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Esthy Kravitz-Lurie
PhD Candidate
Department of Art
Ben-Gurion University
Israel

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Athens Institute for Education and Research
8 Valaoritou Street, Kolonaki, 10671 Athens, Greece
Tel: + 30 210 3634210 Fax: + 30 210 3634209 Email: info@atiner.gr
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Hercules and Rinaldo:
Annibale Carracci's *Invenzione* of Tasso's Epic Hero

Esthy Kravitz-Lurie
PhD Candidate
Department of Art
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Abstract

This paper discusses Annibale Carracci's formation of Rinaldo, Tasso's epic hero, in his rendition of the scene in which he is subjugated to Armida's love in her enchanted palace. It focuses on the painter's reliance on his own depiction of *Hercules and Iole* on the Farnese ceiling. Rinaldo, like Hercules before him, is powerless and submissive. Thus, Annibale borrowed the characteristics of an effeminate Hercules, as well as the antique conception of love evoked in the myth of Hercules and Omphale (Iole), for his interpretation of an effeminate Rinaldo tamed by love.

Keywords: Rinaldo and Armida, Hercules and Iole, Effeminate Hero, Antique Conception of Love, Annibale Carracci, Farnese Gallery.

Introduction

In his epic poem, *Gerusalemme liberata*, based on the history of the First Crusade and published in 1581, the Italian poet Torquato Tasso (1544–1595) placed a warning against entering Armida's palace by describing a relief engraved on the palace gate. In the relief Tasso addresses the shameful episode in which Hercules, captivated by love, loses his strength and masculinity and turns into a maid who turns a spindle in the chambers of Iole, queen of Lydia (XVI:3).[1] This tale was known in the Cinquecento, it was mentioned in Ovid's *Heroides* (IX:73–134) and *Fasti* (II:303–358), and reappeared in Angelo Poliziano's (1454–1494) *Stanze* (I:14), among other mythological love scenes borrowed from Claudian's *Epithalamium*.[2]

The relief was supposed to prevent Rinaldo, the bravest of the Christian warriors, from falling into the trap of the beautiful sorceress Armida, niece of Hydrotes, ruler of Damascus, who sides with the infidels against the Christians. However, Rinaldo missed the warning, since he was asleep when Armida abducted and carried him, on a flying chariot, to her enchanted island, *l'isola di Fortuna* (XIV: 68–69). The sorceress temporarily succeeds in neutralizing the Christian knight with her magic power of love.

Twenty years after the poem was published, and shortly before Annibale Carracci (1560–1609) was asked to depict his version of *Rinaldo and Armida* (1601–1602) for the Farnese Palazzetto, the painter was engaged in making a fresco of *Hercules and Iole* (1597–1601) on the ceiling of the Farnese Gallery (Fig 1). *Rinaldo and Armida* was displayed in the Apollo room in proximity to Annibale's *Sleeping Venus* (1602).[3] The ceiling decoration, as well as the oil painting, were commissioned by Cardinal Odoardo Farnese (1573–1626).

In his depiction of *Rinaldo and Armida*, Annibale followed Tasso's description very closely (XVI:20),[4] the deserting warrior lies passively in the company of his lover, tamed by her love and unaware of reality. He is holding Armida's mirror and gazing into her eyes, while she looks at her reflection in the rounded object (Fig.2). Rinaldo is no longer clad in armor, his curls are loose and he is wearing a pink silk gown, which might easily have been taken from Armida's wardrobe. His sword lies neglected beside him, a silent reminder of his glorious past, and he submissively serves Armida by holding her accessories, her enchanted belt and mirror. While he is performing a maid's tasks, she rises strong and beautiful from behind him, supporting his relaxed figure with her own body. Leaning toward the mirror, she brings a lock of her hair very close to his face. Her braid seems to adorn Rinaldo's smooth and rosy cheeks, as if to render his appearance even more girlish.

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[1] All the quotations are taken from Torquato Tasso, *Jerusalem Delivered, Gerusalemme liberata*, edited and translated by Anthony M. Esolen (The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 2000).

