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THE NATURE OF RENAISSANCE ANTIQUARIANISM: HISTORY, METHODOLOGY, DEFINITION*

Summary: The aim of this work is to provide a possible definition for Renaissance antiquarianism. This cultural pathway, which influenced the way the past was interpreted between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries, represented a methodological perspective which involved the cross-referencing of heterogeneous sources, strongly linked to mankind's perception of time and that helped shape a renewed historical consciousness. Focus will be devoted to a possible history of the phenomenon and a general explanation of its methodology.

Key words: Renaissance, antiquarianism, Classical tradition, philology, collecting

PREMISES

The first attempt to describe the phenomenon of antiquarianism as one of the key moments in the evolution of Renaissance thought can be traced back to the 1950s, when the definition formulated by Arnaldo Momigliano in his seminal essay *Ancient History and the Antiquarian* (1950) led to the impact of material sources on the development of modern thought being clearly identified as a crucial factor in the classical tradition and the history of ideas.[1] According to Momigliano, antiquarianism was a matter of

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[1] MOMIGLIANO, A.: Ancient History and the Antiquarian. *JWI* 3.4 (1950) 285–315; MOMIGLIANO, A.: *Contributo alla storia degli studi classici*. Rome 1955; MOMIGLIANO, A.: *Secondo contributo alla storia degli studi classici*. Rome 1960; Momigliano, A.: *The Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography* [Sather Classical Lectures 54]. Berkeley 1990; CRAWFORD, M. – LIGOTA, R.: *Ancient History and the Antiquarian: Essays in Memory of Arnaldo Momigliano*. London 1995.

historical method, which involved "the systematic collection of relics from the past"[2] and their interpretation with a critical approach. He considered it to be strongly linked to mankind's perception of time which, thanks to the accumulation of remains over the centuries, helped shape a deeper historical consciousness.

Scholars such as Eugenio Garin[3] and Roberto Weiss[4] attempted to coax out further details by taking into consideration the experience of philosophers and humanists from a diachronic perspective: in *L'Umanesimo italiano: filosofia e vita civile nel Rinascimento* (1952) and *The Renaissance Discovery of Classical Antiquity* (1969), respectively, they offered a general overview of the many phases of this cultural movement. The works carried out in parallel by Peter Burke,[5] *The Renaissance Sense of the Past* (1969), the contributions of Sebastiano Timpanaro,[6] *La genesi del Metodo di Lachman* (1960), and Silvia Rizzo,[7] *Il lessico filologico degli umanisti* (1973), on Renaissance philological techniques and the many other studies conducted on the humanistic method all shed further light on its origin and nature.

Vast contributions to this area have been made by the scholarship of Angelo Mazzocco,[8] who explored these dynamics during the fifteenth century – especially in his *Flavio Biondo and the Antiquarian Tradition* (1985) – but above all by the studies of Anthony Grafton,[9] who opened up several pathways for investigating the various aspects of this subject between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries – his essays on Poliziano (1977) and Scaliger (1983–1991), as well as his *Bring out Your Dead: The Past as Revelation* (2001) and his *What Was History? The Art of History in Early Modern Europe* (2007) all represent milestones in the field. Salvatore Settis,[10] especially in his *Memoria dell'antico nell'arte italiana* (1984–1986), increased enormously the paradigms of classical tradition within the arts.

The strong foundations put in place by these masters have been built on more recently by several scholars, including Leonard Barkan,[11] who worked on archaeol-

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[2] MOMIGLIANO: Ancient History (n. 1).

[3] GARIN, E.: *L'Umanesimo italiano: filosofia e vita civile nel Rinascimento.* Bari 1952.

[4] WEISS, R.: *The Renaissance Discovery of Classical Antiquity.* Oxford 1969.

[5] BURKE, P.: *The Renaissance Sense of the Past.* London 1969.

[6] TIMPANARO, S.: *La genesi del metodo del Lachmann.* Florence 1960.

[7] RIZZO, S.: *Il lessico filologico degli umanisti.* Rome 1973.

[8] MAZZOCCO, A.: *Some Philological Aspects of Biondo Flavio's Roma Triumphans.* Humanistica Lovaniensia 28 (1979) 1–26; MAZZOCCO, A.: Biondo Flavio and the Antiquarian Tradition. In SCHOECK, R. J. (ed.): *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Bononiensis. Proceedings of the Fourth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies,* Bologna 26 August to 1 September 1979. Binghamton, NY 1985, 124–136; MAZZOCCO, A. – LAUREYS, M. (eds.): *A New Sense of the Past: The Scholarship of Biondo Flavio (1392–1463)* [Supplementa Humanistia Lovaniensia XXXIX]. Leuven 2016.

[9] GRAFTON, A.: On the Scholarship of Politian and Its Context. *JWI* 40 (1977) 150–188; GRAFTON, A.: *Joseph Scaliger, a Study in History of Classical Scholarship. I. Textual Criticism.* Oxford 1983; GRAFTON, A.: *Joseph Scaliger, a Study in History of Classical Scholarship. II. Historical Chronology.* Oxford 1991; GRAFTON, A.: *Bring out Your Dead: The Past as Revelation.* Cambridge, MA 2001; GRAFTON, A.: *What Was History? The Art of History in Early Modern Europe.* Cambridge 2007.

[10] SETTIS, S.: *Memoria dell'antico nell'arte italiana. I: L'uso dei classici, II: I generi e i temi ritrovati, III: Dalla tradizione all'archeologia.* Torino 1984–1986.

[11] BARKAN, L.: *Unearthing the Past: Archaeology and Aesthetics in the Making of Renaissance Culture.* New Haven – London 1999.

ogy (1999); William Stenhouse,[12] who mostly investigated epigraphy (2005), collecting (2014) and the idea of antiquarianism in general (2017); Christian Dekesel,[13] who focused on numismatics (1998), Ingo Herklotz,[14] who analysed the figure of the antiquarian scholar (2012) as well several cases of ecclesiastical antiquarianism (2017); Peter Miller,[15] who approached antiquarianism with a geographical print (2015) and its interactions with collecting finds from antiquity (2017); and Monica Centanni,[16] who carried out a profound analysis of the many manifestations of classical tradition and rebirth of antiquity (2017). All these scholars have brought new readings to the multifarious and complex interpretations of this field.

The research conducted on Renaissance antiquarianism still flourishes today, taking the form of several publications and conferences: among the latter, special mention should be made of the sessions organised at the RSA Annual Meeting by Ginette Vagenheim and Joseph Connors, *Interpreting the Antique 1500–1675*,[17] and by Richard Calis, *Antiquarianism and Ethnography in the Early Modern World*, during the course of which several original aspects of Renaissance antiquarianism emerged.

However, the concept of Renaissance antiquarianism *per se* has not yet been completely and fully defined: this remains very much a work in progress which deserves a thorough multi-disciplinary examination of the phenomenon from a transnational perspective. The very nature of Renaissance antiquarianism means it cannot be reduced to a simple formulation, nor can it be encapsulated in a single history: antiquarianism during the Renaissance is in fact represented by a multitude of coexisting formulations that are expressed through a plurality of histories.

