

# HEROIC ARMOR OF THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE

FILIPPO NEGROLI AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART





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STUART W. PYHRR AND JOSÉ-A. GODOY

WITH ESSAYS AND A COMPILATION OF DOCUMENTS BY SILVIO LEYDI

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK

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# FOREWORD

The most innovative and celebrated Milanese armorer of the sixteenth century, Filippo Negroli was a virtuoso sculptor in steel who transformed armors, helmets, and shields into works of art covered with exquisitely embossed and chased ornament of Greco-Roman inspiration that rivaled the ancient models he sought to emulate. Distinct from the more severe, streamlined harnesses intended for use in war or the tournament, Filippo's elaborately embellished armors and other classically inspired harnesses made by his contemporaries played a symbolic role, transforming their wearers into the guise of the heroes of ancient history, mythology, or literature. The Metropolitan Museum of Art is particularly proud to be able to present the first monographic exhibition ever devoted to Filippo Negroli and Renaissance armor *all'antica*, an exhibition that we hope will encourage a greater appreciation of the achievements of the Renaissance armorer in general and of the art of Filippo Negroli in particular.

"Heroic Armor of the Italian Renaissance" also marks the first time the Metropolitan Museum has presented a major specialized armor exhibition, even though our permanent collection of arms and armor remains one of the most popular and distinguished of our encyclopedic holdings. In recent years European arms and armor have been an important component of more comprehensive exhibitions of works of art from the state collections in Dresden (1978–79), the Moscow Kremlin (1979), the Princely Collections of Liechtenstein (1985–86), and the Patrimonio Nacional of Spain (1991). The undertaking of the current, rigorously focused exhibition is especially logical in light of the fact that the Museum's own collection includes one of Filippo Negroli's masterpieces, a burgonet dated 1543, as well as the only signed work by his famous cousin Giovan Paolo. Furthermore, we are the only North American institution with a specialized curatorial department able to envision and carry out so complex a project. To this end, Stuart W. Pyhrr, Arthur Ochs Sulzberger Curator, deserves high praise for his scholarly contribution and diligence in coordinating both the exhibition and its catalogue.

From its very inception, the exhibition was encouraged and guided by the late Lionello G. Boccia. For many years

the director of the Museo Stibbert in Florence and a scholar widely recognized as the foremost authority on Italian arms and armor, Dr. Boccia spent two months in 1992–93 in the Metropolitan Museum's Department of Arms and Armor on an Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship, during which time plans for this exhibition were conceived. Dr. Boccia agreed to be part of the organizing team that was also made up of Stuart W. Pyhrr and José-A. Godoy, Curator of Arms and Armor, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva, a specialist possessing an unrivaled knowledge of the armory of Charles V and the collections of the Real Armería in Madrid. Together these three scholars studied the major collections of armor in Europe and America to examine and evaluate the Negroli oeuvre and shape the exhibition. Sadly, Dr. Boccia died before he could prepare his portion of the catalogue, although the texts by Messrs. Pyhrr and Godoy reflect the collaboration and insight of their colleague and preceptor. This catalogue is dedicated to Lionello Boccia.

The exhibition has benefited greatly from the contribution of Dr. Silvio Leydi, whose research in the archives of Milan has yielded an extraordinary wealth of material about the armorers of that city and the Negroli family in particular. Dr. Leydi's work came to our attention very late in the project, and it is a compliment to his professionalism that he was able to prepare for publication two essays and an impressive register of documents in only a few months. This new information, coupled with a fresh examination of the Negroli armors and the generous number of illustrations, the majority of them made specifically for this exhibition, will assure the longevity of the catalogue as a foundation for all future studies of the Negroli.

We especially want to thank the lenders, both public and private, who have so generously agreed to part with some of their greatest treasures for this exhibition. Our work could not have proceeded, however, without the assurance of key loans from Spain's Patrimonio Nacional, which includes the Real Armería, the dynastic armory of the kings of Spain and the repository of the largest single group of works by Filippo Negroli. Manuel Gómez de Pablos and the late Julio de la Guardia, former administrators of the Patrimonio Nacional, endorsed the project in its early stages. We also

acknowledge with special appreciation the support of the current president of the Patrimonio Nacional, Alvaro San Carlos, with whom The Metropolitan Museum of Art worked so fruitfully in connection with the historic Velázquez exhibition of 1989–90. The Metropolitan Museum is delighted to be lending to the newly renovated Real Armería, scheduled to open next year, a number of important armor elements that belong to, and help complete, several royal armors in that unsurpassed collection. Finally, and as always for his indispensable assistance, we are indebted to trustee Placido Arango.

The Museum wishes to express its gratitude to the Madeline and Kevin Brine Charitable Trust for its important support of the exhibition. The realization of the accompanying publication was made possible with the assistance of The Carl Otto von Kienbusch Memorial Fund and the Grancsay Fund.

Philippe de Montebello  
Director  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art



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José Godoy and I owe a debt of gratitude to the many museum trustees, *soprintendenze*, directors, and curators who have so generously agreed to lend some of their most precious and best known Renaissance armors to this unique exhibition. Specialists are aware that the proper study of an armor requires that it be dismantled and its individual elements examined, weighed, and measured; in the wake of our visits, our hosts at the lending institutions often found themselves with heaps of armor parts that required patient and time-consuming reassembly. We therefore extend special thanks to our curatorial colleagues who graciously allowed us unrestricted access to their collections and to the conservators who picked up after us.

While colleagues at all the lending institutions were exceedingly helpful, we especially wish to thank the following individuals, who have encouraged and supported our work over the past three years. In Austria, at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Christian Beaufort-Spontin and Matthias Pfaffenbichler, Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer, and Karl Schütz, Gemäldegalerie. In France, Jean-Pierre Reverseau, Musée de l'Armée, Paris, and Daniel Alcouffe, Département des Objets d'Art, Musée du Louvre, Paris. In Germany, Ursula Heimberg, Rheinisches Landesmuseum Bonn, and Kurt Zeitler, Graphische Sammlungen, Munich. In Italy, Giovann Gaeta Bertelà, Beatrice Paoluzzi Strozzi, and Renato Moscadelli, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence; Kirsten Aschengreen Piacenti and Simona di Marco, Museo Stibbert, Florence; Pierluigi Leone di Castris, Museo e Galleria Nazionale di Capodimonte, Naples; and Paolo Venturoli, Armeria Reale, Turin. In the Russian Federation, Yuriy Miller and Yuriy Efimov, The State Hermitage, Saint Petersburg. In Spain, Alvaro Soler del Campo, Real Armería, Madrid. In the United Kingdom, Robin Crighton, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; Máire Noonan, Art Gallery and Museum of the Glasgow Museums; Thom Richardson and Karen Watt, Royal Armouries, Leeds; and Janet Skidmore and A. R. E. North, Victoria and Albert Museum, London. And in the United States, Sue Reed, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Alan P. Darr and Peter Barnett, Detroit Institute of Arts; Bertrand Davezac, Menil Collection, Houston; and Alison Luchs and Andrew Robison, National Gallery of Art, Washington,

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The majority of the color photographs in this catalogue were taken by Bruce White, who traveled to the lending institutions in Florence, Madrid, Paris, and Saint Petersburg.

Silvio Leydi dedicates his essays to Ro and Erica.

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Stuart W. Pyhrr  
Arthur Ochs Sulzberger Curator  
Arms and Armor  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

# INTRODUCTION

STUART W. PYHRR AND JOSÉ-A. GODOY

Among the hundreds of artists' biographies utilized to chart the progress of Italian art in Giorgio Vasari's monumental work of 1550, *The Lives of the Most Excellent Architects, Painters and Sculptors from Cimabue to Our Times*, only one armorer is mentioned: "Filippo Negroli of Milan, chiseler of arms in iron with leaves and figures."<sup>1</sup> Despite the terseness of the reference, which is the first published notice of the armorer, Vasari's inclusion of Filippo among the most important and celebrated names in the contemporary art world attests to the superiority of his talent and his widespread fame.

A second notice dating to the same years confirms the armorer's reputation. His name is found on a shield made in 1552 as part of an armor for Prince Philip of Spain (the future Philip II) by the Augsburg armorer Desiderius Helmschmid and the goldsmith Jörg Sigman (figs. 1, 2).<sup>2</sup> Desiderius was the third generation of a distinguished family of armorers, who had helped make Augsburg the leading German center for armor manufacturing and who counted among their clientele many of Filippo's own customers, including Charles V. On the shield in question the rim is embossed with a hunting scene that shows a bull charging a warrior, who tumbles at the onslaught; his shield, an obviously insufficient defense, is inscribed NEGROL. In this embossed and damascened armor, Desiderius's only known harness decorated in relief, the proud German armorer and collaborating goldsmith clearly sought to challenge and better Filippo at his own specialty. The very mention of Filippo's name on this German work attests not only to the rivalry of the two masters but also to Filippo's recognized prowess.

For the last century scholars have universally acknowledged Filippo Negroli's superiority in the art of embossing and have held up his harnesses, helmets, and shields as the exemplars against which all other relief-decorated armor must be judged. Indeed, Filippo's classically inspired works epitomize what is generally considered "Renaissance" armor, and they rank among the most valued possessions of any museum. It is curious, then, that the armorer has never been the focus of any specialized research or serious mono-

graphic study. The present exhibition, documented by this catalogue, seeks to redress the neglect and to reaffirm Filippo's rightful place among the great artists of the sixteenth century.

Filippo Negroli did not invent Renaissance armor *all'antica*—the tradition of wearing classically inspired armor was centuries old by his day—nor was he the first to emboss armor—the technique was an ancient one, and the earliest



Figs. 1, 2. Parade shield of Prince Philip of Spain. Desiderius Helmschmid and Jörg Sigman, Augsburg, 1552. Steel and gold. Real Armería, Madrid (A 241)

surviving embossed armors of post-classical date are German works of the late fifteenth century. More to the point, Filippo appears to have been the first Italian armorer to have fashioned these pseudo-antique works, especially helmets, from single plates rather than to construct them by means of appliqué, as was common in Italian parade armor of the fifteenth century (see cat. no. 8), and in this art, both in design and technique, he was unrivaled. Relief decoration on armor was appreciated by the Renaissance antiquarians as the true classical mode of armor embellishment. All of Filippo's signed works are executed in relief, but none ever slavishly copies an ancient model. On the contrary, it is the originality of his designs, which freely adapt classical helmet forms and ornament to sixteenth-century norms, together with his technical virtuosity that distinguish Filippo's works from those of his contemporaries. His armors belong to a humanist culture and were intended for Renaissance princes who were often educated in the classics and saw themselves as successors to the great statesmen and generals of ancient Rome and as the embodiment of the virtues of the ancient heroes. For the kings and captains of the day, wearing Roman-style military equipment imparted a sense of dignity, power, and legitimacy. Filippo's clients ranked among the most exalted and powerful men in Europe, including Emperor Charles V and Francis I and Henry II of France, and yet the armorer's signature, inscribed in Latin and placed in a prominent location, reflects an extraordinary pride and self-assurance without parallel in his profession.

Filippo Negrolì's classically inspired armors and those of his contemporaries are often referred to with the terms *all'antica*, *alla romana*, or *all'eroica*. The first can be translated as "in the ancient [or antique] style" and is the term most frequently encountered in the sixteenth century; its meaning is generic, suggesting a work of classical inspiration. The term *alla romana*, "in the Roman style," can be more specific in meaning, referring to works copied with greater fidelity after Roman models; armors with muscled cuirasses, like Campi's harness of 1546 (cat. no. 54), typify a Renaissance armor *all romana*. The term *all'eroica*, "in the heroic style," is again a general one implying pseudo-classical design of a more imaginative, less archaeological kind, like the fantastic armors ascribed to the heroes of ancient history and mythology. Filippo's so-called Fame Armor (cat. no. 23) epitomizes armor *all'eroica*.

Fundamental to any monographic study is the identification of all the artist's works. Filippo Negrolì's eight signed pieces, which are dated between 1532 and 1545, have long been known. The exhibition organizers (Stuart W. Pyhrr, José-A. Godoy, and Lionello G. Boccia) worked as a team, examining, photographing, and discussing this nucleus of

objects, paying particular regard to the design, the construction, and especially the style and technique of decoration—indeed, every detail that might be helpful in identifying and defining Filippo's unique artistry. These eight works, which are consistent in their originality, quality, and extraordinary precision of detail, set a very high standard by which to judge the many other armors that have at one time been attributed (reasonably or not) to Filippo, his workshop, or even his cousin Giovan Paolo. As a result of this collaborative effort, we have been able to identify with confidence at least two additional pieces (cat. nos. 23, 34) and two others, represented in paintings (cat. nos. 27, 28), as lost works. We can also confirm the attributions of two unsigned but magnificently damascened armors to Francesco Negrolì, Filippo's brother, who seems to have been working in conjunction with Filippo's atelier (but not necessarily the master himself; cat. nos. 31, 38). We have rejected a much larger number of attributions for lack of any direct correspondence with this core,<sup>3</sup> thereby reducing Filippo's oeuvre to a small group of pieces of consistently high quality.

Despite the abundant new documentary information we now possess about the Negrolì clan, discussed below, our knowledge of these armorers is still very limited. Filippo did not work alone but rather was the head of a family-run workshop, which included his three younger brothers, Giovan Battista, Francesco, and Alessandro, and probably also several outside assistants or apprentices. Francesco's profession as a damascener is amply documented, but the exact role played by the other two siblings is unrecorded. Even the identification of Francesco's work is hypothetical insofar as he appears never to have signed his name on an armor independently from Filippo. The brothers were long-lived (Francesco died in 1600) and the main workshop under Filippo's direction remained active until 1556–57, but there is little trace of their work after 1545. The work of Filippo's cousin Giovan Paolo has also been the subject of considerable speculation. A number of unsigned parade armors *all'antica* that do not seem to meet the criteria of quality or precision one expects in works by Filippo are typically assigned, as if by default, to Giovan Paolo. That armorer's only signed piece, a breastplate in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (cat. no. 43), whose design and prominent signature are not unlike Filippo's, provides a meager foundation on which to reconstruct the oeuvre of this talented and successful master.

In addition to the products of the two principal Negrolì workshops, a number of other armors have been assembled in this catalogue to demonstrate the influence of the Negrolì on contemporary Italian armorers and to show the variety and originality of armors *all'antica* created in the years



1530–55. Documents concerning the arms industry in Milan in this period record several dozen armorers' names, but their works, apparently unsigned, can no longer be identified. Happily, there are several exceptions. The exhibition includes the only other fully signed armor of the period, the Roman-style harness made in 1546 by Bartolomeo Campi of Pesaro for the duke of Urbino (cat. no. 54). Campi is an exception, however, for he was a goldsmith by training and a military engineer for most of his career, and he is never again recorded as having turned his hand to armor making. His name and the circumstances surrounding the fabrication of the harness are etched in a Latin inscription that extends along the waist and around the left armhole of the cuirass, a lengthy signature that reflects the pride of his accomplishment and that may also imitate Filippo Negroli, whose works in the Urbino armory Campi may have known. The initials of several damasceners are also recorded: one signing himself twice, O and P separated by a cross, on the famous Medusa shield in Vienna (cat. no. 42), the other, using the initials AP, found on an unusual burgonet with movable visor (cat. no. 67). Finally, the work of the Mantuan court armorer Caremolo Modrone is also addressed, as this master, who was born a generation before Filippo, had a considerable international reputation and also supplied arms to Charles V. Although well documented, Modrone's works were unsigned, and their identification remains problematic and controversial.

Our study of the Negroli armors, which is essentially an exercise in connoisseurship, has been complemented by an attempt to provide as thorough a documentary history of the objects as possible. In addition to utilizing the published documents, most of which were found nearly a century ago, the exhibition organizers have also undertaken research in the archives in Spain (Madrid and Valladolid), Italy (Milan, Florence, Rome), and France (Paris). By far the greatest success has been the recent discovery of an unexpected wealth of documents about the Negroli family in the state, civic, and ecclesiastical archives in Milan by Dr. Silvio Leydi. A historian specializing in the history of Milan in the sixteenth century, Dr. Leydi, unbeknownst to the exhibition organizers, has for some years been collecting information on the Negroli, as well as other Milanese artists and craftsmen. We were exceptionally fortunate to have been able to enlist Dr. Leydi to present a summary of the fruit of his research to date. He has written for this catalogue a brief history of the arms industry in Milan in the sixteenth century and a more detailed history of the Negroli family, which is supported by a digest of over 170 documents relating to the professional careers of the Negroli; hundreds more documents, detailing their private lives, numerous real estate dealings, and fre-

quent legal disputes, are outside the scope of this catalogue and must await the attention of social historians. The documents uncovered by Dr. Leydi fill out the Negroli genealogical tree, providing us at last with concrete dates of births and deaths and a clear understanding of the relationships among the many branches of this complicated family. Wills (no fewer than five for Filippo are known), contracts of apprenticeship, lists of debtors and creditors, and even inventories of the Negroli workshops expand our knowledge of these armorers and their trade. One can only hope that, in light of his tremendous success in the archives, Dr. Leydi will be able to continue his research toward a more comprehensive history of the Milanese armorers.

#### THE PREEMINENCE OF MILAN AS AN ARMOR-MAKING CENTER

Throughout the Middle Ages the demand for arms and armor was constant, and the fabrication of arms was likely to be found in almost every European city of any size;



Fig. 3. Armor of Frederick the Victorious, Elector Palatine. Missaglia workshop, Milan, ca. 1450. Steel. Hofjadg- und Rüstammer, Vienna (A 2)

even the smallest hamlet was sure to have a local blacksmith capable of forging simple instruments of war as the need arose. On the other hand, the manufacture of mail and plate armor required specialized training and skill, a concentration of machinery like forges and polishing mills, and an easy access to iron ore, wood and charcoal for fuel, and water to power the trip hammers that beat iron billets into rough plates. The special requirements of men, machinery, and materials inevitably led to the concentration of manufacturing centers in certain geographic areas. Thus it was that northern Italy (Milan and Brescia), southern Germany (Augsburg, Nuremberg, Passau, and Landshut), the Tyrol (Mühlau and later Innsbruck), and the north of Spain (in the Basque provinces of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa)—regions with ready access to ore mines, forests, and flowing rivers—dominated arms production throughout the Middle Ages. Of these cities Milan was the first to establish its preeminence in the manufacture and commerce of arms in Europe, and it steadfastly maintained that supremacy well into the sixteenth century.<sup>4</sup>

The presence of an arms industry in Milan can be documented as early as 1066, when a “via Spadari” (Street of the Sword Smiths) is mentioned.<sup>5</sup> The chronicle of Bonvesin de la Riva (1288) records “a marvelous number of armorers, who daily produce every type of arm . . . and all are of tempered and polished steel, brighter than a mirror”; by this time the commerce of Milanese armor was already international for, as Bonvesin continued, “all these types of arms pass from this city to other Italian cities, where they are ultimately exported to the Tartars and the Saracens.”<sup>6</sup> By the end of the fourteenth century Milan had achieved a technical sophistication in the production of war harnesses to make its mail and plate the most famous and sought after in the world. The city was able to provide the personal harnesses of tailored steel for the princes of Europe, and at the same time it maintained sufficient stores of ready-made armor to be able to equip a large army on short notice. The Milanese armorers also demonstrated a shrewd business sense by which they adapted their products to foreign markets, exporting to Spain, France, and Germany harnesses made according to the local styles and preferences. These are usually referred to in contemporary documents as *armature alla tedesca* or *alla francese* (fig. 3). Milan enjoyed an advantage in trade, too, as it lay on the crossroads of European commerce and had access to its transalpine neighbors through the mountain passes to the north and through the Italian seaports to Spain and Portugal, North Africa, and the Near East. Milanese merchants traveled to every corner of Europe, and it was the ubiquitous “milaner” who became synonymous

with the trade of fashionable clothing (or millinery), armor, and luxury goods. For the duke of Milan, arms manufacturing was a prestige industry, one that brought fame and income to the city and provided the Milanese state with a natural advantage in times of war. For the same reason, the industry was closely controlled, particularly the export of arms outside the state to potential rivals and enemies.

Throughout the fifteenth century, Milanese armor making was dominated by the Missaglia family, whose very name became synonymous with that industry. Generations of Missaglia served the Visconti and Sforza dukes of Milan, as well as the Gonzaga of Mantua, the Este of Ferrara, and the Medici of Florence, and their family members ran shops in Rome, Naples, Barcelona, and Tours. The family is often referred to in documents as “Negroni da Ello, detto Missaglia,” indicating that the family, surnamed Negroni, originated at Ello, a town north of Milan in the province of Como, and that Missaglia (another place name in the same region) was a nickname. The similarity of Negroni and Negroli, which is entirely coincidental, caused considerable confusion among the early students of Italian arms and armor, who mistakenly identified the Missaglia and the Negroli (whose actual surname was Barini) as the same family.<sup>7</sup> The Missaglia workshop seems to have been a large one and to have employed a number of armorers outside the family, although very large orders were undoubtedly farmed out in a contractual arrangement with other workshops. The presence of diverse stamped marks on the various parts of a homogeneous armor indicates that a number of craftsmen were involved with its fabrication and that there were specialists in making certain elements such as helmets and breastplates or arms and leg harness. The Missaglia workshop marks stamped into the surface of the armor plate typically consist of an M beneath a split-legged cross (usually struck twice), surmounted by a single mark, the letters MY beneath a crown, the latter thought to signify them as ducal armorers.

The Missaglia exemplify the talent, organization, commerce, and material success of the Milanese armorers in the fifteenth century. The family dwelling, workshop, and warehouse were located in a large, multistory house with an internal courtyard on the Via Spadari in the parish of Santa Maria Beltrade (fig. 39).<sup>8</sup> Situated in the heart of Milan, near the Cathedral, the Via Spadari continued into the Via Armorari (also known as the Contrada degli Armorari, the Street of the Armorers) and was parallel to the Via degli Orefici (Street of the Goldsmiths), their proximity suggesting the close relationship among Milan’s metalworking crafts. Judging from plans and drawings of the house made just prior to its demolition at the end of the nineteenth cen-



Fig. 4. Sallet in the Italian style of Philip the Handsome. Negroli workshop, Milan, ca. 1496–1500. Steel, brass, silver, gold. Real Armería, Madrid (D 12)

tury (figs. 40, 41), it rivaled those of the local patricians, having a facade and courtyard frescoed with flowers, fruit, landscapes, the emblems and arms of the Sforza dukes, and the Missaglia marks, MY beneath a crown and the letters AN beneath an abbreviation sign, identifying the decoration as executed for Antonio Missaglia, who headed the family business from 1452 until his death in 1496. The capitals of the columns around the courtyard were carved with the Missaglia marks, and the terracotta window frames were worked with figures of putti, leaves, and what may have



Fig. 5. Sallet in the German style of Philip the Handsome. Negroli workshop, Milan, ca. 1496–1500. Steel, brass, silver, gold. Real Armería, Madrid (D 13)

been Antonio's personal motto, *Ave deo*. This imposing edifice was a showplace for visitors to Milan, and the duke regularly led foreign heads of state and other dignitaries to the Missaglia house as part of their city tour.

The commercial success of the Missaglia and their resulting wealth considerably bettered their social standing. The Sforza were often in debt to them, a situation the armorers used to their advantage. In 1458 the duke interceded on behalf of Antonio Missaglia and saved his brother Cristoforo from a death sentence;<sup>9</sup> in 1469 he gave Antonio an armorer's mill outside the city walls, with an annual rent of one armet or sallet decorated with gold and silver, or the equivalent in cash, to be presented to the duke and his successors each Christmas.<sup>10</sup> The brothers Antonio and Damiano Missaglia were allowed to purchase the fief of Corte di Casale in 1472,<sup>11</sup> and some years later Antonio was granted the title of count.<sup>12</sup> The next generation was the last to continue the family line of business, and during the first quarter of the sixteenth century, they gradually sold off their mills, their workshops, and even their house to a new and more ambitious family, the Negroli.

An account of the genealogy of the Negroli follows in "A History of the Negroli Family," but several general observations can be made here. The earliest recorded member of the family, Giovanni, appears to have been active by the mid-fifteenth century, when he seems to have been in the employ of the Missaglia. A pair of leg defenses stamped with a mark in the form of two crossed keys, the bits downward, are part of an armor made about 1445–50 for Ulrich IX von Matsch (1408–1481) by the partners Pier Innocenzo da Faerno and Antonio Missaglia.<sup>13</sup> The identification of the crossed-keys mark as that used by the Negroli is based on the presence of a similar mark on Filippo Negroli's helmet of 1532 (cat. no. 18), which also bears the armorer's full name. The crossed keys continued to be utilized by the family as their heraldic arms.<sup>14</sup>

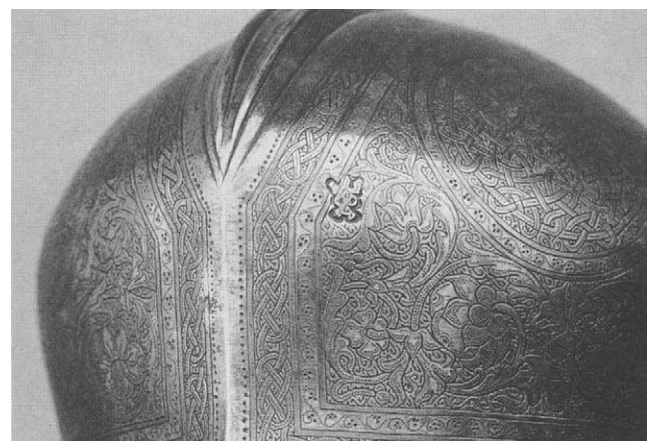


Fig. 6. Mark on sallet in fig. 5





Figs. 7, 8. Helm for the German joust, and detail of mark. Negroli workshop, Milan, ca. 1500. Steel. The State Hermitage, Saint Petersburg (3.O. 336r)

The next generation of Negroli, Giovanni's sons, have left a larger and more distinguished corpus of works, which dates to the years around 1500. The most important are two sallets, one of Italian form (fig. 4) and the other of German type (figs. 5, 6), that were very probably made for Charles V's father, Philip the Handsome (1478–1506), duke of Burgundy, ruler of the Low Countries, and from 1504 King Philip I of Castile. The steel surfaces are covered with thick silver leaf, which was fire-gilt and engraved with a dense overall pattern employing stylized foliate scrolls and interlacing strapwork and knots of Islamic inspiration; the edges have applied borders of gilt brass with engraved and granulated decoration. The presence of an orientizing technique (granulation) and ornament, which corresponds closely to late-fifteenth-century Moorish metalwork, suggests that the helmets were intended for a client with Spanish associations, probably for Philip the Handsome about the time of his marriage to the infanta Juana, heiress to the Spanish throne, in 1496.<sup>15</sup> The simple crossed-keys mark is not unlike that used by Giovanni Negroli decades earlier. The same keys, this time



Figs. 9, 10. Pair of vambraces for a field armor, and detail of mark on left upper vambrace. Domenico Negroli, Milan, ca. 1510. Steel and gold. The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, Funds from various donors, 1929 (29.158.1e, f)



Figs. 11, 12. Backplate in the German style, and detail of mark. Francesco (?) Negroli, Milan, ca. 1505–10. Steel. Collection of Prescott R. Andrews, Jr.

surmounted by a crown, are also found on a helm for the joust with blunt lances in the German style (the *Gesteck*; figs. 7, 8), which is the only recorded example of Negroli armor made specifically for tournament use.<sup>16</sup> A plain, sturdy piece, the helm differs in shape from those typically worn in Italy or Germany and appears instead to have been intended for export to the Low Countries or Spain, where analogous helms were made by local masters.

A pair of arm defenses (vambraces) in the Metropolitan Museum, which can be dated by their form and simple etched and gilt decoration to about 1510, are struck with the most elaborate version of the Negroli mark, two crossed keys with lozenge-shaped heads surmounted by a crown and flanked by the letters D and N (the N reversed) separated from the keys by pellets (figs. 9, 10).<sup>17</sup> The initials are assuredly those of Domenico Negroli (recorded 1492–d. 1526), and these are the only pieces that can with certainty be attributed to him. Two other variations of the Negroli mark were used in these same years, presumably by still other members of the family. A backplate dating to about 1505–10 and made in German style with a spray of raised ribs across its surface, is struck with three marks (figs. 11, 12): in the center, crossed keys (with the circular heads) surmounted by a crown and flanked by two letters, to the left the letter F (apparently struck over an N placed there in error), and to the right the letter N, each beneath a sign of abbreviation.<sup>18</sup> Based on these initials, the backplate should probably be attributed to Francesco Negroli (d. by 1519), son of Filippo. Another form of the Negroli workshop mark appears twice on a fragmentary close helmet dating about 1510–15 in the Harding Collection in the Art Institute of Chicago; it is etched (rather than punched) at the back of the skull, once to either side of the comb: a pair of crossed keys beneath a crown, the keys possibly entwined with fluttering ribbons or flanked by initials (the marks are now very indistinct).<sup>19</sup> Etched marks are unknown before this time and seem to have been used by only one other Italian armorer, Niccolò Silva of Milan, who is recorded between 1511 and 1549. Silva's four known armors, all in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris, are marked with a crowned compass and various combinations of his initials: NI beneath an abbreviation sign; the crowned letters N and S; or NI above SILVA.<sup>20</sup> Niccolò Silva is the only Milanese armorer known to have signed his full name on an armor before Filippo Negroli.

#### RE-CREATING THE ANTIQUE

Filippo Negroli's specialty was the creation of modern armors inspired by the antique. His work, however, is only one chapter in the long history of the revival of classical



Fig. 13. Giulio Campagnola (?), after Andrea Mantegna, *The Triumphs of Caesar: The Corslet Bearers*, ca. 1498. Engraving, 10¼ x 10⅞ in. (26 x 25.7 cm). Print Collection, The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations

armor, which began in the late Middle Ages with the blossoming of humanist study of classical texts, and carried on through to the eighteenth century, when even monarchs of the Enlightenment saw fit to present themselves in festivals, carousels, and state portraits in Roman-style costume that was perceived to enhance their dignity and to underline their divinely ordained authority. The large and complicated history of armor *all'antica*, deserving of a comprehensive study, is outlined here with but a few examples selected to illuminate some of the sources and uses of classical-style armor before and during the age of Filippo Negroli.

The memory of Roman armor and military practice was preserved in the Middle Ages in both written and pictorial form, in a variety of classical texts and illustrated manuscripts, as well as in reliefs and works of art, including Byzantine ivories and mosaics. The importance of Byzantium in maintaining the memory of Roman military dress has not been adequately explored, but it would seem that the emperors in Constantinople did, on occasion, wear muscled cuirasses or other classical-style harnesses,<sup>21</sup> not only as a continuation of an existing tradition but also because such costume reaffirmed the dignity, power, and legitimacy of the Eastern empire. At the same time, Roman armor was adopted for the dress of Christian military saints like Saint Theodore, Saint Michael, and Saint George, apparently to emphasize the historical distance between them and modern man.



Fig. 14. Tombstone of Lorenzo di Niccolò Acciaiuoli, after 1353. Marble. Certosa di Val d'Enza, Florence

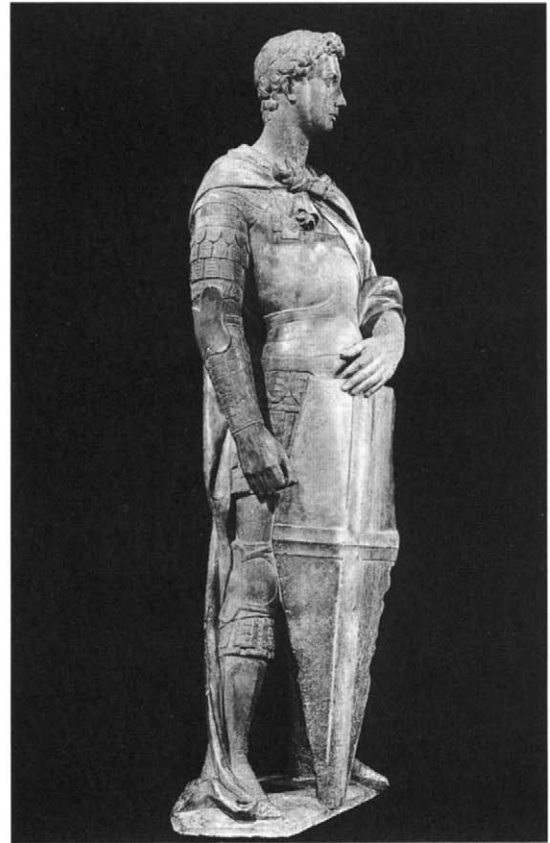


Fig. 15. Donatello, *Saint George*, ca. 1416–18. Marble. Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence

Artists in the dawning years of the Renaissance made certain basic distinctions in costuming the contemporary knights and Roman soldiers who inhabited frescoes or miniatures of biblical themes or classical legend. In speaking about Andrea Mantegna (ca. 1430–1506), whose own representations of Roman military equipment were the most archaeologically correct of his day (fig. 13), Andrew Martindale accurately summarized the several trends of what had come before:

Earlier artists from Giotto or Duccio to Piero della Francesca had realized that Roman soldiers looked different from contemporary soldiers. These distinctions crystallized round various specific features: Roman soldiers, it was observed, wore a cuirass, modelled round the chest and ending in the region of the waist; below this they wore a skirt, usually made of straps hanging vertically to reach the region of the knee; underneath all this, they might wear a tunic, which could be seen protruding beneath the lower edge of the skirt. But over the protection of the arms, shoul-

ders, legs and head the imagination was allowed free play. For instance, it was seen that the upper arm was protected by further layers of leather straps, normally emerging from the arm-hole of the cuirass and hanging vertically downwards. It seems, however, that earlier artists found it hard to accept this as sufficient protection. Fantastic circular discs or moulded metal pieces were introduced to mask the joint between the cuirass and the leather straps; and the lower arm was frequently encased in plate armour. Similarly, the joint of the knee was often covered with a fantastic ornamental elaboration, leading to more plate armour on the lower leg. . . . Supposedly “Roman” helmets, it should be added, came in an extraordinary number of shapes and sizes.<sup>22</sup>

The tendency in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to provide arm and leg defenses for Roman soldiers stems from the everyday presence of such defenses on contemporary armor, whose example reassured artists that an armor was not complete without them.





Fig. 16. Equestrian monument to Annibale Bentivoglio, 1456. Polychromed stone. San Giacomo Maggiore, Bologna



Fig. 17. Detail of Bentivoglio monument in fig. 16

The fourteenth century witnessed the gradual evolution of the European harness from a composite work of mail, hardened leather, and metal plates to the complete armor of articulated steel plates. The tomb of the Florentine knight Lorenzo di Niccolò Acciaiuoli (d. 1353) in the family's crypt at the Certosa di Val d'Enza, Florence, exemplifies this type of mixed-media armor (fig. 14).<sup>23</sup> Acciaiuoli's harness is minutely detailed and shows the lower arms and the thighs (cuisses) encased in leather reinforced with strips of metal, with pairs of rivets holding the ensemble together, whereas the lower legs are covered by greaves of what is presumably molded and hardened leather decorated with a floral pattern. Only the gauntlets and shoes (sabotons) are of plate, as probably also is the cuirass, which is hidden beneath a figured textile surcoat. Of particular interest in the development of heroic armor are the little lion heads, probably of molded leather or perhaps gilt copper, that are attached to the shoulders and the knees. This is an early example of the use of lion heads on armor, which was to become fixed in the minds of Renaissance costumers and armorers as a requisite feature of Roman armor. Leonine shoulder and knee

defenses, while never encountered in ancient art, seem to have been a Trecento fashion that, perhaps because of the Herculean associations of the lion, was subsequently adopted for pseudo-antique armor.

One of the noblest representations of this composite type of classicizing armor is Donatello's *Saint George*, a sculpture commissioned by the armorers' guild in Florence by 1416 and installed in its niche on the facade of the church of Orsanmichele by 1418.<sup>24</sup> The youthful warrior wears a muscled cuirass of Roman type but of two-part Quattrocento form with a pointed, upward-overlapping lower breastplate fitted just above the waist (fig. 15). The pauldrons, arms, and legs basically follow contemporary conventions, but with the addition of pendent straps, known as pteruges, at the shoulders, waist, and knees (where they replace the usual protective curtain of mail in those areas). Donatello's choice of a classicizing armor was probably intended to evoke the antiquity of the Christian hero, while at the same time it succeeds in lending the sculpture a Roman gravity and authority. The fact that the sculpture was made for the armorers' guild also allows us to speculate that the saint's harness did



Fig. 18. Roman coin with the head of Roma. Republican period, 3rd–2nd century B.C.

not offend those practical craftsmen and that it may have approximated a type, perhaps made in molded leather rather than steel, that was worn locally in tournaments and pageants.

The likelihood that pseudo-antique harnesses of this type did exist in the fifteenth century, despite the fact that none survive, is demonstrated by the monument to the condottiere Annibale Bentivoglio (d. 1445) in the church of San Giacomo Maggiore in Bologna, a work dated 1456 (figs. 16, 17).<sup>25</sup> Bentivoglio is portrayed in full armor on horseback in a poly-

chromed relief within the family chapel. His military costume is carefully delineated and at first glance looks like the typical mid-fifteenth-century Milanese harness. However, closer examination shows that the two-part cuirass is of muscled Roman style and that the sabatons, also *all'antica*, are either open toed or have naturalistically rendered toe caps. The presence of a lance-rest on the right side of the breastplate leaves us no doubt that the armor was a practical one of steel. No other fifteenth-century monument so thoroughly and convincingly integrates Roman military costume with contemporary armor construction, anticipating by almost a century the first surviving armor *alla romana* (cat. no. 54).

In the second half of the fifteenth century there was a more determined effort on the part of artists to study the monuments in Rome and to learn firsthand the artistic vocabulary of the ancients. For the artist interested in researching and reconstructing Roman military costume, the visual sources were plentiful: small objects like coins (see fig. 18), medals, and gems, commonplace and widely circulated throughout Italy; sarcophagi, reutilized in the



Fig. 19. Tiberius. Roman, 1st century A.D. Marble. Villa Torlonia-Albani, Rome

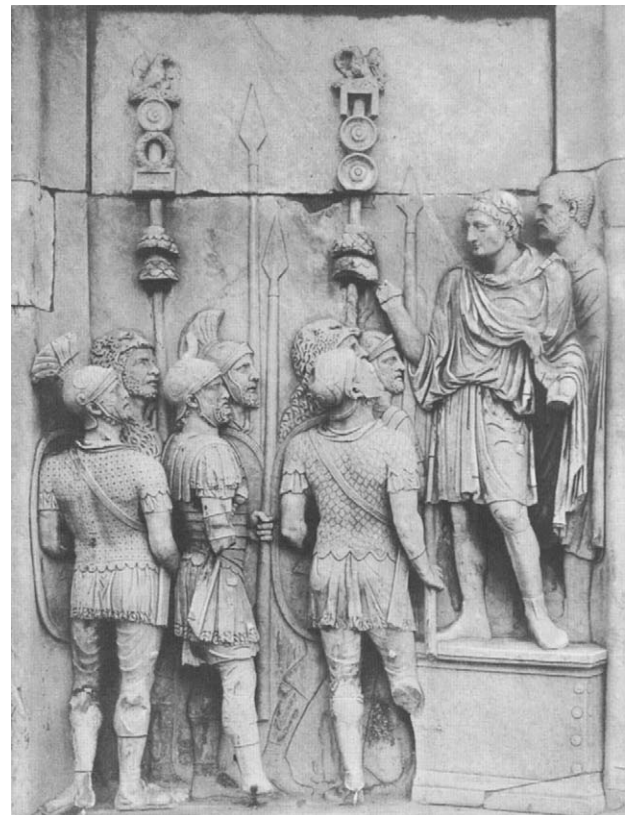
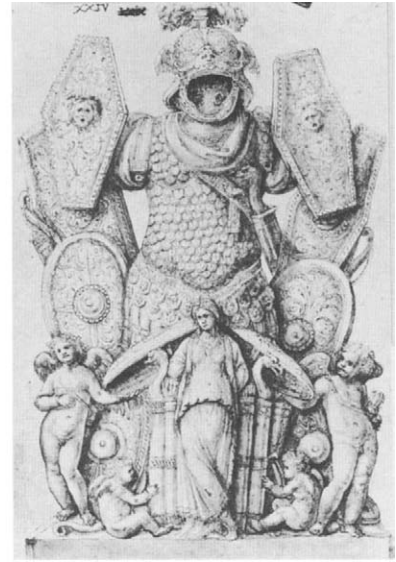


Fig. 20. Marcus Aurelius addressing his troops. Roman, 2nd century A.D. Marble relief on the Arch of Constantine, Rome



Fig. 21. Pillar with trophies (detail). Roman, 1st century A.D. Marble. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence



Figs. 22, 23. Drawings of the Trophies of Marius (Roman, 1st century A.D.), as recorded in the sketchbook of Jacopo Ripanda, early 16th century, fols. 37, 62. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

Christian era as tombs, also well distributed across the peninsula; and monumental sculpture and reliefs, the most important of which were still to be found in Rome. It is not known how much actual Greek and Roman armor was known to Renaissance antiquarians, although the presence of ancient bronze helmets recorded in the armories of the dukes of Urbino and of the grand dukes of Tuscany in Florence in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries suggests that some examples may have been accessible.<sup>26</sup>

From lifesize imperial portraits, of which many examples are known (fig. 19), the form, construction, and decoration of the muscled cuirass could be studied.<sup>27</sup> The relief on the breastplate usually included a Medusa head (gorgoneion) at the top and a pair of confronted griffons at the stomach; protective straps, known as pteruges (which were probably stitched to the undertunic), emerged at the shoulders and below the cuirass, and the lower edge of the breastplate was outlined with semicircular tabs embellished with masks and emblems of various types. With its imperial associations the muscled cuirass was adopted by Renaissance artists as the stereotypical form of Roman armor, although in reality it was a parade harness much less common than other types used by the military. A relief on the Arch of Constantine shows the three principal types of armor that were far more commonplace in the Roman world (fig. 20): from right to left, scale armor (known as the *lorica squamata*), one of articulated horizontal plates (*lorica segmentata*), and a stylized interpretation of mail (*lorica hamata*). The helmets are fitted with peaks at the front, tall feathered crests at the apex, and hinged cheekpieces shaped to the face. In the back row are



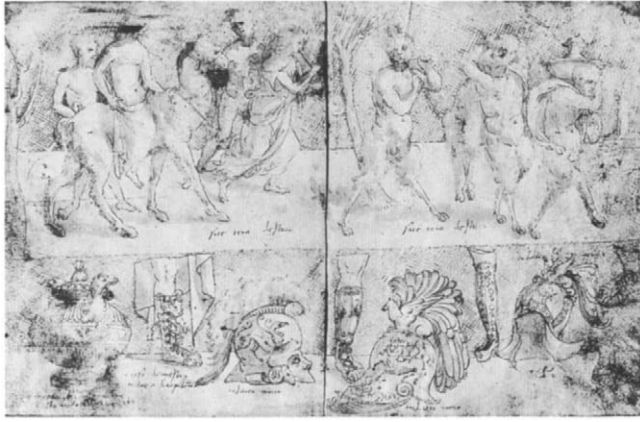


Fig. 24. Drawing recording lost reliefs from the Arch of Diocletian, from the sketchbook of Amico Aspertini, ca. 1503. Waldburg zu Wolfegg collection, Baden-Württemberg; Codex Wolfegg, fols. 44v–45r

several standard-bearers (or *signifers*) wearing their distinctive lion-skin headdress.

Two square-sectioned pillars carved with trophy reliefs on four sides, formerly in or near the Church of Santa Sabina on the Arentine Hill in Rome and since the late sixteenth century in the Galleria degli Uffizi in Florence, provided several generations of artists with an abundant repertory of Roman arms, insignia, and musical instruments (fig. 21).<sup>28</sup> Among these can be distinguished helmets embellished with griffins, curly hair, and foliate scrolls, and shields emblazoned with Medusa heads. Another of Rome's famous monuments, the so-called Trophies of Marius, a pair of freestanding first-century A.D. marble trophies arranged in anthropomorphic fashion that were erected for Emperor Domitian (r. A.D. 81–96), was similarly mined for costume details.<sup>29</sup> From the painter Jacopo Ripanda's early-sixteenth-century reconstruction of these now damaged and frag-



Fig. 25. Jacopo Bellini, *Knight on Horseback*, ca. 1440–50. Silverpoint on paper. Musée du Louvre, Paris

mentary works (figs. 22, 23), one can distinguish helmets with masks, wings, and plumes mounted on sphinxlike crests, two octagonal shields bearing Medusa heads, a cuirass of scales, and one of muscled type with a Medusa head at the top. The vocabulary of ancient helmet design was also expanded by coins (fig. 18) and the now-lost reliefs of the Arch of Diocletian.<sup>30</sup> These last are recorded in a number of Renaissance artists' sketchbooks, including that of Amico Aspertini (1474/75–1552), whose clear renderings of three helmets serve to remind us how influential a single source could be (fig. 24; see cat. nos. 11, 14, 16).<sup>31</sup>

Many representations of classical armor in fifteenth-century Italian painting and sculpture are extremely fanciful, suggesting both a limited knowledge of Roman sources and a healthy dose of artistic license to interpret the antique freely. Some of these pseudo-antique armors are probably rooted in the tradition of costumes for tournaments, pageants, and other ceremonial occasions. Jacopo Bellini recorded a fantastic dragonlike horse chanfron worn in conjunction with more businesslike Quattrocento armor (fig. 25), leaving little doubt as to its probable use in a tournament. An



Fig. 26. *Romulus*, 1480. Paint on parchment. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Cod. Urb. Lat. 899, fol. 74r





Fig. 27. Carlo Crivelli, *Saint George*, 1472. Tempera on wood, 38 x 13¼ in. (96 x 33.7 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Rogers Fund, 1905 (05.41.2)



Fig. 28. Leonardo da Vinci, *Old Warrior*, ca. 1480–90. Metal point on paper. Copyright © The British Museum, London

imaginative armor *all'antica* devised for the ceremonies surrounding the wedding of the condottiere Costanzo Sforza (1447–1483) in Pesaro on May 25, 1475, illustrates this point. An illuminated manuscript, dated 1480, records some of the most important costumes used in the wedding festivities, which included a parade of elaborately dressed allegorical figures, and concluded with a cart symbolizing the Triumph of Fame, on which rode actors representing Scipio, Alexander, and Julius Caesar.<sup>32</sup> The figure of Romulus (fig. 26), son of Mars and the legendary founder of Rome, dressed in a pseudo-antique armor, is described in the manuscript as follows: “a king, armed *all'antica* of gold and silver with an eagle on the breastplate crowned with a crown of gold, with blond hair, and a golden star at the front; and in his right hand he has a spear called a *pilo*; for a sign he had in front of him a helmet *all'antica* of silver with ram’s horns that curl around the ear, or to the neck; and on top of the helmet there was a bird called a *Pico Marcio* of gold, and of various colors with its wings open.”<sup>33</sup> The accompanying miniature shows a youth wearing a golden cuirass of scales, leonine pauldrons with pteruges, a skirt of pteruges, and knee defenses with masks having large, batlike wings. The arm and leg defenses are covered in typical Quattrocento armor plate. The helmet is of particular interest for it anticipates the appearance of quite similar examples fifty years later, notably Kolman Helmschmid’s helmet made about





Fig. 29. Giovanni Pietro Birago, *Francesco Sforza among the Famous Warriors of Antiquity*, ca. 1490. Paint on vellum. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence

1530 for Charles V<sup>34</sup> and several examples by Filippo and Giovan Paolo Negroli and other Milanese armorers of about 1540 (cat. nos. 23a, 44, 65). The miniature appears to record an actual costume used for a specific occasion, indicating that such fanciful armors did exist, although they were probably made of lightweight materials like papier-mâché and textile. Theatrical costumes of this type may well have

served as models for artists in need of inventing dress for saints and heroes, like Carlo Crivelli's *Saint George* (fig. 27), whose pseudo-antique armor is delightfully whimsical.<sup>35</sup>

Florentine artists also employed this overelaborated style of pseudo-antique armor design, which is particularly evident in the sculptures of Andrea Verrocchio (see cat. no. 10). In Leonardo da Vinci's famous head of an old warrior (fig.



Fig. 30. Michelangelo, *Giuliano de' Medici*, ca. 1520–34. Marble, H. 68<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (173 cm). New Sacristy, San Lorenzo, Florence



Fig. 31. Niccolò della Casa, *Henry II, King of France*, 1547. Engraving, 16<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 11<sup>9</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in. (41.3 x 29.4 cm). © The Cleveland Museum of Art; In memory of Ralph King, gift of Mrs. Ralph King; Ralph T. Woods, Charles G. King, and Frances King Schafer (1946.308)

28), which reflects his master Verrocchio's design, the hero wears a fantastic winged helmet inspired by Roman coins but given elaborate and impractical articulation and decorative flourishes of foliate scrolls and undulating ribbons. The wings are even more bizarre and dramatic than those found on coins, for they are modeled on bat's wings but with "eyes" like those on peacock feathers, while the spiked comb adds a dragonlike feature to the design. The warrior's muscled cuirass is decorated at the top with a roaring lion's head with wings rather than the usual gorgon found on imperial sculpture, a motif that echoes the leonine features of the scowling soldier's physiognomy.

The praise of a modern prince by comparing him to the distinguished men of the ancient world was a widely used topos in Renaissance oratory, literature, and the visual arts. In portraiture the wearing of classical armor was regularly reserved for monarchs and military men as an evocation of their dignity, worthiness, and virtue. The symbolic value of armor *all'antica* is evident in a miniature by Giovanni Pietro Birago (active from the early 1470s until at least 1513) showing Francesco Sforza (1401–1466), a highly respected condottiere and from 1450 duke of Milan, seated in discourse with eight of the most illustrious captains of the ancient world (fig. 29).<sup>36</sup> Sforza wears a muscled cuirass like those around him, identifying him more closely with the likes of Caesar and Hannibal, whose bravery and deeds were regularly cited by Renaissance theorists like Leonardo Bruni as examples to be studied and imitated by modern soldiers.<sup>37</sup> It is not surprising, therefore, that similar classicizing costume was created for depictions of other condottieri, like Donatello's equestrian statue of Gattamelata in Padua and Verrocchio's of Bartolomeo Colleoni in Venice. Its effectiveness when employed in state portraiture and political propaganda is plainly evident in Michelangelo's heroic figures of two young Medici princes, Giuliano (fig. 30) and Lorenzo de' Medici, in their tombs in San Lorenzo in Florence, where their representations as seated Roman generals with spectacularly muscled cuirasses have a gravity and dignity out of proportion with their real-life accomplishments. Niccolò della Casa's engraved portrait of Henry II of France (fig. 31), issued the year of his coronation in 1547, is in its own way equally monumental, the profile format, the historiated cuirass, and the complex antique iconography creating a powerful and timeless image of the French sovereign.

#### THE DECORATION OF RENAISSANCE ARMOR

From its earliest appearance in the ancient world, armor was a status symbol for the soldier or officer who could afford it, and better-quality examples were subject to deco-

ration of all kinds. In classical times armor of bronze and, later, iron plate was variously embossed, incised, silvered, gilt, and even inlaid with other materials, such as ivory or amber (cat. nos. 1–6). By the early fifteenth century, by which time the complete armor of articulated steel plates was essentially developed, the plates were usually polished mirror bright, although some were left black from the forge or were heat-blued or painted, all pragmatic methods of rust-proofing to ensure easy maintenance. Armors were also given color with coverings of bright-hued textiles, and sometimes the plates were edged with appliqué of copper alloy or silver-gilt. A few surviving armors dating from the second half of the fifteenth century are embellished with delicate punched (*pointillé*) or incised ornament along the edges, a laborious technique akin to engraving that was executed by means of punches and a hammer or a burin. In the last quarter of the century this method of decoration was rapidly replaced by etching. In this process a plate would be prepared by covering the surface with protective paint or wax, through which the design was scratched; the application of a mild acid would eat away the exposed metal surfaces, leaving the pattern slightly recessed into the surface. This method was particularly favored in Italian armor of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century (for example, fig. 9). In a variant process, the actual design was painted on the metal and the background etched away; this method supplanted the earlier one about 1520 and became standard throughout Europe. The etching found on Filippo Negroli's buffe of 1538 (cat. no. 29), for example, or on armors by Giovan Paolo (cat. nos. 43, 46–48) utilize this technique. No doubt etching was a popular means of decorating armor because though the process required the skills of a specialist (the etcher was often a goldsmith), it could be executed rapidly, it provided neat, legible designs that could also be blackened or gilt, and it did not compromise the defensive qualities of the steel either by weakening the plate or by interfering with the deflective properties of the plates.

Another popular decorative technique, but one that required considerably more time and expertise, was embossing. Also known as repoussé (from the French, to push out), embossing involved the raising of relief on the surface of a metal plate by hammering (or bossing) it up from the underside and then working the exterior surfaces with chisels and punches (a process called chasing) to define the outlines and details (figs. 32–37). A traditional goldsmith's technique, embossing has been known since antiquity and was regularly employed by the armorers of ancient Greece and Rome for parade arms executed in bronze or iron (see cat. nos. 2–5).<sup>38</sup> In the Renaissance, relief decoration was considered the antique mode of armor embellishment per se, and it was





Figs. 32–37. The technique of embossing, illustrated in plates made by Leonard Heinrich, Armorer, Metropolitan Museum of Art, ca. 1940. The left column shows the exterior of each plate, the right column the interior. The pattern is first incised with chisels on the exterior (fig. 32), after which the plate is turned over and set face down into a bed of pitch and the relief is bossed out with hammers (fig. 35). Finally the outer face is chased with chisels and punches to give definition to the relief (figs. 36, 37)

used almost exclusively in Italy for armors *all'antica*. With few exceptions, these embossed pieces were created solely for ceremonial use, as the metalworking process stretched and thinned the steel to the point that it often cracked or broke through, thus requiring repair, and the highs and lows of the exterior surface possess none of the deflective qualities deemed desirable for an armor for battle or tournament use.

In lauding the artists and craftsmen of his native city, Paolo Morigi, in *La nobiltà di Milano* (1595), singled out Filippo Negroli as “merit[ing] immortal praise for he was the foremost chiseler of steel in high and low relief. . . . This virtuoso

spirit astounded the king of France and Emperor Charles V with his truly marvelous work on armors, headpieces and miraculous shields.”<sup>39</sup> The art of Filippo Negroli is characterized by a complete mastery of his material and technique, a totally original and imaginative sense of design, a restraint in the use of ornament, and an almost excessive concern with the precision and finish of every detail. Close study of Filippo’s works reveals that, in addition to the traditional method of embossing, he also employed chiseling, that is, the actual removal of metal from the surface, as part of the process of creating and defining the relief. This is especially evident on the fantastic winged breastplate belonging to the armor of Guidobaldo II della Rovere (cat. no. 23), where the shallow recesses on the inside of the plate bear little resemblance to the high, undercut relief on the exterior. It is, in fact, difficult to imagine how the armorer succeeded in working so heavy and thick a steel plate as this. The same virtuosity that Morigi says astounded Charles V and Francis I is demonstrated by the helmet belonging to that armor, which is unequalled in its complex sculptural form.

The extraordinary plasticity of Filippo’s helmets might lead the uninformed viewer to suppose that they were cast from molten metal rather than hammered up from plate, or that they were of soft iron rather than of harder and more intractable steel. Metallographic studies carried out by Dr. Alan Williams on numerous embossed armors by Filippo Negroli and his contemporaries confirm that the majority are of low to medium carbon steel (an alloy of iron and carbon) and that the best works, especially those by Filippo, are made of the hardest steel.<sup>40</sup>

Embossed armors were invariably colored, either heat-blued or blackened (these colored surfaces were called “bronzed” in some Italian inventories), and often fire-gilt or damascened. Gilding was usually achieved by coating the desired surfaces with an amalgam of mercury and powdered gold and then heating it so that the mercury evaporated and left the gold adhering. Damascening (*agemina*, *azzimina*, or *tausia* in Italian, terms deriving from Arabic roots) is a technique of Eastern origin and refers to the inlaying or encrusting of precious metal on iron or steel.<sup>41</sup> The process typically used in Europe involved the crosshatching of a surface with files, the roughened edges facilitating the adhesion of the applied gold or silver leaf or wire that was then burnished flush with the surface. The damascene process was more exacting and time-consuming than fire-gilding, but allowed for a greater variety of designs in several colors (usually gold and silver, but occasionally also reddish copper) in a technique that was sometimes more permanent than gilding. It is perhaps significant that the earliest damascened armor to bear Filippo’s signature, the Masks Garniture of Charles V

(1539; cat. no. 30), appeared just at the moment when the armorer's brother Francesco, although still a youth, could have contributed to its decoration. It is not surprising, then, that within a few years Francesco, whose specialty was damascening, was appointed gilder to Charles V. Like his brother, Francesco showed an unmatched technical superiority in his art and a comparable restraint in the use of ornament; much of his work in gold and silver is thick enough to rise above the surface and qualifies more as encrusting than as damascening. Unlike Filippo's fame, however, Francesco's reputation as a damascener was not long-lived. Writing at the end of the century but still within Francesco's lifetime, Paolo Morigi singled out instead other distinguished masters of this craft: Giovan Pietro Figino, Bartolomeo Piatti, Francesco Pillizzone, called le Basso, Lucio Piccinino, and one Martino, called il Ghinello.<sup>42</sup>

Of the many recently discovered documents concerning the Negroli family, none shed any light on the armorers' working methods or the division of labor within the various family shops, or *botteghe*.<sup>43</sup> The larger shops, like those headed by Filippo and Giovan Paolo, presumably included specialized hammer men to shape the plates; decorators to emboss, etch, or damascene the ornament; and others to finish and assemble the harnesses. It would seem that in the *bottega* of Gian Giacomo Negroli (d. 1543), his eldest son, Filippo, was the shop's master embosser, since his name, not his father's or his brothers', takes pride of place on the signed pieces dating between 1532 and 1541. Francesco Negroli's specialty, on the other hand, was in the art of damascening. This has long been known thanks to documents concerning his work for Charles V, and it is now confirmed by the newly found contract of September 10, 1548, in which Francesco, working independently from Filippo's shop, hired an apprentice to learn the art of damascening (doc. 90). Immediately following Francesco's departure, Filippo hired an outside assistant (doc. 78), and others followed in subsequent years (docs. 84, 110, 112, 115, 116). None of these outsiders were specifically identified as decorators, although we learn from a document of 1551 (doc. 107) that the shop debts included 2 scudi owed to a *disegnatore*, a term that can be translated literally as a draftsman or designer but more probably refers to an etcher. This is noteworthy, for it would appear that etching was not a technique often employed by Filippo's shops, as the helmet of 1538 (cat. no. 29) is his only signed work with etched ornament. Giovan Paolo Negroli, however, seems to have regularly used etching, rather than damascening, as a secondary technique in conjunction with embossing, and it is therefore not surprising that among the number of apprentices and workshop assistants he hired over the years (see docs. 63, 64, 83, 104, 113), several were

specifically identified as being proficient in etching and gilding (docs. 64, 104).

The same document of 1551 referred to above (doc. 107), which is an inventory of the Negroli atelier run by Filippo and his brothers Giovan Battista and Alessandro, indicates that the shop contained "spontoni" (punches?) and "disegni per lavorare" (working designs), these apparently in Alessandro's room, and that there was a separate room containing designs and medals. This exceptionally important information confirms what was previously only assumed, that the brothers referred to two- and three-dimensional models for the design and decoration of their armors. What these designs and medals were remains subject to speculation, but we can imagine that they included preparatory drawings for armor construction and embellishment, possibly published ornamental engravings and pattern-book drawings, and evidently medals and perhaps also antique coins. As will be discussed in the catalogue entries, Filippo Negroli seems to have had some knowledge of Roman antiquities, which was perhaps acquired secondhand through sketches after the antique, and also had access to engravings of grotesque decoration *all'antica*.

Who was responsible for the design of the Negroli armors? In the absence of information to the contrary, we must assume that Filippo as the embosser can be credited with their invention. Sculptors and goldsmiths—the professions to which Filippo's art was most closely allied—were customarily trained in the art of drawing (*disegno*), and some were accomplished draftsmen. However, apart from the signed works, we have no independent confirmation of Filippo's capabilities in drawing and the invention of ornament. Filippo's illustrious clientele were men of sophisticated tastes, who employed some of the finest and most versatile artists of the day. One can imagine the emperor, the king of France, or the duke of Urbino, for example, sending the armorer sketches for ornament invented by their court artists. The four armor designs included here (cat. nos. 13a–d), which appear to be the work of an Italian artist in the court of Francis I, were evidently created by someone better versed in classical motifs than in the practical necessities of armor construction. It would have been left to the armorer to interpret these sketches and transform them into harness of plate. Whatever the sources of design, preparatory drawings would have been essential for transferring the ornament to the plates, and in many cases these sketches, sometimes highly finished, would have been shown to the client for his final approval. The contract for an embossed and etched anime made for Luigi de Leiva by the workshop of Gerolamo and Giovan Antonio Negroli in 1547 (doc. 85) specifies that the armor is to be made "like the design that his lord

[Leiva] has seen.” Unfortunately no designs associated with the Negroli ateliers are known to survive. In addition to designs on paper, three-dimensional models in wax or clay may also have been used to work out in relief the most complicated designs, particularly those for helmets. Whereas most embossed ornament was applied to plates of conventional form (the torso and limbs of a harness or the surface of a shield, for example), helmets *all’eroica*, like that in catalogue number 23a, are works of steel sculpture conceived in the round, whose success depended on the harmonious integration of the various elements of ornament to the unconventional form of the helmet. It is difficult to imagine the armorer creating so complex and splendid a confection without having worked out his ideas first on paper and then in some three-dimensional medium. There is, however, no confirmation of this in the Negroli atelier inventory, which contains no mention of wax or clay models.

#### THE CRITICAL FORTUNE OF THE NEGROLI<sup>44</sup>

Filippo Negroli is referred to several times in the sixteenth century—twice during his lifetime—and these sources have profoundly influenced modern scholarship. As has already been noted, Giorgio Vasari published the earliest known reference to Filippo Negroli in the first edition of his *Lives of the Artists* in 1550. In the second, 1568, edition of this work Vasari referred again to “Filippo Negroli of Milan, chiseler of arms in iron with foliage and figures,” expanding his reference to include the enigmatic statement, “I will not dwell on [him], but to say that, as one can see, he made things in copper that are so unusual that he achieved very great fame.”<sup>45</sup> Filippo is not otherwise known to have worked on copper—presumably as an engraver—and one can only wonder whether Vasari was thinking of copperplate engravings illustrating armor *all’antica* like that in catalogue number 9. On the other hand, the “things in copper” may refer to the *tremolanti* that occupied Filippo’s work after his retirement in 1557 (for which, see “A History of the Negroli Family”).

In his *Trattato dell’arte della pittura, scoltura et architettura* (1584), Giovan Paolo Lomazzo mentioned Filippo in connection with Francis I of France: “and in the time of this great king the chiseling of iron was rediscovered by Filippo Negroli, who chiseled arms.”<sup>46</sup> In this, Lomazzo seems to ascribe to Filippo the origins of Renaissance embossed armor.

Father Paolo Morigi (also spelled Morigia) of Milan, writing about the craftsmen of his native city in the last decade of the century, offered more substantial information about Filippo. In his *Historia dell’antichità di Milano* (1592), Morigi

observed that “Filippo Negroli was the principal chiseler of iron in low relief,”<sup>47</sup> a reference he considerably augmented in his *La nobiltà di Milano* (1595). Speaking of the “many Milanese virtuosos in the art of damascening, and in making armor, and working iron, who are the inventors of many beautiful secrets,” he dwelled on Filippo at length: “Filippo Negroli merits immortal praise, for he was the foremost chiseler of steel in high and low relief, and he was followed by two of his brothers. This virtuoso spirit astounded the king of France and Emperor Charles V with his truly marvelous work on armors, headpieces, and miraculous shields.”<sup>48</sup> Here Morigi placed Filippo above all his contemporaries in the embossing of iron (Vasari, Lomazzo, and Morigi used the verb *intagliare*, to chisel or engrave, in this sense) and acknowledged that the emperor and the king of France were both amazed by his talent. One can only wonder whether this information, as well as the reference to Filippo’s two brothers (presumably meaning Giovan Battista [d. 1591] and Alessandro [d. 1573]) came from Francesco, the last brother, still alive at the time of Morigi’s writing.

The history of the Milanese armorers and of the Negroli in particular did not become a subject of attention again until the nineteenth century. As a result of the Gothic Revival and Romantic movement that turned attention to the Middle Ages, a new interest was also fostered in the study and collecting of arms and armor. Catalogues of the great European collections of arms and armor began to appear, and it is in them that we find the first mention of Filippo Negroli in modern times. Filippo’s earliest signed work, the helmet of Francesco Maria della Rovere of 1532 (cat. no. 18), now in Vienna but earlier at Schloss Ambras, near Innsbruck, was catalogued by Alois Primisser, curator of Ambras, in 1819 (p. 63, no. 104), with a full transcription of Filippo’s signature. Filippo’s five signed works in the Real Armería in Madrid (cat. nos. 20, 30, 32, 35) were identified for the first time by Antonio Martínez del Romero (1849, nos. 990, 1666, 2316, 2323, 2507), who transcribed the signatures and identified the works correctly as having belonged to Charles V. The remaining two signed pieces by Filippo Negroli, the buffe of 1538 at Leeds (cat. no. 29c) and the Metropolitan Museum’s burgonet of 1543 (cat. no. 33), appeared on the art market at the time but were not known to specialists until this century.

The generation of museum curators writing at the end of the nineteenth century would be very influential in all future studies of the Negroli. Most important was the pioneer Viennese scholar Wendelin Boeheim, curator of the great collection of European arms and armor in the Kunsthistorisches Museum. His earliest work (1884) was devoted to Filippo’s so-called Fame Armor (cat. no. 23), of which he

knew only the helmet in Saint Petersburg, identifying it with the portrait of Guidobaldo II della Rovere in Vienna (cat. no. 24) and ascribing it to the fictitious Florentine armorer Pifanio Tacito (following the imaginative attribution put forward by Antonio Petrini in the seventeenth century, who, however, had considered Pifanio an ancient Carthaginian armorer!). Boeheim echoed Florent Gille's interpretation (in Gille and Rockstuhl 1835–53, text accompanying pl. 57) of the helmet's iconography as having possibly been inspired by Ariosto's chivalric romance *Orlando Furioso*. Boeheim next presented (1885) a comparative study of the works of the Negroli and their German rivals the Helmschmid; this was the first specialized study to examine the Negroli and also the first to publish the Helmschmid parade shield inscribed NEGROL, mentioned above (figs. 1, 2). His groundbreaking article "Works of the Milanese Armorers in the Imperial Collections" (1889) expanded on his article of 1885 and offered a comprehensive overview of the history of Milanese armorers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that was not improved upon until Thomas and Gamber's study of 1958. Boeheim's article incorporated into the discussion of the harnesses in the Vienna collection an impressive number of period references like Vasari, Lomazzo, and Morigi and presented new documentary information drawn from the archives in Milan and Simancas. Regarding the Simancas archives, Boeheim utilized the earlier research of Édouard de Beaumont (1869), who had published a list of royal payments made on behalf of Prince Philip of Spain that included two for damascened arms made in 1550 and 1551 by Francesco Negroli, who was identified as "armorer to the emperor" and as a "gilder to His Majesty." Boeheim here (and in his article in 1885) mistakenly interpreted the Latin forms of Filippo Negroli's signatures to indicate the authorship of two masters, Giacomo Filippo and Filippo, and he confused the Negroli with the Missaglia, whose surname was Negroni. The scholar also identified the lion helmet and Medusa shield in Vienna (cat. nos. 39, 42), which would later be considered works by Filippo Negroli, as youthful examples by a Milanese armorer of a later generation, Lucio Piccinino. Such was Boeheim's authority that many of these errors persisted for decades. He also published for the first time a nineteenth-century genealogical chart found in the Archivio di Stato in Milan,<sup>49</sup> which, although incomplete and often in error, was repeated many times afterward. Boeheim's thoughts on the Negroli were repeated in his influential and still useful biographical dictionary of arms makers (1897, pp. 154–57).

Two contemporaries of Boeheim were equally influential. Angelo Angelucci, curator of the Armeria Reale in Turin and the first Italian scholar to concern himself with

the Negroli, published four works in close succession (1886a, 1886b, 1886c, 1890), in which the Negroli are mentioned or discussed. Angelucci's most important contribution was his discovery of documents in the Turin archives concerning Giovan Paolo Negroli as a supplier of armor to the court of Duke Emanuele Filiberto of Savoy, including harnesses made for the king of France and the duke of Orléans, as well as the duke of Savoy himself. He considered Giovan Paolo the brother of Filippo (1886b) or the son of Filippo or Giacomo (1890) and attributed to him an etched armor of Emanuele Filiberto in the Armeria Reale (inv. no. B.4). In his catalogue of the Armeria Reale (1890), Angelucci expanded his discussion of the Negroli to include the genealogical tree used by Boeheim (1889) and the same Simancas documents, but added to them a third document of 1553 (which was supplied by Valencia de Don Juan). In light of these Spanish payments to Francesco Negroli, Angelucci interpreted the initial F in the Negroli inscriptions on the shield and burgonet in Madrid (cat. nos. 32, 35) as referring to *Franciscus*.

In these very same years (1889–90), the curator of the Real Armería in Madrid, the conde de Valencia de Don Juan (Juan Bautista Crooke y Navarrot), published the *Relación de Valladolid*, the postmortem inventory of Charles V's armory, about 1558, together with a partial, but considerably modified, facsimile of the *Inventario Iluminado*, an illustrated inventory of the same armory that dates about 1544. Both sources are of key importance to the study of Charles V's collection. Valencia's still-standard catalogue of the Real Armería appeared in 1898, and in it Filippo's signed pieces are discussed and the Damascened Garniture of Charles V (cat. no. 38) is tentatively attributed to the Negroli. The varying forms of Filippo's signature misled Valencia (like Boeheim before him) to consider the works to have been made by two different persons.

Additional research on Milanese armorers was published by Jacopo Gelli and Gaetano Moretti in 1903; and in 1914 an impressive register of 176 documents, extracted from the Archivio di Stato in Milan, was published by Emilio Motta. Both works are more useful today in reference to the Missaglia than the Negroli.<sup>50</sup> Gelli and Moretti, for example, offered a number of unsubstantiated attributions to the Negroli, including the etched armor B.4 in Turin (following Angelucci), a French or Flemish shield in Turin (inv. no. F.3), and a Helmschmid armor in Vienna (inv. no. A 2430). Both publications distinguish between the Missaglia and the Negroli, thus correcting Boeheim, while Motta conclusively demonstrated that the Negroli's surname was Barini and that they did not originate in Ello (as was thought by Gelli and Moretti). Motta's work appears to have been the last



substantial archival research on the Negroli (fourteen documents dating between 1492 and 1565) until the present publication.<sup>51</sup>

English students of arms have not usually concerned themselves with the study of embossed armors *all'antica*, but in fact several have made significant contributions. In 1914 the collector and connoisseur C. A. de Cosson first brought to scholarly attention the embossed armors in the Bargello, including the peak of a burgonet, the breastplate and pauldron of the Fame Armor, and the muscled cuirass, all included in this catalogue (cat. nos. 29a, 23b, 23c, and 55, respectively). He ascribed the breastplate and matching pauldron and the muscled cuirass to Bartolomeo Campi of Pesaro, attributions that would go unquestioned until refuted by Thomas and Gamber (1958). Sir Guy F. Laking's *A Record of European Armour and Arms through Seven Centuries* (5 vols., 1920–22), the most lavishly illustrated work on the subject, provides extensive visual documentation for pieces signed by, or then attributed to, Filippo or Giovan Paolo Negroli.<sup>52</sup> Although unoriginal in his attributions, Laking was the first to publish in a discussion of the Negroli the signed buffe now at Leeds (cat. no. 29), which he originally discovered when cataloguing the Breadalbane collection for sale in 1917, and the couters belonging to the Masks Garniture of 1539 (cat. no. 30) now at Waddesdon Manor. A scholar of more rigorous type, Charles Beard (1938) wrote an important (but too often overlooked) article, in which he attributed to Filippo Negroli the lion helmet and Medusa shield in Vienna (cat. nos. 39, 42) and the two related helmets in Cambridge and New York (cat. nos. 40, 41). While the Negroli authorship of these works is questioned in the present catalogue, Beard's study offered a critical analysis of Filippo Negroli's style that had previously been lacking in the literature, and he successfully demolished Boeheim's often-repeated theory that these pieces were the youthful works of Lucio Piccinino. Also in 1938, James G. Mann published the armor of Henry II of France (cat. no. 47), which he convincingly presented as a work by the Negroli atelier, comparing it to the signed works in the same style by Filippo and Giovan Paolo, and identifying the Louvre burgonet as belonging to it.

On the other side of the Atlantic, Bashford Dean, Curator of the Department of Arms and Armor at the Metropolitan Museum, was responsible for first publishing (1916) Filippo Negroli's burgonet of 1543 (cat. no. 33), then in J. Pierpont Morgan's collection, as well as the close helmet attributed to Giovan Paolo Negroli (cat. no. 46), which he acquired for the Museum (1926). Dean's romantic theory that Filippo's burgonet may have been made for Francis I was often cited as a matter of fact in later literature.

The years following World War II saw a significant increase in the number of arms and armor scholars and a new, more critical approach to the subject. Following in Boeheim's footsteps, Bruno Thomas and Ortwin Gamber, similarly curators of the Vienna armory, wrote a concise and well-documented history of Milanese armor production (1958); although based entirely on published sources, without benefit of new archival research, it remains the most authoritative survey on the subject to date. Their discussion of the Negroli is also the most complete, settling once and for all the lingering confusions between the Missaglia and Negroli families and the interpretation of Filippo's signatures, and offering the most comprehensive systematization and stylistic analysis of Filippo's and Giovan Paolo Negroli's work. The authors significantly expanded the Negroli oeuvre by attributing to Filippo the Fame Armor (cat. no. 23), the peak in the Bargello that matches the signed and dated buffe in Leeds (cat. no. 29), the burgonet in Washington (cat. no. 44), a burgonet in the Wallace Collection (inv. no. A 108), and the lion helmet and Medusa shield in Vienna (cat. nos. 39, 42), which they considered an ensemble made for Charles V's Algerian campaign in 1541. They considered the unsigned Damascened Garniture of Charles V (cat. no. 38) the work of Francesco Negroli and another armorer (they were uncertain of Filippo's contribution) and assigned to both Filippo and Francesco the dauphin Henry's armor in Paris (cat. no. 31). To Giovan Paolo they newly attributed the so-called Roman Armor of Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol (cat. no. 53), a burgonet in the Wallace Collection (inv. no. A 106), the armor of Henry II of France (cat. no. 47), and the so-called Lion Armor in Paris (cat. no. 61).<sup>53</sup>

While generally in accord with Thomas and Gamber's methodology and conclusions, Boccia and Coelho (1967) proposed some revisions to their Negroli attributions. Boccia and Coelho agreed that the Fame Armor (cat. no. 23) could be by none other than Filippo, but they ascribed the visor with similar decoration in the Wallace Collection (which had first been associated with the Fame Armor by Mann 1943) to Giovan Paolo. Considering the armor of Francesco Maria della Rovere in Vienna, the authors dissociated from it the signed burgonet of 1532 (cat. no. 18), which they proposed as having originally belonged to the Palm Branch Armor of Charles V (cat. no. 49), thus removing that armor from Caremolo Modrone's oeuvre and redating it to 1532. As regards the rest of the della Rovere harness (cat. no. 19), they accepted it as Filippo's work and identified the curly-haired burgonet in the Metropolitan Museum (cat. no. 22), together with a pair of arm plates then in the Castel Sant'Angelo, as belonging to it. They agreed that the Bargello peak and Leeds buffe of 1538 were once part of the

same helmet, which they identified (following Petrini's *Arte fabrile* of 1642) as having belonged to Guidobaldo II della Rovere. They newly attributed the muscled cuirass in the Bargello (cat. no. 55) to Filippo, thus rejecting de Cosson's attribution to Bartolomeo Campi, and they suggested that it had been made for Cosimo I de' Medici. They also ascribed to Giovan Paolo a couter and lower vambrace decorated with scales (cat. no. 59b), in the Bargello, with which they associated the helmet with scale decoration in Paris (cat. no. 60) and, more tentatively, the Lion Armor in Paris (cat. no. 61). They rejected the idea that the lion helmet and Medusa shield in Vienna (cat. nos. 39, 42) ever formed a matching set or were made by Filippo Negroli or were presented to Charles V in anticipation of his Algerian campaign in 1541; without suggesting the authors of the works, they redated the helmet alone to about 1563.<sup>54</sup>

Twenty years after Boccia and Coelho's important work, Mario Scalini (1987) offered a new examination and radical reinterpretation of some of the most important embossed pieces in the Bargello, which he attributed to either Filippo or Giovan Paolo Negroli and associated with members of the royal house of France. He identified the iconography of the Fame Armor (cat. no. 23), which he considered an early work by Filippo of 1525, expanded its composition to that of a garniture, and described it as having been made for Francis I of France; in explaining its documented della Rovere provenance, he considered it to have been booty captured at the battle of Pavia in 1525 and to have been subsequently given by Charles V to Francesco Maria della Rovere. The peak in the Bargello and the buffe in Leeds (cat. nos. 29a, 29c) were considered elements of a burgonet belonging to a garniture by Filippo that was probably offered by Charles V to Guidobaldo II, duke of Urbino, in 1538. With this garniture Scalini also identified the mail-and-plate armor in Vienna (cat. no. 19) and the curly-haired burgonet in New York (cat. no. 21), among others. The Palm Branch Armor (cat. no. 49) was, following Boccia and Coelho (1967), attributed to Filippo, whereas the Damascened Garniture of Charles V (cat. no. 38) was considered the work of Caremolo Modrone of 1534. The muscled cuirass in the Bargello (cat. no. 55) was ascribed to Giovan Paolo and considered the armor worn at

Henry II's coronation in 1547. Scalini also attributed to Giovan Paolo the Bargello's scaled couter and lower vambrace (cat. no. 59b), to which he associated the Hermitage cuirass (cat. no. 59a), the burgonet in Paris (cat. no. 60), a burgonet in the Metropolitan Museum (acc. no. 14.25.587), and several small elements in the Museo Stibbert, Florence; this armor was identified as having been made for the dauphin Francis, the eldest son of Francis I who died in 1536. The Medusa shield in the Bargello, considered by Scalini as perhaps Giovan Paolo's best work, was identified as having belonged to the future Henry II. This complex theory concerning the French royal provenance of the Bargello pieces was based on the presumed passage of the armors from Paris to Florence in connection with the marriage of Christine of Lorraine (niece of Catherine de' Medici, widow of Henry II) to Grand Duke Ferdinando I of Tuscany in 1589.<sup>55</sup>

Lionello Boccia's monographic article on the Negroli (1993), unfortunately little known to specialists, reviewed and reconsidered the major works attributed to Filippo, Francesco, and Giovan Paolo Negroli. Boccia reaffirmed or revised some of his own earlier-stated opinions and rejected the French royal associations for the Bargello armors as without foundation. He concluded that the time was right for a fresh and systematic study of the Negroli and proposed an exhibition in which all the major works of these incomparable masters could be brought together for the first time. Sadly, this eminent scholar, who encouraged the present undertaking and guided its progress, did not live to see its fulfillment.

This brief, and by no means comprehensive, survey of the literature makes it abundantly clear that documentary research on the Negroli has been neglected, that almost nothing is known about the family beyond a few signed and dated works, and that the attributions to Filippo, Francesco, and Giovan Paolo have usually been extremely subjective, based on the quality and beauty of a piece rather than on careful analysis founded on a firsthand knowledge of the Negroli oeuvre. The following catalogue is intended to fill in our factual knowledge about the Negroli and to present in words and images those works we consider to have been made by these master armorers and by some of their most accomplished contemporaries.

1. "Filippo Negroli milanese, intagliatore di cesello in armi di ferro con fogliami e figure." Vasari 1550 (1986), p. 812.
2. First published in Boenheim 1885, pp. 194–95; for this armor, see New York 1991, pp. 155–64.
3. In the absence of a list of rejected attributions, the reader can assume that armors not specifically discussed in this catalogue are considered by the organizers to be by armorers other than the Negroli.

4. For the iron industry in Italy, and Lombardy in particular, see Armando Frumento, *Imprese lombarde nella storia della siderurgia italiana*, vol. 2, *Il ferro milanese tra il 1450 e il 1796* (Milan, 1963); and Domenico Sella, "The Iron Industry in Italy, 1500–1650," in *Schwerpunkte der Eisengewinnung und Eisenverarbeitung in Europa 1500–1650*, ed. by Hermann Kellenbenz (Cologne and Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 1974), pp. 91–105.
5. Motta 1914, p. 188, n. 2.

6. Authors' translation; see Thomas and Gamber 1958, p. 708. Unless otherwise noted, this overview of the Milanese arms industry is based entirely on Thomas and Gamber 1958, pp. 708–27.
7. The confusion of names appears to originate with Boeheim 1889, p. 383.
8. The Missaglia house is discussed and illustrated in Gelli and Moretti 1903, pp. 95–117.
9. Motta 1914, p. 207, no. 72.
10. Motta 1914, pp. 212–13, no. 97.
11. Motta 1914, p. 215, no. 108.
12. Motta 1914, p. 215, n. 2, and p. 223, no. 151.
13. Trapp 1929, pp. 41–47, no. 19; Boccia 1982a, pp. 282–83.
14. The Negroli arms are: Azure two keys in saltire, the bits in base and facing inward, tied together with a ribbon argent, the dexter key or, the sinister argent; between the bits, on a base vert, a lion passant or, its upraised paw resting on a ball argent. See G. B. di Crollanza, *Dizionario storico-blasonico delle famiglie nobili e notabili italiane* (Pisa: Presso la direzione del Giornale Araldico, 1886–90), vol. 2, p. 204.
15. For the two sallets, see Valencia de Don Juan 1898, pp. 141–43, nos. D 13, D 14; and especially J.-A. Godoy, in Burgos 1994, pp. 298–300, nos. 231, 232.
16. Lenz 1908, pp. 164–65, no. I.230 (mark reproduced). The modern inventory number is 3.O. 3361; the helm weighs 14 lb. 14 oz. (2,000 g).
17. Formerly in the private collection of Dr. Bashford Dean (1867–1928), Curator of the Department of Arms and Armor at the Metropolitan Museum, their earlier provenance is unrecorded. The marks, reproduced here for the first time, appear to have been first identified by Thomas and Gamber (1958), pp. 734–35, noting only the left vambrace.
18. Previously unpublished, the backplate was formerly in the collection of the Cincinnati Art Museum and was sold at William Doyle Galleries, New York, December 13, 1978, lot 91.
19. Stuart W. Pyhrr, "Some Elements of Armor Attributed to Niccolò Silva," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 18 (1983), p. 120, fig. 14.
20. For the identification of Silva's marks, see Blair 1965, pp. 22–24.
21. For example, Emperor Basil II is shown in a scale armor of classical fashion in a psalter produced in Constantinople, 976–1025 (reproduced in color in Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom, eds., *The Glory of Byzantium*, exh. cat. [New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997], p. 186). For Byzantine armor in general, see Koliaas 1988, pp. 37–64.
22. Andrew Martindale, *The Triumphs of Caesar by Andrea Mantegna in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen at Hampton Court* (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1979), p. 67.
23. The armor of Lorenzo Acciaiuoli is discussed by Lionello G. Boccia, "HIC IACET MILES: Immagini guerriere da sepolcristi toscani del Due e Trecento," in *Guerre e assoldati in Toscana 1260–1364*, exh. cat., ed. by L. G. Boccia (Florence: Museo Stibbert, 1982), p. 89 and pls. 20, 21.
24. The best analysis of the armor worn by Saint George remains that of Boccia and Coelho 1967, p. 134, ill. figs. 56–58.
25. We are extremely grateful to Eduardo T. Coelho for having pointed out the existence of this important monument, which seems to have been overlooked by arms and armor specialists. The Bentivoglio relief is discussed by Anna Maria Matteucci, "Le sculpture," in *Il tempio di San Giacomo Maggiore in Bologna*, ed. by Carlo Volpe (Bologna: Officine grafiche Poligrafici il Resto del Carlino, 1967), p. 77.
26. For example, the postmortem wardrobe (*guardaroba*) inventory of Cosimo I de' Medici, grand duke of Tuscany, begun on June 3, 1574, included an "ancient bronze helmet, broken" (celata di bronzo antica rotta); ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 87, fol. 38v. Later Medici inventories also refer to helmets in bronze or copper that may be of classical origin, among them two described in the armory in 1695: "A helmet of smooth copper (or metal), varnished iridescent [?] green and black" (Un Taschetto di rame [o Mettallo] liscio vernicata di color cangio verde, e nero), and "A helmet, or similar, of broken copper (or ancient metal) with an acorn at the top worked with scales" (Un Taschetto, o sim<sup>e</sup> di rame rozzo [o metallo antico] con Ianda [ghianda] in cima lavorata à scaglie); ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 710, fol. 25, nos. 186, 187. The 1630 inventory of the armory of the dukes of Urbino also included at least four ancient helmets in bronze: "A bronze helmet *all'antica* with its cheekpieces and with a button at the top; Another bronze helmet *all'antica* with a button at the top; Another bronze helmet *all'antica* with complete cheekpieces with a *vanello* [?] in the middle of the old helmet; Another copper helmet *all'antica* without cheekpieces, round and old" (Una Celata all'antica di rame con le sue orecchie con bottone in cima; Un'altra Celata all'antica di rame con bottone in cima; Un'altra Celata di rame all'antica con le orecchie sane con vanello in mezzo della Celata vecchia; Un'altra Celata all'antica di rame senza orecchie tonda vecchia); ASF, Urbino, Classe III, Filza XV, fols. 298v–299r. The terms *celata* and *taschetto*, which refer to open-faced helmets of sallet or burgonet type respectively, are here translated more generically as "helmet." The helmets with buttons, or acorns, on top may be examples of the Roman "jockey-cap" type, which had a compact rounded bowl with a raised button (sometimes engraved with scales like an acorn or an artichoke) at the apex and large cheekpieces; for this type, see Robinson 1975, pp. 13–25.
27. For a study of these cuirassed sculptures and a catalogue of all the known examples, see Vermeule 1959.
28. Bober and Rubinstein 1986, p. 206, no. 175.
29. Bober and Rubinstein 1986, pp. 205–6, no. 174a–b.
30. Bober and Rubinstein 1986, p. 197, no. 164.
31. Gunter Schweikhart, *Der Codex Wolfegg: Zeichnungen nach der Antike von Amico Aspertini*, Studies of the Warburg Institute, vol. 38 (London: Warburg Institute, University of London, 1986).
32. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Cod. Urb. Lat. 899, for which see Cosimo Stornajolo, *Codices urbinates latini* (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1902–21), vol. 2, pp. 624–26; and Tammara de Marinis, *Le nozze di Costanzo Sforza e Camilla d'Aragona celebrate a Pesaro nel maggio 1475* ([Florence: Vallecchi, 1946]).
33. "uno Re armato a l'anticha d'oro et d'argento cum una aquila nel pecto coronato di corona d'oro cum biondi capelli, et una stella d'oro in fronte; et nella man dextra havea uno dardo chiamato pilo; per insegna se mandava innanzi uno elmo a l'anticha d'argento cum corne di montone rivolte a l'orechie, overo a le guanze; et in cima del elmo era uno ocello chiamato Pico Marcio d'oro, et de varii colori cum le ale aperte." De Marinis, *Le nozze di Costanzo Sforza e Camilla d'Aragona*, p. 27.
34. Real Armería, Madrid, inv. no. A 59, for which see Valencia de Don Juan 1898, p. 30, and especially Ortwin Gamber, "Kolman Helmschmid, Ferdinand I. und das Thun'sche Skizzenbuch," *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien* 71 (1975), pp. 27–28 and fig. 26. Kolman's dolphin-shaped helmet, forged in one plate, is usually dated about 1530 (Kolman died in 1532) and therefore precedes the documented work of Filippo Negroli.
35. The panel belonged to a dismembered altarpiece dated 1472; see Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings: A Catalogue of the Collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art*,

- Venetian School (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1973), pp. 21–22. Saint George's armor was formerly silvered.
36. The Birago miniature is discussed in M. L. Evans, "New Light on the 'Sforziada' Frontispieces of Giovanni Pietro Birago," *The British Library Journal* 13, no. 2 (Autumn 1987), pp. 240–45, figs. 6, 7.
  37. For Bruni, see C. C. Bayley, *War and Society in Renaissance Florence: The "De Militia" of Leonardo Bruni* ([Toronto]: University of Toronto Press, 1961).
  38. For an introduction to embossing in the ancient world, see Herbert Maryon, "Metal Working in the Ancient World," *American Journal of Archaeology* 53 (1949), pp. 93–125.
  39. Morigi 1595 (1615), pp. 297–98.
  40. Dr. Williams's study will be published in a forthcoming volume of the *Metropolitan Museum Journal*.
  41. For the history and technique of European damascening, see the articles by James D. Lavin, "Damascening in Spain: A Brief History to 1840," and Ramiro Larrañaga, "Damascene as Part of the Engraver's Art," in London 1997b, pp. 13–35 and pp. 36–39, respectively.
  42. Morigi 1595 (1615), pp. 493–94.
  43. There is very little contemporary information concerning the division of labor within the Milanese armorer's atelier in the sixteenth century, whereas the variety of marks on a single armor from the preceding century confirms the specialization among the workers. This same subdivision of work was evidently maintained in the sixteenth century, as one can learn from three contracts of emigration concerning Milanese armorers in the years 1568, 1592, and 1595.

The earliest of these is dated August 18, 1568, contemporary with the late works of the Negroli. Established between the armorer Matteo Piatti and Francesco I de' Medici (1541–1587), grand duke of Tuscany, it stipulated the transfer from Milan and installation in Florence, for a duration of seven years, of a complete armorer's atelier. Matteo Piatti (or Piatto), like his brothers, had learned his trade from his father, Giovanni Battista Piatti, who directed a renowned atelier in Milan (*bottega principalissima*). According to the contract Matteo was to engage the service of his coworkers: one or two polishers; an engraver (etcher); two gilders—one working in gold leaf and the other in powdered gold; four master armorers, the first for making helmets, the second for body armor, mostly cuirasses, the third for arms, and the fourth for gauntlets; plus any additional assistants necessary to make an armor "in one day."

In 1592, twenty-four years later, one of Matteo's nephews, Jacopo Filippo Piatti of Milan, master armorer (*maistro di fare armature*), accepted the same post in Florence for seven years, taking the place of his uncle who, now old, had retired to Milan. According to a document of July 14, Jacopo Filippo indicated the need to have six or seven workers, while another of August 1 specifies that he would need ten to twelve workers and would need to obtain permission from the Milanese authorities to allow them to practice their profession outside the city. On September 2, the duke of Terranova, governor of Milan, granted a license for Piatti to emigrate, but with only four workers. This obliged Ferdinando I de' Medici's representative, Cavalieri Modesti, to appeal the governor's decision, arguing that four workers were insufficient to make an armor, that at least two were needed for making a breastplate, one for vambraces, and another for helmets, not to mention those required for polishing and other aspects of the craft. Cavalieri Modesti further indicated that a master like Jacopo Filippo Piatti must not be counted in these

numbers because, as supervisor of all this work, he would have no time to use his hands. Faced with a reticent governor who did not want to dispossess the city of Milan of its precious armorers, Modesti begged him to allow at least the smallest number of armorers to leave that would be necessary to make a complete armor—eight men at the minimum. Finally, on September 9, the governor granted permission for eight men to leave, not counting the master himself. A few days later the governor informed Modesti that he had been advised by his armorer (apparently Pompeo della Cesa, *armarolo di corte*) that Piatti could in fact easily fabricate an armor with the aid of six workers, but that, in deference to Ferdinando de' Medici, he had granted a license for eight men nonetheless.

A third illustration of the subdivision of labor within an armorer's atelier involves a contract for the emigration of a complete atelier that in 1595 was desired by Philip II of Spain (1527–1598) "to make armors in the same fashion as those in Milan" (*fabricar y hazer armas de la forma y manera que las hazan y fabrican agui en milan*). Thanks to a list sent on September 30, 1595, by Pedro Padilla, governor of Milan, we know the salary, the specialization, and the name of each member of this atelier: Juan Ambrosio Continuo (or Contino), etcher, 25 ducats; Juan Bautista Seminario, polisher, 20 ducats; Dionisio Terzago (Tazago), maker of vambraces, 20 ducats; Jusepe Piatin (Piatti), master of corslets, 20 ducats; Carlos de Vasin (Vezino), master of helmets or of morions, 20 ducats; Ludovico Piatin (Piatti), assistant for corslets, 20 ducats; Bernardo de Sasi (Sapi), armorer and gilder, 15 ducats; Alberto Vesozo (or Visoço) armorer and gilder, 15 ducats; Jácome Felipe Lomazo, master for gauntlets and rivets ("clavar das armas"), 14 ducats; Juan Pedro Ayrago, "who worked with hammers and aided by fire" (*travaja de martillo y ayuda al fuego*), 14 ducats; Juan Bautista Grande (or Tangrande), assistant armorer, 11 ducats; and Bartolomé Comolo, assistant, 11 ducats. These armorers were established at Eugui, in Navarre, making it the major center for armor production in Spain, and there they fabricated richly decorated armors for Philip III (1578–1621) and his children.

These documents demonstrate that the Milanese armorers' craft included very specialized talents devoted to specific tasks. Although dating from the second half of the sixteenth century, these texts confirm a long-established workshop tradition. While the master of a large atelier like Matteo Piatti might only supervise the production of commercial armors, pieces intended for an emperor, a king, or a prince of high rank would undoubtedly have elicited the master's personal intervention and skills. This would certainly have been true for Filippo Negroli, who may have forged, but certainly himself embossed, the major pieces of an important armor.

The Piatti contracts were fully published by Butters 1996, vol. 2, pp. 475–87, and that of 1568 is also discussed by M. Scalini, in Florence 1997, pp. 43, 48–49, n. 13, and Scalini 1997. The Spanish contract is discussed in Boccia and Godoy 1985–86, vol. 1, p. 135, no. 374, and more comprehensively in Godoy 1987, p. 42.

44. This discussion is based on a manuscript prepared by Lionello G. Boccia shortly before his death.
45. "Di Filippo Negrolo, milanese, intagliatore di cesello in arme di ferro con fogliami e figure, non mi distenderò, avendo operato, come si vede, in rame cose che si veddono fuor di suo, che gli hanno dato fama grandissima." Vasari 1568 (1906), vol. 5, p. 389.
46. "Et al tempo di questo gran re fu ritrovato l'intagliar nel ferro da Filippo Negruolo, che g'intagliò le armi." Lomazzo 1584 (1974), p. 548.



47. "Filippo Negrollo è stato principale intagliatore di basso rilievo nel ferro." Morigi 1592, p. 289.
48. "Filippo Negroli merita lodi immortali, perché è stato il principale intagliatore nel ferro di rilievo, e di basso rilievo, il che seguirono due suoi fratelli: Questo virtuoso spirito ha fatto stupire il Re di Francia, & Carlo Quinto Imperatore ne' suoi veramente maravigliosi lavori in armature, celate, e rottelle miracolose." Morigi 1595 (1615), pp. 297–98.
49. The table is found in Giovanni Sitoni di Scozia, *Theatrum Genealogicum Familiarum Illustrium, Nobilium et Civium Inclitae Urbis Mediolani*, begun in 1705, ASM, MS 10, vol. 3, fol. 316.
50. This imbalance in the study of Milanese armorers persists in later years. In the Thieme-Becker biographical lexicon, the Negroli do not rate a separate entry but are discussed only in passing in the very inadequate entry on the Missaglia by Hans Stöcklein (*Allgemeines Lexikon der Bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. by Hans Vollmer, vol. 24 [Leipzig: Verlag von E.A. Seemann, 1930], p. 592). Curiously, Filippo Negroli was dismissed in Matthias Pfaffenbichler's excellent survey *Armourers* (1992, p. 41) as "an armourer working in a very similar style to Bartolomeo Campi and Giorgio Ghisi."
51. Two additional references, utilizing French rather than Italian documents, are especially noteworthy. Émile Picot (1905) can be credited with identifying the merchant-armorer Giovan Pietro Negroli of Paris as the mysterious "fort honneste et riche marchand . . . seigneur Negrot," referred to by the chronicler Brantôme in the sixteenth century. Picot interpreted the Latin inscriptions on Filippo's armors better than his contemporaries, correctly identifying Filippo and Francesco as the sons of Jacopo (Giacomo) and hypothesizing that Giovan Pietro was probably the brother of Giovan Paolo, the son of Nicolò. He published two documents concerning Giovan Pietro, one directed to the duc de Guise of 1552, the other to the duc de Bussy of 1562. Additional references in the notarial archives in Paris, referring to Giovan Pietro Negroli (1556) and Giovan Ambrogio Negroli (1558), were published in extenso by Catherine Grodecki (1986).
52. Laking's attributions to the Negroli often lack logic and consistency. For example, he recognized Giovan Paolo's authorship of the Metropolitan Museum's signed breastplate (cat. no. 43; vol. 3, fig. 1056), but identified the similar cuirass in the Louvre (cat. no. 45; vol. 3, figs. 1057, 1058) as "undoubtedly the work of Filippo Negroli," and the comparable breastplate of the armor of Henry II (cat. no. 47; vol. 3, fig. 1090) as "inspired by some Negroli model" but of indeterminate authorship. On the other hand, his analysis of Filippo's burgonet of 1545 (cat. no. 35; vol. 4, fig. 1226) and the other versions in Paris (cat. no. 36; vol. 4, fig. 1227, which he considered autograph) and New York (cat. no. 37; vol. 4, fig. 1228, "a school work") agree with modern opinion. He also considered the curly-haired burgonet in the Metropolitan Museum (cat. no. 21; vol. 4, fig. 1229) a Negroli work. The burgonet now in the National Gallery in Washington (cat. no. 44; vol. 4, fig. 1233) he identified as "certainly" by Filippo, whereas the Morosini helmet in the same collection (cat. no. 67; vol. 4, figs. 1236a–c) he described as "somewhat in the manner of Paolo Negroli but probably a Roman mid-XVth century production." Following de Cosson, Laking attributed the Fame Armor (cat. no. 23; vol. 4, figs. 1220–23) to Bartolomeo Campi, and following Boehem, he accepted the lion helmet and Medusa shield in Vienna (cat. nos. 39, 42; vol. 4, figs. 1237, 1298) as by Lucio Piccinino.
53. Thomas and Gamber also accepted Filippo's authorship of the burgonets that seemed to be copies of the master's signed works:
- the curly-haired burgonet in the Metropolitan Museum (cat. no. 21), the two burgonets like that of 1545 (cat. nos. 36, 37), and the versions of the lion helmet in Vienna (cat. nos. 40, 41). The authors considered as Giovan Paolo's work the close helmet in the Metropolitan Museum (cat. no. 46) and the cuirass in the Louvre (cat. no. 45).
54. While this brief overview of the literature cannot cite every publication, several additional contributions to the study of Negroli armors are noteworthy. Claude Blair (1974, pp. 21–35) published in a particularly thorough manner the couters in Waddesdon Manor that belong to the Masks Garniture (cat. no. 30) and discussed anew the oeuvre of Caremolo Modrone, in which he rejected the opinion of Boccia and Coelho (1967) that the Palm Branch Armor (cat. no. 49) was the work of Filippo Negroli. In his supplement to James Mann's Wallace Collection catalogue of 1962, A. V. B. Norman (1986, pp. 49–51, 75–76, 81–82) identified the cheekpieces (inv. nos. A 206–207) as belonging to Filippo Negroli's burgonet of 1538 (cat. no. 29), rejected the burgonet A 106 as a work by Filippo, and cautiously suggested instead that burgonet A 108 was comparable to Filippo's Masks Garniture of 1539. He rejected the visor (A 205) as belonging to the Fame Armor (cat. no. 23) on account of its comparably inferior quality. In the second volume of the catalogue of the Vienna armory, Ortwin Gamber and Christian Beaufort (1990) maintained the Negroli attributions presented by Thomas and Gamber in 1958. Four of Filippo's signed works in the Real Armería, Madrid, were republished by José-A. Godoy (in New York 1991, pp. 144–54, and again in Barcelona and Madrid 1992, pp. 152–61, and Brussels 1994, pp. 168–77), for which additional documentation from the Spanish archives was presented.
55. As this catalogue was being completed, two additional studies by Scalini dealing with the Negroli appeared in print. In Beijing 1997, the author published several fragments of armor, originally from the Bargello, that had for decades been on loan to the Castel Sant'Angelo in Rome. These include two waist lames with pteruges (fig. 75) that match the scale-ornamented fragments in the Bargello and the Hermitage (cat. no. 59), portions of an armor *all'antica* that he maintained was made by Giovan Paolo Negroli about 1536 for Henry II of France. Scalini also identified the two arm pieces (fig. 48) as belonging to the Fame Armor (cat. no. 23); he reiterated his theory that the armor was made for Francis I of France by Filippo Negroli in 1525. He also revised his theory concerning cat. no. 19: considered in 1987 as forming part of a garniture of Guidobaldo II della Rovere, datable to 1538, Scalini now proposed that it originally formed part of the Fame Armor.
- In an article also published in 1997, Scalini, in developing an idea put forward by Boccia and Coelho (1967, p. 238), suggested that the "costume armor" worn by Guidobaldo II della Rovere in his portrait by Bronzino in the Galleria Palatina in Florence is a work by the Negroli atelier, and at the same time he identified it as a harness for use in the hunt. The Negroli attribution was also cautiously extended to two similar costume pieces, a cuirass in the Musée de l'Armée in Paris (inv. no. G. 12) and a couter in the Museo Stibbert in Florence (inv. no. 945). An embossed and damascened shield in the Museo Nazionale del Palazzo di Venezia in Rome (formerly Odescalchi Collection, inv. no. 403) was newly attributed to Filippo and Francesco Negroli. As these costume armors and the Odescalchi shield are not mentioned in the following catalogue entries, it should be stated here that the authors of this publication see no obvious similarity in these works to the documented oeuvre of Filippo Negroli.

# MILAN AND THE ARMS INDUSTRY IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

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SILVIO LEYDI

*The State of Milan is a small one; one can walk out of it in a single day no matter where one starts, even from the center. Nonetheless, this modest territory has for many years caused great suffering not just in Italy but in the surrounding lands as well. . . . It is both incredible and very sad to think that the wealth of so many kingdoms has been consumed and the blood of so many people shed while different princes tried either to possess it or defend it.<sup>1</sup>*

These words, with which the Venetian ambassador to Milan, Antonio Mazza, opened his report to the senate of the Venetian Republic, provide an accurate picture of the physical and political state of Milan in the year 1565. Yet the events that brought the city to this state of affairs are rooted in the late fifteenth century.

At the end of the Quattrocento the borders of the Milanese state extended, north to south, from the snowy peaks of the Alps to the Ligurian Sea, including Parma, Piacenza, and Pontremoli, and east to west, from the Adda and Oglio Rivers to the Sesia, as well as the territories of Alessandria and Tortona. Only twenty-five years later, on the eve of the battle of Pavia (February 1525), Milan had lost Bellinzona, Lugano, Locarno, the Valtellina, and the Val Chiavenna to the Swiss; Parma and Piacenza had been incorporated into the Papal States; and Genoa and Liguria had become independent. In 1535, when the last Sforza duke died, Milan's territory, according to official measurements (although in reality it was larger), was 12,250 square kilometers<sup>2</sup> and its population estimated at 1,200,000 inhabitants.

The city of Milan stood at the center of this state. It was the capital, a magnet for the inhabitants of the surrounding countryside, the seat of the tribunals, the Senate, the central administration, and, in the period of Spanish domination, the seat of the court of the governor. It was also

one of the most populous cities in the West; in Italy only Naples and Venice were larger. Milan was a very rich city, and this wealth supported every kind of commercial activity. Following medieval custom, workshops and warehouses were still grouped together on single streets wholly dedicated to one trade, so that the makers of quill pens, spurs, and perfumes, and the weavers, goldsmiths, and armorers all had their own neighborhoods in the city. The Street of the Armorers, the Via Armorari, was usually referred to in the sixteenth century as the Contrada degli Armorari.

Despite the fact that Milan was periodically devastated by epidemics or food shortages, which claimed huge numbers of casualties (the plagues of 1524 and 1576 may have wiped out a third of its population), the vitality of the city never waned. Indeed, if we follow the demographic trends over the course of the sixteenth century we see that the city's population nearly doubled, reaching 130,000 people just before the outbreak of the plague in 1630. Yet as the Venetian ambassador pointed out, it was not just natural catastrophes that marked the history of Milan in the Cinquecento.

From the French invasion of 1499 to the peace with France in 1559, and including the battle of Pavia (1525) and the conflicts over Piedmont (1544) and Parma (1552), Milan was at the center of every war between the Hapsburgs and the Valois. It was conquered and lost many times and occupied successively by French, Imperial, Sforza, Venetian, and Papal forces; each time it was retaken, it was lost again. Francesco II, the last Sforza duke, was finally restored to his domains by Charles V in 1530, although his reign was a brief one: he died, without any direct heirs, on the night between November 1 and 2, 1535, leaving the state without an independent ruler and once again in the hands of the emperor. From that time on, the responsibilities of the duke, officially first Charles V and then, after 1554, his son Philip, were carried out by a governor named by the central authority.



Fig. 38. Map of Milan by Giovan Battista Clarici (?), ca. 1577–78, showing the Castello Sforzesco, the ducal residence and seat of government, at the top, and two rings of city walls. Biblioteca dell'Accademia di San Luca, Rome

For several decades after 1535 Sforza functionaries maintained their positions in the civic and state administrations, but with the passing of that generation and a process of “Spanishization” that had begun to take hold, especially in the military, Spaniards became increasingly more prevalent in the city’s bureaucracies. The governor of Milan, who also functioned as the commander of imperial forces in Lombardy, was at first chosen from among the Italian generals who had most distinguished themselves in the wars against the French, such as Alfonso d’Avalos, marchese del Vasto, and Ferrante Gonzaga. After Gonzaga was removed from office in 1554, having been accused, perhaps unjustly, of financial fraud, the governor, the city’s appointed polit-

ical leader, was always a Spaniard. A certain number of seats in the Senate (the state’s supreme tribunal) and on the *Magistrati delle entrate* (which oversaw the state’s financial administration) were by law reserved for Spaniards, a fact that contributed to the ever-deeper penetration of a Spanish military and administrative tradition in Milan.

It would be wrong to view the period of Spanish domination in Milan—at least until the plague in 1630—as a time of privation, pilfering, and plundering brought on by foreign occupation. During the so-called Italian Wars, the Milanese state, unanimously considered the bulwark against an invasion by the French, was widely subsidized by Sicily, Naples, and Spain. The battles fought on its ter-



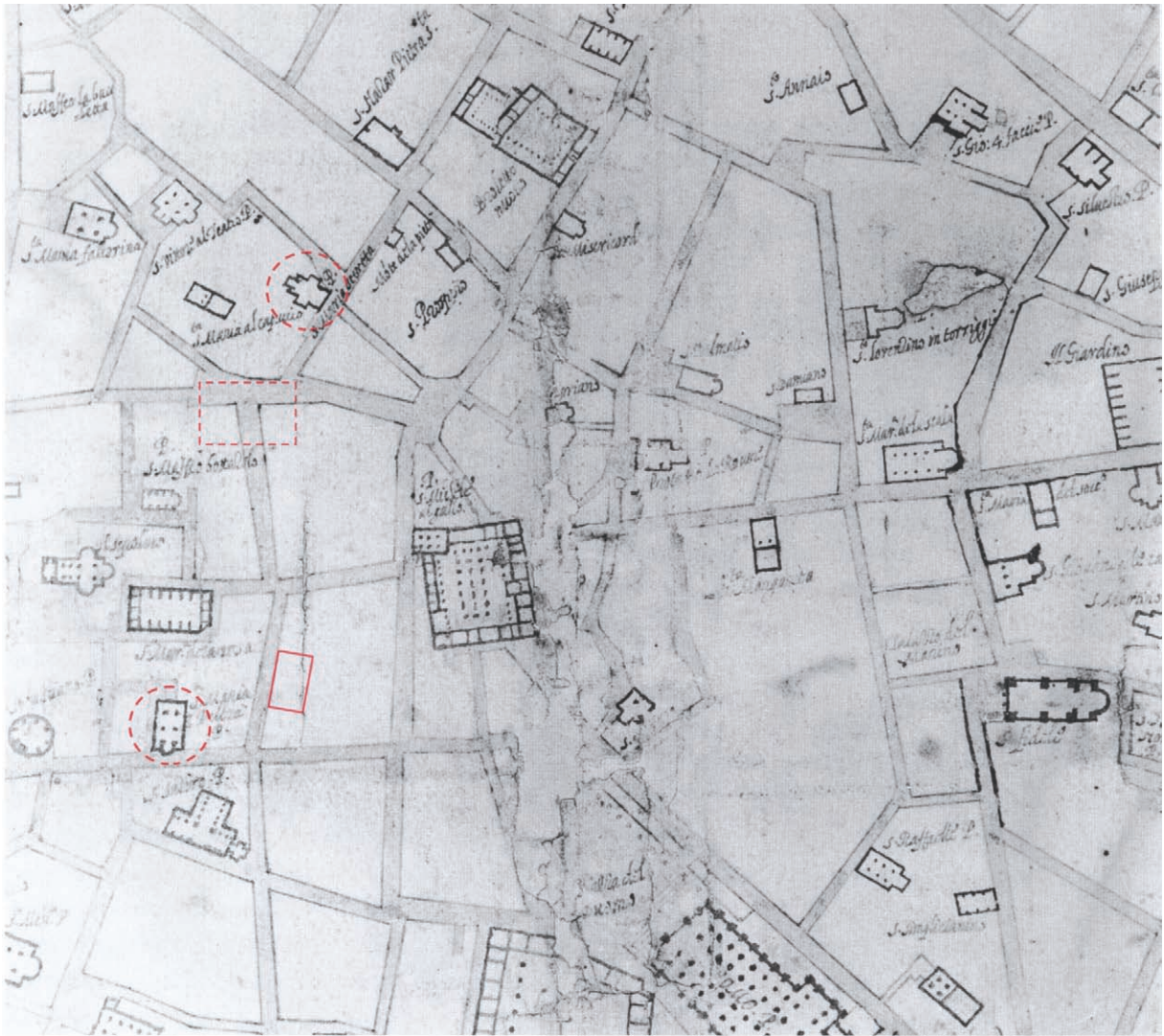


Fig. 39. Detail of map of Milan in fig. 38, showing the Streets of the Armorers (Contrada degli Armadori) and the Sword Smiths (Via Spadari), the parish churches of Santa Maria Segreta (circled above) and Santa Maria Beltrade (circled below), and the workshop/residence of Filippo Negrolì of the corner of the Contrada and the piazza of Santa Maria Segreta (in larger box) and of the Missaglia (later Negrolì) on Via Spadari (smaller box)

ritory obviously wrought great destruction in addition to the periodic food shortages and more-than-occasional outbreaks of the plague. On the whole, Milan received much more money than it was forced to pay out, money that for the most part stayed in Lombardy and was spent, for example, on fortifications or the acquisition of food, clothing, and arms for the army, contributing to the prosperity of a broad section of the population (which, in turn, created an increase in consumption and put more money into the economy).

It is not surprising that in a political, economic, or commercial sense the people of the duchy and especially the city of Milan could maintain and even increase their posi-

tion as successful manufacturers and merchants of every kind of goods. The fame of the Milanese shops and of their owners was so taken for granted in the Cinquecento that it became proverbial, and foreign visitors marveled at the fervor of activity in the shops, at the wealth of the businesses, and at the magnificence of the products. Over the course of the sixteenth century there was hardly a court in Europe whose nobles had not turned to Milanese craftsmen when they bought or ordered deluxe objects of great value and ostentation—goldsmithing, embroidery, clothing, engraved or carved gemstones, cameos, silk woven with silver and gold, and, of course, arms. The manufacture of armor and weapons had for centuries



been Milan's most famous export, the arms industry and the city's name being practically synonymous. Milan's highly respected and sought-after armorers increased its prestige at home and abroad, none of them more than Filippo Negroli. In the opening words of a petition on behalf of the armorers of Milan to the city's governor, "the *contrada* and the trade of the armorers here in the city of Milan is admired by all the world."<sup>3</sup>

A comprehensive history of the arms industry in sixteenth-century Milan has yet to be written, and it is impossible at this stage of research to give a full account of a business that involved such a large part of the city's economic and manufacturing sectors. The difficulty is compounded by the lack of any substantial published information about the subject and especially by the general bias of scholars who have shown more interest in the artistic than the economic or "industrial" aspect of the armorer's business.<sup>4</sup> The history of Milanese armor production seems to be characterized by the presence of a few highly talented individuals and of single workshops run by a small number of families that specialized in armors of great beauty and quality and which were destined for the nobility and men of high social rank who were willing to pay huge prices for those finely wrought and often elaborately decorated pieces. These "artistic" objects came from the workshops of the Missaglia, the Negroli, Giovan Battista Zarabaglia, Pompeo della Cesa, and Lucio Piccinino, to name only the most important, best-known Milanese armorers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and they have monopolized the literature on the subject. There has been little interest in the more ordinary "everyday" harnesses of other masters or even those made by the famous armorers who, more often than is realized, frequently produced plain armors in large numbers for commercial sale.

In painting as realistic a picture as possible of the arms manufacturing industry in Spanish Milan it is necessary, first and foremost, to note that the embossed and damascened armors made in the Milanese workshops of the Cinquecento and so admired throughout Europe were not a determining factor in the city's economy, nor was the production of such objects very remunerative for the artists and craftsmen. In a world where labor costs, even for highly skilled craftsmen, were very low, substantial profits came from the large-scale production of medium and lower priced arms rather than from individual pieces made for emperors or kings. The enormous value of the latter was determined by the quantity of precious materi-

als, usually gold and silver, utilized in their decoration rather than from the craftsmanship expended in fashioning them. Thus it was that Giovan Pietro Negroli (son of Nicolò), an international merchant, became one of the richest armorers of Milan and not his more famous cousin Filippo, who made armor for Charles V. The production of parade armors was tied to fashion and the tastes of a social group that consisted of only several hundred people in the whole of Europe (the names of the patrons are always the same—Hapsburg, Valois, Gonzaga, Farnese, della Rovere, Savoy, the nobles of the European courts, generals, dukes, and princes); it was not an integral part of the industry that supplied the military with the armaments it needed, and therefore it was less likely to be influenced by political and economic factors. Indeed, the fabrication of deluxe armors reached its apex in periods of stagnation, if not of economic contraction or crisis. Filippo Negroli and his magnificent works thus appeared in Milan in the early 1530s, when the city was still suffering from the Italian Wars and the plague of 1524, and he disappeared from the scene at the end of the 1550s, when peace with France offered the opportunity for economic recovery. Armorers—really artists—like Filippo Negroli were the exception, not the rule, in Spanish Milan.

Military and political events in Europe, which included the shifting of the battlefields from Italy to Germany, France, and the Low Countries, had an important impact on the growth or contraction of Milanese arms production and eventually brought the industry into crisis in the last third of the century. This crisis was accentuated by competition from armorers in Germany and especially Brescia. For many years there had also been laments by the Milanese armorers against the periodic orders prohibiting the exportation of arms not only to countries at war with the empire (primarily France) but more generally outside the confines of the Milanese state. These orders were frequently initiated in anticipation of a war but were not always rescinded promptly after the signing of a peace treaty or passing of the political crisis, thus constricting the armorers' foreign market. For example, in a petition of September 19, 1559, the armorers and customs agents of Milan lamented that, despite the passing of many months since the signing of the peace of Cateau-Cambrésis (April 3, 1559), the commerce of arms was still almost impossible.<sup>5</sup> As a result of the political changes, orders placed for armors were often canceled or abandoned, leaving armorers holding hundreds of harnesses, partially or completely executed, in their warehouses. Events such as these seem to have caused a number

of Milanese armorers to flee the city for more stable markets, such as Brescia and Bergamo, although these were probably the less well established or well connected armorers and not the major families.

An examination of the few surviving lists of armorers active in Milan in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries shows immediately that the number of craftsmen declined from seventy-two to twenty-six in less than a century: seventy-two masters were recorded in 1474,<sup>6</sup> twenty-five in 1531,<sup>7</sup> twenty in 1533,<sup>8</sup> twenty-three masters about 1560,<sup>9</sup> and twenty-six in 1569.<sup>10</sup> During this same time, their business turnover appears to have collapsed. In 1580 Milan's armorers were reported to have exported only 55,491 lire of merchandise against imports of 28,732 lire. Exports over the year included 100 cavalry armors and 390 infantry harnesses, 658 infantry corslets, 138 gilt and 1,773 plain morions, and 79 shields, while at the same time 2,944 unfinished helmets were brought into Milan.<sup>11</sup> These pessimistic statistics seem to be contradicted by other documents that suggest that the market was a healthy and active one, at least for the years immediately preceding 1580. For example, between mid-1569 and February 1570 Nicolò Cyd, the army's treasurer, placed some enormous orders with Milanese armorers, which were to be filled in only a month and which specify that the arms must be from Milan and not from Brescia or Bergamo. These orders are more than double the total value of arms sales for all of 1580. Francesco Seroni (called Savioli) and Antonio Maria Vedano agreed to supply 10,000 plain morions for 5 lire and 11 soldi each, for a total value of 55,500 lire. Other masters (in four contracts) agreed to provide 17,000 powder flasks at a cost of 2 lire each, while a group of twenty-six armorers—including Giovan Antonio and Alessandro Negroli, Pompeo della Cesa, and Giovan Battista Piatti—promised to deliver 1,600 corslets within five months at a price of 6½ scudi each, for a total value of 57,200 lire.<sup>12</sup> Further orders in 1575, coordinated by Pompeo della Cesa, were guaranteed again by Seroni and by Giovan Pietro Prina, who were able to extend credit for tens of thousands of lire.<sup>13</sup>

Despite such large orders from the state, there seems to have been a growing crisis, probably because of a contraction of private orders at the middle and lower level, which caused the Milanese armorers to feel the need to form a guildlike trade organization called a *Università*. This organization, because it was governed by clear regulations that bound each member, was able to defend the prerogatives of a craft that had been fundamental to the

city and was now in decline. The first mention of a real armorers' corporation in Milan comes in July 1575, when Philip II was presented with the statutes necessary for its foundation.<sup>14</sup> A letter to Philip II is attached to the statutes asking him to approve them as the only way to stem the tide of artisans moving to Brescia and the decline of the craft in the city. A second version of these regulations is dated 1587,<sup>15</sup> and it was only then that Philip II, king of Spain and duke of Milan, and the Milanese Senate approved its formation.

The statutes of 1587 were obviously drawn up at a time when the armorer's craft in Milan was in some difficulty. Not only do they contain a provision to regulate the distribution of commissions among the members when they totaled more than forty complete armors or more than 250 morions, but many of the articles were aimed solely at protecting a monopoly that was likely already lost. Anyone living within the borders of the duchy of Milan and not a member of the corporation was thus forbidden to possess, acquire, or trade in foreign (especially Brescian) unworked or semi-worked arms. The armorers themselves were required to inform the corporation's head, called the abbot, in writing whenever any arms not made in Milan were imported into the city and to report their place of origin, value, and final destination. In addition, the statutes required that each part of a complete armor be marked (especially the breastplates, backplates, arms, and helmets), that Milanese pieces not be mixed with those of foreign origin, and that all contracts be drawn up by the notary (unfortunately still unidentified) designated by the corporation in order to allow quick inspections of all types. It was also proposed, but not approved by the Senate, that boys between the ages of fourteen and eighteen be allowed to make and sign apprentice's contracts without the approval of an adult guardian. Beyond these individual rules, the 1587 statutes as a whole were clearly aimed at sheltering an ailing trade by means of political protectionism which, on the one hand, prohibited anyone but corporation members from trading in defensive arms (whether they were made in Milan or imported from abroad) and, on the other, tried artificially to maintain both the Milanese armorer's craft and the individual shops that were no longer able, at least on the level of ordinary production, to compete with Brescian artisans.

The statutes of 1575 are not dissimilar to those of 1587 and had the same protectionist intent, although they are less rigid with regard to internal production and especially the importing of arms from abroad. They do include

obligations to register a shop's mark and to declare the place of origin of foreign arms as well as prohibitions against mixing Milanese and foreign pieces in the same armor and against selling Brescian arms as Milanese production. What is missing is the attempt to ban in any way possible all imported production and to favor local masters with overly protectionist rules, an indication that in 1575 Milanese shops and their owners were still optimistic about their share of the European arms market.

Those who made their living from the production of defensive arms did not wait for the statutes of the armorers' corporation to be approved to try to find a solution to an ever-worsening situation. Everyone was aware of the crisis facing the simple armorer, the proprietor of a small or medium-sized shop and a dealer in the fruit of his own labor (as were the majority of the city's armorers), and everyone tried to earn as much as possible from a changing market.

There were several choices open to the most enterprising craftsmen since the average armorer's shop could no longer guarantee its owner a sufficient living. One was to specialize in the production of upper-end and luxury pieces for which there had always been a market and for which demand was actually growing. Another possibility was for the armorer to transform himself from simple producer into large-scale supplier (working primarily for the army). A third choice was to diversify his production so that along with arms he might make furniture, plaquettes, candelabra, inkstands, saddles, and stirrups, usually luxury objects in iron and steel that could be decorated in the same rich manner as the best armors of the period.

It is perhaps possible to place the onset of such diversification in the middle of the Cinquecento. The information available about the Milanese arms industry is still too fragmentary to offer a more precise answer. What needs to be stressed is the adaptive capacity of an entire generation of ironworkers, which abandoned deeply rooted customs in search of new markets and greater incomes.

Among Milanese armorers, the most important representatives of the group of "true" armorers, that is, those who produced and sold arms as a family workshop or in association with other craftsmen, were certainly the sons of Gian Giacomo Negroli—Filippo and his brothers (see "A History of the Negroli Family"). In the second half of the sixteenth century, when Filippo retired from making arms (1557), Pompeo della Cesa rose to become the city's most important armorer. Coincidentally, he did have links

to the Negroli family, as his brother Camillo was placed in Filippo's workshop as an apprentice in 1556.<sup>16</sup>

Active from the 1570s until the very end of the century,<sup>17</sup> Pompeo assumed the responsibility of court armorer in Milan, making a number of richly etched and gilt armors for the leading men of his day, including Emanuele Filiberto of Savoy (in 1572 and 1578), Carlo Emanuele I of Savoy (in 1584), Alessandro Farnese (in 1586), and Vincenzo I Gonzaga (in 1592).<sup>18</sup> Besides this luxury production, we know that Pompeo also supervised the production of lesser quality arms destined for imperial troops in Lombardy. In 1569 he agreed to deliver only twenty corslets (out of a total of 1,600 pieces),<sup>19</sup> but in 1575 he was charged by the governor of Milan, the marchese di Ayamonte, as guarantor of their quality, to oversee a very substantial order of corslets and morions, which was to be distributed equally among the city's many armorers.<sup>20</sup>

Pompeo was active at every level of the arms market, from the fabrication of deluxe armors meant for princes and dukes (unique and extremely valuable custom-made pieces) to mass production for the imperial infantry (hundreds of standard-size pieces at a set price). Two orders help explain this type of production, which is generally less well documented than the others. A contract between Pompeo and Captain Michele de Cantis, a resident of Marseilles, was drawn up in July 1567 for twenty-six armors for men-at-arms. They are described as "white, with a strong breastplate and etched all over with a black ground and foliage gilt with powdered gold [i.e., fire-gilding], with arms and tassets, with the edges worked lame by lame and gilt, with arms, legs, gauntlets, and greaves like the armor," in addition the matching saddles, horse trappings, chanfrons, and lance-rests "gilt and etched like the armor." At the same time, de Cantis ordered "forty-two bowmen's armors like the others except that the ground should be etched in white on black without greaves or buffes but with knees." The price agreed upon was 36 scudi for each armor for a man-at-arms and 24 for the others; the entire order, comprising sixty-eight harnesses and related horse equipment worth almost 2,000 scudi, was to be delivered before Christmas day.<sup>21</sup>

The second order came almost twenty years later, in 1584. In this case Pompeo was not working alone but was the principal among a group of armorers contracted by Pietro Tasso to supply a total of 500 corslets, 150 morions, 200 muskets, 605 musket forks, 2,200 powder flasks, and 85 halberds, equipment most likely intended to outfit a regiment bound for the Low Countries.<sup>22</sup> Of the total Pompeo

undertook to make a hundred white corslets “etched with seven bands, new, etched in the current style, well riveted, with no old leather and all in order, trimmed with braid, all according to the model given to the aforesaid, most illustrious Signor Tasso. . . .” The price agreed upon was 11 gold scudi for each corslet.<sup>23</sup>

In 1595, Paolo Morigi concluded the chapter about Milanese armorers in his *Nobiltà di Milano*:

Now, if it were not for the need to be brief, I would tell of the many Milanese who were inventors of outstanding and useful types of armor and who took this art to the kingdom of France and other kingdoms and who with this profession earned great riches. And in Milan there are those of this profession who, having gained much wealth, now live honorably and are considered to be of the nobility having married into the noble families of the city. There are those also who raised themselves and their families to the nobility by their great wealth just as many other artists and merchants have done.<sup>24</sup>

Morigi’s references to the clever and talented Milanese armorers who took their art to France undoubtedly refer to the Negroli, especially to Giovan Paolo and his brothers who, as is discussed in “A History of the Negroli Family,” had a long-standing and extremely successful and lucrative trade with that realm. And it is clear, although Morigi does not name him specifically, that the descendant of the armorer to whom he is referring is Cesare Negroli, who began as a merchant and became a banker—and one of the city’s principal bankers in the 1570s. In 1570 he married Lucrezia Melzi, a noblewoman, and became lord of Brembio in 1583. Cesare Negroli was, however, an exception in sixteenth-century Milan. He came from a family of armorers, but neither he nor his father, Giovan Pietro, had been involved directly in the actual fabrication of arms, leaving that job to their kin (Giovan Pietro’s brothers Giovan Paolo, Giovan Battista, and Giuseppe). Instead they concentrated on selling the final product. There is no real parallel for this financial and social success except in the case of the Negroni da Ello family—called Missaglia—who, although armorers, had succeeded in raising themselves to the nobility in 1472, buying the feudal holding of Corte di Casale.

The Negroli were not the only successful merchant-armorers. The Seroni (Serono or da Serono) family—called Savioli—went in a totally different direction. They were armorers at least from the end of the fifteenth cen-

tury, when the brothers Antonio and Cristoforo were active in the trade.<sup>25</sup> Bernardo Seroni was a creditor of Francis I of France in 1531, and the family became linked to the Negroli when Cecilia married Gerolamo Negroli about 1560.<sup>26</sup> Over the course of the decades, the Seroni diversified their activities until they came to occupy, in the second half of the Cinquecento, a place at the highest level of the military circle in Spanish Milan. Francesco Seroni and Antonio Maria Vedano were able to promise delivery of 10,000 plain morions to the army less than a month after the order had been placed,<sup>27</sup> indicating either an exceptionally well stocked warehouse—and the wherewithal to tie up an extraordinary amount of capital—or a wide network of contacts with foreign suppliers; the truth is that they likely had both. Francesco Seroni acquired arms by a variety of means. He certainly had the production of his own shop, which was near those of Giovan Paolo and the other Negroli in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta.<sup>28</sup> When his personal production was not sufficient, or when there was a good business deal to be made, Francesco did not hesitate to buy arms from others. In 1572 he was successful in buying a cavalry armor and one for infantry use being sold by the state treasury, perhaps because they were seized goods.<sup>29</sup> In 1575, Francesco Seroni again, but this time with merchant-armorer Giovan Pietro Prina, acted as guarantor and provided the surety in an agreement (already referred to above) by which Pompeo della Cesa, chosen for the quality of his production, was to supply a vast number of corslets and morions.<sup>30</sup> This confirms Seroni’s role as an entrepreneur, financier, and distributor rather than a manufacturer of defensive arms in Milan in the second half of the sixteenth century.

The decorators are the last group of artisans connected to the production of arms and are the ones about whom we have the least information. They were not armorers in the strict sense of the word since they often worked on partially finished pieces made by others, but instead were embossers, damasceners, etchers, and gilders who finished or embellished both armor and weapons, and every other kind of item manufactured in iron or steel. Filippo Negroli’s workshop appears to have followed the old model in its self-sufficiency, with the four brothers evidently being capable of producing, from start to finish, the finest parade armors of the century. Although the exact division of labor among the brothers is not always clearly specified in the documents, Filippo, the principal artist, was responsible for the embossing and his younger broth-



er Francesco for the damascening. The fact that Francesco was specifically appointed “gilder to the emperor” and left the family shop to establish his own nearby (although not breaking entirely with his brothers), including taking on an apprentice to learn the art of damascening, suggests that there was ample call for specialized gilders and damasceners who could serve a number of related crafts.

In the second half of the century another of these artist-decorators was Giovan Battista Zarabaglia (or Sera-baglio), who was praised by Paolo Morigi in 1592 as a great iron chiseler and whose name is mentioned in documents in connection with the famous harness he sold in 1559 to Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol (Hofjagd- und Rüstammer, Vienna, inv. no. A 785).<sup>31</sup> Zarabaglia appears to have been an embosser and in this instance worked with Marco Antonio Fava, a damascener, to create one of the most sumptuous armors of the period. The archives in Milan contain a number of unpublished documents relating to this important master,<sup>32</sup> who was also active in the third quarter of the century in the decoration of

iron objects other than arms. But these works are very different in style from the ones that are studied in this catalogue and constitute another chapter in the history of Milanese armor.

Thorough research on the Milanese arms industry has yet to be undertaken. The documents that have thus far come to light in the research done for this exhibition catalogue, which was intended to gather information about the Negroli family (and has yielded results beyond any expectation), are not sufficient to describe a history as complex and multidimensional as that of the ironworkers of Milan. They do, however, give us an idea of what still needs to be found in the archives on this subject. Perhaps for a historian the most interesting information is that which concerns the arms industry. It was not just the great artisans who were the true masters of armor making, but also the much larger number of still-unknown masters, who allowed Milan to maintain its supremacy in the production of armor at all levels of demand.

