

TOMMASO GAZZARRI : *Cinaedus Galbinatus*: Cultural Perception of the Color “Green” and its Gender Association with *Pathici* in Rome.

Unlike Greek, where a word for the color green, if not absent, is certainly inconspicuous, the Latin language possesses a basic term: *viridis* (connected to *virere* “to be vigorous”, *vis* “strength”, and *vir* “man/male”, cf. n. 24). Like Greek *χλωρός*, *galbinus* corresponds to a hue between yellow and green. Unlike *viridis*, *galbinus*, when referring to persons, is utilized mainly to describe women and *cinaedi*. Because of the lack of effective mordants and the difficulty of mixing yellow and blue, the color green did not enter the Roman wardrobe until the early empire. Even then it became a color not for the objects encountered in everyday life, but for those witnessed at unusual occasions and events. Furthermore, ancient medical lore describes the hue on the color spectrum between green and yellow as typical of a variety of gynecological pathologies, which were eventually grouped by early modern doctors under the heading of “*χλωροσις*”. Whether *cinaedi* purposefully elected *galbinus* as their hue of choice, or such representation stemmed merely from the imaginations of caustic Roman satirists, this otherwise exclusively feminine element of ancient fashion suggests that its connection with *cinaedi* involves a more public dimension to their identity than the passive role ascribed to them during the sexual act, at least as they are defined by constructivist scholarship. Rather, the link with this color seems to be part of their identity, which is not limited to the moment of sexual submission; indeed, it defines *cinaedi* as figures also identified with constructions of women, their esthetics and sensitivity, and more crucially their physiology. The *galbinus* attire, while reinforcing the interpretation of *cinaedi* as a gender-deviant marginal group, simultaneously invites a more complex assessment of these individuals: one that possibly involves the notion of identity.

Key-words :

history of colors – history of pigments – ancient painting – ancient medicine – gynaecology – gender-based differential morbidity – history of the body – lyric poetry – Latin satire – structuralism – fashion and clothing – self-perception and identity – dandyism