


Ut Poesis Historia? A Computational-Hermeneutic Approach to the Renaissance Art of History

SOFIE KLUGE , *University of Southern Denmark*

ROSS DEANS KRISTENSEN-MCLACHLAN , *Aarhus University*

This article aims to reopen discussion of the Renaissance ars historica, a genre that has garnered little attention in modern scholarship. It does so by using a set of computational tools to measure the quantitative occurrence of terms related to artistry and cognition in Johann Wolff's collection of historical-method texts entitled "Artis Historicae Penus" (1579). Like the period's historical writing, which amalgamated aesthetics and historiography, the Renaissance artes historicae belonged to a historiographical paradigm in which the skillful construction of discourse went hand in hand with the search for historical truth. The title of Wolff's anthology accordingly draws an overt connection between the concepts of "ars" and "historia," yet what did sixteenth-century theorists mean by "art"?

INTRODUCTION

THE PERIOD SPANNING roughly from 1550 to 1650 saw a massive proliferation of *artes historicae*, a formally heterogeneous but thematically consistent type of Renaissance text on historical theory and method written in the form of dialogue, essay, oration, treatise, or sententiae, and generally in Latin.¹ These texts formed part of the Renaissance historical turn—a break away from the medieval “conflation of the life of antiquity with the life of the contemporary world”—and in certain ways foreshadowed modern

This article was conceived and written by Sofie Kluge within the framework of HISTORIES, a research project at the University of Southern Denmark funded by the VELUX Foundation. The computational analysis was carried out by Ross Deans Kristensen-McLachlan, while the conversion of the printed Renaissance text into machine-encoded text and correction of the latter was performed by Johann Ramminger and Marianne Pade. See Ramminger's description of this process in his ALEXIS GitHub blog https://jramminger.github.io/collatinus_spellchecker/.

¹ See Cotroneo's definition, in *I trattatisti dell'Ars historica* (Treatise writers of the *ars historica*), of the term *ars historica* as “i molti scritti e trattati intorno alla storia, alla sua dignità, al suo significato, al posto che occupa fra le altre attività di pensiero, apparsi nell'età umanistico-rinascimentale” (“the many writings about history, its dignity, its meaning, and the position it occupies among other activities of thought, that saw the light of day in the humanist-Renaissance age”): Cotroneo, xii.

Renaissance Quarterly 76 (2023): 1303–39 © The Author(s), 2024. Published by Cambridge University Press on behalf of the Renaissance Society of America. This is an Open Access article, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution licence (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>), which permits unrestricted re-use, distribution and reproduction, provided the original article is properly cited.

doi: 10.1017/rqx.2023.541

historical methods and ideas about history, notably in their attempts at systematizing the historiographical discipline.² However, a quick glance at these works suggests that the conception of history underlying them deviated, in some instances sharply, from modern notions. Like the period's historical writing, which combined aesthetics and historiography in ways that modern historians would consider problematic, the Renaissance *artes historicae* belonged to a historiographical paradigm in which the skillful construction of discourse went hand in hand with the search for historical truth.³ In addition to theoretical reflections on the institution of history and the problem of historical evidence, these treatises offered practical advice on history writing as well as technical discussions of the use of metaphor and poetic ornament, the invention of speeches, and the organization of historical narrative. In contrast to most modern historians, who focused, in the famous words of Leopold von Ranke (1795–1886), on “how things actually were,” the main concern of Renaissance historical writers was how to make their narratives as morally edifying as possible, and aesthetics were considered the chief means to achieve this end.⁴ As Luis Cabrera de Córdoba (1559–1623), a Spanish theorist of history and biographer of Philip II, eloquently pointed out in his *De historia para entenderla y escribirla* (On understanding and writing history, 1611), history could be likened to a maid whose purity was her main asset but who would be loved by no one if she were “without artifice.”⁵ Renaissance *artes historicae* provided guidelines for writing

² Pocock, 3. On the French “historical revolution,” see Kelley, 1970. On the English context, see Fussner; and Levy, ix, who writes that “the late medieval chronicle may be seen as a compilation, loosely organized, whose author had no firm grasp of the essential differences between past and present, who thought of the events of a hundred years before his own time as occurring in a context identical to the world in which he himself lived. . . . This was the structure that was to be altered. The importation of Italian humanism introduced first, and most important, the concept of anachronism. The past was different from the present.”

³ This characterization of Renaissance historical writing communicates with the ones proposed by Popper, 2012; and Olds. In the preface to *Theoretiker humanistischer Geschichtsschreibung* (Theorists of humanist historiography), editor Eckhardt Kessler similarly sums up the Renaissance view of history as “true and ornate representation of human action to the benefit of humankind”: Kessler, 17–21. See also Bietenholz, 1994, 398, on the Renaissance balancing of the “rational critique,” or *historia*, and “mythmaking,” or *fabula*.

⁴ Ranke, 57. On the “exemplary” impetus of the Renaissance theory of history, see Blair, 2005, 273–74 (discussing the case of Theodor Zwinger).

⁵ “Those who believe that history is without artifice are mistaken; it has its doctrine and laws prudently set down by the most excellent masters. Others, caring little for fidelity, attend only to artificial, wile, polished and groomed elegance so that readers will read it because it speaks well. Histories (according to Polybius) surge from both the one and the other like a damsel with pretty features who lacks eyes; or if she has pretty eyes, then has freckles or pockmarks in the

history in a manner so delightful that the truth would shine upon its readers, to their moral benefit.

As hybrids of the modern and the premodern, the *artes historicae* have mostly been discussed by intellectual historians specialized in Renaissance historiography. Very few examples of the genre have appeared in modern editions or translations into the vernacular.⁶ On the whole, this material is little known to many Renaissance scholars, even though the authors of *artes historicae* were among the brightest stars in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century intellectual sky.⁷ The present article aims to reopen scholarly discussion of the Renaissance *ars historica* by using computational tools to explore their aesthetic dimensions and the complex understanding of history they project.

Applying an abridged version of what the pioneering literary scholar-cum-data scientist Andrew Piper has conceptualized as the “strange hermeneutics of computational reading,” this study aims to say something more general about the *ars historica* by reading at scale, and to root this distant form of reading in existing discussions of sixteenth-century historiography, thereby highlighting its applicability to the work of Renaissance scholars and historical specialists.⁸ It is our hope

whole face or is otherwise defective. The pure and clean notice of things, without interest or considerations, is the light and soul of this damsel; but if she is stuttering or full of big moles and wrinkles, people will not fall in love with her”: Cabrera de Córdoba, 30. Here and subsequently, translations are by Sofie Kluge, except where otherwise indicated.

⁶ Beside Thomas Blundeville’s loose contemporary English translation of Jacopo Aconcio’s and Francesco Patrizi’s works (*True Order and Methode of Wrying and Reading Hystories*, 1574), it is primarily Bodin’s *Methodus* that has been translated (current English translation dating from 1945); see Blundeville. The *Methodus* is also the only text from the Wolff anthology that was found worthy of mention in Stunkel. Characteristically, Kessler’s 1971 anthology is a facsimile edition of sixteenth-century texts (with an introduction and an analytical table of the contents of the texts). There exists a modern Latin-Spanish edition of Sebastián Fox Morcillo’s *De Historiae Institutione Dialogus* (Dialogue on the instruction of history, 1557), edited by Antonio Cortijo Ocaña.

⁷ The second phase to the genre, from the mid-seventeenth to the mid-eighteenth century, associated principally with French authors such Pierre Le Moyne (*De l’Histoire* [On history], 1670) and René Rapin (*Instructions pour l’Histoire* [Instructions for history writing], 1677), is even less well studied but will not be discussed in the present article. For a discussion of this part of the tradition, see Guion.

⁸ Piper, 69–70: “This is what I would call the ‘strange hermeneutics’ of computational reading. We don’t so much unmask with the computer as puzzle over the meanings of quantitative facts or just get bored by their incapacity to tell us anything new. Reckoning with this admixture of the strange and the mundane will be the precondition of our sustainability within academic institutions increasingly obligated to a science-system premised on the sine qua non of ‘new knowledge’ and ‘repeatable knowledge.’ But it will also challenge a professional stance that has too often failed to engage its unstated and yet deeply felt attachments to books, forcing us to reflect anew on the technological conditions of readerly attachment, both past and present.”

that the complementary relationship between cognition and artistry in the Renaissance *ars historica* suggested by computational analysis, and affirmed by the work of scholars using the traditional hermeneutic tools of close reading and contextualization, will occasion renewed discussion of the aesthetic dimensions of Renaissance historical theory and method.

THE *ARTIS HISTORICAE PENUS*

This study takes as its focus the eighteen Neo-Latin treatises included in the anthology *Artis Historicae Penus*, edited by the German jurist, diplomat, translator, historian, and theologian Johann Wolff (1537–1600) and printed in its final version in 1579 by the prestigious Basel publisher Pietro Perna (1519–82).⁹ For many reasons, this particular anthology provides an ideal point of departure for exploring the Renaissance art of history.

From a geographic as well as a confessional point of view, the *Artis Historicae Penus* is remarkably diverse, uniting nine Catholic, seven Protestant, and two pagan texts by two French, seven Italian, one Spanish, two Greek, two Swiss, one Hungarian, and three German authors (in addition to the Swiss, German, and Hungarian Protestant translators and the German Protestant editor, each of whom wrote a paratext).¹⁰ Furthermore, most of the contributors to the anthology were Renaissance polyhistorians in the true sense of the word, practicing jurisprudence while teaching theology or philosophy at universities or working as diplomats, civil servants, ministers, medical doctors, counselors to princes, or private tutors to aristocratic families. The authors' multifaceted occupations illustrate the important point that in the sixteenth century, history was not yet clearly demarcated as an independent discipline practiced by specialists but, rather, was shaded into an array of other *artes*, theoretical as well as practical.¹¹ Finally, while the *Artis Historicae Penus* must have been intended as a collection of the most up-to-date theory in the field, contemporaneous contributions actually span a good eighty years, from Giovanni Pontano's *De Historia* (On history, 1499) to Theodor Zwinger's homonymous 1577 treatise. Wolff's anthology

⁹ See appendix 1 for a full bibliographical list of texts included in the *Artis Historicae Penus*.

¹⁰ For a comprehensive discussion of the anthology, with special attention to the editorial prefaces, see Vida.

¹¹ Theoretical Renaissance *artes* included the *ars poetica*, issuing from Italy and flourishing in an array of European contexts; the *ars memoriae* of Giordano Bruni (1582) and others, studied by Yates; the *ars rhetorica*, studied by Plett; the *ars gubernandi* of Juan de San Pedro Ustarroz (1614); and the *ars moriendi*, which served as the title of two anonymous and very popular fifteenth-century Latin texts eventually outrivaled by Erasmus's *De Praeparatione Ad Mortem* (On preparation for death, 1533) and studied by Reinis. Practical Renaissance *artes* included the *ars navegandi* (such as Pedro de Medina's *Arte de navegar* [Art of navigation, 1545]) and the *ars dictaminis* or *ars dictandi*, which has been the focus of recent interesting work: see Burton.

also includes two ancient Greek texts: Dionysius of Halicarnassus's *De Thucydidis Historia Iudicium* (Περὶ τοῦ Θουκυδίδου χαρακτήρος [On Thucydides]) and Lucian of Samosata's *De Scribenda Historia* (Πῶς δεῖ Ἱστορίαν συγγράφειν [How to write history]), from the first century BCE and the second century CE, respectively, in András Dudith's and Jacob Molzer's 1560 and 1538 Latin translations.¹² Indeed, the *Artis Historicae Penus*'s chronological diversity constitutes another element of its suitability as a lens through which to study the Renaissance art of history—not as the product of a specific decade or a particular place, but as an epochal, supranational, supraconfessional, and supradisciplinary phenomenon epitomizing sophisticated and cosmopolitan humanist culture.

