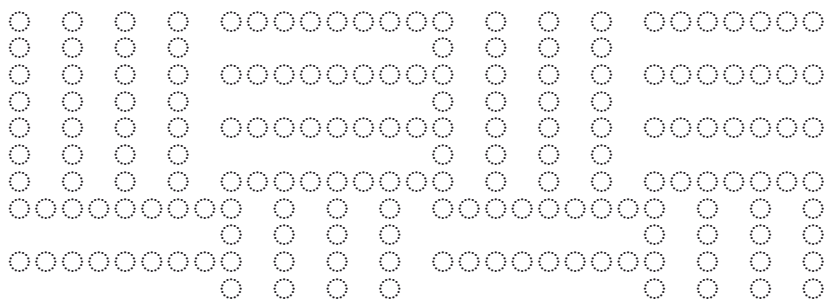
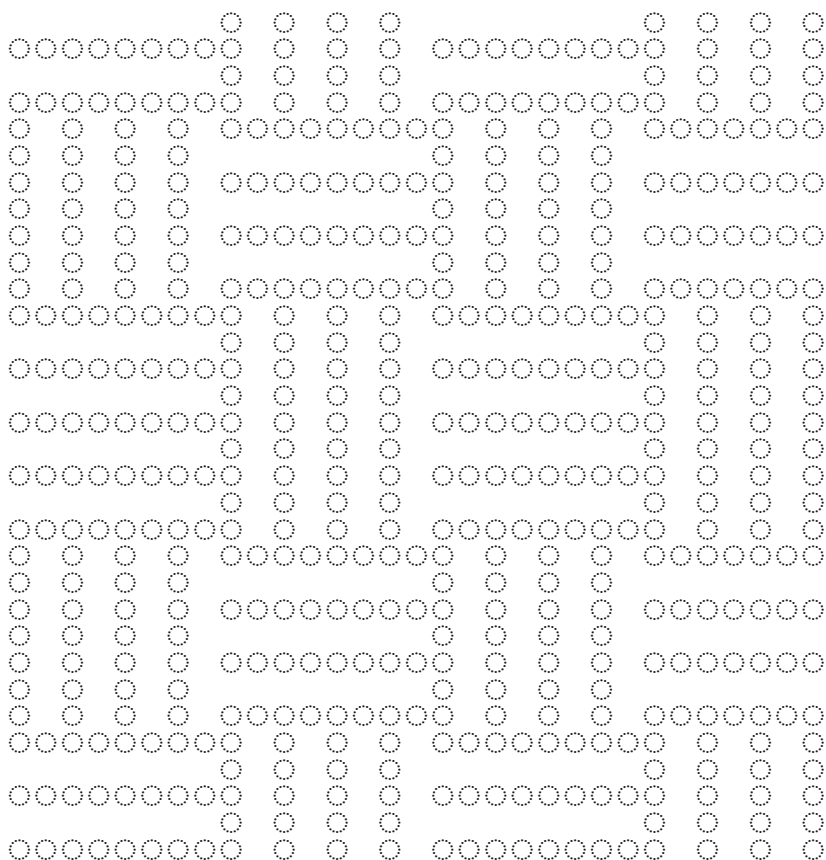


UNFOLDING THE TEXTILE MEDIUM



**UNFOLDING THE TEXTILE MEDIUM IN EARLY
ART AND LITERATURE**
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TEXTILE STUDIES 3



Textile Studies

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Textiles as pictorial motifs encapsulate their functions and meaning in various memory codes. The specific features of textiles enable us to record, preserve, hide, or reveal traces. A garment, cloth, shroud, or veil accumulates reminiscence. This role dating back to antiquity has become a permanent cultural *topos* in the early modern period, particularly in liturgical representations. Textiles, however, do not create a lasting and static language. Their physical properties, which allow us to shape their referential potential in a most flexible manner, are associated with the gradual evolution of their function as visual carriers of meaning that remain dynamic and hard to define. What in textile often undergoes reception-related transformations, iconographical manipulations, and political maneuverings is the rudimentary reminiscence they evoke. The present study is an attempt to capture one of the crucial moments of such intentional creation of <folds> in historical memory. Its subject is the visual motif of the bloodstained cloth that was used as a visual means of provoking an affective response and aimed at strengthening the representation of power in the early modern era. The textile trail leads us in this case to sixteenth-century Florence.

After Giorgio Vasari's death in 1574, the completion of the frescoes in the cupola of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence, commissioned by Grand Duke Cosimo I de' Medici, who died two months before the artist, proved to be a considerable challenge to the local artistic community. The competition to complete the work, eventually won by Federico Zuccari, became one of the breakthrough moments of art history both for the new <Baroque> style and for modern art patronage.¹ One of the participants in this contest was a leading exponent of Florentine Mannerism, Alessandro Allori, a pupil of Agnolo Bronzino. The *Gabinetto dei Disegni e delle Stampe* of the Uffizi holds some of the artist's drawings illustrating Purgatory as described in Dante's *Divine Comedy*, dated 1572 to 1578. They can be associated with his unsuccessful competition entry and be seen as preliminary designs for the frescoes of the cupola or wall of the Duomo's nave that were meant to continue Vasari's decorative scheme or complete the *Last Judgment* which Zuccari had already been painting at the time.

