

## THE ANTHOLOGY OF MANNERISM AND THE RHETORIC CATEGORY OF EUGENIO BATTISTI'S *L'ANTIRINASCIMENTO*

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This article<sup>1</sup> intends to focus on Eugenio Battisti's book *L'Antirinascimento*, published for the first time in 1962 when the Italian culture struggled against the vestiges of fascism. We will deal with the historiography of that period related to the Renaissance-Mannerism debates in order to understand better the implications stimulated by *L'Antirinascimento*.

Battisti was born in Turin, in 1924 and he died in Rome, in 1989. During his youth he experienced the Second World War and he militated in the resistance movement in his home town. By then he got involved mostly with theatre actions, showing his special attention to the culture. His critical thinking was characterized by a peculiar anxiety that pushed him towards a constant review of the *status quo*: an operative skepticism that organized his thinking in dialectical structures like the oppositions between comedy and tragedy, renaissance and baroque, classical and anticlassical, but also – and mainly – a constant renovation and questioning of those classifications.

Battisti was a member of Lionello Venturi's school, opposed to Roberto Longhi's. Battisti experienced a crucial moment of change in art historiography: when important influences by the German school narrowed the limits that separated the roles of the art historian and critic of art. *L'Antirinascimento* will be here considered as a proposal of reviewing the romantic (but still current) notion of Renaissance considered as a period that – surpassing the medieval shadows – achieved the ultimate triumph of rationality. Against the traditional interpretation of Renaissance

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<sup>1</sup> This article is part of my PHd thesis: *Eugenio Battisti and the conceptual and historiographical lexicon of L'Antirinascimento* defended on 2013, IFCH-UNICAMP and founded by CNPq.

contemplated as a turning point of history, Battisti investigated the conservations of the medieval world during the renaissance culture and the artistic creation as free assimilation and emulation of other cultures. His *modus operandi* is characterized by the skepticism of a utopian methodology free of any conclusive results.

In the next pages we will focus on the term *antirinascimento* as the principal tool to understand Battisti's book. We will highlight the debates that bring the author to dedicate himself to this argument in the first chapter of his book, entitled *L'Antirinascimento o Manierismo?*

The prefix *anti* suggests another side of history. The antithetical character of its etymology implies the presumed anticlassical aspect of mannerism. To understand the term *antirinascimento*, therefore, it is essential to deal with the infinite debate about mannerism.

Like a screenplay the author starts his book describing an imaginary scenario with gothic Florentine monuments agglomerated in a cinematographic city with a lively social activity. It is necessary, however, to open our eyes to see that this city is indeed Florence. Constantly described as the authentic location of the utopians, Florence inspired the representation of the *ideal city*, incorruptible and eternal, as it is possible to see in some paintings<sup>2</sup>. In Battisti's words: "dove l'umano è contemperato al trascendente, l'istinto alla legge, il singolo alla società, come nelle repubbliche degli utopisti"<sup>3</sup>. Battisti compared the "gothic Florence" (the idealized city) with what he called as "real Florence", that couldn't be summed up by its walls, palaces, squares, frescos and mathematical calculations of its architects. Through the communal Florence (the one of Brunelleschi) Battisti focused his lens on the internal structures, on the

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<sup>2</sup> Battisti refers to three paintings named "ideal city". One is at Walters Art Museum, in Baltimore and is related to Fra Carnevale. The second is at Gemäldegalerie in Berlin and is related to Francesco di Giorgio Martini. And the last is at Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, in Urbino and is related to Piero della Francesca. Their authorship are not confirmed but is believed they were commissioned to Federico da Montefeltro, in Urbino.

<sup>3</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. *L'Antirinascimento*. Torino: Nino Aragno Editore, 2005, p. 6.

narrow streets, on the confusing topography of its roofs, on a spontaneous city as a monumental *Wunderkammern*, where all the elements are maintained, creating a chaotic and non organic Florence, by him identified as “real”.

This comparison introduces the key-approach of his book: the problems of the historiography about Renaissance. It is necessary to highlight that the differences between the “ideal Florence” and the “real Florence” are the same as those between the public and the private morality, between the oratory in Latin and the vernacular novelistic. The historiography authenticated those *vedute urbane* as the distinctive aspect of a period that we call Renaissance: a period considered as a new era of new values. It is missing, however, as Battisti says, an idea of continuity that could explain the phenomenon of renaissance by its opposites.

The author propones a general critic to the historiography about Renaissance, specially addressed to the wide and not careful definitions of this period. Battisti maintains that before thinking about the concept of mannerism it is necessary to review our concept of renaissance.

“In base alle nuove esperienze della critica figurativa, e a una migliore conoscenza dei monumenti, il grande blocco dell’arte cinquecentesca, tradizionalmente fatto coincidere con il pieno rinascimento, si è dimostrato sempre meno omogeneo, tanto da richiedere uno spezzettamento in più fasi stilistiche. Una di quelle è il manierismo, il cui nome si riferisce a una peculiare poetica, espressa con particolare chiarezza da Michelangelo, e che spicca per il suo carattere polemico contro il classicismo cinquecentesco, rappresentato specialmente dal momento più olimpico di Raffaello, quello della Scuola di Atene. Ma poco per volta nella storiografia questo stile è cresciuto di importanza, divorando sempre più il classicismo, tanto da ridurlo a un episodio di circa una quindicina d’anni posto all’inizio del Cinquecento, e dimostrandosi assai meglio atto ad interpretare le maggiori manifestazioni d’italianismo della cultura eropea, del Cinquecento e di parte del Seicento,

prima dell'espansione altrettanto trionfale dello stile berniniano-rubensiano. Anche molti dei fenomeni letterari che si definivano barocchi, come il concettismo e il gongorismo, sembrano oggi più connessi alla poetica manieristica che a quella barocca. Il termine di rinascimento è rimasto poi, dal punto de vista della critica figurativa, svuotato d'ogni valore, giacchè non coincide né con il classicismo, né con il manierismo. [...]

Manierismo e classicismo dovrebbero inoltre essere aspetti differenziati del rinascimento, che li comprende entrambi; ma che cosa sia il rinascimento almeno in linea di massima, nessuno più lo dice"<sup>4</sup>.

In this text Battisti shows his distaste about the way the reviews of historiography are conducted: the enlargement of the territory known as mannerism narrows the limits of renaissance<sup>5</sup>.