Through the medium of Neo-Latin, the humanist lingua franca, the *Artis Historicae Penus* creates a virtual dialogue across time and space between beacons past and present of European historiography. In its pages, giants of contemporaneous historical theory such as Jean Bodin (1530–96) and Francesco Patrizi (1529–97) rub shoulders with ancient writers in Renaissance translation as well as with contemporaries who are less well known in the present day but were certainly no less erudite. Indeed, as its title suggests, the *Artis Historicae Penus* is a treasure trove of cutting-edge historical-method texts, at once a point of departure for theoretical discussions and a useful *vade mecum* for historical writers. In its first version (1576), comprising twelve texts, the anthology bore the title of its most prestigious contribution, Bodin's groundbreaking *Methodus ad Facilem Historiarum Cognitionem* (Method for the easy comprehension of history, 1566).¹³ However, for the second and more comprehensive two-volume edition of 1579—which constitutes the focus of the present article—Wolff changed the title to *Artis Historicae Penus*.¹⁴ The following

¹² Dudith's "Praefatio" to his translation of Dionysius's text is also included in the *Artis Historicae Penus*. Though the original Greek texts predated the Renaissance, of course, the fact that they were translated into a Renaissance theoretical idiom and found worthy of publishing in the anthology qualifies them for incorporation in the analysis.

¹³ The 1576 version of the anthology comprised Renaissance texts by Jean Bodin (humanist alias Bodinus), Francesco Patrizi (Patritius), Giovanni Pontano (Pontanus), François Baudouin (Baldinus), Sebastian Fox Morcillo (Foxius), Giovanni Viperano (Viperanus), Francisco Robertello (Robertellus), Uberto Foglietta (Folietta), David Kochhafe (Chytraeus), and Simon Griner (Grynaeus), plus two ancient Greek texts by Dionysius Halicarnassos and Lucian of Samosata in the Renaissance translations of András Dudith (Duditis) and Jakob Molzer (Mycillus). Patrizi's *Dialoghi*, originally written in Italian, figured in the 1570 Latin translation of Johann Nikolaus Stupa (Stupanus).

¹⁴ The new texts included in later editions of the *Artis Historicae Penus* are by Christophe Milieu (Mylaeus), Celio Secondo Curione (Caelius), Christopher Pezel (Pezelius), Theodor Zwinger (Zwingerus), and János Zsámboky (Sambucus). There is also a text by the Italian Antonio Riccoboni (*De Historia*). Riccoboni's text, however, is not included in most extant copies and therefore does not form part of the present investigation.

analysis implicitly interrogates the meaning of this shift, for the foregrounding of the term *ars* in the title of the second edition is conspicuous and invites examination of the weight attached to artistry in the *artes historicae*.

STATE OF THE *ARTES*

A rich body of literature has explored the *ars historica* and Renaissance historical theory using the traditional hermeneutic tools of close reading and contextualization. The current article seeks to build on these studies using methods of distant reading.

Early twentieth-century studies by Eduard Fueter and Benedetto Croce underscored continuities and discontinuities between Renaissance historiographical theory and practice.¹⁵ In his study of English seventeenth-century historical thought, John Greville Pocock traced the roots of the Renaissance *ars historica* in studies of Roman law by French Renaissance jurists.¹⁶ Fifty years later, Girolamo Cotroneo's work traced the development of the "ragione storica" from its fourteenth-century Italian humanist origins through Bodin's *Methodus*.¹⁷ George Nadel, in an important article, discussed the role of the genre in the development of the philosophy of history.¹⁸ In other studies, Bodin translator Beatrice Reynolds described the *ars historica's* gradual approximation of political philosophy, on the one hand, and juridical theory, on the other;¹⁹ Giorgio Spini discussed the Italian *artes historicae* as prisms of Counter-Reformation dogmatism;²⁰ Manuela Doni Garfagnini read them in

¹⁵ In *Teoria e storia della storiografia* (1927), Croce criticized Fueter's *Geschichte der neueren Historiographie* (1911) for being based "sopra una fallace analogia tra il produrre dell'arte e quello della storia" ("on a false analogy between artistic production and the production of history"). In other words, while it may be true that literature, which is "opera di fantasia" ("work of fantasy"), cannot be identified with literary theory, which is "opera di riflessione" ("work of reflection"), history is always essentially historical thought, and in historiography, theory and practice are therefore indistinguishable. See Croce, 157–58.

¹⁶ Pocock, 1–29.

¹⁷ In the preface to *I trattatisti*, Cotroneo describes his study as "un esame di quelle opere che rivelano il cammino compiuto dalla ragione storica" ("a scrutiny of those works that show the completion of historical reason"): Cotroneo, xii. He excluded Bodin from his survey, "perché con lui questa operazione culturale con la quale la storia diventa consapevolmente oggetto della filosofia è già praticamente compiuta" ("because with him, the cultural operation by which history becomes the conscious object of philosophy is already accomplished"): Cotroneo, xii.

¹⁸ Nadel, 291–315.

¹⁹ Reynolds, 492.

²⁰ See especially the subchapters "The Counter Reformation and the Dogmatics of History" and "The 'Authorities' of the Counter Reformation" in Spini, 92–97.

the light of Machiavelli's *Istorie Fiorentine* (Florentine histories, 1532).²¹ George Huppert emphasized the importance of erudition and philosophy in the French *artes historicae*, as did Daniel Woolf and John Salmon for kindred English materials.²² Donald Kelley studied the alliance of law and history in French historical thought;²³ Astrid Witschi-Bernz emphasized the element of pyrrhonic skepticism in (primarily) German and French "historical-method literature" between 1500 and 1800;²⁴ and Arno Seifert examined the relation between the early modern concepts of history and epistemology.²⁵ In the most comprehensive study of the Renaissance *ars historica*, Anthony Grafton explored sixteenth- and seventeenth-century *artes* by Reiner Reineck, Francesco Patrizi, and Jean Bodin;²⁶ Cesc Esteve, in different works, focuses on Spanish specimens of the genre as part of a contemporaneous scientific paradigm sanctioning ideological "narratives of origin" and in relation to censorship.²⁷ Finally, Silvana Vida addresses the skeptically rooted "obsession with method" underlying the *artes historicae* in general and Wolff's anthology in particular.²⁸

The aesthetic dimensions of the *ars historica*—the more specific object of interest in the present context—have also been studied by other scholars. In the introduction to his study of Italian Renaissance historiography, Eric Cochrane problematizes the fact that quite a few of his predecessors held views about historiographical form that directly contradicted those of the Renaissance theorists of history whom they studied.²⁹ In the preface to his edited volume of *artes historicae*, Eckhardt Kessler ponders the essential unity of a "demand for truth . . . with the idea of a magnificent and sumptuous representation of past events."³⁰ In the 2005 prelude to his 2007 monographic study of the *artes historicae*, Anthony Grafton pays a great deal of attention to Renaissance theoretical discussions of invented *orationes* and *conciones*.³¹

²¹ Doni Garfagnini, 1–20.

²² Huppert, 12–27; Salmon, 11–36; Woolf, 11–48.

²³ Kelley, 1999, 116–48.

²⁴ Witschi-Bernz, 51–90.

²⁵ See especially Seifert, 63–115.

²⁶ Grafton, 2007.

²⁷ Esteve, 2008, 2014, and 2018, 1–11.

²⁸ Vida, 172–85. Quotation on 179.

²⁹ Targeting Fueter, Cochrane notes that "others of my predecessors seem rather to have been influenced by a critical principle that was the exact opposite of the one held by the humanist historians themselves: not 'What is badly written probably won't be read' but 'What is consciously well written is probably not worth reading': Cochrane, x.

³⁰ Kessler, 21.

³¹ Grafton, 2005, 58–64.

And, most recently, Florian Neumann examines the relation between the *ars historica*, the *ars poetica*, and the *ars rhetorica* in the work of the historian, rhetorician, and poet Famiano Strada (1572–1649), implicitly revising Spini’s unbenign presentation of the same Jesuit as “champion of the new crusade.”³²

The present article builds especially on these latter studies, and in complementary fashion: the distant reading of computational philology augments what other scholars have done via close reading and contextual study. Essentially, the present article proposes, first, that the current understanding of the *ars historica* could benefit from a new approach to its aesthetic dimensions and, second, that further focus on the aesthetic dimensions of the *ars historica* could help stimulate fruitful exchange between scholars of Renaissance historical theory and method and Renaissance scholars outside the circle of specialists in intellectual history—esthetic scholars and literary historians in particular. The relation of the *ars historica* to contemporaneous poetical theory or the period’s various artistic forms of historical representation—historical drama, historical prose, historical epic and lyric poetry, historical painting, historical tapestry, and historical sculpture—has, for instance, not been examined, though such cross-disciplinary studies would be valuable on both sides.³³

The assumption of this investigation is that the treatises collected in the *Artis Historicae Penus* express ideas about the compositional and stylistic aspects of history writing that resemble those appearing in coeval poetics and in the various artistic forms of historical representation listed above.³⁴ In fact, several of the contributors to the *Artis Historicae Penus* penned *artes poeticae*, or works on poetic imitation, including Francesco Robertello (*In Aristotelis Poeticam Explicationes* [Explications of Aristotle’s poetics], 1548), Sebastián Fox Morcillo (*De Imitatione* [On imitation], 1554), Giovanni Viperano (*De Poetica Libri Tres* [Three books on poetics], 1579), Antonio Riccoboni (*Poetica* [Poetics], 1585), and Francesco Patrizi (*Della poetica* [On poetics], 1586).

³² See especially Neumann, 28–102; Spini, 125.

³³ Another type of Renaissance historiographical text that could provide common ground for historical specialists and literary historians is the *exemplum*, a collection of histories that can come from a variety of different (political, natural, theological) fields; the *exemplum* is studied by Blair, 2005.

³⁴ Like the *ars historica*, the Renaissance *ars poetica* had ancient antecedents. Many *artes poeticae*, including Julius Caesar Scaliger’s *Poetices Libri Septem* (Seven books on poetics, 1561), Philip Sidney’s *An Apology for Poetry* (1595), and Alonso López Pinciano’s *Philosophia antigua poética* (Ancient poetic philosophy, 1596), took the form of explications of Aristotle’s *Poetics*. Just as *artes historicae* discussed the aesthetic elements of history writing, the relation between history and poetry was a returning issue in the *artes poeticae*, with Sidney’s “So, then, the best of the historian is subject to the poet” summing up the general opinion rather well: Sidney, 20.

Indeed, as Nicholas Popper has pointed out, in the Renaissance, history was not yet “compartmentalized as its own unique discipline” but “shaded into poetry, moral philosophy, rhetoric, and other arts.”³⁵ Or, as Paulina Kewes put it, “[Renaissance] history plays are rightly interpreted as a form of history writing, alongside prose historiography, historical poems, historical ballads, and historical pamphlets.”³⁶ In other words, the sixteenth century did not distinguish clearly between historical cognition and historical representation, or between the historian’s inquiry into the past and exposition of the facts uncovered by this inquiry. Thus, in their attention to historiographical style, some Renaissance *artes historicae* are almost indistinguishable from the period’s *artes poeticae*—except, of course, for their contradicting views on which art was the better: that of poetry or that of history. In sum, the semantic diversity of the term *ars* invites further examination of the nature of the Renaissance *ars historica*.

HOW TO UNDERSTAND ARS

The 1579 edition of the *Artis Historicae Penus* appears to want to settle, once and for all, the question posed by Sperone Speroni (1500–88) in his 1560 *Dialogo Della Istoria: Fragmento* (Dialogue on history: fragment), which was not included in Wolff’s anthology. The question is whether or not history should be considered an art.³⁷ The title of Speroni’s volume draws a clear

³⁵ “Before enumerating the myriad lies, exaggerations, and oversights imputed to historical witnesses by early modern scholars, it is necessary to survey the status of inquiry into the past in the sixteenth century. This pursuit was not, at that time, compartmentalized as its own unique discipline, but rather was one of the fields comprising the *studia humanitatis*. Readers of history viewed examination of the past as one among a variety of methods of investigating and intervening in the theater of terrestrial life, and as a mode of analysis that shaded into poetry, moral philosophy, rhetoric, and other arts generative of virtue and prudence”: Popper, 2011, 376.

³⁶ Kewes, 184.

