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Cardinal de Richelieu's discovery of purple: Political and emblematic antecedents of a topos

Аннотация. Статья посвящена исследованию иконографического топоса «открытие пурпура», наиболее известным воплощением которого является набросок Рубенса для королевского замка Торре-де-ла-Парада. Однако помимо живописи следы его обнаруживаются в эмблемах и девизах, чрезвычайно распространенных в XVI–XVII вв. В частности, «открытие пурпура» обыгрывается в девизах Жана-Франсуа де Буасьера, созданных в 1622 г. в честь посвящения Ришелье, тогда еще епископа Люсонского, в кардинальский сан. Неожиданным образом Буасьер сравнивает нового кардинала с псом Геркулеса, нашедшим пурпурницу на морском берегу. У этого сравнения есть целый ряд политических импликаций, связанных, с одной стороны, с покровительством королевы-матери (которой, возможно, принадлежала идея использовать этот сюжет, знакомый ей по картине Санти ди Тито), а с другой — с попыткой Ришелье завоевать доверие Людовика XIII, символически обозначив абсолютную преданность его интересам. На примере девиза Буасьера прослеживается постепенная трансформация топоса, от изначальной модели, сформировавшейся в Италии XVI столетия, связанной с прославлением женской власти, вплоть до 1630-х годов, когда Ришелье создает у себя в Пале-Рояль галерею исторических портретов великих людей прошлого и настоящего, где представлено иное символическое истолкование происхождение кардинальского пурпура. Практически одновременно с этим топос «открытия пурпура» используют два нидерландских художника, Теодор ван Лон и Рубенс, причем в обоих случаях он служит прославлению испанской короны.

Статья подготовлена в рамках выполнения научно-исследовательской работы государственного задания РАНХиГС.

Ключевые слова: политическая эмблематика, девиз, открытие пурпура, Рубенс, кардинал де Ришелье, галерея великих людей, Пале-Рояль, Санти ди Тито, Клод Параден, Эрикус Путеанус

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Для цитирования: *Neklyudova M. S.* Cardinal de Richelieu's discovery of purple: Political and emblematic antecedents of a topos // Шаги/Steps. Т. 6. № 4. 2020. С. 245–275. DOI: 10.22394/2412-9410-2020-6-4-245-275.

Статья поступила в редакцию 3 августа 2020 г.
Принято к печати 9 сентября 2020 г.

Shagi / Steps. Vol. 6. No. 4. 2020
Articles

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Cardinal de Richelieu's discovery of purple: Political and emblematic antecedents of a topos

Abstract. The article studies an iconographic topos, 'discovery of purple', mostly known through Rubens's sketch for the Torre de la Parada. However, its development can be traced not only through pictorial tradition, but also through emblems and mottos, which were very popular in the 16th–17th centuries. In particular, the 'discovery of purple' is present in the mottos that Jean-François de Boissière created for Richelieu in 1622, to celebrate the latter's ascension to the cardinalate. Unexpectedly, the new cardinal is compared to Hercules' dog, who found a murex on the seashore. This comparison has a number of political implications: some of them are associated with the patronage of the Queen Mother (who probably recalled Santi di Tito's interpretation of 'discovery of purple' and suggested this story to Richelieu), while others reflect Richelieu's attempt to earn Louis XIII' s trust, symbolically indicating absolute dedication to his interests. Boissière's motto provides an opportunity to trace the gradual transformation of the topos, from the original model which was formed in Italy in the 16th century and which celebrated female rulership, to the 1630s, when Richelieu creates at Palais-Royal the *Galerie des Hommes Illustres*, where the cardinal' purple assumes a different symbolic and political meaning. During the same decade the topos of 'the discovery of purple' was used by two Dutch artists, Theodor van Lohn and Rubens, and in both cases it served to glorify the Spanish crown.

The article was written on the basis of the RANEPA state assignment research programme.

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Keywords: political emblems, devices, Discovery of Purple, Rubens, cardinal de Richelieu, the Galerie des Hommes Illustres, Palais-Royal, Santi di Tito, Claude Paradin, Erycus Puteanus

To cite this article: Neklyudova, M. S. (2020). Cardinal de Richelieu's discovery of purple: Political and emblematic antecedents of a topos. *Shagi / Steps, 6*(4), 245–275. (In Russian). DOI: 10.22394/2412-9410-2020-6-4-245-275.

Received August 3, 2020
Accepted September 9, 2020

In the beginning of 1635 Erycus Puteanus, who succeeded to Lipsius' chair at the University of Leuven, published a short treatise, *Purpura Austriaca Hierobasilica*, to celebrate the arrival of Cardinal-Infante Ferdinand, the newly appointed governor of the Spanish Netherlands. His book, printed in red ink, took its inspiration from an ancient legend connected to the origins of Tyrian purple. Hercules was courting a nymph named Tyro; his dog found and ate a sea-snail whose blood stained its muzzle; Tyro liked the color and asked Hercules for a garment of similar hue; the hero discovered how to make the dye and granted his beloved's wish. The frontispiece — Theodore von Loon's drawing engraved by Cornelius Galle — presents all the characters involved in this plot: Hercules (with the lion skin and the club) is holding a large piece of cloth over Tyro's head, the dog is sitting at his feet, and a big sea-shell is lying in the foreground (Fig. 1). Puteanus interpreted this story as a political allegory, where the king of Spain, Philip IV, was cast as Hercules, Belgium was cast in the role of Tyro, and the king's brother Ferdinand was identified — not with a dog (as you probably thought) but with *purpura*. In fact, the whole invention revolved around the idea of *purpura*, which in seventeenth-century Latin was simultaneously the name of this sea creature, of the precious dye made from its mucus, and of the red garments that metonymically represented royal (or imperial) birth, as well as one of the highest positions in the Church hierarchy. Puteanus's panegyric proclaimed that by sending his brother the king covered Belgium with the purple of royal power, because "to see you means to see Philip, and to see Philip means to see you"[1]. Also, because Ferdinand possessed another authority, derived from his ecclesiastic dignity, and therefore he embodied the mixture of both *purpura*[2].

Puteanus' use of the discovery of purple as a political allegory provides an interesting background for Rubens's treatment of the same legend. As Elizabeth McGraph has pointed out, the latter almost certainly had been aware of *Purpura Austriaca*, and therefore of Galle's frontispiece[3]. Several factors allow us to substantiate this claim. For one thing, in 1634 Rubens was engaged in similar undertakings, designing the triumphal arches for Ferdinand's entry to Antwerp[4]. For another, Puteanus belonged to the circle of Lipsius' pupils, to which Rubens was connected through his brother[5]; moreover, from time to time both men participated in the same editorial projects[6].

[1] "Qui te videt, Philippum videt; qui Philippum, te" [Puteanus 1635: 10].
[2] About political impications of Puteanus' panegyric see: [Klecker 2000].
[3] In a footnote; see [McGrath 2009: 312n].
[4] About this celebration see, for example: [Knaap, Putnam 2013].
[5] About this circle see: [Morford 1991]. It does not seem that Puteanus was close to Philip Rubens, but they did know each other.
[6] For some of them see: [Bertram 2018: 114–116; 202–203].



Fig. 1. *"Hoc capitur pretio". Engraving by Cornelius Galle after Theodore von Loon's drawing, in Erycus Puteanus* Purpura Austriaca Hierobasilica *(1635)*

When in the autumn of 1636 Rubens received a large commission for the Torre de la Parada[7] and made a sketch of Hercules and his dog (Fig. 2), his interpretation of the discovery of purple outwardly had little to do with Puteanus' allegory or with its realization by von Loon and Galle. Nevertheless, the existence of the latter argues against a well-established belief that it was a "very unusual scene" or "one of the most rarified topoi" [Alpers 1971: 113; Georgievska-Shine, Silver 2014: 106]. In fact, throughout the sixteenth and the seventeenth century the story of Hercules' dog lent itself for different genres and purposes. Puteanus' choice of rhetoric that employed both visual (thus the red ink) and verbal means to convey a message, as well as the use of a frontispiece that presented a half-enigmatic image with the motto "Hoc capitur pretio" ("Thus is captured the prize"), points to the source of his inspiration. Such image-oriented rhetoric was closely related to emblematic struc-

[7] About the Torre de la Parada commission and its realization see [Alpers 1971].

tures, including personal devices[8]. It is among this minor but ideologically important genre that we find further examples of how and why the 'discovery of purple' story was told.