One of these designs, exceptionally large (1.52 × 1.26 m), depicts *Christ's Descent Into Limbo* (fig. 1).² In the upper part of the composition angels hold the instruments of Passion. By including a reference to Michelangelo's Sistine *Last Judgment* and testifying to a universal cult of creative genius, this section of the picture is definitely ostensive. We are dealing here with a creative use of a quotation, which implies a sub-

stantial compositional modification: instead of the figure of Christ – known from Michelangelo’s model and hence expected by the viewer –, a cup held by angels and a banderole with an abbreviated quotation from the *Book of Zacharias* 9,11 appears here: «in sanguine eduxisti vi[n]ctos», typologically referring to the Eucharist.³ The Savior’s bodily presence was marked in the lower part of the composition



Fig. 1 Alessandro Allori, *Harrowing of Hell*, 1572–1578, pencil drawing, 1.52 × 1.26 m, Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi, Gabinetto dei Disegni e delle Stampe, inv. 1787E.

where representation becomes narrative, showing Christ meeting Adam, Eve, Noah, David, and other souls in Purgatory. Such an unusual double division of Limbo, appearing neither in Bronzino’s painting in Santa Croce (1552) nor in a later painting by Allori himself in San Marco (1580), may have been prompted by the desire to create a literal and instantly recognizable reference to the Sistine model, making it unique in the modern iconography of the Descent into Limbo.

This drawing anticipated an oil panel painting at the Galleria Colonna in Rome (fig. 2). The work, with similar dimensions to those of the drawing (1.65 × 1.27 m), was completed by Allori in 1578, following Jacopo Salviati’s commission, and was then kept at the Palazzo Salviati in Florence.⁴ There is, however, one significant change that distinguishes the painting from the drawing: instead of the banderole, where Christ is expected to be shown as in the Sistine Chapel, we can see a white, bloodstained cloth spread by the angels and draped to assume almost a throne-like shape and thus recalling the early Christian motif of *hetoimasia*, the empty throne waiting for Christ as Judge upon his second coming (*parousia*, *secundus adventus*).⁵ This motif is novel in the «textile» iconography of the period. What we see here is not the Shroud of Turin (which was traditionally represented as a stiff image of the body impressed on the cloth and not as an imageless textile in folds), nor the cloth with the impressed face of Christ which gave it a «pictorial identity». It is, rather, a frontal display of an autonomous «imageless» cloth as a medium of presence. The textile itself thus creates a reference through the simple model of *ostensio*, and the image’s

visual potential is in this way based on the temporary replacement of the person of the Savior as a permanently enthroned Judge. Significantly, previous studies published thus far have been silent about the origins of this extraordinary textile figure. On the one hand, the appearance of an autonomous bloodstained cloth as a carrier of presence can be interpreted in terms of artistic practice. The numer-



Fig. 2 Alessandro Allori, *Harrowing of Hell*, 1572–1578, oil painting on wood, 1.65 × 1.27 m, Rome, Galleria Colonna.

ous surviving drawings by Allori, who was an advanced student and later an instructor in human anatomy, clearly show an attempt to study the phenomenon of textiles covering of various body parts. These studies consistently led the artist to depict the gesture of holding the spread imageless cloth which served as a formal module paving the way for larger compositions.⁶ On the other hand, it was in the 1570s that Allori, who also designed liturgical robes and paraments, seems to have become increasingly aware of the textile as a pictorial motif with considerable semantic value, especially with regard to Eucharistic symbolism.

For instance, when decorating the Palazzo Salviati chapel 1579–1580, Allori included in its wall paintings the figure of the Eucharistic Christ as a tormented body placed on the altar and covered by a funeral shroud which serves as a liturgical corporal (fig. 3).⁷ Taking advantage of the power of pictorial ambiguity, he thus goes beyond the fixed canons of Eucharistic representation and presents a direct visual <embodiment> of the ritual. It seems that the historical dimension of liturgical textiles and their function as media began at some point to define Allori's identity as an artist. In a fresco painted between 1582 and 1584 for the Chiostro Grande of Santa Maria Novella in Florence, the painter presents himself proudly carrying the body of the dead Christ to the Tomb on a white stretched shroud (fig. 4).⁸ In this perhaps somewhat straightforward though suggestive way, he clearly points to the metaphorical sense of his art of picturing <sacred> textiles.

However, our interpretation of the cloth motif in Allori's Roman painting is so far based on the artistic identity of an artist consciously developing his art and unwaveringly arriving at the moment of iconographic invention. In order to leave such evolutionary assumptions aside, let us, instead, ask about possible external factors that might



Fig. 3 Alessandro Allori, *Christ Veiled by Angels*, 1579–1580, mural oil painting, Florence, Palazzo Salviati.

have motivated Allori's use of this pioneering motif of the autonomous bloodstained cloth in an Christological context. Following to some extent Michael Baxandall, who did not believe in artists' autonomous identity and who analyzed images according to the model of «naïve but skeptical intentionalism», it is worth examining Allori's painting in the light of contemporary discourse on representation.⁹ According



Fig. 4 Alessandro Allori and Giovanni Maria Butteri, *Christ Carried to the Tomb*, 1582–1584, fresco, Florence, Santa Maria Novella, Chiostro Grande.

to Baxandall's principle of historical criticism, words intervene between the image and the attempt to explain it. The eventual language of the visual is usually based on the translatability of intentions

into a specific, working form, which is again accessible only through description.¹⁰ Allori's painting was part of a semantically determined network of associations within a public discourse, full of veiled political allusions and deliberately signaled ambivalences. Therefore, we will here pursue a reconstruction of some of the possible causes for the conception of the painting in the light of its historically intended agency. This attempt is all the more difficult since the object of analysis is a design that never acquired its final form planned by the artist and never reached its originally planned destination.

