## Aretino's troubled afterlife

Harald Hendrix

Aretino's death in 1556 coincided with a major shift in artistic, ethical and political attitudes governing early modern Italian culture. The experimental and highly creative drive based on the fundamental claim to freedom – in the arts like in religion and politics – that had inspired his generation came to a sudden end, being substituted by a culture in which order, control and obedience were of paramount importance. While this shift had been seasoning for some time, from the mid 1540s onwards, it was able to impose itself only at the end of the next decade, but with great force and long lasting effects. In this violent clash of cultures Pietro Aretino became a key figure of undisputed symbolic importance, recognised by partisans of both sides for whom he was a vilain or a hero. For many he represented even a combination of evil and excellence, as his legacy was seen with both disgust and admiration. Yet, its impact is undisputed, since both detractors and admirers were well aware of the far reaching implications of his example, rejecting it, contemplating it with curiosity, or using it as inspiration for their own projects.

Only when in the mid nineteenth century scholarly historiography on early modern Italy developed, Aretino's highly controversial and contested reputation changed. Starting from Burckhardt's still somewhat ambiguous celebration as one of the finest specimens of a 'Renaissance man' wholly dedicated to develop his individuality and enjoy life,<sup>2</sup> Aretino slowly became recognised as what he is: a profoundly innovative and courageous spirit who both as an artist and as a public intellectual imposed himself in a still predominantly closed context, providing fundamentally new ideas and examples to his generation and far beyond. Modern scholarship on Aretino has been developing this assessment into what now is a rich

<sup>1</sup> Cfr. Edward Muir, *The Culture Wars of the Late Renaissance: Skeptics, Libertines, and Opera* (Cambridge, Mass, 2007).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy [1860]*, transl. S.G.C. Middlemore [1878] (Kitchener, 2001), 130-134.

field of research recognised as central to Renaissance Studies, since it dwells on fundamental issues of innovation and resistance. Yet this dynamics not only characterizes Aretino's work itself, but also its reception in the three centuries between his death in 1556 and his modern re-appreciation. Thus the goal of this closing chapter is to illustrate the dynamics of Aretino's troubled afterlife discussing it as an emblematic element in the advent of modernity.

In the changing climate of the 1550s, Aretino's last years witnessed the ambiguous reactions to his bold performance as a successful literary innovator and a widely appreciated self-made public intellectual. Still a universally recognised authority, his failure to follow Pietro Bembo's career track obtaining a cardinalate was as big a setback as the escalating conflicts with some of his pupils, particularly Anton Francesco Doni. While this resistance from two quite opposite sides signals that Aretino's project had reached its limits and indeed had generated its own enemies -- in the world of power as well as in the arts --, it also opened up a new and long season where appreciation and detraction coexisted, sometimes coinciding and even generating one another. This is what the situation in the late sixteenth century suggests, when considered not only in an Italian but in an international perspective.

Starting point here is what seems an almost concerted policy of 'damnatio memoriae' engendered and systematically applied by these two opposite stakeholders, perhaps 'bien étonnés de se trouver ensemble'. While the ecclesiastical authorities used the newly developed tool of the Index Librorum Prohibitorum to not only condemn Aretino's works but make sure all extant copies were destroyed,<sup>3</sup> some of his former pupils and other aspiring authors eager to make a swift career like Aretino's initiated a slander campaign, starting with a funerary allocution full of violent defamation rhetoric and inventing a rich series of highly critical mock epitaphs.<sup>4</sup> While these combined efforts resulted in strong public condemnation of a

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> On the immediate and long-lasting effect of this prohibition, see Amedeo Quondam, "Aretino e il libro. Un repertorio, per una bibliografia", in *Pietro Aretino nel cinquecentenario della nascita* (Roma, 1995), vol. I, 197-230, part. 202-203.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Anton Francesco Doni, *Contra Aretinum (Terremoto, Vita, Oratione funerale)*, ed. Paolo Procaccioli (Manziana, 1998). On the epitaphs, cfr. also Harald Hendrix, "La funzione della morte leggendaria nella mitografia di Pietro Aretino", in *Pietro Aretino* 

figure that only a few years before had enjoyed wide recognition and appreciation, they equally engendered curiosity for what unintentionally they turned into a counterfigure, particularly on the part of those interested in critical approaches to authorities – ecclesiastical and political – and to artistic conventions.

