

A Note on *Abraham Banishing Hagar* by Giambattista Tiepolo

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Dedicated to Cornelia and Josef Delz

IN 1996 THE THREE-HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY of the birth of Giambattista Tiepolo was celebrated with a spate of exhibitions and conferences all over Europe and in the United States where the most noteworthy presentation took place at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. These events engendered a large number of catalogues, studies, archival investigations, new attributions, and reviews. They also led to the identification of some previously unknown works by the painter and much fresh insight into his oeuvre and working methods.¹

The purpose of this note is to reconsider suggestions made regarding the subject matter and the titles ascribed to an enigmatic but powerful early painting by the artist. This canvas, once in the Rasini collection in Milan, was first published by Antonio Morassi, who called it *Abraham Banishing Hagar* (Figure 1).² Keith Christiansen accepts the title but adds a question mark,³ which indicates some doubt about the designation, and his uncertainty seems justified. He—rightly—also rejects two more recent suggestions that seem even less convincing than Morassi's reference to Genesis 16:6–8. In 1987 Bernard Aikema proffered "The Sacrifice of Polyxena at the Tomb of Achilles" as a title,⁴ while in 1993 Massimo Gemin and Filippo Pedrocchi maintained that the scene depicts the banishment of Vashti, the wife of Ahasuerus, the Persian king who ordered her to appear before his guests. Vashti's refusal to do so led to her expulsion.⁵ Unhappy with these hypotheses, Christiansen assumes that Tiepolo's use of a recondite source inhibits the understanding of the paintings subject. The latest contribution to the debate is George Knox's unconvincing alternative: Mordecai at the palace gate beseeching Esther to offer herself to Ahasuerus. "This scenario, though not described in so many words in Esther, 2, covers all the main points: the magnificent palace gateway, the insistent gesture of Mordecai pointing indoors, and the emotional prostration of Esther."⁶

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Only a careful study of the given realia in this painting will lead to a more plausible title. With the exception of Michael Levey,⁷ all those concerned seem to misread the data somewhat. He is the only art historian to describe correctly the building in the scene—however, again without coming to persuasive conclusions. "At the base of a strange, huge drum-like structure (with its bas-relief, more classical-seeming than Biblical) a heavily draped aged priest or sage gesticulates over the prostrate, imploring body of a woman, while two figures look on, one indifferently, the other as though anxious to intercede. Penitence, perhaps, is what the woman's pose suggests." He concludes: "The originality of the treatment is striking, and that is only underlined if the subject really is the Expulsion of Hagar."

Little remains to be added to this description. That the structure is circular—its curve receding into the shadows of the background on the left—is confirmed by its rounded foundation in the lower right of the painting, which serves as a platform for the draped male and the prostrate woman, who beseechingly touches his right foot. A marble string course defines the base of the terracotta-colored building at shoulder height and ends at the projecting straight, noncurvilinear frame of the doorway, of which only the left part is visible. Its pedestal is decorated with a marble relief that depicts a youthful male facing right; a figure of uncertain sex behind him looking back toward a tree hung with drapery; and a wooden pail stands on the ground. The figures may be busying themselves with a sacrifice, although part of the altar is obscured by the two young women who crouch in front of the bas-relief. Over it a carved wave pattern embellishes the ledge on which double pilasters rest. These—together with an identical set at the right of the door but outside the picture—must be thought of as supporting the gateway's pediment. Three plain steps lead up to the dark interior of the building. The billowing smoke that emerges from an ornate brazier at the front is sooty and does not seem to rise up straight and clean, as might be expected.

There is no visual reference to an oriental or bibli-



Figure 1, Giambattista Tiepolo (1696–1770). *Abraham Banishing Hagar*. Oil on canvas, 96 × 136 cm. Private collection (photo: courtesy MMA)