Allori's ultimate composition was most probably meant to be viewed in public. Technical details link the Galleria Colonna painting to the above-mentioned Uffizi drawing and thus with the fresco designs for the Florentine Cathedral. It is not only the evident monumental nature of the composition itself – clearly meant to be a large-format representation – or the size of the painting, but also its unpainted upper corners that suggest this work was a sketch for a fresco in the cupola or one of the eastern aisle walls.¹¹ Following the artist's failure to win the competition, this picture most likely remained unfinished until 1578 and eventually found its place in a private Florentine palace.¹² At the same time, it is the location of the Florentine Duomo that implies a number of interesting though equivocal clues to a historical interpretation of the bloodstained cloth as a visual carrier of identity with a highly metaphoric or, to be more precise, metonymic scope.

During Easter mass of 1478, the cathedral was the venue of one of the most significant events in Florentine history: the assassination of Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici instigated by the Pazzi family and the henchmen of cardinal della Rovere and Pope Sixtus IV, directly beneath the cupola.¹³ Lorenzo publicly demonstrated his survival several times. First, he appeared to the people in a window of Palazzo Medici immediately after his brother's assassination, still wearing his robe with blood stains from a dagger wound inflicted to him by Antonio da Volterra. Then he commissioned Orsino Benintendi to make three wax portrait figures of the votive *boti* type. One of the figures displayed in the church of the Monache di Charito in Florence wore the very same bloodstained robe, which thus acquired a relic-like status.¹⁴ This type of politically motivated display of clothing builds an indirect material reference to the ancient motif of Mark Antony holding up Julius Caesar's bloodstained robe after the dictator's violent death from the hands of the conspirators, thus strengthening the rhetoric of the funeral oration honoring the murdered ruler.¹⁵ In both cases, the aim was not only to commemorate the event, but also to provoke visually a strong response, intensifying people's radical emotions during a political crisis.

In the second half of the 16th century this *topos* was undoubtedly still relevant in Florence. When in the 1550s Duke Cosimo I commissioned Baccio Bandinelli sculptures decorating the cathedral choir, the location reactivated its semantics as the historic <place of the Medici assassination> and as a <place of the revival> of the power of the family, which was only recently restored in 1537 after a period of exile.¹⁶ Shortly afterwards, when Allori was painting his second Limbo version based on his first drawings, the problem of tyrannicide

or regicide and the related need for a visual legitimization of power became relevant once again. In 1575 Grand Duke Francesco de' Medici discovered and thwarted another conspiracy aiming at the complete physical eradication of the Medici family from Florence and Tuscany. Known in historical studies as the <Pucci Conspiracy>, the plot was headed by Orazio Pucci and drew on the failed assassination of Cosimo I attempted in 1560 by the Capponi, Machiavelli, Alamanni, and Pucci families, and directed by Pandolfo Pucci, Orazio's father, who was executed by Cosimo shortly after the conspiracy was discovered. Francesco's reaction was just as energetic as his father's 15 years earlier. He engaged his secret police, the *Otto*, in a large-scale operation that became almost a private *vendetta*, resulting in the beheading of Orazio and the severe punishment of his fellow conspirators.¹⁷

The organizers of conspiracies in this period invoked what could be termed their families' <genealogy of protest>. Similarly, those who tried to defend Medicean rule used propaganda that continued the *topos* of self-legitimization in the face of current political and physical threats. Generally, this mechanism went beyond the autocratic system created by the new Grand Dukes. In the numerous manifestations of the Medici genealogy, which in a historical sense were to provide a direct link between the family and the city as a body politic, Cosimo I also deliberately referred to the glorious days of fifteenth-century Medicean Florence ruled by republican authorities. He did so, for instance, when commissioning monumental paintings for the Palazzo Vecchio as it was transformed from the seat of the Signoria into a new ducal residence, a commission that was given to Vasari in the late 1550s. By referring to figures such as Lorenzo il Magnifico himself, Cosimo strengthened his family's credibility and permanence, the inviolability of its historical rights to socio-political self-determination in Tuscany.¹⁸

The bloodstained cloth in Allori's painting can be interpreted as a clear signal of the persistence and sovereignty of Medici rule immediately after the discovery of a new plot against Francesco. This conspiracy was thus to be depicted as a futile attempt to destroy the sacral dimension of power. This argumentation also originates in the visual policy introduced into the Florentine <iconosphere> by Lorenzo il Magnifico himself after the spectacular Pazzi attack of 1478. This period saw the beginning of such novelties as the cult of the Ten Thousand Martyrs with a new iconography of the subject that was to expand the devotional representation of the Medici family to include martyrological ideology.¹⁹ In this light, the ancient motif of displaying the robe of the murdered Caesar was reformulated during Lorenzo's times to satisfy the Duke's need for self-legitimization combined with his votive intentions and a desire to manifest the physical survival of the assassination. In sixteenth-century Florence it must have already been a recognizable visual motif. It was a *topos* which, as early as 1478, denoted, first of all, the prospective dimension of power and later thus went beyond political sympathies and antipathies, the identity differences between the republican party and the representational claims of the Grand Dukes Cosimo and Francesco.