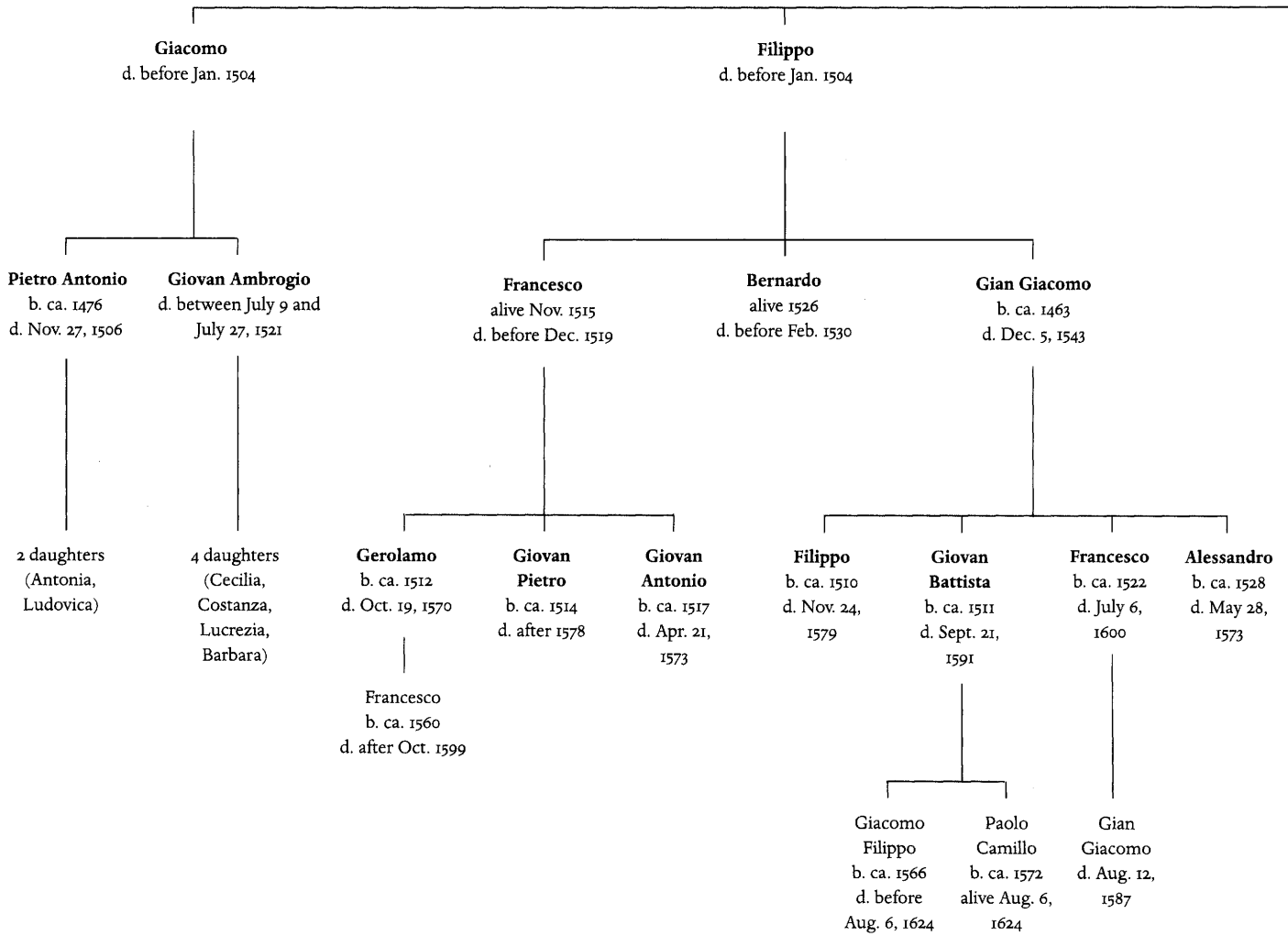
1. “Lo Stato di Milano è un picciolo circuito di paese, del quale si può uscire in una breve giornata, trovisi l’uomo dove si voglia, se bene fosse nel centro. Nondimeno questo così poco spazio di terreno ha già tanti anni posto tanti travagli, non pure nell’ Italia sola, ma nelle provincie circostanti . . . , che è cosa non solo meravigliosa, ma lacrimabile a considerare i tesori di quanti regni, ed il sangue di quanti popoli siano stati consumati e sparso, mentre che diversi principi han cercato ora d’impadronirsene ed ora di difenderlo.” Eugenio Albèri, ed., *Le relazioni degli ambasciatori veneti al Senato durante il secolo decimosesto*, ser. 2, vol. 2 (Florence: Società editrice fiorentina, 1841), p. 467 (Antonio Mazza’s report, 1565).
2. As a comparison, Lombardy today is a little less than 24,000 square kilometers. This includes the provinces of Bergamo and Brescia (in the sixteenth century part of the Venetian Republic), Mantua (independent in the Cinquecento), and Sondrio (which was under Swiss domination). The modern province ceded Novara and Alessandria to Piedmont.
3. “Per tutto l’universo mondo si lauda la contrada et arte de li armaroli della presente città di Milano.” ASM, Commercio parte antica 35, fasc. 4.
4. For an approach that is less interested in the artistic and more in the economic aspects of arms production, see the still excellent study by Rossi, in Milan 1977.
5. ASM, Commercio parte antica 35, fasc. 4.
6. ASM, N 760; see M[aria] Paola Zanoboni, *Artigiani, imprenditori, mercanti: Organizzazione del lavoro e conflitti sociali nella Milano sforzesca, 1450–1476* (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1996), pp. 244–46.
7. ASM, N 4975; see Motta 1914, p. 227. The master armorers listed in 1531 were: Battista Piatti and his brother Biagio, Giuseppe Cavezzali and his brother Giovanni, Giovan Ambrogio Grossi (or Grassi), Battista Monti, Giacomino Vaironi, [?] Giovenzate, †Giovan Antonio da Intra, Giovan Antonio Figino, Giovan

- Andrea de Gallicis, Francesco Mozate, Gabriele Grassi, Battista Coliati, Luigi Biancardi, Giacomo Borri, Giovan Pietro Meraviglia, Bonaventura da Lissone (or Lessona), Cristoforo da Lodi, †Gio . . . Panigarola, Ambrogio Cavaliere, Ambrogio Opreno, Giovan Ambrogio and Battista Varedo, Bernardino Serono, Cristoforo Lomazzo, †Lorenzo Rho, Alberto Vimercatio.
8. ASM, N 4976; see Motta 1914, p. 228. The master armorers listed in 1533 were: Battista Monti, Battista Coliati, Giuseppe Cavezzali, Battista Piatti, Biagio Piatti, Ambrogio Rippa (or Riva), Giovan Antonio Biancardi, Giacomo Borri, Cristoforo Besana, †Giovan Antonio da Intra, Giovan Antonio Figino, Ambrogio Opreno, Ambrogio Cavaliere, Bonaventura da Lissone (or Lessona), Giovan Ambrogio Calvi, †Francesco Giovenzate, Giovan Antonio Gallini, †Giuseppe Panigatis, Bernardino Serono, Giovan Ambrogio Mutono, Giovan Cristoforo Cantoni, †Giovan Ambrogio (?) di San Cassiano detto Bachiccolli (?), Benedetto and Giovan Ambrogio Porro.
  9. ASM, Materie 44, fasc. 13; see Gelli and Moretti 1903, p. 213. “Il nome de li armaroli da Milano,” ca. 1560–65, contains the following names: Paolo Negrolo, Al[e]xandro Negrolo, Hieronimo Negrolo, Baptista Negrolo, Fran[ces]co Savia, Sebastiano de Prina, Antonio Biancardo, Baptista Cremosano, Fran[ces]co Razarella, Fran[ces]co da Vedano, Hieronimo Bizozero, Thomaso Bosso, Melchion de Piro, Antonio Rome, Gio[vanni] Antonio Gambarella, Nicholò Giompardino, Jacobo Phillipppo Cisarò, Gio[vanni] Ambrosio Borro, Al[e]xandro Nada, Battista Spegeilto, Domenico del[l]a Torre, Battista Palto [Piatti?], the heirs of Biasso Pialto [probably Biagio Piatti], Appolonio Piatto [Piatti].
  10. ASM, N 15690, August 9, 1569. The armorers are listed in a contract to supply corslets to the Spanish army at the price of 6½ soldi each; the numbers indicate the pieces available immediately and those that are promised by Christmas: Giovan Antonio

- Negroli (70 immediately), Sebastiano Prina (40 + 100), Francesco Saviolo (40 + 150), Giovan Antonio Orso (40 + 80), Gian Giacomo Solaro (20 + 50), Antonio Maria Vedano (35 + 100), Giovan Stefano Morono (20 by Christmas), Battista Carmesano (10 + 40), Giovan Antonio Castello and Giuseppe da Oreno (50 by Christmas), Melchion [Melchiorre] Cesato (15 by Christmas), Gerolamo Bizozero (40 + 90), Francesco della Torre (6 + 25), Melchion [Melchiorre] da Perego (5 + 25), Giorgio Mantegazza (10 + 20), Cesare di Rosi [Rossi?] (10 + 20), Cesare di Giulij (70 by Christmas), Giovan Pietro dal Ferno (8 + 20), Giovan Battista de Piatì (30 + 200), Giovan Andrea di Conti (50 by Christmas), Battista Caser (25 by Christmas), Alessandro Biancardi (100 by Christmas), Francesco da Bià [da Abbiategrasso?] (10 by Christmas), Francesco Biancardi (10 by Christmas), Pompeo della Chiesa (20 by Christmas), Alessandro Negroli (10 + 25).
11. See ASCM, Materie 306, *Formazione del valimento del traffico del mercimonio della Città de Milano dell'anno 1580* (printed list of all the merchandise entering or leaving Milan with its value).
  12. See ASM, N 15690, August 9, 1569, for the corslets. The same sheet also contains contracts for arquebuses, partizans, gunpowder, etc., as well as provisions for packing and shipping these arms to Genoa and to Spain.
  13. ASM, N 16612, January 24, 1575.
  14. ASM, Senato-Deroghe 50, July 1, 1575. The corporation was to be named for the Blessed Virgin. The suggestion that an earlier corporation had existed since 1525 (see Caterina Santoro, ed., *Collegi professionali e corporazioni d'arti e mestieri della vecchia Milano*, exh. cat. [Milan: Archivio Storico Civico di Milano, 1955], pp. 39–42) is probably without foundation (the statutes of 1584 mention others of 1525, but these were for the sword makers' corporation) since the "Universitas" of 1474 (see Zanoboni, *Artigiani, imprenditori, mercanti*, pp. 145–46) must be considered more an assembly than an actual corporation, which needed to have statutes, social responsibilities, dues, oaths, and above all the sovereign's approval to exist.
  15. ASCM, Materie 44, March 16, 1587. Attached to the regulations are the changes required for their approval.
  16. ASM, N 12236, November 24, 1556. The apprentice's contract was for three years.
  17. On October 16, 1599, Pompeo declared that he owned 156 *pertiche* (a *pertica* is a land measure of about 655 square meters) of vineyard just outside Milan. ASCM, Famiglie 452.
  18. L[ionello] G. Boccia, "Della Cesa, Pompeo," *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, vol. 36 (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1988), pp. 733–38. Emilio Caravatti, *Arte, tecnica e diffusione della fabbriche di armi milanesi della fine del XVI secolo: La produzione di Pompeo della Cesa, "ultimo" armaiolo milanese*, degree thesis, Politecnico di Milano, Facoltà di Architettura, 1988–89, 4 vols., is also a useful source, especially for the many unpublished documents concerning Pompeo.
  19. ASM, N 15690, August 9, 1569. Of the twenty-six armorers under contract, only seven supplied a hundred or more pieces: Sebastiano Prina (140); Francesco Serono (190); Giovan Antonio Orso (120), Antonio Maria Vedano (135); Gerolamo Bizzozzero (130); Giovan Battista Piatti (130), and Alessandro Biancardi (100).
  20. ASM, N 16612, January 24, 1575 (contract for 1,240 infantry corslets and 6,410 morions to be delivered within four months), and April 6, 1575 (760 corslets and 3,560 morions). Other contracts for defensive arms, arquebuses, and pole arms were drawn up at the same time with other masters as well as agreements with packers.
  21. The armors for the men-at-arms are described as "bianche, con il petto forte e inciso tutto intorno con il fondo nero e i fogliami dorati in oro macinato, con i bracciali e scarselle con gli orli [lavorati] a lama per lama e dorati, con i bracciali, l'arnese, i guanti e gli schinieri uguali all'armatura"; those for the bowmen as "quantadue armature da arcieri uguali, salvo che il fondo deve essere inciso in bianco su nero, senza schinieri né buffe, ma con i ginocchietti." ASM, N 11274, July 11, 1567.
  22. Pietro Tasso was the son of Raimondo, first of the line of the Spanish branch of the Tasso family and imperial postmaster and chamberlain to Charles V and Philip II. Pietro was a career military officer, and he died in 1584 at the siege of the Flemish city of Dendermonde. *Le Poste dei Tasso, un'impresa in Europa: Contributi in occasione della mostra "I Tasso, l'evoluzione delle poste,"* exh. cat. (Bergamo: Comune di Bergamo, 1984), pp. 2–3.
  23. "incise con sette liste, nuovi, incisi alla moderna, ben inchiodati, senza cuoi vecchi e ben in ordine, orlati di passamaneria, conformi al modello dato al detto Illustrissimo Signor Tasso . . . , da qui a giorni quindici prossimi a venire"; ASM, N 19594, no. 278, February 20, 1584. This is the only instance I have noted where a different price is paid for identical work because of a craftsman's reputation. Indeed some masters were paid 10 scudi and others 10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> scudi for each corslet even though they were to make them "conformi in tutto per tutto" to Pompeo's. See the contract drawn up the following day with Battista Gandini for 100 corslets; ASM, N 19594, no. 278, February 21, 1584.
  24. "Hora, se non havesse riguardo alla brevità, racconterei de' molti Milanesi, che furono inventori di grandi, & utili foggie d'armature, e c'hanno portato questo esercizio nel Regno della Francia, & in altri Regni, e che con questa professione hanno acquistato grandissime ricchezze. Et in Milano con tal professione ce ne sono, che havendo acquistato molte facultà, hor vivono honoratamente, & sono stimati frà gli nobili, essendo congiunti in consanguinità con le casate nobili della nostra Città, e tuttavia con le loro molte facultà vanno a nobilitando se stessi, e le case loro, si come hanno fatto molti altri nella professione delle loro arti, e mercantie." Morigi 1595, p. 298.
  25. Motta 1914, no. 134 (April 15, 1483).
  26. For one Bernardino Seroni, see notes 7 and 8 above. Cecilia Seroni married Gerolamo Negroli, son of Francesco, about 1560. See the inventory drawn up at Gerolamo's death, in ASM, N 12079, no. 1591, November 27, 1570.
  27. ASM, N 15690, February 3, 1570.
  28. ASM, N 9183, July 19, 1560. Giovan Battista Zarabaglia rented a workshop from Domenico Negroli, which was then occupied by Giovan Paolo Negroli ("in quo de presenti Joh. Pauli de Nigrolis suus fratrum . . . exercent merchatura et exercitium armorum"); the document reports the names of those who owned the property adjacent to the shop, including the Seroni family.
  29. See the payment of 15 scudi to Giovan Antonio Romeo as his salary for taking delivery, in 1572, of the cavalry and infantry armor, which in June of that year had been put up for auction and purchased by Francesco Seroni, "detto il Saviolo," in ASM, RCS XXII, 23, January 29, 1576.
  30. ASM, N 16612, contracts of January 24, 1575, and April 6, 1575 (see note 20 above).
  31. For the documents, see Boenheim 1889, pp. 409–12, and for the armor, see Gamber and Beaufort 1990, pp. 146–49.
  32. The author is preparing to publish these documents in the near future.

# NEGROLI GENEALOGY

armorers are in boldface type



**Giovanni**  
act. 2nd half 15th cent.  
d. before 1504

**Gerolamo**  
b. ca. 1457  
d. Oct. 4, 1507

no known  
descendants

**Domenico**  
d. between Jan. 17 and  
Mar. 1, 1526

**Nicolò**  
d. between Aug. 10  
and Sept. 1, 1531

**Andrea**  
d. between Feb. 14, 1532,  
and Nov. 20, 1535

**Luigi**  
b. ca. 1486  
d. April 11, 1551

**Giovan Paolo**  
b. ca. 1513  
d. May 13, 1569

**Giovan Pietro**  
b. ca. 1515  
d. May 12,  
1569

**Giovan Battista**  
b. ca. 1517  
alive 1579  
d. before Oct. 1582

**Giuseppe**  
b. ca. 1524/26  
d. 1559

**Domenico**  
b. ca. 1527  
d. June 11, 1571

**Giovan  
Francesco**  
alive July 1552

**Giovan  
Ambrogio**  
alive Oct. 1573

**Alessandro**  
alive 1586  
alive 1591?

**Nicolò**  
minor in 1571  
alive Nov. 1599

**Ludovico**  
minor in 1571  
d. before  
Sept. 1615

**Cesare**  
b. ca. 1545  
d. shortly before  
Feb. 1590

**Giovan  
Francesco**  
baptized Apr. 12,  
1570  
d. after 1600

**Pietro  
Francesco**  
notary  
1590-1626

**Giovan Paolo**  
b. ca. 1597

**Giuseppe**  
b. ca. 1601

**Domenico**  
baptized Jan. 15,  
1588





# A HISTORY OF THE NEGROLI FAMILY

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SILVIO LEYDI

**A**lthough many sixteenth-century sources, from Vasari on, unanimously praised Filippo Negroli's<sup>1</sup> extraordinary skill in making parade armor,<sup>2</sup> the history of the Negroli family, or at least its most famous members, failed to excite the curiosity of historians in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, who never undertook any real research concerning their activity.<sup>3</sup> This is difficult to understand, for the Negroli name was for more than a century associated with objects of extraordinary quality displayed in public collections throughout Europe and has always been cited in connection with the fabrication of and trade in parade arms, an industry for which Milan was especially famous in the sixteenth century. Nonetheless, a thorough campaign to document this family in the archives of Italy and elsewhere in Europe has only been undertaken for this exhibition. The wealth of information that has emerged from the archives has more than compensated for the long wait, and it is now possible to write a history of the Negroli family no longer dependent on the few repeatedly cited archival references published eighty or more years ago, but firmly rooted in the numerous newly discovered documents.

This research has unearthed hundreds of documents, but there are certainly many more documents to be discovered. The results of the research reported here must be considered a point of departure rather than a definitive work, and we will therefore examine only those documents that are directly relevant to the fabrication of and trade in arms and that are useful in clarifying significant events in the lives of individual family members. We cannot, for example, deal with the documents concerning the private lives of the Negroli or their many and complex real estate or commercial dealings, such as the collection or payment of rent for houses or land, although these reveal another important and fascinating side of the family's history.

## THE ORIGINS OF THE FAMILY (FIFTEENTH CENTURY—CA. 1530)

### THE FAMILY'S FOUNDING MEMBER: GIOVANNI DE BARINIS, CALLED NEGROLI

Giovanni is the first member of the Negroli family whom the documents allow us to link securely to the production of armor or its components; his mark, two crossed keys, appears on a number of pieces datable to the middle of the fifteenth century.<sup>4</sup> We know practically nothing about the founding member of the Negroli family. Born probably between 1410 and 1420, Giovanni was certainly active as an armorer before the middle of the fifteenth century, when he seems to have been working with the Missaglia,<sup>5</sup> and then, perhaps about ten years later, also in collaboration with other masters, on an armor for a man-at-arms of the sanctuary of the Madonna delle Grazie at Curtatone. That armor is marked with two punches—crossed keys and a crowned M.<sup>6</sup> We do not know the date of Giovanni's death; he was referred to as deceased in 1504 (doc. 2), but he probably died before 1474. In that year only one Negroli—Giacomo, who we shall see was most likely Giovanni's eldest son—is named in the list of seventy-two associated Milanese armorers who asked for confirmation of the letters of patent first conceded to them by the duke of Milan, Francesco Sforza, on June 1, 1463.<sup>7</sup> This is an almost certain indication that the stewardship of the family business had already passed from father to son.

### GIOVANNI'S SONS: GIACOMO, FILIPPO, GEROLAMO, AND DOMENICO

Giovanni had at least four sons—Giacomo, Filippo, Gerolamo, and Domenico (docs. 2, 8, 10)—from whom three branches of the family descend. We know from his will that Gerolamo had no children (doc. 12), and because

he had no grandsons, Giacomo's line also disappeared soon. Filippo and Domenico's lines, however, flourished for many generations. Given the complete lack of documents concerning Giovanni's life, we cannot know with any certainty the order in which his sons were born. We can only assume that Giacomo was the firstborn and that the others followed in the order suggested above. Domenico was probably the youngest because he died much later than his brothers, early in 1526 (docs. 36, 37).

Although Domenico's professional activity is relatively well documented, there is very little information concerning his brothers. As was noted above, Giacomo can most likely be identified as the "Jacobinus de Barinis" present at the meeting of armorers in 1474; he was certainly dead by 1504 (doc. 2). Filippo, who was also deceased by that date, does not appear in any document thus far discovered, while Gerolamo is mentioned between 1504 and 1507 as holding a power of attorney for his relatives, and specifically his nephews—the children of either Filippo or Giacomo. He died at about fifty on October 4, 1507 (doc. 13), a few days after making his will (doc. 12).

Later documents suggest that upon Giovanni's death the firm and the family's goods and property were divided into two main parts. Domenico inherited the Milanese part and his brothers the Roman, but this division was not inflexible. Domenico and his sons conducted their own business in Rome and were well established there in 1505 (doc. 9), while the other Negroli prospered in a variety of shops in Milan.

Between 1504 and 1506 the foundations were laid for the first big division of property about which we have some information. A series of powers-of-attorney indicate that Gerolamo, together with Giacomo's two sons, Pietro Antonio and Giovan Ambrogio, and Filippo's three sons, Francesco, Bernardo, and Gian Giacomo, were all involved in dividing the Roman property (docs. 2, 10), as well as some land and real estate holdings in Milan.<sup>8</sup> It is likely that the Roman business was entrusted to Giacomo's sons<sup>9</sup> and, at the death of the second son in 1521, to their cousin Bernardo.<sup>10</sup> The last can be identified with "Bernardo Negroti [*sic*]," a master armorer who had settled in Rome in 1521<sup>11</sup> and was likely dead in 1526, when a very complicated inheritance case was heard not only by a Roman court but also provoked an order from the emperor Charles V.<sup>12</sup> It is not possible, given the present state of research, to establish what happened to the Roman business, which perhaps continued to be managed by family representatives after Bernardo's death.<sup>13</sup> The few documents that have

come to light do point to extensive activity that presupposes a workshop in Rome. On May 1, 1512, agreements were drawn up between the brothers Francesco and Gian Giacomo Negroli on one side and Francesco Brugora and Domenico Merini on the other, which obligated the latter two to go to Rome to fashion arms on behalf of the Negroli for two years at an annual salary of 30 ducats each, as well as expenses for food, lodging, and clothing (doc. 21). The following year Bernardo and his brothers exported 200 "white" (i.e., polished) breastplates from Milan in fourteen bundles bound, perhaps, for Rome (doc. 24).

#### DOMENICO AND HIS DESCENDANTS: NICOLÒ, ANDREA, AND LUIGI

Of Giovanni's four sons, Domenico, who died in 1526, is the one whose personal affairs can be best reconstructed. He was an important master armorer by the last quarter of the fifteenth century<sup>14</sup> and the head of a well-established, independent workshop with very important clients. His personal mark—two crossed keys (the family's stamp) beneath a crown, with the initials DN for Domenico Negroli—is recorded only twice, on a pair of early-sixteenth-century vambraces (arm defenses; figs. 9, 10). It is often assumed that the same mark, but without the initials, was also his. If so, he is the author of the two spectacular sallets probably made for Philip the Handsome on the occasion of his marriage to the Spanish infanta Juana, which was celebrated in 1496 (figs. 4–6).

Domenico maintained and probably strengthened the contacts that his father, Giovanni, had forged with the Missaglia. Indeed in 1504 Sebastiano Negroni da Ello, called Missaglia, and Domenico Barini, called Negroli, with his son Nicolò, founded a company together. The articles of partnership do not record the specifics of the agreement (doc. 7), but a payment by Domenico to the Missaglia brothers (Giovan Angelo had joined the firm with a minority share) makes it clear that the capital and risk, as well as the earnings, were to be divided in half (doc. 14). When the partnership was dissolved between 1513 and 1516, everything was divided equally. The inventories of the arms and the furnishings of the shop, as well as the list of creditors attached to that act, allow us to understand both the type of client who patronized the armorers and the internal organization of the shop itself (doc. 26).

It is rather rare to find a document that allows a glimpse into a large armorer's workshop, and even in this instance

not everything is inventoried. We do know, however, that each party to the division was given 7 shears, 9 *palli*, 41 hammers, 3 large anvils and 8 medium-sized and smaller ones, 4 cutting rippers, 9 large and small tongs, 1 large pair of shears (allotted to the Negroli and valued in the division at 3 lire), 2 bellows, 4 *spuntoni*, and finally 2 *ponibi*. Such a large quantity of tools suggests that the shop included a number of workers and apprentices. In many cases the list does not differentiate between tools designed for specific tasks; for example 82 hammers indicate specialized work carried out with specific tools that are here grouped together under a single heading. Even the amount of iron, both raw and partially worked to make helmets (more than two tons), gives us an idea of the size of the business.

The clients who are listed as owing the company money appear clearly to belong for the most part to the pro-French party. Among the best-known debtors are the marchese di Montferrat, Guillaume VII Paleologus (for L.I.37I.II.3), several members of the Trivulzio family including Gian Giacomo, marshal of France (for L.64.5), several members of the Pico della Mirandola family, many French commanders and captains (Bayard, Brissac, Guillaume de Crest, Antoine de Bussy), as well as the Sforza, Stampa, Belgiojoso, and Este families. One has a strong sense that, in the years between 1504 and at least 1513, the workshop (or associated workshops) of the Missaglia–Negroli monopolized the high end of the Milanese market, leaving it to other armorers to make more common arms. Thus, at the time the partnership was dissolved, Domenico could have inherited the French clientele that had already patronized the Missaglia, expanding enormously the sphere of his activity.

This collaborative relationship and the gradual usurpation of the Missaglia’s superior position by Domenico’s branch of the Negroli family is also evidenced by the gradual transfer of the famous house of Missaglia to the Negroli. In March 1504 Giovan Angelo Missaglia agreed to rent a workshop with two rooms above and a forge (and perhaps a second forge) to Luigi Negroli for six years for 60 florins annually (doc. 4). In 1525 Luigi rented a second property, located in the parish of Santa Maria Beltrade, with an unspecified number of shops, as well as a portico, passageway, courtyard, and storeroom on the ground floor, three rooms above, and a floor over the portico. It is specifically designated in the lease as the house “called that of the Missaglia armorers,” and Luigi agreed to pay the impressive sum of 430 lire a year for it (doc. 35). Not

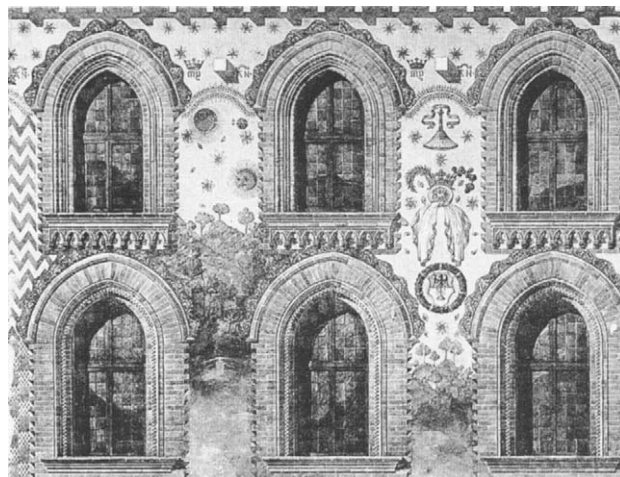


Fig. 40. Reconstruction of the frescoed decoration on the facade of the Casa Missaglia (after Gelli and Moretti 1903)

long before, Mario Mozate, son of master Donato, began to work in the Negroli workshop, where he received one scudo for every cuirass or each corslet with a gorget that he made (doc. 34). In the years to come the workshop run by Domenico and his sons continued to serve important Milanese clients associated with France, such as the Trivulzio family (docs. 27, 28) but also those linked to the Holy Roman Empire or the Sforza, such as Massimiliano Stampa (doc. 42). In 1531 and again in 1533 Luigi determined the balance of the debt, incurred in 1525 on the eve of the battle of Pavia, that Francis I of France still owed to the armorers of Milan (docs. 45, 46).

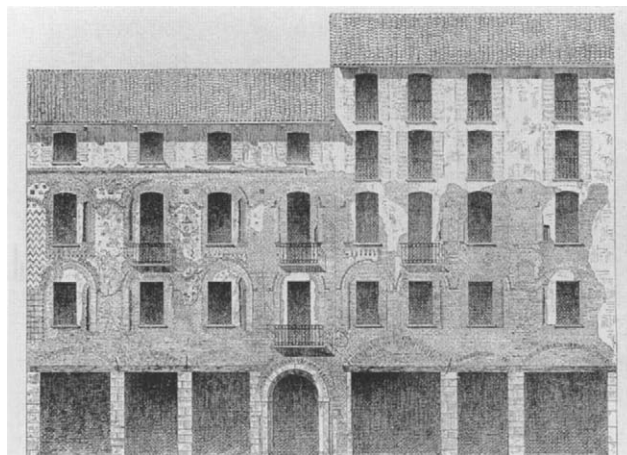


Fig. 41. Exterior of the Casa Missaglia (after Gelli and Moretti 1903), showing traces of the frescoed decoration still visible prior to its demolition in 1901



When Domenico died, his three sons must all have been adults and therefore able to run the family business capably by themselves. Nicolò died first, in the summer of 1531.<sup>15</sup> Andrea was certainly dead by July 1537 (doc. 49), although any trace of him in the documents disappears at the beginning of 1532, perhaps because he moved to Rome. Luigi, the third son, was active at least until the beginning of 1549;<sup>16</sup> he died on April 11, 1551, at the age of about sixty-five (doc. 103 bis).

Andrea's death led to a division of the brothers' joint patrimony. When he died, Nicolò left everything to his minor sons but with the condition that they not be allowed to touch their inheritance until the youngest, Domenico, reached the age of twenty-five. Andrea, who apparently had no direct descendants, left half of his estate to his brother Luigi and half to his nephews Nicolò's sons. In 1537, in order to make peace among various members of the family and especially among Luigi's sons, the communal property was legally divided. Thus, despite Nicolò's last wishes, everything was divided according to what was due each heir: each of Nicolò's five sons received a fifth of their father's estate and a tenth of their uncle Andrea's,<sup>17</sup> and Luigi's sons each received a sixth of Andrea's estate (doc. 49). This division signaled not only the end of the solidarity of the workshop founded by Domenico Negroli but also the development of different activities within the family itself. The agreement to divide the estate, approved by Charles V on July 14, 1537, makes it clear that not all of Nicolò's five sons had followed in their father's footsteps: Giovan Paolo (24 years old) and Giovan Battista (20 years old) were "master armorers," Giuseppe (13 years old) was "learning the armorer's art," Domenico (10 years old) was still in school, and Giovan Pietro (22 years old) was pursuing other business activities, that is he was a real and true merchant.

#### LUIGI DI DOMENICO'S LINE: GIOVAN FRANCESCO, GIOVAN AMBROGIO, AND ALESSANDRO

Luigi Negroli's sons are only rarely mentioned in the documents. The 1537 division (doc. 49), made necessary by the disagreements among the heirs of Luigi's brother Andrea, likely led to a parceling out of the workshops and, perhaps, to a premature abandonment of the family business by Giovan Francesco, Giovan Ambrogio, and Alessandro.

This lack of documentation means that all we have is some biographical information about the brothers, who

were all still alive in July 1552.<sup>18</sup> Giovan Ambrogio made his will on April 21, 1568, in which he mentioned only his brother Alessandro and declared null and void any previous wills drawn up in Paris (doc. 142). Ambrogio and Alessandro reappear in the documents in 1573,<sup>19</sup> but Alessandro alone, a seventy-year-old man, is listed in the parish census of 1586.<sup>20</sup>

#### THE SIXTEENTH-CENTURY WORKSHOPS: FILIPPO AND HIS BROTHERS, GEROLAMO AND HIS BROTHERS, GIOVAN PAOLO AND HIS BROTHERS

##### THE WORKSHOP OF FILIPPO AND HIS BROTHERS

Gian Giacomo Negroli, son of Filippo, had five children—Filippo, Giovan Battista, Francesco, Alessandro, and Susanna<sup>21</sup>—and their birth and death dates can now be fairly surely defined. Filippo was almost certainly born in 1510, the year in which his father married Veronica Arzoni, daughter of Daniele (doc. 19). This date fits with that of his first signed work, a helmet made in 1532 for Francesco Maria della Rovere (cat. no. 18), with his marriage to Bianca Reina, celebrated on September 11, 1539 (doc. 57), and with his death in November 1579 at the age of almost seventy (doc. 164). Giovan Battista, Gian Giacomo's second son, must have been born in 1511 or shortly thereafter in order to have been nearly eighty when he died on September 21, 1591 (doc. 169). He was, therefore, already grown, being twenty-five or a little older in 1538, when he was presumably the *frater* referred to in the signature on the buffe in the Royal Armouries, Leeds (cat. no. 29c). Filippo and Giovan Battista collaborated with a third brother, the precocious Francesco, who was born in about 1522 and died in 1600 (doc. 172), on the Masks Garniture of 1539 (cat. no. 30). The youngest sibling, Alessandro, was old enough to begin working in the family shop by that date but certainly still too young, having been born about 1528, to be among the brothers Negroli referred to in the inscription on that armor.<sup>22</sup>

The lives of Gian Giacomo's sons were closely linked until the end of 1551 when, as we will see, all the family's goods and property were divided into four equal parts. It is true that for more than two years, between 1545 and 1547, Francesco did not work in the family workshop (docs. 77, 86), but this is likely because he was obliged to follow Charles V on his military campaigns in Germany rather than from any misunderstanding among the brothers.<sup>23</sup>

It is a curious coincidence that all the surviving works of the Negroli shop can be dated to the period before Francesco's presumed departure from Milan (and therefore before he sold his share of the business to his brothers), that is between 1532 and 1545. The shop run by Filippo, Giovan Battista, and Alessandro (Francesco had left the family business by 1551; doc. 105) certainly continued to produce arms until 1557. In the act dividing their property, several pieces are listed that remind us immediately of familiar images: shields and helmets worked in relief with trophies and figures or in an ancient Roman style with two prisoners on each side and the rest covered with foliage. These pieces seem not to have survived. Until 1545, however, it is possible to match information from the written sources with several of the objects included in the present catalogue. After this date the absence of the arms to which the sources refer limits the history of the shop to a reconstruction based solely on documents.

#### *Filippo's Works of the Early 1530s*

The first two works that are signed and dated by Filippo—the helmet for Francesco Maria della Rovere, duke of Urbino, in 1532 (cat. no. 18) and the matching helmet and shield for Charles V in 1533 (cat. no. 20)—are much more closely linked to each other than has previously been thought; indeed it is now possible to say with some certainty that the imperial commission was the result of Charles's admiration for Duke Francesco's helmet. On November 9, 1532, the duke of Mantua wrote to Francesco Maria della Rovere (who had a few weeks earlier been in Mantua on his way to Venice)<sup>24</sup> about an armor that Kolman Helmschmid<sup>25</sup> had just delivered to the emperor, and he added, "I [the duke of Mantua] told His Majesty of the two sallets that Your Excellency [Francesco Maria della Rovere] has, and I praised them greatly, especially the curly-haired one, so much so that the emperor wanted to see them. I am therefore sending my delegate in the hope that Your Excellency will quickly send the two helmets together with your armorer, to whom the emperor's armor will be shown. . . ."<sup>26</sup>

There can be no doubt that the beautiful curly-haired burgonet that Francesco Maria had in 1532 is anything but the Negroli helmet. The report of Charles's interest in it, piqued apparently by the duke of Mantua's enthusiastic description, offers new perspectives if one considers that a second curly-haired helmet accompanied the shield dated 1533. The most likely explanation for it is that Charles V

made a request for a replica of the helmet he had so admired directly to Milan and involving Francesco II Sforza, duke of Milan, who at that moment was also in Mantua. The duke would have charged Massimiliano Stampa, the commander of the Milanese castle, with this task, and he, Massimiliano, would also have had the honor of presenting this helmet, paired with a matching shield, to the emperor.<sup>27</sup>

Things must have happened rather quickly. At the beginning of February 1533, Stampa wrote to the duke to tell him that the arms were finished and in his possession<sup>28</sup> and that after receiving two letters from the Imperial Groom, he had shown the new arms for Charles V to a certain "Marsilio,"<sup>29</sup> confirming that he would keep them himself until they were presented to the emperor.<sup>30</sup> This must have occurred during Charles's visit to the Lombard capital during March 10–14, 1533. This, the emperor's first visit to Milan, is unfortunately poorly documented even though it was then that the important question of a match between Christina of Denmark (the emperor's niece) and Francesco II Sforza was finally settled. It is not surprising that the duke wanted to give Charles a truly luxurious gift, and he was probably also well aware of the emperor's previous interest in the duke of Urbino's curly-haired sallet. That Stampa was put in charge of the whole business is also not surprising; the castellan was famous for the ostentation with which he surrounded himself and for the huge sums he spent to maintain his household like a real ducal court. It was not by chance that the marriage was celebrated by proxy in Flanders at the end of September 1533 with Massimiliano Stampa acting as the duke's representative;<sup>31</sup> it was the same Massimiliano at whose house Charles stayed for several days after he left Milan.<sup>32</sup>

The other two examples of curly-haired helmets (cat. nos. 21, 22), datable to the same period, could have been made by the Negroli on commissions that came in the wake of the interest in the "original" helmet (Francesco Maria della Rovere's). The dearth of documents makes any theorizing impossible. This kind of patronage came from the highest social ranks, on a par with the duke of Urbino, and the emperor's visit to Italy, which brought together noblemen of all sorts, could have encouraged a proliferation of copies of the by then famous helmet.<sup>33</sup>

Concerning the two additional works by Filippo Negroli datable to the first half of the 1530s, the armor of mail and plate for Francesco Maria della Rovere (cat. no. 19) and the so-called Fame Armor (cat. no. 23), no documents have yet been discovered in the Milan archives.

*The Masks Garniture of 1539*

In the summer of 1538 the Milanese treasury began to make a long series of payment orders in favor of Gian Giacomo Negroli (docs. 51–56). These payments were made, according to the description accompanying the entries, on account for “the armor that he is making for His Majesty,” that is, for Charles V. Payments were made at fairly regular intervals until December, and they ended on July 2, 1539 (doc. 59). The final settlement came a year later, on June 15, 1540, “for complete payment for the armor which he made for His Majesty,” the total paid to the Negroli amounting to 1,120 scudi (doc. 60; a previous payment had been made on May 2, 1539, doc. 58).

It is clear that these payments are for the so-called Masks Garniture (cat. no. 30), which is signed and dated by the Negroli brothers on the helmet, PHILIPPVS·IACOBI ET FRATR·NEGROLI FACIEBANT M D XXXIX·. All the payments for this ensemble, 6,216 imperial lire, were made out to Gian Giacomo, the head of the workshop, but, as the gold-damascened inscription declares, the real responsibility for making the garniture belonged to Giacomo’s sons, Filippo and his brothers Giovan Battista and Francesco. Indeed the abbreviation FRATR must stand for *fratres*—brothers—and not the singular *frater*. Alessandro, as noted above, was at that time too young to have collaborated actively on a commission of this type. Iacobi is, of course, Filippo’s patronymic; his full name was Giacomo Filippo.<sup>34</sup>

The archives have thus far yielded no documents concerning the commission for this garniture. It is tempting to speculate that the order came not directly from Charles V but rather from the new governor of Milan, Alfonso d’Avalos, marchese del Vasto, and the cultured member of a famous and noble Neapolitan family. He was the hero of the battle of Pavia in 1525 and the expedition to Tunis in 1535, and he was among the first Italians to receive the Order of the Golden Fleece, in 1531, along with Ferrante Gonzaga and Andrea Doria. In February 1538, when Marino Caracciolo died, d’Avalos was named both governor of Milan and captain general of the imperial army in Italy. It is not difficult to imagine that these appointments, which were enormously prestigious, led d’Avalos to offer the emperor a gift—one that was worthy of the recipient, useful, and immediately identifiable as from Milan. The decision to ask the Negroli to design and make a garniture for Charles would certainly have satisfied each of these requirements.

Given the present state of research, this suggestion must remain hypothetical. Yet it is based not simply on the credibility of the assumption but also on a document that, although not decisive, is possibly significant. On November 2, 1538, the Milanese treasury made a payment to the textile merchant Giovan Ambrogio Terzaghi for delivery of material of astonishing richness and cost. This material was meant to cover and line two brigandines (*co-razzine*) for Charles V (doc. 50) and was ordered directly by d’Avalos, who must have known the merchant well since he patronized him again in the future.<sup>35</sup> The summary description of the 1538 order mentions 14 *braccia*<sup>36</sup> of “very rich cloth of gold and silver” to cover two brigandines with sleeves and tassets, plus 2½ *braccia* each of deep blue and crimson satin for their lining and the high price of 222 scudi. The fact that this purchase is exactly contemporary with the manufacture of the garniture leads one to wonder whether Alfonso d’Avalos—ambitious, elegant, and generous even to the point of provoking some ironic comments from contemporaries—might not also have ordered this elaborate garniture at the same time.

Among the few documents that record the activity of the Negroli in these years, the notice of Filippo’s marriage is interesting and important. On September 11, 1539, Gian Giacomo and his son Filippo received a dowry of 1,600 lire from the family of the bride, Bianca Reina (doc. 57). This document, apart from the simple biographical data it provides, tells us that in 1539 Filippo, who was almost thirty years old, was not yet legally emancipated from his father and that he needed Gian Giacomo to execute any legal act. This also explains why all payments (except one, on May 3, 1541, which is made to Filippo; doc. 65) from the Milanese treasury are made out to Gian Giacomo even though he is never listed as an armorer. Filippo and his brothers never dissolved their legal bond with their father, and only his death in 1543 allowed the four of them to operate as independent masters, both as a firm and individually.

*1541: The Medusa Shield of Charles V*

Several documents from the period 1540–41 mention a “damascened shield for His Majesty” (docs. 61, 65, 66) and almost certainly refer to the beautiful shield with a Medusa’s head that is signed and dated, PHILPP’·IACOBI·ET·F·NEGROLI·FACIEBANT·M·D·XXXXI (cat. no. 32). Again we have a piece made by Filippo and damascened by Francesco. It is impossible to say whether Giovan Battista

also collaborated on this shield; the letter F in the inscription might stand for *Franciscus*, *frater*, or *fratres*. The kind of work done here seems to make it impossible to exclude Francesco who, although still young, was already very skilled in the art of damascening. Begun at the end of 1540 and finished the following summer, just in time to be presented personally to Charles during his second visit to Milan (August 22–29, 1541),<sup>37</sup> the shield cost a total of 350 scudi. The last payment, made on August 26, 1541, was doubled; 100 scudi were deposited to pay Gian Giacomo, and another 100 “for the journey made by one of his sons to His Majesty’s army, in his service.” No name is mentioned, but that it was Francesco who, among Gian Giacomo’s sons, was charged with accompanying the emperor on his Algerian campaign, is confirmed by a later payment to the same Francesco. He was still at the imperial court in 1542 working as a *doratore*, or gilder.<sup>38</sup>

During his brief stay in Milan, Charles also acquired other arms. In October 1541 the Commissar General of Munitions and Works, Lorenzo Vassalli, was reimbursed 1,685 scudi for armor to be sent to the emperor (doc. 68). We also know that, in anticipation of this visit of Charles V, Gaspare Trivulzio had ordered a gilt armor from Giacomo Negroli for his trip to Trent, where he was to meet the emperor and escort him to Milan (doc. 67).

No document has yet been found that makes explicit mention of the burgonet of 1543 (cat. no. 33). The simple signature, PHILIPP’NEGROLV’FECIT, is very different from the earlier ones, Filippo alone taking responsibility for the work without mentioning his father or his brothers. The burgonet, itself, which has no gilding and minimal damascening but is simply sculpted from steel and burnished to imitate bronze, bears witness to the absence of any collaborators and especially Francesco. We do not know if in 1543 the family’s expert in damascening had returned to Milan from the ill-fated African expedition or if he was still employed by the emperor. Francesco is not mentioned in the documents until the spring of 1545, when he sold all his possessions to his brothers and returned to the imperial court. Gian Giacomo, who was old and sick (he died at 80 of fever and diarrhea on December 5, 1543 [doc. 75], the day after he dictated his will), must have given up running the workshop, and despite a payment in February 1542 made out to him for “arms and shields for His Majesty” (doc. 70), Filippo had almost certainly begun to run the family business himself at just this time.

Although the 1543 burgonet appears not to be mentioned at all in the sources, and by its small size seems not to have been destined for Charles V, there may be some documentary trace of it. Of the innumerable payments made by the Milanese treasury in 1543, one might refer to the helmet. On October 20 the nobleman Paolo Maria Rainoldi received 15 scudi as a reimbursement for what he had advanced for the arms destined for Charles V, and at the same time 30 scudi were credited to the muleteer Davide da Piacenza for taking those arms to the imperial court (doc. 71). Alone these two payments mean little, especially since they say nothing about which arms Rainoldi advanced the money for, nor when, nor to whom. Nonetheless some small clues connect him both with the burgonet and to an embassy sent from Milan to Charles in December 1543 led by Ottaviano Cusani, a distant relative of Rainoldi.<sup>39</sup>

Gian Giacomo’s last will (doc. 74) is particularly important in understanding the strict control that the aged master exercised over his sons. It tells us first of all that Gian Giacomo still lived above his workshops, which were located in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta, at the corner of the Contrada degli Armorari and the piazza of Santa Maria Segreta. Excluding the spiritual dowry for his daughter Susanna, a nun at the convent of Santa Maria Maddalena presso Sant’Eufemia, he left everything to his four sons by his wife, Veronica Arzoni (who predeceased him)—Filippo, Giovan Battista, Francesco, and Alessandro—including the properties at Cernusco, just outside Milan, where he had houses and about 616 *pertiche* of land.<sup>40</sup> The more interesting clause is the one that forbade his sons to dissolve the family business by banning the division of the estate until Alessandro, then fifteen, should be thirty years old or the alienation of any part of their patrimony until the same Alessandro reached the age of thirty-three. However, it was possible for the brothers to exchange property for another of equal value or to trade it among themselves. The tenor of Gian Giacomo’s wishes as stated in his will is the best evidence for the control he exercised over his sons. In consideration of the legal validity of testamentary dispositions, the later divisions and separations of property among the Negroli brothers—in 1551 when Francesco left the shop and in 1557 when Filippo left his remaining brothers—only happened around the time Francesco and then Alessandro turned thirty. We will discuss below the significance of these legal separations, but it is important to underline that



as soon as it was possible, the solidarity of the family and its workshop began to dissolve.

#### *The Armor for the Dauphin Henry*

The armor made for Henry, dauphin of France (cat. no. 31), which dates to the 1540s and is attributed to Francesco on account of its exquisite damascening, poses a number of problems. There are no documents directly related to this armor, and there are only a few that link the shop run by Filippo and his brothers to the French court, which was more often served by their cousins the sons of Nicolò Negroli.<sup>41</sup>

#### *1545: Burgonet for Charles V*

In 1545 the Negroli shop delivered the burgonet now in Madrid (cat. no. 35), which is signed and dated F·ET·FRA'·DE·NEGROLIS·FACĪ·A·M·D·XXXXV·. Intended for Charles V, it is certainly a collaboration between Filippo—who signed it first—and one or two of his brothers, most likely Francesco, who would have been responsible for the damascening. (FRA' can stand for *Franciscus*, *frater*, or *fratres*; the verb, though, is in the plural.) It is more than likely that this commission came to the Negroli directly from Charles through Francesco, who had just returned from the imperial court. We know that Francesco received 200 scudi between 1544 and 1545 for a corslet for the emperor (doc. 100); nothing more is recorded of the latter, nor is it known if the burgonet and corslet were related. The burgonet was probably finished in the spring, in time for Francesco to take it with him when he returned to the imperial court. On April 30, the Milanese treasury gave Francesco 110 ducats to buy 10 ounces of spun gold, which he was to take to the emperor (docs. 79, 108). On the same day Francesco sold all his possessions to his brothers for 4,254 lire and left Milan (doc. 77).<sup>42</sup>

#### FILIPPO NEGROLI'S WORKSHOP FROM 1545 TO 1551

Nothing of the production of Filippo Negroli's shop after 1545 seems to have survived, although it continued to be busy with prestigious commissions. The year 1545 was an important one for the four brothers. We have already noted that Francesco, who had spent many months with the emperor from 1541 through at least 1542, returned to Milan only to leave again for the imperial court. On April 30, 1545, shortly before leaving Lombardy, he sold all his possessions to his brothers (doc. 77). A week later, on May 6, Filippo, Giovan Battista, and Alessandro gave Alessandro

Nadi a two-year contract to work in their shop, promising to pay him 6 lire for every cuirass with gorget and tassets and 8 lire for each *ferrispezata* he made, as well as 13 scudi for two years' salary (doc. 78). Given the coincident dates, it seems likely that Alessandro Nadi was hired to replace Francesco as the shop's damascener. He is the first outsider of whom we have any record of the Negroli hiring; Tommaso Lamber, from Geneva, followed in 1547 with a five-year apprentice's contract (doc. 84).

Francesco Negroli returned to Milan definitively in 1547; he nullified his act of sale to his brothers of two years before and took possession of his property again, paying them the same sum, 4,254 lire, that he had received for it (doc. 86). The four brothers lived together in the house on the corner of the Contrada degli Armorari and the piazza of the church of Santa Maria Segreta, with Filippo, the oldest, dominating as master of the workshop. In January 1548, Filippo was among the representatives of his parish who swore their loyalty to Prince Philip, Charles V's son, when he visited the city on his long voyage from Valladolid to Flanders (doc. 87).

We also have in 1548 the first mention of arms sold by the Negroli since 1545. On July 11 they received 140 scudi on account from Giovan Ambrogio Cazzoli for the sale of defensive arms made for "monsieur Chatilion e monsignor de Firmeto Galiers" (doc. 89).<sup>43</sup> The kind of arms is not given, but the high price paid and the fact that a shield was specified among the pieces suggest that they were rich, precious objects in the tradition of the Negroli workshop.

On September 10, 1548, Francesco Negroli made a contract with Gerolamo Bascapé, son of one master Battista, taking him on as an apprentice for four years. Francesco agreed to instruct Gerolamo "in the art of intarsia, that is damascening,"<sup>44</sup> and Gerolamo would earn 7½ soldi a day (doc. 90). In itself this is not a remarkable event, but it is significant because the contract makes it clear that Francesco had a shop separate from his brothers, situated in the same parish (Santa Maria Segreta) but facing a different gate, the Porta Romana (and not the Porta Comasina, where Gian Giacomo's house and shop were; after his death, these belonged to his sons at least until September 3, 1547).<sup>45</sup> That Francesco left the family business sometime in 1547 or 1548 is confirmed by a clause in a judgment of 1551 (doc. 105) in which it is clearly stated that Filippo, Giovan Battista, and Alessandro Negroli, but not Francesco, were paid 233 scudi for arms sent to Turin on November 15, 1548 (doc. 92).

Knowing that Francesco separated himself from his brothers' shop makes it more difficult to imagine for what he was being paid by the Milanese treasury in those years. In 1548 he received 400 scudi for two damascened armors, four swords, and a knife intended for Charles V (docs. 93, 94), another 200 scudi in January 1549 (doc. 97), and a final payment for this commission in 1550, along with a gift of 48½ scudi (doc. 100). One of the swords (for a horseman) may be that now in the Real Armería in Madrid (inv. no. G 34), which bears the mark of the *maglio* (the state-controlled center for ironworking and arms production, including cannon founding) of the Castle of Milan (an M with a crown) and the initials DS for Daniele Serravalle, master sword maker, who worked there from 1548 until his death in 1565.<sup>46</sup>

Less problematic, perhaps, is the important commission from Prince Philip, who, in November 1550, began to make payments to Francesco, "armorer to the Emperor." He advanced him 400 scudi (out of a total of 1,100) for the gold and the labor involved in damascening arms that must have been ordered at the end of 1549 when the prince visited Milan (doc. 101). A second payment was made in June 1551 (372 scudi, 300 for gold and labor, the rest for horse harnesses), when Philip was again in Milan on his way back to Spain (doc. 109), and a final payment came in December 1553 (doc. 114).<sup>47</sup> The texts of the three payment documents offer some clues to identify the arms, which were certainly richly damascened (the gold alone was valued at 700 scudi) but also worked (415 scudi for labor and materials is a huge sum). They are called "black," the dark steel producing a spectacular effect with the gleam of the gold. It is also clearly stated that the armor was for Philip—"arms that the said armorer made for the service of His Highness," or when the prince signed the payments, "in my service," from Francesco Negroli "armorer" or "gilder" to the emperor. As will be discussed below, the armor in question may be identified with the Damascened Garniture of Charles V, still in the Real Armería, Madrid (cat. no. 38), which would then presumably have been a gift from his son Prince Philip.

In these same years the workshop of the three brothers continued to produce arms for an international clientele of the highest rank. According to their father's wishes they continued to work together; to comply with these wishes Francesco, who maintained an independent workshop, also kept a share of the patrimony. About 1549, however, he began a series of legal actions to separate himself definitively from his brothers as soon as he turned thirty and

without waiting for Alessandro to reach the same age. Thus, on May 16, 1549, he delegated his cousins Gerolamo, Giovan Pietro, and Giovan Antonio Negroli, the sons of the late Francesco (one of Gian Giacomo's brothers), to take care of everything that might concern the separation of property with his brothers, including later suits or problems (doc. 96). Two years later, between July and December 1551, two notarial acts ratified the final division of Gian Giacomo's legacy.

#### THE 1551 DIVISION: FRANCESCO LEAVES HIS BROTHERS' SHOP

The first act drawn up, an arbiter's decision dated July 24, 1551 (doc. 105), established the terms of the division as decided upon by a committee nominated by the four Negroli brothers. The document is long and complicated, but in essence it recognizes Francesco's right to leave his brothers and to receive from them a sum of money equal to a fourth of the total value of the goods and property they held in common, that is, the expenses sustained by the firm in improving the shop (a total of L.1,419.7.4) and a quarter of the income up to the time of the division (L.4,604.5.6). The category of *crediti*, that is credits or income, was divided into two lists, one with the names of those with outstanding debts to the Negroli and the amounts they owed, and the second with names but no figures. These lists, even if incomplete, provide us with a great deal of information about both the clients of the Negroli (unfortunately not all the names are identifiable) and the value of the commissions.

From the first list of forty-six names, we find that the Negroli had many famous clients, both Italian and foreign, and that their commissions were major ones judging, at least, from the accumulated debts. Among those who owed money to the shop are Giacomo Trivulzio,<sup>48</sup> Carlo Visconti (55 lire),<sup>49</sup> Monsignor Châtillon (687½ lire, the largest debt), and Don Diego de Luna (probably the son of the castellan of Milan, 286 lire).

The list of those who had not yet paid anything for the arms they received is even longer, with ninety-six names. Here, too, the debtors come from every nation and their names are even more impressive. Among the foreigners we find Prince Emanuele Filiberto of Savoy, the Portuguese Consalvo Gomez,<sup>50</sup> Ferrante Sanseverino, prince of Salerno, a Farnese cardinal (Alessandro or Ranuccio?), Pino Colonna, Cristoforo Doria, the duke of Orléans,<sup>51</sup> and Raimondo Cardona. There were, obvious-

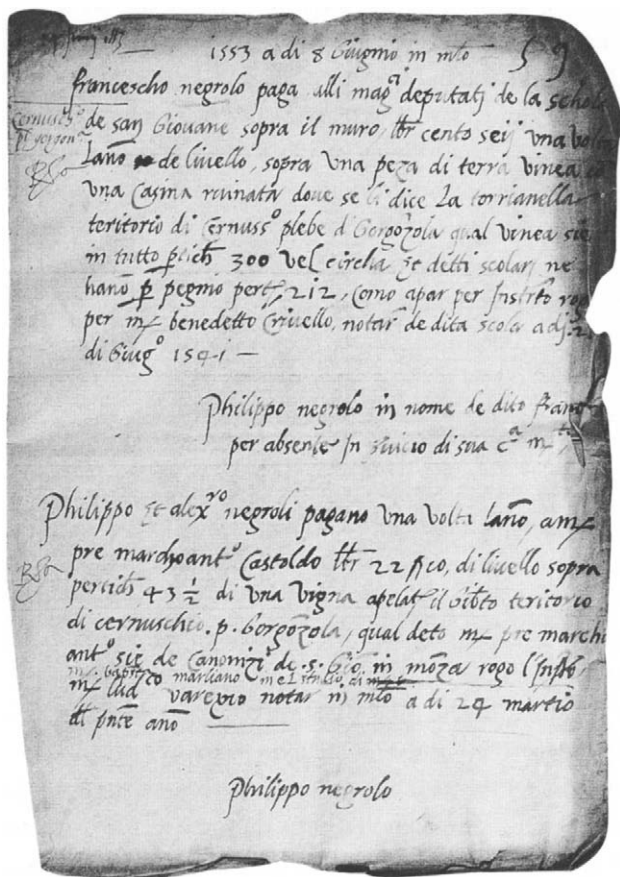


Fig. 42. Declarations of Francesco Negroli, and then Filippo and Alessandro Negroli (all sons of Gian Giacomo), regarding property payments, June 8, 1553. Filippo signed for Francesco, “who was absent in the service of his Imperial Majesty,” and a second time for himself and Alessandro. ASCM, Famigliare 1063

ly, many Lombards—whether by birth or adoption—on this list, including Ludovico Vistarino (Ferrante Gonzaga’s commander of the guard), General Giovan Battista Castaldo (former military tutor to Alfonso d’Avalos’s son Francesco Ferdinando),<sup>32</sup> Carlo Visconti again (he seems to have been a steady client), the captain of the cavalry, Carlo Barbiano di Belgiojoso, Count Giovan Battista di Lodrone, and Count Giovanni Anguissola (who would be named a senator in 1556).

The division of the property the brothers held in common followed on December 31, 1551 (doc. 107). It offers us precious information about the Negroli home and the property that was their joint inheritance from their father, Gian Giacomo. The four brothers divided all their communal property (including income from the shop) into four parts of equal value: Filippo received half of the property at Cernusco, including the manor house and

land (about 270 *pertiche* [see note 40]) to be held in common with Alessandro, half a credit of L.490.10, and half a credit of L.1,586.10; Giovan Battista received the family house in Santa Maria Segreta and two shops with the obligation to pay Filippo and Alessandro L.1,586.10 in total; Alessandro received half of the property at Cernusco, including the manor house and land (about 270 *pertiche*), held in common with Filippo, half of a credit of L.490.10, and half of a credit of L.1,586.10; while Francesco received a house and land at Cernusco called the “Cascina Torriana” (about 331 *pertiche*, part of which was a vineyard) and the obligation to pay Filippo and Alessandro L.490.10.

The division of property could not be clearer. Giovan Battista became the sole proprietor of the family house and workshops in Milan and head of the business through the liquidation of credits in favor of Alessandro and Filippo, who also received all of the property outside the city. Francesco got the other farmhouse which, however, was leased for 106 lire a year from the school of San Giovanni sul Muro in Milan—for which he became solely responsible—and a fourth of the furnishings from the family house but nothing from the shop.

Other adjustments were necessary to make the division equal. Credits still outstanding, for a total of L.1,309.17.6 (although this sum is incomplete because we are missing two entries), were to be divided into four equal parts; outstanding debts (L.911.13.10 in total) were solely the responsibility of Filippo, Giovan Battista, and Alessandro. Filippo was to be reimbursed 1,200 lire by his brothers, a sum equivalent to three-quarters of his wife’s dowry, which had earlier been invested in the business.

The painstaking inventory of the contents of the house, necessary to determine its value and thus what was due to Francesco, is another important source of information. It tells us, for example, how the house was configured. Below street level there was a basement, on the ground floor a large room called the “saletta” and a kitchen, and on the floors above six rooms—two where Filippo and Alessandro slept, two that were empty, a small room, and one “with drawings and medals,” certainly the place where the arms were designed. The furnishings, on the whole rather modest, consisted of a few pieces of furniture (beds, chairs, chests), kitchenware, some woven cloth or cloth embroidered with foliage, a painting, and above all “many *spontoni* [punches?] and drawings for work” in Alessandro’s room. The lists of debtors and creditors are also very valuable. From the former we learn that impor-

tant people owed the Negroli large sums of money: Giovan Battista Castaldo, 25 scudi; Count Francesco Landriani, almost 70 lire; and the duke of Urbino, 25 scudi; the major debtors, however, were Stefano Reggiori and his brothers (180 lire) and Antonio de Toriana (L.759.13), about whom we know nothing. From the list of creditors we get some idea of the expenses of the Negroli household and the shop: nails, charcoal, iron (for which they were in debt to Francesco Sacco for more than 300 lire); they also owed money to their sister, Vittoria (Susanna), as well as to a tailor, a shoemaker, and, most interestingly, 2 scudi to a “disegnatore,” that is, a draftsman or perhaps an etcher.

By the end of 1551 Filippo Negroli’s shop lost the family solidarity that had characterized it from the beginning. Francesco is never again linked in the professional documents with his brothers, although he likely continued for at least some time to work alone as an armorer-damascener, as the payments from Prince Philip through the end of 1553 make clear. In fact, in June of that year Francesco was noted as being absent from Milan while in the emperor’s service (fig. 42). We might speculate that Francesco gave up his craft as a damascener, perhaps to become a merchant or businessman, although the lack of documentation means that this can only be a hypothesis. His name, however, does not appear on a list of Milanese armorers, which, although undated, can be placed in the 1560s.<sup>53</sup> More telling is the fact that the inventory of Francesco’s house, drawn up shortly after his death in 1600, makes no mention of arms but on the contrary includes “a scudi scale with its weights, a board to count money,” and several cashbooks (as well as a large number of notarial acts that pertained to legal affairs and family divisions).<sup>54</sup>

Giovan Battista, who got the family shop in the division of property, continued to work with Filippo and Alessandro. In 1552, first in April and then in November, the three brothers hired two master craftsmen, Bernardo Santagostino and Giovan Angelo Legnani, both with two-year contracts (docs. 110, 112).<sup>55</sup> Afterward the documentation of their activity becomes more sporadic.

A report of Giovan Battista’s testimony in July 1554 to a commission called by Charles V to investigate the many accusations of poor financial administration in Milan sheds some light on those years.<sup>56</sup> One of the many charges made against the governor of the city, Ferrante Gonzaga, was that he sold export licenses at a very high price for goods that might be deemed strategic—especially arms and grain—to enemy territory, that is to France.

When asked if he had ever exported arms to France, Giovan Battista said that he had sold at least twenty shipments of arms thanks to the licenses Gonzaga had signed for him. Each safe conduct had cost more than the last, however, beginning at a little more than 4 scudi per *soma*<sup>57</sup> and growing to 15 in the end. When asked if he had a register of the arms sold and if he still had the safe conducts, Giovan Battista again said yes, telling the commission he had a register where he wrote his accounts and that he should still have at least some of the safe conducts and that he would look for them. When asked, finally, if he knew other armorers who had sold arms to the French, he replied that Francesco Negroli, Giovan Paolo Negroli and his brothers, Battista Piatti, and Bastiano de Portis had all certainly done so. This last statement allows this witness to be identified positively as Giovan Battista, son of Gian Giacomo, and not the similarly named Giovan Battista, son of Nicolò, one of Giovan Paolo’s brothers, who was also called to testify in this case.

The two safe conducts Giovan Battista turned over to the commission (several others do not bear his name and cannot, therefore, be positively linked with him) pertain to two shipments to Turin addressed to “monsignor de Brisac,” that is to Charles de Cossé, count of Brissac, French governor of Piedmont from 1550, and the warrior responsible for the taking of Vercelli in 1553 and Ivrea and Casale Monferrato in 1554. The first license granted, on September 8, 1552, was for two cases containing three armors—one for Brissac himself, one for his son, and the third for Monsignor de Lafayette (Gilbert Motier?). The second safe conduct, dated March 9, 1553, and renewed for twenty days on May 9, was for only one chest containing “a burgonet, a morion and other pieces of armor.”

#### FILIPPO NEGROLI LEAVES THE FAMILY SHOP: 1556–57

These sales suggest that the Negroli workshop remained very active in the first part of the 1550s, not only ready to satisfy the needs of its important patrons, but also well versed in the mechanisms necessary to avoid export embargoes. In fact, on November 24, 1556, Giovan Battista, with Filippo and Alessandro, took on two workshop assistants—Camillo della Cesa (doc. 115)<sup>58</sup> and Dionigi Calvi (doc. 116)—both of whom were paid a small daily wage. On the same day, however, the brothers stipulated an agreement according to which, after all the arms in the shop had been



inventoried in a “libro giallo”—a yellow book of twelve signatures, i.e., 192 folios, now lost—Filippo would leave the family business and receive a payment of 400 lire, two-thirds of the total value of the gold that he had used in their common venture. He would receive this settlement only after a shield, worked in relief and damascened and still in the workshop, was sold (doc. 117).<sup>59</sup>

A little more than a year later, on November 19, 1557, Filippo gave up the arms business altogether, settling all of his debts, collecting what was owed to him by his brothers, and promising them that henceforth he would not interfere “in the business conducted by the said Battista and Alessandro” (doc. 120).<sup>60</sup> This document is important both because it gives us some details about the workshop and because it tells us exactly when Filippo Negroli stopped working as an armorer. The agreement among the brothers further stipulates that certain arms not yet finished must be completed; their description recalls immediately the surviving work produced by the shop before 1545, the last date of any known Negroli productions. Thus a payment to Filippo of 46 scudi, equal to one-third of the value of the tools in the shop, was tied to the sale of a “shield and helmet worked in relief with trophies and armed figures and damascened in gold.” Several armors were still in the shop but almost finished, among which was one for the joust destined for Alberico I Cybo Malaspina, marchese di Massa, and valued at 32 scudi. Still other pieces had to be finished, including “a very beautiful shield and helmet, worked in relief . . . , of which the shield can be dismounted and put together with screws,” “another shield and helmet worked in relief with figures and scrolls with snakes,” and finally “a helmet in the ancient Roman style with two prisoners at the sides and the rest with leaves, with a mask to raise and lower at will.” According to the agreement, these arms had to be finished “with common effort and expense” and then sold.

Nothing in the documents tells us why Filippo made such a drastic decision, although some possibilities can be reasonably excluded such as advanced age (he was about 47 years old and would live another twenty-two) or any disagreements with his brothers (according to the 1551 division of goods and property, Filippo would continue to own jointly with Alessandro the property at Cernusco, which would not be divided for another two years [doc. 125]). It is therefore likely that Filippo was forced to abandon his career because he was sick. In his first will, drawn up on September 24, 1558 (doc. 122), he claimed to be “healthy of mind but sick in body.” Furthermore he left all

his possessions (except what was to go to his wife, his relatives, or the church) to the Ospedale Maggiore of Milan—a bequest that in sixteenth-century Milan was often associated with grave illnesses that required a long convalescence in that same hospital. What ailed Filippo at the end of the 1550s is impossible to determine, and the documents that concern his activities become scarcer afterward; from this point a reconstruction of his life is less certain and based on rare bits of information that can be gleaned from his testaments.

#### FILIPPO NEGROLI’S LAST YEARS: 1558–79

Ill, though perhaps later recovered, Filippo continued to work not as an armorer but as a manufacturer of *tremolanti*. These might have been hatpins with gilt or silvered heads and intended for a woman’s coiffure,<sup>61</sup> or they might have been metal points decorating the ends of laces for clothing.<sup>62</sup> Whatever *tremolanti* were, the manufacturing of these small, semiprecious metal objects—and they involved metalworking—was Filippo’s occupation: in 1565 a disagreement arose between Filippo on one side and the brothers Giovan Battista and Pietro da Cantù on the other (doc. 136) over the supplying of “baturinam” in silver leaf to make “tremolantas”; and in the inventory of Filippo’s household effects appended to his second will, also dated 1565 (doc. 137), one finds, besides “three pictures painted on canvas; a variety of reading books; an illuminated book; a printed book with plates pertaining to architecture; a book with different stories annotated with a pen”; also “thirty *stampe* [probably translatable as molds or forms] for making *tremolanti*.”

By Filippo’s third testament, drawn up on September 1, 1570 (doc. 151), his domestic situation and his health seem to have deteriorated. He left his wife a quarter of all his real property, as well as her dowry and the household furnishings, and he obligated his heirs to reimburse her 200 scudi, the value of her jewelry (including a gold collar, a gold necklace, a large coral mounted in gold, rings, and other pieces), her clothes, and a sable with a gold chain—all indications of a more than dignified social position. Filippo had been forced to sell all he had in order to live, “having suffered for a long time from serious illnesses and being reduced to such great poverty . . . because of the blindness that afflicts me.”<sup>63</sup>

Little more can be said about Filippo except that at his death, on November 24, 1579,<sup>64</sup> the inventory of his household effects was disheartening. In the only two rooms he

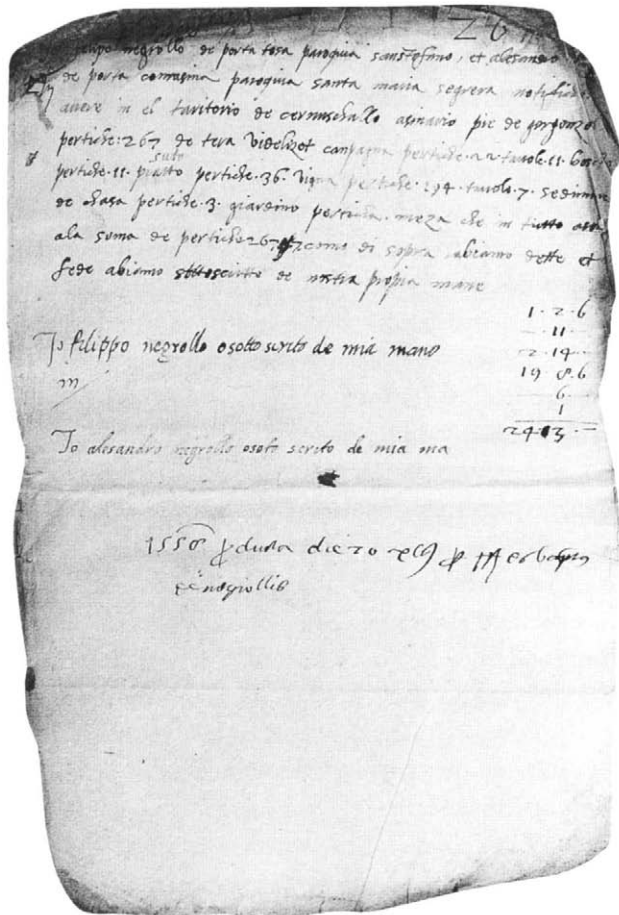


Fig. 43. Declaration (with autograph signatures) of Filippo and Alessandro Negrolli, sons of Gian Giacomo, as owners of 267 *pertiche* of land, December 20, 1558. ASCM, Famigliare 1063

had there were two beds, two tables, eight chairs, and a few other items of modest value. The property at Cernusco was untouchable and unsalable because of his father's will; it was valued at 11,842 lire and was divided (less the expenses of L.I,233) between Giovan Battista, who received a share worth 3,978 lire, and Francesco, whose portion was valued at 6,630 lire.<sup>65</sup>

#### GIOVAN BATTISTA AND ALESSANDRO'S WORKSHOP

By the end of 1556 only Giovan Battista and Alessandro remained at the workshop in Santa Maria Segreta: Filippo had stopped working with them, and Francesco had been independent for years.<sup>66</sup> Yet the family armor-making tradition continued. We have documents that tell of numerous masters and workmen hired to work in the shop, the first being the above noted Camillo della Cesa and Dionigi Calvi in 1556. In 1559 Lorenzo Soresina, an armorer working for Giovan Battista Negrolli, was fined

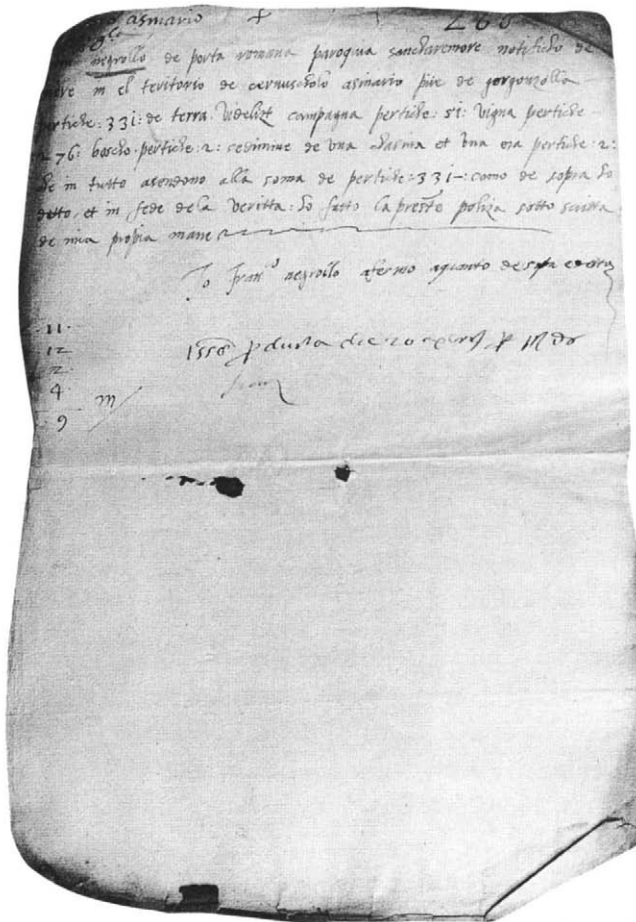


Fig. 44. Declaration (with autograph signature) of Francesco Negrolli, son of Gian Giacomo, as owner of 331 *pertiche* of land, December 20, 1558. ASCM, Famigliare 1063

5 scudi after being convicted of blasphemy (doc. 124). Eleven years later, in 1570, Giovan Battista and Alessandro Negrolli took on Pietro Pergomo for ten months at a salary of 11 soldi a day, promising to instruct him in the art of armor making until he became a master (doc. 150).

Alessandro Negrolli died in the spring of 1573 after having made his will (docs. 158, 159) naming his brother Giovan Battista's sons, Giacomo Filippo (born about 1556) and Paolo Camillo (born about 1572), as his universal heirs. Giovan Battista, by now an old man, continued to work, although perhaps in partnership with other armorers. In 1574 Marco Antonio Bossi, in association with Giovan Battista Negrolli and Antonio Maria de Piro (?), undertook to make, or have made by them, armors then consigned to Bossi, who sent them to the illustrious "Duci Graviniae" (probably Ferdinando Orsini, son of Antonio, duke of Gravina) through his agents (doc. 161).

The next notice of Giovan Battista's shop comes on May 23, 1587, when he and his son Giacomo Filippo sold

the entire property in Santa Maria Segreta to Francesco Negroli, son of Gerolamo—Giovan Battista's second cousin—for 12,000 lire (doc. 167). The property consisted of a cantina and other underground rooms; three workshops, a room (*sala*), and a kitchen on the ground floor; a *loco curiali* (a room for bathing) and two more rooms (also *sale*) on the first floor; two rooms (here called *camere*) and a smaller room on the second floor; two rooms (*camere*) and a small room on the third floor, plus stairs, a toilet, and balconies. Giovan Battista died on September 21, 1591 (doc. 169), and with him the armorers of Gian Giacomo's branch of the Negroli family became extinct.

#### THE WORKSHOP OF GEROLAMO AND HIS BROTHERS

Only a few documents have surfaced concerning the armorer's shop of Gerolamo, Giovan Pietro, and Giovan Antonio Negroli, sons of the late Francesco (Gian Giacomo's brother). Their father, who died between 1517 and 1519 (probably in 1518),<sup>67</sup> was certainly an armorer with his own thriving, independent shop, as was demonstrated by his contacts with Cardinal Ippolito d'Este, archbishop of Milan, and his brother, Alfonso I, duke of Ferrara.<sup>68</sup> We do not know with whom the three brothers apprenticed; they were too young when their father died to have been trained by him—the oldest, Gerolamo, was no more than five or six. Given the interests in common with their father's brothers, however, it is likely that their uncle Gian Giacomo adopted the three orphans in a professional sense until they became adults, that is through the 1530s. The first documents found concerning the brothers date to 1546. On November 22 Gerolamo Negroli took on an apprentice, Scipione Campagnoli (doc. 81), and another, Marco Antonio dell'Abate, the following year (doc. 82).

In 1547 the shop received an important commission to make a small garniture for Luigi de Leiva, prince of Ascoli and son of Antonio de Leiva, the late governor of Milan. It included a complete armor, two helmets, and a shield (doc. 85), pieces that would have allowed the armor to be used both on horse and foot. The contract is especially interesting for the autograph notes by one of the brothers specifying the decoration. The cuirass was to be decorated with three vertical bands in relief both on the breastplate and the backplate, with a relief band around the edge, and "designed [possibly etched] lame by lame," the

relief and etching to be gilt with gold leaf of good quality. The arm defenses were to have a gilt frieze in relief all around and the pauldrons with haute pieces (? "le fade sopra") with a band of relief in the middle, this too gilt, and the gauntlets the same "to match the armor." For the two helmets and the shield, their etched and embossed decoration gilt, the contract refers to designs or drawings de Leiva had seen.<sup>69</sup> The stipulated sum was 220 gold scudi against a delivery date at the end of November, four months after the contract had been drawn up.

There are no further documentary notices until Gerolamo died, on October 19, 1570 (doc. 152). A month later an inventory of his property was drawn up for his brothers, who had been named the guardians of his son, Francesco; the workshop contained 50 etched corslets, only partially finished, valued at about 200 scudi, and 15 more corslets, also etched and unfinished, but of a higher quality and valued at about 80 scudi (doc. 153). The household furnishings were modest, although his wife had some jewelry. Gerolamo's important investments were in real estate and credits. He had eight workshops in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta, valued at 2,000 scudi, as well as other houses and land worth 1,600 scudi, a number of them rented out, and a loan of 125 scudi to Nicolò Cyd, treasurer of the Spanish army in Lombardy.

Gerolamo's brother Giovan Antonio died on April 21, 1573 (doc. 157). Of Giovan Pietro, we hear nothing more after 1570, when he and Giovan Antonio were named guardians of their nephew.

#### THE WORKSHOP OF GIOVAN PAOLO AND HIS BROTHERS

The first notices of a workshop directed by Giovan Paolo Negroli come in 1541. In April of that year, the three sons of Nicolò who had followed in their father's footsteps—Giovan Paolo, Giovan Battista, and Giuseppe—hired two master armorers; one was Agostino de Farinariis from Brescia, together with his assistant Battista, their work not being specified, and the other Giovan Antonio Crippa, who was taken on expressly to work "at designing [etching?] and gilding" arms (docs. 62, 63). At the beginning of the 1540s Giuseppe, who in July 1537 was a thirteen-year-old learning the armorer's art in the family shop run by two of his older brothers, had probably finished his training. In December 1541 a third master, Pietro del Campo, was taken on to work "in the art of arms and [horse] har-

nesses, in which the aforesaid Pietro is expert" (doc. 64). In this case all five sons of Nicolò are named in the contract—the three armorers as well as Giovan Pietro and young Domenico, who could not have been more than fourteen—a sign of the solidarity of the workshop even though each brother had a different specialization. Giovan Pietro had probably chosen or was directed toward the commerce of arms rather than their fabrication, and we know that he did not hesitate to become involved in other lucrative businesses (doc. 72). The prosperity of the family business allowed for the expansion of the workshop in Milan, another master being hired in August of 1543 at a high salary of 40 scudi a year (doc. 73).

Several years pass before we find further archival notices of this workshop. It is in the period from 1540 to 1545, however, that the only signed, although not dated, piece by Giovan Paolo to have survived—a cavalryman's breastplate (cat. no. 43)—was likely made; other pieces attributed stylistically to this workshop also probably date to this period and are discussed below (cat. nos. 44–48). In April 1547 the brothers Giovan Paolo and Giovan Pietro hired an assistant, the Neapolitan Pietro Paolo Calisanti, to work in their shop for three years (doc. 83). On April 21, 1548, another notarial act gives us a further glimpse into the shop (doc. 88). It is a legal obligation in which Marco Antonio Somiliano, a native of Como but living in Milan, who had been sent a few months before to Turin as the Negroli's representative and agent at the Savoy court, promised to pay the five brothers 313 scudi. The document makes it clear that Marco Antonio had sold many pieces (30 corslets to a representative of Andrea Doria, admiral of the imperial fleet, and an armor worth 42 scudi to Captain Antonio "Duplisis") on credit—although his contract expressly forbade him from doing so—and that he had not yet been paid for them. Thanks to the prohibition they had imposed on him, the Negroli recovered their losses from the unfortunate Marco Antonio, who promised to pay back the entire sum. Nicolò Negroli's sons had other business ventures at the end of the 1540s. For example, they exported fustians—made in Cremona, dyed, and marked with the sign of the "Ten Worlds" (*Dieci Mondi*)—from Lombardy to Antwerp, where Domenico (then aged 21) was to sell them (doc. 91). Domenico's presence in Antwerp in 1548 widens the scope of the family's presence in Europe and shows that they were also involved in the lucrative textile trade. Giovan Pietro was in Rome by 1535, when he was only twenty (doc. 47).

Although the activity of the Negroli in these years is poorly documented,<sup>70</sup> the manufacture and export of arms flourished in Milan even during the many years of war between the emperor and the French. Giovan Pietro<sup>71</sup> was in Paris by 1552, after a long stay in Milan, while he negotiated to supply Francis of Lorraine,<sup>72</sup> duke of Guise, with 100 corslets and 100 white morions. He was there again in 1556 for other morions, plain, gilt, or etched corslets, shields, and burgonets<sup>73</sup> and yet again in 1557 (doc. 119).

The statements made to the imperial commissioners sent to Milan in 1554 to investigate its financial and administrative affairs are the most important source for an understanding of the scope of Giovan Paolo Negroli's business (to call it a workshop at this point is too restricting a definition of his activity) at the middle of the century. It was not an easy time for businessmen trying to maintain commercial contacts in France because of the war that had erupted again in 1552. The exporting of arms was of interest to the commissioners because in order to transport them, especially in times of war, one had to have a specific license signed by the governor. They suspected that the governor or his aides had solicited payments from the armorers in exchange for these licenses, a practice that was absolutely forbidden.

Giovan Paolo seems to have been a scrupulous and precise man, especially in his business affairs, and he had no problem producing for the imperial commissioners a list of the payments he had made from the beginning of 1548 to the middle of 1553 to various Milanese functionaries to get the licenses necessary to sell arms in territories controlled by the French.<sup>74</sup> It is impossible to know if this list is complete because there is no correlation between an export request, the payment to an official, and the subsequent issuing of a license (or at least none of these licenses was recorded in the appropriate registers,<sup>75</sup> where there are licenses listed that cannot be linked to any requests or relative payments). Giovan Paolo's list included forty-two requests for licenses and thirty recorded payments for them during the period November 1547 to July 1553. The recipients of payments were people close to the governor, Ferrante Gonzaga: Marco Antonio Bagno, his majordomo; Giovanni Maona, his first secretary; Luigi della Marra, his manservant; and Camillo, his wardrobe clerk (*guardarobiere*).

The enormous difference between the large sums Giovan Paolo paid to various officials to obtain licenses

(almost 3,200 scudi) and the considerable quantity of arms exported (283<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> *some* [see note 57]) on the one hand, and on the other the relatively few (14) licenses officially recorded in the registers for a much smaller quantity of exported merchandise (only 95 *some* plus 12 armors and a shipment of various arms), is immediately striking. Further, in evaluating the breadth of the business activity of Giovan Paolo and his brothers, it must be remembered that these shipments represent only arms bound for France or for French clients. Giovan Paolo's clientele was not limited to his trade with the enemy, although the French kingdom probably represented the preferred market for the arms made by this branch of the Negroli family. We have, for example, notice in 1558 of a shipment of forty-three cases of infantry and cavalry armor, arquebuses and ammunition, and shafted weapons to Brussels or Antwerp (doc. 121).

That the commercial interests of this part of the Negroli family were rooted in Paris is by now well documented. The distribution of responsibilities among the brothers can probably be thus reconstructed: the two brothers who fabricated arms, Giovan Paolo and Giovan Battista,<sup>76</sup> were permanently based in Milan; Giovan Pietro was in charge in Paris, where he sold both his family's production and other imported Italian arms; Giuseppe, also an armorer, went back and forth between Milan and France;<sup>77</sup> and Domenico, who lived in Milan, was a rich merchant trading in arms, textiles, silk, silver, and gold (doc. 132), as well as the administrator of vast land holdings<sup>78</sup> and manager of a ship registered in Genoa and used to trade with Flanders.<sup>79</sup>

#### THE DIVISION AND LATER AGREEMENTS AMONG THE BROTHERS IN 1560: COMMERCE WITH FRANCE

Although further documentation of their activities is lacking, the four brothers (Giovan Battista had left the business sometime after 1548) continued jointly managing their business of making and selling arms until 1559 when Giuseppe died. His death made it necessary to divide the entire enterprise into three shares of equal value for each of the surviving brothers (doc. 126). Yet although the shares were equal in value, their composition, given the different responsibility of each of the brothers, was not. Giovan Paolo, an armorer in Milan, received the family house there, a second house, and land with another house just outside the city; Giovan Pietro, a merchant in Paris,

received all the French credits, worth more than 15,000 lire of Tournai; and Domenico, a merchant in Milan, got a farmhouse (*cascina*) and two shops with all their tools. Each share was worth about 6,500 scudi. It is when it comes to financial matters—more credits and debits, advances, profits and losses, deposits, and bills of exchange, all of which were much harder to divide than real property or simple credits—that the division becomes large and complicated, revealing how much the family business was worth and at the same time just how diversified their financial investments and commitments were. The biggest problem came in dividing everything according to the specific activities of the brothers, but at the same time keeping the shares absolutely equal. This was accomplished with a series of financial adjustments among the brothers that came after the original division. Giovan Paolo got all the arms then in Milan, although the furniture there remained the common property of Giovan Paolo and Domenico. A rough calculation allows us to estimate the turnover and properties of the three at more than 80,000 scudi while their debts equaled about 52,000 scudi. The arms inventoried in Giovan Paolo's shop were valued at only 1,850 scudi—certainly not an unimpressive figure but only about 2.3 percent of the total value of the brothers' financial obligations and real property. Given these numbers, it seems clear that workshop production represented only a small part of the family fortune.

This division among the Negroli was a formal, legal act made necessary by Giuseppe's death; it does not represent a real separation. One must imagine that in the months following this act, the brothers were busy balancing their accounts by making payments and trading credits until they signed a final document on May 2, 1560, in which the last outstanding balances were settled (doc. 128). Even more interesting, however, was the private agreement they made to reestablish the company that had been dissolved when Giuseppe died (attached to doc. 128). It was dedicated to arms dealing: "We, Giovan Paolo, Giovan Pietro and Domenico, brothers Negroli, here declare ourselves to be in agreement among ourselves to form a company for a total sum of forty-eight thousand imperial lire, of which 48,000 lire each will pay his third, the sum of sixteen thousand imperial lire, which is 8,347 scudi, 16 soldi and 6 denari, which sum is pledged in diverse arms, both defensive and offensive, arquebus flasks, horse harnesses and a cross of diamonds worth 500 scudi." All the arms would be consigned to Giovan Pietro, who undertook to



sell them in France, the earnings, once expenses had been deducted, to be divided equally among the brothers.

The other points in the agreement specify that profits could not be withdrawn from the company but had to be reinvested in other arms; that if more arms were needed, they would be made in Giovan Paolo's shop at a predetermined price (plus any gold used to decorate them to be valued separately) paid by Domenico and then consigned to Giovan Pietro; that anything that could not be produced in the workshop (arquebuses, powder flasks, swords, horse harnesses) be acquired by Domenico and Giovan Paolo and debited to Giovan Pietro. The last clauses touched on reciprocal obligations: Giovan Pietro could not sell arms other than those procured by his brothers, and they, in turn, agreed not to export any arms to France except through Giovan Pietro.

#### THE NON-FRENCH TRADE

Trade with France represented an extremely important source of income, but an analysis of the prices for the arms agreed upon by Giovan Paolo and his brothers indicates that these were mostly arms of general quality, sum- marily decorated, the majority probably meant for clients of lower rank.<sup>80</sup> This type of production guaranteed greater profits and a relatively modest investment in terms of work, although the financial investment was enormous. Documents indicate that this production strategy was followed over the course of many years; in 1567, for example, the Neapolitan Fabrizio Pignatelli, son of Marco Antonio, bought thirty-five "inlaid" armors at a price of 25 scudi each (doc. 139),<sup>81</sup> while the list of the arms in stock in Paris in 1571 indicates a large number of pieces and their modest individual values.

Giovan Paolo's indubitable skill allowed him to accept much more elaborate requests and prestigious commis- sions. In 1561, for example, three armors were delivered in Turin, one destined for Emanuele Filiberto, duke of Savoy, and the other two (complete with shields) ordered by the duke as gifts for the king of France and the duke of Orléans. The only traces of this commission come in the clear instructions included in the payments to the man who transported the armor, contained in three docu- ments published first in 1890.<sup>82</sup>

There were certainly three armors, although there is no hint as to what they were.<sup>83</sup> The lack of any payments to the Negroli makes it impossible to imagine the dimen-

sions of the armor made for the duke (it is not even possi- ble to know whether it was a garniture or a single armor), but one can make some suggestions concerning those to be sent as gifts to the French court. The text of the docu- ments is very clear that one armor was to go to the king and the other to the duke of Orléans,<sup>84</sup> but to identify these two people is surprisingly difficult.

In September 1561, the date of the first payment made by the Piedmont treasury for the consignment of the three armors, Charles IX, age eleven, was king of France. If the king for whom one of the armors was intended was Francis II, who reigned from July 12, 1559, to December 5, 1560, his brother Charles would have been no more than nine or ten. If the commission had come even earlier, before the summer of 1559, when Henry II was still king of France, Charles, duke of Orléans,<sup>85</sup> would have been no more than nine.<sup>86</sup> However, it is difficult to imagine that such a large amount of time—more than two years— passed between the order for the armor and its delivery and also that the dauphin would have been ignored in favor of his younger brother. The more likely scenario is that Emanuele Filiberto gave the arms to Charles and Henry, that is to the king and the duke of Orléans, the last of the Valois-Angoulême line.<sup>87</sup>

Beyond their ordinary production, the Negroli also exported valuable arms to France. In 1562 they were grant- ed a license to export twenty loads of arms destined for Giovan Pietro in Paris. The governor agreed to sign the order because the Negroli shipment was etched and gilt (doc. 133) and therefore did not fall under the export ban which included all war munitions and ordinary armor. Part of the stock inventoried in the Negroli shop by the treas- urer of the Spanish army in the same year was also deco- rated (71 infantry armors, in part decorated and in part plain, finished with velvet with trimming and gilt rivets, 140 decorated morions, 160 complete arquebuses; doc. 134). Again in 1562 another 100 *some* of plain arms were exported to France (doc. 135), while a shipment to Lyon in 1568 also included many decorated and gilt arms (doc. 143).

#### THE LAST YEARS AND THE LAST COMPANY

By what can be reconstructed from the documents, it is clear that Giovan Paolo, Giovan Pietro, and Domenico Negroli branched out from their original business of pro- ducing and selling arms into trading in textiles, gold, and silk as well, and extended their activities especially in

France. At some time in the 1560s Giovan Pietro returned to Milan, and he left his son, Cesare, in Paris. In Milan Giovan Pietro and Domenico augmented their incomes by diversifying their investments. Their first such venture was to buy a majority share in a business that produced (and probably marketed) spun gold. They invested 20,000 lire and the use of a workshop and secured for themselves three-quarters of the profits (doc. 132). They then incorporated themselves into a company to “sell arms and spun gold.”

This business was dissolved at the end of 1567, only a little more than a year after it was founded. However, it seems to have continued on for seven years, that is until 1573 (doc. 138). Although we do not know why the company was dissolved so quickly, it had nothing to do with a bad investment. In only fifteen months the initial capital of 93,600 lire had more than doubled, so much so that Giovan Pietro was required to pay his brother 98,000 lire to buy out his share, borrowing from his debtors and creditors and from Bernardo Olgiati, the brothers’ representative in Rome.

With the passing years, the now rich brothers decided that it was time to invest some money in a family chapel to preserve their memory. The church they chose was the Basilica of Sant’Eustorgio, where many members of the Negroli family in Domenico’s line were and would be buried.<sup>88</sup> On March 13, 1568, a series of agreements bound the Negroli brothers to the priests at Sant’Eustorgio. In return for a remarkable number of masses to be said for their souls, the three brothers agreed to pay to rebuild all the cupboards in the sacristy, in which an altar would also be consecrated and which, from then on, would be called the Negroli Chapel. To emphasize their patronage of this space, the family’s coat of arms was added to the cupboards and the mirrors (doc. 140). The master woodworker Giovan Paolo Gazzo was contracted to build, in one year’s time, the cupboards according to a precise plan for the price of 280 scudi (doc. 141).

Having seen to the well-being of their souls, both Giovan Paolo and Giovan Pietro turned to ordering their worldly affairs before their deaths. Giovan Paolo’s will, drawn up on December 30, 1568, is lost, although through a series of later legal documents we know that his universal heirs were his minor sons, Ludovico and Nicolò, while their mother, Giovan Paolo’s wife Cornelia Moresini, was named their guardian and given a life interest in the estate, with an annual income of 100 scudi for the care of her

sons.<sup>89</sup> Giovan Pietro’s testament, dated March 28, 1569, has survived (doc. 145). Beyond various bequests, some of them substantial, to churches, charities, relatives, and for the dowries of his nieces, Giovan Pietro left 45,000 scudi to Giovan Paolo’s two sons. His son, Cesare, was named his universal heir, with the condition that Cesare leave Paris within two years of his father’s death and return to Milan with his sons. Should Cesare die without heirs, his nephews Nicolò and Ludovico would inherit the estate.<sup>90</sup> Giovan Pietro and Giovan Paolo died a day apart, on May 12 and 13, 1569 (docs. 147, 148), leaving Domenico to manage the entire family enterprise. Although named in Giovan Pietro’s will, the fifth brother, Giovan Battista, had had no business dealings with the others for years.

In the fall of 1569 the two surviving members of this Negroli business, Domenico and his nephew Cesare, founded a new company to trade in arms, textiles, and tapestries in Paris—as well as Lyon and Antwerp—with capital of 150,000 lire divided into two nominally equal shares (doc. 149). This company, which followed in the family tradition and perpetuated the ultramontane monopoly of the dynasty, was not to last long. Domenico died in June 1571 (not at age 36 as the death certificate states, doc. 155; he was born in 1527, doc. 49).

The last legal act in this story is the dissolution of the most recent Negroli company on October 30, 1571. Domenico’s death and Giovan Pietro’s own testamentary requirement that his son move to Milan within two years of his death obliged Cesare to leave Paris. The detailed list of merchandise and its value appended to the long act of dissolution (doc. 156) demonstrates yet again the breadth of the Negroli brothers’ trading activities in the second half of the sixteenth century. The arms in stock in Paris alone—more than 2,300 pieces, including morions, complete armors, corslets, arquebus flasks, muskets, shields, swords, sallets, saddles, horse fittings, and brigandines—was valued at 52,173½ lire; other merchandise in Paris, and especially the thousands of *braccia* of fabric, was estimated at more than 80,000 lire, to which must be added the tapestries Domenico had in Milan, worth 3,600 lire, and the arms in Antwerp, valued at almost 3,100 lire. The real size of the Negroli company should not be judged by its substantial inventory but rather by an evaluation of its financial status, the calculable incoming and outgoing payments in September 1569 (about 114,000 lire) and above all the profits that Domenico made in a little less than two years. Subtracting all expenses, the profit for each founding

partner was about 24,000 lire; they had each made a capital investment of 75,000 lire, resulting in a return of over 15 percent a year.

Domenico left his minor son, Giovan Francesco, and his wife, Damicella Gallarati, who was pregnant with Vittoria, born after her father's death, in the care of his nephew Cesare, who would, in a very few years, become the most important merchant-banker in Spanish Milan.<sup>91</sup> Cesare abandoned the arms trade for the much more profitable banking business. At his death in 1590 the inventory of the sumptuous house (which had been decorated, probably in

the late 1550s or early 1560s, with frescoes designed by Bernardino Campi of the story of Cupid and Psyche in one room, as well as a chimneypiece with a scene of his marriage, and the Labors of Hercules in an antechamber),<sup>92</sup> where he lived with his family, familiars, and many servants,<sup>93</sup> included numerous tapestries, leather wall hangings, furnishings of every sort, and a gallery with fifty portraits of members of the House of Austria. The monetary turnover indicated by the list of his debtors and creditors seems unbelievable: almost two million lire, a fifteenth of the total trade for the whole city of Milan.<sup>94</sup>

1. The surname Negroli (usually spelled Negrolo in the documents) is used here to indicate all the members of this extensive and extended family; in the documents, until the beginning of the sixteenth century, family members are referred to as "Barini detti Negroli," just as the Missaglia were originally called "Negroni da Ello detti Missaglia."
2. "E similmente tali ingegni ha seguiti e segue negli intagli Filippo Negrollo milanese, intagliatore di cesello in arme di ferro con fogliami e figure"; Vasari 1550 (1986), p. 812. "Di Filippo Negrolo, milanese, intagliatore di cesello in arme di ferro con fogliami e figure, non mi distenderò, avendo operato, come si vede, in rame cose che si veddono fuor di suo, che gli hanno dato fama grandissima"; Vasari 1568 (1906), vol. 5, p. 389. "Et al tempo di questo gran re [Francis I of France] fu ritrovato l'intagliar nel ferro da Filippo Negrolo, che g'intagliò le armi"; Lomazzo 1584 (1974), p. 548. "E il Negrol, da cui prima / L'arte fu posta in luce ritrovata / D'amolar piastre c'hor tanto è lodata. / Per esser sigillata / Di sopra ogni figura"; Lomazzo 1587, p. 114. "Filippo Negrollo è stato principale intagliatore di basso rilievo nel ferro"; Morigi 1592, p. 289. "Voglio hora dire che Filippo Negroli merita lodi immortali, perché è stato il principale intagliatore nel ferro di rilievo, e di basso rilievo, il che seguitarono due suoi fratelli: Questo virtuoso spirito ha fatto stupire il Re di Francia, & Carlo Quinto Imperatore ne' suoi veramente meravigliosi lavori in armature, celate, e rottelle miracolose"; Morigi 1595, pp. 297–98.
3. Except in the laudable works of Angelo Angelucci (1890), Jacopo Gelli and Gaetano Moretti (1903), and Emilio Motta (1914), very few documents concerning the family have been published.
4. For a list of marks, see Boccia 1982a, pp. 282 (no. 10), 285 (no. 36), 291 (no. 140).
5. Boccia 1982a, p. 282, referring to the armor for Ulrich IX von Matsch, in Churburg Castle, and dating to about 1445–50.
6. Boccia 1982a, pp. 243–44, Set B1 (1450–60).
7. ASM, N 760, August 24, 1474. This document was published by M[aria] Paola Zanoboni, *Artigiani, imprenditori, mercanti: Organizzazione del lavoro e conflitti sociali nella Milano sforzesca, 1450–1476* (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1996), pp. 244–46.
8. Docs. 5, 6. These documents concern Milanese real estate (land holdings at San Lorenzo), and Domenico is also listed as a party in the case; the other side included his brother Gerolamo, his nephews Pietro Antonio and Giovan Ambrogio (sons of

- Giacomo, referred to as deceased) and his other nephews (sons of Filippo, also deceased) Francesco, Gian Giacomo (listed as absent), and Bernardino, all of them residents of Porta Ticinese in the parish of San Lorenzo Maggiore *foris*.
9. This can be inferred from the various notarial acts that involve the heirs of the two brothers who died without sons. See, for example, Giovan Ambrogio's will (doc. 30), in which he says he had had many business contacts in Milan and Rome with Francesco Lomazzo as well as Gian Giacomo Negroli and his associates. When the accounts were totaled, he was in debt for 300 ducats (at the rate of 4 lire to a ducat). The type of business dealings in which Giovan Ambrogio was engaged is clear from the long list of arms for which Giovan Pietro Meraviglia paid Lomazzo, agent for the heirs of the late Giovan Ambrogio, on November 19, 1521 (doc. 33). These arms were held by the Meraviglia but were never paid for (there was perhaps a partnership between them). When Giovan Ambrogio died, however, the arms were purchased for L.686.4, and Meraviglia paid L.171.11, or one-quarter of their value, on account. Lomazzo would continue to represent the Negroli heirs for many years to come. One notes, for example, the petition filed by a number of armorers on October 27, 1531, for the balance of monies owed to them by Francis I of France, a list that included among others both Meraviglia and Lomazzo as agent for the heirs of Giovan Ambrogio Negroli (doc. 45; see Motta 1914, no. 168).
  10. Giovan Ambrogio died between July 9 (when he made his last will and testament, doc. 30) and July 27, 1521 (when the guardianship of his heirs was executed, doc. 31). His brother, Pietro Antonio, had died on November 27, 1506, at the age of only 30 (doc. 11). A suit was filed after Giovan Ambrogio's death that led to the division of his property (personal and real property, debts and credits, and arms and cash held both in Milan and Rome) into two parts, one destined for his daughters and nephews and the other for his cousins, the sons of his uncle Filippo (Bernardo, Gian Giacomo, and the heirs of the late Francesco). See the judgment issued September 13, 1521 (doc. 32), and attached to a later division, dated February 26, 1530 (doc. 40).
  11. Doc. 29; see Bertolotti 1881, vol. 2, p. 321.
  12. Doc. 38. In this document Bernardo appears to be associated with his brother Gian Giacomo, but only to indicate the line of succession. His death at this date is, therefore, only hypothetical. The

- division of property was made according to lineage; half went to the heirs of Pietro Antonio and Giovan Ambrogio and half to Filippo's heirs.
13. Doc. 40. At the end of this long proceeding the survivors of the two lines involved in the division agreed to divide everything they held in common exactly in half, including "bonorum, rerum seu mercantiarum quae ipsi Negroli habebant in urbe Roma" (the property and merchandise that the Negroli had in the city of Rome). Because it involved minor heirs, the act was made valid by an exception granted them by the duke of Milan, Francesco II Sforza, in a letter from Bologna, dated February 26, 1530.
  14. Domenico is first recorded in the documents in August 1492, when he and a nephew (Gian Giacomo, son of Filippo?) give testimony in a proceeding against another armorer (doc. 1).
  15. See the codicils to Nicolò's will (August 10, 1531; doc. 43) and the guardianship of his children, which followed on September 1 (doc. 44). Nicolò was probably fairly young when he died. He had married Angela Venzago in 1510 (doc. 15), and they had five sons and two daughters.
  16. ASM, Panigarola Bannitorum 8, fol. 52v. This document concerns the sentence of decapitation (and a reprieve of the sentence on May 15, 1549) passed on Filippo, called il Boscaya, a worker in the shop of the armorer Luigi Negroli, located in the *contrada* (street) of the armorers.
  17. For confirmation of the share of the estate to which each of Nicolò's sons was entitled, see doc. 47, in which Giovan Pietro Negroli, a resident of Rome but then living in Milan, agreed to pay his share of his sister Caterina's dowry (one-fifth from his inheritance from his father and a tenth from that of his uncle Andrea).
  18. ASM, N 12071, no. 77, July 16, 1552. The three sons of the late Luigi Negroli and their cousins the sons of the late Nicolò Negroli, requested a judgment to resolve a suit that seems to have involved the construction of a common wall.
  19. ASM, N 14645, October 12, 1573, in which the two brothers receive 50 lire in rent.
  20. ASDM, Visitationes, Santa Maria Segreta 1, Stato delle anime 1586. Alessandro is listed as living in the house of Cesare Negroli, the son of his cousin Giovan Pietro, with two servants.
  21. Susanna, who by 1543 was a nun with the name Vittoria Felicia at the convent of Santa Maria Maddalena presso Sant'Eufemia, is difficult to trace in the documents. She was probably born after either Giovan Battista or Francesco.
  22. Alessandro's date of birth poses a problem. In his will, dated 1543, Gian Giacomo gave his son's age as 15—"Alessandro ha 15 anni" (doc. 74)—but Alessandro's death certificate of 1573 (doc. 159) says he was 50 at the time he died. Personally, I am inclined to believe his father rather than the doctor; furthermore, Alessandro's name appears in the documents for the first time at the end of April 1545 (doc. 77), when Francesco sold all his property to his three brothers. It is likely that Alessandro had just attained his majority at that time and was therefore able to participate as a contracting party in a notarial act.
  23. Several factors support this hypothesis. Francesco's first stay at the imperial court is firmly documented in 1541–42 (docs. 66, 69). The sources are more reticent concerning his second sojourn there, but they do support the hypothesis. Not only does Francesco's name disappear from the documents, but on April 30, 1545 (the same day he sold his property to his brothers), he received a payment order from the state treasury for the large sum of 110 ducats (704 lire) to buy 10 ounces of spun gold that he was to take personally to Charles V. There is no doubt that Francesco left Milan, as he could not but obey an imperial command, and he is noted at the imperial court in 1547 by Nicolaus Mameranus in his *Catalogus Familiae totius aulae Caesareae*. One can only speculate if, on this trip, Francesco might have delivered the emperor's parade helmet with figures of Victory and Fame (cat. no. 35), which is dated 1545 and is the last signed and dated work by Filippo and his brothers. Further payment orders seem to confirm that Francesco was away from Milan in the two-year period 1546–47. A payment on July 29, 1550 (for a gift of 48½ scudi; doc. 100), summarizes previous payments made to Francesco: he had received 200 scudi between 1544 and 1545 for a corslet for Charles V and another 600 scudi between August 1548 and January 1549 (docs. 76, 93, 94, 97) for two damascened armors, four swords, and a knife. The absence of payments in 1546 and 1547 would support the theory that he was away at the imperial court.
  24. For the presence of the duke of Urbino in Mantua and his departure on October 16, 1532, see the letter from Gerolamo Carcano to Francesco II Sforza, dated October 17, in ASM, Sforzesco 1234.
  25. The contacts between the Gonzaga and the Helmschmid family of armorers from Augsburg (Lorenz and his son Kolman) date back at least to 1506. See Bertolotti 1885, p. 102, and Bertolotti 1888, pp. 556–62.
  26. "In proposito di questa armatura io dissi a sua Maestà delle due celate che ha V. Ex. laudandoglile summamente, massimamente quella rizza, di modo che l'è venuta in desiderio di vederle, et per questo mando il presente mio cavallaro. La Ex. tia vostra sarà contenta mandarle subito, et serà bene che la faccia venir insieme l'armarolo suo, che se gli faranno veder dette armature, et spero che vi troverà delle cose che molto gli piacerano"; ASMn, Archivio Gonzaga 2934, registro 307, fol. 4r, lettera 11. This letter was published for the first time, with small variations, in d'Arco 1857, vol. 2, pp. 118–19, no. 154, and then by Alessandro Luzio, *Un pronostico satirico di Pietro Aretino (MDXXXIII)* (Bergamo: Istituto Italiano d'Arti Grafiche, 1900), pp. 98–99.  
Reached by the courier in Verona, Francesco Maria della Rovere naturally agreed to show his two helmets to the emperor. "Da questo cavallaro di V. Ex. ha havuta la lettera sua di hoggi, et inteso quanto la mi ordina per parte de sua Maestà delle due Celate, le quali havea in animo de farle meglio asettare, che sarebbeno state de assai più bella mostra; nondimeno non havendo se non ad exeguire la volontà di quella, gli le mando hora il mio benché spero fra pochi di esser li io, non ho voluto differire al portarle con me, et non mando hora il mio armarolo perché devendo esser li io come ho detto, lo menarò meco. . . . Et anchorché sia superfluo, prego l'Ex. V. che quando la vedesse che le celate satisfacessero et fossero desiderate da sua Maestà, che la satisfaccia purre il desiderio suo, et gli le apresenta, che non solo faressimo ciò con quella, dalla quale mi parebbe ricever molta grazia, ma con qual se fosse, che cognoscessi desiderarlo, et satisfarlo. Al servito de V.S. sempre, el Duca di Urbino"; the duke of Urbino to Federico II Gonzaga, November 9, 1532; ASMn, Archivio Gonzaga 1072.
  27. Charles V had already asked Massimiliano Stampa in Milan directly to order 12 large partizans and 12 pike heads of gilt iron for him; Stampa to Francesco II Sforza, December 23, 1532; ASM, Sforzesco 1441 bis. From the subsequent correspondence between the castellan and the duke it seems clear that Francesco II charged Stampa with a second and more important commission:

- "Circa le armi de quali vi habbiamo scritto, anchora che siano fatte qualche innovationi, non di meno non importa molto, bastando che siano fornite al tempo che la Cesarea Maestà venerà el Stato almeno di passaggio, como se rendemo certi, perché ne pare che basti alhora gli le facciate presentare a Sua Maestà como da voi et non più presto, non manchando di far usare diligentia perché siano belle et ne possiate havere honore. . . . Le arme fatte fare voglio le donate voi al Imperatore"; Francesco II Sforza, from Bologna, to Massimiliano Stampa, January 13, 1533; ASM, Sforzesco 1442. That this has to do with something other than pikes and partizans is clear from the cost of these arms, which were no more than 3 scudi apiece. (In the list of expenses Massimiliano incurred when he went to Flanders to represent Francesco II Sforza in his marriage by proxy to Christina of Denmark were 20 gilt partizans with gold and silk fringe costing a total of 60 scudi; AGS, Estado 1181, February 6, 1536.) "Doce hierros de picas doradas y labradas las armas en ellos de su magestad" were noted in the *Inventario Iluminado* of about 1544 and are likely those executed in Milan in 1533; Valencia de Don Juan 1889–90, (11), p. CCLV.
28. Stampa to Francesco II, February 7, 1533; ASM, Sforzesco 1443. In responding to this news, the duke seemed pleased: "He piaciuto avere inteso che le arme siano fornite rendendosi certi che erano belle, et ben fatte, ne havemo fatto parlare al signor Gran scudero di sua Maestà, quale ha detto si debbano retenerne ivi et non mandarle qua, come vedeti per le lettere del predetto Gran scudero, quale vi scrive per questo effetto"; February 12, 1533; ASM, Sforzesco 1443.
29. He was likely Marsilio Colla, Charles V's master of the horse (*cavallerizzo*), who received 200 scudi on August 4, 1541, to pay for horse trappings, and then, on August 26, another L.2,381.16.6 for the maintenance of the horses of the imperial retinue.
30. "Non acade altro in risposta de la de V.ra Ex.tia de 12 excepto che ho hauto due del grande scudero de sua maestà per le quale ho fatto vedere le arme a ms. Marzilio et ditoli se intenterano per presentarle dove piacerà a sua maestà et al gran scudero et per questa mia aligata con el sigilo aperto mi remetto a quanto li scriverà ms. Marzilio"; Massimiliano Stampa to Francesco II, February 14, 1533; ASM, Sforzesco 1443.
31. The list of expenses that Massimiliano incurred on this occasion gives us an idea of the wealth that he loved to show off. The total figure is an incredible 29,961 scudi, which can be compared to the income of the Milanese state which, in 1532, barely reached 160,000 scudi; AGS, Estado 1181, February 6, 1536.
32. For Charles V's first entry into Milan, for Francesco II's marriage to Christina of Denmark, and for Massimiliano Stampa, see Silvio Leydi, "I Trionfi dell'Acquila Imperialissima." Note sugli apparati innalzati a Milano per gli ingressi trionfali di Cristina di Danimarca duchessa di Milano, Carlo V imperatore e Filippo principe di Spagna," *Schifanoia* 9 (1990), pp. 9–55, with prior bibliography.
33. There was in the Gonzaga armory in 1604, for example, "una testa di ferro d'un morro ed li capelli, e barba dorati," a description that might well fit a helmet similar to those made by the Negrolis; Mann 1939, pp. 324–25, no. 23. See also d'Arco 1857, vol. 2, p. 154, no. 2, "una testa d'un moro di ferro con gli cavelli et barba dorati."
34. His full name appears only rarely in the documents, although he used it to sign the helmet and shield dated 1533 (cat. no. 20). See, for example, his brother Francesco's will of March 19, 1560 (doc. 127).
35. In 1549, on the occasion of the funeral of Charles V's wife, the empress Isabella, d'Avalos bought clothing and material, for a total cost of 18,643 lire, in order to outfit the whole court in mourning; ASM, RCS XXII, 2, June 7, 1539.
36. The Milanese *braccio* is a measure of length equal to about 60 centimeters.
37. Leydi, "I Trionfi dell'Acquila Imperialissima," pp. 14–19. Valencia de Don Juan 1898, p. 154, suggested that the shield may also have been a gift from the marchese del Vasto to Charles V.
38. Angelucci 1890, p. 112 (doc. 69), reported that Francesco appeared in 1542 on a list of salaried members of the imperial court: "Francisco Negrolo dorador a de gages par les escroz XII f (*placas*) par jour."
39. A brother of Paolo Maria Rainoldi, Giovan Battista, had married Antonia Cusani. Her father, Luigi Cusani (a distant relative of Ottaviano), besides having a great fortune, had entered the family into the business world, an activity also pursued by his son Giovan Paolo (Antonia's brother), whose own son Federico was often in contact with Cesare Negroli (son of Giovan Pietro). The Cusani family also had business dealings with the sons of Gian Giacomo Negroli; see, for example, the wills of Francesco dated 1588 and 1600 (docs. 168, 171) for the credit of more than 4,000 scudi held by the Cusani.
40. The 616 *pertiche* were about 40 hectares. A *pertica* is a land measure equalling about 655 square meters; 15/16 *pertiche* are approximately equivalent to one hectare.
41. However, see Morigi 1595, pp. 297–98, who stated that "questo virtuoso spirito [Filippo Negroli] ha fatto stupire il Re di Francia."
42. The date of Francesco's departure might be inferred from the fact that Francesco did not sign the contract of May 6, 1545, by which his brothers employed Alessandro Nadi in their shop (doc. 78).
43. The identification of these two individuals is problematic, although the title "monsignor" indicates that they are French. The first is probably François de Châtillon, lord of Andelot, who in 1552 commanded forty lances of the French gendarmerie at Metz. The second cannot yet be identified. Châtillon still owed the Negroli the large sum of 687 lire and 10 soldi in 1551 (doc. 105).
44. "in arte laborandi ad tharsia seu zemina." The apprentice's contract was dissolved on March 12, 1551, before it was set to expire (doc. 103).
45. We cannot exclude the possibility that Francesco had enjoyed some independence for several years since damascening, his specialty, required a workplace apart from his brothers' noisy shop. Their house was still held in common.
46. Daniele Serravalle was called to Milan with his father, who then died, by the marchese del Vasto in 1540 and began to work in the *maglio* of the Castle (see Daniele's petition to Ferrante Gonzaga, ASM, Autografi 230, fasc. 8). He received the patent to run the *maglio* on October 20, 1548, and only afterward would he have been able to stamp the blades with the official mark, an M with a crown above, and his initials, DS. Serravalle also had his own workshop not far from the Negroli in the parish of Santa Maria Beltrade; see the apprentice's contract of July 8, 1556, that Daniele made with Cesare Nava, son of Marco Antonio, which obliged him to work for nine years in the sword maker's shop to learn the art of gilding, damascening, scabbard making, etc.; ASM, Notarile 12752.
47. The final payment of 415 scudi brought the total paid to 1,115 scudi, a little more than had been estimated three years before.



- The three payment documents were first published in part by de Beaumont 1869, pp. 86–89, and then in their entirety by Angelucci 1890, pp. 110–12. The originals of the first two are in the AGS, Estado 1565, fasc. 33, fols. 75, 114, and the third in the AGS, Contaduría Mayor, 1ª Epoca, 1393. To these can be added a fourth document, discovered by J.-A. Godoy, which is a confirmation on May 24, 1551, of the first payment made to Francesco Negroli in November of the previous year (AGS, Estado 1565, fol. 123; see cat. no. 38, note 6). These are the last documents in which Francesco is mentioned as an armorer or a decorator; nothing relating to the last forty-seven years of his life (he died on July 6, 1600) has yet emerged from the sources. However, see his wills—March 19, 1560 (doc. 127), June 28, 1588 (doc. 168), September 17, 1598 (doc. 170), and June 17, 1600 (doc. 171)—in which he named his nephew Paolo Camillo, son of his brother Giovan Battista, as his universal heir.
48. This is probably Gian Giacomo II, son of Giovan Francesco Trivulzio, who, on his father's side, was the great-nephew and designated heir of Gian Giacomo, marshal of France, and on his mother's, the nephew of Teodoro, another Marshal Trivulzio. Although he came from a strongly pro-French family, Gian Giacomo II fully embraced the imperial cause, even marrying Antonia d'Avalos, the daughter of the late Alfonso, governor of Milan, and sister of Francesco Ferdinando, in 1556. It is very likely that the masquerade with a Hapsburg theme organized by Bernardino Campi was held on the occasion of this wedding: Lamo 1584, pp. 49–51.
  49. Carlo Visconti was sent by Charles V as his ambassador to Flanders and then by Philip II to England in 1554. Other embassies followed in 1558 and 1560; Angiolo Salomoni, *Memorie storico-diplomatiche degli ambasciatori, incaricati d'affari, corrispondenti, e delegati, che la città di Milano inviò a diversi suoi principi dal 1500 al 1796* (Milan: Tipografia Pulini al Bocchetto, 1806; facsimile edition, Milan: Cisalpino-Goliardica, 1975), pp. 118, 144, 157. In 1561 he took orders and became a cardinal in 1565. In 1550 there was a thematic tournament, called "Pompa dei corrieri amorosi," organized at his palace in Milan and described by Anton Francesco Rainieri in his *Pompa Prima* (Milan: Giovan Antonio Borgia, 1553).
  50. He must be the same individual as the Gonzales Gomez who, on January 29, 1540, ordered an important consignment of books from the bookseller/publisher Andrea Calvo, all richly bound in leather and gold, for the price of 200 scudi; ASM, N 11178.
  51. It is difficult to identify to which duke of Orléans this entry refers. The title belongs to the second living son of the king of France, but here it is clearly not Charles, Henry II's second son, because he was born only shortly before the document was drawn up. We must choose from among the sons of Francis I; Henry was the duke of Orléans from 1518 to 1536 and Charles from 1536 to 1545. The Negroli did make a set of armor for Henry (cat. no. 31) but in the years when he was the dauphin. It seems to me likely that the debtor here is Charles, whose death may have slowed or impeded a settling of the account.
  52. We know that General Castaldo had a thematic tournament for Carnival on February 5, 1559, with apparatus and scenery by Leone Leoni. For the payment of 200 scudi for paintings and other decoration for the tournament, see ASM, RCS XXII, 12, fol. 59r, January 18, 1559; and for a description of the event, Ascanio Centorio d'Hortensj, *I grandi apparati, et feste fatte in Melano dalli Illustri et Eccellenti S. il S. Duca di Sessa Governatore dello Stato di Melano et Capitan generale de Re di Spagna in Italia, et S. Marchese di Pescara Generale della cavalleria leggiera di Sua maestà in Lombardia: In casa dell' Illustre S. Gio. Battista Castaldo Marchese di Cassano* (Milan: Appresso di Giovan' Antonio de gli Antonij, 1559).
  53. ASCM, Materie 44, fasc. 13; see "Milan and the Arms Industry in the Sixteenth Century," note 9. The date ante quem for this list is determined by the presence of Giovan Paolo Negroli's name at its head. He died on May 13, 1569 (doc. 148). The fact that Filippo Negroli is absent from the list might indicate that it was made after 1557. It is not possible to say how complete the list is.
  54. The inventory is found in ASM, N 17166, August 16, 1600.
  55. Santagostino remained with the shop for many years, at least until 1566; ASM, N 14235, no. 738, petition dated December 13, 1566. Battista and Alessandro Negroli received L.78.9 from Bernardo Santagostino in payment of a debt of L.91.15 that dated back to 1562.
  56. All the documents concerning the armorers are in the AGS, Estado 1207, fasc. 11, fols. 98v–112r. All citations, unless otherwise noted, come from this source.
  57. A *soma* is a unit of measure for grain equivalent to about 140 liters. In 1803 it was made equal to a tenth of a cubic meter or half a cubic *braccia*. In the case of arms it must mean a shipment or load that could be carried by a horse or a mule.
  58. Camillo was the brother of the famous armorer Pompeo della Cesa, the already emancipated son of Vincenzo; Camillo was emancipated on the same day; ASM, N 12236.
  59. The sale of this shield and the subsequent payment by Giovan Battista and Alessandro to Filippo took place on January 23, 1557 (doc. 118).
  60. Bernardo Santagostino was among the witnesses present when this act was drawn up and notarized in the house of the Negroli. He had joined the family shop as an apprentice in April 1552 (doc. 110).
  61. See Francesco Cherubini, *Vocabolario milanese-italiano* (Milan: Dall'Imperial Regia Stamperia, 1839–43), vol. 4, p. 446, who called them "tremiroeù."
  62. Zanononi, *Artigiani, imprenditori, mercanti* (as in note 7), p. 272.
  63. The will (doc. 151) reads, "pro retrodata tempora multos infirmitates habuerim et reductus fuerim in magna necessitate . . . [because of] cecitate in qua opressus sum."
  64. The *Registro dei morti* for 1579 has been lost, but the exact date of Filippo's death can be found in a transaction between his widow, Bianca Reina, and his brother Giovan Battista Negroli on November 20, 1584; ASM, N 14250, no. 5921.
  65. ASM, N 14247, no. 4820, division between the Negroli brothers, July 8, 1581. A few months later the two brothers agreed with Bianca Reina that in exchange for renouncing any claim for her husband's estate they, her brothers-in-law, would allow her to live in the manor house at Cernusco, to have half the rent from that property, and in addition to have a life allowance of 10 scudi a year; ASM, N 14248, no. 5161, March 5, 1582.
  66. Morigi 1595, p. 297, noted that "Filippo Negroli merita lodi immortali, perché è stato il principale intagliatore nel ferro di rilievo, e di basso rilievo, il che seguitarono due suoi fratelli" (my emphasis).
  67. The exact date is not known. Francesco was alive on November 3, 1515, when he made his will (ASM, RN 2223; the notebooks of the notary Francesco Fraganesco da Cremona from 1515 have not survived), and he was dead by December 16, 1519 (ASM, N 6282). A notarial act of April 1526 lists the ages of his sons (doc. 38); Giovan Antonio's age is given as 9, which means he was born in 1517. Francesco's death certificate was not reported in the *Libri dei morti* for these years, although the 1518 volume is lost.

68. For Francesco's relationship with the Roman shop, see above. For the Milanese shop, see the apprentice or work contracts drawn up in 1510 between Francesco and Antonio and Ambrogio, father and son, de Cayzate (or Cayrate) and Gian Giacomo Tadoni (docs. 16, 17), in 1512 with Olivio Landriani (doc. 20) and Bernardino Rossetti (doc. 22), and in 1513 again with Gian Giacomo Tadoni (doc. 23).
- Francesco's contacts with the Este family are documented in the years 1510–12. In February 1510 he traveled to Ferrara at the request of Cardinal Ippolito d'Este; in July 1512 payment was requested on his behalf for arms (which had probably been made for the duke of Ferrara); and in December of that year he was paid for 15 corslets ("corsaletti"), at S.6½ each, that were immediately dispatched to Parma. For these notes, see the correspondence of Tommaso da Gallarate, gentleman in the service of Ippolito d'Este in Milan, in Archivio di Stato, Modena, Cancelleria Ducale, Ambasciatori, agenti e corrispondenti 19.
69. The note made here perhaps by one of the Negrolis reads, "Notta como à de essere l'anima del S. principe d'Aschola. In prima el corpo de l'anima à d'aver 3 liste nel petto et 3 ne la schena et el frixo a torno de releve, et à de essere desegnate de lama in lama, et dito desegno et dito releve à d'essere dorate de oro de folia bona, et in bona forma indorato. Li brazali ano de avere el frexo in torno de releve, et più le fade sopra el spalazo et una lista de releve per el mezo. Li guanti ano de essere conformi a l'armatura. Le due celate et la rodela ano de essere como li desegnate che à visto sua S[ignoria], et tuto el desegno et el releve dorato de oro in folia como de sopra." I thank Grazioso Sironi for calling the contract to my attention.
70. Research has yielded very little information about the shop's activity from the late 1540s through the 1550s. One should note, however, the lavish wedding of their sister Barbara, whose dowry was 10,000 lire, to Giuseppe Cacciaguerra (doc. 98); and the contract drawn up between Giovan Paolo and Francesco Rizzarelli to produce 200 morions in ten months at a price of 9½ lire each (doc. 102). As far as the workshop is concerned, Francesco Pozzi was hired in 1551 (doc. 104), and in January 1553 Giovan Paolo and Giuseppe hired Andrea Cislago with a seven-year contract (doc. 113).
71. Giovan Pietro is probably the "seigneur Negrot" referred to by Brantôme 1583 (1787), pp. 428ff. (Discours LXXXIX, article XI). See Picot 1905. Brantôme explained that the "honest and rich merchant" Negrolis was called to Paris by Piero Strozzi, colonel general of France and an ardent admirer of Milanese armor.
72. Giovan Pietro Negrolis to the duke of Guise from Paris on September 6, 1552; see Picot 1905, pp. 84–85, and Picot 1901–18, p. 238. In the letter Giovan Pietro apologized that at that moment he did not have as many white (i.e., undecorated) pieces as were necessary in stock, but only 50 corslets and 100 etched morions. He assured the duke that everything would be ready by the end of the next month. The armor and horse armor for the duke himself were available immediately.
73. Grodecki 1986, p. 294, no. 1000, April 1, 1556. In this act, "the rich Milanese merchant Giovan Pietro Negrolis" promised to send René Touremine, lord of La Guerche, 100 etched morions, 30 complete corslets with burgonets with etched bands, 5 completely etched corslets, 20 plain corslets, another 15 with gilt burgonets, one gilt corslet and a gilt shield, and another etched and gilt corslet, all by June 24, the Feast of Saint John the Baptist.
74. The list Giovan Paolo gave to the commissioners in 1554 is titled "Nota delli dinari pagati per licentie de arme"; AGS, Estado 1207.
75. The overlap between the *Registri dei salvacondotti e delle patenti* (ASM, RCS, serie XXI) and the licenses presented by Giovan Paolo is limited because the *Registri* begin in January 1552.
76. Giovan Battista disappears from the scene at the end of the 1540s. He is not named in any legal act after September 1548 (doc. 91), nor is he listed with his brother in the division of the late Giuseppe's goods and property in 1560. He had not died but had simply changed his profession, becoming a goldsmith (which may have begun with his specialization, so far undocumented, as a damascener or gilder). He is named in Giovan Pietro's will of 1569 (doc. 145), and again, as a goldsmith, on November 20, 1579 (when the guild assigned him as a punch "the sign of Jesus"). Giovan Battista died sometime in 1582, when the guild records indicate that another master had purchased the mark, "the sign of Jesus," from his heirs. For the guild citations, see Daniela Romagnoli, *Le matricole degli orefici di Milano: Per la storia della Scuola di S. Egidio dal 1311 al 1773* (Milan: Associazione Orafi Lombarda, 1977), pp. 154–55.
77. Giuseppe is documented in Milan on several occasions, but he died in France, at Saint-Quentin, in 1559 (doc. 126). The same document tells us that he had made his will in Paris, although the codicils to it were drawn up in Milan in 1558 (doc. 123).
78. See, for example, the numerous acts that show him involved as manager of the enormous holdings of the Abbey of Mirasole, which was owned by the Neapolitan Cardinal Carafa; ASM, acts of the notary Giovan Andrea Besozzi, son of Gio. Giacomo, from the early 1560s.
79. For the sale of the Negrolis one-third share in the ship the *Sant'Ambrogio* (valued at 3,333 Genoese lire) to their partner Francesco da Velate, see ASM, N 14417, August 17, 1565; see also Motta 1914, no. 176.
80. The most valuable piece was a complete armor for a man-at-arms including all its components, finished and decorated (etched) in bands, worth 19½ scudi (doc. 128). Nineteen scudi was also the price of an armor for a man-at-arms in Giovan Paolo's shop at the beginning of 1560 (doc. 126). To compare, we might recall that the armor made in 1547 for Luigi de Leiva, a deluxe work, was valued at 220 scudi, that is twelve times more than the armor in Giovan Paolo's shop (doc. 85).
81. Final payment was not made until 1569: on January 15, Domenico Negrolis, acting for his brother Giovan Paolo, received from Giulio Panigarola the balance of 200 scudi that Fabrizio Pignatelli owed for the armors ordered and delivered; ASM, N 12860.
82. Angelucci 1890, pp. 57–58, n. 3 (docs. 129–131). I have not been able to find the last two payments in the archives; the first and most important is in the Archivio di Stato, Turin, Camerale Piemonte, Patenti controllo finanze, art. 689, 2°, fol. 90r (with practically identical text). The simple indication of the delivery of the armor, but without any archival citation, is in Angelucci 1886b, p. 133.
83. Angelucci (1890, p. 57) suggested that Duke Emanuele Filiberto's armor is the cavalry armor now in the Armeria Reale in Turin (inv. no. B.4), which matches the infantry armor the duke wears in a portrait by Argenta. For the portrait, at the Galleria Sabauda, Turin, see Noemi Gabrielli, *Galleria Sabauda: Maestri italiani* (Turin: Edizione ILTE, 1971), p. 56, no. 18 and fig. 185.
84. A gift of arms from the duke of Savoy to the king of France in 1561 is not surprising since he had just married Henry II's sister, Marguerite of Valois, and was thus an uncle by marriage to Henry's three sons, Francis, Charles, and Henry, all of whom were to ascend to the throne.

85. There is a problem here with the title of duke of Orléans, normally given to the king's second son (the eldest is the dauphin and the third the duke of Angoulême). Charles IX obviously had no sons in 1561, and when he became king he gave his title of dauphin to his younger brother (the future Henry III), who had been the duke of Angoulême (as Henry II's third son) until Francis II died.
86. The problem of the recipients of the two armors was raised in Thomas and Gamber 1958, pp. 769–70.
87. Because of the rapid succession of deaths at the French court in 1559 and 1560, Francis was the last dauphin, and he relinquished that title when he succeeded his father on the throne in July 1559. There would not be another dauphin until the future Louis XIII was born in 1601.
88. These included their uncle Andrea (doc. 39) and his son-in-law Andrea Grassi, husband of his daughter Susanna (doc. 80), their uncle Luigi and his family (doc. 80), their brother Giuseppe (doc. 123), and their cousin Giovan Ambrogio (doc. 142). See Maria Amelia Zilocchi, "Gli arredi," in *La Basilica di Sant'Eustorgio in Milano*, ed. by Gian Alberto Dell'Acqua (Milan: Banca Popolare di Milano, 1984), pp. 208–17, esp. p. 211 for a photograph of the sacristy.
89. See, for example, Cornelia's receipt to Domenico Negroli, her brother-in-law, dated May 15, 1571 (ASM, N 13767), for 200 scudi received as payment of the 100 scudi annual allowance for the care of the late Giovan Paolo Negroli's sons stipulated in his will, executed by the notary Giovan Ambrogio Guenzati on December 30, 1568. The documents of this notary have survived in part, but the will is missing.
90. Further codicils followed on May 5, 1569, the most important of which concerned the income left to his wife, Violante Panigarola. Instead of the 500 lire annual allowance he had originally left her, he bequeathed her 10,000 lire in cash (doc. 146).
91. For Cesare Negroli, who has not yet been comprehensively studied, see Giuseppe De Luca, *Commercio del denaro e crescita economica a Milano tra Cinquecento e Seicento* (Milan: Il Polifilo, 1996), *ad indicem*, and idem, "Struttura e dinamiche delle attività finanziarie milanesi tra Cinquecento e Seicento," in Elena Brambilla and Giovanni Muto, eds., *La Lombardia spagnola: Nuovi indirizzi di ricerca* (Milan: UNICOPLI, 1997), pp. 31–75. Like his uncles but more lavishly, Cesare invested huge sums of money to ensure the well-being of his soul. In 1573 he underwrote the rebuilding of the choir at San Francesco, which was then decorated by Aurelio and Evangelista Luini with frescoes of scenes from the life of Christ (only the *Miracle of the Loaves and the Fishes* survived the collapse of the structure in 1688; see Bianconi 1787, p. 279). The Luini also painted a panel with a Pietà for the choir; see Carlo Torre, *Il ritratto di Milano, diviso in tre libri . . . , nel quale vengono descritte tutte le antichità, e modernità, che vedevansi, e che si vedono nella città di Milano, sì di sontuose fabbriche, quanto di pittura, e di scultura: Con varie narrazioni storiche appartenenti a' gesti di principi, duchi, e cittadini* (Milan: Per gl' Agnelli Scult. e Stamp., 1674), p. 191. The date of the work in San Francesco was given in the inscription under the frescoes, "Pietate et liberalitate C. Cæsaris Nigrolii. 1573"; see Vincenzo Forcella, *Iscrizioni delle chiese e degli altri edifici di Milano dal secolo VII ai giorni nostri* (Milan: Tipografia di Giuseppe Prato, 1889–93), vol. 3, no. 197.
92. Lamo 1584, p. 51.
93. For the makeup of the household (wife, numerous children, and servants, including two coachmen and a 10-year-old page named Medoro), see the parish census for San Maurilio of 1576 and the mid-1580s in ASDM, *Duplicati e Status Animarum* 40.
94. ASM, N 16200, February 22, 1590, inventory of the goods and property of the late Cesare Negroli.