Fig. 2. *Peter Paul Rubens* Hercules and the Discovery of the Secret of Purple*, oil on panel, Musée Bonnat-Helleu*

The following inquiry is not meant to serve as an interpretation or even as a commentary to Rubens's *Discovery of Purple*. Yet it would be pointless to pretend that the picture did not constantly loom in the background, dwarfing all other images. So at the end of this paper I will come back to Rubens's invention (*inventio*), making it the final point of the intellectual itinerary I am trying to trace. My overall hypothesis is rather simple: Rubens's sketch gave a definite form to an imaginative

[8] I will be using both "emblem" and "device" as more or less interchangeable terms. As Daniel Russel has pointed out, there is no clear-cut distinction between these two genres: "In a formal sense, then, all the emblem and the device had in common was the combination of picture and text through a metaphorical relationship of some sort. They did not combine the picture and text in the same way or for the same purpose. But while there was a constant effort being made to distinguish them from each other, there seemed to be a relentless pressure to combine the two forms through the assimilation of the emblem by the device. This evolving tendency led inevitably to the confusion of the two, and that confusion can best be understood if the device is considered as a form and the emblem as a process" [Russell 1985: 180].

concept that, without being rare, was too specific to attract much attention. As can be glimpsed from Puteanus' opuscule, the story of Tyrian purple became entangled with a political issue that concerned many European countries, but most of all France and Spain. This was not the destiny of the Netherlands, important as it was, but the dual role of cardinals actively involved in the government of the state. One of them was Cardinal-Infante Ferdinand, the other — perhaps the most famous of all royal ministers, cardinal de Richelieu. Unlike Ferdinand, Richelieu was directly identified with Hercules' dog.

Le chien d'Hercule

In December, 1622 Armand-Jean du Plessis, Bishop of Luçon, received a cardinal's hat from the hands of Louis XIII. The ceremony was held in Lyon where the royal family resided at the moment. Probably at about the same time Jean-François de Boissière composed several devices to celebrate Richelieu's ascension to the cardinalate. In his book (published much later, in 1654) they form a distinctive set:

Pour sa promotion au Cardinalat, parmy plusieurs traverses & contrarietez. Un bouton de Rose rouge & le mot, *Frâ le spine impurpurisco*.	[For his promotion to the Cardinalate, among many hardships and trials. A red rosebud, and the word: *Among the thorns I redden*.
Pour le mesme sujet. Un Gond de fer ardent sur un enclume & sous des marteaux, en action de frapper, le mot estoit, *Perficiunt non officiunt*.	For the same topic. A red-hot iron hinge on an anvil that the hammers are about to strike; the word is, *Perfect not impede*.
Pour sa fidelité au service du Roy, par laquelle il acquit la pourpre de Cardinal. Un chien qui tient une pourpre marine sous les pieds, & a le museau empourpré de sang, & le mot, *Mea quaesita fide*.	For his fidelity in the King's service, by which he acquired the Cardinal's red robe. A dog that holds a murex under its paws, and has a blood-red muzzle, and the word, *I seek trust*.
Le chien d'Hercule fut le premier qui trouva la pourpre au bord de la mer.	Hercules' dog was the first to find the purple by the sea.
Pour le mesme sujet. Un Gond de fer ardent sur un enclume, & le mot, *Ab ardore rubor.* [Boissière 1654: 80–81]	For the same topic. A red-hot iron hinge on an anvil, and the word, *Redden by the heat*.]

Red rose, hot iron and blood metaphorically designated the hue of cardinal's robes that served as a common point of reference for the whole sequence. It may have been prompted by Richelieu's speech at the investiture ceremony where he alluded to his new attire as a prefiguration of his (possible) martyrdom in the name

of God and His Church, and in the king's service. To use his exact words, he would never "avoid the occasions to be reddened with [his] own blood"[9]. The image owes much to a theological tradition that connects *purpura* to Christ's suffering, both in the literal (John 19:2; 19:5) and in the figurative sense: any mention of purple, particularly in the Old Testament, may be treated as a reference to the Passion. For instance, in *De venerabili sacramento altaris*, Pseudo-Aquinas commented on a (truncated) line from the Song of Songs, "the hairs of thy head as the purple of the king"[10], explaining it as an allegory:

> Song of Songs, ch. 7: the hairs of thy head as the purple of the king that is dyed by the blood of some animal. The hair on the head of Jesus is the faithful that adorn Him by their good mores. They are like the purple of the king, because, being spiritually drenched in Christ's blood, they are redden as the rose by the virtue of Charity[11].

As we can see, the imagery used by Richelieu and, to some extent, by Boissière, follows the same pattern[12]. The cardinal's red cassock invokes the idea of being clothed in blood, both because the dye comes from "the blood of some animal" (it is obviously a gloss on the first meaning of *purpura*, incorporated in the Song of Songs)[13], and because Christ was mockingly attired in a purple robe which was also stained with his blood. That conjunction brings up the image of the rose, which from the Middle Age on was symbolically associated with the Passion[14]. The hot iron comes from a slightly different source that was probably more relevant for Boissière. In a well-known rhetorical treatise *Essay des merveilles de nature* (1621) the Jesuit Étienne Binet proposed to describe 'la pourpre' by likening it to the "flame, sulfuric gold and pure blood"[15], thus stressing the brightness of that color.

Boissière's decision to present a series of devices for the new cardinal is not surprising, even though some of his inventions appear to be quite bold, in particular the one that refers to the discovery of purple. The story of Hercules' dog was well known; originally it came from Julius Pollux's *Onomasticon* which was widely read in Latin translation (1520) and used in a variety of compilations. I will mention only a few examples that are relevant for my subject. In 1578, Blaise de Vigénère pub-

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[9] "Je l'employeray, sire, d'autant plus volontiers pour vostre majesté, que la pourpre dont il vous a pleu m'honorer m'oblige particulièrement à ne refuser aucune occasion de me rougir de mon sang pour la gloire de Dieu, l'advancement de son église, la grandeur de vostre dignité royale et le service particulier de vostre personne sacrée..." [Richelieu 1853: 746–747].

[10] "Comae capitis tui sicut purpura Regis" (Cant. 7:5). All Biblical quotations in Latin are from the Vulgate.

[11] "Cant. 7: *comae capitis tui sicut purpura regis*, quae scilicet tingitur sanguine cujusdam animalis. Comae capitis ejus, idest Christi, sunt fideles bonis eum moribus decorantes. Hi sunt ut purpura regis, quia spirituali sanguine Christi perfusi rubent, ut rosa virtute caritatis" [Thomas Aquinas 1508: 220].

[12] On the connection between allegorical interpretation of the Bible and the early emblems see [Russell 1995].

[13] Here is the full text without interpolations: "caput tuum ut Carmelus et comae capitis tui sicut purpura regis vincta canalibus" ("Thy head is like Carmel: and the hairs of thy head as the purple of the king bound in the channels").

[14] Cf.: [Winston-Allen 1997: 98].

[15] "…elle resemble le feu, le souphre d'or, & le pur sang" [Binet 1622: 377].

lished a French translation of Philostratus' *Imagines* that went through many editions and was assimilated into the emblematic tradition[16]. In his long commentary to the description of a wild boar hunt ("La Chasse des bestes noires") Vigénère recounted the legend of the discovery of purple: Hercules was courting a nymph named Tyro. Once while he was walking along the sea shore, his dog found a sea snail, cracked its shell, and "the blood painted its lips in beautiful crimson color" [17]. When the nymph saw this, she made it clear that Hercules' advances would be spurned unless he presented her with a dress of such hue — which he did. Thus, according to the Tyrians, he became "the first inventor" of purple dye. This narrative, obviously borrowed from Vigénère, sometimes word for word, can be found in a number of other texts, from natural history to treatises on heraldry [18]. Occasionally, the plot is altered. For instance, Nicolas Rigault started his scholarly career by writing a short Latin poem, *Purpura* (1596), where the discovery of purple was celebrated, interestingly enough, without any mention of a love intrigue. Instead, Rigault focused on the moment when the dog bites the murex, and thus reveals the color of its blood[19]. In other words, the amorous and slightly convoluted explanation why the legendary hero paid attention to his dog's antics can be easily taken out, it does not affect the tenor of the story.

