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CAVALIERI (Marco), « “Velleja [...] est une des curiosités de ce siècle”. The *Antiquitates* of Veleia: collecting, archaeology and politics between Italy and France in the XVIII century »

RÉSUMÉ – La ville de Velleja a été célébrée parmi les historiens comme la “Pompéi du Nord”. Le but de cet article est de situer la découverte de ce *municipium* romain dans le contexte historique et culturel du XVIII^e siècle. Les fouilles archéologiques, débutées en 1760, ont été immédiatement définies comme un tournant pour l’archéologie cisalpine naissante car elles encouragèrent le “culte” et l’étude du monde Antique dans l’Italie néoclassique, et cela, à des fins politiques ainsi que de recherche.

MOTS-CLÉS – Velleja, duc Philippe de Bourbon, Guillaume Léon du Tillot, Anne-Claude-Philippe de Caylus, Paolo Maria Paciaudi

“VELLEJA [...] EST UNE DES CURIOSITÉS DE CE SIÈCLE”

The *Antiquitates* of Veleia:
collecting, archaeology and politics
between Italy and France in the XVIII century

INTRODUCTION

Although the nickname ‘Italian Athens’ given to Parma during the second half of the XVIII century could sound excessive for such a small capital of an even smaller Duchy, it is true that around the 1760s-1770s Parma became a model for both Italian and European cities in reason of the deep transformation it undertook from an intellectual, political, economical and religious point of view.

With the extinction of the Farnese family (1731) the Duchy became subject to a series of disastrous dominations, such as the short-lived reign of Charles of Bourbon and the presence of Austrian rulers in the Parmese territory and of the Sardinian-Piedmontese in Piacenza. After the Peace of Aachen (1748) the Duchy of Guastalla was added to the one of Parma and Piacenza and the newly-born territory experienced a new life.

It was assigned to the Infante Philip of Bourbon, the son of Elizabeth Farnese – now Queen of Spain – and of Philip V of Bourbon – the nephew of Louis XIV of France. This was the most Guelf of the states of the Italian peninsula, created in 1545 by Pope Paul III with nepotistic intentions, and yet it absorbed the reforming principles of the Enlightenment, especially regarding cultural and juridical policies. Linked by a sort of ‘family pact’ to France, Spain and Naples, and depending on them financially through the allowance of a significant dowry, the little

Duchy declined the idea of sovereignty and its cultural implications in an even more pioneering way than these powerful states¹.

Against this backdrop should be read the lucky discovery of Trajan's *Tabula Alimentaria* (1747) through which the world of antiquarians came to know of the existence of the small Roman *municipium* of Veleia² (fig. 1), on the Apennines near Piacenza. In a few years (1760) this discovery would have led to the foundation of one of the first archaeological museums open to a wider public, to be opened in Parma, the Duchy's capital. The museum would have displayed *in primis* the Veleia finds. Both the Veleia dig and the consequent foundation of the museum contributed to the creation of a new attitude towards ancient objects in the Duchy, which – in turn – helped to make Parma an important focus for antiquarian studies, soon to become one of the most vibrant in Italy.

DU TILLOT AT THE COURT OF PHILIP OF BOURBON

The cultural setting

The extraordinary cultural and economical renaissance of the Duchy, however, could not be explained with the discovery of Veleia alone, nor with the family connections between the Duchy and some of the most powerful European families of the time. It was the presence and the skills of Minister Léon Guillaume Du Tillot that made this happen.

Du Tillot was a man of humble origins: he began his career as valet of chamber to Philip of Bourbon, then rose to the role of Philip's personal secretary, then was nominated by him Finance Minister and lastly, in 1759, Prime Minister with the title of Marquis of Felino, in the environs of Parma.

1 G. Gonzi, « Le Istituzioni del Ducato », in G. Cusatelli (ed.), *Petitot. Un artista del Settecento europeo a Parma*, Catalogue of exposition in Parma, Parma, Guanda, 1997, p. 79-86: 79.

2 “Une ville ancienne trouvée dans un lieu nommé aujourd'hui Macinisso, situé dans le voisinage de Plaisance, est une des curiosités de ce siècle. J'ai du moins le plaisir d'annoncer cette découverte au Monde curieux et de prouver la certitude de cet événement ...”; Comte de Caylus, *Recueil d'Antiquités Égyptiennes, Étrusques, Grecques, Romaines, Gauloises*, IV, Paris, Chez N. M. Tilliard, Libraire, 1761, p. 182-187, tav. LIX.

His reform policies were undertaken and pursued with unusual determination: he reorganised the administrative system in a more modern way; encouraged crafts and industries by attracting to the Duchy expert craftsmen from abroad; supported trade by strengthening the road system to ease communication, and applying the modern principles of economic liberalism to trade and commerce. He encouraged enormously agriculture also through the publication of studies and essays on the topic. In particular, and in tune with Enlightenment beliefs, he fought against the Church's privileges by vindicating civil supremacy over ecclesiastical power.

Du Tillot was also a great supporter of the arts, which he helped by weaving a network of diplomatic and cultural exchanges throughout Europe. In 1752 he founded and presided over the Academy of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture, convinced as he was – on a par with modern Enlightened philosophers – that improving and supporting the arts meant moral and material redemption for society, and glory and pride for the State³.

The museum opening in Parma was part of a wider, pan-European phenomenon. In mid-XVIII century all European courts had become centres for arts and culture through the patronage of artistic fora whose purpose was also educational: groups of artists and scholars who promoted a new form of art, more open to the classical heritage, and often in open contrast with the *rocaille* fashion⁴. The Academy in Parma was located in the Western wing of the Pilotta palace, and became fully operational in 1757. It was meant to be a prime way to recover the art holdings of the Duchy, but also to gain to the Duchy fame and prestige through the annual painting and architecture competitions, which were open to foreign artists and widely advertised on European press. As Parma was one of the destinations of the *Grand Tour*, a policy of international exchanges suited perfectly both Du Tillot's aims and policies, and the fashion of the times. Academics focussed particularly on strengthening and enhancing local art culture, with particular attention to the art of the Sixteenth century. Correggio's *Madonna di San Gerolamo* was

3 G. Fiaccadori *et alii*, *Guglielmo Du Tillot regista delle arti nell'età dei Lumi*, Parma, Cariparma, 2012, p. 53.

4 A. Malinverni, « Don Filippo: il duca dell'Atene d'Italia », in A. Mora (ed.), *Storia di Parma V. I Borbone: fra Illuminismo e rivoluzioni*, Parma, MUP, 2015, p. 53-75.

purchased by Philip of Bourbon and became the first painting to be exhibited in the new Gallery, which was now open to both tourists and artists, local and coming from abroad.

Raphael's *Madonna Sistina*, instead, was purchased in 1754 by the Elector Augustus of Saxony. The loss of such a masterpiece sparked a deeper worry: that also Correggio's masterpieces could be threatened by a similar fate. Accordingly, the Duke and his *entourage* inserted in the two Academy Constitutions (of 1758 and 1760) a law under the heading '*Grazie e privilegi*' which was meant to safeguard the local artistic patrimony:

"Outstanding paintings and sculptures are not allowed to be moved from Parma without consulting the Academy, who will assess their value and pass judgement to the relevant authorities. Such judgement will always be subject to the authorities, who may or may not authorise the move⁵".

Support to the Academy went hand-in-hand with support to the Veleia excavation, which was officially opened by the Duke in 1760. Eminent scholars of the time, such as Paolo Maria Paciaudi⁶, the Count of Caylus⁷, Abbot Barthélemy⁸ were involved in it. For quite some time this archaeological operation granted fame to the Duchy by providing

5 *Non potranno uscire di Parma opere insigni in pittura e in scultura, senzaché ne sia interpellata l'Accademia, che riconoscondone il merito, ne farà presente a Chi si dee il suo sentimento, sempre subordinato a chi può autorizzarlo per la concessione.*

6 Paolo Maria Paciaudi, Italian erudite, bibliophile and politician (1710-1785). One of the most relevant reformers of the Italian Enlightenment. He was appointed by the Du Tillot government with the aim of turning Parma into the 'new Athens', a European stronghold for lay and enlightened culture, through the involvement of prestigious personalities from the European culture scene. Among them Paciaudi himself, Condillac, architect Ennemond-Alexandre Petitot, sculptor Jean-Baptiste Boudard, printer Giambattista Bodoni. Paciaudi's most famous work was the *Costituzione per i nuovi regi studi* (*Constitution for the New Royal studies*), which was – however – never applied in practice. Its text was inspired to criteria of consistency and control of all the education system by the State. It aimed at being at the forefront of a new anti-ecclesiastical culture, and the secularisation of the Modern State.

