

Shorter Notices

Marcantonio as Book Illustrator

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According to Gianvito Resta, the subject of the woodcut (fig. 36) found on the verso of sheet IV of *Epithome Plutarchi per Darium Tybertum equitem Cesenatem* (Ferrara, Laurentius de Valentia, i.e. de Rubeis, 1501) 'probably portrays the same Plutarch, seated and intent on writing under a tree from which a bow and a violin are hanging'.¹ This poet, however, dressed in contemporary clothes and crowned with laurel, holds a sheet lengthwise on his knee, which reveals him to be a musician. Poetry and music are incompatible with the figure of Plutarch, but they are well-known attributes of Orpheus. Despite this fact, however, the typology is unprecedented in the iconography of Orpheus, and we must shift from Ferrara to Bologna to explain it and identify its inventor.

The orphic/pythagorean background that sustained humanism in Bologna² received new life from the *editio princeps* of the *Cose Volgari* by Poliziano, published in Bologna by Platone Benedetti on 9 August 1494. It included the *Favola di Orfeo*, a theatrical piece written before 1480 during Poliziano's sojourn at the Gonzaga court in Mantua.³ As has been shown, the *Favola* is 'free from any orphic mysticism derived from Ficino';⁴ Orpheus was seen chiefly as an inspirer of idyll and elegy, well conveyed in many prints of the period.⁵

Scholars have dated Marcantonio's first such engraving (fig. 37) to 1500–03;⁶ the ruled background and the cursory elements that describe the landscape reveal his awareness of *nielli*. In a subsequent work, datable to c. 1504–05 (fig. 38), the artist suggests a connection between the poet and musician portrayed, Giovanni Achillini called Filoteo, and Orpheus; again the influence of the *nielli* by Peregrino da Cesena – the *Orpheus* in the British Museum, for example⁷ – is clear, but Raimondi's originality is unmistakable in the incisive characterization of the poet's features.

In around 1506 (none of these engravings is dated),⁸ he adopted a different viewpoint, so that Orpheus is seen almost from behind, seated next to a tree as he plays the viola (fig. 39). The poet and musician placed at the opening of the *Epithome* (fig. 36) is closely linked to these engravings, sharing many similarities. The decision to crown the poet with a laurel wreath had been taken by Raimondi in his first version (fig. 37), and this element should be related to a particular passage in Poliziano's fable, as suggested by Marzia Faietti;⁹ the monumental scale and the close-up viewpoint are very similar to those of the 1506 engraving (fig. 39), and this suggests that the image was created independently as a single-leaf woodcut and was re-used for the Ferrarese edition of the book. This is confirmed by the iconographic incon-

1. G. Resta, *Le epitomi di Plutarco nel Quattrocento*, Padua 1962, pp. 82–83, n. 2. E. Wintemitz, *Gli strumenti musicali e il loro simbolismo nell'arte occidentale*, Turin 1982 (*Musical Instruments and their Symbolism in Western Art*, New Haven and London 1979), pp. 274–75, cites this woodcut (and reproduces an example surrounded by a lower quality frame) when he deals with the hand lyre as an attribute of humanists. It is likely that the publisher had therefore no intention of portraying either Plutarch or Orpheus; instead he intended to represent the author of the book, the historian and man of letters Dario Tiberto.
2. G. M. Anselmi and S. Giombi, *Cultura umanistica e cenacoli artistici nella Bologna del Rinascimento*, in M. Faietti and K. Oberhuber, *Bologna e l'Umanesimo*, Cittadella 1988, p. 10.
3. V. Branca, 'Momarie veneziane e "fabula di Orfeo"', in V. Branca, *Poliziano e l'umanesimo della parola*, Turin 1983, pp. 55–72.
4. N. Pirrotta, *Li due Orfei: Da Poliziano a Monteverdi*, Turin 1969 (second edition Turin 1975), p. 15. Other useful indications for the relations between Poliziano, Orpheus and musical culture at the end of the fifteenth century are offered by Branca, *op. cit.*, p. 69, no. 14.
5. 'Poliziano carried out his *Fabula* in a paratactic series of scenes,

not divided in acts, not connected and developed by dramatic relations, but almost by a sequence of descriptive and lyrical pictures, visual and melodic, almost as if they were symmetrical panels in a Mantegna-like frieze (it is not a coincidence that the stage design needed five days, compared to two days for the preparation of the text)'; see Branca, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