It would have been intriguing to know if Boissière decided to use this story on his own volition: did he have any communications with the bishop of Luçon? was he actually present in Lyon at the moment of Richelieu's investiture? In November, 1621 we find him in Toulouse, where he participated in the preparation of the royal entry by designing devices for triumphal arches[20]. Perhaps his particular talent for words (as well as his legal training, he was an *avocat au Parlement de Toulouse*) attracted attention of Adrien de Monluc, whose secretary he would become later[21]. Except for his contribution to another set of toulousian festivities, this time during the Carnival of 1624, when Boissière alongside Balthasar Baro, Pèire Godolin, Pierre Caseneuve and Monluc created the *Ballet des Fols*[22], little is known about his other alliances and peregrinations[23]. It is quite possible that Boissière belonged to Monluc's clientele from a much earlier age.

Adrien de Monluc, comte de Cramail had a well-deserved reputation for recklessness and numerous connections at the royal court, but his political preferences are more difficult to discern. As Véronique Garrigues has shown, in 1619 he supported the 'Spanish faction', thus siding with the queen and the queen-mother[24]. His allegiance to Marie de' Medici may also be glimpsed through some of Boissière's

[16] See: [Adams et al. 2002: 302–311].

[17] "le sang luy teignit les levres d'une belle couleur cramoisie" [Vigénère 1578: 245^{V}–246^{R}].

[18] Cf.: [Duret 1605: 49–50; Vulson de La Colombière 1644: 28].

[19] Cf.: [Rigault 1601: 17]. Similarly, Binet who also acknowledged that the dye was discovered by a dog, did not mention either Tyro or even Hercules. See: [Binet 1622: 376]. On the spiritual meaning of this scene see below.

[20] See: [Boissière 1654: 44], cf.: [Janik 1996].

[21] About his connection to Monluc, see: [Garrigues 2006: 131, 231].

[22] See: [Baro 2015: 32–33]. For a short recapitulation of the festivities see: [Schneider 1989: 135–166].

[23] Still, in 1626 he was reimbursed for his many travels to the court. See: [Garrigues 2006: 231n].

[24] About his Spanish connections see: [Garrigues 2006: 171–173].

devices, although these may have been created much later, when Marie went into exile and Monluc ended up in the Bastille[25]. In any case there is some circumstantial evidence to suggest that in the early 1620s Monluc was moving in the orbit of the queen-mother's court. That opens up a possibility that Boissière may have been better informed about its inner workings than was usual for a petty parliamentary official from Toulouse. If so, the references that provide the frame for his emblematic images — "traverses & contrarietez" that Richelieu had to overcome in his quest for the cardinal's hat, and the assertion of his absolute fidelity to the king ("fidelité au service du Roy") — should be taken seriously and treated as ideological statements, probably supplied by the cardinal's acolytes. In his later years Richelieu was definitely aware of Boissière's mastery of the art of devices, as some of his creations decorated the Palais-Cardinal (the future Palais-Royal).

Before examining Boissière's use of Hercules and his dog I would like to point out another possibility of this plot's strategic deployment. In an important work by Gerard Vossius, *De theologia gentili et physiologia christiana* (1641), the Tyrian or Phoenician Hercules becomes one of the connecting points between Greek Antiquity and the Biblical world. Vossius proves that the legendary hero was a close contemporary of Moses and recognizes him as Joshua, the son of Nun. The dog provides one of the necessary links between these two figures because the Hebrew word for it is "caleb", and Caleb was one of Moses' scouts who was later rewarded by Joshua for his service (Joshua 14:6–14) [Vossius 1641: 224–232]. This identification of Hercules and his dog as two biblical characters was part of a widespread effort to merge the separate histories of ancient civilizations. At the same time, it historicized pagan 'fables' that were used as a pedagogical tool. Thus, Hercules and his dog in the guise of the biblical Joshua and Caleb began to migrate from one text to another, easily crossing linguistic and political borders. We find them in many seventeenth and eighteenth century treatises[26].

Neither Vossius nor his followers were interested in the discovery of purple *per se*. That is why their treatment of this fable reveals its basic structure by cutting off not only the covetous nymph but also the unfortunate murex. What is left is the relationship between the great warrior and his faithful servant. Presumably that was the reason why Boissière chose it for the most important part of his emblematic sequence — the part that projected the image of a desirable relationship between the king and the new cardinal. The stress here is on fidelity, affirmed by the ekphrastic representation of the dog[27], the Latin device "Mea quaesita fide" and the author's explanation that the whole signifies Richelieu's "fidelité au service du Roy". All other emblems in the promotional sequence are less explicit and, should I say, interactive. For example, the image of the red-heated iron hinge lying on an anvil (with or without hammers) did not warrant any additional comment. If we look at more or less contemporary *Emblemata moralia*, published by Zacharias Heyns in 1625, the hammers that strike something lying on the anvil (in Heyns' case it is a diamond ring) signify patience in suffering and Christian contempt for physical torture [Heyns 1625: G2^{r-v}]. In Richelieu's case they clearly referred to the hardships and trials that preceded his nomination, and, according to the motto "Ab ardore rubor",

[25] For the ones that refer to Marie's exile, see: [Boissière 1654: 78–79].
[26] For example, [Gale 1672: 53–66; Thomassin 1682: 40–48].
[27] On dogs as symbols of loyalty see: [Géliot 1635: 108–109].

only increased his ardor. Moreover, Boissière designed both of his anvil devices around a simple wordplay: in Latin hinges are "cardine", and the hot iron is obviously red. The invention was rather smart but did not send any personal message to Louis XIII, whereas the image of the dog definitely did because there could be no doubt that his master was Hercules[28].

Let us return to the discovery of purple. According to Blaise de Vigénère and his sources, it was made by Hercules; Boissière attributed it to the dog whose muzzle was empurpled by the sea-snail's blood. A curious twist adds to the complexity of this invention: on the one hand, by putting on the red robes, a new cardinal in some sense 'discovers purple'. On the other, although the gesture pictured by Boissière — the dog holding the murex under its paw — is less violent than in Vigénère's narrative, it is still quite predatory. If we look at other devices that were created for ecclesiastics and contained the image of a dog, we will see that their general tenor is different. For example, Simone Biralli in his *Dell' imprese scelte* (1600) described a device invented by Lodovico Dominichi for the Archbishop of Florence, Antonio Altoviti, that presented the dog next to a flock of sheep and the motto "Non dormit qui custodit" ("The one who guards does not sleep") [Biralli 1600: 36^{v}][29]. These words refer to Psalm 120[30] and clearly indicated both the Archbishop's duty to guard the faithful and his diligent fulfillment of it. In similar fashion, Giovanni Ferro imagined a series of *imprese* with a running dog for his patron, the inquisitor Desiderio Scaglia, who had received a cardinal's hat in 1621. Here the connection between the visual and the verbal part of device is less interesting because the figure of the dog came from Scaglia's coat of arms, and Ferro only offered several mottos to complement it. The first one, "Hominum Custos" ("Guardian of men"), again stresses the guardian qualities, essential for any cleric; two others, "Celeri pede" ("Swift feet") and "Cursu prædam" ("Run after prey") seem to hint at Scaglia's inquisitorial duties, although Ferro explains them as pure intellectual features (quickness of wit, alertness of virtue) [Ferro 1629: 97]. But even if Scaglia's dog is running after its prey, we do not see it shedding blood.

Hercules' dog is definitely not a guardian, it is a hunter covered in blood which is not its own. And that makes Boissière's clever invention potentially subversive. As we have seen, at the moment of his investiture Richelieu promised to serve the king even if it would mean to be reddened by his own blood. But just a few years later he will be accused of wearing his victims' blood. "O lupum purpuratum!" — exclaimed in 1626 the author of *Quæstio Politica* [Piraltus 1626: 3], clearly drawing on traditional representation of evil. In the Bible "the ravening wolves" that appear in sheep's clothing are the false prophets (Mathew 7:15), who can also act as corrupt shepherds[31]. The wolf's purple mantle must be red as it is splattered with innocent blood[32] in a sacrilegious travesty of Christ's sacrifice. No wonder that in another

[28] On Louis XIII's identification with Hercules, particularly in visual propaganda, see: [Duccini 2003].

[29] About another use of this motto see below.

[30] "Ecce non dormitabit neque dormiet qui custodit Israel".

[31] Later on La Fontaine will follow this logic in *Le Loup devenu berger* (Fables, III, 3).