7 Anne-Claude-Philippe de Caylus, French erudite and archaeologist (1692-1765). After a brilliant career in the army, he turned to ancient art history and became a world-renowned expert in the field. He became thus honorary member of the *Académie de Peinture et Sculpture* and of the academy *des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* in Paris. Among other writings, he wrote a substantial work in seven tomes, the *Recueil d'Antiquités égyptiennes, étrusques, romaines et gauloises* (1752-1767). During its preparation, and to complete his knowledge about Roman art, he had exchanges with the cultural institutions of Parma.

8 Jean-Jacques Barthélemy, French religious and erudite (1716-1795). Great lover of antiquities and famous numismatist. He was director of the *Cabinet des Médailles* of Paris since

models to local artists. The Duke was personally involved in its management, as he hoped to assemble a collection to equal the Farnese's art treasures. In July 1763 he ordered that nowhere in his Duchy “*person could demolish any wall, or damage any discovery, for whatever reason or under whatever pretext*”⁹. The Duke found his trusting servant in Paciaudi, whom he nominated in 1761 as his antiquarian, and to whom he entrusted the Royal Library. The Library was to be enlarged and enriched through significant purchases of books coming from France, on suggestion of the Duke – especially on the topic of theatre, and from private collections.

THE VELEIA DIGS: THE ACTORS

Veleia was named the ‘Northern Pompeii’. In the second half of the XVIII century the State Digs (1760-1765 and 1776-1781) became a true reference point for the new-born archaeology of the Cisalpine territories. Together with other digs carried out in the territory near Parma they fostered and contributed significantly to the birth of a true ‘cult’ of Antiquity and to the study of the ancient world in Neoclassical Italy.

The leading role of Veleia, a sort of template for research, is certainly due to the interest for Parma and its archaeological remains displayed by the Count of Caylus, who was one of the leading personalities of the time in terms of antiquarian scholarship, and who – for many years – researched the artistic techniques and the craftsmanship of Classical times. Thanks to Caylus and his correspondence with the first two directors of the excavations – the Piacentine canon Antonio Costa and the Teatine father Paolo Maria Paciaudi – the Veleia dig became for several years a laboratory for archaeological research¹⁰. The Duke was

1753. Moved to Italy to admire the country's artistic treasures, as he himself declared in his *Fragments d'un voyage en Italie*.

9 ...né per ragione, né per pretesto alcuno si ardisca mai di diroccare alcun muro, né guastare cosa alcuna scoperta; Ms 46, Parma, Museo Archeologico Nazionale.

10 M. Cavalieri, « Between aesthetics and research. The reception of Antiquity in the duchy of Parma and Piacenza during the Bourbon age », in M. Cavalieri, O. Latteur (eds.), *Antiquitates et Lumières. Étude et réception de l'Antiquité romaine au siècle des Lumières* (Fervet Opus 5), Louvain-la-Neuve, Presses Universitaires de Louvain, 2019, p. 87-120: 91-98.

sending to Paris all sorts of remains from Veleia: ceramic fragments, glassware, bronze pieces, plaster, bones and other ‘minor’ objects among which natural curiosities which made up a consistent body of material on which Caylus could work and make experiments.

Caylus’ methodological expertise and research methods brought a breath of fresh air to the Duchy’s antiquarian world by stressing the importance of ‘common’ materials and – more generally – of the aspects of research linked to production and craftsmanship, which were subsequently reflected in the display of items in the Ducal Museum of Antiquity.

Another element emerges clearly from a reading of the exchange of letters between Caylus and Paciaudi: the Italian clergyman struggled to accept and adhere to the aims and innovative methodologies advocated by his French counterpart. Such struggle reflected a wider debate between old and new schools of research which was rife throughout Europe at the time, and which saw both Caylus and – most notoriously – Johann Joachim Winckelmann among the most vocal supporters of the new. That debate gave life to the modern archaeological science.

On 14 April 1760 the Duke Philip of Bourbon officially opened the first archaeological campaign in Veleia (1760-1763). The site was virtually unknown, even in the ancient sources – for example only a few words were written on it by Pliny the Elder¹¹, and Paciaudi reported to Caylus from Rome on that same July: “*nobody here has any knowledge of the discoveries of Veleia*”¹².

In order for this research to be successful, both the Duke and his Minister wished that Caylus could become one of the consultants of the Veleia project, for his scientific assistance, which enjoyed excellent reputation worldwide, would have granted lustre to the enterprise.

11 Plin. *Nat. Hist.* III, 7; III, 20.

12 *Personne ici n'a la moindre connaissance des découvertes de Velleja*; A. Sérieys, *Lettres de Paciaudi au comte de Caylus*, Paris, Chez Henri Tardieu, Libraire, 1802, p. 164, letter of 22 July 1760.

CAYLUS, WINCKELMANN, PIRANESI, PACIAUDI
BETWEEN ARCHAEOLOGY AND ANTIQUARIANISM
The Grand Tour

Infante Philip of Bourbon had good reasons to greet the lucky discovery of the tiny *municipium* of Veleia, as this achievement was to partly offset the loss of the famous Farnese Museum, transferred to Naples by its newly-crowned king Charles of Bourbon in 1734. Yet, it was his Minister Du Tillot who most strenuously worked towards first the accomplishment, and then the success of the Veleia excavation. In fact, this was one of the most important initiatives on which the Minister counted for a cultural relaunch of the Duchy. In his intention, and in the Duke's aspiration, its success would have confirmed the effectiveness of the Minister's complex programme of reforms, mostly inspired by the ideals of the Enlightenment, and realised thanks to an extraordinary team of scholars and researchers.

We have already mentioned Paciaudi, strongly supported by Caylus himself, and Barthélemy, famous director of the Cabinet of Numismatics for the King of France. Barthélemy was already very highly regarded ever since the 1760s, when he published his dissertation on the renowned nilotic mosaic of Palestrina, thus achieving particular prestige in the antiquarian scene of Rome. In fact, his involvement in the Veleia project would always remain rather marginal, despite the efforts of both Paciaudi and Du Tillot.

As we have said, the Veleia excavation was accompanied by the birth of the Museum of Antiquity, this too founded in 1760. The Museum was meant to be an integral part of the project, as it provided a much-needed showcase for the artefacts found in Veleia.

Philip of Bourbon effectively created the first 'public' museum of Antiquities in Northern Italy. Among its purposes was to avoid the scattering of the Duchy's art patrimony. Part of the legislation and policies designed to protect the Duchy's patrimony was in fact driven by this preoccupation, and the Antiquities were among the treasures to preserve. (fig. 2).

Such political choices soon brought excellent results. For example, the Julio-Claudian series of sculptures retrieved in the basilica of Veleia,

as well as the other findings coming from the tiny *municipium* did not end up locked in a private collection, but were offered to the wider community. Their presence contributed to the stylistic transformation of both contemporary painting and sculpture. Local artists like academic Gaetano Callani were pushed by the new discoveries to revise their style into a more austere, polished one – in other words, into a more ‘classical’ one made out of open and clear gestural expressiveness and a strong sense of volumes. His work is visible in the sculptures of the *Beatitudes*, in the church of Sant’Antonio Abate in Parma, which pose themselves as solemn and dramatic anticipations of the neo-classical style. The whole church was in itself a pilot project reflecting the new artistic direction taken by artists who worked within the Academy. In particular, the chalk statues of the nave are evidently inspired by the marble statues of Veleia in the volumes of the bodies and the movement of the draperies. One comparison springs to mind: the female headless statue, perhaps to be read as Livia, from which they take the quality of chiton and *himation* (fig. 3).

