

CHAPTER II

From the exemplum virtutis to the Apotheosis: Hercules as an Identification Figure in Portraiture: An Example of the Adoption of Classical Forms of Representation

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2.1 INTRODUCTION

Between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, the classical figure most frequently depicted in art is without doubt the demigod Hercules.¹ In his role as a paragon of virtue, the hero is primarily employed either in religious or moral allegories, or else in connection with politics. From the fourteenth century onwards he is to be found in a republican context (Florence), although in palaces and castles he serves to indicate the power or virtue of a particular prince.² The early modern period furnishes evidence for this 'figurative system of the masked prince', as Sabatier has called it, from a variety of countries and artistic genres.

The Hercules theme occurs especially frequently where cities, countries, and rulers enjoy a special connection to the demigod. This applies both to those communities and families which regarded him as their ancestor or founder, as well as to rulers who wished to emphasize their military power. It thus includes the house of Austria (following the tradition of Burgundy and Spain), and the Emperors Charles V and Charles VI in particular;³ the French kings (the Habsburgs' rivals in this matter too), notably Henry IV and Louis XIII;⁴ the house of Wittelsbach, and, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the house of Este;⁵ from the late seventeenth century onwards, the dukes of Württemberg;⁶ and, finally, the Polish kings Jan III Sobieski and Augustus the Strong.⁷

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¹ Pigler (1974), 107-33; Galinsky (1972).

² Schmitt (1989), 215 ff.; Knall-Brskovsky (1990), 486. Cf. above, Chapter 1.

³ Checa Cremades (1987), 113 ff.; Bruck (1953); López Torrijos (1985), 115 ff.; Matsche (1981), 343-71.

⁴ Bardon (1974); Vivanti (1967).

⁵ Kellner (1970), 109, 119-20.

⁶ Vollkommer (1987), 22; Zahlten (1981).

⁷ Banach (1984); Schlechte (1990).

In Florence, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Hercules was 'usurped' as the city's identification figure by the Medicis.⁸

In order to demonstrate what Checa Cremades has termed this 'typological parallelism with Roman antiquity' with greater clarity, a method of formal comparison has repeatedly been employed. In particular, this is to be found on the obverse or reverse of medals,⁹ and in those copper engravings in which the portrait is supplemented by scenic medallions or surrounding figures. As a result of the large number of such representations, I shall restrict myself in this chapter to the so-called 'identification portraits', that is, to works in which the connection between a prince and Hercules is illustrated either by the hero's attributes, or by the fusion of the type and the antitype. In doing so, however, account should be taken of the fact that the number of such examples is not directly proportional to the frequency of literary identifications or indirect analogies in the visual arts. The true identification portrait thus possesses a significance above and beyond its allegorical function.

2.2 IDENTIFICATION IN PORTRAITURE

As in the case of other identification portraits,¹⁰ identification with Hercules may be a reference either to an analogous name (Ercole d'Este, François-Hercule de Valois, Ercole Gonzaga) or to an analogous event. Of the twelve labours of Hercules, the victories over the Centaur, Antaeus, and the monsters Hydra and Cerberus are represented with particular frequency. However, the most important reason for comparing a prince to Hercules was to analogize their virtue. Of all the variants of the hero known to antiquity, two types, exhibiting special qualities and frequently combined with each other, came to have particular significance for the modern period. The Egyptian or Libyan Hercules (after Herodotus and Annius of Viterbo) symbolized above all a prince's physical male or military potency. According to Cesare Ripa, Hercules not only embodied the 'virtù heroica . . . come depinta dagl' antichi (heroic virtue . . . such as was depicted by the ancients)', but also 'la generosità & fortezza dell'animo (the generosity and strength of mind)' and 'il governo della ragione (the power of reason)'.¹¹ Unlike Mars, Hercules does not represent savage warfare, but the just and deliberate fight against rebellion and heresy. By the end of the fifteenth century, this 'just war' had already become the subject of a woodcut showing the Emperor Maximilian I as *Hercules Germanicus*, doing battle against the heathen.¹² Two centuries later, his descendant, Leopold I, who was more successful in his struggle against the Turks, was glorified as *HERCULES AUSTRIACUS TRIUMPHATOR DE PERFIDIO REBELLIONE, HAERESI, FURORE, TURCICO ETC. ETC.*¹³ A German print depicting Gustavus

⁸ Hessert (1991).

⁹ Bardon (1974), 19; Jacquot (1971).

¹⁰ Polleroß (1988).

¹¹ Ripa, ed. Mandowsky (1970), 506–7.

¹² McDonald (1976); Wang (1975), 201.

¹³ Prohaska (1982), 252.



5 King Gustavus
Adolphus of Sweden as
Hercules Gallicus

Adolphus of Sweden as Hercules shows that the hero of antiquity was employed in a religio-political context by the Protestants, too.¹⁴ (See Pl. 5.) However, by means of the chains which lead from the mouth of the king to his soldiers, this print also makes reference to the intellectual qualities attributed to Hercules. This *Hercules Gallicus* (an 'invention' of the humanists, based on a fable by Lucian, which was published in Greek in 1496, in Latin by Erasmus of Rotterdam in 1506) was regarded as a personification of peaceful government and the power of persuasion in rhetoric.

The combination of the Egyptian and the Gallic Hercules (roles which were acted out in the rivalry between Emperor Charles V and Francis I of France in the early sixteenth century) already makes its appearance in a panegyric addressed to Henry II, dating from the late sixteenth century:

Deux Hercules ont esté, l'un de Libye, qui par la force plusieurs monstres combatit, et de vailance le lotz emporta; l'autre des Gaulles, qui de belle éloquence, prudence et justice fut. . . Mais ces deux pour un tiers parfait en vous se sont assemblez, et ce que Libye et Gaulles ont eu et n'on point eu, la France en vous recouvert, qui, sans massue, les vices, vrayz monstres, abattez et les rebelles à obéyssance ramenez.

[There were two Hercules, one from Libya, who fought with great vigour against several monsters and carried the day by his bravery; the other from Gaul, who was extremely eloquent, prudent, and just. . . But these two are in you combined into a perfect third, and what Libya and

¹⁴ Wang (1975), 195, illus.

Gaul have had and have never had, France recovers in you who, without a club, destroys the vices, true monsters, and brings back the rebels to obedience.]¹⁵

Hercules in bivio

As a result of this 'virtù dell'Animo et del Corpo (virtue of mind and body)' (as Ripa put it), and of his exemplary choice between virtue and vice at the crossroads, Hercules became—despite numerous thoroughly negative traits—the most important model for princes between 1400 and 1700.¹⁶ The use of this and other *exempla* in the art of persuasion had been one of the most important methods in rhetoric and didactics since the classical period.¹⁷ The demigod had also been regarded as an idealized figure by the Greek philosophers of the (fourth century BC,) and Prodicus interpreted the anecdote of Hercules' choice as an image of the freedom of the will.

As for the Romans, Virgil extolled Hercules as a model of the fruits of virtue and exhorted Augustus to surpass him. Dio Chrysostom recommended Hercules, as an ideal model, to Trajan, and in early Christianity the demigod was praised by Boethius as an *exemplum* who had earned his place in heaven by his good deeds. Clement of Alexandria called him the perfect example for a judicious and divine prince.¹⁸ During the Carolingian Renaissance, Hercules was likewise presented as an *exemplum virtutis* for rulers, while the imperial throne (*Cathedra Petri*) was adorned with his deeds.

