KU LEUVEN
FACULTY OF ARTS
BLIJDE INKOMSTSTRAAT 21 BOX 3301
3000 LEUVEN, BELGIË

Tuccia and her sieve:

The *Nachleben* of the Vestal in art.

Sarah Eycken

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Lector: Katlijne Van der Stighelen

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KU LEUVEN
FACULTY OF ARTS
BLIJDE INKOMSTSTRAAT 21 BOX 3301
3000 LEUVEN, BELGIË

I hereby declare that, in line with the Faculty of Arts' code of conduct for research integrity, the work submitted here is my own original work and that any additional sources of information have been duly cited.

Abstract

This master dissertation on the *Nachleben* in art of the Vestal Tuccia and her sieve, tries to chart the motif's course throughout the history of art, using a transhistorical approach excluding an exhaustive study which lies outside the confines of this paper. Nevertheless, different iconographical types of the representations of Tuccia, as well as of their relative importance, were established. The role of Tuccia in art history and, by extension, literature, is not very substantial, but nonetheless significant. An interdisciplinary perspective is adopted with an emphasis on gender, literature, anthropology and religion. In the Warburgian spirit, the art forms discussed in this dissertation are various, from high art to low art: paintings, prints, emblemata, *cassoni, spalliere*, etc. The research starts with a discussion on the role of the Vestal Virgins in the Roman Republic. The tale of the Vestal Virgin Tuccia and her paradoxically impermeable sieve, which was a symbol of her chastity, has spoken to the imagination of artists throughout the ages. Authors from Antiquity such as Valerius Maximus sung her praises and the early Church Fathers Augustine and Tertullian mentioned her legend in their Christian treatises. Tuccia really became a symbol, as seen in several Mannerist prints, of an unblemished city of Rome. From the Late Middle Ages onwards, the motif of Tuccia and her sieve emerged in art throughout Europe. The importance of Tuccia in humanistic iconographical conventions of chastity is derived through seven case studies. In the emblem literature, the impermeable sieve became an important attribute to the personification of Castità or Chastity. Depictions of the story of Tuccia were found regularly in the female private sphere, as she epitomized the ideal of chastity before and after marriage. She functioned as an exemplar for prospective brides, who owned *cassoni* (wedding chests) decorated with a representation of Tuccia and her sieve. Furthermore, several women identified with the Roman Vestal as they took on her role in *portraits historiés.* She was also christianized in art. As a pagan Mary, Tuccia's exemplarity was even more highlighted. The imagery of the woman as a container, bound the Virgin Mother, as a *honorabile vas*, together with Tuccia and her container-sieve. Lastly, as a kind ofsynthesis of the previous chapters, the *Sieve Portraits* of Queen Elizabeth I were closely examined. The sieve in the *Siena Sieve Portrait* denotes the irreversible turn of Elizabeth I to a life of virginity -- the sieve being a symbol of the Virgin Queen's eroto-politics. Elizabeth's chosen virginity was, however, criticized by her contemporaries, such as Shakespeare among others. Nonetheless, by identifying herself with Tuccia, she placed herself above all other women, who were commonly ridiculed as "leaky vessels" in contemporary city comedies. Combining the connotations of chastity and imperialism, Tuccia's sieve perfectly embodied the Virgin Queen, who was also an Imperialist Queen.

Contents

[Continues on next page]

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Preface

My transhistorical research on the role of the Vestal Tuccia and her sieve began in July 2017, when my supervisor Professor Barbara Baert introduced me to the topic. She gave me her article "Around the sieve. Motif, Symbol, Hermeneutic" (2018), which was the starting point of my study of the Vestal. After having done some cursory, preliminary reading on this somewhat elusive character, I was fortunate enough to have been presented with the occasion to start my further research at the Academia Belgica. During the month of October 2017 that I resided at the Academia, I had ample opportunity to go actively searching for artworks featuring Tuccia in Roman musea and churches, and consult a number of libraries — including the library of the Academia Belgica itself. During my inspiring time in Rome, I was able to discover a number of rare representations of Tuccia never published before. Aside from the research I did in Rome, I also went to visit the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena to see the *Siena Sieve Portrait* (1583), depicting Elizabeth I with a sieve. On a previous visit to the National Gallery in London, I had admired Andrea Mantegna's *The Vestal Virgin Tuccia with a Sieve* (*c.* 1495-1506). My further search for relevant artworks of Tuccia also led me to the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie (RKD) in The Hague, where I delved into the iconographical archives.

Many people have helped me during my interesting yet rather challenging research process. First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Barbara Baert, for introducing me to the topic of Tuccia and her sieve, for helping me throughout the writing process with her valuable feedback, and for her recommendation letter to the Academia Belgica. I am also indebted to my lector, Professor Katelijne Van der Stighelen, who provided me with interesting notes and suggestions at the occasion of the colloquium presentation of my research. Furthermore I am grateful to the director of the Academia Belgica, Wouter Bracke, his head of administration Charles Bossu and the other personnel at the institution in Rome. I would also like to say a special thanks to the team of Latinists: David Janssens, Senior Lecturer at Tilburg University (The Netherlands) and his collaborators Leo Nellissen, Thomas Bervoets, and Pim Boer. They were so kind as to translate into Dutch the tricky captions of four prints depicting Tuccia. They also provided me with additional commentary. Their translations and commentaries gave me a deeper understanding of these fascinating engravings. Many thanks also to Herman Lambrechts for introducing me to David Janssens as well as for his enthusiasm and interest in my academic career.

I am also incredibly grateful for the advice, encouragement, and support of my good friend and fellow art historian Ellen Descamps, with whom I was lucky to share my experience at the Academia Belgica. Moreover, I am grateful for the support of my family, my good friend Katrien Hertogs, and my ever patient partner Bert Verheyden. Lastly, I want to dedicate this master paper to my parents for their love, motivation, and never-ending support.

Louvain, August 2018.
Sarah Eycken

1. Introduction

This transhistorical dissertation deals with the *Nachleben* of the Vestal Virgin Tuccia and her sieve in art. Tuccia, a Vestal accused of unchastity, proved her innocence by carrying water in a sieve to the shrine of Vesta. This subject became an exemplum of justice and, more importantly, of chastity in early modern visual culture. The Warburgian principle of *Nachleben*, which denotes the survival of images and motifs, can be applied to the figure of Tuccia.[1] Throughout the early modern period in art, the motif of Tuccia has namely lived on in various different metamorphoses. One such adaptation of the subject I discovered while visiting Siena. In the Pinacoteca Nazionale, I saw the captivating *Siena Sieve Portrait* (1583) of Queen Elizabeth I of England (1533-1603), unsolemnly tucked away in a dusty corner. Here, the Virgin Queen is holding Tuccia's sieve as a symbol of her chastity. This iconographical marvel is the prime example of the importance of the figure of Tuccia. By exploring the link between Tuccia and the Virgin Queen I hope to do justice to this important portrait that certainly deserves to be salvaged from under the dust and to be shown in all its beauty.

Throughout the writing of this master paper my research boiled down to four questions. In what way is Tuccia or her sieve depicted throughout the early modern period? What does it say about the view on women at the time? How did women engage with the Tuccia motif? And lastly, can the figure of Tuccia in art be connected and compared to other famous female figures? I approached these iconographical and iconological research questions through a critical analysis of the available literature[2] from an interdisciplinary perspective with an emphasis on gender, literature, anthropology and religion. In the Warburgian spirit, the art forms discussed in this dissertation are various, from high art to low art: paintings, prints, emblemata, *cassoni, spalliere*, etc.

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1 George Didi-Huberman, Vivian Rehberg, Boris Belay, "Artistic Survival: Panofsky vs. Warburg and the Excorcism of Impure Time," *Common Knowledge* 9, 2 (2003), 273.

2 The most important sources that I used are: Mary Beard, "The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 70 (1980), 12-27; Barbara Baert, "Around the sieve. Motif, Symbol, Hermeneutic," *TEXTILE. Journal of Cloth and Culture* 16, 1 (2018), 1-23; Cristelle Louise Baskins, Cassone *Painting, Humanism and Gender in Early Modern Italy*, Cambridge studies in new art history and criticism, ed. by Norman Bryson (Cambridge/ New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Jerzy Miziolek, "Exempla di Giustizia. Tre tavole di cassone di Alvise Donati," *Arte Lombarda* 2 (2001), 72-88; Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I* (London: Pimlico, 2003); Antonio Vannugli, "Una 'Vestale Tuccia': '*Puditiciae Testimonium*' del Moretto in Palazzo Taverna a Roma," *Bollettino d'Arte* 47 (1988), 85-90; Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens: The Allegory of the Female Form* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1985); Frances A. Yates, *Selected Works.* vol. 5, *Astraea* (London/ New York: Routledge, 2003).

The starting point of my research of the Vestal was the article "Around the sieve. Motif, Symbol, Hermeneutic," (2018) written by my supervisor, Professor Barbara Baert.[3] I continued my research with a number of seminal papers and recent publications on the subject. Apart from articles, like Baert's, or Marina Warner's interdisciplinary article on Tuccia in her book *Monuments and Maidens: The Allegory of the Female Form* (1985), no monographs in art history are dedicated to the subject of Tuccia and her sieve. I was, therefore, compelled to read publications on broader subjects related and relevant to my research, such as reference works on the Vestal Virgins, on virginity, on the role of women in society in the early modern period and the representation thereof in the art of the time, on the portraiture of Elizabeth I, and so on. In each chapter, I have taken care to include illustrative examples of contemporary literary sources such as writings of classical authors, humanist thinkers, and Elizabethan playwrights.

Tuccia, as a figure of female exemplarity, is a complex and ambiguous character, which allows multiple readings. The role of Tuccia in art history and, by extension, in literature, is not very substantial, but nonetheless significant. If one thinks of the diversity of meanings she embodies, one can discern a kind of onion peel structure, which I used as the build-up for this thesis. The three following chapters all have a different focus, and, therefore, highlight different strands of meaning concerning the Tuccia motif. In Chapter 2 (Tuccia, the Vestal Virgin), I will discuss Tuccia as a symbol of an untainted Rome. For this part, I first looked at the literature about the Vestal Virgins.[4] Although it might seem that this step has no direct bearing on the art historical study of the Vestal Tuccia, a certain knowledge of the Vesta cult is, nevertheless, important or even necessary to fully understand the iconology of the Tuccia motif. This aspect is lacking in other writings on the Tuccia motif in art, and yet the literature on the Vestals has yielded some interesting insights. The importance of the Vestal Virgins in ancient Rome depended on their vital role in the religious and ritual ceremonies of the eternal city. The duties they performed, or the negligence thereof, were after all generally believed to directly influence the well-being of the state or have major repercussions on Rome. In this chapter I will also give an overview of the most important accounts of the legend of Tuccia by classical authors and the early Church Fathers Augustine and Tertullian.

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3 Barbara Baert, "Around the sieve. Motif, Symbol, Hermeneutic," *TEXTILE. Journal of Cloth and Culture* 16, 1 (2018), 1-23.

4 The most important sources that I used are: Mary Beard, "The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 70 (1980), 12-27; Robin Lorsch Wildfang, *Rome's Vestal Virgins: A study of Rome's Vestal priestesses in the late Republic and early Empire* (London/ New York: Routledge, 2006); Ariadne Staples, *From Good Goddess to Vestal Virgins: Sex and Category in Roman Religion* (London: Routledge, 1998); Sarolta A. Takács, *Vestal Virgins, Sibyls, and Matrons* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008).

In the next chapter, Chapter 3 (*Castitas* and *Cassoni*: Tuccia as Female Role Model), I will focus more on the gender aspect of the motif of Tuccia and her sieve. I will examine how Tuccia was perceived as an ideal female role model in the early modern period. As an epitome of chastity, women's most important virtue, she represented the ideal woman in the early modern society. This chapter consists of three parts. Firstly, I will, by and large, discuss the view on women in the early modern period and how art helped to shape the ideal image of virginal or chaste womanhood. Secondly, the deep-rooted relationship between women and containers is explicated. This section is crucial in understanding why it was an impermeable sieve that took centre stage in the legend of Tuccia. Lastly, I will apply the findings and concepts of these previous parts to analyze seven case studies of exemplary depictions of the Vestal Virgin Tuccia and of women who tried to emulate her. For this chapter I am mainly indebted to art historical publications on the prominent representations of women in art, with collections of essays focusing on the context surrounding these images, such as the excellent catalogues *Virtue and Beauty* (2001) and *Tussen heks en heilige* (Between Witch and Saint) (1985). Another useful monograph was Cristelle Louise Baskins' study on *cassoni* Cassone *Painting, Humanism and Gender in Early Modern Italy* (1998). Her approach with an emphasis on the underlying gender bias of the art form, inspired me greatly.

Whereas the previous chapter exposes the patriarchal views of marital chastity and female obedience behind the Tuccia motif, this final Chapter 4 (Elizabeth I, A Modern Tuccia) will show the other positive side of the medal. Tuccia could also be a symbol of empowerment for women. In perpetual virginity, Queen Elizabeth found her strength. By not binding herself to a man, she was able to govern England successfully and relatively peacefully, defeat the Spanish Armada, and lay the groundwork for a British empire. She and her councillors used art as an important propaganda tool to create a myth around her virginity, i.e., that of the Virgin Queen. Tuccia's sieve, standing for virginity as well as for imperialist triumph, became one of the most important emblems connected to the English Queen. In this chapter, I analyse both the *Plimpton Sieve Portrait* (1579) and *The Siena Sieve Portrait* (1583), after having given the historical context wherein these portraits were produced. The second part of this chapter deals with the notion of women as 'leaky vessels,' which builds on the seminal article by Gail Kern Paster "Leaky Vessels: The Incontinent Women of City Comedy" (1987). This phenomenon crops up in Elizabethan and Jacobean city comedies, from which the importance of the sieve as a device for Elizabeth can be further investigated. For Elizabeth, Tuccia's sieve was a symbol for her superiority as a Virgin Queen. Furthermore, and nonetheless, I will also include a critical view of the Queen's perpetual virginity, as held by contemporaries and supported by contemporary medical theories. In the final part of this chapter,

which concludes my thesis, I will analyse Elizabeth's queenship in relation to the Vestal model. Marrying together the notion of exemplary virginity (cf. Chapter 3) with that of imperialist triumph through virginity (cf. Chapter 2), I will suggest that Tuccia's sieve perfectly embodies Elizabeth's eroto-politics. Moreover, I will discuss similarities between Elizabeth and the Vestal Virgins to explain how, in her sexual ambiguity as made possible by her perpetual virginity, Elizabeth was able to represent England as a whole. For this chapter it was hard to add something new to the already extensive Elizabethan scholarly literature, lead by the publications of Frances Yates and Roy Strong. Unlike Strong, recent scholars such as Deanne Williams, in her article "Dido, Queene of England" (2006), focus more on the gender and colonialist aspects of the portaiture of Elizabeth. There is, therefore, a quantity of qualitative and complementary studies on the representation of Elizabeth in visual culture. Nevertheless, on the basis of the results of the previous two chapters, I hope I will provide an interesting synthesis of the theme of Tuccia and her sieve through the case study of two sieve portraits of Elizabeth I.

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During my research I encountered many representations of Tuccia, which I have collected. As all these images together show the wide dispersement of the Tuccia motif in Europe, they were put in a separate catalogue. It is, however, impossible to make an exhaustive catalogue as many of the works representing Tuccia are locked away in private collections. This companion volume to my master paper, constituting "An Elementary Catalogue," is divided in iconographical types of the Vestal, that were commented on in this dissertation.

2. Tuccia, the Vestal Virgin

In order to fully understand the figure of Tuccia and the symbolism that enwraps her *persona,* the first proverbial layer, which is incidentally the most obvious one, needs to be peeled off. This is a necessary first step to get to grips with the *Nachleben* of Tuccia's motif in art and literature.

That is why the first chapter begins by investigating the meaning and the role of the Vestal Virgin in general. Although it might seem that this section has no direct bearing on the art historical study of the Vestal Tuccia, a certain knowledge of the Vesta cult is, nevertheless, important or even necessary to fully understand the iconology of the Tuccia motif. Therefore, aspects of the order of the Vestals will regularly be referred back to throughout all the chapters. The complex and ambiguous status of the priestesses of Vesta — pointed out in Mary Beard's article "The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins" (1980)[5] — is quintessential in understanding the significance of Tuccia as an early role model for women in the Renaissance, Baroque, and the art of the eighteenth century.

I will discuss the importance of the Vestal Virgins in ancient Rome: their vital role in the religious and ritual ceremonies of the eternal city. The duties they performed, or the negligence thereof, were after all generally believed to influence and have major repercussions for the well-being of the state. I will also try to demonstrate that their privileged and revered status as virginal women turned them into real icons for women in visual culture, and, more specifically and by extension, transformed Tuccia into a humanist motif, known and used by no one less than queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603).

Secondly, to allow an informed reading of the legend of Tuccia, who herself was accused of impurity, I will elaborate on the ritual murders of unchaste Vestal Virgins. The highly ritualized process of these killings further deepens the comprehension of the Vestal model.

Finally, I will focus on the figure of Tuccia herself, aided by excerpts of Latin authors who underline her exemplary character. The miracle of the chaste Vestal and her paradoxically impermeable sieve inspired early modern artists to depict her as a symbol of an unblemished Rome. For that reason, depictions of Tuccia can be found in palaces and churches across Rome and elsewhere in Italy. Although the subject matter is quintessentially Roman, the figure of Tuccia has also inspired a number of northern artists; some Mannerists from the Low Countries took up the motif in prints and portrayed her next to the male personification of the Tiber and to Romulus and Remus, protected by the she-wolf.

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5 Mary Beard, "The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 70 (1980), 12-27.

2.1. Vestal Virgins and their ambiguous status

How happy is the blameless vestal's lot!
The world forgetting, by the world forgot.
Eternal sunshine of the spotless mind!
Each pray'r accepted, and each wish resign'd;
Labour and rest, that equal periods keep;
"Obedient slumbers that can wake and weep;"
Desires compos'd, affections ever ev'n,
Tears that delight, and sighs that waft to Heav'n.
Grace shines around her with serenest beams,
And whisp'ring angels prompt her golden dreams.
For her th' unfading rose of Eden blooms,
And wings of seraphs shed divine perfumes,
For her the Spouse prepares the bridal ring,
For her white virgins hymeneals sing,
To sounds of heav'nly harps she dies away,
And melts in visions of eternal day.

— From "Eloisa to Abelard" (1717) by Alexander Pope (1688-1744)[6]

The Vestal Virgins were inextricably connected to the history of Rome.[7] After all, Romulus (*c.* mid to late eighth century BC), the founder of Rome, was the son of the Vestal Rhea Silvia and the war god Mars. It was Numa Pompilius (753-673 BC), Romulus' successor as king of Rome, who brought the order of the Vestals from the Alba Longa[8] to the city.[9] It was the "only major female Roman state priesthood."[10] Together with other religious offices, the order of the Vestals was given

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6 Alexander Pope, "Eloise to Abelard," *Poetry Foundation*, last access on 13th of February 2018, https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44892/eloisa-to-abelard.

7 For that matter, it can be no coincidence that the House of the Vestals is located next to the temple of Romulus.

8 The cult was active in Latium and Pompei. Richard Gordon, "Vesta, Vestals," *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, last access on the 18th of February, 2018, classics.oxfordre.com.

9 Mary Beard, *SPQR: A History of Ancient Rome* (London: Profile Books, 2016), 103.

10 Robin Lorsch Wildfang, *Rome's Vestal Virgins: A study of Rome's Vestal priestesses in the late Republic and early empire* (London/ New York: Routledge, 2006), ix.

the task "to perform and oversee major rituals."[11] For instance, these maidens prepared the sacrificial *mola salsa,* a kind of toasted, salted spelt cakes, which the Romans used in every ritual sacrifice.[12] These cakes were part of every Roman ritual, which made them the "representative of the collectivity."[13] To make the *mola salsa* and the *muries*, a brine needed for sacrifices, they used the sacred fire of Vesta.[14]

The Vestal Virgins served Vesta, the goddess of the hearth — a high profile position to hold. Their main priority consisted of keeping the sacred flame of the hearth (the *aedes Vestae*) lit. The fire or *ignis inextinctus*[15] functions as the "cult statue" in the goddess's stead.[16] The circular shrine further held the *Palladium*, a Trojan statuette of the goddess Athena that signified "Rome's fate,"[17] and the *fascinum*, an "erect phallus that averted evil,"[18] right in the inner sanctum or the *penus*. Both objects were of an indispensable value to Rome and only the priestly *sacerdotes Vestales* could touch it. The wellbeing of Rome depended on the Vestals guarding these constitutional objects and keeping the flame alight. If the fire would die, the Romans were horrified that this "threatened the very fundament of the city's existence, the *pax deorum*."[19] Therefore, the Vestal, who let it happen, was severely beaten.[20] Apart from negligence, it was believed that the unchastity (*incestum*) of Vestals mainly caused the light to extinguish. The term *incestum* denotes a "sexual defilement" with

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11 Mary Beard, *SPQR*, 103.

12 Ariadne Staples, *From Good Goddess to Vestal Virgins: Sex and Category in Roman Religion* (London: Routledge, 1998), 154.

13 Ibid., 154.

14 Robin Lorsch Wildfang, *Rome's Vestal Virgins*, 10.

15 Richard Gordon, "Vesta, Vestals," *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, last access on the 18th of February, 2018, classics.oxfordre.com.

16 Ariadne Staples, *From Good Goddess to Vestal Virgins,* 149.

17 J. Linderski, "Palladium," *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, last access on the 18th of February, 2018, classics.oxfordre.com.

18 Richard Gordon, "Vesta, Vestals," *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, last access on the 18th of February, 2018, classics.oxfordre.com.

19 Robin Lorsch Wildfang, *Rome's Vestal Virgins*, 1.

20 Celia A. Schultz, "On the burial of unchaste Vestal Virgins," in *Rome, Pollution and Propriety: Dirt, Disease and Hygiene in the Eternal City from Antiquity to Modernity*, British School at Rome Studies, ed. by Mark Bradley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 122.

religious consequences, jeopardizing the security of the state.[21] The penalty for this betrayal resulted in death by live interment.[22] The analogy between the punishment of unchaste Vestals and the fate of the tragic heroine Antigone seems to suggest a relationship between "incestuous" sexual relations and a sentence of live interment.[23]

Next to tending the sanctuary's hearth, the Vestals' second crucial task comprised of cleansing the shrine of Vesta every day with spring water "drawn from a particular fountain near to the Regia."[24] Eventually, the rules regarding the origin of the water softened, and the priestesses could use any spring water, just as long as it did not "pass through pipes,"[25] for it was prohibited to use water that touched the earth directly.[26] Moreover, that is why the Vestals used recipients "shaped like an inverted cone,"[27] to prevent contact with the unclean earth on the ground.[28] The water had to be as pure as the virgins that cleansed the *penus Vestae* with it. Thus, second to the fire, water formed a quintessential part of the cult. Nonetheless, Wildfang argues that the fire remained the most venerated element in the cult. She criticizes Staples for viewing the water as equally important as fire in the Vestal order.[29] It is, however, safe to say that the water only functioned as a "sacred medium,"[30] its significance in the cult and the Roman culture at large is undeniable.

The paradoxical dependence on the two opposite substances, showed the complex ambiguity of the whole order. In the Roman world people believed that fire and its polar element water work

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21 Holt N. Parker, "Were the Vestals Virgins? Or the Chastity of Women and the Safety of the Roman State." *The American Journal of Philology* 125, 4 (2004), 583. Here, Parker criticizes Koch, who interpreted the term as incest. Koch notes that all citizens of Rome were viewed as the Vestal's kin, and therefore, sexual relations between a Vestal and a Roman citizen could be seen as incestuous. Since the Vestals represented the whole of Roman society, I do not think we have to exclude Koch's interpretation.

22 Cf. Section "2.2. Pollution and punishment: the live interment of Vestal Virgins."

23 Antigone, who transgressed by burying her war criminal brother Polynices was suspected by her uncle King Creon to have been guilty of an incestuous relationship with her brother which led to a sentence of live burial. Later on in *peripeteia* of the tragedy, Creon regrets the sentence and opens the tomb, only to find that Antigone has taken her own life by hanging herself.

24 Cato E. Worsfold, *The History of the Vestal Virgins of Rome*, 2nd ed. (London: Rider & Co. Paternoster House, E.C., 1934), 150.

25 Ibid.

26 Robin Lorsch Wildfang, *Rome's Vestal Virgins,* 11.

27 Cato E. Worsfold, *The History of the Vestal Virgins of Rome*, 150.

28 Robin Lorsch Wildfang, *Rome's Vestal Virgins,* 11.

29 Ibid., 10.

30 Ibid.

as *apotropaia;* these substances remove "harmful effects of contact with persons and things which are […] taboo, and [drive] away evils of all sorts […]."[31] That is why Romans sprinkled themselves with water and walked over fire to protect themselves from death's grip.[32] Moreover, brides also touched fire and water for catharsis and protection.[33] The Vestals' fire was indispensable in various "purificatory rites,"[34] such as in the *Fordicidia*[35] festival.[36] In *Quaestiones Romanae* (s.d.) Plutarch (46-*c.*117 AD) linked the fire, with its "principle of motion," to masculinity while he connected water to the female aspect.[37] The fire, therefore, carried a possibility of procreation, that made it possible to inseminate maidens.[38] Rhea Silva, the most famous Vestal Virgin and mother of Romulus and Remus, got pregnant by the god Mars through the appearance of a phallus in the hearth fire.[39] The *aedes Vestae*, then, symbolized the fertility of Rome.[40]

It is, however, important to note that fire has connotations of sterility as well. Scholars such as Wildfang have refuted the connection between Vesta's sacred fire and fertility.[41] After all, in Roman religion two deities concerned themselves with the awe-inspiring element, namely Vesta and Vulcan. Whereas Vesta symbolized the orderly sterility and purifying property of fire, the unruly Vulcan, the smith of the gods, personified the fertility of the chaotic, powerful, and explosive substance, which ignites and generates itself. Burriss adds that Vesta represented the helpful aspect of fire — cooking, keeping warm — while the "destructive force" of fire was that of Vulcan.[42] Still,

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31 Eli Edward Burriss, *Taboo, Magic, Spirits: A Study of Primitive Elements in Roman Religion*, 2nd ed. (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1974), 226.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid, 228.

34 Robin Lorsch Wildfang, *Rome's Vestal Virgins*, 10.

35 A Roman festival on the 15th of March. A pregnant cow or forda was sacrificed to the ancient earth-goddess, Tellus. Robert Phillips, "Fordicidia," Oxford Classical Dictionary, last access on the 18th of February, 2018, classics.oxfordre.com.

36 Robin Lorsch Wildfang, *Rome's Vestal Virgins*, 10.

37 Plutarch, *Quaestiones Romanae*, I, trans. from Greek, ed. William W. Godwin, *Perseus Digital Library*, last access on the 15th of February, 2018, http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/.

38 Eli Edward Burriss, *Taboo, Magic, Spirits*, 230.

39 Robin Lorsch Wildfang, *Rome's Vestal Virgins*, 9.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.

42 Eli Edward Burriss, *Taboo, Magic, Spirits*, 230.

to claim that the *ignis inextinctus* had nothing to do with fertility delimits the cult too narrowly. Not unlike other ancient priests and priestesses, Vestals participated in various fertility festivals, just because of their virginity. [43]

Anthropologically speaking, virgins possess a rare type of power. Like other women at "transitional points," such as pregnant women and "crones," they "seem to have knowledge that escapes the rational framework of males and that connects with the natural world in an almost uncanny way."[44] They have a pent-up procreative, fertile energy, which gives them a potency and power that transfixes and terrifies men.[45] That is probably why there is a connection between virginity and "agricultural fertility."[46] Sex blurs the lines between life and death.[47] Such an intertwining, together with the mingling of fluids, gives sexual intercourse an association with impurity, disturbing agricultural and other religious rites.[48] In ancient times, people feared that sexual activity "might draw power away from the fertility of the land."[49] Firstly, the Vestals' relationship with fertility was rooted in the connection between earth and fire. The live interment of an unchaste Vestal could, in a way, be seen as a "sacrifice to the Earth whose products they were likely to harm by their immortality."[50] As Ovid (43 BC-17 AD) claimed: "That is the doom of her who proves unchaste; because she is put away in the earth which she contaminated, since Earth and Vesta are one and the same deity."[51] Secondly, the Vestal fire could have a connection to sterility as well as to fertility. On top of that, they housed the phallic *fascinus* (cf. supra) in the inner sanctum, close to the sacred fire. The androgynous quality of fire complements Beard's theory of the

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43 Mary Beard, "The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins," 15.

44 Monika Karpinska, "Early Modern Dramatization of Virgins and Pregnant Women," *SEL* 50, 2 (2010), 427.

45 Eleanor Irwin, "The Invention of Virginity on Olympus," in *Virginity Revisited: Configurations of the Unpossessed Body*, ed. by Bonnie MacLachlan and Judith Fletcher, Phoenix Journal of the Classical Association of Canada: Studies in Gender 1, ed. by Alison Keith and Ingrid Holmberg, (Toronto/ Buffalo/ London: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 14.

46 Jack J. Lennon, *Pollution and Religion in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge/ New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 64.

47 An orgasm is also known as the little death.

48 Jack J. Lennon, *Pollution and Religion in Ancient Rome*, 55.

49 Ibid., 64.

50 Eli Edward Burriss, *Taboo, Magic, Spirits*, 90.

51 Ovid, *Fasti*, VI.459-460, trans. from Latin by James G. Frazer, *Theoi Texts Library*, last access on the 25th of February, 2018, http://www.theoi.com/Text/OvidFasti6.html. In the original Latin text: 'sic incesta perit, quia quam violavit, in illam conditur, et Tellus Vestaque numen idem.'

ambiguous sexual status of Vestal Virgins.

The question of the problematic sexual status of the priestesses harks back to the origins of the order. On a public scale, the tasks of the order ran parallel to the domestic duties of women in the Roman household. Whether the priestesses of Vesta were originally daughters or rather wives of early kings, is not certain.[52] Arguments for both theories exist. In her article "The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins," Mary Beard lists the justifications for both claims. Wives as well as daughters tended the fire of the household and made sacrificial cakes. Plutarch, however, wrote that the wives in early Roman times "were not allowed to grind grain or cook."[53] If the Greek historiographer was right, the view of Vestals as daughters gains the upper hand. Moreover, there is an analogy between the Vestals' virginity and that of the daughters in the Roman family.

Nevertheless, Beard also argues that the Vestal's "type of virginity" could be compared to the "chastity (*pudicitia*) of a univirate Roman matron."[54] The Vestals "fidelity" and "soberness of conduct and dress" also mirrored that of the dutiful wife in service of her husband,[55] while the robes and hairstyle of the Vestal Virgins bore affinities with bridal garments or with the clothes worn by matrons.[56] Only the priestesses and the matrons wore a *stola*, which symbolized their purity and virtue.[57] For their sacrificial duties an *infula* (diadem) and an *suffibulum* (veil) were part of the ceremonial dress of the Vestals (cf. Figure 1).[58] The "ancient"[59] hairstyle of six "braids"[60] or "locks,"[61] mentioned solely by Festus (second century), were called the *sex crines*. These locks, secured by ribbons or *vittae*, were a specific feature, which distinguished both Vestal Virgins and

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52 Mary Beard, "The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins," 13.

53 Ibid.,14.

54 Ibid.

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid., 13.

57 Prostitutes and freedwomen were not allowed to wear it. Robin Lorsch Wildfang, *Rome's Vestal Virgins,* 13.

58 Robin Lorsch Wildfang, *Rome's Vestal Virgins*, 13.

59 Ibid., 11.

60 Ibid.

61 Molly Myerowitz Levine, "The Gendered Grammar of Ancient Mediterranean Hair," in *Off with Her Head!: The Denial of Women's Identity in Myth, Religion, and Culture*, ed. by Howard Eilberg-Schwartz and Wendy Doniger (Berkeley/ Los Angeles/ London: University of California, 1995), 100.

brides,[62] without there being further proof that the Vestals or brides imitated each other's hairstyle.[63] The braids, which resembled knots, were associated with the *nodus Herculaneus* on a bride's girdle "which could only be untied by her new husband."[64] As a unique trademark, however, the curls had a special meaning for the priestesses: "[The *sex crines*] was a marker of both their physical and ideological virginity. Visually it marked out a Vestal […]."[65]

Of no less importance is that the *captio* or the initiation rites paralleled the Roman wedding rituals.[66] Moreover, the connection between the bride and the Vestal finds its analogous completion in the *mulieres religiosae*. From the thirteenth century onwards, nuns saw themselves as 'brides of Christ'; inspired by the Bible's *Canticum Canticorum* or Song of Songs*,* they identified themselves with the figure of the bride and Jesus or God with the figure of the biblical groom. Female mystics even developed a completely unique iconography around this highly poetic Song of Songs.[67]

Apart from the more obvious affinities with brides and matrons, the Vestals' privileged status may also be seen as reminiscent of the rights that powerful males possessed in ancient Rome. As Mary Beard states: "[I]t is at least arguable that the priestesses were regarded as playing a male role and were, in part, *classified as masculine* [own emphasis]."[68] When in public, the priestesses were honoured by the accompaniment of a *lictor* ("an attendant of praetors and consuls"[69]), a "symbol of power" almost exclusively bestowed on magistrates and the *flamen Dialis*, high priest of Jupiter.[70] It is clear that this asserted the exalted position of the Vestals. On top of that, their legal rights outweighed those of other Roman women during most of the existence of the order (cf. infra):

> [*L*]*ike men, they could bequeath property in their own right, without undergoing the process*

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62 Mary Beard, "The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins," 16.

63 Robin Lorsch Wildfang, *Rome's Vestal Virgins,* 11.

64 Ariadne Staples, *From Good Goddess to Vestal Virgins,* 146.

65 Ibid.

66 Mary Beard, "The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins," 13.

67 For more about the iconography of the *Canticum Canticorum*: Barbara Baert, "'Jij hebt mijn hart verwond.' Hooglied in beeld," in *Hooglied. Bijbelse liefde in beeld, woord en klank*, ed. By Hans Ausloos and Ignace Bossuyt, 59-108 (Leuven: VBS-Acco, 2008).

68 Mary Beard, "The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins," 17.

69 Sarolta A. Takács, *Vestal Virgins, Sibyls, and Matrons: Women in Roman Religion* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 83.

70 Ariadne Staples, *From Good Goddess to Vestal Virgins,* 145.

> *of* capitis deminutio *and without, of course, the need for a tutor's permission, as they came out of* tutela *when they entered the order.*[71]

A Vestal could also make her own testament, such as Roman men were able to do.[72] Furthermore, the respect of Romans for the maidens of Vesta resulted in their participation in trials. "Giving evidence in court" (*testabilis*) was reserved for men, yet Vestals were allowed to play a role in the testimony at trials.[73] They could also "pardon or punish any civilian with merely a touch or glance."[74] Evidently, these women enjoyed a more high-profile status in Roman society than other women — even more than some men.

The "threefold aspect" — "virginal, matronal, and masculine" — in terms of sexuality, gives important insights in the study of the Vestals.[75] Takács puts it eloquently: "Vesta's priestesses remained in a perpetual 'rite of passage' loop, between status (unmarried and married) and a gendered (female and male) sphere."[76] This defying of "clear-cut organization"[77] places them in the same category as other formidable androgynous women: virgin goddesses like Athena, and later on, female saints and leaders with Wilgefortis (legend from the fourteenth century) and Elizabeth I, as prime examples, respectively.[78] Although the Romans themselves did not realize it,[79] the ambiguous character of the Vestals, and the goddess and fire they worshipped, contributed to their sacredness. Religious beings function as mediators — forming bridges because of their "features of […] extremes" — and ambiguity enhances this role as "an active unifying force."[80] Eventually, it boils down to the maxim: "mediation is ambiguity in action."[81] Vestals themselves were wives, matrons,

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71 Mary Beard, "The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins," 17.

72 Sarolta A. Takács, *Vestal Virgins, Sibyls, and Matrons*, 82.

73 Mary Beard, "The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins," 17.

74 Bonnie Lander Johnson, *Chastity in Early Stuart Literature and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 46.

75 Mary Beard, "The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins," 18.

76 Sarolta A. Takács, *Vestal Virgins, Sibyls, and Matrons*, 83.

77 Ibid.

78 Cf. Chapter 4.

79 Mary Beard, "The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins," 26.

80 Ibid., 23-24.

81 Ibid., 24.

and men at the same time, which lifted them out of a "conventional role within the family structure."[82] By being removed from the Roman family, they were able to function as mediators between the community and the gods. As we saw Takács put it: Vesta's priestesses remained in a perpetual "rite of passage" loop, between status (unmarried and married) and a gendered (female and male) sphere.

Since the Vestals played such a vital and complex part in the Roman world, the possible candidates were scrutinized during a selection process, aided by divine intervention. The expectations, placed on the *sacerdotes Vestales* by the *pontifex maximus* and the Roman people, were more "stringent and personal"[83] than those required of male priests. Six Vestal Virgins had to occupy the House and the Hearth of Vesta.[84] The chosen girls were taken away from their families and, to be assured of their purity, were initiated between six and ten years of age.[85] In order to become a Vestal, further strict requirements needed to be met, as Aulus Gellius (*c.* 125-180) recounts in *Noctes Atticae* or *Attic Nights* (*c.* 180):

> *[S]he must also have both father and mother living; she must be free too from any impediment in her speech, must not have impaired hearing, or be marked by any other bodily defect; she must not herself have been freed from paternal control, nor her father before her, even if her father is still living and she is under the control of her grandfather; neither one nor both of her parents may have been slaves or engaged in mean occupations.*[86]

In this excerpt, there is a clear emphasis on the purity of the maiden candidates on three levels: physical, mental, and social.[87] This immaculacy made them the perfect role models for women

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82 Ibid., 21.

83 Celia E. Schultz, *Women's Religious Activity in the Roman Republic*, Studies in the History of Greece and Rome, ed. by Robin Osborne, P.J. Rhodes, and Richard J.A. Talbert (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 141.

84 Sarolta A. Takács, *Vestal Virgins, Sibyls, and Matrons*, 81.

85 Celia E. Schultz, *Women's Religious Activity in the Roman Republic*, 141.

86 Gellius, Aulus, *Attic Nights*, I.12, trans. from Latin by John C. Rolfe, *Perseus Digital Library*, last access on the 9th of February, 2018, http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/. The original Latin text: '[I]tem quae non sit patrima et matrima; item quae lingua debili sensuve aurium deminuta aliave qua corporis labe insignita sit; item quae ipsa aut cuius pater emancipatus sit, etiamsi vivo patre in avi potestate sit; item cuius parentes alter ambove servitutem servierunt aut in negotiis sordidis versantur.'

87 Ariadne Staples, *From Good Goddess to Vestal Virgins*, 140.

during the existence of the order and even afterwards.[88] For the same reason, Alexander Pope (1688-1744), in his epistle *Eloisa to Abelard* (1717), made the protagonist Eloisa compare her woe and heartbreak to the "spotless mind"[89] of the Vestal Virgin — clear of the destructive force of earthly love.[90]

The election of the Vestals occurred in two parts. Firstly, the *pontifex maximus* selected twenty maidens, who fitted all the conditions listed above. Afterwards the contenders "drew lots"[91] for the appointment. Implicitly, this means that the gods chose the girls worthy of the priesthood.[92] The chosen ones stayed in office for at least thirty years, sacrificing their fertile years to Vesta's service.[93] During the first ten years, the Vestal remained a novice, ten years after that, she "performed the sacred duties" and the last ten years she "taught the girls who had just entered the order."[94] After their service, they were free to marry, but, according to Plutarch, they seldom did. These marriages were considered unlucky.[95] From their election on, these girls were taken out of the societal system to be able to represent the community.[96] The Vestals, therefore, represent a wonderful paradox of being able to embody the city of Rome because of the fact that they no longer belong to the community.[97] Indicative of her value to Rome, a deceased Vestal was ceremonially buried within the city walls, in the *pomerium*, the hallowed centre of the empire.[98]

From the early imperial period onwards, however, the importance of the Vestals started to

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88 In Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, I will discuss their exemplary role in the Renaissance, the seventeenth century and the eighteenth century.

89 Alexander Pope, "Eloise to Abelard," *Poetry Foundation*, last access on 13th of February 2018, https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44892/eloisa-to-abelard.

90 The epistle is inspired by the famous medieval romance of Pierre Abélard (1079-1142) and Héloïse (*c.* 1098–1164).

91 Celia E. Schultz, *Women's Religious Activity in the Roman Republic*, 142.

92 Ibid., 143. A parallel can be drawn with Queen Elizabeth I, who asserted herself as a modern Vestal. She saw herself as chosen by God to rule over church and state in England, just like the kings and queens before her.

93 Ariadne Staples, *From Good Goddess to Vestal Virgins*, 147.

94 Eli Edward Burriss, *Taboo, Magic, Spirits*, 85.

95 Plutarch, *Numa,* X, trans. from Greek by Bernadotte Perrin, *Perseus Digital Library*, last access on the 7th of March, 2018, http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/.

96 Holt N. Parker, "Why were the Vestals Virgins?," 563.

97 In Chapter 4, we will see that this is also the case for another singular woman, Elizabeth I, who drew on the Vestals for inspiration.

98 Holt N. Parker, "Why were the Vestals Virgins?," 568.

wane. Paradoxically, the stern reforms by Augustus (63 BC-14 AD) — an emperor set on monitoring religious rites to save them from moral corruption — set their demise in motion. The emperor put restrictions on the rights of the "unmarried and childless,"[99] which stripped the Vestal Virgins from a considerable part of their legal privileges. As a 'consolation prize,' Augustus gave them the *ius liberorum* in the year 9 AD: "A contemporary legal artifice was thus used to maintain the Vestals' time honoured status."[100] This marriage law gave them the same rights as the Roman matron.[101] which effectuated their disbandment in 394 AD.[102]

2.2. Pollution and punishment: the live interment of Vestal Virgins

I shall increase and grow ever more famous,
so long as the priest and the silent Virgin
solemnly climb to the Capitol.
— Horace (65-8 BC)[103]

As discussed in the previous section, the Vestals played a crucial role in Rome. Without the Vestals, "what it was to be a Roman would have had a very different meaning."[104] As religious representatives of the state, their tasks needed to be fulfilled perfectly. Furthermore, the safety of Rome depended greatly on their exemplarity and their chastity.[105] As Holt N. Parker argues, Romans considered a Vestal's breach of chastity as an act of treason.[106] It meant that the state was unclean. The Vestal's *crimen incesti* signalled a "rupture" in the "reciprocal relationship between the Roman state and its gods."[107] For that reason, the Vestal in question had to be put to death in

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99 Ariadne Staples, *From Good Goddess to Vestal Virgins*, 145.

100 Ibid.

101 Mary Beard, "The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins," 17.

102 Richard Gordon, "Vesta, Vestals," *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, last access on the 18th of February, 2018, classics.oxfordre.com.

103 Quoted in Robin Lorsch Wildfang, *Rome's Vestal Virgins*, 1.

104 Robin Lorsch Wildfang, *Rome's Vestal Virgins*, 1.

105 Sarah Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity* (London: Robert Hale & Company, 1976), 211.

106 Holt N. Parker, "Why were the Vestals Virgins?," 585.

107 Sarolta A. Takács, *Vestal Virgins, Sibyls, and Matrons*, 87.

order for the city to be cleansed.[108] This peculiar relationship leads to the conclusion that "[t]he Vestal's body served as the microcosm of the city."[109] She was an "embodiment of the city."[110] Poets of antiquity utilized Vesta as a metonym for Rome, giving her the title of *Vesta publica populi Romani Quiritium.*[111] In the same fashion Pallas Athena represented the powerful city of Athens. Thus, the Vestals were inscribed in the tradition wherein the "women embody the state and their inviolability is objectified as the inviolability of the community."[112] Parker takes this assertion to a deeper level by claiming that the Vestal ultimately started to serve as a scapegoat or *pharmakos*/*pharmakon* in Roman society.[113] Whenever the city found itself in major crises, which were considered signs of the wrath and dissatisfaction of the gods — such as the near conquest of Italy by Hannibal (247 BC-*c.* 181-3 BC) in the Second Punic War (218 BC-201 BC) – the Vestal Virgins became "targets."[114] They were the perfect scapegoats, because they belonged to no-one and yet were intrinsically part of Roman society. Furthermore, the Vestal's family would not avenge the death of their religious relative; a prerequisite in the scapegoat theory that Parker adapted from René Girard (1925-2015). When calamity struck the Roman state, it was possible that a Vestal had to pay the price to rectify the relationship between the mortals and the gods.

Although Parker's "Girardian" insights largely make us understand the practically apotropaic function of the Vestal in dark times, Wildfang brings the scapegoat theory more accurately into focus. She rightly notes that "not all instances of external danger or internal turmoil at Rome in this period resulted in such accusations."[115] There needed to be another factor that determined these ritual killings of the Vestals. Wildfang states that Vestals only functioned as scapegoats when their execution could act "as an object lesson to some segment of the Roman population with whom the Vestal in question had close connections or whom she could be seen as

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108 Despite these efforts, Rome acquired a reputation as "whore city." Holt N. Parker, "Why were the Vestals Vir gins?," 563.

109 Ibid., 571.

110 Ibid., 567. Cf. Chapter 4 where we can see a parallel with Elizabeth I, who embodied England.

111 Ibid.

112 Ibid., 563.

113 Ibid.

114 Sarolta A. Takács, *Vestal Virgins, Sibyls, and Matrons*, 80.

115 Robin Lorsch Wildfang, *Rome's Vestal Virgins*, 80.

symbolizing in some way."[116] In some instances, when it was believed that a "faction to which [the Vestal] or [her] family belonged" was in any way culpable for uproar in the state, the priestess got the short end of the stick.[117]

Nineteen cases of persecuted Vestals appear in ancient Roman and Greek literature.[118] The live interment of these corrupted maidens occurred in a formal fashion. In most cases, the alleged lover of the Vestal was flogged to death without ceremony. In stark contrast, the execution of the impure priestess happened in highly ritualized steps. Plutarch describes the process in his *Βίοι Παράλληλοι* or *Parallel Lives* (*c.* late first century-begin second century).[119] The accused got carried in a litter through the *Forum Romanum* to her place of execution, a "ridge of earth […] inside of the city-wall"[120] near the *Porta Collina* or Colline Gate. She was covered and tied with ropes, in order to make her voiceless and invisible. Bystanders followed the "funeral-like procession"[121] in silence, "in a terrible depression of soul."[122] When the litter arrived at the final destination, the attendants unleashed the veiled Vestal, who descended the stairs to her tomb after the prayers of the *pontifex maximus.* At the moment of her descent the high priest and his pontifical college turn away from her. Then, the chamber, furnished with a bed and a lamp, was sealed with earth. In the Vestal's tomb the executioners placed a small symbolic amount of food, water, milk, and oil, "as though they would thereby absolve themselves from the charge of destroying by hunger a life which had been consecrated to the highest services of religion" (cf. Fig. 2 for the nineteenth-century depiction of live interment attributed to Pietro Saja). [123]

Different scholars seem to contradict each other not only on the meaning of these customs, but also on many other aspects regarding the Vestals. Staples argues that the live burial "was in fact

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116 Ibid.

117 Ibid.

118 Sarolta A. Takács, *Vestal Virgins, Sibyls, and Matrons*, 87.

119 Plutarch, *Numa,* X, trans. from Greek by Bernadotte Perrin, *Perseus Digital Library*, last access on the 7th of March, 2018, http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/.

120 Ibid.

121 Celia A. Schultz, "On the burial of unchaste Vestal Virgins," 123.

122 Plutarch, *Numa,* X, trans. from Greek by Bernadotte Perrin, *Perseus Digital Library*, last access on the 7th of March, 2018, http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/.

123 Ibid.

used to construct an elaborate fiction."[124] The pontiffs did not actually 'kill' the Vestal, they gave her "'very small portions' — i.e. symbolic quantities — of what is necessary to sustain life."[125] Furthermore they ignored their guilt in passing the sentence by averting their eyes while the convicted priestess descended. After the earth covered the whole ridge with the underground chamber, it was like the execution never really happened. The polluted Vestal was not considered dead but simply replaced by a new unpolluted one. This logic would also explain why the corrupted priestess was buried within the city walls. Normally, no corpse could be buried within the city: *hominem mortum in urbe ne sepelito neve urito*.[126] For Staples, this fiction marked a certain reverence for the Vestal, who still kept a sanctified state. After her death, the pontiffs persisted in bringing offerings to her burial site.[127] This again characterizes the duality in the treatment of Vestal Virgins.[128] For Wildfang, the ritual is not meant to be seen as an avoidance of "the blame for physically putting to death a priestess dedicated to the goddess."[129] Like Parker, she reads the live interment as a sacrifice to Vesta, the Earth goddess. The burial of the Vestal was vital to fix the relationship with Vesta:

> *Ensuring that the right offering reached the right deity was especially important in cases of expiatory offerings. If such an offering did not reach the right god, then the* pax deorum *remained broken and Rome at risk.*[130]

According to Wildfang, the beverages and food in the underground chamber served the purpose of appeasing the goddess of the hearth, since these provisions have connections to the cult of Vesta.[131] On the contrary, Schultz believes the live interment was not so much a sacrifice, as it was a "ritual

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124 Ariadne Staples, *From Good Goddess to Vestal Virgins*, 133.

125 Ibid.

126 Cicero quoted in Ariadne Staples, *From Good Goddess to Vestal Virgins*, 181.

127 Ibid., 151.

128 Cf. Section "2.1. Vestal Virgins and their ambiguous status."

129 Robin Lorsch Wildfang, *Rome's Vestal Virgins*, 58.

130 Ibid., 59.

131 Ibid.

murder,"[132] because in ancient sources writers never treated the executions as sacrifices. The Vestals were not viewed as victims. Schultz sees an analogy between the sentence for impure Vestals and the disposal of hermaphrodites who were killed by drowning them alive in a sack. Both groups represented "contaminations of sexual categories," who polluted society.[133] In these ritual murders the attendants treated the convicted as already dead: Vestals donned a funeral garb and were covered in the litter, while hermaphrodites were put in coffins before being thrown into a river.[134]

In spite of the fact that scholars keep different views about the punishment of supposed impure Vestal virgins, they unanimously affirm the connection between the Vestal's chastity and the well-being of the state. In the next section, it is shown that early modern artists from Italy and the Low Countries adapted that train of thought in the iconography of Tuccia.

2.3. Tuccia, symbol of an untainted Rome

[T]he chastity of the Vestal priestess Tuccia […]
burst from the cloud of infamy
with which it had been darkened.
— Valerius Maximus (14-37 AD)[135]

The execution of supposedly impure Vestal Virgins was in itself a trial. The Romans believed that Vesta would interfere and help the condemned Vestals in case they had been wrongly accused.[136] Legends of falsely prosecuted Vestal Virgins, who proved their virtue through a miracle, demonstrated that notion. Through divine intervention from the goddess Vesta these maidens could escape their sentence. Aemilia, who let the eternal fire die out on her watch, refuted the allegations of impurity against her by praying to Vesta. Her prayers heard, she miraculously made the fire rekindle by throwing her garment on the cinders of the *aedes Vestae*.[137] Like Aemilia, Tuccia saved herself by the grace of the goddess she served.

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132 Celia E. Schultz, "On the burial of unchaste Vestal Virgins," 125.

133 Ibid., 130-131.

134 Ibid., 131.

135 Translated and quoted in Hans-Friedrich Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus* (London/ New York: Routledge, 2002), 51.

136 Holt N. Parker, "Why were the Vestals Virgins?," 586.

137 Robin Lorsch Wildfang, *Rome's Vestal Virgins*, 86.

The miracle of Tuccia presumably took place *c.* 230 BC, during the start of the Illyrian Wars and right before the Second Punic War. Considering the *pharmakos* theory of Parker, the accusation against Tuccia might have been induced by the turmoil of war.[138] The Vestal's legend[139] was mentioned in various sources in classical literature. Plinius the Elder (23-79 AD) referred to her briefly in his *Historia Naturalis* (*c.* 77-79 AD).[140] A more detailed description of Tuccia's miracle can be found in *Ρωμαϊκή Αρχαιολογία* (end of the first century BC) or *Roman Antiquities* by Dionysios of Halicarnassus (first century BC).[141] According to Dionysios, the pontiffs ordered Tuccia to defend herself against the slanderous and unjust — yet "plausible" — allegations of a mystery man.[142] Confident she could prove her innocence, she called upon Vesta to help her. With townspeople in tow, she made her way to the Tiber, where she scooped water out of the river by using a sieve.[143] Tuccia carried it back to the Forum, where she — according to Dionysius — "poured it out at the feet of the pontiffs."[144] The legend ends with the accuser disappearing off the face of the earth.

Besides Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Valerius Maximus (14-37 AD) described the legend with awe and admiration for Vesta and her chaste priestess. He, as the only classical author to do so, explicitly incorporated the formulaic prayer of Tuccia to her goddess into his account: "O Vesta, if I have always brought chaste hands to your rites, grant that I may with this sieve fetch water from the Tiber and carry it back to your shrine."[145] This prayer highlights the self-assurance of the exemplary maiden. Tuccia's story, like the others in the nine books of his *Factorum ac dictorum memorabilium* (*c.* 30-31 AD) or *Memorable Doings and Sayings*, provided readers with guidelines for moral behaviour. Maximus' work was already read in the Middle Ages and became extremely popular

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138 Cf. Section "2.2. Pollution and punishment: the live interment of Vestal Virgins."

139 Cf. "Appendix 1: Classical Texts Featuring Tuccia in English Translations" for recounts of classical authors of the legend of Tuccia.

140 He erroneously dated the legend at 609.

141 Varro (116 BC-27 BC) , too, wrote an account of the tale, but it did not survive.

142 Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman antiquities* II.69.1-3, trans. from Greek by Earnest Cary, *Internet Archive*, last access on the 16th of April, 2018, https://archive.org/stream/romanantiquities01dionuoft/romanantiquities01dionuoft_djvu.txt.

143 The proverb *'In pertuso haurit dolio,'* translated as 'He's drawing water with a perforated jug,' was well-known in the classical world, and signified an impossible task.

144 Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman antiquities* II.69.1-3, trans. from Greek by Earnest Cary, *Internet Archive*, last access on the 16th of April, 2018, https://archive.org/stream/romanantiquities01dionuoft/romanantiquities01dionuoft_djvu.txt.

145 Translated and quoted in Hans-Friedrich Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, 51.

from the fourtheenth century onwards.[146] This anecdotal *exemplum* literature spread from the Italian city-states to north-western Europe. In France, Maximus' masterpiece became a magnificent illuminated manuscript *Des Faits et dits mémorables* (Koninklijke Bibliotheek van Nederland, *c.* 1470). Simon de Hesdin (?-1383) and Nicholas de Gonesse (*c.* 1364-?) translated the Latin work into French for the Emperor Charles V of France (1338-1380). A miniature (Koninklijke Bibliotheek van Nederland, *c.* 1400-1410) shows the handing over of the translated manuscript by Simon de Hesdin to Charles V (cf. Fig. 3).[147] A century after the translation of de Hesdin and Gonesse, the fifteenth-century illuminators the Master of the Cité de Dieu of Mëcon, the Master of the Psalter of Jean le Meingre III, and the Master of the Echevinage de Rouen provided miniatures to the translated text. In the illuminations of book VIII of *Des Faits et dits mémorables*, the story of Tuccia appears in the upper left margin (cf. Fig. 4). Two scenes have been depicted: firstly, the order of the *pontifex maximus* to prove her innocence and, secondly, Tuccia drawing water from the Tiber in her sieve. All figures wear contemporary medieval dress. In the first scene a blonde-haired Tuccia, with a dress in cinnabar red, is handed the sieve by a man — probably a pontiff — with the blessing of the *pontifex maximus*. The second scene shows the miracle of the sieve. Tuccia bends over to raise the sieve filled with water, while the bystanders, including the *pontifex maximus*, watch the unfolded miracle in awe. This rich fifteenth-century manuscript highlights the acclaim of Maximus' tome.

Due to the organization of the chapters of the work into themes, such as "*Fortitudo*" (fortitude) or "*Amor Parentum*" (parental love), *Memorable Doings and Sayings* was an inexhaustible source for visual artists in need of a simple and fitting *exemplum*.[148] It comes, therefore, as no surprise that the anecdote of Tuccia and her sieve was being so widely dispersed throughout both the south and the north of Europe. Giovanni Battista Moroni (1520/4-1579) even included the inscription "*Castitas infamiae nube obscurata emergit*"[149] from Valerius Maximus' account on a stone in the lefthand corner in his painting *The Vestal Virgin Tuccia* (The National Gallery London, *c.* 1560) (cf. Fig. 5).

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146 Marijke Crab, *Exemplary Reading: Printed Renaissance Commentaries on Valerius Maximus (1470-1600)*, Scientia Universalis 1: Studien zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte der Vormoderne 2, ed. by Karl A. E. Enenkel (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2015), 42.

147 Koninklijke Bibliotheek Nederland, "The Hague, KB, 71 E 68," *Medieval Illuminated Manuscripts*, last access on the 5th of April, 2018, http://manuscripts.kb.nl/show/manuscript/71+E+68.

148 René Veenman, *De klassieke traditie in de Lage Landen* (Nijmegen, Uitgeverij Vantilt, 2009), 160.

149 This translates as 'chastity appears from the darkened clouds of infamy.'

Although most classical authors presented Tuccia as an *exemplum*, it seems though that Livy (*c.* 59/64 BC-17 AD) did not believe in her innocence.[150] In the *Periochae* or *Summaries* — excerpts from the books of *Ab Urbe Condita* (27-9 BC) or *History of Rome* — it says: "*Tuccia, virgo vestalis, incesti damnata est.*"[151] This *Periochae,* however, is an unreliable indirect source, since the work features a patchwork of summaries of *Ab Urbe Condita* — "the size of the complete work made it unmanageable"[152] — from the first century onwards. These summaries are

> *unreliable indicators of the emphases that Livy gave his material where they can be checked against the surviving books: therefore, there is no valid reason to suppose them more accurate and trustworthy for the lost books.*[153]

The Tuccia reference came out of one of the summaries of the lost books, namely out of Book XX. The question, therefore, remains whether this short sentence was a correct summary of the lost fragment in which Livy discusses Tuccia's case. It is not unequivocally possible to ascertain the stance of Livy, due to the brevity of the reference and the possibility of error in the making of these summaries.

Whereas the opinion of Livy is impossible to track down, references to Tuccia made by two early Christian theologians clearly show their rather negative view of the pagan priestess and her miraculous sieve. Tertullian (*c.* 155 /160 - 220) interpreted the miracle as the work of demons with their "powers of spiritual deception."[154] These deceptions kept people from acknowledging the one true God. He compares the wonder of the sieve to that of the story of Claudia Quinta.[155] After

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150 Barbara Kowalewski, *Frauengestalten im Geschichtswerk des T. Livius* (München/ Leipzig: K.G. Saur, 2002), 334.

151 Translation: Tuccia, a Vestal Virgin, was found guilty of impurity. Latin quoted in Holt N. Parker, "Why were the Vestals Virgins?," 593.

152 Robert Maxwell Ogilvie, "Livy," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, last access on the 18th of April, 2018, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Livy.

153 Timothy D. Barnes, *Ammianus Marcellinus and the Representation of Historical Reality* (Ithaca/ London: Cornell University Press, 1998), 211.

154 Quoted in T. Herbert Bindley (ed.), *The Apology of Tertullian* (London/ Oxford: Parker and Co., 1890), 77.

155 It is unsure whether she was a Vestal Virgin or a Roman matron. In various sources both descriptions are found when talking about Claudia Quinta. John Scheid even argues in his article "Claudia The Vestal Virgin" that a Vestal Virgin and a Roman matron — both named Claudia — had to prove their chastity by towing ships. He states that later on the two figures became muddled, and that the version of the Vestal Claudia won from that of the Roman matron. John Scheid, "Claudia, The Vestal Virgin," *Roman Women*, ed. by Augusto Fraschetti, trans. from Italian by Linda Lappin, (Chicago/ London: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), 23-28.

allegations of unchastity, Claudia Quinta cleared her name by miraculously towing a ship by her girdle, a "sign of purity."[156] The ship, which carried a stone representing the Great Mother Cybele, had run aground offshore, before Claudia Quinta towed it all the way to Rome. A couple of centuries later, both legends turned up in the writings of one of the most renowned Latin Church Fathers, namely Saint Augustine of Hippo (354-430). In *De civitate Dei* or *The City of God* (*c.* 413-426) Augustine, like Tertullian, distinguished the miracles of Tuccia and Claudia Quinta — as works by demons — from those "wrought among God's people:"[157]

> *And if some of these do seem to equal those which are wrought by the godly, the end for which they are wrought distinguishes the two, and shows that ours are incomparably the more excellent. For those miracles commend the worship of a plurality of gods, who deserve worship the less the more they demand it; but these of ours commend the worship of the one God, who, both by the testimony of His own Scriptures, and by the eventual abolition of sacrifices, proves that He needs no such offerings.*[158]

Later on, in chapter eleven of Book XXII, Augustine referred back to the miracle of Tuccia and her sieve to elaborate on the greatness of God. In the text he asked himself who originated the miracle: "Who kept the weight of water in the sieve? Who prevented any drop from falling from it through so many open holes?"[159] For Augustine it could have only been caused by a demon or a (lesser) deity. If such a wondrous miracle could have been performed by a lesser being, then the miracles of the Christian God, who exceeds any other god in ability and power, transcend them all. Hence, Tuccia's legend was a tool to argue that if a demon or a lesser god could cause a sieve not to leak, the "Almighty God, who Himself created all the elements, is able to eliminate from the earthly body its heaviness, so that the quickened body shall dwell in whatever element the quickening spirit pleases."[160] The Church Father used classical literature as didactic material to explain the Holy

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156 John Scheid, "Claudia, The Vestal Virgin," 23-24.

157 Augustine, "The City of God (Book X)," trans. from Latin by Marcus Dods, *New Advent*, last access on 5th of April, 2018, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/120110.htm.

158 Ibid.

159 Augustine, "The City of God (Book XXII)," trans. from Latin by Marcus Dods, *New Advent*, last access on 5th of April, 2018, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/120122.htm.

160 Ibid.

Scriptures.[161] By including the legend of Tuccia twice in his *magnum opus,* Augustine had unwittingly ensured its legacy in poetry and art. Petrarch (1304-1374), an admirer of Augustine,[162] included Tuccia as a symbol of chastity in his *Trionfo della Castità* (1351).[163] It is hereby, however, important to note that whereas Petrarch considers Tuccia as a role model, Augustine associates her with paganism and demons. Furthermore, artists mostly ignored these negative Augustinian overtones and, like Petrarch, stressed her exemplarity. Some even viewed Tuccia as a quasi saintly figure, a pseudo-Madonna. Ironically, the most telling example of Tuccia as a Marian character can be found in the Basilica di Sant'Agostino in Rome (cf. Fig. 6). In the chapel of Saint-Catharine the ceiling is embellished with three lunettes, probably painted by Venusti (1510-1579). The right one depicts Tuccia, dressed in white and orange robes with a blue veil. The colours blue and white have Marian connotations. Tuccia is sitting down in a garden with her sieve in her hands. With her left foot she tramples a snake, a symbol of the evil in the world, but also a reference to original sin.[164] This painting clearly does not represent Augustine's view on the miracle, but depicts her as a pre-Christian heroine. Thus far, scholars have not paid attention to this misreading of *De civitate Dei*. For example, in Marina Warner's impressive article "The Sieve of Tuccia" it appears as if Augustine admired Tuccia's virtuous chastity:

> *The affiliation of sexuality and incontinence, of chastity and virtue, led that champion of good behaviour, St. Augustine, to tell Tuccia's story in* The City of God*, and thence her story passed into Christian teaching, and her honour was posthumously extolled.*[165]

Although Warner rightly mentions that Augustine's inclusion of Tuccia's story in his writings led to a wider dispersement, she does not discuss Augustine's interpretation of the story. That being said, some artists like Moretto da Brescia (1498-1554) got their inspiration from Augustine, used an inscription out of *De civitate Dei*, but interpreted it freely to put the Vestal in a positive light as the epitome of female virtue (cf. Fig. 7).

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161 René Veenman, De klassieke traditie in de Lage Landen, 14.

162 For more information on the influence of Augustine on Petrarch: Alexander Lee, *Petrarch and St. Augustine: Classical Scholarship, Christian Theology and the Origins of the Renaissance in* Italy, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History 210, ed. by Han van Ruler (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

163 Cf. Chapter 3.

164 The iconology of this work will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 3.

165 Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens: The Allegory of the Female Form* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1985), 242.

The connection between Claudia Quinta and Tuccia[166] was also picked up by several artists. According to Vasari, the artists Polidoro da Caravaggio (*c.* 1499-1543) and Maturino da Firenze (1490-1528) decorated a façade on Montecavallo near Sant'Agata with stories including those of Tuccia and Claudia Quinta.[167] A couple of series of virtuous women featured both heroines, such as the pair of panels[168] of female virtue allegories by the Sienese painter Bartolomeo Neroni (1505/15?- 1571), called il Riccio. In this *donne illustre*[169] series (V&A, sixteenth century), Tuccia with her sieve represents Chastity (cf. Fig. 8), whereas Claudia Quinta (cf. Fig. 9), holding a miniature ship, stands for Confidence. Both figures are dressed *all'antica*, with one breast exposed. Interestingly, the pair of Roman chaste women also adorned an Italian fan*, Claudia proving her innocence* (Royal Trust Collection, *c.* 1740), that belonged to Princess Charlotte of Wales (1796-1817) and was later passed down to Queen Victoria (1819-1901) (cf. Fig. 10). The fan primarily focuses on Claudia Quinta towing the ship, which is depicted in the middle. Around her, villagers, military men, and priests look in wonderment — very much like in representations of Tuccia's miracle. At Claudia Quinta's left side Tuccia is kneeling in admiration, accompanied by her sieve. In this depiction the sieve is empty and rests on its side, like an attribute of a saint or allegorical figure: the sieve does not play an active role in this representation, but is solely there to point out that the kneeling figure is Tuccia. The fan could have been a wedding gift, since — like the more popular gift of gloves —they were given as wedding presents.[170] The subject matter of these chaste Roman women makes this suggestion even more likely, since these figures were often depicted in a marital context.[171] Again, the fact that the fan ended up in England proves the popularity of these Roman stories outside of the Italian city-states. Still, these two figures probably remained the most popular in their Italian milieu. These heroines can be found on the walls of the

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166 Antonio Vannugli also discusses this connection in his essay on Moretto da Brescia's *The Vestal Virgin Tuccia.* Antonio Vannugli, "Una 'Vestale Tuccia': '*Puditiciae Testimonium*' del Moretto in Palazzo Taverna a Roma," *Bollettino d'Arte* 47 (1988), 87-88.

167 Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors & Architects*, trans. from Italian by Gaston du C. De Vere, vol 5, *Andrea da Fiesole to Lorenzo Lotto* (London: Philip Lee Warner, 1912-14), 176.

168 According to the V&A, there was a third middle panel of another chaste woman (probably Sulpitia). Tuccia, on the left panel, is looking to the right at the middle panel, whilst Claudia Quinta on the right panel is looking at the left. Victoria & Albert Museum, "Tuccia (Chastity)," *V&A*: last access on the 7th of April, 2018, http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O125590/tuccia-chastity-tempera-painting-neroni-bartolomeo/.

169 Cf. Chapter 3 for more about Tuccia as part of the *donne illustre.*

170 David R. Smith, *Masks of Wedlock: Seventeenth-Century Dutch Marriage Portraiture*, Studies in the Fine Arts: Iconography 8, ed. by Linda Seidel (Ann Arbor: Umi Research Press, 1982), 82.

171 Cf. Chapter 3 for more information on the figure Tuccia in a marital context.

Sala Delle Aquile or Hall of the Eagles[172] of the Musei Capitolini, highlighting their importance as quintessentially Roman figures. The room is decorated with a painted frieze by Cristofano Gherardi (1508-1556), depicting 'historical' events from the Republic of Rome in medallions together with landscapes with buildings from Roman antiquity. On one side of the room the two medallions feature Tuccia running with her sieve (cf. Fig. 11) and Claudia Quinta pulling the ship with her girdle (cf. Fig. 12). Since both were Roman female role models, exemplary for their chastity, it is natural that they were painted next to each other in this mural.