As previously happened in Naples after the discovery of Vesuvian Antiquities, the excavation of Veleia had repercussions on the arts, encouraging their development. Also the ‘minor’ decorative arts were affected: one interpreter of this revamped taste for Antiquities, working at the court of Parma was architect Ennemond-Alexandre Petitot¹³, who also had some experience of the contemporary world of Roman antiquarianism and of the Parisian lively art scene. It is thanks to these links with Rome and Paris – at the time the main centres for arts – that Du Tillot and his court of artists, literates, intellectuals and jurists were able to enhance the international reputation of the Duchy. And as Parma’s geographical location was conveniently placed on the way to Rome, the little city became one of the stops of the *Grand Tour* towards the capital. The young *pensionnaires*, the French scholarship holders on their way to

13 Architect and illustrator (Lyon 1727 – Parma 1801). Educated first in Lyon, then in Paris, then moved to Rome, where he had connections with G. B. Piranesi. Again in Paris (1750), he illustrated some plates for the *Recueil d’Antiquités* by the Count of Caylus. Recalled to Parma in 1753, he became architect of the ducal Constructions and teacher at the local Academy. Here he carried out several projects, ranging from town planning to ephemeral architecture to costume design for reception. Such activities witness to his wide-ranging interests, combining late-Baroque imagination and classical and rational modernity.

Villa Medici in Rome to learn about the Classical world, brought with them the French taste for neo-classicism. Thanks to them this style enjoyed great success in Parma, where, at the same time, the findings of Veleia – re-elaborated within the framework of a sort of Piacentine Arcadia of the Apennines –, and the materials used in architecture and sculpture (bronze and marble)¹⁴ allowed the application of original styles, especially to decorations (fig. 4).

In the 1760s this originality in style concurred to make the Bourbon court of Parma one of the leading European centres for arts of the time. Caylus’ principles of archaeological methodology, together with Winckelmann’s historical and philological analysis and Piranesi’s ground-breaking approach to antiquities were brought alive in the Veleia project and found an ideal political continuation in Du Tillot’s policies and Petitot’s architectural and formal choices¹⁵.

FROM PRIVATE COLLECTION TO THE BIRTH OF THE MODERN MUSEUM

The second half of the XVIII century registered a significant boost in the trips to Italy by artists, collectors, antiquarians and intellectuals. Mostly heading for Rome – which was increasingly becoming a multicultural hub –, Naples and its Vesuvian discoveries, Florence and Venice, their routes included now also the Duchy of Parma, Piacenza and Guastalla. The main attraction, together with the constant fascination of a place like Italy, was its classical remains, the new discoveries and findings. The ancient world, revisited in the works of modern artists like Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720-1778) or the French painter Charles-Louis Clérisseau

14 M. Cavalieri, « Artigianato e manifattura bronzea nel Veleiate », in N. Criniti (ed.), *Ager Veleias. Tradizione, società e territorio sull'Appennino Piacentino*, Parma, La Pilotta Editrice, 2003, p. 105-116; Id., « Ipotesi sulla produzione bronzea dell'Emilia occidentale in età romana », in S. Santoro (ed.), *Artigianato e produzione nella Cisalpina. Parte I. Proposte di metodo e prime applicazioni* (Flos Italiae. Doc. arch. Cisalpina Romana 3), Florence, All'Insegna del Giglio, 2004, p. 173-198; Id., « Arte, committenza e società: il caso Veleia », in N. Criniti (ed.), *Res Publica Veleiatium. Veleia, tra passato e futuro*, Parma, MUP, 2006, p. 155-204.

15 G. Fiaccadori *et alii*, *Guglielmo Du Tillot regista delle arti nell'età dei Lumi*, op. cit., p. 90.

(1721-1820), became more nuanced, fantastic and passionate. The new and the old, now joined together, appear throughout the Duchy, in the architectures by Petitot, who had spent a long time in Rome where he was in contact with Piranesi.

In such lively second half of the XVIII century, however, what surprises most is not this passion for antiquarianism, but the birth of an institution which specific aim was to study, research and implement the work on *Antiquitates*: the already-mentioned Ducal Museum of Antiquities. Similar collections, more or less prestigious, had already appeared previously both in the Duchy and in other places. However, these were strictly private ones: the access was restricted to a very limited number of people, and was primarily linked to the owner's prestige and self-representation. There was no connection between these collections and the idea of conservation and promotion of culture to the wider public. Thanks to the new approach promoted by enlightened intellectuals and politicians nowadays, we consider these as inalienable achievements, to benefit everyone. Clearly the idea of 'public' in XVIII century Parma is not the same as we have now¹⁶, and yet the Museum became a place of culture, study and prestige to benefit all the State, not only its ruler.

The Duke's intervention aimed at two main targets: to increase the actual number of precious items of the collection, and to find the most suitable place to display them appropriately and effectively. He created a Museum which would have collected all the archaeological finds of the Duchy: not only the Veleia ones, but also those coming from other sites, such as *Luceria* in the nearby Enza valley. Moreover, he wanted the Museum to gather all of the ancient remains of his little State, not only ornaments, but also memories in a wider sense. The Duke feared there was a concrete possibility they could end up scattered abroad. On 20 September 1760 he issued the ducal rescript of foundation for the new Museum. Although there was a precedent with the Portici Museum, in

16 The Museum of Antiquities in Parma achieved a public function – in its fuller sense – only at the time of Duchess Maria Luigia of Habsburg-Lorraine, as seen in a Piacenza decree of October 1817. Here the Museum and Veleia excavations are declared “*of public utility for the State, as source of public education*” and open “*to whoever among our subjects*”, particularly “*to those young people who come to Parma to be educated in the sciences at the University of the Duchy*”; M. Cavalieri, G. Baldini, *Oltre il riflesso. Storia, iconografia e società negli specchi etruschi del Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Parma* (Collection de l'Institut historique belge de Rome, Artes), Bruxelles-Rome, Institut historique belge de Rome, 2013, p. 24-25.

the kingdom of Naples, this foundation represented a novelty within the collectors' tradition of noble families of the time.

Its founding criteria reflect the contemporary antiquarian culture, even in its contradictions. For example, on the one side the Museum devoted ample space to the numismatic section, and to the one dedicated – as we would say today – to material culture (little bronzes, objects of everyday use), as clearly illustrated by the volumes by Costa. On the other side, however, much attention was paid to a reconstruction of the history of art of the ancient times. Such a dichotomy between the object taken in its aesthetic value, and its rigorous historical setting is clear, for example, in the decision to preserve the Julio-Claudian sculptures found in 1761 at the *basilica* in Veleia not in the Museum, but in the Gallery of the Academy, which too had been created following Du Tillot's policies. In other words, Caylus seems to have been the mastermind of the Museum, with his doctrine and teaching inspiring its founding criteria, while the Academy seems to reflect more Winckelmann's principles, led by the criterion that the analysis of old artefacts and masterpieces should start from a philological and historical study¹⁷. The Academy, like other main scientific and literary academies scattered throughout Europe at that time, was meant to be the place for Apollonian arts – an institution created by the sovereign with the aim to educate in the artistic disciplines. As such, for quite some time it led 'archaeological research' aiming both at education and at the international promotion of the State. And indeed it was successful. Despite the limited resources available, Philip and his wife Louise Elizabeth – the favourite daughter of Louis XV – promoted the instalment of special rooms in the Pilotta palace for the display of the sculptures from Veleia, the famous *Tabula Alimentaria*, and some chalk casts of the most famous ancient statues. This new space allowed the Academy to rise among the most famous *usines savantes* of Europe.

The Museum of Antiquities, instead, was conceived with a more historical purpose, without pandering too much to aesthetics despite the undisputed value of some of the objects.

17 M. Marini Calvani, « Il ruolo del Museo d'Antichità di Parma dagli scavi borbonici a Veleia alle ricerche della nascente paletnologia italiana », in C. Morigi Govi, G. Sassatelli (eds.), *Dalla Stanza delle Antichità al Museo Civico. Storia della formazione del Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna*, Catalogue of exposition, Bologna, Grafis Ed., 1984, p. 483-492: 484.