This is the Aretino interpreted as the quintessential critical author we find as a more or less fictional protagonist in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century debates concerned with intellectual freedom, "one of the wittiest knaves that God ever made" as Thomas Nashe has it in his *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594), having advocated in his *Pierce Penniless* (1592): "We want an Aretine here among us, that might strip these golden asses out of their gray trappings, and after he had ridden them to death with railing, leane them on the dunghill for carion". <sup>5</sup> Even in Italy, the 'damnatio memoriae' policy of Aretino's opponents was not completely successful, since also in Italian texts from these decades we find him celebrated for his unyielding stance, like in Francesco Prati's *Avvisi di Parnaso* (1619) where Aretino is equated to that other quintessential critical thinker, Niccolò Machiavelli. <sup>6</sup>

For his detractors, Aretino's sharp tongue went far beyond what was acceptable, since it challenged all conventions and hierarchies, particularly in the domains of politics and religion.<sup>7</sup> This made it easy to convert reservations towards his irreverent handling of princes and other people of authority into something even much larger, the accusation of atheism, grounded in one of the most wicked and

*nel cinquecentenario della nascita*, vol. I, 453-469. Other attacks on Aretino are illustrated in Giuseppe Crimi, "Otto sonetti contro Pietro Aretino: ipotesi per la paternità", *L'Ellisse. Studi storici di letteratura italiana*, X-1 (2015): 113-130.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> On the early English reactions to Aretino, see Harald Hendrix, "The Construction of an Author: Pietro Aretino and the Elizabethans", in *Betraying Our Selves. Forms of Self-Representation in Early Modern English Texts*, eds. Henk Dragstra, Sheila Ottway, Helen Wilcox (London, 2000), 31-44.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> For Prati's use of Aretino, cfr. Harald Hendrix, *Traiano Boccalini fra erudizione e critica. Studi sulla fortuna* (Firenze, 1995), 249-250. On the equation Aretino-Machiavelli in England, cfr. Mario Praz, "Machiavelli e gli inglesi dell'epoca elisabettana", in Id., *Machiavelli in Inghilterra* (Firenze, 1962<sup>2</sup>), 97-152.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> As such an ambiguous and controversial figure, Aretino is included among the protagonists in Gabriel Gilbert's *Le Courtisan parfait* (Grenoble, 1688).

therefore popular of the apocryphal mock epitaphs produced in the wake of his passing away, which reads: "Here lies Aretino, a Tuscan poet, who spoke ill of everyone but of Christ, apologizing by saying: I don't know him." These accusations of atheism, while not in any way grounded in evidence, seriously undermined Aretino's reputation, becoming even an embarrassment to subsequent generations, as is illustrated in the curious episode of his townsmen from Arezzo solliciting in 1581 a false document attesting to the fact that on his deathbed Aretino acknowledged God and received a Christian blessing before dying. Yet the accusation was there to stay, until today, and caused a long sequence of scholars, from Mersenne to Voetius and others, to discuss Aretino as the stereotypical atheist attributing him even the authorship of the most scandalous manifesto of atheism, the anonymous pamphlet *De Tribus Impostoribus*.

The particular mix of evidence-based criticism and wild speculations on alleged atheism clearly is one of the side effects the 'damnatio memoriae' policy of Aretino's opponents has produced, since it entailed the destruction of the extant work and the prohibition of new editions. In a situation where it is difficult or impossible to assess an author's production, legends may arise, and particularly black legends like the one of Aretino being the quintessential atheist. Such effects were reinforced by the editorial response to prohibition, consisting of anonymous editions, the use of pseudonyms like the acronym Partenio Etiro, publication outside of the Index's reach -- in the original version or in translation -- or in severely altered versions that did no longer reveal Aretino's authorship. As a consequence all kinds of texts considered to be unorthodox could easily become associated with Aretino, whose name thus developed into a general marker of alternative and disputed culture. Thus, a considerable number of texts published from the sixteenth till the eighteenth century

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Hendrix, "La funzione della morte leggendaria", 462-465.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Marin Mersenne, *Questiones in Genesim* (Paris, 1623), 1830; Gisbert Voetius, "De atheismo pars quarta" (1639), in Id., *Selectarum disputationum theologicarum* (Utrecht, 1648), vol. I, 205-206. Cfr. Wolfgang Gericke, *Das Buch 'De Tribus Impostoribus*' (Berlin, 1982).

