



Fig. 1 The only recorded use of this woodcut *impresa* (page height 194 mm)

Pomeran da Cittadella, Troilo

fl. Venice 1534

Triomphi de Troilo Pomeran da Cittadela composti sopra li Terrocchi in Laude delle famose Gentil donne di Vinegia.

Venice, Giovanni Antonio dei Nicolini da Sabbio, 1534

QUARTO (194 × 140 mm), (12)ff. signed A–C⁴, not foliated or paginated. Large woodcut impresa (150 × 100 mm) on folio A1 recto (*Virtus* and *Fama* standing within a wreath, banderols at and top and bottom lettered *Nobis et ecaris [sic] amicis* and *Con gratia e privilegio*), another woodcut by the same hand (180 × 110 mm) on folio B1 recto (a group of five figures, lettered around *Carmine formosa[!] precio capiuntur aurae*).

PROVENANCE Georges Heilbrun, ‘Catalogue 20: Manuscrits Incunables Premières éditions et Livres illustrés’, Paris, circa 1962, item 95 — Pierre Berès, his sale by Pierre Bergé & Associés, ‘Fonds de la librairie Pierre Berès. Des incunables à nos jours, 4ème partie’, Paris, 17 December 2007, lot 15

Lightly washed; otherwise in fine state of preservation.

BINDING nineteenth-century French citron morocco; covers decorated by a gilt centre-piece with red morocco inlay, back decorated in gilt and by red and blue lettering-pieces (in the style of Capé).

VERY RARE volume of verse in praise of the noblewomen of Venice, loosely organised in four parts, commencing with thirteen stanzas of *ottava rima* (folios A2 recto–A4 verso) on Venetian women in general, then (after a pictorial sub-title) twenty-two stanzas of *ottava rima* (folios B1 verso–C1 recto) with headings associating specific women with the *tarocchi* trumps (Major Arcana), next twenty-one stanzas of *ottava rima* (folios C1 recto–C4 verso) addressed to the author’s ‘*Fenice*’, and lastly two quatrains and two stanzas of *terza rima* (folio C4 verso). No other publication of the author is known.

The second part has attracted the attention of historians of *trionphi* or *tarocchi* card games, as an example of ‘tarocchi appropriati’ offering evidence of the sequence (i.e. relative values) of the trumps before the cards were numbered and trick-taking values codified. Pomeran starts with ‘The World’ and runs to ‘The Fool’, with variations to the usual order, and also unusual names: ‘Traditore’ (for The Hanged Man), ‘Tempo’ (for The Hermit), and

'Foco' (probably for The Tower).¹ The cards were not given any divinatory meaning, but simply worked into the poem as a playful exercise of verbal agility, humour, and flattery.

The twenty-two trumps are presented by Pomeran in the following order and in praise of the women named:

Mondo (The World) = Andriana Corner [Cornaro]
Giustitia (Justice) = 'La bella' [Lucrezia?] Barbarigo
Angelo (The Angel) = Isabella Grimani
Sole (The Sun) = Laureta Tron
Luna (The Moon) = Grazimana [Zane, or Giane?]
Stella (The Star) = Isabella Sanuto
Foco (Fire) = Bianca Contarini²
Diauolo (The Devil) = Laura Bollani
Morte (Death) = Paola Capello
Traditore (The Traitor) = [Isabella?] Mocenigo
Tempo (Time) = Maria Leone
Rota (The Wheel [of Fortune]) = Paola Moro
Fortezza (Fortitude) = Paola Querini
Amore (Love) = Orsina Foscoletta [Foscolo]
Carro Triomphale (The Chariot) = Maria Loredan
Temperanza (Temperance) = Bianca Zeno
Papa (The Pope) = 'Famos' [Marina?] Alberti
Imperatore (The Emperor) = Benedetta Pisani
Papessa (The Popess) = Marieta Zane (Giane)
Imperatrice (The Empress) = [-] Pasqualigo
Bagattela (The Juggler) = Paola Valier
Matto (The Fool) = Nicolosa Cornera [Cornaro]

