

3 Iconology

Imagining Lucina

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3.1 Introduction

The material findings and literary bequest that derived from the growth of antiquarian knowledge during the Renaissance heightened the understanding of the classical world, causing a renewed sensitivity to emerge in the intellectual life of the time. Among the many forms of erudition that developed from this relationship with antiquity, the study of ancient mythology appears to be one of the most fruitful areas for the interpretations of the past to be investigated in their many manifestations.¹ This subject also became a common thematic pattern adopted in the decoration of complex pictorial cycles,² and artists utilised the antiquarian evidence at their disposal to not only produce more faithful representations, but also offer details which were, at times, unconventional and original. In order to fully grasp the complexity of the multiple mythological iconogra-

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1 Since Warburg's studies carried out at the beginning of the twentieth century (Warburg 1999), a totally new field of study emerged, and an innovative method of analysis was developed still flourishing today; see e.g., Reinach 1915; Seznec 1953; Wind 1957; Lapp 1977; Guthmuller 1986; Bull 2005; Zappella 2014, 165-7; Waghall 2015.

2 Cieri Via 1996; 2003.

phies that appeared within this vast artistic production, a plurality of elements must be considered, including textual, literary and figurative sources, general symbolic codes, attributes, original intents, final purposes and technical processes.³ Only in this way, can the real influence of iconology on iconographic output be fully understood, which often implied a three-way relationship between patron, iconographer, and artist.⁴

Among the various deities portrayed in the figurative pantheon of the sixteenth century, the goddess Lucina is a particularly interesting case. The imagery of Lucina during the Renaissance appears to be a result of the synthesis and stratification of various elements emerging from the figurative culture of the time.

It was generally recognised that in antiquity, Lucina was the goddess of childbirth and considered to be the protector of pregnant women and newborns. She was usually associated with the Moon⁵ and identified equally with Juno⁶ and Diana (through the Greek goddess

³ Panofsky 1939; Gombrich 1975; Zappella 2014, 221-3.

⁴ Pinelli 2007.

⁵ Interesting in this sense the description given by Pirro Ligorio in his letter known as *Lettera delli XII dei consenti* [Arch. Borr. Isola Bella, Autografi Antichi 2]; see Vagenheim 1996; Volpi 2006, 265: “Luna consentia, anchor lei sculpivano con la luna crescente su la testa e nel mezzo d’essa luna le spiche d’ora; da una mano ha la facella, e dall’altra la placenta, cioè una pizza o foggaccia con questo segno nel mezzo (ΣΧ) che significa (ΣΧΙΣΤΟΣ), cioè la placenta, perché gli Aegyptii così significavano la loro Iside per la luna inventrice dell’agricoltura, e prima mostratrice di far pane; i Sabini chiamarono essa luna Olatre e i Toscani Arduinna, gli Aegyptii Iside, gli Argivi Inachides, i Latini Luna lucifera, i Greci (ΣΕΛΕΝΗ) e (ΕΧΘΑ), presidente de tutti li partorienti, come chiamarono Junone, così detta a Lucidando o vero come alcuni dicono Lunam quasi lucem alienam, perché da per sé non luce, ma mediante un altro lume che è quello del sole, e fu detta Diana e Iana e fu proposta anchora essa sopra delle cose della villa perché essa temperando col moto e movimento dell’aere, col sole le piogge, fa venire alluce le piante e refrigera la notte a lei dedicata, come il giorno al Sole, e perché dicono che secondo il moto della Luna mese per mese i pastori providevano i loro greggi, tanto nelle cose del nodrimento, come nel medicamento, purgando gli animali de’ suoi morbi”.

⁶ See Giovanni Boccaccio’s *Genealogiae Deorum*, 4.16 and 9.9. The most extensive discussion on Juno Lucina features in Giraldis 1548, 159-60 that refers also to ancient coins: “Lucina Iuno fingebatur, si antiquis nomismatibus credendum, hoc modo, u test in Faustina Aug. Pii Aug. Fil. in cuius tergo matronae stolatae imago stans cernitur, quae dextera pateram, sinistra hastam tenet, his literis ascritis IVNONI LVCINAE [RIC III Antoninus Pius 505B]”. See also Biondo 1559, 12: “Tandem Lucina quam parturiens invocaverat”; D’Alessandro 1522, 327^a: “Eius variae potestates et nomina fuere: nam et Curetis, Lucina, Matrona, Regina, et Opigena, quod parturientibus opem fert”; see also the commentary on D’Alessandro’s work by Tiraqueau 1586, 848: “*Lucina*] Terentius in Andria, actus 3. Scena 1: Juno Lucina fer opem, servame obscuro [Ter. *Andr.* 473]. Ubi Donatus, Latine, inquit, Iuno a iuvando dicta, Lucina, ab eo quod in lucem producit [Donat. *Comm. Ter. Andria* 3.473.2]. Et eius loci Terentiani autoritate, Servius ubi nuper citavimus, post ea, quae ibi ex eo diximus, subiunxit, de eadem Iunone loquens, dicit eam praeesse parturientibus [Serv. *Comm. Verg. Aen.* 3.73]. Varro autem lib. 4 de lingua Latina: a Latinis, ait, Iuno Lucina dicta, vel quod terra, ut Physici dicunt, iuvat et luces, vel quod ab luce eius, qua quis conceptus est, una iuvat, donec mensibus ac-

Eileithyia),⁷ who were both related to the Moon and to birth in general.

tis produxit in lucem. Facta igitur a iuvando et luce Iuno Lucina, a quo parientes eam invocant [Varro *ling.* 5.10 69]. Plinius lib. 16 cap. 44: lunonem ita dictam putat a luco, ubi et eius aedes condita fuit, et lotos mirae vetustatis [Plin. *nat.* 16.235]. Cui adstipulatur illud Ovidij lib. 2 *Fastorum*: Gratia Lucinae dedit haec tibi nomina lucus | Aut quia principium tu dea lucis habes | Parce precor gravidis facilis Lucina puellis | maturumque utero molliter aufer onus [Ov. *fast.* 2.449-52]"; Tiraqueau must have partially relied on the information provided by Rosinus 1583, 53: "Iuno Lucina inde nomen habet, quod lucem nascentibus dare crederetur, unde etiam Lucetia. Varro de Lingua Latina lib. 4: Ideo videtur a Latinis Iuno Lucina dicta, vel quod terra, ut Physici dicunt iuvat, et lucet, vel quod ab luce eius, qua quis conceptus est, una vivat, donec mensibus actis produxit in lucem [Varro *ling.* 5.10 69]. Facta igitur a iuvando et luce, Iuno Lucina, a quo parientes eam invocant, unde illud Glycerij apud Terentium: Iuno Lucina fer opem, serva me, obsecro [Ter. *Andr.* 473; Ter. *Adel.* 487]. Plinius vero eam sic dictam, ait, a luco, ubi eius aedes condita fuerit, ubi lotos fuerit mirae vetustatis [Plin. *nat.* 16.235], quam opinionem etiam Ovidius in *Fastis* recitat [Ov. *fast.* 2.449-52]. Huius templum in V regione Urbe a P. Victore recensetur, ubi et lucus ei dicatus fuit: Aedicula ipsi in V regione extracta et dedicata fuit, teste eidem [P. Victor 1503 (*Regio V Exquilina. Templum Iunonis Lucinae*)]. Scribit Dionysius, Servium Tullium regem aerarium Iunoni Lucinae instituisse, in quod pro singulis nascentibus parentes, sive cognati certi precij nummum inferrent [Dionys. Alicar. *Ant. Rom.* 4.15 ("Ἡραν Φωσφόρον)"]; Stucki 1598, 23^b: "Iucorum [dea] [...] et Iuno (unde Lucina cognominata)" and 30^a: "Quantum igitur ad primam partem sive actum, principium nimirum sive exordium vitae humanae attingit, quod est CONCEPTIO et NATIVITAS seu hominis in hanc lucem editio, Junonem primo ethnici finxerunt Fluoniam, quam mulieres colebant, quod eam sanguinis flumen in conceptu retinere putabant. Deinde et partus et parturienteium eadem fuit dea, Iuno quidem dicta a juvenescendo, et Lucina quasi lucida, quam mulieres, ut sibi adesset in partibus invocabant, sicut et Lunam [Plut. *quaest. Rom.* 282 C 6], unde Glycerium apud Terentium, cum partus dolores experiretur, exclamans ait: Iuno Lucina fer opem, servame obsecro [Ter. *Andr.* 473; Ter. *Adel.* 487]. Et hoc: Per caeruleum astrorum polum | partus celerantemque Lunam [Plut. *quaest. Rom.* 282 C 6]. (Facilius enim mulieres sub plenilunium videm prolem eniti [Plut. *quaest. Rom.* 282.27; Xylander 1570, 245]). Cicero: Apud nostros Iunonem Lucinam in pariendo vocant [Cic. *nat. deor.* 2.68.76]. Et quod ferre eam opem in partu laborantibus credebant Opiogenam matronae colebant, inquit Festus [Paul. *Fest.* 221.6]. Atque haec praecipua fuit Dea Nativitatis". The reference to Plutarch, on which the entire passage is built, is cited almost literally from the Latin version provided by Xylander 1570, 245.