After the fourteenth century, when Hercules was included by both Giotto and Francesco Petrarca in their cycles of *uomini famosi*, the hero increasingly developed into a 'perfect princely ideal, combining education and wisdom with vigour and military success'.¹⁹ As early as 1388 the translation of the myth by Saxolus Pratensis served as a 'mirror for princes', and in 1490 the choice between *Volupté* and *Vertu*, with which Hercules—'préfigurant le Roy'—was faced at the crossroads, was enacted on stage for the entry of Charles VIII of France into Vienne.²⁰ In 1497 the Prodicus version of the myth was performed for Emperor Maximilian I, with the figure of the Emperor, instead of the virtuous hero, presented as the one faced with the choice.²¹ At about the same time, the young Massimiliano Sforza, who was related to the Emperor by marriage, was portrayed between Virtue and Vice,²² while in 1510 the ten-year-old Charles V of Austria was painted as Hercules at the crossroads.²³

In 1547 Budé included *Hercules Gallicus* in his *Institution du Prince*, and in 1562 the eleven-year-old Henry III of France was portrayed as a young Hercules.²⁴ Two years later Ronsard wrote a poem in honour of Charles IX 'habillé en Hercules', expressly admonishing *imitatio* and reminding him of the prospect of deification:

Sire, imitez les faits de ce grand Prince:
De toute erreur purgez vostre province,
Par tels degrez il faut monter aux dieux.

¹⁵ Jung (1966), 89 ff. ¹⁶ Panofsky (1930); Vollkommer (1987), 7 ff.; Orgel (1984).

¹⁷ Lumpe (1966), 1, 233.

¹⁸ Malherbe (1988), cols. 559 ff.; Alföldi (1977), 224.

¹⁹ Blume (1985), 133; Donato (1985), 103 ff.

²⁰ Panofsky (1930), 84; Simson (1936), 72.

²¹ Wuttke (1964), 200–19.

²² Valeri (1970), pl. 23.

²³ Kellner (1977), 109.

²⁴ Chapeaurouge (1968), 278–9.



6 The Cardinal-Infante Ferdinand of Austria, as Hercules at the crossroads

[Sire, imitate the deeds of this great prince:
Purge your province of all error,
By steps such as these must one climb to the gods.]²⁵

In c.1595, Sadeler depicted the young Maximilian of Bavaria in the role of Hercules at the crossroads,²⁶ and in 1610 Henry IV of France was praised in a funeral sermon because, 'like the great Alexander', he had 'imitated Hercules as well as he could'.²⁷

In 1635, on the occasion of the triumphal entry of the Cardinal-Infante Ferdinand of Austria into Antwerp, Rubens painted him as Hercules between Pallas and Venus (see Pl. 6),²⁸ and in 1648 the Scottish mythographer, Alexander Ross, formulated in his *Mystagogus poeticus* the exemplariness of the classical hero as follows:

Hercules may be the type of a good king, who ought to subdue all monsters, cruelty, disorder, and oppression in his kingdom, who should support the heaven of the Church with the shoulders of authority; who should purge the Augean stable of superstition and profanation; who should relieve the oppressed, and set at liberty the captives.

²⁵ Ronsard, ed. Marty-Laveaux, ii (1889), 24. A comparable sonnet by Garnier was written in 1556: Jung (1966), 165.

²⁶ Panofsky (1930), 116–18, illus. 57a.

²⁷ Jung (1966), 174.

²⁸ Krempel (1976–8), 87, illus. 5.

In 1650 the young Louis XIV was portrayed at the crossroads in an engraving of Pierre Daret, in which *vertu* addressed him with these words:

Montre qu'estant du sang des Dieux . . .
 Imite un autre jeune Alcide,
 Fuy bien loin de la Volupté;
 Et n'adorant que ma beauté.
 Prend moy pour Maitresse et pour guide.
 [Show your divine lineage . . .
 Imitate the young Alcides,
 Keep your distance from sensual pleasure,
 Worshipping my beauty alone.
 Take me for your mistress and guide.]

In Sweden, Georg Stiernhiem published the poem *Hercules* as a 'mirror of virtue'; in the 1660s the ballet, *The Reward of Virtue*, which dealt with the same theme, was performed there for the young King Charles XI.²⁹

In 1689, the *Hercules Wirtembergicus*, Friedrich Karl of Württemberg, having been appointed imperial lieutenant-general (*Generalfeldmarschallcutnant*), was exhorted to take up the fight against the enemies of the Empire in the following manner:

Fürst, bleibe Deiner Gesinnung treu und gebrauche voll Kraft und Mut Deine Arme, Bändiger der Ungeheuer, den so oft die Lernäische Schlange des Unheils reizt, auf den die bewegliche Hydra mit ihren so vielen Köpfen einstürzt! In Deinen Händen ist die Keule, der edle Sinn des Löwen brennt in Dir, bleibe weiter so mutig, damit Du die Beute davonträgst! Miste den Augias-Stall aus!

[Prince, remain true to your convictions and use all the strength and courage of your arms, subduer of monsters, whom the Lernaean serpent of evil so often provokes, upon whom the agile Hydra storms down with all its many heads! In your hands is the club, the noble mind of the lion burns in you, continue so courageously, that you may bear off the spoils! Clean out the Augean stables!]³⁰

In 1700, the play *Hercules Jugend und Tugend* (*Hercules' Youth and Virtue*) was performed for the fifth birthday of Prince Heinrich of Reuß;³¹ and when Louis XV took office in 1723, he was admonished in both text and illustrations of a pamphlet produced for the occasion, to follow Hercules along the path of virtue.³² (See Pl. 7.)

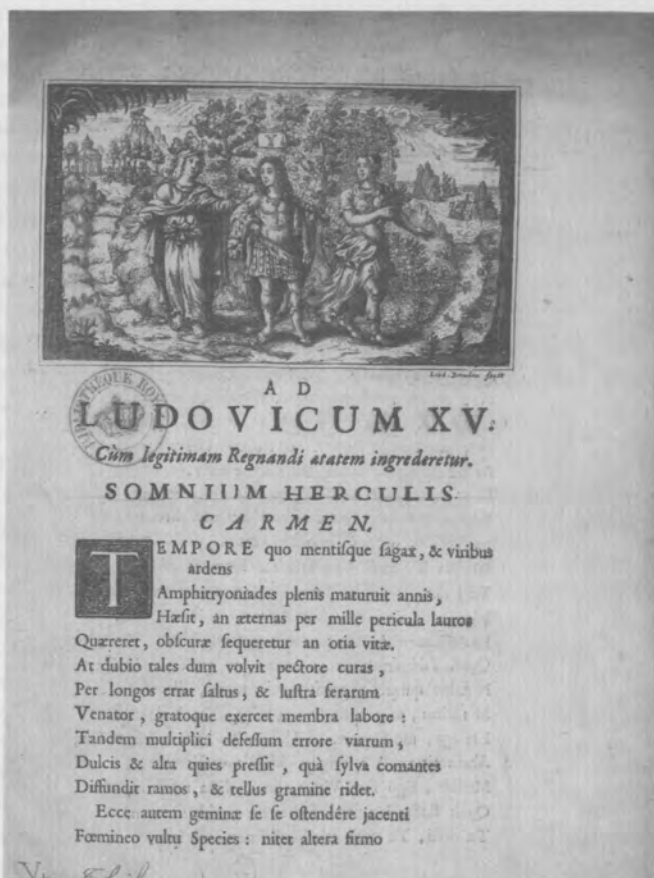
The context of these examples shows that the identification of a prince with Hercules can here be interpreted as a call to virtue by his educators or his people. Naturally enough, however, there is also a certain ambivalence between *imitatio virtutis* and panegyric in these portraits, since, on the one hand, it was generally known how the story ended and, on the other, the hero's preference for virtue was made clear in the representation. For this reason, the representations to be found on the galley of Don John of Austria were the subject of discussion as early as 1571, with their moralistic function being defended as follows:

²⁹ Ellenius (1988), 41 ff.

³¹ Tissot (1932), 102.

³⁰ Zahlten (1981), 7–10.

³² Thiberge (n.d.).



7 Louis XV of France as Hercules at the crossroads

Es scheint mir, daß das, was Herkules betrifft, keine Anmaßung ist, weil ja alle figürlichen Darstellungen, die . . . als Vorbild dessen dienen, was der Herr Don Juan zu tun hat, nicht sagen, daß seine Excellenz das Gleiche bereits vollbracht hat, sondern daß jene Figur nur hergestellt werde, um ihm zu dem zu verpflichten, was er zu vollbringen habe.