under his name, particularly outside of Italy, have no other association with the author than his reputation as a controversial thinker. <sup>10</sup>

However, Aretino's legacy was not exclusively based on a highly contested reputation grounded in polemics. Particularly in the first century after his death, some of his works escaped coerced oblivion and became on the contrary popular and in some instances even highly influential models, without suffering from an association with the black legend of the alleged atheist. Perhaps paradoxically this was the case with his religious production, which had already gained acclaim abroad from the very moment it had been produced in the late 1530s, being almost instantly translated into French and English, by Jean de Vauzelles [III. 1] and Thomas Wyatt respectively. 11 This early and favorable reception facilitated a second wave of interest, now limited to France, in the early 1600s, and thus in a period of severe 'damnatio memoriae', when two of these religious works were reprinted in a total of three French editions. In these very years also a remarkable interest in Aretino's theatre developed, following an English edition of his four comedies (in Italian) produced by John Wolfe in 1588 [III 2], 12 and contributing first to the emancipation of theatre in Holland,

<sup>10</sup> See for example, *Strange & true Newes from Jack-a-Newberries Six Windmills: or the Crafty, impudent, Common-Whore (turnd Bawd) Anatomised [...] by Peter Aretine cardinall of Rome* (Venus [= London], 1660); *La Bibliotheque d'Aretin,* (Cologne [= Low Countries], [ca. 1680]); [Henri-Joseph Dulaurens], *L'Arretin moderne* (Rome [=Amsterdam], 1763).

On the French translations of Aretino's religious work, cfr. Pietro Aretino, *Trois livres de l'humanité de Jésus-Christ*, transl. Jean de Vauzelles, ed. Else Kammerer (Paris, 2004), and Pietro Aretino, *Les trois livres de l'humanité de Jésus-Christ*, transl. Pierre de Larivey, ed. Bruna Conconi (Paris, 2009). On the French translations in general: Bruna Conconi, "1539-1618: tempi, luoghi, protagonisti della traduzione di Pietro Aretino in Francia", in *Dynamic translations in the European Renaissance*, ed. Philiep Bossier, Harald Hendrix, Paolo Procaccioli (Manziana, 2011), 101-167. On early modern translations of Aretino's work in general, see Paolo Procaccioli, "Aretino e la traduzione del moderno", in *Dynamic translations in the European Renaissance*, ed. Philiep Bossier e.a., Manziana, Vecchiarelli, 2011, pp. 223-248.
<sup>12</sup> On John Wolfe's activities as an editor and printer of Italian texts, cfr. Kate De Rycker, "The Italian Job: John Wolfe, Giacomo Castelvetro and Printing Pietro

where in 1618 two versions in Dutch of his *Ipocrito* were produced by leading litterati Bredero and Hooft, <sup>13</sup> as well as to French theatre where somewhat later Corneille and Molière proved interested in Aretino's *Orazia* and *Ipocrito* while conceiving their *Horace* (1639) and *Tartuffe* (1664). <sup>14</sup>

Even more far-reaching was the impact of Aretino's literary production on the development of a stylistic and rhetorical sensibility that was to develop into what later generations would coin as Baroque. Thomas Wyatt's interest in Aretino's religious works<sup>15</sup> is an early signal of a more comprehensive phenomenon that was to find its most poignant expression in the rewriting by Giambattista Marino in his immensely popular poem on the *Strage degli Innocenti* (ante 1625) of a notorious passage in Aretino's *Umanità di Christo* (1535), a new version that in the rest of the seventeenth century proved crucial for the pictorial rendering of this scene by dozens of leading painters, including Poussin (1629) [Ill x] and Rubens (1638).<sup>16</sup> And while the epithet 'divine', once coined by Ariosto to praise Aretino's unrivaled linguistic creativity, was by most considered to be inappropriate for an author Montaigne valued as mediocre, <sup>17</sup> his works remained part of the canon of exemplary vernacular authors,