7 Giraldi 1548, 159: "Lucina igitur Iuno dicebatur, quanquam et Diana, ut dicemus, quod lucem nascentibus dare crederetur, unde etiam Lucetia" and 500-1: "Lucina Diana, quae parientibus favere credebatur. Vergilius: Casta fave Lucina, tuus, iam regnat Apollo [Verg. *ecl.* 4.8]. Varia tamen apud auctores sententia. Quidam enim Iunonem, ut est in Iunone dictum, quidam Dianam. Catullus in seculari carmine ad Dianam, si ista ingit: Tu Lucina dolentibus | Iuno dicta puerperis [Catull. *Carm.* 34.9-16]. Et similiter M. Cic. lib. secundo de Nat. Deorum cuius verba placet subsignare, ne ea sepius citare oportet: Luna, inquit, a lucendo nominata sit, eade enim est Lucina: itaque ut apud Graecos Diana. Eamque luciferam, sic apud nostros Iunonem Lucinam in pariendo invocant [Cic. *nat. deor.* 2.68]. [...] Lucina a parturientibus invocatur, quia proprium eius munus est, distendere rimas corporis, et meatibus viam dare, quod accelerando partui salutare est; et hoc est quod eleganter poeta Timotheus expressit διὰ λαμπρὸν πῶλον ἄστρον διὰ τὸ κνυτόκοιο σελάνας [Macr. *Sat.* 7.16.30; Plut. *quaest. conv.* 3.10.659b], hoc est Per splendidum polum astros, perque accelerantem partum Lunae. [...] Ilithyia Diana a pleisque existimata, ut scribit Phurnutus [Cornut. *nat. deor.* 73.8]. [...] Unde Aristys puella apud Theocrit. in Daphnide, χαλεπὸν βέλος Εἰλειθυΐαις [Theocr. *Idyll.* 27.28] difficile telum Ilithyiae. Quare μογοστόκος etiam dicta est, ut notat Hesychius [Hesyc. *Lex.* μ 1535], utitur item Theocritus [Theocr. *Idyll.* 27.28]. Haec et βολωσία dicebatur, ut graeci gramatici observant [Etym. *Magn.* 205.25]. Huic deae dictamus seu dictamnus (utro-

Although she was linked to other minor goddesses and nymphs (like Egeria),⁸ she was even more closely associated with Janus, the god of beginnings, transitions, gates, and doors, in overseeing and assisting women during childbirth.⁹ The etymology of her name derived from the Latin word *lucem* (light) and meant ‘herald of light’, which added even more value to her mission: just as the moon lit up the night sky, she was thought to bring light and bring new life from the darkness; and since Lucina started the mechanism of life that the three goddesses of the Parcae developed and ended, she was also considered to be the fourth sister.¹⁰

Renaissance scholars and artists also referred to the *Description of Greece* by Pausanias in order to better define the attributes and features of Lucina: a full portrayal of the goddess is provided, in which she appeared with a veil from the top of her head down to her feet.¹¹

que enim modo appellatur haec herba) fuit dicata, quod valde sit odorata, et propterea ad facilem partum valere traditur. Quinea Ilithyia ideo coronabatur, ut apud Theonem in Arati commentariis legimus [Schol. Vet. Arat. 30-3bis], et Phornutum. Idem et Zenodotus Mallothes [Schol. Vet. Arat. 34], et suo carmine innuit Euphorion [fr. 111 P]”. On the issue of the *dictamnus* see Broggiato 2014, 137-8. On the differences between Diana and Lucina, see Giraldi 1548, 502: “Diodorus Siculus, quo loco Cretensium res tractat, diversam Dianam et Lucinam facit. Lucinae, inquit, data est parturientium cura, officiumque eorum euae parturientes perferunt, unde et in partus discrimine et difficultate mulieres janc praecipue deam invocant [Diod. Sic. *Bibl. Hist.* 5.72.5]. Ad Dianam vero tradunt infantium ac ciborum curam pertinere, et reliqua quae idem scriptor executos est [Diod. Sic. *Bibl. Hist.* 5.73.4-5]. Homerus etiam diversam a Diana facit, et a Iunone, cum Latonae partum in hymno Apollinis describit [Hymn. *Homer. In Apoll.* 97-115]. Pindarus quidem in Pythicis et ipse distinguere videtur, cum Aesculapii matrem aureis sagittis Dianae perdomitam canit, antequam cum Ilithyia opus perficeret [Pind. *Pyth.* 3.1-15]”.

8 See in this chapter fn. 33.

9 See in this chapter fn. 49.

10 Giraldi 1548, 502: “Idem in Nemeis Ilithyiam invoke, in Sosigenis peuri Aeginaetae hymno, eamque Parcarum ait assistricem, filiamque Iunonis [Pind. *Nem.* 7.1-3]. [...] Idem Pindarus in Olymo. Ἐλευθω Ilithyiam vocavit, cum eam et Parcas Apollo iubet assistere Evadnae parturienti [Pind. *Ol.* 6.41-2]”. See also Conti 1567, 91^a: “Credita est autem fuisse a Parcis parturientibus praefecta, quoniam neque cum illam mater gestaret in utero, neque cum pareret, ullos dolores sensit, ut in his ait Callimachus: ἦ σί με Μοῖραι | χειρομένην τὸ πρῶτον ἐπεκλήρωσαν ἀρήγειν, | ὅτι με καὶ τίκτουσα καὶ οὐκ ἤλγησε φέρουσα | μήτηρ, ἀλλ’ ἀμογητὶ φίλων ἀπεθήκατο κόλπων [Callim. *Hymn.* 3.22-5]. Hisce levare | vix bene me natam Parcae statuere dolores. | Quod me cum pareret, vel cum gestaret in alvo | mater non unquam doluit, sine laeta dolore | deposuit quod onus”. The final syntagma of v. 25 reported by Conti is ἀπεθήκατο κόλπων which instead derives from another work of Callimachus [Callim. *Hymn.* 1.15], the correct form is instead ἀπεθήκατο γυῖων.

11 Pausan. 1.18.5: μόνοις δὲ Ἀθηναίοις τῆς Εἰλειθυίας κεκάλυπται τὰ ἔξανα ἐς ἄκρους τοὺς πόδας, and Pausan. 7.23.5-6: Αἰγιεῦσι δὲ Εἰλειθυίας ἱερὸν ἐστὶν ἀρχαῖον, καὶ ἡ Εἰλειθυία ἐς ἄκρους ἐκ κεφαλῆς τοὺς πόδας ὑφάσματι κεκάλυπται λεπτῷ, ἔξανον πλὴν προσώπου τε καὶ χειρῶν ἄκρων καὶ ποδῶν, ταῦτα δὲ τοῦ Πεντελησιῶν λίθου πεποίηται· καὶ ταῖς χερσὶ τῆ μὲν ἐς εὐθὺ ἐκτέταται, τῆ δὲ ἀνέχει δῶδα. Εἰλειθυία δὲ εἰκάσαι τις ἂν εἶναι δῶδας, ὅτι γυναιξὶν ἐν ἴσφω καὶ πῦρ εἰσὶν αἱ ὠδίνες· ἔχοιεν δ’ ἂν λόγον καὶ ἐπὶ τοιῷδε αἰ δῶδες, ὅτι Εἰλειθυία ἐστὶν ἡ ἐς φῶς ἄγουσα τοὺς παῖδας. The most famous Latin trans-

Another commonly used source was Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, especially the episodes of the *Birth of Hercules*¹² and the *History of Adonis and Myrrha*.¹³ On the basis of the information reported by these classical authors, Renaissance representations of Lucina were generally carried out in birth allegories and mythological episodes linked directly thereto, as can be seen in the many illustrations accompanying the sixteenth and seventeenth-century editions of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, or various artworks (including enamels) with these mythological subjects, such as Titian's (1506-1508) and Girolamo Sermoneta's (1560 ca.) *Birth of Adonis*, or the *Birth of the Princess* (1622 ca.) part of the Marie de' Medici cycle painted by Peter Paul Rubens.¹⁴

lation of Pausanias carried out during the sixteenth century is the one by Romolo Amaseo, from which the Renaissance scholars who refer to these passages directly cite; see Amaseo 1547, 2.176: "Habent Aegienses vetustum Lucinae fanum, deae ligneum signum a vertice ad calcem tenui varbaso velatum, praeter os tamen, summas manus, et pedes. Sunt vero quae non teguntur partes e marmore Pentelico. Alteram manum porrigit, altera facem praefert. Attributas ei faces ex eo suspicari possis, quod parturientes dolores urer videantur, vel quod ipsa in lucem foetus profert". Different instead is the version given by former translators; see e.g. Loescher 1541, 284^a: "Aegienses vetustum templum Lucinae habent. Ipsa Lucina a capite ad pedes usque tenui panno est tecta. Simulacrum ligneum est, excepta facie, summis item manibus ac pedibus, quae ex Pentelicis lapidibus sint confecta. Alteram manum in directum extendit, altera facem attollit. Quia enim mulierum in partu dolores igni sunt similes, ideo facem a Lucina teneri fortasse quis coniecerit". A later Italian translation, however, seems to follow more closely the outcome of the earlier version, rather than the later; see Bonacciuoli 1594, 292: "Hanno gli Egiesi un tempio antico di Lucina, la cui statua, dalla testa sin alle punte de' piedi è coperta d'una sottilissima tela, et dalla faccia, i piedi et le mani in fuori è tutta di legno. Sono queste parti di marmo pentelesio. Delle mani l'una stende per dritto, con l'altra tiene una facella. Che le facelle siano date a Lucina si può pensare che sia o perché i dolori del parto sono alle donne cocenti come il fuoco, o pur per quest'altra ragione, che Lucina è quella che fa uscire in luce i figliuoli". See also in this chapter fn. 36.

12 Ov. *met.* 9.295-316: "illa quidem venit, sed praecorrupta, meumque | quae donare caput Iunoni vellet iniquae. | Utque meos audit gemitus, subsedit in illa | ante fores ara, dextroque a poplite laevum | pressa genu et digitis inter se pectine iunctis | sustinuit partus. Tacita quoque carmina voce | dixit, et inceptos tenuerunt carmina partus. | Nitor, et ingrato facio convicia demens | vana Iovi, cupioque mori, moturaque duros | verba queror silices. Matres Cadmeides adsunt, | vota que suscipiunt, exhortanturque dolentem. | Una ministrarum, media de plebe, Galanthis, | flava comas, aderat, faciendis strenua iussis, | officiis dilecta suis. Ea sensit iniqua | nescio quid Iunone geri, dumque exit et intrat | saepe fores, divam residentem vidit in ara. | Brachiaque in genibus digitis conexa tenentem, | et "quaecumque es", ait "dominae grate. Levata est | Argolis Alceme, potiturque puerpera voto". | Exsiluit, iunctasque manus pavefacta remisit | diva potens uteri: vinclis levor ipsa remissis. | Numine decepto risisse Galanthis fama est".