Tuccia, as a Vestal Virgin who proved her innocence, certainly was the figurehead of a pure Rome. The paradoxically impermeable sieve fitted perfectly as a symbol of Tuccia's virtuous chastity. Firstly, the sieve played a part in the cult of Vesta: the rekindling of the sacred fire on the First of March happened by the Vestals carrying "the new fire to the temple hearth in a bronze sieve."[173] Secondly, medical authors from antiquity believed that a virgin's skin — very much like that of a man — could not be penetrated, unlike the "porous" flesh of a "sexually active woman."[174] Consequently, a woman's skin seemed to become a sieve after male penetration. In contrast, Tuccia's sieve — a metaphor for her reproductive organs — functioned as a closed-off receptacle.[175]

As explained by Parker, the inviolability of the state depended on the inviolability of the Vestal Virgins. Tuccia's chastity, proven by the sieve, signalled the integrity of the Roman state. Probably this explains depictions of the story of Tuccia in connection to the miraculous legend of Romulus and Remus — who washed ashore — and the she-wolf. The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam possesses a number of engravings with this subject matter made in the Low Countries. From the sixteenth century onwards, in the spirit of humanism, Flemish and Dutch artists started to rely more and more on the classical world for the subjects of their work.[176] The Latin edition of Valerius Maximus' *Factorum ac dictorum memorabilium* of the humanist Stephanus Pighius (1520-1604), published in 1567 by Plantijn in Antwerp, got reprinted time and again.[177] On top of that, artists

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172 Two Roman eagles stand in the room.

173 Rachel Allison Smith, *Vestals Remembered: An Examination of the Myths of Rhea Silvia, Tarpeia, and Tuccia*, unpubl. master thesis (Baylor University Texas, 2014), 64.

174 Eleanor Irwin, "The Invention of Virginity on Olympus," in *Virginity Revisited*, ed. by Bonnie MachLachlan and Judith Fletcher, 17.

175 Cf. Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 for a more detailed discussion on women as (leaky) vessels.

176 René Veenman, *De klassieke traditie in de Lage Landen*, 157.

177 Ibid., 160.

consulted the Dutch translation of the work, namely *Negen boecken, van ghedenckweerdighe, loflicke woorden, daden ende gheschiedenissen der Romeynen en de uytlantsche volcken* by Conradus Mirkinius (?-before 1633) in 1614.[178] Through these editions painters and printmakers came into contact with the legend of Tuccia. Furthermore, many artists of the Low Countries might have discovered the motif of the Vestal Virgin during their travels to Rome and other Italian city-states, where they completed their education.[179] The evolution of the increasing importance of the classical world in the art of the Low Countries came about thanks to key figures such as the "Romanist" Jan van Scorel (1495-1562), Pieter Coecke van Aelst (I) (1502-1550), Jan Gossaert (1508-1532), Hieronymus Cock (1518-1570).[180] Engravers such as Jan Collaert (I) (*c.* 1525/1530-1580) worked in Italy and introduced works by Italian painters, such as Titian (*c.* 1477-1576) and Raphael (1483-1520) to the Low Countries.[181]

Printmaking was a popular medium for the distribution of art. It allowed a wide audience to come into contact with works by celebrated artists and their subject matter. Print culture, therefore, suited propagandist purposes. Prints of virtuous women from antiquity and the Old Testament were produced in large numbers until the end of the seventeenth century, because these "remote, nearly mythological women could be turned into allegories of womanly virtue […]."[182] In contrast, the "Power of Women" *topos* in ambivalent depictions of female heroines expresses the misogynist views of male artists on powerful women.[183] The depictions of Tuccia as a symbol of an untainted Rome largely fall in the first category of prints that promote the virtues, such as chastity, modesty, and obedience.[184] These engravings also serve as publicity for Rome's purity, and, therefore, might also stress the city's superiority as a state.

In Pieter Jalhea Furnius' (*c.* 1545-1626) mannerist engraving[185] *Tuccia with a sieve at the*

178 Ibid.

179 Ibid., 154.

180 Ibid., 154-156.

181 Ibid., 158.

182 Helen Diane Russell and Bernadine Barnes, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, exh. cat., Washington, National Gallery of Art (New York: The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1990), 29.

183 Ibid., 13.

184 Cf. Chapter 3, which focuses more on a gendered reading of Tuccia in art.

185 Cf. "Appendix 2: Translations of the Latin Captions of Prints Depicting Tuccia," for the translation of the text accompanying this print. Thanks to David Janssens, Leo Nellissen, Thomas Bervoets, and Pim Boer for translating the Latin texts in the appendix to Dutch.

riverside (Rijksmuseum, 1573),[186] after the scheme of Jan van der Straet (1523-1605) (cf. Fig. 13), the accused Vestal is modestly dressed in a covering *stola* with a veil and a belt tied in a knot. This "virgin knot" symbolically conveyed the virtuous chastity of the subject. Tuccia has just taken water from the Tiber, which is personified as a river god with in his left hand an amphora with a lion's head with water streaming out of it, and in his right hand a cornucopia. On Tuccia's left, Romulus and Remus are fighting to drink from Lupa Romana's teat. The print shows different scenes of the story synchronically next to one another. In the right corner of the background, we see a shrine with a statue of Vesta.[187] On the left, Tuccia runs[188] to the House of the Vestals to show the water in her impermeable sieve. Just behind Tuccia on the foreground, a triumphal arch is distinguishable, which links Tuccia's miracle to the triumph of the state.

Furnius' engraving is the fifth of his series *Famous Roman Women*:[189] (i) *The Triumph of Hersilia*,[190] (ii) *The Mothers of the Sabine Virgins Make Peace*,[191] (iii) *The Abduction of Cloelia*,[192] (iv) *Veturia and Volumnia Begging Coriolanus*,[193] (v) *The Vestal Virgin Tuccia*, and (vi) *Cornelia, Mother of the Gracchi*).[194] It is striking that all of the stories about these *mulieres clarae* have something to do with war and peace. The diplomatic Hersilia and the Sabine mothers stopped the

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186 Original title: *Tuccia met een zeef aan de waterkant.*

187 Note that in the Vesta cult the goddess was never represented by a statue, but by the eternal sacred fire. This detail in Furnius' print is, therefore, an anachronistic error.

188 Artists often portrayed Tuccia running, because Petrarch described her as running with her sieve to the Tiber (*corse al Tibro*). In most depictions, however, she runs not to the Tiber, but from the Tiber to the Forum Romanum. Cf. Chapter 3, and Catalogue.

189 The object details of this print series can be found in Marjolein Leesberg, *Johannes Stradanus*, The New Hollstein Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts 1450-1700, ed. by Huigen Leeflang, vol 2, *Part II* (Ouderkerk aan den IJssel: Sound & Vision Publishers, 2008), 281-282.

190 Hersilia ended the war between the Sabines and the Romans and ended up marrying Romulus.

191 The mothers of the Sabine virgins, who were abducted by the Romans, entreated their husbands and the hus bands of their daughters to make peace.

192 Cloelia, together with nine other maidens and ten young men, was sent to the Etruscan king Porsenna to settle a peace treaty. Showing great courage, Cloelia decided to escape the Porsenna's camp, saving some of the other hostages. She swam across the Tiber on a horse. After she was recaptured, Porsenna was so impressed by her actions that he freed her and the others.

193 After being exiled, the Roman general Coriolanus (fifth century BC) fled to the Volsci — Rome's enemy — and persuaded them to break of their peace treaty with Rome and attack the eternal city. Eventually his mother Veturia and his wife Volumnia persuaded him to stop the invasion of Rome. Thanks to these two women Rome was saved.

194 Cornelia Africana (second century BC), daughter of Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus maior (236 BC – 183 BC), married to the much older Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus (*c.* 220 BC - *c.* 150 BC). She bore him twelve children, amongst them the brutally murdered social reformers, the Gracchi brothers. After the death of her husband, she never remarried and devoted herself to her children.

war between the Sabine fathers and Romulus' men, while Veturia and Volumnia ended a Volsci invasion.[195] The courageous Cloelia saved herself and other Roman youths from being taken hostage by the Etruscans. Tuccia's chastity, as mentioned before in this chapter, was of paramount importance for the inviolabilty of the state. Finally, the devoted Cornelia mothered the idealistic Gracchi brothers. She had a great influence on her sons and helped them in their political careers. This all ended when her sons were brutally murdered because of their social reforms. Still Cornelia was respected as a virtuous and wise matron. After her death, the Romans erected a statue of her.[196]

Artists frequently made their depictions of Tuccia as part of a series with other virtuous women, as we have seen before in the pairing with Claudia Quinta. Interesting to note is that Gherardi also included depictions of Cloelia's flight on a horse through the sea as well as the reconciliation of the Romans and Sabines among medallions in the Sala delle Aquile in the Musei Capitolini (cf. supra). The print series was, therefore, definitely not the only instance where artists linked Cloelia, the Sabines and Tuccia.

This series of *Famous Roman Women* must have been a success, since Theodoor Galle (1571-1633) reprised the subject matter of these prints[197] in a slightly different order[198] in *c.* 1595. His work was published by his father Philips Galle (1537-1612) in Antwerp, the centre of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century printmaking. Theodoor made some adjustments to the engraving of *Tuccia proves her innocence*[199] (Rijksmuseum, 1653-1654) (cf. Fig. 14).[200] He included the allegorical figure of Rome, a seated woman with a helmet and a harness, a sceptre in her left hand and a statuette of Victoria in her right hand. Seven putti with rock-shaped heads, representing the seven hills of Rome, surround her.[201] The statuette of Victoria alludes to the victory of Rome as long as

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195 Just like Tuccia, Hersilia and the Sabines were depicted on *cassoni* for Renaissance brides (cf. Chapter 3).

196 Lesly F. Massey, *Daughters of God, Subordinates of Men: Women and the Roots of Patriarchy in the New Testament* (North Carolina: McFarland & Company., 2015), 159.

197 The object details of this print series can be found in Marjolein Leesberg, *Johannes Stradanus*, The New Hollstein Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts 1450-1700, ed. by Huigen Leeflang, vol 2, *Part II* (Ouderkerk aan den IJssel: Sound & Vision Publishers, 2008), 287-288.

198 (i) *The Mothers of the Sabine Virgins make Peace*, (ii) *The Abduction of Cloelia*, (iii) *Veturia and Volumnia Begging Coriolanus*, (iv) *The Triumph of Hersilia*, (v) *The Vestal Virgin Tuccia*, (vi) *Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi*.

199 Original title: *Tuccia bewijst haar onschuld.*

200 Cf. "Appendix 2: Translations of the Latin Captions of Prints Depicting Tuccia," for the translations of the text accompanying this print. Thanks to David Janssens, Leo Nellissen, Thomas Bervoets, and Pim Boer for translating the Latin texts in the appendix to Dutch.

201 Rijksmuseum, "Tuccia bewijst haar onschuld, Theodoor Galle, naar Jan van der Straet, 1653 - 1654," *Rijksmuseum*, last access on the 12th of April, 2018, http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.581818.

the Vestals, such as Tuccia, remain chaste and virtuous. Another difference with the earlier engraving is the fact that the Tiber god actively pours the water into Tuccia's sieve, but does not engage with Tuccia like in Furnius' print.[202] The surroundings too, differ slightly in Galle's engraving: the cityscape comes more to the fore and shows more details. One column of the shrine of Vesta appears to have fallen.[203] Furthermore, to the left in the background, a row of pyramids are noticeable.

The narrative in Galle's print largely matches the one of Furnius' print, apart from Galle's inclusion of the allegorical figure of Rome, the putti, and the dismissal of the 'running Tuccia'[204] type: to the left, Tuccia with her sieve is praying to the goddess to grant her a miracle; in the middle, Tuccia is retrieving water from the Tiber; and slightly to the right in the background, Tuccia has reached the house of the Vestals where she is admired by her fellow priestesses.

The prints of Furnius and Galle inspired Rubens (1577-1640) to make a drawing *The Vindication of Tuccia* (Musée du Louvre, *c.* 1622). It depicts Tuccia showing her sieve to the pontiffs whilst in the right corner an engaging river god Tiber supports the attribute of the Vestal, indicating that divine Roman powers intervene to clear her name (cf. Fig. 15).[205] The verso of the double-sided drawing holds an image of the *Majority of Louis XIII* (Musée du Louvre, *c.* 1620s), with the virtues such as Prudence,[206] which suggests that the sketch of Tuccia might have been meant to be part of the *Medici Cycle* (Musée du Louvre, 1621-1625).[207] Nonetheless, Rubens abandoned the idea of making a painting based on the drawing.[208]

The independent publication of Galle's *Famous Roman Women* series aside, these six prints were also included in a picture Bible. This type of Bible, consisting of series of prints of the Old

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202 Elizabeth McGrath, *Rubens: Subjects From History*, Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard 13(1), ed. by Arnout Ballis, vol 2, *Catalogue & Indexes* (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1997), 271.

203 The fallen column may have a symbolical meaning. The column stands for chastity and steadfastness. Has it fallen due to the allegations of Tuccia's assumed lack of chastity? Or does the column, being somewhat of a focal point, simply bring more focus to Tuccia's chastity?

204 Cf. n. 188, Chapter 3, and Catalogue.

205 Elizabeth McGrath, *Rubens: Subjects From History*, vol 2, *Catalogue & Indexes*, 271.

206 For more information about the link between the allegorical representation of Prudence and Tuccia cf. Chapter 4.

207 Elizabeth McGrath, *Rubens: Subjects From History*, vol 2, *Catalogue & Indexes*, 272.

208 Ibid.

and New Testaments, was in high demand in the second half of the sixteenth century in Antwerp.[209] Although these prints originated from Antwerp, Jan Philipsz. Schabaelje (1592-1656) printed this emblematic Bible, called *Den Grooten Emblemata Sacra*, *Bestaande in Meer dan Vier hondert Bybelsche figueren, Soo des Ouden als des Nieuwen Testaments* (Rijksmuseum, 1654),[210] in the Amsterdam printing house of Tymon Houthaeck (1625-1664). The book comprises four parts: the first two on the Old Testament; the third on the prophets and kings of the Old Testament, virtues, and *exempla* of ancient Greeks and Romans; and the last part on the New Testament. Together with print cycles of Judith, Susannah, and the Sybilles, the *Famous Roman Women* series (in the table of contents: "Van der Lof der Romeynsche Vrouwen") features as a collection of *exempla* suited for Christian teaching. The inclusion of Tuccia in a picture Bible could be explained by the fact that she was a virtuous and chaste priestess (albeit a pagan one),[211] comparable to Christian nuns, and, that she was mentioned by the Early Church Fathers Tertullian and Augustine (cf. supra). For the same reasons, the figure of Tuccia can be found in churches such as the lunette in the Basilica di Sant'Agostino (cf. supra), but also as a stoup in the Chiesa di San Francesco in Volterra (cf. Fig. 16). Here, a sculpture of Tuccia — signed G. Bapt. Bava in 1552 — is holding the holy water in her sieve, which bears the inscription "*Innocens nihil timet*" or "The innocent fears nothing."[212] Another example of Tuccia as the bearer of the holy water can be found in the Chiesa di San Bartolomeo a Monte Oliveto in Florence, made by Giovanni Bandini in 1547 (cf. Fig. 17).

Since Tuccia was associated with Augustine and Christian teaching, it might explain why Rafaello Guidi (1585-1615) dedicated his engraving *Vestal Virgin Tuccia carries water in a sieve to prove her innocence* (Rijkmuseum, 1611) (cf. Fig. 18),[213] a copy of the print by Jacob Matham (1571-1631), to Pope Paul V, who was an avid art collector and patron.[214] The original mannerist engraving *Vestaalse maagd Tuccia draagt water in een vergiet om haar onschuld te bewijzen*

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209 Vernon K. Robbins, Walter S. Mellon, Roy R. Jeal (eds.), *The Art of Visual Exegesis: Rhetoric, Texts, Images*, Emory Studies in Early Christianity 19, ed. by Vernon K. Robbins and David B. Gowler (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2017), 5.

210 Translation of the title: *The Large Emblemata Sacra, Consisting of more than four-hundred Biblical Figures, of the Old as well as the New Testament*.

211 Cf. Section "2.1. Vestal Virgins and their ambiguous status."

212 Cf. Chapter 3 for more information on the stoup.

213 Cf. "Appendix 2: Translations of the Latin Captions of Prints Depicting Tuccia," for the translations of the text accompanying this print. Thanks to David Janssens, Leo Nellissen, Thomas Bervoets, and Pim Boer for translating the Latin texts in the appendix to Dutch.

214 Encyclopaedia Britannica (eds.), "Paul V," *Encyclopaedia Brittanica*, last access on 12th of April, 2018, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Paul-V.

(Rijksmuseum, 1608) by Matham (cf. Fig. 19), after a painting by Bartholomeus Spranger (1546-1611), alludes more clearly to the influence of the Vestal's religious purity on the military success of Rome. Matham dedicated the print to Rudolf II (1552-1612), Holy Roman Emperor and a notable patron of Northern Mannerism.[215] In the engraving, Tuccia, dressed *all'antica*, has already scooped up the water of the Tiber and starts to leave the riverbank to take the sieve to the shrine of Vesta. A triumphant parade of soldiers turn to her to watch Tuccia's miracle. Nevertheless, Tuccia does not face them, but looks down at her sieve and at the river god holding Lupa Romana, which emphasizes the importance of the Vestal to Rome. The river god points to one of the two babies, which might indicate that this child represents Romulus, the first king of Rome. In the top half of the print, three angels float in the sky. One of them blows on two buisines to herald the miracle and its accompanying victory.

Remarkable about the copy of the print by Guidi is that it connects ancient history to events of the late sixteenth and begin seventeenth century. In the caption of the engraving the Tiber is described as "savage" and "fast flowing."[216] The river god's tempestuous nature brings "recurrent floods […] wearing out […] Thetys."[217] These verses of the caption refer to the Tiber floods that have tormented Rome since antiquity. On the 24th of December 1598 the worst flood was recorded: "[…] floodwaters were 3.95 meters (13 feet) deep in the Piazza di Minerva."[218] By the beginning of the seventeenth century, Rome had been devastated by a "series of catastrophic floods," which "led to various projects for rectifying the course of the Tiber."[219] In the print by Guidi, Tuccia with Mother Nature on her side, was able to tame the Tiber: "Now […] [the Tiber does] not possess this power because of/through Tuccia."[220] It is her virtue that saved the city in antiquity and kept the

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215 Rijksmuseum, "Vestaalse maagd Tuccia draagt water in een vergiet om haar onschuld te bewijzen, Jacob Matham, after Bartholomeus Spranger, 1608," *Rijksmuseum*, last access on the 12th of April, 2018, http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.337100.

216 Cf. "Appendix 2: Translations of the Latin Captions of Prints Depicting Tuccia." Thanks to David Janssens, Leo Nellissen, Thomas Bervoets, and Pim Boer for translating the Latin texts in the appendix to Dutch.

217 Ibid.

218 Grant Heiken, Renato Funiciello and Donatella De Rita, *The Seven Hills of Rome: A Geological Tour of the Eternal City* (Princeton/ Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005), 61.

219 Emanuela Guidobuoni, "When towns collapse: Images of Earthquakes, Floods, and Eruptions in Italy in the Fifteenth to the Nineteenth Centuries," in *Wounded Cities: The Representation of Urban Disasters in European Art (14th-20th Centuries)*, ed. Marco Folin and Monica Preti (Leiden/ Boston: Bril, 2015), 52.

220 Cf. "Appendix 2: Translations of the Latin Captions of Prints Depicting Tuccia." Thanks to David Janssens, Leo Nellissen, Thomas Bervoets, and Pim Boer for translating the Latin texts in the appendix to Dutch.

Tiber at bay, like the water in her sieve. Tuccia is consequently heralded as a heroine of Rome.[221]

Not only in print does Tuccia come to the fore as an allegory of an untainted Rome, but also other works of art in palaces and museums depict the chaste Vestal. The Musei Capitolini's Sala degli Arazzi holds four interesting eighteenth-century tapestries. One tapestry illustrates the personification of Rome accompanied by the Tiber, whereas the three other tapestries show quintessential scenes from Rome's history among which representations of Romulus and Remus and the miracle of Tuccia and her sieve. The tapestry featuring Tuccia (cf. Fig. 20) by the riverside accompanied by villagers on the foreground and a small group of men in the background to the right — presumably the pontifical college — was based on the painting (Musei Capitolini, c. 1550s) (cf. Fig. 21) by the classical artist Domenico Corvi (1721-1803) from Viterbo, one of the favourite painters of the Borghese family.[222] He worked and died in Rome. As a neoclassicist, it comes as no surprise that he painted Tuccia more than once. He did not, however, paint her dressed *all'antica* in the work hanging in the Pinacoteca Capitolina. Tuccia, lifting up her paradoxically impermeable sieve, is wearing a modest contemporary dress with a shawl and a black veil over her brown hair that is not completely covered. The group of women and children accompanying her are also dressed in contemporary garments. In stark contrast, the men in the right part of the painting are wearing togas as ceremonial dress. In this depiction of the scene, the Tiber is not personified. A completely different Tuccia can be found in Palazzo Barberini,[223] where Corvi was commissioned to adorn the walls of a reception room for Cornelia Constanza Barberini (1716-1797) (cf. Fig. 22). The Camerino di Chiaroscuro (1770), now known as the Sala Corvi, inspired by the work of Piranesi (1720-1778), features frescoes in *grisaille* of famous virtuous figures from antiquity such as Alexander the Great, Dido, Cleopatra, Achilles, Lucretia and Tuccia.[224] Here the Vestal is dressed *all'antica* with a veil covering all of her hair. Her sieve functions merely as an attribute that she holds under her left arm. The fact that Tuccia is included in this list of impressive figures from antiquity shows the importance of the Vestal as a virtuous role model in Italian intellectual society

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221 It would be interesting to further investigate the influence of Tuccia on Father Tiber. A tentative suggestion could be that chastity, represented by Tuccia, resolved Rome's flood problem, which manifested itself because of the lewdness of 'whore city' Rome. Nevertheless this suggestion needs to be further looked into before claiming its veracity.

222 For more on the artist: Anna Lo Bianco and Valter Curzi (eds.), *Domenico Corvi*, exh. cat., Viterbo, Museo della Rocca Albornoz (Rome: Viviani arte, 1998).

223 The collection of the Palazzo Barberini also includes a sculpture of Tuccia, called *La Velata* (1743) by Antonio Corradini (1688-1752).

224 Palazzo Barberini, "Sala Corvi," *Galleria Barberini*, last access on the 12th of April, 2018, http://galleriabarberini.beniculturali.it/index.php?es/176/sala-corvi.

in Rome.

The most frequent type of depiction of Tuccia shows the Vestal Virgin proving her innocence in front of the *pontifex maximus*, who is almost always in the company of a member of the Roman military. It were mostly Italian artists who kept producing paintings of this type from the early fifteenth century until the end of the eighteenth century.[225] Some of these scenes ended up in courthouses, such as the lost painting by Pomponio Amalteo (1505-1588) for the Palazzo del Consiglio dei Nobili of Belluno.[226] The presence of the Roman military at Tuccia's trial again stresses the importance of the virginity of the priestess for Rome's existential welfare. *La vestale Tuccia* (Accademia Tadini, *c.* 1500-1510), presumably the front panel of a *cassone*, painted by the studio of Niccolò Giolfino (1476-1555), shows three soldiers waiting outside around a fire, while in a loggia Tuccia proves her chastity to the *pontifex* in the company of a fourth soldier (cf. Fig. 23). Despite the allegations against Tuccia, the sacred fire never died. This was a sign of Tuccia's innocence. One could, therefore, presume that the depicted fire represents Vesta's fire. Approximately a century later, in Rutilio Manetti's *L'innocenza della vestale Tuccia* (Pinacoteca Nazionale Siena, *c.* 1600-1639), Tuccia presents her impermeable sieve to the pontifical college in a temple, whilst one of the attending soldiers watches the scene attentively from a distance (cf. Fig. 24).

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225 Cf. Catalogue.

226 Elizabeth McGrath, *Rubens: Subjects From History*, Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard 13(1), ed. by Arnout Ballis, vol 1, *Text & Illustration* (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1997), 38.

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This chapter has explored the importance of Tuccia as a symbol of an untainted Rome. The fact that she was a Vestal Virgin made it possible for her to become such a figurehead for a triumphant Rome, since the inviolability of the Roman state was dependent on the virtuous behaviour of their Vestals. Through the recordings of classical authors and the Early Church Fathers Tuccia's legacy passed on into art. In print of the Low Countries, humanist engravers clearly connected the priestess to Rome: Romulus and Remus, the allegorical figures of the Tiber and Rome herself and the Roman military. Depictions of her can be found all over Rome — in churches, *palazzi*, museums — and by extension all over Italy. Of course, it is important to note that Tuccia's virtuous chastity, which makes her a perfect female heroine, sustained the patriarchal values of early modern society, when the figure of Tuccia appeared in art. The reading of the motif of Tuccia and her sieve is, therefore, very much a gendered one. For that reason, Tuccia is often portrayed in a series about other virtuous female role models. In the next chapter, I will focus on Tuccia as a role model for brides and wives from the Renaissance to the eighteenth century.

3. *Castitas* and *Cassoni*: Tuccia as Female Role Model

On ne naît pas femme, on le devient.

— *La deuxième sexe* (1949), Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986)[227]

In this chapter I will examine how Tuccia was perceived as an ideal female role model in the early modern period. As an epitome of chastity, women's most important virtue, she represented the ideal woman in the early modern society. In the Italian Renaissance the virgin Tuccia appeared — maybe somewhat surprisingly — frequently in a marital context. The figure of the Vestal graced the panels of *cassoni* or wedding chests. Depictions of Tuccia and her sieve also decorated the walls of the apartments of aristocratic women. Although the Vestal was not mentioned in *De Mulieribus Claris* (*c.* 1360-1374) or *Concerning Famous Women* by Boccaccio (1313-1375), Tuccia was considered one of the *donne illustre* in the Renaissance. Images of her were often part of a series about other virtuous women, like Claudia Quinta, Dido, Sofonisba, Cloeilia, etc.[228] In the seventeenth century, when printmaking became an incredibly popular medium, Tuccia featured in prints and emblems, emphasizing her chastity. Moreover, paintings of Tuccia's trial emerged together with *portraits historiés* of aristocratic women sporting a sieve. In the eighteenth century some women even wore the Vestal livery in *portraits historiés* in which they were depicted as Tuccia.

This chapter consists of three parts. Firstly, I will by and large discuss the view on women in the early modern period and how art helped to shape an ideal image of virginal or chaste womanhood. Secondly, the deep-rooted relationship between women and containers is explicated. This section is crucial in understanding why it was an impermeable sieve that took centre stage in the legend of Tuccia. Lastly, I will apply the findings and concepts of these previous parts to analyze seven case studies of exemplary depictions of the Vestal Virgin Tuccia and of women who tried to emulate her.

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227 Simone de Beauvoir, *Le deuxième sexe*, vol. 1, *Les faits et les mythes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1949), 285.

228 Cf. Section "2.3. Tuccia, a symbol of an untainted Rome," for a discussion on her relationship to Claudia Quinta and for information about the story of Tuccia as part of the Famous Roman Women series.

Unlike in the previous chapter, the motif of Tuccia will be examined in terms of the gender context. It is a logical step, since the representations of Tuccia in art all promote virginity and chastity in women. From the ancient world until today, this female ideal has facilitated patriarchal tendencies in society:

> *Marriage is a core component of the patriarchal system. According to Gerda Lerner's research on ancient societies, a women could achieve at least some status, and with that, better treatment and privileges, through preserving her only capital — her virginity — and eventually offering it to just one man.*[229]

Virginity has always been closely "allied to power," mostly in favour of the male sex.[230] By upholding the idea of virginity as the "preeminent virtue" for women, they were driven into the domestic sphere while men dominated society.[231] The representation of Tuccia inscribes itself in this train of thought, apart from rare instances, such as I will discuss in Chapter 4. The fact that most works featuring Tuccia were kept in the living space of women as a didactic example further indicates the deeply ingrained ideal of the chaste and obedient woman.

3.1. The views on women in the early modern society and its culture

In this section the general views on women and their role in society during the early modern period will be discussed. Aside from that, this section will also pay attention to the influence of visual culture in cultivating the dominant patriarchal ideas of the time. The text is divided into three parts: the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance; the seventeenth century; and the eighteenth century. These subsections each have a different geographical focus. The first part of the Renaissance focuses mainly on the Italian city-states, as it was there that the Renaissance developed and the ideas of humanism that marked the early modern period sprouted. Moreover, it is in the Italian city-states that Tuccia is born as a humanist symbol of marital chastity. The subsection on the seventeenth

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229 Jenny Nordberg, *The Underground Girls of Kabul: In Search of a Hidden Resistance in Afghanistan* (New York: Penguin Randhom House, 2015), *Google Books*, last access on the 14th of August, 2018, books.google.be

230 Bonnie MacLachlan, "Introduction," in *Virginity Revisited*, ed. by Bonnie MacLachlan and Judith Fletcher, 4.

231 David Alan Brown, "Introduction," in *Virtue and Beauty: Leonardo's* Ginevra de' Benci *and Renaissance Por traits of Women*, ed. by David Alan Brown, exh. cat., Washington, National Gallery of Art (New Jersey/ Ox fordshire: Princeton University Press, 2001), 13.

century deals mostly with the patriarchal expectations of the ideal wife as propagated in advice books and emblems. The stress of this part lies largely on the Netherlands, because it was a significant place of the production of these kinds of literature — a literature which also influenced the art at the time. Lastly, for the eighteenth century, the discussion leads us to France, the birthplace of the Enlightenment, as it is there that the revival of the *querelle des femmes* (the quarrel of the women) transpired. Furthermore, eighteenth-century French artists were enormously inspired by the Vestal Virgins, and used the priestesses as characters in critical portraits historiés of their female sitters.

3.1.1. Late Middle Ages and Renaissance

Did women have a Renaissance?
— title of Joan Kelly-Gadol's 1977 essay.

The early modern period in Europe was a time of innovation and growth. Renaissance Italy flourished due to the "early consolidation of genuine states, the mercantile and manufacturing economy that supported them, and its working out of postfeudal and even postguild social relations."[232] Despite the innovation in the economic and social systems, society in the Italian city-states was marked by gender inequality. As Kelly-Gadol argued in her seminal article "Did Women Have a Renaissance?" (1977), the progress of Renaissance Italy ironically meant a step back for women, especially in urban centres.[233] Traces of this thesis can be found in the juxtaposition of the courtly love romances from the Middle Ages and the love poems by the poet scholars, popular in the Renaissance. Between the two, there is a stark contrast in the portrayal of women's agency. Lyrical poems and romances of *amour courtois* turned knights into the vassals of their beloved, which made the lovers into equals. Furthermore, the ladies played active roles in these stories. The reason for these rather independent women in medieval romances, was the feudal system with its "independent political powers."[234] Women at the medieval court instigated these forms of literature, because they had more influence to do so:

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232 Joan Kelly Gadol, "Did Women Have a Renaissance?" in *Becoming Visible: Women in European* History, ed. by Renate Bridenthal, Claudia Koonz, and Susan Stuard, 2nd. ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987), 176.

233 Ibid., passim.

234 Ibid., 185.

> *women promoted the ideas of courtly love by way of patronage and the diversions of their courts […] it would seem that feudal women consciously exerted pressure in shaping the courtly love ideal and making it prevail. […] These women who assumed cultural roles as artists and patrons of courtly love had already been assigned political roles that assured them some measure of independence and power.*[235]

Although it may seem that writers such as Dante (1265-1321) and Petrarch (1304-1374) put their Beatrice and Laura on a pedestal, these love poems described the inner turmoil of the male authors: their feelings, their spiritual love.[236] Beatrice and Laura,[237] however, remained in the shadows and for the most part voiceless. Both "love-objects" were given speaking parts, but as already departed ghosts.[238] The poems by these poet scholars were, therefore, not about women, but rather about themselves. This highlights the position of women in a society mostly governed by men. Even though the Beatrices and Lauras of humanist love poems were merely figments of the male imagination, they shaped a repressive image of womanhood. Ironically, these celebrations of the "exemplary virtues of their female subjects,"[239] affected female lives in a negative way.

In a time preoccupied with economic expansion — characterizing "early capitalism"[240] — women became a commodity. Brides were called *mercantanzia* or *merce* in the Italian city-states of the fifteenth century.[241] This phenomenon is also referred to as the "exchange of women" paradigm, introduced by Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908-2009).[242] Gayle Rubin reprised the paradigm as "traffic in

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235 Ibid., 184.

236 Ibid., 189-190.

237 For information about sixteenth-century women Petrarchists see Virginia Cox, "Sixteenth-Century Women Petrarchists and the Legacy of Laura," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 35, 3 (2005), 583-606.

238 Virginia Cox, "Sixteenth-Century Women Petrarchists and the Legacy of Laura," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 35, 3 2005, 583-584.

239 David Alan Brown, "Introduction," *Virtue and Beauty,* 13.

240 Joan Kelly-Gadol, "Did Women Have a Renaissance?," 176.

241 Chad Coerver, "Donna/Dono: Chivalry and Adulterous Exchange in the Quattrocento," in *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy,* ed. by Geraldine A. Johnson and Sara F. Matthews Grieco (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 213.

242 Cristelle Louise Baskins, Cassone *Painting, Humanism and Gender in Early Modern Italy*, Cambridge studies in new art history and criticism, ed. by Norman Bryson (Cambridge/ New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 61.

women,"[243] stressing the fact that women "function[ed] as gifts between kinship groups."[244] Especially in Florence, daughters of eminent merchant families, as well as unmarried women from aristocratic families, were crucial for creating useful alliances. Florence was completely "under the control of level-headed males."[245] Florentine women were merely treated as "passing guests" — from her father's house to that of her husband and back again in case her husband died.[246] As Klapisch-Zuber argues: "Women […] were not permanent elements in the lineage. Memory of them was short."[247] The lives of many women completely revolved around dowries, marrying into well-to-do families and providing offspring to further the patrilineage. Securing marriages for eligible daughters, weighed heavily on the family's finances and those of the groom's family:

> *The dowry was the major component of the marriage exchange, but in Florence it was augmented with gifts from the bride's kin and counter-gifts from her husband and his family.*[248]

Gifts like the dowry and the *trousseau* or *donora*, containing richly decorated garments, jewels, and domestic items, were an expensive investment. To the bride's family, the husband provided a "cash gift, corresponding symbolically to the dowry" as well as a *manda* or "tip" after the consummation of the marriage.[249] To his bride a husband usually gave expensive clothes and jewellery, chests, portraits, often bearing his crest to "mark" her as his property.[250] These gifts could at any time be reclaimed by the husband if needed.

Not only for the groom's family, but also for the family of the bride weddings were an expensive affair. A family with more than one daughter possibly could not afford to arrange marriages for all their girls. The state of Florence set up a dowry fund, called the Monte delle Doti,

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243 The popularity of the topic of the abduction of the Sabine women in the Renaissance perfectly illustrates this paradigm.

244 Cristelle Louise Baskins, Cassone *Painting, Humanism and Gender in Early Modern Italy*, 61.

245 Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, trans. by Lydia Cochrane (Chicago/ London: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), 118.

246 Ibid.

247 Ibid.

248 Dale Kent, "Women in Renaissance Florence," in *Virtue and Beauty*, ed. by David Alan Brown, 28.

249 Ibid., 30.

250 Ibid.

"to encourage the institution of marriage."[251] Despite the Florentine efforts, some of the younger unmarried daughters were (in)voluntarily sent to convents to take up the vocation of a nun.[252] Initiates were also given a small dowry or *dos* to take with them to the convent. Women acquired a sense of freedom by living in a convent: "During the Renaissance and baroque periods, many women would have regarded freedom from frequent childbirth as a highly desirable state."[253] Female clergy, therefore, escaped the hazardous task of procreation. For these women, who had taken religious orders and lived a life of celibacy, the Holy Virgin and other female saints were their greatest role models:

> *[The Virgin Mary] was […] markedly an individual who was free from constraints of ordinary marriage and daily life. Women who took religious vows or who otherwise chose a life of virginity or chastity, following the model of the Virgin and virginal saints, lifted themselves out of stereotypical female patterns.*[254]

Nevertheless, these women were not completely free from male authority, since from the thirteenth century onwards their male colleagues had to take up a strict responsibility to supervise the female members of their religious order.[255]

Because of the Reformation, which was mostly in sway in Protestant Northern Europe, marriage was reinstated as the desired life path for women.[256] As a result, many cloisters were closed, which gave poor women and women who could not or did not want to marry no alternative options. Furthermore, the Reformation took empowering female role models, such as the Holy Virgin and female saints, away from women.[257] In Protestant circles women were only esteemed as

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251 Ibid., 28.

252 Cristelle Louise Baskins, Cassone *Painting, Humanism and Gender in Early Modern Italy*, 92.

253 Helen Diane Russell and Bernadine Barnes, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 78.

254 Ibid.

255 Petty Bange, Grietje Dresen, Jeanne Marie Noël, "De veranderende positie van de vrouw aan het begin van de moderne tijd," in *Tussen heks en heilige: Het vrouwbeeld op de drempel van de moderne tijd, 15de/16de eeuw*, by Petty Bange, Ton Brandenbarg, Grietje Dresen, et al., exh. cat., Nijmegen, Commanderie van Sint-Jan (Nijmegen: SUN, 1985), 31.

256 Petty Bange, Grietje Dresen, Jeanne Marie Noël, "De veranderende positie van de vrouw aan het begin van de moderne tijd," 36.

257 Helen Diane Russell and Bernadine Barnes, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 19.

wives and mothers as subordinates of their husbands.[258] As Marina Warner poignantly states the Reformation was "altogether too much like a gentleman's club to which the ladies [were] only admitted on special days."[259] Luckily the Counter-Reformation and the Council of Trent (1545-1563) gave women the possibility again to seek a life of relative freedom within the cloister walls.[260]

Women from affluent households in the Italian city-states who did marry also lived largely secluded lives. They cohabited with their in-laws and were tucked away from the male public sphere into a female domestic sphere, where they concerned themselves mostly with the household, despite the fact that they generally received a humanist education: "[…] women were excluded from public life, and sequestered in the home to ensure their purity and that of the blood line through which property descended."[261] In stark contrast, the household of women from the Northwest of Europe in the second half of the fifteenth century was fairly small due to the importance of the nuclear family.[262] They also possessed more freedom than their Italian counterparts. Nonetheless, some exceptional women from the Italian city-states put their humanistic education to good use. The aristocratic women such as Caterina Sforza (1463-1509), Isabella d'Este (1474-1539), the poetess Vittoria Colonna (1492-1547), the writer and botanist Loredana Marcello (?-1572) and a few women from artistic middle-class families such as Lavinia Fontana (1552-1614) thrived in their respective fields. Through the positive influence of highly educated aristocratic women who were leaders at courts all over Europe in the sixteenth century, there were men — like the Neo-platonists of the Italian school — who actively defended the virtues of women and the invigorating qualities of love.[263] Nevertheless, the majority of women received an education solely for the enjoyment of their families and (future) husbands. Even Thomas More (1478-1535) wrote to his own daughter Margaret that "her learning was solely for the audience composed of himself and

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258 Petty Bange, Grietje Dresen, Jeanne Marie Noël, "De veranderende positie van de vrouw aan het begin van de moderne tijd," 36.

259 Quoted in Helen Diane Russell and Bernadine Barnes, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 19.

260 Petty Bange, Grietje Dresen, Jeanne Marie Noël, "De veranderende positie van de vrouw aan het begin van de moderne tijd," in *Tussen heks en heilige*, by Petty Bange, Ton Brandenbarg, Grietje Dresen, et al., 28.

261 Helen Diane Russel and Bernadine Barnes, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 26.

262 Petty Bange, Grietje Dresen, Jeanne Marie Noël, "De veranderende positie van de vrouw aan het begin van de moderne tijd," in *Tussen heks en heilige*, by Petty Bange, Ton Brandenbarg, Grietje Dresen, et al., 12.

263 Ibid., 23.

her husband."[264] A learned woman who pursued an intellectual life in the public eye had to deal with the scorn of the opposite sex. In an anonymous pamphlet, the writer Isotta Nogarola (1418-1466) was "charged with having committed incest with her brother and of having had indiscriminate intercourse with many men, owing to her 'filthy lust'."[265] Most people considered a woman with a voracious mind as sinful. The aphorism goes "the woman of fluent speech is never chaste." Baldassare Castiglione's hugely influential conduct book *Il libro del cortegiano* (1528) indicated that the education of women in court should merely have a "decorative role," to make them more charming — even though Castiglione praised female intellect.[266]

Apart from having charm, the most important virtue a woman needed to possess was chastity. Without virginity, her most important asset, a woman's worth in the marital market decreased immensely. When married, the chastity of women was also considered extremely important to uphold the purity of the blood lines. For that reason, the age of brides was in most cases half — i.e., between fifteen and eighteen — that of their husbands in order to ensure the girl's virtue.[267] This again differs from the customs in the Northwest of Europe, where women on average waited to get married to save up for their own household.[268] Of course, these economic reasons did not affect the poorest and richest layer of Northwestern European society.[269] Yet, the difference in marriage age demonstrated the more rigid marital system of Renaissance Italy.

Humanist Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472) advised families in his conduct book[270] *I Libri della Famiglia* (1435–44) to scrutinize potential brides on various virtues, such as "beauty, modesty, nobility, fertility, and cleanliness," before "acquisition."[271] It is important to note that mothers of nubile sons also engaged in the inspection of potential marriage material. They, too, treated young women as ware and criticized members of their sex on their beauty and virtues, like Alberti

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264 Helen Diane Russell and Bernadine Barnes, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 20.

265 Ibid.

266 Joan Kelly-Gadol, "Did Women Have a Renaissance?" 186-188.

267 Dale Kent, "Women in Renaissance Florence," in *Virtue and Beauty*, 28.

268 Petty Bange, Grietje Dresen, Jeanne Marie Noël, "De veranderende positie van de vrouw aan het begin van de moderne tijd," in *Tussen heks en heilige*, by Petty Bange, Ton Brandenbarg, Grietje Dresen, et al., 12.

269 Ibid.

270 Helen Diane Russel and Bernadine Barnes, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 18.

271 Chad Coerver, "Donna/Dono: Chivalry and Adulterous Exchange in the Quattrocento," in *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, ed. by Geraldine A. Johnson and Sara F. Matthews Grieco, 213.

advised.[272] Alberti also observed that all other qualities pale into significance compared with the crowning jewel of virtues, namely, chastity:

> *You should realize that in this regard nothing is so important for yourself, so acceptable to God, so pleasing to me, and precious in the sight of your children as your chastity. The woman's character is the jewel of the family; the mother's purity has always been a part of the dowry she passes on to her daughters; her purity has always far outweighed her beauty.*[273]

Another humanist thinker Juan Luis Vives (1492-1540), a Spanish scholar who lived in the Netherlands, stressed in his "frequently reprinted" *Institutio faeminae christianae* or *Instructions to a Christian Woman* (1524, revised in 1538) that the ideal woman should be "chaste, silent and obedient."[274] Unlike men, women only had to possess passive virtues — chastity being the most crucial:

> *For a man, various virtues are necessary, such as wisdom, eloquence, a good memory, a sense of justice, strength, charity and magnanimity. But for a woman, these male virtues do not apply; for her, only chastity is essential, for if that is lacking, it is as if a man should lack all the qualities mentioned. Then the woman becomes utterly dishono[u]rable, and losing her hono[u]r, she loses all.*[275]

This is also reflected in Renaissance female portraiture. When looking at women's likenesses, a woman was seen "in light of her social status and familial role as a wife and mother."[276] Portraits of young Florentine women showed them not as individuals with deeply personal thoughts, but as idealized beauties embodying virtues. Artists included mottoes and/or devices and emblems referring to these virtues of the sitter. Not surprisingly, chastity became the most important virtue of

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272 Dale Kent, "Women in Renaissance Florence," in *Virtue and Beauty*, ed. by David Alan Brown, 37.

273 Leon Battista Alberti, *The Family in Renaissance Florence*, trans. by Renee Neu Watkins (Columbia: Uni versity of South Caroline Press, 1969), 115.

274 Helen Diane Russell and Bernadine Barnes, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 18.

275 Translated and quoted in Helen Diane Russell and Bernadine Barnes, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 18.

276 David Alan Brown, "Introduction," *Virtue and Beauty*, 12.

a woman and the biggest asset that unmarried women had, was their virginity, which was "an essential quality for determining their market value."[277]

This preoccupation with female chastity and purity meant that women from the upper classes mostly remained in the domestic sphere, where there were no temptations. One could say that their lives were more restricted than those of the lower classes. Less affluent women freely "move[d] about the city" to earn money and to buy provisions.[278] Nonetheless, it is important to note that the employment possibilities for women narrowed in the Renaissance in comparison to the Middle Ages, due to the decline of the guilds.[279] Still these women took part in public life, whereas the upper class women did not. Yet there was a sense that all women needed to be controlled, for they were all considered the daughters of Eve, which made them potentially dangerous to the male sex. Church law even stated that "a woman ought to cover her head since she is not the image of God. She ought to wear this sign in order that she may be shown to be subordinate and because error was started through woman."[280] The archbishop of Florence, Saint Antoninus (1389-1459), even discouraged women from coming to church at all.[281] One misogynist moralist wrote: "A woman goes to see sermons/ Often only to show herself…. Therefore, if you don't go for God alone/ It is far better to stay at home."[282]

The urge to keep women out of the public sphere stemmed from a deeply misogynist fear of the power of women, which also found its translation in art.[283] From the fifteenth century onwards moralising images where incredibly popular.[284] In the Low Countries, depictions of the so-called "*vrouwenlisten*"[285] emerged. These depictions show women controlling, dominating, and deriding

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277 Bonnie MacLachlan, "Introduction," in *Virginity Revisited: Configurations of the Unpossessed Body*, ed. by Bonnie MacLachlan and Judith Fletcher, 3.

278 Helen Diane Russell and Bernadine Barnes, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 19.

279 Petty Bange, Grietje Dresen, Jeanne Marie Noël, "De veranderende positie van de vrouw aan het begin van de moderne tijd," in *Tussen heks en heilige*, by Petty Bange, Ton Brandenbarg, Grietje Dresen, et al., 28.

280 Quoted in Dale Kent, "Women in Renaissance Florence," in *Virtue and Beauty*, ed. by David Alan Brown, 36.

281 Dale Kent, "Women in Renaissance Florence," in *Virtue and Beauty*, ed. by David Alan Brown, 36.

282 Quoted in Dale Kent, "Women in Renaissance Florence," in *Virtue and Beauty*, ed. by David Alan Brown, 36.

283 The "power of women" topos has already briefly been touched upon in the Section "2.3. Tuccia, a symbol of an untainted Rome."

284 Renée Pigeaud, "De vrouw als verleidster: De stedelijke moraal in de 15de eeuw," in *Tussen heks & heilige*, by Petty Bange, Ton Brandenbarg, Grietje Dresen, et al., 50.

285 Translation: women's tricks.

men, such as Phyllis riding on Aristotle's back. It was also an age where the fear for the power of women took a violent turn, when women on a large scale were persecuted as witches.[286] This dark page in history ended circa 1630.[287]

Partly, out of this fear for female power, women were urged not to take an active part in the public sphere. On top of that, there was also a fear that women moving in the public sphere would be more susceptible to seduction. Unchastity was considered a threat to the pure lineage of a Renaissance household. Florentine women were, therefore, often pent up in their homes. The Renaissance house contained several pieces of furniture and decorations encouraging female virtuous behaviour:

> *Wall panels, decorated backs for beds and couches, and the numerous chests (*cassoni *or* forzieri*) used to transport the bride's trousseau and to store most household goods illustrated the lives of exemplars drawn from Ovid and Plutarch, from* novelle *like Boccaccio's Decameron, or from the Bible.*[288]

Heroines from antiquity — Lucretia, Dido, Camilla, Hersilia, Virginia — and from the Bible — Esther, Judith, Rebecca, and, most importantly, the Holy Mother — creeped into the female domestic sphere to inspire women throughout their lives. Art helped to spread the image of the ideal woman. In Renaissance portraits of women, like Simons argued, there is a sense of enclosure, of keeping women inside the domestic sphere and out of the public eye.[289] Important to note, however, is that some educated women did get more involved in the "production and consumption of visual culture."[290] Society's expectation of the gender dynamic were explained to women through an example. After all, Renaissance moralists utilized the power of the example in art and literature, which developed throughout this period because of the growing interest in the individual and the

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286 Lène Dresen-Coenders, "De heks als duivelsboel: Over het ontstaan van de angst voor heksen en de bescherming tegen beheksing," in *Tussen heks en heilige*, by Petty Bange, Ton Brandenbarg, Grietje Dresen, et al., 63.

287 Of course, there were also male victims in the witch trials, but the majority of the victims were female.

288 Dale Kent, "Women in Renaissance Florence," in *Virtue and Beauty*, ed. by David Alan Brown, 34-35.

289 Simons, Patricia. "Women in Frames: The Gaze, the Eye, the Profile in Renaissance Portraiture." *History Workshop* 25 (1988): 4-30.

290 Geraldine A. Johnson, Geraldine A. and Sara F. Matthews Grieco, *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*. 1. Cf. Chapter 4 on Elizabeth I.

practical aspect of ethics.[291] These didactic, exemplary images on wedding chests, *spalliere*,[292] and other decorated objects in the private female sphere made abstract ideas of fidelity and marital chastity more graspable[293] for the women looking at them. In Cristelle Louise Baskins' recent study on *cassoni*,[294] she argues that the topics of the wedding chests, meant for women's eyes, reveal the misogynist views of the Renaissance society.[295] Gruesome stories of violence against women were popular subject matter for wedding chests. The rape of the Sabine virgins featured on many wedding chests in the female private sphere. The story of the rape of these women by the Romans clearly illustrates the "traffic in women" paradigm and the motif taught the upper-class women not to question male dominion. Another disturbing example is the popularity of the figure Lucretia, a married woman raped by Sextus Tarquinius. After being raped, the virtuous Lucretia rather stabbed herself than dishonouring her husband and family. This incident signified the end of the Roman monarchy. The popularity of this motive. — also in the Low Countries from the sixteenth century onwards[296] — is an indication of the fact that a woman's virginity and chastity were of quintessential importance not only to her family, but also to society. As I have discussed in Section "2.2. Pollution and punishment: the live interment of Vestal Virgins," the Vestal Virgins' virginity played an immense role in the safeguarding of the Roman state. As "[t]he Vestal's body served as the microcosm of the city,"[297] so, too, the women's bodies of the Renaissance family were regarded as microcosms of their city-state. The family was, therefore, "not viewed as private, but as the smallest political unit and so part of the public realm."[298]

Besides the depictions in the private sphere of upper class women, these heroines also featured on works of art in the male public sphere. These so-called moralising images often showed these heroines in seductively revealing dresses or even in the nude, according to the Renaissance

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291 Ellen en Muller and Jeanne Marie Noël, "Kunst en moraal bij humanisten: Theorie en beeld," in *Tussen heks & heilige*, by Petty Bange, Ton Brandenbarg, Grietje Dresen, et al., 132.

292 Painted panels used to decorate the walls.

293 Ellen en Muller and Jeanne Marie Noël, "Kunst en moraal bij humanisten: Theorie en beeld," in *Tussen heks & heilige*, by Petty Bange, Ton Brandenbarg, Grietje Dresen, et al., 132.

294 Chests.

295 Cristelle Louise Baskins, Cassone *Painting, Humanism and Gender in Early Modern Italy*, passim.

296 Ellen en Muller and Jeanne Marie Noël, "Kunst en moraal bij humanisten: Theorie en beeld," in *Tussen heks & heilige*, by Petty Bange, Ton Brandenbarg, Grietje Dresen, et al., 152.

297 Holt N. Parker,"Why were the Vestals Virgins?," 571.

298 Merry Wiesner-Hanks, "Women's Authority in the State and Household in Early Modern Europe," in *Women Who* Ruled, ed. by Annette Dixon, 35.

beauty ideals.[299] In many paintings and prints, male artists portrayed a sensual Lucretia barely dressed while stabbing herself, like e.g., *Lucretia* (1533, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin) by Cranach the Elder (1472-1553), who had a fascination for the subject. Some of these heroines from classical history or the Bible, like Judith[300] who defeated Holofernes, were regarded in an ambiguous manner, due to their sense of agency. As Russell and Barnes argue: These remote, nearly mythological women could be turned into allegories of womanly virtue, but they could also serve as vehicles for expressing misogynist stereotypes and the ambivalent feelings that men often felt towards powerful women.[301]

It is clear that the importance of marriage and the woman's place in it was a current topic in Renaissance culture.[302] In humanist literature and the popular proto-humanist writings of Petrarch, Boccaccio and Dante, women were made aware how to behave through the examples of heroines, from antiquity and the Old Testament, who valued their chastity above everything else — even above their life.[303] These tales of virtuous women emerged also in the private sphere in order to spread "Renaissance ideas on love and manners, more classical than medieval […] almost exclusively a male product."[304] The art at the time, with its ambiguous portrayal of female role models, then, "expressed this new subordination of women to the interests of husbands and male-dominated kin groups and served to justify the removal of women from an 'unladylike' position of power and erotic independence."[305] To get back to Kelly-Gadol's question "Did Women Have a Renaissance?", it is clear that the advances of Renaissance Italy, which resulted in a humanistic culture, actually meant a step back for women, as society "worked to mo[u]ld the noblewoman into an aesthetic object: decorous, chaste, and […] dependent."[306] The world of the Renaissance women

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299 Ellen en Muller and Jeanne Marie Noël, "Kunst en moraal bij humanisten: Theorie en beeld," in *Tussen heks & heilige*, by Petty Bange, Ton Brandenbarg, Grietje Dresen, et al., 152.

300 She also appeared in the "vrouwenlisten." Petty Bange, Ton Brandenbarg, Grietje Dresen, et al., *Tussen heks en heilige*, 195.

301 Helen Diane Russell and Bernadine Barnes, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 29.

302 Petty Bange, Grietje Dresen, Jeanne Marie Noël, "De veranderende positie van de vrouw aan het begin van de moderne tijd," in *Tussen heks en heilige*, by Petty Bange, Ton Brandenbarg, Grietje Dresen, et al., 12.

303 Ellen en Muller and Jeanne Marie Noël, "Kunst en moraal bij humanisten: Theorie en beeld," in *Tussen heks & heilige*, by Petty Bange, Ton Brandenbarg, Grietje Dresen, et al., 133.

304 Joan Kelly-Gadol, "Did Women Have a Renaissance?," 197.

305 Ibid.

306 Ibid.

was a "private and contained one,"[307] on which I will further elaborate in Section "3.2. Sieves and Containers."

3.1.2. Seventeenth century

Hout staegh u tuyntjen op het slot

(Continually keep your little garden locked)

— Jacob Cats (1577-1660), *Houwelyck* (1624) [308]

Although the sixteenth century was marked by the reign of several female rulers, such as Elizabeth I (1533 - 1603)[309] and Catharina de' Medici (1519 - 1589), ordinary women still were very much urged to stay out of public life. This carried on in the seventeenth century. In Florence, women still remained more removed from the public sphere than in the other Italian city states. A seventeenth-century tourist testified that "[i]n Florence women are more enclosed than in any other part of Italy; they see the world only from the small openings in their windows."[310] In the Northwest of Europe, middle-class 'housewives' dominated their domestic sphere, while their husbands worked and tried to put a mark on the public sphere. Moralist instructions in the form of advice books, for example, were all the rage in the first half of the seventeenth century in Dutch households. For instance, the advice book *Houwelyck* (Marriage) (1624) of Jacob Cats (1577-1660) was for a few decades the most read book after the Bible.[311] The work contained "admonitory sections, poems, rhymed conversations between fictional characters, and emblematic as well as non-emblematic illustrations by engraver Adriaen van der Venne."[312] *Houwelyck*, which was written in verse, was the "most widely read"[313] guide for women aspiring to become the ideal wife and mother. It was divided into

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307 Helen Diane Russell and Bernadine Barnes, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 18.

308 Jacob Cats, "*Houwelick, Dat is het gansche gelegenheyt des echten-staets*," *dbnl*, last access on the 14th of August, 2018, https://www.dbnl.org/tekst/cats001houw01_01/cats001houw01_01_0005.php.

309 Cf. Chapter 4.

310 Quoted from Geraldine A. Johnson, "Idol or Ideal? The Power and Potency of Female Public Sculpture," in *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, ed. by Geraldine A. Johnson and Sara F. Matthews Grieco, 234.

311 Martine van Elk, *Early Modern Women's Writing: Domesticity, Privacy, and the Public Sphere in England and the Dutch Republic*, Early Modern Literature in History, ed. by Cedric C. Brown and Andrew Hadfield (Lon don/ New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 41.

312 Ibid.

313 David R. Smith, *Masks of Wedlock: Seventeenth-Century Dutch Marriage Portraiture*, 26.

six parts, for each stage in the woman's life, from being a virgin (*Maeght*) to becoming a widow (*Weduwe*). *Houwelyck* stresses the importance of chastity, as one unchaste deed corrupts all the initial goodness of the woman in question:

> *Al isser maer een enge scheur,*
> *Al kruypter maer een siertje deur,*
> *Al kleefter maer een vuyltjen aen,*
> *De gansche luyster is gedaen;*[314]

This translates roughly as:

> *Even if there is only one tear,*
> *Even if only one little thing creeps through,*
> *Even if only one speck of dirt clings to it,*
> *The whole splendour is gone.*

The woman, like the Virgin Mary, needs to keep her garden locked (*Hout staegh u tuyntjen op het slot*[315]). Cats urges young virgins who want to marry to be modest in their dress (*Kleedinge die te prachtich is belet / dickmael een goet huwelick*[316]), and quiet and modest in their behaviour (*Maeghden moeten stil ende ingetogen sijn*[317]) in order to find a good husband. In his book, Cats also talks about the importance of marriage. *Houwelick* demonstrated the

> *Reformation's emphasis on marriage over celibacy along with a shift away from a view of marriage as primarily for procreation and the avoidance of sin, towards a conception of marriage as grounded in companionship.*[318]

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314 Jacob Cats, "*Houwelick, Dat is het gansche gelegenheyt des echten-staets*," *dbnl*, last access on the 14th of August, 2018, https://www.dbnl.org/tekst/cats001houw01_01/cats001houw01_01_0005.php.

315 Ibid.

316 Ibid.

317 Ibid.

318 Martine van Elk, *Early Modern Women's Writing: Domesticity, Privacy, and the Public Sphere in England and the Dutch Republic*, 41.

This 'companionship,' however, does not indicate an equality between the sexes, as he emphasizes "male rule and female inferiority."[319] Cats compared the ideal wife to "a turtle, who is silent, slow, and carries her household with her wherever she goes."[320] As Smith argues he had "unquestionably a patriarchal image of the family" and its dynamic."*Het wijf dat heerschen wil kant tegens haren God*,"[321] which translates as "the woman who wants to rule over her lord, goes against God's will," clearly articulates that the wife was expected to obey her husband's orders.[322] Strangely, his "patriarchal advice that women should confine themselves to domestic chores is contradicted by his celebration of women who did exactly the opposite,"[323] such as was the case with the incredibly astute Anna Roemer Visscher (1583 - 1651). By the end of the seventeenth century the book's popularity started to diminish as the perception on the Dutch housewife changed, reflected partly through her prominence in Dutch genre painting.[324] It also needs to be noted that Dutch women attained "more freedom to act and change their sphere than [those] in other societies."[325]

Aside from moralist advice books, almost every seventeenth-century family owned an emblem book, like Cats' *Sinne- en Minnenbeelden* (1627), or Roemer Visscher's *Sinnepoppen* (1614). Nevertheless, the most famous emblem book was the key work *Iconologia* by Cesare Ripa (*c.* 1560-1622), first published in 1593, which circulated throughout humanist households all over Europe. It was also used extensively by painters, who derived inspiration for the depiction of allegorical figures of the elements, emotions, vices and virtues. The *Iconologia* contained multiple emblems of female chastity — among which one female personification with a sieve. In 1644, Dirck Pietersz. Pers translated[326] this book of moral emblems[327] and it was published in

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319 Ibid.

320 Ibid., 42.

321 Quoted in David R. Smith, *Masks of Wedlock: Seventeenth-Century Dutch Marriage Portraiture*, 26.

322 Quoted in David R. Smith, *Masks of Wedlock: Seventeenth-Century Dutch Marriage Portraiture*, 26.

323 Martha Moffitt Peacock, Martha, "Domesticity in the Public Sphere," in *Saints, Sinners, and Sisters: Gender and Northern Art in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Jane L. Carroll and Alison G. Stewart (Alder shot/ Burlington: Ashgate, 2003), 49.

324 Ibid., 50.

325 Ibid., 48

326 Dirck Pietersz. Pers, "*Cesare Ripa's Iconologia of Uytbeeldinghen des Verstants*," *dbnl*, last access on the 14th of August, 2018, https://www.dbnl.org/tekst/pers001cesa01_01/.

327 Just as in the *Iconologia*, the emblem of chastity is represented by a woman carrying Tuccia's sieve. Cf. Cata logue.

Amsterdam, the new printing centre after Antwerp's brain drain in 1585. It is clear, that chastity was inherently connected to women, although the Church encouraged men as well to be chaste in their marriage by being faithful to their wives. This importance of chastity is also indicated by the fact that in the popular form of the *portrait historié* the figure of Diana, the goddess of Chastity, was the most common character to be portrayed.[328]

Apart from the emblem and advice books from the Netherlands at the time of the Reformation, the plentiful Catholic images brought along by the Counter-Reformation also weighed in on the discussion about the ideal chaste woman. This resulted in the reaffirmation of the veneration of the Virgin Mary and that of other female saints.[329] The Church ensured an immense exposure to images of these holy women, through print and paintings, since she understood that art was the perfect propaganda for the spreading of Catholicism. All the while, the same Renaissance role models and cautionary tales for women still remained subjects in art of the seventeenth century. In print, just like on Renaissance *cassoni*, virtuous women functioned as figureheads for morally good women. Especially the chaste yet alluring Susanna[330] gained popularity in the seventeenth century.[331] Similarly, as during the Renaissance, the treatment of female heroines was ambiguous:

> *These conflicting purposes — to exemplify virtue and admonish women to shun public life as well as to warn men against the power of women — come head-to-head in Renaissance and baroque images of heroic women.*[332]

The art of the seventeenth century, like in the Renaissance, was still fascinated by the subject of womanhood and the dichotomy between the passive ideal women and the evil women with agency. While women were mostly shunned from the public sphere, they were paradoxically more represented in the art of the period. As Prof. Van der Stighelen argues in a numerical analysis, it would become clear that women were overall significantly more represented in Western art.[333]

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328 David R. Smith, *Masks of Wedlock: Seventeenth-Century Dutch Marriage Portraiture*, 158.

329 Helen Diane Russell and Bernadine Barnes, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 76.

330 Cf. Subsection "3.3.5. *Tuccia trasporta l'acqua col setaccio*, Giovanni Battista Beinaschi."

331 Helen Diane Russell and Bernadine Barnes, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 32.

332 Ibid., 29.

333 Katlijne Van der Stighelen, "'Vrouwen als boeketten verpakt' beeld en bekentenis van de vrouw in de kunst," in *Vrouwenportretten uit de collectie Mayer van den Bergh*, ed. Annemie Van den Eynden, exh. cat, Antwerpen, Museum Mayer van den Bergh (Antwerpen: Museum Mayer van den Bergh, 2007), 53.

3.1.3. Eighteenth Century

[T]his is what woman is: an error of nature,
a body of lies, a real monkey…
A chaste woman is an obstacle,
an immodest woman a source of scandal,
an ugly one a source of chagrin,
a beautiful one a source of fire.

— Père Achille de Barantanne (eighteenth century), *Discourse on Women* (1754)[334]

The eighteenth century saw a revival of the long debate about the nature of women and their place in society, called the *querelle des femmes*, which raged from the Late Middle Ages until the early twentieth century.[335] While educated women took part in the salon culture in France, these *sallonières* were not welcomed by everyone. The playwright Molière (1622 - 1673), for instance, had already at the end of the seventeenth century ridiculed the *femmes savantes* (or learned women) of his time in his play of the same name *Les Femmes savantes* (1672). The influencial thinker Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712 - 1778) called women the sex that ought to obey — "*le sexe qui devrait obéir*."[336] Furthermore, Diderot (1713–1784) in *Sur les femmes* (On Women) (1772) figures that apart from her parents, husband and children, the woman means nothing in society.[337] The philosopher suggested to give girls the following education for the preparation of a life in the domestic sphere in service of her family:

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334 Translated and quoted in Kathleen Nicholson, "The ideology of feminine 'virtue': the vestal virgin in French eighteenth-century allegorical portraiture," in *Portraiture: Facing the Subject*, ed. by Joanna Woodall (Man chester/New York: Manchester University Press, 1997), 55.

335 Éliane Viennot, "Revisiter la « Querelle des femmes ». Mais de quoi parle-t-on?" In *Revisiter la Querelle des femmes. Discours sur l'égalité/inégalité des femmes et des hommes, de 1750 aux lendemains de la Révolution*, ed. by Éliane Viennot (Saint-Étienne: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Étienne, 2012), 1.

336 Ibid., 9.

337 Maciej Forycki, "A new education of women. Denis Diderot's anatomy course project for young noble wo men," *Biuletyn Historii Wychowania. 1233-2224*. 29 (2013), 8.

> *nothing that touches upon philosophy or science (Diderot reserved these fields for men), little dancing, not too much singing or drawing, but much emphasis on grammar, history, geography, and* especially morality [my emphasis].[338]

This education, which focuses on morality, "should strengthen in the adolescent girl her natural, feminine character, as well as instill civic spirit," and prepare her for "domestic activity."[339] This preoccupation with the morality of young girls was also evident in art, as the popular genre paintings of lost innocence by Greuze (1725 - 1805) demonstrate.[340] The ongoing debate whether or not women belonged in the male public sphere, was not only held in literature and genre paintings, but also in French portraiture.

During this "age of libertinage and royal mistresses,"[341] the incredibly popular *portrait historié* became a tool in the *querelle des femmes* for artists to make their argument about the (lacking) virtues of their female sitters. Remarkably, the Vestal Virgins served as the perfect figures for their criticism. Due to excavations at Herculaneum and the uncovering of the House of Vestals at Pompei, the chaste figures started to capture the imagination of poets and artists alike throughout the century of Enlightenment and well into the nineteenth century.[342] Because of this new fascination for the Vestals, artists depicted contemporary women as these priestesses from antiquity. While Vestal Virgins were not normally seen as seductive temptresses, these modern vestals in the *portraits historiés* were often eroticized.[343] The preoccupation with the Vestals and their chastity, and the loss of that virtue, expressed the importance of the debate on the nature of women in the intellectual Enlightened circles.[344] Female virginity, on the one hand, and the sexual and moral corruption of women on the other hand, occupied male as well as female thinkers at that time. Vestals symbolized propriety, sterility, and virginity, but they also evoked a sense of sexuality and

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338 Ibid.

339 Ibid.

340 For more information on the 'Greuze girl,' cf. Emma Barker, "Reading the Greuze Girl: The Daughter's Seduction," *Representations* 117, 1 (2012), 86-119.

341 Kathleen Nicholson, "The ideology of feminine 'virtue': the vestal virgin in French eighteenth-century allegorical portraiture," in *Portraiture: Facing the Subject*, 58.

342 Peggy Fogelman, "'S'eri tu in viso qual ti feo Canova': Canova's *Herm of a Vestal Virgin*." *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 22 (1994), 50.

343 Kathleen Nicholson, "The ideology of feminine 'virtue': the vestal virgin in French eighteenth-century allegorical portraiture," 62.

344 Ibid., passim.

transgression: they had an alluring "purity ripe for defiling."[345] Anthropologically speaking, virgins possess untapped energy, a pent-up fertility, which gives them a potency and power that transfixes and terrifies men.[346] For French misogynists, the unchaste, fallen priestess, who gets punished by being buried alive, became the unnatural, debauched, and decadent contemporary woman's equivalent from antiquity. In their view, the false Vestal and the eighteenth-century *salonnière* harked back to Eve — "enslaved by biological imperatives and therefore incapable of reason."[347] The comparison aimed to prove the fickle and lustful nature of woman, which nurture could never put right. *Portraits historiés* utilizing the "vestal theme"[348] served then as an ironic commentary on the lack of virtuous chastity of the sitter.[349] Nevertheless, as will be discussed in Subsection "3.3.6. *La Vestale 'Tuxia'*, Louis-Joseph Le Lorrain," some learned women of the French salon culture found a way to turn these critical portraits into images of female empowerment. This attitude of female empowerment foreshadowed the plight of women and supporting men who at the close of the eighteenth century started to fight for women's rights. The political pamphlet *Les Étrennes Nationales des Dames* (The National New Year Gifts of the Ladies) (1789) "vividly denounced women's subordinate status and the role that man played to maintain this inequality."[350] The pamphlet held daring ideas such as the demand that "women had to be elected to represent French citizens in government, to be full participants in the assemblies, and to members of the National Guard." Unfortunately, it would take until 1944 for French women to be allowed to vote and to serve in office.[351]

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345 Ibid., 62.