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[12] STENHOUSE, W.: *Reading Inscriptions and Writing Ancient History: Historical Scholarship in the Late Renaissance* [Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies Suppl. 86]. London 2005; STENHOUSE, W.: Antiquarianism. In GRAFTON, A. – MOST, W. – SETTIS, S.: *The Classical Tradition*. Cambridge, MA 2010; STENHOUSE, W.: Roman Antiquities and the Emergence of Renaissance Civic Collections. *Journal of the History of Collections* 26.2 (2014) 131–144; STENHOUSE, W.: From Spolia to Collections in the Roman Renaissance. In ALTEKAMP, A. – MARCKS-JACOBS, C. – SEILER, P. (eds.): *Perspektiven der Spolienforschung.* Berlin 2017; STENHOUSE, W.: Imagination and the Remains of Roman Antiquity. In: CAFERRO, W.: *The Routledge History of the Renaissance*. London 2017.

[13] BODON, G.: *Veneranda antiquitas: studi sull'eredità dell'antico nella rinascenza veneta.* Bern 2005; BODON, G.: *Enea Vico fra memoria e miraggio della classicità.* Rome 1997; on ancient numismatics during the Renaissance, see also STAHL, A.: *The Rebirth of Antiquity: Numismatics, Archaeology and Classical Studies in the Culture of the Renaissance.* Princeton 2009; MISSERE FONTANA, F.: *Testimoni parlanti: le monete antiche a Roma tra Cinquecento e Seicento.* Rome 2009; CUNNALLY, J.: *Images of the Illustrious: The Numismatic Presence in the Renaissance.* Princeton 1999; DEKESEL, C.: *Bibliotheca nummaria: Bibliography of the 16th Century Numismatic Books.* London 1998.

[14] HERKLOTZ, I.: *La Roma degli antiquari: cultura e erudizione tra Cinquecento e Settecento.* Rome 2012; HERKLOTZ, I.: *Apes urbanae: eruditi, mecenati e artisti nella Roma del Seicento.* Città di Castello 2017.

[15] MILLER, P.: *History and Its Objects.* Ithaca, London 2017, 55–75; MILLER, P.: *Peiresc's Mediterranean World.* Cambridge, MA 2015; SCHNAPP, A.: *World Antiquarianism: Comparative Perspectives.* Los Angeles 2014; MILLER, P. – LOUIS, F. (eds): *Antiquarianism and Intellectual Life in Europe and China, 1500–1800.* Ann Arbor 2012.

[16] CENTANNI, M.: *Fantasmi dell'antico. La tradizione classica nel Rinascimento.* Rimini 2017.

[17] This session was devided in four different panels: *(I) Architects Face the Antique 1*; *(II) Architects Face the Antique 2*; *(III) The Antiquarians and the Antique*; *(IV) The Humanists and the Antique.*

Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to retrace one of its possible histories from the supposed origins to its ideal endpoint, and to better differentiate between its applied methodologies; taking all these aspects into consideration, the final objective is to provide a reliable but not absolute definition that embraces the complex forms through which antiquarianism could have been interpreted by the various levels of understanding of Renaissance scholars.

HISTORY

There are specific historical reasons why Renaissance antiquarianism became a vital piece in the puzzle of how to approach knowledge. Developing at the same time as new philological trends that found support from the increase in the number of archaeological investigations conducted, its history fully embraces the spirit of Humanism. Starting in Italy, it spread throughout Europe between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries, at which point the new scientific culture, which had initially been favoured by antiquarian studies, began to establish a decisive influence as society moved towards a new phase of modernity.

Its origins date back to around the beginning of the fourteenth century in Padua,[18] Veneto, where scholars such as Lovato Lovati (1240–1309) and Albertino Mussato (1261–1329) began rewriting the history of classics by removing the Gothic influences from these texts.[19] The work of Giovanni de Matociis (death 1337) of Verona is also worthy of mention, as he adorned the margins of the manuscript of his *Historia imperialis* with pictorial representations of the emperors that corresponded to his narrative and which were openly inspired by ancient coins.[20]

Concurrent and corresponding phenomena took place in other areas of Italy.[21] In Rome and its surrounding areas, interest towards and investigations of ancient ruins can be detected almost simultaneously: proto-humanists among whom Giovanni Colonna (1298–1343) and Zanobi da Strada (1312–1361) explored libraries discovering ancient manuscripts, and started collecting and interpreting ancient epigraphic inscriptions. Cola di Rienzo's (1313–1354) public reading of the *Lex de imperio Vespasiani* represents an iconic transitional moment to a new perception of the antique and its role in history.

[18] WITT, R.: *In the Footsteps of the Ancients: The Origins of Humanism from Lovato to Bruni.* Leiden 2000.

[19] WEISS (n. 4); BILLANOVICH, G.: Il preumanesimo padovano. In *Storia della cultura veneta*. Vol. II, Vicenza 1976, 19–110; FAVARETTO, I.: *Arte antica e cultura antiquaria nelle collezioni venete al tempo della Serenissima*. Rome 2002; CALVELLI, L.: Un testimone della *lex de imperio Vespasiani* del tardo Trecento: Francesco Zabarella. *Athenaeum* 91.2 (2011) 515–524.

[20] BODON: *Veneranda antiquitas* (n. 13); WEISS (n. 4).

[21] SABBATINI, R.: *Le scoperte dei codici latini e greci ne' secoli XIV e XV. Edizione anastatica con nuove aggiunte e correzioni dell'autore a cura di E. Garin*, vols. 2. Florence 1967 (ed. or. 1905-1914), 1, 49–56; MIGLIO, M.: *Scritture, scrittori e storia*, vols. 2. Manziana 1991; INTERNULLO, D.: Due Romani e la riscoperta dei classici a Montecassino nel Trecento. In CAPASSO, M. – DE NONNO, M. (eds.): *Studi paleografici e papirologici in ricordo di Paolo Radiciotti*. Lecce 2015; INTERNULLO, D.: *Ai margini dei giganti. La vita intellettuale dei romani del Trecento (1305–1367ca.).* Rome 2016.

Nonetheless, the honorary title of "founding father of Renaissance antiquarianism" can be attributed to Francesco Petrarca (1304–1374), who began developing an interest in the study of remains from antiquity in parallel with the many ancient manuscripts that he discovered.[22] Within the broader restoration of the 'Latin golden age', Petrarca's followers Coluccio Salutati (1331–1406), Niccolò Niccoli (1365–1437) and Poggio Bracciolini (1380–1459) represent the most prominent examples of how this humanistic sensitivity helped antiquarianism develop in complexity.[23] The Loggia dei Lanzi was being erected in Florence at that precise time (1396 ca.), clear evidence that the revival in literary output was being matched by a resurgence in classical architecture.

A fundamental contribution in the development of this cultural dynamic was provided by Ciriaco d'Ancona (1391–1452) who, through his detailed descriptions of antiquity carried out during his many journeys throughout the Mediterranean, could very well be considered to be the initiator of modern archaeology.[24] At the same time, Giovanni Marcanova (1410 ca.–1467) depicted Roman antiquities in his manuscripts.[25] It is therefore clear to see how Flavio Biondo (1392–1463) rewrote the history of Rome and many other Italian cities in his *Roma Instaurata* and *Roma Triumphans* by linking his classical readings with the findings of numerous inspections carried out on location.[26] It is also interesting to note that Filippo Brunelleschi (1377–1446), inspired by the Pantheon in Rome, projected the dome of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence at the same time by applying the knowledge obtained from his observation of Roman ruins. He achieved this through his increased knowledge of forgotten elements of classical architecture and by using them to develop modern solutions: the ancient source became the doorway for a new creation.