13 Ov. *met.* 10.503-14: "At male conceptus sub robore creverat infans | quaerebatque viam, qua se genetrice relicta | exsereret; media gravidus tumet arbore venter. | Tendit onus matrem; neque habent sua verba dolores, | nec Lucina potest parientis voce vocari. | Nitenti tamen est similis curvataque crebros | dat gemitus arbor lacrimisque cadentibus umet. | Constitit ad ramos mitis Lucina dolentes | admovitque manus et verba puerpera dixit: | arbor agit rimas et fissa cortice vivum | reddit onus, vagitque puer; quem mollibus herbis | naides inpositum lacrimis unxere parentis".

14 Cieri Via 2003, 133 and 241.

Besides the many declinations of these erudite sources in scholarly dissertations and art, further developments in Lucina's imagery emerged only thanks to additional investigations in ancient literature and antiquarian bases. Of them all, perhaps the most significant is the one deriving from new interpretations of Festus's *De verborum significatione*, which brought about a completely original feature – the key – and opened up some unexpected figurative solutions of symbolic significance.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the complex development of this unusual attribute of Lucina in Renaissance iconography, which appears to have been influenced by several semantic fields and emerged as a visible phenomenon of a deeper cultural dynamic. The works of artists such as Jacopo Zucchi, Lorenzo Lotto, and Raphael, together with the mythographic treatises of antiquarian scholars such as Lilio Gregorio Giraldi, Giovanni Pierio Valeriano, Vincenzo Cartari and Baccio Baldini, will be examined for the purpose of retracing all aspects of this evolutionary path. What emerges is new material concerning the different perspectives on Lucina during the sixteenth century, including new symbolic readings derived from the philological and textual interpretations that influenced the iconographic building method of that time.

3.2 Lucina and the Key

Around 1591 the Florentine artist Jacopo Zucchi decorated the Galleria of the Palazzo Rucellai in Rome,¹⁵ a residence which belonged to the nobleman Orazio Rucellai (1530/40-1605). Zucchi developed a rich iconographic programme that included various deities from ancient mythology.¹⁶ Among the gods and goddesses portrayed in his

¹⁵ One must notice that Zucchi's image of Diana, which carries also the attributes of Lucina, is depicted in a preeminent position on the short side of the Hall, facing the South. The windows of the wall on which Lucina features overlook the church of San Lorenzo in Lucina, originally built on the ruins of the pagan temple of Juno Lucina – this connection was renowned at least since the fifteenth century, see Biondo 1559, 23: "Templum fuit ante urbem conditam Iunonis Lucinae a Iuco dictum in quo erat [...] non si dubitandum id Iunonis Lucinae templum fuisse, ubi nunc est sacti Laurentij in Lucina ecclesia. Refert Ovidius ei templo sacerdotem ex Lupercalibus praefuisse, ad quem quum irent mulieres concipere nequeutes, is ante se denudatas prostratasque flagella verberans hircinis confecto pellibus ut conciperent efficiebat. Monte sub exquilio multis in ciduus annis Iumonis magnaen nomine Lucus erat, et infra [Ov. *fast.* 434-5]. Gratia Lucinae, dedit haec tibi nomina lucus | aut quia principum tu dea lucis habes [...]". An assumption could be made that the reference to Lucina in the fresco may be somehow related with the presence of the temple located just besides, establishing in this way a direct connection between the temple and the Gallery of Palazzo Rucellai through the figure and the attributes of Lucina herself.

¹⁶ A full bibliographic overview of the Galleria Rucellai is provided in D'Amelio, Morel, Rigon 2013, 47 fn. 3, in which mention is made of Lohaus 2008 and Pfisterer 2003.

frescos, Diana [fig. 8a] deserves particular attention because she is represented with the attribute of the key, which constitutes a departure from previous depictions [fig. 8b].

The artist himself discussed this choice of iconography in his *Discorso sopra li Dei de' Gentili*, published in 1602, in which he described and provided explanations for several of his paintings.¹⁷ Here, he stated that the presence of the key in Diana's left hand recalled the imagery of the Roman goddess Lucina, who was considered to be one of Diana's personifications; according to unspecified ancient sources, her distinctive characteristics included a key symbolising safe childbirth.¹⁸

This attribute was not entirely new to Zucchi since he had previously depicted the goddess Diana with a key in the Hall of the Muses (*Camera delle Muse*) at the Villa Medici in Rome, which was decorated between 1584-86 and commissioned by the Florentine cardinal Ferdinando de' Medici.¹⁹ The coffered ceiling of the Hall was made up of seven panels with mythological representations of the Muses carrying specific features of ancient deities. In the panel entitled Melpomene-Sun and Thalia-Moon (*Melpomene-Sole e Thalia-Luna*), the muse-goddess is depicted with all of Diana's attributes, which includes a key lying beside her foot [figs 9a-b].²⁰

17 A full bibliographic overview on Zucchi's *Discorso* could be found in D'Amelio, Morel, Rigon 2013, 47 fn. 2; Saxl 1985; Aurigemma 2000.

18 Zucchi 1602, 1602, 38: "O santa dea, che dalli antichi nostri | debitamente sei detta triforme [Ariosto *OF XVIII*. 184.1-2]. Leggiadramente la dipinse l'Ariosto, in questa ottava, confermando l'opinione di Seneca, che di tal nome adorna la fece, credendola che in Cielo, in Terra et parimente all'Inferno si estendesse il suo valore [Sen. *Med.* 1-12]; come che ancora gl'Antichi volessero accennare, nelle tre teste di animali a lei dedicati, cioè Cavallo, di Cignale et la terza di Cane, sì come ancora più apertamente la dichiarorno con li tre nomi, co' quali da loro era ne' sacrifici invocata, cioè Luna in Cielo, Diana in Terra, Hecate nell'Inferno. Vogliono che sopra il partorire fosse dalle donne sotto il nome di Lucina chiamata, et creduta che facilitasse molto la strada a' già maturi parti; et a questo effetto la facessero gl'Antichi con una chiave in mano, sì come in questo quadro dipinto si vede, la quale tiene dall'altra mano l'arco et le saette, i quali finsero, che gli aspri dolori del partorire dinotassero; indi le orna il capo una cornuta Luna; ma la femina che se gli vede appresso è presa per la rugiada, tenuta di essa figliuola"; see also D'Amelio, Morel, Rigon 2013, 125-6. The fact the Diana held a key "recalling the functions of Lucina" was already pointed out in Seznec 1953, 299-300 however without a critical analysis of this attribute.

19 Morel 1991, 24-33; Cecchi 1999a; 1999b; for a biographical overview of this figure, Bietti, Giusti 2009.

20 All symbols related to Diana: a moon-shaped crown, a sceptre with the bull, a statue of Diana Ephesia in her right hand and a tambourine; the reason for the blending of the muse and Diana lies in the statement made by Marsilio Ficino, who established the equivalence between the nine muses and the planets: Thalia corresponded to the Moon; see Lomazzo 1591, 26-7: "Or secondo il Ficino Calliope è voce risultante da tutte le voci delle sfere, Urania del cielo stellato, così detta per dignità, Polinina di Saturno, di complessione fredda e secca, Tersicore di Giove salutarifero al coito delli huomini, Clío di Marte per la cupidigia di Gloria, Melpomene del Sole, come tem-



Figure 8a
Jacopo Zucchi, *Diana*. Palazzo Ruspoli Memmo (Gallery),
Rome. Fresco painting. 1592

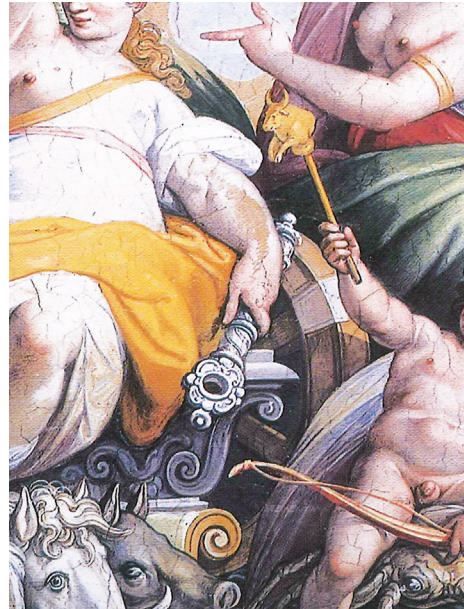


Figure 8b
Jacopo Zucchi, *Diana*, detail. Palazzo Ruspoli Memmo
(Gallery), Rome. Fresco painting. 1592



Figure 9a
Jacopo Zucchi, *Melpomene-Sun Thalia-Moon*. Villa Medici (Hall of Muses), Rome. Hardboard. 1584-86

Figure 9b
Jacopo Zucchi, *Melpomene-Sun Thalia-Moon*, detail. Villa Medici (Hall of Muses), Rome. Hardboard. 1584-86

Another work carried out in around 1572, which was again painted by Zucchi and commissioned by Ferdinando, on the *Salone di Diana* at the Palazzo Firenze in Rome²¹ is closely linked to the two previous cases in terms of substance and in all likelihood represents the archetype for these images. The hardboard entitled *Diana e le sue Ninfe*, which is now exhibited at the Uffizi Gallery in Florence,²² portrays the various personifications of Diana [fig. 10a],²³ including a figure holding a key in her left hand [fig. 10b] that can be quite clearly

peramento ch'egli è di tutto il mondo, Erato di Venere per l'amore, Euterpe di Mercurio, per l'honesta diletatione nelle cose gravi, Thalia della Luna per la viridità data alle cose con l'humor suo. [...] Ma più commune opinione è che sian le Muse l'anime delle sfere: Urania del Cielo stellifero chiamato aplane et della stessa sfera; Polinnia di Saturno; Tersicore di Giove; Clio di Marte; Melpomene del Sole; Erato di Venere; Euterpe di Mercurio; Thalia della Luna", and Ficino 1493 [XII. *Similitudo Solis ad Tritinitatem divinam et novem ordines angelorum. Item de novem numinibus in Sole et novem Musis circa Solem*]: "Deinde de Musis novem veteres in Sole numina collocarent. Nam aut substantia, eius contemplamur, aut vires. [...] Quid igitur novem circa Phoebum Musae, nisi Apollineorum genera numinum per sphaeras mundi novem distributorum? [...] Sed qui inter eos ubique praecipue sunt solares antiquiores appellavere Musas scientiis quidem omnibus praesidentes, maxime vero Poesi, Musicae, Medicinae, expiationibus et oraculis, atque vaticiniis".