³⁷ Kessler, 8–9. Speroni’s five-page “fragmento” (pages 345–50 of the 1740 edition of *Opere*, vol. 2), published in Kessler’s anthology as facsimile, defines *istoria* as a narrative of facts and, as such, distinct from the fictive *favola* of poets and the *argomento* of rhetoricians: “Certo è che istoria è narrazione, e narrazione è ragionamento di qualche fatto; altrimenti sarebbe favola o argomento e fatto è vera operazione; perchiocchè’l finto è non fatto. Del vero è dunque la istoria” (“It is certain that history is a narrative, and narrative is the reasoning of some fact; otherwise it would be a fable or an argument, and fact is a true operation; for that which is feigned is not fact. Therefore, history is about true things”): Kessler, 345–46. Though history distinguishes itself from the other *arti umane* through its commitment to truth, it is nonetheless an *ars*, with its own “piano,” “umile” (“plain,” “humble”) style: Kessler, 347.

connection between the concepts of *ars* and *historia*, yet what did sixteenth-century theorists mean by *art*? And which concept(s) of *historia* did they apply?

According to Charlton Lewis and Charles Short's *A Latin-English Dictionary*, there are many different connotations of the term *ars* in classical Latin.³⁸ Upon closer inspection, though, these connotations can be grouped into two broader categories: one relating to the cognitive and epistemological sphere and denoting, among other things, "the theory of any art or science" and "science, knowledge" and the other designating any practical form of artistry: "skill in joining something, combining, working it, etc.;" "skill in producing any material form, handicraft, trade, occupation, employment (τέχνη)"; or "any physical or mental activity, so far as it is practically exhibited; a profession, art (music, poetry, medicine, etc.)."³⁹

Authoritative reference works support the notion that there may be more to learn about the artistic element of the Renaissance *ars historica*, though *A Latin-English Dictionary* and the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* are of course thesauri of classical Latin. However, Johann Ramminger's *Neulateinische Wortliste: Ein Wörterbuch des Lateinischen von Petrarca bis 1700* (Neo-Latin glossary: a dictionary of Latin from Petrarch to 1700), which is based on an archive of approximately 500 million words, registers artistic meanings of related lemmata such as *artifex* ("artifex, -icis, adj.—kunstreich, raffiniert: VIVES disc I 4,1 p. 157 de hoc artifice et utili dolo ingesserunt praeceptores, quae aperte tradita respuissent discipuli") and *artista* ("artista, -ae, f.—Handwerker: CAMPANELLA synt 2,5 cum in officinis artistarum plus philosophiae realis et verae habeatur quam in scholis philosophorum, consulendi sunt diligenter pictores, tincores, ferrarii, . . . auriductores, . . . bombardarii, pannifici, destillatores et id genus reliqui"). On this basis, it may reasonably be supposed that the term *ars* had both artistic and cognitive connotations in Neo-Latin.⁴⁰

In this article's quantitative analysis of the weight attached to historical cognition and historiographical artistry in the *Artis Historicae Penus*, two semantic clusters are established, and the relative presence of both in the texts is examined. These two clusters are the result of a hermeneutical process

³⁸ Online at <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/>.

³⁹ These two categories also apply to the definitions in the more recent *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, 175: "The rules and principles of an art, theoretical considerations, theory"; "A method, system, procedure; a principle of classification"; "Professional, artistic, or technical skill as something acquired and exercised in practice, skilled work, craftsmanship, art"; and "Artistic achievement or performance, a person's art or artistry; an artistic design or representation."

⁴⁰ Online at www.neulatein.de/neulateinische_wortliste.htm. Its archive contains as many as 123,000 occurrences of *ars*, which makes it difficult, if not impossible, to say anything general about the meaning of this term. Therefore, the focus has been on derived forms instead.

in which close readings of similar materials and the consultation of scholarly literature generated a specialized knowledge of terminology in the field. In particular, Sofie Kluge's work on the Spanish *ars historica* tradition—including close readings and contextualizations of texts by Juan Páez de Castro (“Memorial de las cosas necesarias para escribir la historia” [Memo of things necessary to writing history], 1555), Sebastián Fox Morcillo (*De Historiae Institutione Dialogus* [Dialogue on the instruction of history], 1557, included in Wolff's anthology), Juan Costa y Beltrán (*De Conscribenda Rerum Historia* [How to write history], 1591), Luis Cabrera de Córdoba (*De historia para entenderla y escribirla*, 1611), and Jerónimo de San José (*Genio De La Historia* [Genie of history], 1651)—has provided the present investigation with a basic vocabulary and a fundamental idea of the period's scholarly conversation about history.⁴¹

First and foremost, the examinations of Spanish historiographical texts listed above have made visible a complex poetry-history binary rooted in the classical rhetorical tradition, where “*historia* and *fabula*,” in Bietenholz's words, “still were a team” yet were at the same time pitted against each other as kindred but different forms of narrative.⁴² Like the Latin theorists they leaned on, Spanish historical-method authors applied the classical tripartite distinction between poetry, rhetoric, and history, recommending a type of history writing that was neither a compilation of dry facts nor a succession of poets' lies but, rather, a balanced presentation of artistic and cognitive elements. Pondering the notion that “many truths do not make a history” and that history should not be “without wit,” Royal Chronicler Juan Páez de Castro (1510–70), author of the 1555 memo on the writing of history that propelled the Spanish *ars historica*, urged a break with the local historiographical tradition, which contained “little artifice and delicacy.”⁴³

The Spanish materials constitute, of course, an empirical basis too narrow and too geographically specific to make even moderate claims about the *artes* more generally. Our analysis tests ideas about the *artes historicae* that were generated by applying digital tools to a limited set of texts, most of them

⁴¹ Kluge, 3–32. On the Spanish *artes*, see further studies by Esteve, 2008, 2014, and 2018; Cortijo Ocaña; Courcelles; Montero Díaz.

⁴² Bietenholz, 1994, 60–61. Classical authors with whom the *Artis Historicae Penus* contributors would have been familiar through the medieval and Renaissance commentary tradition (see Ward) defined the historian's *historia*, the orator's *argumentum*, and the poet's *fabula* as kindred but different forms of narrative with varying truth claims, with *historia* being the narrative of remote but true things, *argumentum* that of fictive but plausible things, and *fabula* that of things neither true nor verisimilar. Cicero, 55 (*On Invention* 1.19.27); Quintilian, 224 (*The Orator's Education* 2.4.2).

⁴³ Páez de Castro, 1892a, 608–09.

noncanonical and sparsely studied—namely, the texts included in Wolff's anthology. A fundamental supposition of our study, however, is that the intricate poetry-history binary advanced in the abovementioned Spanish texts on historical theory and method could be more globally relevant to the Renaissance *ars historica*.

In order to clarify the assumptions about the Renaissance understanding of *ars* underlying the present investigation and to make clear how and why the word stems in the two clusters were selected, we have chosen a few passages from the *Artis Historicae Penus* as illustrations of the kind of historiographical discussions that permeate Wolff's anthology. Because our point of departure was the Spanish *ars historica*, Sebastián Fox Morcillo's *De Historiae Institutione Dialogus* was a natural choice. As its title suggests, this text takes the form of a dialogue on the "instruction" of history.⁴⁴ To be sure, Fox Morcillo is no Bodin and no Patrizi. He could be termed a marginal contributor to Wolff's anthology—an outsider, even—because of his Iberian heritage. Nevertheless, Fox Morcillo, a philosopher and Plato scholar who trained in Leuven with Petrus Nannius (1496–1557), is a stringent thinker, whose cogent theoretical vocabulary provides this investigation with a helpful conceptual basis. In terms of examining the interplay between cognitive and artistic elements in the Renaissance *ars historica*, his can be seen as more relatable than the volume's more original, but perhaps also more idiosyncratic, contributions. Sometimes, as the German philosopher-critic Walter Benjamin (1892–1944) argued in his study of the Baroque mourning play, the nature of a historical phenomenon is more clearly visible in its "marginal form" than in the consummate specimens.⁴⁵ In terms of the Renaissance understanding of history as *ars*, then, what does the *Dialogus* bring to the table?

Fox Morcillo's work illustrates how the Renaissance conversation about the art of history revolved around a history-poetry binary. Taking the Latin rhetorical tradition's tripartite division of narrative as a starting point, Renaissance theorists of all stripes measured *historia* against other forms of narrative discourse, often following Quintilian's definitions in *The Orator's Education* 2.4.2 to the letter. Against the "fictitious" narrative of tragedy and epic, on the one hand, and the "realistic" and "verisimilar" narrative typical of comedy, on the other, history was generally seen as the "exposition of actual fact."⁴⁶ So, too, in the *Dialogus*—as a form of discourse that distinguishes itself through its commitment to truth,

⁴⁴ Fox Morcillo's *Dialogus* occupies pages 742–837 of the first volume of Wolff's anthology.

⁴⁵ Benjamin, 390. As mentioned above, Fox Morcillo's text is also one of the very few in Wolff's anthology that has appeared in a modern critical edition and translation (Cortijo Ocaña).

⁴⁶ Quintilian, 224 (*The Orator's Education* 2.4.2). As Bietenholz, 1994, 60, notes, this idea of history as closely allied with facts is also found in the Christian tradition, as exemplified by

history is compared with various forms of poetry that are “verisimilar” at best and “false” at worst: “Thence Quintilian’s opinion that there are three forms of narrative: One false; another verisimilar but fictive; and a third which is mixed and extended. Indeed, a fable is that narrative which, as he says, moves in tragedies and epic songs, not truthfully but remotely from the truth. An argument is that which, though it be false, resembles something true, as in comedy. History, then, is the exposition of things that actually happened.”⁴⁷

It is true, of course, that the *Dialogus* tends to dissolve this binary, confirming the hypothesis about the complementary relationship between cognition and artistry in the Renaissance *ars historica*. Notably, the section “On the Definition of History” posits *historia* as a form of narrative both eloquent and true, clear and embellished, balancing the focus on historical truth with artistic appeal in order to enhance the audience’s receptiveness toward history’s many profitable lessons, lessons that make it the most—morally—“useful” thing to the human race: “History, finally, as we said before, is the full, eloquent, true, lucid and ornate exposition of deeds. Thus, nothing could indeed be more useful, excellent, divine or more necessary to the human race.”⁴⁸

Indeed, according to Fox Morcillo, the historian should cultivate a style that is both “lucid and ornate,” simultaneously clear and pleasant. He even goes so far as to position *historia* “somehow in between” poetry and philosophy, as a narrative that combines the “gravity, moderation, force, and reason” of the latter with the “elegance, passion, and pleasantness” of the former:

These forms that I just spoke of. . . both coincide with and differentiate themselves from each other. They certainly coincide in that they are all orations which are made of words and connections between words that express, pronounce, and make intelligible the thoughts of the soul; but they differ in the very form of expressing the things shown. For the sake of voluptuousness and delight, poetry always speaks not of that which is true and right but of what may be false and foul; the philosophical argument is grave and austere and always has vigorous strength so that it will not permit the reader to relax or

Isidore of Seville’s *Etymologiae* 1.44.5, a source very likely known to Spanish theorists of history (San Isidoro de Sevilla, 1:358–60).

⁴⁷ Fox Morcillo in Wolff, 1:757 (Cortijo Ocaña, 123–24): “Unde Quintiliani sententia, cum triplex narratio sit: una falsa altera verisimilis, ficta tamen tertia diffusa et productior. Ac fabula quidem narratio est, ut ille inquit, quae versatur in tragoediis atque carminibus, non a veritate modo sed etiam a forma veritatis remota. Argumentum, quod, cum falsum sit vero tamen est simile, ut comedia. Historia, in qua est vera rei gestae expositio.”

⁴⁸ Fox Morcillo in Wolff, 1:759 (Cortijo Ocaña, 125): “Historia, denique, ut antea dicebamus, plena, copiosa, vera, dilucida ornataque rerum gestarum est expositio. Qua quidem nihil humano generi utilius, praestantius, divinus aut necessarium magis accidere potuit.”

enjoy for long; dialogues, about the affairs of human life, turn the mind directly to the matter, disregarding eloquence; history, finally, is somehow in between poetry and the philosophical discourse, taking gravity, moderation, force, and soundness from the latter and elegance, passion, and pleasantness from the former.⁴⁹

However, as its last section, “Against the Poets and Their Study,” makes clear, the *Dialogus* does not dissolve the history-poetry binary; instead, it complicates it, juxtaposing the historian’s ideal philosophical-poetic discourse with the negative image of poets who invent things “far from all reason,” bringing forth “the most disgraceful fables that are most harmful to the character of the young.”⁵⁰ In short, according to Fox Morcillo, history is artistic—not in the (bad) sense of seeking to gratify the senses, but in the sense of applying skillfully constructed discourse to search for truth.