As sources of different types began to take up a unitary connotation, the understanding gradually dawned that texts and material findings could be complementary elements. This realisation became essential for the interpenetration of the concept of history and cultural heritage at that time, which implied the development of a renewed sensitivity for the unitary coherence of tradition. In essence, the antiquarian perspective embodied the spirit that allowed Leon Battista Alberti (1404–1472) to critically read Vitruvius, to write *De re aedificatoria* and to conceive the facade of the Basilica of

[22] BILLANOVICH, G.: *La tradizione del testo di Livio e le origini dell'Umanesimo*. Padova 1981; WEISS (n. 4); MILLER, P.: Major Trends in European Antiquarianism, Petrarch to Peiresc. In RABASA, J. – SATO, M. – TORTAROLO, E. – WOOLFE, D. (eds.): *The Oxford History of Historical Writing, 1400–1800*, vol. 3. Oxford 2012, 247–248; MAZZOCCO, A.: The Antiquarianism of Francesco Petrarca. *The Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies 7* (1977) 204–224; WEISS, R. Petrarch the Antiquarian. In HENDERSON, C. (ed.): *Classical, Medieval and Renaissance Studies in Honor of Berthold Louis Ullman*. Rome 1964, 199–209.

[23] WITT (n. 17).

[24] PACI, G. – SCONOCCHIA, S. (edd): *Ciriaco d'Ancona e la cultura antiquaria dell'Umanesimo. Atti del Convegno interniazionale di studio, Ancona 6–9 febbraio 1992*. Reggio Emilia 1998.

[25] CARTWRIGHT, S.: *The collectio antiquitatum of Giovanni Marcanova and the Quattrocento antiquarian sylloge: Modena, Biblioteca Estense Universitaria Ms. alfa.L.5.15=Lat. 992*. Ann Arbor 2007.

[26] MAZZOCCO (n. 8); http://www.repertoriumblondianum.org/ (accessed 22 April 2017).

Sant'Andrea in Mantova as a Roman triumphal arch.[27] Alberti was also the creator of the *Certamen Coronarium* (1441), a poetry contest which celebrated the incorporation of the Latin quantitative metric system into the Italian language – the purpose here was to translate the structure of ancient poetic 'architecture' into contemporary language.

In the late fifteenth century, the driving force behind this evolution of thought is considered to be Angelo Poliziano (1454–1494), who was capable of building a critical method in his *Miscellanea* that was so impacting as to develop into a standard and became the benchmark for the antiquarian scholars who followed.[28] His intuitions in the field of classical philology, which were based on manuscript witnesses, the identification of linguistic usages through the history of language, the constitution of cultural models, the comparative technique and a rudimentary palaeography, brought to light what was later referred to as "the history of tradition".[29] In this way, he approached the text as an ancient finding and heritage of the past from which tangible data could be drawn.

However, this approach, the purpose of which was to reconstruct the original shape of this cultural bequest, was not substantially sufficient to fulfil the voids in the tradition. In response, the humanists compiled a diverse range of interpretative systems to tackle this issue. One example: in his *Castigationes Plinianae,* Ermolao Barbaro (1454–1493) drew analogies with the world around him, especially when explaining naturalistic items, in order to compensate for the general lack of knowledge of these matters at the time.[30] This comparison became a necessary passage adopted by the entire scholarship in order to comprehend the ancient universe through known and controllable parameters.

In parallel, encyclopedic treatises started to flourish.[31] Even if Biondo's works, the *Elegantiae* by Lorenzo Valla (1405–1457) and the *Ortographia* by Giovanni Tortelli (1400–1466) could be recognized as a significant prefiguration of this genre in an antiquarian perspective, a mature expression of Renaissance antiquarian encyclopedism can be found in Raffaele Maffei's (1451–1522) *Commentaria rerum Urbanarum*, Alessandro Alessandri's (1461–1523) *Dies geniales* and Celio Rodigino's *Antiquae lectiones* (1469–1525). These treatises attempted to approach the ancient world from a universal perspective, cross-referencing different literary and material sources, trying to provide a complex idea of history.

The idea that history resided in ancient findings and that, through these ancient findings, history still maintained its vitality in the present, sparked the research of

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[27] CARDINI, R. – REGOLIOSI, M. (edd): *Alberti e la cultura del quattrocento.* Atti del convegno internazionale del Comitato Nazionale VI Centenario della Nascita di Leon Battista Alberti, Florence, 16–18 dicembre 2004. Vol. 1–2. Florence 2007; GRAFTON, A.: *Leon Battista Alberti: Master Builder of the Italian Renaissance.* New York 2000.

[28] BRANCA, V.: *Poliziano e l'umanesimo della parola.* Torino 1983.

[29] VITI, P. (ed.): *Cultura e filologia di Angelo Poliziano: traduzioni e commenti.* Atti del Convegno di Studi (Florence, 27–29 novembre 2014) [Edizione nazionale delle opere di Angelo Poliziano – Strumenti, vol. 6]. Florence 2016; RIZZO (n. 7).

[30] GRIGGIO, C.: *Appunti sulla ricezione classica in Poliziano ed Ermolao Barbaro.* Florence 2014; POZZI, G.: *Barbari castigationes Plinianae et in Pomponium Melam.* Padova 1973.

[31] BLANCHARD, S. – SEVERI, A. (eds.): *Renaissance Encyclopaedism: Studies in Curiosity and Ambition.* Toronto 2018.

material evidence to the indiscriminate action of counterfeiters. Forgeries were created for the purpose of supporting positions that lacked reliable data; and the frequent attempts to unmask their mendacious nature, at times in vain, represented one of the crucial aspects of the antiquarian investigation. By rejecting the authenticity of the *Donation of Constantine*, Lorenzo Valla opened a season of opposition to falsifications.[32] Having rejected a testimony which had been fully trusted during the Middle Ages, this clearly demonstrates how the new vision of sources in their material consistency would have marked a change in thinking. Among the most famous antiquarians who were deemed as counterfeiters worthy of mention are Annius of Viterbo (1437–1502) and Alfonso Ceccarelli (1532–1583). The works of Annius became very popular: he produced literary and epigraphic apocryphal texts (Berosus, Fabius Pictor, Cato, the *Decretum Desiderii*) in order to offer a new cabalistic and esoteric reading of the history of civilisation that had been handed down directly from Hebrew and Etruscan roots.[33] The extensive work of Ceccarelli, which remained predominantly in manuscript form, was put to use in genealogical and historiographic studies.[34]

Antiquarian studies were conducted, even within humanistic circles, the most famous of which was the Academia Romana[35] of Giulio Pomponio Leto (1428–1498). Figures as Bartolomeo Platina (1421–1481) and Niccolò Perotti (1430–1480) maintained a relatively constant presence at these sessions. The humanistic inclination of this circle and its desire to 'revive' antiquity triggered an interest in ancient sources, the rediscovery and publication of manuscripts (one of the most important cases being the unearthing of Festus's *Codex Farnesianus*),[36] the study of material findings (epigraphs, coins, statues, etc.), research into institutional and social history, and the customs of ancient Rome.