²¹ Morel 1991, 115-25.

²² It decorates the ceiling of the Sala delle Carte Geografiche.

²³ Morel 1991, 13-16.

identified as Lucina, which confirms Zucchi's explanatory text on the frescos in Palazzo Rucellai.²⁴

The recurrence of this detail in Jacopo Zucchi's imagery of Diana Lucina reveals that the key had become a constant feature in his iconographic choices for his goddess. As previously stated, Zucchi attributed this feature in his representation of Lucina to the influence of ancient sources ("la facessero gl'Antichi").²⁵ An analysis of the flourishing antiquarian culture of the period, however, points to a more complex web of references [figs 11a-b-c].²⁶

24 Aurigemma 2007, 183-4 recognised the goddess Lucina in the figure holding the key, but without giving a substantial explanation; she simply connected this feature to a general birth of knowledge ("parto della conoscenza") or to the hypothetic pregnancy of Clelia Farnese Cesarini in 1572; see Morel 1991, 15. Morel is not sure about the identification of the images of Diana in this artwork. He instead states that Zucchi blends different attributes of Lucina, Isis and the Moon. It is uncertain whether Zucchi received iconological supervision in the setup of these decorative programmes. Morel affirms that Duke Francesco I Medici sent the humanist Pietro Angelio da Barga (1517-1596) to support the painter. Today it is not possible to reconstruct the influence of this scholar on Zucchi's mythological figures and, more specifically, his Diana Lucina; see Morel 1991, 115 and Ould 2007.

25 Zucchi 1602, 38.

26 Parallel occurrences of female figures depicted holding a key can be found during the Renaissance period, but not in relation to Lucina. One case, which was documented for the first time by Albricus Philosophus in his mythographic collection *De deorum imaginibus libellus* (late fourteenth century), concerns Cybele, goddess of the earth and mother of the gods, who is depicted with a key, which was used to change the seasons, closing Winter and opening Spring; see Albricus 1520, 4^b [I. iii. *De Opis et Vestae configurationis significatione*]: "Ait enim alma parens deorum dicitur tellus. Alma ab eo quo nos alat: abusive tum et aliis inquit numinibus, hoc epitheton damus: terram autem constat matrem esse deorum, umquam simulachrum eius; cum clave pingit, nam terra tempore verno aperitur, claudit hyemali". This interpretation of Cybele's key was given in many other mythographic treatises: see e.g., D'Alessandro 1522, 213^a: "Et Iupiter Labradaeus cum securi, sicut Terrae Simulacrum cum clavi", and Cartari 1571, 201: "Scrive Isidoro [PL 82 0321A (*Isid. etym.* 8.11. *De diis gentium* 61-2)] che fu data altre volte alla imagine della gran Madre una chiave, per mostrare che la terra al tempo dell'inverno si serra, et in sé nasconde il seme sopra lei sparso, qual germogliando vien fuori poi il tempo della primavera, et allhora è detta la terra aprirsi, si come riferisce anco Alessandro Napolitano"; Cybele holding keys can be found also in fifteenth century frescos of Palazzo Schifanoia in Ferrara: see Settis, Cupperi 2007. A second case can be identified in the *Emblemata* of the Flemish scholar Adrianus Iunius (1511-1575). The illustration, entitled *Vxoriarum virtutes*, represents a female figure standing on a turtle, Angerona, with her left hand covering her mouth, signifying silence, and with a key in her right hand, representing the security of the home; see Iunius 1565, 56: "clavem dextra retentat" and 141: "Pingantur itaque recto corporis statu mulier, dextra clavium fascem prae se tenens"; Drusi 2012b. A third case is the one of the goddesses Hekate, personification of Diana herself, who was depicted by the ancients with the attribute of the key. This feature was not known to sixteenth-century scholars (see e.g., Giraldis 1548, 495-8; Giraldis defines Hekate protector of doors, hence somehow related to the attribute of the key, 501: "Sane et hymno qui κοινός inscriptus est, Protyrea Hecate cognominatur, χείρ' Ἐκάτη προθυραία, μέγα σθενάς [Procl. Hymn. 6.2 and 6.14], hoc est, Salve Hecate Prothyreae valde potens"). The key was recognised as an attribute of Hekate only from the seventeenth century onwards; see Zorn 1724-25, 1061-2: "Clavis Hecatae tum in monumentis quibusdam antiquis [...] optime convenit, quai phylax et custos vocata apud inferos cum Plutone regnare credebatur. Quamvis enim Seguinus et



Figure 10a
Jacopo Zucchi, *Diana and her Nymphs*. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence. Hardboard. Palazzo Firenze, Rome, 1572

Figure 10b
Jacopo Zucchi, *Diana and her Nymphs*, detail. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence. Hardboard. Palazzo Firenze, Rome, 1572



Figure 11a

Michel Ange de la Chausse, *Hekate Triformis*, in *Romanum museum sive Thesaurus eruditae antiquitatis: in quo gemmae, idola, insignia sacerdotalia, ... centum & septuaginta tabulis aeneis incisa referuntur, ac dilucidantur: cura, studio, & sumptibus Michaelis Angeli Causei de La Chausse, Romae, ex typographia Joannis Jacobi Komarek Boëmi, 1690, pl. 13*

Figure 11b

Michel Ange de la Chausse, *Hekate Triformis*, in *Romanum museum sive Thesaurus eruditae antiquitatis: in quo gemmae, idola, insignia sacerdotalia, ... centum & septuaginta tabulis aeneis incisa referuntur, ac dilucidantur: cura, studio, & sumptibus Michaelis Angeli Causei de La Chausse, Romae, ex typographia Joannis Jacobi Komarek Boëmi, 1690, pl. 14*

Figure 11c

Michel Ange de la Chausse, *Hekate Triformis*, in *Romanum museum sive Thesaurus eruditae antiquitatis: in quo gemmae, idola, insignia sacerdotalia, ... centum & septuaginta tabulis aeneis incisa referuntur, ac dilucidantur: cura, studio, & sumptibus Michaelis Angeli Causei de La Chausse, Romae, ex typographia Joannis Jacobi Komarek Boëmi, 1690, pl. 15*



It is likely that Zucchi's iconography of the key developed during his apprenticeship under Giorgio Vasari in Florence around 1560-70,²⁷ but not from his master's repertoire: in fact, the four images of Diana painted by Vasari – one in Casa Vasari in Arezzo, 1548 (*Diana Ephesia*), one in Casa Vasari in Florence, 1560 (*Diana Ephesia*), and two in Palazzo Vecchio (*The Chariot of the Moon in the Sala degli Elementi*, 1555; and the *Allegory of Fiesole*, 1563-65) – neither match Zucchi's creations nor feature a key.²⁸ Instead, this idea probably stemmed from a series of notions that he acquired in erudite environments in 1565 while working with Vasari to organise the celebration of the marriage of Francesco de' Medici, son of Grand Duke Cosimo I, with Joanna of Austria, daughter of Emperor Ferdinand I.²⁹

On this occasion, the scholars and artists worked together to prepare a parade of chariots representing gods and goddesses from ancient mythology to celebrate the event.³⁰ In the *Discorso sopra la*

Spanhemius nummus, in quibus Hecate cum clave apparet, de Furiis exponat, rectius tamen Hecate intelligitur, sive Diana triformis"; the numismatic reference [RPC VII.2 (ID 3054); SNC 513] is to Séguin 1684, 180-1: "At in nummo nostro terribilius quiddam baculis gerunt, nempe serpentes, taedas, flagella, stimulos, quibus plenae Poetarum, cum de Furiis loquuntur, paginae. De clavi, quam gestat earum una, vix habeo quid dicam, nusu significari forte inferorum fores ab ea pro arbitro claudi et reserari", and Spanheim 1683, 54: "Au reste, voycy de quelle manière ces Furies se trovent dépeintes en des anciennes médailles Grecques, comme dans la suivante du Cabinet du Roy, frappée sous le jeune Gordien par ceux de Lyrba, ville de l'Asie Mineure; et dans une autre de Mastaura, ville de la Lycies, avec des serpens, de clefs, des torches allumées et poignards dans les mains". The reference to the statues (*monumenta*) is drawn from Montfaucon 1719, 153: "La dernière figure d'Hecaté, publiée par M. de la Chausse, est tirée du cabinet Chiggi. Elle est sans doute la plus belle et la plus chargée de symboles. Les trois figures adossées sont assez différentes entre-elles. [...] La troisième est couronnée de laurier, et tient de la main droite une clef, et de la gauche des cordes. La clef convient fort bien à Hecaté, nommée ci-dessus Phylax, ou la gardienne. Elle étoit en effet la gardienne de l'enfer, où elle regnoit avec Pluton"; an engraving of this statue is provided by De la Chausse 1690, pls 13-14 [II. *Deorum simulachra*]. Although none of these three examples appear to have inspired Zucchi's Lucina – and the explanation given by Iunius himself excludes any possible connection – these figures may have represented parallel occurrences of a general pattern that gradually influenced this imagery.