6. Evidence for the works of Marcantonio Raimondi are taken above all from Faietti and Oberhuber, *op. cit.*, pp. 90–91: *Orpheus and Euridice*, Vienna, Albertina; pp. 123–26, *Portrait of Giovanni Filoteo Achillini*, Albertina; pp. 142–43, *Orpheus Enchanting the Animals*, Albertina; pp. 154–56, *The Incredulity of St Thomas*, Florence, Biblioteca Marucelliana; pp. 187–88, *The She-wolf Suckling Romulus and Remus*, Florence, Uffizi.
7. Inv. 1845.8.25.146, reproduced on p. 333 in Faietti and Oberhuber, *op. cit.*
8. The woodcut of the Ferrarese book is particularly interesting because it is dated. It therefore helps to cast some light on Marcantonio's very early work, which is characterized by a small catalogue of attributed works and with very few chronological certainties.
9. Marzia Faietti in Faietti and Oberhuber, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

- Rehearsal* 1938-39 241 × 305 mm Colour carborundum etching
- STETH, RAYMOND (1917/18-97) Philadelphia FAP
- Henry* 1938-40 165 × 113 mm Etching and carborundum mezzotint
- Refinery* 1938-42 276 × 194 mm Carborundum etching.
Colour carborundum etching
- Reggie* 1938-41 190 × 154 mm Colour carborundum mezzotint
- Uncle Lee* 1938-40 234 × 181 mm Carborundum mezzotint.
Colour carborundum mezzotint
- THRASH, DOX (1892/93-1965) Philadelphia FAP
- Abraham* 1938-42 124 × 102 mm Etching and carborundum mezzotint
- Alice* 1938-42 181 × 146 mm Etching and carborundum mezzotint
- Anna* 1938-42 194 × 143 mm Carborundum mezzotint
- Back Stage* 1938-39 190 × 251 mm Carborundum mezzotint
- Boats at Night* 1940 290 × 188 mm Carborundum mezzotint and aquatint
- Cabin Days* 1939-42 254 × 232 mm Etching and carborundum mezzotint
- Charlie* 1938-42 165 × 127 mm Carborundum mezzotint
- Charlott(e)* 1938-42 225 × 178 mm Etching and carborundum mezzotint
- Defense Worker* 1938-39 181 × 164 mm Carborundum mezzotint
- Evening Tide* 1938-42 127 × 178 mm Etching and carborundum mezzotint
- Georgia Cotton Crop* 1938-42 216 × 254 mm Etching and carborundum mezzotint
- Happy Journey* 1938-39 251 × 175 mm Carborundum etching
- Interlude* 1938-39 110 × 133 mm Etching and carborundum mezzotint
- Life* 1938-39 276 × 222 mm Carborundum mezzotint
- Manda* 1938-41 127 × 102 mm Carborundum mezzotint
- Market* 1938-42 140 × 184 mm Carborundum mezzotint
- Monday Morning Wash* 1938-40 279 × 354 mm Carborundum mezzotint.
Colour carborundum mezzotint
- Mr. X* 1938-42 165 × 127 mm Carborundum mezzotint
- Nellie Scott (Churning Butter)* 1938-41 229 × 166 mm Colour carborundum etching
- Second Thought* 1938-39 228 × 179 mm Carborundum mezzotint
- Untitled (nude)* 1938-42 279 × 356 mm Carborundum mezzotint
- Whiskers* 1938-39 248 × 172 mm Carborundum mezzotint
- Wreckers (Workers)* 1938 253 × 188 mm Etching and carborundum mezzotint
- TURNER, JOHN (dates unknown) Philadelphia FAP
- Autumn (Autumn Landscape)* 1940 191 × 251 mm Carborundum etching.
Colour carborundum etching
- Chrysanthemums* 1938-39 279 × 203 mm Carborundum etching
- Driftwood* 1938-39 178 × 232 mm Carborundum mezzotint
- Flower Arrangement* 1938-42 260 × 191 mm Colour carborundum etching
- Intermezzo* 1938-41 254 × 191 mm Carborundum mezzotint
- Midsummer* 1938-42 254 × 305 mm Carborundum mezzotint
- Pitching Hay* 1938-40 214 × 302 mm Etching and carborundum mezzotint
- Pneumatic Drillers* 1940 202 × 264 mm Colour carborundum etching
- Rear View* 1938-39 137 × 178 mm Carborundum mezzotint
- WEIDNER, ROSWELL (b. 1911) Philadelphia FAP
- Dredge* 1938-40 204 × 264 mm Etching and carborundum mezzotint
- Flowers* 1938 231 × 180 mm Etching and carborundum mezzotint.
Colour etching and carborundum mezzotint
- Fruit* 1938-39 160 × 192 mm Colour etching and carborundum mezzotint
- Industrial Town* 1938-39 264 × 289 mm Etching and carborundum mezzotint
- Merry-Go-Round* 1938-40 203 × 254 mm Etching and carborundum mezzotint
- Schuylkill River* 1938 214 × 276 mm Etching and carborundum mezzotint
- Summer Night* 1938-40 232 × 295 mm Carborundum mezzotint
- Three Flights Up* 1938-40 277 × 193 mm Carborundum etching
- Valley Farm* 1938-39 152 × 251 mm Etching and carborundum mezzotint



