducted research on the catalogue of Philippe de Marnix's books, where the manuscript of Orazio Romano is mentioned in the list with a brief description: 'Oratij

[18] LEHNERDT, p. IV.

Carmina ad Q Pontificem Maximum et alios'.[19] Moreover, a note placed at the end of the catalogue states that the auction of the books took place on 6 July 1599: thus, this is the day when Van Buchel bought the *codex*. Philippe de Marnix probably came into possession of the manuscript during a journey to Rome. In 1558 he moved to Italy with his brother to study in Padua, and during this period he probably travelled to Bologna and Rome.[20] It is noteworthy that his own library, which consisted of more than 1600 volumes, included a considerable number of works by Italian authors, especially historical and political texts, such as Bartolomeo Platina's *Vitae pontificum*, Marco Antonio Sabellico's *Historiae rerum Venetarum*, Machiavelli's and Guicciardini's works. In particular, he had a deep interest in the history of Stefano Porcari's conspiracy, since he quoted on his manuscript the account of this historical event from Sabellico's *Historiae rerum Venetarum* and he referred also to the description of the plot given by Platina in his *Vita Nicolai V*.[21]

Philippe de Marnix's interest in the conspiracy against the pope can be put in relation not only to his religious and political commitment in his country, but also to his literary activity, since he wrote a satirical poem on the Catholic Church, the *Bienkorf der H. Roomsche Kercke*. Moreover, the story of this manuscript is a telling example of the widespread diffusion of Italian humanist culture and political ideology in Europe during the sixteenth century. In particular, the tradition of the *Porcaria* reveals that the most famous conspiracy against popes of the Renaissance received considerable attention both from a historical and literary perspective, not only in Italy but also in Europe, in a period when religious and doctrinal conflicts had crucial importance in the political

[19] *Catalogus librorum bibliothecae Nobilissimi clarissimique viri piae memoriae D. Philippi Marnixii Sancto-Aldegondii...* (Lugduni Batavorum: Ex typographeio Christophori Gujotii, MDIC), c. G6, [anastatic reproduction: *Catalogue of the Library of Philips Van Marnix Van Sint-Aldegonde, sold by auction (July 6th)*, Introduction by G. J. Brouwer, Librarian of Netherlands Publishers' and Booksellers' Association, Nieuwkoop: B. De Graaf, 1964].
[20] *Catalogus librorum bibliothecae...*, Introduction, p. 10.
[21] The quotation is transcribed on folio 1r-v.

scenario. So the *Porcaria*, composed by a little known humanist from the small town of Viterbo, should be considered in the broader cultural dimension of European humanism, paying attention to its connection with political ideologies developed in that age and focusing on the political perspective shown in the poem.

2. Stefano Porcari and the conspiracy against Nicholas V

Stefano Porcari's conspiracy was thwarted before the conspirators could carry out the plot, which had been planned to take place on 6 January 1453, during the religious celebration of the Epiphany. In spite of its early discovery, this was a crucial event in the history of the papal state of the *Quattrocento*. The harsh reaction of the pope, which led to the public executions of the plotters (they were hanged in Castel Sant'Angelo and the Campidoglio), reveals his determination to suppress any threats to the papacy and reinforce his political power, discouraging, at the same time, future attackers. This episode also shows Nicholas V's consciousness of both the actual political instability of his government in Rome and the tangible danger that a conspiracy could bring about, in a period when, as we shall see, the pope's attempt to strengthen his political power had been more decisive than in previous years.

This historical event and the reactions to it – both political and 'artistic' – should be considered briefly in the broader historical context of the early fifteenth century, in which popes had to confront several conflicts. They had to tackle internal opposition, conciliaristic positions, and frequent rebellions in Rome, often stirred up by the most powerful noble families in the city, such as the Colonna. Less than twenty years before Porcari's conspiracy, in 1434, an uprising forced pope Eugene IV to escape on a boat from Rome to Florence, disguised as a monk.[22] Ultimately, this rebellion was

[22] See E. PLEBANI, 'Una fuga programmata. Eugenio IV e Firenze (1433-1434)', *Archivio storico italiano*, 170 (2012), pp. 285-310. See also A. F. D'ELIA, 'Stefano Porcari's Conspiracy against Pope Nicholas V

suppressed and papal government was re-established, but it was a shocking event for the ecclesiastical community, which made clear that the papacy was extremely insecure. In this critical scenario, Eugene IV tried to strengthen his political position, laying the foundation for a more solid papal state. This political purpose, which was characteristic of papal policy in the Renaissance, was pursued even more decisively by the next pope, Nicholas V.[23] Nevertheless, Nicholas V himself was also endangered by the conspiracy plotted by Porcari, a noble knight from an ancient Roman family.

Stefano Porcari had been in Florence from 1427 to 1428, when he worked as *capitano del popolo*, and thanks to this role he came into contact with the Florentine cultural and civic movement. In this period he delivered several speeches which are shaped around republican ideology and characterized by the celebration of ancient Roman virtue.[24] In the following years he was appointed to official public roles in Bologna, Siena, Orvieto and Trani, and in 1434 he was in Rome, as a mediator between Eugene IV and the rebels during the uprising against the pope. His first actual revolutionary attempt took place after the death of Eugene IV, before the election of his successor, in 1447, when Porcari declaimed the famous speech in front of the *Ara Coeli* in Rome, inciting the Roman people to put an end to the popes' and priests' domination. However, the uprising was quelled and when Nicholas V was elected he decided not to punish Porcari, but to nominate him 'rettore della provincia di Campagna e Marittima'.

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in 1453 and Republican Culture in Papal Rome', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 68, 2 (2007), p. 207-231: 209; and D. HAY, *Eugenio IV*, in DBI, 43, 1993, pp. 496-502.

[23] On this political scenario see P. PRODI, *Il Sovrano Pontefice. Un corpo e due anime: la monarchia papale nella prima età moderna* (Bologna: Il Mulino,1982).

[24] This overview of Porcari's biography is based on the historical study by MODIGLIANI, *Congiurare*, pp. 23-36. See also EAD. *I Porcari: storie di una famiglia romana tra Medioevo e Rinascimento* (Roma: Roma nel Rinascimento, 1994); D'ELIA, pp. 207-231. Porcari's speeches delivered in Florence are published in *Prose del giovane Buonaccorso da Montemagno, inedite alcune, da due codici della Biblioteca Capitolare di Verona*, ed. by G. B. C. Giuliari (Bologna: G. Romagnoli, 1874): the attribution is wrong, since the speeches were by Porcari, not by Buonaccorso. On his speeches see M. MIGLIO, '"Viva la libertà et populo de Roma". Oratoria e politica: Stefano Porcari', in *Palaeographica diplomatica et archivistica. Studi in onore di Giulio Bertelli* (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1979), I, pp. 381-428. On Porcari's conspiracy see also TOMMASINI, pp. 111-123, and L. FUMI, *Nuove rivelazioni sulla congiura di Stefano Porcari (Dal carteggio dell'Archivio di Stato di Milano)* (Roma: Archivio della R. Società Romana di storia patria, 1910).

In 1451, during the carnival celebration, Porcari tried again to spur the people to rebellion, delivering a speech in Piazza Navona in Rome: he, once more, urged the Romans to get rid of the unfair papal power, but the revolt failed again. This time, Nicholas V exiled Porcari to Bologna, where he was monitored every day by Cardinal Bessarione. Yet, the pope showed again a merciful approach and decided to pay him a salary. The lenient behavior of Nicholas V towards Porcari in both these circumstances has been considered in some historical sources as evidence of the clement attitude of Nicholas V (although most of these texts are written in support of the pope). Nevertheless, as suggested rightly by Anna Modigliani, the decisions taken by the pope can also be regarded as influenced by his fear of alliances of either conspirators and rulers of other Italian states, or conspirators and Roman barons. Thus, this is probably the reason why he decided not to exacerbate the conflict with Porcari.[25]

Porcari plotted the conspiracy during his exile in Bologna, together with his nephew Battista Sciarra, who lived in Rome and recruited other conspirators, and his brother-in-law Angelo di Maso, who was married to one of Stefano's sisters and was father of Clemente di Maso, both involved in the plot as well. Porcari escaped from Bologna (pretending to be sick to avoid Bessarione's daily check) and arrived in Rome on 4 January. He was greeted by his relatives Battista Sciarra and Angelo di Maso, who arranged a meeting in Porcari's house where all the conspirators gathered. There, Stefano declaimed one of his most well-known speeches, reported by many historical sources, urging his fellows to rebel against papal rule. According to some accounts he dressed in a golden cape that made him look like an emperor. Nevertheless, Nicholas V had already been informed about the plot and the arrival of Stefano. So, the following morning papal troops were dispatched to Porcari's house to catch the conspirators.

[25] For these remarks on Nicholas V's clemency cfr. MODIGLIANI, *Congiurare*, p. 35.

Some of them fled and others were seized, such as Angelo and Clemente di Maso, while Porcari took refuge in his sister's house. Later he tried to convince Cardinal Latino Orsini to hide him in his palace (sending one of his accomplices to speak to Orsini), but the Cardinal refused and, after discovering Porcari's hiding place, he informed the pope. Stefano was arrested in his sister's house on the night between 5 and 6 January: he was found hiding in a chest (upon which his sister and another woman were sitting) and was taken to the papal palace. After being tortured, he confessed his crime and on the 9th he was hanged in Castel Sant'Angelo, while his brother-in-law Angelo di Maso, his nephew Clemente and another seven conspirators were hanged on the Campidoglio.[26]

Porcari's original plan was revealed in his confession and later recounted in several sources. Porcari declared that he had considered different options and that he would choose the best strategy according to the actual circumstances of events. However, the most likely plan was to have three different stages: to assault the pope and cardinals in the basilica during the Epiphany mass; to seize them and occupy Castel Sant'Angelo; finally, to declare Rome free from papal dominion. Most historical sources state that Porcari was prepared to kill the pope, if circumstances required that, and they suggest also that the conspiracy had good chances of success.[27] Porcari and his accomplices relied on the Roman people who, according to their suppositions, would follow them in a general rebellion. But in this case, as in many other plots in the same period, the conspiracy failed.

A significant number of monographic works were devoted to this historical event, as observed in the previous chapter, and Porcari's plot can be regarded as the starting point of this specific genre of humanist literature on the topic of conspiracy. Moreover, several historical sources (letters, orations, histories, biographies) contain accounts of

[26] Cfr. MODIGLIANI, *Congiurare*, pp. 38-41, 46, 47.
[27] On the different options of the plan cfr. MODIGLIANI, *Congiurare*, pp. 42-45.

this plot, such as the two biographies of Nicholas V composed respectively by Giannozzo Manetti and Bartolomeo Platina (the latter in the *Vita Christi ac omnium pontificum*, dated to 1474).[28] All these texts were composed by humanists in some way engaged in papal cultural politics and are to be considered as the product of this link between literature and politics, shedding light on the crucial implications that this conspiracy had in the broader scenario of papal politics.

3. Poetry as a literary transfiguration of the topic of conspiracy

Orazio Romano's epic poem is a sophisticated literary transposition of the historical events. The poem, divided into two books of roughly 500 lines each, is shaped by some typical motifs and patterns that marked the epic genre in both the classical and medieval tradition. Nonetheless, it is possible to recognize many elements of innovation that place this poem in the experimental area of humanist epic developed in the fifteenth century. The *Porcaria* also shows distinctive peculiarities, which can be related to Orazio Romano's original choice of employing the epic genre to treat the historical events of the conspiracy: in particular, the interplay between political matters and poetic frame results in an unusual literary work, characterized by a totally fictitious setting. The imaginary dimension prevailing in the poem, along with the classical setting and the epic tone, is totally modelled by stylistic and verbal references to the major classical epics. But what is more striking is that for the first time the political topic of conspiracy is treated through the rhetorical devices and structures of poetry, in the traditional form

[28] GIANNOZZO MANETTI, *De vita ac gestis Nicolai quinti summi pontificis. Edizione critica e traduzione*, ed. by A. Modigliani (Roma: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, 2005); BARTOLOMEO PLATINA, *Lives of the Popes*, ed. and trans. by Anthony F. D'Elia (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press, 2008 -). On the texts about the conspiracy see chapter I.

of the epic genre, whose development in the fifteenth-century has received little attention from scholars so far.[29]

Unlike historiography, but similarly to other literary genres, epic poetry was not theorized by humanists and, therefore, the canon of epic was not established in any theoretical treatise, nor in any other kind of text (conversely, the theory of historical writing was discussed in a number of works during the fifteenth century - epistles, orations, etc. -, even though the only real treatise devoted to this topic, the *Actius* by Pontano, was composed only towards the end of the century).[30] However, epic had a significant spread in the *Quattrocento*, most notably in connection with accounts of contemporary historical events. Despite the lack of an established epic canon, it is possible to recognize some recurrent features in humanist epic production. Moreover, we might also suggest that the lack of a theoretical written debate on this specific kind of poetry could be due to the fact that the classical models of Vergil, Lucan and Statius had already emerged as the chief epic *auctoritas* in the Middle Ages.

Orazio Romano's poem, in particular, may be placed in the literary tradition of the sub-genre of historical-epic poetry, one of the main branches of epic since antiquity. This genre, dealing with contemporary events, rather than ancient history, enjoyed widespread diffusion in the Middle Ages. During the fourteenth century Petrarch revived and rebuilt classical epic models choosing to write epic poetry on ancient

[29] The classic studies on humanist epic are: A. BELLONI, *Il poema epico e mitologico* (Milano: Vallardi, 1912); V. ZABUGHIN, *Virgilio nel Rinascimento italiano* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1922), I. More general studies on the epic genre in the Italian Renaissance are J. E. EVERSON, *The Italian Romance Epic in the Age of Humanism: The Matter of Italy and the World of Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); C. KALLENDORF, *In Praise of Aeneas: Virgil and Epideictic Rhetoric in the Early Italian Renaissance* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1989).

[30] The most popular treatise on poetic writing in the Renaissance was composed in 1520 by Gerolamo Vida. His *Poeticorum libri tres*, an *ars poetica* totally devoted to Virgil's model, had a significant diffusion in the sixteenth century, in a period when the need for established rhetorical canons in different literary genres was stronger than in the past: *The 'De arte poetica' of Marco Girolamo Vida*, translated with commentary, and with the text of c. 1517 ed. by Ralph G. Williams (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976). For the theoretical debate on historiography developed during the humanist age see the first chapter.

events, as is clear in the *Africa*.[31] However, despite Petrarch's turning to classical themes, the humanists in the fifteenth century shifted the focus to contemporary history: so, while following directly classical models in style and rhetoric, they followed in the footsteps of medieval poems as far as topic and historical issues were concerned. In humanist works, the main link with classical epic can be recognized in the 'epic disguise' of both events and characters (rather than in contents). This stylistic trait is apparent in the humanists' choices of epic patterns, motifs and *topoi*, and sometimes even in the names of characters. In addition to these elements, deployed to create an overall epic frame, another essential component that humanists draw from classical models is lexis, usually extensively modelled on the epic language of the chief Latin sources: Vergil, Lucan and Statius, the main models used by Orazio Romano as well.

The selection of contemporary history links humanist epic with political issues and propagandistic purposes. So, this specific kind of poetry, as already in the Middle Ages, became one of the main literary vehicles for celebrating political rulers, their power and government. Most humanist poems deal with the main character's heroic deeds. The protagonist can be either a king, such as Alfonso the Magnanimous in Matteo Zuppardo's *Alfonseis* (1455-1457), or a *signore*, as Francesco Sforza in Francesco Filelfo's *Sfortias* (1451-1472).[32] Obviously, the main purpose was that of praising the political ruler embodied in the hero. Conversely, the *Porcaria* is based on the story of a negative hero, the leader of the conspiracy: Porcari is condemned by Orazio Romano, whose aim is to celebrate the 'hidden positive hero' of the poem, pope Nicholas V.

[31] The *Africa* is published in the *Edizione Nazionale delle Opere di Francesco Petrarca*, ed. by N. Festa, V. Rossi, vol. I (Firenze: Sansoni, 1926 -).

[32] Zuppardo's work is published in MATTEO ZUPPARDO, *Alfonseis*, ed. by G. Albanese (Palermo: Centro di Studi filologici e umanistici siciliani, 1990). On Filelfo's poem see BOTTARI; ZABUGHIN, I, p. 280; and, more in general, on humanist historical writing in Milan in the fifteenth century see IANZITI, *Humanistic Historiography*.

However, also in this case, the flattering and eulogistic components are predominant and the poem is ultimately focused on the eulogy of papal government.

Almost ten years later the composition of the *Porcaria*, another epic poem was written on a conspiracy: Fosco Paracleto Malvezzi's *Tarentina*.[33] This poem deals with the historical events of the first conspiracy of barons (1459-1465) against Ferdinando of Aragon, king of Naples, and is aimed at exculpating him for the assassination of Giovanni Antonio Orsini, prince of Taranto and leader of the plot, who was killed in obscure circumstances in 1463. Both the infernal setting of this poem and the linguistic structure of the title, created from the name of the conspirator, show substantial connections with the *Porcaria*. To be sure, titles shaped by the name of the main character are very common in both classical antiquity and Humanism, but they are less frequent if the main character is a negative hero. Additional correlations between the two texts might lead us to believe that the author of the *Tarantina* knew Orazio Romano's poems. In particular, both the works mention the mythological figure of *Tisiphone* as the nurse of the conspirators: in the *Tarantina* she feeds the plotter,[34] Orsini, while in the *Porcaria* she is recalled as the figure who attends Porcari's birth (I, 88-90). Moreover, both poems include the speech of the leader of the conspiracy delivered to his accomplices (*Tarentina*, book II) and his confessions to the infernal judge (Minos in the *Porcaria*, Pluto in the *Tarentina*). These textual parallels shed light on the influence that the *Porcaria* could have on this following poem, which, like Orazio Romano's text, was intended to condemn the plotter and commemorate the political rulers attacked. These works are also emblematic examples of how the historical topic of conspiracy can easily match some of the defining features of

[33] MARTUCCI.

[34] MARTUCCI, vv. 186-187 'Excepi gremio tenerum, parvoque mamillas/ Tisiphone dedit una soror tumefacta venenis'. An allusion to the relationship between the two poems in C. CORFIATI-M. SCIANCALEPORE, 'Per un ritratto del congiurato nella Napoli Aragonese: scritture di parte', in *Congiure e Conflitti*, p. 265.

humanist epic: the imaginative transfiguration of historical episodes; the employment of classic epic models to create a work on contemporary events; the role of historical-epic texts as a backing for political propaganda; the eulogistic and flattering aims.

In Orazio Romano's historical epic the imaginary dimension prevails. This is one of the major features of the *Porcaria* that makes it different from most historical epics of the fifteenth century. Because of both the totally imaginary setting and the sophisticated stylistic tone predominant in the poem, the *Porcaria* was acknowledged by Vladimiro Zabughin as an *arcaizzante* epic.[35] In particular, unlike Orazio Romano's text, other humanist epic works (such as Filelfo's *Sfortias*) are characterized by a realistic dimension and follow more closely the narration of the historical events, though they are also framed by mythological elements, as traditionally happens in epic poetry. Conversely in the *Porcaria* the actual historical episodes are narrated only in Stefano Porcari's account of the plot (I, 232-319), while in the rest of the poem there are no more than implied allusions to real history. Moreover, most humanist poems are distinguished by typical features that are absent in the *Porcaria*: firstly, the historical characters are often called with epic names, based on classical models; secondly, the plot is characterized by the massive presence of classical gods, who play a major role as causes and driving forces of the events in the narration.

These recurring epic elements are missing in the *Porcaria*. Deities are recalled only as a mythological element either in similes or in descriptions, displaying the same role as other figures of classical mythology (not gods) - such as Hercules, Typhoeus, etc. - whose presence in the text is aimed at placing emphasis upon some specific passages. Thus, gods and mythological figures have stylistic and rhetorical functions in the poem, but not narrative ones. From this point of view, Orazio Romano seems to follow the

[35] For the definition of these categories and an analysis of the main traits of humanist epic poetry see ZABUGHIN, I, p. 280.

classical model of Lucan, who, as we shall see, is one of the main sources of the *Porcaria*. Lucan, unlike his predecessors, did not assign to a deity a concrete narrative function in the development of the storyline in his *Pharsalia*, but placed gods in the background. Furthermore, in the *Porcaria*, mythological characters are evoked much more often than gods. They are enlisted to confer on the poem a vivid classical and epic atmosphere, and are assigned the conventional roles they usually play in the literary tradition, with the main purpose of ennobling the text and creating an intense classical coloring. This intention surfaces in the depiction of the underworld, which is inhabited by the typical figures of the classical and medieval tradition: Charon, Cerberus and Minos. A similar function is played by the historical figures of Roman history: some of them, such as Catilina and Cato, appear in the poem as proper characters, others are simply mentioned in historical digressions, such as Brutus, Tullia Minor, etc. However, historical figures also acquire a further meaning: they are recalled not only as classical literary icons, but also as symbols that convey an ideological meaning. Therefore they should be regarded also from the perspective of exemplarity, since they play in the *Porcaria* an important and complex symbolic role, whether positive or negative. As for these classic figures, this dimension of exemplarity is traditionally an integral part of the connotation ascribed to them in humanist literature, as we shall illustrate more in depth.

It is also noteworthy that contemporary historical characters are simply referred to obliquely in the *Porcaria*, and this element enhances the classical and fantastic tone of the poem. Generally, these figures are neither called by their actual names, nor disguised under classical names. Beside Nicholas V (always called *pater*, 'father', in the poem), the only historical characters explicitly mentioned are *Beltramus* (II, 253; I have identified him with Beltramo di Martino da Varese, the leader of the architectural restoration of the city in the service of the pope) and *Aretinum Iohannem* (II, 307,

Giovanni Tortelli, the librarian of the Vatican Library). Both the conspirators and the women who cry over the death of the plotters are recognizable only by the textual context (in particular the woman who delivers the funeral lament at the outset of the first book is identifiable as Porcari's sister - who was at the same time Angelo di Maso's wife and Clemente di Maso's mother - only because she addresses the men as 'brother', 'husband' and 'son'). All these elements help to place the historical events in a distant and imaginary atmosphere, totally depicted by means of classical filters.

Another striking aspect of Orazio Romano's poem is that the narrative structure is almost completely missing. The poem develops from scene to scene with quick narrative transitions, and the slight storyline consists mainly of the juxtaposition of single episodes, monologues, descriptions, and historical digressions. Moreover, there are only two scenes in the *Porcaria*: the foremost is the underworld, where the first book and the first 150 lines of the second one take place, then the poem shifts to the city of Rome, where Scipio meets Nicholas V. The only proper narrative section in the text is Stefano Porcari's account of the conspiracy (I, 228-319). Besides this historical account, couched in a lively poetic tone, an additional narrative component can be recognized in both the representation of the punishments inflicted on the conspirators and in the depiction of Scipio's reincarnation and return to Rome. However, even in these sections what prevails is a descriptive style. The scenes in the underworld are shaped by lively and expressionistic images; while Scipio's visit to Rome is recounted through his own words and thoughts, by means of his emotional reactions to the sight of the city, his reflections on the age of ancient Rome, and his speech to Nicholas V.

Thus the combination of imaginary epic components and actual historical events seems to be unbalanced, with a prevalence of fantastic elements, aimed at presenting the conspiracy through poetic transfiguration. Nevertheless, despite this effect of poetic

distance, Orazio Romano's political purpose is constantly implied in the *Porcaria*, since all classical figures and symbols deployed in the narration have a specific literary function in the political perspective of the poem. This perspective, as we shall see, is designed to condemn the conspiracy and celebrate papal power, by presenting the latter as being connected with the civic values of ancient Rome. Therefore the bond between the classical and imaginary dimension, on one side, and the historical background, on the other, lies in the whole structure of the poem and it is intended to convey the author's political standpoint. This literary transfiguration emerges in the combination of every specific component of the text: the rhetorical frame, the stylistic inflection, and the thematic elements.

4. Classical legacy and Latin sources in the *Porcaria*

4.1 Book I

The classical atmosphere that permeates the *Porcaria*, both in its rhetorical framework and style, is produced mainly by the substantial presence of classical references throughout the poem. The chief epic *auctoritates* of the Latin tradition are constantly echoed in the texts, not only by recalling epic motifs and *topoi*, but above all by imitating verses, half-lines, poetic wording and, more in general, quoting verbal expressions from classical works. Thus, as regards style and lexis, the epic tone of the *Porcaria* is created mostly by the widespread use of a classical epic vocabulary, which is extensively used to frame the epic diction.[36] In doing so, Orazio Romano draws on the major Latin models which influenced most medieval and humanist poetry, Vergil,

[36] This pluralistic imitation is what Conte and Barchiesi define 'imitazione fortemente lessicalizzata', which is described as a 'una strutturazione poetica in cui si ripetono unità foniche costituite in equivalenze metrico-ritmiche e che crea una particolare memorabilità poetica che si esercita sull'aspetto esteriore della parola'. Cfr. G. B. CONTE-A. BARCHIESI, 'Imitazione e arte allusiva. Modi e funzioni dell'intertestualità', in *Lo spazio letterario di Roma antica*, vol. I *La produzione del testo* (Roma: Salerno, 1989), pp. 81-114: 101. On imitation in Italian Humanism see MCLAUGHLIN, *Literary imitation*.

Lucan, Statius, and Ovid,[37] but he goes further and employs also more recherché sources, such as Claudian.

The specific political topic treated by the humanist allows him to refer also to historiographical models: Sallust's *De coniuratione Catilinae* is unsurprisingly the main one, but is combined with Livy's work, from which the author draws some references to episodes and characters of Roman history, especially in the historical digression at the end of the first book. However, as already observed, the core of *imitatio* in the *Porcaria* is based on classical epic poems. As usual in humanist poetry, verbal expressions and verses are imitated to re-create metrical structures, or, more generally, to produce particular sound effects. In the *Porcaria*, classical references are so recurrent and accurate that it is worth illustrating them in detail, in order to understand in depth how the poem is built and how they are transformed and re-worked into an original poetic result (the text is also published in the appendix of the thesis with a thorough apparatus that shows all sources used in the poem, line by line).

The most important classical source in the *Porcaria* is predictably Vergil's *Aeneid*. In particular, Orazio draws from book VI of the *Aeneid* the majority of literary quotations deployed in his poem, with the aim of depicting the infernal setting as close as possible to the katabasis in Vergil's work.[38] Apart from a few echoes of Dante's *Inferno* (which we shall mention), Orazio's underworld is totally shaped by references, quotations, and motifs derived from the *Aeneid*, and, more generally, the Virgilian model permeates the whole poem, as a source both of poetic patterns and lexical expressions. While it is evident that the influence of Vergil is prevalent, the *incipit* of the *Porcaria* is modelled on the first lines of Lucan's *Pharsalia*, a source used by

[37] On the use of these *auctoritates* in Italian Renaissance epic see EVERSON, pp. 61-80.
[38] On this aspect see also ZABUGHIN, I, p. 289. Zabughin also pointed out the connection between the *Porcaria* and the *Liber Maiolichinus*, a medieval poem, composed in the twelfth century, which is centred on a similar fantastic katabasis.

Orazio on countless occasions in his text. The opening is structured as a classical epic *proemium*, including presentation of the topic and the invocation to the Muse. In particular, as in Lucan's prologue, the opening verse introduces immediately the vivid image of the civil war, with the very first words 'insidias patriae' being a counterpart to Lucan's 'Bella per Emathios…' (I, 1).[39] Moreover, the *invocatio* is not addressed to the Muse, but to the author's patron, the pope himself (I, 7 'Tu, mea musa, pater'), hinting again at Lucan's invocation to Nero in the *Pharsalia* (1, 66).[40] So, the *incipit* of the *Porcaria* shows from the very beginning that the classical sources employed by Orazio are chosen in relation to the specific historical subject of the poem and in accordance with the different thematic contexts in the text. By the allusion to Lucan's work, the author immediately represents the conspiracy as a cruel and savage civil war, cause of grief and death. So Porcari's rebellion is seen as an unreasonable uprising that brings about suffering to the Roman people, an attempt to threaten the fatherland, rather than an attack on the pope himself.

This thematic dimension pervades much of the *Porcaria* and is achieved not only by means of allusions to Lucan, but also through references to Statius' *Thebais*, the third main epic source used by Orazio Romano. In particular, the prominent role played by the *Thebais* emerges at the outset of the poem. Immediately after the prologue, the *Porcaria* opens with the funeral lament of Porcari's sister (I, 10-108): this character has an important iconic value since she cries over three deaths, as the sister of the main character and also as the wife and the mother of the other two conspirators, Angelo and Clemente di Maso (Antony D'Elia identified wrongly Porcari's nephew with Battista

[39] *Porcaria*, I, 1-4 'Insidias patriae qui struxit et arma parenti/ Ipse parens refer et sceleri si Roma nefando/ Annuerit, tenues nam si fragor impulit auras,/Romuleos iterum formidat curia raptus': Lucan. I, 1-3 'Bella per Emathios plus quam civilia campos,/ iusque datum sceleri canimus, populumque potentem/ in sua victrici conversum viscera dextra,/cognatasque acies, et rupto foedere regni...'.
[40] Lucan. I, 66 'Tu [Nero] satis ad vires Romana in carmina dandas'.

Sciarra).[41] Therefore she embodies in the poem the general concept of grief and sorrow caused by the conspiracy. The threnody, which starts with the weeping for the woman's son, is shaped on the classical model of the funeral laments in Statius' *Thebais*, where images of women who cry for their relatives who had died in the Theban war are recurrent: the global framework of the threnody seems to be inspired by the long speech of Ide (*Theb*. 3, 151-168), while in the first section of the speech (I, 14-22) Orazio makes specific reference to the threnody of Argia (*Theb*. 12, 318-321).[42] These laments, both in the source and consequently in the *Porcaria*, have the function of representing the symbolic image of human suffering amid the atrocity of war. If this idea is mainly evoked by hinting at Statius's threnodies, there are other allusions that help to achieve the same effect, especially references to Lucan, such as the significant quotation from the *Pharsalia* (I, 251-253)[43] that covers two lines, I, 55-56 ('Ah quanto melius gelida tibi ferre sub Arcto/ Exilium gravius vel honestae occumbere morti!').

In the lengthy lament we can find assembled several echoes of mythological female characters that are aimed at placing emphasis on the tragic image of the woman mourning the death of her relatives. Orazio recalls again figures from *Thebais*: Eriphyle (I, 76-78; *Theb*. 2, 265-305 and 4, 187-195), Iocasta (I, 85-98; *Theb*. 1, 56-70 and 7, 475-527) and Agave (I, 102-104; *Theb*. 11, 318-319).[44] But he also evokes Phaedra (I,

[41] For this wrong identification, D'ELIA, p. 213. According to a historical source, after the conspiracy Angelo di Maso's wife was confined to a monastery; another source states that she was found dead a few days after the events and that she was expecting a child: MODIGLIANI, *Congiurare*, p. 48.

[42] *Porcaria*, I, 14-22 'Inclusit lacrimas oculis et corpore toto / Sternitur; exangues vix spiritus errat in artus./ Illa velut gelidum suprema in busta cadaver/ Membra tenet resupina solo pulvisque per ora/ Spargitur inque humeros fusi cecidere capilli. / Quam simulac trepidae videre per atria natae,/ Actutum accurrunt, alternae in brachia matrem/ Suscipiunt tenuemque animam per mutua quaerunt/ Oscula, ut extremae valeant succurrere luci': Stat. *Theb*. 12, 318-321 '[Argia] *inclusitque dolor lacrimas; tum corpore toto/ sternitur* in voltus animamque per *oscula quaerit*/ absentem pressumque comis ac veste cruorem/ servatura legit' (my emphasis).

[43] Lucan. 1, 251-253 '*melius, Fortuna, dedisses/ orbe sub Eoo sedem gelidaque sub Arcto*/ *errantesque domos*, Latii quam claustra tueri' (my emphasis).

[44] *Porcaria*, I, 76-78 'Plus Eryphilea nocui temeraria fraude./Imperiis inhians excellere cultibus illa/ Traxit Apollineum latitantem in lumina vatem'; I, 85-94 'O nate infelix, qua te sub nocte futurum/ Exitio patriae concepi, exhausta fuissem,/Dum furiis uterum Veneris saturata replevi!/ Importuna thoro cum primum enixa iugali,/ Thesiphone ostetrix partus et alumna maligni/Affuit: illa suo produxit pignora

94) and Hecuba (I, 105-108), whose stories are recounted with specific reference to Ovid's *Heroides* (4, 125-126) and *Metamorphoses* (13, 535-544) respectively.[45] Thus, besides the classical sources already mentioned, Ovid's works turn out to be an additional model that influences the humanist's poem and gives a more lyrical tone to it. Finally, the lament ends with a lengthy consolatory speech delivered by Aletes (I, 110-144), again inspired by a passage of the *Thebais* (Stat. *Theb*. 3, 178-252), where the character plays the same comforting role, but probably influenced also by Vergil's portrayal of the consoling counsellor (*Aen.* 9, 246).

Then the poem shifts to the infernal setting, which is totally structured on the model of the Virgilian underworld. Quotations from Vergil's *Aeneid* occur in several lines: for instance, the evil personifications in the entry-way of Minos's place (I, 221-227) are depicted recalling the description of the entrance to Hades in book VI of the *Aeneid* (6, 273-281);[46]; moreover, the infernal mythological figures of Charon and Cerberus are drawn from the same book (I, 149-150; 207-216).[47] Besides a number of references to

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voto./ Tune etiam teneris tantum scelus ausus ab annis?/ Quem patri comitem misero dedit exitus idem,/ Non potui medium prima te elidere vita/ Visceribus ruptis vel abhortum effundere partum?'; I, 102-104 'Sit tibi vita super, qualis Penteya mater,/ Cum caput avulsum, cum brachia trunca videret/ Sanguineque aspersos nati crudeliter artus'.

[45] *Porcaria*, I, 94 'Visceribus ruptis vel abhortum effundere partum?': Ov. *Heroid*. 4, 125-126 'O utinam nocitura tibi, pulcherrime rerum,/ *in medio nisu viscera rupta forent*!'. *Porcaria*, I, 105-108 'Aut ubi cum pelagus volitare ad littora corpus/ Prospiceret Polidori animamque hauriret in undis/ Orba parens flentem et lacrimantia solveret ora,/ In rabiem longis feriens latratibus auras': the episode of Hecuba, mother of Polidorus, derives from Ovid's version (*Met*. 13, 535-544) and not from Vergil's *Aeneid* (3, 8-72). See also the parallel with Dante, *Inferno*, XXX, 16-21 'Ecuba trista, misera e cattiva,/ poscia che vide Polissena morta,/ e del suo Polidoro in su la riva/ del mar si fu la dolorosa accorta,/ forsennata latrò sì come cane/ tanto il dolor le fé la mente torta'.

[46] *Porcaria*, I, 22-27 'Obvius huic primo pallens in limine Morbus/ Et Scelus et Rabies Facinus Furor Impetus amens/Seditio et Raptus, lacrimans cum funere Luctus/ Iraeque Insidiaeque et regni saeva Libido,/ Dira Fames, Curae insomnes atque aegra Senectus,/ Tempestas, Metus et mortis truculenta Voluntas': Verg. *Aen*. 6, 273-281: '*vestibulum* ante ipsum primisque in faucibus Orci/…*pallentesque* habitant *Morbi* tristisque *Senectus*,/ et *Metus* et malesuada *Fames* ac turpis Egestas,/ terribiles visu formae, Letumque Labosque;/…ferreique Eumenidum thalami et Discordia demens/ vipereum crinem vittis innexa cruentis' (my emphasis).

[47] *Porcaria*, I, 149-150 'Verrebat tenues animas per flumina Charon,/ Cum procul hos Stygia fatur speculatus ab unda'; I, 207-216 'Incidit, horrendum latrans ubi Cerberus umbras/ Devorat. Hic iuvenem quassis per colla colubris/ In nodo arreptum pedibus simul implicat uncis./ Stat superincumbens, laceros rimatur in artus/ Viscera et haerentes circum praecordia fibras,/Luxurians nunc huc, nunc ora retorquet et illuc,/ Nunc capita attollit, terno nunc latrat hiatu,/ Nunc furit, alternis laniat nunc morsibus artus./Immixtus sanie fauces interfluit ater/ Sanguis et argutis crepitant sub dentibus ossa' (Cerberus is

Vergil, Orazio Romano alludes also to Dante's *Inferno* in the description of Angelo di Maso's death, in the passage where the conspirator falls from the boat into the Acheron river (I, 163-174): an image that recalls the punishment of Filippo Argenti, *Inf*. VIII, 31-63 (this episode in the *Porcaria* also recalls Palinuro's fate in book V of the *Aeneid*). As Anthony D'Elia contended, the implicit parallel with the figure of the damned soul in the *Commedia*, who was wasteful of his wealth and also irascible, 'suggests the greed and wastefulness of the conspirator'.[48]

Apart from this citation, the katabasis in the *Porcaria* is mainly influenced by classical sources, rather than by Dante, and therefore turns out to be permeated by an intense classical tone. Besides quotations from Vergil, the model of Statius is still present as a source of lexical expressions and motifs in this section of the poem. In particular, the mythological figure of Minos (I, 221; 228-229) is depicted by references from both Vergil (*Aen*. 6, 432) and Statius (8, 102-103).[49] Moreover, lines 233-234 ('Arbiter umbrarum Mynos, male cuncta ministrat/ Impetus et finis tantum laudatur in actis') are quoted from Statius: the very first words addressed by Stefano Porcari to Minos derive from a passage in the *Thebais* (10, 704-705 'male cuncta ministrat/ impetus'), in which Menoeceus's father exhorts his son - one of the mythological heroes - not to give vent to his fervent spirit and not to sacrifice himself for the Theban war. By recalling Statius' words Orazio implicitly places emphasis upon the evil passion of the conspirators that drive them to the crime, causing tragic consequences (even though he quotes a passage concerning a noble action). Statius' *Thebais* inspires also the entire

described in the act of devouring Porcari's nephew). For Charon: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 298-304; 385-397; for Cerberus: *Ibid*. 6, 417-423.

[48] On these references to Dante see D'ELIA, p. 214; LEHNERDT, p. IX.

[49] *Porcaria*, I, 221 'Donec ad inferni pervenit iudicis urnam'; I, 228-229 'Tum prior huic Mynos: Tibi cur violentus in ore/ Stat furor et fractae rumpunt fera murmura voces?': Verg. *Aen*. 6, 432 'quaesitor Minos urnam movet'; Stat. *Theb*. 8, 102-103 'scit *iudicis urna*/ Dictaei verumque potest deprendere Minos' (my emphasis).

questioning of Porcari by Minos (I, 228-231), an episode which seems derived from the passage where Pluto interrogates Amphiaraus in the underworld (Stat. *Theb*. 8, 84-85).

The questioning of Stefano Porcari allows the author not only to narrate the events of the conspiracy, but also to introduce, in direct speech, the harangue delivered by Porcari to his accomplices. It has been argued that this oration, by presenting the conspirator's point of view and his accusations against papal rule, reveals Orazio Romano's sympathy toward the plotters (the same has been asserted about Leon Battista Alberti's *Porcaria coniuratio*, as we shall see).[50] However, an in-depth analysis of the classical sources used in this speech reveals that the author's intention is quite different. More broadly speaking, despite the fictional medium of direct speech, the author's propagandistic standpoint and his disapproval of the conspiracy are clearly displayed throughout this section of the poem, which is shaped as a kind of a confession by the conspirator and as a continuous admission of guilt. In the very beginning of his speech, by mentioning his exile in Bologna and the salary provided by Nicholas V, Porcari immediately underlines the pope's clemency (I, 237-238). Then, in the whole account, not only does he reveal the criminal and deceptive nature of the uprising (I, 241-250), but he also emphasizes his own cowardice, since he admits that he avoided the conflict with the papal guards (I, 302-306) and he hid away in his sister's home (I, 311-315).

Orazio Romano's historical account in the conspirator's words is concise but quite complete and it follows the main historical events: the escape of Porcari from Bologna, the meeting with the conspirators, the discovery of the plot by the pope, the refuge of Porcari in his sister's house, his capture and finally the executions. Orazio continues to use in this section all the classical epic models already mentioned, mostly as sources of verbal expressions and poetic motifs. However, a considerable portion of this historical

[50] In particular, D'ELIA, p. 215, but see also MODIGLIANI, *Congiurare*, 64.

account consists of Porcari's harangue, which is totally shaped after Catiline's *oratio* to his accomplices in Sallust's *De coniuratione Catilinae* (20). The very *incipit* of the speech in the *Porcaria* (I, 252-253), 'Quonam usque feremus/ Exitiale iugum?', recalls one of the rhetorical questions in Catiline's words (20, 9): 'Quae quousque tandem patiemini, o fortissumi viri?'.[51] Besides this echo of Sallust, the opening question in the *Porcaria* is influenced, even more directly, by a verse in Claudian's poem *In Rufinum*, which is literally quoted by Orazio Romano: 'Quonam usque feremus/ exitiale iugum?' (*In Rufinum* 5, 86). This quotation reveals the prominent role played by Claudian as a seminal model in the *Porcaria*, a function that is confirmed by several direct allusions throughout the text (as the apparatus shows). In particular, this reference is placed in a central and crucial position in the poem, namely the outset of the speech by the main character. The use of Claudian's works by Orazio Romano demonstrates the sophisticated and polished nature of the *Porcaria*, which is clearly the result of the contamination of several classical models, including less expected sources. Although this late-classical author was already known and used by Petrarch,[52] he still had a modest circulation around the middle of the fifteenth century, when Orazio composed his poem. But interestingly it was in the cultural humanist environment of Rome in the same period that Claudian's works were studied philologically, especially by Pietro Odo and Pomponio Leto.[53] As for the *Porcaria*, the literary genre of historical and eulogistic poems by Claudian provided the humanist with a relevant source of motifs and images, which could perfectly fit his poem on the conspiracy. Claudian's poems, in particular,

[51] Although in MODIGLIANI, *Congiurare*, p. 65, it has been suggested that Orazio Romano could be influenced by Cicero, *Cat*., I, 1 ('Quo usque tandem abutere, Catilina, patientia nostra?'), I believe that here the most direct source for the humanist is Sallust. Nevertheless, as we shall see, the closest connection is with a verse of Claudian, *In Rufinum*, 5, 86.

[52] See L. CHINES, 'Per Petrarca e Claudiano*', Quaderni petrarcheschi,* 11 (2001), pp. 43-73.

[53] Pietro Odo put together a considerable *corpus* of Claudian's texts starting from the manuscript of the twelfth century, now Vat. Lat. 2809: see D. GIONTA, 'Il Claudiano di Pomponio Leto', in *Filologia umanistica. Per Gianvito Resta* (Padova: Antenore 1997), II, pp. 987-1032: 991. Poliziano, as is well known, in the second half of the century used extensively the source of Claudian in his work, especially in the *Stanze*.

have many traits in common with the literary pattern selected by Orazio Romano: the historical contemporary subject, the political and propagandistic aims, and the encomiastic perspective.

However, after the erudite allusion that recalls both Sallust and Claudian, Sallust is the main model of Porcari's oration. Immediately after the opening question, the conspirator denounces the condition of slavery that the Roman people had to suffer because of the despotic power of papal government (I, 253-259 '...Clero servire coactis/ Continuo vitam in tenebris et tempora luctu/ Deplorare licet: postrema per omnia ducti/ Vivimus imperio, quorum producere pompas/ Est amor et spoliis culti ditantur et auro/ Viribus obnixis et nostro sanguine partis./ En haec barbaries!'), an accusation that is clearly modelled on Catiline's words in Sallust's work (*Cat*. 20, 7-8):

Nam postquam res publica in paucorum potentium ius atque dicionem concessit, semper illis reges, tetrarchae vectigales esse, populi, nationes stipendia pendere; ceteri omnes, strenui, boni, nobiles atque ignobiles, vulgus fuimus, sine gratia, sine auctoritate, iis obnoxii, quibus, si res publica valeret, formidini essemus. Itaque omnis gratia, potentia, honos, divitiae apud illos sunt aut ubi illi volunt; nobis reliquere pericula, repulsas, iudicia, egestatem.

Orazio Romano, influenced by Sallust's style, fills the conspirator's *oratio* with a number of rhetorical questions, which give the speech vigour and liveliness. In particular, the two following pressing questions in the *Porcaria* (I, 259-260), 'Quando haec mutabitur aetas? Nonne viri sumus?', hint at a similar statement in Sallust's text, in the passage where Catiline, like Porcari, asserts that men should not suffer unfair political oppression (*Cat*. 20, 11). As in the humanist poem, the classical plotter makes a specific allusion to the condition of 'real men':

Etenim quis mortalium, cui *virile ingenium* est, tolerare potest illis divitias superare, quas profundant in exstruendo mari et montibus coaequandis, nobis rem familiarem etiam ad necessaria deesse?

Needless to say, Sallust was the most seminal model for a literary work on the topic of conspiracy, but what is most interesting is to consider how Orazio Romano applies

this historical source to the poetic genre. He decides to refer to Sallust's work almost only in a specific section of the poem, namely the historical account of the events given by the conspirator and the quotation of his harangue. This choice is mainly due to stylistic reasons and it appears to be in accordance with rhetorical prescriptions concerning the poetic genre, which traditionally was to be based on poetic diction, rather than historiographical prose (this canon, although not formally established in Humanism, had been conventionally respected since antiquity). Thus, this specific section of the *Porcaria* was one where Sallust's text could be employed most appropriately and extensively by the poet.

In particular, Porcari's speech is totally inspired by Catiline's *oratio*. This process of *imitatio* makes clear that the aim of the author is not that of sympathizing with the conspirator, either openly or implicitly. The plotter's standpoint is presented in the very same way as in the classical source, where Catiline's speech does not have the function of portraying the conspirator in a positive light. Orazio Romano's purpose is to depict his character through the parallel with Catiline, by ascribing to Porcari the same evil political intentions and the same negative features of the classical exemplar. It is no coincidence that Porcari, like Catiline, entices his accomplices with the promise of money and wealth. Moreover, it is not surprising that Porcari's political plan is described as an authoritarian and despotic attempt driven by the yearning for political power.[54] This perspective contributes to the presentation of the conspiracy in a propagandistic light, condemning it as an attempt to threaten all Roman people, making them lose the peace and wealth obtained under papal rule. This implicit connection with an autocratic view is created also by recalling the figure of Caesar as a symbol of tyrannical domination and connecting him with Porcari himself: Caesar is evoked both

[54] On the representation of Porcari's conspiracy as driven by authoritarian aims see also the next section.

in Porcari's speech (I, 266-267 'Ego solus in urbe/ Caesar') and in the next part of the poem in the speech given by the soul of Catiline (I, 329-330 'At Caesar totis fortuna est viribus usus/ Successuque meos ausus meliore sequutus').

Immediately after Porcari's account, the figure of Catiline appears in the underworld as an actual character and addresses his words to the fifteenth-century plotter. In this section of the poem, unlike the previous one, it is not possible to pinpoint one major source that influences Orazio Romano, but it is noteworthy that the poet displays a different use of the classical tradition, resting on 'exemplarity'[55] rather than direct 'imitation'. Catiline, in particular, plays a prominent role as a negative exemplar, epitomizing the classical iconic image of the conspirator. The symbolic value of this character, which derives from the conventional role he has acquired in the literary tradition,[56] is made even more significant in the *Porcaria*, since the poet makes him condemn Porcari (I, 343-349), by describing the infernal punishment that he should suffer.[57] So the author enlists Catiline to denounce the viciousness of the conspiracy against the pope, which is depicted as crueler than Catiline's own plot. In this case, the modern conspirator has surpassed the classical exemplar.

Similarly, a function of exemplarity is displayed in the employment of the character of Cato, who appears after Catiline. Cato is enlisted to ask Minos to punish Porcari, whose name is represented as an arrogant attempt to offend Cato's family name, *Porcius* (I, 350-358). Stefano Porcari, indeed, used to name himself with the Latin surname *Porcius* and to call his family *Porcia*, in order to ennoble his family's origin.[58] Again, the figure of Cato plays a symbolic role, but, unlike Catiline, he is a positive exemplar. He represents the classical iconic image of ancient Roman *virtus* and one of

[55] On exemplarity in Renaissance literature see T. HAMPTON, *Writing from History: The Rhetoric of Exemplarity in Renaissance Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990).
[56] See OSMOND, 'Catiline in Fiesole'.
[57] This punishment can be seen as characterized by a *contrapasso*: for this aspect see D'ELIA, p. 219.
[58] Cfr. MODIGLIANI, *I Porcari*, p. 44.

the preeminent symbols of the Republican age of Rome. As already outlined, this period of Roman history is recalled in the *Porcaria* as the golden age of Rome and the ultimate aim of Orazio Romano is to celebrate papal political power as connected with the most illustrious period of classical antiquity. The very same exemplary role is played in the next book by Scipio, enlisted as a leading actor to bestow on Nicholas V his approval and blessing for papal political rule.

In this respect, Orazio Romano's literary strategy can be regarded as problematic in many aspects, especially if we consider that papal authority was extremely distant from the republican ideals recalled by the exemplary characters in the *Porcaria*. Nevertheless, even though the humanist wants to commemorate the centralized power of the papacy, he achieves this purpose by evoking the most illustrious classical symbolical figures conventionally used in the humanist age. These icons perform a role as cultural and literary vehicles, rather than as actual historical and political characters, embodying both the ideal image of the classical world and the idea of civic *virtus*. In this regard, this conception of civic *virtus* has to be interpreted in a broader sense rather than referring merely to republican ideology. Hence, these exemplars are employed by Orazio Romano to transfigure the political subject into a lofty dimension and stand for traditional figures of the classical republican epoch, which is regarded as the most prosperous age of Rome, but is deprived of a concrete institutional value. Therefore this ennobling link with the classical world functions as the main means by which the poet confers legitimacy on papal government.

The same perspective noticeably characterizes the final section of the first book, where Orazio Romano inserts an intricate historical digression. After the *damnatio* of the Porcari, the poem shifts to Rome, where some Romans look at the hanged conspirators' corpses and comment on this deathly scene, calling ironically Porcari a

'new Brutus' who wanted to achieve freedom from despotism. This brief remark leads to the historical digression wherein the author describes Roman political history as divided into four periods. Once more, he turns to exemplary figures of classical antiquity, whom he mentions as traditional symbols of each specific period of Roman history. The first *status urbis* is the age of the Roman kings, represented as a period of savage violence; the second one is the republican age, depicted as the time when civic values come to life and flourish; the third stage is the Roman Empire, portrayed as the epoch of decline and decadence; finally, the last period consists of papal domination, which is considered as the most affluent age, since it is seen as the combination of the civic values of Roman antiquity with the government of the pope, who is celebrated as both a perfect prince and the embodiment of Christian religion.

In describing this scenario, the author draws on the main sources of the poem: for instance, he derives the image of Brutus (I, 424-426) from Vergil's *Aeneid* (6, 817-821),[59] while the references to Gaius Fabricius Luscinus and Marcus Attilius Regulus (I, 435-436), two symbolic figures of the republican age, are inspired by Claudian's *In Rufinum* (3, 200-201).[60] Claudian's works, in particular, are very much influential in this final historical section of the book. The humanist, indeed, uses Claudian's texts to construct numerous lines through literary quotations: I, 458-459; 465-466; 520-521; 529; 547.[61] However, in this section Orazio resorts also to another chief historical

[59] *Porcaria*, I, 424-426 'Qui primum saevas pro libertate secures/ Instituit, natum leto nova bella moventem/ Implicuit Brutus': Verg. *Aen.* 6, 817-821 'vis et Tarquinios reges animamque/ superbam ultoris Bruti, fascisque videre receptos?/ *consulis imperium hic primus saevasque secures/ accipiet, natos que pater nova bella moventis*/ ad poenam pulchra pro libertate vocabit'.

[60] *Porcaria*, I, 435-437 'Tunc rudis imposito vivebat consul aratro,/ Fabricius parvo contentus munera regum/ Despexit': Claud. *Carm.* (*In Ruf.*) 3, 200-201 'Fabricius *parvo* spernebat *munera regum*/ sudabatque gravi *consul* Serranus *aratro*' (although Claudian is the more direct source, these lines recall also Verg. *Aen.* 6, 842-845 'quis Gracchi genus aut geminos, duo *fulmina* belli,/ *Scipiadas*, cladem Libyae, parvoque potentem/ *Fabricium* vel te sulco, Serrane, serentem?/ quo fessum rapitis, Fabii?').

[61] *Porcaria* I, 458-459 'Exitium quod Roma tulit! Communia Caesar/ Iura ferox in se leges et pacta resolvit': Claud. *Carm.* (*De bello Gildonico*) 15, 49-50 'postquam *iura ferox in se communia Caesar*/ transtulit'. *Porcaria* I, 465-466 'Nil adeo insigne est, quod non exacta vetustas/ Laeserit et longi labes madefecerit aevi': Claud. *Carm.* (*In Eutr.*) 18, 287-288 '*nil* adeo foedum, *quod non exacta vetustas*/ ediderit *longique* labor commiserit *aevi*'. *Porcaria* I, 520-521 'Finibus aut agris pellit vis nulla colonos,/

model, Livy, from whose work (Liv. 1, 48, 7) he draws, for example, the image of Tullia Minor, Servius Tullius' daughter and wife of Tarquin the Proud (*Porcaria* I, 418-421).[62] She is the legendary figure who killed her father and ran over his corpse with a carriage. So this scene represents the symbolic image of the violent and cruel power of Roman kings, which was eventually overturned and evolved into new forms of power.

Through these historical references, the poet shapes his historical *excursus* and, above all, conveys his political message. The first book ends with the celebration of papal government, depicted as the ultimate and most glorious stage of Rome's history. Here, in the *explicit*, the ennobling link between classical antiquity and the papal state is strengthened more decisively and will be reinforced in the second book.

4.2 Book II

The second book of the *Porcaria* is characterized by the same distinctive features as the first. Again, it is not possible to identify a single classical *auctoritas* employed in full as a structural model. It is true that the main model can still be identified in Vergil's *Aeneid*, but the Virgilian poem, along with the other classical epic models, is exploited mostly as a source of wording, verbal-metric patterns and clichés, so as to bring to life the epic landscape and the classical intonation of the poem.

An intense epic atmosphere is immediately evoked at the outset of the second book, which opens with the classical mythological image of Aurora who leaves her lover's bed (II, 1-2), a personification inspired by the opening of book XI of the *Aeneid* (it

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Non laribus miles veteres detrudit avitis': Claud. *Carm.* (*In Ruf.*) 3, 191-192 'laribus *pellit, detrudit avitis/ finibus*'. *Porcaria* I, 529 'Possumus humano necdum mansuescere cultu': Claud. *Carm.* (*In Ruf.*) 5, 42 '*humano* nescit *mansuescere cultu*'. *Porcaria* I, 547 'Mitior ex alta mortalia despicit aula': Claud. *Carm.* (*Paneg. Mallio Theodoro*) 17, 6 '*ex alta mortalia despicit* arce'.

[62] *Porcaria*, I, 418-421 'Filia non miseri carpentum in corpore patris/Erubuit largoque rotas agitare cruore,/ Deturpare lares, opibus regnoque potiri/ Per scelus. Heu fatum pervenit adusque/ minores': Liv. 1, 48, 7 'Sceleratum vicum vocant, quo amens agitantibus furiis sororis ac viri Tullia *per patris corpus carpentum egisse fertur* partemque sanguinis ac caedis paternae cruento vehiculo'.

recurs in other books of the Virgilian poem: IV, 584-585; XI, 459-460).[63] Straight after this mythological opening (followed by a brief evocation of the giant Typhoeus – II, 8-10 – based on the *Georgicae*, I, 279-278), Orazio depicts the dark landscape in Rome after the conspiracy, full of images of death and grief. As in the first book, he creates this grim tone by elaborating a lengthy funeral lament, delivered by Porcari's mother (II, 31-108). So, the two books show a symmetrical structure, both starting with a female threnody and then moving to an infernal setting.

Again, the threnody is created by employing the main classical poetic *auctoritates*: Vergil, Lucan, Ovid and Statius, with the significant addition of Claudian. Among these sources, as in the funeral lament in the first book, the role of Statius' *Thebais* is predominant. In particular, the quotations deployed by Orazio Romano, though merely linguistic, recall passages of the *Thebais* that may be connected with the idea of human suffering that the humanist wants to evoke. For instance, lines 47-48 are shaped on a line in the passage of the death of Eurydice's son, Opheltes (*Theb*. 6, 163);[64] while, other quotations (II, 81-87) are drawn from the speech of Menoeceus's father (*Theb*. 10, 702-712).[65] Thus, as in the previous section, but with a less emphatic tone, the threnody fulfills the function of hinting at the general concept of grief brought about by the conspiracy, seen as a thoughtless war. Here the process of combination of different sources is again extremely sophisticated, as the employment of a lengthy literary quotation from Claudian shows: line 91, 'Nondum luce graves et pubescentibus annis',

[63] *Porcaria* II, 1-2 'Liquerat interea candens Aurora cubile/ Coniugis et radiis orbem lustrarat Apollo': Verg. *Aen*. 11, 1 'Oceanum *interea* surgens *Aurora* reliquit'; *Ibid*. 4, 584-585 'Et iam prima novo spargebat lumine terras/ Tithoni croceum linquens *Aurora cubile*'; *Ibid*. 9, 459-460.

[64] *Porcaria*, II, 47-48: 'Obvius hos ne mihi lusus, haec gaudia matri/ nate refers tandem?': Stat. *Theb*. 6, 163 'nulla ex te *gaudia matri*'.

[65] *Porcaria*, II, 81-87 'Canitiem obtestor, nostros orbare penates/ Ne properes, animis iam frena calentibus adde./ Si te verus amor, pietas si vera teneret,/ Non patriam insidiis divum nec fraude parentem/ Captares. Patres abolere in pace repostos/ Quid nisi triste malum? Nimis o fera gloria regno/ Ventosumque decus tumidum te insistere suasit': Stat. *Theb*. 10, 708 'ne perge *meos orbare penates*'; *Ibid*. 702 'ille monet: Ne *frena* animo permitte *calenti*'; *Ibid*. 711-712 'ibi *gloria* tantum/ *ventosumque decus* titulique in morte latentes'. The same passage of the book X of the *Thebais* is used in the first book of the *Porcaria*, I, 233-234.

appears to be directly derived from the *De Raptu Proserpinae*, 2, 50 ('nondum luce gravem nec pubescentibus alte').

After the threnody, the setting shifts again to Hades, where an unusual tumult takes place involving dead souls (II, 109-119): again, this scene is inspired by a similar infernal uproar represented in a passage of Statius' *Thebais* (*Theb*. 8, 14-20). It is in this tumult that the figure of Scipio appears. He is shocked by the fight and worried that a new war is impending, so he resumes his mortal body and goes back to Rome. Orazio Romano draws this scene (II, 141-161) from the similar episode in book VI of Lucan's *Pharsalia*, in which the sorceress Erichtho makes a dead soldier come back to life by means of a morbid magic ritual (Lucan, 6, 750-762). The representation in the *Porcaria* shares the same vivid tone as the classical source, although less macabre: a descriptive style that is achieved by means of lively images that recall the vigorous colour of Lucan depiction.

When Scipio goes back to Rome, he is shocked by the decline of the city, which is full of ruins and people who look very different to what he remembered. He is so stunned by this sight that he starts to cry and to recall nostalgically the ancient glory of Rome; but, after his lament, he comes across Castel Sant'Angelo, St Peter's and the new architectural buildings of the city, and suddenly is astonished by the magnificence of papal constructions. The Roman hero also sees people working to build new edifices, under their supervisor, whom I was able to identify with Beltramo di Martino da Varese, the leader of the architectural works planned by Nicholas V.[66] So, through Scipio's eyes, Orazio represents the ambitious renovation of the city and evokes Nicholas V's plan as a symbol of papal power. The description of the city (II, 154-305)

[66] On this historical character see E. MÜNTZ, *Les Arts à la Cour des Papes pendant le XVe et le XVIe siècle* (Paris: E. Thorin, 1878-1882), III, 1882, pp. 83-84; A. BERTOLOTTI, *Artisti lombardi a Roma nei secoli XV, XVI, XVII. Studi e ricerche negli archivi romani* (Milano: Hoepli, 1881) [anastatic reprint, Sala Bolognese], I, pp. 15-16.

is mostly framed by means of references to Vergil's *Aeneid*. In particular, the allusion to one of the most famous iconic places of ancient Rome, the *Tarpeias rupes* (II, 154), is modelled on a Virgilian line (*Aen*. 8, 347)[67], while the symbolic depiction of the entrance to the papal palace (II, 278-298) is based on the picture of the entrance to Vergil's Hades (*Aen*. 6, 273-281), the only difference being that the evil personifications of the infernal setting are converted into virtues that stand in front of the papal seat. In this section, the pervasive use of descriptive motifs derived from Vergil is mainly aimed at conveying an ideal image of the classical Roman world. But it is remarkable that beside the model of Vergil, Orazio Romano recalls Martial's first epigram to compare hyperbolically the architectural works built under Nicholas V and the most magnificent buildings of antiquity (II, 271-275), creating the same comparison that Martial made in relation to the *Amphitheatrum Flavium* (Mart. I, 1, 1-6)[68]. These elements demonstrate that the classical dimension in the *Porcaria*, especially in this section, has a double nature, symbolic and verbal. On one hand it is linked with the symbolic evocation of iconic images belonging to the classical Roman tradition (building, places, characters); on the other it is produced by the deployment of verbal expressions derived from classical poetry and immediately perceivable as related to the most glorious classical literature.

The following section consists of a historical account of Scipio's biography. The Roman hero meets the librarian of the Vatican Library, the humanist Giovanni Tortelli, and he finds him reading aloud a book about his own heroic deeds. This metaliterary

[67] *Porcaria*, II, 154 'Tarpeiasque procul quondam Capitolia rupes': Verg. *Aen*. 8, 347 'hinc ad *Tarpeiam sedem et Capitolia* ducit' (a reference to Silius Italicus's *Punica* can also be recognized: Sil. *Pun*. 3, 623 'aurea *Tarpeia* ponet *Capitolia rupe*').

[68] *Porcaria*, II, 271-275 'Pyramidum sileat celebris fastigia Memphis/ Mauseolique labor, cedat Babylonia moles/ Et quae marmoreis late suffulta columnis/ Tot simul ingentes Asiae struxere labores/ Templa solo Triviae penitus fundata palustri': Mart. *Epigr*. I, 1, 1-6 'Barbara *pyramidum sileat* miracula *Memphis*,/Assyrius iactet nec *Babylona labor*;/ nec *Triviae templo* molles laudentur Iones,/ dissimulet Delon cornibus ara frequens;/aere nec vacuo pendentia *Mausolea*/laudibus immodicis Cares in astra ferant'.

episode, which seems to recall Petrarch's *Africa*, allows the author to introduce another brief historical *excursus*, in which Scipio himself narrates part of his biography (II, 315-413): the main classical source of this account is Livy (XXXIII-XXXVII), as usual when Orazio Romano makes direct references to Roman history.[69] However, it is significant that in this *excursus* the humanist introduces a poetic simile in which Scipio's deeds are compared to the labours of Hercules (II, 339-347),[70] a parallel that is inspired by the long section on this myth in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (IX, 98-272) and, less directly, by the passage on Hercules in Vergil's *Aeneid* (8, 285-305). This recherché simile produces a more sophisticated tone in the historical digression and loftier poetic diction.[71] The purpose of celebrating ancient Rome in connection with the contemporary government of popes emerges plainly in the closing section of the poem, where Scipio meets Nicholas V and glorifies his political power. So, the exemplary role of Africanus as an ennobling link between past and present appears clearly at the conclusion of the *Porcaria* and demonstrates the symbolic function that the classical legacy plays in the poem.

It is worth dwelling on the symmetrical structure of this short epic, divided into two books. Both books open with a funeral lament, then shift into the underworld, and finally end with a symmetrical conclusion. In the first book the *excursus* on Roman history presents papal domination as a glorious age of Rome, a passage that can be seen

[69] On the use of Livy in Renaissance epic see EVERSON, p. 85: she underlines the importance of the Third Decade of Livy as a model for both the epic narration of Scipio's deeds and for the epic representation of wars against invaders and foreign enemies.

[70] *Porcaria*, II, 339-347 'Mille licet dederit Iuno implacata labores/ Atque humeris caelum tulerit spoliumque leonis/ Lerneamque datis facibus tremefecerit idram/ Ileumque Pholumque Erimantiadumque furorem/Stimphalidasque arcu, vel si cumulentur in unum/ Idra et Scilla et aper triplicis Gerionis et umbrae,/Antheo vires tellus infundat et ater/ Cerberus horrendis feriat latratibus auras:/ Omnia vix nostros poterunt aequare labores'.

[71] In the Roman age this myth circulates widely, conveying the image of *gravitas*, and the figure Hercules was deified under Augustus: P. FEDELI, 'Le intersezioni dei generi e dei modelli', in *Lo spazio letterario di Roma antica*, pp. 375-397: 397. One of the most important works in Italian Humanism on Hercules is Coluccio Salutati's *De laboribus Herculis*: *Colucii Salutati De laboribus Herculis*, ed. by B. L. Ullman (Turici: In aedibus Thesaurimundi, 1951).

as recalling the prophecy in book VI of *Aeneid;* while the second book ends with Scipio visiting Rome and seeing with his own eyes the magnificence of papal power. The image of Scipio who sees the golden future of Rome can also be regarded as a parallel to Scipio's dream in Petrarch's *Africa*, where Scipio's father takes him up to the stars and from there he points out the walls of Carthage, and foretells his son's great victory. This poetic section, as is well known, is inspired by Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis* in book VI of *De republica*, where the heroic ancestor Scipio Africanus appears to his grandson Scipio Aemilianus while he sleeps and shows him the earth and the universe, predicting him a glorious future. This episode was well known in the Middle Ages thanks to Macrobius' commentary on Cicero, *De republica*. In Petrarch's *Africa* the golden future of Rome is predicted to Scipio in his dream, while in Orazio Romano's reinterpretation, Scipio himself goes to Rome to see the city with his own eyes. This re-writing, in which the classic hero is directly transferred to the prosperity of fifteenth-century Rome, is aimed again at conveying effectively the poet's propagandistic view.

5. The government of the 'papal prince' and the political perspective in the poem

One of the most remarkable aspects of the *Porcaria* is that it is utterly permeated by a secular dimension. Although the poem revolves around the figure of the pope, the political perspective that comes to light in the text is related neither to religious issues concerning papal power, nor to the problem of the juridical legitimacy of his government. These matters had been crucial in the political debate of the Middle Ages (and in some cases they were still relevant in the fifteenth century), but with the development of humanist culture they started to be regarded in different terms and became more interconnected with new political issues.

Unlike the *Porcaria*, this religious sphere has a prominent position in another text

written on the same conspiracy: Pietro Godi's *De coniuratione Porcaria* (1453), a dialogue that is mostly devoted to bestowing legitimacy on the papal government from a religious and juridical point of view. It displays a political analysis mostly influenced by medieval ideologies, which considered papal dominion in terms of a universalistic institution (such as the Roman Empire), rather than a political state.[72] On the other hand, Orazio Romano's poem turns out to be more centred on a secular conception of the papacy: this is a standpoint that characterizes also Alberti's epistle and other literary works produced by humanists in the same period, although with different outcomes, as we shall see. The divide between the *Porcaria* and Godi's dialogue emerges also in the employment of utterly different sources: Orazio Romano draws on classical texts, while Godi supports his argument with a widespread use of quotation from the Bible.

So, the secular dimension in the *Porcaria* emerges in its symbolic use of the classical legacy, which is aimed at evoking political and ethical ideas that had become fundamental in the humanist age. In this regard, the fifteenth-century political view is distant from the religious conception of power prevailing in the Middle Ages, when the right to govern was mainly considered as bestowed by God, while now, in a more personalistic political system, rulers (even popes) resorted to the concept of the prince's *virtus* as the main value on which to found their authority.[73] In this scenario, the most effective contribution to strengthen political sovereignty was made by the humanists' literary activity, which was intended to celebrate virtues and feats of rulers and, in doing so, legitimize them. Orazio Romano's poem reflects this general approach, but it displays other specific ideological elements that make it a product of the Renaissance papal environment, and, in particular, of Nicholas V's cultural politics.

The secular dimension in Orazio Romano's text appears to be based on the new

[72] On this work see MODIGLIANI, *Congiurare*, pp. 176-188; D'ELIA, pp. 227-228 .
[73] Cfr. SKINNER, *Visions*, pp. 122-123.

centralized political ideology that arose around the middle of the century in Italy and that characterized decisively the papal domain, especially Nicholas V's rule. So, in the *Porcaria*, the conspiracy against the pope is seen not as a threat to religious authority, but as an attack on the papal state and its subjects. Moreover, the image of the pope is close to the figure of a prince, as revealed by this telling line: 'Illa mihi visa est digno sub principe vera/ libertas' (I, 535-536). The defining attributes of papal power are represented as the distinctive traits of the monarchical government: the rule of a single man who is able to keep his realm in a condition of peace and wealth. Thus Orazio Romano's standpoint coincides with the traditional pro-monarchic ideology, which depicts the princely regime as the only source of peacefulness and prosperity for the people. This point is shown by the depiction of Nicholas V's rule (I, 487-490):

…legum quo principe virtus,/ quo tranquilla quies fulget, quo paxque piumque/ iustitiaeque decus, qualem non pertulit aetas/ nostra nec antiquis potuit conferre vetustas.

This perspective emerges again plainly in a significant comparison between the papal state, where people live in freedom and peace, and the rest of Italy, racked by wars (I, 514-521):

Cernimus Italiam regisque ducisque sub arma/ implicitam furiis bellorum et sortis acerbae./ Nos vero immunes belli circumque ruinis/ inclusi nulla tamen obsidione tenemur./ Felicem tanto vitam sub principe tuti/ ducimus et nulli rerum violata facultas,/ finibus aut agris pellit vis nulla colonos,/ non laribus miles veteres detrudit avitis.

The pope is once more represented as a 'papal prince', as revealed by the significant words 'Felicem tanto vitam sub principe tuti ducimus'.

In the final part of the first book, as we have seen, Nicholas V's government is celebrated as the new thriving age of Rome. The humanist creates this eulogy through an uneasy parallel between the ancient Roman republic and the papal era, which is considered as a continuation of the golden age of the city, with the fundamental achievement of the Christian religion. So, according to this standpoint, papal rule

brought to the Romans not only a prosperous state, but also the 'true religion'. Indeed, in Orazio Romano's portrayal of the Roman republic the main drawback is the pagan faith (I, 443-451), a negative aspect that is eventually removed by popes. The celebration of the Christian religion as a component of the papal government is clearly detectable in Scipio's words addressed to Nicholas V: II, 488-492 'Fidei manet alta supernae/ Hic pia religio verum caput orbis et omne/ Imperii decus et Petri, cui sanguine primus/ Partus honos templi caeloque infusa potestas./ Ergo iterum altricem mundi pater aspice terram'.

However, despite the occasional observations on religious issues, the poem is entirely dominated by a secular dimension and revolves around a centralized political ideology. It is undeniable that the employment of classical icons of the Roman republic in a poem devoted to commemorate the papal centralized state can be considered inconsistent.[74] Nevertheless, this contradiction turns out to be less relevant if we consider again how these classical images are used in the poem. These figures, as already observed, have to be seen as literary symbols, rather than icons of specific and exclusivist political ideologies. This exemplary function emerges if we analyse how the character of Scipio is used both in the *Porcaria* and in humanist literature of the same period, where (as we shall see) he does not represent a symbol of a specific institution, but an image of virtue relevant to any kind of government. Indeed, in the epic poem both Cato and Scipio are enlisted to legitimate Nicholas V's rule. The first refers to Nicholas V as 'the bishop who gave to Rome the most valued freedom' (I, 359-360), the latter delivers a lengthy accolade to the pope, who is described as a 'happy prince, higher than any power and greater than any wealth, population or arms' (II, 496-497).

[74] This inconsistency was highlighted by D'ELIA, pp. 218-223.

Moreover, the conspiracy itself is represented as a tyrannical attempt to subvert the fair regime of the pope, as is shown by the image of Caesar, recalled as a negative exemplar of a *dictator* and associated with the conspirator (I, 266-267; I, 329-330). If we contextualize the role of Caesar's image in the poem, it reveals that Porcari's plot is condemned as a despotic plan aimed at subverting a just monarchic government.[75] Conversely, despite the frequent employment of classical republican icons, the papal-princely state is not criticized as an autocratic regime, but is eulogistically praised as a model of fair rule. In this princely political perspective the plotter is now seen as the tyrant who illegitimately threatens the monarchic state and it is no accident that this centralized political standpoint has a close connection with the cultural politics that Nicholas V developed in the same period.

This developing idea of statecraft was at the core of Nicholas V's policy throughout his papacy. In this respect, he has been defined by Paolo Prodi as the first pope of the Renaissance, the pope who made a remarkable effort in strengthening and consolidating his political power, seeking to construct a state similar to a monarchy, or a *signoria*, and making it a 'principato secolare-ecclesiastico'.[76] In Prodi's compelling analysis, Nicholas V's papacy is considered as a form of princely rule and his figure is defined as that of a 'papal prince'. This centralizing process had already been undertaken by Eugene IV, but it is only with Nicholas V that the entire papal policy goes in this specific direction. Firstly, this evolution concerned administrative policy. He tried to consolidate his power by means of an extensive administrative reform, which was based

[75] Also other historical texts presented the conspiracy as a tyrannical attempt aimed at creating a *signoria* ruled by Porcari; nevertheless this seems to be a biased opinion, spread by the pope's propagandistic channels to isolate the plotters from the rest of the Romans and discredit Porcari's political intent, which, on the contrary, was probably inspired by republican ideologies. Cfr. MODIGLIANI, *Congiurare*, p. 73. On this issue see also the following chapter on Leon Battista Alberti's *Porcaria coniuratio*.

[76] PRODI, p. 43. He claims that 'con Niccolò V il papato [...] si politicizza, nel senso che fa propri principi di azione dello stato nella forma allora più avanzata' (p. 91); 'l'ideologia monarchica [...] si incarna nella persona del papa, nella sua figura fisica e in quella pubblica' (p. 92). The following brief overview on Nicholas V's policy is based on Prodi's analysis of the papacy during the Renaissance, where specific attention is paid to Nicholas V (PRODI, pp. 91-126).

on creating a new class of bureaucracy, made up of loyal officials. Moreover, he sought to shape the Curia on the model of a court, by establishing a new system of relationships and a strict official protocol, and transforming the baronial aristocracy into a court society. Beside these measures, this centralized ideology also decisively permeates the curial cultural environment, since under Nicholas V several humanists were engaged in official positions and made contribution to politics.

Orazio Romano's *Porcaria* represents a striking literary example of this broader scenario. A key aspect in this political process was the foundation of new cultural principles conceived as a backing to papal power. Humanists and artists were deeply involved in constructing an ideal image of the papacy and, thanks to them, the new monarchic values applied to the papacy did not remain abstract, but they were embodied in the figure of the pope and, above all, in his artistic and literary representations. In this respect, Orazio Romano's poem is one of the most important texts to be focusing on. The pivotal tenets of Nicholas's cultural politics can be recognized as the major ideological elements in the *Porcaria*. From this point of view, the poem reveals how the new princely figure of the pope is shaped: this image of papal power is devoid of medieval attributes related to the religious sphere, but is created by referring to classical models and images. This re-appropriation of classical antiquity is a pivotal element in this cultural process in Renaissance papacies and it plays a prominent role in constructing a new symbolism of power (pope Paul III, for instance, was celebrated by recalling Alexander the Great's deeds).[77] In particular, in the *Porcaria* papal authority tends to be represented as concrete political rule, by deploying classical exemplary figures. In this representation, the two dimensions of Rome, the holy and secular city continuously overlap: this conflation does not show universalistic traits any more (as the

[77] PRODI, pp. 97-98. Cfr. also E. SCHRÖTER, 'Der Vatikan als Hügel Apollons und der Musen. Kunst und Panegyrik von Nikolaus V. bis Julius II', *Römische Quartalsschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte*, 75 (1980), pp. 208–40.

image of the Holy Roman Empire did), but it appears in the new figure of the pope, who embodies both political and religious power. In Orazio Romano's poem, the papal rule is celebrated as the highest form of government, which takes care of the whole sphere of human life: public and private, secular and religious (I, 482-494). This is a princely regime in which we can find unified the traditional medieval idea of centralized religious authority, ruled by the pope as the heir of Peter, and the monarchic ideology that prizes the government of a single ruler, as in the classical pro-monarchic tradition.[78]

In addition, the conspiracy is not regarded as an attack against the single figure of the pope, but against the whole city of Rome, which embodies the highest concept of fatherland, as is revealed by several passages of the poem (I, 235-236 'Insidias totiens patriae patribusque parantem/ Turbantemque animos populorum urbisque quietem'; I, 325 'Qui patriam et sanctos ausus violare penates'; II, 432-433 'Iamdudum infremuit tumidos de plebe rebelles/ Rumor apud manes patriae insaevisse parenti'). This is a recurrent element in humanist texts devoted to conspiracy and is aimed at isolating the conspirators from the rest of the civic community and condemning the conspiracy as a dangerous subversive attack against the whole public sphere. Moreover in the *Porcaria*, besides the political disapproval of the plot expressed by Cato and Scipio (and generally throughout the whole poem), Orazio Romano condemns the event also from a universal perspective, by the lengthy threnodies inspired by Statius' *Thebais* that depict the plot as a tyrannical abuse and as the cause of human grief.

Moreover, the poem shares some crucial ideological perspectives with other literary works related to this conspiracy and in general to Nicholas V's papacy. In particular, the foremost element celebrated by writers is the architectural restoration of Rome planned by Nicholas V, aimed at reconstructing the city and renovating its buildings, palaces,

[78] For this monarchic ideology see SKINNER, *Visions*, pp. 31-33.

fortifications, aqueducts and streets. Many texts, such as Orazio Romano's *Porcaria*, Giuseppe Brivio's *Conformatio Curiae Romanae*, Giannozzo Manetti's *Vita Nicolai V* and Pietro Godi's dialogue, mention the renovation of the city and place it in connection with the plot against the pope. So, both the conspiracy and the architectural plan emerge as major topics in literature and historiography devoted to Nicholas V.[79] In this respect, these matters represent the ideal image of papal political power, from different but complementary perspectives. In the *Porcaria*, the restoration of Rome is described in its concrete development by means of the eulogistic image given through Scipio's eyes (II, 241-276): the Roman hero sees men working to erect new buildings and he is impressed by the magnificent constructions. So, the conspiracy is the event that put in danger the prosperity gained by Romans under the papal government; while the restoration of Rome is the tangible image of this flourishing city, the symbol of the pope's princely government, which is protected from any threat by its fortifications. Both these ideas had a central position in Nicholas V's own political guidelines, since they appear tightly connected in his last will and testament drawn up by the pope and quoted at the end of Giannozzo Manetti's *Vita Nicolai V*. Nicholas V's testament sheds light on the crucial implications that the conspiracy had in this historical scenario. After giving an overview on all threats to the papacy throughout the centuries, Nicholas V explicitly recalls Porcari's plot, and then claims that fortifications are the only means of keeping the papal city safe; thus he encourages later popes to carry on his architectural plan:

> Nonne his temporibus Stephanus Porcarius nobilis Romanus et quidam alii perditi homines paulo ante reperti sunt, qui in nos conspirare et in caput nostrum temere et sceleste admodum coniurare presumpserunt? Verum coniuratione oportuno tempore omnipotentis Dei gratia ac continuis Petri et Pauli favoribus paulo post detecta, conspiratores ipsi in flagranti crimine deprehensi, capti et ultimo – ut merebantur – crucis ac suspendi supplicio affecti periere. Has quidem et veteres et recentes persequutiones romani pontifices, nullo unquam ut iure existimandum et credimus tempore pertulissent, si novis et expugnabilibus munitionibus sese,

[79] Miglio considered the architectural plan as a key topic in historiography on Nicholas V's papacy. He claims also that historical texts devoted to popes are usually characterized by recurrent themes, seen by humanists as defining elements of a specific papacy: cfr. MIGLIO, *Storiografia pontificia*, p. 98.

praesertim intra Urbem, protexissent […]. ...Venerationes vestras in Domino exhortamur quatenus praedicta constructionum nostrarum opera inchoata prosequi ac perficere et absolvere velitis, ut successores nostri, externorum tumultuum domesticarumque persecutionum penitus omninoque expertes, gregem dominicum sibi ab omnipotenti Deo commissum…in viam salutis eterne traducere possint et valeant.[80]

These words hint at the pope's aim of defeating any kind of uprising, reinforcing his state. Nicholas V's majestic plan probably was not directly due to conspiracy and it had been drawn up earlier, but the pope's last words suggest that he found a stronger legitimacy and justification for this project in the conspiracy itself.[81]

Another political issue that emerges in the *Porcaria* and in other historical works on Porcari's plot concerns the punishment inflicted on the conspirators. This matter is closely linked with the idea of clemency, which some humanists emphasized to the pope, urging him to be merciful with the plotters, as Brivio does in his *Conformatio curiae Romanae*.[82] These themes were also at the core of fifteenth-century treatises on the 'perfect prince', where justice was considered the chief virtue of rulers, recalling directly the classical thought of Cicero (*De officiis*, I, 20). As Skinner observed, the indispensable requirement of justice must be *clementia* (*De officiis*, I, 88), 'the avoidance of cruelty and violence': in this regard, it is 'the sole guarantee of popular affection, while love of the people is in turn the sole guarantee of governmental security'.[83] Again, the *Porcaria* turns out to be centred on a princely ideology, but, in the specific scenario brought about by the conspiracy, the idea of clemency also had repercussions in the actual historical context, where the pope was threatened by the

[80] MANETTI, *De vita*, III, §§ 16-18. It is significant that the first version of the testament (in the codex 914 of the Biblioteca Riccardiana in Florence, ff. 55r-65r) did not include the section about both the threats to the papacy and the building plan: Manetti probably added this sections (aimed at justifying the pope's politics) to intensify the eulogistic image of the pope he intended to provide (MANETTI, *De vita*, p. LV).
[81] On this architectonic plan see C. W. WESTFALL, *In this Most Perfect Paradise: Alberti, Nicholas V, and the Invention of Conscious Urban Planning in Rome, 1447-55* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1974); MODIGLIANI, *Congiurare*, pp. 54-60.
[82] TOMMASINI, pp. 111-123: lines 330-375.
[83] SKINNER, *Visions*, p. 125.

prospect of further rebellions and alliances between the plotters and Italian states.[84] Thus he had to prevent this danger by spreading the image of a just ruler who reacted legitimately against enemies to defend his subjects, but was also able to act mercifully not to aggravate the conflict.

In addition, in most texts on Porcari's plot, the allusion to clemency is associated with both the image of the architectural plan and the image of the just government of Nicholas V. In both Brivio and Orazio Romano's works, the most powerful defences against subversive attacks are considered the virtue of the 'papal-prince' and the massive fortification of the city, an idea that shines through Manetti's testament as well. In the *Porcaria*, all these crucial themes are encapsulated in Scipio's final words to Nicholas V, in which the humanist recalls again the unspoken connection between the pope's regime and the golden age of Rome, another central tenet of the poem (II, 447-454):

Hosne iuvat saevire, iterum quod moenia rursus/ Extruis et Romam, si qua est, insignibus ornas/ Extollisque opibus pacemque impendis et annum/ Laetitiae exortem bellis, unde aurea fulget/ Roma et congestis opibus cumulata triumphat,/ Reddere praereptos iterum dignatus honores/ Et civile decus, census augere paternos/ Omnibus et maior rerum data copia templis?

These words can be regarded as the core of Orazio Romano's political ideology. Here all major topics associated with the pope's propagandistic image appear unified: the clemency of Nicholas V, who is considered a just prince; the celebration of his architectural plan, which represents his power; the eulogistic depiction of his government, as a new glorious period.

6. Scipio Africanus and the ambivalence of the humanist literary symbol

Orazio Romano's evocation of Scipio and the Roman Republic, as we have seen, has the literary function of building up the propagandistic perspective of the poem, but

[84] On this historical context and the standpoint of other sources see MODIGLIANI, *Congiurare*, p. 50.

without the purpose of commending republican ideology in opposition to monarchic tenets. The golden age of Rome is glorified as the most magnificent period in the history of the city, equalled and even surpassed only by the contemporary papal domination. From this point of view, the contradiction pointed out by D'Elia in relation to the employment of Scipio as a republican symbol appears less relevant.[85] For instance, in the passage where Africanus is shocked by the ruins of Rome and cries over the decadence of his ancient fatherland is not to be seen as an 'unflattering portrait' of Nicholas's Rome. This scene does not represents a critical contention addressed to the modern city of popes, but it represents a literary motif that is recurrent in humanist literature (such as in Poggio Bracciolini's or Enea Silvio Piccolomini's works).[86] To be sure, the eulogistic dimension of the *Porcaria* emerges continuously. Scipio's negative description of the new Rome is a mere rhetorical device, by means of which the author leads to the celebration of Nicholas V's restoration of the city. Indeed, the representation of the new magnificent architectural works follows immediately after Scipio's lament. This encomiastic image is described by Scipio himself, so that, again, the link with the past, represented by the Roman hero, is used by the humanist to commemorate his patron.

The same ideological ambiguity can be recognized in several humanist texts that deal with Scipio, starting from Petrarch's works, which founded the myth of this historical

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[85] D'ELIA, p. 222.

[86] See the passage of Bracciolini's *De varietate fortunae* quoted in EUGENIO GARIN, *La letteratura degli umanisti*, in *Letteratura italiana*, ed. E. Cecchi - N. Sapegno (Milano: Garzanti, 1966), III, p. 59: the edition of the text is POGGIO BRACCIOLINI, *De varietate fortunae*. ed. by I. Merisalu (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemi, 1993). In addition, it is worth recalling an important passage from an untitled treatise by Piccolomini quoted in PRODI, pp. 33-38: AENEAS SILVIUS PICCOLOMINI, *Opera inedita*, ed. by G. Cugnoni, *Atti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei*, III, 8 (1883), p. 581. The text, written in 1453, reflects the new princely policy pursued by Renaissance popes and, as far as I could see, it shows significant elements in common with the *Porcaria*; in particular, Piccolomini, like Orazio Romano, does not avoid mentioning the crumbling condition of Rome, but he refers to this aspect in order to support his claim for a strong papal state, a new kind of rule that includes secular and temporal power.

character as a literary hero and the highest emblem of the Roman world.[87] Although the eulogy of Scipio has often been considered in comparison with Petrarch's admiration for Caesar,[88] the two figures are not to be regarded as symbols of a strict opposition between political regimes. As Ugo Dotti has pointed out, 'Petrarca vede in Scipione il principe accanto all'eroe'[89] and his idea of Scipio is closely connected with the image of the ideal hero, rather than with republican tenets. Form this point of view, Petrarch's idea anticipates fifteenth-century literary works, where the excellence of Scipio was considered as based on ethics and virtues, which were the central pillars of humanist political thought.

After one of the most popular texts that dealt with Scipio in the early *Quattrocento*, Giovanni Aurispa's translation of Dialogue XII of Lucian's *Dialogues of the dead* (1424-25),[90] the most famous work on the Roman hero was the controversy on Scipio and Caesar between Poggio Bracciolini and Guarino Veronese (1435).[91] Here the unspoken overtone placed by Poggio on the figure of Scipio proves to have some significant elements in common with the function he would have in the *Porcaria*, around twenty years later. It is true that this dispute was not just a rhetorical exercise, but an actual political discussion that involved the two humanists as representatives of different governments. Poggio prizes Scipio in connection with his attack on Caesar,

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[87] See V. FERA, 'Petrarca e Scipione', in *Scipione l'Africano. Un eroe tra Rinascimento e Barocco*, Atti del Convegno di studi di Roma, Academia Belgica, 24-25 maggio 2012, ed by. W. Geerts, M. Caciorgna, C. Bossu (Milano: Jaka Book, 2014), pp. 131-154; A. S. BERNARDO, *Petrarch, Scipio and the Africa: the Birth of Humanism's Dream* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1962).

[88] On the figure of Caesar in Renaissance see M. MCLAUGHLIN, 'Empire, Eloquence and Military Genius: Julius Caesar in Renaissance Italy', in *A Companion to Julius Caesar*, ed. by M. Griffin (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), pp. 335-55 (on Petrarch, pp. 337-339); see also G. MARTELLOTTI, 'Petrarca e Cesare', *Scritti Petrarcheschi* (Padova: Antenore, 1983), pp. 77-89.

[89] U. DOTTI, *La città dell'uomo. L'umanesimo da Petrarca a Montaigne* (Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1992), pp. 139-158: 143. Dotti remarks also that in Petrarch's letters to Cola di Rienzo, the eulogistic evocation of the Republican age of Rome was contingent upon the specific political purpose of that period, but was not a general stance on the superiority of Republican regimes, to the extent that in one of the same letters Petrarch celebrates Augustus and his figure is proposed as a model for Cola: DOTTI, p. 147.