*L'Antirinascimento* belongs to a movement of new conceptions and reflections on the debate about mannerism that took place in the first half of the XX century. The term *maniera* recalls Giorgio Vasari, who used it with different meanings indicating an individual style<sup>6</sup> or a judgment – *bella maniera, buona maniera, cattiva maniera* – but never in a pejorative sense, as it was done by Giovanni Pietro Bellori. With Bellori the term *maniera* was regarded as a vice – something vulgar that declines the beauty achieved by Raphael<sup>7</sup> – and the use of the term was legitimized with Luigi Lanzi<sup>8</sup>, who

<sup>4</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. *Op. cit.*, 2005, pp. 25 a 27.

<sup>5</sup> Battisti's wonderment, in a certain extent, was brought forward by Roberto Longhi in his analysis of Michelangelo's Tondo Doni, in 1951, in a text about the monograph that Paola Barocchi dedicated to Rosso Fiorentino: LONGHI, R. "Il Rosso Fiorentino" (1951). In: *Opere Complete, VIII/2: Cinquecento Classico e Cinquecento Manieristico*. Florença: Sansoni, pp. 99-102.

<sup>6</sup> The ideal of an individual style is about an alteration of a model that is not longer in nature, but must be created by the artist. It is opposed to the premises of some painting treatises written by Leon Battista Alberti, Cennino Cennini and Leonardo da Vinci, that exalt the importance of copying the nature and not other artists, avoiding to be grandson of nature, instead of being his son.

<sup>7</sup> This interpretation of *maniera* is seen in Annibale Carracci's biography, when Bellori refers to it as a "fantastica Idea", that is, an inspiration that is not found in nature, criticizing the artist that does not imitates, but because of the practices vices is distant from the nature.

translated the French term *maniériste* to refer to a group of artists criticized by Bellori.

At the beginning of the XX century the critic of art of the mannerists underwent some changes. Artists who were not famous gained more attention from art historians, stimulating new ways of understanding the Renaissance. The explanation for those changes is currently linked to the inspiration coming from the expressionism and surrealism that offered a new sensibility in the history of forms. This inspiration was felt especially among the North European scholars, mainly by Max Dvořák. The sensibility brought by this new inspiration redirected the horizons of Italian art history that so begun to investigate previously unknown artists from the *Cinquecento*.

We can point out to three crucial periods for those changes that brought the Mannerism inside the debates of art history. The first period consists in the first three decades of the XX century, when Alois Riegl<sup>9</sup> proposed a new interpretation of mannerism as a decorative effect. It was a distant point of view with respect to the pejorative interpretations maintained by the previous critic of art, as in Burckhardt's *Il Cicerone* (1855). Together with Riegl there were other two important names in this first period: Max Dvořák<sup>10</sup> and Walter Friedländer<sup>11</sup>. Those three art historians had different perspectives: Dvořák understood the mannerism more as a universal idea of a spiritual change than as a formal innovation; Friedländer mapped the phenomenon systematizing, for the first time, the Mannerism as a period – dated between 1520 and 1590 – and stimulating new considerations about the classical style of the High Renaissance. In spite of the differences between them, those three authors had in common the proposal of reviewing the Italian *Cinquecento*. Some monographic studies about

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<sup>8</sup> LANZI, Luigi Antonio. *La storia pittorica della Italia inferiore o sia della scuola fiorentina, senese, romana e napoletana*. Stamperia di Antonio Giuseppe Pagani e Comp. Firenze, 1792.

<sup>9</sup> *Die Entstehung der Barockkunst in Rome*, 1908.

<sup>10</sup> *Geschichte der ital. Kunst im Zeitaler der Renaissance*, 1928.

<sup>11</sup> *Die Entstehung des antiklassischen Stiles in der ital. Malerei um 1520*, 1925.

unknown artists were part of this first period, hence stimulating new reflections<sup>12</sup>. Also important in this first period were researches about mannerism in architecture<sup>13</sup> that brought a conceptual expansion of the term – not only understood as a stylistic element or a formal pictorial characteristic, but as a new artistic phase that was achieving a place in art history.

The second period was the decades of 1940's and 1950's, when the debates centered in the attempt to delimitate the place of origin of the mannerism. Once the innate motifs of the mannerism were discussed, the studies began to be dedicated to its territorial definitions. Rome and Florence were poles of two different opinions. On the one hand, the positions that saw Rome as the place of the emergence of the mannerism suggested a deep link between the mannerism and the religious crises of the Counter Reformation. On the other hand the position that placed the mannerism emergence in Florence seemed to understand it as a natural development of the renaissance art, as a reaction to the classical aesthetics.

Those were the problems that were studied by many art historians. Representatives of this second period were names as Roberto Longhi, Luisa Becherucci, Giuliano Briganti and S.J. Freedberg. Longhi indentified the *maniera* in Michelangelo's *Tondo Doni* (1506-1507) shortening the "classical apex" that "wouldn't take more than a few years". Becherucci<sup>14</sup>, instead, indorsed a restricted use of the term *mannerism* ascribing it only to

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<sup>12</sup> Some examples: FRÖHLICH-BUME, Lili. *Parmigianino und der Manierismus*, 1921.; LONGHI, Roberto. *Precisioni sulle Gallerie italiane: La Galeria Borghese*, 1928.; JUDEY, J. *Domenico Beccafumi*, 1932.

<sup>13</sup> See: SEDLMAYR, Hans. *Die Architektur Borrominis*, 1930.; WITTKOWER, Rudolf. "Michelangelo's Biblioteca Laurenziana". In: *Art Bulletin* n°. 16, 1934, pp. 123-218.; GOMBRICH, Ernst. "Zum werke Giulio Romanos". In: *Jarbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlugen in Wien* N.F. 9, 1934-35, pp. 121-150.

<sup>14</sup> BECHERUCCI, Luisa. *I Manieristi Toscani*. Bergamo: Ist. Ital. D'Arti Grafiche, 1944.; BECHERUCCI, Luisa. "Momenti dell'arte Fiorentina nel Cinquecento". In: *Il Cinquecento*, 1955, pp. 159-183.

the artists of the end of XVI century, whereas Briganti proposed a critical reevaluation of the mannerism, understanding it exclusively as a figurative and formal component. Moreover, Freedberg's ideas differed from Briganti's ideas in that he considered the mannerism as an attitude not related with its exterior aspects (as we can realize when he compared Parmigianino's "decorative" mannerism to the Pontormo's "expressive" manner). It is important to recall that the role of Venice played an important part in the discussions of the mannerism. Once Rome and Florence were the main centers of the mannerism, the role of Venice remained as an opened and unclear theme.