346 Eleanor Irwin, "The Invention of Virginity on Olympus," in *Virginity Revisited: Configurations of the Unpossessed Body*, ed. by Bonnie MacLachlan and Judith Fletcher, 14.

347 Kathleen Nicholson, "The ideology of feminine 'virtue,'" 63.

348 Ibid., 61

349 Ibid., 62.

350 Linda Garbaye, "Female and Male Activism for Women's Rights in Eighteenth-Century America and France," *Aurea mediocritas* 72 (2015), last access on the 13th of August, 2018, https://journals.openedition.org/1718/371.

351 Ibid.

3.2. Sieves and containers

She saw herself as a cup of clear water,
which she herself was somehow bearing through a crowd,
and which she should have carried carefully, steadily,
losing not a drop, so that when he *asked for it*
the cup was still full and unpolluted.
— Margery Sharp (1905-1991), *The Nutmeg Tree* (1937)[352]

Women should be used like chamber pots:
hidden away once a man has pissed in them.
— Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499)[353]

From antiquity onwards, women have been compared to containers. It is a deeply ingrained anthropological notion that stemmed from the female anatomy. The uterus resembled a cooking pot, where human life is created, and it acted like a container for the unborn child. Hippocrates saw the womb as an "up-turned jar, its bottom on top and its mouth at the bottom, turned in a downward direction."[354] Another Greek author, Xenophon (*c.* 430 BC - 355 BC)

> *in commenting* […] *upon household management* […] *includes an obvious sexual reference when he remarks that, in the case of a wife who was a poor manager, the husband's role as provider could be described as pouring into* bottomless jars [my emphasis].[355]

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352 Margary Sharp, *The Nutmeg Tree*, quoted in Amy Richlin, "Carrying Water in a Sieve: Class and the Body in Roman Women's Religion," in *Women and Goddess Traditions in Antiquity and Today*, ed. by Karen L. King, Studies in Antiquity & Christianity (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 330.

353 Marsilio Ficino quoted in Dale Kent, "Women in Renaissance Florence," in *Virtue and Beauty*, ed. by David Alan Brown, 27.

354 Ann Ellis Hanson, "The Hippocratic Parthenos in Sickness and Health," *Virginity Revisited: Configurations of the Unpossessed Body*, ed. by Bonnie MacLachlan and Judith Fletcher, 48.

355 Ellen D. Reeder, "Containers and Textiles as Metaphors for Women," in *Pandora: Women in Classical Greece*, exh. cat., Baltimore, The Walters Art Gallery/ Dallas, The Dallas Museum of Art, Basel, Antikenmuseum Basel und Sammlung Ludwig (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 196.

Furthermore, the tragedian Aeschylus (*c.* 525/524 BC – *c.* 456/455 BC) "refers to the female as the treasurer of the man's seed."[356] The remnants of this metaphorical connection of women's bodies to containers are still visible in language, e.g., "the use of feminine gender for ships and cars […]."[357] The anthropological phenomenon also survives through the representation of female figures with or as containers (e.g., Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalen, etc.) and by extension through the description of women in enclosed spaces (e.g., Danaë, Antigone, Susanna,[358] etc.). As Lissarrague points out, the 'women as vessels' paradigm also explains the important space that containers have been taking up in the female private sphere:[359]

> *Thus we see women tidying up, putting things in order; using perfume and jewelry; carrying various objects from one place to another, or spinning wool. And to each of these activities is associated with a specific type of chest, box, basket, or container.*[360]

For instance, on Greek ritual wedding vases, brides are depicted "surrounded by female companions who bring all sorts of baskets and chests, the contents of which remain unknown, but are probably to be connected with the trousseau and wedding gifts."[361] Lissarrague further argues that this female pre-occupation with containers grew from a desire to exercise control "over an indoor private space, where women [we]re themselves detained."[362]

Fast forwarding to the early modern period, we see that the use of the metaphor of the vessel as an argument to contain women indoors was still current. Even then, women were still treated as "walking wombs,"[363] as their "primary function was to serve as the vessel by which the lineage was

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356 Ibid.

357 Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, 251.

358 Cf. "3.3.5. *Tuccia trasporta l'acqua col setaccio*, Giovanni Battista Beinaschi."

359 Lissarrague, François. "Women, boxes, containers: some signs and metaphors," in *Pandora: Women in Clas sical Greece*, ed. by Ellen D. Reeder, exh. cat., Baltimore, The Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore/ Dallas, The Dallas Museum of Art/ Basel, Antikenmuseum Basel und Sammlung Ludwig (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 91.

360 Ibid.

361 Ibid., 99.

362 Ibid., 93.

363 Dale Kent, "Women in Renaissance Florence," in *Virtue and Beauty*, ed. by David Alan Brown, 40.

maintained."[364] In the same vein, officials in Florence compared women to "*little sacks* [my emphasis], to hold the natural seed which their husbands implant in them, so that children will be born."[365] Hence, a woman's body was made to serve her husband, but needed to be "safely protected from the potential use of other men."[366] For that reason, women were commonly locked up in the domestic sphere. In Alberti's *Della Famiglia*, Gianozzo's nephew Lionardo states: "The woman, as she remains locked up at home, should watch over things by staying at her post by diligent care and watchfulness."[367] So, not only were women and their bodies compared to containers, they were contained themselves. As mentioned before, a woman's prime virtue was chastity, solely to keep the lineage pure. The importance of female chastity was demonstated in the iconography of women portraiture: "the symbolism of chastity prevailed through much of the period, whether or not taken from the world of religion—transparent glass vessels, enclosed gardens, impregnable architectural interiors […]."[368] Like Patricia Simons argues in "Women in Frames,"[369] the female sitters in Renaissance portraits look encapsulated in rooms, that overlook gardens. Glass vessels were incorporated in the constraining interiors, for instance in the emblematic *Portrait of a Young Woman* (The Arabella Huntington Memorial Collection, *c.* 1490) (cf. Fig. 25), the female pendant of *Portrait of a Young Man* (The Arabella Huntington Memorial Collection, *c.* 1490). Here, a transparent glass vessel — which "symbolize[s] the Virgin's purity" — alludes to the chastity of the sitter.[370]

The Virgin Mary has been one of the greatest role models for women in the early modern period. The focus in Christian teaching on the Virgin Mother, "born of an Immaculate Conception […], opened the way to a more positive view of women by redeeming the sin of Eve."[371] Her image adorned the private spaces of the female sphere to set an example. Although the Holy Virgin was

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364 Ibid., 28.

365 Ibid., 30.

366 Cristelle Louise Baskins, *Cassone Painting, Humanism and Gender in Early Modern Italy*, 3.

367 Alberti quoted in Cristelle Louise Baskins, *Cassone Painting, Humanism and Gender in Early Modern Italy,* 3-4.

368 Joanna Woods-Marsden, "Portrait of the Lady, 1430-1520," in *Virtue and Beauty*, ed. by David Alan Brown, 83.

369 Simons, Patricia. "Women in Frames: The Gaze, the Eye, the Profile in Renaissance Portraiture." *History Workshop* 25 (1988): 4-30.

370 Joanna Woods-Marsden, "Portrait of the Lady, 1430-1520," in *Virtue and Beauty*, ed. by David Alan Brown, 74.

371 Dale Kent, "Women in Renaissance Florence," in *Virtue and Beauty*, ed. by David Alan Brown, 27.

not mostly depicted in a pregnant state, depictions of the expectant Virgin "reinforced the message that the greatest hono[u]r a woman could enjoy was to bring forth life."[372] Still, in the rare visualizations of her pregnancy, artists focussed on the Virgin Mary's virginity. In the *Madonna del Parto* (Musei Civici Madonna del Parto, *c.* 1460) (cf. Fig. 26) by Piero della Francesca (1415 - 1492), the pregnant Mary has a slit in her dress at the height of her abdomen; her hand resting on her navel. The navel is a "closed opening,"[373] which is mirrored by the slit that does not reveal her flesh. This paradox of a closed opening symbolizes the virginal conception following the Annunciation.[374] Due to the Church Fathers' association of Mary with the bride in the Song of Songs or *Canticum Canticorum*, the Virgin came to be represented metaphorically as the *hortus conclusus* (closed-off garden) or the *fons signatus* (sealed fountain).[375]

In the same vein, Tuccia's sieve, which should inherently be open, is impermeable like the garden and fountain in the Song of Solomon. It is for that reason that the Dominican Franz von Retz (1343 - 1427) included the Vestal as a pagan precursor in his treatise on Mary, called the *Defensorium inviolatae virginitatis beatae Mariae* (*c.* 1400 - 1425).[376] The similarity in imagery of the two female figures demonstrates the perception of chaste women as impermeable vessels. As mentioned before, this, too, could boil down to the gynaecological ideas which were spread by medical authors from antiquity. They believed that the skin of a virgin, like that of a man, was impenetrable and only became porous — like a sieve — after sexual intercourse.[377] Moreover, the hymen was thought to seal the womb completely, comparable to the anomalous *hymen imperforatus* few girls suffer from,[378] as it was thought "to lie at the mouth of the uterus — deep within, unseen

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372 Ibid., 32.

373 Barbara Baert, "'Hoe zal dat gebeuren?' De Annunciatie en de zichtbare onzichtbaarheid," in *Echter dan werkelijkheid?*, ed. by Edwin Koster en Henry Jansen (Zoetermeer: Uitgeverij Meinema, 2011), 49-51.

374 Barbara Baert, "'Hoe zal dat gebeuren?' De Annunciatie en de zichtbare onzichtbaarheid," in *Echter dan werkelijkheid?*, ed. by Edwin Koster en Henry Jansen (Zoetermeer: Uitgeverij Meinema, 2011), 51.

375 Ellen Muller, "Heilige maagden: De verering van maagdheiligen in religieuze vrouwengemeenschappen," in *Tussen heks en heilige*, by Petty Bange, Ton Brandenbarg, Grietje Dresen, et al., 84.

376 Eric M. Moormann and Wilfried Uitterhoeve, *Van Alexandros tot Zenobia. Thema's uit de klassieke geschiedenis in literatuur, muziek, beeldende kunst en theater*, 3rd ed. (Nijmegen: SUN, 1998), 90.

377 Cf. "2.3. Tuccia, symbol of an untainted Rome."

378 Mirna Erman-Vlahović, Dubravko Habek, Ivan Vlahović, et al, "Pseudoacute abdomen in female caused by haematometrocolpos and haematosalpinx because hymen imperforatus: diagnosis and therapy of imperforate hymen," *Central European Journal of Medicine* 2, 3 (2007), 351-355.

and unseeable."[379] The legend of Tuccia served as an example for Roman women, who tried to model themselves after an impossible ideal — just like the early modern woman tried to emulate the Virgin Mary. As Richlin argues, Roman women were

> *permeable yet must be impermeable, they must carry water in a sieve. That matronae accepted this symbolic logic, enacted in their rituals, and enforced it on girls and on nonmatronae seems amply attested. This suggests further that the negative images of the monstrous female may well have been fostered by women.*[380]

So it seems that the ideal of the chaste woman in patriarchal societies of antiquity, as well as in the early modern period, was enforced by women themselves. This female 'cooperation' might have sprung from women's exposure to images of virginal female role models such as Tuccia. In Roman society, the Vestal Virgins "served as a constant reminder of the possibility of a completely closed body and the very high price to be paid for its breach."[381]

This reminder was again instilled in Renaissance women when they looked at their *cassoni* or wedding chests, filled with objects of the female domestic sphere, for as far as they featured Tuccia's legend. The latter's impermeable sieve, which ended up in humanist emblem books, came "as near to a perfect instrument of disclosure about the nature of the virtuous female body as any imaginative *figura* can."[382] Tuccia and her sieve, "miraculously made whole by the power of her own wholeness,"[383] taught women that their sexual continence was the root of their virtue. As Warner points out: "Tuccia's sieve […] provides us with a symbol of ideal integrity, that puns on the semantics of virtue, and constitutes in itself a kenning on the inherent properties of goodness."[384] Similarly, the nun's broken sieve in Gregory the Great's story, which was eventually mended by Benedict of Nursia (480–547), "is an image of the loss of female integrity and in this case the nun's

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379 Ann Ellis Hanson, "The Hippocratic Parthenos in Sickness and Health," *Virginity Revisited: Configurations of the Unpossessed Body*, ed. by Bonnie MacLachlan and Judith Fletcher, 48.

380 Amy Richlin, "Carrying Water in a Sieve: Class and the Body in Roman Women's Religion," in *Women and Goddess Traditions in Antiquity and Today*, ed. by Karen L. King, Studies in Antiquity & Christianity (Min neapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 357.

381 Ibid.

382 Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, 242.

383 Ibid.

384 Ibid., 242.

religious purity."[385] The wedding chests upon which Tuccia and her emblematic sieve appeared, were themselves the visualization of that connection between continence and integrity. In her study of *cassoni*, Baskins interprets these wedding chests as "a microcosm of the household, but also, synedochically,[as] a figure for the wife herself."[386] The locked *cassone*, then, just like the wife needs to "preserve the goods of the household without exposing them to risk and danger."[387]

This brings us back to the notion that women needed to be kept out of the public sphere in order to protect their virtue, like Danaë who was locked away in vain by her father to prevent her from becoming pregnant.[388] The justification lies in the idea that, unlike Tuccia and the Virgin Mary, ordinary women, as vessels, were unable to remain impermeable by themselves. As Reeder argues: "The suggestion that women were physically more susceptible than men to outside influences echoes the popular belief that a woman lacked a man's physical, mental, and emotional self-control."[389] Women could easily become 'leaky vessels.'[390] As Virard asserted in his medical text *Essai sur la Santé des filles nubiles* (1776), young virginal girls "[…] should never forget that they carry a treasure [i.e., their virginity] in fragile vases."[391] Elaborating on this idea, the sculptor Houdon (1741 - 1828), in his *L'Hiver ou La Frileuse* (1783) (cf. Fig. 27), depicted a young woman, carrying a vase that was "shatter(ed) by freezing water."[392] The leaking vase, which stands for her womb, shows the girl's loss of innocence. The lack of self-control or continence inherent in the female sex needed to be remedied by keeping women in the domestic sphere. The household, where the woman remained confined, became an "uncanny space,"[393] in which the woman — as if passing through a sieve[394] — got "sub-divided and ultimately effaced as sexual, desiring subject by being

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385 Barbara Baert, "Around the sieve. Motif, Symbol, Hermeneutic," 12.

386 Cristelle Louise Baskins, *Cassone Painting, Humanism and Gender in Early Modern Italy*, 2.

387 Ibid., 3.

388 Lissarrague, François. "Women, boxes, containers: some signs and metaphors," in *Pandora: Women in Clas sical Greece*, ed. by Ellen D. Reeder, 92.

389 Ellen D. Reeder, "Containers and Textiles as Metaphors for Women," in *Pandora: Women in Classical Greece*, 199.

390 Cf. Section "4.2. Leaky Vessels."

391 Pierre Virard translated in Linda Walsh, *A Guide to Eighteenth-Century Art* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2017), 213.

392 Linda Walsh, *A Guide to Eighteenth-Century Art*, 213.

393 Barbara Baert, "Around the sieve. Motif, Symbol, Hermeneutic," 17.

394 Ibid., 17-18.

put in her proper place among her husband's possessions."[395] Women stayed in an intimate space, steeped in secrecy or *Heimlichkeit*, which separated[396] them from the public world.[397] Again, this is symbolized by the chests, boxes, and containers and their hidden contents. This secrecy makes the woman "dissolv[e] into intimate space."[398]

In this section on impermeable vessels, it has been made clear how the images of figures like Tuccia have been used time and again for maintaining the patriarchal *status quo*. The Vestal with her sieve inscribed herself into this rich cultural tradition, rooted in anthropology, of female figures depicted with or as vessels. From Mary's sealed fountain to representations of Danaë locked in her room, to *portraits historiés* of women as Mary Magdalen with her ointment jar, all of these examples implicitly, but strongly, refer to the ideal of the chaste woman remaining in a private female sphere. A modern take on this 'women as closed vessels' paradigm can be found in the Magritte-esque *Split Personality* (De Paul Art Museum, 1954) by female surreal artist Gertrude Abercrombie (1909-1977) (cf. Fig. 28). The painting shows a woman who stands in a gloomy room that resembles a prison cell.[399] Her upper body is separated from the bottom half which includes her genital area and which has been replaced by a white pitcher. Here, Abercrombie puts her own spin on the construct of the 'women as container' as created by men. As a woman who found "the demands of motherhood and marriage exasperating,"[400] she shows the limiting restraints of the traditional role of the chaste devoted wife and mother — a role male artists promoted by their representations of Tuccia and other chaste secular or religious heroines.

3.3. Case Studies

The views on women in the early modern period explain the presence of the figure of Tuccia in the art between the fourteenth and early nineteenth century. The Vestal with her paradoxically

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395 Ernest Fischer quoted in Barbara Baert, "Around the sieve. Motif, Symbol, Hermeneutic," 17.

396 Interestingly, the word secrecy "derives from *secretum*, which in turn is derived from segregation, separation." Barbara Baert, "Around the sieve. Motif, Symbol, Hermeneutic," 17.

397 Ibid., 17.

398 Ibid., 17.

399 Elaine Margolin, "7 female artists you don't know — but should," *The Washington Post* (February 11, 2017), last access on the 9th of August, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/books/7-female-artists-you-dont-know--but-should/2017/02/09/3b014c4a-c09d-11e6-897f-918837dae0ae_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.f81608ed3dc2.

400 Ibid.

impermeable sieve — which essentially became a container — was the paragon of chastity, before and after marriage. That is why the allegorical figure of chastity in Cesare Ripa's highly influential *Iconologia* was depicted sporting a sieve (cf. Fig. 29). The following chronologically ranked case studies all show different facets of the importance of Tuccia as an ambiguous female role model.

3.3.1. Cassoni

Among the others was the vestal maid.
Who that she might be free of ill report.
Sped boldly to the Tiber, and from thence.
Brought water to her temple in a sieve.
— Petrarch, "*Trionfo della Castità*," Il. 148-151 (1351)[401]

From the fourteenth until the sixteenth century the *cassone*[402] or chest formed a traditional gift to an Italian bride from her family or her groom's family. Especially Florence — the centre of conspicuous consumption in the Italian Renaissance with the most developed "domestic world"[403] — became the heart of the *cassone* production.[404] These mostly rectangular chests varied in size depending on the "length of the bride's dresses,"[405] their depth, however, was more limited, not to "exceed convenient reach of the seeking arm."[406]

Cassoni fulfilled an important function, since they harboured the trousseau or *donora*.[407] As a part of the dowry, the *donora "*consisted of clothes and small personal items" provided by the bride's family.[408] It represented the transaction between the men of the two families involved in the

401 Quoted and translated in Heather Campbell, "'And in their midst a sun': Petrarch's *Triumphs* and the Elizabethan Icon," in *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, ed. by Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins (Manchester/ New York: Manchester University Press, 2007), 90.

402 The term *cassone* is an anachronism put into use by Vasari, the historically accurate term was *forziere*. Ellen Callmann and J.W. Taylor, "Cassone [It.: 'chest']," *Grove Art Online*, last access the 13th of August, 2018, https://doi-org.kuleuven.ezproxy.kuleuven.be/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.article.T014614.

403 Richard A. Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence: An Economic and Social History* (Baltimore/ London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 402.

404 Ellen Callmann and J.W. Taylor, "Cassone [It.: 'chest']," *Grove Art Online*, last access the 13th of August, 2018, https://doi-org.kuleuven.ezproxy.kuleuven.be/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.article.T014614.

405 G.E. Kaltenbach, "Cassoni," *The American Magazine of Art* 14, 11 (1923), 597.

406 Ibid.

407 Dale Kent, "Women in Renaissance Florence," in *Virtue and Beauty*, ed. by David Alan Brown, 21.

408 Ibid., 29.

marriage. That is why the wooden boxes are often part of the nuptial procession.[409] Symbolically the *cassone* not only represented the marriage contract, but also reflected the status of the bride, who was expected to be the living illustration of the wealth, pomp, and status of her husband's family. Apart from their emphatic performative aspect, these chests also had a didactic character, as they instructed the bride on how to be a good wife. As Renaissance homes did not contain lots of furniture "painted wedding chests would have dominated the domestic interior, along with massive beds and *spalliere*, or painted wainscotting […]."[410] In the Renaissance home, the very decorations of these big chests became important as they took up such a prominent space in the house. That is why the subjects of these decorations were used to educate not only the brides but all the female occupants of the house. As the Dominican cardinal Giovanni Dominici (1356 - 1419) stated:

> *Have pictures of saintly children or young virgins in the home…* [*I*]*t is desirable to bring up little girls in the contemplation of the eleven thousand Virgins as they discourse, pray and suffer.*[411]

The subject matter was both "rigidly conventional," and rather "limited."[412] A huge amount of *cassone* featured "tales of classical heroines" often taken from Boccaccio's *De claris mulieribus*[413] as well as from the writings of Petrarch. Of course, biblical scenes featuring female exemplars such as Judith were popular subjects. The best example for Florentine brides was Lavinia as she "represent[ed] the legitimately bestowed virgin whose predestined union with Aeneas [made] possible the establishment of Rome, and, by extension, of Florence."[414] Submissive female figures, such as Virginia and the Sabine women — the first killed by her father, the others raped — were featured on the chests as positive examples of passive womanhood, while *viragos*[415] such as the

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409 Anna Drummond, "Marriage and murder: two wedding chests with representations of Judith," *Art Journal of the National Gallery of Victoria* 53 (2014), last access on the 13th of August, 2018, https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au.

410 Cristelle Louise Baskins, Cassone *Painting, Humanism and Gender in Early Modern Italy*, 5.

411 Translated and quoted in Cristelle Louise Baskins, Cassone *Painting, Humanism and Gender in Early Modern Italy*, 6-7.

412 Ellen Callmann, *Apollonio di Giovanni* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974), 39.

413 Ellen Callmann and J.W. Taylor, "Cassone [It.: 'chest']," *Grove Art Online*, last access the 13th of August, 2018, https://doi-org.kuleuven.ezproxy.kuleuven.be/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.article.T014614.

414 Cristelle Louise Baksins, Cassone Painting, Humanism and Gender in Early Modern Italy, 82.

415 A *virago* is a "woman who has all the strength of a man." Deanne Williams, "Dido, Queen of England," 33.

Amazons were depicted as unnatural women who needed to be mastered and conquered. Humanist men often called their learned female colleagues Amazons, as they did not fit the mould.[416] Other popular *cassone* subjects, such as the tales of Lucretia and Judith, were almost as problematic as that of the Amazons. All these women were depicted with ambiguity, because of their sense of agency. The story of the maiden warrior Camilla — not taken care of by her father — whose "transgression of gender roles" resulted in her death on the battlefield, therefore, functioned as a "warning to Renaissance fathers and daughters alike."[417] As Baskins points out in her study on *cassoni* these figures of female exemplarity and heroism only "earn[ed] faint or skeptical praise for their highest achievement, maintaining chastity," unlike their male counterparts who were unambiguously praised to the skies for their deeds.[418] The whole of Baskins' monograph shows the problematic and disturbing misogynist male rhetoric that instilled meekness, obedience, and subservience into women from an early age onwards.

The appearance of Tuccia in *cassoni* inscribes itself in that humanist rhetoric which promotes chastity as the woman's most paramount possession. On a late fifteenth-century North Italian *cassone* in the Loyola University Museum of Art (cf. Fig. 30), a panel with the story of Tuccia (cf. Fig. 31) is integrated alongside panels depicting the biblical heroines Judith — the epitome of justice and duty — and the obedient Rebecca. The *cassone* highlights Tuccia's importance as a *donna illustra.* Both Tuccia and Judith were also exemplars of justice. Another *cassone* (Wawel Castle, *c.* 1508) with three panels by Alvise Donati (1450-1534) connected Tuccia's miracle as an "exemplum of justice"[419] to the scenes of the judgement of Solomon and the legend of the dead king.[420] As a paragon of chastity, Tuccia's image reminded young women of their duty to their family and the family of her (future) groom. The marital context, for example, is discernible on the decorations of a wedding *cassone* by Bartolomeo Montagna (*c.* 1450 - 1523) (cf. Fig. 32). The right tondo on the wedding chest pictures Tuccia who runs with her sieve, while the left tondo carries an image of Duilius and Bilia. The story of this married couple was popular in humanist teaching of young girls. Bilia, like Tuccia, was the epitome of chastity. As the story goes,

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416 Cristelle Louise Baksins, Cassone Painting, Humanism and Gender in Early Modern Italy, 39.

417 Ibid., 86.

418 Ibid., 11.

419 Nancy Edwards, "144. The Vestal Virgin Tuccia," in *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy*, ed. by Andrea Bayer, *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy*, 314.

420 For more information, cf. Jerzy Miziolek, "Exempla di Giustizia. Tre tavole di cassone di Alvise Donati," *Arte Lombarda* 2 (2001), 72-88.

when Duilius reached a blessed old age, he heard men gossiping about his bad breath. When he confronted Bilia with the fact that she never told him of his bad breath, she replied that she thought that every man's breath smelled like that. "[W]hether she was unaware of it or whether she bore it patiently," Bilia was praised for this reply in humanist teaching.[421] It certainly meant that Bilia, as the humanist Juan Luis Vives noted, did not "[kiss] many men before marriage."[422]

Apart from these appearances of Tuccia together with other figures, the Vestal also was the subject of *cassoni* that solely depicted her legend. For instance, *La vestale Tuccia* (Musée des Beaux-Arts Rouen, sixteenth century), most likely painted by Francesco Granacci (1469 - 1543),[423] shows the story of Tuccia in a sequence of scenes. The panel's sequence is reminiscent of Botticelli's *The Tragedy of Lucretia* (Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, *c.* 1500) (cf. Fig. 33), a panel that presumably was part of a *cassone*. Using a sequence of scenes was typical for many *cassone* depicting the story of a female heroine. The scenes from right to left are: Tuccia drawing water with her sieve from the Tiber; Tuccia running with her sieve to the shrine of Vesta; Tuccia showing her miraculous sieve at the shrine; and Tuccia praying to Vesta with an empty sieve next to her. As the far left scene probably comes before the far right scene, a circular motion is suggested, resembling the shape of the sieve. In the middle[424] of the panel three men, presumably the *pontifex maximus* and other priests, discuss the miracle. In every separate scene the other Vestals are present and accompany Tuccia throughout her journey from shrine to riverbank to shrine. In the upper corner of the right side of the painting, a ship in Ostia can be discerned.[425] As mentioned before in Section "2.3. Tuccia, a symbol of an untainted Rome," the ship refers to the figure of Claudia Quinta — a figure intricately connected to the figure of Tuccia.[426] The triumphal arch, next to the

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421 Juan Luis Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman: A Sixteenth-Century Manual*, ed. and trans. from Latin by Charles Fantazzi (Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 244.

422 Ibid., 245.

423 *Cassone* expert Paul Schubring (1869 - 1935) attributed the panel to Matteo Balducci (1509 - 1554), while Tancred Borenius (1885 - 1948) credited it to Granacci in his younger years. Like Borenius, the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rouen also found Granacci a more likely candidate for the attribution. Paul Schubring, *Cassoni: Ein Beitrag zur Profanmalerei im Quattrocento* (Leipzig: Verlag von Karl W. Hiersemann, 1915), 143; Tancred Borenius, "Unpublished Cassone Panels-I," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 40, 227 (1922), 75.

424 In the background in the middle of the panel a scene, presumably of two goatherds, is included. Whether or not this is a biblical or mythological scene is not clear. The literature available on this *cassone* does not mention the scene.

425 Paul Schubring, *Cassoni: Ein Beitrag zur Profanmalerei im Quattrocento* (Leipzig: Verlag von Karl W. Hiersemann, 1915), 143.

426 Cf. Section "2.3. Tuccia, a symbol an untainted Rome."

shrine, again symbolizes the relationship between Tuccia and the welfare of the Roman state.[427] Yet, it also evokes the *Triumph of Chastity*, in which Tuccia plays a role (cf. *infra*).

In this cassone, like that of Bartolomeo Montagna, Tuccia is seen running with her sieve — the movement of her dress resembling the *bewegtes Beiwerk*[428] or "moving accessories"[429] of Ghirlandaio's *nympha fluida*[430] in his fresco *Birth of Saint John the Baptist* (*c.* 1485 - 1490) in the Tornabuoni Chapel of the Santa Maria Novella in Florence (cf. Fig. 34). Artists took their inspiration for this motif of the running Tuccia from Petrarch's "*Il Trionfo della Castità.*" Tuccia is part of Petrarch's triumphal procession with ermine banners led by his heroine Laura, who represents Chastity, on a chariot carried forward by unicorns. The winged cupid in chains sits defeated next to Laura. The other female attendants of the triumphal procession are the Muses, Judith, Hippo, Dido, Penelope, Hersilia, Lucretia, Virginia, and Sulpicia, while there are also four men: Scipio Africanus, Hippolytus, Joseph, and Spurinna. Virtues such as Prudence also take part.[431] In his poem, Petrarch does not mention Tuccia's name, which suggests "that her story was so well known to his contemporaries that there was no need to do so."[432] The verses (ll. 148-151) mentioning Tuccia are the following (cf. the translated quote at the beginning of this section):

Fra l'altre la vestal vergine pia.
Che baldanzosamante corse al Tibro.
e per purgarsi d'ogni fama ria.

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427 The engravings discussed in Section "2.3. Tuccia, a symbol of an untainted Rome" show many similarities with this *cassone*. Many elements, such as the other Vestals, the *pontifex maximus* and the other priests, the shrine, and the triumphal arch can be found in *cassone* as well as in the engravings.

428 A term coined by Aby Warburg (1866 - 1929) when he observed the waving hair and the fluttering garments in Botticelli's *Birth of Venus* (Uffizi Gallery, *c.* 1483 - 1485). Axel Heil, Margrit Brehm and Roberto Ohrt, "Warburg's Terminology," *ZKM*, last accessed the 13th of August, 2018, https://zkm.de/en/event/2016/09/aby-warburg-mnemosyne-bilderatlas/warburgs-terminology.

429 Axel Heil, Margrit Brehm and Roberto Ohrt, "Warburg's Terminology," *ZKM*, last accessed the 13th of August, 2018, https://zkm.de/en/event/2016/09/aby-warburg-mnemosyne-bilderatlas/warburgs-terminology.

430 This mostly peripheral female figure in a painting's composition, with "pagan origins," "steps into the pictures with moving hair and airy clothing, usually carrying a basket of fruit […]." Axel Heil, Margrit Brehm and Roberto Ohrt, "Warburg's Terminology," *ZKM*, last accessed the 13th of August, 2018, https://zkm.de/en/event/2016/09/aby-warburg-mnemosyne-bilderatlas/warburgs-terminology.

431 V. M. Essling, and Eugène Müntz, *Pétrarque: ses études d'art, son influence sur les artistes, ses portraits et ceux de Laure, l'illustration de ses écrits* (Paris: Gazette des Beaux-Arts, 1902), 110, 117-118.

432 Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, 243.

porte del fiume al tempio acqua col cribro.[433]

In the third line it says that she "sped boldly to the Tiber"[434] (*corse al Tibro*). This inspired artists to depict Tuccia as she runs with her hair flowing and her garments moving through the wind.[435] A great example of the running Tuccia in a *cassone* panel depicting the "*Trionfo della Castità*," is Jacopo del Sellaio's *Trionfo della Pudicizia* (*c.* 1480, Museo Bandini). Tuccia, who is present in the centre of the scene, is running with her sieve with a "classical fly-away tunic."[436] What is interesting here, is that she seems disengaged from the triumphal procession and the other female figures, who are in contrast to Tuccia walking calmly while engaging with each other. Again, Tuccia resembles Ghirlandaio's *nympha fluida* figure, who also seems to be detached from the rest of the scene. Another interesting example of a "*Trionfo della Castità*" is one of Francesco Giorgio di Martini (1439 - 1501). His *Triumph of Chastity* (The Getty Museum, *c.* 1465) (cf. Fig. 35) shows Tuccia, who stands "in focal prominence"[437] in the triumphal procession, dressed as an Augustinian nun. The fact that she is dressed in "a white habit and scapular […] underline[s] the sympathy between Vestal vows and virginity.[438] Furthermore, this iconographically rare representation probably refers to the mention of Tuccia in Augustine's *De civitate Dei*. The connection to Augustine, however, might also have been added, because the Church Father was an immense inspiration to Petrarch.[439] In another, later chest (Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, *c.* 1470) by Francesco di Giorgo Martini, the artist depicts her again as an Augustinian nun. Here she is proving her chastity with her impermeable sieve to the Augustinian prioress, instead of confronting the *pontifex maximus*.[440] All the other Vestals are also dressed in white habits and scapulars. In the past,

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433 Quoted in Heather Campbell, "'And in their midst a sun': Petrarch's *Triumphs* and the Elizabethan Icon," in *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, ed. by Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins, 90.

434 Translated and quoted in Heather Campbell, "'And in their midst a sun': Petrarch's *Triumphs* and the Elizabethan Icon," in *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, ed. by Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins, 90.

435 Just like Botticelli was inspired to paint his female figures with movement through the poetry of Poliziano (1454 - 1494), cassone painters took inspiration from Petrarch's poetry for the running Tuccia motif.

436 Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, 244.

437 Ibid., 243.

438 Ibid..

439 For more information on the influence of Augustine on Petrarch: Alexander Lee, *Petrarch and St. Augustine: Classical Scholarship, Christian Theology and the Origins of the Renaissance in* Italy, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History 210, ed. by Han van Ruler (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

440 Jerzy Miziolek, "Exempla di Giustizia. Tre tavole di cassone di Alvise Donati," 81.

the *cassone* has been confused multiple times with an episode of the life of a female saint, such as, e.g., Saint Scholastica.[441]

From this section, it is clear that the figure of Tuccia has a rich iconographical tradition in the decoration of *cassone*. The chests showcase several aspects of Tuccia and her legacy. Firstly, her presence in *cassone* painting indicates her paramount position as an exemplum of justice and a paragon of female chastity for (prospective) brides. Furthermore, the chests picturing Petrarch's "*Trionfo della Castità*" together with the unique *cassone* of Francesco di Giorgio Martini refer to the literary tradition of the heroine that launched the Vestal as one of the popular humanist female role models in Italian city states of the early modern period.

3.3.2. *The Vestal Virgin Tuccia*, Moretto da Brescia

PVDICIAE TESTIMONIV

(In proof of her chastity)

— inscription on Moretto da Brescia's *The Vestal Virgin Tuccia*

The Vestal Virgin Tuccia (private collection, *c.* 1540-1544) (cf. Fig. 7) by Moretto da Brescia (1498 - 1554)[442] shows a seated Tuccia holding her filled brass sieve on her lap. Her left hand rests on a tablet with the inscription *PVDICIAE TESTIMONIV*, which means in proof of her chastity — a quote from *De civitate Dei* of Augustine.[443] The column in the background on the right side of the painting stands for the virtues of chastity and fortitude — the latter mirrored in the "muscular frame" of the Vestal.[444] The heroine looks almost monumental as she fills up most of the space on the canvas — as if locked in a container keeping her chaste. That is why her left foot, which, is foreshortened, seems to protrude from the painting. As will be discussed in this subsection, this painting is a demonstration of the christianization of Tuccia's iconography.

Because of the relationship between Tuccia and the Holy Virgin, artists depicted the figure of the Vestal as a pseudo-Christian heroine. As mentioned before, stoups with Tuccia's likeness

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441 Ibid., 72.

442 Moroni made a painting of Tuccia, inspired by Moretto's work. For a comparison of Moretto da Brescia's *The Vestal Virgin Tuccia* with Moroni's, cf. Antonio Vannugli, "Una 'Vestale Tuccia': '*Puditiciae Testimonium*' del Moretto in Palazzo Taverna a Roma," *Bollettino d'Arte* 47 (1988), 87-88.

443 Nancy Edwards, "144. The Vestal Virgin Tuccia," in *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy*, ed. by Andrea Bayer, 313.

444 Ibid.

graced the interiors of churches in Italy.[445] Moreover, in the previous section, we have seen that Francesco di Giorgio Martini pictured her as an augustinian nun. Allusions to the christianization of Tuccia can also be found in the engraving *Tuccia with a sieve at the riverside* by Furnius.[446] The inscription indicates how the miracle of the impermeable sieve came from God:

> *for even if she had, guided by a common error,*
> *dedicated her purity to a false divinity,*
> *still the true God had defended the innocent and chaste*
> *maiden and praised her with this miracle.*[447]

In the same vein, the treatment of Tuccia and her sieve by Carlo Maratta (1625 - 1713) (cf. Fig. 36), might suggest the intervention of God. Tuccia, wearing a white veil and white draped robes, resembles a Marian figure, while the sieve she is holding, lights up her face by a seemingly divine light.

The much earlier *The Vestal Virgin Tuccia* by Moretto da Brescia, shows more clearly the allusion to female sainthood, due to the androgynous and "robust physicality"[448] of the Vestal. As mentioned before in Section "2.1. The Vestal Virgins and their ambiguous status," virginity held a deep-seated connection with androgyny. Female saints were, therefore, namely often represented as androgynous women. Moretto mainly painted religiously inspired works, which made this painting of Tuccia one of the rare secular works he ever produced.[449] Nonetheless, the preoccupation with religious subject matter is implicit in this painting as revealed by the androgyny of the figure. The portrayal is reminiscent namely of the "artist's representations of the Virgin and female saints […] in his altarpiece of the *Madonna and Child in Glory with Saints* […]," which was made around the same time as the painting of Tuccia.[450] Moreover, the composition also

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445 Cf. Section "2.3. Tuccia, a symbol of an untainted Rome."

446 Cf. Section "2.1. The ambiguous status of the Vestal Virgins."

447 Cf. Appendix 2: Translations of the Latin Captions of Prints Depicting Tuccia.

448 Nancy Edwards, "144. The Vestal Virgin Tuccia," in *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy*, ed. by Andrea Bayer, 313.

449 Ibid.

450 Ibid.

bring[s] to mind Moretto's painting of about 1544 in the Cappella del Sacramento of San Giovanni Evangelista, Brescia, showing Saint Luke placing a foot on the head of an ox (his symbol) to prop up his tome.[451]

Nonetheless, like with most representations of female heroines, there is an ambiguity in the Moretto da Brescia picture because of the rich fabrics and the sensuality of the sheer white undergarment, which allows the contours of the Vestal's breasts to show through. Hence, the question arises whether or not Moretto is actually crticizing the Vestal, who was accused of unchastity. This ambiguity between sanctity and seduction is typical of the early modern period. Yet, it is far more likely that these seductive garments Tuccia is wearing, point to the fact that chaste women were considered to be extremely alluring, especially because of their chastity.

3.3.3. *The Vestal Tuccia Trampling a Snake*, Marcello Venusti (attributed to)

The angel who greets you with "Ave"
Reverses sinful Eva's name.
Lead us back, O holy Virgin
Whence the falling sinner came.
— Peter Damián (eleventh century)[452]

The Saint-Catherine Chapel in Rome's Basilica di Sant'Agostino contains a unique representation of Tuccia in terms of iconography (cf. Fig. 6). The lunette, most likely painted by Venusti (1512 - 1579), shows the Vestal who holds her sieve while sitting in a garden on a marble bench. Her left foot tramples a snake. This lunette is the only instance where Tuccia has ever been represented together with a serpent. Two possible explanations spring to mind.

Firstly, it could be a reference to the account of Tuccia by Augustine, after whom the church was named, in his *De civitate Dei*. The Church Father compared the miracle of the Epidaurian serpent attaching itself to Aesculapius to the miracles of Claudia Quinta[453] and Tuccia:

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451 Ibid.

452 Translated and quoted in Diane Helen Russell and Bernadine Barnes, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 12.

453 Cf. Section "2.3. Tuccia, a symbol of an untainted Rome," for more on the connection between Claudia Quinta and Tuccia.

> *[…] but I refer to these prodigies which manifestly enough are wrought by their demons power and force, as, […] that the Epidaurian serpent attached himself as a companion to Æsculapius on his voyage to Rome; that the ship in which the image of the Phrygian mother stood, and which could not be moved by a host of men and oxen, was moved by one weak woman, who attached her girdle to the vessel and drew it, as proof of her chastity; that a vestal, whose virginity was questioned, removed the suspicion by carrying from the Tiber a sieve full of water without any of it dropping […].*[454]

According to Pailler, Augustine's association of these themes is rooted in a connection between chaste female heroines and snakes.[455] Ovid mentioned that the Vestals welcomed Aesclaepius and his snake to Rome. Moreover, the snake — which was also associated with the fertility cult of Bona Dea and the "snake-cult"[456] of Lanuvium[457] – was featured eating an egg in an "anomalous"[458] depiction of Vesta. This connection of Vesta to the snake, that plays a central role in these two fertility cults and is the attribute of Aesculapius, also further deepens the Vesta cult's own link to fertility and prosperity: "*Le 'serpent de Vesta' pourrait apparaître alors comme un Agathos Daimôn, gardien du lieu et Heilsgott garant de santé, de fertilité et de prospérité.*"[459] Hence, Augustine's association of the Tuccia with the snake, was deeply-rooted, and the lunette in the Basilica di Sant'Agostino could very well be a visual representation of the Church Father's link, in the very church dedicated to him.

Another, complementary explanation for the incorporation of the snake in this iconographic scheme is as a reference to the Virgin Mary. By being the "virgin mother of Christ," who herself was "born of an Immaculate Conception," Mary was considered to be the typological opposite of

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454 Augustine, "The City of God (Book X)," trans. from Latin to English by Marcus Dods, *New Advent*, last access on 5th of April, 2018, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/120110.htm.

455 Jean-Marie Pailler, "La vierge et le serpent. De la trivalence à l'ambiguïté," *Mélanges de l'école française de Rome* 109, 2 (1997), 521.

456 Micaela Janan, *The Politics of Desire: Propertius IV* (Berkeley/ Los Angeles/ London: University of California Press, 2001), 115.

457 Each year in Lanuvium, two maidens offered food as sacrifice to the sacred snake of Juno. If the snake did not eat the offering, the girls were considered unchaste, which would result in a bad harvest. Micaela Janan, *The Politics of Desire*, 115.

458 Daniel Ogden, *Drakōn: Dragon Myth and Serpent Cult in the Greek and Roman Worlds* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 421.

459 Jean-Marie Pailler, "La vierge et le serpent. De la trivalence à l'ambiguïté," 521.

Eve.[460] That is why the theologian Peter Damián (eleventh century) wrote: "That angel who greets you with Ave' / Reverses sinful Eva's name. / Lead us back, O holy Virgin / Whence the falling sinner came."[461] In art, the Virgin Mary type of the Madonna Immaculata usually shows the virgin standing on the globe, crushing a snake beneath her feet. This snake, of course, refers to the snake who tempted Eve and brought on the fall of man. Hence, artists depict Mary, who "redeemed the sin of Eve" by giving birth to Christ, the saviour of mankind, crushig the snake, which stands for original sin. In Caravaggio's touching *Madonna dei Palafrenieri* (Galleria Borghese, 1606) (cf. Fig. 37), it is not the Virgin but the Christ child that tramples the snake, albeit with the help of his mother. Nevertheless, since the crushing of the snake is typical of the Madonna Immaculata, the artist's incorporation of a snake in the lunette in all probability relates to that specific Marian type. As mentioned before, Franz von Retz considered Tuccia to be the pagan counterpart of the Holy Virgin in his treatise *Defensorium inviolatae virginitatis beatae*.[462] Not only in text, but also in image, Tuccia had already been connected to the Virgin Mary by Andrea Mantegna (1431 - 1506) in his brunaille *The Vestal Virgin Tuccia with a sieve* (National Gallery London, *c.* 1495 - 1506) (cf. Fig. 38). Above the figure of Tuccia, Mantegna painted a pitcher with two lily stems suspended in the air by a ribbon and a wreath made of leaves. Since the lilies as well as the vase symbolize the Holy Virgin, the reference is clear.

The connection that von Retz and Mantegna made, is supported by the many resemblances between the two female role models. As mentioned in Section "3.2. Sieve and Containers," both figures were symbolized by impermeable vessels because of their virginity. In the lunette this is also demonstrated by the fact that Tuccia is sat in a garden, alluding to the Marian motif of the *hortus conclusus*.[463] Furthermore, they both played a role as mediators between their respective gods and the common people. Mary "act[ed] as an intercessor with God," which was a "manifestation of her love for humankind and her merciful attitude."[464] Tuccia, like all Vestals, acted as an intermediary between the Roman people and Vesta.[465] On top of that, they represented female virtue, especially

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460 Dale Kent, "Women in Renaissance Florence," in *Virtue and Beauty*, ed. by David Alan Brown, 27.

461 Translated and quoted in Diane Helen Russell and Bernadine Barnes, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 12.

462 Cf. Section "3.2. Sieves and Containers."

463 Cf. Section "3.2. Sieves and Containers."

464 Diane Helen Russell and Bernadine Barnes, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 17.

465 Cf. Section "2.1. The ambiguous status of the Vestal Virgins."

chastity, "while at the same, time, [they] exceed[ed] [it] as unique, perfect wom[e]n."[466] Tuccia and Mary represented an ideal that the normal early modern woman was unable to uphold. Yet, these female figures were "exemplar[s] for virginal [and] spousal love"[467] and took up important space in the decorations of the female sphere. Moreover, the lunette in the Basilica di Sant'Agostino demonstrates another affinity between Tuccia and Mary. By trampling the snake, Tuccia vanquishes evil through her virginal integrity — just like Mary. As discussed in Section "3.2. Tuccia, a symbol of an untainted Rome," the miracle of the virtuous and intact Tuccia was linked to the welfare of the Roman state. Only through the perpetual virginity of Mary and Tuccia disaster can be avoided or relinquished.

The lunette in Basilica di Sant'Agostino is one of the most overt allusions to the Virgin Mary in a representation of the Vestal, thanks to the inclusion of the *hortus conclusus* motif as well as that of the snake. It is, however, important to note that the snake could also refer to Augustine's written connection between the Vestal and the snake of Aesclapius. Of course, neither of these theories about the fairly unstudied lunette excludes the other. Therefore, the snake could have a double meaning. Nevertheless, the fact that Tuccia tramples the snake, indicates that the second reading is more likely to be accepted. After all, the representation of Tuccia as a pseudo-Mary, would tally with the tendency of many artists to 'christianize' the figure of the Vestal.

3.3.4. *Ritratto di Vittoria Della Rovere in veste di Tuccia*, Justus Sustermans

So great is the reputation of the dowager Grand Duchess' virtues
that by recounting them I would utterly obscure them
— Scipione Lucchesini (seventeenth century)[468]

The portrait *Ritratto di Vittoria Della Rovere in veste di Tuccia* (Palazzo Pitti, *c.* 1634-1640) (cf. Fig. 39), painted by the Flemish Justus Sustermans (1597-1681), illustrates that the humanist motif of Tuccia's sieve functioned as an attribute for the ideal wife in Florentine circles. Sustermans, the most renowned portrait painter in Italy, was a favourite of his Italian patron the Grand Duke

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466 Diane Helen Russell and Bernadine Barnes, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 17.

467 Robert L. Fastiggi, "Mary: Exemplar of Faithful Love for Virgins, Spouses, Mothers, and the Church," *Ave Maria Law Review* 8, 2 (2010), 343.

468 Quoted in Giovanna Benadusi, "The Gender Politics of Vittoria della Rovere," in *Medici Women: The Making of a Dynasty in Grand Ducal Tuscany*, ed. by Giovanna Benadusi and Judith C. Brown. Essays and Studies 36, ed. by Konrad Eisenbichler (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2015), 268.

Ferdinand II de' Medici (1610-1670), who used to commission portraits of his family and friends.[469] Sustermans has painted the Grand Duke's wife Vittoria Della Rovere (1622-1694) — like her husband a fervent patron of the arts — depicting her multiple times as herself as well as in different guises. This particular *portrait historié* of Vittoria, who married Ferdinand in 1634, could quite possibly have been painted on the occasion of their marriage. The motif of the sieve seems to suggest a marital context.[470] On top of that, the tentative dating made by the Fondazione Zeri for the portrait falls between 1634, the year of her marriage, and 1640.[471] The reasons for this dating, is the fact that wealthy families of the bride and groom customarily commissioned portraits of the young bride in all her finery to show-off their own wealth and status.[472]

Although the official marriage took place in 1634, three years went by before Vittoria moved to the Florentine court in 1637. Before her marriage, she was raised in the convent of Santa Croce, also known as La Crocetta, which was "the centre for the training of 'Christian and virtuous' princesses."[473] La Crocetta was founded by Christine of Lorraine (1565–1637), Vittoria's "maternal grandmother"[474] and Tuscan Regent. Between 1621 and 1628 Christine of Lorraine and her aunt and mother-in-law Archduchess Maria Maddalena (1589-1631) both had reigned over Tuscany. It had been the "only period of female rule in the two-hundred-year history of the Medici principate."[475] These strong women set the example for Vittoria to become a powerful female ruler herself. As Grand Duchess, she exerted her political power by creating her own court at the Villa del Poggio Imperiale, which once belonged to Maria Maddalena.[476] From 1642 onwards, Vittoria decided to live at the villa due to her strained disappointing marriage to Ferdinand, and she even

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469 Lisa Goldenberg Stoppato, "Suttermans [Susterman; Sustermans; Sutterman], Giusto [Josse; Juste; Justus]," *Grove Art Online* (2003), last access at 15 May, 2018, http://www.oxfordartonline.com.

470 Cf. "3.3.1. Cassoni."

471 Fondazione Zeri, "Suttermans Giusto, Ritratto di Vittoria Della Rovere in veste di Tuccia," *Fondazione Zeri*, last access on 11th of May, 2018, http://catalogo.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/.

472 David Alan Brown, "Introduction," in *Virtue and Beauty*, 21.

473 Giovanna Benadusi, "The Gender Politics of Vittoria della Rovere," 272.

474 Alexandra Coller, *Women, Rhetoric, and Drama in Early Modern Italy* (New York/ London: Routledge, 2017), 49.

475 Ibid.

476 Ibid.

bought the property from her husband in 1659.[477] Already before her marriage, Vittoria had been financially independent:

> *[A]s last of the della Rovere lineage […] she retained the title of princess of Urbino and inherited as her dowry the substantial patrimonial land of the della Rovere and the Montefeltro families which included vast estates in central and southern Italy. At the death of her paternal grandfather she also came into possession of an important art collection and of the ducal treasure.*[478]

On top of financial self-sufficiency, Vittoria also possessed an "intellectually eclectic"[479] mind, which helped her to establish herself as a female role model. Her correspondence gives us a glimpse of her exemplary conduct:

> *The grand duchess came to exemplify the virtuous woman — the archetype of integrity and exemplary behavior who set the standards of conduct not just at the court but also in the private homes of her subjects. She projected an image of herself as pious, generous and benevolent — a provider of charity, dispenser of maternal advice, and disciplinarian of male sexuality as well as of the morality of young girls.*[480]

Like her two examples Christine and Maria Maddalena, Vittoria became a "defender of […] disadvantaged women […] by helping them overcome obstacles whether through financial sponsorship, therapeutic drugs, or the supervision and implementation of justice."[481] Vittoria was also an avid patron of female painters, writers, composers, and scholars forging deep friendships with women like Maria Selvaggia Borghini (1654-1731) and Camilla Bevilacqua Villa (seventeenth century).[482] As a voracious reader, she also owned a large library.[483] Although she was a supporter of women, she still instilled into her protégés, notions, such as the importance of a good marriage

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477 Giovanna Benadusi, "The Gender Politics of Vittoria della Rovere," 278.

478 Ibid., 277.

479 Ibid.

480 Ibid., 291.

481 Ibid.

482 Ibid., 287-289.

483 Ibid., 276.

without conflict. Hence, essentially, Vittoria further "preserved gender and class inequalities"[484] in seventeenth-century Tuscany.

As mentioned above, the Grand Duchess was an outspoken patron of the arts. Many portraits of her have been made during her lifetime, especially by two of her favourite artists, Justus Sustermans and Carlo Dolci (1616-1686). As a female role model, she carved out an image for herself partly through these portraits. Although the portrait of her as Tuccia possibly might have been commissioned by her husband, Sustermans' work contained many elements to be found in the later portraits commissioned by Vittoria. Vittoria namely always identified herself with virginal and devout figures such as the female saints Margaret, Catherine, her namesake Vittoria and even the Virgin Mary herself. Vittoria, extremely pious and yet incredibly narcissistic, asked Sustermans to paint a scene of the Holy Family (Palazzo Pitti, 1645-1650), with her as the Virgin Mary and her son Cosimo III (1642-1723) as Jesus Christ (cf. Fig. 40). This *portrait historié* of her and her son functioned as an expression of their religious devotion and their exemplarity as Christians — through her influence, but to the annoyance of Ferdinand II, Cosimo III became a fanatical defender of the faith.[485] The group portrait can be compared to the earlier portrait of Vittoria as Tuccia, since the Vestal Virgin was considered a pseudo-saint and a pagan version of the Holy Virgin.[486] Both portraits, as well as the female saints *portraits historiés*, stress Vittoria's exemplarity.

On the *Ritratto di Vittoria Della Rovere in veste di Tuccia* the Duchess' satiny gown is bejeweled with pearls.[487] The pearl ornaments can be found on almost all portraits made of Vittoria della Rovere. In another portrait by Sustermans from the same period as the Tuccia portrait, *Ritratto di Vittoria della Rovere* (Uffizi, 1638-1640) (cf. Fig. 41) Vittoria is portrayed in all her finery. She is wearing a black dress with the bodice encrusted with pearls, as well as a tiara, a necklace, and bracelets made of pearls. Her sleeves are decorated with pearl ornaments. Vittoria's obsession with pearls can also be seen when one looks at her jewellery cabinet, where these white gems took up the

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484 Ibid. 296.

485 Mary Hollingsworth, *The Medici* (London: Head of Zeus, 2017), n. p, *Google books*, last access on the 11th of May, 2018, books.google.be.

486 See Subsection "3.3.3. *The Vestal Tuccia Trampling a Snake*, Marcello Venusti (attributed to)" for more information about Tuccia as a pagan version of Mary.

487 Cf. Subsection "4.1.2. Analysis of the Sieve Portraits." In the Sieve portraits, Elizabeth I is portrayed with a sieve as well as pearl jewellery.

majority of space.[488] These jewels symbolized purity, as they refer to the Virgin Mary[489] and, also, to one of Vittoria's favourite patron saints,[490] Margaret of Antioch (*c.* third and fourth century), where the saint's name means "pearl" in Greek.[491] By wearing pearls, Vittoria alluded to herself as to the epitome of female virtue. Therefore, the pearls strengthen the message of chastity already implicit in the motif of the sieve "she points to with an insistent finger"[492] in *Ritratto di Vittoria Della Rovere in veste di Tuccia.* The other gems, mounted in gold bracelets, a brooch and sleeve details, worn by Vittoria in the Sustermans' portrait can probably be identified as sapphires and rubies. These also contributed to the message of bridal chastity in the picture, as sapphires were believed to "rend[er] the wearer chaste" and rubies "were […] most frequently given to brides as they were thought to benefit the wearer by […] negating lust and *tristesse.*"[493] Next to her jewellery, her loosely flowing hair style, which was highly unusual at that time, comments on her sexual status. Only "virgins and brides wore their hair flowing and loose as a symbol of innocence,"[494] whereas, because of the erotic connotation of untied locks, married women used to wear their hair "decorously bound and restrained […] as a matter of propriety."[495] In *Ritratto di Vittoria Della Rovere in veste di Tuccia*, Vittoria is depicted with long curls, which probably wants to express that she was a virginal bride at the time it was painted. Of course, it is also possible that she wanted to be portrayed with loose hair because she represented Tuccia, who was a virgin. This, however, would have been an anachronistic error, since the Vestals wore their hair bound in curls.[496]

Be that as it may, this *portrait historié* by Sustermans shows Vittoria as the embodiment of chastity. Female portraits in the early modern period often were "variants of the society's paradigm

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488 Wolfram Koeppe and Annamaria Giusti, *Art of the Royal Court: Treasures in Pietre Dure from the Palaces of Europe*, exh. cat., New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New Haven/ London: Yale University Press, 2008),186.

489 Joanna Woods-Marsden, "Portrait of the Lady, 1430-1520," in *Virtue and Beauty*, ed. by David Alan Brown, 67.

490 For Vittoria, who miscarried more than once, this patron saint of expectant mothers, must have been incredibly important.

491 Wolfram Koeppe and Annamaria Giusti, *Art of the Royal Court*, 186.

492 Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, 244.

493 Joanna Woods-Marsden, "Portrait of the Lady, 1430-1520," in *Virtue and Beauty*, ed. by David Alan Brown, 67.

494 Ibid., 65.

495 Ibid., 65.

496 Cf. Section "2.1. The Vestal Virgins and their ambiguous status."

of the 'ideal woman,'"[497] and it is clear that this portrait of the Grand Duchess needed to communicate her exemplarity as the future wife of Ferdinand II de' Medici through the emblem of Tuccia's sieve. In another example, *Portrait of a woman dressed as a vestal virgin* (seventeenth century) by the school of Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione (1609-1664), the anonymous young female sitter holds Tuccia's sieve presumably to convey the same message. It is also important to note, that the sieve — as an agricultural tool — held by young virginal brides stands for the pent-up fertility necessary to propagate the lineage of their husbands. Nevertheless, Sustermans' portrait of Vittoria della Rovere cannot be interpreted simply as the embodiment of the ideal bride. The early portrait already contains elements of the visual image she created for herself as a pious, virtuous, and intellectual woman. The motif of the sieve shows her familiarity with humanist literature and emblems. Indeed, Tuccia's sieve was incorporated in Petrarch's "*Il Trionfo della Castità*" as well as in emblem books. Furthermore, the sieve, as the emblem of chastity, could also be seen as a symbol of her future independence. Although the figure of Tuccia frequently appears within the marital context, the Vestal Virgin may certainly also be seen as embodying female power through celibacy. A couple of years after the painting was made, Vittoria left her marital bed to live independently. Hence, Tuccia's sieve paradoxically refers to her chastity as a young bride, but is also already a foreboding of the independent reign of Vittoria as the pious and celibate Grand Duchess, who paradoxically kept defending the institution of marriage to her protégés.

3.3.5. *Tuccia trasporta l'acqua col setaccio*, Giovanni Battista Beinaschi

O eternal God, who dost discern what is secret,
who art aware of all things before they come to be,
thou knowest that these men have borne
false witness against me.
And now I am to die!
Yet I have done none of the things
that they have wickedly invented against me!

— Susanna in Daniel 13.42-43[498]

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497 David Alan Brown, "Introduction," in *Virtue and Beauty*, 12.

498 Bible Gateway, "Susanna's Beauty Attracts Two Elders," *Bible Gateway*, last access on the 30th of July, 2018, https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+13&version=RSVCE;KJV.

In the painting *Tuccia trasporta l'acqua col setaccio* (private collection, *c.* 1650-1688), by the Piedmontese mannerist painter Giovanni Battista Beinaschi (1636-1688), two old bearded men are looking wonderingly at a sieve filled with water, held by a beautiful young woman (cf. Fig. 42). She, of course, represents the Vestal Virgin Tuccia. The two men are depicted wearing robes that resemble draped togas, while the veiled Tuccia has donned a yellowish brown dress and veil, white chemise sleeves and a dark ochre cloak lined with pink. Tuccia — her face softly caressed by a light source coming from the left of the painting — is looking at her impermeable sieve with her demurely downcast eyes. The old man closest to Tuccia can be identified as the *pontifex maximus*, as he is wearing a veil just like the Emperor August in the sculpture *Via Labicana Augustus* (Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, *c.* 12 BC) which indeed portrays him as *pontifex maximus*. The high priest in Beinaschi's painting extends his left hand out of the canvas, which expresses his astonishment at the miracle happening before his eyes. The unidentifiable man behind him also looks attentively at Tuccia's sieve. Although Beinaschi's biggest influences were Annibale Carracci (1560 - 1609) and Giovanni Lanfranco (1582 - 1647),[499] this painting contains caravaggist elements. The surprise on the faces of the old men and the hand gestures (with the *raccourci*) are reminiscent of Carravaggio's *Supper at Emmaus* (The National Gallery London, 1601). The *chiaroscuro* with the dark background and the light that falls on the faces, the drapery of clothing, and the hands also betray references to Caravaggio's painting style.

Although Beinaschi clearly depicted Tuccia while she proved her innocence in front of the *pontifex maximus*, the painting is also suggestive of the biblical motif of Susanna and the Elders. This is not strange, since both female figures are similar to each other, "as figureheads for morally good women."[500] That is why they both made excellent subjects for cassoni decorations.[501] Furthermore, both women stood for marital chastity. Representations of Susanna and the Elders were in high demand in the seventeenth century — at the time that Beinaschi painted his *Tuccia trasporta l'acqua col setaccio.* Beinaschi usually painted religious scenes, so it is highly likely that he might have gotten his inspiration for this work from Susanna and the Elders. Paintings of the story from the Old Testament always featured two lustful, wicked elderly men juxtaposed by a young — often barely dressed — woman. Here, Tuccia is not found in a compromising position, in contrast to most representations of Susanna. From the sixteenth century onwards, artists frequently

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499 Véronique Damian and Alberto Crispo, *A selection of Italian and Flemish paintings from the 16th to 18th centuries*, unpublished (Paris: Galerie Canesso SAS, 2017), 28.

500 Helen Diane Russell and Bernadine Barnes. *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 32.

501 Dale Kent, "Women in Renaissance Florence," in *Virtue and Beauty*, ed. by David Alan Brown, 35.

depicted Susanna in a state of undress ready to have a bath.[502] Rubens himself painted the biblical heroine completely nude in his first version of *Susanna and the Elders* (Galleria Borghese, 1607), calling the painting a "*galanteria*" — which means that it was "neither sacred nor profane, although taken from the Holy Writ"[503] (cf. Fig. 43). Still the resemblance between Susanna and Tuccia is implicitly clear in Beinaschi's painting — without this resemblence being a *galanteria*. After all, the two elderly men painted by Beinaschi do not only look astonished but also beguiled by lust as they stare into the sieve. As discussed in Section "3.2. Sieves and Containers," the closed, or opened, receptacle referred metaphorically to the womb and the genital area of women — indeed of virgins and sexually active women, respectively. With the sieve standing for Tuccia's appealing virginity, the men's penetrating gaze contains an erotic tension. In *The Vestal Tuccia with the Sieve* (Chatsworth House, sixteenth century) attributed to Giulio Romano (1499 - 1546), Tuccia — dressed *all'antica* with one breast bare — is besieged from the right of the painting by a chained wind sprite and from the left by another male figure with an opened bag (cf. Fig. 44). The personification of the wind, which looks like the lustful Zephyr from Botticelli's *Primavera*, tries to blow wind in her sieve. Here, the impermeable sieve stands for a pent-up fertility, which clearly entices the wind sprite just like it entices the two men in Beinaschi's painting. Like in many representations of chaste female figures, "chastity makes the heroine even more enticing, and the image of virtue easily becomes an object of lust."[504] Beinaschi's Tuccia has not too much flesh on show and the artist rather highlights her beautiful face and décolletage. Hence, like Susanna, Tuccia has become a passive image upon which men actively prey with their scopophilic gaze,[505] and she, too, bears it as meekly as her biblical counterpart in early modern painting.[506]

This paradox of the virtuous and chaste woman as an object of lust is not the only parallel between the stories of Susanna and Tuccia. Both heroines were sentenced to death by malicious rumours. When Susanna dismissed the advances of the Elders, she became accused of marital unchastity by these lying men — who were also judges. Similarly, Tuccia's accusation came from

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502 Elizabeth Philpot, "Susanna: Indecent Attraction / Fatal Exposure," in *Believing in the Text: Essays from the Centre for the Study of Literature, Theology and the Arts, University of Glasgow*, ed. by Jasper Newlands, George Newlands and Darlene Bird, Religions and Discourse 18, ed. by James M. M. Francis (Bern: Peter Lang, 2004), 80.

503 Ibid., 78.

504 Helen Diane Russell and Bernadine Barnes. *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 32.

505 Katlijne Van der Stighelen, "'Vrouwen als boeketten verpakt' beeld en bekentenis van de vrouw in de kunst," 54.

506 Elizabeth Philpot, "Susanna: Indecent Attraction / Fatal Exposure," 78.

unfounded slanderous gossip. After the unfair course of their trial, both Tuccia and Susanna turn to the heavens with a formulaic prayer[507] which incites their respective gods to save them: in Tuccia's case through a miracle, and in Susanna's through the intervention of the shrewd prophet Daniel. It is, therefore, not surprising that illustrations of both stories are also examples of (divine) justice and that the legend of Tuccia graced the walls of public buildings,[508] while magistrates and other administrators of the law commissioned paintings of Susanna for their art collections.[509]

On top of all the previous parallels between these two female figureheads of exemplarity and chastity, these role models also share a connection to the Virgin Mary. As mentioned in Subsection "3.3.3. The Vestal Tuccia Trampling a Snake, Marcello Venusti (attributed to)" Tuccia can be seen as a pagan version of the Virgin Mary. In the lunette, the artist placed Tuccia in a garden, which alludes to the *hortus conclusus*. When looking at the text and pictorial tradition of Susanna, the garden also plays an important part in her story. The incident with the Elders happened in her garden, while she was planning to have a bath. In the Bible, it is explicitly mentioned that Susanna's garden was completely closed, which typologically refers to the *hortus conclusus*. Some artists, such as Albrecht Altdorfer (*c.* 1480-1538), made this reference explicit by incorporating the Marian symbols of the "lily and a pitcher" into his *Susanna im bade* (Alte Pinakothek Munich, 1526) (cf. Fig. 45).[510] This detail of the closed garden, in its turn, can be connected to Tuccia's sieve, which has become a container through its impermeability.[511] Other artists, in the fifteenth and sixteenth century, depicted Susanna as a saint, which can be likened to the treatment of Tuccia as a pseudo-saint by Moretto da Brescia.[512]

As a case study, Beinaschi's painting is interesting, since it is the only painting of Tuccia that so clearly alludes to the motif of Susanna and the Elders. This places Tuccia even more among the *donne illustre* who captivated the early modern period in visual culture. Furthermore, the connection between Tuccia and Susanna marks the Vestal's importance as a figurehead for marital chastity. Moreover, the association again shows that Tuccia was considered to be a pseudo-biblical

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507 Cf. Susanna's prayer quoted at beginning of this section.

508 For instances of the appearance of Tuccia on public buildings, cf. Section "2.3. Tuccia, symbol of an untainted Rome."

509 Elizabeth Philpot, "Susanna: Indecent Attraction / Fatal Exposure," 75.

510 Ibid., 80.

511 Cf. Section "3.2. Sieves and Containers."

512 Cf. Subsection "3.3.2 *The Vestal Virgin Tuccia*, Moretto da Brescia."

figure, who typologically referred to the Virgin Mary. Notwithstanding this, the painting also depicts Tuccia, like her counterpart from the Old Testament, as an object of lust. This confirms the patriarchal views that virginity and marital chastity made a woman even more desirable.