Aretino", in *Specialist Markets in the Early Modern World*, eds. Richard Kirwan, Sophie Mullins (Leiden-Boston, 2015), 241-257.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Cfr. Eddy Grootes, "Aretino's *L'Ipocrito* translated and adapted to the Dutch stage by Hooft and Bredero (1618), in *Dynamic translations*, 207-222.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Francesca Bonanni, "L'*Orazia* dell'Aretino e l'*Horace* di Corneille", *Studi romani*,
30-2 (1982): 187-195; K.H. Hartley, "Pietro Aretino and Molière", *Journal of the Australasian Universities Language and Literature Association*, 20 (1963): 309-317.
<sup>15</sup> See Chris Stamatakis, *Sir Thomas Wyatt and the Rhetoric of Rewriting* (Oxford, 2012), part. 65-96.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Elisabeth Cropper, "Marino's *Strage degli Innocenti*, Poussin, Rubens, and Guido Reni", *Studi secenteschi*, 23 (1992): 137-166.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> "[...] les Italiens, qui se vantent, et avecques raison, d'avoir comunément l'esprit plus esveillé et le discours plus sain que les autres nations de leur temps, en viennent d'estrener l'Aretin, auquel, sauf une façon de parler bouffie et bouillonnée de pointes, ingénieuses à la vérité, mais recherchées de loing et fantasques, et outre l'eloquence en fin, telle qu'elle puisse estre, je ne voy pas qu'il y ait rien au dessus des communs autheurs de son siecle; tant s'en faut qu'il approche de cette divinite' ancienne. Et le

even when they were no longer available, as their inclusion in a work like Montemerlo's *Thesoro delle phrasi toscane* (1566) exemplifies.<sup>18</sup>

Yet this part of Aretino's creative legacy, unacknowledged as it remained until not very long ago, had difficulty competing with that other side dominated by the author's association with irreverence and atheism, celebrated by some -- like Marino who highlighted it favorably in the poem he dedicated to Aretino -- <sup>19</sup> but seen in a overtly judgemental manner by most others. This uneven balance between admiration and condemnation was further complicated by an element that would govern most part of Aretino's afterlife in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, his association with pornography. Based on only a small part of his work, his *Dialogues* and the sonnets written to accompany the notorious series of images on intercourse postures produced around 1525 by Giulio Romano and Marcantonio Raimondi, <sup>20</sup> Aretino's reputation as a pornographer turned out to be not only strong and enduring, but also profoundly ambiguous. While during the author's lifetime the *Dialogues* had not yet a controversial flavour, as their early and unpoblematic translation in Spanish (1547) and 1548) suggests. <sup>21</sup> in the late sixteenth century they became a much sought after yet clandestine text, as may be gathered from their steady publication history in most European languages, including besides English and French also Latin [III x], Dutch and German versions or adaptations, in a period of some eighty years, from 1580 till  $1660.^{22}$ 

surnom de grand, nous lattachons à des Princes qui n'ont rien au dessus de la grandeur populaire." Michel de Montaigne, *Essais*, I-51 (Paris, 1950), 345.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Giovanni Stefano Montemerlo, *Delle phrasi toscane lib. XII* (Venezia, 1566).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Giambattista Marino, "Pietro Aretino", in Id., *La Galleria distinta in due parti* (Milano, 1620), 227.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> On the complex origins and afterlife of these sonnets, see Danilo Romei's reconstruction in Pietro Aretino, *Sonetti lussuriosi*, ed. Danilo Romei (s.l., 2013), 3-23.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Cfr. Pietro Aretino, *Coloquio de las damas. Dialogo*, transl. Fernan Xuarez, ed. Donatella Gagliardi (Roma, 2011), part. XI-XLVI.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> For a short overview, see Procaccioli, "Aretino e la traduzione del moderno", 231-232.