# ABBREVIATIONS OF ARCHIVAL SOURCES

Throughout the catalogue, references cited by author or place and date are given in full in the bibliography.

AGS	Archivo General, Simancas
AAIPABM	Archivio dell'Amministrazione delle Istituzioni Pubbliche di Assistenza e Beneficenza, Milan
ASBASF	Archivio della Soprintendenza per i Beni Artistici e Storici, Florence
ASCM	Archivio Storico Civico, Milan
ASDM	Archivio Storico Diocesano, Milan
ASF	Archivio di Stato, Florence
ASM	Archivio di Stato, Milan
CS	Cancelleria Spagnola
N	Notarile
RCS	Registri della Cancelleria Spagnola
RN	Rubriche Notarili
ASMn	Archivio di Stato, Mantua
ASTo	Archivio di Stato, Turin
ASVe	Archivio di Stato, Venice





# A SELECTION OF NEGROLI DOCUMENTS

COMPILED BY SILVIO LEYDI

It is impossible, for practical reasons, to record here every one of the immense number of documents uncovered by recent research. The Negroli, armorers active in Milan and throughout Europe for more than a century, left behind a huge number of legal deeds, especially notarial acts, the majority of which do not pertain directly to their principal occupation, the fabrication and sale of arms. There are hundreds relevant to their income or the purchase, sale, or rental of real property, and to deposits, payments, or debts that resulted from commerce in textiles, gold, silver, and letters of exchange. All this material is important to a reconstruction of the family's fortune but is of less interest for the history of Lombard armor makers.

This selection includes only those documents that are directly relevant to the Negroli and their activity as armorers or that offer biographical information about individual family members. These include all unpublished documents regarding arms, apprentices' contracts, rental or purchase of workshops, orders for armor, and payments for armor. Documents that give us some biographical information, such as births, baptisms, marriages, or deaths of principal members of the family, are also recorded. Other documents that are less important or are necessary only to pinpoint dates or events have not been listed here but are cited in the notes to the essays.

In this digest the following conventions have been adopted:

1. Patronymics of members of the Negroli family are included only when there might be some confusion between individuals with the same names or in the testaments. "Negroli" has been used throughout as the family's "official" surname rather than "Barini, called Negroli," which was used until the beginning of the sixteenth century. The reader should refer to the genealogical chart for the relationships among the various members of the Negroli family.

2. References to the location of residences (gates—that is districts of the city—and parishes) have been omitted unless they provide information important in a broader context.

3. For individuals other than members of the Negroli family, all available information is given.

4. References to death registers are preceded by a cross (†).

5. For each document, the date (according to the modern calendar when necessary but also indicating the date as it is given in the original), a brief summary of its contents, and the archival citation are given, to which are appended any citations of published sources or complete transcriptions.

Abbreviations used in the archival citations are given on page 61, and short bibliographic references are listed in full in the bibliography.

## A NOTE ABOUT MONEY

The imperial lira, used in Milan for all financial transactions, was divided into 20 soldi, and each soldo into 12 denari. Thus the abbreviation L.12.8.6 means 12 lire, 8 soldi, and 6 denari; ss.8.6 stands for 8 soldi and 6 denari. The lira, however, was a money of account and does not correspond to minted currency. For payments above a certain value, gold scudi were preferred. Their value fluctuated; in the middle of the sixteenth century a scudo was worth about 5½ lire (that is, L.5.10). It increased in value with inflation, and at the beginning of the seventeenth century it was worth about 6 lire. The ducat was worth slightly more than the scudo.

An equivalent in imperial lire (or in scudi) is given for all other currencies or moneys cited. For the relative value of money, one should remember that in the mid-sixteenth century a laborer or soldier was paid 10 to 12 soldi a day, while a skilled worker in Milan earned as much as 1 lira per day he worked, or about 250 to 280 lire a year. Such an income, combined with other miscellaneous family earnings and with what a small garden might produce, allowed a family to survive in normal market circumstances. An average family could live on a total income of about 400 lire (that is about 60 to 70 scudi) a year. The S.220 paid for Luigi de Leiva's armor, made in 1547 (doc. 85), therefore, would have maintained a family for more than three years, while the S.1,120 that Charles V's Masks Garniture (cat. no. 30) cost was equivalent to more than fifteen years of that family's income.

The various denominations of money are abbreviated as follows: denaro, denari (d., dd.); ducat, ducats (D.); lira, lire (L.); scudo, scudi (S.); soldo, soldi (s., ss.).

### 1. August 28, 1492

Domenico Negroli and one of his nephews take part in the proceedings against the armorer Giovan Pietro Bizzozzero (ASM, Autografi 231, fasc. 12; Angelucci 1890, p. 196; Motta 1914, no. 147).

### 2. January 22, 1504

Gerolamo Negroli, son of the late Giovanni, delegates his nephew Gian Giacomo Negroli, son of his brother the late Filippo, as his representative in the division among the Negroli of their property in Rome and its territory (ASM, N 4370).

### 3. January 22, 1504

Pietro Antonio Negroli, son of the late Giacomo, delegates his brother Ambrogio as his representative in the division among the Negroli of their property in Rome and its territory (ASM, N 4370).

### 4. March 14, 1504

Giovan Angelo Negroni da Ello, called Missaglia, son of the late Pietro, rents to Luigi Negroli, son of Domenico, a workshop

with two rooms above it and a forge (and perhaps a second forge) for six years at an annual rent of 60 florins. He also declares that he has received 200 (florins?) of the total rent (ASM, N 5003; Motta 1914, no. 157).

**5. June 25, 1504**

Domenico Negroli must decide within eight days whether he will sell for L.850 his part of some land and houses in the parish of San Lorenzo (where all the Negroli lived together) to Gerolamo Negroli and his kin (Pietro Antonio and Giovan Ambrogio, sons of the late Giacomo, and Francesco, Gian Giacomo, and Bernardino, sons of the late Filippo Negroli) or buy their part of it for L.2,000 (ASM, N 5003).

**6. July 18, 1504**

Gerolamo Negroli (and his kin) withdraw the obligation imposed on Domenico on June 25. Attached is an act dated July 13, 1504 (drawn up by the notary Stefano de Seroni, to which, in turn, the original instrument of June 25, 1504, is appended), in which Domenico objects to the obligation imposed upon him on June 25 (ASM, N 5003).

**7. November 28, 1504**

Partnership between Sebastiano Negroni da Ello, called Missaglia, son of the late Antonio, and Domenico Negroli (and Nicolò, his emancipated son). The specific terms to be inserted in this generic agreement are missing (but see doc. 14) (ASM, N 2612).

**8. May 9, 1505**

Domenico and Gerolamo Negroli, sons of the late Giovanni, pay Giovan Giorgio da Desio L.130 as a year's rent on property (perhaps a mill) in the Corpi Santi (the territory around the city of Milan outside the city walls but under its jurisdiction) of San Lorenzo *foris* (ASM, N 5004; Motta 1914, no. 158).

**9. September 22, 1505**

Agreement between Andrea Negroli, acting as his father Domenico's agent, and maestro Giovan Antonio Bregnano, in which Bregnano is to go to Rome from Milan "et ibi laborare et se et personam suam exercere in arte seu exercitio faciendi arma et alia necessaria et utile circha exercitium armorum, seu artem que exercitur per ipsum dominum Andream in dicta civitate Rome," on Andrea's behalf for two years. Andrea is to provide him with food, drink, and clothing in addition to D.31 a year. He pays him D.8 up front at the time of the agreement (ASM, N 5005; Motta 1914, no. 159).

**10. October 19, 1506**

Gerolamo Negroli, son of the late Giovanni, and his nephews Pietro Antonio Negroli, son of the late Giacomo, and Gian Giacomo Negroli, son of the late Filippo, and on behalf of Gian Giacomo's brother Bernardino, name Giovan Ambrogio Negroli, son of the late Giacomo and brother of Pietro Antonio, as their agent (ASM, N 4376).

**11. †November 27, 1506**

Pietro Antonio Negroli, son of the late Giacomo, dies at about 30 years of age (ASM, Popolazione parte antica 81).

**12. September 21, 1507**

Testament of Gerolamo Negroli, son of the late Giovanni, resident in Porta Comasina, in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta, who declares that he is of sound mind but ill. His heirs must hold the estate in common and are forbidden to divide anything on pain of losing everything. He leaves L.25 to the daughter of

Giovannina de Laude, his sister-in-law, to be paid when she marries. He leaves his brother Domenico D.1 and another D.1 to the Cathedral works. His estate is divided among his universal heirs—half to his nephews the brothers Francesco, Gian Giacomo, and Bernardino Negroli and half to his nephew Giovan Antonio, son of the late Giacomo. The entire estate must then pass to the heirs, male or female, of any one of the brothers and cousins in whatever manner in order that it not be dispersed (ASM, N 4588).

**13. †October 4, 1507**

Gerolamo Negroli, son of the late Giovanni dies, at about 50 years of age (ASM, Popolazione parte antica 81).

**14. February 16, 1510**

Domenico Negroli pays the brothers Giovan Angelo and Sebastiano Missaglia L.2,839.8.3, which is their share of the total earnings (L.5,678.11.6) of the company founded by Sebastiano and Domenico (see doc. 7; Giovan Angelo Missaglia was included in the company later) "to make and sell arms." Earnings and losses were to be divided according to the agreements made. This settlement includes the use of the Missaglia house, which is placed at the company's disposal (ASM, N 2613).

**15. April 18, 1510**

Vincenzo Venzago, son of the late Lazzaro, pays Domenico Negroli and his son Nicolò L.1,500 on behalf of Angela Venzago, his daughter and Nicolò's wife, as her full dowry (ASM, N 5013).

**16. October 26, 1510**

Agreement between Antonio de Cayzate (or Cayrate) and his son, Ambrogio, and Francesco Negroli, whom they owe L.40. Antonio and Ambrogio undertake to work in Francesco's shop for a year to pay off this debt by having money withheld from their salary. This contract can be dissolved only if the debt is paid off or at the end of one year's time (ASM, N 5719).

**17. November 21, 1510**

Agreement between Francesco Negroli and Gian Giacomo Tadoni, son of the late Antonio, resident in Porta Ticinese, in the parish of San Lorenzo, in which it is stipulated that Gian Giacomo will work at making arms in Milan in the shop of Francesco and his brothers for two years from the following May. He is to be paid ss.9 a day the first year and ss.11 the second (ASM, N 5719; see also doc. 23).

**18. 1510**

Gian Giacomo Negroli marries Veronica Arzoni (see doc. 19).

**19. February 21, 1511**

Veronica Arzoni's dowry. Gian Giacomo Negroli receives L.1,200 from Daniele Arzoni, son of the late Gabriele, resident in Porta Ticinese, in the parish of Santa Maria in Valle, as the rest of the dowry of his daughter Veronica, who had been married to Gian Giacomo for a year. Another document follows recording that Gian Giacomo received an additional L.600 to spend "in adobando et ornando personam dicte uxoris sue" (ASM, N 4589).

**20. April 19, 1512**

Agreement between Francesco Negroli and his brothers and Giovanni Antonio Landriani and his son Olivio. Olivio is to spend four years in the Negroli workshop (in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta) in order to become a master; he is to be paid ss.2.6 for each day he works the first year, ss.3.6 the second, ss.5 the third, and ss.6.6 the fourth (ASM, N 5720).

**21. May 1, 1512**

Agreement between the brothers Francesco and Gian Giacomo Negroli and Francesco Brugora and Domenico Merini (or Marini), in which the latter two are to go to Rome to make arms on behalf of the Negroli. They will be paid D.30 a year each and in addition will receive room, board, and their clothing (ASM, N 5720).

**22. September 29, 1512**

Agreement between Francesco Negroli and Bernardino Rossetti, who will work in the Negroli workshop for three years beginning in October for a total salary of L.40 for the first two years. The salary for the third year is not specified (ASM, N 5720).

**23. April 13, 1513**

Agreement between Francesco Negroli and Gian Giacomo Tadoni, who will work in the Negroli workshop for one year beginning in May at a salary of ss.13.6 for each day he works (ASM, N 5720; see also doc. 17).

**24. November 24, 1513**

Declaration of the Milanese customs officers concerning the transit of 14 bales of plain armor (200 breastplates) made by Bernardino Negroli and his brothers (ASM, Autografi 231, fasc. 3; Angelucci 1886b, p. 160; Motta 1914, no. 165).

**25. December 22, 1514**

The brothers Francesco and Gian Giacomo Negroli, and on behalf of their brother Bernardo and their cousin Giovan Ambrogio, son of the late Giacomo, buy a house with land for L.2,800 and then rent it back to the seller, Gabrio Caimi, for L.140 a year (ASM, N 3908).

**26. January 21, 1516**

Dissolution of the company founded on September 28, 1505, by Sebastiano Missaglia and Domenico Negroli and his son Nicolò. (The company had been largely liquidated at the end of 1513.) The Negroli paid the Missaglia L.1,789.5.10 (that is, L.613.6.4 to Giovan Angelo and L.1,175.19.6 to Alessandro).

The mail and the arms (as they are listed in the inventories) are to be divided equally between the Negroli and the Missaglia, and the same is true of the company's credits and debits. Several earlier inventories are also attached to the act:

August 27, 1515: list of the worked iron the Negroli must still deliver to the Missaglia; the Negroli must also give Ottaviano Pallavicini 50 pairs of arm defenses ("bracciali alla stradiota");

September 4, 1513: division between the Negroli and the Missaglia of the tools in the shop;

December 6, 1513: declaration by the sons of the late Sebastiano Missaglia that they had received from the Negroli 38 pairs of greaves ("schinieri"), 8 pairs of arm defenses ("bracciali"), 39 cuirasses ("corazze"), 1 pair of cuisses ("cosciali"), all designated to be in the Italian style ("all'italiana"). These arms have to be repurchased from the Missaglia when the company shuts down; and so they are and at the prices noted in the company's accounts.

There follows an inventory, dated 1515, of all the arms still in the workshop in a bundle of documents attached to the act.

There follow inventories of the mail and of the iron, unworked or partially worked—for a total of 6,571 *libbre piccole* (about 326 grams each), or about 2,142 kilograms—still in the shop.

There follows the list of the company's creditors and debtors (ASM, N 6269).

**27. 1519**

Payment

September 22: L.51 to Nicolò Negroli for an armor for the marchese Giovan Francesco Trivulzio (ASM, Trivulzio registri 7, Mastro 1519, fols. 95, 256; Trivulzio registri 33, Giornale 1519, fol. 52).

**28. 1520**

Payment

March 15: L.18.7.3 to the armorer Nicolò Negroli for various services (ASM, Trivulzio registri 7, Mastro 1520, fols. 95, 98), in particular L.6.–.6 for "two pieces [?] of steel mail" (due liste di maglie de azale) for the marchese Giovan Francesco Trivulzio (ASM, Trivulzio registri 33, Giornale 1520, fol. 14).

**29. 1521**

The armorer Bernardo "Negroti" (Negroli) is in Rome (acts of the notary B. Rotella, 1519–21, fol. 28; cited in Bertolotti 1881, vol. 2, p. 321).

**30. July 9, 1521**

Testament of Ambrogio Negroli, listed as "son of the late Filippo" (although actually the son of the late Giacomo), resident in Porta Comasina, in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta. He has and has had many business dealings in Milan and Rome with Francesco Lomazzo as well as with Gian Giacomo Negroli and his firm. In total he is in debt D.300 (at a rate of 4 lire to a ducat). He leaves the usufruct of his goods and property to his wife, Marta Prina, and she is also named guardian of their daughters. He leaves D.1 to the Cathedral works and names his daughters, Cecilia, Costanza, Lucrezia, and Barbara, as his universal heirs (ASM, N 8343).

**31. July 27, 1521**

Guardianship of the daughters of the late Ambrogio Negroli (ASM, N 8343).

**32. September 13, 1521**

(Act appended to doc. 40.) Act dividing the property of the late Ambrogio Negroli, specifying that the division be done by lineage. Half is to go to the nephews of Giacomo and half to Filippo's sons and their heirs (ASM, N 8002).

**33. November 19, 1521**

Francesco Lomazzo, acting on behalf of the daughters of the two deceased Negroli (the brothers Ambrogio and Pietro Antonio), receives L.171.11 from Giovan Pietro "de Mirabilijis" (Meraviglia), son of the late Marco, as payment of half of what Giovan Pietro owes the Negroli for half the arms stored with the Meraviglia father and son. This payment includes what is owed to the Negroli in money, hardware, and merchandise. Giovan Pietro also promises to pay the remaining L.171.11 by the following February.

An itemized list of 221 pieces of armor is attached to this act; this merchandise is presumably that deposited by the Negroli in the Meraviglia shop (ASM, N 8344).

**34. June 7, 1525**

Agreement between the brothers Andrea and Luigi Negroli and Mario Mozate, son of the late master Donato. Mario is hired to work in the Negroli shop for a year; he will receive 1 scudo for each cuirass and 1 scudo for each corslet with a gorget he makes (ASM, N 8346).

**35. September 13, 1525**

Benedetto Missaglia rents to Luigi Negroli, who is also acting on

behalf of his father, Domenico, and his brothers, Andrea and Nicolò, several workshops with a portico, passageway, courtyard, and storeroom on the ground floor, three rooms above, and a floor over the portico, in Porta Romana, in the parish of Santa Maria Beltrade, property referred to as “la casa de armoroli de Misalia,” for L.430 a year. Half of the rent is to be paid on Easter and the other half on the feast of San Martino (ASM, N 7998).

**36. January 17, 1526**

Bernardino Orlandi promises to pay Nicolò Negroli, son of Domenico, L.300 for all that the Negroli had given him in the past (ASM, N 7998).

**37. March 1, 1526**

Nicolò Negroli and his brothers, sons of the late Domenico, acquire a plot of land with buildings in Porta Vercellina, in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta (ASM, N 7999).

**38. April 28, 1526**

Because of earlier divisions of property and problems of inheritance among various lines of the Negroli family, the following two groups decide to divide all their jointly held property in half, on pain of a D.500 fine:

A. the brothers Gian Giacomo and Bernardo, sons of the late Filippo, and their nephews, Gerolamo, Giovan Pietro, and Giovan Antonio, sons of the late Francesco (who was Gian Giacomo’s and Bernardo’s brother);

B. the brothers Ambrogio and Pietro Antonio, sons of the late “Gerolamo” (but actually the late Giacomo’s sons), both of whom are dead, and for them Ambrogio’s daughters, Cecilia, Costanza, Lucrezia, and Barbara, and Pietro Antonio’s daughters, Ludovica and Antonia.

An earlier act, appended to this one and dated February 3, 1523, had already established the divisions. A second act is also attached; it was issued by Charles V on April 12, 1526, and concerns the same divisions and gives the ages of some of the Negroli: Gerolamo is 14, Giovan Pietro 12, and Giovan Antonio 9; Cecilia is 13, Costanza 9, Lucrezia 8, and Barbara 6 (ASM, N 7999).

**39. August 31, 1526**

Testament of Andrea Negroli, son of the late Domenico, resident of Porta Ticinese, in the parish of San Lorenzo *foris*, who declares that he is ill. He leaves L.100 to Sant’Eustorgio, where he wishes to be buried honorably in his family tomb; he leaves L.200 each to Caterina and Lucia Grassi, his granddaughters, to be paid to them when they marry. His wife is dead, and he leaves her dowry to Paolo, Pietro, Battista, and Caterina Negroli, listed as “Filippo’s” children but in reality Nicolò’s. He names his brothers, Nicolò and Luigi, as his universal heirs (ASM, N 7999).

**40. February 26, 1530**

Agreement between two groups within the Negroli family—on one side the brothers Gian Giacomo and Bernardo, sons of the late Filippo, and the brothers Gerolamo, Giovan Pietro, and Giovan Antonio, sons of the late Francesco, and on the other the sisters Antonia and Ludovica, daughters of the late Pietro Antonio, and the sisters Cecilia, Barbara, Costanza, and Lucrezia, daughters of the late Giovan Ambrogio, and their mother, Marta Prina. The act dividing property between the two groups follows. Gian Giacomo gets the workshop in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta (ASM, N 8002).

**41. †May 28, 1530**

Benedetto Negroli (no patronymic given), resident in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta, dies at about 20 years of age (ASM, Popolazione parte antica 88).

**42. April–September 1531**

Nicolò Negroli and his brothers are listed as creditors for L.200 in an expense account (for the period April–September 1531 and totaling L.18,475.10) that Massimiliano Stampa, castellan of Milan, sent the ducal treasurer Gerolamo Brebbia (ASM, N 7715, January 4, 1532).

**43. August 10, 1531**

Codicils to the will of Nicolò Negroli, son of the late Domenico. He has five sons, Giovan Paolo, Giovan Pietro, Giovan Battista, Giuseppe, and Domenico, and two daughters, Caterina and Barbara. He names his brothers, Andrea and Luigi, as guardians of his children and forbids his children access to the estate until the youngest turns 25 (ASM, N 8004).

**44. September 1, 1531**

Andrea and Luigi Negroli are guardians of the children of their late brother, Nicolò (ASM, N 8004).

**45. October 25, 27, and 30, 1531**

A series of documents concerning the money owed by Francis I of France to various master armorers in Milan, presumably for armor delivered in January 1525, referred to in doc. 46. It is all to be paid to Luigi Negroli (and on behalf of his brother Andrea and the sons of the late Nicolò, Giovan Paolo and Giovan Pietro) and Pietro Francesco Resta, agents of the armorers, by Andrea Sormani, representative of the Most Christian King of France, for the debt the king owes to the Milanese armorers for corslets (probably infantry armors) (“agente nomine X.pianissimi Regis Francorum super debito ipsis Regis versus magistris armorolos mediolorum occasione alacretorum seu cursetorum”). One of many creditors, Gian Giacomo Negroli is owed L.294 and receives L.88.4 (ASM, N 4975; Motta 1914, no. 168).

**46. August 26, 1533**

Additional payments for the arms delivered in January 1525 to “the general Grimaldo” (probably Giovan Battista Grimaldi, lord of Ascros), agent of Francis I of France, and referred to in doc. 45. Payments are received and distributed by Luigi Negroli, son of the late Domenico, on his behalf, that of his nephews Paolo, Battista, Pietro, and Giuseppe, sons of the late Nicolò, and of the various armorers to whom money was owed (ASM, N 4976; Motta 1914, no. 171).

**47. November 20, 1535**

Giovan Pietro Negroli, son of the late Nicolò, a resident of Rome, “ovvero in ‘religione pelegriani,’” and now living in Milan, heir of one-fifth of his father’s estate and one-tenth of that of his late uncle Andrea agrees to pay his share of his sister Caterina’s dowry. He delegates his uncle Luigi to handle this business (ASM, N 8008).

**48. July 14, 1537**

Gian Giacomo Negroli forgives Count Vitaliano Visconti, son of the late count Ludovico Visconti, a debt of S.57, which Vitaliano’s late brother Pietro Francesco owed Gian Giacomo “per resto del valore di alcune armi acquistate a credito dallo stesso Gian Giacomo, o da altri a suo nome, dal predetto Pietro Francesco” (ASM, N 11178).

**49. July 18, 1537**

Caterina Negrolì, daughter of the late Nicolò, marries Francesco Cisati, with a dowry of L.3,700, including the L.1,200 owed to him according to various agreements regarding the Negrolì estate. The three Negrolì brothers Andrea, Nicolò (with his wife, Angela Venzago, who is also now dead), and Luigi lived together and together manufactured and sold arms, and Nicolò, when he died, left his sons, Paolo, Pietro, Battista, Giuseppe, and Domenico, as well as his brothers, Andrea and Luigi, as his heirs. Andrea, who died after Nicolò, left his brother Luigi and Nicolò's sons as equal heirs to his estate but also left two legacies of L.1,200 to Caterina Negrolì, daughter of Nicolò, and Angela Negrolì, daughter of Luigi, to be given them as dowries (ASM, N 8010).

Attached is Charles V's order of July 14, 1537, which summarizes the whole business: Nicolò died testate (doc. 43), naming his brothers, Andrea and Luigi, as guardians of his sons, Giovan Paolo, Pietro, Battista, Giuseppe, and Domenico, and decreeing that nothing be alienated from the estate until all the boys are at least 25 years old; Andrea died afterward, also testate (his will is lost), leaving half his estate to his brother Luigi and half to Nicolò's sons. Luigi had children, boys and girls, but his sons fought constantly with their father, who decided, therefore, that it would be better to divide their patrimony (with the agreement of Nicolò's sons). Thus Luigi and his nephews, the brothers Giovan Paolo (24), Battista (20)—both master armorers—Pietro (22), engaged in a different business, Giuseppe (13), who "si esercita nell'arte dell'armaiolo," and Domenico (10), who was still in school, ask that the clause in Nicolò's will be overturned for the sake of family harmony and that everything be divided. Charles V agreed (ASM, N 8010).

**50. November 2, 1538**

## Payments

L.1,243.4 (equal to S.222) to the Milanese merchant Giovan Ambrogio Terzaghi, for material ordered by Alfonso d'Avalos, marchese del Vasto, for armor for the emperor;

S.216 for 54 *braccia* "de tela d'oro, et d'argento richissima" (14 *braccia* to cover 2 "brigandines with sleeves and tassets" [corazzine con maniche e scarselloni] for Charles V and 40 *braccia* sent separately;

S.3<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> for 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> *braccia* of crimson satin to line one brigandine;

S.2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> for 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> *braccia* of deep blue satin to line the other brigandine (ASM, RCS XXII, 2).

**51–56. 1538**

## Payments

July 24: S.100 to the armorer Gian Giacomo Negrolì on account for armor he is making for Charles V;

August 23: S.100 for the same thing;

October 4: S.100 for the same thing;

November 30: S.100 for the same thing;

December 4: S.120 for the same thing;

December 20: S.150 for the same thing (ASM, RCS XXII, 2).

**57. September 11, 1539**

Filippo Negrolì, son of Gian Giacomo, marries Bianca Reina, daughter of Paolo, with a dowry of L.1,600. Bianca Reina's dowry is accepted jointly by Gian Giacomo and his son Filippo (ASM, N 10727).

**58, 59. 1539**

## Payments

May 2: S.100 to the armorer Gian Giacomo Negrolì on account for armor he is making for Charles V;

July 31: Andrea de Monte is reimbursed S.50 (at a rate of ss.106), which he had advanced on July 2 to the armorer Giacomo Negrolì "sul conto delle armature si fanno per sua Maestà" (ASM, RCS XXII, 2).

**60, 61. 1540**

## Payments

June 15: S.300 to the armorer Gian Giacomo Negrolì as final payment for armor he had made for Charles V (payments for this armor between 1538 and 1540 total S.1,120);

November 24: S.100 to the armorer Gian Giacomo Negrolì on account and as an advance for armor that he will make for Charles V (ASM, RCS XXII, 2).

**62. April 14, 1541**

Giovan Pietro Negrolì and his brothers Giovan Paolo, Giovan Battista, and Giuseppe hire the Brescian master Agostino de Farinariis, son of the late Tommaso, and his assistant Battista de Manaris, son of Agostino, for one year at a monthly salary of S.6. The two are not allowed to work for any other masters or to be absent from work except to return to Brescia for fifteen days (ASM, N 11178).

**63. April 20, 1541**

Giovan Pietro Negrolì and his brothers hire the master Giovan Antonio Crippa to work in their shop "at designing [etching?] and gilding" (super aureatione et desegnatione) arms for one year at a daily salary of ss.9. They pay him L.22 up front (ASM, N 11178).

**64. December 23, 1541**

Agreement between the brothers Giovan Pietro and Giovan Paolo Negrolì (and on behalf of their other brothers, Giovan Battista, Giuseppe, and Domenico) and Pietro del Campo, son of the late Bernardino, to work in the Negrolì shop for eighteen months, beginning in February, "in arte armorum et finimentorum in quibus predictus d. Petrus est expertus." He will be paid S.5.10 a month for eighteen months and is paid S.6 up front (ASM, N 11179).

**65, 66. 1541**

## Payments

May 3: S.150 to the armorer Gian Giacomo Negrolì for a "rotella lavorata alla zemina per sua Maestà," which must be paid to his son Filippo, a master in his own right;

August 26: S.200 to the armorer Gian Giacomo Negrolì, of which S.100 is final payment for the armor he is making for Charles V, and the other L.100 "per l'andata di uno suo figliolo [probably Francesco] presso l'armata de sua maestà in servizio di quella" (ASM, RCS XXII, 3).

**67a–c. 1541**

## Payment (and reimbursement)

July 31: L.82.10 to Gian Giacomo Negrolì as an advance for an armor for Gaspare Trivulzio (ASM, Trivulzio registri 34, Giornale 1540–1542, fol. 39).

September 9: Gian Giacomo Negrolì restores to Gaspare Trivulzio L.56 because the gilt armor ordered by Gaspare for the visit of Charles V was no longer necessary (ASM, Trivulzio registri 34, Giornale 1540–1542, fol. 67).

September 12: the repayment of L.56 is recorded again in greater detail (ASM, Trivulzio registri 10, Mastro 1541–1542, fols. 111, 100).



**68. 1541**

## Payment

October 8: order to pay Lorenzo Vassalli, Commissar General of Munitions and Works, L.8,391.2 at a value of S.1,685.12 (at a rate of ss.106) for a variety of armor to send to Charles V (ASM, RCS XXII, 3).

**69. 1542**

## Payment

Francesco Negroli is at the imperial court and is paid 12 "placas" a day (equal to about ⅓ scudo a day) (Angelucci 1890, p. 112).

**70. 1542**

## Payment

February 12: S.45 to the armorer Gian Giacomo Negroli for a certain number of arms and shields, which he delivered for Charles V's use (ASM, RCS XXII, 4).

**71. 1543**

## Payments

October 20: the nobleman Paolo Maria Rainoldi is reimbursed S.15, which he had advanced as final payment for armor finished for Charles V; in addition the muleteer Davide da Piacenza is paid S.30 for taking the armor to court (ASM, RCS XXII, 4).

**72. April 14, 1543**

Agreement between Giovan Pietro Negroli (with his partner Battista Coliati, who is in Rome, where he has a house and a haberdasher's shop) and the brothers Giovan Battista and Francesco Grassi; Francesco is to go to Rome for three years to work in Coliati's shop and will be paid L.80 a year plus room and board (ASM, N 9174).

**73. August 31, 1543**

Agreement between the brothers Giovan Paolo and Giovan Pietro Negroli and the master Francesco de Mesolis, son of the late Antonio, from Brescia (but now resident in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta); Francesco is to spend two years in the Negroli shop to make arms. He is to be paid S.40 a year (ASM, N 9174).

**74. December 4, 1543**

Testament of Gian Giacomo Negroli, son of the late Filippo, living in a house in Porta Comasina, in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta at the corner of the Contrada degli Armorari and the piazza of Santa Maria Segreta. He leaves to his daughter, Susanna, a nun at the convent of Santa Maria Maddalena presso Sant'Eufemia, L.1,000 as a spiritual dowry. He leaves all his property and goods to his four sons, Filippo, Battista, Francesco, and Alessandro (Alessandro is 15, and the others are all adults—that is they are older than 18), by his late wife, Veronica Arzoni. He owns about 616 *pertiche* of land (a *pertica* is a land measure equal to about 655 square meters) with houses at Cernusco, in the *pieve* of Gorgonzola. His sons are not allowed to divide their inheritance until the youngest, Alessandro, has reached 30 years of age nor alienate any of it until Alessandro is 33. The heirs can, however, trade property for something of equal value or among themselves; they can also have S.200, *una tantum*, for various matters. If Gian Giacomo's line becomes extinct, the whole estate passes to the Ospedale Maggiore, which is obliged, however, to give the church of Santa Maria della Pace L.100 (AAIPABM, Famiglie 318).

**75. †December 5, 1543**

Gian Giacomo Negroli dies at about 80 years of age (ASM, Popolazione parte antica 92).

**76. 1544–45**

## Payment

Francesco Negroli is paid S.200 for a corslet made for Charles V (see doc. 100).

**77. April 29 or 30, 1545**

Francesco Negroli sells all his possessions to his brothers, Filippo, Battista, and Alessandro, for L.4,254 (the act of sale has not survived; see doc. 86).

**78. May 6, 1545**

Agreement between Giovan Battista Negroli (and on behalf of Filippo and Alessandro) and Alessandro Nadi, son of the late Antonio, who will work for two years in the Negroli shop at a salary of L.6 for each "corpo" or corslet, that is a cuirass complete with gorget and tassets, L.8 for each anime, or "ferri speziata," with gorget and tassets. He is paid S.13 up front, of which 6 are to be reimbursed in two years (ASM, N 12233).

**79. 1545**

## Payment

April 30: D.110 (at a rate of ss.128) to Francesco Negroli to buy 10 ounces of spun gold to take personally to Charles V (see doc. 108) (ASM, RCS XXII, 4).

**80. June 20, 1546**

Testament of Andrea Grassi, son of the late Luca, resident in Porta Ticinese, in the parish of San Vincenzo in Prato, who declares that he is sound in mind but ill. He wishes to be buried in Sant'Eustorgio, in the tomb of Luigi Negroli and his nephews, where his father-in-law Andrea Negroli is also buried. He leaves Susanna Negroli, his wife, the usufruct of all his goods and property, credits, etc., as well as her dowry of L.1,800, and his brother and sisters, Giulietta, Angela, Ursina, and Stefano, L.50 each. He names his sons, Francesco, Bernardino, and Giovan Paolo, as his universal heirs (ASM, N 9175).

**81. November 22, 1546**

Agreement between Gerolamo Negroli and Scipione Campagnoli for the latter to learn the art of armor making (document has not survived; ASM, RN 656; Motta 1914, no. 173).

**82. March 21, 1547**

Agreement between Gerolamo Negroli and Marco Antonio dell'Abate and his son Giovan Domenico to make armor at ss.12 a day (document has not survived; ASM, RN 656; Motta 1914, no. 174).

**83. April 5, 1547**

Giovan Paolo and Giovan Pietro Negroli (and on behalf of their brothers) hire the Neapolitan Pietro Paolo Calisanti, son of Annibale, to work in their shop for three years at a salary of ss.20 for each day he works. They pay him L.70 up front, which he will pay off by working (ASM, N 9175).

**84. July 22, 1547**

Agreement between Filippo Negroli and his brothers and Giovan Battista de Calderini, son of the late Giovan Angelo, resident in Porta Vercellina, in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta, on behalf of Tommaso Lamber, son of the late Giovanni, of Geneva.

Tommaso will work in the Negroli shop for five years, beginning on this date; the Negroli will give him room and board and teach him the art of armor making. If he is sick for less than a month over the five years, there will be no penalty, but if he is absent any longer he must make up the time at the end of the five years. Filippo will not spend more than a total of ss.50 on medicines; if he spends more, then Tommaso must work in the shop beyond the five-year period to repay him. Calderini guarantees Tommaso's loyalty and honesty for S.50 and not more (ASM, N 12233).

**85. July 23, 1547**

Contract for an armor drawn up between Luigi de Leiva, son of the late Antonio, resident in Porta Ticinese and the parish of San Giovanni in Conca, and the brothers Gerolamo and Giovan Antonio Negroli (and on behalf of their third brother, Giovan Pietro). The Negroli will make an armor, which is described: "First, the body of the anime is to have three bands on the breastplate and three on the backplate, and a frieze around [the edges?] in relief and to be etched lame by lame and the said etching and relief to be gilt with gold leaf and gilt in a good manner; the arms have to have a frieze in relief around them and also the haute-pieces [?] above the shoulders and a band of relief down the middle . . . ; the gauntlets have to conform to the armor; the two helmets and the shield also have to be like the design that his lord has seen and all the etching and relief gilt in gold leaf as above" (In prima el corpo de l'anima à de [a]vere 3 liste nel pette et 3 ne la schena, et el frixe a torno de releve et à de essere desegnate de lama in lama, et dito desegno et dite releve à d'essere dorate de oro de folia bona et in bona forma indorato; Li brazali ano de avere el frexo in torno de releve et più le fade sopra el spalazo, et una lista de releve per el mezo dreto le [?] disegna . . . ; Li guanti ano de essere conformi a l'armatura; Le due celate et la rodela ano de essere como li desegne che à visto sua S[ignoria] et tuto el disegno et el releve dorato de oro in folia como ut supra). The armor will be delivered in November, and the total price is to be S.220, of which 50 are to be paid up front, 50 at the time the armor is gilt, and the rest when it is delivered.

Attached to this contract is a description of the armor, perhaps in the hand of one of the Negroli brothers (ASM, N 7873).

**86. September 3, 1547**

Transaction between Francesco Negroli and his brothers, Filippo, Giovan Battista, and Alessandro. Francesco, having sold all his goods and property, regardless of their location, to his brother Battista (who made the purchase in his name and on behalf of his brothers Filippo and Alessandro) for L.4,254, as recorded in the act drawn up by the notary Gerolamo Prealone on April 29, 1545 (document is lost); and because Francesco believes that he was not paid enough, even though he received all of the money agreed upon; the brothers, wishing to maintain good relations with one another as they all live together in the house in Porta Comasina, in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta, left to them by the father, Gian Giacomo, decide that: they will all relinquish all their claims; they will annul the sale by means of a resale to Francesco by his brothers of all that is described in the notary Prealone's act for L.4,254, which Francesco receives from Battista and on behalf of his other brothers; to send a petition to Charles V and the Senate asking them to approve this transaction; and they promise not to change their minds (ASM, N 11069).

**87. January 7, 1548**

Oath taken by representatives of the parish of Santa Maria Segreta (which lies in both the districts of Porta Vercellina and Porta Comasina). Among those listed are Luigi Negroli, son of the late Domenico (Porta Vercellina), Giovan Paolo Negroli, son of the late Nicolò (Porta Vercellina), and Filippo Negroli, son of the late Gian Giacomo (Porta Comasina) (ASM, Potenze Sovrane [post 1535] 2).

**88. April 21, 1548**

Giovan Pietro Negroli and his brothers, Giovan Paolo, Giovan Battista, Giuseppe, and Domenico, having some months before sent Marco Antonio Somiliano, son of the late Abbondio, from Como but now living in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta, as their negotiator to the Savoy court in Turin but with the prohibition that he not extend credit to anyone, require that Marco Antonio, because he sold arms (30 corslets and an armor worth S.42 to Captain Antonio "Duplisis" [?]) on credit for a total of S.271 for the corslets alone and thus violated their agreement, pay them back the entire sum. He promises to do so. Should the Negroli be paid for the arms within three months, Somiliano will be reimbursed. It seems the 30 corslets were delivered to a representative of Andrea Doria, prince of Melfi (ASM, N 9176).

**89. July 11, 1548**

The brothers Filippo and Alessandro Negroli receive S.140 from Giovan Ambrogio Cazzoli as final payment for defensive arms made and sold to "monsignor Chatilion e monsignor de Firmeto Galiers," including a shield made by the Negroli for the aforementioned Galiers (ASM, N 10997).

**90. September 10, 1548**

Agreement between Francesco Negroli, resident in Porta Romana, in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta, and Gerolamo Basilicapetri (Bascapé), son of master Battista. Gerolamo agrees to stay in Francesco's shop for four years, "working in the art of intarsia, that is damascening" (in arte laborandi ad tharsia seu zemina). He will be instructed so that at the end of his apprenticeship he will be a master of this art, and he will be paid ss.7.6 for each day he works (see doc. 103; ASM, N 12234).

**91. September 18, 1548**

Partnership agreement by Job de Fiamengi of Cremona and the brothers Giovan Paolo and Giuseppe Negroli (and on behalf of their brothers, Giovan Pietro, Domenico, and Giovan Battista) to export fustians to Antwerp. Job must buy 6 to 10 bales of them a month in Cremona, have them dyed and mark them with the symbol of the "Dieci Mondi," pack them, and send them to Antwerp, where they will be sold by Domenico Negroli or others. Job will have 2% of their value and Domenico another 2%; the rest of the earnings will be divided in half between the two parties (ASM, N 8025).

**92. November 15, 1548**

The brothers Filippo, Giovan Battista, and Alessandro Negroli (but excluding the fourth brother, Francesco) are paid S.233 for armors sent to Turin (from a judgment of July 1551, doc. 105).

**93, 94. 1548**

Payments

August 2: S.200 paid on account to Francesco Negroli for 2 damascened armors, 4 swords, and a knife for Charles V;

September 25: S.200 for the same thing (ASM, RCS XXII, 8).

**95. February 23, 1549**

The armorer Filippo, called il Boscaya, who works in the shop of the armorer Luigi Negroli, is sentenced to be beheaded (a reprieve of the sentence is issued on May 15, 1549) (ASM, Panigarola Bannitorum 8).

**96. May 16, 1549**

Francesco Negroli, son of the late Gian Giacomo, delegates his cousins Gerolamo, Giovan Pietro, and Giovan Antonio Negroli, sons of the late Francesco, to act for him in all matters concerning the division of goods and property with his brothers and in any later disagreements or problems arising from it (ASM, N 11070).

**97. 1549**

Payment

January 4: S.200 paid on account to Francesco Negroli for 2 damascened armors, 4 swords, and a knife for Charles V (ASM, RCS XXII, 8).

**98. March 24, 1550**

Barbara Negroli's dowry (L.10,000) paid by her brothers Giovan Paolo, Giovan Pietro, and Battista (and on behalf of Giuseppe and Domenico) to her lawful husband, Giuseppe Cazaguerra (Cacciaguerra), son of the late Paolo (ASM, N 9178).

**99. September 3, 1550**

The armorer Filippo Negroli, resident at the corner of the Contrada degli Armaioli, is fined S.100, or "a tribus aculeis" (?), for having used his sword (the sentence is forgiven on November 19, 1550) (ASM, Panigarola Bannitorum 8).

**100. 1550**

Payments

July 29: the armorer Francesco Negroli was paid S.600 in 1548–49 "per lavorare armi per Carlo V" (see docs. 93, 94, 97) and S.200 in 1544–45 "per un corsaletto per Carlo V." Once the work was completed, Francesco owes S.48½ for the difference between the money advanced to him and the final cost of the arms, and he receives the aforementioned S.48½ as a gift from Charles V. An order follows instructing that in the account books of the Camera this account be marked as balanced (ASM, RCS XXII, 9).

**101. 1550**

Payment

November 10: payment order made out to Francesco Negroli, "armaiolo dell'imperatore," by Prince Philip in Augsburg for S.400 as part of the S.1,100 he is owed for gold and labor for the damascened arms he is to make (AGS, Estado 1565, fasc. 33, fol. 75; de Beaumont 1869, pp. 86–87, 88; Angelucci 1890, pp. 100–111, with a complete transcription).

**102. February 27, 1551**

Agreement between Giovan Paolo Negroli and Francesco Rizzarelli, son of the late Ambrogio, resident in Porta Comasina, in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta. Francesco agrees to fabricate 200 morions (24 per *fascio* of iron, which is equal to 76.25 kilos; the fabrication of each morion required, therefore, a little more than 3 kilos, or about 7 pounds of metal) that must be well made and complete like the one found at the shop of Sebastiano Prina (who will also be arbiter and judge of the work), over the next ten months at a rate of 20 a month. He will be paid L.9.10 for each piece, and Giovan Paolo will pay him S.50 up front,

which will be deducted against the last month's payment; payments will be made monthly as the pieces are delivered (ASM, N 9178).

**103. March 12, 1551**

The apprenticeship contract between Francesco Negroli and Gerolamo Bascapè, dated September 10, 1548 (see doc. 90), is dissolved (ASM, N 12234).

**103 bis. †April 11, 1551**

Luigi Negroli dies at about 65 years of age (ASM, Popolazione parte antica 94).

**104. April 18, 1551**

Giovan Paolo Negroli hires the master Francesco Pozzi, son of the late Bernardino, of Monza, resident in Porta Vercellina, in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta, who will work "at his craft of decorating [etching?] armor" (in eius exercitio laborandi ad designandi armaturas). He will be paid S.3 for the next three months and then another S.3 through the feast day of Saint Michael (ASM, N 9178).

**105. July 24, 1551**

Decision by arbitration in the suit between the Negroli brothers (with lists of those who owe them money). Francesco won against his three brothers, Filippo, Battista, and Alessandro, who are ordered to pay him:

A. L.354.16.10, which is equivalent to a fourth of the total expenses of L.1,419.7.4, to improve the workshop;

B. L.1,151.1.6½, which is equivalent to a fourth of the shop's outstanding credits of L.4,604.5.6 (followed by a list of debtors, which is divided into two parts: the shop's debtors and those with some outstanding debt; the latter paid a deposit, took the armor, and did not make a final payment, and they are probably considered irrecoverable, since the amounts owed the Negroli are not listed);

C. L.403.6.3 (less L.158.3.1) as one-fourth of L.1,613.5;

D. the income from property held in Milan and the lands at Cernusco for three years;

E. L.281.7.6 for the expenses of the arbitration (ASM, N 8475; Motta 1914, no. 175).

**106. December 6, 1551**

Ferrante Gonzaga, governor of Milan, sends an order from Casale Monferrato to the Capitano di Giustizia to interrogate Giovan Paolo Negroli about the arms that he exported from Brescia to send to France, as well as those that are stored in Milan (ASM, CS 138).

**107. December 31, 1551 (1552 a Nativitate)**

Division of goods and property among the brothers Filippo, Battista, Alessandro, and Francesco Negroli, all resident in Milan, in Porta Comasina, in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta. All their possessions are divided into four equal parts as follows:

to Filippo: half of the jointly held property at Cernusco, including the house and land (about 270 *pertiche*), half of a credit for L.490.10, and half of a credit for L.1,586.10;

to Battista: the house in Santa Maria Segreta in Milan and two shops with the obligation to pay his brothers Filippo and Alessandro L.1,586.10 in total;

to Alessandro: half of the jointly held property at Cernusco, including the house and land (about 270 *pertiche*), half of a credit for L.490.10, and half of a credit for L.1,586.10;

to Francesco: a house and land at Cernusco (about 331 *per-tiche*), and the obligation to pay his brothers Filippo and Alessandro L.490.10.

Attached to the act of division:

A. inventory of the furniture in the four brothers' house. It includes, among many other things, in the basement (cantina) a mattress for the shop-boys; in the first room, called the Saletta, a large painting; in the small room where Filippo sleeps, three canopies with floral patterns; in another small room where Alessandro sleeps, one canopy with a floral pattern, many "spon-toni" and "designs for working" (*disegni per lavorare*); another "small room furnished with designs and medals" (*fornito de disegni e medaglie*);

B. credits to be collected, including L.137.10 from Guidobaldo II, duke of Urbino, and to be divided into four parts;

C. various family debts totaling about L.920, including S.2 to a "disegnatore" (draftsman; probably an etcher).

Filippo must be paid L.1,200, or three-fourths of his wife's dowry which, it seems, had been invested in the workshop (ASM, N 8475).

#### 108. 1551

Payment

February 28: the armorer Francesco Negroli justifies the D.110 spent on work done for His Majesty in 1545, and the debt is erased in the Camera account books (see doc. 79) (ASM, RCS XXII, 9).

#### 109. 1551

Payment

June 25: payment order by Prince Philip, from Milan, for S.372 to be paid for arms and horse harnesses. (AGS, Estado 1565, fasc. 33, fol. 114; de Beaumont 1869, p. 88; Angelucci 1890, pp. 111–12, with a complete transcription).

#### 110. April 8, 1552

Agreement between the three Negroli brothers Filippo, Giovan Battista, and Alessandro and the master Bernardo Santagostino, who will work in their shop for two years at a salary of ss.32 for each day he works. The Negroli take over a debt of S.57, which Bernardo promises to pay over the two years, and if he cannot he will work it off at the end of his contract (ASM, N 12235).

#### 111. September 6, 1552

Letter from Giovan Pietro Negroli in Paris to the duke of Guise. Negroli has received the order for 100 plain corslets and 100 plain morions. At the moment he does not have that many pieces in stock, but he will at the end of the next month. The armor and horse harnesses, however, are ready (Picot 1905, pp. 84–85).

#### 112. November 5, 1552

Agreement similar to that in doc. 110 but made with Giovan Angelo Legnani (or Legnano), who will work for two years at a salary of ss.22 for each day he works. Giovan Angelo has a debt of L.163, which he must pay off (ASM, N 12235).

#### 113. January 4, 1553

Agreement between the brothers Giovan Paolo and Giuseppe Negroli and Andrea Cislago, son of master Francesco, resident in Porta Comasina, in the parish of San Protaso *foris*. Andrea will live in the Negroli house and work in their shop "in arte armaroli" for seven years; he will receive room and board and learn the trade but gets no salary (ASM, N 11360).

#### 114. 1553

Payment

December 27: S.415 paid in Genoa to Gomez Suarez de Figueroa for Francesco Negroli, armorer to His Majesty, as final payment for certain armors made for Philip (AGS, Contaduría Mayor, 1ª Epoca, 1393; Angelucci 1890, p. 112).

#### 115. November 24, 1556

Agreement between Giovan Battista (and Filippo and Alessandro) Negroli and Camillo della Cesa, the emancipated son of Vincenzo, to apprentice in the Negroli shop. Camillo will be paid ss.9 for every day he works in the first year, ss.11 for each day in the second, and ss.13 in the third. For the first eighteen months, Camillo will do only finishing work at the bench; in the second eighteen months the Negroli brothers may entrust him with "zochus" (*giachi?*) ordered from them (ASM, N 12236).

#### 116. November 24, 1556

Agreement between the brothers Giovan Battista, Filippo, and Alessandro Negroli and Battista Rattazzi on behalf of Dionigi Calvi, son of the late Domenico. Dionigi will work in the Negroli shop for four years and will receive, in turn, food, clothing, and a bed. He will receive no salary for the first year, but in the second he will be paid L.10 for the year, L.12 in the third, and L.14 in the fourth (ASM, N 12236).

#### 117. November 24, 1556

Filippo Negroli leaves the family business and is paid L.400 by his brothers Giovan Battista and Alessandro, which is two-thirds of the total he invested in the business to buy gold. The parties agree that Filippo will be paid only after a shield, worked in relief and damascened and still in the shop, is sold (see doc. 118). An inventory of the arms in stock and still held in common was drawn up (this stock book is lost, but it was described as covered with yellow leather and consisting of 12 signatures, i.e., 192 folios) (ASM, N 12236).

#### 118. January 23, 1557

Filippo Negroli is paid L.400 by his brothers Giovan Battista and Alessandro, as agreed in the act drawn up on November 24, 1556 (doc. 117), since the shield was sold in the preceding few days (ASM, N 12236).

#### 119. June 8, 1557

License granted to Giovan Pietro Negroli, "Milanese merchant," and to Alessandro Vayano and Giovan Pietro Scaramuccia, his servants, "to go, remain, and negotiate business in the lands occupied by the French and to return to the state of Milan" (*per potere andare, stare e negoziare nei paesi occupati dai Francesi, e tornare nello stato di Milano*) (ASM, RCS XXII, 2).

#### 120. November 19, 1557

Division of the Negroli brothers' property and shop after Filippo leaves the business for good. Attached to the act is a brief inventory of the arms yet to be finished and a list of the three brothers' (Filippo, Giovan Battista, and Alessandro) credits and debts. The conditions of and agreements concerning the breaking up of the business and division of property are:

Filippo is to receive L.293.8, a third of the money held in common in the business;

Filippo will no longer take any part in the business;

Giovan Battista and Alessandro assume all of Filippo's debts (as reported in the lost "yellow book" on fol. 188), and Filippo, in turn, will pay his brothers L.320.14.6;

Giovan Battista and Alessandro must pay Filippo S.49, one-third of the S.147 “che sono crediti di diverse armature quali di presente si ritrovano in deposito e sono da diversi gentiluomini,” as listed on folio 188 of the “yellow book,” and Filippo must, in turn, pay L.35 or 40 as his share of the labor cost necessary to finish them;

Giovan Battista and Alessandro must pay Filippo S.46 for his share of the tools and unworked iron in the shop. This S.46 will be paid “when the shield and helmet worked in relief with trophies and armed figures and damascened in gold are sold” (quando si venderà la rotella e la celata lavorata in relevo a trofei e figure armate e dorate all’agemina). These arms are still in the shop, and only when they are sold will Filippo receive a third of what they bring plus the S.46, and not before;

Giovan Battista and Alessandro will keep in their shop “the tournament armor of the marchese di Massa” (l’armatura da giostra del marchese di Massa), which is worth S.32. When it is sold, Filippo will receive a third of what it brings;

the three brothers agree that “a very beautiful shield and helmet, worked in relief and not finished, of which the shield can be dismantled and put together with screws” (una rotella e una celata bellissime, lavorate in relevo e non finite, quale rotella si può disfare e metere insieme con le vite) will remain in the shop and be finished jointly and at common expense. When it is sold, Filippo will receive a third of what it brings;

the three brothers further agree that “another shield and helmet worked in relief with figures and scrolls with snakes, not finished” (una altra rotella e celata lavorate in rilievo con figure e cartocci con le bisse [bisce?], non finite) will be finished, and then Filippo will be paid as above;

the three brothers further agree that “a helmet in the ancient Roman style with two prisoners at the sides and the rest with leaves, with a mask to raise and lower at will, not finished” (una celata alla romana antica con due cattivi per spigolo, ed il resto a fogliame, con uno mascherone da alzare e abbassare per volante, non finita) be finished and then Filippo paid as above;

all this armor is listed in the “yellow book” in Alessandro’s hand on folio 187;

all the furniture in the house in Milan, except what was given to Bianca Reina, Filippo’s wife, is to remain the property of Giovan Battista and Alessandro. A horse will remain the common property of all three brothers;

Giovan Battista and Alessandro release Filippo from his obligation to give Francesco, the fourth Negroli brother, his share of the furniture in Milan. Filippo will give Francesco a vase with a capacity of 24 wine-kegs that is in the cantina at Cernusco, as well as a roasting spit, a brass candlestick, and a copper pot;

all the furniture and utensils at the house at Cernusco are Filippo’s except what he must give Francesco (see above). In addition a vase with a capacity of 10 wine-kegs and a bed and bedstead are Alessandro’s. The large boiler and the large “segione” (?) at Cernusco will continue to be the common property of Filippo and Alessandro, and should they be divided, Alessandro will have first choice;

the three brothers agree to divide equally the credits which they still hold (ASM, N 12236).

#### 121. March 23, 1558

Juan de Figueroa, interim governor of Milan, allows Giovan Paolo Negroli and his brothers to take 43 cases of arms, for both infantry and cavalry use, arquebuses and their accessories, pole

arms, etc., either to Brussels or to Antwerp on the condition that the Negroli produce a receipt of the delivery made in those cities and not in enemy territory. In the margin it is noted that the receipt has been produced (ASM, RCS XXI, 3).

#### 122. September 24, 1558

Filippo’s first testament. He is resident in Porta Romana, in the parish of San Calimero, and declares himself to be of sound mind but ill. He leaves L.100 a year to the works at Santa Maria della Pace in Milan for a daily mass to be said, one gold scudo a year to his sister, Vittoria Felicia, a nun at the convent of Santa Maria Maddalena presso Sant’Eufemia, and L.3 a year to his sister-in-law Alessandra Reina (his wife’s sister), a nun at the convent of Lentasio on the Corso di Porta Romana. He leaves his wife, Bianca Reina, the household furniture and utensils, her dowry, jewelry, clothing, etc., and Laura Mantegazza, his wife’s servant, L.25. He leaves Prudenza, daughter of Bernardo de Santangelo, L.50, the Cathedral works S.1, and his brother-in-law, Fabrizio Reina, S.200. The Ospedale Maggiore in Milan is universal heir to his real property, debits, and credits (ASM, N 9209).

#### 123. November 11, 1558

Codicils to the testament of Giuseppe Negroli, son of the late Nicolò, resident in Porta Vercellina, in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta. His testament, in which he names his brother Giovan Pietro Negroli as his universal heir, was drawn up in Paris. He wishes to be buried in Sant’Eustorgio with his ancestors. He leaves his nieces Costanza, Giulia, and Barbara, daughters of his sister Caterina Negroli and her husband, Francesco Cisati, S.100 each (and more should one of them be dead) and S.100 to his niece Prudenza, daughter of his sister Barbara Negroli and Giuseppe de Cazagneris. He leaves all the goods, property, credits, and debits he has or will have, both in Italy and in Paris or France, to his brothers Giovan Paolo and Domenico (ASM, N 13763).

#### 124. March 18, 1559

Lorenzo Soresina, an armorer working for Giovan Battista Negroli, is fined S.5 for blasphemy (ASM, Panigarola Bannitorum 10).

#### 125. December 12, 1559

Act of division between the brothers Alessandro and Filippo Negroli. This property came into their possession through another division of goods and property with their other brothers drawn up by Gerolamo Terzaghi and Giuseppe Maria Annoni on December 31, 1551 (1552; see doc. 107).

Attached to the division is a survey of the land at Cernusco, on the Naviglio, dated August 29, 1559. The total holding is 265 *pertiche*, 7 *tavole*, and 4 *piedi* (about 17½ hectares in all). The property includes a manor house with a garden, press, courts, a farmhouse, and a stable (ASM, N 9076).

#### 126. January 29, 1560

Division of all jointly held property among the three Negroli brothers Giovan Paolo, Giovan Pietro, and Domenico after the death of a fourth brother, Giuseppe, who died at Saint-Quentin, and including Giuseppe’s property according to his testament, drawn up in Paris, and the codicils to it drawn up in Milan on November 11, 1558 (doc. 123).

The three brothers live in Milan, in Porta Vercellina, in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta, and each received property valued at S.6,500:



to Giovan Paolo: the new house where they live now in Porta Vercellina, in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta, with its garden and appurtenances, up to the door to the room in the house called the "casa delle arme," plus the expenses involved in closing the door to that room which opens onto the garden; house and workshop where the furnaces are now; house and garden on the Naviglio but with the obligation to host his brothers there until the next feast day of Saint Michael;

to Giovan Pietro: credits in France for a total of 15,601 lire of Tournai (valued at L.2.8 per scudo);

to Domenico: property including the old house and workshop "where we are now working" (dove al presente facciamo lavorare); a house and workshop in the Contrada delle Armi, rented to the master shoemaker Giovan Antonio Basarino; the tools of the shop, and the annual rent of L.45.12 due to the Malastalla prison.

Giovan Pietro will pay his brothers S.1,248.19.6 each in eighteen months in Lyon (for their share of the jointly held credits, such as a third of the ship the *Sant'Ambrogio*, which now belongs entirely to Giovan Pietro).

All that is in France is now Giovan Pietro's, but if he sells something he will give two-thirds of its value to his brothers.

The unrecoverable debts (L.4,932.11.8 or S.2,051.10) are not counted as capital and are Giovan Pietro's liability. Should he succeed in collecting anything, however, he will give two-thirds of it to his brothers.

All of the household furniture in France, including the silver vases, are Giovan Pietro's.

All of the household furnishings in Milan, including the silver vases, belong to Giovan Paolo and Domenico unless they divide them.

Each brother may demand payment of one-third of the credits that they hold in common for a total of S.2,590.6.8 each (with a list of credits, the majority of which are in the fairs in Besançon and Lyon).

Domenico is responsible for collecting the debts owed to them and dividing the proceeds with his brothers (for a total of S.1,736.5.4; among others a certain "Bernardino disegnatore" owes them S.5.17.6).

The proceeds from the ship the *Sant'Ambrogio* are to be divided into equal shares.

Giovan Paolo will pay S.616 to each of his brothers in exchange for the armor in the shop in Milan, which is either finished or still to be finished (the labor involved in finishing it will be Giovan Paolo's responsibility solely). It is valued all together at S.1,848 (with a list of the actual values and the selling prices): 6 corslets "dassignati" (designed, probably etched) to be sent to the mill, valued at S.10 and to be sold for S.13; 11 corslets "smiriati" (polished), valued at S.6 and to be sold for S.12½; 3 armors "smeriati" (polished) for men-at-arms, valued at S.12 and to be sold for S.19; 14 light-cavalry armors (corpi alla leggera) with 14 burgonets to be etched, valued at S.5 and to be sold for S.16½; 21 armors for men-at-arms with 21 burgonets and 21 pairs of arm defenses to be decorated, valued at S.7 and to be sold for S.19; 4 rough corslets to be finished and etched, valued at S.2½ and to be sold for S.12½ (the total market value of these unfinished arms is S.1,002½, the difference between this figure and the S.1,848 above must represent the value of the finished arms still in the shop).

Attached to the act there is also an inventory of the furnishings still in the house, valued at S.681.12.8: 13 gilt powder flasks

for arquebuses with accessories, S.58.10; a sword and "stocco" (a tuck?) with belt, and a dagger, damascened, S.17; a pair of mail sleeves, S.5; a silver clock that Giovan Pietro brought from Paris, S.81.7; 2 rubies, 1 emerald, 1 diamond, S.117.19; 172 powder flasks of velvet with their cords, S.183.19; various pieces of gold and silver cloth (ASM, N 10806).

#### 127. March 19, 1560

First testament of Francesco Negroli, son of the late Gian Giacomo, resident in Porta Comasina, in the parish of San Calimero, who declares himself to be of sound mind but ill. He wants to be buried in the church of Santa Maria Maddalena presso Sant'Eufemia in Milan, and he leaves L.10 to that church for masses to be said. He leaves his nieces Veronica and Paola Emilia Negroli, daughters of his brother Battista, L.3,000 each as dowries, whether they be temporal or spiritual. He names his brothers, Giovan Battista, Alessandro, and Giacomo Filippo, as his universal heirs; they are to receive equal shares except that Filippo will receive an additional S.10 annually for his lifetime (ASM, N 13502).

#### 128. May 2, 1560

The brothers Giovan Paolo, Giovan Pietro, and Domenico Negroli promise to settle the debts they owe each other as described in the division document dated January 29, 1560 (doc. 126). Giovan Paolo will pay each of the others S.616, and Giovan Pietro is to receive S.1,403.18.7 from the other two.

Attached to the act is a private partnership agreement between the brothers with a capital of L.48,000 (L.16,000 each), equivalent to S.8,347.16.6, in defensive and offensive arms, arquebuses, powder flasks, horse harnesses, and a diamond cross worth S.500.

All the arms are to be sent to Giovan Pietro who will sell them in France.

Giovan Pietro will keep an account of the expenses of shipping and French customs, and the other two of packing up the arms and Milanese customs. They consider other possible expenses: the shipping of arms from Paris to other places in France and gifts to be given to various treasurers to speed up the transportation.

These expenses having been subtracted, the profits will be divided into thirds; they may not, however, be withdrawn from the partnership for the next six years but must be reinvested in other arms or invested in loans at a rate Giovan Pietro will set.

If other arms are necessary, they will be manufactured exclusively by Giovan Paolo in his shop, and he will be paid an agreed-upon price, that is: corslets etched ("gravati") in bands with matching arm defenses, burgonet with velvet collar and yellow rivets at S.13 each; light-cavalry armor, etched and garnished with all its pieces at S.16½ each; armors for men-at-arms with all their pieces, complete and etched as above, at S.19½ each; plain ("bianchi," white) corslets with arm defenses, gauntlets, burgonet with buffe, yellow rivets, and velvet at S.7½ each; plain corslets with gilt figures and all its pieces, as above, and trimmed with velvet at S.9½ each.

For all the gilt arms Giovan Paolo will make he must keep track of the gold and his labor, which will then be valued. Domenico will buy them and become a creditor of Giovan Pietro.

In case arquebuses, powder flasks, swords, or horse harnesses are ordered from Giovan Pietro, they will be purchased by Giovan Paolo and Domenico and paid for by the latter. Domenico will then become a creditor of Giovan Pietro.

Giovan Pietro promises not to deal in arms other than those he has or will order from his brothers, and the others promise not to sell arms in France except through Giovan Pietro.

If Giovan Pietro wishes to return to Milan before the partnership expires (six years), he may do so, leaving what remains in Paris and with the obligation to collect the debts from one or more paid agents of the company (ASM, N 10806).

**129. September 27, 1561**

Order from Negron de Negro, Treasurer General of Savoy, to pay Baldassare d'Aro and Ludovico Biancardi, agents of Giovan Paolo Negroli, S.20 as a gift and for their expenses in returning to Milan, for having brought the armors made for Emanuele Filiberto, duke of Savoy, which he will give to the king of France and the duke of Orléans (ASTo, Camerale Piemonte, Patenti controllo finanze, art. 689, 2°, fol. 90r; Angelucci 1890, p. 58, n. 3).

**130. September 27, 1561**

S.20 to Baldassare d'Aro and Ludovico Biancardi, agents of Giovan Paolo Negroli, for having brought 3 armors by order of Emanuele Filiberto, duke of Savoy (ASTo, "Sezione camerale, conto del tesoriere generale Negron di Negro," 1558-61, no. 167; Angelucci 1890, p. 57, n. 3).

**131. November 23, 1561**

S.2 to Antonio, servant of the "Milanese merchant" Giovan Paolo Negroli, for having transported 2 shields to complete the arms that His Highness (Emanuele Filiberto, the duke of Savoy) had made for the king of France and the duke of Orléans (ASTo, "Sezione camerale, conto del tesoriere generale Negron di Negro," 1558-61, no. 181; Angelucci 1890, p. 57, n. 3).

**132. February 1, 1562**

(Act inserted in a later act dated January 28, 1563.) Private agreement between Alessandro Ceruti and the brothers Giovan Pietro and Domenico Negroli to put a factory to make spun gold in their house. The Negroli will invest L.20,000 and will receive three-fourths of the profits; Ceruti will invest his labor and experience and will have one-fourth of the profits. The contract expires on December 31, 1566 (ASM, N 13763).

**133. July 1, 1562**

Francesco Ferdinando d'Avalos, marchese di Pescara e del Vasto and governor of Milan, grants a license to the brothers Giovan Paolo and Domenico Negroli to export 20 *some* of arms (that is corslets and morions, some etched and some with rivets, gilt trimming, and arquebuses with their accessories) to Paris for service to the king of France. They are being sent to Giovan Pietro Negroli, their brother, resident in Paris. The license is granted because these are etched and gilt rather than ordinary arms (ASM, RCS XXI, 5).

**134. July 5, 1562**

Guarantee of Nicolò Cyd, treasurer of the imperial army in Lombardy, for armors present in the house of the brothers Giovan Paolo and Domenico Negroli: 71 infantry armors, some etched ("intarsiate") and some plain, and finished with velvet with gilt trimming and gilt rivets; 140 etched morions; and 160 complete arquebuses (ASM, Militare parte antica 409).

**135. September 11, 1562**

Francesco Ferdinando d'Avalos, marchese di Pescara e del Vasto and governor of Milan, grants a license, upon the written request of the king of France, to the brothers Giovan Paolo and

Domenico Negroli to send 100 *some* of arms (corslets and morions, for the most part undecorated and from Brescia, as well as arquebuses, and powder flasks) to their brother Giovan Pietro in France (ASM, RCS XXI, 5).

**136. February 1, 1565**

Filippo Negroli is paid L.12 by the brothers Giovan Battista and Pietro da Cantù for a supply of "baturinam" in silver leaf to make "tremolantas" (ASM, N 16295).

**137. May 3, 1565**

Second testament of Filippo Negroli, son of the late Gian Giacomo, resident in Porta Orientale, in the parish of Santa Babila *foris*, who declares himself sound in mind and body. He annuls his previous will and leaves his wife, Bianca Reina, the usufruct of his real property and her dowry plus a fourth of its value. He leaves his brother Battista ss.5 in total and his brother Alessandro a "quadrante" (a clock?) and nothing more. He leaves his sister, Vittoria, a nun at the convent of Santa Maria Madalena presso Sant'Eufemia, S.8.

He wishes to be buried in the church of Santo Stefano in Brolo.

Attached to the will is an inventory of his furniture in Milan and Cernusco: in Milan he has, among other furnishings, 3 paintings on canvas; "diversi libri da leggere; un libro miniato; un libro a stampa figurato pertinente all'Architettura; un libro di diverse storie appuntato a penna, 30 stampe per fare tremolanti" (ASM, N 16295).

**138. November 22, 1567**

Dissolution of the company founded on August 16, 1566 (that document does not survive), by the brothers Giovan Pietro and Domenico Negroli and which was to be terminated on August 16, 1573. The terms of dissolution include that Domenico relinquish all his credits in the company, leaving to Giovan Pietro "tutto il suo interesse per il capitale e gli utili che ha nel commercio delle armi e in quello degli ori filati" (ASM, N 13765).

**139. December 20, 1567**

Giovan Paolo Negroli receives S.675 (at ss.118 per scudo) from the Neapolitan Fabrizio Pignatelli, son of Marco Antonio, by way of Pelago Doria, in partial payment for 35 etched armors ("armature intarsiate") ordered by Pignatelli at a cost of S.25 each. The total price is S.875, and the remaining S.200 must be paid by the following August (ASM, N 12860).

**140. March 13, 1568**

The monks of Sant'Eustorgio and the brothers Giovan Paolo, Giovan Pietro, and Domenico Negroli agree to the following terms:

1. the Negroli agree to have cupboards built to hold the sacred vestments, at their own expense, around the sacristy of Sant'Eustorgio and to put their own coat of arms on these cupboards;

2. the Negroli agree to have an altarpiece made for the sacristy, which will be called the Negroli Chapel and will belong to them for all time but with the obligation that they maintain it in good condition and at their own expense;

3. the monks agree to put mirrors in the sacristy at their expense and to allow the Negroli to put their coat of arms on them but at their own expense;

4. the monks accept the naming of the chapel and to say all the masses necessary and agreed upon for all time (ASM, N 13765).

**141. March 16, 1568**

Agreement between the three Negroli brothers and the carpenter Giovan Paolo Gazzo to make the cupboards for the sacristy of Sant'Eustorgio, with a detailed list of the work and a description of it. Delivery is set for April 1569, and the price agreed to is S.280. Giovan Paolo Gazzo was given a drawing (now lost), which remained in his possession (ASM, N 13765).

**142. April 21, 1568**

Testament of Giovan Ambrogio Negroli, son of the late Luigi, resident in Porta Vercellina, in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta, who declares himself to be of sound mind and body. He annuls every earlier will drawn up in Paris. He wants to be buried in Sant'Eustorgio in the tomb of his ancestors. He leaves L.12 to that church for masses to be said; he leaves his cousins the brothers Giovan Paolo, Domenico, and Giovan Pietro Negroli L.6 in total. He names his brother Alessandro as his universal heir, with credits and debts, and after him his legitimate sons. If Alessandro dies without male heirs, the estate goes to the sons of Giovan Ambrogio's sister, Angela, and if Alessandro has only daughters, they are to receive L.2,000 each, but the estate is to go to Angela's sons with a life interest in it to Alessandro. Angela and her husband, Paolo Antonio Gaffuri, already have one son (ASM, N 13558).

**143. August 28, 1568**

The brothers Giovan Pietro and Giovan Paolo Negroli send some arms to Lyon (along with a chest of linens): 79 plain arquebus barrels; 13 gilt morions; 24 etched ("disegnati") morions; 5 plain corslets; 80 powder flasks with cords of "filixello"; 2 gilt powder flasks with silk cords and silk and gold tassels; 20 gilt arquebus barrels (ASM, N 13766).

**144. December 30, 1568**

Testament of Giovan Paolo Negroli, son of the late Nicolò (this document is lost, but see doc. 154). His universal heirs are his minor sons, Ludovico and Nicolò; he names their mother, Cornelia Moresini, as their guardian; she is to receive a life interest in the estate and S.100 a year to care for the children.

**145. March 28, 1569**

Testament of Giovan Pietro Negroli, son of the late Nicolò, resident in Porta Ticinese, in the parish of San Maurilio, who declares himself to be of sound mind and body. He annuls his earlier will drawn up in Paris by Guglielmo Dunet and Nicola Camus of the Chatelet. He leaves L.300 to the church of Santa Maria presso San Celso, L.300 to the Ospedale Maggiore in Milan, L.300 to the Cathedral works, L.150 to the poor of San Martino, and L.800 to dower poor girls (in the care of their parents). He leaves L.2,000 to each of the daughters of his sister Caterina as temporal dowries (but only L.1,000 should they decide to enter a convent), L.2,000 to his brother Domenico and L.1,000 to Cristoforo Cisati (da Cisate), who is also mentioned later. In addition to her dowry, he leaves his wife, Violante Panigarola, L.500 a year for life. Giovan Pietro made several bequests (L.100, 200, 400) to the household servants, and he left Nicolò and Ludovico Negroli, the sons of his brother Giovan Paolo, L.45,000 to divide between them or to leave to their children.

Giovan Pietro names Cesare, his illegitimate son, as his universal heir, and if Cesare dies without heirs, the estate is to go to his nephews Nicolò and Ludovico, the sons of his brother Giovan Paolo. Should there be no other heirs, five-sixths of the estate is

to go to Cristoforo Cisati, son of his sister Caterina, and the other sixth to Cristoforo's brothers, Nicolò, Gerolamo, and Giovan Battista. If it will become necessary, he names the aforementioned Cristoforo and Giovan Paolo Negroli to administer the estate for any minor heirs.

The will obliges Cesare to return to live in Milan within two years of his father's death (ASM, N 14137).

**146. May 5, 1569**

Codicils to Giovan Pietro Negroli's testament. He declares that he is of sound mind but ill. He takes L.1,000 from his brother Domenico to give to his nephew Cristoforo Cisati and decrees that his wishes be executed by Pietro Antonio Marliani (counselor of the Camera), Giovan Battista Arconati, and Agostino Panigarola. He also leaves his wife, Violante Panigarola, a capital of L.10,000 instead of the L.500 annual payment (ASM, N 14137).

**147. †May 12, 1569**

Giovan Pietro Negroli, son of the late Nicolò, dies at about 55 years of age (ASM, Popolazione parte antica 96).

**148. †May 13, 1569**

Giovan Paolo Negroli, son of the late Nicolò, dies at about 56 years of age (ASM, Popolazione parte antica 96).

**149. September 30, 1569**

(Private act attached to the act of October 30, 1571; see doc. 156.) Partnership is made between Domenico Negroli, son of the late Nicolò, in Milan, and his nephew Cesare Negroli, son of the late Giovan Pietro, in Paris. Each invests a capital equal to L.75,000; Domenico, however, pays L.150,000 up front, while Cesare will pay his share with deposits at the fair in Lyon in about one year's time. Once everything has been paid, Cesare will be released from his debt to the heirs of the late Giovan Pietro Negroli (L.61,769,15.3), which will pass to the company. In addition to Cesare, Raimondo Raimondi will work in Paris, and Domenico Chiariti will work in Milan with Domenico Negroli, each with ample freedom. The company may be dissolved at will. Giovan Battista Calcaterra will work in Lyon in the silk trade. Annual expenses are calculated at L.1,800 (L.800 in Milan and L.1,000 in Paris), and the parties agree that profits and losses will be split equally between them (ASM, N 13768, and another copy in N 17564).

**150. June 19, 1570**

Giovan Battista Negroli (and on behalf of his brother Alessandro) draws up an agreement with Giovan Antonio Pergomo and his son Pietro Francesco, who will work in the armor shop of the Negroli for ten months at a salary of ss.11 a day. He will receive instruction in the craft until he becomes a master (ASM, N 14236).

**151. September 1, 1570**

Third testament of Filippo Negroli, resident in Porta Orientale, in the parish of San Babila *foris*, who declares himself to be of sound mind but ill. He annuls his earlier testaments and leaves one-fourth of his real property to his wife in addition to her dowry. Filippo, "having suffered for a long time from serious illnesses and being reduced to such great poverty, both because of these illnesses and because of the small income from [his] properties and finally because of the blindness that afflicts [him], that [he] has not enough to feed or clothe [himself] or [his] family" (pro retrodata tempora multos infirmitates habuerim et reductus

fuerim in magna necessitate tam ex causa dicte infirmitatis quamque ex bonis meis parum percipiebat et atque attenda cecitate in qua oppressus sum, adeo quod deficiebat victum et vestium pro me et familia mea), has been constrained to sell off over time all that he owned in order to live, including his wife's jewelry—a gold collar, a gold necklace, a large coral mounted in gold, rings, and other jewels, as well as clothes of green damask and a sable with a gold chain—for a total value of S.200. This sum must be reimbursed to his wife. He leaves all the household furnishings to his wife and makes bequests to Catellano Maggi or his brother, Giovan Antonio Maggi. His credits are to go to the Ospedale Maggiore. He wishes to be buried in Santa Maria della Pace. He leaves everything else to his brother Giovan Battista and to his sons after him (ASM, N 17134).

**152. †October 19, 1570**

Gerolamo Negroli, son of the late Francesco, dies at about 56 years of age (ASM, Popolazione parte antica 97).

**153. November 27, 1570**

Postmortem inventory made of Gerolamo Negroli's belongings. Among the objects found in his house, there are 50 etched ("incisi") corslets, some finished and some unfinished, valued at about S.200; 15 etched corslets, some finished and some unfinished, valued at about S.80.

Gerolamo's brothers, Giovan Pietro and Giovan Antonio Negroli, are named as guardians of Francesco, his minor son with Cecilia Seroni (ASM, N 12079).

**154. May 15, 1571**

Cornelia Moresini, Giovan Paolo Negroli's widow, receives S.200 from Domenico Negroli as payment of the S.100 she is to receive annually to care for and instruct the sons of the late Giovan Paolo, as set out in his will, drawn up by the notary Giovan Ambrogio Guenzati on December 30, 1568 (document is lost) (ASM, N 13767).

**155. †June 11, 1571**

Domenico Negroli, son of the late Nicolò, dies at about 44 years of age (rather than 36, as recorded; ASM, Popolazione parte antica 97).

**156. October 30, 1571**

Dissolution of the company founded on September 30, 1569, by Domenico Negroli and his nephew Cesare Negroli to trade with France (see doc. 149). Included is a list of accounts and of the merchandise still in stock and its value. The arms in stock in Paris are worth L.52,173.10 and those in Antwerp L.3,013.8 (ASM, N 13768, and another copy in N 17564).

The numbers of items in the lists are impressive. The arms in Paris comprised the following, with their unit prices: 513 etched morions at L.16; 1 damascened armor for a man at arms at S.60; 508 arquebuses at L.15; 1 damascened sword at S.65; 1 powder flask with relief decoration at S.26; 66 etched corslets at S.20; 26 leather powder flasks at L.3; 358 velvet flasks at L.7; 7 etched shields at S.10; 6 gilt shields at S.10; 38 gilt morions at L.50; 39 morions with gold leaf ("morioni con oro in folia"; damascened?) at S.6; 119 plain corslets at L.55; 37 muskets at L.28; 136 gilt flasks of diverse type at S.6; 58 corslets with leather ("corsaletti con cuoio") at L.50; 117 etched morions of pointed type ("morioni gravati aguzzi") at L.12; 71 plain morions of pointed type at L.6; 21 etched horse armors at S.26; 20 plain horse armors at L.100; 1 gilt armor for a man-at-arms at S.80; 1 horse harness with gold at S.12; 2 horse harnesses with silver at S.12; 6 horse harnesses with

velvet at S.3; 31 painted horse harnesses ("fornimenti da cavallo miniati") at S.5; 52 horse harnesses of leather at L.5; 6 velvet brigandines at S.10; 1 small gilt sallet ("piccola celata dorata") at S.5; 6 damascened swords at L.3; 1 pair of damascened stirrups, bit, and spurs at S.3; 8 barrels for bird guns ("canne da uccellare") at L.15; 3 plain saddles at L.6; 6 gilt saddles at S.3½; 22 small plain sallets at L.7; 1 etched crinet ("collo da cavallo gravato") at L.3; one "embroidered" sallet ("celata ricamata") at L.15; 6 pairs of greaves, that is, 3 etched and 3 plain, at L.5½; 6 shafted weapons at L.5.18; and 1 emerald at S.50.

The arms on deposit in Antwerp were considerably fewer and comprised: 236 etched morions at S.2; 6 gilt arquebus flasks with gold leaf at S.6; one white arquebus at S.2; and 6 gilt arquebuses at S.6.

In this list, plain (i.e., undecorated) armor is referred to as "white" (bianca), etched decoration as "gravati," and damascening as "alla zemina."

**157. †April 21, 1573**

Giovan Antonio Negroli, son of the late Francesco, dies at about 57 years of age (ASM, Popolazione parte antica 98).

**158. May 21, 1573**

Testament of Alessandro Negroli, son of the late Gian Giacomo, resident in Porta Comasina, in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta, who declares himself to be of sound mind but ill. He annuls all earlier wills. He wishes to be buried in Santa Maria Segreta and wants obsequies like those of his cousin Giovan Antonio Negroli (who died a month earlier). He leaves L.50 to Santa Maria Segreta and another L.50 to the Ospedale Maggiore. He leaves his brother Filippo the income from a long-term lease worth L.10 annually, his wife, Maddalena da Carnago, support and the possibility to live where she lives now, as well as L.50 a year, and his brother Francesco L.50. He names his nephews Giacomo Filippo and Paolo Camillo, the sons of his brother Giovan Battista, as his universal heirs to share equally in the inheritance (ASM, N 14238).

**159. †May 28, 1573**

Alessandro Negroli, son of the late Gian Giacomo, dies at about 50 years of age (ASM, Popolazione parte antica 98).

**160. September 3, 1573**

Fourth testament of Filippo Negroli, who now lives at Cernusco, in the *pieve* of Gorgonzola, and declares that he is of sound mind but rather ill. He annuls all earlier wills. He wishes to be buried in the church of Santa Maria in Cernusco. He leaves S.2 both to the school of Corpus Christi at Santa Maria Segreta in Milan and to the Ospedale Maggiore, S.6 a year to his sister, Vittoria Felicia, a nun at the convent of Santa Maria Maddalena in Milan. His father's property has been divided among the brothers Filippo, Battista, and Alessandro, and Filippo leaves the usufruct of his share to his wife, Bianca Reina, as well as her dowry and S.100 for her jewelry and clothing that he had to sell in the past (see doc. 151). His wife can live with his brother Francesco Negroli if she wants. He leaves his brother Giovan Battista a field in Cernusco and other land holdings but with the obligation to pay the school of Corpus Christi L.200. He names his nephew Gian Giacomo (son of his brother Francesco and his recently deceased wife, Angela de Balbis) his universal heir. Should, however, Gian Giacomo not be allowed to inherit the estate because of the will of Filippo's father, Gian Giacomo, Filippo leaves everything to his brother Francesco on behalf of his nephew Gian Giacomo until he turns 25.

A list of the debts contracted by the estate of his father, Gian Giacomo, after his death (December 4, 1543) is attached to the testament (ASM, N 16297).

**161. May 7, 1574**

Marco Antonio Bossi gives his pledge to Giovan Battista Negroli and Antonio Maria de Piro (?), son of the late Melchiorre, for armor made by or having been made for the aforementioned Negroli and Piro and delivered to Bossi, who must send it to the illustrious "Duci Graviniae" (perhaps Ferdinando Orsini, son of the late Antonio, duke of Gravina) by way of his agents (ASM, N 14241).

**162. January 17, 1578**

From two lists of neighbors in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta there appear, as residents of Porta Comasina: Giovan Pietro Negroli, son of the late Francesco, and Giovan Battista Negroli, son of the late Gian Giacomo; in Porta Vercellina: Alessandro Negroli, son of the late Luigi (ASM, N 14644).

**163. March 8, 1579**

Fifth and last testament of Filippo Negroli (the notary's acts have been lost; this testament is cited in doc. 166).

**164. †November 24, 1579**

Filippo Negroli, son of the late Gian Giacomo, dies (the date of his death is found on the inventory of his possessions made immediately after his death and copied into two acts, one of September 20, 1584, and the other of November 20, 1584) (ASM, N 16299, and a copy in N 14250).

**165. July 8, 1581**

At his death in November 1579, Filippo Negroli, having made several wills with different bequests, left a house and lands at Cernusco, in the *pieve* of Gorgonzola, which his two surviving brothers, Giovan Battista and Francesco, have divided between them. Filippo's property was valued at L.11,842 (minus debts of L.1,233); Giovan Battista received property worth L.3,978 and Francesco property worth L.6,630 (ASM, N 14247).

**166. March 5, 1582**

Agreement between Bianca Reina and the brothers Giovan Battista and Francesco Negroli. Filippo Negroli (with his father) received L.1,600 as Bianca Reina's dowry. Given that in his last testament of March 8, 1579 (now lost), Filippo left his wife S.200, there was some discussion about the validity of the will. Bianca and the Negroli brothers now agree that she will renounce all claims, and that the brothers will allow her half of the rents at Cernusco and to live in the manor house there; at her death all the furniture goes to the Negroli brothers. In addition Bianca will receive S.10 a year for the rest of her life as the interest on her dowry (ASM, N 14248).

**167. May 23, 1587**

Giovan Battista Negroli and his son Giacomo Filippo sell their house and shop in the parish of Santa Maria Segreta to Francesco, son of the late Gerolamo Negroli, for L.12,000, of which L.3,000 is to be paid when the contract is drawn up, L.3,000 on the feast day of San Martino, and the last L.6,000 at a time still to be negotiated.

The act includes a description of the house at the corner of the Contrada degli Armadorari and the piazza of Santa Maria Segreta. The property consists of a cantina and other underground areas; three workshops, a room, and a kitchen on the

ground floor; a "loco curiali" and two more rooms on the first floor; two rooms and a small room on the second; two rooms and a small room on the third, as well as stairs, a toilet, and balconies (ASM, N 19223).

**168. June 28, 1588**

Second testament of Francesco Negroli, son of the late Gian Giacomo, resident in Porta Ticinese, in the parish of Sant' Alessandro in Zebedia, who declares himself to be of sound mind and body. He annuls his earlier will and leaves the school of Corpus Domini in Sant' Alessandro in Zebedia a credit of L.20,000, which he has with the Cusani family. He leaves his wife, Maddalena Pellizzoni, her dowry of L.6,700 and his three nieces, Laura, Anna, and Margherita, the daughters of his brother Giovan Battista, L.1,333.6 each for their dowries. He leaves L.100 for masses to be said for Gian Giacomo, his dead son. He obliges the Pellizzoni (who will inherit everything from his wife) to increase the dowries of his nieces to L.2,000. He leaves, finally, L.1,000 to Bianca Reina, his brother Filippo's widow (ASM, N 17157).

**169. †September 21, 1591**

Giovan Battista Negroli, son of the late Gian Giacomo, dies at about 80 years of age (ASM, Popolazione parte antica 98).

**170. September 17, 1598**

Third testament of Francesco Negroli, son of the late Gian Giacomo (the document has not survived, see doc. 171).

**171. June 17, 1600**

Fourth testament of Francesco Negroli, son of the late Gian Giacomo, resident in Porta Ticinese, in the parish of Sant' Alessandro in Zebedia, who declares himself to be of sound mind but ill. He annuls his previous three wills, including that of September 17, 1598 (now lost). He has left a list of his desires for his funeral with his wife, Maddalena Pellizzoni, who is charged with carrying them out.

He leaves to Maria Francesca Pellizzoni, known as Margherita, a nun in the convent of Santa Margherita, daughter of the late Giacomo Antonio, L.50 a year for life.

He gives his wife, Maddalena Pellizzoni, the possibility to live where she is living now, and leaves her the usufruct of the property and furnishings at the farmhouse called Torrianello at Cernusco for one year, after which the usufruct must cover her dowry plus an additional L.1,300 (L.8,000 in total).

He also leaves his wife the furnishings in the house in Milan with the exception of what is in the office.

He leaves a credit of S.4,179 that he has with the Cusani family and is still to be collected by them to the school of Santi Giacomo and Filippo, built in Sant' Alessandro in Zebedia. He also leaves the school other credits with which it should buy property with a return of at least 4% (attached are a letter of exchange, dated May 4, 1600, from Piacenza for S.4,179.1.2 at a rate of ss.134½ per scudo and a receipt from Paolo Camillo Negroli, dated July 5, 1601, for the same letter of exchange).

Francesco names his nephew Paolo Camillo, son of his late brother Giovan Battista, as his universal heir and after him his legitimate sons. If there are no male heirs, the whole of the estate is to go to the Ospedale Maggiore (ASM, N 17166).

**172. †July 6, 1600**

Francesco Negroli, son of the late Gian Giacomo, dies at about 78 years of age (ASM, Popolazione parte antica 106).





# THE CLASSICAL HERITAGE

Filippo Negroli is without doubt one of the most original Renaissance interpreters of the classical style. The design and ornament of his armors effectively evoke the ancient world, but the specific sources of his inspiration and those of contemporary makers of armor *all'antica* are often very difficult to identify. The sources were probably secondhand, that is, representations of armor and weapons copied from Roman monuments, most of them probably known through drawings and engravings after the originals. On the other hand, the parallels between surviving Greek and Roman pieces and Cinquecento armors *all'antica* are sometimes startling, raising the possibility that some pieces of classical parade armor were then available for direct study.

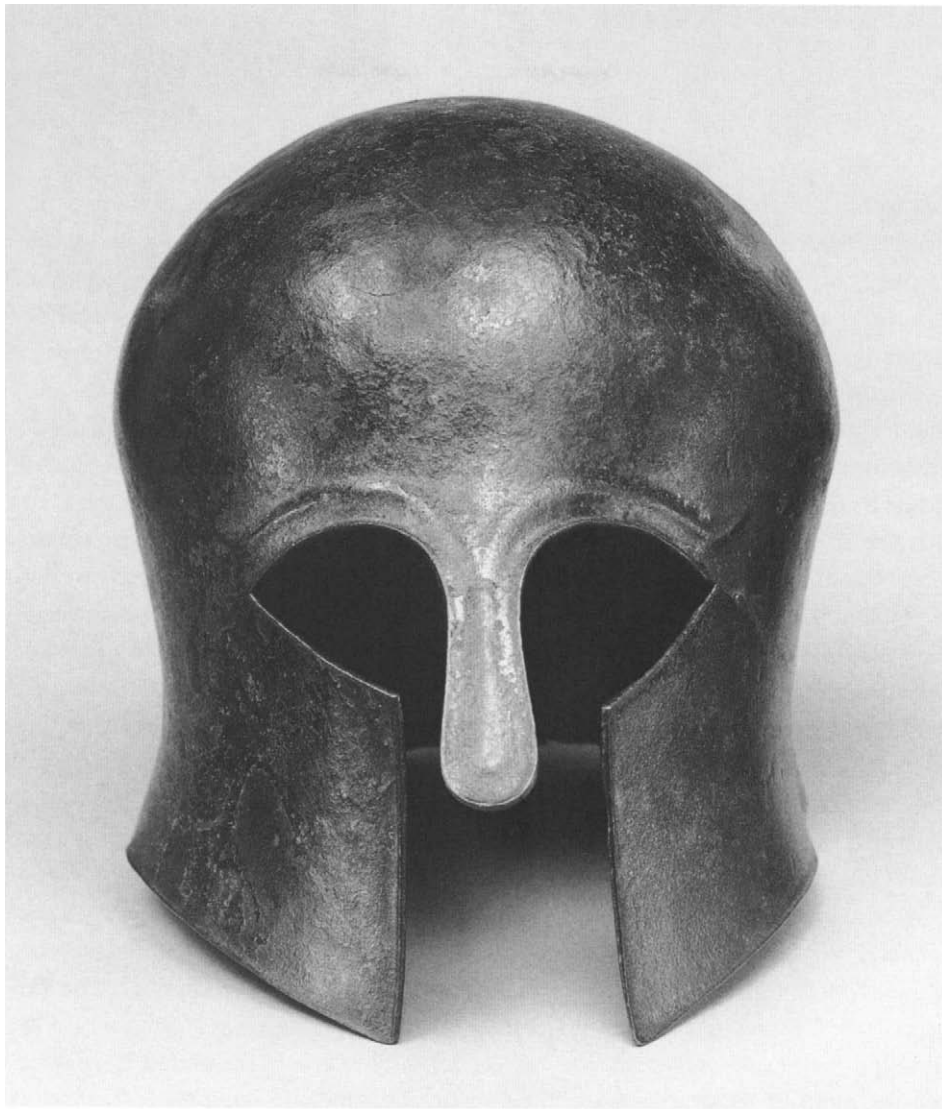
This section includes six examples of classical armor that demonstrate the art of the ancient armorer and at the same time suggest some of the forms, techniques, and decorative features that were rediscovered and emulated in the sixteenth century. Thus it was that the Corinthian style of Greek helmet (cat. no. 1) served as the probable source for the development of the Italian sallet of so-called Venetian type (cat. no. 7) and inspired a later embossed parade helmet (cat. no. 67). A bronze greave embossed at the knee with a fierce gorgon's head (cat. no. 2) shows an early use of this popular motif in armor decoration. This fabulous monster, Medusa, with her coiffure of snakes and petrifying glance, was a favorite blazon on ancient shields and breastplates, and on this authority it was adopted by Renaissance armorers, including Filippo Negroli (cat. no. 32). The bronze muscled cuirass (cat. no. 3) represents a Hellenistic type regularly used by the Romans for their imperial portraiture, and not surprisingly, it became the accepted form of Renaissance armor *alla romana*. The Phrygian-style helmet with its bearded cheekpieces (cat. no. 4), the Roman parade helmet embossed with curly hair

(cat. no. 5), and the cavalry "sports" helmet with its full anthropomorphic mask (cat. no. 6) are types that might well have served as models for Renaissance armor.

The revival of classicizing military dress is well documented in Italian art of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (cat. nos. 9–12), but few pieces of armor *all'antica* survive before the appearance of Filippo Negroli's first documented work of 1532. The only complete Quattrocento example is the lion-head sallet in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (cat. no. 8), datable about 1475–80, which recalls the mythic hero Hercules, who wore as a headdress the pelt of the Nemean lion. The sallet's construction, with the decoration in gilt copper applied over the steel helmet, stands in contrast to similar pseudo-antique works of the following century in which the ornament is an integral part of the armor plate. Like the Medusa head, the lion, with its royal and Herculean associations, was a favorite element of *all'antica* ornament, and it reappears on numerous examples in this catalogue (cat. nos. 8, 39, 56, 61, 62).

The Renaissance fascination with ancient costume was manifest in a variety of printed works, including Vogtherr's woodcut pattern book of 1538 (cat. no. 14) and Orsoni's pen-and-wash album of 1554 (cat. no. 15). On a more academic level, Du Choul's illustrated treatise on Roman military organization and equipment (cat. no. 16) reflects a wide knowledge of Roman literature and monuments. Although not always accurate from an archaeological point of view, these broadly circulated works had considerable influence on the perception of the ancient world.

Finally, this section includes four designs for armor *all'antica* (cat. no. 13) that originated in the court of Francis I of France about 1535–40. One can assume that similar drawings must have been created in connection with the design of armor made by Filippo Negroli and his contemporaries.



I.  
**HELMET OF CORINTHIAN TYPE**

*Greek, 6th century B.C.*

*Bronze*

*H. 8½ in. (21.5 cm); Wt. 2 lb. 5 oz. (1,046 g)*

*The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Rogers Fund, 1921 (21.88.7)*

The one-piece helmet has a smoothly rounded cranium, shallow concave sides with a notch in the edge over each shoulder, and a Y-shaped face opening formed by the long, narrow nasal bar and angular cheekpieces. The only decoration consists of a raised ridge over each eye. The edges are slightly flanged. The bowl has several breaks and minor losses at the back, where the edge has also been trimmed.

In the classical world, the Corinthian helmet was the most commonplace form, and was the typical headpiece worn by the hoplite in Greek sculpture and vase painting from the

seventh to the early fourth century B.C. It reappears in Roman art, where, following Hellenistic models, it was employed in representations of Minerva or Bellona (the Roman goddess of war), and it is presumably from this source that it entered the vocabulary of Renaissance ornament. This type of helmet may also have been the model for the great sallet of the early fifteenth century (cat. no. 7), the only recorded examples of which come from the Aegean region.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: McClees 1933, p. 82, fig. 107.

2.

## GREAVE FOR THE LEFT LEG

Greek (?), 6th–5th century B.C.

Bronze and amber

H. 19 <sup>13</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in. (50.4 cm); W. 4 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in. (10.7 cm)

The Shelby White and Leon Levy Collection

Formed from a single sheet of bronze, with an applied border along the top and bottom edges, the greave is embossed in low relief over the kneecap with the head of a gorgon and around the calf with a series of parallel lines that highlight the muscle. The gorgon's eyes are inlaid with amber.

Armor in the Greek world was invariably of bronze, a comparatively soft metal that seems to have encouraged armorers to explore repoussé, or embossing, the technique of producing raised designs on metal sheet. Whereas armor intended for practical use on the battlefield was by necessity of heavier plate and, if decorated at all, was engraved or had applied ornament, parade armor could be of thinner metal with more elaborately worked surfaces. Embossing required the armorer to hammer the surface up from behind and then to work the exterior with chisel and punches to define the detail of the relief. This process of stretching and punching the metal inevitably weakened it, thereby compromising its defensive properties. In the classical world, as in the



Renaissance, parade armor with embossed decoration served as a conspicuous status symbol for a commander or high-ranking officer, identifying him as a man of wealth, position, and taste.

The armored panoply of a Greek infantryman, or hoplite, typically consisted of a bronze helmet, cuirass, greaves to protect the lower legs, and shield, all of which could be decorated with abstract designs, plant and animal motifs, and even figures from mythology. Of the figural repertory, the most popular was the gorgon Medusa, a female creature with snakes instead of hair and a horrifying glance that turned the onlooker into stone. No monster was more terrifying and none more appropriate to armor, her visage acting as a psychological, if not a magical, defense against the enemy. The gorgon on this greave belongs to the early Greek type, with a stylized, masklike face that emphasizes the monster's frightful appearance, with bulging eyes, protruding tongue, and large boar's tusks instead of teeth. In Hellenistic times Medusa was transformed into a more decorative beauty, her face idealized and serene, and it was this creature that passed into Roman and, later, Renaissance ornament. This catalogue includes three shields embossed with Medusa's head (cat. nos. 32, 42, 68), an emblem that would have brought to the humanist's mind the aegis of Zeus and the shield devices carried by Athena and especially by Perseus, the exemplary hero who slew the monster and adopted her severed head as his blazon. However, the Renaissance works are executed in steel, like most post-classical European armor, rather than the softer and more malleable bronze used by the ancient Greeks.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: New York 1990, pp. 110–11, no. 91.

3.

### CUIRASS

*Greek (southern Italy), mid-4th century B.C.*

*Bronze*

*Breastplate: H. 19 <sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (50 cm)*

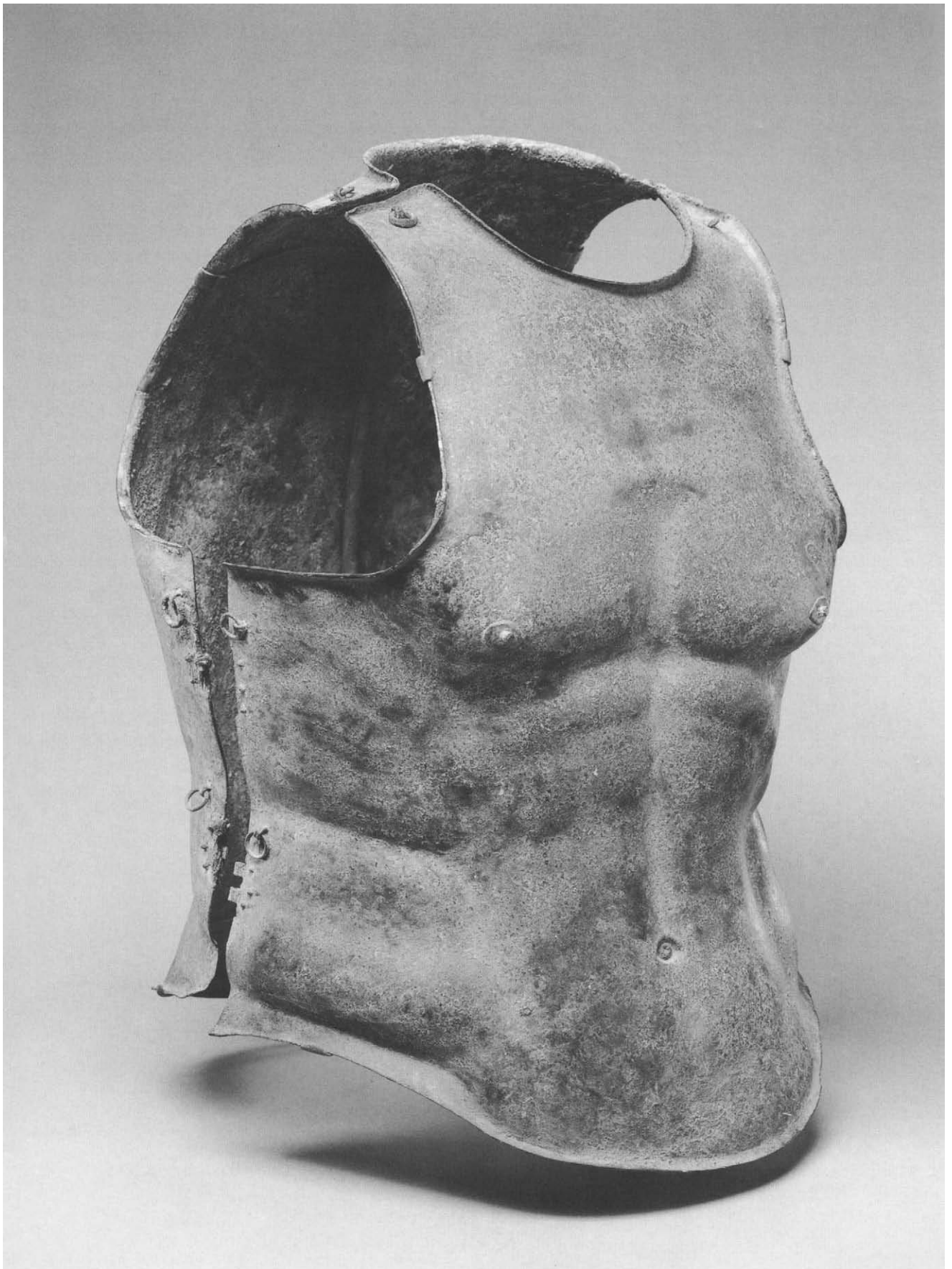
*Backplate: H. 20 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in. (51 cm)*

*The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Gift of Estée Lauder Inc., 1992 (1992.180.3)*

The cuirass is composed of a breastplate and a backplate, each formed of a single plate hammered in relief to simulate the well-developed musculature of a male thorax. The edges at the neck, armholes, and bottom are flanged outward; the nipples are separately applied. The cuirass is closed by two tubular hinges riveted at each side and, originally, by laces that passed through pairs of rings still present at the shoulders and at the sides above the hinges.

This powerfully modeled and remarkably well preserved cuirass, heretofore unpublished, belongs to a distinctive group of armor coming from Apulia, in southern Italy, in western Magna Graecia (Cahn 1989, pp. 43–45). It represents a late development of the more severely stylized anatomical “bell corslet” worn by the hoplite since the eighth century B.C. and displays an enhanced, or idealized, naturalism in which every muscle is carefully rendered in relief. The Hellenistic “muscled” cuirass was subsequently adopted by the Romans as an insignia of rank for their senior officers and, having become a symbol of Roman authority and might, was regularly employed in imperial portraiture (fig. 19). Muscled cuirasses may have continued to be worn at the Byzantine court (Kolias 1988, pp. 49–50), and in any case the memory of this classical type was preserved in Byzantine and Western medieval art in representations of military saints and historical or mythological figures. With the reawakening of interest in antiquity during the Renaissance, the muscled cuirass came to be synonymous with armor *all'antica*.





4.

## HELMET OF PHRYGIAN TYPE WITH BEARDED CHEEKPIECES

*Greek, 4th century B.C.*

*Bronze*

*Wt. 2 lb. 12 oz. (1,250 g)*

*Judy and Michael Steinhardt*

This unpublished helmet is a distinguished example of the so-called Phrygian type, with its comb drawn up into the characteristic forward-curved knob, which on the best examples, including this one, is made in one with the rest of the bowl. The lower edge of the bowl is stepped back and then drawn out at the front into a short, rounded peak and down over the nape into a flange that expands at the sides to encircle the ears. The cheekpieces are now attached by modern hinges and close in front of the chin with original hooks. They are cut out around the eyes, nose, and mouth and are embossed to simulate a beard, with coiled locks in high relief and with a straight-combed mustache. The edges around the eyes are turned out, and those outlining the jaw are raised. There are minor restorations along the back of the comb and on the neck flange.

This rare and well-preserved specimen belongs to a small

group of Phrygian helmets fitted with bearded cheekpieces, many of which come from the region of Thrace, what is now northeast Greece, Bulgaria, and European Turkey (see Dintsis 1986, vol. 1, pp. 23–56; Bottini et al. 1988, pp. 163–69). The group is generally dated to the fourth century B.C. A similar example excavated at Kovačevica is in the Archaeological Museum in Sofia, Bulgaria (New York 1977, fig. 36). These are early examples of anthropomorphic helmets, their “faces” made in two halves, whereas later ones, particularly Roman cavalry helmets dating from the first to third centuries A.D. (cat. no. 6), have masks made of one plate that covers the entire face and is hinged at the front of the bowl. No bearded cheekpieces of this exact type are recorded as having been found in Italy, but the similarity of the cusped facial opening and carefully detailed curls to those of the bevor attached to Charles V’s helmet (cat. no. 20), made by Filippo Negroli in 1533, is striking nonetheless.







5.

## PARADE HELMET

*Roman, 1st century A.D.*

*Iron, silver, and gold*

*H. 7<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (19.3 cm)*

*Rheinisches Landesmuseum Bonn (86.0070)*

Found in 1986 in Xanten-Wardt, near Wesel, in the North Rhine–Westphalia region of Germany, the helmet in Bonn is the best-preserved and most elaborate example of its kind. Although the original is too fragile to travel, it is represented in the exhibition by an exact copy in silvered and gilt copper. The helmet comprises a one-piece bowl and two large cheekpieces (the right one preserved only in part) formerly attached to it by hinges. The smooth iron bowl is covered with silver sheet embossed as a head of human hair encircled by an olive wreath and set at the front with a medallion containing a high-relief bust of a male wearing armor and a baldric, with trophies of arms contained in the encircling frame. The front edge has applied wire decoration, and the line over the ears and across the back is highlighted by a cabled band. The out-turned flange at the nape has raised foliate scrolls, from whose flowers emerge erotes armed with bow and arrow in pursuit of griffins and deer issuing from adjacent buds. The cheekpieces are also of iron faced with silver and are embossed with naturalistic ears and facial hair. Portions of the silver relief are fire-gilt, notably the wreath and medallion and some of the ornament at the nape.

The Bonn helmet belongs to the same type of anthropomorphic parade and tournament headgear as catalogue number 6, although it was never intended to have a mask. In his detailed study of the piece, Prittwitz (1991) noted the similarity of the medallion portrait to members of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, especially Tiberius (A.D. 14–37), and compared the inhabited or peopled scrolls at the nape to comparable decoration on early imperial silver, concluding that the helmet probably dates to the second quarter of the first century. This early date is supported by the fact that the base material used here is iron, over which the thin silver relief was applied, rather than the silvered or gilt bronze employed for parade helmets of the second and third centuries. The olive wreath seems to have been an emblem of an equestrian or knightly order, thus identifying the helmet's owner as a high-ranking cavalry officer. The lavish use of precious metal and the exquisite workmanship of this helmet confirm the elevated status of its owner, while its sturdy construction indicates that it could have served him as a practical defense in battle as well as a splendid decoration for ceremonial occasions.

Anthropomorphic features utilized on Roman parade helmets, notably hair and ears worked in relief, recur in the sixteenth century in the works of Filippo Negroli and his imitators. With its encircling olive branches tied at the back, the Bonn helmet could have served as a model for the two later examples with wreaths of oak shown here (cat. nos. 21, 22), with a variant in the form of a diadem (used as a peak) of palm and of laurel (cat. nos. 18, 20). The inhabited scrolls at the nape represent a vocabulary of classically inspired ornament adopted by Filippo Negroli (cat. no. 33) and his cousin Giovan Paolo in the 1540s.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Bonn 1989, pp. 71–72; Junkelmann 1990–91, vol. 2, pp. 84–85, fig. 37; Prittwitz 1991, pp. 225–41.

6.

## PARADE HELMET WITH MASK

*Roman, 1st century A.D.*

*Bronze*

*H. 11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in. (28.6 cm)*

*The Shelby White and Leon Levy Collection*

The helmet consists of a bowl, two hinged cheekpieces, and a mask in the form of a man's face that attaches to the bowl with a hinge (modern) in the center of the forehead. The one-piece bowl is shaped over the ears and has a narrow, turned-out flange at the nape. The surface is decorated with appliquéd ornament, which includes two bands across the front, a transverse band along the comb, a wide ribbed band across the back, and a pair of S-shaped ornaments (one restored) at the front. The cheekpieces, now attached to the bowl with modern hinges, are shaped around the edges of the face and are embossed at the back with naturalistic human ears. The face mask is pierced in the regions of the eyes, nostrils, and mouth and is delicately embossed and engraved at the eyebrows and lips.

Helmets with complete face masks appear to be Hellenistic in origin; one of the earliest examples is represented in the reliefs on the Pergamon altar dating to about 180 B.C. The majority of the surviving examples are Roman, however, and date from the first to third centuries A.D.; the find-sites, most of them in Northern Europe, the Near East, and even North Africa, have led some scholars to believe that they belonged to auxiliary cavalry troops stationed outside Italy.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the remains of three mask helmets, one of them with a bowl embossed as a head of naturalistic hair, found at



6

Rapolano, near Siena, in 1955 (Museo Archeologico, Florence, inv. nos. 98710–98712), indicate that these helmets were also known, and possibly used, near the heart of the empire. Mask helmets of this type are thought to have been used in a sporting context, probably for cavalry exercises imitating the Trojan games referred to in the *Aeneid*. Some of the masks have female features or are clearly based on oriental types, suggesting that the games may have been posed as contests between Romans and Amazons or exotic foreign warriors.

It is not known whether Renaissance antiquarians were aware of this helmet type, although examples with masklike peaks were known from ancient reliefs (figs. 22, 24). Helmets with naturalistic or grotesquely stylized masks in place of visors appeared in Germany early in the sixteenth century, but these presumably derived from the local traditions of mummery and pre-Lenten, or Shrovetide, festivals in which similar masks were worn. The earliest documented helmet with a centrally hinged mask of this sort, an Austrian work





6

by the Innsbruck armorer Konrad Seusenhofer, which was given in 1514 by Emperor Maximilian I to Henry VIII of England (Royal Armouries, Leeds, inv. no. IV.22),<sup>2</sup> has a mask pivoting at the forehead on a central hinge, with the hinged cheekpieces closing tightly around the mask at the chin to secure it, exactly as on the Roman helmet under discussion. The similarities may be coincidental, but the Leeds example raises the question as to the extent of knowledge of classical armor in the early sixteenth century. Helmets with full

masks are not known in Renaissance Italy, although a number of classically inspired anthropomorphic helmets with naturalistic hair, ears, and beards have survived (cat. nos. 18, 20–22).

1. For an introduction to this subject, see especially Robinson 1975, pp. 107–35.

2. Blair 1965, pp. 17–19.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Junkelmann 1996, pp. 54–55, figs. 105–8.

**GREAT SALLET**

Italian, ca. 1420–40

Steel

H. 13 <sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (34.6 cm); Wt. 8 lb. 12 oz. (3,957 g)

Ex coll.: Found at Chalcis, 1840; Historical and Ethnographical Society of Greece (today National Historical Museum), Athens; Bashford Dean, New York

The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, Funds from various donors, 1929 (29.158.42)

The helmet is constructed of two plates, a bowl and a tubular side plate, their edges overlapped and riveted together at eye level. The pointed bowl has a strong medial ridge down the front, its lower edge cusped over the eyes and flanged outward. The side plate extends down to the shoulders, where the edge is flanged outward and slightly pointed at the back; it has a narrow vertical opening in the front that expands under the eyes, where the edges are also flanged. Lining holes are pierced over the eyes and around the sides below the join. Stamped at the back of the bowl in the center is an armorer's mark, a crowned S.

This imposing and unusually heavy helmet has claim to be the earliest European example to imitate a classical prototype, specifically the Corinthian bronze helmet of the Greek hoplite (see cat. no. 1). It comes from a remarkable hoard of medieval armor found in the ruins of the Venetian fortress at Chalcis, on the Greek island of Euboea, which the Venetians controlled from 1366 to 1470, when the island was conquered by the Turks. Walled up in the fortress and forgotten, the armor was accidentally discovered only in 1840. The hoard is said to have comprised as many as one hundred helmets and helmet fragments, as well as a considerable number of elements for body armor, many of which were types previously unknown to students of European armor. The majority of the armor is now divided between the National Historical Museum in Athens and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The Chalcis hoard yielded several complete "great sallets" of this distinctive type (the others are in Athens, inv. nos. B.24–26), in addition to a number of separate bowls and side plates. These helmets are characterized by a pointed bowl of fourteenth-century type, unprecedented two-piece construction, and, in what appears to be a direct allusion to the

Corinthian helmet, a Y-shaped face opening and almond-shaped eye apertures. Regarding the date of the helmets, Blair (1982) noted that similar pointed helmets of two-piece construction are found on the facade relief on a palace at Šibenik, on the Dalmatian coast north of Split, Croatia, which appears to date to the middle years of the fifteenth century; he also hypothesized that these unusual helmets were made locally, perhaps in the ancient Dalmatian republic of Ragusa (modern Dubrovnik). The mark on this helmet, like many others on Chalcis pieces, is of Milanese type, but that does not exclude the possibility of its fabrication elsewhere by a Milanese armorer. Boccia (1981) also considered the helmets to be the product of an eastern Mediterranean or Aegean origin, a region rich in classical remains, and to have been the predecessor and true model for the so-called Venetian sallet that appeared in Italy about 1440; for this reason he dated the great sallet slightly earlier, about 1420–40. The more familiar Venetian sallet (also known as a barbute), a tall one-piece helmet with a rounded comb and a T-shaped, or more rarely Y-shaped, face opening, was the principal headpiece worn by both mounted and infantry soldiers throughout Italy in the period from about 1440 to 1470 and is often cited as an example of the Renaissance revival of classical forms. However, the general absence of Venetian sallets in Quattrocento representations of classical subjects, as on cassone panels, where the protagonists wear costumes *all'antica*, suggests that contemporaries on the mainland probably were not aware of the helmet's Greek inspiration.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Ffoulkes 1911, pl. LI, fig. 7; Kienbusch and Grancsay 1933, pp. 117–18, no. 27, ill. on pl. III; Boccia, Rossi, and Morin 1980, p. 54, fig. 38; Boccia 1981, p. 6; Blair 1982.



## SALLET ALL'ANTICA IN THE FORM OF A LION HEAD

Italian, ca. 1475–80

Steel, gilt copper, silver, glass, textile, and paint

Wt. 8 lb. 4 oz. (3,750 g)

Ex coll.: Thomas Gwennap, London (1816–33); A. C. Lafontaine (until 1914); Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg (1914–22)  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1923 (23.141)

The helmet consists of two elements, a steel head defense of a type known as a sallet (*celata*, denoting an open-faced helmet or a visored helmet requiring a separate chin defense) and its covering of gilt copper in the form of a lion's head. The sallet is constructed of four steel plates, comprising a bowl with a low comb, to which is riveted a frontal plate with T-shaped face opening that covers the brow and the outer sides of the face around the eyes, and two articulated neck lames at the back, the lower one sweeping backward to a short, bluntly pointed tail. The bottom edges of the frontal plate and the lower neck lame are turned under. The surfaces are rough from the hammer, retaining traces of their original blue-black color, and the original canvas-covered padded lining is still preserved inside the bowl.

Attached to the sallet by copper rivets, the lion head is assembled from sheets of copper that were brazed together, the seams hidden by the embossed, chased, punched, and gilt outer surface. It covers most of the sallet, the long mane flowing down to the bottom edge and the jaws opening around the face aperture, giving the illusion that the wearer is peering out through the lion's mouth. The surfaces of the face and the short, blunt ears are delicately chiseled with closely set parallel lines to suggest fur, while the nose has a dot-punched surface. The eyes are separately inlaid and no longer match: the left one, apparently original, is of dark semiprecious stone, whereas the right one, of slightly different shape, is of dark-green bubbly glass. The teeth are covered with hatched silver. The exposed steel surface below the lion's mane is painted white, and that around the mouth is painted red as if to suggest the beast's tongue.

This famous helmet is generally accepted as the only surviving Quattrocento parade helmet *all'antica*, and it is a masterpiece of early-Renaissance goldsmith's work. It differs fundamentally in construction, materials, and technique from sixteenth-century parade helmets by the Negroli and their contemporaries. Those were usually forged from one plate of steel (except for the cheekpieces); the process of embossing and chasing the steel plate seriously weakened the structure of the helmets and also created a surface more likely to catch, rather

than deflect, an opponent's weapon. The decorative technique thus rendered these later headpieces suitable only for noncombat use. The Metropolitan Museum's sallet, on the other hand, typifies fifteenth-century parade armor with its appliquéd ornament in a lightweight material like gilt copper over practical armor plate, the lion-head covering in this example never compromising the helmet's inherent defensive properties.

A royal beast, symbolic of courage, strength, and justice, the lion figures prominently in the decoration of Renaissance parade armor and is found on many examples in this publication (cat. nos. 39, 40, 56, 61, 62). The wearing of a lion pelt over the head was sanctioned by classical mythology and Roman military practice, so it is not surprising that this early example *all'antica* should adopt this form. In the case of the Metropolitan Museum's sallet, the lion presumably alludes to Hercules, who, for one of his Twelve Labors, slew the Nemean lion and wore its pelt as a headdress. According to legend, the lion was no ordinary beast but had magical properties that rendered its skin impervious to manmade weapons, so that Hercules was required to strangle it. The prince who wore this sallet presumably saw himself as a "new Hercules," an embodiment of heroic and leonine virtues, and he may even have enjoyed the conceit that he was defended by impenetrable armor. The lion imagery might also have been a pun on the owner's name, Ercole or Lionello. The helmet has specific *alla romana* reference as well, having been modeled on, or at least inspired by, the lion headdress of the Praetorian standard-bearers (*signifers*) of the Roman army, whose costume was well known from representations on Trajan's Column and the Arch of Constantine (fig. 20). Renaissance students of Roman military practice, who were well acquainted with the writings of the fourth-century author Vegetius, would have known that the lion head was intended to render the standard-bearer more ferocious and terrible to the enemy.<sup>1</sup>

The Metropolitan Museum's sallet has traditionally been compared to, and even identified with, a lion-covered helmet worn by one of the soldiers depicted in the carved stone reliefs on the lower register of the famous Aragonese Arch on the Castel Nuovo in Naples (fig. 45). Completed by 1457, the two facing reliefs depict King Alfonso I of Naples and his son Ferrante surrounded by soldiers, their costume and armor of contemporary fashion rendered accurately and in great detail.<sup>2</sup> The decoration of the arch is replete with Herculean references, and it is surely in this context that the soldier's lion-draped sallet and the knobby club held by another must be interpreted. Given the specificity of costume detail in the reliefs, and despite the emblematic nature of the attributes, it seems reasonable to assume that the lion helmet on the arch was copied from an existing piece. That model was not the Metropolitan's, however, as the relief





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shows a sallet of different form, one with sweeping cutaway sides that expose a larger portion of the soldier's face. The Museum's helmet probably postdates the relief by a decade or two, as suggested by the form and construction of the sallet. It is unique in combining the earlier type of Venetian-style sallet, in use about 1440–70 and characterized by a tall bowl of one-piece construction and a T-shaped face opening, with a later type of sallet dating to the last quarter of the century that was more horizontal in profile, the bowl fitted at the front with a separate brow plate and with sides sweeping back to an articulated tail.<sup>3</sup> The combination of old and new features suggests a date of about 1475–80.

This helmet is the product of two different workshops, an armorer's and a goldsmith's, but there can be no doubt that the

sallet and the lion head, which fit together perfectly, are contemporary and that the sallet served as the base for which the goldsmith modeled his lion head. Stripped of its golden covering, the sallet is a practical, battle-ready head defense, although designed specifically to support the lion head. Unfortunately there are no armorer's marks, as is usually the case on Italian armor of this date, so it is impossible to determine the place of manufacture. The lining is also exceptional for its survival.

The lion's head, on the other hand, comes from the hand of an unidentified but extremely talented goldsmith or sculptor, the two professions being closely allied in the fifteenth century.<sup>4</sup> In addition to this example *all'antica*, three heraldic tournament crests in engraved and gilt copper have survived that recall the same general type of workmanship.<sup>5</sup>



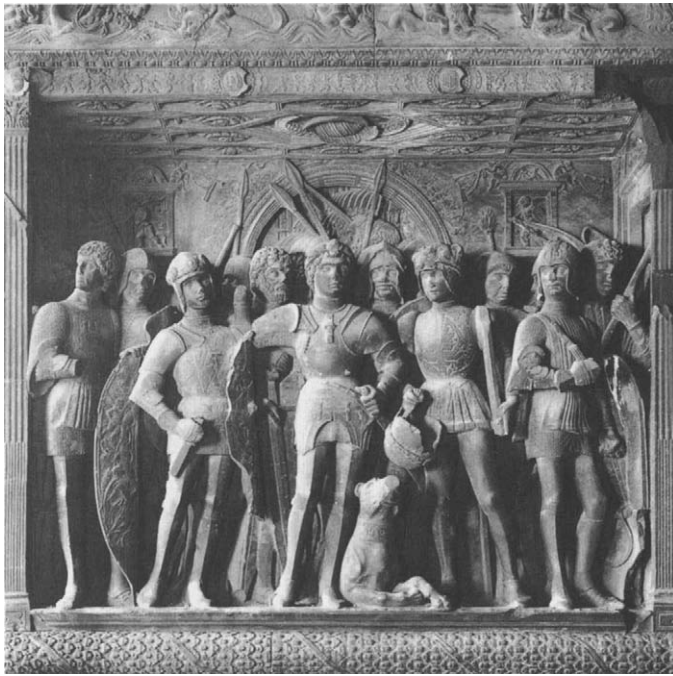


Fig. 45. Relief carving on the Aragonese Arch, completed by 1457. Stone. Castel Nuovo, Naples.

There is also a small group of fabric-covered sallets with separately cast and applied borders, heraldic badges, and other decorations in gilt metal that further attest to the activity of goldsmiths in the embellishment of Quattrocento armor.<sup>6</sup> Not all of these craftsmen were nameless minor masters. Antonio Pollaiuolo (1421–1498), for example, was commissioned by the Signoria of Florence to make a helmet for presentation to the famous condottiere Federico da Montefeltro, duke of Urbino; the decoration of that helmet, in silver-gilt and enamel, depicted Hercules with a club in hand and, chained at his feet, a griffin, symbol of Volterra, the town Federico had recently subjugated for his Florentine employers.<sup>7</sup> Andrea del Verrocchio (1435–1488) is also recorded as having made a helmet crest in the form of a woman, possibly the silver-embellished helmet worn by Lorenzo de' Medici at the tournament in Florence in 1475,<sup>8</sup> and similar helmet crests in silver or gilt metal are recorded in the inventory of the contents of the Medici Palace in Florence in 1492.<sup>9</sup> None of these crests or ornaments, however, appear to have been conceived with the same large-scale sculptural sensibility as the ferocious lion that surmounts this helmet.

1. "The standard-bearers wear for a helmet a device made in true resemblance of a severed lion's head, which serves (according to Vegetius) to render the standard-bearer more ferocious and terrible to the enemy" (les Portenseignes portoyent . . . pour le morion, un accoutrement fait à la vraye semblance d'une teste arrachee d'un lyon: laquelle servoyt [comme dit Vegece] pour rendre le Portenseigne plus feroce & plus terrible à l'ennemi). Guillaume Du Choul, *Discours sur la castrametation et discipline militaire des Romains* (Lyon: Guillaume Rouillé, 1555), p. 152 (see

also cat. no. 16). For an English translation of Vegetius's *De re militari*, see Flavius Vegetius Renuus, *The Military Institutions of the Romans*, John Clark, trans., Thomas R. Phillips, ed. (Harrisburg, Pa.: Military Service Publishing Co., 1944), esp. p. 53.

2. For the arch, see George L. Hersey, *The Aragonese Arch at Naples, 1443–1475* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1973).

3. An early example of a sallet with a brow plate and three neck lames appears in Botticelli's *Venus and Mars* in the National Gallery, London, which is usually dated to about 1475–80.

4. For the recent, and in our opinion unconvincing, argument that the helmet may have belonged to the Sienese architect Francesco di Giorgio Martini, see Scalini 1993, pp. 139–40. The same author also considers the helmet to be of Sienese workmanship about 1470–80.

5. The three crests, two in the form of an eagle's head (Museo Stibbert, Florence, inv. no. 16206; Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence, inv. no. M. 782) and one as a dragon (Museo Statale di Arte Medioevale e Moderna, Arezzo, inv. no. 15629), are discussed by M. Scalini, in *Florence 1992*, pp. 171–72, no. 3.5. The crests are of heraldic design and belong more to the late-medieval chivalric tradition than to the new humanist spirit of the Renaissance.

6. Scalini 1993.

7. Leopold D. Ettlinger, *Antonio and Piero Pollaiuolo* (Oxford: Phaidon Press, 1978), p. 108, no. 55.

8. C. von Fabriczy, "Andrea del Verrocchio ai servizi de' Medici," *Archivio storico dell'arte*, ser. 2, 1 (1895), pp. 167, 171.

9. Scalini 1979, p. 24, nos. 16, 35–37.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Oplotheca 1816, p. 15, no. 107; Oplotheca 1817, p. 18, no. 107; Gothic Hall 1818, p. 24, no. 125; Gothic Hall 1819, p. 21, no. 131; Gothic Hall 1820, p. 21, no. 131; Royal Armoury 1821, p. 8, no. 64; Anonymous sale 1833, p. 19, lot 124; *Anzeiger* 1914; Laking 1920–22, vol. 2, pp. 12–14, 20, fig. 355; Dean 1923a, p. 224; Dean 1924a, p. 50; Beard 1931, p. 169; Thomas, Gamber, and Schedelmann 1964, n.p., no. 15; Blackmore 1965, p. 25, ill.; Metropolitan Museum 1970, p. 212, no. 201; Thomas 1974, p. 4; Hayward 1979, p. 148, fig. 6; Boccia, Rossi, and Morin 1980, p. 78, pl. 67; Scalini 1993, fig. 15.



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## 9. MAN IN A FANTASTIC HELMET

*Florence, ca. 1470–80*

*Engraving*

*5 x 2 7/8 in. (12.7 x 7.4 cm)*

*National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Rosenwald Collection  
(1943.3.9069)*

A unique impression in the Florentine “Fine Manner,”<sup>1</sup> this engraving records one of the most original and fantastic helmet designs of the fifteenth century. At the front of the hemispherical bowl is a peak shaped like a dragon’s mouth, with the warrior’s head seemingly emerging from within; a second, beaked mask projects at the nape, and there is a wing mounted at the side above the ear. A dol-



Fig. 46. Marco Zoppo, sketch in the Rosebery Sketchbook, fol. 22v, ca. 1470. Copyright © The British Museum, London

phinlike creature stretches across the comb, and a winged putto blowing a trumpet, presumably symbolizing Fame, sits atop the bowl at the front. So that this imaginative confection might not be dislodged, the artist has thoughtfully added a chin strap. The combination of grotesque masks, wings, and sea monsters anticipates by half a century Filippo Negroli’s remarkably similar helmet made for Guidobaldo II della Rovere (cat. no. 23a), a comparison that points up the Quattrocento roots of sixteenth-century parade armor.

The bust-length profile figure conforms to the canonical format found on ancient coins and gems, some examples of which show armored warriors wearing helmets mounted with wings (fig. 18) or fashioned like animal heads. The lion-head pauldrons (shoulder defenses) with pendent straps known as pteruges are a conventional feature of Renaissance armor

*all'antica*, whereas the shape and decoration of the breastplate look fashionably modern. The decorative motifs on the breast refer specifically to Florence, incorporating the city's heraldic lily and a falcon, a well-known Medici device. The clusters of six tiny circles scattered over the surface presumably represent decorative rivets. Analogous rivets were also used to affix a textile covering to the steel plate, for fabric-covered armors were commonplace at the time and a number of them were listed in the inventory of the Medici Palace in Florence that was drawn up following the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent in 1492.<sup>2</sup> These rivets may also be a subtle reference to the six *palle*, or balls, of the Medici coat of arms.

Elaborate parade armors of this general type, mixing pseudo-antique and contemporary elements, were undoubtedly created in Florence, as elsewhere in Italy, in the fifteenth century for use in jousts and tournaments, civic and religious pageants, and theatrical spectacles. The majority of them may have been simpler in design and were probably constructed of lightweight materials like leather, papier-mâché, and textiles. The Metropolitan Museum's famous lion-head sallet (cat. no. 8), which consists of a lion pelt in gilt copper fitted over a steel sallet, remains the sole surviving example of a Quattrocento parade helmet *all'antica*. The Medici inventory of 1492 lists several helmets or helmet crests embellished in silver or gilt metal with three-dimensional figures reminiscent of the putto in the engraving, among them a gilt female figure wearing a cloak embroidered with pearls, one of Pallas Athena, a bound cupid, and a Saint Bartholomew.<sup>3</sup> This engraving, which at first glance might appear to be totally capricious in invention, may instead record, or at least echo, some of the more elaborate and fanciful costume designs created by artists in the early Renaissance, of which very few traces otherwise remain.

Levenson (in Washington 1973a) has pointed out the similarity of this engraving to several in the Rosebery Sketchbook in the British Museum, a north Italian pattern book attributed to the Paduan artist Marco Zoppo (1433–1478) and dated to about 1470.<sup>4</sup> A number of the sketches include putti cavorting over the helmets (fig. 46), a feature peculiar to this pattern book, which suggests that the engraving (or at least its helmet) may be based on one of Zoppo's designs or perhaps derives from a common prototype. The Florentine references in the engraving are not, however, found in Zoppo's drawings. Copies of designs like Zoppo's probably circulated widely and may have served as models for artists who would be called on to portray antique heroes or heroines in paintings and manuscript illuminations, sculpture (cat. no. 10), and the decorative arts.<sup>5</sup> Later pattern books also gave special attention to helmets, notably those of Vogtherr and Orsoni (cat. nos. 14 and 15, respective-

ly). The designing of helmets would thus seem to have been something of a preoccupation for fifteenth- and sixteenth-century artists, probably with the self-conscious intent of demonstrating one's *invenzione* and *varietà*.