[2] Angelo Poliziano, *The Stanze,* translation and introduction by David Quint (The Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, PA, 1993), I:114. On Poliziano's use of Claudian's *Epithalamium,* see Quint's Introduction, XI.

[3] *Monsignor Giovanni Battista Agucchi* wrote a lengthy *ekphrasis* on the *Sleeping Venus*. He began by reporting that he had been on his way to see Annibale's *Rinaldo and Armida* and described it as:"*un quadro d'una favola del Tasso, divinamente in pittura rappresentato dal S. Annibale Carracci*," in Carlo Cesare Malvasia, *Felsina Pittrice*, *Vite De'Pittori Bolognesi*, ed. Giampietro Zanotti (Bologna 1841) III, 360: See also, Anne Summerscale, *Malvasia's Life of the Carracci* (The Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, PA, 2000) 334–352; Denis Mahon, *Studies in the Seicento Art and Theory* (The Warburg Institute, University of London, 1947), 149; Donald Posner, "Antonio Maria Panico and Annibale Carracci," *Art Bulletin,* 52, 2 (1970), 181–183, 183; Robertson, *The Invention of Annibale Carracci* (Silvana Editoriale, Milan, 2008), 179–180.

[4] Giovanni Careri explains Annibale's fidelity to the details in Tasso's epic poem as a game that the artist (who could recite the poem from memory) was playing between the verse and the painted object. In Giovanni Careri, *La fabbrica degli affetti: La Gerusalemme liberata dai Carracci a Tiepolo* (il Saggiatore, Milan, 2010), 154–155. Carreri's theory is a response to Lee, who had called the painting an "intolerable picture, which does as much violence to the

From behind the bushes, the couple is observed by Carlo and Ubaldo, who were sent by Godfrey of Bullion (1061–1100), leader of the Christian armies, to retrieve the deserter to the military campaign. Unlike Rinaldo, they gain entry to the place by themselves. Thus, able to notice the relief on the entrance (XVI:3). In Tasso's poem, these two warriors play the role of external focalizers, providing the reader with an opportunity to realize the dangers that lay ahead for whomever passes through the palace gate. Hence, as Carlo and Ubaldo proceed on their mission, they (as well as the readers) expect to find Rinaldo in Hercules' shameful situation.[1]

In this paper I argue that in his rendition of Rinaldo, Annibale interpreted the epic hero by linking Hercules' situation on the relief (XVI:3) to that of Rinaldo in Armida's company (XVI:20). This depiction accorded with Tasso's description of an effeminate Rinaldo and was based on the characteristics that traditionally originated with the episode of Hercules in Iole's chambers. It seems, that Annibale emphasized Rinaldo's femininity, by returning to his depiction of *Hercules and Iole*. In this rendition Annibale borrowed Tasso's descriptive composition of Rinaldo holding Armida's mirror, to portray Hercules holding Iole's tambourine. This *invenzione* of Hercules imitating Rinaldo's gestures linked the two heroes and led to the first representation of an effeminate Rinaldo in the visual arts.

It has been suggested by Giovanni Careri in his *La fabbrica degli affetti*, that Rinaldo's femininity was first portrayed in Annibale's *Rinaldo and Armida*.[2] However, Careri dismisses the similarities between Hercules and Rinaldo, finding the mythical hero in Annibale's painting embarrassed, ridiculous, and less feminine than Rinaldo.[3] For Careri, Rinaldo's feminization

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sentiment of the poem as it faithfully reproduces its details." Rensselaer W. Lee. "Ut Pictura Poesis: The Humanistic Theory of Painting," *Art Bulletin* 22, 4 (1940), 247–248. Lee regretted the accusation in the preface to the second edition of the volume. (W.W. Norton, New York, 1967). VIII.

[1] On the focalizer as the interpreter, see, Mieke Bal, "The Laughing Mice: Or: On Focalization," *Poetics Today* 2,2 (1981) 202–210, 204–205.

[2] Careri, *La fabbrica degli affetti*, 152–153.