If we take a closer look at the constant semantic migration of the ruler's assassination motif, depending on the dynamics of the historical interpretation of the figure of Caesar, we will see that the bloodstained cloth can be perceived in early modern Florence as a visual theme that refers not only to tyrannicide but generally to regicide. Lorenzo il Magnifico himself wrote in his sonnet *De summo bono* about Caesar as a ruler who made mistakes in his search for sovereignty, but was also ready to admit them.²⁰ The humanist Alemanno Rinuccini, who in his dialogue *De libertate* from 1479 clearly bemoaned the recent failure of the anti-Medicean conspiracy, comparing the Florentine plotters, Jacopo and Francesco Pazzi, with Brutus and Cassius. Lorenzo was thus negatively associated with Caesar in emphasizing Medicean imperial ambitions within the Republic.²¹ The figure of Caesar as a model of a justly murdered tyrant or of a ruler who puts his life at risk for the public good became at that time a rhetorical common place for both sides of the political spectrum. The visual power of argumentation through monumental artistic means in the 16th century undoubtedly lay with Cosimo and Francesco de' Medici as Grand Dukes, who could use the visual attributes of this *topos* and reactivate it in this heated debate. Their references to a distant and turbulent history of the family should be treated as part of a conscious strategy, especially given that Cosimo represented only a minor branch of the family and that he took power only as a result of the crisis that followed the death of his cousin, Alessandro de' Medici, murdered in 1537 by Lorenzino who identified himself unequivocally with Brutus, the tyrannicide.²² In Allori's composition we are not dealing with the display of the image of a bloodstained cloth but with its inclusion in a larger Christological scene as a recognizable pictorial figure. This semantic shift reformulates the visual message, which is now to be associated with a strictly prospective dimension of the memory of Christ as the victim's predecessor. It is within the Florentine reception of the motif of assassination and the display of the ruler's bloodstained robe that the meaning of this visual device is gradually brought to light. But, whereas Caesar's robe, which was displayed shortly after his death, was meant to provoke collective revenge of the people, Lorenzo's robe shown to the public was, instead, a sign of his personal victory in the face of a radical threat. The visual signal, which was meant in the first case to evoke affective *post mortem* reactions, was in the second case testified the constant presence and permanence of power that remained in the family despite the killing of Giuliano de' Medici as one of its main representatives. We are dealing here with a positive reformulation of an ancient *topos*: commemoration was merged with the motif of preservation and the claim of legitimization.

This type of Christological allusion to <strengthening through sacrifice> appeared immediately after the Pazzi conspiracy within a rather unusual pictorial composition. The commemorative medal made for the Medici by Bertoldo di Giovanni (fig. 5) contains a significant allusion to the Eucharistic ritual emanating the power of the *corpus vivum* as the object of the sacrifice.²³ This medal depicts the significant moment of Giuliano's assassination and – on the other side – the attack on Lorenzo in the Cathedral when the host was raised by the priest

during Easter mass (or when the cup with wine is raised, as Angelo Poliziano specifies in his description of the events).²⁴ While the murdered Giuliano was honored by the inscription of *luctus publicus* (public sorrow), Lorenzo's figure was accompanied by the term *salus publica* (public salvation). This combination occurs mechanically as a comparison thanks to the features of the double-sided medal as a reversible visual medium offering two overlapping images. In this way,



Fig. 5 Bertoldo di Giovanni, *Medal commemorating the Pazzi Conspiracy and the Assassination of the Medici*, 1478, obverse and reverse, ø 6.6 cm.

it directly implies an element of prospective commemoration, as the most important moment of the transformation of the Christian ritual: the transition from *tristia* to *gaudium* within sacramental procedures that culminate in the final stage of Eucharistic transfiguration is evoked.²⁵ The persistent dimension of the sacrifice was here combined with the socialization of Medici power, represented on the medal quite literally by means of the authority motif in the form of the head (*caput*) controlling the members of the body equated with the State.²⁶

The bloodstained cloth that was covering the body of a ruler who sacrificed himself for the public good was thus semantically expanded during the times of Francesco de' Medici. For the second Grand Duke, the motif of the sacralization of power at risk of assassination, based to a large extent on antique and Christological associations, was not new. His father Cosimo had already identified and depicted himself as Augustus on the basis of astrological explanations (as in the fresco painting by Giorgio Vasari, in Sala di Leone Decimo at the Palazzo Vecchio).²⁷ In Allori's painting, however, Christ's cloth was included in the iconography of the Limbo. This leads to the next and probably the most important point of the Allori's work as a means to glorify the power of the Medici. Christ's Descent into Limbo took place during his three-day sojourn in the Tomb before the Resurrection. So, Allori's reformulation of its iconography indicates the strength and the justness of a ruler who, on the one hand, clearly overcomes the fetters of death inflicted on him, and on the other, rewards the chosen by leading them out of Limbo.