3.3.6. *La Vestale 'Tuxia'*, Louis-Joseph Le Lorrain

Ce nouveau marié a trouvé sa femme plus sçavante qu'il n'eût souhaité […]
Les femmes qui affectent le titre de sçavantes ne sont pas sur un bon pied dans le monde.
— Antoine Furetière (1619-1688), *Dictionnaire universel* (1690)[513]

In a much later eighteenth-century *portrait historié* known as *La Vestale 'Tuxia'* (private collection) by Louis-Joseph Le Lorrain (1715-1759) (cf. Fig. 46), an unidentified middle-aged woman not only poses with a sieve, but is also dressed like a figure from antiquity. The model is wearing a blue and white[514] stola-esque draped garment with a yellow veil covering her curled hair. In the background on the left side of the painting, the blazing sacred fire of the *aedes Vesta* is incorporated, while on the right side Le Lorrain mimicked a Roman temple-like architecture. The sitter with her inquisitive eyes and knowing smile points her finger to her sieve, which is also resting on a classical column-like pedestal. Despite the lack of information on the portrait, it is clear that this painting is an example of the fashionable *portraits historiés* of women portrayed as Vestals, which were immensely popular in eighteenth-century France due to the excavations at Herculaneum and the uncovering of the House of Vestals of Pompei.[515]

The reading of *La Vestale 'Tuxia*,' like Nicholson argues in her study on these *portraits historiés*,[516] is connected to the *querelles des femmes*, mentioned in Subsection "3.1.3. Eighteenth Century." The Vestals resonated with a lot of artists at the time, because they represented women who moved around within the male public sphere. That is why these priestesses were regarded as the perfect Roman counterparts to the intellectual and sociable women present in the eighteenth-century French *salons*. Madame de Pompadour (1721 – 1764), being one of them, these women

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513 Furetière quoted in Elise Goodman, *The Portraits of Madame de Pompadour: Celebrating the Femme Savante*, Discovery Series 7, (Berkeley/ Los Angeles/ London: University of California Press, 2000), 143 n. 17.

514 These colours were typically connected to the Virgin Mary. That is why, they symbolize chastity.

515 Cf. Subsection "3.1.3. Eighteenth Century."

516 Kathleen Nicholson, "The ideology of feminine 'virtue': the vestal virgin in French eighteenth-century al allegorical portraiture," in *Portraiture: Facing the Subject*, ed. by Joanna Woodall, (Manchester/New York: Manchester University Press, 1997). 52-72.

were often viewed as immoral temptresses by French misogynists. For instance, Jean-Marc Nattier (1685 - 1766) depicted these *salonnières* as Vestals as an ironic commentary on the lack of virtuous chastity of the sitters.[517] In *Portrait of a Lady as a Vestal Virgin* (North Carolina Museum of Art, 1759) (cf. Fig. 47), the model

> *displays a seductiveness through the self-aware, self-promoting gestures; the décolletage of her gown; the lavish flow of drapery that emphasises her lower half; and the incidental quality of the two vestals near the altar behind her. The theatricality of the presentation mocks vestal propriety, not least because this vestal attends only to herself.*[518]

Looking back at Le Lorrain's picture, the curtains framing the sitter give it a similar theatricality as the Nattier painting, where curtains also grace the top half of the scene. The two women depicted on these *portraits historiés* also wear the same colour garments, namely the virginal white and blue. Hence, it is possible to assume an ironic reading of the "vestal theme"[519] in *La Vestale 'Tuxia*,' which would comment on the sitter's impropriety.

Yet, the female figure in Le Lorrain's painting, while self-aware, does not primarily want to look seductive, as the modest neckline on her garment indicates. This suggests another interpretation of the motif of the Vestal Tuccia in this portrait. Nicholson points out that French educated women embraced this label of "false virgin"[520] and turned it into an epithet of female intelligence and independence. The already mentioned Madame de Pompadour did just that when she decided to sit for *Madame de Pompadour as a Vestal Virgin* (1760) (cf. Fig. 48). The portrait shows the already middle-aged marquise as a Vestal, who holds a huge tome: "Shown in her maturity in this portrait, she alludes to her intellectuality and to the impressive library she had assembled […]."[521] This portrait, however, also "strikes a note of parody in the seemingly odd fit of the king's former mistress in the guise of a vestal,"[522] and seems to carry "the added joke of

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517 Ibid., 62.

518 Ibid.

519 Ibid., 61.

520 Ibid., 62.

521 Ibid., 64 Fig. 15.

522 Ibid., 65.

women's ageing."[523] The painting does indeed "thwart any single, easy definition of her according to an authorised category of womanhood."[524] Apart from being a former mistress, she is also a *femme savante* "at ease with her signs of ageing, her station, and accomplishment."[525]

I would suggest a similarly positive reading of Le Lorrain's work. The anonymous middle-aged woman with her knowing eyes looks at the viewer completely at ease with herself. It might be possible that she, like a Vestal Virgin, participated in the male public sphere. She could be one of those educated *sallonières*, looked down upon by some of her male peers. If that is the case, the incorporation of the motif of Tuccia can also be a rebuttal of these misogynists, who viewed educated women as false virgins. By posing like the unfairly accused Tuccia, it could be possible that this woman makes a statement about her intact integrity. On top of that, the humanist motif of Tuccia, like in the Vittoria della Rovere's portrait,[526] again seems to suggest that the sitter enjoyed a great education. This ambiguous portrait — which of course might be read in a negative light — nevertheless demonstrates how the identification with Tuccia can make a powerful and even empowering statement on female identity, as will be discussed further in the next chapter on Elizabeth I as a modern Tuccia.

3.3.7. Alcova Torlonia, Filippo Bigioli

I am wondering what became of all those tall abstractions
that used to pose, robed and statuesque, in paintings […]
Truth cantering on a powerful horse,
Chastity, eyes downcast, fluttering with veils.
Each one was marble come to life, a thought in a coat […]
— Billy Collins (1941 -), "Death of Allegory" (1990)[527]

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523 Ibid., 66.

524 Ibid.

525 Ibid.

526 Cf. Subsection "3.3.4. *Ritratto di Vittoria Della Rovere in veste di Tuccia*, Justus Sustermans."

527 Billy Collins, "Death of Allegory," *Poetry Foundation*, last access on the 12th of August, 2017, https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/poems/37694/the-death-of-allegory.

The Palazzo Braschi, now the Museo di Roma, harbours and exquisite room with painted frescoes, namely the Alcova Torlonia (*c.* 1837) with decorations by Filippo Bigioli (1798-1878).[528] The reception room is called after the demolished Palazzo Torlonia, which was situated at the Piazza Venezia in Rome. The *alcova* of the Palazzo Braschi now holds the saved frescoes of the destroyed original.[529] The Alcova Torlonia shows various mythological scenes, such as the *Judgement of Paris* on the ceiling, and various love episodes of the gods on the frieze embellishing the walls of the room.[530] The four corners of the *alcova* are adorned by representations of the four elements depicted by Roman gods on chariots: Vulcan as fire, Juno as air, Ceres as earth, and Neptune as water.[531] On top of that, grisailles of female allegorical figures in fake niches grace the walls. Between these niches, medallions in bas-relief made by Pietro Galli (1804 - 1877) tell the story of Psyche.[532] Under every recess with a grisaille, there are two lunettes painted by Alessandro Mantovani (1814 - 1892). Every lunette depicts a bird of different plumage.

The monochromatic allegorical figures personify the arts as well as the marital virtues.[533] Amongst these women, one is holding a sieve, which identifies her as Tuccia (cf. Fig. 49). Here, she features only as the personification of marital chastity. Like so many female figures, she has been reduced to the virtue she stands for. For instance, the "[s]tatic image" of the *Judith* by Jacopo de' Babari (*c.* 1460/70 - before 1516) shows her "simply […] holding her […] identifying attribute" with "all narrative elements […] eliminated."[534] The Tuccia in the Alcova Torlonia also went through this essentialization, as the legend of the Vestal and her impermeable sieve completely disappeared. Her attribute, the sieve, started to live a life of its own and showed up, as mentioned before, in *portraits historiés*[535] and *spallieri* like Neroni's *Chastity*. This mainly came about through the inclusion of the sieve in the personification of Castità of Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia.* In contrast to

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528 Although this case study is about an example of the nineteenth century, I included it because it is an important outgrowth that shows the essentialization of Tuccia in art.

529 Emiliana Ricci, "La cosidetta 'Alcova Torlonia,'" in *Il Museo di Roma racconta la città*, by Rossella Leone, Federica Pirani, Maria Elisa Tittoni, et al. exh. cat., Rome, Museo di Roma (Rome: Gangemi Editore, 2002), 324.

530 Ibid.

531 Ibid.

532 Ibid.

533 Ibid.

534 Helen Diane Russell and Bernadine Barnes, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 33.

535 Cf. The Subsections "3.3.4. *Ritratto di Vittoria Della Rovere in veste di Tuccia*, Justus Sustermans" and "3.3.6. *La Vestale 'Tuxia'*, Louis-Joseph Le Lorrain." The most famous examples, namely the *Sieve Portraits* of Elizabeth I, will be discussed in Chapter 4.

Neroni's representation of Chastity, who still holds the sieve filled with water near a riverbank, Bigioli makes the monochromatic figure of marital chastity only lightly grasp her emblematic sieve, which does not even contain water.[536] Hence, Bigioli's Tuccia can be seen as the most pure allegorical form of the Vestal.

The fact that Bigioli painted Tuccia amongst the other marital virtues, indicates how established the emblematic sieve was in the upper-class circles as a symbol of marital chastity. Tuccia seems to have been a popular figure for decorations for anterooms; the eighteenth-century artist Domenico Corvi included her in the grisailles of virtuous figures from antiquity in the Sala Corvi at Palazzo Barberini (cf. Fig. 22). Here, the essentialized Tuccia holds her attribute under her left armpit while she points upwards with her left finger. As mentioned before in Section "2.3 Tuccia, a symbol of an untainted Rome," the reception room was made for Cornelia Constanza Barberini, just like it is assumed that the Alcova Torlonia was decorated in honour of Teresa Colonna (1823 - 1875),[537] the wife of Alessandro Torlonia (1800 - 1886). Once more, as we have seen in the other case studies, Tuccia's presence here indicates her importance as a role model promoting the ideal of marital chastity to women. Decorations featuring Tuccia were mostly connected to the female sphere, as we have seen in Subsection "3.3.1 Cassoni."

The figure of Tuccia included in the Alcova Torlonia, as well as in the Sala Corvi, bears a resemblance to Mantegna's pictorially superior *spalliera The Vestal Virgin Tuccia with A Sieve* with the Vestal in "*bronzi finti* (feigned bronze)"[538] — which is again a monochromatic colouring. In all likelihood, Mantegna's painting was made for the *studiolo* of Isabella d'Este (1474 - 1539). The then unusual "innovative" style of the brunaille shows Isabella's and Mantegna's fascination with "*all'antica* sculpture."[539] That is why it is assumed that *The Vestal Virgin Tuccia with A Sieve* of the late fifteenth-century, begin sixteenth-century, belonged to the Marchesa of Mantua, together with the brunailles of Artemisia/Sophonisba,[540] Dido, and Juno. Isabella, who had an "insatiable desire

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536 The fan *Claudia proving her innocence* discussed Section "2.3. Tuccia, a symbol of an untainted Rome," also depicts Tuccia without her carrying a sieve filled with water.

537 The coat of arms of the Colonna's, namely the column, appears everywhere in the Alcova Torlonia.

538 Margaret Franklin, *Boccaccio's Heroines: Power and Virtue in Renaissance Society*, Women and Gender in the Early Modern World, ed. by Allyson Poska and Abby Zanger (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2006), 150.

539 Ibid., 151.

540 There is debate on the identity of heroine. According to Franklin the most likely candidate is Artemisia. Margaret Franklin, *Boccaccio's Heroines: Power and Virtue in Renaissance Society*, 156.

for ancient things,"[541] wanted "to mirror herself on the virtuous heroism of these four women."[542] Tuccia as figure of "humanistic female exemplarism"[543] resonated with the intelligent Isabella, just as the Vestal would resonate with Vittoria della Rovere more than a century later.

In a similar way, Bigioli's Tuccia of the Alcova Torlonia functions as a reminder of the importance of marital chastity to Teresa Colonna and erudite female visitors. The incorporation of the figure highlights the important role that Tuccia has played throughout the early modern period as figurehead for female virtue in Italian higher society. It is one of the last appearances of Tuccia in a work of art, apart from Leroux's narrative representation of Tuccia holding a sieve above her head to prove that it did not leak (cf. Fig. 50), as the fascination with Roman antiquity came more or less to an end at the close of the nineteenth century. It, therefore, marks the end of a long tradition of Tuccia as a female role model for the chaste early modern woman.

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This chapter has dealt with Tuccia's role as a female ideal of chastity in the early modern period. As discussed in the first section of this chapter, the early modern period for women was marked by a preoccupation with chastity, before and after marriage. This was important for keeping family lineages pure. As a result, women were sequestered in the domestic sphere — especially in Florence. As the institution of marriage became more and more important, due to the Reformation, the importance of the ideal chaste wife even intensified. Advice as well as emblem books focused on the importance of marriage and the domestic role that women needed to play therein. Nevertheless, from the Enlightenment onwards, women started to get more involved in the public sphere, e.g., the *sallonières* in France. This resulted in a polemic about the nature of women and their place in society. In the midst of these developments, art has always been a mirror of society's views on women. As a didactic humanist example, the figure of Tuccia, as a *donna illustra*, played a significant part in the visual education of women in the private sphere, as discussed in the case study of the *cassoni*. Her impermeable sieve, which stood for the chaste woman's body, became an important emblem for Chastity. The Vestal with her sieve inscribed herself in the rich anthropological tradition of women with or as vessels. Tuccia's exemplarity even became greater

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541 Isabella d'Este quoted and translated in Barbara Baert, "Around the sieve. Motif, Symbol, Hermeneutic," 8.

542 Barbara Baert, "Around the sieve. Motif, Symbol, Hermeneutic," 8.

543 Ibid.

due to her christianization, which can be discerned in the case study of the lunette in the Roman Basilica di Sant' Agostino. While often Tuccia was used as didactic example to instruct women on the patriarchal notion of sexual continence and obedience, she also resonated with intellectual and (semi-)independent women, as the case study on Vittoria della Rovere shows. Hence, Tuccia's legacy in Western art should not be neglected, as she was a champion of chastity as well as one of female independence. The latter will be further discussed in the next and final chapter on Elizabeth I, who saw herself as a modern Tuccia.

4. Queen Elizabeth I, a Modern Tuccia

As it became clear from the two previous chapters, virginity was the jewel in the crown of virtues for unwed young women. Their purity, or lack thereof, really affected what one can call their marital market value. The ideal of virginity served the patriarchal society of the early modern period: men exploited the powerful concept of virginity for their own ends indeed. Depictions of Tuccia played an important didactic role for spreading those patriarchal views on virginity and chastity. Nevertheless, the *Ritratto di Vittoria della Rovere in veste di Tuccia* and *The Vestal Virgin Tuccia with a Sieve* by Mantegna, most likely made for Isabella d'Este, as discussed in chapter 3, could not simply be explained as products of the patriarchal framework. Although these women were married, they lived (semi-)independently and exerted political power in their city states.

These instances of Tuccia as a role model for women are then intermediates between the patriarchal model of chastity and the one that is going to be explored in this chapter, namely the model of female empowerment through virginity. Miriam Robbins Dexter discerned this dichotomy in the power of virginity.[544] She distinguished

> *two types of potency released from the energy reservoir of the virgin female: the type that is outwardly directed, serving men in patriarchy, and that which is retained in the female, leaving her independent of male control.*[545]

In the case of Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603), that virginal potency was retained by her decision to remain unmarried. By not binding herself to a man, she was able to govern England successfully and relatively peacefully, defeat the Spanish Armada, and lay the groundwork for a British empire. She and her councillors used art as an important propaganda tool to create a myth around her virginity, i.e. that of the Virgin Queen. Tuccia's sieve, standing for virginity as well as for imperialist triumph[546], became one of the most important emblems connected to the English Queen.

In this first section of this chapter, I will analyse both the *Plimpton Sieve Portrait* (1579) and *The Siena Sieve Portrait* (1583). First, however, we must explain the historical context wherein

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544 Miriam Robbins Dexter's view on the power of virginity is explained in Bonnie MacLachlan, "Introduction," *Virginity Revisited: Configurations of the Unpossessed Body*, ed. by Bonnie MacLachlan and Judith Fletcher, 4.

545 Bonnie MacLachlan, *Virginity Revisited: Configurations of the Unpossessed Body*, ed. by Bonnie MacLachlan and Judith Fletcher, 4.

546 Cf. Section "2.3. Tuccia, symbol of an untainted Rome."

these portraits were produced. From 1579 until 1582, marriage negotiations between Elizabeth and the Duke of Anjou and Alençon (1555-1584) preoccupied England. The question of marriage became a controversial topic for most Englishmen. The *Sieve Portraits*, conceived during this time of turmoil, invite the viewer to reflect on this historical context and the stance that Elizabeth took during this period of the Anjou courtship.

The second part of this chapter — further elaborating on the discussion in Section "3.2. Sieves and Containers" — deals with the notion of women as 'leaky vessels.' This phenomenon also crops up in Elizabethan and Jacobean city comedies, from which the importance of the sieve as a device for Elizabeth can be further investigated. For Elizabeth, Tuccia's sieve was a symbol for her superiority as a Virgin Queen. Furthermore, and nonetheless, I will also include a critical view of the Queen's perpetual virginity as held by contemporaries and supported by contemporary medical theories.

In the final concluding section, I will analyse Elizabeth's queenship in relation to the Vestal model, where I will argue that the figure of Tuccia as a Vestal and a pagan version of the Virgin Mary is the perfect role model for the Virgin Queen. Marrying together the notion of exemplary virginity (cf. Chapter 3) with that of imperialist triumph through virginity (cf. Chapter 2), I will suggest that Tuccia's sieve perfectly embodies Elizabeth's eroto-politics. Moreover, I will discuss similarities between Elizabeth and the Vestal Virgins to explain how, in her sexual ambiguity as made possible by her perpetual virginity, Elizabeth was able to represent England as a whole.

4.1. The *Sieve Portraits* in Context

In the first part of this chapter, the *Sieve Portraits*, where Elizabeth represented herself with a sieve, are put into context and, subsequently, analysed. It is important to look at the events that occurred during the making of these emblematic portraits in order to fully understand their meaning. The first section, therefore, deals with a brief discussion of the Anjou match and Elizabeth's reign at the time. Thereafter, I will turn to the *Plimpton Sieve Portrait* and the *Siena Sieve Portrait*. Although these are not the only existing portraits of Elizabeth with a sieve, within the confines of this dissertation, I will only focus my analysis on these two most renowned and most compelling paintings.

4.1.1. The Anjou Match

> [*I*]*n the end this shall be for me sufficient,*
> *that a marble stone shall declare that a Queen,*
> *having reigned such time,*
> *lived and died a virgin.*
> — Elizabeth I[547]

Elizabeth Tudor became Queen of England in 1558. During her reign the question of her succession loomed constantly. On top of that, when Elizabeth came to the throne, an isolated England had a weak army and was in dire need of a powerful alliance.[548] Her advisers were torn between finding her an advantageous match and the possibility of England being ruled by a husbandless Queen. After many failed marriage negotiations with suitors like Philip II of Spain (1527-1598), the last hope of finding a spouse for Elizabeth came from France, when Francis, Duke of Anjou and Alençon vied for her hand.[549] After a previous ill-timed proposal of marriage in 1572,[550] the Duke made a second offer to Elizabeth in 1578. The Queen's reaction was "non-committal," since she had never met Francis in real life.[551] That being said, the Duke had already made a positive impression by taking up "active leadership in the Low Countries on behalf of the Dutch Rebels"[552] against the wishes of his brother, King Henry III of France (1551-1589).[553] By keeping the cause of the Dutch Rebels alive, the power of Catholic Spain had been weakened to Elizabeth's advantage.[554] Although his dealings in the Low Countries earned Francis a certain favour with the Queen, there was still the unsolved matter of meeting each other before actual marriage negotiations could be set in motion. Early in the year 1579, Francis sent his close friend Jean de Simier (second half of the sixteenth

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547 Elizabeth I quoted in Alison Weir, *Elizabeth, The Queen* (London: Vintage Books, 2009), 44.

548 John S. Morrill and Stephen J. Greenblatt, "Elizabeth I: Queen of England," *Encyclopaedia Brittanica*, last access on 12th of June, 2018, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Elizabeth-I.

549 Previously, Elizabeth was offered the hand of his older brother Henry, but his reluctance to marry a non-Catholic was too great to overcome. Lloyd E. Berry (ed.), *John Stubbs's* Gaping Gulf *with Letters and Other Relevant Documents*, Folger Documents of Tudor and Stuart Civilization (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1968), ix.

550 Ibid.

551 Ibid., xiii.

552 Ibid., xii.

553 Ibid., xiii.

554 Ibid., xiii.

century) to the English court to negotiate on his behalf with Elizabeth and her councillors.[555] In August of that year, the Duke himself visited England to woo the Queen.[556]

From then on, the serious courtship between the twenty-four-year-old Francis and the nearly twice as old Elizabeth commenced. These marriage negotiations came at one of the most challenging times during Elizabeth's monarchy. From 1578 to 1582, several attempts on the Queen's life were made by Catholics on English soil and abroad.[557] As it was established that no heretic should be allowed to rule at the Council of Trent (1545 and 1563), Spain, in cahoots with the Pope, tried to assist Catholic uprisings in England to depose Elizabeth and enthrone her Catholic cousin Mary Stuart (1542-1587),[558] who was next in line.[559] Because of these difficulties and threats, Elizabeth could use an alliance with France. Even though the Queen and her French suitor instantly grew a liking to one another upon meeting (Elizabeth even lovingly called him "her frog"[560] despite his facial disfigurement from "a bout of smallpox"[561]), the country and her court advisers were divided about the possible match. In her Privy Council, Lord Burghley (1520-1598) was very much in favour, whereas Walsingham (1532-1590) disapproved entirely.[562] Christopher Hatton (1540-1591), one of the Queen's favourites, also strongly opposed an Anjou alliance.[563] Understandably, many Protestant Englishmen did not look forward to risk having a Catholic French duke rule England through his wife — although it was clear after his time in the Low Countries that Francis was a moderate[564] Catholic. After the reign of Elizabeth's half-sister Mary I (1516-1558), also known as Bloody Mary, English Protestants feared the return of a fanatic Catholic regime,

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555 Ibid., xiii.

556 Ibid., xv.

557 Ibid., xi-xii.

558 In 1586, Mary Stuart was eventually executed, since her existence would always threaten Elizabeth's position on the throne. Antonia Fraser, "Mary, Queen of Scotland," *Encyclopaedia Brittanica*, last access on 12th of June, 2018, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Mary-queen-of-Scotland.

559 Lloyd E. Berry (ed.), *John Stubbs's* Gaping Gulf *with Letters and Other Relevant Documents*, xii.

560 Ibid., xv.

561 Amy Licence, *In Bed with the Tudors: The sex lives of a dynasty from Elizabeth of York to Elizabeth I* (Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2013), 226.

562 Lloyd E. Berry (ed.), *John Stubbs's* Gaping Gulf *with Letters and Other Relevant Documents*, xv.

563 Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I* (London: Pimlico, 2003), 101.

564 Encyclopaedia Britannica (eds.), "François, duc d'Anjou," *Encyclopaedia Brittanica*, last access on 12th of June, 2018, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Francois-duc-dAnjou.

where they would again be violently persecuted. The religious and political turmoil was voiced in pamphlets such as *The Discoverie of a Gaping Gulf* (1579)[565] by the political commentator John Stubbs (*c.* 1544-1589) and publisher William Page (sixteenth century), who both lost their right hand for producing it.[566]

For the following years the marriage was alternately on and off the table. The Queen cleverly recommenced negotiations to get support from the French whenever Spain threatened to attack.[567] In 1581, the Duke of Alençon visited England for a second and last time. During his stay, he asked the Queen for support in the cause of the Dutch Rebels. The reunion amounted in a seemingly serious reconsideration of the marriage proposal on Elizabeth's part. On the 22nd of November, the Queen in a "momentary impulse"[568] took the Duke of Anjou on a stroll through her gallery when she kissed him, exchanged rings with him, and declared to the French ambassador that she would marry Francis.[569] Nevertheless, the Queen's pledge was assuredly a ploy to obtain a treaty with Henry III of France.[570] Of course, this "strange episode" could also be construed to a certain extent to have been a genuine "unguarded" moment of a wavering Elizabeth, who after all was fond of Francis.[571] The following day regret set in and the Queen backed out of a binding engagement, whereupon the Duke mocked the "lightness of women, and the inconstancy of I[s]landers."[572] Still Anjou would not give up and decided to stay in England, where he wintered until February 1582.[573] The years of tiresome negotiations, however, had taken their toll and it had finally become clear that the possibility of the marriage was suspended for good. The Queen had grown more and more disenthralled by the idea of marriage. Indeed, Elizabeth — being a highly

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565 The full title: *The discoverie of a gaping gulf whereinto England is like to be swallowed by another French mariage, if the Lord forbid not the banes, by letting her Maiestie see the sin and punishment thereof.*

566 David Loades, *Elizabeth I: A Life* (London/ New York: Hambledon Continuum, 2006), 210.

567 Lloyd E. Berry (ed.), *John Stubbs's* Gaping Gulf *with Letters and Other Relevant Documents*, xviii.

568 David Loades, *Elizabeth I: A Life*, 213.

569 Mack P. Holt, *The Duke of Anjou and the Politique Struggle During the Wars of Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 161.

570 Ibid., 162.

571 David Loades, *Elizabeth I: A Life*, 213.

572 Francis of Anjou quoted in Mack P. Holt, *The Duke of Anjou and the Politique Struggle During the Wars of Religion*, 162.

573 Mack P. Holt, *The Duke of Anjou and the Politique Struggle During the Wars of Religion*, 162-164.

intelligent and incredibly astute stateswoman — recognized that the match would not be in the best interest of her country. The resistance of many of the Queen's countrymen and the lack of agreement within her Privy Council played a decisive part in deciding against the marriage. The Spanish ambassador Mendoza (*c.* 1540-1604) had even reported to Philip II of Spain that the marriage could cause a civil war were it to proceed.[574] Apart from the looming unrest, the "question of religion […] proved to be [too big] a stumbling block,"[575] as well as the fact that a pregnancy and childbirth would be too risky for the ageing Queen.[576] All these reasons prevailed and made her break off the marriage negotiations completely by 1582. Although the marriage was off, the Duke did not leave London empty-handed as Elizabeth provided financial support for the revolt in the Low Countries. Furthermore, Anjou secured an "alliance with Leicester and the 'war party' in the council."[577] Even though Elizabeth and Francis parted awkwardly, they still kept writing affectionate letters to each other.[578] Eventually, the Duke fell out of grace by asking for further financial assistance after his flight to France as a result of his failure to "seize control of Antwerp."[579] He died in 1584.

In the aftermath of the break-up with Anjou, Elizabeth wrote the poem "On Monsieur's Departure" (*c.* 1582), voicing her inward conflict between her desire and her duty to her country. In the poem she was able to express these clashing sentiments by emulating the "Petrarchan lyric," which was filled with "characteristic oxymorons."[580] In a touching passage she expresses the divide between her body personal and her body politic:[581]

> *I grieve and dare not show my discontent,*
> *I love and yet am forced to seem to hate,*

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574 Lloyd E. Berry (ed.), *John Stubbs's* Gaping Gulf *with Letters and Other Relevant Documents*, xv.

575 Ibid., ix.

576 Christine Coch, "'Mother of my Contreye': Elizabeth I and Tudor Constructions of Motherhood," in *The Mysteries of Elizabeth I: Selections from the English Literary Renaissance*, ed. by Kirby Farrell and Kathleen M. Swaim (Amherst/ Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 141.

577 David Loades, *Elizabeth I: A Life*, 213.

578 Lloyd E. Berry (ed.), *John Stubbs's* Gaping Gulf *with Letters and Other Relevant Documents*, xix.

579 David Loades, *Elizabeth I: A Life*, 216-217.

580 Ilona Bell, *Elizabethan Women and the Poetry of Courtship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 108.

581 Barbara Baert, "Around the sieve. Motif, Symbol, Hermeneutic," *TEXTILE. Journal of Cloth and Culture* 16, 1 (2018), 9.

I do, yet dare not say I ever meant,
I seem stark mute but inwardly do prate.
I am and not, I freeze and yet am burned,
Since from myself another self I turned.[582]

The last line conveys Elizabeth's realization that her body personal must always lose out to her body politic: the Crown must always come first. That is why she decided to fully affirm her position as the Virgin Queen — although court poets such as Spenser already had given her this epithet in 1579 as a "thinly disguised criticism" of the Anjou match.[583] She understood the humanist notion of the family as the "smallest political unit"[584] and as a microcosm of society.[585] In Tudor times, "a husband was expected to govern his wife and household."[586] Remaining unwed cancelled out this power problem:

> *Elizabeth I clearly recognized the power of this idea, for though she had many suitors, she never married, recognizing that if she did she would put herself in a very awkward position in society that regarded husbandly and fatherly authority in the household as a model for good government in the larger political realm.*[587]

Married to her country, Elizabeth reigned England, all by herself, until her death.

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582 Elizabeth I, "On Monsieur's Departure" quoted in Stephen Greenblatt, M.H. Abrams, Carol T. Christ et al. (eds.), *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 8th ed., vol. 1 (New York/ London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006), 695-696.

583 David Loades, *Elizabeth I: A Life*, 210-211.

584 Merry Wiesner-Hanks, "Women's Authority in the State and Household in Early Modern Europe," in *Women Who Ruled: Queens, Goddesses, Amazons in Renaissance and Baroque Art*, ed. by Annette Dixon, exh. cat., Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Museum of Art/ Wellesley, David Museum and Cultural Center (London: Merrell, 2002), 35.

585 Cf. Subsection "3.1.1. Late Middle Ages and Renaissance."

586 David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage, and Death: Ritual, Religion, and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 287.

587 Merry Wiesner-Hanks, "Women's Authority in the State and Household in Early Modern Europe," in *Women Who Ruled*, ed. by Annette Dixon, 35.

4.1.2. Analysis of the *Sieve Portraits*

Stancho riposo e riposato affanno.
— *"Il Trionfo dell'Amore"* (IV, 1.145), Petrarch (1304-1374)[588]

The *Sieve Portraits* span the period from the beginning of the Anjou marriage negotiations to their very end. This turbulent time in Elizabeth's monarchy, paired with an inner struggle between desire and duty, also marked a change of strategy in her eroto-politics. Although she had refused many other marriage proposals in the past, this particular refusal heralded the official beginning of the era of the Virgin Queen. In the scholarship of the iconography of Elizabeth, it has been suggested that after 1570, the portraits, such as the *Sieve Portraits*, focused primarily on the Queen's virginity as "a response to specific political events such as England's relations with Spain and the succession."[589] In this section, I will discuss this transformation to a new era of the myth of the Virgin Queen that can be discerned in the *Sieve Portraits*. Apart from that shift, I want to posit tentatively that, even though both *portraits historiés* show many iconographical similarities, there is a difference in intent between these two works.

The Plimpton Sieve Portrait (Folger Shakespeare Library, 1579) (cf. Fig. 51) by the Queen's serjeant painter George Gower (1540-1596) was conceived at the beginning of the marriage negotiations between Elizabeth and Anjou. It is one of three nearly identical portraits, made in 1579. One of the other two is lost, the second is in a private collection.[590] The *Plimpton Sieve Portrait* marked the beginning of a personal iconography of the Queen, "[…] for it combines the earliest manifestations of imperial aspirations with Petrarchan motifs in celebration of her chastity."[591] In the portrait, the Queen is wearing an exquisite, red bejewelled gown with a high-necked chemise, a cartwheel lace ruff, a gold necklace with gemstones and pearls, white slashed sleeves, lace cuffs and flower-patterned embroidery in gold. A golden headdress covered in pearls and rubies with a black veil trimmed with gold stripes gathers her hair together. In her right hand she holds brown gloves and in her left she carries a sieve, which is attached to her golden V-shaped belt embellished with

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588 The citation can be found on the *Plimpton Sieve Portrait* as well as on the *Siena Sieve Portrait* (1583). Translation: "Tired rest and restful restlessness."

589 Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins (eds.), *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I* (Manchester/ New York: Manchester University Press, 2007), 9.

590 Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*, 95.

591 Ibid., 96.

pearl rosettes and other gems. These garments and accessories exude luxury and regal splendour. The red colour of her gown marks the "Englishness" of the sitter, as opposed to blue garments connected to France.[592] The plain black background and Elizabeth's flat facial expression betrays the influence of Flemish art, so admired by the Queen.[593] Gower shows Elizabeth in three-quarter length with her body turned slightly to the right. The Queen purposely does not stand in the "woman's position."[594] Women normally "fac[ed] left on the right-hand side of the picture."[595] Here, Gower depicts Elizabeth in the opposite male direction, most likely to underscore her power and sovereignty. The coat of arms and the initials E R (Elizabeth Regina) on the right side of the portrait further explicate her rank and superiority. The Queen's right hand leans on a black upholstered chair trimmed with gold thread. The incorporation of a chair usually "denotes rank," but it is also "emblematic of the bedroom."[596] At that time, artists depicted women mostly in the bedchambers of their upper-class homes, since these were the spaces that were "designated as rooms uniquely their own."[597] The incorporation of chairs, draperies, and cushions in the portraits of women refer to that unique space and became standard objects in women's portraiture.[598] Furthermore, the chair "represents the unseen presence of the master of the house."[599] As Elizabeth was unmarried, the chair could not have been a representation of her husband. Nonetheless the presence of the chair does — contrary to her masculine position — associate Elizabeth with the domestic female sphere. In male portraiture, chairs also appear, but the sitters actually sit in them, rather than stand next to them, as was most common in women's portraiture in Tudor England.[600] The pose of the Queen, therefore, shows aspects of the male and the female, just like the accoutrements and mottoes incorporated in the painting. To the left, the motto "*Tutto vedo e molto*

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592 Ben Spiller, "Warlike mates? Queen Elizabeth, and Joan La Pucelle in *1 Henry VI*," in *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, ed. by Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins, 40.

593 Susan E. James, *The Feminine Dynamic in English Art, 1485-1603: Women as Consumers, Patrons and Painters* (London/ New York: Routledge, 2016), 194.

594 Ibid., 118.

595 Ibid.

596 Ibid.

597 Ibid., 115.

598 Ibid., 117.

599 Ibid., 118.

600 Ibid.

mancha," meaning "I see everything but much is missing," substantiates the imperial theme already implied by the globe in the left-hand upper corner of the portrait.[601]

The map of England became a recurring motif in the royal iconography,[602] as in the renowned *Ditchley Portrait* (The National Portrait Gallery, *c.* 1592). In this iconic portrait by Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger (*c.* 1561/1562-1636), Queen Elizabeth stands on a map of England with her feet on Oxfordshire (cf. Fig. 52). This portrait does not only highlight the Queen's imperialist mindset, but it also communicates that England is as "impenetrable" as Elizabeth herself.[603] This message can also be found in the earlier *Plimpton Sieve Portrait.* It constitutes one of the first examples of this connection between imperialism and virginity, that characterizes Elizabeth's successful reign. With the incorporation of the globe in the *Plimpton Sieve Portrait*, she inscribes herself in an iconographical tradition that goes back to the emperors of antiquity and that has been made famous by Charles V (1500-1558) in portraits such as Rubens' posthumous portrait *Allegory of Emperor Charles V as master of the world* (Residenzgalerie, *c.* 1604) (cf. Fig. 53).[604]

Next to the overt references to imperialism, the "femininely intimate and controversial"[605] sieve — one of the Queen's "favourite emblematic devices"[606] — highlights the virginity of the English monarch and comments on her reign. William Camden (1551-1623), an Elizabethan historian, stated that the Queen "used so many heroical devices, as would require a volume; but most commonly a Sive […]."[607] The globe and the sieve — which "[reflect] [each other's] shape and position"[608] — bind together the themes of imperialism and chastity in the *Sieve Portraits*. Unlike the "three-dimensional" masculine globe, which "triggers our sense of sight," the "ungraspable, […] flat" sieve is connected to the feminine sphere, and, "appeals to touch," "a

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601 Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*, 98.

602 Ibid., 99.

603 Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins (eds.), *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, 9.

604 Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*, 99.

605 Barbara Baert, "Around the sieve. Motif, Symbol, Hermeneutic," 18.

606 Heather Campbell, "'And in their midst a sun': Petrarch's *Triumphs* and the Elizabethan Icon," in *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, ed. by Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins, 89.

607 William Camden quoted in Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, 244.

608 Barbara Baert, "Around the sieve. Motif, Symbol, Hermeneutic," 6.

'lower' feminine sense."[609] In *The Plimpton Sieve Portrait,* unlike in the *Siena Sieve Portrait* (Pinacoteca Nazionale Siena, 1583) (cf. Fig. 54), the sieve is attached to a pearl rosette on Elizabeth's belt at the height of her genital area — which makes the sieve an intimate accessory or "clothing-ego" attached to Elizabeth's body, delimited by the skin-ego or *moi-peau*.[610] Hence, the (im)permeable sieve stands for the supposedly virginal genital area of the Queen. Through emblem books, the sieve had been a humanist emblem known by the erudite and humanist Elizabeth and her courtiers. In the groundbreaking *Iconologia* (1603) by Cesare Ripa (*c.* 1560 - *c.* 1622), which was only published after Elizabeth's death, the sieve is used, for instance, in the representation of the personification of Castità — holding "her eternally replenished sieve of love"[611] in her left hand and a scourge for chastising Amor in her right hand (cf. Fig. 29). Even though the sieve referred to Elizabeth's virginity, it is likely that the emblem of the sieve on the *Plimpton Sieve Portrait* was also incorporated to put rumours of Elizabeth's unchastity to rest.[612] It is clear that the tactile connection between the sieve and the Queen's private parts establishes the importance of her sexual status for her role as queen. Although the sieve refers to Elizabeth's 'sterility,' one must not forget that virginity also harbours fertility — like the sterility of the Vestal Virgins harbours pent-up fertility within.[613] The sieve was also a fertility symbol, since it "purifies milk and separates grain."[614] Nonetheless, Strong thinks that the sieve merely made a "statement against the marriage by means of a deliberate intensification of the mystique of chastity as an attribute essential to the success of her rule,"[615] but then he seems to forget that chastity was the most sought after virtue for a nubile woman to possess. As discussed in Chapter 3, Tuccia's sieve appeared often in a marital context. Moreover, the *Plimpton Sieve Portrait* had been made in 1579 at the height of marriage

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609 Ibid., 18. For more information about gender and the senses, cf. Barbara Baert, "An Odour, a Taste, a Touch. Impossible to Describe. Noli me tangere and the Senses," in *Religion and the Senses in Early Modern Europe*, Intersections. Interdisciplinary Studies in Early Modern Culture 26, ed. by Wietse de Boer and Christine Goettler, 111–151 (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

610 For information on the sieve as the clothing-ego attached to the *moi-peau*, cf. Barbara Baert, "Around the sieve. Motif. Symbol. Hermeneutic," 16-19.

611 Peggy Muñoz Simonds, "Sacred and Sexual Motifs in *All's Well That Ends Well*," *Renaissance Quarterly* 42, 1 (1989), 54.

612 Louis Montrose, *The Subject of Elizabeth: Authority, Gender, and Representation* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2006), 125.

613 That is why the Vestal Virgins played an important role in multiple fertility rites. Cf. Section "2.1. Vestal Virgins and their ambiguous status."

614 Barbara Baert, "Around the sieve. Motif. Symbol. Hermeneutic," 12. For a more detailed discussion on the sieve as fertility symbol, cf. Barbara Baert, "Around the sieve. Motif. Symbol. Hermeneutic," 12-13.

615 Roy Strong, Gloriana*: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*, 97.

negotiations with the Duke of Anjou. That is why the sieve in this portrait could also be interpreted as a marital symbol "uniquely appropriate to a virgin queen [who] is a virgin ruler and a prospective royal bride."[616] The gloves in Elizabeth's right hand, which stand for "purity of heart," "righteousness" and "authority and power,"[617] might, however, also be associated with a marital context, since "the custom of glove-giving was the promise of fidelity […] a sign of betrothal."[618] This reading of the symbolism of the sieve together with the gloves would be entirely acceptable, since Elizabeth's nubility, at the time of the marriage negotiations, was "of central importance to the geopolitical aims and strategies of her regime."[619] With Catholic Spain as England's enemy, she needed strong allies.

On the edge of the sieve in both the *Plimpton Sieve Portrait* as well as the *Siena Sieve Portrait*, the motto "*A terra il ben mal dimora insella*" has been engraved. It translates as "The good falls to the ground while the bad remains in the saddle." This follows the "emblem tradition's interpretation of the sieve as discernment,"[620] which Whitney included in his *Choice of Emblemes* (1586) (cf. Fig. 55), accompanied by the motto "*sic discerne*" or "so distinguish it."[621] The sieve with its engraving refers to Elizabeth as a wise ruler.[622] Roy Strong remarks "the English Vestal is thus not only chaste but wise."[623] In this citation, he implies that Tuccia's impermeable sieve only signifies chastity and that Elizabeth's sieve has a "dual signification."[624] However, like Bonnie Lander Johnson, I would suggest that Tuccia's sieve already marries chastity and discernment.[625] The Romans had great reverence for the Vestals and their wisdom.[626] The priestesses, unlike other

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616 Louis Montrose, *The Subject of Elizabeth*, 127.

617 David R. Smith, *Masks of Wedlock*, 75.

618 Ibid., 81.

619 Louis Montrose, *The Subject of Elizabeth*, 127.

620 Bonnie Lander Johnson, *Chastity in Early Stuart Literature and Culture*, 46.

621 Henry Green (ed.), *Whitney's "Choice of Emblemes." A fac-simile reprint* (London/ Chester/ Nantwich: Lovell Reeve & Co./ Minshull & Hughes/ E.H. Griffiths, 1866), 68.

622 Elizabeth was also compared with the judge Deborah. For a discussion on Elizabeth as England's Deborah, cf. Carol Blessing, "Elizabeth I as Deborah the Judge: exceptional women of power," in *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, ed. by Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins, 19-33.

623 Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*, 97.

624 Bonnie Lander Johnson, *Chastity in Early Stuart Literature and Culture*, 46.

625 Ibid.

626 Cf. Section "2.1. Vestal Virgins and their ambiguous status."

women, were allowed to play a role in the testimonies at trials and they could also "pardon or punish any civilian"[627] by touching them or looking at them. As Lander Johnson notes:

> *By virtue of their chastity, the Vestal Virgins oversaw the integrity of the Roman state: their special awareness of good and evil made them guardians not only of the moral integrity of individual Romans but of the state as one body […].*[628]

The motto "*A terra il ben mal dimora insella*" could, therefore, also easily apply to the emblematic sieve of the Vestal Virgin. Nevertheless, it is important to note that Tuccia's sieve is an impermeable one, whereas the sieve of discernment is not.[629] The connection between Tuccia's sieve and discernment, however, recurred in various representations of the allegorical figure of Prudentia or Prudence[630] — the most important of the cardinal virtues. Normally depictions of Prudence show a woman — sometimes Janus-like two-faced — who holds a mirror in one hand and a snake in the other. Through the mirror she cannot only see what is behind her but she can also study herself — following the Greek maxim "γνῶθι σεαυτόν" or "know thyself." The snake stands for astute intelligence. In *The Rainbow Portrait* (Hatfield House, *c.* 1600) (cf. Fig. 56), an allusion to this typical representation of Prudentia is used to depict Elizabeth. The "serpent of wisdom" with a heart hanging out its mouth — and that hence "rules the passions of the heart" — can be found embroidered on Elizabeth's left arm sleeve.[631] Apart from this traditional reference to Prudentia, the sieve of both of the *Sieve Portraits* can be found in rare exemplars of an amalgam of Prudentia and Tuccia, like in the print *Prudence* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, *c.* 1559-1560) from *The Seven Virtues* series, engraved by Philips Galle (1537 - 1612) after Pieter Bruegel the Elder (1526/1530 - 1569). At the centre of the print (cf. Fig. 57), Prudentia looks into the mirror held by her right hand. She holds a coffin in her left hand as a *memento mori*, since one should always be prepared for death.[632] A sieve steadily remains on her head. Of course, it is possible that the connection between Prudentia and the sieve is merely the discernment between good and bad. Still, by examining

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627 Bonnie Lander Johnson, *Chastity in Early Stuart Literature and Culture*, 46.

628 Ibid.

629 Nevertheless, the sieve of the legend of Tuccia may have been momentarily impermeable to perform the miracle.

630 Cf. Catalogue

631 Roy Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth: Elizabethan Portraiture and Pageantry* (Berkeley/ Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977), 50.

632 Helen Diane Russell and Bernadine Barnes, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, 224.

Prudentia's clothing, a link with Tuccia's sieve might not be far-fetched. The sash tied into a knot at the front of the allegorical figure's dress could be a reference to the virgin's knot. If that is the case, this sieve might, just like in the *Sieve Portraits*, have a dual signification which binds Prudence and Tuccia together. It is also important to note that Tuccia's miracle was an "exemplum of justice"[633] and was connected to the scenes of the judgement of Solomon and the legend of the dead king in the cassone of Alvise Donati.[634] This connection to justice makes Tuccia's sieve again refer to Elizabeth as a wise ruler and as the appointed sovereign chosen by God.

The sieve in the *Plimpton Sieve Portrait* as well as the one in the *Siena Sieve Portrait*, which will be further discussed below, both refer to Petrarch's "*Il Trionfo della Castità.*" Under the coat of arms, a motto from the "*Il Trionfo dell'Amore*" — which is also incorporated in the *Siena Sieve Portrait* — further deepens the connection to Petrarch. Although at first glance these elements in the portrait seem to have no imperialist undertones, they too play a part in the "propaganda of empire"[635] that is propagated in this picture — and even more in the *Siena Sieve Portrait.* "*Stancho riposo e riposato affanno*," or "Tired rest and restful restlessness" comes from Petrarch's *I Trionfi*, wherein Tuccia with her impermeable sieve appears among the chaste heroines of the "*Il Trionfo della Castità.*" The iconographical references to Petrarch's work show Elizabeth to be a humanist thinker and England's answer to the figure of the chaste and victorious Laura.[636] Apart from the *Sieve Portraits*, the *Ermine Portrait* (Hatfield House, 1585) featuring an ermine with a "golden crown-shaped collar"[637] — which is also the symbol on the banners of the triumphal procession of Chastity — is one of the most famous examples of the identification with Laura in Elizabeth's royal iconography. In sixteenth-century England Petrarch's literary work had been renowned in humanist circles. In the posthumously published *The Scholemaster* (1570), Roger Ascham (*c.* 1515-1568) even described that in England "the triumphes of Petrarches [were held in more reverence] than the Genesis of Moses."[638] The popularity of Petrarch's poem cycle was due to the "substantial number"

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633 Nancy Edwards, "144. The Vestal Virgin Tuccia," in *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy*, ed. by Andrea Bayer, *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy*, 314.

634 For more information, cf. Jerzy Miziolek, "Exempla di Giustizia. Tre tavole di cassone di Alvise Donati," *Arte Lombarda* 2 (2001), 72-88.

635 Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins (eds.), *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, 9.

636 Petrarch made clear, that while Death triumphs over Chastity, the virgin Laura's fame lives on until eternity.

637 Heather Campbell, "'And in their midst a sun': Petrarch's *Triumphs* and the Elizabethan Icon," in *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, ed. by Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins, 92.

638 Ibid., 85.

of Italian editions of the *I Trionfi* that had spread through the country.[639] The fourteenth-century poetry cycle was so well-known in Europe that the text as well as derived illustrations "had become part of the furniture not only of literary endeavour but of the visual arts, and of the world of civic and religious celebration as well."[640] The court of Henry VIII owned at least three copies of Petrarch's work and, under the king's reign, Henry Parker, Lord Morley, (*c.* 1476-1553/1556) made the first English translation *Tryumphes of Fraunces Petrarcke* (1554).[641] The love for Petrarch passed on to Henry's daughter, the young Elizabeth, who, as an exercise, translated the *Triumph of Eternity* very rigorously and precisely.[642] Because of her personal preference for Petrarch and the immense popularity of *I Trionfi*, Laura, the heroine of the poem cycle, became hugely important in the "creation of the Elizabethan icon."[643] In "A Vision Upon this Concept of the Faery Queene" (1590) by Sir Walter Raleigh as the "first dedicatory sonnet"[644] in Spenser's epic *The Faerie Queene* (1590-1596),[645] Raleigh associates Elizabeth with Laura as well as with the Vestals:

> *Me thought I saw the grave where Laura lay,*
> *Within the Temple, where the vestall flame*
> *Was wont to burne; and passing by that way,*
> *To see that buried dust of living fame,*
> *Whose tombe faire love and fairer vertue kept;*
> *All suddeinly I saw the Faery Queene […].*[646]

Seeing Elizabeth as a "Petrarchan heroine," also had religious connotations. Protestants

> *collecting criticisms of the Papacy, enrolled both Dante and Petrarch on their side as having, at some time or another, ventured to call the Pope, the Whore of Babylon. […]*

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639 Ibid., 84.

640 Ibid.

641 Ibid.

642 Ibid., 85.

643 Ibid., 83.

644 Ibid., 94.

645 For more information on Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, cf. "4.3. Elizabeth I's Queenship and the Vestal model."

646 John Hannah (ed.), *Poems by Sir Henry Wotton, Sir Walter Raleigh,and Others* (London: William Pickering, 1845), 116.

> *[Petrarch] was brought into the Protestant propaganda. Thus Puritan associations were tinging the Elizabethan image of Petrarch, and his poem, I Trionfi, already fasionable in England, became more fashionable still.*[647]

Elizabeth stood for a moderate Protestant England, embodied by the Petrarchan ideals of "rejection of earthly love and worldliness."[648]

The "dual tradition" of the text and illustrations of *I Trionfi* (cf. *supra*) became indispensable in the Queen's iconography, by the use of the emblematic sieve in combination with the motto of Petrarch, as can be seen in the *Sieve Portraits*.[649] The influence of the triumphal processions in *I Trionfi* also emerged in "all forms of court celebration […] including the royal entries, all kinds of civic processions, and the allegorical masques presented to Queen Elizabeth during the royal progresses."[650] Laura as a model "provided a pattern for a victory procession that both communicated the special power of virginity and introduced Elizabeth to the nation as reigning monarch."[651] When we look at the motto and Tuccia's sieve in the *Sieve Portraits* as references to triumph, the Petrarchan conceit about restlessness could, as Campbell argues, also be "applied to the stresses of rulership […]."[652] Together with the other motto "*Tutto vedo e molto mancha*" the line from the *Trionfi* can again be interpreted as a reference to the "developing empire."[653]

In the *Siena Sieve Portrait* (Pinacoteca Nazionale Siena, 1583) (cf. Fig. 54), the portrait with the "highest […] pictorial quality" from a second series of *Sieve Portraits* (*c.* 1580-1583),[654] the theme of imperialism plays an even bigger part. The portrait was commissioned by Christopher Hatton (1540-1591), one of the Queen's favourites, "to praise the queen's chastity and her commitment to founding an empire."[655] The commission also betrayed Hatton's own "political

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647 Frances A. Yates, *Selected Works*, vol. 5, *Astraea* (London/ New York: Routledge, 2003), 113.

648 Ibid.

649 Heather Campbell, "'And in their midst a sun': Petrarch's *Triumphs* and the Elizabethan Icon," in *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, ed. by Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins, 86.

650 Ibid., 87.

651 Ibid.

652 Ibid., 90.

653 Ibid.

654 Roy Strong, *Gloriana: : The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*, 101.

655 Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins (eds.), *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, 7.

agenda" since he fiercely opposed the Anjou match.[656] From the relevant literature, one cannot derive the precise attribution of the portrait which is variably considered to have been painted by either Quentin Massys the Younger (1543-1589)[657] or Cornelis Ketel (1548-1616),[658] the artist whom Hatton took under his wings. While there are many similarities between Gower's portrait and the more skilfully painted *Siena Sieve Portrait*, Elizabeth has a more austere appearance in the latter. The stern yet luxurious black gown with white accents of "gravity-defying confections of lace"[659] make the Queen's necklace of a "double rope of pearls"[660] stand out. Besides the necklace of pearls, she is also wearing pearl earrings, a headdress and golden belt bejewelled with pearls, and a brooch with a pearl drop. Although Elizabeth also wore pearls in the *Plimpton Sieve Portrait*, these jewels attract the attention much more prominently in the *Siena Sieve Portrait.* Together with the white lace the pearls highlight Elizabeth's purity and chastity, while the black gown represents the Queen's "constancy."[661] These colours were also her "personal colours […] worn […] by her champions in the tiltyard and by dancers in court masques."[662] Like in the *Plimpton Sieve Portrait,* Elizabeth is shown in three-quarter length. In contrast her body is now twisted to the left instead of to the right, which denotes the woman's position (cf. *supra*).[663] Her left hand "claps her sieve lightly between finger and thumb."[664]

The biggest difference between the *Plimpton Sieve Portrait* and the *Siena Sieve Portrait* is the inclusion in the latter of a column and a procession of courtiers — including Christopher Hatton and the retiring Queen's Champion Henry Lee (1533-1611) (cf. *infra*). The column stands for the virtues of fortitude, constancy[665] and chastity. In Petrarch's "*Il Trionfo della Castità*" Laura carries a

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656 Ibid.

657 Ibid.

658 Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*, 101.

659 Susan E. James, *The Feminine Dynamic in English Art*, 205-206.

660 Heather Campbell, "'And in their midst a sun': Petrarch's *Triumphs* and the Elizabethan Icon," in *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, ed. by Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins, 90.

661 Ibid., 90, n. 46.

662 Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*, 21.

663 The answer why there is a difference in stance, is still unclear.

664 Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, 244.

665 The black of Elizabeth gown also alludes to her constancy.

pillar of jasper as her attribute, which symbolizes her chastity.[666] Jasper was believed to "quench the flames of passion."[667] The column on the left side of the painting also refers to the Pillars of Hercules — the two promontories framing the Strait of Gibraltar signifying the end of the Western world. These columns stood for imperialist expansion and were incorporated in the Spanish coat of arms by Charles V,[668] which bear the motto "*Plus ultra.*"[669] The incorporation of this column, which at the base is crowned with an "imperial crown"[670] "worn by the Holy Roman Emperors,"[671] together with the "far more clearly delineated"[672] globe — now moved to the right — accentuates, more so than the *Plimpton Sieve Portrait*, the imperialist policies of Elizabeth:

> *These place the Queen directly into the framework of Dee's imperial claims which fiercely endorsed the descent of the Queen from the old imperial stock of Troy via Brutus, besides giving credence to every Arthurian claim.*[673]

This ancient lineage is further explicated in the series of medallions "inset on the pillar."[674] The scenes of these medallions, depicting the story of Aeneas and Dido, "further interconnect imperial destiny and the spurning of human passion"[675] — like Tuccia's sieve that also marries chastity and imperialism. The nine scenes — best known from *Aeneid* (29 - 19 BC) by Virgil (70 - 19 BC) — from right to left are:

> *Aeneas fleeing from Troy; the Trojans arriving at Carthage; Aeneas meeting Dido in the Temple of Juno. The row of medallions above these shows Dido in the Temple of Juno. The row of medallions above these show Dido and Aeneas together; the banquet at which they*

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666 Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*, 105.

667 Ibid.

668 The globe is also an iconographical reference to Charles V. Cf. *supra*.

669 Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*, 105.

670 Frances A. Yates, *Selected Works*, vol. 5, *Astraea*, 115.

671 Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*, 103.

672 Ibid.

673 Ibid.

674 Ibid., 106.

675 Ibid., 107.

> *fell in love, with the blind harper, Iopas, in the foreground; Dido and Aeneas at the hunt. The top row shows Mercury warning Aeneas to depart; Dido on the funeral pyre; the departure of the Trojans.*[676]

According to Strong and Yates, these medallions need to be interpreted as a warning against love and passion, where Elizabeth "is cast as this century's Aeneas. She too is of imperial descent, she too is destined to found a mighty (British) empire and in order to achieve it she too has spurned the wiles of human passion."[677] Elizabeth as Virgin Queen, unrestrained by the passions for a man, had "achieved a Triumph of Chastity and [wore] the imperial crown of pure empire […] [she was] the empress of pure imperial reform."[678] This idea is further alluded to in the globe on the painting "in which the British Isles appear in light, together with much shipping moving towards the West, whilst the rest of Europe is in darkness […]. Here we see the emerging Idea of the British Empire."[679] Thus, the story of Aeneas "provided a model for Britain's self-fashioning as a 'second Troy,' founded by Brutus."[680] Although this interpretation is the most accepted and needs to be included in the analysis, it does not suffice to completely explain the meaning of these medallions. With Deanne Williams, I tend to think that Elizabeth is not only identified as a modern Aeneas, but as Dido as well. The publication of *Dido, Queene of Carthage* (*c.* 1593) by Christopher Marlowe (1564 - 1593), ten years after the *Siena Sieve Portrait*, underwrites this assumption. The play "dramatises the symbiotic relationship between Elizabeth's virginity and her political power."[681] Up until the point where Aeneas beguiles Dido, the Queen of Carthage is a successful ruler, with a reign that parallels that of Elizabeth. After falling in love with Aeneas, Dido is sadly rendered "a negative example of enslavement by erotic love and the desire for marriage."[682] It is at this point that the Virgin Queen and the Carthaginian Queen differ. With the play, Marlowe wanted to "[offer] a sophisticated theatrical compliment to the queen"[683] for choosing to remain unwed, while at the

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676 Frances A. Yates, *Selected Works*, vol. 5, *Astraea*, 115.

677 Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*, 107.

678 Frances A. Yates, *Selected Works*, vol. 5, *Astraea*, 115.

679 Ibid.

680 Deanne Williams, "Dido, Queen of England," *ELH* 73, 1 (2006), 32.

681 Deanne Williams, "Dido, Queen of England," 31.

682 Ibid., 32.

683 Ibid.

same time he criticized the "grand Virgilian themes of divine right and colonialist expansion"[684] "at a time when England was supporting exploration and settlements in North America, Africa, and India."[685] Nevertheless, the identification with the exotic and erotic Dido also "constructed [Elizabeth] as a quintessential Other."[686] The play,[687] therefore, highlights the Otherness[688] of a female ruler.

In spite of the somewhat misogynist parallel of Otherness, the figure of Dido also had another dimension to her that fitted Elizabeth better. Before Virgil altered the story of the Carthaginian Queen, she was known as a "faithful wife and fearless leader […] [and] the founder of an empire that rivals Rome."[689] In this tradition, she first bore the name of Elissa, which shifted later on to Dido — meaning "the valiant one" — because of her "intrepid wanderings and intelligence as a political leader."[690] The similarities in the name explains the "popularity of Elizabeth's associations with Dido."[691] Spenser also alluded to this Elissa/Dido as an alter ego for Elizabeth in his *The Shephaerdes Calendar*,[692] where Eliza is the Queen of the shepherds.[693] This first Dido, who was regarded by Christine de Pizan (1364-1430) as a true *virago*,[694] had a "great deal in common with Aeneas."[695] She was his female counterpart, just like Elizabeth. In Boccaccio's *De Mulieribus Claris*, the widowed Dido does not succumb to any man, but she, as a

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684 Ibid., 48.

685 Ibid.

686 Ibid, 32.

687 For a more detailed discussion of *Dido, the Queene of Carthage*, cf. Deanne Williams, "Dido, Queen of England," *ELH* 73, 1 (2006): 31-59. See also Annaliese Connolly, "Evaluating Virginity: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the iconography of marriage," in *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, ed. by Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins, 136-153 for the comparison between Queen Elizabeth and the figure of Dido in the Christopher Marlowe's *Dido, Queen of Carthage* (1594) and Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595/96).

688 For more information on the Other and Otherness, read Simone de Beauvoir, *Le deuxième sexe*, 2 vols. (Paris, Gallimard, 1949).

689 Deanne Williams, "Dido, Queen of England," 34.

690 Ibid., 33.

691 Ibid., 33.

692 Ibid., 33.

693 Helena Shire, *A Preface to Spenser*, Preface Books, ed. by Maurice Hussey (London/ New York: Longman, 1978), 98.

694 A "woman who has all the strength of a man." Deanne Williams, "Dido, Queen of England," 33.

695 Deanne Williams, "Dido, Queen of England," 33.

chaste *univira,*[696] stabs herself and throws herself on a funeral pyre rather than marrying Iarbas, a "local chieftain" who "presses her to marry him."[697] Petrarch also sung her praises in "*Il Trionfo dell'Amore*" and in "*Il Trionfo della Castità.*" In the verses dedicated to her, he clearly states that she was "dr[iven] to death" for the love of her "own spouse:"[698]

> *poi vidi, fra le donne pellegrine,*
> *quella che per lo suo diletto e fido.*
> *sposo, non per Enea, volse ire al fine.*
> *Taccia il vulgo ignorante! Io dico Dido,*
> *cui studio d'onestate a morte spinse,*
> *Non vano amor come è il publico grido*.[699]

This translates as:

> *And there I saw, 'mid those of other lands,*
> *Her who for a belov'd and faithful spouse.*
> *(Not for Aeneas) willed to meet her end.*
> *Let ignorance be still! I speak of her,*
> *Dido, whom honour led to death, and not.*
> *An empty love, as is the public cry*.[700]

With all the other references to Petrarch's *I Trionfi*, it may be assumed that this "alternative story"[701] of the Carthaginian Queen, "still very much current in sixteenth-century England," definitely needs

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696 A woman who only gives herself to one man.

697 Heather Campbell, "'And in their midst a sun': Petrarch's *Triumphs* and the Elizabethan Icon," in *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, ed. by Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins, 91.

698 Translated quotes of Petrarchan verse for "*Il Trionfo dell'Amore*" in Heather Campbell, "'And in their midst a sun': Petrarch's *Triumphs* and the Elizabethan Icon," in *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, ed. by Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins, 90.

699 Quoted from Petrarch's "*Il Trionfo della Castità*" in Heather Campbell, "'And in their midst a sun': Petrarch's *Triumphs* and the Elizabethan Icon," in *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, ed. by Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins, 91.

700 Translated in Heather Campbell, "'And in their midst a sun': Petrarch's *Triumphs* and the Elizabethan a Icon," in *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, ed. by Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins, 91.

701 Heather Campbell, "'And in their midst a sun': Petrarch's *Triumphs* and the Elizabethan Icon," in *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, ed. by Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins, 91.

to be taken into consideration when looking at the *Siena Sieve Portrait*. The procession of courtiers included in the painting then visually replicates the Triumph of Chastity,[702] since the English Dido trumped love and passions in order to pursue imperialist victories.

Because of the inclusion of Dido in the texts of Boccaccio and Petrarch, she became known as a role model for women in literature and art and emerged in different series of virtuous women. She featured next to Tuccia in depictions of the *Trionfo della Castità* as well as in series such as Mantegna's *Four Exemplary Women of Antiquity*.[703] In Mantegna's *Dido* (*c.* 1500, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Montréal), the heroine holds the urn of her deceased husband in her left hand near her reproductive organs (just like Mantegna's *Tuccia* holds the sieve near her genital area), emphasizing her fidelity to him. In her right hand she holds the wooden spike, ready to stab herself (cf. Fig. 58). The combination of the Dido and Aeneas medallions and Tuccia's sieve then

> *invites the viewer to discern between Virgil's tragic Dido and the Dido of the alternative non-Virgilian tradition: the solitary and mighty ruler whose chastity is symbolized by the sieve, and who chooses suicide over the indignity of an enforced marriage. […] By identifying Elizabeth with 'this Dido,' the portrait presents the imperialistic binaries of triumph and defeat as well as the erotic and moral distinctions between discernment and profligacy.*[704]

Similarly, one could through the appearance of the emblematic sieve discern two Elizabeths: the Elizabeth of the body personal and the Virgin Queen's body politic. This same sentiment is voiced in the already mentioned poem "On Monsieur's Departure," written by Elizabeth herself, where the closing lines allude to the "awareness of a double self:"[705] "I am and not, I freeze and yet am burned,/ Since from myself another self I turned."[706] As Barbara Baert explains, the motif of the sieve suits Elizabeth exceptionally well, since it stands for this duality of the — especially female — royal body:

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702 Ibid.

703 Cf. "3.3.3. *The Vestal Tuccia Trampling a Snake*, Marcello Venusti (attributed to)."

704 Deanne Williams, "Dido, Queen of England," 41.

705 Barbara Baert, "Around the sieve. Motif, Symbol, Hermeneutic," 9.

706 Elizabeth I, "On Monsieur's Departure" quoted in Stephen Greenblatt, M.H. Abrams, Carol T. Christ et al. (eds.), *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 696.

> *The sieve was there defined as a filter between the I as woman and the I as queen. The "sieve's penetrability" (although reference is made to the impermeability of Tuccia's sieve) enables her to flow back and forth between both bodies […]. Elizabeth is after all queen and not simply woman, besides the space of "secrecy" she also inhabits masculine public space. As a consequence she is impenetrable at home, and penetrating outside. She is both camouflage and performance, both Echo and Narcissus.*[707]

Elizabeth, as woman, could be identified with the passion-driven Dido, who needs to be denied in order for Elissa/Aeneas to thrive as Queen.[708]

In that respect, the painting's intent is different than that of the *Plimpton Sieve Portrait.* While almost all the mottoes and emblems in the *Plimpton Sieve Portrait* can also be found in the *Siena Sieve Portrait*, the first depiction of Elizabeth does not yet establish her as the "Imperial Virgin."[709] The *Plimpton Sieve Portrait* still plays with the mixed message of sterility and fertility that the sieve as an emblem carries with it, especially given the marital context wherein Tuccia's sieve was seen in the early modern period.[710] At the time the *Plimpton Sieve Portrait* was made, the marriage negotiations between Elizabeth and the Duke of Anjou rekindled and Tuccia's sieve in this portrait can, therefore, be interpreted as a symbol of her virtue as an unwed queen still available for marriage. In the *Siena Sieve Portrait* this strategy of

> *leav[ing] doors open to possible matches without shutting any of them, and […] facilitat[ing] a series of propitious alliances without relinquishing her own power, resolved itself in the myth of the Virgin Queen.*[711]

Her virginity meant "an enhancement of both the queen's self-mastery and her mastery of others."[712] In an illustration for *Sphaera civitatis* (1588) by John Case (*c.* 1540 - 1600), a crowned

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707 Barbara Baert, "Around the sieve. Motif, Symbol, Hermeneutic," 18. For a discussion on the dynamics and kinetics of the sieve as tectonics, cf. Barbara Baert, "Around the sieve. Motif, Symbol, Hermeneutic," 14-16.

708 If we look at the Vestals, they, too, needed to give up a normal life, in order to serve a higher purpose. They, too, had to deny their body personal, for their body politic.

709 Frances A. Yates, *Selected Works*, vol. 5, *Astraea*, 116.

710 Cf. Chapter 3.

711 Deanne Williams, "Dido, Queen of England," 31.

712 Genevieve Guenther, "New-Historical Elizabeths," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 70, 3 (2007), 463.

Elizabeth is holding a sieve-like "diagram representing the universe according to the Ptolemaic system"[713] (cf. Fig. 59). After the defeat of the Armada, she was perceived as a modern Astraea[714] bringing a new golden age, governing the world as the "One ruler" with her *Iustitia immobilis.*[715] The illustration shows Elizabeth as the intermediate between God and the universe, just like the Vestal Virgins represented Vesta on earth. Through the chastity, represented by the sieve, Elizabeth laid the firm groundwork for a British Empire, which in Victorian times would encompass almost the entire globe.

4.2. Leaky Vessels

The feminine Earth, punctured by the Rocket, becomes a sieve.
And that which spills out of it contrasts the malevolent purity of the Rocket's energy.
— Dana Medoro[716]

You may follow me by the S's I make
— 2.2.50-51, *Bartholomew Fair* (1614) by Ben Jonson (1572-1637)[717]

Her vestall livery is but sicke and greene,
And none but fooles do weare it; cast it off.
— 2.2.8-9, *Romeo and Juliet* (1597) by William Shakespeare (1564-1616)[718]

In Section "3.2. Sieves and Containers," the deep-rooted connection between women and containers has been addressed. The motif of Tuccia played a part in the tradition of comparing women to

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713 Frances A. Yates, *Selected Works*, vol. 5, *Astraea*, 64.

714 She was the Greek virgin goddess of justice, who lived with the mortals during the Golden Age, but fled to the heavens because of human cruelty in the Iron Age. There, she became the constellation Virgo.

715 Frances A. Yates, *Selected Works*, vol. 5, *Astraea*, 64.

716 Dana Medoro, "The Sieve and the Rainbow Serpent: Bleeding *Gravity's Rainbow*," *The Journal of Narrative Technique* 28, 2 (1998), 201.

717 Ben Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair*, ed by Eugene M. Waith, The Yale Ben Jonson, ed. by Alvin B. Kernan and Richard B. Young (New Haven/ London: Yale University Press, 1963), 65.