GENERAL METHODOLOGY

On the basis of the understanding of the *ars historica* reached through close readings of Spanish *artes*, two semantic clusters were established, delineating a set of conceptual pairs that responded to the history-poetry binary found in Fox Morcillo’s *Dialogus* and other Spanish historical-method texts.⁵¹ This was accomplished by listing all conceivable concepts related to history as

⁴⁹ Fox Morcillo in Wolff, 1:802 (Cortijo Ocaña, 162–63): “Hae porro . . . formae a me dictae tum inter se congruunt, tum etiam differunt. Congruunt quidem in eo, quod orationes sunt, quam verbis et eorum connexionem continentur, quod animi sensa expriment, declarant et intelliguntur differunt autem forma ipsa expremendi res oblatas. Nam poesis ad voluptatem et delectionem non quod verum et rectum sed falsum turpeque sit saepe dicit philosophica disputatio atque gravis austera est semper intentosque veluti nervos habet nec respirare lectorem aut delectari diu permittit colloquia, negotiis humanae vitae implicata, ad res, oratione neglecta, mentem convertunt historica, demum, media quodammodo inter poesim ac philosophicum sermonem, gravitatem, moderationem, nervos, sanitatem ab hoc, ab illa venustatem, elationem amoenitatemque habet.”

⁵⁰ Fox Morcillo in Wolff, 1:836–7 (Cortijo Ocaña, 194): “Ab omni ratione aliena”; “turpissimas quasdam et iuvenum moribus pestilentissimas fabulas.”

⁵¹ The history-poetry binary inherited from the Latin tradition and permeating Fox Morcillo’s *Dialogus* also appears, for instance, in the first book of Juan Costa’s *De Conscribenda Rerum Historia*, paraphrasing *The Orator’s Education* 2.4.2: “Iam historia est vera, dilucida, & ordine distincta narratio aliquarum rerum praeteritarum, vel praesentium ad earum notitiam hominum memoriis firmiter inhaerendam. Narratio vero est rei gesta utilis & necessaria ad vita institutionem expositio. Cum vero historiam narrationem esse dicimus, non falsam, aut verisimilem aut simplicem intelligimus: falsa siquidem narratio poesis aut fabula dicitur, quae in carminibus & Tragediis ab omni veritate remotis posita est: verisimilis

representation (the writing of history) and history as cognition (reading of history) and then searching for these concepts in the *Artis Historicae Penus* text file using BBEdit, an open-access multi-file text searching application, noting how often and in what contexts they came up. In this process, concepts such as *praeceptum* (precept) and *doctrina* (doctrine) had to be discarded, due to the fact that they did not occur often enough in the text. Then followed a process of lemmatization, whereby inflected or variant forms of the same concept were grouped together—a not entirely unproblematic operation in some cases because of irregular Latin inflections, as in the cases of *scribe* (write), *fingo* (invent), and *cognosco* (know). In these three cases, searches had to include both present and perfect stems. In the end, the following two word-stem clusters were settled on:

Cluster A	Cluster B
<i>crea</i>	<i>cogn cogi</i>
<i>scrip b</i>	<i>leg</i>
<i>poe</i>	<i>scienti</i>
<i>fing fic</i>	<i>stud</i>
<i>imit</i>	<i>intel</i>
<i>fab</i>	<i>prob</i>
<i>narra</i>	<i>method</i>
<i>orn</i>	<i>perspic</i>
<i>concio</i>	<i>argum</i>
<i>orat</i>	<i>ratio</i>

The semantic field circumscribed by cluster A (encompassing notions of creativity, writing, imitation, fiction, poetry, fable, narrative, ornament, oratory, and harangue) variously contrasts with the semantic field circumscribed by cluster B (encompassing notions of cognition, reading, comprehension, method, study, science, reason, proof, argument, and perspicuity). The stem *poe*, for example, found in cluster A, presents a counterpoint to the stem *scienti*, one denoting the literary approach to historiography and the other a scientific take. The stem *fab*, from cluster A—associated with literary terms such as *fabella* (fable, story) and *fabula* (fable, story, tale) and derived forms such as *fabulosus* (fabulous, storied), as well as the entire semantic field relating to *faber* (workman, craftsman, artisan), which includes *fabre* (ingeniously)—contrasts with *prob*, from cluster B, which denotes demonstrability, approvability (*probabilitas*), and its derived meanings. On a more detailed

narratio est argumentum fictum & falsum, vero tamen simile, cuius imaginem quod potest sequitur & representat, quod in Comediis constitutum est”: Costa, 1.29.

level, *perspicu*, in cluster B, which represents an array of forms signifying transparency and clarity of style (the adjectives *perspicuus*, *perspicua*, and *perspicuum*, and the adverb *perspicue*), responds to the stylistic stem *orn*, in cluster A, which represents a group of forms (*ornatus*, *ornata*, and *ornatum*, as well as the adverb *ornate*) connected to the aesthetic embellishment of historiographical discourse.

Though they belong to a slightly different and more specific register, the final two word stems in cluster A (*concio*, *orati*) have been included because the phenomena they refer to—the speeches and harangues with which historians had invested kings, military leaders, and other historical protagonists since the time of Thucydides’s *The Peloponnesian War* (1.85–86; 2.35–46)—epitomize the artistic element of the Renaissance *ars historica*.⁵² Indeed, in their undeniable capacity as inventions of the historian, these speeches blurred the boundary between systematic cognition and imaginative re-creation of the past. In the present investigation, they contrast with the stems *argum* and *ratio*, which oppose an affective, imaginative approach to history and endorse logical argument and reason.

Our examination of these clusters and their relative presence in the *Artis Historicae Penus* was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the occurrence of stems relating to *ars historica* as a systematic practice of understanding?
2. What is the occurrence of stems relating to *ars historica* as an artistic writing practice?

Considering how basic these research questions will seem to Renaissance scholars, it is all the more surprising that they have not been posed before. Even the most comprehensive and in-depth studies consider only a few of the texts in Wolff’s anthology from a comparative angle.⁵³ This is likely due to the text’s inaccessibility, which was touched upon above and will be further discussed, from a digitization perspective, below. Indeed, the poor quality of most extant copies and the lack of modern philological editions and translations of the contributions to Wolff’s anthology place limitations on the design and scope of studies addressing them. The simplicity of our questions does not make the present investigation of the conception of *ars* in the *Artis Historicae Penus*

⁵² This point underlies Grafton, 2005.

⁵³ Grafton, for example, compares the treatises of Patrizi and Bodin with kindred works by their contemporary, Reinhard Reineck or Reineccius; see Grafton, 2007, 123–88. Kessler publishes four of the *artes* from Wolff’s anthology (Robortello, Patrizi, Viperano, and Foglietta) along with four kindred works by Dionigi Atanagi (1504–73), Giacomo Aconcio (1492–1566), Alessandro Sardi (1520–88), and Sperone Speroni (1500–88), contextualizing them in his preface within the broader field of “humanist historiography.”

unambitious. It merely means that the intention is not to discover as-yet-unknown patterns but, rather, to ascertain patterns that are presumed to exist but have not yet been revealed. In other words, our computer-assisted reading tests partially substantiated ideas about what the Renaissance theorists of history included in the Wolff corpus may have meant when they employed the term *ars*. Based on the knowledge attained through traditional close readings of Spanish *artes* and, more broadly, the study of scholarly literature pertaining to the genre, the following hypotheses may be advanced:

1. Word stems relating to cognitive and artistic conceptions of *ars* are equally represented in the corpus considered as a whole, suggesting complementarity rather than opposition.
2. Word stems relating to the artistic conception of *ars* recur across the corpus, suggesting their general importance to the Renaissance *ars historica*.

While the *Artis Historicae Penus* is of the scale required to test these hypotheses and to make a more general statement about the Renaissance *ars historica*, reading 1,500+ pages of Renaissance Latin is not within the reach of most modern scholars, especially considering the abovementioned dearth of modern critical editions. In a situation such as this, computationally assisted reading provides a viable approach to what Franco Moretti, in “Conjectures on World Literature,” famously termed the “great unread.”⁵⁴ It offers the possibility to read not only Bodin, Patrizi, and Fox Morcillo but also Celio Secondo Curione, Giovanni Pontano, Theodor Zwinger, David Kochhäfè, and the rest of the contributors to Wolff’s anthology, who are less known today. Not to read them closely, of course, but, instead, to let the computer count the relative occurrences of the two groups of word stems in their texts. However, the present examination does not stop at numbers. It proceeds to link the findings reached through computational analysis with ideas about the materials generated through hermeneutical readings and proposes a tentative concept of the role of aesthetics in the Renaissance *ars historica*.

Alluring as this all sounds, there are a few issues that need to be addressed at the outset. The first relates to the creation of an adequate textual basis. Establishing a reliable and machine-readable text from the digitized versions of the *Artis Historicae Penus* available at different research libraries and through Google Books proved to be a major challenge. In the end, the scan of the copy in the Universiteitsbibliotheek Gent, with signature Hist. 8022/2, was deemed the most suitable. However, pages 19–21 of volume 2 in this copy turned out to be from volume 1 and were therefore replaced with the corresponding pages from the copy owned by the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, signature

⁵⁴ Moretti, 55.

65.Y.26 (vol. 2). Indeed, producing the OCR scan—turning digitized images into machine-readable text—and correcting the text constituted the largest portion of the digital-humanities work that went into this article. A series of follow-up procedures then had to be performed to make the text readable and searchable. In order to enhance optical character recognition, for example, images were binarized with the package `image.binarization`, version 0.1.1, available at Vrije Universiteit Brussels and maintained by Jan Wijffels.⁵⁵ Machine-readable files of the two volumes were subsequently produced using the open-source tool OCR4all, and abbreviations were expanded with `o4asolver` and partially corrected with EML-spellchecker, both developed by Johann Ramminger and available at his GitHub.⁵⁶ A number of other changes were made using the lemmatizer Collatinus, maintained by Yves Ouvrard, including the removal of word divisions (when identified); the markup of Greek words with “gr”; correction of the computer’s misreadings of a long *s* as an *f*; correction of the ligature for enclitic *-que* as “q” or “q;”; and emendation of the loss of hyphens and, where appropriate, their replacement with periods.⁵⁷ Moreover, all pages were given a headline in order to facilitate easy navigation of the corpus. But even despite these considerable efforts, the overall quality of the text made it necessary to downscale scholarly aims. There are still quite a few textual problems that need to be corrected manually, including inaccurate word divisions and misplaced orthographic signs. The focus was therefore limited to, first, determining the quantitative occurrence of terms related to artistry in the *artes historicae* as compared to terms related to cognition and, second, identifying any (geographical, confessional, temporal) patterns or trends across the corpus in regard to artistry and cognition. Our approach is thus emphatically explorative and aims principally to identify patterns and noteworthy exceptions that can be the focus of future research, analogue or digital, some suggestions for which will be proposed at the end of the article.

Once the text was ready for a rudimentary computational reading, we conducted a keyword analysis, even though this procedure is not uncontentious. It is, for example, unclear whether the presence of keywords relating to cognitive and artistic conceptions of *ars* actually tells us anything about the meaning attached to these conceptions. A word indicating artistry or cognition could easily be negated in the very same sentence, which would reverse the meaning, and, due to Latin’s flexible word order, the computer would not be able to recognize this by means of, for example, collocation or keyword-in-context analysis. For this reason, computational keyword analysis of the two semantic clusters cannot address

⁵⁵ <https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/image.binarization/>.

⁵⁶ <https://jramminger.github.io/>.

⁵⁷ <https://outils.bibliissima.fr/en/collatinus>.

qualitative questions such as the value ascribed to artistry in the *Artis Historicae Penus*. It simply registers the relative quantitative weight attached to the artistry cluster and the cognition cluster in the texts.

