The Collection of Classical Antiquities
in Bishop Gerolamo Garimberto’s Quarters
in the Gaddi Palace on Monte Citorio in Rome

CLIFFORD M. BROWN
Carleton University, Ottawa

There is no lack of documentary and visual evidence for collections of antiquities formed from the 17th century onwards. On the one hand, there are the pictures by Ternier, van Haecht, Jan Bruegel and Francken which serve both as poetic evocations of the ideal Kunstkammer and as more precise documents of specific achievements. On the other hand, and as for example with the Galleria Farnese in Rome, the original architectural setting is intact, its painted decorations well preserved, while engravings supplement the written evidence regarding the contents of this antiquarium.

For earlier collections, including the antiquarium in the Farnese Palace finished by 1568 for Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, the evidence is less generous. Indeed a general lack of visual and textual material hampers the study of many of the major Roman collections known to the Bolognese naturalist Ulisse Aldrovandi. While the Statua Antiche di Roma (1550) is an indispensable guide to the contents of innumerable collections, including, and most especially, those formed by Cardinal Rodolfo Pio da Carpi, Aldrovandi said little about the architectural and decorative ensembles in which these collections were set. Accordingly it is difficult to determine, and problematic to speculate on, the principles underlying the construction of special rooms for the display of these antique busts, statues, statuary and reliefs.

The situation is only slightly better when one turns to those non-Roman collections created during the third quarter of the 16th century through the persistent and systematic despoling of the city’s bountiful artistic patrimony. The removal of vast quantities of statuary, already the subject of concern at the beginning of the 16th century, reached alarming proportions by the end of the century at which time vast quantities of marbles left daily by mule train or by boat, and often without official sanction, in order to satisfy the needs of Italian and Northern Princes. Example: one hundred forty marble heads with their busts and bases, fifty-seven marble statues of various sizes, ten marble table tops, and twenty-four reliefs ...

* Much of the material dealt with in this paper comes from my article, 'Major and Minor Collections of Antiquities of the Later 16th Century,' Art Bulletin (September 1984). Accordingly, the reader is referred to that article or to my studies in Arte Lombarda (forthcoming) (‘Bishop Gerolamo Garimberto Archeological Advisor to Guglielmo Gonzaga Duke of Mantua’) and Venezia (1985) (Paintings and Antiquities from the Roman Collection of Bishop Gerolamo Garimberto Offered to Duke Albrecht Vth of Bavaria in 1576) for additional information as well as for illustrations of the statues, reliefs and engravings which are not reproduced here. Footnotes have been kept to a minimum and have been included primarily for material not otherwise discussed in the forementioned articles.

1 A. Bertolotti, 'Esportazione di oggetti di Belli Arti da Roma,' Archivio storico artistico, archeologico e letterario della città e provincia di Roma, 11 (1877), 137.
What all of the aforementioned collections have in common, other matters aside, is the fact that the gallery of antiquities of the Medici, Este, Grimani and Gonzaga were all created just after the mid-point of the century, thus in the period 1560-1575. Furthermore it would appear that, although the evidence is sparse, and while comparable examples are lacking, the architectural shells for these museums – the system of niches, pilasters, fictive or real marble inlays – depended on models readily accessible in Rome to these princes and to their advisors.

Of the Ferrara library and gallery nothing survives save for several sketches (a ground plan and a hasty sketch for the elevation of one section of the wall) made by the court antiquarium and architect Pirro Ligorio.2 As an intimate of Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, and as one of the city’s noted architects before he entered the Este employ, it is logical to assume that Pirro Ligorio’s ideas had a Roman bias. Furthermore the Este Gallery would have had an effect on other similar efforts done by those North-Italian collectors who saw Ligorio’s creation. Similar pressures and influences informed those on whose opinions Cardinal Grimani relied for the creation of his Galleria d’Antichità; one of the few examples of the period to survive intact.3 In its use of an architecturally complex marble revetment, the Grimani antiquarium represents one end of the scale. The other, less costly approach is indicated by the painted substitutes employed by Giovanni Battista Bertani for Duke Guglielmo Gonzaga’s Galleria di Mesì in the Ducal Palace in Mantua. Here fictive, rather than real marble was used to give the polychromed effect of inlays. The main niches originally housed a collection of near life-sized statues, while the smaller ones on the upper surface, and the brackets of the pilasters, displayed the busts of the first twenty-two Roman emperors.