27 Cecchi 1999b.

28 Vasari 1588, 12: "P. Ditemi ora in questo quadro della Luna molto ci havete fatto il Carro d'Argento? G. L'ho fatto perché il corpo della Luna è bianchissimo, e li poeti lo figurano così, e questo è tirato da due cavalli l'uno di color bianco per il giorno, et l'altro per la notte, caminando la Luna et di giorno et di notte; e quell'aria carica di freddo mostra che dove la passa fa la rugiada, e però ho dipinto quella femmina che le va innanzi, che è la rugiada partorita dalla Luna", and 169: "Quest'è Fiesole ritratta al naturale, con il suo Mugnone fiume a piedi, che il suo corno pieno di frutti, et ho fatto una Diana cacciatrice, che tiene lo stendardo entrovvi una luna di color celeste, insegna antica di quella città". My gratitude goes to Liana De Girolami Cheny for helping to find all Vasari's Dianas.

29 Cecchi 1999b, 106.

30 The case of Vincenzo Borghini and Giovanni Battista Cini are very significant; see Belloni, Drusi 2002, 371 [ASF*i Carte Stroziane* I. 133.63r-v]; Lorenzoni 1912, 67-9 and 154-9; Bottari 1754, 90-147.

Mascherata della Genealogia degl'Iddei de' Gentili (1565), the humanist Baccio Baldini made particular note of the imagery used for the celebration,³¹ describing for the first time the detail of the key in relation to Egeria, a minor deity associated with birth. When describing the Chariot of the Moon, Baldini referred to this nymph holding a key, adding that she was invoked by pregnant women, who usually held a key in their hand to propitiate childbirth, as reported by the Latin grammarian Festus [fig. 12].³²

Baldini referred specifically to Festus's *De verborum significatione* as the source of his iconography. However, the use of a key in reference to Egeria as the protector of childbirth did not only derive from the etymology of her name. Reference to the key can be found under the word *clavim* (key), which is related to birth in general, with Festus stating that a key was donated to pregnant women to ensure a safe birth. From this, it is possible to infer that there is a strong likelihood that Baccio Baldini amalgamated the two passages, thereby creating a new source which offered original solutions.³³

31 Pierguidi 2007, 347-64 and Mini 1593, 65.

32 Baldini 1566, 63: "appresso a questi venne Egeria la quale invocavan le donne antiche quando eran gravide, perciocché con l'aiuto suo credevon partorir più agevolmente, et di questa Dea fa mentione Festo Pompeio, perché l'authore la finse una giovane vestita di una veste di varij colori che risplendesse et gli dette in mano una chiave et una pietra pregna, perciocché l'apriva la via al parto acciocché ei venisse a luce"; see also Giraldi 1548, 160: "Egeria quoque a mulieribus colebatur, quod eam partui egerendo opitulari credebant: auctor Festus" and Stucki 1598, 30^a. In the preparatory drawing of this chariot (BNCF, ms. Pal. C.B. III. 53/1, c. 93) made by Alessandro Allori, who was one of the artists involved in setting up the parade, no key is attributed to Egeria. This situation, however, changes in the second series of drawings housed in the Gabinetto dei disegni e delle stampe of the Galleria degli Uffizi (GDS 2795F), where a key features in the hand of the nymph; see Pierguidi 2007, 349 and Degl'Innocenti, Martini, Riccò 2013 [<http://mascherata-firb.ctl.sns.it>]: "ma avrà trovato posto sicuramente nella mano destra". For the relationship between Zucchi and Baldini's text see D'Amelio, Morel, Rigon 2013, 53.

33 Paul. Fest. 67: "Egeriae nymphae sacrificabant praegnantes, quod eam putabant facile conceptum alvo egerere", and 49: "Clavim consuetudo erat muliebris donare ob significandam partus facilitatem". It was recently and convincingly argued (Lentano 2018) that a third source contributed to influence the iconography of Egeria in Baldini's parade, still coming from Festus, Paul. Fest. 48: "Claudere et clavis ex Graeco descendit, cuius rei tutelam penes Portunum esse putabant, qui clavim manu tenere fingebatur et deus putabatur esse portarum". The entry for *claudere*, which came right before the entry for *clavim*, mentioned also the Roman god Portunus, who bore a key, providing a practical example of a deity carrying this feature, which could be applied also to other figures. Renaissance scholars interpreted also this passage of Festus, see Agustín 1559: "*Claudere*] Portunum portubus praesse notat Servius lib. V Aeneid. [Serv. Comm. Verg. Aen. 5.241] ex Virgilii versibus: Et pater ipse manu magna Portunus euntem | impulit, illa Noto citius volucrique sagitta. | Ad terram fugit, et portu se condidit alto [Verg. Aen. 3.623-5]. Et Varro lib. V: Portumnalia, inquit, a Portumno, cui eo die aedes in portu Tiberino facta et feriae institutae [Varr. ling. 6.3.19]. In aereis nummis Neronis Ostiensis agnoscitur, cum huius Dei imagine [RIC I² Nero 83]. Vide Ovid. lib. VI Fastor. [Ov. fast. 6.544]".



Figure 12 Anonymous, *Egeria with Key*, Gabinetto dei Disegni e delle Stampe 2795F, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence. Ink on paper. c. 1565

This framework does not yet provide a full explanation of Zucchi's iconography of Diana Lucina, but this is the first occurrence of a key being connected to a deity of birth.

The development of this imagery also derived from other iconological interpretations in contemporary antiquarian treatises. In 1571 the Italian mythographer Vincenzo Cartari published a revision of his *Imagini de gli dei de gli antichi*, an inventory of the mythological attributes of ancient gods that were usually adopted by artists in their works. Far from being a mere revision of previous editions, this volume for the first time included a description of Lucina that could have inspired Zucchi's representations. In discussing the various personifications of Diana, Cartari affirmed that when the goddess was identified with the Moon, she had positive effects on childbirth and was therefore acknowledged as Lucina. He then described the attributes of the goddess with an open, empty, and outstretched hand. A key could very well have been placed here as a good luck token for pregnant women, as described by Festus. Cartari concludes his discussion by theorising that the open hand could have had the same symbolic meaning as the key.³⁴ Cartari, therefore, gives a correct reading of Festus's text – i.e. the key symbolised a safe birth, and for this reason could be combined with Lucina, who was the protector of childbirth – and one can assume that he attempted to amend Baldini's previous misinterpretation of the key linked to Egeria. However, when reading Cartari's passage, Zucchi may have considered the key to be a real attribute of the goddess and not simply an iconographic option.

3.3 Lucina and the Open Hand

The detail of the key was not included in previous editions of Cartari's work, which only mentioned Lucina's outstretched hand;³⁵ this

³⁴ Cartari 1571, 106-11, especially 108-9: “perché dicono che la luna per la humidità sua ha forza di fare il ventre della donna molle in modo che facilmente si apre nel partorire [...] nominandola Lucina [...] l'una delle mani era distesa, senza alcuna cosa et vi havrebbero ben potuto mettere una chiave perché Festo scrive che la solevano donare gli antichi alle donne, mostrando con questa che è stromento da aprire, che desideravano loro un parto facile e piacevole, perché aprendosi bene la via al bambino, quando ha da nascere, egli se ne esce senza dare tormento alla madre; ma forse, che vollero mostrare il medesimo con quella mano di Lucina distesa, et aperta”. The former editions of this work are Cartari 1556, 1566 and 1567. The 1571 edition was the first to include new antiquarian material and to be provided with an iconographic apparatus; for Cartari as one of the sources of Zucchi, see D'Amelio, Morel, Rigon 2013, 87.

³⁵ For example Cartari 1556, 23-4: “Et per questo la chiamavano allhora e divotamente la pregavano nominandola Lucina, che tosto, e senza pericolo della madre facesse che venisse il parto già maturo in luce. Onde Pausania scrive che in Egina, città della Grecia, era in un antico tempio consecrato a lei una staoa di Lucina fatta tut-

reference is likely to have derived from other sources such as the *De deis gentium* by Lilio Gregorio Giraldi, and later replicated by Natale Conti in his *Mythologia*, in which the goddess was portrayed with an empty outstretched hand, according to Pausanias's description.³⁶ Therefore, the association of the open hand with Lucina is fundamental to understanding the presence of the key, because it emerged as an alternative figurative possibility.

The first literary example of this figuration can be identified in a humanistic poem in octave rhyme, *Silve* (1521 ca.), which was written by the Italian poet Antonio Fileremo Fregoso.³⁷ In the section entitled *De i tre pretegrini* (The Three Pilgrims), three characters travelled in a sacred oneiric dimension and the goddess Lucina was represented as their guide in the chapter entitled *Del chiostro di Lucina* (The Cloister of Lucina). Fregoso described Lucina holding a torch in her right hand and assisting the birth process with her left hand.³⁸

Renaissance artworks can offer visual evidence of what was being expressed in erudite and literary writings of the time. In one of the engravings of the *History of Juno* (1560) by Giulio Bonasone (ca. 1498-1574), an Italian painter from Bologna, Juno is represented as Lucina assisting childbirth [fig. 13a] with an open and empty hand [fig. 13b]. Together with the drawing, Bonasone's verses evoke a direct relation-

ta di legno fuori che la faccia, le mani, et i piedi, che erano di marmo, e la copriva tutta un sottilissimo velo da quelle pari in fuori ch'erano di marmo; stendeva l'una mano, e con l'altra portava una face accesa. La quale o mostrava che le donne al partorire sentono gravissimi dolori, che le distruggono quasi, come il fuoco strugge e consuma tutto quello in che si accende, ovvero che questa dea era apportatrice della luce a' nascenti fanciulli, perché porgeva loro aiuto ad uscire del ventre della madre".

