

5 | Rubens's Humanistic Title Pages for Jesuit Authors

5.1 | The Society of Jesus

While Rubens used the numismatic title pages to proclaim himself as a numismatist and antiquarian, he expressed his humanistic education with the following title pages. Although all of them were written by authors from the Society of Jesus, the title pages by Rubens advocate the books not as mainly Jesuit, but as humanistic titles. Nevertheless, the Jesuits' interest in books and thus in his title pages needed to be identified, before the title pages could be interpreted. This wider context of the title pages thus constitutes the first part of this section.

Books and their relevance to the Society of Jesus

Rubens designed eighteen title pages for authors from the Society of Jesus, apart from producing several paintings for their churches both in Italy and the southern Netherlands. This religious order was very influential in the seventeenth century and the society was particularly strong in Antwerp. Because education was of primary importance in the young order, books were highly coveted by the Jesuits: countless authors belonging to the society published an incomparable number of books for almost every step of the education system.

The Society of Jesus, founded in the 1530s by Ignatius de Loyola, was one of the most successful and influential orders in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In 1540 Pope Paul III issued the first papal bull for the approval of the Society of Jesus; it was finally approved in its revised state by Pope Julius III in 1550 as *Exposcit debitum*. To this day this is the document that allows the Jesuits to operate within the Catholic Church and is thus the charter of the Society.¹ In it the purpose of the order is defined as “to serve the Lord alone and the Church, his spouse, under the Roman

¹ John O'Malley, “Introduction: The Pastoral, Social, Ecclesiastical, Civic and Cultural Mission of the Society of Jesus”, pp. xxiii–xxxvi, in: O'Malley and Bailey 2006.

pontiff, the vicar of Christ on earth”.² While the Jesuits had a close connection to the papacy from the beginning, they were never willing to serve the Church, and refused to take on parishes or any other offices in the Church’s organisational structure. As the historian of religious culture, John O’Malley, emphasises, in Ignatius’s correspondence—one of the largest extant early modern collections with more than seven thousand letters—the expression “to serve the Church” does not occur once, while the “help of souls” is used frequently.³ The Society’s ultimate goal, formulated very generally by Ignatius of Loyola, was the service to God: to work for the “greater glory of God”,⁴ or, in the words of the *Exposcit debitum*, the “defense and propagation of the faith”.⁵ Depending on the country in which the Jesuits lived, this could mean an active mission for the evangelisation of heathens or the confrontation with the Reformists, and the Society soon took up that cause especially in countries such as England, the German countries and the Netherlands. The written word was an important tool for the Society’s mission.

In the publication of books the Society of Jesus was on the forefront: the Jesuit scientific corpus alone comprises almost 6,000 works for the years 1540 to 1800.⁶ From very early on, the Jesuits had recognised the significance of books for their purposes: a letter by the secretary of the Jesuits’ founder Ignatius Loyola stated that “for the houses of study purchasing of books is as essential as the buying of food. A book is a tool in the service of God”.⁷ The first generation of Jesuits still regarded publishing books critically, as they perceived it as a distraction from their work of charity, and in the constitutions books were mentioned only in passing. However, throughout the decades, books became more and more important for the society, especially in their missionary work.

The Jesuits were not only involved in the production of books, they also established a huge system of standardised education that was always in need of new books, whether textbooks for the students or scholarly books for the teachers. This educational endeavour made libraries necessary in Jesuit colleges. Over time twelve rules for college libraries were formulated in the *Regulae praefecti bibliothecae* (Rules for the Prefect of the Library). Among these rules it is postulated, for instance, that all the forbidden and censored works collected by the Church in the *Index librorum prohibitorum* were denied a place on the shelves, and that the library had to own and display the Index. The rules also made sure that the purchases of new books were discussed frequently with the superior, that the books were classified according to their subjects and that a catalogue of books and subjects was compiled. A collection of essential works had to be placed in the reading room

² O’Malley and Bailey 2006, pp. xxxiv–xxxvi.

³ Ibid., p. xxvi.

⁴ Harris 1988, pp. xxxvii–xxxix.

⁵ O’Malley and Bailey 2006.

⁶ Harris 1988, pp. xx–xxi.

⁷ *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu*. Matriti, Gabriel Lopez del Horno, 1907. IV, pp. 494–495. in Begheyn 2014, p. 17.

with free access to all.⁸ The *Ratio Studiorum*, the guidelines for teaching in the Jesuit colleges, completed these rules. They declared that the library had to be up to date and supplied with new authors and books.⁹ The newly founded order of the Society of Jesus was very soon at the forefront of book production and consumption.

What influenced the Jesuit production of books was not only intellectual zeal, but also the need to find patrons and donors for an order that lived off donations. This patronage system made books economically relevant for the Jesuits. The reputation of both schools and their teachers depended on their publications, and attracting sponsors and wealthy pupils helped to create and nourish these reputations.¹⁰ The books were a tool in this system: almost every book, especially those with engraved title pages, had a dedication that either thanked a patron for rendered services or was a sign of hope for future patronage. Sometimes the dedication would also be incorporated into the title page with the inclusion of coats-of-arms and other legible allusions to the patron.¹¹

In a study on the dedicatory policy used by Jesuits, Martha Baldwin examined the dedications by Jesuit scientists. The mathematician Christopher Clavius (1538–1612), for instance, used dedications only from 1581 onwards, and then concentrated on kings, priests with royal connections, wealthy merchants with good connections, as well as Italian princes: according to Baldwin, he “sought to earn the validation of men in the secular world who exercised considerable cultural, political, and economic power in Catholic Europe”.¹² It is important to note, that not only the economic power was of importance; choosing a patron was not only done to finance publications but also to navigate political waters. The Jesuit network helped the individual author in negotiating the social and economical complexities of patronage: provincials and superiors not only censored the books written by their members, they also advised authors on the publication and suggested potential patrons. This method of earning and keeping the good will of rulers and the powerful goes back to Ignatius Loyola and his founding document.¹³ In later years very successful authors were freed from teaching standard courses and were appointed *scriptors*, such as for instance Clavius or Athanasius Kircher, which underlines the growing importance of publications for the order.¹⁴

Generally, the publication of a book never occurred in the name of the Society of Jesus without the express approval of the hierarchy: the order had developed strict protocols and procedures that were demanded of authors and superiors alike. As well as the general censorship introduced with

⁸ Comerford 2015, p. 184.

⁹ Cf. Begheyn 2014, p. 18.

¹⁰ Baldwin 2003.

¹¹ Ibid.; Ashworth 1985, 1986, 1989, 1991. Cf. Frese 1989 for title pages as dedications.

¹² Baldwin 2003, p. 290.

¹³ Ibid., p. 291.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 286.

the mass distribution of the printed book, the Jesuits introduced their own censorship. Books were assessed by censors in the provinces and by censors in Rome, before an *approbatio* was granted.

Images played a special role in the belief of the Jesuits and were used widely in meditation and education.¹⁵ Many books by Jesuits were published with images, often illustrations, especially those that were needed by missionaries in other parts of the world.¹⁶ However, title pages were not made to be meditated on in the same way as illustrations. More often, the usual functions of title pages can be observed in Jesuit title pages: as a dedication, as a preface to the book, or as a summary of the content.¹⁷ Because the Jesuits used artists widely and had an encompassing cultural output, the discussion about a “Jesuit style” or specific Jesuit propaganda has never abated.¹⁸ But, as Ralph Dekoninck among others has repeatedly shown, the Jesuits used the means available to them, including a visual system that had been in play since the middle ages; this did not mean that there was “a causal relationship between a religious sensibility and an artistic style”.¹⁹ Just as any early modern author or artist, the Jesuits followed the rhetorical aim with its roots in classical teachings in rhetoric: a speech (and later any written or visual work) was to teach, move and delight, with an emphasis on the affective response of the viewer or reader. Since the nineteenth century, an age that assessed the Jesuits in a not particularly positive way, a specific “Jesuit taste” was assumed to be closely connected to a “Baroque style”, particularly in the Belgian province, and in the middle of that was the name Rubens. Instead, as many authors have shown in the last century, the Jesuits adapted various styles and preferences prevalent in certain regions in order to blend in and to have more persuasive force.²⁰ In Antwerp, an important city in the Jesuits’ network, Rubens was approachable as an artist, he was undoubtedly Catholic, he knew many of the Jesuits, and as such was asked to provide paintings and designs for many of their projects.

Rubens’s Work for the Society of Jesus

There are several reasons for Rubens’s collaboration with the Jesuits: the Society of Jesus was particularly strong in Antwerp, he seems to have had close connections to the Society and it had very knowledgeable authors. A strict education system ensured that only the best and most dedicated would, after years of study, achieve the rank of a professed Jesuit. Rubens collaborated with the Jesuits from early in his career: during his stay in Italy he had already received commissions for Jesuit churches. Because the Jesuits used images widely, their order was a very interesting patron with many potential commissions and a large world-wide network. Rubens later joined one of their so-

¹⁵ Boer et al. 2016; Oy-Marra et al. 2011; O’Malley 2005; J. C. Smith 2002; O’Malley and Bailey 1999.

¹⁶ Van Dael 1998; Remmert 2011.

¹⁷ For the various functions, cf. Frese 1989.

¹⁸ Dekoninck 2012; O’Malley 2005; Levy 2004; Bailey 1999.

¹⁹ Dekoninck 2012, p. 66; Dekoninck 2005a.

²⁰ Bailey 1999.

dalities in Antwerp, and he must have had personal contacts within their order. Apart from altar pieces, Rubens designed title pages for several authors of the Society of Jesus, in all eighteen.²¹ This means that one third of all the publications illustrated by Rubens were for productions by Jesuits, therefore making it necessary to investigate some of these collaborations more closely. A mathematical and a juridical work were chosen as case studies: the book on optics by Aguilonius and *De iustitia et iure* by Leonardus Lessius.

Very early on in his career, in the first months of his stay in Italy, Rubens became a protégé of the Jesuits.²² On 26 January 1601 he received his first important commission for the newly built Jesuit church in Mantua. He was to produce three paintings for the high altar and the two side altars, for the design of which he consulted two fathers: the superior of the professed house in Mantua and Father Antonio Possevino (1533–1611). The latter had brought out a treatise *De cultura ingeniorum* in 1598 (Bologna) in which he affirmed the views of Father Louis Richeome (1544–1625), who, in two seminal works, had written about the use of sight in spiritual education. The high altar by Rubens was consecrated in 1605 and showed the Gonzaga family in reverence of the Trinity. Vincenzo I Gonzaga, fourth duke of Mantua and Monferrato, had appointed Rubens to work for him and his splendid collection. For the eight years of Rubens's stay, the Duke of Gonzaga was his patron in Italy.²³ Rubens's collaboration with the Jesuits continued in Rome with an illustrated edition about the founding father of the Society, Ignatius de Loyola. Two sketches by Rubens for the illustrations are known.²⁴ Back in Antwerp, he not only painted the first Jesuit saints for the Jesuit church in Antwerp, Ignatius and Francis Xavier, but also decorated the church with a series of ceiling paintings and worked on a number of book projects.²⁵

Just as his friend Balthasar Moretus, Rubens became a member of the Latin Sodality of Our Lady under the direction of the Jesuits. The Latin sodality was one of the eight sodalities of the Jesuits, and its members spoke Latin only.²⁶ It is not known when exactly he became a member, the documents only mention him and Balthasar Moretus as *consultores* in 1623.²⁷ The years after his

²¹ Aguilonius 1613; Areopagita 1634; Baronio and Sponde 1623; Bauhuis et al. 1634; Bidermann 1634; Boonaerts 1634; Cordier 1628; Hugo 1626; L. Lessius 1617; Liutprandus 1640; Pietrasanta 1634; Ribadeneyra and Rosweyde 1619; Rosweyde 1617, 1628; Sarbiewski 1632, 1634; Scribani 1624; Steen 1616.

²² Büttner 2008a, p. 67.

²³ Büttner 2015c; Morselli 2016; Büttner 2008a; Morselli 2001.

²⁴ Dekoninck 2012, p. 79; Dekoninck 2005b, p. 166; Held 1972; Evers 1943, pp. 167–194.

²⁵ Lombaerde 2008.

²⁶ Thijs 1993; Ziggelaar 1983, p. 41.

²⁷ Büttner 2015c, p. 65. Antwerpen, Onze-Lieve-Vrouwcollege, Bibl. no 86, A 8. "D. Petrus Ruebens" mentioned as a secretary in another document, is probably his namesake, as Peter Paul was traveling from 1628–1630: Büttner 2006b, p. 44, fn. 30; Baudouin 2005a, p. 210, fn. 50. For stylistic reasons it is assumed that Rubens painted the *Annunciation* (oil on canvas, 224 x 200 cm, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, no. 685), hanging in the chamber of the Latin sodality up to 1776, for its formation in 1609. There is no documentary evidence for this. Cf. Kräfner 2004, pp. 56–59, no. 9; Logan and Schröder 2004, no. 25; Demus 1977, no. 18, with older literature.

return from Italy saw Rubens making a systematic effort to be integrated into Antwerp society.²⁸ In 1609, the same year in which he married the daughter of Jan Brant, Isabella Brant (1591–1626), he entered the guild of Romanists. With his marriage to Isabella, it is very probable that he would have been able to enter the Latin Sodality, but more has to be found out about these sodalities and how they worked.

On June 19, 1609, in any case, he became a member of a religious fraternity, the *Confratrum collegii Romanorum apud Antuerpienses*, that was affiliated to the Sint Joriskerk and venerated the saints Peter and Paul.²⁹ Its chairman was the distinguished painter Jan Brueghel (1568–1625). A prerequisite for the admission into this elitist fraternity of 25 members was an obligatory visit to Rome and the ability to converse in Italian. Just as Latin in the Latin sodality, the ability to fluently converse in Italian was a distinguishing characteristic: it elevated the person who was part of the fraternity above those who could not be members because of language, it also was a mark of erudition and connected like-minded persons. For Rubens these memberships were not only welcome pastimes in which he could practise the languages he liked most,³⁰ but it also elevated him as an artist and it brought him into direct contact with many patrons and clients.

Of the eighteen publications in which Rubens collaborated with the Jesuits, only six were not published by the Officina Plantiniana.³¹ Not all of the works published for the Jesuits were primarily theological books. Indeed, the first book by a Jesuit author illustrated by Rubens was a work that would nowadays be considered to be scientific rather than religious, and in its own time was part of the mathematical curriculum.³² This first design was for a book published by Balthasar Moretus; it was the title page for Aguilonius's *Opticorum Libri Sex* (Fig. 29).³³ It was written by the Franciscus Aguilonius (François d'Aguilon, 1567–1616), as background reading for Jesuit teachers on this fairly new subject: it was intended to be useful for professors of both philosophy and mathematics. Rubens must have got to know Aguilonius through his involvement in Antwerp society, as the latter was a trusted member of the Jesuit community.

Aguilonius taught philosophy and mathematics in Antwerp from 1598, and became rector in 1614 and vice-provincial from 1615 to 1616. Together with the previous rector, Carlo Scribani, he was responsible for opening a school for mathematics there. In his time as rector Aguilonius was involved in the building of what is nowadays known as the Sint Carolus Borromeuskerk in Antwerp, the plans of which Rome finally agreed to in 1615.³⁴ The illustrations for the vignettes in Aguilo-

²⁸ Büttner 2015c.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 65.

³⁰ Rubens wrote most of his letters in Italian.

³¹ Baronio and Sponde 1623; Boonaerts 1634; Ribadeneyra and Rosweyde 1619; Rosweyde 1617; Scribani 1624; Steen 1616. Ribadeneyra 1609 is not considered here, as Rubens probably only delivered the illustrations.

³² This book on optics belongs to the book class of mathematical books in Albert's catalogue.

³³ Aguilonius 1613. For a full bibliography concerning this often-mentioned title page, see Bertram 2016.

³⁴ Meskens 1997 p. 13.

nus's book show a closeness to the text that make several authors assume that Rubens and Aguilonius at least talked about the book.³⁵

Although none of the other collaborations have been proven so far, not even Rubens's involvement in the building of the church, his interest in architecture cannot be denied, nor his interest in the theoretical side, as he owned several tracts on architecture, by Alberti, Vitruv, Scamozzi, Serlio, and Francart, for example, and in 1622 he even published his own book: *Palazzi di Genova*.³⁶ There is, however, no record showing that Rubens contributed the sketches for the planned Jesuit church in Antwerp.³⁷ This church was built by Franciscus Aguilonius and the lay brother Peter Huyssens (1578–1637), a Jesuit mason. Much speculation exists as to how far Rubens was involved in this project and the discussions in this century have indeed “provoked a great diversity of opinions”.³⁸ What remains of the collaboration of Aguilonius, Huyssens, and Rubens are seven drawings of the sculptural parts of the façade, the ceiling, and the crowning of the high altar—possibly by the latter—plans sent to Rome from Aguilonius and Huyssens, and a church influenced by contemporary Italian architecture.³⁹ On April 14, 1615, the first stone of the church was laid and when Aguilonius died in the spring of 1617 the building was not finished by far. Huyssens continued building the church until 1621.⁴⁰ In this year Rubens was to deliver the paintings for the ceilings of the new church, as the contract shows.⁴¹

Rubens's collaboration with the Society of Jesus increased in the thirties and did not cease until his death: for three decades, from the first title page for the Aguilonius in 1613 to 1640, when he provided the design for title page of the works of Liutprand with the help of Erasmus Quellinus, he designed title pages for the Society in Antwerp. In this town the members of the ruling elite were connected by familial ties, and the Jesuits actively sought the patronage of these members; it is inconceivable that Rubens would not have known several of these highly educated men. He definitely knew the publishers of the books, but not necessarily the authors. The Jesuits were always on the lookout for patrons and good artists, and Rubens was subsequently often approached to either decorate the Jesuit church or provide a design for a title page by a Jesuit author, without necessarily having a close connection to the authors himself. The Society of Jesus, with its many sodalities and members, had many opportunities to contact Moretus or Rubens for a title page.

³⁵ Büttner 2015c, p. 119; Jaffé 1971 includes the new Jesuit church in the collaboration, others the colour theory put forward in Aguilonius's work, Ibid., Parkhurst 1961.

³⁶ Blunt 1977, p. 621, fn. 43 for the most important treatises Rubens bought between 1613 and 1617; Baudouin lists his acquisitions from 1613–1620 when he was building his house. Baudouin 2001, p. 62.

³⁷ Büttner 2015c, pp. 119–120; Lombaerde 2008, passim; J. R. Martin 1968; Ziggelaar 1983, p. 25; Alfred Poncelet, Vol. I, p. 343; Ferdinand Peeters 1945, p. 172.

³⁸ Baudouin 2002a, p. 15. The forthcoming Part XXII, 3 of the CRLB might clarify some open questions concerning Rubens's involvement in the building of the church.

³⁹ Lombaerde 2002, p. 27.

⁴⁰ Daelmans 2002, p. 42.

⁴¹ Büttner 2015c, p. 122, fn. 520.

5.2 | The Title Page for Aguilonius's *Opticorum libri sex* (1613)

The title page by Rubens for Aguilonius's main work, six books on Optics, exemplifies why this section addresses Rubens as a humanist rather than an artist in the service of the Society of Jesus. Apart from the mathematical instruments lying on the ground, the title page itself is not overly concerned with the mathematical side, and instead focuses on the allegorical representation of optics. Rubens draws here on classical mythology in order to show *Optica* as the queen of mathematical studies.

The six books on optics by Franciscus Aguilonius, published as *Opticorum libri sex Philosophis iuxtà ac Mathematicis utiles* in 1613, were written as background reading for Jesuit teachers of philosophy and mathematics.⁴² Optics was not a subject of its own at the beginning of the seventeenth century, but belonged to philosophical and mathematical studies; it was taught in the philosophy course of physics and mathematics in which it was preceded by arithmetic and geometry, spherical astronomy and geography, the motion of the heavenly bodies and the astrolabe.⁴³ Mathematics was a fairly new subject and Aguilonius himself must have been among the first to study mathematics in Douai in the 1580s; optics as only a sub-discipline was not taught everywhere. The well-known professor of mathematics at the Roman college, Clavius, had written two treatises in which he praised the discipline and argued for its inclusion in the Jesuits' regulations for studies in the colleges, the *Ratio Studiorum*.⁴⁴ A definite version of these regulations had only been published in 1599. Seven years later the Antwerp rector of the college, Carlo Scribani (1561–1629), petitioned the magistrate to open a special mathematical school.⁴⁵ The main objective was to move the whole college to a bigger building, and Scribani was able to use the mathematical school, intended for the merchants, gaugers, navigators, and surveyors of Antwerp, as an argument for this move. He gained the support of Mayor Hendrik van Etten,⁴⁶ and in 1608 the college moved to the Huys van Liere. Another seven years later, in 1615, the new rector Aguilonius was allowed to open a special mathematical school that also taught astronomy. Although Gregory of St. Vincent (1584–1667) arrived in Antwerp in the same year to help with the curriculum, a course on mathematics was only started after Aguilonius's death in 1617.⁴⁷ During this struggle by the Jesuit college to establish a school for mathematics in the city, Aguilonius's book was published, for which he received 200 guilders from the city of Antwerp.⁴⁸ It was a sumptuous book of 684 pages in folio with over 500

⁴² This subchapter is largely based on an article published in 2016. For a detailed bibliography cf. Bertram 2016.

⁴³ Meskens 1997, Meskens 1996.

⁴⁴ Cf. Smolarski 2002.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 257; Ziggelaar 1983, pp. 33–35.

⁴⁶ Dupré 2008, p. 56.

⁴⁷ Vanpaemel 2003, p. 396; Ziggelaar 1983, pp. 47–52; Parkhurst 1961, p. 40.

⁴⁸ Judson and Van de Velde 1977b, p. 495.

wood-cut illustrations, as well as a general title page and a vignette for each book. The title page and all vignettes were designed by Rubens and cut by Theodore Galle.

The imagery on the title page, just as the “Letter to the Reader”, praises *Optica*, the personification of optics, as the queen of mathematical studies.⁴⁹ In her hands she holds the two attributes that combine vision and reason: the optical pyramid and the eye-sceptre (Fig. 29).⁵⁰ Both Sven Dupré and Isabelle Pantin show that Aguilonius argues against the new Keplerian theories in order to understand vision in terms of cognition and ultimately in the terms of contemplating God. While Kepler dismisses the *species* in his *Astronomiae Pars Optica* of 1604 as part of a dated, Aristotelian intromission theory, Aguilonius reintroduces them in his theory. It postulates that objects emit rays which carry the *species* and with their help stimulate our internal senses residing in the soul via the external sense of vision. Kepler’s theory threatened a central concern of Jesuit mathematicians, as, according to them, spiritual knowledge could only be obtained through the stimulus of the soul through the *species*.⁵¹ The title page puts an emphasis on light by showing rays of different kinds; rays were not only the carriers of the important *species*, but light was also used as a symbol of knowledge, a relationship that is vividly explained in Cesare Ripa’s *Iconologia*:

A sitting woman is holding a lighted candle in her hand / and has with her an open book / onto which she points with her right index finger. The burning candle means / that / just as our eyes / when they should see and perceive something / have need of light: thus also the inner eye of reason / when it shall grasp / seize and perceive the form of the things that are subject to knowledge and reason / needs the tool of the outer sense and especially of sight to this end / which is indicated by the burning light (as said) / as says Aristotle / Nihil est in intellectu, quod prius non fuerit in sensu: nothing comes or is in the mind (reason) that has not come through the (both inner and outer) sense first: And this is shown by the open book / because we achieve knowledge and science of many things only through seeing / or through hear-reading.⁵²

Optica is elevated by Rubens in this title page because vision is an integral part of cognition, and in analogy, not only of cognition as such, but in a narrower way also the soul’s knowledge of God. The title page underlines the Jesuits’ belief that images and the sense of sight could lead to a knowledge of divine reality.⁵³ This theory, by this time rather old-fashioned, was presented here with a title page that had a very traditional structure and composition not often used by Rubens. The

⁴⁹ “[I]ll ac prope divina Optice, regina omnium quas Mathesis complectitur scientiarum.” Aguilonius 1613, *Lectori*.

⁵⁰ Bertram 2016, p. 220. See also the sceptre in the title page to Scribani 1624, in: Judson and Van de Velde 1977a, pp. 237–240.

⁵¹ Cf. Pantin 2008, pp. 257–263, esp. p. 260; and Dupré 2013, p. 474, fn. 6; Dupré 2008, p. 54.

⁵² Trsl. from Ripa 1669, p. 161.

⁵³ Dupré 2013, p. 475; see also J. C. Smith 2002, pp. 29–56; Dekoninck 2005a, *passim*.

traditional architectural frame was thus used for the writings of an author who favoured tradition over the new developments in the field.

In his architectural title pages, Rubens takes up much of the architectural language from previous title pages, and also from the architectural tracts he owned. Thus Blunt suggests that Rubens knew the widely circulated architectural writings by Giovanni Battista Montano (1534–1621) because the most striking features of the Aguilonius title page, the two caryatids, seem to be copied straight from the *canephor*i carrying baskets of fruit on their heads.⁵⁴ The architecture in this title page is used to express to the reader that he is about to read a solidly traditional work, while it elevates *Optica* by placing her on a pedestal and framing her with classical architecture.⁵⁵ When Rubens uses architecture in this way in his title pages, he usually refers to older title pages of the same genre, as with the Bible, or to previous editions, as with the *Annales sacri* or biblical commentaries.⁵⁶ By including the architectural framework, he emphasises and continues the tradition of the books he illustrates. A case in which he ostensibly does not use the architectural framework is the work by Leonardus Lessius, *De iustitia et iure*, even though its previous edition had a very traditional title page that was most certainly known to Rubens.⁵⁷

For Aguilonius's title page Rubens uses the well-known visual language of allegory. By using mythological iconography he refers to various issues connected with the sense of sight: be it the instruments of scientific research depicted at the bottom of the title page, the caryatids of Mercury and Minerva, Jupiter's eagle or Juno's peacock, or the blind and the seeing *cynocephali* in the pedestals.⁵⁸ This does not preclude a profoundly Christian reading in which sight has an important place in the education of the soul. Especially Jesuit readers, for whom this book was primarily printed and who were used to see images as a tool for meditation in which they tried to achieve a deeper understanding of God, will have interpreted the well-known mythological allusions in a Christian way with all their allusions to light and life.⁵⁹ Just as the subjects of sacred and secular history might not have been rigorously differentiated, as Elizabeth McGrath notes in her introduction to *Subjects from History*, the biblical and classical exempla having been hung alongside each other in collections, the iconography of classical literature could be used for Christian content.⁶⁰

The assimilation of literary pagan antiquity into the Christian culture had already begun in the Middle Ages, when from the beginning of the fourteenth century onwards the fascinating stories of Ovid were explained in moralising terms, in order to make them acceptable.⁶¹ The inclusion

⁵⁴ Blunt 1977, pp. 612–613; Figs. 12–13.

⁵⁵ Bertram 2016.

⁵⁶ See section 6.

⁵⁷ See section 5.3.

⁵⁸ For a detailed discussion of these, see Bertram 2016, pp. 227ff.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ McGrath 1997, p. 40.