In addition to these Italian examples from the late 1560s and the early 1570s there survives one major North-European example, Albrecht Vth’s antiquarium in the Residenz Palace in Munich4 (Figs. 1-2). The designs are attributed to Jacopo Strada. Mantuan by birth, Strada entered the services of Emperor Maximilian II, spending much of his life in Vienna. On his behalf and also for the Duke of Bavaria himself, Strada spent several years back in Italy, as well as time in Rome acquiring antiquities and gathering ideas for their display, which were then exported to the North. As Strada knew intimately the Roman and Venetian collections, it may be conjectured that his distribution of the wall surfaces reflects current practices adopted to the requirements of a Bavarian patron. With the wall surface as a screen that was subdivided by columns into bays, statuary and busts alternatively were set on bases or in niches. Without these drawings one would know little of Albrecht Vth’s antiquarium because his successor, Wilhelm IV replaced Strada’s ideas with the present series of graduated steps, which provided an increased area for the visually complex effect he desired to achieve for his greatly expanded collection.

To return to Rome, we should consider the documentary evidence for one of the smaller private collections for which the city was so justly famous. Aldrovandi devoted nearly one seventh of Delle Statue Antiche to the various rooms and studioli in Cardinal Rodolfo Pio da Carpi’s house in the Campo Marzo. He notes the less had both the space and inclination to discuss those owned by the likes of the Bishop of Gallese, Gerolamo Garimberto, an otherwise little-known figure who is not entirely deserving of the obscurity that has overtaken his accomplishments.

Born in Parma in 1506, Garimberto made Rome his residence, its Cardinals his protectors and its humanists, antiquarians and collectors his friends. If not an intimate, he was none the less familiar with Cardinal Alessandro Farnese and his chief scholarly advisor Fulvio Orsini. At the same time Garimberto was a frequent visitor in Cardinal Pio da Carpi’s house. Garimberto died in 1575 and was buried in the Church of San Giovanni in Laterano where he had served as canon and where one still finds the handsome monument erected by his heirs (Fig. 3).

5 Located on the second pier of the right hand aisle of the church, the monument contains a long inscription praising Garimberto as a friend and servant of princes (referring, among others, to the Duke of Mantua and the Lord of Guastalla whom he served as archaeological advisor):

*D.O.M. Hieronymo Garimberto Parmens Episcopo Gallesiano/ Inter diversarum artium studia/ Aequam fides et probitatis laudem/ Semper retinuerit/ Vixit an. ixxi/ Oblatt iv kal. dec./ M.D.L.xx/ Ioannes Franciscus Garimbertus/ Patruo optima pos.*
The documentary sources for the collection Garimberto displayed in his quarters in Cardinal Niccolò Gadalò’s palace on Monte Citorio are extensive. Firstly there is his ample correspondence with the ruler of Guastalla, Cesare Gonzaga, as well as his letters to Cesare’s cousin, the Duke of Mantua. The former material is found in the Parma State Archives (Raccolta Manoscritti, Busta 112 and Gonzaga di Guastalla, Busta 48), the latter is preserved in the Mantuota State Archives. In addition to such published accounts as that of Aldrovandi, two inventories survive among the Duke of Bavaria’s papers in the Hauptstaatsarchiv in Munich. The earliest of these was compiled during Garimberto’s lifetime in 1569 (‘Libri Antiquatatum,’ III, 35-39v, 95-102, 105-114v). The second was drawn up by his estate at the request of Cardinal Cristoforo Madruzzo (‘Libri Antiquatatum,’ III, cc. 40-43v). Finally, and in addition to those pieces from the collection which can be identified in various museums, no fewer than twenty-eight engravings after his marque were printed by the end of the 16th century. Two are found in Fulvio Orsini’s Imagines et elogia vrorum illustrum et erudiorum (Rome, 1570, pl. 23,30), the remainder in Giovanni Battista de Cavallieri’s Antiquarium Statuarum Urbis Romae (Rome, 1594). To date, inadequate use has been made of this wealth of textual and visual material for the documentation of what were the typical holdings of a man of modest means and position during this high-water mark of collecting towards the end of the 16th century.