COUNTING COGNITION AND ARTISTRY

Our computational analysis consisted of the following steps: First, numbers were extracted from the digitized and OCR-scanned version of the *Artis Historicae Penus*. The initial goal of this exercise was to assess the distribution of various word stems across the individual texts that comprise the full corpus. The word stems were drawn from the two semantic clusters. In each document, the number of words that began with these stems was counted. These values were then entered into a spreadsheet showing how often each stem appears in each document.

Yet while the raw frequency with which a word stem appears in a document can be informative, it can also be skewed by a document's length. In other words, a longer text is more likely to contain certain word stems simply because it is longer. It is therefore more informative to consider a stem's normalized frequency, calculated as the number of occurrences per 10,000 words. The significance of this distinction becomes clear if one looks at results for *1_743_837_Foxius.txt* and *1_838_890_Viperanus.txt* (see appendix 2). These file names refer to *De Historiae Institutione Dialogus*, by Sebastián Fox Morcillo, and *De Scribenda Historia* (On writing history, 1559), by Giovanni Viperano, respectively.⁵⁸ The stem *narra* appears 117 times in the text by Fox Morcillo and only 57 times in the text by Viperano (raw frequency). Considering these figures, it would seem that the Spanish theorist focuses more on the concept of narration and narrative than his Italian colleague. However, if the normalized values are considered, Viperano's score is only slightly lower—in this case 36.65 occurrences of *narra* per 10,000 words compared to 39.85 per 10,000 words in Fox Morcillo. The following discussion of the computational analysis considers both raw and normalized numbers in order to ensure that what is being compared can actually be compared.

Our research questions concern the occurrence of word stems relating to the idea of history as a systematic practice of reading and as an artistic writing practice in the *Artis Historicae Penus*. After determining the normalized frequencies of word stems from each category, the numbers were scrutinized to test our hypotheses about the general complementarity of artistry and cognition in the Renaissance *ars historica* and the equal distribution of word

⁵⁸ The file names indicate volume number, pages, and the author's Latinized name. For an overview of texts in the corpus, see appendix 2.

stems pertaining to artistry across the corpus. We also scanned the results for significant outliers, unexpected patterns, and other results that could challenge the scholarly narrative and necessitate a different approach.

Subjecting the results of the computational keyword search to an initial superordinate analysis yielded a total raw frequency of 4,637 for word stems included in cluster A, the artistry cluster. This figure is slightly smaller than the total raw frequency of word stems from cluster B, the cognition cluster, which was 5,057. Looking at the normalized frequency values, the situation is the reversed, with a slightly higher occurrence of word stems from the artistry cluster (3,031.58) compared to word stems from the cognition cluster (2,935.16). Of course, when considering the entire corpus at once, there is no need to normalize values. Yet the normalized values underscore the balanced representation of the two clusters and have therefore been included here. With no more than an approximately 10 percent difference in raw numbers, the frequency values for stems relating to artistry and cognition are quite similar, confirming our first hypothesis—namely, that these two semantic clusters have a largely complementary relationship through the corpus as a whole. Examining specific values, however, yields some thought-provoking findings, which we describe and discuss in the following.

Comparing the frequency values for the stems *crea* (164 raw, 54.34 normalized) and *cogn|cogi* (831 raw, 567.33 normalized) points to a large discrepancy, suggesting the irrelevance of the modern notion of creativity to the Renaissance *ars historica*. Indeed, excepting Foglietta's *De Ratione Scribendae Historiae* (How to write history, 1574)—which has 4 raw and 13.74 normalized occurrences of *crea*, and high scores on almost all cluster A search terms—occurrences of *crea* in the corpus are quite few. However, our initial analysis indicated a balanced representation of the two clusters throughout the corpus. Thus, perhaps *crea* itself is the problem. One possible conclusion is that sixteenth-century theorists of history did not conceive of the imaginative side to history writing in terms of creativity. Like modern-day narrative historians, who similarly refrain from labeling their practice creative, the *Artis Historicae Penus* contributors apparently preferred to talk of the artistic dimension of history writing in terms of narration.⁵⁹ The stem *narra* appears in the corpus a total of 523 times, and 470.16 times per 10,000 words.

While these results run counter to the idea of a “creativity-cognition” binary proposed at the outset of this project, it would also not be appropriate to label cluster A the “narration” cluster. In accordance with the Latin rhetorical tradition and its tripartite distinction between “false,” “verisimilar,” and

⁵⁹ For the theory and methodology of modern narrative history, see works by Ankersmit, 1983 and 2001; Munslow, 2003 and 2007.

“true” narratives, the Renaissance concept of *narratio* was polyvalent, lending itself equally to the discourses of the poet and the historian. It is therefore impossible to say that one cluster is more closely connected to narration than the other. This conceptual polyvalence was clearly a factor in the work of Fox Morcillo discussed above, but one must also consider in this context the anthology’s uncontested champion of *narra*, Uberto Foglietta.

Taking the polemic surrounding his *Della Repubblica di Genova* (On the republic of Genoa, 1559), which centered on the nature of historical narrative, as a starting point, Foglietta’s *De Ratione Scribendae Historiae* utilizes the stem *narra* a total of 84 times (222.25 normalized frequency) in about forty pages. Foglietta’s discussion of narrative is aimed at vindicating the style of his own historiographical work. To answer criticism of his attempt to reconcile the historian’s narrative with that of the epic poet, the Genoese historian launches a defense of historiographical artistry based on the idea of decorum: “At the same time that the narrative should be apt, ornate, plentiful and elegant . . . it should put dangers and calamities before the eyes, inspire the attention of the readers, make spectators out of listeners, and finally be full of all eloquence and arts; yet if truth is desired in it, it would need to be a decorous and appropriate narrative.”⁶⁰

As long as the writing is in keeping with good taste and propriety, the distinction between epic and history need not be upheld, for the kind of truth that history represents is always moral. On this point Foglietta and his fellow Renaissance theorists unanimously agreed.⁶¹ Therefore, Foglietta argued, if the historical writer makes all the edifying examples of the past come alive before the reader’s eyes in a “decorous and appropriate narrative,” his discourse can also be “ornate” and “plentiful.” However, while Foglietta may have been able to balance cognition and artistry in his own *ars historica*, his text simultaneously confirms the history-poetry binary as the backdrop of this balance. His *De Ratione Scribendae Historiae* came under attack precisely because of its attempt to unite the truth of historical narrative with the beauty of epic narrative in a single discourse.⁶² By bringing the inner tensions of the Renaissance concept of *narratio* to light, Foglietta offers further evidence of the

⁶⁰ Foglietta in Wolff, 2:413: “Itaque quamvis apta, ornata, copiosa, elegans sit narratio . . . discrimina et casus ante oculos ponat, ac veluti in rem praesentem legentium animos inducat, ac pro auditoribus spectatores faciat, omnibus denique eloquentiae, et artis numeris expleta sit, si veritas in illa desideretur, decoram quidem et aptam fore narrationem.”

⁶¹ Nadel.

⁶² Foglietta in Wolff, 2:413: “Haud sciunt an dicant omnium maximo et praestantissimum, uni tantum hominum generi convenire.” Foglietta names his censors in Wolff, 2:411.

problematic nature of “narration” as a label for the word stems comprising cluster A.

The shortcomings of *narratio* as an umbrella concept for cluster A are further underscored by the fact that the words this term covers do not necessarily or at least do not fully describe the multifarious craftwork dimension of the semantic cluster.⁶³ One practical aspect of *ars* that is not covered by *narra* is the dimension of writing known as *τέχνη* (craft): the meticulous putting into words of what happened when, where, how, and why; the painstaking labor with pen and paper that every historical scholar recognizes; the laborious materialization, in letters, of thoughts and ideas reached through study and cognition. To capture this central aspect of *ars*, we initiated a search for the stem *scrip|b*, which yielded 2,085 raw occurrences and a normalized frequency of 1,158.31 per 10,000 words, accounting for roughly 50 percent of the total occurrences from cluster A. Our next step was to compare these results with the occurrences of the stem *leg*, covering words relating to *legio* in the broad sense of “reading” but also the entire semantic field relating to laws (*leges*), systems, and order. In all, there were 1,253 raw occurrences of *leg*, and a normalized frequency of 666.39 per 10,000 words, accounting for about 25 percent of the total occurrences from cluster B. The difference is notable indeed, and would appear to indicate heavier emphasis on the idea of history as an artistic writing practice. Here again, however, the possibility needs to be taken into account that reading as a metaphor for cognition may not have been prevalent in the sixteenth century.⁶⁴ It is impossible to obtain a definitive answer, of course, but the numbers suggest that it was not, perhaps because the development of the Renaissance *ars historica*—“an art cast as a guide not to writing, but to reading history,” in Grafton’s words—was still in its nascent stages, at least when the earliest Renaissance contributions to Wolff’s anthology were penned.⁶⁵ Or perhaps, as Ann Blair has pointed out, Renaissance scholarly reading could not be so sharply distinguished from writing, because it was always accompanied by extensive note taking, meaning that, in effect, it did

⁶³ In the Neo-Latin tradition, *narrare* actually appears to be tied to the noetic sphere of cognition and, more specifically, to memory. See, for instance, the entry in Nizzoli’s contemporaneous reference work, the *Apparatus Latinae Locutionis* (System of Latin expressions, 1535), based on Cicero’s library and reprinted in numerous editions during the period: “Narrare, Narro, inquit Varro, cum alterum narrum facio, est dicere, conmemorare”: Nizzoli, 399. The reference is to Varro’s *De Lingua Latina* 6.7 (Varro, 219).

⁶⁴ Considering the currency of the theater metaphor in contemporaneous science (*theatrum botanicum, theatrum chemicum, theatrum orbis terrarum*), “seeing” may be a better bid, though this problem cannot be pursued in the present context.

⁶⁵ Grafton, 2007, 26.

not exist as a distinct activity.⁶⁶ Either way, a clearer picture is offered by considering the prevalence of stems from cluster A versus cluster B throughout the corpus as a whole. As mentioned above, viewing the data in this way suggests equal emphasis on artistry (cluster A) and cognition (cluster B) in the Renaissance *ars historica*.

Concerning the occurrence of single word stems, one noteworthy data point is the overrepresentation of the stem *method* in *I_000_Praefationes.txt* as compared to the other texts in the corpus, calling to mind what Silvana Paula Vida has termed the editor's "obsession with method."⁶⁷ This is rather striking, because only four other texts in the anthology—Bodin's *Methodus*, Francesco Patrizi's *Dialogi X de Historia* (Ten dialogues on history, 1560; Latin translation by Johann Nikolaus Stupa, 1570), Sebastián Fox Morcillo's *Dialogus*, and Francesco Robortello's *De Historica Facultate* (On the power of history, 1548)—have occurrences of *method* at all, and very few at that (7, 3, 2, and 3 raw and 0.59, 0.66, 0.68, and 6.03 normalized, respectively). These numbers suggest that establishing an operative methodological *vade mecum* was first and foremost the agenda of Wolff and not of the contributors, who—numerically, at least—preferred the term *ratio* (1056 raw and 528.22 normalized in total), aligning with the top-down synthesizing approach later epitomized by the Jesuit *Ratio Studiorum* (Plan of studies, 1599).⁶⁸ Even Bodin's treatise, which bears the term *methodus* in its title, has almost forty times more occurrences of *ratio* than of *method* (7 against 251 raw, and 0.59 against 21.19 normalized).

From this perspective, Wolff's preface to volume 1 could be construed as evidence of the emergence of an entirely new approach to historiography, an approach focused on the intricacies of history writing. Concretely, this preface addresses the challenges facing the historian who seeks to establish not only what happened but also when, where, how, and why it happened: "The historical treatise is indeed challenged by maximal difficulties, wherefore it is necessary that the person who does not diligently and constantly strain the mind incurs multiple errors: not only concerning what happened, but when, where, in what way, by which means and by whose council, for what reason, and to which end something was done; what came before, what followed."⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Blair, 2010, 1–10 and 62–116.

⁶⁷ Vida, 179.

⁶⁸ See definition II.B.(α) of *ratio* in Lewis and Short: "Subject., *course, conduct, procedure, mode, manner, method, fashion, plan, etc.*"

⁶⁹ Wolff, 1:5: "Historiarum profecto tractatio maximis difficultatibus obstructa: ut eum sit necesse in multos errores impelli, qui non diligenter assidueque animum intenderit: non solum quid acciderit, sed quando, quo loco, modo, consilio, qua de causa, in quem finem sit quodque factum: quid antecedit, quid subsequatur."