718 William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, Parallel Texts of the First Two Quartos, (Q1) 1597—Q2; 1559, ed. by P.A. Daniel (London: N. Trübner & co., 1874), 51.

vessels, which where closed when pure and opened when impure. This train of thought is found in the *Holy Maidenhead* (*c.* 1200), an anonymous Middle English treatise for the "guidance of holy virgins,"[719] which "[…] extends the comparison between the pure, sealed, virginal body and the horrid maternal body, subject to external change and fluxes […]."[720] In the treatise, virginity is seen as the glue that keeps the woman virtuous: "This [virginity] is yet the virtue that holds our breakable vessel, that is our feeble flesh, in whole holiness."[721] That is why, Elizabeth included the emblem of Tuccia's impermeable sieve, similar to the Marian *honorabile vas*,[722] in her visual imagery.

Interestingly, as Paster described in her seminal article "Leaky Vessels: The Incontinent Women of City Comedy" (1987),[723] Elizabeth's literary contemporaries turned to this anthropological phenomenon in their city comedy plays. Satirical references to women's reproductive organs as vessels — and more specifically leaky vessels — expressed a deep misogyny:

> *This discourse […] inscribes women as leaky vessels by isolating one element of the female body's material expressiveness — its production of fluids — as excessive, hence either disturbing or shameful. It also characteristically links this liquid expressiveness to excessive verbal fluency. […] the question is one of the women's bodily self-control or, more precisely, the representation of a particular kind of uncontrol as a function of gender.*[724]

Therefore, it comes as no surprise that in the English language (as in many other languages such as Dutch, for example) the female genitals are pejoratively referred to as a box.[725] According to a

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719 Judith M. Bennett, *History Matters: Patriarchy and the Challenge of Feminism* (Philadelphia: University of Penssylvania Press, 2006), 112.

720 Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, 252.

721 *Holy Maidenhead* quoted in Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, 253.

722 Barbara Baert, "Around the sieve. Motif, Symbol, Hermeneutic," 6.

723 Gail Kern Paster, "Leaky Vessels: The Incontinent Women of City Comedy," *Renaissance Drama* 18 (1987), 43-65.

724 Ibid., 44.

725 François Lissarrague, "Women, boxes, containers: some signs and metaphors," in *Pandora: Women in Classical Greece*, ed. Ellen D. Reeder, exh. cat., Baltimore, The Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore/ Dallas, The Dallas Museum of Art/ Basel, Antikenmuseum Basel und Sammlung Ludwig (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 98.

seventeenth-century physician de Graaf, the womb was the weakest part of a woman's body, a "defective barrel,"[726] which made it possible to let blood escape "the same way that wine or beer undergoing fermentation escapes by defective parts of the barrel."[727] Of course, this leaky vessel discourse came from the fact that women naturally 'leak' more than men, as they produce liquids such as menstrual blood, breast milk, and tears. Although men could also be brought to tears, women have always been more associated with crying, e.g., the motif of the weeping woman throughout art history. Regardless, the most troubling fluid remained menstrual blood, "an occult liquid which combines life and death, ending and beginning."[728] Since early Christianity, there reigned a "far-reaching taboo on the menstruating woman."[729] In Judaism, menstruation was viewed as "the consequence of the fall of man."[730] Women were considered ritually impure because of their period. In Christianity, notwithstanding its abrogation of the Mosaic Law, there was a debate whether or not women could attend church "during carnal impurity."[731] There was also a "waiting period" before women could enter a church after childbearing.[732] Interestingly, some theologians recited the parable of the Haemorrhoissa, the woman who suffered from excessive bleeding for twelve years, "in an attempt to turn the tide" and lift the taboo off menstruation and childbearing.[733] Similarly, in Tudor England, women needed to wait for a month before being allowed back into religious life.[734] After that, the new mother could have a purification ceremony, if she felt unclean after the "stain of childbearing."[735]

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726 Dana Medoro, "The Sieve and the Rainbow Serpent," 211, n. 6.

727 de Graaf quoted in Dana Medoro, "The Sieve and the Rainbow Serpent," 211, n. 6.

728 Dana Medoro, "The Sieve and the Rainbow Serpent," 202.

729 Barbara Baert, Liesbet Kusters, and Emma Sidgwick, "An Issue of Blood: The Healing of the Women with the Haemorrhage (*Mark* 5.24B-34; *Luke* 8.42B-48; *Matthew* 9.19-22) in Early Medieval Visual Culture," *Journal of Religion and Health* 51, 3 (2012), 666.

730 Ibid., 666.

731 Jonas of Orléans (*c.* 760–843) quoted in Barbara Baert, Liesbet Kusters, and Emma Sidgwick, "An Issue of Blood," 667.

732 Barbara Baert, Liesbet Kusters, and Emma Sidgwick, "An Issue of Blood," 667.

733 Ibid., 667. For more information about the views on the Haemorrhoissa in early medieval visual culture, cf. Barbara Baert, Liesbet Kusters, and Emma Sidgwick, "An Issue of Blood: The Healing of the Women with the Haemorrhage (*Mark* 5.24B-34; *Luke* 8.42B-48; *Matthew* 9.19-22) in Early Medieval Visual Culture," *Journal of Religion and Health* 51, 3 (2012): 663-681.

734 David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage, and Death*, 207.

735 Ibid., 229.

In contemporary medicine all the liquids spilt by women seemed to be interconnected, as "breast milk was the purified form of menstrual blood," which made it possible for virgins to produce milk.[736] Moreover, "tears and urine […] seemed interrelated"[737] as made clear by the proverb: "Let her cry, she'll piss the less."[738] It was believed that the inability to "control" their bodies put women's families "status and power" in jeopardy.[739] This train of thought brought with it a disdain for women, who were led by nature instead of culture:[740] "Women were dangerous and, like water, unreliable and changeable."[741] They were "controlled cyclically by the watery planet, the moon."[742] Women's openness, which brings along the leakiness, has always had a negative and even threatening connotation in society. As Warner argues:

> *The association of emptiness and badness, fullness and good, of leaky vessels with wrongdoing and sound vessels with righteousness is very ancient, and the reference to female sexuality recurs throughout the tradition.*[743]

This notion can be perceived in both literary and visual culture. One of the first examples is Pandora, who opens her box, releasing evil into the world. Another one is the parable of the wise and foolish virgins. Unlike the wise virgins, the foolish virgins forget to buy oil for their lamps. As they went back to buy oil, the wise virgins already went to the Kingdom of Heaven with the Bridegroom. The foolish virgins remained behind. In Martin Schongauer's engraving of one foolish virgin (second half of the fifteenth century), he represents her with dishevelled hair in a state of undress with breasts on show and a distressed face (cf. Fig. 60). She shows her empty open lamp, which is mirrored by the "bodice, which opens unbuttoned over her stomach, like the lips of a shell

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736 Gail Kern Paster, "Leaky Vessels," 50.

737 Ibid.

738 Tilley quoted in Gail Kern Paster, "Leaky Vessels," 50.

739 Gail Kern Paster, "Leaky Vessels," 49.

740 Dana Medoro, "The Sieve and the Rainbow Serpent," 200.

741 Ibid.

742 Gail Kern Paster, "Leaky Vessels," 49.

743 Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, 244-245.

or vulva."[744] In contrast to the emptiness of the foolish virgin's lamp,[745] the jar of Mary Magdalen, who was considered to be a saved foolish virgin, is filled with ointments.[746]

As daughters of Eve, women were seen as sinful creatures prone to lewdness, gossip, and excessive drinking. As the poet John Skelton (1460 - 1529) in "The Running of Elynor Rumming" (1517, published in 1609) argued: "a woman who leaves her house is a woman who talks is a woman who drinks is a woman who leaks."[747] Already in Antiquity, the Greeks commented on women's behaviour as illustrated by *oinochoe* vases shaped like female heads (cf. Fig. 61). These vases assimilated "the performer of the libation and the instrument of libation itself."[748] A much later example, connecting leaking to a loss of purity, is *La cruche cassée* (Musée du Louvre, 1771) of Jean-Baptiste Greuze (1725-1805), where a young rosy-cheeked girl holds a broken pitcher that symbolizes her lost innocence (cf. Fig. 62).

Leakiness was not only associated with female licentiousness, but also with female misbehaviour and disobedience in general. The prime example is the story of the Danaids, which was also a popular motif in the Elizabethan period. Whitney, for example, included a print of a "barrel riddled with holes and streaming with liquid [which] adorns a verse about womankind's excessive nature" together with a reference to these daughters of Danaus (cf. Fig. 63).[749] Strikingly, the Danaids remained perpetual virgins and yet were cursed to carry water in leaky sieves for eternity in the Underworld. In that respect, the leaky sieves stand for "fertility squandered."[750] In order to remain virgins, the Danaids, save Hypermnestra, killed their husbands — following the unnatural command of their father. This meant an upheaval of the patriarchal societal order, since their deed was "a transgression against the ordinary marital destiny of womankind."[751] Women who did not stay sexually continent before marriage and women who did not obey their husbands by

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744 Ibid., 256.

745 Ibid.

746 Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, 256-257.

747 John Skelton quoted in Gail Kern Paster, "Leaky Vessels," 52.

748 François Lissarrague, "Women, boxes, containers: some signs and metaphors," 95.

749 Dana Medoro, "The Sieve and the Rainbow Serpent," 200.

750 Eleanor Irwin, "The Invention of Virginity on Olympus," in *Virginity Revisited: Configurations of the Unpossessed Body*, ed. by Bonnie MacLachlan and Judith Fletcher, n.30, 23.

751 Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, 245.

refusing to have intercourse were looked at and treated in the same way. Marina Warner figures the Danaids' sentence[752]

> *follows the internal logic of the myth's imagery with witty aptness, for the hellish retribution of fetching and carrying water in leaky pots provides an objective correlative both to the murder by sharp weapons they committed, and to virginity's loss, which their act was intended to prevent.*[753]

The penalty, therefore, goes by principle of "an eye for an eye" or rather "a hole for a hole."[754] According to Plato, carrying water through sieves was a punishment of "the unjust[,] […] the irreligious"[755] and the foolish, "on account of their fickle and forgetful nature."[756] That is why the leaky sieve becomes very much a symbol of female disobedience (by unjustly turning the patriarchal order topsy-turvy), whereas Tuccia's impermeable sieve stands for conscientiousness. The aspect of being dutiful implied by Tuccia's sieve must as well have appealed to Elizabeth.

All of these previous examples show the misogynist views on women's lewdness and misbehaviour, which were thought to go hand in hand with their leakiness. Be that as it may, some early modern English authors looked at virginity — which was mostly celebrated — from a critical viewpoint. In William Shakespeare's body of work, the playwright addressed the state of virginity rather critically in his plays. In the famous balcony scene in *Romeo and Juliet* (1597), Romeo warns Juliet — to his own benefit of course — that holding on to virginity is utter foolery.[757] Although Shakespeare wrote this speech for a young man wooing his love interest, it still voiced another stance on virginity that was based on medical accounts of his time. In the early modern

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752 For a discussion on the views of the classical authors on the Danaids, cf. Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, 244-249.

753 Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, 246.

754 Ibid., 248.

755 Plato, *The Republic*, trans. from Greek by Desmond Lee (Harmondsworth/ Baltimore: Penguin Classics, 1974), 110.

756 Plato, *Gorgias,* trans. from Greek by Walter Hamilton (Harmondsworth: Penguin Classics, 1959), 92.

757 See quote at beginning of this section.

period, green sickness[758] or chlorosis — a technical term that came after the vernacular one —[759] was also known as *morbus virgineus*, which means disease of the virgins.[760] Medical men surmised that this illness typically manifested itself in virgins because their hymens prevented the menstrual blood from flowing out completely. The excess blood would then transform itself into a toxic gas that could travel to the girl's brain and make her mad. The girls who were thought to be suffering from this disease had a distinctively pale face with a greenish hue. That is why Shakespeare's Romeo says that the goddess Diana's "vestal livery is but sick and *green* [my emphasis]." Since it was believed that it was a condition linked to virginity, green sickness was remedied by marriage and its subsequent consummation. The "marriage cure,"[761] as it was called, promptly made the suffering girl better. Without the hymen, the blood could flow more easily, which prevented toxic gasses to form. In order to be healthy, girls needed to become leaky vessels, so their menstrual flow would be able to leave the body completely. This is interesting, since leaky women were ridiculed in city comedies. If a woman stayed a virgin all her life, she would be susceptible to green sickness and would become erratic, illogical, and physically weak. It seems that the ideal woman could never exist.

Thomas Middleton (*c.* 1613), for instance, exhibits such an ambiguous view on womanhood in *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* (1580 - 1627). In the opening scene, Maudline comments on her daughter Moll's strange behaviour and suggests marriage as a solution: "Yes, you are a dull maid a-late, methinks you had need/ have somewhat to quicken your green sickness; do you/ weep? A husband!" (1.1.3-5).[762] Consequently, Moll's father Yellowhammer arranges a marriage to the Sir Walter Whorehound. However, Moll tries to elope with the penniless Touchwood Junior. After the elopement fails, Moll gets locked up by her father: "In the meantime I will lock up this baggage/ As carefully as my gold; she shall see as little sun,/ If a close room or so can keep her from the light on't" (3.1.43-45).[763] Moll is described by her father as a baggage, comparable to a vessel. On top of

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758 Now called hypochromic anemia.

759 Helen King, *The Disease of Virgins: Green Sickness, Chlorosis, and the Problems of Puberty* (London/ New York: Routledge, 2004), 16.

760 Ibid., 2.

761 Kaara L. Peterson, "The Ring's the Thing: Elizabeth I's Virgin Knot and *All's Well That Ends Well*," *Studies in Philology* 113, 1 (2016), 112.

762 Thomas Middleton, *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*, ed. by Alan Brissenden, New Mermaids, ed. by William C. Carroll, Brian Gibbons, and Tiffany Stern (London/ Oxford/ New York/ New Delhi/ Sydney: Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, 2002), 5.

763 Ibid., 47.

that, the space in which Moll gets locked up, which also stands for Moll's sexual status, keeps her unsoiled. Nevertheless, Moll manages to escape through a "little hole looked into the gutter" (4.2.41),[764] which makes the room a leaky vessel. This is a reflection of Moll who becomes a leaky vessel by eloping with Touchwood Junior. That is why after her escape, Moll and her lover flee to the waterside — to emphasize her leakiness. When Moll and Touchwood Junior get intercepted "from the water" her brother Tim compares Moll to a mermaid — a euphemism for whore.[765] Moll is not the only character that is considered leaky. The gossips at the Allwit christening — who babble and drink too much — "wet the floor beneath their stools" (4.2.67-69)[766] as a "shameful token of uncontrol."[767] Hence, Middleton links incontinence to female misbehaviour of all kind.

Nonetheless, the connection between urination and sexual incontinence — comparable to the *puer mingens* motif in art which links urination to sexuality[768] — remains the strongest, as also can be discerned in *Bartholomew Fair* (1614) by Ben Jonson (1572 - 1637). In the play, the leaky vessel *par excellence* is Ursula, a fat piggy woman, who owns a food and drink booth at the fair in Smithfield, the pleasure district. She also describes herself as a "plain plump soft wench o' the suburbs […] juicy and wholesome" (2.5.77-78).[769] At one point, Ursula, as she is constantly sweating over her stove, says: "I do water the ground in knots as I go, like a great garden-pot, you may follow me be by the S's I make" (2.2.49-51).[770] This links her sexual incontinence — as she is wholesome (which means nourishing here) and juicy and she works in the whores' district in a lewd booth — to her actual incontinence. The men in the play also see her as a leaky vessel. Quarlous remarks: "Out upon her! How she drips! She's able to give a man/ the sweating sickness with looking on her" (2.5.101-102).[771]

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764 Ibid., 83.

765 Ibid., 84.

766 Gail Kern Paster, "Leaky Vessels," 44.

767 Ibid., 54.

768 Jean-Claude Lebensztejn, *Pissing Figures 1280-2014*, Ekphrasis, ed. by Lucas Zwirner. trans. from French by Jeff Nagy (New York: David Zwirner Books, 2017), 33.

769 Ben Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair*, 79.

770 Ibid., 65.

771 Ibid., 80.

All these examples from city comedies from the late Elizabethan and Jacobean times, show the paradoxical existence of the woman who is disdained for sexual activity, and yet needs to be cured of virginity in order to stay healthy. Interestingly, the concept of the marriage cure had been around for centuries before Shakespeare's, Middleton's and Jonson's day. Greek and Roman medical writers from antiquity already made the connection between virginity and illness:

> *[…] not to engage in married sexual activity, was to refuse to make the transition [from child to woman]. […] remaining physically and socially intact beyond menarche was dangerous: it set the young girl up for various pathologies and death.*[772]

Hippocratic gynaecological treatises of the fifth and early fourth century BC[773] also warned that "uterine suffocation, caused by movement of the uterus to moist areas elsewhere in the body and resulting in blocked passageways," mostly manifested itself in "old *parthenoi*[774] and widows too young in their widowhood."[775] When the menses did not break through this had physical and mental repercussions. One anonymous medical writer recounts that one of his patients suffered from "delirium, and a loss of reason."[776] One of the remedies prescribed in these treatises entails simulating "the first penetration of intercourse" using a "jar's neck."[777] These medical writers mistook the bleeding that ensued after the "defloration" as menstrual blood.[778] There is a clear resemblance between the Hippocratic notion of uterine suffocation and green sickness. Both phenomena served as an example of the "medical Otherness"[779] of women, even though Galen

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772 Bonnie MacLachlan, "Introduction," in *Virginity Revisited: Configurations of the Unpossessed Body*, ed. by Bonnie MacLachlan and Judith Fletcher, 7.

773 Ann Ellis Hanson, "The Hippocratic Parthenos in Sickness and Health," in *Virginity Revisited: Configurations of the Unpossessed Body*, ed. by Bonnie MacLachlan and Judith Fletcher, 46.

774 Greek term denoting a virginal girl, who is menstruating.

775 Ann Ellis Hanson, "The Hippocratic Parthenos in Sickness and Health," in *Virginity Revisited: Configurations of the Unpossessed Body*, ed. by Bonnie MacLachlan and Judith Fletcher, 44.

776 Ibid., 50.

777 Ibid., 46.

778 Ibid.

779 Ibid., 54.

stressed that "age, diet, and lifestyle were more important determiners of sickness and health than gender difference."[780]

The accounts of green sickness influenced the treatment of virgins in Elizabethan plays. In Shakespeare's work it seemed more often than not that a woman ideally — after a period of innocent virginity — would marry eventually. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (*c.* 1595/96), Theseus' caveat to Hermia about dying a maid, evokes Shakespeare's view on perpetual virginity:

> *Know of your youth, examine well your blood,*
> *Whether, if you yield not to your father's choice,*
> *You can endure the livery of a nun,*
> *For aye to be in shady cloister mew'd,*
> *To live a barren sister all your life,*
> *Chanting faint hymns to the cold, fruitless moon.*
> *Thrice-blessed they that master so their blood,*
> *To undergo such maiden pilgrimage;*
> *But earthlier happy is the rose distill'd,*
> *Than that which withering on the virgin thorn*
> *Grows, lives, and dies in single blessedness. (1.1.68-78)*[781]

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780 Ibid., 55.

781 William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Nights's Dream*, ed. by William Aldis Wright, Clarendon Press Series (Shakespeare Select Plays) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1877), 3.

On top of that, the play also offers a "less than flattering portrait of a barren Elizabeth" in the guise of Titania, queen of the fairies.[782] In his poem *The Bride* (1617), Samuel Rowlands (*c.* 1573–1630) also sung the praises of marriage for women, as it "completes a woman's social and sexual identity."[783] The following lines clearly showed his belief that marriage made women better rather than worse: "Unperfect female, living odd you are,/ Never true even, till you match and pair."[784]

Nevertheless, this plea for marriage is most discernible in Shakespeare's aptly titled *All's Well that Ends Well* (1604-1605), with a pun on the words 'ends well' sounding like 'end swell,' as the play ends with a pregnancy.[785] The play's female protagonist Helena, the daughter of a physician, falls in love with the noble-born but aloof Bertram, Count of Roustillon. With the blessing of Bertram's mother, the Countess, Helena pursues Bertram and goes to Paris. There, she cures the dying King of France in the hope that Bertram will fall in love with her. As a reward, Helena is allowed to pick a husband of her choice by the king's decree. Evidently, she chooses Bertram to be her husband, and he accepts her grudgingly, whereupon he flees to Florence to fight in the Tuscan wars together with his friend Parolles. In a letter to Helena, Bertram states that he will never belong to her, unless she obtains his ring and proves she is carrying his child. This, of course, seems impossible, since Bertram is not willing to consummate the marriage. Nevertheless, Helena, posing as a pilgrim, travels to Tuscany, where she discovers that Bertram has got his eye on the fair Diana, the daughter of the inn-keeper. After seeing this, Helena decides to concoct a plan with Diana, who willingly helps her. By promising Bertram she will bed him, Diana coaxes him to give her his ring, which she in turn delivers to Helena. Then in a "virgin's bed-trick"[786] Helena takes the place of Diana and makes love to Bertram. In the end, Diana reveals the ruse to Bertram and Helena, who was believed to be dead because of her absence in France, shows Bertram she is wearing his ring and carrying his child. To conclude the story, Bertram falls in love with Helena and 'all's well.'

The play clearly makes a case for the marriage cure, restoring suffering maidens back to health. The virginal Helena, all forlorn at the beginning of the play, laments her husbandless

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782 Annaliese Connolly, "Evaluating virginity: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the iconography of marriage," in *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, ed. by Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins, 146.

783 David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death*, 290.

784 Rowlands quoted in David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death*, 290.

785 Kaara L. Peterson, "The Ring's the Thing," 107.

786 Kaara L. Peterson, "The Ring's the Thing," 102.

existence by the metaphor of Tuccia's sieve: "Yet in this captious and inteemable[787] sieve/ I still pour in the waters of my love/ And lack not to lose still" (1.3.197-199).[788] Only by marrying and having a child, her predicament has ended. The character of Helena is not the only one that Shakespeare uses to get his point about perpetual virginity across. In the first scene of the first act, Shakespeare, through the words of Parolles, fiercely criticizes perpetual virginity, which is "too cold a companion" (1.1.129-130).[789] He calls virginity "a commodity [that] will lose the gloss with lying" (1.1.149),[790] indicating that the virtue has a shelf life and can turn sour. Needless to say this disdainful speech against virginity was implicitly directed at the Virgin Queen. Parolles or rather Shakespeare also connects celibacy in women as an act of vanity and self-love: "Besides virginity is peev-/ish, proud, idle, made of self-love, which is the most inhibited sin/ in the canon […]." (1.1.141-143).[791] Again, Shakespeare clearly aimed this scornful remark at the cult of Elizabeth I. That is probably why, the play was not performed until after the Queen's death. As Peggy Muñoz Simonds argues: "If Queen Elizabeth were still alive when *All's Well* was first performed, we ought to be amazed at Shakespeare's political daring in allowing his comic character such pointed remarks on ageing virginity."[792] Although Shakespeare made audacious statements about virginity and marriage, it is important to note that these views were prevailing in England at the time: "[T]he spousal culture of post-Reformation England contrasted sharply with the late medieval privileging of virginity and the single life."[793] Even Edmund Spenser, who sung Elizabeth's praises in the *Faerie Queene*, criticized Elizabeth's reluctance to get married — which eventually debouched into an aversion of the institution[794] — by celebrating the married chastity of

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787 Inteemable means impermeable.

788 William, Shakespeare, *All's Well that Ends Well*, ed. G. K. Hunter, The Arden Shakespeare, ed. by Richard Proudfoot, Ann Thompson, and David Scott Kastan (London/ Oxford/ New York/ New Delhi/ Sydney: Bloomsbury, 1959), 31.

789 Ibid., 11.

790 Ibid., 12.

791 Ibid., 11.

792 Peggy Muñoz Simonds, "Sacred and Sexual Motifs in *All's Well That Ends Well*," 46.

793 David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death*, 292.

794 "Elizabeth discouraged marriage among her attendants, was notorious for exiling married ladies-in-waiting (occasionally sending them to the Tower), and restored married courtiers to her good graces only if their wives kept their distance." Deanne Williams, "Dido, Queen of England," 45.

the former maiden warrior Britomart, one of the Queen's alter egos.[795] Like the Danaids, it seems that Elizabeth got criticized by men for not complying with the expectations of the age, namely that women eventually should marry.

Be that as it may, aside from the criticism on her eroto-politics, the decision to assert herself as the Virgin Queen, helped Elizabeth carve out a cult around her persona that characterized her reign. She presented herself as a modern Tuccia — an 'unleaky' vessel — to convey her control over her body, and, consequently, over the country. Other women were controlled by the moon, also known as the watery planet. As a *honorabile vas*, Elizabeth considered herself to be the moon (cf. *Sphaera civitatis*) — like the virgin goddess Diana who also governed the moon:

> *As moon she influenced the waxing and waning of plant, or project, or courtier. As moon* she had power over the tides and waters of the world [my emphasis]*; she was mistress of the sublunary region of the cosmos, the region of change on earth.*[796]

The emphasized excerpt is important, as Elizabeth's control over the tides and water of the world parallels with Tuccia's power over the capricious Tiber, as explained in the inscription on Guidi's copy of Matham's *Vestaalse maagd Tuccia draagt water in een vergiet om haar onschuld te bewijzen*.[797] By improving England's "naval forces in design and strength," Elizabeth did in reality control a large part of the seas. Besides the fact that the emblem of Tuccia's sieve communicated the Queen's singularity amongst women, it also refuted rumours of Elizabeth's unchastity. These rumours sprang from her deep attachments to courtiers such as Robert Dudley (1532 - 1588), but also most likely because of the fact that she was a woman in a man's profession. As mentioned before, a woman who talked was a woman who leaked. An intelligent woman, speaking her mind, was not considered to be virtuous. By using the emblem of Tuccia, the Queen offered ill-sayers a rebuttal. In this section, it became clear that Elizabeth bended the misogynist notion of the 'leaky vessel' to her will. By identifying herself as the Virgin Queen, a new cult was born. As unleaky vessel, the Virgin Queen became the English Vestal and, consequently, Protestant England's answer to the Catholic notion of Mary as *Virgo inter Virgines* (cf. *infra*).

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795 Siobhan Keenan, *Renaissance Literature*, Edinburgh Critical Guides (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 153.

796 Helena Shire, *A Preface to Spenser*, Preface Books, ed. by Maurice Hussey (London/ New York: Longman, 1978), 41.

797 Cf. Section "2.3. Tuccia, symbol of an untainted Rome."

4.3. Elizabeth I's Queenship and the Vestal model

I am she that men call Modesty.
Virgin I am and ever shall be,
Not for me the fruitful fields and the fertile vineyard.
— *Orlando* (1928), Virginia Woolf (1882-1941)[798]

From the previous section, it is clear that the choice of Elizabeth to identify herself with Tuccia and her impermeable sieve was a shrewd, eroto-political propaganda stunt.[799] Louis Montrose suggests that the sieve of the *Sieve Portraits* might even have been employed by Elizabeth's councillors to put rumours of the unchastity of Elizabeth to sleep.[800] On top of rumours of unchastity, the Queen might have been viewed as improper by misogynists, because "women who engaged in humanist studies could be judged guilty of impropriety for entering this traditionally masculine domain."[801] This notion is summed up in the maxim: "an eloquent woman is never chaste."[802] The incorporation of the sieve therefore is a defence against slanderous accusations. By posing as a modern Tuccia, she distanced herself from ordinary women, who were essentially 'leaky vessels.'[803] Moreover, the *Sieve Portraits* also deepen the connection between Elizabeth as the Virgin Queen and as a substitute to the Virgin Mary[804] — indeed, not unlike Tuccia who can also be seen as a pagan Marian figure. After the marriage negotiations with Anjou, Elizabeth completely committed herself to replacing the "previous national devotion to the cult of Mary"[805] with her own cult, making her a

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798 Virginia Woolf, *The Selected Works of Virginia Woolf*, Wordsworth Library Collection (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Limited, 2007), 465.

799 Whether or not Elizabeth physically was a virgin, she construed an image of virginity for herself, which singled her out.

800 Louis Montrose, *The Subject of Elizabeth*, 125.

801 Nancy Edwards, "144. The Vestal Virgin Tuccia," in *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy*, ed. by Andrea Bayer, *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy*, 314.

802 Ibid.

803 Cf. Sections "3.2. Sieves and Containers" and "4.2. Leaky Vessels."

804 For more information about the role of the Virgin Mary in the Elizabeth cult in contemporary literature, cf. Helen Hackett, *Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen: Elizabeth I and the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995).

805 Amy Licence, *In Bed with the Tudors*, 226-227.

"semi-divine detached and iconic figure."[806] Elizabeth took full advantage of the Tudor society's love for pomp and circumstance by carving out an otherworldly persona through her appearance:

> *Her face would be daubed in ceruse, a poisonous mixture of white lead and vinegar; cochineal, madder and vermilion dyed the cheeks and lips, kohl accentuated the eyes and hair, while wigs were dyed with celandine, lye, saffron and cumin.*[807]

The film *Elizabeth* (1998), directed by Shekhar Kapur, beautifully portrayed this metamorphosis — "modelling herself after the Virgin Mary"[808] — through her make-up in combination with the cutting of her sensual long locks. After the transformation, the film ends with the first public entrance of the Virgin Queen — all in white — in the midst of a kneeling, awe-inspired and admiring crowd of subjects. As Elizabeth strides to her throne a woman even touches her cape and kisses it. This reaction resembles that of Catholics kneeling and kissing sculptures of the Holy Virgin. Apart from the Queen, her ladies-in-waiting have also gone through a change. Like modern versions of the Vestals, they are all dressed in white garments and veils.[809] The final shot shows the Virgin Queen sitting on the throne like an icon of "maternal authority and virginal autonomy."[810]

Elizabeth became the Holy Virgin within the Anglican Church: "She was not only the inaccessible Rose in a royal garden where none but she could enter, the archetypal Virgin Queen, she was also the human embodiment of the English Church. To serve her was to serve the state; to serve her was to serve God."[811] She could be seen as the "bride of God."[812] It is important to note that her appointment as queen was seen as chosen by God — just like God chose Mary to carry his Son and just like the Vestals "were selected by the gods themselves"[813] to fulfil their office. As the

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806 Ibid., 227.

807 Ibid., 227.

808 Bonnie MacLachlan, "Introduction," *Virginity Revisited: Configurations of the Unpossessed Body*, ed. by Bonnie MacLachlan and Judith Fletcher, 5.

809 Elizabeth discouraged her ladies-in-waiting to get married, and they were exiled if they did. Deanne Williams, "Dido, the Queen of England," 45.

810 Bonnie MacLachlan, "Introduction," *Virginity Revisited: Configurations of the Unpossessed Body*, ed. by Bonnie MacLachlan and Judith Fletcher, 5.

811 Susan E. James, *The Feminine Dynamic in English Art*, 198.

812 Ibid.

813 Celia E. Schultz, *Women's Religious Activity in the Roman Republic*, 143.

Head of the Anglican Church, she took up the role of mediator between God and her subjects, which was quite similar to the role of the Virgin Mary in Catholicism. After all, Mary was the mediator between God and the faithful — hence the many *sacra conversazione* altarpieces where wealthy patrons were shown praying to the Virgin and Child. Interestingly, Elizabeth and the Virgin Mary shared this parallel with the Vestal Virgins, and, therefore, by extension with Tuccia.[814] The Vestals themselves maintained the contact between the Roman people and Vesta. As mentioned before in Section "2.1 Vestal Virgins and their ambiguous status," their ambiguous status made them into ideal mediators. They dressed like brides, had more rights than matrons and even more than some men. They explored the borders of gender and sexuality. In being non-categorizable, they represented everyone. As Mary Beard asserted in "The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins:"

> *These are the mediators, for their ambiguous status is not merely passively evocative, but is an active unifying force. Thus in short one might offer the following formulation: mediation is ambiguity in action.*[815]

This also applied to the Holy Mary, who was a virgin, and yet gave birth to Jesus Christ.

Queen Elizabeth understood that she needed to acquire a similar ambiguous status to embody the whole of England. By asserting herself as the Virgin Queen, she was able to marry her country, making her the mother of all Englishmen:

> *She declared herself wedded to her people: at her coronation she 'wedded' England with a ring and the anniversary of her accession was kept as a festival on 17 November, 'Queen Elizabeth's wedding-day'. Exacting love service, she gave in return unswerving devotion to the well-being of her realm […].*[816]

By looking on her royal body as two bodies into one, she evoked the image of a pregnant woman, carrying her body natural within her body politic: "With recourse to such accolations of bodies within bodies and even more explicit maternal rhetoric, Elizabeth was able to instill the sense

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814 Cf. Section "2.1. Vestal Virgins and their ambiguous status."

815 Mary Beard, "The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins," 24.

816 Helena Shire, *A Preface to Spenser*, Preface Books, ed. by Maurice Hussey (London/ New York: Longman, 1978), 40.

among her people that she was their loving mother […].”[817] She called herself “a good mother of my Contreye.”[818] As a “political mother” she could make her subjects successful, by “creating their public persons,” and she expected “loving obedience” in return:[819] “Like children showing deference to their parents, her people were to accept the limitations of their subordinate status with perfect submission.”[820] By asserting herself as mother of her country, she “legitimated […] a distinctive form of feminine personal government.”[821] Many scholars have looked at the Queen’s relationship to England as that of a wife and a mother, who makes her subjects consequently both her husbands and children.[822] This strange relationship can again be compared to the ambiguous status of Mary, who was not only the mother of Jesus, but also the bride of Christ according to the Song of Songs.

With all Englishmen being her husbands, the discourse and imagery of courtly love flared up at the Elizabethan court. Like medieval female rulers, such as Eleanor of Aquitaine (1122-1204), Elizabeth employed this concept of courtly love — “the supramarital love between a knight and his lady.”[823] The French thirteenth-century canonical work *Le Roman de la Rose*, which dealt with the ideal of courtly love, “came to have specific connections to the court of Elizabeth, especially in the last two decades of her reign.”[824] Every year on the seventeenth of November, the court celebrated Elizabeth’s Accession Day by holding the Accession Day Tilts. It was a day filled with pageantry and jousting in honour of the Queen, where the courtiers “enacted the romance of chivalry.”[825] At those Tilts, allusions were made to “the Biblical Annunciation, the moment when Mary received a visit from the Angel Gabriel announcing her right to claim supremacy among women, or in

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817 Sid Ray, *Mother Queens and Princely Sons: Rogue Madonnas in the Age of Shakespeare*, Queenship and Power, ed. by by C. Beem and C. Levin (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 71.

818 Elizabeth I quoted in Christine Coch, “‘Mother of my Contreye:’ Elizabeth I and Tudor Constructions of Motherhood,” 134.

819 Christine Coch, “‘Mother of my Contreye:’ Elizabeth I and Tudor Constructions of Motherhood,” 159.

820 Ibid., 157.

821 Ibid.

822 Kaara L. Peterson, “The Ring’s the Thing,” 121.

823 Susan E. James, *The Feminine Dynamic in English Art*, 197.

824 Ibid., 198.

825 Frances A. Yates, *Selected Works*, vol. 5, *Astraea*, 88.

Elizabeth's case, among her subjects."[826] These allusions, stating her singularity, enforced the concept of chivalry at the Elizabethan court. Some courtiers tried to win the favour of their lady by having their own portrait painted as a doting medieval knight, e.g., Hilliard's miniature (The Cleveland Museum of Art, *c.* 1590-1593) of Sir Anthony Mildmay[827] (*c.* 1549-1617) in "a state of semi-*déshabillé*"[828] — "courtier as courtesan" (see Fig. 64).[829] Elizabeth's favourites were given various gifts,[830] like jewels with miniatures of her likeness and rings. The wearing of these jewels came into fashion for men, like it had already for women since the reign of Henry VIII.[831] The Queen's rings were also tokens of her affection, and the act of giving them very much conjured up marriage symbolism.

Next to being a virgin, a mother, and a wife, Elizabeth's duty as the ruler of England required her to act and assert her power as a male:

> *Elizabeth clearly realized that people expected monarchs to be male, and that qualities judged masculine by her peers—physical bravery, stamina, wisdom, duty—should be emphasized whenever a monarch chose to appear or speak in public.*[832]

Thanks to her humanist upbringing, she was able to keep up in conversation with learned men and "spoke excellent Latin when the situation warranted it."[833] Apart from her astute mind and her other 'male' qualities, Elizabeth also presented herself as bi-gendered in a visual and verbal manner. Susan James claims that Elizabeth did not experiment with masculinity in her appearance, and rather presented herself in a hyper-feminized fashion — a feminization in dress which spread

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826 Susan E. James, *The Feminine Dynamic in English Art*, 200.

827 Mildmay's faithfulness is depicted by the little dog on his left side.

828 Susan E. James, *The Feminine Dynamic in English Art*, 200.

829 Ibid., 199.

830 For more information about gift-giving at the Elizabethan court, cf. Jane E. Lawson (ed.), *The Elizabethan New Year's Gift Exchanges, 1559-1603* (Oxford: The British Academy by Oxford University Press, 2013).

831 Susan E. James, *The Feminine Dynamic in English Art*, 201.

832 Merry Wiesner-Hanks, "Women's Authority in the State and Household in Early Modern Europe," in *Women Who* Ruled, ed. by Annette Dixon, 32.

833 Ibid.

among male[834] and female courtiers.[835] While Elizabeth mostly presented herself in a hyper-feminine way to the "edge of caricature",[836] she did also embrace masculinity on rare occasions. At times, she wore a "small arm[our] breastplate."[837] When visiting the naval troops at Tilbury waiting for the Spanish Armada in 1588 (cf. *infra*), it was said that the "king-like queen"[838] spoke to her men wearing a "costume of armour"[839] "while mounted upon a horse."[840] In the queen's iconography Elizabeth has been associated with a few male heroes such as Aeneas[841] and Saint George — although she still looks like a woman in these instances. In *Elizabeth I and the Three Goddesses* (Windsor Castle, 1569), the first "classical painting […] at the Tudor Court,"[842] the Queen substitutes Paris' place in the story of the judgement of Paris (cf. Fig. 65). Here, she keeps the orb — replacing the apple — to herself rather than giving it to Aphrodite. In doing so, she conveys "her supremacy over the three goddesses in majesty, wisdom, and beauty."[843] Elizabeth's "elevation several steps above the goddess and […] her static, monumental posture" further communicates her superiority.[844] Her dress looks almost like armour in comparison to "the flimsy, billowing garments of the goddesses."[845] This painting, like the *Sieve Portraits*, also justifies her

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834 Without them losing their masculine behaviour. Susan E. James, *The Feminine Dynamic in English Art*, 207.

835 Susan E. James, *The Feminine Dynamic in English Art*, 196-222.

836 Ibid., 204.

837 Merry Wiesner-Hanks, "Women's Authority in the State and Household in Early Modern Europe," in *Women Who* Ruled, ed. by Annette Dixon, 32.

838 Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins (eds.), *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, 7.

839 Ben Spiller, "Warlike mates? Queen Elizabeth and Joan La Pucelle in *1 Henry VI*" in *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, ed. by Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins, 34.

840 Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins (eds.), *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, 7. For a comparison between Queen Elizabeth and Joan of Arc in Shakespeare's Henry VI Part 1, see Ben Spiller, "Warlike mates? Queen Elizabeth and Joan La Pucelle in *1 Henry VI*" in *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, ed. by Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins, 34-44.

841 Cf. Subsection "4.1.2. Analysis of the *Sieve Portraits*."

842 Richard Rex, *The Tudors* (Gloucestershire: Amberley Publising, 2012), no page number, caption image nr. 60.

843 Helen Hackett, "A New Image of Elizabeth I: The Three Goddesses Theme in Art and Literature," Huntington Library Quarterly 77, 3 (2014), 236.

844 Ibid.

845 Ibid.

imperial claim since Elizabeth is depicted wearing a "closed imperial crown."[846] Such a crown was also worn by her mother Anne Boleyn (*c.* 1501 - 1536), during her coronation pageant, right after Henry VIII's jurisdiction had been turned from a royal one into an imperial jurisdiction through the Act of Restraint of Appeals in 1533.[847] Through Elizabeth's parentage she, therefore, already had an imperial claim. By pursuing imperial expansion and using imperial iconography in images of herself, Elizabeth matched herself against Charles V and other male imperial rulers. In Thomas Cecill's engraving *Truth Presents the Queen with a Lance* or *Elizabetha Angliae et Hiberniae Reginae &c* (British Museum, *c.* 1625), made after her death, the Queen is more explicitly represented as 'manly' (cf. Fig. 66). Like a virago, Elizabeth, dressed in armour[848] and mounted on a horse, is about to slay the "hydra of Catholicism."[849] The Queen receives a lance by the personification of Truth who holds a book inscribed with the word "Truth" — i.e., the truth of Protestantism. In the background, Cecill depicts the army at Tilbury and the Spanish Armada, which was about to be defeated.[850] The hydra, therefore, also stands for Catholic Spain, as it is about to get slain by the Protestant Queen of England. In this image, Cecill represents Elizabeth as a fierce "military leader."[851]

Like James argues, Elizabeth used more of a "political androgyny,"[852] than of a physical one. Her contemporaries compared her to historical male kings, like David and Solomon. In a sermon by William Leigh (1550-1639), he likened the Queen to Joshua and Hezekiah "in order to praise her defence of the Protestant faith in the face of the Catholic threat."[853] Painters represented

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846 Helen Hackett, "Anne Boleyn's Legacy to Elizabeth I: Neoclassicism and the Iconography of Protestant Queenship," in *Queens Matter in Early Modern Studies*, ed. by Anna Riehl Bertolet, Queenship and Power, ed. by C. Beem and C. Levin (London/ New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 179.

847 Helen Hackett, "Anne Boleyn's Legacy to Elizabeth I," 179.

848 Armour turns her into a closed container, sealing her like Tuccia's sieve. Cf. Section "2.3. Tuccia, symbol of an untainted Rome," where the skin of a virgin is compared to a harness, whereas a sexually active woman's skin becomes porous.

849 Lisa Gim, "Representing the 'Phoenix Queen': Elizabeth I in Writings by Anna Maria van Schurman and Anne Bradstreet," in *Resurrecting Elizabeth I in Seventeenth-Century England*, ed. by Elizabeth H. Hageman and Katherine Conway (Madison, N.J.: Rosemont Publishing & Printing, 2007), 182, n.17. 168-184.

850 British Museum, "Elizabetha Angliae et Hiberniae Reginae &c," *British Museum*, last access on the 25th of July, 2018, https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?assetId=118984001&objectId=1506325&partId=1.

851 Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins (eds.), *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, 4.

852 Susan E. James, *The Feminine Dynamic in English Art*, 203.

853 Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins (eds.), *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, 4.

the exquisitely dressed feminine Queen with manly attributes — a globe, a background with battlefield scenes, etc.[854] More so than in visual imagery, Elizabeth verbally asserted herself as a "bi-gendered ruler."[855] In the famous speech to the troops at Tilbury in 1588 "in the face of the Spanish Armada"[856] — whether the Queen herself actually wrote or said it or not, is not necessarily an issue — her androgyny as female ruler is emphasized: "I know I have the body of a weak, feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too."[857] Although her body personal was female, she saw her body politic as male. Her status as monarch "overrid[ed] [her] status as wom[a]n."[858] Like by a sieve which "is the medium by which one substance is altered and separated into two, or where two sift together to become one, transfigured substance,"[859] the body politic and the body personal combine to make the transfigured body of the sovereign. The "body of the state" can also be seen as a "*character angelus* [that] does not seem bound to gender."[860] Elizabeth called herself a "Prince […] set on stages in the sight and view of all the world."[861] This notion also came across to her male peers. Lord Burghley said to the poet Sir John Harrington (1560-1612) that the Queen was "more than a man, and in troth, sometimes less than a woman."[862] It is a type of androgyny and a "strategic ambiguity"[863] that Elizabeth has in common with the virgin goddesses and the Vestal Virgins, who were "Roman incarnation[s] of many of the features of Athena."[864] Other famous examples of androgynous virgins are the bearded Saint

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854 Susan E. James, *The Feminine Dynamic in English Art*, 208-211.

855 Ibid., 203.

856 Mary Beard, *Women & Power: A Manifesto* (London: Profile Books/ London Review of Books, 2017), 22.

857 Elizabeth I quoted in Stephen Greenblatt, M.H. Abrams, Carol T. Christ et al. (eds.), *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 700.

858 Merry Wiesner-Hanks, "Women's Authority in the State and Household in Early Modern Europe," in *Women Who Ruled,* ed. by Annette Dixon, 32.

859 Dana Medoro, "The Sieve and the Rainbow Serpent: Bleeding *Gravity's Rainbow*," 187.

860 Bettina Baumgärtel, "Is the King Genderless? The Staging of the Female Regent as Minerva Pacifera," in *Women Who Ruled*, ed. by Annette Dixon, 97.

861 Elizabeth I quoted in Merry Wiesner-Hanks, "Women's Authority in the State and Household in Early Modern Europe," in *Women Who Ruled,* ed. by Annette Dixon, 32.

862 William Cecil (Baron of Burghley) quoted in Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins (eds.), *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, 1.

863 Susan E. James, *The Feminine Dynamic in English Art*, 202.

864 Bonnie MacLachlan, "Introduction," in *Virginity Revisited: Configurations of the Unpossessed Body*, ed. by Bonnie MacLachlan and Judith Fletcher, 9.

Wilgefortis (legend of the fourteenth century) and viragos like Joan of Arc (1412-1431). "Gender transformation and transvestitism" take up a huge part of the legends of the first female Christian martyrs.[865] Anthropologically speaking, androgyny and virginity have a long-standing connection. By embodying both sexes, the virgin makes mediation possible:

> *[…] it is arguable that the virgins themselves are acting as independent mediators between the opposed terms of 'man' and 'woman', setting up a 'chain of mediation' similar to those described by Levi-Strauss.*[866]

That is why it is not surprising that these female figureheads chose a life of celibacy that allowed them to wield their power[867] without "male […] intervention."[868] As a result "traditional gendered expectations no longer appl[ied]."[869] In fact, for Elizabeth, acting like a man was necessary to maintain the respect of her male councillors, as can be deduced from the speech at Tilbury. Of course, this androgyny allowed "Tudor misogynists" to spread elaborate theories that she was actually a man.[870] Other opposers saw her as a frightening modern Amazon, who threatened to "emasculat[e] […] her male subjects."[871]

Be that as it may, this ambiguity gave Elizabeth, as a woman, the freedom to rule without the oppressive constraints of her sex. To acquire the all-encompassing sexual status, the Queen and her councillors exploited the power of the image; "[i]mages and imagery, religious and secular, were to play a large part in Elizabeth's reign."[872] The Elizabethan age heralded a "new pictorial phenomenon […] in England."[873] Artists produced a myriad of portraits and prints of Elizabeth to

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865 Bonnie MacLachlan, "Introduction," *Virginity Revisited: Configurations of the Unpossessed Body*, ed. by Bonnie MacLachlan and Judith Fletcher, 9.

866 Mary Beard, "The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins," 26.

867 Sometimes with disastrous outcomes, e.g. Joan of Arc.

868 Bonnie MacLachlan and Judith Fletcher, *Virginity Revisited: Configurations of the Unpossessed Body*, 9.

869 Bonnie MacLachlan, "Introduction," in *Virginity Revisited: Configurations of the Unpossessed Body*, ed. by Bonnie MacLachlan and Judith Fletcher, 9.

870 Amy Licence, *In Bed with the Tudors*, 227.

871 Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins (eds.), *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, 4.

872 Susan E. James, *The Feminine Dynamic in English Art*, 192.

873 Ibid., 201.

shape her legacy as Virgin Queen. Partly due to her personal preference for Flemish miniature,[874] small portraits of the Queen's likeness were omnipresent[875]: "[T]he popular celebration and display of the monarch's manufactured portrait by all of her subjects as a shared ritual […] helped to glue society together."[876] The miniatures became "quasi-religious" *Andachtsbilder*, like the images of the Holy Virgin:

> *With the acknowledgement of the queen as the head of the English church and Defender of the Faith, wearing the royal image was more than just a declaration of loyalty to the monarch. Its display also operated as a talisman with reverent overtones announcing the wearer's obligation to both Church and state.*[877]

In miniatures and other portraits, artists mostly depicted her as a "nubile but chaste young girl even when she was sixty years old."[878] This gave her an otherworldly aura of perpetual female youth, which has the "potential […] to be invested with political power."[879] As discussed in Section "2.1. Vestal Virgins and their ambiguous status," Roman society believed that the Vestal Virgins had a powerful pent-up power because of their untapped fertility.[880] The same can be said about Elizabeth and her religious role model, the Virgin Mary. James recognizes that the Elizabeth in the portraits possesses the "unvarying youthfulness of the Virgin Mary, a female cant on the masculine cult of virility."[881] That together with the hyper-femininity displayed in her appearance and the incorporation of masculine attributes (cf. *supra*) produced a new necessary form of royal portraiture.

As a female unwed sovereign she had to create a new visual language that fitted the completion of the English monarchy: "[O]ver time, the feminine template was transformed into the

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874 Ibid., 194.

875 As said before, the Queen gifted bejewelled miniatures of her face to her favourites to wear.

876 Susan E. James, *The Feminine Dynamic in English Art*, 201.

877 Ibid.

878 Bonnie MacLachlan, "Introduction," in *Virginity Revisited: Configurations of the Unpossessed Body*, ed. by Bonnie MacLachlan and Judith Fletcher, 5.

879 Ibid.

880 Cf. Section "2.1. Vestal Virgins and their ambiguous status."

881 Susan E. James, *The Feminine Dynamic in English Art*, 196.

template of the state."[882] By creating an image of an otherworldly, ambiguous, powerful and perpetual virgin, she was able to come across to her subjects as the "personification of the state."[883] John Lyly (*c.* 1553/1554 - 1606) in his *Euphues and His England* (1580) found the Queen's virginity paramount to the welfare of England:

> *Where is Tuscia [sic.] one of the same order, that brought to passe no lesse marvailes, by carrying water in a sive, not shedding one drop from Tiber to the Temple of Vesta? If Virginitie have suche force, then what hath this chast Virgin Elisabeth don, who by the space of twenty and odds yeares with continuall peace against all policies, with sundry myracles, contrary to all hope, hath governed that noble Iland…*[884]

He regarded it as "a necessary aspect of her achievement in governing the body politic, bringing peace, plenty, good government and the maintenance of God's word."[885] This mechanism of a perpetual virgin with an ambiguous sexual status representing the state can be compared to the way Romans regarded the Vestal Virgins as metonyms for Rome. It is, therefore, not surprising that the land of Virginia was named after the Virgin Queen, for it again "reveals the complex relationship between the discourse of gender and power and the ways in which Elizabeth's body became key in the ideological underpinning of England's imperialist project."[886]

In portraiture, like in the poetry of the Elizabethan court poets, the Queen took on many forms. A number of Elizabeth's alter egos such as Eliza (queen of the shepherds), Gloriana (the Faerie Queene), Belphoebe (the chaste maiden) and Britomart (the female warrior fighting for Chastity), created by Spenser in his epic poems *The Shepheardes Calendar* (1579) and *The Faerie Queene* (1590), appear in the iconography of the Queen. In her most beloved art form of the miniature, Nicolas Hilliard (1547-1619) associated his royal subject to the Tudor Rose by lining the Queen's likeness with wired lace.[887] This, again, partly emanates from the "floral symbolism of the Virgin […], supremely desirable, totally unattainable, locked behind the impregnable walls of a

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882 Ibid., 208.

883 Ibid., 196.

884 John Lyly quoted in Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*, 96.

885 Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*, 97.

886 Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins (eds.), *Goddesses and Queens: The iconography of Elizabeth I*, 9.

887 Susan E. James, *The Feminine Dynamic in English Art*, 197.

mythic garden."[888] Interestingly, the aspects of these alter egos come together in the emblem of Tuccia's sieve from the *Sieve Portraits*. It combines the two aspects that are keynotes of her reign, namely virginity and imperialism. In the *Siena Sieve Portrait* the references to her chastity match the Belphoebe model, whereas the imperialist aspects accord with her as the Faerie Queene Gloriana, who brings glory and victory to England.[889] On top of that, the *honorabile cribro* asserts the Queen as a substitute for Mary. By channeling Tuccia in these portraits — especially the *Siena Sieve Portrait* — Elizabeth transforms into Gloriana, bringing glory and triumph to England like Tuccia brought triumph to the State by remaining a virgin. The figure of Tuccia, in the Petrarchan sense of the *Trionfo della Castita* where Cupid is chastised, shows parallels with the Queen's alter ego Britomart. Both alter egos fight for chastity. That is why these portraits and the figure of Tuccia, in all her facets as a Vestal Virgin, match so perfectly the myth of Elizabeth as Virgin Queen.

After the *Sieve Portraits*, the cult of Elizabeth I became intertwined with that of the ancient Vesta cult. So much so, that even twenty-seven years after her death, the poet and playwright Aurelian Townshend (*c.*1583 - *c.*1649) described her using vestal imagery: "Tis but a while, since in a vestall flame/ Barren, but bright, the Tudors royall name/ Beloved expir'd […]."[890] The series *Sieve Portraits*, therefore, take an important place in the collection of portraits of Queen Elizabeth. They are a testament of the shift from an unmarried queen — who used marriage negotiations as a tool for manipulating her relationship with other countries — to the Virgin Queen. Yates suggests that the *Siena Sieve Portrait,* like many of the other allegorical portraits of the Queen, might also relate to a "great occasion of pageantry" – in this case the ceremony in honour of Henry Lee's retirement as the Queen's Champion at Accession Day Tilts of 1590.[891] This tilt, however, occurred nine years after the portrait was painted. From the tilt gallery, where the Queen and courtiers could watch the spectacle, Elizabeth could see

> *the Temple of the Vestal Virgins [arising] from the earth. Within this church-like structure there was an altar tended by Vestals who bore gifts to the Queen and before it stood a crowned pillar entwined with an eglantine rose (another of her symbols) on which hung a*

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888 Ibid.

889 Frances A. Yates, *Selected Works*, vol. 5, *Astraea*, 116.

890 Quoted in Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*, 107.

891 Frances A. Yates, *Selected Works*, vol. 5, *Astraea*, 117.

> *Latin prayer, which included the line:'You have moved the farther column of the pillars of Hercules.'*[892]

At the time, "in the aftermath of the Armada and the colonization of Virginia," Elizabeth's dominion stretched out to the New World.[893] As seen before in this chapter, as in the second chapter, the Vestal model has "overtones of Roman imperialism," making it the perfect model for the queenship of a "Virgin Queen still living in the reflected glory of the Armada defeat."[894] Therefore, the tilt of 1590 continued to declare Elizabeth a modern Vestal.

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In this concluding chapter, I have discussed the various parallels between Elizabeth I and the figure of Tuccia with her impermeable sieve. On the basis of previous information, gathered in Chapters 2 and 3, it has become clear that, as a role model, Tuccia perfectly fits Elizabeth. By applying the motif of Tuccia's sieve, which came from a humanist tradition, the Queen asserted herself as a humanist ruler. The combination of virginity and imperial triumph contained in the motif of the Vestal Tuccia and her sieve, completely envelops the constructed persona of Elizabeth I as the Imperial Virgin or Virgin Queen. As a modern Vestal, who renounced marriage and portrayed herself with an ambiguous sexual status, Elizabeth was able to embody England and create a cult, competing with that of the Virgin Mary.

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892 Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*, 105.

893 Roy Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth*, 153.

894 Ibid.

5. Conclusion

My dissertation on the *Nachleben* of the Vestal Tuccia and her sieve in art, wanted to chart the motif's course throughout the history of art. Of course, due to the transhistorical approach of my research, an exhaustive study was not feasible within the confines of a master paper . Nevertheless, I was able to distinguish the different iconographical types of the representations of Tuccia, as well as of their relative importance. While the role of Tuccia in art history and, by extension, literature, is not very substantial, this dissertation has shown that it is significant. If one thinks of the collection of meanings she embodies, there remains no doubt about the rich afterlife of the legend of Tuccia in art.

The tale of the Roman Vestal Virgin Tuccia and her paradoxically impermeable sieve, which was a symbol of her chastity, has spoken to the imagination of artists throughout the ages. Authors from Antiquity such as Valerius Maximus sung her praises and the early Church Fathers Augustine and Tertullian mentioned her legend in their Christian treatises. From the Late Middle Ages onwards, the motif of Tuccia and her sieve emerged in art throughout Europe. As has been demonstrated in Chapter 2 on Tuccia as Vestal Virgin, she is the personification of an untainted Rome. Women have always been compared to cities (cf. Pallas Athena) and although Rome is called after Romulus, women, such as Dido, the Sabines, Lucretia, and the Vestal Virgins, have had a huge impact on the city. They helped shape it and Tuccia plays a part in the complex history of this capital of antiquity. I started this chapter with a discussion on the role of the Vestal Virgins in the Roman Republic, so that I could show the power of Tuccia to become a symbol, as seen in several Mannerist prints, of an uncompromised city in times of hardship.

In the next chapter — through seven case studies — I stressed the importance of Tuccia in humanistic iconographical conventions of chastity. In the emblem literature, the impermeable sieve became an important attribute to the personification of Castità or Chastity. Depictions of the story of Tuccia were found regularly in the female private sphere, as she epitomized the ideal of chastity before and after marriage. She functioned as an exemplar for prospective brides, who owned *cassoni* (wedding chests) decorated with a representation of Tuccia and her sieve. Furthermore, several women identified with the Roman Vestal as they took on her role in *portraits historiés.* As a female role model, Tuccia was part of the *donne illustre* group, that features major female figures like Lucretia, Dido, and Judith to name but a few. As we have seen throughout my dissertation, she was also christianized in art. As a pagan Mary, Tuccia's exemplarity was even more highlighted.

The imagery of the woman as a container, discussed in Section 3.2 (Sieves and Containers), bound the Virgin Mother, as a *honorabile vas,* together with Tuccia and her container-sieve.

Lastly, as a kind of synthesis of the other two chapters, I looked at the *Sieve Portraits* of Queen Elizabeth I. These portraits where made during the Anjou affair, which denoted a shift in the Queen's image. When the negotiations with the Duke of Anjou ended, Elizabeth took on the *persona* of the Virgin Queen. The sieve in the *Siena Sieve Portrait* denotes that irreversible turn to a life of perpetual virginity. This was, however, criticized by her contemporaries, such as Shakespeare among others. Nonetheless, by identifying herself with Tuccia, she placed herself above all other women, who were ridiculed as "leaky vessels" in contemporary city comedies. Next to the sieve being a symbol of the English Queen's eroto-politics, the vessel was also an allusion to her successful rule: the good is kept, while the bad gets sifted away. This maxim is also linked to Tuccia, whose wisdom is implied by the fact that she was a Vestal Virgin. That is why the Vestal's sieve also emerged in representations of the allegorical figures of Prudence. Combining the connotations of chastity and imperialism, Tuccia's sieve perfectly embodied the Virgin Queen, who was also an Imperialist Queen.

While we tried to lay bare all the layers of meaning that encompass Tuccia as motif, there still remains an interesting subject that needs to be investigated further. Throughout the early modern period, a tendency to christianize the Roman heroine can also be discerned. Due to the fact that male artists had depicted Tuccia like a female saint or even a Marian figure, the question arises to what extent the motif of Tuccia and her sieve was popular with purely female communities, e.g., in the convents of the early modern period. In the former convent of San Paolo in Parma a fresco of Vesta (*c.* 1518-19) by Corregio (1489-1534) adorns the space that used to be the study of the head nun.[895] That is why, it would not be too farfetched to assume that the priestesses of Vesta, such as Tuccia, could have had a place in the iconography of the Italian convents. Since Tuccia was a 'pagan' version of the Holy Virgin — the role model *par excellence* for many religious Christian women — the story of the Vestal and her paradoxically impermeable sieve might have resonated deeply with the women who lived in convents and cloisters in the early modern period. Unfortunately, the question of the presence of Tuccia in the iconography of strictly female Italian convents, as an interesting complementary subject, can only be answered in the context of further research.

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895 Giancarla Periti, *In the Court of Religious Ladies: Art, Vision, and Pleasure in Italian Renaissance Convents* (New Haven/ London: Yale University Press, 2016), 197.

Appendix 1: Classical Texts Featuring Tuccia in English Translations

The following texts of Greek and Latin authors from antiquity and of the early Church Fathers all mention the story of Tuccia and her impermeable sieve. These excerpts have been given in their English translation.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus (first century BC), *Ρωμαϊκή Αρχαιολογία* or *Antiquitatum Romanarum quae supersunt* (end of the first century BC), II.69.1-3

But what I am going to relate is still more wonderful and more like a myth. They say that somebody unjustly accused one of the holy virgins, whose name was Tuccia, and although he was unable to point to the extinction of the fire as evidence, he advanced false arguments based on plausible proofs and depositions; and that the virgin, being ordered to make her defence, said only this, that she would clear herself from the accusation by her deeds. Having said this and called upon the goddess to be her guide, she led the way to the Tiber, with the consent of the pontiffs and escorted by the whole population of the city; and when she came to the river, she was so hardy as to undertake the task which, according to the proverb, is among the most impossible of achievement: she drew up water from the river in a sieve, and carrying it as far as the Forum, poured it out at the feet of the pontiffs. After which, they say, her accuser, though great search was made for him, could never be found either alive or dead. But, though I have yet many other things to say concerning the manifestations of this goddess, I regard what has already been said as sufficient.[896]

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896 Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman antiquities* II.69.1-3, trans. from Greek by Earnest Cary, *Internet Archive,* last access on the 16th of April, 2018, https://archive.org/stream/romanantiquities01dionuoft/romanantiquities01dionuoft_djvu.txt.

Valerius Maximus (14-37 AD), *Factorum ac dictorum memorabilium* (*c.* 30-31 AD), 8.1 absol. 5

With the same kind of assistance, the chastity of the Vestal priestess Tuccia (charged with the crime of unchastity) burst from the cloud of infamy with which it had been darkened. And she, with the sure knowledge of her innocence, dare to look for hope and safety in a dangerous logic. She grabbed a sieve and said: "O Vesta, if I have always brought chaste hands to your rites, grant that I may with this sieve fetch water from the Tiber and carry it back to your shrine." The rules of the natural world gave way before the priestess' bold and reckless vows.[897]

Pliny the Elder (23-79 AD), *Historia Naturalis* (*c.* 77-79 AD), 28.3(2)

There is also preserved the prayer uttered by the Vestal Tuccia, when, upon being accused of incest, she carried water in a sieve—an event which took place in the year of the City 609.[898]

Tertullian (*c.* 155 /160 - 220), *Apologeticus* (*c.* 195), XXII

There is little need for me to analyze their other ingenious devices, or even their powers of spiritual deception, —such as the apparitions of Castor, the water carried in a sieve, the ship drawn forward with a girdle, and the beard turned red at a touch, —so that stones should be believed to be divinities, and the True God not be sought after.[899]

Augustine (354-430), *De civitate Dei*(*c.* 413-426), X.16

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897 Valerius Maximus translated and quoted in Hans-Friedrich Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus* (London/ New York: Routledge, 2002), 51.

898 Pliny the Elder, *Historia Naturalis*, 28.3(2), trans. from Latin by John Bostock, M.D., F.R.S. H.T. Riley, *Perseus Digital Library*, last access on the 12th of August, 2018, http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0137%3Abook%3D28%3Achapter%3D3.

899 Tertullian translated and quoted in T. Herbert Bindley (ed.), *The Apology of Tertullian* (London/ Oxford: Parker and Co., 1890), 77.

As for those miracles which history ascribes to the gods of the heathen — I do not refer to those prodigies which at intervals happen from some unknown physical causes, and which are arranged and appointed by Divine Providence, such as monstrous births, and unusual meteorological phenomena, whether startling only, or also injurious, and which are said to be brought about and removed by communication with demons, and by their most deceitful craft — but I refer to these prodigies which manifestly enough are wrought by their power and force, as, that the household gods which Æneas carried from Troy in his flight moved from place to place; that Tarquin cut a whetstone with a razor; that the Epidaurian serpent attached himself as a companion to Æsculapius on his voyage to Rome; that the ship in which the image of the Phrygian mother stood, and which could not be moved by a host of men and oxen, was moved by one weak woman, who attached her girdle to the vessel and drew it, as proof of her chastity; *that a vestal, whose virginity was questioned, removed the suspicion by carrying from the Tiber a sieve full of water without any of it dropping [my emphasis]: these, then, and the like, are by no means to be compared for greatness and virtue to those which, we read, were wrought among God's people* [my emphasis]. How much less can we compare those marvels, which even the laws of heathen nations prohibit and punish — I mean the magical and theurgic marvels, of which the great part are merely illusions practised upon the senses, as the drawing down of the moon, "that," as Lucan says, "it may shed a stronger influence on the plants?" And if some of these do seem to equal those which are wrought by the godly, the end for which they are wrought distinguishes the two, and shows that ours are incomparably the more excellent. For those miracles commend the worship of a plurality of gods, who deserve worship the less the more they demand it; but these of ours commend the worship of the one God, who, both by the testimony of His own Scriptures, and by the eventual abolition of sacrifices, proves that He needs no such offerings. If, therefore, any angels demand sacrifice for themselves, we must prefer those who demand it, not for themselves, but for God, the Creator of all, whom they serve. For thus they prove how sincerely they love us, since they wish by sacrifice to subject us, not to themselves, but to Him by the contemplation of whom they themselves are blessed, and to bring us to Him from whom they themselves have never strayed. If, on the other hand, any angels wish us to sacrifice, not to one, but to many, not, indeed, to themselves, but to the gods whose angels they are, we must in this case also prefer those who are the angels of the one God of gods, and who so bid us to worship Him as to preclude our worshipping any other. But, further, if it be the case, as their pride and deceitfulness rather indicate, that they are neither good angels nor the angels of good gods, but wicked demons, who wish sacrifice to be paid, not to the one only and supreme God, but to themselves, what better protection against them can we choose

than that of the one God whom the good angels serve, the angels who bid us sacrifice, not to themselves, but to Him whose sacrifice we ourselves ought to be?[900]

Augustine, *De civitate dei*, XXII.11

If we pass now to their miracles which they oppose to our martyrs as wrought by their gods, shall not even these be found to make for us, and help out our argument? For if any of the miracles of their gods are great, certainly that is a great one which Varro mentions of *a vestal virgin, who, when she was endangered by a false accusation of unchastity, filled a sieve with water from the Tiber, and carried it to her judges without any part of it leaking* [my emphasis]. Who kept the weight of water in the sieve? Who prevented any drop from falling from it through so many open holes? They will answer, Some god or some demon. If a god, is he greater than the God who made the world? If a demon, is he mightier than an angel who serves the God by whom the world was made? If, then, a lesser god, angel, or demon could so sustain the weight of this liquid element that the water might seem to have changed its nature, shall not Almighty God, who Himself created all the elements, be able to eliminate from the earthly body its heaviness, so that the quickened body shall dwell in whatever element the quickening spirit pleases?[901]

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900 Augustine, "The City of God (Book X)," trans. from Latin to English by Marcus Dods, *New Advent*, last access on 5th of April, 2018, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/120110.htm.

901 Augustine, "The City of God (Book XXII)," trans. from Latin by Marcus Dods. *New Advent*, last access on 5th of April, 2018, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/120122.htm.

Appendix 2: Translations of the Latin Captions of Prints Depicting Tuccia

In this appendix the Dutch and English translations are given to the Latin inscriptions of prints depicting Tuccia in order to have a deeper understanding of the subject matter. I am hugely indebted and thankful to a team of Latinists: David Janssens, Senior Lecturer at Tilburg University (The Netherlands) and his collaborators Leo Nellissen, Thomas Bervoets, and Pim Boer. They were so kind as to translate these tricky captions to Dutch and provided me with additional commentary. For the English translations, I tried to follow the phrasing of the Dutch translation without adhering to the meters of the Latin verse. Each print's translation is accompanied by the original Latin text and its Dutch translation.