ANTIQUARIANISM BETWEEN CAYLUS,
PACIAUDI AND COSTA
Similarities and differences in scientific methodologies

Caylus, the main antiquarian-adviser of the court and Paciaudi, renowned scholar and expert in antiquities, had enjoyed a relationship built on mutual respect, friendship and complicity well before the Veleia project was set up. Their correspondence lasted throughout their adult lives, and ended only with Caylus' death. A reading of this collection of letters provides extraordinary information on the two main publishing, archaeological and collectors' enterprises of the second half of the XVIII century – Herculaneum and Veleia – allowing a close insight into the world of art merchants, forgers, antiquarians, amateurs and simple onlookers surrounding the commerce and study of Antiquities¹⁸.

Paciaudi had been entrusted by Caylus to research and send to him material which could strengthen the volumes of his *Recueil*. This work does indeed owe much to the work of the Teatine clergyman, especially from the third tome onwards. 'You have a fine intelligence and long arms'¹⁹, wrote Caylus to Paciaudi in February 1763, wishing to use his friend's knowledge to access some material – especially from Herculaneum – which he was longing for. Both scholars, in fact, were keen readers of publications and news about the Vesuvian excavations, and commented – mostly negatively – on a recent work published by the Herculaneum Academy, *Antichità di Ercolano*, in 1757 (I volume) and 1769 (II volume). Paciaudi stated that the second volume 'is painful', as its illustration were badly drawn, not faithful to the original and sketched without intelligence or grace. Caylus' judgement is equally negative on the text of the first volume: repetitive and full of useless information. Possibly such a trenchant assessment was exacerbated by the Frenchman's continuous and frustrating attempts at knowing or even acquiring some of the Herculaneum remains.

18 A. R. Parente, « Caylus et l'archéologie en Italie au XVIII^e siècle. Herculaneum et Veleia en perspective », *Les Nouvelles de l'Archéologie*, 110, November 2007, p. 17-23 with bibliography.

19 "Vous avez l'intelligence fine et les bras long".

Caylus aimed at coming into possession of some papyrus fragments in order to verify his own theory on how to unroll a scroll. He would have even been ready to steal, as he declared to Paciaudi. And yet, the ‘long arms’ of the Teatine were not reaching far enough. They did not manage to overcome the rigid prohibitions to export and even to replicate the Herculaneum material set by Charles of Bourbon, and they certainly did not beat the surveillance of the King’s Minister, Marquis Tanucci. Caylus’ interest in replacing abbot Antonio Costa with Paciaudi as the new director of the Veleia digs seems to be driven by a similar preoccupation: to obtain free access to the material coming from this new site.

Despite friendship and similarities, however, the two scholars always adhered to different scientific methodologies. Paciaudi, in fact, was particularly in tune with Winckelmann’s methods, while Caylus could not stand the German academic.

The difference between the two scholars is enclosed in one word – *guenilles*. These were the fragments Caylus was so desperate for, as through them he would be able to study the production techniques of the ancient. The Veleia ones were all the more important to him, as they came directly from the excavations, which in itself was a guarantee of authenticity and allowed a correct placement of the items in their context²⁰. All in all, Caylus thought that the study of Antiquities lay mostly in its objects. These witnessed to an ever-evolving material culture aiming at perfection. This perfection, for him, was the Greek production and style²¹. Caylus therefore had a materialistic and evolutionist view which helped shaping archaeology as the science of the antique world²².

On the other hand, Paciaudi’s intention – as an antiquarian – was to reinstate the ducal collection of Antiquities. For him Veleia was exclusively a repository of findings to be added to the collections,

20 “Je vous prie toujours de vous souvenir que je ne fais pas un cabinet, que la vanité n’étant pas mon objet, je ne me soucie point de morceaux d’apparat, mais que des guenilles d’agate, de pierre, de bronze, de terre, de verre, qui peuvent servir en quoi que ce soit à retrouver un usage ou le passage d’un auteur, sont l’objet de mes desirs. Je ne fais point un cabinet, je fais un cours d’antiquité, et je cherche les usages, ce qui les prouve, les pratique, ce qui les démontre” wrote Caylus to Paciaudi in February 1758; Ch. Nisard, *Correspondance inédite du Comte de Caylus avec le P. Paciaudi, théatin (1757-1765) suivie de celles de l’abbé Barthélemy et de P. Mariette avec le même*, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1877, I, 3.

21 F. Haskell, N. Penny, *Pour l’Amour de l’Antique. La statuaire gréco-romaine et le gout européen. 1500-1900* (French translation), Paris, Hachette, 1999, p. 140.

22 F. Haskell, *L’historien et les images* (French translation), Paris, Gallimard, 1995, p. 244-251.

never a place where everyday materials could be studied, even though he recognised that it had been an interesting case of preservation of an entire Roman city.

In order to avoid the *Recueil* ending up being a list of ‘pieces’ (as instead wished by Caylus), Paciaudi kept sending to his friend ‘precious’ items as well as the minor fragments he required. Little statuettes and other precious findings are still preserved at the *Cabinet de Médailles de Paris* (*Bibliothèque nationale de France*)²³.

Lastly, let us move on to the Piacentine erudite Antonio Costa, the first director of Veleia’s excavations. His name is linked to the location and identification of the site and to the beginning of the digs, but most importantly to the discovery, reconstruction and transcription of the *Tabula Alimentaria*²⁴. Costa had been nominated by Philip of Bourbon as the Prefect of the Parma Museum of Antiquities, and among his duties was also the direction of research in Veleia. A rich correspondence between Du Tillot and Costa has been preserved, as well as some unpublished work among which two manuscripts²⁵ completed between 1760 and 1762, detailing his duties and activities. Although the excavations carried out under his direction, referring to the urban *forum*, brought to light a significant amount of findings, Costa’s archaeological knowledge – self-taught, superficial and not well-established – soon appeared to be too weak and highlighted the limits of his direction, both in the excavation and in the Museum. This reason drove Du Tillot to ensure that the most renowned archaeologist of the time, Caylus, could be

23 M. Cavalieri, « Veleia a Parigi. La collezione di bronzi veleiatì della *Bibliothèque Nationale de France*: un aggiornamento degli studi archeologico-antiquari », in P. L. Dall’Aglio, C. Franceschelli and L. Maganzani (eds.), *Atti del IV Convegno Internazionale di Studi Veleiatì*, Veleia-Lugagnano Val d’Arda, 20-21 September 2013, Bologna, Ante Quem, 2014, p. 41-59.

24 CIL XI, 1147. It is the largest bronze Roman inscription ever found (m 1,38 × 2,85 weighing around 200 kg), and a precious testimony of the *institutio alimentaria* under emperors Nerva and Trajan; N. Criniti, *La Tabula Alimentaria di Veleia*, Parma, Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Province Parmensi, 1991, p. 247-255; M. Cavalieri, « Veleia ed il suo territorio: la Tabula alimentaria », *L’Universo*, 79, 3, 1999, p. 380-396: 382-384.

25 *Raccolta dei Monumenti di Antichità che col mezzo dei Regi Scavi si sono tratti dalle Viscere della città dei Veleiatì – Tomo Primo riguardante le scoperte del MDCLX* (Ms 49, Parma, Museo Archeologico Nazionale). *Raccolta di varj pezzi di Antichità stati disotterrati col mezzo dei R. Scavi, umiliata a S.A.R. il Sig. Infante delle Spagne D. Filippo Borbone Duca di Piacenza, Parma, Guastalla – Tomo Secondo riguardante le scoperte degli anni MDCLXI e MDCLXII* (Ms 50, Parma, Museo Archeologico Nazionale).

involved in the project as adviser to the director. The correspondence between Caylus and Costa has been extensively studied²⁶, and shows all the director's doubts and uncertainties, to which Caylus replied from France, systematically, but often with a clear sense of annoyance. Costa's incompetence and Caylus' personal interests brought eventually Caylus to suggest the appointment of Paolo Maria Paciaudi to replace the director. Paciaudi was well other erudite, and Du Tillot granted him the title of Prefect of Antiquities in 1763.

RESTORATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND *INSTRUMENTA*

Between antiquarianism and modernity

In 1761 Costa was still keeping the fragments of the *Tabula Alimentaria* in his own house wishing to restore them and reassemble the *tabula* in its entirety. By then Caylus was one of the main experts in the field, also because he knew well the work by de Réaumur on alloys and the art of melting metal (*L'art de convertir le fer forgé en acier et l'art d'adoucir le fer fondu*, Paris, 1722)²⁷. Relying on his own competence, Caylus wrote to the Placentine that, technically, the reassembling of the *tabula* would have been a difficult, hazardous and irreversible operation.

The two scholars disagreed on other issues too. Caylus was well aware and somehow feared his counterpart's limitations in the study and observation of phenomena. For instance, the canon was noting in some letters that the bronze fragments extracted from the digs in Veleia were at first 'doughy and ductile', while they hardened soon after being exposed to the open air. It is true that Costa did not set foot in Veleia before 1761, when the Duke made his first official visit on site; therefore, he was referring to observations never made by himself. Caylus had always remarked that he should have been there, to overview the excavation

26 A. M. Riccomini, *Scavi a Veleia. L'archeologia a Parma tra Settecento e Ottocento*, Bologna, CLUEB, 2005, p. 13-86; A. R. Parente, « Caylus e Paciaudi. La ricezione dell'antico tra archeologia e collezionismo a Parma », in R. Balzani (ed.), *Collezioni, musei, identità fra XVIII e XIX secolo*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2007, p. 29-67: 29-52.

27 René-Antoine Ferchault de Réaumur (1683-1757) was a French scientist and physicist, particularly renowned for his work on temperature.

in person. Costa instead always delegated to his two personal envoys, Ambrogio Martelli and Giacomo Nicelli, the direct management of the digs, while receiving only the outcomes of the operation. These were sketches of the objects retrieved and plans detailing the digs, and were collected in the *Giornale delle scoperte e ritrovamenti* (Journal of discoveries and retrievals), diligently compiled and including lists of the findings²⁸.

Paciaudi, on the other hand, displayed a more nuanced point of view and a finer perception of the restoration of antiquities. About intervening on the collection of statues retrieved in the *Veleia basilica* he wrote to Du Tillot on 16 July 1763:

it seems to me necessary to transfer to Parma all the findings, so that we can have a more certain idea of the Monuments [*here meant as ancient remains of the past*]. Before transferring them here, however, we need to define two important things. The first is how and where they should be kept. Leaving them in the casks does nothing but ruin them, and it could be deemed as a sort of barbarity. The second is to ascertain whether there is need for a restoration of imperfect pieces or mutilated statues: this has been done – for instance – in Rome, Naples and Florence. What to do will depend on the judgement of learned men, which we will have to consult, and not on the opinion of simple artists²⁹.

To this Caylus replied with some caution, as he had already done before. He writes to Paciaudi on 16 July 1764:

As far as the restoration of the marble [*artefacts*] is concerned, you will understand that a humble Gaul cannot object anything to the Italians, who are such fine and capable craftsmen. I would simply recommend to you to avoid adding too much, and to stick to the plainness of the Antique [*style*]³⁰.

28 M. Marini Calvani, «Gli interessi antiquari del ducato di Parma e Piacenza», in *L'arte a Parma dai Farnese ai Borbone*, Catalogue of exposition (Parma 22 September – 22 December 1979), Bologna, Alfa, 1979, p. 231-246: 232; M. Cavalieri, «Vero o falso? La vicenda archivistica in merito al rinvenimento dell'Ercole ebbro veleiate», *Archivio Storico per le Province Parmensi*, s. IV, 71, 2019, p. 201-224.

29 "... pare necessario far venire a Parma tutto ciò che si è trovato, per poter formare una più sicura idea dei Monumenti. Facendoli venire conviene prima determinare due cose. La prima come e dove si abbiano a collocare. Perché il lasciarle nelle casse non può che deteriorarli, oltre a che ci si imputerà una specie di barbarie. La seconda, se le statue mutilate e gli altri pezzi imperfetti si debbano restaurare, come si è praticato a Roma, a Napoli, a Firenze. Questo dipende dal giudizio degli uomini dotti, che bisogna consultare, e non da quello dei semplici artisti"; A. M. Riccomini, *Scavi a Veleia*, op. cit., p. 40, n. 77.

30 "Quant aux restaurations de marbre, vous sentez bien qu'un pauvre Gaulois ne peut rien dire à des artistes aussi fins et aussi adroits que les Italiens. Je vous recommanderais tout grossièrement de s'empêcher de trop ajouter, et de se tenir dans le simple de l'antique"; Ch. Nisard, *Correspondance inédite du Comte de Caylus*, op. cit., II, 24.

Moreover, Caylus' involvement in the excavation meant that more value was attributed to topographical reports and to the provenience of individual artefacts. Costa's concern was to provide guidance so that in drawing the plans for the dig 'the location where individual objects are retrieved should be noted with extreme care'³¹. Such attention to the contextualisation of each and every piece sounds extremely modern and was certainly not applied during the most renowned digs of the time – the ones on the Vesuvius. This is to say that in Veleia we find a complete change of perspective, as these are not mere digs but proper archaeological excavations (fig. 5). Precision in topographical annotations shows that the drawing of the excavation was felt as one of the main goals in order to preserve the memory of the sites. The other legacy of Caylus, perhaps more importantly, was his commitment to material culture, his action towards the collection and appreciation of each individual piece – the *instrumentum* –. This was indeed a new idea, not only at the court of Parma, and has to be added to the fundamental work done by him to pass on new methodologies, based on direct assessment and comparison between the findings, which Caylus taught to measure, describe and draw correctly. It is scarcely relevant that only few of those responsible for the excavation could in fact understand all the ideological implications of this new method, not only theoretically, but also practically... Regarding this Costa wrote to Du Tillot: without the Count of Caylus 'we would not have looked after some of the findings, or we would have not known their true relevance, as it has happened up to now, with the discoveries made both in Rome and Herculaneum'³².

Veleia therefore, even if not superior to Rome and Herculaneum for the number of findings and the value of its artistic treasures, was – at least in the propaganda organised by the Duke – the most advanced and best equipped excavation site as far as research methodologies were concerned, for – in the final stage of Paciaudi's time (1776-1781) the most modern technologies of engineering were used in order to ease the transport of the soil and therefore to reduce the costs of such enterprise³³.

31 “venissero segnati minutamente gli siti de capi che si anderanno trovando di mano in mano”; Costa, Ms Pallastrelli, letter to Du Tillot of 21 September 1761.

32 “... certi capi non si sarebbero curati o non se ne sarebbe saputo la loro rilevanza, come è accaduto fin qui per riguardo alle scoperte fatte sia in Roma sia in Ercolano”; *ibid.*

33 A. M. Riccomini, *Scavi a Veleia*, *op. cit.*, p. 61-62.

THE PUBLICATION OF THE VELEIA EXCAVATIONS' OUTCOME

Costa was pressed by the Minister, who wanted to cultivate the Court's relationship with France and avoid losing Caylus' precious consultancy. He therefore sent to Paris many – perhaps too many – findings coming from Veleia. And yet he did not overlook the fact that there could be a danger: to disperse all those precious pieces. Sometimes – with firmness – he tried to avoid dividing the findings, as he feared that, for instance, he might have sent over to France a fragment that could be important to reconstruct, say, a ceramic pot. This attention too shows how different was Costa's approach to archaeological findings from the one held by Du Tillot: while the first was essentially an antiquarian, the second was a politician and saw antiquities as tools for exchange and means to acquire prestige. The different approach between the two, and the evident inadequacy displayed by Costa in the study of antiquities coming from Veleia drove Du Tillot – strongly supported by Caylus – to appoint Paciaudi as official Antiquarian for Philip of Bourbon and royal Librarian, on 10 august 1763. Paciaudi's employment as Librarian – perhaps the role closest to his own chords – made the Royal Library larger and better equipped in a short time, both in terms of acquisitions and cataloguing methods. As such, the Library and Veleia became the pride of the Duchy's cultural strategy, and a model for others thereafter.