Pomeran's association of a named person with a *trionphi* card had few literary precedents. The inspiration for his book most probably was a popular parlour game and carnival entertainment, in which each player is assigned a tarot card or cards by an opponent, and then has to explain the reason for the attribution in an extemporaneous poetic composition.³

¹ Stuart R. Kaplan, *The Encyclopedia of Tarot* (New York 1986), II, pp.185, 187; see also, Michael Dummet, *Il Mondo e l'angelo. I tarocchi e la loro storia* (Naples 1993), 'Gruppo B'; and Lucia Nadin Bassani, *Carte da gioco e letteratura tra quattrocento e ottocento* (Lucca 1997), pp.88–90.

² Five of Pomeran's stanzas are translated into English by Kaplan, *op. cit.*, II, p.9: 'Foco', 'Rota', 'Carro Triomphale', 'Temperanza', and 'Imperatore'.

³ The only earlier publication cited by Kaplan is the Mantuan poet Teofilo Folengo's *Chaos del Tri per uno* (Venice 1527), containing sonnets associating each of two men and two women – Giuberto, Focilla, Falcone, Mirtella – with five or six *trionphi* cards (Kaplan, *op. cit.*, II, pp.8–9). An unpublished 'Pasquinate sopra il Conclave del 1521' by Pietro Aretino and other manuscripts of uncertain dates are

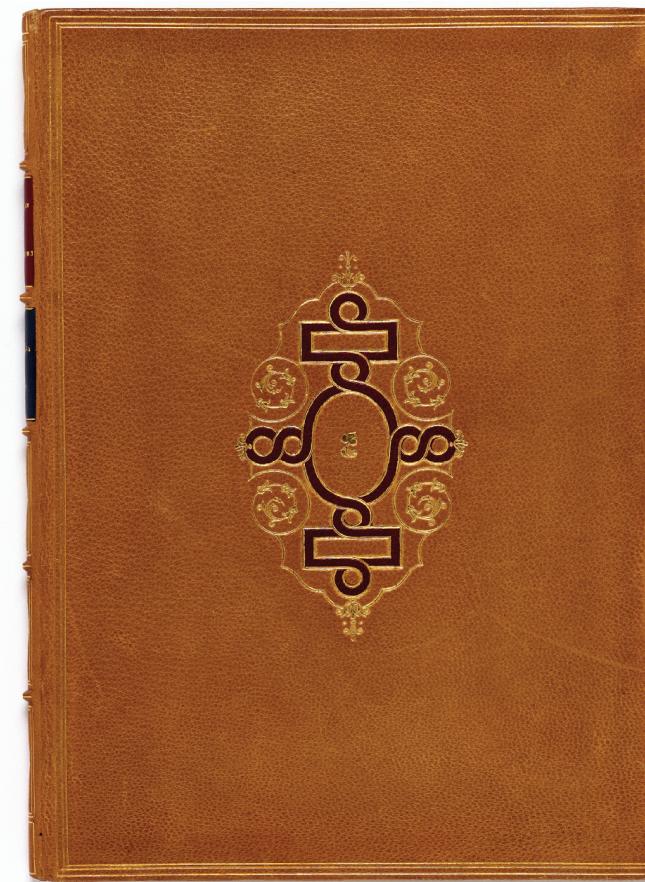


Fig. 2 One of seven copies known (height of binding 198 mm)

cited by Giordano Berti and Andrea Vitali, *I Tarocchi: le carte di corte, gioco e magia alla corte degli Estensi*, catalogue of an exhibition in the Castello Estense, Ferrara, September 1987–January 1988 (Bologna 1987), nos. 29, 32, 33, 35; see also Giordano Berti, *Storia dei Tarocchi: verità e leggende sulle carte più misteriose del mondo* (Milan 2007), pp.174–176.