One of the heirs to this cultural experience was Angelo Colocci (1474–1549), who continued this intellectual circle at Horti Sallustiani, where antiquarian interests flourished.[37] Among the participants, Baldassarre Castiglione (1478–1529), Giovanni Pierio Valeriano (1477–1558) and Pietro Bembo (1470–1547), in particular, are worthy of mention. The presence of the three humanists, Bembo, Valeriano and Colocci, confirms that the antiquarian perspective was carried out in parallel with the histor-

[32] CHABOD, F.: *Lezioni di metodo storico.* Bari 1969.

[33] FUBINI, R.: *Storiografia dell'Umanesimo in Italia da Leonardo Bruni ad Annio da Viterbo.* Rome 2003; PARENTE, F.: *Liber antiquitatum biblicarum e i falsi di Annio da Viterbo.* In NALDINI, M. – PRIVITERA, A. G. – BURINI, C. et al. (eds.): *Paideia cristiana: studi in onore di Mario Naldini.* Rome 1994, 154–172.

[34] FUMI, L.: L'opera di falsificazione di Alfonso Ceccarelli. *Bollettino della Deputazione di Storia patria per l'Umbria* 8 (1902) 213–277.

[35] http://www.repertoriumpomponianum.it/ accessed 22 April 2017; STENHOUSE, W.: Imagination (n. 12) 126–130; MODIGLIANI, A. – OSMOND, P. – PADE, M. – RAMMINGER, J. (eds.): *Pomponio Leto tra identità locale e cultura internazionale.* Rome 2011; BIANCA, C.: Pomponio Leto e l'invenzione dell'Accademia Romana. In DERAMAIX, M. – GALAND-HALLYN, P. – VAGENHEIM, G. – VIGNES, J. (eds.): *Les Académies dans l'Europe humaniste. Idéaux et pratiques. Actes du Colloque international de Paris, 10-13 juin 2003.* Paris 2008, 27–56; ACCAME LANZILLOTTA, M.: *Pomponio Leto: vita e insegnamento.* Tivoli 2007.

[36] GLINISTER, F. (ed.): *Verrius, Festus, and Paul: Lexicography, Scholarship, and Society.* London 2007.

[37] FANELLI, V.: *Ricerche su Angelo Colocci e sulla Roma cinquecentesca.* Città del Vaticano 1979;

ical-linguistic theories debated at the time, and perhaps had an influence on them.[38] Its influence on the works of Theodore Bibliander (1506–1564) and Joachim Périon (1498–1559) is clear from *De ratione communi omnium linguarum et litterarum commentarius* and *Dialogorum de linguae Gallicae origine, eiusque cum Graeca cognatione*, respectively.

Between the end of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth century, antiquarian studies gradually became inextricably linked with collections of antiquity.[39] Although important private collections also existed, the main collections of antiquity produced during the Renaissance were owned by the political and ecclesiastic aristocracy and were often linked to the royal courts. This created a close bond, often of subordination, between antiquarian erudition and power, putting the first at the service of the second. Beyond the political interferences that may have taken place, the most important antiquarian works of the sixteenth century emanated from the richest and most heterogeneous collections, such as those which belonged to the Farnese family in Rome, to the Medici in Florence, to the Este in Ferrara, or the Palatine collection in Vienna and the royal collection in Madrid.

Many erudite works flourished within these environments. These included, for example, the philological and numismatic investigations carried out by Antonio Agustín (1517–1586),[40] and Fulvio Orsini (1529–1600),[41] the ecclesiastical and juridical enquiries by Onofrio Panvinio (1530–1568),[42] and the extensive antiquarian encyclopaedia written by Pirro Ligorio (1513–1583),[43] which all benefited from the vitality

[38] BOLOGNA, C. – BERNARDI, M. (eds.): *Angelo Colocci e gli studi romanzi*. Città del Vaticano 2008; BELTRAMINI, G. – GASPAROTTO, D. – TURA, A. (eds.): *Pietro Bembo e l'invenzione del Rinascimento*, Catalogo della mostra (Padova, 2 febbraio-19 maggio 2013). Edizione illustrata. Venezia 2013; VINE, A.: Etymology, Names and the Search for Origins. Deriving the Past in Early Modern England. *The Seventeenth Century* 21.1 (2006) 1–21; POZZI, M.: *Discussioni linguistiche del Cinquecento*. Torino 1988; BIBLIANDER, T.: *De ratione communi omnium linguarum*. AMIRAV, H. – KIRN, H.M. (eds.). Geneva 2011; SIMONCELLI, P.: *La lingua di Adamo: Guillaume Postel tra accademici e fuoriusciti fiorentini*. Florence 1984. CONSIDINE, J.: *Dictionaries in Early Modern Europe: Lexicography and the Making of Heritage*. Cambridge 2008.

[39] GOENIG, A. – GRAFTON, A. – MICHEL, P. (eds.): *Collectors Knowledge: What Is Kept, What Is Discarded/Aufbewahren oder wegwerfen: wie Sammler entscheiden* (Brill's Studies in Intellectual History) Leiden 2013. NALEZYTY, S.: *Pietro Bembo and the Intellectual Pleasure of a Renaissance Writer and Art Collector*. New Haven, CT, London 2017; STENHOUSE, W.: Roman Antiquities (n. 12); STENHOUSE, W.: From Spolia (n. 12).

[40] ALCINA FRANCH, J. F.: *La biblioteca de Antonio Agustín: los impresos de un humanista de la Contrarreforma*. Alcañiz 2007; SOLER, A.: *La correspondència d'Ottavio Pantagato (1494–1567)*. PhD thesis, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona 2000; CARBONELL i MANILS, J.: *Epigrafia i numismatica a l'epistolario d'Antonio Agustìn (1551-1563)*. PhD thesis, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona 1991. MISSERE FONTANA (n. 13).

[41] CELLINI, G.: Le Imagines di Fulvio Orsini nella Calcografia Nazionale. *RendMemAccLincei* ser. IX, 15 (2004) 477–530; NOLHAC, P.: *La Bibliotheque de Fulvio Orsini: contributions à l'histoire des collections d'Italie et a l'etude de la Renaissance*. Paris 1887.

[42] BAUER, S.: Onofrio Panvinio. In *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* [DBI] vol. 81 (Rome 2014) 36–39; FERRARY, J-L.: *Onofrio Panvinio et les antiquités romaines*. Paris 1996.

[43] Ligorio's works are being published by De Luca Editore with the title *Edizione nazionale delle opere di Pirro Ligorio*; OCCHIPINTI, C.: *Pirro Ligorio e la storia. Atti della giornata di studio (Pisa, Scuola Normale Superiore, 28-29 settembre 2007)*. Rome 2011; GASTON, R.: *Pirro Ligorio Artist and Antiquarian*. Milan 1988.

of the Roman environment. The philological studies on classical texts conducted by Piero Vettori (1499–1585)[44] and the antiquarian studies by Vincenzio Borghini (1515–1580)[45] were deeply rooted in the Florentine context, as well as the mythographic studies of Lilio Gregorio Giraldi (1479–1552)[46] and Agostino Mosti (1505–1584)[47] in the Ferrarese court. Austria and Spain were also fertile grounds for the works of Wolfgang Lazius (1514–1565) and Jeronimo Zurita (1512–1580)[48] respectively.