By appointing Paciaudi Du Tillot saw the possibility to accomplish one of the projects he was keenest on – the publication of the discoveries made in Veleia, which had been kept secret for too long. The Court had chosen to maintain the secret and an aura of mystery upon the initiatives and kept the works hidden from the public and the scholarly world by opposing any inspection and forbidding any type of reproduction. Du Tillot, as we shall see further, was particularly jealous of the findings and went only as far as to disclose the site of the excavations, which was known to everybody in any case.

Following the lucky finding of the cycle of sculptures of the basilica (1761), the moment had come to disclose to the scientific and literary world

the results achieved with the excavation, so that Parma could claim a leading role within the archaeological scene of the late eighteenth century.

While the task of publishing these discoveries had been already entrusted to Costa, Du Tillot secretly wished for Paciaudi to take over, as the scholar's reputation would have earned wider and more reliable fame to the project. And yet Costa had already put together two manuscripts³⁴ about the results of the first couple of years of archaeological campaign. In these great attention was given to materials, drawings and topography. Both volumes were rich in plans and drawings of the materials, made by the painter and illustrator of the *Royal Excavations*, Giovanni Permòli. Still today these illustrations, for both their quality and usefulness, are paramount to reconstruct the first batch of discoveries, some of which are now lost (fig. 6). Both Paciaudi and Caylus, however, misjudged these manuscripts, adding their voice to other voices, remarkable ones, who shared roughly the same opinion. Among them Pierre-Jean Mariette, famous French art writer, engraver and collector, to whom Caylus had recurred for an opinion about Costa's work. But the most trenchant review was undoubtedly Paciaudi's one:

One needs to think philosophically about Antiquity, and to put some thought into it: this cannot be done without order³⁵.

And again:

The poor Canon does not know what he is talking about: all is confused, superfluous and idiotic. We cannot even think about printing anything of what I have seen³⁶.

According to Paciaudi, who put it rather concisely, the main weaknesses of Costa's works were inconsistency and the fragmentary nature of the content, together with a scant catalogue – a basic inventory of objects, without any comment or interpretation attached³⁷.

³⁴ Cf. note 24.

³⁵ “Bisogna filosofare sull' antichità, e bisogna mettervi del ragionamento: questo non si fa senz'ordine”; Ch. Nisard, *Correspondance inédite du Comte de Caylus*, op. cit., letter of 8 February 1762.

³⁶ “Il povero Canonico non sa cosa vi dica: tutto è confusione, superfluità, ed imbecillità. Non si può assolutamente pensare a stampare niente di ciò che ho veduto”; Ch. Nisard, *Correspondance inédite du Comte de Caylus*, op. cit., letter of 22 February 1762.

³⁷ A. R. Parente, « Caylus e Paciaudi », art. cit., p. 52-53.

But what do scholars think *now* of the unpublished work by Costa? Aside from the undisputed value of Permòli's iconographical apparatus, which was driven more by artistic parameters than a philological interest for the objects, clearly some of these negative assessments – especially by Paciaudi – were due to personal interest. In fact, he had already taken over Costa's position in 1763. While acknowledging lack of method and scientific rigour to the manuscripts, we cannot avoid admitting Costa's great merit: that the publication of the outcomes of this enterprise was posited in a modern way, in terms of aspiration (what one wishes to achieve), not of execution (what one can reasonably achieve). If this is the case, we must also acknowledge the difficulties encountered when wanting to publish the results of the excavation in a systematic way. Still today, this is the most complex stage of archaeological research, much more than the study of the findings. And a proof of the difficult task Costa took on is that no alternative publication was achieved until the end of the XVIII century, with many attempts reaching only the manuscript phase, as Antonio Costa's *Raccolta dei Monumenti di Antichità*.

VELEIA'S FORTUNE

The international resonance and the interest sparked by the Veleia excavation throughout the second half of the XVIII century crossed the boundaries of the little Duchy. Both Caylus' statements in his *Recueil* and the fortune enjoyed by some of the findings within public and scientific opinion, witness to this success³⁸. Among them, the twelve marble sta-

38 Some artefacts presumed to come from Veleia (and clearly sought after, since the University of Pavia purchased them), were circulating on the antiquarian market at the beginning of the Nineteenth century, as noted by A. Stenico, «Sculpture di asserita provenienza veleiate dell'Istituto di Archeologia dell'Università di Pavia», in *Studi Veleiati. Atti e Memorie del I Convegno di Studi storici e archeologici* (Piacenza-Velleia 29-30 May 1954), Piacenza, Ente Provinciale per il Turismo, 1955, p. 131-140. Moreover, the Veleia excavation were known, for instance, even in Poland: the Royal Library of Warsaw held manuscripts detailing the 1760-1765 discoveries made in Veleia. J. Kolendo, «Le descrizioni manoscritte degli scavi di Veleia nella biblioteca di Stanislao Augusto Poniatowski, ultimo re di Polonia, e le loro successive vicende», *Aurea Parma*, 88, 2004, p. 175-194.

tues of the basilica³⁹ and the well-known bronze (26 cm including its base) of *Hercules bibax*⁴⁰ (fig. 7). While the *Hercules*' authenticity was for a long time unjustly a matter of doubt, recently it has been confirmed that the piece is genuine, with scholars beginning a study on a copy of the statuette, – already pointed out by Mirella Marini Calvani in 1979 – preserved in the Museo Civico Medievale in Bologna⁴¹. Despite their efforts, however, they were unable to reconstruct the history of this item prior to the beginning of the xx century. The *Hercules* of Bologna is most probably a copy taken from a chalk cast of the original Veleia bronze, as attested by some problems with the casting occurred possibly during the melting stage, which both exemplars share. Aside from this, a reconstruction of the events taking this copy away from the Duchy is proving problematic and difficult (fig. 8). And yet, it seems to us impossible that both cannot be connected in some way to Du Tillot and his cultural and diplomatic connections. Du Tillot, as was Marquis Bernardo Tanucci for the Vesuvian findings, had been always rather cautious, if not overtly jealous of the Veleia treasures. He discouraged and even opposed onlookers and antiquarians from surveying the site in search of archaeological objects or simply news⁴². Archival research on the matter is still ongoing, but – given the well-known exchanges between Parma and Bologna run both in the scholarly field and in the art and entrepreneurial one⁴³ during the second half of the XVIII century – it is not unreasonable to posit a link between the two art Academies.

39 M. Marini Calvani, « Gli interessi antiquari del ducato di Parma e Piacenza », art. cit., p. 234.

40 M. Cavalieri, « Veleia's Bronzes Collection: New Archaeological and Scientific Data and Interpretation », in E. Deschler-Erb, Ph. Della Casa (eds.), *New Research on Ancient Bronzes*, Acta of the XVIIIth International Congress on Ancient Bronzes (Zurich Studies in Archaeology 10), Zürich, Chronos, 2015, p. 175-178.

41 N. inv. 1506. Donated to the City Council of Bologna in 1920, together with the possessions of the widow Maria Luigia Rusconi, née Verzaglia. This information was given to me by Mark G. D'Apuzzo, the *Conservatore* at the Civic Museums of Ancient Art in Bologna, to whom go my deepest thanks. M. Cavalieri, « “L'idioletto di bronzo con occhi d'argento”. La lunga storia dell'Ercole ebbro di Veleia tra scavi, collezionismo e archeometria », *Archeologia Classica*, 72, 2021, p. 479-514.

42 M. Marini Calvani, « Gli interessi antiquari del ducato di Parma e Piacenza », art. cit., p. 234; A. M. Ricomini, *Scavi a Veleia*, op. cit., p. 37; A. R. Parente, « Caylus et l'archéologie en Italie », art. cit., p. 18.

43 C. Campanella, « La Real Fabbrica della Maiolica e Vetri: relazioni tra Parma e Bologna nel XVIII secolo », *Bollettino del Museo Internazionale delle Ceramiche in Faenza*, 2, 2013, p. 38-54.