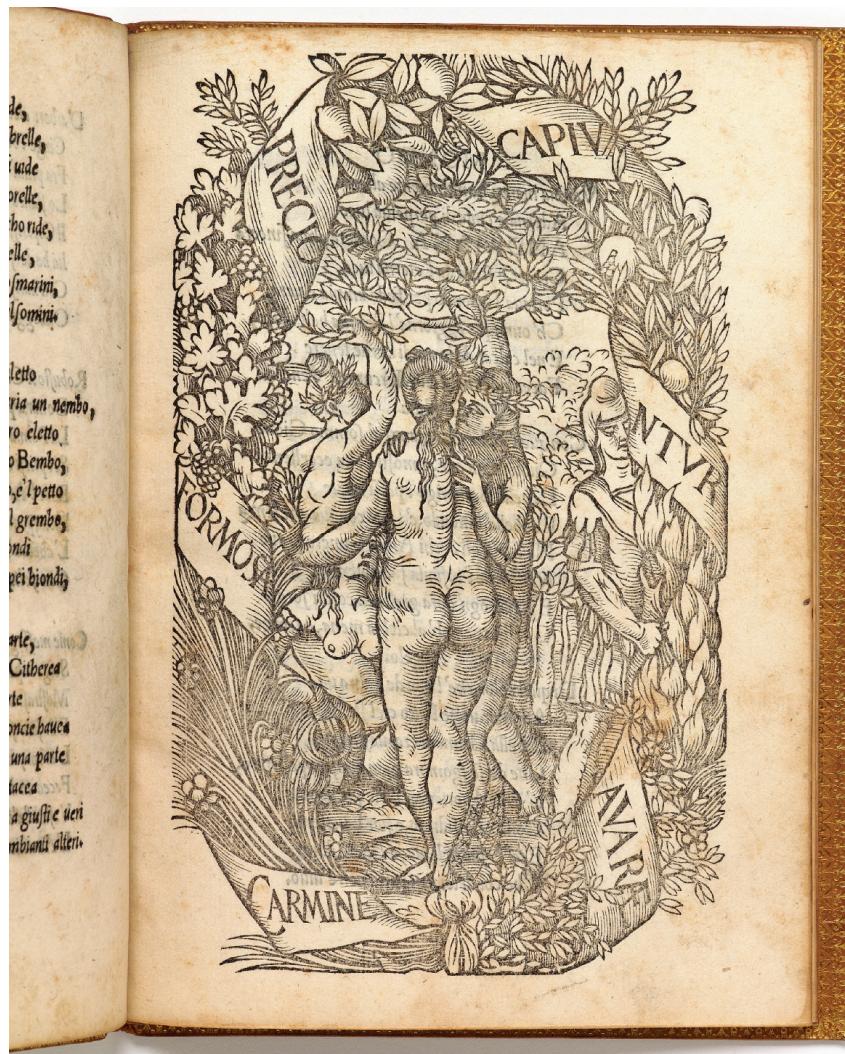


Fig. 3 The only recorded use of this woodblock (page height 194 mm)

Although ‘tarocchi appropriati’ developed into a literary phenomenon, later works – by Giovanni Battista Dragoncino, Girolamo Parabosco, Giovanni Battista Susio, and others – are not obviously indebted to Pomeran. The only clear evidence of the influence of his book is seen in Nicolò Franco’s *Tempio d’amore*, published at Venice by Francesco Marcolini in 1536 (about half the thirty names listed by Pomeran reappear in Franco).⁴

Our book has long been prized by collectors, for its two fine woodcuts (Figs. 1 & 3, neither recorded in use elsewhere), the elegance of the cursive type, and rarity. We note copies in the distinguished collections of Italian literature assembled by Crofts,⁵ Riva,⁶ Libri,⁷ and Landau,⁸ and trace six copies in public collections

- Cambridge, MA, Harvard University, Houghton Library, Typ 525 34.706⁹ • Florence, Biblioteca nazionale centrale (located by Carpané)
- London, British Library, C.57.c.28 • Udine, Biblioteca Arcivescovile e Bartoliniana, KK.VII.23(10)¹⁰ • Venice, Fondazione Cini, FOAN TES 465¹¹ •
- Venice, Biblioteca nazionale Marciana, 83.C.197.¹²

A second edition, printed in octavo format and without the two woodcuts, was published under the imprint ‘per Giouann’ Antonio, e Pietro fratelli de Nicolini da Sabio’ on 23 November 1541.¹³

⁴ Nadin Bassani, *op. cit.*, pp.91–98.

