

M. TULLI CICERONIS
RHETORICI LIBRI DUO
QUI VOCANTUR DE INVENTIONE

LIBER SECUNDUS

1 I. CROTONIATAE quondam, cum florerent omnibus copiis et in Italia cum primis beati numerarentur, templum Iunonis, quod religiosissime colebant, egregiis picturis locupletare voluerunt. Itaque Heracleotem Zeuxim, qui tum longe ceteris excellere pictoribus existimabatur, magno pretio conductum adhibuerunt. Is et ceteras complures tabulas pinxit, quarum nonnulla pars usque ad nostram memoriam propter fani religionem remansit, et, ut excellentem muliebris formae pulcritudinem muta in se imago contineret, Helenae pingere simulacrum velle dixit; quod Crotoniatae, qui eum muliebri in corpore pingendo plurimum aliis praestare saepe acceperant, libenter audierunt. Putaverunt enim, si, quo in genere plurimum posset, in eo magno opere elaborasset, egregium sibi opus illo in fano relicturum.

2 Neque tum eos illa opinio fefellit. Nam Zeuxis ilico quaesivit ab eis quasnam virgines formosas haberent. Illi autem statim hominem deduxerunt in palaestram atque ei pueros ostenderunt multos,

166

MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO
TWO BOOKS ON RHETORIC
COMMONLY CALLED ON INVENTION

BOOK II

1 I. THE citizens of Croton, once upon a time, when they had abundant wealth and were numbered among the most prosperous in Italy, desired to enrich with distinguished paintings the temple of Juno, which they held in the deepest veneration. They, therefore, paid a large fee to Zeuxis of Heraclea who was considered at that time to excel all other artists, and secured his services for their project. He painted many panels, some of which have been preserved to the present by the sanctity of the shrine; he also said that he wished to paint a picture of Helen so that the portrait though silent and lifeless might embody the surpassing beauty of womanhood. This delighted the Crotoniats, who had often heard that he surpassed all others in the portrayal of women. For they thought that if he exerted himself in the genre in which he was supreme, he would leave an outstanding work of art in that temple. Nor were they mistaken in this opinion. For Zeuxis immediately asked them what girls they had of surpassing beauty. They took him directly to the wrestling school and showed him many very handsome

magna praeditos dignitate. Etenim quodam tempore Crotoniatae multum omnibus corporum viribus et dignitatibus antisteterunt atque honestissimas ex gymnico certamine victorias domum cum laude maxima rettulerunt. Cum puerorum igitur formas et corpora magno hic opere miraretur: "Horum," inquit illi, "sorores sunt apud nos virgines. Quare qua sint illae dignitate potes ex his suspicari." "Praebete igitur mihi, quaeso," inquit, "ex istis virginibus formosissimas dum pingo id quod pollicitus sum vobis, ut mutum in simulacrum³ ex animali exemplo veritas transferatur." Tum Crotoniatae publico de consilio virgines unum in locum conduxerunt et pictori quam vellet eligendi potestatem dederunt. Ille autem quinque delegit; quarum nomina multi poëtae memoriae prodiderunt quod eius essent iudicio probatae qui pulcritudinis habere verissimum debuisset. Neque enim putavit omnia, quae quaereret ad venustatem, uno se in corpore reperire posse ideo quod nihil simplici in genere omnibus ex partibus perfectum natura expolivit. Itaque, tamquam ceteris non sit habitura quod largiatur, si uni cuncta concesserit, aliud alii commodi aliquo adiuncto incommodo muneratur.

⁴ II. Quod quoniam nobis quoque voluntatis accidit ut artem dicendi perscriberemus, non unum aliquod proposuimus exemplum cuius omnes partes, quocumque essent in genere, exprimendae nobis necessarie viderentur; sed, omnibus unum in locum coactis scriptoribus, quod quisque commodissime praecipere

young men. For at one time the men of Croton excelled all in strength and beauty of body, and brought home the most glorious victories in athletic contests with the greatest distinction. As he was greatly admiring the handsome bodies, they said, "There are in our city the sisters of these men; you may get an idea of their beauty from these youths." "Please send me then the most beautiful of these girls, while I am painting the picture that I have promised, so that the true beauty may be transferred³ from the living model to the mute likeness." Then the citizens of Croton by a public decree assembled the girls in one place and allowed the painter to choose whom he wished. He selected five, whose names many poets recorded because they were approved by the judgement of him who must have been the supreme judge of beauty. He chose five because he did not think all the qualities which he sought to combine in a portrayal of beauty could be found in one person, because in no single case has Nature made anything perfect and finished in every part. Therefore, as if she would have no bounty to lavish on the others if she gave everything to one, she bestows some advantage on one and some on another, but always joins with it some defect.