These difficulties, the editor argues, make evident the need for a book like the *Artis Historicae Penus*, in which erudite scholars share their ideas about historical method. For method is the answer to the challenges involved in understanding what is irrevocably lost and can only be (partly, deficiently) retrieved through “infinite labor with the remnants of the past”: “For as it was perceived that this could not be understood by the common intelligence of everyone, erudite men who had devoted much study and much time to history began to exhibit the method of their infinite labor with the remnants of the past. And that which they had perceived after a long period of time using the highest diligence they brought forth by the light of their own genius, and with great praise, against the shadows of the histories, in these books which are not unjustly entitled Historical Method.”⁷⁰

Indeed, with its suggestive description of how the scholars in Wolff’s anthology have brought out the “lights” of their intellects against the “shadows of histories,” the preface virtually anticipates Anthony Grafton’s description of the Renaissance *ars historica* as an “Ariadne thread through the frightening, demon-haunted labyrinths of historical writing, ancient and modern, trustworthy and falsified, that every learned man must explore.”⁷¹ On the whole, Wolff’s opening text suggests a rather close connection between the Renaissance methodological vogue exemplified by the publication of the *Artis Historicae Penus* and germinating ideas about enlightenment, which, unfortunately, exceed the scope of the present study.⁷²

In terms of occurrences of stems from cluster B in individual texts, Christophe Milieu’s *De Scribenda Universitatis Rerum Historia* (On writing the history of the universe of things, 1551) is in a class of its own, with 1531 raw and 630.51 normalized occurrences, followed by François Baudouin’s *De Institutione Historiae Universae* (On the instruction of universal history, 1561), with 440 raw and 308.15 normalized occurrences, and David Kochhaffé’s *De Lectione Historiarum Recte Instituenda* (On the proper reading of histories, 1563), with 161 raw and 268.26 normalized occurrences. Interestingly, Milieu’s piece is also among the top three texts utilizing stems from cluster A, with 777 raw and 313.91 normalized occurrences of stems from the artistry cluster, second only to Foglietta (263 raw and 493.14

⁷⁰ Wolff, 1:5–6: “Verum cum istud non in communi omnium intelligentia positum esse videretur, caeperunt viri eruditi, & qui plurimum studii atque temporis historiis impertivissent, reliquis infiniti laboris modum ostendere: & ad ea quæ longissimo tempore, summaque diligentia perceperunt, quasi suorum ingeniorum lumina, cum magna laude, contra historiarum tenebras præferre, in illis libris, quos Methodus historiarum non iniuria inscripserunt.”

⁷¹ Grafton, 2007, 26.

⁷² For an in-depth discussion of the editor’s prefaces, see Vida.

normalized) and Kochhaffe (245 raw and 307.58 normalized). This suggests that the Swiss-born humanist saw the ideal Renaissance *ars historica* as a, in Kessler's words, "true and ornate representation of human action to the benefit of humankind," balancing cognition and artistry.⁷³ Or, in Milieu's own phrasing, "the profession of historians is not only to pursue the knowledge of all remarkable internal and external events but also to restore, through faithful accounts, the public memory of everyday things."⁷⁴ Indeed, as Donald Kelley writes, Milieu was devoted to "the capturing and ordering of past experience in written form"—not just to apprehending and systematizing history but also to laying down, in writing, what was apprehended and systematized.⁷⁵ It is all the more thought-provoking, then, that Milieu is practically unknown today, even taking into account Cochrane's perspicacious remark about Renaissance and modern historians' opposing valorizations of style.⁷⁶

In sum, our analysis confirms the first of the two hypotheses we laid out—namely, that word stems relating to cognitive and artistic conceptions of *ars* would generally be balanced in the corpus when taken as a whole. It also partly confirms the second hypothesis—that word stems relating to artistry would recur across the corpus—albeit with some modifications. Of course, the texts are not uniform in their tendencies. Prefaces and introductions to individual contributions, for instance, contain comparatively few stems from either cluster.⁷⁷ Deviations in paratextual material were expected, however, and do not invalidate the study's heuristic design.

CONCLUSIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

We mentioned at an earlier point that Renaissance historical writers enjoyed penning ferocious harangues and eloquent orations, and it has been suggested that this taste for the rhetorical essentially blurred the boundary between cognitive and artistic conceptions of history. Did the same intertwining of cognition and artistry apply to the authors of the *artes historicae* included in Wolff's anthology?

⁷³ Kessler, 17–21.

⁷⁴ Wolff, 2:242: "Quocirca institui posset non contemnenda Historicorum professio, qui non modo rerum omnium domesticarum atque externarum praeclaram cognitionem essent assequuti, uerum etiam publicam memoriam eorum quae quotidie sunt, in commentarios fideliter referrent."

⁷⁵ Kelley, 1999, 345.

⁷⁶ Cochrane, x. With the exception of Kelley's 1999 article, we were unable to identify any scholarly engagements with Milieu.

⁷⁷ The texts in question are 1_593_594_Balduinus_praefatio1.txt, 1_595_598_Balduinus_praefatio2.txt, 1_908_915_Duditis_praefatio.txt, 2_000_index.txt, 2_001_007_Milaeus_praefatio.txt, and 2_452_458_Chytreaus_praefatio.txt.

Our computer-assisted examination of cognition and artistry clusters in the *Artis Historicae Penus* indicates that in the Renaissance *ars historica*—at least as defined by this weighty anthology—the artistic reimagining of the thoughts and feelings that ignited the actions of history’s protagonists and spilled over into their well-wrought discourse was not incompatible with the rational, systematic understanding of these actions. The computational analysis suggests that for the contributors to the *Artis Historicae Penus*, the practice of writing history was neither one of pure factual reporting nor one of pure imagination. Such a conception accords with *orat* top scorer Milieu’s comment on Herodotus’s style. Milieu praises Herodotus’s use of beautiful language while also criticizing his loose relationship with facts: “For when Herodotus turned to writing history, he practiced it excellently with ornate, candid, and sweet oration, so as to pursue public Athenian honors; but his rather stupid proclivity for the joy of things rather than the truth caused him to be called the father of lies.”⁷⁸

Milieu’s enjoyment of eloquent orations fundamentally agrees with David Kochhaffe’s discussion in *De Lectione Historiarum Recte Instituenda* (1563)—the text with the second highest score for *orat* (43 raw and 51.85 normalized)—of Thucydides, who is said to have been most diverse in his historiographical devices, using orations, maxims, advices, and exempla: “Thucydides illustrates his many advices about life and actions done prudently or rightly not only with orations and the most serious sententiae, but also with remarkable counsels and examples of consequences, which much more effectively than bare precepts move and compel the minds of humankind.”⁷⁹

As the above quotation makes clear, Kochhaffe saw stylistic elegance as something that could stimulate audiences’ appetite for the deep truths and

⁷⁸ Milieu in Wolff, 2:336: “Herodotus nanque ad scribendam historiam conversus, ornata, candida, et suavi oratione illam praeclate tractavit, ut publicis honoribus Athenienses eum sint prosequuti: sed iucunditatis rerum, quam veritatis stultiosior habitus, effecit, ut fabularum parens diceretur.” As discussed by Olds, this “philomythia”—love of oration—held by ancient prose historians such as Herodotus led the Greek geographer Strabo to reject their works as unreliable and even to declare that “on certain historical questions one might be more rightly guided by ancient poets like Homer and Hesiod”: Olds, 3–4 (reference is to the *Geographica*, book 5). Cf. Bodin’s comment that he couldn’t understand why Cicero called him the father of history, “quem omnis antiquitas mendacii coarguit,” in Wolff, 1:49. On Herodotus as the “father of history” and “father of lies,” see Momigliano.

⁷⁹ Kochhaffe in Wolff, 2:543: “Thucydides non orationibus tantummodo et sententijs gravissimis, verum etiam insignibus consiliorum ac eventuum exemplis illustrat. Quae multo efficacius, quam nuda praecepta, hominum animos ad omnem posteritatem movent et percellunt.” The context is Chytraeus’s discussion of the applicability of Thucydides (and other ancient historians) to contemporary German affairs; see Wolff, 2:542–99, originally published as *Chronologia Historiae Herodoti, & Thucydidis* (Chronology of Herodotus’s and Thucydides’s histories, 1563).

profitable lessons encrypted in the great deeds of the past. According to Kochhafe, eliciting admiration of “life and actions prudently and rightly done” required much more than “bare precepts,” orations, and other embellishing devices. Again, the taste for stylistic adornment is closely connected with moral exemplarity: in what George Nadel aptly termed the “heyday of the exemplar theory of history,” beauty must serve a purpose, must be put in the service of moral truth.⁸⁰

Passages like these in the texts of Milieu and Kochhafe essentially confirm the underlying poetry-history binary of the Renaissance *ars historica* that was first observed in Fox Morcillo and that formed the basis of this investigation. They also confirm the intriguing complexity of this binary, which does not present a duality between historical truth and poetic embellishment but, rather, unites these two facets in the multiseismic concept of *ars*. In the light of our computer-assisted distant reading of Wolff’s anthology, the Renaissance art of history may be seen as part of a sophisticated historiographical paradigm in which the cross-breeding of truth and beauty was understood as a productive agent of historical reflection and moral contemplation—a paradigm with which contemporaneous historical drama, historical prose, historical epic and lyric poetry, historical painting, historical tapestry, and historical sculpture, flourishing in an array of European contexts, obviously also aligned. Additionally, if only indirectly and cautiously, the present study suggests a necessary revision of the Enlightenment narrative of modern historiography coming into itself by outmaneuvering the fictions and fables and sumptuous rhetorical embellishment—invented speeches, metaphors—intrinsic to much artistic reimagination of the past.⁸¹ Indeed, our findings suggest

⁸⁰ Nadel, 304–09.

⁸¹ Though the discussion of fabulous histories dated to antiquity, when Strabo and others attacked Herodotus for being too literary, it was reanimated in the seventeenth century with René Descartes, who, in the first part of *Discours de la méthode* (Discourse on method, 1637), presented history as a most untrustworthy form of science: “Et que meſme les hiſtoires les plus fideles, ſi elles ne changent ny n’augmentent la valeur des choſes, pour les rendre plus dignes d’eſtre leuës, au moins en omettent elles preſque touſiours les plus baffes & moins illuſtres circonſtances: d’où vient que le reſte ne paroît pas tel qu’il eſt, & que ceux qui reglent leurs meurs par les exemples qu’ils en tirent, ſont fuiets a tomber dans les extrauagances des Paladins de nos romans, & a conceuoir des deſſeins qui paſſent leurs forces” (“and even if the most faithful of accounts of the past neither alter nor exaggerate the importance of things in order to make them more attractive to the reader, they nearly always leave out the humblest and least illustrious historical circumstances, with the result that what remains does not appear as it really was, and that those who base their behaviour on the examples they draw from such accounts are likely to try to match the feats of knights of old in tales of chivalry and set themselves targets beyond their powers”): Descartes, 1902, 7 (original); Descartes, 2006, 8–9 (translation).

that, in the sixteenth century, historical cognition was—to a certain degree, at least—seen as dependent on artistry, not adulterated by it, though this point clearly begs a much more comprehensive investigation.

Within the framework of the present article, these assertions cannot be further pursued, though they have the potential to advance current knowledge both of the Renaissance *artes historicae* and of the prehistory of the modern historical paradigm. Moreover, the possibilities opened up by the production of a decent machine-readable version of the *Artis Historicae Penus*, which, until now, lay dormant in research libraries and archives, are far from being fully explored. Quite a few stones remain unturned, and aspects of this material that could yield interesting results from a number of different scholarly perspectives have not been explored in depth. For example, the metadata collected beforehand have not been put properly to use. Systematically comparing the numbers extracted from the corpus with information about the authors' lives, nationalities, confessions of faith, and primary geographical locations, or with the texts' generic affiliations and years of publication, could reveal geographical, confessional, and temporal patterns or discursive trends across the corpus.