[90] On this text and its widespread diffusion in the fifteenth century see G. CREVATIN, 'Scipione e la fortuna di Petrarca nell'Umanesimo. Un nuovo manoscritto della *Collatio inter Scipionem Alexandrum Hanibalem et Pyrrum*', *Rinascimento*, 17 (1977), pp. 3-30

[91] On this dispute see bibliography mentioned in note 6 in the previous chapter.

ascribing to the emperor the image of the parricide of his fatherland and expanding the theory on the correlation between republican government and the growth of culture.[92] Nevertheless the symbolic role of Scipio is more multifaceted and is not a pure icon of Republicanism.[93] In particular, he is celebrated as a symbol of the safeguard of civic institutions and loyalty to the fatherland, a devotion that is preserved even when the Roman hero is exiled for unfair reasons. From this perspective, the ideal link between Scipio and Cosimo de' Medici, the ruler of Florence that Poggio wishes implicitly to celebrate, emerges clearly. Poggio wrote his work in a crucial moment, in 1434, when Cosimo returned to Florence after his exile (caused by the opposition of the anti-Medici party) and started to consolidate his power by means of institutional reforms, which gradually transformed the republic into a more centralized government under the control of the Medici.[94] So, the figure of Scipio is shaped to evoke Cosimo as the *pater patriae*: the man who is led by love and loyalty for his motherland, which is stronger than unfair allegations coming from enemies of the state.

The unspoken parallel between the Roman hero and Cosimo reveals the ambiguous political traits of the image of Scipio, who, as later in the *Porcaria*, is used as a literary vehicle to symbolize civic virtues in a propagandistic perspective. A parallel with the *Porcaria* can be seen also in the employment of Scipio in the representation of the threat of the civil war: like Nicholas V, Cosimo saved his state from a subversive attack, and they both are connected (though in different ways) with the Roman hero. These considerations emphasize again that this exemplary image is not univocally linked with republican ideals, but is associated with more ambivalent political implications. In this ideological scenario Scipio stands for more generic civic values, embodying the *optimus civis*: a figure that can be applied unconditionally to both republican government and

[92] MCLAUGHLIN, *Empire*, pp. 334-335; CANFORA, *La controversia*, p. 118.
[93] G. CREVATIN, 'La politica'.
[94] CREVATIN, 'La politica', p. 289.

princely rule.

Almost thirty years later, the image of the *optimus civis* is represented again by employing the exemplar of Scipio in Giovanni Pontano's *De principe* (1468). In the *incipit* of the treatise the Roman hero is recalled as an *exemplum* of youth and wisdom; later in the text, he is evoked again as both an exemplar of the *virtus* of *continentia* and an embodiment of the classic tenet of 'know thyself'.[95] Scipio is mentioned with this specific symbolic role related to the virtue of *continentia* also in Diomede Carafa's *Memoriale a Francesco d'Aragona* (dated before 1476) and Francesco Patrizi's *De regno* (1481-1484), where he is recalled as an *exemplum* of abstinence from passions.[96] These treatises reveal that in the last decades of the fifteenth century Scipio is enlisted in political texts explicitly devoted to princely statecraft. This transition shows how the literary image of Scipio was not a univocal symbol of Republicanism, but, conversely, he gradually became the personification of classical virtues recalled to evoke a parallel with current rulers, such as Cosimo de' Medici and Nicholas V, whose figures were linked with an emerging centralized political ideology. This link appears more overtly in the second half of the century, when the Roman hero is directly connected to the image of the ideal prince. The evolution of the myth of Scipio as a princely hero is now complete.

7. The eclectic use of the classical legacy and a new political symbolism

The analysis of the *Porcaria* has shown the extensive and eclectic presence of classical sources in this humanist work. The main model is Vergil's *Aeneid*, the most

[95] PONTANO, *De Principe*: § 5; § 14. For a more general analysis see D. CANFORA, 'Riflessioni di Giovanni Pontano su Cesare e Scipione', in *Confini dell'Umanesimo letterario. Studi in onore di Francesco Tateo*, ed. by M. De Nichilo (*et al*.) (Roma: Roma nel Rinascimento, 2003), pp. 187-99.
[96] PERSICO, *Diomede Carafa*; FRANCESCO PATRIZI, *De regno et regis institutione* (Parigi: Galeotus a Prato, 1531): for the passages where Scipio is evoked see Cappelli's commentary to Pontano's *De Principe* (note to § 14).

prominent classical epic text in antiquity and, moreover, the chief source for shaping the infernal setting of the *Porcaria*. Another important *auctoritas* is Lucan, who is employed in order to establish an unspoken connection between the conspiracy against the pope and the most famous civil war narrated in a classical poem. However, besides these models, the *Porcaria* turns out to be built up by multifarious references to different sources and the humanist proves to be a learned and quite sophisticated poet, who had a considerable knowledge of ancient poetry, as confirmed also by the fact that he was engaged in the translation of the *Iliad*.

In particular, the centrality of eulogistic elements in the *Porcaria* links directly this humanist poem to the model of Claudian, from whose works Orazio Romano draws many literary quotations, as we have seen. The most significant trait that correlates the *Porcaria* and Claudian's works is the close interaction of typical patterns of different genres: epic poetry and epideictic rhetoric. This is a defining and innovative feature of Claudian's historical-epic poems, panegyrics and invectives, which have been defined as informed by a process of 'panegirizzazione dell'epica' or 'epicizzazione dell'epidittica':[97] a development that ended up with the creation of a mixed genre of poetry, which enjoyed a great fortune from late antiquity onwards. This conflation of eulogy and epic is a crucial component in Orazio Romano's work as well, but this is not the only trait in common with the poet of late antiquity. It is likely that the humanist draws from this classical model also the short structure of the poem, consisting only of two books, like Claudian's invectives *In Rufinum* and *In Eutropium*. From this point of view the *Porcaria* can be defined as a 'short historical epic': it shares this character of brevity not only with Claudian's invectives, divided into two books, but also with his

[97] A. FO, *Studi sulla tecnica poetica di Claudiano* (Catania: Carmelo Tringale Editore, 1982), p. 77.

epic poems, *De bello Gildonico* and *De bello Gothico*, which are made up of one and three books respectively.[98]

Another point worth making is about the use of historiographical sources in the poem. The author does not only resort to classical epic models, which are usually a substantial part of humanist *epos*, but he also turns to historiographical authors, such as Livy and, most significantly, Sallust, a model that is perfectly consistent with the historical topic of the poem. From this point of view, the *Porcaria* can be connected with the remarkable fortune that historiography found in the humanist age, and it seems also to follow the pioneering humanist paradigm of epic established by Petrarch's *Africa*, a poem where the historical source of Livy is a substantial model. Moreover, the use of Sallust in the section of the *Porcaria* devoted to the account of the conspiracy, along with the allusion to Lucan in the *proemium* and the references to Statius in the funeral lament, reveals that classical sources are selected by the humanist in accordance with the different thematic contexts in the text. Therefore the employment of sources matches coherently the unfolding of the scenes of the poem, even when historical scenarios are directly recalled. So the *Porcaria* turns out to be a bizarre and refined epic experiment of the humanist age, an eclectic combination of classical poetry and prose and manifold classical models.

This eclecticism appears also in the use of political symbols drawn from the classical tradition. Historical characters and figures, by epitomising and idealising the ancient world, perform the function of bestowing authority on papal government, regardless of the actual political system they belong to in strictly institutional terms. More generally, they become icons of an ideal cultural, political and social dimension: a golden age whose symbols can be equally applied to the different modern political

[98] As is well known, the model of Claudian had a crucial role also in Poliziano's *Stanze per la Giostra*, divided into two books.

ideologies. This dignifying connection with the classical tradition emerges as one of the cornerstones of the new theory and practice of fifteenth-century powers, even religious power. Humanists, such as Orazio Romano, were deeply involved in building this new image of the papacy, shaping it by presenting it as anchored in ancient Roman values and icons, which, more broadly, become the legitimizing vehicles for new Renaissance political systems.

CHAPTER III

Leon Battista Alberti, *Porcaria coniuratio*: The historiographical epistle as an unresolved reflection on the political plot

1. Alberti and the composition of the *Porcaria coniuratio*

Leon Battista Alberti wrote an account of Stefano Porcari's conspiracy in an epistle to an unknown addressee: the *Porcaria coniuratio*. In 1453 Alberti was in Rome, where he lived and worked carrying out ecclesiastical commitments, and he probably composed the letter soon after the failed plot, in the first half of January of the same year (this date is also mentioned in some manuscripts of the texts).[1] The *Porcaria coniuratio* represents the first 'historical' work in prose in the humanist age completely devoted to the topic of conspiracy: from this perspective it recovered the classical tradition of Sallust's historiographical monograph on Catiline and re-created and recast it concretely, with modern features and purposes. This Sallustian model, for the first time, is employed neither as a general ideological authority, nor as a mere source of historical facts or quotations,[2] but as an actual literary prototype to be re-built in a new monographic work on a contemporary conspiracy. Alberti's imitation of Sallust, as we shall see, is also extremely personal and original, since he selected the literary genre of the epistle, instead of a proper historiographical framework, to deal with the account of the episode. But he also enriched his letter with many elements typical of historiography, in a sophisticated and multifaceted combination of different components. Inasmuch as this is the earliest fifteenth-century prose text on this political topic (Orazio Romano's poem is contemporaneous, but it displays different literary features belonging to the genre of epic poetry), it is possible to claim that it was

[1] On the date of the epistle see the introduction to the edition of the text by M. Regoliosi (preliminary to a critical edition), in *Leon Battista Alberti: Opere latine*, ed. by R. Cardini (Roma: Istituto poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 2010), pp. 1265-1281: 1265 (from now on ED. REGOLIOSI).
[2] On this use of Sallust in the first half of the Quattrocento see the first chapter.

Alberti's pioneering work that opened the way to the proliferation of literary texts on plots during the second half of the century. However, Leon Battista's epistle reveals some distinctive elements that cannot be found in most subsequent works on conspiracies in the *Quattrocento* and, therefore, it may also be regarded as an extremely original text. In particular the analysis of the event is presented from a multiple and elusive standpoint, through a lofty and composite rhetorical structure, albeit seemingly simple. Thus, in so far as this work shows an ambivalent ideological perspective, it turns out to be more politically independent and less biased than other similar humanist works, which were focused on boosting political power.

In 1453 Alberti was directly involved in the political and cultural life of Rome. Nevertheless, he was not assigned an official leading position under Nicholas V's papacy. In particular, there is no proof that Alberti played an active role in the pope's ambitious architectural plans and, furthermore, the humanist's works produced in these years contain several unspoken criticisms of the pope's rule.[3] This uneasy and undefined relationship between Leon Battista and the pope has been given great consideration in the interpretations of the epistle on the conspiracy, since Alberti's ambiguous reading of the events appears to be closely connected with his view on Nicholas V's papacy and, more generally, on political institutions and statecraft. Some scholars, from Grayson to Tafuri and Cassani, have pointed out that the *Porcaria coniuratio* reflects Alberti's criticism of Nicholas V's government and it develops a

[3] On Nicholas V's policy see the previous chapter. On Alberti and the papal architectural plan: WESTFALL; MODIGLIANI, *Congiurare*, pp. 54-60. Other studies on Nicholas V's plan questioning Alberti's role in it are: M. TAFURI, '"Cives non esse licere": Niccolò V e Leon Battista Alberti', in ID., *Ricerca del Rinascimento. Principi, città, architetti* (Torino: Einaudi, 1992), pp. 33-88; C. BURROUGH, *From Signs to Design: Environmental Process and Reform in Early Renaissance Rome* (Cambridge-London: MIT Press, 1990), pp. 62-67; ID., 'Alberti e Roma', in *Leon Battista Alberti*, ed. by Anne Engel, Joseph Rykwert, Centro internazionale d'arte e di cultura di Palazzo Te (Milano: Electa, 1994), pp. 134-157; A. GRAFTON, *Leon Battista Alberti. Master Builder of the Italian Renaissance* (London: Allen Lane, 2001): chapter IX. Many critics have interpreted Alberti's *Momus* (1443-53) as a critique of Nicholas V's architectural plan for Rome: see also *infra*.

sympathetic attitude toward Porcari.[4] However, if it is true that the humanist's oblique disapproval of the pope's government appears in more than one work, this interpretation of the epistle has to be partially reconsidered, paying specific attention to other elements which reveal that Alberti's complex and elusive view cannot be linked directly with a tacit sympathy with the plotter. Thus, in order to provide a better insight into this work, it is essential to contextualize it more precisely as regards both the historical context and Alberti's overall literary oeuvre, taking into consideration also the structure of the text and the combined employment of specific literary genres, classical sources and rhetorical techniques. Moreover, it is important to look at this work from a comparative perspective, placing it in the category of monographs on conspiracies.

Despite Alberti's vague attitute toward Nicholas V's papacy, it is undoubtedly true that he held a prominent position in the intellectual and political Roman environment, as one of the chief Italian humanists and, more importantly, a man of the clergy.[5] He had been living in Rome since 1432, when he was appointed the secretary of Biagio Molin - patriarch of Grado and ruler of the curial chancery - and was given the role of 'abbreviatore apostolico'. Alberti had also been a close secretary of Eugene IV: he left Rome with him to go to Florence in 1434, after the uprising against the pope, and he

[4] Cfr. C. GRAYSON, *Leon Battista Alberti*, in DBI, 1 (1960), pp. 702-713: he states that the epistle is 'non priva di simpatia per la generosa ambizione del Porcari'. On Alberti's disaproval of Nicholas and his implied understanding for Porcari see A. G. CASSANI, '*Libertas, frugalitas, aedificandi libido*. Paradigmi indiziari per Leon Battista Alberti a Roma', in *Le due Rome del Quattrocento: Melozzo, Antoniazzo e la cultura artistica del '400 romano: Atti del Convegno internazionale di studi, Università di Roma La Sapienza, Facoltà di lettere e filosofia, Istituto di storia dell'arte, Roma 21-24 febbraio 1996*, ed. by Sergio Rossi e Stefano Valeri (Roma: Lithos, 1997), pp. 296-321; TAFURI, pp. 44-45; R. FUBINI, A. MENCI GALLORINI, 'L'autobiografia di Leon Battista Alberti. Studio e edizione', *Rinascimento*, 12 (1972), pp. 57-58; and now MODIGLIANI, *Congiurare*, p. 68. On the other hand, other scholars do not see in Alberti a sympathy for the conspirator, but a more complex attitude: G. PONTE, *Leon Battista Alberti umanista e scrittore* (Genova: Tilgher, 1981), p. 76; A. GRAFTON, *Leon Battista*, chapter IX, p. 311; F. FURLAN, '*Leonis Baptistae Alberti Porcaria coniuratio*: Appunti critici e filologici', *Albertiana*, 5 (2002), p. 267; S. BORSI, *Introduzione alla* Porcaria coniuratio *di Leon Battista Alberti* (Foggia: Libria, 2015), who observes that Alberti does not blame only the conspirator for the critical political situation in Rome (pp. 211-212).

[5] In general on Alberti's life and work see T. KIRCHER, *Living Well in Renaissance Italy. The Virtues of Humanism and the Irony of Leon Battista Alberti* (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2012). See also GRAYSON, *Leon Battista Alberti*.

followed him to take part in the Council of Ferrara and Florence, in 1439.[6] When the papal court was re-established in Rome in 1443, Alberti returned to the papal city and lived there until his death in 1472, with occasional visits to Central and Northen Italy (for instance to Florence, Ferrara, Mantua, Rimini). It is likely that under the papacy of Nicholas V, Leon Battista and other humanists previously involved in curial politics were not assigned official commitments, probably due to their not very well-integrated positions in the new papacy's policy (such as Biondo Flavio, who, like Alberti, was somehow associated with Prospero Colonna, a member of the noble Roman family opposed to the pope).[7] Nonetheless, in spite of this partial exclusion, Nicholas V renewed Alberti's ecclesiastical benefices and conferred on him the role of prior of Borgo San Lorenzo in the Mugello, with the Bulla of the 12th December 1448.[8] This means that the humanist was an integral part of the curial environment. If Florence was the city where he lived as a 'forestiere' (he stated in the *De iciarchia* 'raro ci venni e poco ci dimorai', despite living there for quite a long time), Rome was the place where he found his financial stability.[9]

Looking at Alberti's work, in these years the humanist was mainly engaged in writing one of his chief technical and artistic texts, the *De re aedificatoria,*[10] as well as the Latin satire *Momus*, both chronologically close to the *Porcaria coniuratio*. It is noteworthy that the technical treatise contains a number of reflections that can be regarded as an implicit disapproval of Nicholas V's architectural plan, a criticism that ends up applying to the whole of papal cultural politics. These allusions reveal that

[6] In particular, on Alberti's life in Florence and his relationship with the city: L. BOSCHETTO, *Leon Battista Alberti e Firenze: Biografia, storia, letteratura* (Firenze: Olschki, 2000).
[7] BURROUGH, *Alberti*, p. 147; GRAFTON, *Leon Battista*, p. 312.
[8] Alberti was already prior of San Martino in Gangalandi, in the Florentine diocese: GIROLAMO MANCINI, *Vita di Leon Battista Alberti* (Firenze: Sansoni, 1882), pp. 93, 127; BURROUGH, *Alberti*, p. 156.
[9] CASSANI, p. 297.
[10] The text has been traditionally considered as completed by 1452; nevertheless, recently it has been claimed that Alberti kept revising it until 1468: A. MODIGLIANI, 'Per la datazione del *De re Aedificatoria*', *Albertiana*, 16 (2013), pp. 91-110.

probably the relationship with the pope started to deteriorate around 1450, in conjunction with the centralization of power pursued by the Nicholas V. In particular, Alberti condemns the *libido aedificandi*, the too ambitious attitude of building excessive constructions, a trait that can be ascribed to the pope's renovation of the city. On the other hand, he praises modest and classical buildings, in accordance with a natural principle of restraint.[11] A similar disapproving attitude (but articulated in a complex imaginary and philosophical genre) informs the *Momus*, the sarcastic and multifaceted mythological *fabula de principe*, inspired by the model of Lucian. Many passages of this work have been interpreted as Alberti's unspoken and caustic criticisms addressed to Nicholas V's despotic and unreasonable policies.[12] From this point of view, the *Porcaria coniuratio*, composed approximately in the same period, has been seen as another expression of Alberti's censorious approach toward the pope, sharing some implied connections with both his major works, the *Momus* and the *De re Aedificatoria*.[13] It is indubitable that the humanist's disapproval of papal rule appears in a number of passages in these texts, nevertheless Alberti's personal and ecclesiastical position in Rome, along with some stylistic, rhetorical and thematical elements in the *Porcaria coniuratio*, as we shall see, lead us to re-evaluate the interpretation that attributes to the humanist an unspoken sympathy with the rebel Porcari. These factors

[11] See MODIGLIANI, 'Per la datazione', pp. 101-102; CASSANI, pp. 302-306 (references to this issue have been recognised in the *Porcaria coniuratio*, in the speech of the foreign clergymen: 'urbs facta aurea', 'maxima ornandae Urbis cura', § 30: on the whole speech see *infra*).

[12] LEON BATTISTA ALBERTI, *Momo o Del Principe*, ed. by R. Consolo, introduction by Antonio Di Grado (Genova: Costa e Nolan, 1986). The composition of the text has been traditionally dated between 1443 and 1450 (it is mentioned in a famous letter that Francesco Filelfo sent to Alberti in 1450), but according to recent studies the humanist may have carried out his work on the *Momus* until the late years of Nicholas V's papacy, probably 1453: cfr. BORSI, *Leon Battista Alberti e Roma* (Firenze: Polistampa, 2013), pp. 63-64. This date would confirm the interpretation of the *Momus* as a mockery of Nicholas V's political attitude. See also R. FUBINI, 'Leon Battista Alberti, Niccolò V e il tema della "infelicità del principe"', in *La vita e il mondo di Leon Battista Alberti*, *Atti del Convegno internazionale, Genova (19-21 febbraio 2004)* (Firenze: Olschki, 2008), II, pp. 441-69.

[13] In particular see CASSANI; S. BORSI, '*Momus* e *Porcaria coniuratio*: Leon Battista Alberti testimone', in ID. *Niccolò V a Roma. Alberti, Angelico, Manetti e un grande piano urbano* (Polistampa: Firenze, 2009), pp. 521-623; ID., 'Momenti di tangenza tra *Momus* e *Porcaria coniuratio*', *Albertiana*, 9 (2006), pp. 68-98; and now, ID. *Introduzione*.

analysed in relation to the humanist's ideological and political view expressed in other works may help us to deduce more about Alberti's standpoint in this elusive work, similar, in this elusiveness, to the *Momus*.

The complex ideological perspective in the *Porcaria coniuratio* is reflected by the history of the manuscript tradition of the text. Although the epistle was almost certainly composed in Rome and it focuses on an episode of Roman history, none of the copies of the work still extant were produced in the papal city. The manuscript tradition is divided into two branches: the first originated from the *codex* of the University Library of Genoa (G. IV. 9, ff. 58-61), copied in Florence in the fifteenth century; the second came from an antigraph, not extant anymore, put together probably in the area of Ferrara and Padua (as some texts in the manuscripts of this branch seem to prove).[14] Looking at this textual tradition, what is most striking is that Alberti's work seemingly did not have a significant diffusion in Rome, but circulated more widely in the Florentine cultural environment, where the greatest number of copies was produced. In addition, probably also the northern branch of the tradition is connected with Florence, since all manuscripts have mistakes in common and, therefore, derive from an archetype codex, which could have been copied in Florence as well.

The diffusion that Alberti's epistle enjoyed in this city is certainly to be linked with the considerable fame that the eclectic artist had there, but also with the significant attention that Florentine intellectuals paid to the episode of the conspiracy against the pope, a crucial event in the history of the *Quattrocento*. This interest is shown by another text composed in Florence on the same plot: a letter written by Alamanno

[14] For a complete analysis of the manuscript tradition see G. CREVATIN, 'Prime osservazioni sul testo del *De Porcaria coniuratione*', in *Leon Battista Alberti umanista e scrittore: filologia, esegesi, tradizione. Atti del Convegno Internazionale del Comitato Nazionale VI Centenario della Nascita di Leon Battista Alberti, Arezzo, 24- 26 giugno 2004*, ed. by R. Cardini, M. Regoliosi (Firenze: Polistampa, 2007), pp. 327-336; now see also the *Nota al testo* in the edition by REGOLIOSI, p. 1279.

Rinuccini (to an unknown friend), in 1459.[15] Rinuccini's choice of recounting the episode in an epistle could lead us to suppose a correlation with Alberti's work; nevertheless there are many differences in the two accounts and Rinuccini seems to have drawn on different historical sources (he focuses extensively on the events preceding the conspiracy and he quotes the speech delivered by Porcari in 1447 and not the harangue of 1453). Moreover, Rinuccini, who was an upholder of republican tenets, sympathizes with the conspirator more unwaveringly than Alberti does. In addition, we have to consider that Stefano Porcari (as mentioned in the previous chapter) spent two years in Florence as *capitano del popolo*, between 1427 and 1428, and consequently he was very well known in this city and had close relationships with the chief figures of Florentine culture. This further connection can help to explain the wide circulation of Alberti's text in Tuscany. On the other hand, the limited diffusion of the text in the papal city can be related to the independent and unbiased perspective of the work, probably too intricate to be easily associated with the pope's propagandistic aims and rather distant from the other one-sided historical sources that recount the conspiracy, although not in favour of the plotters.

2. The epistle as historical writing: the conflation of literary genres

Alberti's epistle has a bipartite structure: the first half of the work is a narrative section that contains the proper historical account, while the second half is mainly speculative and is devoted to presenting the different reactions by the members of the Curia to the conspiracy.

The historical narration covers all the main events concerning Porcari's attempts to subvert papal rule: from the first episode of rebellion, in 1447, when he delivered his

[15] RINUCCINI, pp. 39-46.

speech in *Ara Coeli* after Eugene IV's death to instigate the people to rise up (an endeavour stopped by the jurist Lelio Della Valle, as recalled by Alberti), to his public execution on 9 January 1453, after the failure of the conspiracy.[16] The humanist mentions the clemency of Nicholas V regarding Porcari's first attempts to overthrow the government: firstly the pope sent the rebel to Anagni ('Hernicos', § 6), appointing him as *propretore* and, after a further seditious action, he decided to exile him to Bologna. After this, the text follows the narration of the conspiracy organized by Porcari with the help of his nephew: Alberti recounts Porcari's secret escape from Bologna, the arrival in Rome, the gathering of many accomplices the night before the Epiphany, the discovery by the pope and the capture and execution of the plotters.

It is remarkable that the longest part of this account, almost half of it, consists of the speech delivered by Porcari to his accomplices to urge them to rebel against papal domination. This lengthy oration (which was included also in Orazio Romano's poem) is quoted by Alberti in indirect speech, which represents faithfully the actual oral delivery. Then Alberti dwells on the plan that the plotters would have carried out if the conspiracy had not been discovered and here probably he relies on the actual confession that Porcari delivered before being executed.[17]

The second half of the letter is the most cryptic. Here the humanist compares different readings of the historical episode, presenting the viewpoints of diverse factions of curial members and alluding also to his own opinion. The first members he recalls are the foreigners, who are traumatized by the conspiracy and blame the Roman people for the attack on papal rule. Next, he introduces the statement made by the Italian clergymen (among whom Alberti is included) who celebrate Rome and the pope and

[16] The events of the conspiracy are summed up in the previous chapter of the thesis.
[17] On the confession see the previous chapter on Orazio Romano's poem: II.2. Massimo Miglio suggested that Alberti could have used the documents of the trials against Porcari in his text: M. MIGLIO, 'Nicolò V, Leon Battista Alberti, Roma', in *Leon Battista Alberti e il Quattrocento. Studi in onore di Cecil Grayson e Ernst Gombrich*, ed. by L. Chiavoni, G. Ferlisi, M. V. Grassi (Firenze: Olschki, 2001), pp. 47-64: 55.

refuse the irrational approach that associates all Romans with the conspirators. In this group there are also more cautious men, who are worried about further attacks that the pope would not be able to defeat. Finally Alberti presents his own standpoint and concerns, but he admits that he is not able to give a univocal opinion on the events and will leave his ultimate judgment to the future.[18]

As this brief synopsis demonstrates, the *Porcaria coniuratio* is mainly constructed as a short historical monographic text, articulated in the form of an epistle. In this respect, the work can be regarded as an original rhetorical combination of historiographical and epistolary elements, aimed at both reporting a faithful and accurate historical account (a purpose that Leon Battista claims at the very *incipit*) and presenting comparatively all the different reflections on the conspiracy, among which the author is allowed also to relate his own view. So Alberti's original literary choice, which reveals the humanist's experimental artistic attitude, results in the conflation of rhetorical and stylistic traits typical of two of the most preeminent literary genres in the humanist age: epistolography and historiography. The whole work is the harmonic result of this blending, but the bipartite structure of the text discloses the predominance of historiographical elements in the first section, while a dialogic framework prevails in the second. Here the articulation of the arguments reflects more directly the epistolary style, in which the author's viewpoint is expected to come to light more plainly than in historical writings.

Given this structure, it is worth considering the main features of the epistolary genre, in order to have a better insight into Alberti's work. Epistolography enjoyed a considerable fortune in the humanist age and it maintained its mixed nature between

[18] The second half of the epistle is analysed extensively in the following section: III.3.

private and public writings, a trait it had shown since antiquity.[19] Starting from Pseudo-Demetrius's treatise *De elocutione*, epistolography was considered the literary genre in which it was possible to perceive most clearly the author's character.[20] After the Middle ages, when this genre acquired a more rigid status regulated by the *artes dictaminis*, in the *Quattrocento* epistolary writing was progressively reshaped following classical models and became more extensively permeated by a rhetorical dimension: it mantained a sort of balance between medieval tradition and innovation,[21] but played a crucial role in the development of a new cultural society.[22] Humanist letters reveal a wide range of writing styles and topics (public, official, literary, private) and they become a vehicle of intellectual dialogue between cultural circles, courts and cities, but without showing traits of intimate communication. So fifteenth-century epistolography enhanced its mixed nature making 'private' and 'public' inseparable.[23] This heterogeneous state also accounts for the conflation with other genres. Epistles were employed to recount historical events, discuss political and literary issues, and often consisted of actual treatises, such as Petrarch's letter to Francesco da Carrara (*Senili*, XIV, 1; 1372), which

[19] A. CAVARZERE, 'Caro amico ti scrivo. "Privato" e "Pubblico" nella letteratura epistolare di Roma', in *Alla lettera. Teorie e pratiche epistolari dai Greci al Novecento*, ed. by Adriana Chemello (Milano: Guerini, 1998), pp. 11-31.

[20] Cfr. J. R. HENDERSON, 'Humanist Letter Writing: Private Conversation or Public Forum?', in *Self-presentation and Social Identification: The Rhetoric and Pragmatics of Letter Writing in Early Modern Times*, ed. by Toon Van Houdt [*et al.*] (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2002), pp. 17-38: 22-23.

[21] See G. BURTON, 'From *Ars dictaminis* to *Ars conscribendi epistolis*: Renaissance Letter-Writing Manuals in the Context of Humanism', in *Letter-writing Manuals and Instruction from Antiquity to the Present*, ed. by C. Poster and L. C. Mitchell (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2007), pp. 88-101: 88; P. O. KRISTELLER, 'Humanismus und Scholastik in der italienischen Renaissance', ID., *Renaissance Thought and its Sources* (New York: M. Mooney, 1979), pp. 85-105; R. G. WITT, 'Medieval "Ars Dictaminis" and the Beginnings of Humanism: a New Construction of the Problem', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 35, 1 (1982), pp. 1-35; G. C. ALESSIO, 'Il *De componendis epistolis* di Niccolò Perotti e l'epistolografia umanistica', *Res Publica Literarum*, 11 (1988), pp. 9-18.

[22] On humanist epistolography see M. FUMAROLI, 'Genèse de l'épistolographie classique: rhétorique humaniste de la lettre, de Petrarque à Juste Lipse', *Révue d'Histoire Littéraire de la France*, 78 (1978), pp. 866-905; C. GRIGGIO, 'Dalla lettera all'epistolario: aspetti retorico-formali dell'epistolografia umanistica', in *Alla lettera*, pp. 83-141.

[23] HENDERSON, pp. 29-30.

can be regarded as a *speculum principis*, or Guarino Veronese's epistle-treatise on historiography, *De historiae conscribendae forma* (1446).[24]

These brief general considerations can help us to look at Alberti's work from a broader point of view. Scholars have tried to answer the question whether the *Porcaria coniuratio* is an authentic letter addressed to an actual interlocutor, or a text composed as a mere literary work. A clear answer is not possible thus far, because of the lack of evidence, and, in fact, critics are divided between the two options.[25] However, it is important to take into account the hybrid nature of epistolography, especially during Humanism: a genre in which private writing can become a piece of work conceived to be public and, conversely, public issues can be treated from a personal perspective. In this respect, a personal letter can be part of the public dialogue of the literary community, as shown by the humanist practice of publishing epistolary collections. This combination of features may account for Leon Battista's twofold intention. Even if his work was an actual personal epistle, it displays a highly rhetorical nature and therefore it should be considered a literary text envisaged to be 'public'; moreover, Alberti's choice of the epistolary genre might be related to the intention of composing an account in which the author's standpoint is allowed to emerge as a crucial element of the text, conveying the humanist's message as in a private work.

This preference can be also associated with Alberti's predilection for the literary form of the dialogue, a genre that since antiquity was considered parallel to epistolography and in which the author discusses an issue from different perspectives, without giving a univocal interpretation, but leaving the debate open to different reflections and thoughts. As Poliziano asserts in his commentary on Statius's *Silvae*, the

[24] FRANCESCO PETRARCA, *Lettera di Francesco Petrarca al magnifico Francesco da Carrara signore di Padova, delle Senili lib. 14 epist. 1., sui doveri del principe*, ed. by G. Fracassetti, C. Landi, M. Papafava dei Carraresi (Padova: Società cooperativa tipografica, 1922). On Guarino's epistle see *infra*.
[25] It is claimed that the epistle is merely a literary work in FUBINI-MENCI GALLORINI, p. 57; while MIGLIO, 'Niccolò V', p. 54, states that the letter could have been written to an actual addresse.

epistle is like one of the two sides of a dialogue, a suspended conversation with an absent interlocutor.[26] Poliziano here stresses the link between dialogues and epistles:[27] indeed, epistolary writing was seen as having an intermediate formal status between oratory, the loftiest genre, and dialogues, characterised by the least studied style. It is significant that these theoretical considerations on the flexible nature of epistolography, which were to be widely popular in the humanist age, can be applied also to Alberti's *Porcaria coniuratio*. The rhetorical dimension of humanists' letters and the fluidity of this genre responded to different needs and concerns. These traits are probably at the heart of Leon Battista's choice of this kind of writing, which seems intended to give the writer/historian the chance to introduce his personal point of view extensively in the text, contrasting also different opinions in a dialogic and unresolved comparison, typical of Alberti's work. He would not have had such a possibility if writing a proper historiographical work, where the historian is supposed to be more 'external' in analysing the facts (albeit by selecting Sallust as the main model, the *Porcaria coniuratio* is directly associated with a political kind of *historia*). By composing his text as a letter, Alberti was allowed to write in the first person and insert references to his personal life and private situation, to the point of admitting the uncertainty and confusion of his thoughts and judgment.

On the other hand, the epistle is continuously filled with historiographical elements, especially in the first narrative section, where the writer/historian gives an accurate account of the facts. In particular, as we shall see, the most distinctive historiographical components are embedded in the opening of the letter and in the lengthy oration of the

[26] 'Epistola velut pars altera dialogi…maiore quadam concinnatione epistola indigent quam dialogus…imitator enim hic extemporaliter loquentem…et epistola scribitur'. ANGELO POLIZIANO, *Commento inedito alle 'Selve' di Stazio*, ed. by L. Cesarini Martinelli (Firenze: Sansoni, 1978): Poliziano's discussion on the epistolary genre is included in the *praefatio* to the commentary (pp. 15-50). On Alberti's dialogues and his predilection for this genre see D. MARSH, *The Quattrocento Dialogue: Classical Tradition and Humanist Innovation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), pp. 78-99.

[27] He referred probably to Artemon's statement, mentioned by Pseudo-Demetrius in his *De elocutione*: on this claim by Artemon see HENDERSON, p. 22; CAVARZERE, p. 28.

conspirator. The attention paid by Alberti to the truthfulness of his account can be acknowledged as a distinctive element which unifies the epistolary and historical components in the text: it appears to be a link between, on the one hand, the idea of *historia* as based on reliable evidence collected by the historian and, on the other, epistolary writing, intended to convey the author's view as corroborated by his role of witness of the events. So the historian and the epistle-writer are connected by the rhetorical principle of truthfulness, which informs the whole text.

Nevertheless, it emerges clearly that Alberti's work evades any strict definitions of genre, since, despite the overall epistolary-historiographical structure, the text's framework is built up by the combination of different kinds of literary writings. Indeed, a large part of the historical account consists of the oration declaimed by Porcari, while the closing section of the letter is dominated by the dialogic presentation of the clergymen's opposing arguments that gives the reader the effect of an actual dialogue between different interlocutors, bordering on irreconcilable contradiction. So the *Porcaria coniuratio* turns out to be a combination of the chief literary genres of the humanist age: epistolography, historiography and, to a lesser extent, oratory and dialogue, all components perfectly blended to give a sophisticated literary result.

3. Classical sources in the *Porcaria coniuratio*

3.1 Structural and theoretical models: Alberti's view on history

The pivotal classical models in Alberti's work are historiographical *auctoritates*. This aspect reveals the centrality of the historical genre in this work, despite being

shaped as an epistle. In particular, the main source is predictably Sallust,[28] whose prototype of historical monograph on plot is recovered and given new life. The title itself recalls directly the classical work's heading, where the historical definition of the *coniuratio* is provided by the name of the plotter, the genitive *Catilinae*, while, similarly, in the humanist epistle it is given by the adjective coined after the name of Porcari, *Porcaria*. As already illustrated in the introduction, prior to Alberti's literary 'experiment', Sallust's work was already one of the chief models consistently employed from the Middle Ages to Humanism, when it surpassed or at least equalled the chief model of Livy that had been one of the main sources of Bruni's *Historiae Florentinae*.[29] Nevertheless, Sallust's work had been mainly used as a general source for historical motifs or political ideologies, while Alberti's epistle matches it from a thematic and structural point of view, focusing on a single contemporary conspiracy (and, differently from Orazio Romano, treating this topic in a prose work).

In Alberti's work the use of the *De coniuratione Catilinae* is widespread and it does not only appear in the practice of inserting textual references, which, nonetheless, are not as frequent as in other humanist texts on conspiracies (such as Poliziano's *Coniurationis commentarium*), but mainly in the adoption of specific historiographical elements and moral categories, which are enlisted to describe the plot and the conspirator. Moreover we have to consider that Sallust was regarded by Alberti as one of the chief classical authors and already played a prominent role in the *Libri della Famiglia*: as is well known, he explicitly declared the importance of the Latin historian in the first book ('E arei io caro che e' miei...molto si facessino familiari, non a cartule e

[28] Some considerations on the sources of the *Porcaria coniuratio* in S. BORSI, '*Momus*, *De re aedificatoria*, *Porcaria coniuratio*: considerazioni sull'uso delle fonti in Leon Battista Alberti', in *Leon Battista Alberti. Teorico delle arti e gli impegni civili del 'De re aedificatoria'* (Firenze: Olschki, 2007), pp. 537-569. On the model of Sallust in the *Porcaria contiuratio* see also GRAFTON, *Leon Battista*, p. 307, and now P. OSMOND, 'Catiline in Renaissance Conspiracy Histories: Hero or Villain? The case of Stefano Porcari', in *Congiure e conflitti*, pp. 209-213.
[29] On Bruni's historical and political works see now IANZITI, *Writing History*.

gregismi, ma sopra tutti a Tullio, Livio, Sallustio, ne' quali singularissimi ed emendatissimi scrittori, dal primo ricever di dottrina attingano quella perfettissima aere d'eloquenza con molta gentilezza della lingua latina'),[30] but he also employs Sallust extensively as a source in the whole text (for instance in the *proemio* and in book IV, where the historian is explicitly quoted).[31]

This model comes to light immediately in the incipit of the *Porcaria coniuratio*, which is shaped by hinting at classical historiographical tenets and, thus, plays a programmatic function. Alberti indeed, addressing his unknown interlocutor (this is the only passage of the text in which the humanist speaks directly to him) explains briefly the purposes of his account and the methodological guidelines to which his historical writing adheres. In this respect, Leon Battista follows closely two of the most important classical *auctoritates* in humanist historiography, respectively Latin and Greek: Sallust, as already mentioned, and Thucydides. Both historians played a prominent role in the construction of the humanist *ars historica*, especially in the development of the branch of 'political historiography'. In particular, at the outset of the epistle, Alberti claims the accuracy of his historical narration. He states that his account is well-founded since it is based on his own direct experience as a 'witness' of the events: 'qua in re illud conferet, quod inter pericula constituti historiam, uti gesta sit, melius quam qui istic audiere, teneamus' (§ 1). Leon Battista was in Rome when the stunning episode took place, so he is able to recount the facts more truthfully than people who just 'hear' about the story and were not present on that occasion. He underlines this element at the very beginning of his work, saying that his friend could have known the news by 'rumoribus' and stressing the opposition between his letter and these rumours. Such a remark connects

[30] LEON BATTISTA ALBERTI, *Opere volgari*, ed. by C. Grayson (Bari: Laterza, 1960-1973), I, p. 71.
[31] On the use of Sallust in the *Libri della Famiglia* see M. MCLAUGHLIN, 'Unità tematica e strutturale nel *De Familia*', in ID., *Leon Battista Alberti. La vita, l'umanesimo, le opere* (Firenze, Olschki, 2016), pp. 99-123, and M. REGOLIOSI, 'Per un catalogo degli *auctores* latini dell'Alberti', in *Leon Battista Alberti: La biblioteca di un umanista*, ed. by R. Cardini (Firenze: Mandragora, 2005), pp. 105-113: 110-113.

historical writing with autoptical and accurate reports, which must be based on direct experience and careful examinations of sources, a historiographical principle that was asserted by Thucydides in the *Peloponnesian war* (I, 22):

> In recording the events of the war my principle has been not to rely on casual information or my own suppositions, but to apply the greatest possible rigour in pursuing every detail both of what I saw myself and of what I heard from others.[32]

Other important historiographical tenets held by Thucydides appear in Alberti's work.[33] The attention paid to the truthfulness of the historical narration is associated, from a methodological point of view, with the rigorous analysis of evidence, while from a theoretical perspective it is linked with the concepts of *veritas* and *parrhesia* as the keystones of the *ars historica*. In Alberti's epistle these general principles act as guidelines for his historiographical approach. In particular, Leon Battista immediately claims that he writes as a reliable 'friend' to his interlocutor and therefore it is implied that he *can*, but he also *must*, recount the truth, following closely the idea of *parrhesia*. This conception of *historia* was crucial for Alberti, since he made a similar point in the only other historical work he wrote: the *Vita Sancti Potiti*, a hagiographical text on the biography of a medieval saint which was composed in 1432-1434, at the invitation of Alberti's protector Biagio Molin.[34] In the prefatory letter addressed by Leon Battista to Leonardo Dati, the humanist declared all his concerns as a historian, disclosing his awareness of the theoretical problems related to this literary genre. He confesses his

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[32] THUCYDIDES, *The Peloponnesian War*, a new translation by Martin Hammond (Oxford: Oxoford University Press, 2009), p. 12. The same statement is in I, 21 'anyone accepting the broad facts of my account on the arguments I have adduced will not go wrong. […] He will conclude that my research, using the clearest evidences available, provides a sufficiently accurate account…'.

[33] In general, on Alberti's knowledge of Greek see L. BERTOLINI, *Grecus sapor: tramiti di presenze greche in Leon Battista Alberti* (Roma: Bulzoni, 1998).

[34] This text was supposed to be the first of a series of hagiographical narrations which were never produced. On this work see KIRCHER, pp. 24-34; E. GIANNARELLI, 'Alberti, i padri della chiesa e la letteratura cristiana antica: linee di un problema', in *Alberti e la tradizione: per lo 'smontaggio' dei 'mosaici' albertiani: Atti del Convegno internazionale del Comitato nazionale VI centenario della nascita di Leon Battista Alberti: Arezzo, 23-24-25 settembre 2004*, ed. by R. Cardini, M. Regoliosi (Firenze: Polistampa, 2007), pp. 425-447.

worry about the truthfulness of evidence and sources, which should be put together in a trustworthy account, as all the fifteenth-century *letterati* expect a *historia* to be:

> Eram timida quidem in sententia, dum tecum verebar nequid eruditi viri subdubitarent hanc nostram Potiti istoriam esse fictam aliquam et puerilem fabulam. Memineram enim quam multa in istoria queritent viri non indocti quamve plene rerum causam, rem gestam, loca, tempora atque personarum dignitatem describi optent. Et videbam quoque apostolorum actus, pontificum martirumque reliquorum vitam dilucide atque plenissisime a maioribus descriptam. Hanc autem Potiti istoriam videbam ita negligenter traditam ut facile illam arbitrari potuerim esse ab imperitis non ab illis diligentissimis viris editam.[35]

With these words Leon Battista not only reveals how essential was the accuracy of historical *narratio* to him, but also how important and lively was the humanist debate on historiography in that period, since his concerns are openly referred to other humanists's opinions on this issue. Around twenty years later, when the widespread debate on *ars historica* had developed still more, Alberti decided to write a historiographical work devoted to a contemporary event, Porcari's conspiracy, following the same tenets. He accurately introduced into the *Porcaria coniuratio* all the historical components he regarded as fundamental in his previous prefatory letter: in particular, precise references to the historical context and to the 'quality of the actors' ('personarum dignitatem'). It is noteworthy that Alberti incorporates in his early statement on historical writings not only Thucydides's and Sallust's tenets but also some of Cicero's reflections on history: the ideals to which Leon Battista openly subscribed are drawn directly from Cicero's *De oratore* (II, 63) a theoretical model that had a fundamental influence on humanist historiography and also in Alberti's work, as we shall see ('Rerum ratio ordinem temporum desiderat, regionum descriptionem; vult etiam, quoniam in rebus magnis

[35] L. B. ALBERTI, *Opuscoli inediti di Leon Battista Alberti. 'Musca', 'Vita S. Potiti'*, ed. by C. Grayson (Firenze: Olschki, 1954**)**, pp. 86-87 (an English translation in GRAFTON, '*Historia* and *Istoria*: Alberti's Terminology in Context', *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance*, 8 (1999), pp. 37-68: 51: 'I feared that scholars might entertain the doubt that this history of Potitus of ours is a childish, invented tale. For I knew what men of learning usually seek in a history: they expect a full account of the event in question, the places, the times, and the quality of the actors. And I saw that the ancients had given clear and full accounts of the Acts of the Apostles and the lives of the popes and the other martyrs. But I saw that this history of Potitus was transmitted so carelessly that I could easily infer that ignorant men, rather than those scholars of great learning, produced it').

memoriaque dignis consilia primum, deinde acta, postea eventus exspectentur, et de consiliis significari quid scriptor probet et in rebus gestis declarari non solum quid actum aut dictum sit, sed etiam quomodo, et cum de eventu dicatur, ut causae explicentur omnes...').

Moreover, the very beginning of the *Porcaria coniuratio* shows another decisive correspondence with both Thucydides and Sallust. Alberti underlines immediately the extraordinary nature of the historical event he is going to recount ('rebus… que…vix credibilia esse ob facinoris immanitatem videantur', § 1) and consequently the significance of this episode, which deserves an historical narration:

> Facinus profecto, quo a vetere hominum memoria in hanc usque diem neque periculo horribilius, neque audacia detestabilius, neque crudelitate tetrius a quoquam perditissimo uspiam excogitatum sit (§ 2).

This point is made also in the *Peloponnesian War* (I, 21):

> As for this present war, although men always think that any war they are engaged in is the greatest of all wars, […] this war will even so prove itself, to those who examine the pure facts, a greater war than any in previous history.

However, in this respect, Alberti's statement seems to recall more closely Sallust's work (*De coniuratione Catilinae*, 4, 3-4), since he makes the same reference to the atrocity and the cruelty of the crime he narrates, emphasizing that it was so brutal and savage that it put every citizen in jeopardy:

> Igitur de Catilinae coniuratione quam verissume potero paucis absolvam; nam id facinus in primis ego memorabile existumo sceleris atque periculi novitate.

In addition, Alberti follows Thucydides, and consequently Sallust, in acknowledging the programmatic nature of the *proemium* of historical texts (although the *incipit* of his epistle is very brief): a section where the writer is supposed to affirm the purpose and method in his work. Moreover, the two classical authors are linked also by the political dimension of their historiography. This approach is characterized by a thorough

political analysis with pedagogical intents and it influences Alberti very much, as well as, more broadly, humanist historiography.

A further parallel between Thucydides, Sallust and Alberti can be seen in the extensive use of speeches and orations made up by the historian to be put into the mouths of historical characters as truly delivered by them (a practice that in general is adopted by humanist historians). It is significant that in the classical sources, as in Leon Battista's text, these speeches are often in clear opposition to the author's standpoint. This narrative device is frequently employed by Alberti in his work: he quotes Porcari's lengthy oration and, in the second section of his work, the various clergymen's opinions on the conspiracy, either in direct or indirect speech.[36] In the case of Porcari's harangue he opts for a more oblique narrative strategy, relating the conspirator's words in indirect speech; nevertheless this choice still matches the historiographical purpose of making the account more realistic and truthful, as Thucydides himself claimed (I, 22):

> Of the various speeches made either when war was imminent or in the course of the war itself, it has been hard to reproduce the exact words used either when I heard them myself or when they were reported to me by other sources. My method in this book has been to make each speaker say broadly what I supposed would have been needed on any given occasion, while keeping as closely as I could to the overall intent of what was actually said.[37]

As we shall see, Porcari's oration in Alberti's work is totally based on the model of Catiline's speech in Sallust's *De coniuratione Catiline* (20), a predictable source that was fundamental also in the parallel section of Orazio Romano's poem. The practice of inserting speeches into historical texts can be detected also in Alberti's *Vita Sancti Potiti*: a work where this rhetorical tool cannot be explained with a thematic link with Sallust's work (as in the case of the orations of Porcari and Catiline), but has to be correlated more generally to Alberti's choice of employing a specific classical

[36] Grafton observed that 'like Sallust, Alberti did not comment elaborately himself but let his speaker do so': GRAFTON, *Leon Battista*, p. 307.
[37] THUCYDIDES, p. 12.

historiographical device. Significantly, in the hagiographical work the humanist formulated a speech similar to Porcari's, in so far as he made the emperor Antoninus pronounce decisively a denunciation of the immoral customs and idleness of the Christians.[38] The use of this narrative strategy in both historical works leads us to acknowledge that Alberti resorts to this kind of speech as a classical technique that allows the historian to present the characters' viewpoints in a realistic and effective way, but this does not mean that he sympathizes with these specific declarations.

Looking at classical models of Alberti's work it is worth considering briefly other important components that played a role in Leon Battista's writing. As we have seen in the programmatic statement related to the *Vita Sancti Potiti*, one of the main theoretical sources for Alberti was Cicero, a fundamental model for the process of creation of humanist historiography. In particular Cicero's theory, along with Lucian of Samosata's *Quomodo historia conscribenda sit* (the most important treatise on *ars historica* in classical antiquity),[39] strongly influenced the first organic treatise on history in the *Quattrocento*, Guarino Veronese's *De historiae conscribendae forma*, an epistle to Guarino's student Tobia del Borgo written in 1446.[40] Humanists relied on Cicero's theoretical reflections presented in the *De oratore* (II, 35-36; 54; 63), where he correlated directly the idea of *veritas* with the principle of *utilitas*, ascribing to historical writing a pedagogical and moral dimension. But fifteenth-century historians drew from Cicero also the rhetorical link between *historia* and oratory, a connection that places on

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[38] GRAFTON, '*Historia'*, p. 52.

[39] LUCIANI *Opera*, ed. by M. D. MACLEOD, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), vol. 3, pp. 287-319. On the fortune of Lucian in Humanism see E. MATTIOLI, *Luciano e l'Umanesimo italiano* (Napoli, Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Storici, 1980); E. BERTI, 'Alla scuola di Manuele Crisolora. Lettura e commento di Luciano', *Rinascimento*, 27 (1987), pp. 3-74; REGOLIOSI, 'Riflessioni'.

[40] On Guarino's work see REGOLIOSI, 'Riflessioni', with an edition of the text. On this work and in general on humanist historiography see BLACK. Guarino's letter is considered the chief vehicle for the diffusion of Lucian's work. It is also significant that most of Thucydides' tenets are acknowledged by Lucian. Nevertheless, Guarino did not introduce into his work the section of Lucian's text (§ 47) which presented the Thucydidean idea of history as grounded on meticulous examination of evidence, so we can not suppose that Alberti drew this element from Guarino (conversely, a connection is pointed out by BORSI, *Introduzione*, p. 159, who wrongly considers Guarino's epistle as a translation of Lucian's text).

history a high rhetorical status. In the *De oratore* (II, 62) Cicero declared 'videtisne quantum munus sit oratoris historia?', and, most remarkalbly, in the *De legibus* (I, 2) he claimed that *historia* is 'opus oratorium maxime', a statement that is recovered by Guarino and informs great part of humanist historiography, including Alberti's work. And it is not irrelevant that Leon Battista possessed his own copy of the *De legibus* (Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence, Conventi soppressi, I 9 3), a text that was extensively used by the humanist in his works.[41] So, the highly rhetorical development of arguments in the *Porcaria coniuratio* reveals that the humanist agreed with classical principles that placed history in the realm of rhetoric, as is proved also by Grafton's studies on Alberti's conception of *historia*/*istoria*.[42] In particular, Leon Battista's historical account is constructed using rhetorical tools whose purpose is that of portraying the complexity of reality, as we shall see with regard to the employment of the *disputatio in utramque partem*.

Moreover, it is significant that Alberti adopts the term *historia* also in his artistic treatise *De Pictura* (1435) to define what an ideal visual composition should be (he employs the same word, *istoria*, in his vernacular version of the text translated in 1436):

> Est autem compositio ea pingendi ratio qua partes in opus picture componuntur. Amplissimum pictoris opus non colossus, sed historia. Maior enim est ingenii laus in historia quam in colosso. Historiae partes corpora, corporis pars membrum est. Membri pars est superficies. Primae igitur operis partes superficies, quod ex his membra, ex membra corpora, ex illis historia.[43]

Although it has been claimed that the term *historia* is simply used by Alberti with the meaning of a 'representation of events' (a meaning that had appeared in the artistic vocabulary in the previous century to mark the difference from 'non-narrative

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[41] On Alberti's copy of the *De legibus* see *Alberti. La biblioteca*, Scheda n. 60, ed. by M. L. Tanganelli, pp. 396. On Alberti's extensive employment of Cicero's rhetorical works in his oeuvre see M. MCLAUGHLIN, 'Alberti e le opere retoriche di Cicerone', in *Alberti e la tradizione*, pp. 177-206.

[42] GRAFTON, '*Historia*', p. 65. See also I. MASTROROSA, '*Rusticitas* e *urbanitas* in Leon Battista Alberti: la tradizione classica', *Albertiana*, 8 (2005), pp. 85-117: 113.

[43] L. B. Alberti, *De pictura*, in ID., *On Painting and On Sculpture*, ed. and tr. by C. Grayson (London: Phaidon, 1972), p. 70; the vernacular translation is published in Alberti, *Opere volgari*, III. On this text see GRAFTON, '*Historia'*.

representations of people'), nevertheless, the choice of this specific word reveals more profound conceptual implications surrounding the broader idea of *historia* and historical writing, which was crucial in the humanist debate.[44]

Leon Battista's statement on art in the *De Pictura* reflects indeed some distinctive traits of his historical work: in his view, both literary and artistic *historiae* do not represent in a linear manner the development and unfolding of facts, episode by episode, but, conversely, they depict the complexity of the historical event and its intricate overtones, which emerge from the overall portrayal of the composite reality that the painter/historian chooses to represent. As far as classical sources are concerned, the distinction between the *colossus* and the *historia* that Alberti sets out in the *De pictura* can be regarded as an implicit reference to Pliny, who considered ancient statues of colossuses an emblematic example of the artist's *audacia* (Plin. *Nat.* 34, 38). The extensive theoretical discussions on art in Pliny's *Naturalis historia* is a pivotal model for Alberti, yet, the humanist reveals his aim of establishing a divide between his innovative treatise and the classical precedent, as usual in his works: here this tendency appears in Alberti's claim that a more various and multifaceted kind of composition, the *historia*, is the most praiseworthy expression of art, in an unspoken polemic with the classical source. Immediately after the allusion to Pliny, Alberti describes the perfect correlation and balance that must link all members in the work of art. This important statement may have been influenced by Quintilian's description of the rhetorical construction of *historia*, a passage where the rhetorician illustrates the 'fluid' interrelation of each component in a wide cohesive composition ('Historia non tam finitos numeros quam orbem quendam contextumque desiderat. Namque omnia eius

[44] For the presence of the word *historia* in the artistic terminology of that period see C. HOPE-E. MCGRATH, 'Artists and Humanists', in *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism*, ed. by J. Kraye (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 161-188: 166. On the other hand, Grafton's whole study, which is the most complete work on this issue so far, highlights relevant rhetorical implications in the selection of the term *historia* by Alberti: GRAFTON, '*Historia'*.

membra conexa sunt, [et quoniam lubrica est ac fluit] ut homines, qui manibus invicem adprehensis gradum firmant, continent et continentur': Quint. *Inst*. 9, 4, 129). It is from this passage that Alberti probably draws the terms *historia* and *membrum*. Moreover, he specifies in his treatise that the essential features of the *historia* are copiousness and variety, with the fundamental contribution of dignity and truth:

> Primum enim quod in historia voluptatem afferat est ipsa copia et varietas rerum. [...] hanc copiam velim cum varietate quadam esse ornatam, tum dignitate et verecundia gravem atquem oderatam.[45]

All these traits that Alberti describes in his theoretical work on painting perfectly fit his literary historical writing, which, as we have seen, does not provide an extensive narration of a series of events, but is articulated to depict the intricate totality of the historical episode, by means of the studied balance of various rhetorical components derived from different literary genres, in an homogenous conflation inspired by the tenets of *varietas* and rhetoric, and by the search for truth.

The rhetorical nature of historical writing, and as a consequence its lively stylistic nature, is firmly claimed also by Lorenzo Valla, with whom Alberti proves to have significant viewpoints in common as far as historiographical theory is concerned, such as the predilection for inserting orations in the texts and for using rhetorical devices to shape the narration.[46] Moreover, they both strongly believe that a careful examination of evidence and sources is at the core of the historian's work.[47] Most importantly, we have to consider that Valla worked on a Latin translation of Thucydides to be offered to

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[45] ALBERTI, *On Painting*, p. 78.

[46] Valla claimed that he was inspired by classical historians in introducing digressions and orations in his storical writings. He made this remark in his *Antidotum in Facium*: the text that is part of the dispute between Valla and Bartolomeo Facio on historiography. See REGOLIOSI, 'Riflessioni', p. 24; 25. See also Valla's important statements on historiography in his *Proemium* to the *Gesta Ferdinandi regis Aragonum*, ed. Besomi. On this issues also: L. GARDNER JANIK, 'Lorenzo Valla. The Primacy of Rhetoric and the De-moralization of History', *History and Theory*, 12 (1973), pp. 389-404.

[47] On Valla historiographical tenets see FERRAÙ, 'La concezione storiografica del Valla: i *Gesta Ferdinandi regis Aragonum*', in *Lorenzo Valla e l'Umanesimo italiano.* Atti del Convegno internazionale di studi umanistici (Parma, 18-19 ottobre 1984), ed. by O. Besomi, M. Regoliosi (Padova: Antenore, 1986), pp. 265-310, later published in ID., *Il tessitore*, pp. 1-42; see also M. REGOLIOSI, 'Lorenzo Valla e la concezione della storia', in *La storiografia umanistica* (Messina: Sicania, 1992), I, pp. 549-571.

Nicholas V from 1448 to 1452, in the very same period when Leon Battista Alberti lived and worked in Rome in the curial environment.[48] Although there is no proof of direct connection between the two humanists,[49] Valla finished his translation just one year before Alberti wrote his epistle, so it is possible to suppose that Thucydides's work, and in particular Valla's Latin version of it, was one of the main historiographical landmarks for Leon Battista, especially taking into account that other Greek texts translated by Valla have been recently identified as part of Alberti's library, such as Herodotus' *Historiae*.[50]

So the theoretical cornerstones of Alberti's work can be recognized in Thucydides (perhaps through the mediation of Valla's translation) and Sallust, the chief classical models for humanist political historiography, with the contribution of the other essential bases for fifteenth-century historical writings, Quintilian and especially Cicero, from whom the idea of the close connection between rhetoric and history derives.

3.2 Thematic and stylistic models: a Sallustian conspiracy

Immediately after the brief incipit of the letter, Alberti starts his historical narration. The opening of the account discloses at once the significant influence that Sallust had in the epistle, also from a thematical and stylistic point of view, especially in the first section of the text, which is characterized by a more evident narrative structure. In

[48] M. PADE, 'Il Tucidide romano del Valla: la traduzione valliana nel quadro della traduzione umanistica del Quattrocento' in *Le radici umanistiche dell'Europa. Lorenzo Valla. La riforma della lingua e della logica*. Atti del convegno del Comitato nazionale VI centenario della nascita di Lorenzo Valla. Prato, 4-7 giugno 2008, ed. by M. Regoliosi (Firenze: Polistampa 2010), pp. 279-98. See also G. B. ALBERTI, 'Tucidide nella traduzione latina di Lorenzo Valla', *Studi italiani di filologia classica*, 29 (1957), pp. 224-249.

[49] On some connections between Alberti and Valla's works, although not supported by the proof of a direct relationship, see RINALDO RINALDI, '"Larvatus prodeo": vecchie e nuove ipotesi su Alberti e Valla', in *Alberti e la cultura del Quattrocento. Atti del Convegno internazionale del Comitato Nazionale VI centenario della nascita di Leon Battista Alberti. Firenze, 16-17-18 dicembre 2004* , ed. by R. Cardini, M. Regoliosi (Firenze: Polistampa, 2007), pp. 541-602

[50] *Alberti. La biblioteca*, scheda n. 68. Nevertheless, it is likely that Alberti knew Herodotus's work before Valla's translation: on Alberti knowledge of Greek authors see L. BERTOLINI, 'Per la biblioteca greca dell'Alberti', *ibid*., pp. 101-103; and BERTOLINI, *Grecus sapor*.

particular, the leader of the political plot, from his first appearance in the text, is described with echoes of some famous traits of Catiline in Sallust's work.[51] This characterization is recurrent in the whole epistle, although the conspirator's negative attributes turn out to be depicted with less emphasis than in the classical source. For instance, Alberti does not stress the moral corruption of Porcari as much as Poliziano does in his Sallustian portraits of plotters in the *Coniurationis commentarium*. However, Leon Battista still resorts to the Latin historian to shape the image of his main character, who, as a consequence of this parallel, proves to be a negative hero. If it is true that Sallust's work was a predictable model, Alberti's practice of imitation is not merely dictated by stylistic purposes, but, conversely, it is also aimed at conveying a specific political image of the conspirator: he is seen as a *turbulentissimus* man, led by ambition and recklessness, and driven by his yearning for political upheavals.

The first image of Porcari recalls the portrait of Catiline in so far as it points out at once the duplicity and ambivalence of the conspirator's figure, who is depicted as gifted at eloquence and *ingenio*, but neither moderate nor well-balanced:

(§ 3) homo animi utinam tam moderati, quam erat ingenio preditus docili et lingua ad dicendum paratus.

This descriptive technique, which enriches the representation of a negative character with positive features, is derived from Sallust, who stresses the negative traits of Catiline but hints also at positive qualities, such as eloquence, the very same attribute recalled by Alberti: '[Catilina] satis eloquentiae, sapientiae parum' (Sall. *Cat*. 5, 4; another description based on oppositions appears a few lines earlier, *Cat*. 5, 1).

In general, Porcari is portrayed with direct references to the moral and political categories employed to describe Catiline and his accomplices, who embody the ideal image of nasty conspirators. The modern plotter is represented as an organizer of

[51] On this parallel see also OSMOND, 'Catiline in Renaissance', pp. 209-213.

seditions (‘seditionum auctor’, § 5), a man capable of criminal plans (‘turbidis consiliis’, § 6), dominated by insolence and ambition, always turbulent (‘redisset…non posita animi pristina protervia, sed aucta ambitione, iterato se turbulentissimum exhibuit’ § 7).[52] The link between men’s *ambitio* and the disposition to violent political changes is recurrent in Sallust’s work and this proves to be a typical characteristic associated with immorality and dishonesty which can lead to revolts: ‘Sed primo magis ambitio, quam avaritia animos hominum exercebat’ (Sall. *Cat*. 11, 1; the word *ambitio* occurs several times in the *De coniuratione Catilinae*: 3, 4; 10, 5; 11, 1; 52, 22; 52, 26). Porcari is also driven by recklessness and thirst for subversion (‘audacia’; ‘temeritatem’; ‘cupiditate rerum novarum’, § 8), all negative traits that Alberti draws from the classical source: ‘plebem sollicitare, egestate simul ac dolore iniuriae novarum rerum cupidam’ (*Cat*. 28, 4).[53] Moreover, the inability to control oneself, ascribed by Alberti to Porcari (‘Homo impatiens sui’, § 9) is another typical trait of the classical conspirator: ‘Vastus animus inmoderata, incredibilia, nimis alta semper cupiebat’ (Sall. *Cat*. 5, 5).

Not only does Alberti enlist Sallustian categories to describe the plotter, but also to build up his narration of the historical event and to examine its causes. The conspiracy, indeed, is considered to have been brought about and fomented by some dangerous human behaviours and attitudes, like the appetite for political *res novae*, which can jeopardize established political rule. Recounting briefly Porcari’s first attempt to provoke a rebellion against papal rule (3), the humanist describes the plotter’s oration as

[52] The ajdective *turbulentus*, as mentioned, occurs twice in relation to Porcari: ‘non minus vehementem quam turbulentam’ is his oration (§ 3).

[53] Other passages are: ‘Neque solum illis aliena mens erat, qui conscii coniurationis fuerant, sed omnino cuncta plebes *novarum rerum studio* Catilinae incepta probabat’ (37, 1); ‘quae primo *cupida rerum novarum* nimis bello favebat’ (48, 1); ‘Numidarum, ingenio mobili, seditiosum atque discordiosum erat, *cupidum novarum rerum*’ (Sall. *Iug*. 66, 2); ‘proelio strenuus…ex audacia temeritatem afferre plerumque solet’ (Sall. *Iug*. 7, 4). On the *cupiditas rerum novarum* as one of the main causes of the conspiracy underlined by Alberti and Sallust see also MASTROROSA, p. 112; MODIGLIANI, *Congiurare*, p. 66; OSMOND, ‘Catiline in Renaissance’, p. 213.

‘vehementem’ and ‘turbulentam’. This element underlines immediately the negative power of Porcari’s eloquence, which could lead to political disorder by urging people to rebellion. It also puts under a negative light the ‘vulgus’, represented as liable to be easily roused into a military uprising. This idea emerges in the description of Porcari’s second attempt to rise up, where the author mentions the ‘insanum vulgus’:

(§ 7) …presto affuit Porcarius vultu, gestu, manu, verbis, clamore omnia temptans, quibus *insanum vulgus ad odium eorum*, qui rebus preessent, *incenderet atque ad arma concitaret*.

The depiction of the common people as insane, foolish, and inclined to be inflamed by political leaders comes to light also in Sallust, in particular in his *Bellum Iugurtinum*: ‘Vulgus, uti plerumque solet, ingenio mobili, seditiosum atque discordiosum, erat cupidum rerum novarum, quieti et otio advorsum’ (66, 2) ; ‘prorsus intentus omni modo plebis animum incendebat’ (30, 3). Moreover, in the same passage of Alberti’s epistle (§ 7), Porcari is portrayed as a trained and expert orator, whose rhetorical skills are able to move men to rebellion. Once again this overall description, in which the conspirator’s physical traits recall the internal ones, seems to evoke Sallust’s representation of Catiline (in this case totally negative): ‘foedi oculi, citus modo, modo tardus incessus; prorsus in facie voltuque vecordia inerat’ (*Cat*. 15, 5).

Another significant correlation emerges in the reference to the idea of *libertas* as a driving force that lead the conspirators:

(*Porcaria coniuratio* § 7) Homo impatiens sui…deberi ab se fortune sue et animi generositati putabat, ut quocumque daretur pacto, vel etiam interitu, sin aliter nequiret, libertatem redimeret;

(*Cat*. 20, 6) Ceterum mihi in dies magis animus accenditur, cum considero, quae condicio vitae futura sit, nisi nosmet ipsi *vindicamus in libertatem*.

Furthermore, Alberti, like Sallust, underlines that the conspirator gathered accomplices led by similar wicked intentions and by the thoughtless hope of achieving success (§ 9):

Quos idcirco visum est complices adiungit nepotemque imprimis adolescentem, cupidum atque ad ferrum perpromptum premittit Romam, ut meritoriam militiam simulans cogat armorum vim et consceleratorum manum, devinciatque quam possit multos multa spe rerum agendarum.

This allusion recalls again some passages in the *De coniuratione Catilinae*, where the plotter is described enlisting young men with the same purposes:

(*Cat*. 17, 1-2) …hortari alios, alios temptare; opes suas, inparatam rem publicam, magna praemia coniurationis docere. Ubi satis explorata sunt, quae voluit, in unum omnis convocat, quibus maxuma necessitudo et plurumum audacia inerat.
(*Cat*. 17, 6) Ceterum iuventus pleraque, sed maxume nobilium, Catilinae inceptis favebat; bellum quam pacem malebant.

All these thematic and descriptive elements inspired by Sallust clearly reveal that Leon Battista does not sympathize with Porcari in his historical epistle. The moral paradigms and exemplary traits that the humanist selects from the classical source to be associated with the fifteenth-century conspiracy and its leader, although conventional, are totally negative and lead us to believe that the humanist's intent is not to show comprehension for the plotter, neither outspokenly nor covertly.[54] So, although Porcari's harangue is informed by an apparent and substantial disapproval of the papal government, it cannot be considered as evidence of Alberti's closeness to the rebel's ideas, as some scholars have claimed.[55] The insertion of a lengthy oration as delivered by the leader of the plot to his fellow-citizens, as already observed, is a rhetorical device typical of historiographical works and it is perfectly consistent with the classical model, in which, needless to say, Catiline gives his famous speech (*Cat*. 20).[56] The introduction to the *oratio* in the Latin source seems to inspire directly Alberti's presentation of Porcari's harangue, which is described as skilfully delivered as a result of the plotter's rhetorical ability, in both eloquence and gesture:

[54] This point is confirmed by the reception of the figure of Catiline in the literary tradition from Middle ages to Humanism, where the conspirator always maintains an evil status: see P. J. OSMOND, '"Princeps"'; ID., 'Catiline in Fiesole'.
[55] See MODIGLIANI, *Congiurare*, pp. 67-68.
[56] On Catiline's oration drawn from Sallust's work and used in Alberti's texts see REGOLIOSI, 'Per un catalogo', pp. 110-113.

(§ 10) Convocantur illico, quibus placere sua consilia noverat. Repente completa domo confluentium multitudine, excogitatam diesque multos elaboratam orationem pronuntiat tanta et sui fiducia et auditorum approbatione, ut nihil ad rem perficiundam, nisi constitutum deesse tempus omnes affirmarent.

Alberti makes Porcari denounce decisively the papacy for its unfair rule, which had put Roman people in a condition of poverty and marginalization and gave power only to a small minority of curial men. The plotter hints at the *topoi* which recall the *libertas* and glory of ancient Rome, now lost because of iniquitous governments, and, in contrast, he reminds his accomplices of their valour and virtues. The content and the rhetorical structure of the *oratio* seem to reflect Porcari's actual orations that he delivered when he was *capitano del popolo* in Florence in 1427, which were mainly focused on the concept of *libertas*.[57] But, most importantly, these thematic and rhetorical elements perfectly match Catiline's speech in Sallust's work, just as Porcari's oration in Orazio Romano's *Porcaria* did. So the narrative choice of placing the leader's speech in a literary work on a conspiracy (either a poem or an epistle) turns out to be rather common and aimed at presenting the plotter's purposes in a vivid way.[58]

A point worth making concerns the structure of the *oratio* in Alberti's epistle, which shows a perfect correspondence with the rhetorical framework of classical orations. The speech proves to be divided into the *partitiones* prescribed as essential sections of *orationes* in the chief classical treatises on the *ars rhetorica*, such as Cicero's *De inventione*. Porcari's harangue contains an *exordium*; a lengthy *laudatio* ('Neque dubitare…recensere?', §§ 11-13), in which the conspirator underlines his accomplices's value, bravery and capacity to recognize the problematic political situation of Rome; a *narratio* ('Egestate…ausus sit', §§ 13-14), where he describes the unfair papal government; a *confirmatio* ('Subinde…incautos', §§ 15-17), where Porcari proves his allegations and condemns his enemies; and a final *peroratio* ('Nihil…obsecundent', §§

[57] ED. REGOLIOSI, p. 1280; CASSANI, p. 310; MIGLIO, '"Viva la libertà"'.
[58] This rhetorical device is used also in Malvezzi's *Tarentina* (book II): on this text see chapter II. 3.

18-19), which opens with the classical Ciceronian closing formula, 'Nihil reliquum esse…', and incites the audience by appealing to pathos. This rigorous structure reveals Alberti's carefulness in shaping this *oratio* and his awareness of classical oratorical rules, but it also confirms his intention of following closely historiographical models which use this very rhetorical tool, such as Sallust and Thucydides. Thus, this lofty and well-structured speech, written in accordance with the rules of classical oratory, proves also that Leon Battista sees history as a high form of rhetorical writing.

The connections between Porcari's speech and Catiline's in Sallust's work can be acknowledged in both structural and thematic components. Alberti shapes the opening of the *oratio* on the first section in Catiline's speech, which can be regarded as a *captatio benevolentiae* or a *laudatio*. Here the conspirator urges his accomplices to seize the day and undertake a noble endeavour, reminding them they are valorous and 'viros fortes', a definition that occurs in both works (a similar claim is made in Porcari's speech in Orazio Romano's poem, I, 259-260 'Nonne viri sumus?') and is frequently stressed by Catiline, who underlines the condition of his fellow-citizens as 'strong men':

(§§ 11-12) Neque dubitare quidem se omnes eos qui adessent, quos esse *viros fortes* meminisset, digna fortibus optasse persepe atque cogitasse, sed aliis occasionem defuisse, aliis alia impedimento fuisse, cur privatis rebus magis quam publicis intenti essent. Nunc pro certo habere, intellectis que pararent rebus, fore neminem, neque ex his qui adsunt, neque ex his ad quos preclarissima sua consilia perventura sint, modo *se aut Romanos cives, aut saltem homines meminerint*, quin de tota causa eadem sentiat.

(Sall. *Cat*. 20, 2-3) ...*vos cognovi fortis fidosque* mihi...
(*Cat*. 20, 9) Quae quousque tandem patiemini, o *fortissumi viri*?
(*Cat*. 20, 11) Etenim quis mortalium, cui *virile ingenium* est, tolerare potest illis divitias superare...?

Both the classical plotter and the fifteenth-century conspirator promise to their associates a permanent acquisition of glory and honour, along with the gaining of money and wealth:[59]

[59] It has been pointed out that Alberti put less emphasis on Porcari's greed in comparison with other historical sources: cfr. BORSI, *Introduzione*, p. 153.

(§ 12) Opus esse animo parato...ea exequenda que necessaria utiliaque sint et cum eterna laudis et glorie celebritate coniuncta.
(§ 18) Sustineant sua gaudia atque se ad cumulatissimas divitias capescendas parent. Decies centena millium nummorum aureorum noctem proximam allaturam.

(Sall. *Cat*. 20, 14) En illa, illa, quam saepe optastis, libertas, praeterea divitiae, decus, gloria in oculis sita sunt.
(*Cat*. 58, 8) memineritis vos divitias, decus, gloriam, praeterea libertatem atque patriam in dextris vostris portare.[60]

Moreover, at the beginning of the *oratio*, Porcari, like Catiline, highlights that he and his co-conspirators share the same poor condition of life:

(§ 13) Essetne quispiam, qui communes miserias posset sine lachrimis recensere;

(Sall. *Cat*. 20, 3) simul quia vobis eadem quae mihi bona malaque esse intellexi.

After this, the central section of Porcari's speech (§§ 13-15: 'Egestatem, servitutem...non servum esse') is a denunciation of the slavery status in which Romans are forced to live, because of the hideous and unjust domination of people who do not deserve this autocratic power, a point that is made by contrasting the condition of 'citizens' and 'slaves': (§ 13 'Egestatem, servitutem, contumelias, iniurias et eiusmodi iam tum peculiare malum et tolerabile factum esse assuetudine'; § 14 'cives esse non licere'; 'Urbem civibus factam vacuam'; (§ 15) '...cum cives ipsi meliori fortuna digni precario viverent... Oportere quidem olim meminisse, quid possit virtus; quanti sit non servum esse'). Similarly, Catiline describes extensively the crimes and injustices perpetrated by people who rule Rome: he pronounces these accusations in both his orations in Sallust's work (Sall. *Cat*. 20, 6-8; 20, 11-13; 58, 13-14).[61]

Before moving to the closing section of the *oratio*, both Porcari and Catiline incite their fellows, by mentioning the favour of the gods. They claim that victory is imminent

[60] Analogous considerations appear in other passages of Sallust's work: Sall. *Cat*. 21, 2 ; 58, 9.
[61] For the specific connection with Sall. *Cat*. 20, 6-8 see also OSMOND, 'Catiline in the Renaissance', p. 211.

and stress the difference between the vigour of the conspirators and the weakness of their enemies, corrupted by luxury:

(§ 17) Superos favere, populum congratulaturum, orbem terrarum admiraturum virtutem, nullam posteritatem suas laudes obliteraturam. Hostes contra, superis atque hominibus invisos, inter se dissidere, inermes, ociosos, luxu perditos, incautos.

(Sall. *Cat*. 20, 10) Verum enim vero, pro deum atque hominum fidem, victoria in manu nobis est: viget aetas, animus valet; contra illis annis atque divitiis omnia consenuerunt.

The *explicit* of both speeches, a sort of *peroratio* typical of classical oratory, consists of the final and emphatic exhortation to carry out the plot and it contains a further allusion to the wealthy reward that would be gained from the rebellion (*Porcaria coniuratio*, § 17; Sall. *Cat*. 20, 14).

This analysis shows how closely Alberti follows Sallust. But the process of imitation performed by Leon Battista is far from being unoriginal, since he applied the prototype of Sallust's text to a different kind of writing, the epistle, innovating and re-semanticizing the classical source. In addition, the humanist does not seem to replicate his model directly from a verbal point of view, although the vocabulary obviously echoes Sallustian terminology due to the thematic relationship between the texts. Conversely, Alberti's language is far more composite and it includes references to different authors and, in particular, a number of Ciceronian expressions, synonymic pairs and words, variegated and simple at the same time.

What emerges plainly is that the condemnation of unfair papal rule articulated in Porcari's oration reflects the very same thematic and rhetorical construction of Catiline's speeches, which were certainly not aimed at conveying any kind of understanding for the evil plotter. Also Porcari's claim that his political plan is the consequence of his love for the fatherland and freedom has a parallel in Catiline's words (*Cat*. 58, 11 'nos pro patria, pro libertate, pro vita certamus'; 58, 8): § 19 'Moveri tamen se magis patrie pietate quam opibus: magis pendere ad civium suorum decus et

felicitatem, quam ad ulla que sese attingant commoda'. Thus, the specific way in which the model of Sallust is used in the epistle contributes to shedding light on Alberti's view of the conspiracy. By establishing this extensive correlation with the most famous classical conspiracy, he does not have any intention, not even unspoken, of putting Porcari's plot under a positive light. It is clear that, although he does not share the flattering eulogy of the papacy he ascribed to the foreign clergymen in the second section of the epistle, he does not display sympathy for the plotter.

3. 3 'Eclectic classicism' in language

The model of Sallust is not employed in the second section of the epistle, where the enlisting of classical sources becomes less frequent and evident. This double approach in the practice of imitation can be related to the dissimilar character of the two portions of the letter. However, notably, it is again a specific reference to a classical source in the second section that can help us to gain a better insight into Alberti's standpoint on the events. In particular, Leon Battista inserts a significant quotation at the end of the discourse of the foreign clergymen. They praise papal rule and blame the Roman people for putting in danger the prosperity and safety of Rome with a brutal attack on the Curia. The closing sentence of the speech finishes with a sophisticated reference to a satire of Juvenal (*Sat*. 2, 1-3), which reveals the ironic tone that dominates in the representation of the foreigners' viewpoint: they claim they are afraid to remain in Rome and want to leave the city, 'Ultra Sauromatas nimirum hinc fugiendum est; linquendum crudele celum et lares avaros' (§ 29). The reference is drawn directly from Juvenal: *Sat*. 2, 1-3 '*Ultra Sauromatas fugere* hinc libet et glacialem/ Oceanum, quoties aliquid de moribus audent/ qui Curios simulant et Bacchanalia vivunt'. The *Sauromatae* were a nomad population, who lived at the extreme confines of the Mediterranean Sea,

and embodied the image of the most inhospitable and furthest land from Rome. Notably, in the satire 'Ultra Sauromatas' is the expression by which Juvenal emphasises that he wants to run away as far as possible whenever he hears hypocrites who talk about moral principles. This implicit correlation associates the *barbari*'s final words in Alberti's text with Juvenal's, but, on the other hand, it might perhaps also reveal an ironic implication, linking obliquely the clergymen to the hypocrisy that the classical poet condemns and disclosing the sarcastic tone by which the *barbari*'s whole monologue seems to be phrased.

As far as language is concerned, these verbal echos betray Alberti's predilection for the use of a plurality of models and his stylistic ideal of literary composition as based on originality and 'eclectic classicism'.[62] What emerges in Leon Battista's epistle is his pursuit of a personal middle-style, apparently unsophisticated, but informed by the cult of brevity and of rare and unpolished terms. Nevertheless, this tendency, which reflects a decisive opposition to stylistic conformity, is combined with the creation of a classical veneer aimed at ennobling the whole work by means of references to the chief classical *auctoritates*, such as Cicero. It is not surprising that Alberti relies on Cicero as a fondamental source, since he often mentioned the Latin rhetorician in his works with words of praise, such as in book I of the *Libri della Famiglia*, where Lionardo defines Cicero 'quel nostro principe degli oratori'.[63] We have already seen the prominent role played by this *auctoritas* from a theoretical perspective, especially as far as historiographical tenets are concerned; but it is significant that Cicero's works are also a source for Alberti's lexis and style. As the apparatus that follows the text shows

[62] On Alberti's teory and practice of literary imitation see MCLAUGHLIN, *Literary Imitation*, pp. 149-165. For the definition of 'classical eclecticism' see MARSH, p. 94 and again MCLAUGHLIN, *Literary Imitation*, p. 165.
[63] Cfr. MCLAUGHLIN, *Literary Imitation*, p. 149.

(*Appendix*), a number of terms, *iuncturae* and verbal expressions derive from Cicero and eventually confer a lofty classical patina to the epistle.

The eclecticism of Alberti's language appears clearly in the employment of verbal expressions drawn not only from Cicero and classical historians (Sallust, Suetonius, Caesar)[64] but also from satirical writers, such as Juvenal (§ 29), as already mentioned. It is again a verbal reference to a satirical author that highlights Alberti's taste for rare terminology typical of his ideal of imitation: the noun 'cistiferos'[65] (§ 27) is a recherché word used by Leon Battista with the meaning of 'porter', as an extention of the original meaning of 'bearer of a box or a chest', and it proves to be drawn directly from Martial (5, 17, 4 'Dum te posse negas nisi lato, Gellia, clavo/ Nubere; nupsisti, Gellia, *cistibero*'; Alberti adopts the term in the form *cistifer*). Thus the intertextual sources in the *Porcaria coniuratio* range from the ethical denunciation of Sallust to the indignant satire on Rome's decadence in Juvenal, Martial and Suetonius, and give us an idea of Alberti's own tone and stance in this historiographical epistle.

But the epistle, despite its historical character and its brevity, betrays also Leon Battista's predilection for technical terminology, which is recurrent in the humanist's whole output and reflects his taste for unconventional language and classical rarities. The synonymic pair 'fenisiceis et stramentariis'[66] (§ 21) shows the refined combination of two rare terms derived from the technical language of agriculture: the noun 'fenisiceis' corresponds to the term *faenisex, faenisecis*, which means 'the mower/ the

[64] Besides the many references to Sallust, already mentioned, the segment 'victorie fructum colligant' (§ 18) seems to recall Caes. *Gall*. 7, 27, 1 'fructum victoriae perciperent'; while the description 'Purpura et auro distincta veste amictus' (§ 21) might be inspired by Suetonius (*Nero* 25, 1 'sed et Romam eo curru, quo Augustus olim triumphaverat, et in *veste purpurea distinctaque stellis aureis* chlamyde coronamque capite gerens Olympiacam') as well as the use of the adjective *meritoria* in 'meritoria militia' (§ 9; Suet. *Vit*. 7 'meritorio coenaculo'; *Cal*. 39 'meritoriis quoque vehiculis'; *Claud*. 15 'meritoria scorta').

[65] (§ 27) 'En priscos Camillos et Coruncanos, qui preter se quoscumque intueantur barbaros et cistiferos predicant!'.

[66] (§ 21) 'Per Epiphaniam solemni die, cum pontifex et collegia atque pretor et minores pontifices sacrum pro more facerent in basilica, ex complicibus, cui negotium mandarat, fenificeis et stramentariis ad pontificia stabula basilice finitima iniecturus erat ignem…'.

person who cuts hay' and is a derivative from *faenisicium*, 'the harvest, the cutting of hay'. This term occurs only in Varro's *Res rusticae* (1, 49, 2), Columella's *De re rustica* (2, 18, 4), and Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis historia* (3, 18, 259),[67] who can be regarded as Alberti's sources. The second word 'stramentariis' is an adjective that means 'concerning straw' and is used by Cato in his *De re rustica* (10),[68] from which Alberti draws the term and turns it into a noun, with the meaning of 'the harvester'. This is basically a synonym of the previous noun in the pair, which, therefore, seems to be fashioned to exibit a profound enthusiasm for technical and rare terms. But in the very same passage, Alberti discloses also a classicist approach in the wording, since he defines the ecclesiastical offices (which did not have a name in classical Latin) by relying on classical terms: (§ 21) '...cum pontifex et *collegia* atque *pretor* et *minores pontifices* sacrum pro more facerent in basilica, ex complicibus, cui negotium mandarat, *fenificeis et stramentariis* ad pontificia stabula basilice finitima iniecturus erat ignem...' (*collegia* are the 'colleges of cardinals'; *pretor* represents the 'magistrate in charge of the administration of justice'; and *minores pontifeces* are the 'prelates').

This passage provides an emblematic example of Alberti's complex attitude towards language, displaying the combination of rare technical terms and classical words employed to name new entities unknown in the ancient Roman world. This approach, which informs the whole epistle, challenges stylistic conformity but is profoundly nourished by a plurality of classical models, showing what has been properly defined an 'eclectic classicism'.

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[67] Varro, *Res. rust.* 1, 49, 2 'sicilienda prata, id est falcibus consectanda quae *faenisices* praeterierunt'; Colum. 2, 18, 4 'Sed iam *faenisicia* insequitur cura messis'; Plin. *Nat.* 3, 18, 259 'hoc est quae *feniseces* praeterierunt secari'.

[68] Cato *De re rust.* 10 'Falces fenariae tres, *stramentariae* sex'. More in general, for Alberti's use of this kind of authors see F. SBERLATI, '*Rerum rusticarum scriptores*' in Alberti, in *Alberti e la tradizione*, pp. 153-175.

4. The rhetorical construction of an unresolved political dialogue

The political perspective of the text and Alberti's own standpoint are not plainly conveyed in the epistle. As we have seen, the humanist does not have any compassion for the conspirators; nonetheless his political view is couched in a multifaceted rhetorical exposition that is aimed at underlining the complexity of the historical situation and the unresolved dispute between the different factions involved in the Roman scenario. As in most of Alberti's works, his purpose is not to provide the reader with a reassuring and linear reading of the social and political world. On the contrary, the presentation of conflicting points of view is intended to depict the unsettled intricacy of political tensions and, at the same time, Leon Battista's disillusioned and anti-dogmatic view on the problematic relationship between individual and society.

This enquiring approach that arouses questions instead of giving comforting answers is reflected in the rhetorical construction of the second section of the *Porcaria coniuratio*. It is totally articulated by means of the classical technique of the *disputatio in utramque partem*, a method according to which the discussant argues on both sides of the question in the form of a 'for and against' debate and uses the same argument on both sides, giving different interpretations of a specific matter.[69] This debating method had been used since antiquity, especially to train orators, but in the Renaissance it became a proper technique of discussion and analysis employed by humanists. One of the first and most emblematic examples of the fifteenth-century use of this practice can be found in Leonardo Bruni's *Dialogi ad Petrum Paulum Histrum* (1405-1408), which

[69] The employment of this technique in the *Porcaria coniuratio* has been briefly aknwoledge by FURLAN, *Leonis*, p. 267; GRAFTON, *Leon Battista*, p. 311; MASTROROSA, p. 113; ED. REGOLIOSI, p. 1280. The use of this argumentative method deserves a more in-depth analysis focused on disclosing its implications in Alberti's work.

were based on the Ciceronian debating model of the *De oratore*.[70] This argumentative technique was closely linked with both the ideas of 'prudence' and 'rhetoric', seen as the core of many humanists' ideology (as Victoria Kahn illustrated examining the works of Coluccio Salutati, Lorenzo Valla and Giovanni Pontano) and was aimed at 'persuading the reader not to any specific action but to the exercising of the prudential judgment that is required for all actions'.[71] The centrality of rhetoric in humanist works is not only conceived in terms of style but also of building a line of reasoning which leads to the application of 'prudential judgment':[72] a practice that proves to be crucial also in the *Porcaria coniuratio*, which is a product of Alberti's conception of *historia* as a highly rhetorical form of writing. Here the univocal depiction of the event moves toward a dialogic representation of reality.

The articulation of the different political views presented by Alberti, although informed by a problematizing approach, is framed by means of a logical and rigorous expository method. This exposition presents the diverse standpoints as asserted by the clergymen in their own words and it underlines clearly the distinctions (and sub-distinctions) between every component of the political debate, by means of rhetorical devices which bring forth a coherent development of the argument. Alberti hints also explicitly, more than once, at his own viewpoint, as one of the curial officials. Immediately after the account of the conspiracy, which finishes with the words Porcari pronounced before dying (§ 25 'Nos victoria in noctis vestibulo properans expectabat'), the humanist stresses the divide between the conspirators and the curial members: he declares that he and the other clergymen ('Nos alii…', § 26) are perturbed by fear and

[70] On the use of this technique in Bruni's *Dialogi ad Petrum Paulum Histrum*, see MARSH, p. 24-25; R. FUBINI, 'All'uscita dalla Scolastica medievale: Salutati, Bruni, e i *Dialogi ad Petrum Histrum'*, *Archivio Storico Italiano*, 150, 2 (1992), pp. 1076-1099.
[71] V. KAHN, *Rhetoric, Prudence, and Skepticism in the Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985): on the *Quattrocento*, pp. 55-88; quotation at p. 39.
[72] KAHN, p. 39

indignation caused by the revolt, as if they were thrown onto rocks by a storm, and thus are not able to maintain univocal opinion on the events. The first group presented consists of the *barbari*: the foreigners who were assigned official ecclesiastical roles and who are shocked by the conspiracy and blame the Romans for not being aware of the prosperity created in the city by the papal government. The speech appears to be shaped by a sarcastic tone by which Alberti distances himself from the *barbari*. In particular, the rhetorical choice of direct speech allows the author to set an ironical overtone on these words making them sound affected.