⁴ II. In a similar fashion when the inclination arose in my mind to write a text-book of rhetoric, I did not set before myself some one model which I thought necessary to reproduce in all details, of whatever sort they might be, but after collecting all the works on the subject I excerpted what seemed the most suitable precepts from each, and so culled the flower of many minds. For each of the writers who are worthy of

LIVRE II

I. 1. Jadis, les citoyens de Crotone, qui possédaient tout en abondance et qui étaient comptés parmi les plus riches d'Italie, décidèrent d'orner de peintures exceptionnelles le temple de Junon, temple auquel ils vouaient une très grande vénération.

Ils s'assurèrent donc à grands frais le concours de Zeuxis d'Héraclée qui était considéré alors comme le peintre de loin le meilleur. Il peignit de très nombreux tableaux dont une partie a subsisté jusqu'à notre époque en raison de la vénération attachée à ce sanctuaire et, pour fixer dans une image muette un modèle de beauté féminine parfaite, il dit vouloir peindre Hélène. Les Crotoniates, qui avaient souvent entendu dire que, pour peindre le corps féminin, il dépassait largement les autres, accueillirent volontiers cette idée. Ils pensaient en effet que, s'il se surpassait dans le genre où il était le plus fort, il leur laisserait dans ce beau temple un chef-d'œuvre.

LIBER SECVNDVS

I. 1. Crotoniatae quondam, cum florerent omnibus copiis et in Italia cum primis beati numerarentur, templum Iunonis, quod religiosissime colebant, egregiis picturis locupletare uoluerunt.

Itaque Heracleoten Zeuxin, qui tum longe ceteris excellere pictoribus existimabatur, magno pretio conductum adhibuerunt. Is et ceteras conplures tabulas pinxit, quarum nonnulla pars usque ad nostram memoriam propter fani religionem remansit et, ut excellentem muliebris formae pulchritudinem muta in se imago contineret, Helenae pingere simulacrum uelle dixit; quod Crotoniatae, qui eum muliebri in corpore pingendo plurimum aliis praestare saepe accepissent, libenter audierunt. Putauerunt enim, si, quo in genere plurimum posset, in eo magno opere elaborasset, egregium sibi opus illo in fano relicturum.

INCIPIIT LIBER SECVNDVS P INCIPIIT SECVNDVS fh nulla inscr. HVSm

I. florerent: florent *H*¹ || cum primis *HPS*¹*mh*: cum in primis *VS*²*f* || numerarentur *VPS*²*I*: munera- *HS*¹ || heracleoten *edd.*: -cleotē *P* -cleotē *V* eracleoten (-tem *HS*) *rell.* || zeuxin *Vm*²*f*: -xī *P* zeusin *Sm*¹*h* *eras. H* || existimabatur *VPf*: //mabatur *H* estimabatur *Smh* || fani: sumi *V* || religionem *H*²*PS*²*I*: *om. H*¹*VS*¹ || muliebris: -eris *P*¹ || muta in se: *om. Born.* || se: sese *f* || pingere *HVPS*²*h*: -ge *S*¹ se pingere *m* pingere se *f* || simulacrum *VPh*: -achrum *HSmf* || qui *HVPS*¹*f*: cum *S*²*mh* || muliebri: -re *H*¹ || plurimum: *om. m* || accepissent: accip- *H* || posset: possit *V* || in eo *HVPS*¹*m*²*fh*: si in eo *S*²*m*¹ || magno opere *Pf*: magnopere *HVSmh*

2. Leur attente ne fut pas trompée. En effet Zeuxis leur demanda aussitôt quelles belles jeunes filles ils avaient. Ils conduisirent immédiatement l'homme à la palestre et lui montrèrent de nombreux jeunes hommes, dotés d'une grande beauté. En effet il y eut un temps où les Crotoniates étaient de loin les premiers en force et en beauté physiques et ils remportèrent dans des combats gymniques de très honorables et glorieuses victoires. Il admira donc vivement la beauté corporelle de ces jeunes gens: ses interlocuteurs lui dirent alors: «Nous avons chez nous des jeunes filles, les sœurs de ces jeunes gens. Tu peux, d'après leurs frères, juger de leur beauté». Il leur répond: «Amenez-moi donc, je vous prie, les plus belles de vos filles, le temps que je peigne ce que je vous ai promis, pour que la vraie beauté passe de ces modèles vivants à un tableau muet». 3. Alors les Crotoniates, par un décret public, firent venir les jeunes filles en un même endroit et donnèrent au peintre la possibilité de choisir celle qu'il voudrait.