By means of these studies, the mannerism issue achieved better contributions. Many exhibitions organized not only in Italy, but in the whole Europe have also an important role. One of the most relevant was in 1940: *La Mostra del Cinquecento Toscano*. And after this one we can remember: *Lelio Orsi*, in Reggio (1952); *Fontainebleau e la Maniera Italiana*, in Naples (1952); *Mostra dei disegni dei primi manieristi italiani*, in Amsterdam and Florence (1954); *Manieristi piemontesi e Lombardi*, in Turin (1954); and *Le Triomphe du Maniérisme Européen*, at Rijksmuseum Amsterdam (1954). In 1956 was published the first *Storiografia del Manierismo*, written by Giusta Nicco Fasola.

The third period is the one during the decades of 1960's and 1970's, starting with a very influential contribution for the future studies: *La Maniera Italiana*, written by Briganti, in 1961. According to Fasola, Briganti inaugurated the supremacy of the Italian historiography on the German's which was responsible for the "rescue" of the mannerism and for its insertion on the mainstream history of art. The importance of Briganti's book was the legitimization of the Mannerism as a systematized period. Following Longhi's indications, Briganti found the years between 1503 and 1506 in Florence as decisive for a change in art history, especially with the battles of Anghiari and Cascina, painted by Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo. He divided the *maniera* in two artistic currents: the first in Rome and the other in Tuscany, not differentiated chronologically but

conceptually.

According to Pinelli, Briganti pushed the Italian historiography to a new era when his publication stimulated important contributions gathered in two international congresses: *Manierismo, Barroco e Rococo: concetti e termini*, in 1960, in Rome; and *XX Convegno Internazionale di Storia dell'Arte*, in 1961, in New York. In the second one the most important contributions were by John Shearman and Craig Hugh Smyth with the respective talks: '*Maniera*' as an aesthetic ideal, and *Mannerism and 'Maniera'*. Both authors proposed an interpretation of the mannerism as a change of the "figurative taste", linked to a sophisticated and elegant society. Shearman went beyond, not only he considered the mannerism as an expressive aspect, but also he considered it as a "stylish style": an exacerbated stylization in favor of a sophisticated taste.

The Italian historiography was, then, growing and enriching its studies on the mannerism. However, the enrichment of its studies stimulated also a rhetorical prolixity that did not solve the main historiographical problems. One of the clearest example of this was Freedberg's second monograph – *Painting in Italy 1500-1600*, published in 1971 (indeed an elaboration of an older article published in 1965 – *Observations on the Painting of the Maniera*). In this book (1971) Freedberg, trying to establish an evolution of Mannerism, divided the Italian *Cinquecento* in different periods. He placed its origin in Florence with Michelangelo, then he named as *first maniera* the first period until 1535, and finally as *high maniera* the period from 1535 to 1575. Freedberg seems to demonstrate his understanding of the mannerism as a non homogeneous period, but he loses himself in categories such as *counter-maniera*, *high maniera*, *anti maniera*, *neo-maniera* and *post-maniera*, that denounces, above all, the clutter achieved by the mannerism debates.

Even claiming the existence of differences between the mannerism and the so called *antirinascimento*, Eugenio Battisti in the first chapter of his book discusses the interpretations of the first in order to clear the second. Contributing to the studies on mannerism, Battisti considers three other



important art historians: Wylie Sypher (United States, 1905-1987), Gustav René Hocke (Brussels, 1908-1985) and Ernst Robert Curtius (Germany, 1814-1896). Battisti attributes to Sypher the merit of enforcing the “formal analogy” that conceives the history of art as part of the history of culture. However, Battisti also claims that this point of view does not solve the problem of the mannerism, since Sypher restricts it to an anticlassical phase of the renaissance. The ideas of Hocke and Curtius are better accepted by Battisti because they do not make use of a chronological definition, but they consider the mannerism phenomenon as a fight between two constant forces. Nevertheless, the problems of their interpretations are criticized by Battisti: Curtius associates the figurative mannerism to the mannerism in literature, but this relation is problematic because those manifestations in visual arts and in literature were not always contemporaries. Beyond that, as Battisti says, Curtius suggests that the mannerism is a manifestation of an interior idea. So this could bring an interpretation of the mannerism as a creative and inventive freedom – as if the artist of the Italian *Cinquecento* would be interested only in the “art for the sake of art”. About Hocke, Battisti explains that he identifies the mannerism with an attitude, suggesting associations with many modern ideas, but without exploring the mannerism itself.

Beyond the studies on the concept and examples of the mannerism, Battisti outlines as one of his main inspirations Hiram Hydn’s book, *The Counter Renaissance*, published in 1950 and translated to Italian in 1967<sup>15</sup>. The point of this inspiration is the idea of a thesis conjugated with an antithesis, understanding the anticlassical reaction as a classical persistence, and having a wide idea of renaissance as a period of two opposing forces: the

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<sup>15</sup> *L’Antirinascimento: alcune riflessioni dieci anni dopo*: “Il titolo del mio volume *L’Antirinascimento* è soltanto la traduzione in italiano di una parola inglese, quella di ‘counter-renaissance’, termine usato saltuariamente in relazione a Shakespeare, e divenuto il titolo dell’importante libro di Hiram Haydn. L’ho adottato anch’io allo scopo di estendere questa categoria, relativamente nuova, al campo delle arte visive in Europa, considerato nella sua unità. Uso il termine ‘antirinascimento’ soprattutto perché voglio mettere in risalto non un rapporto di evoluzione, ma un confronto di scontro violento tra, da una parte, le principali tendenze del tardo Quattrocento e, dall’altra parte, l’inizio del secolo successivo e il nuovo atteggiamento di un ampio settore del Cinquecento”. [BATTISTI, *L’Antirinascimento. Op. cit.*, 2005, p. XXIII].

classical interpreted as a rational field would coexists with a “inseparable shadow” considered as a reaction to its authoritarianism. Battisti exemplifies these oppositions when he describes the idea of the Ciceronian *decorum*, imposed by *Cinquecento*’s reactions to the rationalism of the first Tuscany *Quattrocento*: if during the *Quattrocento* the Ciceronian *decorum* was considered as honesty – the obedience to the order and the maintenance of the *status quo* – during the *Cinquecento*, this conception was enlarged to free an individual expressions, not understood anymore only as a maintenance to a social order.