[It seems to me that that which concerns Hercules is no presumption, because none of the figurative representations which . . . serve as models for what Lord Don Juan has to do state that His Excellency has already achieved the same, but that those figures are only produced as a means of binding him to what he has to carry out.]³³

Nevertheless, fifteen years later, when Otto van Veen produced a copper engraving which portrayed another of Philip II's generals in the role of Hercules at the

³³ Cf. Warnke (1987), 433-4.



8 The Christian Prince (Archduke Leopold William of Austria) as the New Hercules

crossroads, the pendulum was already swinging in the other direction: after his victory over the Protestants, Duke Alessandro Farnese is depicted being shown the way to the Temple of Virtue and Fame by Religion, embodying virtue, while Heresy, equated with pleasure, lies defeated on the ground.³⁴

³⁴ Hofmann (1987), 197–8, no. IV. 3.

Triumphus et gloria Herculis

From this picture it was only a small step, both thematically and historically, to the depiction of the prince *inside* the Temple of Virtue and Honour. Alessandro Farnese was finally accorded this honour in 1594, that is, two years' after his death, with a 'statue in apotheosis' by Simone Moschino.³⁵ We have thus arrived at what I believe is the decisive phase in the shift of emphasis in the Hercules identification: the transition from the *imitatio virtutis* to the *gloria virtutis*. For the majority of the identification portraits of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries show Hercules and his modern reincarnation not at the crossroads, but at his goal, in other words, as the triumphant hero or 'in apotheosis'. The most significant example of such a representation is the fresco by Pietro da Cortona in the Pitti Palace, dating from c.1650. It shows the ideal(ized) prince, holding the club of Hercules and accompanied by Victory, being presented to Jupiter, the father of the gods. The new Hercules does not show any signs of portraiture, but the arms of the Medici betray the fact that a prince of this family was intended here.³⁶

The inspiration for this composition may have come from the title-page of Diego de Saavedra's *Idea principis Christiano-Politici*,³⁷ one of the most important 'mirrors of princes' of its time. (See Pl. 8.) Here, too, the virtuous prince—presumably Archduke Leopold William, who was then governor-general of the Spanish Netherlands—is rewarded by Hercules: accorded a guard of honour composed of the virtues, he is received into the ranks of the immortals, among whom are biblical and historical heroes, such as David and Charles V. They are not assembled on Mount Olympus, but in the *TEMPLUM HONORIS*, although the inscription *SIC ITUR AD ASTRA* equates this with the assumption into heaven. Almost all the modern identifications with Hercules 'in apotheosis' are also characterized by this idea of his inclusion in the ranks of the immortals, rather than by the true apotheosis of antiquity, in which the hero was carried off to heaven. As such, they are either illustrations of the moment prior to this event, namely that of the hero's selection, in which Victory as the heavenly messenger summons the hero to life in Olympus, or they take the form of a statue of the new *divus* in the temple, which also corresponds to the *consecratio in formam deorum* of antiquity.³⁸

The actual meaning of the *consecratio* lay not in the multiplication of the number of gods to be worshipped, nor in the potential eternal life of him who has been carried off to the higher spheres, but in the immortalization of the honoured memory and fame of the deceased good ruler . . . The Romans' strict differentiation between the *deus* and the *divus* (one who has ascended from the human to the divine level), met Christian thought half-way, since, although the latter did not admit of any parity with God, it did allow similarity with Him.³⁹

In my opinion, the identification portraits which I shall discuss later in this chapter—whether they take the form of genuine 'statues in apotheosis' (as Keutner

³⁵ Keutner (1956), 164 ff., illus. 24 ff.

³⁶ Campbell (1977), 130 ff., 146 ff.

³⁷ *La España de Felipe IV* (Historia de España, 25; Madrid, 1982), 38, fig. 7.

³⁸ Koep and Hermann (1957), 284 ff.

³⁹ Büttner (1972), 58 ff.

puts it), or simply illusionistic depictions of them—allow one to distinguish four thematic possibilities which, with temporal shifts, are also reflected in formal changes.

Hercules as 'the king's body politic'

Although the deification of rulers in classical times was at first bound up with the idea that a person's good deeds led to his or her posthumous deification, some princes even laid claim to this distinction during their lifetimes. In the reign of Alexander the Great this theocratic absolutism resulted in the identification of the ruler with Hercules for the first time. Under the Roman Empire, the apotheosis of Augustus, or that of Nero (who also slipped into the role of the paragon of virtue on stage) or Domitian, was compared with the apotheosis of Hercules. Later, the cult of Hercules and the identification with him was promoted above all by Commodus.⁴⁰ The statues of Hercules erected by Commodus, including those which were in the possession of the French king c.1600,⁴¹ were also intended to express a deification claimed during the Emperor's lifetime. This was probably also the reason why Commodus' predilection for referring to himself as Hercules and even dressing as him, and for having statues erected depicting him as the virtuous hero, were condemned by Hubert Goltz in 1557 as the excesses of a madman.⁴² In fact the first monumental but ephemeral identification portrait, that of Francis I of France, depicted as *Hercules Gallicus* on a triumphal arch built for the entry of his successor into Paris in 1549,⁴³ also originated as an act of posthumous reverence, as did the first stone monument, dating from 1573, which is dedicated to Charles V as the founder of Seville and depicts him on a column in the role of Hercules.⁴⁴ As the literary pendant, so to speak, to this monument, the work *Hercules Prodicus seu Principis Iuventutis vita et peregrinatio* (published in Antwerp in 1587) may be mentioned. For it served not only as an idealized biography of Duke Karl Friedrich of Jülich-Cleves-Berg (1555–75), but also as a 'mirror of virtue' for the general reader.⁴⁵ In 1574 Antoine Du Prat expressly describes in an elegy for Charles IX how the French king had now settled in heaven like Hercules and had made himself the *nouveau dieu*.⁴⁶ In the early part of the seventeenth century, we also find the first representations of a prince being received into Olympus. An engraving of 1612 showed the deceased Emperor Rudolph II ascending to Olympus, where he is first of all received by Hercules.⁴⁷ The ceiling fresco in Fontainebleau, showing the apotheosis of Henry IV, and which Bardon describes as 'Henri IV–Hercule', was presumably executed in the same period.⁴⁸

Such examples, like the rejection of the identifications of Commodus and Don John of Austria with Hercules during their lifetimes (1557, 1571) already mentioned, tend to reinforce Keutner's thesis that it was the restriction of individuality through the

⁴⁰ Malherbe (1988), 565 ff. ⁴¹ Bardon (1974).

⁴² Goltz (1557), no. 19 (medal of Commodus as Hercules).

⁴³ Chapeaurouge (1968), 278. ⁴⁴ Lléo Canal (1985), 24.

⁴⁵ *Land im Mittelpunkt der Mächte* (1984), 423.

⁴⁶ Jung (1966), 167.

⁴⁷ Vocolka (1981), 329–30. ⁴⁸ Bardon (1974), 75–6, pl. 37a.



9 Louis XIII of France as Hercules. Gorget of the king, c.1640

allegorization of the sitter in the role of Hercules as a paragon of virtue that first made it possible to erect public monuments to living persons in the sixteenth century. This form of statue 'had assimilated and developed the traditional type of Virtue-Vice representations. Living regents and generals now took the place of Judith, Hercules, or Perseus, while at their feet the country's conquered foes fell as personified vices, instead of as Holofernes, Cacus, or Medusa.'⁴⁹

The heroes, whose role the princes now assumed, signified as it were their 'body politic', as it was first displayed on an ancient coin showing Gordianus III. On one side is his portrait, on the other the *VIRTUS AUGUSTI*, symbolized by Hercules.⁵⁰ In this sense, Antonio Ricciardo also writes in 1591 that 'Hercules naked . . . signifies that by his resplendent virtue the prince subdues and expels vices from his nation with just and hallowed laws'.⁵¹ The contemporary interpretations of the monuments likewise argue in favour of this thesis, since they do not name the princely individual as the triumphant force, but rather his virtues. Leone Leoni's 'naked Herculean heroization' of Charles V (1549–55) bears the inscription *CESARIS VIRTUTE DOMITUS FUROR*, and a monument by the same artist in honour of the Emperor's most important general in Italy 'depicts Don Ferrante, whose virtue and bravery conquered the vice and envy of his

⁴⁹ Keutner (1956), 158.