The striking parallels between the helmet in this engraving and the actual helmet of Guidobaldo II della Rovere lead one to wonder if Vasari's enigmatic statement that the works of Filippo Negroli were famous throughout Italy thanks to the engravings of his designs might not mistakenly refer to the National Gallery's print and others like it.<sup>6</sup>

1. The "Fine Manner" refers to the school of fifteenth-century Florentine engravings associated with Baccio Baldini that are characterized by delicate outlines and lightly crosshatched shading, a technique like that of the goldsmith's, in contrast to prints in the "Broad Manner," with more draftsmanlike diagonal shading akin to the painter's art; Hind 1938–48, vol. 1, pp. 2–3.
2. Scalini 1979, p. 22, no. 14, and pp. 24–25, nos. 42–45.
3. Scalini 1979, p. 24, nos. 26, 35–37.
4. Ruhmer 1966, pp. 77–81.
5. For example, Zoppo's sketchbook appears to have been the source for the head of a very similar helmeted warrior that appears among the trophies in the reliefs on the Scala dei Giganti in the Palazzo Ducale in Venice, which were designed about 1485–95 by Antonio Rizzo (ca. 1440–1522). See Schulz 1983, p. 104 and n. 92.
6. For two related Fine Manner engravings of this type, see Hind 1938–48, vol. 1, p. 47, nos. A.I.55, 57, vol. 2, pl. 53.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Hind 1938–48, vol. 1, p. 47, no. A.I.56, vol. 2, pl. 53; Washington 1973a, p. 40, no. 9; Zucker 1980–, vol. 24, *Commentary*, pt. 2, pp. 184–85, no. 2405.040.

10.

## ALEXANDER THE GREAT

*Workshop of Andrea del Verrocchio*

*Florence, ca. 1483–85*

*Marble*

*22 x 14 1/2 in. (55.9 x 36.7 cm)*

*National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Gift of Therese K.*

*Straus (1956.2.1)*

In his biography of the Florentine sculptor Andrea del Verrocchio (1435–1488), Vasari wrote that the artist "made two heads in metal, one of Alexander the Great in profile, the other of Darius according to his whim, both in half relief and each a separate work, varying one from the other in their helmet crests, armor, and everything else,"<sup>1</sup> which were ordered by Lorenzo de' Medici as a gift for King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary. The relief in Washington is



one of several profile portraits *all'antica* in marble or glazed terracotta that have been claimed to be one or the other of Verrocchio's originals, despite the difference in medium. Although the authorship, subject, and date of the National Gallery's relief have been debated, the most recent monograph on Verrocchio's oeuvre concludes that the marble is probably a copy of, or a variation on, the lost bronze original and may have been worked by assistants in Verrocchio's shop, probably about 1483–85 (Butterfield 1997).

The so-called Alexander Relief reflects the Renaissance predilection for heroic portraits, which were sometimes made in pairs but more often in series of *uomini famosi*. In an age of condottieri, the great conquerors and commanders of the ancient world were held up as *exemplae virtutis*, their biographies studied, their deeds admired and emulated, and their likenesses, real or imaginary, recorded in paintings, woodcuts and engravings, and the decorative arts. These historical portraits challenged the artist to search out or invent costume and armor appropriate to the hero, and consequently they provide us with a useful measure of the artist's knowledge of classical antiquity and his approach to adapting it to his needs.

In the Alexander Relief the warrior wears a fanciful armor in which the classical prototypes have been so freely transformed as to render them almost unrecognizable. The bust-length profile format, the open-faced helmet with projecting peak over the face, the breastplate with a mask at the top and scrolls below that outline the pectorals, and a pauldron with pendent straps (pteruges) are features derived from ancient coins and sculpture that were probably deemed sufficient to evoke the classical past. To these basic forms of Roman armor were added an improbable variety of classical and contemporary ornament that brings to mind the imaginative costumes one sees on cassone panels. The fantastic helmet is totally impractical in construction, the bowl formed as a conch shell, the cantilevered peak and neck lames impossibly attached to it, with the neck lame illogically pierced for a fluttering ribbon; the dragon surmounting it seems to owe more to contemporary tournament helmets with their elaborate crests than to Roman sources. The mask at the top of the cuirass, modeled on the Medusa heads (gorgoneia) found on Roman imperial breastplates, has been transformed into a screaming Fury. The triangular section on the lower part of the torso suggests the pointed edge of the lower plate of a typical two-part Quattrocento breastplate, although in the relief this section is fluted like a classical column. The circular pauldron with a scalloped edge echoes the helmet's shell motif and is carved with an appropriately aquatic subject, a triton and a nereid. The faces on the pteruges are copied from ones that are sometimes found on

the semicircular tabs outlining the base of the Roman parade cuirass but which are never repeated at the shoulders. This highly ornamented type of pseudo-antique armor finds close parallels in late-fifteenth-century Florentine art, especially Verrocchio's silver relief of the Decollation of Saint John the Baptist (Museo del Opera del Duomo, Florence), completed in 1480, which includes a comparable helmet and circular, scallop-edged pauldron. Leonardo's famous drawing of an old warrior (fig. 28) shares many of the same features, including the ribbons tied through holes in the neck lames of the helmet, and presumably was also inspired by Verrocchio's portraits of Alexander and Darius.

1. Authors' translation. The text reads: "Fece anco due teste di metallo; una d'Alessandro Magno, in profilo; l'altra d'un Dario, a suo capriccio; pur di mezzo rilievo, e ciascuna da per sè, variando l'un dall'altro ne' cimieri, nell'armadure ed in ogni cosa." Vasari 1568 (1906), vol. 3, p. 361.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Passavant 1969, pp. 41–44, 199–201, no. A5; Butterfield 1997, pp. 156–57, 230–32, no. 25.

## II. ROMA

*Master I.B. with the Bird (Giovanni Battista Palumba?)*

*Rome, ca. 1500–1510*

*Engraving*

*8 1/16 x 6 1/8 in. (22.1 x 15.8 cm)*

*Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Harvey D. Parker Collection (P.1036)*

A personification not only of the Eternal City but also of the greatest empire in the ancient world, Roma is conceived as a statuesque amazon armed for battle and holding forth a statue of Victory, a winged deity holding palm and olive branches and presenting a crown of laurel. Roma's bellicose appearance is akin to that of Bellona, the female counterpart to Mars, the Roman god of war, and the jumble of weapons at her feet, displayed like trophies, are symbols of the empire's military might. The panoply includes a circular shield emblazoned with figures of the she-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus, the legendary founders of Rome, and a pelta-shaped shield inscribed S·P·Q·R· (*Senatus populusque Romanus*; Senate and people of Rome).

The engraver, whose initials and device of a bird can probably be identified as those of Giovanni Battista Palumba (Zucker 1980–, vol. 25, *Commentary*, pp. 135–37) appears to have been active in Rome during the first decade of the six-





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teenth century. His careful study of the city's ancient monuments is particularly evident in this engraving. Many of the arms on the ground appear to derive from those carved on two piers that were formerly in the church of Santa Sabina (fig. 21). Roma's elaborate headdress is an imaginative creation based on two helmets represented on a relief on the Arch of Diocletian, destroyed in 1491, which stood on the site of the church of Santa Maria in Via Lata; Amico Aspertini's early-sixteenth-century drawing in the Wolfegg Sketchbook (fig. 24) shows both distinctly. From one Palumba took the

humanoid mask at the front and the ram's head at the side, and from the other he utilized the centaur to decorate the side of the bowl and the winged sphinxlike figure surmounted by plumes to serve as the crest. The helmet seen frontally at Roma's feet, also surmounted by a sphinx crest and plumes, is copied from another of Rome's landmarks, the so-called Trophies of Marius (fig. 22).

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Washington 1973b, no. 343; Zucker 1980-, vol. 25, *Commentary*, pp. 148-50, no. 2507.011.

## YOUNG WARRIOR

Workshop of Tullio Lombardo

Venice, ca. 1490–1500

Marble

H. 34½ in. (87.6 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art; The Friedsam Collection,  
Bequest of Michael Friedsam, 1931 (32.100.155)

Although geographically distant from the principal sites of Roman monuments to the south, Venice and its surrounding region nurtured an antique revival unmatched elsewhere on the Italian peninsula. The painters Jacopo Bellini and Andrea Mantegna (Jacopo's son-in-law from Padua) were the leading antiquarians of their generation, who not only adopted the forms and motifs found in ancient art but also imitated the spirit, the *gravitas*, of the originals. In sculpture the Lombardo family, with Tullio (ca. 1455–1532) its most talented member, originated a series of tombs whose architecture and figural decoration successfully integrate a sophisticated classical vocabulary within a Christian funerary context. Their masterpiece, the tomb of Doge Andrea Vendramin in the church of Santi Giovanni e Paolo (completed by about 1493), includes two almost lifesize figures of warriors in accurately rendered Roman armor. The Metropolitan Museum's half-length figure of a young warrior, perhaps a fragment from another tomb, is stylistically similar to the Vendramin figures and appears likely to have come from Tullio's workshop.

The armor worn by the half-length figure comprises a muscled cuirass with skirt of overlapping rows of leather

straps, or pteruges, with lion-head pauldrons and more pteruges below. The cuirass is tightly formfitting, as if it were made of wet, clinging cloth rather than of bronze or steel; the ripple above the navel reinforces the impression of a textile costume. Unlike those on the the Vendramin figures, however, this armor is more eclectic and decorative, with foliate scrolls ornamenting the upper chest and lines across the midsection that perhaps suggest the sculptor's arbitrary combination of two distinct types of Roman armor, the muscled cuirass and the *lorica segmentata* (a cuirass made up of articulated horizontal bands of steel; see fig. 20). The arms, which would have been bare in ancient times, are covered with sleeves and encapsulated in a series of Quattrocento plates of misunderstood construction that are seemingly attached to one another by flimsy strings. This unconcerned mix of antique and contemporary features is typical of fifteenth-century pseudo-classical armor and may also reflect the lingering influence of Byzantine art, whose warrior saints wore armor based on late-antique types with sleeves.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Planiscig 1921, p. 239, fig. 245; Athens 1979, p. 104, no. 23.



## FOUR DESIGNS FOR ARMOR

French or Italian, ca. 1535–40  
Black chalk on paper

a. Design for a helmet  
15¼ x 10¾ in. (38.6 x 27.2 cm)

b. Design for a helmet  
11⅞ x 8⅞ in. (29.4 x 22.5 cm)

c. Design for a breastplate  
15¾ x 10⅝ in. (39.9 x 27 cm)

d. Design for a backplate  
15 x 7⅞ in. (38 x 18 cm)

Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Munich (14390, 14542,  
14543, 14540)

These four drawings are among the earliest and most Italianate of a remarkable group of 170 preparatory designs for embossed armor made for the French court over the years 1530–70 and that have remained together for four centuries. The earliest drawings date to the reign of Francis I (1515–47) and reflect the creative innovations in painting, stucco, and ornamental interior design that evolved at the château of Fontainebleau under the artistic leadership of two Italian artists, Rosso Fiorentino (1495–1540) and Francesco Primaticcio (1504–1570). The bulk of the corpus, however, dates to the period of Henry II (r. 1547–59) and is more decidedly French in style; the ornamental motifs are generally smaller in scale, more densely organized, and more delicately rendered than their Italianate counterparts, and many of them appear to be the work of the Parisian goldsmith, medalist, and engraver Étienne Delaune (1518/19–1583). It seems quite possible that the entire group, which apparently once numbered 325 designs, may have belonged to Delaune and traveled with him on his peregrinations in Germany after his flight from Paris in 1572, following the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre and the persecution of Huguenots.

The two helmet designs are variations on the same silhouette, each a close helmet with three collar lames front and back, with similar set-back visors and prow-shaped upper bevors. Neither is practical in its proportions or details of construction, which suggests that these were made by artists without direct experience with armor. The first helmet (cat. no. 13a) is surrealistically anthropomorphic, with a bejeweled ear surrounding the visor pivot, and with eyes, nose, and mouth worked into the upper and lower bevors; the mouth

is divided between the two hinged plates and would open when the upper bevor was raised. The comb has a prominent turn and is surmounted by a dolphin, possibly a reference to the dauphin Francis (d. 1536), the monarch's firstborn son and heir, or, more likely, to the future Henry II, who succeeded to the title upon the death of his older brother. At the base of the dolphin, at the nape, there appears to be a rondel attached to the bowl by a short stem, an archaic feature of fifteenth-century armets that went out of general use by about 1510. The dolphin iconography is repeated in the second helmet design (cat. no. 13b), its bowl covered with scales and having an eye presumably belonging to the aquatic beast; a more complete and conventional dolphin is drawn on the lower bevor. The comb, worked as an acanthus garland, recalls similar motifs on Filippo Negroli's helmet for the Masks Garniture of 1539 (cat. no. 30), whereas the cusped edge superimposed on the comb specifically recalls late-fifteenth-century Florentine helmet design (fig. 28 and cat. no. 10).

The breastplate and backplate designs (cat. nos. 13c, 13d) form a matching cuirass *all'antica*. The beaded edges at the neck and arm openings and around the waist echo a distinctive feature found on armors attributed to Giovan Paolo Negroli (cat. nos. 44, 45). The surfaces of both the breastplate and the backplate are covered with foliate scrolls and masks; the decoration of the breastplate consists of confronted female figures with wings holding palm branches, symbolizing Victory, and that of the back of a centrally placed female figure blowing a trumpet, a personification of Fame. In both drawings, trophies of arms and bound captives occupy the lower portions. The waist plate of the breast is formed *alla romana* with semicircular tabs in the form of grotesque masks, with pteruges below; the culet lame of the backplate is similarly ornamented with a series of horned satyrlike masks. Typical of the economy used by artists in creating designs for three-dimensional objects, especially goldsmiths' work, only one half of the symmetrical design is rendered.

In the absence of comparable Milanese armor designs for the same period, these drawings serve as useful examples to illustrate the creative process by which the artist devised on paper the ornamentation of the irregularly shaped three-dimensional armor surfaces. The use of anthropomorphic details, raised scales, acanthus scrollwork, grotesques, trophies of arms, and personifications of Victory and Fame are elements of armor design *all'antica* repeatedly found on the harnesses made by Filippo and Giovan Paolo Negroli and their Milanese contemporaries in the 1530s and 1540s.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Thomas 1959, pp. 49–54, figs. 52, 53, 58, 59.



13a



13b



13c



13d





14



14

14.  
**EIN FREMBDS UND WUNDERBARS  
 KUNSTBUECHLEIN**

*Heinrich Vogtherr the Elder  
 Strasbourg, 1538*

*The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Rogers Fund, 1919 (19.62.2)*

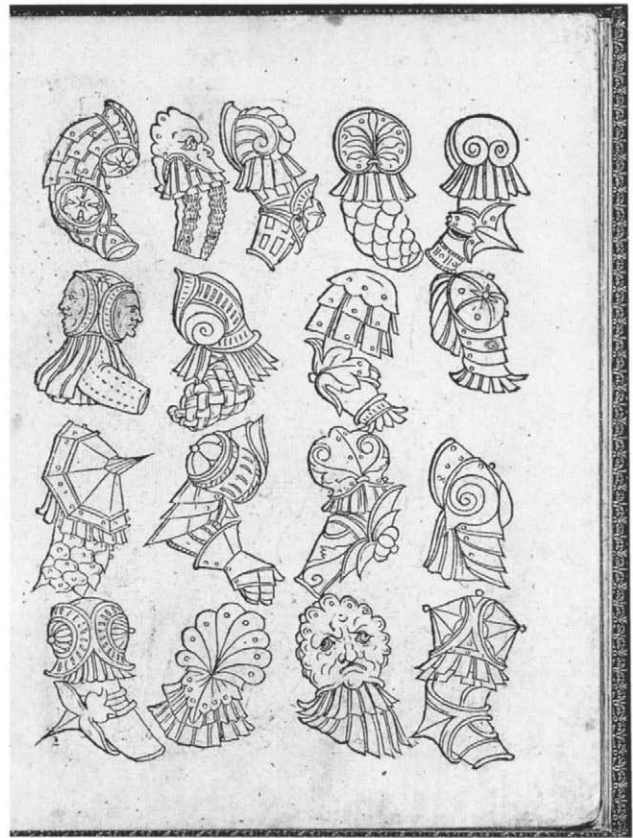
First published in 1537 by Heinrich Vogtherr the Elder (1490–1556), with seven editions in German, French, or Spanish appearing before 1556, this popular pattern book, richly illustrated with hundreds of woodcut illustrations, represents a compendium of Renaissance ornamental motifs, which includes Italianate architectural motifs, cartouche and candelabra designs, and numerous elements of costume, including arms and armor. In the author's own words, the book was aimed at painters, wood-carvers, goldsmiths, stonecutters, carpenters, armorers, and cutlers, and was intended to "guide the artists who are burdened with wife and children and those who have not traveled," and to "store stupid heads and inspire understanding artists to higher and more ingenious arts" for the betterment of the German

nation (Byrne 1981, p. 20). For modern readers it serves as a useful measure of the knowledge of classical decorative motifs that existed north of the Alps in the first third of the sixteenth century.

Of the book's fifty-one leaves, twelve are devoted to designs of helmets, cuirasses, arm and leg defenses, as well as weapons of various types. The designs appear to be based on secondary sources, probably paintings, woodcuts, and engravings; some of the most bizarre and fanciful armor details derive from late-fifteenth- and early-sixteenth-century German and Netherlandish art. On the other hand, there are many classically inspired armor elements *all'antica* that suggest an awareness of Italian art, if only an indirect one. Among the helmets there are examples with wings, leafy masks, and elaborate figural crests that derive from Roman monuments (figs. 21, 22, 24). Most of the cuirasses are of the muscled type, and many of the pauldrons (shoulders) and knee pieces are formed as masks. Among the designs for arm pieces one notices a dolphin-masked pauldron with pteruges and vambraces of plate and mail that look remarkably like



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the arms made by Filippo Negroli for the armors of Francesco Maria della Rovere and his son Guidobaldo (cat. nos. 19, 23), which date only a few years before the appearance of Vogtherr's book. The coincidence is startling.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Byrne 1981, pp. 20–21; Bartrum 1995, pp. 156–58; Snodin and Howard 1996, pp. 28–29.

15.

## ALBUM OF DESIGNS

*Filippo Orsoni*

*Mantua, dated 1554*

*Pen, ink, and wash, with yellow watercolor*

*16 ½ x 11 in. (41.9 x 28 cm)*

*Ex coll.: Markus Sittich Graf von Hohenembs; Frédéric Spitzer,*

*Paris; bought from Cyril Andrade, London, 1929*

*Victoria and Albert Museum, London (E. 1725–2031-1929)*

This album by Filippo Orsoni (recorded 1540–59) consists of 306 pages, one of them dated 1554, with pen and wash designs of horses and horse equipment (textile caparisons, armored bards, saddles, stirrups, and 204 bits), as well as armor, pageant costume, and sword hilts.<sup>1</sup> The title page identifies the author as “Philippi Ursoni . . . Pictoris Mantuani,” an obscure painter of Mantua whose existence is otherwise known from a single document in the Mantuan archives and from two albums that are close variants of the one in London, one in the library of the former dukes of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel (Codex Guelf I.5.3. Aug<sup>2</sup>, a volume comprising 120 pages, three of them dated 1540, 1558, and 1559), the other in a private collection (an undated volume of 150 pages consisting exclusively of horse equipment and bits). The title page of the London album contains an invitation to the reader in typical Renaissance self-promotional terms: “If you wish to learn the varied forms of arms and the splendid ornaments of the warrior then see the wonderful drawings of Filippo Orsoni, whose skilled hand has lent them life and color. Arms such as not even Vulcan



Questo cavalier sta guarnito alla Romana, e nella lui s'usa p. mascarata.  
co' stucco, e uerpisto d'ovra formato si fava la celada. e ovra: lo teste  
di leone. il resto el costano multadi si potra fare li scartoni mti: e li p'ncipi  
p'ncipi oro dove bisognava. come qui sotto si v'edite:







15



15



15

devised for Gods or men. . . . Every age will marvel how his hand has excelled in the art of Apelles."<sup>2</sup> This prologue recalls the more modest introduction to Vogtherr's woodcut pattern book (cat. no. 14) and suggests that Orsoni's too was probably originally intended for publication.

Despite the claims for his draftsmanship, Orsoni's drawings are not of great technical skill and their captions are naive. On the other hand, the London and Brunswick albums constitute a unique and important compendium of mid-sixteenth-century design related to the chivalric arts. Among the most interesting designs for armor specialists are two pages illustrating the composition of the Italian small garniture (an ensemble of armor utilizing the smallest number of exchange or reinforcing pieces in order to create distinctly different harnesses for field and infantry use)<sup>3</sup> and one, reproduced here, showing an embossed parade armor *all'antica*, apparently intended for Henry II of France, with alternative designs for the helmets and pauldrons. There are a number of designs for classically inspired pageant costumes and helmets, which probably tell us more about the contemporary theatrical arts than about armor making but



braciale medio di ferro  
lo spazio di  
manica.



Disegno per fare una corolla o uovo  
coronato. battuto a rilievato  
come qui si vede.



braciale da piede  
di forma parte  
di ferro e parte  
di malta.  
fatto di rilievo  
e la parte  
come qui si  
vede.



Goleta alla parte d'avanti



Goleta alla parte di dietro di rilievo  
come qui sotto si vede.



Modo di celare la barba a  
rilievato come  
qui si vede.



Placa a pinto  
fatta di rilievo  
battuta come  
qui si vede.



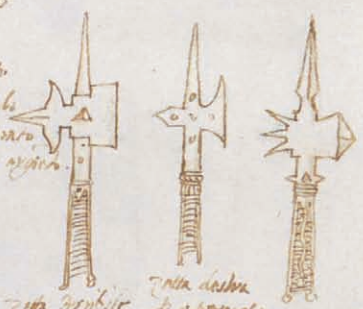
Sebrina della punta d'oro coronata  
di sopra. Fatto di rilievo e battuto  
come sopra si vede. si usava  
ovunque il campo era il rilievo.



Modello di spada  
In bello armare  
unite per le mani  
per il manico e l'impugnatura.



Mano per impugnare  
a modo d'arrete



per non  
offendere.

per non  
offendere.

per non  
offendere.

AVIII



which are useful nevertheless for their variety of types, the nomenclature used in the captions, and the indications given for their fabrication (in steel, stucco, or papier-mâché, worked in relief, etched, embossed, gilt, or silvered). While several of the drawings incorporate the monograms or devices of Emperor Charles V and Henry II of France, none of them contains any reference to the ruling Gonzaga family of Mantua. In devising arms for the two greatest European monarchs of his day, Orsoni appears to have been aggrandizing the importance of his designs, probably with the idea of having them engraved and published.

The London album contains five drawings of equestrian figures in antique or contemporary costume intended for the masquerade. The most splendid of these (ill.) is identified as a knight *alla romana* (called *grecco* in the Brunswick album), whose armor could be made of stucco or papier-mâché and the other accessories and barding of rolled cardboard. Consisting of an open-faced helmet with dragon crest, a cuirass of scales with lion-head pauldrons and pteruges, leonine masks at the top of the boots, and a short, curved sword, this warrior's equipment typifies the Renaissance conception of Roman military dress. Inexpensive and lightweight costumes such as these were undoubtedly made in considerable numbers in the sixteenth century for use in triumphal entries, court pageants, and theatrical performances, although none have survived. Orsoni's designs thus provide a colorful record of these imaginative but ephemeral costumes, allowing us to visualize the pomp and pageantry of a cavalcade of similarly dressed knights parading through the streets of Mantua. The equestrian armor of Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol (cat. no. 53), a real rather than make-believe armor, demonstrates that there was often little difference between festival costumes and parade armor in that period.

Among the album's sixteen designs for helmets *all'antica*, several come particularly close in inspiration to extant examples in embossed and gilt steel. One of Orsoni's more sophisticated designs shows a Roman-style helmet with a tall arched comb and a pivoting visor in the form of a bearded human face with ears (ill.). It echoes both Roman mask helmets of the early imperial period (cat. no. 6) and the three mid-sixteenth-century burgonets with pivoting leonine visors in this catalogue (cat. nos. 39–41). Another helmet assumes the form of a scaly dragon (ill.), its talons serving as the peak and its scales covering the straps tied beneath the wearer's chin, suggesting Filippo Negroli's equally audacious design for the helmet of the duke of Urbino (cat. no. 23a). Orsoni's dolphinlike helmet (ill.) seems to recall one in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris (cat. no. 60), which has a similar scaly bowl with a spiky comb and a peak with teeth and an

inserted plate to close the snout; according to Orsoni this design, which was in the French style, would instill terror in the enemy. Orsoni also included a lion-head helmet, a type illustrated by several examples in this catalogue (cat. nos. 8, 39, 61, 62b); he commented that while such a helmet was not very useful as a defense, it was noteworthy nonetheless because it was bizarre and based on Roman models.

Hayward (1982) attempted to see in Orsoni's designs some reflections of the Mantuan school of armor making and the art of Caremolo Modrone (ca. 1489–1543), the well-documented ducal armorer from whom no signed works survive. Certain motifs in Orsoni's designs do indeed find parallels in the armors traditionally ascribed to Modrone: the foliate scrolls, palmettes, and leafy masks, sometimes with radiating tonguelike projections, found in several of the designs are also seen on a burgonet in Waddesdon Manor (fig. 68) and the helmet and shield of Archduke Ferdinand II (cat. no. 51), while the symmetrical rosette on the elbow of a scale armor in the Brunswick album (fig. 74) is repeated in the same position on the armor of Carlo Gonzaga (cat. no. 50). These examples prove the existence of a certain connection between Orsoni's designs and the armors attributed to Modrone. However, Orsoni never referred in his captions to Modrone (or any other Mantuan armorer) by name nor is there any indication that Orsoni's designs were ever executed by an armorer, so it is difficult to affirm that there was any direct relationship between the two artists. As only four of Orsoni's designs are dated (1540, 1554, 1558, 1559), one is ignorant of how many of them may have been executed before Modrone's death in 1543. Nevertheless, Orsoni is a valuable witness to the art of the armorer in Mantua.

Independent of several designs for plain battle harness, Orsoni's album reflects an awareness of contemporary developments in the design of north Italian parade armor, although many of the drawings are so impractical as to suggest that the painter was concerned more with demonstrating his virtuosity and fantasy than with providing useful working models for an armorer. The robust figural and foliate ornament, the complexity of the compositions, and the sheer variety of the corpus bring to mind the goldsmith's drawings by, or after, another artist from Mantua, Giulio Romano (ca. 1499–1546).<sup>4</sup> Raphael's principal assistant in Rome and an artist well versed in the ancient monuments, Giulio took up the post as court artist to Federico II Gonzaga in Mantua in 1524 and for the next two decades served as chief architect, painter, and designer-in-residence responsible for all manner of luxury goods, including tapestries and silver wares. A large number of goldsmith's designs for vases, ewers, and basins are attributed to Giulio's hand, and these show the same combination of hasty draftsmanship,

fertile imagination, and a free interpretation of the antique as is evident in Orsoni's albums. Many of the drawings were collected into albums by Jacopo Strada (1507–1588), a goldsmith from Mantua who served as court antiquary to Emperor Rudolf II and Duke Albrecht V of Bavaria.<sup>5</sup> Strada is known to have purchased Giulio's drawings after the artist's death, and Strada's son Ottavio (1550–1612) copied and published many of them. In this context it is useful to recall the existence of two related albums of helmet drawings associated with either Giulio Romano or Jacopo Strada. A volume in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna,<sup>6</sup> inscribed as having come from the "museum" of Jacopo Strada, contains more than 150 designs for helmets, turbans, and other elaborate headdresses that are indicated in the title page as having been copied after the antique, although they are of pure Mannerist fantasy. A closely related volume in the Nationalmuseum, Stockholm,<sup>7</sup> contains 76 designs, many of them copies or close variants of those in the Vienna album, and it is inscribed in a later hand "casques d'après Jules Romain" (helmets after Giulio Romano). Orsoni's helmet designs and those in Vienna and Stockholm often are similar in form and use similar types of ornament, suggesting that they had a common source of inspiration, probably Mantuan and, at least in some cases, possibly after original sheets by Giulio Romano and his studio.

It should also be noted that Orsoni's Brunswick album contains five additional figures on horseback not found in the London volume. Three of these, a Roman archer, a light cavalry man, and a standard-bearer, are copied after illustrations first published in Du Choul's *Discours sur la castrametation et discipline militaire des Romains* of 1555 (cat. no. 16), of which there was an Italian edition in 1556. In these drawings Orsoni showed himself to be aware of contemporary studies of Roman military practice and equipment and willing to copy another author's works. These copies confirm that the Brunswick album was completed after the one in London.

1. For the composition and pagination of the album, see Ward-Jackson 1979; for a thorough analysis of its contents and its relationship to the Brunswick album, see Hayward 1982. On the second page of both the London and Brunswick albums is an early topographical view of Mantua, whose importance has been demonstrated by Vannozzo Posio, "Una inedita veduta della Mantova del 1554," *Quadrante Padano* 2, no. 1 (March 1981), pp. 42–45. Posio also discussed the horses in Orsoni's album in connection with the famous Gonzaga stud: "Quegli splendidi corsieri della razza di Mantova," *Quadrante Padano* 2, no. 3 (September 1981), pp. 26–31.
2. Translation from the Latin by Hayward 1982, pt. 1, p. 2.
3. Orsoni's garniture is of particular importance for having its lance-rest fitted to the reinforcing breastplate rather than to the principal breastplate, as was more usual; the same feature is employed on Filippo Negroli's Masks Garniture of 1539 (cat. no. 30) and the Lion Armor at Leeds (cat. no. 62).
4. For Giulio's work as a designer of goldsmith's work, see Hayward 1976, pp. 136–38.
5. For Strada's career and his relationship to Giulio, see Hayward 1976, pp. 136–37, and especially Dirk Jacob Jansen, "Der Mantuaner Antiquarius Jacopo Strada," in Vienna 1989, pp. 308–23.
6. Vienna 1989, p. 319, and no. VI/44.
7. Stockholm 1992, pp. 119–20, 365, no. 102. The very similar group of helmet drawings in the Uffizi, Florence, published in Boccia 1982b, appear to be later, more mechanical copies of the Strada designs in Vienna and Stockholm. The Strada designs, or their source, also provided the models for twelve sixteenth-century prints by an anonymous Italian engraver illustrating characters from Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* (Department of Prints, Drawings, and Paintings, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, inv. nos. 26803.1–12).

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Giraud 1892, p. xli, figs. 1–4; Spitzer sale 1893, lot 3041; Mann 1939, pp. 264–72; Gamber 1958, pp. 99–101, figs. 88, 89; Hayward 1965, nos. 25, 27, 29; Thomas 1965, pp. 49–50, fig. 37; Hayward 1976, pp. 318–19, figs. 238–40; Hayward 1979, pp. 150–53, figs. 13–16; Ward-Jackson 1979, pp. 101–7, no. 212; Hayward 1980; London 1981, pp. 145–46, no. 72; Hayward 1982, pt. 1, pp. 1–5, pt. 2; Blair 1983, pp. 11–17; Boccia 1991, pp. 58–59, no. 25; Stockholm 1992, pp. 119, 364–65, nos. 101, 102; Godoy 1993, pp. 97–99.

## DISCOURS SUR LA CASTRAMETATION ET DISCIPLINE MILITAIRE DES ROMAINS

Guillaume Du Choul

Guillaume Rouillé, Lyon, 1555

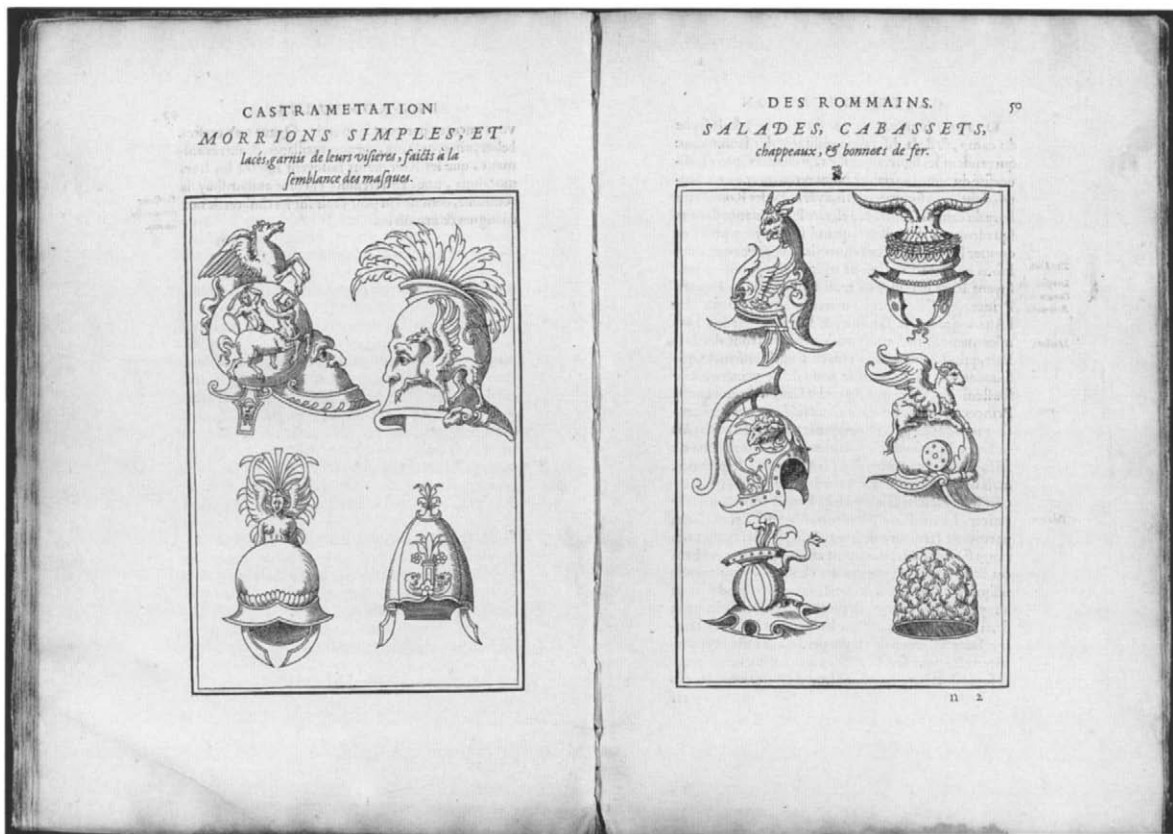
The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Thomas J. Watson Library,  
Jane E. Andrews Fund, in memory of her husband, William Loring  
Andrews, 1942

A citizen of Lyon and counselor to the king, Guillaume Du Choul was one of the leading antiquarians in France in the mid-sixteenth century. His principal works focus on ancient Roman religious practices (*Discours de la religion des anciens Romains*, Lyon, 1556), on the Roman baths and athletic competitions (*Des bains et antiques exercices Grecques et Romaines*, appended to *Castrametation*), and, in the present volume, on military organization and equipment. These works reflect the author's extensive knowledge of classical texts, and the woodcut illustrations are for the most part copied after Roman monuments preserved in France or Italy. Appropriately, the author dedicated his book on the Roman army to Henry II, whom he acknowledged as a monarch who took special pleasure in arms.

Unlike earlier books devoted to classical military practice, notably Robert Valturio's *De re militari* (1472), Du Choul's is

more scholarly and the illustrations more archaeologically correct. Of particular interest is his commentary on ancient helmets: "One wishes to show with antique figures the diversity and variety of their sallets, cabassets, hats, iron bonnets, and simple morions, tied, of which the visors (which raised and lowered like those that men-at-arms wear today) were made to resemble masks like those one still sees everywhere today. As for crests, beasts, wings, birds, horns, leaves, and other animals that the Romans put on their morions, we maintain the same custom today."<sup>1</sup>

The woodcuts on facing folios 49v–50r illustrate some of the helmet types he mentions, including two examples with human masks and one apparently covered with hair or fur. Most of the helmets derive from well-known Roman monuments (figs. 21, 22, 24), the same as were utilized by Vogtherr (cat. no. 14).



1. "Il demeure à monstrier, par figures antiques, la diversité & façon variable de leurs salades, cabassets, chappeaux, bonnets de fer, morrions simples & lassés: desquels la visiere (qu'ils haussoient & baissoyent, comme celles que portent aujourdhuy noz Hommes-d'armes) estoyt faicte à la similitude des masques que l'on voyt encores par tout le monde. Quant aux crestes, bestes, ailes, oyseaux, cornes, fueillages, & autres animaux, que les Rommains faisoient mettre sus leurs morrions, nous en retenons encors aujourdhuy la coustume." Du Choul, *Discours sur la castrametation*, fols. 48v–49r.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Mortimer 1964, vol. 1, pp. 222–23, no. 181.

17.  
**PORTRAIT OF JEAN DE DINTEVILLE  
AS SAINT GEORGE**

Francesco Primaticcio

Italian, ca. 1550

Oil on canvas

64 ¼ x 53 ½ in. (163 x 136 cm)

The Barbara Piasecka Johnson Collection Foundation

This commanding image is one of the few sixteenth-century portraits to represent the sitter in Roman-style armor. In this case, however, the costume was employed to identify the subject not with one of the caesars or with a classical hero like Alexander or Scipio, but rather with the most venerated of Christian warriors, Saint George. The vanquished dragon and broken lance leave no doubt as to the portrait's allegorical subject. The painting reminds us that, even in the sixteenth century, armor *all'antica* was not exclusively humanist in its allusions but it also retained medieval associations with traditional Christian iconography.

The costume is so meticulously rendered and specific in detail as to suggest that the artist had observed similar armors. The harness conforms to the canonical Roman muscled type, with an anatomically modeled cuirass with broad shoulder straps, lion-mask pauldrons with pteruges (pendent straps) below, a skirt of similar pteruges framed at the top by semicircular tabs emblazoned with lion heads, and openwork sandals with high crisscrossed leg straps surmounted by lion heads. Such armors, based on Roman sculpture, appear regularly in Renaissance paintings and sculpture of historical and religious subject matter but rarely in formal portraiture. The only complete parade armor *alla romana* of the sixteenth century is that made of elaborately embossed and damascened steel by Bartolomeo Campi of Pesaro, in 1546, for Guidobaldo II della Rovere, duke of Urbino (cat. no. 54). The portrait under discussion here is

especially interesting in that certain details, such as the presence of mail at the sleeves and beneath the skirt and the turned and roped edges of some of the plates, are of sixteenth-century construction, indicating that the artist was also acquainted with current armor fashions. On the other hand, the olive-colored torso, its gilt mounts, and the pteruges of what appears to be pink satin may reflect the painter's knowledge of contemporary pageant armor constructed of leather, fabric, and papier-mâché, like those illustrated in Filippo Orsoni's album of 1554 (cat. no. 15). The elaborate cartouche at the top of the breastplate, which encloses a female figure holding a lance, probably Minerva or Bellona, is a purely sixteenth-century invention, as is the baldric and elaborate sword hilt, further confirming the impression that the artist had in mind an actual costume.

The helmet on the adjacent table is noteworthy, as it seems unrelated in style and material to the sitter's Roman armor. The headpiece is a contemporary burgonet of unusual symmetrical form, its surfaces covered with red velvet and gilt-metal appliqués, suggesting that it may originally have been intended to accompany a costume or matching velvet-covered brigandine (a textile-covered armor lined with small plates).<sup>1</sup> The gilt figure of a lion at the apex, the female herm at the front, and the putto clasping the surrounding acanthus scrolls belong to a well-established Renaissance vocabulary that will be seen many times in this catalogue.<sup>2</sup> The medallion or cameo set over the ear is a fanciful detail that suggests that the helmet is at least partly fictitious or perhaps that it was an elaborate tournament prize of a kind that no longer survives.

The subject of this portrait was first identified by Charles Sterling (in Amsterdam 1955) as Jean de Dinteville (1504–1555), lord of Polisy and bailly of Troyes, who was earlier represented by Hans Holbein in *The Ambassadors* (National Gallery, London) and again, this time in the guise of Moses, by an unknown Netherlandish or French artist in a panel of 1537, *Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh: An Allegory of the Dinteville Family* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, acc. no. 50.70). Sterling also attributed the canvas, or at least its design, to the Bolognese painter Francesco Primaticcio (1504–1570), who worked with Giulio Romano in Mantua and then moved to France in 1531 to become the principal designer at the royal château of Fontainebleau. Primaticcio is recorded as having visited Dinteville at his château at Polisy in 1544, and according to Sterling, the portrait was painted immediately thereafter as an allusion to Dinteville's recent victory over political rivals. Henri Zerner (1996) has rejected Sterling's long-accepted identification of both the subject and the artist, suggesting instead that the canvas may have been painted by Luca Penni (1501/4–1556), a member of







Raphael's Roman workshop who moved to France about 1530 to join Rosso Fiorentino and Primaticcio at Fontainebleau. In spite of the questions he raises, Zerner has reaffirmed this heroic portrait's place as one of the major paintings of the Fontainebleau school.

1. A contemporary example of a matching velvet-covered helmet and brigandine is shown in Titian's famous portrait in the Hessisches Landesmuseum, Kassel, for which see Wethey 1969–75, vol. 2, p. 73, no. 1, pls. 167–69.

2. The sharply angled profile of the helmet's lower edge recalls an embossed and gilt burgonet in the Rüstkammer of the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (Haenel 1923, pl. 28, fig. b), which is of interest for its appliquéd seated lion at the front of the helmet and the nude demi-figure emerging from foliate scrolls and clasping garlands at either side, motifs also found on the helmet in the portrait.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Amsterdam 1955, pp. 86–87, no. 101; Béguin 1960, pp. 54–55, ill.; Hayward 1979, pp. 150–51, fig. 10; Zerner 1996, pp. 134, 136, fig. 146; London 1997a, p. 23.

# FILIPPO NEGROLI AND HIS WORKSHOP

Filippo Negroli's earliest works appeared in Milan without warning and apparently without precedent; nothing quite like them had previously been seen. Filippo's first documented work, an extraordinary burgonet embossed in the form of a head of curly hair (cat. no. 18), made for Francesco Maria della Rovere, duke of Urbino, in 1532, was apparently inspired by classical busts or possibly even Roman parade helmets of analogous form (for example, cat. no. 5). The burgonet was so greatly admired by the emperor Charles V that he ordered a similar one for himself. In making this second version, dated 1533, Filippo surpassed his own model, gilding the hair and adding a beaver with gilt beard and an accompanying shield embossed in the center with a lion head (cat. no. 20). With these early works the armorer created one of the most successful and influential helmet designs in history (the catalogue includes two other curly-haired examples by his workshop or contemporary armorers, and at least two others are recorded in inventories of the period), and at the same time he seems also to have invented the typical Renaissance ensemble (*gioco* in Italian) of matching parade helmet and shield. Despite his youth, Filippo's debut was that of a mature and highly skilled armorer and an imaginative artist who looked to classical sources for his inspiration. As a designer and craftsman, he was in every sense a virtuoso.

The works assembled in this section include all those that can confidently be ascribed to Filippo's authorship or to the family workshop, which he shared with his father Gian Giacomo and his younger brothers, Giovan Battista, Francesco, and Alessandro. Filippo's eight signed works are presented, as are a small number of armors that, by reason of their style, workmanship, and direct relationship to the master's signed works, can be attributed to him. These works, which date between 1532 and 1545, cover only a portion of Filippo's known career (he retired from the family business in 1557) and represent but a tiny percentage of his output; nevertheless each bears evidence of the armorer's remarkable range of invention and technical innovation.

Charles V and the dukes of Urbino were Filippo's most regular and prestigious patrons. In addition to the helmet of 1532, already mentioned, three armors were made for

the dukes of Urbino: the orientaling armor of mail and plate for Francesco Maria della Rovere (cat. no. 19); the fantastic "Fame Armor" for Guidobaldo II (cat. no. 23), with its monstrous helmet, dolphin-shaped pauldrons, and a breastplate conceived as two folded bat wings covered, Argus-like, with eyes; and a magnificently embossed and etched helmet, now incomplete, with grotesque masks on the peak and buffe (cat. no. 29). The Masks Garniture of 1539 (cat. no. 30), made for Charles V, is Filippo's only surviving armor garniture, and with it we are introduced to his young brother Francesco, who reveals himself a damascener of uncommon talent. With its grotesque masks and elegant acanthus foliage, the garniture bridges the expressive and bizarre style of the 1530s and the more serene classicizing mode of the 1540s, typified by two works made for the emperor, the exceptional Medusa shield of 1541 (cat. no. 32) and the burgonet of 1545 (cat. no. 35). Two paintings that illustrate what appear to be lost armors by Filippo are also included (cat. nos. 27, 28).

Shown among these embossed pieces are two armors decorated solely by damascening, those of the dauphin Henry of France (cat. no. 31) and Charles V (cat. no. 38), which can be considered Francesco Negroli's masterpieces. Both harnesses are unsigned, but their forging appears to have been done in the Negroli workshop and the damascening is certainly by the same hand as was responsible for the Masks Garniture and the Medusa shield. Charles V's armor corresponds to payments made to Francesco in the late 1540s or early 1550s, and thus it probably represents one of the last works of the unified Negroli workshop before Francesco's departure in 1551.

Identifying Filippo Negroli's work after 1545 becomes extremely subjective and a source of speculation (see the following section, "The Heritage of Filippo Negroli"). He abandoned his profession as an armorer in 1557 and took up a second career as maker of *tremolanti*, perhaps some sort of hair ornaments or small costume fittings. Filippo died, apparently blind and in poverty, on November 24, 1579. It was a sad end for this sculptor of steel who "merit[ed] immortal praise" and whose richly decorated armors "astounded the king of France and Emperor Charles V" (Morigi 1595 [1615], p. 493).

## BURGONET OF FRANCESCO MARIA I DELLA ROVERE, DUKE OF URBINO

Filippo Negroli

Milan, dated 1532

Steel and textile

Wt. 5 lb. 12 oz. (2,600 g)

Ex coll.: Armory of the dukes of Urbino (until 1581); Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol, Schloss Ambras, Innsbruck; acquired for the imperial collections, 1606

Hofjagd- und Rüstammer des Kunsthistorischen Museums, Vienna (A 498)

The burgonet of blackened steel is constructed of a bowl forged from a single plate, with two neck lames at the back, hinged cheekpieces of two lames each, and a plume tube. The bowl is embossed as a head of curly hair and is drawn out over the face into a short rounded peak formed as a diadem of twisted palm fronds; the peak is hollow and is closed on the inside by a plate that retains traces of a woven textile (canvas?) lining strap beneath its rivets. Riveted inside the bowl at the back is a steel lining bar, which also retains traces of a lining strap. The cheekpieces are embossed in high relief with anatomically well-fashioned ears, with pierced lobes for earrings and small ringlets of hair in front. The cusped facial rim of the cheekpieces is turned and embossed with two palm branches with interlaced stems; the same motif appears on the turned edge of the lower neck lame and continues along the edge of the lower lame of the cheekpieces. In the center of the lower neck lame, above the palm branches, is a scrolled banderole in relief, now polished bright, which bears a three-line inscription in tiny stamped letters: PHILIPPI-NIGROLI-IAC·F·/MEDIOLANENSIS·OPVS·/·M·D·XXXII·(the Ns are reversed, and the points are actually small flowers with five petals). At the base of the bowl to the right is a punched mark consisting of two crossed keys, the bits down, surmounted by a crown; to the left is riveted a spiral-turned plume tube.

For over four centuries this burgonet has been associated with an armor of mail and plate (cat. no. 19) that does not, however, match it. Both pieces belonged to the famous Italian condottiere Francesco Maria della Rovere (1490–1538), duke of Urbino, and were sent in homage to Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol (1529–1595) for the Armory of Heroes he was assembling at Schloss Ambras, near Innsbruck. They were already at Ambras by November 14, 1581, the date of a letter in which Ferdinand thanked Francesco Maria II della Rovere, the last of the ducal line, for his gift of several portraits and the armors of his ancestors Federico da Monte-

feltro and Francesco Maria I.<sup>1</sup> The burgonet and cuirass were described as an ensemble in the printed Ambras inventory of 1593 as “Francesco, duke of Urbino, a complete armor,”<sup>2</sup> and in the inventory of 1596 as “Francesco duke of Urbino: a black half-armor completely embossed and articulated, together with its helmet embossed like a head of hair.”<sup>3</sup> It was illustrated for the first time in 1601, in the *Armamentarium Heroicum* by Jakob Schrenck von Notzing, the catalogue of the Ambras armory with engraved plates based on drawings by Domenico Custos (fig. 47). Nonetheless, this ensemble *all’antica* is undeniably composite, as the differences in the decoration on the burgonet and the cuirass clearly indicate.

The lack of unity between the two pieces has occasionally been pointed out. The bottom edge of the helmet fits the collar lames awkwardly; the palm-branch border on the helmet is not repeated on the armor, whereas the armor’s boxed edges, foliate borders, and surface stippling are not found on the helmet. Some specialists have thought that the burgonet might have belonged to Charles V because of the similarity between its palm-branch decoration and that of the emperor’s Palm Branch Armor (cat. no. 49), an idea first proposed by Boccia and Coelho in 1967, but this seems not to be the case. We have no way of knowing whether the burgonet and the armor were associated during their working life or whether they were united later, either by accident or with the intention of composing a complete armor *all’antica* when an armor of Francesco Maria I was requested for the Ambras collection. In any event, this is not an isolated case of mixing armors within their period of use.<sup>4</sup>

Dated 1532, this burgonet is the earliest recorded work by Filippo Negroli and is arguably also the first in the long series of embossed Italian parade helmets *all’antica* made in the sixteenth century. Thus, from the outset, Filippo Negroli emerges as the imaginative creator of the style of armor *all’antica* and an artist of maturity and incomparable technical skill. A work of great innovation, this burgonet is also important in denoting the transition from Quattrocento traditions to more modern practice, since it is the last one to bear the Negroli crossed-keys mark and the first surviving work to bear Filippo’s signature. It also retains another archaic feature, decorative internal rivet heads of flattened form stamped with the design of a star and pellets within a pearled border (similar to those illustrated by Boccia 1982a, p. 293), a type commonplace on fifteenth-century Italian armor but rarely used after about 1520.

There is no known Renaissance antecedent to Filippo’s curly-haired burgonet, a form that must have been startlingly novel in its first appearance. Its form was intended to impart to its wearer the look of a classical hero and may have



18 and 19





18



18

been inspired by Roman sculpture and coins. On the other hand, one cannot help but wonder if Filippo had some knowledge of Roman parade helmets of the anthropomorphic type, either directly, from an existing example (although no actual helmets of this sort are recorded in the sixteenth century), or indirectly, based on antiquarian descriptions or sketches after the antique. In the Roman world, these anthropomorphic helmets were part of the athletic accoutrements of participants in the *hippika gymnasia*, a tournament-like public military exercise in which two groups of horsemen confronted one another in mock battle. The majority of the helmets date from the imperial era and are found in the Roman provinces north of the Alps rather than in Italy, and they are fashioned in iron or bronze with naturalistic representations of hair, ears, and even complete faces (see cat. no. 6). A particularly fine example of a Roman parade helmet embossed with soft curls of hair is in Bonn (cat. no. 5). Some knowledge of these anthropomorphic helmets existed in the sixteenth century, as seen in the woodcut illustrations to Vogtherr's *Kunstbuechlein* of 1538 (cat. no. 14) and to Du Choul's *Discours* of 1555 (cat. no. 16), as well as the pen-and-ink designs in Filippo Orsoni's album of 1554 (cat. no. 15). Filippo Negroli's burgonet of 1532, however, is an entirely original creation, which harmoniously adapts classical prototypes to contemporary sixteenth-century helmet forms and construction.

Filippo's burgonet is a confident and sophisticated work, indicating that the armorer, only about twenty-two years old, was already a mature craftsman. The lack of color imparts a severity to the piece, yet the helmet's embossing and chasing have an exuberance and daring unmatched at this date. The whorls and eddies of hair are lively and varied, the curls turning in a variety of directions without apparent repetition. The ears stand out from the planes of the cheekpieces in such high relief as to appear cast, or at least applied, rather than hammered up from the underside. The deep recesses inside the plates demonstrate the elasticity of the metal and the technical skill and expert judgment exercised in stretching the material to its extreme limits. This mastery becomes especially evident when comparing the ears on these cheekpieces to those on the helmet of Charles V made by Augsburg's leading armorer, Desiderius Helmschmid, about 1535–40 (Hofjagd- und Rüstammer, Vienna, inv. no. A 547), the German's attempt at relief looking timid by comparison. In his debut, Filippo Negroli surpasses all rivals, not only the Helmschmids but also the armorers of antiquity.

This example is the earliest of four surviving curly-haired parade helmets *all'antica* of undoubted authenticity (cat. nos. 20–22).<sup>5</sup> Indeed, as has already been demonstrated in "A History of the Negroli Family," the duke of Urbino's burgonet seems to have been the example upon which Charles V's helmet of 1533 was modeled. The popularity of



these anthropomorphic helmets is further attested by the existence of two additional examples, both with beards, mentioned in the inventories of the della Rovere armory at Urbino and that of the Gonzaga armories at Mantua. One is described in the 1630 inventory of the Urbino armory as “a sallet with beard worked in the middle and at the top like a cap of hair with two roses, one on either side, with brass rivets,”<sup>6</sup> and the other, recorded in the Gonzaga armory in 1604, as “a Moor’s head of iron, with the hair and beard gilt.”<sup>7</sup> One or both may have been the work of Filippo Negroli, and it is just possible that the Urbino helmet matched the Vienna cuirass (cat. no. 19), both pieces including roses in their decoration.

We do not know if the burgonet in Vienna was intended, like the one in Madrid, to form a parade ensemble comprising a helmet and a shield. Whatever the case, shields decorated with palm branches existed at the time, as demonstrated by the presence of two shields by Caremolo Mondrone, in the armory of the Gonzaga, dukes of Mantua, in 1542: “two large shields of iron surrounded with palm leaf decoration and scrolls and swags made by Master Caremolo.”<sup>8</sup>

Finally, the original color of the Vienna burgonet deserves consideration. Is the brownish black that today colors the surface of this burgonet and of the cuirass in Vienna the result of a fortuitous coincidence, or is it a later treatment intended to unify the appearance of the two pieces so that they formed an ensemble *all’antica*?

1. The original letter is in the ASF, Urbino, Classe I, Divisione G, Filza 252<sup>1</sup>, fols. 139r–140v, and a copy is preserved in the archive at Innsbruck, Konzept Hofkammersachen 1581, fol. 146v (as recorded in the files of the Hofjagd- und Rüstammer, Vienna).
2. “Francisci, hertzogen zu Urbin, ganze rüstung.” Luchner 1958, p. 93.
3. “Franciscz herzog zu Urbin: Ain schwarze halbe rüstung durchaus

- geschiebt und geschoben, sambt seiner hauben, getriben wie ain krausts haar”; Luchner 1958, p. 93. For the seventeenth-century inventory references to this armor, see Auer 1984, p. LXXXVIII, no. 359.
4. Two armors belonging to Charles V and Phillip II in Vienna (Hofjagd- und Rüstammer, inv. nos. A 546, A 547), both sent from Spain to the Armory of Heroes at Ambras, were mounted with mismatched helmets that belong to other armors of Charles V (Gamber and Beaufort 1990, pp. 52, 53, 56).
  5. We exclude from consideration here the burgonet formerly in Warwick Castle and sold at Sotheby’s, Summers Place, July 15, 1997, lot 44.
  6. “Una celata con barba lavorata per il mezzo et à cima come una piega di capello con due rose una per parte con brocche d’ottone”; ASF, Urbino, Classe III, Filza XV, fol. 307v. This inventory, which will be discussed at greater length by S. Pyhrr (forthcoming), appears to have been written in Urbino, although the della Rovere residence was traditionally at Pesaro, where their armory was described in 1571 as including “a room full of the most beautiful types of arms, next to which, in another room, are arms sufficient to arm 600 persons”; Maria Rosaria Valazzi et al., *La corte di Pesaro: Storia di una residenza signorile* (Modena: Edizioni Panini, 1986), p. 103, no. 221.
  7. “Una testa di ferro d’un morro ed li capelli, e barba dorati.” Mann 1939, pp. 324–25, no. 23.
  8. “due rodelle grande de ferro con li palmi intorno et tortioni e groppi fatti per mg caremolo.” Mann 1939, pp. 310–11, no. 314.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Primisser 1819, p. 63, no. 104; Sacken 1855, vol. 1, pp. 247–48, no. 120; Sacken 1859–62, vol. 2, pp. 22–23, pl. 21; Boenheim 1889, pp. 381–83; Angelucci 1890, p. 110; Boenheim 1890, p. 102, fig. 109; Boenheim 1894–98, vol. 1, p. 9, pl. 14; Boenheim 1897, pp. 155–56; Gelli and Moretti 1903, pp. 78, 80, pls. III, XLII; Laking 1920–22, vol. 2, p. 191, fig. 534, vol. 4, p. 145, fig. 1230; Grosz and Thomas 1936, p. 50; Cripps-Day 1956, p. 84; Luchner 1958, p. 93; Thomas and Gamber 1958, pp. 760–63, fig. p. 770; Boccia and Coelho 1967, pp. 321–22, 328–29, figs. 249, 250; Rossi 1971, no. 1; Hayward 1979, pp. 155–56, fig. 20; Schrenck and Thomas 1981, no. 29; Blair and Boccia 1982, p. 22, ill.; Auer 1984, p. LXXXVIII, no. 359; Scalini 1987, pp. 14, 37, n. 11, fig. 7; Vienna 1987, p. 219, no. IV.43; Vienna 1989, p. 236, no. V/2; Gamber and Beaufort 1990, pp. 36–37, figs. 10, 11; Vienna 1990, pp. 148–49, no. 63; Boccia 1993, p. 12, ill. p. 9.



18, detail of mark



18, detail of signature

## ARMOR OF FRANCESCO MARIA I DELLA ROVERE, DUKE OF URBINO

Filippo Negroli

Milan, ca. 1532–35

Steel, brass, and leather

Wt. 16 lb. 14 oz. (7,675 g)

Ex coll.: Armory of the dukes of Urbino (until 1581); Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol, Schloss Ambras, Innsbruck; acquired for the imperial collections, 1606

Hofjagd- und Rüstammer des Kunsthistorischen Museums, Vienna (A 498a)

This armor, a cuirass constructed of mail and plate, is shaped like a sleeveless jacket opening down the sides, with gorget (neck defense), short tassets (thigh defenses), and culet (buttock defense) made in one (ill. p. 117). The steel surfaces are of a dark bronzelike color without traces of gilding. The front and back panels are each constructed of eleven vertical rows of upward-overlapping scalelike plates that taper toward the waist. These rows alternate with ten rows of riveted links of mail, with an extra row of mail and plate on each tasset. Each plate is hammered and punched to resemble three overlapping rows of five scales, each scale slightly concave in section and with a rounded upper edge. Each row of mail measures seven links across and is composed of fine, riveted iron links, with the exception of two rows of brass links on the outer strip of mail at the sides.

The gorget is formed in two halves and consists of three upward-overlapping collar lames on the front and back panels; the lames are hinged at the left side and closed on the right by means of a hole snapping over a pin. The edge of the uppermost collar lame has a narrow boxed turnover, and the lower edge of the bottommost lame is embossed with a boxed ridge bordered by a row of stylized acanthus leaves. All three collar lames have a matte surface punched overall with tiny crescent-shaped marks. The armholes are reinforced with gussets of one plate, each similarly matted, with a boxed turn at the inner edge and a border of raised leaves. The edges of the tassets and culet have matching boxed edges and raised leaves. The transverse row of scales across the midsection on the front and back panels is concave in profile to emphasize the waist.

The two halves are closed at the collar as noted, at the armholes by a double-pronged hook at the top and bottom of each gusset that passes through a corresponding pierced pin, and at the sides by three leather straps (modern) and corresponding iron buckles. Inside the cuirass the scales are riveted to long vertical strips of leather, with a horizontal strip across the waist. Blind rivets around the top collar

lames and stitch holes pierced in the scales along the opening at the sides and along the edges of the interior leather straps indicate that the cuirass was once fully lined with a textile, now lost.

The cuirass is completed by a pair of pauldrons (shoulder defenses) *alla romana*, each composed of three lames from which hang pteruges of plate and mail. The edges of the plates are boxed and the surfaces matted overall with crescent-shaped punch marks. The first lame is decorated with a slightly raised band, on which are embossed five eight-petaled rosettes alternating with three parallel recessed channels, the petals and the channels having engraved outlines. The caplike third lame is embossed in the center with a large four-petaled flower, the flat-ended petals having pointed underleaves projecting between them and a raised eight-petaled rosette in the center. The lames are articulated by sliding rivets at the sides and a leather strap down the center on the inside. Internal leather straps also fasten the eighteen pteruges, which are arranged in two overlapping rows. Each pteruge, which expands slightly at the end, is constructed of a leather backing superimposed with a steel border with a boxed edge and a raised row of leaves pointing inward, the center filled with riveted mail. The pauldrons are attached to the cuirass at two points: by a hinged pin riveted at the shoulders of the cuirass that passes through the hole at the top of each pauldron, and by a hinge at the rear edge of the pauldron that fixes it to the gusset. The front and back edges of each pauldron and the edges of the gussets where they meet under the arm have been cut away, which indicates that the armor has been altered.

The cuirass, together with the burgonet signed by Filippo Negroli and dated 1532, here catalogued separately (cat. no. 18), belonged to Francesco Maria della Rovere (1490–1538), duke of Urbino. Both pieces were presumably sent in 1581 by the last duke, Francesco Maria II della Rovere, to Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol at Ambras.<sup>1</sup> The helmet and cuirass have been recorded together since the late sixteenth century, and their association has rarely been questioned. However, Laking (1920–22), followed by Boccia and Coelho (1967), felt that although both are by Filippo and are contemporary in date, the two pieces do not belong together. Boccia and Coelho specifically noted that the shape of the burgonet's lower edge is incompatible with the collar of the cuirass, and that the palm-branch border on the helmet is not found on the cuirass but instead matches the so-called Palm Branch Armor of Charles V in Madrid (cat. no. 49). It should also be observed that the matte surface of the cuirass does not recur on the helmet. In fact, the only shared feature is the black or bronze color, which may explain why the two pieces were joined in the della Rovere armory, regardless of



Fig. 47. Portrait of Francesco Maria della Rovere, in Jakob Schrenck von Notzing, *Armamentarium Heroicum*, 1603. Engraving. The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Thomas J. Watson Library, Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913



Fig. 48. Mail-and-plate arm pieces. Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence (M. 1502–1503)

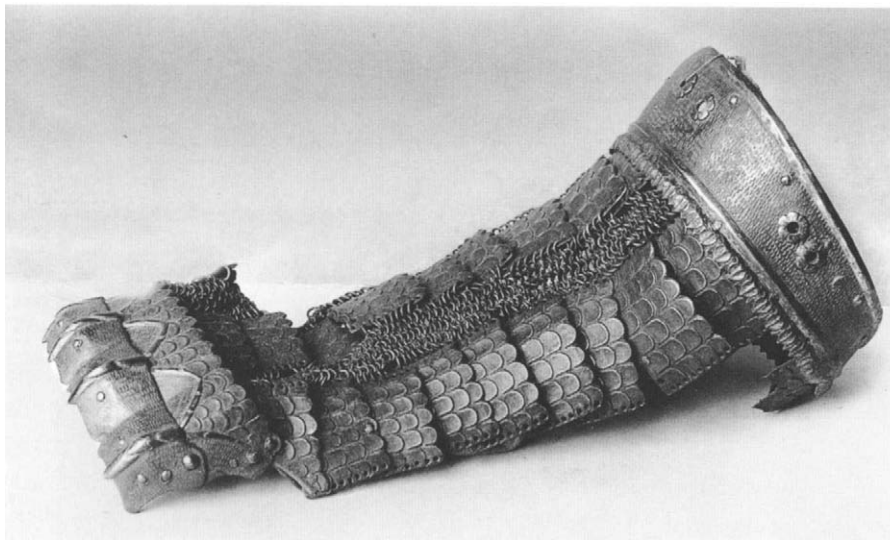


Fig. 49. Left lower vambrace and gauntlet. Formerly Zeughaus, Berlin



Fig. 50. Two scale straps (attached to 19th-century cheek-pieces). The State Hermitage, Saint Petersburg (3.O. 3059)

whether they were originally intended to be worn together.

If the burgonet and cuirass were not created as an integral armor, then the authorship of the cuirass and its date of manufacture are open to question. There can be little doubt, however, that it, too, is the work of Filippo Negrolì. Its novel design and technical virtuosity are hallmarks of this master, as are such small but revealing details as the narrow boxed edges that are found on most of Filippo's signed works, and the tiny crescent-shaped punch marks that recur on the so-called Fame Armor of Guidobaldo II della Rovere (cat. no. 23), another work securely attributable to Filippo. Indeed, the close similarities between Guidobaldo's armor and this cuirass made for his father suggest that they are probably con-

temporary in date. Both armors appear to have been made before 1536–38, when they were recorded (Guidobaldo's armor explicitly, the cuirass implicitly) in Titian's series of the Roman Emperors painted for Federico II Gonzaga for his Gabinetto dei Cesari in the Palazzo Ducale in Mantua (see cat. nos. 26, 27). Titian's *Claudius* is dressed in an armor directly modeled after Guidobaldo's, which apparently had vambraces of mail-and-plate construction exactly like the cuirass. In the *Caligula* in the series, the pauldrons are loosely modeled on those of the cuirass, including a band decorated with alternating roses and recessed channels, which leaves little doubt that Titian knew this cuirass as well as Guidobaldo's armor. Both armors probably date to the first half of the 1530s and

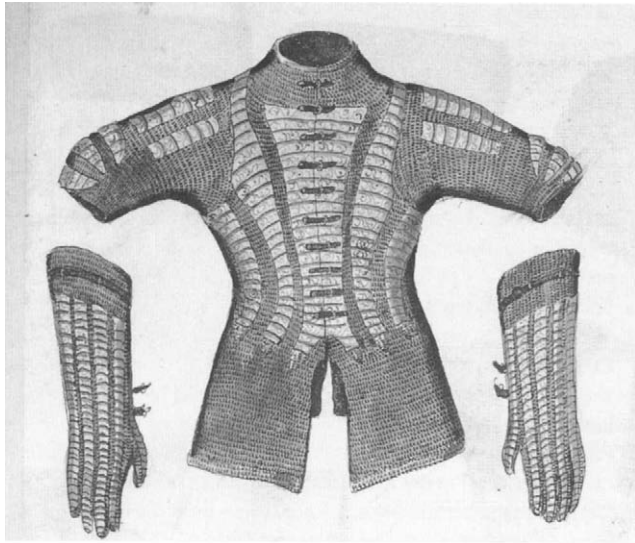


Fig. 51. Watercolor drawing of mail-and-plate armor of Emperor Charles V, *Inventario Iluminado*, ca. 1544. Real Armería, Madrid (N 18)

thus cannot be too distant in date from the burgonet of 1532.

The design of the cuirass is exceedingly unusual in the history of sixteenth-century armor. It is not a brigandine, as it is usually called, but a hybrid combination of oriental and *all'antica* features.<sup>2</sup> The term brigandine (*brigantina* or *corazzina* in Italian) denotes a form of armored jacket in which small, overlapping steel lamellae are riveted to the interior layers of textile, with only the heads of the securing rivets showing on the outer layer of velvet or brocade. In the sixteenth century, brigandines were sometimes made with matching tassets and classically inspired pteruges at the sleeves, and they usually closed down the sides, features also found on this cuirass. However, the mail-and-plate construction, without use of a textile cover, is not inherently European. It appears instead to have been inspired by a popular form of armor worn since the late fourteenth century throughout the Islamic world, notably in Iran, Turkey, and the Mamluk kingdom in Syria and Egypt. The torso defense was fashioned as a short-sleeved jacket opening down the front and constructed of vertical rows of lamellae (small plates) connected by mail, a type of armor that was fairly lightweight, well ventilated, and flexible and that required less time and skill in the forging of the small lamellae than European armors constructed of large, anatomically shaped plates.<sup>3</sup> Closely related to these Islamic examples is the Russian *bekhter*, another close-fitting mail-and-plate armor in which the plates are smaller, more numerous, and more compact, with the closings at the sides rather than down the front.<sup>4</sup> The Muscovite *bekhter* is in fact more directly comparable to the Vienna piece than are the Islamic shirts.

Oriental armors of both types undoubtedly came to the West, either as booty or as diplomatic gifts, by the early sixteenth century, as demonstrated by the imitations made by European armorers. In addition to the Vienna cuirass, two other examples of a European interpretation are known. One was also formerly in the della Rovere armory, recorded in the inventory of 1630 as “a small cuirass entirely of iron plate and mail,”<sup>5</sup> and the other belonged to Charles V and is represented in the pictorial inventory (*Inventario Iluminado*) of his armory, executed after 1544 but before his death in 1558: a short-sleeved jacket of mail and plate, with matching gauntlets with elbow-length cuffs of the same construction (fig. 51), as well as a second pair of gauntlets with short cuffs.<sup>6</sup> Unlike other orientalizing European armors, however, there is nothing overtly or purposely exotic about the Vienna cuirass. Filippo Negroli seems to have studied the construction of these oriental armors and assimilated it within his own idiom, so transforming it that its origins are difficult to detect.

The cuirass as we see it today is incomplete. In 1967 Boccia and Coelho first identified two small mail-and-plate arm pieces then in the Castel Sant’Angelo (fig. 48) as belonging to it, thus establishing that the armor originally possessed complete arm defenses.<sup>7</sup> The upper edges of these plates are pierced with slots to allow them to turn on adjoining plates, now lost (they cannot attach directly to the present pauldrons). The lower left vambrace with gauntlet made in one was formerly in the collection of Prince Carl of Prussia and later entered the holdings of the Berlin Zeughaus but is unaccounted for since World War II.<sup>8</sup> The recent rediscovery of a photograph of this lost piece (fig. 49) confirms that the armor’s vambraces were almost identical to those of the Fame Armor, as recorded in Titian’s *Claudius* and known to us in the copies after it (cat. no. 26), and were not unlike the wide mail-and-plate sleeves matching Charles V’s mail-and-plate armor, mentioned above. What may be fragments of the missing right vambrace are in the State Hermitage in Saint Petersburg, where they are now utilized as the chin straps for Guidobaldo della Rovere’s helmet for the Fame Armor (cat. no. 23a), and as chin straps for a second burgonet (fig. 50). One of the latter two chin straps still retains a small decorative buckle at the end that exactly matches those at the sides of the cuirass. This vambrace may also have had some sort of couter (elbow defense) like the one shown in *Claudius*. The vambraces presumably remained behind as detached elements in the della Rovere armory when the cuirass was sent to Ambras, with the result that they were transferred with the rest of the armory to Florence in 1631. They were subsequently sold at the time of the dispersal of the Medici armory in the 1770s.



The Vienna armor can now be appreciated not merely as an isolated cuirass, but rather as a complete *corsaletto*, or half-length armor for infantry use. It undoubtedly was created together with an open-faced helmet, but no surviving burgonet, including the one so long associated with it, appears to match. There was, however, another curly-haired burgonet *all'antica* in the della Rovere armory that is a possible candidate. It is described in the 1630 inventory as “a sallet with beard worked in the middle and at the top like a cap of hair with two roses, one on either side, with brass rivets.”<sup>9</sup> The mention of roses, perhaps embossed on the cheekpieces, brings to mind the roselike flowers on the pauldrons, but unfortunately the description is too vague to be certain and the helmet is not known to have survived.

The owner of the cuirass, Francesco Maria della Rovere, duke of Urbino, was one of the most renowned condottieri of the sixteenth century. The adopted heir of his uncle Guidobaldo I da Montefeltro, the last of the Montefeltro rulers of Urbino, Francesco Maria succeeded to the title in 1508. His military honors were conferred early in his career and included the posts of hereditary prefect of Rome (from 1502), captain general of the Church (1508–15), commander of Florentine forces (1522–23), and captain general of Venetian land forces from 1523, and concluded with his appointment in 1538, the year of his death, as commander of land forces for the Holy League against the Turks. As an art patron, Francesco Maria is best remembered as one of Titian's principal clients. Less well known, however, was the duke's patronage of the armorer's craft, which included commissions to the two most important practitioners of their day, Kolman Helmschmid of Augsburg and Filippo Negroli of Milan. The field armor seen in Titian's portrait of Francesco Maria in the Uffizi, painted in 1536–38 (fig. 78), is almost certainly by Kolman. The Vienna cuirass and its associated helmet exemplify Filippo's work for the duke, but these were not his only works for Francesco Maria. In 1538 Filippo is also recorded as having made a small garniture for the duke in preparation for a new campaign against the Turks, a harness to which the elements of a burgonet (cat. no. 29) may have belonged.

1. For the early history of these pieces, see cat. no. 18, notes 1–3.
2. Sacken (1855) appears to have been the first author to use the term “brigandine” in connection with Vienna armor A 498. Laking (1920–22) and Scalini (1987) used the term “jazarant” to describe it, but this would not be correct since the jazarant (from the Persian *kazhagand*) appears to have been a coat of mail fitted within a textile garment padded with silk waste (*kazh*); see A. S. Melikian-Chirvani, “The Westward Journey of the Kazhagand,” *The Journal of the Arms & Armour Society* 11, no. 1 (June 1983), pp. 8–35.
3. For an early Timurid example of this armor type, see Thomas W. Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision: Persian Art*

*and Culture in the Fifteenth Century*, exh. cat. (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1989), no. 31. A slightly later Mamluk example of identical construction was recently sold at Christie's, London, April 23, 1996, lot 126, ill.

The upward-overlapping scales, with their rounded edges and black color, call to mind the lacquered leather or iron scales of Japanese armor. On Japanese examples, however, the scales are connected by colorful silk laces, not mail, so this similarity is probably coincidental. For possible Japanese influence on the Negroli, see cat. no. 29.

4. For the *bekhter*, see Bocherński 1971.
5. “Una corazzina tutta di lama di ferro et maglia.” ASF, Urbino, Classe III, Filza XV, fol. 290r.
6. Two pairs of mail-and-plate arm defenses of this type are known, both in the Royal Armouries, Leeds (inv. nos. III.26, III.792); see Ffoulkes 1916, vol. 1, pp. 143, 163. Both are etched and gilt, the pair of sleeves (III.26) in the Italian style, the short-cuffed gauntlets of German manufacture. Both probably came from the Real Armería, Madrid, and belonged to Charles V.
7. The arm pieces originally came from the armory in the Museo Nazionale del Bargello in Florence and were transferred to Rome in 1929 for display in the Castel Sant'Angelo. They presumably came to Florence in 1631, when the Urbino armory was transferred there following the betrothal of Vittoria della Rovere, the last of that line, to Grand Duke Ferdinando II de' Medici. The arms unfortunately are not recognizable in the 1630 packing list of the Urbino armory or in subsequent inventories of the combined Medici-della Rovere armories. The Bargello pieces have recently returned to Florence from Rome and the arm pieces have been published by Mario Scalini, in Beijing 1997, pp. 113–14, no. 78.
8. A pre-World War II photograph of the vambrace is preserved in the photographic archives of the Livrustkammaren, Stockholm, and was annotated in Swedish by Dr. Rudolf Cederström with the following comment (in translation): “Belonging to the brigandine in Vienna (on which the Negroli helmet is wrongly placed).” This vambrace was mistakenly referred to as part of a leg in Thomas and Gamber 1958, p. 760. We are especially grateful to Dr. Ortwin Gamber, who remembered where he saw this photograph more than four decades ago, and to Dr. Lena Rangström for having the photograph copied.
9. “Una celata con barba lavorata per il mezzo et à cima come una piega di capello con due rose una per parte con brocche d'ottone”; ASF, Urbino, Classe III, Filza XV, fol. 307v. The drawing by A. Rockstuhl (published in Gille and Rockstuhl 1835–53, pl. 57) of Guidobaldo's helmet (cat. no. 23a) shows what appears to be a three-dimensional rose attached to the right cheekpiece. One can only wonder if this rose, which is no longer present, may have been that referred to in the 1630 inventory.

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## HELMET AND SHIELD OF CHARLES V

Filippo Negrolì

Milan, dated 1533

Steel and gold

Burgonet: Wt. 5 lb. 3 oz. (2,350 g); buffe: Wt. 1 lb. 11 oz. (763 g)

Shield: Diam. 20<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (51.6 cm); Wt. 5 lb. 12 oz. (2,620 g)

Real Armeria, Patrimonio Nacional, Madrid (D 1, D 2)

The helmet *all'antica* is made up of a burgonet and a buffe. The bowl of the burgonet is worked in a single piece, embossed, chiseled, and gilt in the shape of a head of curly hair and with a projecting hollow laurel wreath that serves as a peak. The inside of the peak is closed by a separate plate that also served to affix the lining; a second lining bar is attached at the back of the bowl. The cheekpieces, each constructed of two plates, are attached to the bowl by internal hinges, which in this case have rim stops that limit their movement to the inside. The cheekpieces are embossed in high relief with naturalistic human ears, the lobes pierced with holes for earrings, with ringlets of gilt hair in front of the ears. Around the face opening is a series of stitch holes for the attachment of the missing lining. There are three articulating neck lames at the back of the bowl and two attached to each of the cheekpieces, the latter locking beneath the chin. The lower edge of the neck plates is turned under and embossed with interlaced ribbons decorated with a dot-punched pattern and enclosing small punched circles. Bordering the edge is a finely embossed and chiseled band, narrowing toward the front, that depicts at the center of the back two confronted griffins, their tails extending into foliate scrolls, which support a medallion bearing, around its frame, the device *PLVS VLTRA* and, in the center, the columns of Hercules set on water and surmounted by the imperial crown. Along the top edge of this band, on the polished surface of the neck lame, is the die-punched signature: ·IAC·PHILIPPVS·NEGROLVS· ·MEDIOLAN·FACIEBAT·M·D·XXX·III. This signature is interrupted in the middle by the protruding cross of the imperial crown in the medallion. Traces of gilding on the edge of this plate suggest that the entire band was formerly gilt.

The burgonet is fitted with a detachable buffe (lower face defense) with two pendent collar lames, which is attached around the back of the helmet by an iron strap of three hinged sections, etched with a twisted rope design and gilt. The chin plate is masterfully embossed and chiseled with open lips and a pierced mouth, mustaches, beard, and sideburns; the hair is gilt overall, as on the bowl. The smooth polished surface around the face opening above the beard is pierced with three rivet holes. The hair, arranged in curled

locks, is given particular attention, and even the barely visible whiskers beneath the chin are carefully rendered. Note that the beard does not have the same tight ringlets as the hair on the head but is depicted as neatly trimmed and combed. The lower collar lame is decorated around the edge with a recessed and delicately embossed band bearing the collar of the Order of the Golden Fleece, composed of a series of fire-steels and flaming flints, with the Fleece hanging down into the rounded center lobe of that lame. A small hole in this plate directly beneath the Fleece originally must have held an appliqué, perhaps a golden flint. The fact that this collar does not continue onto the neck lames of the burgonet and does not appear on the companion shield has led some scholars to question whether the buffe was part of the original set, despite the presence of the same interlaced ribbons embossed on the turned edge that also appear on the burgonet and the shield. Nevertheless, in spite of the apparent change of decorative program and the gap between the collar lames of the buffe and those of the cheekpieces, the burgonet and the buffe fit together perfectly. There is a seamless continuity between the ringlets of hair in front of the ears on the cheekpieces and on the sideburns on the buffe; moreover, the length of the buffe's metal strap corresponds exactly to the circumference of the neck of the two assembled pieces.

The buffe might possibly have been fitted originally with a small masklike plate, now lost, that completed the human face, with eye openings and a nose; in this case it would have been attached to the chin plate through the three existing rivet holes. On the other hand, these rivet holes may have served only to affix a textile lining. It must be kept in mind, however, that this hypothetical visor is not illustrated in the *Inventario Iluminado*, dating about 1544, where just the burgonet and existing buffe are shown.

The burgonet is accompanied by a matching shield constructed of two concentric plates. The base plate with the border has a hollow center, and the boss, or umbo, measuring 9<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches (25 cm) in diameter, is applied over it and attached with domed rivets. The umbo, masterfully chased, chiseled, and gilt overall, depicts a lion's head with ringlets on the forehead and a long wavy mane that radiates into a regularly spaced circle of overlapping locks on three layers. The relief of the lion's head measures about 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches (6.5 cm) in the center. The lion is depicted with a menacing expression, with drawn features, furrowed brows, its mouth closed but with the corners of the lips raised to reveal the teeth. The curious representation of the ears in the shape of twisted circles is noteworthy, as is the presence of dots on the muzzle suggesting the roots of its whiskers.

The underlying plate domes slightly toward the center, and its edge, like those of the burgonet and buffe, is turned



20, helmet



20, helmet without buffe



20, back of helmet

and embossed with interlacing ribbons; the center of each interlace is dot-punched, a motif absent from the border of the burgonet and buffe. The edge is bordered by an exquisitely worked band measuring  $2\frac{7}{8}$  inches (6.5–6.7 cm) wide that is minutely chased and chiseled with six equidistant medallions supported by griffins with tails that extend into foliate scrolls that are linked together by decorative rings. The medallions depict, alternately, the columns of Hercules with the device *PLVS VLTRA* on the water and surmounted by the imperial crown (the emperor's personal *impresa*); the double-headed and crowned imperial eagle with outstretched wings, flanked with the initials *KI* (*Karolus Imperator*); and the fire-steels and flint, with the cross of Saint Andrew and the same initials (emblems of Burgundy and of the order of the Golden Fleece). All these motifs are gilt and stand out from a background which, now only partially preserved, was originally blackened. The smooth center field between the border and the umbo, now polished bright, was also originally blackened (fig. 52). At the top of the smooth field, adjacent to the border, is the inscription in individually punched and formerly gilt letters *·IACOBVS ·PHILIPPVS ·NEGROLVS ·MEDIOLANENSIS ·FACIEBAT·* and, at the bottom, the date *M·D·XXX·III·* (the marks beginning and ending the two





20, helmet





20, shield

inscriptions are circles with lines through them, while the ones between the words are smaller, stylized flowers with six petals). A series of lining rivets encircles the shield's outer rim, with a second series in the polished field around the umbo; the shield's lining, now missing, was of leather.

The helmet and the shield have suffered from the effects of time and excessive cleaning. Both pieces have lost their blackened surfaces, which now appear white, and the embossed

edges of the burgonet and buffe have lost their gilding.

The creation of these pieces appears to have come about as a direct response to the fame of the curly-haired burgonet made for the duke of Urbino by Filippo Negroli in 1532 (cat. no. 18), about which Charles V had heard an enthusiastic report from the duke of Mantua in November of that same year (see "A History of the Negroli Family"). Francesco Maria della Rovere probably sent his helmet to the emperor,





20, detail of shield





20, signature on shield

a connoisseur of armor, soon thereafter, and the emperor's delight with it is evident in the subsequent placement of an order for another of the same type. For so exalted a customer, Filippo Negroli elaborated on and surpassed his earlier model, adding rich gilding and the imperial emblems and devices (the duke of Urbino's helmet is without personal insignia), and supplementing it with a matching shield. The bold modeling of the bowl exceeds that of the Vienna example, the whorls of hair covering the head are differenti-

ated and lively, the curls in front of each ear differ from one side to the other. The ears are exceptionally thick along the edges, as if chiseled from solid plate or applied separately, but they are made in one with the cheekpieces. The powerful relief of the bearded buffe, which is drawn out into two spiraling points, is a virtuoso demonstration of Filippo's mastery. The relief along the edges of the plates is also noteworthy for its delicacy and precision and the desire to give maximum volume to every motif.

The helmet and shield obviously form a set that, in the absence of earlier datable examples, serves as the precursor of the parade ensembles *all'antica*, made up solely of a burgonet and shield, which are frequently encountered from the second half of the century. In this burgonet and shield Filippo Negroli created a minimal garniture, fitted with a partially interchangeable helmet, which could be worn with or without the buffe. If worn without, the face was left free and Charles V's blond beard blended in with the gilt curls on the burgonet. If the helmet was worn with the buffe, the face was mostly covered and the true beard hidden beneath a gilt one inspired from antiquity. With these pieces, the emperor presented himself with the idealized features of a classical hero, the lion on the shield emblematic of the virtues of strength, courage, and magnanimity, with the presence of the Golden Fleece explicitly identifying him as grand master of that prestigious chivalric order and implicitly designating him as a new Aeneas. The brilliant coloring of the helmet and its naturalism evoke the equally splendid parade pieces fashioned by armorers of the ancient world, which included remarkably similar examples with curly hair and beards (cat. nos. 4, 5).



Fig. 52. Watercolor drawing of shield, *Inventario Iluminado*, ca. 1544. Real Armería, Madrid (N 18)

The Madrid set is represented in the *Inventario Iluminado*, but on different pages: the shield is reproduced on a page with other shields (fig. 52), while the burgonet and buffe are on a page together with the Palm Branch Garniture (fig. 71). The original coloring of the pieces can be judged from these illustrations.

The pieces are also identifiable in the *Relación de Valladolid* and in the inventory of the Real Armería of 1594:

Another burgonet with rounded skull in the manner of a golden fleece / A buffe like a gilt beard . . . A shield, the field black and in the center a gilt lion's head, lined with leather.<sup>1</sup>

A shield with a gilt lion's face / A morion with gilt curls, with a face on the buffe.<sup>2</sup>

In light of the apparent popularity of these anthropomorphic helmets, of which there are at least four known examples (cat. nos. 18, 21, 22, in addition to the one under discussion), it is worth noting that at least two others are recorded as having possessed beards. One formerly belonged to the Gonzaga dukes of Mantua, and is described in the inventory of 1604 as "a Moor's head of iron, with the hair and beard gilt."<sup>3</sup> The other, mentioned in the 1630 inventory of the armory of the dukes of Urbino, was described as "a sallet with beard worked in the middle and at the top like a cap of hair with two roses, one on either side, with brass rivets."<sup>4</sup> Both examples may have been Negroli workshop variants of the emperor's helmet and buffe.

The signed and dated helmet and shield in Madrid provide important evidence in the study of the Negroli armor, as one finds specific characteristics of their decoration reproduced on other works attributed to Filippo. Most important, the treatment of the lion's mane and the hair and beard on

the helmet recall the locks on the burgonet and pauldrons of the so-called Fame Armor (cat. no. 23), which is unsigned. Furthermore, the distinctive raised ringlets on the beard are also found on the mustaches of the mask decorating the peak of the della Rovere burgonet (cat. no. 29), whose buffe is signed by Filippo Negroli and dated 1538. The die-punched inscriptions found on the helmet and shield and on the helmet of 1532 (cat. no. 18), the individually struck letters measuring only 2 millimeters high, are not encountered again in the Negroli oeuvre, where the armorer's signature is rendered instead in gold damascene.

1. "Otra çelada morrion con una cabeça redonda a manera de vellocino dorado / Un barbote como una barba dorada . . . Una rodela el campo negro y en al mitad una cabeça de leon dorado guarnecida de cuero." *Relación de Valladolid*, ca. 1558, fols. vr and xir.
2. "Una Rodela con Un Rostro de leon dorado / Un Morrion con su crespo dorado, con Un rrostro en el barbote." Inventory of the Real Armería, 1594, fol. 41v.
3. "Una testa di ferro d'un moro ed li capelli, e barba dorati." Mann 1939, pp. 324–25, no. 23.
4. "Una celata con barba lavorata per il mezzo et à cima come una piega di capello con due rose una per parte con brocche d'ottone." ASF, Urbino, Classe III, Filza XV, fol. 307v.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Abadía 1793, pp. 3, 57–58; Jubinal and Sensi 1839, vol. 1, p. 23, pl. 24, vol. 2, p. 23, pl. 30, supp., p. 27, pl. 27; Martínez del Romero 1849, pp. 39, 156–57, nos. 990, 2316; Boeheim 1885, pp. 191–92; Angelucci 1886b, p. 159; Boeheim 1889, p. 393; Boeheim 1897, pp. 155–56; Valencia de Don Juan 1898, pp. 133–35, pl. xviii; Calvert 1907, p. 106, pls. 30, 147; Laking 1920–22, vol. 4, pp. 145, 221, figs. 1230A, 1297; Cripps-Day 1956, p. 86; Thomas and Gamber 1958, pp. 760, 763, figs. pp. 772, 775; Boccia and Coelho 1967, pp. 321–23, 328–30, figs. 249–52, 255; Blair 1974, pp. 22–25; Eisler 1983, p. 103, figs. 13, 14; Scalini 1987, pp. 13–14, 37, figs. 3, 3 bis, 6; Godoy 1989, p. 195, fig. p. 190; New York 1991, pp. 144–48, no. 22; Barcelona and Madrid 1992, pp. 152–55; Boccia 1993, pp. 10–12; Brussels 1994, pp. 168–71.

## BURGONET

Filippo Negroli

Milan, ca. 1532–35

Steel, brass, and leather

Wt. 2 lb. 2 oz. (967 g)

Ex coll.: Eugène Piot, Paris (sold, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, May 21–24, 1890, lot 282); Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, duc de Dino, Paris The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Rogers Fund, 1904 (04.3.202)

The bowl is embossed in imitation of a human head, the face is left open, and the hair is arranged in soft curls reaching from the brow to the nape of the neck and down the sides, around and in front of the ears on the cheekpieces. Encircling the hair is a wreath of oak branches, their ends crossed and tied at the back, the leaves interspersed with acorns. The rear edge of the burgonet has a narrow flange with rivet holes at either side for the attachment of the now-missing collar plates. A modern half-round border filed with diagonal lines, like roping, is riveted at the front edge of the bowl, above which are lining holes, three filled with modern steel rivets. The cheekpieces, held to the bowl by modern iron hinges, consist of two plates each. The larger, upper one is embossed with a naturalistic human ear and with the bulge of the rear edge of the jawbone in front of it. The lower plate is attached to the upper with leather and has at its bottom a modern leather loop through which the cheekpieces could be tied beneath the chin. The edges of the cheekpieces have applied modern borders matching that of the brow.

The condition of the burgonet merits attention, as it affects our appreciation and understanding of it. The piece is heavily corroded, so the metal is now very thin and has numerous rust holes, particularly in the depths of the curls. There are several brazed repairs, especially around the ears, and a strip of modern metal has been riveted on along the back edge of the right cheekpiece. The modern borders at the brow and the cheekpieces presumably were added by a nineteenth-century restorer to mask the damage to the edges, which have been trimmed. The oak branches were described by de Cosson (1901) as gilt, but Grancsay (1921) indicated that the color was modern and he apparently had it removed, as there are no remaining traces of gold.

The irregular stepped outline of the cheekpieces where they fit into the sides of the bowl is unlike any other sixteenth-century helmet. The walls of the bowl around the cheeks and the metal of the cheekpieces themselves appear to be the same, which suggests that the cheeks were originally made in one with the bowl but were cut out for some reason and reattached with modern hinges. If this is the case,

then the helmet may have looked something like a Greek bronze helmet of Illyrian type, examples of which may have been known in Renaissance Italy.

Despite its corroded and altered condition, this helmet still displays a remarkably lively and free quality of embossing. The curls of the hair are soft and never repetitive in design, and the oak wreath is equally naturalistic, with the veins of the leaves subtly rendered and the cups of the acorns dot-punched in a matte finish to contrast the smooth surface of the nut. The leaves overlap and stand apart from one another, unlike the flat leaves on the similar helmet in Saint Petersburg (cat. no. 22). The ears are modeled in very high relief, which explains the numerous filled breaks evident on the inside; the bulge of the jaw below the ears is a subtle anatomical detail.

The quality of the embossing and the general similarities with the curly-haired burgonets by Filippo Negroli in Vienna and Madrid (cat. nos. 18, 20) suggest that this helmet, too, is probably by Filippo. De Cosson (1901) observed these similarities, but it was Laking (1920–22), followed by Grancsay (1921), who first made the attribution to the Negroli workshop; Thomas and Gamber (1958) took the next step, attributing it to specifically Filippo, and other scholars have followed suit. On the other hand, whereas the Vienna and Madrid helmets are very clearly by the same hand, with marked resemblance in the form and pattern of the curls of hair and projecting peak over the brow, the Metropolitan Museum's example is somewhat different. The skull is higher and the hair less tightly curled, the individual strands of hair less precisely defined.<sup>1</sup> This softness and lack of detail may, however, be the result of the heavy corrosion.

The presence of the oak-branch garland has generated considerable speculation that the helmet belonged to a member of the della Rovere family, for whom the oak tree (*rovere* in Italian) was a heraldic cognizance.<sup>2</sup> If this is the case, the helmet presumably would have been made for Francesco Maria della Rovere (1490–1538), third duke of Urbino, or for his son and successor, Guidobaldo (1514–1574); either is a possibility if the helmet is contemporary with, or perhaps slightly later than, the burgonets of 1532 (in Vienna)







and 1533 (in Madrid). A golden oak wreath encircles the sallet of the young Francesco Maria in his portrait, sometimes attributed to Giorgione, in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, and oak leaves and acorns were frequently employed in the decoration of armor of the dukes of Urbino.<sup>3</sup> The absence of oak on the burgonet associated with the cuirass of Francesco Maria della Rovere in Vienna (cat. nos. 18, 19) is noted, but the fact that the helmet and cuirass are mismatched need not be taken as evidence that the Metropolitan Museum's helmet more properly belongs to the cuirass. The lack of original borders and rear neck lames on the Metropolitan's helmet unfortunately makes it impossible to link it stylistically with the cuirass or any other known armor.<sup>4</sup>

In his treatise on Roman armament (cat. no. 16), Guillaume Du Choul observed that a *corona civica*, crown of oak (rather than laurel), was offered to the emperor by the senate and people of Rome,<sup>5</sup> so that oak need not be interpreted as referring exclusively to the della Rovere. However, in the sixteenth century the oak was widely recognized as belonging to the della Rovere family, one that included important and powerful soldiers and churchmen, and it is unlikely that a crown of oak would have been used by anyone else. If this is indeed the case, and the Metropolitan Museum's helmet is a della Rovere piece, then the dukes of Urbino must have possessed a number of helmets of this anthropomorphic type: the Metropolitan's and that in the Hermitage (cat. no. 20), the one now in Vienna (cat. no. 18), and a fourth with a beard recorded in the 1630 inventory of the ducal armory, already mentioned (see cat. nos. 18, 20). The inventory description makes no reference to oak branches, which are frequently noted on other pieces in the armory, so it is possible that the Metropolitan Museum's helmet is not that one.

The provenance of this helmet has long been confused with that of the Fortuny helmet now in the Hermitage (cat. no. 22). In fact, the earliest record of it dates from the sale of the Piot collection in 1890.

1. Boccia and Coelho (1967) also observed these differences, theorizing that the soft modeling may suggest the helmet was intended to be painted. There are no traces of paint on the helmet today and no surviving examples of painted steel helmets of this type to give credence to that theory. The same authors also suggested that the soft modeling was perhaps an indication of a slightly earlier date than the helmets of 1532 and 1533, but this is purely hypothetical.
2. This suggestion was first made by Boccia and Coelho (1967).
3. The inventory made of the armory of the dukes of Urbino in 1630 included, for example, "a simple morion with oak leaves on the cheekpieces, lined with black silk" (*Un Morione Semplice con foglie di Cerqua all'orecchie foderato di raso nero*), and "a morion with chiseled crest and oak leaves behind, with embossed cheek-

pieces, lined with black silk" (*Un Morione con cresta intagliata et foglie di Cerqua dietro con orecchioni sbugiati foderato di raso nero*); ASF, Urbino, Classe III, Filza XV, fols. 344r and 344v, respectively. Although there is no mention of curly hair, this last could, of course, refer to either cat. no. 21 or cat. no. 22.

4. Mario Scalini (1987) has speculated that the helmet was possibly a gift of Charles V to Guidobaldo II della Rovere in 1538, the year he succeeded as duke, and that it formed part of the Negroli armor of 1538, of which the Bargello peak, Leeds buffe, and Wallace Collection cheekpieces (cat. no. 29) are the only known elements. As there are no stylistic or iconographic parallels between the two helmets and no recorded gift of this sort, this theory must be discarded.
5. Guillaume Du Choul, *Discours sur la castrametation et discipline militaire des Romains* (Lyon: Guillaume Rouillé, 1555), pp. 34v–35r (see also cat. no. 16).

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Piot sale 1890, lot 282; de Cosson 1901, no. B.26, pl. 9; Dean 1905, p. 113, fig. 49H; Laking 1920–22, vol. 4, pp. 142–45, fig. 1229; Grancsay 1921, pp. 236–37, fig. 4; Cripps-Day 1925, p. 25; Los Angeles 1953, no. 26; Thomas and Gamber 1958, p. 763; Aroldi 1961, fig. 167; Boccia and Coelho 1967, p. 329; Scalini 1987, pp. 14, 42, fig. 6; Boccia 1993, p. 12.

22.

## BURGONET

After Filippo Negroli (?)

Milan, after 1532

Steel and gold

Wt. 3 lb. 8 oz. (1,600 g)

Ex coll.: Mariano Fortuny Marsal, 1871 (sold, Paris, April 30, 1875, lot 20); A. P. Basilewsky; acquired by Czar Alexander III of Russia for the Hermitage, 1884

The State Hermitage, Saint Petersburg (3.O. 3414)

Forged in one piece, the bowl is embossed in imitation of a human head of hair, the wavy locks reaching from the nape to the forehead, where they arch over the brow and recede at the sides. Encircling the hair is an embossed and gilt oak wreath formed of two branches crossed and laced together at the back and overlapping at the front to create a slight projection; the gilding is modern. The brow area below the hair is left smooth, the front edges cut in a shallow arch over the face, with an engraved line parallel to the edge. The brow is pierced with blind lining rivets and, below, three holes across the front edge. At the back of the bowl is a series of vertically aligned holes, some of which were presumably for the attachment of a plume tube. Lining rivets also encircle the back, and there are two holes on the flange for the



22



22

attachment of the now-missing collar plates. Hinged to the sides of the bowl are large, one-piece cheekpieces embossed with naturalistic human ears and with the bulging line of the jaw, and engraved with a line parallel to the front edge; the cheekpieces and their hinges are modern. The bowl is deeply corroded and pierced overall with tiny holes; the flange at the nape is split on the right side and has an old riveted-on iron patch; a similar repair is at the front of the oak wreath.

Despite the obvious similarities among the four helmets embossed with curly hair (cat. nos. 18, 20–22), the Hermitage example stands apart in design and execution and seems quite distant from the work of Filippo Negroli. The rendering of the hair, which is arranged in wavy locks rather than twisted curls, is flatter and less exuberantly worked than the other three. The oak wreath is also flatter and is more mechanically worked than that on the Metropolitan Museum's example, the leaves lacking variation and articulation of their surface. The treatment of the front of the bowl is awkward, with the area of smooth metal below the hair looking unfinished, an impression reinforced by the lack of a turn or some other finish to the edge of the bowl around the face opening. The helmet thus would seem to be a variant on a design apparently developed by the Negroli, but in this case carried out by another, somewhat less talented armorer. The Hermitage helmet is the largest of the

four, having considerably more volume than the examples in Vienna, Madrid, and New York.

Apparently unknown to most scholars, this burgonet has seldom been mentioned in the literature on armor *all'antica*. It appears to have been purchased by the Spanish painter Mariano Fortuny Marsal (1838–1874) in Granada, Spain, in the summer of 1871. He wrote to his pupil and friend the painter Attilio Simonetti from Granada in August of that year, "I have found a beautiful helmet worthy of Charles V, of the most beautiful work of chiseling and which, without any doubt, must be Milanese or Florentine."<sup>1</sup> As was his custom, Fortuny sent several sketches of his new acquisition to friends, and two published drawings of the helmet show it without cheekpieces.<sup>2</sup> A photograph of the helmet without cheekpieces is also preserved among the papers of C. A. de Cosson in the library of the Royal Armouries at Leeds.<sup>3</sup> These documents confirm what an examination of the piece makes clear, that the cheekpieces are modern replacements. The cleaning and restoration of the helmet was apparently done in Paris under the direction of Édouard de Beaumont, whom Fortuny thanked for this work in a letter of November 14, 1873.<sup>4</sup> It was presumably at that time that the oak wreath was gilded (the gilding covers the corrosion, a sure sign that it is a later addition). The cheekpieces were apparently modeled on those of the Metropolitan

Museum's example (cat. no. 21), which may have been in the Piot collection in Paris at the time. The restored helmet figures several times in photographs taken in Fortuny's studio in Rome about 1874.<sup>5</sup> The helmet was acquired at the Fortuny sale in 1875 by the distinguished Russian collector of medieval and Renaissance works of art Alexander Petrovich Basilevsky, who exhibited it at the Exposition Universelle in Paris in 1878. The entire Basilevsky collection was acquired for the Hermitage by Czar Alexander III in 1884.<sup>6</sup>

As noted in catalogue number 21, the presence of the oak leaf and acorn wreath is strong evidence that this helmet, too, belonged to either Francesco Maria I or Guidobaldo II della Rovere.

1. "J'ai trouvé un beau casque digne de Charles V, du plus beau travail de ciselure, et qui, sans aucun doute, doit être milanais ou florentin"; cited in Fol 1875, p. 358. Writing to his friend Baron Davillier on November 27, 1871, Fortuny sent a sketch of his new acquisition, noting that "le croquis de ce casque vous plaira: il est très-simple, mais d'une bonne forme et merveilleusement ciselé: j'aurai du plaisir à la montrer à de Beaumont"; cited in Davillier 1875, p. 70. The de Beaumont referred to was the painter, lithographer, and arms connoisseur Charles-Édouard de Beaumont (1812–1888), a close friend of Fortuny's, who ultimately catalogued Fortuny's arms for sale.
2. One sketch, which included the helmet, the famous Fortuny vase, and a dagger, was reproduced in Fol 1875, p. 357, and again in Darcel 1885, p. 54. Another view of the helmet, apparently sent to Baron Davillier, was reproduced in Grancsay 1921, p. 236. The artist's sketch of a helmet, possibly this one, was included in the Fortuny sale of 1875, lot 152.
3. The photograph is loose within a scrapbook and is labeled on the reverse "Fortuny?" The richly woven textile hanging behind the helmet matches exactly one seen in a photograph of Fortuny's Roman atelier published in Ciervo 1921, pl. 9.
4. Quoted in Davillier 1875, p. 102: "Mille choses à l'ami Beaumont; dites-lui que j'ai enfin reçu le casque, et que le remercie mille fois pour la peine qu'il a prise de le nettoyer." Fortuny himself often repaired the antique arms he collected, and he also seems to have created some pastiches, or fakes, of medieval arms (for which, see Grancsay 1921), but he appears from the above quotation to have left the restoration of this helmet in professional hands.
5. See especially Ciervo 1921, pls. 2, 3, 7, 8.
6. The helmet was mentioned only in passing in the last catalogue of the Hermitage armory by Lenz in 1908, p. 174. The Fortuny helmet was mentioned by Boenheim (1889, p. 382, n. 1), as was another, probably that now in the Metropolitan Museum (cat. no. 21), said to have recently been on the Paris art market.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Davillier 1875, pp. 70, 102; Fol 1875, pp. 357–58; Fortuny sale 1875, lot 20 (sold for F 10,000); de Beaumont 1878, p. 711; Darcel 1885, p. 50, ill. p. 54; Boenheim 1889, p. 382, n. 1; Lenz 1908, p. 174; Ciervo 1921, pls. 2, 3, 7, 8; Boccia 1993, p. 12.

23.

## ARMOR OF GUIDOBALDO II DELLA ROVERE, DUKE OF URBINO

Filippo Negroli  
Milan, ca. 1532–35

### a. Burgonet

Steel, gold, and textile  
Wt. 2 lb. 14 oz. (2,310 g)

Ex coll.: Armory of the dukes of Urbino (until 1631); Medici armory, Florence (until after 1780); Czar Nicholas I of Russia, Tsarskoye Selo, by 1828  
The State Hermitage, Saint Petersburg (3.O. 6159)

### b. Breastplate

Steel and gold  
Wt. 10 lb. 11 oz. (4,860 g)

Ex coll.: Armory of the dukes of Urbino (until 1631); Medici armory, Florence; Museo Nazionale del Bargello, from 1865  
Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence (M. 772)

### c. Pauldron for the left shoulder

Steel  
Wt. 1 lb. 7 oz. (655 g)

Ex coll.: Armory of the dukes of Urbino (until 1631); Medici armory, Florence; Museo Nazionale del Bargello, from 1865  
Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence (M. 778)

### d. Three lames for the left pauldron

Steel and gold  
Wt. 7 oz. (196 g)

Ex coll.: Armory of the dukes of Urbino (until 1631); Medici armory, Florence (until after 1780); Frederick Stibbert, Florence  
Museo Stibbert, Florence (2665)

### e. Pauldron for the right shoulder

Steel and gold  
Wt. 1 lb. 3 oz. (552 g)

Ex coll.: Armory of the dukes of Urbino (until 1631); Medici armory, Florence (until after 1780); Dr. Marco Guastalla, Florence (until 1862); William H. Riggs, Paris  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913 (14.25.714i)

Of the six identified pieces that belong to this dismembered armor, we have been very fortunate to be able to bring together the five most important ones in an effort to restore to memory one of the most striking and original "heroic" armors of the sixteenth century and one of Filippo Negroli's masterpieces.

The helmet bowl, forged in one piece, is embossed in high relief with a grotesque mask at the front, its pointed, rip-









23a



23a

pling snout forming the peak. The edges of the snout are turned under and boxed, and the underside is filled by a narrow plate with rippled surface and eight projecting teeth. The sides and back of the monster's head are embossed with flowing hair from which emerge ears and tightly coiled horns. Surmounting this monster and forming the helmet's comb is a crocodile-like creature with a long pointed face, a scaly body and tail, and four webbed feet. At the back of the bowl is a fragmentary mask with glaring eyes and furled brows in low relief; the lower portion of the face was formed by the nape plate, now missing. Hinged at the sides of the bowl are cheekpieces (left one modern) shaped as bat wings, with eyes between the ribs of the membranes, the front edges embossed with tufts of hair and ripples to suggest the monster's stretched-open mouth. The helmet's brownish black surfaces retain on the raised areas traces of gilding, which is heaviest on the hair, horns, and face of the crocodile, with lighter highlights on the face of the monster at the peak and on the raised edges. Long chin straps of red velvet, covered with small plates of dark steel chiseled with upward-overlapping scales, are riveted at the base of the cheekpieces.

The breastplate is formed of thick, heavy plate, with separate movable gussets at the armholes and two waist plates. The edge at the neck (the uppermost collar lame is missing) is embossed with a chain of intertwined knotty branches; from this is suspended a scroll-edged cartouche enclosing the representation of a river and bulrushes, with an inscription above: *NVLLA BIBAM LAETHES OBLIVIA FLVMINE IN IPSO*; the river and inscription were probably achieved by a combination of etching and chiseling. The remaining surface of the breastplate is embossed with a pair of confronted spiky batlike wings, the membranes with raised edges and ribs, overlapping scales, and eyes; the undecorated areas between the wings are given a matte finish by means of closely set crescent-shaped punch marks. Along the base of the breast is a row of upward-pointing leaves. The gussets, which are pressed outward by small U-shaped springs riveted on the inside, have boxed edges and matted surfaces. The waist plate terminates in the center with an outward-turned point and is embossed along the bottom edge with stylized leaves between raised bands; its surface is also matted. Riveted beneath this waist plate is a narrower plate embossed with rectangular panels, like pteruges, the grooves between each panel gilt. The breastplate's boxed edges and the edges, ribs, and eyes of the wings are also gilt.

The central plate of each pauldron is embossed to resemble a grotesque dolphinlike mask, with deeply furled brow and sunken eyes, rippled and pointed snout with open mouth and bared teeth, short pointed ears above and flame-like rippling hair at the back. The left pauldron is complete and consists of seven plates: the central plate and three nar-

row lames above it belong to the Bargello, whereas the three lames below the main plate, which are embossed to imitate overlapping rows of rectangular scales, are in the Museo Stibbert. A small plate with teeth riveted at the front of the dolphin's mouth is perhaps an old repair. The Bargello's pauldron was at one time overcleaned, with the loss of its original rivets, color, and gilding, but it has recently been recolored to match the breastplate. The right pauldron, in the Metropolitan Museum, consists only of the central plate and the adjacent lame above it but retains its original gilt-iron rivets and dark surface color, with traces of gilding along the edges, hair, and eyes. Of the lower three pauldron lames originally joined to it, the uppermost one (not exhibited) has recently returned to Florence from the Castel Sant'Angelo, Rome, where it had been on loan from the Bargello since 1929 (Beijing 1997).

The armor is one of the most original, finely crafted, and best documented of the sixteenth century and ranks as one of the masterpieces of Italian Renaissance metalwork. It is also the most enigmatic of harnesses, about which many questions remain concerning its authorship and date, its patron and the circumstances surrounding its commission, and the interpretation of its iconography.

The armor was very probably made for Guidobaldo II della Rovere (1514–1574), who succeeded his father as duke of Urbino in 1538.<sup>1</sup> It appears in a miniature of the duke that seems to have been copied after a portrait painted about 1570 (cat. no. 24). This portrait is the key document for identifying the harness's owner and also helps us to reconstruct the armor's original composition. In the miniature the burgonet is shown with a brow plate, now missing, and cheekpieces with three or four small tapering lames at the bottom, also lost, to which were attached dark fabric-covered chin straps; the present scale-covered straps obviously must be later additions. In the painting the breastplate has the now-missing collar plate, which was embossed with flat petals like those around the edge of the upper waist plate, and also has plate tassets with gilt vertical channels like those on the surviving under waist plate, this decoration meant to suggest overlapping pteruges. The lost backplate can be seen where it was hinged at the shoulders to the breastplate; there is a hinged spring pin at the shoulder by which the pauldron was attached. The original dark surfaces of the plates and gold highlighting are accurately rendered in this very precise miniature.

Two other works shed light on the armor's original appearance. The first is a sixteenth-century Venetian drawing (cat. no. 25) showing the profile head of a bearded warrior wearing the burgonet. Here the helmet is seen with the complete cheekpieces and the now-missing nape plate shaped as a mask with down-turned beak. The other important icono-





graphic source is Titian's Roman Emperors, a series of eleven canvases painted about 1536–38 for Federico II Gonzaga, duke of Mantua, for which he utilized Guidobaldo's armor for the costume in *Claudius* (cat. no. 26). Although Titian's painted series no longer survives, the Roman Emperors are recorded in a number of sixteenth-century copies that show Claudius wearing the Bargello breastplate and left pauldron, with complete vambraces and short-cuffed gauntlets of alternating rows of mail and round-headed scales, a construction identical to the left arm formerly in Berlin (fig. 49) which matched the Vienna armor made for his father. The vambraces and gauntlets for Guidobaldo's armor seem not to have survived, but the scales now fitted to the chin straps on the burgonet, as well as a second pair of chin straps in the Hermitage (fig. 50), are either cut-up remnants of these arms or are portions of the lost right vambrace for Francesco Maria's armor. Claudius's/ Guidobaldo's vambraces were fitted with large plate cutters (elbow defenses) embossed with a grotesque mask and bat wings, which appear to be the earliest known examples of mask-shaped cutters, anticipating those of the Masks Garniture of 1539 (cat. no. 30). The tassets worn in *Claudius* are like those in Guidobaldo's portrait.

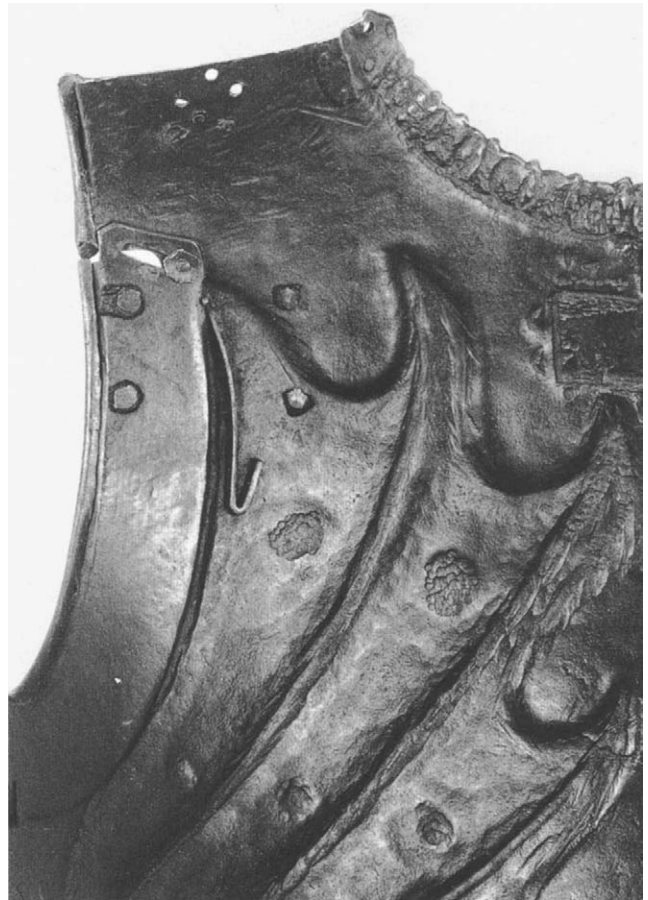
In addition to the visual evidence, inventory descriptions and other documentary sources provide a fuller account of this armor. The earliest complete inventory of the della Rovere armory is that of 1630, when it was being packed in Urbino for shipment to Florence as part of the inheritance of Vittoria della Rovere, the infant daughter of the last duke, who was betrothed to Ferdinando II de' Medici, grand duke of Tuscany. In that list, the armor is described as: "An armor of his Most Serene Lord Duke Francesco Maria I made of scales and fish eyes, with a helmet in the manner of an eagle with a serpent on top, with its lower legs, without backplate but with an X [a cross strap?], with shoes, saber, and mace, which Charles V had asked to have a similar one made, with a sword."<sup>2</sup> From this it is clear that the armor possessed lower legs and shoes, probably of *all'antica* type like those on Bartolomeo Campi's armor of 1546 (cat. no. 54), and had accompanying weapons that may have been associated with its display. In the 1630 Urbino inventory, the owners of the more important items are often identified, but the compilers frequently confused the generations of Montefeltro–della Rovere dukes, so the claim that this armor was Francesco Maria's must be treated with caution. The reference to Charles V is puzzling, but it may reflect an oral tradition still current in the della Rovere court that Charles V once so admired one of Francesco Maria's armors that he had it copied. The apparent truth of this is borne out by the emperor's helmet of 1533 (cat. no. 20), which imitates the duke of Urbino's example of 1532 (cat. no. 18).

With the transfer of the della Rovere armory to Florence in



23b, detail

1631, a new inventory of the items was drawn up by the custodians of the Medici Guardaroba. This inventory differs from the previous one in that the entries are much shorter and the oral traditions associated with the pieces in Urbino are no longer recorded. Guidobaldo's armor was described that year as: "A black armor without backplate, chiseled with bat wings and masks of diverse types, in six pieces, that is, breastplate, arms, helmet, and morion."<sup>3</sup> Only five pieces (the arms count-

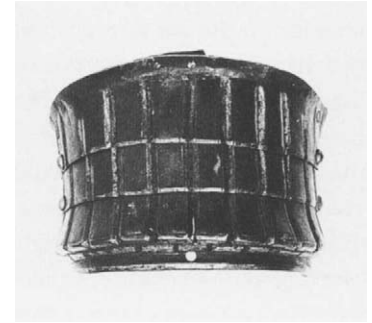


23b, detail of inside





23b, c, e



23d

ing as two) are specifically mentioned, a second helmet among them. Scalini (1987) considered the sixth piece to be a detached buffe for the “morion” (burgonet), but this remains highly speculative. Judging from this brief, and apparently not very accurate, description, the lower leg armor and weapons formerly associated with the harness in Urbino had become separated following its installation in Florence.

In the inventory of 1639–40, the “bat-wing” armor was given a more colorful description by the custodian of the Guardaroba, Giuseppe Petrini: “A black armor said to be of Hannibal of Carthage, completely worked with bat wings, with eyes, and with scales, with touches of gold in parts, without a backplate, with a helmet with a figure of a hermaphrodite, with ear pieces in the manner of bat wings.”<sup>4</sup> In 1642 Giuseppe’s nephew Antonio Petrini wrote a treatise on arms, *Arte fabrile*, in which he described several masterpieces of ironwork in the Medici collections, including among them this armor:

a helmet with its breastplate and pauldrons said to have been Hannibal’s of Carthage, where it [the helmet] was worked in such a way with a mask with two coiled horns

that spring out with such a mastery that many have remained astonished when considering how it was possible to chisel and emboss the metal so completely, as to cast it would have been impossible to do, as also the breast in the form of two dragon wings full of eyes, and similarly the pauldrons figured as two lions’ heads; that armor was accordingly made, as Felitiano the Macedonian affirms, by Piripe, a most excellent sculptor who was then called Pifanio Tacito, who was a hero in this art.<sup>5</sup>

Petrini’s apocryphal identification of this armor with Hannibal may have been inspired by the tradition that the Urbino armory contained “the helmet of Hasdrubal [Hannibal’s brother-in-law] of Carthage, found in his tomb.”<sup>6</sup> The Florentine inventories of the combined Medici and della Rovere armories regularly mention this helmet, identified variously as Hasdrubal’s or Hannibal’s, the descriptions making it clear that it was in fact an oriental piece inscribed in Arabic!<sup>7</sup> Petrini seems to have adopted this bizarre-looking armor as another of Hannibal’s relics, probably with the intention of sensationalizing the armory for the increasing number of distinguished tourists who visited the Medici collections.

Subsequent inventories, beginning with that of 1651 and ending with the one of 1776, continued to refer to the armor as Hannibal's but listed the number of pieces as eight: breastplate, arms, gauntlets, tassets, and a helmet "chiseled with masks, with two wings at the sides, and a crocodile above in low relief."<sup>8</sup> Between 1773 and 1776, the Medici armory was dispersed to make room for a reorganization of the Uffizi galleries. The majority of arms were sold at auction in Florence, those with precious metal or jewels having first been despoiled, although a select number were retained for the grand ducal collections because of their historic or artistic merit. "Hannibal's armor" was inventoried in 1776 among those items to be retained, and its continued presence was vouched for in 1780.<sup>9</sup> After that date many more items disappeared from the armory, portions of this harness among them. The helmet was an early acquisition made by Czar Nicholas I of Russia for his armory in Tsarskoye Selo and is recorded in a drawing of 1828 by the artist A. Rockstuhl.<sup>10</sup> The Metropolitan Museum's portion of the right pauldron remained in Florence until 1862, when it was acquired from the collector Marco Guastalla by William H. Riggs, who subsequently presented it to the Museum in 1913. The source of Frederick Stibbert's acquisition of the three pauldron lames is not recorded.

Two additional pieces of armor have been identified as belonging to Guidobaldo's armor, although neither convincingly matches it in the details of decoration and quality of workmanship. One is a detached two-part visor for a close helmet in the Wallace Collection, London (inv. no. A 205). First associated with Guidobaldo's armor by Mann (1943), the visor is embossed on the upper plate (the visor proper) with a scowling monster's face and on the lower plate (the upper bevor) with bat wings covered with eyes. Although these motifs specifically recall the decoration of Guidobaldo's harness, the visor's lightweight metal, soft-edged low-relief ornament, and roped edge do not correspond to it. A second detached helmet part, what appears to be a pivoting chin plate for a burgonet of hitherto unrecorded construction, was discovered by Scalini (1987) in the Bargello.<sup>11</sup> This small piece is much finer in quality than the visor in the Wallace Collection, and its precisely chiseled eyes correspond to those on the armor under discussion. Furthermore, the plate's dolphinlike mask at the front of the neck, with its chiseled eyes and rippling snout matted with closely set punch marks, echoes the pauldrons on Guidobaldo's armor, but its roped edges, extensive gilding, and straight, rather than crescent-shaped, matting are distinctly different. If the visor and chin plate belong to Guidobaldo's armor, which is highly unlikely, they were certainly not made at the same time, but they may have been made to supplement it. However, the presence of the roped edges, which are not



23e

found on the armor, and the absence of specific pictorial or written evidence for an addition to this well-documented harness argue against this interpretation. It seems safe to assume that these elements were made within the Negroli circle, possibly even for a second armor decorated with bat wings and eyes as a variation of Guidobaldo's. The visor is somewhat reminiscent of the Metropolitan Museum's close helmet with a monster's head on the visor (cat. no. 46), and its high, deeply furled brows recall the burgonet in the National Gallery in Washington (cat. no. 44), both attributed to Giovan Paolo, but an attribution of the Wallace Collection visor to that master is purely speculative.

In the absence of a signature, which may have been on the burgonet's lost browband, this harness has been attributed to several different armorers. Boenheim (1884), who first recognized the armor in the miniature portrait of Guidobaldo II della Rovere in Vienna (cat. no. 24), also correctly identified its original owner as the duke of Urbino, but he naively retained Petrini's attribution to Piripe, whom he considered a sixteenth-century Florentine. De Cosson (1914) recognized Boenheim's error and instead suggested that the maker was the Renaissance goldsmith and engineer Bartolomeo Campi of Pesaro, author of the famous Roman-style harness made for Guidobaldo II in 1546 (cat. no. 54). The Campi attribution was retained in the literature as late as 1962 (Mann). In the meantime Thomas and Gamber (1958) rejected Campi's authorship and ascribed the armor to Filippo Negroli based on its similarity of style and workmanship to the armor of Francesco Maria della Rovere in Vienna (cat. no. 19). The Negroli attribution has since gone unchallenged.

The attribution is supported in general by the novel design and superb craftsmanship that are so characteristic of this master and, more specifically, by certain telltale details common to this armor and armors signed by Filippo or securely ascribed to him. The chasing of the hair at the sides and back of the burgonet and on the pauldrons is identical to the hair at the back of Filippo's helmet of 1533 (cat. no. 20), and, as Thomas and Gamber noted, the color and matte surface of the plates, as well as the unusual mail-and-plate construction of the lost but documented arms, match the Vienna armor exactly. The eyes on the breastplate and on the wings of the helmet, distinguished by sharply chiseled outlines, pronounced notches on the inner corners, and pupils with engraved outlines and concave centers, recall those of the lion on the shield of 1533 (cat. no. 20) and of the face on the peak of 1538 (cat. no. 29). The narrow boxed turns at the edges are typical of Filippo's work, as are the decorative bracket-cut hinges and buckles. The small U-shaped gusset springs inside the breastplate, while not unique to Negroli armors, are also found on the Masks Garniture of 1539 (cat. no. 30) and on two slightly later armors attributed to Filippo or Francesco (cat. nos. 31, 38).

The workmanship displays an ambition, authority, and virtuoso technique that exceed anything else in Filippo's oeuvre. The plastic conception of the helmet, which is of very complex design and is rendered in exceptionally high relief, is unrivaled in the sixteenth century. The breastplate is unusually thick and heavy, the majority of its decoration chiseled out of the metal like relief sculpture rather than pushed up from below in the usual repoussé technique. Embossing always requires work on both sides of the plate, but the surface chiseling most often simply adds definition to the relief created from the hammering on the back. A comparison of the shallow recessed design on the interior surface with the high, crisply defined relief on the exterior leaves no doubt as to the considerable extent of surface chiseling that was required. Indeed, we know of no other example of embossed armor where so much of the relief is created by removing, rather than merely shaping, the metal. The precision and subtlety of the armorer's work is exemplified in the chiseling of the inscribed tablet at the neck, which is "hung" from a ribbon, one loop of which stands completely free from the surface.

As has already been observed, this armor compares most closely to the armor of Francesco Maria della Rovere, which probably dates to 1532–35, if not specifically 1532. The design of Guidobaldo's armor is more bizarre and "Mannerist" than any other Negroli armor but is closer in spirit to the expressive works of that decade, especially the helmet of 1538 (cat. no. 29), than to the cooler, more intellectual pieces dating from the 1540s. The technique is more painstakingly detailed than any other by Filippo; this too may be inter-

preted as an early, perhaps overly ambitious, effort that seems never to have been repeated. The armor can be dated with confidence before about 1536–38, when it was depicted in Titian's *Claudius* in his series of Roman Emperors.

Despite the innovative character of this armor, its fanciful, theatrical design seems to look back to an older, Quattrocento tradition of pageant armor made from textiles, papier-mâché, and metal appliqués. Although costumes of this type are no longer extant, they are represented both in secular painting, particularly on cassone panels depicting battles, tournaments, and civic pageants, and in religious art where classicizing costumes were used for historical figures. Common to these are open-faced burgonets, or sallets, that have sharply pointed peaks and wings at the sides, with cuirasses inspired by the antique that sometimes have wings or scales, and usually have mask-shaped pauldrons (see, for example, fig. 26). The elaborate fantasy of such costumes is exemplified by the so-called Alexander relief (cat. no. 10) and by the engraving of a warrior's head in profile (cat. no. 9), both late-fifteenth-century works. The helmet in the latter bears a remarkably close resemblance to Guidobaldo's, with a snouted monster at the front, a fish as a crest, wings at the sides, and a beaked mask at the rear. Winged helmets were commonplace fifteenth-century attributes of armor *all'antica*—Roman coins (fig. 18) having provided authoritative models for Renaissance antiquarians—but they are only infrequently encountered in the sixteenth century. Few helmets with wings survive, most of them dating from the first quarter of the sixteenth century, the majority made in Germany under the spell of Italy. After 1525–30, wings seem to disappear altogether from helmet design. The presence of wings on Guidobaldo's burgonet in the Hermitage reinforces the stylistic and documentary evidence that it is one of Filippo's early works.

The bizarre dragonlike form of this harness is unprecedented in the history of European armor. The armorer's point of departure appears to have been Roman parade armor, comprising a helmet, cuirass, and greaves, with the shoulders and thighs protected by pteruges. On the other hand, the profusion of grotesque bird and dolphin masks and the presence of bat wings and eyes are anticlassical and point to the imaginative interpretation of contemporary grotesque ornament. The meaning of the harness's very specific iconography remains elusive, however, but it probably has some literary reference. A number of specialists have pointed to *Orlando Furioso*, Ariosto's romantic tale of Carolingian chivalry, with its multitude of brave heroes, wily magicians, and fierce monsters, which was first published in 1516. Gille (in Gille and Rockstuhl 1835–53) likened the helmet in the Hermitage to the Orc, the sea monster

with an appetite for fair damsels (canto 10, lines 94, 100). Thomas and Gamber (1958) suggested that the armor might refer to the creature that Rinaldo, one of Charlemagne's paladins, encountered in the Ardennes forest: "a strange monster in the shape of a woman, her head possessed a thousand lidless eyes which she could never shut . . . and an equal profusion of ears; instead of hair she had a great tangle of snakes . . .; her tail was a large, savage snake which coiled and knotted itself about her torso" (canto 42, lines 46–47).<sup>12</sup> Scalini (in Florence 1988) likened the armor to the hard-tempered breastplate (*usbergo*) of the Saracen warrioress Marfisa, which was "magically wrought, smelted in the fires of Hades, and annealed in the waters of Avernus" (canto 19, line 84), whereas Boccia (1993; 1994) suggested that it might refer to the impenetrable armor of Rodomonte, the brave Moorish knight, which was made from the scaly hide of a dragon (canto 14, line 118; canto 18, lines 9, 12).

Perhaps the most intriguing interpretation of the armor's imagery was proposed by Scalini (1987), who identified the membranous batlike wings filled with eyes as an allusion to Fame, who the iconographers Cartari (1556) and Ripa (1607) described as a winged female covered with eyes, mouths, and ears. The source of this image, noted by Cartari, is Virgil, who described Fame, or Rumor, as "a vast, fearful monster, with a watchful eye miraculously set under every feather which grows on her, and for every one of them a tongue in a mouth which is loud of speech, and an ear ever alert" (*Aeneid* 4.181–83).<sup>13</sup> Following the late classical poet Claudian, Cartari distinguished not one Fame but two, one that announced the good and another who bore ill tidings, the latter with black wings like a bat. The cartouche at the top of Guidobaldo's breastplate further alludes to Fame within Ariosto's frame of reference. In canto 35, lines 11–16, the poet summoned up an image of the waters of Lethe, the river of oblivion, into which an old man (Time) drops plaques inscribed with the names of mortals, which sink to the bottom and are forgotten; only a few names are rescued by white swans and are taken to a hilltop shrine presided over by a nymph (Fame), where their immortality is assured.

If indeed the armor alludes to Fame, she seems a rather dark and morbid creature, so unlike the usual triumphant figure familiar in Renaissance art. In the absence of contemporary references to the circumstances that brought about the armor's creation and use, the interpretation of its iconography remains a subject for speculation. Nevertheless we can appreciate the harness as one of the most ambitious, imaginative, and superbly crafted examples ever made. It is without doubt the most theatrical of Renaissance armors, intended to impress an audience with its clever *invenzione* and awe-inspiring *terribilità*.

1. Scalini's (1987) suggestion that the armor was made for Francis I of France and was worn by him at the battle of Pavia (February 25, 1525) is not supported by historical facts or stylistic evidence and is conclusively disproved by the newly discovered documentary information concerning Filippo Negroli, who was born about 1510.
2. "Una Armatura del Ser<sup>mo</sup> Sig.<sup>r</sup> Duca Francesco Mario P<sup>o</sup> fatta à scaglie, e occhio di pescie con l'elmo à foggia d'Aquila con un serpa in cima, con i suoi gambali senza schiena ma con la Croce, con scarpe scimitarra, e mazza, la quale fù da Carlo quinto addi mandata per farne fare una simile, con la spada." ASF, Urbino, Classe III, Filza XV, fols. 269r–v.
3. "Una Armadura Nera senza stiena cesellata à alie di preristello, e maschere di diverse sorte in sei pezzi cioè petto braciali elmo, e morione." ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 513, fol. 52.
4. "Un Armatura nera dissano d'Anibale Cartaginese tr<sup>a</sup> lavorata à alie di pipistrello, a occhi, e à scagle tocco con oro in parte senza schiena, con elmo a figura del mofrodito, con orechioni a foggia di alie di pipistrello." ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 539, n.p.
5. "un elmo con il petto, e gli spallacci, il quale si dice esser stato d'Annibale Cartaginese ove era talmente lavorato con un Mascaronone con due corna avilicchiate, che sporgevano fuori con una tal Maestria, che molti nel considerare a tal opera sono restati attoniti, nel considerare come sia possibile a cisellare e sporgere il ferro totalmente, che a farlo di gietto sarebbe impossibile il farlo, come anche il petto forma due ali di drago piene d'occhi, e similmente li spallacci figurano due teste di Leone; la quale armatura fu fatta secondo, che afferma Felitiano Macedonio da Piripe scultore valentissimo il quale fu detto poi Pifanio Tacito, che fu in tal arte herroe." Antonio Petrini, *Arte fabrile ovvero armeria universale dove si contengano, tutte, le qualita, e natura del ferro con varie impronte che si trovano in diversi arme cosi antiche come moderne e vari segreti e tempere*, 1642, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence, MS Magliabechi XIX.16; reprinted in Gaibi 1962, p. 127.
6. "La celata d'Asdrubale Cartaginese trovato nel suo sepolcro," cited in the 1630 inventory of the Urbino armory. ASF, Urbino, Classe III, Filza XV, fol. 279r.
7. For example, in the inventory of 1747: "A burgonet or helmet of copper alloy, completely gilt, punched [with] Arabic words, with similar ear pieces, with a projection in the middle, which was Hannibal's of Carthage" (Un taschetto o elmo di metallo corinto tr<sup>o</sup> dorato fattovi di Bulino parole Arabe con orechioni sim<sup>i</sup> con risalto in mezzo, quale era d'Annibale Cartaginese). ASF, Guardaroba Medicea Appendice 60, fol. 93, no. 667.
8. The harness can be traced in the following inventories of the Medici armory in the Archivio di Stato, Florence: Guardaroba Medicea 633, inventory of 1650 (N.S. 1651), fol. 75v; Guardaroba Medicea 710, inventory of 1695, fol. 9, no. 45; Guardaroba Medicea 1091, inventory of 1696–97, fol. 119v, no. 2190; Guardaroba Medicea 1231<sup>bis</sup>, inventory of 1715, no. 2190; Guardaroba Medicea Appendice 60, inventory of 1746 (N.S. 1747), fol. 140, no. 960. Additional listings are found in inventories in the Archivio della Soprintendenza per i Beni Artistici e Storici, Florence, Uffizi library: MS 97, inventory of 1768, fol. 131, no. 1486, repeated in MS 103, an inventory of 1776 listing the arms retained for the royal collections following the dispersals of the previous years, n.p., no. 1486.
9. MS 103, cited in note 8, contains a note on the last page indicating that the items inventoried therein were present on March 21, 1780.
10. The drawing, now in the library of the State Hermitage, as kindly pointed out by Y. Miller and Y. Efimov, served as the model



for the lithographic illustration reproduced in Gille and Rockstuhl 1835–53, pl. 57.