cal ambience; instead, everything points to a classical setting. If we follow the pictorial cues supplied by the painter, the subject reveals itself almost as a matter of course. The literary background of Tiepolo's contemporaries (ours is so sadly remiss) must have enabled them to recognize the scene without any difficulty, the visual allusions being unequivocally clear. The classical sources that were then available refer to the circular temple of Vesta in the Forum Romanum. The very ancient cult that centered on the family hearth and gods (Penates) had been officially elevated to a state worship by imperial times.⁸ Ovid's *Fasti* 6.280–318 give a vivid description of the goddess Vesta, of her cult—because she was a virgin she required chaste servants—and of the shape of the building that Ovid calls a tholus (6.282).⁹ Excavations had not yet started in the Campo Vaccino in Tiepolo's day,¹⁰ and the sanctuary's actual shape, circular and ringed with columns, was not known. However, Tiepolo may have seen coins depicting it (Figure 2).¹¹ Venice could pride itself on one of the finest assemblages of Classical antiquities, ever since Cardinal Domenico Grimani, followed by Giovanni Grimani, patriarch of Aquileia, willed their

collections to the city in 1523 and 1586 respectively. Tiepolo must have been aware of these treasures and used them. The coins invariably show the tholus with a conical roof, its doorway framed by two columns on either side; this was a pictorial convention to evoke the peristyle familiar to the Roman viewer, but it was unknown to Tiepolo. He therefore omits it but provides the drumlike structure with a stately porch and flanking double pilasters. The brazier in the painting not only attests to the sacred character of the building but, as we shall see, is its actual focus. The old man who peremptorily points into the sanctuary, while sternly talking down to the young prostrate woman, wears sandals and the classical garb of a Roman priest officiating. In early Rome, it was the king (rex) who served as the main priest at religious functions. The name *Rex sacrorum* and the position survived throughout the Republic.¹² With their heads covered ritually, priests presided over the sacrificial rites.¹³ This framework allows me to suggest passages from Ovid's *Fasti* and from Plutarch's *Lives* as the major sources of Tiepolo's painting. Let me quote the "historian" first, in his *Life of Romulus*:



Figure 2. Roman coins with the temple of Vesta. No. 1, Neronian; no. 2, Vespasianic; no. 3, Tiberian (photo: from *LIMC*, V, 2, s.v. Hestia Vesta)

The kings of Alba reigned in lineal descent from Aeneas, and the succession devolved at length upon two brothers, Numitor and Amulius. Amulius proposed to divide things into two equal shares, and set as equivalent to the kingdom the treasure and gold that were brought from Troy. Numitor chose the kingdom; but Amulius, having the money, and being able to do more with that than Numitor, took his kingdom from him with great ease, and, fearing lest his daughter might have children, made her a Vestal, bound in that condition forever to live a single and maiden life. This lady some call Ilia, others Rhea, and others Silvia; however, not long after, she was, contrary to the established laws of the Vestals, discovered to be with child, and should have suffered the most cruel punishment [to be buried alive], had not Antho, the king's daughter, mediated with her father for her; nevertheless, she was confined, and debarred all company, that she might not be delivered without the king's knowledge. In time she brought forth two boys, of more than human size and beauty, whom Amulius, becoming yet more alarmed, commanded a servant to take and cast away.

We may stop here, since the future of these boys—who were nursed by a she-wolf, who restored the kingdom to Numitor and founded the city of Rome—is well known. In Rome the wolf was a creature sacred to Mars and this “gave credit to what the mother of the children said, that their father was the god Mars; though some say that it was a mistake put upon her by Amulius, who himself had come to her dressed up in armour” (!)¹⁴ The poet's version is more circumstantial. The story of Rhea Silvia is the major subject of *Fasti*, book 3.

Tiepolo has compressed the events into a single scene full of passion and drama: Amulius, the king, priest, and uncle of Ilia or Rhea Silvia, who had forced her to become a vestal virgin, has just learned of her pregnancy and threatens to put her to the gruesome death reserved for delinquent virginal priestesses. The goddess Vesta is offended by what has transpired. The smudgy smoke from the brazier signals a dying fire.

“Silvia fit mater . . . / ara deae certe tremuit pariente ministra/et subiit cineres territa flamma suos.”¹⁵ Antho, the king's daughter (who is mentioned only in Plutarch's tale), intercedes on behalf of her cousin—the indirect light on her face enlarges her eyes dramatically—while her maid looks on impassively. The sanctuary is not located in the busy Forum but in a dark glen. Tiepolo, aware of Ovid's description,¹⁶ may also have seen reliefs of Rhea Silvia and Mars on Roman sarcophagi or on mosaics (Figure 3), which place the scene on the wooded banks of the Tiber.¹⁷ The background in his painting may indicate this specific site, and the women wear classicizing robes. However,