The connection with the political power of the time permitted the antiquarian investigation to break free from the closed circles of collections and libraries and to be disseminated into the collective imagination, thereby developing into one of the columns of the triumphant Renaissance. In fact, when planning their works, it was common practice for artists and architects to receive support from antiquarian scholars, who took on the role of iconographic advisors and enhanced the conceptual coherence of the patron's projects.[49] Giorgio Vasari (1511–1574) was supported by Borghini when decorating the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, the Zuccari brothers by Orsini or Panvinio for the Palazzo Farnese in Caprarola, or Rosso Fiorentino (1495–1540) by a figure who remains anonymous for the Gallery of Francis I in Fontainebleau (probably Lazare de Baïf)[50] – more rarely, the same artist took on the role of iconographer and this was perhaps the case with Jacopo Zucchi (1542–1596).[51]

In artistic contexts, it was possible for a stylistic feature of antiquarian origin to enter into the decorative standard, meaning that it was difficult to distinguish between the re-use of a classical *stilema* and a voluntary or unconscious citation: this was especially the case with grotesques,[52] which became commonplace after their re-discovery in the Domus Aurea (1479 ca.) and brought about a debate on their legitimacy and their consequent censorship. Anton Francesco Doni (1513–1574), Francisco de Hollanda (1517–1585) and Gabriele Paleotti (1522–1597), among others, were prominent in these disputes.

[44] Baldi, D.: *Il greco a Firenze e Pier Vettori (1499–1585).* Alessandria 2014; Carrara, E. – Ginzburg, S. (eds.): *Testi, immagini e filologia nel XVI secolo.* Pisa 2007.

[45] Drusi, R.: *Ricercando scrittori e scritture. Studi su Vincenzio Borghini.* Padova 2012; Belloni, G. – Drusi, R. (eds.): *Vincenzio Borghini: Filologia e invenzione nella Firenze di Cosimo I.* [Biblioteca di bibliografia italiana, vol. 174] Florence 2002.

[46] Foà, S.: Giraldi, Lilio Gregorio. In *DBI* 56 (2001) 452–455.

[47] Russo, E.: Mosti, Agostino. In *DBI* 77 (2012) 340–343.

[48] *Jerónimo Zurita: su época y su escuela.* Congreso nacional, Zaragoza, 16-21 de mayo de 1983. Zaragoza 1983.

[49] Pinelli, A.: 'Intenzione, invenzione, artifizio'. Spunti per una teoria della ricezione dei cicli figurativi di età rinascimentale. *Ricerche di storia dell'arte* 91/92 (2009) 7–42.

[50] Panofsky, D.: The Iconography of the Galerie François Ier at Fontainebleau. *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 52 (1958) 113–90.

[51] D'Amelio, A. – Morel, P. – Rigon, F. (eds.): *Storia di una galleria romana: la genealogia degli dèi di Jacopo Zucchi e le famiglie Rucellai, Caetani Ruspoli, Memmo.* Rome 2011.

[52] Dacos, N.: *La découverte de la Domus aurea et la formation des grotesques à la Renaissance* [Studies of the Warburg Institute XXXI]. Leiden 1969; Chastel, A.: *La grotesque. Essai sur «l'ornement sans nom».* Paris 1988; Morel, P.: *Les grotesques: les figures de l'imaginaire dans la peinture italienne de la fin de la Renaissance.* Paris 1997; Scholl, D.: *Von den Grotesken zum Grotesken: die Konstituierung einer Poetik des Grotesken in der italienischen Renaissance.* Münster 2004; Zamperini, A.: *Le Grottesche: il sogno della pittura nella decorazione parietale.* San Giovanni Lupatoto 2007.

The fundamental role played by architecture underwent a revival in the development of the Renaissance antiquarian spirit.[53] After the fifteenth century, this took the form of evocations inspired by classical buildings; and during the sixteenth century, several treatises attempted to provide a more precise and complex codification of the matter. Sebastiano Serlio (1475–1554), Paolo Giovio's *Accademia dei Virtuosi* (1483–1552), Daniele Barbaro (1514–1570), Jacques Androuet du Cerceau (1515–1585) and, perhaps most importantly, Andrea Palladio (1508–1580) conjugated the study of Vitruvius with practical knowledge, paving the way for a season of deeply rooted classicism.

Another form of antiquarianism in Renaissance cultural life can be seen in the building of *imprese*.[54] This genre, which was openly inspired by emblems, combined images and short texts (usually a motto), often reutilised the erudite elements of the antiquarian investigation and related them to the addressee. Starting with Andrea Alciati (1492–1550), who was the first to codify this 'figurative literature', a widespread editorial phenomenon took place which involved scholars from all over Europe, including Girolamo Ruscelli (1518–1566), János Zsámboky (1531–1584) and Jean Jaques Boissard (1528–1602). The most famous motto of the Renaissance was perhaps *festina lente*, most commonly presented as an anchor and a dolphin. Originally, this figuration was minted on the reverse side of a coin of the Roman imperial series of Augustus and Titus.[55] The image and the adage were represented and cited in the *Hypnerotomachia Polyphili* (1499),[56] adopted by Aldo Manuzio (1449–1515) as the symbol for his publishing house, explained in their original sense by Desiderius Erasmus (1466–1536) in his *Adagia*, and reinvented by Cosimo I de' Medici, the Grand Duke of Tuscany in his impresa.

The re-discovery of the *Fasti Consulares* in the Roman Forum (1546) represented a pivotal moment in the growth of this movement.[57] This epigraphic finding was transferred to the Capitolium under the supervision of Michelangelo. The edition of the text transmitted in these inscriptions triggered a debate among the experts of epigraphy and chronology, in particular Bartolomeo Marliani (1487–1566), Francesco Robortello (1516–1577), Carlo Sigonio (1520–1584), Panvinio, Martin Smetius (1525–1578) and Stephan Winand Pigge (1520–1604), who all published it within a few years of each other. The major contribution to antiquarian scholarship provided by this finding was that it represented a new source for ancient Roman chronology, which until then had been obtained only through literary histories, and represented an official document

[53] TAFURI, M.: *Interpreting the Renaissance: Princes, Cities, Architects*. New Haven 2005; NASSELRATH, A.: The Census of Antique Works of Art and Architecture Known to the Renaissance. *Archeologia e Calcolatori* 4 (1993) 237–241; NASSELRATH, A.: Raffaello e lo studio dell'antico nel Rinascimento. In FROMMEL, C. L. – RAY, S. – TAFURI, M. (eds.): *Raffaello Architetto*. Mailand 1984, 405–450.

[54] http://www.emblematica.com/en/colophon.htm; accessed 23 April 2017; D'ELIA, U. R.: *Raphael's Ostrich*. University Park, Penn 2016.