Abbot Carlo Innocenzo Frugoni, courtesan at both the Farnese and the Bourbon court, entertained a correspondence with all the Italian noble erudites in his capacity of secretary of the Parma Academy. A scenario in which he himself might have suggested to Du Tillot to have a copy of the Hercules made, and send it to some Bolognese scholar while searching for applicants to the renowned academic competitions of Parma, seems entirely plausible. Moreover, at that same time Parma hosted sculptor Jean-Baptiste Boudard, the first statue maker of the Court, certainly able to take a cast from a bronze⁴⁴, perhaps with the help of Michel Chateleraux Dubois, minter and medal-maker for Philip of Bourbon. Such hypothesis has found no confirmation until today in the records of payments of the Academy, which are unfortunately rather patchy for that time, nor in the Archivio di Stato di Parma, for after the 1944 bombing many documents from the Bourbon times have been lost⁴⁵.

Another hypothesis can be made, this too in connection with Du Tillot's personality. The Duke's Prime Minister, in fact, was well-known to have built his own art collection. A catalogue was published, the *Catalogue de vente*, compiled in 1775 by the Minister's heirs who wanted to sell out the collection after Du Tillot's death⁴⁶. A little bronze is mentioned among the items, but it is not the Hercules. A possible explanation for such omission is the knowledge that "it is sure that some artwork which were for sure among the Marquis of Felino's possessions do not appear in the *Catalogue*⁴⁷" as, during Du Tillot's life, the collection was probably enlarged and changed. Anyhow, the collection went for sale in Paris, and this last stage could hardly explain the presence of the Hercules in a Bolognese context; whereas an additional collection – this time a public one – was directly commissioned by the Minister to decorate the Ministry's palace in Parma, and remained within the Duchy even after Du Tillot was removed. It is therefore plausible that

44 The sculptor at the Court of Don Philip of Bourbon was busy during the early years of the 1750s making plaster copies of the most famous ancient sculptures for the Accademia in Parma; F. Barocelli (ed.), *Jean-Baptiste Boudard 1710-1768*, Milan, Electa, 1990, p. 219 n. 10.

45 My thanks go to Carlo Mambriani of the University of Parma who pointed out this research path.

46 G. Fiaccadori *et alii*, *Guglielmo Du Tillot regista delle arti nell'età dei Lumi*, *op. cit.*, p. 167-178.

47 «... è certa l'assenza nel *Catalogue* di opere effettivamente possedute dal marchese di Felino»; G. Fiaccadori *et alii*, *Guglielmo Du Tillot regista delle arti nell'età dei Lumi*, *op. cit.*, p. 110-111.

the Bologna Hercules could be part of this second set: perhaps it was sold later on, or – more likely – used as an expensive gift for other art lovers (we cannot avoid thinking that among them there could have been Caylus with his *Recueil*), and – for some reason unknown to us – never delivered to its destination.

THE FLEETING FATE OF AN AGE OF RENAISSANCE

In the European Courts' imagination, Veleia was due to become a 'Northern Italian Pompeii'. Its destiny of glory was in fact rather short-lived. The excavations had been willingly sponsored by Philip of Bourbon and took place from the very inception in what would later be discovered as the *forum* area of the city; they uncovered a significant amount of material (bronzes, marble statues, furnishings, coins and so on) which were accurately described by Costa and Paciaudi, the two directors of research. At Philip's death in 1765 his son Ferdinand succeeded as Duke. Ferdinand was far less interested in this sort of research which, moreover, had already completed the enquiry on the *forum* area, and moved to its surroundings. The new area under scrutiny was originally residential, and therefore less rich in prestigious objects, so the financial support dried out. With Ferdinand's succession, the cultural renaissance of his Duchy began to struggle and entered a period of deep crisis after the French invasion and the following treatises imposed by revolutionary France on to the Italian states (1797-1798). The Duke was obliged to hand in several masterpieces of figurative arts and others of great historical and archaeological value. These ended up among the Louvre's holdings⁴⁸. Following a time of splendour, the century was closing in, drawing a rather negative balance for the Duchy's Antiquities, mostly the ones from Veleia which were boxed and shipped to Paris. As far

48 L. Fornari Schianchi, *La Galleria Nazionale di Parma*, Parma, Artegrafica Silva, 1983, p. 13; M. Marini Calvani, « L'archeologia di Maria Luigia », in J.-P. Samoyault (ed.), *Maria Luigia. Donna e sovrana. Una corte europea a Parma 1815-1847. Saggi*, Parma, Guanda, 1992, p. 76-79: 76.

as the excavations were concerned, the new French government ruling over the Parmesan states after the fall of the Bourbon dynasty, resumed them. The new government's political direction too was inspired by an idea of culture which – forty years before – was held by Du Tillot. And yet the personalities of that time were not equal to Paciaudi, Caylus or even Costa – who had been heavily criticised by the other two. The land surrounding the previously excavated sites was acquired as State land, but the new findings were not deemed as interesting enough; the operation turned back to being a dig more than an archaeological excavation and the land was gradually abandoned and left to agricultural activities. As for the Museum, it recovered only after Napoleon's fall, thanks to a deep transformation of the legal system which was due to high-calibre politicians and intellectuals, like Pietro De Lama⁴⁹, engaged in the good government of the time of Duchess Maria Luigia.

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49 About Pietro De Lama see: A. M. Riccomini, *Il viaggio in Italia di Pietro De Lama. La formazione di un archeologo in età neoclassica*, Pisa, ETS, 2003, p. 10-15; Ead., *Scavi a Veleia, op. cit.*, p. 87-91.

CAPTIONS



FIG. 1 – Aerial photo of the archaeological site of Velleia, in the Apennines near Piacenza: clearly visible in the middle of the picture the forum, lined on the North side by the *basilica*, and on the Eastern and Western sides by rows of *tabernae* (from Google Maps 2023, revised by M. Cavalieri).
With the authorisation of MiC – Complesso Monumentale della Pilotta.



FIG. 2 – Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Parma, Northern prospectus showing the restoration carried out at the times of Duchess Maria Luigia. Behind the site, it is possible to see the monumental staircase of the Pilotta palace and – on the right – the Maria Luigia hall in the Palatina Library (picture by CMP, 2023).

With the authorisation of MiC – Complesso Monumentale della Pilotta.

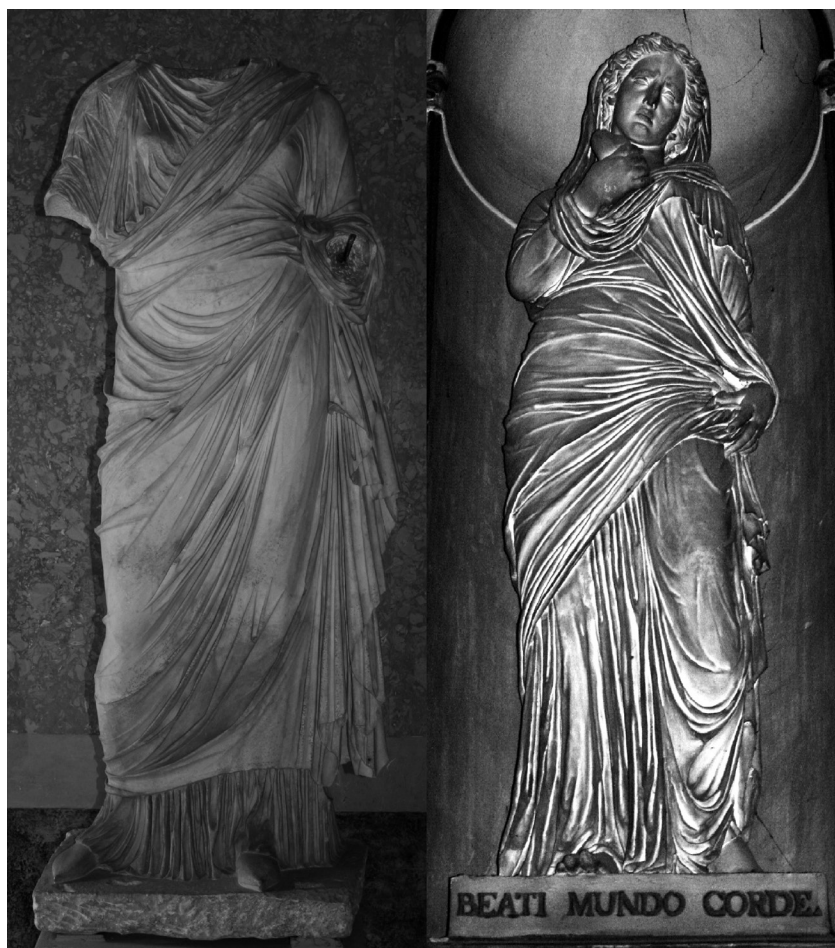


FIG. 3 – Statue of the so-called Livia (1 century AD), from the cycle of sculptures from the *basilica* in Veleia, on the left; this is compared with the sculptures of the ‘Blessed [are the] peacemakers’, in Gaetano Callani (1736-1809)’s rendition: in the picture – on the right – the ‘Pure in heart’, Church of Sant’Antonio Abate in Parma (picture by M. Cavalieri, 2017). With the authorisation of MiC – Complesso Monumentale della Pilotta.