11. The inventory number M. 1305, cited by Scalini (1987), is incorrect. This piece, which cannot be traced in the inventories of the Bargello, now bears a provisional number, M. 778 bis.
12. The passages quoted here are from Ludovico Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso*, trans. by Guido Waldman (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).
13. Virgil, *The Aeneid*, trans. by W. F. Jackson Knight (1956; rev. ed., London: Penguin Books, 1958), p. 102.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Gille and Rockstuhl 1835–53, pl. 57; Gille 1860, p. 39; Florence 1861, p. 51, no. 38 (?); Boehm 1884, p. 234; Lenz 1908, pp. 169–70, no. I. 362, pl. xvii; de Cosson 1914, pp. 387–88; Lenti 1917–18, vol. 2, p. 444, no. 2665; Laking 1920–22, vol. 3, p. 284, vol. 4, pp. 134–39, figs. 1221–23; Florence 1938, p. 109, no. 57; Mann 1943; Mann 1945, p. 37; Grancsay 1957, p. 5; Thomas and Gamber 1958, pp. 760, 763; Gaibi 1962, p. 127; Mann 1962, vol. 1, p. 11; Boccia and Coelho 1967, pp. 321, 327–28; Vienna 1970, p. 33; Florence 1971, p. 34; Rossi 1971, pls. v, vi; Boccia 1975, vol. 1, p. 79, no. 122, vol. 2, pl. 115; Boccia, Rossi, and Morin 1980, pp. 116–18, figs. 117–19; Florence 1980, pp. 122–23, no. 231; Norman 1986, pp. 75–76, nos. 206, 207; Scalini 1987, pp. 19–22, 41; Cracow and Florence 1988, pp. 13–14; Boccia 1993, p. 16; Boccia 1994, p. 58; Beijing 1997, pp. 113–14, no. 78.

24.

## GUIDOBALDO II DELLA ROVERE, DUKE OF URBINO

*Italian, ca. 1580*

*Oil on copper*

*5<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (13.5 x 10.5 cm)*

*Ex coll.: Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol, Schloss Ambras,*

*Innsbruck; acquired for the imperial collections, 1606*

*Gemäldegalerie, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (GG 5177)*

This postcard-size portrait, which is a copy of a lost painting, is the principal source for identifying the owner of Filippo Negroli's fantastic bat-wing (or Fame) armor (cat. no. 23) and, as discussed above, is also of crucial importance in documenting the armor's original appearance. The portrait shows Guidobaldo late in life, balding and with a closely clipped, pointed beard, a visage that differs markedly from earlier known portraits showing him with a fuller head of hair and a thick, rounded beard. The portrait, or rather its original, must have been painted after 1561, the year Guidobaldo received the Order of the Golden Fleece,<sup>1</sup> whose emblem hangs from a ribbon around his neck; it probably was executed about 1570, judging from the physi-

cal change over Guidobaldo's portrait of about 1560 in the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, Florida (Wethey 1969–75, vol. 2, p. 177, no. X-86).

The authors of this miniature and of the original canvas on which it is based are not known. The Vienna picture may derive from another version of this likeness of Guidobaldo that once belonged to the Albani family and which is known today only from a crude and muddled nineteenth-century engraving (Litta 1819–1923, vol. 9).<sup>2</sup> In the Albani portrait, the ledge and helmet at the left have been eliminated, and all of the armor, including the clearly discernible bat-wing breastplate, a confused rendering of a plumed helmet, and a scale or mail vambrace, are clustered at the right edge along with the two batons. The engraver almost certainly misunderstood or modified the painting he was reproducing, and it seems likely that the better-composed Vienna miniature more accurately represents the original composition.

Guidobaldo's portrait was modeled on Titian's famous portrait of his father in the Uffizi (fig. 78), particularly in the placement of the helmet at the upper left and the presence of the batons at the right. Guidobaldo's batons are fewer in number, consisting of only a plain wooden staff and one of silver with gilt moldings and heraldic escutcheons (illegible but undoubtedly denoting Venice) topped with the della Rovere acorn. Whereas Titian's commanding state portrait presents Francesco Maria dressed in armor and posed in an aggressive stance, here Guidobaldo is dressed in a civilian costume and stands in a subdued, pensive manner, his hands relaxed, the right one holding a glove and the left one resting on the sword hilt at his side. His advanced age and his contemplative pose contribute to the image of a man whose active career as condottiere was behind him but whose military profession and status are demonstrated by his armor, batons, and the Golden Fleece. The presence of the Negroli armor underscores its importance for Guidobaldo. He may have associated it with a critical moment in his early life, but unfortunately no documentation has been found to attach this armor to a specific date or event. If the iconography of the armor was indeed intended to refer to Fame, then its inclusion in this late portrait of the duke may have a more general meaning, symbolizing Guidobaldo's lifelong achievements, loyal service, and well-earned respect and renown.

The Vienna miniature is one of several portraits of the dukes of Urbino that, along with armors, were solicited in 1579–81 from the last duke of Urbino, Francesco Maria II della Rovere, by Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol for his Armory of Heroes at Schloss Ambras, near Innsbruck. Ferdinand was the first systematic collector of armor and sought to assemble at Ambras the harnesses and portraits of the most pow-



24

erful rulers and most famous warriors of his day. The dukes of Urbino enjoyed a prestigious international reputation as condottieri, and consequently Ferdinand requested mementos of each of them. The armors sent were disappointingly few, comprising only a helmet, said to have belonged to Federico da Montefeltro but which actually dates to the mid-sixteenth century (Schrenck and Thomas 1981, no. 23), and the composite armor of Francesco Maria della Rovere, catalogue numbers 18 and 19 in this exhibition. The portraits were more numerous, six in all, each painted in oil on copper according to the measurements specified by Ferdinand.<sup>3</sup> The Vienna miniature thus must date about 1580. The surviving correspondence concerning these gifts includes a letter from Ferdinand dated May 10, 1581, thanking the duke for “the portraits . . . which are infinitely dear to us.”<sup>4</sup>

1. In Bruges 1962, p. 41, no. 233, Guidobaldo is listed among the recipients elected to the order in 1559, but he seems to have

received it only in January of 1561 (ASF, Urbino, Classe I, Divisione B, Filza 10, fol. 82).

2. This may be the portrait of Guidobaldo wearing the Fleece (*Tosone*) recorded in the Pesaro Guardaroba inventory of 1623–24; see Sangiorgi 1976, p. 347, no. 335.
3. The Urbino collection also possessed a set of twelve miniature portraits of the notables of the Montefeltro–della Rovere line, including the six dukes. These portraits, painted in oil on copper and set into brass frames, are recorded in the Pesaro inventory of 1623–24 (Sangiorgi 1976, pp. 349–50). One of these, *Guidobaldo*, an exact replica of the Vienna miniature, appeared for sale at Christie’s, South Kensington, London, February 22, 1996, lot 269, ill.; the back of the frame was engraved in a banderole GVIDOBALDVVS / URB<sup>1</sup> / DVX V.
4. “li ritratti . . . li quali ci sono stati infinitamente cari.” ASF, Urbino, Classe I, Divisione G, Filza 252<sup>1</sup>, fol. 137r.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Primisser 1819, p. 134, no. 658; Litta 1819–1923, vol. 9, dispensa 147, n.p.; Boheim 1884, p. 234; Kenner 1896, pp. 272–73; Gronau 1933, pp. 492–93; Cripps-Day 1945b, (116), p. 22; Boccia and Coelho 1967, pp. 327–28, fig. 237; Boccia, Rossi, and Morin 1980, p. 116; Boccia 1993, pp. 10, 16; Calvino and Beaufort-Spontin 1994, p. 131.



25.  
**STUDY OF A BEARDED MAN  
WEARING A HELMET**

*Venetian school, probably mid-16th century*

*Black and white chalk on blue paper*

*10 1/4 x 8 1/2 in. (25.8 x 21.4 cm)*

*Ex coll.: Sir Bruce Ingram (until 1952); Carl Winter*

*Private collection*

This handsome drawing appears to derive from the circle of Titian, but specialists are undecided as to its author. In the context of this exhibition, however, its subject is of greater importance, for it very accurately records the helmet of Guidobaldo II della Rovere (cat. no. 23a) in its original state, with the nape plate and articulated chin straps still attached.

The purpose of the drawing is unknown, as it is not recognizable as a study for a history painting or portrait. What is certain is that the helmet was sketched directly from the object itself, which suggests that the artist had access to the helmet in the della Rovere armory at Pesaro. Titian's name

immediately comes to mind, as he had made a careful study of Guidobaldo's armor for the painting *Claudius* (cat. no. 26) in his series of Roman Emperors executed between 1536 and 1540. The depiction of Guidobaldo's helmet in this drawing and the repetition of the profile format suggest that the two works might somehow be related. Titian was closely associated with the dukes of Urbino in the late 1530s, painting portraits of Francesco Maria della Rovere and his wife Eleonora Gonzaga (both in the Uffizi, Florence) in 1536–38 and one also of Guidobaldo (lost) in 1538, the year he succeeded his father. In 1538 Titian also delivered to Guidobaldo his famous *Venus of Urbino* (Uffizi) and was recorded at the ducal court at Pesaro in September (Gronau 1936, p. 93, no. xxxi). The painter made careful studies of the costumes of his sitters and is known to have had Francesco Maria's armor in his studio in Venice in 1536 to assure its accurate rendering in the Uffizi portrait (Gronau 1936, p. 92, no. xxx). It seems very likely, therefore, that he would have sketched the helmet at the same time he was recording the rest of Guidobaldo's armor for *Claudius*.





26, during restoration

The identification of the helmet as Guidobaldo's could suggest that the drawing is a portrait of that prince. Judging from Bronzino's youthful portrait of 1532 (Galleria Palatina, Florence), as well as later ones of the 1540s and 1550s, Guidobaldo had large eyes, a long straight nose, and a thick beard that covered much of his face, features very like those of his father. Unfortunately, the sketchy quality of the drawing, the shaded eyes, and the generalized character of the bearded face make a positive identification difficult. On the other hand, the drawing may not be a portrait after all, as the profile formula was rarely used in Venetian portraiture for living subjects, except under special circumstances, and more attention and care seem to have been devoted to delineation of the helmet than to the face. It may instead be a costume study, perhaps for a history painting, with the helmet worn by a bearded model.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Boccia and Coelho 1967, p. 244, ill.; Anonymous sale 1988, lot 61, ill.

26.

## EMPEROR CLAUDIUS

*Bernardino Campi, after Titian*

*Milan, ca. 1561*

*Oil on canvas*

*54 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 43 <sup>15</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in. (138 x 110 cm)*

*Ex coll.: Francesco Ferdinando d'Avalos, marchese di Pescara; d'Avalos family (until 1882)*

*Museo e Galleria Nazionale di Capodimonte, Naples (Q 1159)*

**C**laudius is one of eleven canvases representing the Roman Emperors that were copied by the Lombard painter Bernardino Campi (1522–1591) about 1561 after Titian's famous series painted for Federico II Gonzaga, duke of Mantua. Commissioned in 1536 and delivered in 1540, the Roman Emperors were intended for the Gabinetto dei Cesari, a small room within a suite of newly constructed apartments in the ducal palace, the decoration of which was supervised by Federico's court artist Giulio Romano.



Titian's eleven emperors (there was insufficient room to accommodate the usual twelve, as prescribed by Suetonius's *Lives of the Twelve Caesars*) occupied the upper portions of the room and were framed by stucco ornament; small narrative scenes illustrating the life of each emperor, painted by different artists, were inserted below the portraits. In composing the series Titian studied Roman busts and coins as models for the emperors' heads, whereas the costumes are less archaeologically exact and derived from a mixture of both classical and contemporary sources. It is extraordinary that for the armors in *Claudius* and *Caligula* (cat. no. 27) the painter seems to have utilized as his models two parade harnesses by Filippo Negroli, thereby providing arms historians with an invaluable contemporary record of their appearance. Titian's borrowings may be interpreted as high praise for Filippo's convincing evocation of the antique.

Titian's canvases unfortunately no longer survive. The Roman Emperors were sold by the duke of Mantua to Charles I of England in 1628, and in 1651, during the English civil wars, they were sold to the king of Spain; they perished in a fire in Madrid in 1734. Bernardino Campi's series in Naples, painted for his patron Francesco Ferdinando d'Avalos, marchese di Pescara and governor of Milan, is considered to be the earliest copy of the Titian Roman Emperors, having been ordered as the result of d'Avalos's visit to Mantua in 1561 to attend the wedding of Guglielmo Gonzaga (Lamo 1584, pp. 77–79). These canvases, which include a twelfth emperor copied after one by Giulio Romano, are in fact the first of five sets known to have been painted by Campi for different patrons, attesting to the widespread admiration for Titian's series and the popularity of imperial themes in the sixteenth century. The Naples series also precedes by several years the drawings by Ippolito Andreasi (ca. 1548–1608) made about 1568 (Kunstmuseum, Düsseldorf; reproduced in Verheyen 1967, figs. 15–25) at the behest of the imperial court antiquary Jacopo Strada, and the less accurate but influential engraved series by Aegidius Sadeler (1570–1629), published in Antwerp about 1593–94 and reissued about 1625 by his nephew Marcus. As the earliest, and probably the closest, copies after Titian's canvases, Campi's series provides the most useful information about the armors, and also conveys a sense of the original colors. In the *Claudius*, the armor of Guidobaldo II della Rovere (cat. no. 23) is rendered in faithful detail (with the exception of the jewel set into the breastplate at the top, replacing the inscribed tablet), and the painting is especially important for recording the construction of the vambraces with their mask couters, now lost.

Bernardino Campi will also be remembered in connec-

tion with the Negroli for having designed frescoes for several rooms in their house, apparently in the early 1550s. One room was decorated with scenes from the loves of Cupid and Psyche, another with the Labors of Hercules, painted ". . . with such design and liveliness that they are judged by connoisseurs as works of great esteem and excellence for their powerful movement and the beauty of color, as well as for the variety of dress."<sup>1</sup> The *casa dei Negroli* must have been a house of some size and pretension to warrant frescoed interior decoration, and the family of sufficient wealth and social standing to attract the talents of this popular and politically well-connected painter. The choice of classical subject matter for the frescoes seems especially appropriate for a family so indelibly associated with the fabrication of armor *all'antica*.

1. The entire passage reads: "In di fece depignere da Giuseppe da Meda sopra i suoi disegni nella casa dei Negroli intorno ad una sala gli amori di Cupido, & Psiche, & egli di propria mano sopra il camino depinse lo sposito loro, & in un camerino pur della medesima casa depinse le forze d'Hercole con tanto disegno, & vivacità, che sono giudicate da gli intendenti opere di molta stima, & bontà per la terribile moventia loro, & per la vaghezza del colorito, & insieme per la varietà de' panni." Lamo 1584, p. 51.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Lamo 1584, pp. 51, 77–79; Verheyen 1967; Wethey 1969–75, vol. 3, pp. 235–40; London 1981, pp. 190–91; Cremona 1985, pp. 154–56, 160; Naples 1994, p. 50.

## 27. EMPEROR CALIGULA

*Bernardino Campi, after Titian*

*Milan, ca. 1561*

*Oil on canvas*

*53 x 42 1/2 in. (134.5 x 108 cm)*

*Ex coll.: Francesco Ferdinando d'Avalos, marchese di Pescara; d'Avalos family (until 1882)*

*Museo e Galleria Nazionale di Capodimonte, Naples (Q 1155)*

The armor worn in Titian's *Caligula*, most accurately recorded today in a copy by Bernardino Campi of about 1561, is rendered with the same specificity of detail as the elaborate bat-wing armor appearing in *Claudius* from the same series of Roman Emperors (cat. no. 26). Titian seems again to have portrayed an existing harness, without doubt another by Filippo Negroli.

The armor in *Caligula* is of composite *alla romana* type, characterized by a classically inspired muscled cuirass and



27, before restoration

pauldrons with pteruges, but modernized to include a contemporary form of gorget and closed vambrace with small lames covering the inner bend of the elbow. The presence of the hook on the lower vambraces, which served to lock together the two hinged plates, convinces us that the painter copied his model with fidelity. The decoration of the harness was evidently embossed and gilt against a dark ground and included a twisted band, or guilloche, on the gorget; bands of foliate scrolls at the neck, armholes, wrists, and base of the breastplate; and acanthus branches covering the couters (elbow defenses) and ending in confronted scrolls on their heart-shaped wings. A Medusa head occupies the center of the band at the top of the breastplate, and below it hangs a cartouche enclosing two nude figures, one of them on horseback; the nipples are punctuated with gilt rosettes. The pauldrons appear to consist of three plates, the top one decorated with rosettes alternating with groups of oval channels, the caplike third plate embossed with foliage.

The novel construction and restrained but elegant decoration of this armor, hitherto overlooked and unlike any that survives today, can only have been made by one master: Filippo Negroli. The armor is a synthesis of different motifs found on several of Filippo's surviving armors, which does not exclude the possibility that Titian portrayed here an actual armor that no longer exists. The pauldrons *all'antica* are almost identical to those on the cuirass of Francesco Maria della Rovere in Vienna (cat. no. 19), including the topmost lame with its distinctive rosettes and oval channels. The pendent cartouche specifically recalls that on the breastplate of Guidobaldo's bat-wing armor (cat. no. 23b), whereas the foliate scrolls in the bands outlining the edges of the breastplate and lower vambraces look like those on the helmet and shield of Charles V, signed and dated by Filippo in 1533 (cat. no. 20). The couters, on the other hand, seem to anticipate the pair at Waddesdon Manor that belong to the Masks Garniture of 1539 (fig. 55); they utilize the same broad

acanthus leaf that extends over the elbow and issues two branches that encircle the edge of the wing and scroll inward to terminate in flowers, their stems joined by a bracket, or clip, at their closest point. In the *Inventario Iluminado*, the Waddesdon couters, which are of typical sixteenth-century Italian type, could be worn alternatively with shallow infantry pauldrons or with a pair of *all'antica* type with pteruges, thus demonstrating the same informal mix of modern and antique forms found in *Caligula's* armor.

If one accepts Filippo's authorship and a date prior to the completion of Titian's Roman Emperors (delivered in 1540), this armor would appear to be the earliest documented example of an actual Renaissance armor *alla romana*. It almost certainly predates the muscled cuirass in the Bargello (cat. no. 55) and anticipates by a number of years the more archaeologically exact harness made by Bartolomeo Campi in 1546 (cat. no. 54). It would also be the only known example of a Roman-style armor by Filippo Negrolì and demonstrates the seminal influence he had on Italian armor design. The owner of this armor is not known, but he was most likely an Italian nobleman, if not a prince, someone close enough to Titian to afford him access to the armor. It is tempting to think that the armor may have been made for Francesco Maria della Rovere or his son Guidobaldo, with whom Titian was so close during these years and whose armors he knew well; unfortunately the harness is not recorded in any della Rovere portraits and is not recognizable in the inventories of their armory. Federico II Gonzaga, duke of Mantua, who also possessed a renowned armory and was Titian's patron for the Roman Emperors series, is another likely candidate, but no armor matching that worn by *Caligula* can be identified in the inventories of the Gonzaga armory (Mann 1939, 1945).

BIBLIOGRAPHY: See cat. no. 26.

28.

## A LOST BURGONET BY FILIPPO NEGROLÌ

a. *A man in armor, probably Mars*

Peter Paul Rubens

Antwerp, 1620s

Oil on panel

32½ x 26 in. (82.6 x 66.1 cm)

Private collection

b. *Miscellanea eruditae antiquitatis*

Jacob Spon

Lyon, 1685

The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Thomas J. Watson Library,  
Rogers Fund, 1908

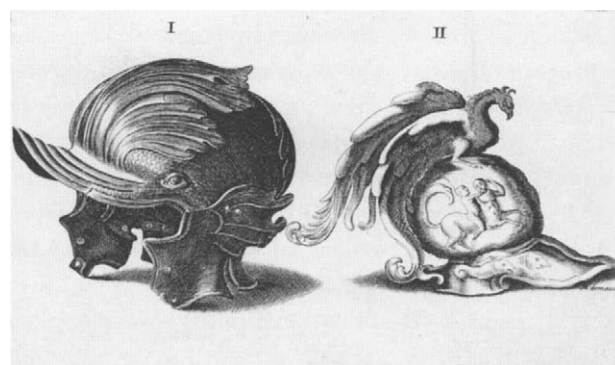
Scholars have debated the subject of this painting, which is usually interpreted either as an allegorical portrait of one of the artist's contemporaries in the guise of Mars or as a straightforward representation of the god of war, but they are in general agreement as to the masterful quality of this work by Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640) and its debt to Venetian painting, in particular Titian's series of Roman Emperors.<sup>1</sup> The portrait's broad format, the subject's twisted pose, and the glint of the armor are aspects of Titian's compositions that Rubens seems to have utilized to create this dynamic and commanding martial figure. Of particular interest is Rubens's meticulous observation of what is clearly a Renaissance burgonet *all'antica*, which contrasts with the generalized and inaccurate depiction of the armor at the shoulder. This dichotomy in the rendering of the armor can be explained by the fact that the shoulder defense derives from the artist's imagination, whereas the helmet was one that we know Rubens owned and therefore sketched directly. Until now, however, no one seems to have observed that the burgonet merits consideration as a lost work by Filippo Negrolì.

Martin Holmes (1964) first identified the burgonet as having belonged to Rubens, although he did not know the present painting. He observed instead that the helmet appeared in Rubens's *Bearing of the Cross* (Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels, inv. no. 374), painted in 1634–37, and that it was also reproduced in an engraving in *Miscellanea eruditae antiquitatis*, by Jacob Spon (1647–1685). There it was identified as an antique helmet in gilt steel "formerly preserved by the celebrated painter and antiquarian Peter Paul Rubens in his museum and was drawn by him for Peiresc from whose sketches it is reproduced here." This information is confirmed by a letter of March 16, 1636, in which Rubens wrote to his friend and fellow antiquary Nicolas Claude Fabri de Peiresc in Aix-en-Provence: "I



28a

enclose here the drawings of the ancient helmet, in the same size as the original, and also the bas relief of the Trojan War, drawn by one of my pupils from the Arundel marble itself.”<sup>22</sup> The last-named relief was the source for the second helmet illustrated in Spon’s engraving. In a letter, dated December 19, 1628, to Pierre Dupuy, keeper of the King’s Library in Paris, Peiresc referred to Rubens’s letter of August 24, 1628, now lost, in which the painter mentioned the helmet and enthusiastically described it (in Peiresc’s paraphrase) as “a complete antique helmet that was once gilt, which was one of the most beautiful pieces surviving from antiquity and one of the best worked. It is terribly rare, as in all my travels I have never seen another like it.”<sup>23</sup> Walter Liedtke, who



28b





Fig. 53. Jacob Adriaensz. Backer, *Allegory of the Republic of Holland*, ca. 1644–45. Oil on canvas, 64 x 45<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (162.5 x 115.8 cm). Jagdschloss Grunewald, Berlin (GK I 3073)

kindly assisted in the preparation of this catalogue entry, has suggested that this letter may imply that Rubens's acquisition of the helmet was a recent one and that the painting here identified as Mars may, as a result, date to the late 1620s rather than to about 1620, as most scholars assume.

Rubens's own careful delineations of the helmet and Spon's engraving based on the painter's sketch provide us with a remarkably detailed knowledge of the lost work. The helmet was embossed in the shape of a dolphin's head, the bowl drawn out at the front with a pointed, rippling snout, with eyes set behind it, and with a thick sheaf of ribbed acanthus leaves sweeping back across the forehead and over the comb. The hinged cheekpieces were irregularly shaped around the face and appear to have been made in one with a small wing. Spon's engraving accurately records such typical sixteenth-century constructional features as turned edges, lining rivets, and a leather or textile lining strap inside the bowl at the back. The abrupt end to the cheekpieces suggests that they were originally extended at the bottom by small tapering plates, now lost; by Rubens's time this deficiency had been remedied by the addition of a leather loop

riveted to the bottom of the right cheek, seen in Spon's engraving, which presumably was intended to receive a corresponding leather lace fitted to the left cheek, thus allowing the helmet to be tied securely beneath the chin. The surfaces were matted with tiny crescent-shaped punches and apparently still retained traces of gilding.

The conception and modeling of Rubens's helmet recall the bat-wing armor of Guidobaldo II della Rovere (cat. no. 23). The helmet's dolphin shape echoes the shape of the armor's pauldrons, and the winged cheekpieces match those on Guidobaldo's helmet; the dolphin's eye, with its elongated notch at the front corner, and the surface matting are also repeated on the armor. Rubens's helmet and Guidobaldo's armor were evidently contemporary works by the same master, Filippo Negroli. One cannot help but think that the armorer would have been very pleased and profoundly complimented to know that, a century after it was made, the burgonet was mistaken as ancient by so distinguished and informed a collector of antiquities as Peter Paul Rubens.

The helmet appears one last time, rather unexpectedly, in Jacob Adriaensz. Backer's *Allegory of the Republic of Holland*,<sup>4</sup> a work painted in Amsterdam about 1644–45 (fig. 53). At the bottom of the canvas, the helmet is upside down beneath the foot of the Bellona-like figure, its acanthus-crowned bowl and winged cheekpieces readily distinguishable. It is not clear how Rubens's helmet came to be known by that Dutch painter, but its presence in Backer's painting suggests that it had passed through the art market in Amsterdam following Rubens's death and the dispersal of his collection. The subsequent fate of the helmet is not known.

1. For a summary of the scholarly arguments as to the painting's subject, author, and date, as well as for its provenance and bibliography, see Peter C. Sutton, in Boston 1993, pp. 287–90.
2. Translation quoted from Ruth Saunders Magurn, ed., *The Letters of Peter Paul Rubens* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1955), p. 404; for the original text and commentary, see Max Rooses and Charles Ruelens, eds., *Correspondance de Rubens et documents épistolaires concernant sa vie et ses oeuvres* (Antwerp: J.-E. Buschmann, 1887–1909), vol. 6, pp. 153–58.
3. "un heaulme antique tout entier qui avoit esté autres foyz doré, qui estoit l'une des plus belles pièces qui soient demeurés de l'antiquité et des mieux élaborées. Bien est elle grandement rare, car en tous mes voyages, je n'en ay jamais veu aucun." Rooses and Ruelens, *Correspondance de Rubens*, vol. 5, pp. 13–14. In commenting on the helmet, the editors of Rubens's letters (vol. 6, p. 158) were mistaken in assuming that it had been purchased in Madrid, as Rubens had not yet left Antwerp for Spain when he told Peiresc of the helmet.
4. Werner Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler* (Landau: Edition PVA, 1983), vol. 1, p. 197, no. 29.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: (cat. no. 28a) Boston 1993, pp. 287–90; (cat. no. 28b) Holmes 1964.

## ELEMENTS OF A BURGONET WITH BUFFE OF FRANCESCO MARIA I OR GUIDOBALDO II DELLA ROVERE

*Filippo Negroli and his brothers*

*Milan, dated 1538*

*Steel and gold*

*a. Peak (not in exhibition)*

*Wt. 2 lb. 2 oz. (960 g)*

*Ex coll.: Armory of the dukes of Urbino (until 1631); Medici armory, Florence; Museo Nazionale del Bargello, from 1865*

*Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence (M. 771)*

*b. Pair of cheekpieces (not in exhibition)*

*Wt. 9½ oz. (270 g) and 8½ oz. (240 g)*

*Ex coll.: Armory of the dukes of Urbino (until 1631); Medici armory, Florence (until after 1780); Sir Richard Wallace*

*Wallace Collection, London (A 206–207)*

*c. Buffe*

*Wt. 2 lb. 7 oz. (1,065 g)*

*Ex coll.: Armory of the dukes of Urbino (until 1631); Medici armory, Florence (until after 1780); John Campbell, second marquis of Breadalbane (d. 1862); by descent to T. G. B. Morgan-Granville-*

*Gavin (sold, Christie's, London, July 5, 1917, lot 86); R. W. M.*

*Walker (sold, Christie's, London, July 25–26, 1945, lot 168); Dr. Burg; acquired by the Royal Armouries, March 25, 1949*

*The Board of Trustees of the Royal Armouries, Leeds (IV.477)*

The helmet to which these elements belonged originally consisted of a bowl with a peak pivoting at the sides, two hinged cheekpieces, and a buffe with articulated neck lames that covered the face and was secured around the back of the burgonet by a strap and buckle. Disassembled more than two hundred years ago at the time of the dispersal of the Medici armory, the elements (except for the bowl, which has not yet been identified) are now scattered among several museums. The relationship of these elements to one another was recognized by H. Russell Robinson, who identified the buffe as belonging to the cheekpieces,<sup>1</sup> and Thomas and Gamber (1958), who recognized the buffe as matching the peak. A temporary reunion of the buffe and cheekpieces in 1976 confirmed the accurate fit of those elements (as reported in Norman 1986, p. 75). Unfortunately it has not been possible to bring these pieces together for this exhibition.

The peak (brim), forged from a single plate, projects to a point at the front, the leading edge turned, roped, filed with double lines in the recesses, and gilt; it extends to the back with rounded arms, through which it was attached to the bowl by transverse pivots. The plate is embossed in high relief with a grotesque, satyrlike mask that has furled brows,

deeply inset eyes with upturned pupils, a short, slightly flattened nose, down-turned mustaches formed of hair and leaves, and an open mouth exposing the upper teeth and a projecting tongue. The face is edged with leaves, and its ears, also in high relief, have an outgrowth of leaves along the top. The surfaces, formerly blued, are now russet, and the leafy areas are lightly gilt. Some hair around the face was etched on the flat surfaces, and the gold appears to have been painted on in featherlike patterns around the edges.

The cheekpieces were formerly hinged at the sides of the bowl and closed under the chin, left over right, by means of a pierced peg on the right cheek passing through a hole on the left, with a pivot hook (now lost) that would lock the two together. The edges are turned and roped as on the peak, but they are bordered by a narrow band etched and gilt with foliate scrolls, masks, dragons, and cornucopias on a sparsely dotted ground. Etched in the center of each cheek is a lion's head, slightly asymmetrical and facing forward, with traces of gilding. In the center of each plate is also a projecting stud with gilt rosette-shaped head as a guide for the buffe. The original hinges survive, secured by rivets with gilt-iron heads; the present buckle on the right cheek is modern.

The buffe (lower face defense) consists of a chin plate with spring-held, pivoting faceplate above and three collar lames below. The faceplate is shaped at the top with two semicircular cutouts below the eye area, the edges boxed outward at right angles to the plate, and it is embossed with a wrinkled, slightly flattened nose and a pursed mouth with protruding lower lip; the nostrils and mouth are pierced for ventilation. Around the face is a gilt leafy border in low relief, with featherlike projections of the russet (formerly blued) steel into the gilt areas. The lower edge of the faceplate on either side is



Fig. 54. Hypothetical reconstruction of burgonet with buffe. Drawing by Michael Batista

shaped as a scroll with chamfered and gilt edges, through which the pivot is fixed. The chin plate is fitted on the right side with an internal spring with a shaped and gilt head that projects through the plate and holds up the faceplate; when the spring is pressed, the upper plate drops several inches, exposing the face. At either side of the chin are riveted the metal ends of the neck strap, each of two hinged halves, decoratively shaped, blued, etched, and gilt. The back edges of the chin plate are notched to fit over the corresponding studs on the cheekpieces. Etched at either side of the chin plate, just below the face opening and hidden by the overlapping faceplate, are gilt banderoles bearing the incised inscriptions: PHĪ ET FRĀ / DE NEGROLIS·F (right) and MD / XXXVIII (left). The neck lames have beveled and gilt upper edges, and the bottom edge of the lowermost lame is turned, roped, and gilt, with a recessed inner border etched and gilt with scrolling foliage, cornucopias, and dragonlike creatures.

The abbreviated inscription on the buffe should probably be read as "Philippus et Fratres de Negrolis faciebant,"<sup>2</sup> thus establishing the helmet as the first signed work in which Filippo indicated the participation of two or more of his brothers, presumably Giovan Battista and Francesco; the pre-eminence of Filippo's name points to his role as head of the workshop. The concealment of the inscription beneath the faceplate is unexpected, as Filippo usually placed his name in a more prominent location. Indeed, the signature and date are only visible when the faceplate is removed; their discovery can probably be credited to Laking, who published the signature for the first time in the Breadalbane sale catalogue in 1917.<sup>3</sup>

This helmet is one of the most unusual works in the oeuvre of Filippo Negroli. It is the only example among his eight autographed pieces to utilize etching as well as embossing, and to employ roped rather than boxed edges, features one associates more with Giovan Paolo's armors. The etching is almost Germanic in quality<sup>4</sup> and recalls that on the della Rovere burgonet and rondels (cat. no. 63), which were also once mistakenly identified as being of northern manufacture (Scalini 1987, p. 14). The soft, almost flat leaves that surround the masks on the peak and buffe are unlike the crisp high-relief foliage characteristic of Filippo's work. On the other hand, the sharply modeled eyes and mustache betray Filippo's hand and are directly comparable to the chasing on his armor for Guidobaldo II della Rovere (cat. no. 23) and on the bearded buffe of Charles V's helmet of 1533 (cat. no. 20). That helmet is an especially useful comparison, not only in the form of the buffe (which may once have been completed by a second plate that perhaps had a nose), but also in the treatment of the curled mustache and the fine anatomical modeling of the ears. The expressive mask on the peak, with its gathered brow, compressed grimace, and protruding

tongue, is a virtuoso demonstration of Filippo's mastery of modeling steel as if it were merely clay. Facing the onlooker, it offers a rudely defiant gesture of contempt and anticipates similar masks on the garniture of 1539 (cat. no. 30).<sup>5</sup>

The missing bowl can be envisioned from the inventory descriptions, cited below, as having an etched and gilt comb and embossed scales. In this respect it relates to a drawing in Munich (cat. no. 13b) and to a helmet in Paris (cat. no. 60), both dominated by scales. The scales would have added another, more dramatic dimension to the helmet, increasing its fantastic or grotesque character, which is fully in keeping with Filippo's helmets of the 1530s. Judging from the roped lower edges of the cheekpieces, the bowl probably also ended in a roped edge that turned on the collar (a similar burgonet with peak and falling buffe is depicted in Titian's portrait of Francesco Maria della Rovere in the Uffizi, fig. 78).

Once thought to have belonged to the emperor Charles V and to have been stolen from the Real Armeria in Madrid in the nineteenth century (Breadalbane sale 1917 and Laking 1920–22), the helmet of which these elements were a part has been shown, on the contrary, to have belonged to the dukes of Urbino and later passed into the armory (Boccia and Coelho 1967). The presence of the peak in the Bargello, which retains the remnants of the armory, is sufficient evidence to assert a Florentine provenance. But Antonio Petrini's manuscript treatise *Arte fabrile* of 1642 provides more concrete testimony to its former presence in Florence and to the identity of its original owner, Guidobaldo II della Rovere. Among the great examples of the armorer's art that Petrini noted in the Medici collection was "the helmet of Aeneas the Trojan, which the excellent Guidobaldo, duke of Urbino, acquired when he was general of the Most Serene Republic of Venice, and which is held as the greatest marvel; on the said helmet are sculpted two masks, one above the head, the other on the visor, that are made by means of chiseling, which render it a great marvel to the beholders, and this was made by Ripa, son of Numa Babilonico, according to Demosthenes."<sup>6</sup>

Petrini's account, at least regarding the fantastic identification of the helmet as having been made by the fictitious armorer Ripa for Aeneas of Troy, can be discounted. On the other hand, the ascribed ownership of Guidobaldo may reflect an oral tradition associated with the helmet when it arrived in Florence. Guidobaldo succeeded his father, Francesco Maria della Rovere, as duke of Urbino in 1538, and this helmet, bearing that date, is very likely associated with some event connected with his assumption of the ducal title. Whether or not the helmet was a present from the Venetian Republic, as stated by Petrini, or from Charles V, as Scalini (1987) has speculated, cannot now be demonstrated. However, given the established patronage of Filippo's work-



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shop by the della Rovere family, the commission is likely to have come from the duke himself. It is improbable that the helmet was created as an independent work and, judging from the closely related Masks Armor made by Filippo the next year, it was most likely part of a complete harness. Unfortunately, no such armor is recognizable in the Urbino and Medici inventories, and no other elements matching this helmet are known today.

Despite Petrini's account, we must also consider the possibility that the helmet, and probably a complete matching armor, were made for Guidobaldo's father. In the first place, it was Francesco Maria, not his son, who was captain-general in Venetian service in 1538, the date of the helmet's completion. This date accords with the commission of Francesco Maria as captain of a newly formed "holy league" against the Turks, a coalition of allied troops being assembled under the auspices of Pope Paul III and Charles V with plans to attack the infidel on his home territory, including the siege of

Constantinople and the invasion of Egypt. It would appear that, in connection with this military undertaking, the duke ordered a new armor from Filippo Negroli. In relating the events surrounding Francesco Maria's preparations for war, an anonymous biographer indicated that the duke had made for his person "an armor . . . by the hand of Filippo Negroli of Milan with duplicate pieces"; the harness was referred to as "the beautiful and ingenious black armor, ornamented in beautiful and diverse works in gold."<sup>7</sup> Francesco Maria died in October of that year, and his new armor, intended for the most ambitious campaign of his long career, likely served him only on his catafalque. In describing the funeral arrangements for the late duke, the same anonymous biographer recorded that the body was dressed in "the black armor ornamented in gold by the hand of Filippo Negroli of Milan," and "at his feet two most beautiful helmets."<sup>8</sup>

The helmet is not securely identifiable in the inventory of the Urbino armory made in 1630, nor is it recognizable in the





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29c, details of signature and date

inventory of 1631, after the arms reached Florence.<sup>9</sup> Its Urbino origin is proven, however, in the separate description of the Urbino armory that was part of a general inventory of the Medici–della Rovere armories of 1639–40; there it is described quite clearly as “a morion of pistol proof, with a face in front in low relief worked with gilt leaves around the head, with scales in relief worked with gold damascene, with a peak with a face that sticks out its tongue through its teeth and is worked with gold leaves.”<sup>10</sup>

Additional information about the helmet is found in the later Medici inventories. In that of 1650, for example, the collar lames are said to be articulated and gilt.<sup>11</sup> In 1695 the burgonet was characterized as “a morion of rather heavy black iron like a mask chiseled with gilt leaves, with an etched and gilt comb, and above it another similar mask that raises and lowers, with gilt screws at the bosses, with attached gilt collar that articulates.”<sup>12</sup> In the following year the helmet was said to be closed by means of screws, with “two gilt rosettes,”<sup>13</sup> the latter possibly referring to the guide studs on the cheekpieces. A much abbreviated description of the helmet is found in the last inventories of the armory in 1768 and 1776, in which it is referred to as “a morion of black iron with attached collar and visor made like a mask that raises and lowers.”<sup>14</sup> Like many other important pieces from the Medici armory, this helmet was selected for retention in Florence, but nevertheless parts of it disappeared in succeeding years.

The thickness of the plates and their weight are noteworthy. The peak, cheeks, and buffe together weigh 5 pounds 9 ounces (2,535 g), with the skull presumably weighing another 4 pounds, for a total of nearly 10 pounds, almost twice as heavy as most contemporary helmets of this kind. The thickness of the steel must have presented a considerable challenge to the embosser, yet this example has skillfully modeled features that are sharper and better articulated than most Italian embossed helmets of lighter metal. The only other example of Filippo’s work of comparably thick plate is the armor of Guidobaldo II della Rovere (cat. no. 23). None of Charles V’s armors by Filippo are as heavy (the helmet and buffe of the Masks Garniture of 1539 weigh 6 lb. 9 oz. [2,985 g], the buffe alone weighing 370 g, as compared to the Leeds buffe weighing 1,065 g), so it would appear that Francesco Maria or Guidobaldo, both professional soldiers, preferred even their parade armor to be made of heavy metal. If this helmet was indeed part of the garniture of armor ordered by Francesco Maria for the campaign of 1538, this would explain the sturdiness of its material and construction.

1. Robinson’s discovery was reported in Thomas and Gamber 1958.
2. The abbreviation *FRĀ* could also be interpreted as *Frater* or *Franciscus*, although neither reading is convincing. Had Filippo wished to refer to only one of his brothers, he presumably would have identified him specifically by name. Given Francesco’s youth (he was about 16 years old), Filippo’s singling him out, while possible, seems to us less likely.
3. The buffe was probably acquired by John Campbell (1796–1862), second marquis and fifth earl of Breadalbane, who purchased arms and armor on the London art market to decorate the Gothic-style Baronial Hall at Taymouth Castle, Perthshire, Scotland. The buffe has not been traced in the auction catalogues of that period, but it is recorded in a manuscript inventory and



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valuation of the deceased marquis's possessions at Taymouth made by Christie, Manson & Woods in 1863, where it is recorded simply as "A fragment of a mask visor with a gorget" (Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh, GD112/22/58, p. 60, no. 109).

4. Both Laking (1900) and Mann (1962) catalogued the cheekpieces in the Wallace Collection as German.
5. The anthropomorphic buffes on the helmets of 1533 (cat. no. 20) and 1538, while evidently inspired by antique examples, are nevertheless also very reminiscent of Japanese face masks, or *mempo*. These were usually made of black-lacquered steel and were typically constructed of two parts, the lower faceplate covering the chin and a masklike upper plate with prominent nose and cutouts under the eyes with turned out edges; pendent neck lames of lamellar type, formed of small plates of lacquered iron or leather held together with silk or leather laces, hung below. The unusual form of two-part construction of the buffe of 1533 (if there ever was an upper plate) and the flat turned-out edges beneath the eyes on the buffe of 1538 are features not known on other European buffes but are distinctive of the *mempo*. The correspondence between Filippo Negroli's buffes and the *mempo* may, of course, be purely coincidental, particularly in light of the fact that the first Japanese did not arrive in Europe until 1584–85, and no Japanese object appears to be recorded in European collections before that date.
6. "la cellata di Enea Troiano, la quale acquistò l'Eccellentissimo Guido Baldo duca d'Orbino, quando era Generale della Ser.ma Repubblica di Venezia, et è tenuta per grandissima meraviglia; in detta cellata vi sono scolpiti duoi mascheroni, uno sopra la testa, e l' altro nella visiera che sono fatti a forza di cisello, il quale rende gran meraviglia alli riguardanti, e questo fu fatto da Repa figliuolo di Numa Babilonico, secondo che afferma Demostene." Antonio Petrini, *Arte fabrile ovvero armeria universale dove si contengano, tutte, le qualita, e natura del ferro con varie impronte che si trovano in diversi arme cosi antiche come moderne e vari segreti e tempere*, 1642, Biblioteca

Nazionale Centrale, Florence, MS Magliabechi XIX.16; reprinted in Gaibi 1962, pp. 127–28.

7. "una armatura... di mano di Filippo Negrolo Milanese con duplicati pezzi"; "la bella & ingegnosa armatura in negro, hornata di belli & vaghi lavor doro." This manuscript is in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Cod. Urb. Lat. 1037, fol. 200.
8. "la armatura in negro hornata doro, & fatta p[er] mano dil Filippo Negrolo da Milano"; "alli piedi doi bellissimi celate." Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Cod. Urb. Lat. 1037, fols. 203r–203v. The biographer's spelling of Filippo's name, using the classicizing Ph (which the armorer used on seven of his eight signed works) rather than the colloquial F suggests that he may have had firsthand knowledge of Filippo's armors.
9. The inventory of 1631 is very concise, but this helmet is probably included among the "five helmets in the antique style . . . one with a face chiseled in the front" (Cinque elmi l'antica . . . uno con viso cesellato dinanzi); ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 513, fol. 53. Scalini 1987, pp. 41–42, suggested that the helmet may have belonged to an armor listed on page 52 of the same inventory, but the description is too general to be conclusive.
10. "Un morione abotta d'Pistola, con un viso dinanzi di basso rilieue lav<sup>to</sup> a fog<sup>mi</sup> dorati in testa, con Scagla di rilieue lavorata con oro ataugia, con una Testiera con un viso, che si taglia la lingua con i denti, lavorato a fog<sup>mi</sup> con oro." ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 539, inventory of the Medici and della Rovere armories begun in 1639 and completed in 1640, not paginated; also cited in Boccia and Coelho 1967, p. 330.
11. "Un morione di ferro Cesellato, che fa' maschera, con visiera, che fa' altro mascherone dintornati di fogliami dorati con goletta attaccata che si snoda, rabescato d'oro." ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 633, fol. 91r.
12. "Un morione di ferro nero [assai grave] che fa Mascherone cesella to con fogliami dorati con Cresta lavor<sup>a</sup> à acqua forte, e dor<sup>a</sup> e sopravi altro Mascherone simile da levare, e porre con Vite à borchie dorate con goletta attaccata che si snoda rabescata d'oro"; ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 710, fol. 24, no. 177.
13. "Un morione di ferro nero con goletta che si snoda rabescata d'oro cesellatovi nella visiera un Mascherone con fogliami sotto dorati, con cresta sopra lavorata con acqua forte, e dorata, con altro Mascherone sopra fatto di cesello, e dorato in parte da alzare, e abbassare fermo à vite con parte d<sup>lla</sup> goletta per di dietro, con due rosette dorate"; ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 1091, fol. 49v, no. 982. Similar descriptions are found in the subsequent inventories of 1715 (ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 1231<sup>bis</sup>, fol. 71) and 1719 (Guardaroba Medicea 1275, fol. 188).
14. "Un morione di ferro nero con goletta attaccata, e visiera fatta a maschera da alzare e abbassare." ASBASE, Uffizi library, MS 97, inventory of 1768, fol. 2, no. 15, repeated in MS 103, inventory of 1776, no. 15.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Laking 1900, p. 178, no. 663; de Cosson 1914, p. 389, fig. 4, and p. 391; Breadalbane sale 1917, p. 16, no. 86; Laking 1920–22, vol. 4, pp. 145, 146, fig. 1231; Cripps-Day 1925, p. 159; Walker sale 1945, lot 168; Thomas and Gamber 1958, pp. 760, 764, 765; Mann 1962, vol. 1, pp. 157–58; Boccia and Coelho 1967, pp. 322, 330, fig. 253; Dufty 1968, pl. 135; Vienna 1970, p. 33; Florence 1971, p. 34; Norman 1986, pp. 75–76; Scalini 1987, pp. 14, 41–42; Boccia 1993, pp. 17, 22.



## MASKS GARNITURE OF CHARLES V

*Filippo Negroli and his brothers*

*Milan, dated 1539*

*Steel, gold, and silver*

*Wt. 31 lb. 3 oz. (14,490 g)*

*Real Armería, Patrimonio Nacional, Madrid (A 139)*

The Masks Garniture occupies a special place in the Negroli oeuvre as the largest surviving armor ensemble signed by Filippo Negroli and the only example of his work to specify unequivocally the participation of two or more of his brothers. The armor's appellation, "de los mascarones," derives from the grotesque masks that figure prominently in its decoration, and it was coined by Valencia de Don Juan (1898) to distinguish it from the many other harnesses of Charles V in the Real Armería. Indeed, for Valencia, none of the emperor's numerous richly embellished armors could match this one for the beauty of its decoration. As the term "garniture" implies, the harness possesses a number of exchange and reinforcing pieces that allow it to be employed, with several variations, for mounted use in the field as well as on foot.

The exhibited harness is composed of the following elements: a burgonet with hinged cheekpieces and a separate, detachable buffe to close the face opening; a breastplate with two downward-overlapping waist lames and a single skirt lame supporting tassets (upper thigh defenses) of seven lames each that are divisible between the second and third lames; a backplate with two waist lames and a single culet (rump) lame; asymmetrical pauldrons (shoulder defenses) made in one with vambraces (arm defenses) and having large couters open on the inside of the elbows; articulated cuisses (lower thigh defenses) with poleyns (knees); and half-greaves open on the inside of the leg. The construction of the cuirass is noteworthy, particularly because the solid breastplate and backplate are decorated with narrow horizontal recessed bands to suggest an anime, that is, an articulated cuirass composed entirely of horizontal plates, of which catalogue number 52 is an example. In addition to the waist lames, the breastplate has two gusset lames at each armhole held in position by internal U-shaped springs (ill.), and with a series of hinged plates at each side. The backplate is fitted with similar side plates, on the largest of which is a fixed pin that passes through a guide slot on the corresponding side plates of the breastplate, thus assuring the proper alignment of the cuirass.

Although now polished bright, the surface of the armor was originally black and rough from the hammer, as shown by the contemporary illustrations in the *Inventario Iluminado* (figs. 56–58) and the description of the harness in the









30, detail of burgonet, front

*Relación de Valladolid*, both discussed below.<sup>1</sup> The dark surfaces must have provided a particularly effective background for the exquisite embossed decoration, which was formerly gilt, and the rich gold- and silver-damascened ornament that is still well preserved. The relief work consists primarily of leafy-edged grotesque masks on the peak of the burgonet, the points of the pauldrons, and the couters, those on the

burgonet and the pauldrons issuing acanthus scrolls that extend over the adjacent surfaces. The masks on the couters are the largest and most expressive. Lion heads are embossed on the main plate of each cheekpiece, and the poleyns are covered with a geometrically interlaced strapwork that turns into scrolling acanthus branches on the wings, the branches confronted and joined together with a clip. The burgonet's



30, underside of peak with signature and date



30, detail of burgonet, left side





30, burgonet





30, right couter



30, left pauldron

low, rounded comb is embossed as an acanthus garland with a band of globular fruits at the apex; the plume tube (modern) is chiseled to match.

The damascened ornament is of two basic designs: a complex, interlacing pattern of foliate scrolls in the wide recessed bands around the outer edges of the main plates, and a simpler motif of undulating foliage placed end to end, the stems of one interlaced with the stems of the next, on the horizontal bands on the cuirass and along the transverse edges of most plates. The finest ornament is found on the bands to either side of the helmet comb, where (contrary to traditional damascening, which is more or less flush to the surface) the gold and silver are so thickly applied that they stand in slight relief. Here, too, the design is exceptional; it is inhabited by a variety of creatures, notably squirrels, birds, a snake, flies, and other insects, as well as a quadruped and cherubs. The edges of the main plates are turned under and boxed, the turns hatched and gold-damascened with a Greek key motif. The underside of the burgonet's peak is damascened in gold with foliate scrolls surrounding a banderole containing the armorers' signature and date: PHILIPPVS·IACOBI ET FRATR·NEGROLI FACIEBANT MDXXXIX· (Made by Filippo Negroli, son of Giacomo, and his brothers in 1539).

The Masks Garniture, although incomplete today, is the



30, right cuisse and poleyn





30, detail of backplate

largest and best-preserved Italian garniture dating to the first half of the sixteenth century. With the exception of the pair of couters (fig. 55) in the James A. de Rothschild Collection at Waddesdon Manor, Surrey,<sup>2</sup> all the other known pieces are in the Real Armería (comprehensively inv. nos. A 139–146).<sup>3</sup> The composition of the garniture can be accurately reconstructed thanks to the watercolor drawings that cover three pages in the *Inventario Iluminado*. These illustrations demonstrate that the pieces assembled to form armor A 139 were not necessarily composed in this manner in their time of use.

The first page (fig. 56) illustrates the field armor composed of the following elements: the burgonet of armor A 139, the face closed not by the present buffe but by a barred visor (lost), for which there are attachment slots and a spring pin still present on the underside of the peak; a cuirass made in one with the gorget (A 142), its armholes, waist, and sides articulated like the cuirass of A 139 but with a hole for the attachment of a special form of lance-rest held internally by a spring (lost); tassets (lost); asymmetrical pauldrons and vambraces (A 139); gauntlets (lost); articulated cuisses with poleyns (A 139); and half-greaves (A 139). The armor is accompanied by three supplementary pieces: a skull-reinforce, or *guffe* (A 140), and two alternate faceplates for the buffe, one pierced (A 139) and the other solid (A 141).

The second page (fig. 57) includes: a wide-brimmed war hat (A 142); a gorget (A 139); the anime-like cuirass with tassets (A 139); a pair of pauldrons *all'antica* with pteruges (lost); and symmetrical spaudler-fronted pauldrons (only the left one is preserved, A 142) intended to be worn over mail sleeves in conjunction with the couters and lamellar straps at Waddesdon Manor. The pieces illustrated on the third page (fig. 58) supplement those on the previous page: a reinforcing breastplate (A 143) with lance-rest; a pair of symmetrical pauldrons and vambraces (lost), the former with inverted crescent-shaped wings; and a half-chanfron (A 146). Curiously, the matching shield still in Madrid (A 144) is not represented, although it was customary in the *Inventario Iluminado* to depict the shield along with the rest of the garniture and there was sufficient space to include it on the third page; unless it was accidentally omitted, it was most likely grouped with other shields on a page now lost.

From these illustrated elements, a light horseman's armor could be made, combining the gorget, anime-like cuirass with tassets, and reinforcing breastplate, the pauldrons and couters worn over mail sleeves, gauntlets and leg harness belonging to the heavy cavalry armor on the first page, as well as its burgonet with the pierced buffe. An infantry armor, worn without leg defenses, could be composed of





30, shield A 144

the war hat, gorget, anime-like cuirass with short tassets, symmetrical pauldrons with complete vambraces, gauntlets, and the shield. A version of the latter *all'antica* could be made by removing the arms and substituting the pauldrons with pteruges.

The elements of the garniture not exhibited here are also the ones to have suffered most from overzealous cleaning. The cuirass A 142 has lost most of its damascening, but there are traces of recesses at the neck that once held gold appliquéés, that on the breastplate probably a double-headed imperial eagle and that on the backplate Saint Barbara. The

*Inventario Iluminado* also shows a Virgin and Child lower down on the breastplate, but this has disappeared completely; the figure must have been damascened, as there are no traces of the recesses needed for attaching an applied relief. The skull-reinforce, which was worn over the burgonet to provide added protection in battle or the tourney, is damascened with a fabulous monster with scrolled horns and a scaly body that stretches back across the comb and ends in a fishlike tail; the applied circular plates that fitted over the embossed flower on each side of the burgonet are damascened with delicate interlaced foliage. The shield is dama-

scened around the edge with a wide band of gold and silver foliate scrolls, with silver grape clusters, and with arabesques in a polygonal field around the central raised point. It should be noted that the war hat and the shield have roped edges rather than the boxed edges that are found on the rest of the garniture, an unexpected inconsistency in the treatment of the borders that is atypical of garnitures.

In addition to what we see in these pages of the *Inventario Iluminado*, our knowledge Masks Garniture is supplemented by descriptions in the *Relación de Valladolid* of about 1558 and the inventory of the Real Armería of 1594:

A cuirass, worked with bands of damascening, with tassets down to the knee / Round pauldrons / A black "morion" with some trophies in relief / A mail brayette covered with black satin / Another cuirass black from the hammer engraved and gilt with damascening, Our Lady on the breast, with long tassets / And a breastplate for this cuirass and a backplate and a lance-rest / A gorget, joined to the embossed pauldrons and vambraces / A mail brayette / A "sallet" with visor and half-bevor for barred visor, gilt / Half-greaves with their cuisses / A pair of gauntlets / A lame for enlarging / A demi-visor / A half-chanfron of this work / A shield, companion to this cuirass and of the same work, engraved and gilt, lined with leather / A sword like a tuck with its dagger, damascened / A damascened knife for the saddle / A reinforcing breastplate with its lance-rest by itself with some straps, damascened and of musket-proof plates / A damascened skull-reinforce like the sallet for combat / Another pair of pauldrons made of small lames with some faces on them / A pair of damascened elbows for mail sleeves / A strong hat, rough from the hammer, damascened / A pair of black half-vambraces.<sup>4</sup>

Another corslet in the manner of an anime with its breastplate and backplate and its tassets with its mail brayette and its gorget / A round morion with its brim like a hat / two arms without lower cannons for mail sleeves / Another damascened morion with a face / Another light morion lined with black velvet with some little gold braids and three crests and a bar for protecting the face / Another harness with its breastplate and the image of Our Lady on it and backplate and gorget and lance-rest and its sallet with a visor and some iron bars in front of the face and the visors that are lowered and this is a burgonet, its two pauldrons and vambraces and gauntlets and cuisses and articulated half-greaves / A chanfron / A brayette with its flap behind to attach to the backplate / Two other small pauldrons with some faces and some lames on them in the manner of a trophy / A

visor and a skull-reinforce / Two other small round pauldrons / A stout breastplate with its lance-rest that serves on the said harness / . . . / Another black damascened [shield].<sup>5</sup>

From these texts it is clear that despite the presence of embossed ornament, which inherently weakens the steel plate and so was used almost exclusively for parade armors, the Masks Garniture was designed along the lines of an armor intended for battlefield use. The armor's serious intent is emphasized by the presence of a skull-reinforce "for combat," a heavy buffe, and a reinforcing breastplate described as "musket-proof." There is, however, no tradition of Charles V having worn this armor into battle, unlike other harnesses in Madrid that are identified today by the names of the campaigns in which they saw use, notably at Tunis in 1535 (A 112–113), Algiers in 1541 (lost), and Mühlberg in 1546 (A 164–187).

Several pieces mentioned in these inventory accounts can no longer be traced. The *Relación de Valladolid* lists a third helmet, a black "morion" with trophies in relief, whereas four helmets are described in the inventory of 1594, including one damascened and with a mask and another of steel covered (or lined?) with black velvet and having three combs and a nasal bar, in addition to the surviving burgonet and war hat. The *Relación de Valladolid* also mentions a sword and

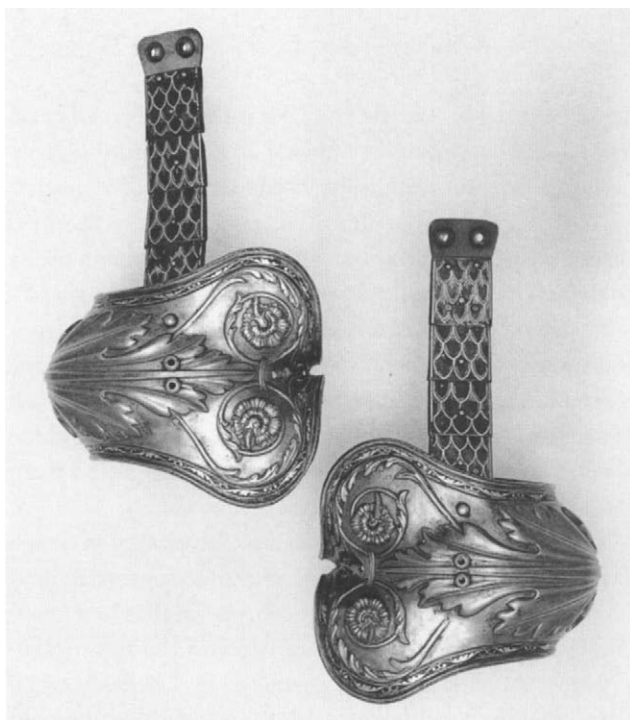


Fig. 55. Couthers from the Masks Garniture, 1539. Steel, H. about 9½ in. (24.1 cm). James A. de Rothschild Collection, Waddesdon Manor, Surrey (W1/97/2)





Fig. 56. Watercolor drawing of portions of the Masks Garniture (field armor with exchange and reinforcing pieces), *Inventario Iluminado*, ca. 1544. Real Armería, Madrid (N 18)



Fig. 57. Watercolor drawing of portions of the Masks Garniture (elements for light cavalry and infantry use), *Inventario Iluminado*, ca. 1544. Real Armería, Madrid (N 18)

dagger, as well as a saddle knife, all with damascened ornament. These may have been made en suite with the garniture although they are not recorded in later inventories. Valencia de Don Juan identified rapier G 33 in the Real Armería as one of these, but despite the high quality of the gold-damascened decoration on the blade, it lacks specific reference to the distinctive ornament found on the armor and therefore is unlikely to have been part of the original ensemble. A pair of damascened stirrups (A 145) in the Real Armería was also catalogued by Valencia as belonging to the Masks Garniture, but these have since disappeared from Madrid so the assertion cannot be confirmed.

The garniture displays considerable originality in design and a consistently high quality of workmanship throughout, despite the losses and excessive restoration that have compromised its original appearance. Certain features of construction were undoubtedly prescribed by Charles V when he ordered the garniture, notably the hinged side plates on both cuirasses and the breastplates' double gussets held by internal springs; the unusual form of the lance-rest on cuirass A 142, which was inserted through the breastplate

and locked into position by an internal spring; the lightweight arm and leg defenses, especially the small couters connected to the pauldrons by laminated straps, which were intended to be worn over mail sleeves; and the unusual combination of head defenses, including a burgonet with multiple face defenses, rather than the more customary close helmet, and a cabasset of Spanish fashion. Many of these same features are found on the other harnesses made for the emperor in the 1530s and 1540s, including those by Caremolo Modrone of Mantua (A 112–113) and Desiderius Helmschmid of Augsburg (for example, the so-called “narrow bands garniture,” A 128–138, of 1538, and the Mühlberg Garniture, A 164–187, of 1544), and reflect not only Charles V's personal preferences as an experienced soldier but also an accommodation (particularly in the multiple laminations of the cuirasses) to his physical ailments, notably gout and a spinal curvature. The presence of the Virgin and Child on the breastplates and Saint Barbara on the backplates also reflect the emperor's personal iconography, as he employed those sacred images on all his harnesses since 1531. The aesthetics of the armor, on the other hand, reveal the unique



Fig. 58. Watercolor drawing of portions of the Masks Garniture (chanfron, exchange pauldrons, reinforcing breastplate), *Inventario Iluminado*, ca. 1544. Real Armería, Madrid (N 18)



30, inside of breastplate A 139

talents of the Negroli atelier. These include the graceful design of the plates (noting in particular the flowing profile of the faceplate on the buffe of A 139 and the rhythmic line of the waist plate on the reinforcing breastplate A 143, which echoes that on the breastplate of the earlier Fame Armor, cat. no. 23b), as well as the embossed and damascened ornament. Despite its rich decoration, the Masks Garniture succeeds in presenting a restraint and sobriety perfectly in keeping with the emperor's taste.

As has already been noted, the Masks Garniture is Filippo's only signed work that indicates clearly the participation of two or more of his brothers, identified only as *fratr[es]*. Knowing as we do now the approximate birth dates of the Negroli brothers, this can only refer to Giovan Battista, then about twenty-eight years old, and Francesco, about seventeen, and probably not the youngest sibling, Alessandro, only eleven. We can assume that Filippo was responsible for the embossed ornament, as the same style of workmanship and many of the same motifs reappear on the burgonet of 1543 (cat. no. 33) that Filippo signed with his name alone. The damascened ornament is undoubtedly the

work of the precociously talented Francesco, still a minor, who just a few years later, in 1542, was recorded as a gilder in the service of Charles V. The Masks Garniture of 1539 is thus the earliest identifiable work by Francesco and, significantly, the first of the Negroli armors to utilize damascening. Giovan Battista's contribution is not so easily defined, but it seems likely that he must have played an active part in the hammering and shaping of the plates, serving more as a traditional armorer than as a decorator. The fabrication of a garniture comprising so many pieces undoubtedly required a number of hands, and documents indicate that while the workshop was a family business, outside apprentices were regularly hired on short-term contracts to assist in the labor.

The Masks Garniture occupies a key place in the evolution of the Negroli style and in the development of Italian parade armor *all'antica*. The vegetal motifs are much different from those found in the borders of the burgonet and shield of 1533 (cat. no. 20), for they are softer, more naturalistic, and more fluid in movement; they anticipate the more extensive use of foliate relief work on Filippo's burgonet of 1543, as well as his cousin Giovan Paolo's distinctive, if somewhat less original,



style. The repeated use of the grotesque leonine or satyrlike mask sticking its tongue out or issuing foliate scrolls from its open mouth echoes a motif already seen on the couters of Filippo's Fame Armor of about 1532–35 (cat. no. 23) and the burgonet dated 1538 (cat. no. 29), and it heralds the appearance of armors with even bolder and more prominent masks, as on Giovan Paolo's armor for Henry II of France (cat. no. 47), as well as on the so-called Lion Armors in Paris and Leeds (cat. nos. 61, 62). As the first identifiable example of Francesco's damascened work, the Masks Garniture demonstrates the youth's remarkable skill. Indeed, the inventive design of the ornament, its application (some places it is better defined as incrustation, with the gold and silver raised above the steel surface, rather than damascening, which by definition lies flush to the surface), and the creative use of the varicolored metals are unsurpassed in the sixteenth century. The technique, style, and relief of the damascening on the Masks Garniture is exactly like that found on the armor of Henry II as dauphin (cat. no. 31), providing convincing evidence that that unsigned masterpiece must also be attributed to Francesco Negroli.

1. In addition to the loss of its original hammer-rough, blackened surfaces, the Masks Garniture has also undergone other changes and restorations. The burgonet's plume tube is modern, as are certain decorative rivets. The two neck lames of the buffe, the lower neck lames of the gorget, and the top lame of the left tasset appear to be replacements, their damascened decoration possibly the work of Placido Zuloaga (1834–1910), a famous damascener whose father was custodian of the Real Armería. The skirt and culet lames today associated with cuirass A 142 are German and undoubtedly belonged to one of the emperor's other harnesses made by Desiderius Helmschmid of Augsburg. The present lining of the shield (A 144), of red velvet embroidered in gilt thread with foliage, the pillars of Hercules (without Charles V's device *Plus ultra*), and an eagle with outstretched wings beneath an arcade is a nineteenth-century refurbishment utilizing an old textile, whereas the original lining, according to the *Relación de Valladolid*, was of leather.
2. These are fully described and discussed in Blair 1974. The Waddesdon couters are also polished bright, evidence that the removal of the original color and overpolishing of the roughened surfaces predated the theft of armor from the Real Armería in 1838, which event caused numerous armor parts, including the Waddesdon couters, to come onto the art market via auctions at Christie's, London, January 23–24, 1839, and February 26, 1840.
3. Gamber (1958) has also suggested that the Masks Garniture originally included a saddle and vamplate, pieces that were in the garniture delineated in the manuscript of Filippo Orsoni of Mantua in 1554 (cat. no. 15), but these pieces are mentioned neither in the

*Relación de Valladolid* nor in the Real Armería inventory of 1594.

4. "Una corocha, labrada á bandas de atauxia, con escarçelas hasta la rodilla / Unos guardabraços redondos / Un morrion negro con unos trofeos relevados / Una bragueta de malla, cubierta de raso negro / Otra corocha negra de martillo grabada y dorada de atauxia, en el peto Nuestra Señora, con escarçelas larges / Y un peto de esta corocha y espaldar y un ristre / Una gola, pegada á los guardabraços y braçales relevados / Una bragueta de malla / Una celada con ventalle y medio barbote para la vista rexuela dorada / Unas medias grebas esquinelas con sus quixotes / Un par de mandilettes / Una launa para alargar / Una media vista / Una media testera de esto labor / Una rodela, compañera de esta coroca y de su labor, grabada y dorada, guarnecida de cuero / Una espada como estoque con su daga grabada de atauxia / Un cuchillo labrado de atauxia de arzan / Un volante con su ristre por sí con unas correas, labradas de atauxia y de launas á prueba de arcabuz / Una escofia como celada para combatir, labrada de atauxia / Otro par de guardabraços de launillas con unos gestos en ellos / Un par de navajas para con mangas de malla de atauxia / Un sombrero fuerte, labrado al martillo de atauxia / Un par de medios cañonçillos de braçales negros." *Relación de Valladolid*, ca. 1558, fols. XIIIIV–XIIIIV.
5. "Otro coselete A manera de Anima con su pecto y espaldar y sus escarçelas con su bragueta de malla y su gola / Un Morrion rredondo con su falda a manera de sombrero / dos braçales sin cañones para con Mangas de Malla / Otro Morrion labrado de Atauxia con un rrostro / Otro Morrion de herreruero Guarnecido de terçiopelo negro con Unos Cordonçillos de oro y tres crestas y Una barra para guardar la cara / Otro Arnes con su peto y la ymagen de Nra ss<sup>a</sup> en el y espaldar y gola y rristre y su çelada con una bentalla y Unas barras de hierro delante la cara y las bistas que se baxan y esta zelada es borgoñona, sus dos guardabrazos y brazales y mandilettes y quixotes y medias grevas tranzadas / Una testera / Una bragueta con su falda para detras para poner en el espaldar / Otros dos Guardabrazos pequeños de Unos rrostros y unas laonas en ellos a manera de trofeo / Una Vista y Vna escofia / Otros dos Guardabrazos pequeños Redondos / Un pecto ffuerte con su rristre q̄ sirve sobre este dho arnes / . . . / Otra [Rodela] labrado de atauxia negra." Inventory of the Real Armería, 1594.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Abadia 1793, p. 3; Jubinal and Sensi 1839, supp., p. 36, pl. 38, no. 5; Martínez del Romero 1849, pp. 192–93, no. 2507; Boenheim 1885, p. 192; Angelucci 1886b, p. 159; Boenheim 1889, p. 393; Valencia de Don Juan 1889–90, (II), p. ccXLVI, pls. 33, 34; Boenheim 1897, p. 156; Valencia de Don Juan 1898, pp. 48–50, pl. IX; Gelli and Moretti 1903, p. 81, pl. XXXIX; Calvert 1907, p. 96, pls. 31, 31A; Laking 1920–22, vol. 3, pp. 305–7, figs. 1063, 1064; Cripps-Day 1927, pp. 156–57, 161–62, figs. 2, 6, 7; Mann 1938, pp. 603–4; Cripps-Day 1944, p. 90; Cripps-Day 1951, pp. 76–79, 123–24; Cripps-Day 1956, pp. 102–3; Gamber 1958, pp. 89–90, 98, 100, figs. 68, 69; Thomas and Gamber 1958, pp. 760, 762–63, 765, fig. p. 779; Cortés 1963, p. 36, fig. 5; Boccia and Coelho 1967, pp. 322, 331, figs. 256–58; Blair 1974, pp. 28–35, figs. 4–7; Reverseau 1982a, p. 26; Scalini 1987, p. 12, fig. 2; Pfaffenbichler 1992, p. 41, fig. 61; Boccia 1993, p. 10.

**ARMOR OF DAUPHIN HENRY OF FRANCE***Francesco Negroli and his brothers**Milan, ca. 1540**Steel, silver, and gold**Wt. 43 lb. 5 oz. (19,700 g)**Ex coll.: Garde-Meuble de la Couronne, Paris (until 1797); Musée des Antiques/Cabinet des Médailles, Bibliothèque Nationale (until 1852); Musée des Souverains (until 1872); Musée d'Artillerie (renamed Musée de l'Armée, 1883)**Musée de l'Armée, Hôtel National des Invalides, Paris (G. 118)*

The armor is composed of a burgonet with buffe; a breastplate and backplate constructed in one with the gorget and articulated at the waist; symmetrical pauldrons (shoulders) made in one with vambraces, the right pauldron fitted with a removable plate to convert it for use with a lance; vambraces with large couters (elbows) partially open on the inside of the arm; fingered gauntlets; long articulated cuisses (thighs) with poleyns (knees) that are divisible into two parts of seven plates each; and half-greaves open on the inside of the leg. The feet were probably originally protected by mail sabatons with steel toe caps, now missing.

Some details of the armor's construction are particularly noteworthy. The burgonet is made up of a one-piece bowl with an elegant and sweeping profile, to which are attached hinged cheekpieces and a brow plate under the peak that covers the forehead; two rectangular holes pierced along the edge of the peak, one to either side of the center, originally must have secured the latches at the top of a face defense different from the present one. The buffe, constructed of a chin plate, two telescoping faceplates, and two collar lames, is unusual in that it covers the face opening completely, with the upper plate pierced with eye slits and with ventilation holes arranged in a rosette on the right. It attaches to the burgonet by means of a spring pin and a fixed guide pin on each cheekpiece that fit, respectively, into the corresponding holes and slots on the rear edge of the chin plate; an articulated steel strap, constructed of numerous hinged sections, is riveted to the buffe, with a leather section encircling the back of the bowl, where it buckles closed.

The breastplate is of flattened bombé form without a median ridge and has, in addition to the main plate, three lames forming the gorget, three downward overlapping lames articulating the waist, two others serving as the skirt, and two gusset lames at each armpit, these last fitted with internal U-shaped springs that allow the gussets to flex with the movement of the arms. The backplate is modeled over the shoulder blades and is similarly articulated at the collar and the waist; the culet is of one plate. A hinge at either side

locks the cuirass closed, the alignment of the plates assured by means of a fixed guide pin at each side of the backplate that slides into a corresponding slot at each edge of the breastplate. There is also a separate metal belt, made up of hinged segments like the strap on the buffe, which serves as a secondary closing; the belt is held in place by a stud at the base of the breastplate that prevents it from slipping upward. The right pauldron is constructed with a removable lame at the front lower edge to allow a lance to pass beneath the arm. The attachment of the tassets by means of hinges that fit over pierced studs on the lower skirt lame appears to be unique, as is the unusual shape of the cutout on the inner side of each greave. Finally, we note the rounded surfaces of the poleyns, which, like the breastplate, lack the more usual median ridge. The armor also has a slightly "hunched" quality, the backplate especially revealing the round-shouldered profile of its wearer.

Judging from the surviving pieces, this armor was designed as a small garniture capable of composing a light horseman's armor, which was formed by removing the wing of the right pauldron, and another armor for infantry use, to be worn without the greaves and the lower parts of the cuisses, but with symmetrical pauldrons. Furthermore, the presence of pierced pegs at the sides of the breastplate indicate that the armor originally possessed a reinforcing breastplate, presumably one with a lance-rest, indicating that this garniture is not only a parade ensemble, but was also designed along the lines of a heavy-cavalry armor for use, at least in theory, in combat. The harness's smooth, rounded surfaces, broken only by the conventional turned and roped edges and narrow recessed borders, as well as the complex articulation of the cuirass, further reinforce the impression that this armor was made for practical, rather than merely ceremonial, use.

The surface of the armor is blackened and very richly damascened overall in silver, which is in very slight relief. The ornament is, for the most part, arranged in alternating vertical bands of unequal width separated by three fillets. The wider bands are filled with dense foliate scrollwork, sinuous and complex, with interweaving tendrils, leaves, flowers, and grains or fruit. Incorporated into the rinceaux on the breastplate and backplate are the additional features of three trophies of arms and a bird. These foliate bands are especially noteworthy for the thickness of the silver, which has been very subtly modeled, engraved, and punched to give texture and enhanced liveliness to the forms. The narrower intervening bands are lighter and more open in their embellishment. They are occupied by lengths of ribbon suspended on rings that extend down the center, the ribbons in turn supporting, alternately, cartouches bearing a monogram of the conjoined



31, burgonet

letters HD or HC, medallions enclosing three interlaced crescents, and trophies composed of bows and quivers of arrows.<sup>1</sup> The surfaces of the couters and poleyns are covered entirely with foliate scrolls incorporating the just-described cartouches, medallions, and trophies, and a large symmetrical flower with leaves that form a cross is damascened at the point of each poleyn, as well as on each knuckle of the gauntlets. Scale ornament covers the fingers of the gauntlets and the narrow lame below each knee; on those lames each scale is filled with a sprig of leaves. Two confronted dolphins are on either side of the burgonet's comb and at the center of the culet.

Dolphins are also found on the peak, framing the cavity left by a now-missing inlay. The inlay was in silver, like the surrounding ornament, for the remaining attachment nails of that metal are still present. The subject of this appliquéd piece is not known, but given the irregular outline of the cavity, it seems unlikely that the inlay was a medallion of the Order of Saint Michael, as was suggested by Buttin (1929). Certain other motifs in thick silver relief have also disappeared from the central band of the breastplate, leaving only their outlines in the roughened cavities destined to receive them. One of these, near the top of the breastplate, appears









31, detail of damascening on backplate

by its wavy outline to have possibly been a bearded satyr or lion head. All of these losses were undoubtedly worked in relief, as evidenced by the flowers still present on the upper breastplate and on the peak of the burgonet. In all, there were twenty-two appliquéd motifs in low relief that stood out against the flatter damascened foliate scrolls. The hinged straps on the buffe and at the waist, and the remaining original buckles are also silver-damascened.

The monochromatic coloring is relieved by an embossed and gold-damascened laurel wreath that encircles the burgonet and a gold-damascened collar formed of oval links that extends around the top of the breastplate and backplate. Just below the collar at the center of the breastplate is a deep escutcheon-shaped cavity, suspended from a chain of three links, which originally must have contained a plate of relief-worked gold. The shape of the cartouche suggests a heraldic shield, probably emblazoned with the arms of France, or France-Dauphiné, rather than the medallion of the Order of Saint Michael suggested by Buttin (1929).

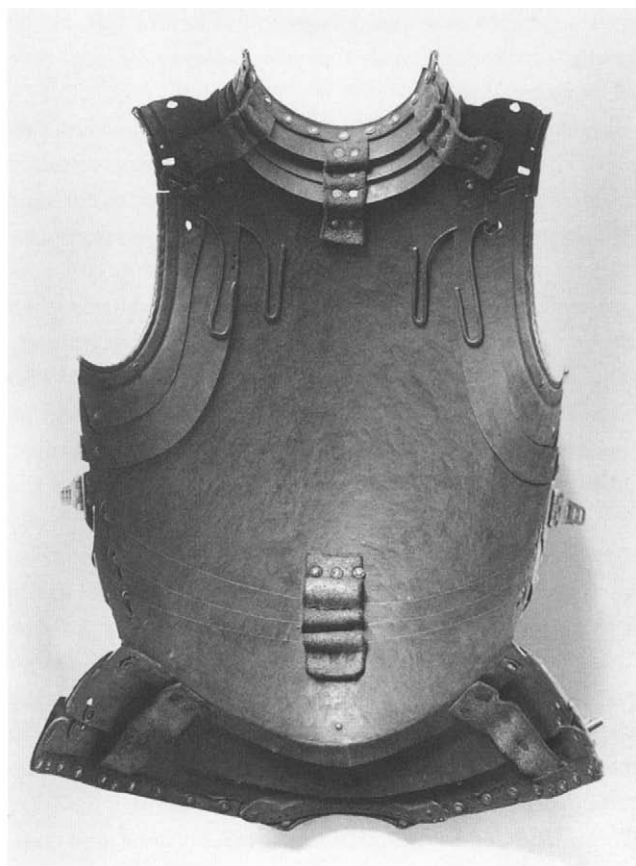
The emblematic and allegorical nature of the armor's decoration, even its color, point to its owner as Henry II of France (1519–1559; r. 1547–59). Henry was the second son

of Francis I and became dauphin in 1536 following the death of his older brother, Francis. In that year he adopted the device of a crescent moon with the motto *Donec totum impleat orbem*, thus proclaiming, according to Paolo Giovio, that until the day he became king, he could not show all his valor, just as the moon cannot be completely resplendent if it is not full. The crescent moon, used simply or in threes, indirectly suggests his well-known liaison with Diane de Poitiers (1499–1566), widow of Louis de Brézé, count of Maulevrier (d. 1531), which began about 1538. In the classical pantheon Diana, daughter of Jupiter and Latona and twin sister of Apollo, the god of the sun, was goddess of the moon and the hunt, and it is from this association of Diane with Diana that most of Henry's personal iconography was developed. The trophies of bows and arrows refer to Diana as huntress, and the monogram is cleverly interpretable both as H and C, the latter referring to Catherine de' Medici, his wife since 1533 and the future queen, and as H and D, for Diane. Never one to hide his love for his favorite, Henry also adopted Diane's widow's colors of black and white (or silver) as his own. The presence of the dolphins on the one hand, and absence of royal crowns on the other, allow us to situate the fabrication of the armor between 1536, when Henry became heir to the throne, and 1547, the date of his accession. The laurel wreath around the burgonet was linked by Buttin (1929) to Henry's first military success in the Piedmont in 1537, but it may also be interpreted more generally as an allusion to the heroes of classical antiquity. Niccolò della Casa's portrait *all'antica* of Henry II (fig. 31), engraved in the year of the young monarch's coronation (1547), shows him in the guise of a Roman emperor, his head crowned with the traditional laurel.

This sumptuous armor is neither signed nor dated. Long assumed to be a French work because of its royal provenance, or one created by Italian armorers established in France and utilizing French designs (Buttin 1929), the dauphin's harness was more appositely associated with the oeuvre of Filippo and Francesco Negrolì by Thomas and Gamber (1958), an attribution that has been maintained ever since. The imaginative and harmonious design and the technical prowess of the damascened decoration are paralleled on only one other armor known to us, the Masks Garniture made for Charles V in 1539 by Filippo and his brothers, including Francesco (cat. no. 30). On both examples the gold- and silver-damascening is frequently of sufficient thickness to be worked in relief, and is sometimes also engraved or punched; both also had massive gold or silver appliqués that required deep cavities and retaining nails to secure them to the steel. The type of the floral ornament is so similar on both as to be ascribed to the same artist. One notes in particular thin tendrils that entwine around single, or parallel, stems, and the additional presence



31, detail of breastplate showing cavities of missing silver reliefs



31, inside of breastplate

of fruits or grains and even a small bird, the latter found on the backplate of the dauphin's armor and along the helmet comb of the Masks Garniture. The scale ornament enclosing leaves that is found on the lower poleyn lames of the dauphin's armor is also present on the skull-reinforce (A 140) of the burgonet of the Masks Garniture. There are specific similarities in the two armors' construction too, especially the double gussets on the breastplate held by U-shaped springs, the multiple waist lames, and the presence of guide slots and fixed pins to aid the proper alignment of the cuirass. The bombé shape of the dauphin's breastplate compares closely to that of two breastplates belonging to the Masks Garniture (Real Armería, inv. nos. A 142, A 143). The peaks of the burgonets belonging to both armors are similarly pierced with holes to accommodate an exchange visor. The remarkable similarity between these two harnesses, despite their obvious differences, would seem to confirm the Negroli attribution and a date for the dauphin's armor soon after 1539.

This armor also relates to several other works emanating from the Negroli workshop. The hinged steel straps utilized on the buffe and at the waist echo a similar strap on Filippo Negroli's helmet made for Charles V in 1533 (cat. no. 20).

Except for these two Negroli examples, no other articulated straps of this kind are recorded. It is also significant that the closest parallel to the damascening of the dauphin's armor, apart from the Masks Garniture, is found on the Medusa shield made by Filippo and Francesco in 1541 (cat. no. 32). The shield exhibits the same type of thickly applied and carefully modeled foliate scrolls, and it originally incorporated applied gold ornaments. The dauphin's armor would



31, confronted dolphins on culet

thus appear to date about 1539–41, but before 1545, as the helmet of Charles V made that year displays a different style of damascening.

Ranking as the most elaborately embellished and best-preserved damascened armor in existence, this harness, or rather its decoration, can be attributed with confidence to the hand of Francesco Negroli. The forging of plates was almost certainly done in the Negroli shop, as the armor's overall construction and small details like the narrow boxed turns at the edges, the rounded poleyns, and the hinged belt or strap are features peculiar only to this armor and to the Masks Garniture of 1539. The contribution, if any, of Filippo Negroli, the shop's specialist in embossing, is impossible to determine, unless he modestly limited himself to the raising of the wreath. Unlike Filippo, Francesco has left no individually signed works,<sup>2</sup> but stylistic comparisons with armors he decorated in collaboration with Filippo leave little doubt as to this armor's author. Indeed, it must be considered his masterpiece.

The early history of this armor is unrecorded, although it presumably remained in the royal collection following Henry II's death in 1559. Curiously, it does not appear in the general inventory of French Crown Property drawn up during the reign of Louis XIV by Gédéon Du Metz, Contrôleur Général des Meubles de la Couronne, and completed on February 20, 1673. That inventory, which records the contents of the royal furniture repository, or Garde-Meuble, listed 351 items from the king's *cabinet d'armes*, including weapons and armor having belonged to earlier monarchs. The dauphin's armor appears only in the expanded inventory of the royal collection completed in 1729, where it was described as number 375: "The armor of Henry II composed of a burgonet encircled by gilded laurel leaves, collar, cuirass, pauldrons, vambraces, gauntlets, cuisses, and greaves, all of blackened iron, damascened with flowers, leaves, scrolls, bows, quivers, and monograms in silver."<sup>3</sup> The same description is repeated in the inventory of 1775.<sup>4</sup> The armor must have entered the Garde-Meuble sometime before 1706, however, as it seems to have been referred to in Germain Brice's guide to Paris published that year. In describing to his readers some of the more valuable and curious objects displayed in the royal collection, Brice mentioned an armor of Henry II "in which he was wounded in the unfortunate tournament in the rue Saint Antoine by the count of Montgomery,"<sup>5</sup> an apocryphal story alluding to the tragic jousting accident on June 30, 1559, which brought about the king's death ten days later. The helmet alone, mounted with its buffe, was incorporated into a still life painted in 1783 by Piat-Joseph Sauvage.<sup>6</sup> The history of the armor following the French Revolution and the nationalization of the royal collections was discussed in Buttin (1929).

1. These same motifs, damascened in silver, recur on the grip of a sword formerly in the Pauilhac Collection and since 1964 in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris (inv. no. G.PO. 1101), and also on a pommel in the same collection (inv. no. J. 993453). This last does not correspond to the grip and may be an old pommel redecorated at a later time. They are also found, singly or combined with other emblems of Henry II, on many of the armors that belonged to him. The most important of these include an etched and gilt armor formerly in the Wartburg Castle at Eisenach, Germany, which disappeared after World War II; an embossed burgonet and a shield preserved, respectively, at the Musée de l'Armée (inv. no. H. 193) and in the Wallace Collection, London (inv. no. A 325); two embossed almond-shaped shields, one in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (acc. no. 34.85) and the other in the Musée du Louvre, Paris (inv. no. MS. 57); two embossed round shields, one in the State Hermitage, Saint Petersburg (inv. no. 3.O. 3517), and the other in the Museum für Deutsche Geschichte, Berlin (inv. no. P.C.934); and, finally, a mace in the Musée de l'Armée (inv. no. K. 50). We note, furthermore, that the three interlaced crescents are also found on the sheath of the saber given by Henry II to his jester, Nicolas de Coville, preserved in the Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence (inv. no. R. 93), on a morion from Henry II's guard in the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva (inv. no. AD 7164), and on a burgonet in the Muzeum Wojska Polskiego, Warsaw (inv. no. 4268).
2. One does not know if a signature might have been included on one of the lost pieces of silver formerly applied to the burgonet and breastplate; however, no signature is found on the underside of the peak, or on the brow plate, places chosen by Filippo for his signature on works dating to 1539 (cat. no. 30), 1543 (cat. no. 33), and 1545 (cat. no. 35).
3. "L'Armure de Henri II composée du casque entouré de branches de laurier dorées, du colet, corselet, épauls, brassards, gantelets, cuissards et jambes, le tout de fer bruny, damasquiné de fleurs, feuilles, rainceaux, arcs, carquois et chiffres d'argent." Cited in Reverseau 1982a, p. 31, quoting the *Inventaire Général des Meubles de la Couronne*, 1729, in the Archives Nationales, Paris, O<sup>1</sup>3334.
4. Archives Nationales, Paris, O<sup>1</sup>3349, fol. 115v, and O<sup>1</sup>3350, fol. 170.
5. "Un autre [armure] de Henry II lorsqu'il fût blessé dans le malheureux tournoy de la rue saint Antoine par le Comte de Montgomery." Germain Brice, *Description nouvelle de la vile de Paris, et recherche des singularitez le plus remarquables qui si trouvent à present dans cette grande vile* (Paris, 1706), vol. 1, p. 74.
6. The painting, now at the château of Fontainebleau, was published by Boris Lossky, "À propos du Château de Fontainebleau. Identifications et considérations nouvelles. . . Peintures de Verdier et de Sauvage . . .," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de l'Art Français*, 1970 (1972), p. 38, fig. 6.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Du Mersan 1838, p. 4; Lavoix 1862, p. 73; Barbet de Jouy 1868, pp. 103–4; Robert 1889–93, vol. 2, pp. 73–74, no. G.118; Maindron 1893–94, (10), pp. 274–76, 281–82; Buttin 1912; Robiquet 1916, pp. 13–15, no. 3; Niox 1917, pp. 37–38, pl. 17; Laking 1920–22, vol. 3, pp. 346–48, fig. 1091; Buttin 1929; Cripps-Day 1956, p. 95; Thomas and Gamber 1958, p. 769; Thomas, Gamber, and Schedelmann 1964, no. 27; Reverseau 1977, pp. 113–14, fig. 2; Blair and Boccia 1981, p. 29, ill.; Reverseau 1982a, pp. 30–31; Reverseau 1982b, p. 122, fig. 10; Boccia 1993, p. 22; Godoy 1993, pp. 89–90, fig. 9; Reverseau 1995; Scalini 1997, p. 43.

## MEDUSA SHIELD OF CHARLES V

Filippo and Francesco Negroli

Milan, dated 1541

Steel, gold, and silver

Diam. 23<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in. (59.2 cm); Wt. 10 lb. 5 oz. (4,700 g)

Real Armería, Patrimonio Nacional, Madrid (D 64)

The shield is constructed of two circular plates: the larger plate is slightly domed toward the hollow center, and the smaller umbo, measuring 10 inches (25.5 cm) in diameter, is applied over the center and attached by four iron rivets with round heads, the twenty-four smaller rivets being purely decorative. The umbo is embossed and chiseled in high relief with the winged head of Medusa, her hair worked in overlapping tresses that radiate out into a circle, with a flower set above her forehead. Two confronted snakes encircle the face, their upper bodies knotted at the top and their tails entwined and tied with a ribbon beneath the chin; on each side is a symmetrical wing with finely engraved feathers. Medusa's head is in relief about 2 inches (5 cm) above the surface of the shield, and she scowls at the viewer, her expression highlighted by furrowed brows, eyes rolled back in the head, nose with pinched nostrils, and mouth open and pierced.

The edges of the shield and the applied umbo are turned and chiseled as laurel wreaths. The wreaths are subdivided into eight equal sections by four ribbons and as many groups of small berries; these motifs are staggered in such a way that each ribbon on the inside wreath corresponds to a grouping of berries on the outside wreath. The field between the wreaths is divided into three concentric bands, of which the middle one is made up of four raised panels with shaped ends containing recessed lozenges damascened with gold and silver foliage. Cartouches within the lozenges bear the following inscriptions (top, bottom, left, right, respectively): IS TERROR/QVOD VIRTVS/ANIMO ET FOR/TVNA PARET (This object inspires terror, for valor is shown through courage and fortune). The two other bands, linked to one another by the recessed areas between the raised panels in the middle band, are likewise filled with delicate foliate scrolls and bunches of grapes damascened in gold and silver. In the outer band, in the horizontal and vertical axes, next to the cartouches with the inscriptions, are four recessed medallions supported by winged sirens. The medallions formerly contained the double-headed eagles of the Holy Roman Empire alternating with the columns of Hercules with scrolls bearing the device *Plus ultra*, both motifs surmounted by imperial crowns. These motifs designate Charles V as the incontestable owner of this shield. The eagles' bodies and the columns with scrolls, orig-

inally appliquéd in massive gold relief, have disappeared, but their silhouettes and attachment points and the rest of the engraved and damascened compositions remain. Hence one can still see the crown, wings, claws, and tails of the eagles, and the crown and the water (in silver on one of the medallions) upon which the columns rested. Like the Masks Garniture and the Damascened Garniture (cat. nos. 30, 38), the shield has lost much of its original blue-black surface color from repeated cleaning, and it has deep scratches on the damascened band around the edge, which bear further witness to earlier acts of vandalism. We note, too, that all three bands, along with the raised and recessed fields, are outlined by delicate gold fillets, and that the raised panels of the middle band are intentionally left rough from the hammer.

Riveted around the rim on the inside of the shield is a circular steel band with eight rounded protrusions for the placement of the attachment screws, of which only one damascened example is original. This band served to secure a black-velvet lining, now lost. It is damascened with concentric bands of interlaced strapwork and foliate scrolls and a scrolled cartouche bearing the signature and date: PHILPP'·IACOBI·ET·F·NEGROLI·FACIEBANT·M·D·XXXXI. The inscription can be translated "Made by Filippo Negroli, son of Giacomo, and F in 1541," with the ambiguous F referring to *Franciscus*, *frater*, or *fratres*. The style and quality of the damascening leave no doubt that Francesco was responsible for this aspect of the decoration. The inscription is positioned horizontally at the top of the shield, facing the shield's bearer, who was thus forced to read it. In this way Filippo and Francesco Negroli proclaimed paternity of one of the great masterpieces of European armor.

Despite the damages and losses suffered by the shield in the past, its sophisticated design, masterful execution, and imaginative variety of ornament can still be appreciated today. The work as a whole is symmetrically rhythmic around the eight radiating axes, which, beginning with the eight intermediary motifs on the outside laurel wreath and continuing through those on the inside wreath, converge above the Medusa's nose, between the brows. These axes also pass through the four medallions and lozenges and through the decorative passages that join the two concentric bands damascened with scrolls. As the shield's centerpiece, the Medusa is its most powerful and expressive element; the exceptionally high relief of the face is complemented by the graduated lower relief and delicate tooling of the surrounding hair, wings, and snakes, whose richly textured surfaces, in turn, set off the smooth planes of the face. Here too, as elsewhere in Filippo and Francesco Negroli's joint work, the division of labor is well defined and the equilibrium deftly established. The gold- and silver-damascening by Francesco, of a great richness and sobriety, serves as a frame-





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work for Filippo's superb Medusa, while the relief of the edges and surfaces of the concentric bands create well-defined and harmonious fields for the damascened ornament.

This is the only dated example of a shield embossed in the center with a Medusa head, of which two later ones are included in this exhibition (cat. nos. 42, 68). Another Medusa shield, an expressive but seemingly hastily made work forged in one plate, the gorgon's head raised in comparatively low relief, was formerly in the Medici armory and is now in the Bargello, Florence. Sometimes attributed to Filippo or Giovan Paolo Negroli (Scalini 1987, pp. 31, 44–45,

as by Giovan Paolo; Boccia 1993, p. 12, as by Filippo), that shield may have been made locally, perhaps en suite with a burgonet of similarly rough work in the Bargello (inv. no. M. 764), in the third quarter of the sixteenth century. Other circular steel shields embossed in the center with low-relief Medusa heads of small size are preserved, but these are quite distant from Negroli work; and one is recorded in the Paris *hôtel* of Anne de Montmorency, constable of France, in 1556 (Mirot 1920, p. 110, no. 444). From this it is evident that Medusa-head shields were commonplace in the sixteenth century, which is not surprising since the imagery was sanc-



tioned by its origins in antiquity. The gorgon Medusa was reputed in classical legend to be the most hideous of creatures, whose very look turned into stone anyone who laid eyes on her. In the popular tale of Perseus, for example, the hero was able to vanquish the gorgon by hiding his eyes behind a mirror-bright shield and directing Medusa's petrifying glance back at her, with fatal results. After severing her head, Perseus adopted it as a trophy and wore it on his shield. Medusa's head also appears as the aegis of Athena/Minerva, worn either on her breast or on her shield, and was accepted as one of her time-honored attributes. Medusa heads frequently appear as shield blazons in Roman art (figs. 21–23) and were often employed as decorative motifs on ancient metalwork, including armor (cat. no. 2). These literary and iconographic traditions were well known in the Renaissance, with the result that the gorgon head became synonymous with ornament *all'antica*. When applied to armor it immediately associated the wearer with the heroes of Rome and the legendary Perseus.

Although one is tempted to consider that this shield might originally have formed part of a parade ensemble consisting of a shield and a burgonet like that in catalogue number 20, this remains hypothetical. Indeed, there is no known helmet with analogous decoration that might be considered part of the same set and, furthermore, there is no known document to support this supposition. The documents of 1540–41 referring to the “damascened shield of His Majesty” appear to bear this out (see “A History of the Negroli Family”). The shield is not illustrated in the *Inventario Iluminado* of Charles V, but it is described among the emperor's shields, without mention of an accompanying helmet, in both the *Relación de Valladolid* and the 1594 inventory of the Real Armería:

A damascened shield, the field black and in the center a face with black snakes and gilt borders, lined with black velvet.<sup>1</sup>

Another [shield] damascened with a raised face in the center.<sup>2</sup>



32, signature on inside rim



32, detail

From the first of these documents, we know that in 1558 the snakes on the Medusa were blackened and that the lining was of black velvet. Finally, it is worth noting, at least for documentary purposes, that at the end of the eighteenth century this shield was considered, mistakenly, to belong to the Masks Garniture (Abadia 1793).

1. “Una rodela de atauxia, canpo negro y en medio un rostro con unas culabras negras y bordes dorados goarnecida de terciopelo negro.” *Relación de Valladolid*, ca. 1558, fol. xii.
2. “Otra labrada de atauxia con un rostro Relevado [en] medio.” Inventory of the Real Armería, 1594, fol. 9r.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Abadia 1793, p. 58; Jubinal and Sensi 1839, vol. I, pp. 27–28, pl. 27; Martínez del Romero 1849, p. 77, no. 1666; Angelucci 1886b, p. 159; Boenheim 1889, p. 393; Valencia de Don Jaun 1889–90, (II), p. ccliv; Maindron 1895, pp. 386–87; Boenheim 1897, p. 157; Valencia de Don Juan 1898, p. 154, pl. xxi; Gelli and Moretti 1903, pp. 81, 91–92, pl. xxxvi; Calvert 1907, pp. 109–10, pl. 150A; Laking 1920–22, vol. 4, pp. 218–20, fig. 1296; Cripps-Day 1951, pp. 64–65; Cripps-Day 1956, p. 113; Thomas and Gamber 1958, pp. 760, 763, 765–66, fig. p. 781; Godoy 1989, p. 196, fig. p. 192; New York 1991, pp. 149–51, no. 23; Barcelona and Madrid 1992, pp. 156–58; Pfaffenbichler 1992, p. 41; Boccia 1993, p. 17; Brussels 1994, pp. 172–74; London 1997b, p. 22, figs. 13, 14.



33.  
**BURGONET**

*Filippo Negroli*

*Milan, dated 1543*

*Steel, gold, and textile*

*Wt. 3 lb. 12 oz. (1,698 g)*

*Ex coll.: Bernard Brocas, Wokefield Park, Sharnbrook, Berkshire, England (sold, George Robins, London, March 1834, lot 366); dukes of Luynes, Château de Dampierre, France; J. Pierpont Morgan, New York, by 1910*

*The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1720)*

Forged in one piece, the bowl is shaped closely to the back of the head and is drawn out to a point over the face and at the nape. The comb is raised in the form of a mermaid-like siren whose head, upside down, faces forward and whose tail of overlapping acanthus leaves extends down the back. The siren's upper body is clad in a skintight classical

lorica with square-cut neck and short sleeves terminating in bands of scales and pteruges, with scales demarcating the waistline. Her flowing hair has a five-petaled flower set in it above her forehead. She grasps with outstretched hands the hair of the Medusa head over the peak. Two snakes coil above Medusa's head, their tails crossing beneath her chin. At the tip of the peak is a shieldlike cartouche "fastened" with three rings around the snakes' tails; the cartouche bears faint traces of gold-damascened decoration consisting of double outlines, foliate scrolls at the outer corners, and traces of a Latin inscription on two lines, of which only the first three letters on the upper line are legible: IMP.

At the back of the helmet the siren's tail splits to either side with a thick sheaf of acanthus leaves, each issuing a wide leafy tendril that spirals twice around the side of the helmet and ends there in a flower from whose center emerges a winged putto, or eros, who grabs on to the tendril with one hand and the siren's hair with the other. At the nape is a grotesque leafy mask with rubbery lips; from the corners of the mouth





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emerge tendrils, which apparently terminated on the cheekpieces, now missing. Both sides of the bowl have deep cutouts for the cheekpieces, for which only the upper half of the internal hinge remains on each side. Across the inside front of the bowl is a separate brow plate held in place by a rivet at either side and by a stud fitted to its upper projection that snaps through a hole in the bowl within the coils of Medusa's snakes. The plate is embossed with a scrolled cartouche and tendrils at the sides, the cartouche gold-damascened with the maker's name and date: PHILIPP·NEG/ROLV·FECIT·MCXXXIII.



33, signature on browplate

Apparently owing to the carelessness of the damascener, the date was mistakenly inscribed as 1143 instead of 1543 (MDXXXIII). Around the back of the bowl and along the lower edge of the brow plate are tiny steel lining rivets (modern) that secure portions of red leather lining straps (also modern). Two rivet holes to the left of the siren's tail at the back originally secured the missing plume tube, with the transverse hole through the comb at the back presumably serving for the attachment of a plume support. The helmet has suffered minor damage, with two breaks at the front edge of the peak and a large break, or hole, in the siren's tail that has been filled with lead. A modern quilted lining covered with antique red velvet is fitted into the bowl, with a separate section covering the area of the peak in front of the brow plate.

One of only four pieces signed exclusively by Filippo Negroli (see cat. nos. 18, 20), the Metropolitan Museum's helmet is arguably also his masterpiece. Despite the loss of the cheekpieces, the helmet has an elegant and graceful profile, and both the design and the modeling are unexcelled in Filippo's oeuvre. There is a remarkable balance, harmony, and organic quality to the design, with the siren on the comb connecting most of the elements of the surface decoration, her hands supporting the Medusa head at the front, from which hangs the inscribed shield, and her tail issuing foliated tendrils that cover the back and fill the sides. Only the mask at the back is not directly connected to the siren, although it issues tendrils from its mouth that continued onto the adjacent (now lost) cheekpieces. The working of the complex, overlapping, and intertwined foliate motifs is exceptionally crisp; the relief is high, rounded, and often undercut along the edges to emphasize the plasticity. The subtle modeling of the siren's upper torso, showing her breasts, rib cage, and navel, is also noteworthy. The faces of the siren and Medusa have a cool, abstract classical quality seen both in full face and in profile, whereas their flowing hair, with minutely rendered, flamelike tresses, contrasts with the smooth, frozen faces it enframes.

This is the only example among Filippo's signed works in which the entire surface is covered with rinceaux in a composition so dense that the background all but disappears. The design is based on the grotesque, the distinctive Renaissance ornamental vocabulary *all'antica* derived from the study of Roman mural paintings, particularly those that had been found in Nero's Golden House (Domus Aurea) in Rome in the late fifteenth century.<sup>1</sup> As these ruins were found beneath the ground they came to be known as grottoes, hence the origin of the term. Grotesques incorporated human figures, animals, birds, and insects with fantastic and mythological beasts amid a space-filling structure composed of plant and architectural elements. The variety of motifs and the playfulness with which they were interwoven assured their popularity in the





33, detail of back

33, detail of peak



Renaissance and caused them to be copied and imitated in numerous drawings and prints. Filippo's burgonet seems to have been inspired by a series of Italian prints traditionally attributed to the anonymous Master of the Die, several plates of which are dated 1532.<sup>2</sup> One print (fig. 59), perhaps the set's frontispiece, is accompanied by a poem extolling the virtues of Roman art and indicating that it was copied after paintings in the grottoes for use by contemporary artists. Particularly close to the siren on the burgonet is the female half-figure at the bottom of the print, her arms outstretched overhead and her lower body formed as a separate, layered acanthus skirt that divides at the base and continues upward on either side as lush spiraling acanthus leaves inhabited by putti. Details such as the round-faced putti with their tiny wings, the scalloped edge at the top of the female's skirt, the thick and varied leaves and double-calyx terminals along the stems are common to both the helmet and the print. In other grotesque prints of the period, half-putti, without wings, emerge from the centers of flowers, the burgonet seemingly combining both types into one. These same motifs appear on Roman metalwork, including parade helmets (cat. no. 5). Filippo's use of these motifs reflects a sophisticated knowledge of classical ornament, but he seems not to have copied any one print slavishly. Rather, having mastered the vocabulary of the grotesque, he invented a design of his own for use on the difficult and complex form of a helmet, creating something totally original and unexpected, a virtuoso demonstration of a Renaissance reinterpretation of the antique.



As with all of Filippo's output, each new work advances beyond the previous one and explores different design solutions. This burgonet clearly evolved from the Masks Armor of 1539 (cat. no. 30), whose acanthus decoration is of identical type but used much more sparingly and with more open space among the tendrils so that the planes of the armor plate are never lost; it is classically inspired foliate ornament applied to a conventional sixteenth-century armor. With the Metropolitan's burgonet Filippo created a more synthetic *all'antica* work in both form and decoration. This foliate style of decoration is also characteristic of the contemporary works by Giovan Paolo Negroli (cat. nos. 43–48), thus demonstrating a close relationship between the two Negroli ateliers in this period.

The Medusa at the peak also looks back to an earlier work of Filippo's, the shield of 1541 (cat. no. 32). Despite the differences in the relative height of modeling, the two masks are stylistically very close to one another and are clearly based on the same model. In the earlier example, the

Medusa knits her brow more dramatically and opens her mouth to reveal her teeth, whereas the Medusa on the burgonet has a more abstract, masklike quality. This coolness and abstraction will become even more evident in Charles V's burgonet of 1545 (cat. no. 35).

The Metropolitan's helmet has been repeatedly cited in the literature as having been made for Francis I of France (1494–1547; r. 1515–47). This association was first proposed by Bashford Dean (1916), based on Morigi's comment that Filippo made astonishing works for Francis I and Charles V. Dean speculated that, as temporary ruler of Milan in 1543, Francis would have been likely to patronize that city's most renowned armorer. He also observed that, whereas the majority of Filippo's recorded works were made for Charles V and have been in the Spanish royal collection since that time, this helmet cannot be identified in the *Inventario Iluminado* or in the written inventories of the emperor's armory. Thus, almost by default, the helmet became the French monarch's. Dean's speculations have been repeated ever since, too often as established fact.



32, detail of right side



Fig. 59. Master of the Die, *Panel of Grotesques*, 1532. Engraving, 8<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 5<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (22.5 x 15 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1953 (53.600.62)

However, the small size of this helmet (the smallest in this exhibition) unequivocally precludes its having ever been worn by Francis I. The monarch was a giant in his day, standing well over six feet tall. His only securely documented armor, that made by Jörg Seusenhofer of Innsbruck in 1539–40, has a helmet of considerably larger size, the internal width across the ears measuring 20.7 centimeters, as compared to 15.4 centimeters of this burgonet.<sup>3</sup> There can be little doubt that the Metropolitan's burgonet was intended for an adult with an unusually small head or, more likely, for a youth.

The fragmentary inscription on the cartouche on the peak would seem to hold the key to the identity of its original owner. Unfortunately, only a few disjointed letters can be made out on the abraded surface. It should not be inferred from the letters *IMP* that the helmet was made for Emperor (*Imperator*) Charles V, as it is also much too small for his head, the measurements of which are amply documented. Given Filippo's regular employment by Charles V, we might think that this helmet could have been made for the emperor's son Prince Philip (1527–1598; king of Spain, as Philip II, from 1558), who was sixteen years old the year it was made. Unfortunately, there is no iconographic or documentary evidence to support this theory, so the identity of the burgonet's princely possessor will remain a subject for further speculation.

The earliest reference to this helmet occurs in the sale catalogue of the Brocas collection in 1834, in which the inscription on the brow plate is cited.<sup>4</sup> The helmet was subsequently acquired by the eighth duke of Luynes, who formed in the second quarter of the nineteenth century a small but important collection of arms and armor at his château at Dampierre (Île de France). The burgonet was acquired by J. P. Morgan from Dampierre by 1910 and was to be that maecenas's only acquisition of armor.

1. On the development of the Renaissance grotesque, see Dacos 1969.
2. For this series, see Byrne 1981, p. 50, pl. 45.
3. For Francis I's measurements, see Charles 1950, p. 17; his armor by Seusenhofer, now in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris (inv. no. G. 117), is discussed in Innsbruck 1954, pp. 75–76.
4. Brocas sale 1834, lot 366: "Another equally superb [helmet], with the master's name and date on the chin piece: PHILIPP' NEG ROLV'. FECIT. MCXXXIII." The price realized was £29.8.0 (priced copy in the National Art Library, Victoria and Albert Museum, London).

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Brocas sale 1834, lot 366; Dampierre 1905, pl. 9; New York 1911, no. 60, pl. 30; Dean 1916, ill.; Dean 1918, ill.; Laking 1920–22, vol. 4, pp. 145–50, figs. 1232a, b; Dean 1921, p. 152, pl. 31; Dean and Grancsay 1930, pp. 132–33, figs. 83, 84; Grancsay 1956, pp. 211, 233, ill.; Detroit 1958, no. 204, ill. p. 96; Thomas and Gamber 1958, pp. 760, 768, ill. p. 788; Aroldi 1961, fig. 173; Blackmore 1965, pp. 96–97, ill.; Boccia and Coelho 1967, pp. 323, 333, fig. 272; Metropolitan Museum 1970, no. 227, ill.; Nickel 1974, p. 128, ill.; Scalini 1987, p. 40, no. 30; Boccia 1993, pp. 17, 22, ill. pp. 13–15.

34.

## GAUNTLET FOR THE RIGHT HAND

Filippo Negroli

Milan, ca. 1543

Steel

Wt. 11 oz. (320 g)

*The Board of Trustees of the Royal Armouries, Leeds (III.813)*

Constructed of nine plates of blue-black steel, the gauntlet consists of a short, rounded cuff of two hinged plates that encircles the wrist, six upward-overlapping metacarpal lames covering the back of the hand, and a knuckle plate. The cuff plates are hinged on the outer side, and they close on the inner side by means of a stud on the edge of the under plate passing through a corresponding hole on the upper plate. The top edge of both plates and the concave bottom edge of the under plate are turned under and boxed. Two small holes are pierced in the upper cuff plate, just below the top edge; their purpose is uncertain. The upper cuff plate is embossed with a symmetrical design of two large flowers issuing circular grains or fruit separated by a large leaf and surrounded by acanthus leaves and vines. The under cuff plate is embossed with a similar, but simpler, foliate design. The upper plate is engraved at the base of the wrist with a transverse line, below which it is boxed outward and embossed with the beginnings of six radiating vine branches that continue down the metacarpal lames, the vines issuing symmetrical pairs of leaves. The transverse knuckle plate is embossed over each knuckle with lion-masks. The lames for the fingers and thumbs are missing. The cuff hinge and most of the articulating rivets are original; all are of steel. There are small breaks around the embossing of both cuff plates, and there is a modern riveted-on patch on the lowermost metacarpal lame.

The authorship of this piece has variously been given to Filippo Negroli or the Mantuan armorer Caremolo Modrone (Hayward 1982, p. 88). On the other hand, the gauntlet's embossed ornament, narrow boxed edges, and blue-black color specifically recall Filippo's burgonet of 1543 (cat. no. 33). The crisply chiseled foliate scrolls are virtually identical to those on the burgonet, as are such details as the lightly stippled surfaces of the flower petals, their turned-over tips, and the presence of flatter underleaves whose pointed tips stick up between the rounded petals. The organic quality of the design, so typical of the embossed foliage found on the Masks Garniture of 1539 (cat. no. 30) and the burgonet of 1543, is also evident here, with the tendrils bound at the center of the outer cuff plate and scrolling gracefully across the surface to the inner plate. So close in



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spirit, design, and workmanship are the burgonet and the gauntlet that we have no hesitation in accepting the unsigned gauntlet as a contemporary work by Filippo Negroli. The gauntlet presumably formed part of a complete armor, undoubtedly a richly decorated one like the Masks Garniture. It is conceivable that the gauntlet belongs to the same armor *all'antica* as the Metropolitan Museum's burgonet of 1543.

The gauntlet's provenance is unrecorded before 1857, when it was lent to the "Art Treasures of Great Britain" exhibition in Manchester;<sup>1</sup> it was also included in Hewitt's first catalogue of the Armouries in 1859. Given the notable

absence of embossed armor in the Tudor armory, the gauntlet was probably acquired during the second quarter of the nineteenth century, when the Armouries purchased numerous elements of decorated armor on the London art market to fill gaps in the collection.

1. No proper catalogue of the "Art Treasures" exhibition was published, but the gauntlet does appear in a contemporary photograph, a print of which is in the Picture Library of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Hewitt 1859, p. 22, no. III.82; Ffoulkes 1916, vol. 1, p. 164, no. III.813, ill.; Dufty 1968, pl. 122; Boccia, Rossi, and Morin 1980, pl. 145; Hayward 1982, p. 88, pl. 21.



**BURGONET OF CHARLES V***Filippo and Francesco Negroli**Milan, dated 1545**Steel and gold**Wt. 4 lb. 10 oz. (2,100 g)**Real Armeria, Patrimonio Nacional, Madrid (D 30)*

The bowl is forged from a single plate, embossed and chiseled with figures, cartouche, mask, scrolls, and foliage in relief. The comb is modeled as a herm bending over backward, taking the shape of a mustachioed and turbaned Turkish prisoner with his hands seemingly tied behind his back. He wears an anatomical breastplate *alla romana* over a tunic with rolled-up sleeves and long skirt that appear beneath the pteruges at the shoulders and base of the breastplate. The Turk's lower body turns into a fluted column which, in tapering toward the bottom, seems to plunge into a cluster of curved acanthus leaves and reemerges as two strapwork scrolls extending to either side. Below this, on the neck plate, there is a foliate mask with a menacing

grin. A scrolled cartouche at the front bears the gold-damascened inscription, in two lines: ·SI·TVA·/·IVICT<sup>E</sup>·CÆSAR·. This cartouche is flanked by female figures personifying, on the left, Victory, holding a palm branch, and, on the right, Fame, holding a trumpet. The two winged deities grasp the Turk by his long mustaches; they sit leaning against trophies of shields, quivers, and bows. Riveted beneath the peak at the front is a separate brow plate, 2<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches (7.3 cm) high, that protects the forehead and bears the armorers' signature and date in gold: ·F·ET·FRA'·DE·NEGROLIS·FACI'·A·M·D·XXXXV·. The cheekpieces are missing, and there is a small damaged area on the front edge, to the left. The narrow edges of the bowl and brow plate are turned and boxed.

The burgonet has a blue-black surface very finely damascened in gold along the edges and on the cartouche, the herm, the armorial trophies, Victory's diadem, the sides of the comb, the scrolls on the neck plate, and the two inscriptions. The boxed edges are decorated with a Greek-key pattern and are bordered with a narrow band of delicate arabesque scrollwork; similar scrollwork appears on the strapwork scrolls at the back of the bowl. The damascened decoration on the comb is concentrated on the Turk's breast-



plate and on the column, where the edges of the flutings are decorated with fillets, while the capital has a transverse band of interlaced foliage. The breastplate is highlighted with symmetrical bands of foliage on the square neck opening, armholes, and pteruges at the shoulders and waist; the scrolls marking the pectorals are embellished with fillets like those on the column. The wide band of foliate scrollwork on each side of the bowl, below the comb, is outlined by a series of tiny punched dots to help the decorator align his ornament.

The extensive use of damascening on this helmet suggests that the abbreviated inscription should probably be translated as "Made by Filippo and Francesco Negroli in 1545." As already noted (see "A History of the Negroli Family"), the letters FRA' can be interpreted equally as *Franciscus*, *frater*, or *fratres*, but in the instance of this single highly decorated piece, the inscription most likely refers only to the embosser and the damascener, Filippo and Francesco. This is the first recorded use by Filippo of the colloquial spelling of his name, with an F, rather than the classical Ph, although two autograph documents (figs. 42, 43) indicate that he signed his name in both forms. It will also be noticed that the damascened ornament employed on this example, although

of equally high quality, is lighter and more delicate than Francesco's previous works of 1539–41 (cat. nos. 30–32).

While the wonderfully preserved damascened work by Francesco is superb, the chased work of his brother Filippo is no less so. The virtuosity displayed in shaping this bowl, with its numerous complex figures, from a single plate is enhanced by the masterful treatment of the forms and the high level of workmanship. The figure of the Turk is remarkable, and in it Filippo returned to the idea of the herm bent over backward on the comb that he used in 1543 on the splendid burgonet at the Metropolitan Museum (cat. no. 33). The acanthus leaves and foliate mask on the neck plate (the foliate mask also reused from the burgonet of 1543) are elegantly fashioned and are clearly set off from the background by precise chiseling and the undercutting of the edges. As for the winged deities, Filippo made them hieratic and impassive; their secure hold on the Turk seems effortless, judging from their outward-turned gaze and the relaxed musculature of their arms. This impression of serenity is seen again on the Turk's face. The only hint of movement, albeit frozen, is found in the deities' clothing. They are each dressed in clinging or pleated drapery which follows the contours of their bodies. The robes are not identical; that of







35, signature on browplate

Victory leaves her arms and left breast bare, with the palm branch modestly hiding her nipple, while Fame is more amply covered. The treatment of the hair is also different, and only Victory wears a diadem.

It is obvious that the allegorical subject of the burgonet's decoration is the victory over Islam and, by extension, over all enemies. This theme is underlined by the inscription in the cartouche, which can be interpreted as "Thus is Caesar invincible." The prominent signature, placed ostentatiously on the brow band (as on cat. no. 33), is proof of the high regard they had for their art, an opinion evidently shared by the emperor. This is the last signed work by Filippo Negroli and his brothers. The date 1545 also marks Francesco's departure from the



35, detail of left side

family enterprise, when in April of that year he sold his interest in the business to return to imperial service. It is possible that he may have personally delivered this burgonet to Charles V.

Two other burgonets are directly related to the example in Madrid. The first, in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris, has a similar but different iconographic design (cat. no. 36), while the second, now in the Metropolitan Museum (cat. no. 37), is a modest version of the Paris burgonet. The relationship of these helmets to the one in the Real Armería was first observed by Valencia de Don Juan (1898).

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Abadia 1793, p. 151; Jubinal and Sensi 1839, vol. 2, p. 23, pl. 29; Martínez del Romero 1849, pp. 159–60, no. 2323; Boenheim 1885, p. 192; Angelucci 1886b, p. 159; Boenheim 1889, p. 393; Angelucci 1890, p. 110; Maindron 1895, p. 386; Boenheim 1897, p. 156; Valencia de Don Juan 1898, pp. 147–48; Gelli and Moretti 1903, pp. 81, 91–92, pl. xxxvii; Calvert 1907, p. 108, pls. 127, 129; Dean 1914, pp. 31–32, no. 30, pl. xvi; Laking 1920–22, vol. 4, pp. 141–42, fig. 1226; Cripps-Day 1956, p. 92; Thomas and Gamber 1958, pp. 760, 768–69, fig. p. 791; Boccia and Coelho 1967, pp. 323, 333, fig. 273; Boccia, Rossi, and Morin 1980, p. 118, no. 120; Godoy 1989, p. 196, fig. p. 191; New York 1991, pp. 152–54, no. 24; Barcelona and Madrid 1992, pp. 159–61; Boccia 1993, pp. 17–21; Brussels 1994, pp. 175–77; London 1997b, pp. 22, 29, fig. 15.

36.

## BURGONET

*Attributed to Filippo Negroli*

*Milan, after 1545*

*Steel, silver, and gold*

*Wt. 4 lb. 15 oz. (2,250 g)*

*Ex coll.: Musée d'Artillerie (renamed Musée de l'Armée, 1883)*

*Musée de l'Armée, Hôtel National des Invalides, Paris (H. 253)*

This burgonet seems to have been directly inspired by the similar helmet in the Real Armería in Madrid (cat. no. 35), but with notable differences. The edges are roped rather than boxed. The herm that forms the comb is not a Turk, but a Roman warrior with mustache and beard, who wears a burgonet and an anatomical breastplate. The relief on the warrior's burgonet is accentuated by two small riveted-on plates that frame the edge of his face and form the front and comb of his helmet. The two winged deities have lost their feminine grace and have been transformed into two fantastic figures holding the attributes of Victory and Fame, the palm branch and the trumpet. They are composite creatures, the upper halves formed as winged female bodies, the midsections demarcated by leaves, the lower halves ending with thick serpentlike tails with stippled surfaces and foliate terminals. The fur-covered back legs are different on each figure: those of Victory, on the helmet's left side, have claws, while those of Fame have cloven hooves. These figures are each crowned



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with a diadem, and they hold fast to the warrior's beard, rather than the mustaches, as on the Madrid helmet. The cartouche at the point of the brim is supported by the tails of the fantastic figures; it is more rounded than that on the Madrid burgonet, and the inscription is in Greek instead of Latin. Partially effaced, it is written in four lines: ·ΤΑΥ'ΑΙΣ / ΠΡΟΣ / ΑΣΤΕΡ / . . . [Σ?]. The foliate mask present at the neck of the Madrid example is absent here, and the brow plate, which measures  $3\frac{1}{8}$  inches (7.9 cm) high, lacks a signature. The edges

of the bowl and the brow plate are turned and roped, and the steel lining rivets have flattened pyramidal heads. The cheek-pieces, now missing, were attached by hinges, the upper half of each hinge still riveted inside the bowl. The metal surface has lost its original dark blue-black color, faint traces of which are visible around the base of several lining rivets.

The damascened decoration, composed of interlacing foliate scrollwork, is in silver, with the exception of the Greek inscription, which is in gold. The damascening, for the most





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part obliterated, outlines the edges of the bowl and brow plate, the sides of the bowl below the comb and the acanthus leaves and strapwork scrolls on the back; similar damascening is also found on the diadems of Victory and Fame and on the herm, the capital, and the edges of the fluted column, as well as certain parts of the warrior's armor, notably the two applied plates on his helmet, the neck and arm openings of his breast-



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plate, the stomach band, and the pteruges of the pauldrons and skirt. This allocation of the damascening corresponds closely to that on the burgonet in Madrid.

The low-relief modeling was achieved by light embossing followed by a great deal of surface chiseling and some additional stippling. In fact, the internal concavities are not very deep, whereas on the outside of the helmet the figures stand



36, detail of right side



36, detail of left side

out clearly from the background and their relief is significant. This implies that the metal was originally much thicker, especially in the area of the figures, and that it was, at least in part, carved like a piece of sculpture. The helmet is thus primarily a chiseled work. This combination of techniques, and particularly the reductive process of cutting metal away, is distinctive of the Negroli.

On this helmet, the pseudo-deities give the same impression of serenity as those on the Madrid example, but the features on the warrior's face are more striking and expressive. The allegory suggested here is revealed by the inscription on the cartouche, which can be translated: "Through them, the stars," meaning that, thanks to Victory and Fame, one attains apotheosis and eternal glory. Similar Greek inscriptions are found on catalogue numbers 40 and 42.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Lenoir 1800–1806, vol. 4, pl. 153; Musée d'Artillerie 1825, p. 12 (?); Musée d'Artillerie 1827, p. 12; Musée d'Artillerie 1833, p. 22, no. 113; Musée d'Artillerie 1845, pp. 25–26, no. 190; de Saulcy 1855, p. 36, no. 276; Pengully l'Haridon 1862, p. 298, no. H.133; Robert 1889–93, vol. 2, p. 208, no. H.253; Niox 1917, pp. 87–88, pl. 35; Laking 1920–22, vol. 4, p. 142, fig. 1227; Thomas and Gamber 1958, p. 769; Boccia and Coelho 1967, pp. 323, 333, fig. 273; Reverseau 1982a, pp. 28–29; Reverseau 1982b, pp. 122–23, fig. 11; Scalini 1987, p. 39, n. 25; New York 1991, p. 154; Barcelona and Madrid 1992, p. 159; Boccia 1993, p. 17; Brussels 1994, p. 175.

37.

## BURGONET

*After Filippo Negroli*

*Milan, after 1545*

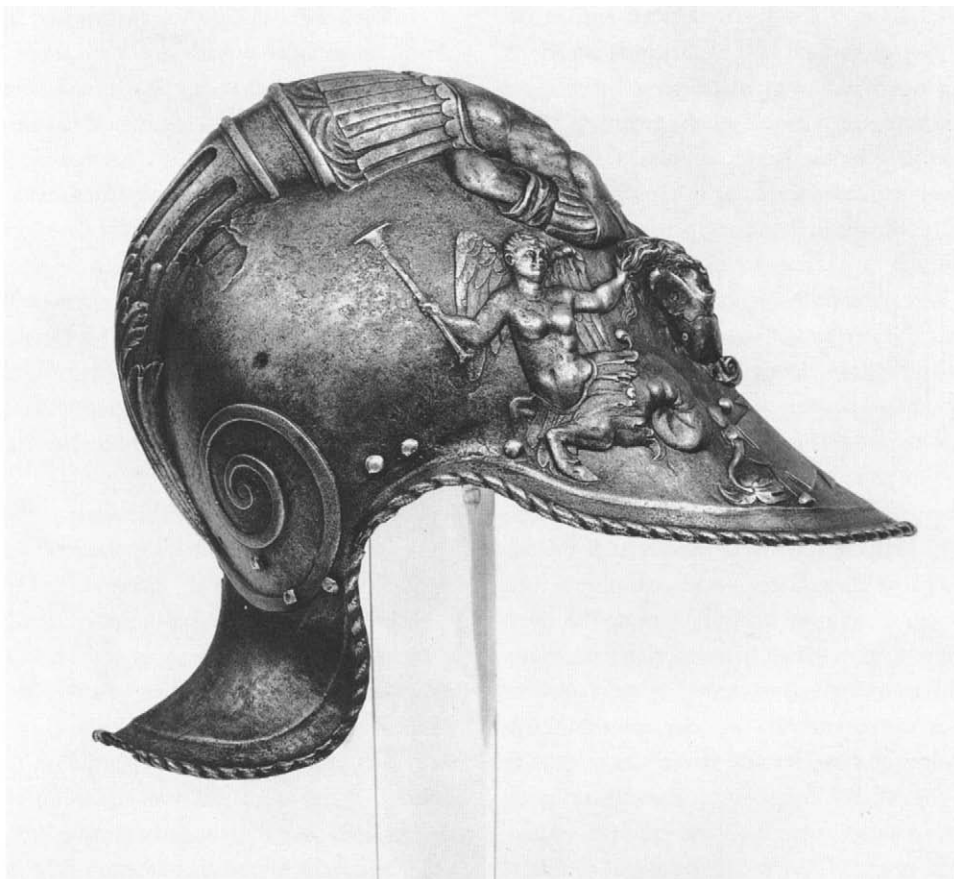
*Steel*

*Wt. 3 lb. 10 oz. (1,651 g)*

*Ex coll.: John Walker Baily, by 1861 (d. 1873); W. Baily, 1873 (until 1881); C. A. de Cosson, 1881 (until 1893); Rutherford Stuyvesant, from 1893; by descent to Alan Rutherford Stuyvesant*

*The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Gift of Alan Rutherford Stuyvesant, 1949 (49.163.3)*

Forged in one plate, the bowl is embossed with figures and ornament replicating the decoration of a burgonet in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris (cat. no. 36). The analogous motifs include: a comb raised as a herm taking the form of a bearded captive warrior; sirens at either side grasping the warrior's mustache and holding the attributes of Victory and Fame; a strapwork cartouche over the peak; and strapwork spirals issuing from the acanthus leaves at the base of the comb. The edges of the burgonet are turned over wire and roped and are bordered by a narrow recessed band. The surface, presumably once blued or blackened, is now bright;





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it shows signs of having been deeply rusted and subsequently cleaned by mechanical and electrolytic methods, with the resulting loss of the original coloring, most of the surface decoration, and much of the relief's crispness.<sup>1</sup> Faint traces of cross-hatching on the herm, at the top of the column below the warrior, and on the right-hand scroll at the back of the bowl, indicate that the surface was originally damascened, although no gold or silver is detectable today in those areas. The corrosion patterns in the crosshatched areas indicate that the ornament consisted of confronted strapwork scrolls and foliage. There appear to be a number of contemporary repairs, notably a large patch filling a hole in the warrior's helmet, another patch on the right side of the bowl near the top, and a brazed repair at the point of the peak, as well as more recent damage and loss along the edges and small rust holes in the relief. Rivet holes indicate the former presence of a brow plate, cheekpieces, and plume tube at the base of the comb, all now missing. Among the rivets on the helmet are several original, brass-capped iron examples, the remainder modern replacements.

Of banal workmanship and now in poor condition, this helmet is nonetheless of considerable interest as a contemporary replica of the Negroli burgonet in Paris. It is slightly smaller and lighter in weight than the Paris example, its profile is less fluid and graceful. While the principal motifs of



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decoration were taken over almost literally, they were rendered more mechanically and with fewer details. The warrior on the comb lacks the bared teeth found on the counterpart in Paris and his armor was simplified, with only one row of pteruges at the sleeves and skirt, and with the drapery below less sharp and varied in its folds. The scrolls issuing at the base of the comb are larger and more space filling, and form double, rather than single, loops. The sirens are slightly flatter and stiffer, their pose with outstretched arms ungraceful and tentative. The cartouche at the peak is oversized and rigid, its broad rectangular shape fitting awkwardly into the triangular space. The large iron patches filling holes in the bowl betray the uncertain hand of a less-skilled armorer.

Could both helmets have emanated from the same workshop or, as is more probable, was the Negroli example in Paris copied by another armorer? There can be no doubt that the Paris helmet, rather than a sketch or model, served as the prototype for the burgonet at the Metropolitan Museum: apart from the obvious similarities, the distinctive headdress of the warrior, which was constructed in an unusual manner with two applied plates, is repeated on the Metropolitan's helmet (there are small rivet holes for the attachment of these plates on the damaged example in New York). On the other hand, the imitative character of the decoration and the



mediocre execution of the Metropolitan's helmet can be taken as convincing evidence that it is very unlikely to have originated in the Negroli workshop.

Like several examples presented here (cat. nos. 23a, 33, 40, 43, 44, 46, 63a, 63c), this one turned up on the London art market in the early nineteenth century without a recorded provenance. It is said to have been acquired by the collector J. W. Baily from a pawnbroker at Hampstead (London) for £1 sometime prior to its first publication in 1861.<sup>2</sup>

1. This condition is already documented in the engraved illustration reproduced in London 1861, vol. I, p. 181, and in a photograph taken in 1862 at the South Kensington Museum, London, at the time of the "Special Exhibition of Works of Art" (Picture Library, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, no. 2967).
2. As recorded by C. A. de Cosson (in London 1890, p. 164), who acquired this helmet with the rest of the Baily collection in 1881.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: London 1861, vol. I, p. 181; London 1863, p. 366, no. 4688; Baily 1868; de Cosson and Burges 1881, pp. 77–78, no. 86, pl. VII, fig. 87; de Cosson 1890, p. 324; London 1890, p. 164, no. 696; de Cosson sale 1893, lot 109, ill.; New York 1911, pp. 34–35, no. 61, pl. xxx; Dean 1914, p. 31, no. 30, pl. XVI; Laking 1920–22, vol. 4, p. 142, fig. 1228; New York 1931, pp. 26–27, no. 81, ill.; Thomas and Gamber 1958, p. 769; Boccia 1993, p. 17.