⁵⁰ *Welt im Umbruch* (1981), illus. 25.

⁵¹ Vivanti (1967), 183–4.

foes' (Vasari) in full figure above the Hydra (1556–64).⁵² While Leoni's sculpture was possibly never intended for public display, the Gonzaga monument was only erected posthumously, in 1594. Just one year later, a twelve-foot-high 'marble' statue, which was set up for Henry IV's entry into Lyons, depicted not the king but Hercules, and the monarch was only 'portrayed' through the inscription, *HENRICO HERCULEIS LABORIBUS FRANCORUM REGI. SEDITIONIBUS PUBLICAE INTERFECTORI. VIRTUTIS ASSERTORI . . .*.⁵³ Apart from this, the nakedness of the person portrayed⁵⁴—which is often encountered in this period, even in depictions of Louis XIII and Louis XIV (see Pl. 9)—provides further evidence that it was not a matter of reproducing the accidental appearance and character of the individual, but of representing the ideals and virtues associated with his office. These portraits therefore correspond perfectly not only to the ideology of 'the king's two bodies' (as expressed by Kantorowicz),⁵⁵ but also to the view held by art theory at that time. It was the opinion of Paleotti, Lomazzo, and others 'that those who deserve to be portrayed are people endowed with Christian virtues' and that it is important 'not only to represent an image verily, but also to retain in memory all the virtues' (as Armeni put it) and 'to capture the *idea* of the person portrayed: *il suo concetto*'.⁵⁶

Hercules thus embodied these official virtues and the *idea* of the prince in a special way, as is shown by a description of representations from the time of Louis XIV by Guillet de Saint-Georges:

le roi est représenté sous des figures allegoriques, qui ont pour objet les vertues morales et politiques de son auguste fondateur; tantôt sous celle d'Hercule, qui est pris pour l'exterminateur des monstres et des vices et pour le symbole de la force.

[the king is represented by allegorical figures, the object of which is to show their majestic founder's moral and political virtues; sometimes as Hercules, who is regarded as the exterminator of monsters and vices and as the symbol of strength.]⁵⁷

Hercules redivivus

However, it was not long before the prince was no longer solely portrayed in what Warnke has called the 'normative costume' of Hercules, but was glorified as the reincarnation of the ancient hero. The intellectual basis for this representation was provided by ideas of the state similar to those of Erasmus of Rotterdam, who not only demanded that the prince was obliged to act with the utmost virtue, but that he also had to set an example for his subjects.⁵⁸ What is presumably the first representation of a living prince as an *exemplum virtutis* in the role of Hercules depicts, significantly enough, one of the Habsburgs, to whose ancestors Erasmus had addressed his 'mirror of princes'. It is the identification portrait of the Archduke Ernest, to be found on a

⁵² Keutner (1956), 155 ff.

⁵³ Bardon (1974), 95.

⁵⁴ Chapeaurouge (1968), 165 ff.

⁵⁵ Matsche (1981), 345, has already pointed out that 'in view of the mystical concept of rulership, which emphasized the dual character of the sovereign, Hercules [was] an ideal symbolic figure'.

⁵⁶ Freedman (1987), 66, 75.

⁵⁷ Quoted in Mai (1975), 167.

⁵⁸ Koerber (1967), 688 ff. Cf. above, Chapter 1.

triumphal arch for his entry into Antwerp in 1594. Like Alessandro Farnese on the engraving already mentioned, the archduke, who was governor-general of the Netherlands, appeared in the company of Religio in front of the Temple of Honour. However, in contrast to those representations of Hercules at the crossroads which I have discussed so far, what is 'decisive here is that it is no longer the moment of choice between virtue and vice which is depicted, but solely the victorious Hercules'.⁵⁹ Hercules-Ernest is therefore characterized by the allegory of victory, with laurel crown and palm leaves, just as Farnese was also presented in the contemporary monument by Moschino.

In an engraving dating from c.1600, an illusionist statue of Ernest's uncle, the Archduke Ferdinand of Tyrol, showing him with the lion's head cowl of Charles V and a club of Hercules, can probably also be interpreted in this sense, even if the inscription is ambiguous: *DUM SUMMAE INVIGILANT ALTISSIMA PECTORA LAUDI ASPERA NON TERRENT CURA LABORQ IUVANT* ('as long as those personalities in the highest positions are animated by the intention of achieving the greatest fame, great worries or hardship shall generate no fear, but shall be overcome with joy').⁶⁰ It is probably no accident that both princes regarded themselves as successors of the ancient Hercules. Even when Henry IV entered Avignon, explicit reference was made not only to the classical examples of the identification with Hercules but also to the blood ties with the ancient model:

Mais ce portrait, SIRE . . . n'est pas une peinture muette & mixtionnee seulement de couleurs sains une image parlante & antitype de l'histoire, & Heroiques faicts de vostre incomparable valeur. Le modelle, & l'idee en fut retiree d'Hercules (car aussi à Rome ne se faisoit jamais triomphe que l'effigie d'Hercules ne marchat devant) de son entregeant, & posture, nous avions portraict au naturel, & naïfvé en parallele les traicts les plus eminents, & remarquables de voz exploits, comme vives couleurs de vostre Majesté victorieuse, & triomphante, posees, & couchees sur le fond de l'histoire, & extraction des Roys de Navarre voz devanciers pourgnez de la souce, & tige d'Hercules . . . Alexandre le grand se vantoit, à l'assemblee des Dieux, d'avoir imité de pres, & suivy à la piste Hercules . . . Milon Crotoniate . . . s'habillant à l'Herculienne, s'affeublant de la toison de son lyon, & branslant en main le hampe de sa masse au preallable que d'entrier au Tournoy. Les Empereurs Commodus, & Caracalla bien plus fantaques que cela . . . pensoient d'avoir dans leurs corps les deux ames, celuy d'Hercules, se faisant habiller, portraire, & nommer comme Hercules . . . Mais vous avez, SIRE, par droit d'heritage que ceux cy n'avoient que par presumption, & fantosme. C'est le fonds, & le champ de nostre tableau.

[But this portrait, SIRE . . . is not a mute painting, compounded solely of colours without a life-like image and antitype in history, and the heroic deeds of your incomparable valour. The model, and the concept, was derived from Hercules (for even in Rome one never entered in triumph without an effigy of Hercules paraded in front) from his worldly wisdom and posture, which we have portrayed realistically, and unaffectedly, drawing a parallel with your most eminent traits, and the most remarkable of your exploits, like the vivid colours of your victorious and triumphant Majesty, standing, and reclining against the background of history, and the

⁵⁹ Krempel (1976–8), 88, illus. 6.

⁶⁰ Bruck (1953), 195, illus. 228.

descent of the kings of Navarre your forefathers from the source and stock of Hercules . . . Alexander the Great boasted, to the assembly of the gods, that he had closely imitated Hercules, and followed his path . . . Milon of Croton [took to] . . . dressing himself in Herculean manner, masquerading in his lionskin, and swinging in his hand the shaft of his mace as a preliminary to entering tournaments. The Emperors Commodus and Caracalla were far more fanciful than he . . . [and] thought they had two souls in their body, [one being] that of Hercules, making them dress, have themselves portrayed, and be called Hercules . . . But you, SIRE, have by right of inheritance that which these others only had by presumption and in imagination. This is the basis, and the ground of our picture.⁶¹

Here, then, in contrast to Goltz's text written fifty years earlier, Commodus is no longer accused of identification during his lifetime; instead, he is deprived of the right to do so by not being descended from Hercules. The French king, on the other hand, is extolled as the worthy descendant of the virtuous hero of antiquity. Other sources also show that it is not simply a matter of succession in office, but rather one of the 'sanctity of blood'. For 'the seventeenth century witnesses the end of a long development, in which hereditary legitimation had gradually become the decisive criterion for the ruler's dignity as a sovereign'.⁶² This is the intention behind a copper engraving showing Henry's son, Louis XIII, as a triumphant Hercules, with his ascension to heaven in the background. The picture's caption leaves no doubt about the interpretation: 'Hec summa virtus petitur hac coelum via.'⁶³

In c.1640 the same French king was portrayed as a naked Hercules on the gorget of his armour. Holding a torch, and being crowned by angelic spirits, he is seen triumphing over the enemies of religion, who are depicted as blind with rage and wearing the mask of deceitfulness.⁶⁴ (See Pl. 9.) This motif subsequently reappears in most of the later identification portraits.