1. Matham and Guidi (cf. Fig. 18)

Original text

Illustrissimo et Clarissimo Domino Domino Petro Strozae Serenissimi Domini Nostri Domini Pauli Papae Quinti Brevium secretorum ad Principes Secretario Virtutum fautori Antonius Carenzanus humilissimus servus dat donat dicatque Romae anno 1613

Trux, vage, citate, curvicursor, caxifer,[902]
Poeninigena Tybri pater, et pelagidomus,
Siste reciprocipedes fugas nec amplius
Refluam impotens Thetin fatiga Tucia;
Nova Romularis meta nunc erit tibi.
Non lenibus stagnis refusis alveis,
Quae alluvio fluitantis in sicco creat
Aquula, creatque unaque destituit dius:
Sed fluctuum, quos impetus tui integra
Moles ciet cietque nec destituere
Aliā potest. Uxorie amnis, Iliae:
Somnos tuae te vindicasse, et virginis

902 Written in iambic trimeter.

Servasse partus imminutae nec fidem
Debere Tuciae suamve Troicae
Iam vendicare Virgini viraginem
Sed deferet natura quas fecit notas;
Ponderaque suspendet tua, et cribro vehet
Invicta veri vis et innocentiae.

Dutch translation

Antonius Carenzanus, allernietigste dienaar, geeft, schenkt en wijdt (deze prent) aan de zeer aanzienlijke en zeer beroemde heer mijnheer Petrus Stroza, schrijver van de privé-brieven aan vorsten van de zeer doorluchte heer, onze mijnheer Paus Paulus V, en beschermer van de deugden. Rome 1613.

Woesteling, meander, snelstromend, bochtig, caxifer,
Vader Tiber, uit de Penninische Alpen geboortig en huis van de zee,
breng de steeds terugkerende overstromingen tot staan en mat niet langer,
nu je d(i)e macht niet meer hebt door Tucia, de terugstromende Thetis af;
Er zal nu voor jou een nieuwe Romeinse grens/paal zijn,
niet door/met zacht stromende poelen, die teruggestroomd zijn van de bedding,
die een beekje door golfslag van de stroming-heen-en-weer maakt op het droge,
(nee) die de god maakt én tegelijkertijd opgeeft.
maar (een nieuwe grens) voor de golven, die de onverzwakte watermassa van jouw stroming in beweging brengt; in beweging brengt en op geen andere manier kan opgeven.
Rivier bij de echtgenote behorend, (rivier) van Rea Silvia:
dat jij de slaap van jouw (vrouw) hebt opgeeist en
dat jij de borelingen van de onverzwakte hebt gered
en dat jij niet meer moet aanbieden hulp aan Tucia en/of haar eigen heldin aan de Trojaanse (Vestaalse) Maagd.
maar de natuur zal de kenmerken die zij gemaakt heeft, weghalen.
Zij, als onoverwonnen kracht van waarheid en onschuld, zal jouw lasten ondersteunen en hen met een zeef vervoeren.

English translation

Antonius Carenzanus, lowliest servant, gives, bestows and devotes (this print) to the very eminent and very famous Petrus Stroza, esquire, writer of the private letters to monarchs of this illustrious gentleman, our lord Pope Paul V, and the protector of the virtues. Rome 1613.

Savage, meander, fast flowing, winding, caxifer,
Father Tiber, out of the Pennine Alps born and house of the sea,
Bring the ever recurrent floods to a halt and stop wearing out,
Now that you do not possess this power because of/through Tuccia, the back flowing Thetis;
Now there will be a new Roman border/pale for you,
Not through/with soft flowing pools, that have flowed back from the river-bed,
Which makes a brook through the wave of the to and fro current on the dry land.
(nay) which the god makes and at the same time relinquishes.
But (a new border) for the waves, which bring the unweakened body of water of your current in motion; brings it in motion and cannot relinquish in any other way.
River belonging to the spouse, (river) of Rea Silvia:
That you have claimed the sleep of your (wife) and
That you have saved the newborns from the unweakened
And that you no longer are obliged to offer help to Tuccia and/or her own heroine to the Trojan (Vestal) Virgin.
But nature will take away the traits that she has made.
She, as invincible power of truth and innocence, will support your burdens and
carry them with a sieve.

2. Theodoor Galle (cf. Fig. 14)

Original text

Da pater illaesi testem, Tyberine, pudoris[903]
te mihi[904] Vestalemque tuo de gurgite nympham
Arguat unda ream cribro contenta, nefando

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903 Written in hexameters.

904 Mihi (me) refers to the author and/or reader

Delatam indicio, prius haec non visa ferentem
Pontifices portenta foro mirentur, et omnis
Posteritas, purgetque suo se Tucia cribro.

Dutch translation

Geef je(zelf), vader Tiber, als getuige van ongeschonden zedigheid aan mij,
en laat/moge het water uit jouw stroom, vastgehouden in een zeef,
aantonen dat het aangeklaagde Vestaalse meisje beschuldigd is met
goddeloos bewijs. Laat/Moge de priesters en heel het nageslacht haar
bewonderen, terwijl zij deze niet eerder geziene wondertekenen draagt
op het forum, en laat/moge Tucia zichzelf zuiveren met haar eigen zeef.

English translation

Give yourself, father Tiber, as a witness of undefiled chastity to me,
and let/may the water from your current, contained in a sieve,
demonstrate that the accused Vestal Virgin is charged with
godless testimony. Let/May the priests and all of posterity marvel
at her, while she wears these miraculous signs that have never been seen
On the forum, and let/may Tuccia cleanse herself with her own sieve.

3. Furnius (cf. Fig. 13)

Original text

Credo equidem, annales haud fingere vana Latinos[905]
    Dum Tucciam Vestae dicatam virginem
Perlata ad socias in cribro a flumine lympha
    Suam probasse castitatem praedicant.
Nam licet illa suum communi ducta pudorem
    Errore falso consecrasset numini:

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905 Written in alternating hexameter and iambic trimeter.

Hoc tamen insontem verus, castamque puellam
Defendit, et laudavit ostento Deus.

Dutch translation

Ik geloof inderdaad dat de Latijnse jaarboeken geen onjuiste (verhalen) verzinnen,
wanneer ze beweren dat de maagd Tuccia, gewijd aan Vesta,
nadat ze naar haar gezellinnen in een zeef vanaf de rivier water had gebracht,
haar eigen maagdelijkheid heeft bewezen.
Want ook al had zij, geleid door een gemeenschappelijke vergissing,
haar zuiverheid gewijd aan een onechte godheid,
toch heeft de ware God het onschuldige en kuise
meisje verdedigd en geprezen met dit wonder.

English translation

I do believe that the Latin annals do not fabricate untruthful (records),
when they claim that the virgin Tuccia, devoted to Vesta,
after she brought water from the river in a sieve to her companions
proved her own virginity.
for even if she had, guided by a common error,
dedicated her purity to a false divinity,
still the true God had defended the innocent and chaste
maiden and praised her with this miracle.

List of Figures

Fig. 5. Giovanni Battista Moroni, The Vestal Virgin Tuccia, *c.* 1555. Oil on canvas, 152,5 x 86,9 cm. London, The National Gallery, inv. no. NG3123.

Last access 12th of August, 2018, https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/giovanni-battista-moroni-the-vestal-virgin-tuccia

Fig. 6. Marcello Venusti (attributed to), *The Vestal Tuccia Trampling a Snake*, sixteenth century (repainted in the eighteenth century). Lunette, no dimensions. Rome, Capella Santa Caterina in the Chiesa di Sant' Agostino, no inventory number.

Photo author.

Fig. 7. Moretto da Brescia (Allesandro Bonvicino), *The Vestal Virgin Tuccia*, *c.* 1540-1544. Oil on panel, 113 x 86 cm. New York, private collection, no inventory number.

Andrea Bayer (ed.), *Love and Art in the Renaissance*, exh. cat., New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art/ Fort Worth, Kimbell Art Museum (New Haven/ London: Yale University Press, 2008), cat. 144.

Fig. 8. Bartolomeo Neroni, *Tuccia (Chastity)*, mid sixteenth century. Tempera on panel, 74,3 x 45 cm. London, Victoria & Albert Museum, inv. no. 425-1869.

Last access 7th April, 2018, http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O125590/tuccia-chastity-tempera-painting-neroni-bartolomeo/.

Fig. 9. Bartolomeo Neroni, *Claudia Quinta (Confidence)*, mid sixteenth century. Tempera on panel, 74,3 x 45,7 cm. London, Victoria & Albert Museum, inv. no. 426-1869.

Last access 7th April, 2018,

http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O124611/claudia-quinta-confidence-tempera-painting-neroni-bartolomeo/.

Fig. 10. Artist unknown (Italian), *Claudia proving her Innocence*, c. 1740. Fan leather (kid) leaf, watercolour painting, carved and pierced ivory and mother-of-pearl guards, carved ivory sticks, 29,5 cm (guardstick). United Kingdom, Royal Collection Trust, inv. no. RCIN 25095.

Last access 7th April, 2018, https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/25095/fan-depicting-claudia-proving-her-innocence.

Fig. 11. Cristofano Gherardi, *La Vestale Tuccia*, mid sixteenth century. Fresco, no dimensions. Rome, The Hall of the Eagles, Musei Capitolini, no inventory number.

Photo Sovrintendenza Capitolina.

Fig. 12. Cristofano Gherardi, *Claudia Quinta*, mid sixteenth century. Fresco, no dimensions. Rome, The Hall of the Eagles, Palazzo dei Conservatori, Musei Capitolini, no inventory number.

Photo author.

Fig. 13. Pieter Jalhea Furnius (after Jan van der Straet), *Tuccia met een zeef aan de waterkant*, 1573. Engraving on paper, 225 × 296 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-OB-7404.

Last access 12th of April, 2018, http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.106880.

Fig. 14. Theodoor Galle (after Jan van der Straet), *Tuccia bewijst haar* onschuld, 1653 - 1654. Engraving on paper, 215 × 281 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-2015-10-193.

Last access 12th of April, 2018, http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.581818.

Fig. 15. Pieter Paul Rubens, *The Vindication of Tuccia* , *c.* 1622. Pen, brown ink and traces of black chalk on paper, 22,7 x 31,5 cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre, inv. no. 20199.

Last access 10th of April, 2018,
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Fig. 16. G. Baptista Bava, La vestale Tuccia che porge il setaccio, 1552. Marble, no dimensions. Volterra, Chiesa di San Francesco, no inventory number.

Last access 10th of April, 2018,
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Giovan_battista_bava,_acquasantiera_con_la_vestale_tuccia_che_porge_il_setaccio,_1552,_02.JPG.

Fig. 17. Giovanni Bandini, *La Vestale Tuccia*, 1547. Marble, no dimensions. Florence, Chiesa di San Bartolomeo a Monte Oliveto, no inventory number.

Last access 12th April, 2018,
https://sanbartolomeoamonteoliveto.wordpress.com/affreschi-e-opere-darte/.

Fig. 18. Raffaello Guidi (after Jacob Matham, after Bartholomeus Spranger), *Vestaalse maagd Tuccia draagt water in een vergiet om haar onschuld te bewijzen*, 1613. Engraving on paper, 381 x 476 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-36.363.

Last access 12th of April, 2018,
http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.119619.

Fig. 19. Jacob Matham (after Bartolomeus Spranger), *Vestaalse maagd Tuccia draagt water in een vergiet om haar onschuld te bewijzen*, 1608. Engraving on paper (two plates), 285 x 495 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-OB-27.240.

Last access 12th of April, 2018,
http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.337100.

Fig. 20. Manifattura di San Michele (after Domenico Corvi), *La Vestale Tuccia*, 1768. Tapestry, no dimensions. Roma, Hall of the Tapestries, Palazzo dei Conservatori, Musei Capitolini, inv. no. PC 342.

Photo author.

Fig. 21. Domenico Corvi, *La vestale Tuzia*, second half of the eighteenth century. Oil on canvas, 135,5 x 122 cm. Rome, Pinacoteca Capitolina, Musei Capitolini, inv. no. PC 281.

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https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/the-vestal-tuccia/QgEscMzY_K55Jg.

Fig. 22. Domenico Corvi, *Salotto Corvi* (detail *Il ritratto a figura intera della Vestale Tuccia*), eighteenth century. Fresco, no dimensions. Rome, Palazzo Barberini, no inventory number.

Photo Mauro Coen, Gallerie Nazionali di Arte Antica di Roma, Palazzo Barberini.

Fig. 23. Niccolò Giolfino (studio of), *La vestale Tuccia*, *c.* 1500-1510. Tempera on panel, 20 x 63, 2 cm. Lovere, Accademia Tadini, inv. no. P 22.

Last access 13th of April, 2018,
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Fig. 24. Rutilio and Domenico Manetti, *L'innocenza della vestale Tuccia*, first half of the seventheenth century. Oil on canvas, 303 x 448 cm. Siena, Pinacoteca Nazionale, inv. no. 640.

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http://www.provincia.siena.it/index.php/La-provincia/La-sede2/Photogallery.

Fig. 25. Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Portrait of a young woman, c.* 1490. Tempera on panel, 51.8 x 39.7 cm. San Marino, The Arabella Huntington Memorial Collection, The Huntington Library, Art Collections and Botanical Gardens, no inventory number.

David Alan Brown (ed.), Virtue and Beauty: Leonardo's Ginevra de' Benci and Renaissance Portraits of Women, exh. cat., Washington, National Gallery of Art (New Jersey/ Oxfordshire: Princeton University Press, 2001), B, 197

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Fig. 26. Piero della Francesca, *Madonna del Parto*. *c.* 1560. 260 x 203 cm. Monterchi, Museo Civico, no inventory number.

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http://www.madonnadelparto.it/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/IngrandimentoMDP1024-1080x1032.jpg.

Fig. 27. Jean-Antoine Houdon, *L'Hiver ou la Frileuse,* 1783. , 145 x 57 cm. Montpellier, Musée Fabre, no inventory number.

Last access 15th of August, 2018,
https://musee-denys-puech.rodezagglo.fr/assets/docs/posters-sculptures-expo-art-matiere.pdf.

Fig. 28. Gertrude Abercrombie, *Split Personality*, 1954. Oil on masonite, 20.32 x 25.4 cm. Chicago, DePaul Art Museum, inv. no. 2010.21.

Last access 10th of August, 2018,

https://museumcollections.depaul.edu/detail.php?term=abercrombie&module=objects&type=keyword&x=0&y=0&kv=6003&record=0&module=objects.

Fig. 29. Artist unknown, “Castità” from *Iconologia* by Cesare Ripa, 1603. Engraving, no dimensions. Washington, D.C., Folger Shakespeare Library, inv. no. PN 6349 R65 1603 Cage.

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Fig. 30. North Italian school, *Cassone*, late fifteenth century. Wood with polychromy and oil on panel, no dimensions. Chicago, Loyola University Museum of Art, inv. no. 1975-02.

Last access 15th of August, 2018, https://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/luma/pdfs/Cassone.pdf.

Fig. 31. North Italian school, *Cassone* (detail Tuccia), late fifteenth century. Oil on panel, no dimensions. Chicago, Loyola University Museum of Art, inv. no. 1975-02.

Last access 15th of August, 2018, https://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/luma/pdfs/Cassone.pdf.

Fig. 32. Bartolomeo Montagna, *Duilio e Bilia, Tuccia trasporta l'acqua col setaccio*, *c.* 1490-1495. Wood with polychromy and oil on panel, no dimensions. Milan, Museo Poldi Pezzoli, inv. no. 1652.

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Fig. 33. Sandro Botticelli, *The tragedy of Lucretia. c.* 1500. Tempera and oil on panel, 83.8 x 176.8 cm. Fenway-Kenmore, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, inv. no. P16e20.

Last access 15th of August, 2018, https://www.gardnermuseum.org/sites/default/files/images/art/007514.jpg.

Fig. 34. Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Birth of Saint John the Baptist, c.* 1486-90. Fresco, 741 x 426 cm. Florence, Capella Maggiore, Santa Maria Novella, no inventory number.

Last access 15th of August, 2018, https://www.wga.hu/html_m/g/ghirland/domenico/6tornab/62tornab/3birth.html.

Fig. 35. Francesco di Giorgio Martini, *Triumph of Chastity*, *c.* 1465. Tempera on panel, 38.7 x 170.4 cm. Los Angeles, The Getty Museum, no inventory number.

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Fig. 36. Carlo Maratta, *La Vestale Tuccia*, seventeenth century. Oil on canvas, 128 x 89 cm. Location unknown, private collection, no inventory number.

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Fig. 37. Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *Madonna and Child with St. Anne (Dei Palafrenieri)*, 1606. Oil on canvas, 292 x 211 cm. Rome, Galleria Borghese, no inventory number.

Last access 12th of August, 2018,
https://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?/html/c/caravagg/08/48palaf.html.

Fig. 38. Andrea Mantegna, *The Vestal Virgin Tuccia with a Sieve*, *c.* 1495-1506. Egg tempera on poplar, 72.5 x 23 cm. London, *The National Gallery*, inv. no. NG1125.1.

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https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/andrea-mantegna-the-vestal-virgin-tuccia-with-a-sieve.

Fig. 39. Justus Sustermans, *Ritratto di Vittoria Della Rovere in veste di Tuccia*. *c.* 1634-1640. Oil of panel, 101 x 80 cm. Firenze, Palazzo Pitti, Galleria Palatina e Appartamenti, inv no. 116.

Last access 15 August, 2018,
http://catalogo.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/foto/120000/112400/112141.jpg.

Fig. 40. Justus Sustermans (attributed to), *Portrait der Vittoria Della Rovere di Cosimo III und Ihres Tutors*, seventeenth century. Oil on canvas, 111,5 x 88 cm. Unknown location, private collection, no inventory number.

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http://www.artnet.com/artists/justus-sustermans/portrait-der-vittoria-della-rovere-di-cosimo-iii-kfLi9CnoroNIpHEBZ676Fw2.

Fig. 41. Justus Sustermans, *Ritratto di Vittoria della Rovere*, 1638-1640. Oil on canvas, 154 x 119 cm. Florence, Palazzo degli Uffizi, Galleria degli Uffizi, inv. no. 1890, n. 2251.

Last access 15 August, 2018,

http://catalogo.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/foto/120000/112400/112162.jpg.

Fig. 42. Giovanni Battista Beinaschi, *Tuccia trasporta l'acqua col setaccio*, *c.* 1650 - 1688. Oil on canvas, 119 × 171 cm. Location unknown, private collection, no inventory number.

Last access 30th of July, 2018, http://catalogo.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/scheda.v2.jsp?tipo_scheda=OA&id=50327&titolo=Benaschi%20Giovanni%20Battista,%20Tuccia%20trasporta%20l%27acqua%20col%20setaccio&locale=en&decorator=layout_resp&apply=true#lg=1&slide=1.

Fig. 43. Peter Paul Rubens, *Susanna and the Elders. c.* 1607-1608. Oil on canvas, 94 x 66 cm. Rome, Galleria Borghese, no inventory number.

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Fig. 44. Giulio Romano, *The Vestal Tuccia with the Sieve*, early sixteenth century. Drawing, no dimensions. Chatworth, Chatsworth House, inv. no. ND202 to ND1100.

Last access on 15th of August, 2018, http://community.artauthority.net/work.asp?wid=76803&pos=40.

Fig. 45. Albrecht Altdorfer, *Susanna im Bade*, 1526. Oil on panel, 74.8 x 61.2 cm. Munich, Alte Pinakothek, inv. no. 698.

Last access 12th of August, 2018, https://www.pinakothek.de/kunst/albrecht-altdorfer/susanna-im-bade.

Fig. 46. Louis-Joseph Le Lorrain, *La Vestale 'Tuxia,'* mid eighteenth century. Oil on canvas, 113 x 90.5 cm. Location unknown, private collection, no inventory number.

Last access 11th of August, 2018, http://www.artnet.fr/artistes/louis-joseph-le-lorrain/la-vestale-tuxia-filBij3tXKnUnM6B4Grf3w2.

Fig. 47. Jean-Marc Nattier, *Portrait of a Lady as a Vestal Virgin*, 1759. Oil on canvas, 115,9 x 135,9 cm. Raleigh, North Carolina Museum of Art, inv. no. 52.9.130.

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Fig. 48. François Hubert Drouais (attributed to), *Madame de Pompadour as a Vestal Virgin*, *c.* 1762. Oil on canvas, 100 x 81 cm. Montréal, David M. Stewart Museum, inv. no. 359.2012.

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Fig. 49. Filippo Bigioli, Alcova Torlonia (detail *Tuccia*), 1837. Fresco, no dimensions. Rome, Museo di Roma Palazzo Braschi, no inventory number.

Photo Museo di Roma, inv. no. MR_D - 57396.

Fig. 50. Louis Hector Leroux, *La vestale Tuccia*, 1877. Oil on canvas, 117 x 76 cm. Location unknown, private collection, no inventory number.

Last access 12th of August, 2018, http://www.artnet.com/artists/louis-hector-leroux/la-vestale-tuccia-QOOGjGBl91jYFBMGYL160Q2.

Fig. 51. George Gower, *The Plimpton Sieve Portrait of Elizabeth I of England*, 1579. Oil on panel, 104.4 cm x 76.2 cm. Washington D.C., Folger Shakespeare Library, inv. no. ART 246171.

Last access 5th of July, 2018, http://bodleian.thejewishmuseum.org/?p=61

Fig. 52. Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger, *Queen Elizabeth I ('The Ditchley portrait')*, *c.* 1592. Oil on canvas, 241.3 cm x 152.4 cm. London, National Portrait Gallery, inv. no. NPG 2561.

Last access 8th of July, 2018, https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw02079/Queen-Elizabeth-I-The-Ditchley-portrait?.

Fig. 53. Peter Paul Rubens, after after Parmigianino, *Allegory of Emperor Charles V as master of the world*, *c.* 1604. Oil on canvas, 161.5 cm x 137.5 cm. Salzburg, Residenzgalerie, inv. no. 303.

Last access 8th of July, 2018, https://www.akg-images.co.uk/archive/Allegory-of-Emperor-Charles-V-as-master-of-the-world.-2UMDHUR4F1VX.html.

Fig. 54. Quentin Metsys the Younger, *Sieve Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I (Siena Sieve Portrait)*, 1583. Oil on panel, 124.5 x 91.5 cm. Siena, Pinacoteca Nazionale, inv. no. 454.

Last access 8th of July,
https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/sieve-portrait-of-queen-elizabeth-i-c1583.

Fig. 55. Artist unknown, "*Sic discerne*" from *Choice of Emblemes* by Geffrey Whitney, 1586. Woodcut, no dimensions. Washington, D.C., Folger Shakespeare Library, inv. no. STC 25438.

Henry Green, Henry (ed.), *Whitney's "Choice of Emblemes." A fac-simile reprint* (London/ Chester/ Nantwich: Lovell Reeve & Co./ Minshull & Hughes/ E.H. Griffiths, 1866), 68.

Fig. 56. Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger (attributed to), *Elizabeth I (The Rainbow Portrait), c.* 1600. Oil on canvas, 127 x 99,1 cm. Hertfordshire, Hatfield House, no inventory number.

Roy Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth: Elizabethan Portraiture and Pageantry* (Berkeley/ Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977), 8.

Fig. 57. Philips Galle, *Prudence (Prudentia) from the Virtues, c.* 1559-60. Engraving, plate 220 x 295 mm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. no. 28.4(26).

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https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/410924.

Fig. 58. Andrea Mantegna, *Dido*, *c.* 1500. Tempera and gold on linen canvas, 65,3 x 31,4 cm. Montréal, Musée des Beaux-Arts, inv. no. 1920.104.

Last access 24th of July, 2018,
http://mini-site.louvre.fr/mantegna/acc/xmlen/section_7_3.html.

Fig. 59. Artist unknown, *Sphaera Civitatis* from *Sphaera Civitatis* by John Case, 1588. Woodcut, sheet 184 x 131 mm. Location unknown, Royal Collection Trust, inv. no. RCIN 601260.

Last access 24th of July, 2018, https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/601260/elizabeth-i.

Fig. 60. Martin Schongauer, *A Foolish Virgin in Half-Figure*, second half of the fifteenth century. Engraving, sheet 147 x 108 mm. New York, Metropoltian Museum of Art, inv. no. 1984.1201.52.

Last access 26th of July, 2018, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/367029.

Fig. 61. Artist unknown, *Terracotta oinochoe (jug) in the form of a woman's head*, late 4th century BC. Terracotta, height 13 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. no. X. 21.18.

Last access 26th of July, 2018, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/256601.

Fig. 62. Jean-Baptiste Greuze, La Cruche Cassée, 1771. Oil on canvas, 109 x 87 cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre, inv. no. 5036.

Last access 26th of July, 2018, https://www.louvre.fr/oeuvre-notices/la-cruche-cassee.

Fig. 63. Artist unknown, "*Frustrà*" from *Choice of Emblemes* by Geffrey Whitney, 1586. Woodcut, no dimensions. Washington, D.C., Folger Shakespeare Library, inv. no. STC 25438.

Henry Green (ed.), *Whitney's "Choice of Emblemes." A fac-simile reprint* (London/ Chester/ Nantwich: Lovell Reeve & Co./ Minshull & Hughes/ E.H. Griffiths, 1866), 12.

Fig. 64. Nicolas Hilliard, *Portrait of Sir Anthony Mildmay, Knight of Apethorpe, Northants*, *c.* 1590-1593. Watercolour on vellum mounted on card, mounted on wood, 23.3 x 17.4 cm. Cleveland, The Cleveland Museum of Art, inv. no.1926.554.

Last access 18th of July, 2018, http://www.clevelandart.org/art/1926.554.

Fig. 65. Hans Eworth, *Elizabeth I and the Three Goddesses*, 1569. Oil on panel, 62.9 x 84.4 cm. Windsor, Windsor Castle, inv. no. RCIN 403446.

Last access 27th of July, 2018, https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/403446/elizabeth-i-and-the-three-goddesses.

Fig. 66. Thomas Cecill, *Elizabetha Angliae et Hiberniae Reginae &c*, *c.* 1625. Engraving, 272 x 296 mm. London, The British Museum, 1849,0315.2.

Last access 27th of July, 2018, https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details/collection_image_gallery.aspx?assetId=118984001&objectId=1506325&partId=1.

Figures

Fig. 1. Artist unknown, *Portrait of a Vestal Virgin*, early second century AD.
Marble, no dimensions.
Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano (Terme), inv. no. 639.

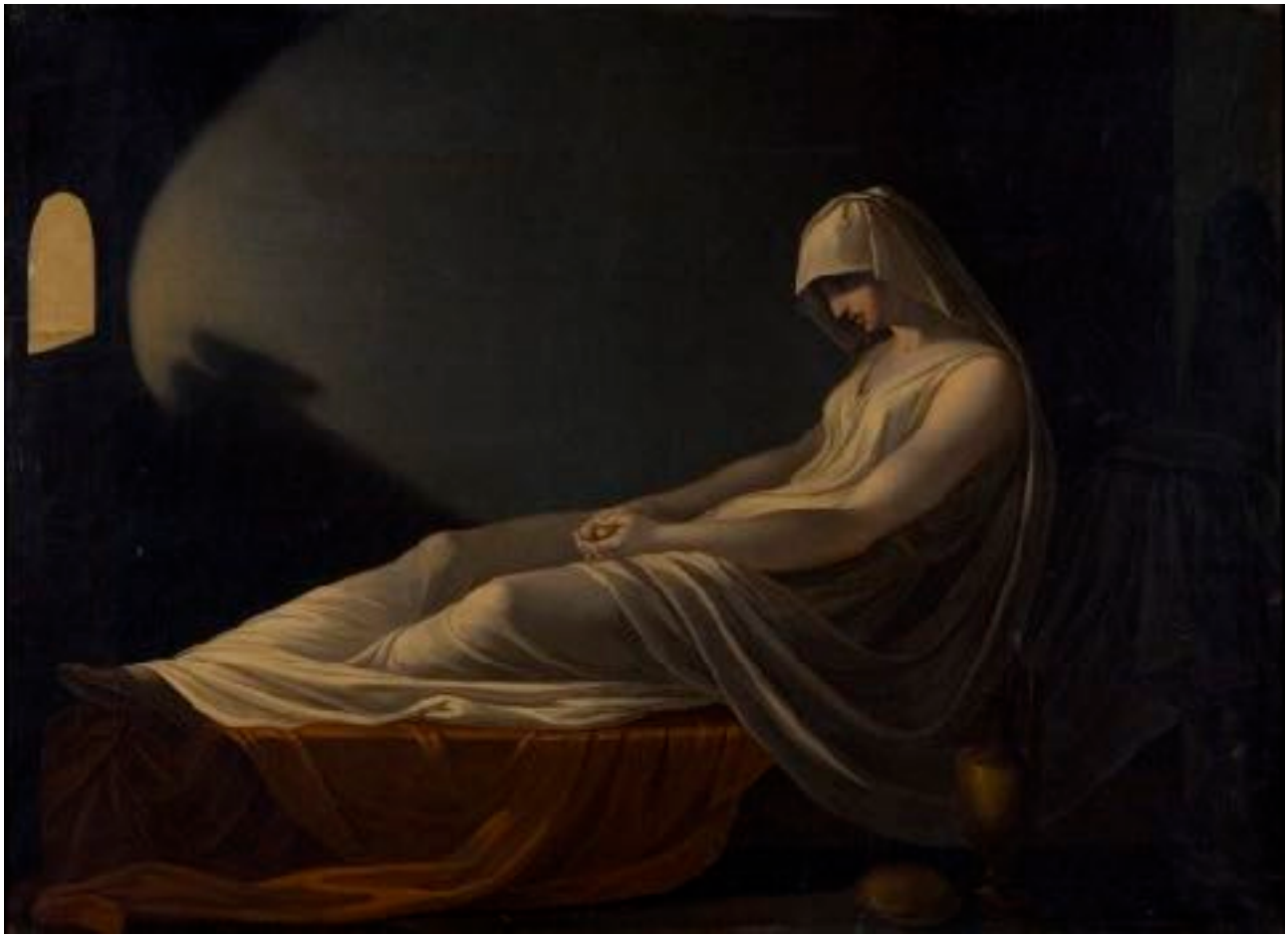


Fig. 2. Pietro Saja (attributed to), *Painting of a Reclining Vestal*, *c.* 1800.

Oil on canvas, 91,5 x 125,5 cm.

New York/ London, Carlton Hobbs LLC, inv. no. 9176.

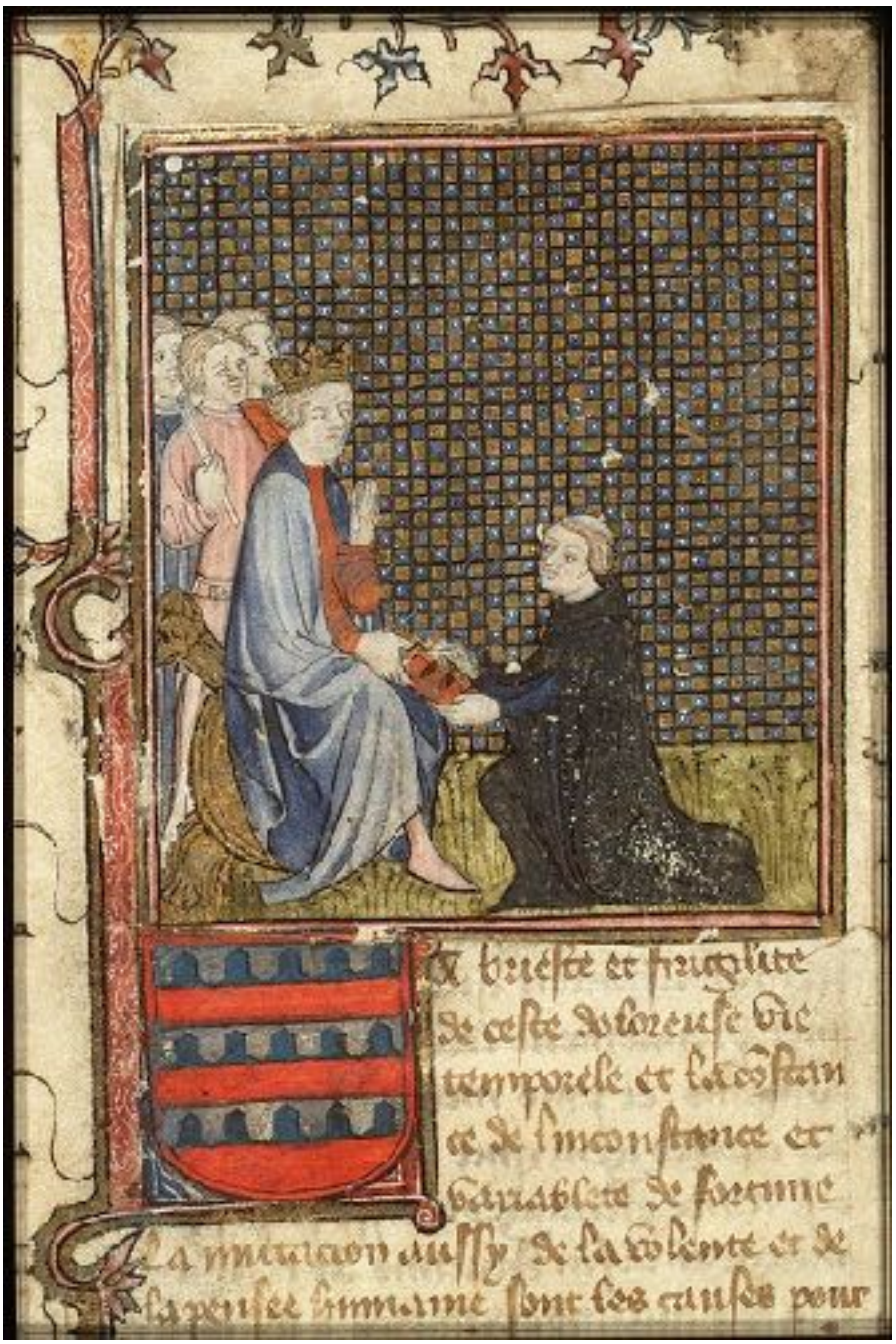


Fig. 3. Unknown artist, *Simon de Hesdin presents his translation of the 'Facta et dicta memorabilia' of Valerius Maximus to Charles V, king of France*, *c. 1400-1410.*

Vellum, ff. 477, binding of 15th-century white leather, 298 x 240 (220 x170) mm, 40 lines, littera hybrida.

The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, inv. no. KB 71 E 68.

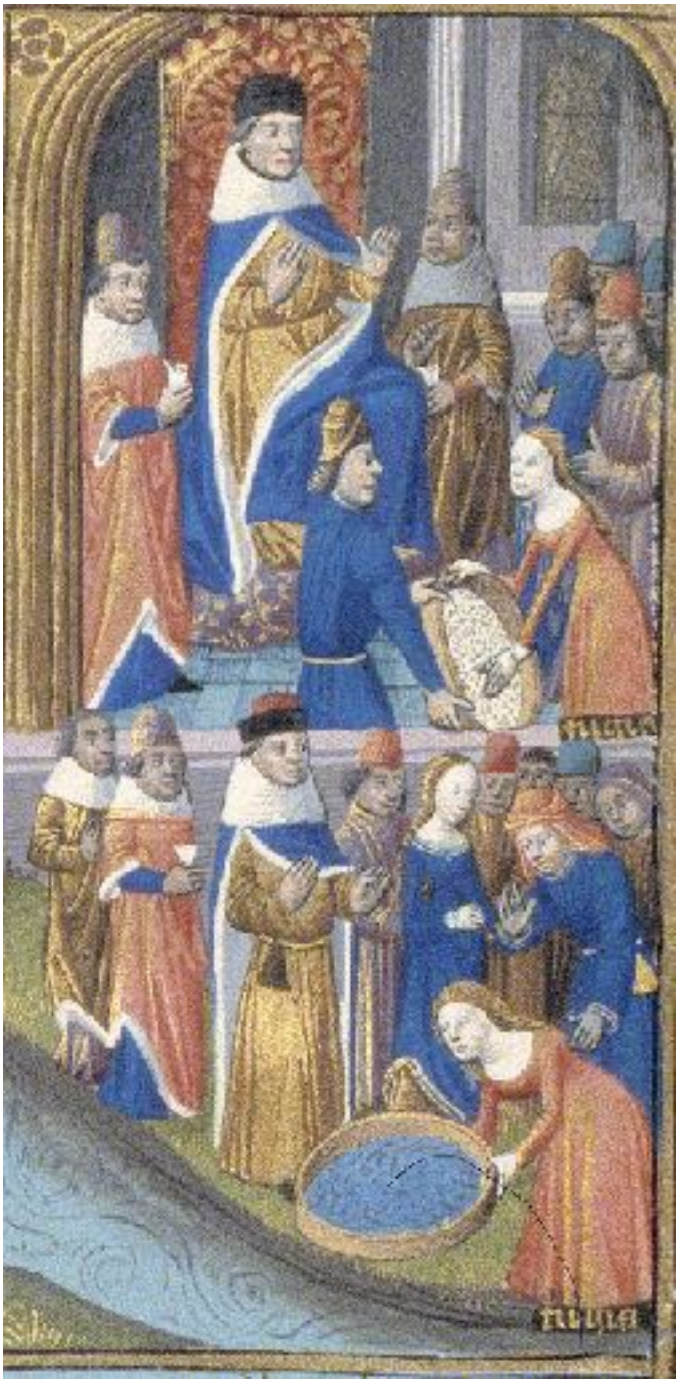


Fig. 4. Master of the Cité de Dieu of Mëcon, Master of the Psalter of Jean le Meingre III, Master of the Echevinage de Rouen, *Detail of The Vestal virgin Tuccia accused of adultery; Tuccia, being helped by Vesta, carrying water in a sieve to prove her chastity*, *c.* 1470.
Vellum, ff. 485, binding of 18th-century brown leather, 335 x 250 mm.
The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, inv. no. KB 66 B 13.

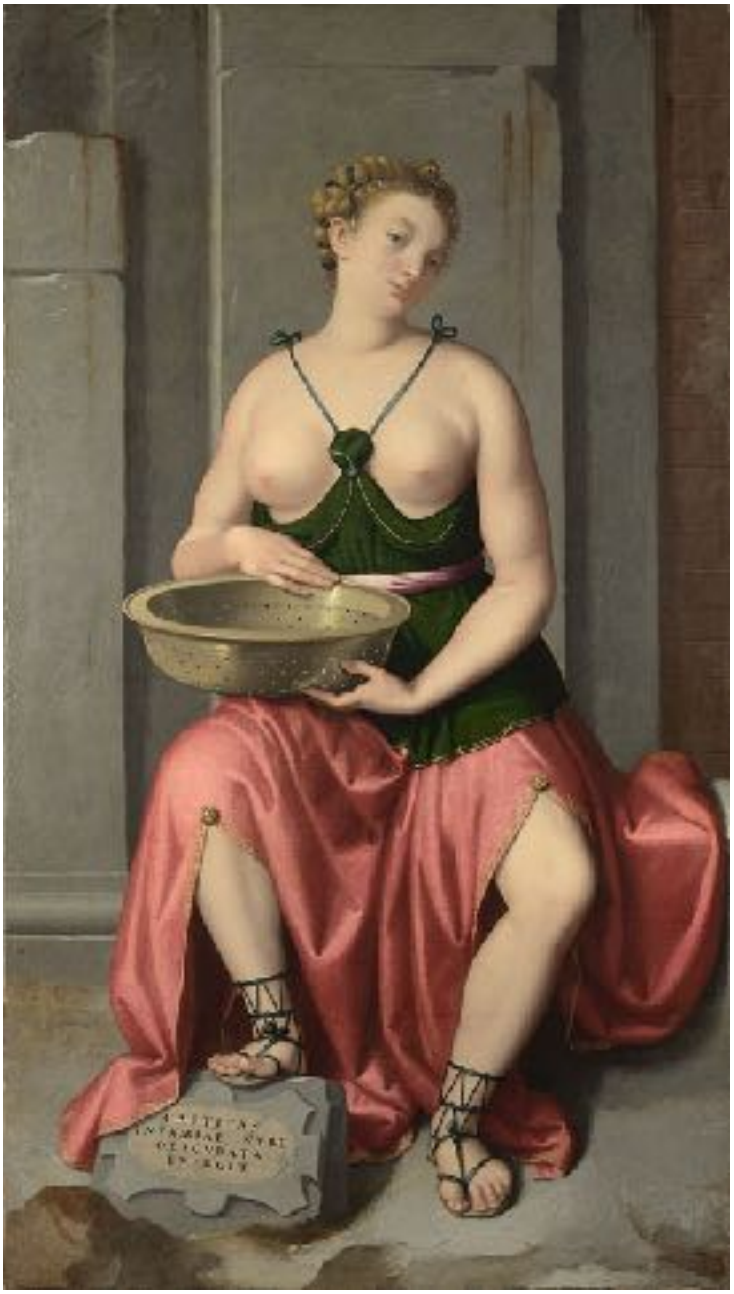


Fig. 5. Giovanni Battista Moroni, *The Vestal Virgin Tuccia, c.* 1555.

Oil on canvas, 152,5 x 86,9 cm.

London, The National Gallery, inv. no. NG3123.

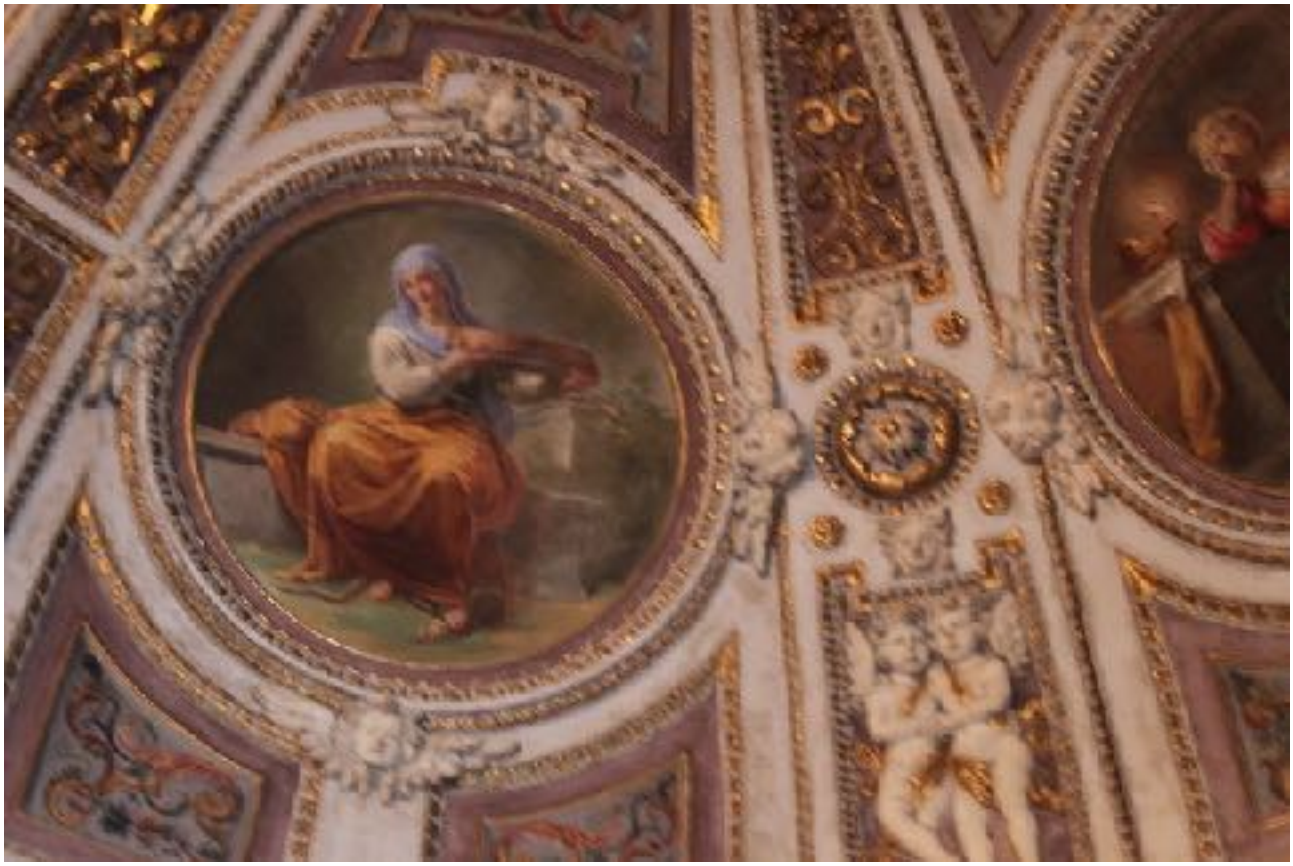


Fig. 6. Marcello Venusti (attributed to), *The Vestal Tuccia Trampling a Snake*, sixteenth century (repainted in the eighteenth century).
Lunette, no dimensions.
Rome, Capella Santa Caterina in the Chiesa di Sant' Agostino, no inventory number.

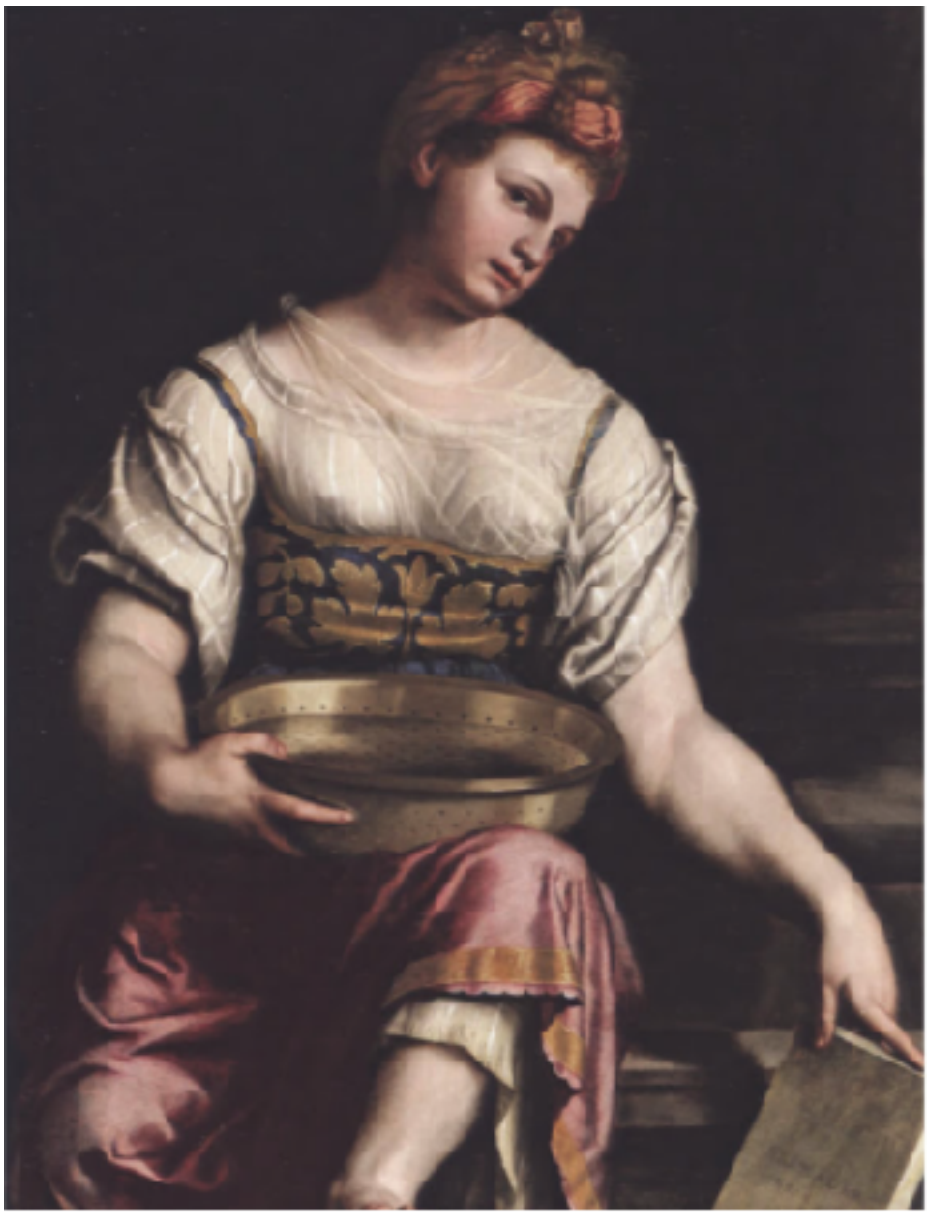


Fig. 7. Moretto da Brescia (Allesandro Bonvicino), *The Vestal Virgin Tuccia*, *c.* 1540-1544.

Oil on panel, 113 x 86 cm.

New York, private collection, no inventory number.

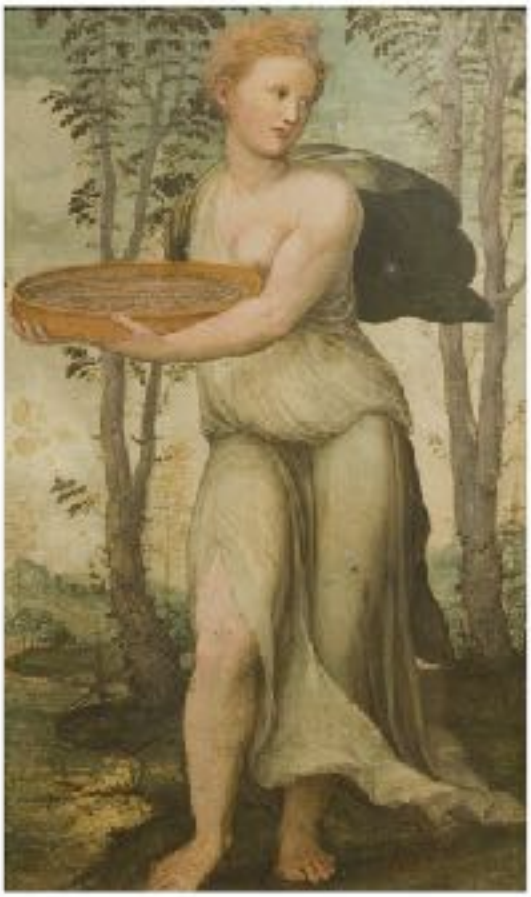


Fig. 8. Bartolomeo Neroni, *Tuccia (Chastity)*, mid sixteenth century.

Tempera on panel, 74,3 x 45 cm.

London, Victoria & Albert Museum, inv. no. 425-1869.

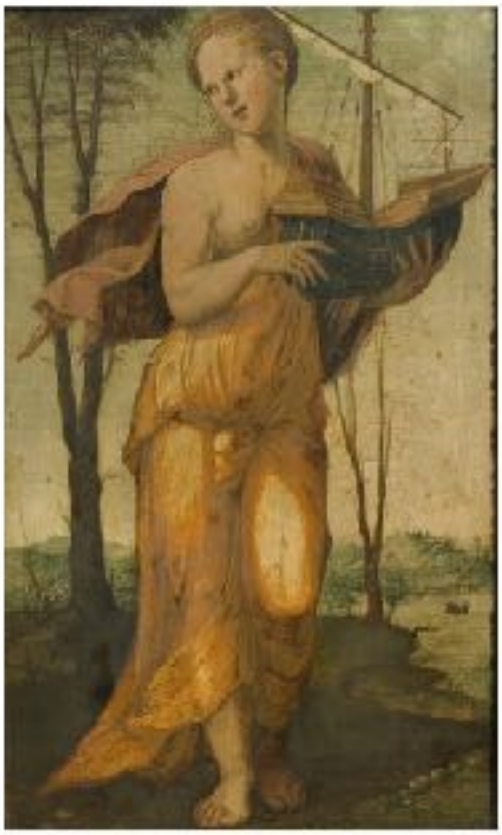


Fig. 9. Bartolomeo Neroni, *Claudia Quinta (Confidence)*, mid sixteenth century.

Tempera on panel, 74,3 x 45,7 cm.

London, Victoria & Albert Museum, inv. no. 426-1869.

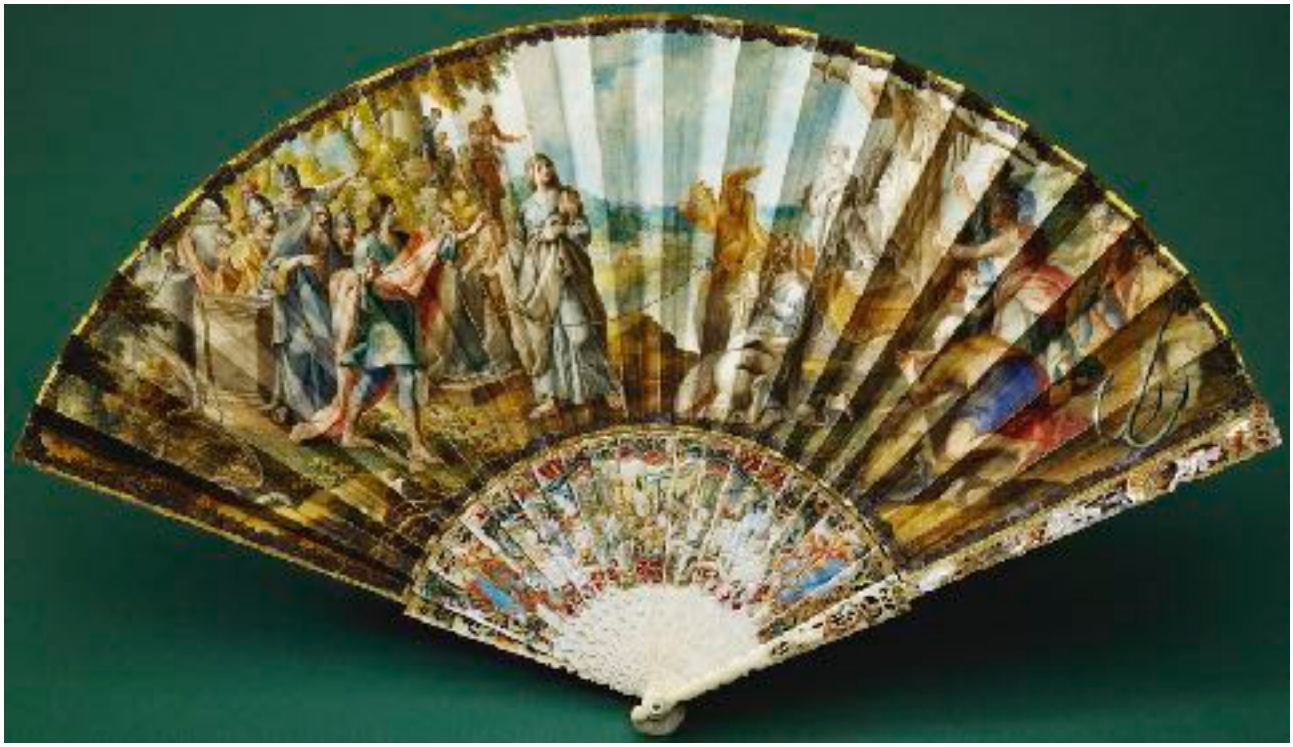


Fig. 10. Artist unknown (Italian), *Claudia proving her Innocence*, c. 1740.
Fan leather (kid) leaf, watercolour painting, carved and pierced ivory and mother-of-pearl guards, carved ivory sticks, 29, 5 cm (guardstick).
United Kingdom, Royal Collection Trust, inv. no. RCIN 25095.

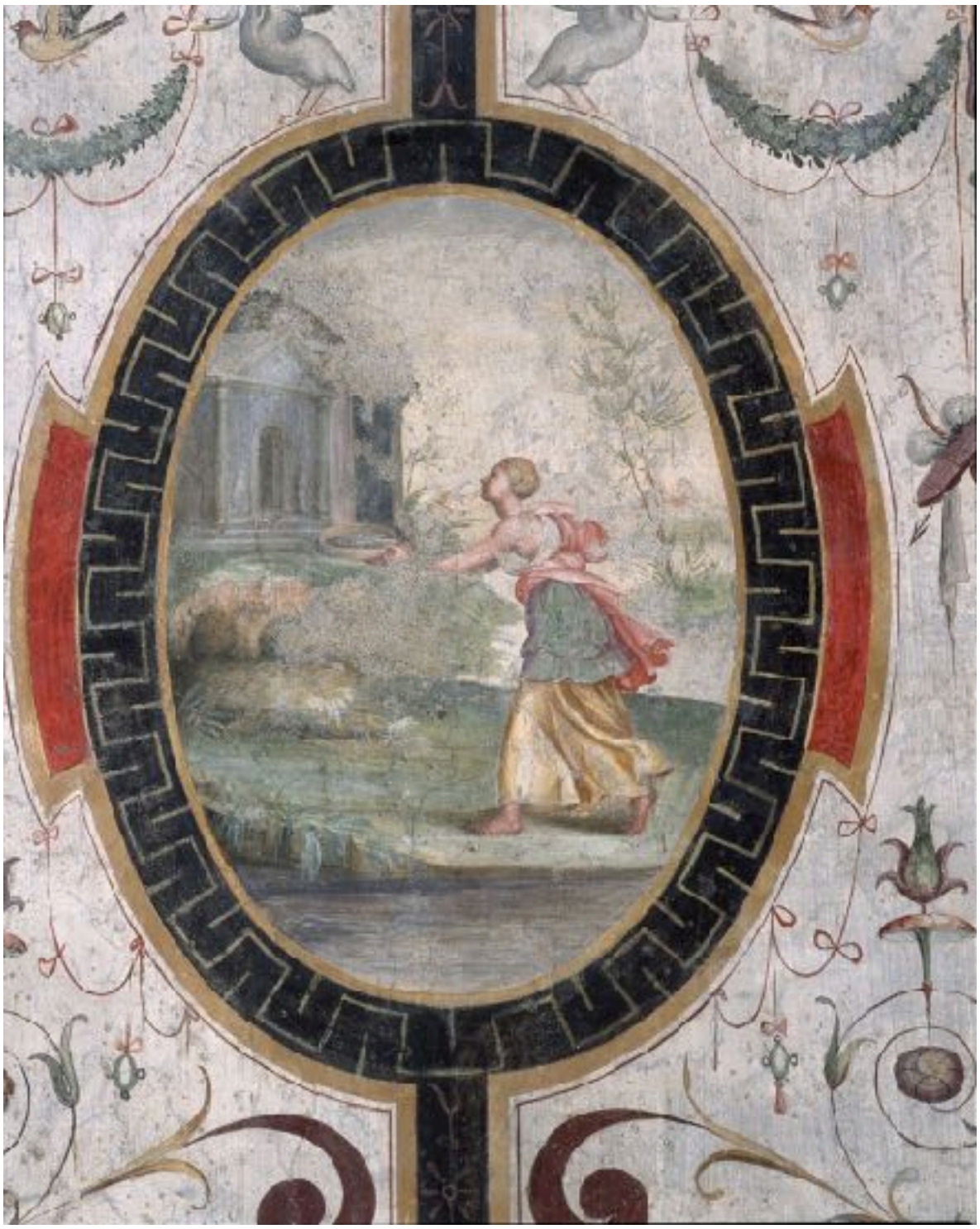


Fig. 11. Cristofano Gherardi, *La Vestale Tuccia*, mid sixteenth century.

Fresco, no dimensions.

Rome, The Hall of the Eagles, Palazzo dei Conservatori, Musei Capitolini, no inventory number.

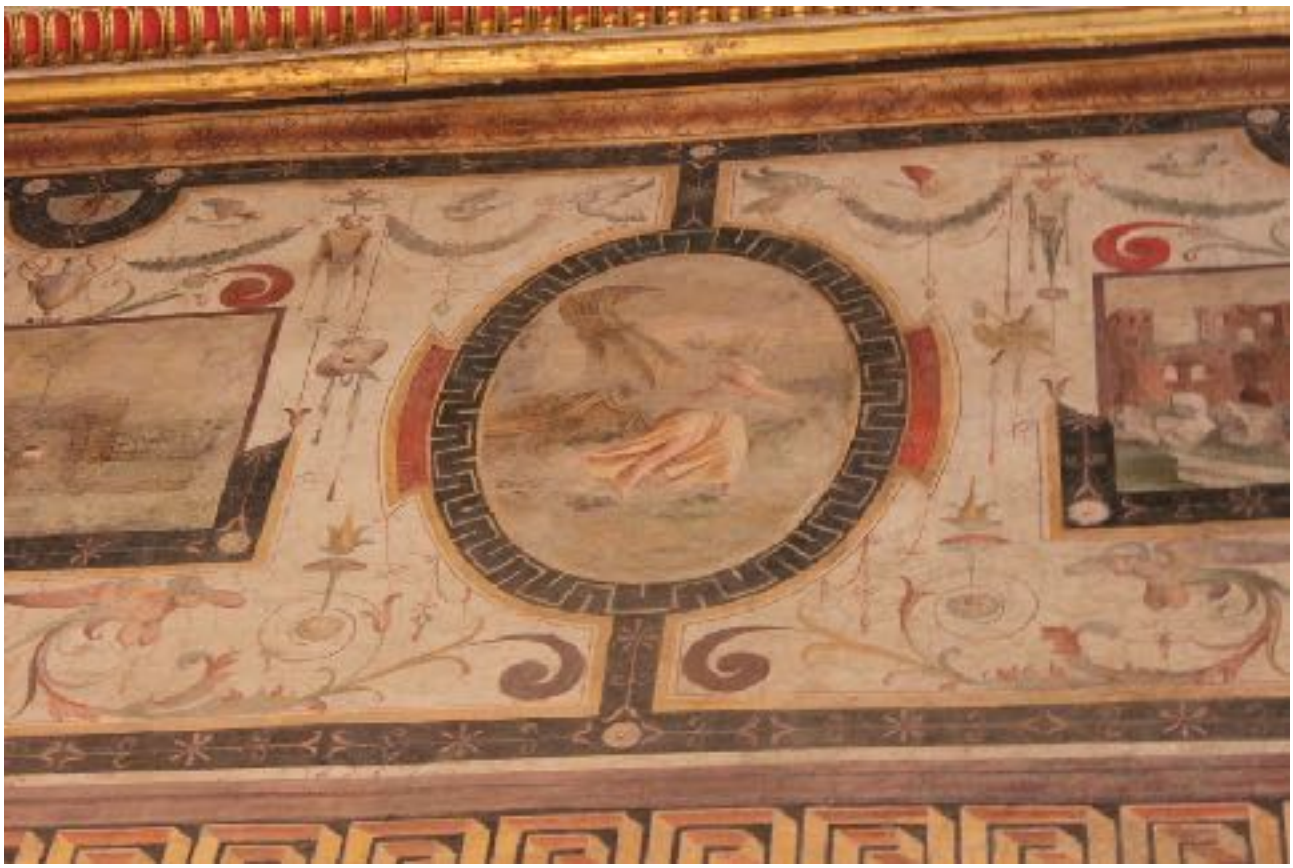


Fig. 12. Cristofano Gherardi, *Claudia Quinta*, mid sixteenth century.

Fresco, no dimensions.

Rome, The Hall of the Eagles, Palazzo dei Conservatori, Musei Capitolini, no inventory number.

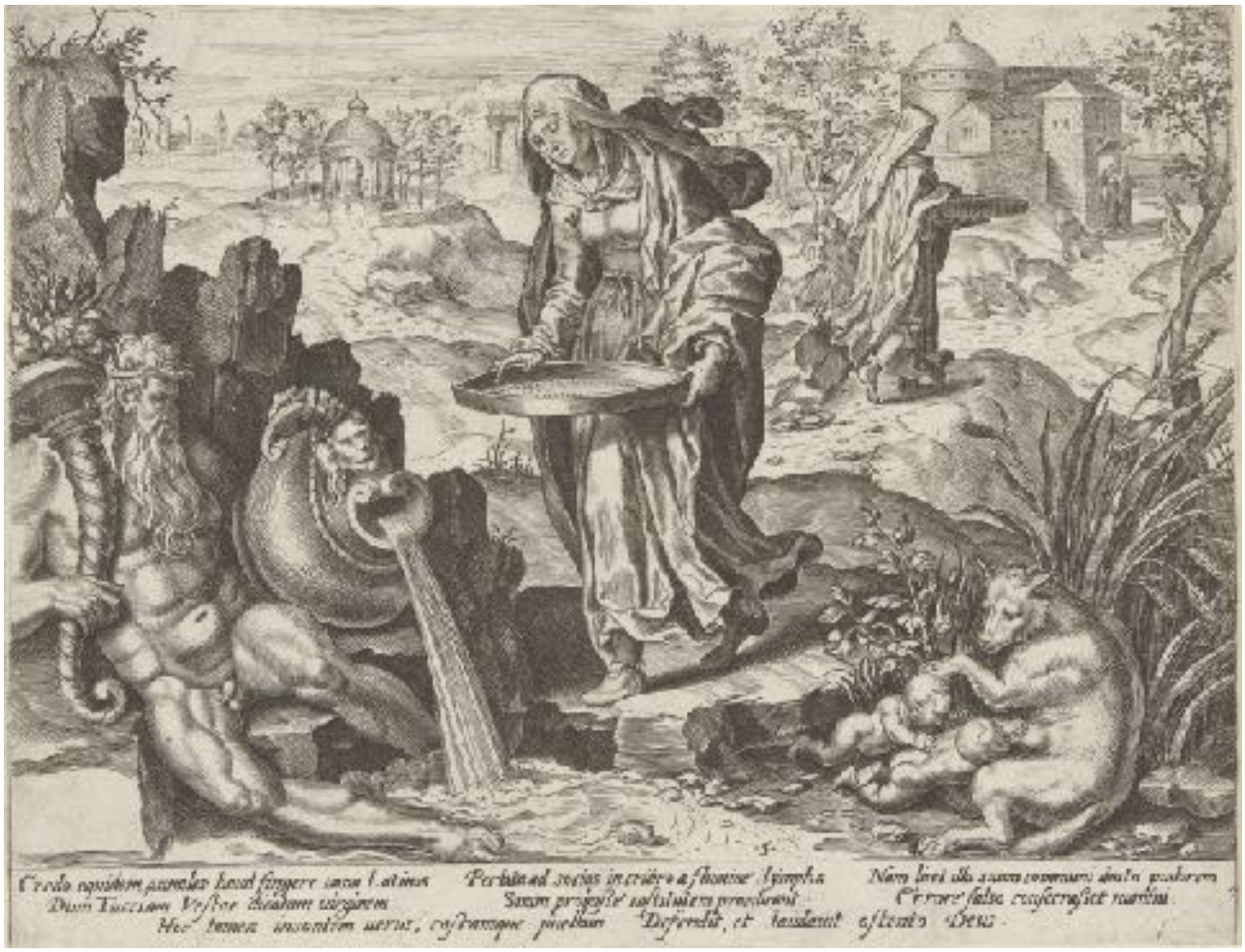
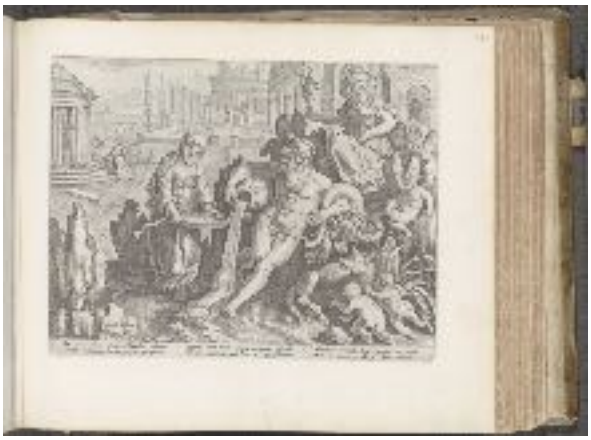


Fig. 13. Pieter Jalhea Furnius (after Jan van der Straet), *Tuccia met een zeef aan de waterkant*, 1573.

Engraving on paper, 225 × 296 mm.

Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-OB-7404.