38.

## DAMASCENED GARNITURE OF CHARLES V

*Francesco Negroli and his brothers*  
Milan, ca. 1550–53 (?)  
Steel, gold, and silver

### a. Field armor

Wt. 46 lb. 15 oz. (21,340 g)

Real Armería, Patrimonio Nacional, Madrid (A 159)

### b. Barred visor

Wt. 10 oz. (280 g)

Ex coll.: Real Armería, Madrid; Frederick Stibbert, Florence  
Museo Stibbert, Florence (3190)

### c. Two gauntlets

Wt. left 11 oz. (310 g), right 8 oz. (230 g)

Ex coll.: Real Armería, Madrid; Czar Nicholas I of Russia; Russian Imperial collection, transferred to the Hermitage, 1885  
The State Hermitage, Saint Petersburg (3.O. 6141)

### d. Rapier

L. overall 42 ¼ in. (107.3 cm); Wt. 2 lb. 11 oz. (1,219 g)

Ex coll.: Real Armería, Madrid; Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, duc de Dino, Paris  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Rogers Fund, 1904 (04.3.21)

The exhibited armor, part of a garniture for mounted and infantry use, is a horseman's harness comprising a close helmet, breastplate and backplate constructed in one with the gorget, lance-rest, symmetrical pauldrons with small wings, vambraces with couters partly open on the inside of the arm, tassets, articulated cuisses, and half-greaves open on the inside of the leg.

Almost all the known pieces of this garniture are preserved in the Real Armería and include, in addition to this harness, a light horseman's armor (inv. no. A 160), a shield (A 161), two armored saddles (A 162, 163), and a sword with matching mounts (G 34); there is also the upper faceplate from the buffe for a closed burgonet (E 247), which was previously in the collection of the Royal Armouries at the Tower of London and was given by the English government in 1901 to the queen regent Maria Christina of Hapsburg-Lorraine, mother of Alfonso XIII (1886–1941; r. 1886–1931), for the Real Armería. The only known pieces outside Madrid are the barred visor in the Museo Stibbert, the two mismatched gauntlets in the Hermitage, and the sword in the Metropolitan Museum, which have been reunited for the exhibition. These pieces were presumably among the many items stolen from the Real Armería and sold at Christie's, London, in the well-known sales of January 23–24, 1839, and February 26, 1840, although the catalogue descriptions are too brief for specific identification.

The garniture is decorated overall with a singular type of damascened ornament consisting of a series of vertical stripes made up of nine gold fillets alternating with eight silver ones, interrupted at regular wide intervals by diagonal gold bands. The bands are rows of palmettelike leaves on either side of an engraved bar, the details of the leaves also engraved, which are regularly and symmetrically placed to form a chevron pattern. Across the breastplates and backplates, the chevron points down, and the bands on the pauldrons, vambraces, and tassets are correspondingly aligned. The bands on the helmets, cuisses, and greaves, on the other hand, point in the opposite direction, upward toward the center. On the saddles, the arrangement of the bands forms an upward-pointing chevron. Thus when the horseman is mounted, the converging diagonals of downward- and upward-pointing chevrons produce the pleasing visual effect of an allover design forming an X. Along the stripes, there are small punched dots that served to ensure the regularity and alignment of the damascened ornament; the same feature is found on the burgonet of 1545 (cat. no. 35). The principal edges of all the plates are turned under and boxed and are damascened with alternating fillets of gold and silver bordered with a single row of gold leaves.

Two other types of damascened ornament were also used





38a

on this armor with great decorative effect. The first consists of applied medallions bearing the images of the Virgin with Child and Saint Barbara that were placed in the center, high up near the neck, of the breastplates and backplates of both harnesses A 159 and A 160. All four medallions were different and must have been in gold relief; the figures have now disappeared, but their silhouettes are still visible on the breastplates and backplates, where the surfaces are deeply crosshatched and have holes pierced for the attachment of the figures. Each of these images was centered in a mandorla of clouds surrounded by alternating straight and wavy rays of light; these designs are still preserved, except for the clouds on breastplate A 160 (only partially preserved) and those on backplate A 160 (almost entirely lost). The second type of ornament consists of an elegant composition of interlaced foliate scrolls damascened in gold that fill the wings of the poleyns (knees) and the umbo and perimeter band of the shield. On the shield, these two areas of foliate scrolls are framed by bands of leaves, and the intermediate space is decorated with sixteen radiating stripes of gold and silver fillets crossed by horizontal gold bars of leaves.

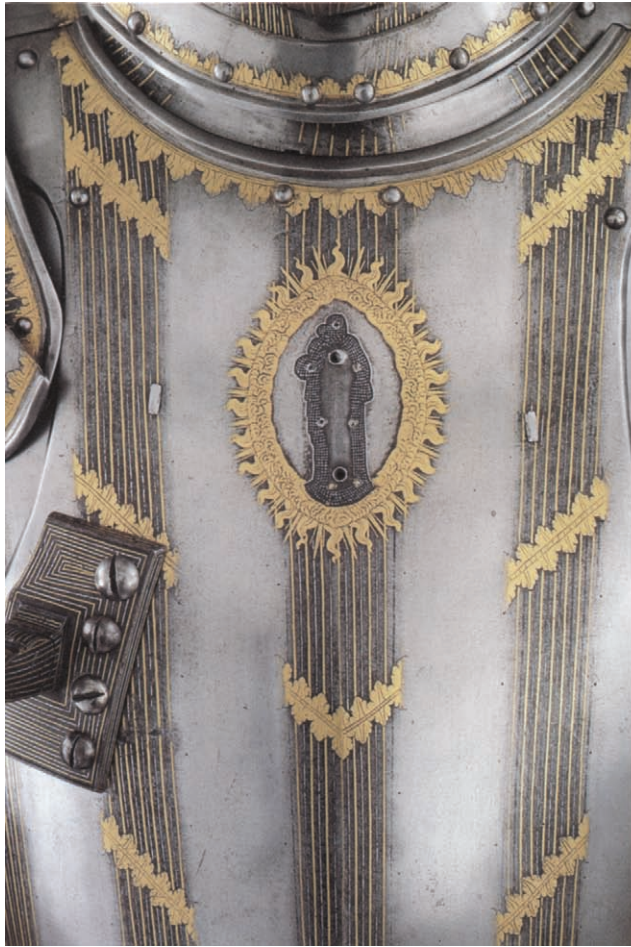
The shield has been damaged and, like that of the Masks Garniture (cat. no. 30), has gouges in the damascened band around the edge that bear witness to an attempt to remove the precious metal. On the rest of the garniture, damage is visible in the damascened stripes where, in most cases, the outside fillets are now worn or effaced. This damage is the result of many vigorous cleanings in the past that have also removed the blackening, which originally covered the steel and provided a foil for the rich and elegant damascened decoration. The blackening is preserved on only a few pieces: the lance-rest of A 159 and the buffe E 247 in Madrid, the visor in Florence, the gauntlets in Saint Petersburg, and the mountings of the two swords in Madrid and New York.

The garniture has no specific name in the inventories or scholarly literature but is referred to here for convenience as the Damascened Garniture. Thanks to the large number of surviving pieces and the unusual typology of some of them, it is identifiable in the 1594 inventory of the Real Armería, in which it is described among other damascened black armors having belonged to Charles V as:

Another harness with breastplate with the image of Our Lady, and its backplate and gorget attached / A morion with buffe and a grill in front of the face, and a collar of mail / Half-vambraces without lower cannons / Two gauntlets with mail fingers, and half-cuisses / Another light-cavalry harness of the same workmanship with breastplate with the image of Our Lady, and its backplate and pieces of mail and brayette and gorget







38a, detail of breastplate



38a, right cuisse and poleyn



38c

attached / A close helmet, with pauldrons and vambraces and gauntlets, and articulated half-greaves with cuisses / Another two pauldrons with mail sleeves / A visor with its buffe and grill that serves on the same close helmet / A morion like a hat / . . . / Another [round shield] damascened in gold and black at the edges and in the center field / . . . / Another two armored saddles damascened and lined with black velvet and gold fringe.<sup>1</sup>

As for the swords in Madrid and New York, with mountings matching the garniture, their identification cannot be established with certainty in this inventory. Nevertheless, if they were included, as seems logical, they must be among the “six swords and four daggers of damascened work with scabbards of velvet and leather . . .” listed in the same section of the inventory.<sup>2</sup> We do not know the exact number of swords specifically belonging to the Damascened Garniture, but there must have been at least three of them. In the *Inventario General Histórico* of 1793, three swords with identical mountings (“3 Espadas iguales en sus guarniciones”), which were then kept in cabinet 2 and bore the numbers 74, 75, and 87, are related to the garniture.<sup>3</sup> Sword number 74 corresponds to sword G 34 in the Real Armería, whose blade, damascened in gold, bears the maker’s mark of the Milanese Daniele da Serravalle. Sword number 75, with a blade engraved and gilt with foliage and the inscriptions MANDATE and DARO (I will give in exchange for that given me) on the ricasso, is easily identifiable as the one in the Metropolitan Museum. Number 87, which had an engraved and gilt blade, seemingly without maker’s mark or inscription, is either lost or has not yet been identified.

Returning to the 1594 inventory, there are several discrepancies between the pieces enumerated there and those preserved today. For example, the lance-rest and the two pairs of tassets of six lames each that are mounted on armors A 159 and A 160 are not listed; the inventory specifies half-cuisses (“medios quixotes”) and full cuisses (“quixotes”) for pieces that are practically identical—unless this refers to the fact that the cuisses of A 160 have cutout sides, while those on A 159 have boxed edges like the rest of the armor; further, the greaves are in one piece and not “trañçadas,” that is, articulated at the ankle to facilitate movement, as described in the inventory. In spite of these perplexing omissions, errors, or imprecisions, the inventory has the virtue of informing us that, in addition to the known pieces, there were a morion “like a hat,” a barred visor for the burgonet (also called a “morrion”), and a pair of gauntlets with mail fingers. The fingerless right gauntlet in Saint Petersburg may be one of these, as the left one, which does not match the right, retains one finger and the thumb of plate. The inven-

tory also mentions pauldrons intended to be worn with mail sleeves and two half-vambraces without plates covering the lower arm. These could correspond to the existing vambraces A 160, which have been reworked and are now composed of two ill-matched elements: pauldrons of five plates like those of A 159 and upper vambraces made up of three plates and a couter, the latter a little narrower than the couters on the vambraces of A 159.

The ensemble, comprising the many extant pieces and those known only from the documents, was a small garniture which could form, with several variations, a traditional horseman’s armor for use in the field, a light-cavalry armor, and one for infantry use. Some of the pieces have characteristics that are also found on other harnesses belonging to Charles V. The unusual form of close helmet found on armor A 159, for example, is also found on the so-called Mühlberg Garniture made for Charles V by Desiderius Helmschmid in 1544 (Real Armería, inv. no. A 165) and worn in the famous battle of 1547, as well as those known as the Knotwork (*Lacerias*) Garniture and the Flowers (*Flores*) Garniture, also made for Philip II by Desiderius Helmschmid about 1549–50 (Real Armería, inv. nos. A 192 and A 218, respectively). The close helmet A 159 is furnished with a one-piece visor pierced on the lower half with vertical slots for ventilation that form a grill, which in turn is protected by a superimposed set of sliding plates, also pierced, of which the right-hand plate is at present missing. When these plates are drawn to the rear, they leave the ventilation openings unobstructed, and when pushed forward, they close them. The presence of a pierced peg in the center of the visor beneath the eye openings attests to the former presence of a removable reinforcing plate, now lost, that was held in place by a transverse pin. This close helmet must have had another interchangeable visor, not specified in the 1594 inventory, but implicitly forming a part of the “zelada borgeñoña” (close helmet). A third visor, that in the Museo Stibbert, also belongs to this helmet and was worn under one of the other two visors, thus forming a double protection for the face.

Additional distinguishing features of the garniture include the breastplates and backplates made in one with the gorget, with a turned and boxed edge delineating what would be the neck opening on a conventional cuirass fitted over a separate gorget. In the group forming armor A 159, the horseman’s breastplate has gussets at the armholes formed of two lames each, held in their extended position by internal springs (ill.). It is fitted with a pivoting lance-rest whose base is pierced with four holes, while on the breastplate there are only two, thus allowing the lance-rest to be adjusted in two different positions, one above the other. As





38, shield A 161

for the backplate, the sides of the main plate have been widened with an additional section attached with rivets to increase its girth; only the right-hand extension plate is preserved today. In the group forming harness A 160, the structure of the light-cavalry or infantry cuirass is similar but has more articulations at the waist.

This splendid garniture is neither signed nor dated. Nonetheless, it is usually mentioned in the literature as dating from 1546, on the basis of a letter sent to Italy by Charles V, dated Regensburg, July 12, 1546, in which the emperor ordered the payment of "200 scudos to someone who was making armor worked with damascening."<sup>4</sup> Valencia de Don Juan (1898), who first associated the Damascened Garniture with the armor referred to in that letter, considered it especially likely, since the proportions of an almost contemporary armor belonging to Charles V, the Mühlberg Garniture of 1544, are similar. The same author also ventured the opinion that the Damascened Garniture could be the work of the Negroli.

In our opinion, the attribution to the Negroli workshop is justified, but we doubt that the harness mentioned in the letter of 1546 refers to the Damascened Garniture. Inasmuch as

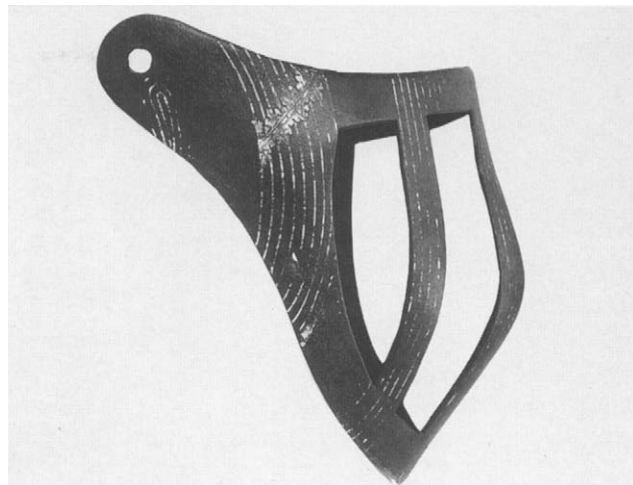
this garniture is the work of an excellent armorer and an exceptional damascener and it also presents obvious Negroli characteristics in both its construction and its decoration, we think its author is certainly Francesco Negroli. Although in the documents Francesco is sometimes referred to as "armorer," it is probable that the forging of the plates was carried out by one or more of his brothers (for example, the narrow boxed edges and the articulation of the cuirass with its double gussets held out by internal springs are features found also on the Masks Garniture) and that he saved the execution of its rich damascened decoration for himself. The ornament is sober, carefully organized on the armor's surface, and marked by a kind of serene splendor in accord with the emperor's taste. At the same time, we detect obvious reminiscences to the decoration of the Masks Garniture, especially the similar figural medallions in gold relief that were applied by the same technique and in the same places (at the top of the breastplates and backplates); the interlaced foliate scrolls on the umbo and the perimeter band of shield A 161 are also similar to those of the Masks Garniture.

Considering Francesco Negroli as the author of this

work, we find it improbable that Charles V would refer to him in the letter of 1546 as vaguely as “to someone who.” On the contrary, the emperor knew him and his work and valued both highly since he already possessed several pieces by his hand. Francesco Negroli had been in his service regularly since 1542 and had only recently made a damascened corslet for him in 1544–45 (doc. 76).

Only a few years later, between 1550 and 1553, Francesco created, at the order of Philip II, then prince, certain “black arms . . . [worked in gold] damascene,” which, given their considerable cost of 1,100 gold scudos, must correspond to an armor of considerable importance. According to the four documents cited below, the armor seems to have been ordered by, but was not yet begun in, November 1550; it was in the process of being made in May and June 1551. This important harness would seem to have vanished without a trace, for its whereabouts are unknown and it is not even mentioned in the 1594 inventory of the Real Armería, where the only damascened armor belonging to Philip II is that made by Desiderius Helmschmid and Jörg Sigman of Augsburg in 1549–52 (inv. nos. A 239–242). However, although the orders for payment for armor in these documents explicitly bear the notation “for my service” and “mine” (“para mi servicio”; “mías”), they could implicitly refer to the Damascened Garniture as ordered by Prince Philip for his father, the emperor.

Of the four documents, three have been published but sometimes with errors in the amounts of payments. Through these records we can follow the progress of work on the armor in the references to the arms “that he has to damascene” (November 10, 1550), “that he is damascening” (May 24 and June 25, 1551), and “that the said armorer has made” (December 27, 1553). In the first document, Prince Philip issued orders from Augsburg, on November 10, 1550, to his treasurer Domingo de Orbea to pay Francesco Negroli 400 gold scudos against the 1,100 he was to receive for the cost of his work and the gold for the damascening. Five months later, on May 24, 1551, still at Augsburg, he confirmed, in the course of his treasurer’s verifications of accounts, the stated amount, plus the cost of monetary exchange. Then, the following month, on June 25, he again ordered his treasurer to pay 300 gold scudos toward the sum of 700 that was still owed of the total price of 1,100 (400 having already been paid, November 10, 1550), as well as 72 gold scudos for horse harnesses. Finally, in the 1553 accounts of the treasurer Domingo de Orbea, which mention a warrant of Prince Philip dated December 27, is a notation for the payment of 415 gold scudos and 4 reales for the balance of the price of certain arms made by Francesco Negroli for Prince Philip. These 415 gold scudos thus certainly correspond to the 400 left to pay on June 25, 1551.



38b

The documents in question are as follows:

The Prince / Domingo de Orbea, my treasurer, I hereby order that from any moneys in your charge you give and pay to Francesco Negroli, armorer to the Emperor my lord, and who resides in Milan, four hundred gold scudos . . . on account and in part payment of one thousand one hundred gold scudos that he is to have for his



38d



Fig. 60. Light cavalry armor of the Damascened Garniture. Francesco Negroli and his brothers, Milan, ca. 1550–53 (?). Steel, gold, and silver. Real Armería, Madrid (A 160)

labor and for the gold to be used on some arms that he has to damascene for my service . . . written in Augsburg on 10 November 1550. I the Prince / By order of His Highness, Gonçalo Perez.<sup>5</sup>

The Prince / Purse bearers or whichever other persons whose charge it is to keep the accounts of Domingo de Orbea, my treasurer, . . . four hundred gold scudos which from Milan . . . paid there to Francesco Negroli, armorer to the Emperor my lord, on account toward the one thousand one hundred gold scudos he was to have for some arms of mine that he is damascening, the said

four hundred gold scudos . . . written in Augsburg on 24 May of 1551. I the Prince. By order of His Highness, Gonçallo Perez.<sup>6</sup>

The Prince / Domingo de Orbea, my treasurer, I command that from any moneys in your charge you pay to Francesco Negroli, gilder to His Majesty, three hundred seventy-two gold scudos in gold, of which the three hundred are to complete payment of seven hundred gold scudos, of which he has previously received four hundred, that are all in part payment of one thousand one hundred gold scudos which he is to have for the gold and the mak-





38a, inside of breastplate

ing of some black arms that he is damascening for my service, and the remaining seventy-two gold scudos are for certain horse harnesses from which some will be taken for my service and delivered to my stable . . . written in Milan on 25 June 1551 / I the Prince.<sup>7</sup>

To Francesco Negroli, armorer to His Majesty, four hundred fifteen gold scudos in gold and four reales, which he received in Genoa delivered by the ambassador to Genoa, Gomez Suarez de Figueroa, as deputy of said treasurer [Domingo de Orbea] for the hand of His Highness, which were in fulfillment of the price of certain arms that the said armorer has made for the service of His Highness, which scudos, with interest and transmittal and brokerage fees from Genoa to Besançon, and from there to Spain, for the October fair in Medina del Campo in the said year of 1553, cost two hundred nine thousand thirty-eight *maravedis*, the said *maravedis* received on account by virtue of a warrant from His Highness, written on the twenty-seventh of December of the said year of 1553, in which he commands the said treasurer receive them on account by virtue of it without other surety.<sup>8</sup>

These documents prove the existence of an armor by Francesco Negroli, which was begun at the end of 1550 or the beginning of 1551, was in the course of work in June of 1551, and was certainly finished well in advance of December 1553, when payment was ordered. The armor could be either the Damascened Garniture of Charles V described here—as we believe it to be—or an undocumented and lost armor belonging to Philip II. The documents of 1550–53, like those of 1544–45 and 1548–49, show that Francesco—like his brother Filippo in 1532, 1533, and 1543—produced works in his name alone. Philip II must have seen this armor during its fabrication in Milan at the end of June 1551, just prior to his return to Spain, at which time he received from Francesco Negroli some horse harnesses for his own use worth 72 scudos, as his order of payment issued in Milan on June 25 shows.

On the interpretation of the documents, let us remember that Prince Philip was away from Spain between 1548 and 1551 in order to rejoin Charles V and become familiar with his own future holdings. During these years he spent a great deal of time with his father, notably at Augsburg, where they were together from July 1550 to May 1551. Philip must have been particularly grateful to see his father do everything in his power to assure that Philip would in his turn inherit the empire. Furthermore, on May 7, 1551, Philip received from Charles V the investiture of the Low Countries, and the following month, June 23, he received full powers as governor of Spain. During the same period Philip took possession of the already mentioned embossed and damascened garniture, dated 1549–50, by Desiderius Helmschmid and Jörg Sigman (Real Armería, inv. nos. A 239–242), as well as two other armors, the Flowers Garniture (A 217–230), attributed to Desiderius Helmschmid and datable to 1549–50, and the Landshut Garniture of 1550, the work of Wolfgang Grosschedel, now divided principally between Madrid (Real Armería, inv. nos. A 231–238) and Brussels (Musée Royal de l'Armée et d'Histoire Militaire, inv. nos. H/24; II/41). In April 1551 he ordered yet another garniture, known as the Burgundy Cross (*Aspas* or *Cruces de Borgoña*) Garniture (Real Armería, inv. nos. A 263–273), from Wolfgang Grosschedel. Such a concentration of armor for one man in so short a period of time makes us think that Prince Philip had no pressing need, at least for his personal use, of the Damascened Garniture. On the contrary, it seems very possible that it was presented by Prince Philip to his father in gratitude for all the favors he had recently received. But this remains only a hypothesis, pending discovery of other documents.

The identification of the Damascened Garniture, which is the one undoubtedly referred to in the documents of 1548–49 or, more probably, 1550–53, as the work of the Negroli may



shed some light on the enigmatic scene that appears on the shield made for Prince Philip in 1552 (figs. 1, 2) by Helmschmid and Sigman. In the border of the shield is depicted, amid other hunting scenes, a bull charging a warrior whose shield bears the inscription NEGROL. The allusion to a rivalry between Desiderius Helmschmid and the Negroli is self-evident and has often been noted. Nonetheless, the presence of this “little sin of pride” on an armor that is atypical in the oeuvre of this well-known Augsburg armorer shows that he considered the embossed harness a masterpiece, a demonstration of the supremacy of his skill over that of the Negroli, his Milanese competitors. He hoped to beat them on their own ground, the art of embossing and damascening, for which Filippo and Francesco Negroli were internationally famous. However, the allusion was placed not on the armor but on the shield, which was only finished on April 15, 1552, that is, two years after the armor. It is plausible that, in the meantime, Desiderius might himself have seen Charles V’s Damascened Garniture and, believing his own to be more beautiful, decided to proclaim the preeminence of his art.

1. “Otro Arnes pecto con Imagen de Nrā SS<sup>A</sup> y su espaldar y la gola pegada en el / Un morrion con bentalle y Una rrexa delante la cara y Un collar de malla / Unos medios brazales sin cañones / Dos mandiletes con los dedos de malla y medios quixotes / Otro Arnes de la misma labor de cavallo ligero peto con Imagen de nuestra Señora y su espaldar y alpartaz de malla y bragueta y su gola pegada / Una Zelada borgoñona sus guardabrazos y brazales y mandiletes y medias grevas trançadas con quixotes / Otros dos Guardabrazos para con mangas de malla / Una Vista con su bentalle y rrexas q̄ sirve en la misma zelada borgoñona / Un Morrion A manera de sombrero / . . . / Otra [rodela] labrada de Atauxia los cantos y en medio el campo de oro y negro / . . . / Otras dos sillars Armadas de arçon ancho labradas de Atauxia Guarneçidas de terciopelo negro y franxon de oro.” Inventory of the Real Armería, 1594.
2. “Seys espadas y quatro dagas de Atauxia con baynas de terciopelo y cuero y las tres espadas tienen su cuchillo y punçon y la Una Un punzon.” Inventory of the Real Armería, 1594.
3. *Inventario General Histórico*, 1793, fols. 16r–16v, 21v, in the inventory of swords.
4. “200 escudos á uno que nos estaba haciendo unas armas labradas de ataujía.” AGS, Secretaría de Estado, legajo 643, fol. 143.
5. “El Principe / Domingo de orbea mi thesorero yo vos mando que de qualesquier dineros de vuestro cargo deys y pagueis a francisco noguerol armero del Emperador mi señor que reside en Milan quatrocientos scudos de oro . . . los quales son para en quenta y

parte de pago de Mill y cient scudos de oro que ha de aver por la labor y el oro que entrare en unas armas que ha de labrar de atauxia para mi servicio . . . fecha en Augusta a X de noviembre 1550. Yo el Principe / Por mandado de su Al<sup>a</sup>. Gonçalo Perez.” AGS, Secretaría de Estado, legajo 1565, fol. 75.

6. “El principe / Contadores o otras qualesquier personas a cuyo cargo fuere de tomar las cuentas de Domingo de Orbea mi thesorero . . . quatroçientos escudos de oro que de Milan . . . pago alli a francisco noguerol armero del Emperador mi señor para en cuenta de mill y cient escudos de oro que avia de haver de unas armas mias que labra de Atauxia los quales dichos quatrocientos escudos de oro . . . fecha en Augusta a XXIII de mayo De Mill quinientos cinquenta y un años. Yo el principe. Por mandado de su alteza Gonçallo Perez.” AGS, Secretaría de Estado, legajo 1565, fol. 123.
7. “El Principe / Domingo de orbea mi tesorero yo vos mando que de qualesquier dineros de vuestro cargo pagueis a francisco negrol dorador de su magestad trezientos y setenta y dos escudos de oro en oro de los quales los trezientos son para cumplimiento a seteçientos escudos de oro que los quatroçientos dellos tiene antes rreçebidos que son todos para en parte de pago de mill y çien escudos de oro que a de aver por el oro y manos de unas armas negras que labra de atauxia para mi serviçio y los Restantes setenta y dos escudos de oro son por ciertas guarniçiones de cavallo que del se an tomado para mi serviçio y entregado en Mi cavalleriza . . . fecha en Milan a XXV de Junio 1551 / Yo El Principe.” AGS, Secretaría de Estado, legajo 1565, fol. 114.
8. “a francisco noguerol armero de su mag<sup>t</sup>. quatrocientos y quinze escudos de oro en oro y quatro rreales que recibio en genova por mano del embaxador de genova gomez suarez de figueroa por comysion del dho thesorero [Domingo de Orbea] por mano de su alteza los quales fueron a cumplimiento del preçio de çiertas armas que el dicho armero hiço para el serviçio de su alteza los quales dichos escudos con los intereses y costas de rresponcion y corretaje de genova a besançon y de alli a españa para la feria de octubre de medina del campo del dicho año de 1553 costaron dozientos y nueve mill y treinta y ocho m̄rs [maravedis] los quales dhos [dichos] m̄rs se le rreçiben en quenta por virtud de una çedula de su Alteza fecha a veynte y siete de diziembre del dho año de 1553 en que manda que al dicho thesorero se le rreçiban en quenta por virtud della sin otro rrecaudo.” AGS, Contaduría Mayor, 1<sup>a</sup> Epoca, legajo 1393.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Abadia 1793, pp. 2–3, 6, 28, 57–58; Martínez del Romero 1849, pp. 43, 85, 187, nos. 1087, 1716, 2480, 2483, 2484; Boenheim 1885, pp. 192–93; Valencia de Don Juan 1898, pp. 59–60, 216, figs. 131, 132; de Cosson 1901, pp. 57–58, no. F.11; Calvert 1907, pp. 99–100, pls. 34, 142, 164, 170; Lenz 1908, p. 205, no. I.406; Lensi 1917–18, vol. 2, p. 506, no. 3190; Gamber 1958, p. 92; Thomas and Gamber 1958, p. 768; Cortés 1963, pp. 36–38, figs. 6, 7; Boccia and Coelho 1975, pp. 366–67, pls. 328–30; Scalini 1987, p. 37, n. 9.

# THE HERITAGE OF FILIPPO NEGROLI

The absence of signed works by Filippo Negroli after 1545, the date of his burgonet for Charles V (cat. no. 35), brings to an end any clear understanding of the evolution of his art. However, thanks to recently discovered documents, we know that he continued to work on richly embossed armors *all'antica* until his retirement in 1557. His collaborators for much of this time were his brothers Giovan Battista and Alessandro, as Francesco, who was away from Milan in 1545–47 and had set up his own damascening shop in 1548, officially left the family enterprise in 1551. The inventory of the workshop in November 1557 (doc. 120) provides a list of finished and partially finished armors for various noblemen; among them were:

the shield and helmet [*celata*, presumably a burgonet] worked in relief with trophies and armed figures and damascened in gold . . .

a very beautiful shield and helmet, worked in relief and not finished, of which the shield can be dismounted and put together with screws . . .

another shield and helmet worked in relief with figures and scrolls with snakes, not finished . . .

a helmet in the ancient Roman style with two prisoners at the sides and the rest with leaves, with a mask to raise and lower at will, not finished.

The enumeration of these objects reveals the number of important parade pieces that were on hand at a single moment—armors waiting to find a purchaser or to be completed—and that the atelier continued to produce works of this genre as they had in the 1530s and 1540s.

Keeping in mind the excessive number of unfounded attributions to the Negroli made in the past, attributions which have often blurred or obscured their true achievement, we have approached the following four armors with deliberate restraint. At first glance they appear to relate to those works described in 1557: the “very beautiful” shield that could be assembled with screws might well describe the Medusa shield in Vienna (cat. no. 42), where as the lion helmet in Vienna (cat. no. 39), with its figures at

the sides, lush foliage, and pivoting mask visor, generally corresponds to the unfinished helmet *alla romana antica* in the same list. In fact, any one of the three related helmets (cat. nos. 39–41) appears to match this description, except that their figures are not prisoners but readily distinguishable personifications of Victory and Fame. The replication of this unusual helmet type in three variants also recalls the copies made after Filippo’s burgonets of 1532 (cat. nos. 20–22) and 1545 (cat. nos. 36–37). It would appear, then, that in this period, the Negroli atelier was producing armors like those in this section, although the lack of a direct stylistic link between the last dated works of Filippo Negroli and his atelier (especially cat. no. 35) cautions us not to accept them unquestionably as autograph works. They might conceivably be variants after a Negroli model (the basic form was already known to Orsoni in his album of 1554, cat. no. 15), or they may be by Filippo and his brothers if one accepts that they demonstrate the evolution of the Negroli style a decade after the burgonet of 1545. If indeed the Vienna burgonet and Medusa shield are among Filippo Negroli’s last works, they furnish new evidence of his unfailing imagination, virtuoso technique, and fidelity to the classical style.

It is also significant that among the last pieces created by Filippo was a helmet and shield “worked in relief with trophies and armed figures and damascened in gold.” While this might evoke the decoration of the Medusa shield (cat. no. 42, which, however, lacks armed figures), the description also brings to mind the numerous embossed and damascened parade helmets and shields, popular in the third quarter of the century, that were covered with large figural compositions, usually copied directly from engravings. The center of a shield of this type is typically embossed with a multifigured scene (the subjects were usually taken from classical or biblical history), the enframing border with combinations of medallions, trophies of arms, putti, and garlands, and the surfaces blued and richly damascened in gold and silver. One can only speculate that in their late works, the Negroli brothers might have initiated this new genre of parade armor.

## BURGONET "ALLA ROMANA ANTICA"

Milan, ca. 1550–55

Steel, gold, and brass

Wt. 7 lb. 4 oz. (3,300 g)

Ex coll.: Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol, Schloss Ambras,

Innsbruck; acquired for the imperial collections, 1606

Hofjagd- und Rüstammer des Kunsthistorischen Museums, Vienna  
(A 693)

This type of parade helmet with masklike pivoting visor was specifically identified in the 1550s as "alla romana antica" (in the ancient Roman style).<sup>1</sup> The helmet is of unusual construction, for it is formed of ten major elements: a bowl with an added brow plate, two cheekpieces of two hinged plates each, a mask visor, and a three-piece scrolled neck plate. The bowl is forged in one piece with a tall comb that is embossed along the edge as a twisted branch with raised knots, the wood grain and knots picked out in gold-damascening, and on the sides with a pair of confronted tritons battling with clubs and shields, their tails extending the length of the comb. At the base of the comb are two holes for a missing plume tube, and the edge of the comb is pierced with three transverse holes, with a vertical hole at the apex, these presumably for plume supports. A raised rib separating the base of the comb from the bowl on each side is damascened with foliate scrolls. Both sides of the bowl are embossed with a sirenlike half-figure, the torso a winged nude female, the lower part formed of a leafy skirt and a bifurcated fishtail curving symmetrically to either side and ending in a spiral of leaves, tendrils, and a flower. The figure on the right side, personifying Victory, holds a wreath in her outstretched left hand and a palm branch in her right; the figure on the left side, symbolizing Fame, blows a trumpet and also holds a palm. At the nape is a horizontal notched band damascened with flowers. The neck plates are riveted to the nape and consist of a triangular center plate embossed with a leaf, with another plate with split and inward-scrolled edges riveted to each side; the upper surfaces are channeled and damascened with foliage, the undersides damascened with arabesques. The front edge of the bowl is extended by a brow plate, arched over each eye, to the center of which is riveted a bracket for the visor support. The cheekpieces are hinged at the sides of the bowl, each formed of two hinged parts: the upper half is shaped at the back to fit over the raised band at the nape and is damascened with an arabesque medallion over the ear; the lower half is turned out and fluted along its back edge and embossed in the center with a winged putto, the one on the right holding a trident, that on the left holding a sail damascened with stars. The embossed figural and foliate decoration on the comb, sides of the bowl,

and cheekpieces is highlighted in gold-damascening. The edges of the brow plate and cheekpieces have smooth turns damascened with scrolls. The visor is forged in one piece as a lion-mask surmounted by a fluted "diadem" with scrolled upper edge. The lion face is deeply modeled, the hair of the eyebrows and whiskered lips engraved and punched, with raised veins issuing from the corners of the eyes; the eyebrows, surrounds of the pupils, and whiskers are gold-damascened, and the teeth are silvered. Riveted inside the visor is a hinged bar with telescoping nasal support damascened with foliate scrolls, the lower end of which fits into the bracket at the front of the brow. The visor pivots are modern.

This helmet and the famous Medusa shield in Vienna (cat. no. 42) have been associated since 1596, when they were described together in the inventory of the contents of Schloss Ambras, above Innsbruck, following the death of its owner, Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol (1529–1595): "An iron shield with damascening, in the middle a Medusa, with it his princely highness's helmet with the lion face."<sup>2</sup> Based on this and subsequent Ambras inventories and the general similarities of the two embossed and damascened pieces, the helmet and shield are usually considered a matching set (*gioco* in Italian), with common provenance, attribution, and date. However, Boccia and Coelho (1967) argued persuasively that the two are stylistically diverse, with considerable differences in the design and the details of decoration, and thus probably never constituted a set. We agree with this conclusion and thus have catalogued them separately.

The helmet is first recorded in an engraved portrait of Archduke Ferdinand II (fig. 61) in Francesco Terzio's *Imagines Gentis Austriacae* (Innsbruck, vol. 2, 1569), the drawings for which were already begun in the 1550s (Scheicher 1983, pp. 45–46). Ferdinand is depicted wearing an armor, now in Vienna (Hofjagd- und Rüstammer, inv. no. A 693), with embossed and gold-damascened decoration that includes representations of Neptune, Hercules, Jupiter, and Vulcan; the lion-mask burgonet is at his feet. Described separately from the helmet and Medusa shield in the Ambras inventory of 1596, this armor is now thought to have been made in Prague about 1560 to match the helmet and shield, which are assumed to have been





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in the archduke's possession by that date (Gamber and Beaufort 1990, pp. 149–51). Terzio's engraving also served as a model for the frescoed portrait of the archduke in the Spanish Hall at Ambras (Scheicher 1975, fig. 95), painted about 1575, and for the slightly later oil-on-canvas portrait of the archduke in which the helmet's red textile lining, now lost, is recorded

(Innsbruck 1988, no. 25). These portraits are important not only for establishing Ferdinand's ownership of the helmet, but also for the noticeable absence in them of the Medusa shield.

Although visors or peaks formed as animal, human, or grotesque masks are typical features of sixteenth-century helmets *all'antica*, the lion-mask here undoubtedly alludes





39, without visor

to the Nemean lion, the fierce beast that Hercules strangled and whose impenetrable pelt he wore as a trophy. Renaissance princes often associated themselves with Hercules, a paragon of strength, valor, and invincibility, with the result that lion heads were commonplace motifs in armor decoration *all'antica* since the fourteenth century. That Archduke Ferdinand identified with this mythical hero is made clear in Terzio's portrait by the inclusion of a knotty club, another of Hercules' attributes. This imagery was presumably chosen to underscore Ferdinand's powerful position as governor of Bohemia, whose heraldic symbol was a lion, and as a "new Hercules." The references to Victory and Fame on the helmet bowl and to the four Roman deities on the associated cuirass add to the "Roman-ness" of the ensemble. It must be admitted that in this context the classically inspired Medusa shield would have been an appropriate adjunct.

This helmet and the related examples in Cambridge and in New York (cat. nos. 40, 41) stand out among sixteenth-cen-



39, detail of left side



39

ture parade burgonets because of their unusual form and multipart construction, especially their distinctive articulated cheekpieces, scrolled neck plates, and lion-mask visors. The visor on this helmet, in fact, serves no practical purpose: it lacks apertures for vision and, if lowered, completely covers the face of the wearer and renders him blind. It also fits the helmet badly, as there is no correspondence between the irregular outline of the lion's mouth and the helmet's smooth, gracefully shaped face opening. Thus, despite the presence of pivots and an ingenious telescoping support bar, it appears to have been designed to remain fixed in an open position. The impracticality of this construction underscores the helmet's purely decorative and symbolic function.

The authorship and dating of the helmet have generally been linked with that of the Medusa shield. Boenheim (1889) proposed that both were the youthful work of the Milanese armorer Lucio Piccinino, about 1550–52, based on the erroneous interpretation of the letters LPF on the shield to read

“Lucio Piccinino Fecit.” Despite the fact that there are no signed Piccinino armors and that the only harnesses reasonably attributed to him date to the 1570s and 1580s, the attribution was accepted by several generations of armor scholars. In 1938 Beard ascribed the Vienna helmet and shield, along with the helmets in New York and Cambridge, to Filippo and Francesco Negroli, comparing them to the signed Negroli helmets of 1543 and 1545 (cat. nos. 33, 35). The Negroli attribution was embraced by Thomas (in London 1949), who subsequently dated the Vienna pieces to 1541, based on the allusion to Africa in the decoration of the shield, which he interpreted as referring to Charles V's campaign in Algeria in that year. The Negroli authorship and dating to 1541 remain commonly accepted (for example, Gamber and Beaufort 1990).

Contrary to this consensus and usually overlooked in the literature, the Negroli attribution for the helmet (the shield was not discussed) was rejected thirty years ago by Boccia and Coelho (1967), who suggested that it was stylistically different from the signed works of Filippo and Francesco, and that it related more closely to a distinctive group of Milanese embossed helmets with similar scrolled edges that are usually dated about 1560–65. These authors and others (Thomas and Gamber 1958; Scalini 1990) also observed the burgonet's similarity to the lion-mask helmets found on two monumental bronzes by the sculptors Leone and Pompeo Leoni, the freestanding *Charles V Vanquishing Fury* in the Prado, a work documented in 1549–53 but not finished until 1564, and the funeral monument to Gian Giacomo Medici, marquis of Marignano, in Milan Cathedral, which dates to 1561–63. The fact that Pompeo Leoni is recorded as having made a helmet for Pier Luigi Farnese in 1546 has even generated speculation that the Vienna burgonet and the related headpieces in Cambridge and New York might actually be the work of Pompeo (Scalini 1990).

The two Leoni-monument helmets, which derive from the same model, have lion-mask visors and fluted neck plates generally similar to those on the Vienna and Cambridge burgonets. On the other hand, their combs, with roped edges and reeded sides, are different from those of the burgonets, and their bowls are covered with large foliate scrolls rather than figural ornament. More important, the bronze-sculpture helmets differ from their steel counterparts in that the visors are set within the bowl, under the peak, and are not pivoted on the outside. This impractical construction reveals the helmet to be the imaginative creation of a sculptor who was apparently without a working knowledge of, or at least concern for, actual helmet design. One can only conclude from this that lion-mask helmets with curled neck plates probably existed in the 1550s and that the Leoni may have seen one, but there is no convincing documentary or stylistic evidence to link the





Fig. 61. *Portrait of Archduke Ferdinand II*. Engraving published in Francesco Terzio, *Imagines Gentis Austriacae*, vol. 2, 1569. The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Gift of Ica Waldes Bušek, in memory of Jindřich Waldes, 1986 (1986.1250.6)

forging, embossing, and damascening of burgonets like them in Vienna, Cambridge, and New York to the hand of either Pompeo or Leone Leoni. It seems obvious that the Vienna helmet was made by a professional, and exceptionally skilled, armorer who could shape and emboss a parade helmet with imagination, proficiency, and grace. The damascened decoration, too, is in the mainstream of Milanese armor tradition.

The authorship of this helmet is problematical. The Vienna burgonet and the versions in Cambridge and New York clearly follow closely upon the achievements of the Negroli workshop, the foliate ornament in particular recalling Filippo's work. The thick acanthus leaves on the sides of the bowl, the smooth tendrils with crisply defined half-round profiles that connect to the flowers, and the rosettelike blossoms worked in two or three layers of petals that show the leaves of their plant below, are motifs also common to the Masks Garniture of 1539, the burgonet of 1543, and the contemporary gauntlet at Leeds (cat. nos. 30, 33, 34). The slightly pasty quality of the embossing of the leaves especially recalls the burgonet of 1545 (cat. no. 35),

the last dated work by Filippo, which also comes closest to the Vienna burgonet in its more assertive use of gold-damascened ornament. The lion-mask visor is a masterpiece of modeling, notable especially for the rippling facial planes and the subtle rendering of the bulging veins at the sides; the sharp outlines of the eyes in particular recall those on the lion-mask shield of 1533 (cat. no. 20), on Guidobaldo della Rovere's armor of about the same date (cat. no. 23), and on the faces on the burgonet of 1545, as well as the burgonet attributed to Giovan Paolo in the National Gallery of Art in Washington (cat. no. 44). The damascening of the telescoping bar on the inside of the visor, which would have been invisible to both the viewer and the wearer, reveals the armorer to be a perfectionist.

The long-held Negroli attribution is far from secure, however, as the Vienna, Cambridge, and New York burgonets also differ significantly from the known Negroli oeuvre. The workmanship lacks the consistent precision typical of every one of Filippo's signed or securely attributed armors. The tritons on the comb and the putti on the cheeks seem rough edged and lumpy, quite unlike the precisely chiseled and polished quality of the small figures on the burgonets of 1543 and 1545. The figures of Victory and Fame, centered on the sides of the bowl and with heads in profile, are flatter in conception and embossing and seem to have no direct relation to the full-length personifications seated at the front of the burgonet of 1545. The damascening is much more extensive on these helmets, and there is no apparent correspondence in the style or motifs employed here and those used by Francesco Negroli. More significant, the damascening on the Vienna helmet tends to flatten the relief, emphasizing its linear qualities at the expense of its plasticity, an effect opposite to what one would expect from Filippo Negroli.

The Vienna burgonet (representing the most complete and best preserved of the three versions) appears to bridge the stylistic and chronological gap between Filippo Negroli's classically inspired helmets of the 1530s and 1540s and the more eccentric Mannerist group of helmets of the 1560s that Boccia and Coelho (1967) originally compared with it. The earlier helmets are more faithful to their antique sources of inspiration and are decorated with greater originality and variety of design; the figures are large, the ornament uncluttered, and the use of color restrained. The later ones, on the other hand, exhibit a horror vacui that would come to characterize all subsequent Italian embossed armor; the steel surfaces are covered with large multigure compositions copied from reproductive engravings, with prominent strapwork frames and abundant grotesque ornament, and an unrestrained pictorial use of gold- and silver-damascening. The Negroli helmets and many contemporary works are



more broadly sculptural; the later ones exhibit a fussy, meticulous attention to detail that reveals a goldsmith's approach. Moreover, the burgonets of the 1560s owe a direct debt to the Vienna, Cambridge, and New York examples in their curled edges and the use of trophies on the sides of the comb, the acanthus leaves down the center of the nape plate, and the figural decoration on the cheekpieces. Thus a date in the early 1550s, between these two distinct groups of armor, seems likely for the Vienna burgonet, and it accords well with the appearance of the lion-mask helmets in the Leoni bronzes and with the drawing of an analogous burgonet in Filippo Orsoni's album of 1554 (see cat. no. 15), whose pivoted visor is shaped as a bearded human face surmounted by a diadem. This date, a period in which Filippo and his brothers were still active, raises the question of whether indeed we are looking here at a late example of the Negroli workshop, or whether another virtuoso talent, inspired by the Negroli achievement but as yet unnamed, had emerged in Milan.

40.

#### BURGONET "ALLA ROMANA ANTICA"

*Milan, ca. 1550–55*

*Steel, gold, and brass*

*Wt. 6 lb. 1 oz. (2,750 g)*

*Ex coll.: Possibly first Lord Amherst of Hackney (1835–1909);*

*"Theatrical junk" sale, 1935; Mr. Jones; Foster's Sale Room, Pall*

*Mall, 1936; Capt. R. P. Johns; John Hunt, 1937*

*Lent by the Syndics of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge*

*(M. 19-1938)*

This helmet is generally analogous in form, decoration, and workmanship to the example in Vienna (cat. no. 39), but it lacks its brow plate and the lower portions of the cheekpieces. The surfaces are heavily corroded and are now of dark russet color, the original surface color and almost all the gold-damascening and fire-gilding lost. Despite these effects of time, the modeling remains very expressive.

The one-piece bowl has a tall comb, whose edge is chiseled on either side with overlapping layers of acanthus leaves, formerly gilt. The sides of the comb are embossed with a loose arrangement of classical armor and weapons, musical instruments, a banner and a cannon, vases, ewers, basins, and books, some retaining traces of damascened decoration. Among these, on the right side, is an open book damascened with an inscription in Greek, now very worn, which appears to read: ΤΑΥ[ΤΑ]ΙΣ Π[Ρ]ΟΣ ΔΣΤ[Ε]ΡΑΣ (By these

1. The term is used to describe a similar helmet in Filippo Orsoni's album of designs dated 1554 (cat. no. 15) and is encountered again in the inventory of the Negroli workshop in 1557 upon Filippo's retirement (doc. 127).
2. Boeheim 1888, p. CCLXIX, fol. 307r: "Ain eisene rundell mit tauschierarbeit, in der mitten die Medusa, darbei irer fürstlich durchlaucht hauben mit dem lewengesicht." Subsequent descriptions in the Ambras inventories were published by Auer 1984, p. xxxvi, no. 63.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Sacken 1855, vol. 1, p. 29, pls. 14, 15; Boeheim 1888, p. CCLXIX; Boeheim 1889, pp. 395–99; Laking 1920–22, vol. 4, pp. 158–59, fig. 1237; Grosz 1925, pp. 123–31; Grosz and Thomas 1936, p. 79; Beard 1938; Cripps-Day 1945b, (116), pp. 24–25; London 1949, no. 44; Luchner 1958, pp. 26–27; Thomas 1958; Thomas and Gamber 1958, pp. 765–66, ill. p. 787; Vienna 1958, p. 41; Thomas, Gamber, and Schedelmann 1964, no. 28; Sälzle 1965, pp. 405–6; Boccia and Coelho 1967, pp. 325, 334–35, pl. 285; Scheicher 1975, pp. 71–72, figs. 94, 95; Blair and Boccia 1982, p. 58; Auer 1984, pp. xxxvi, no. 63, and XLIV, no. 145; Vienna 1987, pp. 148–49, no. I.18; Innsbruck 1988, pp. 3–4, 7–8, no. 1; Vienna 1989, p. 236, no. V/4; Gamber and Beaufort 1990, pp. 45–47, pl. 13; Scalini 1990, pp. 15–27; Boccia 1993, p. 17.

things to the stars).<sup>1</sup> Similar inscriptions are also encountered on two other pieces (cat. nos. 36, 42). On each side of the bowl is a winged, nude female half-figure, the one on the left symbolizing Victory and on the right, Fame. The lower half of each figure consists of a bifurcated skirt of acanthus leaves, from which issue leafy branches that curl on either side and end in a large blossom. At the back of the helmet is a rounded and notched horizontal band, below which is riveted a separate neck plate embossed down the center with leaves, the sides deeply fluted and the edges split and curled upward. The hinged cheekpieces are fragmentary and are of unequal length. Each has a turned and roped forward edge bordered by a sunken band and a rear edge raised slightly to fit over the band at the nape, and each is pierced at the center with holes to facilitate hearing. The front of the bowl is cut straight across and has an unfinished edge, indicating



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that there was originally a riveted-on brow plate, as on the Vienna example; this plate would have continued the line of the cheekpieces and presumably would have carried the bracket for a visor support. The lion-mask visor is comparable to that on the Vienna helmet, but it has lost its internal support bar and the pivot end of each arm and is now incorrectly riveted in a fixed position at the sides of the bowl.

The obvious similarities between this burgonet and the one in Vienna leave little doubt that both emanated from the same workshop. There are, however, some noteworthy differences between them. The decorative treatment of the

edges and sides of the combs differ. The sides of both bowls are occupied by figures of Victory and Fame, but the fishtailed sirens on the Vienna example have become, on the Cambridge helmet, female demi-figures whose lower bodies consist only of acanthus skirts. The figures on the Cambridge example lack the small diadems worn by their counterparts on the Vienna helmet but have more elaborately coiffed hair, and their wings and skirts show more variety in embossing. The neck plate of the Cambridge example is made in one piece rather than three. On both helmets, the visor is essentially the same, especially the model-



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ing of the lion's face, but the diadem on the Cambridge visor is heavier looking and slightly simplified in form, with its scrolled upper edge thicker and divided into fewer, wider notched sections, the leaves in the center flatter and fewer in number, and the flutes fewer and with shorter, wider reeds.

In its original state, the Cambridge helmet must have looked very similar to the Vienna burgonet. The traces of fire-gilding on the edge of the comb and the gold-damascening still evident on the trophies and in a few isolated spots on the figures of Victory and Fame suggest that the raised decoration was consistently highlighted in gold applied one way or another. On the other hand, it is curious that no traces of gold are evident on the visor or neck plate, areas that on the Vienna example are elaborately damascened. Rather than detract from the beauty of the piece, however, the absence of gold appeals to the modern eye, enhancing our appreciation of the helmet's superb sculptural presence.

This helmet was first published by Beard in 1938, shortly after it appeared on the art market. Beard argued persuasively that the Cambridge and Vienna helmets, and also the one in New York (cat. no. 41), as well as the Medusa shield in Vienna (cat. no. 42), should be attributed to Filippo and Francesco Negroli. He also suggested that the Cambridge helmet corresponded more closely to the Medusa shield than did the lion-mask helmet traditionally associated with

it since 1596, noting that the bands of trophies around the rim of the shield had no parallel on the Vienna helmet but were very similar to those on the comb of the Cambridge example. The trophies on both the Medusa shield and on the Cambridge helmet include an open book inscribed in Greek with like inscriptions referring to the stars; there are no inscriptions on the Vienna helmet. Beard speculated that since there were three very similar lion-mask helmets in existence, there were possibly originally three Medusa shields as well, the sets having become mixed up with the passage of time.<sup>2</sup> A theory of multiple sets of lion-mask helmets and Medusa shields was also expounded by Cripps-Day (1945b).

There is no evidence to prove that the helmets in Vienna, Cambridge, and New York ever had matching shields, particularly as there is some doubt that the Vienna helmet and shield were intended to form a set. On the other hand, Beard's attribution of the three helmets to Filippo Negroli has certain merit. Although the Negroli attribution has been discussed in the previous entry, some additional observations are warranted. The acanthus leaves, branches, blossoms, and narrow meandering tendrils on the bowl of the Cambridge helmet are essentially the same as those employed on Filippo's burgonet of 1543 (cat. no. 33), and on the Cambridge example the relief is equally high and crisp, with undercut edges. The foliate scrolls are symmetrical to either side of the central figure, but each is slightly different, a testimony to the creativity of



the armorer. The tip of the center acanthus leaf on the diadem of the visor is turned over outward in relief (this tip is broken through and missing on the Vienna burgonet), another motif common to Negroli embossing. The edge of the comb is very subtly embossed and chiseled with a double row of leaves, a sophisticated treatment not found elsewhere and one that required exceptional skill. The mastery demonstrated in these details is offset, however, by the disjointed frieze of trophies on the comb, which is surprisingly poorly designed and looks like nothing found in the established Negroli oeuvre. As noted above (cat. no. 39), these trophies appear to be the direct forerunner to those employed on the group of burgonets with scrolled edges dating to the 1560s, particularly the examples in Dresden and Berlin.

1. As interpreted by R. A. Crighton, in Washington 1989, p. 40, correcting Beard's transcription of 1938.
2. Beard identified a Medusa-head shield formerly in the Beardmore collection (Beardmore 1845, pl. 10) as a candidate for one of these three pairs. The shield is known only from an engraving, but it appears to have been made in the same workshop as one in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris (inv. no. I. 82), which differs from it only in the substitution of a grotesque horned mask in the center for the Medusa. Both shields have outer rims filled with trophies of arms not unlike those on the comb of the Cambridge helmet and the inner ring on the Medusa shield in Vienna (cat. no. 42).

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Beard 1938; *National Art-Collections Fund* 1939; Cripps-Day 1945b, (116), pp. 24–25, fig. xviii; Thomas and Gamber 1958, p. 768; Washington 1989, pp. 40–41, no. 43; Scalini 1990, pp. 3, 26; Boccia 1993, p. 17.

41.

## BURGONET "ALLA ROMANA ANTICA"

*Milan, ca. 1550–55*

*Steel, gold, brass, and leather*

*Wt. 4 lb. 11 oz. (2,125 g)*

*Ex coll.: Marqués del Bosch, Valencia; Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, duc de Dino, Paris*

*The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Rogers Fund, 1904 (04.3.223)*

Like the example in Cambridge (cat. no. 40), this helmet originally must have looked very similar to the lion-mask helmet of Archduke Ferdinand II in Vienna (cat. no. 39). The Metropolitan Museum's helmet lacks a neck plate and a visor, and the surface is russet colored, although it was probably once blued or blackened. It is otherwise in excellent, essentially unrestored condition.

The bowl is formed in one piece with a tall comb, the edge embossed as a twisted, knobby branch, the knots formerly gilt, bound at the center with a transverse gilt band of roses and acanthus leaves; the uppermost rose is pierced, perhaps for a plume fixture. The sides of the comb are embossed with confronted tritons with leafy skirts and coiling serpent tails with gold-damascened scales; each figure holds a bucranium shield and a jawbone club, the figures separated by a long-necked vase. The rounded rib along the base of the comb is damascened with scrolling foliage. The sides of the bowl are embossed with nude female half-figures personifying Victory (left side) and Fame (right). The lower half of each figure is formed of acanthus leaves that spread to either

side and issue scrolling branches that terminate in a flower. The front edge of the bowl dips slightly in the center and has a turned edge etched with a narrow bead-and-reel band, with a parallel raised band above it etched with a roped design. A leaf-shaped plate with a projecting U-shaped bracket as a visor support is riveted at the center of the brow, and there is a projecting iron stud at either side. The back of the bowl is embossed with a notched horizontal band, and the flange below it, to which the neck plates were riveted, is damascened with a narrow band of Greek-key ornament. A pair of holes at the base of the comb presumably held a plume tube (missing), and a pair of transverse holes farther up on the comb was probably also used to support the plume. At each side of the bowl is a threaded rosette-shaped washer of gilt iron that turns on a screw projecting through the bowl; the screws, which served as visor pivots, are pierced through at the ends. Just below each pivot is a narrow baluster-shaped stud projecting at right angles to the bowl, the left one broken off. The cheekpieces are formed of two hinged plates analogous to those on the Vienna







41, detail of right side

burgonet, the upper plate with an etched foliate medallion in the center, the lower plate embossed with a satyr blowing a horn, the edges of both etched with foliate motifs. At the rear edge of the left cheek is an iron buckle riveted over a leather tab. Most of the relief decoration and all of the etched areas were formerly gilt, of which many traces remain. The interior reveals a number of large iron patches, especially along the base of the comb, numerous small breaks filled with rivets, and a large brazed repair above the left eye.

This helmet must originally have had a visor of mask form, presumably a lion-mask like the examples in Vienna and Cambridge. The visor was pivoted at the sides (the Metropolitan's helmet is the only one of the three to retain its original visor pivots) and supported above the brow by a telescoping bar inside the visor that fitted into the bracket at the front of the bowl. The neck plate, or plates, presumably

had curled edges like those on the other two burgonets.

The Metropolitan's helmet shares a number of decorative elements found on both the Vienna and Cambridge examples, but it also differs from each in small but significant details. The comb is generally similar to that of the helmet in Vienna, but the knotty branch along the edge is more sculpturally and naturalistically rendered, and the battling tritons on the sides are larger, filling the sides of the comb completely. The personifications of Victory and Fame on the sides of the bowl compare closely to those on the Cambridge helmet, but are generally more robust, with sharply chiseled, almost masculine profiles; unlike their counterparts in Vienna and Cambridge, they lack wings and their elaborately coiffed and meticulously delineated hair trails in curls down their necks and over their shoulders. The figures' leafy lower bodies have become heavier and the scrolls issuing from them more abundant, adding weight,





41, detail of left side

but also a certain congestion, to the design. This amplitude of form and space-filling quality carries over onto the cheekpieces, where the satyrs appear to be squashed within the framework of the lower plates.

This helmet is the only one among the three to employ etched decoration. The borders around the face opening, the medallion on the upper cheek plates, and the decoration of the raised scales and flutes of the rear edges of the cheeks (and presumably the lost neck plate as well) are etched rather than gold-damascened, as on the other helmets. The type of etching, with thick, stylized foliage on a plain sunken ground, is close to that found on armors of the 1540s by Giovan Paolo Negroli. The damascened decoration is limited to the tritons' tails on the comb, the rounded rib along the base of the comb, and the flange at the back of the bowl.

Several construction features of this helmet appear to be unique, although their purpose is not clear. The projecting

pegs just below the visor pivots are a feature apparently otherwise unrecorded; they may have served as a stop, or rest, for the arms of the visor. The two projecting rivets on the flange at the back of the bowl are also unusual, as the neck plate was presumably riveted flush over the flange, as on the Vienna and Cambridge helmets. The buckle riveted over a piece of leather at the back edge of the left cheekpiece presumably had a corresponding strap riveted at the rear of the right cheek; although unknown from other examples, this strap and buckle arrangement may have been a later adaptation intended to lock the cheeks and neck plate together more securely from behind.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: De Cosson 1901, pp. 34–35, no. B.30, pl. 9; Dean 1905, p. 113, fig. 49G; Laking 1920–22, vol. 4, p. 159, fig. 1238; Beard 1938, pp. 295–96; Grancsay 1940, fig. 4; Thomas and Gamber 1958, p. 768; Boccia and Coelho 1967, p. 335; Scalini 1990, pp. 15–16; Boccia 1993, p. 17.



42.

## MEDUSA SHIELD

Milan, ca. 1550–55

Steel and gold

Diam. 24 in. (61 cm); Wt. 10 lb. 3 oz. (4,620 g)

Ex coll.: Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol, Schloss Ambras,

Innsbruck; acquired for the imperial collections, 1606

Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer des Kunsthistorischen Museums, Vienna

(A 693a)

The shield is constructed of ten plates and a series of applied moldings that overlap and are riveted solidly together. At the center is an embossed disk, the umbo, which is set into the hollow middle of a larger, slightly domed circular plate; that plate is in turn framed by a wide border constructed in four equal sections, the joins of which are concealed beneath four

applied medallions. The outer edge is defined by a shaped molding, and three similar moldings are applied within that rim; two of the moldings cover the joins between the plates and one divides the middle plate into two distinct sections, forming as a result three concentric bands around the umbo. The exterior surface of the shield is of deep blue-black color







42, detail





42, detail of rim, upper right



42, detail of rim, upper left





42, detail of rim, lower left



42, detail of rim, lower right



highlighted with gold damascening. The inner moldings are damascened with repeating palmettes, whereas the rim molding is damascened with a continuous foliate scroll. The outer edge is pierced with lining holes, and inside, four threaded brackets are riveted around the umbo as fixtures for attaching the arm straps; the lining and straps are now missing.

The umbo is embossed and chiseled in high relief in the form of a winged Medusa head, whose coiled hair fans out around the face, with two raised locks on the forehead stylishly bound with a ribbon. Surrounding the gorgon are two snakes, their confronted heads standing free from the surface, their tails entwined beneath the chin. The modeling of Medusa's head, which rises about 5 centimeters in height, is masterfully executed, and her face, the eyes upturned and mouth agape, expresses horror and pathos. The details of the hair, eyebrows, and wing feathers are minutely chiseled, while the spines of the feathers, the scaly bodies of the snakes, and the hair ribbon are gold-damascened. The head stands out against a uniformly gilt ground.

The first adjacent band is damascened overall with a dense pattern of foliate scrolls that creates an aureole around Medusa. This rich and complexly conceived composition consists of delicate spiral tendrils that issue from tiny vases at either side of the umbo and sprout leaves and flowers; the outlines are engraved or punched, and their fruit is rendered by small punched circles. A small socle is placed in the center of the foliage at the top, and it bears a V-shaped mark.

The second band is embossed with four elongated oval compositions consisting of trophies of ancient and contemporary arms (including a cannon), musical instruments, vases, banners with Turkish crescent moons, and prisoners; arranged in a cross, the ovals are separated by trapezoidal panels enclosing (clockwise from the upper right) figures of David, Samson, Hercules, and Judith. The compositions at the sides are centered on winged figures symbolizing Victory (on the viewer's right), who holds an oval shield inscribed VIC / TOR / -A / DD (*Victoria deorum donum* [?]; Victory, gift of the gods), and Fame (on the left), who holds a trumpet and palm; to the right of Fame, amid the trophies, is a pelta (crescent-shaped shield) with the Greek inscription ΠΡΟΣ / ΤΑ / ΑΣΤΕΡΑΙΑ / ΤΑΥΤΑ (Through these to the stars), which appears to signify that fame or immortality could be gained through the use of arms. Similar inscriptions are also found on catalogue numbers 36 and 40. In the composition at the top, anchored at the center with two bound prisoners separated by a flaming urn, is a scroll-topped shield damascened in the center with the letters O and V separated by a cruciform motif. This same device (but with the letter O abraded to read like a C) is found on another shield in the composition at the bottom. That one also includes two nude figures seated back-to-back on helmets, each holding an open

book; the facing pages of one book are inscribed on four lines CA / RO / LO / V and IM / SA / [?] / D, while the other book is inscribed F- [?] / [?] / [?] / D and [?] / ALP / ·F / V·D.<sup>1</sup>

The outermost band is embossed with four historiated compositions—staggered in relation to the adjacent band—separated by medallions placed on the vertical and horizontal axes. Framed by applied borders damascened with foliate scrolls, these medallions are embossed with (clockwise from the top) busts of three Roman emperors, Julius Caesar, Augustus, and Claudius, and the general Scipio Aemilianus. Each of the busts is accompanied by an identifying Latin inscription: D·IVLIVS·CÆ·IMP·P·M· (Divus Iulius Caesar Imperator, Pontifex Maximus); D·AVGVSTVS·CÆ·IMP· (Divus Augustus Caesar Imperator); TI·CLAVDIVS·CÆ·AVG·IMP· (Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Imperator); and SCIPIO·ÆMIL·APHRICANUS (Scipio Aemilianus Aphericanus). The historiated scenes between the medallions consist of a battle of tritons (lower right) and three other marine processions with tritons, sea creatures, and nereids, some of them playing musical instruments.

The repoussé technique and classical subject matter were intended to evoke images of the heroes of ancient history and mythology, the central Medusa head alluding to the shield blazons of Perseus and Minerva, Mars and Bellona, and the concentric bands of historiated ornament bringing to mind the shield fashioned for Achilles by the divine smith Hephaestus, which was embellished with prophetic scenes from the future history of Rome. The trophies of arms, personifications of Victory and Fame, and families of sea creatures were conventional subjects *all'antica* found throughout Renaissance art.

The mythological scenes in the outer border stand out for their sophisticated compositions and for the variety of figures and poses. Unlike the adjacent band of trophies, in which the figures, arms, and musical instruments are disproportionate in size and somewhat jumbled in design, the marine scenes have a unified and convincingly antique look. At least one of the compositions, the battle of the tritons in the lower right quadrant, has been shown (Grosz 1925) to derive from the famous engraving by Andrea Mantegna (ca. 1430–1506) *Battle of the Sea Gods* (fig. 62), which is thought to date to the 1470s. The most classically oriented artist of his generation, Mantegna seems to have based his composition, at least in part, on an antique relief then in the Villa Medici in Rome, which was well known to artists of the Quattrocento.<sup>2</sup> Mantegna's print, already of considerable age when this shield was made, nevertheless continued to be authoritative in its powerful rendering of this marine battle. In adapting the print to the shield, the embosser limited himself to using the four main figures in the foreground of the engraving, altering their relative positions and making a number of small changes





Fig. 62. Andrea Mantegna, *Battle of the Sea Gods*, 1470s. Engraving and drypoint, 11 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 32 $\frac{1}{2}$  in. (28.3 x 82.6 cm). Duke of Devonshire and the Chatsworth Settlement Trustees

in their poses. In Mantegna's print, for example, only one of the two confronted tritons defends himself with a skull as a shield, whereas in the relief both carry bucrania.

The sources of the other three compositions eluded Grosz. They can be shown, however, to derive from Roman reliefs whose images were probably transmitted to Milan through artists' sketches and pattern books, as no prints of these subjects are recorded. The scene in the lower left copies almost literally a Roman sarcophagus relief datable to the second third of the second century, which in the fifteenth century was in the cloister of San Francesco a Ripa in Trastevere, Rome (fig. 63), where it was frequently copied by Renaissance artists.<sup>3</sup> The armorer preserved the general structure of the composition, while simplifying it by eliminating the foreground figures of putti on dolphins and combining several figures or figural groups (thirteen figures are reduced here to nine). One of the eliminated figures, a triton leading a sea horse by the bridle, reappears in the adjacent composition in the upper left, immediately to the other side of the separating medallion of Scipio Africanus.

The composition in the upper right quadrant includes a series of nine tritons and nereids at play, with one triton playing the double pipes and another a harp. These figures are plausibly adapted from a relief in the Camposanto at Pisa,<sup>4</sup> in which, if one studies the individual groupings, sometimes in reverse, virtually all the figures in that area of the shield are accounted for. Although the relief is not among ones specifically identified as having been known in the Renaissance, its composition seems evidently to have been accessible in some form to the designer of the shield.

This example is one of the best-known, finest preserved, and iconographically most complex parade shields of the sixteenth century. It has been associated since 1596 with burgonet A 693 in the Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer in Vienna (discussed separately, cat. no. 39), the two pieces being described together in the postmortem inventory of Archduke Ferdinand II's collection at Schloss Ambras: "An iron shield with damascening, in the middle a Medusa, with his princely highness's helmet with the lion face."<sup>5</sup> Whereas the helmet was already recorded in an engraved portrait of the archduke published in



Fig. 63. Roman sarcophagus relief, mid-2nd century A.D. Marble. Musée du Louvre, Paris (MA. 342)

1569, nothing is known of the shield before 1596. The absence of more specific information about the shield in the Ambras records has encouraged considerable speculation as to the owner of the shield, the meaning of the inscriptions, and, of course, its maker and date.

The first attempt at interpreting the shield was undertaken by the pioneer Viennese scholar Wendelin Boeheim (1889), who identified it as an early work by the famous Milanese armorer Lucio Piccinino that was made for Charles V about 1550–52. This was based on Boeheim's interpretation of the inscriptions, in which he read the signature *L[ucius] P[iccininus] F[ecit]*. This attribution was generally accepted by specialists until 1938, when Charles Beard rejected it on the grounds that Piccinino, who was alive and presumably still working in 1595, would have been too young to execute it in the early 1550s. Beard also pointed out that the masterful high-relief embossing was stylistically dissimilar to Piccinino's generally accepted work, most of which dates to the 1570s and later and was executed in a much flatter relief, but that it did correspond quite closely to the well-documented armors by Filippo Negroli, particularly the Medusa shield made for Emperor Charles V in 1541 (cat. no. 32). The Negroli attribution was initially accepted by Bruno Thomas (in London 1949), who subsequently elaborated on Beard's theories (in Thomas and Gamber 1958) and suggested that the Vienna shield was made by Filippo in 1541 as a present to Charles V from his brother Ferdinand I in anticipation of the emperor's campaign against Algiers in the autumn of that year. Thomas interpreted the Latin inscriptions to read: "Carlo V Imperatore semper augusto divo; Ferdinandus ad Algeriam liberandum profecto fratri victori dedicat" (Charles V, Emperor, forever august, divine; Ferdinand gave [this shield] to his victorious brother en route to liberating Algiers). The presence of the three emperors and Scipio Africanus, who conducted campaigns in Africa (Caesar in Egypt, Augustus in Ethiopia, Claudius in Mauretania, and Scipio in Carthage) and subjugated much of Europe (Caesar in France, Augustus in Germany, Claudius in England, and Scipio in Spain), and even the aquatic subject matter in the border, which suggested the sea to be crossed to Africa, were offered as corroborating evidence for this interpretation.<sup>6</sup> With a single exception,<sup>7</sup> Thomas's persuasive interpretation has gone unchallenged.

The veracity of Thomas's identification of the shield's owner, its date, and the historical circumstances surrounding its creation depends entirely on his deciphering of the fragmentary and enigmatic inscriptions. Whereas it is not possible to propose here a new reading, there is strong stylistic evidence that points to a later dating, thus disassociating the shield specifically from the Algerian campaign. In

abandoning these long-held assumptions, the authorship of the shield must also be reconsidered.

At first glance the Vienna shield bears a striking similarity to Filippo Negroli's Medusa shield of 1541 in Madrid (cat. no. 32), each having a masterfully embossed and precisely chiseled gorgon head at the center. Upon closer examination, however, the two demonstrate such marked differences in construction, design, and style of workmanship that it seems impossible they could have been made by the same armorer, in the same year, and for the same patron.

The construction of the shields could not be more different: that in Madrid is formed of only two plates, while the Vienna example is composed of more than ten. Piecemeal assembly of this kind greatly simplified and speeded up the decorating process, allowing the embosser to work on smaller, more easily manipulated plates that could then be handed over, one by one as finished, to the damascener. Neither of Filippo's signed and dated parade shields is constructed in this way. In a similar vein, the upper bodies of the snakes above the gorgon's head on the Vienna shield are separately applied pieces, thus allowing the serpents to rise dramatically from the surface. Filippo's relief, on the other hand, is always integral with the plate. The presence of so many small figures (about fifty in all) inhabiting the two concentric bands is very different from the simpler, bolder designs employed by Filippo and in fact is uncharacteristic of Italian embossed armor dating from the 1530s or 1540s. The damascening on the Vienna shield is much more extensive than that found on Filippo's works, and the painterly way the gold was used to highlight the surfaces diminishes the sculptural qualities of the relief ornament, an effect opposite to Filippo's aesthetic. The absence of a signature is also noteworthy, particularly given the ambitiousness of the decoration and the ample space available on the exterior for another inscription (there are no fixtures inside the shield for the attachment of a screwed-on metal lining rim like that bearing the Negroli signature on the Madrid example). Filippo Negroli was not a modest craftsman, and if this were his work, one would have expected him to display his name prominently. The shield is in fact signed, the letters OV separated by a cross presumably being the initials of the damascener.

The claim that the shield was made for Charles V does not take into account the conspicuous absence of imperial devices and mottoes, which are present on both of the emperor's shields by Filippo Negroli. Had the shield been a gift from Charles's brother Ferdinand I, who, as king of the Romans (since 1531), was heir apparent to the imperial title, the failure to include the requisite insignia would have been interpreted as a serious breach of etiquette. Furthermore, that the Ambras inventory does not identify the shield as the emperor's casts doubt on his having ever owned it. Archduke

Ferdinand's Armory of Heroes at Ambras was already famous in his lifetime, and the collection of armors and portraits of the famous princes and warriors (including those of Charles V) are carefully identified in the surviving inventories. Given the deep respect accorded Charles V throughout the sixteenth century, it seems highly unlikely that, had the shield been his, all memory of its illustrious owner would have been forgotten at Ambras.

In addition to these objections, the theory that the Medusa shield (and its associated helmet) was a gift to Charles V from his brother Ferdinand is not probable for practical reasons: the time was not available for its fabrication. As the shield is supposed to celebrate the emperor's undertaking against Algiers (Thomas and Gamber 1958), it would have to have been made by September 10, 1541, the date of Charles's setting sail from Genoa. Since the campaign had been conceived in great secrecy while Charles attended the Diet of Regensburg (April–July 1541) and his decision to proceed with the plans was finalized only at the end of May, the time to make the shield was short. There was even less time, however, as his brother Ferdinand I, king of Bohemia and Hungary, went to Regensburg on June 21 seeking the emperor's financial and military assistance in the face of a Turkish threat in the east, and it is very possible that he only learned of the emperor's campaign then. If this was indeed the case, Ferdinand could have ordered the shield from Filippo Negroli and his brothers after that date. The shield would have to have been designed, its program approved by Ferdinand, the work undertaken, and the finished shield presented to the emperor, either directly or through Ferdinand. The shield could conceivably have been presented directly to the emperor during his stay in Milan (August 22–29) en route to the fleet awaiting him at Genoa. This implies that Filippo and his brothers realized this magnificent and complex shield (and the burgonet, if one accepts that they belong together) in less than two months.

Even less likely is the possibility that the shield was made after the Algiers campaign, which was one of Charles V's most devastating military failures.<sup>8</sup> It also seems unlikely that a second Medusa shield would have been ordered for Charles V from Filippo Negroli in the very year the emperor had his own made in that same workshop.

What, then, do we make of the mention of Charles V in the inscription? Pending a more convincing explanation, it can only be suggested here that it is a respectful reference to the most famous of Hapsburg rulers, one who oversaw the greatest empire in modern times, comprising much of continental Europe, all of the Americas, and most of the Indies. Charles was a truly heroic figure and his deeds were already chronicled and illustrated in his lifetime. The most important of these was the series of twelve engravings issued in 1556 by Hieronymus

Cock of Antwerp after the designs of Maarten van Heemskerck.<sup>9</sup> The illustrations, which are fanciful re-creations of the emperor's military campaigns and political successes in the years between 1525 and 1547 (Algiers is noticeably absent), coincidentally served as the source for the decoration of at least two shields, both of them presumably dating after the emperor's death in 1558. All twelve engravings were utilized for the etched and gilt decoration of a shield in the Wallace Collection, London, which is signed by the etcher Gerolamo Spacino,<sup>10</sup> a Milanese working in Bologna, whereas a single episode, the surrender of Johann Friedrich, elector of Saxony, after the battle of Mühlberg (1547), occupies the center of an elaborately embossed and damascened shield, a Milanese work of about 1560–65, in the Metropolitan Museum.<sup>11</sup> Although stylistically unrelated to the Medusa shield in Vienna, these examples demonstrate the contemporary view of the emperor as an *exemplum virtutis*, justifying the illustration of his deeds in the same way one would those of Caesar or Aeneas. If the shield was made for Archduke Ferdinand, its first recorded owner, then perhaps the inscribed tablets merely bear the names of his two illustrious relatives, his uncle Charles V and his father, Ferdinand I (if indeed the two letters F and D in the inscription refer to him). The ancient imperial titles that follow Charles's name (but not that of Ferdinand, who succeeded to the imperial title) indicate that the emperor was still living, in which case the shield must date before 1558.

Leaving aside historical considerations, stylistic analysis suggests that the shield should be dated at least a decade later than the 1541 proposed by Thomas, probably about 1550–55, still during Charles V's reign and within Filippo Negroli's active period. The complexity of the shield's composition, its multifigured scenes copied (at least in part) from engravings, the mixed references to classical mythology, Roman history, and biblical heroes, not to mention the painterly use of damascening, reflect the Mannerist horror vacui that also characterizes Milanese armors of the 1560s and 1570s by masters like Giovan Battista Zarabaglia and Lucio Piccinino.<sup>12</sup> Apart from the three helmets discussed above (cat. nos. 39–41), no other Milanese armor corresponds closely to the Vienna shield. There are, however, three shields, probably dating to about 1560–65, that exhibit many of the same features (multiplate construction, a central mask surrounded by concentric bands of historiated ornament, and applied medallions of emperors), suggesting that the Vienna shield, or another like it, may have engendered copies or derivative versions.<sup>13</sup>

As has already been observed, this shield differs in many fundamental ways from Filippo's signed and dated example of 1541 in Madrid. There are, however, enough similarities to warrant speculation that it might be a late work from the



Negroli shop, one that dates after the last signed work of 1545 (cat. no. 35) and prior to Filippo's retirement in 1556–57. The Medusa head on the Vienna shield, although more compact, harder, and more angular than the one on the shield in Madrid, is in even higher relief and is surrounded by a nimbus of deeply chased curls that specifically recall those on the example of 1541. The edges of the wings are deeply undercut and the surfaces of the feathers minutely tooled, as on the Madrid example. No comparable armor, other than the signed works by Filippo Negroli, displays the same boldness and precision of embossed and chased work. There are also some obvious parallels in the organization of the ornament on these two shields that are not found elsewhere: each has a high-relief umbo surrounded by three distinct concentric bands, the inner one damascened in gold, the middle one divided into four long compartments aligned on the vertical and horizontal axes, and the outer ring with four axial medallions separating compartments that are at staggered alignment with the compartments on the adjacent ring. On the other hand, there is nothing in Filippo's documented oeuvre that anticipates his use of small figures, nor is it easy to reconcile the rougher quality of the small figures and the awkward composition of trophies with the thoughtful design and careful finish of every detail that one sees in his autograph works. Considering these significant stylistic differences and the absence of information concerning Filippo's style of embossing after 1545, we are inclined to conclude that the shield is the work of an exceptionally talented and original armor embosser with a different artistic sensibility, but one who was aware of Filippo Negroli's designs. In this work he benefitted from collaboration with a master damascener, also unrecorded, who twice signed the shield with his initials OV.

1. For a slightly different reading of the inscriptions, see Gamber and Beaufort 1990, p. 46.
2. For Mantegna's engraving, see Suzanne Boorsch et al., *Andrea Mantegna*, exh. cat. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art; London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1992), no. 79, pp. 285–87.
3. Discussed and illustrated in Andreas Rumpf, *Die Meerwesen auf den Antiken Sarkophagreliefs*, Archäologisches Institut des Deutschen Reiches, *Die Antiken Sarkophagreliefs*, vol. 5, pt. 1 (Berlin: G. Grote'sche, 1939), pp. 56–58, no. 132, pls. 39, 40, figs. 87, 88. See also Bober and Rubinstein 1986, p. 134, no. 103.
4. Rumpf, *Die Meerwesen auf den Antiken Sarkophagreliefs*, pp. 55–56, no. 131, pl. 46, figs. 84–86.
5. "Ain eisene rundell mit tauschierarbeit, in der mitten die Medusa, darbei irer fürstlich durchlaucht hauben mit dem lewengesicht"; Boenheim 1888, p. CCLXIX, fol. 307r. Subsequent descriptions in the Ambras inventories were published by Auer 1984, p. xxxvi, no. 63.

6. A detailed and sophisticated analysis of the iconography is offered by Matthias Pfaffenbichler, in Vienna 1987, pp. 148–49.
7. Scalini 1990, p. 26, who attributes the Medusa shield and associated burgonet in Vienna (cat. no. 39) to the sculptors Leone and Pompeo Leoni, while cautiously retaining their association with Charles V.
8. For the Algiers campaign, Charles V's second in Africa (after the Tunis campaign of 1538), see, for example, Karl Brandt, *The Emperor Charles V: The Growth and Destiny of a Man and of a World-Empire*, trans. by C. V. Wedgwood (London: Jonathan Cape, 1965), and especially Prudencio de Sandoval, *Historia de la vida y hechos del Emperador Carlos V* (Pamplona, 1614–18), Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, vols. 80–82, ed. by D. Carlos Seco Serrano (Madrid: Ediciones Atlas, 1955–56), vol. 3, pp. 103–14.
9. Ilja M. Veldman and Ger Luijten, eds., *The New Hollstein, Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts 1450–1700: Maarten van Heemskerck, Part II* (Roosendaal, The Netherlands: Koninklijke van Poll in cooperation with the Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 1994), pp. 200–211, nos. 524–35.
10. The signature reads: HIER. SPACINVS. MEDIO. BON. FACIEBAT. Mann 1962, pp. 206–8, no. A334, pl. 87.
11. Acc. no. 42.50.5. See Stephen V. Grancsay, "A Parade Shield of Charles V," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, n.s. 8, no. 4 (December 1949), pp. 122–32; reprinted in Grancsay 1986, pp. 348–62.
12. For the development of Milanese armor design in the second half of the sixteenth century, see, for example, Thomas and Gamber 1958, pp. 777–94.
13. The shields in question are inv. no. I. 82 in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris (for which, see Niox 1917, pl. 48), a lost example formerly in the Beardmore collection in England (illustrated in a line engraving in Beardmore 1845, pl. 10), and inv. no. D 6 in the Real Armería, Madrid (illustrated in Calvert 1907, pl. 149). The first two are almost identical, except for the umbo, which is a grinning satyr's mask on the Paris shield and a Medusa head on the Beardmore example. Both umbos are surrounded by four elongated oval compartments enclosing historiated scenes devoted to the Roman heroes Horatius Cocles, Mucius Scaevola, Manlius Tarquinius, and Marcus Curtius; the outer borders are filled with trophies, captives, seated females writing into books, and personifications of Victory and Fame, the border divided into four equal sections by axially aligned medallions enclosing classical busts (uninscribed, but probably intended as emperors). The shield in Paris is constructed of an umbo and a surrounding circular plate, the medallions and outer rim being separately applied pieces. Of very different workmanship, the Madrid shield, which is formed of seventeen plates, has an outer border embossed with tritons and nereids divided into four sections and separated by classical busts on scallop shells.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Sacken 1859–62, vol. 1, p. 29, pls. 14, 15; Boenheim 1889, pp. 395–96; Boenheim 1894–98, vol. 1, p. 13, pl. 22; Laking 1920–22, vol. 4, fig. 1298; Grosz 1925, pp. 130–31; Simon 1926; Beard 1938; London 1949, p. 15, no. 44, pl. xvii; Thomas 1958, p. 182; Thomas and Gamber 1958, pp. 765–68; Vienna 1958, p. 41; Thomas, Gamber, and Schedelmann 1964, pl. 28; Boccia and Coelho 1967, pp. 334–35; Blair and Boccia 1982, p. 25, ill.; Bober and Rubinstein 1986, p. 103; Vienna 1987, pp. 148–49; Innsbruck 1988, pp. 7–8, no. 1; Vienna 1989, p. 236; Gamber and Beaufort 1990, pp. 45–47; Scalini 1990, p. 3, fig. 3; Vienna 1990, pp. 64–65, no. 10; Pfaffenbichler 1992, fig. 47; Boccia 1993, p. 17.

# GIOVAN PAOLO NEGROLI

The eldest of Nicolò Negroli's five sons and a member of the same generation as his more famous cousin Filippo, Giovan Paolo Negroli (ca. 1513–1569) is the third member of this large family of armorers whose oeuvre can be reconstructed, at least in small part. His professional career is documented only from 1541, when, as the head of a well-established workshop that included his brothers, he hired two additional masters, one of them specialized in etching and gilding. By this date the shop must have had substantial orders that required the employment of outside workmen. Later documents demonstrate the existence of a veritable business empire, with representatives in Rome and Turin, as well as in the north, including Antwerp, Brussels, and especially Paris. The French market was directed by his brother Giovan Pietro, who supplied Milanese parade armors to the nobility and quantities of munition-grade infantry armors to the army. Among Giovan Paolo's most prestigious commissions was the personal armor of the future Henry II of France, which still survives (cat. no. 47), and three harnesses, now lost but recorded in 1561, that had been ordered by the duke of Savoy, for himself and for the king of France and the duke of Orléans. Giovan Paolo's career differed from Filippo's in that he produced not only elaborately embossed parade armors for the aristocracy but he also dealt in ordinary armors made in large numbers for men-at-arms and infantry troops. His business acumen, as well as his talent as an armorer, ensured him a better fate than Filippo's: he died a wealthy and successful man in 1569.

Giovan Paolo's only signed work is the breastplate in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (cat. no. 43), which dates

about 1540–45. It is embossed in high relief with foliate scrolls and monstrous creatures and has etched borders, the decoration formerly gilt on a blued or blackened ground. This work reveals Giovan Paolo as an embosser of considerable skill, one who, perhaps under Filippo's influence (cat. nos. 30, 33), based most of his relief decoration in those years on grotesque ornament after the antique. Unlike Filippo, however, Giovan Paolo did not aim at the same level of detail and precision—the difference may be more a question of style and intent than of technical competence—with the apparent objective of creating bold overall designs that were legible from a distance. It is evident from this work and from the others assembled around it that Giovan Paolo's embossed armors are usually etched rather than damascened (as was typical of Filippo's work), although his shop was capable of both techniques (cat. nos. 44, 46).

The works here attributed to Giovan Paolo all date to the 1540s, from the early part of his career, and are directly related to the signed breastplate by reason of their workmanship, style, and iconography. But what of the armorer's later works of the 1550s and 1560s, when he was at the height of his career? Although many finely embossed armors *all'antica* are preserved from this period, none, in our opinion, can be convincingly shown to be by Giovan Paolo. The workshop style undoubtedly evolved over time, and different types of armor—plain, etched, or embossed—were evidently produced in the same years. In fact, the majority of the works referred to in the documents are described as etched, and yet not a single armor decorated in this manner can be identified as Giovan Paolo's.

**BREASTPLATE**

Giovan Paolo Negrolì

Milan, ca. 1540–45

Steel and gold

Wt. 8 lb. 1 oz. (3,669 g)

*Ex coll.: Hollingworth Magniac, Colworth House, Sharnbrook, Bedford, 1862 (d. 1867); Charles Magniac, 1867 (d. 1891; sold, Christie's, London, July 12, 1892, lot 1044); William H. Riggs, Paris The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913 (14.25.1855)*

The breastplate, now polished bright, was probably originally blued or blackened, the embossed and etched decoration gilt. It is forged in one plate, with separate gussets of one narrow lame each; about two inches of metal at the top of the left shoulder are missing. The edge at the neck and the outer edges of the gussets have large roped turns. A wide band below the neck is etched with a marine scene of

tritons and nereids, dolphins, and foliate scrolls, all against a plain sunken ground; the gussets are etched with intertwined leafy branches against a similar ground. The main surface is embossed in high relief with a design that is approximately symmetrical to either side. At the base are confronted grotesque beasts, whose leafy feet are joined by brackets in the center. Their curled, scaly bodies issue leafy



43, detail







43, detail of left side

tendrils that scroll up the sides and blossom with flowers, dragonlike beasts, and grotesque heads; a bird is perched on one of the scrolls on the left side. Slender tendrils from either side intertwine in the center and are joined by a clip. At the top, below the etched band, is a large winged female hermlike figure, her limbs formed as leaves, the lower ones entwining with the tendrils at either side. The raised decoration on the upper right side is interrupted by a flat area pierced with two holes for a lance-rest. Etched at the base of the breastplate is a banderole inscribed: ·IOS·PAVLVS·DE·NEGROLIS·ME·FECIT·. (Usually misread, the first name, Iohannes, is abbreviated with the I and the S conjoined.) Below this, in the center, is a raised stud to secure the waist strap. The flange at the base is studded with steel rivets securing inside a modern leather lining strap (fragmentary); similar modern straps are riveted inside the gussets. Traces of gold are found along the roped edges, in the background of the etched and embossed areas, as well as along the waistline and in the letters of the inscription.

This breastplate is the only signed work by Giovan Paolo and therefore is the key to reconstructing his oeuvre.

The task is complicated by the poor condition of the piece, which in the nineteenth century suffered heavy cleaning by mechanical, and probably also electrolytic, means,<sup>1</sup> with the resulting loss of its original color and some of the sharpness of the relief. Taking these limitations into consideration, we can nevertheless extrapolate from it some general observations about Giovan Paolo's technique and style.

Like his cousin Filippo, Giovan Paolo was a masterful and ambitious embosser, covering the surface with a dense and complex design, much of it in high relief (the profile of the female figure at the top of the breastplate, for example, extends about ½ in. [1.5 cm] above the surface), that has been chased and undercut. In order to suggest depth, the edges of the leaves are often turned over, a device frequently used by Filippo (see cat. nos. 30, 33). The breastplate's design is bold and space filling, the ornament essentially symmetrical but not strictly mirror image, with some variations in the foliage on the left and right sides. The rosettes on the upper half are located over the breasts, the centers of the flowers suggesting nipples (a similar solution was used by Bartolomeo Campi on the breastplate of 1546; see cat. no. 54). The armor left the flower on the right side unfinished to accommodate the placement of the lance-rest, proving that from its inception, the breastplate was intended for mounted use; the strong turned and roped edges also reflect its practical design. The coherence and balance of the design were carefully thought out, with the tendrils and foliage logically spreading out from a single source, the left and right halves joined in the center by brackets and intertwined branches, and with a central unifying figure at the top whose outstretched wings define the lower edges of the recessed border at the neck.

Like Filippo's burgonet of 1543 (cat. no. 33), the ornament used in the decoration of the breastplate derives from grotesques. Similar half-figures, male or female, with wings or without, some with fishtails and others with acanthus skirts, are found in grotesques engraved by such artists as



43, signature at base of breastplate



Giovanni Antonio da Brescia, Zoan Andrea, Nicoletto da Modena, and Agostino Veneziano in the period 1500–1535. Most of these figures occupy the center of the design, their tails or leaves encircling elements to the left and right and thereby uniting the halves, exactly as on the breastplate. The dense acanthus scrollwork, with its thick branches and lush foliage, is especially close to that found in a set of prints traditionally ascribed to the anonymous Master of the Die that has already been referred to (fig. 59). The half-figures of dragons emerging from the centers of flowers that appear in one of these prints are not unlike the dragons at the sides of the breastplate.

The parallels in style, technique, and graphic sources between Filippo's burgonet of 1543 and Giovan Paolo's breastplate suggest that the two are approximately contemporary in date. The innovative quality of Filippo's work leads one to presume that he originated this type of decoration, although too little is known about the Negrolis to draw any firm conclusions about the interrelationships of Filippo's and Giovan Paolo's work. What can be demonstrated with this breastplate and with the other works grouped around it is that Giovan Paolo's work reflects a different sensibility and ambition, his chiseling intended to outline and model the embossed motifs, without excessive detail, to render them more visible. The thick roped edges of the breastplate are quite unlike Filippo's usual narrow boxed turns, and the use of etching in conjunction with embossing, rarely employed by Filippo (the exception being cat. no. 29), appears to have been favored by Giovan Paolo. But like his cousin, Giovan Paolo displayed his signature prominently, giving it the Latin form and etching it in large classical letters within a banderole at the base of the breastplate. Apart from these two masters, the only other armorer known to sign his works so explicitly was Bartolomeo Campi of Pesaro (cat. no. 54).

This breastplate originally formed part of a complete horseman's armor, probably similar to one made for Henry II of France (cat. no. 47). The former presence of a lance-rest indicates that it was designed as a traditional field armor for mounted use, either cap-a-pie or knee-length like Henry II's armor, presumably with a close helmet or burgonet with buffe. Embossed armors are rarely fitted with lance-rests for the obvious reasons that the raised decoration seriously weakened the metal and eliminated the smooth deflecting surfaces, thereby rendering the harness useless on the battlefield; here the lance-rest presumably reflects the armorer's or his client's clinging to time-honored tradition.<sup>2</sup> The helmet in the Metropolitan Museum (cat. no. 46) and the knee piece in the Hermitage (cat. no. 48) discussed below are very close in style to this breastplate and could have belonged

to it. In any event, these pieces may be considered to be contemporary in date and to have belonged to the same type of harness. The breastplate's original color probably matched the russet and gilt surfaces of the aforementioned pieces.

The early history of the breastplate is unknown. It must have been in England by 1838, when "the celebrated *Paulus de Negrolis*" was referred to in connection with an embossed morion in the dealer Samuel Pratt's catalogue of that date.<sup>3</sup> As Giovan Paolo's existence was not otherwise known at the time and the armorer's name is cited almost exactly as inscribed on the breastplate, there can be no doubt that Pratt knew the piece; perhaps it was he who sold it to the distinguished collector Hollingworth Magniac (1786–1867). When the breastplate was first exhibited, in the "Art Treasures of Great Britain," held in Manchester in 1857, it had a hole in its lower right side (since repaired), which apparently gave rise to the story, cited by Planché, that it had belonged to Elector Moritz of Saxony, who was mortally wounded by gunshot at the battle of Sievershausen on July 9, 1553. A different but equally romantic and apocryphal tradition was associated with the breastplate by its later owner William Riggs, who interpreted the rosettes on the upper breastplate as Tudor roses and the dragons in the foliage as the supporters of the British coat of arms, therefore concluding that it had originally belonged to Henry VIII (Orville 1900). Both putative owners were men of large size.

1. The overcleaned surfaces, as well as a hole in the right side (since closed up), are already evident in a photograph taken in 1862 on the occasion of the "Special Exhibition of Works of Art," held at the South Kensington Museum (Picture Library, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, no. 1938).
2. Other embossed armors with lance-rests, or holes indicating their former presence, include three armors made for Erik XIV of Sweden (1533–1577) and decorated by the Antwerp goldsmith Eliseus Libaerts in 1560–63 (Livrustkammaren, Stockholm, inv. no. 2605, and Rüstammer, Dresden, inv. nos. E.7 and E.12), and the armor of Alessandro Farnese (1545–1592), duke of Parma and Piacenza, made by Lucio Piccinino of Milan about 1575 (Hofjagd- und Rüstammer, Vienna, inv. no. A 1132).
3. [Samuel L. Pratt], *Catalogue of the Exhibition of Ancient Arms and Armour, No. 3, Lower Grosvenor Street* (London: J. Davy, 1838), no. 29: "A very splendid *Embossed Morion*. The high relief and freedom of design of this beautiful specimen are worthy of the school of the celebrated *Paulus de Negrolis*."

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Planché 1857, p. 76; Waring 1858, p. 44, pl. 16, no. 1; Robinson 1862, pp. 38–39, no. 65; London 1863, p. 366, no. 4689; Magniac sale 1892, pp. 206–7, no. 1044, ill.; Orville 1900, p. 25; Dean 1915, p. 72, pl. 36; Laking 1920–22, vol. 3, pp. 289–93, fig. 1056; Dean and Grancsay 1930, p. 150, fig. 82; Grancsay 1940, fig. 5; Thomas and Gamber 1958, pp. 769, 771, fig. p. 793; Aroldi 1961, fig. 125; Boccia and Coelho 1967, pp. 323–24, 333–34, fig. 274; Boccia, Rossi, and Morin 1980, pl. 141; Scalini 1987, pp. 33, 40, n. 30; Boccia 1993, p. 22, ill. p. 25.





44.  
**BURGONET**

*Giovan Paolo Negrolì*

*Milan, ca. 1540–45*

*Steel and gold*

*Wt. 5 lb. (2,273 g)*

*Ex coll.: Thomas Gwennap, by 1816 (sold, George Robins, London, June 10–11, 1833, lot 157); Sir Adam Hay, Bart., by 1862; Sir Duncan E. Hay, Bart., by inheritance, by 1909 (until 1912); Samuel J. Whawell, Eastbourne, 1912 (until 1916); sold through Robert Partridge of London to Joseph E. Widener, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, 1916; Peter A. B. Widener, by inheritance (until 1942) National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Widener Collection (1942.9.355)*

The bowl, forged in one piece, is embossed at the front with a dolphinlike mask, the rippled, scaly snout forming the peak and the edges turned and embossed with a raised bead-and-reel design. The mask is fringed with leaves and has large eyes and protruding brows with scaly, flame-like eyebrows. The rounded comb is formed as a laurel garland bound at intervals with transverse bands of acanthus leaves and berries. At the back of the bowl on either side is a grotesque creature with a satyrlike bearded head, the upper torso dressed in a classical muscled cuirass, human arms with claw hands, and a scaly serpentlike lower body supported on two birdlike feet. Their bodies curl toward the front of the helmet and issue acanthus branches that scroll over the sides of the bowl; one tendril ends in a flower from

which emerges a clawed, scaly dragon on the right side and a feathered birdlike creature on the left, and another tendril near the comb supports a bird. The rear edge of the bowl is cut in a shallow point over the nape, and it is engraved with a delicate foliate design that bears traces of gold-damascening. A separate plate with a beaded turn is riveted along this back edge. Hinged at either side of the bowl are cheekpieces of one plate, the left one modern, with turned and beaded edges; the center of each is embossed with a scaly, winged dragonlike creature with feathery legs. Two holes at the right rear side of the bowl, one filled by a rivet, served for the attachment of the plume tube, now missing. Lining rivets around the skull and along the applied edge at the nape retain traces of the original canvas lining strap to which a padded lining, now lost, was sewn. The surfaces of the burgonet are patinated a gray-black color.

This burgonet is a work of imaginative design and virtuoso craftsmanship whose roots lie in the art of Filippo Negroli but whose choice of ornament and handling of the relief point instead to the hand of Giovan Paolo. If the attribution to the latter is correct, this is undoubtedly his finest surviving work.

Throughout its recorded history, this helmet has been held up as an exemplary specimen of embossed steel and one of the outstanding parade helmets of the sixteenth century. Its compact, elegant profile, the imaginative union of the different design elements, and the superb quality of the

embossing, particularly the expressive mask with its high furled brows, the turned-over leaf at the top and undercut leaves at the sides, and the high rounded comb, are features that distinguish it from most contemporary examples. The very quality of its embossing has divided scholarly opinion as to the possible author, some seeing it as the work of Filippo Negroli (Laking 1920–22; New York 1931; Thomas and Gamber 1958), others considering it to be by Giovan Paolo (Waring, in London 1863; Dean 1923, 1924; Scalini 1987; Boccia 1993). The helmet's profile and the mask with rippled snout that forms the peak have quite rightly been compared to the Hermitage burgonet belonging to the armor of Guidobaldo II della Rovere (cat. no. 23a), a work here attributed to Filippo Negroli, about 1532–35. But the predominance of acanthus scrolls and grotesque ornament suggests that the National Gallery's burgonet should also be compared to later works by Filippo, particularly his burgonet of 1543 (cat. no. 33). Giovan Paolo here demonstrates a knowledge of his cousin's work and a capacity to emboss and chisel steel on a level with Filippo, without the need to imitate the latter's preoccupation with precious detail.

Over a century ago, Waring (in London 1863) compared this burgonet to Giovan Paolo's signed breastplate (cat. no. 43), which was in the same exhibition, and concluded that they were undoubtedly by the same master. The burgonet and breastplate share many of the same features. The acanthus foliage, especially the turned edges of the leaves, and the small spiral tendrils shooting off the main branches are very similar on both pieces. The hybrid creatures at the back of the burgonet are close in conception, if not in specific morphology, to those at the base of the breastplate, both having scaly, leaf-edged bodies that issue branches that scroll over the surrounding surfaces. The birds near the top of the burgonet are very like the one on the left side of the breastplate, and there are dragonlike creatures emerging from the foliage on both. The horned and winged beasts on the cheekpieces are covered with scales and leaves not unlike the monsters at the base of the breastplate, and their faces with recessed eyes and rounded noses recall the canine heads emerging from branches at the top of the breastplate. These comparisons leave no doubt that the burgonet is a contemporary work by Giovan Paolo.

In addition to the superb embossing on this burgonet, two other features command our attention: the gold-damascened ornament at the nape and the applied edge adjacent to it. The damascened ornament, now barely visible, was discovered in 1982 when the burgonet was cleaned at the Metropolitan Museum. As there are traces of no other coloring—gilding or silvering—on the rest of the helmet's blackened surfaces, the damascening appears to have been





44, detail of right side

limited to this area, and perhaps also to a brow plate, which seems likely to have been fitted at the front of the bowl inside the peak. This sparing use of gold suggests a subdued aesthetic comparable to that of Filippo's burgonet of 1543, where damascening is present only on the peak and the brow plate, and further supports a dating to the years 1540–45. This is the only example in Giovan Paolo's putative oeuvre



44, detail of right side

that has damascened ornament, a decorative feature more commonly associated with armors by Filippo and his brothers, although Giovan Paolo also used the hatched technique of damascening to gild the relief covering the close helmet in the Metropolitan Museum (cat. no. 46). This use of damascened decoration ties him much more closely to the work of his cousins than has heretofore been realized.

The applied edge at the nape is another unusual feature, since a turned edge typically would have been made in one with the bowl. As the plate appears to be contemporary with the bowl (the lining rivets match those at the front of the helmet, and the surfaces are consistent in color and patination), the armorer presumably ran out of metal while shaping the bowl, or perhaps the original edge was damaged during the working and had to be replaced.

The early history of this helmet is unrecorded before 1816. It turned up on the London art market following the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars, which, along with the French Revolution, caused many armors to be liberated from their ancestral homes in France and elsewhere on the Continent. As reconstructed by Blair (1974), the provenance can be traced to Thomas Gwennap, an entrepreneur who owned a collection of European and oriental arms and armor that he displayed in London under the various names of the Oplotheca (1816–17), Gothic Hall (1818–20), and Royal Armoury (1821), before disposing of it at auction in 1833. During those years the helmet was said to have belonged to Francis I of France and to be the design of Leonardo da Vinci and the execution of Benvenuto Cellini. Romantic associations of this sort date back to Horace Walpole's day, when, in 1771, he acquired in Paris an embossed and gilt armor that he also considered to have been made by Cellini for Francis I. The association of the National Gallery's burgonet with the French monarch may imply that it too was known to have come from France in recent times.<sup>1</sup>

1. Gwennap is thought to have acquired some of his collection from another London dealer, William Bullock, who had brought them over from Paris (Blair 1974, pp. 50–52, n. 4). A French provenance, however, would in no way support the speculation of Scalini (1987) that the burgonet and other works by Giovan Paolo were made for the dauphin Francis, son of Francis I, in 1536.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Oplotheca 1816, pp. 12–13, no. 90; Oplotheca 1817, p. 16, no. 90; Gothic Hall 1818, p. 22, no. 108; Gothic Hall 1819, p. 18, no. 114; Gothic Hall 1820, p. 18, no. 114; Royal Armoury 1821, p. 7, no. 50; Anonymous sale 1833, p. 26, lot 157; London 1863, p. 365, no. 4685; Laking 1920–22, vol. 3, p. 293, vol. 4, pp. 150–51, fig. 1233; Dean 1923b; Dean 1924b, p. 163; New York 1931, p. 27, no. 82, ill.; Thomas and Gamber 1958, p. 764; Mann 1962, vol. 1, p. 111; Blair 1974, pp. 46–52; Scalini 1987, pp. 33–34, 40, n. 30, fig. 24; Boccia 1993, p. 22.



45.

## CUIRASS

Giovan Paolo Negrolì

Milan, ca. 1540–45

Steel, brass, leather, and textile

Breastplate: Wt. 6 lb. 3 oz. (3,050 g)

Backplate: Wt. 4 lb. 9 oz. (2,065 g)

Ex coll.: Pierre Révoil, by 1811; acquired by the Louvre, 1828

Musée du Louvre, Paris (MR.R. 1)

The cuirass is composed of a breastplate and backplate, now brightly polished. The breastplate is constructed of a central plate, a gusset at each armhole, two waist lames, two skirt lames, and a single tasset lame on either side. The turned edges at the neck and arms are embossed as laurel garlands with a knob in the center and are bordered by a series of rosette-headed brass rivets. The central plate is embossed at

the top with a pair of confronted monsters that have horned and bearded heads, their necks entwined, and winged, scaly bodies from whose tails flow acanthus branches that scroll over the rest of the surface; the branches are inhabited by a variety of dragons and birds. A satyr mask occupies the center of the breast beneath the monsters. The waist plates overlap downward and are undecorated, whereas the adjacent skirt and tas-





45, backplate

set lames are embossed with acanthus scrolls, dragons, and birds matching those on the central plate. The turned edges of the tassets are embossed with a bead-and-reel design and bordered by a recessed band set with brass-headed rivets.

The backplate is covered with embossed designs comparable to those on the breastplate and has similar turned edges worked as laurel garlands (with berries within the leaves, which are not present on the breastplate) and bordered by brass rivets. The two downward-overlapping waist plates are undecorated, the lower one carrying a narrow culet (rump) lame embossed with foliage and birds, its turned edge beaded. The cuirass is closed with modern brass buckles and red velvet-covered straps at the shoulders and waist.

A severe and thorough cleaning has left the cuirass bereft of its original coloring; it has also been substantially modified. The rivet holes inside the waist lames are inconsistent with the proper internal strapping, suggesting that these plates may be replacements. The two tasset lames have been reduced in width by trimming off part of the inner edge of each, an indication that they were probably the lowermost lames of longer, articulated tassets for which the

upper lames are lost. The lower skirt lame has been altered by the addition over the fork of a beaded edge cut from another plate (possibly trimmed from the right tasset). The decorative rosette-headed rivets around all the edges are later additions. The extensive alterations make it difficult to reconstruct the armor's original appearance.

In spite of its poor condition, this cuirass is important as one of the few surviving armors that can be ascribed to Giovan Paolo with some confidence. As on the autograph breastplate in the Metropolitan Museum (cat. no. 43), the embossed designs on the cuirass are based on the Renaissance grotesque and are symmetrical, with only minor variations, to either side of the center; the working of the surface into high relief is also very similar, as is the conception and handling of many of the ornamental motifs. The confronted monsters at the top of the breastplate and backplate have a family resemblance to those at the base of the signed breastplate and in both cases are the generating source for the foliate scrolls that cover the remainder of the surface. The acanthus scrolls on both are similar in formation, the leaves often having turned-over edges, the branches with tiny spiral

offshoots; the inhabiting birds and dragonlike creatures are also the same, the dragon heads alternately of pointed or of blunt, canine type. There are, however, differences between the two, this cuirass having a much denser, cramped design, with a multiplication of branches, birds, and dragons. There is a pronounced horror vacui and nervousness in the cluttered ornament that prove much less satisfactory than the open and more fluid organization of the ornament on the signed breastplate. The impression of the cuirass would undoubtedly be more favorable if one were to see it in its original construction and coloring, the relief presumably having been gilt to contrast with a blued or blackened ground. The plain surfaces of the gussets and waist plates were probably intended to frame, contrast, and relieve the highly decorated areas and to create a rhythm over the different parts of the armor.

The resemblance between the burgonet in the National Gallery (cat. no. 44) and the Louvre cuirass was first pointed out by Laking (1920–22), who considered them to be part of the same harness. Both are covered with rinceaux, fantastic creatures, and birds of very similar type, and both have the same distinctive turned edges with raised bead-and-reel ornament. The garland-shaped turns at the neck and armholes of the cuirass might also be viewed as corresponding to the burgonet's comb. Acknowledging these similarities, it is difficult at first glance to reconcile the two in light of the burgonet's more pleasing design and superior workmanship and the absence of any traces of gilding or damascening on the now overcleaned surfaces of the cuirass. However, given the markedly superior quality of Giovan Paolo's helmets to the other elements ascribed to his hand—this most clearly evident on the Henry II armor (cat. no. 47)—the National Gallery burgonet and the Louvre cuirass could possibly belong to the same parade harness.<sup>1</sup>

The cuirass came from the collection of the "troubadour" painter Pierre-Henri Révoil (1776–1842), who formed in Lyon

one of the earliest and most important nineteenth-century holdings of medieval and Renaissance works of art. The cuirass was already in the artist's possession in 1811, when his collection was visited by fellow antiquary A. L. Millin, who singled it out for distinction as "a work almost miraculous in the richness and perfection of its arabesques."<sup>2</sup> The cuirass also appears in Jean-Claude Bonnefond's *Self-Portrait at the Age of Sixteen*,<sup>3</sup> which was painted in 1812 when Bonnefond (1796–1860) was a pupil in Révoil's studio. This early illustration of the cuirass shows that it was in the same condition as we find it today. Since it was in France at this date, the cuirass may, like many of Giovan Paolo's works, have an old French provenance.

1. Another burgonet, in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris (inv. no. H. 257; Niox 1917, pl. xxxix), compares closely to this cuirass. It, too, has a turned edge with raised bead-and-reel design and a dense composition based on grotesque ornament, but the style of workmanship is not identical with Giovan Paolo's.
2. Millin's description reads in full: "Des armes variées forment sur les murs de riches trophées. J'admire surtout un très-belle armure d'acier d'un travail presque miraculeux par la richesse et la perfection des arabesques qui n'ont cependant rien que de grand et de largement taillé, ce qui est rare dans la ciselure moderne. Le dos est plus beau que le poitrail; ce qui peut faire présumer que l'artiste avoit commencé par la pièce principale, mais qu'il s'étoit instruit lui-même en travaillant, et que plus il avançoit dans son entreprise, plus il approchoit de la perfection." A. L. Millin, "Le Musée lapidaire, le Musée de peinture et le Cabinet des Antiques à Lyon en 1811. Artaud et Révoil," *Revue du Lyonnais* 2 (1842), pp. 331–45; cited in Florence 1989, p. 158.
3. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lyon (inv. no. B. 599); reproduced in Florence 1989, p. 160, fig. 82.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Penguilly l'Haridon 1865, p. 9, no. 43; Courajod 1886, pp. 16, 34, no. 1; Maindron 1891–92, (7), p. 34; Laking 1920–22, vol. 3, p. 293, figs. 1057, 1058; Thomas and Gamber 1958, p. 771; Boccia 1993, p. 22.

46.

## CLOSE HELMET

Giovan Paolo Negrolì

Milan, ca. 1540–45

Steel and gold

Wt. 6 lb. 8 oz. (3,062 g)

Ex coll.: Possibly Thomas Gwennap, London, by 1816 (sold, George Robins, London, June 10–11, 1833, lot 143); dukes of Luynes, Château de Dampierre, France (until 1911); Bachereau, Paris (until 1925);

Samuel J. Whawell, London

The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Rogers Fund and Gift of George D. Pratt, 1926 (26.53)

Of conventional close helmet construction, this example consists of a bowl with visor, upper bevor, and lower bevor, all rotating on the same pivots at the sides of the bowl; the neck lames are missing. The comb is embossed in high relief as a scaly dragon, its face and tail issuing spiky ribbed wings or gills. Emerging from behind the dragon face on each side is a thick acanthus branch that scrolls over the side of the bowl and sprouts leaves, flowers, and berrylike clusters; a bird with raised claw stands on a leaf at each side at the back. The visor is embossed with a leaf-fringed grotesque mask pierced below the nose with two sights, and it sits deep within the upper bevor; the lifting peg, which fits





46

in a slot cut into the right edge of the upper bevor, is modern. The upper bevor is embossed in the center with a female demi-figure, or siren, her arms and lower body formed as acanthus leaves that spread as tendrils to either side; the plate's upper edge is roped and bordered by a recessed band etched with symmetrical foliage against a sunken ground.

The lower bevor is similarly embossed with scrolls and has a brass hook (modern) on the right side that passes through an iron ring on the upper bevor, thus locking the two parts closed. It originally had a pivoting support bar to hold the upper bevor and visor open; of this bar only the stem and pivot remain. The edges of the face opening are roped and





46, detail, front of bowl



46, detail of left side

bordered by an etched band. The visor pivots are original, their conical steel heads chiseled like artichokes and seated on washers chiseled with leaves. The helmet's surface is rough from the hammer and russet-colored (originally blued?), with the raised ornament gold-damascened (the steel surfaces appear to be hatched and covered with gold leaf rather than fire-gilt), whereas the roped edges and etched bands appear to be fire-gilt. Although lightly corroded overall, the gold is well preserved on the left side.

The helmet is exceedingly close in design and workmanship to the signed breastplate by Giovan Paolo (cat. no. 43) and thus can be attributed with confidence to him. The acanthus ornament matches that of the breastplate in many details, notably in the way certain leaf groupings are organized, their edges turned over, and in the spiraling tendrils that shoot off from the main branches. The siren at the front of the upper bevor, while not identical to that on the breastplate, is similarly conceived. The birds standing on tendrils at the back of the bowl closely correspond to the bird on the left side of the breastplate.

The quality of the embossing is noticeably higher on the helmet than on the breastplate. The edges of the leaves stand distinctly clear of the surface, and their modeling and engraved center veins are clearly differentiated. The sharpness and crisp delineation that distinguish this helmet may be accounted for, to a certain extent, by the better condition of the helmet, and also by the fact that the large surface of the breastplate required broader, more space-filling motifs. This same distinction between helmet and breastplate is evident on the armor of Henry II (cat. no. 47), of which the helmet is the finest element. One can conclude from this that we should expect that the Negroli excelled in designing and embossing helmets, perhaps leaving the lesser elements to assistants. This difference in the quality of work within a single armor is also evident in a comparison of the burgonet in the National Gallery in Washington (cat. no. 44) to the Louvre cuirass (cat. no. 45), elements that possibly belong to the same harness.

The helmet can be compared to that of Henry II, which also employs masks on the bowl and on the upper bevor.







The Metropolitan's example, on the other hand, has a greater variety of ornament, and the masks on the comb and visor are different from one another. The conception of the comb as a monster that drapes front-to-back across the bowl looks back to Filippo Negroli (cat. no. 23a), although other armors utilized this design as well (cat. no. 53). The dominance of acanthus foliage in the decoration relates it especially to Filippo's burgonet of 1543 (cat. no. 33), and this, together with the marked similarities to Henry II's armor of about 1545, suggests a comparable dating.

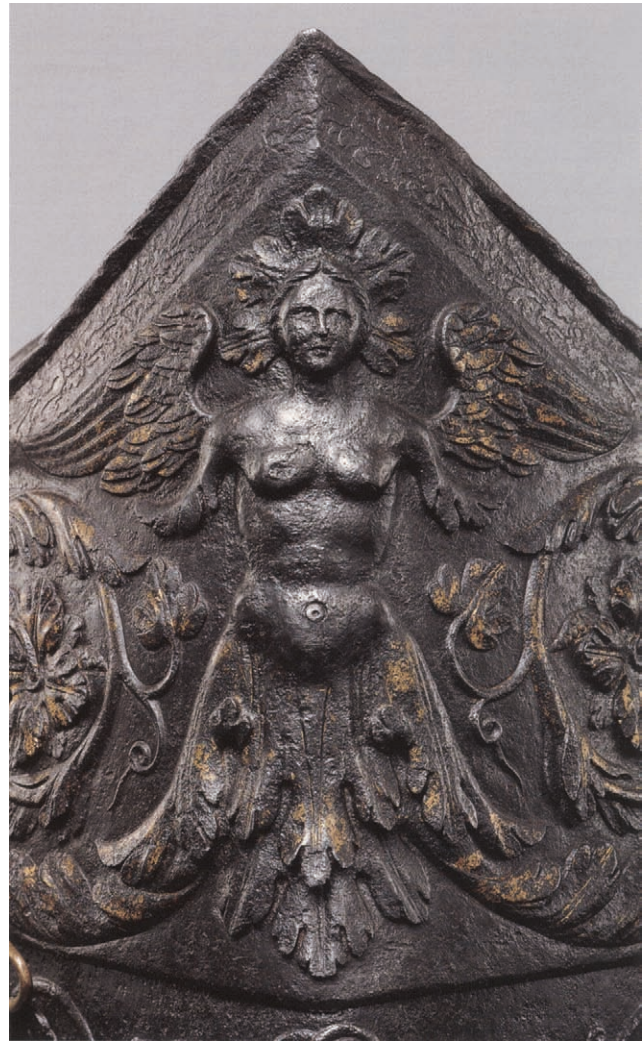
The helmet comes from the Château de Dampierre, seat of the dukes of Luynes, and was recorded there in a photograph published in 1905 (Dampierre 1905, pl. 9). When sold in 1911, the helmet was asserted to be old family property and to have been made for François de Lorraine (1519–1563; called Balafre, or Scarface), second duke of Guise, an ancestor by marriage to the Luynes (Dean 1926). The helmet is thus usually referred to in the literature as "the Guise helmet," its provenance stimulating further speculation about the work done by Giovan Paolo for the French court. In light of the fact that the heterogeneous collection of European and oriental arms at Dampierre appears to have been assembled by the eighth duke in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, among them the Negroli burgonet of 1543, which was still in England in 1834, the Guise provenance is highly improbable. Indeed, it is quite possible that it was the "beautiful enclosed helmet, superbly embossed with masks, arabesque foliage, etc.," that was owned by the London dealer Thomas Gwennap and exhibited by him between 1816 and 1821 at various establishments, successively known as the Oplotheca, Gothic Hall, and Royal Armoury, before being dispersed at auction in 1833.<sup>1</sup> This date accords with other acquisitions of arms and armor made by the duke of Luynes.<sup>2</sup>

Scalini (1987) has speculated that this helmet and the Metropolitan Museum's signed breastplate, as well as the burgonet in the National Gallery of Art and the cuirass in the Louvre, were early works of Giovan Paolo and formed part of a garniture made about 1536 for the dauphin Francis, son of Francis I. That attribution is unsupported by documentation, iconography, or stylistic evidence.

1. On Thomas Gwennap's collection, see Blair 1974, pp. 50–52.

The helmet is described in Oplotheca 1816, no. 92; Oplotheca 1817, no. 92; Gothic Hall 1818, no. 110; Gothic Hall 1819, no. 116; Gothic Hall 1820, no. 116; and Royal Armoury 1821, no. 48, as well as Anonymous sale 1833, lot 143.

2. Among the arms at Dampierre whose provenance can be traced, most appear to have passed through the art market from the 1820s



46, front of upper bevor

to the 1840s. This group included: the burgonet made by Filippo Negroli in 1543 (cat. no. 33) and parts of an embossed Flemish-style armor signed D. G. V. Lochorst, both having been sold at the Brocas sale of 1834; an embossed burgonet considered to be by Augsburg armorer Desiderius Helmschmid and goldsmith Jörg Sigman, a work said to have been acquired at the sale of the painter Anne-Louis Girodet-Trioson in 1825; and an all-steel wheel-lock pistol by Emmanuel Sadeler of Munich, bearing the arms of Duke Maximilian I of Bavaria, which was sold to the duke of Luynes by the gunmaker Henri Lepage of Paris in 1837. All four pieces are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, acc. nos. 17.190.1720, 38.137a–e, 25.135.66, and 25.135.88, respectively.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Dampierre 1905, pl. 9; Dean 1926; Dean and Grancsay 1930, p. 130, fig. 81; Thomas and Gamber 1958, p. 795; Boccia and Coelho 1967, p. 334; Scalini 1987, pp. 33, 40, n. 30, fig. 23; Boccia 1993, p. 22; Pyhrr 1994, p. 18.

**ARMOR OF HENRY II OF FRANCE**

Giovan Paolo Negropoli

Milan, ca. 1545

Steel and gold

*a. Armor*

Wt. 38 lb. 10 oz. (17,570 g)

Ex coll.: Count Auguste de Colbert, by 1839–46; Charles Stein, Paris, by 1892 (sold, 1894); Sigismond Bardac, Paris; Duveen, London, 1901 (until 1903); acquired through Guy F. Laking and Robert Partridge, London, by William Waldorf Astor, Hever Castle, 1903; John Jacob Astor; Viscount Gavin Astor (sold, London, May 5, 1983, lot 44);

B. C. Trupin, New York

Private collection

*b. Burgonet*

Wt. 4 lb. 5 oz. (1,950 g)

Ex coll.: Charles-Adrien Picard (sold, Paris, January 17–25, 1780, lot 193); Nicolas-Xavier Willemin, by 1806; Pierre Révoil; acquired by the Louvre, 1828

Musée du Louvre, Paris (MR.R. 3)

*c. Portrait of Henry II as dauphin*

Atelier of François Clouet

French, early 1540s (?)

Gouache on parchment mounted on wood

10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in. (27.3 x 22.2 cm)

The Menil Collection, Houston (X 546)

The armor comprises a close helmet; a breastplate with holes for a lance-rest (missing); a single skirt lame supporting long tassets reaching to the knee, each of seven lames with the lower two lames detachable; a backplate; asymmetrical pauldrons (shoulder defenses) made in one with the vambraces (arms); and gauntlets. The surfaces are embossed with eleven horned and bearded grotesque masks fringed with leaves that are located at the front of the helmet bowl and on the upper bevor, in the center of the breastplate near the bottom, on the bottom tasset lame covering each knee, at the top of each shoulder, on the couters (elbows),



Fig. 64. Atelier of François Clouet, *Henry II on Horseback*, ca. 1547 (?). Oil on oak panel, 10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in. (27.3 x 22.2 cm). Bearsted Collection, Upton House; courtesy National Trust Photographic Library









47b



47b

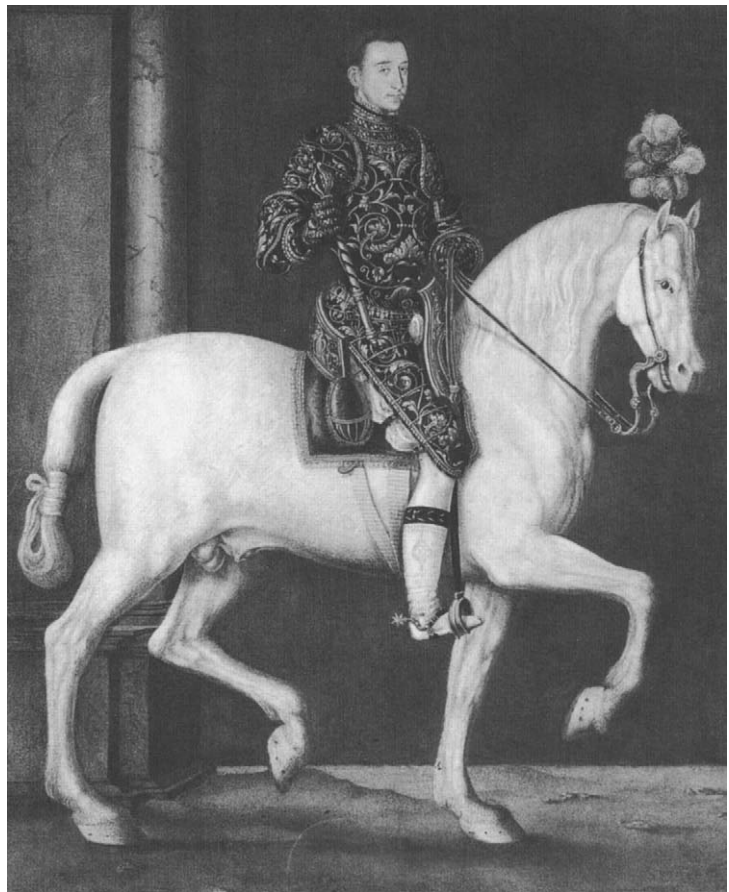


47a, close helmet





47a, right couter



47c

and on the gauntlet cuffs. Issuing from the masks' open mouths are acanthus branches that scroll gracefully over the armor's surfaces. The relief is gilt against a dark russet ground. The main edges of the plates are turned, roped, and gilt, and are bordered by recessed bands etched and gilt with symmetrical candelabra-like foliage on a plain sunken ground. The V-shaped bands at the top of the breastplate and backplate are etched with foliate scrollwork, that on the breast centered on a cuirassed, and now headless, demi-figure.

The armor has suffered from corrosion, leading to the loss of some plates and the pitting of others, and as a result was restored in the last century. A number of minor new parts were made for it, including: the lifting peg on the visor, the visor pivots, and the upper collar lames of the helmet; both gussets and the waist plate; on the right arm the four lower pauldron lames, upper vambrace, and entire gauntlet; on the left arm the fourth, sixth, and seventh pauldron lames, the upper vambrace, couter, and fingers of the gauntlet. The turned edges at the neck of the breastplate and backplate have been modified, the original roped edges having been damaged and apparently rolled down to form new turns,

with the resulting truncation of the etched border. The backplate has lost its cutlet and has been given a new roped lower edge; extension plates added at the sides increase the girth, a working-life modification. The mask at the base of the breastplate has been patched, and the flanges at the base of the breastplate and backplate have been altered. The articulating leathers and rivets, as well as the velvet-covered straps and gilt buckles, are replacements.

The matching burgonet in the Louvre is in excellent condition. It consists of a one-piece bowl with hinged cheek-pieces of one plate each, the smaller plates that extended beneath the chin now lost. The surface is embossed like that of the close helmet, with a horned, leafy mask at the front of a rounded comb formed as a long mane of hair, and with acanthus branches issuing from the mask's mouth and scrolling over the sides; the relief is gilt against a black ground. The edges are turned, roped, and gilt and, at the nape, bordered by a sunken gilt band.

This armor is of exceptional importance for three reasons. First, it is one of the few armors securely identifiable as having belonged to Henry II of France and thus provides a demonstrable link between Giovan Paolo and the French



Fig. 65. *Henry II*, ca. 1553. Paint on parchment, Diam. 2 in. (5.1 cm). Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence

court. Second, it is the only complete armor decorated with embossed foliate scrollwork of a type usually associated with Giovan Paolo Negroli. As such, it provides the context in which to see the related armor elements here attributed to that master (cat. nos. 43–46, 48). Third, it is one of the few embossed parade armors to preserve its exchange helmet.

Once considered to be of French manufacture because of its Valois associations, the armor has in recent years been attributed to Giovan Paolo based on its similarity to the signed breastplate in the Metropolitan Museum (cat. no. 43).<sup>1</sup> The decoration is firmly rooted in the Negroli oeuvre, particularly Filippo's *Masks Garniture* of 1539 (cat. no. 30), with its plethora of grotesque masks, some of them with open mouths issuing foliate scrolls, and its robustly proportioned and sculpturally conceived couters. The style of embossing and the employment of foliate scrollwork as an overall design are more characteristic of Giovan Paolo than Filippo, however, and indeed the flat leaves with their defined central vein, the half-turned leaves with folded-over edges, the branches with diagonally cut stems and delicate spiraling tendrils, and the brackets joining the confronted branches are motifs common to this armor, the signed breastplate, and the other elements attributed here to Giovan Paolo. The helmet of this armor is very similar to the close helmet in the Metropolitan Museum (cat. no. 46), the two headpieces having comparable silhouettes, with masks at the front of a

rounded comb, visors with stepped profiles, and the same elaborate visor pivots with foliate iron washers (the original pivots on Henry II's helmet, since replaced, were still present when the helmet was engraved by Asselineau. The type of etching, with symmetrical thick-leafed foliage on a plain sunken ground, while only generally related to that of the signed breastplate, is more or less identical on both helmets, as well as on the knee plate in the Hermitage (cat. no. 48).

Despite these similarities, there are certain differences between this armor and the signed breastplate that complicate the attribution to Giovan Paolo. The design of the armor's decoration is lighter in style and less dense; it is also less imaginative and varied. The eleven masks punctuating the main plates are copied from the same model and are repetitious. The scrolls covering the surfaces, particularly on the cuirass, are simpler and more rigidly symmetrical and are typologically less robust and more static, with fewer turned leaves; the birds, dragons, and other grotesque creatures that inhabit the foliage on other works by Giovan Paolo are absent. The armor's workmanship is uneven, with the finest embossing found on the close helmet and the couters, where the relief is higher and more crisply delineated than elsewhere. The cuirass, by contrast, is rendered in very low relief. If this armor was made by Giovan Paolo, as the high quality of embossing on the helmet and couters suggests, perhaps it was constructed in haste, with the master concentrating primarily on the larger, more sculptural elements. Another royal harness, the *Lion Armor* of Francis I (cat. no. 61), also shows similar inconsistencies.<sup>2</sup>

Unlike the damascened armor of Henry II (cat. no. 31), which displays the king's personal colors, monogram, and devices, this armor is devoid of royal insignia. Its provenance is established by several portraits of Henry II in which the king wears an embossed harness covered with foliate scrolls that can be none other than this one. The finest of these is an equestrian portrait attributed to François Clouet (active by 1536–died 1572) in the Bearsted Collection at Upton House,<sup>3</sup> which provides a dependable contemporary illustration of the armor's original appearance (fig. 64). The gorget, now missing, is recorded there, as is the original waist plate, which was embossed with a downward-pointing row of gilt leaves, a motif somewhat reminiscent of the upward-pointing leaves encircling the waist of Guidobaldo II della Rovere's armor (cat. no. 23b). The breastplate was evidently once longer, with more metal below the mask at its base; the etched band of foliage around the neck includes a grotesque figure in the center, its head clearly indicated, whereas on the present truncated breastplate the head is missing. The breastplate and right pauldron in the painting accurately record the pattern of foliate scrollwork that we see today on



the armor, whereas the scrolls on the tassets are generalized and not true to the piece. The Bearsted portrait is also important in recording the original coloring, with gold relief ornament against a dark (black, or blued) ground.

The date of the king's portrait has direct bearing on the dating of the armor. The monarch's age in the Bearsted portrait appears to be about twenty-five to thirty, mature but still youthful, with a leaner and more angular face than shown in his portraits of the 1550s. His close-cropped hair, chiseled profile, and short beard correspond to a portrait sketch in Chantilly datable to about 1547,<sup>4</sup> and to Niccolò della Casa's heroic portrait of that year (fig. 31). The armor would thus seem to date to Henry's last years as dauphin or soon after his accession.

The dating of the armor is complicated by the existence of two other royal portraits that may have been created more than a decade apart. An equestrian portrait very similar to the Bearsted version is in the Menil Collection, Houston (cat. no. 47c),<sup>5</sup> and shows the king as a young man sprouting traces of a beard, his face turned slightly outward toward the viewer. In that painting, which has the same dimensions as the Bearsted portrait, the horse's trappings are much simpler and the architectural background is different, but the armor is the same. The face corresponds to another drawing at Chantilly, which shows the youthful Henry II when he was dauphin, about 1541.<sup>6</sup> However, the

Menil portrait could also be a copy after a lost original. If the prototype portrait did indeed originate in the early 1540s, then the armor was probably made about the same time as the dauphin's silver-damascened armor (cat. no. 31), another Negroli work. If, on the other hand, the Menil portrait is a later historicizing one, with the substitution of an earlier facial type upon the model of the Bearsted portrait, then the more traditional date of the mid-1540s for the armor can be maintained with some confidence.