[3] Ibid. 156. See also, Jonathan Unglaub, *Poussin and the Poetics of Painting, Pictorial Narrative and the Legacy of Tasso* (Cambridge University Press, New York, 2006), 103; and Charles Dempsey, *Annibale Carracci, The Farnese Gallery, Rome* (George Braziller, New York, 1995),31.

is based on his similarity to Armida.[1] Careri finds the source of this resemblance in Marsilio Ficino's concept of love, which appears in his *Libro del Amore* (Chapter VIII), where the Neo-Platonist describes how the lover evolves and becomes more and more like his beloved.[2]

I suggest that in *Rinaldo and Armida* Annibale portrayed the conception of love encapsulated in Hercules and Iole's myth. Annibale was familiar with that love from antiquity, which involved an exchange of the traditional passive and active roles.[3] He had already painted this reversed conception of love in four *quadri riportati minori* on the ceiling of the Farnese Gallery, among them *Hercules and Iole*. In his *Rinaldo and Armida* he elaborated the characteristics of this love.

The Exchange of Objects

As I noted earlier, prior to *Rinaldo and Armida*, Annibale depicted *Hercules and Iole* (1597–1601) on the ceiling of the Farnese Gallery, where he portrayed the love of the gods (Fig. 1). In *Hercules and Iole*, he imaged Hercules trading his traditional attributes, the warrior's club and the lion's fur, for Iole's gown, which he is wearing wrapped around his hips. Hercules is holding a rounded tambourine in front of Iole's face, and as she stares at this object his gaze is fixed into her eyes. Hercules appears effeminate and submissive, wearing women's clothes and handling women's accessories, whereas Iole is in possession of his weapons, her tiny arm laid across his broad shoulders in a patronizing gesture of authority.

Dempsey points out that Annibale's biographer, the humanist and theoretician Giovan Pietro Bellori (1613–1696), noted that Tasso's relief was the textual source for *Hercules and Iole*: "In this fable Annibale followed the description by Tasso, who in his very poem showed himself to be an admirable sculptor, and he made Cupid there gazing at Hercules from a loggia and laughing, pointing with his hand to the powerful hero, feminized and vanquished."[1] Bellori meant to connect Annibale's painting to Tasso's *stanza*:

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[1] Ibid. 154.

[2] Ibid.,138–139. Careri stresses the similarity between the lovers throughout *canto* XIV:66–67, when Armida, who had come to kill Rinaldo, glances at the sleeping youth and falls in love with him. This scene was painted by Nicole Poussin. His *Rinaldo and Armida* (1628–1629), depicts Armida's hate changing into love, as she seems to merge into Rinaldo's sleeping figure, just as Narcissus' image merged with the pond. Ibid.,137–143.

[3] This antique conception of love, where the traditional passive and active roles between the lover (*erastēs*) and his beloved (*erōmenos*) are exchanged, can be traced back to Alcibiades' speech in: Plato's *Symposium*, translated with an introduction and notes by Alexander Nehamas and Paul Woodruff (Hackett, Indianapolis and Cambridge, 1989), 215b–222c; see also Kenneth James Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1978), 91–100. Bellori may have hinted at Plato's *Symposium* when he described the conception of love depicted on the ceiling of the Farnese Gallery: "The painter wished to represent with various symbols the war and peace between heavenly and common love formulated by Plato." Bellori, *The Lives*, 84. For the conception of love in the *Stanze* see See also: Jane Tylus, "Epic Endless Deferral: Vernacular Masculinities in the Florence of Lorenzo de' Medici," in *The Poetics of Masculinity in Early Modern Italy and Spain* (eds.). Gerry Milligan and Jane Tylus (Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, Toronto, 2010).

> Here they saw Hercules, hero of the war,
> gossiping with the servant ladies, spinning;
> he who had harrowed hell and borne the stars
> now turns his loom. Love looked upon him, grinning,
> while weakling Iole fulfilled the farce,
> lugging his homicidal weapons, pinning
> upon her girlish frame a lion's skin-
> too rough to clothe her tender members in! (*canto* XVI:3)

However, there is no reference in this description to the tambourine that Annibale placed in Hercules' hand. Neither is there such a reference in other sources of this tale, such as, Ovid's *Heroides* (IX:73–134), the *Fasti* (II:303–358), and Poliziano's *Stanze* (I:14). In these tales, Hercules is portrayed either working the loom or turning Omphale's spindle.