By the time Ulisse Aldrovandi visited his quarters in the Gadalò Palace, Garimberto was the proud owner of an ample and varied collection. He actively encouraged visitors to examine his holdings, for as Aldrovandi writes: ‘In the event that any [of the readers of my book] should wish to gain admittance to his quarters they are assured of the same courteous reception which I had at the hands of the aforementioned messer Heronimo (‘se alcuno gentiluomo si degnasse avers alla sua camera, le sarà mostrato ogni cosa cortesemente dal suddetto Messer Heronimo, come gli à fatto a me’). Among the treasures then available in the ‘altrò camerino che serve per studio,’ in which Garimberto kept the ‘cose piu eletto ma piu piccole,’ one found a collection of busts including those of Caracalla, of Alessandro Mameo, Pyrrhus, Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius ‘che è tenuta per cosa rara.’ In addition to vast assortment of medallions ‘da bronzon, d’argento, e di oro,’ various figurines, an Apollo with the bow, innumerable fragments, vases and curiosities such as an ostrich egg, the studio also boasted a Cupid with the mace of Hercules sleeping on a five-palmi-wide serpentine table framed in ebony. This type was a special favourite among collectors from the time of Isabella d’Este and of sculptors since Michelangelo carved his statuette in 1496.

The ruler of Guastalla, Cesare Gonzaga, was among those who accepted Ulisse Aldrovandi’s invitation to examine the Garimberto collection. Garimberto Gonzaga’s own antiquarium in the Mantuan residence of the rulers of Guastalla, was probably built by the Roman trained architect Francesco Capriani, called Francesco da Volterra. It was decorated with those statues, statuettes, heads and busts and reliefs whose selection was personally supervised by Garimberto. The Mantuan palace of the Gonzaga of Guastalla was totally transformed in the 18th century to make way for the present Accademia Nazionale Virgiliana. Although it is not possible to judge to which degree the Mantuan example related to the Roman models, it cannot be doubted that this was indeed the case. Another visitor to Garimberto’s museum was the Duke of Ferrara, Alfonso n II d’Este, who was in Rome in 1573. By that date his court architect and antiquarian Pirro Ligorio, was putting the finishing touches on the decoration of his Ducal museum complex in the Ferrara palace. Ligorio’s decision to offset the Este library with portraits of the Greek and Roman authors was based on standard Roman practice, which Garimberto had himself achieved.

Regarding what precisely Garimberto showed Alfonso n II d’Este and how the collection that existed in 1573 differed from what Aldrovandi knew back in 1550, one has the testimonies of Garimberto’s own words. The letter in question (8 April 1572), an unusually detailed autobiographical statement by a collector, forms part of the ruler of Guastalla’s correspondence files, an ample and still largely unpublished collection in the State Archives in Parma.