[32] It is implied but not stated, see: [Piraltus 1626: 2].

pamphlet published during the same campaign[33] the cardinal-minister was treated both as purple-wearing imposter and as the Antichrist[34].

Boissière's device has an uncanny affinity with these accusations. All other images in the promotional sequence are drawn from traditional Christian and moralistic stock and present Richelieu's *purpura* as a result of personal trials and sufferings: the hinges are heated and struck by the hammers, the rosebud becomes red among the thorns. Whereas Hercules' dog is smeared with blood of a (relatively) harmless creature[35]; it hunts instead of guarding its flock, which makes it an imposter. I do not believe this ambiguity was intentional — moreover, it becomes noticeable in hindsight, when Richelieu's image as 'l'Éminence rouge' is fairly fixed. Still, by using the fable of discovery of purple Boissière blurs the line between two symbolic patterns to formulate a purely political message — Richelieu's promise to use his *purpura* to serve the king. By doing that he creates friction between the cardinal's dignity with its rich spiritual symbolism, and his absolute devotion to the king's interests, thus unwittingly sliding from praise into potential blame.

La Gallerie des hommes illustres

So far I have been treating Boissière's devices as purely verbal inventions. Yet he makes it clear that many of them were actually realized, i. e., that his descriptions served as blueprints for artists. For instance, he claims that he provided several devices for the Palais-Royal Galleries but refuses to put them in the book because they are "public enough" [Boissière 1654: 85]. Does it mean that the ones he published were just ekphrastic exercises? There is at least one piece of evidence that suggests the opposite. In *Les entretiens d'Ariste et d'Eugene* (1671) Dominique Bouhours mentions seeing in the "Gallerie du Palais Royale" a number of devices that marked Richelieu's promotion to the cardinalate, and among them "un Bouton de Rose avec ce Mot, *Fra le spine impurpurisco*"[36] which (as we know) belonged to Boissière. We can tentatively locate it in the *Gallerie des hommes illustres* because by Bouhours' time the other one, *La Petite Gallerie*, was demolished. Considering that Boissière used the plural 'galleries', his creations must have graced both of them[37]. It would be tempting to imagine Boissière's discovery of purple in *La Petite Gallerie*, among Italian landscapes and next to the "beautiful naval frieze"[38], but more likely he was asked to supply the mottos for the representation of Richelieu's virtues[39].

The only emblems from *La Gallerie des hommes illustres* that survived its demolition in 1727 were the ones attached to the portraits of historical personages that reflected Richelieu's vision of a national Pantheon and his own place in it[40]. These devices were not Boissière's invention but belonged to Jean Guisse, who in 1637

[33] About Catholic opposition to Richelieu's polices in 1625–1626 see [Church 1972: 120–126; Thuau 2000: 110–113].

[34] "impostore purpurato", "Antichristo Galliae purpurato" [Du Ferron 1626: 12, 14].

[35] In a specific setting this image may be interpreted as 'triumphal'; cf.: [Picinelli 1653: 224].

[36] "A rosebud and this word: *Among the thorns I redden"* [Bouhours 1671: 398].

[37] For a concise account of Palais-Royal's construction see: [Sauvel 1960: 169–190].

[38] "cette belle frise marine" [Sauval 1724: 164].

[39] See the description of that part of the Gallery [Sauval 1724: 164–165].

[40] Cf.: [Kirchner 2009].

published their descriptions, mottos and explanations in a short booklet, *Symbola heroïca*. Fortunately for us, there is also a visual record: a decade later Zacharie Heince (not to be confused with Zacharias Heyns) and François Bignon made a series of engravings that reproduced both the portraits and their settings, i. e. the emblems and the miniature scenes from the subjects' life. In 1650 these engravings were printed together with necessary explanations and short biographies of each historical personage composed by Marc de Vulson, sieur de La Colombière. According to an eyewitness who had a chance to compare the actual Gallery to its paper version, Heince and Bignion did an excellent job, but their skills, sufficient for the emblems, fell short of the originals when it came to Champaigne's and Vouet's paintings[41]. To this testimony I would like to add another, that in a way fills the gap between Guisse's book and *Les Portraits des hommes illustres François*. In 1644 Vulson de La Colombière published a treatise on heraldry, *La Science héroïque*, where he declared Guisse's emblems for the Gallery "mostly excellent" and worthy to be quoted in full. At the same time he warned his readers that "many of them have changed" since 1638 [Vulson de La Colombière 1644: 468].

Indeed, if we compare Guisse's published devices with the ones presented in *La Science héroïque*, and then with what we actually see on the engravings, there are some noticeable differences. For instance, one of the emblems listed by Guisse for cardinal de Lorraine (Fig. 3) is "the mountain Parnassus with two peaks to house the Muses" because Charles de Lorraine founded two universities [Guisse 1638: 14]. In *La Science héroïque* Vulson de La Colombière describes it differently: "The horse Pegasus jumping from one mountain to another", although the motto remains the same, "Praebet iuga bina Camoenis" ("Provides two summits for the Muses")[42]. When we turn to *Les Portraits*, the relevant engraving does show Pegasus flying from a big mountain to a smaller one with two peaks. Yet the explanation of this device does not correspond to that image but follows Guisse's original version with some minor stylistic changes[43]. Another significant discrepancy has to do with the number of cardinal de Lorraine's emblems: Guisse lists four, Vulson describes five, and the actual engraving includes four — but they are not the same as in Guisse's booklet. For instance, in Heince's and Bignion's layout there is no image of the bell that, according to both *Symbola heroïca* and *La Science héroïque*, was present in the Gallery to invoke Lorraine's participation in the Council of Trent and the Colloquy at Poissy[44]. *Vice versa*, the engraving shows an emblem that Guisse did not acknowledge but Vulson saw in the Palais-Royal. It represents an obelisk

[41] Cf.: [Sauval 1724: 166]. According to Sauval, every portrait in the Gallery was also "accompanied by two marble busts".

[42] "Un cheval Pegas qui saute d'une montagne à l'autre" [Vulson de La Colombière 1644: 470].

[43] Cf.: "Le Mont Parnasse. *Praebet iuga bina Camoenis.* Ce Mont a deux sommets pour la demeure des Muses" [Guisse 1638: 14]; "Le Parnasse. *Praebet iuga bina Camoenis*. Son double Sommet sert de demeure aux Muses" [Vulson de La Colombière 1650: Gg^{V}]. It is quite possible that these changes were made by Guisse. According to Sauval, in 1644 Guisse's authorship of the mottos etc., was contested by Pierre de Montmaur, who held the position of the *intendant des devises et inscriptions pour les bâtiments royaux de France*. Montmaur's goal was to block what he saw as an infringement of his official rights, but it definitely put Guisse on the defensive. See [Sauval 1724: 166].

[44] "Une Cloche. *Synodos mittitque vocatque*" [Guisse 1638: 14], cf.: [Vulson de La Colombière 1644: 470].

enwrapped by ivy, with the motto "Te stante virebo" ("While you stand, I will flourish") [Vulson de La Colombière 1644: 470]. Unlike other devices associated with cardinal de Lorraine, this one is historically accurate because it really belonged to him. As Claude Paradin recounted in *Devises heroïques* (1557), when Charles de Lorraine became the Abbot of Cluny, this emblem was put above the monastery's entrance [Paradin 1557: 72–73].



Fig. 3. *Zacharie Heince and François Bignon, engraved portrait of Charles de Lorraine, in* Les Portraits des hommes illustres françois qui sont peints dans la gallerie du Palais cardinal de Richelieu *(1650)*

Vulson de La Colombière's transcription of what was actually present in the Gallery around 1644 helps to put into perspective both the verbal and the visual evidence provided by Guisse's book and by Heince's and Bignon's engravings. It seems that some of Guisse's original concepts were found impractical either by the audience (headed by Richelieu[45]) who could not decipher them without additional

[45] According to Sauval, Richelieu delighted in such inventions and liked to listen to Champaigne's explanations of allegories that represented his own life: "il prenoit plaisir quelquefois de faire reciter à Champaigne l'histoire de sa vie que ce Peintre avoit representée dans la voute, d'un bout à l'autre" [Sauval 1724: 164].

explanations, or by the artist who created the images, thus the insertion of Pegasus in Parnassus' emblem. Moreover, not all of Guisse's emblems, publicly displayed at the Palais-Royal, made it into *Les Portraits*. The opposite is also true: not all of the emblems recorded by Heince and Bignion were invented by Guisse. Finally, we cannot disregard artistic concern with order and uniformity of representation that is definitely present in *Les Portraits*. Again, if we look at the portrait of cardinal de Lorraine, it is framed by seven historical scenes (the Council of Trent and the Colloquy at Poissy are among them) and four emblems. This layout, the same for all portraits, clearly privileged historical tableaux over allegorical ones, and limited the latter's number. In other words, Heince and Bignon did not simply depicted the Gallery 'as it was' but made an informed selection from the available images or were advised which ones to use.