⁵ S. Paterson, ‘Biblioteca Croftiana. A catalogue of the curious and distinguished library of the late Reverend... Thomas Crofts’, London, 7 April 1783 (and 43 days), lot 3758.

⁶ L. Potier, ‘Catalogue de livres rares et précieux, manuscrits et imprimés composant la bibliothèque de M. C[arlo] R[iva] de Milan, dont la vente aura lieu le jeudi 8 janvier 1857’, Paris, [1856], lot 970.

⁷ S. Leigh Sotheby and John Wilkinson, ‘Catalogue of the choicer portion of the magnificent library, formed by M. Guglielmo Libri’, London, 1 August 1859 (and 13 days), lot 2111.

⁸ [Fr. Roediger], *Catalogue des livres manuscrits et imprimés composant la bibliothèque de M. Horace de Landau* (Florence 1890), II, p.386.

⁹ Harvard College Library Department of Printing and Graphic Arts; Catalogue of Books and Manuscripts, Pt. 2. Italian 16th century books, compiled by Ruth Mortimer (Cambridge, MA 1974), no. 393.

¹⁰ Local OPAC reports ‘Esemplare mutilo del fasc. A4’.

¹¹ Tammaro De Marinis, *Il castello di Monselice; raccolta degli antichi libri veneziani figurati* (Verona [1941]), p.96; Dennis E. Rhodes, *Catalogo del fondo librario antico della Fondazione Giorgio Cini* (Florence 2011), p.213 no. P105.

¹² Exhibited by Berti and Vitali, *op. cit.*, pp.106–107, no. 30.

¹³ Only one copy is known, formerly in the collections of Gustave Parthey — Charles Fairfax Murray (*Catalogo dei libri posseduti da Charles Fairfax Murray*, London [i.e. Florence] 1899–1902, p.276, no. 1577) — Giuseppe Martini (sold by Libreria antiquaria Hoepli, ‘Bibliothèque Joseph Martini, deuxième partie’, Zürich, 21–23 May 1935, lot 167), and now unlocated; see Sander, *op. cit.*, no. 5833, *Biblia*, *op. cit.*, no. 3790, Carpané, *op. cit.*, p.206 no. *11.

REFERENCES Emmanuele Antonio Cicogna, *Saggio di bibliografia veneziana* (Venice 1847), p.569, no. 2592; Jacques-Charles Brunet, *Manuel du libraire et de l'amateur de livres* (fifth edition Paris 1860–1865), IV, col. 793; Jules Gay, *Bibliographie des ouvrages relatifs à l'amour, aux femmes, au mariage*, edited by J. Lemonnier (Paris 1894–1900), III, col. 1265; Victor Masséna, prince d'Essling, *Bibliographie des livres à figures vénitiens... 1469–1525* (Paris 1892–1914), II, p.662; Hugues Vaganay, *Le Sonnet en Italie et en France au XVI^e siècle. Essai de bibliographie comparée* (Lyon 1902–1903), no. 1534/4; Lodovico Frati, *La Donna italiana nei più recenti studi* (Turin 1928), p.126; Max Sander, *Le Livre à figures italien depuis 1467 jusqu'à 1530* (reprint Nendeln 1969), no. 5832; Biblia: *Biblioteca del libro italiano antico. La biblioteca volgare, I: Libri di poesia*, edited by Italo Pantani (Milan 1996), no. 3789; Lorenzo Carpané, ‘Annali tipografici’ in *Il mestier de le stamperie de i libri: le vicende e i percorsi dei tipografi di Sabbio Chiese tra Cinque e Seicento e l'opera dei Niccolini*, edited by Ennio Sandal (Sabbio Chiese [Brescia] 2002), p.171, no. 29 (title-page reproduced p.172)