From Garimberto’s own hand it is learned that the collection was displayed in three areas, ‘una Galleria con una loggia sotto et una libraría di sopra.’ Nearly 2000 volumes were arranged according to discipline in the library. ‘Testoni antichi di filosofi, mathematici, poesi e istorici,’ were located on the cornices near these texts. Garimberto singled out those of Plato, Aristotle, Solon, Hesiod, Socrates and Seneca. Presumably he also displayed on the same cornices the statuette of Moschion now in the Archeological Museum in Naples. Like the Hesiod, Garimberto’s Moschion passed into the collection of Cardinal Farnese’s librarian Fulvio Orsini who published engraving of these objects in his Imagines et elogia vrorum illustrum. Visual evidence for Garimberto’s holdings is also available for several of the reliefs, which were displayed in the library together with a group of unspecified paintings and portraits of famous men of the 16th century. Thus the literarygreats of the past looked towards their present-day counterparts in a variation on the museum of Paolo Giovio at Como.

Among the reliefs displayed in the library, Garimberto signaled out for special mention: three large and rare black Indian marble plaques which are carved like cameos, and one of which depicts the story of Phaeton (‘tre favolet in tre tavolozzi di pieter d’India ragguisime et di straordinario polimento che rappresentano cameli d’infinita bellezza, particolarmente una con tutta la favola di Fetonte, molto grande et rare’). This description squares with what is seen in the engravi-
ing that opens the third book of Giovanni Battista de' Cavalieri's *Antiquarium Statuarum Urbis Romae* where, however, the relief is described as having been carved from alabaster. Published in 1594, no fewer than twenty-five out of the one hundred plates bear the legend *In Musaeo Garimberti.* A curious piece, the *Phaeton* seems more a strange all' antica variation on a classical piece, then a Hellenistic original or a Roman copy such as the one now in the Villa Borghese. As for the other pieces in the set, these were more precisely described by Cardinal Cristoforo Madruzzo when in 1576 he sent the inventory of the collection to the Duke of Bavaria, who was hoping to negotiate a purchase from Garimberto's estate. Madruzzo's text makes it possible to identify the second relief with the Weinleser or Vintage, Plate Four in the Cavalieri publication ('drei Stück von Marmelstein, in schwarzem Stein gehauen, der ein Phaethon mit dem Wagen, so vom Himmel [sic] herab in die Pfau gefallen, das andere ein Weinleser und das dritte mit Kuh und Buben ist') (Figs. 4-5).

Among the paintings housed in the library was the 'San Hieronimo con una Venere et acrmi amori, cavata da Giorgio d'Arezzo,' a copy of a work by Giorgio Vasari. The description comes from the inventory of 1569 of Garimberto's collection; it enables us to identify the type in question. Three versions are now known of the *Temptation of Saint Anthony:* one in the Palazzo Pitti; the second in the Art Institute in Chicago; and the third owned by Temple-Newsam. If Dr. Clark is correct, then Vasari intended his Venus to be read as a positive force. This Madruzzo suggested when he wrote: A Saint Jerome with Heavenly Love, that is to say Venus, who in flight with Earthy Love, which is to say Cupid ('eine Tafel von St. Jeronimo mit der göttlichen Liebe, so die Venus und weltliche Liebe verjagen tut').

In the Gallery, which Garimberto located on the piano nobile below the library, he proudly displayed in chronological order a collection of the busts of the Roman emperors. No Gallery would in fact have been complete without these and, accordingly, such heads were indeed hard to come by. A matching group was all but impossible to obtain at any cost, as Garimberto documented for the Duke of Mantua in an extraordinary letter dated 8 October 1572. The Duke of Mantua's own set was placed in niches and on the brackets of the pilasters in the *Galleria dei Mesi,* Garimberto's collection, a more varied grouping, included the likes of Julius Caesar and Pompey as well as the emperors themselves; it was placed on columns which stood against the wall. Thirteen of these, complete with bases and capitals, of the most varied veinage, are recorded in the inventory of 1569. Alternat-
ing with these columns and the Roman portraits, was a group of marble figurines. Thus, the effect must have been not dissimilar to what is seen in the left-hand bay of the Jacopo Strada sketch for the Munich Antiquarium. That drawing proposed an alternation of bays, one containing a large statue, the next two busts framing a column on which a smaller statue was placed. As Garimberto is known to have set his larger figures in the loggia, it is clear that his Gallery presented a somewhat different aspect—a collection of smaller pieces more suitable for a cabinet or studio.