“Nel trattato sulla pittura di Leon Battista Alberti, che è di somma importanza anche in questo contesto di idee, possiamo spigolare decine di passaggi in cui, proprio in nome del decoro, si dichiara che la “istoria è summa opera del pittore”, o si chiede che l’artista sia “docto in buone lettere”, “costumato”, “copioso di notitia di molte cose”, “familiare ad i poeti, retorici et ad li altri simili dotti di lettere”.

Ora, il Cinquecento rifiuta nettamente proprio codesta concezione quattrocentesca: ed è perciò che riesce assai difficile trovare un massimo comune denominatore, piuttosto elevato, valido sia per il XV che per il XVI secolo. [...] Nel corso della critica cinquecentesca, si possono cogliere quasi ovunque altre prove di una progressiva disgregazione del connubio umanistico fra onestà e decoro, o, se si vuole, fra virtù e magnificenza, fra espressione e geometria, fra ideazione ed esecuzione, fra modello e opera finita; sempre ormai a vantaggio dell’onesto, a scapito del decoro, anche se, purtroppo, in sede pratica, la vittoria resta spesso al secondo termine, troppo difficile da vincere, troppo accademicamente consacrato; lo dimostra, anche come indizio di una sminuita aderenza sociale e morale, il moltiplicarsi, nell’arte aulica, di immagini altrettanto vuote che magniloquenti, capaci di commuovere, caso mai, per virtù

di retorica, tramite la riflessione e il ragionamento, ma non per impulso, cioè per compartecipazione morale”<sup>16</sup>.

Haydn asserts the impossibility of defining a three centuries period<sup>17</sup> in fix characteristics, so he proposes to divide the Renaissance in three principal movements: the classical Renaissance, or humanistic; the Counter Renaissance; and the Scientific Reformation. The first movement is characterized by its relations with the medieval thinking, not only for what concerns literature and academy, but also understood as a life inspiration. By doing so the Renaissance would be understood with a major sense of continuity with respect to the medieval tradition. The author emphasizes the importance of union between faith and rationality (taking the first as subordinate to the second) in order to understand the universal, speculative and abstract philosophical theories. Those movements, according to Haydn, happened consecutively, one in reaction to another. Therefore, the Counter Renaissance should be understood as a reaction to the humanistic morality and to the scholastic intellectualism. In the scientific field this movement is represented by the radical empiricists and by the historians, poets and ethic scholars who denied the traditional concepts of “natural law” and “innate justice”, defending “pragmatic experience”; among the religious thinkers, the Reformations precursors, who repudiated rationality exalting faith. Those movements outlined by Haydn were part of the same ideological revolution – the Counter Renaissance – announced from a pragmatic, factual, particular, intuitive and instinctive philosophy, as the author says. Its apex occurred with the Scientific Revolution, achieved by Kepler and Galileo, when the rationality is revalued, not much in respect to faith but by means of its achievements in natural science.

It is interesting and important to compare the terms *antirinascimento* and *counter renaissance*. Haydn introduced his book through an organized scheme in which the counter renaissance was defined as a resistance

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<sup>16</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. *L'Antirinascimento. Op. cit.*, 2005, pp. 33-35.

<sup>17</sup> For a wide Renaissance's chronology Haydn consider as principal events the coronation of Petrarch as a poet, in April 8<sup>th</sup> 1341, and Francis Bacon's death, in April 9<sup>th</sup> 1626.

against to the humanist and classicist roots that instigated the scientific revolution. Unlike Haydn, instead of demonstrating the intrinsic characteristics of the term that entitles his book, Battisti feels the necessity to denounce the weakness and defects of the art criticism and historiography.

I suggest here an interpretation of *l'antirinascimento* in two levels of meaning: one is devoted to the renaissance culture, focusing on the problems of the Italian *Cinquecento* through the antithetical analysis between the classical (engrained in traditional roots) and the anticlassical (understood as an autonomous manifestation of independent tradition). Battisti emphasizes very often that “il Ciquecento nasce da questo coro molteplice, ed è proprio il numero, l'intensità, l'impostazione, la concordia o discordia di queste voci a caratterizzarlo, rispetto ad altri secoli e ad altri civiltà”<sup>18</sup>. The “coro molteplice” to which the author refers is represented in the index of his book, with the following chapters: 1. *Manierismo o l'antirinascimento?*; 2. *Per una mappa dell'antirinascimento figurativo*; 3. *Le radici archeologiche delle fiabe*; 4. *La fiaba nel rinascimento*; 5. *Nascita della strega*; 6. *La magia degli elementi*; 7. *Dal totem all'allegoria*; 8. *Per una iconologia degli automi*; 9. *L'illustrazione scientifica in Italia*; 10. *Dal “comico” al “genere”*; 11. *Astrologia, utopia, ragione*; 12. *Anticlassicismo e romanticismo*.

Between the legitimate and not legitimate artistic manifestations, Battisti dedicates himself to explore the Renaissance in both directions: from the crises of the art of the court to the popular culture, from the logical rationality of the classicism to the dynamism and transformation of *l'antirinascimento*.

Following the meticulous effort in every page of his book it is possible to understand the second meaning of the term *antirinascimento*. If with the first one we emphasized the link between this term and the renaissance culture, with this second level the focus is directed to the problems of the

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<sup>18</sup> BATTISTI, E. *L'Antirinascimento*. *Op. cit.*, 2005, p. 43.

artistic historiography about the Renaissance. In Battisti's words, those problems are related to the "sources' reticence". *L'antirinascimento*, therefore, is not only a study on the period of the Renaissance, but it is also on the non-official critic opposed to the legacy of the pre-romantic critic of the *Setecento* and *Ottocento*.

