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Rivista semestrale di scienze sociali e simbolica politica

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The double face of Sovereignty

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According to Kantorowicz the rise of the national state coincides with the new definition of the sovereignty. The King has not only his physical body, but also a "public" body, related to his "officium" (public function). The first is a mortal, the second is an immortal body. This is what he named the "Two-bodies of the king". In this context one of the most important problems is the translation of the power. In the medieval world the secular power is based on an external legitimation, that is the spiritual power. This composition of the *equilibrium* between powers guarantees the continuity and the stability of social and political control. The transition by the medieval world to the early modern world imposes a new foundation of the political continuity problem in terms of dynastic inheritance. This change of perspectives is witnessed by a representational change in several images of power, in particular in those which represent the lines of political continuity through the portraits of sovereigns themselves. In fact the protagonists of the political succession are represented together in the same image, to mean that only the mortal body of the king dies, his public body is always alive.

In many medals and other representations, the Habsburg dynasty is represented through the portraits of its protagonists. Naturally the main personages are Maximilian the First, Charles the Fifth, Ferdinand the First and Phillip the Second. While the first three will be emperors, the last will be only a king. The focus of this exposure is on a series of medals and figures which represents two monarchs one in relation with the other. The idea is that the king's representation changes: if the subjects are to be considered of equal degree they will be represented in a certain way; if instead they are one subordinate to the other in another way. For "being of equal degree" I mean that the two subjects are both of the same rank; that they are related one another in a relationship that is not of father and son; that both are sovereigns by election and not by descendance. For "being one subordinate to the other" I mean, on the contrary, than the two subjects have not the same rank; that they are related one another in a "father-son" relationship; and that they have obtained the sovereignty by inheritance.

The representation of the first class is, in the medals that I have chosen, of the type "face-to-face" (affrontate). The representation of the second class is of the type "neck-to-neck" (accollate).

The medals and the figures in general terms have been ordered adopting the following classification:

1. Familiar /historical groups
2. Maximilian the First, Charles the Fifth representations
3. Maximilian the First, Charles the Fifth, Ferdinand the First representations
4. Charles the Fifth, Ferdinand the First representations
5. Charles the Fifth, Phillip the Second representations
6. Charles the Fifth, Phillip the Second, Jesus Christ representations

1. In the first type I grouped the references to a whole familiar/historical group of personages.

The group in the figure number 01 (1518), is composed by Maximilian the First, his son Phillip the Beautiful, Mary of Burgundy and his grandson Charles the First. In this engraving the four monarchs were represented like a joined group, but everyone shows his own attributions (heraldic shield, scepter, etc.). [to notice Mary of Burgundy, represented riding an ass].



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1. Massimiliano I, Maria di Borgogna, Filippo il Bello e Carlo V Xilografia di Jacob Cornelisz van Oostanen (1518)

In the figure number 02 (1537), the represented group is composed by Henry the Second, Charles the First, Caesar and Lucretia and the representation is Roman-style: it imitates a roman use that creates continuity lines not only blood-based, but also based on the political resemblances between the characters.



2. In the second type I grouped Maximilian the First and Charles the Fifth always represented "face-to-face".

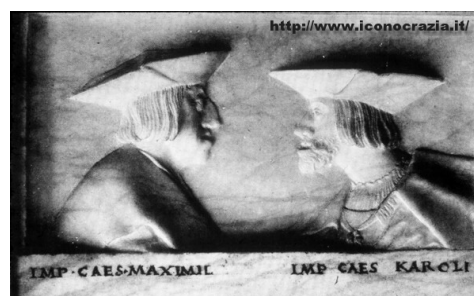
In the figure number 03 (?), a painting of Hieronymus Beck, the two Emperors are "face-to-face" and have the Golden Fleece like a common element.

This last element is also the common element, the fil-rouge connecting on a plan of substantial parity the painting protagonists. The Golden Fleece is a long period element that will involve not only Charles and Maximilian, but also Ferdinand the First and Philip the Second. Each of them, will be figured with the order's devise on his neck.

In figure 04 (1529), an alabaster relief, still the two emperors "face-to-face".



3. Massimiliano I e Carlo V (f/f) Hieronimus Beck (XVI sec.)





4. Massimiliano I e Carlo V (f/f) Bassorilievo in alabastro di Loy Hering (1529)

3. In the third type I grouped all the three emperors (Maximilian the First, Charles the Fifth and Ferdinand the First), but they are represented in the first medal "face-to-face", in the other two "neck-to-neck".

In the figure number 05 (1540), Maximilian the First is represented faced by his two grandsons, but Charles the Fifth is more visible than the other.

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5. Medaglia con Massimiliano I, Carlo V e Ferdinando I (f/f) (n/n) Medaglia di Hans Kels (1540)

In the figures number 06 (1558) and 07 (1536) the figures of the three emperors are "neck-to-neck". In the first case the medal space organization imitates the roman style (it remembers the medal of the figure 02); on the contrary, in the second medal the style is more similar to the German style medals, in particular it remembers the figure 05.

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6. Drei Kaiser Taler (n/n) Medaglia anonima (1558)



7. Medaglia con Massimiliano I, Carlo V e Ferdinando I (n/n) Medaglia di Veit Kels (1536)

4. In the fourth type I grouped the Charles the Fifth and the Ferdinand the First coupled portraits. In this case, seven figural elements out of nine selected are "face-to-face" and only the other two are "neck-to-neck", demonstrating the fact that the iconographical emphasis in the representation of the two brothers, is posed on some symbolical elements that place them both on a plan of substantial equivalence, although with one light prevalence (also chronological) of Charles the Fifth.

The figure number 08 (1536) is very interesting for the presence of the Jesus Christ cross, regarding which the two monarchs are like two planets in the classic representation displaying on the right of the Christ the sun and on the left the moon.

The figure number 09 (1530 ca) remembers the style of figure 04, Charles the Fifth and Maximilian the First "face-to-face".

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Rivista semestrale, con peer review
Aut. Trib. di Bari n. 3690//2011
num Reg. Stampa 42
ISSN 2240-760X
© 2012
designed by POOYA

Bari, 12 Dicembre 2011
Editore: Prof. Giuseppe Cascione
Dipartimento di Scienze Politiche
Università degli Studi di Bari "Aldo Moro"