In addition to panel paintings of unspecified subjects, which completed the decoration of the wall surfaces, the floor space in the Gallery contained no fewer than six tables fashioned from various types of marble and by two studios or medallion cabinets. One of them, perhaps the ‘studio grande, di belle pietre di marmo, con la sua tavola d’affresco bellissimo, colonnelle d’alabastro et statuette di marmo et di bronzo antichie per finimento, tutto corniaggiato di legno,’ is to be identified with the cabinet Garimberto commissioned from the shop of Francesco Capritani towards 1564. The obligatory item of furniture by the middle of the 16th century, these medallion cabinets were extraordinary creations of wood and marble inlays, colonnettes, marble and bronze statuettes and reliefs. They recreated on a miniature scale the polychromed richness of the Gallery itself. Aldrovandi saw Garimberto’s medallions back in 1550 displayed ‘in una cassetta lavorata alla damascina.’ Changes in taste in matters both great and small had caused Garimberto to rethink entirely his methods of display in the years leading up to Duke Alfonso II d’Este’s visit.

Among the statuettes that were interdispersed with the imperial busts in Gerolamo Garimberto’s Gallery, some can be identified with engravings in Cavalieri’s Antiquuario Statuarum Urbis Romae. These are the pieces unsuitable by their size for display in the loggia, each being about three palms high as is known from the inventory of 1569. Whereas Cavalieri did not indicate the size of the pieces he published, correspondences between the inventory and the engravings make it possible to establish this. Among the statuettes set in the Gallery was the Diana of Ephesus (iii/7) and the Terra vel Natura (iii/8) (Fig. 6). The latter was actually an incorrectly restored Jupiter Heliopolis. Unrestored examples such as the one in the Louvre show what the Garimberto piece should have looked like.

Although his letter is not clear on this point, it can be conjectured that Garimberto displayed the best of his reliefs in the Gallery. Other pieces may also have found their way into the library. Prized perhaps more for its inscription than for its artistic merits, the sarcophagus now in the Seminario Spagnuolo in Rome was more suited to the library.6 This sarcophagus came to Garimberto from the Francesco Liscia collection, a collection which accounted, as shall be seen, for many of the large-scale pieces displayed in the loggia. Among the reliefs which could have found their way into the Gallery were two reliefs engraved by Cavalieri, the Maenad Relief (iv/71) and the so-called Lauro (iv/52) (Figs. 7-8). Like the Lauro, the Maenads can be identified with a marble now in the Museo d’Antichità in Turin. In the same collection one also finds the Garimberto Hercules Strangling the Serpents, another piece engraved by Cavalieri (iii/39). As the Hercules measures 67 by 73 centimeters, it was doubtless not placed in the loggia, which was reserved for life-sized statuary. Valued at 500 scudi in the inventory of 1569, Garimberto had actually purchased it in 1564 for only 100 scudi. While Aldrovandi writing in 1550 praised Garimberto’s sleeping Cupid, this newer acquisition achieved a similar notoriety through Adriano Fuscioni’s annotations to Andrea Fulvio’s L’Antichità di Roma of 1588.

In so far as can be judged from the available evidence, Garimberto’s Gallery did not contain the large-scale objects normally found in such rooms. Rather it housed a collection of miniature or modest sized pieces, busts and statuettes such as the ‘Satyrus cum cista et fructibus.’ In a letter to Cesare Gonzaga written on 25 August 1565, Garimberto states that his statuette is worthy to be displayed next to ‘quelli famosi del gia Cardinal di Carpi.’ The Carpi reference is an important one. Ashby judged the Garimberto statuette to be an out and out forgery. Yet when compared to the Giovanni Bologna drawing of the Carpi satyr, it becomes clear that the Garimberto torso was probably an original to which the extensive but artful restorations were added by an unknown hand. What was unsuitable to be exhibited in the library or to be displayed in the Gallery was located in the loggia on the piano terreno of Garimberto’s quarters in the Gaddi Palace. Garimberto’s pantheon of the classical gods consisted of no fewer than thirteen pieces, an outdoor display not dissimilar perhaps to that known from the Heemskerck Berlin sketchbooks to have been in the courtyard of the Sassi or the Caprannica collections.