Battisti points to four principal myths related to the Renaissance propagated by this critic: the first one is the idea of order, proportionality, coherence and decorum; the second one is the idea of an artist devoted to the tradition – an artist who respects the principles and values and not an artist as a technician and virtuosos; the third one is the desire to add to modern art the values of an antique art of the court; finally the fourth is the condemnation of the artistic anticlassical tendencies, associated to whim and extravaganza. The critic of art and the art historiography are characterized by Battisti as exclusivist when intended as a main paradigm. Contrary to them Battisti proposes an individual, fantastic, symbolical and esoteric manifestation of the Renaissance, in need for an anticlassical analysis. Hence, he concludes that the historiography of art itself is a product of classicism.

It would be difficult to say which of these two meanings of *l'antirinascimento* is the main proposal of his book; the one dedicated to the renaissance culture or the other announced as a review of the art historiography and its methodology. Both are widely recognizable in his book. From the enthusiasm for the analysis of the anticlassical manifestation to the indignant look towards the conclusions of the historiography Battisti's book is a passionate work. Balancing from two different poles, the result of this sentimental equation is his utopian militancy.

Battisti acknowledges that the most productive studies in art history are those dedicated to a reconstruction of history, its meaning and iconology. And that this renovation is possible only through the study of the contemporary and non-European arts. Battisti also believes that in order to continue the studies of *l'antirinascimento* the scholars should walk out of the humanities libraries in direction of different sources linked to popular

culture, devotional manifestations, astrology, and that they should get acquainted more with the scientific fields than with the philosophical and literary one.

In *Per un ampliamento del concetto di manierismo*, published after *L'Antirinasimento*, Battisti questions the legitimacy of the term *mannerism*, while not denying its utility in discussions that enlarge the definitions of renaissance. The author lists three principal postulates linked to the conceptualization of the mannerism relative to chronological, stylistic and thematic delimitations. The first postulate is the difference between the *Quattrocento* and the *Cinquecento* that disturbs generic definitions of humanism and renaissance. And thus the category of “manierismo” should be interpreted as the stylistic link between the renaissance and the baroque. The second postulate consists in the identification of the mannerism with a new theory, “identificato nella teoria platonica dell’idea, nell’accezione positive dell’imitazione, cui è attribuito un ruolo creative e non riproduttivo, nello slittamento dal significato passivo a quello attivo, del termo *ingere*”<sup>19</sup>. Finally, the third one, accounts for a catalogue of psychological, symbolic, religious, or even vague movements that take place during the *Cinquecento*. Among them Battisti looks for the ones that can be identified with the roots of our contemporary culture: “permettendo così una verifica drammatica con noi stessi”<sup>20</sup>.

“Noi vorremmo qui tentar di rispondere, esclusivamente, alla domanda di base: la definizione può riuscire criticamente utile? E vorremmo farlo ora, in quanto al successo del brillante volumetto dello Shearman uscito nel 1967, alle discussioni provocate dal volume di Manfredi Taufuri (L’architettura del Manierismo nel Cinquecento

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<sup>19</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. “Per un ampliamento del concetto di manierismo”. In: *Annali dell’Istituto Storico italo germanico in Trento*, 1977. Bologna: Società Editrice il Mulino, 1978, p. 328.

<sup>20</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. *Op. cit.*, 1978.

europeo, Roma 1966), è seguita una perfino troppo larga accettazione del termine in sede di storia letteraria”<sup>21</sup>.

Even though this text has been written in a later stage (when his critical commitment in art historiography was not as sharp as in *L'Antirinascimento*), it is important to notice that his work was always directed to the review to previous knowledge and to methodological concerns. It is with this purpose that the author tries to distinguish *antirinascimento* from *manierismo*, founding the latter as a “pseudoconcetto”.

“Tuttavia, nelle idee correnti, e ancora in quasi tutti i tentativi generali di più adeguata periodizzazione del rinascimento, questa alternanza di fenomeni continua a configurarsi in rigida successione temporale, quasi come se la cultura italiana fosse rigidamente unitaria, o avesse a disposizione un solo ‘canale’ figurativo, per esprimersi: invece riconoscere ch’essa risulta da componente diverse, che a volta a volta predominano. Ne è conseguita una sempre maggior difficoltà di periodizzare, adeguatamente, i vari episodi di stile; e ancor peggio, il loro artificioso isolamento da un contesto più vasto e comune. Anche il concetto di manierismo è divenuto così un pseudo concetto. È difficile ormai dire quali possano essere le ragioni che impediscono di definire manierista un Filippino Lippi; e in un quadro più vasto non si sa più come possono essere incasellati un Bosch ed un Grünewald, giacché, se manierismo è anticlassicismo, nessuno, certo, è più anticlassico di loro. E se il manierismo o l’anticlassicismo sono un periodo cronologico, invece che una componente stilistica, ecco perso ogni criterio di definizione globale e complessiva del rinascimento, giacché, specialmente nella diffusione europea della cultura rinascimentale, le manifestazioni

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<sup>21</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. *Op. cit.*, 1978, p. 324.

cinquecentesche anticlassiche prevalgono di gran lunga su quelle difinibili per il loro stile classicistiche”<sup>22</sup>.

According to Battisti, the force of *l'antinascimento* is linked to the crises of the art of the court<sup>23</sup>. Understanding the Renaissance as a period of two main forces of opposed origins, the author polarizes the problem: on one side, the “ideal Florence”, the gothic and the classical Renaissance; on the other side, the “real Florence” and *l'antinascimento*. By doing so, the mannerism should be understood as a reaction of a crisis, mainly political and religious. This consideration would simplify the main oppositions on the Renaissance. Battisti does not linked the mannerism to the anticlassical, recurrently understood as creative freedom, as an individual trend opposed to classical rules, but he sees mannerism and anticlassicism as a balance between two opposites poles. Because of its crisis, the art of the court found within the anticlassical forms its ways of expression; on the contrary, these forms used the collapse of authority to promote themselves.

“Ma è solo quando l'anticlassicismo riesce a far pendere, col suo peso, la bilancia, quasi come il diavolo che si aggrappa alla stadera di san Michele, che il dualismo, da noi avvertito entro la cultura cinquecentesca, si riduce e quasi si annulla. L'età del manierismo è uno di questi casi; un altro è l'arte della riforma; un terzo ancora, il naturalismo della prima contrariforma cattolica; un quarto è il grande fasto, da macchina processionale, del cosiddetto barocco gesuitico”<sup>24</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. *Op. cit.*, 2005, p. 15.