From references connected to these texts we may conclude that by the end of the sixteenth century they were not anymore read as amusing narratives, as had been the case in mid Cinquecento Italy recorded by someone like Bandello,<sup>23</sup> but consumed as what later generations would coin pornography, notoriously exposed by Ben Johnson in his *Volpone* (1606): "[...] some young French-man, or hot Tuscane bloud, / That had read Aretine, conn'd all his printes, / Knew every quirke within lusts laborinth, / And were profest critique, in lechery."<sup>24</sup> Aretino's very name quickly was turned into a brand, associating the author with the notorious postures illustrated by Raimondi which, though the originals were almost immediately and completely destroyed, enjoyed a clandestine yet massive popularity through several remakes produced to satisfy the curiosity of a large and clearly eager audience.<sup>25</sup>

And Aretyne a book of bawdery writ
With many pictures which belonged to it
Where many several wayes he teacheth howe
One may performe that acte, with shame enough
That it is true the stationers can tell

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Renaissance (Evanston, IL., 1989).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> "Zanina che era scaltrita e più maliziosa d'una volpe, per meglio confettar il marito che era un augellaccio e nuovo squasimodeo, e talora se un'oncia di male sentiva, fingeva averne più di cento libre, e se ne stava tutto 'l dì in camera con il Petrarca, le *Centonovelle* o il *Furioso*, che di nuovo era uscito fuori, ne le mani, o leggeva la Nanna o sia Raffaella de l'Aretino, di maniera che bene spesso ser Gandino, a ciò che la moglie troppo leggendo non s'affaticasse, faceva egli il lettore, e con quella sua goffa pronunzia bergamasca le leggeva tutto ciò che ella comandava." Matteo Bandello, *Novelle* (Lucca, 1554), I-34.

More in Ian Frederick Moulton, *Before Pornography. Erotic Writing in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2000), part. Part 2, "The Aretine and the Italianate", 111-221. Cfr. also Saad El-Gabalawy, "Aretino's Pornography and Renaissance Satire", *Rocky Mountain Review of Language and Literature*, 30-2 (1976): 87-99.
 Cfr. Lynne Lawner, *I Modi. The Sixteen Pleasures. An Erotic Album of the Italian*

I've seene the pictures publiquely to sell.<sup>26</sup>

The identification of Aretino with this highly controversial genre of pornography once again caused his name to be used as marker for all kinds of publications in this field imitating his model, like in *La bibliotheque d'Aretin* (1680) containing an anthology of such texts, or much later, the notoriously pornographic *L'Aretin françois* (1782) containing on its opening page a provocatively explicit image of a vulva surrounded by ten ejaculating erect penises [III. 4].<sup>27</sup> Yet it also reinforced his reputation as an unorthodox and critical spirit dedicated to challenge conventions and promote intellectual and artistic freedom. As such, at the end of the seventeenth century Aretino comes to represent two sides of the newly developing phenomenon of the 'libertine': on the one hand a man who provocatively challenges conventional morality openly celebrating an unrestrained sexuality lived and enjoyed without compunction, and on the other a free spirit cherished and loathed as a profoundly critical public intellectual who does not respect authority, doubting even the most fundamental values in politics and religion.

In this guise of what might be defined a proto-libertine, Aretino figures as protagonist in one of Fontenelle's *Nouveaux dialogues des morts* (1683) where he teaches the first Roman emperor Augustus to distrust praise and appreciate instead criticism.<sup>28</sup> And as such he also figures in what was to become one of the founding texts of eighteenth-century Enlightenment culture, Pierre Bayle's *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (1697), that dedicates an elaborate discussion to his work and legacy.<sup>29</sup> Though following on some earlier yet less influential biographers,<sup>30</sup> Bayle is

<sup>26</sup> J[ohn] M[arston], *A Study of the Newe Metamorphosis* (Gent, 1600), ed. John Henry Hobart Lyon (New York, 1919), 211.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> La bibliotheque d'Aretin, contenant les pièces marquées à la table suivante (Cologne [=Holland], [ca. 1680]); [François-Felix Nogaret], L'Aretin françois, par un membre de l'Académie des dames (Larnaka [=Bruxelles?], [1792]). On this particular side of the Aretino reception in France, see Carolin Fischer, Education érotique. Pietro Aretinos 'Ragionamenti' im libertinen Roman Frankreichs (Stuttgart, 1994).

<sup>28</sup> [Bernard de Fontenelle], Nouveaux dialogues des morts (Paris, 1683), 75-93, "Dialogue I [de morts anciens avec des modernes]. Auguste. Pierre Aretin".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Pierre Bayle, *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (Rotterdam, 1697), I, 342-346.

the first to offer a balanced and well informed profile of Aretino, an author that is appreciated precisely because of his claim to freedom, in the arts as well as in society. Bayle's authoritative assessment would prove to be essential in redefining Aretino's reputation in eighteenth-century Europe, balancing the controversial and often opposite judgments on his erotic production and slander with an appreciation of the innovative and liberating force of his disrespect of conventions and authorities. This is the Aretino we find in the first elaborate and well-researched scholarly biography published by Gianmaria Mazzuchelli in 1741,<sup>31</sup> as well as in the profiles provided by the many others following his lead.

