

INTRODUCTION

In early sixteenth century Rome a Hellenistic statue became the focus of regular satirical outbursts. Each St Mark's day the statue was decorated with satirical Latin epigrams denouncing the errors of courtiers and church officials. The fiction that these libels were written by the 'talking statue', Pasquino, established the satirical genre of the Pasquinade. Later in the sixteenth century Italian Protestant writers used the genre of the Pasquinade and the mouth-piece of Pasquino to write their Latin and Italian denunciations of Catholic superstitions. The most famous example of this sixteenth century religious appropriation of sculptural and literary aspects of the classical tradition was the *Pasquillorum libri duo* (Basel, 1544), most probably written by the Piedmontese reformer Celio Secondo Curione (1503-1569). The publication of a new edition of this book, edited by Damiano Mevoli, provided the occasion for the conference on Italian protestant satirical writing, organised by Angelo Romano and Chrysa Damianaki, which is the basis of the present volume.

Satire and Protestantism can be awkward collaborators. Since Protestants like to denounce Catholic corruption and superstition (anti-clerical satire is one of the antecedents of much Protestant polemic) genre and religion would seem to go together, but the extremism of satire and the sense that the satirist depends on vice for his subject-matter, and so in a sense also celebrates vice, sits more awkwardly with protestant sobriety. This conference provided the occasion for serious bibliographical, textual and stylistic study of a number of neglected texts. New attributions for anonymous texts were proposed and new attempts were made to understand the context in which these writings were written and the effects which they had on audiences. The histories of print, of religion and of Italian literature and culture have been of deep interest to the Warburg Institute since its foundation. For this reason it was appropriate and timely to hold this conference at the Warburg Institute and I am deeply grateful to the organisers and contributors who provided this intellectual feast.

Four of the contributions focus on the text *Pasquino in estasi*. Giovanna Cordibella and Stefano Prandi discuss the relationship between the different

versions of the text: the first Latin edition, *Pasquilli extatici seu nuper e coelo reverse* (before 1543), the first Italian edition, *Pasquino in estasi* (Venice, 1544) and the six manuscripts related to it, the German translation, *Der verzuckt Pasquinus* (Augusta, 1543) and two later versions, *Pasquillus ecstaticus, non ille prior, sed totus plane alter* (1544) and *Pasquillus ecstaticus, una cum aliis etiam aliquot sanctis pariter et lepidis dialogis* (1545), itself expanded in two Italian editions published in 1546. This survey of editions and manuscripts forms an essential foundation for a critical edition of the text. Davide Dalmas compares two of the Italian editions, *Pasquino in estasi* (1544) and *Pasquino in estasi nuovo e molto piu pieno ch'el primo* (1546), showing how the text was adapted and extended to include discussions of topical events. Lucio Biasori finds persuasive similarities between *Pasquino in estasi* and the antipapal polemic *Antichristus sive prognostica finis mundi*, which he redates from c. 1570 to somewhere between 1525 and 1545, and attributes to Celio Secondo Curione. Chrysa Damianaki concentrates on Curione's polemics against unsuitable representations of the Virgin Mary and the saints in *Pasquillo ecstaticus*, relating these comments to other remarks on images and the externalisation of religion in works like Erasmus's *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (1501). Curione intended to steer a middle path, defending decorous religious images against extreme iconoclasts like Karlstadt who strongly supported in his treatise (1522) the abolition of all holy images in churches.

Literary approaches to Italian reformers are pursued by four further papers. Angelo Romano examines Curione's use of satire to cast into relief the religious situation of his time and his success in satirizing the papacy. Franco Pierno analyses the language, dialect and style of Bernardino Ochino's *Apologi* (1554), a collection of short stories satirizing the immorality of the papal curia. Chiara Lastraioli discusses the diffusion of the genre of Pasquino satire from its Italian origins across early modern Europe. Northern protestant satirists were particularly encouraged by the example of their co-religionists, such as Celio Secondo Curione and Bernardino Ochino. Valentina Sebastiani approaches the phenomenon of satire from the perspective of book history, analysing the satirical output of the Basel presses between 1494 and 1544, looking at the context of the production of satires and the audience, local and international, aimed at by their printers.

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