<sup>23</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. *Op. cit.*, 2005, p. 50: “Naturalmente, la forza e l'autorità di questa corrente diventa particolarmente pressante quando la cultura aulica manca di vitalità, o meglio, quando crisi economiche, o politiche, o religiose, o fenomeni inspiegabili come, durante il rinascimento, comete, inondazioni, terremoti, carestie, pestilenze, generano un diffuso stato di ansia e consentono appunto la nascita di una pubblicitistica ad hoc, di stampe popolari, di libelli o scritti esplicativi, di vaticini. Ed è proprio in questi momenti che anche le componenti erudite dell'anticlassicismo e il riferimento agli scrittori dell'antichità si fanno più consapevoli e convincenti”.

<sup>24</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. *Op. cit.*, 2005, p. 51.



George Weise in *Il Manierismo ed Il concetto di Antirinascimento*<sup>25</sup>, discusses this problem not only comparing both terms, but thinking the renaissance through Battisti's lens: if *l'antirinascimento* is not mannerism and if mannerism is not anticlassicism, what is renaissance?

“Col dichiararsi sempre più convinto ‘che quanto da tempo è definito ‘rinascimento’ non sia altro che il classicismo’, il Battisti si schiera risolutamente con quei studiosi che, in contrasto con la tesi burckhardiana, intravedono il fatto essenziale del Rinascimento – e l’apporto specifico dell’Italia – non più nel prevalere del realismo e dell’immanentismo quattrocenteschi, ma nell’instaurazione della nuova visione classica ed idealizzante, sviluppata dall’Umanesimo al contatto col mondo antico e divenuta clima generale verso la fine del Quattrocento. Ma neanche col Manierismo si può identificare senz’altro, secondo il Battisti, la corrente anticlassica ed antirinascimentale, riferendosi, a suo avviso, la designazione di Anticlassicismo a un fenomeno ‘estremamente più vasto e vago, composito e differenziato’ per poter essere inquadrato in una sola categoria stilistica, e non trovandosi, prescindendo dalla ‘comune consapevolezza di una crisi’ e dal ‘comune atteggiamento anti-intelettualistico, antimoralistico, antisintetizzante, antiautoritario’ niente che possa ricollegare il fenomeno specifico qualificabile di Manierismo alle tante altre manifestazioni artistiche e spirituali, appartenenti all’Antirinascimento ed alla corrente anticlassica. In questo senso occorre distinguere dal Manierismo non solo le creazioni di stampo prebarocco, a cui si è fatto cenno, ma l’intera gamma degli elementi suggestivistici, irrazionali, bizzarri e stravaganti, antitetici agli ideali classici di armonia, norma e compostezza, e che in massima parte, secondo me, rientrano piuttosto nella categoria del Barocco e sono da

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<sup>25</sup> WEISE, Georg. “Il Manierismo. Bilancio critico del Problema stilistico e culturale”. In: *Accademia Toscana di Scienze e Lettere. “La Colombaria”*. “Studi” XX. Firenze. Leo S. Olschki Editore, 1971.

identificare col suo gusto dell'irregolare e dell'eccessivo"<sup>26</sup>.

Weise's critic centers on Battisti's distinction between *l'antirinascimento* and other anticlassical concepts. According to Battisti, the Renaissance has two main moments: "il nuovo orientamento realistico, trionfante all'inizio del Quattrocento"; and "il sorgere della nuova visione classica ed idealizzatrice, maturate al contatto con l'antichità ed opposta alla predizione del realismo quattrocentesco per il caratteristico e l'individuale"<sup>27</sup>. Weise demonstrates that Battisti's idea of the Renaissance is in opposition with Burckhardt's thesis that exalts exclusively the principles of immanentism and realism. By doing so, Weise concludes that Battisti's idea restricts the Renaissance to its classic phase:

[...] "mi pare eccessivo il voler limitare alla sola fase classica il concetto di Rinascimento e l'escluderne – qualificando come 'Antirinascimento' – stadi preliminari di non minore importanza storica. Anche l'idea di una reazione cronologicamente posteriore, che potrebbe sembrare suggerita dal prefisso 'anti', mi sembra un po' arbitraria, almeno per quel che concerne la componente naturalistica"<sup>28</sup>.

Considering a book like *L'Antirinascimento*, we cannot conclude that Battisti misunderstood the naturalistic motifs of the renaissance culture. By Weise words we realize that his interpretation of *l'antirinascimento* is restricted to the first meaning mentioned above. Weise explains the prefix *anti* as a chronological explanation referred to a previous phase of the Renaissance and, therefore, to a previous phase of the naturalism of the *Quattrocento* and of the medieval traditions that survived during the *Cinquecento*.

It is worth mentioning that what Weise pointed out as a gap in Battisti's

<sup>26</sup> WEISE, Georg, *Op. cit.*, 1971, pp.188-189.

<sup>27</sup> WEISE, Georg, *Op. cit.*, 1971, p.188, nota 2.

<sup>28</sup> WEISE, Georg, *Op. cit.*, 1971, p.188.

theory is considered here as a methodology choice. The reorganization of the facts by a different perspective generates an inversion of the factors: if we consider the classicism as a reaction to the irrational instead of considering the anticlassicism as a reaction to the classical forms, what would emerge from the culture of the *Cinquecento*? Considering this point of view we cannot conclude that Battisti reduces the Renaissance to its classical forms, but he realizes that *l'antirinascimento's* voices spoke louder than the ones of the classicism at the time of the Renaissance:

“Il classicismo cinquecentesco, della corte di Leone X e Giulio II, resta così, per ora, configurato come una cima isolata fra due declivi – se non addirittura una valle fra due altipiani – e analogamente il classicismo del primo Quattrocento fiorentino (se non lo si interpreta come una conclusione del classicismo medievale), appare addirittura un roccione isolato, entro la brughiera o la selva fiorita del tardogotico”<sup>29</sup>.

The term *antirinascimento* does not consist, however, in an alternative proposal with respect to other terms. Battisti often acknowledges that the choice of his book's title is a result of his ideas and it is not solid conclusion of his studies. In *L'antirinascimento: Alcune Riflessioni dieci anni dopo* the author balances the necessity to delimit styles and periods to understand history, but he also recognizes the problems that arise from these delimitations: [...] “manierismo, antirinascimento? La mia opinione è oggi più confuse che mai”<sup>30</sup>.