⁶¹ Cf. Seznec 1972, p. 92.

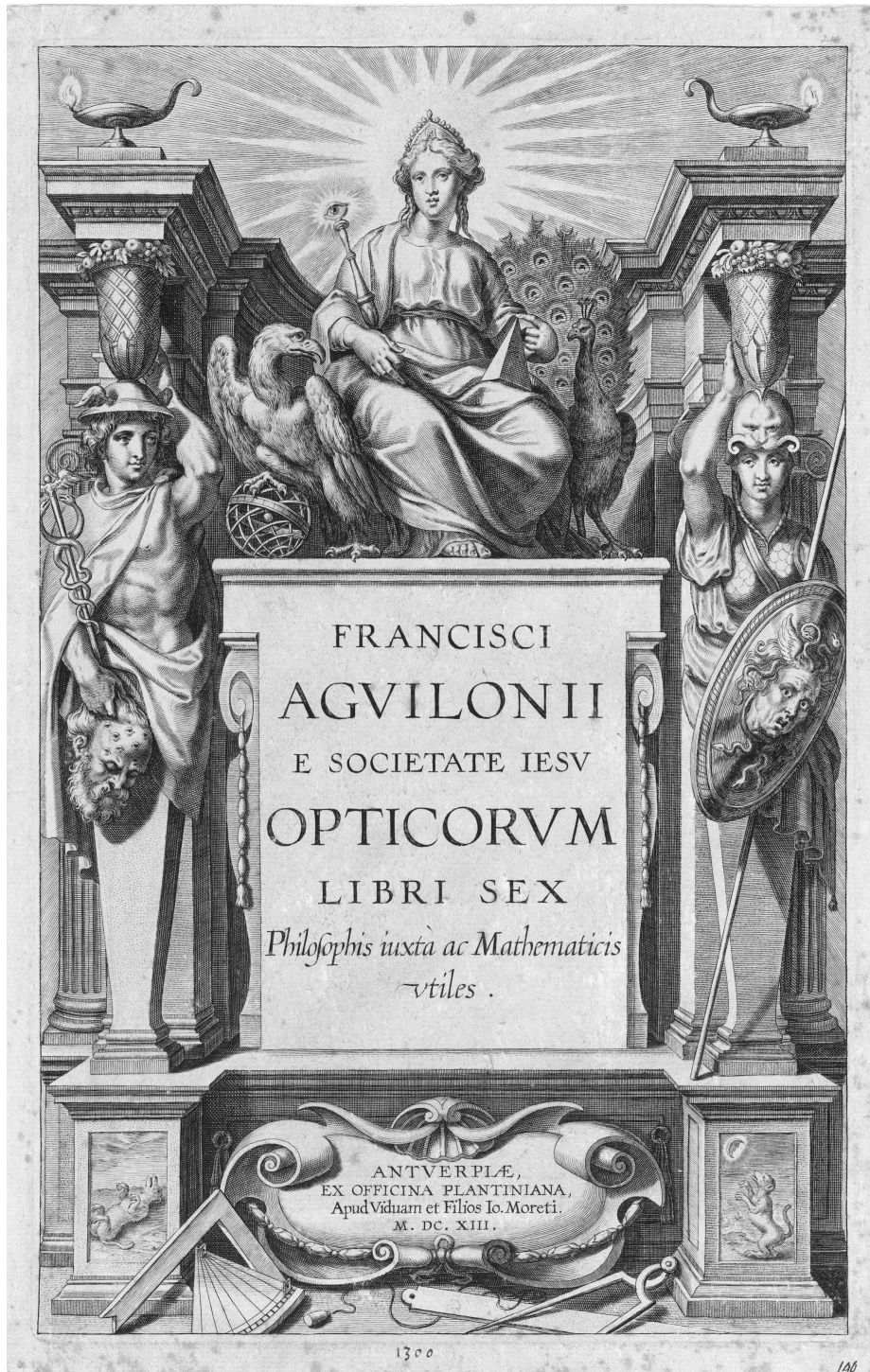


Figure 29 – Title page for Aguilonius 1613; engraving Theodoor Galle after Rubens, 314 x 194 mm. Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-6889. © Rijksmuseum.

of the myths of antiquity in the school curriculum made the knowledge of the Greek and Roman myths widely available and affected art and its visual language.⁶² It was possible for Rubens to depict the god of eloquence and the goddess of wisdom in this work on optics that was written by a Jesuit for Jesuit teachers. In this title page they act as the patrons of education and learning, apart from inducing the reader to recall the stories about Argus's many watchful eyes and the fierce gaze of the Medusa, carried by Minerva on her shield, the gorgoneion.

Rubens uses the title page in a discriminating way: especially in comparison with near-contemporary title pages for scientific works that often emphasise the uses of the scientific aspects discussed in the books. The traditional architectural and allegorical frame used by Rubens can be explained by the circumstances in which the book was published. On the one hand, Aguilonius's theory reverts to a rather traditional theory of optics, and it is possible that Rubens intends to emphasise this by using a traditional architectural frame. On the other hand, the architecture in the frame is used to elevate and celebrate Optica as the queen of mathematical studies, which would be beneficial for the Jesuits in Antwerp. Through this use of architecture, the title page elevates Aguilonius's work and thus the highly respected Antwerp Jesuit himself who would become rector of the college only very few years later, in 1615. The book seems to have been crucial in the petition made by Scribani to the city council to open a mathematical school in Antwerp. As it was a book aimed at the future teachers of mathematics, it laid the groundwork for optics in the new mathematical school and could be used to serve as a further argument for such a school. The book was certainly noticed by the city of Antwerp, as the Jesuit College received the sum of 200 guilders from the Lords of the city council in 1613 for this publication.⁶³

That Rubens was involved in this project was probably due to his social contacts to the Society of Jesus and those of Balthasar Moretus who coordinated the whole production of his books. It seems that the cooperation with Rubens was a deliberate choice to further the causes of the Jesuits with a special title page, although Rubens did not emphasise the Society in the design, but rather the subject matter at hand. As this title page received a lot of attention over the past centuries, it seems that Moretus had chosen wisely, and it had the desired effect.

Although here was no later edition of Aguilonius's work, Rubens's design was taken up again for a publication twenty years later: Claude Clement, *Musei sive Bibliothecae tam private quam publicae extraction, instruct, cure, uses, libri iv*, printed 1635 by Jacques Prost in Lyons (Fig. 30).⁶⁴ Claude Clement (Claudius Clemens, 1596–1642/43) was a French Jesuit who taught Greek and Latin at the Imperial College in Madrid.⁶⁵ His work on libraries was first printed in 1628 in octavo in Lyon. In

⁶² McGrath 2016, p. 11.

⁶³ Judson and Van de Velde 1977b, p. 495.

⁶⁴ Clément 1635.

⁶⁵ Rovelstad 1991, p. 176.

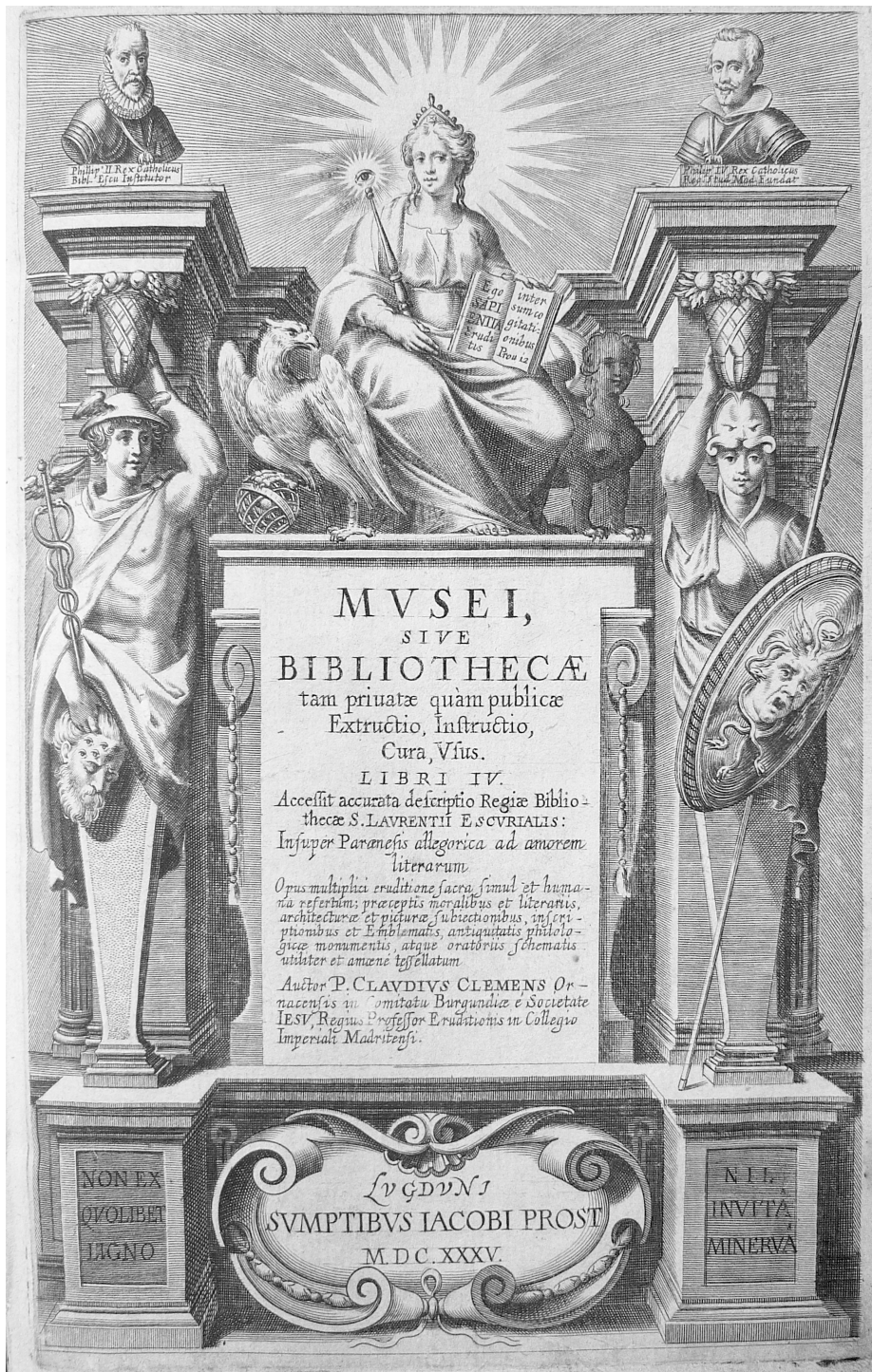


Figure 30 – Title page for Clément 1635; engraving, unknown engraver.

1635 an enlarged version was printed in quarto. Although Rubens had in no way emphasised the Society in the design, a Jesuit librarian wanted this title page for his book on the organisation of a library, its meaning and function.

Only few changes were necessary to adapt the subject matter of the title page to the publication.⁶⁶ This was not only due to Rubens's open use of symbolism. The optical references in the title page were well-used for a book on libraries that suggested to facilitate access to a library using visual aids. In the second part of book 1, Clement proposed a pictorial catalogue that was to guide the reader to the literature and stimulate him: figures, emblems, and pictures were to relate to the books either on the walls, on the shelves, or even on the book itself. Clement introduced his work with an allegorical letter to the reader, his suggested use and explanation of emblems in his work explains the adaptation of Rubens's title page with its emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge through vision.

The parts that were too specific for optics, such as the optical pyramid and the peacock, were exchanged for a book and a sphinx, while the pedestals show Horace's dictum "NON EX QVOLIBET LIGNO [fit Mercurius]" and the proverb "NI[hi]L [decet] INVITA MINERVA" instead of Cynocephali.⁶⁷ Although the lamps on the top of the title page would have been apt symbols of knowledge and wisdom, they were exchanged for two busts representing Philip II on the left and Philip IV on the right. The book's dedication was to King Philip IV of Spain, reminding him of his ancestor Philip II who built the Royal library in the Escorial, but the figures of course also exemplify what Clement introduces in his book, the use of portraits in libraries. The rest of the title page, the caryatids with Minerva and Mercury with their mythological allusions are still appropriate for this title page, as is the eye-scepter and the eagle with the armillary sphere. It seems that Rubens's use of allegory allowed for reuse and thus the longevity of his designs.⁶⁸

5.3 | **Leonardus Lessius's *De iustitia et iure***

Rubens's title page, designed for the 1617 edition of Leonardus Lessius's *De iustitia et iure*, confirms the findings from the Aguilonius title page. As in the Aguilonius title page, Rubens emphasises not the religious content or the affiliation of the author, who was also a Jesuit, but advocates the contents with the use of allegories deeply rooted in humanistic scholarship. The Lessius title page,

⁶⁶ Bertram 2016, pp. 233–237.

⁶⁷ Both would have been sufficiently known to be understandable in their abbreviated form: "Mercury is not to be fashioned from just any piece of wood" and "Nothing is decent against the will of Minerva"; the first to say that just as a sculptor cannot make a Mercury from any woodblock, you cannot make a scholar from just any man, and the second to emphasise that it is not useful to fight against one's nature. Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 236.

⁶⁸ In this case parts of the design were used for the title page for *Grounds of Natural Philosophy* by Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, London: Maxwell, 1668.

however, offers earlier and later title pages by other designers, thus good opportunities to compare these other solutions to that of Rubens. All in all, four different title pages were created within a short period of time for this title, offering the possibility to address questions pertaining to the “Jesuit style”, to the use of allegory in Rubens’s title pages, and to the ways in which Rubens’s designs differ from precursors. Before addressing these specific questions, however, the historical relevance of the book in question and the relevance of its author in his time has to be assessed.

Leonardus Lessius and his Work

Leonardus Lessius (Lenaert Leys, 1554–1623) was a renowned Louvain theologian.⁶⁹ From 1567 to 1572 he studied at the University of Louvain, where he entered the Jesuit order in 1572 and became a priest in 1580. He was sent to Rome in 1583 to complete his theological studies with Francisco Suarez (1548–1617) and Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621) at the Collegium Romanum.⁷⁰ After finishing his theological studies in Rome, he began to lecture in Louvain on Thomas Aquinas’s *Summa Theologiae*. By 1600 he was freed from teaching duties and was able to focus on his writing, which he continued until his death in 1623.⁷¹

In his time he was a renowned professor of moral theology at the Jesuit College of Louvain. He was especially well-known for his seminal work *De iustitia et iure*, essentially a commentary on Thomas Aquinas’ *Summa Theologiae*, first published in 1605 with an engraved title page. Although he is mostly remembered for this learned scholastic commentary on Thomas Aquinas, Lessius also wrote many apologetic, ascetic and mystical works. During his time at Louvain he came into conflict with the Faculty of Theology because of his work on the doctrine of grace. The dispute got so out of hand that the Pope had to intervene.⁷² Nonetheless, other publications by Lessius were not less controversial and over the years Lessius became anxious about his image.⁷³ Toon van Houdt presents Lessius as an author who was careful about what he wrote, also because of his bad experience, and whose authorial image “depended to a large extent on the proper reproduction of his texts”.⁷⁴ Lessius’s stigma as a controversial author never left him and even after 200 years it was not safe to acknowledge his work: a last beatification process failed.⁷⁵ Nowadays, he and his work are being rediscovered by law historians because of his influence on European civil law, especially

⁶⁹ For the most recent critical biography see Stanciu 2015.

⁷⁰ Cf. Van Houdt 1998a, pp. ix–xiv.

⁷¹ Apart from writing, he also held various posts like *praefectus studiorum*, *consultor rectoris* in which he advised the rector of the Louvain *studiehuys*, and *consultor provincialis*, the advisor of the Provincial for the Netherlandish Province. Ibid., pp. xi–xii.

⁷² See Stanciu 2015, pp. 260–261 for further information on this episode in Lessius’ life.

⁷³ Van Houdt 1996, p. 411.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 411.

⁷⁵ Rai 2016 and Stanciu 2015, *passim*.

in the history of contract law.⁷⁶ With the reassessment of the role the Jesuits played in European culture, Lessius and other Jesuits are often used as examples in order to trace hermeneutical shifts in early modern culture, such as is shown in the informative work of Tutino.⁷⁷

Leonardus Lessius's main work was *De iustitia de iure*, first published in 1605 and subsequently published in many editions.⁷⁸ This work was written from the lecture notes of his theological lectures between 1593 and 1595.⁷⁹ As Lessius explains in his "Praefatio" in typical authorial humility, which maybe should not be taken entirely literally, the pressure to publish these notes was becoming so high that he had to give in.⁸⁰ Before publication, however, Lessius's work had to go through censorship, both official and from the Society of Jesus.

The procedure of censorship in the Jesuit order is beautifully illustrated by the case of Lessius's book. The case shows the order struggling to present a unanimous voice, enforcing a uniformity of the philosophical and theological doctrines in the Society, as well as maintaining the high quality of their order's works, and gives insight into the reception of Lessius's work and its controversial nature.⁸¹ Censorship in the Society was divided into two parts: first censors from the provinces evaluated the work and then sent their reports to Rome, where a central commission, the *revisores*, took over. The General based his conclusion on the evaluations of both groups, and could order the work to be revised or re-evaluated.

In May 1598 the Superior General Acquaviva gave permission to have the lecture notes assessed by local censors, and in July of the same year the Antwerp group around Cornelius a Lapide agreed unanimously that they deserved to be published and should be sent on to the *revisores* in Rome.⁸² Although the internal censorship in the Society of Jesus had been introduced by Acquaviva in 1598, it only started to take effect in 1601.⁸³ Accordingly, from 1603 to 1604, Jesuits from the Belgian Province and from Rome read and commented extensively on some passages of Lessius's work and suggested modifications. While all censors from Louvain and Antwerp admired the "solid doctrine", the "clarity, brevity, and method", as well as the accuracy with which Lessius supported

⁷⁶ Cf. Decock 2013, pp. 61–63. Decock explains that Lessius's *De iustitia et iure* played a vital role in the history of law of obligations and contract law. Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), in his *De iure belli ac pacis*, frequently relies on and summarises Lessius's extensive arguments. Cf. Decock 2012, p. 33. For a short biographical note consult Toon van Houdt, 'Leonardus Lessius' in: Nationaal Biografisch Woordenboek, 14 (1992), col. 416–424.

⁷⁷ Tutino 2014, passim.

⁷⁸ Wille 2017 Decock 2009, 2013, 2012; Decock and L. S. Lessius 2007, Schefold et al. 1999, Van Houdt 1998b, Van Houdt 1998a, Van Houdt 1996.

⁷⁹ Van Houdt 1998a, p. xv.

⁸⁰ See "Praefatio ad lectorem" in *De iustitia de iure*.

⁸¹ For the censorship of Lessius's *De iustitia et iure* cf. Tutino 2014, pp. 179–182, who draws on the reports in ARSI, Fondo Gesuitico 654, fos. 1r–74v, passim. Van Houdt 1998a, p. xvi.

⁸² *Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu*, Germ. 178, f. 159r–162v. in: *ibid.*, p. xv.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. xvi.

tion before giving his approval, and wrote to the General of the Society.⁸⁸ The censor noted, for instance, that Lessius's was becoming famous in Louvain, and that many people were waiting for his book; because of the brevity of the work and its increased readability, he expected it to be a great success—even more reason to avoid all haste and check Lessius's doctrine. Tutino emphasises rightly, that a French Jesuit, "understood better than most the needs of the *tramontani*," those Jesuits that lived and worked north of the Alps, whose problems were quite different from those in the southern regions.⁸⁹ However, scarcely any of the propositions were modified, and even after Lessius's death, the Jesuits questioned republishing the work: they considered it too liberal to be published without serious revision. Nevertheless, an authorised revised version was never published, and instead the last version edited by Lessius himself was published repeatedly.⁹⁰

The critical censor's estimate had been right and *De iustitia et iure* became Lessius's most important work, which is why it is depicted as the principle book in his portrait of 1623 (Fig. 31). In the first decades of the century, until his death in 1623, Lessius worked incessantly in improving his text and Moretus received many corrections from him. The work was published in more than 20 editions in the seventeenth century alone. All in all it was published over a period of four centuries, from its first edition in 1605 until today, when translations into various languages are being prepared.⁹¹

5.3.1 | The Title Page of the First Edition of *De iustitia et iure*, 1605

The title page for the 1605 edition of *De iustitia et iure* has the symmetrical and traditional imaginative architectural structure (Fig. 32).⁹² The book is a commentary on Thomas Aquinas, divided into four books of the cardinal virtues as announced in the title: *De iustitia et iure caeterisque virtutibus cardinalibus: libri quatuor*. Each of the four cardinal virtues is shown on the title page: on the left of the title is *Prudentia*, depicted with mirror and serpent, on the right is *Iustitia* with sword and scales. On the top of the architectural structure are the saints Peter and Paul holding the sign of the Society of Jesus, together with the two other cardinal virtues: on the right is *Temperantia* watering wine, and on the left *Fortitudo* in armour embracing a column. The columns are here not only a sign for steadfastness, but also the pillars of the church.

The second book dealing with *Iustitia* is by far the longest: it has on a quantitative basis many more chapters and definitions and is more detailed—none of which is mirrored in this title page. The arrangement on the title page foregrounds *Prudentia* and *Iustitia*, and is crowned with a medal-

⁸⁸ Tutino 2014, p. 181.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 182.

⁹⁰ See ARSI, *Censurae librorum*, vol. III, f. 72–73; Letter from the censor librorum Iannes Camerota, 16 Mar 1625; cf. Le Bachelet, 1931, 2, pp. 332–333, no. 141; in: Van Houdt 1998a, p. xv.

⁹¹ A German translation is currently in preparation at the University of Münster, cf. Wille 2017.

⁹² L. Lessius 1605

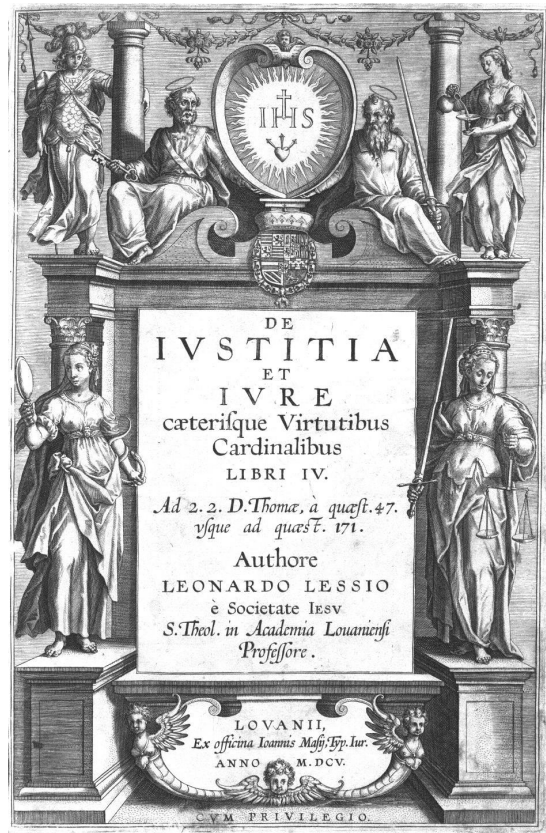


Figure 32 – Title page for L. Lessius 1605; engraving.

lion of the Society of Jesus in which the IHS is combined with the heart and the sun of truth. This sign, prominently visible on all Jesuit churches worldwide and on most of the books which the Jesuits wrote, is the monogram of Christ “IHS”. This monogram may be read as either the first three letters of the Greek “Iesos Christos” or as the shortened form of “Iesus Hominum Salvator”, Jesus the saviour of mankind.⁹³ The monogram was originally created by the Franciscan priest Bernardino of Siena in 1427 for a confraternity he had established on the site of *Il Gesù* in a chapel taken over by Ignatius in 1541.⁹⁴ From that moment the monogram appeared as a vignette on Jesuit title pages, as, for instance on that of the *Spiritual Exercises* in 1548, and with time, different varieties of the IHS monogram developed. It became the model for the official seal of the Society, which was made in Ignatius’s lifetime and is still in use today.⁹⁵

Below the medallion is the coat of arms of Albert of Austria, to whom the volume is dedicated. In his dedication Lessius explains that the virtues under discussion have to be found especially in

⁹³ For the various interpretations and readings of the monogram, cf. Lang 2012, pp. 274–275.

⁹⁴ Bailey 2005, p. 189.

⁹⁵ Pfeiffer 2005, p. 202.

the head of the state, the prince.⁹⁶ The medallion of the Society is flanked by the saints Peter and Paul. Because of their teaching and founding of Christian communities, the saints were seen as the pillars of the Church, expressed by the two pillars next to them.⁹⁷ Peter and Paul are traditionally found in depictions either flanking Jesus or holding the Church between them. In this case they are holding the sign of the Society of Jesus, thus visually linking the Society with the Church and Jesus. The book thus announces as its topmost objective a common goal to the Church, the Society of Jesus and Lessius's book: the saving of souls.

The book was indeed written in order to save souls, at least on one level. Most twentieth-century authors agree on Lessius's pragmatism for he was not as interested in the prevalent theological doctrine as he was in giving guidance to confessors—much in the tradition of confessor's manuals.⁹⁸ His work can be explained by the Jesuits' general desire to "bring back the whole world to its Creator" which made them focus on people rather than politics.⁹⁹ The Jesuits' idea was that mankind could be reconciled with God through consolation and penance with which the Jesuits helped, as exemplary servants of God.¹⁰⁰ Confession was the Sacrament of Penance; a procedure in which the individual could confess to the sins they had committed. Confessors, however, needed to know what was considered sinful and what was not, which is why more and more manuals for confessors were produced. In concrete cases, however, an operational device was needed, which not only the Jesuits found in the legal tradition.

The particular Christian blend of theology and law had already been established in the old testament itself, but, as Wim Decock shows, the origin of the manuals should be sought in the monastic orders and their manuals for confessors.¹⁰¹ The confessor's manuals tried to determine the practical consequences of *ora et labora* for monks because of their combining the roles of confessors with that of being an economic actor of their times. Thus, the manuals brought "Roman law and Canon Law to bear on cases of conscience stemming from Christians' perceived tension between faith and secular life".¹⁰² Angelo Carletti de Chovasso's confessor's manual, the *Summa Angelica* (1486), famously burned by Martin Luther, contained two thirds of references that were taken from Roman law, Canon law and Medieval jurists.¹⁰³ The Protestants condemned this mixture of secular philosophy and law with spiritual advice.¹⁰⁴ Their condemnation, however, only

⁹⁶ L. Lessius 1617, Dedication, n.p.

⁹⁷ For an identification of the apostles in general with the pillars of the Church, both architecturally and metaphorically, see Dern et al. 2010, esp. pp. 15–19; and no.135, p. 289 (Gero Seelig).

⁹⁸ See for instance Tutino 2014, p. 183, who studies Lessius in the context of hermeneutical aspects of the oath; or see Van Houdt 1998b, p. 51, who shows that Lessius's originality is often associated with his pragmatism as an ethicist.

⁹⁹ Decock 2012, p. 19; see also O'Malley 1993 and Höpfl 2012.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Maher 2000.