Figure 3. *Mars and Rhea Silvia on the Banks of the Tiber*. Roman mosaic from Ostia, second century A.D. (photo: from *LIMC*, VII, 2, s.v. Rea Silva, no. 6)



Figure 4. Ciro Ferri (1634?–1689). *The Vestals*, 1666. Oil on canvas, 148 × 194 cm. Rome, Palazzo Spada (photo: from Lo Bianco, *Pietro da Cortona*, no. 87)

Tiepolo was not familiar with the very distinct head-dress of the vestal virgins; it consisted of multiple woolen bands worn under a veil (as attested by excavated statues and reliefs).¹⁸

So much for the painting's iconography, which apparently has no counterpart. Not surprisingly, however, another artist—and surely not the only one—had already met the challenge of Ovid's compelling tale, but his rendition remained unacknowledged due to our unfamiliarity with the classics. Ciro Ferri (1634?–1689), the devoted collaborator of Pietro da Cortona (1596–1669), who completed many unfinished projects after the master's death, painted a large canvas while busy on a commission of Pietro's in Bergamo in 1666 (Figure 4). The provenance of the picture, entitled *The Vestals*, is well documented.¹⁹ The works of Ferri lack the grandiose and balanced sweep of Pietro's creations, but he successfully emulated his master's astounding versatility. In this picture, Ferri leads us into the tholus, crowded with animated groups of adults and children, as Vesta was the protector of the family and the hearth. In an island of stillness in the center, there is an elaborate golden altar (together with a thronelike chair and a tall ewer, which exhibit Ferri's talents as sculptor and goldsmith) with a vestal virgin standing behind it. The focus, however, is on the seated young priestess, undoubtedly Rhea Silvia, who drapes the end of her large veil over her abdomen and looks, half thoughtful, half surprised, at the strange shapes of the flames, while sooty smoke wells up from a reluctant fire. The vestal virgin who tries to rekindle it has to protect her face from the acrid smoke. This is



Figure 5. Giandomenico Tiepolo (1727–1804). Red-and-white chalk drawing of a seated man, *capite velato*. Stuttgart, Graphische Sammlung der Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, inv. no. 1456 (photo: from *Tiepolo* [Stuttgart, 1970] no. 148)

not the solemn standard sacrifice for Vesta, but rather the sign of the goddess's horror and indignation at the discovery of Rhea Silvia's pregnancy. Because of the unrecognized iconography of the scene, the catalogue entry censures the painter for perceived shortcomings. Ironically, the words used by its author to denigrate the work's general atmosphere actually confirm the intentions of the painter. What is seen as an error by the modern critic turns out to be the artist's triumph.²⁰

In Tiepolo's picture scholars have searched for parallel poses, and a number have been pinpointed as being typical of the painter's youthful work, specifically prostrate figures.²¹ As a matter of course, Giambattista's son Domenico shared motifs with his father. The garb of Domenico's seated man, *capite velato* and wearing sandals (Figure 5), much resembles Amulius's garb in our painting.²²

In conclusion, one would like to ask whether the rare subject might have been a special commission. It has been suggested, though tentatively, that the picture belonged to a set—recorded by Da Canal in 1732—painted by young Giambattista for the home of Doge Giovanni Corner (r. 1709–22).²³ Corner's tenure covered a phase of unprecedented gloom in the history of the once proud Republic.²⁴ Though deeply religious, the scion of one of the oldest and most respected patrician families in Venice may have felt the need to enhance the standing and morale of his house by trying to connect it to figures out of Roman history. Decorating palaces in such a manner was not unusual in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Venice.²⁵ It was a tradition of long standing among the Venetian nobility to appropriate Trojan and Roman ancestors, and our painting may have functioned as such.²⁶

NOTES

1. For a summary of these activities, see George Knox, "1996: The Tiepolo Year," *Kunstchronik* 50, 1 (1997) pp. 1–7. The latest comprehensive catalogue of the painter's work is by Massimo Gemin and Filippo Pedrocchi, *Giambattista Tiepolo: I dipinti. Opera completa* (Venice, 1993); for a review, see S. Loire, *Kunstchronik* 50, 1 (1997) pp. 23–32. Gemin and Pedrocchi's work and the catalogue edited and partly written by Keith Christiansen, *Giambattista Tiepolo: 1696–1770*, exh. cat., MMA (New York, 1996), serve as a basis for this study.