[55] *RIC* II 13 (R2).

[56] COLONNA, S.: *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili e Roma. Metodologie euristiche per lo studio del Rinascimento*. Rome 2015.

[57] MCCUAIG, W.: The Fasti Capitolini and the Study of Roman Chronology in the Sixteenth Century. *Athenaeum* 69 (1991) 141–159; STENHOUSE (n. 12); MAYER, M.: El canon de los humanistas de su tiempo interesados en la epigrafia y las antigüedades clásicas según el criterio de Onofrio Panvinio. *Sylloge Epigraphica Barcinonesis* 8 (2010) 29–65.

directly connected to Roman imperial institutions. Previously, Roman chronology had often been reconstructed by comparing Livius and Dionysius of Halicarnassus (whose accounts often contradicted each other), as demonstrated by the Roman chronotaxes of Gregorius Haloander (1501–1531), Johannes Cuspinianus (1473–1529) and Heinrich Glareanus (1488–1563).

The number of findings from classical antiquity was higher in Italy than the rest of Europe. And, although many humanists of other nations travelled to and resided for long periods in Italy, it was not possible for everyone to directly access a wide range of ancient findings. Nonetheless, the level of antiquarian understanding had developed in the rest of Europe by the mid-fifteenth century, and gradually strengthened throughout the years to the point where Italy's leading position in governing this area of knowledge was challenged.

One of the earliest examples of this circulation of ideas is represented by the arrival in Germany of a partial copy of the *Commentaria* of Ciriaco d'Ancona, brought by Hartmann Schedel (1440–1514), which had a significant influence on the compilation of Peter Apian's (1495–1552) epigraphic collection and some of the later works of Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528).[58] Furthermore, Jacopo Strada's (1507–1588) arrangement of his own *Magnum ac Novum Opus* for the Fugger bankers is clear in describing how antiquarian culture passed across the Alps.[59] And the studies on Roman antiquity conducted by Johann Roszfeld (1550–1626) clearly show the fortune and impact of this tradition on German erudite environments.

In France, the growth of antiquarian scholarship was encouraged by king Francis I and by the circle of humanists who gravitated around him.[60] The studies conducted by Guillaume Budé (1468–1540), who was an ambassador to Rome, and the journeys he made to Italy helped him amass a weight of numismatic knowledge that led to the publication of the most important Renaissance metrological treatise, *De asse*.[61] The research carried out by Lazare de Baïf (1496–1547) was also pivotal; he was an ambassador to Venice, from where he sent several antiquities to his homeland, and arranged for innovative antiquarian investigations to be carried out on clothing, vases and vessels. Guillaume Du Choul (1496–1560) investigated several aspects of Roman religion by cross-referencing material and literary sources. Joseph Scaliger (1540–1609)

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[58] This was argued by Stefano Casu in a paper entitled *The reception of Ciriaco d'Ancona in German Renaissance*, which was presented in the session *German Humanism and Its Influences* at 2016 RSA Annual Meeting in Boston.

[59] These studies are conducted within the *DFG-Projekt Jacopo Strada's Magnun ac Novum Opus: a sixteenth-century numismatic corpus* at the Gotha Research Center of the University of Erfurt, under the direction of Martin Mulsow; https://www.uni-erfurt.de/en/gotha-research-centre-of-the-university-of-erfurt/projects/dfg-projekt-jacopo-stradas-magnum-ac-novum-opus/; accessed 23 April 2017.

[60] COOPER, R.: *Roman Antiquities in Renaissance France, 1515-1565*. Farnham 2013.

[61] JOUANNA, J. – FARTZOFF, M. – BAKHOUCHE, B. (eds.): *L'homme et la Science. Actes du XVIe Congrès international et quinquennal de l'Association Guillaume Budé à Montpellier* 1–4. 9. 2008. Paris 2011; BOEHM, I. – FERRARY, J-L. – FRANCHEY D'ESPÈREY, S. (eds.): *L'Homme et ses passions: Actes du XVII e Congrès international de l'Association Guillaume Budé organisé à Lyon du 26 au 29 août 2013*. Paris 2016; a particular mention should be made of *Les Noces de Philologie et Guillaume Budé*, a colloquium held in 2018 on this heterogeneous figure of humanist and antiquarian.

demonstrated his antiquarian scholarship in his editing of ancient authors and his work on historical chronology.[62]

Antiquarian erudition was also practised at the highest level in the Low Countries. Hubert Goltzius (1526–1583),[63] one of the most famous numismatists of the second half of the sixteenth century, developed his scholarship while travelling from Netherlands to Italy: the purpose of his publications was to reconstruct the history of the Roman Empire by drawing links between ancient coins and epigraphs and their related narrative sources. Justus Lipsius (1547–1606),[64] who spent part of his life in Rome, investigated many aspects of classical and biblical antiquity, including banqueting, the real nature of the Christian cross and more complex analyses of Roman civilization: even if his focus was mainly philological in nature, Lipsius often used material findings to carry out his emendations and corrections of ancient texts; his *Antiquae lectiones* represent a clear example of this methodological approach. The long journey through Italy completed by Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640)[65] also contributed significantly to the antiquarian scholarship: he was a learned painter, and it has been proved that his drawings of statues and ruins increased the knowledge on the material bequest of antiquity.

The main *viaticum* through which antiquarianism became a continental phenomenon was the circulation of published books. The philological editions of ancient authors and historiographic texts, especially if they also included images, had a significant positive effect on the understanding of indirect records. In this way, the knowledge acquired in Italy was made available to the rest of the European humanistic community, allowing research to be undertaken where findings were missing. Among the others, the works of Antoine Lafréry (1512–1577) is worthy of mention.

The antiquarian surveys also included national investigations,[66] the purpose of which was to reconstruct a reliable history for a specific territory, following the model for the studies undertaken on Roman antiquity. Therefore, by comparing local literary sources with local ruins, it was possible to give a new shape to the origins of: (i) France, which were described for example in the works of Pierre Pithou (1539–1596); (ii) England, owing to William Camden's (1551–1623) *Britannia*; (iii) Germany, which were investigated in Johan Månsson's (1488-1544) and Philipp Clüver's (1580-1622) treatises; and (iv) Spain, through the histories of Zurita's and Francisco Padilla's (1527–1607). In the same period, the Polish scholar Jan Łasicki (1534–1602) attempted to complete the first erudite history of Russia, while histories of the Turkish Empire,

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[62] GRAFTON 1983 and 1991 (n. 9).

[63] NAPOLITANO, M.: *Hubertus Goltzius e la Magna Grecia. Dalle Fiandre all'Italia del Cinquecento* [Itala Tellus 3]. Napoli 2012 (2011).

[64] HENDRICKSON, T.: *Ancient Libraries and Renaissance Humanism: The De Bibliothecis of Justus Lipsius*. Leiden 2017; PAPY, J.: An Antiquarian Scholar between Text and Image? Justus Lipsius, Humanist Education, andthe Visualization of Ancient Rome. *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 35.1 (2004) 97–131.

[65] VAN DER MEULEN, M.: *Rubens: Copies after the Antique*. London 1994.

[66] JANNSEN, L.: Antiquarianism and National History. The Emergence of a New Scholarly Paradigm in Early Modern Historical Studies. *History of European Ideas* 43.8 (2017) 843–856.