36. Here attributed to Marcantonio Raimondi, *Orpheus*, woodcut, from *Epithome Plutarchi* . . . , Ferrara 1501, 175 × 120 mm (Photo courtesy of the author).



37. Marcantonio Raimondi, *Orpheus and Euridice*, engraving, 130 × 100 mm (Vienna, Albertina).

gruities between image and text and by the white space between woodcut and frame.¹⁰ Other connections with *Orpheus Enchanting the Animals* are the same type of viola, and the faces of the two poets with their strange drooping moustaches and the corkscrew curls – a feature common to many of Raimondi's works of different dates,¹¹ such as the woodcut of *The Incredulity of St Thomas* (fig. 41), also used to illustrate a book.¹² The same drawing style, typical of the early *maniera* of Marcantonio, with background ruling, an economic use of lines to bring out the foreshortening of the figure in the woodcut *Orpheus* can be also seen in the feet and cloak folded just above the ankles of the *Orpheus* of 1506.¹³ One can



38. Marcantonio Raimondi, *Portrait of Giovanni Achillini, called Filoteo*, 182 × 129 mm (Vienna, Albertina).

thus assume that the woodcutter used a drawing or an engraving by Marcantonio as his source. I am tempted to link this woodcut (or perhaps its prototype) to the verses by Giovanni Filoteo dedicated to Marcantonio in his *Viridario*: 'Hame retratto in rame come io scrivo / Chen dubio di noi pendo quale è vivo'. This hypothesis is supported by the possibility of a superimposition of the two subjects (Filoteo, of course, was also a musician), but it is weakened by the lack of similarity between our *Orpheus* and Achillini, who can be

10. In the catalogue *Riche et précieuse collection de Livres à figures des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles*, Florence 1990, pp. 387–89, Leo S. Olschki describes and reproduces an edition of the *Epitome* of Plutarch where the woodcut of Orpheus is edged by a frame different from the one presented here. It was certainly executed in the same workshop, and represents a richer variant, with female figures bearing cornucopias, trophies as well as the usual architectural elements. In this example the woodcut is also lightly shaded with pen.

11. Faietti and Oberhuber, *op cit.*, p. 154.

12. It is found on fol. 4v of *Epistole e evangelij volgari hystoriade*, Venice, for Zuane Antonio et fradeli from Sabio ad instantia de Nicolò

et Demenego from Jesus fradeli, June 1522. The woodcut (274 × 174 mm) was cut by Ugo da Carpi (F. Lippmann, 'Ein Holzschnitt von Marcantonio Raimondi', *Jahrbuch der Königlich preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, 1, 1880, pp. 270–76), which reproduces a drawing or engraving by Raimondi executed not after 1506 (D. Landau and P. Parshall, *The Renaissance Print, 1470–1550*, New Haven and London 1994, p. 264 and nn. 10–12).