2. Antonio Morassi, "An Unknown Early Work by Giambattista Tiepolo," *Burlington Magazine* 70 (Feb. 1937) p. 53.

3. Cat. no. 8 in Christiansen, *Tiepolo*.

4. Bernard Aikema, "Quattro note su G. B. Tiepolo giovane," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz* 31 (1987) pp. 441–454, esp. p. 452. Aikema believes that Ovid's *Metamorphoses* XIII, ll. 447–480, is the source.

5. See Christiansen, *Tiepolo*, cat. no. 27 and chap. 1, n. 101.

6. *Apollo* (Nov. 1996) p. 53.

7. Michael Levey, *Giambattista Tiepolo: His Life and His Art* (New Haven/London, 1986) pp. 12–14.

8. K. Latte, *Römische Religionsgeschichte, Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft* 5, 1 (Munich, 1960) chaps. 6: "Religion der Gemeinde," and 8: "Die Pontifikalreligion." *Enciclopedia dell'arte antica classica e orientale* (Rome, 1966) VII, pp. 1148ff., s.v. Vesta (G. Carettoni). For Vesta, see also E. Simon, *Die Götter der Römer* (Munich, 1990); for the capital punishment inflicted upon guilty vestal virgins, see F. Hampl, "Zum Ritus des Lebendigbegrabens von Vestalinnen," *Festschrift für R. Muth* (Innsbruck, 1983) pp. 165–182; M. Beard, "Re-reading (Vestal) virginity," in *Women in Antiquity: New Assessments* (London/New York, 1995) pp. 166–175, and the report on Session 313: "Proximity to Powers: The Vestal Virginis in Imperial Rome" at the 99th Annual Meeting of America, *American Journal of Archaeology* 102, 2, (April 1998) pp. 389–391. See also S. Ribichini, "La vergine del focolare," *ARCHEO* XIII, 12 (Dec. 1997) pp. 116–118.

9. See Ovid's *Fasti*, Sir J. G. Frazer, trans. (London/New York, 1931) pp. 338–343. Architects and artists must have been familiar with the meaning of the word *tholus* (Greek *Θόλος*) since the late 15th century when the first printed editions of Vitruvius's *De architectura* appeared; see his discussion of the word, 4.8.3.

10. See R. Lanciani, *The Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome* (Boston/New York, 1897) pp. 221–224; idem, *Rovine e scavi di Roma antica*, E. Rodríguez-Almeida, trans. (Rome, 1985) pp. 203–205; E. Nash, *Pictorial Dictionary of Ancient Rome* (New York, 1962) II, pp. 505–509, s.v. Aedes Vestae. Excavations were conducted in 1883 and 1889–1900; the tholus was partially restored in 1930.

11. See *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (hereafter *LIMC*) V, 1 and 2 (Zurich/Munich, 1990) p. 417, s.v. Hestia/Vesta, nos. 43ff.; 46 (T. Fischer-Hansen). See also Nash, *Pictorial Dictionary*, pp. 511–513, s.v. Vesta in Domo Palatina.

12. However, his role was largely ceremonial and he ranked below the all-powerful pontifex maximus. Augustus assumed the office of pontifex maximus in perpetuity, as did all his successors. See *Der Kleine Pauly: Lexikon der Antike* 4 (Munich, 1972) p. 1046–1048, s.v. Pontifex (K. Ziegler), also Latte, *Römische Religionsgeschichte*, Appendix I. "Die römischen Priesterschaften," p. 394. Latte surmises that the king originally kept a vestal virgin in his house to watch over the sacred hearth.

13. For depictions of priests officiating, see Latte, *Römische Religionsgeschichte*, figs. 23, 27ff. The grandest example of the pontifex maximus officiating is the over-lifesize statue of Augustus from the Via Labicana in the Museo delle Terme; see W. Helbig, *Führer durch die öffentlichen Sammlungen klassischer Altertümer in Rom, Die Staatlichen Sammlungen, Museo Nazionale Romano (Thermenmuseum), Museo Nazionale di Villa Giulia*, 4th ed., H. Speier, ed. (Tübingen, 1969) no. 2300, pp. 216–218 (H. v. Heintze). For the formula *capite velato* frequently used to describe priestly persons at sacrifice whose toga or veil covered the back of their heads, see *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* III (Leipzig, 1907) pp. 387⁷⁴–388²¹, s.v. *caput*. In Cicero's *De natura deorum* 2.3.10, it designates the head as being completely covered, including the face, when men performed the rare act of *devotio*, or self-immolation. The references to this habit in Roman literature were not lost upon Renaissance and Baroque artists; the *capita velata* of the Roman priests and of Publius Decius Mus in Rubens's 1616 series depicting the fateful divination, the consul's