Next, in a strong contrast underlined by the connective phrase 'Haec illi. Nos alii…' (§ 30), the humanist explains the viewpoint of the Italian members of the clergy, among whom he includes himself. They claim a more rational approach in judging the situation and do not accept that all Romans are to blame for the crime of a few people; moreover, they celebrate Rome and the pope, acknowledging the flourishing state of arts and humanist studies in the city. Now, the author introduces a further distinction, presenting those clergymen who are more cautious. They are concerned that papal rule might not be able to face other attacks and put forward some general considerations on the issue of conspiracies. After these reflections, the humanist appears again in the development of the argument (for the third time), this time giving his personal standpoint. He declares that he does not totally agree with the opinions presented and he shifts the focus onto the wider Italian scenario, hinting at possible threats coming from other states. Then, he rethinks his concerns and celebrates the pope's *maiestas* and love for peace, claiming that these virtues will keep the papacy safe. Finally, in this overlapping of contrasting points of view, Alberti's position turns out to be still evasive, since he concludes his work admitting that he cannot give a univocal opinion and he will decide about his own life by considering the evolution of the events, day by day.

This whole section reflects both Alberti's prudent and dissimulating attitude and his predilection for a dialogical construction of reasoning, which is characterized by an underlying tone of doubt and perplexity, as in most of his works, many of which belong to the very genre of the dialogue (such as the four vernacular dialogues, and some *Intercenales*). This dialectic argumentation is used not only in the actual dialogues but also in other texts, and it confers vividness and vigour on the exposition. It mainly consists in 'the interaction of polarities which is generally expressed in the opposition of …interlocutors', but this collision also has an intimate and introspective character, since it often portrays 'tensions within the author's own personality'.[73] As the historiographical text shows, the polarity portrayed becomes the image of both a social and an inner conflict. Thus, in the *Porcaria coniuratio*, the dialogic structure is not only a mere expository technique but reflects also the controversial nature of the themes and issues that arise in the text.

It is noteworthy that Alberti describes the use of the *disputatio in utramque partem* in his later work *Trivia senatoria*, the treatise on the art of eloquence and oratory dedicated to Lorenzo de' Medici in 1460. Here he claims that it is possible to argue on the same issue from opposite sides:

> Atqui trivium quodque duos habet ad disceptandum aditus, ubi argumenta contendat: nam aut de lege roganda consultant aut contra de lege abroganda… Persuasionum quidem loci eque numero sunt, uti trivia, quoque sex… Ex quocumque istorum, quod ipsum etiam triviis accidit, duplex ad persuadendum facultas prebetur.[74]

[73] On the style and structure of Alberti's dialogic writings and in general on the forms of argumentations in his works see MARSH (quotations at p. 79, 83); MASTROROSA, p. 114; F. TATEO, 'Le forme dell'argomentazione nella tarda trattatistica albertiana', in *Leon Battista Alberti: actes du congrès international de Paris (Sorbonne, Institut de France, Institut culturel italien, Collège de France), 10-15 avril 1995*, ed. by F. Furlan, P. Laurens, S. Matton (Torino: Aragno-Paris: Vrin, 2000), pp. 391-403; F. FURLAN, 'Remarques sur la conception, la genèse et la construction dialogique des livres *De familia*', *ibid*., pp. 427-441; P. GUÉRIN, 'Préméditation et improvisation: Un modèle anomique de la *disputatio'*, *ibid*., pp. 493-510.

[74] ALBERTI, *Opere latine*, p. 1286. See also BORSI, *Momenti*, p. 79 and MASTROROSA, p. 114.

Alberti also seems to allude to this very same argumentative technique in a passage in book II of the *Libri della Famiglia*: 'io ora dimando, ora rispondo difendendo il contrario di quello che gli altri dicono'.[75] Most significantly, the same dialogical articulation of different viewpoints, based on the juxtaposition of the characters' speeches (in either a direct or indirect form), emerges in more than one of the *Intercenales* (1432-1442),[76] especially in the texts devoted to political matters. In the *Intercenales Hostis*, *Bubo* and *Lacus* most of the narration consists of the pure contrasting of opposing opinions, ideologies, and thoughts,[77] ascribed to different characters or to different groups and parties, comparable with the clergymen in the *Porcaria coniuratio*. This is the case in *Lacus*, where, in an imaginary society of animals, the political speeches of the delegates of the little fishes (the opponents of the frogs) have an important narrative function and are presented as an effective attempt to change the allegorical social system depicted. The same technique appears in *Hostis*, where the Genoese ponder over diverse opinions on the treatment of captured enemies. Here all different views are reported without any comments, apart from the laconic final remark, 'ut iam non obscurum sit, unicum et eum quidem abiectum hominem posse in tempore universe rei publice pestem calamitatemque afferre'[78]: this statement can be regarded as an additional parallel to the text on the conspiracy, since it underlines the evil power that a single man's oratorical art can have on individuals and social changes.

As this latter example demonstrates, the rhetorical articulation of arguments is a crucial issue in Alberti's work, not only from a stylistic perspective, as a pivotal element in shaping his own texts, but also, from an ideological point of view. Political

[75] Quoted by MASTROROSA, p. 114.
[76] For this date see ALBERTI, *Opere latine*, pp. 194-201 (the edition of the texts: pp. 223-818).
[77] This element is more striking in *Hostis* and *Bubo*, where the development of the text is exclusively based on the juxtaposition of different speeches: in *Hostis* the speeches are delivered by broad groups of men, representative of different opinions, while in *Bubo* the orators are the owl, who embodies philosophical tradition, and the duck, who stands for aristocracy.
[78] ALBERTI, *Opere latine*, p. 316.

oratory is often represented as a device through which eloquent men (or a personification of men, as in some *Intercenales*) can persuade the common people to hideous actions, such as violent rebellions, which are considered by Alberti one of the most dangerous threats to *concordia* in societies. This issue emerges clearly in both the *Porcaria coniuratio* and in the *Intercenales Lacus* and *Bubus*, where the driving forces of political changes are the speeches delivered by skilled orators.[79] In the epistle on the conspiracy, in particular, Porcari's rhetorical tools are often put in relation with the purpose of moving popular masses to action by raising hatred and evil impulses (§ 7; 15). Moreover, detailed representations of the conspirator's rhetorical techniques are also frequent in the text and are placed in order to emphasize the effectiveness of his speeches (§ 10; § 13).

Hence the link between rhetoric and politics, a key element in Alberti's works,[80] becomes apparent in the *Porcaria coniuratio* and in those *Intercenales* more extensively devoted to political issues. The prominent function that argumentative techniques, eloquence and oratory play in the development of political phenomena turns out to be addressed by Alberti from multiple perspectives in his works: stylistic, rhetorical, thematic, ideological. But, most importantly, this matter is always treated through a questioning and dialectical approach which reflects Leon Battista's complex and caustic ideological view.

5. The disapproval of *res novae* and the 'iciarchical' image of power

The Sallustian tone of Porcari's *oratio*, along with the negative light in which Alberti places political oratory, is a confirmation of the humanist's decisive disapproval of the

[79] For this element in the *Intercenales* see G. ROSSI, 'Alberti e la scienza giuridica quattrocentesca: il ripudio di un paradigma culturale', in *Alberti e la cultura*, pp. 59-121: 110-115.
[80] In general on this matter H. BARON, *In Search of Florentine Civic Humanism: Essays on the Transition from Medieval to Modern Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), I, pp. 258-288.

conspirator's plans. Porcari turns out to be a 'turbulentissimum' rebel, whose rhetorical skills are able to inflame the 'insanum vulgus', exploiting the 'cupiditas rerum novarum' and putting in danger the whole social institution.

At the core of this idea of the conspiracy there are two crucial ideological elements that dominate in Alberti's bitter political thought and are recurrent in his work. The first is the negative image of the plebs, which is depicted as unable to decide independently for the common good, as favourable to upheavals, and as the target of evil manipulations.[81] The second is the pessimistic idea according to which political and social changes, *res novae*, can bring about only detrimental conditions and are caused by egoistic and thoughtless ambitions of single men that lead to a general collapse of the social system. From this perspective, as Giovanni Rossi demonstrated extensively in his study on Alberti's views on juridical science, the observance of 'tradition' and the protection of the *status quo* are the only ways to safeguard a peaceful and orderly political organization, protecting the citizens's *quies* and *tranquillitas*.[82]

It is also very well known that Alberti often shows a critical attitude towards the most oppressive aspect of power, which is articulated in many passages of his works either implicitly or openly, such as the caustic and allegorical mythological *fabula* of *Momus*, the earlier work *Theogenius* (1441) and some *Intercenales*, where the eagerness for civic commitment coexists with a disillusioned desire to escape from politics, in an unresolved tension.[83] In the *Momus* the criticism of political power reaches unparalleled peaks and the veiled and sarcastic denunciation of the mechanisms of autocratic rule covers both concrete and general aspects of the contemporary society. In particular, a direct target of Alberti's mordant portrait has been identified in the curial political

[81] See also MASTROROSA, p. 101.
[82] On this issue see the analysis in ROSSI, pp. 59-121.
[83] Cfr. MASTOROSA, p. 99. On the *Momus* see FUBINI, 'Leon Battista Alberti', and on the *Theogenius* see L. BOSCHETTO, 'Ricerche sul *Theogenius* e sul *Momus'*, *Rinascimento*, 33 (1993), pp. 3-52. The edition of the *Theogenius* is in ALBERTI, *Opere volgari*, II.

system, an element that links this work directly with the *Porcaria coniuratio*. Numerous correlations between the two works have been pointed out,[84] but one of the most significant parallels, neglected so far, comes to light in the passage of the *Momus* where Leon Battista describes the conspiracy as a nefarious instrument to gain political control, within a more general denunciation of the evil of power:

animadvertisse duas ad principatum patere vias [...]: unam quidem, quae factionibus et conspirationibus muniatur, hanc teneri expilando, vexando, collabefactando, sternendoque quicquid tuis curriculis obiectum ad interpellandum offenderis, alteram vero ad imperium viam bonarum esse artium peritia, bonorumque morum cultu ac virtutum ornamentis deductam atque aptam, qua quidem te ita compares, ita exhibeas hominum generi oportet, ut te gratia et benivolentia dignum deputent, unum te suis adversis rebus adire, tuis potissimum assuescere consiliis et stare sententiis condiscant.[85]

These words confirm not only Alberti's negative opinion about Porcari as a plotter, whose actions in the *Porcaria coniuratio* are metaphorically stigmatized by the image of 'pigs's grunts' (§ 35 'primus inter porcos qui grunnitum sustulerit', a wordplay which links 'porcos' with 'Porcari'), but they prove also the humanist's general condemnation of conspiracies as a way to gain power. In spite of Alberti's frequent disapprovals of the despotic side of political dominion in his works, he does not admit the possibility of rebellion: the conspiracy is regarded as a brutal upheaval that subverts the political system and, in Alberti's pessimistic view, can lead only to chaos and the ruin of the state. Thus the only option is the maintenance of traditional laws to prevent dangerous changes brought about by the social body.

The denunciation of the inconsiderate yearning for transforming the *status quo*, which underlies the *Porcaria coniuratio*, is a recurring topic also in some *Intercenales*, such as *Templum*, *Lapides* and *Lacus*. In *Templum*, in particular, the 'stones' at the foundations of a temple want to gain a higher position as they envy the stones at the upper levels of the building, but this thoughtless and self-destructive rebellious

[84] On the correlation between these works see the studies already mentioned at footnote 13.
[85] ALBERTI, *Momo*, p. 118. This significant passage ends up with the denial of any possible form of good power, since 'imperio postquam adeptum partumve...imperantibus asserebat', so *Momus* suggests that the better condition for a man is that of a vagabond, 'qui quidem vulgo mendicant, quos errones nuncupant'.

behaviour brings about the destruction of the whole temple. This *fabula* is both an allegory of the danger of not accepting the social order validated by the tradition and a declaration of political conservatism.[86] As the allegorical social picture in *Lacus* also demonstrates, in Alberti's cynical view the harmful 'res novae' end up prevailing eventually, because of man's ambitions, thoughtlessness, greed and envy: all negative traits that are conventionally ascribed to conspirators in the literary tradition and are evoked also in the *Porcaria coniuratio*.

These considerations shed light on the intimate correlation between the issue of conspiracy and the debate on the theory and practice of political power typical of the humanist age, a subject which in that period became closely related to the idea of princely rule and, as a consequence, to the political conduct of the perfect prince. These issues prove to be crucial also in Alberti's *Porcaria coniuratio*, where, despite the fact that the subject is a conspiracy against the pope, the ideological perspective that underlies the epistle is completely secular and political. Similarly to Orazio Romano's poem, Leon Battista's work does not deal with religious matters; conversely, the issue concerning papal power is addressed entirely from a secular perspective and the pope is seen as a political ruler who has to deal with threats to his state.

As in Orazio Romano's text (but with different purposes and outcomes), in the *Porcaria coniuratio* the pope is assimilated to the figure of a prince and his government is seen as a princely political institution.[87] This aspect reflects not only the general emergence in Italy of a personalistic idea of authority, but also the political and cultural process of centralization of power carried out by Nicholas V.[88] More generally, a similar secular perspective applied to the treatment of religious issues had already come

[86] See ROSSI, p. 112.
[87] On this political aspect of Alberti's epistle, see also the brief remarks in BORSI, *Introduzione*, pp. 78, 109, 217, who recognises in this element a correlation with the *Momus*.
[88] On this process see the previous section of the thesis.

to light in Alberti's *Pontifex*, the dialogue written in 1437 which deals with the ideal traits, duties and behaviour of the figure of the *episcopus* analysed from a moral point of view: already in this work the bishop is regarded as a prince who governs his state and community of people as a *pater familias*, a *praetor* or a *dux*.[89] Along with the denunciation of the moral corruption of the Church, this earlier text shows the utterly secular standpoint from which Alberti looks at religious matters, which are directly associated with issues concerning political rule.

In the *Porcaria coniuratio* Alberti explicitly refers to the pope calling him 'prince', or ascribing to him attributes typical of royal leaders: In the Italian clergymen's eulogy of the papal city, they claim that Romans will be always safe because of the 'solertissimi principis sapientiam...' (§ 32); next, the more cautious curial men add that the 'principis maiestas' was 'offensa' by the conspirators (§ 34); moreover, Alberti himself mentions the 'pontificis maiestas' (§ 35), ascribing again to the pope a distinctive feature of princes, namely majesty, which will be considered a fundamental princely virtue in the late fifteenth-century treatises *de principe*, in particular in Giovanni Pontano's *De principe* (1465) and in Iuniano Maio's *De maiestate* (1492), where this princely virtue appears as the title of the work.[90] From this perspective, it is also remarkable that whenever Leon Battista mentions Nicholas V he prizes his political conduct, attributing important political virtues to him, such as restraint and wisdom, by means of which he is able to govern fairly and efficiently, tackling the threats coming from Porcari, or other enemies. The reference is again to distinctive princely attributes, especially *clementia*, one of the pivotal classical *virtutes* assigned by humanists to ideal rulers (in italics in the quotation that follows):

[89] See the introduction to the text by Andrea Piccardi in ALBERTI, *Opere latine*, p. 921, and the edition *Leonis Batistae Albertis Pontifex*, ed. by A. Piccardi (Firenze: Polistampa, 2007).
[90] MAIO.

(§ 6) Sed pontifex, cum per ipsa pontificatus initia instituisset quam posset plurimos sibi omnis conditionis homines conciliare omni qua posset *beneficentia* et *facilitate*, hunc alioquin honestum et presertim romanum civem *beneficio* devinciendum atque a turbidis consiliis ad spem honesti otii revocandum statuit *mansuetudine*;

(§ 8) ne quid pro suscepto instituto aggrederetur, quod non *piissimi* et *misericordis* esset, non extinguendam duxit hominis temeritatem, sed paulo cohercendam;

(§ 35) …versatur ante oculos pontificis *maiestas*. Numquam ferme inventum a veterum memoria, ut qui pontifex arma odisset, in arma incideret. Hunc *pacis esse studiosum*, in principes plus satis facilem, ut extrinsecos impulsores non multum verear, et perinde intestina quidem malorum contagia non multum momenti habitura censeam.

It is true that Alberti is distant from the propagandistic attitude that dominates in other works on this conspiracy, such as Orazio Romano's *Porcaria*, and he looks at the event with more critical, unbiased and meticulous eyes. Nonetheless these meaningful passages show that his text turns out to be integrated into the political and cultural horizon that was developing around the middle of century in Italy, and especially in the scenario of Nicholas V's papacy (despite Alberti's implicit criticism of the pope's government), which was marked by the strengthening of the ideal image of the 'papal prince'. Leon Battista's political ideology, indeed, although it is based on different principles, shares with Nicholas V's politics the idea of a distinct secularisation of papal power, a conception that will emerge as crucial in the Renaissance.

We have also to consider that Alberti's eulogistic remarks on the pope's rule seem to clash with his negative view on Nicholas V's politics concealed in some of his works, such as the *Momus* and the *De re Aedificatoria*,[91] and also with the disapproving mockery through which Alberti disparages the foreign clergymen's speech (§§ 28-29), a hyperbolic celebration of the pope that he certainly does not approve. However, the examination of the text in relation to the political principles conveyed by Alberti in other works has shown that it would be highly implausible that he sides against the pope, even implicitly, in a text completely devoted to an attack on a political system. Rather, he maintains an analytical and non-adulatory approach towards the events,

[91] See *supra*.

without drastically deploring papal government, but introducing unspoken critical elements in his depiction of the complex Roman political situation, such as in his sarcastic framing of the *barbari*'s speech.

Some scholars have pointed out that Alberti's disapproval of Nicholas V's appears also in his eulogy of the pope's peaceful policy which is to be read as merely ironical (§ 35).[92] However the humanist's final laudatory words addressed to the pope may also be seen from a different prespective: they can be regarded as an invitation to the pope to put into practice the virtues that the humanist mentioned, suggesting that he should adopt moderate and merciful behaviour. As we have seen, the emphasis on the idea of *clementia* is characteristic of the texts on Porcari's conspiracy, where the pope is often urged to be clement with criminals,[93] but, more in general, it is also a recurrent element in other fifteenth-century monographs on conspiracies and in humanist treatises *de principe*. In both these literary 'genres', the perfect prince described by the author ideally corresponds to the actual prince to whom the text is devoted: in mirror-for-princes works, in particular, the qualities of the dedicatee are often used as *exempla* to portray the ideal monarch. So the actual ruler is encouraged to imitate the model proposed, but he is also a reflection of that ideal image, according to the eulogistic approach predominant in these texts. Moreover, in monographs on conspiracies it is the ruler in power who defeats the plot and therefore he stands out as the positive hero of the historical episode. Hence Alberti's depiction of the pope does not have to be regarded merely as a conventional accolade, nor as an ironical statement, but may be considered an implied invitation to follow the ideal image of the ruler portrayed by the

[92] 'Sed alia ex parte versatur ante oculos pontificis maiestas. Numquam ferme inventum a veterum memoria, ut qui pontifex arma odisset, in arma incideret. Hunc pacis esse studiosum, in principes plus satis facilem, ut extrinsecos impulsores non multum verear, et perinde intestina quidem malorum contagia non multum momenti habitura censeam'. For these remarks see MODIGLIANI, *Congiurare*, p. 167.

[93] In the case of Porcari's conspiracy the pope had to limit his revenge in order not to exacerbate the internal conficts in Rome: MODIGLIANI, *Congiurare*, p. 52. On this issue see also the previous chapter.

author. This approach matches also the humanist idea of political power conceived as influenced by intellectuals, in a broader pedagogic view based on the principles of humanist education.

Moreover Leon Battista deals with the issues of clemency and fair punishment in another work very close to his epistle, the *De re aedificatoria*, in a section devoted to the ancient system of jails, where, as well as in the text on the conspiracy, he recommended that political rulers should behave mercifully:

> Carceris genera apud veteres tria fuisse invenio. [...] hoc genus carceris si fuerit quispiam qui subterraneum atrum et horrendo sepulchro simile faciundum curarit, is quidem ad sontis poenam nimirum spectabit magis quam lex ipsa aut hominum ratio postulet. Nam, etsi perditi homines ultima omnia suis flagitiis mereantur, erit tamen et rei publicæ et principis officium de pietate nihil demereri.[94]

So the reference to these matters in the *Porcaria coniuratio* contribute to revealing that Leon Battista's analysis of the event is utterly political and proves to be oriented towards an individualistic conception of rulership. The text turns out to be based on the idea of a virtuous and individualised authority and according to which the ruler's *virtutes* are the defining elements and cornerstones that legitimize political power.[95] This political perspective emerges in many of Alberti's works (such as in the passage of the *Momus* previously quoted) and especially in the treatise *De iciarchia* (1468), where the ideal ruler is assimilated to the figure of the *pater patriae*.[96] In Leon Battista's views the image of the sovereign must exhibit his virtues and has to inform the whole social body. This society, in a kind of metaphorical identification with the family system, reflects the quality of its leader, who is the controller and guarantor of ethical and social

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[94] LEON BATTISTA ALBERTI, *De re aedificatoria*, ed. by Giovanni Orlandi and Paolo Portoghesi (Milano: Il Polifilo, 1966), p. 396. The passage is quoted in A. G. CASSANI, 'Le carceri di Ravenna', in *Dalla Romagna alle Romagne,1815-1860. Le quattro Legazioni di Romagna e i loro archivi fra Restaurazione e Risorgimento. Atti del convegno internazionale Ravenna 2011 per il 150° dell'unità d'Italia*, ed. by A. Turchini (Cesena: Società editrice il Ponte Vecchio, 2015), pp. 245-261: 260.

[95] On this complex general process see SKINNER, *Visions*, II, pp. 122-125.

[96] See PASTORE STOCCHI, pp. 77-79. This figure was often associated with Cosimo de' Medici, who started the gradual and veiled transformation of the republican institutions of Florence into a princely government run *de facto* by the Medici family.

values. So the state is seen as the projection of the prestige of a personalistic authority by whose traits society is shaped.

A final point worth making concerns Alberti's ideas on the issue of conspiracies. Unlike most fifteenth-century texts on this topic, the *Porcaria coniuratio* includes general considerations on political plots. Leon Battista addresses this matter not only with reference to the specific historical episode narrated, but also hinting at broader problems concerning the dynamics of political conflicts. In particular, the author places these reflections in the mouth of the more cautious Italian clergymen (§§ 33-34)[97] and in his own final remarks (§ 35). The curial members point out the rebellious and manipulable nature of the common people and claim that revolts are easier to be aroused than to be defeated. Given the fact that only a few conspirators were punished, while most accomplices stayed apart when the plot failed, these clergymen came to the conclusion that men do not want to stay in the forefront in dangerous uprisings, but they take advantage, later, of the suppression of the leaders. Even though Alberti claims that he does not totally agree with these reflections (displaying his usual evasive standpoint), it is noteworthy that he introduces into his work this general analysis on conspiracies. In doing so he proves to have an extensive view on this political phenomenon, showing a pioneering approach that will reappear only in the sixteenth century in Machiavelli's maturest work, where this topic is comprehensively treated through a modern historical method aimed at producing a theorization of the phenomeonon of the conspiracy.[98] Alberti's critical attitude is not followed by other humanists, who, on the contrary,

[97] (§§ 33, 34) 'Namque norunt quidem populares turbines facilius excitari quam sedari et numquam non esse populos ad motum paratos, si adsit quem sequantur. Ex his, qui tantum facinus inchoarint, vix sex qui penas luerint, deesse. Ceteros qui supersint, si qui sunt, qui esse et multi et varii dicuntur, pristinas, quibus movebantur, cupiditates non posuisse, sed adiecisse capitis tuendi sui curam ab vite discrimine in quo versari deputant se, offensa principis maiestate. Tum et illud venit in mentem, raros forte inveniri, qui in istiusmodi facinoribus se auctores primarios prebere velint. Qui autem secundo esse querant loco post primos periculi aggressores, inveniri quidem multos. Amoto idcirco primario, videre hos videntur, qui erant secundi factos primos'.

[98] See the analysis in FASANO GUARINI.

usually focus only on the specific event they narrate, not broadening their considerations to more general issues and merely concentrating on the internal conditions of the state threatened by the conspiracy. This narrow perspective turns out to match perfectly propagandistic intents, since it allows the author not to open up his analysis to the complex historical causes of the plot. On the other hand, it limits the examination of the event to the application of moral categories, through which the conspiracy is usually presented in Manichean terms as a blameable attack against the state. From this point of view, Leon Battista's attitude is different from the other humanist accounts of plots.

Significantly, Alberti, at the end of his letter, also adds some meaningful considerations on the wider Italian political scenario, connecting the contemporary situation with the past history of popes and hinting at the threats addressed to Eugene IV and Boniface IX (§ 35).[99] Here the humanist mentions the implication of external political forces in the conspiracy and alludes to the complex Italian context. This is again a proof of Leon Battista's independent and critical approach in recounting the event, since he introduces a thorny political element into his account. By contrast, in the other humanist texts on conspiracies the authors usually omit any references to the wider historical scenario (emblematic is Poliziano's *Coniurationis commentarium*, as we shall see). In the unstable political circumstances brought about by the plots it appears as a recurring and prudent behaviour by humanists not to mention the foreign states that could have had a role in the conspiracy, since the explicit reference to external enemies could produce the effect of a declaration of hostility, usually avoided by diplomacy, and therefore also by the humanists, who were often aware of the subtle

[99] 'Video sane quo stent loco res ltalie. Intelligo qui sint, quibus hic perturbata esse omnia conducat; memini tempora Eugenii, audivi Bonifacium et legi complurimorum pontificum adversos casus. Non ignoro primum, uti aiunt, inter porcos qui grunnitum substulerit, hunc futurum principem omnium admotum'.

implications of the rulers' political strategies. This is the reason why Alberti also, albeit alluding to this matter, leaves his reflection in a completely evasive dimension, not specifying which states were actually involved in the crime.

In conclusion, despite the analytical approach displayed by Leon Battista in his work, it ends with the author's apparent declaration of his inability to provide the reader with an ultimate and definitive judgement of the events:

(§ 36) Tamen quid de tota re statuam, quid de me consilii capiam, nondum constat, preter id, ut ex temporum eventu consilia in diem capturus pendeam.

This final remark reveals once again the humanist's unresolved view on the complex Roman political background and, more generally, his problematizing attitude towards issues concerning political power. Alberti's work, because of all its contradictions, stands out as one of the most ideologically evasive texts on the topic of conspiracy in the fifteenth century, but, paradoxically, at the same time, as one of the most unbiased: a text highly rhetorically articulated to convey the author's standpoint in a veiled manner; a complex Sallustian epistle/history that turns out to be not so much informed by propagandistic intents as other humanist works on the same topic, but one that discloses significant traits of Alberti's avant-garde literary approach and his complex political views.

CHAPTER IV

Giovanni Pontano's *De bello Neapolitano*: The *historia* of the conspiracy in political theory

1. The 'first conspiracy of the barons' and the *De bello Neapolitano*: Pontano the historian, the royal secretary and the political and literary theorist

The first and chief historical source of the 'first conspiracy of the barons' against the king of Naples, Ferdinando of Aragon, is Giovanni Pontano's *De bello Neapolitano*: the historiographical work composed by the distinguished and versatile humanist, who was involved in Neapolitan politics as a diplomat and royal secretary and took active part in the events of the kingdom until his death.[1] The rebellion of the noblemen against the new king Ferdinando (also called Ferrante) started in 1459, immediately after Alfonso the Magnanimous's death, in June 1458, and it resulted in a six-year war between the Aragonese party and the Angevins, who were supported by the insurgent barons of the realm and led by John of Anjou, son of René of Anjou, the titular king of Naples.[2] Pontano's historical account is divided into six books and narrates the events of the conspiracy and the war. It follows an annalistic order and includes the description of several battles, sieges, counter-attacks, and, above all, the continuous betrayals and shifting alliances of the noblemen who defy Ferdinando. Despite the large number of war episodes recounted, which result in a dispersive narration, the main thematic thread of the text is the central topic of the conspiracy, an issue that discloses its crucial implications in both the intricate history of the Neapolitan kingdom and the ambitious political theory conceived by Pontano in his historical and political works.

[1] On Pontano's literary works and his political commitment see the classic study on Neapolitan humanist culture by BENTLEY, pp. 184-253. For the connection between politics and culture in fifteenth-century Naples see also M. SANTORO, 'La cultura umanistica', in *Storia di Napoli* (Napoli: Società Editrice Storia di Napoli, 1974), vol. IV, t. II, pp. 315-49. The most complete study on Pontano's biography is E. PERCOPO, *Vita di Giovanni Pontano*, ed. by M. Manfredi (Napoli: ITEA, 1983).

[2] This political plot is called 'first conspiracy of the barons' so as to distinguish it from the following rebellion of the noblemen that took place around 20 years later, between 1485-1487. One of the main accounts of this later event is Camillo Porzio's *La congiura de' baroni del regno di Napoli contra il re Ferdinando primo*, written around 1560 and published in Rome, by Paolo Manuzio, in 1565.

The chronology of composition of the *De bello Neapolitano* is rather complicated and it has been convincingly reconstructed by Liliana Monti Sabia in her volume on Pontano's historical text,[3] which contains also an anthology of passages quoted from the codex Vindobonensis Lat. 3413 of the National Library in Vienna: the autograph manuscript of the *De bello Neapolitano* and the only copy still extant. She has pointed out a layered process of composition divided into three main stages of writing and revision. Pontano wrote the first version of the text immediately after the end of the war, in 1465, using documentary and diplomatic sources to which he had access thanks to his role as secretary, but also relying on his own memories and notes, since he was a close collaborator of the king during the whole conflict (he also mentions himself in the narration, underlining his role in the famous battle of Troia, IV, II, 37).[4] Later on, he revised his work and added some passages and historical details in different phases between 1470s and the early 1480s, as some inconsistencies in the text also reveal (for instance in the introductory historical overview in book I, Pontano mentions Federico of Montefeltro as already dead but his death took place in 1482).[5] After this process of revision, the text was copied by the author in the Viennese manuscript, but he kept on correcting and changing it until his death, in 1503.

He probably tweaked his work mainly between 1495 and 1499, while he was writing the dialogue *Actius* - his important treatise on the theory of the *ars historica*, whose composition was obviously closely interconnected with the concrete historiographical work - and in the scenario of harsh crisis faced by the Aragonese monarchy, after Charles VIII's invasion in 1494. He wrote on the codex some *additamenta*, the most

[3] MONTI SABIA, *Pontano*. On Pontano's historical work see also: FERRAÙ, *Il tessitore*, especially the chapter: 'Tentativi di proposta politico-storiografica nel tempo di Ferrante: Giovanni Pontano', pp. 81-129; TATEO, *I miti*, pp. 223-233; F. SENATORE, 'Pontano storico', *Studi storici*, 39 (1998), pp. 291-296; ID., 'Pontano e la guerra di Napoli', in *Condottieri e uomini d'arme nell'Italia del Rinascimento*, ed. by M. Del Treppo (Napoli: Liguori-GISEM, 2001), pp. 281-311.

[4] On the use of diplomatic and chancery sources by Pontano see in particular SENATORE, 'Pontano e la guerra', pp. 279-309.

[5] MONTI SABIA, *Pontano*, p. 62.

important of which consist of critical observations on Ferdinando's behaviour and policy (I, II, 7; VI, IV) and some lengthy antiquarian and geographical descriptions that reveal the development of the humanist's erudite studies in his last days.[6] In particular, the final judgment on Ferdinando's whole reign presupposes his death, which took place in 1494 (VI, IV). The additional comments concerning the figure of the king have been regarded as the humanist's ultimate partial reconsideration of Ferrante's entire government; nevertheless, as we shall illustrate, despite these variants, the political perspective of the work remains unaltered and it proves to be aimed at presenting and boosting Pontano's political theory formulated in his treatises in the same years (such as the *De Principe*, *De obedientia*, etc.).[7]

The interplay between 'theoretical' and 'concrete' elements in Pontano's works comes to light also if we consider the direct link that connects the treatise on historiography, the *Actius*, and the actual historical writing, the *De bello Neapolitano*. Given the chronology of composition, in this case it is the practical phase that precedes the theoretical, since the *Actius* was composed later than the *historia*, in the last years of the century. The dialogue *Actius*, in which the second section *de lege historiae* is totally devoted to the theory of historiography, is the first systematic treatise on historical writing in the humanist age and it is a fundamental landmark in the lively debate on this subject that had been going on throughout the *Quattrocento* and had already produced prominent works, such as Guarino's epistle *De historia conscribenda* (1446).[8] As Monti Sabia compellingly illustrated, Pontano's historiographical theory is formulated on the

[6] For the detailed chronology of composition of the text and the description of the Viennese codex see MONTI SABIA, *Pontano*, pp. 43-69. In general, on erudite geographical digressions in the *De bello Neapolitano* see A. IACONO, 'La *Laudatio urbis Neapolis* nell'appendice archeologico-antiquaria del *De bello Neapolitano* di Giovanni Gioviano Pontano', *Bollettino di Studi Latini*, 39, 2 (2009), pp. 562-587; EAD., 'Geografia e storia nell'Appendice archeologico-antiquaria del VI libro del *De bello Neapolitano* di Giovanni Gioviano Pontano', in *Forme e modi delle lingue dei testi antichi*, ed. by R. Grisolia e G. Matino (Napoli: M. D'Auria Editore, 2012), pp. 161-214.

[7] For the single treatises see *infra*. On Pontano's ethical treatises see F. TATEO, *Umanesimo etico di Giovanni Pontano* (Lecce: Milella, 1972).

[8] On this work, and for bibliography on it, see the previous chapter.

basis of his previous practice of historiography, but, at the same time, the *De bello Neapolitano* itself is revised at a later stage according to the theoretical tenets asserted in the *Actius*, in a twofold and reciprocal influence.[9]

The correlation between the historical account and the historiographical canon illustrated in the treatise concerns several thematic, structural and stylistic elements: the pursuit of a style grounded on the principles of *varietas* and *celeritas*, in accordance with the model of Sallust; the explanation of the remote causes of the historical events, which in the *De bello Neapolitano* are evoked in the introductory synoptic *excursus* on the Italian and Neapolitan conditions from the Middle Ages to the present time; the fundamental function played by direct speeches delivered by characters as a rhetorical tool deployed to depict their nature and thoughts; the widespread presence of character portraits; and the poetic colour sometimes given to the historical narration, according to Quintilian's principle that 'historia est proxima poetis et quodam modo carmen solutum' (*Inst.* X, 1, 31).[10] Moreover in the *De bello Neapolitano* the extensive and frequent accounts of war episodes, such as battles, sieges and conquests, adhere to the rules illustrated in the *Actius*, which prescribe that these narrative sections have to include the accurate descriptions of the geographical settings, the disposition of troops, the feelings and attitudes of soldiers, and the role of imponderable forces, such as fortune. As this brief overview showa, both Pontano's treatise and his *De bello Neapolitano* are based on the recovery and re-appropriation of classical models: in particular Sallust and Livy, who are selected by Pontano as the chief Latin historians to be employed as literary prototypes. Nonetheless, despite the substantial correspondence between the 'theory' and 'practice' of history, the two works cannot completely

[9] See MONTI SABIA, *Pontano*, pp. 63-65, and on the *Actius*, pp. 1-9. The dialogue is published in PONTANO, *I dialoghi*, pp. 121-239. On Pontano's historiographical theory see also G. COTRONEO, *I trattatisti dell'ars historica* (Napoli: Giannini, 1971), pp. 87-120; FERRAÙ, *Il tessitore*.
[10] On the links between the *De bello Neapolitano* and the *Actius* see MONTI SABIA, *Pontano*, pp. 9-33.

interlock because of an intrinsic thematic difference between, on the one hand, the pure military subject that is theorized in the *Actius* as the main historical theme, and, on the other, the topic of the conspiracy which, although often concealed in the narration of war episodes, resurfaces throughout the text as the most pivotal issue and places the work in the monographic genre. For this reason, the *De bello Neapolitano*, though centred on the key word *bellum* as the title shows, is not merely an account of the war between two states, as the *Actius* mainly prescribes, but it mostly revolves around the internal hostilities between the rebel barons, who supported the French pretender, and the king of Naples.

The continuous overlapping of the historical episodes in Pontano's long narration is due to the complex chain of the actual episodes, which are often put in sequence by the author (sometimes with some mistakes) on the basis of his own notes and chancery documents. In order to gain a better insight into the *De bello Neapolitano*, which is the chief historical source for these events, let us summarize the main episodes of the conspiracy and the war, from 1459 to 1465.[11] Before dying in 1458, Alfonso the Magnanimous had nominated his illegitimate son Ferdinando as his successor in the Aragonese family, but the unstable conditions of the kingdom, where the new Spanish ruling class had to cope with the resentment of the old noble class throughout the realm, brought about a general revolt against the new king. The majority of the barons in the kingdom, led by the powerful Prince of Taranto, Giovanni Antonio Orsini[12] (whose niece was Ferrante's wife, Isabella da Chiaromonte), plotted a conspiracy against the Aragonese monarchy and decided to support the claims of the French aspirant to the

[11] The most complete study of the historical events as presented in Pontano's work is SENATORE, 'Pontano e la guerra'. For the history of the kingdom of Naples see G. GALASSO, 'Il Regno di Napoli. Il Mezzogiorno angioino e aragonese (1266-1494)', in *Storia d'Italia* directed by G. Galasso (Torino: UTET, 1992), vol. XV, I; on the war between Ferdinando and the French see also the old study by R. NUNZIANTE, 'I primi anni di Ferdinando d'Aragona e l'invasione di Giovanni d'Angiò', *Archivio Storico per le Province Napoletane*, 17 (1892) – 23 (1898), and on Ferdinando's reign, E. PONTIERI, *Per la storia del regno di Ferrante I d'Aragona re di Napoli* (Napoli: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1968).
[12] See A. KIESEWETTER, *Giovanni Antonio Orsini del Balzo*, in DBI, vol. 79 (2013), pp. 729-732.

crown, John of Anjou, who was supported by his father René d'Anjou, the titular king of Naples before Alfonso's conquest. In October 1459 John travelled with his fleet to Naples to wage war against the Aragonese and this marked the beginning of the conflict. Ferdinando could count on his allies Francesco Sforza and pope Pius II; while the renowned *condottiero* Iacopo Piccinino led his troops on the side of the Aragonese's enemies, as well as Ercole d'Este, who, despite having been appointed as governor of Apulia by Ferrante, defected to the French side.

The episode that openly revealed the barons' betrayals to Ferdinando was the infamous attack in Teano in May 1460. Marino Marzano,[13] duke of Sessa, one of the mightiest noblemen in the kingdom and Ferrante's brother-in-law (he was married to Eleonora d'Aragona, Alfonso the Magnanimous's daughter), planned an ambush against the king and tried to kill him, with the help of two other barons: Deifobo Dell'Anguillara and Iacopuccio da Montagano. Ferdinando, who was accompanied by his loyal fellows Gregorio Corella and Giovanni Ventimiglia, managed to save himself and put the attackers to flight. After this incident the war continued and the first and unexpected defeat for the Aragonese army took place in Sarno, on 7 July 1460. Here, Ferdinando, after having carefully pondered the different possibilities, decided to attack the opposing troops, but this choice turned out to be disastrous and the Aragonese were conclusively beaten. Due to this heavy defeat many other barons defected to Orsini and John of Anjou, seriously compromising the maintenance of the king's power.

The war continued until 1465 and the decisive battle took place on 18 August 1462 in Troia, a small city in Apulia, where Ferdinando's enemies were violently defeated. The course of the war was also influenced by the death of the prince of Taranto, who, after coming to a peace agreement with the king on the 21 September 1462, died in

[13] See P. SARDINA, *Marino Marzano*, in DBI, vol. 71 (2008), pp. 446-450.

Altamura in unclear circumstances, on 14 November 1463. Many allegations were made against Ferdinando himself, who was accused of being the instigator of the assassination perpetrated by a servant of the prince, and even Pontano does not totally exculpate Ferrante from this accusation and leaves the issue vague in his work (however he specifies that the king immediately took possession of Orsini's properties, without any judgment on this behaviour - V, II, 3). On the other hand, the humanist did not keep the same approach with the death of Iacopo Piccinino, who was murdered in Naples in the jail of Castel Nuovo, where he had been treacherously imprisoned by Ferrante: in this case Pontano opted for totally omitting this episode, though it was relevant in the narration.[14] Another implacable enemy of the king of Naples, Marino Marzano, was harshly punished by Ferdinando. He is depicted in the text as a recidivist traitor, who, despite having formally been reconciled with the king on 15 August 1463, kept plotting against him. Therefore Ferrante ordered his men to capture and incarcerate Marzano in the jail of Castel Nuovo in June 1464, without showing any mercy for his brother-in-law. After these acts of revenge and, in particular, the turning point of the Prince of Taranto's death, the rebel barons lost their leader and John of Anjou also surrendered. Thus Ferdinando was able to come back to Naples in 1464. The final conflict was the battle on Ischia, between the king and Giovanni Torella, a treacherous baron who had been appointed as ruler of the island by Alfonso V (when he had given Ischia as a fief to his lover Lucrezia d'Alagni, Torella's sister-in-law). At the end of the naval conflict in July 1465 the Aragonese won their ultimate victory over the rebels and the war ended.[15]

As already mentioned, the central topic in the whole historical text, as well as the most relevant theme for the critical study presented in this thesis, is the issue of conspiracy. On account of this thematic criterion, the *Appendix* of the thesis contains a

[14] For this omission see MONTI SABIA, *Pontano*, p. 38.
[15] On this battle see A. IACONO, *La guerra d'Ischia nel 'De bello Neapolitano' di G. Pontano* (Napoli: Accademia Pontaniana, 1996).

selection of the most relevant passages of this lengthy text concerning, either directly or indirectly, this issue, allowing us to follow the sequence of the events. These passages are quoted from Monti Sabia's volume, which contains a partial edition of the text. Due to the length of the work, the text in the *Appendix* is not followed by an apparatus of sources, but the literary models used by Pontano are critically discussed in the next section of this chapter.

2. The narration of the conspiracy as a classical *historia*: Pontano's models and the development of political historiography

Pontano's work belongs to the classical literary genre of *historia*: the highest rhetorical sub-genre in the realm of historiography. It displays an extensive narration that covers the entire sequence of the events of the war and is crafted in a lofty literary style based on the model of the chief historiographical sources of classical literature. From this point of view, Pontano's work follows in the footsteps of the newly-fashioned fifteenth-century Neapolitan historiography, whose development was inaugurated by Lorenzo Valla's *Gesta Ferdinandi regis Aragonum* (1445):[16] the first piece of dynastic historiography to be written after the conquest of the Neapolitan kingdom by Alfonso the Magnanimous in 1442 and whose main purpose was to celebrate and legitimize his rule by narrating his father's glorious deeds. The gradual growth of this new kind of monarchic historiography was pursued by later official historians patronized by the king himself, Bartolomeo Facio and Antonio Panormita: 'humanists in government' who enhanced the eulogistic dimension of historical writing, making it an essential component in the Aragonese system of cultural politics.[17]

[16] VALLA, *Gesta*.
[17] The definition of 'humanist in government' was given by A. RYDER, 'Antonio Beccadelli: a Humanist in Government', in *Cultural Aspects of the Italian Renaissance. Essays in Honour of Paul Oskar Kristeller*, ed. by C. H. Clough (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1976), pp. 123-140. On Neapolitan historiography see BENTLEY; COTRONEO; FERRAÙ, *Il tessitore*; TATEO, *I miti*; and in

The *De bello Neapolitano* can be regarded as a continuation of this historiographical tradition established by Facio and Panormita, which is characterized by a strong encomiastic component, but Pontano incorporated in his text also some distinctive elements of Valla's work.[18] Valla had been disapproved of by the two other humanists, in particular Facio, especially for his lack of *decorum* in dealing with royal characters and for the neglect of the principle of *brevitas*, which was interpreted as a form of reticence that had to be employed in recounting episodes unsuitable for an eulogistic history.[19] The *De bello Neapolitano* integrated both these strands. It adhered to the propagandistic and monarchic historiographical practice founded by Facio and Panormita that turned out to be the most successful in the Neapolitan cultural environment, but it also followed the distinguished model of Valla in its pursuit of the idea of veracity, which is regarded by both Pontano and Valla as an essential component of historiographical writing to be combined with the rhetorical dimension of the narrative.[20] This conflation of *veritas* and rhetoric results in a literary outcome that is able to represent the intricacy of reality and, at the same time, to convey a specific political standpoint.

There is no doubt that the direct predecessor and model of Pontano's text is Panormita, also from a chronological point of view, since when Pontano started to write

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particular on Facio, G. ALBANESE, 'Storiografia come ufficialità alla corte di Alfonso il Magnanimo: i *Rerum gestarum Alfonsi regis libri* di Bartolomeo Facio', in *La Corona d'Aragona ai tempi di Alfonso il Magnanimo*. *Atti del XVI Congresso Internazionale di Storia della Corona d'Aragona. Celebrazioni Alfonsine (Napoli, 18-24 settembre 1997)* (Napoli: Paparo, 2000), pp. 1223-1267.

[18] An allusion to a possible connection with the model of Valla is in FERRAÙ, *Il tessitore*, p. 98. More generally, some reflections on the relationship between the two humanists in G. FERRAÙ, *Pontano critico* (Messina: Centro di Studi Umanistici, 1983).

[19] The dispute is mainly articulated in two texts: BARTOLOMEO FACIO, *Invectivae in Laurentium Vallam*, ed. by E. I. Rao (Napoli: Società Editrice Napoletana, 1978); and LORENZO VALLA, *Antidotum in Facium*, ed. by M. Regoliosi (Padova: Antenore, 1981).

[19] On Facio see G. ALBANESE, *Studi su Bartolomeo Facio*, Pisa, Edizioni ETS, 2000; FERRAÙ, *Il tessitore*, pp. 43-80; REGOLIOSI, 'Riflessioni'; Facio's *Gesta Alfonsi* is published in FACIO, *Rerum gestarum*. For Valla's theory of historiography: FERRAÙ, *Il tessitore*, pp. 1-42; see also M. REGOLIOSI, 'Lorenzo Valla'.

[20] Pontano follows classical models in asserting that *veritas* is 'prima historiae lex': *Actius*, in PONTANO, *Dialoghi*, p. 208; cfr. Cic. *De or.* II, 62. Cfr. MONTI SABIA, *Pontano*, p. 35. On Valla's idea of history see also the previous chapter: III.3.1.

his historical account in 1465 the older humanist was still the official historian of the Aragonese court and he was composing his *Libri rerum gestarum Ferdinandi regis* (due to his death in 1471 they are unfinished).[21] In this work Panormita mentioned his intention to recount the events of the war in a *De bello Neapolitano*, which he would never write and which, probably not coincidentally, is the title of Pontano's work.[22] Nevertheless the younger author had already decided to undertake the historiographical enterprise before Panormita's death. His willingness to take on this composition may be due to the fact that he took active part in the war alongside the king and, moreover, his historical work fitted perfectly with the humanist's monarchic political theory attested by the composition of the *De Principe* in 1465 and, later, by many other treatises. It is also likely that after the elder historian's death Pontano projected onto his own historiographical work the traits of an official monarchic history, despite the lack of any commission by the king.

In spite of this continuity with his direct predecessor, Pontano did also borrow more directly from Valla the principles of *veritas* and *utilitas* as pivotal in his idea of history and reconciled them with the eulogistic dimension that characterized the most recent works by the official historians of the king, Facio and Panormita. Furthermore, similarly to Valla, and also to Alberti (as we have seen), Pontano is very much concerned with the reliability of the sources of his historical account. His narration is mainly based on letters and official documents of the royal chancery (though, of course, these Aragonese sources also connect this text with a partially biased view). Therefore Pontano's work turns out to be the most mature output in the gradual development of Neapolitan historiography, enhancing its political dimension but, at the same time, harmonizing the pursuit of truthfulness and the propagandistic aim. The *De bello Neapolitano* perfectly

[21] PANHORMITAE, *Liber*.
[22] MONTI SABIA, *Pontano*, p. 60. On the influence that Facio and especially Panormita had on Pontano's work see also FERRAÙ, *Il tessitore*, pp. 93-96.

represents the strand of 'political historiography',[23] which can neither be merely associated with eulogistic intentions as a panegyric, nor should it be described as *storia cortigiana*, but it has its centre of gravity in a specific political horizon that results in the unspoken, though relentless, affirmation of the political standpoint of the present government.[24] It is a type of historical writing that is imbued with a specific political perspective and may be described as a 'phenomenology of politics'. This historiography, which would develop in the sixteenth century in a modern kind of historical writing based on a more critical political analysis, in the humanist age took the shape of different literary compositions and matched the needs of new and unstable political powers, becoming the vehicle for the affirmation of a specific political theory.

In the *De bello Neapolitano*, the not always balanced integration of *veritas* and propaganda may explain some contradictions that have been recognized by scholars, especially in the coexistence, on the one hand, of the celebration of the king and the continuous condemnation of his internal enemies, and, on the other, of some critical remarks on both Ferdinando's behaviour[25] (such as the ingratitude shown in the imprisonment of the *condottiero* Maso Barrese, who was guilty of cruel deeds - II, VI- but was also always loyal to the king - II, VII, 6)[26] and the conduct of his troops, sometimes responsible for plunderings and inconsiderate and violent actions (I, IX, 24-25; II, I; II, II).[27] We have also to consider that the few more substantial disapproving

[23] On this kind of historiography see the first chapter.
[24] From this perspective my analysis does not agree with that of Monti Sabia, who argues that Pontano's work is not a political text: MONTI SABIA, *Pontano*, p. 62.
[25] In this respect, if Pontano's text appears not totally focused on celebrating the figure of the king as much as Facio's works, it is not possible to agree with Ferraù (*Il tessitore*, p. 96) who does not acknowledge in Pontano's *De bello Neapolitano* the same idealizing perspective that is distinctive of Facio's texts: the analysis of the *De bello Neapolitano* shows that a similar approach characterises this work, although with different outcomes.
[26] See W. INDEBORG, *Maso Barrese*, in DBI, vol. 6 (1964), pp. 521-522. *De bello Neapolitano* II, VII, 6 'vir utique dignus mitiore animo qui esset praeditus quique si non magis grato, minus saltem severo principe usus esset'.
[27] Particularly emphatic and intense is the description of violent actions perpetrated by Ferrante's soldiers in II, II, 4.

comments about the king are usually put into the mouth of his enemies, while, instead, Pontano justifies on many occasions Ferdinando's wrong strategic choices and leaves out or minimizes his unfair actions. This is evident in the omission of any reference to Piccinino's murder, or in the narration of the dishonorable sacking of the temple of San Michele (II, II),[28] where the humanist dwells on the soldiers' brutal raids, but explains that the king's decision to seize the riches of the temple is due to the urgent need for money for the war. He also adds that after the final victory Ferdinando would give all gold and silver back to the holy sanctuary.

Moreover most critical observations are embedded in the unfolding of the narration and are an integral part of vivid descriptions, which are aimed at producing a realistic overtone and proving the reliability of the historical account. They display no connection with an open judgment by the historian, who is external. In fact, although Pontano agrees in his *Actius* with the Ciceronian definition of *historia* as 'vitae…magistra', and therefore claims that the historian has to *docere* and comment on the events with his personal judgment,[29] in his actual historiographical work he does not often intrude openly with moral remarks, but inserts them implicitly in the development of his account. Thus, despite the lack of the author's explicit opinions, the reader always discerns Pontano's viewpoint, which proves to be reliable because rooted in the principle of veracity that underlies the whole text.

Being placed in this new but already illustrious tradition of Neapolitan historiography, the *De bello Neapolitano* is the only fifteenth-century work on a conspiracy which reaches the highest rhetorical status of *historia*, matching the distinctive elements characteristic of this classical literary genre. As we have seen, the other humanist works on political plots were written as a poem, epistle, lament,

[28] On this sanctuary see MONTI SABIA, *Pontano*, p. 20, note 41.
[29] MONTI SABIA, *Pontano*, p. 9.

commentary, etc. Thus, in this *corpus* of texts, Pontano's work seems to mark the final step of a gradual process of approaching the loftiest and most formalized *status* of historiography, in an evolution where the historiographical components are increasingly relevant and central in the texts. The choice of this genre could have been determined also by the longer chronology of the events narrated in the *De bello Neapolitano*, which does not only include the episodes concerning the political plots, but also the war waged after the barons' betrayals. The extensive narration of military events in the text is also an element that perfectly suits the classical genre of *historia*, where the topic of war is traditionally a crucial and recurrent theme.

In addition, it is significant that the narration in the *De bello Neapolitano* follows a rough annalistic chronology, adhering to the chief classical model of Livy: the first book covers the events of the first year of war, which was waged in 1459, but had its major development in 1460; the second book is devoted to 1461; books III and IV deal with years 1462-1463; the fifth book keeps narrating events of 1463 arriving at 1464; and finally book VI focuses on 1465.[30] It is no accident that the model of Livy plays a prominent role in Pontano's work, since the Latin historian is also acknowledged as a fundamental prototype in the dialogue *Actius*. In particular, the numerous speeches that the author puts into the mouth of the characters in the *De bello Neapolitano* are mostly inspired by Livy's work, where, as Pontano claims in his treatise, the orations suit the different characters' personality and the specific circumstance of delivery.[31] An emblematic example of the fundamental narrative function of these speeches is provided by the lengthy orations inserted in the story-line before and after the battle of Sarno, through which the different opinions of the military captains are compared (§§ I, IX, 8-22; I, X, 2-21). As we have already illustrated in the previous chapter, the extensive use

[30] For this chronological distribution of events in the six books see SENATORE, 'Pontano e la guerra', pp. 281-284, and for a complete reconstruction MONTI SABIA, *Pontano*, pp. 43-53.
[31] MONTI SABIA, *Pontano*, p. 32: *Actius*, in PONTANO, *I dialoghi*, p. 211, 3-8.

of these speeches reveals a rhetorical conception of historiography combined with the search for a realistic narrative which is based on truthfulness. All these elements perfectly match the requirements of the loftiest historiographical genre, the *historia*, which in this case is chosen to deal with a specific and circumscribed event: the conspiracy and the resulting war. Thus, despite the broadly annalistic framework, Pontano's work acquires also the traits of a traditional monographic historical narrative, unsurprisingly based on the model of Sallust. Both the *De coniuratione Catilinae*, for the narration of the political plot, and *Bellum Iugurtinum*, for the episodes of the war, represent a more than suitable model for Pontano, who includes the Latin historian in the *Actius* as the most prominent classical *auctoritas* together with Livy.

As far as the structure of the *De bello Neapolitano* is concerned, critics have pointed out a lack of order and systematic arrangement in the narration, which is built up by the juxtaposition of countless and sometimes unconnected events. Therefore the *historia*, with its annalistic construction, displays a centrifugal character that can make the reader feel lost in the endless sequence of different war episodes: battles, sieges, conquests and betrayals. However it is the main political topic on which the monographic structure of the work is grounded, the theme of conspiracy, which provides the unifying centre and the core of the whole narration. From this point of view the complex and wide architecture typical of the major genre of the *historia* is balanced by the monographic and 'thematic' framework of the text, which hinges on the issue of the political plot. So, if the narrative construction is centrifugal, the unity is provided by the consistency and uniformity of the political perspective in the text. Hence the conspiracy, and more in general its political implications and consequences in the Neapolitan kingdom, turns out to be the crucial topic on which the narrative consistency of the text rests and through which Pontano elaborates his political views.

On account of this pivotal thematic element, Sallust's work emerges in the text as the chief classical model, from which motifs and images are drawn, and, most significantly, it is the source of the main moral categories through which the conspiracy is interpreted. If Pontano, already at the beginning of the text (I, II) and more extensively later (II, III) mentions Ferrante's controversial succession after Alfonso's death as a cause of the barons' uprising, nevertheless the reasons for the political plot are recognized mainly in the conspirators' evil nature and vices (as in the other humanist literary works on plots): the thoughtless ambition, the yearning for political changes and subversion, the inconstancy and moral corruption, the unwillingness to acknowledge the flourishing conditions provided by the current government. These causes are not presented in an orderly and systematic way in the text, but are mentioned recurrently in different sections, especially in the portraits of the barons and in the narrations of their betrayals, which are recounted throughout the work (the last episode is Marzano's final betrayal - V, IV, 1-4). These descriptive and narrative components also contribute towards building up the pro-monarchic political perspective that the author aims to convey.

One of the most emblematic examples of the employment of these interpretative categories is Giovanni Antonio Orsini's portrait (I, III), which is depicted recalling many of the conspirators' features described by Sallust, especially in the evil profile of Catiline (*Cat*. 6).[32] Pontano mentions the impatience for *res novae*, the inconstancy (which is recalled twice in a few lines in both 'eius *inconstantia* atque animum minime tranquillum' and 'vario et *inconstanti* ingenio'), the lack of any eagerness or respect for anything holy and honest, the urge to do whatever his mind could plan ('apud quem sancti honestique non tantus respectus quantum studium quantaque erat cura assequendi eius quod animi destinasset'), the double-faced vices of avarice and greed ('sui ipse

[32] For this parallel see also MONTI SABIA, *Pontano*, pp. 13-14.

parcissimus, sic contra alieni quam appetentissimus erat'), and the lack of any scruple ('nihil pensi habere'). Moreover, as Monti Sabia has pointed out, Pontano draws from Sallust's portrayal of Catiline also the attribute of the ambivalent and contradictory nature of the leader of the plot (as Alberti also did): the humanist, besides assigning a few good qualities to Orsini, narrates some episodes in which the character proves to be both ruthless and thoughtful (such as during the siege of Minervino, when he left for many days a hanged corpse to be seen by his niece who was imprisoned in the castle's jail, but he still provided her every day with good food; IV, I).[33]

In particular, the specific reference to the two opposite vices of avarice and greed ascribed to the prince of Taranto ('sui ipse parcissimus, sic contra alieni quam appetentissimus erat') reminds us of a passage in Poliziano's *Commentarium*, where the Florentine humanist evokes a similar double and ambivalent trait in the description of the chief conspirator, Iacopo Pazzi: 'Duo in homine ingentia vitia eaque, quod mirum esset, maxime inter se contraria eminebant: multa avaritia, multa perdendi patrimonii voluptas' (§ 5). Poliziano's source is Sallust, *Cat*. 5, 8, 'Incitabant praeterea conrupti civitatis mores, quos pessuma ac divorsa inter se mala, luxuria atque avaritia, vexabant': therefore the original passage in the classical text could also have had an influence on Pontano's description, possibly through the mediation of Poliziano's work. In this case it would be an 'imitative series' which would concern two of the main humanist works on conspiracies and their major classical model.[34] From this perspective, it is significant

[33] MONTI SABIA, *Pontano*, p. 14.

[34] Another parallel between the two works can be found in the descriptions of the common people's reaction to the plotters' attacks: *De bello Neapolitano* I, VI, 6: 'Deseri villae, relinqui aedificia, impuberes, senes, mulieres munita in loca passim trahi, fuga omnes sibi consulere, iumentis, pecoribus, carris vias oppidaque impleri, viderique omnia circumsonare armis atque equorum hinnitibus fremere, dum quotidi anae tum populorum tum principum rebelliones nuntiantur, demum vanis etiam rumoribus oppida urbesque complentur'; *Coniurationis commentarium* § 37 'Videre erat tumultuantem populum, viros mulieresque, sacerdotes, pueros, fugitantes passim quo pedes vocarent. Omnia fremitu plena et gemitu, nihil exaudiri tamen expressae vocis: fuere et qui crederent templum corruere'; § 44 'Videres pueros, senes, iuvenes, sacros ac prophanos viros arma capere, domum Medicam quasi publicam omnium salutem defensare'.

that Pontano owned a copy of Poliziano's text: he was the possessor of one of the oldest manuscripts that contains the account of the Pazzi conspiracy, a miscellany of historical texts and orations now conserved in the Vatican Library (Vat. Lat. 13679). Even though Poliziano composed his *Commentarium* only in 1478, and the manuscript was probably put together in the 1480s, it has been proved that Pontano revised and changed his text until the end of his life.[35] Therefore he might have been influenced by Poliziano's text also at an intermediate stage of his revision and he could have drawn from the *Commentarium* some motifs and descriptive elements (although often the presence of the common source of Sallust makes it difficult to pinpoint a precise correlation between the two fifteenth-century texts). Another specific connection between the two works, this time not ascribable to Sallust's influence, can be found in the reference to the plotters' impulsive and evil nature, which drives them to accomplish any hideous idea they have in mind: Pontano ascribes this behaviour to Orsini (I, III, 2 'cura assequendi eius quod animo destinasset'), while Poliziano ascribes it to Francesco Pazzi (§ 15 'dum rem quamcunque is animo volveret expeditum iret'). Moreover, the two humanists mention the lack of respect for any tenet of honesty, both religious and ethical, as a typical characteristic of conspirators: in Poliziano's work this trait is associated with the archbishop of Pisa Francesco Salviati ('is Franciscus homo fuit, id quod Dii atque homines sciunt, omnis divini atque humani iuris ignarus et contemptor', § 10), whilst in the *De bello Neapolitano* both leaders of the conspiracy, Antonio Orsini and Marino Marzano, are represented as totally dishonest ('apud quem [sc. *Orsini*] etiam sancti honestique non tantus respectus...', I, III, 5; 'Marinus contempto iure necessitudinis, omnis divinae et humanae rationis oblitus', I, VI, 5). Besides these

[35] In particular, the text of the *De bello Neapolitano* copied in the autograph codex in Vienna probably corresponds to the pre-final version, which includes the changes made between 1470s and 1480s; then the humanist added on this manuscript only the final amendments (which can be read in the codex). On the manuscript of Poliziano's *Commentarium* see the next chapter: V.1.

descriptive and stylistic correlations, the connection between the two humanists' texts proves to be still more significant if we consider the ideological framework of both works, which share the same centralized political perspective and employ the same crucial thematic nuclei and *topoi*.

Coming back to Pontano's description of the causes of the conspiracy, it is noteworthy that not only individual barons but also the collective group of rebel noblemen are often described as motivated by economic reasons and the yearning for political subversion, the *cupiditas rerum novarum*: fundamental elements in both Sallust's work and in humanist texts on plots. In the *De bello Neapolitano*, after the portrait of Orsini, these traits are attributed to the barons whom the Prince of Taranto wants to drive to rebellion:

> Is igitur per finitimas civitates locaque opportuna clam summittere coepit qui aliis praemia, aliis delictorum condonationem promitterent, nobiles alias suae inopiae, alias gloriae maiorum admonerent, regulos, ut quenquam vel cupidum rerum novarum, vel aere alieno pressum, vel rei suae poenitere intelligerent, tentare, hortari, solicitare: multa pollicendo erigere, opes eius ostentare ne desinerent, denique belli eum auctorem ac ducem offerrent (I, III, 3).

This passage contains the description of the thoughtless promises by which the leader of the conspiracy urges his accomplices to follow him in the political crime, which is a recurrent motif in classical and humanist literature on conspiracies. Moreover, some of these negative features ascribed to the barons and seen as the roots of the conspiracy are also regarded as characteristic of the common people, in a critical standpoint that is similar to Alberti's negative opinion on the *vulgus* (I, VI, 3):[36]

> Ea potissimum tempestate iudicari plane potuit non fidem, non constantiam, non gratitudinem popularium animis inesse ullam, poenitere eos praesentis semper imperii, gaudere novis rebus, futura in expectatione habere, levitatem ducem esse atque auctorem ad postrema quaeque flagitra. [...] Non illos longae pacis ocium, quae etiam eorum, qui in militia educati sunt, relanguescere animos facit, non partae sub Alfonso plurimae divitiae, quarum comes voluptas desidiaque esse consuevit, non belli facies ipsa, quae eo terribilior magisque formidolosa

[36] See the previous chapter.

apparet quo longior pax fuit, non denique agrorum securitas, ad quos relictis oppidis commigrarant, aut eorum desiderium, quae relinquenda erant, remorantur. Certatim undique ad rebellandum curritur.

The common people are portrayed as inconstant, unfaithful, easily manipulable and eager for subversion, and never grateful for the condition of peace and wealth brought by the government, which in this case is the Aragonese monarchy. This aspect, as already observed, is mentioned also in Sallust's *Bellum Iugurthinum* (66, 2; 30, 3), and it is redeployed in humanist works on conspiracies as a key factor in the analysis of the historical event. Nevertheless, as in Poliziano's text, so in the *De bello Neapolitano* the role played by the common people is considered crucial not only as a fundamental help for conspirators, but, still more, as an essential factor that may be exploited by rulers to defeat the internal enemies and maintain power. The masses are more often seen as loyal supporters of the legitimate government, which succeeds in maintaining his power thanks also to the mutual link with the people. This double perspective in these texts reveals how the model of Sallust is not passively enlisted, but is adapted in accordance with the new historical and cultural scenario of the Renaissance age, which these works plainly represent.

In general the source of Sallust is adjusted to the new political implications of fifteenth-century conspiracies and it surfaces also in the definition of the plot as a *facinus*: 'facinus indignum et atrox', for example, is how the attack in Teano against the king of Naples is described (I, VIII, 13). The representation of the conspiracy as a nefarious crime coincides with a political and moral characterization of the rebellion that perfectly suits the ideological angle that subtends the whole of Pontano's work, as well as most humanist texts on the same topic. This typical Sallustian word, in particular, is employed as a moral category used to define political actions.[37] Although

[37] Poliziano's incipit is modelled on Sallust *Cat*. 4, 3, where the conspiracy is defined as *facinus*.

Pontano's work covers a long chronology and numerous episodes, and consequently it may appear more dispersive in giving a precise characterization of the historical events, the description of the conspiracy as an outrageous *facinus*, as a moral, social and political crime, continually emerges in the unfolding of the story.

However, the influence of Sallust on the *De bello Neapolitano* is not only thematic or structural, but also stylistic, as Monti Sabia stated, highlighting the adherence of the text to the Sallustian tenets of *brevitas* and *celeritas*, which are claimed in the *Actius* as the main stylistic feature of an ideal humanist *historia*.[38] Moreover, the influence of the classical model goes further and it appears in the employment of specific descriptive motifs and purely literary patterns and *topoi*. An emblematic example is the image of the strong man able to resist hardship which is associated with Catiline and would become extremely famous in the literary tradition: this motif is displayed by Pontano in the description of the Aragonese *condottiero* Maso Barrese, a character who is represented as full of contradictions (II, VII, 5): 'Inerant autem ingentes Masio virtutes tum corporis, tum animi, maxime firma laborum tolerantia, frigoris calorisque patientia aeque magna…' (Sall. *Cat.* 5, 3 'Corpus patiens inediae, algoris, vigiliae supra quam cuiquam credibile est'). Thus, the centrality of the prototype of Sallust affects several components: stylistic, rhetorical, structural, and thematic.

As far as the political analysis is concerned, Pontano's work, as a proper *historia*, proves to be more oriented towards the political background of the events than other literary works on the topic of conspiracy, such as Poliziano's and Orazio Romano's texts (the latter, in particular, belonging to the epic genre, followed completely different principles in narrating the events, as we have seen). Nevertheless, the political perspective that informs the whole of the *De bello Neapolitano* is still similar to

[38] MONTI SABIA, *Pontano*, p. 30.

Poliziano's *Commentarium*, as both works do not examine analytically and systematically the political and historical causes of the conspiracy. In this respect they both differ from Sallust's text, which contains a more extensive and in-depth analysis of the actual historical motivations of the plot (although the classical work is also pervaded by a specific political viewpoint). If it is true that Pontano is more careful than Poliziano in considering the political and historical factors that may have brought about the conspiracy, and therefore is closer to Sallust's approach, his work still lacks the thorough and mature analysis that, instead, would characterize sixteenth-century historiography. Albeit the Italian and Neapolitan scenario is partially reconstructed in the introductory digression at the opening of the text, the author's perspective does not deviate from the Aragonese political views, just as the Medici's political position is never put aside by Poliziano. This element marks a distance between these humanist works and the model of Sallust, whose political approach is assumed by the fifteenth-century historians without the classical historian's broader outlook.

The ground on which Pontano's narrative lies is totally moralistic and political and it is for this reason that he does not indulge in giving specific details in the representations of episodes that may be problematic for the monarchy's politics. If he offers meticulous descriptions of military events, sometimes even mentioning mistakes that Ferdinando might have made, he does not dwell on episodes that concern the burning issue of the relationship between the king and the barons with the same thorough and straightforward approach. This is because the main ideological thread of the narrative, which is the issue of conspiracy, unfolds rotating around a precise pro-monarchic political standpoint. In some passages this narrative attitude produces also an emphatic dramatization of the events, which is mainly achieved through a realistic and colorful style, and a dynamic and lively rhythm of syntax and narration.

The political nature of Pontano's *historia* accounts also for the lack of a more comprehensive and in-depth investigation of the role played by the foreign states in the war. This perspective would have opened up the narration to consider external points of view: in particular the standpoints of both the foreign participants in the war - such as Pius II and Francesco Sforza as allies of Naples - and the enemies of Ferdinando, the French invaders. But these elements are irrelevant to the Neapolitan-centred perspective of Pontano's narration of the war. It has been claimed that the humanist did not pay as much attention to the role played by Ferdinando's allies as to the deeds of the Neapolitan and Aragonese characters, which are at the forefront; conversely, in Pio II's *Commentarii* and in Cicco Simonetta's *Rerum gestarum Francisci Sfortiae Commentarii*, which contain an account of the same episodes, the perspective turns out to be centred respectively on the pope and the *condottiero*, whose contribution to the victory appears highlighted.[39] In addition, the thematic nuclei in the *De bello Neapolitano* are the issues of political subversion and the management of monarchic power. Accordingly, the 'Neapolitan-centred perspective' is also a result of the 'conspiracy-focused perspective'. It is no accident that also among the ranks of the enemies of the house of Aragon, Pontano's attention is drawn almost exclusively to the barons, rather than to the French characters and troops. It is the barons who are the evil protagonists of the narration, they are the main characters in most episodes and descriptions, and, as a result, they represent the actual enemies of the monarchy and the main political forces opposing the just king. This is why the portrait of John of Anjou at

[39] G. SIMONETTA, *Rerum gestarum Francisci Sfortiae Commentarii*, in *Rerum Italicarum Scriptore*, t.XXI/2, ed. by G. Soranzo (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1934); *Pii II Commentarii rerum memorabilium que temporibus suis contigerunt, ad codicum fidem nunc primum editi ab Adriano van Heck* (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana , 1984). *I commentari di Enea Silvio Piccolomini*, ed. by G. Bernetti (Milano: Longanesi, 1997). For the comparative analysis of the different narrations, with specific focus on Simonetta's history, see: IANZITI, *Humanistic Historiography*, pp. 140-152, where it is stated that Simonetta, following chancellery techniques of forging documents, created a pro-Sforza account without altering the truth. See also SENATORE, 'Pontano e la guerra', pp. 281-291, who pointed out the 'Neapolitan' standspoint from which the events are narrated and claimed that Pontano's historical recontruction is not as precise and carefully organised as Simonetta's: p. 288.

the end of the narration is almost totally built around the description of positive qualities (VI, I), while the insurgent noblemen are depicted as totally negative exemplars and are the actual targets of Pontano's sharp criticism. So the humanist's political interest is not attracted by the war between different countries, but by the internal conflict within a single state and the dynamic of dissident behaviours.

Once again, the monographic prototype of the account of a plot, which is traditionally epitomized by Sallust's work, turns out to be the source of unity in the text, not merely from a structural point of view, as the pivotal element that balances the centrifugal narration of the war, but also from an ideological perspective, since the issue of the conspiracy stands out as the frame which allows Pontano to formulate and convey his political view. Thus the *De bello Neapolitano*, as well as the other works on this topic, proves once more the centrality of the issue of political plot in the historical, political and cultural scenario of the humanist age.

3. Conspiracy, obedience and kingship in Pontano's political theory

The conspiracy, the *leitmotiv* of the *De bello Neapolitano*, is a concrete historical theme that the humanist placed at the core of a considerable part of his political speculation, which was systematically articulated in his theoretical treatises and, more implicitly, in his historiographical work. Hence with Pontano, who was a first-hand observer of contemporary statecraft and who pragmatically connected his active political role with his ideological theorization, the crucial fifteenth-century issue of internal rebellions and plots acquires ultimately a pivotal function in the literary elaboration of the theory of princely power.

The political perspective that subtends the *De bello Neapolitano* is deeply intertwined with the well-structured political thought that Pontano constructs in two of

his main treatises: the *De principe* (1465), the first organic humanist work on the perfect prince, as the title clearly shows, and the *De obedientia* (1470), which, for the first time in the fifteenth-century, is devoted to elaborating a comprehensive theory of the ideal state and social and political relationships in it.[40] Thus, these works prove to be totally complementary and coordinated in articulating Pontano's organicistic and autocratic political conception. In his view, the head of the state is embodied in the monarch, whom the whole social body must spontaneously obey, in an indissoluble relationship between the prince and his subjects which is the essential condition for the state to thrive.

The *De bello Neapolitano* is perfectly integrated into this all-embracing political ideology, which is clearly centred on the principles of *fides* and conformity to the ruler's authority (as the title itself of the most pivotal treatise, the *De obedientia*, demonstrates) and it is based on the thorough condemnation of any disobedience and rebellion against the king-*pater patriae*. The historical work, which deals with this specific issue, provides the actual events to support the humanist's theory and becomes a central pillar of it. It is no accident that Pontano composed (or started to compose) these three major works in the same years, immediately after the first conspiracy, trying to contribute through his literary activity - as an influential intellectual engaged in politics - to the strengthening of the unstable political condition of the monarchy and the reconstruction of the moral and civic bedrock of the state.[41]

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[40] The relationship between these three works, especially the historiographical text and the *De obedientia*, has been pointed out by FERRAÙ, *Il tessitore*, pp. 108-117; see also C. FINZI. *Re, baroni, popolo: La politica di Giovanni Pontano* (Rimini: Il Cerchio Iniziative Editoriali, 2004), pp. 39-94; and G. M. CAPPELLI, 'La sconfitta di Sarno nel pensiero politico aragonese', in *La battaglia nel Rinascimento meridionale. Moduli narrativi tra parole e immagini*, ed. by G. Abbamonte, *et al*. (Roma: Viella, 2011), pp. 198-201: 199-201.

[41] See PONTANO, *De Principe*, *Introduzione*, p. XXVIII; FERRAÙ, *Il tessitore*, p. 110. It is not possible to agree totally with Ferraù's critical remarks in as much as he recognises in Pontano's works a willingness to reconcile the royal and feudal souls of the state; conversely, Cappelli's analysis is more compelling in so far as it highlights in Pontano's texts, in particular in the *De obedientia*, a decisive affirmation of the principles of a centralised monarchy: CAPPELLI, 'La sconfitta', p. 199. On the *De obedientia* see also ID.,

From this political perspective the historiographical account plays a literally classical exemplary role in the making of Pontano's political theory, by offering both positive and negative *exempla* and by connecting the theoretical tenets that the humanist illustrates in his treatises with practical facts, problems and solutions. In particular it is possible to identify four main thematic nuclei in the *De bello Neapolitano* which convey four complementary political ideas. These thematic nuclei make up the humanist's political theory and are embodied in specific categories of characters, either evil or virtuous: the rebel barons, who represent the chief negative 'pole' in the social body and symbolize any blameworthy defiance toward the king; the loyal noblemen and the barons who regret their betrayal and come back under the prince's authority, who play a positive exemplary role as the emblem of a regained social bond; the royal protagonists, in particular Ferdinando, the *princeps*, who stands out as the personification of the highest concept of kingship; and finally, the common people, who are another essential pole in the political system and are often pictured in the narration in order to convey the image of the mutual relationship between the monarchy and his subjects.[42]

3.1 The barons and the crime of disobedience

At the core of the *De bello Neapolitano*'s political perspective are placed the rebel barons and their criminal deeds. We have already seen the emblematic representation of the leader of the plotters, Giovanni Antonio Orsini, whose main portrait is significantly

'Prolegomeni al *De Obedientia* di Pontano. Saggio interpretativo', *Rinascimento meridionale*, 1 (2010), pp. 47-70**;** ID., 'Il castigo del Re. Bartolo, Pontano e il problema della disubbidienza', *Studi Umanistici Piceni*, 34 (2014), pp. 91-104; C. FINZI, 'Il principe e l'obbedienza. I primi scritti politici di Giovanni Pontano', in *Théologie et droit dans la science politique de l'État moderne. Actes de la table ronde de Rome (12-14 novembre 1987)* (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1991), pp. 263-279.

[42] These central characters in both the historiographical work and the actual social body appear correlated in the title of the compelling book, already mentioned, FINZI, *Re, Baroni, popolo*, which, nevertheless, does not pay enough attention to the *De bello Neapolitano* and to the function of these protagonists in the historical narration and in the political system. A critical remark about this restricted approach is given by Riccardo Fubini in his review in *Renaissance Quarterly*, 58, 4, (2005), pp. 1309-1310, where it is claimed that this book 'scarcely hints at the real background of Pontano's writings' (p. 1309).

introduced through Ferdinando's thoughts, who is aware of the noblemen's immoral and corrupt attitude ('Ferdinando significantur Ioannem Antonium Principem Tarentinum clam rebus novis studere, quod Regem nequaquam fallebat, qui eius inconstantiam atque animum minime tranquillum noverat, quippe cui ab adolescentia seditiones, rapinas discordiasque gratas fuisse intelligeret', I, II, 1). This narrative strategy implicitly displays the conflict between two opposing extremes, the barons and the monarchy, making immediately clear where the right and the wrong belong, and emphasizing the clever perspicacity of the king in detecting all possible threats that his enemy could mount against him.

It is through the same angle that the unsteady condition of the kingdom at the beginning of Ferdinando's reign is described. This intricate situation is depicted by representing Ferdinando's full awareness of the barons' ('reguli') subversive plans, of their fictitious loyalty and dissembled hatred, of the *discordiae* deeply-rooted in the realm, and the avarice, greed, and inconstancy of men ('Rex animo vehementer angi diversaque secum consilia agitare, nec cui fidendum esset satis compertum habere; repetere animo veteres regni discordias, domestica populorum inter se odia regulorumque aut simulata, aut amicitias. Praeterita bella docere plane posse quantum in hominum animis polleret inconstantia ac levitas, quantum avaritia valeret ac vindicandi cupido…', I, V, 2). Another passage where the condemnation of the barons ends up in the implicit affirmation of the king's standpoint can be seen in the allusion to the rumours concerning Ferrante's illegitimate birth[43] and his unlawful right to govern. These allegations, which appear as one of the causes that drive the rebels, are mainly ascribed to some of the most ungrateful, wicked and perfidious barons (as well as some Spanish officials who supported Ferdinando's uncle, Giovanni, in the succession):

[43] There were many rumours concerning Ferdinando's mother, Gueraldona Carlino, as the passage in Pontano's work illustrates: *Appendix*, II, III.

Giovanni Torella, Pietro Mandragone and Giovanni Fosciano, who had received fiefdoms and estates from the monarchy, but, notwithstanding, betrayed it ('quae quidem aliaque [*sc*. rumors] ab illis, qui Ferdinandum prosequebantur odio, palam indigneque iactabantur. In quibus tres praecipue visi sunt maxime improbi atque ob insignem perfidiam detestabiles: Ioannes Torella,…Petrus Mondraconius…, Ioannes Antonius Foscianus…', II, III, 1-2). So it is the evil barons who are the sources of these unfounded accusations, which, through the narrative articulation conceived by Pontano, turn out to be totally untrue. Hence, the subversive noblemen and the king appear as the contrasting, respectively negative and positive, poles in the political conflict. A similar approach is adopted in describing the demands put forward to Ferrante by the barons Antonio Centelles and Giosia Acquaviva[44] (through the mediation of Giovanni Antonio Orsini), who wanted back the territories that Alfonso had confiscated from them because of their previous insubordination (I, III, 4). Here, once again, Ferrante is depicted as honest and generous in his decision to accede to these claims, in contrast with the seditious and ungrateful barons.

Even when Pontano shows impartiality in describing the favourable position of some cities towards the Angevin pretender to the throne, a view brought about by the oppressive domination of the Aragon rulers, nevertheless, he presents these opinions as rumours, as words uttered by unspecified anti-Aragon opponents, and therefore, implicitly, devoid of any objective basis (all these remarks are introduced by the anaphora of the perfect infinitive 'venisse', which is dependent on an introductory statement that is couched so as to convey the idea of rumours: '*Fama*…Ioannis per regnum *divagata* multos, qui antea dubiis erant animis, ad rebellandum invitat: *venisse* virum florentem annis…contra alii Ispanae gentis impotentis animos, insatiabilem

[44] On these barons see the notes to the text in MONTI SABIA, *Pontano*, p. 163.

avaritiam, crudelem cum damnarent dominationem; *venisse* tandem…qui ab insolentissimo Catalanorum dominatu tot annis oppressos populos…liberaret', I, 7, 1). It is significant that also in other works on conspiracies the authors often adduce the motivations that drive conspirators, which correspond to a denunciation of the current rulers' misconducts; nonetheless, these critical opinions are usually put in the mouth of the conspirators. Frequently thay are expressed in their speeches (following the model of Catiline's oration in Sallust's work, as we have seen), or, as in Pontano's text, they are presented as generic 'gossip' which has arisen among the Angevins' supporters. Therefore these beliefs are depicted as directly coming from the evil plotters' minds and in neither case can they be considered as being shared by the author, or as corresponding to sympathy with the rebels.[45]

Besides the leader of the conspiracy, Orsini, another chief evil character is Marino Marzano, who is described in even darker shades. He is represented as devoid of any virtues and his nobility is based only on his lineage, not on his nature ('Marinum Martianum Principem Rosanensem, cuius praeter genus vix erat quod bonus aliquis laudare in eo posset', I, IV, 1). Pontano goes further and claims that Marzano was considered blameworthy even by his father and was disrespectful of any religious or human law (I, VI, 5). The rebel also urged other barons to rise up against the monarchy and he was the planner of the ambush against Ferdinando in Teano, the attack which was seen as the most dangerous attempt to murder the king and jeopardize the government. Thus Marzano's profile is comprehensively conveyed and corresponds to that of an actual anti-hero. He is also the emblem of the inveterate traitor, since, even though Ferdinando reached a peace agreement with him, he ended up again plotting against him and consequently was finally punished without mercy (V, I; V, IV): a

[45] Pontano's condemnation of the rebel barons is acknowledge also by CAPPELLI, 'Il castigo del Re'.

recidivism that, as we have seen, is ascribed also to Porcari in Alberti's account and becomes an aggravating factor.

The descriptions of the barons' characters and deeds, which are often associated with the opposing ideal image of the king, dovetail with the theorization of the perfect political system, and its nastiest aberrations, which Pontano formulated in his treatise *De obedientia*. Here the whole centralized and organic architecture of power is grounded on the principle of *fides* that the subjects, and especially the barons, must give to the monarch. Therefore, as Cappelli has illustrated, this idea of *fidelitas* represents a natural and rational act of obedience that must derive from spontaneous *consensus* and is deprived of medieval and feudal implications, but becomes a vital political tenet on which the state is built.[46] As the political horizon of the *De bello Neapolitano* shows, the government of one single ruler is the only guarantee of peace and prosperity, in accordance with classical monarchical principles. Moreover, the *princeps* is regarded as the head of the social body and a *pater patriae*, exploiting the two major metaphors of the organicistic political ideology which associates the state with either an actual body or a family.[47] But Pontano goes even beyond this view and ends up totally identifying the king with the *patria* and the state. Thus the medieval dilemma about the

[46] According to Cappelli, this idea would evolve into the principle on which the modern absolutist state would be founded: CAPPELLI, 'Umanesimo', p. 12. More generally on the issue of the foundation of modern states see *Origini dello Stato. Processi di formazione statale in Italia fra medioevo ed età moderna*, ed. by G. Chittolini, A. Molho, P. Schiera (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1994), and in particular in this same volume: D. QUAGLIONI, '"Fidelitas habet duas habenas". Il fondamento dell'obbligazione politica nelle glosse di Bartolo alle costituzioni pisane di Enrico VII', pp. 381-396. For the analysis of Pontano's *De obedientia* see the studies already mentioned at footnote 41.

[47] For the traditional employment of the metaphor of the body and the conception of organicistic political thought see KANTOROWICZ, in particular chapter V; C. VASOLI, 'La "naturalezza" dello Stato e la sua "patologia" nella tradizione politica aristotelica', *Il pensiero politico*, 26, 1 (1993), pp. 3-13; P. BECCHI, 'Individualismo versus organicismo? Elementi per la critica di una grande dicotomia', *Verifiche*, 25, 2-3 (1996), pp. 251-288; on the Renaissance age see P. ARCHAMBAULT, 'The Analogy of the "Body" in Renaissance Political Literature', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 29 (1967), pp. 21-53; G. BRIGUGLIA, *Il corpo vivente dello Stato. Una metafora politica* (Milano: Bruno Mondadori, 2006).

preeminence of either the *rex* or the *lex* is solved in the *De obedientia* by establishing a complete identification of the two terms, so that the king *is* the state:[48]

De obedientiae officiis erga regem. Qui obedientiae in regem munus implere suum volet, duo sibi ante omnia proponat: unum ut iudicet quae in illum contulerit in patriam se conferre, quae post Deum primum sibi locum in nobis vendicavit. [...] ut sibi persuadeat ad illius [rex] praescriptum vivendum esse statuatque regis imperium legem esse, nam tyrannorum iussa plerumque iniuria summa sunt.[49]

This is precisely the political system that is mirrored and promoted by the historical picture provided by the *De bello Neapolitano*. In light of this ideological construction, any rebellion, or any disobedience and departure from monarchic authority, is seen as an action contravening not only the princely law, but also natural law, and therefore is subject to resolute condemnation. As stated in the *De obedientia*, high treason, the 'perduellionis crimina' (66r),[50] is the most grievous and outrageous crime. Pontano's disapproval of the rebel barons is firm in both the historical account and the political treatise, where he also mentions the official juridical sentences handed down to the guilty noblemen:

Sed in omni perfidiae atque inobedientiae genere plurimum barones peccant, dum aut cum regis fortuna communicare sua nolunt aut ampliandorum finium gratia novis student rebus, sua parum sorte contenti. Ac de hac fidei atque obedientiae parte satis hic dictum sit; plura apud iurisconsultos qui suas de iis tulere sententias.[51]

In view of these ideas, whoever is culpable of such execrable crimes must be considered 'humanae societatis hostis ac naturae ipsi rebellans' (64r) and must be punished. This point is made also to justify the king's reactions to the conspiracy and to legitimise both his rule and the measures he took against the traitors. Significantly, the very same approach emerges in an important letter that Ferrante, and Pontano on behalf

[48] On Pontano's idea of organicism in the state see G. M. CAPPELLI, 'Umanesimo politico. La monarchia organicista nel *De obedientia* di Giovanni Pontano', *California Italian Studies* 3/1 (2012), pp. 1-20; ID., 'Prolegomeni'.
[49] The passages of the *De obedientia* are quoted from the *editio princeps*: *Ioannis Ioviani Pontani ad Robertum Sanseverinium principem salernitanum in libros obedientiae prohemium incipit feliciter* (Neapoli: Per Mathiam Moravum, 1490 die 25 octobris), ff. 65v-66v.
[50] On this issue see also FINZI, *Re, baroni*, p. 70, where the source is given as *Dig*. XLVIII, 4, 11.
[51] *Ioannis Ioviani Pontani...in libros obedientiae*, f. 67r.

of him, wrote to Giovanni Albino[52] during the 'second conspiracy of the barons', on 7 July 1487, when, after signing a peace agreement, some barons kept plotting against the king, and this drove Ferdinando to proceed neither with pity, nor with respect for the previous accord, jailing them and confiscating their territories.[53] Although this letter was written more than 20 years after the first conspiracy, we know that Pontano kept revising the *De bello Neapolitano* throughout his life and the new political plot certainly demonstrated to him that the issue of rebellions and conspiracies was still very topical and was more and more relevant for the maintenance of Aragonese power, proving to him the abiding historical relevance of both his political theorizing and his historical work.[54] In the letter, as well as in the *De bello Neapolitano* and *De obedientia*, the seditious noblemen are presented as the only ones who bear the blame for the war and the atrocities caused by the uprising; while the king has always shown generosity and has repeatedly attempted to reconcile with them. In light of this, Ferdinando's ruthless reaction is seen as the *extrema ratio*. In the letter Pontano also employs medical metaphors[55] to describe the measures taken against the barons, a treatment that was initially lenient, but became more severe as a consequence of the barons' obduracy:

Depò le turbatione del anno passato, essendo sequita la pace, lo nostro intento non è stato altro, che pacare li animi di ciascuno, et maxime de quilli che più ne haviano offiso, usando tucte manere, et tractamenti apti et convenienti ad quisto effecto; et perbenchè con li mezi dele

[52] Albino was royal secretary, diplomat and historian under the reigns of Ferrante and his son: cfr. V. FENICCHIA, *Giovanni Albino*, in DBI, vol. 2 (1960), pp. 12-13.