I have singled out cardinal de Lorraine's emblematic assemblage for several reasons. First and foremost, his ecclesiastic dignity underscores both the similarities and the differences in the devices chosen for his portrait and for Richelieu's usage. Second, right from the start Guisse designed for him a full set of emblems, whereas for cardinal d'Amboise, another prince of the Church whose likeness was commissioned for the Gallery, he managed to come up with only two, the unicorn and St. Peter's keys[46]. In 1644 Vulson confirmed their existence without adding anything to the list, so we can assume that this scarcity was not remedied[47]. However, in *Les Portraits* the image of unicorn disappeared but three more emblems took its place — a papal tiara, a crane and a saffron crocus. That begs the question, were they actually present in the Gallery (but for some reason ignored by Vulson), or invented to balance the composition? If the latter is true that makes d'Amboise's emblematic set less useful for my purpose than the one associated with Charles de Lorraine.

Finally and most importantly, it is among Lorraine's emblems that we find an image of "the fish from which extract the purple" with motto "Nobiscum purpura nata est" ("Born with purple") (Fig. 4)[48]. As Guisse succinctly explains, the creature's blood produces purple, and so does the blood of the house of Lorraine which 'produced' two cardinals in a row (first Jean de Lorraine, and then his nephew Charles). This invention is too close to Boissière's device, both structurally and ideologically, to be considered a simple coincidence. Moreover, even if we discard the possibility that Hercules' dog and the murex were represented among other promotional emblems mentioned by Bouhours, the fact remains that Boissière contributed to the decoration of both Galleries, and thus was involved in this undertaking. For that reason I propose to treat Guisse's invention as a development and, in some sense, correction of Boissière's original device. But considering that this time we are dealing not only with ekphrastic description but with the actual image, I will start with a short and necessary limited excursus into emblematic tradition to see if Guisse's (and Boissière's) murex has other antecedents.

[46] See: [Guisse 1638: 21–22]. It was suggested by the nineteenth century heraldrists that the unicorn was cardinal d'Amboise's device.

[47] Of course there is a chance that at this particular point Vulson simply reproduces Guisse's text but so far his information was quite reliable. See: [Vulson de La Colombière 1644: 471].

[48] "le poisson dont on tire la pourpre" [Guisse 1638: 14].



Fig. 4. *Zacharie Heince and François Bignon, engraved portrait of Charles de Lorraine (detail)*

Dux fœmina facti

Sea-creatures covered with shell do not seem to be overly popular with emblem-makers. Apart from Alciato's emblem "Captivus ob gulam" ("Caught by greed") that shows a rodent with its head enclosed in a large clam[49], they rarely put in an appearance. But there is at least one significant exception: in *Devises heroïques* (1557) Claude Paradin presents "the fish called a Purple" that both benefits and suffers from its huge tongue[50]. With it "shee getteth her living", and "by the same she may incurre the danger of death, and become a pray [sic! – *M.N.*] to the fishers". Therefore, this fish is an apt metaphor for the blabbers and slanderers whose poisoned tongues may be compared "to the tongue of a great purple fish because there cleaveth to the palit of her mouth a purple, red humor, signifying allegorically a cruel poison of an

[49] The story comes from the *Anthologia graeca*: a mouse has tried to nibble on a half-opened oyster and got caught when the shell closed. See: [Alciato 1534: 91] and subsequent editions.

[50] Information about the murex's tongue goes back to Aristotle's *Historia de animalibus*, most likely via the Renaissance bestiary tradition. Cf.: [Aristotle 1619: 570–571].

evill speaker, a backbiter, and a bloodie fellow"[51]. The engraving (Fig. 5) shows an oblong sea-shell and the head of the creature that looks like a snail (with an unusually big tongue). It is complemented by the motto "Sic praedae patet esca sui" ("So her meat lyeth open to her own destruction").

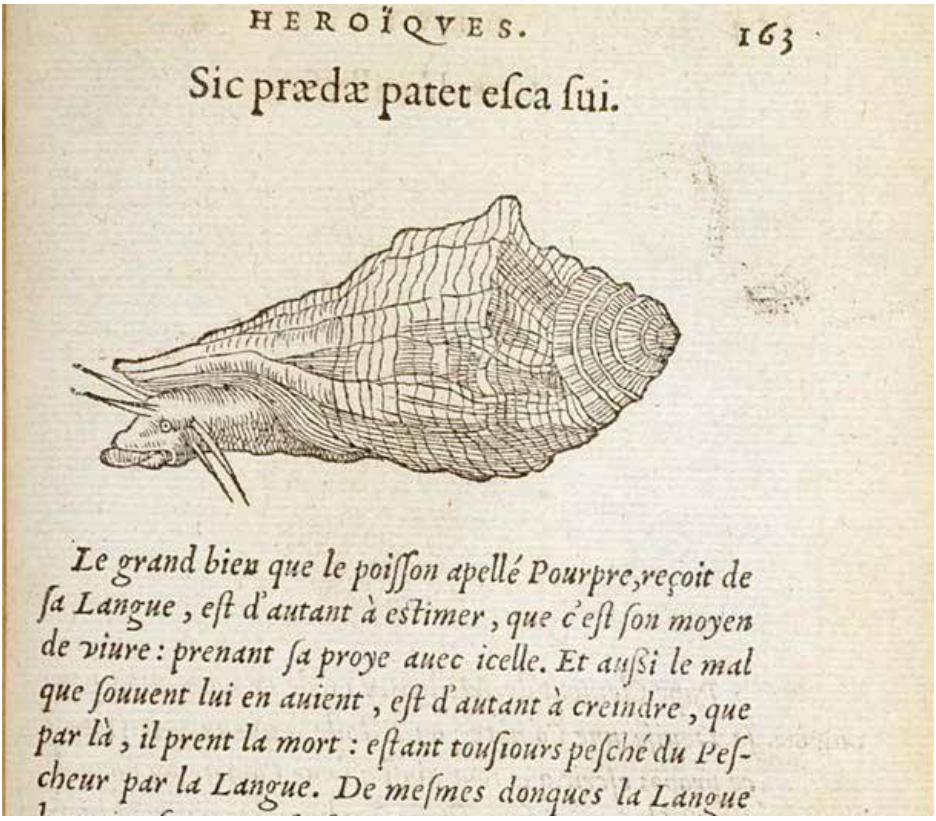


Fig. 5. *"Sic praedae patet esca sui", in Claude Paradin,* Devises heroïques *(1557)*

Paradin's use of the murex appears completely unrelated to Tyrian legend, and as such provides a good counterpoint to Guisse's invention. The *Devises* were highly appreciated by the publishers and by the public, and continued to circulate well into the seventeenth century. There were at least two Parisian editions in 1621–1622, and a considerable number of earlier reprints, both in French and in Latin, which means that Guisse had ample opportunity to acquaint himself with this treatise. It is quite possible that the image of the murex from Paradin's book served as a reference for the artist who realized Guisse's invention. Although Heince's and Bignon's engraving is not big enough to make a reliable comparison, it does show an oblong shell

[51] I am citing an English translation [Paradin 1591: 207] which was made not from the French original but from the Latin version, so there are some minor discrepancies between these texts. For the original see: [Paradin 1557: 163].

and the head of the creature which has a certain similarity with Paradin's 'fish', only this time it resembles more a lobster than a snail and does not have a visible tongue.