devotio, victory, and death in the battle against the Latins (Livy, 8.6–10) constitutes its most splendid manifestation. For the paintings, intended as cartoons for tapestries, in the collection of the prince of Liechtenstein in Vaduz, see R. Baumstark, *Tod und Sieg des römischen Konsuls Decius Mus* (Vaduz, 1988).

14. Plutarch, *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*, trans. by John Dryden and rev. by A. H. Clough (New York, no date) pp. 24ff. For a recent study of the background of the myth of the founding twins, see T. P. Wiseman, *Remus: A Roman Myth* (Cambridge, 1995).

15. Ovid, *Fasti* 3.45, 47ff: “Silvia became a mother . . . certainly the altar of the goddess trembled, when her priestess was brought to bed, and the terrified flame sank under its own ashes.” Should we see in the curious gap that has opened between the thick marble relief and the actual body of the tholus the result of the earthquake described by Ovid?

16. *Fasti* 3.11–24.

17. See LIMC, VII, 1 and 2 (Zurich/Munich, 1994) pp. 615–620, s.v. Rea Silvia (M. Hauer-Prost), nos. 6 (fig. 3), 7–9; 11, 20–25a. The scene is also depicted on gems and on reliefs. Figure 3 is a Hadrianic mosaic from Ostia. For a late Republican depiction, see the paintings from the sepulchrum Statiliorum et Aliorum on the Esquiline with legends of Troy and Romulus in the Museo delle Terme, Rome; see Helbig, *Altertümer in Rom*, no. 2489, pp. 461–464 (B. Andreae); for illustrations, see Nash, *Pictorial Dictionary*, pp. 360–365. For sarcophagi, see C. Robert, *Die antiken Sarkophagreliefs* III, 2 (Berlin, 1904) nos. 188, 188a (Palazzo Mattei and Vatican), pp. 190–192, and H. Sichtermann, *Die antiken Sarkophagreliefs* 12, 2. *Die mythologischen Sarkophage* (Berlin, 1992) pl. 6,1, cat. no. 10.

18. The headdress consists of the *suffibulum*, or veil, and the *infulae*, a sextuple string of wool worn as a headband; see *Enciclopedia dell'arte*, p. 1148. For a sculpture of a vestal, see Latte, *Römische Religionsgeschichte*, fig. 32. Busts of Vesta herself, with veiled head, appear on Roman coins, see e.g., LIMC, nos. 48, 50ff. See also Nash, *Pictorial Dictionary*, s.v. Vesta in Domo Palatina.

19. See A. Lo Bianco, ed., *Pietro da Cortona, 1597–1669*, exh. cat. (Milan, 1997) pp. 229–234, for Ferri's career and cat. no. 87; 148 × 194 cm, Rome, Galleria Spada. The picture was painted for the Grand Duchess Vittoria della Rovere, wife of Ferdinando II de' Medici, and passed into the Spada collection in 1698. See also *The Dictionary of Art* 11 (1996) s.v. Ferri, Ciro, nos. 22–25 (S. Prosperi Valenti Rodinò), where the painting's title is given as *Vestal Virgins Tending the Sacred Flame*. The stature of Ciro Ferri may enjoy some reevaluation after the Rome exhibition; see S. Pepper, *The Art Newspaper* 77 (Jan. 1998) p. 14.

20. “. . . ma la grazia delle figure femminili, il guizzo vivace dei fanciulli, le torsioni violente che turbano l'equilibrio compositivo della scena non ricevono adeguata valorizzazione dalla tavolozza cromatica adottata dal Ferri in questo dipinto, appesantisce la grazia dei personaggi, blocca in un atmosfera affocata il dinamismo della composizione” (my italics); see Lo Bianco, *Pietro da Cortona*, no. 87, p. 420.