13. A comparison with other pen studies of his youth in brown ink is significant: see *The She-wolf Suckling Romulus and Remus*, Florence, Uffizi (fig. 40, the trees in the background) or the *Tempus Nostre*, Berlin, Staatliche Museen (the old man on the right).

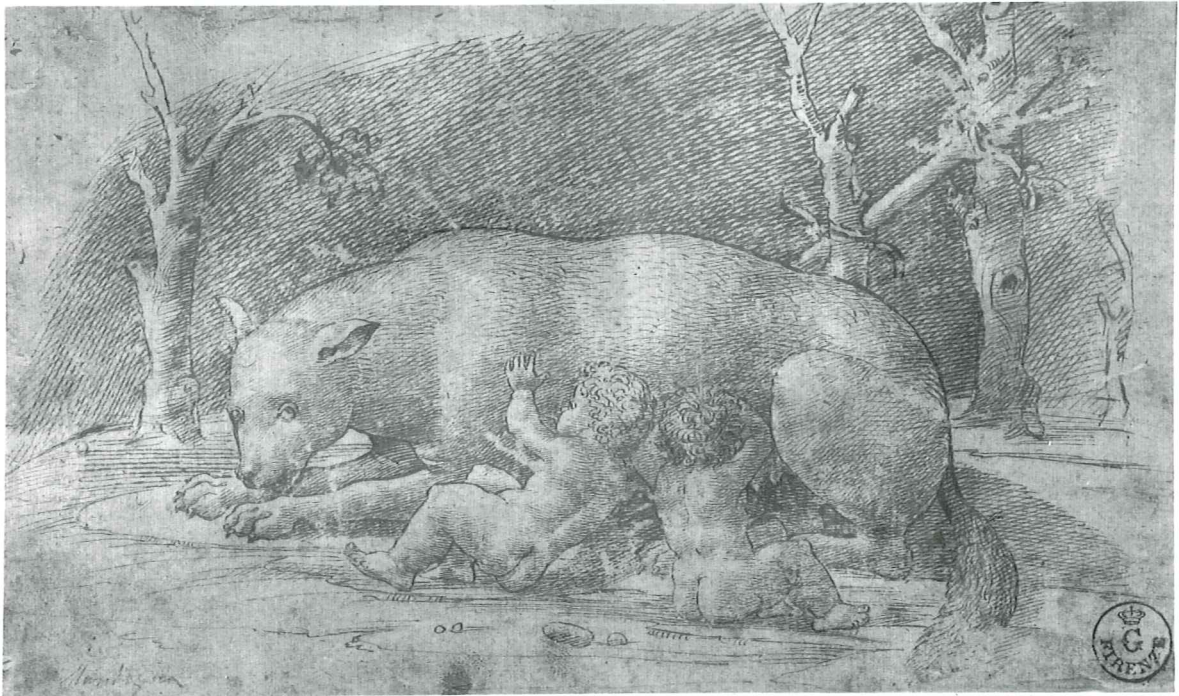


39. Marcantonio Raimondi, *Orpheus Enchanting the Animals*, engraving, 212 × 170 mm (Vienna, Albertina).

identified thanks to portraits by Raimondi (fig. 38) and Amico Aspertini.¹⁴

In order to trace further Raimondi's contribution to sixteenth-century book illustration, we must now move to the cities where he spent most of his time – Venice and Rome. The Venetian editions containing images taken from various engravings by Raimondi suggest that he became an unwitting illustrator, whose figurative repertoire was pillaged without his involvement or knowledge.¹⁵ In this, of course, he was