36 See also in this chapter fn. 11. Giraldi 1548, 502: "Idem Pausanias auctor est apud Athenienses institutum fuisse, ut Ilithyae simulachra ad imos usque tegerentur pedes. Fuit et Ilithyae apud Aegienses templum pervetustum, cuius simulachrum ita fuit effictum, ut a capite ad pedes tenuissimo esset panno coniectum, et manum alterum porrigeret, altera facem teneret accensam" and Conti 1567, 91^b: "Effigebantur imago Lucinae, cuiusmodi fui tilla apud Aegienses, quae alteram manum vacuum porrigebat, altera gerebat facem, ita enim et infantem susceptura videbatur, in lucem eductura, et dolores, quos inflammatio totius corporis consequitur, significare".

37 Special thanks to Stefano Pezzè for his advice.

38 Fregoso 1528, 50^a [22-4]: "Giongendo al liminar del loco puro, | l'ample valve col corno percotea | e una portinara, anze una diva, | la fatal porta subito li apriva. || De velli candidissimi vestita, | una facella in la man destra tene, | con qual accende de l'umana vita | la lucerna a ciascun ch'al mondo vene; | con l'altra poi ogni mortale aita | entrar per quella via ch'al mal e al bene | conduce sempre ognun che peregrina | pel l'uman stato, e chiamasi Lucina. || Con voce e con la mano al magno ospizio | adimandolli [...]" It is unclear from the text whether her left hand was open and empty; it is only stated that she used it during childbirth. However, in the following verse, Lucina calls the pilgrims with her voice and beckons to them with her hand ("Con la voce e con la mano"); this implies that she was using her left hand and not her right hand, which was holding the torch.



Figure 13a
 Giulio Bonasono, *Giunone Lucina*. In *Amori sdegni et gelosie di Giunone*. Iulio Bonasono InVentore, after 1560



Figure 13b
 Giulio Bonasono, *Giunone Lucina*, detail. In *Amori sdegni et gelosie di Giunone*. Iulio Bonasono InVentore, after 1560, pl. 3



Figure 14 Giovanni Antonio Rusconi, *Birth of Hercules*. In *Le trasformazioni di M. Lodouico Dolce*, In Venetia, appresso Gabriel Giolito de Ferrari e fratel., 1553

ship between Juno and the Moon, the “celestial goddess of birth, holy Lucina”, which recalls the basic iconographic traits of the goddess.³⁹

This feature also recurs in an engraving of Giovanni Antonio Rusconi in the *Trasformazioni* of Lodovico Dolce, a poetic translation of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. In chapter XIX, where the birth of Hercules is narrated, Lucina appears in the form of Juno. Juno was also Jupiter’s wife, and Hercules was Jupiter and Alcmena’s love child. For this reason, Lucina (as an emanation of Juno) became hostile to Hercules’s mother, using her influence on the birth process to increase the pain of labour, obstructing the delivery of the child. Ovid describes the episode in detail (*met.* 9.280-316): as Lucina attended on a stool while Alcmena was giving birth to her son, she linked the fingers of her hands together and placed them between her legs in order to impede the birth process. Only a servant, who was aware of the goddess’s plan to inhibit the positive influence of her open hands on pregnant women, found a way to make her open them; at that moment, the spell was broken, and Alcmena was finally able to give birth.⁴⁰

39 Bonasone 1560, 3: “Celeste dea del parto, alma Lucina, | principio e causa de ogni ben feondo | che informi e serbi e che perpetui ‘l mondo | sia a noi propitia tua bon-tà divina”.

40 *Ov. met.* 9.295-9: “dextroque a poplite laevum | pressa genu digitis inter se pectine iunctis | sustinuit partus; 308-9: divam residentem vidit in ara | brachiaque in geni-

This passage was translated by Dolce and served as the model for Rusconi's representation.⁴¹ In fact, Rusconi's engraving depicts Lucina with her hands clamped between her legs in order to prevent Alcmena from giving birth to her child. Only when the goddess finally opened her hands did Hercules come to light.⁴² Therefore, it is clear that Rusconi used these literary sources to represent Lucina's hands: she can be easily identified in the scene [fig. 14], confirming the fundamental relevance of this iconographic trait in her imagery.⁴³

Even the iconography of Juno in one of the frescos of the *Loggia di Amore e Psiche* at the Villa Farnesina in Rome, which Giovanni da Udine and Giulio Romano rendered from a drawing by Raphael,⁴⁴ appears to have been designed with the traits of Lucina in mind [fig. 15a]. In the rib vault representing the three goddesses, Venus, the goddess of beauty, is depicted nude; Ceres, the goddess of crops, is presented with grain spikes on her head; and Juno is displayed with a peacock by her feet. Thus far, the position of Juno's hands has been interpreted as a theatrical gesture in an attempt to placate a furious Venus, directly citing Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*.⁴⁵ However, this

bus digitis conexa tenentem; and 315-16 exsiluit iunctasque manus pavefacta remisit | diva potens uteri, vinclis levor ipsa remissis".

41 See Capriotti 2013; Guthmuller 1983, 771-9.

42 Dolce 1553, 197: "Per sette giorni e sette notti (essendo | maturo il parto) fuor d'ogni misura | fui tormentata, e tal cordoglio io prendo | che quasi al gran dolor cesse natura. | Al fin le braccia humilmente stendo, | e Lucina pregai, c'avesse cura | di levarmi dal duolo: e ben venn'ella, | ma tutta guasta, e al mio desio rubella. || Venne ma da Giunon tutta corrotta, | e sol con disiderio di finire | mia vita: e ben temei di questo allhotta, | sentendo raddoppiarsi il mio martire. | S'hebbe ne la mia camera condotta | nascostamente, e udendomi languire | presso l'uscio in un canto si ripose | e stretta l'una man nell'altra pose. || Mise il destro ginocchio sopra il manco, | e, come io dico, strinse ambo le mani; | (così impediva il parto) e aggiunsevi anco | parole, onde i rimedi erano vani. | Ond'io con viso impallidito e bianco | formo lamenti da far gli orsi umani. | Molte donne mi son sparse d'intorno, | e in voto conumar tutto quel giorno. || Avvenne ch'una ancella, andando spesso | per casa a far diversi uffici volta, l'inganno di Giunon conobbe espresso, | ch'ebbe Lucina d'improvviso colta: | e senza con lei far lungo progresso, | "rallegrati" le dice "ch'è disciolta | la donna nostra dal suo parto grave | et un vago bambin partorito have." || La dea, credendo le parole vere, | levata da seder le mani aperse. Alhora io partori' con dispiacere di lei, quando l'astuzia discoperse: | prese l'ancella insolito piacere, | e questo suo piacer non ricoperse, | ma rise de la fraude bene andata, | e sì perché Lucina havea beffata".

43 For a general picture on the iconography of Lucina in the Renaissance editions of Ovid, see Zappella 2014, 157-8.

44 Varoli-Piazza 2002, 57-69, especially 61-2. Regarding these paintings, see also Caneva 1992 and Mols, Moormann 2008.

45 Apul. *met.* 5.31: "Sic effata foras sese proripit infesta et stomachata biles Venurias. sed eam protinus Ceres et Iuno continuantur uisam que vultu tumido quaesiere, cur truci supercilio tantam uenustatem micantium oculorum coarceret". The identification of this source is in Frommel 2003, 171.

passage does not provide a full description of Ceres and Juno's poses, nor does it give specific details regarding their hands. Instead, a subsequent passage never included among the sources for this figuration describes Psyche imploring both Ceres and Juno to protect her from Venus's wrath, praying to the former for her "fertile" hand and evoking the latter as "Lucina" protector of childbirth.⁴⁶ Since the hand of Ceres is in full accordance with these words, it could be hypothesised when observing the fresco that Juno's pose could also have been influenced by this same invocation, applying the iconographic characteristic of Lucina to her figure (i.e. the open hand) [fig. 15b]. Furthermore, since the hands of the goddess were always described in the plural form in the verses of Ovid referring to the birth of Hercules (*iunctas manus* | *ambo le mani*), the fact that Lucina was depicted with both hands open does not create a conflict with her general imagery, which allowed iconographic variations to manifest. Therefore, the representation of Juno as Lucina in this fresco may acquire an iconographic meaning that strengthens the links to her mythological tradition.

46 Apul. *met.* 6.2: "per ego te frugiferam tuam dexteram istam deprecor, and 6.4: et omnis occidens Lucinam appellat [...] Quod sciam, soles praegnatibus periclitantibus ultro subuenire". An extensive explanation of the figure of Lucina within this passage of Apuleius is given in Beroaldo 1501, 95^b: "Lucina appellant] Iunonem Lucinam a par-turientibus invocari nemo est qui nesciat. Lucinam autem ideo nuncupant, quod lucem nascentibus tribuat; a luce quoque lucecia nominatur, sicut et Iupiter lucetius dictus et quod lucis causa sit, quodque nos luce quasi vita ipsa afficiat et iuvet. Marcianus, Gellius, Festus auctores [Martian. Cap. *Nupt.* 2.149; Fest. 396.17]. Plinius autumat Lucinam a loco nominari, in quo Romae condita est aedes Lucinae [Plin. *nat.* 16.235]; Ovidius utrumque etymon complexus est his versibus: gratia Lucinae dedit haec tibi nomina lucus, vel quia principium tu dea lucis habes [Ov. *fast.* 2.449-52]. Supercilia in Iunonis tutela esse prodiderunt, quod his protegantur oculi, per quos luce fruimur; quam lucem tribuere putabant Iunonem Lucinam. Quidam tradunt, Lucinam Iunonis esse filiam. Graeci mystico nomine Ilithyam vocant, qua dictione usi sunt et nostri. Ovidius: Praepositam timidis parientibus Ilithyan [Ov. *met.* 9.273], Horatius in carmine seculari: Levis Ilithyia fuere matres | Sive tu Lucina probas vocari | Seu genitalis [Hor. *carm. Sec.* 12-14]. M. Varro sentit Iunonem Lucinam esse Luna, eandem et Proserpinam, Dianamque, quae ideo videtur Lucina dicta, vel quod lucet, vel quod lucem nascentibus praebet. Luna enim nascentium dux, a quo parientes eam invocant [Varro *ling.* 5.10 69]". This could be very well a collateral source for scholars and iconographers of the time; albeit no reference to Pausanias and to the open hand is made, which could directly reinforce the abovementioned assumption, just only the fact the figure of Lucina is extensively discussed within this passage allows to consider that it was recognised by those who dealt with this text and hence it could have been a concrete reference also within the fresco.