Il en choisit cinq. Bien des poètes ont transmis leurs noms; parce qu'à leurs yeux elles avaient été distinguées par le jugement d'un homme qui avait dû avoir un sentiment très sûr de la beauté. Il en choisit cinq parce qu'il pensait que tout ce qu'il recherchait pour faire un beau portrait il ne pouvait le rencontrer dans un seul corps¹. C'est que la nature n'a pas placé l'absolue perfection dans une seule créature. Aussi, comme redoutant de ne pas avoir de quoi donner aux autres, si elle accordait tout à une seule femme, elle offre des attraits différents à chacune, en y joignant quelque disgrâce.

1. Cf. Pline, *Hist. nat.*, XXXV, 36.

2. Neque tum eos illa opinio fefellit. Nam Zeuxis ilico quaesivit ab iis quasnam uirgines formosas haberent. Illi autem statim hominem deduxerunt in palaestram atque ei pueros ostenderunt multos, magna praeditos dignitate. Etenim quodam tempore Crotoniatae multum omnibus corporum uiribus et dignitatibus antesteterunt atque honestissimas ex gymnico certamine uictorias domum cum laude maxima retulerunt. Cum puerorum igitur formas et corpora magno hic opere miraretur: 'Horum', inquit illi, 'sorores sunt apud nos uirgines. Quare, quae sint illae dignitate, potes ex his suspicari'. 'Praebete igitur mihi, quaeso', inquit, 'ex istis uirginibus formosissimas, dum pingo id quod pollicitus sum uobis, ut mutum in simulacrum ex animali exemplo ueritas transferatur'. 3. Tum Crotoniatae publico de consilio uirgines unum in locum conduxerunt et pictori quam uellet eligendi potestatem dederunt.

Ille autem quinque delegit; quarum nomina multi poetae memoriae prodiderunt, quod eius essent iudicio probatae, qui pulcritudinis habere uerissimum iudicium debuisset. Neque enim putauit omnia, quae quaereret ad uenustatem, uno se in corpore reperire posse ideo quod nihil simplici in genere omnibus ex partibus perfectum natura expoliuit. Itaque, tamquam ceteris non sit habitura quod largiatur, si uni cuncta concesserit, aliud alii commodi aliquo adiuncto incommodo muneratur.

2. iis *edd.*: his *codd.* || haberent: -re *H*¹ || crotoniatae *VSI*: coroton-*H* crotoan- *P* || antesteterunt *VP*²*SI*: antistet- *P*¹ antestit- *H* || ex: et *V* || gymnico *HVSfh*: -io *P* gimniaco *m* || maxima: -me *V* || illi: *om.* *V* || potes *HP*²*SI*: -est? *VP*¹ || simulacrum: -chrum *S* || animali *HP*²*SI*: animi *VP*¹ || ueritas *P*²*SI*: -atis *HVP*¹

3. tum: tunc *f* || quam *HVPm*¹*fh*: quas *Sm*² || delegit: el- *P*¹ || prodiderunt *HVP*¹?*S*¹?*f*: tradi- *P*²*mh* trade- *S*² || iudicio: ind- *f* || qui *H*²*PSmf*: quid *H*¹ quod *h* || pulcritudinis *H*: pulchr- *VPSI* || habere: -ret *V* || quae quaereret: quaereret *H*¹ || reperire *Pfh*¹: repp- *HVSmh*² || genere: indiuiduo *supers.* in *P* || tamquam *H*²*P*²*SI*: tam *H*¹*VP*¹ || uni *H*²*P*²*SI*: una *H*¹*VP*¹ || alii *HPS*¹*m*²*fh*: enim a- *S*²*m*¹ || muneratur: numerantur? *m*¹