As a provisional test of the metadata's potential to offer new insights, a series of small experiments were conducted, none of which produced any clear results. It was not possible to detect any clear geographical, confessional, or temporal patterns in the distribution of word stems belonging to the two clusters. While one would, for example, have expected to find an overrepresentation of cluster A in texts by Catholic authors—who would presumably have been less influenced by Protestant iconoclasm and, hence, less critical toward the use of rhetorical imagery—no such pattern was observed.⁸² While the Basel-based Italian Protestant Celio Secondo Curione's *De historia legenda sententiae* and the Rostock German Protestant David Kochhaffe's *De Lectione Historiarum Recte Instituenda* predictably aligned with the Protestant editor's dominantly cognitive understanding of *ars*, it was actually a Catholic author, Christophe Milieu, who scored highest on cluster B (and by far). On cluster A, two Catholics—the Rome-based Uberto Foglietta and the Swiss Milieu—obtained the highest scores, but they were followed by two Protestant theorists,

⁸² On Protestant aesthetics and the iconoclasm of “the original Protestants,” contemporaries of the authors in Wolff's anthology who “did center anxiety about art, beauty, materiality, and images in their theological preoccupations,” see Reklis, 1. While it seems pointless to speak of a uniform Jesuit or Counter-Reformation style of writing (Bailey, 73), no *Bilderstreit* took place in the Catholic orbit. Accordingly, Catholic writers may be presumed to be less concerned with the “damaging” (*schadend*) impact of the visual, rhetorical image emphasized by Luther in *Wider die himmlischen Propheten* (Against the heavenly prophets, 1525, quoted in Berns, 221). On the close relation between confessional identity and historical method, see Backus, 3.

Kochhafe and the Swiss Theodor Zwinger, whose text has 171 raw occurrences and a normalized frequency of 251.72 per 10,000 words from the artistry cluster. It appears that neither nationality nor confession represents a viable parameter for identifying patterns and trends in the corpus. Those paths of investigation are dead ends, it appears.

However, considering the personal stories and historical details behind the metadata—as far as these may be reconstructed—the lack of insights gained from cross-referencing the keyword-analysis results with the metadata is perhaps not so surprising. The sixteenth-century contributors to the *Artis Historicae Penus* represented a highly sophisticated segment of the Renaissance republic of letters, a segment that, generally speaking, took a deliberate personal stand on religion and was highly intellectually advanced. Some of them—such as the Protestant Celio Secondo Curione and the Catholics Sebastián Fox Morcillo and François Baudouin—were converts, as was the Protestant publisher Pietro Perna.⁸³ Others, like Jean Bodin, remained nominal Catholics but essentially adhered to the Reformist program of the Erasmian school (and flirted with esoterism). Still others, like Simon Griner, belonged to minor creeds such as the First Helvetic Confession. In short, in terms of religious persuasion, the contributors to the *Artis Historicae Penus* did not fit into any predesigned boxes; instead, they appear to have created their own categories.⁸⁴ They did not answer to mainstream religious, spiritual, or intellectual standards, and their views on history, presumably, cannot be so easily compartmentalized either.

The fact that the present investigation did not identify any clear patterns from cross-referencing keyword-analysis results with the metadata does not necessarily mean that there are no interesting discoveries to be made and no promising paths of future research to be based on the Wolff corpus. For one thing, the dataset could form the basis of future research on sixteenth-century European intellectual hotspots. Quite a few of the contributors to the *Artis*

⁸³ It should be mentioned, of course, that while conversion was presumably a personal choice for Curione and Baudouin, for Fox Morcillo—a Spaniard of Jewish descent—it was most likely not.

⁸⁴ While little is known about most of the *Artis Historicae Penus* contributors' personal lives, specialists have unearthed some facts concerning their religious commitments. On Perna, see Rotondò; on Bodin, see Mesnard; on Baudouin, see Russell; on Fox Morcillo, see Salazar; on Milieu, see Kelley, 1999; on Kochhafe, see Benga; on Curione, see D'Ascia; on Griner, see Bietenholz, 1985; on Zwinger, see Blair, 2005. Curiously, the Protestant persuasion of Kochhafe, Griner, Curione, and Zwinger can be gleaned from the copy of the *Artis Historicae Penus* held in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek with the signature H.un. 679–81, originating from the Munich Jesuit Collegium and bearing the inscription “Collegio Societatis Jesu Monachij approbat P. Gerardus Massetus 1579” on the title page. In the table of contents of this copy their names are stricken, supposedly by Massetus.

Historicae Penus—including Christophe Milieu, Celio Curione Secondo, Simon Griner, Theodor Zwinger, and the editor Pietro Perna—were based in Basel, Switzerland, a famous center of Renaissance humanism and the Protestant Reformation, whose specific role in the development of Renaissance historiography would certainly be worth further investigation, mapping intellectual networks with digital tools such as social network analysis.⁸⁵ It could also be interesting to use topic modeling to map similarities and differences between the *artes poeticae* penned by contributors to Wolff’s anthology—Francesco Robertello’s *In Aristotelis Poeticam Explicationes* (Explications of Aristotle’s poetics, 1548), Sebastián Fox Morcillo’s *De Imitatione* (On imitation, 1554), Giovanni Viperano’s *De Poetica Libri Tres* (Three books on poetics, 1579), Antonio Riccoboni’s *Poetica* (Poetics, 1585), and Francesco Patrizi’s *Della Poetica* (On poetics, 1586)—and the same authors’ *artes historicae*.

On the hermeneutical side, looking into individual contributors’ use of genre and discursive form could also yield interesting insights. While the majority of the contributions in the anthology are classic treatises, a few of the authors—Giovanni Pontano, Francesco Patrizi, and Sebastián Fox Morcillo—wrote in dialogue form. Others (such as Francesco Robortello and Christopher Pezel) used the essay-like *oratio*, and Celio Secondo Curione preferred to write what he termed “sententiae.” Especially in the case of the texts written as dialogue, one would expect form to play a significant role in the overall message, but scrutinizing authors’ use of language and style more generally could also turn up interesting findings. If it is true, as the present investigation suggests, that Renaissance theorists of history generally saw artistry and cognition as complementary aspects of history writing, how did they write about this complementarity themselves? Are there any patterns to be discovered, any thought-provoking exceptions?

To conclude: though the present examination of the relative emphasis on cognitive and artistic conceptions of *ars* in Johann Wolff’s *Artis Historicae Penus* has concluded, the dataset resulting from our computational analysis presents multiple open questions that are waiting to be explored, either through hermeneutical readings or with the assistance of digital tools. We cordially invite our colleagues to join the conversation.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Apropos the seminal role of Basel in the development of Renaissance historical theory and method, Ann Blair notes that Zwinger was “well-connected to the Basel elite” and that his influential *Theatrum Humanae Vitae* (Theater of human life, 1565), a collection of historical exempla to be imitated or shunned, “offers a rich set of claims about the nature and role of *historia* that was admired at least in its original context of late sixteenth-century Basel”: Blair, 2005, 272.

⁸⁶ The article dataset is available upon request and will eventually be made freely accessible online.

Sofie Kluge holds PhD and higher doctorate degrees from the University of Copenhagen. She is Associate Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Southern Denmark and author of articles and books on European Renaissance literature and drama. Her most recent book, *Literature and Historiography in the Spanish Golden Age*, was published by Routledge in 2021. She is a member of the Academia Europaea, section for Literary and Theatrical Studies, and editor of *Orbis Litterarum*.

Ross Deans Kristensen-McLachlan is Associate Professor of Cognitive Science and Humanities Computing. His work explores cognitive, computational, and corpus-based approaches to the study of register, genre, and style. He is based at Aarhus University in the Department for Linguistics, Cognitive Science and Semiotics, and is Machine Learning Team Lead at the Center for Humanities Computing.

Appendix 1 – Overview of Texts in the *Artis Historicae Penus* (1579)

Vol. 1

1. Jean Bodin (Bodinus), *Methodus ad Facilem Historiarum Cognitionem* (1566)
2. Francesco Patrizi (Patritius), *Dialogi X de Historia*, trans. Nikolaus Stupa (1570)
3. Giovanni Pontano (Pontanus), *De Historia* (1499)
4. François Baudouin (Balduinus), *De Institutionae Historiae Universae* (1561)
5. Sebastián Fox Morcillo (Foxius), *De Historiae Institutione Dialogus* (1557)
6. Giovanni Viperano (Viperanus), *De Scribenda Historia* (1559)
7. Francesco Robortello (Robertellus), *De Historia Facultate* (1548)
8. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *De Thucydidis Historia Iudicium* (Περὶ τοῦ Θουκυδίδου χαρακτῆρος), trans. András Dudith (1560)

Vol. 2

1. Christophe Milieu (Mylaeus), *De Scribenda Universitatis Rerum Historia Libri Quinque* (1551)
2. Uberto Foglietta (Folietta), *De Ratione Scribendae Historiae* (1574)
3. David Kochhafe (Chytraeus), *De Lectione Historiarum Recte Instituenda* (1563)
4. Lucian of Samosata, *De Scribenda Historia* (Πῶς δεῖ Ἱστορίαν συγγράφειν), trans. Jacob Molzer (1538)
5. Simon Griner (Grinaeus), *De Utilitate Legendae Historiae* (1539)
6. Celio Secondo Curione (Caelius), *De Historia Legenda Sententiae* (1576)
7. Christoph Pezel (Pezelius), *Oratio de Argumento Historiarum* (1568)
8. Theodor Zwinger (Zwingerus), *De Historia* (1570)
9. János Zsámboky (Sambucus), *De Historia* (1568)
10. Antonio Riccoboni, *De Historia et de Ea Veterum Documenta Recens Adiuncta* (1568)*

* Not included in the copy of the text used for the present study and therefore not part of this investigation

Appendix 2 – Overview of Texts as They Appear in the Corpus

- 1_000_Praefationes.txt
 1_000_1_396_Bodinus.txt
 1_397_543_Patritius.txt
 1_544_592_Pontanus.txt
 1_593_594_Baldinus_praefatio1.txt
 1_594_598_Baldinus_praefatio2.txt
 1_599_742_Baldinus.txt

1_743_837_Foxius.txt
1_838_890_Viperanus.txt
1_891_907_Robortellus.txt
1_908_915_Dionysius_praefatio.txt
1_916_995_Dionysius.txt
2_000_index.txt
2_001_007_Milaeus_praefatio.txt
2_008_106_Milaeus1.txt
2_107_173_Milaeus2.txt
2_174_247_Milaeus3.txt
2_248_313_Milaeus4.txt
2_314_407_Milaeus5.txt
2_408_442_Folieta1.txt
2_443_451_Folieta2.txt
2_452_458_Chitraeus_praefatio.txt
2_459_515_Chitraeus1.txt
2_516_542_Chitraeus2.txt
2_543_564_Chitraeus3.txt
2_565_594_Lucianus.txt
2_595_599_Grinaeus.txt
2_600_602_Caelius.txt
2_603_617_Pezelius.txt
2_618_643_Zwingerus.txt
2_644_650_Sambucus.txt

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ankersmit, Frank. *Narrative Logic: A Semantic Analysis of the Historian's Language*. Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1983.
- Ankersmit, Frank. *Historical Representation*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001.
- Backus, Irena. *Historical Method and Confessional Identity in the Era of the Reformation (1378–1615)*. Leiden: Brill, 2003.
- Bailey, Gauvin Alexander. “Le style jésuite n'existe pas’: Jesuit Corporate Culture and the Visual Arts.” In *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540–1773*, ed. John W. O'Malley, Gauvin Alexander Bailey, Steven J. Harris, and T. Frank Kennedy, 38–89. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019.
- Benga, Daniel. *David Chytraeus (1530–1600) als Erforscher und Wiederentdecker der Ostkirchen*. Giessen: VVB Laufersweiler Verlag, 2012.
- Benjamin, Walter. Vol. 1.1 of *Gesammelte Schriften*. Ed. Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1991.
- Berns, Jörg Jochen. *Von Strittigkeit der Bilder: Band 1; Texte des deutschen Bildstreits im 16. Jahrhundert*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014.
- Bietenholz, Peter G. “Simon Grynaeus.” In *Contemporaries of Erasmus*, ed. Peter Bietenholz and Thomas B. Deutscher, 1:141–46, 3 vols. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985.
- Bietenholz, Peter G. *Historia and Fabula. Myths and Legends in Historical Thought from Antiquity to the Modern Age*. Leiden: Brill, 1994.
- Blair, Ann. “Historia in Zwinger's *Theatrum humanae vitae*.” In *Historia: Empiricism and Erudition in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Gianna Pomata and Nancy Siraisi, 269–96. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005.
- Blair, Ann. *Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information before the Modern Age*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010.
- Blundeville, Thomas. *True Order and Methode of Wryting and Reading Hystories*. Ed. Hans Peter Heinrich. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1986.
- Bodin, Jean. *Method for the Easy Comprehension of History*. Trans. Beatrice Reynolds. New York: Columbia University Press, 1945.
- Burton, Gideon. “From *Ars dictaminis* to *Ars conscribendis epistolis*: Renaissance Letter-Writing Manuals in the Context of Humanism.” In *Letter-Writing Manuals and Instruction from Antiquity to the Present: Historical and Bibliographic Studies*, ed. Carol Poster and Linda C. Mitchell, 88–126. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2007.
- Cabrera de Córdoba, Luis. *De historia para entenderla y escribirla*. Ed. Santiago Montero Díaz. Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Políticos, 1948.
- Cicero. *De inventione*. Trans. H. M. Hubbell. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1949.
- Cochrane, Eric. *Historians and Historiography in the Italian Renaissance*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981.
- Cortijo Ocaña, Antonio. *Teoría de la historia y teoría política en Sebastian Fox Morcillo. “De Historiae Institutione Dialogus,” Dialogo de la enseianza de la historia*. Alcalá de Henares: Universidad de Alcalá, 2000.