Figure 15a

Giulio Romano and Giovanni da Udine
(after Raphael), *Venus, Ceres and Juno*. Fresco
painting. Loggia di Amore e Psiche, Villa Farnesina,
Rome. c. 1518



Figure 15b

Giulio Romano and Giovanni da Udine
(after Raphael), *Venus, Ceres and Juno*, detail. Fresco
painting. Loggia di Amore e Psiche, Villa Farnesina,
Rome. c. 1518



Figure 16a Lorenzo Lotto, *Portrait of Lucina Brembati*. Oil on panel. Accademia Carrara, Bergamo. c. 1518



Figure 16b Lorenzo Lotto, *Portrait of Lucina Brembati*, detail. Oil on panel. Accademia Carrara, Bergamo. c. 1518

The feature of the open hand as one of the distinctive traits in the iconography of Lucina can be found in other representations directly related to the semantic field of the goddess and the Moon.⁴⁷ An interesting example can also be seen in the portrait of Lucina Brembati [fig. 16a] by the Italian artist Lorenzo Lotto, which was painted between 1518 and 1523, and in which the noblewoman featured appears to have her left hand open [fig. 16b], perhaps intentionally evoking the attribute of the goddess Lucina as the protector of birth.

⁴⁷ Even in Renaissance paintings depicting pregnant women or themes related to childbirth, iconographic features recalling this imagery can be found. For example, in the portrait of the Arnolfini carried out by the Flemish artist Jan van Eyck (1434), or in Botticelli's *Primavera* (ca. 1480), a pregnant veiled woman with an open hand is represented: it is likely that no direct relation with Lucina can be established, but it would be interesting to see if this gesture passed into these works through the Middle Ages via the iconography of Saint Margaret of Antioch, the protector of pregnant women and childbirth; see e.g. Saint Margaret of Andrea del Sarto (ca. 1510) and Guercino (1622), where the left hand is open and extended in both cases.



Figure 17 Vincenzo Cartari, *Diana*. Engraving. In *Le imagini de i dei de gli antichi nelle quali si contengono gl'idoli, riti, ceremonie, & altre cose appartenenti alla religione de gli antichi, raccolte dal sig. Vincenzo Cartari con la loro espositione, & con bellissime & accomodate figure nuouamente stampate*. In Venetia, appresso Vincentio Valgrisi, 1571

Figure 18

R/C III Marcus Aurelius 779. Aureus. Rome. A.D. 164 - A.D. 180. L1: LVCILLA AVGVSTA: bust of Lucilla, bare-headed, hair waved and fastened in a bun on back of head, draped, r. L2: PVDICITIA: Pudicitia, with the features of Lucilla, veiled, draped, standing l.



Figure 19

Pudor. Engraving. In Hieroglyphica sive de sacris Aegyptiorum literis commentarii, Ioannis Pierii Valeriani Bolzanii ... Habes in hisce commentariis non solum variarum historiarum, numismatum, veterumque inscriptionum explicationem, verumetiam praeter Aegyptiaca et alia pleraque mystica, tum locorum communium ingentem magna cum oblectatione sylvam. Basel, Michael Isengrin, 1556, 360^b



The relationship between Lucina Brembati and this goddess had already been established in previous studies that demonstrated the mythological allusions of the portrait.⁴⁸ However, no reference was ever made to the left hand being a canonical feature of Lucina. Usually, the right hand of the noblewoman was interpreted as a feature of childbirth because it was pressed down on her womb, representing the position of a pregnant woman. However, if this new interpretation of her left hand is accepted, the entire portrait could acquire a new meaning, reinforcing its allegorical nature: Lucina Brembati could, therefore, be fully identified as a personification of the goddess Lucina.

48 Dezuanni 2011; Humfrey 1997, 66-70; Gentili 1989; Berenson 2008, 50, 72 and 108.

3.4 Janus and Lucina

In order to consider the appropriateness of the new iconographic element of the key within the more general imagery of Lucina, it is necessary to consider other functions that this goddess covered and how they were understood in Renaissance erudition. Lucina was in fact also considered the guardian of doors; this may have in some way evoked the attribute of the key, further favouring its applicability. Lilio Gregorio Giraldi and Natale Conti recalled that in antiquity she was labelled as *Prothyrea* (προθύρεια), which means literally ‘standing in front of a door’,⁴⁹ and Fregoso described her as a door-keeper, confirming the early diffusion of this epithet during the Renaissance.⁵⁰ Moreover, in ancient symbols, the door was an element related to birth, almost as ‘a door to life’.

According to Giovanni Pierio Valeriano, the goddess Lucina could also be identified with the personification of *Pudicitia*. In his *Hieroglyphica* (1556), the largest dictionary of symbols published during the Renaissance, he stated that *Pudicitia* was connected to the Moon, which represented Lucina both in the forms of Diana and Juno [figs 17-18].⁵¹ Furthermore, Valeriano, relying on Fabius Pictor, added

49 Giraldi 1548, 501: “Orpheus in primo hymno, quo loco et Προθυραία, quasi ianuae praepositam, et vitae intricem invocat, eique deae de styrace suffimentum adolet. At quod Diana Ilithya et Prothyraea eadem sit, ille idem Orpheus, in eodem hymno ita cecinit: Ἄρτεμις Εἰλείθια, καὶ ἡ σεμνή, Προθυραία [Orph. H. 2.12], hoc est: Ilithya Diana et casta Prothyraea”; Conti 1567, 91^a: “Tanta fuit Lucinae reverentia apud antiquos, ut non solum praeesse parturientibus credita sit, cum invocaretur, illisque opem ferre; verum etiam tanquam custodis, cui ortus et vitae salutisque humanae initia deberentur, illius imago ante fores domorum ponebatur, quare ita hymnum scripsit Orpheus ieius laudem, quam Prothyraeam nominavit: Ἡέλιον δὲ μάλ’ αἰδέομαι καὶ δαίμονας ἄλλους, | καὶ σὲ φιλῶ καὶ τοῦτον ὀπίζομαι· οἴσθα καὶ αὐτὸς | ὥς οὐκ αἰτίος εἰμι· μέγαν δ’ ἐπιδαίομαι ὄρκον· | οὐ μὰ τὰδ’ ἀθανάτων εὐκόσμητα προθύραια [Orph. H. 2.1-4]. Audi me veneranda Dea, cui nomina multa | praegnatum adiutrix, parientum dulce levamen | sola puellarum servatrix, solaque prudens | auxilium velox teneris Prothyraea puellis. Atque paulo post eandem esse et Dianam, et Ilithyiam et Prothyraeam aperte demonstrat: μούνην γὰρ σὲ καλοῦσι λεχοὶ ψυχῆς ἀνάπαυμα· | ἐν γὰρ σοὶ τοκετῶν λυσιπήμονες εἰσιν ἄνῃαι, | Ἄρτεμις Εἰλείθια, καὶ ἡ σεμνή, Προθυραία [Orph. H. 2.10-12]. Solam animi requiem te clamant parturientes | sola potes diros partus placare dolores | Diana Ilithyia gravis simul et Prothyraea”.

50 Fregoso 1528, 50^a [22]: “e una portinara, anze una diva, | la fatal porta subito li apriva”.

51 This while discussing about the eternity of life symbolised by cycles of the Sun and the Moon; see Valeriano 1556, 328^b: “Denique humore unius [Lunae] et alterius [Solis] calore sustentatae rerum species prorogantur aeternaeque fiunt. Ad hoc faciunt plerique Corneliae Saloninae Augustae nummi [RIC V Salonina 7], cuius caput ex nova Luna prodire videtur, a quorum tergo modo FOECVNDITAS, ob id quod modo dicebamus, modo IVNO, quod eadem Lucina est, modo PVDICITIA, quod Iuno, Luna, Diana, et idem Proserpina numen. Horum omnium summam Catullus ita brevier colligit: Tu Lucina dolentibus | Iuno dicta puerperis | Tu potens Trivia et notho | Dicta lumine Luna | Tu cursu dea menstruo | metiens iter annum | Rustica agricolae bonis | tecta frugibus expels [Catull. Carm. 34.9-16]”. The identification of Lucina with Pudicitia, which

that *Pudor*, the male counterpart of *Pudicitia*, could have been represented with a key when personifying the god Janus, the protector of beginnings, ends, and doors.⁵² Valeriano linked this key to women in labour and to childbirth, reporting that the custom of giving a key to pregnant women was to assist the opening of the womb. Valeriano also stated that, when Janus was depicted with a key in his hand [fig. 19], he was identified with the ancient Roman god Portunus because he was considered to be the protector of doors. This strong bond between Lucina and Janus, established thanks to their personifications, may have fostered potential iconographic exchanges due to the semantic field they shared.⁵³

was possible also because *Pudicitia* was represented with a veil just like the *Lucina* described by Pausanias, paved the way to the use of new iconographic sources, such as numismatic specimens, epigraphic inscriptions and statues; see Valeriano 1556, 161^b: “Alibi diximus pudicitiam a Romanis velata facie pingi sculpisque solitam”, and 296^b: “Quod vero in nummis [RIC III Marcus Aurelius 779] et monumentis alijs antiquis velatae nonnumquam facies observantur cum inscriptione PVDICITIAE”. The reference to this last coin is extremely appropriate because in its features on the obverse the legend LVCILLA AVGVSTA and the bust of Lucilla, while on the reverse appears the legend PVDICITIA surrounding the image of *Pudicitia*, with the features of Lucilla, veiled, draped, standing left. The point is that some catalogues (e.g., Guischart 1784, 117) report that the same series of Lucilla’s coins featured also the legend (r) LVCINA AVGVSTA and (v) IVNO LVCINA [RIC III Marcus Aurelius 1752 – which instead reads respectively LVCILLAE AVGVSTAE and IVNO REGINA]. These specimens are not attested in modern repertoires; however, if Valeriano happened to see them, this may have favoured the shift from *Pudicitia* to *Lucina* within the discussion.