Allori's picture assumed the presence of a semantic antinomy resulting directly from the adaptation of prospective commemoration, characteristic only of Christ, to the needs of the representation of the Grand Duke's secular power. His composition contains a distinct message:

even if the robe as an announcement of the assassination of the current ruler's body is exposed to the public, the ruler himself, as a representative of the office and the family or, rather, of the title held by the family, is nevertheless able to free his people and to resurrect himself. In this way, it fulfills the former announcement of *salus publica* from exactly hundred years earlier. According to the Accademia Fiorentina, which was obligated already by the new *pater patriae* Cosimo I to give cultural foundations for a collective identification of the city with the Medici family, its representatives, under the care of the saint doctors, Cosmas and Damian, embodied the <healing doctors> of the public life.²⁸ In this context, it becomes clearer why Allori, when making in his picture another version of the already well-established Medicean visual motif of *Christus medicus*, made such a clear reference to Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* in the Sistine Chapel.²⁹ It must be underlined that his *Christ in Limbo* may have been innovative in terms of its composition when compared with the entire iconography of the subject, but was not devoid of a distinctive structural dualism. It seems that a manifestation of this dualism was what the artist intended. Firstly, only when the bloodstained cloth is so clearly displayed and combined together with Christ's missionary presence in the Limbo abyss below could this textile cover be elevated from a symbol of sudden decline and death to the rank of a victorious trophy. Secondly, only such a split composition associates the cloth with the figure of the Michelangelo's angry Judge, who in the Sistine fresco is occupying the same place and delivering the Last Judgment according to everyone's merits. In this way, political theology escapes the chains of medieval semantic canon bearing the terms of <body natural> and <body politic>. Instead, the retrospective value of the representation of the current ruler is manifested here only by means of visual association provoked by a mannerist <artist-collector> who deliberately plays with the well-known pictorial model.³⁰ This association was meant to be read primarily within a specific fragment of public space, on a place that was historically marked with affect and as such subsequently shaped with various rhetorical devices by successive generations of the Medici.

In his book *Ideology of the Traitor*, Achille Bonito Oliva elaborates on the categories of <metaphor>, <disguise>, and <duality> in Mannerist aesthetics. He relates it directly to the subject-ruler relationship and to the *topos* of the threat of treason and possible assassination of the ruler who is thus forced to wear a public mask.³¹ This interpretation is confirmed by the above-mentioned problem of the visualization of the bloodstained cloth. «In the house of the ruler and the duke, there echoes only the word, in the derivative form of the metaphor», Oliva writes, referring to Baldassare Castiglione and his *Cortigiano*.³² The textile medium used in his painting by Allori, although it has its own genealogy, becomes in this light a means of argumentation, wrapped in advance by words of political discourse. It is at the same time a deliberately ambivalent tool: it both determines a lasting level of presence and demonstrates, in an authoritarian manner, a sense of public hierarchy.

1 This paper, introducing the meaning of a particular clothing motif in the political history of the Renaissance rather than structurally dealing with the function of a specifically textile art medium, is an initial sketch for a broader research project. Therefore, some ideas as well as references in the footnotes appear in abbreviated form only. For the history of the competition for the cupola and on Zuccari's success – already a *locus classicus* of Florentine art history – see e. g.: Detlef Heikamp, «Federico Zuccari a Firenze 1575–1579. Parte I: La cupola del Duomo, il diario disegnato»; in: *Paragone. Arte*, 1967, vol. 18, nr. 205, p. 44–68. Cristina Acidini Luchinat, «Federico Zuccari e la cultura fiorentina. Quattro singolari immagini nella cupola di Santa Maria del Fiore»; in: *Paragone. Arte*, 1989, vol. 40, nr. 13, p. 29–56. Ead., «Traccia per la storia delle pitture murali e degli artisti»; in: *Cupola di Santa Maria del Fiore. Il cantiere di restauro*, ed. by id. and Riccardo Dalla Negra; Rome, Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 1995, p. 63–112, here p. 63–86. Id., «Il «Giudizio Universale» nella cupola e altre pitture»; in: *La cattedrale di Santa Maria del Fiore a Firenze*, ed. by id.; Florence, Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze, 1995, vol. 2, p. 303–324. Detlef Heikamp, «Federico Zuccari e la cupola di Santa Maria del Fiore. La fortuna critica dei suoi affreschi»; in: *Federico Zuccari. Le idee, gli scritti*, ed. by Bonita Cleri; Milan, Electa, 1997, p. 139–157. Cf. Tristan Weddigen, «Federico Zuccaro zwischen Michelangelo und Raffael. Kunstideal und Bilderkult zur Zeit Gregors XIII»; in: *Federico Zuccaro. Kunst zwischen Ideal und Reform*, ed. by id.; Basle, Schwabe Verlag, 2000, p. 195–268, p. 266–268.