¹⁰¹ Decock 2012, p. 20.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 20.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 20.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Frank 2018.

fuelled this model of theology and law, and the century after Trent could, according to Decock, just as well be called “Confessional Catholicism”.¹⁰⁵ This was in stark contrast to the belief of the Protestants: they believed that the sinner would receive divine grace (*sola gratia*) through scripture (*sola scriptura*) and faith (*sola fide*) alone.¹⁰⁶ The Jesuits however, found the Gospel insufficient as a set of rules for everyday life. In the footsteps of the manuals of confessors and the “School of Salamanca”, the Jesuits developed the tools to help confessors especially, advising people on their best courses of action by which to please God.

In order to illustrate his cases Lessius included and discussed many practical issues concerning trade in Antwerp. In 1675 already his book was recommended to lawyers by the jurist Zypaeus (1580–1650) in his *Notitia iuribus belgici* because of its good analysis of financial techniques used by merchants and bankers at the Antwerp bourse.¹⁰⁷ Although it is of interest even today because of its economical implications and even though the questions he tackles have an immediate repercussion on everyday life, it should not be forgotten that Lessius’s ultimate aim was to give guidance in order to save souls on the day of the Last Judgment. Thus his book was much more than a commentary on Aquinas, and while the old title page did nothing to emphasise this aspect, it was reflected in Rubens’s new title page.

5.3.2 | The New Title Page by Rubens for the 1617 edition of *De iustitia et iure*

Rubens’s concept for the title page of *De iustitia et iure* shows more complexity than the first title page, and incorporates a notion of the impact that Lessius’s book could have had in his society (Fig. 33). The painter had only been asked for the design in 1617 by Moretus, whose father, Jan I Moretus, had bought the remaining 175 books from Maes and published the first Plantinian edition in 1609.¹⁰⁸ The Officina Plantiniana published five editions of Lessius’s major work, beginning with its second amended edition in 1609; the fifth in 1621 was the last edition which Lessius himself had corrected and amended.¹⁰⁹ As *De iustitia et iure* had been an instant success, it was immediately published in Paris and Venice.¹¹⁰ In 1606 the first Parisian edition was printed by Thierry, who added a letter addressed to the author after the dedication to Archduke Albert: in this letter

¹⁰⁵ See O’Malley 2000, pp. 119–145.

¹⁰⁶ I thank Katharina Frank for calling my attention to this.

¹⁰⁷ Decock 2013, p. 63.

¹⁰⁸ Fabri et al. 2004, no. 45, pp. 152–153; Van Houdt mentions that the title page was the same as the one from Louvain except for the printer’s mark: Van Houdt 1998a, no. 4, p. xix.

¹⁰⁹ The Officina Plantiniana published the second edition of Lessius’s major work in 1609 under Jan I Moretus, the third edition under the widow of Jan I Moretus and his sons in 1612, the fourth in 1617 under Balthasar and Jan II Moretus. Rubens provided the title page for this fourth edition which was then used for the fifth and sixth editions in 1621 and 1626 respectively, under Balthasar Moretus, the widow of Jan Moretus and Jan van Meurs, who by that time had become a partner in the press. Cf. *Ibid.*, nos. 5, 8, 12, and 15; pp. xix–xxii.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, no. 1, p. xviii.

Thierry excuses his non-authorised edition. He justifies his action by stating that it was too difficult to get a copy of the work in Paris which is why he decided to print it in his own name.¹¹¹ In 1610 he published his second edition, the third in 1613, and the fourth in 1618.¹¹² Meanwhile the Venetian edition was published in 1608, while it was printed in Milan in 1613 with two different title pages by two publishers; in 1618 a second edition came out in Milan.¹¹³ With the distances between these printing centres, the competition between the printers cannot have been too high.

Overall, Moretus printed five editions of this work while it appeared in Paris, Venice, Milan, and Lyon. Of particular interest are the two editions published in Lyon in 1622, as both have an illustrated title page, one of which is a copy of Rubens's design, which is why these will be discussed later.¹¹⁴ The Lyonese editions do not differ from each other in content, but they were printed separately, as the typography, the two title pages, and the various *approbatios* reveal, and were two distinct editions.¹¹⁵ Thierry's letter in his Parisian copy of 1606 suggests that printing a copy without the author's consent was considered a breach of etiquette, but against the author, not necessarily against the publisher.¹¹⁶ The Officina Plantiniana clearly catered for a different market and was not affected by the other editions in far-away towns. This difference in market was not only geographical, but also social: Moretus's books were usually in the upper range of the market.

Even though Jan I Moretus was still head of the Officina in 1609, the correspondence with Lessius was handled by his son Balthasar Moretus.¹¹⁷ It can be assumed that Lessius wanted to be published by Moretus, as the Officina Plantiniana was already the most successful of publishers in the country, if not in northern Europe.¹¹⁸ In his letter of condolence on the death of Jan I Moretus, Lessius grasps the moment to tell Balthasar and his brother Jan II not only to follow in the footsteps of their inspiring forefathers but also that the entire Christian world and especially all "literati" are indebted to them for the extreme care with which they handle their authors' texts.¹¹⁹ Lessius, who always took great care to correct his texts, and whose further editions of books were usually amended, must have meant that quite seriously. For the fourth edition, for instance, Lessius decided to add some paragraphs in the midst of the printing process.¹²⁰ For Lessius a lot was at stake—he had had his share of bad experiences with censorship.

¹¹¹ Van Houdt 1998a, no. 2, p. xviii–xix.

¹¹² The 1610 edition is not mentioned in Van Houdt's bibliography. Ibid., nos. 7b, 10; pp. xx–xxi.

¹¹³ Ibid., nos. 3, 7 and 7b, 11; pp. xix–xxi.

¹¹⁴ Van Houdt 1998a, nos. 13 and 13b; p. xxi.

¹¹⁵ This is in contrast to van Houdt's estimate that the two versions do not differ: "Behalve voor de titelpagina verschilt deze uitgave niet van de onder nr. 13 vermelde editie." Ibid., p. xxi, no. 13b.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., no. 2, p. xviii–xix.

¹¹⁷ This correspondence lasted for decades: the last letter is from 16 July 1622. Van Houdt 1996, p. 410.

¹¹⁸ In Father Ribadineyra's praise of the Society of Jesus, the Plantin Press is the only publisher mentioned. Cf. Ribadineyra 1608, p. 135. Cf. Van Houdt 1996, p. 408.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 410–411.

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 414, fn. 25.

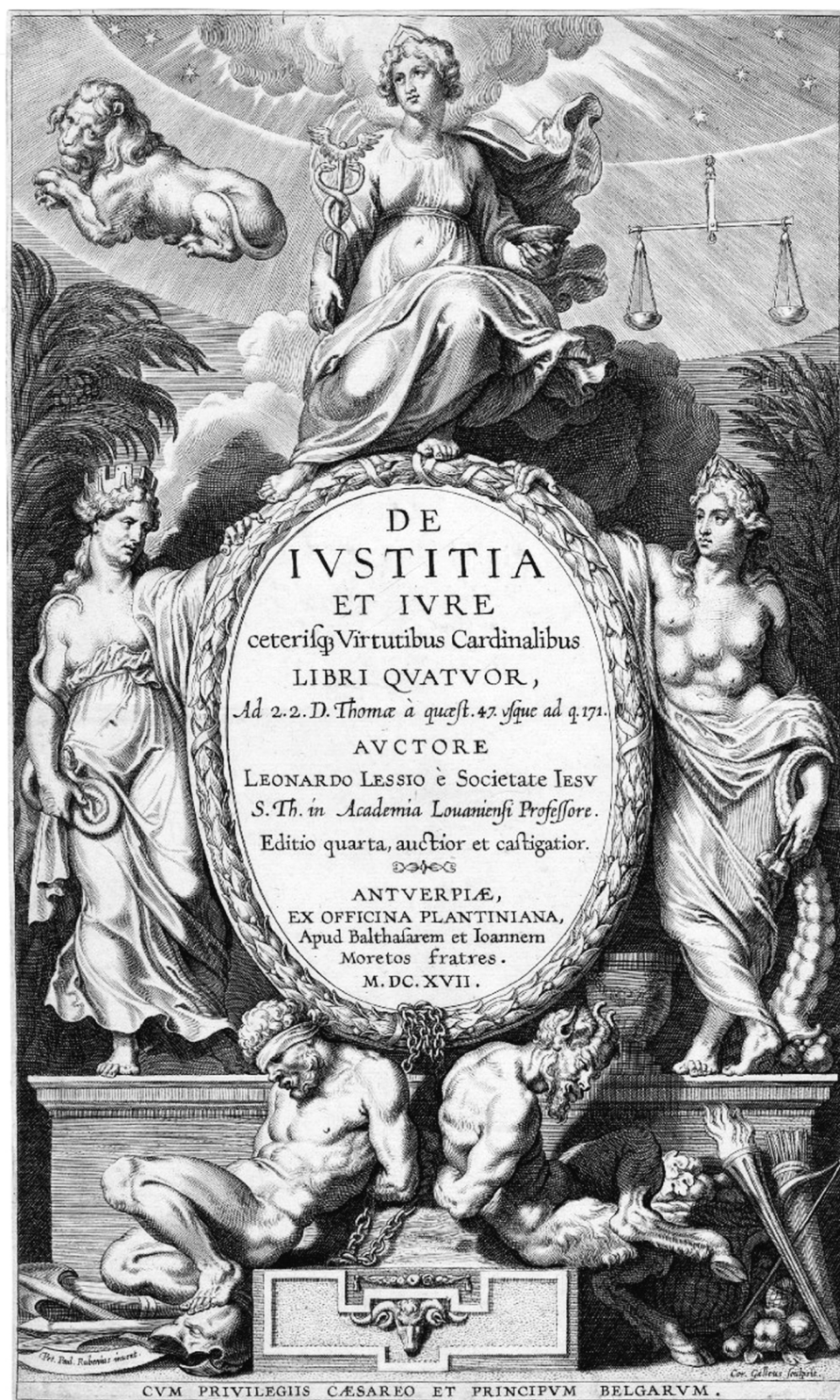


Figure 33 – Title page for L. Lessius 1617; engraving, 327 × 198 mm, by Cornelis Galle I. Private image.

In February 1617 Balthasar Moretus first mentions *De iustitia et iure* in his exchange of letters with Lessius and announces that he will start with the book in one to two months.¹²¹ In the letters that follow, Moretus mentions the book repeatedly in order to keep Lessius informed about its progress. In his letters Moretus emphasises the book's steady progress and his goal to have it finished for the autumn fair in Frankfurt.¹²² In July Moretus informs Lessius about the new title page for the design of which he had asked Rubens.¹²³ The reason he gives is that the plate is old and worn. As Moretus had successfully had several plates re-cut for a lower price, the plate was either worn beyond repair or the design was not to his liking. Moretus had the book finished for the book fair but had to resort to an old title page, as books exist of the new edition but with the old title page and the new date. It is possible that the design was not finished early enough to have the title page cut and printed before the autumn fair, as this could take several months.¹²⁴ However, for the new title page Rubens uses an entirely new concept and does not take up the older iconography, which he could have done if the older iconography had simply needed a modernised representation. The *Annales Sacri* by Torniello is an example in which Rubens did exactly that (Fig. 63 on p. 236).¹²⁵ The fact that Rubens invented a completely new, and much more complex title page, suggests that the old title page simply did not serve the book in Moretus's estimation.

No letters are known in which Moretus or Rubens discuss this title page, and judging from the purely informative letters Moretus sent to Lessius, he did not involve the author in the design of the new title page. Lessius had little chance to do anything else but approve of it, which he did on October 12, only mentioning that it was "full of elegance and ingenuity".¹²⁶ On October 6 an entry in the accounts states that Galle received 15 guilders for printing 1,500 copies of the new title page.¹²⁷ This means that by the time Lessius approved the title page by letter, Galle had already received the money for the printing of 1,500 title pages for his book. As Galle usually received payment only after he had printed all the pages, and this was at least a week before Lessius approved the title page, Moretus had not really counted on a negative answer from Lessius. The whole design was thus in the hands of Rubens and Moretus, and the latter only presented the author with a *fait accompli*. The high number of prints pulled from the plate suggests that Moretus knew that this new and edited edition of Lessius would sell.

The title page is roughly divided into three registers: the ground, on which two prisoners are shackled to the title surrounded by weapons and fruit; the podium, on which two female figures

¹²¹ Letter from Moretus to Lessius, 04 Feb 1617, in: Judson and Van de Velde 1977b, pp. 404–405.

¹²² "In Opere De Justitiâ recudendo diligenter pergimus, vt saltem ad proximas nundinas exeat in lucem." Letter from Moretus to Lessius, 13 May 1617, in: *ibid.*, p. 405. The spring fair around Easter had already finished by May.

¹²³ Letter from Moretus to Lessius, 15 Jul 1617, in: Held 1977, p. 27.

¹²⁴ See chapter 2.2 for the printing of a title page.

¹²⁵ Tornielli 1620.

¹²⁶ Letter from Lessius to Moretus, 12 Oct 1617, in: Judson and Van de Velde 1977b, p. 405.

¹²⁷ "Printed the title Lessius, De Justitia, in-folio, 1,500 [copies], at 20 Stuivers." Archives, no. 123, f. 53, in: *ibid.*, p. 461.

flank the medallion containing the title, behind them a palm tree and a laurel; and the top-most register, in which a third female figure is half-standing, half-sitting in the winds in front of the lower part of the zodiac, and surrounded by clouds, stars and rays of light. Placed thus at the top of the title page is Astraea, a very versatile and complex character with a mixed pedigree. The figures depicted beneath Astraea are less easily identified. Rubens leaves these figures purposefully ambiguous. The ambiguity leaves the reader capable of discussing them in terms of several discourses, including, but not exclusively, that of law. Using Astraea as the central figure means that the knowledge of the just virgin was widely known—at least in the circles that would be interested in this book, students of law and theology, confessors, lawyers, and merchants. It is possible that for them the title page would be clear on a very basic level. These educated readers would have known about the various bodies of law governing the world as described by Lessius, for Lessius does not describe anything new here. Lessius's book shows how religion and the marketplace were connected in questions of law; he is the first to explicitly address this combination and is well-known for exactly this even today. Thus the two attributes held by Astraea in her hands can easily be interpreted to reflect this, especially if the reader already knows about Lessius's work, which is highly likely.

From early on, Astraea was identified with the constellation of Virgo. Closely linked to the topos of the new Golden Age, she was, for instance, used extensively in the monarchic iconography of both Elizabeth I and Henry IV of England.¹²⁸ This topos can be traced back to the Greek poet Aratos, who, in an astronomical poem, explained that when the virgin Justice left earth in the Iron Age of mankind she appeared as the constellation of Virgo.¹²⁹ In this context, the Iron Age was the last of the four ages of mankind. The first, the Golden Age of Saturn, was followed by three ages of decline: the Silver, the Bronze, and lastly the Iron Age, in which all evil was let loose. Astraea, the just virgin, was also taken up by Ovid in his description of the four ages in the *Metamorphoses*; here Astraea is the last of the immortals to leave the world during the Iron Age.¹³⁰ More importantly, she appears in the fourth of Virgil's *Eclogues*, in which her return to earth heralds a new Golden Age: "now comes back the virgin and Saturn's reign returns".¹³¹ This new Golden Age begins with the birth of a child destined to rule a reconciled world. Whom Virgil meant by that has always been debated, but is not relevant here, as later ages have read and interpreted these lines according to their own history: be it the Romans who saw in it the Augustan revival of piety with the Augustan empire, or Constantine, who interpreted the child in the Christian sense as Jesus and the just virgin as the Mother of God, Queen of the heavens.

¹²⁸ Cf. Yates 1985, *passim*.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, I:149–50.

¹³¹ "Iam redit et virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna." *Eclogue IV*, 6. Yates 1985, p. 33.

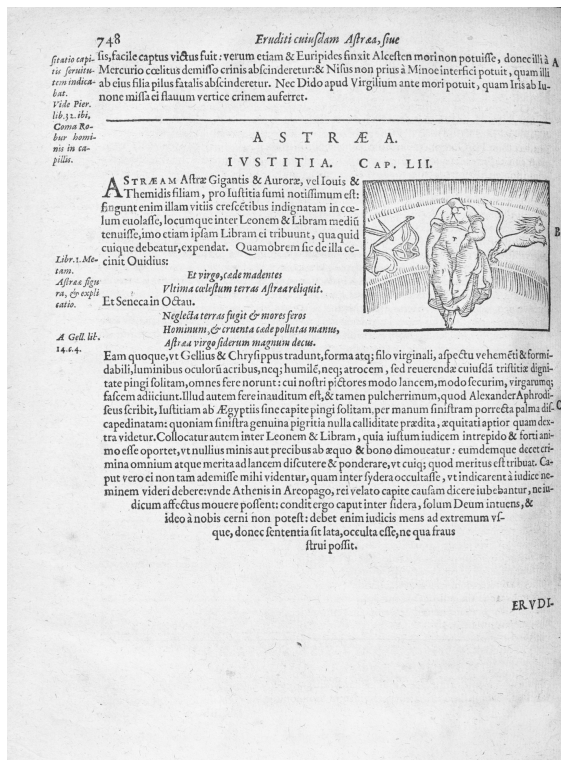


Figure 34 – “Astraea”, in: Valeriano 1614, p. 748.
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Lactantius (Lucius Caecilius Firmianus Lactantius, c. 250–c. 325 CE), a Latin rhetor and early Christian author and advisor to the first Christian emperor Constantine I, did not equate Virgo with the Virgin but used the concept of the Golden Age and the just virgin on Christian piety in general. For him the age of Saturn was the age of God, an age of peace, which later deteriorated until the just virgin left earth; God then sent a messenger to bring back the old age, but before this could happen justice returned to earth, which is nothing less than the worship of the one God.¹³² For Francis Yates, the orator Lactantius laid the foundation for the “assimilation of the description of the Golden Age to the language of Christian mysticism”: justice and the Golden Age would return to the faithful and to every individual soul accepting the Christian religion through the worship of the true God.¹³³ Thus by virtue of her history, the figure of Astraea is already layered in meaning, which is exploited by Rubens for his invention.

Rubens depicts Astraea within a zodiacal circle and with her head in the clouds. The image is very close to a woodcut in Valerianus’s *Hieroglyphica*, in which Astraea is placed between Leo and

¹³² Lactantius, *Div. Inst. Lib v, ch. vii.* in: Yates 1985, p. 35.

¹³³ “Be just and good, and the justice which you seek will follow you of her own accord. Lay aside every evil thought from your hearts, and that golden age will at once return to you, which you cannot attain to by any other means than by beginning to worship the true God.” Lactantius, *Div. Inst. Lib. v, ch. viii.*, in: *ibid.*, p. 35.

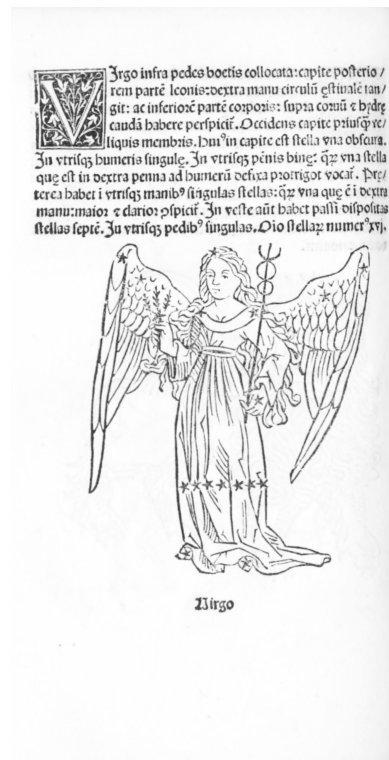


Figure 35—“Virgo”, in: Hyginus 1482.

Libra in the zodiac (Fig. 34).¹³⁴ Although Rubens’s solution does indeed resemble the arrangement in the *Hieroglyphica*, he mirrors contemporary celestial charts in positioning Leo, Virgo and Libra at the lower part of the zodiac instead of the upper part.¹³⁵ Valerianus explains the image of Astraea and her use in the zodiacal circle, attributing meaning to her placement between Leo and Libra: the fierceness of the lion is to show Justice’s intrepid mind that is required by a fair judgement, while Libra signifies that this judgement should be made without favour.¹³⁶ Valerianus obscures the head of Astraea, making her look almost beheaded, and the text explains that her head should be hidden by clouds in order to show her impartial judgement. Rubens tentatively shows her head in a cloud, but only in the later re-cuts of the plate is that cloud reinforced. Thus in the early editions with his title page, Rubens’s goddess of Justice, as she was known in antiquity, is much more corporeal than the goddess departed from earth as described by Ovid.¹³⁷ For Mattison, in his analysis of

¹³⁴ Valeriano 1610, p. 634 (first edition Basle 1556). See also McGrath 2006, p. 111; Judson and Van de Velde 1977a, p. 185; Held 1977, p. 106; McGrath also points out that Rubens had his copy of Valerianus, the Lyons edition of 1610, rebound after only five years of use, which, to her, implies a constant use of the book, cf. McGrath 1997, p. 62.

¹³⁵ A variation of the zodiac was used in the title page for *Franciscus Schwabel a Schwabenfeldt Pragensis, Repetitio de Donationibus*, which Rooses attributes to Rubens, Ruelens and Rooses 1972c, p. 118. Judson and Van de Velde 1977a, p. 185.

¹³⁶ Valeriano 1610, p. 634.

¹³⁷ *Metmorphoses*, I, 149–150.

the title page, this corporality is deliberate: in his view, Rubens placed her closer to the foreground, “thus strengthening her association with two personifications related to the affairs of this world”, the two figures beneath her.¹³⁸ What is most important is that, in contrast to the woodcut in the *Hieroglyphica*, she holds two attributes in her hand, the caduceus and a flat bowl.

The caduceus has a wide variety of meanings as an attribute of various personifications.¹³⁹ Hence it is not only an attribute of Mercury and a symbol of peace, but it is also an attribute to the commercial Mercury as pointed out by Mattison.¹⁴⁰ Rubens, however, puts it into the hands of Astraea. Hyginus, for instance, had already depicted the virgin with angelic wings and a caduceus in her hands in his description of *Virgo* as part of the zodiac (Fig. 35).¹⁴¹ The caduceus as an attribute of Astraea is also used on the façade of the Ancient Greffe in Bruges where *Justice* carries it.¹⁴² The symbols of peace, commerce and justice are therefore combined in both Bruges and Antwerp: these cities were the European centres of trade in the 15th and 16th centuries respectively.

The caduceus was often placed in Astraea's hands for much more profound reasons: together with *Gemini*, *Virgo* was allotted to Mercury according to the astrological authority of Ptolemy.¹⁴³ This induced Manilius (first century CE) to state in his *Astronomica* that those born under her sign were given “great facility in eloquence and all branches of rhetoric”.¹⁴⁴ Usually, the constellation Astraea was depicted with an ear of corn, the *virgo spicifera*, originating from Latin translations of the Greek astronomical poet Aratos. With that use a particularly bright star in the constellation of *Virgo*, Spica, was indicated in traditional representations of Astraea. In Rubens's depiction, however, Astraea does not carry an ear of corn, but a flat bowl as well as the caduceus; the patera, as the flat bowl is called, was associated with piety and with that Astraea united piety and justice in this image.¹⁴⁵

Astraea is not the only figure on the title page and Astraea's relationship to the other two personifications and their meanings has been interpreted in various ways. While Judson sees the image of Wise Government in the left figure, Mattison identifies her as Cybele, and McGrath sees her as *lex civilis* in “the guise of turreted Cybele”. The right figure is identified by McGrath as *Natura* or *Diana multimammia* in combination with *Ceres legifera*, “the Bringer of Laws”; Judson suggests Temperance or, less specifically, the personification of abundance in times of peace; Mattison fol-

¹³⁸ Held 1977, p. 106.

¹³⁹ Cf. Tervarent 1958 for a comprehensive list.

¹⁴⁰ Held 1977, p. 106.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 106. Cf. “*Virgo*”, in: Hyginus 1482, p. 58; the text only describes the stars of the sign.

¹⁴² “*Caducée*”, Item III. Attribut de la Justice, Tervarent 1958, p. 58.

¹⁴³ Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos* I, p. xx; In Yates 1985, p. 34, fn. 2.

¹⁴⁴ This work was first annotated in 1579 by the French classical historian Joseph Justus Scaliger (1540–1609), and then appeared in many editions. Cf. Ibid., pp. 33–34.

¹⁴⁵ The flat bowl was identified as a patera by Mattison, who found it to be identical with attribute of Piety in the designs for the Janus temple and in Bidermanus' *Heroum Epistolae*. Held 1977, p. 106, fn. 6.

lows Tervarent in identifying her as Isis, as Valerianus identifies Isis as Ceres legifera.¹⁴⁶ The variety with which these personifications are interpreted reveals the spectrum in which interpretation is possible and it also reveals what is most associated with the personifications. The figures as such are certainly unusual in their use here and most interpreters combine various identifications in order to offer a solution. The reason for this is that Rubens does indeed combine various attributes in an highly enigmatic way. It would be futile to argue for one single solution, as the entertainment for the reader would be in finding associations and interpretations.¹⁴⁷

Nevertheless, the book's contents can help in interpreting the title page. In broad terms, Lessius distinguishes between natural law and positive law in his treatise. *Ius naturale* derives from the natural conditions of things and is determined by the nature of the things; in Lessius's understanding it cannot be altered even by God.¹⁴⁸ *Ius positivum* is changeable, and depends on the free will of God and mankind; it divides into divine and human law. Of that *Ius divinum* encompasses *Ius divinum vetus*, i.e. God's law in the Old Testament, and *Ius divinum novum*, i.e. the Gospel and the sacraments. *Ius Humanum* encompasses *Ius gentium*, a law common to all nations, while *Ius civile* is constituted by secular rulers and *Ius canonicum* is issued by the pope and councils.¹⁴⁹ Unlike positive law, however, divine and human law are both concepts for which elements from other personifications can be used, thus it is possible that these two regulations of human behaviour are depicted on the title page.¹⁵⁰ In Rubens's design, Astraea, with her connection to heaven, could well depict *Ius divinum*, while the figures below could be *Ius naturale* and *Ius humanum*.¹⁵¹ Rubens's use of the figures is thus not a literal transferal of Lessius's concept of law, but a loose interpretation of it, as will be shown by a closer look at the secondary figures.

The figure on the right has been interpreted as Ceres because of her five breasts, taking up the many-breasted depiction of the cult statue of Diana of Ephesus, "the very personification of Nature".¹⁵² McGrath sees in this figure a Rubensian conflation of Ceres legifera and Natura, and other mythological figures: "evidently the artist followed ancient assimilations of Tellus or Terra (Earth) with Ops, Ceres (Demeter: Terrae mater), Cybele (the great Mother) and many-breasted Isis".¹⁵³ A painting of Ceres in the Hermitage attests to Rubens's interest in depicting goddesses of nature and abundance (Fig. 36), but the figure reminds the viewer of another painting of his:

¹⁴⁶ McGrath 2006, p. 111; Judson and Van de Velde 1977a, p. 186; Held 1977, p. 107.