[53] It is likely that the letter was written by Pontano, as the signature would reveal, since the king's name is followed (on the line below) by the humanist's name. The letter is published in *Lettere istruzioni ed altre memorie de' re aragonesi dalle quali si conferma quanto narra Giovanni Albino ne' quattro libri della storia qui davanti stampati, e si supplisce ciò che vi manca* (Napoli: Stamperia di Giovanni Gravier, 1769), pp. 120-123. The letters in the Aragonese chancery were written in order to give a rational organization to the historical events and create a narrative elaborated from the monarchic standpoint; the second stage of this official interpretation of events is the *De bello Neapolitano* itself, as claimed in F. SENATORE, 'Il principato di Salerno durante la Guerra dei baroni (1460-1463)', *Rassegna storica salernitana*, 11, 2 (1994), pp. 29-69: 39; 60.

[54] Pontano did not significantly change his work in light of the events of the second conspiracy of the barons, although many crucial episodes could have influenced his political view and his work, such as the later defection of Ferdinando's ally Roberto Sanseverino, on which see *infra*.

[55] The use of medical metaphors is ackowledge by E. SCARTON, 'La congiura dei baroni del 1485-87 e la sorte dei ribelli', in *Poteri, relazioni, guerra nel Regno di Ferrante d'Aragona*, ed. by F. Senatore and F. Storti (Napoli: ClioPress, 2011), pp. 213-290: 261.

forteze cercassemo de assecurarene, el che non manco tenneva al assecuratione, et reposato vivere de ipsi Baroni, … ad fine de acquitare et assecurare li animi loro, non avemo facti altri deportamenti, che da patre ad figlioli…li havemo sempre confortati ad stantiare in Napoli appresso de nui, accarezandoli et honorandoli continuamente più presto come figlioli che come subditi. … pur sempre havemo cercato con bone et piacevole manere de destraherli… havendo quisto designo avante l'occhi, che *con lo tempo et con piacevoli modi non solo le piache seriano sanate, ma etiam extricate le cicatrice de quelle*, et con el bene vincere ogne mala dispositione, che in lo animo de alcuno fosse restate. Et però tanto ne è più grave et più intimamente ne dole, che siano state frustrate de quisto nostro fine, et che per le loro perverse nature et inveterati defecti siamo stati necessitati ad mutare designi, et *non bastandoce grati et piacevoli cibi, siamo constricti ad usare medicine et remedii de ammalati, anche de infirmitate disperate et incurabile*.[56]

What is most remarkable is that the relationship between the king and the noblemen is explicitly described as the mutual relation that links the father with his sons, on the basis of the very same organicistic view that implicitly informs the *De bello Neapolitano* and that is openly stated in the *De obedientia*,[57] in particular in the chapter on the principles of political obedience (*An homo cum liber natus sit parere debeat*):

Hi principio qui populos regerent reges dicti, a similitudine etiam patres appellati, quin et pastores eos vocavit antiquitas, quos et sacrosanctos et augustos esse voluit atque inter divos merita retulit. [...] Nunquidnam filius qui sub patria potestate vivat servus est iudicandus? Quod si esset, nequaquam maiores nostri filios suos liberos appellassent.[58]

The barons, who are supposed to be loyal to their prince as to a father, are guilty of such a crime that in the letter they are accused of jeopardizing not only the Neapolitan kingdom, but all Italian states, with the extreme consequence of making the whole peninsula an easy prey for the Ottomans; therefore, since the king-*pater* is guided by the defence of his people, he has to punish them:

[…] machinavano contro de nui et nostro stato, et de sì mala natura, che havendo possuto consequire loro perverso designo, nui et nostro stato haverriano posto in confusione, et non solo noi, ma serriano stati causa ponere tutta l'Italia in foco […] volendo non solamente retornare altra fiata li nostro Collegati in affanni et periculi, ma ponere Italia in tumulto et nove brighe…anche mandare la Cristianità in ruina, perchè questo non era altro che chiamare lo Turco in Italia, et darlela in preda. […] De che vedendo poco valere el bono, et che la detectione

[56] *Lettere istruzioni*, p. 120 (my emphasis).
[57] This idea appears also in PONTANO, *De Principe*, § 50 'Praesens eum te erga cives geres ut necessitatibus suis paterfamilias', p. 60.
[58] *Ioannis Ioviani Pontani...libros obedientiae...*, ff. 59v-60r.

de una machinatione era principio et causa de l'altra…per non mancare al bisogno del publico bene, al che principalmente simo tenuti, la necessità medesima, et la cura del Regno et de nostri subditi, ala quale la Divina bontà ne ha preposti, ne ha inducti ala detentione deli predicti…[59]

The king's actions are totally justified in view of this political scenario and his duty of preserving the 'publico bene', which is the major concern and responsibility of the head of state. Moreover, as we have seen, in Pontano's works the *princeps* acquires absolutistic traits and his authority is seen as incontestable, to the extent that in the *De Principe* (§ 57) his verdicts are regarded as more legitimate and fair than law itself, in a view that fosters a highly personalistic idea of power.[60] As stated in the *De obedientia* and in the official letter and recalled in many passages in the *De bello Neapolitano*, it is only by virtue of the king's *liberalitas* that the noblemen are given territories to run (for example, this is what the king did with Antonio Centelles and Giosia Acquaviva - I, III, 4 - and many others mentioned in the historical text). Conversely, the barons' obligations towards the monarch are irrevocable and precisely fixed and can be encapsulated in the principle of total obedience to his orders, to the extent of even sacrificing their own life, as Pontano explicitly claimed in the *De obedientia*:

Subiectorum duo sunt genera: quorum unum qui simpliciter dicuntur subiecti; illorum alterum qui regum liberalitate ac virtutis gratia tum agros possident tum oppida urbesque sui iuris habent, pro quibus annua pendere tributa debeant et ad militiam cogantur. Quorum e numero sunt quos hodie tum barones dicimus tum comites aut duces [...] Horum omnium una est regula: fidem ut teneant ac pace belloque imperata faciant. Quo tempore et adversa constanter ferenda sunt et vita ipsa saepius obiectanda est periculis. Nam et tempora contingunt quibus fides a popularibus suae liberorumque vitae sit anteponenda, nec veterum tantum, sed et nostra memoria florentissimae quoque urbes, dum servare illam volunt et in officio permanere, aliae direptae sunt, aliae incensae, quaedam etiam funditus excisae: quae res notior est quam ut exemplis indigeat.[61]

[59] *Lettere istruzioni*, p. 121.
[60] 'In hos severum, illos facilem, pro causis, ingeniis, temporibus locisque te exhibebis, sciens "summum ius summam interdum iniuriam esse"': cfr. Cicero, *De off.* I, 133; Terentius, *Heaut.* 796.
[61] *Ioannis Ioviani Pontani... libros obedientiae...*, ff. 66v-67r. On this passage see also CAPPELLI, 'La realtà', p. 213.

As in the *De bello Neapolitano*, in the diplomatic letter the liberality of the king (along with an eulogistic reference to the proseperous wealth of his kingdom), is openly placed in contrast with the ungratefulness and greed of the barons:

> Nulla cosa era da nui più lontana nè più fora de cogitatione, che cercar vendetta, che fu sempre aliena dali Principi de nostra casa […] Non ce ha mossi cupidità de roba, perchè le nostre ordinarie rendite, et le altre nostra facultate sonno per Dio gratia ad opulentia, non che ad sufficientia, et se è veduto nui essere soliti dare, et non tollere, far novi Baroni, non disfare li vecchi; et si semo cupidi o larghi verso li nostro subditi se vede de qua, che dicti Baroni…haveano et hanno la majore parte de loro intrate de nostra concessione, liberalitate, et gratia, de continuo sonno stati et sonno da nui beneficiate […] et…forse che questa nostra benificatione et ampliatione de immunitate è stata causa de farli exire dai termini loro, per non essere saputo conservare con modestia in le gratie et honori, per non ad ipsi facte.[62]

Once again, in this passage as often in the historical work, the defence of the monarch's behaviour is articulated in opposition with the evil vices of the rebel noblemen, who appear as the negative pole of society.

3. 2 The loyal noblemen and the repentant traitors

Besides the condemnation of the state's internal enemies, the construction of Pontano's political theory was fundamental for providing not only the negative *exempla* of the most outrageous crimes against the monarchy, but also the exemplary image of positive and upright conduct. This latter function is mainly fulfilled by the category of the loyal barons and, still more relevantly, by the noblemen who, after siding against the king, change their mind and turn into devoted supporters of political authority. It is noteworthy that the most significant example employed to explain the tenet of fidelity in the *De obedientia* is drawn directly from the actual historical events of the conspiracy, revealing again the close link between the theoretical treatise and the historical work. Pontano mentions the cities that during the war did not defect to the enemy, but, despite the difficult situation, remained loyal to Ferrante:

[62] *Lettere istruzioni*, p. 122.

Bello Neapolitano quod Ioannes Andegaviensis contra Ferdinandum gessit, aliquot oppida quanquam longa obsidione ac fame coacta, non prius ab hoste conditionem acceperunt, quam capiendae illius ius potestasque a Ferdinando facta esset, fidelitatis iure hoc modo exoluto.[63]

In the *De bello Neapolitano*, in addition to the barons and cities faithful to Ferdinando, the most remarkable *exemplum* of the relationship that must connect the noblemen and their *princeps* is provided by the men who become obedient to the monarchy after having opposed it. This exemplary element emerges in the emblematic and extremely detailed description of the oath of allegiance that the captain Orso Orsini, who had fought on the side of the French and the rebels,[64] swore to Ferdinando, in an official and highly formalised ceremony (II, III). In this rite the king bestows on him the status of nobleman, naming him count of Nola and duke of Ascoli Satriano, and, in turn, the ruler receives from him the formal promise of total and everlasting loyalty. But what is most striking is that the historical account illustrates meticulously the procedure that ratifies the oath, describing the gestures made as a traditional ritual and quoting the exact words on which the bond is founded (II, III, 5):

Ursus ego Ursinus...tibi Ferdinando Regi liberisque successoribusque in regno Neapolitano tuis polliceor, promitto, spondeo pro liberis successoribusque item in hisce urbibus, oppidis, agris ac finibus meis fideles meque illosque utique futuros, tuisque illorumque imperiis ubique meque illosque parituros atque imperata facturos cum hisce urbibus, oppidis, agris, finibus popularibusque perpetua cum constantia fide. Siquid vero adversus teve illosve parari fraudis dolive insidiarumve audiero, sciero, compertumve significatumve habuero, indicaturum illud e vestigio ac facturum palam tibique illisque, officia demum obiturum meque illosque omnia domi forisque pace belloque adversum quoscunque ac pro imperio quae probi et fidelis subiecti iure, lege, natura obeunda ac praestanda sunt Regi.

Pontano carefully describes the single phases of the ceremony. At the end of it, Orso Orsini, who is on his knees in front of the king, after repeating three times a formula which includes the significant words 'Ego me...Ligium hominem statuo' ('I declare myself a loyal man'), receives a kiss on his forehead from the monarch, who puts his

[63] *Ioannis Ioviani Pontani... libros obedientiae...*, f. 67r.
[64] On Orso Orsini see the note in MONTI SABIA, *Pontano*, p. 164.

hands around the nobleman's hands. These gestures represent both the verticality of the relationship between the two elements of society, its head and the subject who is elected as a beneficiary, and the bond that ties them. But, despite this long-established rite, this emphasis on *fides* (a recurrent semantic field in this passage, as the terminology shows) is no longer rooted in medieval feudal tenets, but, as the *De obedientia* reveals, it is totally political and becomes the pivot of the modern centralised state. The oath described in the *De bello Neapolitano* corresponds precisely to the tenets formulated in the *De obedientia* and it governs the conduct of the barons, who must help the king in every contingency, in both peace and war, and against every enemy, displaying a *perpetua fides*. But this obligation goes even further and it includes also the moral and juridical duty of denouncing traitors, even if they are members of the baron's family. The exemplary significance of the passage in the *De bello Neapolitiano* is stressed by the remark with which Pontano closes the episode, where he tells us that after the oath Orso Orsini was always loyal to Ferrante and ready to help him, behaving in all circumstances with virtue, prudence and wisdom (II, III, 8). Therefore, in view of the whole description and the closing observations, the nobleman turns into a positive *exemplum* of just and fruitful behaviour that all honest subjects must follow.

Another meaningful case of regained loyalty is offered by Roberto Sanseverino, who was nominated prince of Salerno in 1463 and whose personal history is surrounded by crucial political implications. He is presented in the *De bello Neapolitano* as one of the most faithful and helpful allies of Ferdinando and he is the subject of a portrait that is one of the most eulogistic celebrations in the text (I, XII). However, the humanist could not avoid recounting the temporary defection of the noblemen, who, after the military defeat in Sarno, for some months (from July to December 1462) sided with the barons and then returned to the king's party. This was such a problematic issue for Ferdinando,

who had to publicly justify the double turnaround of one of his major allies, that the chancery and the king himself were committed to inventing a juridical excuse that would explain Sanseverino's behaviour. They fabricated a fake *licenza*, along with official and diplomatic letters, that stated that the only occasion when a nobleman was allowed to be disloyal to his prince was the extreme situation in which the prince himself could not guarantee him protection and so, in this specific case, the baron was 'obliged' by 'force majeure' to defect.[65] This event demonstrates how the insight that public opinion could gain regarding the relationship between the monarchy and the barons was a crucial issue and a priority not only for the king and his officials, but also for Aragonese cultural politics. It is no accident that Pontano's narration of this episode in the *De bello Neapolitano* perfectly matches the version of the event fabricated and spread by Ferdinando. If the humanist avoided mentioning the *licenza*, which had been soon recognised as an inapplicable stratagem by jurists, he insisted in presenting Sanseverino as 'forced' by the circumstances to defect to the enemies, saying that 'coactus est Robertus desperatis pene rebus suis consulere' (I, XI, 2). In fact, Sanseverino emerges in the text as one of the most positive exemplars, who embodies physical, human, and intellectual virtues, and represents the ideal faithful relationship that must unify the barons and the king. This emblematic role also accounts for the dedication to Sanseverino of the *De obedientia*, the humanist's final theory of the social roles in the perfect state. Significantly, the treatise contains a brief description of the extreme conditions in which the barons' loyalty can be disregarded, though with a stricter approach compared to the previous work:

[65] SENATORE, 'Il principato', pp. 29-114; G. M. CAPPELLI, 'La realtà fatta dottrina. Sarno e dintorni nel pensiero politico aragonese', *Bullettino dell'Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo*, 116 (2014), pp. 193-216: 213.

Multi tamen in dubiis atque asperis rebus ad hostem dum declinant necessitatem causantur quae saepissime voluntas est. Hos quis dubitat defectionis culpam debere luere? Sed excusanda necessitas est, dum talis fuerit, cui alia obsisti ratione nequeat.[66]

Nevertheless in 1485 Sanseverino would turn into a traitor in the second conspiracy and this further rebellion would show how difficult it could be to apply the humanist's political ideas to concrete society. But Pontano did not modify the overall perspective of his historical work, which remained essentially unchanged, also because it would not have been possible for him to insert so many amendments that it would have resulted in a complete alteration of his text. However, the symbolic and exemplary function played by the protagonists and the events in the *historia*, and more in general by the *historia* itself, proves to be a cornerstone in Pontano's political theory and in his concrete and systematic operation of supporting the monarchy.

3. 3 The *princeps* and his people

In Pontano's view, as we have seen, the king is the vertex of the state and he ultimately coincides with the *patria* itself. If the *De principe* is dedicated to the young successor to the throne, Ferdinando's son Alfonso, displaying traditional edifying and didactic intents, it is the actual king Ferrante and more often his father Alfonso the Magnanimous who occur in most treatises as the personification of princely traits and kingship. Moreover, Ferdinando is of course the undisputed protagonist of the *De bello Neapolitano*, as the king who had to tackle the conspiracy and fight the subsequent war, therefore his historical profile turns out to be the personification of both the ideal and the actual image of the *princeps*, offering the concrete substratum beneath Pontano's theoretical elaboration.

[66] *Ioannis Ioviani Pontani... libros obedientiae...*, f. 66v.

Due to the specific prerogatives of the different literary genres, it is the theoretical treatises that are characterised by the main prescriptive (and at the same time openly eulogistic) elements and provide the fully-rounded description of the perfect prince, with the detailed illustration and discussion of his virtues.[67] On the other hand, in the historical account the ideal profile of the monarch, Ferrante, is never systematically depicted, but it is implicitly and continuously outlined by the narration of his deeds, the quotation of his speeches, and the reference to his thoughts. An analogous difference between different literary genres had already been established by Bartolomeo Facio in his epistolary correspondence with Francesco Barbaro in 1451: Facio, despite being committed to writing a highly propagandistic history of the Aragonese monarchy, set a precise and programmatic distinction between the literary forms of the *laudatio*, that is the panegyric, the *res gestae*, that correspond to history, and the *vita*, that coincides with biography.[68] Consequently he excluded from the *historia* mere eulogy, which was considered too naive and was regarded as distinctive of panegyrics, and, accordingly, he considered the historical writing as a pure narration of events, although political and militant in its nature. This is the theoretical and rhetorical horizon in which Pontano's work can also be placed. Thus, if history penetrates speculative political literature, by concretely providing *exempla* for treatises, nevertheless, theoretical and ideological elements remain out of the historical account, where it is the historiographical narration that allows the political perspective and ideology to emerge in the whole work. This is probably the reason why the *De bello Neapolitano* does not include a fully rounded portrait of Ferdinando, though many other characters receive one. Although this surprising omission might be reasonably explained with the supposition that Pontano

[67] On this aspect see also CAPPELLI, 'La realtà', p. 215, where it is claimed that the 'specificicità dottrinaria della *virtus'* is not dealt with in the historiographical recostruction.
[68] M. MIGLIO, 'Biografie e raccolte biografiche nel Quattrocento italiano', *Atti dell'Accademia delle Scienze dell'Istituto di Bologna. Classe di scienze morali*, 63 (1974-75), pp. 166-199: 170-173; ALBANESE, *Studi*, pp. 52-79.

wanted to avoid a flattering celebration of the king, this does not mean that the humanist did not aim to provide an overall eulogistic image of his prince, which, instead, rested on the political theory that is constantly evoked by the narration of historical events.

We have also to consider more closely Pontano's final changes to his text that affect Ferdinando's profile. They consist in the description of Ferrante's dissembling and simulating attitude, which is seen as a negative quality by the rebel barons ('Non deerant tamen qui e regulis existimarent haec ipsa a Ferdinando simulanter fieri, quod iis ingenium eius a puero esset cognitum, nam et eum sese esse post manifesto declaravit: quae existimatio nonnullorum etiam procerum ac primatum regni animos ab illo, ut creditum est, avertit', I, II, 7), and in the closing critical remarks on Ferdinando's overall government, which depict him in his last peaceful years of government as not as virtuous and capable of ruling as in the early years ('Qui si quibus artibus in initio regnum sibi comparavit, easdem in pace ocioque retinuisset, ut maxime felix est habitus sic inter optimos fuisset principes numeratus', VI, IV, 1). As Monti Sabia and Ferraù stated, these sharp observations do not cancel out the eulogistic image of the prince in the whole work, but they evoke a profile that overlaps with the figure of the young, audacious and bright king, who is portrayed as able to manage the extremely hard situation of the rebellion.[69] This image ends up standing alongsides the new final picture of a less virtuous ruler, who, according also to Pontano's few remarks in his very last treatise, the *De immanitate*, is sometimes inclined to an inconsiderate use of violence.[70]

However it has to be taken into account that the comments on Ferrante's tendency to feign and simulate is presented as the rebel barons' opinion and we have already seen

[69] See FERRAÙ, *Il tessitore*, 127; MONTI SABIA, *Pontano*, pp. 67-68.

[70] The *De immanitate* is published in *Ioannis Ioviani Pontani De immanitate liber, Edidit, italice vertit, commentariolo instruxit Liliana Monti Sabia* (Napoli: Loffredo, 1970). In particular in the *De bello Neapolitano* Pontano claims that Ferrante was too inflexible and unmerciful in imprisoning Maso Barrese (I, VII, 6), the violent *condottiero* who was always loyal to the king, but he was also guilty of such brutal actions that he is mentioned as a negative *exemplum* in the *De immanitate*. On Barrese see note 26 in this chapter.

that this narrative strategy in texts on conspiracies usually cannot be interpreted as proof of the author's personal view. Moreover it is significant that in a considerable number of passages in the *De bello Neapolitano* Pontano mentions the king's same feigning approach as a positive quality, which enables him to handle difficult situations and to confront the barons' open and unspoken threats. For example, this is highlighted in the descriptions of his behaviour towards his main enemies, Giovanni Antonio Orsini and Marzano (I, V, 4; V, IV, 2). Despite being aware of their dishonest plans and distrusting them, Ferrante conceals his thoughts and pretends he is adopting a conciliatory or neutral attitude, but he will be ready to defeat them at the right moment. Ferdinando indeed is often depicted as thoughtful, suspicious and capable of pondering all the problematic aspects of the barons' subversion. These traits also emerge in the telling description of the intricate conditions of the kingdom and the noblemen's untrustworthy natures, which are presented through the king's thoughts (I, V). In this respect, the suspiciousness and, more importantly, the tendency to simulate ascribed to the *princeps* marks a significant turning point in the traditional humanistic representation of the ideal prince, which was considered mainly grounded on classical virtues and belonged to a mere theoretical projection. Conversely, in Pontano's conception the image of the ruler encompasses the practical ability to adapt to reality, assuming also traditionally negative behaviours, such as the capacity for simulating. The ruler's feigning attitude in facing traitors will also be presented by Machiavelli as a fundamental quality in his famous chapter on conspiracies in the *Discorsi* (3, 6), where he will also praise the means used by political leaders to thwart rebellions.[71]

[71] 'Non voglio però mancare di avvertire quel principe o quella repubblica contro chi fosse congiurato, che abbino avvertenza, quando una congiura si manifesta loro, innanzi che facciano impresa di vendicarla... debbono con ogni industria dissimularla; perchè i congiurati, veggendosi scoperti, cacciati da necessità, operano senza rispetto', *Discorsi* (3, 6). This statement is followed by the *exemplum* drawn on Livy (7, 38, 5) of the attempt at revolt by the legions left in Capua by the Romans: the very same example that Pontano mentioned in his *De Prudentia* (book V), describing how this conspiracy was thwarted. On

Thus Pontano's works turn out to be pioneering in the all-embracing and pre-modern outlook that they provide. This feature ascribed to the *princeps* reveals that the humanist's political theory is not simply based on mere ethical tenets, but it already presents elements that prefigure the more realistic and less ethically-centred political philosophy of the following centuries, anticipating in some respects Machiavelli's thought, as well as the modern absolutistic idea of state (as the new idea of *obedientia* at the core of the social system also shows).[72] Moreover, the allusion to the punishment inflicted by Ferrante on some of his bitter enemies, who in some significant cases were relatives-in-law, such as Marino Marzano, appears in the text along with the representation of the king's merciful nature. In Pontano's work the balance between clemency and vengeance reveals the surfacing of a more ruthless conception of the exercise of princely power, which is subject to actual concrete needs. As we have seen in Ferdinando's official letter written by Pontano, the merciless but legitimate punishment of the king's enemies is presented as essential for the safeguarding of the state and betrays an embryonic notion of political realism, which surpasses traditional ethical principles.

This approach inspired by a developing notion of *realpolitik* comes to light also in the *De Principe*, where emphasis is put on the 'exterior' behaviour of the ruler and on the 'exterior' image that he is able to give to his subjects. His power does not lie only in

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this and other significant connections between Pontano's work and Machiavelli's *Discorsi* see B. RICHARDSON, 'Pontano's *De Prudentia* and Machiavelli's *Discorsi*', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 33 (1971), pp. 353-357. Moreover, Machiavelli discussed some ideas that Pontano presented in the *De Fortuna* in his correspondence with Francesco Vettori (letters, 15 and 20 Dec. 1514): *Opere di Niccolò Machiavelli*, ed. by S. Bertelli (Milano: Salerno, 1968-1982), vol. V, pp. 359-360.

[72] Important correlations between Machiavelli and Pontano are analysed in RICHARDSON, 'Pontano's *De Prudentia*'; C. GINZBURG, 'Pontano, Machiavelli and Prudence: Some Further Reflections', in *From Florence to the Mediterranean and Beyond. Essays in Honour of Anthony Molho*, ed. by D. Ramada Curto, *et al.* (Firenze: Olschki, 2009), pp. 117-125; BENTLEY, pp. 249-**2**52; FINZI, 'Il principe'. Further observations can be found in FINZI, *Re, baroni*; but Riccardo Fubini in his review of the volume disagrees with Finzi, stating that: 'Machiavelli's "new prince" directly faces reality; and...the *specula principum* prove themselves to be inept. On the contrary, Pontano's writings are grounded in a solid tradition of legitimacy and doctrine'; but he also adds that 'Pontano's aim is to enlarge this tradition, in order to adapt more and more moral rules to reality', FUBINI, rev. *Re, baroni*, p. 1310.

his virtues, but, most importantly, in the appearance of his virtues and in what people perceive of him. This is the only element that allows the king to gain political favour and it is for this reason that, for the first time, the virtue of *maiestas* is extensively illustrated and is placed at the core of the theorization of princely conduct: this is a totally external virtue which corresponds to the distinctive royal image of the king and includes all strategies that serve to gain the people's acquiescence.[73] It is no accident that at the end of the century the very same virtue would become so central to political speculation as to embody the whole idea of kingship itself, as Iuniano Maio's treatise, *De maiestate* (1492), proves. In this mirror-for-princes work the majesty theorized by Pontano becomes the essence of statecraft and the 'exteriority' of power is further enhanced as the cornerstone of princely rule. What is more remarkable is that in Maio's text the whole construction of this centralized and personalistic concept of authority is articulated by constant reference to Ferrante's deeds, and in particular, to the episodes of the conspiracy, which provide the most suitable historical *exempla* to prove the prince's virtue in ruling and fighting his enemies and ultimately maintaining his supremacy. This is a case in point that demonstrates the direct interconnection in humanist literature between the theory of princely power and the concrete issue of conspiracies: a connection that at the end of the century became even closer.

Coming back to the critical remarks on Ferdinando's rule that Pontano adds at the end of the *De bello Neapolitano*, as Ferraù rightly claimed, this presents the king as a *felix princeps* rather than an *optimus princeps*, a man who is *fortunatus* and successful in his life beyond any *ratio*, thanks to a sort of inner vocation and to the circumstances that surround his choices. This is a general idea that emerges in Pontano's late treatise *De fortuna* (1502-1503) and that regards *fortuna* as a key factor in human history and in

[73] Cappelli defines it 'la cifra teorica degli attributi del potere nelle sue circostanze concrete': PONTANO, *De Principe*, p. XCIV; for an in-depth discussion of this virtue in Pontano's work: pp. XCIII-CVI.

the success of any leader.[74] On the other hand, in Pontano's previous works the individual was seen as having more power in dealing with fortune: this theme is brought forth in the *De Prudentia* and in most of the speeches of military leaders quoted in the *De bello Neapolitano*, where the influence of fortune in war and in human deeds is a recurrent topic, along with the importance of prudence and fortitude (§§ I, IX, 8-22; I, X, 2-21).[75] Moreover the final reference to Ferrante's rather deficient abilities in running his state in peace and *otium* - abilities which are not as notable as those he clearly had at the beginning of his rule - could have been drawn from the famous passage in Livy's work (XXXVIII, 53) where Scipio Africanus is judged by a similar remark, 'vir memorabilis bellicis tamen quam pacis artibus memorabilior'.[76] This allusion to the classical hero, who is also recalled as an exemplary figure in the *De Principe* (§§ 5, 14) especially for his famous virtue of continence, seems to evoke a literary *topos* which links the Aragonese monarch to the illustrious classical figure of Scipio and, therefore, diminishes the negative overtone that surrounds Pontano's closing statement.

In addition, Pontano's partial re-evaluation of Ferrante's rule conceived after the king's death, which was very soon followed by the fall of the Aragonese monarchy after Charles VIII's invasion, can be explained by the drastic change of political conditions in the realm that had occurred in the late years of the humanist's life. In this new scenario, the initially urgent need to elaborate a cohesive monarchic theory to back the Aragonese king was over. Now, at this later stage, the author could indulge in comments that perhaps would not have been appropriate in a previous phase, although, apart from this

[74] FERRAÙ, *Il tessitore*, pp. 124, 128

[75] On Pontano's conception of war as an emblematic situation in which fortune and prudence play a prominent role see FINZI, *Re, baroni*, pp. 171 (more in general on Pontano's idea of war: pp. 167-174).

[76] The reference to Livy is mentioned in TATEO, *I miti*, p. 67. Another source for Pontano's statement could be Sallust, *Cat*. 2, 4 'imperium facile his artibus retinetur quibus initio partum est', as suggested by FERRAÙ, *Il tessitore*, p. 128.

sole modification, he did leave the whole political perspective of his work totally unaltered. It is true that the implications that the burning subject of conspiracies held in the concrete scenario of fifteenth-century states had a profound influence on all humanist texts on this topic, which were usually written in the aftermath of the plots. However, from this point of view, Pontano's work is different from other works in so far as it is the result of a longer process of composition and revision over more than 30 years, a broad time frame that could have made him consider the original political aims he had projected onto his work not as important as in previous years.

As already mentioned, Pontano's overall profile of Ferdinando emerges throughout the text mainly by the representation of his deeds and words. In particular, some specific historical events are chosen to play a prominent paradigmatic role in conveying this ideal princely image and, through the influence that Pontano's text had on later works, they became crucial episodes in the subsequent historiographical and cultural tradition. The main events to which Pontano assigns this exemplary function are the ambush in Teano against Ferdinando (§ I, VIII), the military defeat at Sarno, both in 1460 (§ I, IX), and the victory of the Aragonese troops in Troia, in 1462 (§ IV, II). This last episode acquires the traits of the prince's decisive and final triumph over the rebels, not only in Pontano's work, where the episode also underscores the military virtue of the king, but in the whole Aragonese propagandistic apparatus. Not only is it chosen as the subject of literary works, such as Porcelio de' Pandoni's poem *De proelio apud Troyam*,[77] but it was also celebrated in visual representations: in particular, in two bas-reliefs on the bronze gate of the Castel Nuovo in Naples (the so called 'Maschio

[77] On this poem see A. IACONO, 'Epica e strategie celebrative nel *De proelio apud Troiam* di Porcelio de' Pandoni', in *La battaglia*, pp. 268-290. F. TATEO, *I miti*, pp. 239-240; on this important historical episode in Neapolitan historiography, see pp. 223-256.

Angioino'), which was commissioned by Ferdinando from the artist Guglielmo Monaco around 1475 (Fig. 1).[78]



Fig. 1 Guglielmo Monaco, Bronze gate of *Castel Nuovo*, Naples (1475ca.)

[78] This work of art is mentioned in A. RYDER, *Ferdinando I d'Aragona*, in DBI, vol. 46 (1996), pp. 174-189: 182.

It is no accident that another panel of the same gate portrays Marzano's abortive attack against the king in Teano (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2 Guglielmo Monaco, Bronze gate of *Castel Nuovo*, Naples (1475ca.): The ambush in Teano

In the *De bello Neapolitiano*, Pontano dwells on the narration of this crucial episode, telling how Ferrante managed to save himself and scared away his enemies. This account is placed in a central position in the first book of the historiographical work and it symbolically represents all the distinctive elements concerning the issue of conspiracies in the humanist literature. While it underlines the criminal behaviours of the plotters, it also emphasizes, in contrast with this image, the celebration of the king's virtues and skills: his smart and suspicious attitude that allows him to discover the imminent danger (I, VIII, 7); his prompt and intrepid reaction against his attackers and his strength in fighting with his enemies and making them flee (I, VIII, 8-9); the solemn return to his soldiers in the camp, where he shows himself safe and vigorous in both his

body and mind (I, VIII, 10). Finally, the closing observation intensifies the contrast between, on the one hand, the highly sacred conception of kingship which is at the basis of Pontano's ideal state and is embodied in the image of Ferdinando, who is loved by all his people, and, on the other, the hideous crime against the monarchy committed by Marzano, who stands as a symbol of the rebels and is hated by everyone ('Videri enim supra hominum improbitatem facinus indignum et atrox, Regem, cuius nomen apud mortales sanctum esset….' I, VIII, 10). From this perspective, as we shall see, this representation is parallel to both Poliziano's narration of Lorenzo de' Medici bold reaction against the conspirators (§ 35-36), which focuses on the promptness and courage of the leader of Florence, and to the description, significantly placed at the centre of the *Commentarium*, of the favour shown to Lorenzo by the Florentine people, who take an active part in the revenge against the ruler's attackers (§ 62-64).

The narrative of the ambush in Teano brings to the fore two pivotal aspects which are fundamental in the portrayal of the ideal image of the *princeps* in the *De bello Neapolitano*: the virtue of *fortitudo*, which is seen as an essential trait of the ruler (Pontano openly claims: 'Illi [*scil*. the enemies]…Regis fortitudinem admirati suspiciunt' I, VIII, 10); and the mutual relationship between the king and his people, which plays a decisive function in the maintenance of political power. Both these key factors are further enhanced in the account of the huge defeat that the Aragonese troops suffered in Sarno:[79] an episode that demonstrates how even a debacle can be interpreted as to convey an eulogistic image of the defeated protagonist. Firstly, the humanist outlines Ferdinando's main virtues by the speech the king delivers before the battle (I, IX, 18-22), in which his alacrity, dynamism, vigour, and the capacity to seize the opportunity come to light as his positive qualities.[80] These virtues are ascribed to

[79] On this battle see M. SQUITIERI, 'La battaglia di Sarno. 7 luglio 1460', in *Poteri, relazioni*, pp. 15-40.
[80] For these virtues as distinctive of Ferrante see FINZI, *Re*, p. 172.

Ferrante throughout the whole text and are underlined with a similar technique in the speech delivered by the king before the battle in Troia (IV, II, 5-9). Pontano also tries to justify Ferdinando's rash decision to attack the enemies in Sarno as due to the fear that his ally Pius II could defect (the humanist adds this comment when revising his text: I, IX, 15-16), and he also implicitly imputes the main blame for the defeat to the soldiers' greed, since they disobeyed the orders given by the king and focused only on looting. But most importantly, this episode allows Pontano to put emphasis on the king's *fortitudo*, namely the capacity to accept and face misfortune and negative events, and to react with strength and courage to them. If in the *De bello Neapolitano* the humanist simply alludes to this aspect, in the *De Principe* (§§ 15-16) he mentions the specific episode of the defeat at Sarno, and more in general the whole conspiracy, as a paradigmatic example of the prince's fortitude, a virtue that Pontano sees as perfectly embodied in Ferdinando:

Maxime autem hominis est et eius praesertim hominis qui principatum gerat, praesenti animo in adversis uti, nec adversanti fortunae succumbere. Ferdinandus pater in initio regni, cum multorum simul procerum ac populorum, nonnunquam etiam integrarum provintiarum, ad Ioannem Andegaviensem defectiones nuntiarentur, nunquam mutavit vultum ne dum ut animo consternaretur, in ipsos defectores nullo unquam contumelioso dicto usus. Nuntiata rebellione magni cuiusdam viri, quem honoris causa non nomino…hactenus commotus est, ut diceret dolere se quod talis vir et tanta familia ortus seque maioribus suis indignum fecisset. Coeterum Christo gratias agere, quod ne minimam quidem ipse tanti patrandi facinoris causam illi praebuisset. Quid illud nonne invicti est et ex adversis etiam vires resumentis animi? Accepta Sarnensi clade, cum, praeter pauca admodum oppida, universum regnum ab rege descivisset ….in extremis et prope desperatis Ferdinandus frequenti senatu adeo magnifice de rebus suis locutus est ut non modo illorum animos confirmaverit, sed vel affirmaverit brevi se hostem pulsurum traditurumque liberis suis regnum multo stabilius quam sibi fuisset a patre relictum. Illud etiam in adversis confirmare maxime non debet, quod ad summa non nisi maximis cum laboribus et periculis pervenitur.[81]

[81] PONTANO, *De Principe*, §§ 15-16. This very same standpoint was at the core of other texts composed by humanists close to the Aragonese monarchy, such as Giovanni Brancato's oration to Ferdinando written in 1472 (where the author also quotes the words that Fedinando addressed to the Senate after the defeat and that perfectly convey this idea of resistance against misfortune): CAPPELLI, 'La realtà', pp. 201-209. Brancato's *oratio* is published in ID., 'Giovanni Brancato e una sua inedita orazione politica', *Filologia&Critica*, 27 (2002), pp. 64-101: 84-92.

This is the only direct reference to Ferdinando as the personification of a specific *virtus* in the *De Principe* and it is no accident that he is mentioned also in Pontano's treatise which is entirely devoted to this princely quality, the *De fortitudine*, where fortitude is not seen as a mere military virtue but mainly as a remedy against misfortune.[82] Therefore this can be seen as the chief virtue that the humanist ascribes to Ferrante and it is assigned a key position in the elaboration of the profile of the ideal prince. This is also proved by an important publishing project: it is indeed noteworthy that in 1490 Pontano included the text of the *De Principe* within the *editio princeps* of his newly written *De fortitudine*.[83] The association in the same edition of the work on fortitude with the treatise written 25 years previously shows the major relevance of this specific virtue to the theory of princely power that Pontano was constructing in his works.

Besides the focus on this virtue, probably the most pivotal political element that is incorporated into the narrative of the defeat in Sarno is the fundamental role played by the subjects in support of the king. The common people's closeness to their ruler in Pontano's work, as well as in other texts on conspiracies, is considered invaluable, especially when the government has to face difficult circumstances. In particular, immediately after pointing out the critical situation brought about by the military collapse at Sarno, Pontano engages in a long description of the concrete help that all citizens - knights, plebeians, merchants, etc. - gave to the monarchy and he significantly claims that the *civium benevolentia* is the princeps' real wealth, not just money kept as treasury in the *aerarium* (I, XIII, 1-2):

Ferdinandus accepta Sarnensi clade[84] cum se Neapoli recepisset […] Hoc tempore maxime cognitum est civium benevolentiam divitiasque popularium, non eos qui in aerarium illati essent Regum thesauros esse. Nanque eques, mercator, opifex, nobilis, ignobilis, inquilinus, etiam

[82] FERRAÙ, *Il tessitore*, p. 100.
[83] On this edition see L. MONTI SABIA, 'Un ritrovato epigramma del Pontano e l'*editio princeps* del *De fortitudine-De principe*', in L. MONTI SABIA – S. MONTI, *Studi su Giovanni Pontano*, ed. by G. Germano (Messina: Centro interdipartimentale di studi umanistici, 2010), vol. II, pp. 1059-71.
[84] This is the very same formula by which, as we have seen, the passage concerning the defeat of Sarno is introduced in the *De Principe*, underlining the virtue of *fortitudo*: § 15 'Accepta Sarnensi clade…'.

sacerdos certatim Regi pecuniam maxima pars sponte, pauci rogati, offerre atque elargiri, alii bellatorem equum, alii mulum clitellarium, erant qui thoraces, loricas, arma, tela, hastas, qui pannos vestiendis militibus, qui coria loricandis equis, tela faciendis tabernaculis: nullum denique rerum genus omitti, quod reficiendis copiis atque instruendis militibus conduceret.

This is a crucial passage where the rhetorical tools of *amplificatio* and *enumeratio* serve to intensify the ideas of both the totality of people who show devotion to the king and the considerable amount of goods that they generously donate to the monarch. This representation, once again, seems to parallel the equivalent picture in Poliziano's *Commentarium* of the help given by the Florentine people to Lorenzo de' Medici (§ 63).[85]

This image in the *De bello Neapolitano* directly recalls the classical principle of the *mutua caritas* which is traditionally seen as cornerstones of princely political theory since antiquity and is extensively illustrated in Pontano's *De Principe* (§§ 35-36).[86] Here the humanist also concretely discusses the strategy by which the king can gain this fundamental support and, in doing so, the author seems to go beyond the traditional idea of a direct connection between the goodness of the prince and his people's love, revealing, once more, a dawning realistic ideological approach which implies calculated behaviour. Significantly, in the *De bello Neapolitano* the representation of the people's favour is followed by the description of the deep affection that the monarchs show to their subjects in order to comfort them in that difficult situation. This role is assigned to queen Isabella (whose eulogistic portrayal logically follows this section: I, XIV), in a representation that emphasizes the reciprocal bond that should link the prince and his community. Isabella is depicted as she appears in public places with her children and

[85] 'Iam ex omnibus municipiis, ut quaeque urbi viciniora essent, magna vis armatorum in forum, in trivia, in Medicam praecipue domum confluere, ostentare pro se quisque suum studium; cives catervatim cum liberis et clientibus polliceri suam operam, suas vires atque opes; omnes ex uno Laurentio et publicam et privatam pendere ipsorum salutem dictitare. Videre erat continuos aliquot dies undique in domum Laurentianam arma convehi, importari carnes et panes quaeque essent victui oportuna'.
[86] On the classical value of *mutua caritas* in humanist literature see PONTANO, *De Principe*: pp. LXXXI-LXXXVII (*Introduzione*).

claims that they are Italian and Neapolitans as the common people are, so that they all would live or die together; she reassures her subjects and urges them to be faithful and steadfast; she reminds them of the flourishing conditions that the Aragonese rulers had brought to the Neapolitans, but she also states that the royal family's riches are all in the citizens' hands (I, XIII, 3).

In general, besides the Sarno episode, the portrayal of the Neapolitan people's devotion to the king is a recurrent and crucial component in the *De bello Neapolitano*, and Pontano insists on underlining it especially at the end of his work, in order to suggest a reunification of the whole social body after the conspiracy and the war. He describes the jubilant affection with which Ferdinando was welcomed in every city of his realm, after Antonio Orsini's death (V, II), and the grand homage that was paid to him when he returned victorious to Naples (V, III, 1-2). Finally, the humanist depicts the joyous populace who celebrate the final victory in the war, a passage that relies again on an amplifying style achieved through the juxtaposition of short clauses connected by asyndeton, which emphasizes the image of the jubilant city (VI, II, 1):

Tum vero urbs victoriae certa laeta omnia agere, viri, mulieres, cives, peregrini, senes, impuberes per urbem discursare, ad litus currere, molem pervagari, qui victrice e classe redissent sciscitari, gratulari, complecti, virtutem eorum in coelum ferre, convivia parare, publice privatimque laetari, quod mare liberum, quod navigatio secura, quod tamen pax terra marique omnino esset parta.

It is also significant that the humanist makes specific reference to Ferdinando's clemency towards some of his enemies and prisoners (IV, II, 40; VI, III, 3): this princely virtue, as already observed, is opposite but complementary to vengeful actions and contributes to the well-rounded image of the autocratic and fair ruler, who is able to show his benevolent attitude towards the subjects who deserve his mercy, but who is also ready to punish the bitterest opponents.

In conclusion, in the *De bello Neapolitano* all the fundamental constituents of the organicistic social body illustrated in Pontano's political theory are represented through the historical events which see them as protagonists: the kings, the barons and the common people. In this substantial mutual influence between political theorization and historiographical narration, the historical events and characters acquire a prominent exemplary function, whether positive or negative, which is at the core of the humanist's whole articulation of his political ideology. In accordance with the rhetorical prerogatives of literary genres, the theoretical elements are not openly included within the historiographical account but they still imbue the political perspective of the whole text; vice versa, the historiographical components are frequently enlisted in Pontano's theoretical works, where they provide genuine examples drawn from contemporary history, which contribute (together with traditional classical *exempla*) to the formulation of a systematic and concrete political theory.

CHAPTER V

Angelo Poliziano's *Coniurationis commentarium*: The literary account of the conspiracy as 'official' historiography

1. Composition, publication and circulation of the *Coniurationis commentarium*

The *Coniurationis commentarium* is the first historical account of the Pazzi conspiracy and it is the only historiographical work composed by Poliziano.[1] This text was written immediately after the attack against the Medici brothers in the church of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence, on the 26th April 1478, when Giuliano was murdered and Lorenzo managed to save himself. Poliziano, who was in the church, was a witness of the assault by the conspirators. Only 24 years old, he was already one of the most distinguished humanists of the Florentine cultural environment and was actively involved in the Medici's system of cultural politics. A few years earlier he had been appointed as Lorenzo's personal secretary and the tutor of his eldest son, Piero, becoming Il Magnifico's right-hand man. Poliziano's 'official' commitment to consolidate the Medici's prestige and power through his literary activity was also manifest in the *Stanze*, the poetic work by which he was universally recognised as the laureate poet of Laurentian Florence. However his political engagement alongside the Medici becomes still more apparent with the composition of the *Commentarium*. He worked on the *Commentarium* not only in the aftermath of the conspiracy, when it was immediately published, but also in the following years, going back to revising his historical text in 1480. This revision led to the publication of a new edition printed in Rome: in this new version the *Commentarium* appears more finished from both a

[1] This chapter presents, with some variations and additions, the critical study published in the introduction to the edition of Poliziano's *Coniurationis commentarium* that I have recently published: ANGELO POLIZIANO, *Coniurationis commentarium*, con introduzione, traduzione e commento ed. by M. Celati (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2015).

stylistic and a political perspective, and it is adapted to the new historical scenario through a series of slight but significant changes.

The pivotal political function that Poliziano's work was intended to play in the intricate and troubled scenario of the failure of the conspiracy is proved by its immediate publication in Florence by Niccolò di Lorenzo della Magna,[2] the printer who published all the documents through which Lorenzo's programme of propaganda was articulated after the plot: other important works in the programme were Gentile Becchi's *Florentina Synodus*, which was supposed to disseminate the results of a holy synod that actually never took place, and Bartolomeo Scala's *Excusatio Florentinorum*, an official document written by the chancellor of Florence.[3] Both texts were aimed at presenting the Medici's standpoint and defending Lorenzo and his political entourage from the accusations made by pope Sixtus IV. The pope was the main instigator of the conspiracy and, after the plot, in June, he promulgated two virulent bulls to excommunicate Lorenzo and sanction the city with an interdict, so as to punish the ruler of Florence for the revenge that was carried out against the plotters, which included some religious figures.[4] As is well known, some of the most powerful Italian rulers were involved in the conspiracy: Sixtus IV, who had been in conflict with Lorenzo from 1474 (the disagreements mainly concerned the election of the archbishop of Pisa, Francesco Salviati, one of the leaders of the future plot, and the dismissal of the Medici as bankers of the Camera Apostolica, a role that was assumed *de facto* by the Pazzi); the

[2] ANGELUS POLITIANUS, *Pactianae coniurationis commentariolum*, s. l. [Firenze: Niccolò di Lorenzo della Magna], 1478.

[3] The *Florentina Synodus* is now published in A. POLIZIANO-G. BECCHI, *La congiura della verità*, ed. by Marcello Simonetta, tr. by Gerardo Fortunato (Napoli: La scuola di Pitagora editrice, 2012); T. DANIELS, *La congiura dei Pazzi: i documenti del conflitto fra Lorenzo de' Medici e Sisto IV. Le bolle di scomunica, la* Florentina Synodus, *e la* dissentio insorta *tra la Santità del Papa e i Fiorentini*. *Edizione critica e commento* (Firenze: Edifir, 2013). The *Excusatio Florentinorum* (the *editio princeps* was printed on 11 August 1478) is published in BARTOLOMEO SCALA, *Humanistic and Political Writings*, ed. by A. Brown (Tempe, AZ: Medieval and Renaissance texts and studies, 1997), pp. 199-202.

[4] The bulls were also published in Rome: Sixtus IV, *Bullae 'Ad apostolicae dignitatis auctoritatem' et 'Inter cetera quorum nos cura sollicitat' contra Laurentium de Medicis* [Roma: Bulle, *post* 22 Jun. 1478]. The bulls are now published in DANIELS.

king of Naples, Ferdinando of Aragon, who was an ally of the pope also in the war that followed the failure of the conspiracy; and Federico of Montefeltro, the Duke of Urbino, who had worked as *condottiero* of the papal troops and had been nominated Duke by Sixtus IV himself.[5] In Florence it was the Pazzi family that planned the conspiracy: this role was mainly played by Iacopo Pazzi, the old leader of the clan, and Francesco Pazzi, his nephew, who lived mostly in Rome as emissary of the family's bank and was in contact with the pope's emissaries, in particular his nephew Girolamo Riario, who had crucial responsibility in organizing the plot. The conspiracy had been planned since 1477, but the attack took place only one year later, and, after the failure of the endeavour, Sixtus IV and Ferdinando waged a war against Florence that lasted until March 1480.

In this turbulent and difficult situation for the Medici's regime, Lorenzo needed to build up an efficient and coordinated defence, not only from a political and military point of view, but also, and most importantly, from a cultural perspective, elaborating a multifaceted system of propaganda. This political and cultural operation involved all the chief intellectuals committed to the Medici's politics, such as Gentile Becchi, the bishop of Arezzo and the former tutor of Lorenzo when he was a child, Bartolomeo Scala, the chancellor of the Republic of Florence at that time, and Poliziano himself, the distinguished humanist and poet who was called on to provide his authoritative contribution with his literary work. Thus, the *Commentarium*, among all humanists works on conspiracies in the corpus analysed in this thesis, is the text which most openly shows the deep connections between this monographic literature on plots and the rulers' need for support and legitimacy after the subversive attack. Although there is no

[5] On the historical circumstances that led to the conspiracy see FUBINI, *Italia quattrocentesca*, pp. 87-106, 253-327; L. MARTINES, *La congiura dei Pazzi: intrighi politici, sangue e vendetta nella Firenze dei Medici*, tr. by Nadia Cannata (Milano: Mondadori, 2005); M. SIMONETTA, *L'enigma Montefeltro* (Milano: BUR, 2008); DANIELS, pp. 9-21.

proof that Lorenzo directly commissioned the *Commentarium*, this interplay between the literary dimension and the political purposes subtends the whole of Poliziano's narration and its rhetorical, stylistic and thematic structure, which is perfectly framed to convey a specific ideological viewpoint.

Therefore, the intricate historical circumstances in the aftermath of the plot account for the immediate composition and publication of the text by Poliziano. As Perosa supposed,[6] the humanist probably did not prolong the writing beyond the summer of 1478, since, due to the outbreak of plague, he had to leave Florence with Lorenzo's sons and wife, Clarice Orsini: they left the city on the 12th of August to move temporarily to Pistoia,[7] and after that, in autumn, the humanist travelled between Fiesole, Careggi and Cafaggiolo. As he lived in a condition of instability and uncertainty and did not know when he could go back to Florence, he probably completed his work, concerning such a burning issue, before leaving for Pistoia, and gave it to the printer. It is no coincidence that all the texts on which the Medici's propaganda rested were published in the same months, between the summer and the autumn of 1478: the *Florentina Synodus*, which was almost certainly published after the *Commentarium* (not before August 1478);[8] the *Excusatio Florentinorum*, printed on the 11 August 1478; and the *Lamento in morte di Giuliano*, an anonymous poem in the vernacular, directed at an audience of common people and printed on the 9 October 1478 by the typography of S. Iacopo of Ripoli, where the text was edited by Bartolomeo Fonzio, another humanist of Lorenzo's entourage.[9] These editions prove that the ramification of the literary and publishing

[6] ANGELO POLIZIANO, *Della congiura dei Pazzi (Coniurationis commentarium)*, ed. by A. Perosa (Padova: Antenore, 1958), pp. VI-VIII (from now on PEROSA).
[7] For this date see A. CHIAPPELLI, 'Sopra due avvenimenti notevoli nella vita pistoiese dell'anno 1478', *Bullettino Storico Pistoiese*, 31 (1929), p. 94.
[8] For the chronological data see DANIELS, p. 62 and POLIZIANO, *Coniurationis commentarium*, p. 4n.
[9] *Lamento in morte di Giuliano* in F. FLAMINI, 'Versi in morte di Giuliano de' Medici', *Il Propugnatore*, 2, 9 (1889), pp. 318-330. For the date of publication see D.E. RHODES, *Gli annali tipografici fiorentini del XV secolo* (Firenze: Olschki, 1988), n. 390, p. 74; E. NESI, *Il Diario della Stamperia di Ripoli* (Firenze: B. Seeber, 1903, n. XXVIII), the *Diario* is now edited with commentary by M. CONWAY, *The*

activity in support of Florentine cultural politics in this critical situation was all-pervading and varied, aimed at addressing different targets by means of various kinds of documents and works: doctrinal, law-based, historiographical, literary and popular texts.

Although the publishing note on the *editio princeps* of the *Commentarium* provides only the general indication of the year 1478, it is possible to suppose that the work was printed in this very same period, between the end of summer and the beginning of autumn. The specific examination I have conducted on the four exemplars of the edition still extant allows us to hypothesize that, after the printing, some copies were kept in store to be disseminated in the following year, in order to put onto the market some new and 'fresh' books in 1479.[10] This might be proved by a significant handwritten 'double' amendment that appears on two exemplars out of the four copies still extant:[11] in these two exemplars the date of publication of '1478' is corrected to '1479', by adding one unit to the Roman number ('MCCCCLXXVIII'), and then it is again amended back to '1478' by eliminating the Roman letter added. A possible explanation for this complex double change could be found in the strategy of storing some copies for a new 'issue' onto the market in the following year, 1479, in order to keep selling the most important pro-Medici work on the conspiracy but presenting the books as newly published copies; nevertheless, probably, a large number of copies was already sold by the end of 1478 and, therefore, the exemplars with the changed date '1479' had to be corrected again

Diario of the Printing Press of San Jacopo di Ripoli, 1476-1484. Commentary and Transcription (Firenze: Olschki, 1999).

[10] This practice of storing some exemplars of an edition, bearing a different date, so as to sell the following year was common amongst printers and could cause some mistakes in the indication of the publishing date: this practice is illustrated in C. FAHY, *Le edizioni veneziane dei Paradossi di O. Lando*, in ID., *Saggi di bibliografia testuale* (Padova: Editrice Antenore, 1988), pp. 82-88 pp. 169-211. For an extensive analysis of the exemplars of the *Commentarium* editions see M. CELATI, 'L'*editio princeps* fiorentina del *Coniurationis commentarium* di Angelo Poliziano e il tipografo Niccolò Tedesco: nuove acquisizioni', *Archivum Mentis. Studi di filologia e di letteratura umanistica*, 2 (2013), pp. 161-180.

[11] The four copies are now in: the Biblioteca Corsiniana in Rome (52. E. 62); Biblioteca Casanatense in Rome (Inc. 1432); and Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale of Florence (two copies: E. 6. 3. 26; M. 6. 21).

back to '1478'.[12] This would demonstrate that the diffusion of Poliziano's text, a cornerstone of Medici propaganda, was as widespread as it was intended to be.

Even though this is only a hypothesis, what is clear is that the printer, Niccolò di Lorenzo della Magna, and his collaborators took an active part in the publishing and editing process: indeed, all four exemplars of the *editio princeps* still extant contain a considerable number of handwritten variants, most of them executed in series in all copies. This element reveals that the publication and dissemination of Poliziano's work was so important that it had to be printed as accurately as possible, to the extent that even small spelling mistakes are amended.[13] But the need for a quick publication, along with the high cost of paper, meant it was not possible to re-print the pages with mistakes and thus a number of ink corrections were added systematically to the exemplars by the printer himself or his co-workers. Niccolò di Lorenzo della Magna, who moved from Germany to Tuscany and was one of the most distinguished printers in Florence in the fifteenth century, was actively involved in this important publishing operation, and it is no accident that he is the only printer who was commissioned to publish official texts by the Florentine government under Lorenzo de' Medici. These included not only the works on the Pazzi conspiracy, but also chancery documents (the *Uffici della Città* and the *Stratto dei Gabellieri*) and some orations, between 1480 and 1486.[14] This further element casts additional light on the political significance of the publication of the

[12] Moreover, according to the Florentine calendar *ab Incarnatione Domini*, the first day of the year is 25 March: this element might have also caused the second amendment of the date, since the typographical note indicating '1479' would be consistent only for the copies sold after the 25 March 1479. For some cases of *incunabula* with mistakes in the date of publication due to the use of different calendars cfr. D. MARZI, 'I tipografi tedeschi in Italia durante il sec. XV', in *Festschrift zum fünfhundertjährigen Geburtstage von Johann Gutenberg* (hrsg. von O. Hartwing, Leipzig, O. Harrassowitz, 1900), pp. 568-569: 508-509.

[13] This proves that it was not Poliziano himself who corrected the *editio princeps*, otherwise more significant mistakes, but less easily detectable, would have been amended.

[14] On the handwritten corrections and the activity of the printer see CELATI, 'L'*editio princeps'*. On the edition of these official documents see also R. RIDOLFI, *La stampa in Firenze nel secolo XV* (Firenze: Olschki, 1958), p. 20, and C. BIANCA, 'Le dediche a Lorenzo de' Medici nell'editoria fiorentina', in *Laurentia laurus. Per Mario Martelli*, ed. by F. Bausi e V. Fera (Messina: Centro interdipartimentale di studi umanistici, 2004), pp. 51-89: 70.

Commentarium, revealing more plainly the political implications of the printing project of the *editio princeps* and the crucial role played by the new revolutionary invention of the printing press in the historical and cultural scenario of the Renaissance.[15] From this perspective, Poliziano's text may represent an emblematic case in point which allows us to gain a better understanding of the various dynamics associated with the early diffusion of the groundbreaking 'art' of printing in Italy: an innovation that would change forever the history of culture.

The political dimension that surrounds the *Commentarium* is also revealed by the ideological perspective that imbues the whole text. The well-crafted framing of the political message of the *Commentarium* has to be considered in connection with the concrete activity in support of Florentine politics and diplomacy that Poliziano carried out alongside Lorenzo in the same years. This commitment is tangible proof that the humanist was perfectly aware of the delicate political situation and the complex diplomatic relationships that Florence was weaving after the conspiracy. Thus, these concrete political factors had to be taken into account by him in the process of writing and had a direct influence on the historical reconstruction provided by his text. Poliziano, in particular, wrote a number of diplomatic letters addressed to allies or ambassadors of Lorenzo between May and June 1478.[16] He also played an active role in the collection of the legal *consilia* put together by il Magnifico to hinder the excommunication and interdict promulgated by the pope. Lorenzo consulted the most distinguished legal experts in Tuscany, among whom was Poliziano's friend,

[15] On the introduction of the printing press in Renaissance Italy see the fundamental volume by B. RICHARDSON, *Printing, Writers and Readers in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); and ID., 'Publication', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Italian Renaissance*, ed. by M. Wyatt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 164-78. In particular, on the publication of texts in the vernacular see ID., *Print Culture in Renaissance Italy: The Editor and the Vernacular Text, 1470-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

[16] LORENZO DE' MEDICI, *Lettere*, ed. by R. Fubini, I – II; N. Rubinstein, III – IV; M. Mallet, V – VII (Firenze: Giunti-Barbera, 1977–), vol. III, pp. 9, 11, 31, 58, 75, 83, 101 (from July to December: letters at pp. 145, 309). See also POLIZIANO-BECCHI, p. 36.

Bartolomeo Sozzini. It was Poliziano who sent to his patron in a letter from Pistoia, dated 24 August, the *consilium* written by the Sienese jurist and he was also in contact with him to supervise and revise his work (as we know from the letter where the humanist tells Lorenzo that he had already asked Sozzini to emend his text).[17] As part of this articulated propaganda programme, a productive and close collaboration must have linked Poliziano and Gentile Becchi, who in those days was commissioned to write the *Synodus*, the legal defence against the pope's allegations that was mostly based on the results of the consultations of the jurists: a connection that shows the interplay of the political, juridical and literary spheres in the elaboration of these texts, in particular the *Commentarium*, as we shall see.

The immediate publication of these works was obviously aimed at disseminating the Medici's standpoint as quickly and widely as possible. Consequently, the history of the diffusion and circulation of the *Commentaium* has always been exclusively connected with the tradition of its printed editions. However, now the study can be extended to the manuscript traditions, thanks to the important *codices* of the texts that I have identified and analysed through new philological research. If it is true that the main vehicle of dissemination of the *Commentarium* was certainly the channel of printed books, it is also significant that a group of manuscripts, four out of the total of 12 still extant, are not copies of printed editions, but prove to derive from an archetype independent of the *editio princeps* (the other eight manuscripts, instead, are copied from exemplars of either the *editio princeps* - 4 - or the editions of the second version of the text printed in Rome - 2 -, while two codices derive from the edition of Poliziano's *Opera omnia* published in Basle in 1553).[18] This new element shows that, in contrast to what was generally believed up till now, the circulation of the *Commentarium* did not only rest on

[17] Cfr. CHIAPPELLI, p. 103. See also DANIELS, p. 62; POLIZIANO-BECCHI, p. 19.
[18] For these philological results and a complete list of the manuscripts see POLIZIANO, *Coniurationis commentarium*, pp. 27-33

the printed editions and that a considerable group of manuscripts is independent of these.

What is most noteworthy is that the oldest and most important of these codices (Vat. Lat. 13679), from which two manuscripts originated (Oxford, Bodleian Library, D'Orville 59; Perugia, Biblioteca Comunale Augusta, I 100), was owned by one of the leading figures of Neapolitan Humanism and culture in the second half of the *Quattrocento*: Giovanni Pontano. This codex is a miscellany of historical and political works, mainly by Tuscan authors, and it was probably copied in Florence around the middle of the 1480s (as the watermark reveals). It is likely that, after the volume was put together, Pontano came into its possession thanks to his relationship with the Florentine environment. Thus this important manuscript does not only confirm the close connection between two of the most advanced cultural centres in fifteenth-century Italy[19] and their most illustrious representatives, Poliziano and Pontano, who were also deeply involved in politics, but it also discloses some possible correlations between two of the most important humanist literary works on the topic of political plots: the *Coniurationis Commentarium* and the *De bello Neapolitano*. In particular, as we have seen, Pontano's work, revised by the author up until his death, displays significant parallels with the text on the Pazzi conspiracy, in terms of motifs and descriptive *topoi*. After Pontano's death, the manuscript was inherited by his daughter Eugenia and, together with other books of his library, was given to the Convent of San Domenico Maggiore in Naples (as stated by the handwritten note in the first folio of the volume).[20]

[19] The cultural relationship between Florence and Naples has its roots in the previous years and is emblematically represented by the famous *Raccolta Aragonese*, the anthology of vernacular texts collected between 1476 and 1477 and given as a gift to Federico of Aragon by Lorenzo, with a preface almost certainly written by Poliziano himself: the dedicatory epistle is published in *Prosatori latini del Quattrocento*, ed. by C. Varese (Milano: Ricciardi, 1955), pp. 985-990; cfr. D. DE ROBERTIS, 'Lorenzo Aragonese', *Rinascimento*, 2, 34 (1994), pp. 3-14.

[20] The manuscript and the document that ratifies the donation to the convent is mentioned in M. RINALDI, 'Per un nuovo inventario della biblioteca di Giovanni Pontano', *Studi medievali e umanistici*, 5-6 (2007-

It was probably in the convent that the two copies of the miscellany were transcribed: the first codex was acquired in the first half of the eighteenth century by the Neapolitan intellectual Francesco Valletta, who some years later sold it to his friend Jacques Philippe D'Orville, the Dutch antiquarian from whose library the D'Orville collection of the Bodleian Library originated;[21] the second manuscript was transferred to the Biblioteca Augusta of Perugia in the seventeenth century.

Another codex that contains the *Commentarium* and is independent of the printed editions is an old miscellany owned by the famous bibliophile Carlo Tommaso Strozzi (Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Magliabechiano XXI 151). It was certainly copied in the Florentine area, from a lost copy that was probably close to Poliziano's environment. The presence of this text in the Strozzi's library can be correlated with the deep interest that he must have had for the Pazzi conspiracy and that is proved by the important documents concerning this historical event preserved in his collection, such as an important autograph copy of Becchi's *Florentina Synodus*.[22]

The other codices are copied from printed editions, but the manuscript tradition reveals an unexpected circulation of Poliziano's historical work that does not originate from the world of print. Moreover, it proves also that the *Commentarium* had a significant diffusion in the Italian humanist environment between the fifteenth and sixteenth century: besides the manuscript owned by Pontano, another important codex that contains the text, this time copied from the *editio princeps*, belonged to Paolo Giovio (Como, Biblioteca della Società Storica Comense, Archivio Aliati, 5), who paid

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2008), pp. 163-197. The codex was identified for the first time by T. KAEPPELLI, 'Antiche biblioteche domenicane in Italia', *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, 36 (1966), pp. 48-50.

[21] The discovery of the manuscript in the convent by Valletta and the sale to D'Orville is recorded in the epistolary correspondence between Valletta and D'Orville, in the manuscript D'Orville 497 of the Bodleian Library in Oxford (ff. 139-248): letter of 5 August 1729 (cc. 180-181); letter of 1749 (cc. 235-237).

[22] This copy of the *Synodus* is now in the Florence State Archive, *Carte Strozziane*, Appendice, Filza 3, 1: cfr. V. ARRIGHI, 'Lettere inedite di Lorenzo il Magnifico in un'Appendice delle carte Strozziane', *Archivio Storico Italiano*, 169 (2011), p. 124; see now POLIZIANO-BECCHI, p. 51; and for a more general study of the manuscript traditions of Becchi's work see the introduction to DANIELS.

specific attention to Poliziano's work and mentioned it in his *elogium* devoted to the Florentine humanist.[23] There is no doubt that the *Commentarium* enjoyed a considerable fortune throughout the whole of the sixteenth century, when it was used by historians and intellectuals as the main source for one of the most important political events of the Italian Renaissance. It was included in the edition of Poliziano's *Opera omnia* printed in Basel in 1553, while it had been left out from the *editio princeps* of the *Opera omnia* printed in Venice by Aldo Manuzio in 1498 and edited by Pietro Crinito and Alessandro Sarti, probably because, after the fall of the Medici and in a changed historical scenario, the editors did not want to directly associate Poliziano's name with his most explicit pro-Medici work.[24] After the sixteenth century, in the 1600s the *Commentarium* was gradually neglected and no edition was published until the second half of the eighteenth century. This temporary oblivion was due to the criticism of the biased and partial standpoint of the work's historical reconstruction which ended up clouding the *Commentarium*'s success in this period. But from the late eighteenth century onwards, thanks to the re-birth of a profound new interest in national history and a new scientific approach in studying past events, Poliziano's work was again published in a number of editions, the most important of which also contained historical documents.[25]

[23] PAOLO GIOVIO, *Ritratti degli uomini illustri*, ed. by C. Caruso (Palermo: Sellerio, 1999), p. 119.

[24] *Opera omnia Angeli Politiani et alia quaedam lectu digna quorum nomina in sequenti indice videre licet* (Venezia: Aldo Manuzio, ed. Alessandro Sarti, July 1498) [anastatic reproduction: Roma, Bibliopola, 1968]; *Angeli Politiani Opera quae quidem extitere hactenus omnia...* (Basileae: apud Nicolaum Episcopium Juniorem, 1553) [anastatic reproduction: ANGELUS POLITIANUS, *Opera omnia (scripta in editione Basilensi anno MDLIII collecta)*, ed. by Ida Maïer (Torino: Bottega d'Erasmo, 1971)]. On these editions, and in particular on the text published in the edition of 1553 see PEROSA, pp. XVII-XX.

[25] The most important of these editions are: *Angeli Politiani Coniurationis Pactianae anni 1478 Commentarium, documentis, figuris, notis nunc primum illustratum* cura et studio Ioannis Adimari (Napoli: ex marchionibus Bumbae, 1769 [1770]); and *Congiura de' Pazzi, narrata in latino da Agnolo Poliziano e volgarizzata con sue note e illustrazioni da Anicio Bonucci* (Firenze: Le Monnier, 1856; reprint. ed. Fano, 1847). For a complete list of the editions see POLIZIANO, *Coniurationis commentarium*, p. 33 (and Bibliography, pp. 89-91).

The text of the *Coniurationis commentarium* in the Appendix of this thesis is quoted from the most recent edition of Poliziano's work[26] and it provides a reliable text (with some amendments of the previous fundamental critical edition prepared by Alessandro Perosa in 1958), thanks to the philological studies I have conducted on the whole tradition of the *Commentarium*, including both manuscript and printed editions. My critical study of the text has been carried out on the basis of both a new investigation of the variants introduced by Poliziano in the process of revision of his work and a thorough examination of the classical sources employed by the author in composing the *Commentarium*: all the references, quotations and allusions to classical models (thematic, stylistic and lexical) are illustrated in the apparatus that follows the text in the Appendix of the thesis.

2. Classical models: *varietas* in the historical account

As the title itself shows, Poliziano's work is directly associated with the literary genre of the *commentarium*, a rhetorical choice that, in the realm of historiography, corresponds to specific thematic and stylistic features. From this perspective, the narration clearly proves to be conceived and articulated on the basis of the principle of 'autopsy', i. e. as the account of a witness. Poliziano, indeed, was present during the whole development of the conspiracy and, therefore, the figure of the historian/narrator turns out to play an active role in the events told, supporting arguments for the truthfulness of the account itself. But the straightforward and trustworthy report of the episodes is also framed through an extremely refined and studied literary construction, which makes this text a highly sophisticated piece of literature, whose artistic greatness and political effectiveness are interconnected.

[26] POLIZIANO, *Coniurationis commentarium*.

The classical historiographical genre of the commentary enjoyed remarkable diffusion in the humanist age, especially between 1460s and 1480s, when this kind of historical writing was employed in a number of works as the ideal rhetorical framework to perfectly fit with the propagandistic and political intentions of most of fifteenth-century historiography.[27] As for Poliziano's work, the thematic structure of the narration that revolves around a single crucial historical episode accounts for his choice of this specific genre,[28] which is more suitable for monographic writing than the wider and loftier genre of the *historia*. Other stylistic traits of the *Coniurationis commentarium* are linked to this specific rhetorical pattern: for example, the literary function of the author who, as already mentioned, often appears in the narration as a character and underlines his presence in the scene or his emotional involvement (frequently using the first personal pronoun highlighting his own position, §§ 29, 39, 43, 86); more generally, the realistic style of the entire representation of the events.

If in terms of rhetorical genres this choice recalls the classical model of Caesar's *Commentarii*, but in this specific case, due to the thematic and monographic architecture of the text, Poliziano's work is openly shaped after the historiographical prototype of Sallust's *De coniuratione Catilinae*.[29] This classical model, which, as we have seen, was the main resource for all humanists who wrote accounts of conspiracies, is one of the chief sources for Poliziano from an ideological, structural, thematic and

[27] On the use of this genre in humanist historiography see the fundamental study: IANZITI, 'I *Commentarii*'.

[28] In particular, this account also for the choice of the singular form of the title: *commentarium*, and not *commentarii* (on this issue see *infra*).

[29] All references to Sallust's works are illustrated at length in the apparatus that accompanies the edition of the text in the Appendix. For a thorough and illuminating analysis of Poliziano's theory and practice of imitation, with a specific section on the *Commentarium* see MCLAUGHLIN, *Literary imitation*, pp. 188-226 (in particular pp. 192-193). Other studies of the model of Sallust in the *Commentarium* are M. SAVINI, 'Il modello sallustiano nel *Pactianae Coniurationis Commentarium*', *Atti e memorie. Arcadia*, 8 (1986-1987), pp. 166-175; A. TESTA, 'Sallustio e Poliziano: impronta dello storico latino nella cronaca della Congiura dei Pazzi', *Levia Gravia*, 4 (2002), pp. 39-52. See also the more general study F. TATEO, 'Poliziano e la storiografia umanistica', in *Agnolo Poliziano poeta, scrittore, filologo*. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di studi. Montepulciano, 3-6 novembre 1994, ed. by V. Fera e M. Martelli (Firenze: Le Lettere, 1998), pp. 195-205.

stylistic point of view. The perspective that informs the *Commentarium* is inspired by the moral dimension that predominates in the Latin model, especially in the description of the conspirators who are sketched as men corrupted by vices which are characteristic of Sallust's plotters: *ambitio*, immorality, unscrupulousness, and eagerness for social upheaval. However, in Poliziano's text the angle from which the events are narrated is slightly changed to be adapted to the specific historical scenario of fifteenth-century Florence and, in particular, to the needs of its leader: the envy and yearning for power that are identified as the main causes of the plot are ascribed only to the individual conspirators, so as to emphasise the isolation of the Medici's enemies from the whole body of society, which instead is portrayed as totally loyal to Florence's rulers. Conversely, in Sallust's work, although the plotters are colourfully characterised, the moral decline is seen as a fault that is everywhere in the entire Roman community, through a historical analysis that is certainly wider and more thorough than in Poliziano's text.

The symmetrical structure of the *Commentarium*, divided into complementary descriptive and narrative sections, is also inspired by Sallust's text. The actual narration of the conspiracy, which is introduced by the Sallustian formula 'Res ipsa postulat uti coniurationis consilium explicemus' (§ 27)[30] is indeed preceded by the description of the plotters, who are emphatically depicted with negative traits in a series of vivid portraits. These characters are represented with a pictorial style by which their most intimate and dark sides are laid bare. Again, by means of a descriptive technique frequently used in Sallust's work, the conspirators' physical appearance becomes the visible stigmatization of their moral vices and dishonesty. Moreover, the most recurrent negative features that Poliziano ascribes to the plotters appears in the most illustrious

[30] Cfr. Sall. *Cat*. 5, 9 'Res ipsa hortari videtur…'.

literary tradition of classical texts on Catiline's conspiracy, not only Sallust's monograph, but also Cicero's Catilinarian orations: in these works the category of the conspirators is characterized by specific vices and moral stains, such as the addiction to gambling and the poverty due to their profligacy with money and property (§§ 4; 8; 17; 19; 20; 77). Therefore, it is in the footsteps of this ennobling tradition that Poliziano composed his work, establishing a close connection and continuity with the most illustrious classical texts related to the topic of political conspiracy. But predictably Poliziano also enriched his works by means of a mosaic of references, allusions and echoes derived from a wider horizon of classical sources, displaying in his historical writing his artistic ideal of a harmonious and sophisticated *varietas*.[31]

Besides Sallust, another classical model that plays a prominent role in the *Commentarium* is Suetonius. His biographical work, although less openly evoked, permeates the whole work and emerges significantly in some of the most pivotal sections of the narration. In particular, the humanist resorts to Suetonius in the passages that most closely match biographical writing, such as the physical descriptions of some characters, which recall the portrayals of the Roman emperors. Suetonius's descriptive style and lexis is used, for example, to sketch the figure of Francesco Pazzi (§ 15 'Statura fuit brevi, gracili corpusculo, colore sublivido, candida coma, cuius et in cultu nimium ferebatur occupatus'): this image totally adheres to a physical description in the *Vita Terentii*, 6 'Fuisse dicitur mediocri statura, gracili corpore, colore fusco', while the allusion to the hair care, and in general to body care, is a motif that appears in the biography of Caesar and Augustus (*Iul*. 45, 2; *Aug*. 79, 1). But the section of the text where the influence of Suetonius is most apparent and relevant is the famous final portrayal of Giuliano (§ 87), which is modelled on the pictures of Caesar and Tiberius,

[31] On *varietas* in Poliziano, see also N. GARDINI, *Rinascimento* (Torino: Einaudi, 2010), pp. 254-262.

from which Poliziano drew the reference to stature, body traits, complexion, eyes and hair of the young man.[32]

Among Suetonius's *Vitae*, it is the biography of Caesar that most pervasively underlies Poliziano's *Commentarium*: a correlation that binds the two works also from a thematic point of view, as the classical model includes the narration of one of the most famous conspiracies in history. It is no coincidence that the description of the assault against Lorenzo (§ 85) is formulated by means of subtle but meaningful echoes of the narration of the attack on Caesar (*Iul*. 82):

Interim et Laurentium delecti sicarii invadunt, ac primo quidem Antonius manum sinistro eius humero iniicit, ictum in iugulum destinat. Ille imperterritus humeralem amictum exuit laevoque advolvit brachio, simul gladium vagina liberat; uno tamen ictu petitur, nam, dum sese expedit, vulnus in collo accipit. Mox se homo acer et animosus stricto gladiolo ad sicarios vertere, circumspectare se caute et tueri. Illi exterriti fugam capiunt...

(Suetonius, *Divus Iulius*, 82, 1-2) Assidentem conspirati specie officii circumsteterunt, ilicoque Cimber Tillius…ab utroque umero togam adprehendit, deinde clamantem ''ista quidem vis est!' alter e Cascis aversum vulnerat paulum infra iugulum. Caesar Cascae brachium arreptum graphio traiecit conatusque prosilire alio vulnere tardatus est; utque animadvertit undique se strictis pugionibus peti, toga caput obvoluit, simul sinistra manu sinum ad ima crura deduxit, quo honestius caderet etiam inferiore corporis parte velata.

Besides lexical connections, parallel descriptive elements come to light: the conspirators' gesture of approaching and catching the victim from behind; the wound in the throat; the heroic reaction by the hurt man who protects himself with his clothes (Lorenzo deftly moves his cape and bravely tries to escape; Caesar covers his body with his toga to die in a dignified way). Lorenzo managed to save himself, but the implicit correspondence with Caesar evoked by Poliziano emphasises the heroic tone of the representation of the ruler of Florence, whose valorous figure acquires an epic overtone and stands out more vividly in light of the parallelism with the classical hero.

Moreover, this correlation evokes the ideal profile of a prince and indirectly ascribes this trait to Lorenzo. This is a crucial ideological element in the *Commentarium* that,

[32] See the Appendix.

although not openly, pervades the whole political perspective of the text and is the cornerstone on which Lorenzo's image is built. As we have seen, the political dimension that subtends the humanist literary output on the topic of conspiracy is dominated by a princely ideology that, though with different outcomes, was burgeoning in most Italian states in the same years. This phenomenon took place also in Florence, where, despite the formal maintenance of the traditional republican institutions, power had gradually become concentrated in the hands of the Medici family, already with the government of Cosimo and still more under Lorenzo. This progressive transition to a personalistic and autocratic political system, which was disguised as a long-lasting republican organism, was a complex process that affected not only the political sphere, but also, as a consequence of mutual influence, the cultural horizon. In this scenario, Lorenzo's cultural politics played a decisive function in creating, spreading and consolidating this new ideological scheme, and the artistic and literary output produced after the conspiracy, especially the *Commentarium*, allows us to gain a better insight into this complex operation. It is well known that the failure of the Pazzi conspiracy ended up consolidating still more the Medici's power and we may claim that Lorenzo's figure can be now associated with the actual profile of a prince. It is no accident that in Poliziano's work, as we shall illustrate, the image of Lorenzo is represented as a personification of both the state itself and the whole Florentine people, whose safety coincides with the safety of their ruler. In this perspective, the subtle parallel with the heroic figure of Caesar, the classical emblem of monarchical power, implicitly fulfils the function of highlighting the princely traits of the Magnifico and ennobling his profile and authority.

The model of Suetonius does not only emerge in the sections hitherto mentioned, but is pervasive throughout the text. For example, Poliziano recovers a motif from the

classical biographer to depict the macabre and ghoulish image of the Florentine people who, in order to show their closeness to the Medici and support their revenge, carry their spears with pieces of corpses on the top around the city (§ 54 'Omnia direpta, cadavera ipsa foede lacerata: iam ante Laurentii fores caput humanum lanceae praefixum, iam humeri partem attulerant'; Suet. *Iul.* 85, 1: 'Plebs statim a funere ad domum Bruti et Cassii cum facibus tetendit atque aegre repulsa obvium sibi Helvium Cinnam…occidit *caputque eius praefixum hastae* circumtulit'). The humanist also relies on Suetonius's *Vita divi Iuli* to shape the anecdote of the Pazzi's palace that was pointlessly demolished and then re-built by Iacopo Pazzi (§ 6 'Domum paternam magnifice exstructam a fundamentis diruit, novam de integro exaedificare aggressus est'): an episode that is narrated to represent the tendency to dissipate the family possessions typical of the conspirator and is drawn from the biography of Caesar, who is said to have destroyed a villa just to indulge his whim (*Iul.* 46, 1 'villam in Nemorensi a *fundamentis* incohatam magnoque sumptu absolutam, quia non tota ad animum ei responderat, totam *diruisse*').

This correlation reveals Poliziano's penchant for Suetonius's literary style, which often encompasses refined *exempla* and anecdotes, a typical trait of the biographical genre frequently used as a narrative technique also in the *Commentarium*. The adherence of Poliziano's work to the prototype of Suetonius appears also in the stylistic and lexical veneer of the humanist's historical work, which often duplicates the classical model's original and sophisticated lexis, its lively realism and fragmented narrative architecture. In Poliziano's academic lectures delivered in 1490-1491 he openly claimed that he particularly prized the essentialness and expressivity of Suetonius's vocabulary

and wording, which is never verbose or redundant.[33] Moreover, the humanist's predilection for Suetonius is proved by both the extensive studies he carried out on the classical biographer's works and the academic courses he taught on the *Vitae*. A number of Poliziano's handwritten notes and commentaries on Suetonius's texts are still extant and are contained in the famous codex Lat. 754 of the Staatsbibliothek in Munich: it was put together by Poliziano's pupil, Pietro Crinito, and is divided into two sections that date from different periods of the philologist's activity, the first between 1482 and 1483, when he taught his course on the first *Vitae* (from Caesar to Tiberius), and the second to the early 1490s, when he gave the aforementioned lectures on the later biographies (from Caligula to Domitian).[34] However, already in the first half of 1480 Poliziano had finished his collation of Suetonius's work, as is revealed by the handwritten note, with the date of the 17 June 1480, on the copy of the edition of the Latin biographer's texts that is now preserved in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence (Inc. B. R. 91).[35] This thorough philological study certainly had a deep influence on Poliziano's literary activity, especially on the *Commentarium*, his only historical work, where the adoption of this classical model was particularly substantial and relevant.

In addition, only a few years later, in 1482-83, Poliziano wrote his famous oration devoted to the Latin biographer and aimed at both eulogizing and defining the principles

[33] Poliziano's opinion is encapsulated in the definition 'singula singulis correspondere' used by Poliziano to describe Suetonius's language in one of his comments on a passage of Caligula's biography (Suet. *Cal*. 52): cfr. V. FERA, *Un'ignota* Expositio Suetoni *del Poliziano* (Messina: Centro interdipartimentale di Studi Umanistici, 1983), p. 53 (the volume publishes the notes collected by one of Poliziano's students who attended the humanist's lectures on Suetonius delivered in 1490-91).

[34] On Poliziano's studies on Suetonius see G. GARDENAL, *Il Poliziano e Svetonio. Contributo alla storia della filologia umanistica* (Firenze: Olschki, 1975); L. CESARINI MARTINELLI, 'Il Poliziano e Svetonio. Osservazioni su un recente contributo alla storia della filologia umanistica', *Rinascimento*, 16 (1976), pp. 111-131; FERA, 'La *Praefatio in Suetoni expositionem* del Poliziano', in *Laurentia Laurus*, pp. 139-159, pp. 140-141.

[35] A. PEROSA, *Catalogo della Mostra del Poliziano nella Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, manoscritti, libri rari, autografi e documenti* (Firenze: Sansoni, 1955), pp. 20-21; I. MAÏER, *Les Manuscrits d'Ange Politien. Catalogue descriptif. Avec dix-neuf documents inédits en appendice* (Genève: Libraire Droz, 1965), pp. 342-343.

of the *historia*: the *Praefatio in Suetoni expositionem*. This speech was probably composed in order to be delivered as the inaugural lecture of Poliziano's academic course on Suetonius of the same years. It consists of an actual *encomium* of historical writing and historiography and displays a significant celebration of Suetonius as Poliziano's favourite historigraphical *auctoritas*: a choice that associates the biographer with the major historians selected as chief models in the humanist age. This rather unconventional claim corresponds to Poliziano's parallel affirmation in favour of the biographical genre, a statement that is mainly grounded on stylistic and rhetorical reasons:

> Sed quoniam de ea universa satis, ni fallor, pro tempore locuti sumus, pauca etiam de illustrium vitarum scriptoribus persequamur, qui mihi quidem tanto eos antecellere videntur, qui multifariam illam hominum, locorum, temporumque diversorum, quasi sylvam in medium exponunt, quanto et diligentius singula quaeque exprimere et facilius imitari atque effingere, quam universa quis possit. Itaque nunquam ego aut Plutarchum minus hominibus quam Herodotum, aut Suetonium quam Sallustium fatear contulisse.[36]

The classical historiographical prototypes of Suetonius and Plutarch are explicitly compared to Herodotus and Sallust, so as to contrast an exemplary biographical history, which tends to emphasise the dramatic elements in the narration, with a political history.[37] These critical reflections, if read in conjunction with the numerous connections between the *Commentarium* and Suetonius's *Vitae*, shed light on the centrality of this classical model in Poliziano's historical work. If the source of Sallust was in some respect an unavoidable choice, this predominant *auctoritas* is combined with the pervasive, although more unspoken, presence of Suetonius, in particular his biography of Caesar.

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[36] The *Praefatio* is published in *Angeli Politiani Opera quae quidem extitere hactenus omnia...*, pp. 499-506, from which this passage is quoted. On the work see FERA, 'La *Praefatio'*, pp. 139-160. The text has an important position in the humanist debate on the theory and practice of historiography (on which see also chapters I and III.3.1).

[37] Among the Greek historiographical models, it is Lucian of Samosata who plays a prominent role in Poliziano's *Praefatio* (on this classical author see chapter III.3.1).

Thus, since the prototype of Sallust was predictable, but at the same time the most illustrious and therefore obligatory, Poliziano merges it with wide-ranging combination of references and echoes of multiple sources, following his eclectic artistic poetics and taking care also to dissimulate his main model. As the *Commentarium* belongs to the broad genre of historiography, Poliziano extensively relies also on the other most important historians of classical antiquity: Livy and Caesar, whose works are especially used as sources for vocabulary, *iuncturae* and verbal expressions. In particular, the technical military terminology, although not very frequent in the text, derives from Livy's prose (for example § 67),[38] while it is from Caesar's *Commentaries* that Poliziano quotes some rather lengthy expressions (such as in §§ 50-51)[39]. Nevertheless, as already noted, the *Commentarium* comes across as the homogenized and balanced fusion of manifold sources of varied nature, not only historiographical, but also poetic, comic, and technical. In this perfect interplay of various references, the function played by classical poetic works is most noteworthy, despite the rhetorical distance between historiographical prose and poetry. In particular, poetic models are most frequently employed in specific thematic sections of the texts, where they fulfil the function of amplifying the tragic dimension of the narration: this stylistic strategy is adopted in the description of the murder of Giuliano, the narrative centre of the whole work, where the dramatic tension reaches its climax and the prose style is elevated to a kind of tragic

[38] [67-68] 'Postridie eius diei Iohannes Bentivolius, Bononiensis eques suaeque princeps rei publicae, vir multis officiis familiae Medicum coniunctissimus, in Mugellanum *cum aliquot equitum turmis multisque peditum cohortibus auxilio venerat*, iamque tota *urbs peditibus expleri coepta*. Sed veriti Octoviri, nequid *milites praedae avidi* tumultuarentur, delectis *qui custodiae urbis praeessent*, reliquos, ut primum in urbem venerant, suam quemque domum, aut sicubi usu fore decernerent, regredi iubent': Liv. 28, 14, 17 '…cum ternis peditum cohortibus ternisque equitum turmis'; 22, 28, 11 '…mittens auxilia peditum equitumque iam iustam expleverat aciem'; 25, 25, 4 'miles avidus praedae'; 24, 35, 7 'Epicydes praeesset custodiae urbis'.

[39] [50-51] 'Iacobus autem Pactius, ubi spem Laurentii necandi se fefellisse intellexit, haud ignarus quantum sceleris in se admisisset, utraque palma suam ipse faciem caeciderat; mox, dum se domum e templo corriperet, ad terram prae angustia collapsus est. Tandem, ubi rem in angusto esse videt, fortunam tentare aggressus, cum paucis ex necessariis recta in forum contendit, populum ad arma convocat': Caes. *Gall.* 2, 10, 4 'hostes…spem se fefellisse intellexerunt'; 3, 9, 3 'quantum in se facinus admisissent intellegebant'; 2, 25, 1 '…rem esse in angusto vidit'.

level, thanks to the smooth intermingling of references to the major classical poets, in particular Vergil and Ovid (§ 31).[40]

Moreover, many allusions are made to works from the classical comic traditions, which contribute to intensifying the realistic and colourful overtones of the *Commenarium*. Again, the references to Plautus and (more often) Terence are concentrated in specific sections of the narration, where the linguistic expressiveness is enhanced: an emblematic example is the narration of the revenge inflicted by the Florentine people on Iacopo Pazzi's dead body, a passage that is couched in a vocabulary mainly derived from classical comic authors and aimed at creating stylistic effects of expressionism (§ 83-84).[41] In his historical work Poliziano also reveals his predilection for erudite, encyclopaedic and technical works: this tendency emerges in the employment of expressions derived from Pliny, Columella, and most of all Celsus (for example § 87).[42] The sophisticated and at the same time unaffected usage of these authors discloses, already at this early stage in Poliziano's artistic career, the humanist's eclectic and learned interest in multiple cultural and literary models.[43]

[40] [34] 'Princeps Bandinus, *ense per pectus adacto*, iuvenem transverberat. Ille moribundus aliquot passus fugitare, insequi illi. *Iuvenis*, deficiente spiritu, *terrae concidit*; iacentem Franciscus, repetito saepe ictu, pugione traiicit. Ita *pium iuvenem* neci dedunt. Qui Iulianum sequebatur famulus, *terrore exanimatus, in latebras se turpiter coniecerat*': Ov. *Met.* 6, 271 'ferro per pectus adacto'; Apuleius *Met.* 9, 37 'exanimatus adulescens ille terrae concidit'; Verg. *Aen*. 10, 657 'conicit in latebras'; the *iunctura* 'pium iuvenem' referred to Giuliano is drawn from Ovid, *Fasti*, 6, 739; 6, 747.