In a third portrait, a round miniature in the Uffizi, the king is portrayed bust-length, his face seen in three-quarter view from the left, a type datable to about 1553 (fig. 65).<sup>7</sup> The armor is now somewhat generalized, suggesting that the miniature is probably also a copy of another portrait, but the presence of a bearded mask at the top of the left pauldron and the pattern of foliate scrolls around it leave no doubt that the same armor again served as the model. The presence of this armor in a portrait of the 1550s could be interpreted to suggest that the harness is less likely one of the monarch's youth than one of his maturity. In any event, the harness seems to have been one of Henry's favorites.

This armor provides tangible proof of Giovan Paolo's association with the French court, which is otherwise known only from documents. His name is mentioned in notarial accounts of 1531 and 1533 in which installment payments were made to the principal armorers of Milan for



Fig. 66. Circle of Madeleine Boullogne, *Still Life*, signed and dated (?), NAP, 1678. Oil on canvas, 25<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 33<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (65.6 x 84.2 cm). Courtesy Christie's, London



Fig. 67. *Helmet*, 19th century. Watercolor on paper, 11 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 9 $\frac{3}{8}$  in. (29 x 23.7 cm). Royal Armouries, Leeds (I.392)

armors furnished to the French in 1525.<sup>8</sup> This presumably refers to equipment made prior to the battle of Pavia (February 24, 1525), in which the French were defeated by the imperial army and Francis I was taken prisoner. The large number of craftsmen referred to suggests that the armors in question were prepared for the troops and did not necessarily include personal harnesses for the king. Giovan Paolo is recorded again in September and November of 1561 as receiving payments from Emanuele Filiberto (1528–1580), duke of Savoy, for three armors, one of them presumably for the duke, the other two, probably intended as ducal gifts, for the king of France and the duke of Orléans.<sup>9</sup> The date of the commission is unfortunately not recorded but it was presumably contracted months, if not a year or two, earlier, so the recipients in question may have been Henry II (died July 10, 1559) and his second son, the future Charles IX (1550–1574; r. 1560–74), as duke of Orléans. Alternatively, the persons referred to may have been Francis II (1544–1560) and the future Charles IX, or Charles IX and his brother the future Henry III (1551–1589). Unfortunately, neither of these armors is described in the documents, so we remain ignorant of their composition and decoration.

Henry II's armor is purely Milanese in the sculptural conception of its embossed foliate scrollwork and provides an interesting contrast to the goldsmithlike precision, delicacy, and miniature qualities that characterize the foliage employed on French embossed armor of the 1550s.<sup>10</sup> It seems likely that this Milanese harness and perhaps others like it provided inspiration, and also a point of departure, for later French armorers working for the court.

The existence of a second helmet need not be interpreted as proof that this royal parade armor was originally part of a conventional small garniture with exchange pieces for field and infantry use.<sup>11</sup> On the contrary, field armors, and apparently also parade armors, were frequently supplied with both close helmets and burgonets. For example, the Paris armory of Anne de Montmorency (1493–1567), constable of France, included at least three armors of this type: “a black armor chiseled, gilt, and enriched, complete with a headpiece, a morion, arms, its tassets to the knees, and gauntlets”; “another white armor, gilt and engraved in bands, a headpiece, a burgonet with two buffes, arms, gauntlets, tassets, knee pieces, and greaves”; and “a white armor, engraved and gilt in spiral bands, furnished with tassets and gauntlets, morion, and a headpiece and two small pauldrons.”<sup>12</sup> The first of these armors, an embossed and parcel-gilt harness reaching to the knees, sounds very similar to the king's. An anime in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris, that probably also belonged to Henry II is currently mounted with a burgonet and buffe, but a contemporary engraved portrait of the king shows it with a matching close helmet, now lost.<sup>13</sup> The Lion Armor in the Royal Armouries, Leeds (cat. no. 62), is the only other surviving embossed armor known to have had a second helmet, although its burgonet, recorded in a painting and a later drawing, is now missing. The armor of Henry II is thus complete and still remarkably versatile, allowing the king to wear it as a light field armor with close helmet, lance-rest, and long tassets, and as an infantry harness with burgonet and short tassets, the lance-rest removed.

When and under what circumstances the king's armor left the French royal armory are not known. The close helmet, lacking its collar plates, appeared in a French still life attributed to the circle of Madeleine de Boullogne (1648–1710) that passed through the art market in 1990 (fig. 66).<sup>14</sup> A nineteenth-century watercolor drawing of the helmet with the collar plates still missing is in the collection of the Royal Armouries, Leeds (fig. 67).<sup>15</sup> The helmet next appeared, this time mounted with a single collar lame front and back, in an engraved illustration published by Asselineau (1839–46), when it was captioned as belonging to “M. le Cte Colbert,” apparently Count Auguste de Colbert, a modern collector and not, as is usually assumed, Louis XIV's famous minister.<sup>16</sup> These

renderings of the helmet suggest that the armor was already damaged and in pieces by the late seventeenth century but that some of the original collar lames survived with it and were subsequently restored to it in the nineteenth century; the modern collar lames on the helmet today indicate that the armor's more complete restoration followed its acquisition by Colbert. Only at the end of the nineteenth century, when in the possession of dealer Charles Stein, was the complete armor (rather than just the helmet) documented, and by that time it had come to be identified as Henry II's.<sup>17</sup> The burgonet in the Louvre was already on the art market in the second half of the eighteenth century, when it was owned by C.-A. Picard.<sup>18</sup> It appears to have served as a model for the helmet held by the blinded warrior Belisarius in Jacques-Louis David's *Belisarius Begging Alms*, painted in Paris in 1781 (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille), which has the same grotesque mask at the front of the bowl.<sup>19</sup>

1. Mann (1938) was the first to attribute this armor to the Negroli atelier and to associate the Louvre burgonet with it, but it was Thomas and Gamber (1958) who first ascribed the armor specifically to Giovan Paolo.
2. Embossed armors were inevitably worked on by several craftsmen, but the most prominent parts, especially the helmet, breastplate, and possibly the pauldrons and couters, usually reflect the master's hand. This is certainly the case with the Metropolitan Museum's parade armor of Henry II (acc. no. 39.121), a French work of about 1555, on which the vambraces, gauntlets, and tassets are of noticeably inferior quality.
3. Paris 1996, pp. 110–11, with bibliography.
4. Dimier 1924–26, vol. 1, pl. 15.
5. Paris 1996, pp. 109–10.
6. Dimier 1924–26, vol. 1, pl. 15; vol. 2, p. 85, no. 26.
7. Florence 1977, p. 237, no. 167.
8. Motta 1914, pp. 226–28.
9. Angelucci 1890, pp. 57–58.
10. For this style of French armor and its probable Milanese inspiration, see Thomas 1965.
11. As suggested by Tarassuk, in Chicago 1986, p. 8.
12. Mirot 1920, pp. 143–44, citing the inventory of 1568, nos. 997, 999, and 1000, respectively; the same armors are described more concisely in the inventory of 1556, nos. 360, 364, 366, 367, respectively (Mirot 1920, p. 106).
13. For this armor, see Paris 1993, pp. 30–31.
14. Christie's, London, December 14, 1990, lot 336, ill.

15. Inv. no. I.36; ex coll. A. R. Dufty, sold at Christie's, London, October 21, 1987, lot 131.
16. The mistaken identification of Count Colbert as Jean-Baptiste Colbert (1619–1683) originated with de Cosson 1901, p. 32. Count Colbert appears to have formed his collection during the second quarter of the nineteenth century, judging from the fact that he also owned the famous embossed and gilt burgonet of Henry II of France in the Metropolitan Museum (acc. no. 04.3.217), which was sold in London in 1833 (Anonymous sale 1833, lot 152). The same helmet is reproduced in Jolimont and Gagniet 1836–38, pl. 23, its owner identified as Count Auguste de Colbert.
17. The armor is referred to several times in letters dating 1892–94, written by C. A. de Cosson and C. Ressman to the American collector W. H. Riggs (files of the Department of Arms and Armor, Metropolitan Museum of Art). The harness was already owned by the dealer Charles Stein in 1892 (Riggs to de Cosson, November 2, 1892), and was sold to the banker Stefano Bardac in 1894 (Ressman to Riggs, August 10, 1894). Bardac lent the armor to the Exposition Universelle of 1900 (Migeon 1900; Molinier and Marcou 1900), but it was already in the hands of Duveen Galleries in London by the following year. It was sold to Lord Astor through Laking and then Partridge in 1903 (information from the Duveen account books in the Getty Research Center, Los Angeles).
18. Picard sale 1780, lot 193. The small collection of arms included two sixteenth-century circular embossed shields—one (lot 189) now in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris (inv. no. I. 82), the other (lot 190) in the Wallace Collection, London (inv. no. A 322)—as well as the pair of stirrups belonging to Francis I of France (lot 197) now in the Musée National de la Renaissance, Écouen (inv. no. E. Cl. 21108).
19. The helmet in David's painting differs in outline from the Louvre example, having a raised Roman-style comb that arches above the grotesque mask. It is not certain if the painter modified the existing helmet to look more Roman, or if he was copying another helmet, which no longer survives.  
The painting is illustrated in *Masterworks from the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille*, exh. cat. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1992), p. 138.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Picard sale 1780, lot 193; Allou 1835, p. 234, fig. 89; Willemin and Pottier 1839, vol. 2, p. 52, pl. 255; Asselineau 1839–46, pl. 40; Penguilly l'Haridon 1865, p. 22, no. 143; Penguilly l'Haridon 1867, p. 57, no. 157; Courajod 1886, p. 35, no. 3; Migeon 1900, n.p., ill.; Molinier and Marcou 1900, p. 24; London 1901–2, p. 97, no. 665; Laking 1920–22, vol. 3, pp. 342–46, fig. 1090; Mann 1938; Thomas and Gamber 1958, p. 773; Thomas 1959, p. 44; Thomas 1965, p. 48, fig. 35; Auersperg 1983, ill.; Hever Castle sale 1983, pp. 35–39, lot 44, ill.; Chicago 1986, pp. 7–10; Boccia 1993, p. 22.





48.

### LEFT KNEE PLATE (POLEYN)

*Giovan Paolo Negrolì*

*Milan, ca. 1540–45*

*Steel, gold, and silver*

*Wt. 9 oz. (255 g)*

*Ex coll.: Czar Nicholas I of Russia, Tsarskoye Selo  
The State Hermitage, Saint Petersburg (3.O. 3071a)*

Forged in one plate, the poleyn has a turned and roped edge bordered by a recessed band etched with symmetrical foliate ornament against a sunken ground. The border is pierced for lining rivets, and the iron rivet heads that remain have a conical shape with eight raised ribs. The center of the knee is embossed with a grotesque leafy mask with four twisted flamelike mustaches above a gaping mouth; leafy branches issue from the sides and scroll around the mask. The raised decoration, turned edge, and etched border retain traces of gilding and what may be silvering in the ribs of the leaves around the face, the remaining surfaces having a russet-brown color. The metal is corroded and a large hole is pierced in the mouth region of the mask.

This is one of a pair, its mate (Hermitage, inv. no. 3.O. 3071b, not exhibited) being a well-made copy.<sup>1</sup> The poleyn originally served as the lowermost plate for a long articulated *cuisse* (lower thigh defense) belonging to a light-cavalry armor like that of Henry II of France in (cat. no. 47). Indeed, the shape of the poleyn, its embossed mask and foliage, and its etched border are so similar to those on the Henry II armor as to be securely attributable to the same workshop.

The poleyn's etched border and its distinctive ribbed conical rivet heads also match those on the close helmet in the Metropolitan Museum (cat. no. 46). These details and the similarity of the masks on the poleyn and on the visor of the helmet indicate that the two pieces could originally have been part of the same armor. However, the helmet's gilding was achieved by hatching the surface and applying gold leaf (a damascening technique), whereas the poleyn appears to be fire-gilt, so that they are more likely to be remnants of two different, although nearly identical, parade armors of the Henry II type.

1. The restoration of the imperial collection was undertaken by the Saint Petersburg armorer I. Orlov, the jeweler K. Pock, and the Parisian arms and armor dealer and restorer F. Juste père (Tarassuk 1959, p. 2). It may have been Juste, who worked in Russia for the years 1844 to 1848 (Gille 1860, p. vi), who undertook the copying of the poleyn and possibly also the replacement of the missing cheekpiece on the helmet of Guidobaldo II della Rovere in the exhibition (cat. no. 23a).

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Lenz 1908, p. 170, no. I.296, pl. xvii.

# CAREMOLO MODRONE OF MANTUA

Caremolo Modrone is the best known of Filippo Negroli's contemporaries. Although he was born in Milan about 1489, Caremolo's career is indelibly associated with the Gonzaga court in Mantua. By 1521 he was already in the service of Federico II Gonzaga (1500–1540), marquis (duke from 1530) of Mantua, whose trusted armorer he remained for almost two decades. Federico admired Caremolo's work, referred to him as an "eminent artist" ("artifice insigne"; Posio 1985, p. 47) and as "our beloved armorer" ("nostro armarolo carissimo"; Bertolotti 1889, p. 146), and named him master of the ducal armory. In a letter of January 21, 1525, Federico noted that "many times I want to have armors made for me by Caremolo, our armorer, and three or four times a year, according to my wishes and according to the different types that please me" (Bertolotti 1889, p. 145). In addition to the duke's personal harnesses, Caremolo made armors for the Gonzaga troops and for the duke's friends, relatives, and political allies. Much of Caremolo's own correspondence deals with his procuring iron from Brescia, where he on occasion also acquired for his patrons swords and other

finished arms from the famous craftsmen of that town. In January 1527 Caremolo received Mantuan citizenship along with his younger brother Paolino and his nephew Bernardino, who were also armorers, and in November 1528 Federico granted him the privilege to build an armor forge on the banks of the Parcarello, near the town.

In 1542, following Federico's death, Caremolo was responsible for drawing up an inventory of the ducal armory. It is curious to note that among the hundreds of items he listed, he specifically identified only two shields as his own work: "two large shields of iron surrounded with palm leaf decoration and scrolls and swags made by Master Caremolo" ("due rodelle grande de ferro con li palmi intorno et tortioni e groppi fatti per mg caremolo"; Mann 1939, pp. 310–11, no. 314). However, the inventory of 1543, made just after Caremolo's demise, describes as his an armor of simple design made for Duke Federico: "a light horseman's armor, plain and burnished without gauntlets, which was made for Duke Federico by Master Caremolo M[odrone]" ("una armatura alla legiera schietta inbornita senza guanti chera del prefato q. ill. S. Duca Federico fatta per el q. Maestro caremolo M"; Mann 1945, pp. 48–49, no. 7). On February 27, 1543, Caremolo, age fifty-four, died in Mantua in his house in the armorers' quarter. His will and the postmortem inventory of his estate indicate that he lived comfortably and owned property and that he had a wife named Clara, a son Federico, and a daughter Blanca, who was married to Marcantonio Osma, another armorer, who succeeded him as master of the ducal armory. His brother Paolino survived him by twenty years and died on April 20, 1563, at the age of sixty-five.

There are no surviving armors signed by Caremolo Modrone, and our knowledge of his life and career is based entirely on the documents in the Archivio di Stato, Mantua, which were first brought to light by Bertolotti (1889) and have recently been supplemented by Posio (1985). In addition to establishing Caremolo's service to Duke Federico, these documents show that, despite his position as court armorer in Mantua, he had a distinguished roster of aristocratic customers. In 1524, for example, he made armors for the marchese del Vasto and another for Charles de Bourbon, the former constable of



Fig. 68. Burgonet of Emperor Charles V. Attributed to Caremolo Modrone, Mantua, ca. 1534–36. Steel, H. 10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (26.3 cm). James A. de Rothschild Collection, Waddesdon Manor, Surrey (W1/97/1)



Fig. 69. Watercolor drawing of the Tunis Armor, *Inventario Iluminado*, ca. 1544. Real Armería, Madrid (N 18)

France, who had recently entered into imperial service against his former master, Francis I. In 1525 he delivered an armor to Federico's cousin Ercole d'Este, the eldest son of Alfonso I, duke of Ferrara and Modena, and it is likely that he also made armor for Piro Gonzaga, Federico's uncle. In 1539 he sent arms (*arme*, an ambiguous term referring to both armor and weapons) to Anne de Montmorency, constable of France, and later that year some arms made in Mantua by an unspecified master, possibly Caremolo, were sent to Don Garcia de Toledo, son of the viceroy of Naples. Many of these works were presumably commissioned by the duke of Mantua.

Caremolo is best known, however, for the armors he made for Charles V. In December 1528 Caremolo is reported to have delivered to Brescia arms that had been made

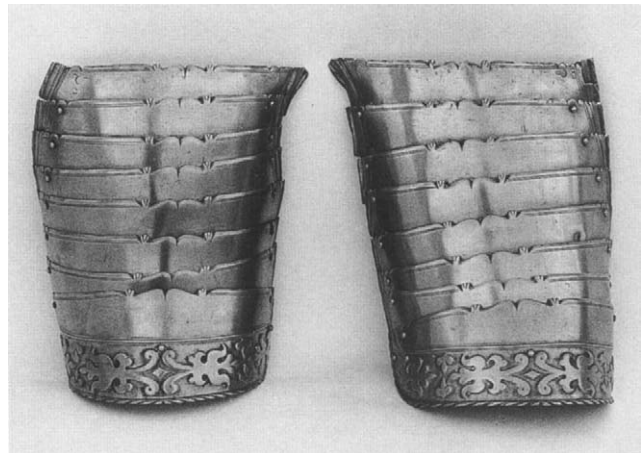


Fig. 70. Tassets from the Tunis Armor. Caremolo Modrone, Mantua, 1534. Steel. Real Armería, Madrid (A 112)



for the emperor. On May 2, 1530, the emperor's armorer wrote from Innsbruck requesting the arms that were being made in Mantua, noting that his master was awaiting them impatiently. The maker of these works is not named, but they too were possibly by Caremolo. In March 1533 the armorer personally delivered arms and an armored saddle to Charles V, who was then with Federico Gonzaga in Alessandria (in Piedmont). In August of the following year he delivered a gift of arms from Federico to the emperor, who was residing in Palencia, Spain. The emperor received Caremolo warmly, admired the armors, and, having tried them on, especially praised the perfection of the measurements. In an effusive letter to the duke reporting on that meeting, the Mantuan ambassador in Spain related that the emperor had extolled the arms as being more valuable to him than a city, and that, had he been measured a thousand times, the harness could not have fit better. Charles is said to have embraced Caremolo like a brother. On June 19, 1536, Caremolo once again delivered arms to Charles V, who was at Asti, in Piedmont, where he was preparing to invade Provence. The emperor again expressed his satisfaction with the arms (mention is made of a burgonet, called a *celata*, a sword, and armors) but also voiced some impatience in his need for other promised items that were not yet ready. From this it has been surmised that these items may not have been a gift from the duke but rather had been personally ordered by the emperor (Boccia and Coelho 1967, p. 329).

Apart from the Negroli, few Italian armorers are as well documented as Caremolo Modrone. Yet he remains one of the most mysterious of craftsmen on account of the absence of signed works, the lack of specificity in the letters and inventories in which his works are mentioned, and the heterogeneous oeuvre ascribed to him in recent years. Our ignorance about his work is such that even the docu-

mented armors presented to Charles V in 1534 and 1536 cannot be identified today with certainty. The corpus of armors generally attributed to Caremolo includes the so-called Tunis Armor of Charles V (fig. 69), an entirely gilt harness with simple embossed bands on the tassets, which may be the armor presented in 1534; the embossed and gold-damascened Palm Branch Armor of Charles V, discussed below (cat. no. 49), which may be that of 1536; and the emperor's embossed burgonet now at Waddesdon Manor (fig. 68). All three are illustrated in the *Inventario Iluminado* of about 1544 and seem, at least circumstantially, to be associated with Caremolo and his patron Federico Gonzaga. A small group of armors embossed in a style generally similar to the Waddesdon Manor burgonet, notably the armor of Carlo Gonzaga (cat. no. 50), the helmet and shield of Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol (cat. no. 51), and the armor traceable to the Medici armory in Florence (cat. no. 52), have also been associated with Caremolo, although without any documentary evidence. The armor of Carlo Gonzaga is the only one with a Mantuan association. With these works must be mentioned two armored saddles with embossed and gilt decoration in the Real Armería in Madrid (inv. nos. F 22, F 23), which are also very probably by Caremolo. The finer of the two (F 22) is embossed with cockle shells and foliate scrolls and, at the center of the front plate, the Mount Olympus device of Federico II (a mountain with spiral road leading up to an altar at the summit, accompanied by the motto *Fides*).

A complete reexamination of all the works attributed to Caremolo goes beyond the scope of the present catalogue, and here we have to content ourselves with treating the armors that show a relationship to the work of the Negroli and to the general development of the *all'antica* style of Italian parade armor.

## PALM BRANCH ARMOR

*Caremolo Modrone*

*Mantua, ca. 1536*

*Steel and gold*

*a. Two arms, waist plate, and two culet lames*

*Right arm: Wt. 3 lb. 10 oz. (1,640 g)*

*Left arm: Wt. 3 lb. 12 oz. (1,705 g)*

*Waist plate: Wt. 12 oz. (345 g)*

*Culet lames: Wt. 6 oz. (180 g)*

*Real Armería, Patrimonio Nacional, Madrid (A 114)*

*b. Burgonet*

*Wt. 4 lb. 1 oz. (1,855 g)*

*Ex coll.: Real Armería, Madrid*

*The Board of Trustees of the Royal Armouries, Leeds (IV.443)*

Preserved today in extremely fragmentary condition, this harness, traditionally referred to as the Palm Branch Armor (*de las palmas*, coined by Valencia de Don Juan in 1898), can best be appreciated from the watercolor illustration in the *Inventario Iluminado* of about 1544 (fig. 71). There it is shown as a richly blued and gold-damascened small garniture capable of forming, with a minimum number of exchange pieces, a cavalry armor, another for light cavalry, and an infantryman's corslet. For reasons unknown, most of the armor seems to have disappeared from the Real Armería in the sixteenth century, with only a few elements remaining today in Madrid: two complete arms, comprising shallow, symmetrical pauldrons and vambraces of three-part construction; a single waist plate with roped lower edge;<sup>1</sup> and the two lowermost lames from the culet of the backplate, these last having been reacquired for the collection in 1985.<sup>2</sup> According to Valencia de Don Juan, the Real Armería also retained in 1898 a close helmet and a rondel protecting the armpit, both decorated with palm branches, but those pieces have since disappeared. Outside Madrid only two other pieces are recorded. One is the burgonet at Leeds, which corresponds exactly in shape to the one rendered in the *Inventario Iluminado*;<sup>3</sup> the burgonet is now highly polished and devoid of decoration except for the crossed palm fronds. The other is a single toe cap that was formerly in the collection of William Meyrick (d. 1865) and is known both from a watercolor drawing by Meyrick (fig. 72) in the Department of Prints, Drawings, and Paintings in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, and from a faded image in an album of photographs recording Meyrick's collection in 1861.<sup>4</sup> The present whereabouts of the toe cap, which seems to have retained its original coloring, are not known. A number of other pieces have wrongly been identified as belong-

ing to the Palm Branch Armor, but they are of distinctly different workmanship and should no longer be associated with it.<sup>5</sup>

Judging from the *Inventario Iluminado*, the original appearance of the armor must have been very splendid. The high quality of hammer work and damascening can still be appreciated in the surviving elements. The outer edges are turned under, roped, and gold-damascened, not fire-gilt as was usual. The principal edges are bordered by pairs of embossed palm fronds, their stems entwined and their surfaces gold-damascened. Palm branches are found at the top of the pauldrons (shoulders), along the perimeters of the couters (elbows), and at the wrists on the lower vambraces, on the edges of the waist plate and the lower culet lame, at the base of the comb of the burgonet, and at the front of the Meyrick toe cap; judging from the *Inventario Iluminado*, palms were also located at the top of the breastplate, at the lower edges of the tassets, and (although not specifically indicated in the drawing) probably on the gauntlet cuffs, cuisses, and small exchange pauldrons. Between the roped edges and the palms on the pauldrons, wrists, and lower culet lame there runs a narrow sunken band, which is gold-damascened with pseudo-Kufic script; on the couters and the waist plate these bands are only gilt (without inscriptions), like those around the top of the inner plate of the lower vambrace. The main surfaces of the armor were originally blued and damascened with vertical bands of foliate scrolls. Traces of the original translucent bluing, now an opaque blue-black color, are still preserved on the waist plate and culet lames, which also retain evidence of seven damascened vertical bands framed by double lines. The arms in Madrid unfortunately were polished white in the nineteenth century, although the damascening at the edges is still well preserved;





Fig. 71. Watercolor drawing of the Palm Branch Armor, *Inventario Iluminado*, ca. 1544. Real Armería, Madrid (N 18)





49a, arms

most of the damascening on the waist plate has been scratched away by a vandal.

The armor is described in the *Relación de Valladolid* in terms that correspond remarkably well with its illustration in the *Inventario Iluminado*:

Harness damascened in bands, burnished blue, that the duke of Mantua gave, for war, with these pieces / A breastplate and backplate, on the breastplate Our Lady, with long laminated tassets / A gorget attached to the pauldrons, with its rondels and vambraces of three pieces / A close helmet / A separate visor like a ventail, with a barred visor / A pair of fingered gauntlets / A pair of laminated pauldrons / A breastplate / Some open greaves like shin defenses, with cuisses / Some shoes of mail with steel tips / Two morions, one blued and engraved like this harness, and the other similar, except that it is in relief and gilt and the ground blued / Another burgonet-morion with a round skull in the form of a golden fleece / A buffe like a beard, gilt / Some small separate pieces to enlarge the cuisses and vambraces.<sup>6</sup>

The identification of the Palm Branch Armor with the description in the *Relación de Valladolid*, which never actually mentions the crossed-palm motif, is based on general similarities between the written description and the watercol-

or illustration in the *Inventario Iluminado*.<sup>7</sup> Both describe a blued and gold-damascened armor with distinctive barred visor and rondels, accompanied by three other helmets. One of the latter is the curly-haired burgonet with bearded buffe made for Charles V by Filippo Negroli in 1533 (cat. no. 20), and another is the embossed and gilt burgonet now in Waddesdon Manor (fig. 68); these two helmets obviously do not belong to this armor. The third helmet, described as matching the Palm Branch Armor, must be the Leeds burgonet, which, although now devoid of color, has the same graceful form and the eponymous palm branches delineated in the *Inventario*. The reference to it as being “engraved” (rather than damascened) is undoubtedly an innocent error of the inventory clerk. Based on the *Relación*, Valencia de Don Juan identified the armor as the one presented to Charles V by Federico II Gonzaga, duke of Mantua, and, in light of Bertolotti’s 1889 publication of documents concerning Caremolo Modrone, he attributed it to the Mantuan armorer.

Despite the general concordance between the *Inventario Iluminado* and the *Relación de Valladolid*, there are some disturbing discrepancies between the illustration and the written description and between these sources and the surviving pieces. Although the *Relación* describes the armor as blued and traces of bluing are preserved on the waist plate and culet lames, the drawing of the armor in the *Inventario Iluminado* is a reddish purple. We cannot explain the reasons for the difference in chromatics between the armor described and the armor illustrated, as all the other blued or blackened armors of Charles V are accurately colored in the *Inventario Iluminado*.<sup>8</sup> Neither document accounts for the waist plate, which is unusually thick and heavy and has a roped lower edge without a notch over the fork or holes for the attachment of tassets, and so does not match the horseman’s armor illustrated in the *Inventario*. It may, however, have been attached to the second (reinforcing or infantry?) breastplate mentioned in the *Relación* but not illustrated in the *Inventario*. The lames for extending the arms, cited in the *Relación*, are also not illustrated. Finally, there is the absence of the Virgin and Child on the breastplate, a motif typical of the emperor’s armors (see, for example, cat. nos. 30, 38), which was specified in the *Relación*. It must originally have figured in the damascened decoration of the breastplate’s central band, but its omission by the illustrator can surely be accounted for by his inability to render all of the details; in the same way, he did not represent the palms on the couters.

These discrepancies are not clarified in later documents. The armor is not identified in the 1594 inventory of the Real Armería, where, in principal, it should have been found in the company of the emperor’s other damascened harnesses (fols. 8r–12r). This suggests that it may already have been fragmentary, its pieces mixed in with other armors or described so



49a, detail of right pauldron

generally as to be unidentifiable. The first precise and recognizable mention of the Palm Branch Armor after the *Relación* is found in the *Inventario General Histórico* of 1793, in which two burgonets (referred to as “morions,” one of them having a barred visor and forming part of a composite armor, no. 157) and two vambraces are recognizable as coming from this ensemble:

No. 157: . . . a morion with barred visors and at the top two interlaced palms on either side, on those parts an elevation [comb] that ends in a gilt rope made by chiseling, and in the same area down to the palms many arabesques encrusted in gold and well executed; the other parts of this morion are bordered by some lines; and in the joining of the visor to the face one part recessed and gilt that finishes in a small rope, which also finished the border of the neck, where there are some small gilt pieces with some nails.

No. 14: An open arm and elbow with pauldron, smooth, with raised chiseled palms, small moldings made by files, gilt, as are also some bands, and others encrusted with gold that represent various Arabic characters of the talisman.

No. 20: A morion matching the arm no. 14.

No. 25: An arm like that of no. 14.<sup>9</sup>

No mention is made in this inventory of the pieces referred to by Valencia de Don Juan in 1898—the close helmet with two-part visor and the rondel—and the waist lame. Of the two burgonets (referred to by the generic term *morion*), one of them, not described, must be that at Leeds; the other one with the barred visor presumably matched that illustrated in the *Inventario Iluminado*, although in the illustration it has a low roped ridge rather than a developed comb. The close helmet noted by Valencia had a tall comb and a two-part visor, which seems to correspond to number 157 in

the inventory of 1793 but fitted with, in place of a barred visor, the two-piece exchange visor that is illustrated separately to the right of the armor in the *Inventario Iluminado*. These two helmets would appear to be one and the same, the bowl and bevor mounted once in 1793 with the barred visor and another time in 1898 with the two-part visor.

The Palm Branch Armor has been widely accepted as one of the few securely documented works of Caremolo Modrone (ca. 1489–1543). The evidence presented by Valencia is admittedly only circumstantial, particularly in light of the facts that the *Relación de Valladolid* never mentions Caremolo by name and that there are no signed works by Caremolo to corroborate the attribution. Boccia and Coelho (1967) proposed a different author, suggesting that the armor was made by Filippo Negroli in 1532 and originally included the signed and dated curly-haired helmet now in Vienna (cat. no. 18) on which are found virtually identical crossed palm branches. Those authors were the first to observe that the burgonet and brigandine (the latter, cat. no. 19) in Vienna do not appear to match, despite their having been associated since the 1580s in the famous Armory of Heroes at Schloss Ambras. Boccia and Coelho’s argument presupposes that the burgonet now in Vienna became separated from the armor between 1532 and 1544 (the presumed date of the *Inventario Iluminado*, in which it is conspicuously absent) and that it somehow passed from Charles V either to one of the dukes of Urbino (who later donated it to the Ambras collection,



49a, waist plate and culet lames



49b

misrepresenting it as having belonged to Francesco Maria della Rovere) or directly to his young nephew Ferdinand (who, it would seem, intentionally associated the imperial helmet with an armor of the duke of Urbino's). Neither possibility seems plausible, especially as the helmet of 1532 lacks the characteristic damascening of the Palm Branch Armor. The Negroli attribution has found little acceptance among specialists, with Blair (1974) arguing for the traditional attribution to Modrone. Boccia (1993) nevertheless reaffirmed the Negroli attribution, based on the exceptionally high quality of the workmanship, the combination of embossing and damascening that occurs so frequently on armors from the Negroli workshop, and the lack of similarity with any of the embossed armors usually ascribed to Caremolo. Boccia did, however, disassociate the Vienna helmet from the armor. The extensive reconstruction of the Palm Branch Armor proposed by Scalini (1987) is not supported by the documents or internal evidence.

Neither attribution—to Caremolo Modrone or to Filippo Negroli—is clear cut. With its limited embossed ornament and extensive damascening, the Palm Branch Armor is atypical of the work usually thought of as Caremolo's, notably the Waddesdon Manor burgonet (fig. 68) and the armor of Carlo Gonzaga (cat. no. 50), pieces characterized by embossed and

gilt decoration incorporating broad foliate motifs and masks, without traces of damascening. Boccia and Coelho's (1967) attribution to Filippo Negroli would seem justified because of the extraordinary quality and subtleness of the decoration and the occurrence of nearly identical palm branches on the Vienna burgonet of 1532. However, the embossing is uncharacteristically modest by comparison to the prominence of the damascening, which is usually found only in Negroli works ascribed to Francesco, notably the armor of Dauphin Henry (cat. no. 31) and Charles V's Damascened Garniture (cat. no. 38). Traditionally dated to 1536, the Palm Branch Armor is too early a work for Francesco Negroli (ca. 1522–1600) to have damascened, and it is technically and artistically unlike any other Negroli armor.

The description in the *Relación de Valladolid* associating the Palm Branch Armor with a gift from the duke of Mantua thus remains the most convincing historical evidence for the origin of the armor, although it leaves the date of the gift and the armor's author subject to speculation. The Mantuan documents published by Bertolotti (1889) seem to establish at least five occasions—in 1528, 1530, 1533, 1534, and 1536—on which Charles V either commissioned armors in Mantua or received armors as a gift from Federico Gonzaga, most of them pre-



sumably by Caremolo's hand. The armor and other arms of Mantuan origin probably came about as the result of the emperor's visits to that city in 1530 (March 25–April 18, during which time he granted Federico the title of duke) and 1532 (November 6–7), while in March of 1533 Federico and Charles were together in Alessandria. The emperor, a connoisseur of armor and a regular patron of the leading armor workshops in Augsburg and Milan, would seem to have been deeply impressed at an early date by the quality of Mantuan armor<sup>10</sup> and specifically the work of Caremolo Modrone. The armor delivered by Caremolo to the emperor in Palencia in August 1534, which was highly praised by its recipient, was imagined by Valencia to be that described in the *Relación de Valladolid* as having been worn in the following year by the emperor at the conquest of Tunis ("que su mag[esdad] llebo a tunez"). The *Relación* specifies that the armor was gilt overall, thus allowing Valencia to identify it with one so illustrated in the *Inventario Iluminado* (fig. 69), a harness still preserved in the Real Armería (inv. no. A 112–113).

If the *Relación*'s indication of the armor's use at Tunis is exact (the 1594 inventory of the Real Armería, fols. 18r–19r, says nothing on the subject) and if Valencia was correct in his assumptions, the so-called Tunis Armor would serve as one of the foundation stones for establishing Caremolo's personal style. The harness, which has lost all traces of its gilding and is extensively restored, nevertheless retains a purity of line and an astonishing decorative simplicity. Aside from the incised vertical lines on the cuirass and the bracket-cut edges of most plates, the principal ornament consists of a single band, measuring about 4 centimeters wide, along the bottom edge of each tasset that is embossed in low, flat relief with a simple, symmetrical pattern of stylized foliage (fig. 70). If this armor is Caremolo's, the decoration unfortunately provides little substantive evidence on which to define his manner of embossing. To confuse matters even further, the Tunis Armor was not the only entirely gilt one in the emperor's armory. According to the inventory of the Real Armería of 1594 (fols. 18r–19r), there was a second one, which is described in the inventory of 1625 as having been used during the emperor's coronation in Bologna on February 24, 1530.<sup>11</sup> We do not know if this late reference is based on historical fact or unverified oral tradition.

A comparison of the Tunis and Palm Branch Armors reveals certain shared features in construction and finish that do suggest a common origin, despite the differences in decoration. These similarities include the form of the couters, with their swelling, triangular-shaped middle section outlined by engraved lines; the distinctive bracket-cut edges, with the squared ends of the confronted volutes incised with V-shaped lines; and the unusually narrow culet lames. The size of the culet lames on the Tunis Armor is determined by the peculiar construction of the backplate, the center plate of which is

quite narrow but is extended by hinged panels at each side. Each panel is composed of eleven narrow downward-overlapping lames, two of them flared outward at the waist to cover the gap at the sides between the waist plates on the breastplate and the culet on the backplate. Given the general correspondence between the two surviving waist plates of the Palm Branch Armor and the complete culet of three lames on the Tunis Armor,<sup>12</sup> we can surmise that the Palm Branch Armor originally had a backplate constructed exactly like that of the Tunis Armor. The presence of articulated side plates seems to be characteristic of Charles V's armors (for example, cat. nos. 30, 38), but on those cuirasses the side plates are formed of larger panels hinged to the breastplate. We know of no other extant harness with an articulated backplate exactly like that of the Tunis and Palm Branch Armors.

Taking into account that the Tunis Armor and the Palm Branch Armor are structurally similar, and that the workmanship and style of the relief decoration of the Tunis Armor is closer to the works of Caremolo than to those of the Negroli, one can consider Caremolo Modrone as the likely author of both imperial harnesses, which, according to documents, can be dated to 1534 and 1536. This would seem to indicate that his workshop was capable of producing armors of sophisticated design and construction with embossed, gilt, and damascened decoration of the first quality. The yellow washed rendering of the Tunis Armor in the *Inventario Iluminado* gives only a hint of the rich and glittering impression this entirely gilt harness must once have made. Had it survived intact, the Palm Branch Armor would have been similarly impressive; indeed, it most likely would



Fig. 72. William Meyrick, watercolor drawing of a toe cap from the Palm Branch Armor. Victoria and Albert Museum, London (D. 615-1906)

have been ranked as one of the most beautiful armors of the 1530s and the most extensively damascened harness prior to those of the Negroli workshop, beginning with the Masks Garniture of 1539 (cat. no. 30). Both armors, despite their present altered and fragmentary state, justify the high regard in which Caremolo Modrone was held by his contemporaries.

The presence of virtually identical crossed palm branches on armors made for different patrons by different armorers several years apart—referring, of course, to the burgonet made for Francesco Maria della Rovere by Filippo Negroli in 1532 and the Palm Branch Armor of Charles V attributed to Caremolo Modrone in 1536—has never been satisfactorily explained. However, there are circumstances that allow us to conjecture that Filippo Negroli was the first to use the motif and that it was subsequently appropriated by Caremolo. In a letter of November 9, 1532, Federico Gonzaga urged his brother-in-law Francesco Maria della Rovere to send along the two helmets that he had praised to the emperor during his visit to Mantua several days earlier (see “A History of the Negroli Family,” note 26). One of those helmets, referred to as having curly hair, must be the one now in Vienna. Charles V probably was shown the helmets in Bologna (where he stayed from November 13, 1532, to February 28, 1533) and, evidently impressed by the curly-haired example, immediately ordered a similar one from the same armorer (cat. no. 20). It seems very likely, especially given the close relationship that existed between the courts of Mantua and Urbino, that Caremolo had become familiar with the duke of Urbino’s much lauded curly-haired burgonet and, admiring the simple but iconographically significant motif, adopted the crossed palms as his own. Palm branches were a traditional symbol of victory since antiquity, and their extensive use on the emperor’s armor is particularly apt, explicitly identifying Charles V as a *triumphator*. The pseudo-Kufic inscriptions on the armor are equally appropriate to Charles in his dual role as king of Spain and Holy Roman Emperor, alluding most certainly to the Spanish conquest of the Moorish kingdom in 1492 and quite possibly also to the emperor’s victorious Tunis expedition of 1535. That campaign was aimed against Khayr ad-Dīn (Barbarossa), who commanded a large part of the Turkish fleet and who, from his base in Tunis on the North African coast, repeatedly threatened Mediterranean shipping and the coastal towns of Italy. Determined to rid himself of this threat, the emperor commanded an international force that successfully besieged the fortress of Goletta overlooking the bay of Tunis and captured Barbarossa’s fleet; the town of Tunis, attacked from within by a revolt of Christian slaves, quickly capitulated. Charles V was the first emperor since Roman times to set foot in Africa, and his conquest was likened to Scipio’s defeat of Hannibal of Carthage; his victo-

ry was celebrated with a series of triumphal entries *all’antica* in the various Italian cities he passed through on his way back to Spain. The iconography of the Palm Branch Armor, evoking the recent victory over the infidel, would thus seem to confirm the traditional dating to 1536.

The armor was very probably among the arms delivered by Caremolo to Charles V on June 19, 1536, at Asti (Piedmont). The emperor was pleased with the arms and expressed his pleasure to the duke of Mantua in a letter of June 23: “The arms are very good and appear to us extremely well made and we are very content, and also the armorer has satisfied us, and it gives us pleasure that you have recommended him to us.”<sup>13</sup>

1. This lame was mistakenly identified by Valencia de Don Juan (1898) as belonging to the culet.
2. The culet lames at one time belonged to Baron van Zuylen, who sold them at Sotheby’s, London, on December 13, 1971, lot 171, ill. They were subsequently acquired by the collector Rainer Daehnhardt of Lisbon, who exhibited them in Lisbon in 1983 (*Os Descobrimentos Portugueses e a Europa do Renascimento: Armaria*, exh. cat. [Lisbon, 1983], p. 94, no. 101, ill.) and sold them at Christie’s, London, November 13, 1985, lot 83, ill.
3. The burgonet is thought to have been acquired by the Royal Armouries from the well-known armor dealer Samuel Pratt in the mid-nineteenth century as part of a composed and heavily restored German armor, now catalogued as inv. no. II.15. The burgonet had been etched and gilt to match that armor and complete the ensemble, with the result that any original decoration left on it was lost. A photograph of the burgonet in its “restored” condition is in the Armouries library. In later years the importance of the burgonet was realized and its nineteenth-century decoration polished away. It is curious to note that objects stolen from the Real Armeria in the 1830s are often in better condition than those that remained behind, many of the latter having had their original blued or blackened surfaces polished bright (see, for example, cat. nos. 20, 30, 32, 38). The condition of the Palm Branch burgonet when it left Spain is not recorded, and it cannot be identified in the Christie’s sales catalogues of January 23–24, 1839, and February 26, 1840; however, had its blued and damascened decoration been well preserved at the time, it seems unlikely that it would have been redecorated.
4. The Meyrick drawings bear the inventory numbers D. 600–637–1906, among which the Palm Branch toe cap is illustrated with four others on sheet D. 615–1906. The photograph appears in a privately printed volume entitled *An Illustrated Catalogue of Weapons and Detached Specimens of Armour, from the Collection of William Meyrick, Esq.* (London: Joseph Clayton, 1861), no. 76. Meyrick’s collection was purchased in its entirety by Henry Arthur Brassey, M.P., of Preston Hall, Kent, and was sold by Brassey’s son, Leonard Brassey, M.P., of Apethorpe Hall, Peterborough, at Christie’s, London, February 21, 1922, but the toe cap is not identifiable in that catalogue and may have left the collection at an earlier date.
5. Following the description in the *Relación de Valladolid*, Valencia de Don Juan (1898) associated with the Palm Branch Armor a breastplate with a Virgin and Child etched and gilt in the center, and a single openwork greave for the right leg, the latter apparently matching a pair of poleyns formed as winged masks in the Royal

Armouries (inv. no. III.849–850). The armor is frequently illustrated with the cuirass, giving a false impression as to its completeness (Cortés 1963, fig. 4; Boccia and Coelho 1967, fig. 251; Scalini 1987, fig. 3). Very similar crossed palm branches embellish the edges of a close helmet in the Higgins Armory Museum, Worcester, Mass. (inv. no. 416), but the helmet is very heavy and rough from the hammer, and the roped edges and raised palm branches are fire-gilt rather than damascened; there is no trace of its ever having had damascened bands of foliate ornament or pseudo-Kufic inscription. A number of burgonets embossed with palm fronds of different type are found in the Museo Stibbert in Florence and the Museo Poldi Pezzoli in Milan; other burgonets, following similar patterns of decoration, but substituting crossed leaves and fleurs de lis for palms are found in the Museo Civico Medievale in Bologna, in the Scott Collection in the Art Museum and Gallery in Glasgow, and in the Wallace Collection in London (Boccia and Godoy 1985–86), but these are completely unrelated to the armor under discussion.

6. “Arnes de atanxia [sic] por bandas pabonado acul q̄ dio el duque de mantua de guerra con estas piecas / Una coroca y espaldar en el peto una nra Señora con escarcelas largas de laonas / Una gola pegada a los goardabraços con sus lunetas y braçaletes de tres piecas / Una cellada borgonona / Una bista por si amañera de bentalle con una rrejuela por la vista / Un par de mandiletas de dedos / Un par de goardabraços de laonas / Un peto / Unas grevas abiertas con sus quixotes amañera desquinelas / Unos escarpes de malla y puntas de acero / Dos morriones uno pavonado y gravado como este artes [sic: arnes] y el otro tambien salvo que es relebado y dorado y el campo pabonado / Otra çelada morrion con una cabeça redonda amañera de vellocino dorado / Un barbote como una barba dorada / Unas peçeçuelas por si pequeñas de quixotes y braçales para alargar.” *Relación de Valladolid*, ca. 1588.
7. A similar version (but showing fewer exchange pieces) of the page illustrating the Palm Branch Armor in the *Inventario Iluminado* was also found in the so-called Thun Sketchbook, an album of armor drawings (Codex a/8) formerly in the library of the counts Thun-Hohenstein in Teschen, Czech Republic, and lost in World War II. Photographs of the album made before 1936 are in the Department of Arms and Armor, Metropolitan Museum of Art.
8. The same differences can be observed in the so-called Almain Armourer’s Album, a volume illustrating the harnesses made and decorated in the English Royal Workshops at Greenwich in the years about 1555–85, where extant armors that still preserve their original heat-blued color are depicted in reddish purple tones. For example, the blued armor of Sir George Clifford, earl of Cumberland, in the Metropolitan Museum (acc. no. 32.130.6) is rendered in a decidedly reddish wash. For these designs, see Viscount Dillon, *An Almain Armourer’s Album: Selections from an Original Ms. in Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington* (London: W. Griggs, 1905), pls. xxviii, xxix.
9. “N<sup>o</sup> 157 . . . un Morrion con viseras grillados y en la cimera dos palmas enlazadas à cada lado, de las quales parte una elebacion que remata en un cordon dorado hecho al cincel, y en los espacios que resultan desde èl à las Palmas muchos arabescos embutidos de oro y bien executados; las demas piezas de este Morrion estan orilladas de algunos filetes; y in el encaje de la visera à la cara una porción rebajada y dorada que remata en un cordoncillo, con el que concluye tambien la orilla del cuello, en la que hai alguna pequeña porcion dorada con algunos clavos”; “N<sup>o</sup> 14. Un

Brazo y lazo abiertos con ombrera, liso, con Palmas elebadas al cincel, junquillos hechos à la lima, dorado, de lo que estan tambien varias fajas, y otras de embutidos de oro que representan varios caracteres Arabujos del Talisman”; “N<sup>o</sup> 20. Un Morrion compañero del Brazo n<sup>o</sup> 14”; “N<sup>o</sup> 25. Un Brazo igual al del n<sup>o</sup> 14.” *Inventario General Histórico*, 1793, fols. 33r, 169r, 169v.

10. It will be remembered that the duke of Mantua sent the emperor armors by one “maestro Pietro” in 1532 (Bertolotti 1889, p. 154) and that during his visit to Mantua in November 1532 Charles V had so admired the duke’s harnesses by “maestro Franceschino” as to desire others for himself (Bertolotti 1889, p. 155).
11. “Un Arnes dorado Antiguo que sirbio en la coronacion de el emperador”; inventory of the Real Armería, 1625, fol. 129v. Three gilt armors, all said to have been worn by Charles V in Bologna, were mentioned by Diego Cuelbis in the account of his trip to Spain entitled *Thesoro Chorographico de Las Espannas* (British Museum, London, Harley MS 3822). Describing his visit to the royal armory in Madrid on June 5, 1599, he mentioned: “Two cuirasses of the Emperor Charles V, that he wore in the entry into Bologna when he was young, entirely gilt” (Dos Cuyrasses del Emperador Don Carlos V, que llevò en la entrada di Bononia quando fue aun moço, son dorados todos; fols. 115v–116r), and “A gilt cuirass that the Emperor Charles V wore when he was crowned by the Pope in Bologna in Italy” (Un Cuyrass dorado que llevò entonces el Emperador Carlos V, q̄i fue coronado del Papa en Bononia en Italia; fol. 117r). It is unlikely that the emperor owned three different armors that were gilt overall or that three such armors would all have been worn for his coronation. One can imagine a gilt garniture comprising elements for three armors, but no garniture matching this description is found in earlier documents.
12. The three-lame culet on the backplate of the Tunis Armor (Real Armería, inv. no. A 112) measures 20.2 cm wide across the top lame and 32.2 cm across the bottom lame, whereas the incomplete culet of the Palm Branch Armor, which is missing the top lame, measures 27.5 cm across the second lame and 33.4 cm across the bottom lame.
13. “Las armas son muy buenas y nos han parecido en extremo bien y contentado mucho y assy nos ha satisfecho el armero al qual hauremos plazer que per nuestro respecto tengays per encomendado.” Bertolotti 1889, pp. 149–50.

If the Palm Branch Armor was indeed a gift of the duke of Mantua to the emperor in June of 1536, it was certainly not in recognition of Charles V’s granting him the duchy of Monferrato (as suggested by Valencia de Don Juan 1898, p. 42); in fact Federico Gonzaga was not invested with the fief until November of that year.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Bertolotti 1889, pp. 141–52; Valencia de Don Juan 1889–90, (10), p. CCCLIV, pl. 17, (11), pp. CCXLIII–CCXLVI, pl. 30; Boenheim 1897, pp. 34–35; Valencia de Don Juan 1898, pp. 40–43, 155, 175; Calvert 1907, pl. 28; Ffoulkes 1916, vol. 1, pp. 111–12; Laking 1920–22, vol. 4, pp. 111, 131–34, 142–45, figs. 1196, 1218, 1219, 1230; Mann 1939; Mann 1945; Cripps-Day 1951, pp. 28–31, 44–47; Gamber 1958, pp. 87–91; Thomas and Gamber 1958, pp. 757–60, ill. p. 764; Cortés 1963, p. 35; Boccia and Coelho 1967, pp. 321–22, 328–29, fig. 251; Dufty 1968, pl. civ, fig. c; Blair 1974, pp. 21–27; Hayward 1980, pp. 39–40; Hayward 1982; Blair 1983; Posio 1985; *Reales Sitios* 1985; Boccia and Godoy 1985–86, vol. 1, pp. 92–93, no. 50, fig. 71; Scalini 1987, pp. 13–14, 37, n. 9; Boccia 1991, pp. 58–59; New York 1991, p. 148; Barcelona and Madrid 1992, p. 154; Boccia 1993, pp. 12, 16; Brussels 1994, p. 170.





## ARMOR MADE FOR CARLO GONZAGA, COUNT OF GAZZUOLO AND SAN MARTINO

*Attributed to Caremolo Modrone*

*Probably Mantua, ca. 1540*

*Steel, gold, silver, leather, and velvet*

*Wt. 28 lb. 4 oz. (12,840 g)*

*Ex coll.: Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol, Schloss Ambras,*

*Innsbruck; acquired for the imperial collections, 1606*

*Hofjagd- und Rüstammer des Kunsthistorischen Museums, Vienna  
(A 632)*

The corslet consists of a gorget, cuirass of anime construction, tassets (thigh defenses), symmetrical pauldrons (shoulders) made in one with the vambraces (arms), and gauntlets. It was originally completed by a burgonet, which is now missing but is known from sixteenth-century sources. The breastplate is constructed of eleven transverse lames, with a single gusset lame at each armhole, and has a low medial ridge; two skirt lames support tassets of six lames each that are modeled around the thighs. The backplate, formed of twelve lames, has a single culet lame. The arms are of three-part construction, with the large couters (elbows) attached by internal straps to the upper and lower vambraces; a pronounced longitudinal ridge extends down the outside of the pauldrons and vambraces. A lining of red leather covers the interior of the gorget and the tassets, and the edges of the armor are fringed with red velvet pickadils; the attachment straps at the shoulders, the waist belt, and the straps supporting the tassets are of leather, covered with red velvet, and are fitted with brass buckles. The leather and velvet fittings are modern.

The armor's hammer-rough and blackened surfaces provide an effective contrast to the rich variety of ornament, which is embossed, gilt, and partly silvered. The relief work consists primarily of stylized, blunt-ended palmettes, acanthus scrolls which sometimes end in flowers, and ribbons. The foliate ornament at the top of the cuirass and pauldrons, at the base of the tassets, and on the gauntlet cuffs is symmetrically arranged to either side of a palmette; the foliate ornament that covers the lowest lame of the breastplate and the couters is more naturalistic and rhythmic in design. The upper lame of the gorget and the knuckle lames of the gauntlets are embossed with inverted swags of ribbons separated by leaf clusters. This relief ornament is framed by a complex treatment along the edges of the main plates, which are turned and roped and are bordered by a band of scalelike tabs, or lambrequins, in relief, and then by a raised

slotted band, these motifs gilt overall. The inner edges, particularly those of the anime and tassets, are chamfered, incised with two parallel lines, and gilt; the edges of the plates also have decorative cutouts around the articulating rivets. The lower vambraces, which are conventionally constructed of



Fig. 73. *Carlo Gonzaga*, ca. 1540–50. Oil on canvas, 52 x 34¼ in. (132 x 87 cm). Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (GG 8218)



50a, detail, inside of breastplate

two hinged plates, are embossed and gilt with raised ribs, arranged chevronlike, to suggest articulating lames. The point of each couter ends with a rosette in high relief, gilt and partly silvered.

The armorer created a rich, colorful, and harmonious work utilizing a simple ornamental vocabulary, which is varied on each part of the harness. The embellishments are confined to only certain areas of the armor, and the contrast of the plain and the decorated surfaces yields a particularly pleasing and balanced effect. The motifs in relief have a soft, rounded appearance but are nonetheless precisely embossed, their outlines accentuated by an incised line that helps separate them from the background. The clarity of the embossed motifs is especially evident from inside the plates (see detail). The use of classically inspired floral and abstract ornament in relief, the scalloped edge of the lowest pauldron lame in imitation of the pteruges found at the shoulders of Roman armors, and the decoration of the lowest breastplate lame, which suggests foliate flourishes at the base of a muscled cuirass (see fig. 19), are subtle but evocative elements that define the armor as one conceived, at least nominally, as *all'antica*.

The armor is recorded as having belonged to Carlo Gonzaga (1523–1555),<sup>1</sup> count of Gazzuolo and San Martino, who was a member of the Bozzolo branch of the ruling Gonzaga dynasty of Mantua. He was a distinguished soldier in imperial service, for Charles V in the campaigns against the French and later for Cosimo I de' Medici in the siege of Siena in 1554. He was subsequently named commander in chief of the imperial infantry in Lombardy but died soon thereafter. In 1578 Carlo Gonzaga's descendants contributed the armor, along with his portrait illustrating this very harness (fig. 73), to the Armory of Heroes assembled by Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol at Schloss Ambras.<sup>2</sup> First mentioned in

the 1593 inventory of that collection as “Carlo Gonzaga, count of Gazuola, a complete armor,”<sup>3</sup> it is described more fully in the 1596 inventory as “. . . a black articulated half armor, gilt along the beveled edges, together with its embossed burgonet with gilt scrollwork.”<sup>4</sup> The burgonet mentioned in the inventory has since been lost, but its appearance is recorded in the count's portrait, mentioned above, as well as in the engraved portrait published in Jakob Schrenck von Notzing's *Armamentarium Heroicum* (Schrenck and Thomas 1981, no. 93). The burgonet was decorated en suite, the sides of the bowl embossed with acanthus scrolls flanking a central palmette and with swagged ribbons at the peak and nape, the hinged cheekpieces embossed in the center with a leafy mask with foliate diadem surrounded by scrollwork. The edge of the comb was worked in high relief with a series of leaves, its knobby profile recalling the comb on the burgonet that belongs to the contemporary Brescian-made armor for a member of the Martinengo family (cat. no. 64).

At the end of the nineteenth century, Boeheim (1894–98) attributed this harness to the Mantuan school, undoubtedly because of its owner's lineage, and dated it to about 1550. Thomas and Gamber (1958) revised the date to about 1540–45 and tentatively connected it with the work of the Mantuan court armorer Caremolo Modrone (ca. 1489–1543). Hayward (1980, 1982), followed by Blair (1983), asserted more emphatically the Modrone attribution, in which case the harness could date no later than 1543. A dating of 1545–50 was suggested by Pfaffenbichler (in Vienna 1989), thus removing the armor from Modrone's oeuvre, although it nevertheless remains attributed to the armorer's putative workshop. In our opinion, despite the very sketchy circumstantial evidence of Caremolo Modrone's personal style, the attribution of the harness to this master is reasonable in view of the family ties that existed between Carlo Gonzaga and his cousin Federico II Gonzaga (1500–1540), duke of Mantua, and the prominence of Modrone at the Gonzaga court.

Modrone was for many years *maestro dell'armoria* in Mantua as well as the duke's personal armorer; his reputation undoubtedly extended well beyond the court, as he had made important works for various high-ranking personages, including Charles V (see cat. no. 49). Carlo Gonzaga's father, Pirro, held Modrone in high esteem and in 1527 intervened in the armorer's favor with the duke (Bertolotti 1889, p. 147). It seems likely, then, that Carlo Gonzaga might well have turned to Modrone for the fabrication of his own harness. The decorative vocabulary, in any event, accords well with that presumed to be Modrone's. The borders with raised scallops, or lambrequins, are close to those on Charles V's burgonet now at Waddesdon Manor (fig. 68). The foliate ornament and stylized mask on the lost burgonet also corre-



spond to similar features found on the helmet at Waddesdon. Two shields made by Caremolo are recorded in the inventory of the Gonzaga armory in Mantua that was drawn up in 1542 after the death of Duke Federico in 1540: "two large shields of iron surrounded with palm leaf decoration and scrolls and swags made by Master Caremolo."<sup>5</sup> Similar motifs are found on Carlo Gonzaga's armor, as well as on the stylistically related burgonet and shield of Archduke Ferdinand II (cat. no. 51), and also in several of the designs for armor recorded in the volumes by Filippo Orsoni of Mantua, which are dated between 1540 and 1559. The Orsoni drawings presumably provide us with a reflection of the armorer's art in Mantua about the time of Caremolo Modrone's death, and in one of the drawings (see cat. no. 15), illustrating a corslet *all'antica* for a king of France, presumably Henry II (r. 1547–59), we find the same decorative vocabulary that is generally deemed typical of Modrone's work. The same type of ornament is present on Carlo Gonzaga's armor, thus associating it more closely with a Mantuan origin.

Regarding the date of the armor, certain parallels can be drawn with Filippo Negrolì's Masks Garniture of 1539 (cat. no. 30) insofar as both harnesses are animes with dark surfaces (the Masks Garniture is now polished bright) highlighted by embossed foliate ornament at the tops of the cuirasses, on the pauldrons, and on the couters. The ornament utilized on the Gonzaga harness, however, is much simpler in design, the forms heavier, less intricate, and more

summarily worked. The Gonzaga harness presumably follows, rather than precedes, the innovative Masks Garniture, although it is difficult to specify on stylistic grounds if the armor was made prior to Caremolo's death.

1. For a biography of Carlo Gonzaga, see especially Giuseppe Amadei and Ercolano Marani, *I ritratti Gonzagheschi della collezione di Ambras*, exh. cat., Schloss Ambras, Innsbruck ([Mantua]: Banca Agricola Mantovana, [1978]), pp. 137–38.
2. Acknowledgment of the gifts of armor and portrait was sent to Don Alfonso Gonzaga, August 2, 1578, as noted in the files of the Hofjagd- und Rüstammer, Vienna (citing Konzept Hofkammersachen 1577–78, fol. 237, in the archive at Innsbruck).
3. "Carl Gonzagen, Graffen zu Gazuola gantze rüstung." Luchner 1958, p. 84 (citing the printed inventory of the Ambras collection).
4. "Carl Gonzaga graf zu Gazuola: Ain schwarze halbe geschobne rüstung am furfeilen vergult, sambt seiner getribnen sturmhauben mit vergulten raifen." Boenheim 1888, p. CCLXXIII, inventory of 1596, fol. 325v. Later inventory descriptions are noted by Auer 1984, p. LXXXI, no. 322.
5. "due rodelle grande de ferro con li palmi intorno et tortioni e groppi fatti per mg caremolo." Mann 1939, pp. 310–11, no. 314.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Primisser 1819, p. 62, no. 98; Sacken 1855, p. 234, no. 99; Boenheim 1888, p. CCLXXIII; Boenheim 1894–98, vol. 2, pl. 32; Grosz and Thomas 1936, p. 116; Mann 1939, pp. 262–63, pl. xviii; Mann 1945, p. 32; Luchner 1958, p. 84; Thomas and Gamber 1958, pp. 759–60; Hayward 1980, p. 41, fig. 7; Schrenck and Thomas 1981, no. 93; Hayward 1982, pp. 14–15, figs. 14, 15; Blair 1983, p. 12; Auer 1984, p. LXXXI, no. 322; Posio 1985, p. 47; Vienna 1989, pp. 338–39, no. VII/139; Gamber and Beaufort 1990, pp. 35–36, fig. 8.

51.

## BURGONET AND SHIELD OF ARCHDUKE FERDINAND II OF TYROL

Attributed to Caremolo Modrone

Mantua, ca. 1540

Steel, gold, silver, brass, and leather

Burgonet: Wt. 4 lb. 10 oz. (2,105 g)

Shield: Diam. 21 in. (53.2 cm); Wt. 6 lb. 8 oz. (2,960 g)

Ex. coll.: Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol, Schloss Ambras,

Innsbruck; acquired for the imperial collections, 1606

Hofjagd- und Rüstammer des Kunsthistorischen Museums, Vienna (A 1348, A 1348a)

The one-piece bowl of the burgonet is worked in relief on each side with a large, leafy mask wearing a crown of leaves encircled by a garland, beneath which is a row of scalelike tabs, or lambrequins; the grimacing face of the mask exposes the upper teeth and has a large leaf below serving in place of a tongue or beard. Below this emerge two foliate scrolls that curl to left and right and are joined to the mask by the leaves of its beard. Each of these branches in turn issues two scrolled straps, the upper one connecting with the mask's leafy crown, the lower one attached by a band to the symmetrical palmette of honeysuckle located at the ends of the comb at the front and back of the helmet;



51, burgonet

branches emerge from the base of the palmettes and scroll to either side across the peak and the nape. The tall comb is embossed along its edge with a band of leaves and on its sides with calyx-shaped leaves joined at their bases by a swagged ribbon; the base of the comb is outlined by a raised rib. The edges of the bowl are turned under and notched and are bordered by a recessed band outlined on the inner side by a raised rib. The matching cheekpieces are of one plate each, their top edges scalloped, and are embossed in the center with a symmetrical cluster of leaves fastened with a band; their lower edges taper to a rounded point and are incised with two horizontal lines to suggest the presence of small articulated chin lames. A plume tube, engraved and damascened with scrollwork in silver and gold, is riveted at the base of the comb; as it does not match the decoration of the helmet in any specific way, it may be a later addition. Two pairs of holes pierce the left side of the bowl at the back, perhaps for earlier plume tubes, and there is also a large hole at the apex of the comb for a crest or plume.

The circular shield has a convex profile and is worked in relief in the center with a leafy mask like those on the sides of the burgonet, only more elaborate and better modeled. The mask here has a mustache and nine teeth instead of six or seven, and the leaves of its crown, ears, and beard are larger and more naturalistic. Emerging from behind the mask and forming a lobed halo around it are four symmetrical pairs of leafy branches that crisscross and transform into slotted strapwork bands, whose ends terminate in scrolls forming double volutes joined by a slotted band that also supports a short branch of leaves. These straps differ from the smooth ones on the burgonet in their raised edges and deeply punched slots along their length. The edge of the shield is turned under, boxed, and decorated with half-round lobes separated by narrow triangular elements. The border consists of alternating leaf formations, one of palmette type and the other having a thick central sheaf issuing symmetrical scrolling branches, the two formations joined by smooth, undulating strapwork that weaves through them and





51, shield

imparts a sinuous rhythm around the center. The inner edge of this border is framed by a raised band of bead-and-reel ornament and a festoon of smooth strapwork bearing small leaf clusters. The lining of white leather appears to be a later replacement, as are the brass rivets utilized on both the shield and the burgonet.

The embossed ornament on both pieces is gilt, except for the eyes, nostrils, and teeth of the mask on the shield, which are silvered. The backgrounds are stippled and silvered, although much of the foil is now worn away. The ornament is large and boldly conceived, particularly on the shield, and was no doubt intended to be readily visible from a distance.

The embossed motifs, like those on the preceding armor (cat. no. 50), stand clear of the background thanks to their chromatic differences and to the stippled ground, which provides a contrast to the smooth and softly modeled relief. The armorer's chisel is evident in the embellishing of these pieces, particularly in the outlines of the ornament and the shaping of the turned edges. Although the burgonet and the shield were undoubtedly created as a set, there are some unexpected differences between the ornamental details on the two, notably the treatment of the edges and the strapwork.

This striking parade ensemble of burgonet and shield belonged to Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol (1529–1595) and



is described in the 1583 inventory of his collection at Schloss Ambras, near Innsbruck, as follows: “a morion, the ground silvered, on which is raised gilt work. Further, a shield, silvered, on which is also raised gilt work, lined inside with white velvet and picked out with little golden cords.”<sup>1</sup> In the inventory of 1596, following the archduke’s death in the previous year, the ensemble is described as “an iron shield, the ground silvered, on which is a gilt mask, together with its burgonet of the same work.”<sup>2</sup>

Once considered possibly a Venetian work of about 1590 (Boeheim 1894–98; Grosz and Thomas 1936), Thomas and Gamber (1958) were the first to compare the helmet and shield to Carlo Gonzaga’s armor (cat. no. 50), which they dated to about 1540–45, and to propose the ensemble cautiously for inclusion among the hypothetical works of Caremolo Modrone. Hayward (1980, 1982) later affirmed the Modrone attribution with greater conviction. More recently, a slightly later date of about 1545–50 was assigned to the pieces based on the assumption that Ferdinand II commissioned them but would have been too young to use them before that date; the pieces were consequently reattributed to the Modrone workshop, as the master himself died in 1543 (Pfaffenbichler, in Vienna 1989; Gamber and Beaufort 1990).

The attribution of this parade ensemble to Caremolo Modrone seems justified if one accepts the armor of Carlo Gonzaga as Caremolo’s work. Both armors are embossed with similar foliate designs with deeply chiseled outlines, and both utilize slotted straps and repeated-tongue patterns. The swags around the inner side of the shield’s border is not unlike those that encircle the gorget and extend across the knuckles of the gauntlets of the Gonzaga armor. The rhythmic repetition of leaf clusters on the sides of the comb and the serrated profile of the comb’s leafy edge also recall the lost burgonet belonging to the Gonzaga armor that is recorded in that prince’s portrait at Ambras (fig. 73). There can be little doubt that these two armors are closely related in design and workmanship and are very likely to have originated in the same workshop.

Apart from the difficulty of identifying Modrone’s autograph works, the dating of the burgonet and shield plays an important role in establishing whether they could be by Caremolo’s hand or are the work of his successors in the Gonzaga court workshop. Caremolo is recorded as working

with his brother Paolino (d. 1563) and his nephew Bernardino and also his son-in-law Marcantonio Osma, the last succeeding Caremolo as court armorer, but nothing is known of their individual work. The helmet and shield were very probably made in the 1540s, but there appear to be no stylistic criteria to determine a secure date of manufacture before or after Caremolo’s death in 1543. That the pieces belonged to Archduke Ferdinand II has already been established by the Ambras inventories, but these documents give no hint as to when or under what circumstances he acquired the helmet and shield. If they were made explicitly for him, they most likely date to the late 1540s, when he was governor of Bohemia (1547–64). However, Ferdinand’s passion for armor and his aggressive collecting of harnesses for his Armory of Heroes at Ambras are well known, so it is equally likely that the burgonet and shield were acquired at a later date. For example, they may have been purchased for use in some pageant or merely as works of art appropriate for his collection. They may also have been given to him as a gift, perhaps by one of his Gonzaga relatives at the time of his second marriage in 1582 to Anna Caterina Gonzaga, the daughter of Duke Guglielmo of Mantua and Ferdinand’s sister Eleonore. That event, by the way, was celebrated with an elaborate pageant *all’antica* in which the archduke was dressed in a classical-style armor with lion-head pauldrons made for him in the imperial armor workshop at Innsbruck. In the absence of any specific information about this burgonet and shield, it seems reasonable to retain their association with Caremolo Modrone and his Mantuan workshop and to date them about 1540 or slightly later.

1. “ain morian, das veld versilbert, darauf erhebt vergulde arbat. Mer ain rundell, versilbert, darauf auch erhebt vergulde arbat, inwendig mit weissem samat gefuettert und mit gulden schnierlen ausgestickt.” Boeheim 1888, p. cccxi, inventory of 1583, fol. 93r.
2. “Ain eisen rundell, der grund versilbert, ain vergulte mascera sambt der sturmhauben von der gleichen arbat.” Boeheim 1888, p. cclxix, inventory of 1596, fol. 307v. Essentially the same description is found in subsequent inventories of the Ambras collection, which are cited in Auer 1984, p. xxxvi, no. 64.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Sacken 1855, vol. 1, pp. 264–65; Boeheim 1888, p. cccxi; Boeheim 1894–98, vol. 2, p. 15, pl. 41; Grosz and Thomas 1936, p. 129; Thomas and Gamber 1958, p. 759; Hayward 1980, pp. 41–42, pl. 8; Hayward 1982, p. 15, fig. 16; Auer 1984, p. xxxvi, no. 64; Vienna 1989, p. 240, no. V/4; Gamber and Beaufort 1990, pp. 47–48, fig. 12.

**ARMOR FOR INFANTRY USE (CORSLET)**

*Mantua?, ca. 1540–50*

*Steel, gold, leather, and textile*

*H. 47½ in. (121 cm)*

*Ex coll.: Medici armory, Florence (until 1776); Fortezza da Basso, Florence; Counts Erbach-Erbach, Erbach Castle, Odenwald, Hesse, by 1785; William Randolph Hearst, by ca. 1930*

*The Detroit Institute of Arts; Gift of the William Randolph Hearst Foundation (53.198)*

The armor is a composite, the helmet, pauldrons, and cuirass with tassets probably coming from three different harnesses of approximately contemporary date. The edges, borders, and raised ornament on all of the elements are gilt, the background surfaces blackened. The burgonet is constructed of a one-piece bowl with low comb and a short projecting peak, a single neck lame, and large hinged cheekpieces extended beneath the chin by small articulating plates (modern). The edges are turned over wire and left smooth. The decoration, embossed in low, rounded relief, comprises delicate foliate scrolls, figures, and masks. A horned and mustachioed foliate mask occupies the center of the comb on either side, with a similar mask at the nape and a bearded mask on the peak whose entwined tresses flow to either side. On each side of the bowl is a helmeted and winged figure of Fame blowing a trumpet, her lower body transformed into bifurcated branches issuing slender foliate tendrils that scroll over the surrounding surfaces; a garland tied with tasseled ribbons drapes across the front above the peak. The cheekpieces are each embossed with a grimacing foliate mask with glaring eyes and open mouth, its head surmounted by a basket of fruit and flowers. A small scroll-edged plume tube of gilt iron is riveted at the base of the comb.

The cuirass is of anime type, formed in one with the gorget and constructed of transverse lames articulated internally with sliding rivets and leather straps. The breastplate is composed of twelve horizontal plates, including the collar and skirt lames, with a separate gusset lame at each armhole, while the backplate consists of eleven plates including a culet lame; the tassets of six lames each are shaped over the fork and curve around the thighs. The edges are turned, roped, and filed with double lines inside each twist, and are bordered by a narrow recessed band. The plates are embossed in low, rounded relief with horizontal bands of stylized leaves interlaced with geometrical strapwork arranged symmetrically to either side of a central motif; the band of ornament across the bottom lame of each tasset ends with a vase issuing flames. The collar lames are modern, as

are the velvet-covered leather straps that close the cuirass and secure the tassets to the skirt.

The pauldrons, of five lames each, have scalloped edges around the top and bottom lames, the edges turned and slotted and bordered by recessed and slotted bands; the edges of the middle lames are embossed with festoons, their surfaces also slotted, with stylized palmettes at the cusps. Gilt S-shaped recesses imitating slashed costume design cover the surface of the top pauldron lame.

The armor, as presently assembled, is recorded in the inventories of the Medici armory in Florence between 1631 and 1776. In the inventory of 1631, the earliest surviving account of the armory as it was arranged in the galleries on the top floor of the Uffizi at the end of the sixteenth century, it was described as “an antique armor of black iron in the manner of a small jointed anime, completely chiseled in transverse bands with foliage in low relief, completely gilt, that is breastplate, backplate, pauldrons, and burgonet similar to that armor and similar tassets.”<sup>1</sup> The description remains essentially unchanged in the subsequent inventories,<sup>2</sup> although by 1696–97 it had acquired a papier-mâché mask inserted into the face opening of the burgonet,<sup>3</sup> suggesting an attempt by the custodians to give a more dramatic and picturesque quality to the armory. In a later inventory, the mask is referred to as having the face of a Moor.<sup>4</sup>

The reorganization of the Uffizi galleries in the 1770s led to the dispersal of the Medici armory, including the destruction of many objects to recover the value of their precious metal or gemstones and the public sale of thousands of others no longer deemed of historic or artistic value. In 1776, just prior to the sale of the redundant items, several hundred pieces, the Detroit corslet among them, were sent to the Director of Artillery for display at his headquarters in the Fortezza da Basso.<sup>5</sup> Some of those arms remained in Florence and were later reunited with other parts of the Medici armory in the Museo Nazionale del Bargello, founded in 1865; others mysteriously disappeared soon after their transfer from the Uffizi. The Detroit armor was already north of the Alps by the 1780s, when it turned up in the







52, burgonet

newly formed collection of arms and armor assembled by Count Franz zu Erbach-Erbach in his castle in the Odenwald (near Darmstadt).

The Erbach armory, displayed in the Rittersaal (knights' hall), was one of the first collections of European arms and armor formed in modern times and as such is an important early manifestation of Gothic Revival taste. The contents of the Rittersaal are first recorded in a manuscript of 1805–7, now in the library of the Hofjagd- und Rüstammer, Vienna, that includes a series of watercolors by Johann Adam Schlessinger, several of them dated 1785, in which the most important armors are illustrated.<sup>6</sup> The Detroit armor is found among them, its Florentine provenance cited and its owner identified as Cosimo II de' Medici (1590–1621; grand duke from 1609), an improbable attribution given the much earlier date of the armor. The armor remained at Erbach until it was sold to William Randolph Hearst in the late 1920s.

The documented presence of this harness in the Medici collection suggests that it may have belonged to a member of that illustrious Florentine family, although the armory also contained many items acquired from other sources. The armor may have belonged to Cosimo I (1519–1574; duke from 1537 and grand duke from 1569), and, judging from its likely date in the early 1540s and its slender proportions, it would have been a harness of his youth. Cosimo's only known

complete armor, an Italian work of about 1550–55, today in the Hofjagd- und Rüstammer, Vienna (inv. no. A 406), is considerably stouter in proportion. Boccia (1983) very tentatively suggested that the Detroit armor might have belonged to Gian Giacomo Medici (1495–1555), marquis of Marignano. A Milanese condottiere only distantly related to the Medici of Florence, Gian Giacomo is best remembered as the commander of the imperial and Florentine troops that defeated the French-supported Sieneese in 1554, a victory that united all of Tuscany under Medici dominion. The descriptions of the Erbach Rittersaal include an armor said to have belonged to Gian Giacomo Medici, but that armor was one of seventeenth-century date and of uncertain provenance. Given the absence of corroborative evidence in the Medici inventories, which include no mention of an armor ascribed to Gian Giacomo and, furthermore, fail to identify the Detroit harness with any historical individual, the association of the armor with Gian Giacomo Medici must be considered very doubtful.

The homogeneity of this armor has not previously been questioned, but the lack of consistency in the treatment of the edges (smooth on the helmet, scalloped and notched on the pauldrons, and roped on the cuirass and tassets) and the distinct differences in the choice of ornament and style of embossing on the various elements leave us with little doubt

that the armor was assembled from different sources. It must be acknowledged, however, that the elements, which are all of fairly small proportion and of compact form, fit together well and share the same harmonious color scheme of black and gold. The parts seem to have been mixed up at an early date, possibly well before they were recorded in the 1631 Medici inventory, and perhaps even incorporate the accidentally interchanged parts of several harnesses belonging to the same person. Armors were frequently mixed up soon after their working life had passed, as is evidenced by the number of composite armors recorded in the Armory of Heroes at Schloss Ambras at the end of the sixteenth century. Among them is the armor of Francesco Maria della Rovere shown here (cat. nos. 18, 19) and that of Gianettino Doria (d. 1547) of Genoa, whose armor, now in Vienna (Hofjagd- und Rüstammer, inv. no. A 831; Boenheim 1894–98, vol. 2, pl. 25, fig. 2), is composed of a burgonet, cuirass, and arms apparently from at least three different harnesses.

Despite its lack of homogeneity, the Detroit corslet is important as an example of armor *all'antica* most likely made outside Milan. It was considered Mantuan by Hayward (1982) and Brescian—but under Mantuan influence—by Boccia (1983), but it is to the armors attributed to Caremolo Modrone or associated with the Mantuan court that the Detroit harness can best be compared. The vegetal motifs on the cuirass and tassets are completely stylized, their abstraction from nature providing a distinctive, if bland, decorative effect. This same tendency to abstraction characterizes the simple embossed ornament found on the bottom lame of the tassets of the so-called Tunis Armor (fig. 70) in the Real Armería in Madrid, a harness thought to have been presented to Charles V by Caremolo Modrone in 1534 as a gift from his patron, Duke Federico II Gonzaga of Mantua. Similar stylized foliage is found on the other works here attributed to Caremolo Modrone (cat. nos. 50, 51).

Although they are very different in decoration from the cuirass, the pauldrons of the Detroit armor also relate to the Mantuan group. The raised and slotted gilt bands that outline the pauldron lames are characteristic motifs on Carlo Gonzaga's armor and on the helmet and shield of Archduke Ferdinand II. The pauldrons should also be compared to the similar ones associated with Gianettino Doria's armor in

Vienna, mentioned above, which combines pseudo-antique design with recessed slashing imitating sixteenth-century German costume fashion. The Doria pauldrons, dating about 1540, have matching vambraces and large couters covered with embossed leaves, inspired by Milanese examples.

The origin of the burgonet is more difficult to localize, as it does not conform to Milanese armor of the period nor does its embossing match that on the armors ascribed to Caremolo Modrone. It is, however, without doubt the finest of the elements comprising this harness, its embossed decoration more imaginative and varied in design and more delicately worked.<sup>7</sup>

1. "Una Armad<sup>a</sup> di ferro nera anticha a foggia di Animetta che snoda tutta cesellata a striscie per il traverso di basso rilievo a fogliami tutti dorati cioè petto stiena spallacci e taschetto simile a Detta armadura, e scarsella simile." ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 513, fol. 3.
2. ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 539, inventory of 1639–40, fol. 2v; Guardaroba Medicea 633, inventory of 1650 (N.S. 1651), fol. 2r; Guardaroba Medicea 710, inventory of 1695, fol. 4, no. 17; Guardaroba Medicea 1091, inventory of 1696–97, fol. 7r, no. 145; Guardaroba Medicea 1231<sup>bis</sup>, inventory of 1715, fol. 115v, no. 145; Guardaroba Medicea Appendice 60, inventory of 1746 (N.S. 1747), fol. 96, no. 682. ASBASF, Uffizi library, MS 97, inventory of 1768, fol. 95, no. 1103.
3. ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 1091, fol. 7r.
4. "maschera di moro." ASF, Guardaroba Medicea Appendice 60, fol. 96, no. 682.
5. ASBASF, Ufficio catalogo, Filza IX (1776), no. 55, "Nota di capi dell'Armeria consegnati alla Direzione dell'Artiglieria . . ." fol. 36, no. 124 (old inv. no. 1103).
6. The manuscript, entitled *Abbildungen einiger interessanten Rüstungen welche in dem Rittersaale im Schlosse zu Erbach aufbewahrt sind* (Representations of several interesting armors which are preserved in the knightly hall of Erbach Castle), is mentioned by Donald J. LaRocca, "The Fico Armours: A Study in Connoisseurship and Secular Iconography," *The Journal of the Arms & Armour Society* 13, no. 1 (March 1989), p. 66.
7. Forrer n.d., p. 3, no. 69, pl. 10. A fragmentary and corroded burgonet formerly in the Zschille collection, known today from a photograph, employs the same mask as that on the Detroit cheekpieces.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Erbach 1808, p. 14; Kress 1832, p. 7, no. 2, ill.; Schaefer 1891, pls. 39a, b; Erbach 1894, p. 8, no. 44; Boenheim 1894–98, vol. 2, pl. 25; Müller-Hickler 1926, pl. xix, fig. 59; Brooklyn 1933, p. 4, no. 6, ill.; Robinson 1954, pp. 14–15; Boccia, Rossi, and Morin 1980, p. 124, fig. 128; Florence 1980, pp. 401–2; Hayward 1982, p. 87, figs. 17, 18; Boccia 1983, pp. 61–62, figs. 2, 6.

# MANIFESTATIONS OF THE ANTIQUE

The harnesses, pieces of armor, and helmets here assembled show, each in its own way, the variety of approaches to the creation of armor *all'antica* by Italian armorers in the period 1540–50. Although heterogeneous, this group is nevertheless very representative of the entire class of pseudo-antique armors made in the wake of the innovations of Filippo Negroli in the 1530s. With the exception of the armor by Bartolomeo Campi (cat. no. 54), all are anonymous works by talented Italian—mostly Milanese—contemporaries of the Negroli. Indeed, several of these armors were formerly attributed to Filippo or Giovan Paolo Negroli because of their high quality (cat. nos. 53, 55, 57, 60, 61).

The most faithful of classicizing armors is without doubt Campi's harness *alla romana* made for Guidobaldo II della Rovere in 1546. It is a reproduction in steel of the armors seen in imperial Roman portraiture (for example, fig. 19) and was intended to ennoble its wearer, giving him the guise of a new caesar or one of the valiant heroes of antiquity. Campi's vision of the ancient world was of course filtered through the perceptions of his own era, with the result that he made small but significant modifications to his model; among them was the addition of mask-shaped pauldrons, unknown to the Romans, which were an accepted, if not indispensable, feature of pseudo-classical Renaissance armor. The muscled cuirass in Florence (cat. no. 55) and the breastplate in Paris (cat. no. 57) demonstrate that Campi's re-creation of a Roman harness was not unique at the time. The armor for man and horse belonging to Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol (cat. no. 53), described in the sixteenth century as a "Roman armor," is in fact a novel and highly imaginative costume of mail and plate *all'antica* that is considerably more distant from its purported Roman model than Campi's.

The imitation and assimilation of the antique also manifests itself in a group of armors simulating the Roman *lorica squamata*, or scale armor (cat. nos. 58, 59). Whereas this type of armor was originally composed of individual scales riveted in an overlapping arrangement to a leather or textile base, Renaissance armorers achieved the effect by embossing steel plates of conventional sixteenth-century form with scale ornament. Not content with the simple tunic of scales (for which, see fig. 20), the armorers covered the entire armor with scales, including the helmet, vambraces, and gauntlets, supplemented by masks and foliate scrollwork. The mere presence of scales would have been sufficient to convey to even the most critical antiquarian the "Roman-ness" of such a harness.

From a very early date lion-head pauldrons became an accepted part of armors *all'antica*. The pair of lion pauldrons included here (cat. no. 56) probably belonged to an armor with muscled cuirass like that of catalogue number 55. A surfeit of lions, with the same Roman and Herculean associations as already discussed above (cat. no. 8), appear at every conceivable point on two similar, yet stylistically diverse, harnesses in Paris (cat. no. 61) and Leeds (cat. no. 62).

In some examples the connection with antiquity is not always so obvious. However, the mere presence of pteruges (even simulated ones) on an infantry armor of otherwise conventional type (cat. no. 64) was enough to transform it into an armor *all'antica*, as was the use of simple embossed ornament like the della Rovere oak branches (cat. no. 63). Helmets transformed into fierce dragonlike monsters (cat. no. 60) or grinning grotesque masks (cat. no. 65) would, by their imaginative conception and virtuoso embossing, undoubtedly have been described at the time as possessing that awe-inspiring quality known to Renaissance theorists as *terribilità*.



## ROMAN ARMOR OF ARCHDUKE FERDINAND II OF TYROL

Milan, ca. 1547–50

Steel, gold, silver, brass, paint, leather, and textile

Burgonet: Wt. 5 lb. 4 oz. (2,390 g)

Pauldrons (pair): Wt. 11 lb. 8 oz. (680 g)

Poleyns (pair): Wt. 10 oz. (280 g)

Chanfron: Wt. 5 lb. 10 oz. (2,560 g)

Ex coll.: Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol, Schloss Ambras,

Innsbruck; acquired for the imperial collections, 1606

Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer des Kunsthistorischen Museums, Vienna (A 783 [armor], A 784 [bard], A 433 [saber])

This equestrian harness comprises a man's armor consisting of a burgonet, shirt of mail, plate pauldrons and poleyns, and high boots of mail with plate toe caps, and a matching horse armor consisting of a plate chanfron, mail bard, and armored saddle. The ensemble is completed by a saber and spurs for the man and stirrups, bit, and reins for the horse, some of which are possibly later associations. A pair of matching mail boots, but with short cuffs and lacking their toe caps, also belong to this ensemble (inv. no. A 579; not exhibited).

The burgonet is constructed of a one-piece bowl with separate brow plate, hinged cheekpieces, and a plume tube; its relief decoration is gilt against a blackened ground, and the turned and roped edges are also gilt. Pointed at the peak and nape, the bowl has a stepped profile angled toward the back. The high comb is embossed in the form of a fantastic creature with a lobsterlike segmented body that ends abruptly at the front, where two holes indicate that its head, now missing, was formerly riveted in place; the creature's body bifurcates at the nape and ends in meandering leafy scrolls on the sides. A leaf-shaped plume tube is riveted at the base of the comb, and there are three transverse holes pierced through the comb above it for securing the plume. The nape is covered by a separate group of leaves that continue onto the cheekpieces. A large, leafy mask in very high relief occupies the front of the bowl, its open mouth issuing a tongue that ends in a tiny monster's head; touches of translucent red paint (restored) accentuate the eyes, nostrils, mouth, and tongue, and the teeth are silvered. The roped edge of the brow plate and the recessed confronted volutes above it are gilt.

Fashioned after a Roman tunic, the mail shirt is laced closed across the left shoulder and down the left side, with separately attached elbow-length sleeves and double rows of pteruges at the shoulders and waist. The mail is constructed of tiny butted rings, measuring only 3 millimeters in diameter, of two metals: gray (tinned?) iron rings that serve as the background for the contrasting yellow brass rings that are arranged in an

overall reticulated pattern of strapwork lozenges and knots. Brass rings also form the bands of guilloche ornament that outline the hem of the shirt and the square frame around the neck opening, a distinguishing feature of classicizing cuirasses. Laced at the shoulders are pauldrons embossed as mustachioed masks, whose upper row of teeth serve as the lower edge; the plates are gilt overall, with the eyes and nostrils highlighted with red paint (restored) and the teeth silvered. The poleyns (the left one is a nineteenth-century replacement), which presumably were originally strapped over some sort of textile leggings, are small, shallow plates without the usual external wings and are embossed in the center with a gilt lion's mask and foliate scrolls on a blackened background, the eyes and mouth with touches of red paint; the edges are roped and gilt. The mail boots of matching patterned iron and brass rings have leather soles and are fringed along the top edge with a row of triangular pendants; the gilt-steel toe caps are embossed to simulate human toes.

The embossed elements of the man's armor are of different quality. The pauldrons are better made and more subtly modeled than the mask on the burgonet, although these three masks have similar eyebrows and noses. On the other hand, the mask on the genuine knee defense does not match those on the burgonet and pauldrons and is of considerably lesser quality. The naturalistically modeled toe caps offer a surprising contrast to the fanciful conceptions of the other elements.

The mail bard is constructed in two parts, the front half combining crinet and peytral, the rear half with flanchards and crupper, and is composed of iron and brass links matching the reticulated pattern of the man's armor. Openwork triangular mail pendants accent the bard's main edges. The saddlecloth of matching two-color mail has a guilloche border and the arms of Austria (the so-called *Bindenschild*: gules, a fess argent) in the rear corners. The associated saddle plates, three in the front and two at the back, are etched in bands with foliate scrolls, masks, and animals, the decoration with traces of gilding. The chanfron is constructed of ten plates in addition to the spike (modern) and is embossed in the center with a grotesque monster's head with gaping maw, with leaves and hair above and below; the relief work and roped edges are gilt, the background blackened. The chanfron, which is in harmony with the rest of the armor, nevertheless appears to be of different workmanship and ornament.

The other elements of this ensemble generally correspond to the sixteenth-century descriptions of the armor given below. The associated saber (inv. no. A 433) has a gilt-iron pommel, guard, and scabbard locket, the remaining parts of the scabbard and baldric being modern reconstructions. Short, curved swords of this type, usually referred to as falchions in English and as *storte* or *coltellacci* (large knives) in Italian, were







53, burgonet

erroneously considered *all'antica* in the sixteenth century, despite the fact that the straight-bladed *gladius* was amply represented in Roman monuments. Similar sabers are illustrated in Filippo Orsoni's album of armor and costume designs (cat. no. 15). The stirrups are of etched and gilt steel and the bit is gilt. A mask-shaped plate in the Kienbusch Collection in the Philadelphia Museum of Art has repeatedly been identified as the lost tailpiece for the bard,<sup>1</sup> although Boccia<sup>2</sup> convincingly demonstrated that it is instead a pauldron for the right shoulder and therefore cannot have formed part of this armor.

This is the only surviving example of an armor *all'antica* for man and horse. It belonged to Ferdinand II (1529–1595), archduke of Tyrol, the youngest son of Emperor Ferdinand I and nephew of Charles V, whose ownership is confirmed by the armor's presence in the inventories of his collection at Schloss Ambras, near Innsbruck, and by the inclusion of the Austrian

ducal arms worked into the mail fabric of the saddlecloth. Ferdinand undoubtedly wore it on one of the many ceremonial occasions at which he officiated during his tenure as imperial governor of Bohemia (1547–64), when he resided at Prague. The typology and style of the armor suggest that it originated in the 1540s and therefore might have been made in connection with Ferdinand's assumption of the governorship at the age of eighteen. The slender proportions of the mail shirt, suggesting a youthful owner, tend to support this dating.

Like most princes of his day, Ferdinand owned a number of finely wrought German field and tournament harnesses of conventional construction, but when in need of parade armors, he, like his uncle Charles V, showed a marked preference for Italian examples of classical inspiration. In addition to the present example, his collection included the lion helmet and the Medusa shield in catalogue numbers 39 and 42, the silvered and





53, right pauldron

gilt burgonet and shield also shown here (cat. no. 51), his Milanese Harness made by Giovan Battista Zarabaglia and Marc Antonio Fava in 1559–60 (Hofjagd- und Rüstammer, inv. nos. A 785, A 746–747, A 752), and, much later in his life, his so-called Wedding Armor, made by the Innsbruck master Jacob Topf for the archduke's wedding to Anna Caterina Gonzaga in 1582 (Schloss Ambras, inv. no. A 786). The last is accompanied by a burgonet surmounted by a dragon and pauldrons *all'antica* (with pteruges) that are embossed, etched, and gilt with lion's masks. The contemporary practice at the Hapsburg court of dressing up in Roman fashion is readily demonstrated in a manuscript recording the costumes worn at the wedding celebrations of 1582, and several costumes of this type are recorded in the archduke's collection: "Six Roman dresses, the skirt of yellow and white taffeta, [the decoration] on it painted in yellow, and to go with them five matching leather and flesh-colored pairs of leggings and six burgonets of cardboard, silvered and gilt, also twelve gilt shoulder pieces, [and] . . . four robes, as the Roman emperors of olden times have used."<sup>3</sup> Unlike these ephemeral textile and papier-mâché costumes, however, the archduke's harness was elaborately fashioned of gilt steel, its imperial iconography and fine craftsmanship a reflection of the prince's exalted position, refined taste, and ample budget.

The armor is first recorded in the 1583 inventory of Ferdinand's collection at Ambras, where it is referred to

specifically as of Roman style. The description is unusually precise and complete, suggesting the importance and novelty of the armor in that collection:

A Roman-style mail armor. On the horse a saddle, in back and front a black [iron] plate, the mounting gilt and etched, the seat covered with ash-colored velvet, thereon applied golden and silken fringes and cords, edged at the bottom with mail. The crupper, peytral and crinet entirely of mail of brass and white rings. The chanfron of black plate, on it embossed work of a face and gilt, on top a plume of white and black feathers, also decorated with gold and sequins. A gilt bit, thereon a pair of red velvet long-shank curb bit reins. On the man a full coat, except for the shoulders, of mail with brass and white rings, on the shoulders two gilt iron lion's faces, likewise on the knee pieces two gilt iron lion's faces, a pair of boots, entirely of mail, his morion with embossed and gilt work, on it a plume of white and black ostrich feathers, trimmed with gold and sequins. A pair of spurs with black velvet spur leather [straps]. Two pairs of shoes, one of them of iron with its attached spur and the other of mail except for the toes, which are of iron. A saber, its scabbard of black velvet, the chape, quillons, grip and pommel of damascene work gilt and etched. A *pery* [textile covering] of red crimson taffeta and golden lace network with sequins, trimmed on the inside with golden threads.<sup>4</sup>

The inventory lists three types of footgear: a pair of boots entirely of mail (presumably the matching pair still in Vienna, A 579; not exhibited); a pair of mail shoes with iron toe caps (exhibited here); and another pair entirely of iron with attached spurs. These last probably looked like those belonging to the armor of Guidobaldo II della Rovere (cat.



53, detail of right mail boot with plate toe caps



53, chanfron

no. 54), made by Bartolomeo Campi in 1546, and the missing pair with spurs that originally accompanied the muscled cuirass in the Bargello (cat. no. 55). The anatomical toe caps of the exhibited boots and those of the all-metal variety, which imitated the open-footed Roman sandal, were evidently considered essential for this type of classicizing armor. As has already been demonstrated, this tradition can be traced back to the mid-fifteenth century, when Annibale Bentivoglio was depicted in a muscled cuirass with open-toed sabatons or naturalistically rendered steel toes (fig. 16).

The armor is exceptional for the extent and type of mail it employs; indeed, no comparable sixteenth-century mail armor *all'antica* or complete bard of mail is known. By the middle of the sixteenth century, an age of increasingly heavy armor plate, mail played only a minor role as a defense. The choice of mail

may have been determined by Ferdinand's specific desire to have a flexible, lightweight armor that would nevertheless evoke by its tailoring and ornament a Roman harness. Known in antiquity as the *lorica hamata*, the mail shirt is frequently represented in Roman sculpture and was well known to Renaissance antiquarians like Du Choul (cat. no. 16), although the muscled cuirass, with its imperial associations, remained the archetypal form of classicizing body armor. From its first appearance in the ancient world, at least by the second century B.C., European mail was typically constructed of iron rings closed by rivets, whereas butted mail, often of particularly small diameter as found here, is usually considered oriental. Patterned mail of iron and brass is even rarer in Europe, whereas it is frequently found on Persian and Indian armor of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The type of mail



employed on the archduke's harness thus appears to be unprecedented, although it perhaps reflects the existence of an as yet unstudied type of decorative mail used at that time in central and eastern Europe. For example, a German mail cape, or "bishop's mantle," in the Metropolitan Museum (acc. no. 29.158.202) is composed of large panels of butted iron rings with a border of butted brass rings that spell out the Latin mottoes *Non nobis domine non nobis* (Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us) and *Plus ultra* (More beyond), whereas a Polish or Hungarian mail shirt in the same collection is decorated with panels of geometric ornament in brass rings on the collar, hem, and down the front, all the rings, however, of the usual riveted or stamped type. The exotic quality of the archduke's colored mail may be explained by the location of his residence in Prague, on the eastern edges of the Holy Roman Empire, where Hungarian and Turkish influences were particularly strong and where the participants of the many tournaments hosted by Ferdinand often dressed in oriental costumes. If the mail was inspired by Eastern types, the ensemble most likely dates after 1547.

This armor has long been considered a work of Giovan Paolo Negroli, about 1545–50, an attribution and dating first suggested by Thomas and Gamber (1958), although the more cautious attribution "in the manner of" Giovan Paolo Negroli (Gamber and Beaufort 1990) seems more appropriate. The ornament—masks and thick acanthus foliage—and technique—high relief of considerable accomplishment—relate closely to Giovan Paolo's signed breastplate and the works assembled around it (cat. nos. 43–48). Certain details of ornament also appear to be common to both. The mask at the front of the helmet has distinctive eyes with recessed pupils and sharply angled lower eyelids, with eyebrows rising flamelike above; similar masks are found on Henry II's armor (cat. no. 47). The leaves surrounding the mask have turned-over scalloped edges in the recesses, and the curled tip of the center leaf rises prominently above the surface, details that one also sees on the burgonet in Washington (cat. no. 44), on the Metropolitan Museum's close helmet (cat. no. 46), and on the two helmets belonging to Henry II's armor. The mask pauldrons are dramatically expressive, and the illusion of hair falling over the headband shows imagination and playfulness, as do the naturalistic toes. On the other hand, the design of the helmet is much simpler and the workmanship somewhat cruder than Giovan Paolo's work: the foliage is round-edged and less well modeled, the branches thicker, and the arrangement of the scrolls more open and meandering, features that contrast with the well-modeled naturalistic foliage, thin tendrils, and tightly organized scrollwork that covers the Metropolitan Museum's breastplate. The chanfron, impressive at a distance, is much coarser in detail, as are the knee pieces, than any of Giovan

Paolo's works. The heterogeneous character of this armor, which is composed of pieces of different quality and workmanship, suggests that it was probably made by several armorers working in the same atelier. As an ensemble, however, it is harmonious and impressive and represents a highly original solution to the Renaissance creation of armor *all'antica*.

1. First proposed by Thomas in Thomas and Gamber 1958, p. 773, repeated in C. O. von Kienbusch et al., *The Kretzschmar von Kienbusch Collection of Armor and Arms* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Library, 1963), p. 121, no. 223, ill. on pl. LXXXIV; and Gamber and Beaufort 1990, p. 37. The Kienbusch piece now bears the accession number 1977.167.290. Thomas and Gamber also suggested that the dragon-shaped helmet in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris, discussed below in cat. no. 60, might belong to this armor, although there is no apparent connection between the two and no such helmet is listed in the Ambras inventory of 1583.
2. Boccia 1988, pp. 20–21.
3. "Mer sechs Romanische claidr, das rökchl von gelb und weissem taffet, darauf gelb gemalt, und darzue fünf lidrene und leibfarbe par hosen und sechs gepappte sturmbhauben, silber und verguldt, auch zwelf verguldt ächselen. . . . Mer vier claidung, wie es die Römischen kaiser vor zeiten gebraucht haben." Boenheim 1888, p. CCXVI, fol. 119v.
4. "Ain Romanische panzerrüstung. Auf dem ros z ain satl, hinten und vornen ain schwarz plëch, das beschlächt verguldt und geöcz, der sicz mit ascherfarbem samat überzogen, darauf guldene und seidene gfräns und schnier verbrämbt, unten herumb mit panzer eingefast. Das hinterzeug, fürpieg und hals durchaus von ganzem panzer von messinen und weissen ringlen. Die rosstürn von schwarzem plëch, darauf erhebt arbeit von angesicht und verguldt, auf der stürn ain federpuschen, weisz und schwarz, auch mit gold und gflinder geschmuckht. Ain verguldt piz, daran ain par rot samatene stanzenzigl. Auf dem mann ein ganzer rockh, bisz auf die ächselen von panzer mit messinen und weissen ringlen, auf den ächselen von eisen zwai verguldt löwenangesichter, desgleichen auf den kniepiglen zwai eisene löwenangesichter und verguldt, ain ganz panzeres par stifl, sein morian mit erhebter und verguldter arbeit, darauf ain federpuschen von weisz und schwarzen strausenfedern, mit gold und gflinder eingefast. Ain par sporn mit schwarz samaten sporleder. Zwai par schuech, das ain von eisen mit seinen angeheften sporn und das ander von panzer bisz auf die zehen, so von eisen. Ain gardaläcz, die schaiden von schwarzem samat, das orpand, kreiz, heft und knopf von tauschierarbeit verguldt und geöcz. Ain pery, ist von rottem cärmasin taffet und guldem kleckhlwerch mit gflinder, inwendig mit gulden schniern verbrämbt." Boenheim 1888, pp. CCVII–CCVIII, fols. 85v–86r. Subsequent descriptions, beginning with the postmortem inventory of Ferdinand's armory in 1596, are much more concise; for these, see Auer 1984, p. xxx, no. 27.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Sacken 1855, vol. 1, pp. 159–61; Sacken 1859–62, vol. 1, p. 32, pl. 19; Boenheim 1888, pp. CCVII–CCVIII; Grosz and Thomas 1936, p. 75; Luchner 1958, pp. 15, 118; Thomas and Gamber 1958, p. 773; Boccia and Coelho 1967, p. 334; Auer 1984, p. xxx, no. 27; Boccia and Godoy 1985–86, vol. 1, p. 92, no. 48; Pfaffenbichler 1989, p. 122, fig. 1; Vienna 1989, p. 240, no. V/3; Gamber and Beaufort 1990, pp. 36–37, fig. 9; Vienna 1990, pp. 58–61; Pfaffenbichler 1992, pp. 41–42, fig. 50; Stockholm 1992, pp. 115–16, 363; Boccia 1993, pp. 22, 24.





54.  
**ROMAN-STYLE ARMOR OF  
 GUIDOBALDO II DELLA ROVERE,  
 DUKE OF URBINO**

*Bartolomeo Campi*

*Pesaro, dated 1546*

*Steel, gold, silver, and brass*

*Wt. 44 lb. 6 oz. (20,170 g)*

*Real Armería, Patrimonio Nacional, Madrid (A 188)*

The burgonet is forged of black, hammer-rough steel and consists of a one-piece bowl and large, hinged cheekpieces of one plate each, the helmet's principal edges turned under, roped, and gilt. The comb and the edges are accentuated with wide borders that are richly damascened with foliate scrolls in gold and silver. Applied to the base of the comb at the back is a plume holder of gilt brass shaped like a square-sectioned colonnette, the tapering base dividing into two branches that scroll outward to either side and are secured to the bowl by rivets with rosette-shaped heads of cast gilt brass. Also applied to the bowl is an elaborate gilt-brass oak wreath on a ribbon that is decoratively tied to the scrolls at the back; the wreath is formed of ten groups of three oak leaves of alternating smooth and matte finish. The lining rivets along the outer edges of the peak and the cheekpieces and around the base of the skull have elaborate rosette-shaped gilt-brass heads in several different sizes.

The cuirass is also of blackened steel but smooth finished, the breastplate and backplate each articulated with two gorget (collar) lames and two waist lames, with a gusset lame at each armhole of the breastplate; the edges at the neck and armholes are turned under and left smooth. The breast and back are anatomically shaped, with powerfully modeled musculature, including the upward-overlapping waist plates, whose cusped edges further accentuate the abdominal muscles. Around the bottom edge of the cuirass is a single row of scalloped tabs; on the backplate this border is made in one with the lower waist lame, while on the breastplate each tab is separately hinged to the adjacent waist lame for greater ease of movement. The tabs have applied gilt-brass edges and each is filled with an appliqué of gilt brass: an inverted vase issuing flames; crossed palm branches tied with a ribbon inscribed: *IOABIOS MNÓABIOS* (Happy and prosperous); a winged barrel (grenade?) issuing flames; a sleeping bear; bucrania; a satyr's head; the heads of an eagle, a lion, a horse, and a unicorn; and a monogram composed of two addorsed and entwined Gs surmounted by an open crown. Extending below the tabs is a skirt formed of long, articulated pteruges, each consisting of overlapping rectangular plates of blackened steel with applied borders of gilt brass riveted to a leather strap. Beneath this skirt is a second skirt of mail.



54, burgonet

The tops of the breastplate and backplate are embossed to simulate a cuirass with a square neck opening worn over a mail shirt, which in turn is worn over a gorget, of which the upper two lames are visible. The illusion is heightened by the faithful depiction of the mail, which is etched and silvered and seems to stretch over the collarbone and upper back muscles. The two gorget lames, the border around the neck opening, and the wide shoulder straps have applied borders of gilt brass, their surfaces richly damascened with gold and silver foliate scrolls. Damascened at the center of the neck opening on the breastplate and backplate is the monogram comprising two addorsed and entwined Gs. Applied to the center of the breast, below the neck opening, is a Medusa head of gilt brass, from which emanate two acanthus leaves extending into scrolls that outline the pectoral muscles and terminate with a silver rosette over each nipple.

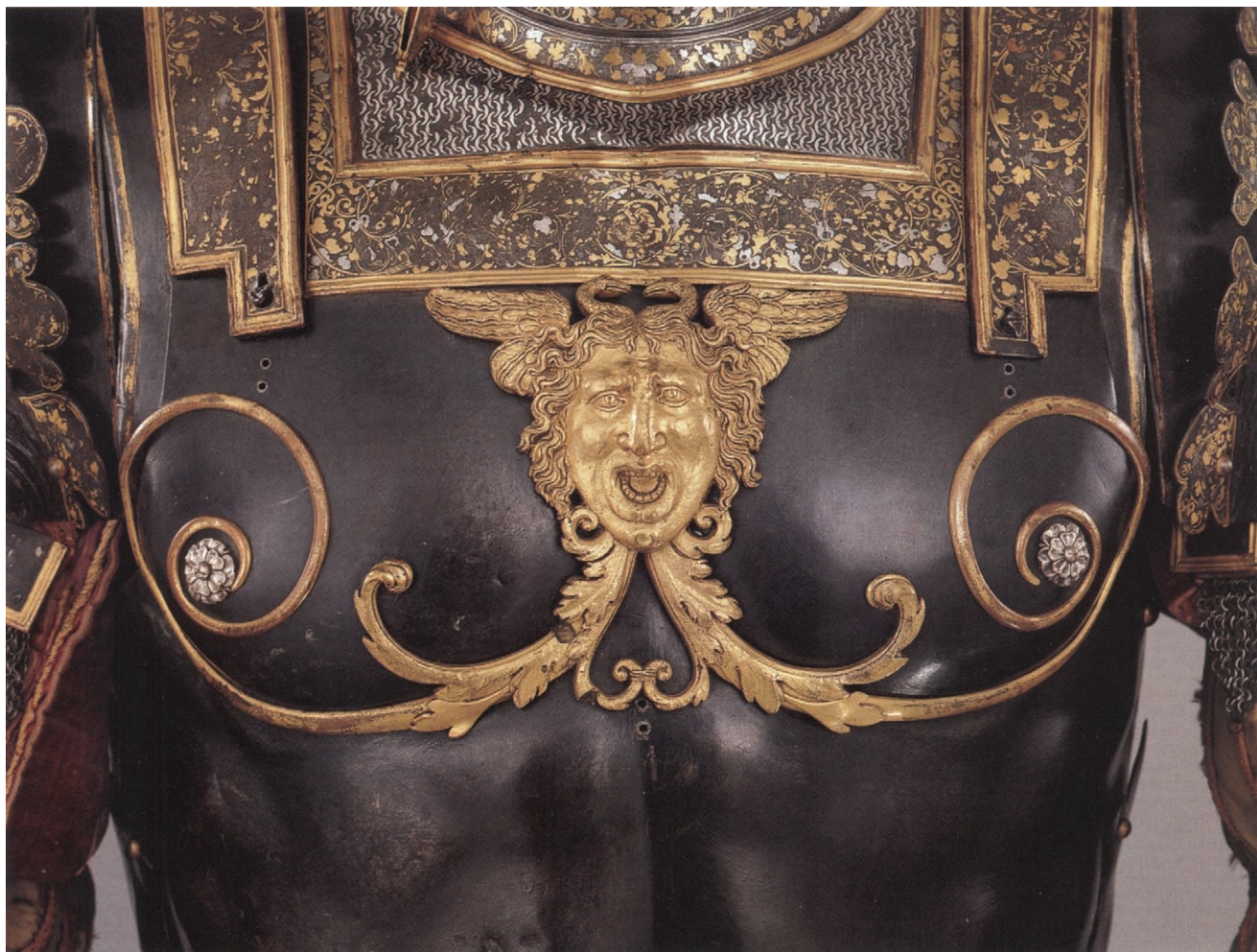
The pauldrons are embossed in high relief as mustachioed masks, their blackened faces punctuated by expressive eyes with silvered pupils surrounded by gilt irises and framed by an openwork crown of leaves, whose concave surfaces are damascened with gold and silver foliage. Above the mask is a smooth articulating plate that joins the pauldron to the cuirass, and below it is a short sleeve of pteruges comprising eight rows of black steel plates, outlined by gilt-brass bor-

ders, and an undersleeve of mail with a jagged lower edge. The armor is completed by a pair of openwork steel boots fashioned in imitation of Roman sandals, with anatomically modeled toe caps and cross straps that extend up the calf and end in outward-turned scrolls; the main edges are also framed by applied gilt-brass borders, and there is a satyr's mask of gilt brass applied to the top of each boot.

The armor, especially the left boot, suffered bomb damage during the Spanish civil war of 1936–39; the damascened decoration around the neck is also deeply scratched, evidence of vandalism that is seen on other pieces in the Real Armería (see cat. nos. 30, 32). The two types of gilt-brass rivets on the peak and the cheekpieces of the burgonet are not original but are later restorations that are also found elsewhere in the Real Armería (for example, on armor A 290, a work of about 1560 by Anton Peffenhauser of Augsburg).

From the Real Armería inventories of 1594 and 1625, discussed below, we know that this armor had further adornments that are no longer extant. Originally, for example, the comb of the helmet had a crest above it (“Una sobre cresta dorada”), and there was a small chain of gilt brass with a medallion or mask that served as a belt and probably passed through a small ring which is still extant in the middle of the abdomen (“Una cadena de laton q̄ sirve de çinta con Una medalla”). The ornamen-





54, detail of breastplate

tal brass crest of the helmet was held in position by small clamps riveted to the sides of the comb. This is illustrated in a painting of the biblical story of Jael and Sisera in the National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, a work sometimes ascribed to Antonio de Pereda (1611–1678), in which the faithfully depicted armor was utilized for Jael’s costume (Laking 1920–22, vol. 3, p. 280, fig. 1052). That painting also informs us of the existence of three small, detachable rings, now lost, the mounting holes for which can be seen in the breastplate; one of them is beneath the Medusa mask, the other two above the volutes marking the pectoral muscles. Similar rings are found on the Roman-style breastplate in the Bargello (cat. no. 55).

This armor was made for Guidobaldo II della Rovere (1514–1574), duke of Urbino from 1538, as evidenced by the monogram of two Gs, thrice repeated on the cuirass, which incorporates Guidobaldo’s initial with that of his wife Giulia Varano (1524–1547). Giulia was heiress to the papal fief of Camerino, and Guidobaldo assumed the ducal title in 1534 as a result of their union. He was forced to surrender his rights

to Camerino to Ottavio Farnese, nephew of Pope Paul III, in 1542. The couple’s monogram is mentioned in a letter by Pietro Aretino dating from October 1545 that refers to Titian’s portrait of the duchess, now in the Galleria Palatina, Florence (Wethey 1969–75, vol. 2, no. 90), where the same device that is on Guidobaldo’s armor is employed on her sleeves, bodice, and panels of her skirt. The creator of this armor, Bartolomeo Campi of Pesaro, proudly signed and dated his work, emphasizing his achievement of completing in only two months work that normally would have taken a year. The etched and gilt inscriptions are found around the lower edge of the breastplate: *BARTHOLOMEVS CAMPI AVRIFEX TOTIVS OPERIS ARTIFEX QUOD ANNO INTEGRO INDIGEBAT PRINCIPIS SVI NVTVI OBTEMPERANS GEMINATO MENSE PERFECIT* (Bartolomeo Campi, goldsmith, author of the entire work, finished it in two months in order to obey the wish of his prince, even though it needed a full year), and on the left gusset lame, *PISAVRI ANNO·M·D·XLVI* (Pesaro, 1546). The backplate is signed on the shoulder blades: ·B·C· and ·F· (Bartholomeus Campi Fecit).





54, backplate

Campi's armor has long been associated with Charles V (1500–1558) and today is still displayed on a mannequin with a face modeled after the emperor's. In the early catalogues of the Real Armería it was proposed that the armor had been presented to him by the Romans (Abadia 1793), or by the rulers of Monza (Martínez del Romero 1849), during the ceremonies that took place in Bologna in 1530 in connection with Charles's imperial coronation. Later, following the identification of the monogram as that of Guidobaldo, the armor came to be regarded as a gift from the duke of Urbino to the emperor. This seemed all the more likely because the conde de Valencia de Don Juan, author of the 1898 catalogue of the Real Armería, claimed that the armor was included among the emperor's harnesses in the 1594 inventory. However, the inventory cited by Valencia dates from 1625 and is inaccurate regarding this armor. Valencia reasoned that the armor was made for Charles V as a present from Guidobaldo II della Rovere on the occasion of the duke's marriage in June of 1547 to Vittoria Farnese, sister of Ottavio Farnese, the emperor's

son-in-law. The ceremonies were held in the ducal residence at Pesaro and included the participation of Bartolomeo Campi as organizer of the wedding festivities. Valencia's conviction that Charles V was the original owner of the harness, a theory seemingly confirmed by the royal inventories, has been followed by most authors for the last hundred years.

The hypothesis that this armor was made expressly for Charles V is unsustainable because the emperor never wore any armor, however beautiful, that bore arms or monograms other than his own. The prominence of Guidobaldo's monograms would thus seem to leave no doubt as to the armor's intended owner. It can be demonstrated, in fact, that the armor entered the Spanish royal collection later than was usually assumed and that it was given to Philip II (1527–1598; r. 1556–98) rather than his father. Macoir (1908) reported an opinion of José Florit, the conservator of the Real Armería at the time, that this armor could have been offered by Guidobaldo II to Philip II when the duke became a knight of the Order of the Golden Fleece in 1561. Nevertheless, the armor continued to be



54, left pauldron



54, detail of breastplate, portion of etched inscription around bottom edge

considered in Madrid as a gift to Charles V. Godoy (in Stockholm 1992) has since demonstrated convincingly that the armor formed part of the personal armory of Philip II. Although the 1625 inventory (fol. 124) includes it among the emperor's armors, the same harness appears in the 1594 inventory (fol. 84), where it is listed among the arms of Philip II. The inventory of 1594 is based on the one compiled in 1567. This ear-

lier inventory, which no longer survives but is referred to at the beginning of the 1594 compilation, was made shortly after Philip II's arrangement of the Real Armería in 1565. At that time most of the royal arms were divided into two main groups: those belonging to the emperor and those of Philip II. The division is clearly apparent from the 1594 inventory, in which there is a marginal note specifying, "Here begin the arms of his Majesty the King."<sup>1</sup> Guidobaldo's Roman-style armor is listed there after Philip II's small embossed garniture made in 1549–50/52 by Desiderius Helmschmid and Jörg Sigman of Augsburg (Real Armería, inv. nos. A 239–242):

The other armor is *all'antica* and is after the fashion of a trophy hammered in black, having / breast and backplate and a gorget worked in damascening in the manner of mail attached to it / some pauldrons with gilt medallions [masks] and some lamellae with gilt edges and its fringes of mail / a skirt of lamellae with a skirt of mail beneath it / some pierced half-greaves with two gilt medallions [masks] / a chain of brass serving as a belt with a medallion [mask] / a morion of the same work, the borders and comb damascened, and a gilt crest and a gilt band around the same.<sup>2</sup>

The 1625 inventory was an almost verbatim copy of the 1594 inventory, retaining its structure but taking into account the new acquisitions and changed positions of objects in the Real Armería since 1594. A marginal note indicates that sometime between 1594 and 1625 Campi's armor was transferred from Section XVI to Section I, that is, from the later group of armors belonging to Philip II and his successors to the earlier group of armors of Charles V. It was this change of position in the armory that caused the armor of Guidobaldo II to be mistakenly incorporated into the listing of Charles V's collection of armor in the 1625 inventory, thus placing it before the group described as "las Armas del Rey nuestro Señor Philipe Segundo." Valencia de Don Juan, who was actually quoting the 1625 inventory, instead of the 1594 inventory that he cited, was misled by this error.

It is not known when and under what circumstances this armor entered the Spanish royal collection. Pending discovery of a definitive document, one can only speculate as to the possible occasions when a gift of this kind would have been presented to Philip II. For example, it might have been given to the monarch either by Guidobaldo II or by his son Francesco Maria II (1549–1631) in gratitude for the king's having invested them, in 1561 and 1585 respectively, with the Order of the Golden Fleece. Another hypothesis may also be offered: Francesco Maria, aged sixteen, left Pesaro in December 1565 to complete his education at the court of Spain. In Madrid, where he remained until July 1568, he sought to gain the respect of his peers; in creating a *bella figura* he led a quite costly existence, to



the extent that the allowance paid him by Philip II was not enough, much to the chagrin of his father. Francesco Maria was strongly influenced by Spanish customs, came to know a host of famous men, and fell in love with one of the queen's ladies-in-waiting, the beautiful Magdalena de Girón, sister of the duke of Osuna, whom he was ready to marry when his father called him back to Urbino. His fascination with the court of Philip II was so intense that his father addressed him as "You who are Spanish,"<sup>3</sup> with the young prince writing home to Guidobaldo that "I have no other thought than to gain honor in this court."<sup>4</sup>

Francesco Maria's stay in Madrid coincided with the arranging of the royal armory. Although work on the armory interior was still in progress in 1566, the installation of the arms must have been completed in the first months of 1567, since the first inventory dates from that year. It is conceivable that Francesco Maria decided to offer Philip II, whom he admired, a beautiful armor belonging to his family that would be considered worthy of display next to the splendid ones he saw exhibited in Madrid. His father, who had been in Spanish service since 1558 as general commander of the kingdom of Naples, might well have been sympathetic to Francesco Maria's idea and have concurred in making this donation.

Guidobaldo's armor, dated 1546, was undoubtedly made for a specific occasion that forced Bartolomeo Campi to work without stopping in order to finish a year's work in two months. This event, as yet unknown, may have been connected with Guidobaldo's entrance into the service of Venice in 1546 as governor of the Venetian armies (a title already borne by his father, the famous condottiere Francesco Maria I della Rovere, before obtaining the higher title of captain-general). Guidobaldo was invested with his office that summer in an elaborate ceremony in Venice, in which he was described as wearing a jeweled cap and diamond collar and a sword valued at 700 scudi (Dennistoun 1909, vol. 3, p. 97). His nomination was no doubt the object of public celebration in the duchy of Urbino as well, not unlike the three evenings of festivities in Gubbio in 1558 in celebration of his nomination as general commander in the service of Spain,<sup>5</sup> and Guidobaldo might have ordered this armor for a parade or official ceremony in connection with this event.

Bartolomeo Campi (before 1520–1573), goldsmith and military engineer, was one of those talented, clever, gifted, and ingenious men who graced many Renaissance courts. Guidobaldo II greatly respected him and called upon his services for various projects: "I use him continuously and for many things,"<sup>6</sup> he wrote to Ercole II, duke of Ferrara, on April 2, 1554. Campi's biography, traced by Carlo Promis and published for the first time by Angelucci (1869), was augmented by Valencia de Don Juan (1898) with the aid of documents from the archives of Fernando Alvarez de Toledo, duke

of Alba, under whose command Campi served as chief engineer of the fortifications and sieges in Flanders. Thus we know that Campi was born in Pesaro at the end of the second decade of the sixteenth century and that in his youth he worked as a goldsmith, chaser, and damascener of metals, counting among his works arms and armor of great value. These last were praised by Pietro Aretino in a letter of March 1545. That year, Campi entered into the Communal Council of Pesaro, and in 1546 he signed Guidobaldo's armor, his only surviving work, which allows us to imagine the quality of his other arms, now lost, that elicited Aretino's praise. In 1547 he directed the festivities in Pesaro celebrating the marriage of Guidobaldo II to Vittoria Farnese, and later, following the birth of their son Francesco Maria II on February 20, 1549, Campi created a work in gold and silver, which was highly praised, that had been ordered by the town as a present for the duke. In 1550 Campi offered his services as an engineer to the municipality to turn the stagnant waters near the town into a system of canals, and four years later he was sent to France by Guidobaldo II to show Henry II personally an artillery invention of which he was the author.

Through the 1550s until his death in battle in 1573, Campi was first and foremost a soldier and renowned military engineer, so his work in goldsmithing and armor making were



54, openwork boots



confined to the early years of his life. In affixing his name to Guidobaldo's armor, Campi identified himself as a goldsmith (*aurifex*). The delicacy and exquisite detail of the harness's decoration, especially the damascened ornament and the beautifully cast, chased, and gilt-brass appliquéés, leave no doubt as to his training in that profession. On the other hand, the modeling of the plates, which are conceived with great plastic sensibility, demonstrates a surprising proficiency in the shaping of steel that equals, and often surpasses, that of many an experienced armorer. Unexpected though these combined talents may be, we have no alternative but to accept at face value Campi's proud assertion of having made Guidobaldo's entire armor himself (TOTIVS OPERIS ARTIFEX).

Campi's armor is the only complete Renaissance example of a Roman legionary's parade armor with muscled cuirass. The type derives from a well-established Hellenistic model (cat. no. 3) that was adopted by the Etruscans and later by the Romans for their officers' parade gear. Examples were well known to Renaissance artists from sculpture (fig. 19), although it is not recorded if actual bronze cuirasses of this type were available for study in sixteenth-century collections of antiquities. The widespread knowledge of this type is, however, demonstrated by the similarity of Campi's armor and that worn in the *Portrait of Jean de Dinteville* (cat. no. 17), contemporary works made in different courts of Europe. Despite the prevalence of such Roman-style armor in sixteenth-century sculpture and painting, only two other fragmentary muscled armors survive, a cuirass in the Bargello in Florence and a breastplate in the Musée de l'Armée in Paris (cat. nos. 55, 57). These examples are by three distinctly different artists, but Campi's differs from the other two not only in its emphasis on applied rather than embossed ornament but also on the hard accentuation of the musculature that looks frozen and brittle by comparison to the softer and more fluidly integrated torso planes of the other two. These differences clearly distinguish the goldsmith from the armorer.

It will also be recalled that Filippo Negroli may have been the author of at least one Roman-style armor in the 1530s, if he designed the harness worn by Emperor Caligula, as proposed here (cat. no. 27). That armor, copied by Titian in the years 1536–38, may have been in the armory of the duke of Urbino or possibly that of the duke of Mantua, for whom Titian painted his series of Roman Emperors. One can only wonder if Filippo's armor were known to Campi, serving as a challenge to the goldsmith to equal or surpass the Milanese masterpiece. The long Latin inscription on Campi's armor would appear to have been inspired by Filippo's well-established custom of signing his name in prominent locations.

An exquisite pair of damascened steel stirrups in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London (inv. nos. M. 662, 662A-1910;

Hayward 1965, no. 23) are often assumed to belong to Guidobaldo's Roman-style armor. The gold- and silver-damascened foliate scrolls on the outer arches, the applied framing bands, and the cast rosette-shaped buttons attached to the outside of the scrolled feet compare closely to similar decorative elements on that harness. On the other hand, the damascened arabesques inside the arches are not found on the armor, and the applied bucrania and satyr's mask on the stirrups' outer faces do not match the appliquéés on the armor's pendent tabs. The absence of any mention of these stirrups in the earliest inventory descriptions of the armor casts further doubt on their having belonged to it. The attribution of the stirrups to Campi is defensible on stylistic grounds, nonetheless, presuming that they were among his other, highly praised efforts in the field of arms and armor. However, the damascened signature AC-F found at the top of the stirrups does not match that on Guidobaldo's backplate, inscribed BC-F, and it seems inconceivable that this proud and masterful craftsman would have made an error in applying his own signature.

1. "Desde aquí empiezan las Armas del Rey ñro s<sup>r</sup>." Inventory of the Real Armería, 1594.
2. "El otro Arnes A la antigualla a manera de troffeo de Martillo negro que tiene / Un pecto y Un espaldar y la gola labrada de atauxia a manera de malla pegada en el / Unos Guardabraços con Medallas y Vnas laonas los rremates dorados y sus franxas de Malla / Unas faldas de laonas con Una falda de malla devajo de las laonas / Unas Medias Grevas rrxadas con dos medallas doradas / Una cadena de laton q̄ sirve de çinta con Una medalla / Un Morrión de la misma labor los bordes y cresta de atauxia y Una sobre cresta dorada y un traçellin alderredor dorado." Inventory of the Real Armería, 1594.
3. "Vuoi che siete spagnuolo." Giovanni Scotoni, *La giovinezza di Francesco Maria II e i ministri di Guidobaldo della Rovere* (Bologna, 1899), p. 53.
4. "No ho de pensar en nissuna altra cosa, si no a farmi honor in questa Corte." ASF, Urbino, Classe I, Divisione G, Filza CXII, letter of Francesco Maria II to Guidobaldo II, dated December 18, 1566.
5. Filippo Ugolini, *Storia dei conti e duchi d'Urbino* (Florence: Grazzini, Giannini e C., 1859), vol. 1, p. 278.
6. "Mi servo de lui, de continuo et in molte cose." Angelucci 1869, p. 330.

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## ROMAN-STYLE CUIRASS

Probably Milan, ca. 1545–50

Steel and gold

Breastplate: Wt. 8 lb. 5 oz. (3,780 g)

Backplate: Wt. 6 lb. 3 oz. (2,820 g)

Ex coll.: Medici armory, Florence

Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence (M. 768–769)

(not in exhibition)

The cuirass of Roman muscled type is composed of an anatomically modeled breastplate and backplate, each made in one with a gorget (collar) of two lames; the surfaces are hammer rough and blackened, the decoration embossed and gilt. The breastplate is articulated at the armholes, where the left gusset lame is missing, and at the bottom, where there are a wide, upward-overlapping waist plate and a narrow skirt plate; both plates are shaped deep over the belly, their upper edges cusped, and are riveted only at the sides to allow them some mobility. The backplate has a comparable waist plate and a narrow culet lame, both with cusped edges, but these are held rigid by three rivets. Wide hinged shoulder straps of considerable thickness and weight are riveted to the backplate, and the pivoting front half locks to the breastplate by turning pins. The closing of the cuirass is completed by means of holes pierced at each side of the breastplate and top collar lame that snap over corresponding pins on the backplate; there are also gilt-iron hinges riveted at the sides of the rear waist plate that close over corresponding turning pins on the front waist plate, these fixtures possibly later additions. Inside the breastplate and backplate are the remains of a canvas lining strap around the top of the gorget and another of leather on the lower edge of the waist plate. The edges of the gorget and gusset lame are turned, roped, and gilt.

The cuirass is magnificently modeled but without anatomical exaggeration. The compact and powerful musculature has been shaped by a restrained but confident hand, the chest, stomach, and back muscles clearly but subtly defined, the distinct hammer marks readily visible on the inner surfaces (for which, see Boccia and Coelho 1967, figs. 262, 263). The neck area on both halves is worked so that it simulates the wearing of a cuirass with a large rectangular neck opening over a high-collared mail shirt, the mail rendered by means of etching. The trompe l'oeil effect is enhanced by the embossing over the collarbone and upper back muscles to suggest the anatomy beneath the mail shirt. Known in the Roman world as *lorica hamata*, the mail shirt is rendered in a distinctive manner by parallel rows of interlaced rings, whose diagonal connecting links are emphasized by an axial line, as though the rings were split.

This stylized representation differs from the more naturalistic rendering of mail on the armor by Bartolomeo Campi (cat. no. 54) or that belonging to a member of the Martinengo family (cat. no. 64), whereas it is identical to the simulated mail etched on a seemingly unrelated Italian breastplate in the Real Armería in Madrid (inv. no. M 10). The rectangular neck opening on the front and back halves is framed by raised ribs that form a horizontal band along the bottom edge, which is embossed and gilt with a crescent moon in the center and scrolling foliage extending to either side. The shoulder straps are decorated with raised moldings and have rings at their front ends; the moldings and rings are gilt. Embossed in the center of the breast, just below the neck opening, is a fierce, grimacing head of Medusa, winged and encircled by eight symmetrically interlaced snakes, whose scaly skin is rendered by tiny curved punch marks. Below Medusa's head emerge two leafy branches, which turn into spiraling garlands that scroll over the pectorals and end with a flower bud at the nipples. Just below the head of Medusa there is a rivet hole that probably served to attach a ring like those on the shoulders; a corresponding hole exists on the backplate. Embossed on the waist plate are two confronted griffins, each wearing a collar and raising one paw, with a pair of leafy stems between them that converge upward and terminate with three leaves like a stylized fleur-de-lis. The skirt plate, now missing a small section on the left side, has its upper edge embossed in half-round section with a raised and gilt band imitating a twisted cloth; the two points of the cusped edge are embossed with a stylized fleur-de-lis (on the left) and a crescent moon (on the right). The lower edge retains a series of seven half-hinges (originally there were eight), to receive decorative tabs analogous to the one remaining on the backplate; between the half-hinges are shallow semicircular cutouts outlined by a raised and gilt rib that originally continued the undulating line of the tabs across the skirt.

The culet lame attached to the backplate retains seven half-hinges for pendent tabs, of which only one tab remains; it is now attached at the center and fits badly with the adjacent shaped recesses. The tab is embossed with a cross with bifurcated arms surrounded with six balls, four of which are punched from below with five-pointed stars and two with eight-pointed stars. Corresponding schematically to the six balls (*palle*) of the coat of arms of the ruling Medici family of Florence, they surround the cross of the dynastic Order of Saint Stephen of Victory, founded in 1561 by Cosimo I de' Medici to commemorate the battle of Marciano, carried out against the Sienese on August 2, 1554. Given the difference between the apparent date of the armor and the founding of the order, as well as the tab's crude workmanship and its poor fit to the skirt lame, the tab is clearly not original to the ensemble. The hinges on both waist plate and culet lame



55

may have been added when the tab was, for they are also crudely made in comparison with the rest of the cuirass.

The cuirass appears to be the only surviving element of a complete armor of Roman muscled type very similar to the preceding example by Bartolomeo Campi (cat. no. 54). It was undoubtedly modeled on imperial Roman sculpture, notably cuirassed statues of emperors and high-ranking officers wearing similar parade armor with breastplates enriched at the top with a Medusa head and at the bottom with confronted griffins (fig. 19). These sculptures were widely distributed throughout the Roman world and display a number of variations on the established iconography. The cuirass in Florence follows one well-known group in which the griffins face one another (in other groups their heads turn backward), lift one paw, and stand on foliate tendrils; the beasts are invariably separated by a vertical element, typically a flaming candelabrum. The flowering branches between the griffins on the waist plate of the Bargello cuirass echo this motif. Similar, but not identical, griffins are found on the muscled breastplate worn by Cosimo I in the bronze bust of

about 1557 by Baccio Bandinelli (1493–1560) in the Palazzo Pitti, Florence (inv. no. 671).