The term *tardo rinascimento* has chronological limitations; *anticlassicismo*, instead, is a very broad and vast definition; *manierismo* has too many interpretations, sometimes even opposed; and *antirinascimento* wouldn't be different, as Battisti maintains. However, the main point we should not forget is the second level of *l'antirinascimento's* meaning that does not

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<sup>29</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. *Op. cit.*, 2005, pp. 14-15.

<sup>30</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. *Op. cit.*, 2005, p. XXXVI.

originate only from the problems of the *Cinquecento* culture, but that also pertains to issues of art historiography. In this way, *l'antirinascimento* is first of all a theorization about art historian's method, idealized as a vast catalogue of the taste of the culture. As a consequence we can say that *l'antirinascimento* is also the result of an interdisciplinary study.

It is worth recalling the text of 1978 – in which Battisti exposed his thoughts about the meanings of mannerism – to better understand the terminology of *antirinascimento* as a critical and methodological proposal. The studies about the mannerism had different motivations in art history. As we saw before, there were three important moments: from the beginning of the XX century until the 1930's, with the works of Alois Riegl, Max Dvořák and Walter Friedländer; from the 1940's to the 1950's with the exhibitions dedicated to the mannerism and the studies of Roberto Longhi, Luisa Becherucci, Giuliano Briganti and S.J.Freedberg; and finally, during the 1960's and the 1970's, with Briganti and with Shearman and Craig Hugh Smyth in the occasions of the congresses in New York and Rome.

In the text of 1977 Battisti analyses the uses of the term mannerism in seven different historical phases. Even if the author calls them “historical phases” they do not consist in a chronological reconstruction of the use of the term mannerism. Battisti is interested, mainly, in understanding the notion of mannerism stimulated by “simpatia” or “odio”, considered as “esclusivi orientamenti di indagine e interessi”<sup>31</sup>. The first historical phase is characterized by “preoccupazioni semantiche”<sup>32</sup>, exemplified by the studies of Dvořák that Battisti considered together with Leo Spizer's *Classical and Christian Ideas of World Harmony*, of 1944-45. The second phase is determined by “coincidenza di gusto”<sup>33</sup>, with as its most important interpreter the XV<sup>o</sup> chapter of E.R.Curtius, *Europäische Literatur und*

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<sup>31</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. “Per un ampliamento del concetto di manierismo”. In: *Annali dell'Istituto Storico italo germanico in Trento, 1977*. Bologna: Società Editrice il Mulino, 1978, p. 325.

<sup>32</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. *Op. cit.*, 1978.

<sup>33</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. *Op. cit.*, 1978.

*lateinisches Mittelalter*, of 1953 and Gustav René Hocke, *Rowohlts Deutsche Enzyklopädie*. The third phase is concerned with a “vasta indagine antiquaria e conoscitiva”<sup>34</sup> promoted by Roberto Longhi’s work that reminds of a catalogue that Battisti compares with the exhibitions dedicated to Fontanebleau’s court (one in Naples, in 1952 and other in Paris, in 1972-73). In this phase we find also S. J. Freedberg’s publications of 1961 and 1971, committed to provide a date and a topography of the High Renaissance. The fourth phase consists in some studies on the concept of the mannerism and it is represented by two names: C.H.Smyth, *Mannerism and Maniera*, of 1963 and *Scrittori d’Arte*, organized by Paola Barrochi. The fifth phase is a “catalogazione per tematica”<sup>35</sup>, made by iconology’s methods or by the history of ideas. Battisti localized his *L’Antirinascimento* in this phase (we will comment on this later). The sixth phase is an expansion of the discussions about the mannerism in other disciplines like architecture, music and literature. The main thinkers of this phase are E. Lowinsky, M.L. Altieri Biagi, N. Borsellino, M. Costanzo, C. Dionisotti, P. Camporesi, C. Ossola, Padre G. Pozzi, A. Quondam, E. Raimondi, M. Rak, C. Segre, F. Ulivi and G. Weise. Finally the seventh phase can be seen as a beginning of a new perspective about the society of a dominant culture of the *Cinquecento*, for which “le manifestazioni del manierismo finiscono per venire assorbite entro la cultura di corte del periodo”<sup>36</sup>. For this association between mannerism and the court Battisti indicates Arnold Hauser as pioneer, especially with *Storia Sociale dell’arte e Sociologia dell’Arte*. Battisti points out some studies like from L. Berti and John Shearman, indicating also the triennial program of *Centro di Studi “Europa delle Corti”*.

To come back to the fifth phase, defined as “catalogazione per tematica”, Battisti writes:

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<sup>34</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. *Op. cit.*, 1978, p. 326.

<sup>35</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. *Op. cit.*, 1978, p. 326.

<sup>36</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. *Op. cit.*, 1978, p. 327.

[...] “nonostante le critiche fatte (anche dai “puri” di uno e dell’altro método) credo che il mio *Antirinascimento* costituisca una fase importante, anche per avere impostato il problema della doppia cultura, umanistica e scientifica, da un lato; colta e popolare dall’altro, ed aver tenuto in conto l’area antropologica e poi psicologica del problema”<sup>37</sup>.

Battisti classifies his *L’Antirinascimento* as an important contribution to the studies of the mannerism especially because he intended to provide a vast catalogue of the cultural ambiguities of the XVI century. Battisti looked for the non homogeneity of the *Cinquecento* in every detail of its culture, but his lenses focused more on the non official manifestations, so proposing new artistic dialogues, as we can see in an example from chapter three *Le radici archeologiche delle fiabe*: Battisti says we can understand better the development of the arts during the XVI century if we look at the active commerce of gems, stamps and jewelry instead of researching the influences of the monumental statuary and the imperial architecture on the general artistic scenario<sup>38</sup>. According to the author, the same thing occurs in literature: the XVI century culture consumed Cicero as much as Apuleio and Ovid, considered by Battisti as “mostruose metamorfosi, fonti prime, in campo poetico, del fantastico e del diabolico figurativo”<sup>39</sup>.