China and the New World, contaminating travel literature with antiquarian accounts, also flourished.[67]

The hypothesis that there was a relationship between the triumph of antiquarian culture and the explosion of religious controversies in Northern Europe is very interesting, especially given the impact of the reformed approach to sacred scriptures on spiritual life.[68] For example, the New Testamentary comment of Erasmus could have taken advantage of the experience acquired in his antiquarian publications.[69] As one would expect, humanists and theologians (Catholic and Protestant alike) used antiquarianism to support their own positions and contest opposing views. The *Magdeburg Centuries*,[70] which was overseen by Matija Vlačić (1520–1575), represented the high point for Protestant antiquarian writings and breathed life into a constellation of analogous works by authors such as Matthew Parker (1504–1575), Johan Jakob Gryner (1540–1617) and Johann Wilhelm Stucki (1542–1607). On the Catholic side, the most complete and organised response is represented by the *Annales* of Cesare Barionio (1538–1607), the purpose of which was not only to rehabilitate the Roman vision of Christianity from a historiographic perspective but also to utilise a more precise and systematic antiquarian approach.[71] These patterns remained popular for most of the seventeenth century, as demonstrated by the monumental *Italia Sacra* written by Ferdinando Ughelli (1595–1670).

Although the antiquarian tradition continued to generate very important epigones during the centuries that followed, the turning point for Renaissance antiquarianism can be narrowed down to the early seventeenth century, when it started to become unsuitable for dealing with new scientific enquiries.[72] Hybrid figures who continued to follow the traditional path began to emerge, but they were unable to remain indifferent to the impending new developments: this was especially the case with the medical, zoological and botanical studies carried out by Conrad Gesner (1516–1565), Girolamo

[67] MARKEY, L.: *Imagining the Americas in Medici Florence*. University Park, PA 2016; SCHNAPP (n. 15).

[68] VAN LIERE, K. – DITCHFIELD, S. – LOUTHAN, H. (eds.): *Sacred History. Uses of Christian Past in the Renaissance World*. Oxford 2012; BACKUS, I. D.: *Historical Method and Confessional Identity in the Era of the Reformation, 1378–1615*. Leiden 2003; DOST, T.: *Renaissance Humanism in Support of the Gospel in Luther's Early Correspondence: Taking All Things Captive*. Burlington 2001.

[69] RUMMEL, E.: *Biblical Humanism and Scholasticism in the Age of Erasmus*. Leiden 2008.

[70] MENTZEL-REUTERS, A. – HARTMANN, M.: *Catalogus und Centurien: Interdisziplinäre Studien zu Matthias Flacius und den Magdeburger Centurien*. Tübingen 2008.

[71] GUAZZELLI, G. – MICHETTI, R. – SCORZA BARCELLONA, F. (eds.): *Cesare Baronio tra santità e scrittura storica*. Rome 2012; CALIÒ, T. – DURANTI, M. – MICHETTI, R. (eds.): *Italia sacra: le raccolte di vite di santi e l'inventio delle regioni*. Rome 2013.

[72] GOEING, A. S.: Reading Books in Natural Philosophy: How Conrad Gessner's Commentary on 'De Anima' (1563) was Annotated and Interpreted. *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 93.2 (Autumn 2017) 69–90; SIRAISI, N.: History, Antiquarianism, and Medicine: The Case of Girolamo Mercuriale. *Journal of the History of Ideas* 64.2 (Apr., 2003), 231–251; FEOLA, V.: *Antiquarianism and Science in Early Modern Urban Networks* [Sciences et Techniques en Perspective, Deuxième serie, vol. 16, fasc.]. Paris 2014; OLMI, G.: *L'inventario del mondo: catalogazione della natura e luoghi del sapere nella prima età moderna*. Bologna 1992. BERNS, A. D.: *The Bible and Natural Philosophy in Renaissance Italy: Jewish and Christian Physicians in Search of Truth*. Cambridge 2015.

Mercuriale (1530–1606), Ulisse Aldrovandi (1522–1605) and Giovanni Battista della Porta (1535–1615), and most of all with the astronomic and scientific investigations conducted by Nicolas Fabri de Peiresc (1580–1637) and Pierre Gassendi (1592–1655). However, there are two dates in particular which encapsulate this moment of transition: 1620, the year in which Francis Bacon (1561–1626) published his *Novum Organum*, and 1637, the year René Descartes' (1596–1650) *Discours de la méthode* was published. The emerging empiricism of evidence-based enquiry and philosophical scepticism started undermining the reliability of the antiquarian investigation, questioning the nature of the source and hence the value of the method, opening the way to a new phase in the development of knowledge towards modern times.

METHODOLOGY

In Renaissance antiquarian studies, the source began to take on a central role in the entire intellectual system and became the key aspect to consider when searching for knowledge about the past, thereby exerting an influence on the hermeneutical approach. During the Renaissance, many scholars debated the practical applications of the antiquarian methodology. Beyond specific objects of study, antiquarian techniques generally converged on a dual scheme which included a cataloguing phase and an interpretative phase. A large number of records had to be compiled (both directly and indirectly) in order to create a solid foundation; the records were then divided into different categories – in which the formal, geographical, political and typological parameters were considered. After this descriptive stage, a process of amalgamation took place, which involved the cross-referencing of the data according to its common or distinctive elements, thereby establishing links with its cultural context in the process. The aim was for the interpretation of each finding to be subjected to a comprehension of its morphology, and these records were mainly used to fill gaps in knowledge, providing a plausible reconstruction through analogy.

Personal observation (*autopsia*) became essential in order to ascertain the reliability of the antiquarian method and allowed other scholars to verify evidence or findings. It was no longer deemed sufficient to settle for texts that simply referred to an issue – it became necessary to elicit primary information and examine the works and pieces that developed around it. It was therefore important to study both primary and secondary sources, such as analogous treatises or commentaries, from a unitary perspective because they could provide further lost information.

Collections permitted the antiquarian practice to be carried out widely. Thanks to the collections of ancient findings available, it was possible to carry out multidisciplinary excursions aimed at identifying the links between the different findings and the texts, transforming a general humanistic interest in antiquity into a systematic approach to the subject. Although these collections cannot be identified with antiquarianism in and of themselves, they do retain its premise. The purpose of antiquarianism instead lays in its capacity to make the data react with the cultural context from which

it derived, utilising new instruments to understand the stratification of meanings, where the links between witnesses and time could be found.

Through the propagation of the antiquarian approach during the Renaissance, the past acquired a tangible and measurable connotation which was identified through its remains. The 'materialisation' of the object of study transformed each finding into a 'semiotic' vehicle of unexpected meanings. This progress is particularly meaningful in that it moved away from the literary world: the written form lost its oracular connotation thanks to the objectivation of the support (codex/finding) and medium (the language). This represented the fundamental passage in Renaissance antiquarian erudition: the awareness of the genre's equivalence of sources. This equivalence was based on general categories which were subordinated to specific approaches. It was possible to obtain meaningful data from manuscripts, inscriptions, coins, statues, and the like due to the endeavours made in each specific discipline, e.g. philology, epigraphy, numismatics, archaeology, iconography, etc. For each field, the findings were ranked according to their reliability (the most consistent manuscripts, the most relevant inscriptions, the best-preserved coins, etc.).