The spindle also appears in the group sculpture, *Hercules and Omphale* (Fig. 3), one of the antique pieces in the Farnese collection. According to Clare Robertson, Annibale might have based the portrayal of Iole on this visual source,[2] but the sculpture shows Hercules trading attributes with the queen, as he is holding her spindle and she is in possession of his club.

Despite the numerous visual and textual sources that include the spindle, in *Hercules and Iole,* Annibale deliberately chose to replace the traditional attribute with a rounded tambourine. This exchange of objects does not interfere with the concept of the effeminized hero performing female chores for his lover. Yet the tambourine resembles Rinaldo's mirror, not only in its shape and gloss, but also in the particular way in which Hercules is holding it in front of Iole's face (Fig. 1). This exchange of glances involving Hercules, Iole, and the tambourine is borrowed from Tasso's description of Rinaldo and Armida with the mirror:

> …she sees herself in the mirror, while he spies
> himself in the calm reflection of her eyes. (XVI:20)

It seems that the exchange of objects helped Annibale reinforce the visual connection between Hercules and Rinaldo, thus providing him with a solid base for his interpretation of an effeminate Rinaldo as a warrior who, like Hercules, was temporarily tamed by love.

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[1] Giovan Pietro Bellori, *The Lives of the Modern Painters, Sculptors and Architects*, translated by Alice Sedgwick Wohl (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, 2005), 89. See also, Dempsey, *Annibale Carracci*, 68; Charles Dempsey, "'*Et nos cedamus amori*: Observations on the Farnese Gallery," *Art Bulletin* 50, 4 (1968), 363–374, 369.

[2] Clare Robertson, *The Invention,* 161. For *Hercules and Omphale*, see the illustration in *Le Palais Farnèse* (École française de Rome, Rome, 1981), II, pl. 340a. For the *Farnese Hercules*, see Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny, *Taste and the Antique* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1981), under catalogue no. 46, 229–32.

As Careri had noticed Annibale's *Rinaldo and Armida* was the first depiction of an effeminate Rinaldo in the visual arts. Prior to Annibale's painting, the couple had been depicted in the illustrated edition of Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* from 1590 by Bernardo Castello (Fig. 4), which was engraved by Agostino Carracci in the same year, [1] and in a painting by Ludovico Carracci from 1593 (Fig. 5), but neither of those portrayals highlights Rinaldo's femininity. In Castello's version, Rinaldo is leaning against Armida's lap, but he is not performing any service for her, as she is holding the mirror. Rinaldo seems relaxed in her company but definitely not tamed or domesticated by love. In Ludovico's painting Rinaldo is holding the mirror, but he retains his armor and his sword, which allows him to hold on to his masculinity.

In Annibale's painting, Rinaldo's feminization accorded with Tasso's idea of the hero. Rinaldo's femeninity is suggested in the description of his gestures and in the passive state that Carlo and Ubaldo find him-- a deserter who had forgotten himself in the company of his lover.

> If you'd looked on
> just as you heard him heave a deep, deep sigh
> you would have thought, "His pilgrim soul has gone
> and fled to hers." So the two hidden knights
> gazed upon all these amorous delights. (XVI:19)
> Rinaldo's femininity is also hinted in the scene in which a love-stricken
>
> Rinaldo assists Armida in her morning rituals by holding her mirror:
>
> From the lover's side there hung a crystal glass,
> shining and smooth – strange thing for him to wear.
> He rose, and held it out between his hands,
> in the rites of Love the chosen minister. (XVI:20)

Although Rinaldo's gestures of servitude and domestication were clearly understood by Carlo and Ubaldo (as well as by the readers), his femininity was not yet admitted by Rinaldo himself. It is only when he faces his rescuers (while Armida is away) that Rinaldo is able to see his own reflection in Ubaldo's shield, an artifact that was given to them by the Wise Man of Ascalon to overcome Armida's charms (XV:1). For Rinaldo it seems to be the moment of truth: he suddenly realizes what love has done to him and finally faces up to his shameful state:

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[1] Daniel M. Unger, "The Yearning for the Holy Land: Agucchi's Program for Erminia and the Shepherds," *Word & Image,* 24, 4 (2008), 367– 377, 374.