14. G. F. Achillini, *Viridario*, Bologna 1513, CLXXXIX (but the text had been completed since 1504). The attempts to make these verses refer to other prints of Raimondi do not seem credible to me, as no other engraving depicts the poet while he is writing.
15. The texts in which Essling (V. Massena Prince d'Essling, *Etudes sur l'art de la gravure sur bois à Venise. Les livres à figures vénitiens de la fin du XV^e siècle et du commencement du XVI^e*, Paris and Florence, 1907–14, reprinted Turin 1967) discovered derivations from Raimondi's prints are: Nicolò degli Agostini, *Inamoramento de Lancilotto e Ginevra*, Nicolò Zoppino e Vincenzo Polo, 31 October 1521; Baldassarre Olympo da Sassoferrato, *Aradia*, Nicolò Zoppino e Vincenzo Polo, 9 April 1522; Baldassarre Olympo da Sassoferrato, *Gloria d'Amore*, s.n.t., 21 October 1522; Matteo Maria Boiardo, *Orlando innamorato*, Nicolò Zoppino e Vincenzo Polo, 21 March 1521; Matteo Maria Boiardo, *Orlando innamorato*, Nicolò Zoppino e Vincenzo Polo, 22 June 1521; Matteo Maria Boiardo, *Orlando innamorato*, Nicolò Zoppino e Vincenzo Polo, 10 December 1524. Another Bolognese artist active in the same years as Raimondi, Amico Aspertini, showed a very different awareness and was very active in making book illustrations. On this see S. Urbini, 'Amico Aspertini poligrafo dell'illustrazione libraria', *Nuovi Studi*, iv/2, 1997, pp. 143–56.



40. Marcantonio Raimondi, *The She-wolf Suckling Romulus and Remus*, pen and ink, 106 × 182 mm (Florence, Uffizi).



41. Ugo da Carpi and Marcantonio Raimondi, *The Incredulity of St Thomas*, woodcut, from *Epistole e evangelij* . . . , Venice 1522, 274 × 174 mm (Florence, Biblioteca Marucelliana).

Dialogus quē cōposuit. R. P. B.

Dñs Amadeus Berrutus Epūs Aug. Suberator Rome
 Dñs ellet in minoribus Tempore Julij. ij.
 In quo precipue tractat: An amico sepe ad scribendum prouocato:
 ut scribat non respondenti sit amplius scribendum
 Et hinc incidenter multa pulcia.

De Amicitia vera De Amore honesto De amicis veris
 De Epist. a curie Romane et aliorum principum De curialibus uis
 minus vere q̄ facere scribit. Et piara nouoq; ita lo addit his
 que Idus ii. in de inferis cu salum scripte

Postea vero Suberator factus a Leone .pp. i. multa pulcia acco
 modate addidit: quibus doce quales esse debeant
 qui magistratibus publicis preponuntur.

Et in eo quatuor colloquutores eu colluctatores introducuntur
 Uidelicet.

Amadeus. Austeritas. Amicitia. et Amor.



42. Marcantonio Raimondi, *Amedeo Berruto with Austeritas, Amicitia and Amor*, engraving, 100 × 111 mm, from *Dialogus quem composuit . . .*, Rome 1517 (Photo courtesy of the author).

not unique: several books that contain images after Marcantonio – the very same *Epistole e evangelij* . . . is an example – also have illustrations derived from either Agostino Veneziano or Giovanni Battista Palumba.¹⁶

A survey of Marcantonio as book illustrator during his stay in Rome has yet to be undertaken.¹⁷ At present, one can establish with certainty that only in one case – in a Roman edition containing a very rare engraving – Raimondi had explicitly worked with this end in mind (fig. 42). Bartsch cautiously attributed the creation of this design to Francesco Francia, though he did not link it to the text we know it was created for.¹⁸ The illustration, signed by Raimondi at bottom left, depicts the allegorical dialogue that its author, Amadeo Berruto, announced in the long *incipit* of the text, dated 1517 and published by Gabriele Bononensem.¹⁹ Berruto, who

held important positions during the papacy of Leo X (he was the Governor of Rome and took part in the works for the Fifth Lateran Council) began to write this dialogue at the time of Julius II, when he still held moderate but reformist opinions and dared to denounce the shortcomings of the Curia.²⁰ The three characters symbolize the three fundamental values for men in public office: Austerity, Friendship and a Love for Rome. According to Barbieri, this engraving was made before 1517, as Berruto is portrayed as a friar and not as the Bishop of Aosta,²¹ though this iconographic preference may simply be seen as a display of humility. The connection between the image and the text is so marked, that one can safely assume that they were both conceived at the same time.