This historiographical attitude applied by Battisti is opposed, as the author says, to the “official” historiography, currently related to the *Ottocento* critic and its consequences. It is worth reproducing here the introduction of the third chapter where Battisti distinguishes both attitudes:

<sup>37</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. *Op. cit.*, 1978, p. 326.

<sup>38</sup> Here Battisti, pp. 60-61, notes 8 and 10, refers to Baltrušaitis, as *Le moyen âge fantastique*, Paris, 1960 and *Réveils et prodiges. Le gothique fantastique*, Paris, 1960 and to Chastel’s works, as *Les médaillons du Palais Médicis et la cornaline de Cosme*, in *Art et humanisme à Florence au temps de Laurent le Magnifique*, Paris, 1959.

<sup>39</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. *Op. cit.*, 2005, p. 61.

“Mentre in genere gli studiosi ottocenteschi del rinascimento, di fronte all'imponente produzione pittorica e monumentale, e al consapevole sorgere di un'archeologia avente già aspetto scientifico, a scavi ed esplorazioni accompagnati da volumi di documentazione d'una grafica tuttora senza confronti, prodotti da una editoria specializzata in libri illustrati, si stupivano per la ricchezza di temi, di conoscenze, di immagini del Cinquecento, oggi, meglio informati sulla vastità delle fonti figurative note al medioevo, dovremmo forse meravigliarci della quantità di lacune ed esclusioni, della limitatezza, talvolta inspiegabile di informazione rispetto a ciò che già prima era noto e a quanto sarebbe stato, poco dopo, “scoperto” dallo storicismo illuminista e romantico”<sup>40</sup>.

The proposal of a catalogue of the cultural manifestations of the *Cinquecento* is linked, therefore, to a commitment in filling up the gaps and what is left out by the *Ottocento's* studies on the Renaissance. We could say that this is one of the many proposals of his book, and so we could place *L'Antirinascimento* in the historiographical tradition whose *auctoritates* are Hiram Haydn, *The Counter Renaissance* (1950), Enrico Castelli, *Il demoniaco nell'arte* (1952); Jurgius Baltrušaitis, *Le moyen âge fantastique* (1955) and *Réveils et prodiges, Le gothique fantastique* (1960); just to name a few.

By insisting on a double meaning of *L'Antirinascimento* in order to get a wider understanding of Battisti's book, we can say that his catalogue-method is linked to the first meaning. The expansion of the studies on the *Cinquecento* is the main goal of his historiographical review and so the prefix *anti* is the tool that instigates the oppositions to the official critic.

After analyzing this first meaning, we can understand better the second one, that Weise did not take into consideration in his critical investigation of *L'Antirinascimento*. To this aim we need to recall the 1978's publication,

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<sup>40</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. *Op. cit.*, 2005, p. 57.

where Battisti compares the contemporary critic of art to the critic of art from the *Cinquecento*. The differences between Ludovico Dolce and Giorgio Vasari are understood by Battisti as incompatibilities of taste. While Ludovico Dolce opposed the diligence of the artists of the *Quattrocento* to majestic and softness forms – relating art to a direct dependency to nature – Vasari focused on the artistic mental progress: he did not take into account external conditions in the creative process neither any negative aspect of the imitation, but he maintained that art comes from art. However, what interested Battisti were not the debates developed in Venice's and Florence's schools: for example the Venetian ideology of transforming art in science and the Florentine violation of the common and scientific experience in the name of art. Between the theoretical debates brought to the fore by Dolce and Vasari there is a fundamental point in common that inspired Battisti's researches: "Tuttavia, ciò che accomuna i due critici ed i loro ambiti culturale, è l'uso di identiche categorie retoriche, pro o contro, magari di segno invertito, ma con ruolo, sempre di protagoniste primarie"<sup>41</sup>.

"Gli uomini del cinquecento, poi, sono abbastanza cinici da operare con le figure che piacciono o spiacciono al loro pubblico. [...] Ecco così inscenata una battaglia che in genere vede schierate dal lato positivo le personificazioni della Convenienza, del Decoro, della Varietà, dell'Imitazione, della Correzione, della Diligenza, della Maestà, del Verosimile, e dall'altro, quelle del Capriccio, della Licenza, dell'Affettazione, ecc"<sup>42</sup>.

Those rhetoric categories are the criteria that modeled the critic judgments of the thinkers of the *Cinquecento*. They were not structured by a single visual model, but by a "metamodello che galleggia al di sopra delle varie arti ed espressioni"<sup>43</sup>. Battisti's praise to the *Cinquecento's* critic is due to

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<sup>41</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. "Per un ampliamento del concetto di manierismo". In: *Annali dell'Istituto Storico italo germanico in Trento, 1977*. Bologna: Società Editrice il Mulino, 1978, p. 339.

<sup>42</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. *Op. cit.*, 1978, pp. 336-337.

<sup>43</sup> BATTISTI, Eugenio. *Op. cit.*, 1978, p. 336.



the abstractionist aspect and the artificiality of its *modus operandi* that achieves a wide perspective of a global culture.

Battisti recalls Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*, a book that can be considered as a dictionary of the rhetoric categories of the *Cinquecento*, in order to exemplify the artificial level achieved in this culture. According to Battisti, the personification of *Capriccio* – characterized between the *dandy* and the mad, the intellectual libertine and the noble bohemian – is opposed to the personification of *Correzione* – loved by the artist of the *Quattrocento*. But, in contrast, *Capriccio* is closer to the personification of *Invenzione* – the one that manifests the intellectual capacity of improving the works of nature. With the attributes of the simian and with the mask, the personification of *Invenzione* demonstrates the artistic model's change during the *Quattrocento* and *Cinquecento*.

Bearing in mind Battisti's praise of the critics of art of the *Cinquecento* (and considering his judgment of the contemporary critic as "troppo parolaia"<sup>44</sup>) we realize the depth of the term *antirinascimento*. The second meaning, therefore, needs to be embraced as a rhetoric category of deconstruction aimed to review the traditional historiography. Taking into consideration this meaning the term *renaissance*, therefore, became the suffix of *anti*, changing the semantic functions of its title and instigating new reflections about the Renaissance and new methodological implications in the field of art history.

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<sup>44</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, expression used by Battisti referring to the research of T. de Mauro, *Il Linguaggio della Critica d'Arte*, 1965, that provides a list of 23 key-words repeated in art criticism, as "form", "figure" "style" and "taste".