At about the same time, in Germany, two princes were presented as *exempla virtutis* in literary form. In 1639, the Protestant general, Bernhard von Weimar, was described in the *Teutschen Tugentspiegel oder Gesang von dem Stammen und Thaten dess Alten und Neuen Teutschen Hercules* (*German Mirror of Princes or Song of the Lineage and Deeds of the Old and New German Hercules*) as a descendant of 'the father of great heroes', and as combining in his person all the virtues of his ancestor Hercules. A year later, the author J. B. Schupps dedicated a speech to his patron, the margrave of Hessen, giving it the significant title, *Hercules togatus sive de illustrissimo celsissimoque Domino Georgio II.*⁶⁵

This theme is also illustrated by a portrait of Leopold I vanquishing the Hydra in front of the Temple of Virtue and Fame, which was presumably made after his victory over the Turks in 1664. Here, the allegories of the seven principal virtues and *Religio* leave no doubt about the Emperor's role as an *exemplum virtutis*. (See Pl. 10.) This aspect is expressed even more clearly in an engraving dated 1695, since Leopold I is there depicted as Hercules not only in the form of a statue but also in a temple of Fame and Honour.⁶⁶

⁶¹ Valladier (1601), 'Au Roy'.

⁶² Skalweit (1973), 264–5.

⁶³ Bardon (1974), 136, pl. 5b.

⁶⁴ Reverseau (1982), 105.

⁶⁵ Tissot (1932), 110–11.

⁶⁶ Prohaska (1982).



10 Emperor Leopold I as Hercules. Oil painting by Gerard Hoet, c.1664.

The actual realization of such a Hercules statue, which in this copper engraving takes a purely imaginary form, occurred, significantly enough, at the court of Louis XIV. In 1674, after his victory over the Triple Alliance, the French king was glorified on a medal bearing the inscription *A L'IMMORTALITÉ*,⁶⁷ as well as on a relief of the Porte Saint-Martin, in both of which he is depicted naked as the vanquisher of the Hydra, being crowned by Victory: 'Hercules, here, is Louis XIV, unless it fails to say on the other side that Louis XIV, here, is Hercules . . . the town of Paris treats its son as a hero, and at the same time intimates his apotheosis by this memorial to him and by the mythological figuration which it bears.'⁶⁸ (See Pl. II.) This identification portrait provided one of the essential presuppositions for a monument depicting Louis XIV as Hercules beneath a triumphal arch, presumably planned c.1675, which has come down to us in designs by Le Brun and Desjardins.⁶⁹

The sculptor then used this model for the monument to the French king erected in the Place des Victoires in 1679–80. The inspiration for the design of victory, who represents Louis XIV with the laurel crown and the victor's palm, presumably goes back to the sculpture of Alessandro Farnese already mentioned.⁷⁰ As at the time of Henry IV, reference is made to the example of Commodus, and to the hereditary legitimacy which he lacked:

Si l'Empereur Commode (sans autre motif que celui de son ambition) a pris dans ses Médailles & dans ces Constitutions l'habit & le nom d'Hercule Romain, nous avons bien plus juste sujet

⁶⁷ Jacquot (1971), 250.

⁶⁸ Néraudeau (1986), 8.

⁶⁹ Seligman and Seligman (1968), 284–95.

⁷⁰ Keutner (1956), 167.



11 Étienne le Hongre, Louis XIV of France as Hercules. Relief on the Porte Saint-Martin, Paris, c.1675

d'attribuer le nom d'Hercule Francois à nostre auguste LOUIS, soit par un droit hereditaire de cet ancien Hercule qui a gouverné les Gaules, soit par la grandeurs & la multitude des ses exploits guerriers, soit enfin . . . par le merite de son eloquence.

[If the Emperor Commodus (without any motive other than his ambition) adopted the attire and the name of the Roman Hercules on his medals and in these constitutions, we have even more cause to attribute the name of the French Hercules to our majestic LOUIS, whether by hereditary right from this ancient Hercules who ruled the Gauls, by the glory and number of his warlike exploits, or finally . . . by the merit of his eloquence.]⁷¹

Although, in the final version, the imperial Roman attire was replaced with the ruler's contemporary robes of office, the Hercules constituted, as before, the main theme of the monument:

le Roy est représenté debout, revestu de ses habits Royaux, & ayant un Cerbere sous les pieds, qui marque la triple alliance dont Sa Majesté a si glorieusement triomphé. Derriere la statue du Roy est une Victoire . . . Un casque, un bouclier, un faisceau d'armes, une masse d'Hercule & une peau de Lion paroissent derriere les deux Figures.

[the king is represented standing, clothed in his royal garments and having a Cerberus under his feet, which marks the triple alliance which His Majesty has so gloriously vanquished. Behind

⁷¹ Bauderon (1684), 162.

the statue of the king is a Victory . . . A helmet, buckler, sheaf of arms, Hercules' club, and a lion-skin appear behind the two figures.]⁷²

If the large dedicatory inscription, VIRO IMMORTALI, can in this context already be regarded as an indication of the monarch's acceptance into the ranks of the immortals, his deification was later explicitly demonstrated at a firework display on the occasion of the erection of Girardon's equestrian statue, *L'Apothéose d'un nouvel Hercule, ou le théâtre de la gloire de Louis-le-Grand* (*The Apotheosis of the New Hercules, or the Theatre of the Glory of Louis the Great*). The act of letting-off fireworks symbolized the burning of Hercules on Mount Oeta, which subsequently resulted in his immortality:

C'est icy qu'on immortalise
Le plus grand Roy de l'Univers
Le Château qui brûle
Est l'Oete d'un second Hercule.
[It is here that one immortalizes
The greatest king of the universe
The castle which burns
Is the Oeta of a second Hercules.]⁷³

Hercules Christianissimus

In the course of the Catholic Counter-Reformation, a renewed Christianization of the themes of antiquity occurred.⁷⁴ One of the most important examples is the poem *Hercule Chrétien* by Pierre de Ronsard (1571). In this work, parallels were drawn between the most important episodes in the Hercules legend and in the life of Christ, with the divine-human birth identified as one of their shared characteristics. In doing so, Ronsard made use of typology and presented the mythological tales as prefiguring the Bible.⁷⁵ In Spain at this time it was above all Philip III's court chaplain, Fray Hortensio de Paravicino, who found similarities between Christ and Hercules, cross and club. Even in the mid-eighteenth century, the hero of antiquity was still regarded as the 'image of Christ, vanquisher of death'.⁷⁶

Alongside the rechristianization of classical mythology, the theories of the state and rulership also became increasingly sacralized. One of the central authorities in this field was Justus Lipsius (1547–1606). In his book of ethics, *De constantia in malis publicis* (1584), as well as his 'mirror of princes', *Politica seu civilis doctrina* (1589), he replaced the classical-pagan concept of Fortuna with the Christian aspect of divine providence as the *prima causa* in life. This is why we also find this divine mercy illustrated in identifications with Hercules dating from the first half of the seventeenth century.

In 1600, the author of the *Labyrinthe royal de l'Hercule*, written in honour of Henry IV of France in the pontifical city of Avignon, accordingly criticized those who preferred the texts of Livy and Plutarch to the Gospels, and who regarded Machiavelli's maxims

⁷² *Description du monument* (1686), 4–5.