The Bargello armor formerly stood in the Medici dynastic armory in the Uffizi and is recorded in the inventories dating between 1631 and 1776. The inventory of 1631 describes the armor as “an antique armor of black iron embossed in low relief with masks and other work, gilt in part, that is, a muscled breastplate and backplate, mask pauldrons and a similar burgonet, and pierced boots with gilt straps and attached spurs.”<sup>1</sup> Subsequent inventories provide additional information about the armor’s appearance. From the inventory of 1695 we learn that the helmet was decorated with masks and had attached cheekpieces, and that there was a series of pendent tabs (“naccheroni,” referring to their shell-like form) around the lower edge of the cuirass.<sup>2</sup> The same description is found in the inventory of 1696–97, but with the mention of tabs (referred to this time as “piastre,” plates, rather than “naccheroni”) with mail,<sup>3</sup> this presumably indicating that there was a skirt of mail beneath the tabs and pteruges like that still preserved on the Campi armor. The armor’s openwork, sandal-like boots are described as having attached spurs (a feature





55, backplate

not found on the Campi armor), indicating that the harness was primarily intended to be worn on horseback. The boots are no longer mentioned in the inventories of 1746, 1768, and 1776.<sup>4</sup>

Despite the apparent clarity of these documents, divergent theories have been offered as to the original composition of the harness. On the basis of the 1695 inventory, in which the helmet was described “a maschera,” Boccia (in Florence 1980) once suggested that it may have been one fitted with a mask visor, like the one made by Filippo Negroli in 1533 for Charles V (cat. no. 20). This seems unlikely, however, as other helmets are described in the Medici inventories as “a maschera” (see, for example, cat. no. 59), the term seemingly referring to the presence of masks in the decoration rather than to a buffe embossed as a human or grotesque face. Scalini (1987) proposed that the Bargello cuirass might originally have formed part of the same ensemble as the so-called Roman Armor of Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol (cat. no. 53), that additional arm and leg pieces of plate and mail, described elsewhere in the 1631 Medici inventory, may also have belonged to that armor, and that there was a second, associated helmet, which

he identified as one divided between the Wallace Collection in London (the bowl, inv. no. A 106) and the Bargello (the hinged cheekpieces, inv. no. M. 1329) and dated to 1551. These suggestions are not acceptable, as neither the archduke’s Roman Armor nor the burgonet bears any demonstrable stylistic relationship to the Bargello cuirass, and their association with it is not supported by documentation; the arm and leg pieces are not mentioned in immediate proximity to the armor, which otherwise may be presumed to be complete, so there seems no reason to assume that they belonged to it.

The identities of the armorer who made this harness and of the prince who wore it have been the subject of considerable speculation. In our opinion, neither can be named with certainty. By reason of its similarity to the armor by Bartolomeo Campi for Guidobaldo II della Rovere (cat. no. 54), de Cosson (1914) judged the Bargello cuirass to be a second work by Campi for Guidobaldo, and he dated it shortly before the Madrid harness. The attribution to Campi, occasionally still encountered (Pfaffenbichler 1992), was revised in 1967, when Boccia and Coelho, recognizing the differences in

workmanship between the two harnesses and affirming the superiority of the Bargello cuirass, attributed it to Filippo Negroli. They identified the Bargello armor in the Medici, rather than della Rovere, section of the 1631 inventory (the two armories were stored and catalogued separately at that time) and, based on its apparent date and size, considered it to have been made for Cosimo I de' Medici, probably in 1546, the year he received the Order of the Golden Fleece. They also hypothesized that the fleur-de-lis and the crescent might allude to Henry II of France (1519–1559; r. 1547–59), but, given the poor relations between France and Florence at midcentury, they concluded that a gift from Henry II to Cosimo I was unlikely. Admitting that the form of the lily was not exactly Florentine, they nevertheless accepted it as a schematization; they justified the crescent as an allusion to the new and increasing splendor of the House of Medici. At the same time, they thought that the armor must have served as inspiration for Campi's armor for Guidobaldo II.

The association of the armor with Cosimo I de' Medici, which tacitly persists today, was thrown into question by Scalini (1987), who believed the armor to have been made expressly for the coronation of Henry II in 1547 and to be the work of Giovan Paolo Negroli. In Scalini's opinion, this harness—like other important armors at the Bargello—would have come to Florence through the bequest of Catherine de' Medici, widow of Henry II of France, to her niece Christine of Lorraine, who married Ferdinando I de' Medici (1549–1609), grand duke of Tuscany in 1589. Although this hypothesis is worthy of consideration, no documentary evidence has been discovered to support it. The negotiations for the marriage of Christine to Ferdinando are amply documented, with considerable attention given to the bride's dowry, especially her jewels and other precious objects, but there is no mention of arms and armor being brought to Florence at the same time.

The armor's identification with Henry II is based on the fact that it bears in three places the crescent, the king's personal emblem, and what is interpreted as the fleur-de-lis of France, symbols specific to the French monarch and not to Cosimo I de' Medici. According to Scalini (1987), the armor was most likely made for the coronation of Henry II in 1547, its imperial iconography being appropriate to such an occasion and more befitting a monarch than a mere duke like Cosimo. Henry adopted the crescent moon as his device when dauphin (see cat. no. 31), and he continued to use the crescent throughout his reign. A single crescent or the more usual interlaced triple-crescent appears on most of Henry's personal arms regardless of their date. The crescent moons on the Bargello cuirass would thus appear to be convincing proof that the armor belonged to Henry II rather than Cosimo I, who seems never to have utilized the crescent in his personal imagery.

In the years under consideration, no monarch or prince is so readily identified with the crescent moon as Henry II, but the evidence for identifying the Bargello cuirass as the French king's is far from conclusive. The placement of a single crescent in a decorative frieze at the top of the breastplate and backplate, and again on the waist lame where, along with the triple-leaved spray identified as a fleur-de-lis, it was almost invisible, compromises the importance of these symbols. The spray of leaves atop the branches between the griffins, which has also been identified as a fleur-de-lis, similarly lacks heraldic accuracy. While it must be admitted that the crescents at the neck of the cuirass occupy the same position as Guidobaldo's identifying monogram on his armor by Bartolomeo Campi, one would nevertheless expect a more prominent, accurately rendered, and unequivocal display of French royal insignia if the armor were indeed Henry's. The absence of more specific badges of royal status, such as the arms of France or Henry's monogram or his triple-crescent badge, suggests that even if the armor were the king's, it was unlikely to have been created for so public and symbolic a spectacle as his coronation.

As to how this Roman-style armor, if originally belonging to Henry II, could have passed from France to Florence, the hypothesis of a personal gift from the king to Cosimo I (1519–1574; r. 1537–74) should be ruled out. Cosimo owed his appointment as duke to Charles V and loyally followed imperial foreign policy, which was customarily hostile to France. Moreover, Catherine de' Medici, the last of the older branch of the Medici, hated her cousin from the younger branch of the family. As for the proposed arrival of the armor in Florence in 1589, at the time of the marriage of Christine of Lorraine to Ferdinando I, the lack of supporting documentary evidence has already been noted. However, Ferdinando's reign (1587–1609), when Florentine relations with France were reestablished, was a far more propitious time for such a gift. Ferdinando became reconciled with Catherine de' Medici, who arranged his marriage, and supported Henry of Navarre politically and financially in his successful struggle for the French throne, permanently indebted Henry to him. The inventories of the Medici armory contain ample evidence of the exchange of gifts with France, beginning in 1587,<sup>5</sup> and in the inventory of 1631 are listed a number of items *alla francese*, including a sword and a pistol with the arms of Henry IV.<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately the inventories are silent as to the original possessor of the Bargello cuirass or the circumstances surrounding its arrival in Florence.

The presence on the backplate of a tab bearing the cross of the Order of Saint Stephen surrounded by the Medici *palle* proves without doubt that the armor was, on some occasion after 1561, worn in Florence, most likely by the duke himself as grand master of the order. At that time the armor must

have been modified by the replacement of at least some of the original tabs around the base of the cuirass with new ones bearing specific Medici devices. It has been suggested that the size of the armor has also been altered with the enlargement of the armholes (Boccia and Coelho 1967) and cuts along the sides (Scalini 1987), but we find no evidence of these changes. The hinges at the sides are probably contemporary with the tab. Had this armor been Henry II's, it would seem unusual that its prestigious royal origins would have been overlooked in the inventories (where other French royal pieces are specifically noted). Questionable, too, is the assumption that the Medici would have reworked a French royal armor as their own, to the extent of substituting Florentine emblems for what might have been French ones on the original tabs. It is also curious to note that the measurements of the cuirass accord better with the known armor dimensions of Cosimo I de' Medici than Henry II of France.<sup>7</sup>

The author of this work has yet to be convincingly identified. The similarity of the Bargello cuirass to Bartolomeo Campi's armor of 1546 (cat. no. 54) is obvious both in its successful emulation of a Roman muscled cuirass and in the details of its construction and decoration. Campi's armor is the work of a goldsmith, however, with an emphasis on applied rather than embossed ornament, and with a certain fussiness in detail and stiffness in the embossing of the musculature that is not evident in the Bargello piece. In contrast, the cuirass in Florence exhibits an entirely different conception and technical ability and is undoubtedly the work of an extremely talented professional armorer. Despite the fluid modeling of the torso and the fine quality of the embossed and chiseled decoration, it lacks the novel invention and precision of workmanship so characteristic of Filippo Negroli's works and therefore must be excluded from his oeuvre. There is likewise nothing about this armor that corresponds with the work of Giovan Paolo Negroli, whose one signed work (cat. no. 43) is very different in conception and handling. Given the perplexing and unresolved questions concerning its authorship, the intended wearer, and the circumstances surrounding its fabrication, the cuirass is tentatively attributed here to a Milanese production in the years about 1545–50.

1. "Una Armad<sup>a</sup> antica di ferro nera cesellata di basso Rilievo con mascere Dorate in parte e altro lavoro, cioè petto stiena muscoloso spallacci a mascere, e tascetto simile e stivaletti traforati con strisce dorati e sproni attaccati"; ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 513, fol. 3. Essentially the same description is repeated in the inventories of 1639–40 (Guardaroba Medicea 539, fol. 2v), and 1650 (N.S. 1651; Guardaroba Medicea 633, fol. 2a).

2. The complete entry reads: "Un Armadura antica di ferro nera, cesellata in parte di basso rilievo, e in parte dorata, cioè Petto, e Schiena muscolosa, Spallacci à Maschere, e Taschetto, ò Elmo Sim<sup>e</sup> fatto à maschera, e Stivaletti straf<sup>ti</sup> con strisce dor<sup>te</sup> [inserted: con Naccheroni sim<sup>e</sup> che rigirano (sotto al petto) in cintola] e sproni attaccati." ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 710, fol. 4, no. 16.
3. "... e piastre con Maglie di ferro che rigirano attorno alla cintola." ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 1091, fol. 7v.
4. ASF, Guardaroba Medicea Appendice 60 (1746, N.S. 1747), fol. 96, no. 681; ASBASE, Uffizi library MS 97 (1768), fol. 95, no. 1102; ASBASE, Uffizi library MS 103 (1776), n.p., no. 1102. A note at the end of the last inventory attests to the presence in Florence of the described contents in March 1780.
5. An embossed and gilt burgonet with buffe in the Metropolitan Museum (acc. nos. 04.3.217, 22.140), a French work of about 1555 believed to have been made for Henry II, is recorded in 1587 in the inventory of Ferdinando I (Boccia 1980, pp. 398–99).
6. "A sword of ordinary steel worked at the base of the blade with silver in low relief with the arms of Henry IV, king of France, with iron guards completely inlaid with gold and silver in low relief, with a grip of silver-gilt and scabbard of black velvet" (Una spada d'acciaio Ordinario lavorata nel falso di basso Rilievo con arg<sup>to</sup> con l'arme di Erigo quarto Re di francia con guardie di ferro tutto comesso Doro e arg<sup>to</sup> di basso rilievo con manico d'arg<sup>to</sup> Dorato e fod<sup>o</sup> di Vell<sup>o</sup> nero); and "A French-style pistol entirely of dark polished steel and completely inlaid with gold and silver with figures, arabesques, and the ciphers and arms of King Henry IV of France" (Una Pistola alla franzese tutta di ferro bigio lustro e tutta comm<sup>a</sup> d'oro e arg<sup>to</sup> con figure rabeschi e Gigli e Cifere e arme del Re Erigo quarto di francia). ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 513, fol. 40.
7. The most significant measurements are the width of the breastplate across the arms and the waist (measured in a straight line across the interior). The breastplate of the Bargello cuirass measures 36.4 and 33.6 cm, respectively, in comparison to 38 and 33 cm for that of the armor of Cosimo I de' Medici, an Italian work of about 1550–55, in the Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer, Vienna (inv. no. A 406). If the armor were Cosimo's, then its slightly smaller size would suggest a date of about 1545–50.

The corresponding measurements of Henry II are as follows: 32 and 26 cm for his silver-damascened armor of about 1540 by Francesco Negroli (cat. no. 31); 33.5 and 27.7 cm for the armor by Giovan Paolo Negroli, about 1545 (cat. no. 47); and 36 and 29.7 cm for the embossed French parade armor of about 1555 in the Metropolitan Museum (acc. no. 39.121). Another harness associated with the king and datable to the 1550s (Musée de l'Armée, Paris, inv. no. G. 138) measures 37.3 and 32.5 cm. If this armor was the king's (for which, see Paris 1993, pp. 30–31), it would be his largest and thus presumably also his latest, about 1555–59. If the Bargello armor did belong to Henry II, it would have to be dated to about 1555.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Rossi and Supino 1898, p. 28; de Cosson 1914, p. 390, fig. 3; Laking 1920–22, vol. 3, pp. 287–88, fig. 1054; Cripps-Day 1927, p. 165; Florence 1938, p. 96, no. 28, pl. xxvi; Thomas and Gamber 1958, p. 705; Boccia and Coelho 1967, pp. 323, 332–33, figs. 261–70; Vienna 1970, p. 35; Florence 1971, p. 40; Hayward 1979, p. 157, fig. 25; Boccia, Rossi, and Morin 1980, pp. 119–20, fig. 121; Florence 1980, pp. 124–25, no. 236; Scalini 1987, pp. 22–27, 42–43, figs. 13, 13 bis; Pfaffenbichler 1992, p. 41; Stockholm 1992, pp. 113, 362; Boccia 1993, pp. 22–24.





56, left pauldron

56.  
**PAIR OF LION-HEAD PAULDRONS**

Milan, ca. 1540–50

Steel and gold

Wt. left 6 oz. (382 g), right 5 oz. (308 g)

Museo Stibbert, Florence (11586)

Each pauldron consists of a single plate embossed in the form of a lion's head, its mane extending to the edges at the top and sides, the turned bottom edge shaped as the beast's upper lip. At the sides, near the top, is a recessed band; the top edge near the sides is filed with tiny scallops, with a dot punched in the center of each, and with an incised line immediately below that extends across the plate. Rivet holes at the edges indicate the former presence of upper pauldron lames and probably also pteruges below the mask, while a hole in the center of the lion's forehead once secured an articulating internal leather strap that vertically connected the pauldron lames; blind rivets around the edge originally fastened the lining, now lost. The left pauldron is in good condition and retains much of its overall gilding, while the right one, now black and with few remaining traces of gilding, is badly damaged and has several large patched holes.

Lion-head pauldrons were a quintessential feature of armor *all'antica* since the fourteenth century and are found on two sixteenth-century armors included here (cat. nos. 61, 62). The Stibbert pauldrons are noteworthy nevertheless as they are the only surviving leonine pauldrons of traditional mask shape, of the type seen in the *Portrait of Jean de*

*Dinteville* (cat. no. 17), in contrast to the Lion Armors in Paris and Leeds, which have pauldrons of contemporary form and construction. Despite the regularity with which lion-head pauldrons appear in *all'antica* costume in Italian painting and sculpture, the majority of surviving mask pauldrons are embossed as grotesque faces, like those on the armor by Bartolomeo Campi (cat. no. 54). Very likely of Milanese manufacture, these pauldrons may originally have formed part of a parade armor with a muscled cuirass like that of catalogue number 55.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Boccia 1975, vol. 1, pp. 78–79, no. 121, vol. 2, fig. 114; Boccia, Rossi, and Morin 1980, p. 121, pl. 123.

57.  
**ROMAN-STYLE BREASTPLATE**

Milan, ca. 1545–50

Steel and gold

Wt. 6 lb. 7 oz. (2,920 g)

Ex coll.: Musée d'Artillerie (renamed Musée de l'Armée, 1883)

Musée de l'Armée, Hôtel National des Invalides, Paris (G. 298)

Formed of a single plate, this anatomically shaped breastplate is masterfully modeled with pointed breasts, a sternal protrusion, and athletic musculature on the abdomen. The neck and arm openings are emphasized by flat bands, which are defined on their inner edge by an engraved line and whose outer edge is turned inward. The bands edging the armholes are ½ inch (1.2 cm) wide, while that at the neck, which is raised in slight relief and has a pronounced central point, measures 2⅞ inches (7.3 cm) at its widest. These bands, which today are dark and have traces of gilding, were originally entirely gilt; the rest of the surface, now brightly polished, may have been blued or blackened. Rivet holes along the bottom flange attest to the former presence of a waist lame; rivet holes and oval slots found on the shoulders and sides presumably served for the attachment of the breast to a backplate. Two other holes at the arm openings, placed in an unusual position high upon the breast, must have been used for the attachment of the pauldrons; they are the only holes that are fitted, on the inside, with a riveted and perforated reinforcement plate (a later working-life modification?).

This simple but magnificently embossed muscled breastplate, originally richer and more colorful, is one of only three surviving sixteenth-century examples (for the others, see cat. nos. 54, 55). The anonymous armorer who conceived and forged it was probably directly inspired by Greek and Roman sculpture, and he knew how to give it the impression

of power, which comes from the play of light and shadow over the harmoniously worked surface relief.

The composition of the armor to which the breastplate originally belonged is not recorded, nor is anything known of its provenance. The intriguing suggestion (Reverseau 1982b) that it may have belonged to Anne de Montmorency, constable of France, whose armory included “a corslet made in the antique style” accompanied by “a morion belonging to the said corslet,”<sup>1</sup> unfortunately cannot be proven owing to the brevity of the description and the inexactness of the term *à l'antique*.

1. Mirot 1920, p. 106, citing the inventory of 1556, no. 369: “Item, ung corsellet fait à l'enthicque”; no. 370: “Item, ung morion de mesmes led. Corsellet.” The same pieces appear again in the inventory of 1568 following the constable's death: “Item, ung corsellet relevé à la vieille anticque, ayant son morion”; Mirot 1920, p. 144, no. 1002.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Robert 1889–93, vol. 2, pp. 102–3, no. G298; Reverseau 1982b, p. 124, fig. 14; Scalini 1987, pp. 22, 39, n. 23; Paris 1990, pp. 38–39, no. 23; Stockholm 1992, pp. 114–15, 363, no. 93; Paris 1993, p. 29, no. 18; Boccia 1993, p. 24.





58, burgonet

58.

### CORSLET ALL'ANTICA

*Milan?, ca. 1540*

*Steel, gold, silver, leather, and textile*

*Ex coll.: Château de Chantilly, France (until 1793); Musée*

*d'Artillerie (renamed Musée de l'Armée, 1883)*

*Musée de l'Armée, Hôtel National des Invalides, Paris (G. 136)*

The armor consists of the following elements: a burgonet forged in one piece, the cheekpieces missing; a cuirass of anime construction, the breastplate composed of eighteen horizontal plates including two collar lames and three skirt plates as well as two gusset lames at the armholes, the backplate of sixteen plates including a one-piece culet (rump defense); two long tassets of ten lames each attached by straps and buckles to the lowest skirt plate; shallow caplike pauldrons (shoulder defenses) of three lames each; three-part vambraces (arm defenses), each consisting of a four-lame upper vambrace, a large couter (elbow), and a lower vambrace of two hinged

parts, each half formed of seven horizontal lames; and a pair of gauntlets, the fingers missing. The outer edges of the armor are turned and roped with double filed lines in each turn; the edges of the tassets, culet, and lower waist plate are bordered by two recessed bands, the couters and gauntlet cuffs bordered by single bands. The armor's surface is embossed overall with horizontal rows of shallow upward-pointing scales, the rows alternately silvered or gilt; the roped edges and recessed bands are gilt, the buckles on the pauldrons and tassets alternately silvered or gilt. The lowest lame of each pauldron has raised and diagonally filed bosses in imitation of puffed-textile costume.







58, right pauldron

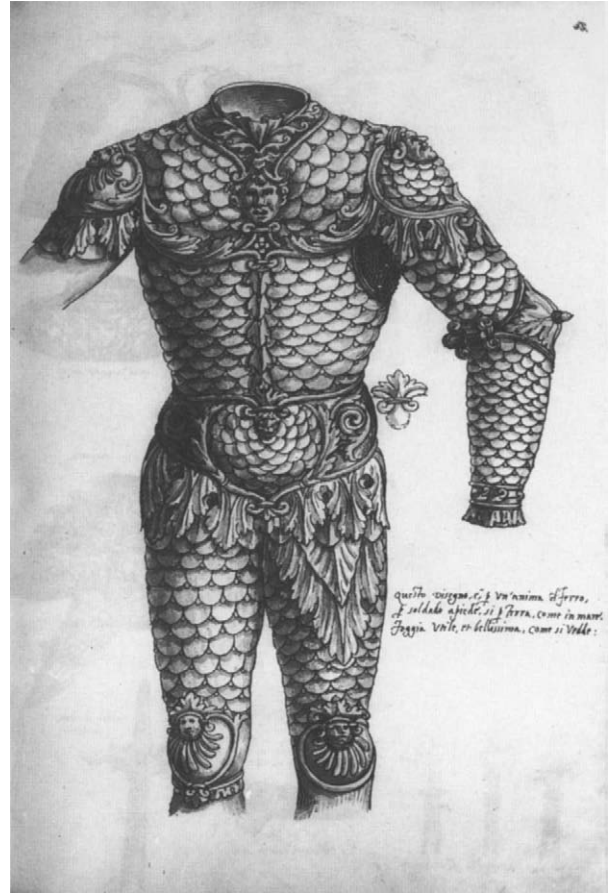


Fig. 74. Filippo Orsoni, design for scale armor. Herzog-August-Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, Cod. Guelf 1.5.3. Aug<sup>2</sup>, fol. 58

The anime is constructed in the conventional manner, incorporating the gorget (collar) in one with the cuirass, and articulated internally with sliding rivets and leather straps. The attachment of the pauldrons is noteworthy: in addition to the usual fastening by strap and buckle to the collar, each pauldron is attached to the backplate by means of a hinge.

Of conventional infantry type, this corslet was transformed by its embossed scale decoration, once richly silvered and gilt, into an armor *all'antica*. It is the only complete example known of a sixteenth-century parade armor decorated with scales, of which two fragmentary examples are also included here (cat. nos. 59, 60). Scale armor (*lorica squamata*) was one of the principal forms of defensive armament in the ancient world and was known to Renaissance antiquarians through a variety of written and visual sources. Numerous monuments in Rome (for example, fig. 20) provided models for artists who sought authentic details for their paintings and sculptures of classical subject matter.<sup>1</sup> Scale armors are illustrated in Heinrich Vogtherr's model book (cat. no. 14), in Guillaume Du Choul's treatise on Roman armament (cat. no. 16), and in Filippo Orsoni's album of

armor designs (cat. no. 15). Orsoni, for example, illustrated a mounted Roman soldier dressed in a short-sleeved shirt of scales and also provided a design for a more fanciful costume in which the entire body, except for the helmet, is covered with scales, with the addition of masks at the shoulders, the top of the breastplate, and the knees, and with other areas punctuated with acanthus leaves (fig. 74). The drawing is labeled: "This design is for an anime of iron for a foot soldier, for use on land as well as at sea. A most beautiful and useful type." In both these designs the scales point downward, as was usual, whereas on the armor the scales are inexplicably pointing upward, an apparent error that compromises the authenticity of the *all'antica* allusion. In certain Byzantine ivories and paintings, however, the stylized rendering of the scale or lamellar armor suggests exactly this upward-overlapping imbricated construction, and it may be from these classicizing medieval sources that the armorer took his inspiration. The design of the armor might also be based on a textile pattern, such as that shown in Ridolfo Ghirlandaio's portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici as a boy, painted about 1530 (Uffizi, Florence), in which the young man's tunic is embroi-



dered with upward-pointing scales. The fictive tufts of cloth embossed at the shoulders of the armor also allude to a costume model.

The maker of this armor was presumably Milanese, although in light of the armor's French provenance, he may have been one of the many Italian armorers employed in France. Several contemporary armor designs with French associations also show scale designs (cat. no. 13b), indicating the widespread popularity of this motif. The conception and quality of work are far below Filippo or Giovan Paolo Negroli's standards, but the hinged attachment of the pauldrons is noteworthy, for it is found on only one other example, Filippo's mail-and-plate armor made for Francesco Maria della Rovere (cat. no. 19). As there is no apparent connection between these two harnesses, we must assume that such hinges were occasionally used by Milanese artists during this period.

The armor is first recorded in a drawing of 1782 by J. B. L. Carré for his book *Panoplie* (1795). Although no provenance is given there, the armor can be traced to the Château de Chantilly, where the goods of the prince de Condé, seized by the state during the Revolution, were inventoried in 1793. This armor is there described as "a knight's armor stamped with scales of gold and silver, the form very old, furnished with its gauntlets and without greaves. . . ." <sup>2</sup> One might infer from the Chantilly provenance that the armor was made for the château's builder, Anne de Montmorency (1493–1567), constable of France, although unfortunately no armor matching this description can be recognized in the published inventories of the constable's armory (Mirot 1920). <sup>3</sup> By the late eighteenth century the armory at Chantilly seems also to have included pieces from the French royal collection <sup>4</sup> and possibly other sources as well, so that provenance is no guarantee of Montmorency ownership. The Chantilly armory was transferred to Paris and eventually incorporated into the newly established Musée d'Artillerie. This armor, like many others from the same source, acquired an apocryphal identity, being recorded in the early catalogues of the museum as that of the "Connétable de Lesdiguières." <sup>5</sup> This refers to François de Bonne (1543–1626), duke of Lesdiguières and

constable of France from 1622, whose life dates preclude his having worn this harness.

1. For the history of Roman scale armor, see Robinson 1975, pp. 153–61.
2. "un armure de chevalier estampée en écailles or et argent, la forme très ancienne garnie de ses gantelets et sans grève. Estimée cent cinquante livres." Document bearing the modern title "Procès verbal d'inventaire des armures trouvées à Chantilly par les Citiz. Anne Alex. Marie Thibault, et François Siméon Bezarard, députés de la Convent. Nat. sur l'estimation faite par Aubrey armurier . . .," Archives Nationales, Paris, R<sup>4</sup>, 828, no. 31.
3. The armor, if the dating of about 1540 is correct, is unlikely to have belonged to either of the constable's sons, François (1530–1579) or Henri (1543–1619).
4. These included the so-called Lion Armor (cat. no. 61), an armor thought to be Henry II's (inv. no. G. 138), and a sword of Henry IV (inv. no. J. 377), these in the Musée de l'Armée, and the flintlock gun by Marin Le Bourgeois of Lisieux for Louis XIII in the State Hermitage, Saint Petersburg (inv. no. 3.O. 94).
5. According to a report of September 3, 1806, made to Napoleon on behalf of the Minister of War concerning the armors then in the central artillery depot, the armors from Chantilly included those of John the Fearless, duke of Burgundy, Louis XI of France, Philip of Valois, Francis I of France, Louis de Bourbon, the dukes of Guise and Mayenne, count Montgomery, Philip de Culant, the marshals Tavannes and Crèvecoeur, the count of Chabannes, Alessandro Farnese, "the brave Crillon," and the constable Anne de Montmorency, "the armor in which he was killed"; Archives Nationales, Paris, AF IV, 1162, premier dossier, pièces 230, 231. An armor believed to be that of the constable de Lesdiguières is not mentioned. The Lesdiguières armor first appears in the guide to the Musée d'Artillerie of 1825 (itself based on a manuscript of 1824 presented to the duke of Angoulême and now kept in the Bibliothèque d'Art et Archéologie, Paris). Confirmation that armor G. 136 is indeed the Lesdiguières harness is provided by a sketch of 1830 by Auguste Raffet (1804–1860), in which this armor is labeled as such (Bibliothèque d'Art et Architecture, Paris). These apocryphal associations disappear from the guidebooks with the 1855 edition.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Carré 1795, pp. 435–36, pl. xxvii; Musée d'Artillerie 1825, p. 7, no. 16; Musée d'Artillerie 1827, p. 6, no. 16; Musée d'Artillerie 1833, p. 15, no. 66; de Saulcy 1855, p. 17, no. 120; Penguilly l'Haridon 1862, p. 175, no. G.24; Robert 1889–93, vol. 2, p. 78, no. G.136; Kelly 1919, p. 27, fig. E.





59a

59.  
**CORSLET ALL'ANTICA**

*Milan, ca. 1545–50*  
*Steel and gold*

*a. Cuirass*

*Breastplate: Wt. 5 lb. 12 oz. (2,600 g)*

*Backplate: Wt. 4 lb. 5 oz. (1,950 g)*

*Ex coll.: Medici armory, Florence (until after 1780); Czar Nicholas I of Russia, Tsarskoye Selo, by ca. 1835*

*The State Hermitage, Saint Petersburg (3.O. 3452)*

*b. Right couter and lower vambrace*

*Couter: Wt. 14 oz. (400 g)*

*Vambrace: Wt. 12 oz. (350 g)*

*Ex coll.: Medici armory, Florence; Museo Nazionale del Bargello, from 1865*

*Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence (M. 1357, M. 770)*

The breastplate is formed of a large plate with separate gussets at the armholes and a waist plate that overlaps the breast upward. The edges at the neck and armholes are turned and roped with double filed lines in the grooves; the edges and the adjacent narrow recessed band are gilt. The upper third of the breastplate is embossed in low relief and gilt with a leafy grotesque mask in the center, which issues foliate scrolls that fill the surrounding area. Below this the surface of the breastplate is embossed with downward-overlapping scales of elongated form with rounded bottom edges; now polished white, the scales retain faint traces of their original blue-black color. The backplate consists of a single plate with upward-overlapping waist plate and two culet lames; the principal edges are turned, roped, and gilt. The decoration on the backplate matches that on the breastplate except that the embossed scrolls at the top are centered on a sheaf of leaves rather than a mask.



59a, backplate

The couter encircles the elbow three-quarters around and has turned, roped, and gilt edges. The point of the elbow is embossed and gilt with a bearded mask wearing a crown of lobed leaves like the mask on the breastplate, and acanthus leaves spread across the center of the couter. The remaining surfaces are embossed with scales pointing to the back. The lower vambrace consists of two hinged halves with turned, roped, and gilt edges at the cuff and inside the bend of the elbow; a wide sunken band at the wrist is embossed with a twisted band, or guilloche, and is gilt overall. The remaining surfaces are embossed with downward-overlapping scales. The couter and lower vambrace retain their original blue-black color.

The only other elements that assuredly belong to this armor are a pair of waist lames with pendent scale pteruges in the Bargello, Florence (fig. 75), which were on loan to the Castel Sant'Angelo, Rome, from 1929 to 1997.<sup>1</sup> The waist

lames complete the Hermitage breastplate and, unlike it, retain their original blackened surface. The lowermost edge of the bottom plate is roped and gilt, and there is no indication that tassets were ever appended. Riveted below the bottom plate are six leather-backed pteruges, each formed of narrow horizontal lames embossed with small scales, the bottom lame of each with a roped edge.

Apart from the complete armor in Paris (cat. no. 58) and a helmet (cat. no. 60), this seems to be the only other sixteenth-century armor decorated overall with raised scales. Although fragmentary and now partly overcleaned, it was originally an armor of striking appearance, with the raised ornament gilt against a blackened ground. The design is much more ambitious than that on the armor in Paris, with a more conspicuous reference to the antique in the classically inspired pteruges.

The cuirass, skirt lames, and elements for the right arm





59b

have only recently been recognized as belonging together (Scalini 1987). They formed part of a corslet, an infantry half-armor (without leg defenses) similar in type to the Paris armor. The original appearance of the harness can be reconstructed from descriptions in the inventories of the Medici armory, which was displayed from about 1589 to 1775 in several galleries on the top floor of the Uffizi, Florence. It is first recorded in 1631 as: “An armor of iron made of black scales with gilt masks and leaves in low relief, that is, breastplate, backplate, arms, collar, and morion, or rather a burgonet, with gilt mask.”<sup>2</sup> In the inventory of 1695 the description is more complete: “An armor of iron made of black scales with gilt masks and foliage in low relief, that is, breastplate, backplate, pauldrons chiseled with gilt masks, arms, gorget, and burgonet, or helmet, completely chiseled with similar masks, gilt, with another mask of painted papier-mâché as a

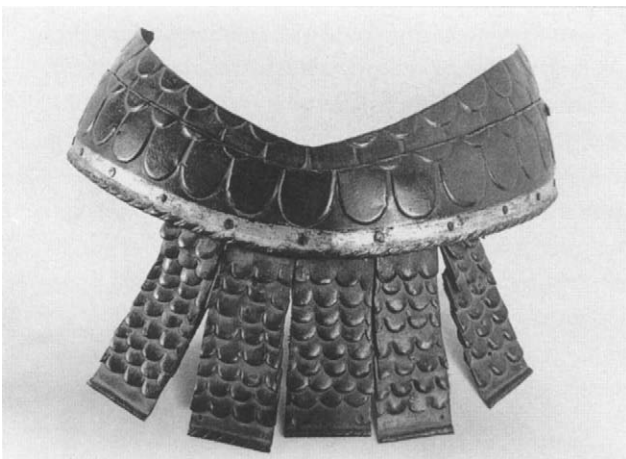


Fig. 75. Waist lames for scale armor. Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence (inv. no. M. 1551)

face.”<sup>3</sup> The addition of a papier-mâché mask in the face opening reflects the trend of displaying armor in the Uffizi in a more romantic and picturesque manner, essentially inhabiting the armor with a human likeness. The inventory of 1719 further expands the description, indicating “. . . [a] burgonet with ear pieces, completely chiseled with gilt masks and foliage, with bands of embroidery around it, and some [embroidery] at the shoulders of articulated iron plate, with a mask of vellum in the helmet.”<sup>4</sup> The embroidery presumably refers to the helmet lining and pickadils, the decorative scalloped textile borders along the edges of the pauldrons that prevented the shoulders from scratching the cuirass. The armor was last recorded in 1776 in an inventory of items to be retained for the permanent collections in Florence.<sup>5</sup> Many of those items, confirmed as still being present in 1780, subsequently disappeared from Florence, including major portions of this harness.

A number of armor elements decorated with raised scales have been suggested as belonging to this armor, although none of the proposals is convincing. The dolphin helmet in Paris (cat. no. 60) has persistently been associated with the Bargello arm pieces since Boccia and Coelho (1967) first compared them, but, as will be noted, the quality of embossing on the helmet is much higher than, and its coloring is different from, the Hermitage cuirass and matching couter and lower vambrace in the Bargello. Judging from the inventories, the armor had an open burgonet without a buffe, as it was felt necessary in the late seventeenth century to fill the face opening with a human mask. Scalini (1987) further multiplied the associated elements to include a burgonet with dolphin mask and scales in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (acc. no. 14.25.597), a pair of mask pauldrons with scale pendants in the Museo Stibbert, Florence (inv. nos. Met. Lav. 7511, 7656), and even the famous Medusa shield in the Bargello (inv. no. M. 956). Of these pieces, only the Stibbert pauldrons bear even the slightest resemblance to the Hermitage and Bargello elements. The embossed masks and soft foliate motifs on the pauldrons do not specifically match those same motifs on the breastplate and the couter, although their unusual construction, the mask being assembled from three plates in addition to the pendent scales below, does correspond to the 1719 inventory description of a pauldron “of articulated iron plate.” A thick layer of paint now obscures the pauldrons’ original coloring, making it impossible to be certain if they belong to the ensemble.

The authorship of the armor represented by the Hermitage and Bargello elements and its princely owner are still open to discussion. The armor is usually attributed to Giovan Paolo Negroli (Boccia and Coelho 1967) based on the assumption that the Paris helmet and Bargello arm pieces



belong to the same harness. Although the mask on the Bargello couter recalls masks on the elbows of armors by Filippo Negroli (cat. nos. 26, 30), as well as by Giovan Paolo (cat. no. 47), the similarities are generic rather than specific. The embossed masks and foliate scrolls are attractively designed and well executed, but the low, soft-edged relief is distinct from the more precise and robust modeling usually associated with the Negroli. This type of foliate mask with a diadem of petals belongs more to the ornamental vocabulary associated with Caremolo Modrone and his atelier, but the workmanship of this piece is different, less graceful in detail. Similar foliate designs are found on other embossed works of this period. We note, for example, two burgonets in the Wallace Collection, London (inv. nos. A 107, A 108), one of them having also come from the Medici armory in Florence.<sup>6</sup> A tentative date for this armor of about 1545–50 is proposed, based on the construction and shape of the breastplate, whose long line, V-shaped waistline, and large upward-overlapping waist plate recall other Italian armors of that period.

The presence of the armor in the Medici collection in 1631 suggests that it probably belonged to a member of that family. The suggestion (Scalini 1987) that the armor was made for Henry II of France when he became dauphin in 1536 is not supported by documentary, iconographic, or stylistic evidence.

1. Discussed by Scalini, in Beijing 1997.

2. “Una Armadura di ferro fatta a scaglie nera con maschere e fogliami dorati di basso rilievo cioe petto stiena bracciali Goletta e morione anzi taschetto con mascera dorata”; ASF Guardaroba Medicea 513, inventory of 1631, fol. 3. Scalini (1987) interpreted this description as referring to two helmets, apparently a close helmet (*morione*) and burgonet (*taschetto*), although the conjunction *anzi* (or) implies that only one helmet was being described but in alternate terms. In subsequent inventories the descriptions are less ambiguous and only one helmet, a burgonet (*taschetto*), is mentioned: ASF Guardaroba Medicea 539, inventory of 1639–40, fol. 2v; Guardaroba Medicea 633, inventory of 1650 (N.S. 1651), fol. 2r.

3. “Un Armadura di ferro fata a Scaglie nera, con Maschere e fogliami dorati di basso rilievo, cioe Petto Schiena, Spallacci cesellati a

Mascheri dorati, Bracciali, Goletta, e Taschetto, o Elmo tutto cesellato a Maschera dor.<sup>a</sup> Sim.<sup>e</sup>, con altra Maschera al viso di carta pesta dipinta.” ASF Guardaroba Medicea 710, inventory of 1695, fol. 4, no. 15.

4. The complete description reads, “Una Armatura di ferro nera lavorata a scaglie, con maschere, e fogliami di basso rilievo dorato, cioè Petto, Schiena, Spallacci cesellatovi un mascherone dorato, Bracciali, Goletta, Taschetto, con orecchioni, tutto cesellata a mascherone, e fogliami dorati, con striscie di ricamo attorno, e alcuni alli spallacci di piastra di ferro snodate, con maschere nel taschetto di cartapecora”; ASF Guardaroba Medicea 1275, inventory of 1719, fols. 146a, b. Similar descriptions are found in the subsequent inventories Guardaroba Medicea 1450, inventory of 1736, fol. 42r, no. 684, and Guardaroba Medicea Appendice 60, inventory of 1746 (N.S. 1747), fol. 96, no. 684.
5. “One said [armor] of black iron made of scales with masks and leaves in low relief, gilt, that is, breastplate, backplate, pauldrons chiseled with gilt masks, arms, gorget, burgonet with cheekpieces, completely chiseled with gilt masks and leaves and a mask of oil-cloth” (Una detta [armatura] di ferro nera fatta a Scaglie con Maschere, e fogliami di basso rilievo dorati, cioè Petto, Schiena, Spallacci cesellatovi Mascherone dorato, bracciali, goletta, Taschetto con orecchioni tutto cesellato a Mascherone, e fogliami dorati e Maschera di tela incerata); ASBASF, Uffizi library, MS 103, n.p., no. 1195. This is an exact repetition of the preceding inventory of 1768, MS 97, fol. 96, no. 1105.
6. Wallace Collection burgonet A 107 is described repeatedly in the Medici inventories beginning as early as 1597 (ASF Guardaroba Medicea 190, fol. 140r) and most tellingly in the inventory of 1650 (N.S. 1651; ASF Guardaroba Medicea 633, fol. 7v): “A morion of black iron, in the manner of a lion’s head chiseled in low relief with leaves” (Un Morione di ferro nero, a uso di testa di Leone Cesellato di basso rilievo a fogliami). Burgonet A 108 is even closer in design to the pieces under discussion, particularly the foliage whose branches sometimes turn into strapwork scrolls and have corkscrew tendrils shooting off the main branch, as found on the Hermitage cuirass, but is of superior workmanship to the Hermitage-Bargello elements. For both helmets, see Mann 1962, vol. 1, pp. 112–19, and Norman 1986, pp. 49–51.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Gille and Rockstuhl 1835–53, pls. 29, 30; Gille 1860, p. 39; Rossi and Supino 1898, p. 29; Lenz 1908, p. 172, no. K.23; Boccia and Coelho 1967, pp. 324, 334, fig. 278; Vienna 1970, p. 35; Florence 1971, p. 41; Florence 1980, p. 126; Scalini 1987, pp. 29–31, 43–44, n. 5; Paris 1990, p. 35; Boccia 1993, p. 22; Beijing 1997, p. 113, no. 77, ill. p. 202.



60.

### BURGONET AND BUFFE

*Milan, ca. 1540–45*

*Steel, gold, silver, and textile*

*Burgonet: Wt. 5 lb. (2,300 g)*

*Buffe: Wt. 11 oz. (310 g)*

*Ex coll.: Château de Chantilly, France (until 1793); Musée d'Artillerie (renamed Musée de l'Armée, 1883)*

*Musée de l'Armée, Hôtel National des Invalides, Paris (H. 149)*

The burgonet is constructed of a one-piece bowl with a single collar lame at the back, hinged cheekpieces closing with a turning pin at the chin, each cheek having a single collar lame, and a one-piece buffe attached to the cheekpieces by turning pins. The bowl is embossed in high relief as a fantastic winged dolphin head. The face at the front, which is surrounded by batlike wings and twisted strands of hair at the sides, has a deeply furled brow, bulging eyes with recessed pupils, and a pointed, scaly snout that forms the peak. A U-shaped plate riveted to the underside of the snout is pierced at the front with two comma-shaped nostrils and is embossed as rippled gums and with irregularly spaced teeth of different sizes. A tall scaly comb rises in twenty-two points behind the monster's face, and the remaining area is



60, without buffe

embossed with downward-overlapping scales with rounded profiles. A plume holder is riveted at the base of the comb on the right side. The cheekpieces are embossed with hair, and each has an added plate of teeth riveted along the face opening; traces of a textile lining strap are preserved below these plates and under some of the lining rivets around the face opening. A gilt-iron turning pin to secure the buffe is fitted to each cheek, the right cheek also having a spring pin to hold the buffe upright. The front collar lames are embossed with the design of a guilloche-like twisted band; the band extends onto the rear collar lame, which is otherwise embossed with scales and has a separately applied pointed scale at the center. The edges of the peak, cheekpieces, and collar lames are turned under, roped, and filed with double

lines in the recesses; the principal edges are also bordered by a pair of etched lines. The creature's face and hair, the comb, and the roped edges are gilt overall, with the scales silvered on their faces and gilt along the edges; the separate plate beneath the snout is gilt, with silvered teeth; and the teeth on the cheeks are also silvered. The collar lames are gilt except for the twisted band, which is silvered.

The buffe of one plate is embossed in the center with a leafy mask with slightly open mouth and protruding tongue. A wide notched border frames the top and sides, and the edges are turned and roped; keyhole-shaped slots are pierced at the rear edge on each side to fit over the turning pins on the cheekpieces. The surface of the buffe is gilt overall.

The bold conception of the helmet as a fierce dragonlike



dolphin's head, its masterful embossing, and the pictorial use of gilding and silvering distinguish this burgonet as one of the outstanding examples of armor *all'eroica*. Its design seems to reflect a knowledge of Filippo Negroli's work, particularly the burgonet of Guidobaldo II della Rovere in the Hermitage (cat. no. 23a), in such details as the peak formed as a beast's snout, the underside filled with a separate plate incorporating the teeth, and the face surrounded by jagged wings, hair, and scales. The raising of the comb as a series of high points is a tour de force of metalworking and recalls not only the Hermitage helmet but also another with an equally impressive comb in the Wallace Collection (inv. no. A 106). The applied scale at the rear neck lame, which carries the spiky profile of the comb down to the lower edge of the helmet, reveals an unusual level of sophistication and playfulness. The motif on the buffe of a grotesque mask sticking out its tongue is also found on the peak of Filippo's burgonet of 1538 (cat. no. 29) and in several places on the Masks Garniture of 1539 (cat. no. 30). It is no wonder that scholars, beginning with Thomas and Gamber (1958), have regularly attributed the Paris helmet to the Negroli workshop, invariably to Giovan Paolo rather than Filippo. In our opinion, however, and despite the obvious quality of the helmet, the authorship of either master cannot be demonstrated. While it possesses an imaginative design and vigorous embossing typical of Filippo's work, the Paris helmet lacks the precision of detail so characteristic of that master's armors. It also bears no obvious relationship to Giovan Paolo's signed breastplate (cat. no. 43) or the closely allied works attributed to him. A feature such as the summary treatment of the creature's eyes, with their simple recessed pupils, differs markedly from the sharply chiseled eyes with fully defined pupils found on Filippo's helmets (compare to cat. nos. 23a, 29, 30) or on Giovan Paolo's burgonet in Washington (cat. no. 44). Given the lack of any direct comparisons with signed Negroli works, it seems reasonable to remove this splendid helmet from the core Negroli oeuvre; it remains, however, one of the major works of the period.

The lack of stylistic and iconographic coherence between the burgonet and its buffe is puzzling, leading one to wonder if the two originally belonged together. The roped edges of the buffe do not have the incised double lines in the turns that are found along the edges of the helmet, and the buffe's notched border is not repeated on the burgonet. The mask is surrounded by leaves that fill the buffe's surface, yet the leaves do not carry over onto the supporting cheekpieces, which instead are embossed with tufts of hair. The buffe lacks any trace of silvering, which was once so prominent on the helmet. On the other hand, the buffe does fit the burgonet sufficiently well, and the gilt-iron turning pins and



60, buffe

spring catch that secure it look old. The punched eyes in the mask are not unlike those of the dolphin on the helmet. There can be no doubt that the cheekpieces were originally intended to support a buffe, as the raised tufts of hair are set back from the face opening so as not to interfere with the placement of a face plate. If the two pieces were made for each other, this is additional evidence against their having been made by the Negroli, whose works invariably are well thought out and consistent in detail.

The burgonet and buffe are likely to have been in France since the sixteenth century. They are first recorded in a drawing of 1782 made by J. B. L. Carré for his book on the history of arms and armor, *Panoplie* (1795). Although the source of Carré's illustration is not given,<sup>1</sup> the majority of illustrated items came from the armory of the prince de Condé at Chantilly or that of the dukes of Boillon at Sedan. This helmet is almost certainly that described in the inventory of the Chantilly armory begun on April 30, 1793: "A hauberk or coat of mail . . . and a helmet damascened and stamped, representing the figure of a dragon. . . ."<sup>2</sup> The description of the helmet as damascened (probably referring to the presence of precious metal) and stamped (embossed or punched, presumably a reference to its relief decoration or even the repeated scale motif) seems a plausible identification. The armors inventoried at Chantilly in 1793 on behalf of the revolutionary government were initially sent to the Louvre for storage and were subsequently incorporated into the collections assembled to form the newly founded Musée d'Artillerie. The helmet can be recognized in the early catalogues of that institution from 1827.

The Chantilly provenance suggests that the burgonet could have belonged to Anne de Montmorency (1493–1567), constable of France, builder of Chantilly, and a leading *maecenas* in Renaissance France. Montmorency possessed a large and richly equipped personal armory that is recorded in inventories of his Paris *hôtel* in 1556 and 1567 (Mirot 1920), but unfortunately the burgonet cannot be recognized among the brief descriptions given there. Indeed, there is little correspondence between the Montmorency inventories and the one made at Chantilly in 1793. By that date the Chantilly armory seems to have included not only Montmorency armors but also pieces from the French royal armory and others added by the princes of Condé, owners of Chantilly since the mid-seventeenth century. Identifying the burgonet's original owner thus is not so easy, although he was probably French.

Boccia and Coelho (1967) first suggested that this helmet belonged to a scale-decorated couter and lower vambrace from the Medici armory now in the Bargello (cat. no. 59b),<sup>3</sup> and it has been generally assumed ever since that the Paris helmet also has a Medici provenance. However, this helmet and the Bargello arm pieces are as different as they are similar. Most important, the quality of embossing on the helmet is much higher. It is true that on certain armors (for example, cat. no. 47) the quality of workmanship evident on the helmet is superior to that of the rest of the armor, but there are other differences here that distinguish these pieces. The scales on the helmet are of compact form, raised in high relief, and gilt and silvered, whereas those on the arm pieces are elongated, flat, and blackened or blued. The twisted band around the collar plates of the helmet is embossed in high relief, with slightly concave surfaces, and is silvered; the similar band around the wrist of the lower vambrace is in low relief, with a flat surface, and is gilt. The double lines found in the roped turns at the edges and along the edges of the collar plates are absent on the arm pieces. Similarly, there is no apparent connection between the burgonet and the scale cuirass in the Hermitage (cat. no. 59a), which can be shown to be part of the same Medici armor as the arm pieces. It thus seems reasonable to conclude that the Paris burgonet belongs to yet another armor of different provenance.

Scalini (1987), following up on Boccia and Coelho's suggestion, considered this helmet to be part of an even larger

complex of armor decorated with scales that included the Bargello pieces. He attributed the ensemble to Giovan Paolo Negroli and, evidently influenced by the burgonet's dolphinlike form, considered it to have been made for the future Henry II of France when he succeeded to the title dauphin in 1536. The old French provenance of this helmet (assumed by Scalini, but now demonstrated) was taken as evidence that the armor and its exchange pieces were once used in the Valois court and only later in the sixteenth century passed by gift into the Medici armory. As already discussed, the relationship of this helmet to the Bargello pieces must be discounted, as must also the attribution to Giovan Paolo. Apart from the helmet's having come from Chantilly, there is no iconographic or documentary evidence to support a Valois connection.

This burgonet is a superb example of the taste for helmets made in the form of fantastic animals, a style in vogue about 1535–45, of which Filippo Negroli's burgonet for Guidobaldo II della Rovere (cat. no. 23a) is the oldest documented and the finest. Another example was formerly in the Gonzaga armory in Mantua: "A burgonet gilt in the form of a serpent's mouth in relief, gilt."<sup>4</sup>

1. Carré 1795, pl. XXI B, the caption noting that "on ignore de qui il vient."
2. "Un haubert ou cotte maille garni de son colet et de sa gagnette et d'un casque damasquiné et estampé représentant la figure d'un dragon; estime deux cent livres"; Archives Nationales, Paris, R<sup>4</sup>, 828, inventory of the arms and armor found at the Château de Chantilly in 1793, no. 18. A publication on this inventory by S. Pyhrr is forthcoming.
3. The relationship of the cuirass in the Hermitage to the Bargello fragments was not yet recognized; it was pointed out by Scalini in 1987.
4. Mann 1939, pp. 324–25, no. 24, quoting from the inventory of 1604.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Carré 1795, p. 411, pl. 21; Musée d'Artillerie 1827, p. 15, col. 2, no. 12; Musée d'Artillerie 1833, p. 23, no. 124; Musée d'Artillerie 1845, p. 28, no. 224; Lacroix and Seré 1848–51, vol. 4, pl. 12, fig. 2; de Saulcy 1855, pp. 38–39, no. 311; Penguilly l'Haridon 1862, p. 288, no. H.53; Robert 1889–93, vol. 2, pp. 193–94, no. H.149; Maindron 1893–94, (11), p. 313; Bernadac 1899, p. 43, no. H149; Niox 1917, pl. 34; Thomas and Gamber 1958, p. 773; Boccia and Coelho 1967, pp. 324, 333–34, fig. 277; Reverseau 1982b, p. 124, pl. 15; Scalini 1987, pp. 29–31, 43–44; Paris 1990, p. 35; Boccia 1993, p. 22.





## LION ARMOR

Milan, ca. 1540–45

Steel, gold, and silver

Wt. 35 lb. 11 oz. (16,215 g)

Ex coll.: *Château de Chantilly, France (until 1793); Musée d'Artillerie (renamed Musée de l'Armée, 1883)*

*Musée de l'Armée, Hôtel National des Invalides, Paris (G. 50)*

This parade armor of infantry type comprises a burgonet, gorget, breastplate and backplate, symmetrical pauldrons permanently attached to the three-part vambraces, the latter having large couters open to the inside of the arm, gauntlets, and tassets. The cheekpieces of the burgonet and the fingers of the gauntlets are missing; the lowest lame on each half of the gorget is modern. The breastplate is constructed with three upward-overlapping lames at the waist, two skirt lames, and a single gusset lame at each armhole, while the backplate has the same number of articulations at the waist and a single culet lame. The tassets, of seven lames each, expand downward and wrap around the thighs.

The armor displays a rich decoration employing embossing, chiseling, punching, and damascening in gold and silver set against hammer-rough blackened surfaces. The relief ornament is dominated by the lions' heads that form the bowl of the burgonet, the main plate of each pauldron, the points of the couters, and the cuffs of the gauntlets. The lions are boldly modeled and are depicted with menacing expressions, their brows furled and their mouths open and teeth bared. The faces are blackened and matted overall with closely set chisel marks simulating the beasts' fur, while the muzzles are dotted with silver to suggest the roots of whiskers. The faces are framed and their relief emphasized by long gilt manes; the ears in the form of twisted circles emerge from the wavy ringlets. The pupils of the lion's eyes on the burgonet are pierced, but these crudely punched holes are probably not original to the armor.

Relief decoration is also employed in the recessed bands that border the turned and roped edges of the main plates. In these bands the embossing is rather coarse, less refined than that of the lions, the designs blackened, sometimes highlighted by simple gold-damascened lines, and set against a stippled and gilt background. The border motifs consist principally of scrollwork emerging from the mouths or ears of grotesque masks, but the ornament also includes a herm and heronlike birds on the burgonet, a vase with masks on the backplate, grotesques at the center of the lower waist plate over the crotch, and oval cartouches within strapwork

frames on the tassets. The roped edges are alternately blackened and gilt, creating a striped effect.

Embossed in high relief around the upper part of the breastplate and backplate is a richly detailed collar of the Order of Saint Michael, its double row of scallop shells linked by gold-damascened cordwork; from the collar is suspended an oval medallion, adorned with flower buds and a pendent "pearl" below, which encloses the figure of the archangel Saint Michael, in armor *all'antica*, striking down Satan with his lance.

The majority of the damascened decoration is executed in gold and consists of narrow transverse bands of foliate scrolls of a simple and repetitious design framed by double fillets. These damascened bands occupy the leading horizontal edges of the individual lames but are also carried over onto the solid upper portions of the cuirass and on the vambraces, creating the impression that the armor has more lames than it does. This is particularly significant on the breastplate and backplate, where this decoration visually continues the articulated waist plates, giving the whole the look of an anime, that is, a fully articulated cuirass constructed of horizontal lames. The horizontal damascened bands on the vambraces are intended to suggest articulation (in a similar way to the fictive articulation on the vambraces on Carlo Gonzaga's armor, cat. no. 50). The damascening in silver is in very slight relief (but less pronounced than that on cat. nos. 30–32); it is limited to a large cross that appears to be superimposed on the fictive lames of the breastplate and backplate. The arms of the cross are wider than the gold transverse bands, and its rigid, rectilinear form gives it prominence. The cross is also filled with foliate scrolls but of a denser and more varied design than those executed in gold; the outlines of the major elements are engraved, the ribs of some of the leaves incised, and the clusters of fruit circle-punched.

The presence of the collar of the Order of Saint Michael and the silver cross is a clear indication that this armor was made for a French knight, or at least for a high-ranking foreign noble in French service. The order was founded in 1469 by Louis XI and was the principal French royal order of



61, burgonet

the knighthood until the introduction of the rival, and more exclusive, Order of the Holy Spirit, instituted by Henry III in 1578; both orders were maintained until they were abolished during the Revolution of 1789. The collar was originally composed of a single row of cockle or scallop shells joined with knots, but during the reign of Francis I (1515–47), perhaps about 1527, the form was changed to a double row of scallop shells. The persistence of this new form until the reign of Charles IX (1560–74), when the original single row of shells was restored, allows us to date the creation of this armor to the period about 1527–60. The silver cross apparently represents the white (argent, or silver, in heraldic terms) cross that served as the French battle emblem since the Hundred Years War,<sup>1</sup> probably in contradistinction to the red cross of Saint George utilized by the English. Both emblems, the order and the cross, are worn, for example, by Alfonso I d'Este (1476–1534), duke of Ferrara and Modena and ally of Francis I of France, in his portrait by Dosso Dossi painted about 1513 (Galleria Estense, Modena). The original owner of the Lion Armor is generally assumed to have been a Frenchman, however, although his identity has been the subject of considerable speculation for more than two centuries.

The first known mention of the Lion Armor occurs in J. B. L. Carré's *Panoplie*, completed in 1783 but not published until 1795, in which the armor is illustrated and described as being in the armory of the princes of Condé at Chantilly. Referring to the harness, perhaps for the first time in print, as the "armure aux lions," Carré tells us that "some antiquarians" believed that it belonged to Henry IV (r. 1589–1610), while he himself was inclined toward Francis I or Louis XII (r. 1498–1515). In fact, the author mistakenly interpreted the strapwork cartouches on the tassets as "rondelets bearing the batons of a commander or marshal of France in saltire,"<sup>2</sup> devices he considered more appropriate to the armor of a general than that of a sovereign. In light of these apparent contradictions, Carré wisely left the question of the armor's original owner unresolved.

Only a few years after Carré's visit to Chantilly, following the outbreak of the Revolution, the goods of the château's owner, the émigré prince de Condé, were seized by the state. An inventory of the armory was drawn up, beginning on April 30, 1793, and among the harnesses was listed as number 8, "a knight's armor worked in relief, damascened, bearing on the cuirass the great collar of the order of Saint Michael,

which lacks the lower part of the helmet. . . .”<sup>3</sup> The compiler of this inventory, who commented on the helmet’s absent cheekpieces, inexplicably failed to mention the lion heads or to note the harness’s putative royal ownership that had so occupied Carré’s thoughts, but there can be no doubt that it is the Lion Armor being described. The contents of the Chantilly armory were transferred to Paris later that year and were stored first in the Louvre before transfer in year V (1796–97) to the Musée d’Artillerie. In a report made by the minister of defense to the emperor Napoleon on September 3, 1806, the most important armors in that museum are listed, including the Lion Armor from Chantilly, which was by then attributed to Francis I.<sup>4</sup> This attribution, and another to Louis XII, persisted for many years in the official catalogues of the Musée d’Artillerie, until both these possibilities were apparently judged to be without merit, and speculation as to the armor’s owner was dropped. Charles Buttin’s monographic study of this armor (1928) revived the attribution to Francis I, which has prevailed in arms and armor literature ever since. Buttin’s attribution to Francis I was primarily based on the monarch’s reputed colossal stature (thought to be 6 ft. 6 in. in height) and followed from measurements taken from another armor made for the king by Jörg Seusenhofer of Innsbruck in 1539–40 (Musée de l’Armée, inv. no. G. 117). The arguments for this harness’s having

belonged to Francis I have in the meantime been buttressed by J.-P. Reverseau (1982a).<sup>5</sup> In our opinion, however, the measurements are not convincing evidence of Francis’s ownership.

In the absence of conclusive documentary or iconographic proof of the Lion Armor’s owner, measurements would seem to provide the only evidence for his identity. Comparing the armor G. 117 made by Seusenhofer for Francis I, the French king’s only documented harness, and the Lion Armor, the measurements of the torsos are very similar: the respective widths of the breastplates are 40 and 37 centimeters across the inside at the armholes; 32.5 and 32.5 centimeters across the inside at the waist; and 104 and 105 centimeters around the circumference of the cuirass at the waist. The arms, on the other hand, are markedly different in length: the upper arm from the point of the shoulder to the center of the elbow of G. 117 is 44.5 centimeters, whereas that of the Lion Armor measures only 36 centimeters. The difference of 8.5 centimeters (3¼ in.) is significant enough to put the armor’s long-standing association with Francis I in serious doubt and to open for reconsideration the possibility that it belonged to Anne de Montmorency (1493–1567), constable of France. In fact, the measurements of the Lion Armor are not unlike the constable’s only securely identifiable harness (Musée de l’Armée, inv. no. G. 61), which is 37.5 centimeters across the armholes, 32.5 centimeters across the waist, 103 centimeters around the cuirass at the waist, and 35–36 centimeters from the shoulder to the elbow, the measurements of a mature man (he was a year older than the king) of similar corpulence but shorter in limb. The Lion Armor, apparently designed as an infantry corslet, seems never to have possessed leg defenses. These would have provided conclusive evidence (or refutation) of Francis I’s purported ownership, as the monarch’s legs were extremely long, as demonstrated by the leg harness of Seusenhofer’s armor, which measures 60 centimeters in height from the middle of the knee to the ground. This exceeds by 14 centimeters (5½ in.) the comparable measurement of Anne de Montmorency’s lower legs on armor G. 61 (about 46 cm). The iconography of the armor’s decoration is equally appropriate for Montmorency as for the king: as peer of the realm and the commander in chief of the French army, Anne de Montmorency was a member of the Order of Saint Michael and would very likely have worn the white cross of France as a battle emblem. As has already been observed (cat. no. 57), Montmorency possessed a “corslet made in the antique style” with matching helmet, but this description is too vague to identify the present harness. The possibility thus remains that the Lion Armor may have belonged to Montmorency, although conclusive proof is still lacking.



61, burgonet





61, right pauldron



61, right couter

The Milanese inspiration of this harness has rarely been questioned, although its authorship, date, and place of manufacture—in Milan or in Paris, where many Italian armorers took up residence—are contended. Buttin (1928) proposed that the armor may have been made by a Milanese working in France about 1530–35 but following French designs. Cripps-Day (1927), on the other hand, seems to have been the first to compare the harness to Filippo Negroli’s Masks Garniture of 1539 (cat. no. 30) and to suggest that, following the Negroli model, it probably dated about 1540–45. He speculated further that the armor may have been the work of Giovan Paolo Negroli, who he deduced (incorrectly) was the “seigneur Negrot” referred to by Brantôme as being a resident of Paris (it was actually Giovan Pietro, as demonstrated by Picot 1905). The attribution to Giovan Paolo has generally been accepted (Thomas and Gamber 1958; Reverseau 1982a), although at least on one occasion the armor was also tentatively ascribed to Filippo and his broth-

ers (Boccia, Rossi, and Morin 1980). In our opinion the armor lacks the distinctive characteristics of either Filippo’s or Giovan Paolo’s documented works, its embossing softer, flatter, and less precise, its damascening simpler and less inventive. The harness nevertheless preserves the spirit of these masters, especially their sculptural conception of the helmets, pauldrons, and couters on the Masks Garniture and the armor of Henry II (cat. no. 47). The forceful presence of leonine imagery throughout the harness’s decoration is imaginative and transforms what is otherwise a conventional corslet into a strikingly impressive armor *all’antica*.

1. Contrary to Buttin 1928, p. 203, who proposed that the white cross was taken from the heraldic arms of Savoy in honor of Francis I’s mother, Louise of Savoy.
2. “rondelles appuyées de bâtons de commandans ou de maréchaux de France, en sautoir.” Carré 1795, p. 439.

3. "armure de Chevalier relevée en bosse, damasquinée, portant au corcelet le grand colier de l'ordre de St. michel, à laquelle manque la partie inférieure du haume, estimée trois Cent Livres." Archives Nationales, Paris, R<sup>4</sup>, 828.
4. "François I (Armure dite aux lions)." Archives Nationales, Paris AF IV, 1162, pièce 102.
5. Cripps-Day (1927) identified Anne de Montmorency, constable of France and builder of Chantilly, as the armor's likely owner.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Carré 1795, pp. 437–39, pl. xxx; Dubois and Marchais 1807, pls. VII, VIII; Musée d'Artillerie 1825, p. 10, no. 51;

Musée d'Artillerie 1827, p. 9, col. 2, no. 51; Musée d'Artillerie 1833, pp. 8–9, no. 27; Musée d'Artillerie 1845, p. 6, no. 20; de Saulcy 1855, p. 17, no. 118; Penguilly l'Haridon 1862, p. 191, no. G.65; Robert 1889–93, vol. 2, p. 56, no. G.50; Maindron 1893–94, (II), pp. 398–99; Niox 1917, pp. 31–32, pl. xv; Laking 1920–22, vol. 3, pp. 295–97, fig. 1060; Cripps-Day 1927, figs. 3, 8–12; Buttin 1928; Cripps-Day 1934, p. 13, n. 1; Cripps-Day 1944, p. 90, fig. IX; Blair 1958, p. 249, pl. LXIX; Thomas and Gamber 1958, pp. 773–74; Reverseau 1977, pp. 112–13, fig. 1; Boccia, Rossi, and Morin 1980, pp. 122–23, figs. 125–27; Reverseau 1982a, pp. 24–27; Reverseau 1982b, p. 124, fig. 13; Boccia and Godoy 1985–86, vol. I, p. 92, no. 48; Boccia 1993, p. 22.

62.

## LION ARMOR

### a. Armor

*Italian or French, ca. 1545–55*

*Steel and gold*

*Wt. (without reinforcing breastplate) 47 lb. 3 oz. (21,450 g);*

*reinforcing breastplate 6 lb. 9 oz. (2,983 g)*

*Ex coll.: James Cooper; acquired by the Royal Armouries, 1768*

*The Board of Trustees of the Royal Armouries, Leeds (II.89)*

### b. Drawing of a burgonet

*European, 19th century*

*Colored wash on blue-tinted paper*

*11 1/2 x 10 5/8 in. (29.2 x 26.9 cm)*

*Ex coll.: A. R. Dufty (sold, Christie's, London, October 21, 1987,*

*lot 131)*

*The Board of Trustees of the Royal Armouries, Leeds (I.393)*

The armor comprises the following elements: a close helmet for field use with two (originally three) collar lames front and back; a breastplate with a gusset lame at each arm-hole, one upward-overlapping waist lame (formerly two), and one skirt lame (formerly two) supporting tassets (thighs) of six (originally seven) lames; a one-piece backplate with two articulating lames at the waist and a single culet (rump) lame; asymmetrical pauldrons (shoulders) of *all'antica* type, with simulated pteruges, which were attached by straps and turning pins to the vambraces, the last with couters (elbows) articulated with a single lame above and below; gauntlets; one-piece cuisses with poleyns; hinged two-part greaves encircling the lower leg three-quarters around, with two articulating lames at the base of the front

plate, the lower lame pierced for the attachment of a mail sabaton; and associated toe caps.<sup>1</sup> The gorget is missing.<sup>2</sup> There is also a heavy reinforcing breastplate, which attaches to the main breast by means of a turning pin in the center at the top and two hooks, one to either side, passing through pierced pins; the reinforce has a crude cutout on the right side, which fits over corresponding two holes for the (missing) lance-rest on the breastplate.

The history of this armor and its vicissitudes have been the subject of two detailed studies, by Blair (1958) and Norman (1974), the findings of which can only be summarized here. Blair observed that the armor had been subjected to a number of alterations that resulted in its current shorter and stouter proportions. Notable among these



62a, left pauldron

changes was the removal of one of the waist lames on the breastplate, one skirt lame, and one lame of each tasset, the widening of the armor by the addition of extension plates at the sides of the backplate and culet, and the enlargement of the face opening of the helmet, with the resulting loss of some of the border decoration at the front of the bowl. The reinforcing breastplate was originally fitted with a lance-rest, which was subsequently transferred to the main breastplate, where attachment holes for a rest are present; this alteration necessitated the large cutout on the reinforce in order that the plate fit over the lance-rest. The reinforce retains a single hole above the cutout, which is evidence of original location of the lance-rest.

The armor's decoration, little affected by these alterations, remains one of the most refined and unusual encountered in the sixteenth century and is exceptionally well preserved. It combines highly distinctive relief work, which is embossed, chased, and partly gilt, with a rich and complex gold-damascening noteworthy for its elegance and mastery. The surfaces are black and rough from the hammer, providing an effective contrast of color and texture for the decoration. The edges of most plates are turned under and roped, whereas the turned edges at the top of the breastplate and backplate are left smooth.

A wide band occupies the top of the breastplate and is embossed with a dense, complex, and exuberant composition in which animal and vegetal motifs merge. The relief of the embossing is about 5 millimeters high. The composition, which has traces of gilding, depicts a central lion's head, with tendrils issuing from its mouth; the foliage to either side contains a feathery foreleg and wing of a grotesque beast emerging from a blossom, the wings confronted above the lion's head and tied with a ribbon. The band of embossing is stepped up slightly from the surface to allow the upper edge of the superimposed reinforce to fit flush beneath it, thus leaving the relief visible at all times. The band at the top of the backplate, which is not stepped, is embossed with a central grotesque mask, confronting half-lions emerging from blossoms, and scrolling leaves that end in confronted volutes clipped together above the mask. The relief on the rest of the armor consists of lions' heads on the front of the helmet bowl and on the pauldrons, couters, gauntlet cuffs, and poleyns, giving a rhythm and unity to the armor's composition. The lions' faces are depicted with menacing expressions, the features drawn, brows furrowed, and mouths open to reveal the teeth and fangs; the faces are surrounded by thick manes, once heavily gilt, with long wavy locks from which emerge oval-shaped ears with hairy outlines. The well-modeled heads, with varied expressions, have stippled eyelids and small chiseled strokes to simulate fur, and the muzzles are damascened with curly whiskers. Among the lions' heads, the most complete is the one on the helmet, which is depicted with its mouth open, with the upper jaw at the front of the bowl and the lower jaw on the lower bevor. This concept of the wearer peering out from within the mouth of the beast was a favorite one in the sixteenth century (as, for example, cat. nos. 23, 28, 39, 40, 44, 60).

The embossed areas are balanced by a profuse use of gold-damascened arabesques contained within three wide vertical bands on the breastplate and backplate and the reinforce, and in narrower bands down the centers of the arms, tassets, and legs, and along the edges of most plates. The arabesques consist of delicate scrolling tendrils with flowers or leaves and occasionally a simulated fruit; the compositions are dense and carpetlike, those at the center of the breastplate and backplate symmetrical about the center, the remainder arranged as undulating scrolls. The central band on the breastplate is framed at the top by decorative birds, the gold surfaces lightly engraved as well, with foliate scrolls in the same position at the top of the reinforce, backplate, and cuisses. A few areas are damascened more freely, notably the visor and upper bevor of the helmet, the elaborate cartouche-shaped plume holder, the fictive pteruges on the pauldrons, and the fingers of the gauntlets, which are cov-







62a, detail of breastplate

ered with gold arabesques. The scrolls covering the visor and upper bevor are larger and more open than elsewhere and incorporate on either side of the upper bevor a winged dragon facing a medallion of arabesques, the one on the right side serving as the centerpiece for the rosette of ventilation holes. The smooth turned edges at the top of the breastplate and backplate are damascened with leaves, and a single gold-damascened leaf is found on each turn of the roped edges of most plates. The one remaining original buckle, still attached to the left pauldron, is damascened with a Greek key design.

This splendid armor, incomplete today, originally possessed a matching burgonet that is recorded from two different, and seemingly unrelated, sources. The earlier is a still life with armor (fig. 66), attributed to the circle of Madeleine de Boullogne (1648–1710), that appeared in a London salesroom (Christie's, December 14, 1990, lot 336, ill.). The canvas, which includes several other recognizable pieces, including the close helmet belonging to the Henry II armor attributed to Giovan Paolo Negroli (cat. no. 47), depicts a burgonet embossed at the front with a lion head, a comb with stepped profile exactly like the close helmet belonging to the Lion Armor, and delicate gold arabesques covering the peak. The same burgonet is rendered more completely and in greater detail in the drawing shown here,<sup>3</sup> which displays a furry oval ear emerging from the lion's mane, damascened curls at its muzzle, and an elaborate plume holder, details that match the close helmet exactly. The drawing is clearly of nineteenth-century workmanship and is one of four helmet drawings by the same hand. Curiously, this distinctive headpiece is not otherwise recorded and seems to have disappeared without a trace.

The existence of the matching burgonet confirms the observations of Gamber and Norman (both cited in Norman 1974) that the Lion Armor is in fact a small garniture of Italian type whose reinforcing and exchange pieces allowed it to function for both mounted and infantry use. The possible variations include: a heavy cavalry armor, utilizing the close helmet and reinforcing breastplate with lance-rest; a light cavalry armor, created by eliminating the lower leg armor and the reinforce, and substituting a burgonet with buffe for the close helmet; a corslet for infantry use, formed by omitting the leg armor entirely and by utilizing the burgonet without the buffe; and also a corslet *all'antica* formed by removing the vambraces entirely and perhaps substituting mail sleeves, resulting in an armor like that in the portrait of one of the Martinengo family (fig. 79). A small garniture of this general type was illustrated in Filippo Orsoni's album of designs of 1554 (cat. no. 15), although that garniture included additional reinforces for tournament use (*haute pieces* for the pauldrons and reinforces for the face and left pauldron, and a vamplate for the lance), horse armor (a chanfron and saddle of plate), as well



62a, right cuisse and poleyn



as a buffe for the burgonet and a circular shield for use on foot. The Lion Armor does not follow Orsoni's model and is instead a hybrid form of garniture, a synthesis combining a parade armor with a small garniture of more practical design for use in the field and on foot; in this it recalls specifically one earlier example, the Masks Garniture by Filippo and Francesco Negroli (cat. no. 30). Despite the embossed decoration, which weakened the metal and provided catch points for a lance or sword, the presence of a reinforcing breastplate with lance-rest indicates that the armor was designed for active use, most likely in a tourney (a mock battle, or melee, in which groups of combatants fought first with lances, followed by swords), and the cuts along the left side of the helmet are proof that it saw such action.

One of the best preserved and most splendid harnesses *all'antica* of the sixteenth century, the Lion Armor is also one of the most enigmatic regarding its place and date of manufacture and the identity of both the armorer and the original owner. Provenance offers little help. The armor did not enter the Royal Armouries until 1768, when it seems to have been lent by (but never returned to) James Cooper, armorer at the Tower of London, to fill a gap in the "Line of Kings," the famous historical presentation of English sovereigns dressed in armor and placed on horseback, that was one of the main attractions of the Tower of London since the late seventeenth century. In fact, nothing is known of the armor's history prior to the seventeenth century, when it appeared in a number of English portraits. The earliest and most instructive of these is a portrait of an unknown subject (fig. 76) painted about 1620, probably by a Flemish artist in England or an English artist working in the Flemish style,<sup>4</sup> in which the armor is shown prior to its later modifications, with the breastplate retaining both waist lames but lacking the lance-rest or attachment fixtures for the reinforce. Subsequent portraits in which the armor occurs include those of Edward Montagu (1602–1671), second count of Manchester; several versions of a portrait of General George Monck (1608–1670), first duke of Albemarle, one of them signed by Michael Wright and dated 1668; two undated miniatures of Charles II (r. 1660–85) by Samuel Cooper (d. 1671); and another by the same artist of Cosimo III, grand duke of Tuscany, which was painted during his visit to England in 1669. This last work also shows the Lion Armor unaltered, suggesting that the changes were probably made at the time it was mounted for inclusion in the "Line of Kings" (Norman 1974). The presence of the armor in so many portraits by different artists suggests that it was a well-known piece and was probably centrally available for study in London, although there are no records of it in the Royal Collection or in the inventories, or "remains," of the Armouries at that time.



62a, detail of backplate

The Leeds armor inevitably invites comparison with the Lion Armor in Paris (cat. no. 61). Both are embossed with the eponymous lion heads at the front of the helmet bowl and on the pauldrons, couters, and gauntlet cuffs. The typology of the faces is generally similar, with furrowed brows, deep-set glaring eyes, chiseled or stippled surfaces to indicate hair or whiskers, furry oval ears, and flowing manes. Both armors also share certain features of construction, especially the articulation of the cuirass with multiple upward-overlapping waist lames. Of the two, the Leeds armor is undoubtedly the finer, and it exhibits a refinement of design, a much sharper and more lively quality of embossing, and a more ambitious, sophisticated, and complex damascening. By comparison, the Lion Armor in Paris looks rough and less carefully finished, although its lions are larger, more sculptural, and more aggressive in their domination of the decoration. Following the speculation of Claude Blair (1958), one could imagine that the Leeds armor was made for Henry II of France in imitation of the Paris example, which is thought to have belonged to his father, Francis I, or to his devoted friend Anne de Montmorency, constable of France. It might





62b



62a, close helmet

be argued that an identification of the Leeds armor with Henry II is further strengthened by the fact that the missing burgonet appears in a still life (fig. 66) in association with another of Henry II's helmets (cat. no. 47) and also with a circular embossed shield of contemporary French workmanship. The painting thus connects the Leeds armor with France, and possibly the royal collection. It must be emphasized, however, that there is no iconographic or documentary evidence to support the identification of the Leeds armor with Henry II, and there is nothing about the armor itself, in its construction, decoration, or even its measurements, which appear to be too small for the king,<sup>5</sup> to link it conclusively with that monarch.

The armor's date and place of manufacture are also unresolved, although the long-standing attribution to an Italian or French workshop and a date about 1550 still appear to be valid. The armor has certain distinctive features of construction and decoration that may ultimately be useful indicators as to when, where, and by whom it was made, and these features do not appear to conflict with this attribution. Regarding the date, certain features have a decidedly old-fashioned look. The articulated cuirass with its two waist lames is of a type that generally went out of style by about 1550–55 (Gamber 1958, p. 92). Gauntlets with short, rounded cuffs were used in Italy up to the early 1540s, when they were generally replaced by longer, more acutely pointed ones (Gamber 1958, p. 91); the gauntlets of the Masks Garniture of 1539 (see cat. no. 30) and a single gauntlet of about 1543, here attributed to Filippo Negroli (cat. no. 34), are among the

latest examples of this type of rounded cuff. The lames at the front of the greaves are also unusual for midcentury, recalling instead much earlier Italian armors (as, for example, on an Italian armor of about 1525–30 in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris, inv. no. G. 11; Gamber 1958, fig. 55). Among the distinctive features in the decoration are the embossed bands at the top of the breastplate and backplate, which are sharply and quite masterfully chiseled, although their compositions are dense and slightly confused (the winged creatures flanking the lion head on the breastplate lack their heads). The embossing is unlike any Italian or French work known to us, although the congested design recalls later Mannerist forms of Italian embossed ornament that developed in the 1550s and remained in vogue until the late sixteenth century. The same may be said for the stepped profile of the helmet comb, which suggests the profiles of Italian burgonets dating from the 1550s to the 1570s, the earliest datable example being the burgonet of Henry II (d. 1559) in the Musée de l'Armée (Reverseau 1982a, pp. 32–33). The wide bands of ornament also point to a date in the 1540s or 1550s, when damascened armors like those of the dauphin Henry (cat. no. 31) and Charles V (cat. no. 38) were in fashion.

There can be no doubt that the Lion Armor in Leeds is of Milanese inspiration. The combination of crisp and boldly embossed decoration and sophisticated damascened ornament is characteristic of Filippo and Francesco Negroli's work in the 1540s and a Negroli attribution has occasionally been suggested (for example, Cripps-Day 1945a; Boccia, Rossi, and Morin 1980); but while the overall quality of the Lion

Armor is comparable to their best work, there is no specific correlation between the construction and decoration of the Leeds armor and those of the signed or firmly attributed Negroli oeuvre. The Lion Armor does, however, exhibit certain parallels with the works of the Negroli family that may reflect their influence. As has already been noted, the armor was modeled on the Italian form of small garniture and in this is not unlike the Masks Garniture. The exquisite damascened decoration recalls the work of Francesco Negroli, particularly the burgonet of 1545 (cat. no. 35), which employs bands of interlaced foliate scrolls of generally similar style and complexity. On the Leeds armor, the fictive pteruges at the base of the pauldrons, their individual forms defined by gilt channels framed by damascened lines, repeat a solution used on the pauldron and skirt of Guidobaldo della Rovere's so-called Fame Armor (cat. no. 23). The snub-nosed dragons damascened on the helmet visor also recall similar grotesque creatures on the embossed breastplate signed by Giovan Paolo Negroli (cat. no. 43). Although certainly not demonstrable as an autograph work of the Negroli atelier (whose activity after 1545 is virtually unexplored), the Lion Armor must surely be acknowledged as having been made in their wake by an equally talented and inventive craftsman.

The Lion Armor at Leeds has also impressed some scholars as more French (or Franco-Flemish)<sup>6</sup> than Italian (Blair 1958). The impression of an origin north of the Alps is strengthened by comparison to the more Italianate Lion Armor in Paris. The Leeds armor's compactness of form and the almost fussy precision of the ornament do indeed have a northern sensibility, although among Italian armorers the Negroli rivaled their German counterparts with faultless craftsmanship and precision of detail. There are, however, several details that could suggest a Franco-Flemish origin or at least an Italian armorer adapting his work to French taste. The helmet in particular recalls certain French examples of the 1550s. The use of pivoting hooks to lock the upper bevor to the lower one and the lower bevor to the bowl is rarely found in Italy but does occur on certain French examples, such as the helmet belonging to the embossed armor of Henry II, about 1550–55, in the Louvre, and on the Franco-Flemish embossed armor of Maximilian II, about 1555, in Vienna (Hofjagd- und Rüstammer, inv. no. A 1400; Gamber and Beaufort 1990, pp. 204–5), as well as on several individual helmets of about 1555–60 with distinctively French etched decoration (Musée de l'Armée, inv. no. H. 42; Saint Louis Art Museum, inv. no. 79:39). The elaborate cartouche-shaped plume tube, a seemingly insignificant detail, is nonetheless very like several found on mid-sixteenth-century French helmets, such as a burgonet etched with the date 1554 (Musée de l'Armée, inv. no. H. 162), although the same type occurs



Fig. 76. *Portrait of a Man in Lion Armor*, ca. 1620. Oil on canvas, 33½ x 38¼ in. (85 x 97 cm). Muzeul Național de Artă al României, Bucharest

on an Italian anime thought to date about 1540–45 in the Metropolitan Museum (acc. no. 32.130). A strong argument against a French attribution is the fact that there is no hint in the decoration of the Lion Armor of the current and most fashionable styles favored by the court in the 1550s, that is, embossed armor employing the sophisticated Mannerist ornament of the Fontainebleau school and the elegant designs created for the king's armors by the Parisian goldsmith and engraver Étienne Delaune. Next to these prototypical French Renaissance examples the Lion Armor looks decidedly Italian.

To summarize, the Lion Armor appears to us Milanese in inspiration and not too distant from the work of the Negroli. Despite this, one can also distinguish a certain preciousness, difficult to define, that could be interpreted as French. This singular armor continues to defy easy definition, but its beauty and quality of workmanship nonetheless confirm our impression that the Negroli, while unexcelled, competed with many other talented armorers and damasceners active in Milan and elsewhere during the same years.

1. The toe caps match an embossed and damascened Milanese armor of about 1580 that was presented to Philip III of Spain by the duke of Savoy in 1606 (Real Armeria, Madrid, inv. nos. A 291–294), portions of which were stolen in the nineteenth century and subsequently appeared for sale at Christie's, London, January 23–24, 1839. The toe caps were probably acquired at this time, possibly lot 103, for the Royal Armouries and were undoubtedly associated with the armor by reason of their shared iconography.

A falling buffe for the burgonet belonging to the same armor is in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (inv. no. M. 111-1921; Hayward 1965, no. 34).

2. A seventeenth-century gorget in the Royal Armouries (inv. no. III.89), with similar damascened decoration, was formerly associated with the armor but has since been removed.
3. The drawing is one of four by the same hand that formerly belonged to A. R. Dufty, Master of the Armouries, and were sold at Christie's London, October 21, 1987, lot 131.
4. We are grateful to Walter Liedtke, Curator, Department of European Paintings, Metropolitan Museum of Art, for his advice on the authorship of this portrait. The painting, formerly in the collection of Charles Sedelmeyer (sold, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, May 25–28, 1907, lot 54, ill.), is said to have an English provenance (Long collection, Presham House).
5. The Leeds armor measures 32.6 cm across the inside of the breastplate at the armholes and 26.7 cm across the inside at the waist. These measurements generally correspond to those of the slim dauphin's armor in Paris (cat. no. 31), made about 1540, which has a chest of 32 cm, a waist of 26 cm. Henry II's armor of about 1545 by Giovan Paolo Negroli (cat. no. 47) measures 33.5 cm across the chest, 27.7 cm at the waist. The king's embossed armor in the Metropolitan Museum (acc. no. 39.121), which can be dated on the basis of its style of decoration to about 1555, measures 36 cm across the chest, 29.7 cm at the waist. If these measurements of the Leeds armor are valid indicators of the original owner's stature, keeping in mind alterations, the armor would only have fit Henry as a youth, about 1540, and would have been too small for him in the 1550s.
6. For a general introduction to the problem of identifying French and Flemish embossed armor, see Blair 1974, pp. 52–54.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Meyrick 1824, vol. 3, p. 135; Hewitt 1859, p. 7; Ffoulkes 1916, vol. 1, pp. 131–33, no. 89, pl. xvi; Laking 1920–22, vol. 3, pp. 297–301, fig. 1061; Cripps-Day 1927, pp. 167–68, fig. 17; Cripps-Day 1934, p. 13, n. 1; Cripps-Day 1945a, p. 35; Blair 1958, pls. LXVII, LXVIII; Thomas and Gamber 1958, p. 774; Dufty 1968, pls. xxvi, xxviii; Norman 1974; Boccia, Rossi, and Morin 1980, p. 122, fig. 124; Reverseau 1982a, p. 27, n. 7; Boccia and Godoy 1985–86, vol. 1, p. 92, no. 48; Boccia 1993, p. 22.

63.

## ELEMENTS OF AN ARMOR FOR A DUKE OF URBINO

Milan, ca. 1540

### a. Burgonet

Steel and gold

Wt. 4 lb. 15 oz. (2,250 g)

Ex coll.: Ralph Bernal (?); Prince Peter Soltykoff, Saint Petersburg; Napoleon III of France; acquired for the Musée d'Artillerie, 1871 (renamed Musée de l'Armée, 1883)

Musée de l'Armée, Hôtel National des Invalides, Paris (H. 164)

### b. Rondel

Steel, leather, and velvet

Diam.  $5\frac{9}{16}$  in. (14.1 cm); Wt. 6 oz. (174 g)

Museo Stibbert, Florence (2438)

### c. Rondel

Steel

Diam.  $6\frac{7}{8}$  in. (17.4 cm); Wt. 8 oz. (234 g)

Ex coll.: Robert Curzon, Baron Zouche of Haryngworth, Parham, Sussex (sold, London, 1920, lot 204); W. H. Fenton, London; R. L. Scott, Glasgow

Glasgow Museums; R. L. Scott Bequest ('39-65cg)

The burgonet's one-piece bowl is embossed in high relief along the comb with a knobby branch that issues smaller branches of oak leaves and acorns that extend down the sides; two holes pierced at the back are for a plume tube, missing, and a hole at the apex was presumably intended to accommodate a plume or crest. The front is embossed to simulate a rotating peak with narrow arms; the pivot ends of the arms are embossed with a rosette of oak leaves with an applied acorn projecting from the center. The edge of the peak is turned, roped with double engraved lines, and bordered by a narrow recessed band etched with a bead-and-reel design; it is pierced with two holes filled with quatrefoil grommets of gilt iron. A browband is riveted beneath the peak. Two narrow neck lames are attached at the back, the lower one with a roped edge and recessed band etched with foliate scrolls. The cheekpieces are hinged at the sides, each with a roped forward edge bordered by an etched band of bead-and-reel ornament; in the middle of each is an embossed rosette of oak leaves centered by a projecting acorn. A single neck lame is riveted at the base of each cheek, this plate worked to simulate two overlapping lames. The smaller lames that extended the cheeks beneath the chin are missing (those attached to the left cheek are modern). Each cheekpiece has a rosette-headed stud (left one missing) and below it a turning pin, with a similar turning pin at the base of the bowl behind the cheek, these fixtures





63a

presumably once facilitating the attachment of a buffe. The surfaces are black and rough from the hammer; the embossed, roped, and etched areas, as well as all rivet heads and turning pins, retain traces of gilding.

Matching the burgonet are two rondels of different sizes that were suspended from the front of the pauldrons to protect the armpits. Each is composed of a circular plate with a turned and roped edge, the central area embossed with symmetrically arranged branches of oak leaves, acorns, and berries. The Stibbert rondel has a narrow border etched with foliate scrolls and cornucopias like those on the burgonet and an applied, spiral-turned spike in the center; riveted around the edge at the back are modern, leather-backed red-velvet pickadils. The larger rondel in Glasgow, which is heavily corroded, shows no evidence of an etched border and lacks the spike; it does, however, retain traces of gilding, which is lacking on the Stibbert example.

The prominence of the embossed oak leaves and acorns on the burgonet and rondels indicates that they formed part of an armor probably made for one of the della Rovere dukes of Urbino, either Francesco Maria I (d. 1538) or his son

Guidobaldo II, whose harnesses were frequently decorated with the family emblem of the oak (*rovere* in Italian). The three pieces undoubtedly belonged to a cavalry armor of German type (*alla tedesca*) similar to that worn by Francesco Maria della Rovere in his famous portrait by Titian, painted in 1536–38 (fig. 78), but unfortunately it cannot be identified with certainty among the inventories of the della Rovere armory. The inventory of 1630, for example, includes many armors and armor parts described as decorated with oak leaves and acorns, but usually without distinguishing whether these motifs were etched, damascened, or embossed. One possible candidate is “a lance armor [i.e., for cavalry use] with the Madonna on the breastplate, gilt, and worked with gilt oak leaves and acorns, with its helmet, which covers down to the knees and which served the Most Serene Lord Duke Francesco Maria I at Mirandola.”<sup>1</sup> Another item describes “a pair of vambraces *all’antica*, burnished black and decorated with gilt oak leaves and acorns, with the gauntlets attached [perhaps like the vambraces for the Vienna cuirass and Guidobaldo della Rovere’s armor, cat. nos. 19, 23], with a rondel attached to the pauldrons.”<sup>2</sup>



63b



63c

Several individual helmets decorated with oak leaves are also mentioned: “a simple morion with oak leaves on the cheekpieces, lined with black silk,”<sup>3</sup> and, closer to the example under discussion, “a morion with chiseled crest and oak leaves behind, with embossed cheekpieces lined with black silk.”<sup>4</sup> In subsequent inventories made in Florence following the transfer of the armor from Urbino in 1631, four rondels—presumably two matched pairs—are listed: “four rondels of iron plate chiseled in low relief with branches and acorns, partly gilt.”<sup>5</sup> The Stibbert and Glasgow examples may represent one of each pair.

The apparent modesty of the burgonet—it has previously failed to attract any scholarly attention—belies the considerable sophistication of its design and high quality of workmanship. The embossing of the comb as an oak branch is masterful, the central branch worked in a two-thirds-round section and rising 10 to 11 millimeters above the bowl. In this respect it recalls a later example utilizing a similar motif (cat. no. 41). The rendering of the fixed peak as one that could be rotated is a clever illusion—even in hand, one is tempted to move it—and brings to mind a close helmet of about 1530 attributed to Kolman Helmschmid of Augsburg in which the bowl is embossed to simulate a brow reinforce (Wallace Collection, London, inv. no. A 30). In many ways the Paris burgonet approaches the inventiveness one associates with the Negroli, although the embossing lacks the complexity of form and crisp execution typical of Filippo or even Giovan Paolo.



Fig. 77. Buffe. The State Hermitage, Saint Petersburg (3.O. 8521)

The burgonet was intended to be worn with a buffe, which was secured by the studs and turning pins on the cheeks and the sides of the bowl. A buffe in the State Hermitage, Saint Petersburg (fig. 77), comes very close in its etched decoration and roped edges to this helmet and may belong to it. The buffe has a single face plate with turned and roped upper edge, with two horizontal vision apertures, boxed breaths in the mouth region, and, on the right side, ventilation holes arranged within a medallion of etched foliage; the back edge ends in a scroll and the plate is held up by a shaped push-button spring pin. The rear portions of the chin plate seem to have been reshaped and the turning pins are modern. A bead-and-reel design is etched around the edge of the lower collar lame and around the breaths on the face plate, and foliate scrolls extend beneath the roped upper edge of the face plate. The buffe has been over-cleaned, its surfaces now smooth and highly polished, and it lacks any traces of gilding.

The buffe's collar lames, with their roped lower edges and beveled upper edges, recall those on the burgonet, as do the etched bead-and-reel motif and the foliate scrolls with distinctive rounded leaves with sketchy lines within the leaves. Unfortunately the modification of the rear edges of the chin plate make it impossible to conclude if the two pieces originally fitted together. The buffe nevertheless serves as an important link between the Paris burgonet and the works of Filippo Negroli. It compares closely with the buffe of the Masks Garniture of 1539 (cat. no. 30), the face plates having similar boxed profiles and scrolled lower edges etched with a pattern of oval notches. The same scrolls are also found on the buffe of 1538 (cat. no. 29), which has very similar etched foliate decoration. All three examples have the same type of shaped push-button release. Given these comparisons, the Paris burgonet and matching rondels probably originated in Milan about 1540 and within a close orbit to the Negroli.

1. "Un Armatura da lancia con la Maddonna in petto indorata, e lavorata a foglie di quercie et ghiande indorate con il suo Elmo, quale arma sino al ginocchio, se ne servi il Ser<sup>mo</sup> Sig<sup>c</sup> Duca Francesco Maria P.<sup>o</sup> sotto la Mirandola." ASF, Urbino, Classe III, Filza XV, fol. 290v.
2. "Un para di Bracciali all'antica imbruniti neri con foglie di cerqua, et ghiande dorate con manopole attaccate con un scudo per braccio piccholi attaccati alli spallacci." ASF, Urbino, Classe III, Filza XV, fol. 334v.



Fig. 78. Titian, *Francesco Maria I della Rovere*, 1536–38. Oil on canvas, 44<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 39<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (114 x 100.5 cm). Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence

3. "Un Morione Semplice con foglie di Cerqua all'orecchie foderato di raso nero." ASF, Urbino, Classe III, Filza XV, fol. 344r.
4. "Un Morione con cresta intagliata et foglie di Cerqua dietro con orecchioni sbugiati foderato di raso nero." ASF, Urbino, Classe III, Filza XV, fol. 344v.
5. "Quattro rotellini di piastre di ferro cesellati di basso rilievo a tronchi e ghiande dorati in parte"; ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 633, inventory of 1650 (N.S. 1651), fol. 77v. The same rondels are described more fully in the inventory of 1715 as "four rondels, or small iron shields for attachment to the pauldrons of an armor, completely chiseled with branches of oak with acorns, with touches of gold, of which two have projections in the center, lined with red satin" (Quattro rotelline, o scudetti di ferro per a dattare à spallacci d'Armature tutti cesellati a rami di rovere con Jande tocchi d'oro, che due con risalti in mezzo foderati di raso rosso); ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 1231<sup>bis</sup>, fol. 3v.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Bernal sale 1855, lot 2531; Penguilly l'Haridon 1865, p. 22, no. 145; Penguilly l'Haridon 1867, p. 58, no. 160; Robert 1889–93, vol. 2, p. 196; Lensi 1917–18, vol. 1, p. 407; Zouche sale 1920, lot 204; Joubert 1924, vol. 1, sec. 3, n.p., ill.; Scalini 1987, p. 14, fig. 9.





## CORSLET ALL'ANTICA, PROBABLY MADE FOR GIROLAMO MARTINENGO

Brescia, ca. 1540

Steel, gold, and leather

Wt. 21 lb. 4 oz. (9,660 g)

Ex coll.: Martinengo della Fabbrica family, Brescia (until 1839)

Armeria Reale, Turin (C.11)

The corslet is composed of a burgonet, a cuirass with tassets, and symmetrical pauldrons of *all'antica* type with pendent straps, or pteruges. The burgonet consists of a one-piece bowl with tall comb and a pointed peak and neck flange, hinged cheekpieces of three lames each, and a small cartouche-shaped plume tube at the base of the comb at the back. The breastplate is only slightly convex in profile and has a shallow median ridge; a single gusset lame articulates each armhole, and two skirt lames support tassets of five lames each that wrap around the thighs. The breast, skirt, and tassets are riveted together as a solid unit. The backplate carries a narrow culet lame. The cuirass is closed at the shoulders by leather straps and gilt buckles (modern), at the sides by a large hinge on the left and by a hole snapping over a pin on the right, and by a leather waist belt. Each caplike pauldron is modeled from a single plate, shaped to a point in the center, with a pronounced medial ridge, the upper edge embossed with a transverse band imitating the metal shoulder straps on a Roman cuirass. Riveted beneath each pauldron are two overlapping rows of pteruges, each of eight (formerly ten) rectangular plates.

The armor is distinguished by an unusual elegance of line, from the sweeping curves of the burgonet and the pauldrons to the long, narrow, and compact form of the cuirass. At the same time, it is covered with a rich and imaginative etched and gilt ornament wholly sympathetic to the forms. The decoration is arranged as a series of parallel vertical bands consisting of narrow recessed bands alternating with the wider raised areas of the armor's surface; recessed bands also border the outer edges of the main plates. The narrowest bands are etched in reserve with delicate foliate scrolls, while the wider bands down the center of the breastplate, backplate, and pauldrons are etched with symmetrical candelabra-like ornament consisting of foliage, vases, masks, and grotesques against a recessed and dotted ground. At the top of the breastplate, where the center band widens and continues around the neck, there is a large grotesque figure emerging from foliage that issues from a vase; in the same area on the backplate are two putti holding the ends of the foliate scrolls that spread over the rest of the band. Foliate

scrolls, occasionally sheltering leafy animals, fill the bands along the helmet's edges and the sides of the comb; the graceful recessed scrolls on the cheekpieces and the raised scroll that marks the end of the line of the peak where it merges with the bowl are also felicitous design features. The armor's surfaces between the recessed bands are etched and gilt with an overall design simulating mail, which is rendered as a series of parallel rows of interlaced wavy lines, the diagonals with a center line, a distinctive pattern exactly like that found on the muscled cuirass in the Bargello (cat. no. 55) and on a breastplate in the Real Armeria in Madrid (inv. no. M ro), although there is no apparent connection among these three examples. Narrow, slightly raised ribs separate the raised and sunken bands. The complex pattern of etched decoration is contained by the turned, roped, and gilt edges of the plates, and the comb of the helmet is worked as a series of leafy calyxes boldly embossed in high relief.

Like many armors in Turin, this one formerly belonged to the noble Martinengo della Fabbrica family of Brescia, whose ancestral armory was purchased in 1839 by King Carlo Emanuele of Savoy for the Armeria Reale. Now incomplete, the harness originally possessed a gorget, as attested by the portrait of a member of the Martinengo family (fig. 79). The portrait shows the armor worn only with mail sleeves, suggesting that it may never have possessed vambraces and gauntlets; the helmet at the foot of the sitter matches the armor, whereas the shield behind it does not. This armor is also depicted in the marble statue erected in 1764 by Count Girolamo Silvio Martinengo in honor of his ancestor the condottiere Antonio I (d. 1473). The familial association of the armor with Antonio I was contested by Angelucci (1890), who correctly identified the harness to be of sixteenth-century date and therefore more likely to have belonged to Antonio III (b. 1550). Gamber (1958) redated the armor to about 1540, noting the straight lines of the breast profile and hips, the shallow curve of the waistline, and the organization of the ornament in narrow stripes, features that seem to have come into vogue in those years. In light of this revised dating, Hayward (1966) identified the owner as probably Antonio III's father, Girolamo, who, like so many





64, burgonet

members of his family, was a condottiere in Venetian service. This identification accords well with the armor's date and with the portrait, which shows a soldier against a backdrop of galleys. Girolamo entered Venetian service in 1539 to fight Turks in the east, and his long military career ended with the Turkish capture of the fortress at Famagusta, on

the east coast of Cyprus, whose Venetian defenders were executed on April 7, 1571.

This armor has traditionally been considered a Brescian work on account of its Martinengo provenance. Well established by the fifteenth century as an armor-making center second only in importance to Milan, Brescia in the sixteenth century specialized in the production of plain but well-made munition armors, which it supplied in vast quantities throughout Europe. Much of the output was intended for use by Venetian troops, particularly after Brescia fell under the Serenissima's suzerainty in 1516. The production of Brescian arms was closely regulated by Venice, and permission to export arms and armor outside its territory was granted only by the Council of Ten. It has been said that officers in Venetian service were required to purchase their arms from Brescia, and if this was the case, it reinforces the Brescian attribution for the Martinengo armor. In addition to the simple but functional harnesses usually associated with Brescian production, harnesses of higher quality, perhaps some designed exclusively for parade use, were probably made there from time to time, but few seem to have survived, or at least fail to be distinguished from Milanese work. It is very likely that Girolamo Martinengo would have patronized the best local armorers, but other sources for the Turin armor, especially Milan, cannot be excluded a priori, particularly in the instance of a wealthy and powerful aristocrat with far-reaching diplomatic connections. If, however, the Turin armor is a Brescian work, as is probable, it constitutes the earliest identifiable example of a Brescian parade



64, detail of backplate



armor and demonstrates the capabilities of the local armorer to rival the Milanese.

An analogous armor, also of probable Brescian origin, is the corslet made for the future doge Sebastiano Venier (1496–1578) in Vienna (Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer, inv. no. A 984). The Venier harness, which is of conventional (rather than *all'antica*) type, is distinguished by a series of narrow recessed bands etched and gilt with foliate scrolls alternating with candelabra ornament consisting of leaves, vases, and masks against a dotted ground, with the surfaces between the bands polished bright. Similar motifs are present on the Turin armor, placed on the borders and the axial bands on the breastplate and backplate, and on a cuirass in the Museo delle Armi “Luigi Marzoli” in Brescia (inv. no. C38), about 1540–50. These armors share the same system of decoration based on alternating recessed etched bands and raised plain bands, which seems to be more characteristic of Brescian armor than Milanese.

The Martinengo armor appears to be one of the earliest Italian harnesses to have etched ornament covering the entire surface rather than limited to vertical bands and borders around the main plates, as was usual in the sixteenth century. In the second half of the century, on the other hand, the better examples of what are thought to be Brescian work often employ overall decoration; indeed, this feature seems to be a Brescian hallmark, although not exclusively so. Among these putative Brescian armors is one for man and horse, about 1560–70, said to have belonged to the Venetian condottiere Pio Enea I Obizzi of Padua, now in Konopiste Castle, near Prague (inv. no. 1040), and parts of a corslet, about 1570–80, in the Museo delle Armi “Luigi Marzoli” in Brescia (inv. nos. B45, B946, P79). The armor for man and horse is covered with tiny etched and gilt scrolls enclosing grotesque figures, with unusually large, high-relief borders along the main plates. The corslet, which is engraved (rather than etched) and formerly gilt with large foliate scrolls on a pebbled background, is particularly relevant, as it has pauldrons *all'antica* similar to those on the Turin armor. Dating from the end of the century, about 1590, is the corslet of Giovanni Battista del Monte, captain general of Venetian land forces, in the Metropolitan Museum (acc. no. 14.25.710), which is etched and gilt overall with a reticulated pattern enclosing flowers; like the Obizzi armor, it has boldly raised borders that are never found on Milanese armors of this date. Now fragmentary, the complete del Monte armor is depicted in a portrait in the Museo Stibbert in Florence (Boccia, Rossi, and Morin 1980, figs. 190, 191, for the armor and the portrait), where one sees vambraces of conventional construction but with pauldrons *all'antica* with fictive pteruges similar to those on the above-mentioned corslet in



Fig. 79. *Portrait of Girolamo (?) Martinengo*, Italian, 3rd quarter of the 16th century. Oil on canvas. Private collection

Brescia. The Obizzi and del Monte armors are associated with owners in Venetian service and are therefore likely to be of Brescian origin; the corslet still in Brescia, of lesser quality than the other two, exhibits a loose, sketchy style of ornament frequently found on the more commonplace Brescian munition armors. Seen in the context of these later armors, the Martinengo harness is likely to be one of the earliest etched armors of probable Brescian manufacture.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Seyssel d'Aix 1840, p. 98, no. 177; Angelucci 1890, p. 119; Quaregna 1898, vol. 1, pl. 49; Gelli and Moretti 1903, p. 83, pl. vii; Laking 1920–22, vol. 3, pp. 288–89, fig. 1055; Gamber 1958, p. 91; Hayward 1966, pp. 65–66; Boccia and Coelho 1967, pp. 322–23, 331–32, figs. 259, 260; Mazzini et al. 1982, p. 325, no. 80; Palmanova 1993, pp. 300–305, no. 36.

65.

## BURGONET

Milan, ca. 1540

Steel, gold, and textile

Wt. 3 lb. 14 oz. (1,755 g)

Ex coll.: Czar Nicholas I of Russia, Tsarskoye Selo, by 1840

The State Hermitage, Saint Petersburg (3.O. 6160)

The bowl is forged in one piece with turned and roped edges at the peak and nape; the hinged cheekpieces are missing but are recorded in a contemporary drawing (cat. no. 66). The bowl is embossed at the front with a grotesque human face that has bushy eyebrows, glaring eyes with pronounced lines extending from the outer corners, a squat, flaring Negroid nose, a long twisted mustache with teeth (one bent out), and a protruding tongue. Behind the head on either side is a curled ram's horn with tufts of curly hair at the back. The creature's pointed ears, embossed at the bottom edges, also served as the point of attachment for the lost cheekpieces. Surmounting the bowl and forming its comb is a female greyhoundlike dog wearing a collar, the dog's tail terminating in flat leaves that spread down the back of the helmet and across the nape, the leaves issuing grape clusters

that extend over the neck flange. The surface is blackened (formerly blued?; see cat. no. 66), whereas the roped edges and most of the embossed decoration are gilt. A dolphin-shaped plume tube of gilt steel is riveted at the base of the comb. Gilt-steel rivets encircle the bowl and secure traces of the original canvas lining strap inside.

This exuberantly worked helmet has a bold and colorful presence that belies the somewhat quick and occasionally rough quality of its embossing. The unfocused eyes and uneven teeth are unexpected and bizarre features of the design; the hair at the back is modeled with the edge of a chisel, the tool marks still distinct and sharp edged. Created less as a work of art than as a piece of Renaissance theater, the burgonet is nevertheless an imaginative work whose imagery could easily be distinguished from a distance thanks to the







65

clarity of its embossing and dramatic contrasts of color.

Although distant in workmanship from the more sophisticated helmets by Filippo Negroli, this example nonetheless seems to owe a debt to him in its design. The piling up of motifs echoes that found on Filippo's helmet made for Guidobaldo II della Rovere (cat. no. 23a): the mask at the front, with its horns and hair, and the comb conceived as an animal are elements seemingly inspired directly by that helmet or another of its type. The grotesque face baring its teeth and sticking out its tongue also recalls the mask on the peak belonging to Filippo's burgonet with buffe of 1538 (cat. no. 29) and those on the helmet and couters of the Masks Garniture of 1539 (cat. no. 30). Following upon these

examples, the burgonet should probably be dated about 1540.

In the nineteenth century this burgonet was associated with the scale cuirass (cat. no. 59a) in the Russian imperial collection, the two pieces having been displayed together in the Arsenal at Tsarskoye Selo (Gille 1860). Although a common provenance for the two pieces cannot be demonstrated, it is possible that they were acquired together. As the cuirass comes from the Medici armory, the burgonet too may have a Florentine provenance, although it cannot be identified with certainty in the Medici inventories.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Gille and Rockstuhl 1835–53, pls. 29, 30; Gille 1860, p. 39; Lenz 1908, p. 170, no. I.334, pl. 17; Avtonomova 1924, p. 36.





66.

### DRAWING OF A PARADE HELMET

*Italian, probably Venice, 2nd half of the 16th century*

*Colored chalk on blue paper*

*7½ x 8¼ in. (19 x 21 cm)*

*Ex coll.: J. David Wille*

*The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Purchase, Bernice and Jerome Zwanger Gift, 1997 (1997.6)*

This drawing unmistakably illustrates the preceding bur-gonet in the Hermitage (cat. no. 65). It records the appearance of the right cheekpiece (presumably both were present), which was already missing when the helmet was acquired by Czar Nicholas I during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The cheekpiece consists of a large plate embossed with a rosettelike flower, the center gilt, with four small lames below it tapering down to the chin strap. The metal surfaces rendered in the drawing may indicate that the helmet was originally blued rather than blackened.

The style of draftsmanship and the use of colored chalk on blue paper suggest that this is a Venetian work dating to the second half of the sixteenth century,<sup>1</sup> although the identity of the artist remains unknown. The helmet is drawn as if placed on a table, suggesting that the drawing served as a study for a still life or, more likely, a portrait. According to a

format used both north and south of the Alps, male subjects portrayed in armor often stood near a table on which were placed their helmet and gauntlets, the parts of armor not usually worn by sitters in formal portraits. Artists were frequently required to make accurate and detailed studies of the costume and armor worn by their subjects, although few of the drawings survive. In a well-known example, Titian had the armor of Francesco Maria I della Rovere brought to his studio in Venice so that he could render it exactly in his portrait of that prince, completed by 1538, which now hangs in the Uffizi (fig. 78).<sup>2</sup> In that example, the duke's helmet, shown in profile, sits on a ledge behind its owner.

1. I am grateful to George Goldner, Dru Heinz Chairman of the Department of Drawings and Prints, Metropolitan Museum of Art, for this attribution.

2. Gronau 1936, p. 92, no. xxx.

67.

## VISORED BURGONET

Master AP

Milan, ca. 1550–60

Steel, gold, silver, and leather

Wt. 4 lb. 14 oz. (2,214 g)

Ex coll.: Gatterburg-Morosini family, Venice, before 1894; estate of Countess Lauredana Gatterburg-Morosini (sold, May 15–22, 1894); Goldschmidt firm, Paris; Sigismond Bardac, Paris, 1894 (until 1913); Arnold Seligmann, Paris, 1913; Peter A. B. Widener, by 1914; Joseph E. Widener, by inheritance

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Widener Collection (1942.9.356)

The one-piece bowl has a sharp median ridge from front to back that serves in place of a comb; its front edge is cut in an inverted V shape, with a small hole pierced in the metal just above the point, and its back is drawn out to a pointed tail with a raised straplike border, turned under at the edge. A pair of rivet holes just above the nape in the cen-

ter presumably served to attach a plume tube (lost); a rough hole in the tail may have facilitated the later display of the helmet on a wall (Dean 1923a, p. 227). The bowl is embossed on both sides with symmetrical designs of foliate scrolls, whose ends are joined at the front by a bracket. The branches extend back across each side of the skull in a scroll that



67, with visor lowered





67, with visor raised

terminates with a winged dragon. The bracket at the front also secures a pair of leafy branches that extend to either side across the edge. A symmetrical arrangement of foliage, joined by strapwork, embellishes the back of the bowl and the tail. The embossed motifs are in low, rounded relief, their surfaces finely hatched and damascened in gold with closely set parallel lines, and they are against a matte stippled background. The steel is now blackened overall, but traces of silvering are evident beneath the color on the stippled ground. The bracket at the front is gold-damascened with the initials A and P, the letters separated by foliate scrolls; similar scrolls also cover the raised border around the tail. Small oval cheekpieces are hinged to the outside of the bowl at either side, each hinge fixed to the bowl by a single rivet that allows the cheekpiece to rotate. The cheekpieces have scalloped edges, and their centers are embossed with a grotesque mask, its eyes and mouth pierced to facilitate hearing; the surfaces, including the hinges, are damascened to match the bowl. The left cheekpiece has an old repair and retains traces of the original leather chin strap.

The one-piece visor pivots within the bowl on the same rivets that secure the hinges of the cheekpieces. The visor's acutely pointed lower half has a raised border matching that at the tail of the burgonet and is embossed and gold-damascened with a leafy-edged grotesque mask, the eyes

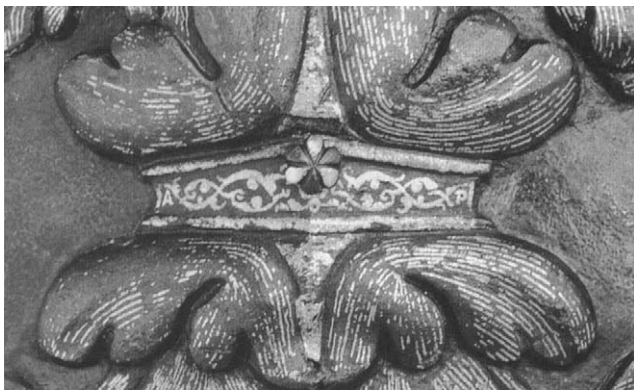






67, inside

pierced with sights; the upper half is smooth but is etched with a symmetrical spray of leaves. The two sections of the visor are separated by an etched strapwork border rising in the center to a stylized fleur-de-lis, at the base of which is a small hole that aligns with the hole at the front of the bowl when the visor is raised. The sunken areas of the etching are stippled and retain traces of silvering beneath the surface blackening. Applied inside the bowl across the front edge and held out from the interior surface by spacers is a narrow steel band pierced with holes for the attachment of a lining,



67, detail at front of bowl showing damascened initials

now missing; a similar pierced band is riveted at the nape, and both are joined by a transverse bar arching up under the bowl. These bands served to suspend the lining away from the bowl, allowing the visor to be raised and lowered unimpeded between them. The lining was secured at the tail by rivets around the edges. A spring fastened inside the bowl at the front served to hold the visor in a raised position.

Traditionally known by the name of its only recorded provenance, the "Morosini helmet" is one of the most unusual and puzzling examples of Renaissance parade armor. Its shape was called "Athenian" by Bapst and likened to the Corinthian-style helmet, with its characteristic pointed front edge and almond-shaped openings for the eyes, that was traditionally seen in representations of the goddess Athena. In conception and workmanship it is essentially a mid-sixteenth-century Italian creation contemporary with the embossed and damascened works of Filippo and Giovan Paolo Negroli. Its construction, however, is unprecedented. The absence of a defined comb is very unusual on a helmet of this period, as is the flat, ribbonlike border on the tail and the visor. We know of no other helmet having a visor that pivots into, rather than over, the front portion of the bowl, but the solution presented here, while apparently unique, functions remarkably well. The visor rotates smoothly up into the bowl, passing between it and the lining, and was held up by means of an internal spring as well as some sort of transverse pin at the front that passed through the aligned holes in the two overlapping plates. The attachment of the cheekpieces to the exterior of the bowl, rather than to the interior, is also unusual but was obviously necessitated by the visor's internal movement. When the visor is raised, the borders of the tail, cheekpieces, and visor form a continuous line; when lowered, the continuity is maintained by the etched band that divides the two sections of the visor.

The decoration of the Morosini helmet defies easy definition. The raised foliate scrollwork generally recalls the work of Giovan Paolo Negroli of the 1540s, with Laking (1920–22) specifically comparing the dragons emerging from the tendrils to similar motifs on Giovan Paolo's signed breastplate in the Metropolitan Museum (cat. no. 43). Nevertheless, while the general vocabulary of classical ornament is the same on both pieces, the styles of workmanship are unrelated. Unlike Giovan Paolo's vigorously modeled relief, the embossing of the Morosini helmet is shallow and softly rounded. The flatness of the ornament is emphasized by the lack of turned leaves to suggest depth and volume. The delicacy of the damascening, which consists of closely set parallel striations, creates a play of light, giving value to the raised relief. Microscopic examination of the helmet has revealed that some, if not all, of the recessed ground on the

bowl and on the upper part of the visor, now blackened, retains traces of silvering. Although the extent of the silvering has not yet been determined, its presence indicates that this helmet was originally much richer in appearance.

The Morosini helmet has received little attention by arms and armor specialists, in part, no doubt, because it is not found among the better-known holdings of the armories in Europe and North America, and also because its unusual form, construction, and embellishment render it one of the most difficult works to categorize and attribute. Indeed, even its authenticity has been questioned.<sup>1</sup> Inspired by its provenance, Germain Bapst, who may have been writing for its subsequent owner the banker Sigismond Bardac,<sup>2</sup> identified the helmet's original owner as Vincenzo Morosini (1511–1578), a prominent commander in the service of the Serenissima, and ascribed its design to the Venetian sculptor and architect Alessandro Vittoria and the damascening to a little-documented master of that technique, Paolo Rizzo. Laking rejected Bapst's imaginative attributions, rightly stressing that there was no known armor-making tradition in Venice;<sup>3</sup> he went on to note the similarities in design to the breastplate of Giovan Paolo Negroli but nevertheless attributed the helmet, without offering supporting evidence or argument, to a Roman workshop. Thomas and Gamber (1958), who did not specifically discuss the Morosini helmet in their comprehensive survey of Milanese armor, alluded to its similarity to the work of Giovan Paolo Negroli.

The key to identifying the helmet's place of manufacture and the name of the armorer rests in the interpretation of the damascened initials AP found at the front of the bowl. Curiously, these small but legible letters have been completely overlooked.<sup>4</sup> The rarity of a signature on armor in the sixteenth century has already been stressed. There are, however, two other initialed works dating from the third quarter of the sixteenth century that may have bearing on the interpretation of the initials. Both are circular shields embossed and damascened in gold and silver with large figural compositions based on engravings or drawings of antique subject matter: one, decorated with a scene from the story of the vestal Tusciana, is signed MP (State Hermitage, Saint Petersburg, inv. no. 3.O. 6145), while the other, embellished with the Triumph of Bacchus, is signed <sup>B</sup>F<sup>P</sup> and dated 1563 (Museo delle Armi "Luigi Marzoli," Brescia, inv. no. 373).<sup>5</sup> Presuming that the letter F on this last example stands for *fecit*, all three pieces would appear to be the work of armorers or damasceners whose surname begins with P. Among the names of armorers known to us today who were active in the middle years of the sixteenth century, the most likely candidates for the authorship of these embossed works should be sought among the members of the Piatti family of Milan.

Like the Negroli, the Piatti were already established in their craft by the late fifteenth century. One Francesco Piatti (Franciscus Platus in Latin) is recorded as an armorer in 1492 (Gelli and Moretti 1903, pp. 8–10; Motta 1914, p. 222); he was deceased by 1531, when his sons Biagio, Vincenzo, and Tommaso are listed among the Milanese armorers whose claims against the French Crown for armors furnished Francis I in 1525 were settled (Motta 1914, pp. 226–27, no. 168). Battista Piatti, son of Ambrogio, is also listed in this document. Vincenzo was still an active armorer in 1553, when he furnished 192 corslets with their helmets (Beltrami 1919, pp. 15–16, 21). The list of Milan's leading armorers of about 1560–65 ("Milan and the Arms Industry in the Sixteenth Century," note 9) includes the names of three members of the family: Battista, Biagio (recorded as deceased), and Apollonio. Another Piatti, Bartolomeo, is mentioned in 1570 (Butters 1996, vol. 1, p. 260, n. 179) and is probably the same master praised by Morigi in his history of Milan (1595) as one of the city's leading damasceners. The best-documented member of the family is Matteo, son of Giovan Battista (Bartolomeo's brother), who worked in Milan at the sign of the "Coraza Busada." Recently discovered correspondence in the Archivio di Stato, Florence, has revealed that Matteo was contracted to work for Cosimo I de' Medici, grand duke of Tuscany, in 1568, and he set up a workshop in Florence early the next year to produce plain fighting armors for the court, the grand ducal bodyguard, and the knights of the Order of Saint Stephen, as well as parade harnesses for the Medici family (Scalini 1992, pp. 11–13; Florence 1997, pp. 97–99; Butters 1996, vol. 1, pp. 255, 260–61, vol. 2, pp. 475–90). Matteo brought with him all the specialists needed for such work, including an engraver, a damascener, and a gilder.<sup>6</sup> Matteo's Florentine works apparently were not signed, and none can be identified with absolute certainty, although it may be possible to attribute to him the embossed and blackened garniture in the Bargello (inv. nos. M. 747, M. 775–776), which can be dated to about 1574 as it includes in the decoration the likeness of Grand Duke Francesco I de' Medici, who succeeded Cosimo I that year.<sup>7</sup> Matteo Piatti apparently returned to Milan that same year, but in 1592 his nephew Jacopo Filippo Piatti, son of Bartolomeo, was enticed to set up shop in Florence (Butters 1996, vol. 1, pp. 257, 260, vol. 2, pp. 482–87). Two other members of the family, Giuseppe and Ludovico, were among the Milanese armorers invited by Philip III of Spain to establish a new armor-making center at Eugui, near Pamplona, in 1595 (Godoy 1987, p. 42). The documents make clear that the Piatti were especially well respected in the second half of the sixteenth century and ran workshops capable of producing deluxe parade armors with embossed and damascened decoration. It is very possible

that the Morosini helmet and the two shields were made by members of the Piatti family, signing with their initials AP, MP, or BP, in which case a Milanese attribution, perhaps about 1550–60, seems reasonable. Confirmation of these attributions nevertheless must await further research on the armorers of Milan.

1. According to notes in the curatorial files of the National Gallery of Art, kindly brought to our attention by Dr. Alison Luchs.
2. A letter of August 10, 1894, from Constantine Ressman in Paris to William H. Riggs, the American collector of arms and armor living in the same city, mentions Bardac as having already acquired the Morosini helmet (original letter in the files of the Department of Arms and Armor, Metropolitan Museum of Art). Bardac presumably acquired it from the Goldschmidt firm (Dean 1914, p. 253).
3. Venice traditionally acquired her armor in Brescia, the armor-making center within her territory that specialized in the manufacture of munition-type armors. A Brescian production of embossed and damascened parade armors, otherwise known as a Milanese specialty, has not yet been established. Bapst's identification of Vincenzo Morosini is purely speculative, as the early provenance of the helmet has not been traced, and the helmet may, in fact, have been acquired by the family by marriage or purchase at a much later date.

4. The initials were, however, noted by S. Pyhrr during an examination of the helmet on August 30, 1978 (note in the National Gallery of Art curatorial files).
5. The Hermitage shield has been studied by Grosz (1925, pp. 145–48), the shield in Brescia by Thomas and Gamber (1958, p. 784) and by Rossi and Carpegna (in Brescia 1969), p. 59.
6. "Un gravador per gravar l'armi; un indorador d'oro di foglia; un indorador d'oro machinato," quoting the contract agreement of August 18, 1568 (Butters 1996, vol. 2, pp. 479–80). In Piatti's letter of June 15, 1568, he referred to the engraver as one who could design arms as needed ("per designare le arme che farano de bisogno"), not merely one who would engrave (or, more accurately, etch) the decoration. The gilder using gold leaf ("oro di foglia") was presumably a damascener, while the specialist using powdered gold ("oro machinato") was employed in the more traditional mercury (or fire-) gilding technique.
7. For this armor, see especially the recent discussion by Scalini, in Florence 1997, pp. 97–98, with earlier bibliography.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Morosini sale 1894, p. 9, lot 1; Bapst n.d.; Leman 1913, n.p., no. 48; Dean 1914, pp. 250–54; Laking 1920–22, vol. 4, pp. 154–57, figs. 1236a–c; Dean 1923a, p. 227, n. 1; Dean 1923b; Dean 1924b, p. 163; New York 1931, p. 27, no. 83; Thomas and Gamber 1958, p. 834.

68.

## MEDUSA SHIELD

Milan, ca. 1570–80

Steel, gold, silver, and brass

Diam. 22¼ in. (56.5 cm); Wt. 8 lb. 2 oz. (3,700 g)

Ex coll.: Musée d'Artillerie (renamed Musée de l'Armée, 1883)

Musée de l'Armée, Hôtel National des Invalides, Paris (I. 75)

The shield is made in two pieces, a circular plate with a slightly raised central disk, superimposed over which is a second plate, or umbo, measuring about 9½ inches (24 cm) in diameter. The umbo is attached with four brass rivets with plain heads (apparently modern replacements) that alternate with four purely decorative ones of rosette shape edged with a roped border. The umbo, embossed in high relief and chiseled, depicts a Medusa head with a polished face; the pupils, hair, wings, and snakes are gilt to stand out from the darkened background that is matted with small punched circles. Set high on Medusa's forehead at the hairline is a jewel with a frame set with silver-encrusted dots, with a pendent strand of silver dots beneath and two additional dots poised at the ends of the curls hanging at the temples. The hair, radiating around the face in flamelike waves, is decorated

with small curved strokes; the chiseled wings have engraved feathers; and the scales of the snakes' skins are centered with a gold dot. The perimeter of the umbo is engraved with three narrow concentric bands decorated with punched ornament, and the scalloped edge is engraved with leaves.

Encircling the umbo on the body of the shield are two wide concentric bands of ornament. The inner one forms a halo of alternating pointed and flamelike rays, in which the deeply etched outlines are filled in with small punched circles. The outlines of the straight rays are blackened, and those of the undulating rays, gilt; the gilt rays are matted with curved punch marks. The outer band, decorated with figural compositions, is gilt and framed on the outside with smooth fillets and on the inside with a band of festoons between fillets that are either smooth or sprinkled with dots.





68

The festoons, embellished with small punched circles, stand out in relief from a matte background like that on the umbo. The historiated band, measuring  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches (5.8 cm) wide, is divided into four equal sections by oval medallions with punched frames that enclose battle scenes in the antique style: a horseman against a foot soldier armed with a lance (viewer's upper right), a mounted horseman against a centaur with a club (upper left), two horsemen (lower left), and a horseman against a foot soldier armed with a club (lower right). Between these medallions are a series of composite and disjointed scenes: a beardless Hercules with a

club, Bellona seated before a trophy of arms flanked by four vase bearers, Cupid, and a crowned centaur abducting a queen (the rape of Hippodamia?); a winged Victory bearing a crown, a battle of foot soldiers, and a hunt on horseback in which one hunter is trying to catch an animal with enormous pincers; battles on foot to either side of a winged Victory seated on a trophy of arms flanked by captives; the triumph of Bacchus. Each of these classically inspired scenes contains animals and grotesques that fill the spaces between the figures, all these elements having deeply etched outlines that separate them from the background matted with small





68, detail

punched circles. The human figures are stippled, whereas the skins of the animals have incised or punched lines, as well as the small circles. The eyes of the animal and human figures, the buttons on the clothing, the jewelry, and the decorations on the shields are encrusted with small silver dots. The edge of the shield is turned and roped and is bordered by steel lining rivets with smooth brass heads. Eight holes grouped two by two in the band around the umbo mark the original placement of internal straps, or braces, now missing, of which one was used for the forearm and the other as a handgrip.

The base of the shield and the umbo are inexplicably misaligned. Curiously, the medallions on the border are placed neither in a perpendicular cross nor in an axial X with regard to the Medusa head, as was customary (compare, for example, the symmetry evident on the other shields in this exhibition, cat. nos. 20, 32, 42). The placement of the four rivets attaching the umbo has not been modified, so this skewed arrangement of the two plates must be accepted as original. As for the shield's workmanship and aesthetic merits, there is a discrepancy between the sobriety and classicism of the umbo, with the Medusa a virtuoso work of high-relief



68, detail of rim, lower right

embossing, and the jumbled, heterogeneous classical subjects, executed with an unusual combination of deep etching, punching, and silver incrustation around the border. However, as the same tooling and incrustation appear on the Medusa, there can be no doubt that both parts are contemporary and that the shield is homogeneous.

The majority of the border figures are copied, wholly or in part, from engravings by the Parisian goldsmith and printmaker Étienne Delaune (1518/19–1583). The triumph of Bacchus, for example, is adapted almost literally from one

of Delaune's prints (fig. 80; Robert-Dumesnil 1835–71, vol. 9, no. 285), as are the seated female figures of Bellona and Victory (Robert-Dumesnil 1835–71, vol. 9, nos. 281, 283); the remaining figures, particularly the battling Roman soldiers, are extracted individually from Delaune's large friezelike compositions (especially Robert-Dumesnil 1835–71, vol. 9, nos. 288, 290, 291). None of these prints is dated, but they were probably executed in the 1560s and certainly before Delaune's flight from Paris following the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre (August 24, 1572).



Fig. 80. Étienne Delaune, *Triumph of Bacchus*, ca. 1560–70. Engraving,  $2\frac{3}{8} \times 8\frac{3}{4}$  in. (6.7 x 22.2 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1947 (47.139.85)



The use of these prints for the border decoration of the shield need not imply French manufacture, as Delaune's ornamental compositions were exceptionally popular throughout Europe and were frequently copied outside France. On the contrary, the technique and style of workmanship of the border are decidedly Milanese. The figures' incised outlines, the deeply recessed and stippled backgrounds, the consistent use of punched dots and circles in the costumes and decorative details, and the encrusted silver dots in association with gilt surfaces recall certain Milanese armors dating from the last quarter of the sixteenth century. Among the earliest examples to exhibit this distinctive and demanding decorative technique are portions of a small garniture for field, tilt, and foot combat made about 1575 for Alessandro Farnese, duke of Parma and Piacenza (Museo e Galleria Nazionale di Capodimonte, Naples, inv. nos. OA 3532, 3538), and an armor made for Don Juan of Austria before 1578 (Hofjagd- und Rüstammer, Vienna, inv. nos. A 1048–1049). These comparative examples indicate that the shield may date about 1570–80, considerably later than the Medusa head might suggest. The shield thus takes on a greater interest and importance in demonstrating an unexpected persistence of a theme so closely associated with the Negroli and, on the other hand, the existence of high-quality works by a later generation of Milanese armorers who, although working in a very different style from that of Filippo Negroli, were nonetheless technically capable of

embossing and chiseling a Medusa head in relief about  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches (7 cm) high. This performance is especially noteworthy since the Medusa heads on the shields in Madrid and Vienna (cat. nos. 32, 42) rise only about 2 inches (5 cm) and the lion on a shield in Madrid (cat. no. 20) about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches (6.5 cm).

The provenance of the shield before entering the Musée d'Artillerie (the predecessor to the Musée de l'Armée) is unrecorded. It is interesting to note, however, that at least one Medusa shield is recorded in sixteenth-century France, in the armory of Anne de Montmorency, constable of France, described in 1556 as a ". . . shield of steel of which the ground is gilt, made by damascening, having in the middle the head of a woman surrounded by serpents and around it trophies and human figures, and a morion belonging to the same."<sup>1</sup>

1. "Item, une aultre rondelle d'acier, dont le fondz est doré, faict à la damasquine, ayant au milieu une teste de femme atournée de serpens et à l'entour d'icelluy trophées et personnaiges, et le morrion de mesmes"; Mirot 1920, p. 110, no. 444. The same shield is also described in the Montmorency inventory of 1568; Mirot 1920, p. 146, no. 1031.

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Other photographs were supplied by owners of the works, except: Alinari/Art Resource, New York, figs. 14, 19, 30, 45; Marcello Bertoni, cat. nos. 56, 59b, ills. p. 142; Mario Brogiolo Fotografo, fig. 79; A. C. Cooper Ltd., cat. no. 25, fig. 66; Prudence Cumming Associates Ltd., fig. 62; José-A. Godoy, ills. pp. 119, 141, 169 right, 174, 175, 262, 334 top, figs. 8, 60, 70, 77; LSH Fotoavdelningen, fig. 49; National Trust Photographic Library/Angelo Hornak, fig. 64; Patrimonio Nacional, Madrid, figs. 51, 52, 56–58, 69, 71; Luciano Pedicini, cat. no. 26; Réunion des Musées Nationaux, Paris, cat. nos. 45, 47b; Royal Armouries, Leeds, ills. pp. 242 lower right, 243 left; Soprintendenza Beni Artistici e Storici, Gabinetto Fotografico, Bologna, fig. 16; Soprintendenza per i Beni Artistici e Storici, Gabinetto Fotografico, Florence, figs. 15, 21, 65; Sotheby's, ill. p. 241