¹⁴⁷ Bauhusius, for instance, claims that a title page "amuses the reader wonderfully". See letter from Bauhusius to Moretus, 1 Aug 1617, in Judson and Van de Velde 1977b, pp. 366.

¹⁴⁸ Decock 2012, p. 22.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 21–22.

¹⁵⁰ Also, Rosinus divides law in less detail, he has a threefold division into *Ius divinum*, *Ius naturale* and *Ius humanum*. Rosinus 1611, p. 391.

¹⁵¹ Elizabeth McGrath suggests that Rubens conflated Ceres legifera and Natura so as to produce a personification for Lex naturalis with Divine Law opposed. McGrath 2006, p. 111.

¹⁵² Ibid., p. 105.

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 107.



Figure 36 – Peter Paul Rubens, *Homage to Ceres* c.1612–15, LB 777. Oil on panel; 903 × 655 mm; St Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum. Inv. no. GE–504.

Nature Adorned (Fig. 37).¹⁵⁴ In this painting the statue with the multiple breasts is identified by a half hidden inscription on the pedestal: “To the Great Mother, Earth who bears everything”.¹⁵⁵ The conflation of Ceres with the bringer of laws and the Mater magna was already given through literary examples.¹⁵⁶

Ceres as the law-bringer was commonly known in the early modern era: in a sixteenth-century ode, Madeleine Des Roche praised Ceres as a law-making and wheat-bearing goddess.

On voit par le rond du monde / Le nom de Ceres la blonde / De temps en temp refleurir
/ Qui garda, tant ell’ sçeut faire, / Porte-blez et legifere, / Corps et ames de perir.¹⁵⁷

Ceres is connected to the age of agriculture, to the downfall of the Golden Age and thus also to cities and the law.¹⁵⁸ The many breasts of the right-hand figure on the title page thus point towards Isis,

¹⁵⁴ Peter Paul Rubens and Jan Breughel I, *Nature adorned*. Glasgow, Museum and Art Gallery. Later engraved by Cornelis van Dalen. Cf. McGrath 2006.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 107.

¹⁵⁶ Ceres as the bringer of laws is mentioned in Ovids *Fasti*, 5, 342–343: “Prima dedit fruges, alimenta que mitia terris, / Prima dedit leges.”

¹⁵⁷ Madeleine Des Roches, “Ode 3”, l. 73–78; in: Tarte 2007, p. 211.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. esp. Boccaccio’s *Famous Women* 5: the building of cities was a fall from the innocence of the Golden Age.



Figure 37 – Peter Paul Rubens/Jan Breughel I, *Nature and Her Followers*, c.1615. Oil on panel, 1067 × 724 mm Glasgow, Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum, Accession no: 609.

the Mother Goddess with her many breasts and the abundance she offers, Ceres as the bringer of laws and also *ius naturale* in the concept mentioned above.

The figure on the left is equally multi-dimensional and problematic. She wears a mural crown which, on the one hand, could refer to Cybele, who established villages and towns,¹⁵⁹ but, on the other, it could more generally be applied to cities in general as the personifications of cities often wore the *corona muralis* in Rubens's time.¹⁶⁰

Cybele was, just as Astraea, a very complex figure: she was frequently identified with Ceres, Ops, Rhea, Tellus, even Venus—generally with the Mater Magna, and could be associated with growth in general. On antique coins she is depicted seated on a throne, flanked by two lions, a branch in her right hand, and a sceptre in her left, often resting on a drum. The mural crown on the title page could specifically refer to Antwerp, as Lessius refers to this city in his text. The depiction of *Antverpia* with a mural crown is often used in the art of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, especially in the iconography of festive entries, but by no means exclusively there. Abra-

¹⁵⁹ See Lucretius, *De Natura Rerum* (I1, 606ff.) and Ovid, *Fasti* (IV, 219). See also Virgil, *Aeneid* (X, 253 and VI, 736).

¹⁶⁰ The *corona muralis* is still used on the coat-of-arms of cities.



Figure 38—Abraham Janssens, *Scaldis et Antverpia*, 1609. Oil on panel, 1740 × 3080 mm, Antwerp KMSK, inv. no. 212.

ham Janssens I (1575–1632), for instance, depicted *Antverpia* with a mural crown in his allegorical painting of *Scaldis et Antverpia* (Fig. 38).¹⁶¹

It is possible that Rubens alludes to civilisation in general with the crown, possibly with an inherent emphasis on Antwerp, and this is not dependent on a specific personification. Rubens himself comments on Cybele in his explanation for a different title page, the *Legatus* by Frederik de Marselaer (1584–1670) (Fig. 41).¹⁶² In this book, first published in 1618, Marselaer discusses the necessary qualities of an ambassador.¹⁶³ The book proved to be so popular that Moretus decided to print it in quarto with an engraved title page, designed by Theodore van Loon and cut by Cornelis Galle (Fig. 39). The title page Rubens then designed in the 1630s for a third edition refers to this first illustrated title page by using its central idea and reinforcing it.¹⁶⁴ In the explanation of his title page, Rubens explains that the central position is occupied by the figure of Good Government, wearing “a turreted crown like Cybele because she builds, rules and preserves cities”.¹⁶⁵ In the same vein he includes symbols of peace and abundance in the upper part of the Lessius title page: the

¹⁶¹ For more on its political relevance in the negotiations of the truce in 1609 and the bibliography of this painting cf. J. Vander Auwera, in: Van der Stock, *Metropol*, 146–147, cat. 1; cf. also Balis 2010, p. 510ff.

¹⁶² Marselaer 1666.

¹⁶³ First printed as *KĒRYKEION, sive Legationum Insigne* in Antwerp 1618. Cf. Van de Velde 1981.

¹⁶⁴ Marselaer 1626; Marselaer 1666; Rubens had received a copy of Marselaer’s book in 1626, Van de Velde 1981, p. 75.

¹⁶⁵ Judson and Van de Velde 1977b, pp. 500–502.

palm and laurel trees behind the two figures, the cornucopia, and the snake, can all be associated with the common good.

The figure with the turreted crown could therefore be interpreted as Cybele, but the snake in her hand also opens other possibilities. Cybele in combination with a snake is rare, and is a playful invention of Rubens, but the snake is the reason why this figure is frequently read as Prudence.¹⁶⁶ The snake, however, is not only an attribute of Prudence, but also of Hygieia, or Salus Augusti, which Rubens painted in around 1614 and which was often copied in the following.¹⁶⁷ Hygieia and Salus were conflated from the first century onwards, both used in political iconography as a symbol of the public weal, meaning both the well-being of the state and its citizens. Although Cicero was not convinced of the divine power of Salus,¹⁶⁸ the veneration and depiction of Salus publica continued well into Christian times: Salus was depicted on coins of the second and third centuries CE, and thus entered political iconography. The political motif, the formula that was used to praise the emperor for his accomplishments concerning the public weal and at the same time remind him of these obligations, was well known to Rubens and his contemporaries; it appeared in the numismatic literature for which Rubens produced numerous title pages.¹⁶⁹ Rubens depicted Salus feeding the snake for the first time in 1614, in an allegorical painting of which many copies followed (Fig. 40).¹⁷⁰ Well aware of the many personifications depicted with snakes, Rubens remains ambiguous on purpose in the design of the title page. In his treatise, Lessius discusses many examples of mercantile practice from Antwerp which makes an allusion to Antwerp on the title page, or at least to cities as ruling bodies, not entirely unreasonable. Especially as the caduceus in Astraea's right hand reinforces this notion and evokes associations with trade, it is not unreasonable to suggest that the lower figure also carries aspects to do with the larger public and its well-being.

On the later title page for the *Pompa Introitus Ferdinandi* (Fig. 10 on page 65) Rubens uses *Salus Publica* again, but more forcefully and with less ambiguity. The entry for Cardinal Infant Ferdinand in Antwerp not only celebrates a new and victorious governor, but also expresses the plight of a city stricken by the war in its vicinity.¹⁷¹ On the title page of the book *Salus Publica* is depicted in the tympanum of the arch, a very prominent place. In the tympanum, Cardinal Infante is receiving his commander's baton from Philip IV, and *Salus* is used to remind the commander of his obligation towards the well-being of his country. This reading is enforced by a quotation placed prominently on a lintel below this scene in the centre of the title page: TV REGERE IMPERIO BELGAS GERMANE,

¹⁶⁶ The snake is an attribute of Prudence in: Ripa, *Iconologia*, 1603, p. 416. For an interpretation of the snake as Prudence see McGrath 2009a, pp. 405–407; Judson and Van de Velde 1977a, no. 38, pp. 184–187.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Büttner 2018, no. 32.

¹⁶⁸ Cicero, *On the Nature of the Gods*, III, 61; in *Ibid.*, p. 344.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 344, fn. 70. See chapter 4.

¹⁷⁰ Seven copies of this painting survived: *Ibid.*, no. 23, p. 331ff. *Salus (Hygieia)*, c. 1614, LB 815, Oil on panel; 130 cm × 74 cm. Nelafozeves Castle, The Lobkowitz Collections, no. LR11563.

¹⁷¹ Z. Arnold 2014, p. 192.

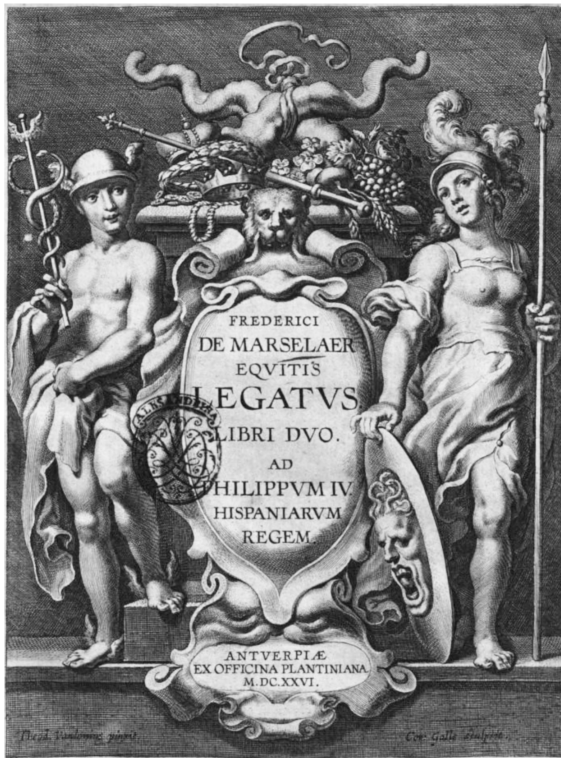


Figure 39 – Title page for Marselaer 1626; engraving by Cornelis Galle after Theodore van Loon.

MEMENTO: PARCERE SVBIECTIS ET DEBELLARE SVPERBOS.¹⁷² In his commentary Gevartius explicitly mentions the source of these words: they refer back to Virgil's *Aeneid* and proclaim the descendants of Aeneas as those who will be restoring the Golden Age of peace.¹⁷³ The quotation appears twice in the Festive Entry, on the title page to the book and again on Isabella's stage and is the programmatic centre of the whole entry: the Cardinal Infante is thus hailed as the restorer of the Golden Age of peace.

Even the title page for Lessius's *De iustitia et iure* has this political touch that unfolds in full force in the much later *Pompa introitus Ferdinandi*, for the figure wearing the crown of civilisation and the snake of public weal is placed directly underneath Leo depicted in the zodiac. In Valerianus the upper part of the zodiac is shown, placing Libra on the left and Leo on the right of Astraea (Fig. 34); Rubens rotates the zodiac so that the succession within the zodiac is not perturbed when he depicts Leo before Astraea and Libra. The reason for this could be the depiction of contemporary celestial charts, but it should not be forgotten that the *Leo Belgicus* was the common depiction of the Netherlands. It is again possible to refer to the later *Pompa introitus Ferdinandi* in which a con-

¹⁷² "Du aber Bruder [Vergil: Römer], gedenke mit Macht der Belger [Vergil: Völker] zu walten, / Schone den, der sich fügt, doch brich den Trotz der Rebellen!" in: Heinen 2008, p. 171. "Remember, brother, that you must reign over the Belgians: spare the conquered and defeat the arrogant." in: Judson and Van de Velde 1977a, p. 328.

¹⁷³ Heinen 2008, p. 171.



Figure 40 – P. P. Rubens, *Salus*, c. 1614. Oil on panel; 130 × 74 cm. The Lobkowitz Collections, Nelahozeves Castle. Inv. no. LR11563.

siderably desperate Belgian Leo is placed between Philip IV and Ferdinand, embracing the Belgian territory while being in a pose of submission.¹⁷⁴ The Belgian plight had been reduced through the armistice, but this was about to finish at the end of the 1610s. The Leo Rubens depicts on the title page is not the charging lion shown in the woodcut by Valerianus, but a reclining lion that may be read as a waiting *Leo Belgicus* by Rubens's contemporaries. The *Leo Belgicus* refers to the whole of the Netherlands. The political aspect of this title page is reinforced as *Salus*, civilisation or *ius humanum*, can only feed her snake with the patera if she cooperates with Astraea, trade or *ius divinum*.

The two prisoners depicted below these multidimensional figures contribute to the political interpretation of the title page. These figures on the base of the title page are kept like prisoners and chained to a book that is about the cardinal virtues thus are negatively connoted; these figures could be interpreted as restrained vices. McGrath suggests that the two, a satyr and an enslaved man, represent unruly aspects of nature and society subdued by the particular laws.¹⁷⁵ The paraphernalia next to them can also be seen in this more negative way of unruly behaviour, of war and havoc, and of lust and carnal love. The attributes of weapons, fire and apples offer many interpretations: the first that comes to mind is the war that is represented by the weapons, and also

¹⁷⁴ "Leo, Orbem Belgicum complexus, ad pedes eiusdem se submittit & inclinat." Gevaerts 1642, Explicatio.

¹⁷⁵ McGrath 2006, p. 120, fn. 29.



Figure 41 – Title page for Frederik de Marselaer, *Legatus Libri duo, ad Philippum iv Hispaniarum Regem*, Antwerp 1666. Engraving: 316 × 208 mm by Cornelis Galle II.

by the bow and arrows and the torch leaning against the wall. Judson and Van de Velde interpret the torch resting against the weapons of war as being connected with peace, possibly because the torch is often shown to burn weapons.¹⁷⁶ Nevertheless, the torch and its flames also carry associations of something uncontrollable, as does the presence of the satyr. Mattison connects the basket overflowing with fruit and vine leaves to the “bacchic sphere”, indicating the satyrs’ sensuous appetites.¹⁷⁷ He also connects this directly to Lessius’s chapter on gluttony and drunkenness in *De iustitia et iure*. The negative interpretation of the satyr is supported by his crossed legs, which was considered inappropriate in classical times.¹⁷⁸

In any case, the prisoners are antagonists to the positive powers depicted in the upper half of the title page, a concept Rubens mainly used in title pages focussing on the triumph of the church over heathens and heretics. This symbolism was used in Roman political iconography found on coins and repeated by Rubens in various designs throughout his life. In a way, the inclusion of these prisoners contributes to a political reading of the title page.¹⁷⁹ Not surprisingly the prisoners also appear on Jacob de Bie’s *Nomismata imperatorum romanorum*, later used for the second volume of Goltzius’s collected works (Fig. 28 on page 134). And just like Salus, the two prisoners with the spoils of war appear in the *Pompa Introitus Ferdinandi*, on the Triumphal Arch of Ferdinand.¹⁸⁰ In this context they were interpreted accordingly as blind and furious violence.¹⁸¹ However, they are also shown on title pages concerned with imprese, the history of Procopius, and the collected decrees of Council of Trent, and—with a slightly changed appearance—on all the Counter-Reformation title pages by Rubens.¹⁸² All in all, the prisoners always appear in political contexts: in terms of rulership as shown in De Bie’s *Nomismata*; as a political plea to a new ruler in the *Pompa*; as an emphasis on the superior role of the Church in the collected decrees of the councils.

The prisoners illuminate the consequences of a way of living that is not Christian or virtuous. In the particular case of *De iustitia et iure* they show that by following the law—natural, divine, and civil law—the vices can be overcome. They are shackled to the title medallion of the book, as Lessius’s book discusses in great detail what behaviour is lawful and can be tolerated, not only in civil law, but also in divine law. For Lessius, these two are invariably connected, as they are part of the *ius positivum*. Rubens also depicts them as invariably connected on the title page, each leaning on

¹⁷⁶ Cf. also the title page for *Pompa introitus Ferdinandi*; cf. also Judson and Van de Velde 1977a, p. 186.

¹⁷⁷ Held 1977, p. 107.

¹⁷⁸ Winckelmann shows in *Kunst des Alterthums*, 1767, I, p. 61, that a statue with crossed legs would have been scolded by the Greek. Cf. the painting of *Pausias and Glycera* in Büttner 2018, no. 45, pp. 29–36, esp. p. 32.

¹⁷⁹ On the “Two Captives with Booty” see no. 29 in *Ibid.*, pp. 404–410.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 408; Gevaerts 1642, fol. C4v–D2r; J. R. Martin 1972, pp. 141–147, esp. p. 144, no. 36, fig. 67.

¹⁸¹ Judson and Van de Velde 1977a, p. 186; Held 1977, p. 107.

¹⁸² See chapter 6. Cf. Ruscelli, *Le Imprese Illustri*, Venice 1580; Procopius, *Historiarum Libri VIII*, Augsburg 1607; Ph. Chifflet, *Concilii Tridentini... canones et decreta*, Antwerp 1640.

or holding the central medallion to which the prisoners are bound, for only together will they be able to keep up the prosperity of Belgium.

Thus it again depends on the reader what meaning is created from the image Rubens offers. The attributes the personifications on the title page carry could belong to the cardinal virtues and it is possible to interpret them in this way, as Judson did.¹⁸³ Leo and Libra, apart from being parts of the zodiac and adding a specific meaning to the central figure, are signs of strength and equality. Both concepts are important in questions of law and the interpretation of laws. However, both also point to two of the cardinal virtues, fortitude and justice, while the snake and the vessel at the feet of the right-hand figure point to prudence and temperance. The four virtues are still recognisable, but they are woven into the fabric of allegorical invention with various other attributes and symbols, which stands in contrast to the presentation of the old title page: there the cardinal virtues are presented in the context of the commentary on Aquinas.

Rubens, however, provides an humanistic allegory for an educated readership with a juridical background that enforces a political way of reading connected to the situation in the Netherlands. This would not have been the predominant reading for readers in other parts of Europe, but Rubens's title page offers other possible interpretations for theologians and lawyers with its focus on law and its effect on society (Fig. 33).

5.3.3 | Two Editions of *De iustitia et iure* printed in Lyon in 1622

In 1622, one year after the publication of yet another Plantinian edition of *De iustitia et iure* with Rubens's title page, the book was issued twice in Lyon by two different publishers. The edition by Claude Larjot (??–1643) copied Moretus's edition including Rubens's design for the title page, which he reissued in 1630 (Fig. 42). The edition by Louis Prost (1598–1627) had a more compact layout, thus fewer pages than Moretus's and Larjot's editions; it also had its own, new title page invented by Michel Lasne in a very traditional composition using an architectural framework (Fig. 43).¹⁸⁴ The different markets for which publishers issued editions might be the reason why these editions in Lyon were printed at almost the same time as Moretus continued printing and selling the same book in Antwerp.¹⁸⁵ The Lyonese editions were not the only ones printed outside Antwerp, as a Venetian edition was published in 1625. It seems that Moretus's market did not include Italy or southern France, or maybe Lyon had such a great demand for this book that it was possible for these Lyonese publishers to sell their own editions without angering Moretus. Printing another edition in a different city was not considered to be unproblematic, as is shown in the letter to the

¹⁸³ Judson and Van de Velde 1977a, p. 186.

¹⁸⁴ L. Lessius 1622a,b.

¹⁸⁵ Moretus published one edition in 1621, other editions followed in 1626 and 1632.

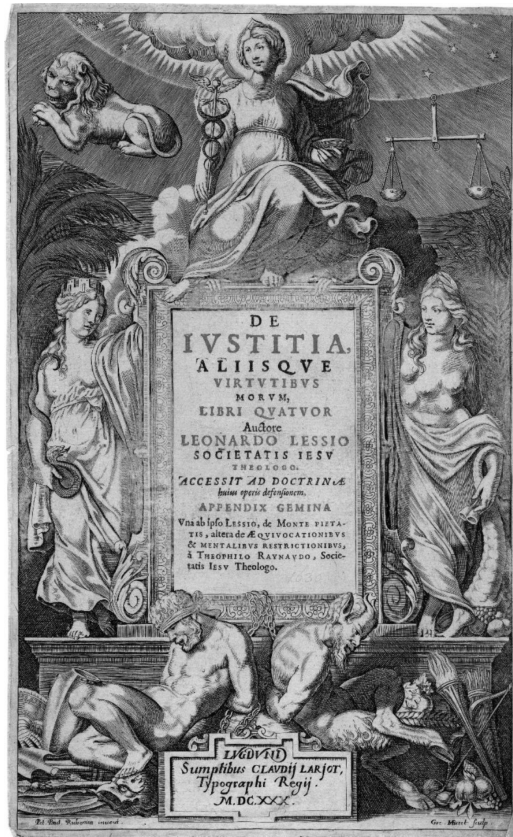


Figure 42 – Title page for L. Lessius 1630; engraving: 326 × 200 mm. British Museum no. 1872.0511.1023. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

author from the printer of the Parisian 1606 edition which was attached to the preliminary matter of the book.¹⁸⁶ In this open letter, the publisher excuses his printing of the unauthorised edition due to the unavailability of Lessius's treatise. The publisher argues that not only was this act in the interest of the general public, but also in the author's interest: the printing would increase his fame.¹⁸⁷ The two Lyonese editions both had permissions and *approbatios* printed in the front matter of the book. Larjot had two *approbatios* copied from Moretus's edition and added four short notices: an *approbatio* by Robertus Berthelot, a Dominican, and three notices of permission all dated to the April 29, 1622. In contrast to that, the edition by Prost only had two: one by the Lyonese censor Ioannes Claudius de Ville dated April 11, 1622, and a second one by the Provincial of the Society of Jesus in Lyon and its Province from April 4.

The copyist of Rubens's title page for Larjot's edition, Grégoire Huret, changed several details: he changed the medallion into a square frame, thereby distorted the figures' proportions, prolonging their limbs and making their stances extremely forced; the frame changed from a laurel wreath

¹⁸⁶ Van Houdt 1998a, p. xviii.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p. xviii.

sus in the title page: an angel next to *Iustitia* is holding a medallion with the IHS monogram, the cross and the three nails.¹⁸⁹ In front of the columns are the two authorities of the law: the pope and with him the Church, and the worldly ruler, here in the figure of an emperor. This title page is thus blunter than Rubens's that uses the concepts behind the law discussed in the book, rather than the authorities that enforce the law. In Lasne's title page, Justice is presented as the one force above these worldly authorities, with a quotation by Vergil above her head, one of the many inscriptions found on this title page: "Discite iustitiam moniti [et non temnere divos]."¹⁹⁰ The sentence, cried out by a sinner being punished in the inferno, became a motto in the sixteenth century and by the seventeenth was widely used to admonish readers to "heed the warning, learn justice, and do not scorn the gods."¹⁹¹ The sentence not only appeared in various emblem books under the lemma "iustitia", but was also commented on by Lipsius in *De constantia*.¹⁹² With this quotation, the title page addresses the monarchs and the Church hierarchy, especially the dedicatee.

The dedication was addressed by Louis Prost himself to Denis-Simon de Marquemont (1572–1626), archbishop of Lyon from 1612. The archbishopric of Lyon is one of the most eminent in France: this archbishop has precedence over several others and is known as the Primate of the Gauls. During much of his office de Marquemont acted as an ambassador for the French king in Rome. Shortly before his death on September 16, 1626, he was elevated to the cardinalate.¹⁹³ Archduke Albert, to whom the book had been dedicated so far, had died the previous year and another dedication was thus possible; a fact that was exploited by Prost. The title page of this edition was thus changed in order to express the duties owed by someone this high in the hierarchy of the Church who would still need to be ruled by *Iustitia*, just as the highest worldly and clerical leaders would.

Balthasar Moretus left the dedication addressed to the archduke in all subsequent editions, even in those after 1621, which was the last authorised edition, and changed only what Lessius wanted to have changed. Larjot, who had kept the Rubens title page, also kept the dedication; it would be interesting to know whether a new dedication made a new title page necessary, whether Rubens's invention simply did not express what Prost wanted on his title page, or whether it was a question of the publisher's honour to produce an entirely new edition. The new title page by Lasne certainly emphasises the authorities of the dedicatee de Marquemont and I would suggest that here the patronage had a greater influence on the title page than the fact that the author was from the Society of Jesus.

¹⁸⁹ On the IHS sign, cf. 5.3.1.

¹⁹⁰ *Aeneid*, VI.620.

¹⁹¹ O'Hara suggests that it could also mean "learn what justice is" considering that the speaker, Phlegyas, only burned Apollo's temple upon the rape of his daughter by this god. O'Hara 2007, p. 95.

¹⁹² *De constantia*, lib. 2. cap. 10; more examples can be found in: "Virgil's Best Verse. Discite iustitiam, moniti, et non temnere divos"; Silva 2, 7-12-2004 www.studiolum.com/en/silva3.htm.

¹⁹³ Di Borgo-Mouton-Brady 1977; Marion 1848, p. 50.

5.4 | Neo-Latin Poetry for Pope Urban VIII

In the 1630s Rubens designed the title pages for several books of neo-Latin poetry. All these books of poetry were published by Moretus, and most of them within a few years of each other. Although the authors, often Jesuits, emulated classical authors, their poetry was often religious at its core. With only a few exceptions, Rubens designed title pages for the works of neo-Latin poets under the patronage of Pope Urban VIII, who was one of the authors himself. This pope was an important patron for many artists and poets in Rome during his papacy, the results of which are present in Rome to this day. Patronage played an important role in early modern society for artists and poets. For title pages it is of great importance, as many a title page would not have existed without a patron willing to finance the endeavour. However, patronage did not only ensure that the book could be beautifully decorated, and it was more than a possibility for the author to secure financial support.¹⁹⁴ A patron's name gave credence to the publication, making his support official, while at the same time demonstrating the artistic or scientific interests of the patron, and thus honour the patron as much as the author. It seems, however, that not only the author had an interest in securing the patronage of certain people as the following case study shows.

The publication history of the titles enabled me to place Rubens's title pages in a wider historical context of engraved title pages for poetic works. The books with their title pages and many editions offer good comparisons in order to clarify what made Rubens's title pages different from their earlier or later counterparts. Rubens seems to emphasise the classical heritage rather than the Christian subtext. As all of these books belonged to the same book class, it made it possible to see what elements were common to all and could be ascribed to a particular genre. A look at the publication history and the wider context of the title pages also shows that Rubens contributes title pages to works of lasting importance. Sarbiewski in particular was a well-known poet throughout Europe for centuries, although his name is mainly known in expert circles today.