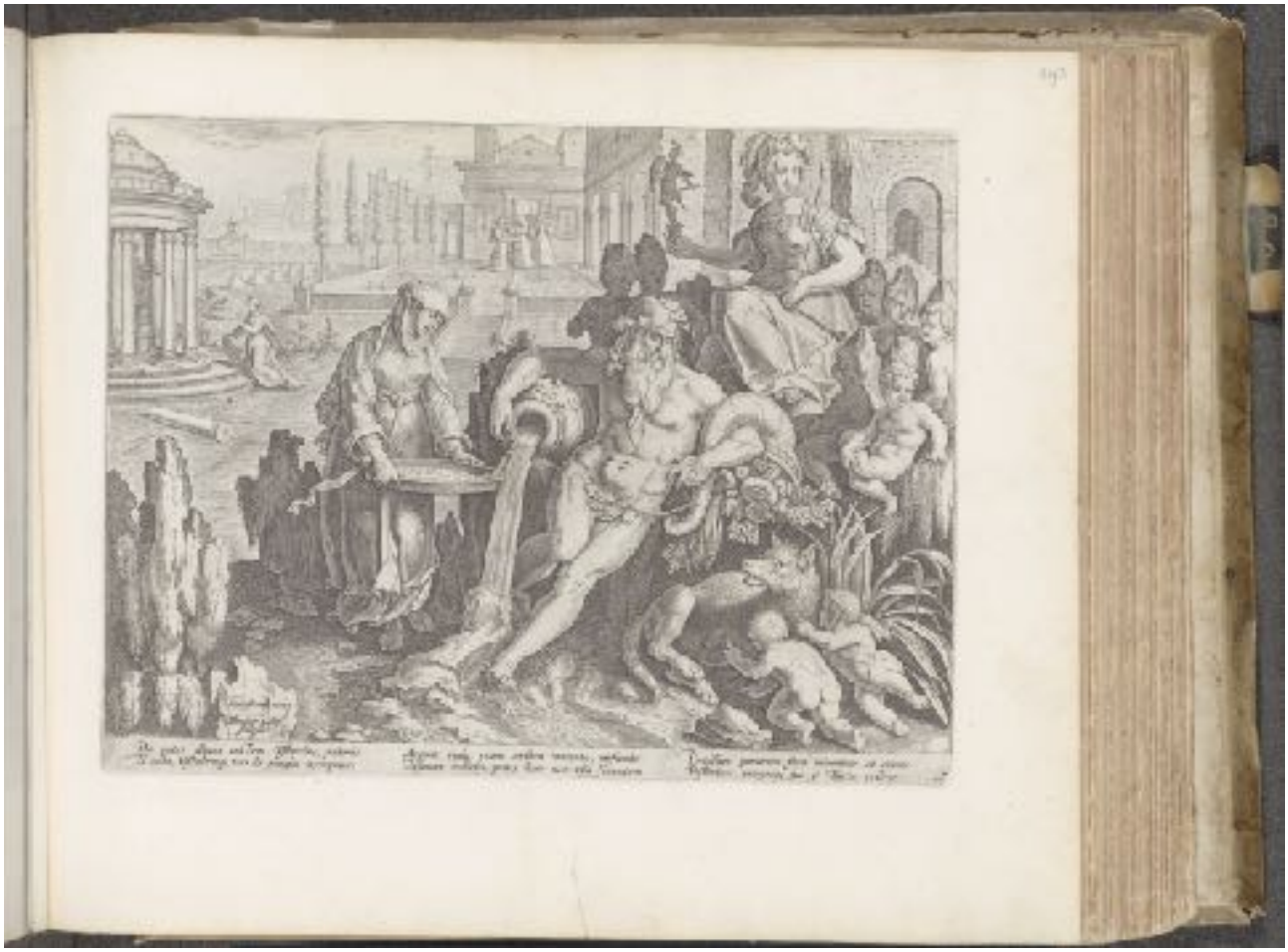


Fig. 14. Theodoor Galle (after Jan van der Straet), *Tuccia bewijst haar* onschuld, 1653 - 1654.
Engraving on paper, 215 × 281 mm.
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-2015-10-193.

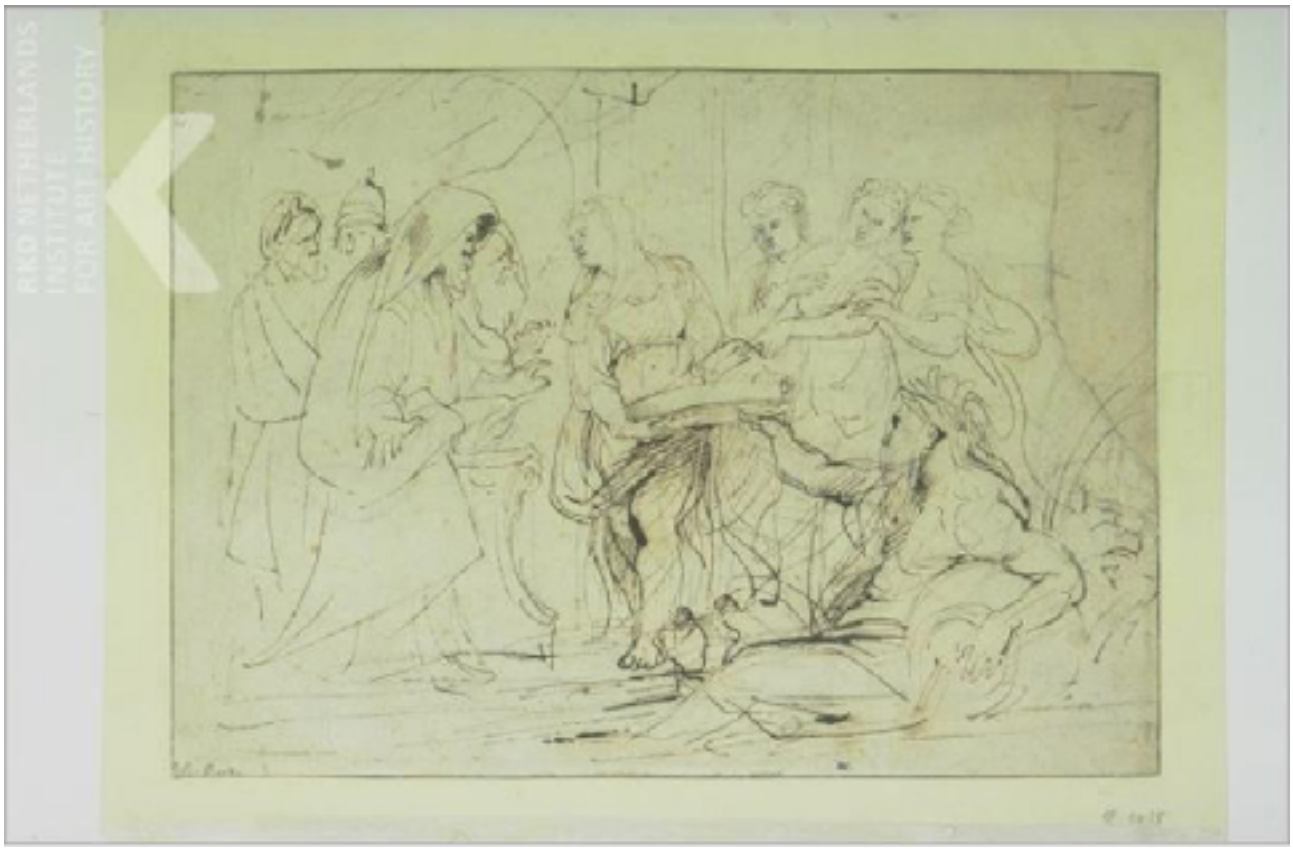


Fig. 15. Pieter Paul Rubens, *The Vindication of Tuccia* , *c.* 1622.

Pen, brown ink and traces of black chalk on paper, 22,7 x 31,5 cm.

Paris, Musée du Louvre, inv. no. 20199.

Fig. 16. G. Baptista Bava, La vestale tuccia che porge il setaccio, 1552.

Marble, no dimensions.

Volterra, Chiesa di San Francesco, no inventory number.

Fig. 17. Giovanni Bandini, *La Vestale Tuccia*, 1547.

Marble, no dimensions.

Florence, Chiesa di San Bartolomeo a Monte Oliveto, no inventory number.

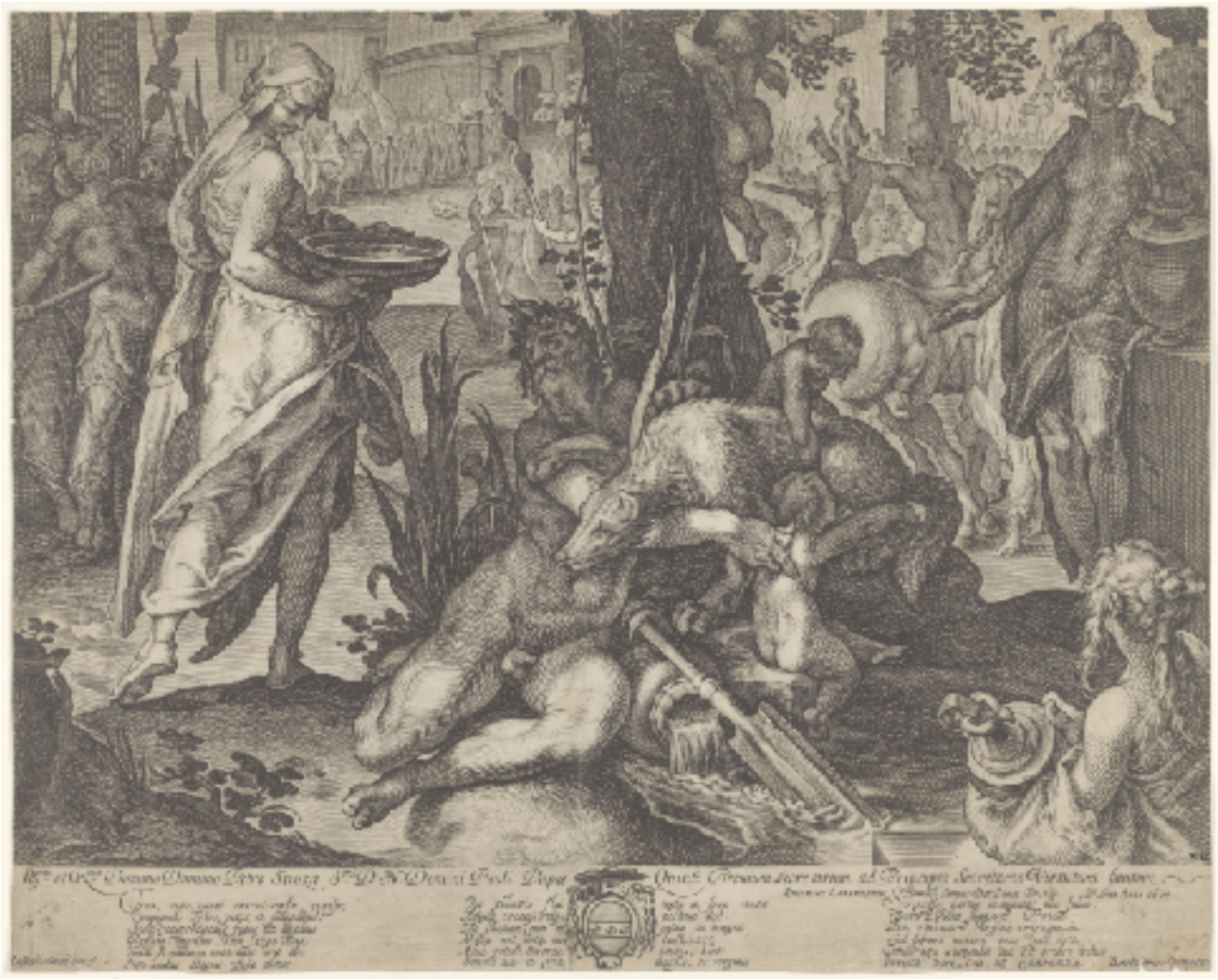


Fig. 18. Raffaello Guidi (after Jacob Matham, after Bartholomeus Spranger), *Vestaalse maagd Tuccia draagt water in een vergiet om haar onschuld te bewijzen*, 1613.

Engraving on paper, 381 x 476 mm.

Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-36.363.

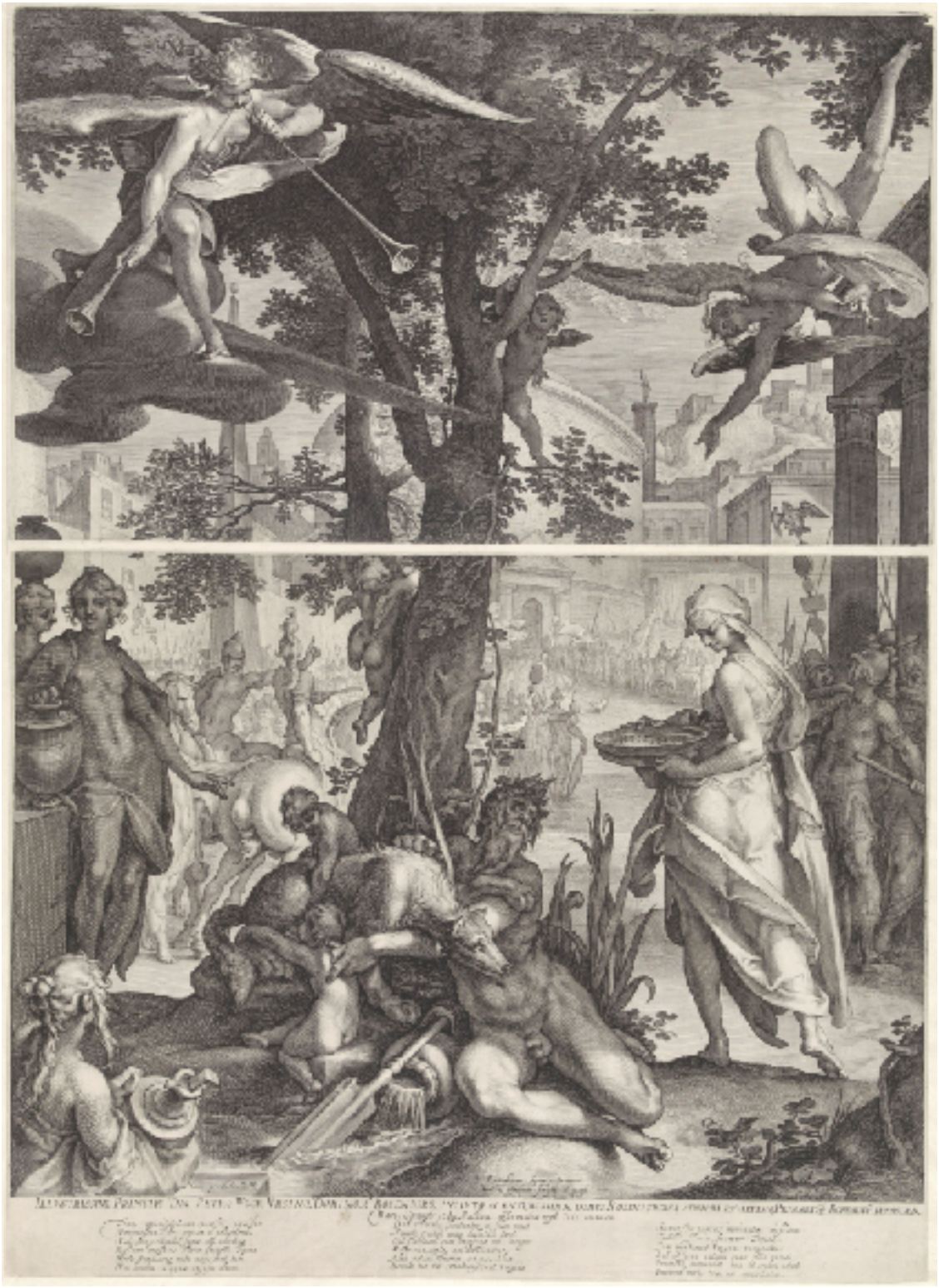


Fig. 19. Jacob Matham (after Bartolomeus Spranger), *Vestaalse maagd Tuccia draagt water in een vergiet om haar onschuld te bewijzen*, 1608.

Engraving on paper (two plates), 285 x 495 mm.

Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-OB-27.240.

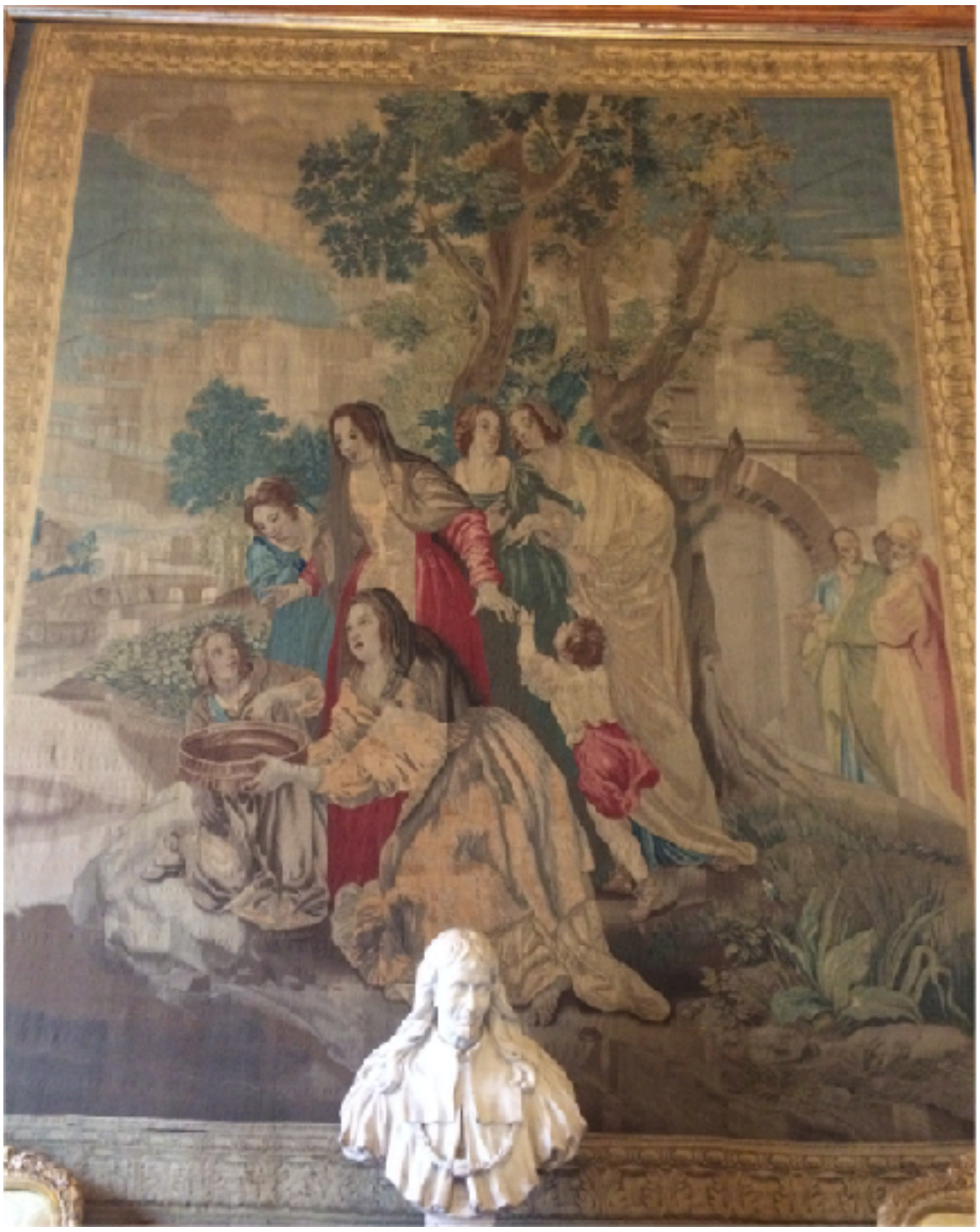


Fig. 20. Manifattura di San Michele (after Domenico Corvi), *La Vestale Tuccia*, 1768.

Tapestry, no dimensions.

Roma, Hall of the Tapestries, Palazzo dei Conservatori, Musei Capitolini, inv. no. PC 342.

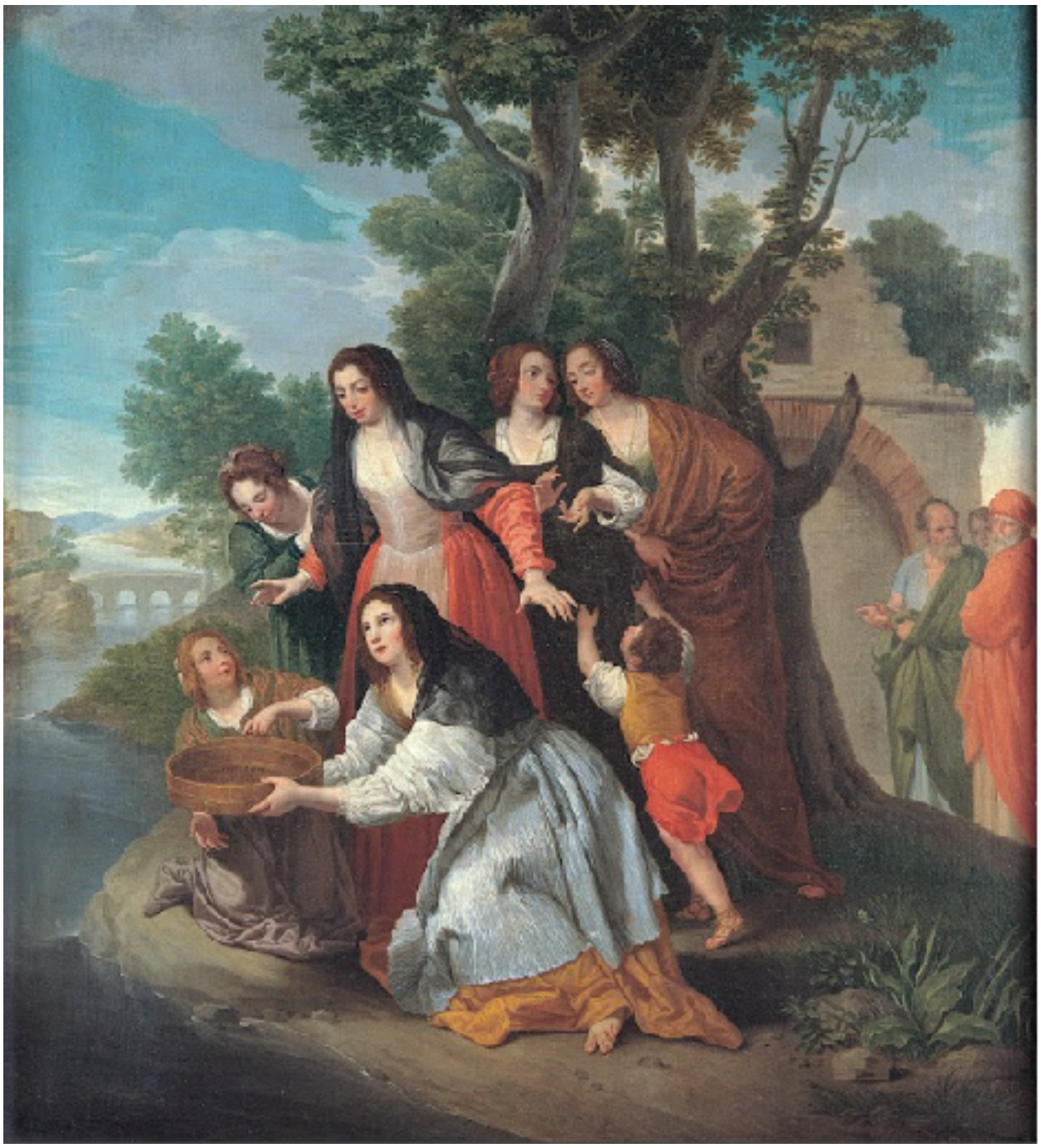


Fig. 21. Domenico Corvi, *La vestale Tuzia*, second half of the eighteenth century.

Oil on canvas, 135,5 x 122 cm.

Rome, Pinacoteca Capitolina, Musei Capitolini, inv. no. PC 281.

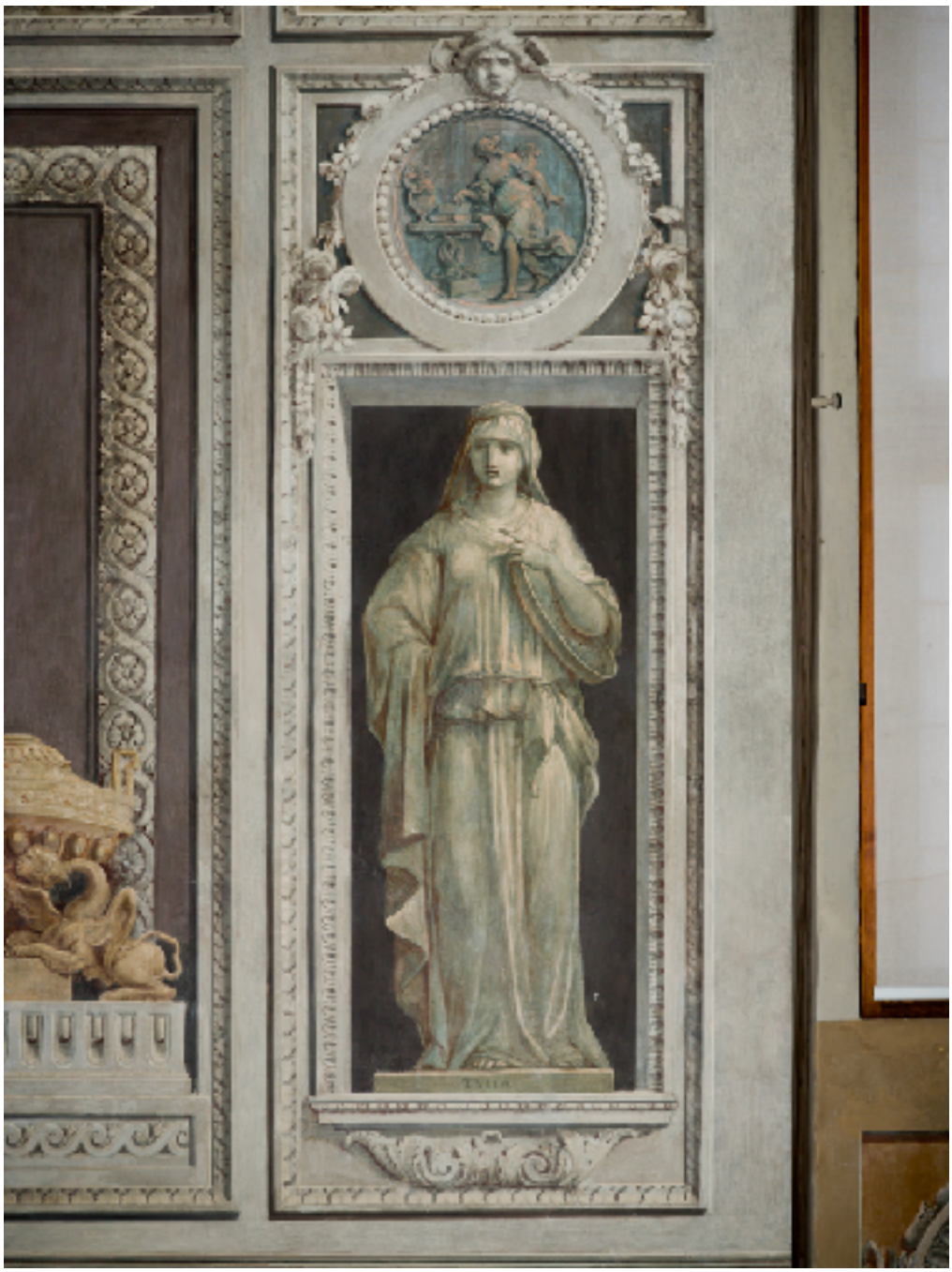


Fig. 22. Domenico Corvi, *Salotto Corvi* (detail *Il ritratto a figura intera della Vestale Tuccia*), eighteenth century.

Fresco, no dimensions.

Rome, Palazzo Barberini, no inventory number.

Fig. 23. Niccolò Giolfino (studio of), *La vestale Tuccia*, c. 1500-1510.

Tempera on panel, 20 x 63, 2 cm.

Lovere, Accademia Tadini, inv. no. P 22.

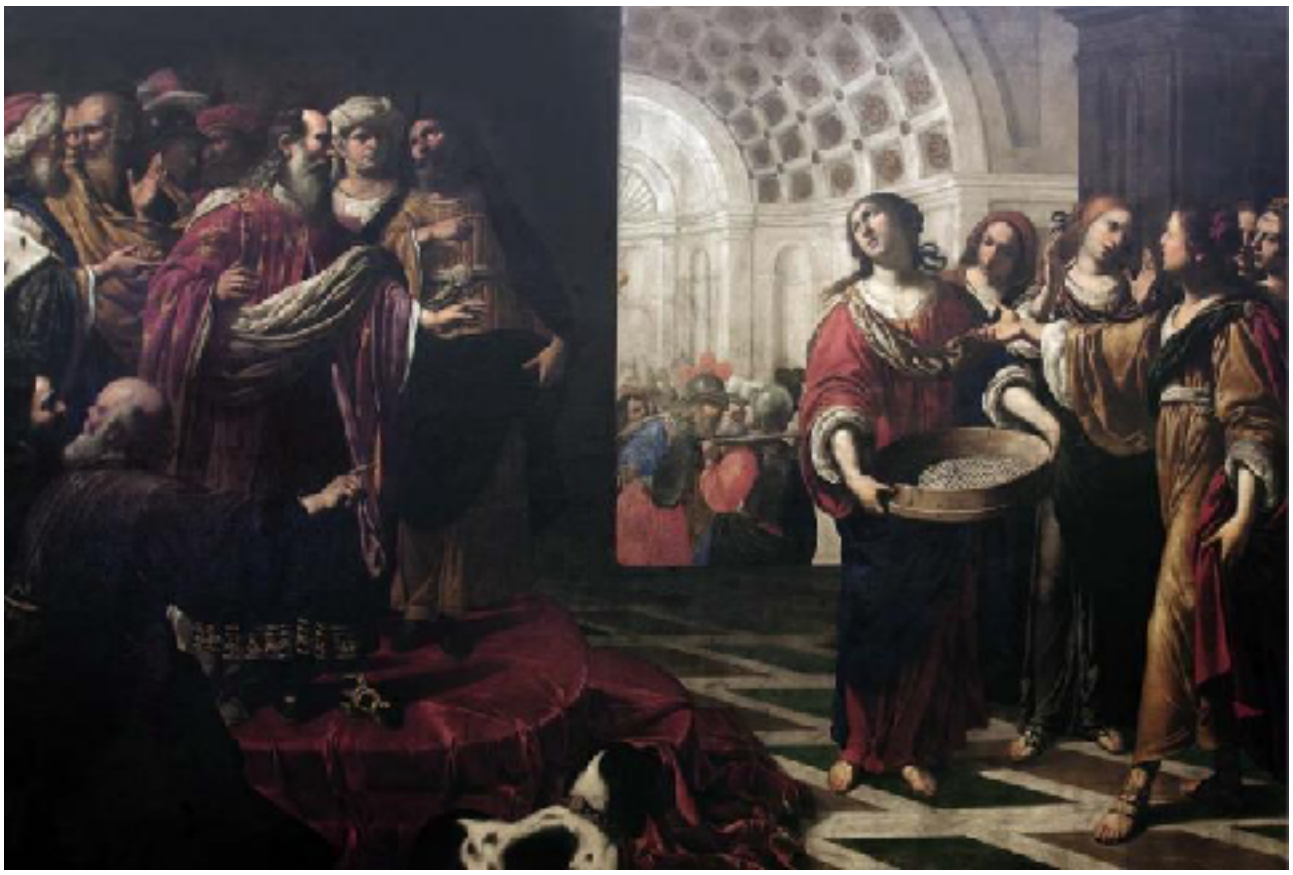


Fig. 24. Rutilio and Domenico Manetti, *L'innocenza della vestale Tuccia*, first half of the seventheenth century.
Oil on canvas, 303 x 448 cm.
Siena, Pinacoteca Nazionale, inv. no. 640.

Fig. 25. Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Portrait of a young woman, c.* 1490.

Tempera on panel, 51.8 x 39.7 cm.

San Marino, The Arabella Huntington Memorial Collection, The Huntington Library, Art Collection and Botanical Gardens, no inventory number.

Fig. 26. Piero della Francesca, *Madonna del Parto*. *c.* 1560.

Fresco, 260 x 203 cm.

Monterchi, Museo Civico, no inventory number.

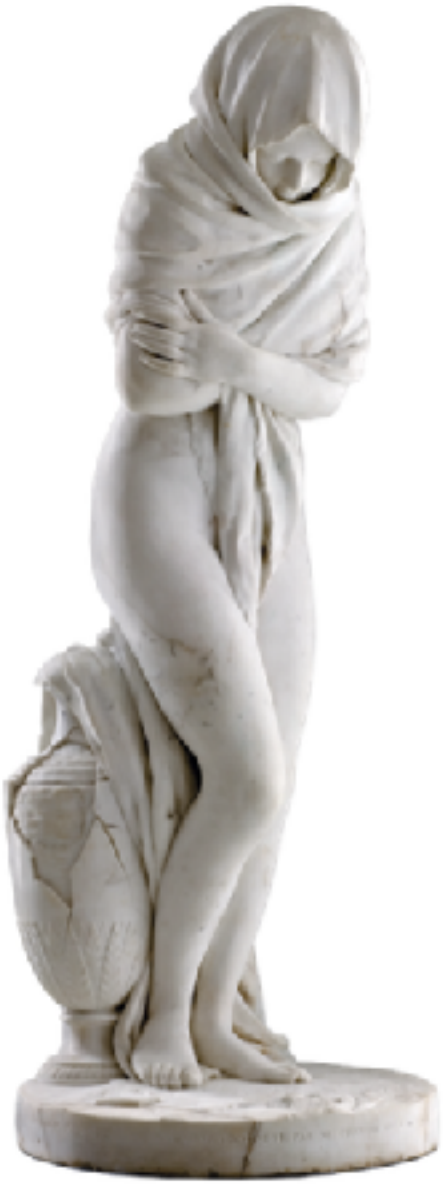


Fig. 27. Jean-Antoine Houdon, *L'Hiver ou la Frileuse,* 1783.

Marble, 145 x 57 cm.

Montpellier, Musée Fabre, no inventory number.

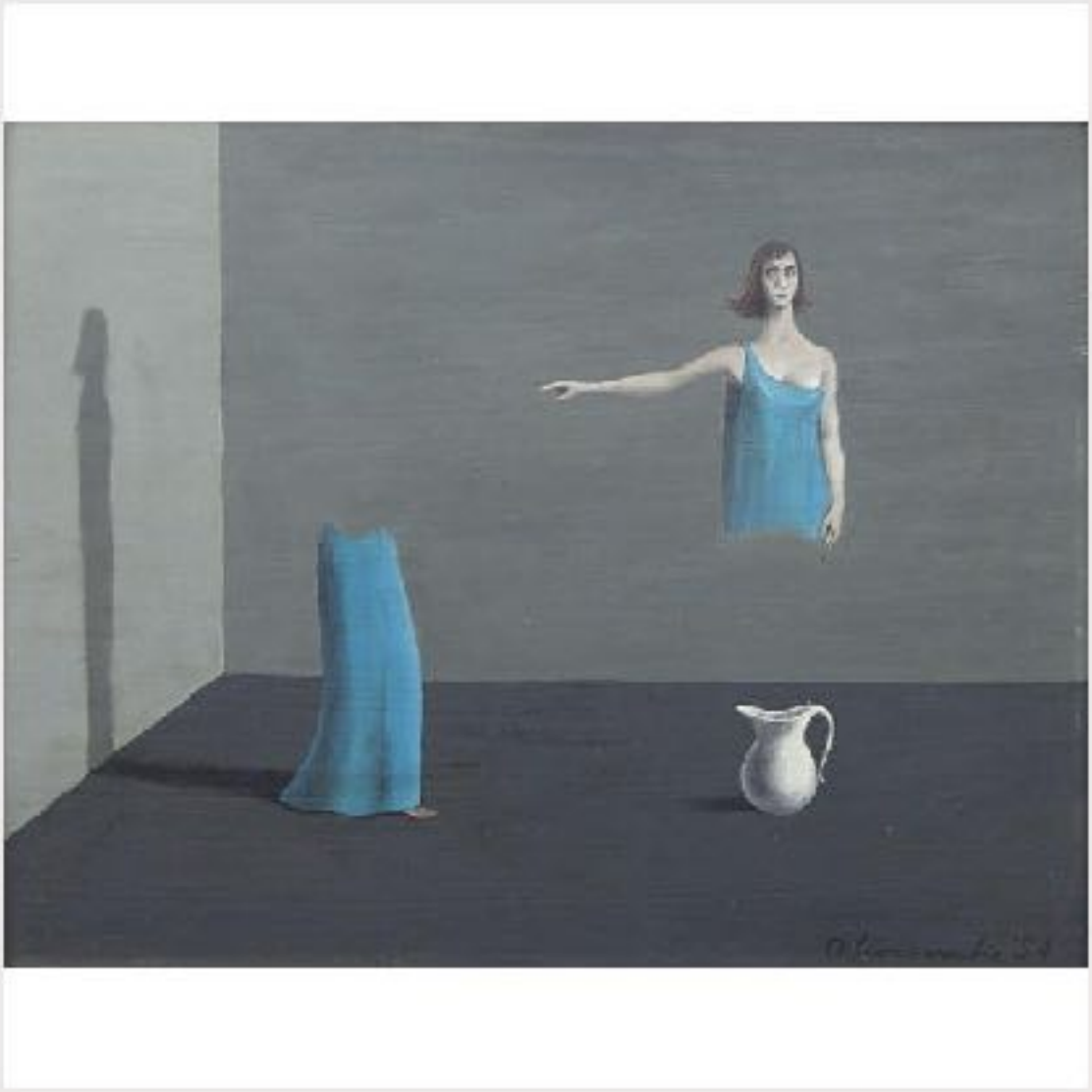


Fig. 28. Gertrude Abercrombie, *Split Personality*, 1954.

Oil on masonite, 20.32 x 25.4 cm.

Chicago, DePaul Art Museum, inv. no. 2010.21.

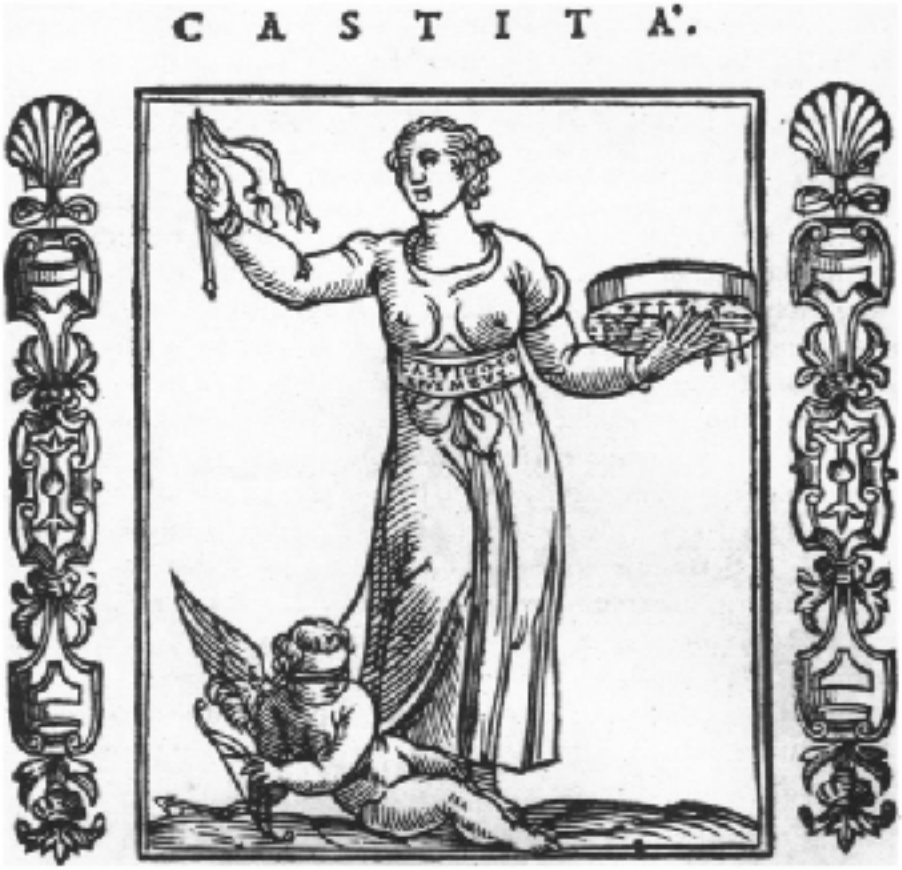


Fig. 29. Artist unknown, “Castità” from *Iconologia* by Cesare Ripa, 1603.

Engraving, no dimensions.

Washington, D.C., Folger Shakespeare Library, inv. no. PN 6349 R65 1603 Cage.

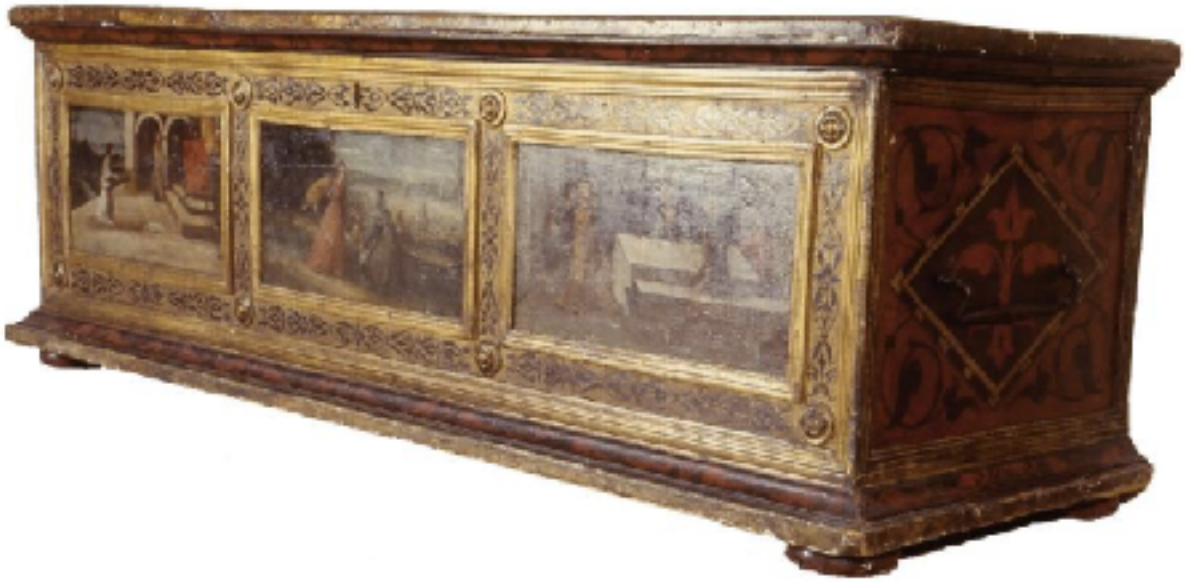


Fig. 30. North Italian school, *Cassone*, late fifteenth century.

Wood with polychromy and oil on panel, no dimensions.

Chicago, Loyola University Museum of Art, inv. no. 1975-02.

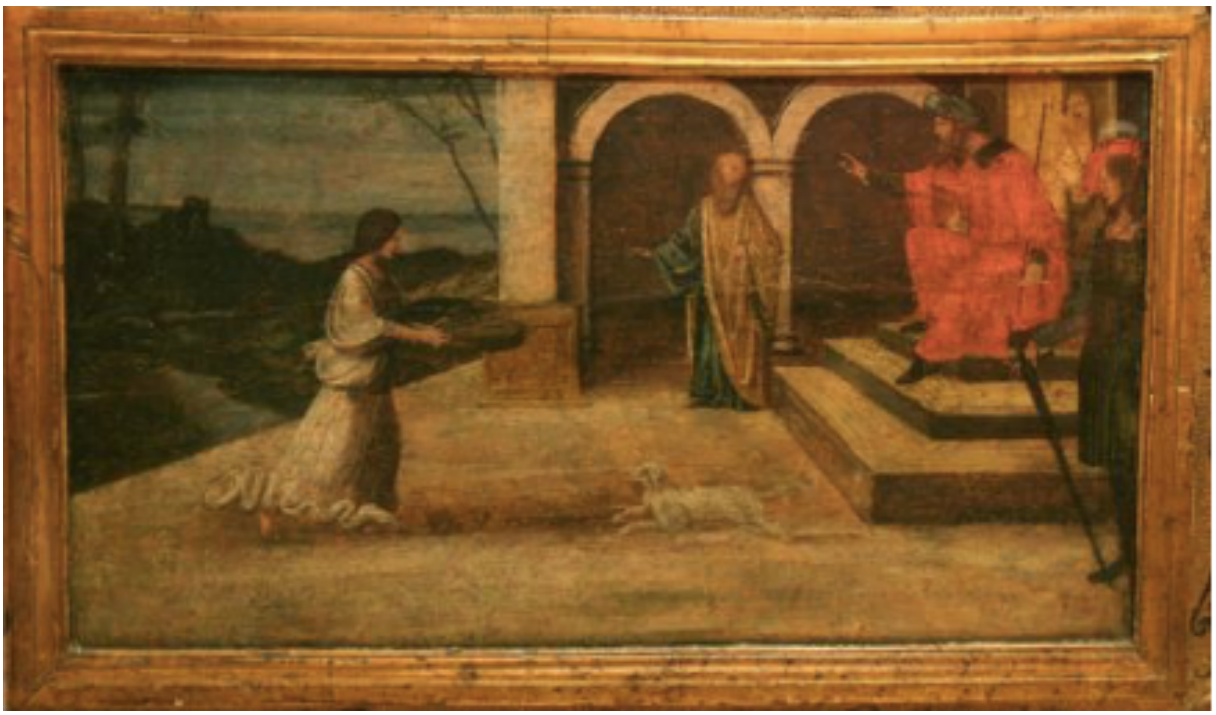


Fig. 31. North Italian school, *Cassone* (detail Tuccia), late fifteenth century.

Oil on panel, no dimensions.

Chicago, Loyola University Museum of Art, inv. no. 1975-02.

Fig. 32. Bartolomeo Montagna, *Duilio e Bilia, Tuccia trasporta l'acqua col setaccio*, *c.* 1490-1495.

Wood with polychromy and oil on panel, no dimensions.

Milan, Museo Poldi Pezzoli, inv. no. 1652.

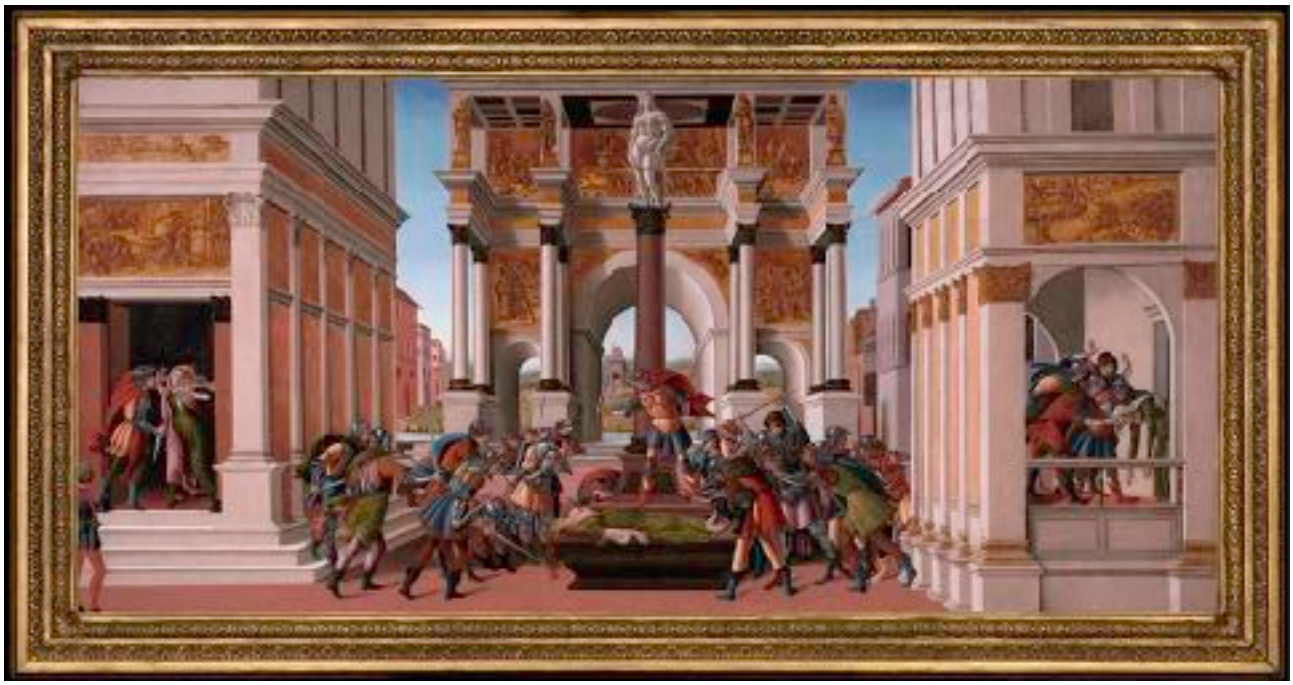


Fig. 33. Sandro Botticelli, *The tragedy of Lucretia. c.* 1500.

Tempera and oil on panel, 83.8 x 176.8 cm.

Fenway-Kenmore, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, inv. no. P16e20.

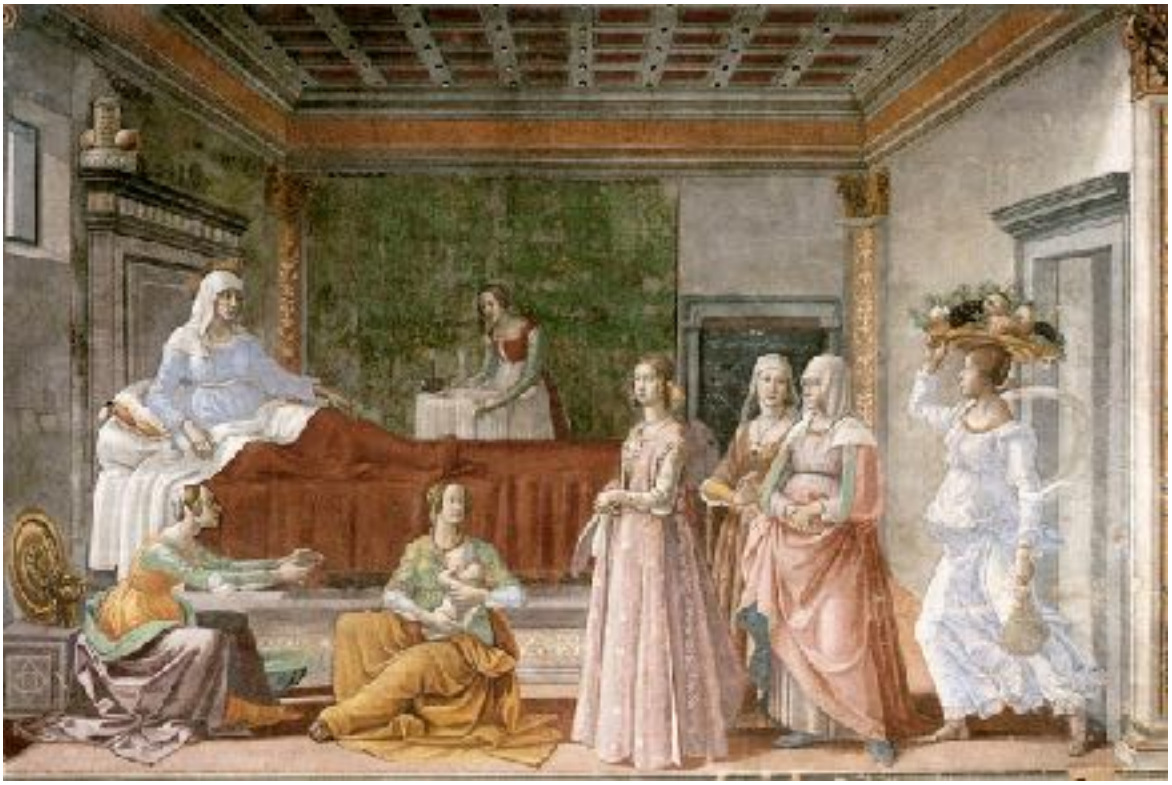


Fig. 34. Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Birth of Saint John the Baptist, c.* 1486-90.

Fresco, 741 x 426 cm.

Florence, Capella Maggiore, Santa Maria Novella, no inventory number.

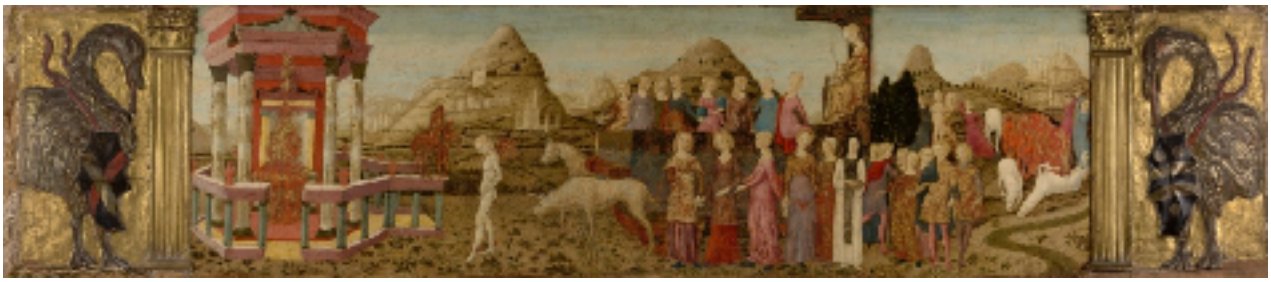


Fig. 35. Francesco di Giorgio Martini, *Triumph of Chastity*, *c.* 1465.

Tempera on panel, 38.7 x 170.4 cm.

Los Angeles, The Getty Museum, no inventory number.

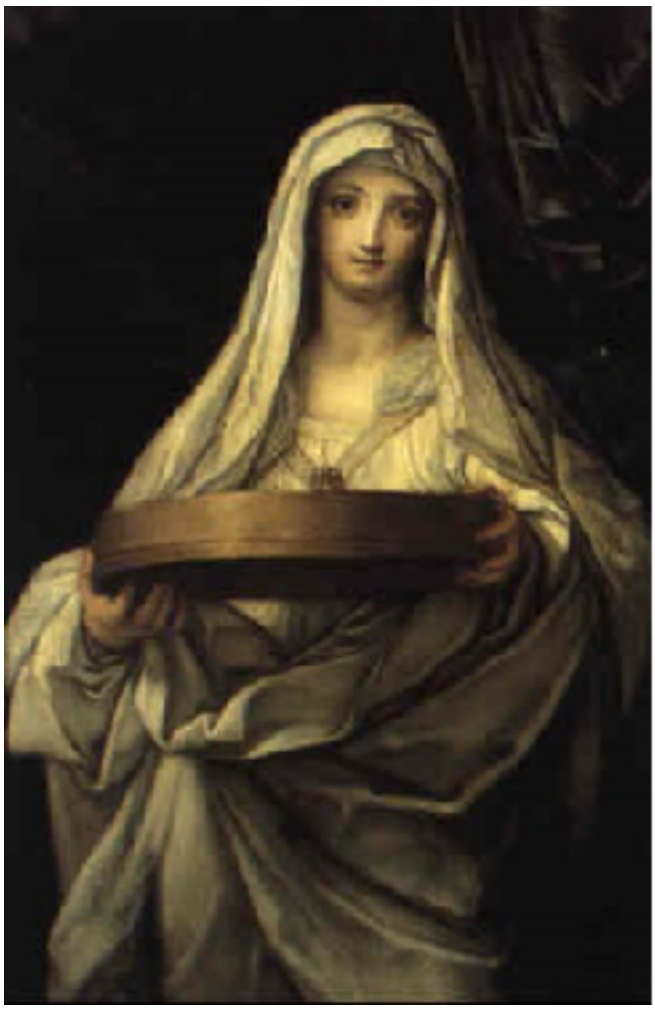


Fig. 36. Carlo Maratta, *La Vestale Tuccia*, seventeenth century.

Oil on canvas, 128 x 89 cm.

Location unknown, private collection, no inventory number.

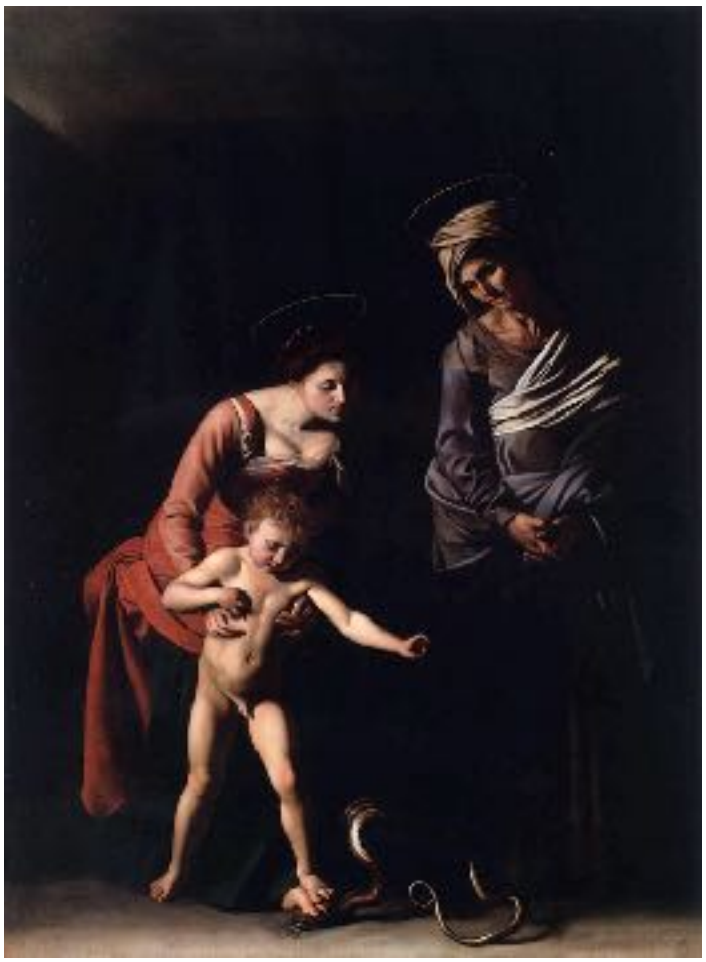


Fig. 37. Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *Madonna and Child with St. Anne (Dei Palafrenieri)*, 1606.

Oil on canvas, 292 x 211 cm.

Rome, Galleria Borghese, no inventory number.

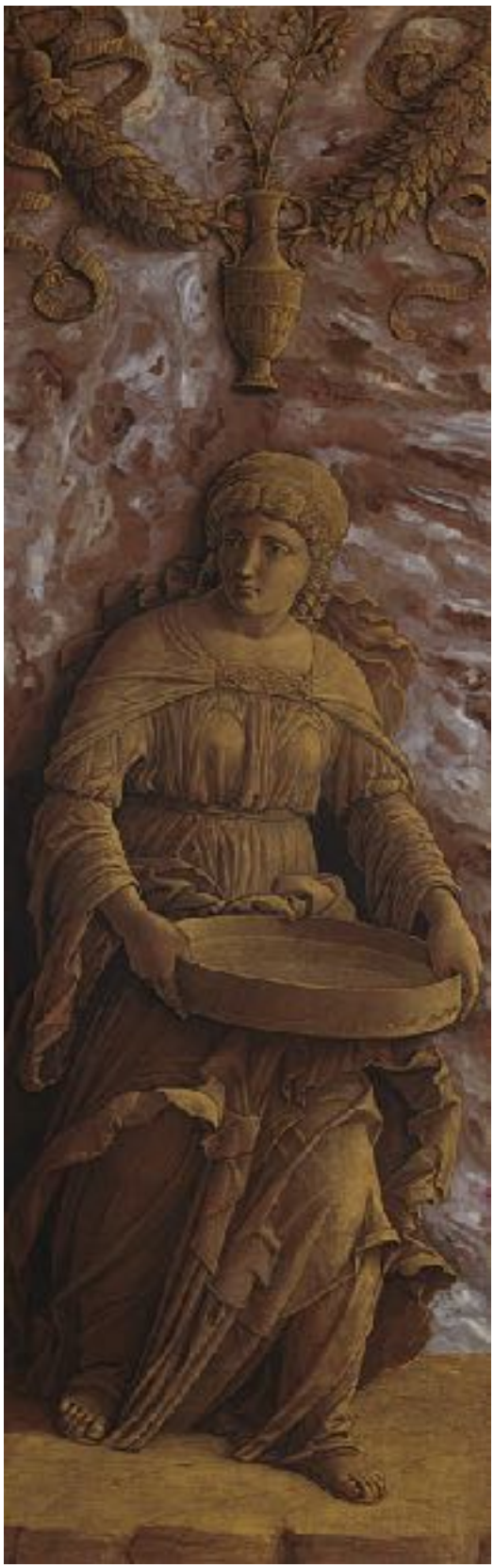


Fig. 38. Andrea Mantegna, *The Vestal Virgin Tuccia with a Sieve*, *c.* 1495-1506.

Egg tempera on poplar, 72.5 x 23 cm.

London, *The National Gallery*, inv. no. NG1125.1.

Fig. 39. Justus Sustermans, *Ritratto di Vittoria Della Rovere in veste di Tuccia*. *c.* 1634-1640.
Oil of panel, 101 x 80 cm.
Firenze, Palazzo Pitti, Galleria Palatina e Appartamenti, inv no. 116.

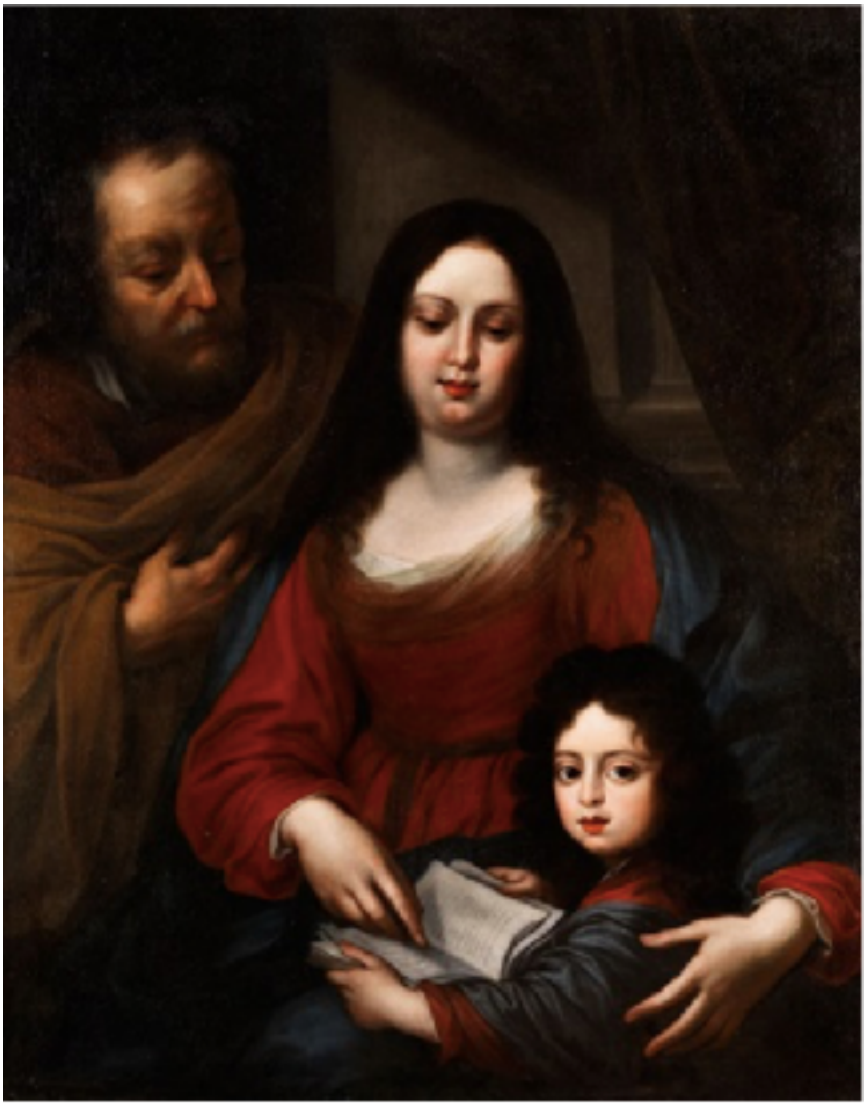


Fig. 40. Justus Sustermans (attributed to), *Portrait der Vittoria Della Rovere di Cosimo III und Ihres Tutors*, seventeenth century. Oil on canvas, 111,5 x 88 cm. Unknown location, private collection, no inventory number.

Fig. 41. Justus Sustermans, *Ritratto di Vittoria della Rovere*, 1638-1640.

Oil on canvas, 154 x 119 cm.

Florence, Palazzo degli Uffizi, Galleria degli Uffizi, inv. no. 1890, n. 2251.

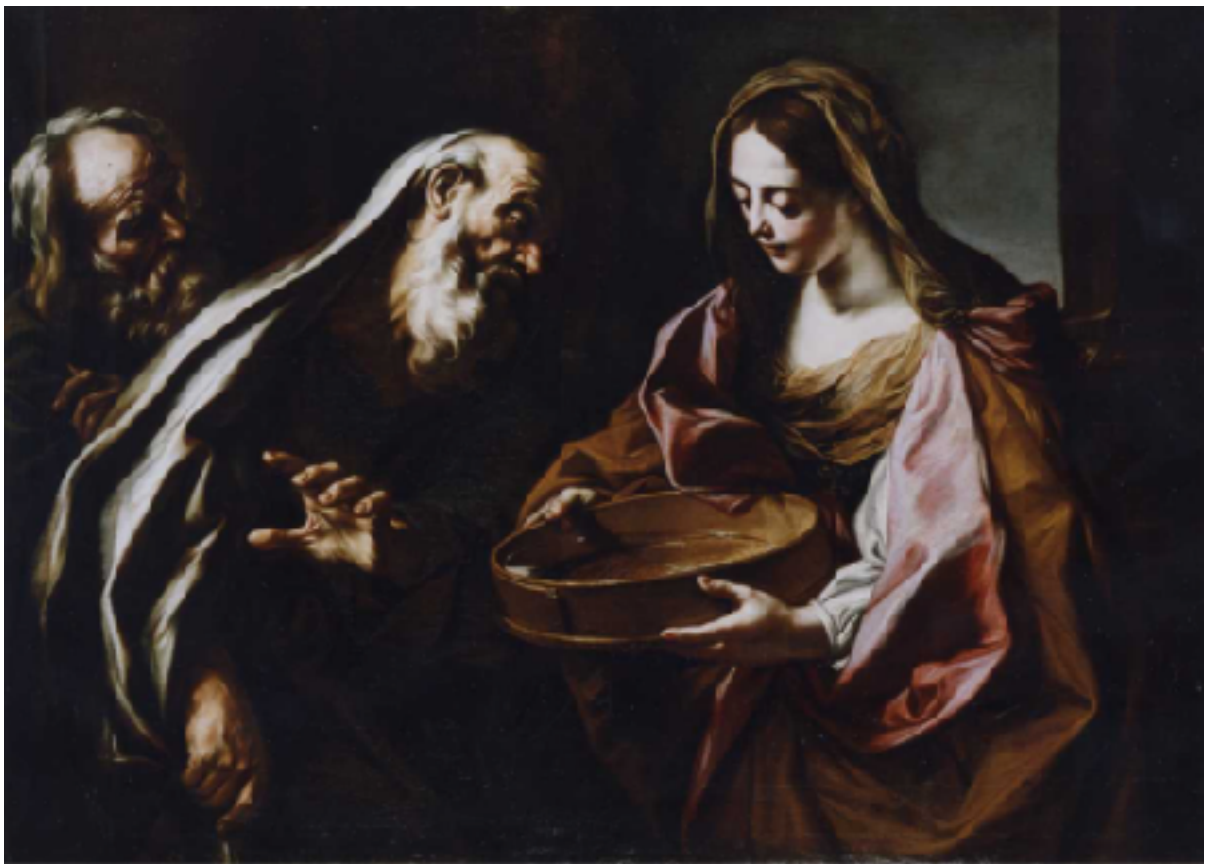


Fig. 42. Giovanni Battista Beinaschi, *Tuccia trasporta l'acqua col setaccio*, *c.* 1650 - 1688.

Oil on canvas, 119 × 171 cm.

Location unknown, private collection, no inventory number.