> He turned his glance upon the brilliant shield
> and saw himself for what he was, how tressed
> with dainty touches, reeking of perfume,
> his hair in curls and tassels on his vest,
> his dangling sword effeminate at his side,
> prettified – not to mention all the rest,
> for it's a dandy ornament he bore,
> not a ferocious instrument of war! (XVI:30)

This last *stanza* endorses Annibale's portrayal of Rinaldo's femininity and shows that Annibale's interpretation of Tasso's epic hero was grounded in the poem. However, it is the love of Hercules and Iole described on the relief, which hints at the conception of reversed love that explains Rinaldo's feminization.

The Exchange of Masculine and Feminine Roles

Rinaldo's femininity in *canto* XVI is consistent with an ancient conception of love in which the traditional passive and active roles between women and men are exchanged, a conception that, as mentioned earlier, is encapsulated in the myth of Hercules and Iole. This tale from antiquity was introduced to the Renaissance's literature by Tasso's senior, the poet Angelo Poliziano, in his *Stanze*, the first epic poem written in the vernacular languages and left unfinished in 1478. In the poem an effeminate Hercules, once "accustomed to the ponderous club, now turns a spindle" as a servant girl and wears women's clothes in the company of an authoritative Omphale (I:115). The couple is portrayed among other love scenes engraved on Venus' garden doors, which Vulcan had crafted for their marriage. By addressing this scene, the poet revived the moral values of this reversed love and welcomed them into the poetry of the Renaissance. His narrative was picked up by Tasso and re-engraved on a different set of doors.

Hercules and Omphale's scene from the *Stanze* (I:14), seems to be Tasso's source for the relief, and appears to be relevant for Rinaldo and Armida's love scene in *canto* XVI, since it depicts the moral values of a powerful love that can neutralize a hero and reverse the norms of conventional love. The shift in authority, as well as the dangerous enclosed in this love, are an essential element in Rinaldo and Armida's love scene.

Poliziano used Hercules and Omphales' tale to emphasize the power of love, which can castrate and domesticate even the most powerful of all heroes. In his *Stanze* he defines a profile of an epic hero acting between love and war, which can easily fit the profile of any epic hero on the playground of Mars and Venus. Poliziano's hero, Julio (based on the image of Giuliano de Medici), is a hunter who lives a free life in nature and either ignores or mocks the idea of love (I:8–24). While hunting he comes upon the beautiful nymph Simonetta (based on the image of Simonetta Cattaneo-Vespucci) and falls in love. This encounter changes Julio’s nature, leaving him as vulnerable as the prey he used to hunt (I:25–57).

In his introduction to the *Stanze*, David Quint traces the formation of the epic hero, and stresses that as the poem progresses, Julio advances from adolescence to manhood. Once in love, he has to prove himself in battle (the tournament). His image evolves into that of Mars, whereas that of Simonetta settles into that of Venus – the two forces that drive the structure of the epic poem.[1] Quint addresses the love of antiquity represented by Hercules and Omphale, and seeks the purpose of this tale in Poliziano’s plot. He notes that the example of a “transvestite Hercules” in the service of his lover “would confirm Julio’s worst fears of subjugation, and present an ironic version of the conjugation of Mars and Venus.”[2] I suggest, that Julio’s fears of subjugation, raised by Poliziano as a major risk that awaits the epic hero, were borrowed by Tasso and became Rinaldo’s own fears as he faced his effeminate image in Ubaldo’s shield.