The Title Pages for Books of Poetry

When the Jesuit Bauhusius pleaded with Moretus for a title page at the beginning of his book, he argued for his wish with cases of precedence. He explained that "we have seen it happen here and there before", for example in Heinsius's work.¹⁹⁵ Indeed, Heinsius's *Poemata* were consistently adorned with engraved title pages, the latest edition before this letter had been published being Heinsius's *Niederduytsche Poemata* (Fig. 11 on page 68).¹⁹⁶ Bauhusius felt it necessary to point out

¹⁹⁴ Although Parry demonstrates the problems and pitfalls of patronage mainly in England, the system was principally the same in all of Europe. Cf. Parry 2002.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. Letter from Bauhusius to Moretus, 1 August 1617, in: Judson and Van de Velde 1977b, p. 366.

¹⁹⁶ Heinsius 1616.

that his wish was not so special as it might initially seem. That the wish would seem special at all merits a quick look into the conventions of publishing poetry.

In libraries, the books of poetry were categorised as *Libri humaniores*, humanistic books. Humanistic literature encompassed classical Latin and Greek poetry, and, increasingly, vernacular works. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, books of contemporary poets did not usually have illustrated title pages: in general, only a fraction of poetry books had a title page that was engraved. Most books of poetry had a simple typographical title page with, at most, a printer's mark beneath the title. This is particularly pronounced for the works of Horace which were very rarely introduced with an illustrated title page.

For the genre and the format of a book, certain traditions appear to have developed that can be related to the hierarchies within genres. Scientific title pages, for instance, very often had an illustrated title page, but only specific literary genres seem to be worth a title page.¹⁹⁷ Certain genres, such as epic poetry, were generally valued more than vernacular poems or sonnet cycles, and for certain types of books an illustrated title page had become the standard. Jutta Breyl shows, for instance, that specific conventions developed for the title pages of heroic romances in the course of the sixteenth century. These title pages for this specific genre tended to depict the heroic couple or the titular hero on the title page rather than a generic Minerva or Muse.¹⁹⁸ Thus the literary canon and the expectations and conventions that ruled it were taken into consideration by publishers.

Another criterion considered by publishers was the format of a book and its intended readership or use. Smaller formats were generally less generously decorated. In contrast to the larger quarto or folio formats, they were easier to handle and to carry, and it is assumed that they were produced for daily use. The smaller formats were, of course, also cheaper to produce, and the bigger print runs suggest that a larger market existed for these formats. An engraved title page would have made these cheaper prints more expensive, so it is possible that smaller formats were printed with simple title pages to keep the costs down and the market as large as possible.

Only classical literature of a certain standing regularly received illustrated title pages from publishers: Ovid's *Metamorphoses* or the works by Virgil were chiefly among those. These eminent authors were widely emulated throughout the Renaissance and beyond. Their portraits were often depicted on the title page, usually in a medallion on the top of an architectural structure, surrounded by putti blowing Fame's trumpet or holding a branch of a palm tree, signalling the authors' importance. The classical poets were read in every Latin school and thus a large readership probably made it possible to print these books in the larger and more expensive formats, while

¹⁹⁷ This merits more research, however, as only specific title pages have been tackled so far, as for instance, those for scientific works; cf. Remmert 2005.

¹⁹⁸ Breyl 2006, passim, here p. 116.

contemporary poetry first had to prove itself. Thus, contemporary Latin poetry was frequently only adorned with an engraved title page if the author had already become very well-known.

The vernacular canon developed over centuries, and by the seventeenth century certain poets were celebrated like the classical Latin poets: Durante degli Alighieri (Dante, 1265–1321), Francesco Petrarca (1304–1474), Ludovico Ariosto (1474–1533) and Torquato Tasso (1544–1595) can be included in this canon of humanistic poetry.¹⁹⁹ The title page for the *Comedia di Danthe Alighieri*, published by Lucantonio Giunti in Venice in 1529, depicts the contemporary Humanistic canon of poets in its frame (Fig. 44). Headed by Apollo, the frame consists of ten smaller medallions with portraits of the canonic poets: the five on the left-hand side depict the canon of classical poets, while the five on the right depict the canon of contemporary “divine” poets. The two rows are headed by Virgil and Dante respectively. Above the whole structure Apollo is playing a stringed instrument, while the muses are shown in a relief-like manner at the bottom of the page.

Nevertheless, a contemporary poet writing in the vernacular, published in a quarto edition and with an engraved title page was apparently so noteworthy that Bauhusius emphasises it in his argument for a title page for his own work.²⁰⁰ Heinsius’s *Niederduytsche Poemata* from 1616 has a title page that shows Apollo, the Muses, Pegasus and Mount Helicon (Fig. 11 on page 68). The symbolism used was thus not far from what Bauhusius in a later letter to Moretus describes as his ideal title page.²⁰¹ Two months after the first letter to Moretus, in which Bauhusius argues for a title page, he reinforces his argument with backing from the Reverend Father Viceprovincial and goes on to describe clearly what he expects from a title page for his work: “I have thought of hallowed Parnassus, the Muses, Mnemosyne, all the things associated with the gods etc.”²⁰² Bauhusius seems to describe what he knows to be a suitable subject matter for a title page for poetry.

The depiction of Apollo on the top playing a stringed instrument was indeed one of the main ways of introducing a book of poetry. The aspect of music was frequently used in title pages for poetry because music and poetry were reported to have been created at the same time.²⁰³ Depicting music on a work of poetry invoked the concept of the sister arts, along the lines of the famous dictum *ut pictura poesis*.²⁰⁴ The lyre exemplified this connection particularly, because both epic and

¹⁹⁹ For illustrated incunabula of classical literature cf. Zimmermann-Homeyer 2018, specifically pp. 32ff for the development of an illustrated classical canon from illuminated manuscripts.

²⁰⁰ The conventions as they are outlined here need a more thorough and systematic investigation than was possible in the course of this doctoral study. I looked at all title pages for contemporary Latin and vernacular poetry I could find in digitalised form: the vast majority was produced with typographical title pages and in smaller formats.

²⁰¹ Heinsius 1616.

²⁰² “Excogitavi Parnassum sacrum, Musas, Mnemosynem, Apollinem, omnia sacra, etc.” Letter from Bauhusius to Moretus, 12 October 1617, in: McGrath 1987, p. 233, fn. 4. McGrath proposes a different translation than Judson and Van de Velde to avoid a Christian implication; Judson and Van de Velde 1977b, p. 367–368.

²⁰³ Cf. Frese 1989, p. 17–18.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 18; quoting Birken, 1679, ch. IX, p. 97; Junius 1637, p. 23 (l. 3, 12). For more examples cf. Schöne 1993, p. 205; R. W. Lee 1967, esp. p. 3.

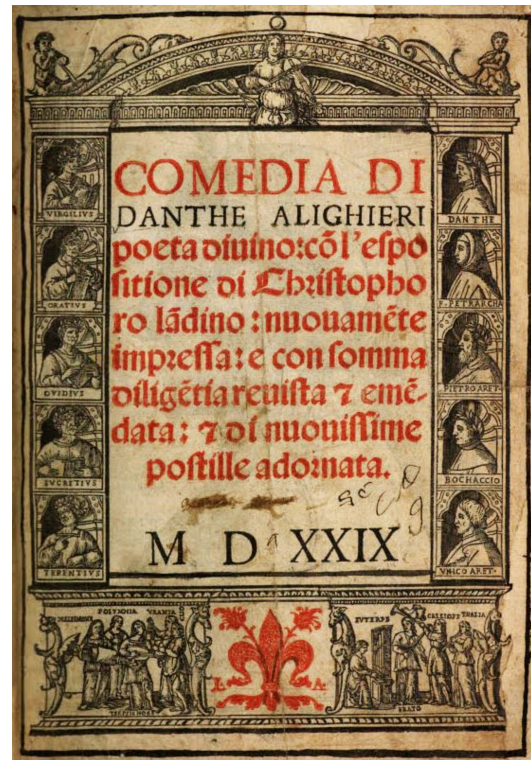


Figure 44 – Title page for Dante 1529; woodcut frame.

lyric poetry were said to have been declaimed to the sound of this instrument, and it was used most often to represent poetry. However, as can be seen in the title page for Dante's *Comedia*, Apollo was often shown as playing contemporary instruments. Because of Rubens's interest in antiquity, it could have been expected for him to design title pages for the work of classical poets, and yet the eight title pages for poetry designed by Rubens were for contemporary, neo-Latin poets.

Neo-Latin Poetry published by Moretus

From 1622 onwards, Balthasar Moretus had his most famous illustrator design title pages for contemporary, neo-Latin poetry. The reason for this can be sought in the social context of the authors and dedicatees, as well as of the patrons paying for the additional expenses, and maybe in the longterm planning by Moretus. All of the eight poetry books were printed in the Officina Plantiniana, seven of the eight in the 1630s, five for Jesuit authors, and for half of them Pope Urban VIII is the influential patron. Five were printed in quarto and three in sextodecimo, which are an exception in the designs by Rubens, as he usually designed for folios and quartos.²⁰⁵ As the earlier case studies suggested that not Rubens himself but Moretus chose Rubens as an illustrator for spe-

²⁰⁵ Only six books with title pages by Rubens are smaller than quarto, and of these six, three are books of poetry.

cific books, this corpus of connected books presented itself as a perfect further case study in order to investigate the role of the publisher, as well as the role of patronage in book production. This chapter focusses on the books connected with Urban VIII: the two books containing the poetry of Mathias Casimir Sarbiewski (1593–1640), the book containing Maffeo Barberini's own poetry, and that by Simonini celebrating the same pope with a collection of *silvae*.

The first book on contemporary poetry illustrated with a title page by Rubens was Agostino Mascardi's *Silvarum Libri IV* in 1622 (Fig 45).²⁰⁶ It is a prime example of a book published with the help of patrons. Agostino Mascardi (1590–1640) was one of the most important intellectuals at the court of Urban VIII.²⁰⁷ He was an ex-Jesuit, who was expelled from the Society in 1617 after eleven years in the order. The reason for his expulsion is not known from the Jesuits' side, but according to himself it was his "employment with the family d'Este".²⁰⁸ After severing the ties with both the Society of Jesus and his own family, Mascardi was entirely dependent on the Roman patronage system and found powerful patrons in the d'Este and the Barberini families.

In 1622, when Mascardi's book was published by Moretus, Maffeo Barberini had not yet been elected as pope, and Mascardi was neither his "cameriere segreto" nor professor of rhetoric at the Sapienza yet. But he already had powerful patrons who were willing to pay for an illustrated title page, as the arrangements between Carlo Cotta and Raphael Rauano show: Cotta bought 500 copies of Mascardi's book in advance.²⁰⁹ It remains unclear whether Mascardi bought the books himself with Cotta as an intermediary, but as Tutino describes him as constantly on the lookout for money and patronage it seems highly unlikely that he had the means to do so.²¹⁰

In a letter to Philip Chifflet, Moretus mentions the need for a patron in order to have a book printed which will probably not sell well:

Therefore, there ought to be the help of some Maecenas, so that the printer does not have to sustain alone all the risks of such an edition. Thus I have printed the *Silvae* of Agostino Mascardi, not so much with my money as with the author's, since he bought 500 copies of the book.²¹¹

The money probably came through the d'Este family, as the dedication is made out to Cardinal Alexander d'Este. It is possible that Moretus included Rubens in this project because of these powerful patrons. Patronage was important for the publication of poetry, possibly more so in this genre than in any other. After all, it was the powerful patron of Virgil and Horace, Gaius Clinicus Maece-

²⁰⁶ Mascardi 1622.

²⁰⁷ Delbeke 2002, p. 58, esp. fn. 198.

²⁰⁸ Tutino 2014, p. 41.

²⁰⁹ Cf. Judson and Van de Velde 1977a, p. 217.

²¹⁰ Cf. Tutino 2014, p. 41 for Mascardi's constant need for money.

²¹¹ Letter from Moretus to Chifflet, 15 Jun 1623, in: Judson and Van de Velde 1977b, p. 370.

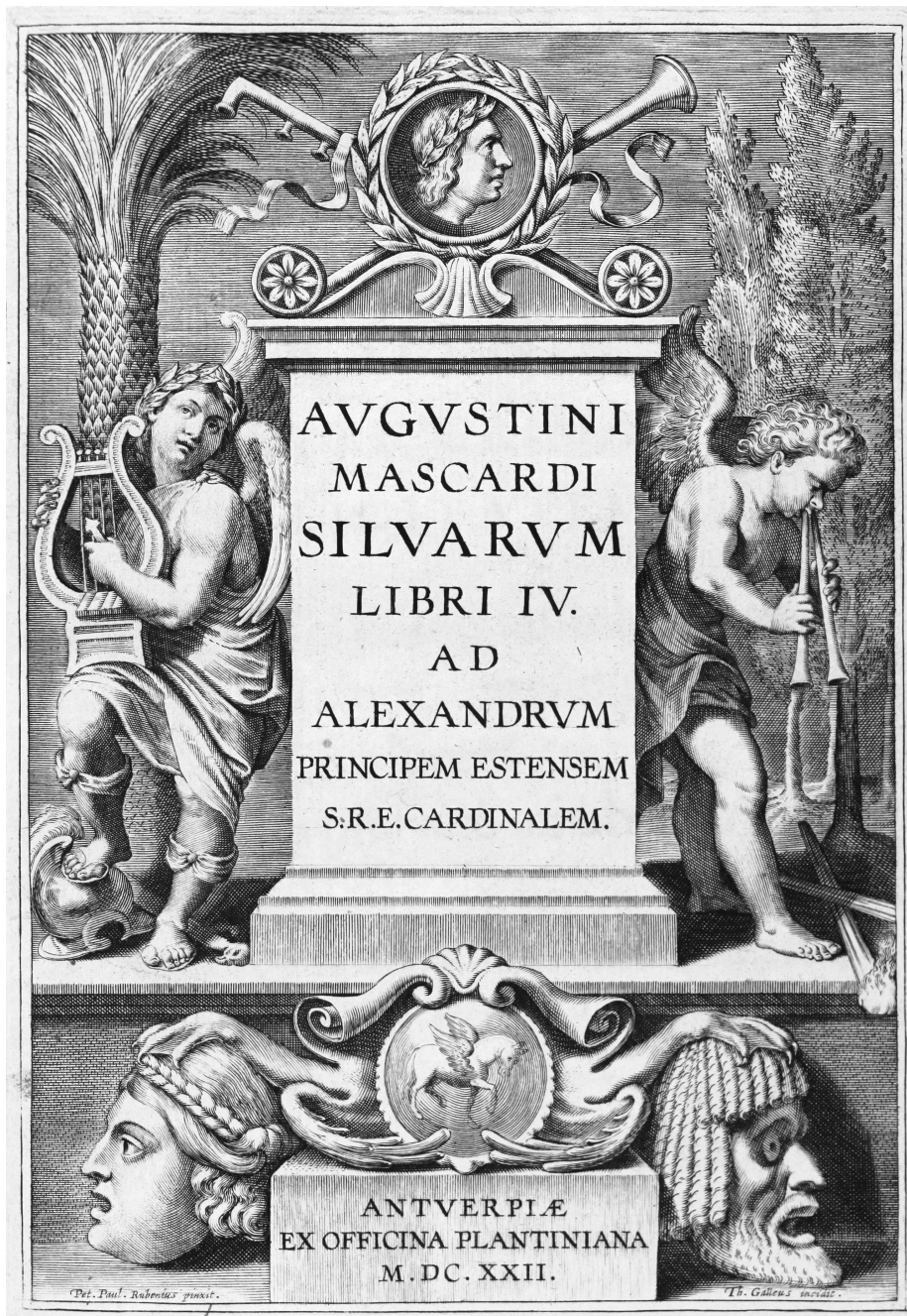


Figure 45— Title page for Mascardi 1622; engraving: 192 × 134mm by Theodoor Galle. Private Image.

nas, whose surname became the byword for a patron of the arts. The most powerful patron in Rome during the second quarter of the seventeenth century was Maffeo Barberini as Pope Urban VIII, a writer himself. Because Urban was so influential and also a patron of the Jesuit poet, Sarbiewski, for whom Rubens designed two title pages, his work and interest in neo-Latin poetry is illustrated in the following with an interpretation of Rubens's title pages for Barberini's poetry.

5.4.1 | The *Poemata* (1634) by Maffeo Barberini, Urban VIII

Maffeo Barberini (1568–1644; Pope Urban VIII from 1623–1644) wrote poetry from early on and the first edition of his *Poemata* was published in 1620 in Paris. These poems were written at a time when neo-Latin literature was celebrating a last come-back. Because of the renewed interest in neo-Latin literature and, not the least reason, Barberini's election to the papacy, his book was published in various editions until his death, and in 1634 Moretus also published an edition with a title page by Rubens. Additionally, Barberini's poetry was published in the context of school books by the Society of Jesus, as a poetic example to be emulated.

The Jesuits provided a very good Catholic education for students around the whole world and this incorporated a very good knowledge of Latin. Consequently, the Latin language played a central role in the curriculum of the Jesuit colleges, the *Ratio Studiorum*: apart from the grammar, the students had to know classical authors and genres, and had to show their knowledge of and fluency in the Latin language in mock court proceedings, plays and emulations of classical and Christian texts, including poetry.²¹² Some of the students developed a real talent for neo-Latin poetry, receiving lasting fame throughout Europe. Maffeo Barberini, too, was educated in a Jesuit college in Florence and later in the famous Collegium Romanum. It was there that he developed his taste for neo-Latin poetry, first in the various secular poetic genres, concerned with the arts and eroticism, later Pope Urban VIII rather emphasised religious topics in moralistic poetry. Throughout his work he remained faithful to his formal and verbal high standard.²¹³ Urban VIII followed a long tradition of popes writing poetry, but is mainly remembered for his patronage of the arts. A brief introduction to this influential figure is necessary in order to place Rubens's title page accordingly.

Maffeo Barberini was born into a wealthy Florentine family on April 5, 1568, as the fifth child of six.²¹⁴ His father, Antonio Barberini, died when he was three and from then on his uncle directed his education. In 1580 the uncle summoned Maffeo to Rome where he attended the Collegio Romano for the following six years receiving the broad humanistic education provided by the

²¹² Wiendlocha 2005, p. 296.

²¹³ Ibid., p. 305.

²¹⁴ The most extensive modern biography so far is Pastor 1960. Lutz 2000 provides a detailed bibliography; Schütze 2007 focusses on the early years of Maffeo's life. In the seventeenth century, Cardinal Francesco Barberini commissioned a biography from Andrea Nicoletti: BAV, Barb. Lat. 4730–4738.

Jesuits.²¹⁵ For the next two years he studied law in Pisa before returning to Rome and receiving the minor orders. The influence of his uncle helped him in his rapid rise within the Church.²¹⁶ In the office of Protonotaio Apostolico, for instance, he had to write the documents used for the absolution of King Henry IV of France. With the election of Clemens VIII (Ippolito Aldobrandini, 1592–1605) a long-term family friend was elected to the papacy, helping Maffeo's advancement in the hierarchy of the Church considerably.²¹⁷ In 1600 his uncle Francesco Barberini, died, making him sole heir to an estate of more than 260.000 scudi.²¹⁸ In the same year, as part of Cardinal Pietro Aldebrandini's retinue, he took part in the wedding festivities of Maria de' Medici and Henry IV, in which Rubens was present as part of the Duke of Mantua's retinue. Although no meeting is recorded, there remains the possibility for an encounter between Barberini and Rubens.²¹⁹

The decision of Clemens VIII to send the young prelate to Paris in 1601 as an extraordinary papal nuncio had a huge influence on Maffeo's career.²²⁰ He handled the situation at Henry IV's court exceptionally well, inducing the pope to make him nuncio plenipotentiary in 1604 and to give him the archdiocese of Nazareth—thus, considerable position and income. One of his tasks in Paris was to handle and improve the situation between the court and the Society of Jesus in France. Only in 1603 had the Jesuits been allowed back into France, after an attempt on the King's life by a Jesuit student in 1594 had led to the expulsion of the Society from the country.²²¹ The successful Maffeo Barberini was made cardinal in 1606 and on 14 October of that year he received his biretta from the hands of Henry IV in a ceremony in Fontainebleau.²²² The king also symbolically ennobled the Barberini family: the three "taffani" on the Barberini coat-of-arms, the horseflies with which it had been decorated, were changed to bees after Maffeo Barberini's elevation to cardinal.²²³ The next pope, Paul V (Camillo Borghese, 1605–1621), also supported the young cardinal, and provided him with several offices; this development continued under Gregor XV (Alessandro Ludovisi, 1621–1623). Barberini took his offices seriously, and proved to be a conscientious and diplomatic custodian and legate; from early on he began to build alliances with many important cardinals.²²⁴

²¹⁵ Ibid., p. 13.

²¹⁶ Within four years he was Protonotaio Apostolico de' numerarii. Ibid., pp. 13–14.

²¹⁷ Wiendlocha 2005, p. 281.

²¹⁸ Schütze 2007, p. 14.

²¹⁹ Cf. Zurawski 1979, p. 4; Zurawski 1989.

²²⁰ Schütze 2007, p. 14.

²²¹ Wiendlocha 2005, p. 282.

²²² Ibid., p. 283.

²²³ While Schütze maintains that the exact date of this change in coat-of-arms is not documented, Wiendlocha dates it to the festivities of 14 October in honour of Maffeo Barberini in Fontainebleau, omitting, however, her source for this claim. Cf. Schütze 2007, p. 31, fn. 6; Wiendlocha 2005, p. 283; Lutz 2000, p. 301.

²²⁴ Schütze 2007, p. 17.

Barberini's interests in poetry and his humanistic education influenced to a great part his official image, both as cardinal and as pope.²²⁵ Coming from a somewhat modest family background, Urban began to enlarge his family's estates and bought a new family chapel as soon as he had the means to do so. He actively used poetry and the visual arts to promote himself and his erudition even before his election, thus compensating his modest background. After his election as pope, he supported poets, artists and scientists in Rome, drawing so many to the capital, that Leone Allacci, in his biographical dictionary of learned authors, called them the bees of Urban, *Apes Urbanae*.²²⁶ Throughout his rise in the Church he wrote poetry and several authors poetically celebrate important occasions in his life.²²⁷ His poetic endeavours were increasingly geared towards a renewal of religious and sacred poetry, even though his early poems had been of humanistic origins. Keeping to the conventions and the expectations of a cardinal, he enlarged his collection of books, and after his election started to build one of the most important libraries in Europe, the Barberini library, famed for its quality and completeness.²²⁸ From 1604 onwards, when he first started to invest in the family's estate, he commissioned young artists, and in 1617 he first ordered a painting from the young Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598–1680) who would become his favoured protégé.²²⁹

After his election to the papal chair, Urban assigned his nephew, Cardinal Francesco Barberini, with the task of enlarging his collection of books housed in the Palazzo Barberini. The Biblioteca Barberina gained fame not only due to the huge quantity and excellent quality of the books and manuscripts, but also due to its lavish decoration and interior design.²³⁰ In the library, Bernini's bronze bust of Maffeo Barberini himself was placed at the end of a long row of famous scholars. Countless literary works promoted and celebrated the "Parnaso Barberiniano", and the new golden age of Barberini's rule, for example Leone Allacci's *Apes Urbanae* of 1633, Stephanus Simonini's *Silvae* of 1637, or Girolamo Tetis's description of the library in the *Aedes Barberinae* written in 1642. In 1681 the Barberini library contained around 40,000 volumes and was completely catalogued in the *Index Bibliothecae Barberinae*.²³¹ In the index 28 titles are listed for which Rubens provided a design.²³² Most of these books were acquired by Cardinal Francesco Barberini after Barberini's election to the papacy, thus after 1623.²³³

In order to understand Barberini's role as a powerful patron, Sebastian Schütze analyses the inventory of the library made in 1623, its focal points and structure. On the one hand, the inventory

²²⁵ Schütze 2007, p. 17.

²²⁶ Scott et al. 1995, p. 219.

²²⁷ Wiendlocha 2005, pp. 281–283.

²²⁸ Cf. Schütze 2007, p. 18ff. for an analysis of his library.

²²⁹ Cf. Ibid.; Wiendlocha 2005, p. 284.

²³⁰ Schütze 2007, p. 18.

²³¹ Index Bibliothecae 1681.

²³² In Vol. I twenty titles are listed; in Vol. II eight. Cf. Zurawski 1989, p. 43, fn. 118.

²³³ Only two books with a connection to Rubens are mentioned in the inventory of 1623. Schütze 2007, p. 27.

reveals that Maffeo Barberini was influenced by the art and culture of his home town Florence: this is attested not only by the historical works on the city in his collection, but also the presence of Dante, Boccaccio, Ficino, and Pico della Mirandola in bibliophile editions.²³⁴ On the other hand, it reveals Barberini's education under the Jesuits with a strong focus on Jesuit *ars rhetorica*,²³⁵ and all the important Jesuit authors are present in his library, sometimes even in manuscript form.

Maffeo Barberini's stations in Paris and Bologna are equally represented by a large quantity of books concerned with the history of these places, while the juridical works in his library were probably to a large extent inherited from his uncle.²³⁶ The presence of literary and academic authors from Rome, and Italian humanists of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in general, is very pronounced. Just like the other libraries assessed above,²³⁷ his library fits the humanistic scheme of omniscience, and just as in other learned libraries, books on philosophy, theology, law, astrology, astronomy, geography, rhetoric, and literature were present in large numbers. Classical authors, however, were a special feature of his library: both Latin and Greek authors were comprehensively present and that for almost all subjects. Several of the classical authors were present in various editions, often commented, as were the relevant dictionaries, grammars and manuals for the study of these texts. Notwithstanding the comprehensive nature of this library its special focus was poetry, showing Maffeo Barberini's personal interest in this literary form. His interest was equally expressed in his own poetry and his exceptional patronage of poetry.

The Various Editions of Maffeo Barberini's Poemata

Balthasar Moretus's edition was not the first edition of Maffeo Barberini's poetry. Barberini circulated his first poems in the late 1580s: he sent them to the poet Aurelio Orsi, who belonged to the court of Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, whom Barberini venerated.²³⁸ In the following years the occasional poem was published in collections of verses and probably also circulated in manuscript; his first own publication was the ode "In S. Mariam Magdalenam" in 1618.²³⁹ The first edition of his collected poems was printed by Antonius Stephanus in Paris at the suggestion of Peiresc, mainly in acknowledgment of Barberini's diplomatic work there: it contained 31 epigrams and odes and was the basis for all later publications.²⁴⁰ Throughout the rest of his life this book would be re-edited and enlarged, and three bibliophile editions were produced in all. Although Cardinal Barberini

²³⁴ Ibid., pp. 18–19; see also Appendix XLII for a transcript of the inventory.

²³⁵ Marc Fumaroli extolled the role of Jesuit culture on the Barberini pontificate. Cf. Fumaroli 1978 and 1980.

²³⁶ Schütze 2007, p. 25.

²³⁷ Cf. section 2.5.1.

²³⁸ Schütze 2007, p. 27.

²³⁹ Cf. Wiendlocha 2005, p. 308. A systematic analysis of all the editions can be found in: Castagnetti 1979–1980 [publ. in 1982].

²⁴⁰ Rietbergen 2006, p. 111. In 1621 the first edition was reprinted identically in Paris, in 1623 a slightly varied second edition was published.