52 Valeriano 1556, 360^b: “DE CLAVI. Praestat utrunque clavis, quod et cuneus et clavus, eadem enim aperit et claudit, hoc est ligat et solvit, et in manu Iani praecipue statuebatur. De qua quidem multa poetae nostri. Sed ut figmenta, ubi agitur serio, praetereamus, Fabii Pictoris, si modo legitimum est id opusculi, interpretationem afferemus, qui Ianum dicit ad pudorem et sanctimoniam domorum primum valvas, seras et claves excogitasse, ab eoque ianus appellatas, unde claves in simulacris, in beneficii huius memoriam gestet. SECVRITAS. Alij dicunt securitatis eius signum esse, quae passim eo regnante fuit: domus enim omnium religione ac sanctitate munitas fuisse praedicant. Alij cludendi aperiendique anni officio, quod munus eius esse Dei putabant, claves additas arbitrantur, eaque de causa Clusium et Patultium appellatum. Ad huius instar Apollo cognomento Θύραις colebatur apud Graecos, quod in cunctis et exeuntis anni arbiter haberetur. Ianum vero eundem esse ac Solem a multis ubique disputant. PORTVNVS. Neque tamen Ianus tantum cum clavibus, verum et Portunus cum clavi figurabatur in manu, nam et portarum Deus esse putabatur. PARTVS. Erat etiam olim ritus, ut nuptialibus inter alios clavibus quoque mulieribus traderetur. Id aiunt boni ominis causa fieri salitum, ad partum scilicet facilitatem illis comprecandam. Et hoc significato in sacris literis saepe invenies, vulvam aperire”. Talking about the keys, Valeriano refers to Fabius Pictor as featuring in the collection of texts edited by Annianus 1498, 34^b: “Duodecim vero aras tenet sub pedibus ob plures causas. Primum, quia.xii. pomoeria prima, sive.xii. olympos, primis.xii. populis Etruriae statuit, qui suberant Iano Larthi et urbi eius Etruriae, ut Fabius Pictor et Cato in.ii. fragmento referunt. Secunda causa est quam Macrobius in primo Saturnalium refert [Macr. Sat. 1.9.7], et Varro in.v. librum divinarum rerum scribit, Iano.xii. aras dictas pro totidem mensibus. Similiter (ut aiunt) tenet claves, quia ad pudicitiam et castimoniam ac religionem tutandam ostiis patentibus apposuit valvas et seras ac claves”.

53 A Janus *claviger*, protector of doors had already appeared in the parade of chariots for the wedding of Francesco Medici of 1565; see Baldini 1566, 124: “Et in sul carro



Figure 20 Jacopo Zucchi, *Janus*, detail. Fresco painting. Palazzo Ruspoli Memmo (Gallery), Rome. 1592



Figure 21 Annibale Carracci, *Allegory of security*. Fresco painting, monochrome. Palazzo Farnese. Rome. c. 1599

It is very likely that all the above figurative prototypes contributed towards influencing Zucchi's imagery of Lucina, further justifying her association with a key. In fact, even when decorating the Hall of Palazzo Rucellai in 1591, it is interesting to note that Zucchi portrayed Janus holding a key in his hand on the opposite side of his Diana Lucina [fig. 20].⁵⁴ No mention is made in his *Discorsi* as to its symbolic meaning:⁵⁵ Zucchi simply described Janus as Saturn's brother and that he carried a key in his hand. Nevertheless, given the significant level of iconological interference that occurred between the attributes of Janus and those of Lucina, it is possible to conclude that these two representations not only have precise correlations in their

di sopra detto messe Iano che haveva due facce, una dinanzi che era d'un vecchio, et una di dietro, et questa era d'un giovane, et in una mano gli dette una chiave et nell'altra una bachetta, perciocché egli è descritto così da Macrobio nel lib. allegato di sopra, come guardiano di tutte le porte, et guida, et rettore delle vie [Macr. Sat. 1.9.7]”, depicted by the artist Alessandro Allori and similarly represented by Cartari 1571, 46-9: “Le porte del cielo sono due, l’una dell’Oriente, per la quale entra il Sole quando viene a dare la luce al mondo, l’altra dell’Occidente, e per questa egli esce Giano fu creduto un medesimo nume con Portuno, il quale era stimato un dio guardiano, e custode delle porte, e perciò così mettevano gli antichi in mano a costui una chiave, come a Giano. [...] Ora ritorno a Giano che è il Sole, il quale non solamente apre la mattina, e chiude la sera il dì, come dissi, ma fa il medesimo di tutto l’anno anchora, perché l’apre quando di primavera da che la terra comincia a produrre herbe e fiori, e tutta allegra dilata l’ampio seno, e serralo poi d’inverno allhora che ella privata di ogni suo ornamento in sé stessa si ristringe, e stassene coperta di neve e di ghiaccio. [...] Plinio scrive che Numa re dei romani fece una statua di Giano con le dita delle mani acconcie in modo che mostravano 365 [Plin. nat. 34.33], acciocché si conoscesse perciocché egli era il Dio dell’anno, perché l’anno ha tanti dì, quanti ei ne mostrava con le mani, conciosiacché gli antichi piegando le dita o stendendole in diversi modi mostrassero tutti i numeri che volevano, come si pò vedere appresso del beato Beda, che ne fa un libretto [PL 90 0295 (*De ratione temporum*. 1. *De computo vel loquela digitorum*)]. E Suida parimente riferisce che per mostrare giano essere il medesimo che l’anno, gli posero alcuni nella destra mano 300 e 65 nella sinistra, e che altri gli diedero la chiave nella destra per farlo conoscere principio del tempo, e portinaio dell’anno [Suid. Lex. i 39]”. The source of Cartari’s description is Giraldi 1548, 209.

54 The relationship between Chronos-Saturn and Diana-Moon (to which Lucina and Janus are associated) are fully explained in D’Amelio, Morel, Rigon 2013, 58 and 138-9.

55 Zucchi 1602, 15: “a canto dico a la man dritta di Saturno si vede il bifronte Giano, il quale havendo ricevuto e fatto loco commune il regno, edificano di comun concordia Saturnia et Gianicolo; tiene il detto Giano da una mano una chiave e dall’altra sostiene, secondo Plutarco, un tempio con un tritone in cima, il quale fu da esso in honor di Saturno edificato, e appresso lo scettro”. The reference to Plutarch is unclear. Plutarch mentions Janus several times [e.g., Plut. Num. 19.7.6 or Plut. *quaest. Rom.* 22]. The source reporting that the temple of Saturn had a Triton on the roof is Macrobius [Macr. Sat. 1.8.4], which was reused in many Renaissance mythological compilations, i.e. Cartari 1571, 38: “E solevano gli antichi porre in la cima del tempio di Saturno un Tritone con la buccina alla bocca, volendo in quel modo mostrare, come dice Macrobio, che da Saturno cominciò la historia di havere voce e di essere conoscitiva”. And this description matches perfectly the iconography of Zucchi’s fresco. Janus is often associated to temples and to their construction, for example in Giraldi 1548, 650: “Sunt tamen qui in Italia Ianum patrem primum templa struxisse tradiderunt”; but the god was never figured holding a temple himself.

external features but may even lead to uncovering additional hidden meanings in the iconographic programme.⁵⁶

3.5 Conclusions

What has emerged thus far is founded on the methodological processes applied by Zucchi in developing the iconography of the key in relation to Lucina during the Renaissance. Reference has been made to various ancient and modern sources, taking figurative prototypes and archetypes, parallel and divergent imageries into consideration. In this light, the association of the key with the goddess during the Renaissance appears to be a result of the synthesis and stratification of various elements from the same semantic field, which found tangible representation in the figurative culture of the time but which, as of today, can be found only in Zucchi's mythological paintings [fig. 21].⁵⁷

It is now clear that this attribute stems from the evolution of the canonical iconography of Lucina's open hand, which represented the most recognizable feature in her imagery for the protection of women in labour and of childbirth. In fact, the key as described by Festus became a parallel occurrence which was perfectly compatible with this feature and its many meanings.

If the representation of Janus in direct relation to Lucina is also considered, the tie between the goddess and the key appears even stronger, especially since Lucina was described as the protector of doors, directly recalling the imagery of Janus, linking the attribute of *Prothyrea* with that of *Portunus* and fostering an iconographic exchange. It remains unclear whether the archetype of this figuration developed by Baccio Baldini was created while he worked on the Florentine parade for the wedding ceremony of Francesco de' Medici in 1565 or when he came across Cartari's description of Lucina in 1571. Regardless of its origin, the key, which Zucchi depicted three times in thirty years, certainly benefited from his personal experience and readings.

⁵⁶ If in this case the two gods embodied the Moon and the Sun respectively, this may be indicative of the alternation between day and night. And if one adds to this interpretation the chromatic differences between the two keys, one silver and one gold, further conceptual correlations could be hypothesised, embracing hidden meanings beyond textual and visual sources, taking on even esoteric implications, such as the disclosure of knowledge, the entrance to the door of mysteries, the symbolic access to alchemy, and the sublimation of metals. For a methodological overview on the relationship between iconology and alchemy during the Renaissance, see Caron 2001; Pereira 2001; Linden 2007; Gabriele 2008.

⁵⁷ In one of the decorations of the *Camerino* at the Palazzo Farnese in Rome, which was carried out by Annibale Carracci around 1599, a female figure depicted in a monochrome tympanum sitting on the side of the south-eastern door is holding two keys in her right hand. It vaguely recalls the imagery of Zucchi's Lucina. Carracci's iconography was realised slightly afterwards Zucchi's Lucina in Palazzo Rucellai (1599) and may have been inspired by it.