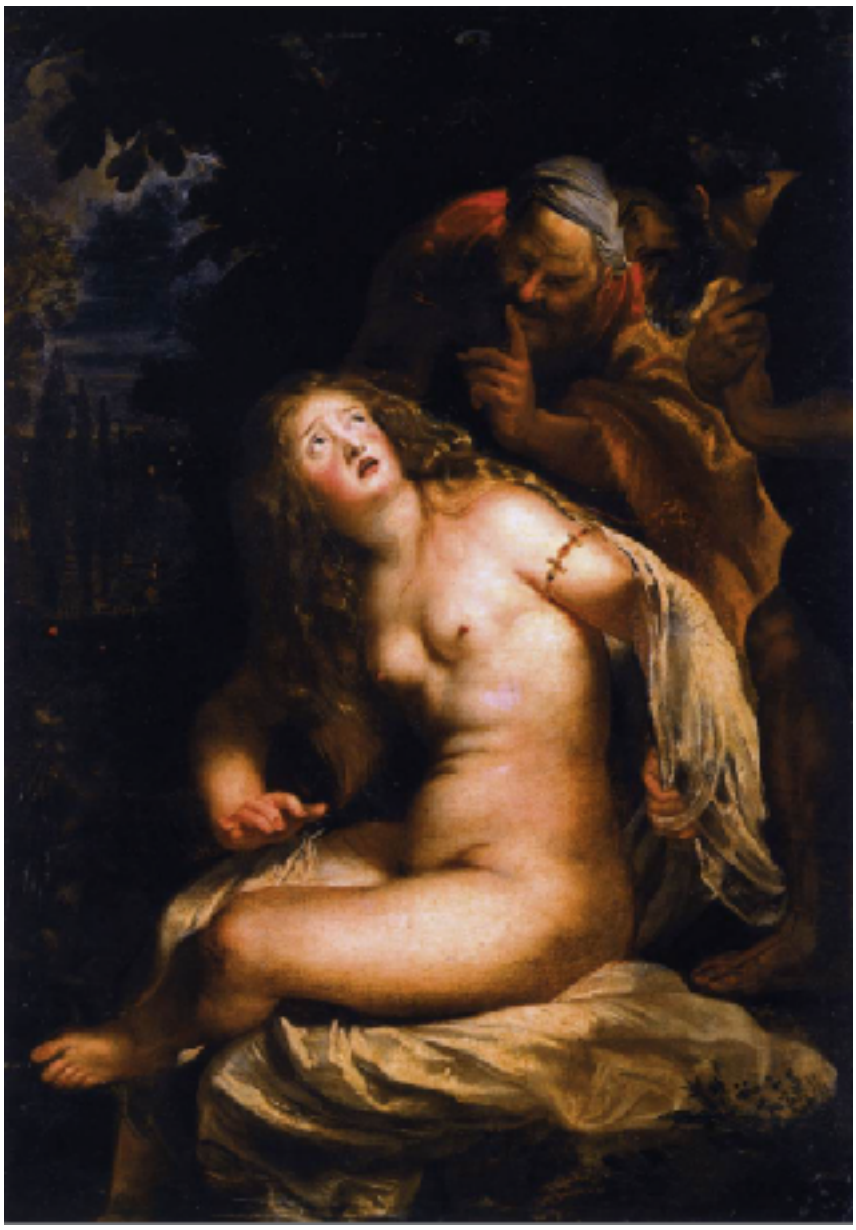


Fig. 43. Peter Paul Rubens, *Susanna and the Elders. c.* 1607-1608.

Oil on canvas, 94 x 66 cm.

Rome, Galleria Borghese, no inventory number.

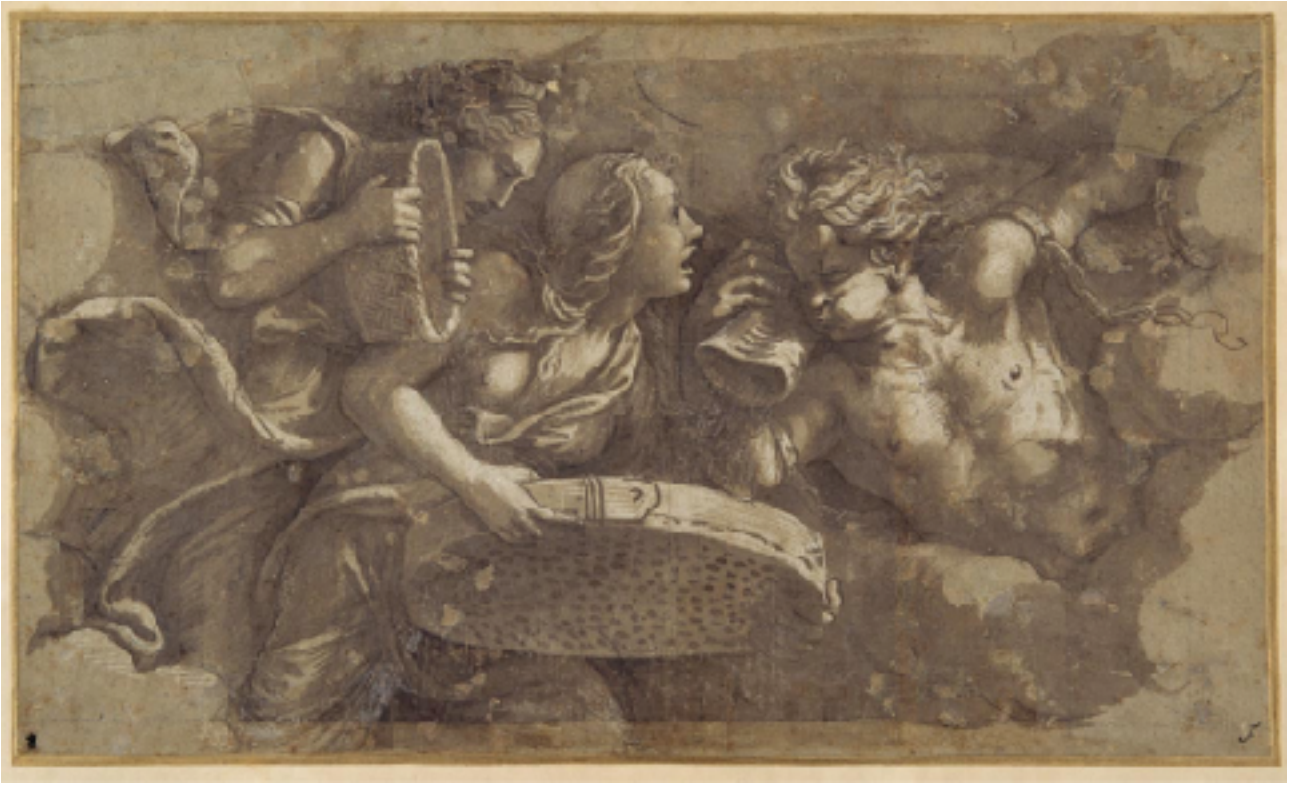


Fig. 44. Giulio Romano, *The Vestal Tuccia with the Sieve*, early sixteenth century.
Drawing, no dimensions.
Chatworth, Chatsworth House, inv. no. ND202 to ND1100.

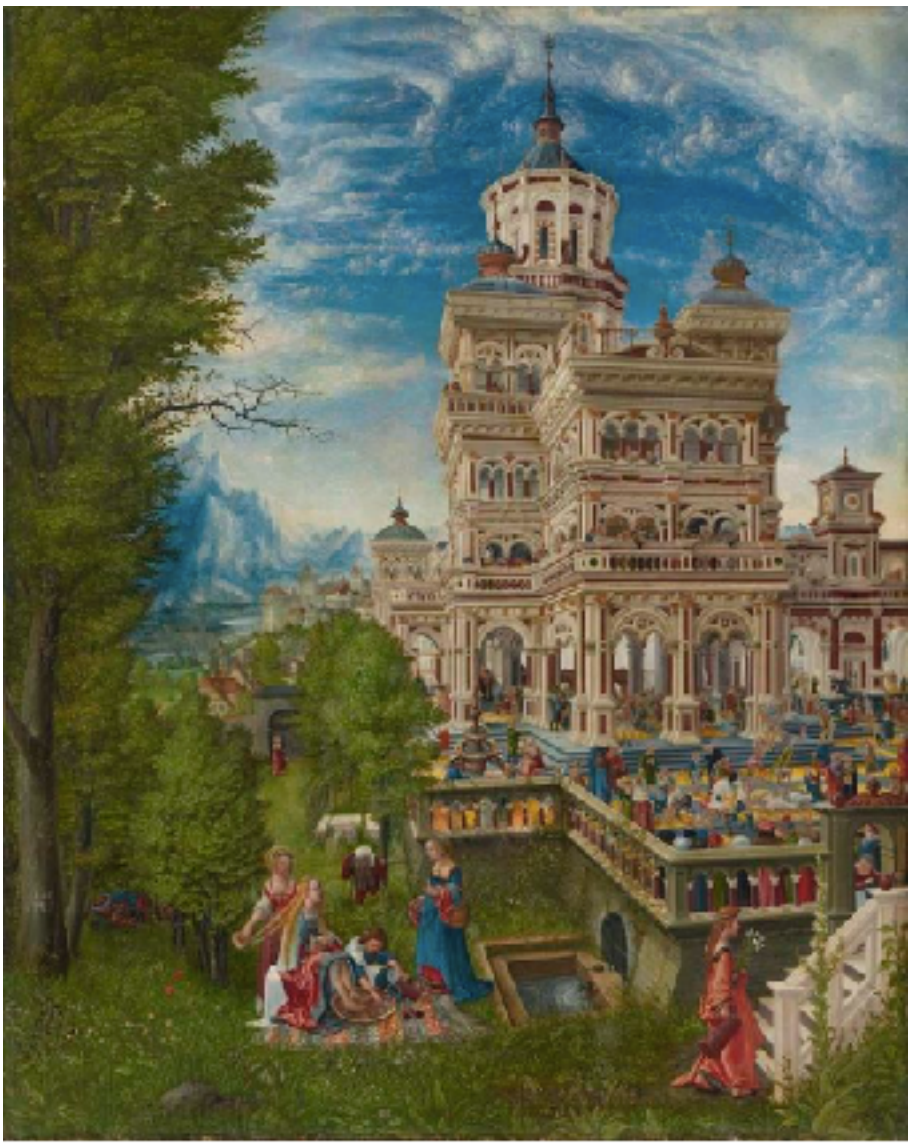


Fig. 45. Albrecht Altdorfer, *Susanna im Bade*, 1526.

Oil on panel, 74.8 x 61.2 cm.

Munich, Alte Pinakothek, inv. no. 698.

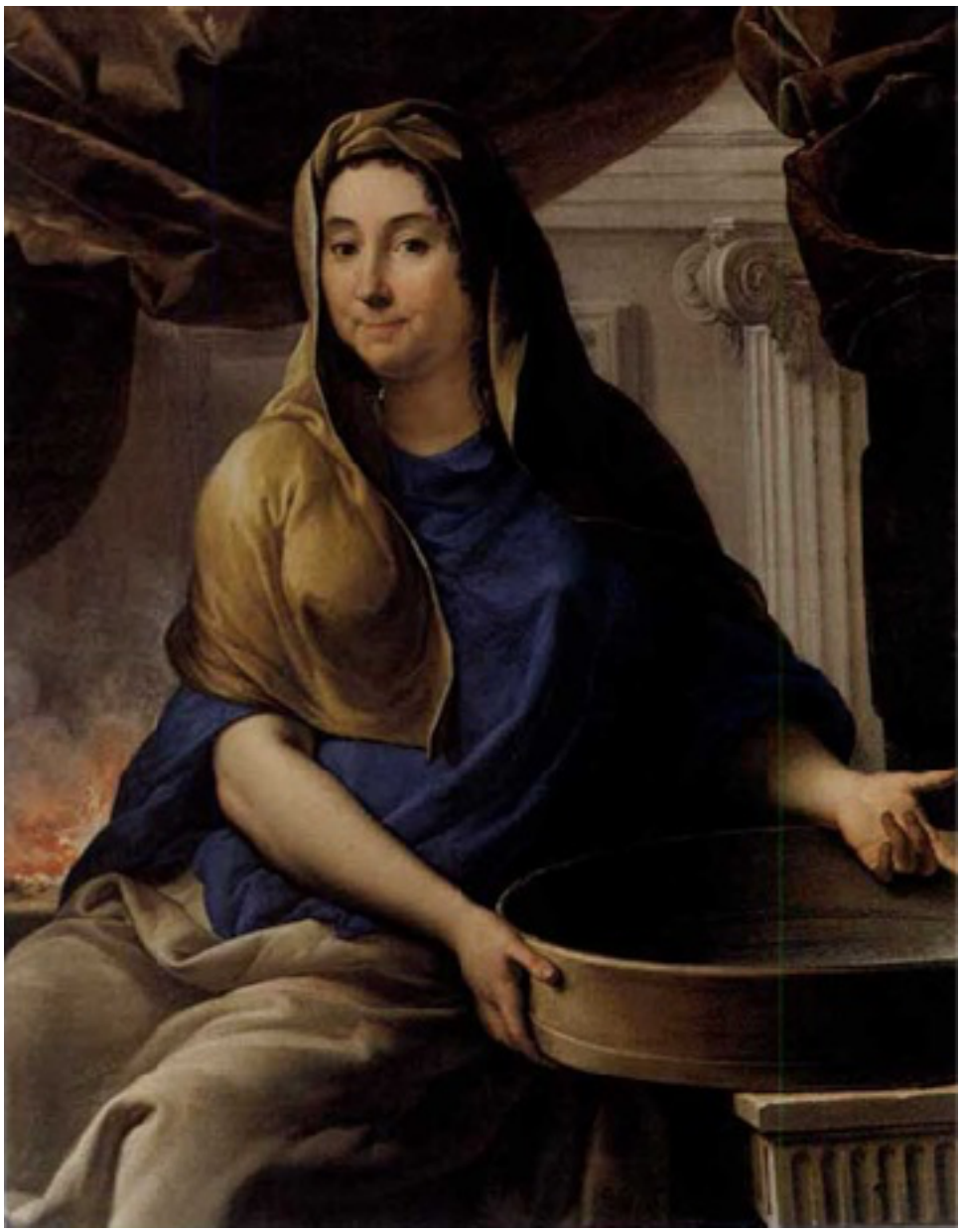


Fig. 46. Louis-Joseph Le Lorrain, *La Vestale 'Tuxia,'* mid eighteenth century.
Oil on canvas, 113 x 90.5 cm.
Location unknown, private collection, no inventory number.

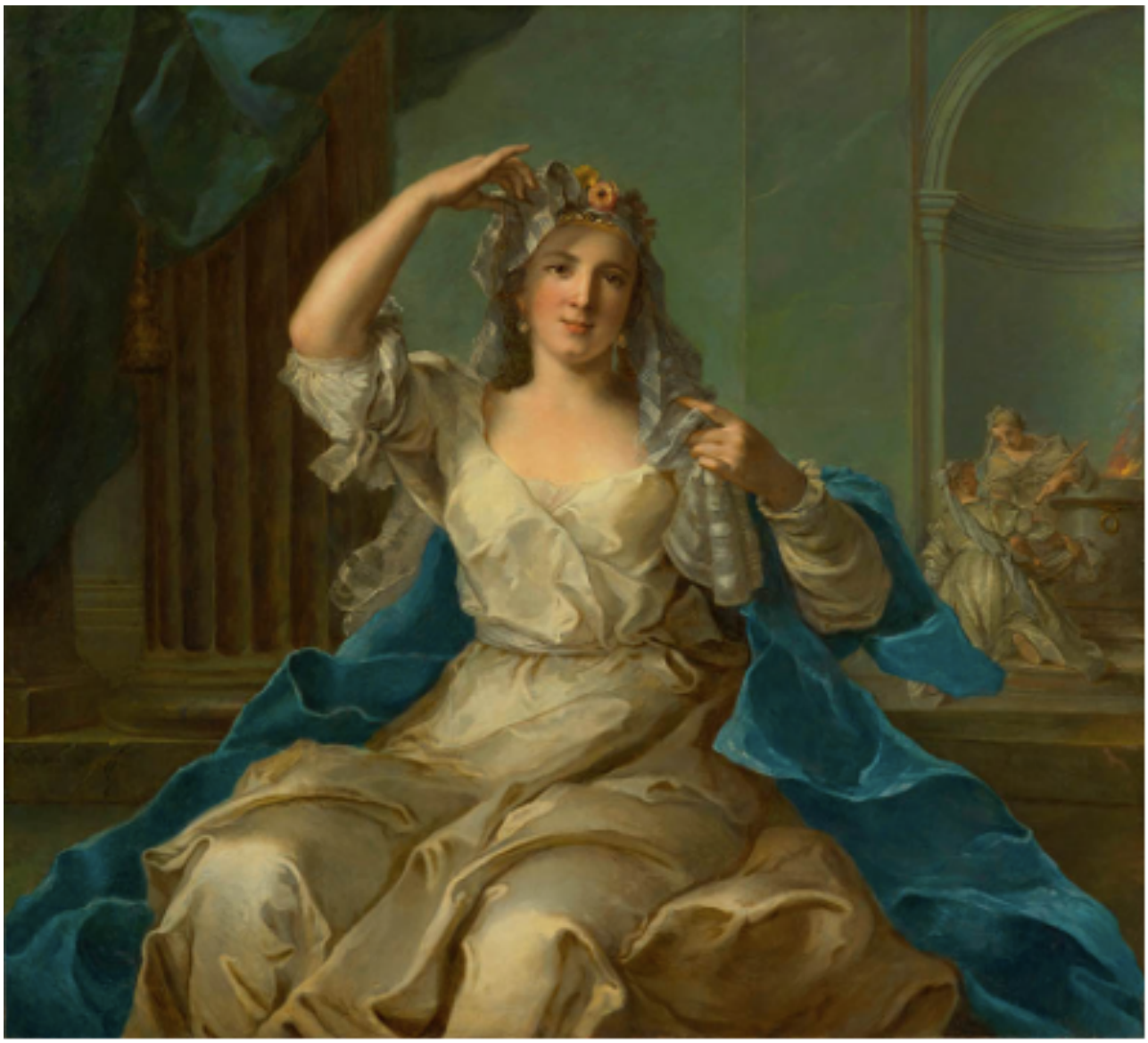


Fig. 47. Jean-Marc Nattier, *Portrait of a Lady as a Vestal Virgin*, 1759.

Oil on canvas, 115.9 x 135.9 cm.

Raleigh, North Carolina Museum of Art, inv. no. 52.9.130.

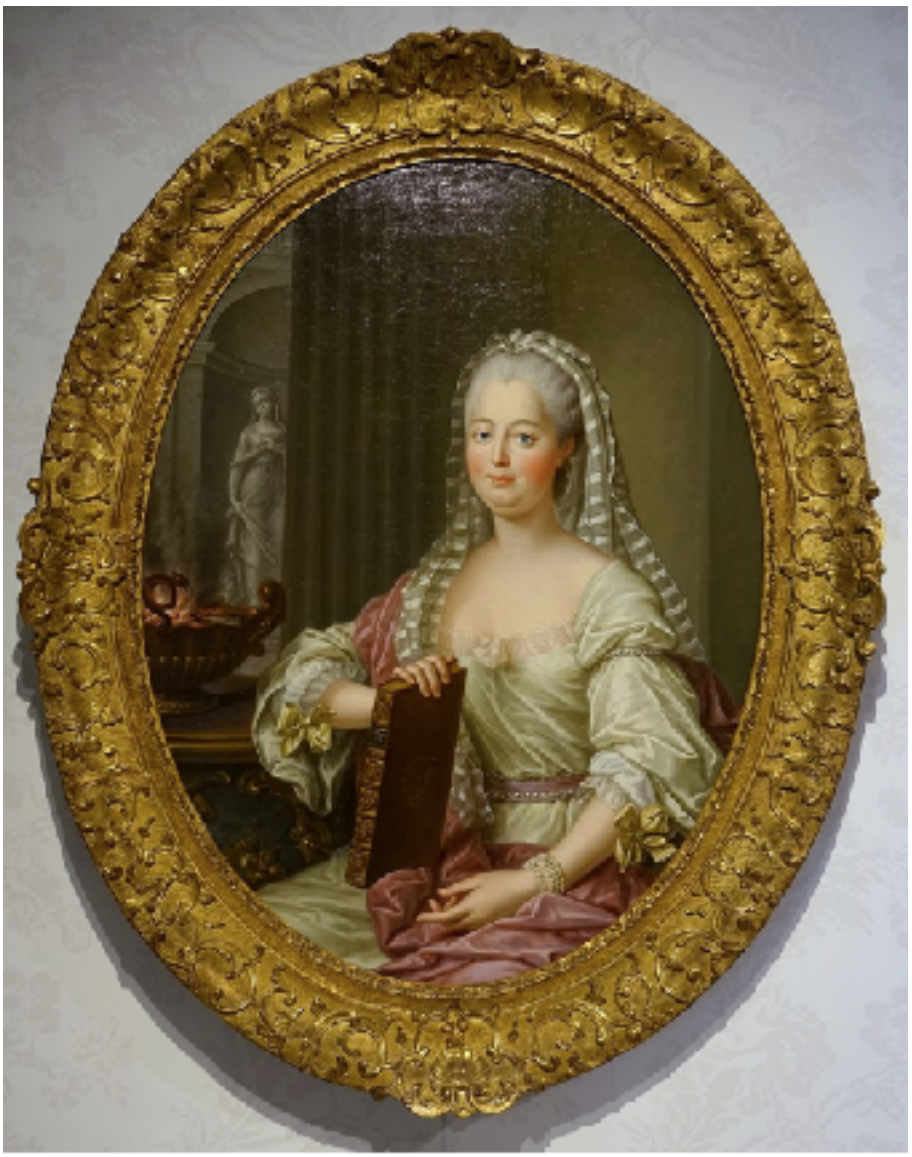


Fig. 48. François Hubert Drouais (attributed to), *Madame de Pompadour as a Vestal Virgin*, *c.* 1762.

Oil on canvas, 100 x 81 cm.

Montréal, David M. Stewart Museum, inv. no. 359.2012.

Fig. 49. Filippo Bigioli, Alcova Torlonia (detail *Tuccia*), 1837.

Fresco, no dimensions.

Rome, Museo di Roma Palazzo Braschi, no inventory number.

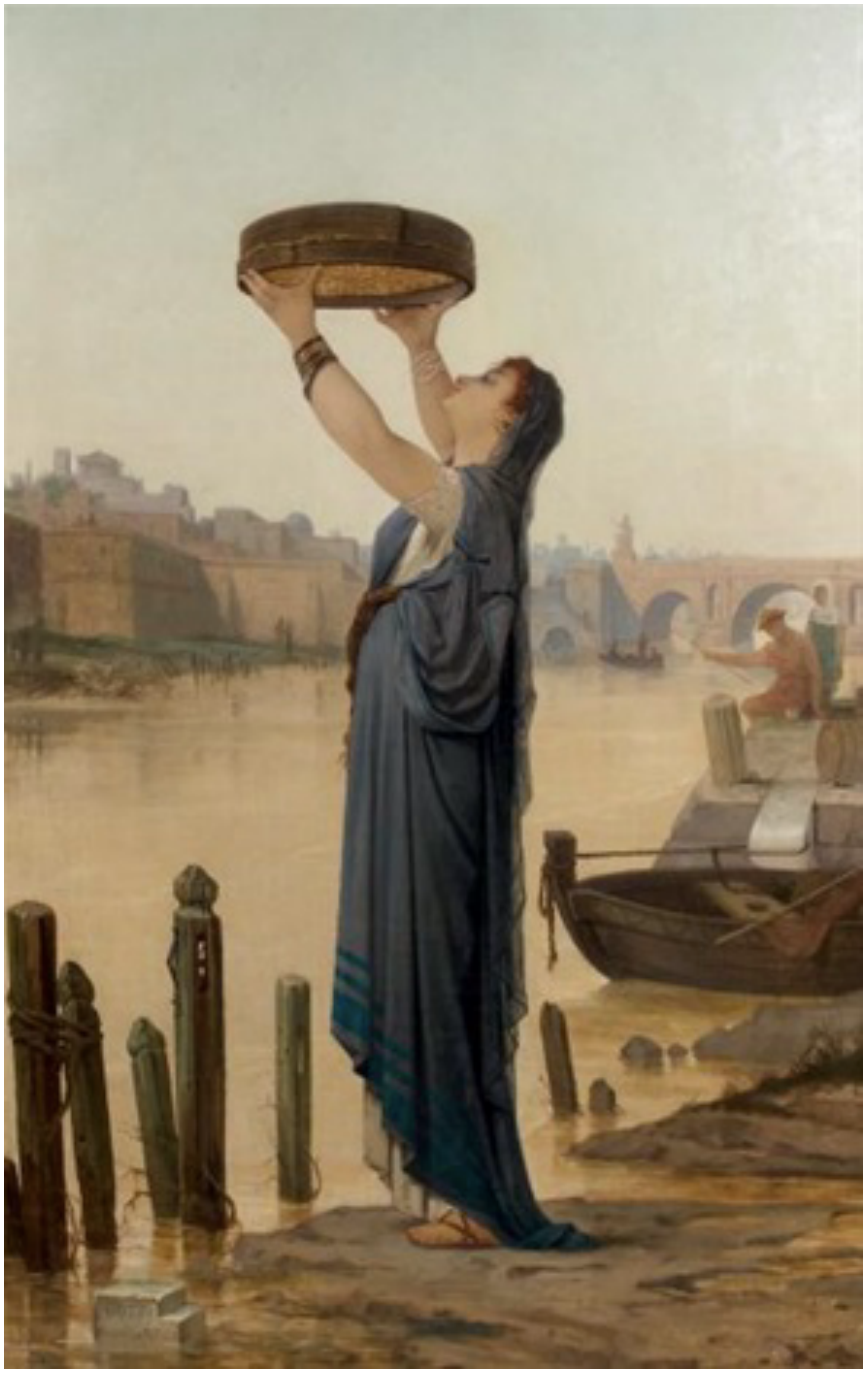


Fig. 50. Louis Hector Leroux, *La vestale Tuccia*, 1877.

Oil on canvas, 117 x 76 cm.

Location unknown, private collection, no inventory number.

Fig. 51. George Gower, *The Plimpton Sieve Portrait of Elizabeth I of England*, 1579.

Oil on panel, 104.4 cm x 76.2 cm.

Washington D.C., Folger Shakespeare Library, inv. no. ART 246171.

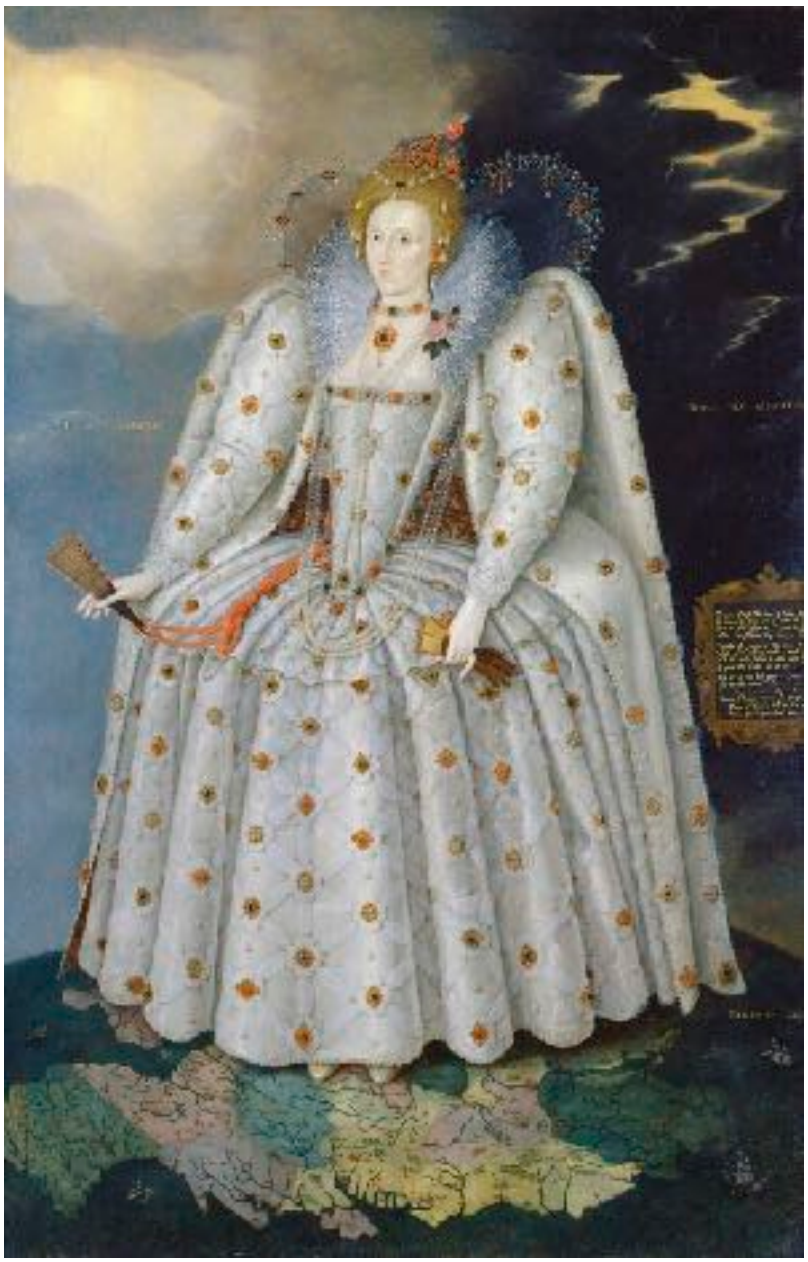


Fig. 52. Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger, *Queen Elizabeth I ('The Ditchley portrait')*, *c.* 1592.

Oil on canvas, 241.3 cm x 152.4 cm.

London, National Portrait Gallery, inv. no. NPG 2561.

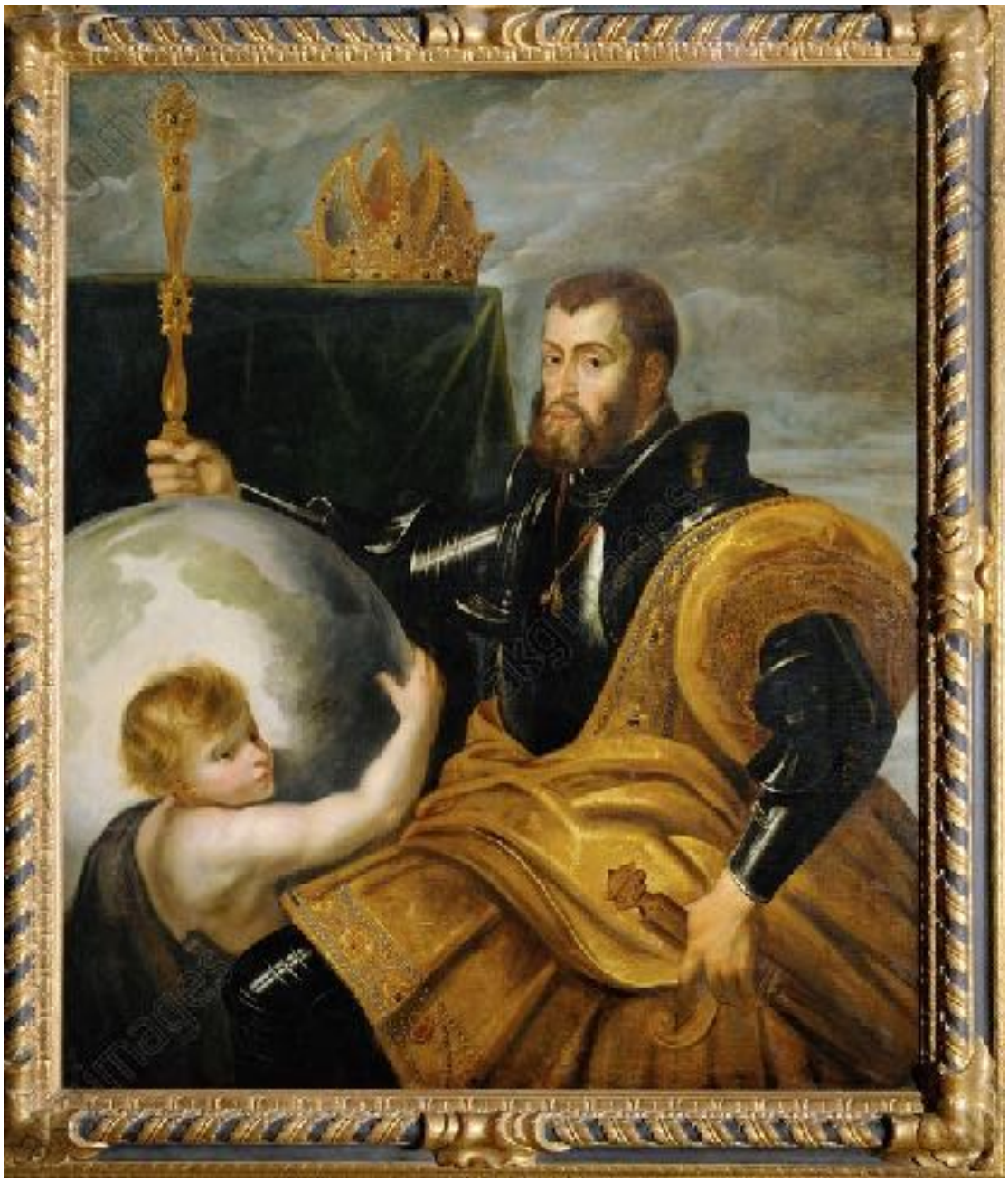


Fig. 53. Peter Paul Rubens, after after Parmigianino, *Allegory of Emperor Charles V as master of the world*, *c.* 1604.

Oil on canvas, 161.5 cm x 137.5 cm.

Salzburg, Residenzgalerie, inv. no. 303.

Fig. 54. Quentin Metsys the Younger, *Sieve Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I (Siena Sieve Portrait)*, 1583.

Oil on panel, 124.5 x 91.5 cm.

Siena, Pinacoteca Nazionale, inv. no. 454.

68 *Sic discerne.*

To THO. STVTVILE *Esquier.*

IN fruictefull feilde amid the goodlie croppe,
The hurtfull tares, and dernell ofte doe growe,
And many times, doe mounte aboue the toppe
Of highest corne: But skilfull man doth knowe,
When graine is ripe, with siue to purge the seedes,
From chaffe, and duste, and all the other weedes.

Ouid. 5. Trist. 4. [illegible]

By which is ment, sith wicked men abounde,
That harde it is, the good from bad to trie:
The prudent sorte, shoulde haue suche iudgement sounde,
That still the good they shoulde from bad descrie:
And sifte the good, and to discerne their deedes,
And weye the bad, noe better then the weedes.

Interiora

Fig. 55. Artist unknown, "*Sic discerne*" from *Choice of Emblemes* by Geffrey Whitney, 1586.

Woodcut, no dimensions.

Washington, D.C., Folger Shakespeare Library, inv. no. STC 25438.

Fig. 56. Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger (attributed to), *Elizabeth I (The Rainbow Portrait), c.* 1600.

Oil on canvas, 127 x 99,1 cm.

Hertfordshire, Hatfield House, no inventory number.

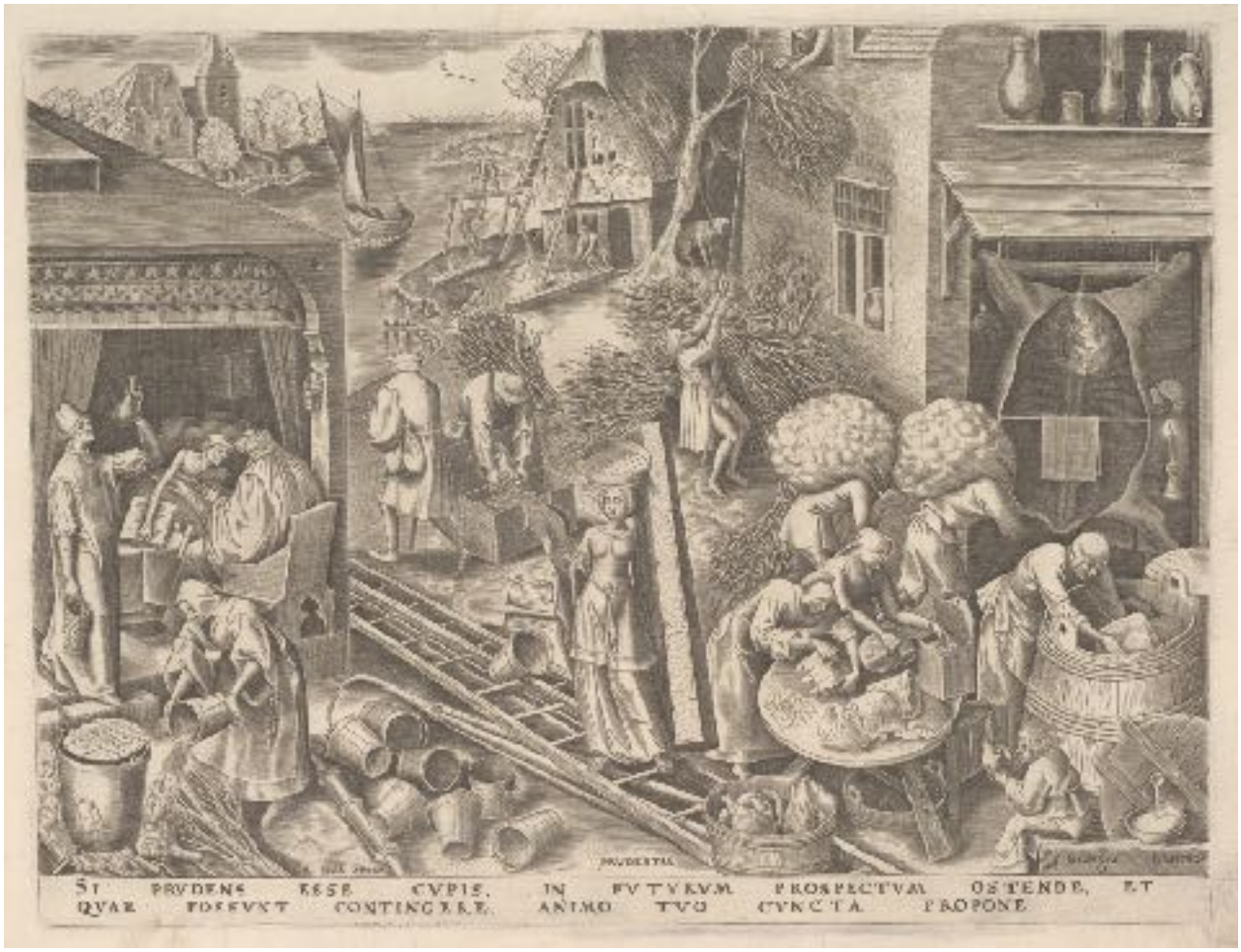


Fig. 57. Philips Galle, *Prudence (Prudentia) from the Virtues, c.* 1559-60.

Engraving, plate 220 x 295 mm.

New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. no. 28.4(26).

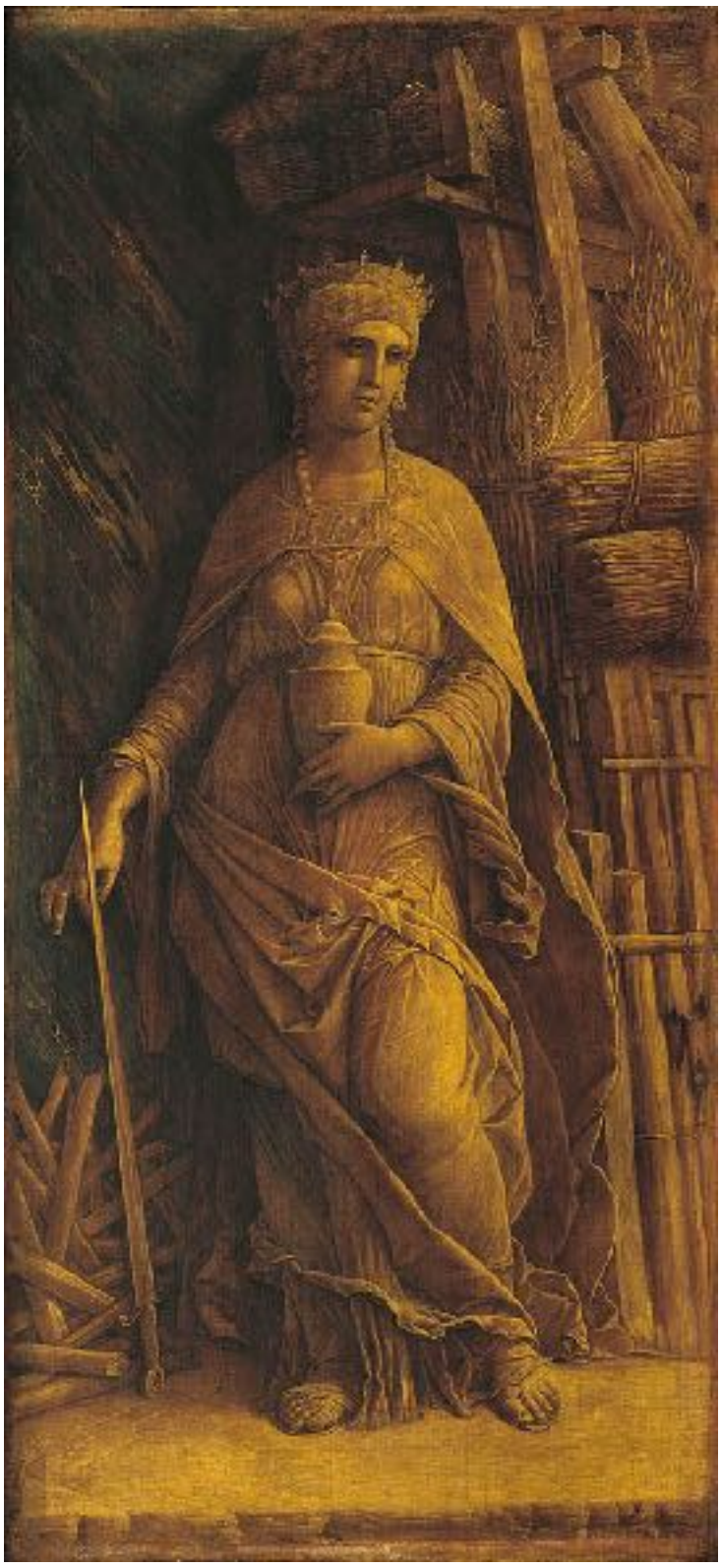


Fig. 58. Andrea Mantegna, *Dido*, *c.* 1500.

Tempera and gold on linen canvas, 65,3 x 31,4 cm.

Montréal, Musée des Beaux-Arts, inv. no. 1920.104.

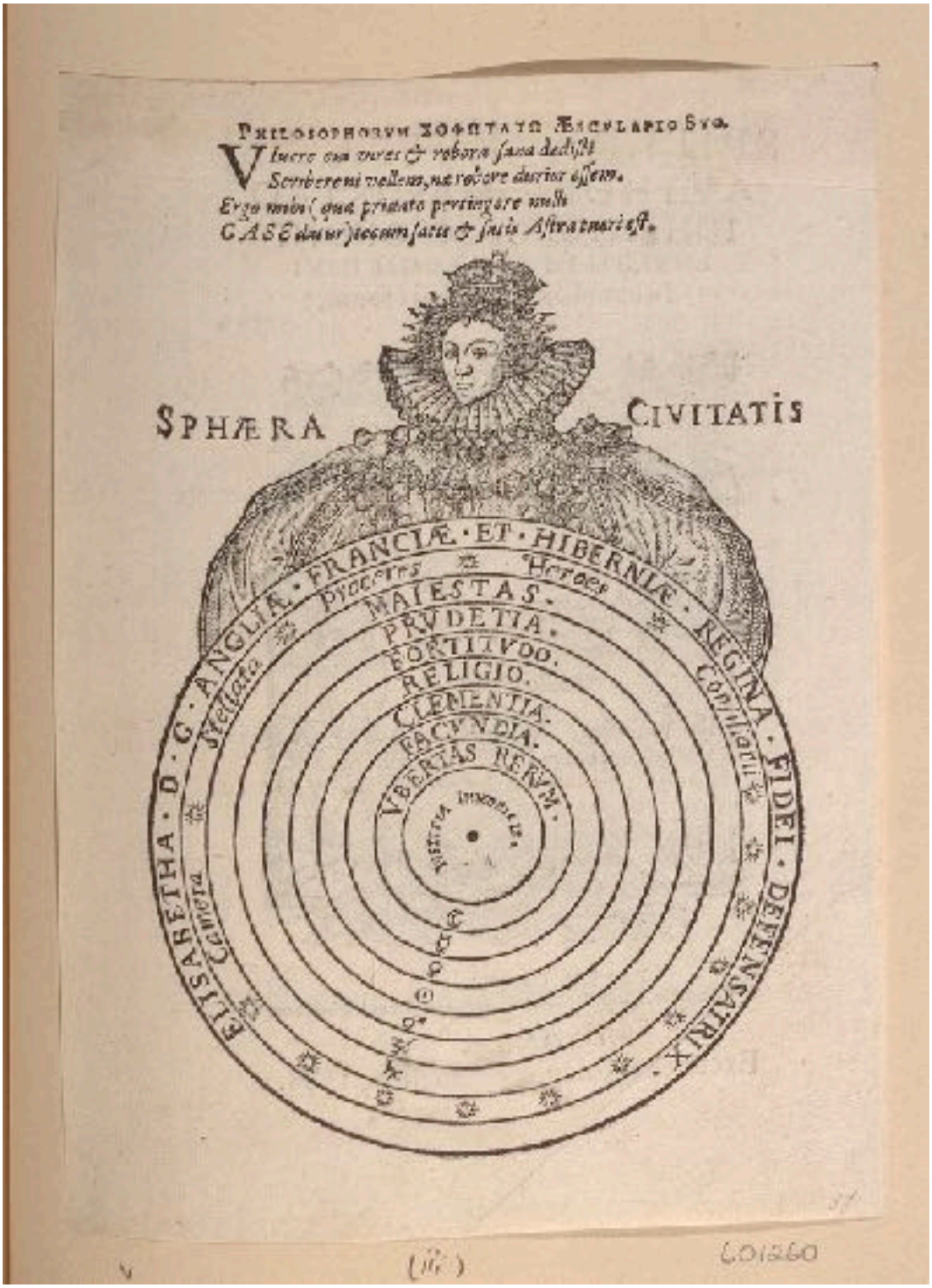


Fig. 59. Artist unknown, *Sphaera Civitatis* from *Sphaera Civitatis* by John Case, 1588.

Woodcut, sheet 184 x 131 mm.

Location unknown, Royal Collection Trust, inv. no. RCIN 601260.

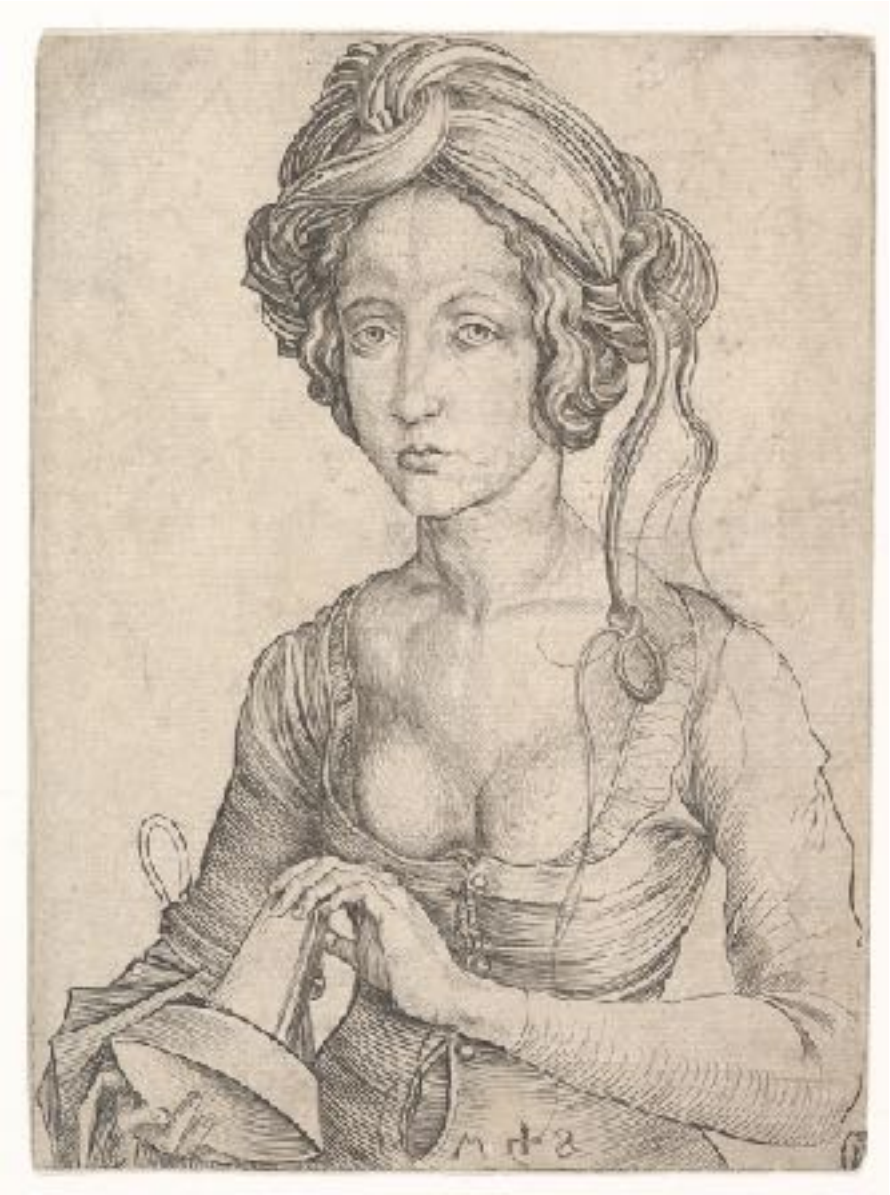


Fig. 60. Martin Schongauer, *A Foolish Virgin in Half-Figure*, second half of the fifteenth century. Engraving, sheet 147 x 108 mm.

New York, Metropoltian Museum of Art, inv. no. 1984.1201.52.

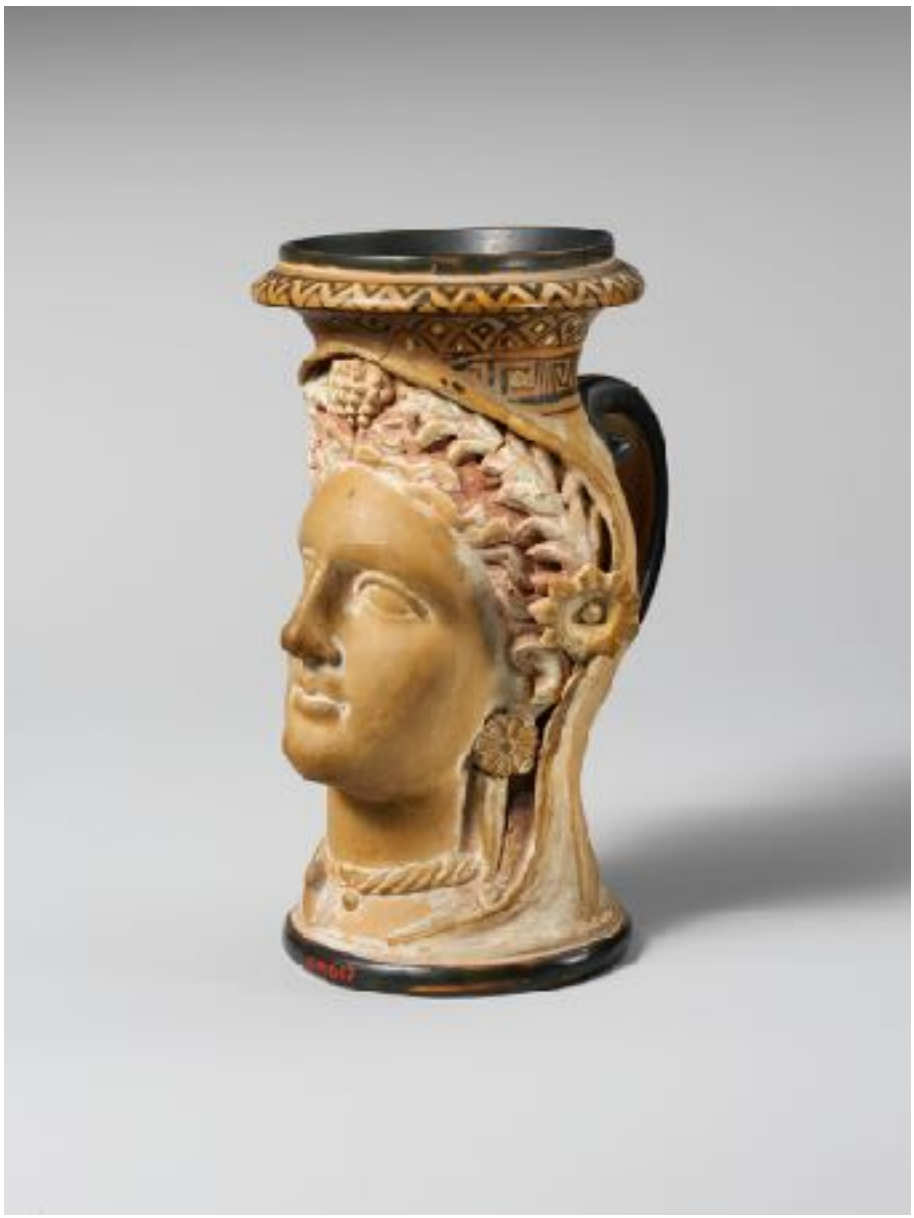


Fig. 61. Artist unknown, *Terracotta oinochoe (jug) in the form of a woman's head*, late 4th century BC.

Terracotta, height 13 cm.

New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. no. X.21.18.

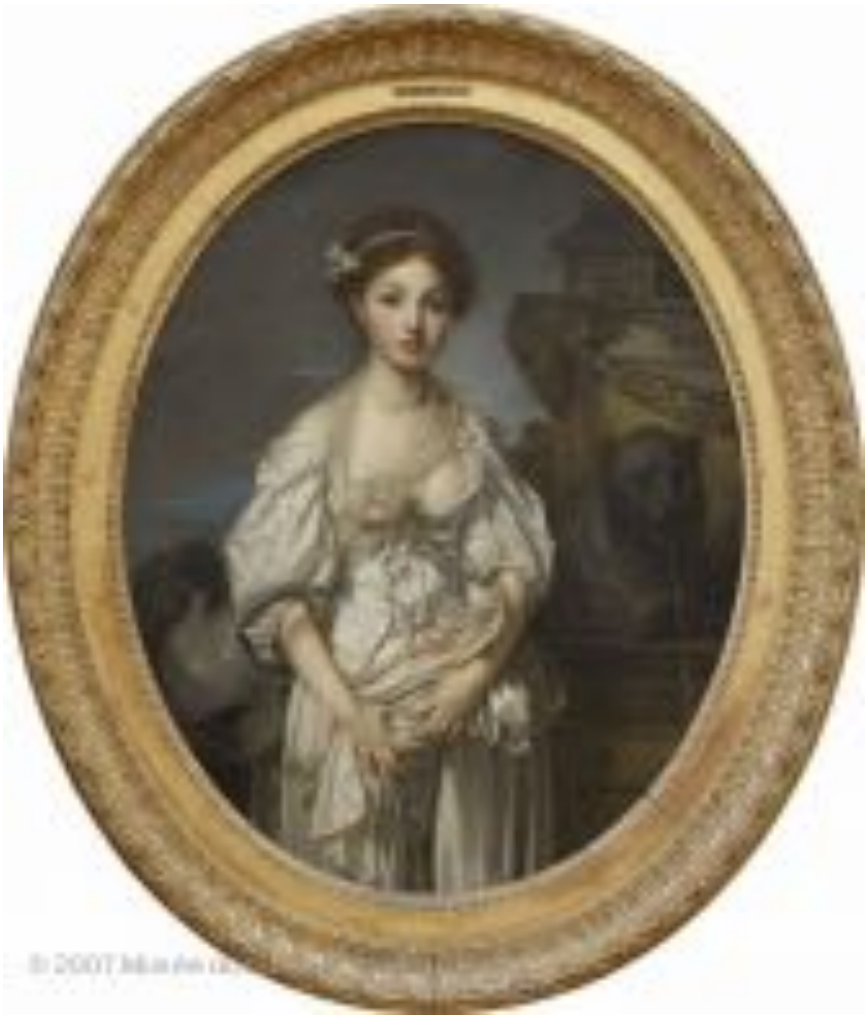
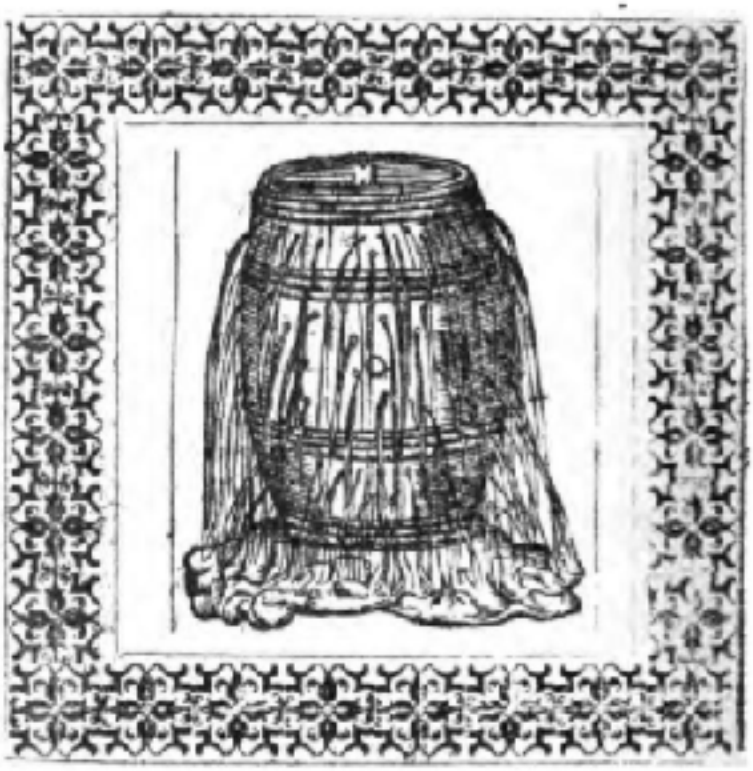


Fig. 62. Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *La Cruche Cassée*, 1771.

Oil on canvas, 109 x 87 cm.

Paris, Musée du Louvre, inv. no. 5036.

Fruſtra.



THE Poettes faine, that DANAVS daughters deare,
Inioyned are to fill the fatall tonne:
Where, thowghe they toile, yet are they not the neare.
But as they powre, the water forthe dothe runne:
No paine will ſerue, to fill it to the toppe,
For, ſtill at holes the ſame doth runne, and droppe.

Which reprehender, three ſortes of wrenches vaine,
The blabbe, thingrate; and thoſe that couet ſtill,
As firſt the blabbe, no ſecretts can retaine.
Th'ingrate, not knowes, to vſe his frendes good will.
The couetous man, thowghe he abounde with ſtore
Is not ſuffiſ'de, but couets more and more.

Superbia

Fig. 63. Artist unknown, "*Frustrà*" from *Choice of Emblemes* by Geffrey Whitney, 1586. Woodcut, no dimensions.

Washington, D.C., Folger Shakespeare Library, inv. no. STC 25438.

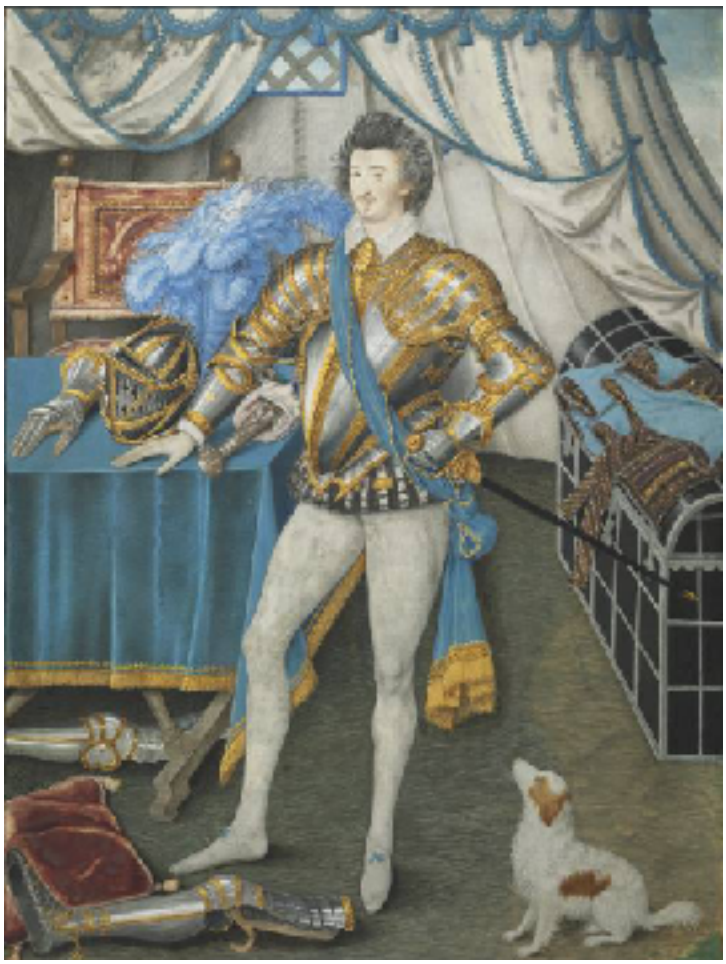


Fig. 64. Nicolas Hilliard, *Portrait of Sir Anthony Mildmay, Knight of Apethorpe, Northants*, *c.* 1590-1593.

Watercolour on vellum mounted on card, mounted on wood, 23.3 x 17.4 cm.

Cleveland, The Cleveland Museum of Art, inv. no.1926.554.

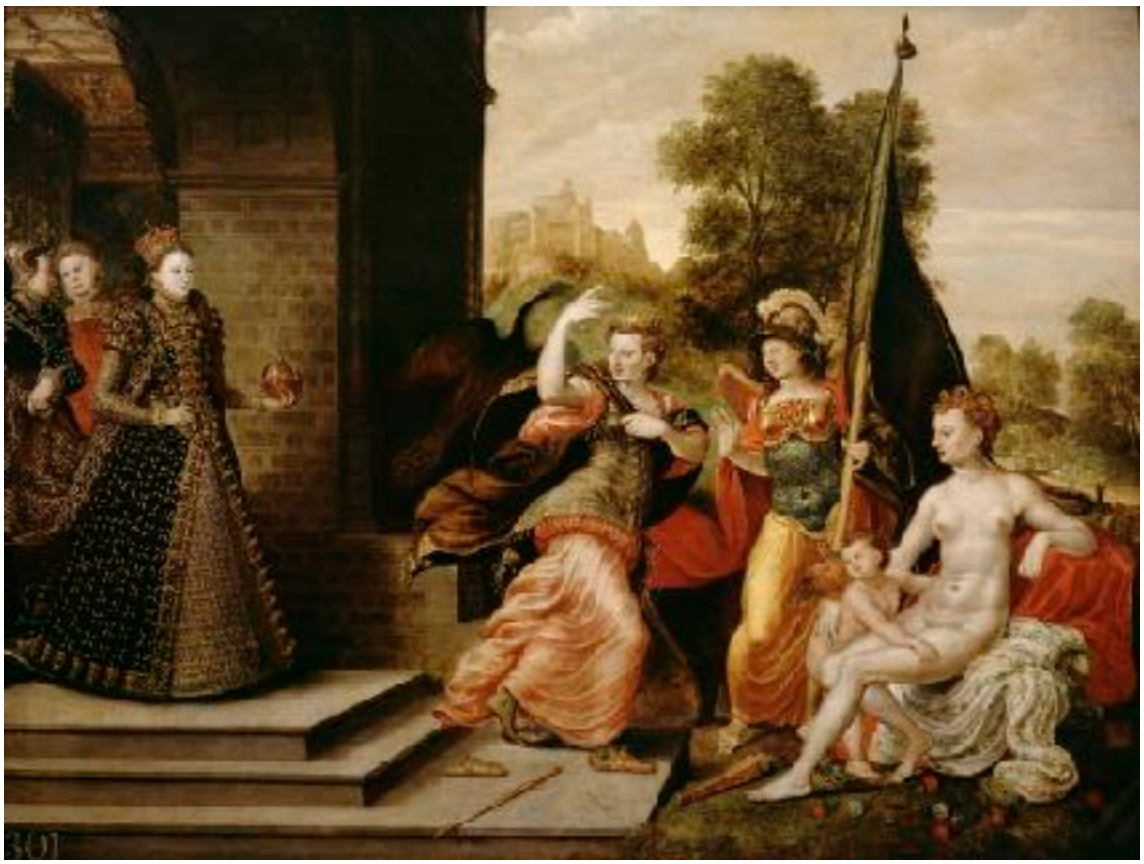


Fig. 65. Hans Eworth, *Elizabeth I and the Three Goddesses*, 1569.

Oil on panel, 62.9 x 84.4 cm.

Windsor, Windsor Castle, inv. no. RCIN 403446.

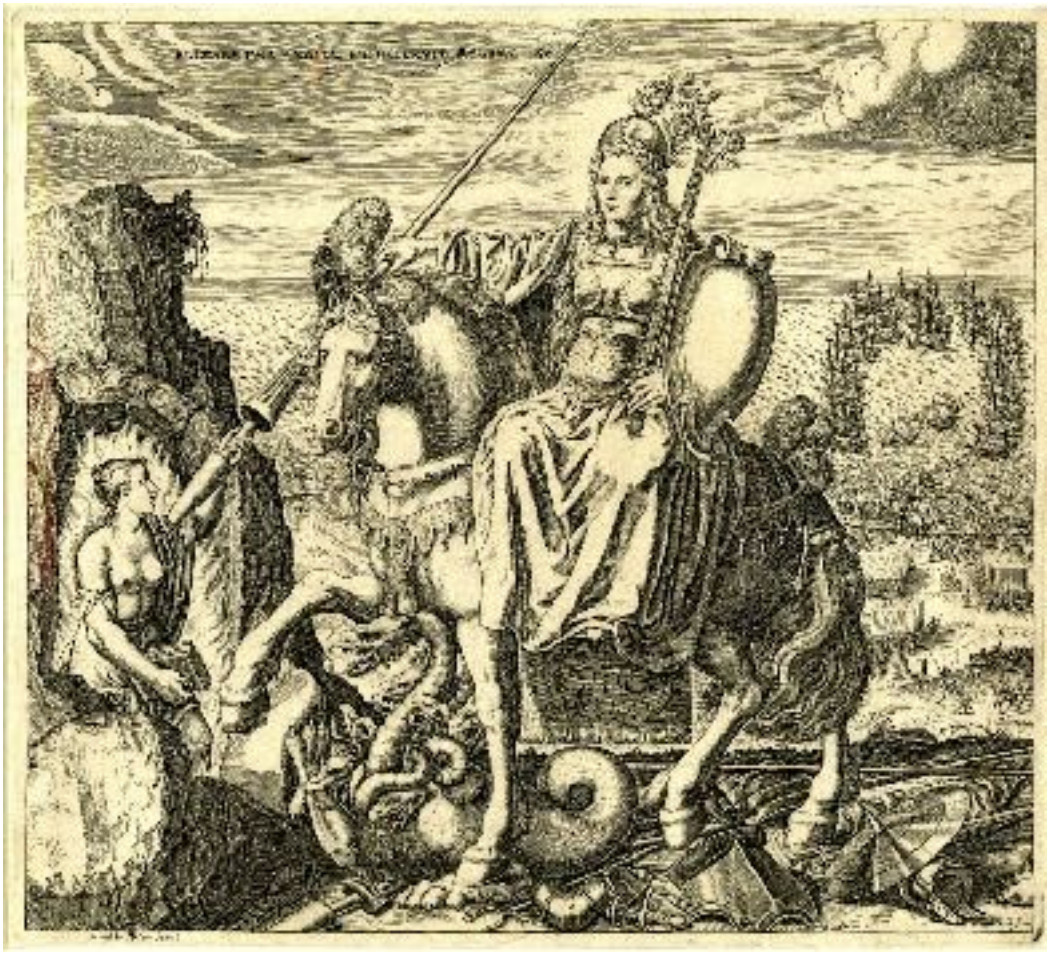


Fig. 66. Thomas Cecill, *Elizabetha Angliae et Hiberniae Reginae &c*, *c.* 1625.

Engraving, 272 x 296 mm.

London, The British Museum, 1849,0315.2.