⁷³ *L'Apothéose d'un nouvel Hercule* was published in Paris in 1669: Néraudeau (1986), 67.

⁷⁴ Sparr (1984), 82 ff. ⁷⁵ Simon (1955), 180 ff. ⁷⁶ Sebastian (1985), 31, 331.

as immutable. The connection between Christian and classical themes was made on the title-page, with representations of *Ecclesia militans et triumphans* and *Fides*.⁷⁷ In a book dating from 1604, the identification of the French king with Hercules was both justified by transpersonal ideas of the state and interpreted as an expression of divine mercy:

Et tout ainsi qu'en la ville d'Argos on ne prenoit des Rois que de la famille des Heraclides . . . ainsi de ceste race divine se sont pris de toute antiquité non seulement les Rois de France mais quasi tous les Monarques de la Chrestienté . . . La divine vertu de nostre grand Hercule nous a preservez de la mort . . . mais la dextre de Dieu l'a exalté, la dextre de Dieu a monstéré en luy sa vertu merveilleuse, le ciel a combatu pour luy . . . Comme l'on dict que la Deesse Minerve fuit guidé en toutes les actions & enterprises de Hercules & cause qu'il fut enregistré au nombre des immortels: Ainsi la vraye Pallas celeste la sagesse magnanime & courageuse a tousjours assisté cest Hercules Francois & le fera finalement des habitans du ciel des plus proches & favoris de Dieu.

[And just as in the town of Argos the king were only taken from the family of the Heraclides . . . so, ever since antiquity, not only the kings of France but also almost all the monarchs of Christendom have been taken from this race divine . . . May the divine vertue of our great Hercules preserve us from death . . . but the right hand of God has exalted him, the right hand of God has revealed in him his marvellous virtue, Heaven has fought for him . . . Just as it is said that the goddess Minerva was guiding all Hercules' actions and enterprises and caused him to be recorded among the number of the immortals: so the true celestial Pallas, magnanimous and courageous in her wisdom, has always assisted this French Hercules and finally made him one of the inhabitants of heaven nearest to and most favoured by God.]⁷⁸

Although the connection between the Christian-medieval idea of *Rex-imago-Dei* (Henry IV is expressly described in the text as 'vif image du Dieu vivant') and the Renaissance ideal of the *uomo divino* can already be found in Erasmus,⁷⁹ it still seems to be very characteristic of the French concept of the state current in the seventeenth century.⁸⁰ Whereas in a portrait of Elector Maximilian I of Bavaria⁸¹ the *divina protectio* of Hercules was only intimated by drawing parallels with Daniel, Samson, and David,⁸² it was expressed quite clearly in the leaflet already mentioned in honour of Gustavus Adolphus (above, 2. 2). A cord from the hand of God to the heart of the Swedish king emphasizes the fact that, as the 'servant of God', he is equipped with a 'hero's courage' and that 'through thee God rules what moves beneath the heavens'.⁸³ (See Pl. 5.)

On the occasion of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, Louis XIV, too, was portrayed in an engraving as Hercules, to whom medallions of David, Solomon, and Hezekiah were assigned as prefigurations of the *miles Christi*.⁸⁴ The inscription

⁷⁷ Valladier (1601), 98; *Henri IV* (1989), 223, no. 282.

⁷⁸ *Remonstrance au peuple de France* (1604).

⁷⁹ Koerber (1967), 75.

⁸⁰ Brunner (1965), 249 ff.; Jackson (1983), 100 ff.; Pillorget (1991), 43, 51.

⁸¹ *Das Porträt* (1977), 26–7, no. 42.

⁸² On the identification of princes with Old Testament heroes under the aspect of divine mercy: Polleroß (1988), 33–4.

⁸³ Wang (1975), 195.

⁸⁴ Le Goff and Rémond (1988), 476, illus.

mentions Louis's choice *in bivio*, and this is a reference to the topicality of Erasmus's *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (1503/1518), according to which the apotheosis of Hercules is a symbol of the acceptance of the pious warrior in the Christian heaven. A work by Christian Ehrenhaus, which was published in Nuremberg in 1672, may—like Saavedra (see Pl. 8)—also be cited as an example:

Hercules Christianus in bivio: Das ist: Christlicher Hercules Auf dem Scheide-Wege. Oder . . . der auf dem Scheide-Wege (deren einer, der schmale, zum Dienste Gottes und ewigen Leben, der andere, der breite, zum Dienst des Satans und ewigen Verdamniß führet) stehende Hercules . . .

[*Hercules Christianus in bivio*, that is, Christian Hercules at the crossroads. Or . . . Hercules standing at the parting of the ways (of which one, the narrow, leads to the service of God and eternal life, the other, the broad, to the service of Satan and eternal damnation)].⁸⁵

Under these conditions it was only logical to combine representations of Hercules in a religious context with the Old Testament heroes David and Samson, as well as with saintly rulers and knights. An especially beautiful example is to be found in the church of the Minorities in Leżajsk (Poland), dating from the last quarter of the seventeenth century. There, dominating the organ front, is a figure of Hercules, flanked (among others) by the country's royal patrons, Casimir and Wenceslas, as well as the saintly knights, George, Martin, and Michael, the biblical hero Samson, and four more warriors. Banach here interprets the classical hero as serving as an example for Christian heroes fighting against the 'infidel' Turks.⁸⁶

This connection between the classical apotheosis and the Catholic veneration of the saints led, in the second half of the seventeenth century, not only to the depiction of some Catholic saints as Hercules, but also to a more-or-less direct union in the single person of the ruling sovereign of heroic saint and classical hero. The earliest example is to be found in the panegyric to Charles II of Spain, dating from c.1670–80. At the celebrations for the canonization of Ferdinand III of Spain in 1671 in Seville, one of the emblems which decorated the cathedral bore the motto, *labor munia vincit*. It showed an

Imagen de Santo Rey con la Clave de Hercules en las Manos, esprimada contra las Cabeças de la Hydra . . . pretendiose simbolizar assi la Oposicion de las Cabeças Barbaras de la Andulusia vendidas y castigadas por las Virtuosas Fuerças de Nuestro Santo Restaurador.

[Portrait of the holy king with the club of Hercules in his hands, aimed at the heads of the Hydra . . . thus arrogantly symbolizing the opposition of the barbarian heads of Andalusia, betrayed and punished by the virtuous forces of our holy restorer.]⁸⁷

At these celebrations, the ruling monarch, Charles II, was acclaimed as the successor to the 'holy king' by both blood and virtue. Similarly, as king of Spain, he was glorified a few years later by Fernandez de Heredia in his work, *Trabajos y afanes de Hercules*, as the direct descendant of Hercules.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ Sparr (1984), 79, 91.

⁸⁶ Banach (1984), 228 ff., illus. 1 ff.

⁸⁷ 'Imagen de Santo Rey con la Clave de Hercules en las Manos', in *Fiesta de la Sancta Iglesia de Sevilla* (1671), 99; García Vega (1984), no. 2,006, illus. 457.

⁸⁸ López Torrijos (1985), 177–8.

In 1680, as part of a firework display in Valenciennes, a statue of *Hercules christianissimus* holding the globe was erected in honour of Louis XIV to symbolize the French king's zeal in the interests of God:

Le Ciel qui repose sur les épaules d'Hercules est la figure de l'Eglise; le Zodiaque représente la Hiérarchie Ecclésiastique; les Etoiles qui brillent dans le machine du ciel, & les feux qui en sortent artificieusement de toutes partes, sont les portraits de tous ces voeux, & de toutes ces ferventes prières que les peuples soumis à la Monarchie François adressent continuellement à Dieu pour la gloire & pour la conservation de SA MAJESTÉ.