2 Galleria degli Uffizi in Florence, Gabinetto delle Disegni e Stampe, nr. 1787 E. See: Thomas Fletcher Worthen, *The Harrowing of Hell in the Art of the Italian Renaissance*; University of Iowa, 1981, p. 246–252. Simona Lecchini Giovannoni, *Alessandro Allori*; Turin, Allemandi, 1991, p. 243. Cf. Michael Brunner, *Die Illustrierung von Dantes Divina Commedia in der Zeit der Dante-Debatte (1570–1600)*; Munich, Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1999, p. 101–106. Marc-Oliver Loerke, *Höllenfahrt Christi und Anastasis. Ein Bildmotiv im Abendland und im christlichen Osten*; Regensburg, University of Regensburg, 2003, p. 146–147; dissertation: University of Regensburg.

3 *Zacharias* 9,11: «Thou also by the blood of thy testament hast sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit, wherein is no water».

4 Its comprehensive painting decoration was created by Allori and his assistants, employed for several years by this Florentine family: Lecchini Giovannoni 1991 (cf. note 2), p. 243.

5 The comparison of this less known painting by Allori with Michelangelo's *Last Judgement* can be found already in Aby Warburg's *Mnemosyne-Atlas*, board nr. 56.

6 See resp. the artist's drawings in GDSU: inv. 90 S, 10224 F, 10231 F, 10273 F, 10282 F, 10299 F, 10253 F, 10320 F.

7 According to Allori's own description of the painting in his *Ricordi*: «sopra alla porta di dentro di detta cappella vi è un quadro dentrovi un Nostro Signore Gesù Cristo con due Angeli che lo sostengono sopra a un altare sendo finto morto» (*I ricordi di Alessandro Allori*, ed. by Iginio Benvenuto Supino; Florence, Barbera, 1908, p. 22–23). Cf. Piero Bargellini, *Le pitture di Alessandro Allori nel Palazzo Salviati da Cepperello già case dei Portinari in Firenze oggi sede e proprietà della Banca Toscana*; Florence, Zincografica Fiorentina, 1953. Lecchini Giovannoni 1991 (cf. note 2), p. 248. Simultaneously, in 1579, Allori painted almost exactly the same figure of veiled Christ in his *tavola* of Christ mourned by the angels on the Golgatha designed for an altarpiece in Florence's Sant'Egidio, which still can be seen in the church. See Lecchini Giovannoni 1991 (cf. note 2), p. 250–251.

8 The historically undefinable figure of the carrier in the foreground, looking straight at the beholder and the only one in the whole composition directed to him in the proudly pose of a *gentiluomo*, is in all probability Allori's self-portrait. The paintings in Chiostr Grande are nowadays hardly accessible, as the whole complex functions as the main quarter of the Scuola Sottufficiali Carabinieri. About Allori's participation and cooperation with his pupil Giovanni Maria Buttero see Lecchini Giovannoni 1991 (cf. note 2), p. 258–259. Peter Assmann, *Dominikanerheilige und der verbotene Savonarola. Die Freskoausstattung des Chiostr Grande im Kloster Santa Maria Novella in Florenz, ein kulturelles Phänomen des späten Manierismus*; Mainz/Munich, Chorus-Verlag für Kunst und Wissenschaft, 1997, p. 202 (here quotation of the sources, cf. p. 121–123).

9 Michael Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention. On the Historical Explanation of Pictures*; New Haven, Yale University Press, 1985, p. 1–12.

10 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 1: «We do not explain pictures: we explain remarks about pictures – or rather, we explain pictures only in so far as we have considered them under some verbal description or specification». *Ibid.*, p. 10: «this is the texture of the verbal «description» that is mediating object of any explanation we may attempt. It is an alarmingly mobile and fragile object of explanation». *Ibid.*, p. 10–11: «If we wish to explain pictures, in the sense of expounding them in terms of their historical causes, what we actually explain seems likely to be not the unmediated picture but the picture as considered under a partially interpretative description. This description is an untidy and lively affair.»

11 See most of all the elaborately described and, according to me, plausible supposition on the then planned placement of the fresco by Worthen 1981 (cf. note 2), p. 246–252. This destination was later mentioned also