FIG. 4 – Giovanni Permòli, watercolour drawing preceding the dedication of Antonio Costa's work *Raccolta dei Monumenti di Antichità che col mezzo dei Regi Scavi si sono tratti dalle Viscere della città dei Velati* – Tomo Primo riguardante le scoperte del MDCCLX, (Ms 49 of the Museo Archeologico Nazionale of Parma) (courtesy Complesso Monumentale della Pilotta).

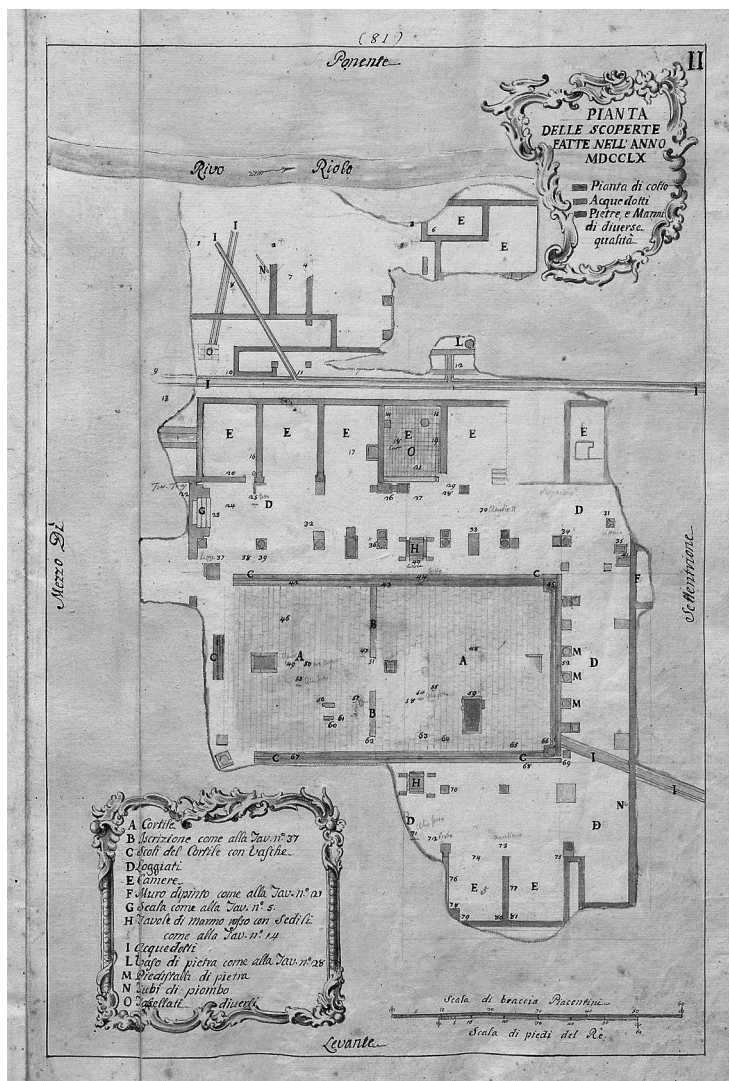


FIG. 5 – Antonio Costa, *Raccolta dei Monumenti di Antichità...*
Plan of the discoveries made in Velleia in 1760, (Ms 49 of the Museo
Archeologico Nazionale of Parma). With the authorisation of MiC –
Complesso Monumentale della Pilotta.



FIG. 6 – Antonio Costa, *Raccolta dei Monumenti di Antichità...*
 Dedication (frontispiece) to Don Philip of Bourbon (Ms 49 of the Museo
 Archeologico Nazionale of Parma). With the authorisation of MiC –
 Complesso Monumentale della Pilotta.

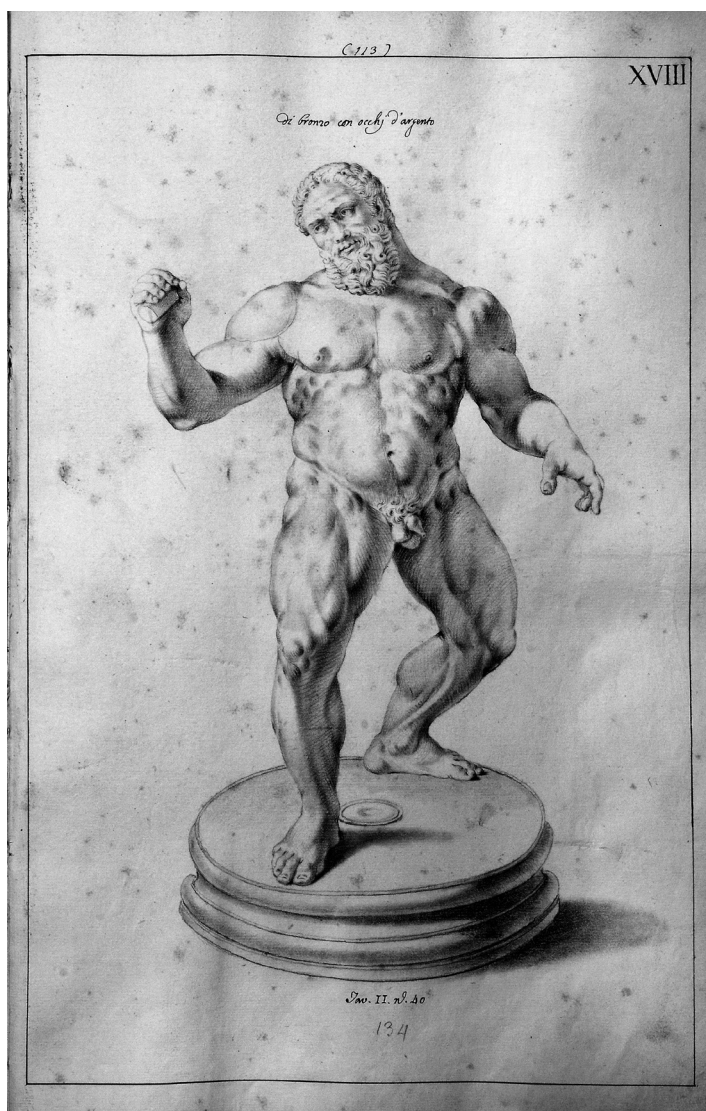


FIG. 7 – Giovanni Permòli, pl. XVIII of the *Raccolta dei Monumenti di Antichità...* di Antonio Costa: the Hercules bibax Veleiatium found near the Veleia forum in July 1760, (Ms 49 of the Museo Archeologico Nazionale of Parma).

With the authorisation of MiC –
Complesso Monumentale della Pilotta.



FIG. 8 – On the left, the *Hercules bixax* found in Veleia and – on the right – the exemplar of the Museo Civico Medievale in Bologna: even from a simple comparison, there is a high probability that the second is a copy taken from a cast (scale 1:1) of the first one.

Courtesy Complesso Monumentale della Pilotta and Museo Civico Medievale of Bologna.