[41] [83-84] 'Postridie eius diei, *id quod monstri simile visum est*, puerorum ingens multitudo, velut quibusdam furiarum arcanis facibus accensa, conditum rursus cadaver effodiunt; prohibentem nescio quem parum abfuit quin lapidibus necarent. [...] Hic alii per ridiculum praeeuntes decedere via obvios iubere, quod se equitem insignem dicerent adducere; alii baculis stimulisque increpitantes monere hominem, ne praestolantibus se *in foro civibus esset in mora*. Mox ad suas adductum aedes ostium capite pulsare subigunt, simul exclamant *ecquis intus sit, ecquis redeuntem magno comitatu dominum excipiat*': Donatus's commentary to Ter. *Eun.* 451 'quasi militi monstri simile videatur'. Ter. *And*. 467 'sed sequere me intro, ne in mora illi sis'; 224; *Ad*. 354; Plaut. *Truc*. 255 'Ecquis huic tutelam ianuae gerit? Ecquis intus exit?'.

[42] The expressions 'quadrato corpore' and 'subnigro colore' derive from Celsus's *De medicina* (2,1; 5, 28).

[43] This predilection had been already extensively shown in the virtuosistic *Sylva in Scabiem*, where, in particular, many references to Celsus are enlisted in the poetic diction: ANGELO POLIZIANO, *Sylvam in Scabiem*, ed. by A. Perosa (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1954); a new edition is edited by P. Orvieto (Roma: Salerno Editrice, 1989).

The clarity, vigour and expressiveness of Poliziano's prose is therefore a reflection of his brilliant erudition and his intellectual and linguistic curiosity, through which he is able to give life to a literary text where every word is an echo of the most illustrious and variegated cultural traditions. Thus the *Commentarium* turns out to be a work whose refined and perfectly fashioned artistic features totally fulfil its political and propagandistic aims: a multifaceted text conceived in order to convey a univocal and consistent perspective, capable of reaching peaks of both strong descriptive realism and tragic touching intensity.

3. The stylistic revision of the text

In the second version of the text, besides substantial variants that affect the content (which will be analysed in the next section), a large number of stylistic variants are introduced by the author in order to perfect and polish his work. The amendments are mostly aimed at eliminating some improprieties in the lexis with more exact and pertinent terminology and refining the syntactical construction, usually in search of a more concise style. In some significant cases the variants also concern the imitation of classical models. Thus the systematic analysis of these changes may help us to better understand how Poliziano's stylistic tenet of *varietas* is applied in his historical work. In particular, a considerable number of amendments can be explained as being aimed at intensifying the Sallustian stylistic tone in the text, but this imitation is not pursued by the conventional insertion of references to the Latin source, on the contrary it is performed by unaffectedly modelling the style on the classical model.

This elegant result is achieved, by employing verbs in the historic infinitive, typical of Sallust's prose,[44] and by condensing sentences and expressions that could have been

[44] The first quotation in what follows is the first version of the text and the second quotation gives the second version (also in the following footnotes): § 4 'Iacobus Pactius…diem noctemque aleae *vacabat*'/

perceived as too wordy,[45] adhering again to a characteristic trait of Sallustian style, which is famous for its *brevitas* and laconic constructions imbued with dramatic intensity. Nevertheless, as already said, Poliziano's imitation is not passive and unoriginal. This is proved by the elimination of some quotations from classical sources that must have been considered by the humanist too explicit and ordinary. Significantly these cuts appear in references to Suetonius and, most of all, Sallust, the authors who are most frequently evoked in the text (§§ 86; 87; 88).[46] This dissimulating aspect of the process of imitation, together with the indirect and sophisticated adherence to the Sallustian style (rather than a colourless collage of quotations), reveals that the humanist, two years after the rapid and urgently needed composition of the pamphlet, came back to his work to refine it and to make it conform still more to his personal poetics of *docta varietas*.

In general, from a stylistic point of view, the revision proves to be intended to polish Poliziano's historical text and elevate it to a loftier level. This seems to be confirmed by the cutting of some passages containing narrative and descriptive elements that could be considered too colloquial and popularizing. For example, in the second version of the

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'Iacobus Pactius…diem noctemque aleae *vacare*'; 'Deos atque homines diris *agebat*'/ 'Deos atque homines diris *agere*'; 'alveolum tessararium…*iaculabatur*'/ 'alveolum tessararium…*iaculari*', § 6; '*pauperculosque* homines….*defraudabat*'/ '*pauperculos* homines…*defraudare*'; § 84 'alii...*iubebant*'/ 'alii…*iubere*'.

[45] § 34 'Iuvenis, *cum iam sanguis eum viresque defecissent*, terrae concidit'/ 'Iuvenis, *deficiente spiritu*, terrae concidit'; § 47 'Caesar ubi *supra modum titubantem* contemplatur…'/ 'Caesar ubi *titubantem Salviatum* contemplatur…'; § 48 '[Caesar] publicam salutem *magna animi praesentia acerrime* defensat'/ '[Caesar] publicam salutem *acriter* defensat'; § 50 'Iacobus autem Pactius…*dum se domum corriperet, priusquam de templo egrederetur*, ad terram prae angustia collapsus est'/ 'Iacobus autem Pactius…*dum se domum e templo corriperet* ad terram prae angustia collapsus est'; § 55 'Iacobus Pactius *desperatis rebus* fuga sibi consulit'/ 'Iacobus Pactius fuga sibi consulit'; § 84 'Tum, quo fuerat suffocatus laqueo *comprehensum multis ludibriis, multa verborum contumelia* per omnes urbis vicos raptant'/ 'Tum, quo fuerat suffocatus laqueo *apprehendunt multisque conviciis ac ludibriis* per omnes urbis vicos *passim* raptant'.

[46] In the first version of the text an entire sentence in the portrait of Giuliano was modelled on a famous passage by Sallust: 'Vigiliae atque inediae iuxta patiens, potionis adeo exiguae, ut ea aliquando vel integrum diem sponte abstinuerit' (POLIZIANO, *Coniurationis commentarium*, p. 88); Sall. *Cat.* 4, 3 'corpus patiens inediae algoris vigiliae, supra quam cuiquam credibile est'. The expression 'paucis absolvam' is changed into 'paucis perstringam' (§ 86), again with the purpose of altering a quotation from Sallust (*Cat.* 38, 3); moreover, in the description of Giuliano's eyes the adjective 'nigrisque' is eliminated from the formula 'vegetis nigrisque oculis' that was used in the first version and recalled the identical expression in Suet. *Iul.* 45, 1.

text he omits the image of the gambling table thrown against a man's head (§ 'alveolum tessararium [...] temere in proximum quemque *iaculabatur, saepe et ad ipsum alveolum furiosi instar frontem allidebat*'), which is recurrent in the tradition of the *cantari*.[47] Poliziano also cut the reference to the common people's superstition according to which after the disinterment of Iacopo Pazzi's dead body the rain stopped and the sun started again to shine (§ 82 '...*effossumque hominis cadaver* in pomerio defodiunt *statimque foedatus nubibus aer, adeo plebis opinioni fortuna favebat, solis fulgorem coepit ostendere*'), an anecdote that probably, for the author, lowered the tone of the description.

This overall refinement of the text is reflected by a slight but significant variant in the title of the work, which in the first version was defined 'commentariolum', and in the second and final redaction becomes 'commentarium'.[48] Thus the unconventional and rare diminutive used in the first instance is replaced with the more traditional and classical term 'commentarium'. The diminutive is infrequently used as a title and generally means 'brief notes', without any literary meaning; while the standard form 'commentarium' (or *commentarius*, in the masculine, or in the plural *commentarii*/*commentaria*) is generally used with reference to the historiographical genre, both in the classical tradition and in the humanist age. Thus, the transition from the rare and rhetorically limiting diminutive to the classical form, in light of the considerable number of stylistic variants introduced in the text, seems to formally state, even in the title, the overall stylistic improvement of the work, which, as we have seen, is a perfect expression of Poliziano's elegant and erudite poetics of imitation.

[47] The connection of this detail with the *cantari* is pointed out by M. MARTELLI, *Angelo Poliziano, storia e metastoria* (Lecce: Conte Editore, 1995), p. 30.
[48] For a more detailed analysis of this variant in the title see M. CELATI, 'La seconda redazione del *Coniurationis commentarium* di Angelo Poliziano e l'edizione romana di Johannes Bulle', *Hvmanistica*, 11 (2016), forthcoming.

4. The *Commentarium* in Medici cultural politics

The events of the conspiracy are narrated by Poliziano from a political angle, which, as we have seen in the previous chapters, is characteristic of this specific monographic and thematic genre of fifteenth-century literature on conspiracies. In the *Commentarium,* in particular, the perspective of the historical reconstruction is totally focused on Florence, leaving out the wider political dimension of the episode. This approach fulfils the purpose of isolating the event from the Italian historical context and, simultaneously, underlining the marginalisation of the conspirators from the totality of the Florentine people, who instead are represented as loyal to the rulers of the state. The plotters are therefore depicted as individual corrupt figures, motivated by their ruthless ambition and unscrupulousness, features that, as we have illustrated, are idiosyncratic characteristics of most conspirators in fifteenth-century literature. Furthermore, Poliziano's work is carefully articulated in four complementary sections so as to both highlight the wickedness of the crime committed and, at the same time, put emphasis on the celebration of the Medici regime. The text opens with the presentation of the plotters, which is followed by the narration of the assault in the church; symmetrically, the second half of the work contains the description of the vengeance triggered by the Florentine government against the conspirators and finally ends with the eulogistic portrayal of Giuliano, the commemoration of the young man murdered.

In the opening section the plotters are represented with emphatic negative traits and by an expressionistic tone aimed at underscoring their immorality and viciousness. These characters are implicitly presented as divided into two groups on the basis of their contribution to the plot: on the one hand, the organizers, who are considered more responsible for the evil crime and among whom the figures of the archbishop of Pisa, Francesco Salviati, Iacopo Pazzi and his nephew Francesco emerge; on the other hand,

the actual perpetrators of the attack.[49] The account of the events opens with the first unsuccessful attempt to carry out the plot in the Medici palace. Then Poliziano narrates the assault in the cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore, Giuliano's tragic death and the brave reaction of his brother, who succeeds in saving himself by seeking refuge in the sacristy, where the humanist himself flees. With a quick narrative transfer, the author describes the abortive attempt to occupy the Palace of the Signoria by Francesco Salviati and some armed men, who are arrested by Cesare Petrucci, the *gonfaloniere* of justice. Once the conspiracy fails, the whole city becomes the scene of the harsh revenge against the plotters, who are captured and brutally killed. Poliziano indulges in the depiction of these macabre and violent images with an expressionistic style and an almost decadent taste: this emerges in the picture of the hanging of Francesco Salviati (§ 58) and in the description of the torture inflicted on Iacopo Pazzi's corpse, which was unearthed twice, dragged around the city and abused by a group of young boys, and finally thrown into the river Arno (§§ 82-85). Finally, the *Commentarium* ends with the portrait of Giuliano, a fully rounded apologetic representation that solemnly concludes the work and culminates in the elegant closing quotation from Vergil's *Georgicae* (1, 500), which evokes again the figure of Lorenzo, who is continuously celebrated in the background.

Form the very beginning the conspiracy is immediately presented as a subversive attack against the whole community of Florence, and not just against its leader Lorenzo, who was the actual target of the plot (§1):

> Pactianam coniurationem paucis describere instituo, nam id in primis memorabile facinus tempestate mea accidit parumque abfuit quin Florentinam omnem rem publicam penitus everteret.

The subversion is seen as a dangerous threat that can jeopardize the entire state, the fatherland and the common good. This propagandistic reconstruction achieves the goal

[49] On this subdivision see PEROSA, p. 19.

of disseminating a cohesive image of public *concordia*, which is functional to the maintenance of power by the ruling family. Here Poliziano also contrasts this with the isolation of the plotters, a motif that is recurrent in the *Commentarium*. This element is also highlighted in the episode in which Iacopo Pazzi tries to urge the Florentine people to rebel against the Medici but nobody answers (§ 51):

Tandem, ubi rem in angusto esse videt, fortunam tentare aggressus, cum paucis ex necessariis recta in forum contendit, populum ad arma convocat. Nihil succedere illi, verum omnes hominem scelestum et tum prae formidine vix sonum vocis qui exaudiretur erumpentem, contemptui habere facinusque detestari. Is, ubi nihil in populo auxilii videt, trepidare animoque detestari.

The adoption of this narrative strategy, once again, ends up laying emphasis on the indissoluble bond between Florence and the Medici. In particular, it is Lorenzo who becomes the actual personification of the whole Florentine community. As already observed, he gradually assumed the traits of an actual prince, an image that he succeeded in strengthening still more immediately after the failure of the conspiracy. In particular, in Poliziano's *Commentarium*, the princely image of Lorenzo is conveyed continuously: he is depicted as the leader and the saviour of Florence, he is the embodiment of the state itself, a state whose safety is totally dependent on the safeguard of its ruler. The section of the text that most effectively conveys the celebration of Lorenzo and the Medici is the description of the close link that ties the common people to their *signore*, who is supported and helped by all citizens after the attack (§§ 62-64). Here the author suggests the idea of a strong mutual relationship between Florence and Lorenzo, who is portrayed as a one-man ruler loved by his people with heroic traits:

Fremebant omnes ... ipsum Laurentium, in quem unum Florentina omnis res publica recumberet, ipsum illum Laurentium, in quo spes omnes opesque populi sitae forent, ferro petitum, id vero indignissimum clamitabant. Iam ex omnibus municipiis, ut quaeque urbi viciniora essent, magna vis armatorum in forum, in trivia, in Medicam praecipue domum confluere, ostentare pro se quisque suum studium; cives catervatim cum liberis et clientibus polliceri suam operam, suas vires atque opes; omnes ex uno Laurentio et publicam et privatam pendere ipsorum salutem dictitare. [...] Ipse Laurentius non vulnere, non metu, non dolore, quem ex fratris nece maximum ceperat, impediri quo minus rebus suis prospiceret: prehensare cives omnis, gratiam se singulis habere, ipsis omnibus suam dicere salutem referre acceptam; populo sese de ipsius salute anxio non nunquam e fenestris ostentare. Ibi acclamare omnis

populus, manus ad caelum tollere, gratari eius saluti, exultare gaudio. Ipse rebus omnibus intentus agere, neque animo neque consilio destitui.

This political outlook is the cornerstone of the *Commentarium* and it was one of the central pillars of Medici propaganda. The emblematic representation of Lorenzo as the saviour of Florence also appears in the medal that Lorenzo commissioned after the conspiracy from the artist Bertoldo di Giovanni (Fig. 1): in the medal Lorenzo's image is followed by the emblematic words 'salus publica', 'public safety', while, on the reverse, the image of his brother Giuliano, murdered in the plot, is combined with the motto 'luctus publicus' ('public grief').[50] This art work along with Poliziano's literary text reveals the ramification of Lorenzo's multifaceted political and cultural strategy.



FIG. 1 Bertoldo di Giovanni, *Medal of the Pazzi conspiracy*, 1478 (British Museum, London)

As already illustrated, Poliziano was perfectly integrated into the Medici's political programme and played an active role in the aftermath of the conspiracy as Lorenzo's personal secretary. The humanist's political involvement accounts for the perfect correspondence of the *Commentarium*'s narrative perspective with Lorenzo de'

[50] On the medal see cfr. K. LANGEDIJK, *The Portraits of the Medici, 15th-18th Centuries* (Firenze: S.P.E.S., 1981-1987), I, p. 27; M. BULLARD, *Lorenzo il Magnifico. Image and Anxiety, Politics and Finance* (Firenze: Olschki, 1994), p. 11.

Medici's political guidelines after the plot. Not only does the text contribute to legitimizing and consolidating the authority of the family who ruled Florence, but it also closely reflects some specific Medici's strategies designed to boost defences against the enemies. In fact in Poliziano's work the event is not contextualised at all within the wider Italian political scenario, but instead the most important instigators of the attacks are totally overlooked and left out of the narration: Sixtus IV, Ferdinando of Aragon, Federico da Montefeltro. The *Commentarium* does not even allude to the intricate background of the conspiracy. This narrative scheme, where the literary components prevail over the historiographical ones, has been often regarded as a proof of the partiality of Poliziano's historiographical views. Nevertheless it is possible to claim that these considerable omissions mirror Lorenzo's intention to cover up the guilt of the major Italian political figures, especially as, initially, the direct responsibilities of these instigators in the plot had been obscured by the government of Florence itself. This strategy comes to light, for example, in the epistolary correspondence between the rulers of Milan, Florence's allies, and Lorenzo, immediately after the conspiracy: the dukes suggested that Florence should behave extremely prudently with all those who had been 'auctori, fauctori, conscii et partecipi di questa sceleratagine', and advised that the most prudent and recommended conduct was 'cum epsi fingere non vedere né havere inteso et governare tutto sotto silentio et cum secretanza che si po''.[51]

Significantly, a similar political approach is revealed by the famous confession delivered by Giovanni Battista Montesecco on the 4 May 1478: he was a *condottiero* who worked for Sixtus IV and his nephew Girolamo Riario and was involved in planning the plot. The confession, given after his capture, is an important historical source that shows how the conspiracy was organised step by step. However, no allusion

[51] Letter of 9 May 1478: LORENZO, *Lettere*, vol. III, p. 22n.

to this document is made in the *Commentarium*. It is again noteworthy that immediately after the failure of the attack the confession was concealed by the Florentine government itself until August, when it was finally published and included in the printed edition of Bartolomeo Scala's *Excusatio Florentinorum*. Before that, the document had only been divulged to the Medici's allies, such as Milan, where it was already sent on the 6 May. What is most remarkable is that the confession was published with substantial cuts aimed at eliminating all the passages where Ferdinando of Aragon and Federico of Montefeltro are mentioned: these considerable omissions were clearly intended to hide any proof of their participation in the conspiracy. The purpose of this operation was publicly to downplay the culpability of the external and most powerful enemies in order not to exacerbate political tensions and to let diplomacy try to negotiate an agreement, so as to protect Florence from a military attack: an outcome that was never accomplished.[52] Notably, also the anonymous author of the *Lamento in morte di Giuliano* mentions the concealment of the names of the more illustrious organisers of the plot, although their identities would have been probably well known in Florence: 'Furonvi certi di maggiore stato,/ che per miglior non dico e nomi loro,/ ma di vil gesta ciascheduno è nato,/ sì che pensilo ogniun(o) chi sono costoro'.[53]

Furthermore, already in May, the government proclaimed severe measures to punish the Pazzi, which are also mentioned by Poliziano in the first version of his work.[54] These laws were promulgated in order to take revenge against the Medici's enemies and isolate them from the Florentine community, on which these harsh measures had a strong emotional impact. This effect was achieved also by means of the violent execution of the conspirators, once again fully described in *Commentarium*. Thus the

[52] Cfr. FUBINI, *Italia quattrocenteca*, pp. 264-268.
[53] FLAMINI, I, vv. 94-97.
[54] On this passage in the first version of the *Commentarium* see the next section of this chapter.

perspective of the pamphlet's reconstruction reflects the Medici's political guidelines also from this point of view and it ends up emphasising the cohesion between the rulers and their people. Poliziano, indeed, focuses on blaming the internal enemies of the Florentine regime, the Pazzi, alongside whom he mentions only a few external conspirators, in particular the archbishop Salviati. So the historical text completes the accusatory picture outlined and disseminated by Lorenzo and works alongside the other propagandistic texts composed after the plot to back and spread the Medici's standpoint (the *Synodus* and the *Excusatio* were focused on defending Florence from the allegations made by Sixtus IV in June, when he was publicly recognised as Florence's chief enemy).

Poliziano's account also shows direct correlations with the legal *consilia* commissioned by Lorenzo from the most eminent jurists, who formulated the Medici's official defence against the pope.[55] As we have seen, the humanist himself collaborated on the collection of the *consilia*, in particular revising and sending Bartolomeo Sozzini's work to his patron. The strongest accusation against Lorenzo concerned the murder of the archbishop Salviati and the imprisonment of the cardinal Raffaello Sansoni Riario, Sixtus IV's grandnephew, who was released only after the publication of the excommunication.[56] Since they were religious men, according to the pope, the jurisdiction of their behaviour (and therefore of their punishment) had to be an exclusive prerogative of the Church, and not of a secular institution like the Florentine state. It is

[55] On the *consilia* see E. SPAGNESI, 'In difesa del Magnifico. A proposito di alcuni *Consilia* legali al tempo della Congiura dei Pazzi', in *La Toscana al tempo di Lorenzo il Magnifico: politica, economia, cultura, arte.* Convegno di studi promosso dalle Università di Firenze, Pisa e Siena (5-8 novembre 1992) (Pisa: Pacini, 1996), vol. III, pp. 1235-1253; A. DE BENEDICTIS, 'Abbattere i tiranni, punire i ribelli. Diritto e violenza negli interdetti del Rinascimento', *Rechtsgeschichte*, 11 (2007), pp. 76-93; EAD., 'Il principe prima e dopo Machiavelli', in *Principi prima del Principe*, ed. by L. Geri, *Studi (e Testi) Italiani*, 29 (2012), pp. 21-23; K. PENNINGTON, *The Prince and the Law, 1200-1600* (Berkeley-Los Angeles-Oxford: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 238- 268; R. BIZZOCCHI, *Chiesa e potere nella Toscana del Quattrocento* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1987), pp. 264-266.

[56] The decision to release him was taken on the 4 June 1478 (cfr. LORENZO, *Lettere*, vol. III, p. 47), while the Bulla that sanctioned the excommunication was promulgated on 1 June.

significant that in his narration Poliziano dwells on the description of the archbishop's attempt to siege and occupy the Palazzo of the Signoria (§§ 45-49) and highlights Salviati's criminal behaviour and his evil nature, not least by adding in the second edition of the text three mordant epigrams against him. This viewpoint is perfectly consistent with the strategy of defence conceived by the jurists and formulated in the *consilia*. Here, the execution of Salviati is justified with the evidence that his religious status was not recognisable when he attacked and occupied the palace with his armed men, and therefore the government of Florence had the right to put into action exceptional measures of punishment against him. As for the detention of the cardinal Sansoni Riario, all the texts of the Medici's propaganda - the *consilia*, the *Florentina Synodus*, the *Excusatio Florentinorum* and also the *Commentarium* - agree in reporting that the young man was taken into custody so as to protect him from the brutal revenge that the common people were carrying out in the streets of Florence, otherwise he would have been killed: a motivation that is explicitly adduced in Poliziano's work (§ 53 'Cardinalem comprehensum magno praesidio in curiam subducunt aegreque hominem a populi impetu tuentur. Qui eum assectari consueverant, plerique a plebe occisi').

As this analysis has shown, the *Commentarium*, despite not mentioning any of the foreign states involved in the plot, conformed to the political programme planned by Lorenzo. This text, therefore, may be defined as an 'official' historiographical work: the loftiest literary component of Lorenzo's multifaceted politics, which was composed by the most eminent Florentine humanist, who had already played the role of 'laureate poet' with the composition of the *Stanze per la giostra di Giuliano de' Medici* written to celebrate Giuliano's victory in the famous tournament in 1475. A close reading of both the *Commentarium* and the *Stanze* reveals a considerable number of correlations that link the two masterpieces. In particular, the very same ideological and political

perspective imbues both works: despite being openly intended to celebrate Giuliano, they are both permeated by the implicit but continuous eulogy of the older brother, and focus on boosting Lorenzo's cultural and political programme and his hegemonic and magnetic figure.[57]

5. The evolution of the political perspective: from the first to the second version

Two years after the composition of the *Commentarium*, Poliziano edited his work stylistically and refined the political perspective of the historical account. The new version of the text was published in Rome by the printer Johannes Bulle in two editions (one a copy of the other) in 1480,[58] which was the same year that the humanist carried out the revision and the same period that saw a fundamental turning point in both the political relationships among the Italian states and in the biography of Poliziano himself.

The substantial changes that the humanist introduced into his text are connected with the radical evolution undergone by Medici politics in the crucial historical circumstances of 1480. On the 13 of March, Florence and Naples signed an important peace agreement, after Lorenzo de' Medici's journey to Naples to meet Ferdinando of Aragon. It was a delicate diplomatic mission that put an end to the war waged after the conspiracy and was immediately unanimously considered as the successful completion of the strategic policies executed by Lorenzo, who, as a result, succeeded in centralising still more power in his hands. Nevertheless, the terms of the agreement included also some extremely harsh conditions to be respected by Florence and prescribed that the measures of punishment that had been promulgated against the Pazzi had to be

[57] On this element in the *Stanze* see GARDINI, *Rinascimento*, pp. 240-246.
[58] ANGELUS POLITIANUS, *Coniurationis commentarium*, s. l. et a. [Roma: Johannes Bulle, 1480]. Cfr. PEROSA, pp. XI-XII. An investigation of these editions and the second version of the *Commentarium* can be found in CELATI, 'La seconda redazione'.

cancelled. This disposition was put into effect in 1480, with the release of the members of the Pazzi family who had been imprisoned in the jail in Volterra. Moreover the exile inflicted on Guglielmo Pazzi (who was Bianca de' Medici's husband and Lorenzo's bother-in-law, and for this reason was not sentenced to death) was revoked, and the heavy ban on marriage that had been declared against the Pazzi was annulled.[59] This political development probably had a deep influence on the second version of the *Commentarium*. Here, for example, Poliziano cut an extensive description of the measures promulgated by the Florentine government against the Pazzi with the *Provvisione* on the 23 May 1478, a passage that in the first redaction followed the narration of the abuse of Iacopo Pazzi's dead body:

> Multa praeterea iocularia carmina in Iacobi Pactii contumeliam inque omnium coniuratorum detestationem passim per urbem a pueris cantitata, multi undique famosi libelli in eosdem conscripti. Bona eorum in publicum adducta factumque senatus consultum, nequis post eam diem eius nomen familiae usurparet, nequa usquam Pactiorum insignia remanerent, ne ve quis nostra in re publica affinitatem cum ipsis contraheret. Qui contra faceret eum contra rem publicam contraque senatus auctoritatem facere.[60]

This change combines with a number of minor amendments that go in the direction of limiting the blame assigned to the Pazzi and, simultaneously, indirectly emphasise the responsibility of other characters, such as the archbishop Salviati, against whom Poliziano wrote the three caustic epigrams added to the final version of the work.[61] Although this is a minor change that does not completely overturn the political perspective of the *Commentarium*, it appreciably affects it and partially transforms its political angle. An emblematic example of this new overtone is provided by a brief, but significant addition that the author inserted in the initial presentation of the conspirators: 'Principes coniurationis post Salviatum, Iacobus et Franciscus Pactii' (§ 12). Here, by

[59] The text of the treaty is published in LORENZO, *Lettere*, vol. IV, pp. 377-389. On the agreement see MARTINES, pp. 198-199.
[60] See POLIZIANO, *Coniurationis commentarium*, p. 87. On the document (Florence State Archive, *Provvisioni*, *Registri*, 169, ff. 24-26) see PEROSA, p. 61 and MARTINES, pp. 137-141.
[61] These variants are discussed in CELATI, 'La seconda redazione'.

identifying the three main figures responsible for the plot, Iacopo and Francesco Pazzi and Francesco Salviati, Poliziano specifies that the foremost position of blame is that of the archbishop Salviati. Already in the first version of the text, particular negative emphasis was put on this character and his hideous behaviour and actions. This standpoint can be related to the aim of supporting Lorenzo's defence against the pope's allegations of having executed a member of the Church with no legitimacy: an accusation that, as already mentioned, was contested in all texts of the pro-Medici propaganda by depicting the archbishop as an armed man actively involved in the violent attack. But it is in the final redaction that Salviati acquires an even more prominent evil role. This new narrative approach might have been influenced also by the general evolution of Medici politics in 1480, when Lorenzo was committed to ending the conflict with both Ferrante and Sixtus IV and to mitigating the punishment inflicted on the Pazzi. Thus, now Salviati, who was already dead, seems to be the guiltiest instigator of the tragic events: an interpretation that is perfectly fitting with the new conciliatory tendencies in Lorenzo's both internal and foreign politics.

Moreover, the publication of the second version of the *Commentarium* in Rome - an aspect that remains enigmatic in this publishing operation - has perhaps some implications in this changed historical scenario. It can be contextualised in the new peaceful diplomatic relationship between Lorenzo and the pope that followed long negotiations and was ratified by an embassy of twelve delegates sent from Florence, in November 1480, to apologise to the pope on behalf of the Medici leader.[62] What is most striking is that the Roman edition of the *Commentarium* (Fig. 2) was printed by a typographer, Johannes Bulle, who had been personally engaged in publishing not only religious texts and documents, but also official Bulls promulgated by the papal Curia

[62] On this embassy cfr. MARTINES, pp. 200-201.

between 1478 and 1479,[63] the years when his activity is at its peak. It is still more remarkable that Johannes Bulle was the printer who published also the Bulls by which Sixtus IV promulgated the excommunication and the interdict against Lorenzo and Florence in June 1478 after the conspiracy, as the analysis of the different editions and the typographical characters used by the typographer has shown (Fig. 3).[64] Therefore Bulle's activity was put at the service of Sixtus IV on many occasions, in particular in the conflict that arose from the failure of the plot. Thus it seems improbable that the pope did not know about the publication of the most important pro-Medici literary work in Rome, especially if we consider that it was printed by a typographer so close to the Curia.

This new element leads us to believe that the publication of Poliziano's text was approved by Sixtus IV, or at least tolerated. We should also take into account that the pope's direct responsibility in the attack is never mentioned in the text and that, in the second version, the main blameworthy curial plotter becomes Salviati, already dead and therefore a perfect scapegoat. Hence the Roman editions of the *Commentarium* can be possibly traced back to a publishing project aimed at disseminating the text, two years after its first publication in Florence, in a wider area not limited to Tuscany: a work that had been revised and perfected and that, despite its intrinsic pro-Medici viewpoint, could enjoy new diffusion in a phase of political reconciliation (at least in the surface) between the papal and Florentine governments.

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[63] Sixtus IV, *Bulla 21 Mar. 1478 'Tandem ascensurus' de reformatione hospitalis Sancti Spiritus*, [Roma: Bulle, *post* 21 Mar. 1478]; Sixtus IV, *Bulla 18 Dec. 1478 'Etsi quandoque negotiorum magnitudine' et Bulla 23 Jan. 1479 'Quoniam experimento didicimus' revocatoriae circa beneficia* [Roma: Bulle, *post* 23 Jan. 1479]: IERS 543; 581.

[64] Sixtus IV, *Bulla 'Ineffabilis et Summi Patris providentia' de excommunicatione Laurentii de Medicis* [Roma: Bulle, *post* 1 Jun. 1478]: HAIN 14817; IISTC is00545000; PELLECHET 10571; IERS 603. The Bulla was also published by the printing house of Giovanni of Monferrato and Orlando of Borgogna in Rome (HAIN 14817; GOFF S545; IERS 570). Sixtus IV, *Bullae 'Ad apostolicae dignitatis auctoritatem' et 'Inter cetera quorum nos cura sollicitat' contra Laurentium de Medicis* [Roma: Bulle, *post* 22 Jun. 1478]: HAIN 14816; IISTC is00545550; PELLECHET 10572; IERS 604. I have examined the exemplar in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich (Ink. S-437).

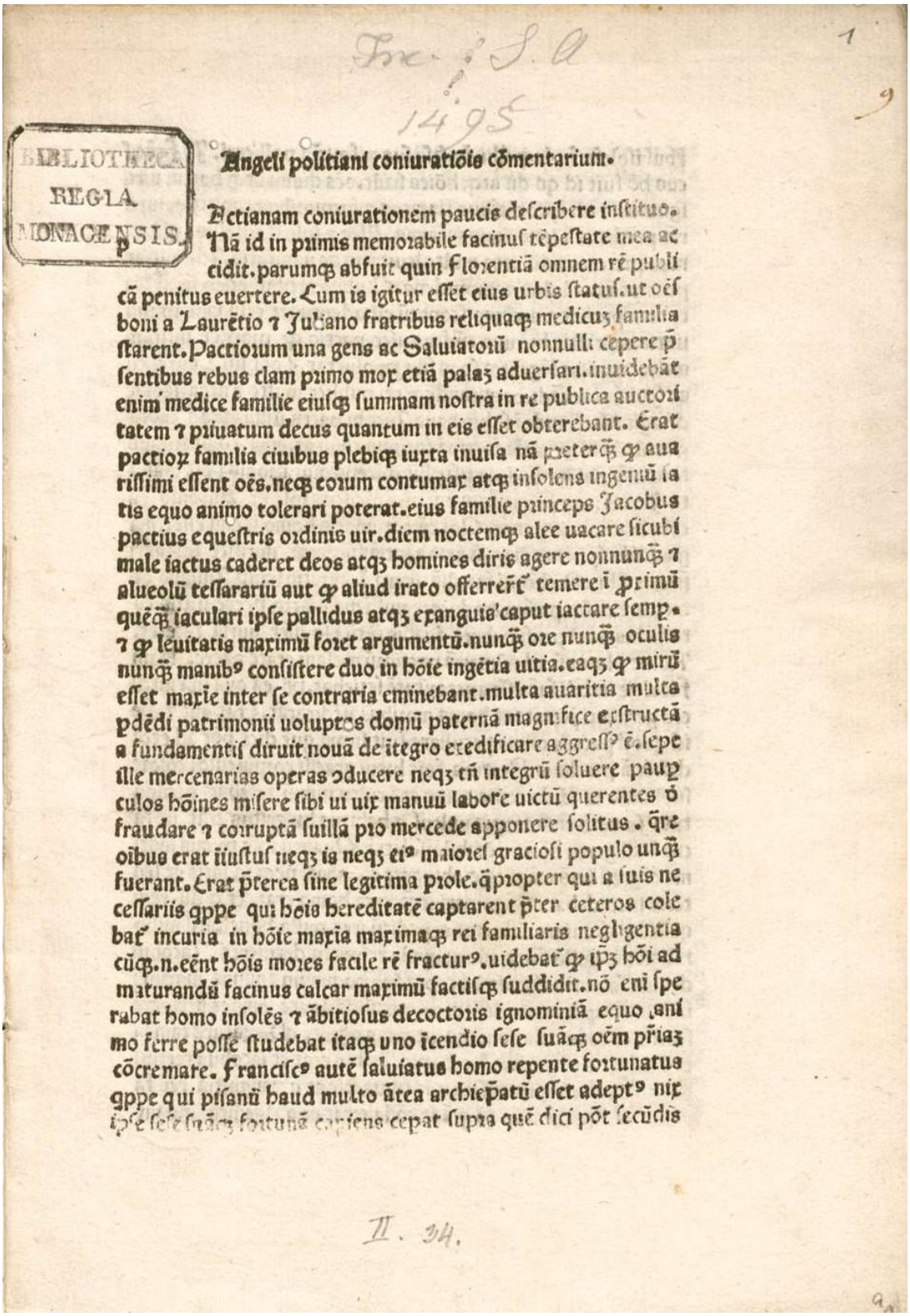
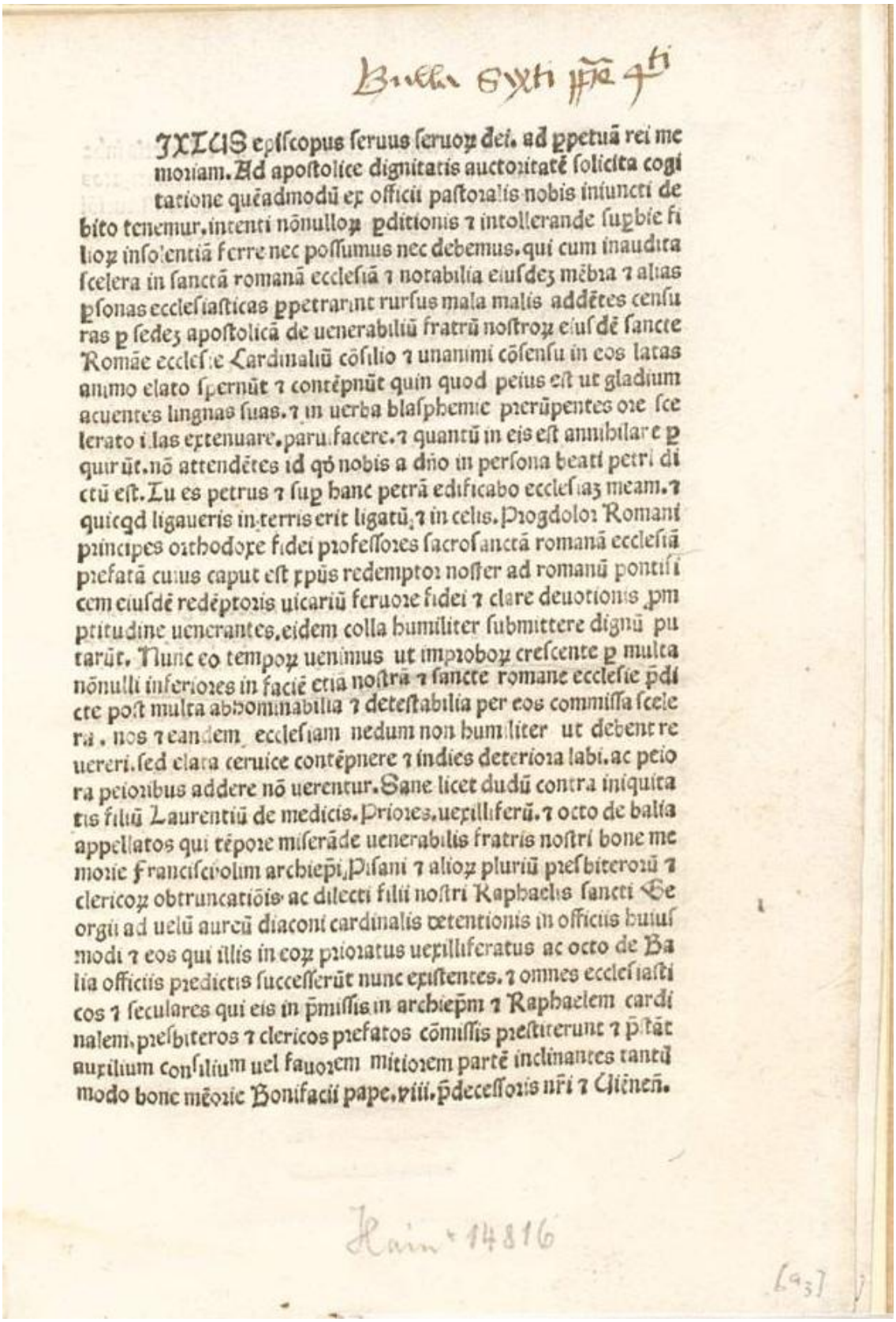


FIG. 2. ANGELUS POLITIANUS, *Coniurationis commentarium*, s. l. et a. [Roma: Johannes Bulle, 1480]. München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Ink. P-665, f. 1r.



SIXTUS episcopus seruus seruoꝝ dei. ad ꝑpetuã rei me moriam. Ad apostolice dignitatis auctoritatẽ solicita cogi tatione quẽadmodũ ex officii pastoralis nobis iniuncti de bito tenemur. intenti nõnulloꝝ ꝓditionis ꝛ intollerande supbie fi lioꝝ insolentiã ferre nec possumus nec debemus. qui cum inaudita scelera in sanctã romanã ecclesiã ꝛ notabilia eiusdẽ mẽbra ꝛ alias ꝑsonas ecclesiasticas ꝑpetrarint rursus mala malis addẽtes censu ras ꝑ sedẽ apostolicã de uenerabiliũ fratrũ nostroꝝ eiusdẽ sancte Romãe ecclesie Cardinaliũ cõsilio ꝛ unanimi cõsensu in eos latas animo elato spernũt ꝛ contẽpnũt quin quod peius est ut gladium acuentes lingnas suas. ꝛ in uerba blasphemie prerũpentes ore sce lerato illas extenuare. paru facere. ꝛ quantũ in eis est annibilare ꝑ quirũt. nõ attendẽtes id qõ nobis a dño in persona beati petri di ctũ est. Tu es petrus ꝛ sup hanc petrã edificabo ecclesiaꝫ meam. ꝛ quicqd ligaueris in terris erit ligatũ. ꝛ in celis. Progdolor Romani principes orthodoxe fidei professores sacrosanctã romanã ecclesiã prefatã cuius caput est ꝓpus redemptor noster ad romanũ pontifi cem eiusdẽ redẽptoris uicariũ feruore fidei ꝛ clare deuotionis ꝑm ptitudine uenerantes. eidem colla humiliter submittere dignũ pu tarũt. Nunc eo tempoꝝ uenimus ut improboꝝ crescente ꝑ multa nõnulli inferiores in facie etiã nostrã ꝛ sancte romane ecclesie ꝑdi cte post multa abhominabilia ꝛ detestabilia per eos commissa scele ra. nos ꝛ eandem ecclesiam nedum non humiliter ut debent re uereri. sed elata ceruice contẽpnere ꝛ indies deteriora labi. ac peio ra peioribus addere nõ uerentur. Sane licet dudũ contra iniquita tis filiũ Laurentiũ de medicis. Priores. uexilliferũ. ꝛ octo de balia appellatos qui tẽpore miserãde uenerabilis fratris nostri bone me morie Francisci olim archiepi. Pisani ꝛ alioꝝ pluriũ presbiteroꝝ ꝛ clericoꝝ obtruncatiõis ac dilecti filii nostri Raphaelis sancti Ge orgii ad uelũ aureũ diaconi cardinalis ꝫtentionis in officiis huius modi ꝛ eos qui illis in coꝝ prioratus uexilliferatus ac octo de Ba lia officiis predictis successerũt nunc existentes. ꝛ omnes ecclesiasti cos ꝛ seculares qui eis in ꝑmissis in archiepm ꝛ Raphaelem cardi nalem. presbiteros ꝛ clericos prefatos cõmissis prestiterunt ꝛ ꝑstãt auxilium consilium uel fauorem mitiorem partẽ inclinantes tantũ modo bone mẽorie Bonifacii pape. viii. ꝑdecessoris nri ꝛ Clitten.

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FIG. 3. SIXTUS IV, *Bullae 'Ad apostolicæ dignitatis auctoritatem' et 'Inter cetera quorum nos cura sollicitat' contra Laurentium de Medicis* [Roma: Johannes Bulle, *post* 22 June 1478]. München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Ink. S-437, f. 1r.

The most significant and evident change in the second version of the text, although it has hitherto never been noted or analysed by scholars, appears in the title. In the first edition it was *Pactianae coniurationis commentariolum*,[65] while in the final redaction it becomes *Coniurationis commentarium*. This slight but significant alteration, which excises the name of the Pazzi from the title, must have been for political reasons. Evidently, the necessity of adapting his text to the new political scenario was so important and urgent for Poliziano that he opted for an unconventional and anomalous title that turns out to be 'incomplete', since it leaves unspecified the subject of the text, the 'conspiracy', which appears as devoid of any historical definition and specification that allows contextualisation. Thus, once again, it is probably after the radical change of direction of the political situation in Florence (and the consequent strengthening of Lorenzo's personal power) that the humanist thought it inopportune to insist on the revenge against the Pazzi and to identify the conspiracy with the name of the Medici's enemies, although 'Pazzi conspiracy' is the definition with which the event has gone down in history.

The revision of the *Commentarium* has significant implications also for Poliziano's life. He probably decided to come back to the text he had written two years earlier and revise it also in order to reaffirm his loyalty and devotion to Lorenzo, presenting a perfected version of his most openly pro-Medici work. This need to show a new and stronger fidelity to his patron was in part due to the voluntary exile that had kept the humanist out of his city for several months, from December 1479 to the spring of 1480. This absence from Florence was almost certainly caused by a misunderstanding with Lorenzo: Poliziano was to have accompanied him in the diplomatic mission to Naples, but he did not and, after Lorenzo's departure, in December, he left Florence. It is the

[65] The use of the diminutive has been already discussed in the previous section of this chapter.

humanist himself who explains and justifies his behaviour in a famous letter, called *Apologia*, that he wrote to Lorenzo in March 1480 from Mantua.[66] Here he claims that he was ready to follow his patron, but, after having been waiting for a while to meet him and suddenly finding out that he had been replaced by Francesco Gaddi, he did not have an opportunity to meet him again to clarify what had happened.[67] In the letter Poliziano tries to make peace with his *signore* and reminds him of literary works he had composed to support and to celebrate the Medici, a statement that can be regarded as an allusion to the *Commentarium* itself. He also hints at the considerable contribution that he can still make with new literary texts. So, Lorenzo did not wait too long to call him back to Florence and already in May appointed him as professor of Latin and Greek at the *Studio Fiorentino*,[68] a highly prestigious role that Poliziano carried out until his death. Thus, at the end of June the humanist returned to the city that had welcomed him when, as a young boy, he had left Montepulciano, and he came back with a new important position that re-integrated him in the Medici's cultural programme.

This analysis shows that among the fifteenth-century texts on conspiracies, the *Coniurationis commentarium* is perhaps the work that proves to be most directly correlated with political and propagandistic aims. It so closely reflects both the political guidelines of the Medici's strategy and the evolution of the political situation in Florence that it can be regarded as a piece of 'official' historiography, even though there is no evidence of any commission by Lorenzo. The immediate printing of the pamphlet, the active involvement of the printer Niccolò di Lorenzo della Magna in this project and the widespread fortune that the text enjoyed support such an argument. The explicitly

[66] The letter is published in G. B. PICOTTI, *Tra il poeta e il lauro. Pagina della vita di Agnolo Poliziano*, in ID. *Ricerche umanistiche* (Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1955), pp. 73-82. A relevant passage of the epistle is published and commented on in MARTELLI, pp. 29-31, 34-35.
[67] Cfr. MARTELLI, pp. 34-35.
[68] His appointment was registered on the 29 May 1480: cfr. A. VERDE, *Lo Studio fiorentino, 1473-1503: ricerche e documenti*, 4 vols. (Firenze: Olschki, 1973-2010), vol. II, p. 26.

political nature of this work marks a fundamental step in the literary development of the topic of conspiracy that has been traced so far: here the interaction of the literary, historical and political realms reaches its climax and shapes a historical account that is effectively framed as a powerful political tool. However, the propagandistic dimension never obscures the pure artistic greatness of this work: the sophisticated literary framework and the studied stylistic formulation are intertwined with the historiographical components and the political overtones, so as to give life to one of the most effective examples of ‘political historiography’ in fifteenth-century literature.

CHAPTER VI

Conclusions

1. The classical legacy: genres, models, symbolism, and political ideology

The topic of conspiracy, directly intertwined with that of political subversion and internal dissent, was chosen as a frequent subject for historical narratives already in the classical world. However, it is only in the humanist age that, in footsteps of the model of Sallust's *De coniuratione Catilinae*, an actual 'thematic genre' of literature on contemporary plots was produced and enjoyed remarkable success. Humanists resorted to this classical prototype, but they radically renewed the traditional use of Sallust's work, combining it with manifold classical sources, employed in accordance with the rhetorical genre to which each text belongs, and adopting it as a literary archetype for a new specific kind of monographic writing. Often the stylistic veneer and moral ideological overtone of texts are also modelled on Sallust; nevertheless this historiographical model is not passively assumed, rather, it is projected into the more flexible sphere of literature and is re-worked in the pursuit of creative and eclectic imitation. Although the *historia* is at the heart of this whole literary output, the narrative of plots does not only appear in purely historiographical works, as was the case in the classical age (when, beside Sallust, this topic was usually addressed in broader historical works, with the exception of Cicero's orations on Catiline), but surfaces in various kinds of writings that prove the typically heterogeneous character of much of humanist literature. These texts, therefore, can be defined as literary and historical, with one of these two components prevailing over, and interacting with, the other in each text: history is embedded in literature and, in other cases, the rhetorical nature of historiography is amplified by means of the exploitation of literary tools and structures.

As we have seen, it is Alberti's work that can be regarded as having opened the way for the proliferation of this literary output in the second half of the fifteenth century, recovering for the first time the structural and thematic prototype of the historical monograph on a conspiracy and re-elaborating it in the freer realm of literature, entwining the historical bedrock with the witness-discourse typical of epistolary writing and, with the harmonious intrusion of oratorical and dialogical elements. Orazio Romano's *Porcaria* also displays a substantial use of Sallust, especially in the section of the poem containing the account of the historical events. But what is most remarkable is that the classical historiographical source is directly applied to poetry and is reworked into an other-worldly transfiguration. However, it is only in later works, such as in Poliziano's *Commentarium*, that the employment of Sallust becomes all-encompassing and surfaces more overtly also in the stylistic and linguistic weaving of the text, and in a more pronounced moral undertone subtending the political reading of the events. Although Poliziano, like Alberti, painstakingly pursues his well-known literary poetics of *docta varietas* in framing his work and dissembling somehow the use of his main model, he took the reproduction of Sallust to a more extreme, and at the same time more sophisticated, level. He chose the major historiographical genre for the eyewitness-narrative of contemporary history, the *commentarium*, adapting it to the monographic standpoint of his account and embroidering it by the fusion of a multifaceted variety of sources. Pontano also, before Poliziano (or rather at the same time, because of the 40 years long revision of the work on the Neapolitan conspiracy), resorted to Sallust's model and combined it with elements from Livy, in a perfectly balanced lofty historiographical narrative, in which the monographic outlook is intertwined with a partially annalistic framework. As in the text on the Pazzi plot, so also in the *De bello Neapolitano* the influence of Sallust becomes more apparent in the pro-government

view of events, which is imbued with an implicit but firmly decisive moral condemnation of the subversion.

In these later works, the mark of the Latin historian informs the whole text as a more intrinsic trait running throughout the historical reconstruction and ending up by conferring on it a precise political overtone. It is above all in Poliziano's *Commentarium* that the multifunctional recovery of Sallust proves to be one of the most distinguishing factors which contribute to producing the centralised political perspective that underlies the literary account. In general, in humanist works on plots, unlike works from the previous century and the early *Quattrocento*, this classical model is not merely enlisted as a source for historical *exempla*, images and political principles, but as a literary archetype for a new kind of work that reflects the shift from a more varied political reading of the *auctoritas* to a more rigid interpretation of it, now distant from republican ideologies. This new literary use of Sallust clearly comes to light, for example, in the conspirator's speech and in the colourful portrayals of the plotters, where the perfect conflation of rhetorical and historical components is aimed at conveying a specific political message (either overtly or less openly), by re-fashioning the image of the state's enemies as modern Catilines. Thus, if already in the early 1400s the reference to Sallust was oriented in such a way as to condemn any attempt to undermine the state's unity, also in the sphere of republican thought, nevertheless it is only in the second half of the century that the re-elaboration of this model gradually moves to a more all-embracing literary practice and becomes tied to a verticalised view of power.

Despite the central position of Sallust, the overall architecture of these works - their stylistic, thematic, narrative and ideological components - is built on the combination of multiple classical sources. In the *Porcaria*, for example, both the refined epic texture

and the political perspective of the text are created by the studied overlapping of echoes derived from the most distinguished poetic *auctoritates*, from Vergil to Lucan, from Statius to Claudian. In particular, a classical poetic prototype that could perfectly fit with the specific issue of conspiracy was Lucan, a model that was reframed by Orazio Romano to implicitly put across the propagandistic denunciation of political *discordia*, to the extent of covertly relating the conspiracy to a ferocious and unreasoning civil conflict. Thus Lucan, because of the thematic link with civil wars, functions as a crucial model deployed to interpret and exorcise the threat of the political disintegration of the state. On the other hand, Vergil is more generally seen as the chief *auctoritas* constantly employed to connect the contemporary world with the noblest classical epic dimension. The genre of (historical-)epic, regarded as bordering with history and intruding into historical territory since antiquity, allowed humanists to intensify the propagandistic outlook on contemporary events and gave them more freedom to expand the political dimension in the more encomiastic poetic sphere.

The transposition of the theme of conspiracy into different literary genres reveals also the hybridism of humanist literature and the extent to which its rhetorical experimentalism somehow extends the boundaries of canonical genres, especially historiography, re-elaborating classical tenets (derived from Lucian to Cicero, from Thucydides to Sallust) in a new theory and practice of historical literature. The *Porcaria* appears as a fantastic-historical-epic poem, while Poliziano's *Commentarium* and Pontano's *De bello Neapolitano* belong to different sub-genres of historiography, with more prevailing and intense literary aspects in the former, where the narration is framed by embedding allusions to a manifold variety of sources, from technical literature to lyric poetry, in a homogeneous amalgamation that consistently conveys the political representation of the event. But it is in Alberti's epistle-history, the first step in this

trajectory of texts, that the interlacement of multiple kinds of literary writings ends up creating one of the most original re-adaptations of the classical monograph on plot.

The role of the classical legacy in this composite strand of literature is not limited to what we may define generally as 'literary imitation', but it also affects the use of classical symbols associated with 'exemplarity'. In this case, the connection with the classical tradition is aimed at evoking an ideal correlation between contemporary figures and events, on the one hand, and historical characters and episodes of the ancient world, on the other. Thus the classical references take on an exemplary role and an eternalizing function. The symbolism of ancient history is epitomised in exemplary characters (already immortalized by classical literature, such as Catiline) that are evoked as iconic images that crystallize contemporary personalities in their either positive or negative features, proving to be the keystone on which the political discourse is elaborated, on both a moral and literary level.

In the *Porcaria*, in particular, the employment of classical historical figures as actual characters creates a seamless circularity between ancient and contemporary history and puts forward the author's political message. What is even more striking is that these symbols are often divested of their authentic historical position that would link them to the specific political institution to which they belonged. They are not seen any more as personifications of an exclusivist form of government (republic, monarchy, etc.), but, in the intricate development of fifteenth-century political theories, they stand out as representative examples of a personalistic power intrinsically based on the idea of *virtus* and encapsulated (or rejected in the case of negative symbols) in the iconic images of the classical world. Therefore the parallel with antiquity becomes the most effective tool to carry out any speculation on the contemporary epoch and the most solid element on which any immortalizing (and legitimizing) representation of the present was erected.

This ennobling link with the protagonists of the classical age surfaces also in Poliziano's *Commentarium* in the more indirect evocation of the figure of Caesar, the victim of another of the most famous conspiracies in western history and, equally importantly, the symbolic personification of princely rule. The impalpable but pervasive echo of the image of Caesar in the intense description of Lorenzo's fearless reaction to the plotters' attack (§ 35) is framed by recalling Suetonius's *Life of Iulius*. This source reveals the significant modelling function played in humanist literature by another sub-genre of historical writing: biographical history. Moreover, this is linked with the tradition of imperial power and, therefore, at this stage in the *Quattrocento*, implicitly harks back to the idea of a centralized state. Although the connection between the leader of a formally republican government and the emblem of monarchical power could contrast with the Medici's intentions of concealing their autocratic ambitions, nevertheless this sophisticated allusion, along with the princely political perspective that informs the whole text, depicts the ruler of Florence as a virtuous and heroic *pater patriae* and puts across this standpoint in an oblique but effective manner.

This theory of statecraft subtending all works, based on the idea of individualized and all-embracing authority, was anchored in the recovery of classical and medieval political speculation, re-elaborated and adapted to the fifteenth-century scenario. In general, Aristotelian and Platonic philosophical tenets are filtered through the fundamental re-appropriation of Ciceronian thought and are dovetailed with seminal Greek and Latin *auctoritates*, from Isocrates to Xenophon and Seneca, which contribute to fashioning the idea of a personalistic power that is able to maintain its legitimacy thanks to the exercise of the ruler's virtues, such as justice, fortitude, clemency and majesty. In particular, in the wake of the gradual recovery of Isocrates's thought, which was inaugurated by Guarino Veronese and his circle of disciples (such as Bernardo

Giustinian and Bartolomeo Facio), political authority is conceived as legitimized by the prince's *virtus* and nourished by humanistic education and trust in *paideia*. This conception is shaped by means of the conflation of philosophy and rhetoric, with the recasting of a sophistic idea of 'double morality', applied to the political sphere.[1] This new concept of 'double morality' emerges, for example, in the representation of the twofold face of the ruler's power in the exercise of his right to act with either ruthlessness, in taking revenge on his enemies, or mercy, in forgiving them. But this specific element can also be traced back to the reinterpretation of the classical principle of *concordia* in the state in strictly monarchical terms as an absolute value.

Thus the eclectic recovery of the classical legacy, in its multiple philosophical, historical and literary ramifications, deeply affects different and intertwined components of these texts: the structural and thematic framework, the narrative and stylistic aspects, the political and ideological perspective, and the historiographical bedrock in all texts.

2. The centrality of history and its literary forms

In the humanist age, the issue of political plot intruded into multiple literary forms, where the historical narrative, however, retained a pivotal position. The centrality of *historia* in the literary sphere concerns the whole of humanist literature, since it is on history that the interpretation of men's lives is erected. This thematic literature, in particular, proves how crucial and many-sided the function of history is in fifteenth-century culture, to the extent that this entire strand of texts does not only revolve around a specific typology of historical events but, most importantly, conveys a political meaning that was conceived to have concrete implications in the actual historical scenario and in the development of a theory of political power to be applied to states.

[1] On the recovery of Isocrates in the *Quattrocento*: GUALDO ROSA, *La fede*.

In this interchange between the theoretical and practical dimension of both literature and politics, history developed into the key to interpretation of political facts, and historiography, therefore, was seen as the source of any learning experience to be put into practice in the contemporary political sphere. In these texts, the more traditional use of ancient history is enriched with the practical employment of contemporary history, in order to create and express a pedagogic message rooted in the classical tenet of the *utilitas* of *historia*. Through this conflation of ancient symbols and fifteenth-century events, this literature became the territory in which a new concrete political theory of statecraft is theorised, framed and put forward, through the intrusion of historiography into different kinds of texts displaying a pronounced propagandistic overtone.

Thus, the theoretical dimension of the speculation on the art of government (which is openly carried out in treatises but informs also other genres, such as this whole literature on plots) is intertwined with the historical account of episodes that construct the exemplary elements in support of the political message. In particular, the princely ideology blossoming in this period is shaped in literature by means of the amalgamation, with different proportions in different texts, of the theoretical illustration of the paradigmatic traits of the ideal ruler, on the one hand, and the representation of the tangible behaviour of the actual prince in concrete situations, on the other. So, following the principle encapsulated in the traditional symbol of the 'mirror for princes', the profiles of fifteenth-century rulers were outlined on the basis of the ideal image of the virtuous man deriving from the classical tradition, with a specific idealising and didactic function; but, at the same time, this model corresponds to the concrete figure of the political leader in governance, who is implicitly and eulogistically seen as the embodiment of the best ruler possible in the practical sphere of contemporary history. A similar exemplary function can be also recognised in the

depiction of the negative historical figures - mainly the plotters, or more generally the rebels - who are the evil protagonists and act in the same coeval historical reality.

This interplay between the implicit theorization of an ideal government and the practical image of the leadership of the current ruler, along with the problems he has to confront, is dominant in Pontano's *De bello Neapolitano*, the text most closely connected with treatises on kingship. But the reciprocal interdependence between the ideal and the real – between the prescriptive and descriptive components, the modelling and pragmatic dimensions – characterises also the other texts on plots (and in general most of humanist political literature). In the *Porcaria* the eulogistic and exemplary nature of the text, as vehicle of a precise papal political ideology, is amplified by the epic and fantastic texture of the poem. In Alberti's epistle also the veiled formulation of the author's political view is interlaced with (and based on) the truthful historical account of the event and the report of the various opinions on it. In Poliziano's *Commentarium*, instead, the propagandistic perspective prevails over the elaboration of a political theory, although the portrayal of the Florentine government is in itself the celebration of an actual centralised political model.

It is therefore by the concrete means of history - as historical narrative and historiographical tenets - that the political viewpoint is articulated, even in its theoretical aspects. Because of its exemplary function, history performs a crucial role also in the literary realm of treatises, especially in Pontano's work, since it upholds the ideological elaboration of the political theory supplying the direct connection with the tangible dimension of the contemporary scenario. From this perspective, this interaction between the interlaced levels of political theorization and history (both ancient and contemporary) seems to anticipate Machiavelli's groundbreaking meditation on statecraft as based on 'una lunga esperienza delle cose moderne e una continua lezione

delle antique' (*Il Principe*, Dedica). In this respect, the humanists' approach establishes the pragmatic and functional use of history as the territory of both exemplarity and practical experimentation in the art of governing. In humanist treatises and texts on conspiracy, the historical events and situations experienced by the *princeps* make him an actual *speculum*, in accordance with the philosophical tradition: a figure suspended between the reality of history and utopian idealization.

As already illustrated, in literature on plots the pivotal position of history in the texts' architecture is founded on the principles of *veritas* and *utilitas*, as the central pillars of historiography deriving from the classical legacy. Despite the distinguishing features of each work, the leading tenet of truthfulness is retained as one of the essential prerogatives and is combined with both the didactic utility and rhetorical perspective associated with *historia* in its different forms. In all works, even in Orazio Romano's poem dominated by a totally imaginary and eulogistic dimension, the representation of the historical events is carried out in the pursuit of veracity and respect of historical reality. The facts are not usually altered, nor reconstructed in a counterfeit narrative, but, conversely the historiographical approach appears generally informed by documentary accuracy. This is underlined also by the position of the author in the text, who usually does not openly comment on the events with personal remarks. It is the skilful literary depiction of the actions, thoughts and behaviours of the protagonists, either positive or negative, that expresses in itself the political reading of the events. Thus the anti-rebellious interpretation is filtered through the political lens through which the episode is seen, even though omissions and amplifications are often used as rhetorical tools to intensify the political message. From this point of view, this literature turns out to be connected with the aims and prerogatives of humanist political

historiography[2] and represents a crossroads between the seeking of *veritas*, in order to convey a credible ideological conception, and the political and ideological aim itself.

3. The conspiracy against the prince: literary strategies and political perspectives

In the Roman tradition, historical narratives on conspiracies betrayed the implicit intention of containing the critical political situation created by the plot, by creating an authoritative version of the events which was embedded in emotional and moral elements and resulted in a credible account that could deter citizens from further unrest.[3] If the myths of Aeneas and Romulus celebrated the foundation of a national cohesiveness, the literary symbolism revolving around the account of conspiracies succeeded in preserving the same cohesiveness. A similar purpose shines through fifteenth-century literature on plots. But in these humanist texts, besides the aim of maintaining a political identity in order to preserve the state, the typology of conspiracy narrative is enriched with the purpose of legitimizing a new kind of power emerging in that period. Thus the ennobling link with classical principles was intended to empower and bestow authority on rulers who could not count on the longer and more consolidated tradition of Roman political institutions. Consequently, some of the main rhetorical constructions, narrative tools, and recurring *topoi* in these texts on plots are inextricably linked with the political implications they are intended to put forward.

Firstly, a fundamental role in structuring and fashioning the narrative is played by the figure of the author (as a poet, letter writer, historian, witness) who coincides with both an omniscient narrator and, at the same time, an eye witness to the events. This produces the effect of a peculiar standpoint in the narration that is both internal, therefore well-informed, and external, therefore unbiased. Also in the fantasy epic poem

[2] On humanist historiography see the introduction and, in particular, chapter IV on Pontano.
[3] PAGAN, *Conspiracy*, pp. 4-5.

Porcaria, the well-documented historical details provided in the account of the events perform this function. Although in this work, unlike the others because of the poetic medium, the author can be seen as a more indefinite extradiegetic presence and is less perceptible (to the extent that it is the plotter himself who is made to tell his story), in the other works the author even appears within the narration as a protagonist. In Poliziano's *Commentarium* and Pontano's *De bello Neapolitiano* the author openly refers to himself as taking active part in some specific episodes; while in Alberti's *Porcaria coniuratio* he is still more directly involved because of the choice of the epistolary genre, which projects him to the centre of a 'private' form of writing, where he presents himself as part of the Roman curial environment that reacts to the turbulent political situation. But it is significant that, as already mentioned, in all texts the author does not intrude in the storyline with his open judgment, but lets it emerge through the moral and political perspective that pervasively shapes descriptions and narrations. Thus, the authoritative and trustworthy nature of the reconstruction is conveyed by this twofold position of the writer: as both witness and omniscient narrator. This structural element affects the reader's perception of the account and strengthens the reliability of the political viewpoint that imbues the work. The author's perspective stands out as the most dependable and respectable and, therefore, the text succeeds in limiting all other possible interpretations of the events, preventing any potential feeling of sympathy with the plotters (even in Alberti's work, which passes on the author's anti-subversive political position, though with a general questioning approach).

This specific narrative method also applies to the frequent introduction of speeches put into the mouth of the conspirators. In most works the writer lets the characters speak in order to represent their personality, nature, intentions and contradictions, especially in the case of negative protagonists, who are key figures and are often ascribed the same

iconic role, although negative, as the positive heroes opposed to them. In these sections, the narrator/historian/poet steps aside and it is through the plotters' words that their evil behaviour and plans are vividly put before the reader's eyes, without the need of any external comment or judgment. This rhetorical tool, which ultimately stems from the Greco-Roman tradition of historiography, is employed in both the *De bello Neapolitano* and in the *Porcaria coniuratio*, and most remarkably, also in Orazio Romano's poem, where, as in Alberti's epistle, the well-crafted oration delivered by Porcari is essential in creating the Sallustian overtone of disapproval of the plot and, in addition, the whole account of the events is narrated by the plotter in a sort of report-confession. The use of either direct or indirect speeches, which are presented as actually delivered by characters, amplifies the effect of immediacy, veracity and realism of the narration, and consequently, the lack of bias of the author. He implicitly appears as so well-informed of the facts and 'inside' them as to be able to reproduce the discourses uttered in specific circumstances; but, at the same time, he is also impartial and reliable, not intruding into the account and not filtering the events through his own words.

Only in Poliziano's *Commentarium* are there no speeches delivered by characters, but the humanist hints at two famous discourses: the first given by Iacopo Pazzi, the leader of the upheaval, and the second by Lorenzo, the head of state. In the first reference, Poliziano alludes to the famous words that Iacopo uttered in the Piazza della Signoria to urge the Florentine people to rise up against the Medici and, in an evocative description of the isolation and failure of the traitors, he says that Iacopo's exhortation could hardly be heard because of the man's trepidation, so that nobody could follow or answer him (§ 51). In the other passage, Poliziano depicts the glorious image of Il Magnifico showing himself to his people from his palace window and speaking to them (§ 64). Thus, even the mere evocation of direct speeches takes on significant meanings.

It is noteworthy that these discourses were recalled by Machiavelli in his *Istorie Fiorentine*, where both scenes acquire a crucial significance. Lorenzo's speech, in this case delivered in front of the assembly of the citizens' representatives, is extensively reported and framed to convey the idea of the indissoluble bond between Florence and the Medici, one of the keystones of the ruling family's propaganda. On the other hand, Iacopo Pazzi's emblematic words are immortalised by the bitter and meaningful remark on the Florentine political condition made by Machiavelli: (*Ist.* VIII, 8):

> messer Iacopo…se ne andò alla piazza del palagio, chiamando in suo aiuto il popolo e la libertà. Ma perché l'uno era da la fortuna e liberalità de' Medici fatto sordo, l'altra in Firenze non era cognosciuta, non gli fu risposto da alcuno.

The political perspective subtending the texts on conspiracies is immediately brought to light by evoking the exceptionality of the event, presented as an unprecedented and outrageous attack on the state and the common good. All authors, once again, follow in the footsteps of Sallust, who gave Catiline's plot the very same connotation, labelling it as *facinus* and *scelus*, memorable in the centuries for its extraordinariness (*Cat*. 4, 3). Thus, by underscoring the abnormality and exceptionally dangerous nature of the threat, often at the outset of works, all humanists highlight the hideous character of the political attack, equating it with a criminal action. Moreover, the emphasis put on the aberration of the conspiracy works within the strategy of containment of possible further acts of sedition.

It is because of the overall political framework in the texts that the crucial episode of the attack (either actual, or planned, if the conspiracy was thwarted) is placed at the core of each work and therefore is put into the foreground as the climax of the narrative. Albeit all texts display a different general structure, the central part is occupied by the account of the key event. Usually these sections coincide with the enhancement of the plotter's plans and the conflict that followed, leading often to the description of the

general climate of reprisal and chaos that is brought about in the city, along with the people's tormented feeling. This textual architecture is clearly evident in Poliziano and Alberti's works, though in the latter the author alludes to the different possible scenarios opened up by the various clergymen's opinions on the plot, without narrating at length the actual consequences in the city. In Orazio Romano's poem also, the heart of the epic narration is Porcari's confession of his crimes, which contains a detailed account of the thwarted conspiracy. Thus in this specific case the central part of the text also coincides with the conspirator's own words and, in particular, with the speech delivered to his fellow-citizens, quoted as a manifestation of his evil intentions: the same pivotal position that is taken by the plotter's oration in Alberti's work. Moreover, also in Pontano's much longer *historia* the most representative event of the whole conspiracy of barons is placed at the ideal core of the first book: the ambush organised against the king in Teano by Marino Marzano. This episode, unsurprisingly, becomes one of the most famous exemplary episodes in Aragonese propaganda and encapsulates the idea of the conspiracy par excellence: the assault sneakily plotted in order to murder the legitimate ruler. Hence, albeit not every storyline in the texts follows a linear progress, the climax in all works is reached with the narrative of the subversive attack or the symbolic image of it, which intensify the dramatic relevance of the historical event.

Another pivotal section is the portrait of the conspirators. In particular, in Poliziano's *Commentarium*, since the conspirators' speeches are not quoted, the plotter's profiles assume a fundamental position, occupying almost the first half of the work and revealing more evidently the structural and ideological function that these descriptions play as epitomising images of the wickedness of the plotters. In most of these works, the portrayal of the conspirators, either more detailed or just sketched, is a central pillar in the moulding of the general picture of the plot as a criminal action on an ethical and

political level. In particular, the profiles of the traitors depict them as guilty of some specific negative vices: moral corruption, avarice, envy, inconstancy, duplicity, unscrupulousness, inclination to crime and, most of all, to subversive political change. Besides these main faults, other minor and more anecdotal blemishes are sometimes ascribed to the conspirators, such as the propensity for gambling or irascibility, in order to emphasise their negative nature and provide a realistic and mocking profile of the historical figures. The literary characterization of these figures is obviously inspired by the emblematic icon of Sallust's Catiline. This literary transposition of actual characters and events ends up deeply influencing the political reading of the historical facts, at the crossroads between history, literature and politics.

The confluence of these *topoi* builds the major *topos* of the conspirator's profile and contributes to elaborating the ideology in support of the consolidated government, often presented through a moral angle overlapping with the political one. Even when the leader of the plot is not characterised only by heinous attributes, as in Alberti's work, his ideas and attitudes are represented as extremely dangerous. The adoption of this viewpoint accounts for the key position given to the most pivotal negative trait ascribed to conspirators: the eagerness for *res novae*. This expression, typical of Sallust's vocabulary, conveys the concept of overturning of established government, which puts an end to the civic concord guaranteed by the government itself. This is presented as the major political threat and, consequently, the yearning for upheaval emerges as the main vice of conspirators, seen as driven by their nature to this antisocial behaviour. The inclination to overthrow the state, therefore, is idiosyncratic and intrinsic to the plotters' character and becomes not just a reflection of a radical view but a crime.

From this perspective, the personalistic political ideology on which the legitimization of new fifteenth-century powers is based applies also to the decisive condemnation of

the enemies of power itself. It is always on the basis of the possession (and displaying) of either virtue or vice that the ruler is accorded consensus and, conversely, his opponents are condemned by public opinion. Although, on the one hand, this appears as an ethically-centred view, on the other, this political standpoint and its literary expressions already betray the blossoming of a notion of *realpolitik* in the making of an ideology concretely applicable to a specific turbulent historical context. The preservation of centralised government and the defence of the state as the incarnation of social unity become the foremost principles and goals to achieve, within a new political pragmatism that starts to see in these tenets the actual aims of ruling. In light of this new view of sovereignty, the recognition of the authority and the condemnation of its adversaries are based on the judgement of single political figures and their qualities, both rulers and plotters. This idea leads to the gradual identification of the state with the leader in charge and, conversely, of the antisocial forces with the rebel.

Thus the new vicious Catiline epitomises the symbol of the illegitimate pretender to power and, therefore, of the tyrant. This political interpretation completely erases the anti-despotic ideals often affirmed by conspirators, who, instead, appear as usurpers and criminals, also in light of their moral corruption. Consequently, following and reworking the previous centuries' political and juridical speculation on tyranny, now the profile of the plotter coincides with that of the tyrant (a potential and often unfulfilled tyrant): the political figure lacking legitimacy and trying to occupy the state unfairly. Hence, the image of virtue and fairness that the ruler is able to project onto the outside, along with the contrasting representation of viciousness associated with his enemies, is what brings political consensus and constructs the backbone of the state's solidity. The fight against tyranny now is not as crucial and relevant as in the past, on the other hand, only the cohesiveness of the state really matters. So, the traditional concept of tyranny

begins to be surpassed and overturned with the diffusion of a political thought that, although anchored in the re-elaboration of classical ethical principles, adjusts them to the actual political reality of the times and in so doing already goes beyond them.

This political dimension in texts on conspiracies adheres to the burgeoning princely ideology subtending also pre-machiavellian mirror-for-princes works and proves fifteenth-century political thought to be more pragmatic than it is usually considered to be. Literature on political plots reveals that the figure of the prince is now dominant and all-embracing. This idea of rulership starts to epitomize also the pope's power, which turns into that of a 'papal prince', and even Lorenzo de' Medici's profile can be now totally assimilated to that of a *princeps*. The historical circumstances of relative stability in Italy after the middle of the *Quattrocento* form the background to the development of this theory of statecraft and the literature in support of it. This context accounts for another feature that these texts share with treatises *de principe*: the exclusivist focus on 'internal' power and on its dynamics and prerogatives seen within the state, rather than in relation to a broader geographical and political context. In works on conspiracies, in particular, the historical reconstruction of the events is totally oriented towards domestic issues concerning the current government and the defence against internal enemies. Interestingly, this focus corresponds to the outlook that Machiavelli would claim to adopt in his programmatic statement in the preface to the *Istorie fiorentine*, stressing the divide between early fifteenth-century historiography on Florence and his work:

> Ma avendo io di poi diligentemente letto gli scritti loro [sc. Leonardo Bruni and Poggio Bracciolini]…ho trovato come…delle civili discordie e delle intrinseche inimicizie, e degli effetti che da quelle sono nati, averne una parte al tutto taciuta e quell'altra in modo brevemente descritta, che ai leggenti non puote arrecare utile o piacere alcuno. […] perché…se niuna lezione è utile a cittadini che governono le repubbliche, è quella che dimostra le cagioni degli odi e delle divisioni delle città, acciò che possino con il pericolo d'altri diventati savi mantenersi uniti (*Istorie fiorentine*, Proemio).

The *Istorie*, from this point of view, seems to be in more direct continuity with the approach adopted in monographic works on plots in the second half of the fifteenth century and, therefore, marks the predominance of this tendency to concentrate on internal matters in looking at the political context (although Machiavelli developed a much more critical and broader analysis).

This internal perspective in texts on conspiracies also contributes to framing the reassuring propagandistic image of a consolidated regime, whose opponents are isolated figures driven by personal and inconsiderate foolish aims. Moreover, the omission of any references to any possible responsibility of foreign states as instigators and supporters of the plotters produces the effect of not exacerbating the critical situation of the government that has been attacked and preserves its chances to act in the delicate sphere of diplomacy. Obviously, this cannot be said about Pontano's *De Bello Neapolitano*, which is devoted to the war between the Aragonese and the barons allied with the French troops; nevertheless, even in this text, the political analysis is totally focused on the delicate issues concerning the management of internal dissent and the relationship with the various components of the social body in the Neapolitan kingdom.

Thus, the common ground on which political speculation is carried out in this strand of literature is that of the exercise of power *within* the state and *as* the state itself, in an ideal coincidence between the ruler, the power he has the right to exert and the state he embodies. On this basis, the defence of the leader from any attack coincides with the protection of the whole civic community that he impersonates. Moreover, the threats coming from internal enemies appear as the most dangerous because they can disclose instability in the load-bearing axis of the political organism. This viewpoint underlies also mirror-for-princes works, where the focal point is almost totally on the exercise of power within the state, rather than on foreign politics. This approach appears as a

reflection of the tenet according to which internal *concordia* is the supreme value to be pursued and is a reflection of the *potestas* of the state itself. Thus this literature advocates a political theory based on the idea of a government that succeeds in acquiring 'external' prestige also thanks to the 'internal' legitimacy it obtains.

In the literary construction of this political theory a key function is played by the collective entity of the common people, a fundamental constituent of the social body and a prominent protagonist in the historical scene and, as a consequence, in the literary projection of historical facts. In all texts on conspiracies the people are evoked, or concretely depicted, as an active character in the political conflict and, therefore, are ascribed a crucial role in the conclusion of the internal struggle. Their influence in the course of events can be twofold. Following a pessimistic characterisation, the common people are often seen as changing, fickle and easily manipulable by the instigators of the subversive attack, such as in Alberti's work, where the danger arising from the control exerted over unstable masses appears as the most troubling threat to any state. A similar connotation surfaces also in Pontano's text, but here it is combined with the other, more frequent, opposite image associated with the people: the embodiment of the unified civic community that supports the ruler in fighting the traitors and celebrates his victory as a triumph of the whole state. It is no coincidence that in some texts, especially in Poliziano's *Commentarium*, the common people react vigorously in first person in the vengeance against the attackers. This element underlines both the isolation of the plotters and the long-lasting mutual link between Lorenzo, who survived the attack, and the Florentine people, who back him and react to the assault. This approach to looking at the common people in the aftermath of a conspiracy significantly emerges also in an official letter written to some Milanese castellans by Bona di Savoia, the widow of the Duke Sforza and the ruler of Milan after her husband's murder in 1476:

Havereti inteso del inopinato et infelice caso de la morte intervenuta al nostro illustrissimo consorte, el quale heri matina…fu percoso da più ferite da uno traditore Johanne Andrea da Lampugnano et certi altri pochi suoi seguaci et lui poi fu subito tagliato a pezi e stracinato per li piedi per tutta la nostra città da li puti. La qual cità ha facto e fa grande demonstratione de la fede et devotione sua verso nuy et Stato nostro et sta costante in la solita fedeltà soa et piange la missione et la perdita del suo signore; il simili han facto et fano le altre citadi del dominio nostro.[4]

The attack by the traitor is avenged by the reaction of the citizens, who are portrayed as collectively faithful to the ruling family, so as to convey the idea of unity in the state.

Thus, in this literary portrait, the contrasting images of the revenge perpetrated against the plotters and, either implicitly or overtly, supported by citizens, and the manifestations of love towards the ruler, build up the ideological framework of most works. This studied representation conveys the image of an indissoluble connection between the prince, the state and the people: three elements that are unified in a theory of statecraft based on the tenets of political centralism and organicism, as illustrated in Pontano's treatises. But works on conspiracies also reveal a burgeoning political realism already growing in this theory. Since the image of the ruler overlaps both with that of a *pater patriae* and with the head of the social body, his will and right of decision is elevated above all single citizens, in the name of a notion of common good that becomes deeply affected by a new autocratic view. In general, the unconditional and verticalized relation that binds the people and the leader is the cornerstone of the humanist concept of the state and it will deeply influence also the principles on which the conceptual backbone of the modern state will be constructed: a state that, though gradually losing its personalistic nature, appears as an absolute, superior and all-encompassing entity.

In light of this conception of power, the legitimacy of the head of government comes from the people's favour. Hence public opinion is perceived as an instrument of *realpolitik* in so far as it is the most important factor that allows the ruler to strengthen

[4] Cfr. F. VAGLIENTI, *Giovanni Andrea Lampugnani*, in DBI, vol. 63 (2004), pp. 272-275.

his internal authority and even prevent him from threats coming from foreign political entities, as fifteenth-century conspiracies prove. For this reason, in this pre-machiavellian view, the building of political consensus is already the major goal to be achieved and the image of virtue that the *princeps* displays is fundamental. The contribution of humanist literature was crucial not only in conceiving this political theory but also, and most importantly, in fashioning and spreading this image of power and in some cases, in creating a mythology around it. Now, as we have seen, in humanist texts a new focus is placed on the most 'exterior' virtues of the prince, such as majesty (which in Iuniano Maio's *De Maiestate* becomes the essence of princely power), and, implicitly, on the external image that he is able to project on the outside, with significant reference to the capacity to feign and dissemble. Moreover, most texts reveal that the ruler is also allowed to act both unmercifully and ruthlessly, as long as the 'image' of his behaviour is justified and preserved in an ideal sphere of fairness, which is often forged by a propagandistic dimension. From this perspective, the ethical dimension already starts to make way for a more practical attitude rooted in an advanced idea of prudence, which is seen as the ability to adapt to different conditions.

In particular, this growing not ethically-centred standpoint emerges in the depiction, or in the simple evocation, of the reprisal inflicted on the plotters. The ruler's heartlessness, although analogous to the viciousness of the conspirators in abstract terms, is described as implicitly characterised by a different origin and proves to be opposed to the cruel actions perpetrated by the enemies of the fatherland. So, the plotters' ferociousness is reflected, in a kind of mirror-like correspondence, in the violence carried out by rulers, who, after managing to survive, react harshly to defeat their antagonists with the active support of their people. In Poliziano's *Commentarium*, in particular, once the conspiracy fails the city becomes the scene of brutal reprisal.

Also in Orazio Romano's poem, this vengeful violence characterises both the 'infernal' and 'earthly' punishment, underlying the images of the plotters' hanged corpses and the description of torment they undergo in the underworld. Thus in light of the emphasis put on the picture of the cruel attack, the unmerciful punishment inflicted on the conspirators turns out to be the emblem of a fair revenge. From this point of view, this idea of violence reveals its dual nature and becomes the expression of a 'double morality'. This pioneering realistic approach, which comes to light also in Pontano's work, is closely linked with an unspoken idea of *contrappasso* that underlies the whole autocratic perspective of these texts and is intended to show the undisputed character of the ruler's power. He is a *pater patriae* whose pitiless revenge coincides with the justified reaction of the union of all citizens against their enemies. Thus the two overlapping images of violence, which belong respectively to the crime and the punishment, coexist and foster the same propagandistic view.

But in this symmetrical representation, another crucial element must be considered, which is parallel, and at the same time opposite, to the revenge: it is the concept of clemency, one of the most important princely virtues traditionally ascribed to monarchs, as we have seen. In most humanist texts on plots mercy is regarded as a distinctive trait of political leaders in dealing with enemies, and, in some cases, is evoked by the author in order to urge the ruler to be merciful with the conspirators, such as in the *Porcaria*. From this perspective, clemency proves to be the counterpart of reprisal, and, though it is its political antithesis, it appears as a key factor within the same propagandistic perspective. *Clementia* is, indeed, the fundamental virtue of a just political power, which is violent and revengeful with the guiltiest adversaries, but is forgiving with people who deserve mercy. This is one of the most distinguishing traits of a personalistic power, since, in this view, it is only the head of the government who has

the right to decide on the destiny of the traitors of the state, and his decision is totally dependent on his judgement, virtues, and capacity to adapt his choices to the actual circumstances. In this respect, humanists' groundbreaking attention to princely attributes that go beyond traditional ethics, especially in Pontano's work, marks a fundamental turning point between medieval and modern political thought. The uneasy balance between clemency and vengeance reveals the surfacing of a more flexible conception of the exercise of power, which is subject to whatever the specific conditions require. Moreover, we have to consider that in fifteenth-century works on political plots the idea of clemency also had concrete implications for historical reasons, since, after the conspiracies, the rulers had to face threats of further uprisings.[5] This is the reason why they needed to justify their vindictive reaction against the conspirators and avoid new rebellions. From this perspective, the focus on the idea of mercy is crucial: the humanists spread the image of a virtuous prince, who is merciful with people who are worthy of his clemency, but reacts legitimately against enemies to defend his subjects.

To conclude, in the second half of the fifteenth century the development of a thematic genre of literature on conspiracies played a prominent part in the process of the literary fashioning of the figure of the ruler. The theoretical and concrete aspects of statecraft are deeply intertwined in the literary speculation on political authority, both in its more prescriptive component and in its practical representation. These texts, in all their different facets, supply the tangible representation of the actual issues that rulers have to deal with and, implicitly, offer a political interpretation of them, along with a specific model of government. This new political project is that of a centralized and organic state, not only ruled by, but also embodied in, its prince. In the flourishing and, at the same time, tragically precarious background of Italy in the *Quattrocento*, the

[5] For these implications in the scenario of Porcari's conspiracy see MODIGLIANI, *Congiurare*, pp. 23-36.

seeds of the modern idea of the state are sown: a concept that, developing in the following centuries, applies also to a more general abstract notion of power that is self-sufficient and finds its deepest legitimacy in itself. This critical study therefore may lay the ground for a more in-depth investigation on the influence that humanist literature had both on Machiavelli, and, more generally, on the growth of modern western political thought. In this strand of literature on plots, as we have seen, a range of *auctoritates* from philosophy, historiography, rhetoric, poetry, are combined and re-worked to build a new complex ideology, which resists easy categorizations. In this eclectic, and often contradictory, construction of a concrete political theory through these historical-literary works, an embryonic form of reason of state starts to blossom and overlaps with a more ethically-based tradition, in a transition between the Middle Ages and the Modern era that recovers as its foundations the classical world.