16. A. Campana, *Intorno all'incisore Gian Battista Palumba e al pittore Jacopo Ripanda (Ripanda)*, *Maso Finiguerra*, I, 1936, pp. 164–81. Matteo Maria Boiardo, *Orlando innamorato*, Nicolò Zoppino e Vincenzo Polo, 21 March 1521: woodcuts depicting a knight and a battle signed respectively *IO.B.P.* and *I.B.P.*, and which reappear among the reprints of the same publisher of 1528 and of 1532–33. Nicolò degli Agostini, *Li successi bellici*, the woodcut of the statue of Marcus Aurelius bears the initials *IB.P.*

17. The only contribution on this subject is by David Landau, who hypothesized that the woodcut opening the *Liber Quindecim Missarum* by Andrea Antico, Rome 1516, *in-folio*, could have been based on a drawing by Raimondi (Landau and Parshall, *op. cit.*, p. 264, n. 9). The rare musical editions of the Antique, which can be recognized for their refined and original iconographic repertory, have already caught the attention of art historians. Gianni Romano has attributed the vignette that opens the *Canzoni nove con alcune scelte de varii libri di canto*, Rome 1510, to Amico Aspertini (G. Romano, 'Verso la maniera moderna: da Mantegna a Raffaello', in F. Zeri, *Storia dell'arte italiana*, VI/1: *Dal Cinquecento all'Ottocento*, Turin 1981, p. 52, n. 5), an attribution called into question by Marzia Faietti (M. Faietti and D. Scaglietti Kelesian, *Amico Aspertini*, Modena 1995, p. 342).

18. A. Bartsch, *Le Peintre-graveur*, Leipzig, 1803–21, XII, no. 355, and then K. Oberhuber, *The Illustrated Bartsch, XXVII: The Work of Marcantonio Raimondi and his School*, New York 1978, fig. 355 (270): *Amadeus*, after Francesco Francia(?); fig. 355A (271) *Amadeus*, copy by Cornelis Bos.

19. In the sale catalogue *Vendita all'asta della preziosa collezione proveniente dalla cessata libreria De Marinis*, part I, Milan 1925, p. 65, no. 262, publisher Ulrico Hoepli presents an interesting example of

the book by Berruto: it contains a second engraving signed by Raimondi representing *The Debate between the Three Doctors* (*The Illustrated Bartsch, XXVII*, 404 (305)), a sheet whose original destination can thus be at long last established. To the book in question there was 'found attached together a book with 8 sheets; on the first a print of the same artist (96 × 72 mm) the dispute of the three doctors; there follows a manuscript "Amadeus Eps. Augustanus Caracio, procuratori fisci ducalis. Salutem." dated "Auguste XV January MDXXXIII". It seems that the print found at the end has to be part of the work, it is also found in the copy of sales Sykes and Hanrot. . . .

20. See the biographical profile of the author by L. Marini in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, Rome 1967. The long title which refers to the copper plate engraving of Raimondi is as follows: 'Dialogus, quem composuit Rev.P.D.D. Amadeus Berrutus episcopus Augustanus Gubernator Romae, dum esset in minoribus tempore Iulio II, in quo praecipue tractat: an amico saepe ad scribendum provoco ut scribat, non respondentem sit amplius scribendum. Et hinc incidenter multa pulchra de amicitia vera -de amore honesto- de amicis veris- de epithetis curiae Romanae et aliorum principum. De curialibus non minus vere quam facete scribit, et plura novoque stylo addit his, quae Pius II de miseriis curialium scripsit. Postea vero, gubernator factus a Leone X, multa plura accomodate addidit, quibus docet quales esse debeant qui magistratibus publicis praeponuntur. Et in eo quatuor colloquutores seu colluctatores introducuntur, videlicet Amadeus, Austeritas, Amicitia, Amor', Rome, for Gabriele Bononensem 1517.

21. Barbieri, *op. cit.*, p. 146, n. 49.