In the multi-faceted understanding of Aretino's legacy promoted by erudite scholars like Bayle and Mazzuchelli his claim to freedom grew into the central element, satisfying both a constant and ever growing interest in a libertarian moralism as well as a more politically inspired desire for intellectual and artistic independence. While this always slightly ambiguous reaction to his person and work inspired a slowly but constantly augmenting presence in the historiographical literature produced in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, <sup>32</sup> it also inspired playwrights, novelist and painters to adopt Aretino as protagonist of some of their works. As we may gather from the 1838 'drame en trois actes' *Pierre d'Arezzo* produced for the Parisian 'Théâtre de l'Ambigu-Comique' by Philippe Dumanoir and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> A first biographical profile of Aretino's was included in Girolamo Ghilini, *Teatro d'huomini letterati* (Venezia, 1647), I, 191-192. Other such profiles in, for example, Lorenzo Crasso, *Elogii d'huomini letterati* (Venezia, 1666), I, 35-40, and Louis Moreri, *Le grand dictionnaire historique* (Lyon, 1683<sup>3</sup> [first edition 1673]), I, 613.

<sup>31</sup> Giammaria Mazzuchelli, *La vita di Pietro Aretino* (Padova, 1741); a reduced

version of the text in French was published a few years later in the Netherlands: M. De Boispreaux, *La vie de Pierre Aretin* (La Haye, 1750).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Some examples: Apostolo Zeno / Giusto Fontanini, *Biblioteca dell'eloquenza italiana* (Venezia, 1753), I, 195-219; Carl Friedrich Flögel, *Geschichte der komischen Literatur* (Liegniz-Leipzig, 1785), II, 144-145; Pierre-Louis Ginguené, *Histoire littéraire d'Italie* (Paris, 1813), VI, 241-273; Giambattista Corniani, *I secoli della letteratura italiana* (Torino, 1854 [first edition 1813]), II, 391-306; Philarète Chasles, "L'Arétin, sa vie et ses mœurs", *Revue des deux mondes*, 4 (1834): 187-228, 292-312, 751-768.

Adolphe Dennery [Ill. 5],<sup>33</sup> it was precisely his controversial reputation and unconventional biography that made Aretino into what romantic culture would consider to be a picturesque figure.<sup>34</sup>

Yet paramount in this curiosity was admiration for Aretino's autonomy, as the choice of biographical scenes illustrated by some of the leading painters in the historicist school of 'peinture troubadour', from Ingres to Feuerbach, elucidates. <sup>35</sup> Foregrounding the author's proudly manifested independence vis-à-vis those in power, as in Ingres's *L'Arétin et l'envoyé de Charles Quint* (1815/1848) [Ill. 6], or his all-pervasive laughter, as in Feuerbach's monumental *Der Tod des Pietro Aretino* (1854) [Ill. x], these artists bear testimony to what Aretino had become to the nineteenth-century historicist culture that would culminate in Burckhardt's 1860 magisterial portrait: a thoroughly provocative intellectual and artist dedicated to irrespectively challenging conventions in all domains, from religion to politics and aesthetics. Truly a man in whom the innovative and experimental drive of Renaissance culture found one of its most poignant and thus fundamentally unsettling expressions.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Philippe Dumanoir [=Pinel], Adolphe Dennery [=Philippe], *Pierre d'Arezzo* (*Arétin*), *drame en trois actes* ([Paris], 1838).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Such 'picturesque' interest in Aretino may be gathered from the frequent references included in Valéry [Antoine-Claude Pasquin], *Voyages historiques et littéraires en Italie pendant les années 1826, 1827, 1828; ou L'indicateur italien* (Paris, 1831-1835).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> See Harald Hendrix, "Aneddoti veri e/o verosimili nella pittura storicizzante del primo Ottocento: Aretino fra Tiziano, Tintoretto e Tasso", *Fontes. Rivista di filologia iconografia e storia della tradizione classica*, 22 (2019): [in print].