[The sky resting on the pillars of Hercules is a figure of the Church; the zodiac represents the ecclesiastical hierarchy; the stars which shine in the machine of the heavens, and the fires which issue artificially from all parts, are portraits of all those wishes, of all those fervent prayers which the peoples subject to the French monarchy continually address to God for the glory and for the preservation of HIS MAJESTY.]⁸⁹

In 1685, on the occasion of the expulsion of the Calvinists, Cardinal d'Estrées ordered the festive decoration of S. Trinità de' Monti in Rome, to celebrate the triumph of the piety of the king and of France in its victory over heresy. Louis XIV was glorified by being depicted in *forma d'Ercole gallico*, receiving a laurel crown from a personification of the Catholic Church. In honour of France and the *Christianissimo Ercole* there were, furthermore, statues of Fides, Pietas, and Caritas, as well as pictures recalling the piety of other French kings.⁹⁰ Exactly the same virtues (Faith, Piety, and Love) recur in a roughly contemporary design by Thomas Blanchet for a ceiling fresco. What is depicted, however, is the admission of Hercules to Olympus, although the latter is none the less transformed into a Christian heaven of the saints through the integration of the Archangel Michael, one of the patron saints of France. The representation has therefore probably rightly been associated with the victory of Louis XIV over a religious-political rival.⁹¹

In a book of emblems dating from 1692, in honour of St Leopold, the Austrian national patron, the connection between classical apotheosis, Christian canonization, and absolutist ideology is not simply intimated, as in the examples already considered from Seville or Paris, but demonstrated quite unequivocally. One emblem, bearing the title 'Ab Innocentio VIII. in Sanctorum numerum refertur', shows Hercules placed among the stars on a medallion, circumscribed with the classical hero's attributes of lionskin and club. Furthermore, the pious Margrave Leopold is presented as the new Hercules by means of the lemma, 'Est virtute locus dignus & illa loco' (inspired by Seneca's *Hercules oetae*)—'Nam Virtus mihi in astra et ipsos fecit ad superos iter'. In the introduction, the canonization of the Catholic Church is interpreted as the 'transformation of the superstition of ancient Rome into religion'. At this period, the relationship of the ruling emperor, Leopold I, to his patron and holy ancestor not only provided a principal motif of the Habsburgs' panegyrics as an analogy by name,⁹² but

⁸⁹ 'Hercule soutenant le ciel. Dessein des feux d'artifices pour l'arrivée du Roy en sa ville de Valenciennes le 5. Aoust 1680. Par le Magistrat et Conseil'.

⁹⁰ Fagiolo dell' Arco and Carandini (1977), 300 ff.

⁹¹ Galactéros-de Boissier (1991), 406, fig. 315.

⁹² Kovács (1986), 200 ff.

was also explicitly employed as an analogy by virtue in the foreword to a small instructional book of emblems:

In Augustissimum Romanorum Imperatorem Leopoldum oculos defigatis et animum: quia in eo non solum nomen gloriosa appellatione, sed etiam virtutes Sancti Principis laudabili imitatione perfecte expressas comperietis.

[Direct your gaze and your heart to the exalted Emperor Leopold: for in him you will recover not only the famous name itself, but also find the virtues of the holy prince perfectly expressed in praiseworthy imitation.]⁹³

The direct connection between the Emperor and a *Hercules christianus* placed among the stars was established as early as 1680 in a panegyric entitled *Hercules Austrius*⁹⁴ and culminated in 1705 with the catafalque erected by the University of Vienna in St Stephen's cathedral. This displayed the inscription *APOTHEOSIS HERCULIS CHRISTIANI SEU IMMORTALIS VIRTUS LEOPOLDI MAGNI COELO CONSECRATA* ('Apotheosis of the Christian Hercules, or the immortal virtue of Leopold the Great, consecrated to heaven') and was crowned by a statue of Hercules soaring up to heaven.⁹⁵

Ten years later, the same ideological mixture can be discerned at the court of the Elector Maximilian II Emanuel of Bavaria. In c.1713–14, the Parisian Guillelmus de Grof made a design for a monument for the victory of the Wittelsbach over the Turks,⁹⁶ glorifying him after the manner of Louis XIV, with club and lionskin, and depicting him in the company of Fama, who is holding the globe. At his side is a statue of St Michael, the national patron of Bavaria,⁹⁷ which at the same time prefigures the Elector as Hercules. One might perhaps suspect an accidental combination of saint and classical hero here, yet it becomes quite clear from a panegyric of the same date that this was, in fact, the intention. This work, which was published by the Jesuits on the occasion of the restoration of the electorship, bears the title *Descriptio historia utriusque fortunae Maximiliani Emmanuelis . . . secundum heroica majorum suorum Exempla Herculeis laboribus representata* (*Description of the History and Fortunes of Maximilian Emanuel . . . tracing the Heroic Examples of his Ancestors as Represented by the Labours of Hercules*) and indicates the protection afforded to the Elector by divine provision. The first part contains depictions of the ancestors of the house of Bavaria, and presents St Arnulf (like St Leopold of the Habsburgs) in an emblem with the lemma 'Est immortale quod opto' beneath the constellation of Hercules.⁹⁸ (See Pl. 12.)

It is well worth noting that in each of these four examples no saint or hero has been chosen at random, but those saints or heroes who were regarded as national patrons or ancestors of the prince concerned. There can be no doubt that what we are concerned with here is the phenomenon of the *rex perpetuus*, that holy national patron to

⁹³ Lesky (1976), 121, 168–9, illus.

⁹⁴ Kögl (1680).

⁹⁵ Püringer-Zwanowetz (1975), illus. 215.

⁹⁶ *Kurfürst Max-Emmanuel* (1976), nos. 490–1.

⁹⁷ The archangel, who was introduced as national patron in 1597, already appears on the title-page of the 1627 edn of *Bavaria Sancta* (repr. 1704, 1715), together with the arms of the dukes of Bavaria and the Order of the Golden Fleece: *Maximilian I.* (1980), nos. 348, 407, illus.

⁹⁸ *Descriptio historia* (1715), 96.

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VI.
S. ARNULPHUS
 MAJOR DOMUS FRANCIÆ
 DUX AUSTRASIE, MOSELLANIE, &c.
DEIX
 EPISCOPUS METENSIS



*Cælum, & celsa peto; Sola immortalia quero
 Parvabumiles; altos alta decent animos*



On terrestres tantum, sed & coelestes habet Hercules Bojaria. Factis alii mundum implent Heroicis; alii coelos suis accendunt radiis, neque solum ex alto terras illuminant sed & salubri virtute influunt, infra se positos fovant, protegent. Tale sidus Herculeum Sanctus Arnulphus est, cui Bojaria non modò Principum suorum vetustissimam debet Originem, sed præsidium celeste, tutelam Patriæ, multasque, quas ipsa fortè non agnovit, gratias in acceptis habet referendas; prout enim est credere, quòd jam de coelo infuset in Sanguinem, & Scirpem suam, à qua profuxit ipse in terra. Arnulphus hic Arnoldi Filius Dux Austrasie, & Mosellanæ, opibus potens, Majoris Domus sive Palatini Franciæ Dignitatem erat adeptus, Regibus Franciæ parè par; nam universum Francorum Regnum administrabatur eo tempore per Domus Majores, ut vocabant, ipsi⁸

H 2

Regi-

De Genes.
 lapia dicit
 dicit ut
 Genes.
 non Tibi
 de Genes.
 Scitabatur
 ne angelis.

12 St Arnulf of Metz as
 Hercules in Heaven

whom the ruling prince traced his legitimation and power.⁹⁹ Here we find the culmination of the relationship between the humanist ideal of virtue, the medieval idea of the sanctity of blood, and the sacralization of the Counter-Reformation, and this is clearly formulated in the *Descriptio historia . . . Maximiliani Emmanuelis*:

Non terrestres tantum, sed & coelestes habet Hercules Bojaria. Factis alii mundum implent Heroicis; alii coelos suis accendunt radiis, neque solum ex alto terras illuminant, sed & salubri virtute influunt, infra se positos fovant, protegent. Tale sidus Herculeum Sanctus Arnulphus est, cui Bojaria non modò Principum suorum vetustissimam debet Originem, sed præsidium

⁹⁹ Becker (1982).

coeleste, tutelam Patriae, multasque, quas ipsa forte non agnovit, gratias in acceptis habet referendas; pronum enim est credere, quòd jam de coelo influat in Sanguinem, & Stirpem suam, à qua profluxit ipse in terra.