Figure 46 – Title page for Urban VIII. 1631; engraving by Claude Mellan after Bernini. Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-71.230. © Rijksmuseum.

had been famed as a neo-Latin poet in his own right, reviving a Pindaric style and the *poesia sacra*, the printing of eighteen editions of his poems probably owed more to the fact that he was elected to the papacy. After his death, his poetry was not re-issued for a long time.

The first really important edition in relation to title pages was published in Rome in 1631 under the aegis of the Society of Jesus.²⁴¹ For the first time, the pope's poems appeared in an illustrated, decorated, and enlarged edition (Fig. 46). 31 additional poems were printed and, just as Moretus would three years later, the Jesuits used two great artists to illustrate the volume: Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini (1598–1680) and the engraver Claude Mellan (1598–1688).²⁴² Bernini had been in the Pope's service from early in his life. In 1614, his father, Pietro Bernini, was commissioned to sculpt a statue for the Cappella Barberini. Soon after this, from 1617 onwards, the son was commissioned for statues of the Saints Laurence and Sebastian, as well as the busts of Barberini's parents.²⁴³ A liaison with the Bernini workshop was maintained and from the time of Maf-

²⁴¹ Urban VIII. 1631.

²⁴² Wiendlocha 2005, pp. 310–311.

²⁴³ Schütze 2007, pp. 193–194.

feo's election to the pontificate, Bernini was Barberini's favourite artist for all of the Pope's greater projects.²⁴⁴

Notwithstanding the sumptuous appearance of the book, the edition by the Jesuits was mainly made for educational purposes; hence the book contained a tabular overview of the poems' metres. For the students of Latin poetry the metres were schematically introduced before each poem in the work. The panegyric nature of the book was expressed through its very elaborate decoration: each page was printed in two colours, and bees could be found in many depictions and on many pages, while vignettes and decorations and occasionally prints by Mellan were interspersed throughout the book. This strange combination of schoolbook and dedicatory publication was published by the *Typographia Vaticana*, the official press of the Vatican library, but in the same year the same publisher printed a cheaper edition for schoolroom use.²⁴⁵

Rietbergen suggests that a demand for the books must have existed as the Vatican press and the Apostolic Chamber reissued their editions while the *Officina Plantiniana* brought out its own version a year later,²⁴⁶ but, as the Jesuits had intended this book of poems for the schoolroom, it is no surprise that the title was constantly reissued. The demand was created by the Jesuits and their educational programme rather than by a frenzy for Urban's poetry. However, the various editions were created for different readerships; a reader of the Plantinian edition was certainly no normal school boy sitting in a Jesuit schoolroom, and it is questionable whether that was the case with the edition containing the Bernini title page. The title page alone suggests an affluent readership, although the didactic aim of the Roman edition could mean that the book was awarded as a prize by the Jesuits for excellent students, while Moretus's edition was aimed at a bibliophile reader.

The title page by Bernini for the 1631 edition is conceived as the illusionistic rendering of a print, corners of the depicted paper curling up, in which the title of the book is above the image. On the subscript, where usually the dedication for such prints would be, all the relevant information is placed: city, printer, date, designer, and engraver. The print shows the fight between David and the lion (I Sm 17,34–37). In the image, the lanky youth, particularly vulnerable in his nakedness, is about to strangle the fierce lion, placed on top of a rock. David's lyre is lying in the foreground, causing the viewer to anticipate the end of the fight upon which David will pick up his lyre again. The lyre, and musical instruments in general, had by that time already become the standard symbols of poetry. David, king and psalmist, praised for his valour as a warrior after this fight against the lion, might refer to Pope Urban VIII here, who put aside his lyre in order to fight for Christendom. Or, as Mary Alice Lee suggests, it indicates a basic analogy of the word and the sword in the

²⁴⁴ Ibid., p.193.

²⁴⁵ Wiendlocha 2005, p. 311. Pope Sixtus V reorganised curial bureaucracy and established the Vatican Press in 1587 in order to print religious books himself. Rietbergen 1983, p. 90.

²⁴⁶ Rietbergen 2006, p. 118.

defence of the faith.²⁴⁷ David was the archetype of the Christian poet, and was specifically revered by Maffeo Barberini: in an ode he asked Italy's youth to take up his lyre and continue his work.²⁴⁸ Later Barberini himself was revered as the new David.²⁴⁹

Rubens's Title Page for Barberini's *Poemata* (1634): a Question of Artistic Rivalry

With his title page, Rubens went into an artistic competition against Bernini by using the title page's main theme: the fight with the lion (Fig. 47).²⁵⁰ Rubens knew Bernini's title page, to which not only the depicted fight with the lion attests, but also the use of Urban VIII's portrait. This portrait was depicted on the second page of the Plantinian edition and reverses Bernini's portrait faithfully from the earlier edition.²⁵¹ That Rubens took up Bernini's design and went into direct artistic competition with him is maybe not surprising, for the Pope was a powerful patron for whom Rubens had so far not been asked to work. Instead of commissioning Rubens, Urban VIII employed his local artists, Bernini and Pietro da Cortona (1596/7–1669). For the tapestry series of the *Life of Constantine*, for instance, Cardinal Francesco Barberini rather commissioned Cortona to design new tapestries in order to complete the series, instead of buying the remaining tapestries designed by Rubens.²⁵² Earlier, during Rubens's stay in Italy, when Cardinal Maffeo Barberini decorated his newly bought chapel in Sant'Andrea della Valle, he must have known about the artist; Rubens had provided the paintings for the new altars in S. Croce in Gerusalemme and S. Maria in Vallicella.²⁵³ On 29 November, 1604, Maffeo Barberini had contracted Domenico Passignano for the decoration of his new family chapel, during a time in which Rubens might have been available to him.²⁵⁴

Thus it can be assumed that neither the author, nor his agent, his nephew, Cardinal Francesco Barberini, commissioned Rubens with the title page. The publisher, however, had a great interest in pleasing the author. In November 1633 and again in January 1634 Moretus writes to the intermediaries, A. Brogiotto and G. B. Brogiotto Timantino, that he is awaiting judgement from the Pope on this new, Antwerpian edition and that printing has been halted until then.²⁵⁵ The edition was printed in quarto, embellished with a title page and a portrait of the author, and contained 10 new poems. It is possible that Moretus was anxious about the success of this book, because he had

²⁴⁷ M. A. Lee 1993, pp. 85–89.

²⁴⁸ Schütze 2007, pp. 240–241.

²⁴⁹ Preimesberger 1989, p. 125; Schütze 1994, pp. 271–273.

²⁵⁰ Cf. also Zurawski 1979, pp. 83–84.

²⁵¹ *ibid.*, p. 83.

²⁵² Zurawski 1989, p. 34.

²⁵³ This point is made by *Ibid.*, p. 24. For Santa Croce see Vlieghe 1972, nos. 110–112, pp. 56–58; for the altar in Santa Maria in Vallicella, see Buttler 2011 and Mühlen 1996.

²⁵⁴ Cf. Schütze 2007, ch. 2, for the work on the Cappella Barberini.

²⁵⁵ See Letter from Moretus to G. B. Brogiotto Timantino, 21 Nov 1633, in: Judson and Van de Velde 1977b, p. 370; and Letter from Moretus to A. Brogiotto, 9 Jan 1634, in: *ibid.*, pp. 369–370.

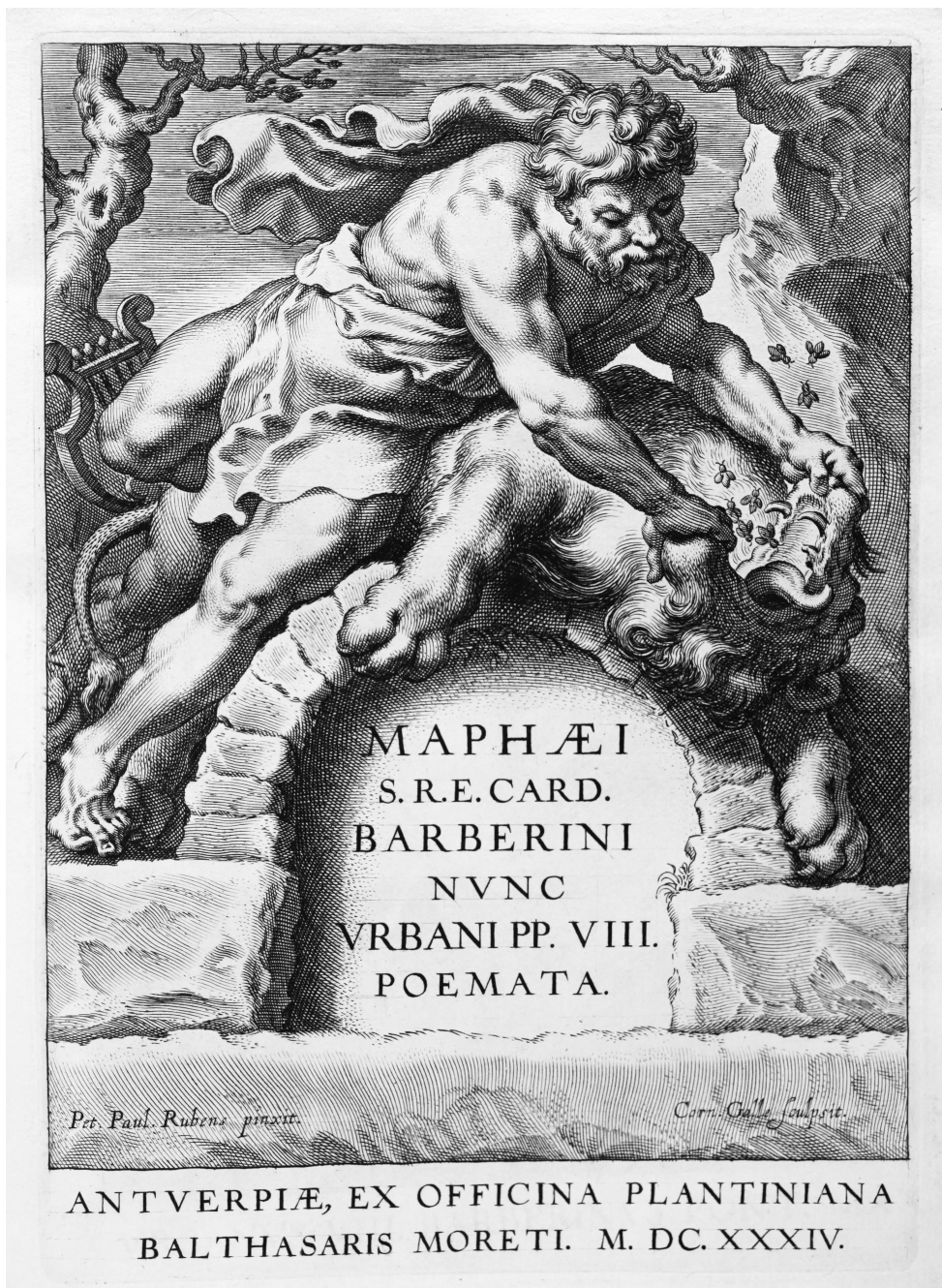


Figure 47 – Title page for Barberini 1634; engraving: 197 × 141 mm by Cornelis Galle I after Rubens. Private Image.

faced some competition for obtaining the long-held papal privilege for his liturgical works, which in effect was the monopoly for printing these works.²⁵⁶ It seems that those printers with a good relationship with local bishops had gained the desired privileges at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The new edition of the Pope's poetry might have been Moretus's way of drawing Papal attention to himself and thus gaining an advantage over the other printers in Antwerp.

A title page by the most successful painter of Antwerp could have been a good investment for this end, and Rubens's design for the Pope's poetry is one of the most dramatic title pages he designed. On this title page, the protagonist is no meagre youth, but a Herculean Samson, dynamic and powerful.²⁵⁷ Samson was repeatedly depicted by the Rubens workshop.²⁵⁸ The story of Samson is related in *Judges*: how Samson came across a young lion while walking to Timnah, where he wanted to marry a young Philistine woman. On the way, the spirit of the Lord came over him and he killed the lion with his bare hands before continuing his journey. He later returned to the place and found that bees had built their state in the lion's skin. He ate some honey and took some back for his parents. In the negotiations with the Philistines he used this episode to pose a riddle and a bet: "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness."²⁵⁹

On Rubens's title page not only the body of the protagonist is bigger and more muscular than on Bernini's; the scene seems more monumental, the shading in the print increasing this effect. This depiction of the hero's *fortitudo* is especially caused by the positioning of Samson, emphatically leaning across a rusticated arch. The way in which Rubens depicts Samson conflates his two engagements with the lion: he is both tearing the animal apart with his bare hands,²⁶⁰ while the bees flying above the animal suggest the later scene in which he harvests the honey from the carcass.²⁶¹ In Medieval typological readings, Samson was seen as a prefiguration of Christ and this topic was often addressed. This Christological symbolism had not been forgotten in the seventeenth century, but it was not as prevalent as the reading of Samson as a model of courage and virtue.²⁶² The way in which the scene is shown by Rubens, with the emphasis on the courage and the virtue of the protagonist, also evokes associations of Hercules' fight with the Nemean lion.²⁶³ Thus the figure fighting the lion evokes courage, virtue and power while at the same time acting as a prefiguration of Christ.

²⁵⁶ Van Rossem 2014a, pp. 85–90.

²⁵⁷ For commentaries on this title page, cf. Büttner 2015c, pp. 162–164; Büttner 2014a, p. 118; Freedberg 1998, p. 273; Judson and Van de Velde 1977a, no. 68, pp. 283–287; Held 1977, no. 3, pp. 54–55.

²⁵⁸ D'Hulst et al. 1989, nos. 26–28, pp. 96–104.

²⁵⁹ Judges 14:14.

²⁶⁰ Judges 14:6.

²⁶¹ Judges 14:9.

²⁶² D'Hulst et al. 1989, p. 98.

²⁶³ Cf. the drawing for "Hercules Strangling the Nemean Lion", dated to the mid-30s by Logan, in: Logan and Plomp 2005, pp. 296–297, no. 110.

But, of course, the title page also refers to Maffeo Barberini. Again, as in the Aguilonius title page, the details in this image and its ambiguity, lead to a multitude of possible interpretations. McGrath has suggested that this openness of the title pages should not only be sought in Rubens's preference for generalised allegorical inventions.²⁶⁴ The "dangers of misinterpretations", so well-known to Rubens, were intensified with the lack of interpretive context. Books travel, they can be read by many readers, and their title pages with their basic function of pleasing a reader provide that. The interpretation changes with the reader, as will be shown below. Very few readers can be pinpointed, but there is always at least one ideal reader: the patron. It is possible that in this case the family of the Pope and his court could also be incorporated into the group of ideal readers. These would have recognised the bees as a thinly veiled reference to the Barberini coat-of-arms, as the three bees appeared everywhere in Rome and the Papal States: the papal critic Gregorio Leti claimed that he had counted some twenty thousand bees in the city.²⁶⁵ Because of this the bees were major protagonists in this image, and they also carried a number of other associations.

Bees carrying the sweet honey of enthusiasm and setting it down onto the lips of the sleeping were a mythological motif in describing the lives of poets and philosophers.²⁶⁶ Thus the insects visited not only Pindar, but also Plato, Sophocles, Virgil and Lucan. For Plato already, only a real poet received this kind of enthusiasm, and not those who had to toil day and night to apply their art to poetry.²⁶⁷ Honey was likened to enthusiasm, which acted like glue between the words of poetry, so that bees themselves were soon read as a sign of eloquence.²⁶⁸ But Plato also compared the souls of poets to bees flying from flower to flower to collect the sweetness of melody, an image that was later used by Petrarch: a poet should imitate by flitting from poetic model to poetic model, gathering the best and creating a new poetic work from this.²⁶⁹ What is more, bees were also called the birds of the muses and were said to be an expression of the Divine, the *anima mundi*. There is almost no author, classical or early modern, who did not use the metaphor and image of bees in one way or other: either because of their importance for humans, the simile they offer when their state is compared to that of humans as in *Henry V* by Shakespeare,²⁷⁰ because of the bees' ingenuity,²⁷¹ because of the sweetness they produce, or because of their good example which humans can follow, as they "recognise only common good" as Pliny maintains.²⁷² They were also said to be

²⁶⁴ McGrath 2016, pp. 62–66.

²⁶⁵ Gregorio Leti, *Il nepotismo di Roma* (Amsterdam 1667), Vol. I, pp. 208, 228. Rietbergen 2006, p. 1.

²⁶⁶ Waszink 1974, p. 17.

²⁶⁷ Plato 2015, 245 A.

²⁶⁸ For which see also Lefkowitz 2012, pp. 59 and 80.

²⁶⁹ Plato, Ion 534.

²⁷⁰ I, 2, l. 333–335.

²⁷¹ Waszink 1974, p. 34.

²⁷² See more on that in Haarhoff 1960.

connected to souls, as Sophocles had compared the dead to a buzzing swarm of bees,²⁷³ and the spirits of the departed were said to leave the body in the form of a bee.²⁷⁴

This latter, classical idea was used in a poem in Barberini's *Poemata*: the poem dedicated to Maffeo's deceased brother Antonio Barberini mentions the Samson episode,²⁷⁵ directly referring to Samson taking the honey from the slain lion, meaning that "the spirit could rise from a defeated body".²⁷⁶ That Rubens took the image from this poem written by Barberini in memory of his brother as the topic for his title page, would at least be obvious to the most important readers of all: the Pope himself and his family.

In contrast to Bernini, Rubens does not take up the image of the Pope as the next poet-king David who is engaged in his fight against evil; instead, he focusses on the aspect of the triumphant fighter. By modifying the aspect of his hero from Bernini's lanky David into his muscular Samson, he changes the interpretive context. By giving Samson an ambivalent posture, Rubens combines the fight with the finding of the lion, thus not only merging two events that were days apart but also enabling an allusion to Hercules' fight with the Nemean lion. The image offers many possibilities for a favourable interpretation regarding his Holiness Urban VIII. The notion that sweet poetry has come out of the strong, and an equation of the Pope with such a model of virtue and courage as Samson was certainly flattering. Rubens also refers to Bernini's design, most certainly known to his single most important reader. The reference to Bernini's David is reinforced by the lyre in the background, normally not included depictions of Samson.²⁷⁷ Sufficient parallels in the images make the reference to this earlier title page possible, and the knowledgeable reader is thus witness to a case of artistic competition: Rubens not only delivers a more fitting image, alluding to a personally important poem by Maffeo Barberini, but also manages to express both the Pope's strength and his accomplishments in poetry in a visually more captivating, monumental and dynamic image. Compared to this Samson, Bernini's David is a powerless youth. The title page for the Pope's poetry appear at the centre of several other title pages Rubens produced for neo-Latin poetry patronised by this Pope. In the following, the same kind of analysis of the title pages and the production histories of their books was used in order to see whether Rubens used a similar symbolism in his other designs, and whether this symbolism related to the genre or the patron.

²⁷³ Waszink 1974, p. 27.

²⁷⁴ The comparison of the activity of the deceased souls with the activity of a swarm of bees is from Vergil. Cf. Ibid., p. 27. See also Büttner 2015c, p. 162.

²⁷⁵ Barberini 1634, pp. 250–253.

²⁷⁶ "Ac veluti Samson dulces ex ore perempti Leonis accipit favos" in Judson and Van de Velde 1977a, p. 284.

²⁷⁷ Glang-Süberkrüb 1977, col. 641.

5.4.2 | Neo-Latin Poetry by Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski

Two years earlier, Rubens had already produced a title page in which Pope Urban VIII and his bees featured largely, the title page for the *Lyricorum Libri IV*. This book was written by Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski (1595–1640) who, although almost unknown today, was considered to be one of the greatest neo-Latin poets in his time and beyond. He influenced the literary endeavours of countless poets in Europe and had a lasting effect long into the nineteenth century.²⁷⁸ Although vernacular literatures developed rapidly from the Renaissance onwards, neo-Latin poetry was still written until long into the eighteenth century: in an attempt to revive the language of the classical world, humanists all over Europe imitated and emulated the great Roman and Greek poets, such as Horace and Pindar.²⁷⁹

Born in the Polish town of Sarbiewo in 1595, Sarbiewski was educated at the Pultusk Jesuit college from the age of twelve to seventeen, when he joined the order.²⁸⁰ He taught rhetoric and poetics at various Jesuit colleges before going on to study at the Vilnius Academy, and at the Collegium Germanicum in Rome from 1622 to 1625.²⁸¹ Rome at this time was a blossoming metropolis in which, from 1623, Urban VIII and the Barberini family promoted all cultural endeavours be they religious, architectural, artistic, poetic, or scientific, and the bees of the family's coat-of-arms dominated the city. In this thriving cultural climate Sarbiewski not only met fellow Jesuits from all over Europe, but also built many lifelong friendships with scholars outside the Society of Jesus. In 1623 he represented his order at the inauguration of the new Pope with a poem on the new Golden Age, his *Auream saeculum*.²⁸² For this ad hoc performance, Sarbiewski reused a panegyric poem he had written for a Polish prince; as a reward he received a ride in the papal carriage.²⁸³ Two years later, shortly before leaving Rome, he again presented his work. This time he presented his first collection of poems, the *Lyricorum libri tres*, to Pope Urban VIII, for which he received a gold medal.²⁸⁴ In the same year, 1625, this collection was published for the first time in Cologne while he was back in Poland, teaching. From 1628 he taught at the Vilnius Academy where he acquired his doctoral degrees in philosophy (1632) and theology (1636), and where he published a second, enlarged edition of odes.²⁸⁵ After taking his final orders in 1629, he continued teaching in Vilnius. From 1635 to 1640 Sarbiewski held the post of court preacher, and died only a month after his resignation from the position in April 1640.

²⁷⁸ For a detailed bibliography cf. Bertram 2018a.

²⁷⁹ Fordonski et al. 2010, p. 17.

²⁸⁰ Sarbiewski 1995, p. xliii.

²⁸¹ Ibid., p. xliii.

²⁸² The poem is found in the Biblioteca Vaticana as Cod. Barb. Lat. 2105.

²⁸³ Wiendlocha 2006, p. 10.

²⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 11.

²⁸⁵ Vilnae: Formis Academicis Societatis Iesv [...], 1628.

After the publication of Sarbiewski's first edition of poems in 1625 more than twenty editions followed in the next century alone, published all over Europe and with varying contents. As was usual, this first edition was not merely reprinted, but continuously enlarged over the next editions.²⁸⁶ Their final Horatian form of four books seems to have been reached, however, in the editions of the Officina Plantiniana. Moretus knew that the book would sell; he even considered an engraved title page for its small edition, something he did not often do. The 1634 edition published by Moretus had over 100 odes collected in four books and at least 119 epigrams, which bear the influence of Horace, resulting in Sarbiewski's nicknames as the "Christian" or "Polish" Horace.

About 60 editions of Sarbiewski's lyrics were published over the next centuries, fifteen of them in Poland.²⁸⁷ But even in Anglican England, Casimir, as he was known there, was very popular and his poems were used in grammar schools to teach Latin. Many students had to translate his poems as Latin exercises, which is why so many of them were so influential on young poets. Complete editions translated into the vernaculars are rare, however, although individual poems were translated into many European languages, often also by poets.²⁸⁸ His concise language made it difficult to translate both form and content accurately, which is one of the reasons why the reception of Sarbiewski's poetry decreased with the falling interest in Latin poetry.²⁸⁹ That a Jesuit priest and poet was able to fascinate readers in Anglican England or the Dutch Provinces, otherwise not very welcoming to Jesuits, is rather surprising, but can be explained by the variety of odes and the nature of his poetry.²⁹⁰

Sarbiewski's language was closely modelled on classical Latin, it was very concise and erudite. Allegedly, he had read Virgil sixty times, and other, unnamed classical authors between ten and twenty times.²⁹¹ Even if it is not true, the account alone is a sign of how close Sarbiewski must have

²⁸⁶ *Lyricorum libri III*: Coloniae Agrippinae: sumptibus Bernardi Gualteri, 1625; Vilnae: Formis Academicis Societatis Iesv [...], 1628; Antverpiae: Typis Ioannis Cnobbari, 1630; *Lyricorum libri IV*: Lugduni Batavorum: Typis Bonaventurae et Abrahami Elzeviriorum, 1631; Antverpiae: ex officina Plantiniana, 1632 (the only quarto edition); Antverpiae: ex officina Plantiniana, 1634; Romae: Apud Hermannum Scheus ..., 1643; Antverpiae: Officina Plantiniana 1646; The Odes of Casimire Translated by G. H., H. Moseley, London, 1646; *Lyricorum Libri IV*: Antverpiae: ex officina Plantiniana Balthasaris Moreti, 1647; Divione: Apud Petrum Palliot [...] 1647; Parisiis: Apud Gasparum Meturas, vi Jacobae, sub signo SS. Trinitatis, 1647; Lutetiae Parisiorum: Apud I. Henault ..., 1647; Coloniae Vbiorvm, apud Iodocum Kalcovium, 1648; Coloniae Vbiorvm: Apud Iodocum Kalcovium, 1659; [Breslau?] 1660; Venetiis: Balleonius, 1668; Venetia: n.p., 1697; Calissii: typis Collegij Societatis Iesv, 1681; Coloniae: Sumptibus Godefridi Meucheri, 1682; Cantabrigiae, apud R. Green, 1684; Venezia: L. Baseggio, 1697; Coloniae Agrippinae: sumpt. Joannis Everhardi Fromart, 1721.

²⁸⁷ Fordonski et al. 2010, p. 20.

²⁸⁸ Apparently the first Polish edition was published in 1852 in "rather inaccurate Polish renderings". Ibid., p. 20.

²⁸⁹ The earliest edition of a translated *Lyricorum* was published in England in 1646. Fordonski and Urbanski identified six waves of interest in Sarbiewski's poetry in England from the seventeenth century onwards. They did not deem it necessary to give any kind of proof for their claims, so that I have to take their estimates at face value. Ibid., p. 23.

²⁹⁰ For an account on the influence of Sarbiewski in the Provinces cf. Hulsboom 2016. For the German reception see P. Drews, "Die deutsche Sarbiewski-Rezeption im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert", in: Schäfer 2006a, p. 271–288.

²⁹¹ An account from 1827 maintains that a copy of Virgil was found in Drohic, that belonged to Sarbiewski and in which he had annotated how often he had read Virgil and other Latin authors. Budik 1827, p. 164.

come to his classical models. Sarbiewski's poems are, apart from the formal references he shares with other neo-Latin writers, are often full of classical mythological references, mostly omitting any poetic medieval and specifically Christian language. While the underlying philosophical and religious assumptions are still at play in his poetry, allowing it to be well-received in the Christian world, his language and vocabulary is classical rather than religious, especially in those poems translated into English.²⁹² Thus the English could admire his mastery of Horatian language and form, without necessarily being confronted by the Catholic faith of its author. The odes with references to the Catholic Church were simply left out of the English editions. Of the 35 odes translated by George Hils and published in 1646, only five are directly related to the Christian faith, such as "Out of Solomon's sacred marriage song" and "The Voice of Christ upon the Cross".²⁹³ In Hils's edition the name of Urban VIII does not appear, neither does the *Carmen Saeculare* or any other ode or epigram with a strong reference to the Church or Catholicism.²⁹⁴

Sarbiewski's poetry did not only emulate the language of Horace, but also the structure of his odes and epodes, as well as the patriotic undertone Horace develops from the first ode onwards. While Horace mixes Greek and Roman literary traditions and allusions in order to express his belief in the young Caesar as the saviour of the *res publica*, Sarbiewski transposes this onto the religious war and his saviour, Pope Urban VIII.