Apart from Tasso, it seems that Annibale was also aware of Poliziano’s *Stanze*. Robert Baldwin notes that the love of the gods portrayed on the ceiling of the Farnese Gallery includes many love scenes depicted in the *Stanze* (I: 97–119), which were borrowed from Claudian’s *Epithalamium*, among them that of Hercules and Omphale. [3]

Before executing *Rinaldo and Armida*, Annibale depicted the characteristics of the reversed love in four mythological paintings on the ceiling of the Farnese Gallery. The *quadri riportati minori* include *Diana and Endymion*, *Venus and Anchises*, *Jupiter and Juno*, as well as *Hercules and Iole*. Each of these compositions consists of two large figures exhibiting intimate gestures of love, where the men are either neutralized by the women or performing chores on their behalf. The successful unveiling of the Farnese Gallery ceiling announced in an *avviso*, a public notice, dated June 2, 1601,[4] as well as its acceptance by the viewers, can explain why Annibale chose to rely on those visual sources to achieve the same kind of success for his *Rinaldo and Armida*. [5]

It is likely that Annibale relied on the composition of *Diana and Endymion* (Fig. 6) to position the figures of Rinaldo and Armida. In this painting the young shepherd rests in Diana’s arms; he has surrendered to eternal sleep in the wake of his forbidden love affair with the chaste goddess. The heavy limbs of the sleeping Endymion leaning on a vigilant Diana seem to be the visual model for the dreamy Rinaldo, with his relaxed posture, reclining on an authoritative Armida, who supports him from behind (Fig. 2). In *Diana and Endymion*, there is also a pair of cupids, which play the same role as Carlo and Ubaldo: like them, they are hidden in the bushes and silently observe the couple. Both sets of spectators seem to be puzzled: one by the passivity of Endymion, overwhelmed by a woman and the other by Rinaldo's numbness, blinded by Armida's love.

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[1] Poliziano, *The Stanze*, see Quint’s introduction, xv–xx.

[2] On an effeminate Hercules; Ibid., xxi; see also, Jane Tylus, “Epic Endless Deferral: Vernacular Masculinities in the Florence of Lorenzo de’ Medici, 76, 79–80.

[3] Among the images: *The Marriage of Bacchus and Ariadne*, *Polyphemus Innamorato*, *Europa and the Bull*, *Hercules and Iole*, and *Jupiter and Ganymede*,Robert Baldwin, “Annibale Carracci’s Farnese Ceiling” (1997); 2–21, 3–4, in: www.socialhistoryofart.com/essaysbyperiod.htm (Feb 2, 2015).

[4] Roberto Zapperi, “Per la datazione degli affreschi della Galleria Farnese,” in: *Mélanges de l’Ecole Française de Rome*. Moyen âge, temps modernes, XCIII, 1981, 821–822; see also Silvia Ginzburg Carignani, *Annibale Carracci a Roma* (Donzelli, Rome, 2000), 112–115, 135–150.

[5] On Annibale’s commissions that followed the unveiling, see Clare Robertson,“Late Annibale and His Workshop: Invention, Imitation and Patronage,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, 54. Bd., H. 2 (2010–2012), 267–294, esp. 267–268.

In *Rinaldo and Armida*, Rinaldo is fascinated by Armida's enchanted belt, which he holds with both hands (Fig. 2). He is so charmed by this object that he is willing to forego his sword in order to win the favor of his lover. This idea was first depicted in Annibale's *Jupiter and Juno*, where Jupiter, seeing Juno, put aside his traditional weapon – the lightning bolt. Charles Dempsey notes that in the Farnese painting Juno is wearing Venus' seductive belt under her bare breasts (Fig. 7). Referring to the *Iliad* (XIV:197ff), he points out that the goddess had borrowed the belt "that steals the wits even of the wise" from Venus, in order to keep Jupiter away from the Trojan War, in which they take opposing sides.[1] It seems that Juno's belt serves the same purpose as Armida's, which according to Tasso, "she wears always, even when she lies nude" (XVI:24). Tasso described the power of seduction imprinted on that belt:

> The tender coyness and the calm rebuffs,
> the precious, charming warfare, and the sweet
> moments of peace; the little smiles, the tears,
> the broken sighs, soft kisses, all completed
> this belt, for they were melted down in one,
> then fused over a torch with gentle heat. (XVI:25)

This object of seduction is definitely a great source of power. In both of Annibale's paintings it seems to be shaped as a Roman *strophium*, a breast band that can be worn under the breasts (as in the depiction of Juno) or around them, above or under the gown.[2] In *Rinaldo and Armida*, Armida's breasts are bare, but are partly hidden behind Rinaldo, which implies that the band that Rinaldo is holding is the cloth that had previously covered her breasts. Annibale's painting clearly suggests that this erotic object is used to distract the warrior, to distance him from the Christian troops who are fighting the infidels in the Holy Land.

In *Rinaldo and Armida*, Rinaldo is willing to perform a maid's tasks and assist Armida with her mirror, just as the Trojan hero in *Venus and Anchises* (Fig. 8) removes the goddess' sandal. This task seems to be the last in a series of many others, as Venus' gown and jewelry are carefully piled up on the chair next to Anchises. To highlight Anchises' servitude, Annibale painted Hercules' lion fur on the floor between his feet, emphasizing that the nature of the love portrayed in this painting is the same as in *Hercules and Iole*.[1]

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[1] Dempsey, *Annibale Carracci*, 74.

[2] Liza Cleland, Glenys Davies, and Lloyd Llewellyn Jones, *Greek and Roman Dress from A to Z* (Routledge, London, 2007),183; see also John R. Clarke, *Looking at Lovemaking: Constructions of Sexuality in Roman Art 100 B.C.–A.D. 250,* (University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1998), 34, 73

These four paintings indicate that Tasso's conception of love was not alien to Annibale when he painted *Rinaldo and Armida*. That he could comfortably base Rinaldo's femininity on gestures of servitude, passivity, submission, and fascination clearly apparent in the paintings of the Farnese ceiling.

In conclusion, Annibale portrayed Rinaldo's femininity, by linking Hercules and Rinaldo and by exchanging Hercules' spindle for a tambourine, which has the same function as Rinaldo's mirror. This device established the connection between the mythical hero and the epic warrior as two effeminized characters who were tamed by love. From Annibale's perspective it was clearly the influence of poetry (the sister-art) on the visual representation of the classical myth that suggests that he was well aware of Tasso's comparison between the two heroes. But, above all, the exchange of attributes is an expression of Annibale's invention, his freedom of interpretation, achieved by drawing on the hybridity of poetry and mythology, both of which evoke similar conceptions of love.

Although Annibale's interpretation of an effeminate Rinaldo is not discussed by most modern researchers,[2] it was clearly understood and celebrated by his pupils. Expressions of Rinaldo's gentle gestures, feminine postures, curls, gowns and open cleavages, sometimes with hinted breasts, can be seen in later renditions attributed to Lucio Massari (1569–1633), Francesco Albani (1578–1660), Sisto Badalocchio (1585–1647?), and Domenichino Zampieri (1581–1641), whose portrayals of *Rinaldo and Armida* indicate that they understood their master's wit and continued to exaggerate and even to ridicule Rinaldo's feminine characteristics.

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[1] On Anchises and Hercules see, Dempsey, "Et Nos Cedamus Amori," 368.

[2] Apart from Careri, modern scholars do not deal with Rinaldo's feminization and have tried to explain the rendition of *Rinaldo and Armida* by attributing it to Annibale's pupils. Rudolf Wittkower judged Annibale's work as "mainly studio." In Rudolf Wittkower, *The Drawings of the Carracci in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen at Windsor Castle* (Phaidon Press, London, 1952), 178. Donald Posner excused his distress in regard to the painting, "its air of physical lassitude and dramatic vacancy," by attributing the execution almost entirely to Panico. In Posner, "Antonio Maria Panico and Annibale Carracci," 183. Clare Robertson suggests Innocento Tacconi, another pupil of the Carracci, as a more plausible assistant for *Rinaldo and Armida*. In Robertson, *The Invention*, 160, 179; See also Claudio Giardini, in Emilio Negro and Massimo Pirondini (eds.) *La scuola dei Carracci, I seguaci di Annibale e Agostino* (Artioli Editore, Modena, 1995): 261, 265. And Puglisi suggests Francesco Albani as Annibale's assistant. In Catherine R. Puglisi, *Francesco Albani* (Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1999, 131–132.