APPENDIX
EDITIONS OF THE TEXTS

ORAZIO ROMANO
Porcaria

I
Insidias patriae qui struxit et arma parenti
Ipse parens refer et sceleri si Roma nefando
Annuerit: tenues nam si fragor impulit auras,
Romuleos iterum formidat curia raptus.
Tu potes obscuris fulgorem et lumina coecis
Incertisque fidem, levibus dare pondera rebus,
Tu mea Musa, pater, virtus mihi numen et aura
Ingeniique calor, nostro qui tempore solus
Vatibus extinctas refoves in carmina vires.
Haec mihi vix primum series pervenit ad aures
Ut laqueo affectos vitam finire maritum
Germanum soror et natum mortemque nefandam
Audiit atque omnis cecidit fiducia vitae,
Inclusit lacrimas oculis et corpore toto
Sternitur; exangues vix spiritus errat in artus.
Illa velut gelidum suprema in busta cadaver
Membra tenet resupina solo pulvisque per ora
Spargitur inque humeros fusi cecidere capilli.
Quam simulac trepidae videre per atria natae,
Actutum accurrunt, alternae in brachia matrem
Suscipiunt tenuemque animam per mutua quaerunt
Oscula, ut extremae valeant succurrere luci.
Ut gelidis vires membris et anhelitus ori
Redditus atque oculis lux intercisa refulsit,
Aspexit coelum rupitque in verba dolorem:
Heu nimium infelix genetrix et nupta sororque,
Quam crudele tuens natum fratremque maritum
Supplicio afflictos fatis cecidisse sinistris!
Quos ego nunc gemitus, quae iam lamenta dolendo
Ordiar? anne virum nato fratremne marito
Anteferam lacrimis? Pietas simul aspicit omnes,
Omnibus unus amor. Te te, qui causa malorum,
Frater, et ingenti nos implicuisse ruinae!
Heu nimium tibi fidus eras — quae dira libido

[The text is based on a new examination of the ms. 5. M. 22, University Library, Utrecht]

1-4. **Insidias…raptus**: *cf.* Lucan. 1, 1-3 'Bella per Emathios plus quam civilia campos,/ iusque datum sceleri canimus, populumque potentem/ in sua victrici conversum viscera dextra...' 5-9. **Tu...vires**: (invocation to pope Nicholas V) *cf.* Lucan. 1, 66 'tu satis ad vires Romana in carmina dandas' (invocation to Nero) 11-108. **Ut… auras**: The woman is Stefano Porcari's sister, she is also the wife and the mother respectively of two other conspirators, Angelo and Clemente di Maso: *cf.* Stat. *Theb*. 3, 151-168 (Ide's funeral lament) 14-22. **Inclusit…luci**: *cf.* Stat. *Theb*. 12, 318-321 '[Argia] *inclusitque dolor lacrimas; tum corpore toto/ sternitur* in voltus animamque per *oscula quaerit*/ absentem pressumque comis ac veste cruorem/ servatura legit' 24. **lux intercisa**: Stat. *Theb*. 2, 184 'non fugeret diras *lux intercisa* Mycenas' 32. **Omnibus…amor**: *cf.* Verg. *Georg*. 3, 244 'amor omnibus idem' **Te…malorum**: Lucan. 1, 84 '*tu causa malorum*' 33. **ingenti-ruinae**: Stat. *Theb*. 3, 640 'vidi *ingentis* portenta *ruinae*'

Quisve animum deus in facinus mentemque resolvit
Militiamque trucem et vetitos sperare triumphos?
Quod decus aut quantum sceleris tibi gloria laudis
Haec potuit conferre, licet fortuna labori
Faverit et diro spirarint numina voto?
Romanis decor unus eras, quibus obruta virtus
Fulsit et externae per te fuit aemula laudi.
Nonne satis fama celebris nullique secunda
Laudibus aucta tuis domus illustrata triumphis
Portia, divinos tulerit licet ipsa Catones?
Servitio qui te quamquam vetuere potiri,
Non tamen humano scelerare in sanguine dextras
Exemplo docuere suo nec mergere cives.
Nunc inhonora domus patriae illatura perenne
Dedecus et tristes aeterna in saecula luctus.
Non solis radios in te spectare cadentis
Fas erit aut lunam tenuem nec sideris aethram. . .
Umbrarum sedes et nigrae mortis imago.
Consilium insulsum, cum libertatis ad urbem
Sic te traxit amor, lueres ut crimina tantum.
Ah quanto melius gelida tibi ferre sub Arcto
Exilium gravius vel honestae occumbere morti!
Ad te nunc lacrimas coniunx miserande revolvo,
Cui requiem et somnos atque his in finibus aevi
Otia defessae licuit sperare senectae.
Unde animi in facinus tantum furor impius hausit?
Iam manus imbellis senioque refrixerat ardor,
Te noctu amplectens potui sentire quid esses.
An superum instinctu mundumque regentibus astris
Credideras impune tibi tam saeva licere
In scelera et patres iam conspirare verendos?
Quis te autem sinat imperio sceptrisque potiri?
Te penes orbis eat, nutu tibi militet aether
Mitior, aequatus iam iam prope sidera regnes:
Quid poteras optasse magis? Tibi larga facultas,
Ampla domus meritis et nati et munera et aurum,
Quanta valet cuiusque animus sperare modesti.
Imo ego te, quando fratri malesana timebam,
Exposui fatis, ego te furibunda coegi
Occuluisse nefas precibus lacrimisque reflexi,

36. **Militiamque trucem**: Stat. *Theb*. 9, 609 '*militiamque trucem* sexum indignata frequento' 38. **fortuna labori**: Stat. *Theb*. 12, 197 'adspiretque pio *fortuna labori*' 40. **obruta virtus**: Lucan. 4, 491 'perit *obruta virtus*' 41. **aemula laudi**: Verg. *Aen*. 10, 371 'spemque meam, patriae quae nunc subit *aemula laudi*' 46. **scelerare...dextras**: Stat. *Theb*. 9, 666 '*scelerarit sanguine dextram*' 55-56. **Ah quanto...morti**: Lucan. 1, 251-253 '*melius, Fortuna, dedisses/ orbe sub Eoo sedem gelidaque sub Arcto/ errantesque domos*, Latii quam claustra tueri' 56. **occumbere morti**: Verg. *Aen*. 2, 62 'versare dolos seu certae *occumbere morti*' 58. **his…aevi**: Stat. *Theb*. 6, 141 'etenim *his in finibus aevi*' 60. **furor impius**: Verg. *Aen*. 1, 294 '*furor impius* intus' 62. **potui...esses**: Ov. *Epist. Pont*. 1, 6, 11 'certe ego, cum primum *potui sentire quid essem*' 66. **sceptrisque potiri**: Verg. *Aen*. 9, 267 'si vero capere Italiam *sceptrisque potiri*'

Saepe minis, fratrem et facinus ne prodere velles.
Plus Eryphilea nocui temeraria fraude.
Imperiis inhians excellere cultibus illa
Traxit Apollineum latitantem in lumina vatem:
Hoc efferre nefas casus ignara futuri
Te vetui coniunx maioraque viribus ausa
Speravi titulis omnes anteire Latinas.
Successus reor oblati, quos improbus urget,
Paenituisse deos: nam si mala sidera culpae
Inclinant animos, fuerat tolerabile factum.
O nate infelix, qua te sub nocte futurum
Exitio patriae concepi, exhausta fuissem,
Dum furiis uterum Veneris saturata replevi!
Importuna thoro cum primum enixa iugali,
Thesiphone ostetrix partus et alumna maligni
Affuit: illa suo produxit pignora voto.
Tune etiam teneris tantum scelus ausus ab annis?
Quem patri comitem misero dedit exitus idem,
Non potui medium prima te elidere vita
Visceribus ruptis vel abhortum effundere partum?
Ah saltem poteras dignus pietate videri,
Ni tentasset atrox Romanum iniuria patrem.
Imo ego non ausim tanti consortia leti
Rumpere, vos potius comes expectata per umbras
Insequar. O miserae tantos abolere dolores
Da mihi morte pater simul et requiescere in urna!
Quin vive ut merita es tenebrosa in tempora luctu,
Sit tibi vita super, qualis Penteya mater,
Cum caput avulsum, cum brachia trunca videret
Sanguineque aspersos nati crudeliter artus,
Aut ubi cum pelagus volitare ad littora corpus
Prospiceret Polidori animamque hauriret in undis
Orba parens flentem et lacrimantia solveret ora,
In rabiem longis feriens latratibus auras. —
Sic effata; silet, vocem clausere dolores.
Tum meritis gravis et pietate insignis Aletes
Condolet afflictae, quamquam domus omnis inundet
Luctibus, amissis tandem pia verba resolvit:
Aeternum primis etenim mortalibus ex quo
Fulsit humus, nulli est hominum fortuna secunda.

76-78. **Plus...vate**: (Eriphyle) *cf.* Stat. *Theb.* 2, 265-305; 4, 187-195 82. **improbus urget**: Hor. *Sat*. 2, 6, 29 ‘ne, et quas res *improbus urges*’ 82-83. **Oblati…deos**: Ov. *Am.* 3, 7, 46 ‘Muneris *oblati paenituisse deos*’ 85-96. **O nate...patrem**: (Iocasta) *cf.* Stat. *Theb*. 1, 56-70; 7, 475-527 94. **Visceribus...partum**: (Phaedra) *cf.* Ov. *Heroid*. 4, 125-126 ‘O utinam nocitura tibi, pulcherrime rerum,/ *in medio nisu viscera rupta forent*!’ 97-98. **non...rumpere**: Stat. *Theb*. 3, 166 ‘*non…ausim/ tanti consortia rumpere leti*’ 100. **requiescere in urna**: Ov. *Met*. 4, 166 ‘una *requiescit in urna*’ 102-104. **Panteya...artus**: (Agave) *cf.* Stat. *Theb*. 11, 318-319 105-108. **Aut...auras**: (Hecuba, Polidorus’s mother) *cf.* Ov. *Met*. 13, 535-544 109. **vocem…clausit**: Lucan. 8, 59 ‘animam *clausit dolor*’ 110-144. **Tum...possunt**: (Aletes) *cf.* Stat. *Theb*. 3, 178-252 (Aletes’s consolatory speech) ‘concilium infaustum dictis mulcebat Aletes…’; Verg. *Aen.* 9, 246 110. **Pietate insignis**: Verg. *Aen*. 1, 10 ‘insignem pietate virum’

Divitias livor, virtutem offendit egestas,
Ardua successus raro complectitur ausa.
Nil solidum est orbi: bellis insignior ille,
Iustitiae sed laude minor. Per singula quemque
Nobilitat virtus; felix qui protinus omnes
Composuit mores in religionis amore.
Tu tantum humanos casus et fata recense
Fortunaeque vices fallacis: ad aethera dudum
Te tulit una dies et te simul una reduxit.
Desine germani lacrimis incendere manes,
Ille dedit mites poenas non aspera passus
Supplicia: at pondus tantum deforme pependit,
Cum licuit totum membris divellere corpus
Et raptare solo et canibus dare viscera saevis
Aeternumque viri nomen damnare per orbem.
Nonne satis totiens fuerat violasse quietem
Urbis et insano populum miscere tumultu?
Exulis hi mores, haec est pia causa modesti
In patriam reditus, ut acerbo funere mergat
Pontificem et patres urbemque a stirpe revellat
Totque animas leto afficiat, dare cuncta ruinae
Incestare sacrum facibus pia templa laboret
In praedamque domos, conspergere caedibus aras
Et ferro et flammis coelum rescindere tandem?
Vos igitur monitus tenerum, quos nulla per aevum
Cura movet, misera confecti in sorte parentis
Discite, ut aeternum sint haec monimenta futuris:
Felices illi, quorum laudata per artes
Vita rudis: simul et fragiles contemnere fasces
Imperium et pompam et sceptra exitialia possunt. —
Dixerat, et diri geminantur ad aethera planctus.
At manes illi pariter per inania tracti
Desiliunt — raptis quid enim velocius umbris? —
Per loca perque vias steterunt Acheruntis ad undas.
Verrebat tenues animas per flumina Charon,
Cum procul hos Stygia fatur speculatus ab unda:
Dic age, qui te agitent miles Romane furores,
Quae scelera et casus superique in luminis usu
Edideris delicta? Nitent tibi purpura et aurum
Militiaeque decus, sed livida colla rudenti
Nexus et elisum iugulum declinat in armos.

127. **divellere corpus**: Verg. *Aen*. 4, 600 ‘non potui abreptum *divellere corpus*’ 132. **causa modesti**: Stat. *Theb*. 11, 366 ‘bona *causa modesti*’ 133. **in patriam reditus**: Verg. *Aen*. 10, 435-436 ‘Fortuna negarat/ *in patriam reditus*’ 134. **a stirpe revellet**: Stat. *Theb*. 1, 242-243 ‘totumque *a stirpe revellam*/exitiale genus’ 143. **contemnere fasces**: Claud. *Carm.* (*De cons. Stilic*.) 22, 2, 233 ‘Augusti potuit/ soceri *contemnere fasces*’ 148. **Acheruntis ad undas**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 295 ‘ Hinc via Tartarei quae fert *Acherontis ad undas*’ 149-155. **Verrebat…armos**: (Charon) *cf.* Verg. *Aen*. 6, 298-304; 385-397 149. **Verrebat…Charon**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 320 ‘*illae* remis vada livida *verrunt*’ 150. **Stygia…ab unda**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 385 ‘Stygia prosperit ab unda’ 154. **livida colla**: Ov. *Am*. 1, 8, 98 ‘factaque lascivis *livida colla* notis’

Indignatus eques: Quamvis haec littora serves,
Dire Charon, culpas hominum vel crimina certe
Non tibi nosse datur sontes nec volvere poenis.
Remigio tantum et velis impelle carinam,
Transvectare animas. Sursum cur tollere cessas
Romanos? - Ille ad ripam convertere puppim
Nititur atque omnes secum tulit improbus umbras.
Ultimus extremae latitans post terga carinae
Stat gener affixus lateri per inania pendens,
Nunc pedibus luctans, manibus nunc transtra fatigat,
Nunc capit ore ratem, donec manus utraque laxa est.
Decidit infelix, sonitum dedit ictus in undis;
Stridenti virides vocem clausere liquores.
Ille diu quatiens per rupta fluenta lacertos
In caput inque humeros versim resupinus abundis
Praecipitatur aquis variosque rotatur in orbes.
Vorticibus raptus fluviique in tartara mersus
Nunc sursum, nunc infra agitur, nunc brachia versans
Volvitur illisus scopulis nunc restat et undis.
Illum inter cumulos flammarum et sulphuris auras
Caeruleis stringunt circum fera pectora nodis,
Orbibus implicitis glomerantur in ora cerastae.
Non sic ramiferae circum sua robora vites
Aut hederae inserpunt nodosae brachia quercus.
Sic iacet aeternum rapidis ludibria ventis.
Natus ad haec trepidus convertit lumina solus,
Pectora nunc quassans, nunc crudus in ora superbit
Unguibus, in superos voces nunc asperat ira,
Liventes oculos tandem manus impia vulsit.
Proiecit lucem in fluvium, mox dira profatur:
Dii quibus iratis egi mala tempora vitae,
Tartarei manes et tu Lucina parenti
Quae miseros partus intempestiva dedisti,
Eumenides omnisque chorus lataeque tenebrae
Infernorum operum, caeci miserescite nati!
O furor, o rabies, rapti mala fata parentis!
Vos saltem obtestor, simili me affligite casu,
Crudeles divi! misero per singula letum
Impendunt mihi fata malum: vel Cerberus ossa
Conterat et diri lanient mea membra colubri.
Heu dolor, ante annos inhonesta morte peregi

159-160. **impelle...animas**: *cf*. Verg. *Aen*. 6, 391 'Stygia vectare carina'
161. **Ille…puppim**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 410 'Caeruleam *advertit puppim ripaeque propinquat*'
163-180. **Ultimus…ventis**: Angelo di Maso, conspirator: *cf*. Dante, *Inf*. VIII, 31-63 (Filippo Argenti); Verg. *Aen*. 5, 835-871; 6, 337-383 (Palinurus) 176. **caeruleis...nodis**: Stat. *Theb*. 1, 109-110 '*caerulei* redeunt in *pectora nodi*' 177. **ora cerastae**: Stat. *Theb*. 1, 103 'centum illi stantes umbrabant *ora cerastae*'; Dante, *Inf*. IX, 42 'serpentelli e ceraste avien per crine' 180. **rapidis...ventis**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 75 'ne turbata volent *rapidis ludibria ventis*' 181. **Natus... solus**: Clemente di Maso, conspirator 184. **Liventes...vulsit**: *cf*. Stat. *Theb*. 1, 71-72 (Oedipus) 187-188. **Lucina...dedisti**: *cf*. Stat. *Theb*. 3, 158-159 'quis steriles thalami nulloque ululata dolore/respexit Lucina domum' 191. **mala fata**: Ov. *Am*. 3, 9, 35 'Cum rapiunt *mala fata* bonos'

Lucis iter: iugulo patri comes ipse pependi.
Cur vetor infelix nigras comes ire per umbras?
Intercepit enim gressus per flumina casus.
Sic ferus obscuras diris ululatibus auras
Perculit, invisa donec descendit ab unda.
Illum flere vetat miles turbatus et ipse
Ingerit in superos. Novit mala fata diuque
Haeret et his gravius poenis meruisse fatetur.
Expositi ad ripam tendunt per opaca. Nepotem
Fallit iter caecum: imprudens per devia callis
Incidit, horrendum latrans ubi Cerberus umbras
Devorat. Hic iuvenem quassis per colla colubris
In nodo arreptum pedibus simul implicat uncis.
Stat superincumbens, laceros rimatur in artus
Viscera et haerentes circum praecordia fibras,
Luxurians nunc huc, nunc ora retorquet et illuc,
Nunc capita attollit, terno nunc latrat hiatu,
Nunc furit, alternis laniat nunc morsibus artus.
Immixtus sanie fauces interfluit ater
Sanguis et argutis crepitant sub dentibus ossa.
Ille nefas sensit longeque remotior ipsum
Declinavit iter; solus per tartara praeceps
It lacrimans rapti repetens nunc fata parentis,
Nunc generi: cursu tantum festinat anhelo,
Donec ad inferni pervenit iudicis urnam.
Obvius huic primo pallens in limine Morbus
Et Scelus et Rabies Facinus Furor Impetus amens
Seditio et Raptus, lacrimans cum funere Luctus
Iraeque Insidiaeque et regni saeva Libido,
Dira Fames, Curae insomnes atque aegra Senectus,
Tempestas, Metus et mortis truculenta Voluntas.
Tum prior huic Mynos: Tibi cur violentus in ore
Stat furor et fractae rumpunt fera murmura voces?
Fare tuos casus sceleratque tempora vitae!
Nil furor hic umbris nec verba minantia prosunt.
Ille ad humum torvus deflectens lumina fatur:

198. **ire per umbras**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 461 ‘quae nunc has *ire per umbras*’ 205. **per opaca**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 633 ‘*per opaca* viarum’ 207-216. **Cerberus…ossa**: *cf*. Verg. *Aen*. 6, 417-423; Dante, *Inf*. VI, 13-24 207. **Latrans...Cerberus**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 417 ‘Cerberus haec ingens latratu regna trifauci’ 208. **colla colubris**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 419 ‘cui vates, horrere videns iam *colla colubris*’ 209. **pedibus...uncis**: Dante, *Inf*. VI, 17 ‘e ’l ventre largo, e unghiate le mani’; Verg. *Aen*. 11, 723 ‘comprensamque tenet *pedibusque* eviscerat *uncis*’ (*et al.)* 210. **Stat superincumbens**: Lucan. 9, 933 ‘*tum superincumbens* pallentia volnera lambit’ 214. **laniat...artus**: Sil. *Punica* 13, 873 ‘ales in aeternum *laniabit morsibus artus*’ 221. **inferni...urna**: (Minos) *cf*. Stat. *Theb*. 8, 102-103 ‘scit *iudicis urna*/ Dictaei verumque potest deprendere Minos’; Verg. *Aen*. 6, 432 ‘quaesitor Minos urnam movet’; Dante, *Inf*. V, 4-6 222-227. **Obvius…Voluntas**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 273-281 ‘*vestibulum* ante ipsum primisque in faucibus Orci/…pallentesque habitant *Morbi* tristisque *Senectus*,/et *Metus* et malesuada Fames ac turpis Egestas,/ terribiles visu formae, Letumque Labosque;/…ferreique Eumenidum thalami et Discordia demens/ vipereum crinem vittis innexa cruentis’ 228-231. **Stat… prosunt**: Minos questions Porcari: *cf*. Stat. *Theb*. 8, 84-85 (Pluto questions Amphiaraus) 231. **verba minantia**: Ov. *Met*. 1, 90-91 ‘poena metusque aberant nec *verba minantia* fixo/ aere legebantur’

Arbiter umbrarum Mynos, male cuncta ministrat
Impetus et finis tantum laudatur in actis.
Insidias totiens patriae patribusque parantem
Turbantemque animos populorum urbisque quietem
Me pater exilio sanctus proscripsit honesto;
Munus et aera dedit civem miseratus egenum.
Hac dignus pietate fui, dum pectus Erynis
Inflammavit atrox regnique cupidine tinxit.
Tunc ego mentis inops furiali concitus ira
Multa parans animo leges et foedera rupi
Exilii et furtim Latiam sum vectus ad urbem,
Infensus patriae dominoque parentibus et diis.
Delitui ad generum, traxi in mea vota nepotem,
Quos mea causa simul iugulis affecit utrosque.
Mox alios furto implicitos vel sanguine mecum
Ad mea tecta voco iuvenes, quibus omnis edendi
Gloria et aeterno vitam consumere ludo,
Pollicitis duxi variis, sermone furentes
Inflammavi animos, non dissociabile cuique
In facinus votum statui: Quonam usque feremus
Exitiale iugum? Clero servire coactis
Continuo vitam in tenebris et tempora luctu
Deplorare licet: postrema per omnia ducti
Vivimus imperio, quorum producere pompas
Est amor et spoliis culti ditantur et auro
Viribus obnixis et nostro sanguine partis.
En haec barbaries! Quando haec mutabitur aetas?
Nonne viri sumus? O quondam Romana propago
Felix prole sua, quae libertatis amore
Insignes animas pulchrae per vulnera morti
Exposuit vitam statuens pro laude pacisci.
Quid totiens referam Brutos Deciosque, Catones
Et Furium et Drusos, insignes laude Metellos,
Vos Fabii, vos Coclites? Ego solus in urbe
Caesar et aspiciam dictator ab arce Quirites.
Ipse ego iam dudum auratis vincire catenis
Aut ante ora deum sacrum mactare parentem
Constitui atque omnes in praedam vertere cives,
Extirpare genus, totas rescindere gentes.
Tunc ego vos meminisse volo, victoria quando

233-234. **male...impetus**: Stat. *Theb*. 10, 704-705 '*male cuncta ministrat/ impetus*' 241. **concitus ira**: Verg. *Aen*. 9, 694 'immani *concitus ira*' 242. **foedera rupi**: Stat. *Theb*. 11, 380 'ille fidem et stata *foedera rupit*' 245-252. **Delitui...statui**: *cf.* Sall. *Cat*. 14, 5-6 252-295. **In facinus...quid**: Porcari's oration, *cf.* Sall. *Cat*. 20 252-253. **Quonam...iugum**: Claud. *Carm.* (*In Rufinum*) 5, 2, 88-89 '*Quonam usque feremus/exitiale iugum?*' 254. **vitam in tenebris**: Verg. *Aen*. 2, 92 '*vitam in tenebris* luctuque trahebam' 262. **pulchrae...morti**: Verg. *Aen*. 9, 401 '*pulchram* properet *per volnera morte*?' 263. **vitam…pacisci**: Verg. *Aen*. 5, 230 '*vitamque* volunt *pro laude pacisci*' 264-266. **Quid...Coclites**: *cf.* Verg. *Aen*. 6, 824-825 'quin Decios Drusosque procul saevumque securi/ aspice Torquatum et referentem signa Camillum'; Lucan. 2, 785-796 266-267. **solus...Caesar**: Lucan. 2, 280-281 'liber in orbe/ *solus Caesar erit*' 267. **Caesar-dictator**: Lucan. 5, 383-384 'summum *dictator* honorem/ contigit'

Annuerit, quantis opibus cumulabimur omnes.
Non opus ardenti bello depellitur aura
Gens ignava; manus durus quibus asperat ensis,
Hos pecudes nobis, ipsis nos esse leones
Credite: lanigeras tondebit quisque bidentes.
Pugnaces animae nobis et pectora molli
Non violanda manu; nihil hic mortalibus ausum
Consiliis, sperate, dabunt pia numina regnum.
Lectus ego augurio, tantis datus auctor ab astris.
Si iuvat interdum nostrum meminisse malorum,
Cur dum fata parant felicia tempora nobis,
Non iuvet et libeat tanto nos munere fungi?
Fulsit amica dies, squalore et sanguine turpes
Iam satis externae luimus periuria gentis.
Magnanimos fortuna viros illustrat et auget.
Et nos fama canet populos vulgata per omnes
Esse viros, iterum nostris sub legibus orbem
Impelli et veteres iam reddere posse triumphos.
Hannibal hic fiet, hic Hector, hic inclitus armis
Martius, hic Pyrrus; largos habitare penates
Tu poteris, tibi longus honos, tibi finit egestas,
Divitiis polles, quantas tulit ante Lucullus.
Huic ego iam scio quid. — Qualis latura ministrat
Mater inornatis iam plurima dona puellis,
Pellexi iuvenes, quos in mea vota reduxi.
Nil valet heu virtus pugnantibus ardua fatis.
Sensit adesse dolos pater: omnis et ardor et ausus
Cessit enim, cinxere meos longa agmina ferro
Culta lares, postquam nostris cecidere furores.
Delitui — mallem medios rupisse per hostes
Cominus et pulchram properasse in vulnera mortem.
Speravi latebris; sceleri conferta virorum
Robora dissiliunt, agitat spes ultima vitae
Praecipitatque viros. Clipeata per agmina quidam
Nunc dextra, nunc ille humero, nunc percutit hasta,
Nunc cubito ad terram multos prosternit et ensem
Sibilat atque aciem ferri venientibus offert
Hostibus: hic magni nomen meruisset Achilli.
Tutata est fortuna virum: fugitivus et haerens . . . .
Quando ego nil fidum aspexi fractusque ruina

277. **lanigeras...bidentes**: Verg. *Aen*. 7, 93 ‘centum *lanigeras* mactabat rite *bidentis*’ 278. **Pugnaces animae**: Stat. *Theb*. 4, 593-594 ‘quantum arma et vulnera monstrant,/ *pugnaces animae*’ 279-280. **nihil…sperate**: Stat. *Theb*. 4, 599-600 ‘*nihil hic mortalibus ausum*,/ credite, *consiliis*’ 281. **Lectus…augurio**: Stat. *Theb*. 4, 627 ‘*lectus ego augurio* tantisque potissimus umbris’ 285. **amica dies**: Stat. *Theb*. 4, 612 ‘vidit *amica dies*’ 286. **Iam...gentis**: Stat. *Theb*. 11, 272 ‘*sat* tua non aequis *luimus periuria* divis’ 290. **veteres...triumphos**: Lucan. 8, 733 ‘*veteres* feralis pompa *triumphos*’ 293. **longus honos**: Stat. *Theb*. 12, 335 ‘hic tibi *longus honos*, hic indivisa potestas’ 294. **Lucullus**: Lucius Licinius Lucullus: *cf.* Plutarch *Lucull*. 38,2-39,1 295-297. **qualis...reduxi**: *cf.* Sall. *Cat*. 16, 1 ‘Sed iuventutem, quam, ut supra diximus, illexerat’; *Ibid*. 14, 6 305. **spes ultima**: Lucan. 8, 454-455 ‘quantum, *spes ultima* rerum,/ libertatis habes’ 306. **Clipeata-agmina**: Verg. *Aen*. 7, 793-794 ‘*clipeataque* totis/ *agmina* densentur campis’ 308-309. **ensem...offert**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 290-291 ‘*ferrum*/ Aeneas strictamque aciem *venientibus offert*’

In latebris clausus iacui sub tecta sororis.
Tunc me confectum somno curisque satelles
Captivum oppressit; nigra sub nocte revinctum
Aeriam ad Tibrim miserum detrusit in arcem
Et iugulo pendens solvi pro crimine poenas.
Nunc me sublimem volitant per inania venti
Et soror ad superos lacrimans mihi funus acerbat.
Occupat hunc etiam velox Cathilina loquentem,
Qui procul astabat mediis annixus in hasta
Coetibus; hunc laetus sese superare fatetur
Cominus ora ferens equitique illudere gaudet:
Qua dignum te laude feram? Da tangere dextram,
Qui patriam et sanctos ausus violare penates.
Tu quoque fortis adhuc sero licet ordine famam
Illustrem meruisse potes: mihi denique quondam
Effulsit dubio similis fortuna sub ictu.
At Caesar totis fortuna est viribus usus
Successuque meos ausus meliore sequutus.
Magniloquax miles, merito genus omne furorum
In te ferre licet, quando furiatus in orbe,
Cum patriam offendis, medium te dissipet axis.
Iam magis ausus eras — maior tibi gloria, maius
Supplicium expectes: omnes cumulentur in unum
Eumenides. Liceat nobis requiescere, quando
Concomitata tibi scelerum tormenta fatiges.
Interea Tytion laniare in viscera vultur
Et raptare novem cesset per iugera corpus.
Tantalus ad votum fugientes hauriat undas,
Sysiphon atra silex, Ixiona nulla fatigent
Supplicia et sontes Lapithas sua poena relaxet.
Cum totiens superis et vana et ficta loquutus,
Falsa minutatim saevis lanianda colubris
Lingua dabit poenas, ausus violare parentem
Diripiere solo lorisque trahentibus artus
In diversa citae raptent tua membra quadrigae,
Incestare sacrum longo execraberis aevo,
Pulvereus rapidis iactaberis undique ventis.
Tum Cato pectus adhuc perfusus sanguine fatur:
Iure verende Mynos, si qua est tibi cura Catonum,
Hoc intende: virum quo non iactantior alter
Ad superos vixit voveo, qui Portia finxit
Nomina de porcis titulique ascripsit honorem
Gentibus obscuris. Unde hic sceleratior extat:

320. **velox Cathilina**: *cf.* Lucan. 6, 793 ‘Catilina minax’ 324. **Qua...feram**: Claud. *Carm.* (*In Ruf.*) 3, 273 ‘*Qua dignum te laude feram,* qui paene ruenti’ **da...dextram**: Claud. *Carm.* (*De bello Gildonico*) 15, 231 ‘*da tangere dextram*’ 338-342. **Interea…relaxet**: (Tityus, Tantalus, Sisyphus) *cf. Odiss.*, XI, 721-758 338-339. **Interea...corpus**: (Tityus) Verg. *Aen*. 6, 595-597 ‘nec non et *Tityon*, Terrae omniparentis alumnum,/ cernere erat, *per tota novem cui iugera corpus*/ *porrigitur*’ 340. **hauriat undas**: Lucan. 1, 415 ‘Titan, ut alentes *hauriat undas*’ 341-342. **atra...relaxet**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 601-603 ‘quid memorem *Lapithas, Ixiona* Pirithoumque?/ quos super *atra silex* iam iam lapsura cadentique/ imminet adsimilis’ 352. **quo...alter**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 815 ‘*iactantior* Ancus’; *Ibid*. 6, 164 ‘*quo non* praestantior *alter*’

Num puduit claram prolem virtutibus olim,
Unde tot illustres fulsere ad sidera cives,
Offendisse hominem et rigidos lusisse Catones?
Quid poteras vesane? Pium violare parentem
Ausus es atque ipsum mactare in limine templi,
Praesule quo nostrae libertas gratior urbi
Non fuit aut maior viguit pietatis imago.
Talia dum ferret, latum quo cinctus ad ensem
Imposuit dextram miseri iugulumque sinistra
Angit et infrendens: Minima ni plebe fuisses
Inferior, pudeat scelerare in sanguine ferrum
Et vili et tetro iam degenerare Catonem.
Tu tamen adde Mynos: ausus temeraria quando,
Irruat hic mersus tenebrosa in tartara praeceps!
Annuit his iudex, poenas mox fata sequuntur.
Interea vox est diversa per agmina sursum
Coniuratorum laqueo data corpora morti
In poenas scelerum simul et pendere sub auras.
Undique fervet iter, speculisque per avia longe
Intenti nequeunt oculos satiare tuendo
Attonitique monent patres attendere natos
Et conferre volunt casusque exposcere tantos.
Hic ait: ‘Audaces animos et pectus et iram
In patriam et sacrum miles tulit iste parentem:
Invidit fortuna ausis ingentibus.’ Alter:
‘Nota mihi ante alios huius facundia linguae
Et vitia et virtus’. Melior cui pectore mens est
Iudiciumque — equitis novit per singula mores:
‘Nulli consilium minus aut prudentia fulsit.
Rara hominis virtus; tantum super ardua pendens
Ducebat nullo fluitantia pondere verba:
En patriae vindex nostroque in tempore rursus
Brutus adest, alii caelo cecidere Catones!
Sed cum tela manus poscunt, dum vulnera tractant
In facinusque ardent animi, dum tempus agi rem,
Delituisse iuvat tenebris, ut nocte satelles
Captivum trahat et sceleris luat inde furorem.
Excitat interdum vires timor: omnia virtus
Audet et a nullo confunditur ardua casu.’
Felix Roma! novus Caesar delapsus ab astris,
Qui mare, qui terras populosque et regna sub uno
Conferat imperio et fama conterritet orbem,
Unde viros rerum dominos sua gloria coelo

356. **claram prolem**: Lucan. 8, 410 ‘*proles* tam *clara* Metelli’ 358. **rigidos…Catones**: Claud. *Carm.* (*De cons. Stilic.*) 22, 372 ‘Pulsent nec *rigidos* pudeat *lusisse Catones*’ 362. **Pietatis imago**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 405 ‘tantae *pietatis imago*’ 369. **tenebrosa in Tartara**: Ov. *Met*. 1, 113 ‘*tenebrosa in Tartara* misso’ 381. **Facundia linguae**: Ov. *Epist. Pont*. 2, 3, 75 ‘me tuus ille pater, Latiae *facundia linguae*’ 390. **dum...rem**: Stat. *Theb*. 5, 140-141 ‘quin o miserae, *dum tempus agi rem*, /consulite’ 395. **Felix Roma**: Lucan. 4, 807 ‘*Felix Roma* quidem civisque habitura beatos’

Aequabit meritis et tollet ad aethera virtus.
Quam male sanus erat caecaque cupidine captus!
Quod non mille manus belli, tot fulmina et arma,
Tot populorum acies, tot longa in saecula reges
Totque duces clari bello nec terror ab oris
Hannibal Alpinis potuere in moenia Romae,
Hic sibi iam suasit. Quanto tulit omnia fastu!
Hunc auri scelerata sitis nimiusque rapinae
Incestabat amor. Statuit natura beatos
Esse viros, si qua contenti sorte manerent.
Sed vitio impliciti rabieque libidinis annos
Ante ipsos teneras foetus truncamus in herbas
Virtutum, ut flores nequeant producere fructus.
Si memorem annales primaque ab origine Romam
Ordiar, hanc primum fraterno sanguine tinxit
Romulus et rapuit violato foedere nuptas.
Viximus ex rapto nec diis nec legibus ullis.
Quod libuit tantum fuerat Romana potestas
Regibus: hi solo ductabant singula voto.
Filia non miseri carpentum in corpore patris
Erubuit largoque rotas agitare cruore,
Deturpare lares, opibus regnoque potiri
Per scelus. Heu fatum pervenit adusque minores.
En tibi prisca fides! Tenuit mox Roma secundum
Consulis imperium, quod stupro et sanguine partum est.
Qui primum saevas pro libertate secures
Instituit, natum leto nova bella moventem
Implicuit Brutus. Patriae fuit una voluptas
Fortunam stabilire et debellare tirannos.
Floruit illa tamen multis virtutibus aetas.
Nosse modum iuris libertatemque tueri
Bellorum studiis potuit tunc Martia Roma.
Digna fuit totum quae viribus occupet orbem.
Non cives auri rabies nec dira libido
Imperii traxit, sed famam extendere caelo
Laudibus ac meritis et duros ferre labores.

399. **tollet...virtus**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 130 ‘ardens evexit *ad aethera virtus*’ 405. **Quanto...fastu**: Stat. *Theb*. 1, 188 ‘quas gerit ore minas, *quanto* premit *omnia fastu*!’ 406. **auri scelerata sitis**: Verg. *Aen*. 3, 57 ‘*auri sacra fames*’; Dante, *Purg*. 22, 40-41 ‘per che non reggi tu, o sacra fame/ de l'oro, l'appetito de' mortali?’; Claud. *Carm.* (*In Ruf.*) 3, 220 ‘crescebat *scelerata sitis* praedaeque recentis’ 414. **Romolus...nuptas**: *cf.* Liv. 1, 9 418-421. **Filia...scelus**: (Tullia Minor, who killed her father Servius Tullius) *cf.* Liv. 1, 48, 7 ‘Sceleratum vicum vocant, quo amens agitantibus furiis sororis ac viri Tullia *per patris corpus carpentum egisse fertur* partemque sanguinis ac caedis paternae cruento vehiculo’ 422. **prisca fides**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 878 ‘heu pietas, heu *prisca fides* invicta’ 424-426. **Qui...Brutus**: (Lucius Giunius Brutus) *cf.* Verg. *Aen*. 6, 817-821 ‘vis et Tarquinios reges animamque/ superbam ultoris Bruti, fascisque videre receptos?/ *consulis imperium hic primus saevasque secures/ accipiet, natos que pater nova bella moventis*/ ad poenam pulchra pro libertate vocabit’ 427. **Debellare tirannos**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 853 ‘parcere subiectis et *debellare superbos*’ 428. **Nosse...iuris**: Lucan. 9, 190-191 ‘multum maioribus impar/ *nosse modum iuris*’ 431. **Digna...orbem**: Verg. *Aen*. 7, 257-258 ‘huic progeniem virtute futuram/ egregiam et *totum quae viribus occupet orbem*’ 433. **famam extendere**: Verg. *Aen*. 10, 468 ‘*sed famam extendere* factis’

Tunc rudis imposito vivebat consul aratro,
Fabricius parvo contentus munera regum
Despexit, potius voluit dominantibus auro
Iussa dare et forti bellum decernere ferro.
Hinc Fabii ingentes Catulique et fulmina Martis
Scipiadae, quorum virtutibus Itala tellus
Claruit et rerum princeps Mavortia Roma
Orbe triumphato sacrum caput intulit astris.
Verum vana viris pietas cultusque deorum
Illusit, tulit externos ad sacra penates
Aut dedit ipsa deos; numen sibi quisque dicabat
Fingebatque Iovem Venerem Martemque Minervam.
Festivare dapes et odori pocula Bachi
Vertere, nocturnas tyrsis agitare choreas,
Debachari homines, sanctum violare pudorem
Religionis erat, donec pia cura superni
Sanguine restituit deperdita saecula nati.
Consulis exactae postquam cessere secures,
Publica res urbis mox est effecta sub uno
Imperio: hic omnes complectitur una potestas.
Quis referat, quantis Latium, quibus arserit armis
Ausonia, utque omnis bello flagraverit orbis
Vulneraque et strages Romani sanguinis actas!
Exitium quod Roma tulit! Communia Caesar
Iura ferox in se leges et pacta resolvit,
Solus in arbitrium totum sibi contulit orbem.
Mox alii atque alii, donec volventibus annis
Res Romana ruit, maculas deduxit aniles
In senium vergens tristique ac curva senecta
Decidit et tenues paulatim effluxit in umbras.
Nil adeo insigne est, quod non exacta vetustas
Laeserit et longi labes madefecerit aevi.
Tum deserta pio tandem data Roma parenti;
Redditur imperium ecclesiae, quod praeda reliquit.
Hic pia libertas maculis servilibus aevum
Abluit, et caelo placuit Romana propago.
Inde fides et religio sanctumque piumque,
Incestare nefas ignique adolere penates
Et simulare deos et inania numina credi.

435-442. **Tunc...astris**: *cf.* Verg. *Aen*. 6, 842-845 ‘quis Gracchi genus aut geminos, duo *fulmina* belli,/ *Scipiadas*, cladem Libyae, parvoque potentem/ *Fabricium* vel te sulco, Serrane, serentem?/ quo fessum rapitis, Fabii?’; Claud. *Carm.* (*In Ruf.*) 3, 200-201 ‘Fabricius *parvo* spernebat *munera regum*/ sudabatque gravi *consul* Serranus *aratro*’ (Gaius Fabricius Luscinus and Gaius Atilius Regulus, called ‘Serranus’, who came to know that he had been appointed consul while he was ploughing, in 257 a. C.: *cf.* Liv. 9, 43) 444. **externos-penates**: Stat. *Theb*. 2, 405 ‘*externos* submissum ambire *penates*’ 458-459. **Communia…resolvit**: Claud. *Carm.* (*De bello Gildonico*) 15, 49-50 ‘postquam *iura ferox in se communia Caesar*/ transtulit’ 463. **in senium vergens**: Stat. *Theb*. 1, 390-391 ‘medio de limite vitae/ *in senium vergens*’ 465-466. **Nil…aevi**: Claud. *Carm.* (*In Eutr*.) 18, 287-288 ‘*nil* adeo foedum, *quod non exacta vetustas*/ ediderit *longique* labor commiserit *aevi*’ 469. **maculis…aevum**: Claud. *Carm.* (*In Eutr*.) 20, 130-132 ‘ad quos Oriente relicto/ confugeret sparsum *maculis servilibus aevum*’ 470. **Romana propago**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 870-871 ‘vobis *Romana propago*/ visa potens’

Roma diu vario postquam sub praesule vixit,
Diversis agitata fuit per saecula fatis.
Plurima nunc pollens, nunc sorte involvitur ima,
Nunc tremit et stabili pedibus nunc robore firma est,
Ut solet atra dies commota per aequora iactam
Disturbare ratem, ventis nunc obruta sursum
Nunc redit, interdum scopulis illiditur et nunc
Fluctibus aequatis stabilis persistit in undis.
Pontificum in terris quocunque in tempore fulsit
Legibus ante alios status et pietate per omnes
Iuris honor valuit, sed nos meliore parente
Pontifices inter fruimur, miseratus ab alto
Quem pater aethereus contraria fata rependens
Ductus amore dedit, legum quo principe virtus,
Quo tranquilla quies fulget, quo paxque piumque
Iustitiaeque decus, qualem non pertulit aetas
Nostra nec antiquis potuit conferre vetustas
Nunc pudor et pietas, fructus sperare laborum
Nunc licet, et grati redeunt virtutibus anni.
Nunc et religio (ni nos malus inquinet error)
Ad superos ostendit iter per levia sursum.
Heu nimis immensum vitiis patefecimus aequor!
Quando magis viguit, nobis clementia maior.
Nuper enim indoluit cives damnare rebelles,
Non odium sed causa fuit: licuisset in omnem
Progeniem saevire, in pignora non tamen iram
Protulit. Enixus maculas abolere pudendas
Alloquio mitis genitor non plurima questus
Solatur populum. Solium ne hoc civibus, inquit,
Deficiet nec nostra suis clementia rebus.
Vidimus infractos cunctorum animumque fidemque
In nos, virtutem merito laudamus in omnes
Et patriae et gentis nunquam meminisse pigebit.
In vestris omnem gremiis audentius urbem
Vel bello vel pace damus. Simul oscula cuique
Delibat gaudens patulisque amplectitur ulnis.
Heu nos ingrati, felicia tempora quando
Pensabunt lacrimae: laeti reminiscimur aevi,
Cum redit infelix, fluctus contemnit et iras
Aequoris, optata potitur cum puppis harena.
Cernimus Italiam regisque ducisque sub arma
Implicitam furiis bellorum et sortis acerbae.
Nos vero immunes belli circumque ruinis

478. **atra dies**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 429 ‘abstulit *atra dies*’ 485. **miseratus ab alto**: Stat. *Theb*. 2, 115 ‘ipse deum genitor tibi me *miseratus ab alto*’ 486. **contraria...rependens**: Verg. *Aen*. 1, 239 ‘fatis *contraria fata rependens*’ 491. **fructus…laborum**: *cf. Sapientia*, III, 15 ‘bonorum enim *laborum* gloriosus est *fructus*’ 507. **In vestris...gremiis**: Verg. *Aen*. 9, 260-261 ‘quaecumque mihi fortuna fidesque est,/ *in vestris* pono *gremiis*’ 508-509. **oscula-delibat**: Verg. *Aen*. 12, 434 ‘summaque per galeam *delibans oscula* fatur’

Inclusi nulla tamen obsidione tenemur.
Felicem tanto vitam sub principe tuti
Ducimus et nulli rerum violata facultas,
Finibus aut agris pellit vis nulla colonos,
Non laribus miles veteres detrudit avitis.
Quot pietate viros patria vel honore carentes
Sustinet, a propriis laribus quos depulit ira
Principis, exhaustos opibus miseratus egenos!
Praemiaque impendit meritis et praemia dignis,
Quanta vel ingratus vel qui tacet invidus extat.
Hei nimium invisi superis: felicibus annis
Vivere nescimus miseros nec ferre superbi
Possumus humano necdum mansuescere cultu.
Quid totiens strepitus et inania nomina rerum
Fingimus elati? Facimus fundamine nullo
Culmina. Quid totiens totiens totiensque vocamus
Libertas? Quid concilium, quid publica res est?
Et quid Roma valet nobis ubi curia cessat?
Illa mihi visa est digno sub principe vera
Libertas. Felix nos cura tuebitur omnes,
Plebis in arbitrium dabitur cum summa potestas?
Fallitur heu nimium sancto sub praesule quisquis
Imperium et mores longe indignatus abhorret.
Ingrati quantos superis debemus honores,
Cum dederint nulli dominum pietate secundum,
Cui nec prisca parem meritis nec nostra tulerunt
Saecula nec similem poterunt praestare futura!
Hic hic rector adest, qui maiestate verendus
Sanctior insurgit tantoque in culmine rerum
Iustior et toto longe sublimior orbe
Mitior ex alta mortalia despicit aula.
Sic ego, plura loqui nox circumfusa vetat nos.

520-521. **Finibus...avitis**: Claud. *Carm.* (*In Ruf.*) 3, 191-192 ‘laribus *pellit, detrudit avitis/ finibus*’ 529. **humano...cultu**: Claud. *Carm.* (*In Ruf.*) 5, 42: ‘*humano* nescit *mansuescere cultu*’ 547. **ex...aula**: Claud. *Carm.* (*Paneg. Mallio Theodoro*) 17, 6 ‘*ex alta mortalia despicit* arce’

II

Liquerat interea candens Aurora cubile
Coniugis et radiis orbem lustrarat Apollo;
Quisque suas artes variis operumque labores
Prosequitur studiis. Turbant nova funera mentes
Implicitum sceleri: secreta per avia furto
Tendere quisque fugam tremula nec tutus ab aura
Nititur atque equitem longe execratur et odit
Emissumque atra rursus tellure Tipheum,
Qui superos ruere et caelum rescindere certet,
Quisque refert. Gemit ille suos liquisse penates,
Hic patriam et longa confectum aetate parentem,
Plorantesque alius gremio consortis alumnos.
Illum vexat amor, facinus formidat et ardet
Coniugis amplexus: Quis te nova nupta fovebit,
Frigida cum lacrimis oculos tumefacta iacebis?
Quin etiam sceleris trepidant meminisse nefandi
Damnatique ausus miseri si posse liceret
Paenituisse volunt lacrimas vocesque profusi
Talibus errantes feriunt conquestibus auras:
Quis deus in fraudem, quae nos insania traxit
Attentare nefas? Sanctum lacerare parentem
Et violare sacrum populosque in pace repostos
Vertere in arma simul civesque agitare tumultu
Non puduit miseros. Quid enim crudelius usquam
Prospexit tellus monstrumque infame per orbem?
Ora virum vivos nos et post fata loquentur.
Nec minus attonita (quamquam timor absit) in urbe
Flebilis auditur questus: gemit illa maritum
Germanumque soror, profugum dolet altera natum,
Quisque suam maeret sortem, dolor undique laxat
Fletibus ora piis. Triplici tum funere maesta
Magna parens equitis (tantum dolor ultimus angit)
Canitiem evellens terraeque illisa furentis
More ruit laceroque super procumbit amictu,
Lumina nunc palmis, nunc unguibus ora lacessit,

1-2. **Liquerat…Apollo**: *cf*. Verg. *Aen*. 11, 1 ‘Oceanum *interea* surgens *Aurora* reliquit’; 4, 584-585 ‘Et iam prima novo spargebat lumine terras/ Tithoni croceum linquens *Aurora cubile*’; 9, 459-460 4. **nova funera**: Stat. *Theb*. 10, 489 ‘adhuc *nova funera* narrat’ 5. **secreta...furto**: Stat. *Theb*. 12, 143 ‘[Ornytus] timido *secreta per avia furto*’ 8-9. **Emissumque...certet**: (Typhoeus) *cf*. Verg. *Georg*. 1, 279-280 ‘Coeumque Iapetumque creat saevumque *Typhoea*/ et coniuratos *caelum rescindere* fratres’ 11. **confectum...parentem**: Verg. *Aen*. 4, 599 ‘quem subiisse umeris *confectum aetate parentem*’ 20-21. **Quis…nefas**: *cf*. Verg. *Aen*. 10, 72-73 ‘*Quis deus* in *fraudem*, quae dura potentia nostri/ egit?’; Stat. *Theb*. 5, 624 ‘*quae* mentem *insania traxit*?’ 25. **monstrumque infame**: Stat. *Theb*. 11, 578 ‘*monstrumque infame* futuris’ 26. **Ora…loquentur**: *cf*. Ennius, *Epigr*. (quoted in Cic. *Tusc*. 1, 16) ‘volito vivus per ora virum’; Verg. *Georg*. 3, 9 ‘virorum volitare per ora’
28. **Flebilis…questus**: Claud. *In Ruf*. 1, 127 ‘*flebilis auditur questus*’ 32. **tantum...angit**: Stat. *Theb*. 11, 322 ‘*tantum* miserae *dolor ultimus* addit’

Nunc resupina solo, nunc prona exasperat iras
Crudeles divos crudelia sidera clamans.
Dira manus ambas nudosque elisa lacertos
Concutit atque animam paulum miseranda resumens
Iam conata loqui. Miserae dolor anxius ora
Occupat, exangues arescunt luctibus artus.
Quis poterat lacrimis non indulgere, cadentem
Exanimem quando convexo in limine matrem
Singultu medias intercidente querelas
Viderat, ut nati fleret scelus orba senectus
Funeraque et tales absolveret ore dolores:
Obvius hos ne mihi lusus, haec gaudia matri
Nate refers tandem? Fessae post longa senectae
Exilia haecne quies? Quotiens noctesque diesque
Errores deflens, ne quis tibi casus obesset,
Vota dedi superis, cumulatos thuris odores
Saepe tuli ante aras exoratura tonantem.
En caeli pietas! Sic te videt anxia mater!
Qui nunc fulgor eras populis, spectacula pendes.
Heu quotiens patriae luctus et bella parenti
Nate minabaris populumque involvere praeda!
Nunc ego praeda feror! Miseraene haec munera matri
Haec mihi dona refers, et regna et praemia sunt haec,
Quae mihi pollicitus, cum blandus ad oscula dudum
Fovisti algentes lacrimis gaudentibus artus?
Speravi requiem, veterisque iniuria facti
Iam poterat desisse: dedit nova causa malorum
Supplicia afflictae longe graviora senectae.
Heu dolor, heu lacrimas — extremo in funere nullus
Inferias ne ausit tenui producere pompa?
Sicne ille exilio quondam miserabilis ad me
Expectatus ades? sic me complexibus ambis
Languentemque tenes? quor fata infausta sequuntur
Exortem culpae et tristem sine crimine vitam?
Hei mihi secretis scelus occuluisse latebris
Cura fuit miserae: sic ire ad sidera rebar
Sorte tua partis olim decoranda triumphis.
Heu heu nate decus dudum et nova gloria matri,
Nunc dolor et lacrimae populoque urbique tuisque
Dedecus aeternum! Quae non memoraverit aetas
Tam crudele nefas, simul et damnaverit orbis!

38-40. **nudosque…loqui**: Lucan. 1, 189-190 ‘caesarie lacera *nudisque* astare *lacertis*/ et gemitu permixta *loqui*’ 45. **orba senectus**: Ov. *Met*. 5, 27 ‘per quem haec non *orba senectus*’ 47. **gaudia matri**: Stat. *Theb*. 6, 163 ‘*nulla* ex te *gaudia matri*’ 48-49. **post…exilia**: Flacc. *Argon*. 5, 685-686 ‘donec et Aeeten inopis *post longa senectae*/ *exilia*’ 53. **anxia mater**: Stat. *Theb*. 11, 460 ‘ ceu soror infelix pugnantum aut *anxia mater*’ 60. **lacrimis gaudentibus**: Stat. *Theb*. 7, 493 ‘raptam *lacrimis gaudentibus* inplet’ 69. **sine…vitam**: Verg. *Aen*. 4, 550 ‘non licuit thalami expertem *sine crimine vitam*’ 73. **nova…matri**: Stat. *Theb*. 6, 340 ‘ecce et Iasonidae iuvenes, *nova gloria matris*’

Frondebit tellus, dum sidera fulciet Athlas;
Dumque auras ferient volucres et squamea pontum,
Tantorum scelerum Romam meminisse pudebit.
Dicebam infelix: Per te mi nate meamque
Canitiem obtestor, nostros orbare penates
Ne properes, animis iam frena calentibus adde.
Si te verus amor, pietas si vera teneret,
Non patriam insidiis divum nec fraude parentem
Captares. Patres abolere in pace repostos
Quid nisi triste malum? Nimis o fera gloria regno
Ventosumque decus tumidum te insistere suasit.
Quam melius teneris animam vagitibus olim
Inclusisse tibi, sceleris dum nescia tanti
Mens fuit atque aetas poterat minuisse dolores
Nondum luce graves et pubescentibus annis!
Iam iam parta quies populis et funere vera
Libertas sancita tuo est; scelus omne recessit
Et furor. Huic tantum miserae fortuna superbit.
Quid moror? amisi natum! Num tempus acerbis
Iam poterit tantos lacrimis lenire dolores
Plus mihi morte graves? Totosque in luctibus annos
Exiget infelix annis glomerata senectus.
O dii si vestrum est misereri et parcere victis
Aut si qua est pietas usquam mortalibus, auras
Aetheris invisas tenuemque includite lucem,
Figite qui valuit tantos peperisse furores
Infelicem uterum iustisque exurite flammis,
Dum dolor exuperat vires et lumina vitae
Obruere affectat nigrae spes anxia mortis. —
Desinit in lacrimas, iterum furiata seniles
Sanguine perfusos vultus laniabat acutis
Unguibus et terrae frontem concussa recumbit.
Nec minus horrendo diversa in parte tumultu
Miscentur manes; rapiunt genus [omne] furorum
Eumenides rapiuntque virum feriuntque ruuntque,
Viscera collacerant et aduncis unguibus acres
Vulnificos raptim exercent per membra labores.
Unde duces bello clari, qui proxima servant
Arva piis, dubio simul obstupuere tumultu.

77. **dum…Athlas**: Ov. *Her*. 9, 18 ‘Hercule supposito *sidera fulsit Atlans*’ 81. **orbare...penates**: Stat. *Theb*. 10, 708 ‘ne perge *meos orbare penates*’ 82. **animis...adde**: Stat. *Theb*. 10, 702 ‘ille monet! Ne *frena* animo permitte *calenti*’ 86-87. **Nimis...suasit**: Stat. *Theb*. 10, 711-712 ‘ibi *gloria* tantum/*ventosumque decus* titulique in morte latentes’ 88. **teneris-vagitibus**: Claud. *Rapt. Proserp*. 2, 52 ‘fingitur et *tenerum vagitu* despuit ignem’ 91. **Nondum...annis**: Claud. *Rapt. Proserp*. 2, 50-51 ‘*nondum luce gravem* nec *pubescentibus* alte/ cristatum radiis’ 97-98. **Totosque...annis**: Stat. *Theb*. 5, 108 ‘flore situm et *longis* steriles *in luctibus annos*’ 104. **Infelicem...flammis**: Stat. *Theb*. 9, 633-634 ‘cunctis hunc fige sagittis/ *infelicem uterum*’ 106. **Desinit in lacrimas**: Ov. *Fast*. 2, 755 ‘*desinit in lacrimas* inceptaque fila remisit’ 109-119. **Nec…putant**: *cf*. Stat. *Theb*. 8, 14-20 [uproar in the underworld]; Verg. *Aen*. 6, 651-655 112. **aduncis unguibus**: Ov. *Met*. 13, 613 ‘*...aduncis unguibus* iras’

Quisque ad tela ruens quae tum dabat impetus arma
Corripiunt, tamquam vivos fera bella fatigent,
Iamque acies strepitus incendia et arma ruinas
Ante oculos volitare putant. Stupet inscia rerum
Turba ducum, ante alios qui primus in agmine praestat
Scipio, cui tantos dedit Africa victa triumphos.
Assurgens cubito intrepidus circumtulit hastam,
Cui tum nixus erat: Nondum vetus excidit ira
Atque iterum insultat nostrae ferus Hannibal urbi
Excidium referens populis Latioque ruinam
Aut Pauli ante acies insignem quaeritat umbram.
Ibo animis contra: nunquam mihi gloria maior,
Vincere quam Poenos urbem patriamque tueri.
Prosiliens raptim gressus per opaca nocentum
Tartara tendit iter, passim circumspicit umbras
Pallentes Erebi Stygiae noctisque tenebras.
Dirarum furias tantum crudescere cernit
Unius in poenas stimulisque agitare colubras
Horrescitque tuens: ‘Patriaene hac sorte rebelles
Plectuntur miseri dominisve infanda parantes?
Heu tibi dire deis miles! me me indice saltem
Debueras superum et patriae non temnere curas’.
Tum magis insultant furiae, magis urget anhelas
Ira deas. Diro flectebat ab omine vultum
Scipio, nam patriae pietatis imagine raptus
Tot scelerum poenas longe indignatus abhorret.
Tartareis postquam sacrum caput extulit umbris,
Luminis et caeli fruitur melioribus auris;
Ad tumulum rursus mortales induit artus.
Hic simul ossa nova glomerari in carne videres,
Atque ipsum liquida spirare in voce cadaver
Pallentesque animam sensim vegetare per artus
Coeperat et prisca fieri gravitate verendus.
Ille sepulcrali respersus pulvere pectus
Discutit, inde humeros pallentiaque ora genasque
Detergit manibus, nigranti aspergine tinctos
Ventilat inde pedes, meliore afflatus in aura

120. **Turba ducum**: Verg. *Aen*. 11, 12-13 ‘namque omnis eum stipata tegebat/ *turba ducum*’ 122-123. **hastam...erat**: Verg. *Aen*. 12, 398-399 ‘ingentem *nixus in hastam*/ Aeneas’ 123. **vetus...ira**: Stat. *Theb*. 7, 210 ‘sed, quoniam *vetus excidit ira*, silebo’; 7, 258 ‘et innuptae *vetus excidat ira* Dianae’ 126. **Pauli…umbra**: (Lucius Aemilius Paulus) Liv. XXII, 35, 49 127. **Ibo...contra**: Verg. *Aen*. 11, 438 ‘*Ibo animis contra*, vel magnum praestet Achillem’ 127. **Nunquam…maior**: Stat. *Silv*. 5, 3, 219 ‘quam tuus ille dies, *quam non mihi gloria maior*!’ 130-131. **umbras...tenebras**: Verg. *Aen*. 4, 26 ‘*pallentis umbras Erebo noctemque* profundam’ 134. **Horrescitque tuens**: Stat. *Theb*. 7, 41 ‘*horrescitque tuens* - ubi mille furoribus illi’ 141. **scelerum poenas**: Verg. *Aen*. 8, 668-669 ‘et *scelerum poenas* et te, Catilina, minaci/ pendentem scopulo furiarumque ora trementem’ 142. **caput...umbris**: Verg. *Aen*. 1, 127 ‘placidum caput extulit unda’ 142-161. **Tartareis…ore**: *cf*. Lucan. 6, 750-762 (Erichtho makes a dead soldier come back to life) 144. **mortales-artus**: Ov. *Met*. 9, 268 ‘sic, ubi *mortales* Tirynthius exuit *artus*’ 148. **gravitate verendus**: Ov. *Met*. 9, 270 ‘coepit et augusta fieri *gravitate verendus*’ (Hercules’s death)

Se videt agnoscitque homines Latiumque locosque
Tarpeiasque procul quondam Capitolia rupes,
Hinc Tuscum Tibrim et Carmentis moenia vatis
Fatidicae, quae non cecinit nova casmata Romae.
Vix pedibus superinsistens pavidusque tremiscit
Virgulti in morem, donec vestigia pressit
Fortius et robur gracilis natura recepit.
Ocior igne Iovis rapidisque citatior austris
Emicuit macies pallorque recessit ab ore.
Carpit iter validus, tandem super astitit urbi.
Miratur campos raro sterilescere cultu,
Miratur niveas pecudes errare per agros
Porcorumque greges patulosque in cornua tauros
Et genus omne simul pecorum, genus omne ferarum.
Disiectas hinc inde domos veterumque labores
Undique collapsos, turrita palatia quondam,
Nunc aequata solo, celsi radiata Colossi
Culmina et ingentes quas ipse instruxerat aedis
Defecisse videt, simul et traxisse ruinas
Templa deum, fractas hinc inde astare columnas.
Iam spirare animas, vivas iam reddere voces
Marmoris hinc formas, passim nisi fracta iacerent
Membra, videt veterumque animatas paene figuras,
Ante triumphales titulos virtutis honores,
Frusta minutatim torrenda in calce parata
Ingemit et longe vectos aliunde labores.
Progressus tandem media proficiscitur urbe
Collustrans hinc inde oculis; variare figuras
Atque habitus hominum cernit paulumque moratus
Haec secum: Quaenam, gens haec tenus inguine vestes
Quae gerit et pedibus nimium gradiuntur acutis
Villosoque comas umbrantur et ora galero?
Horum ego iam memini quondam attrivisse furores,
Barbaricos quando domui. Num forte sinistra
Victores nostris opibus potiuntur et urbe?
Effera gens nimium in luxum te Roma subegit,
Quam totiens tantis protexit ab hostibus ingens
Scipiadum virtus, acies ubi Martius ardor
Fulminis in morem totis exciverit oris.
En hinc quis strepitus? cursim adventare togatos
Prospicio verbisque loqui nutuque latinis.

154. **Tarpeiasque…rupes**: *cf*. Verg. *Aen*. 8, 347 ‘hinc ad *Tarpeiam sedem et Capitolia* ducit’ (Sil. *Pun*. 3, 623 ‘aurea *Tarpeia* ponet *Capitolia rupe*’) 155-156. **Carmentis…Romae**: *cf*. Verg. *Aen*. 8, 337-341 ‘vix ea dicta: dehinc progressus monstrat et aram/ et Carmentalem Romani nomine portam/ quam memorant, *nymphae* priscum *Carmentis* honorem,/ *vatis fatidicae*, cecinit quae prima futuros/ Aeneadas magnos et nobile Pallanteum’ 158. **vestigia pressit**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 197 ‘sic effatus *vestigia pressit*’; 6, 331 169. **aequata solo**: Ov. *Fast*. 6, 643 ‘haec *aequata solo* est, nullo sub crimine regni’ (Vedius Pollio’s house destroyed by Augustus) 169. **radiata Colossi**: Mart. *Epigr*. 1, 70, 7 ‘nec te detineat miri *radiata colossi*’ 191. **Fulminis in morem**: Verg. *Aen*. 11, 616 ‘*fulminis in morem* aut tormento ponderis acti’

Hi num Romulei proceres? haec Martia nostrae
Militia est urbis? sanctusne hic forte senatus?
Frondentes hederae et postes ubi laurus obumbrat,
Hos video nimias agitare in iurgia vires.
Iam satis hoc: rediit virtus, nostraeque peracta est
Spes longinqua viae. Poteram requiescere saltem
Tutus apud manes, animum quando irritus hausi
Exuperare Erebum rursusque ad fata reverti.
Indignatur adhuc externa a sede profectos
Aspexisse viros urbis connubia fungi,
Quae totiens reges iam dedignata maritos.
Conscius hic solita veterum virtute minores
Degenerasse dolet viresque in sordibus omnes
Effluxas Latii et tantum superesse ruinas.
Laxus humi residens auras captabat aperto
Pectore et afflicto flabat suspiria corde,
Nec lacrimas tenuere oculi salsaeque per artus
More nivis guttae fluxere ardore liquatae.
Tantus ubique dolor membrorum robora laxat,
Suspiransque graves erumpit ab ore querelas:
O patria, o tellus divum, domus alta Quirini
Imperiosa viris, mundi regina subacti
Terrarum genitrix omnis simul aetheris altrix,
Quae genuisse deos potuisti et lumine caelum
Illustrare tuo superisque extendere laudes,
Iam deserta iaces: cecidit vigor ille Quiritum,
Virtutum princeps. Nil heu nisi nomen et umbra
Restat et antiquae tantum levis urbis imago.
Hei ubi siderei proceres, en indita virtus
Illa virum! Cecidit divini seminis ardor,
Magnanimum heroum iam degeneravit origo,
Aetheris antiqui clementior aura recessit
Haec urbis facies, qualis cum frigore primo
Arcadiae saltus, ubi Iupiter horret ab astris,
Laxat hiems frondes boreasque excerpit honorem
Arboribus, si quando gelu pulsantur et imbri.
Vastities horret, foliis nemora alta caducis
Strata iacent, feriunt ramorum excelsa procellae,
Undique procumbunt ruptis radicibus orni.

195. **sanctusne-senatus**: Verg. *Aen*. 1, 426 ‘iura magistratusque legunt *sanctumque senatum*’ 198-199. **peracta...viae**: Stat. *Theb*. 12, 338-339 ‘sed bene habet, superi, gratum est, Fortuna; *peracta*/ *spes longinqua viae*: totos invenimus artus’ 204. **dedignata maritos**: Verg. *Aen*. 4, 536 ‘quos ego sim totiens iam *dedignata maritos*?’ 208-209. **Laxus...pectore**: Ov. *Fast*. 3, 15-16 ‘fessa *resedit humo*, *ventosque accepit aperto*/ *pectore*’ 211. **More nivis**: Ov. *Her*. 13, 52 ‘*More nivis lacrimae* sole madentis eunt’ 214. **alta Quirini**: Ov. *Trist*. 1, 7 ‘dique relinquendi, quos urbs habet *alta Quirini*’ 215. **mundi-subacti**: Lucan. 1, 160 ‘namque, ut opes nimias *mundo* fortuna *subacto*’ 220-221. **nisi...restat**: Ov. *Am*. 3, 9-10 ‘Si tamen e nobis aliquid *nisi nomen et umbra*/ *restat*, in Elysia valle Tibullus erit’ 226. **qualis...primo**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 309-310 ‘quam multa in silvis autumni *frigore primo*/ lapsa cadunt folia aut ad terram gurgite ab alto’ 227. **Iupiter horret**: Verg. *Aen*. 9, 670 ‘cum *Iuppiter horridus* austris’

Si rapidus flammas volvat Vulcanus ad auras,
Tunc nemus omne flagrat, dilecta cubilia nimphae
Diffugiunt celeres nullaque in fronde virescit
Lucus, et exusti restant sine cortice trunci.
Heu nimium praeceps, nimium furiosa vetustas
Acceleras nimiumque ruis matura sub aevo,
Insignes rerum vires et singula vertis
Ardua paulatim mundumque exosa resolvis!
Iam iam carpit iter surgit qua parte superbum
Ilium et admirans pontem fluctusque ruentes
Turritamque arcem summumque ad sidera culmen:
Conspicuis, inquit, tantum haec aequanda vetustis
Moenia. Si Priamus tanto iam robore Troiam
Munisset, nullis violassent viribus olim
Vertissentque solo fumantia Pergama Grai.
Tum festinat iter: multos celerare gerones
Prospicit et manibus ingentia volvere saxa
Semiferis similes satiris; pars agminis illuc
Convectat silices alta de rupe recisas,
Pars terit advectas, operi pars miscet arenas;
Beltramum ante alios, qui calcibus ilia nudis
Tundit equi frustra, manibus quem nixus et armo
Vix tractim impellit, nutuque et voce lacessit
Saxiferum vulgus segnesque in calce clientes.
Ferte citi ferte! exclamat, properate labores
Turris et ambitus murorum, haec moenia quando
Cingere constituit summus pater omnia tractu
Urbis opus longo! Tantos Beltrame paratus
Aggredere intrepidus: durus labor ardua vincit,
Omne quidem facile est animis audentibus altum.
Tum mage fervet opus: totos cyclopas ab Ethna
Prospiceres ruere; magnum cum robore caelum
Debellare parant ac montibus insuper altis
Coniiciunt montes et in aethera surgit Olimpus.
Ingressus templum teretes hinc inde columnas
Miratur tractusque loci et testudinis altae
Fundamenta iaci, paulatim assurgere muros
Gaudet et hanc longe molem superare vetustas.
Pyramidum sileat celebris fastigia Memphis
Mauseolique labor, cedat Babylonia moles
Et quae marmoreis late suffulta columnis
Tot simul ingentes Asiae struxere labores
Templa solo Triviae penitus fundata palustri.

241-242. **superbum Ilium**: Verg. *Aen*. 3, 2-3 ‘ceciditque *superbum* /*Ilium*’ 253. **Beltramum**: Beltramo di Martino da Varese: man in charge of the architectural works planned by pope Nicholas V 257. **Ferte citi**: Verg. *Aen*. 9, 37 ‘*Ferte citi* ferrum’; 4, 593; Stat. *Theb*. 5, 658 271-275. **Pyramidum…palustri**: *cf*. Mart. *Epigr*. I, 1, 1-6 ‘Barbara *pyramidum sileat* miracula *Memphis*,/Assyrius iactet nec *Babylona labor*;/ nec *Triviae templo* molles laudentur Iones,/ dissimulet Delon cornibus ara frequens;/aere nec vacuo pendentia *Mausolea*/laudibus immodicis Cares in astra ferant’

Dirigit inde pedes, ubi nunc domus alta monarcae
Tollitur antiquis non concessura triumphis.
In foribus timor in superos sanctumque pudorque
Iustitia et pietas, opere associata frequenti
Pone fides sequitur, nullo violabilis aere
Gratia stat simplex, quam raro in praesulis aedes
Esse reor: multos solet id iugulare potentes.
Felix qui nullo nimium speraverit auro!
Aulai in medio summoque in culmine regnat
Maiestas gravis imperio vultuque verendo
Iudicium sequitur fecundo in pectore verum
Consilium gestans viridique adoperta colore
Spes et amor, grati longe immortalibus ambo.
Haec propter totum virtus quae temperat orbem,
Candida religio sacrata in sede coruscans
Ad superos ostendit iter, monstratque colendo
Simplicitas hominum qua vi superevolet astris.
Gloria post longos et fama aeterna labores
Insequitur biiugoque super concordia curru
Eminet et rerum seriem regit Athica Pallas.
Plurima per muros hinc inde effulget imago.
Haec post longa quies residens secura sub alta
Otia pace terit meritisque rependit honores.
Hinc studia ingenuis antiquae laudis et artes
Athica demonstrat quae sit natura quibusve
Cursibus errantes stellas represserit Athlas,
Qua trepidet tellus, qua vi maria alta tumescant,
Unde animae inspirent homines volucresque ferasque,
Quae regio in terris Cereri sit quaeque Lyaeo
Gratior aut saltus maiora armenta coronent.
Post aulas vergens penetrali in sede receptus
Lustrat Aretinum crocea sub veste Iohannem,
Qui tum forte legens leni sub voce labores
Scipiadum magnis animos pensabat ab actis
Romanosque duces meritis super aethera vectos.
Ille autem ad nomen tacitas erexerat aures
Scipiadum; dum se se armis confringere Poenos
Audit et hostiles iam debellare catervas,
In medium tales prorumpit ad aethera voces:
Ille ego qui totiens armis victricibus olim
Spem patriae ante annos mediis in caedibus ardens
Paene auxi extinctam, cum saevus inhorruit armis
Hannibal et nostris undarent stragibus amnes.

278-298. **In…honores**: (personifications at the entrance of the pope's palace shaped after the entrance to Vergil's Hades) *cf.* Verg. *Aen*. 6, 273-281 284. **Aulai in medio**: Verg. *Aen*. 3, 354 '*aulai medio* libabant pocula Bacchi' 289. **temperat orbem**: Ov. *Fast*. 4, 91 'illa quidem *totum* dignissima *temperat orbem*' 295. **rerum seriem**: Lucan. 5, 179 'tanta patet *rerum series*...' 297. **secura sub alta**: Verg. *Georg*. 3, 376-377 'ipsi in defossis specubus *secura sub alta*/ *otia* agunt' 300. **Athica...tumescant**: Verg. *Georg*. 3, 478-479 'defectus solis varios lunaeque labores;/ *unde tremor terris, qua vi maria alta tumescant*' 303. **homines...ferasque**: Ov. *Met*. 7, 185-186 '*homines volucresque ferasque*/ solverat alta quies' 307. **Aretinum-Iohannem**: Giovanni Tortelli (1400 ca.- 1466), humanist and librarian of the Vatican Library

Inter tot furias bellorum primus ad oras
Produxi hostiles ausus contemnere vires
Fortunae. Fuit ingenti pro numine virtus
Et patrum studiis animus mihi maior et ensis.
Edomui Lybiae populos, tot regna tot urbes
Sub iuga Romanae posui dicionis et orbem
Occiduum statui. Cura est mihi credita fratris
Imperiumque urbis, strueret cum bella Philippus
Antiochique furor. Totiens domuisse rebelles
Glorior atque Asiae fratri peperisse triumphos.
Unde tot invidiae: studium sine laude virorum est
Polluere illustres et rerum carpere famam.
Quin etiam cinerum ne quid sibi Roma meorum
Iactaret manesque meos tenuisse sepultos,
Sponte tuli exilium. Meritis haec gratia, postquam
Restitui decus omne meis ac paene ruentem
Italiam tantis tutatus ab hostibus armis.
Laudibus his cesset quaecunque est gloria gentis
Externae Graiumque simul, licet aemula virtus
Herculis ingentes olim simulaverit actus.
Mille licet dederit Iuno implacata labores
Atque humeris caelum tulerit spoliumque leonis
Lerneamque datis facibus tremefecerit idram
Ileumque Pholumque Erimantiadumque furorem
Stimphalidasque arcu, vel si cumulentur in unum
Idra et Scilla et aper triplicis Gerionis et umbrae,
Antheo vires tellus infundat et ater
Cerberus horrendis feriat latratibus auras:
Omnia vix nostros poterunt aequare labores.
Haud dextrae colus apta meae nec Lidia coniunx
Horrentes humeros molli derisit amictu,
Non ego Amazonidum traxi ferus arma puellae.
Vis mihi maior erat; nam me sublimis agebat
Gloria, cum totiens Romanis arcibus hostes
Averti atque omnis per me tulit orbis habenas.
Nondum bellorum studiis, sed viribus impar
Quisque fuit ductor. Vitiis a stirpe recisis
Aetatis florem duro exposuisse labori

323-335. **Edomui…armis**: *cf*. Liv. XXXIII, 31-35; XXXV-XXXVII (Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus and Lucius Cornelius Scipio Asiaticus) 337. **aemula virtus**: Lucan. 1, 120 ‘stimulos dedit *aemula virtus*’ 339-347. **Mille...labores**: *cf*. Ov. *Met*. 9, 98-272 (Labours of Hercules: Lernaean Idra; Antaeus; Geryon; Stymphalian birds; Ileus and Pholus; Erymanthian boar; Nemean lion); *cf*. Verg. *Aen*. 8, 285-305 (‘fatis Iunonis iniquae’, v. 292; Ileus and Pholus, vv. 293-294; Nemean lion, v. 295; Cerberus, vv. 296-297; Lernaean Idra, vv. 299-30) 347. **aequare labores**: Stat. *Silv*. 2, 1, 124 ‘Herculeos annis *aequare labores*’ 348. **colus apta**: *cf*. Stat. *Theb*. 3, 241-242 ‘sic fata mihi, nigraeque Sororum/ iuravere colus’ 351-352. **me...gloria**: Stat. *Achill*. 2, 152-153 ‘nec nisi iussus abi: *sic me sublimis agebat*/ *gloria*, nec duri tanto sub teste labores’ 351. **Romanis arcibus**: Verg. *Aen*. 11, 12 ‘cum fera Karthago *Romanis arcibus* olim’ 355. **Vitiis...recisis**: Claud. *In Ruf*. 1, 56-57 ‘pro dolor! ipsa mihi liquidas delapsa per auras /iustitia insultat *vitiisque a stirpe recisis*/ elicit oppressas tenebroso carcere leges’

Cura fuit. Nobis victa Cartagine virgo
Illustris delata. Oculos licet illa nitentes
Gesserit aut quales nimium laudata Pelasgis
Tyndaris ardenti donis cumulata marito
Iussa dari, belli quamquam mihi iure liceret,
Non tamen usque meum tetigit captiva cubile.
Exuperare animum flammasque libidinis acres
Laudis erat. Divum cantet licet altus Achillem
Graiorum vates et felix Mantua Troem,
Hic nisi nemo fuit, nostras qui carmine laudes
Altius extulerit, patrem qui tollere sacrum
Nititur, in viles usus ni mergat egestas.
Talibus obstupuit dictis Aretinus et actis
Collustrans oculis, dubiusne illuserit arte
Aut ope Peonia fuerit revocatus ab orcho,
Quae fortuna virum circumferat inscius haeret.
Obtutu spectans humeris haerere lacertos,
Membra simul vivo penitus spirantia pulsu
Miratur: Quis te traxit casusne deusne
Sedibus a stigiis nigroque erumpere Averno
Ad superos, cum tot Furiae iuxta atria Ditis,
Gorgon et horrendi custos sit Cerberus antri?
An superum iussu venias, ut luseris arte
Mentibus humanis fictoque in corpore vultus
Ostentes, quales tenuit dum vixerit ille
Scipio, quem nuper vana mentiris in umbra?
Saga phynecea tumulo mala carmina fraude
Forte dedit, pelago ruis an telluris hiatu?
I procul ad manes stygios atque aethera lustra
Spirantesque viros, dum nos hic vita reservat.
Tum Romanus ad haec: Quamquam volitare figuras
Morte obita fama est umbrasque illudere vivis,
Ne turbere animo neve exhorresce precantem
Ad papam ingressus; neque enim te laedere manes
Velle putes nostros, suetus cum saepe labores
Scipiadum legere et memoranda rependere facta.
Imperio magni venio Iovis: ille tenebras
Rupit et e Stigiis supera ad convexa levavit
Meque iterum dedit humanis et luce potiri.
Quod te per lacrimas, dudum quibus ora caducis
Fluxa vides superasque poli quibus uteris auras
Fortunamque urbis, nostri quae sola reductus

359-360. **Pelasgis Tyndaris**: (Helen, Tyndareus's daughter) Verg. *Aen*. 2, 601 'Non tibi Tyndaridis facies invisa Lacaenae'; 2, 569 359-362. **Gesserit...cubile**: (The continence of Scipio: reference to the episode of the bride of the Celtiberian nobleman Aluccius) *cf*. Liv. XXVI, 50 365. **felix Mantua**: Mart. *Epigr*. 1, 61, 2 'Marone *felix Mantua* est' 384. **telluris hiatu**: Stat. *Theb*. 8, 19-20 'dissiluisse novo penitus *telluris hiatu*/ Tartara et admissos non per sua flumina manes' 387-388. **Quamquam...vivis**: Verg. *Aen*. 10, 641-642 '*morte obita qualis fama est volitare figuras*/ aut quae sopitos deludunt somnia sensus' 393. **Imperio...Iovis**: Verg. *Aen*. 5, 726 '*imperio Iovis* huc *venio*, qui classibus ignem' 393-394. **Ille...levavit**: Stat. *Theb*. 10, 915-917 '*Stygias rupisse* catenas/ Iapetum aut victam *supera ad convexa levari*/ Inarimen Aetnam ve putes'

Causa fuit tantosque ausim tolerare labores,
Ante pedes sacri quaeso genitoris et ora
Duc Aretine. Deos sic tu maioribus oro
Muneribus potiare patris, nam fata polique
Et tua te virtus merita ad maiora reservant.
Duc, iterum rogat, et sacrum me admitte parentem
Immeritumque licet. Patrios non ille refellet
Affatus, pia vota solet lacrimasque precantum
Mollius accipere et fessis succurrere rebus,
Cui caput ante alios ornet licet alta potestas.
Iam memini quondam imperio sublimis et armis
Supplicibus sua iura dedi facilisque rogatu
Ante acies quamquam victor. Fortuna modestos
Esse animos vires regni tumidosque ruinas
Edocuit summisque diu non fidere rebus.
Ille tamen victus precibus lacrimisque rogantem
Romanum implicuit dextra monuitque vereri
Pontificem. 'Gratum est patriae spectare parentem,
Cui meriti virtus ausa est includere tantum'.
Ergo ut erat gemitu laceroque inhonorus amictu,
Mente gerens casus tristisque exordia facti
Militis, illacrimans urbis miserabile fato
Ante patrem manibus supplex et poplite flexo
Haud rudis eloquii sic ora trementia solvit,
Quae magis indigni commendat gratia luctus:
Dive virum Nicolae, inopem qui numine Romam
Quinte tuo extollis, tantos miserate labores
Solus et antiquas qui nondum despicis artes
Romanumque decus, Stigiis de sedibus unus
Ausus ego ad superos vastae telluris hiatu
Rumpere. Scipiades eadem nos cura repostos
Urbis habet, quondam tenuit quae in tempora vitae.
Iamdudum infremuit tumidos de plebe rebelles
Rumor apud manes patriae insaevisse parenti
Et violasse sacrum. Poenorum qualis ab armis
Tempestas mihi visa iterum. Sic infera pugnas
Extimuit Romana acies: nos bella gigantum
Credidimus trepidi vel hiulci fulminis iras
Ob scelerum poenas irataque numina genti.
Hei ubi prisca fides! tanto cur turbine miscent
Otia mortales finesque egressa modesti
Libertas nimium rerumque exaucta superbit?
Quid faciunt miseri, tibi cum caelestia parent
Infernique sinus? Ubi nunc vetus ille priorum
Virtutum fulgor? Vetus illic Roma quiescit,
Robur et arma virum: nequeunt mansuescere tantum

423. **Quae…luctus**: Stat. *Theb*. 8, 558 'squalor et *indigni commendat gratia luctus*' 425. **miserate labores**: Verg. *Aen*. 6, 56 'Phoebe, gravis Troiae semper *miserate labores*' 435. **bella gigantium**: Lucan. 1, 36 'non nisi saevorum potuit post *bella gigantum*' 436. **fulminis iras**: Stat. *Theb*. 11, 91 'bella deum et magnas ridebam *fulminis iras*'

Relliquiae sordesque hominum, quos undique fluxum
Confecit populos extrema in tempora vulgus.
Hosne iuvat saevire, iterum quod moenia rursus
Extruis et Romam, si qua est, insignibus ornas
Extollisque opibus pacemque impendis et annum
Laetitiae exortem bellis, unde aurea fulget
Roma et congestis opibus cumulata triumphat,
Reddere praereptos iterum dignatus honores
Et civile decus, census augere paternos
Omnibus et maior rerum data copia templis?
His quamquam aspirent felicibus omnia fatis,
Tu tamen excelsa moderantius utere sorte
Imperiique manu. Meritis excellere malis
Et pietate alios, quae sola in principe virtus
Eminet, exemplum cum sis pietatis et auctor
Ante omnes decet esse pium monitusque supernos
Fortius accipere atque ipsi non parcere vitae,
Si iubeat pietas. Populorum vita salusque
In te omnis, cuiusque humeris incumberet orbis
Milibus e tantis cum factus ab aethere dignus.
Nec tibi, sed totis genitum pia cura superni
Instituit populis: ergo reminiscere, quando . . .
Gentibus esse caput mundoque impendere leges,
Siderei meritis recludere limina caeli,
Indignata viris exposcere numina pacem.
Tunc deus aspexit mundum, cum dulce ferenti
Pondus eras matri, tunc arrisere corusci
Numina cuncta poli et patriae spes aucta Latinae,
Cum tu maiores adolebas dignus in annos
Atque ingens virtus meritos spectaret honores.
Surgere iam poterat neglecta et squalida Roma
Et veteres haurire animos maiorque videri,
Tum quoque communi felix adolescere sorte,
Cum melior per te longe sibi redditur orbis.
Ante tuos ortus miserandum et flebile numen
Roma fuit. Tandem triplices laetata per omnes
Te surgente gradus, tribuit quos ipsa, meretur
Ante alias veniam populos spectata per omnes
Sacra diu nomenque tuum templumque dicabit
Gentibus: hic totus Romae laetabitur orbis.
Sis pater ergo memor patriae telluris amatae
Numinibus, cineres ubi tot tumulantur et ossa
Pontificum sacroque hominum perfusa cruore
Undique terra rubet. Fidei manet alta supernae
Hic pia relligio verum caput orbis et omne

453. **census...augere**: Ov. *Am*. 1, 10, 41 ‘Turpe, tori reditu *census augere paternos*’ 460-461. **pium...vitae**: *cf*. Verg. *Aen*. 6, 853 ‘parcere subiectis et debellare superbos’ 462-463. **Populorum...omnis**: Lucan. 5, 685-686 ‘cum tot in hac anima *populorum vita salusque*/ pendeat et tantus caput hoc sibi fecerit orbis’ 470. **cum...matri**: Stat. *Theb*. 7, 165-166 ‘ego nempe tamen, *qui dulce ferenti*/ *pondus eram*, cui tu dignatus limina vitae’ 487-488. **cruore...rubet**: Ov. *Fast*. 2, 212 ‘accipiunt: Tusco *sanguine terra rubet*’ 489. **Caput orbis**: Ov. *Am*. 1, 15, 26 ‘Roma triumphati dum *caput orbis* erit’

Imperii decus et Petri, cui sanguine primus
Partus honos templi caeloque infusa potestas.
Ergo iterum altricem mundi pater aspice terram.
Imperat ille deis fortunae et rebus et astris,
Qui sibi nec patitur mentis sordescere lumen
Vimque animi, imponit qui frena libidini et irae.
Ille quidem felix princeps et celsior omni
Imperio et populis opibus quoque maior et armis.
Haec postquam effatus, subito velut umbra recessit
Spiritus ad manes corpusque reliquit in urna.
Ac veluti ignitas si quando per aethera sursum
Intenti aspicimus noctu volitare favillas,
Igne micant tenui, mox nulla in corpora lapsae
Deficiunt, subito aspectu solvuntur in auras,
Aut ubi quam sidus vulgus putat ignea currit
Rima polo, celeri raptu se condit in astris.

501. **volitare favillas**: Verg. *Aen*. 5, 666 ‘respiciunt atram in nimbo *volitare favillam*’
504-505. **Ignea...polo**: *cf*. Verg. *Aen*. 8, 391-392 ‘Haut secus atque olim tonitru cum rupta corusco/ *ignea rima* micans percurrit lumine nimbos’

LEON BATTISTA ALBERTI
Porcaria coniuratio

[1] Etsi ad vos que per hos dies hic apud nos gesta sunt, rumoribus esse delata non dubitem, tamen (quod in tantis rebus fit) cupere te arbitror a nobis amicis ea discere, que ab incertis auctoribus perlata vix credibilia esse ob facinoris immanitatem videantur. Faciam quod amicum decet: tuis enim ultra desideriis satisfaciam. Qua in re illud conferet, quod inter pericula constituti historiam, uti gesta sit, melius quam qui istic audiere, teneamus.
[2] Facinus profecto, quo a vetere hominum memoria in hanc usque diem neque periculo horribilius, neque audacia detestabilius, neque crudelitate tetrius a quoquam perditissimo uspiam excogitatum sit.
[3] Stephanus Porcarius eques romanus, homo animi utinam tam moderati, quam erat ingenio preditus docili et lingua ad dicendum paratus, per eos dies, quibus Eugenii pontificis maximi funus celebrabatur, suos ad concives pro concione orationem habere instituit, non minus vehementem, quam turbulentam. Quoad enim in se fuit, hortari aggressus est ut, captis armis, veteris romani populi et nominis et libertatis meminissent. [4] Nolo dicere prope futurum fuisse ut studia multorum concitarentur, ni ab Lelio Valleio iurisconsulto, viro frugi et gravi, interpellatus destitisset. [5] Commovere cepta hec pontificis animum Nicolai, qui tum primum post Eugenium pontificatum inierat, admonebaturque ab his, quorum consiliis uteretur, Urbem quietam non futuram, ni prius seditionum auctor abigeretur. [6] Sed pontifex, cum per ipsa pontificatus initia instituisset quam posset plurimos sibi omnis conditionis homines conciliare omni qua posset beneficentia et facilitate, hunc alioquin honestum et presertim romanum civem beneficio devinciendum atque a turbidis consiliis ad spem honesti otii revocandum statuit mansuetudine. Idcirco in Hernicos misit propretorem, habitusque in magistratu est summa cum dignitate.

[The text is quoted from: LEON BATTISTA ALBERTI, *Porcaria coniuratio*, ed. by M. Regoliosi, in *Leon Battista Alberti: Opere latine*, ed. by R. Cardini (Roma: Istituto poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 2010), pp. 1265-1281]

[1] **Etsi...teneamus**: *cf*. Thucydides, I, 21-22 'In recording the events of the war my principle has been not to rely on casual information or my own suppositions, but to apply the greatest possible rigour in pursuing every detail both of what I saw myself and of what I heard from others' **facinoris immanitatem**: Cic. *Cat*. 1, 14 'quod ego praetermitto et facile patior sileri, ne in hac civitate *tanti facinoris immanitas* aut exstitisse aut non vindicata esse videatur'
[2] **Facinus...excogitatum sit**: *cf*. Sall. *Cat*. 4, 3-4 'Igitur de Catilinae coniuratione quam verissume potero paucis absolvam; nam *id facinus in primis ego memorabile existumo sceleris atque periculi novitate*' **quoquam perditissimo**: Cic. *Cat*. 2, 29 'perditissimorum civium nefario scelere defendant'; *Ibid*. 3, 14 'ut ex tanta coniuratione tantaque hac multitudine domesticorum hostium novem hominum perditissimorum'
[3] **Stephanus...paratus**: *cf*. Sall. *Cat*. 5, 4 '[Catilina] satis eloquentiae, sapientiae parum' (*cf*. Sall. *Cat*. 5, 1 'Lucius Catilina, nobili genere natus, fuit magna vi et animi et corporis, sed ingenio malo pravoque') **ingenio preditus**: Cic. *Sull*. 32 '*ingenio* et prudentia *praeditus*'
[5] **viro frugi**: Cic. *Att*. 7, 4, 1 'frugi hominem'; *Fam*. 5, 6, 1; 13, 70, 1; *Tusc*. 4, 16, 36; Plaut. *Asin*. 861 (*et al.*)
[6] **Sed...devinciendum**: Liv. 22, 22, 10 'itaque quos metus non teneat, *beneficio et gratia devinciendos esse*' **Hernicos**: Liv. 1, 53, 8 ; 2, 22, 3 (*et al*.); Cic. *Balb.* 13, 31; *De off*. 1, 11, 34

[7] Cum vero ex magistratu rediisset, quod videre licuit, non posita animi pristina protervia, sed aucta ambitione, iterato se turbulentissimum exhibuit. Nam per eum quidem diem, quo, pro vetere consuetudine, ludi agonales celebrabantur, orta inter nonnullos adolescentulos rixa et studiis partium plusculis circum tumultuantibus, presto affuit Porcarius vultu, gestu, manu, verbis, clamore omnia temptans, quibus insanum vulgus ad odium eorum, qui rebus preessent, incenderet atque ad arma concitaret. [8] Tantam hominis audaciam atque cupiditatem rerum novarum veritus Nicolaus, suis rebus mature consulendum censuit. Tamen ne quid pro suscepto instituto aggrederetur, quod non piissimi et misericordis esset, non extinguendam duxit hominis temeritatem, sed paulo cohercendam. Ea re hominem relegavit Bononiam, quove et relegati et suorum desideria leniret, si forte hic ulla rerum inopia excitaretur aut hi absentis misericordia moverentur, mandarat magistratibus Bononiensibus, ne quid homini deesse paterentur quod ad victum faceret, in ceteris observarent quid ageret, quid conaretur. [9] Homo impatiens sui, que olim per concionem apud cives inchoasset, nova cum temporum suorum ratione coniungens, deberi ab se fortune sue et animi generositati putabat, ut quocumque daretur pacto, vel etiam interitu, sin aliter nequiret, libertatem redimeret. At in eo instituto egregie pertinere arbitrabatur vel ad vite iocunditatem, vel ad gloriam posteritatis, si maxima et incredibili aliqua spe proposita caput periculo obiectasset. Quos idcirco visum est complices adiungit nepotemque imprimis adolescentem, cupidum atque ad ferrum perpromptum premittit Romam, ut meritoriam militiam simulans cogat armorum vim et consceleratorum manum, devinciatque quam possit multos multa spe rerum agendarum. Paratis rebus, constituta die, sese furtim proripuit atque ex Bononia nocte quarta applicuit Romam divertitque domum.