Yet I am not absolutely certain that Paradin's decision to use the murex has nothing to do with the discovery of purple. Later Filippo Picinelli in his encyclopedic *Mondo Simbolico* (1653) had no problem switching from the negative meaning of "porpora" which he characterized as "crapula" (gluttony) to the positive one, where an image of a crushed murex served as an allegory of Christian death[52]. Moreover, in the first edition of Paradin's *Devises*, which came out in 1551 and contained only the images and mottos, there was a rather enigmatic device that may be related to that legend. It represents a dog holding a clam in its mouth, with the motto "Dux fœmina facti" (Fig. 6). This image was not included in the second edition, and consequently we do not know what exactly Paradin wanted to convey by it. The motto — a much quoted line from the *Aeneid* ("A woman was the leader of the deed") — was frequently used to celebrate female leadership[53]. In the poem it referred to Dido's achievements, i. e., her successful flight from Phoenicia and the founding of Carthage. Now, the nymph from Pollux's legend also comes from Phoenicia and is clearly connected to the city's origins, as she shares her name with Tyre. Moreover, it is her sudden fancy that prompts Hercules to move from an accidental discovery made by his dog to the actual use of purple dye. In some sense, Tyro was the leader of the deed.



Fig. 6. *"Dux fœmina facti", in Claude Paradin,* Devises heroïques *(1551)*

[52] The latter example refers to Orazio Spinola's funerary emblem [Picinelli 1653: 224].

[53] For instance, it was written on a 1588 medal that commemorated Queen Elizabeth I's triumph over the Spanish Armada.

The major drawback of this hypothesis comes from the fact that in Paradin's device the dog is holding the wrong kind of shell. As we have seen in "Sic praedae patet esca sui", the engraver knew how the murex should look, and that image did not correspond to what was represented in "Dux fœmina facti" device. But these two images did not belong to the same assemblage: the fish with an evil tongue appeared only in the second edition of *Devises* from which the dog with the clam was excluded. If my reading of the latter device is correct, then perhaps the artist initially had a vague idea how to represent *purpura* and copied the clam from Alciato's "Captivus ob gulam" emblem. Linguistically it made sense, because in Alciato's text the sea-creature that captured the mouse was called 'oyster', and the same name was often given to the murex. That fact was already pointed out in Brunetto Latini's *Li livres dou tresor*[54], and in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries Latin *purpura* was frequently rendered into French as 'l'huitre'. The same Guisse who in 1638 used the word 'poisson' to describe his subject, in 1650 (assuming that was still him) switched to the oyster: "l'huistre, *purpura*, dont on tire la pourpre". So when Paradin decided to add the allegory of the evil tongue, he dispensed with the discovery of purple — otherwise the stories would have clashed — and corrected the artist's misconception.

There is also a possibility that both emblems were designed to convey a warning. Let us assume that Paradin went against the prevalent interpretation of "Dux fœmina facti" and used it in a misogynistic sense. After all, the dog with the clam looks rather sheepish and the wording of murex's narrative is ambiguous. The Latin motto hints at female frailty ("So her meat lyeth open to her own destruction"), and even though the French commentary firmly stays with masculine pronouns ("il prent la mort", etc.) and speaks of sin in general terms, the whole could have been read as a gender-specific invective. Significantly, when working with this text, the English interpreter slipped from masculine to feminine pronouns: "The great commoditie which the fish called a Purple receiveth by his tongue, is so much to be esteemed, because thereby shee getteth her living".

To bring this purely conjectural issue to a close, I would suggest that if there was a connection between Paradin's images of two shells, it stemmed from the reference to female power/influence. That seems to be atypical for representations of the discovery of purple, even when the stress is put on Hercules' courtship. For instance, much later, in 1663, Claude-François Ménestrier used this legend to decorate one of the triumphal arches that he devised for the celebration of Françoise-Madeleine d'Orléans's marriage to Charles Emmanuel II, Duke of Savoy. As he painstakingly explained, because the dog discovered purple, its master was able to gift his beloved with the precious garment, and that makes this story "an emblem of Loyalty and Love". Nevertheless the actual image — judging from its description — showed only Hercules "sitting and petting his dog, whose muzzle is all purple", with the motto "Fidelité merite Amour" ("Loyalty deserves Love")[55]. Even in this nuptial

[54] "Une autre coquille est en mer qui a non murique ou conche, et li plusor l'apelent oisre..." [Latini 1863: 187].

[55] "...le premier [embleme] represente Hercules assis, & caressant son chien, qui a le museau tout teint de pourpre avec cette Ame "Fidelité merite Amour". Nous apprenons des anciens que ce fut le chien de ce Hero qui trouva le pourpe, & qu'en ayant fait teindre un habit, il en fit present à une Nymphe de Tyr qu'il aimoit: ce qui fait de cet embleme un embleme de Fidelité & d'Amour" [Ménestrier 1663: 23].

context the woman (Tyro / nymph) was superseded by the dog, and her explicit desire for the colored dress became a passive acceptance of Hercules' gift. Moreover, the emblem had a rather curious prefiguration. A year earlier Ménestrier published a treatise, *L'Art des emblems* (1662), where he already proposed the motto "Fidelité merite Amour" in conjunction with a slightly different image, "A Dog petted by a Nymph"[56]. The dog signified devotion to the beloved who rewarded it with her affection. We can assume that for some reason it was deemed inappropriate for the ducal pair, consequently Hercules replaced the nymph, and the whole was rather hastily associated with the discovery of purple legend.



Fig. 7. *Giovanni Battista Cavalieri, "Tyro Hercolis uxor", in* Antiquarum statuarum urbis Romae, primus et secundus liber *(1585)*

The last part of my conjecture may be wrong: it is quite possible that Hercules and his dog did belong to the same thematic assemblage as the nymph and the dog, and that both types of images were linked to Pollux' story. But the evidence to support that claim comes from a slightly different area of artistic expertise, even though

[56] "Un Chien, qu'une Nymphe caresse" [Menestrier 1662: 125].

it also involves interpretation of images, this time ancient ones. In the middle of the sixteenth century, the architect Pirro Ligorio, on request of Ippolito II d'Este, began to excavate Villa Adriana. Among his finds were two copies of a Greek statue that he identified as 'Tyro'. It represented a sitting woman with a big dog under her chair[57]. One of these sculptures was brought to Villa d'Este and used to decorate the garden [Hülsen 1917: 92]. In the same decade or just a bit later its image was captured in Giovanni Battista de' Cavalieri's engraving entitled "Tyro Hercolis uxor" included in his *Antiquarum Statuarum Urbis Romae* series (Fig. 7)[58]. The woman in the engraving shows no discernable affection for the dog and seems to be oblivious to its presence, but as sixteenth-century antiquaries were more attuned to the texts than to the visual signs, just a combination of particular personae was sufficient for them to associate this monument with Hercules' and Tyro's legend from the *Onomasticon*. This misnomer opens up a possibility that we failed to identify some visual or ekphrastic interpretations of that story. Ménestrier's 1662 emblem with a nymph is a case in point: it could refer to the discovery of purple, and the subsequent substitution of a nymph for Hercules just made it more recognizable for the less learned public.

However, the image of "Tyro Hercolis uxor" did not seem to have much influence on the pictorial tradition where the discovery of purple was represented in a more narrative mode. For instance, in the beginning of the 1560s Taddeo Zuccaro, while working at the Villa Farnese at Caprarola, included this story in the decorations of the Stanza dei Lanifici. His fresco shows Hercules and his beloved standing together; the hero's figure is half-hidden behind the nymph's and mirrors her posture. But only Tyro makes an imperious gesture, pointing at the dog whose head and tail are lowered, as if it is not sure of its master's approval. Significantly, when in 1578 Fabio Arditio mentioned this painting, he concentrated on Tyro and the dog, taking less notice of Hercules[59]. Thus, even though Arditio's narrative basically sums up the one from the *Onomasticon*, Zuccaro's arrangement of characters has a certain impact on how the story is told.

The same dramatis personae — Hercules, Tyro and the dog — appear in Santi di Tito's *Discovery of Purple* (alternatively known as *Hercules and Iole*[60]) that decorated Francesco I de' Medici's *Studiolo* in the Palazzo Vecchio (Fig. 8). The artist represented a mostly naked Hercules, who is holding a small pup, in close conversation with Tyro and surrounded by several other figures. The nymph, discreetly but quite expressively, points at the dog's muzzle, thus indicating her desire for a purple garment[61]. This gesture is reminiscent of the one which Tyro makes in Zuccaro's work, but greatly reduced in scale. Still it marks her as "the leader of the deed", while Hercules and the pup encircled in his arms are simply recipients of this command.

[57] Or two sculptures of the same type: for more information see [Hülsen 1917: 102].

[58] I am using the 1585 edition of *Antiquarum Statuarum Urbis Romae* and unable to verify if 'Tyro' was present in the earlier prints that appeared since 1561.