The First Editions of Sarbiewski's Poetry

A first collection of Sarbiewski's poems was published in Cologne in 1625, the year he left Rome. It is unclear why the manuscript was published in Cologne and how it reached its printer and publisher Bernhard Walter.²⁹⁵ The volume itself contains only a fraction of the odes present in later editions. It seems, however, that Sarbiewski was personally involved in the printing process: after the last book of epigrams, four additional poems were printed and the continuing pagination suggests that the printing of the book was largely finished by the time these odes reached the printer. Sarbiewski must have sent them to Cologne in the summer of 1625, as three of them are dedicated to Urban VIII and the last celebrates the sanctification of Queen Elisabeth of Portugal, celebrated on 25 May 1625. Sarbiewski sent these odes to the printer to be added to his book, possibly in order to thank the Pope and to commemorate the event of the sanctification, even though it was

²⁹² In a comparison of two hymns written by Urban VIII and one hymn by Sarbiewski, this difference is made visible by Jolanta Wiendlocha. Wiendlocha 2006, p. 17.

²⁹³ Cf. Fordonski et al. 2010.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.; see for instance Freyburger 2006.

²⁹⁵ The dedicatory epistle is written to Nicolaus Veierus by A. Pyratinius who was given the manuscript of these books by a young man called Marcus Golenius. However, the "Typographis Lectori" at the end of the book of epigrams has differing information in the various copies. Manuwald 2006, p. 35. A copy of the *Lyricorum Libri Tres* in manuscript is preserved in the Biblioteca Vaticana as Cod. Barb. lat. 1941. It was the copy for which Sarbiewski received the Papal medal.



Figure 48 – Title page for Sarbiewski 1625; engraving, unknown engraver.

by then not possible to change the dedicatory epistle or the arrangement of the odes.²⁹⁶ Nothing further is known about the dedicatee or the printer of this book, nor about the engraver.

From this first edition onwards, all the title pages for Sarbiewski's work emphasise the lyre or musical instruments in general (Fig. 48).²⁹⁷ This is shown by the Cologne title page of Sarbiewski's work of 1625 featuring a viola da gamba.²⁹⁸ The viola da gamba was a refined, rather elite instrument in the seventeenth century, also shown several times in the *Allegory of Hearing* by Rubens and Bruegel, and they were produced in Cologne in the seventeenth century.²⁹⁹ Although stringed instruments were often used on title pages for poetic works, the 1625 title page is still unusual in that the letters of the title are presented on the musical instrument rather than on any other back-

²⁹⁶ Manuwald 2006, p. 35.

²⁹⁷ Although the lyre was the instrument used to introduce poetical works, poetry could also be represented by other instruments. Cf. introduction to this chapter, section 5.4.

²⁹⁸ The instrument is quite large and could be anything between contrabasso, a viola da braccio, a viola grande or basso di viola da gamba. The terms are endless and not standardised and it does not help that the instrument is only depicted schematically. Bonta 2011.

²⁹⁹ There was a well-known family of lute makers in Cologne, Bochem; cf. Josef Zuth, *Handbuch der Laute und Gitarre*, p. 44.



Figure 49 – Title page for Sarbiewski 1630b; engraving (?).

ground, and in that the muse, already wearing a laurel wreath, holds a second wreath in an oddly raised arm. The gesture suggests that the muse was supposed to hold a bow in her hand with which she could have played the instrument. Maybe the design was intended to be a frontispiece for a work on music or sheets of music and was reused in this way.

The viola was a frequently used instrument in both book illustrations and frescoes, mostly in angelic choirs. Such a choir was depicted on the first Antwerpian edition of the *Lyricorum libri tres*. On this title page a choir of angels is singing from a book on which the title of Sarbiewski's book is presented (Fig. 49).³⁰⁰ It was published by Jan Cnobbaert (1590–1637) in 1630 who had a small printing company “near the professed house of the Society of Jesus”.³⁰¹ Cnobbaert's printing company produced largely vernacular books and collaborated closely with the Jesuits.³⁰² As Cnob-

³⁰⁰ Sarbiewski 1630a.

³⁰¹ On Cnobbaert see Van Havre 1884, pp. 97–100; Olthoff 1891, p. 18. Cf. Lamal 2016, who emphasises that the Cnobbaerts are not well studied, pp. 130–132.

³⁰² The *Short Title Catalogue of Flanders* records 245 titles under the name Cnobbaert from 1616 to 1648 with a very balanced ratio of vernacular and Latin books, tending to print more vernacular titles. In comparison with the Officina Plantiniana in the same time period, the Cnobbaerts' output is much smaller: Moretus publishes 459 titles in the first decade and over 1000 in all three. STCV. Access Jan 2017.

baert's printing house was located near the Jesuits' professed house, it is possible that the Jesuits approached a printer close-by to print Sarbiewski's poems.

According to the tradition, Cnobbaert's edition depicts a musical aspect on its title page by showing an angelic choir. However, it was divided into two parts, showing a book in each part. The book in the lower part is an awkward repetition and provides somewhat unnecessary information. It emphasises the additional book of epigrams and the permission of the superior, neither of which needed to be mentioned here unless they were special. Maybe a book of *Lyricorum*, the poetry of the lute, was not the usual output by a Jesuit author and needed to be bolstered by an advertisement of epigrams and the permission of the order. The title page apparently needed a religious emphasis, because, apart from pointing towards the poetic content of the book by musical references, the choir invoked cosmic harmony. The angels, and by analogy the author, performed the odes not only for the reader but also for God. God is indicated through the only empty spot at the top centre of the image, to which an angel draws the reader's gaze with his baton. Just like the strange advertisement in the lower part, the emphasis of the title page is so much on the religious that it is possible that the Jesuits were eager use this to justify the classical poetry.

Rubens's Title Page for the Quarto Edition of Sarbiewski's *Lyricorum libri IV* (1632)

Balthasar Moretus produced the only quarto of Sarbiewski's odes, the fourth edition. To use such a large format for a contemporary poet was in itself a matter of distinction. Moretus was in contact with Sarbiewski before the printing as a letter of 2 May 1631 shows. In his letter, Moretus thanks Sarbiewski for the poem that the latter wrote for and dedicated to Moretus, and informs Sarbiewski of his intention to publish the odes when the edition by Cnobbaert has been sold. This consideration for his publishing colleague indicates a good relationship between the printers in Antwerp. The letter shows that Sarbiewski intended to dedicate the book to Pope Urban VIII,³⁰³ but why the dedication was not written by him but by the Antwerpian Jesuits has so far not been explained satisfactorily. However, considering the problems Moretus had in contacting Sarbiewski and several book shops in Danzig, Krakow and Vilnius in later years, it is possible that it had gone astray and the book was to be printed before it could be retrieved.³⁰⁴ The dedication by the Antwerp Jesuits

³⁰³ "Gratissimas tuas accepi, summae erga me benevolentiae indices ac testes, una cum carmine panegyrico, in quo omnia dilaudo praeter nimias meas laudes; quas non a iudicio tuo, sed ab affectu admitto; et de hoc gratias ago et mutuum repono, cum debito cultu. Reverendus Pater Bollandus varie te Lyrica auxisse, et heroicorum item Carminum librum adornare indicavit. Itaque sic auctum, innovatum et quodammodo novum opus prelo subicere haud recuso, cum Cnobarus exemplaria sua distraxerit. Et quia Pontifici Optimo Maximo inscribere statuisti, primo augustiorem et tanta maiestate haud indignam formam meditabor, deinde minorem et quae magis studiosis inserviat. Vale, reverende in Christo Pater, tuo, sacrae religionis et litterarum bono. Antverpiae, in Officina Plantiniana, postrid. Kal. Maias, 1631." Letter from Moretus to Sarbievius, 2 May 1631, in: *Sacré* 2002, p. 187, Letter no. 1.; MPM Archive 144.

³⁰⁴ About the problems Moretus had sending Sarbiewski copies of his own books, cf. *ibid.*

only mentions that the author had approved of it.³⁰⁵ Moretus printed 1,025 copies of the title page, a typical number of impressions for this sort of publication.³⁰⁶

Sarbiewski's poetry is framed by the dedication to Urban VIII and the *Epicitharisma sive Eruditorum virorum ad auctorem poemata*, an appendix containing poems in honour of Sarbiewski by fifteen of his admirers, all fellow Jesuits except for the first, Erycius Puteanus.³⁰⁷ Puteanus was at that time a professor in Louvain; he had been a student of Lipsius, thus connected to an important circle in the Southern Netherlands. In his contribution he pleads for peace and the unity of the Netherlands, invoking the famous neo-Stoic dictum (and Moretus's family motto) *Labore et constantia*. Sarbiewski answers his Belgian friends with an ode of his own published in the next edition in 1634: in "Ad Amicos Belgas" he hails all of those who had praised him in the previous edition, starting with Bollandus, possibly the best-known of all, and ending with Puteanus and Boelmans.³⁰⁸ Such an exchange of poetry among friends praising each other was not unusual, and was here celebrated in public with the aim of strengthening the ties between the actors and proclaiming an intimacy that was not necessarily there. The same exchange was celebrated between Sarbiewski and Moretus, with a poem that Moretus included in the collection. Although the addenda to the poetry celebrate a distant friendship with the author, they also show that the above-mentioned networks of humanists and Jesuits overlapped in a considerable way.

The title page focusses on the author and the patron, however, with the central placement of the patron's coat-of-arms (Fig. 50). Urban VIII's coat-of-arms is hanging above a lyre placed on an altar, and flanked by several figures. In the background two peaks can be seen, while a spring is flowing from underneath the altar. The two peaks, of which one certainly denotes Mount Helicon, create the Valley of the Muses, which was described in detail by Hesiod.³⁰⁹ Hippocrene, source of poetic inspiration, was located in the valley, together with the Sanctuary of the Muses.³¹⁰ Two trees frame the action in the foreground from which the Papal emblem hangs: a laurel to the right, and a palm tree to the left, both connected to poetic fame and victory.

On the left-hand side of the title page is Apollo, a complex deity: he is god of the Sun, the patron god of music and of poetry, but he is also the leader of the Muses, as *Apollon Musegetes*, and of their choir. While it was Hermes who created the lyre as an infant, the instrument soon became a

³⁰⁵ Sarbiewski 1632, Dedication.

³⁰⁶ The plate of the title page is still in the Museum Plantin-Moretus; no. KP 103 C.

³⁰⁷ IJsewijn attributes this collaboration to the many contacts Puteanus had, his interest in Poland, and his closeness to the Jesuits, as one of his sons was a Jesuit; IJsewijn 1998 pp. 28–29.

³⁰⁸ For "Ad Amicos Belgas" (Lyr 3,29) see Dücking 2006.

³⁰⁹ Wallace 1974.

³¹⁰ The Hippocrene was created by the hooves of Pegasus; cf. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, II, 221; idem, V, 256–264. Judson and Van de Velde 1977a, p. 267; Weber 1993, p. 86.



Figure 50 – Title Page for Sarbiewski 1632; engraving: 193 × 136mm by Cornelis Calle I. Private Image.

common attribute of Apollo.³¹¹ In the famous contest between Apollo and the satyr Marsyas, the victor, Apollo, flayed Marsyas alive for daring to challenge his virtuosity on the lyre with his base lute.³¹² Apollo has been portrayed with a lyre in hands, singing for the gods since Homeric times, often at gods' feasts in Homer's *Illiad*.³¹³ In the early modern artistic canon, his appearance was partly standardised by the print of Apollo Belvedere that was circulated in Europe from at least 1530. But even before Marcantonio Raimondi made this engraving of the marble, it received immense attention from artists after it had been placed in the Vatican in 1509.³¹⁴ Rubens's Apollo, however, is not playing his lyre, but laying it on the altar underneath the Barberini coat-of-arms.

Rubens's depiction of the altar is also intriguing. The altar is classically decorated with lion's paws and ram's heads that, apart from being a general reference to antiquity, could be read as symbols of the pastoral. The pastoral was seen as the most ancient and original of poetry, "vestustissimum genus".³¹⁵ This notion was introduced into literary discourse by the Leiden professor Joseph Justus Scaliger (1540–1609), one of the most respected authorities on the classics.³¹⁶ The shape of the altar itself is a tripod, and differs considerably from Roman altars which shows that Rubens did not use just any shape of a classical altar but differentiated between the cultures.

In this context the correspondence between Peiresc and Rubens is of importance, in which they discuss a tripod found among temple ruins in Fréjus.³¹⁷ Peiresc had written an illustrated treatise on the subject, which he sent to his friends in order to be discussed.³¹⁸ The tripod was of interest to the antiquarians, and to Peiresc especially as he wanted to solve the mystery of the Delphic oracle and Greek religion. It was understood as being sacred to Apollo or at least connected to him, which is also shown on some Greek coins (Fig. 51).³¹⁹ The altar on the title page is nothing like the image Peiresc sent to Rubens, but it has distinctive elements that it shares with it: the three legs of the

³¹¹ "The Homeric Hymn to Hermes, similar in form and style to the earlier Hymn to Apollo but written in a less serious vein, probably belongs to this period [sixth century] and is important for its description of Hermes' 'invention' of the tortoiseshell lyre (chelys-lyra)." Maas et al. 1989, p. 26.

³¹² Herodotus (7.26; cf. 5.118) and Xenophon (Anab. 1.2.8) reveal that the river Marsyas in Phrygia received its name from this foolish satyr who challenged Apollo to a musical contest with an instrument both invented and discarded by Athena. Apollodorus (1.4.2) and Hyginus (Fab. 165), two mythographers of the second century CE, as well as Ovid in both the *Fasti* and the *Metamorphoses* give more detailed accounts. Nizyńska 2001, pp. 152–153.

³¹³ It almost goes without saying that Homer was part and parcel of a humanist's education. Rubens and his friends talk about his works in letters, and two complete works of Homer are listed in the inventory of Albert's library.

³¹⁴ "The Apollo Belvedere from the Vatican his left hand resting on the tree trunk around which coils a python." Marcantonio Raimondi (ca. 1480, before 1534), ca. 1510–27, Engraving (29.1 x 16.2 cm), Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 49.97.114. Cf. Winner 1992 for Rubens's use of this statue.

³¹⁵ Manuwald 2006, p.17.

³¹⁶ For him the pastoral was "vestustissimum igitur Poematis genus ex antiquissimo viuendi more". In: *Politics and the Pastoral: a Study of the Tudor and Stuart Pastoral Eclogue as a Vehicle for Political Expression*, 1967, p. 6.

³¹⁷ Meulen 1977; P. Gassendus: *Viri illustris Nicolai Claudij Fabricij de Peiresc*, The Hague [1651], p. 152 (anno 1630).

³¹⁸ For the images see Jaffé 1989, p. 43, Figs. 6–8.

³¹⁹ Cf. Ossa-Richardson 2011, p. 266, fig. 2. Another Greek coin shows Apollo's head on one side and a tripod on the other. Bruttium, Kroton. Circa 330–300 BCE. AR nomos. Laureate head of Apollo right KPO, ornate tripod; filleted branch to left. SNG ANS 398ff; SNG Lockett 515; SNG Lloyd 623.



Figure 51 – Tripod with dolphin and crow, silver denarius of Vitellius Germanicus, from G. P. Bellori, *Adnotationes nunc primum evulgatae . . . priorum Caesarum numismata*, pl. II. II, no. 8. From Ossa-Richardson 2011, p. 266, fig. 2.

altar, their lion's feet and ram's heads at the top.³²⁰ Peiresc was convinced that his tripod was not only religious in nature, but was “a tripod of Apollo”.³²¹ Rubens did not share this conviction about the use; he thought that Peiresc's small tripod had been used to burn incense during sacrifices, but he nevertheless used its ornaments in his design for Sarbiewski's book (Fig. 52). Peiresc pursued his idea of Apollo's tripod, however, and wrote to Cardinal Barberini about it, who in turn sent him a sketch of a Roman mosaic in 1632. Rubens's allusion to Peiresc's “tripod of Apollo” would have been recognised by the Barberinis, as by most of Peiresc's correspondents.³²²

Although it suffices to read the lyre as a general symbol of poetry, the way it is offered on the altar by Apollo evokes other associations, myths and tales. The lyre as an instrument is above the lute, not only because it has a less shrill tone, but also because one can simultaneously declaim poetry to its harmonies.³²³ The lyre, as a simple stringed instrument with a soundbox and two arms surmounted by a crossbar or yoke, had been invented even before the Minoan lyre, but because of a lack of sources, the history of the lyre usually starts with these instruments depicted at around

³²⁰ These are described by Peiresc, cf. Ruelens and Rooses 1972c, “Mémoire de Peiresc sur un Trépied de Bronze”, pp. 317–331, esp. p. 327; Ossa-Richardson 2011, p. 265.

³²¹ Ibid., p. 265.

³²² For a watercolour drawing of the Roman mosaic similar to that sent by Cardinal Barberini in 1632, see Ibid., p. 271, Fig. 4.

³²³ For Hamilton the lyre refers to reason and is an instrument that accompanies the voice with harmony, whereas the *aulos* was considered a base instrument in ancient Athens, associated with slaves, prostitutes and satyrs. Hamilton, John T. *Music, Madness, and the Unworking of Language*, pp. 37–39.

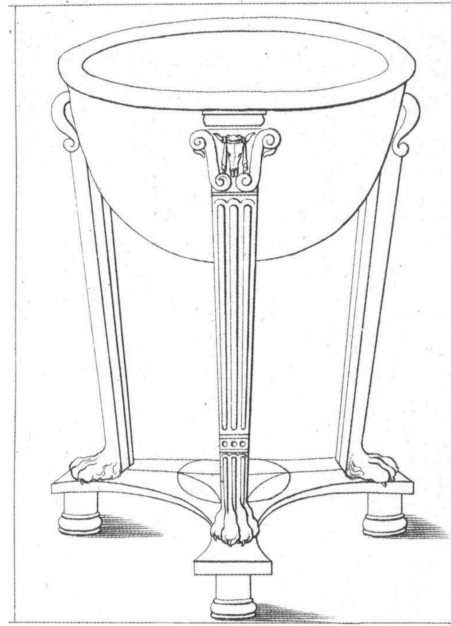


Figure 52 – Peiresc's Tripod discovered at Fréjus, 1629. Engraving published by Bernard de Montfaucon, *L'Antiquité expliquée*, II.I, pl. LIII. From Ossa-Richardson 2011, p. 265, fig. 1.

1600 BCE.³²⁴ Over the next centuries, millennia even, the names given to the lyre, the shape of the instruments, and even the number of strings have varied.

Rubens's sketch and the engraving show a very unusual lyre, with a special shape even for Rubens.³²⁵ It has a very large soundbox, it is not flat like the *kythara* that is usually depicted in Apollo's hands, its arms are shaped like horns, and rise unusually high above the cross bar. The lyre depicted here seems to be of Rubens's own invention, both the shape and the number of strings being rare.³²⁶ Maas and Snyder have shown that, while the number of strings probably remained constant throughout Greek antiquity, there was no consistent representation. Lyres could have been depicted with any number of strings depending on the material on and with which they were depicted, the space available and the artist's interest in naturalistic images.³²⁷

³²⁴ Maas et al. 1989.

³²⁵ Rubens had depicted Apollo with his lyre in other sketches, for instance in the "Sketches for the Figure of Victory" Büttner 2018, no.11c, p. 156. or in the oil sketch for "The Judgement of Midas" which later was painted by Jordaens for the Torre de la Parada in 1637. McGrath shows that Rubens had probably used Apollo's contest with Pan on his house. Although it was not an invention known from antiquity it had a high currency in the sixteenth century, especially as its main theme was ignorance or unenlightened aesthetic judgement. McGrath 1978, p. 274. Cf. also Alpers 1971, no. 41 and 41a, pls. 147–148.

³²⁶ McGrath points out that the ancient lyre was usually said to have seven or nine strings, occasionally also three or five, but rarely six as shown in the engraving. She concludes that the engraver Galle unknowingly gave Apollo's lyre an extra string, as the sketch shows it with only five. McGrath 1987, p. 237, esp. fn. 37.

³²⁷ For instance, bronzes and terra-cottas tend to show few strings, and the space on seals is limited. Cf. Maas et al. 1989, p. 203.



Figure 53 – Peter Paul Rubens, Oil sketch for Sarbiewski 1632; oil on panel, MPM.

It is in this way that the number of strings have to be understood, the lyres usually depicted by Rubens are those that can be found on antique coins. What Rubens intended with the depiction of a lyre in this shape is, however, not known. It is possible that he wanted to emphasise the pastoral with the use of horns for the lyre's arms.

On the other side of the altar and the lyre a woman with a child are depicted, commonly regarded as a muse and the young Pindar. In Rubens's oil sketch for the design, she is unambiguously identified as a muse by a feather on her head (Fig. 53).³²⁸ The same feathered muse was pointed out by Rubens in a sketch for a different book on poetry (Fig. 12 on page 69).³²⁹ On the left-hand side of the sketch Rubens left a message that the engraver should note "that the Muse has a feather on her head by which she is distinguished from Apollo" (Fig. 8 on page 52).³³⁰ Both McGrath and Held have pointed out that Rubens might have felt it necessary to include this note, as two years earlier, in the sketch for Sarbiewski's quarto, the feather he had painted was not included in the finished print.³³¹ However, for an engraver it would not have been difficult to later add this feather, if Rubens had felt it necessary. That Rubens drew attention to the feather was probably due to

³²⁸ Grisaille Sketch, Judson and Van de Velde 1977a, pp. 267–268, no. 62a.

³²⁹ Bauhuis et al. 1634. Judson and Van de Velde 1977a, pp. 268–271, no. 63 and 63a.

³³⁰ Ibid., p. 271, no. 63a: "nota quod Musa habeat Pennam in capite qua differt ab Apolline."

³³¹ See Held 1980, pp. 418–19, no. 304; McGrath 1987, p. 237.

the difficulty of distinguishing the muse from Apollo, especially as she was depicted with a lyre on this title page. Confusing Apollo with a muse occurred repeatedly throughout history, as McGrath shows, most notably in the case of the Barberini Muse, excavated in 1678: she changed her gender when she was pronounced as Apollo Citharoedus.³³² Nevertheless, in this image the muse is distinctly female and, as Apollo is already depicted, there is no danger of confusing the two. What remains ambiguous is the identity of the muse, although Calliope alone is invoked in the book.³³³ As McGrath has convincingly argued, Erato, the Lyric muse, is too often associated with erotic verse to be fitting for this book by a Jesuit author.

The missing feather opens a different interpretive possibility and with it a slightly different discourse. The two parent-like figures above the cradle, together with the garland of fruit used to hang Urban VIII's coat-of-arms, evoke the image of the Golden Age, as put forth in Virgil's "Fourth Eclogue".³³⁴ In Virgil's "Fourth Eclogue", the new Golden Age is characterised by the reign of Apollo, the return of the virgin and the birth of a child. The meaning of the child has been read in multiple ways over the past centuries: it is possible to read this child in its historical context as the son of Octavia and Marc Anthony, the ruler whose marriage brought an end to Civil War; but the child could also have been read as representing a link between the past, present, and future, a "symbol of continuity and an embodiment of the survival of Rome"; or in religious and mythological terms as the birth of a prophet.³³⁵ Whatever the interpretation of Virgil might be, a Golden Age in terms of a lost age of prosperity and peace whose renewal was dependent on the return of the virgin and the birth of a child, the symbolism of the child lends itself to a Christian reading.

The title page to Sarbiewski's poetry can be read particularly well in terms of the coming of the Golden Age. Sarbiewski had addressed Urban as the herald of a Golden Age in his laudatory poem of 1625, *Aureum saeculum Urbano VIII. P. O. M. Orbi invecum*. Even more so, as Sarbiewski's first ode connects Urban VIII with this state of abundance and an earthly paradise. The idealisation of the Saturnian life of peasants in Virgil is reflected in the pastoral landscape in the background of the title pages, and the rams' heads on the altar. This pastoral scene signifies an absence of war, a fertility and abundance reflected in the garland that flanks the coat-of-arms with angels' heads, and the flourishing of the arts and of harmony as signified by Apollo's lyre. And all this is promised by the child, or, as Sarbiewski had earlier claimed in his poetry, by the new Pope Urban VIII. In this reading of the title page, the gesture of the "virgin" that connects the child with the coat-of-arms

³³² Ibid., pp. 234–235, esp. fn. 12.

³³³ Once by Libens and several times by Sarbiewski in I, 10; II, 20; and IV, 9.

³³⁴ At least Philip had read Virgil's Bucolic Eclogues, and it stands to reason that Rubens had also read them long before he obtained a different edition in 1637 from Moretus. Arents et al. 2001, p. 286, O11 and 12 for a note on Virgil to Lipsius in 1604 (the Works of Virgil had been published by Plantin in 1580 and in Paris in 1600); p. 198, E 190 and 192 for the "aankopen bij de Officina Plantiniana" in 1637. Rubens had alluded to this topic already in his title page for Lessius and the just virgin Astraea.

³³⁵ Whittaker 2007, p. 65.

is anything but ambiguous, for in this context the child, as Urban VIII, is proclaimed as the herald of peace and a Golden Age.

The title of epode VI, “Carmen Saeculare Divinae Sapientiae in anno saeculari MDCXXV C m Vrbans VIII. Pont. Opt. Max. portam auream aperiret”, announces 1625 as the year in which Urban opens the golden gate. Sarbiewski’s *Carmen Saeculare* is closely related to Horace’s hymn of the same title, while the latter “shows evidence of a complex intertextual relationship with the Fourth Eclogue”.³³⁶ These literary relationships must have been obvious to Sarbiewski, who, even if he had not read Virgil about sixty times, would have known his Virgil just as Rubens or the educated readers of this book did theirs. Especially those texts which lend themselves to a Christian reading had long become key texts of early modern humanism.

The insects have commonly been read as bees referring to the Pope,³³⁷ but because the bees are placed above the infant’s mouth, the child is commonly interpreted as the young Pindar and the female figure behind it as a muse. Pindar was considered to be the greatest Greek lyric poet at least from the Augustan age onwards, during which time Rome began to develop a serious interest in the Greek writer.³³⁸ The most successful *aemulus* of Pindar was without doubt Horace;³³⁹ in the sixteenth and following centuries the two poets were frequently compared.³⁴⁰ By invoking this relationship between Pindar and his *aemulus*, Rubens invoked other similar relationships of *aemulatio*, as this was how poets were educated: imitating and emulating, and finally superseding a great poet. By analogy, the same claims are made for Sarbiewski and Urban VIII on this title page.