[7] **iterato se turbulentissimum**: Cic. *De or.* 2, 48 ‘Titius seditiosus civis et turbulentus’ **ambitio**: Sall. *Cat.* 3, 4 (*et. al.*) **ludi agonales**: Ov. *Fast.* 1, 318 ‘Ianus Agonali luce piandus erit’; 1, 324 ‘dies Agonales’; Serv. *Verg. Aen.* 1, 3 ‘Actia Litora…propter Augustum hoc dicit, qui illic ludos statuit agonales’ **vultu…temptans**: *cf.* Sall. *Cat.* 15, 5 ‘foedi oculi, citus modo, modo tardus incessus; prorsus in facie voltuque vecordia inerat’ **insanum vulgus**: Sall. *Iug.* 66, 2 ‘Vulgus, uti plerumque solet, ingenio mobili, seditiosum atque discordiosum, erat cupidum rerum novarum, quieti et otio advorsum’ **ad odium…incenderet**: Sall. *Iug.* 30, 3 ‘prorsus intentus omni modo plebis animum incendebat’

[8] **cupiditatem rerum novarum**: Sall. *Cat.* 28, 4 ‘plebem sollicitare, egestate simul ac dolore iniuriae *novarum rerum cupidam*’; 48, 1; *Iug.* 66, 2 **hominis temeritatem**: Sall. *Iug.* 7, 4 ‘proelio strenuus…ex audacia temeritatem afferre plerumque solet’ **rerum inopia**: Sall. *Cat.* 5, 7 ‘ferox inopia rei familiaris’

[9] **impatiens sui**: Sen. *Phaed.* 372 ‘semper impatiens sui’; Sall. *Cat.* 5, 5 ‘Vastus animus inmoderata, incredibilia, nimis alta semper cupiebat’ **libertatem redimere**: *cf.* Sall. *Cat.* 20, 6 ‘ Ceterum mihi in dies magis animus accenditur, cum considero, quae condicio vitae futura sit, nisi nosmet ipsi *vindicamus in libertatem*’ **caput periculo obiectasset**: Verg. *Aen.* 2, 751 ‘rursus *caput obiectare periclis*’ **Quos idcirco…agendarum**: Sall. *Cat.* 17, 1-2 ‘hortari alios, alios temptare; opes suas, inparatam rem publicam, magna praemia coniurationis docere. Ubi satis explorata sunt, quae voluit, in unum omnis convocat, quibus maxuma necessitudo et plurumum audacia inerat’; 17, 6 **meritoria militia**: Suet. *Vit.* 7 ‘meritorio coenaculo’; *Cal.* 39 ‘ meritoriis quoque vehiculis’; *Claud.* 15 ‘meritoria scorta’; Isid. *Etym.* 10, 182 ‘meritoriae tabernae: nam et milites, cum stipendia accipiunt, mereri dicuntur’

[10] Convocantur illico, quibus placere sua consilia noverat. Repente completa domo confluentium multitudine, excogitatam diesque multos elaboratam orationem pronuntiat tanta et sui fiducia et auditorum approbatione, ut nihil ad rem perficiendam nisi constitutum deesse tempus omnes affirmarent. [11] Cepit enim veterem Urbis gloriam deperditam deplorare et temporum iniurias detestari, que, si quid prisce gravitatis et virtutis in quoquam esset, non sinerent sine gravi periculo in lucem prodire; neque se omnino tamen penitere sui, quin satis de se patrie civibusque suis prestitisset, quo intelligerent unum se esse, qui suorum decus concupisceret, neque dubitare quidem se omnes eos qui adessent, quos esse viros fortes meminisset, digna fortibus optasse persepe atque cogitasse, sed aliis occasionem defuisse, aliis alia impedimento fuisse, cur privatis rebus magis quam publicis intenti essent. [12] Nunc pro certo habere hoc se: intellectis quae pararentur, rebus, fore neminem, neque ex his qui adsunt, neque ex his ad quos preclarissima sua consilia perventura sint, modo se aut Romanos cives aut saltem homines meminerint, quin de tota causa eadem sentiat, idem sibi expedire atque necesse esse affirmet, quod brevibus monstraturus sit. Opus esse animo parato non ad discendum modo que facto opus sint (ea enim iam tum quisque pro sua prudentia et malis urgentibus novisse potuisse), sed ad ea exequenda que necessaria utiliaque sint et cum eterna laudis et glorie celebritate coniuncta.
[13] Cumque paululum tacitus maximi doloris inditia vultu, gestu et suspirio dedisset, porrecta manu circumspectans rogavit an esset in tanto prestantissimorum et optime meritorum civium numero quispiam, cui suarum rerum, aut patrie status ulla ex parte placere, essetne quispiam, qui communes miserias posset sine lacrimis recensere. Egestatem, servitutem, contumelias, iniurias et eiusmodi iam tum peculiare malum et tolerabile factum esse assuetudine, et pro censu

[10] **Convocantur... affirmarent**: *cf*. Sall. *Cat*. 20, 1 ‘Catilina ubi eos, quos paulo ante memoravi, convenisse videt, tametsi cum singulis multa saepe egerat, tamen in rem fore credens univorsos appellare et cohortari in abditam partem aedium secedit atque ibi omnibus arbitris procul amotis orationem huiusce modi habuit’ [11] **prisce gravitatis**: Sall. *Cat*. 58, 12 ‘Quo audacius aggredimini memores pristinae virtutis!’; Tac. Hist. 1, 83, 1 ‘modestia et prisca gravitate’ **Neque...essent**: *cf*. Sall. *Cat*. 20, 2-3 ‘Ni virtus fidesque vostra spectata mihi forent, nequiquam opportuna res cecidisset; spes magna, dominatio in manibus frustra fuissent, neque ego per ignaviam aut vana ingenia incerta pro certis captarem. Sed quia multis et magnis tempestatibus *vos cognovi fortis fidosque* mihi, eo animus ausus est maxumum atque pulcherrumum facinus incipere’ **viros fortes**: Sall. *Cat*. 20, 9 ‘Quae quousque tandem patiemini, o *fortissumi viri*?’
[12] **Nunc...sentiat**: *cf*. Sall. *Cat*. 20, 11 ‘ Etenim quis mortalium, cui virile ingenium est, tolerare potest illis divitias superare, quas profundant in exstruendo mari et montibus coaequandis, nobis rem familiarem etiam ad necessaria deesse?’ **necessaria...coniuncta**: Sall. *Cat*. 20, 14 ‘En illa, illa, quam saepe optastis, libertas, praeterea divitiae, decus, gloria in oculis sita sunt’; 58, 8 ‘memineritis vos divitias, decus, gloriam, praeterea libertatem atque patriam in dextris vostris portare’
[13] **porrecta manu**: Cic. *De fin*. 1, 11, 39 ‘statua est in Ceramico Chrysippi sedentis porrecta manu, quae manus significet illum in hae esse rogatiuncula delectatum’; Apul. *Met*. 9, 18 ‘porrecta enim manu sua demonstrat’ **communes miserias**: Sall. *Cat*. 20, 3 ‘simul quia vobis eadem quae mihi bona malaque esse intellexi’ **Egestatem...degere**: Sall. *Cat*. 20, 8 ‘Itaque omnis gratia, potentia, honos, divitiae apud illos sunt aut ubi illi volunt; nobis reliquere pericula, repulsas, iudicia, egestatem’

modo inter suas erumnas in patria liceret degere. [14] Sed novum genus crudelitatis ab his, qui se piissimos dici velint, repertum esse: cives esse non licere, templa et aras maiorum intueri non habendum, licere, proscribi, relegari, necari insontes, totam Italiam refertam esse proscriptorum multitudine, Urbem civibus factam vacuam; nullos videri per Urbem, nisi barbaros; ad flagitium ascribi, qui amantissimum patrie profiteri se ausus sit. [15] Subinde acriter invectus in eos, qui rebus preessent, cuncta colligens que ad vituperationem et criminationem pertinerent, auxit invidiam et indignationem, quod sordidissimos et ignobilissimos plerosque omnes, qui se veluti deos venerari velint, nimia opum affluentia insanire multis modis ostenderet, cum cives ipsi meliori fortuna digni precario viverent. Sed intolerabilis conditionis istius culpam non plectendam in aliis, quam in se, si demum id malum sua ignavia diutius paterentur. Oportere quidem olim meminisse quid possit virtus, quanti sit non servum esse. [16] Quando istiusmodi rebus, que inprimis desiderentur, abunde omnia suppeditent, nihil relictum, quod amplius ad negotium exequendum desiderari possit: habere intra Urbem in armis conductos milites tercentos, adesse proscriptorum manum fortissimam quatringentorum; accedere et strenuos hosce, qui convenerint; adfutura et aliunde subsidia. [17] Ad ea que agantur multo paucioribus esse opus, quam sint qui coram adsint. Superos favere, populum congratulaturum, orbem terrarum admiraturum virtutem, nullam posteritatem suas laudes obliteraturam. Hostes contra, superis atque hominibus invisos, inter se dissidere, inermes, otiosos, luxu perditos, incautos. [18] Nihil reliquum esse, preterquam ut victorie fructum colligant. Decertationem, que in hac re habenda fuerat, satis esse peractam strenue, rebus bene consultis, et ea ipsa, quam in hanc usque diem habuissent, patientia. Consilio enim perfectum esse ut, etiam si repugnent hostes, superentur patientia, aut desidiosus et nullo labore conficiendus reddatur. Inter iam partam victoriam, que in manu sit, et laborum premia diem non plus unam interesse. Sustineant sua gaudia atque se ad cumulatissimas divitias capescendas parent. Decies centena millium nummorum aureorum noctem proximam allaturam. [19] Moveri tamen se magis patrie pietate

[14-15] **genus crudelitate**: Cic. *Phil*. 3, 4, 57 ‘nullum genus eum crudelitatis’; Id. *Pis*. 85 ‘crudelitatis tuae genus universum’ **cives…viverent**: *cf.* Sall. *Cat*. 20,7; 20, 11-12; 58, 13-14 ‘Quia illa foeda atque intoleranda viris videbantur, haec sequi decrevistis’
[15] **non servum esse**: Sall. *Iug*. 31, 2 ‘vos, Quirites, in imperio nati aequo animo servitute tolerari’
[17] **Superos...incautos**: *cf*. Sall. *Cat*. 20, 10 ‘Verum enim vero, pro deum atque hominum fidem, victoria in manu nobis est: viget aetas, animus valet; contra illis annis atque divitiis omnia consenuerunt’ **luxu perditos**: Ter. *Ad*. 757 ‘adulescens luxu perditus’
[18] **Nihil…colligant**: *cf*. Sall. *Cat*. 20, 10 ‘tantummodo incepto opus est, cetera res expediet’ **victorie fructum colligant**: Caes. *Gall*. 7, 27, 1 ‘fructum victoriae perciperent’ **Inter…interesse**: Sall. *Cat*. 20, 14 ‘divitiae, decus, gloria in oculis sita sunt; fortuna omnia ea victoribus praemia posuit’
Sustineant…allaturam: Sall. *Cat*. 21, 2 ‘Catilina polliceri tabulas novas, proscriptionem locupletium, magistratus, sacerdotia, rapinas, alia omnia, quae bellum atque lubido victorum fert’; 58, 9 ‘Si vincimus, omnia nobis tuta erunt: commeatus abunde, municipia atque coloniae patebunt’ **nummorum aureorum**: Liv. 39, 7, 1 ‘aureorum nummorum sedecim milia trecentos viginti’
[19] **Moveri…commoda**: Sall. *Cat*. 58, 11 ‘nos pro patria, pro libertate, pro vita certamus’

opibus: magis pendere ad civium suorum decus et felicitatem quam ad ulla, que sese attingant, commoda. Sui quemque consilii tamen futurum, quo pacto utatur victoria, quando se factos omnium quam dominos visuri sint. Hortari, ut patrie et nomini et bene ceptis consiliis atque communibus rebus animi virtute atque mutuo consensu obsecundent.
[20] Hec Porcarius. Cognitis apud pontificem, per indicem, que agerentur, visum est noctem ipsam dissimulare, quod intelligeret multos, occultandi facinoris spe, concursuros ad scelus noctu, si quid turbatum conscivissent, qui in luce quiescerent. Proxima idcirco die missis armatis expugnatur Porcarii domus. Ex complicibus coniuratorum aliqui capti. Solus Porcarii nepos, facta per medios hostes via ferro, sese eripuit. Ipsum Porcarium per eum insultum latitantem non invenere: nocte proxima inclusus a sorore scrinio repertus est. Ex capto que discenda videbantur didicere. Penas sumpsere suspendio.
[21] Que instituerat hec sunt. Per Epiphaniam, solemni die, cum pontifex et collegia, atque pretor et minores pontifices sacrum pro more facerent in basilica, ex complicibus cui negotium mandarat, fenisiceis et stramentariis, ad pontificia stabula basilice finitima iniecturus erat ignem, hac spe ut expediti ad opem prestandam, relicto sacrificio, accurrerent. Interea prodituras erat Porcarius dormitoria ex cella conscii editui proxima basilice, qua noctu cum armatis delituisset. Purpura et auro distincta veste amictus, cum paucis, ad spetiem uti ad sacrificium venisset, futurum non dubitabat quin apparitores ignari quid ita rediisset, illico nulla mora intromisissent.
[22] Utcumque res foret successura, armati et bipennes e vestigio affuissent, convolassent et qui signum ex variis insidiarum locis prestolarentur. Refractis cancellis primo impetu, pontificem revinctum, non sine cede eorum quos gravius odissent, decreverant ad arcem adducere et una fratrem eius qui arci preesset, ut his supplicibus cogerent arcem dedere. Arce occupata, futurum fuisse confidebat, ut summa eum alacritate populo fautore uteretur. [23] Interea, dum hec ad basilicam et arcem agerentur, alii complices, sese prefectos vigilium esse et captivos maleficos ducere in carcerem simulantes, Capitolium, cuius intra septum carcer est, custodiis vacuum liberrime iniissent ac sine periculo occupassent. Postremum erat ut predam atque cedem passim

[21] **fenificeis**: Varro, *Res. rust*. 1, 49, 2 ‘quo facto sicilienda prata, id est falcibus consectanda quae *faenisices* praeterierunt ac quasi herba tuberosum reliquerunt campum’; Colum. 2, 18, 4 ‘Sed iam *faenisicia* insequitur cura messis’; Plin. *Nat*. 3, 18, 259 ‘hoc est quae *feniseces* praeterierunt secari’ **stramentariis**: Cato *De re rust.* 10 ‘Falces fenariae tres, stramentariae sex’ **Dormitoria-cella**: Plin. *Epist*. 5, 6 ‘Dormitorium cubiculum’ **purpura...amictus**: Suet. *Nero* 25, 1 ‘sed et Romam eo curru, quo Augustus olim triumphaverat, et in *veste purpurea distinctaque stellis aureis* chlamyde coronamque capite gerens Olympiacam’; Curt. Ruf. *Hist. Alex. Magn*. 9, 7, 12 ‘lineae *vestes* intexto *auro purpuraque distinctae*’

facerent tota Urbe, ac decreverat quidem omnem pontificiam turbam funditus extinguere. Velle enim aiebat se id agere, ut eternum intra hec menia capitis rasi dentes vereri non oporteret.
[24] Qui rem honestant, templum non polluere, sed pro foribus basilice pontificem ad sacrificium <pontificem> euntem prehendere decrevisse predicant. Tandem quidem comperte sunt catene, quibus pontificem maximum erat illaqueaturus. Predam sic annumerabant. Ex pontificis domo et rebus ducenta milia, ex collegio ducenta, ex mercatoribus atque his qui officiis presunt ducenta, ex publicis horreis salinarum atque ex inimicorum civium fortunis centena milia.
[25] Moriturus: 'Ohe, tribus - inquit - diurnis horis me superastis ! Nos victoria in noctis vestibulo properans expectabat'.
[26] Itaque huiusmodi fuere pericula, que imminerent. Nos alii, veluti qui a tempestatibus maris ad incertos scopulos reiecti, periculi terrore et indignationis nausea confecti, nunc mare, nunc rupem spectamus et, quod aiunt perturbatum animum semper errare, cum alter alterum offendimus, uno aspectu et salutatione per omnes mentis motus distrahimur. Congratulamur, dolemus, rursus sumus in metu. Conflictus quidam est inter nos verborum et sententiarum : 'sic oportuit, sic institueram, sic futurum fuisset, sic fare statuo'; ad eamque, quam quisque tuendam suadendi rationem susceperit, non vera modo aut verisimilia, sed etiam, utcumque illa sint possibilia atque impossibilia, argumentis trahunt. Nihil est, quod aliis de rebus posse quispiam aut loqui aut cogitare videatur. Denique una omnes condolemus communem sortem.
[27] Me superi! Pre misericordia interdum lacrimas movent exterarum nationum homines nobilissimi et ornatissimi, Galli, Hispani, Germani, dum sic loquuntur: 'O nos miseros! Siccine patriam, parentes et dulces necessitudines et cara omnia relinquimus? Siccine pontificem sequimur, ut preda consceleratissimorum latronum simus, ut crudelitati atque furori immanissimorum obiiciamur? En priscos Camillos et Coruncanos, qui preter se, quoscumque intueantur, barbaros et cistiferos predicant! En cultam moribus et ornatam vite degende rationibus gentem missam celo ad orbis imperium bonis artibus moderandum! Quid facerent in sevissimos hostes? Quid perturbatis rebus ac perditis? Quid in ultima inopia et rerum omnium desperatione? [28] Toto in Latio pacate sunt res et quidvis potius expectabamus, quam in

[26] **Perturbatum…errare**: *cf*. Cic. *Tusc*. 3, 3, 5 'animus que aeger, ut ait Ennius, semper errat neque pati neque perpeti potest, cupere numquam desinit'
[27] **consceleratissimorum latronum**: Cic. *Sest*. 76 'subit tamen vim illam nefariam consceleratorum latronum' **Coruncanos**: Cic. *Planc*. 8, 19 'Ti. Coruncanio'; Id. *De sen.* 27 'Ti. Coruncanius' (Tiberius Coruncanius, the first plebeian pontifex maximus) **cistiferos**: Mart. 5, 17, 4 'Dum te posse negas nisi lato, Gellia, clavo/ Nubere; nupsisti, Gellia, *cistifero*'

alicuius Romani animum posset incidere, ut rebus novis se meliorem assecuturum fortunam arbitraretur. Ager cultus, Urbs facta aurea proximo iubileo, civium dignitas aucta, uti quisque postulandum a pontifice duxerat. Nulle exactiones, nulla nova vectigalia, summa iustitia, maxima ornande Urbis cura. Quid malum hoc est nimia felicitas? Homines non insanire modo bonorum copia, verum etiam in furorem verti? [29] Proh superi! Immeritos hospites - qui ex ultima, ut sic loquar, Thule, aurum, qui premia laborum omnium totius vitae huc conferant, erogent, profundant, qui id agant ut suis fortunis ociosi et inertes, uti sunt plerique omnes Romani cives laute splendideque degant, nulla iniuria accepta, nulla re alia offensi, preter unum id, quod egre ferant adventitios pre se cultiores videri - tot hominum millia, hore momento, nudare bonis, trucidare ac penitus perdere instituisse? Templum cede profanare, aram cruore funestare, collegia, sacerdotia, religionem funditus pervertere instituisse? Pontificem, cui maximi omnes reges pedem exosculari dignentur, sacrificantem abripere, trahere, trudere in catenas, atque necem instituisse? Ultra Sauromatas nimirum hinc fugiendum est; linquendum crudele celum et lares avaros'.
[30] Hec illi. Nos alii, qui etatem hic duximus, qui laudibus Urbis afficimur civiumque loco amore in Urbe sumus atque gerimus rem, non uti illi perturbato animo, sed ratione pensamus, et pro nostro officio admonemus: desistant paucorum culpa totam Urbem in odium adducere. Adesse enim graves et integros complures viros prisca dignos Roma. Neminem dari non pessimum, quin tranquillitatis et ocii sit cupidus. [31] Inter ceteras urbes Italas hanc non in postremis studiis bonarum artium esse deditissimam; preter paucos hosce male consultos, qui penam luerint stultitie, ceteros omnes eiusmodi esse, ut ad eos et dolor et periculum perturbationum multo pertineat magis quam ad nos. Urbem et dignitate et veneratione sua nobis incolis ornamento esse. [32] Nihil incidisse, cur alibi apud romanum pontificem versari commodius sit quam Rome; qua in urbe vel ad religionem, vel ad usum vite, vel ad voluptates omnia suppeditent. Accedere solertissimi principis sapientiam incredibilemque solertiam et collegii perspicaciam, quorum consiliis tutissimi futuri sumus. Futuros et superis diutinis omnium supplicationibus, uti hactenus fuerimus cordi et commendatos.

[28] **proximo iubileo**: Jubilee 1450 **maxima...cura**: Suet. *Iul*. 44, 1 'Nam de ornanda instruendaque urbe, item de tuendo ampliandoque imperio plura ac maiora in dies destinabat'
[29] **ultima Thule**: Verg. *Georg*. 1, 32 'numina sola colant, tibi serviat ultima Thyle' **Ultra...avaros**: Iuv. *Sat*. 2, 1-3 '*Ultra Sauromatas fugere* hinc libet et glacialem/ Oceanum, quoties aliquid de moribus audent/ qui Curios simulant et Bacchanalia vivunt' **pedem exosculari**: Suet. *Oth*., 12, 2 'Multi praesentium militum cum plurimo fleto manus ac pedes iacentis exosculati' (exosculari *cf.* Id. *Vit*. 7; *Cal*. 33)

[33] Tamen cum ista ita esse viri maturi omnes et loquantur et credant, fit nihilominus ut alia ex aliis repetentes, qui cautiores videri velint, sic interea statuant iterum atque iterum consulendum. Namque norunt quidem populares turbines facilius excitari quam sedari, et numquam non esse populos ad motum paratos, si adsit quem sequantur. Ex his, qui tantum facinus inchoarint, vix sex qui penas luerint, deesse. Ceteros, qui supersint, si qui sunt, qui esse et multi et varii dicuntur, pristinas, quibus movebantur, cupiditates non posuisse, sed adiecisse capitis tuendi sui curam ab vite discrimine in quo versari deputant se, offensa principis maiestate. [34] Tum et illud venit in mentem, raros forte inveniri, qui in istiusmodi facinoribus se auctores primarios prebere velint, qui autem secundo esse querant loco post primos periculi aggressores, inveniri quidem multos. Amoto idcirco primario, videri hos videntur, qui erant secundi, factos primos.
[35] Me quidem cum istos audio, neque me movent quas adducunt adducique possunt rationes, neque vehementer assentior. Video sane quo stent loco res ltalie. Intelligo qui sint, quibus hic perturbata esse omnia conducat. Memini tempora Eugenii, audivi Bonifacium et legi complurimorum pontificum adversos casus. Non ignoro primum, uti aiunt, inter porcos, qui grunnitum substulerit, hunc futurum principem omnium ad motum. Sed alia ex parte versatur ante oculos pontificis maiestas. Numquam ferme inventum a veterum memoria, ut qui pontifex arma odisset, in arma incideret. Hunc pacis esse studiosum, in principes plus satis facilem, ut extrinsecos impulsores non multum verear, et perinde intestina quidem malorum contagia non multum momenti habitura censeam. [36] Tamen quid de tota re statuam, quid de me consilii capiam, nondum constat, preter id, ut ex temporum eventu consilia in diem capturus pendeam. Vale.

[33] **turbines**: *cf*. Cic. *Dom.* 53 ‘Tu procella patriae, turbo ac tempestas pacis atque otii’; Id. *Pis.* 9 ‘In maximis turbinibus ac fluctibus reipublicae navem gubernare salvamque in portu collocare’
populos...paratos: *cf*. Sall. *Cat*. 37, 1 ‘omnino cuncta plebes novarum rerum’
[35] **Eugenii**: Eugene IV (1431-1447) **Bonifacium**: Boniface IX (1389-1404)
grunnitum…porcos: Cic. *Tusc.* 5, 40, 116 ‘Nec grunnitum audiunt quum jugulatur sus’; Nonius, 465,1 ‘“Grundire”...etiam hominum esse grunditum Caecilius Imbriis designavit: cruento ita ore grundibat miser’.

GIOVANNI PONTANO
Passages from the *De bello Neapolitano*

[The text is quoted from: L. MONTI SABIA, *Pontano e la storia. Dal* De bello Neapolitano *all'*Actius (Roma: Bulzoni, 1995)]

Book I

I. *The kingdom of Naples and Alfonso's death*
(1) Hoc regnante Italiae res maxime floruere: nam et bella multa fortissime gesta sunt, et bellis partim compositis, partim etiam confectis pax secuta est tranquillitatis atque opulentiae plena. (2) Haec aetas fortissimos duces, sapientissimos rerum publicarum administratores habuit viditque literarum studia magno favore, ingenti frequentia post tot saeculorum interiecta intervalla revocari; quam temporum felicitatem Alfonsi mors turbavit. (3) Hunc hieme in Apuliam profectum, dum aucupii ac venationis studiis capitur, morbus corripit, quo confectus, haud multis aestivum post solstitium diebus Neapoli interiit, aetatis suae annum agens quartum ac sexagesimum. (4) Alfonso mortuo Ferdinandus succedit, quem haeredem in regno Neapolitano pater instituerat, natum Valentiae, in Ispania citeriore, atque ex muliere susceptum, quam, Valentiae cum ageret, in deliciis habuisset.

II. *The controversial succession of Ferdinando*
(1) Reliquam Italiam, quae ab saltu Terracinensi per Equos Hernicosque ac Marsorum et Sabinorum montes in Picenum, ad hostia Truenti, pertinet, quod flumen in Hadriaticum sinum influit, quaeque supero etiam atque infero mari cingitur, Neapolitani eam Reges tenent, in qua Ferdinandus ex testamento successit. (2) Igitur Alfonso mortuo, reguli civitatesque missis oratoribus, Capuae conventu habito (nam pestilentia Neapolim infestabat) in Ferdinandi verba de more iuravere. Et quanquam omnia quieta apparebant, Rex tamen conventu dimisso, in Pelignos ac Marrucinos digressus, equitatu in itinere scripto, reliquum aestatis in Theatibus ac Ferentanis egit. Hinc rebus provinciae eius pro tempore compositis, in Apuliam, ubi hiemem agere decreverat, maturavit. (3) Interea Callistus Pontifex Maximus, Alfonsi beneficiorum immemor, cuius auctoritate atque opibus antea Cardinalis, post Nicolao quinto mortuo Pontifex creatus fuerat, perversa consilia et perfidiae piena adversus Ferdinandum agitare coepit clamque cum primoribus civitatum ac regulis agere de rebellione, divulgatis etiam epistolis, quibus Ferdinandum supposititium Alfonsi filium diceret, denique aqua et igni interdiceret, qui huius imperata facerent et in officio ac fide permanerent. Quod ni Callisti consilia mors interrupisset, ingens maximeque calamitosum conflatum iri bellum apparebat, quippe qui esset fluxa fide, pervicaci ingenio, variis consiliis, praecipiti ambitione. (4) Huc accedebat quod, dum assentatoribus patefacit aures, Borgio sororis filio ingentem dominatum in regno Neapolitano destinaverat. Sed Callisti consiliorum ac vitae finis idem fuit. Creatur inde Pius Pontifex, ad quem missi ab rege legati omnia pacata retulere, quin etiam haud multo post Latinus Ursinus Cardinalis cum amplissimis decretis Barolum in Apuliam venit, ubi iussu Pontificis collegiique Ferdinandum initiatum (uti moris est) coronaque donatum Regem declaravit, quae res popularium regni animos de bello iam dubitantes quietiora uti sperarent mirum in modum confirmavit. (5) Ipse interea amicos sociosque nunc per literas hortari, nunc per oratores rogare uti veteris amicitiae memores esse vellent, se bonum amicum, fidum socium futurum, ad cumulandam veterem benevolentiam, ad continendam societatem novas ubique causas, nova semper vincula additurum offerre, polliceri se paterno contentum regno suisque fortunis pacem atque ocium omni arte procuraturum, denique omnia quam bellum malle, illumque pro hoste habiturum palam dicere, qui bellum in Italia moliri pararet. (6) Adhaec in populos popularesque suos publice ac privatim nova beneficia conferre, vectigalia minuere, regulos benigne appellare, ornare muneribus decretisque, Ispanis, qui remanere apud se vellent, familiaritatem polliceri

suam, qui redire in patriam mallent, muneribus affectos ornatosque dimittere; Carolum patruelem, Navarrae principem, qui agente animam Alfonso res novas tentasse Neapoli dicebatur, quique ob conscientiam Alfonso mortuo navem, quae Neapolitano in portu in ancoris stabat, confestim ascenderat, benigne appellatum multa etiam amplaque per amicos pollicitus, nihil prius habuit quam persistentem in abeundi proposito conciliatum dimittere isque haud multis post diebus in Siciliam navigavit. (7) Demum Rex cuncta perspicere ac meminisse quibus amicos sociosque contineret, adversum populos regulosque non satis habens iustum sese ac liberalem gerere, nisi et illos ad bene et de se merendum invitaret. Non deerant tamen qui e regulis existimarent haec ipsa a Ferdinando simulanter fieri, quod iis ingenium eius a puero esset cognitum, nam et eum sese esse post manifesto declaravit: quae existimatio nonnullorum etiam procerum ac primatum regni animos ab illo, ut creditum est, avertit.

III. *Giovanni Antonio Orsini and Ferrante*

(1) Haec agenti, Ferdinando significatur Ioannem Antonium Principem Tarentinum clam rebus novis studere, quod Regem nequaquam fallebat, qui eius inconstantiam atque animum minime tranquillum noverat, quippe cui ab adolescentia seditiones, rapinas discordiasque gratas fuisse intelligeret. (2) Erat enim Ioannes Antonius vario et inconstanti ingenio ac parum firma amicitia; apud quem etiam sancti honestique non tantus respectus quantum studium quantaque erat cura assequendi eius quod animo destinasset, atque ut sui ipse parcissimus, sic contra alieni quam appetentissimus erat, utque in bello abunde timidus, sic in pace parum fidens suis aut amicorum opibus, quem longa et maxime quieta Alfonsi pax male habuerat. Sed ad quod intentus erat aliquando pervenire ut ad id posset, interim dum ingentem sibi pecuniam compararet nihil pensi habebat, et quanquam ipse timidus ac suspiciosus, gerendi tamen belli maxime avidus, utque in conserendis manibus minime strenuus, sic producendi belli egregius artifex. (3) Is igitur per finitimas civitates locaque opportuna clam summittere coepit qui aliis praemia, aliis delictorum condonationem promitterent, nobiles alias suae inopiae, alias gloriae maiorum admonerent, regulos, ut quenquam vel cupidum rerum novarum, vel aere alieno pressum, vel rei suae poenitere intelligerent, tentare, hortari, solicitare: multa pollicendo erigere, opes eius ostentare ne desinerent, denique belli eum auctorem ac ducem offerrent. His atque aliis animos hominum ad belli studia cum impelleret, in Galliam quoque ad Carolum Regem, in Provinciam ad Renatum, Genuam ad Joannem Renati filium mittit qui eos ad regnum armis repetendum hortentur; omnibus denique artibus participes, socios, duces consilii sui quaerit atque habere tentat. (4) At Rex, artes illius veritus, nunc per literas, interdum per oratores aut amicos operam dabat illum uti conciliarent, itaque blande appellando largamque de eo spem ac fidutiam ubique prae se ferendo, consiliis eius pro tempore obviam ibat. Quam tamen ille occasionem nactus (ut erat simulator atque dissimulator, arte non minus quam natura ad utrumque institutus), per speciem conciliationis postulare ab Rege coepit, uti Josiae generi sui, Julii patri, et Antonio Centiliae, cuius filio suam ipse despondere filiam pararet, quis illos oppidis, castellis agrisque Alfonsus spoliasset, ea uti cuncta restitueret. (5) Hac re diutius in senatu agitata, diversae cum essent patrum sententiae nec de Joannis Antonii fide quicquam exploratum haberetur aut bonae spei, tandem Rex honestum potius quam utile consilium secutus famaeque suae consulens, ne accusari unquam posset, quod per ipsum scilicet stetisset, quominus cum Joanne Antonio pax maneret, Josiae Hadriam Teramumque, Centiliae Crotonem, Catantiarium, quaeque alia oppida, agrisque aut huius aut illius fuerant, restitui iussit, missis ab Joanne Antonio, qui eius ea nomine acciperent.

IV. *Marino Marzano*

(1) Cum primis autem tum socium fidelem tum solertem ministrum invenerat Marinum Martianum Principem Rosanensem, cuius praeter genus vix erat quod bonus aliquis laudare in eo posset. Hunc Joannes Antonius pater adolescentulum, quod ingenio maxime perverso esse senserat, ab suo conspectu arcuerat, in filii locum non habiturus, ni Alfonsus Helionora filia ei in matrimonio collocata, magno etiam dominatu addito, in patris restituisset gratiam. Ac nihilominus pater dum viveret, filii foedum animum ac perversos conspicatus mores non semel

quidem suspiransque dixisse inter domesticos fertur fore ut is Martianam tandem familiam pessum daret. (2) lgitur Marinus hinc Regi suadere, quo Ispanos omnis regno eiiceret, neque enim fidendum illis esse consulereque uti per Italicos homines suosque populares regni res administraret, magnam inde Regem sibi benevolentiam et gerendis rebus fidem auctoritatemque conciliaturum; illinc Joannem Paulum Cantelmum, proximum sibi regulum, nobiles item multos in Campania Samnioque ad rebellandum diversis artibus pellicebat. (3) Post ubi vero satis prospere cedere consilia sua vidit, Ispanos palam insectari coepit, adhaec cum Honorato Caietano, qui Fundis finitimisque dominabatur in locis, simultatem primo exercere, post vero in manifestas inimicitias prolabi, quod illum Regi acceptum suisque consiliis offuturum maxime intelligebat; quin etiam adversus Galeatium Pandonum arma moverat, obsessis Capreatis, uti per hanc occasionem scribere exercitum liceret.

V. *Ferrante and the critical condition of the kingdom*

(1) Hic motus quae Tarentino mens esset futurumque haud multo post bellum indicavit, licet missis ultro citroque saepius legatis quieta utrinque nuntiarentur. Sed ille verbis quidem pacem velle, re autem bellum parare tempusque agitandae per speciem concordiae terere, dum quae agitabantur a coniuratis parata essent omnia. (2) Quocirca Rex animo vehementer angi diversaque secum consilia agitare, nec cui fidendum esset satis compertum habere; repetere animo veteres regni discordias, domestica populorum inter se odia regulorumque aut simultates, aut amicitias. Praeterita bella docere plane passe quantum in hominum animis polleret inconstantia ac levitas, quantum avaritia valeret ac vindicandi cupido; nec tantam aequi aut honesti curam, quantum utilitatis studium ac libidinis generi mortalium inesse: suas Tarentinique ac Renati opes iusta expendere, quid ab Gallis Gallicarumque partium studiosis, quid contra ab se sociisque terra marique geri posset cogitare ac metiri, denique quantum fortuna humanis in rebus polleat, quam varii rerum eventus essent, animo aestuanter volutabat.

VI. *John of Anjou wages war against Ferdinando and the queen Isabella defends Naples*

(1) Dum haec a Ferdinando geruntur, Ioannes, uti cum Tarentino coniuratisque convenerat, classe ab Renato patre in Provincia comparata instructaque, rebus Genuae compositis, idoneam ad navigandum tempestatem nactus, cum duabus ac viginti rostratis navibus, honerariis quatuor e Liguria solvit ac felici navigatione usus, paucis postquam solverat diebus, propter litus Formianum delatus inter Lyris ac Vulturni hostia, diebus aliquot in ancoris stetit, dum cum Marino Martiano quid primum agendum videretur statuit Tarentinumque de adventu suo certiorem facit. (2) Rebus igitur e communi sententia compositis, Falernum in litus descensione facta, Suessam a Marino deducitur, ubi magnificentissimo apparatu laetisque adeo popularium animis acceptus est, ut nihil in eum honoris praetermissum videretur, quod aut maiorem civium laetitiam, aut Marini vehementius declarare studium posset. Quae res Joannis animum magis magisque auxit atque accendit. (3) Ea potissimum tempestate iudicari plane potuit non fidem, non constantiam, non gratitudinem popularium animis inesse ullam, poenitere eos praesentis semper imperii, gaudere novis rebus, futura in expectatione habere, levitatem ducem esse atque auctorem ad postrema quaeque flagitia. (4) Rebellant cum Marino simul volentibus animis communi consensu complures Campaniae ac Samnitium populi. Non illos longae pacis ocium, quae etiam eorum, qui in militia educati sunt, relanguescere animos facit, non partae sub Alfonso plurimae divitiae, quarum comes voluptas desidiaque esse consuevit, non belli facies ipsa, quae eo terribilior magisque formidolosa apparet quo longior pax fuit, non denique agrorum securitas, ad quos relictis oppidis commigrarant, aut eorum desiderium, quae relinquenda erant, remorantur. Certatim undique ad rebellandum curritur. (5) Ipse vero Marinus contempto iure necessitudinis, omnis divinae et humanae rationis oblitus, spretis invitisque patris manibus, qui Alfonsi partes acerrime foverat, paternum tectis hostem accipit, addit sceleri nato tunc filio religionem compatratus, moxque in illius ac Renati patris nomen conceptis verbis, solennibus sacris, ante aras deo teste iurat, confestimque nullo indicto bello, hinc finitimos Capuae agros, illinc Lyri traiecto, propinquam regionem populationibus vastat.

Abigitur omnis generis rerum praeda ingensque captivorum trahitur numerus. Calvium quoque oppidum, corruptis qui illud proderent, capit ac praesidio firmat, et quam maxime potest metu ac formidine cuncta complet. (6) Augebat terrorem Regis absentia, nullo propinquo exercitu, nullo duce, qui gravibus ac repentinis malis iret obviam. Quocirca nihil tutum, nihil securum Neapoli aut finitimis in locis videri, metu in maius cuncta tollente. Deseri villae, relinqui aedificia, impuberes, senes, mulieres munita in loca passim trahi, fuga omnes sibi consulere, iumentis, pecoribus, carris vias oppidaque impleri, viderique omnia circumsonare armis atque equorum hinnitibus fremere, dum quotidianae tum populorum tum principum rebelliones nuntiantur, demum vanis etiam rumoribus oppida urbesque complentur. (7) Hanc tantam consternationem auxit confirmavitque classis, quae Ioannis iussu ante portum Neapolitanum aliquot diebus in ancoris stetit, prae se ferens spem rerum in urbe novandarum. Quod sentiens Isabella Regina, singularis animi matrona, urbem diurnis ac nocturnis praesidiis firmat, fortibus ac fidelibus viris quid agendum, quid cavendum esset praescribit, hostem a continenti equitibus per oram maritimam pluribus in locis dispositis arcet, portum erectis aggeribus ac muris eductisque ex arce ferreis aeneisque tormentis munit, nihil hosti ad offendendum terra marive aut opportunum relinquit, aut civibus quod idoneum ad propugnandum esset neglectum permittit. (8) Ipsa Neapolitanos nunc plures nunc singulos coram benigne appellat, fortes confirmat, timidos erigit, alium alia ratione cohortatur. Quin etiam Campanos coeterosque qui in fide perstabant, literis ac nuntiis bonum habere animum iubet, Regem propediem cum exercitu affuturum affirmat, demum pro re ac tempore necessaria parat ac pluribus simul prospicit.

VII. *Reactions to the news of John of Anjou's arrival*

(1) Fama interim Ioannis per regnum divagata multos, qui antea dubiis erant animis, ad rebellandum invitat: venisse virum florentem annis, regiis moribus, ex antiqua Neapolitanorum Regum prosapia, quorum merita passim a natu maioribus referebantur, contra alii Ispanae gentis impotentis animos, insatiabilem avaritiam, crudelem cum damnarent dominationem: venisse tandem, erant qui subiicerent, venisse iam, qui ab insolentissimo Catalanorum dominatu tot annis oppressos populos, spoliatas provincias dissipatum regnum a vi iniuriaque liberaret, cuius integritas, rectitudo, sanctitas diis aequaretur immortalibus. Haec igitur taliaque palam iactabantur passimque inibantur in civitatibus a rebellionum auctoribus consilia. (2) Apulia maxime in adventus eius expectatione erat. Civitatum principes nihil prius aut potius curabant, quam ut advenientem apertis portis acciperent. Augebant Ioannis nomen auctoritatemque Ioannes Paulus Cantelmus Dux Soranus, Nicolaus Monfortius Comes Campibassanus, nobilesque item multi et in iis <Ioannes> Sanframundius Comes Cerretanus, qui ad Ioannem statim ad primum adventus eius nuntium defecerant, et Caldorarum familia, cuius dominatus, quod in Pelignis, Marrucinis Ferentanisque potens pollensque et clarus esset, rebellionis suae fama ingentem Ioanni expectationem conciliaverant.

VIII. *The ambush in Teano*

(1) At Marinus, qui non iuvenili levitate magis quam execrabili in Ferdinandum odio descivisset, hostemque ab Liguria accitum classeque profectum finibus ac tectis accepisset suis, quo pacto Regem e medio tolleret animo aestuanter agitabat, hominum ac deorum immemor. Hoc dies noctisque versanti secum tandem per speciem colloquii adoriri illum placuit. (2) Quocirca Gregorium Coreliam multos sibi ante annos cognitum intimumque Regis familiarem a se arcessitum mitti clam ab Rege postulat, acturus cum illo de reconciliatione rebusque communibus. Quem ad se profectum blande appellans ac facti poenitentiam simulans rogat uti, compositis opera eius simultatibus, in Regis gratiam pristinumque benevolentiae locum restituatur. Vetera in se Alfonsi beneficia commemorat, pueritiam cum Ferdinando actam, tot liberos e sorore susceptos, iura divina et humana refert, Gallorum insolentiam detestatur, Joannem incusat nec se passurum affirmat liberos suos, duorum Regum nepotes, homini barbaro Gallicamque insolentiam in tenui etiam re prae se ferenti servituros. (3) Cum his mandatis plenus spei Gregorius ad Ferdinandum revertitur. Re in senatu agitata exquisitisque sententiis

cum Regis responso ad Marinum Gregorius redit. Quo saepius ultro citroque misso, dies tandem colloquio dictus est, quo dirimi omnem posse controversiam satis magna spes offerebatur. (4) Abest Theano circiter mille ac sexcentos passus, secundum viam militarem, vetus sacellum, a cuius fronte, qua meridiem spectat, campus patet pene nudus arboribus: hic ad colloquium delectus est locus. Ferdinandus, explorato itinere ac praesidiis dispositis, prior ad Turricellam (id loco nomen est) venit ac partitus copias peditatuque viarum angustias et loca superiora occupans, ne quid a tergo parum tutum relinqueret, equites in plano pluribus locis distribuit ac praesidiis firmat, hinc ad locum pedetentim progreditur, Gregorium ac Ioannem Vigintimilium comites secum ducens non tam consilio quam necessitate adductus. (5) Nam, cum Gregorium Marinus dirimendae controversiae medium adesse vellet, Rex Ioannem propter rerum gestarum famam prudentiaeque opinionem alterum deligere coactus est, quando duobus cum non amplius comitibus in colloquium utrinque veniendum convenerat; et Ioannes quidem propter aetatem pugnae parum idoneus, Gregorius vero imbecillo corpore ac dextro brachio pene inutilis erat, quod Marinus futurum prospexerat. (6) Postquam igitur ventum ad locum est, Ioannes ac Gregorius una cum Deiphobo Anguillaria et Iacobutio Montagano delectis a Marino comitibus, quibus cum consilia communicasset quodque facinoris essent conscii, ad viam haud procul a sacello remansere. Illi in campum uterque armatus, uterque equo insidens circiter nonaginta passus ab via soli, communibus de rebus disceptaturi processerant. (7) Rex aliquanto editiorem in campo locum cum cepisset, unde circum omnia lustrare oculis late poterat, a Marino est monitus humiliorem in locum equum ut demitteret, ne a Gallis, qui Theani arcem tenebant, despectari possent. Quod dictum Regis animum vehementer pupugit, suspicati insidias paratas seque fraude peti. Quam suspicionem Marini oratio mirum in modum confirmabat, cum ita esset exorsus, uti omnem semper in Regem ab se culpam reiiceret, nullam vero ipse Regis excusationem aut causam acciperet. (8) His altercantibus cum aliquantum temporis extractum esset, Deiphobus (sic enim convenerat) ad Joannem Gregoriumque conversus vultu quam maxime composito: ‘Quando - inquit - Marinus (quod felix ac faustum sit) res ex animi sententia cum Rege suas composuit, an ipse quoque meas compositurus Regem supplex adire ultra morabor?’ adactoque statim equo solus in Regem ferebatur. (9) Venientem conspicatus Rex animadvertit quo propior fiebat magis magisque se versus ad dextram declinare apparebatque hostili eum ingressu ferri. Et iam eo progressus erat ut Rex quem strictum ille quoad poterat pugionem occultabat conspiceret, quo conspecto cum Deiphobus tantum non in Regis equi habenas illatus esset, Ferdinandus confestim stricto ense atque animo quam confirmatissimo in illum primum, mox in Marinum equum concitat ac nunc hunc, nunc illum, nunc utrunque simul cominus petens, ambos in fugam vertit, cum interim Iacobutius Ioannem Gregoriumque armatus ipse pugnae inutiles facile continet. (10) Quod equites conspicati qui in speculis dispositi erant, sublatis clamoribus, praesto fuere. Illi ad suos quam maxime citatis equis delati re infecta non tam tristes abeunt, quam Regis fortitudinem admirati suspiciunt. Ferdinandus incolumis a suis exceptus, ingentis animi plenus in castra revertitur. Illud deorum potius quam hominum consilio factum videtur, ne rogantis Regis, cum primum in via obviam facti sunt, uti galeae fibulam Deiphobus ei substringeret gladio iugulum ille aperuerit. (11) Postero die Rex et aliquot insequentibus diebus, productis copiis, populabundus in agrum Sidicinum proficiscitur coactaque e propinquis oppidis satis magna agrestium manu, quacumque it, ferro cuncta vastat. Inde in Stellatem progressus, ad balneas usque Sinuessanas quaecumque in agris erant corrumpit, parcitur tamen aedificiis ignique temperatum est: eripi enim hosti victum, non exuri aedificia, quae longa paravisset pax, volebat. (12) Forte accidit ut, cum praetervectus equo locum Rex esset, ubi cum Marino congressus fuerat, pugionem humi repertum eques ad eum ferret, qui Deiphobo inter congrediendum exciderat: erat autem veneno intinctus tabidisque medicamentis delibutus, quo quamvis leviter ictus cum esset catulus, statim veneno exedente concidit. Haec res maximam in primis Marino invidiam conflavit. (13) Videri enim supra hominum improbitatem facinus indignum et atrox, Regem, cuius nomen apud mortales sanctum esset, fraude ac veneno ab illo circumventum. Non fidem apud eum, non necessitudinem, non quod in Regis nomen volens libensque iurasset, non deum metum locum habuisse ullum, spretam, contemptam, pessum eodem facto datam famam, pietatem,

gratitudinem, religionem, nihil illum in dea, nihil in hominibus credere adversum scelera esse repositum. Haec gravioraque adversus Marinum ab amicis inimicisque aeque iactabantur.

IX. *Siege and battle of Sarno*

(1) Sarnum in adeso montis latere positum arcem in summa habet dorso quam munitissimam. Sub ipsum autem montem suburbium iacet, in longum porrectum, habitatoribus frequens. Ab ipso suburbio in via Nolana occasum versus circiter mille et sescentos passus, sub inflexi radicem montis fontes scatent, qui statim minime vadosum fluvium, qui et ipse Sarnus dicitur, constituunt, quo in loco porta est turri subiecta. Eum autem locum 'Fauces' incolae vocant. Ab altera etiam suburbii parte ad solis exortum, qua Salernum versus est iter, fontes alii manant, qui coeteris immisti fontibus toto passim suburbio scatentibus, alterum et ipsum nequaquam vadosum flumen efficiunt. (2) Hi amnes, solis alter ab occasu, ab exortu alter se se petentes ex obliquo in meridiem, mare versus prolapsi per culta circiter duobus millibus passuum ab ipsis fontibus coniuncto simul alveo confluunt in mare, quod a confluente quidem ipso circiter sex millibus passuum abest. Quod medium interiectum est agri fluminibus insulae pene in modum cingitur, a septemtrione perpetuis ac minime perviis montibus clausum. Ager ipse vitibus atque oleis consitus, pabulo quoque abundat plurimo. (3) ltaque in hanc tanquam insulam cum se hostis recepisset, fluminibus ac montibus perinde ac munitionibus se tuebatur. Ferdinandus sub confluentem in silva, cui Longulae nomen est, castris positis, quo arctius hostem premeret, structo ponte, a frumentatione, quod maturae iam erant segetes, atque a pabulatione hinc atque illinc arcere hostem statuit idque eo erat facilius quod castellum Sancti Martiani valde confluenti proximum Regi parebat. (4) Igitur strato ponte, assiduis discursionibus hostem adeo vexabat, ut is obsesso persimilis videretur. Quocirca fremere eques, timere duces, ipse Tarentinus sibi diffidere et iam de nocturna fuga cogitare, esse etiam qui se Regi per amicos conciliare clam studerent, alii qui transfugere pararent, cuncta demum piena esse terroris atque formidinis. [...] (5) Rex eo acrius instare, ne annona comportari Sarnum posset summis viribus conari, arcere hostem a pabulationibus, prohibere frumentationes, dies noctesque id agere, quo nihil hosti tutum, nihil quietum relinqueret. (6) Forte accidit levi ut certamine inito Petrus Hubaldinus, eques regius, ab hoste caperetur. Is (uti moris nunc est) exutus armis atque adempto equo ad Regem remissus, retulit satis se exploratum habere, occupato clam monte a peditatu, deinde per effractam quae ad Fauces esset portam immisso equite diripi, qui ex hostibus ad suburbii consedissent caput, haud magno conatu posse, quo hosti inflicto vulnere fore uti castris intra Fauces translatis, hostem fame confectum paucis diebus ad se dedendum Rex compelleret. (7) Quo audito, convocatis ducibus, cum singulorum ipse sententias exquireret, Simonectum huiusmodi orationem habuisse accepimus. (8) 'Qui dominari in bello fortunam dicunt, Ferdinande Rex, non temere illi quidem mihi et sentire videntur et dicere, non quod belli administrationem victoriaeque eventum in manu fortunae collocatum existimem, sed quod in conserendis praecipue manibus, propter ea quae repente accidunt, numquam satis prospici ab imperatoribus aut consulendo queat aut, ubi consilium captum est, strenue rem graviterque gerendo. Quo enim consilio, aut quanam prospicientia equorum confossiones, militum transfugia, falsi rumores, male accepta imperia, coeli tempestates, locorum iniquitates in itinere faciundo, equitum, centurionum, tribunorum, aut imperatoris ipsius casus in conserendo praelio aliaque huiuscemodi prope innumerabilia aut provideri, ne accidant, aut postquam accidere, ne damno sint, satis utique perspecte poterit, cum nullum persaepe ad prospiciendum spatium, propter temporis exiguitatem, nulla opportunitas ob rerum difficultatem imperatori relinquatur, nec idem ipse et hic et illic uno in tempore adesse, nec plura simul aut imperare aliis, aut administrare ipse valeat? (9) Equidem ego ita se habere rem non magis magistro ab aliquo in scholis quam ipso ab usu, qui humanarum actionum optimus ac sapientissimus magister est, doctus affirmare audeo, quippe qui iam sexagenarius quam militiam adolescens sequi coepi, eam adhuc sequor. Quo interim tempore animadversum a me est non semel etiam levissimum casum ex victo victorem, ex victore victum exercitum reddidisse. (10) Tot igitur annorum usus, et haec, quam videtis, aetas abunde me monere debent, nequid temere incipiendum, nequid

inconsulto audendum consulam. Velie autem tentare fortunam eius esse arbitror, cuius res angustae cum sint, spes etiam longe angustior in dies futura videatur. Quod ego consilium Ioanni Tarentinoque, quorum res deteriores in dies futuras arbitror, sequendum potius iudicem. Nobis dies ipsa meliora atque secundiora cuncta promittit, dum tanquam saeptis hostem clausum ac circumsessum habemus, nobis stando, ne dicam cunctando, augetur auctoritas, duplicantur vires et tantum non captum hostem fama ipsa, qua bella maxime constant, per regnum atque Italiam divulgabit; illis contra omnia cum suis nostrisque contemptui aeque sint. (11) Stando, Felicem, id est Salernum Nolamque, utramque nobilem, utramque maxime opportunam urbem, recuperavimus; stando hostem paulo ante ad obsidendam Neapolim festinantem, de fuga ut cogitet sitque de propria etiam salute sollicitus (quod videtis) iam coegimus, cum interim classis quae oram hanc maritimam metu sui concusserat, ludibrio haberi coepit; stantibusque hic nobis pene auditi fuerint classiariorum militum clamores atque heiulatus aut iugulum Surrentinis praebentium, aut praeruptissimis e rupibus in mare se praecipitantium, quo insequentium gladios fugerent. Nobis Neapolis et oppida urbesque vicinae annonam, equos, arma, recentem peditem, recentem equitem sumministrant. Quarum rerum illis non modo nulla est commoditas, aut copia, sed haud sciam, an eorum desiderium relictum sit ullum, cum Apuliam Peucetiosque ac Salentinos, tot montes ac valles, tot nostra oppida ab illis distrahant. (12) Demum a pugna continendo, pugnantium finem, id est victoriam, absque ullo nostro periculo consequemur, cum illis vero satis bene actum fuerit si (quod unum cogitare ac meditari possunt) nocturna fuga concessa fuerit per loca difficilia, praerupta, aspera, magnaque ex parte nobis parentia, quanquam etiam fortissimis peritissimisque ab imperatoribus usurpatum esse scio fugienti hosti pontem quoque vel ex argento constituendum esse. (13) Quam ob rem cum dimicandi nulla immineat nobis necessitas, censeo a prelio continendum, nec praebendam hosti bene gerendae rei occasionem. Et quoniam quanto arctius sese pressum senserit, tanto est amplius de fuga cogitaturus, etiam censeo uti occupato monte, qui Faucibus imminet, castra sub ipsum montem ad caput fluminis cis ripam transferantur, quo pabuli atque annonae difficultate coactus hostis (quod unum reliquum est) nocturnae fugae consilium ineat'. (14) Rex probata Simonecti sententia statutoque ad peragendum negocium tempere, peditatum quanto potest maiorem comparat, veteranos evocat, novos etiam equites scribit, quid hostis paret, quid consulat, per transfugas captivosque explorat, qui montem lustrent, aditus vestigent, semitas inquirant, fidelibus et strenuis viris negocium dat. (15) Satis etiam constat, Ferdinando clam significatum esse Pium Pontificem mutata sententia decrevisse medium sese belli eius gerere, clanculumque Simonecto iniunxisse uti paucos post dies in Samnites Beneventumque, quae Pontificis ipsius urbs esset, exercitum traduceret atque eo cognito Regem decrevisse fortunae res e vestigio committere, fare ratum, superior si evaderet, uti victoria ipsa in partes eius Pontificem retraheret, sin secus cessisset, uti cum iram in illum provocaret hostium, tum illum ipsum ad vindicandi cupiditatem, quod postea secutum est. (16) Quocirca, quae faciendo praelio necessaria essent, summa ea cum celeritate comparari iussisse. Illud vero a Simonecto impetratum, differret abitum e castris, quoad suos Rex per oratores tentasset, posset ne Pontificem ab eo proposito dimovere. (17) Itaque ubi parata esse omnia suaque consilia latere hostem Rex sensit tribunis ducibusque convocatis imperat, uti quam maximo silentio de secunda vigilia curo exercitu instructo paratoque ad signa assint. (18) Quid ipse paret, quid fieri a quoque velit, singulos edocet, huiusmodi etiam oratione cohortatus: 'In omni re bellica, fortissimi viri, quod usus ipse docuit, plurimum occasio valet, quam optimus quisque imperator summa studio ac celeritate complecti debeat, quippe cuius ea natura est, ut ardua in planum facile vertat. Eam igitur nos capere ac sequi maxime utile atque in primis cautum consilium reor, sed in omni occasione capienda inceptisque prosequendis duo potissimum servanda sunt: alterum, quod factu opus est, mature id ut fiat (quid enim occasione brevius aut fugacius est?); alterum, ut suo quodque geratur ordine, quando in re praesertim militari nihil ordine ipso potius ac maius est. Nam confusio ac trepidatio praeterquam quod periculosa, gerendis quidem rebus maxime etiam contraria est. Neque enim aut unum aut alterum tantum praelium, quanquam consilio ac ratione susceptum, infeliciter tamen cessisse invenias, magis ob imperia non eo quo tradita erant ordine servata, quam ob militum virtutem atque adversarum partium imperatoris industriam. (19) Quocirca nequaquam a me cohortandi estis, ut in conserendis manibus fideliter

ac fortiter rem geratis, quippe cum fidem virtutemque vestram in multis magnisque difficultatibus plane perspectam habeam, neque uti ductando exercitu iter maxime exploratum habere studeatis, cum hostis ipse quam proximus sit et quae exploranda essent, cuncta sint a me diligentissime explorata. (20) Quid etiam mihi in animo sit, quid faciundum decreverim quaeque se nobis occasio offerat, iusta mecum tenetis. Verum illud unum, illud inquam unum moneo, hortor, rogo et pro iure etiam meo impero, ut quae a me praescripta sunt, eorum memores, ad capiendam occasionem, quam prope tenemus in manibus, atque (ut verius dicam) omnino iam tenemus, ordinem adiungatis. (21) Ego ipse pro loco ac tempore adero. An fortasse verendum est, exercitatissimi viri, ne hostis, cognito consilio nostro, instructus paratus atque in acie armatus offendatur? Satis compertum, satis exploratum et cognitum habeo, praeter paucos admodum, qui pro statione noctu excubant, coeteros omnis per oppidum dispersos sub tectis quenque, flumine ac montibus fretos, somnos etiam ignavissimos ducere. (22) Antequam somno expergiscuntur, armis instruuntur, equi frenantur tribunumque quisque ac ducem suum pedes, eques convenit, metu ac repentina re attonitus, nos occupato monte, effractis portis adituque reserato, voti compotes, locum castris ceperimus. Quo capto nobis in acie stantibus eo castra transferentur, quibus positis, reliquum est uti non horam quietam, non locum ullum securum hosti relinquamus; neque multum tempus dabitur, dum aut sese nobis dedat, aut necessitate compulsus fuga sibi quam maxime periculosa consulat'. (23) Hac oratione accepta tribuni ducesque ad imperata quisque facienda properans, paulo post instructo cum exercitu, magno etiam silentio assunt. Rex peditatum praemissis itineris ducibus montem circuire ac, superato iugo, sine ulla trepidatione inde descendere interim equitem procedere paulatim atque sub signis iubet. (24) Ubi vero tempus visum est, quo pedes destinatum ad locum pervenisse iam poterat, dato signo Robertum Ursinum lectis cum equitibus superare Fauces imperat. Ille egregie navata opera, citato equite, in hostium stationem illatus alios semisomnes capit, alios resistentes vulnerat ac paulo post in fugam actos suburbium versus acriter urget. Roberto urgente gregarius miles, qui eum secutus erat, praedae intentus nihilque ad praescriptum gerens, tabernacula diripere, equos a praesepibus dissolvere seque equosque sarcinis honerare statim coepit, ac tanquam fugato hoste praeda honustus ad Fauces atque in castra regredi. (25) Rex, id quod erat veritus, dari tempus hosti ad arma capienda, aliquot turmas cum summisisset, ipse reliquo cum exercitu pro Faucibus expectare decrevit. (26) Interea hostium duces fugientium ac pugnantium clamoribus exciti, re cognita, propere accurrunt, suos hortantur ac, praemissis qui impetum sustineant, ut quenque sors obtulerat, acies instruunt ac paulatim alias atque alias equites summittunt. (27) Robertus ubi sustinere impressionem nequit, cedere pedetentim coepit. Urgebat enim cum lectissimorum manu equitem Ursus atque acri coepta pugna summis utrinque viribus de loco pugnatur. Hinc Robertus, illinc Ursus dum suos hortantur, dum fortiter rem gerunt, parum abfuit quo minus uterque suo ab adversario caperetur. (28) His rem pene intra globum gerentibus regiisque in arcto propter locorum ignorantiam pugnantibus, ab hostium ducibus leva dextraque, hinc pedites, inde equites summittuntur. (29) At Rex, cum intellexisset suos in arcto premi, maiorem equitum manum subsidio ire iubet. Hostium vero pedites in angustiis viarum implicitos inter se regios conspicati alii hastis eminus aut sclopetis, alii cominus gladio suffossis aut vulneratis equis, ipsos equites partim deiiciunt, partim in fugam vertunt. Locorum peritia hostem maxime adiuvabat; regius vero vix e via egredi, illic omnes cogi aliisque atque aliis subsidium ferentibus in unum simul cuncti coire. (30) Quod adversarius ubi vidit, ab dextra sinistraque acrius illum premere, conari etiam a tergo invadere atque ab reliquo exercitu seiungere. (31) Quod Rex veritus, suos referre pedem paulatim iussit. Primis igitur, dum partim pedem referunt, partim etiam terga vertunt, fugam iam parantibus, postremis autem in acie stantibus, cum locus ipse explicandis ordinibus haudquaquam satis esset, hostium duces eo atrocius urgere incipiunt. Illi a tergo, hi ab latere plures singulos liberi impeditos, recentes saucios circumsistunt. (32) Hic vero ingens strages equorum atque hominum a sclopetariis edita, qui ab Rege propter stipendia non statim exoluta initio obsidionis ad Joannem transfugerant. Inter alias atque inter primos Simonectus cadit. Robertus vulnere in ore accepto vix hostium elapsus e manibus ad Regem, qui extra Fauces in loco paulo editiore instaurare pugnam parabat, se recipit. Coeteri magna e parte capti.

(33) Rex magna exercitus parte exutus, cum nullum in pedite praesidium esset, quippe cuius nulla in toto praelio extitisset opera, cum neque locum tenuerit neque imperium servaverit neque, ubi tempus ferebat, pugnae affuerit, summis tamen viribus anniti, quod unum erat reliquum, ne hostes Faucibus prodirent. Quocirca prensare fugientes, confirmare integros, hortari, rogare locum tuerentur: superesse tot lectos equites, tot etiam recentes turmas, adventare e castris subsidia, si viri esse velint, non hostium modo impetum repressuros, verum etiam si Faucibus egrediantur, magna etiam illos clade affecturos. (34) Ipse in hostem proficisci ac nunc his, nunc illis se ostentare, cum interim ex iis qui in praesidiis collocati erant quique postremos tenebant ordines, multi signa locumque deserere seque fugae dare coeperunt, quod hostium duces cum animadverterent tanto se impetu e Faucibus proripiunt, ut regii vix primo congressu sustentato in fugam se quam laxissimis habenis dederint. (35) Hostes statim in castra profecti, cum vacua ea defensoribus invenissent, capta diripiunt, pauci trans pontem, Nuceriam finitimaque in loca se recipiunt. (36) Regem Neapolim versus fugientem haud multi secuti, reliqui pene omnes aut in prelio, aut in fuga, aut in ipsis castris ad quae post praelium refugerant, ignaviter capti. Magnus captivorum omnis generis fuit numerus. Direptis castris ingens tum rerum aliarum, tum argenti atque auri praeda Sarnum perlata. (37) Hanc cladem non vatum modo praedicta et eorum qui rerum coeli periti sunt, verum prodigia quoque praecessere. Nam et veterum fatiloquorum carmina passim recitabantur, quibus Regi clades obnuntiabatur et mathematicorum minae vulgo ferebantur. (38) Pridie etiam quam pugnatum est, toto ferme die corvorum greges praetorium obvolitavere conclamantes ac proximis insedere arboribus. Rex ipse praetorium egressus equo repente concidit. Diversis locis, alibi sanguine, alibi oblitis cinere guttis pluisse nuntiatum est notatumque foliis holerum eas guttas insedisse. Nostra tamen tempestate haec aut animadvertere, aut procurare religiosum est.

X. *The Angevin captains'speeches after the victory of Sarno*

(1) Die quae insecuta est, cum a Ioanne Tarentinoque coacto senatu quid de captivis statuendum, quo primum arma inferenda essent consultaretur, de captivis vicit eorum sententia, qui censebant uti triremibus impositi, Massiliam deportarentur, nisi finito bello in Italiam non remittendi. De prosequendo vero bello duae cum essent sententiae, altera uti ad obsidendam Neapolim statim admoveretur exercitus, altera uti finitima prius oppida quique in Regis fide reguli persistebant tentarentur, huius quidem Tarentinus, prioris vero Ioannes Coxa auctor erat, cui plerique assentiebantur. (2) Eumque ita locutum accepimus: 'Siquam nobis perficiendi belli rationem hesterna ostendit victoria, eam ipsi sequi atque oblatam a diis immortalibus capere occasionem volumus. Dicam audacter, fortissimi duces, die crastino hostem Neapoli circumsessum atque haud multo post cum ipsa etiam urbe expugnatum videbimus. Quantum igitur sedendo ac consultando temporis ipsi absumimus, tantum a belli fine per negligentiam atque ignaviam volentes absumus; qui, si quo impetu in hostium castra irrupimus, eadem alacritate fusos atque in fugam versos secuti essemus eodem cursu, aut Rege ipso in fuga capto, aut fugienti itinere intercluso, in magnam (mihi credite) occupandae ex improviso Neapolis occasionem incidissemus, secura et pene ociosa civitate, dum Sami circumsessos nos ac tantum non captos in porticibus ac compitis inaniter gloriantur. (3) Sed quod vel militum labore vel praedae studio aut laetitia ipsa (quae praecludere hominum solita est consilia) omissum est aut peccatum, id quam primum ut corrigamus, nostrum quidem est, aut si corrigi minus potest (quando quod factum oportuit, frustra de eo faciendo consilium nunc initur), saltem quod reliquum est quodque in nostra adhuc manu positum, celeritate pensemus. (4) Quamobrem quoniam (quod in omni bello maximum videtur) profligatum in acie adversarium de se vallo murisque turando cogitare iam coegimus, quid reliqui superest, nisi uti moenibus inclusum obsidione eum quam artissima cingamus? Quo quidem circumsesso, quid opis, quid spei reliquum, quid animi esse potest iis, qui eius partes hactenus sunt secuti? Itaque cum una sit regni caput Neapolis, in quam Ferdinandus amisso exercitu pene solus refugit, non tam (ut arbitror) aut moenibus fretus aut civium benevolentia, quam arce ipsa fidens, in quam non est dubitandum quin, ubi muris castra admota senserit, confestim se includat metu territus ac nobilitatis odium timens, cuius bona pars ad nos transierit, quae nam causa est, quae, inquam,

est causa, fortissimi duces, cur non crastino die, albescente coelo, avulsis signis ad eam obsidendam exercitum rapiamus? (5) Nobis integrae sunt vires, miles victor et (quod maximum est) fortunae ipsius favor adest hominumque voluntates, eodem semper quo fortuna inclinantium. Contra Regi effoetae vires, exhaustis Alfonsi thesauris, milite, qui ei fidelis esse poterat, et strenuo quoque capto, reliquis, quos fuga tutata est, inermibus quosque optandum sit Neapolim se post fugam clademque recepisse, aliquem illic tumultum ob famem inopiamque excituros. (6) Videlicet maritimum aliquod auxilium paratum est Ferdinando? Atqui mare a nobis tenetur. An fortasse terrestris alias copias, quas adventare fama sit, subsidio venturas expectat, cum nec ullae quidem ipsae sint et quicquid illinc trans Capuam, hinc cis Acerras agrorum atque oppidorum est nobis pareat et armis circum clausa omnia teneantur a nostris? (7) Reliqua est una illi civium benevolentiae spes, qua firmissima obsidionem tamdiu cives tolerent, dum ex Ispania ab Ioanne patruo aut a Pio Franciscoque ex Italia mari terrave is mittatur exercitus, qui aut metu sui solvi a nobis obsidionem aut viribus congressus cogat. De spe quidem civium (ut dicam quod sentio) imperium Catalanorum quam omnes oderint, iusta mecum tenetis et res ipsa docet. In nobilitate vero quid certum habere aut constitutum in ea Ferdinandus potest, cuius maior pars odio illum prosequentes sponte ad nos transierint? (8) Nam de auxiliis vestrum erit iudicium. Quid enim in Ioanne patruo, rege non modo paupere, verum etiam inopi, repositum esse praesidii potest? Quae ab hoc auxilia expectari, praeter paucas admodum triremes easque captivo instructa remige? (9) Quod vero ad Pium et Franciscum attinet, etiamsi maxime cupiant, quae tamen auxilia aut tanta mitti ab eis possunt, ut vel perrumpere tantum montium ac fluviorum valeant, nobis aditus omnes armis circumsaeptos tenentibus, Picininoque cum validissimis copiis obsistente? Aut tam praesto ea esse, ut non quod aestatis reliquum est interim prolabatur, hiemsque mox inhorrescat? Quo tempore an dubitatis Neapolim aut vi expugnatum iri a nobis aut partium studiis sponte imperium accepturam, cum interea quae in Calabria, Marsis, Pelignis, Marrucinis reliqua in fide Regis manent oppida, audita exercitus eius strage, cognita Neapolis obsidione, ultra mittent qui sese nobis accepto imperio dedant? (10) Adhaec Neapolim obsidere quid est aliud quam Pium Franciscumque ab incepto deterrere atque abstrahere, reputantes frustra se de mittendis auxiliis cogitare tam brevi tempore, tanto terrarum spatio, omni itinere atque aditu intercepto? Contra vero hortari atque incitare, ubi dari a nobis Ferdinando spatium senserint ad comparandam pecuniam, ad restituendum exercitum, ad ipsa denique auxilia commode tutoque expectanda? (11) Ac tandem siqui sunt qui adversus Ferdinandum moliri aliquid parent, quos non paucos esse quotidiana nobilium docent transfugia, deterrere eos animumque et vires adversariis adiungere? Quae cum ita se habeant, an cunctamini, fortissimi duces, ad obsidendam Neapolim propere castra ducere, quo fortuna, quo coeli favor nos vocat, ac regni ipsius caput coactis in unum viribus petere, ut contusa, mox etiam excisa anguis cervice, reliquum corpus truncum atque exanimum relinquamus?'.

(12) Quae ubi Coxa dixit, cum qui aderant et ipse in primis belli dux Ioannes, pars vultu, verbis alii probare viderentur, contra ea Tarentinus in hanc sententiam locutus dicitur: (13) 'Neque importune, duces, neque parum considerate paulo ante Ioannes Coxa de obsidenda Neapoli totaque belli mole eo vertenda disseruit, quippe quae regni caput neque multis ante annis ab Alfonso capta victoriam illi decusque pepererit ac regnum universum in pace officioque stabilierit. (14) Verum enim cum eo mihi de genere obsidionis parum omnino convenit, quippe cum exercitum propere muris admovendum censeat, ego vero longe aliam sequendam rationem statuam et cur ita statuam, multa me simul movent, primum urbs ipsa, eo loci sita ut praeter non multum campi, quod ab ortu solis muris adiacet, coetera omnia libera ab obsidione atque aperta relinquenda sint, cum ab occasu atque a septentrione tantum montium interiaceat ac vallium, a meridie vero mare patens ac liberum, molesque adeo munita atque ad propulsandum instructa, ut tranquillo mari, longissimo ab continente tractu classem in ancoris stare necesse sit, futuram in summo discrimine, ubi etiam levior spirare aut auster coeperit aut boreas, quibus hic ipse sinus quam maxime est obnoxius. (15) Movet deinde populi frequentia et Ispanus miles quam maxime Regi fidus et quod ea tum armorum est, tum equorum illic copia, ut brevi non exigua equitum manu comparata restituere exercitum Ferdinandus queat. Addam tot arces tam egregie munitas, quas qui civis aut peregrinus aspicit Rege praesertim praesente atque incolumi,

quamvis magnum atque robustum habeat animum, quamvis factionis nostrae studiosus, abiiciet tamen illum obtorpescatque formidine. (16) Nam quod ad nobilitatem attinet nobiliumque ad nos transitionem, utinam inquam, utinam Neapoli potius manere consilium eis fuisset. Quid enim aliud tot nobilium ad nos transitione effectum est, quam ut urbem Ferdinando liberam permiserint, nec securiorem illum modo, verum etiam cautiorem reddiderint? (17) Adhaec tanto incepto quae paucitas nostra sit ipsi videtis, cum etiam ad oppugnandum necessaria nobis desint omnia. Regi contra et ad repugnandum et ad lacessendum urbs ipsa et arces et multorum etiam annorum Alfonsi apparatus cuncta suppeditent. Scilicet sperandum id est, uti constitutis a nobis ante portas castris in arcem sese Ferdinandus includat, quem non montes, non flumina deterruerint quominus infesto agmine, loco sibi maxime iniquo, intra Sarnum irruperit. An potius (quae illius est virtus et aetas militaribus laboribus assueta) verendum etiam atque etiam est, nequid apud obsidentes tutum aut in castris quietum continuis eruptionibus patiatur? (18) Tentare igitur opsidionem, quae postea turpiter omittenda sit, an quaeso erit aliud quam victoriam, fortuito nobis oblatam, turpi aliqua dedecorare iactura? Aut sedendo ad Neapolim, qui populi principesque in officio erga Ferdinandum reliqui permanent, iis ut oppida muniant, commeatus importent, militem conducant aliaque praesidia sibi comparent, tempus ociumque permittere? (19) Quamobrem quae tutissima quidem est obsidendi ratio, hanc ego censeo ineundam primumque uti Robertum Sanseverinium, cuius oppida nobis ante oculos sunt posita, ad deditionem pelliciamus aut debellare recusantem tentemus, finitimos deinde populos; quibus aut captis, aut deditis Robertoque in partis nostras ascito, an dubitamus a Neapoli Cossentiam ac Regium versus omnia in ditionem ac nomen nostrum concessura? (20) Robertum enim Lucas Sanseverinius, cuius late magnus in Lucanis Brutiisque dominatus est, minoresque alii proceres, liberae item civitates sequentur ut diebus quam paucissimis praeter Aversam, Capuam, Acerras, Neapolim, nihil in tanto terrarum spatio, quod inter Lirim amnem urbemque Regium atque Crotonem interiacet, Ferdinando relinquamus ac Pio Franciscoque animum, cogitationem denique omnem mittendorum auxiliorum adimamus, dum Regem perinde ac truncum sine membris, sine nervis, destitutum atque emutilatum viderint, missis etiam ad eos oratoribus qui utrumque et nostro et Renati nomine benigne appellent ac largis etiam pollicitationibus impleant. (21) Quae an sit tutissima obsidendae Neapolis via, omnes iam videtis. Nam tentare fortunam ubi consilio locus est, quam sit temerarium dies hesternus admonere nos potest. Regem certe ipsum ne fortunae posthac tam facile se committat abunde iam docuit'. (22) Dicenti haec Tarentino senatus assensus est omnis: ea erat senis auctoritas, is rerum usus (quodque belli esset auctor, omnis spes ratioque vincendi in eo collocata videbatur), ut, Coxae sententiam quamvis tacitis omnes comprobarent animis, nemo tamen, ne ipse quidem belli dux Ioannes, a Tarentino dissentire aut videri palam vellet aut omnino auderet. Igitur motis a Sarno castris petiere Stabias.

XI. *Felice Orsini, Prince of Salerno*

(1) Huic tot principum populorumque tam repentinae defectioni non magis cladem ad Sarnum acceptam quam inconstantem ac perlevem Felicis animum causam dedisse satis constat. Qui si quam debuit animi firmitatem retinuisset, praeter praedam in castris inventam vix aliud eo praelio ab hoste partum aut quaesitum fuisset. Verum enim adolescens infirmo ingenio, nullo rerum usu, addictus consiliis Francisci Infantis avunculi, hominis incompositi ac sacerdotis parum continentis, non deditionem modo urbium atque oppidorum statim fecit, sed supplex ipse ad Ioannem Antonium in castra profectus est. (2) Ex ea deditione cum Nola Salernumque maxime opportunae urbes hostium accessissent viribus, coactus est Robertus desperatis pene rebus suis consulere.

XII. *Roberto Sanseverino*

(1) Quoniam autem locus ipse admonuit, pauca de Roberto deque eius maioribus dicam. Roberto pater fuit Ioannes Sanctiseverini (id oppido nomen est) comes, mater Ioanna et ipsa quoque ex eadem cum marito stirpe edita. Quo mortuo, superstitibus ex eo compluribus liberis,

celebs ipsa summa illos cura et aluit et eorum res procuravit. Nam et domi parca erat et continens et, quod esset supra muliebrem sexum animo elato et magno, utrasque patris et matris vices gerere se videri volebat. (2) Cumque eorum singulos materna prosequeretur caritate, Roberto tamen, qui natu erat maximus (qua praerogativa paternus ei dominatus obvenerat), et indulsit supra maternos affectus et, dum augere quacunque ratione res illius posset, parum omnino pensi habuit. (3) Ad coeteras autem matrona dignas artes illud etiam adiunxit quod, ut erat ipsa fidei ac regii nominis colens, iisdem artibus, eodem etiam fidelitatis studio filium imbuit. Itaque nihil prius habuit quam ut Robertum egregie institutum Ferdinando quibus liceret artibus conciliaret. (4) Ille igitur, ubi primum aetas tulit, equitando, venando, cum aequalibus sese nunc iaculo, nunc gladio exercendo, nullo turpi ocio adolescentiam labefecit; quo etiam tempore literis operam dedit, quas post natu grandior maiori studio complexus est. Iis igitur artibus inter regulos facile eminebat Ferdinandoque propterea maxime carus atque acceptus erat, naturae quoque muneribus ad ea adiutus, quippe cuius decora esser facies, statura procera et cum dignitate, oratio pro tempore non minus suavis quam gravis atque ingenua. (5) Ipse facilis aditu, gratus responsu atque imprimis urbanus et liberalis, cuius etiam domus generosissimo ac probatissimo cuique quotidie pateret; demum singulis in rebus nobilitatem prae se ferebat generis, quod alii Gallicum ab origine quam Italicum malunt.

XIII. *Ferdinando and Isabella after the defeat in Sarno*

(1) Ferdinandus accepta Sarnensi clade cum se Neapolim recepisset, Pyrrhum Baucium, Ennecum Gevaram, Inicum et Alfonsum Davalos, qui nuntio cladis accepto statim se in Campaniam contulerant, cum equitibus quadringentis et aliquot peditum cohortibus Acerris, Robertum Ursinum Aversae cum praesidio imposuit. Ipse nunc Capuae, nunc Neapoli agere, relliquias exercitus colligere, pecuniam quantam posset publice privatimque conquirere, equos, arma, tela undique cogere. (2) Hoc tempore maxime cognitum est civium benevolentiam divitiasque popularium, non eos qui in aerarium illati essent Regum thesauros esse. Nanque eques, mercator, opifex, nobilis, ignobilis, inquilinus, etiam sacerdos certatim Regi pecuniam maxima pars spante, pauci rogati, offerre atque elargiri, alii bellatorem equum, alii mulum clitellarium, erant qui thoraces, loricas, arma, tela, hastas, qui pannos vestiendis militibus, qui coria loricandis equis, telas faciendis tabernaculis: nullum denique rerum genus amitti, quod reficiendis copiis atque instruendis militibus conduceret.

(3) Isabella Regina nunc in templis, nunc publicis in locis sese civibus ostendere, praeferre parvos liberos, Alfonsi nepotes dicere, qui de populo Neapolitano tantopere esset benemeritus, cives eos esse Neapolitanos, Italici generis, apud ipsos genitos, altos, educatos; non Gallicam praeferre insolentiam, non peregrinos mores in urbem illaturos; cum ipsorum liberis ac nepotibus aetatem acturos, cum iis divitias, honores, magistratus distributim partituros, cum iis pueritiam, cum iis adolescentiam, cum eisdem quoque senectutem exacturos; regias opes, regni administrationem in eorum arbitrio ac manu futuram, se vero quidnam aliud curaturam quam ut publice privatimque Neapolitani populi patrocinium gerere videretur? Haec dicendo lentos excitabat, excitatos impellebat, impulsos confirmabat, ipsa magna et excellens habebatur.

XIV. *Isabella of Chiaromonte, queen of Naples*

(1) De qua quoniam res admonet pauca dicam. Isabellae pater fuit Tristanus Comes Cupertinensis, ex Claramontia familia, quae in Gallia ulteriore habita est nobilissima, mater Catarina Ioannis Antonii Tarentini, qui bellum hoc excitavit, utroque e parente soror. (2) Patre mortuo, Ioannes Antonius eam, quae minima natu erat, cum quatuor sororibus Lipii in Salentinis habuit atque educavit. Post collocatas autem sorores et Alfonsi victoriam, avunculi opera, Alfonso etiam cupiente, Ferdinando nuptui tradita est, quem pater in regno Neapolitano haeredem instituerat. (3) Ipsa statim a primis annis mirum pudicitiae ac continentiae studium prae se tulit, domi parca, non tamen alieni appetens, formae quantum dignitas posceret studiosa, religioni non sine superstitione dedita, facilis aditu, in responsis libera magis quam aspera, magno animo, magno consilio, constans in adversis, lenis in prosperis, populari eloquentia

quaeque nihil fictum aut compositum prae se ferret, iusti atque honesti etiam ad contentionem colens. (4) Quominus autem gratitudinem exercere atque liberalitatem posset mors prohibuit: bello enim finito, rebus tamen regni nondum plane compositis, Neapoli diem obiit, cum sex iam liberos enixa esset. Mors eius vulgo molesta, quod vitam longe utilissimam omnes praesertim boni arbitrabantur.

Book II

I. *Destruction of fields and vineyards*

(1) Scafato dedito Ferdinandus iunctis simul cum Antonio copiis e Campania movit, eo consilio ut in Apuliam profectus segetes, quae maturae in agris essent, corrumperet. Paucis tamen diebus in oppugnando Monteforti frustra consumptis, per Samnium iter faciens aliquot etiam castellis in itinere receptis, cum ad Appenninum pervenisset, sub Sabinianum consedit; inde superato monte, cui nunc Crepicorio nomen est, in Apuliam descendit, positisque ad Troiam castris finitimos inde agros pluribus diebus vastavit. (2) Erat autem vastandi genus duplex, quod quae minus maturae erant segetes ad equorum pabulum, quae iam maturae ad usum hominum secabantur. Cum enim rei frumentariae laboraretur inopia nullaque esset panis in castris copia, triticum ahenis excoquebatur in cibum tum peditum, tum equitum. Cumque mortales permulti montanis ex oppidis et in iis mercatores penuria frumenti ac lucri gratia venirent in castra ad frumentationis famam, inde miles vastationi factus est intentior ob lucrum ac laboris pretium. Itaque castra ipsa ad mercaturam pene conversa horreum quasi quoddam ea aestate praebuere finitimis. (3) Extitit autem ipsis solstitii diebus frigoris tam atrox vis, ut necesse fuerit vineta concidi ac frugiferam quanque arborem ad ignis castrensis usum: res sane rara atque annotatu digna propter temporis ac regionis illius naturam. Vastatis igitur Troiae subiectis campis Rex inde movens sub Vulturinum consedit simili evastatione in agro Lucerino usurus.

II. *Conquest of Monte Sant'Angelo*

(1) Processum inde mitiora in loca castraque secundum Pantanum statuta. Rhodo igitur recepto ac propter Vestas castellis omnibus, quae in ea Gargani parte constituta sunt, refectoque paucis diebus exercitu noctu maximo itinere confecto mane sub Montem Sancti Angeli (quod oppidum summo e iugo in quo est positum aequinoctiali ab exortu pelagus, a meridie subiectos Apuliae despectat campos, Uriosque eos montes ab antiquis dictos non temere quidam pertendunt in iisque Veneris celeberrimum fuisse quondam templum) universo cum exercitu Rex improvisus apparuit. Cuius repentino adventu eo atrocius consternati sunt civium animi, quod maxime tutos sese antea arbitrati essent montium asperitate aquarumque inopia ac pabuli. (2) Tentatis igitur oppidanis, quominus sese dederent obstitit praesidium a Ioanne missum. Itaque paratis ad oppugnandum necessariis tertio Rex die, qua parte neque fossae ab oppugnatione distinebant, neque rupes ab ingressu deterrebant militem, dispositis circum balistariis sclopetariisque, quorum magnus erat in castris numerus, acri oppidum prelio adortus, vulneratis aut caesis maxima e parte defensoribus, cum tribus circiter horis pro muris pugnatum esset, comminutis ac deiectis non semel scalis, instaurata saepius pugna cohortantibusque subinde ducibus eiectis e muro propugnatoribus paucorum pertinacia, uno simul tempore pluribus locis miles irrupit perque humiliorem turrim facto aditu peditum pars maxima ac gregariorum immissa est manus, moxque effractis portis omnis multitudo ingressa. Paucis in ipso ingressu e praesidiaribus caesis reliqui in arcem se recepere. (3) Direptionis huius facies multo maxime miserabilis fuit irritatis militum animis pugnae ardore ac multitudine omni simul irrumpente, spe praedae incita. Nam quod oppidum ipsum frequens atque opulentum esset quodque propter situm maxime securum atque ab hoste tutum existimabatur, pervulgatum erat e finitimis urbibus, praesertim Manfredonia, locupletissimos quosque cives clanculum a se comportatos illuc thesauros amicis aut templorum sacerdotibus commendasse. ltaque non sacra, non profana ab vi iniuriaque tuta erant, dum occultos thesauros miles exquirit. (4) In viros ac mulieres saevissima suppliciorum edebantur exempla maximeque sacris in aedibus saevitum. ltaque sepulcra eruta, spellata

donaria, direpti loculi venerabilium reliquiarum, arae etiam sanguine foedatae ac polluta abdita: quodque mulieres atque imbecillior sexus eo confugerant, quisque pro libidine trahere, verberare, caedere, infantes a matrum complexu divellere ac solo sternere, rapere pueros, violare virgines, nec deesse qui foeminarum pudendas partes insertis digitis contrectarent, dum gemmas unionesque aut pretiosum aliquid putant illic abditum. In ipsos quoque tribunos ac duces tumultuatum, dum parei imbecillo sexui ac sacris imperant. (5) Rex Michaelis Angeli templum statim ingressus claudi illud iubet demandata fidelibus viris custodia, in quo praeter civium privatam pecuniam aedituis commendatam, auri atque argenti sacri magna vis reperta eaque Regis iussu a scribis notata atque a quaestoribus in castra atque in aerarium relata est. Quam tamen omnem parta post victoria (sic enim conceptis iuraverat verbis) referendam in templum summa diligentia curavit, singulaque restituta sunt atque a bonis refecta artificibus in ea qua fuerant, antequam in numos conflarentur, forma.
(6) [...] Spoliando templo Regem (etsi aerarii premebatur angustiis) magis tamen illud compulit quod compertum haberet Ioannem post suum statim ipsius discessum cuncta direpturum. Nam et ille graviore etiam rei pecuniariae laborabat inopia, et ipse decreverat urbem habitatoribus vacuam ac sine ullo praesidio relinquere. Nam et arx a Ioanne tenebatur, nec prohiberi poterat quo minus quotidiana praesidia noctu praesertim immitterentur. Adhaec fama erat Picininum adventare a Ioanne pariter Tarentinoque arcessitum. Itaque ne illic includeretur veritus, descendere quam primum e monte statuit, cum praesertim exercitus praeda omnis generis esset honustus, praeteritaque Manfredonia, quae praesidio tenebatur, castris ad Sipontum positis praedaque universa tutum in locum comportata quietem militi ac iumentis dedit. Quo tempore ingentis multitudinis armentali praeda male custodita atque ab latronibus noctu abacta insequenti die maxima e parte eques, qui Fogiae erat, ea potitus est.