21. See Morassi, “An Unknown Early Work,” p. 53. In addition, Morassi thought he could decipher a signature and an indistinct date (1717 or 1719) on the piece of wood next to the brazier. No trace of it is visible today, and Christiansen, *Tiepolo*, pp. 74ff., convincingly places the painting in the early 1720s. See also W. L. Barcham, *The Religious Paintings of Giambattista Tiepolo: Piety and Tradition in Eighteenth Century Venice* (Oxford, 1989) pp. 39, 42ff., for

further parallels in Tiepolo's work, and also for references to 16th-century artists providing models for poses, e.g., Tintoretto and Titian. Such adaptations were customary and commendable. Recumbent figures, male or female, facing us or seen from behind, mostly placed in the foreground, however, are to be found not only in the youthful work but throughout the career of both Giambattista and Giandomenico Tiepolo. (They are preceded in this by their slightly senior contemporary Giovanni Battista Piazzetta [1683–1754].) A Mannerist conceit is transformed by them to define space in a fresh and vigorous way. Rhea Silvia's despairing prostration is strangely reminiscent of an anonymous drawing in the Albertina, traditionally ascribed to Perino del Vaga; see V. Birke and J. Kertész, *Die Italienischen Zeichnungen der Albertina. Generalverzeichnis Bd. I* (Vienna/Cologne/Weimar, 1992) p. 262, inv. no. 463. It shows a woman in a very similar posture; at her right, on the ground, is a crying, naked baby boy. Is she Hagar?

22. See *Tiepolo: Zeichnungen von Giambattista, Domenico und Lorenzo Tiepolo aus der Graphischen Sammlung der Staatsgalerie Stuttgart*, Sept. 20–Nov. 30, 1970, Stuttgarter Galerieverein e.V. Graphische Sammlung Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, cat. no. 148, pp. 128ff., where another version is referred to.

23. Aikema (above, n. 4) p. 452, cites Vincenzo da Canal's life of Tiepolo's teacher, *Vita di Gregorio Lazzarini* (Venice, 1732), in the 1809 Venice edition of G. A. Moschini, XXXII, where we are told that Giambattista “fu pittore del Doge Cornaro a S. Polo, nella cui ricca abitazione presidiava alla distribuzione delle cose pittoriche, oltre all'avervi fatto più sovra-porte con ritratti e quadri di buon gusto.” The relatively small dimensions of our picture (96 × 136 cm), and its implicit invitation to be viewed “di sotto in sù,” suggest to Aikema that it might have been intended for one of the doors—of similar width—in the *piano nobile* of Palazzo Corner. Two related portraits were identified sometime ago: E. Martini, “I ritratti di Ca' Cornaro di G. B. Tiepolo giovane,” *Notizie da Palazzo Albani III*, I (1972) p. 34⁵ (not accessible to me), Aikema, “Quattro note,” p. 454.²¹ They were exhibited in Venice and New York, see Christiansen, *Tiepolo*, cat. nos. 3a, b: For Doge Giovanni II Corner (1647–1722), Tiepolo's patron who commissioned the paintings, and Doge Marco Corner (ca. 1286–1368), during whose tenure (1365–68) Guariento of Bologna painted the *Incoronazione di Maria* in the Sala del Maggior Consiglio in the palace of the Doges, destroyed by fire in 1577, see the respective entries by E. Martini and F. Pedrocco.

24. See *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (Rome, 1983) XXIX, pp. 234–236, s.v. Corner, Giovanni. Born in 1647, Giovanni was elected doge in 1709 and died in 1722. The peace of Passarowitz concluded the Venetian-Turkish war of 1714–18. Venice lost the Morea and the Aegean islands, while Austria, the ally and real victor, won territories along the Danube and on the Adriatic coast.

25. See B. Aikema, “La decorazione di Palazzo Barbaro-Curtis a Venezia fino alla metà del settecento,” *Arte Veneta* 41 (1987) pp. 147–153. Scenes from the lives of virtuous men and women from ancient history were apparently combined with portraits of family members. Giambattista's contribution to the main salone, *The Apotheosis of the Barbaro Family* (1750), is in the MMA. See Christiansen, *Tiepolo*, cat. no. 21a; for the rest of Tiepolo's set, see cat. nos. 21b–d. Ciro Ferri's *Vestals* attests to the subject as entirely acceptable.

26. See H. Buchthal, *Historia Troiana: Studies in the History of Mediaeval Secular Illustration* (London, 1971) esp. pp. 59–67.