However, bees offer wide possibilities for interpretation, and their symbolism is not necessarily related to Pindar only.³⁴¹ Like most of famous poets, Pindar was said to have been visited by the bees who put their honey onto his lips, the honey being that of poetic enthusiasm.³⁴² With the inclusion of Barberini’s emblem bound between the two trees, a reminder of the Pope’s own poetry, it is possible to interpret the child in this context as representing the Pope. In this context, the bees can be seen in analogy to the soul of the poet who collects the best for his poetry by flitting from

³³⁶ Whittaker 2007, p. 76.

³³⁷ Nave 1997, pp. 140–141, no. 44a/b; Judson and Van de Velde 1977a, p. 266; Judson and Hoozee 1977, p. 59, no. 23a; H. Bouchery et al. 1941, pp. 81 and 139ff.

³³⁸ Kennedy 1975, p. 9.

³³⁹ Ibid., p. 11.

³⁴⁰ Both names had become descriptions of quality: it was possible to describe an early modern poet in terms of the one or the other, but it was possible to call a great poet a new Pindar, although his poetry was more Horatian in form and language. Waszink 1974, pp. 78–79.

³⁴¹ See section 5.4.1.

³⁴² Waszink 1974, p. 17. Of Pindar it is said that bees built a honeycomb in his mouth while he was sleeping which is why his poetry is so sweet, while Pindar himself links honey to poetry; Crane, p. 401–402. Cf. Dornseiff, *Pindars Stil*, Berlin 1921, p. 61. Others report of bees feeding the child honey, which is what Cicero says of the infant Plato, and which he interprets as a sign that he would be marvellously eloquent. Cicero. *De Div. i.* 78. See e.g. Philostratus, *Imagines*, Book II, 13.

poetic flower to poetic flower.³⁴³ In their dedication to Urban VIII the Antwerp Jesuits explain that the book was born with his help, because of his example, and through his appreciation. With the inclusion of several odes dedicated to Urban in the first book of the Antwerpian editions, the relationship of Sarbiewski and Urban as patron is strengthened. In light of this dedication the child could be the symbolic child that Urban helped bring forth, namely the book and its poet. The child could depict the little Sarbiewski, to whom the muse shows Urban VIII as a worthy example and patron. The placement of Urban's coat of arms directly above the altar carrying Sarbiewski's name mirrors that ingeniously. The frame of reference opened by the bees is endless and varied: their duty and activity, their diligence and productiveness, the sweetness of their honey or the sound of their hive could be likened to the productivity of the poet or the sweetness of his poetry. In the context of Christian Horatian odes, however, reading the child as Pindar is more apt.

Thus the title page identifies its book as a poetic work belonging to a tradition that goes back to the beginnings of poetry. The various analogies which were invoked by such an image in a learned reader who had enjoyed a humanistic education are countless and depend on the knowledge and the interests of the reader, and of his reasoning in deciphering the image. It is not accidental that the letters announcing the book are inscribed on the altar. Apollo offers his lyre in honour of the Pope and to God on the altar of the *Lyricon libri IV*, while the muse, who inspires all poets, indicates the relationship between Pindar and Urban VIII, claiming both as her poets. Hippocrene flows towards the reader, inspiring the reader just as Pindar had inspired Horace, and Horace Sarbiewski. The lyre is the connective visual element in the title page, just as the poetry is the connective element for these figures. Through Sarbiewski's book both the Pope and through him God are honoured, and the muse's inspiration declared a holy one. The garlands of fruit that bind the pope's coat of arms to the trees of poetic fame are, just like the cornucopia, a symbol of abundance and nourishment, which in this context is not only applied to the poetic abundance and nourishment. Sarbiewski emphasises a vision of peace in his odes and in the concept of the four books, complete with the next edition by Moretus. In the 1634 edition this vision was expressed by the added eighth epode in imitation of Horace's sixteenth epode. It takes the European catastrophe of the Thirty Years' war and the envisioned rescue by Europe's princes as its central theme. Whereas Horace ends his fourth book with a vision of the *pax augusta*, Sarbiewski ends it with the crowning of King Władysław IV of Poland and the hope for peace in his country.³⁴⁴ With this last epode, Sarbiewski completed his emulation of Horace's work and achieved the final form of four books.

³⁴³ Plato, *Ion* 534.

³⁴⁴ Schäfer 2006b, p. 174.

Rubens's Second Title Page for Sarbiewski's *Lyriconum libri IV* (1634)

The relationship between holy inspiration and the poet is equally made clear in the title page for the next edition of Sarbiewski's work, also published by Moretus. This book, however, is not the collector's book that the quarto edition was: Moretus printed this next edition in sextodecimo, more common for contemporary poetry. Less paper was needed for smaller formats, making them cheaper and easier to sell, which would account for the immense size of this edition, reportedly 5,000 copies.³⁴⁵ Books of that size could also easily be carried around, thus they appear to have been intended for everyday use.³⁴⁶ Notwithstanding the smaller size, the pagination is almost the same and it is printed in the same pristine manner as the quarto. However, the small format made it necessary to have another title page printed, and again Rubens was asked to provide the design. He did so for this and for two other editions of poetry of similar size at the same time, which makes it possible that the other two titles were furnished with a title page in the course of designing the smaller Sarbiewski.³⁴⁷ The engraver most probably needed a large copper plate for such a small format, because a smaller plate would have been impossible to handle. Cornelis Galle is known to have engraved four smaller illustrations on one large plate, sending the whole plate to Moretus in order to have it cut in Antwerp.³⁴⁸ Thus it is possible that the other two poetic works simply received title pages because Galle would have used the larger plate in any case, and would most certainly have charged Moretus for it. For the smaller formats, Rubens decided to have less imagery on the title page and for all three small editions he reduced the forms drastically, achieving a maximum of clarity. Nevertheless, he retained the basic content of the previous title page for Sarbiewski: again the lyre is placed on an altar, framed by two trees between which six bees fly around a laurel wreath bound to the trees with two bands of white cloth.

With fewer figures and less detail, the frame of interpretation is narrower, but the title page is still comparable to the two similarly sized earlier editions with illustrated title pages (Fig. 54). As in the larger title page, the lyre plays an important role: it is placed monumentally on an antique altar, crowned by a laurel wreath. The reference to Urban VIII is reduced (the coat-of-arms had been left out) but it could still be induced by the six bees, one of which is framed by the laurel wreath. Again, Rubens emphasises the classical inheritance visible in Sarbiewski's poetry and neglects its religious colouring. In the following years this title page was copied and repeated by many publishers all over Europe and was thus one of Rubens's biggest successes. If the print runs

³⁴⁵ Plantijns Archief, Antwerpia Groothoek, 1624–1655, vol. 134, k° 222. in Chrościcki 1977, p.308, fn. 48.

³⁴⁶ This could be the reason why the book is so rare nowadays.

³⁴⁷ Rubens received 15 guilders for all three designs. Judson and Van de Velde 1977b, pp. 448–449; MPM Archives no. 134, f° 222.

³⁴⁸ Stijnman 2012, p. 145, and fn. 164, p. 237.

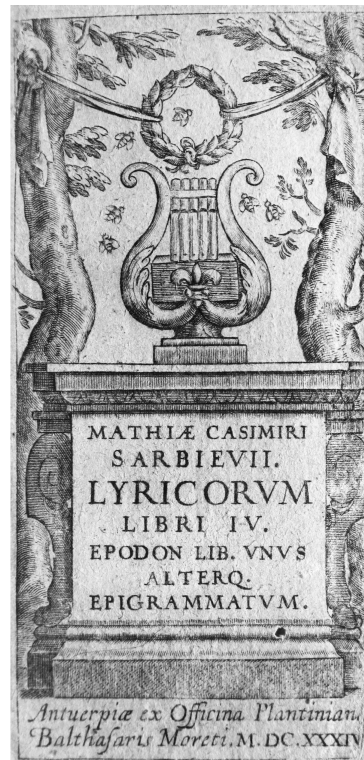


Figure 54 – Title page for Sarbiewski 1634; engraving, 100 × 50 mm, by Karel van Mallery after Rubens. Private Image.

were similar to those in Moretus's publishing house, the distribution of this title page in Europe would have been widespread indeed and with it the name of Rubens.

The Title Page for Stephanus Simoninus's *Silvae*

The quarto title page for Sarbiewski's work was used five years later for a completely different book: the *Silvae* by Stephanus Simoninus.³⁴⁹ The same plate as for the Sarbiewski quarto edition was used, the title scratched off, and the book title for the *Silvae* inserted. Simoninus's (??–1668) work is a collection of eight *silvae* and an eclogue in five books, praising Pope Urban VIII, his education, his patronage, the beatifications, his commitment to the faith and, finally, it is a plea for peace. The book is dedicated to both Pope Urban VIII and his nephew Cardinal Francesco Barberini. With the reuse of a title page, Moretus was able to enrich Simoninus's work without many added costs; something which printers often did with the plates in their possession.

³⁴⁹ Simoninus 1637.

Not much is known about Simoninus,³⁵⁰ but letters to Philippe Chifflet show that he was in Rome during 1634 and 1635.³⁵¹ Simoninus was born at the end of the sixteenth century in Gray, studied theology at a university in Flanders, and then travelled to Italy. He was allowed to recite poetry to the Pope, a distinction which had previously been granted to Sarbiewski. After returning to his province he received the title of Professor of Theology and held the chair for ten years before he died in 1668.³⁵²

Silvae, the plural of *silva*, if used in a title usually designates a collection of poems of various kinds with the association of early, insignificant verse and impromptu poetry.³⁵³ The name alone alludes to forests in general, but on title pages specific trees could also point to specific uses of the *silvae* by at least the eighteenth century: a group of cedars would indicate spiritual poetry for the reader, while cypresses would point to a lament, oak or palm trees stood for paeans of praise, and laurel was a sign of veneration.³⁵⁴ The influential *Silvae* by Publius Papinius Statius (c.45–c.96 CE) had reached the Southern Netherlands by 1595 at the latest, by means of an edition by Johan Bernaert.³⁵⁵ Bernaert was part of the Louvain circle around Justus Lipsius, who himself imitated and praised the *Silvae* by Statius repeatedly. Statius's poetry had been of interest to the most important scholars of the early modern Netherlands, whether Hugo Grotius and his circle, or Caspar Gevaerts who had borrowed Scaliger's annotated copy of Statius's poetry.³⁵⁶ Imitating Statius's *Silvae* was a common pastime in Leiden, and possibly elsewhere (as can be seen by Gevaerts), by Heinsius, Scriverius, Meursius and many others.³⁵⁷

Nevertheless, the poetry by Simoninus, with its properties usually not shared by books of *silvae*, is unusual. A defining property of this kind of text was its *varietas*, the rhetorical use of variation in language and topics used to delight a reader. The book in question, however, focuses on the life of Urban VIII, his education, his work as a patron, and the beatifications under his rule, and as such does not display the *varietas* expected from *silvae*, and the prose introductions to each chapter are highly unusual for such a work. Simoninus's insistence that his poems are not improvised but that he has worked on them for some time, as they are addressed to the single most important person

³⁵⁰ The entry in the *Zedler Universallexikon* only states that he is a little known author: "Simoninus oder Simonius (Stephan) ein unbekannter Scribent, hat Sylvas Urbanianas L. de gestis Urbani VIII. Pontif. Max. geschrieben, welches Werck zu Antwerpen 1637. in 4. herausgekommen. Barbarini Biblioth. Gryph. de Scriptor. Hist. Saecul. XVII." Zedler et al. 1743, p. 1486.

³⁵¹ It is interesting that Simoninus was in contact with Philippe Chifflet, who collected information about the Infanta Isabelle-Clara-Eugenia in these years. Cf. Bibliothèque municipale de Besançon, Tome XXXIII: 2,1 Collection Chifflet, f° 405.

³⁵² Weiss 1833, 2856, right col.

³⁵³ For a categorisation of the term *silvae*, cf. Dam 2013.

³⁵⁴ Frese 1989, p. 123. Siehe auch *Die Buchillustration im 18. Jahrhundert: Colloquium der Arbeitsstelle 18. Jahrhundert* 1980, pp. 76–92.

³⁵⁵ Cf. Dam 2008, p. 52.

³⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 61.

³⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 64.

on earth, the pope, does also break with the tradition of this poetic genre, for which the typical claim would be the spontaneity of its creation.³⁵⁸ The only characteristic of *silvae* he retained is the metrical variety of his verses. For van Dam, this and the imitation of a great variety of Latin poetry is the only link between Simoninus's poems and the poetry of Statius.³⁵⁹

Although Sarbiewski and Simoninus did not share the same literary recognition, the circumstances and the social context of the books are comparable: both authors were strict Catholics and had used the classical models for their Catholic neo-Latin poetry; both had presented their poetry to the Pope; and both expressed their hope for a new era of peace or a Golden Age under this particular Pope's leadership—all of which is expressed in the title page. There are, however, also differences. Sarbiewski wrote panegyric poetry in which the poetic content featured primarily, while Simoninus wrote panegyric poetry for the sake of the panegyric. Accordingly, Simoninus was, and has remained, little known, and only one edition of his work was printed. Simoninus never reached the kind of fame Sarbiewski enjoyed from the moment his poems were published.³⁶⁰ All of these differences also influence an interpretation of the title page.

While it was possible to read the child in the cradle as the new Pindar, referring to Sarbiewski, in the first printing of the title page, this is hardly possible in the second. In Simoninus's title page, the child relates more strongly to Urban VIII who was already famous as a poet, or to one of the older poets, Pindar or Horace. Even if the child is read as Pindar himself, the context of Sarbiewski's work opens other dimensions to the interpretation that cannot be invoked in the second work. Sarbiewski was so famous for his poetry that he was called the Polish, or the Christian, Horace. He in turn praises Urban VIII as a worthy successor of Pindar and Horace in Ode I, 22, and emphasises the role of the Pope in bringing back classical poetry both as a poet and a patron.³⁶¹ In contrast to Simoninus's book, the work of Sarbiewski can be located within this discourse of *imitatio* and *aemulatio*, the rhetorical aim to surpass a literary predecessor, and Sarbiewski could be seen as being the Apollo, or the young Pindar, being inspired by the muse. This means that the first title page can be interpreted in relation to the author as much as to Urban VIII. The second title page, however has more to do with Urban, his life and the panegyric nature of the book, than it has to do with Simoninus's poetry, as the author was, and remained, little known. Interpretations possible for the title page of the first book are not feasible for that of the second, although they use the same image. This suggests that reused title pages are highly dependent on the context within which they are presented.

³⁵⁸ Simoninus 1637, Introduction.

³⁵⁹ I am very grateful to Harm-Jan van Dam for generously giving me his time and helping me with placing this book.
³⁶⁰ Bertram 2018a.

³⁶¹ Manuwald 2006, p. 25.

5.5 | Conclusion: Humanistic Allegories on Title Pages for Jesuits

The Jesuit Bauhusius wrote to Moretus that he was sure “M. Rubens with his divine gifts will invent something to be put on it which befits my poetry, the Order to which I belong, and the Faith”.³⁶² The order and the faith were indeed of great importance to the eighteen Jesuit authors for whose work Rubens designed title pages, but that does not mean that Rubens would have changed his design in a special way for authors of this order. The books presented in the case studies above were indeed prime examples of books for important Jesuit authors, and yet all those books showed that Rubens was not overly interested in the Jesuit background of the authors. The imagery on the title pages belongs more to a humanistic background than a Jesuit one.

Although the books were written by eminent authors of the Society, the title pages did not relate to this fact in their imagery; Rubens never acknowledged the Society visually.³⁶³ He neither did so through his allegorical inventions, nor through the use of the IHS sign that usually emphasised the affiliation to the Society of Jesus on their books. When earlier title pages emphasised at least the Catholic content of the work, Rubens’s inventions worked with humanistic, and mainly classical imagery. This is not to say that it was an either-or situation. Of course, this imagery could also be understood in a deeply religious way, but the visual emphasis had shifted, as was repeatedly shown.

The large number of Jesuit authors in this chapter made it possible to investigate the collaboration between Rubens and the Society of Jesus. As was revealed through the production history of Lessius’s book, the author was not necessarily asked for approval of the design of the book and thus had little influence on the design. So even though the Jesuits had relatively easy access to Rubens and Moretus through the sodalities to which both belonged, and even though it was clear for Bauhusius that Rubens and no other artist would illustrate his book, the authors seem to have had relatively little influence on the artist or the publisher. The Society of Jesus was, however, the reason why the books discussed above were printed in the *Officina Plantiniana*, and often provided the necessary contacts to Moretus. While Aguilonius and Lessius were authors who were personally available, Sarbiewski, who by the time his book was published was back in Poland, probably came into contact with Moretus through his brethren in Antwerp.

It is nevertheless more probable that the publisher commissioned Rubens for these books, especially as most of the books were not just any books, but titles by popular authors. The many European editions printed only of Lessius’s and Sarbiewski’s works show the importance of these authors and a title page by the most prominent artist in Antwerp appears to honour them. The

³⁶² Letter from Bauhusius to Moretus, 1 Aug 1617, in: Judson and Van de Velde 1977b, p. 366.

³⁶³ This alone speaks against a so-called Jesuit style, the spectre of which still haunts the historiography of the Society of Jesus. Cf. Dekoninck 2012, Hills 2006, O’Malley 2005, Levy 2004, Bailey 1999.

fame of the authors seems to have justified an expensively engraved title page because it probably correlated to the number of editions of their books Moretus could publish.

When Moretus decided to print the 1632 edition of Sarbiewski's work in quarto and with an illustrated title page, Sarbiewski was already so famous that Moretus could advertise him as the "Polish Horace".³⁶⁴ Additionally, the book was dedicated to Pope Urban VIII, a fact that Moretus exploited and he produced a carefully designed book for the bibliophile pontifex and his family. It is entirely possible that the reason for the large size of the work and the inclusion of a title page is due to its very important patron rather than Sarbiewski's popularity. The design of the book, and its size and appearance, including the title page, made it particularly valuable for collectors, but it could also be offered as a present by the bibliophile Pope or other dignitaries.

All in all, patronage played a key role in the production of Rubens's title pages for the poetic works, with references to the patron, bees in this case, highly visible. For the Barberini *Poemata* Rubens used an allusion to the 1631 edition with a title page by Bernini and Mellan, to draw attention to his own artistic superiority while at the same time honouring the Pope. He included the Pope in the poetic allusions and the praise included in the title page for Sarbiewski's poetry. The social ties between patron and artist could have induced Rubens to participate in the project for Urban's poetry, in the hope of arousing the Pope's attention, but it seems unlikely, considering that no commission followed. It was rather the personal connection to Rubens that induced Moretus to commission him for this title page. As the Pope could issue papal privileges that granted a printer exclusive rights to publish liturgical books, Moretus was anxious to please the Pope. These privileges, with their stable income, had helped Christopher Plantin to continue printing less profitable but still important work, and it stands to reason that this practice was not abandoned over the generations. In the 1630s, however, Moretus experienced severe competition for these privileges, and it is possible that Moretus wanted to counterbalance his insufficient connections to the local bishops with this chance to please the Pope.³⁶⁵ The title page for Sarbiewski seems to have had a similar motive in attracting papal interest, although the Jesuits from Antwerp seem to have had an equally great motive. The title page, in any case, underlines the Jesuits' dedication to Pope Urban VIII.

In his design for the title page for Sarbiewski, Rubens combines classical myths and poets, the origins of poetry, and a panegyric for Urban VIII, as well as a vision of the Golden Age of peace. The ability to express the genre and the content through allegorical images that drew mostly on classical usages of images, often taken from coins, is shown on all of the title pages for poetry by Rubens,

³⁶⁴ "Seneca Lipsii et Fromondi iam a prelo meo prodiit itemque Historia Miraculorum Beatae Mariae Silvaducensis, elegantissimo stilo a Patre Othone Zyllo Soc. Jesu sacerdote conscripta et Casimiri Sarbievii (qui nostri est aevi Horatius) Lyricorum libri quattuor." Letter from Moretus to F. de Calatayud, 23 Oct 1632, in: *Sacré* 2002, p. 193, no. 6.

³⁶⁵ Van Rossem 2014a, p. 89.

as well as on the title pages for Aguilonius and Lessius. These classical references were surprisingly pronounced, considering that these authors were mostly Jesuit or strict Christian authors, including the Pope himself. Rubens distances himself there from earlier title pages for these poets, that often had a rather religious title page, for instance the angelic choir on Sarbiewski's third edition or the depiction of the cardinal virtues on Lessius. With his humanistic references to classical sources, Rubens shows that he understands the context in which the works were written, and he gives the books a more fitting framework by visually reflecting the way in which the early modern authors draw on classical authors.

However, the classical myths could be linked to a panegyric image as used in the title page for Pope Urban's own poems, enhanced by its Christian content. With the fight of Samson and the lion, Rubens enters an artistic contest against the previous title page by Bernini depicting the fight of David and the lion. Rubens can be seen to emulate the previous title page by Bernini, changing the story but not the theme of the fight, in order to encompass more by opening the interpretative field. Thus by opening this field of interpretation and the ambiguity it creates, the reader is offered what Bauhusius called entertainment: "Mire enim lectorem recreat".³⁶⁶ Bauhusius's argument is part of a bigger, rhetorical demand that a speech, and, by analogy, an image, should teach, delight and move the audience.³⁶⁷ This description of the perfect orator whose speech instructs, delights and moves the audience, was given by Cicero in his *De optimo genere oratorum*: "Optimus est enim orator qui dicendo animos audientium et docet et delectat et permovet. Docere debitum est, delectare honorarium, permovere necessarium".³⁶⁸ From the fourteenth century onwards, these classical works on rhetoric were used as the basis on which to build a new discourse about art, and the demands on the perfect rhetor were transferred onto the perfect artist. The best example of how this worked was the writing of Franciscus Junius who cited this prominent dictum of Cicero's in his *De pictura veterum*.³⁶⁹

Bauhusius refers to an intellectual entertainment that depends on the knowledge of the educated reader. This ideal learned reader had read his Latin texts and could draw associations and find resemblances. He was also mostly educated in and amused by what is nowadays called the allegorical mode, but what in Rubens's time did not have its own name. The allegorical mode was expressed by words of darkness and shadow and it was clear that the allegorical use invited misreadings. Thus Spenser in his "Letter to Raleigh" accompanying the *Faerie Queene* explains the basic gist of his conceit "knowing how doubtfully all Allegories may be construed, and this booke of mine, which haue entituled the Faery Queene, being a continued Allegory, or darke conceit, I haue

³⁶⁶ "It amuses the reader wonderfully, it attracts the buyer, it decorates the book and it does not add much to the price". Letter from Bauhusius to Moretus, 1 Aug 1617, in: Judson and Van de Velde 1977b, p. 366.

³⁶⁷ A point already made by Dekoninck 2011, p. 72.

³⁶⁸ Cic. opt. gen. I, 3, 4.

³⁶⁹ Cf. Junius 1637; Dundas 2007.

thought good aswell for auoyding of gealous opinions and misconstructions, as also for your better light in reading thereof”.³⁷⁰ Through the allegory something was alluded to, but not precisely named. Samuel Hoogstraten deals with allegories, or *Zinnebeelden* as he calls them, in a similar way: they are “bywerk dat bedektlyk iets verklaert”, additions that covertly explain something.³⁷¹ The point of these figures is, in Spenser’s words, to be “doubtful”, i.e. to be ambiguous; the explaining has to be done by the reader but it offers the author or the painter possibilities to express doubt, critique and dissent as well as a panegyric simultaneously, and as such it was widely exploited. Although this might be dissatisfying for a modern reader, it is this reason why only a framework can be provided for an interpretation, indicating the sources with which a contemporary viewer might have argued for his reading of the images.

Rubens’s figures offer multiple associations and options of interpretation. The compound nature of the personifications used in the Lessius title page confirms suspicions about the inherently “open” title page: parts of the figures, their gestures, their stances, their gazes, and the individual attributes could each for themselves point to a specific personification, but in combination with the other parts become problematic if the aim is to pinpoint one meaning. However, if an inherently open title page is postulated, a title page in which the reader has to weigh one interpretation against the other, then the compound figures with their recognisable attributes become possible anchors for a multitude of interpretations. This is the reason why the interpretation of the 1617 title page for Lessius *De iustitia et iure* has seen so many differing opinions. It is also in this vein that the feather on the head of the Muse shown in the sketch for Sarbiewski’s quarto title page is left out of the print, as it offers the viewer more possibilities for interpretations.³⁷² The entertainment or delight of the reader was created through the ambiguity of the figures and with that a general openness of the title page that could mean something different for every reader, and also something else each time the same reader looked at the title page.

All in all, Rubens works within the prevalent traditions of title page design and visual invention which becomes visible through a comparison with older title pages. The comparison with older title pages, especially where a comparison with older title pages for the same work is possible, shows the difference of Rubens’s design for Lessius and the designs by others. His designs provide a novelty and a stark contrast to the highly traditional title pages of previous editions. Novelty as such needs to be different, but still understandable, in order to be stimulating and not boring or unsettling.³⁷³ However, the contemporary understanding of novelty differs from ours in that it had to refer to older examples, and preferably the highly valued examples from the classical past.

³⁷⁰ Spenser 2007, p. 714.

³⁷¹ Hoogstraten 1678, p. 89f..

³⁷² See the discussion in section 5.4.2.

³⁷³ Bianchi 1998, p. 3.

Another aspect that has come to the fore in these title pages, especially those for poetry, was the expectations of the readers. Even more than in other book classes, a canon of symbols had been developed that were expected to be present on the illustrated title pages for literary books. To these belonged musical instruments, the muses or allusions to the muses' dwelling place, Mount Helicon, and allusions to poetic inspiration such as, for instance, Pegasus, or the Hippocrene. Other means to illustrate a poetic title page were the inclusion of the author's portrait together with symbols showing the fame of a poet. The use of classical imagery was especially pronounced for books on neo-Latin poetry, while vernacular poetry, especially in other genres such as courtly romances, rather alluded to the contents of the book, for example its heroes. The wishes of the Jesuit Bauhusius indicate the expectations that authors and potential readers had of neo-Latin title pages: they expected to see indeed "Parnassus, the Muses, Mnemosyne, all the things associated with the gods etc."³⁷⁴ Rubens knew this symbolism, he knew of the expectations and used them in his designs. His focus on the classical content of the poetry is especially pronounced when compared to the earlier title page for Sarbiewski's work, where an angelic choir rather emphasised the Christian nature of his neo-Latin poetry.

Rubens's title pages for historical works, especially those for profane history, corroborate the importance of his networks in Antwerp, the patronage system and the genre in the design of title pages, but they also introduce a fourth influence: a political dimension. The hope for a Saturnian age of peace expressed in the title page for Sarbiewski's title page reflected that in his poetry and in the dedication by the Antwerpian scholars. This dedication was not made by chance in the midst of the Thirty Years' War that wrecked all Europe and made the situation in Antwerp especially difficult. It is thus no wonder that the hope for the victorious Habsburg and Catholic Netherlands pervaded the designs for the title pages from 1623 onwards.

³⁷⁴ "Excogitavi Parnassum sacrum, Musas, Mnemosynem, Apollinem, omnia sacra, etc." Letter from Bauhusius to Moretus, 12 October 1617, in: McGrath 1987, p. 233, fn. 4. McGrath proposes a different translation than Judson and Van de Velde to avoid a Christian implication; Judson and Van de Velde 1977b, p. 367–368.