III. *Cerimony of Orso Orsini's oath of allegiance to the king*
(1) Cum etiam Ursus Neapolitanos atque Averanos agros assiduis excursionibus in dies magis ac magis affligeret marique ab Ioanne Torella, qui Aenariam obtinebat, tuti nihil prorsus esset, inter haec Bartholomaeus Cardinalis, qui gerente bellum in Apulia Ferdinando Beneventi Pontificias res curabat, per fidelem hominem cum Urso egit, uti Pii opera Ferdinandum transiret: nam et Pontifici Maximo rem abunde gratam faceret et rebus suis perquam opportune consultum iret. Cui cum hereditario iure Nola deberetur, quam tunc precario teneret, hanc esse viam recuperandae illius persuadere summon ei studio conabatur. (2) At Ursus, qui paternis puer atque avitis exutus bonis fuerat eiectusque patrimonio, tantam hanc occasionem nactus, cum intelligeret Ioannem Antonium annis morboque aggravatum iam ita bellum gerere ut qui animi consiliisque incertus in diversum traheretur, decrevit oblatam occasionem frustra labi non sinere. (3) Itaque rebus sic compositis uti Nola, Laurum, Atripaldum, Forinum, Asculum cum agris, finibus civibusque ipsi liberisque ac posteris dominanda traderentur a Ferdinando, quarum rerum omnium Pontifex fideiussor esset, Ursus Neapolim ad Regem profectus, iuravit de more Neapolitanorum Regum in eius verba. (4) Ritus vero iurandi verborumque huiusmodi est formula. Sedet Rex medius regia in sella editiore loca consituta; assident iusta primi ordinis optimates ac proceres, stant inde purpuratorum frequentes ordines loco quisque suo. Regis ad pedes genibus innitens a dextra procumbit parte epistolarum magister, qui nunc Secretarius dicitur, sinistra antistes, Evangeliorum libros regio in sinu adstratos tenens; horum medius genibus et ipse ille innisus procumbit, qui in verba iurat utraque manu libris adapertis imposita. Ibi epistolarum magister verba praeit, quae iuraturus in verba sequitus. (5) Igitur posteamquam Ursus, regios ad pedes provolutus, palmam in codice utramque expansam statuit, tum magister praeire verba haec coepit Ursusque ea est secutus: 'Ursus ego Ursinus Nolae et Atripaldi comes, Asculi, Lauri ac Forini dominus illorumque et agrorum et finium civium atque popularium, tibi Ferdinando Regi liberisque successoribusque in regno Neapolitano tuis polliceor, promitto, spondeo pro liberis successoribusque item in hisce urbibus, oppidis, agris ac finibus meis fideles meque illosque utique futuros, tuisque illorumque imperiis ubique meque illosque parituros atque imperata facturos cum hisce urbibus, oppidis, agris, finibus popularibusque perpetua cum constantia fide. Siquid vero adversus teve illosve parari fraudis dolive insidiarumve audiero,

sciero, compertumve significatumve habuero, indicaturum illud e vestigio ac facturum palam tibique illisque, officia demum obiturum meque illos omnia domi forisque pace belloque adversum quoscunque ac pro imperio quae probi et fidelis subiecti iure, lege, natura obeunda ac praestanda sunt Regi. Deumue his optimum maximum testem invoco perque sacrosancta haec evangelia sciens, volens, libensque verbis conceptis iuro'. Atque his dictis manus ipse e libris sustulit. (6) Tum Rex Ursi manus utriusque digitis pollicibus apprehensis suosque intra polices iis insertis devinxit illos suis statuitque super evangelia. Hic rursus Ursus magistro praeeunte verba: 'Ego me – inquit – cum liberis successoribusque meis Ferdinandi Regis mei, domini mei, liberorum ac successorum eius Ligium hominem statuo dedicoque eumque me hic sisto.' Haec ter ubi dixit, Regios osculatus est pollices Rexque ore suo illius os excepit moxque comiter appallatum dimisit. (7) Hic est usitatus iurandi mos in verba Regum Neapolitanorum, quique Ligios illorum se faciunt ipsum hunc servant, dicti inde Ligii, quid ligatis Reges pollicibus illos fidei imperiisque sic suis vinciant atque obnoxios statuant. (8) Ex ea tempestate Ferdinandus Ursi opera forti fidelique in maximis quibusque usus est rebus, quippe qui esset magno ingenio, constanti animo, fida amicitia, maturis consiliis, integra voluntate, manu promptus atque in certaminibus felix, in consulendo cautus, in deliberando minime temerarius, quique nihil prorsus ficti haberet: atque ut maxime impiger, sic ipse parum omnino ambitiosus erat.

IV. *The infidelity of the Spanish people and the rumours on Ferrante's birth*

(1) Hoc in bello rerumque bellicarum varietate et casibus cognitum est Ispanos plerosque, qui oppidis aut arcibus praefecti essent, Ferdinando parum fideles fuisse, seu quod tacitis ipsi consiliis Ioanni patruo regnum assererent, seu quod indignum ducerent Ferdinandum Alfonso succedere, quem alii incesto coitu e Catarina, Errici fratris uxore, susceptum ab Alfonso putarent, alii supposititium, neque ex Gilardona Carlina, quae mater eius diceretur, genitum, sed suppositum ab ea, auctore Gulielmo Corelia, quem Alfonsus honoribus titulisque mirifice evexisset, procreatumque ex homine ignobili, utque alii mussitarent, sutore calceolario, ut vero alii, ex homine Mahometanae religionis, quales Valentini plerique sunt agricolae atque opifices; quae quidem aliaque ab illis, qui Ferdinandum prosequebantur odio, palam indigneque iactabantur. (2) In quibus tres praecipue visi sunt maxime improbi atque ob insignem perfidiam detestabiles. Ioannes hic Torrella, quem Alfonsus, quod Antoniae vir erat, quam e sororibus Lucretia unice amasset, illius gratia Isclae moderationi substituerat praefeceratque arei; Petrus Mondraconius alter, cui ab Alfonso arcis Metalonii et oppidi administratio permissa fuerat; tertius Ioannes Antonius Foscianus, cui Tranesis arcis erat custodia demandata. Verum hi duo clanculum cum hoste consenserant, ad Torella bellum aperte gessit adversus Ferdinandum: Iohannemque ad se confugientem, amissa continente terra, et accepit et armis opaque fovit iuvitque.

V. *Maso Barrese and the Duke of Melfi*

(1) Hunc Rex initio belli Venusiae cum praesidio praefecerat isque, ut erat acri ingenio et magno atque elato animo, multa fortiter ac feliciter gessit. Nam non urbem modo eam ab hoste tutatus est, verum cum Ioanne Melfiae Duce collatis saepius signis conflixit, quibus in certaminibus non minus saepe victor evasit quam victus. (2) Duo hi praestantes animis ac bellicis laudibus duces nunquam manus conseruere, quin utrique summis conatibus ingentibus animis haud minore sua quam militum virtute imperatoriisque artibus ac muneribus decertaverint. Ioannes tamen suam ubique maiorumque suorum nobilitatem praetulit; ille, ut erat natura ferus ac parum urbanis moribus, vix ab ingenio unquam discessit.

VI. *Battle of Arci and Maso Barrase's ferocity*

(1) Est autem Acris summa in monte posita, paucissimis locis muro, coeterum vallo ac rupibus undique ferme cincta, circiterque duobus millibus ab oppido passibus decurrit Cotilis fluvius, a cuius vado ad ipsum usque oppidum sensim assurgit arduo ascensu montis dorsum, quem

Serronem incolae vocant. (2) Ad vadum Baptista consueverat singulis noctibus vigiles disponere, qui per tenebras aucuparentur, siqui flumen transirent, statim id renuntiaturi. (3) Igitur tranato amne cum ob praefecti negligentiam vigiles nulli ea nocte flumen observarent, milites cum Milano ac Blancino praemissi cum essent, nulloque omnino strepitu ad custodiam pervenissent, summa silentio custodes iugulant deque suorum numero lectos substituunt, qui oppidanis signa de more custodum antea quidem explorata et cognita redderent. (4) Cum vero accepto signo, ubi aliquantulum quievissent, Masium adesse cum copiis sensere, magno impetu oppidanis quiescentibus vallum transcendunt Gattumque centurionem, qui vallum custodiebat, inermem ac semisomnem capiunt, inde clypeati primi, post eos sclopetarii balistariique occupatis viis in forum irrumpunt. Quo a civibus ac militibus concursum cum esset, magnis utrinque sullatis clamoribus acre committitur prelium: (5) inter haec Masius portam conatus diffringere ab illis qui eo concurrerant magno nisu repellitur, aliis tandem atque aliis succedentibus facta est ferro per portam via. Milites turmatim ingressi qua conferti irrumpunt gladio sibi iter pandunt. Multa omnis generis hominum caedes passim facta. (6) Baptista repentina re perculsus alio atque alio dimissis militibus ipse cum paucis veteris ad arcis tumulum confugit, illicque contra irrumpentes aliquantum cum stetisset, tandem superatus ac pene circumventus ab hostibus, fuga sibi per rupes asperas confragosaque montis loca vix consuluit, ac beneficio noctis usus cum exiguo familiarium numero Longobucum (sunt autem qui Themesen olim hanc fuisse propter metallorum venas arbitrentur) se recepit. (7) Capto igitur oppido conversi ad praedam milites nihili sibi reliqui, non ad praedam, non ad crudelitatem fecere. Sacra profanaque in promiscuo cuncta habita. Ducis ipsius iussu Nicolaus Clanceoffus serra per dorsum lumbosque adacta medius secatur, rarum profecto ac pene inexcogitatum saevitiae genus ac supplicii exemplum.

VII. *Maso Barrese*

(1) Haec dum in Brutiis Calabriaque administrantur, Ioannes Vigintimilius a Ferdinando missus propter aetatis auctoritatem ac rerum gestarum gloriam mari ad Brutiorum litus provectus Antonium adiit quodque de conciliatione prius agitatum esset cum illo transegit, quibus transigendis illud etiam effectum est, uti Ioanna Antonii filia Masio desponderetur, conditionibus ex amborum sententia scriptis, uti sua Antonii liberorumque eius essent oppida, agri, et bona quaecumque uxori haereditario iure deberentur, quaeque ipse olim tenuisset, Masius Castrivillari Dux declararetur cum iis agris oppidisque quae ipse belli iure tum teneret. (2) His conventis hacque rerum gestarum gloria elatus Masius, in fines Terrae Novae universis cum copiis digressus, oppidum ipsum statim recipit itemque Sanctum Georgium, e cuius arce Rogerium Oriliam, equitem Neapolitanum, duosque item alias nobiles viros e summis arcis pinnaculis in rupes maxime praeruptas deiici iussit: spectaculum sane horrendum, immane, novum atque ob crudelitatem ea tempestate per Italiam ab amicis adversariisque iusta nobilitatum. (3) Sunt qui factum excusent, quod cum Ioannes Barresa Masii frater in foro Cossentino nulla honesta causa a popularibus in frustra concisus esset: hoc genere vindictae ulcisci fratris ipse interitum voluerit. (4) Inde adversus Galeoctum Baldasinum profectus, qui ad Andegaviensem iam desciverat, scalis noctu summo silentio admotis, urbem nomine Oppidum capit ac captam diripit largaque cum praeda ad Terram Novam reversus illic hiemavit; ac per speciem colloquii veterisque consuetudinis Marinum Curialem, qui Giracium tenebat, capere dum intendit, ille re per amicos cognita dolum atque insidias fuga maxime improvisa vitavit, tanta celeritate usus, ut equus quo ferebatur de nimio cursu in itinere exanimaretur. (5) Inerant autem ingentes Masio virtutes tum corporis, tum animi, maxime firma laborum tolerantia, frigoris calorisque patientia aeque magna; victus eius plerumque militaris, vestitus pro tempore, quique inter alios vix excelleret; perferendae inediae militibus ipse suis exemplum erat, honoris gloriaeque appetitio insatiabilis, habendi cupiditas infinita, nec minus ut multa largiretur aliis quam ut ipse possideret quam plurima, periculorum incredibilis despicientia, difficiliumque inceptorum summa audacia; ira tamen superbiaque vastum eius vixque sui capacem animum deformabant. (6) Itaque pace parta compositisque regni rebus, Neapoli agens, obvium cum

haberet Ioannem Spataphorum, hominem sibi adversum ac maxime infestum, qui salutandi Regis gratia in arcem accedebat, ira atque impotentia praeceps gladio illum obtruncat, qua e re in carcerem coniectus, aliquot post annos illuvie atque pedore obsitus squalensque diem illic obiit: vir utique dignus mitiore animo qui esset praeditus quique si non magis grato, minus saltem severo principe usus esset.

Book III

I. *Galeotto Baldassino*, condottiero *of Angevin troops*

(1) In hac itaque deditionis expectatione cum essent, Baldasinus, cuius ut corporis sic animi quoque incompositae admodum ac vastae vires erant, levissimas ob causas ira atque indignatione praeceps, equestris militiae quosdam, alios hasta, alios fuste cum percussisset, tumultuantem pene omnem in se exercitum traxit, dum equites alii, dum equitum praefecti indigne impotenterque ab illo factum aegerrime ferunt criminantiumque in castris audiuntur clamores. Is igitur (ut erat animi impotens atque intractabilis) conclamatis vasis repente e castris se proripit profectusque in agrum Giraciensem maritima in ora consedit. (2) Quo facto duces alii quod impotentiam hominis furiasque nec precibus, nec ratione ulla lenire potuissent, et ipsi dissoluto exercitu ad oppida quique sua agrosque reversi sunt cognitumque precipue tunc est Baldasinum, cuius in Europa clarum admodum nomen erat, quod saepius in singulare certamen cum prodiisset, victor semper evaserat, vires illas corporis admirabiles tantamque membrorum dexteritatem animi morbis moribusque foedasse intolerandis naturamque ipsam, qua gignimur, quibus hominibus corporis attribuendis viribus maxime consuluerit, eisdem animorum conferendis viribus aeque vix unquam prospexisse, quippe quae huic viro parum pensi, nihil omnino moderati indiderit, cuius animus esset trux, violentus, inexorabilis, vastus in cupiditatibus, foedus, crudelis, immanitate etiam fera. Huc accedebat quod, in tanta elatione hominumque despicientia, bellicis in rebus parum se pro hominum opinione veterique dignitate gesserat.

Book IV

I. *The siege of Minervino and Orsini's contradictory behavior*

(1) Facta <Andriae> deditione rebusque e formula compositis Tarentinus ad arcem expugnandam Minervinum partem exercitus mittit, ob Pyrrhi fugam longe infensior factus. Qui postquam nec precibus, nec minis tentatam impellere ad deditionem Mariam nequit, arcem non minus crudeliter quam pertinaciter oppugnari iubet. (2) Concutitur itaque assi: duis tormentorum ictibus, labefactantur pluribus etiam locis muri; ipsum quoque ginaeceum, ubi mulier pleno utero, languenti corpore, ingentibus vieta malis se se continebat, patrui iussu plus etiam quam hostiliter pulsatur; oppugnationem tamen verius quam obsidionem supra muliebrem animum fortiter substinet. (3) Addit igitur eius constantia obstinatioque propugnatoribus animum paranturque ab iis ad propugnandum opportuna, quantum ars, quantum pertinacia valet. Quae res Tarentini animum eo acrius irritabant. Itaque eius iussu expugnationi necessaria mira celeritate, summo studio, diurnis nocturnisque expediuntur laboribus, quoque Mariae prospectum foedet ac lucem ipsam, qua nil est mortalibus gratius, ante os illius oculosque suspendio confectum hominem in iugo statui iubet. Circumsonabant omnia minarum ac terrorum plena palamque audiebantur voces, quibus significabatur foeda exempla, atroces cruciatus, crudelia supplicia parari. (4) At vero significatum ubi est ei Mariam morbo simul partitudineque aggravari, victus pietate senis ac patrui animus, memorque ex fratre quem unice amasset genitam (adeo in acerbissimis etiam odiis naturalis persaepe recursat affectus) quotidianum ad eam victum deferendum curavit, qualis languentibus dari solet. (5) Haec ad Regem perlata cum essent, eius animum vehementius perculsere. Movebant amissa oppida, in primis vero nequid in Franciscum Ducem crudelius admitteretur: inexorabilis enim Tarentini

animus iure plurimum suspectus erat. (6) At Maria, quod nulla ulterius tuendae arcis spes esset, muri solo aequati, munimenta eversa ac disiecta ab imo essent omnia, nullum denique auxilium paratum intelligeret, nec sustineri iam oppugnatio posset diutius, capta verius quam dedita, exuta pene bonis omnibus, ac maledictis oppleta, cum liberis Spinaciolam a patruo mittitur. In eos qui in arcem confugerant saevitum est.

II. *Battle of Troia*

(1) Troia edito in tumulo sita ab occasu, qua arx est, clementi tractu in ortum excurrit equinoctialem; ipsa oblongior et maxima e parte positu plano, utrisque ab lateribus muros clivo impositos habet, aequato pene ubique aggestitia terra fastigio. A qua parte in orientem (ut dictum est) vergit solem, paulatim se campi demittunt, donec in vastam illam planitiem diffunduntur. Ager ipse ficu, vitibus atque oleis consitus. Sub ipsum tumulum a septemtrione Chilon amnis delabitur, ab Appennino decurrens [...]. (2) Positis igitur ad Troiam castris, Andegaviensium partium duces cum diversa sentirent altercandoque aliquantum extraxissent temporis, illorum tandem vicit sententia, qui censerent uti occupato colle, qui ante regia castra non magno tamen interiecto spatio aliquanto surgebat editior, unde et aquationem facile hostium prohibere possent et subiectos tueri campos, eo copias traducerent. (3) Occupandi vero collis ratio haec est inita, uti de quarta vigilia praemisso paucis cum equitibus, quo plurimo abundarent, peditatu locoque castris delecto reliquus exercitus instructo agmine curo impedimentis sequeretur. (4) At Rex (quod unum cupiebat), cum in dimicandi necessitatem rem adductam cerneret, praefectis ducibusque in praetorium ad se vocatis, huiusmodi ad eos orationem habuit: (5) ‘Siquam occasionem aut dii immortales ostendunt, aut hostes ipsi nobis offerunt, fortissimi viri, eam sequi ducem volumus. Non de recipienda Ursaria, sed de profligando adversario, belloque conficiendo nobis potius cogitandum videtur. Quam ob causam non tam mihi aut confirmandi estis, aut instruendi ad dimicandum quam studiis ipsis vestris vestraeque fortitudini gratulandum. Quem enim hostem indipisci in campis avebatis, en ante oculos iam habetis, atque in apertis locis positum spectata virtus vestra vel contemptui habere eum potest. (6) Quod obesse unum videbatur, Tarentini illius cunctatoris praesentia, id omnino sublatum videtis. Ipsi vero inter se hostium duces non consiliis modo, sed animis quoque dissentiunt. Quibus dissentientibus, quid in militibus esse firmitatis censeatis aut roboris? (7) Contra summum in nobis studium, certa consilia, firma concordia; miles ipse noster, preliandi cupidus, signa sequi atque ordines servare consuctus omniaque ad praescriptum gesturus, plenus et ipse spei, tantum animi pollicetur et fidutiae, ut iam iam verso in fugam hoste cogitandum magis sit, quo nam illum modo castris exuamus, quam quibus artibus, aut quo pugnae genere sit cum eo congrediendum. (8) A me parata sunt cuncta, quae consilium, ratio reique militaris disciplina paranda docuere. Vos modo suum quisque militem seque et equos curare armaque in promptu habere iubeatis, atque uti de tertia vigilia instructi paratique ad signa conveniant. (9) Quod si quos vultus quaeque ora nunc video cras iis similes animos habueritis, dicam vobis, duces: “Bellum iam confecimus”. Nec tam ad crastinam parare vos victoriam ac praedam oportet, quam ad belli praemia accipienda, quanta et a gratissimo expectari Rege debeant, et Regni Neapolitani amplitudo atque opulentia fortitudini promittat vestrae’. (10) Concione dimissa praefecti ducesque laeti atque animorum pieni militem quisque suum curare equos, expedire arma, seque in crastinam parare pugnam hortantur, praemia cuique sua proponunt, regias vires, sua consilia atque opes in maius efferunt, hostem elevant; in primis nequis extra ordinem in aciem prodeat edicunt. Hisque rationibus suorum animis confirmatis, corpora curare illos iubent.

(11) Albescente igitur coelo hostis collem occupat. Quod ubi Regi cognitum est, eductis copiis, quas de tertia vigilia esse instructas iusserat, Robertos Ursinum atque Calatinum cum ea equitum manu, quae satis visa est, occurrere hosti imperat; post hos Alexandrum cum parte copiarum mittit. Ipse relicto in castris praesidio, reliquo cum exercitu ad pugnam instructus progreditur. (12) Descensum in certamen est ab Rege cum novem et quadraginta equitum turmis. Roberti hostium equitem non magno conatu e colle deturbatum in fugam coniiciunt, inde in confertissimum illati peditem, alter a dextro, alter a sinistro cornu prelium committunt. (13)

Pedes primo (quod equitatum suum auxilio venturum sperat) impressionem acriter sustinet, multa utrinque vulnera eduntur, ex hoste plures cadunt, e regiis equi non pauci confodiuntur imparque erat omnino pugna, quod hostis nullo equestri praesidio, nudo arboribus loco irruentem equitem nec evitare poterat, nec ex aequo cum illo confligere. Fit igitur magna peditum strages, sustinent tamen. (14) At ubi fulgentia signa conspecta sunt et agmen procedere regiumque equitem, qui impressionem fecerat, nova subsidia, recentis subinde equos accipere visum est, repentinam in fugam versus prostratusque ingruentium impetu equorum, pedibus illorum proteritur. (15) Pars decliviorem per locum, qua equiti non patebat excursus, praeceps ab insequentium manibus elabitur seque trans torrentis ripam, ubi suos in acie stare conspexerat, recipit. Alii caesi, vulnerati alii aut capti, armis exuuntur. (16) At ubi regio a milite ad ripas ventum est, hic nova rursus pugna conseritur. Utrinque duces acies instruunt, praesidia locant, suos hortantur, apparet totis viribus atque universo marte decernendum. (17) Procedebat Ferdinandi agmen suis sub ducibus, suo loco, suo quisque ordine gradiens. Quod Picininus conspicatus, qui trans ripam suos colligebat, conversusque ad Ioannem, qui iuxta aderat: ‘Nae dies hic - inquit - plurimos hastarum truncos plurimaque videbit fragmenta!’. Cui ab Ioanne oblique responsum cum esset, quippe qui pugnae cupidus detrectatum iri pugnam a Picinino verebatur, quem producere intelligebat arte bellum; aegerrime id ille ferens indignabundusque, qua parte redintegrari pugna coeperat, milites summittit.

(18) Erant omnino aditus duo, et hi quidem angusti atque acclives, quibus regius irrumpere conabatur eques, quem superiore e loco hostis facile propellebat. Magna enim illic hastatorum manus, non minor sclopetariorum coacta pugnabat; quocirca facile equites ab ascensu deiiciebantur, et qui acrius institissent vulnerati pedem referebant. Itaque magni utrinque clamores tollebantur, ut quis aut ferocius illatus ascenderat, aut praeceps datus corruerat; vario eventu, varia spe, summa tamen alacritate pugnabatur. Pedes hinc atque illinc obteritur, eques equite substernitur, utrinque centuriones, utrinque tribuni recentes submittunt milites. (19) Cadit ibi e regiis tribunus, vir acer et strenuus, qua e re additus hosti animus. At regius facto tandem cuneo victor irrumpit, ripisque superatis inde adversarios depellit, fugientisque ad ordines regredi atque ad signa cogit. (20) Et iam parte alia, qua se campi latius aperiebant, canere signa et concurrere acies coeperant primaque e regio equitatu turma non satis prospere manum conseruerat, cui laboranti et pene ab hoste circumventae duas, quas Alexander secum habebat, auxilio mittit: harum adventu pugna restituitur. Nec minus a Picinino ac Picinini ducibus subsidia mittuntur. (21) Pluribus simul locis certamen initur pugnaque pro equitum virtute proque recentium equorum robore vel adversa erat, vel prospera. Quod ubi Rex animadvertit, Ursum cum globo lectissimorum equitum, quem ad pugnae difficillima paraverat, aliasque atque alias post eum turmas procedere paulatim iubet. Quod hostis conspicatus, subducere se accedere sensim coepit. (22) Regius eo acrius equos promovet hostemque iam cogitantem qua se ratione aut in castra reciperet, aut intra Troiae moenia, magno impetu adoritur. Excepit hic Gallus eques procurrentem regium ingentibus animis, additusque est Gallo Hercules Estensis magno cum equitum robore lectaque virorum manu. Itaque nec viribus nec animis primo cedunt. (23) Stimulabat Gallum animus insolens ac natura ferox, manum vero Estensem ducis sui praesentia et quod ille nihil praetermitteret, quod strenui militis aut fortissimi ducis esset, quippe qui nunc voce, nunc praesentia, saepe gladio suis, modo pluribus, interdum singulis adesset, vir et corporis viribus et animo magnus atque excellens. (24) Tandem relicti ab reliquo exercitu, suffossis aut iugulatis equis, circumventique ab regiis, partim capiuntur, partim qui equo erant incolumi, cum Hercule duce fugientes, ad suos se recipiunt, qui iam sub Troiae muris in clivo constiterant; eos regios insecutus eques cum esset, superiore e loco facile deiicitur.

(25) Quo tempore Picininus acclivi loco sub ipsam Troiae portam, quae ad Appenninum spectat, ordines de integro restituit, tumulumque, qui est ante arcem, praesidiis firmat. Adhaec equitibus turmatim pluribus locis dispositis milites cohortatur, uti pristinae virtutis memores locum teneant, regios tam iniquum in locum sine summa suorum clade minime successuros. Si viri esse velint, acceptam ignominiam eo loco, eodem die, ipso illo pene momento, abolituros. Cuncta esse post tergum tuta, recentes equos, recentes milites urbem castraque sumministratura; contra regisa copias eo loci perductas esse, ut neque explicare se a pugna, neque recipere in castra, siti laboreque equis virisque confectis, sine multa interncione queant. (26) Redintegratur

igitur pugna regio urgente, dum pertinacius iniquum in locum succedit, moxque adversario rursum propellente detruditur multi tamen utrinque cadunt equi virique.
(27) Quod conspicatus Rex, vocatis ad se principibus, cum in maximum adductam discrimen rem cerneret, quid potissimum sequendum censeant sciscitatus, cum alii sensim recedendum censerent, quod satis eo die, eo certamine actum iudicarent, alii, insidias veriti artesque Picinini, Regi, se uti e pugna subduceret, persuadere conarentur. (28). Ad ea ipse: 'Quando - inquit - dies hic noster est, et nos fortunam hodiernam sequamur. Macti virtute estote! Qua me vadentem videritis, sequimini ducem'. Tum praemissis qui explorarent, nequae post tumulos insidiae essent positae, concitato statim equo cum lecta manu equitum per summum evadit tumulum. (29) Procurrentem Ferdinandum suae acies signaque sequuntur, atque omnium primae turmae aliquot recentes, quae a pugna <se> continuerant integrisque erant viribus. Ea e re novus repente ardor equites invasit: ferro sibi viam quisque faciunt, nec turmatim iam, sed confusis ordinibus res geritur, nec tam gladiis Mars saevit, quam propellentium equorum pectoribus. (30) Hos incitabat, quod partam iam victoriam eripi sibi e manibus indignabantur, illos ducis sui gloria et multis bellis partum decus. Igitur, dum acerrime haud procul a porta ac sub ipsis muris ab iis, qui clivum tenebant, dimicatur, interim ab illis, qui in via paulo a porta longius collocati erant, fuga fieri repente coepta. (31) Inde premente Rege multisque ex hostibus et in iis aliquot praefectis partim captis, partim equo deturbatis, qui tumulum tutabantur, ipsi quoque deserto loco terga vertunt. Ibi undique a regiis tanta facta impressio eoque incursum est impetu, ut versis equis hostes, alii in castra secundum urbis raperentur fossas, alii ex equis in fossam deiecti ab iis, qui e muris pugnabant, manibus, scalis, funibus excepti sublevarentur. (32) Ioannes Picininusque magno tumultu intra portam admissi, quique cum iis erant vix acceptis porta ipsa repente clauditur, regio ita urgente, ut quidam hostibus immisti urbem sint ingressi. Signa ab iis qui in propugnaculis constiterant excepta intra muros cum trepidatione iaciuntur.
(33) Rex in fossam quae ad septemtrionem est equo invectus ac fugientibus immistus in castra hostium contendit, quem Alexander coeterique quanquam diverso itinere subsequuntur. Ubi in castra perventum est, confestim nullo defendente capta direptaque. Qui e regiis a prelio atque ab labore recentes erant atque integris viribus fugientem Luceriam versus hostem insecuti, in ipsa fuga multos vulnerant, plures etiam capiunt. (34) Rex, ubi castra diripi et iam nihil ex praescripto geri sensit, haud procul a porta, quae ad orientem spectat, signa in via constituit eaque praesidio firmat edicitque ne quo casu locum deserant. (35) Interea victor miles totis campis vagatur, longiusque fugientes ad multam etiam diem insecutus atque in praedam versus, non ad signa redire, non ad ordines curat. Videres itaque alios proiectis armis honustos sarcinis vix progredi, alios collatam unum in locum praedam inter se partiri, plurimos equestris decoris oblitos phaleratum praeda equum honerare seque ante agere, ipsos pedibus ire et reste alia atque alia iumenta equosque sarcinis impeditos trahere. Quin etiam ex iis, qui in praesidio collocati fuerant, complures et ipsi in praedam intenti signa locumque reliquerant. (36) Quae res hostis quanquam fessos et muris clausos ad erumpendum invitavit. Egressi igitur portis, nullo tamen clamore edito, regios praeda occupatos ac sub sarcinis impeditos de improviso adoriuntur multosque, ante quam hostes esse intelligantur, mentito etiam nomine capiunt et iam liberius vagari incipiunt. (37) Quod ubi Regi cognitum est, undique ad signa concurri imperat, multaque per Iovianum Pontanum, quem secum ducebat, ab ducibus peragenda curat. Ipse, ut quenque nactus erat, primo singulos, deinde plures qua pugnam consertam videbat immittit, donec aliquot ordinibus restitutis, iustae pugnae more dimicare coepit. Itaque dum sustinere impetum hostis nequit, citatis equis in urbem regreditur. Stetere dein regii in acie atque sub signis, donec praeda omnis coacta et Ursariam versus tutum in locum delata. Inde sub vesperum in castra est reditum.
(38) Dies quae insecuta est quieti militum atque equorum data. Captivorum numerus recensitus fuit aliquanto minor, quia captivorum alii, quod capitalium rerum convicti essent, clam dimissi ab amicis aut cognatis fuerant, alii iureiurando parum servato fideique et datae atque acceptae (ut nunc in conflictu moris est) dexterae immemores, Troiam profugerant. Ioannes Picininusque maximo silentio Troia egressi Luceriam noctu profugiunt. (39) Deliberantem de obsidenda urbe Ferdinandum Troiani invitant, misso qui seque urbemque dedituros polliceretur, ubi castra propius admovisset. Imperitabat urbi Ioannes Coxa, qui, quod Nicolaum Episcopum indignius

habuerat, Lombardorum familiae invisior erat, cuius opes in civitate magnae atque pollentes tunc erant. Castris igitur ad vineta positis, tumultu (sicuti convenerat) ab Lombardis excitato, deditur Regi oppidum. Coxa cum in arcem cum paucis confugisset, diffisus rebus suis, Alexandro se, cui propter veterem consuetudinem plurimum fidebat, dedidit. (40) Rex uno simul tempore et oppido potitus et arce, oppidanos collaudat, Lombardos etiam muneribus donat. Coxam ad se ductum multisque ornatum laudibus atque invitatum, ut manere in patria vellet, dimittit. Captivos, qui in castris erant, et in iis quosdam qui Ioannis e cognatione essent, liberos abire permittit.

Book V

I. *Peace agreement with Marzano. John of Anjou retreats to the Castle of Ischia*

(1) Habente hic castra Ferdinando levibus quidem ex initiis agitari coeptum est de pace, Martiano popularium iras ob famem futurum in annum verente, Ferdinando autem metuente Tarentini perfidiam, quodque intelligeret quartana illum magis magisque in dies premi, ex eo cupiente in Apuliam quam primum finitimaque Tarentini locis loca cum exercitu proficisci ad naturae extremos casus. (2) Itaque aequis conditionibus pax fit. Paci additur alterum affinitatis vinculum Beatrixque Ferdinandi filia, quae post Matthiae Hungariae Regi nupsit, Ioanni Baptistae Martiani filio despondetur, permittente Pontifice, quod uterque, et vir et uxor, alter e sorore e fratre altera, Alfonsi Regis liberis orti essent. Moxque ex convento Beatrix a Ferdinando Suessam ad Helionoram sororem mittitur, futurum pignus et securae pacis et certi matrimonii, cum essent uterque impubes. (3) Andegaviensi publica fides data, tuto se Isclam ad Torrellam conferendi, quibuscum etiam vellet e suis. Coeteris in quae loca et ad quos vellent accedendi potestas permissa.

II. *Giovanni Antonio Orsini's death*

(1) Descendentem in Apuliam Regem Antonius Agellus et Antonius Vidanus adierunt, Tarentini legati iique Romam (uti referebant) ituri; post habitum cum eo congressum Rex illos ad Ioannem Antonium remisit, qui aggravante quartana Idibus Decembris in aree Altemurae diem obiit. (2) Mors tamen eius suspicione non caruit. Nam uterque Antonius in suspicionem cum venisset initi cum Rege consilii, subminatus (in cubiculo solus cum esset ac sine testibus) Tarentinus eis fuerat, ubi Tarentum, quo properabat, pervenisset, securi quam primum in illos animadversurum. Id a puero, qui assiduus in cubiculo versabatur, clanculum et quasi non audisset exceptum atque ad alterum ex Antoniis perlatum, a quo blanditiis pollicitationibusque delinitus puer fuerat, praeproperandam ad necem perpulisse utrumque creditum est. Itaque ad multam noctem ingressos cubiculum, ut qui repentinum aliquid afferrent, somno morboque oppressum strangulasse, statimque ad Regem misisse mortis nuntium. Multaque comperta violentae mortis signa statim divulgatum est. (3) Rex accepto nuntio missisque qui urbem atque arcem acciperent, cumque iis simul Marino Tomacello, fideli et cauto viro, qui duodecim millia aureum ex aree magnamque auri atque argenti summam inde in castra ferret, accito e Manfredonia milite solutoque stipendium ad Aufidum pergit, atque inde movens in agro Tranensi consedit, tantisper ibi moratus dum, qui post Ioannis Antonii mortem Barensi in terra motus fierent, ab exploratoribus significaretur.

III. *Ferrante after the victory*

(1) Inde Rex dispositis opportuna per loca copiis, Tarentum profectus, omnia pacata invenit, nullumque fuit alicuius nominis oppidum, ad quod non accesserit benigne liberaliterque acceptus a civibus, quos ipse publice privatimque ac praesertim bene meritos quosque prosecutus est privilegiis, muneribus, beneficiis, aliosque liberavit vectigalibus, alias ornavit stipendiis equestrique praerogativa. (2) Compositisque provinciarum rebus, sub ipsum ver Neapolim rediit victor opibusque et fama insignis, diversis etiam oratoribus, qui ad eum

convenerant, aliisque et bello et pace claris viris, in iisque Alexandro Sfortia, qui ad eum e Theatibus venerar, ac Bartholomaeo Cardinale comitantibus. (3) Duxit autem secum et Iulium Antonium, cuius opera consiliisque in maximis pacis ac belli rebus ex eo usus est, cuius etiam ductu multa post et fortiter gesserit et feliciter administraverit, tametsi in toga quam in armis non minus vir hic claruit, ad praestantissima quaeque natus munia domi forisque.
(4) Ingredientem Neapolim Ferdinandum ordo populusque nullo non honoris genere cumulavit. Gaudii laetitiaeque a viris mulieribus, omni denique aetate, in templis, porticibus, compitis, privatorumque civium domibus signa promiscue praebita. Is postquam et civium et oratorum rebus, qui ex Italiae urbibus gratulatum multi venerant, satisfecit, reversus ad belli studia, Isclae obsidioni acrius intendit, datque maritimae rei operam. (5) Hinc Ovi arcem, multis prius usus artibus corrumpendis custodibus, concutit admotis ingentis crassitudinis tormentis, in cassum tamen multorumque operum et dierum iactura. Longe vero post, fame coactus, praefectus illam dedidit, qua undique perquisita praeter salis pusillum in ollula fasciculumque salitae brasicae nihil omnino esui quod esset in arce repertum est: adeo fortibus atque obstinatis animis praefectus defensoresque extitere.

IV. *Capture of Marino Marzano*
(1) Inter haec agente ad Isclam Ioanne, tum rebus aliis praesertimque missa clam annona, tum interceptis Martiani literis, cognitum est illum nova cum Ioanne inisse consilia idque modo expectari, dum exectae messes essent frumentaque intra oppida relata, ne renovato bello fame premeretur populariumque metuendi tumultus Martiano essent. (2) His perceptis consiliis, multa cum animo suo agitans Ferdinandus, illud primum curabat, ne ratione aliqua suspectam habere Martiani fidem putaretur, quodque Neapolis gravi laborare peste coeperat, quo urbem multitudine vacuam faceret, per hanc speciem statutis Leborio in campo tabernaculis eo se recepit, assiduo venatu aucupiisque nunc Capuano, nunc Aversano se exercens in agro. (3) Quodque Caldorae in Ferentanis hostiliter adhuc agerent, ut qui debellaturus eos esset, soluto militibus stipendio convenire eos Rosarum ad Mansionem iussit, atque ubi maturae segetes visae sunt, ad Savonem universo cum exercitu profectus, Martianum ad se in castra omnibus cum copiis evocat, quo ni statim proficisceretur, illum se pro hoste habiturum agrumque eius omnem hostiliter populaturum significat. (4) Ille primo timens pavensque, prius etiam omnia tentaturus videhatur quam Regis se fidei permittere armati et inimicum prae se ferentis animum, tandem et suorum admonitionibus et quod popularium fame laborantium animos verebatur iratos iam et de rebellione cogitantes, ad Regem vultu orationeque quam maxime composita in castra venit ab eoque benigne acceptus est. Cum eo Rex permulta egit, tum de rebus suis aliis, tum de conciliandis aut debellandis Antonio reliquisque Caldoris. (5) Ille vero aliquot post dies ex quo in castris manserat, quiescente in tabernaculo Rege, mane sub exortum solis equo per castra praeter solitum devectus deambulansque cum paucis, ac subinde quasi multa animo agitans, vultum immutabat, alioque atque alio se se vertens, nunc humi fixos tenebat oculos, nunc coelum suspirans aurasque suspectabat. (6) Quod animadversum cum esset, Regique perlatum, iussit diligenter vadum observari fluminis, quo e loco ad Carinulas fugienti (neque enim amplius duobus millibus passuum oppidum aberat) iter tutum erat vadum praetergresso. (7) Incertus igitur atque animi dubius fluctuansque diutius cum fuisset, tandem ad vadum iam citato equo repentinus ferebatur; ibi interceptus a custodibus captivusque Capuam atque inde Neapolim Regis iussu ducitur. Qui statim urbibus atque arcibus illius potitur, Helionora cum liberis ac Beatrice Aversam deducta.

Book VI

I. *John of Anjou*
(1) Atque haud multo post Ioannes, Tarentino iam mortuo, desperatis iam rebus suis, in Provinciam inde Narbonensem enavigat, relinquens in regni Neapolitani populis atque apud nobilitatem praecipue permagnum sui desiderium, cum esset maxime compositis moribus,

integra fide, incredibili continentia, summa constantia, magno in Deum metu, in homines liberalitate ac gratitudine, iusti honestique apprime colens ac supra Gallorum hominum ingenia gravis, severus, circumspectus.

II. *The city of Naples celebrates Ferdinando's victory*

(1) Tum vero urbs victoriae certa laeta omnia agere, viri, mulieres, cives, peregrini, senes, impuberes per urbem discursare, ad litus currere, molem pervagari, qui victrice e classe redissent sciscitari, gratulari, complecti, virtutem eorum in coelum ferre, convivia parare, publice privatimque laetari, quod mare liberum, quod navigatio secura, quod tandem pax terra marique omnino esset parta. (2) At Isabella Regina, qua erat pietate et in Deum cultu, victoriam Deo acceptam referre, ipsa Mariae aras, ipsa Divorum templa adire, venerari, parvos liberos ante se ferre, cum iis ante illorum imagines procumbere, gratias agere, vota solvere, supplicia pluribus diebus facere, nihil civitas universa, nihil nobilis, ignobilis, sacerdos omittere, quod ad declarandam laetitiam, nihil Isabella, quod ad gratitudinem erga Deum, erga Divos Divasque testificandam pertineret.

III. *The surrender of Giovanni Torella in Ischia and the end of the war*

(1) Torella, amissa classe, capto fratre ac filio, destitutus omni spe, de deditione per Duraeam cum Rege egit, per quem paucis ante diebus etiam tentaverat exolutis sibi a Ferdinando aureum numum quinquaginta millibus oppido et insulae simul cedere. (2) Rex igitur, Ximeno procurante, convenit his conditionibus, uti Torella oppidum Regi traderet, ipse liber tutusque cum uxore, liberis reque omni familiari in Siciliam deferretur regiis duabus triremibus, Carolus frater et e filiis alter liberi suique iuris essent, Ximenus conventorum praes ac fideiussor esset. (3) Ante tamen quam ille triremibus impositus vela faceret, Ferdinandus coram exhortatus est eum, uti cum universa familia Neapoli remaneret, rerum se praeteritarum immemorem futurum, neque ipsi, neque liberis defuturum pollicitus. (4) Ille Regi gratias cum egisset, solutis triremium oris in Siciliam primo, post in Ispaniam Tarraconensem, quaeque illi erat patria, Barcellonem perlatus est: vir profecto levitate ac perfidia sua deterrima quaque sorte ultimoque supplicio dignus. Et hic quidem belli huius Neapolitani finis atque exitus rerum fuit.

IV. *Final judgment on Ferrante*

(1) Igitur in hac urbe Ferdinandus pace parta rebusque e sententia compositis supra triginta annos regnavit, cum interim multa bella pro sociis atque amicis suscepta fortissime gesserit, Turcas quoque qui Hydruntum bonamque Salentinorum partem ex improviso adorti occupaverant, Alfonsi filii industria atque opera victos Italia expulerit. Qui si quibus artibus in initio regnum sibi comparavit, easdem in pace ocioque retinuisset, ut maxime felix est habitus sic inter optimos fuisset principes numeratus.

ANGELO POLIZIANO
Coniurationis commentarium

[1] Pactianam coniurationem paucis describere instituo, nam id in primis memorabile facinus tempestate mea accidit parumque abfuit quin Florentinam omnem rem publicam penitus everteret.
[2] Cum is igitur esset eius urbis status, ut omnes boni a Laurentio et Iuliano fratribus reliquaque Medicum familia starent, Pactiorum una gens ac Salviatorum nonnulli coepere praesentibus rebus clam primo, mox etiam palam adversari: invidebant enim Medicae familiae eiusque summam nostra in re publica auctoritatem et privatum decus, quantum in eis esset, obterebant.
[3] Erat Pactiorum familia civibus plebique iuxta invisa, nam, praeterquam quod avarissimi essent omnes, neque eorum contumax atque insolens ingenium satis aequo animo tolerari poterat. [4] Eius familiae princeps, Iacobus Pactius, equestris ordinis vir, diem noctemque aleae vacare; sicubi male iactus caderet, Deos atque homines diris agere, non nunquam et alveolum tessararium, aut quod aliud irato offerretur, temere in proximum quemque iaculari. Ipse pallidus atque exanguis caput iactare semper et, quod levitatis maximum foret argumentum, nunquam ore, nunquam oculis, nunquam manibus consistere.

[The text is quoted from: ANGELO POLIZIANO, *Coniurationis commentarium*, con introduzione, traduzione e commento ed. by M. Celati (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2015)]

[1] **Pactianam…accidit**: Sall. *Cat*. 4, 2-4 '…*statui* res gestas populi Romani carptim, ut quaeque memoria digna videbantur, *perscribere* […]. Igitur *de Catilinae coniuratione* quam verissume potero *paucis* absolvam; nam *id facinus in primis ego memorabile existumo* sceleris atque periculi novitate' **rem publicam-everteret**: Suet. *Iul*. 53, 1 (Quint. *inst*. 8, 2, 9)
[2] **praesentibus…adversari**: *cf*. Suet. *Iul*. 80, 1 'ne populo quidem iam *praesenti statu laeto*, sed *clam palamque* detrectante dominationem…'
[3] **Erat…invisa**: *cf*. Sall. *Iug*. 88, 1 'Metellus interea Romam profectus contra spem suam laetissimis animis accipitur, plebi patribusque, postquam invidia decesserat, iuxta carus.'
[4] **familiae princeps**: Liv. 3, 17, 8 **sicubi…caderet**: Don. *Ter*. *Ad*. 740-741 'ars adhibenda pro fortuna, non enim si male iactus ceciderit, deserendus est ludus' (Ter. *Ad*. 739-741 'Ita vitast hominum, quasi quom ludas tesseris: si illud quod maxume opus est iactu non cadit, illud quod cecidit forte, id arte ut corrigas.') **diris agere**: Hor. *Epod.* 5, 89-90 'diris agam vos; / dira detestatio nulla expiatur victima' **pallidus…exanguis**: *cf*. Sall. *Cat*. 15, 5 'Igitur colos exanguis, foedi oculi, citus modo, modo tardus incessus: prorsus in facie vultuque vecordia inerat.' **caput iactare**: *cf*. Quint. *Inst*. 11, 3, 71 'adeo iactare id [*sc*. caput] et comas excutientem rotare fanaticum est.'

[5] Duo in homine ingentia vitia eaque, quod mirum esset, maxime inter se contraria eminebant: multa avaritia, multa perdendi patrimonii voluptas. [6] Domum paternam magnifice exstructam a fundamentis diruit, novam de integro exaedificare aggressus est. Saepe ille mercenarias operas conducere neque tamen integrum solvere, pauperculos homines misere sibi vix manuum labore victum quaerentes defraudare et corruptam suillam pro mercede apponere solitus; quare omnibus erat invisus, neque is neque eius maiores gratiosi populo unquam fuerant. [7] Erat praeterea sine legitima prole, quapropter et a suis necessariis, quippe qui hominis hereditatem captarent, praeter caeteros colebatur.

[8] Incuria in homine maxima maximaque rei familiaris negligentia, cumque hi essent hominis mores, facile rem fracturus videbatur: quod ipsum homini ad maturandum facinus calcar maximum facesque subdidit. Non enim sperabat homo insolens et ambitiosus decoctoris ignominiam aequo animo ferre posse: studebat itaque uno incendio sese suamque omnem patriam concremare.

[9] Franciscus autem Salviatus, homo repente fortunatus, quippe qui Pisanum haud multo antea archiepiscopatum esset adeptus, vix ipse sese suamque fortunam capiens, coeperat, supra quam dici potest, secundis rebus insolescere omniaque sibi de sese suaque fortuna polliceri. [10] Is

[5] **Duo…voluptas**: *cf*. Sall. *Cat*. 5, 8 ‘Incitabant praeterea conrupti civitatis mores, quos pessuma ac divorsa inter se mala, luxuria atque avaritia, vexabant’.

[6] **Domum…aggressus est**: *cf*. Suet. *Iul*. 46, 1 ‘villam in Nemorensi a fundamentis incohatam magnoque sumptu absolutam, quia non tota ad animum ei responderat, totam diruisse’ **mercenarias operas**: Cic. *Phil*. 1, 22 **operas conducere**: Colum. 3, 21, 10 **manuum…quaerentes:** Thomas, *Summa theol*. 187, 4 ‘non possint sibi labore manuum victum quaerere’

[8] **rei…negligentia**: *cf*. Sall. *Cat*. 5, 7 ‘Agitabatur magis magisque in dies animus ferox inopia rei familiaris et conscientia scelerum’ **rem fracturus**: Cic. *Att*. 4, 1, 3; Hor. *sat*. 2, 3, 18-19; Pers. 5, 164-165 **ad maturandum facinus**: Sall. *Cat*. 15, 4 **incendio…concremare**: *cf*. Sall. *Cat*. 31, 9 ‘Quoniam quidem circumventus – inquit - ab inimicis praeceps agor, incendium meum ruina estinguam’

[9] **supra…potest**: Sall. *Cat*. 5, 3 ‘supra quam cuiquam credibile est’

secundis…insolescere: Tac. *Hist*. 2, 7, 2 ‘rebus secundis etiam egregios duces insolescere’

Franciscus homo fuit, id quod Dii atque homines sciunt, omnis divini atque humani iuris ignarus et contemptor, omnibus flagitiis et facinoribus coopertus, luxuria perditus et lenociniis infamis. Aleae et ipse studiosus, maximus praeterea adulator, multae levitatis ac vanitatis, idem audax, promptus, callidus et impudens: quibus artibus (adeo nihil Fortunam puduit) et archiepiscopatum est adeptus et caelum iam ipsum votis captabat.

[11] Hic una cum Francisco Pactio, quod propter insitam animo vanitatem ingentis spes sibi proposuerat, consilium Laurentii ac Iuliani necandi occupandaeque rei publicae multo antea Romae dicitur agitasse. [12] Tandem in suburbana Iacobi Pactii villa, quod Montughium dicitur, una omnis factio in facinus coniurant. Eius coniurationis formulam Salviatus ipse perscribit. Principes coniurationis post Salviatum, Iacobus et Franciscus Pactii.

[13] Franciscus ipse ex Antonio, Iacobi fratre, erat natus, qui, cum contumacis homo ingenii esset, magnos sibi spiritus, magnam arrogantiam sumpserat. Mirifice indignari praeferri sibi Medicam familiam; semper Laurentio, semper Iuliano obtrectare eosque passim traducere, nulli maledicto parcere, nullis contumeliis, nihil pensi habere, dum illis, quantum in se esset, iniuriam faceret.

[14] Romae plurimum ad nummariam Pactiorum mensam aetatem agere, nam Florentiae nihili suam esse auctoritatem sentiebat prae ea, quam sibi Medices germani pietate et bonis moribus vendicarant. Erat autem et ipse, id quod Pactiis omnibus peculiare fuit, supra quam dici potest, ad excandescentiam proclivis. [15] Statura fuit brevi, gracili corpusculo, colore sublivido, candida coma, cuius et in cultu nimium ferebatur occupatus. Is vero eius corporis vultusque habitus, ii gestus erant, ut facile intelligeres hominis incredibilem insolentiam, quam tamen ipse primis maxime congressibus magnopere obtegere conabatur, neque id satis ex sententia succedebat.

[10] **flagitiis…coopertus**: Sall. *Cat*. 23, 1 ‘flagitiis atque facinoribus copertus’ **audax…callidus**: Tac. *Hist*. 1, 48, 4 ‘Galbae amicitiae in abruptum tractus audax, callidus, promptus…’ **nihil…puduit**: Boeth. *Cons*. 1, 4, 19 ‘nihil fortunam puduit…’; Lucan. 2, 566-568 2, 568: ‘teque nihil, Fortuna, pudet’ **caelum…captabat**: *cf*. Sall. *Cat*. 5, 5

[11] **occupandaeque rei publicae**: Sall. *Jug*. 31, 12 ‘At qui sunt ii qui rem publicam occupavere?’

[12] **in facinus coniurant**: Liv. 39, 16, 5 ‘in omne flagitium et facinus coniuravit’; 39, 18, 3 **Principes coniurationis**: Suet. *Iul*. 80, 4 ‘Conspiratum est in eum a sexaginta amplius, Gaio Cassio Marcoque et Decimo Bruto *principibus conspirationis*’

[13] **magnos…sumpserat**: Caes. *Gall*. 1, 33, 5 ‘Ariovistus tantos sibi spiritus, tantam arrogantiam sumpserat…’ **parcere…contumeliis**: Liv. 1, 46, 7 **nihil pensi habere**: Sall. *Cat*. 12, 2; *Iug*. 41, 9

[14] **nummariam-mensam**: *cf*. *Dig*. 14, 3, 20 ‘mensae nummulariae’ **aetatem agere**: Sall. *Cat*. 4, 1; 58, 13; *Iug*. 85, 1 **ad excandescentia proclivis**: Cic. *Tusc*. 4, 21

[15] **Statura…coma**: *cf*. Suet. *Vita Ter*. 6 ‘Fuisse dicitur mediocri statura, *gracili corpore*, colore fusco’ **colore sublivido**: Cels. 5, 28 **cuius…occupatus**: *cf*. Suet. *Iul*. 45, 2; *Aug*. 79, 2

Sanguinarius praeterea homo erat et qui, dum rem quamcunque is animo volveret expeditum iret, nullo honestatis, nullo religionis, nullo famae aut nominis respectu detineretur.
[16] Iacobus deinde Salviatus, homo ad captandos hominum animos maxime factus: semper is arridere in os omnibus, laute omnes accipere, scortis et comessationibus intentus agere; mercaturae tamen et studiosus et gnarus ferebatur.
[17] In his erat et Iacobus tertius, Poggii illius eloquentissimi viri filius. Hic et ob angustiam rei familiaris aesque alienum, quod grande conflaverat, et ob ingenitam quandam sibi vanitatem, rerum novarum cupidus erat. [18] Eius praecipua in maledicendo virtus, in qua vel patrem, maledicentissimum hominem, referebat. Semper ille aut principes insectari passim, aut in mores hominum sine ullo discrimine invehi, aut cuiusque docti scripta lacessere, nemini parcere. Ipse ex multa historiarum memoria magnaque loquendi copia mirifice superbus esse, eas omnibus circulis coronisque, vel ad satietatem audientium, ingerere. [19] Patrimonium, quod ipsi amplum ex hereditate paterna obvenerat, totum paucis annis profuderat, quare et egestate coactus Pactiis Salviatoque se totum addixerat: erat enim, id quod semper fuerat, cuicunque emptori venalis.
[20] Fuit in his et quartus Iacobus, archiepiscopi frater, omnino vir obscurus ac sordidus; Bernardus praeterea Bandinus, perditus homo, audax, impavidus, quem et ipsum dilapidata res familiaris in omne flagitium praecipitem ageret.

[16] **arridere…omnibus**: Ter. *Ad*. 863-4 ‘nulli laedere os, adridere omnibus’; 269 ‘coram in os aliquem laudare’ **scortis et comessationibus**: Cic. *Catil*. 2, 10 ‘Quodsi in vino et alea *comissationes* solum et *scorta* quaererent’.
[17] **angustiam rei familiaris**: Suet. *Claud.* 5, 9 **aes…conflavarat**: Sall. *Cat*. 14, 2; ‘quique alienum *aes grande conflaverat*’; 24, 3 ‘*aes alienum grande conflaverant*’ **rerum novarum cupidus**: Sall. *Cat*. 48, 1; *Iug*. 66, 2
[18] **principes insectari**: Plin. *paneg*. 53, 3 ‘quod *insectari* malos *principes* tutum est’
[19] **ex hereditate…obvenerat**: Plin. *epist*. 3, 1, 1 **egestate coactus**: Ter. *Andr*. 274-275 **emptori venalis**: Sall. *Iug*. 35, 1

[21] Septem hi fuere cives, qui facinus susciperent. Additi his Iohannes Baptista ex oppido Montesicco et Hieronymi comitis familia; Antonius Volaterranus, quem vel patrium odium, vel facilis quaedam hominis levisque ad obsequendum natura in facinus sollicitabat; Stephanus praeterea sacerdos, Iacobi Pactii scriba, homo impudicus et male audiens omni crimine, qui et in Iacobi domo haud satis honeste versari ferebatur: eius enim unicam filiam adulterio conceptam litteras docebat.

[22] Coniurationis huius et Renatum et Guilielmum Pactios non ignaros fuisse compertum est. Guilielmus ipse Blancam, Laurentii Medicis sororem, in matrimonium duxerat eque ea amplam iam sobolem susceperat, quare et duabus, quod dicitur, sellis sedere putabatur. Hic eius, quem saepe dicimus, Francisci maior natu erat germanus. [23] Renatus autem ex Petro, equestris ordinis viro, Iacobi atque Antonii fratre, genitus, Guilielmi et Francisci patruelis. Erat hic homo haud incallidus maximusque odii atque iniuriae dissimulator, animi vero maximi neque tamen audax, sed qui rem maturius quamcunque is animo agitasset expeditum iret; tenax idem et pecuniae avidus, quapropter et multitudini minime carus. [24] Cliens praeterea Guilielmi, Napoleo Francesius, non ultimas partes in eo negotio assumpserat.

[25] Interfuere ei facinori et nonnulli obscuriores, partim ex archiepiscopi, partim ex familia Pactiorum. Hos inter et Brigliainus quidam, homo extremae conditionis, et Nannes notarius Pisanus, vir scelestus et factiosus.

[26] Sed qui ex peregrinis primas partes susceperat, is erat, quem diximus, Iohannes Baptista, Hieronymi familiaris. Hic rem totam, biennium iam ante agitatam, in quintum kalendas Maias anni a Christiana salute octavi et septuagesimi supra mille et quadringentos inque ipsum Dominicum ante Ascensionem diem reiecerat. Erat is magni vir ingenii, multi consilii et sagacis animi, ad obeundas res maxime dexter, neque vero in iis non saepe exercitatus. Magnam in eo fidem Salviatus, magnam coniurati omnes habuerant.

[22] **Coniurationis…fuisse**: *cf*. Sall. *Cat*. 17, 7 ‘Fuere item ea tempestate qui crederent M. Licinium Crassum *non ignarum eius consili fuisse*’. **duabus…sedere**: Macr. *Sat*. 2, 3, 9 ‘solebas duabus sellis sedere’; *Sen. contr*. 7, 3, 9

[23] **homo…incallidus**: Cic. *Inv.* 1, 3, 4; Ps. Quint. *decl.* 1, 11 **dissimulator…audax**: *cf*. Sall. *Cat*. 5, 4 ‘Animus audax, subdolus, varius, rei lubet simulator ac dissimulator, alieni adpetens, ardens in cupiditatibus’

[25] **extremae conditionis**: Sen. *Epist.* 80, 3 **vir scelestus et factiosus**: Sall. *Cat*. 51, 32

[26] **primas…susceperat**: Suet. *Iul.* 82, 1 ‘…qui primas partes susceperat’

[27] Res ipsa iam postulat uti coniurationis consilium explicemus. Medicum familia cum plerisque in rebus splendida semper magnificentissimaque est, tum vel maxime in claris hospitibus accipiendis. Nemo unquam vir clarus aut Florentiam aut Florentinum agrum petiit, in quem non illa domus hoc magnificentiae genere usa sit. [28] Cum igitur in suburbano illo Iacobi rure, ubi supra coniurationem factam ostendimus, Raphael forte cardinalis, ex Hieronymi comitis sorore natus, haud multo antea divertisset, hanc tanti facinoris ansam coniurati occupant. [29] Nuntiant cardinalis nomine geminis fratribus uti se Fesulis, quae ipsorum suburbana villa est, accipiant. Eo Laurentius atque egomet cum puero Petro, Laurentii filio, accedimus; Iulianus, quod valitudine impediretur, domi restitit: id quod rem in ipsum, quem diximus, diem distulit. [30] Iterum familiarius homini nuntiant cupere cardinalem et Florentiae convivio accipi, urbanae domus ornamenta, vestem, aulaea, gemmas, argentum, pretiosam omnem supellectilem inspicere. Nullum optimi iuvenes dolum suspicantur: domum parant, ornamenta depromunt, vestem explicant, argentum, signa, toreumata in propatulo collocant, producunt gemmas in promptuarium; magnificentissime convivium apparatur.

[31] Ecce tibi ante tempus coniuratorum manus scitantur ubi Laurentius, ubi Iulianus. Discunt in templo divae Reparatae esse ambos: eo contendunt.

[32] Cardinalis in suggestum chori de more subducitur, dumque Eucharistiae mysteria celebrantur, archiepiscopus cum Iacobo Poggio et duobus Iacobis Salviatis aliisque nonnullis comitibus in curiam contendit, uti dominos Florentinos arce deturbet, ipse curiam occupet. Reliqui in templo ad facinus obeundum remanent. [33] Destinatus ad Laurentii caedem, Iohannes Baptista negotium detractarat, Antonius Volaterranus Stephanusque susceperant; reliqui in Iulianum tendebant.

[27] **Res…explicemus**: *cf.* Sall. *Cat*. 5, 9 ‘Res ipsa hortari videtur…’.

[28] **ansam…occupant**: *cf.* Plaut. *Persa* 670 ‘quaerere ansam’; Cic. *Lael.* 59 ‘det…ansas’; *Sest.* 22 ‘ansas dabat’

[30] **ornamenta…toreumata**: *cf.* Suet. *Iul.* 47, 1 ‘gemmas, toreumata, signa, tabulas operis antiqui semper animosissime comparasse’

[31] **coniuratorum manus**: Cic. *Catil*. 1, 12; 44, 20; *Pis.* 15

[32] **arce deturbet**: Flor. *epit.* 1, 1, 5

[34] Ibi primum peracta sacerdotis communicatione, signo dato, Bernardus Bandinus, Franciscus Pactius aliique ex coniuratis, orbe facto, Iulianum circumdant. Princeps Bandinus, ense per pectus adacto, iuvenem transverberat. Ille moribundus aliquot passus fugitare, insequi illi. Iuvenis, deficiente spiritu, terrae concidit; iacentem Franciscus, repetito saepe ictu, pugione traiicit. Ita pium iuvenem neci dedunt. Qui Iulianum sequebatur famulus, terrore exanimatus, in latebras se turpiter coniecerat.
[35] Interim et Laurentium delecti sicarii invadunt, ac primo quidem Antonius manum sinistro eius humero iniicit, ictum in iugulum destinat. Ille imperterritus humeralem amictum exuit laevoque advolvit brachio, simul gladium vagina liberat; uno tamen ictu petitur, nam, dum sese expedit, vulnus in collo accipit. [36] Mox se homo acer et animosus stricto gladiolo ad sicarios vertere, circumspectare se caute et tueri. Illi exterriti fugam capiunt, neque vero segnis in eo tuendo Andreae et Laurentii Cavalcantis, quibus ille pedissequis utebatur, opera fuit; Cavalcantes brachium vulneratur, Andreas integer superat.
[37] Videre erat tumultuantem populum, viros mulieresque, sacerdotes, pueros, fugitantes passim quo pedes vocarent. Omnia fremitu plena et gemitu, nihil exaudiri tamen expressae vocis: fuere et qui crederent templum corruere.
[38] Qui Iulianum trucidarat, Bernardus Bandinus, non contentus suis partibus, ad Laurentium contendit. Ille se commodum cum paucis in sacrarium coniecerat. Bandinus ob iter Franciscum Norium, prudentem virum et mercaturis Medicae familiae praefectum, ense per stomachum adacto, uno vulnere perimit. Eius cadaver spirans adhuc idem in sacrarium, quo se Laurentius receperat, invectum est.

[34] **ense…adacto**: Ov. *met*. 6, 271 ‘ferro per pectus adacto’ **iuvenis…concidit**: Apul. *Met*. 9, 37 ‘exanimatus adulescens ille terrae concidit’ **pium iuvenem**: Ov. *Fast*. 6, 739; 6, 747 **in latebras…coniecerat**: Verg. *Aen*. 10, 655-656 ‘conicit in latebras’.
[35] **Interim…accipit**: *cf.* Suet. *Iul.* 82, 1-2 ‘Assidentem conspirati specie officii circumsteterunt, ilicoque Cimber Tillius, *qui primas partes susceperat,* quasi aliquid rogaturus propius accessit renuentique et gestu[m] in aliud tempus differenti *ab utroque umero togam adprehendit*: deinde *clamantem*: 'ista quidem vis est!' alter e Cascis aversum *vulnerat paulum infra iugulum*. Caesar Cascae brachium arreptum *graphio traiecit* conatusque prosilire alio vulnere tardatus est; utque animaduertit undique se *strictis pugionibus* peti, *toga caput obvoluit, simul sinistra manu* sinum *ad ima crura deduxit*, quo honestius caderet etiam inferiore corporis parte velata. - Atque *ita tribus et viginti plagis confossus est* uno modo ad primum ictum gemitu sine uoce edito, etsi tradiderunt quidam Marco Bruto irruenti dixisse: ‘kai su teknon'; *exanimis diffugientibus cunctis aliquamdiu iacuit*, donec lecticae impositum, dependente brachio, tres servoli domum rettulerunt. nec in tot vulneribus, ut Antistius medicus existimabat, letale ullum repertum est, nisi quod secundo loco *in pectore acceperat*’. **gladium vagina liberat**: Ov. *Fast*. 2, 793 ‘surgit et aurata vagina liberat ensem’; Ov. *Met*. 6, 548 ‘vagina liberat ensem’

[39] Tum ego, qui eodem me contuleram, aliique nonnulli fores, quae aheneae sunt, occludimus: ita periculum, quod a Bandino ingrueret, propulsavimus. Dum fores servamus, trepidare intus alii, de Laurentii vulnere solliciti esse. Ibi Antonius Rodulphus, Iacobi filius, egregius adolescens, Laurentii vulnus exugere. [40] Ipse nullam suae salutis rationem ducere, sed rogitare continenter ecquid Iulianus valeat; interdum vero et indignabundus minitari querique quod a quibus minime aequum fuerat sua vita peteretur. [41] Continuo iuvenum globus, qui Medicae domui fidi essent, ad sacrarii fores cum telis constipantur. Clamant unanimes amicos sese et necessarios: exeat, exeat Laurentius, antequam adversa factio robur capiat! Nos trepidi intus ambigere hostes an amici forent, rogitare tamen an incolumis Iulianus. Ipsi ad ea nihil respondere.

[42] Tum Sigismundus Stupha, egregius iuvenis et qui Laurentio iam inde a puero miro amore, mira pietate esset coniunctus, scalas ascendit, speculam, quae in templum despiceret, ubi et organa essent musica, festinans petit, facinus continuo ex Iuliani cadavere, quod prostratum viderat, intelligit. Qui pro foribus astabant videt esse amicos; iubet aperiri. Illi frequentes Laurentium in armatorum globum accipiunt, domum per dispendia, ne in Iuliani cadaver incideret, perducunt.

[43] Ego recta domum perrexi Iulianumque multis confectum vulneribus, multo cruore foedatum miserabiliter iacentem offendi. Ibi titubans et prae doloris magnitudine vix satis animi compos, a quibusdam amicis sublevatus domumque sum deductus.

[44] Omnia ibi armatorum plena erant, omnia faventium clamoribus personabant, strepitu et vocibus tectum omne resultabat. Videres pueros, senes, iuvenes, sacros ac prophanos viros arma capere, domum Medicam quasi publicam omnium salutem defensare.

[39] **periculum…propulsavimus**: Cic. *Cluent*. 52, 144 **egregius adolescens**: Sall. *Cat*. 52, 31; Liv. 44, 38, 1

[42] **per dispendia**: *Lucan.* 8, 2; *Mart.* 9, 99, 5 43. **Multo cruore foedatum**: Amm. 19, 7, 5 ‘nostra multo cruore foedabant’ **miserabiliter iacentem**: Val. Max. 6, 9, 9 **vix…compos**: Ter. *Ad*. 309 ‘Vix sum compos animi’

[44] **clamoribus…resultabat**: *cf.* Plin. *Paneg*. 73, 1 ‘inde resultantia vocibus tecta, nihilque tantis clamoribus satis clausum.’

[45] Interim Pisanus praesul Caesarem Petrucium, vexilliferum, quod aiunt, iustitiae, remotis arbitris, in colloquium vocat, eo consilio, ut hominem trucidet: velle se ait nonnulla Pontificis referre nomine. [46] Quidam ex Perusinis proscriptis, qui hominem facinoris conscii in curiam comitabantur, in publici cubiculum scribae se coniciunt, uti locum idoneum teneant; fores concludunt cubiculi, neque eas, ubi res postulat, aperire queunt: ita neque sibi neque suis auxilio esse.

[47] At Caesar, ubi titubantem Salviatum contemplatur, dolum suspicatus, lictores ad arma concitat. Salviatus metu perturbatus e cubiculo se proripit. Ille in Iacobum Poggii filium incidit eumque, ut est homo ingentis animi, capillo correptum humi deturbat custodibusque servandum mandat; mox ad summam turrim cum dominorum manu festinus evadit. [48] Ibi, quantum in se est, correpto e culina veru (nam id ei telum metus atque ira obtulerant), fores tuetur, suam atque publicam salutem acriter defensat. Idem alii pro se quisque viriliter agunt. [49] Crebrae in Florentina curia sunt ianuae: eae a lictoribus occlusae, capita coniuratorum separant. Ita illi in multos diducti rivulos impetum perdunt. Interea omnis curia intus fremere, pauci ex civibus eo convenire.

[50] Iacobus autem Pactius, ubi spem Laurentii necandi se fefellisse intellexit, haud ignarus quantum sceleris in se admisisset, utraque palma suam ipse faciem caeciderat; mox, dum se domum e templo corriperet, ad terram prae angustia collapsus est. [51] Tandem, ubi rem in angusto esse videt, fortunam tentare aggressus, cum paucis ex necessariis recta in forum contendit, populum ad arma convocat. Nihil succedere illi, verum omnes hominem scelestum et tum prae formidine vix sonum vocis qui exaudiretur erumpentem, contemptui habere facinusque detestari. Is ubi nihil in populo auxilii videt, trepidare animoque destitui. [52] Qui in summam curiae arcem receperant se, saxa ingentia telaque in Iacobum iaculantur. Homo pavitans domum se refert. Eodem et Francisus, acceptis in eo tumultu gravibus vulneribus, repente confugerat.

[46] **facinoris conscii**: Sall. *Cat*. 22, 1

[49] **capita coniuratorum**: Liv. 8, 19, 13 (*et al*.) **curia…fremere**: *cf*. Liv. 23, 31, 7; 42, 3, 5

[50] **spem…intellexi**: Caes. *Gall*. 2, 10, 4 ‘hostes…spem se fefellisse intellexerunt’ **quantum…admisisset**: Caes. *Gall*. 3, 9, 3 ‘quantum in se facinus admisissent intellegebant’

[51] **rem…videt**: Caes. *Gall*. 2, 25, 1 ‘…rem esse in angusto vidit’ **hominem scelestum**: Sall. *Cat*. 51, 32 **prae formidine**: Plaut. *Amph*. 337; *Capt*. 637

[52] **acceptis…vulneribus**: Caes. *Gall*. 6, 38, 4 Caes. *Gall*. 6, 38, 4 ‘relinquit animus Sextium gravibus acceptis vulneribus’; 1, 48, 5

[53] Interim Laurentiani curiam recipiunt, Perusini, effracto ostio, trucidantur. Tum et in reliquos saevitum, Iacobum Poggii e fenestris suspendunt. Cardinalem comprehensum magno praesidio in curiam subducunt aegreque hominem a populi impetu tuentur; qui eum assectari consueverant, plerique a plebe occisi. [54] Omnia direpta, cadavera ipsa foede lacerata: iam ante Laurentii fores caput humanum lanceae praefixum, iam humeri partem attulerant. Nihil tum magis undique exaudiri quam populi voces 'Pilas, Pilas' (id enim Medicae familiae insigne est) clamitantis. [55] At Iacobus Pactius fuga sibi consulit: portam, quae ad Crucis dicitur, cum armatorum manu petit, inde erumpit.

[56] Interim ad Medicum aedes miro studio, miro favore populus confluere, proditores ad supplicium flagitare, nulli maledicto, nullis minis parcere, dum ad poenam sceleratos rapi cogerent. [57] Ibi Iacobi Pactii domus vix a direptione defensa; Franciscus nudus ac saucius a Petri Corsini globo ad laqueum rapitur paene semivivus: non enim facile aut pronum erat furenti populo temperare.

[58] Mox et Pisanus praesul ex eadem, qua et Franciscus Pactius fenestra pendebat, supra ipsum exanimum corpus suspenditur. Cum deiiceretur (id quod mirum quidem omnibus visum iri arbitror, nemini tamen ignotum eo tempore extiterit), sive id casus aliquis sive rabies dederit, ipsum illud Francisci cadaver dentibus invadit, alteramque eius mamillam, vel cum laqueo suffocatus est, apertis furialiter oculis, mordicus detinebat. Post hunc et duo Iacobi ex Salviatorum familia laqueo guttur franguntur.

[53] **effracto ostio**: Petron. 98, 1

[54] **caput…praefixum**: *cf.* Suet. *Iul.* 85, 1 'Plebs statim a funere ad domum Bruti et Cassii cum facibus tetendit atque aegre repulsa obvium sibi Helvium Cinnam…occidit *caputque eius praefixum hastae* circumtulit'.

[56] **ad poenam...rapi**: Suet. *Claud*. 10, 2; 37, 1

[57] **furenti populo**: Lucan. 1, 68-69; 2, 249

[58] **furialiter**: Ov. *Fast.* 6, 637 **mordicus**: Suet. Iul. 64 'mordicus trahens' **laqueo…franguntur**: Sall. *Cat*. 55, 5 '…laqueo gulam fregere', Hor. *Epod*. 3, '…guttur fregerit' e Lucan. 2, 154 'hic laqueo…guttura fregit'.

[59] Memini me tum venire in forum (nam domi quieta iam res erat) ibique multa cadavera foede lacerata passim videre proiecta: multa in ea populi ludibria, multae detestationes. [60] Erat enim Medica domus multis causis populo grata. Tum Iuliani caedem detestari omnes: indignum facinus clamitare iuvenem egregium, delitias Florentinae iuventutis, per scelus, per dolum ac proditionem a quibus minime oportuit interemptum, familiam impotentem ac sacrilegam, Diis hominibusque infestam, tantum facinus perpetrasse. [61] Stimulabat plebem et memoria recens eius virtutis. Nam, cum paucis ante annis equestre illud cataphractorum equitum certamen celebraretur, mira virtus Iuliani extiterat palmamque et spolia domum reportaverat: quae res magnopere vulgi animos conciliat. Ad haec et facinoris indignitas accedebat; neque enim quicquam tam scelestum dici aut excogitari poterat, quod huius atrocitatem sceleris adaequaret. [62] Fremebant omnes iuvenem pium, innocentem, in templo, inter aras et sacra crudeliter trucidatum, violatum hospitium, violata sacra, pollutum humano sanguine templum; ipsum autem Laurentium, in quem unum Florentina omnis res publica recumberet, ipsum illum Laurentium, in quo spes omnes opesque populi sitae forent, ferro petitum, id vero indignissimum clamitabant.

[63] Iam ex omnibus municipiis, ut quaeque urbi viciniora essent, magna vis armatorum in forum, in trivia, in Medicam praecipue domum confluere, ostentare pro se quisque suum studium; cives catervatim cum liberis et clientibus polliceri suam operam, suas vires atque opes; omnes ex uno Laurentio et publicam et privatam pendere ipsorum salutem dictitare. Videre erat continuos aliquot dies undique in domum Laurentianam arma convehi, importari carnes et panes quaeque essent victui oportuna.

[59] **cadavera…proiecta**: *cf*. Sen. *Epist*. 92, 34 ‘Non conterret, inquit, me nec uncus nec proiecti ad contumeliam cadaveris laceratio foeda visuris’
[60] **indignum…clamitare**: Ter. *Andr*. 144-45 ‘*clamitans/ indignum facinus* comperisse’ **per…proditionem**: Liv. 2, 3, 1 ‘per dolum ac proditionem prope libertas amissa est’ **Diis…infestam**: Sall. *Cat*. 15, 4 ‘dis hominibusque infestus’
[61] **cataphractorum equitum**: Sall. *Hist. frg.* 4, 64; 4, 66 (Non. P. 256,14) **atrocitatem sceleris**: Sall. *Cat*. 22, 3
[62] **iuvenem pium**: Ov. *Fast.* 6, 739; 6, 747 **spes…sitae**: Sall. *Iug.* 114, 4 ‘et ea tempestate *spes atque opes* civitatis in illo *sitae*’; Ter. *Ad*. 330 **indignissimum clamitabant**: Ter. *Andr*. 144-45 (*cf*. Don. *Ter. Andr.* 144)
[63] **magna vis armatorum**: *cf*. Liv. 8, 1, 6; 30, 6, 9

[64] Ipse Laurentius non vulnere, non metu, non dolore, quem ex fratris nece maximum ceperat, impediri quo minus rebus suis prospiceret: prehensare cives omnis, gratiam se singulis habere, ipsis omnibus suam dicere salutem referre acceptam; populo sese de ipsius salute anxio non nunquam e fenestris ostentare. Ibi acclamare omnis populus, manus ad caelum tollere, gratari eius saluti, exultare gaudio. Ipse rebus omnibus intentus agere, neque animo neque consilio destitui.

[65] Dum haec aguntur, nuntiatum Iohannem Franciscum Tollentinatem, Fori Cornelii praefectum, cum delecta equitum manu in nostrum agrum ex ipsis Fori Cornelii finibus irrupisse; idem mox et Tifernatem fecisse Laurentium, qua parte Senensium fines Florentinum disterminant agrum, multorum nuntiis litterisque admonemur: tum utrumque, a nostris pulsum, domum suam recepisse se. [66] Nocte atra vigiliae per urbem dispositae, domus Laurentiana diligenter custodita, stationes armatorum in quadriviis, in foro, tota urbe. [67] Postridie eius diei Iohannes Bentivolius, Bononiensis eques suaeque princeps rei publicae, vir multis officiis familiae Medicum coniunctissimum, in Mugellanum cum aliquot equitum turmis multisque peditum cohortibus auxiio venerat, iamque tota urbs peditibus expleri coepta. [68] Sed veriti Octoviri, nequid milites praedae avidi tumultuarentur, delectis qui custodiae urbis praeessent, reliquos, ut primum in urbem venerant, suam quemque domum, aut sicubi usu fore decernerent, regredi iubent.

[69] Renatus interim Pactius, qui pridie eius diei, quo facinus gestum est, in villam Mugellanam se receperat ibique milites cogebat, cum duobus fratribus Iohanne et Nicolao captivus ducitur. Guilielmi ac Francisci frater, Iohannes Pactius, in horto quodam suae domui contiguo deprehenditur. [70] Qui Iacobum sequuti sunt, ab omnibus iam destitutum in Castaneo vico comprehendunt. Qui primus hominem assequutus est, is fuit Alexander quidam agricola, annis plurimum viginti natus. Ipse homini manum iniicit, at Iacobus, septem prolatis aureis, obsecrare rusticum incipit uti se neci dedat, neque vero id homini persuadet. Ut vero magis hoc magisque precibus contendit, a fratre Alexandri scipione verberatur. Tum intellexit homo pavidus verum esse quod dicitur: ducunt volentem fata, nolentem trahunt.

[64] **salutem…acceptam**: *cf*. Caes. *Civ*. 3, 57, 4 '*salutem imperii* uni omnes *acceptam relaturos*'.
[65] **in-agrum irrupisse**: Lucan. 2, 441 'Hesperiae fines vacuosque irrumpat in agros'
[66] **stationes armatorum**: Liv. 26, 46, 2 (*et al.*)
[67] **equitum…cohortibus**: Liv. 28, 14, 17 '…cum ternis *peditum cohortibus ternisque equitum turmis*' **auxilio…expleri**: Liv. 22, 28, 11 '…mittens *auxilia peditum* equitumque iam iustam *expleverat* aciem'
[68] **milites…avidi**: Liv. 25, 25, 4 '*miles avidus praedae*' (*et al.*) **custodiae…praeessent**: Liv. 24, 35, 7 'Epicydes *praeesset custodiae urbis*'.
[70] **ducunt…trahunt**: Sen. *Epist*. 107, 11 'Ducunt volentem fata, nolentem trahunt' (Cleanth. *frg. theol*. 527ab Arn.) **expressa…confessione**: Suet. *Galba* 10, 5 'tormentis expressa confessio est cogitati facinoris'

[71] Ibi Florentiam cum praesidio Octovirorum, ne a plebe laniaretur, in curiam perlatus, expressa nullo tormento totius facinoris confessione, paucis post horis laqueo poenas luit. Hic homo iam leto vicinus, haud quaquam sui illius rabidi furiosique ingenii obliviscitur: Manes suos adverso daemoni dedere se clamat. [72] Post eum et de Renato supplicium sumptum; reliqui fratres in vincula coniecti. Eorum minimus natu Galeottus, impubis adhuc, muliebri stola amictus, fugam trepidus moliebatur: ibi agnitus in eundem carcerem coniicitur, eodemque haud multo post et Andream Pactium, Renati fratrem, ex fuga retractum obtrudunt.

[73] Bandinus fugitans in Tifernatem incidit, a quo in aciem receptus Senas pervasit. Napoleo, a Petro Vespuccio equite adiutus, fuga sibi consuluit. Aliquot post dies et de Iohanne Baptista supplicium sumptum. [74] Qui Laurentium percusserat, Antonius Volaterranus, et Stephanus in Florentina abbatia aliquot dies latuere. Id ubi rescitum, continuo gregatim eo populus convolat vixque ab ipsis monachis, quod religione prohibiti non eos indicassent, manum abstinent. Arreptos sicarios foede lacerant; ibi demum, mutilato naso, truncis auribus, multis colaphis contusi, ad laqueum post confessionem sceleris rapiuntur. [75] Praemia deinde publice his decreta ac per praeconem denuntiata qui Bandinum et Neapoleonem aut occiderent aut viventis agerent captivos. [76] Guilielmus Pactius, qui affinitate fretus in Laurentianam domum confugerat, una cum liberis cis vigesimum trans quintum ab urbe lapidem proscribitur.

[72] **muliebri stola**: Varro 8, 13 **ex fuga retractum**: Sall. *Cat*. 47, 4 Sall. *Cat*. 47, 4 ‘nam is paulo ante ex fuga retractus erat’
[74] **manum abstinent**: Ter. *Ad*. 5, 781 **foede lacerant**: *cf*. Sen. *Epist*. 92, 34 **mutilato…auribus**: *cf*. Mart. 2, 83, 3 ‘trunci naribus auribusque vultus’; Liv. 29, 9, 7
[75] **per..denuntiata**: Macr. *sat*. 1, 16, 9 ‘per praeconem denuntiabant’

[77] Ubi rescitum est a Petro Vespuccio Neapoleonem adiutum, continuo et ipsum capiunt. Hic iam inde a pueritia bona paterna dilapidaverat, quare et hereditatis iure parentis testamento mox cecidit. Domi erat illi summa inopia, foris grande aes alienum, quamobrem et praesenti re publica offendebatur et rerum novarum cupiens erat. [78] Atque is, ut primum Iuliani caedes transacta, coepit, ut erant hominis subita ac repentina consilia, Pactiorum facinus verbis attollere. Mox, ut omnem populum, omnes cives vidit a Laurentio stare, confestim se ad diripiendam Pactiorum domum corripuit, nactusque praedae inhiantis milites, parum abfuit, nisi Petrus Corsinus, egregius iuvenis, eius ferociae occurrisset, quin civitatem omnem, sacra prophana omnia in summum periculum adduceret: adeo homo praeceps et furiosus populum militesque omnes ad praedam animaverat. Demum et ipse in carcerem coniectus et Marcus filius ad quintum ab urbe lapidem proscriptus.
[79] Multae praeterea insequutae caedes atque omnes conscii partim caesi, partim in vinculis habiti aut proscripti sunt. [80] Romae ubi nuntiatum est, maximus dolor, multae undique legationes, mira omnium de Laurentii incolumitate exultatio.
[81] Funus Iuliano magnifice ductum et iusta Manibus in divi Laurentii templo persoluta. Pleraque iuventus vestem mutavit. Ipse undeviginti vulneribus perfossus erat. Annis vixerat quinque et viginti.
[82] Paucis post diebus, cum iuges pluviae essent insequutae, repente ex omnibus agris magna vis hominum in urbem confluit. Nefas esse clamitant Iacobi Pactii cadaver in sacro conditum: ideo tam diu perpluisse, quod hominem scelestum et qui ne in morte quidem religionis ullam aut Dei rationem habuerit contra ius fasque in templo condiderint; officere id, quae rusticorum vetus est superstitio, lactentibus adhuc frumentis. Idem et populus omnis, ut in tali re assolet, passim dictitare. Tum ad ipsum sepulcri locum conveniunt frequentes, erutum cadaver in pomerio defodiunt.

[77] **Domi…alienum**: Sall. *Cat*. 20, 12 ‘At nobis est *domi inopia, foris aes alienum*’.
[78] **caedes transacta**: Tac. *Germ*. 22, 1 **subita…consilia**: Caes. *Gall*. 3, 8, 3 ‘ut sunt Gallorum *subita et repentina consilia*’ **in…adduceret**: Plin. *Epist*. 8, 10, 1 ‘…*in summum periculum adducta*’
[81] **iusta…persoluta**: *cf*. Ps. Quint. *Decl*. 18, 17 ‘si prius licuerit coram civitate *manibus tuis iusta persolvere*’; Sen. *Oed*. 998 ‘*iusta persolvi* patri’ **undeviginti…perfossus**: *cf*. Suet. *Iul*. 82, 2 ‘ita *tribus et viginti* plagis *confossus est*’
[82] **contra…fasque**: Sall. *Cat*. 15, 1 **lactentibus…frumentis**: Verg. *Georg.* 1, 315 ‘frumenta in viridi stipula lactentia turgent’; *cf*. Ov. *Fas*. 1, 351 ‘nam sata, vere novo, teneris lactentia sucis’

[83] Postridie eius diei, id quod monstri simile visum est, puerorum ingens multitudo, velut quibusdam furiarum arcanis facibus accensa, conditum rursus cadaver effodiunt; prohibentem nescio quem parum abfuit quin lapidibus necarent. [84] Tum, quo fuerat suffocatus laqueo apprehendunt multisque conviciis ac ludibriis per omnes urbis vicos passim raptant. Hic alii per ridiculum praeeuntes decedere via obvios iubere, quod se equitem insignem dicerent adducere; alii baculis stimulisque increpitantes monere hominem, ne praestolantibus se in foro civibus esset in mora. Mox ad suas adductum aedes ostium capite pulsare subigunt, simul exclamant ecquis intus sit, ecquis redeuntem magno comitatu dominum excipiat. [85] In forum venire prohibiti, ad Arni fluvium contendunt eoque cadaver abiciunt. Id cum supernataret, magna vis rusticorum convicia fundentes subsequebantur; unde et quidam non irridicule dixisse fertur fuisse illi omnia ex sententia successura, si quem extinctus habuit populi comitatum et vivens habuisset.

[86] Ex hac tanta rerum commutatione saepe ego de humanae fortunae instabilitate sum admonitus maximeque admiratus incredibilem omnium de Iuliani interitu dolorem. Cuius quae forma corporis, qui ve habitus, qui mores fuerint, paucis perstringam.

[87] Statura fuit procera, quadrato corpore, magno et prominenti pectore, teretibus ac musculosis brachiis, validis articulis, compressa alvo, amplis femoribus, suris aliquanto plenioribus, vegetis oculis, acri visu, subnigro colore, multa coma, capillo nigro et promisso atque in occiput a fronte reiecto.

[83] **monstri…est**: Don. *Ter. Eun.* 451 ‘quasi militi *monstri simile videatur*’
[84] **decedere via**: Plaut. *Amph*. 984; 990 **esset in mora**: Ter. *Andr*. 467; 224; *Ad*. 354 **ecquis...sit**: Plaut. *Truc*. 255 ‘Ecquis huic tutelam ianuae gerit? Ecquis intus exit?’
[85] **convicia fundentes**: Ov. *Met*. 13, 306 ‘…stolidae *convicia fundere* linguae’
non irridicule: Caes. *Gall*. 1, 42, 6
[87] **Statura…promisso***: cf. Suet. Iul. 45, 1*; *Tib*. 68, 1 **statura…procera**: Suet. *Dom*. 18, 1; *Tit*. 3, 1; *Vesp*. 23, 1 **quadrato corpore**: Cels. 2, 1 **validis articulis**: *cf*. Suet. *Tib*. 68, 1 **compressa alvo**: *Moret*. 34 **vegetis oculis**: Suet. *Iul*. 45, 1 **acri visu**: Mart. Cap. 4, 328 **subnigro colore**: Cels. 5, 28; Amm. 23, 6, 75

[88] Equitandi iaculandique gnarus, saltu et palaestra excellens, venatu mirum in modum delectari solitus. Magni animi et maximae constantiae, religionis et bonorum morum cultor, picturam maxime amplectebatur et musicam atque omne munditiarum genus. Ingenio erat ad poesim non inepto: scripsit nonnulla ethrusca carmina, mire gravia et sententiarum plena; amatoria carmina libens lectitabat. [89] Et facundus erat et prudens, minime tamen promptus, idem et urbanitatum mirus amator et ipse non inurbanus. Mendaces magnopere oderat et iniuriarum memores. In cultu corporis mediocris, mire vero et elegans et lautus. Obsequii erat multi, multae humanitatis, mirae in fratrem observantiae, magni roboris et virtutis.

[90] Haec illum atque alia carum populo, carum suis, dum vixit, reddebant; haec eadem nobis omnibus luctuosam egregii iuvenis atque acerbissimam memoriam relinquunt. Deum tamen optimum maximumque, ne prohibeat precamur: hunc saltem everso iuvenem succurrere saeclo.

[90] **hunc… saeclo**: Verg. *Georg*. 1, 500

[EPIGRAMMATA IN SALVIATUM]

In Salviatum

‘Quid tam, furca, doles, laqueus cum gestiat?’ ‘Heu, heu,
Salviatum eripuit celsa fenestra meum’.

In eundem

Salviatus mitrae sceleratus honore superbit:
Et quemquam caelo credimus esse Deum?
Scilicet hoc scelera, hoc artes meruere nefandae.
At laqueo en pendet: estis, io, Superi!

In eundem

Et laqueum et gestans rutilum Fortuna galerum,
‘Utrum, inquit, mavis accipe, Salviate’.
Respondit: ‘Sat mitra caput decet’. Ipsa, quid inde
Conveniat collo, tu quoque caeca vides.

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