by Acidini Luchinat 1989 (cf. note 1), p. 54–55 (cf. note 52) and repeated by Lecchini Giovannoni 1991 (cf. note 2), p. 243. 12 The history of the painting before its completion in 1578 is unclear. A note in the Salviati accounts mentions only the *«pagamento finale»* for the painting by Jacopo Salviati on 21st March 1578 (Lecchini Giovannoni 1991 [cf. note 2], p. 67). However, the painting's above mentioned technical and compositional details in comparison with the Uffizi drawing make the commonly accepted thesis regarding the Palazzo Salviati as original destination of the former rather unconvincing. For Allori's activity in 1574–1580, see *ibid.*, p. 51–53, as well his own entries in the *Ricordi*: Supino 1908 (cf. note 7), p. 10–23. 13 See e.g. the latest monograph: Lauro Martines, *April Blood. Florence and the Plot Against the Medici*; Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003. 14 Guido Mazzoni, *I boti della SS. Annunziata in Firenze. Curiosità storica*; Florence, 1923, p. 25–26. Julius von Schlosser, *Tote Blicke. Geschichte der Porträtbilderei in Wachs. Ein Versuch*, ed. by Thomas Medicus; Berlin, Akademie, 1993, p. 61–64. Horst Bredekamp, *Repräsentation und Bildmagine der Renaissance als Formproblem. Erweiterte Fassung eines Vortrags gehalten in der Carl Friedrich von Siemens Stiftung am 29. Juni 1993*; Munich, Carl-Friedrich-von-Siemens-Stiftung, 1995, p. 30–32. Susanne Kress, «Laurentius Medicus – Salus Publica. Zum historischen Kontext eines Voto Lorenzos de' Medici aus der Verrocchiowerkstatt»; in: *Die Christus-Thomas-Gruppe von Andrea del Verrocchio*, ed. by Herbert Beck, Maraike Bückling, and Edgar Lein; Frankfurt, Henrich, 1996, p. 175–195 (with previous literature). Patricia Lee Rubin, *Images and Identity in Fifteenth-Century Florence*; New Haven, Yale University Press, 2007, p. 118–119. Cf. also Philine Helas, «San Tommaso contro San Giovanni. Verrocchios <Ungläubiger Thomas> im Kontext zeitgenössischer Festkultur und mediceischer Politik»; in: *Die Christus-Thomas-Gruppe von Andrea del Verrocchio*, ed. by Herbert Beck, Maraike Bückling and Edgar Lein; Frankfurt, Henrich, 1996, p. 163–174, here p. 168–170. 15 Appian, *The Civil Wars*, transl. by Horace White, Book 2; New York, Bohn, 1913, p. 498–499: «Carried away by an easy transition to extreme passion he uncovered the body of Caesar, lifted his robe on the point of a spear and shook it aloft, pierced with dagger-thrusts and red with the dictator's blood. Whereupon the people, like a chorus in a play, mourned with him in the most sorrowful manner, and from sorrow became filled again with anger. After the discourse other lamentations were chanted with funeral music according to the national custom, by the people in chorus, to the dead; and his deeds and his sad fate were again recited. Somewhere from the midst of these lamentations Caesar himself was supposed to speak, recounting by name his enemies on whom he had conferred benefits, and of the murderers themselves exclaiming, as it were in amazement, <Oh that I should have spared these men to slay me!> The people could endure it no longer. It seemed to them monstrous that all the murderers who, with the single exception of Decimus Brutus, had been made prisoners while belonging to the faction of Pompey, and who, instead of being punished, had been advanced by Caesar to the magistracies of Rome and to the command of provinces and armies, should have conspired against him; and that Decimus should have been deemed by him worthy of adoption as his son.» 16 For the symbolic meaning of Bandinelli's visual arrangement of the altar space under the cupola and later of Zuccari's paintings see e.g.: Dettel Heikamp, «Baccio Bandinelli nel Duomo di Firenze»; in: *Paragone. Arte*, 1964, vol. 15, nr. 175, p. 32–42. Cf. the particular essays in: *L'uomo in cielo. Il programma pittorico della cupola di Santa Maria del Fiore. Teologia ed iconografia a confronto. Atti del simposio interdisciplinare promosso dallo Studio Teologico Fiorentino il 18 ottobre 1995 nell'Aula Magna del Seminario Arcivescovile di Firenze*, ed. by Timothy Verdon; Bologna, EDB, 1996. 17 John K. Brackett, *Criminal Justice and Crime in Late Renaissance Florence, 1537–1609*; Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 128. Jean Bouter, «Trois conjurations italiennes: Florence (1575), Parme (1611), Gênes (1628)»; in: *Mélanges de l'Ecole Française de Rome*, 108, 1996, p. 319–375. John M. Najemy, *A History of Florence 1200–1575*; Malden Mass., Blackwell Publishing, 2006, p. 486–487. Caroline P. Murphy, *Murder of a Medici Princess*; Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 291–293. 18 Felice Stampfle, «A Ceiling Design by Vasari»; in: *Master Drawings*, 1968, vol. 6, no. 3, p. 266–329. Henk Th. van Veen, «Republicanism in the Visual Propaganda of Cosimo I de' Medici»; in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 1992, vol. 55, p. 200–209. Roger J. Crum, «Lessons From the Past: the Palazzo Medici as Political <Mentor> in Sixteenth-Century Florence»; in: *The Cultural Politics of Duke Cosimo I de' Medici*, ed. by Konrad Eisenbichler; Aldershot, Ashgate, 2001, p. 47–60, here p. 50–51, 54–55. Mary Weitzel Gibbons, «Cosimo's *Cavallo*: a Study in Imperial Imagery»; in: *ibid.*, p. 77–102, here p. 82–83. For question of possible political continuities cf. Alison Brown, «De-Masking Renaissance Republicanism»; in: *Renaissance Civic Humanism. Reappraisals and Reflections*, ed. by J. Hankins; Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 179–199. 19 Richard C. Trexler, «Lorenzo de' Medici and Savonarola, Martyrs for Florence»; in: *Renaissance Quarterly*, 1978, vol. 31, nr. 3, p. 293–308. 20 Lorenzo de'