It was from this awareness that efforts were made to commence with the collation of manuscripts, the association of different pieces of material evidence to confirm the existence of a historical fact, and the evaluation of data from different and ostensibly incompatible cultural areas. This also resulted in parallels being drawn between the past and present. For example, by using descriptions from ancient sources, it was possible to compare geographical places with their modern status and characteristics. Different linguistic domains (ancient languages vs. current vernaculars) could also be compared in order to explain the lost meanings of words and expressions.

It is therefore clear that the convergence of disciplines in the antiquarian method derived from the mutual irradiation of specific and coherent methodologies, which ultimately modified the conformation of the entire system. The advancements of one derived from the advancements of the others, but only progressively, and it was understood that all were part of the same whole. The reconstruction of the past (or the idea of the past) depended on the relationship between the plethora of aspects linked to a source and to the phenomena that occurred within the history of tradition.

Through conjecture, hypotheses were formulated on the remains for the purpose of restoring their original status, which required a theoretical cognition of their essence. This was based on the philological principle of respecting the 'text/object' as handed down, which was the precondition for any amendment or modification. This meant that the criteria of emendation (*emendatio*) had to be applied to the explanation (*explicatio*): clarifying the nature of a source through its tradition, i.e. the recovery of a reliable lesson (*accuratam lectionem*), also became essential for its interpretation (*lectionem utilem*).

The relationship between documentary voids and hypotheses of reconstruction emerged: all the lacunas could have been potentially fulfilled because they were part of a 'cultural grammar', the rules of which were deduced through antiquarian investigation. The illusion of a coherent reconstruction of the heritage of the ancients became the foundation for the construction of a culture of the present in a universal perspective, rooted in the remains of a past perceived as incomplete but also solid in its material substance.

Scholars were encouraged to draw a distinction between their conjectures and hypothetic reconstructions, and the data transmitted. Only in this way was it possible to preserve the integrity of the tradition without contaminating the evidence and to allow future scholars to solve the problems faced.

Ignoring the origins of remains often not only opened the door to a new layer of corruption of tradition, but also represented the limits beyond which it was not possible to push forward conjecture in all of its forms: the 'void of knowledge' was considered somehow to be a starting point for research to be undertaken. This focus on rejecting or accepting conjectures reinforced respect for tradition: the preferred solution was to adopt the 'principle of authority', defending the stability of tradition rather than accepting positions that could have potentially undermined the legacy of knowledge. At the same time, there were also scholars who claimed that real progress could only be achieved in antiquarian studies if new discoveries were made, pointing to the limits of the *auctoritas* and the lack of canon sources.

This also implied the possibility of a credible reconstruction of the matter using external arguments (*argumenta*). In order to obtain a thorough comprehension of remains without omitting the complex weave of meanings involved, it was necessary to examine their connection with their historical background. Although these endeavours occasionally did not reap any rewards, they remained a mandatory passage of the investigation in that they considered the source as part of a context from which it was possible to glean parallel or additional information. Contradictory data emerged from this process, a problem that encouraged the development of alternative solutions to preserve the coherence of the entire system.

In this phase, the concept of 'error' (or the 'nature of errors') became a further instrument to be used in understanding sources more fully. It was hypothesised that the permanence in the tradition of errors was made by those who physically assembled the object analysed. This permitted a distinction to be made between the identity of the 'author' (the creator) and the 'maker' (a scribe, an engraver, a sculptor – but sometimes also the author), admitting the possibility of an unintentional fallacy despite the authority and antiquity being known. This distinction opened new perspectives: the admission that the error was potentially common to any type of writing, and hence to any type of communication, went straight to the core of the problem, i.e. the hand of the writer, as opposed to the surface on which the wording was written.

This represented the first emergence of the awareness that all the data deriving from sources could be influenced by several variables, which had to be understood in order to fully grasp the subject matter being studied. The source was considered to be influenced by contingencies (e.g. the social or economic status of the executor), implying that quantitative differences did not necessarily correspond to qualitative dynamics (e.g. if the errors were more frequently found in manuscripts or epigraphs).

This implied that all types of writing were governed by similar mechanisms, fostering the understanding of the two laws that influenced its morphology: norm and usage. All the potential fluctuations within these factors started to be considered, with each specific occurrence assessed in accordance with diatopic, diachronic and diastratic parameters.

CONCLUSION: A NEW DEFINITION

The intellectual phenomenon of Renaissance antiquarianism developed throughout Europe, manifesting itself in a plurality of works influenced by the origin, the environment and the personal approach of each author, the language adopted, the publishing house involved and the commissioner. These works were related to a multitude of disciplines, which can be broadly identified by following the setup of Angelo Poliziano's *Panespistemon* (1491). The production of antiquarian works reached its peak during and after the mid-sixteenth century, a period when antiquarianism transitioned from a phase of growth and consolidation to maturity, and the advancements made in previous centuries were systemically classified and widely utilised.

Antiquarian interests can be divided into two key areas, both of which connect all deriving disciplines: the first could be defined as 'orthographic', in which the material finding transmitted a written witness, in any form, in various languages; the second as 'iconographic', in which the investigation was based exclusively on the morphological aspect, beyond the linguistic factor. It was inevitable that these two contexts would be complementary and that they went hand in hand, benefiting mutually from their respective development. From here, different disciplines emerged, each with their own peculiarities, passing from the literary to the artistic to the scientific and many other areas of enquiry, each with clearly defined cultural horizons.

The antiquarian writings of the Renaissance were generally categorised according to two models: miscellanies of scattered records and organic works which often contained an encyclopaedic print. In the first case, these works comprised an explanation of a plurality of misinterpreted or misunderstood passages referring to the antiquarian corpus in the broadest sense, frequently with the title of *Variae* or *Antiquae Lectiones*. The works in the second case, on the other hand, comprised systematic expositions of antiquarian themes or topics that would also take related contexts into consideration, thereby significantly widening the possible implications of a single study.

Therefore, *Renaissance antiquarianism* could be defined as a cultural phenomenon aiming at interpreting the past by cross-referencing heterogeneous sources thanks to accumulation and collection. This implied the use of new investigative techniques which involved the combination of literary sources and material findings in order to provide a reliable foundation for the idea of history. However, Renaissance antiquarianism must not be reduced to the mere collecting, nor can it be condensed to an intellectual interest or a general fascination with antiquity. It is reasonable to assume that Renaissance antiquarianism first emerged from the study of the classical world, but it eventually evolved beyond these boundaries to become a method of approaching an object of study rather than simply a discipline. Since the universality of the method became potentially applicable to all fields and times, its essence was manifested in the methodological pathway and perspective applied. In fact, the broadening of the sources from which it was possible to obtain historical data triggered the development of competencies and interpretative instruments, which allowed the identification of evidence from an array of objects of study. From this, it can be seen that Renaissance antiquarianism represented a methodological perspective, the purpose of which was to

rethink the way the past was viewed through a critical analysis of sources, producing a renewed approach towards history, which stimulated the interaction of disciplines and influenced the intellectual life of the time.

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