Illustrations

Figure 1. *Annibale Carracci, Hercules and Iole (1597–1601), Farnese Gallery, Rome.*

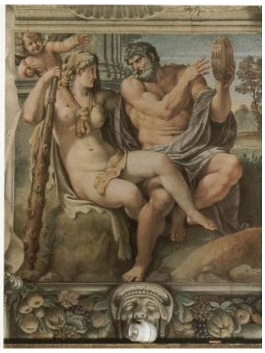


Figure 2. *Annibale Carracci, Rinaldo and Armida (1601–1602), Museo Nazionale di Campodimonte.*

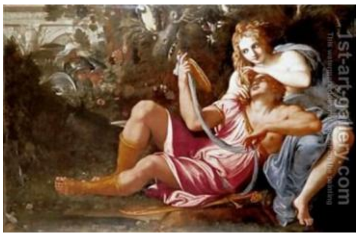


Figure 3. *Hercules and Omphale (1st Century A.D, Copy of a Work from the 1st Century B.C.), Museo Archiologico Nazionale, Naples.*

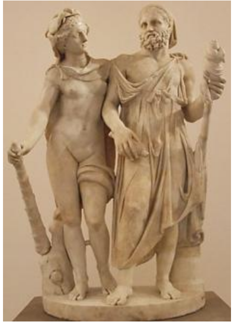


Figure 4. *Bernardo Castello, Rinaldo and Armida, Illustration in Gerusalemme liberata 1590.*

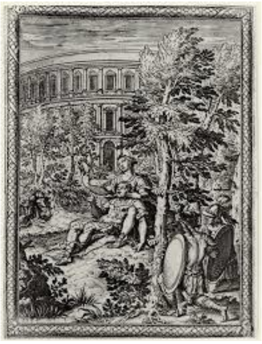


Figure 5. *Ludovico Carracci, Rinaldo and Armida (1593), Museo Nazionale di Campodimonte.*

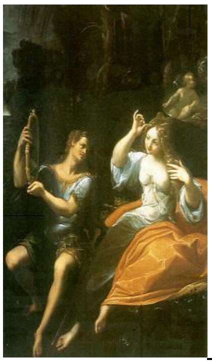


Figure 6. *Annibale Carracci, Diana and Endymion (1597–1601), Farnese Gallery, Rome.*

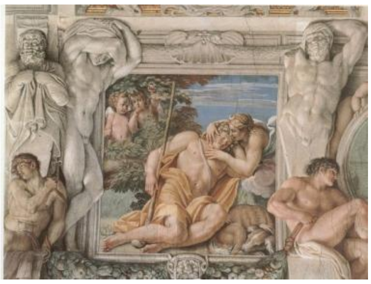


Figure 7. *Annibale Carracci, Jupiter and Juno (1597–1601), Farnese Gallery, Rome.*

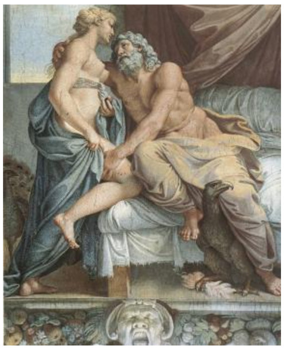
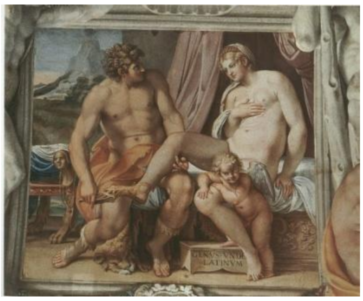


Figure 8. *Annibale Carracci, Venus and Anchises (1597–1601), Farnese Gallery, Rome.*



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