The place of honour in Garimberto’s collection was not the seated Apollo seen in the Heemskerck drawing, but rather the Pomona known from the Cavalieri engraving (iv/54). Although strikingly similar to the Grand Duke of Tuscany’s statue, now in the Uffizi, the two are not apparently identical as it was once thought. According to the annotation on the reissue of the Cavalieri plate in 1621 the Pomona was then in the hands of the Borghese family. In addition to the Jupiter with the Thunderbolt (iii/23), Garimberto’s outdoor collection boasted a Celestial Venus (iv/73). Like the Pomona, it passed into the Borghese collection. As a type this Venus is best known from the Medici version now in the Uffizi.

The growth and consolidation of the Medici collection towards 1568 parallels that of the Este, the Gonzaga and the Farnese. It also occurred at the time when Garimberto’s own ambitions to compete with

---

Figure 6. *Terra vel Natura*, engraving from G.B. de Cavalieri, *Antiquarum Statuarum*...

Figure 8. *Laurea*, engraving from G.B. de Cavalieri, *Antiquarum Statuarum*...

Figure 7. *Lachesis/Antropos*, engraving from G.B. de Cavalieri, *Antiquarum Statuarum*...

Figure 9. Bust of Lucius Verus, Modena Biblioteca Estense (Photo: Author).
these collectors were fulfilled. On 2 May 1563 Garimberto wrote to advise Cesare Gonzaga that:

Having thought myself finally cured of this craving for marbles, I find that I am still at the mercy of this nine magnificent obsession. Indeed I have only just now purchased from the Lisca heirs all of these antiquities. Among them are nine notable statues including the celebrated Pomona which Your Excellency doubtless recalls having seen a short while ago... (non voglio tacere che quando credevo di esser libero dall'infermità de' sassi, tuttavia mi trovava più infettata, havendo comprato tutte l'anticaglie della heredi del Lisca che comprendono IX statue notabili tra le quali è la Pomona famossissima che Vostra Eccellenza ha veduta altrove con più temperato giudizio che non ho fatto io).

Thus when Duke Alfonso II d'Este spent an afternoon in Garimberto's company, much of what he saw in the loggia (the Pomona, the Jupiter and the Celestial Venus) came from the holdings of the Milanese merchant Francesco Lisca.

For obvious reasons, scholars investigating the various manifestations of the humanistic study and the princely appreciation of the antique in the second half of the 16th century have limited their research largely to the major figures of the period. Utilizing a wide range of previously unexplored or under-utilized sources, this paper has sought to expand the investigation to the secondary collectors and particularly to suggest the wealth of material that awaits publication for the holdings of the Bishop of Gallesse, Gerolamo Garimberto.

It might also be useful to expand the examination of the files for the Garimberto collection into those areas which touch on the holdings of the major collectors. Anxious to keep Cesare Gonzaga abreast of the latest results of the archaeological digs, Garimberto's correspondence provides the huberto missing documentation for the Medici Hercules, the iconographically important addition to the Palazzo Pitti which rivaled what the Farnese displayed in the courtyard of their own palace in Rome. In addition to providing otherwise inaccessible information on the dispersal of the legendary Cardinal Rodolfo Pio da Carpi collection, portions of which, it is now known, ended up in the imperial collection in Vienna, Garimberto also documented the rôle played by the Carpi Lucius Venus in providing the model for modern sculptors seeking to recreate the classical effect in the busts which they carved (Fig. 9). These and similar matters can be best explored, however, on some other occasions.