[Bavaria has not only earthly but also celestial Hercules. Some of them fulfil the world with their heroic deeds, others not only illuminate the heavens with their light and enlighten the earth from on high but also fill it with virtue and take care of those under their protection. Such a Herculean constellation is St Arnulf, to whom Bavaria owes not only the ancient lineage of its princes, but also divine assistance and protection for the fatherland, and for this we owe him great gratitude—even if this has not yet been recognized; for it is easy to believe that he also exerts his influence from heaven on the race from which he himself is descended.]

The classical deification of Hercules on the basis of his virtue thus corresponds perfectly to the canonization of the pious prince, reaching its summit and finale in the combination of both in the person of the ruling sovereign.

Hercule moderne

The fact that there is no path that leads on from this point was first recognized in France. For in the wake of the *Querelle des anciens et des modernes*—an expression of the tension which developed at the beginning of the Enlightenment (see below, Chapter 11)—the Hercules identification was also reinterpreted during the reign of Louis XIV. Thus, in 1672, Abbé Esprit wrote:

Toute l'antiquité s' offre mal à propos:
Placer notre vainqueur parmi tous ces héros,
Ce n'est pas élever, c'est faire descendre;
Et si ce que j'en dis se peut dire d'autrui,
Soit Hercule, César, ou le Grand Alexandre,
L'éloge, je l'avoue, est indigne de lui.

[All antiquity offers poor chance to compare:
To place our conqueror among all these heroes,
Is not to elevate, but is to relegate him;
And if what I say can be said of another,
Be it Hercules, Caesar, or Alexander the Great,
Then this eulogy, I swear, is unworthy of him.]¹⁰⁰

A first indication of the new attitude is already supplied by the change from classical to contemporary costume in the monument in the Place des Victoires, which is justified as follows:

on l'a revestu de ses habits Royaux, parce que cette forme d'habillement est si particulier à nos Rois, que mesme par là ils sont distinguez de tous les Rois de la Terre.

[his royal garments have been restored because this form of dress is so particular to our kings that by this very point they are distinguished from all the kings of this earth.]

¹⁰⁰ Néraudau (1986), 70 ff.; cf. Apostolidès (1981).

Such national pride, combined with a disregard for antiquity, produced statements of a kind seldom encountered before, to the effect that the prince had not only attained the same degree of perfection as his model but even surpassed him.¹⁰¹ Thus Ménestrier explains with regard to a portrait of HERCULES GALLOR. AUGUST. on a coin: 'le Roy comparé a Hercule dont il a surpassé les Traveaux, et fait avec moins de Peine des Actions plus glorieuses (the king compared to Hercules, whose labours he has surpassed, performing even more glorious deeds with even less exertion).'¹⁰² As early as 1679, the triumphal arch erected to commemorate the Treaty of Nijmegen, which sanctioned the king's conquests of 1672, bore the motto, NE HERCULES CONTRA DUOS. The *Mercure Galant* claimed that this was justified by his simultaneous victory over three enemies, the Empire, Spain, and Holland:

Jamais l'Hercule de la Fable
Eut-il deux Ennemis à combattre à la fois?
Nostre Hercule veritable
A sceu triompher de trois.
[Did ever mythic Hercules
Fight against two foes at once?
Our veritable Hercules
Could vanquish three.]

However, this text goes one step further in the direction of the Enlightenment, since Hercules is no longer mentioned in the same breath as historical personalities such as Alexander and Caesar, or as the primogenitor or ancestor of the French kings, but is quite simply dismissed as a mythological being.

Such disregard was illustrated in 1682 in the engravings for a panegyric in honour of Louis XIV, upon the occasion of the birth of his grandson. On one page the king is seen mounted on horseback, effortlessly climbing the steep path of virtue, from which Hercules removes any obstacles. Having arrived at the Temple of Virtue and Honour, Louis is crowned by Victory and presented by Virtue as a model for the young prince. In contrast, the dethroned Hercules has to content himself with a place in the shadow of the Sun King.¹⁰³

Since the later statues of Hercules were certainly made by sculptors who were familiar with the monuments to Louis XIV, it comes as no surprise to find that they, too, depict the relevant prince in contemporary dress. It may be presumed that, in doing so, they also adopted the Enlightenment conception of Hercules.¹⁰⁴ This is at least so in the case of both a bronze statuette of the Elector Johann Wilhelm of the Palatinate, and the huge monument erected to him in Mannheim c.1710, since they portray the Elector in contemporary armour, while the attributes of Hercules, the club and the lionskin, lie at his feet—as in the monument to Louis XIV. The representation of the four principal vices indicate that he, just like his arch-enemy in Paris, has already

¹⁰¹ For an example *temp.* Henry IV: Bardon (1974), 116 ff.

¹⁰² Ménestrier (1693), illus. 79.

¹⁰³ Ahrens (1990), 223.

¹⁰⁴ In fact, the dissolution of 'moral plausibility' in Hercules can also be established in Germany c.1700: Sparr (1984), 91.



13 Moitte, *The French People as Hercules*. Design for a monument

vanquished them and become the *Epitome of Virtue*. Then, in 1716, in a funeral sermon by his confessor, Johann Wilhelm was expressly glorified as a paragon of virtue who, like Hercules, had earned his apotheosis: *Horoscopus Herculis Palatini per Virtutes et Labores ad Astra translatus*. *Das ist Tugend und Lebenswandel Joannis Wilhelmi Pfalzgrafen bey Rhein* (*Horoscope of the Palatine Hercules, Placed among the Stars for his Virtues and Labours: Such is the Virtue and Life of the Count Palatine Johann Wilhelm*).¹⁰⁵

In the 1720s, Balthasar Permoser made two marble statues of victorious princes who, like Johann Wilhelm, were closely connected to the Habsburgs. In 1721 the German sculptor executed the statue of Prince Eugene of Savoy, depicting him with club and lionskin, while Fama and Victory announce his eternal fame.¹⁰⁶ Some years later, the artist portrayed Augustus the Strong in a slightly altered form, although the lionskin unmistakably shows the Elector to be *Hercules Saxonicus*.¹⁰⁷ Never realized, on the other hand, was the design for a posthumous monument to Frederick the Great as Hercules—classically naked within a circular temple.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ *Europäische Barockplastik am Niederrhein* (1971), 68 ff., 104 ff.

¹⁰⁶ On the Hercules identification of princes on medals: *Eugenius in Nummis* (1986), nos. 13/21, 13/36, 13/48, 13/66, 155.

¹⁰⁷ Asche (1978), 99 ff.

¹⁰⁸ Chapeaurouge (1968), 280.



14 Louis-Philippe of France as Hercules

2.3 HERCULES AFTER THE REVOLUTION

In France, the identification of the sovereign with Hercules after the Revolution was transferred from the king to his subjects, in which connection the designs by David and Moitte for a monument to the French people deserve mention.¹⁰⁹ (See Pl. 13.) The people's sovereign function is demonstrated above all by a print in which, instead of Hercules, it is the citizens who are shown fighting the hydra of despotism. Yet their enemies also chose the image of Hercules in seeking 'to triumph over the Hydra of the Revolution',¹¹⁰ while Napoleon reverted to the symbolism concerning the hero which had been used under the monarchy.

The nineteenth century marked the end of princely absolutism and also that of the Hercules ideology which had accompanied it: Louis-Philippe was only identified with the hero in satirical form, in a caricature¹¹¹ (see Pl. 14) which was obviously a persiflage of the tradition of royal monuments to Hercules.

¹⁰⁹ Hofmann (1989), 303, no. 402.

¹¹⁰ *Freiheit, Gleichheit, Brüderlichkeit* (1989), 395, no. 255.

¹¹¹ Chapeaurouge (1968), 279.