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«Questo misto di profano e di sacro»: The *Studiolo Oratorio* of Torrechiara

In one corner of the Camera d'Oro of Torrechiara castle (south of Parma), the room's gold and azurite frescoes and polychrome tiles are conspicuously interrupted by the remnants of a study: intarsia panels and terra verde *frescoes representing four* uomini famosi*. This essay examines and reconstructs the format and iconography of Torrechiara's* studiolo *and evaluates the space's juxtaposition of monochrome materiality with the exceedingly magnificent and resplendent surfaces of the larger room. I place the study within the context of Pier Maria Rossi's art patronage and intellectual activity. A generally ignored document identifying Torrechiara's «studiolo oratorio», moreover, allows us both to attribute the green-ground frescoes to the Lombard painter Francesco Tacconi and to conceptualize the space as both sacred and profane. By exploring princely* studiolo *cultures and typologies, and investigating courtly conceptions of privacy, secrecy, and revelation, we can appreciate the dynamic operations of concealment, display, and privilege activated by experiences of Torrechiara's* studiolo oratorio*.*

The Camera d'Oro (Golden Chamber) of Torrechiara, a castle stunningly perched atop a hill south of Parma, manifests signorial material splendor from floor to ceiling. Formerly-polychromed tiles cover the lower walls, while profusely-gilded and *pastiglia*-loaded azurite frescoes shimmer above[1]. Decorated by a team of artists led by the prominent Bembo family of painters around 1460, this multimedia space on the *piano nobile* of Torrechiara's northeast tower was commissioned by Pier Maria Rossi (1413-1482), a Sforza-allied lord who controlled much of the Parmense, and sporadically Parma itself, for three decades from the late 1440s. In the Camera d'Oro's lunettes, the figure of Pier Maria's mistress, Bianca Pellegrini (ca. 1420 – ca. 1479), ennobles her *signore* (lord) through rituals of courtly love. This *bianca pellegrina* (fair pilgrim) confers upon Pier Maria a sword and crowns him with laurel, while above in the vaults the pilgrim wanders Rossi's territory (figs. 1-2). In the room's southeast corner, however, the opulence of the radiant frescoes and terracotta tiles is conspicuously interrupted by the remnants of a *studiolo* (study): intarsia panels and *terra verde* frescoes representing four *uomini famosi* (illustrious men) (figs. 1, 3)[2].

The importance Corrado Ricci placed upon the ostensibly private relationship between Pier Maria Rossi and Bianca Pellegrini – in the first modern study of the Camera d'Oro, in 1894 – established the prevailing interpretive key for the majority of subsequent scholarship on Rossi's art patronage[3]. Bianca's imagery is routinely interpreted as merely erotic and private, yet the Camera d'Oro's damsel and pilgrim held not only personal significance, but meanings, as I have argued elsewhere, that

were dynastic, multivalent, and public[4]. This imagery was diffused geographically, well beyond Torrechiara, and served to promote Rossi's authority and virility, as a symbolic and intimate register amplifying his dynasty's patriarchal, chivalric, and crusading traditions and histories. This chamber, moreover, was not Pier Maria and Bianca's private bedroom, but served as an arena in which Rossi entertained guests and signed documents, and, after his death, was placed on view for his subjects.

Given the predominantly inwardly-directed focus of studies of the Camera d'Oro, the *studiolo* remains surprisingly overlooked: if not entirely ignored, then eliciting very few sentences, or at best paragraphs. In 1991, Bettina Holthaus published the lone article dedicated to reconstructing the *studiolo*, and more recently, C. Jean Campbell provided a more ambitious and penetrating analysis of its spatial plays and visual poetics[5]. In what follows, I build upon the contributions of these scholars to reimagine the format and iconography of Torrechiara's *studiolo* and to evaluate the space's juxtaposition of monochrome materiality with the exceedingly magnificent and resplendent surfaces of the larger room. Situating the study within the contexts of princely *studiolo* cultures and typologies, and investigating courtly conceptions of privacy, secrecy, and revelation, set the stage for a multifaceted exploration of the dynamic operations of concealment, display, and privilege activated by experiences of the space.

As an instructive starting point, we should consider two fifteenth-century references to the *studiolo*. In a poem celebrating the Rossi dynasty and dated to the final days of 1463, Gerardo Rustici lauded the Camera d'Oro's «studio», identifying some but not all of its *uomini famosi*[6]. Twelve years later, in a letter accounting for work both undertaken and forthcoming at diverse locations for Pier Maria, Francesco Tacconi (ca. 1429 – ca. 1504), a Pavian artist active in and around Cremona, Parma, and Venice, recorded having painted Torrechiara's «studiolo oratorio». This document enables us to attribute the *terra verde* men to the Lombard artisan. More crucially, Tacconi's terse description affords an opportunity to refine our understanding of the use and decoration of Pier Maria Rossi's *studiolo*, and of such courtly spaces more generally[7]. The painter's suggestive terminology encourages us to imagine the ways that Torrechiara's study was intended for contemplation – both sacred and profane.