[59] "Vi è anco quanto fu ritrovata la porpora dal cane d'Hercole et de la giovane Tiro, che, mangiando la conchiglia presa sul lito del mare, si tinse la bocca di quel sangue, onde ella vedendo cosi bel colore, ne volse dal detto Hercole una veste" [Orbaan 1920: 379].

[60] About this misnomer see [Spalding 1982: 280–281].

[61] As Spalding suggested, this desire is simultaneously shown as already fulfilled because Tyro is wearing a purple robe. See [Spalding 1981: 19].



Fig. 8. *Santi di Tito* The Discovery of Purple*,*
oil on canvas, Studiolo *of Francesco I, Palazzo Vecchio, Florence*

Both Taddeo Zuccaro's fresco, created around 1562, and Santi di Tito's painting, probably finished in February 1571 [Spalding 1981: 19], belonged to two decorative programs that celebrated human arts and crafts. This allegorical function did not affect their narrative part which closely followed Pollux's legend. And despite some variations, that narrative was conveyed through the arrangement of particular characters (Tyro, Hercules and his dog), the scenery (the sea-shore, possibly with some shells lying around), and Tyro's gesture that indicated her active participation in the discovery of purple. This combination of visual and narrative features makes my tentative reading of Paradin's device "Dux fœmina facti" a bit more plausible. If we consider Cavalieri's "Tyro Hercolis uxor", Taddeo Zuccaro's fresco and Santi di Tito's painting, they all turn spotlight on the female character, and, incidentally, clarify Ménestrier's dilemma. The reverend father definitely wanted to foreground the gallant aspect of the story, i. e. hero's devotion to his beloved, but his emblem with a nymph was probably too obscure for the uninitiated, whereas the one with Hercules excluded the new bride — or inadvertently likened her to the dog.

Before concluding this part I would like to stress the fact that I am not trying to find the actual filiation between Paradin's device and Taddeo Zuccaro's or Santi di Tito's works: they clearly belong to different systems of representation. But their staging of Pollux's legend has some common points that are absent from other interpretations. As we have seen, unlike the sixteenth-century painters and emblem-makers, neither Boissière nor Rubens had any use for Tyro. In other words, the watershed that separates one predominant reading of the story from another, is less genre-oriented than chronological. On one side of the divide, the discovery of purple means a task set by the beloved, on the other — the unquestionable fidelity of the dog.

Candorem purpura servat

Santi di Tito's *Discovery of Purple* provides another possible framework for Boissière's invention which may also explain the subsequent appearance of Guisse's device. As I mentioned in the beginning of this paper, when Boissière created his promotional set, he was likely connected to the queen-mother's court, either personally or through his patron, the comte de Cramail. It is possible that the idea to use the Tyrian legend originated directly from Marie de' Medici's inner circle. She more than anyone else had an opportunity to see Santi di Tito's work. Besides, the distribution of roles — the nymph directs Hercules' actions — should have appealed to her, particularly given Louis XIII's established identification with that hero. Previously her regency abounded with symbolic celebrations of female power (incidentally, among them was a medal bearing inscription "Tanti dux femina facti"[62]), and later on she definitely tried to maintain her political influence.

But if Santi di Tito's work was chosen as a blueprint for Richelieu's promotional device, it was adapted for the occasion. In spite of Louis XIII's pointed mistrust and almost visceral dislike of the Bishop of Luçon, Marie wanted to have him in the Royal Council. Therefore, the allegory had to stress the dog's absolute fidelity to its master: as I suggested before, Boissière's device was intended as a message from the new cardinal to the king. Given the situation, no one would have appreciated the hint that "a woman was the leader of the deed". Yet, she was still behind the scenes. The image invented by Boissière — the dog holds a murex under its paws, and has a blood-red muzzle — was supposed to showcase the dog's usefulness for Hercules. At the same time it probably conveyed a sense of personal triumph. Picinelli in his *Mondo symbolico* cited an interesting emblem where Hercules' dog, covered in murex' blood and thus empurpled, signified victory. The ultimate one, because it was a part of marquis Guido Villa's funerary ceremony, which took place in 1649. Picinelly found it appropriate for a warrior, although he commented that Villa's military triumph — he was killed at the siege of Cremona — proved transitory[63]. There is little doubt that Richelieu's ascension to the cardinalate represented an important victory for him. As attested by his spectacular gesture when he laid the cardinal's hat at Marie's feet, he did not hesitate to acknowledge that "dux fœmina facti"[64].

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[62] See pl. XXXII in [Delaroche et al. 1836: 25].

[63] "Impresa nobile, e degna d'vn tanto guerriero" [Picinelli 1653: 224].

[64] "Il alla ensuite faire ses remerciemens à la reine mère, et mettant son bonnet rouge aux pieds de cette princesse, il lui dit: "Madame, cette pourpre dont je suis redevable à la bienveillance de vostre majesté me fera tousjours souvenir du voeu solennel que j'ai fait de répendre mon sang pour votre service"" [Richelieu 1853: 748n].



Fig. 9. *Zacharie Heince and François Bignon, engraved portrait of cardinal de Richelieu, in* Les Portraits des hommes illustres françois qui sont peints dans la gallerie du Palais cardinal de Richelieu *(1650)*

By the late 1630s Richelieu's position vis-à-vis Louis XIII called for different allegories. Fidelity remained the central characteristic of cardinal's service to the king, but now it was treated as firmly established. So when Guisse designed a device to complement Champaigne's portrait of the cardinal-minister in *La Gallerie des hommes illustres* (Fig. 9), he used the image of an eagle and the motto "Expertus fidelem Jupiter" ("Proved his fidelity to Jupiter"). The line was taken from Horace's Ode 4.4, where "the winged minister of thunder"[65] earned Jupiter's trust by ab-

[65] "Qualem ministrum fulminis alitem". I am using eighteenth century prose translation [Horace 1777: 227].

ducting Ganymede. Guisse skipped over that fact and focused on its consequences: "Jupiter always loved the eagle for his loyalty and as a reward has given him the power over all birds. The King perceived His Eminence's unparalleled devotion and entrusted him with the government of affairs"[66].



Fig. 10. *Zacharie Heince and François Bignon, engraved portrait of abbé de Suger (detail)*

[66] "Le Roy a reconnu une fidelité incomparable en son Eminence, & luy a confié le gouvernement de ses affaires" [Guisse 1638: 10]. It is interesting that in *Les Portraits* this explanation was toned down a bit, and somewhat clarified: the king has "put in his [i. e. Richelieu's] hand the punishment and the reward", thus concentrating our attention on the thunderbolt, the weaponized expression of Jupiter's trust. See: [Vulson de La Colombière 1650: Hh^{R}].

This twofold idea that absolute trust leads to the delegation of power played an essential role in Richelieu's propaganda, and therefore was frequently expressed both allegorically and through historical parallels. For instance, abbé de Suger's and cardinal d'Amboise's portraits were commissioned for the Gallery because the first acted as a regent of the realm, and the second, like Richelieu, filled the position of 'principal ministre d'État'. Suger's political function was evoked by an emblematic image of "a sheepdog [sitting] next to shepherd's staff" (Fig. 10). As we have seen in Dominichi's *impresa* for the Archbishop of Florence[67], such imagery was frequently used in ecclesiastic devices to underscore the guardian duty of clergy. But here the idea of protection plays second fiddle to the notion of trust. The emblem's motto, "Absens pastor mihi creadit ouile" ("Absent shepherd entrusted me the flock"), emphasizes the master's faith in his dog's abilities. According to Guisse, when the king (Louis VII) participated in the Second Crusade, he appointed Suger as one of his regents[68]. This historical precedent was increasingly important for Richelieu as Louis XIII's health slowly deteriorated and another period of regency was expected (cf.: [Hildesheimer 2004: 449]). In other words, the image of the dog that guards the flock in the shepherd's absence referred to Suger's achievement and at the same time indicated Richelieu's aspirations.



Fig. 11. *"Dat pretium candor", in Sylvester Petrosancto,* De symbolis heroicis libri IX *(1634)*

I am reluctant to attach too much importance to cardinal d'Amboise's emblematic set because it seems to be put together for the sake of compositional unity (see above). The device that, according to *Les Portraits*, showed d'Amboise diligent service to the king and the state (a crane standing one leg and holding a stone in another, with familiar motto "Non dormit qui custodit") was probably borrowed

[67] See above, cf.: [Biralli 1600: 36^{V}].