Medici, *Selected Poems and Prose*, ed. and transl. by Jon Thiem; Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991, p. 72 (*De summo bono/Supreme Good*): «Caesar, it seems, named this the sovereign good, / but then he finally saw that greater sway / will make only you subject to more men.» 21 Alemanno Rinuccini, «The Liberty»; in: *Humanism and Liberty. Writings on freedom from fifteenth-century Florence*, transl. and ed. by Renée Neu Watkins; Columbia, University of South Carolina Press, 1978, p. 193–224, here: p. 196: «The truth did not escape the truly magnanimous mind and noble character of Jacopo and Francesco dei Pazzi and of the various heads of that family. [...] They did undertake a glorious deed, an action worthy of the highest praise. They tried to restore their own liberty and that of the country. [...] Men of sound judgement will always rank them with Dion of Syracuse, Aristogiton and Harmodius of Athens, Brutus and Cassius of Rome, and in our own day, Giovanni and Geronimo Andrea of Milan». 22 Bredekamp 1995 (cf. note 14), p. 42–54. Cf. the tradition of tyrannicide, referring also to Caesar (who was traditionally believed to be the founder of Florence), and its visual glorification in the public space of Florence in the Medici times: Sarah Blake McHam, «Donatello's Bronze <David> and <Judith> as Metaphors of Medici Rule in Florence»; in: *The Art Bulletin*, 2001, vol. 83, nr. 1, p. 32–47. In this context, I set the further republican elaborations on Brutus by Michelangelo and Donato Giannotti aside. 23 Among the rich literature on this topic see: Vladimir Juřen, «<Civium servator>. Bertoldos Medaille auf Lorenzo il Magnifico»; in: *Umění*, 1971, vol. 19, p. 75–82. Karla Langedijk, *The Portraits of the Medici: 15th–18th Centuries*; Florence, Studio Per Edizioni Scelte, 1983, vol. 2, p. 1072–1073. James David Draper, *Bertoldo di Giovanni. Sculptor of the Medici Household. Critical Reappraisal and Catalogue Raisonné*; Columbia, University of Missouri Press, 1992, p. 86–95. Kress 1996 (cf. note 14), p. 184–187. Cf. Luke Syson, «Bertoldo di Giovanni, Republican Court Artist»; in: *Artistic Exchange and Cultural Translation in the Italian Renaissance City*, ed. by Stephen J. Campbell and Stephen J. Milner; Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 96–133, here p. 100–102. 24 Angelo Poliziano, «The Pazzi Conspiracy»; in: Watkins 1978 (cf. note 21), p. 171–185, here p. 175. 25 Cf. e.g. Osborne Bennett Hardison, *Christian Rite and Christian Drama in the Middle Ages. Essays in the Origin and Early History of Modern Drama*; Baltimore, The John Hopkins Press, 1965, p. 46. In this way, the reading of the medal should begin with Giuliano's side, different to the usually accepted mode. 26 According to a political paradigm of microcosm known at least from the time of John of Salisbury (ca. 1115–1180) who formulated the theory of representation and legitimization of power in his work *Policraticus* from ca. 1159 that already then was part of the canon of medieval political writing: John of Salisbury, *Policraticus. Of the Frivolities of Courtiers and the Footprints of Philosophers*, ed. by Cary J. Nederman; Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990 (e.g. Book vi, Chapter 25); on the political currency of the *Policraticus* at the time of the Renaissance humanism cf. McHam 2001 (cf. note 22), p. 38–41. 27 Janet Cox-Rearick, *Dynasty and Destiny in Medici Art. Pontormo, Leo X, and the Two Cosimos*; Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1984, p. 280–281. 28 Michael Sherberg, «The Accademia Fiorentina and the Question of the Language. The Politics of Theory in Ducal Florence»; in: *Renaissance Quarterly*, 2003, vol. 56, nr. 1, p. 26–55, here p. 1–2 and 32. Cf. Mark Jurdjevic, «Civic Humanism and the Rise of the Medici»; in: *Renaissance Quarterly*, 1999, vol. 52, nr. 4, p. 994–1020. Mary Alexandra Wyatt, «The Reception of Dante in the Time of Cosimo I»; in: Eisenbichler 2001 (cf. note 18), p. 121–134, here p. 122–123, 128–133. 29 Allori painted a *sacra conversazione* version of *Christus-Medicus* together with Saints Cosmas and Damian already in ca. 1559–1560; the painting, in which Cosmas bears the facial features of Cosimo I, is now in the Musées Royaux des Beaux Arts in Brussels: Cox-Rearick 1984 (cf. note 27), p. 248; Lecchini Giovannoni 1991 (cf. note 2), p. 218. 30 About Allori's actual Mannerist predilection for collecting masterly and acknowledged image motifs as well as things for his own visual inspirations see e.g. Antonio Natali, *La donna col cameo. Ortensia de' Bardi da Montauto dipinta da Alessandro Allori/The lady with a cameo. Ortensia de' Bardi da Montauto, a portrait by Alessandro Allori*; Florence, Edizioni Polistampa, 2006. 31 Achille Bonito Oliva, *L'ideologia de traditore. Arte, maniera, manierismo*; Milan, Electa, 1998, p. 51–53. 32 *Ibid.*, p. 51: «nella casa del Padrone, del Principe, rimbomba soltanto la parola, nella forma deviata della metafora».