- Costa, Juan. *De conscribenda rerum historia libri duo, quibus continentur totius historiae institutionis breuissima, & absoluta praecepta*. Saragozza: Ex officina Laurentij Robles Aragonij regni typographi CaesarAugustae, 1591.
- Cotroneo, Girolamo. *I trattatisti dell'ars historica*. Naples: Giannini, 1971.
- Courcelles, Dominique de. *Ecrire l'histoire, écrire des histoires dans le monde hispanique*. Paris: Vrin, 2008.
- Covington, Sarah, and Kathryn Reklis, eds. *Protestant Aesthetics and the Arts*. New York: Routledge, 2020.
- Croce, Benedetto. *Teoria e storia della storiografia*. Bari: Laterza, 1927.
- D'Ascia, Luca. *Erasmus da Rotterdam, Celio Secondo Curione, Giordano Bruno*. Bologna: Pendragon, 2004.
- Descartes, René. *Discours de la méthode et Essais*. Ed. Charles Adam and Paul Tannery. Paris: Léopold Cerf, 1902.
- Descartes, René. *A Discourse on the Method*. Trans. Ian McLean. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Doni Garfagnini, Manuela. *Il teatro della storia fra rappresentazione e realtà*. Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2002.
- Esteve, Cesc. "Orígenes, causas e inventores en la historiografía del Renacimiento." *Talia dixit* 3 (2008): 77–103.
- Esteve, Cesc. "Teorías de la prosa histórica en la temprana modernidad." *Criticón* 120–21 (2014): 117–36.
- Esteve, Cesc, ed. *Disciplining History: Censorship, Theory, and Historical Discourse in Early Modern Spain*. New York: Routledge, 2018.
- Estienne, Henri. *Ciceronianum Lexicon Graecolatinum: Id Est, Lexicon Ex Variis Graecorum Scriptorum Locis à Cicerone Interpretatis Collectum Ab Henrico Stephano. Loci Graecorum Authorum Cum Ciceronis Interpretationibus*. Parisiis: Ex Officina Henrici Stephani Parisiensis Typographi, 1557.
- Fox Morcillo, Sebastián. *De Historiae Institutione Dialogus: Diálogo de la enseñanza de la historia*. Trans. Antonio Cortijo Ocaña. Seville: Diputación, Area de Cultura y Deportes, 2000.
- Fueter, Eduard. *Geschichte der neueren Historiographie*. Munich: Oldenburg Wissenschaftsverlag, 1911.
- Fussner, Frank Smith. *The Historical Revolution. English Historical Writing and Thought 1580–1640*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962.
- Grafton, Anthony. "The Identities of History in Early Modern Europe: Prelude to a Study of the *Artes historicae*." In *Historia: Empiricism and Erudition in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Gianna Pomata and Nancy Siraisi, 41–74. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005.
- Grafton, Anthony. *What Was History?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Guion, Béatrice. "Comment écrire l'histoire: l'ars historica à l'âge classique." *Dix-Septième Siècle* 1 (2010): 9–25.
- Huppert, George. *The Idea of Perfect History: Historical Erudition and Historical Philosophy in Renaissance France*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970.
- Kelley, Donald R. *Foundations of Modern Historical Scholarship. Language, Law, and History in the French Renaissance*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1970.
- Kelley, Donald R. "Writing Cultural History in Early Modern Europe: Christophe Milieu and His Project." *Renaissance Quarterly* 52.2 (1999): 342–65.

- Kessler, Eckhardt, ed. *Theoretiker humanistischer Geschichtsschreibung*. Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1971.
- Kewes, Paulina. "The Elizabethan History Play: A True Genre?" In *A Companion to Shakespeare's Works, vol. II: The Histories*, ed. Richard Dutton and Jean E. Howard, 170–93. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Kluge, Sofie. *Literature and Historiography in the Spanish Golden Age. The Poetics of History*. New York: Routledge, 2021.
- Levy, Fred Jacob. *Tudor Historical Thought*. San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1967.
- Lewis, Charlton T., and Charles Short, eds. *A Latin Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1879.
- Mesnard, Pierre. "La pensée religieuse de Bodin." *Revue du seizième siècle* 16 (1929): 77–121.
- Momigliano, Arnaldo. "The Place of Herodotus in the History of Historiography." *History* 43.147 (1958): 1–13.
- Montero Díaz, Santiago. "La doctrina de la historia en los tratadistas españoles del Siglo de Oro." *Hispania* 1.4 (1941): 3–39.
- Moretti, Franco. "Conjectures on World Literature." *New Left Review* 1.4 (2000): 54–68.
- Munslow, Alun. *The New History*. Oxford: Taylor & Francis, 2003.
- Munslow, Alun. *Narrative and History*. London: Macmillan, 2007.
- Nadel, George H. "Philosophy of History before Historicism." *History and Theory* 3.3 (1964): 291–315.
- Neulateinische Wortliste. Ein Wörterbuch des Lateinischen von Petrarca bis 1700*. Ed. Johannes Ramminger. http://nlw.renaissancestudier.org/neulateinische_wortliste.htm.
- Nizzoli, Mario. *Apparatus Latinae Locutionis . . . Olim Per Marium Nizolium Ex M. Tullii Ciceronis Libris Collectus, Nunc Denuo Auctior Factus . . . Auctore Alexandro Scot, . . . Subjectus Ad Calcem Operis Fr. Sylvii Progyrnasmatum In Artem Oratoriam Libellus*. Lyon: J. Pillehotte, 1589.
- Neumann, Florian. *Geschichtsschreibung als Kunst : Famiano Strada S.I. (1572–1649) und die ars historica in Italien*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013.
- Olds, Katrina B. *Forging the Past: Invented Histories in Counter-Reformation Spain*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015.
- Oxford Latin Dictionary*. Ed. P. G. W. Glare. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968.
- Páez de Castro, Juan. "Memorial de las cosas necesarias para escribir la historia," ed. Eustacio Esteban. *Ciudad de Dios* 28 (1892a): 601–10.
- Páez de Castro, Juan. "Memorial de las cosas necesarias para escribir la historia," ed. Eustacio Esteban. *Ciudad de Dios* 29 (1892b): 27–37.
- Piper, Andrew. "Novel Devotions: Conversational Reading, Computational Modelling, and the Modern Novel." *New Literary History* 46.1 (2015): 63–98.
- Plett, Heinrich F. *Rhetoric and Renaissance Culture*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2004.
- Pocock, John Greville Agard. *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law. A Study of English Historical Thought in the Seventeenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- Popper, Nicholas. "An Ocean of Lies: The Problem of Historical Evidence in the Sixteenth Century." *Huntington Library Quarterly* 74.3 (2011): 375–400.
- Popper, Nicholas. *Walter Raleigh's "History of the World" and the Historical Culture of the Late Renaissance*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2012.
- Quintilian. *Institutio oratoria*. Trans. Harold Edgeworth Butler. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1920.

- Ranke, Leopold von. "Preface: Histories of the Latin and Germanic Nations from 1494–1514." Trans. Fritz Stern. In *The Varieties of History: From Voltaire to the Present*, ed. Fritz Stern, 54–62. London: Macmillan, 2015.
- Reinis, Austra. *Reforming the Art of Dying: The ars moriendi in the German Reformation (1519–1528)*. New York: Routledge, 2007.
- Reklis, Kathryn. "Introduction." In *Protestant Aesthetics and the Arts*, ed. Sarah Covington and Kathryn Reklis, 1–18. New York: Routledge, 2020.
- Reynolds, Beatrice. "Shifting Currents in Historical Criticism." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 14.4 (1953): 471–92.
- Rotondò, Antonio. "Pietro Perna e la vita culturale e religiosa di Basilea fra il 1570 e il 1580." In vol. 1 of *Studi e ricerche di storia ereticale italiana del Cinquecento*, ed. Antonio Rotondò, 479–576. Firenze: Olschki, 2008.
- Russell, Alexander. "The Colloquy of Poissy, François Baudouin and English Protestant Identity, 1561–1563." *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 65.3 (2014): 551–79.
- Salazar, Alejandro Cantarero. "Reexamen crítico de la biografía del humanista Sebastián Fox Morcillo (c. 1526–c. 1560)." *Studio Aurea* 9 (2015): 531–64.
- Salmon, John H. M. "Precept, Example, Truth: Degory Wheare and the *Ars Historica*." In *The Historical Imagination in Early Modern Britain: History, Rhetoric, and Fiction, 1500–1800*, ed. Donald Kelley & David Sacks, 11–36. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- San Isidoro de Sevilla. *Etimologías*. Edición bilingüe, vols. I–II. Texto latino, versión española y notas por José Oroz Reta y Manuel-A. Marcos Casquero. Madrid: Biblioteca de autores cristianos, 2000.
- Seifert, Arno. *Cognitio historica. Die Geschichte als Namengeberin der frühneuzeitlichen Empirie*. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1976.
- Sidney, Philip. *The Defense of Poetry Otherwise Known as An Apology for Poetry*. Ed. Albert S. Cook. Boston, MA: Ginn & Company, 1890.
- Spini, Giorgio. "Historiography: The Art of History in the Italian Counter Reformation." In *The Late Italian Renaissance 1520–1630*, ed. Eric Cochrane, 91–133. London: Macmillan, 1970.
- Stunkel, Kenneth, ed. *Fifty Key Works of History and Historiography*. London: Routledge, 2011.
- Varro. *On the Latin Language*. Trans. Roland G. Kent. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1938.
- Vida, Silvana Paula. "El *Artis Historicae Penus* de J. Wolff y P. Perna (1579): Reflexiones sobre el arte de leer y escribir historias en el tardo-Renacimiento europeo." *Historia da Historiografia* 25 (2017): 172–85.
- Ward, John. "The Medieval and Early Renaissance Study of Cicero's *De Inventione* and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*: Commentaries and Contexts." In *The Rhetoric of Cicero in Its Medieval and Early Renaissance Commentary Tradition*, ed. Virginia Cox and John Ward, 1–75. Leiden: Brill, 2006.
- Witschi-Bernz, Astrid. "Main Trends in Historical-Method Literature: Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries." *History and Theory* 12.12 (1972): 51–90.
- Wolff, Johann, ed. *Artis Historicae Penus. Octodecim Scriptorum Tam Veterum Quam Recentiorum Monumentis & Inter Eos Io. Praecipue Bodini Libris Methodi Historicae Sex Instructa*. 2 vols. Basileae: Ex Officina Petri Perna, 1579.
- Wolf, Daniel R. "Erudition and the Idea of History in Renaissance England." *Renaissance Quarterly* 40.1 (1987): 11–48.
- Yates, Frances A. *The Art of Memory*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966.