[68] "Le berger s'escarte quelquesfois du troupeau sur l'asseurance qu'il a de son chien. Le Roy allant en Syrie laisse Suger Regent en France"[Guisse 1638: 30].

from earlier emblematic collections. A similar invention can be found in the second volume of Gabriel Rollenhagen's *Nucleus emblematum* (1613) where the crane is directly associated with a bishop's crosier[69]. Even if it actually belonged to Georges d'Amboise, it does not add much to Richelieu's image, unless the mention of d'Amboise's vigilance[70] was supposed to refer to Richelieu's insomnia and his habit of spending nights working on the state papers. Nevertheless, this device provides a good point of comparison, demonstrating the difference between ideologically important concepts (an eagle entrusted with Jupiter's thunderbolt, a sheepdog guarding the flock in shepherd's absence) and commonplace ones.

The play with symbolic meaning of a cardinal's *purpura* definitely belonged to the former category. While such witticisms existed before and after Richelieu's time, they did not seem to be de rigueur. Remarkably, in the Gallery all three cardinals were assigned devices that emphasized their relation to *purpura*. Again, I have to put aside d'Amboise's image of saffron crocus and the motto "Per aspera purpurastis" ("Empurpled through hardships"): structurally it is close to Boissière's rosebud (the red color comes from the thorns), and it also involves a wordplay (saffran / souffrance). That leaves only two other *purpura* devices, Lorraine's and Richelieu's. For the moment let us ignore Guisse's explanation why a murex was deemed appropriate for Lorraine; as usual, he tells only a part of the story. As a member of the Guise family that claimed sovereign status, Charles de Lorraine may have been 'born in purple'("Nobiscum purpura nata est") both literally and figuratively. He stood very close to the French throne, particularly for the short period when his niece, Mary, Queen of Scots, was married to François II. In him the ecclesiastic purple was almost — but not quite — mixed with the royal one. As we have seen in cardinal-infante Ferdinand's case, this combination was too symbolically charged to be simply ignored. So Lorraine's murex may have been a reminder of this double claim.

Richelieu's personal and political situation was different. After 'la Journée des Dupes' his power became exceptional but it was still delegated to him by the king and therefore fully dependent on Louis XIII's good will[71]. At the same time his political opponents, particularly from the queen-mother's court, began to insinuate that he was trying to usurp the throne. Significantly, his *purpura* device showed not a red rose or a bleeding murex but an image of "a crimson and white carnation" with motto "Candorem purpura servat" ("Purple guards candor")[72]. According to Guisse, this implied that his Eminence's glory stemmed both from his Vatican purple and from his most sincere service to the king. The central concept here is "candor" that in Latin indicates both the color (white) and the moral quality (integrity, sincerity, etc.), thus creating an ingenious word play. In some sense, Richelieu and his emblematists wanted to demonstrate that his *purpura* was more white than red.

This marriage between the red and the white could have been achieved by other means. Just a few years earlier Sylvester Petrasancta presented his patron, Pier Luigi Carafa, bishop of Tricarico and Apostolic Nuncio to Cologne, with a similar

[69] See emblem 15 in [Rollenhagen 1613].

[70] "Vne Grue qui dort tenant vne pierre en l'air ‹...› Ce Cardinal ne prenoit aucun repos qu'en meditant dessein pour l'honneur de son Maistre & pour la gloire de sa Patrie" [Vulson de La Colombière 1650: Gg^R].

[71] Cf.: [Hildesheimer 2004: 238].

[72] "un oeillet incarnat meslé de blanc" [Guisse 1638: 10].

invention. In his *De symbolis heroicis libri IX* (1634) he offers an interesting interpretation of *purpura* that is both red and white: the red alludes to the royal blood of Aragon, while the white signifies Carafa's virtues. The engraving that illustrates this simile shows not a flower but a huge shell lying on a tiny islet and profusely bleeding into the surrounding sea (Fig. 11). The shell looks like a murex's but has a pearl inside, so it is a cross between two kinds of 'oysters', the one which denotes "purple / red" and another which signifies "white". The motto, "Dat pretium candor", stressed the white component of this invention, and that is probably why Picinelli, who also described that device in his *Mondo Simbolico*, interpreted it as virtue's prevalence over blood[73].

The white is more important than the red: that was probably the intended message of Richelieu's flower device as well. Lorraine's murex hinted at the idea that the royal and ecclesiastic purple can be united in one personality; but ultimately the House of Guise's ambitions came to naught. Richelieu's red-and-white carnation stated that the difference between the royal white and the cardinal purple should and would remain distinct.

* * *

In 1636, a year before Jean Guisse published his *Symbola heroïca*, the Gallery in the Palais-Royal inspired another learned author to contribute to its decoration. Jean du Four from Tours offered several Latin verses for each portrait, celebrating the virtues of the depicted figures, and using them as the foil to the unsurpassable eminence of the cardinal-minister. For instance, he compared Charles de Lorraine to Nestor and at the same time imagined how this sagacious personage would have acknowledged Richelieu's greatness[74]. Whereas cardinal d'Amboise was practically dismissed because he did not have "Armand's genius"[75], Du Four did not have much to say about l'abbé de Suger, but "Cardinalis Dux Eminintissimus" definitely made him think of the lightning in the king's hand [Du Four 1636: 10].

Du Four's verses displayed a good understanding of the Gallery's ideological framework. Nevertheless his panegyrics (which were not used in *Les Portraits des hommes illustres françois*, where the portraits are introduced by other Latin verses) give a sense that their author was unaware of some finer points. He did get the significance of Lorraine's and d'Amboise's presence but completely missed why the presence of Suger was really important. In other words, his perception of the Gallery was that of a well-informed outsider.

Both Guisse and Boissière were much closer to Richelieu's network of artists and literati, and therefore more attuned to the interplay of political allusions. That is why I was able to retrace some possible filiations that connected Boissière's invention first to the Italian pictorial tradition, and second to Richelieu's gallery of historical portraits. This trajectory from Santi di Tito's *Discovery of Purple* to Guisse's "Nobiscum purpura nata est" shows the constant reshaping of the same story that can be narrated in full or used metonymically, cut down to one or two characters

[73] Cf. [Petrosancto 1634: 455–456; Picinelli 1653: 224].

[74] Cf.: "Si tamen hic *lusti* palmas numerarit, ab astris / *Armando* dicet, *Dux* tibi cedo manus" [Du Four 1636: 10].

[75] "Hunc at fors non respexit, miraris? in illo / Non erat *Armandi Principis* ingenium" [Du Four 1636: 13].

and still remain recognizable — at least for the contemporaries. Its ideological role may be less interesting than the thought process. Even Ménestrier's opportunistic flipping through images in "Fidelité merite Amour" suggests new equivalences that were not evident before.

The same principle of proximity and human communications allows me to suggest some connection between Boissière's device and Rubens's sketch for the *Discovery of Purple*. For one thing, the way Boissière described the dog's posture — "un chien qui tient une pourpre marine sous les pieds, & a le museau empourpré de sang" — almost exactly corresponds to what we see in Rubens's work. It is possible that both had the same verbal or iconographic model. But it is also plausible that the artist was aware of Boissière's invention. In the beginning of 1622 Rubens was in Paris, negotiating the terms of the contract for the Luxembourg Palace with Marie de' Medici's agents, including the Bishop of Luçon. Afterwards he stayed in close contact with Peiresc and the Du Puy brothers that supplied him with Parisian news and international curiosities. These communications went both ways, which most likely explains why Ménestrier's description of his emblem for Charles Emmanuel's wedding[76] sounds like a depiction of Rubens's / Theodoor van Thulden's painting for the Torre de la Parada. The learned emblematist belonged to the same intellectual network that connected Rubens to Peiresc (with whom Ménestrier also corresponded) and other antiquarians.

By putting the Flemish artist next to the French emblem-maker I do not want to overstress the latter's importance but to draw attention to another curious fact. When we consider Theodore von Loon's and Cornelius Galle's engraving for *Purpura Austriaca*, it seems to follow in Taddeo Zuccaro's or Santi di Tito's footsteps by lining up all the dramatis personae from Pollux's legend. Whereas Rubens's *Discovery of Purple* moves in the opposite direction: its narrative technique is more emblem-like. Not only because it leaves out Tyro and her request, but also because it is perfectly recognizable and at the same time slightly enigmatic as attested by the variety of interpretations it inspires.

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