Torrechiara's Green Men

The *studiolo* we encounter today, still *in situ*, is a flat, static shell of its former self. On the east wall of the Camera d'Oro are two intarsia panels, a Christological inscription, and four surviving *uomini famosi*: Hercules and Samson flanking Virgil

and Terence. Intarsia continues on the south wall, framing the door once leading to a hidden spiral staircase (figs. 4-7). Allowing opportune escapes and dramatic appearances, disguised stairs were common features of Renaissance palaces and castles, and sometimes of *studioli*, permitting princes to move unseen and to observe others unnoticed[8]. Initially, Torrechiara's four extant *uomini* were not exposed as they are today, but were instead covered by intarsia, the exterior of two large fold-out wings which the priest and historian Ireneo Affò called *portoni* in the late eighteenth century. When swung open, these large panels revealed additional *terra verde* men on their interiors. According to Affò, moreover, a surface for writing and reading fit into the wall within the approximately meter-long rectangular recess below the four existing illustrious men. A broken hinge remains as evidence of this platform which, when folded down, unveiled a (subsequently lost) devotional image described by Affò as a polychrome fresco (see fig. 3)[9]. This surface provided Rossi with a commodious support for display and reading, much like the panel used to rest books upon in Federico da Montefeltro's *studiolo* in Urbino[10]. When the ledge and *portoni* were closed, Torrechiara's *studiolo* afforded little room for storage and thus could not have served as a treasury, cabinet of curiosities, or library. Rossi's codices and other precious objects would presumably have been brought to the *studiolo* to be studied or exhibited.

The normative account of the Renaissance *studiolo* traces its origins to monastic cells transformed into secular spaces of studious withdrawal. Here, often surrounded by intarsia and *uomini famosi*, lords demonstrated their intellect and virtue to distinguished visitors, presenting, as Stephen J. Campbell proposed, an «appearance of industrious solitude» and «personal culture as entitlement to rule»[11]. *Studioli* – efficacious spaces for the display not only of books, gems, and medals, but equally of power, learning, and piety – rapidly became fashionable for *signori*, and increasingly imperative for the exercise of princely sovereignty.

Intricate intarsia featured in contemporary *studioli* from Naples to Modena, Ferrara to Lucca. Indeed, innovative modes of intarsia circulated among fifteenth-century patrons. In 1434 Leonello d'Este had the woodcarver Arduino da Baiso relocate to Ferrara the intarsia that Arduino's workshop had produced two decades earlier for the Lucca palace of Paolo Guinigi (deposed in 1430), while in the late 1460s, Diomede Carafa of Naples sought out a painted representation or reproduction of Piero de' Medici's Florentine study and its decoration[12]. In a letter to his father Francesco in 1459, Galeazzo Maria Sforza praised the «ornateza de studioli» (ornamentation of the *studioli*) in the Medici Palace, and a Florentine poem composed for the young lord's visit extolled their «utmost art in intarsia […] and sublime intaglio»[13].

The intarsia of Torrechiara's *studiolo* (see figs. 3, 7) – along with the *coretto* (small choir) from the castle's chapel of San Nicomede (fig. 8) – have been attributed to the workshops of the da Baiso and Canozzi da Lendinara woodworkers. A further possibility is Pantaleone de' Marchi, who collaborated with Bonifacio Bembo on multiple projects in Cremona and who, like the Canozzi, cut his teeth with Arduino da Baiso (whose shop was responsible for the renowned Este *studioli* in Ferrara)[14]. The frame of Benedetto Bembo's polyptych (fig. 9) for Torrechiara's chapel has been attributed to the brothers Lorenzo and Cristoforo Canozzi da Lendinara, who crafted intarsia choirstalls for Parma's Duomo[15]. Cristoforo seems the most likely candidate for Rossi's *studiolo*; he departed Ferrara in the late 1450s and was documented between Modena and Parma throughout the 1460s. No doubt he and other artisans carried with them ideas and innovations about *studioli* and their intarsia configurations.

Not only intarsia, but also green-hued frescoes set the *studiolo* apart from the radiant surfaces of the Camera d'Oro. The Camera di Griselda, a *terra verde* chamber on the ground floor of Roccabianca, another castle constructed by Rossi, portrays the patient heroine's trials in great detail and with considerable inventiveness, and it complicates any schematic interpretation of the lord's patronage of the medium[16]. Germane to our discussion of Torrechiara's *terra verde* frescoes is the fact that Renaissance images of religious figures in their spaces of study and contemplation often have a green setting, whether curtains or painted walls. Among the most familiar are Carpaccio's *Saint Augustine* (1502) in the Venetian Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni and the frescoes of *Saint Jerome* (1480) and *Saint Augustine* (1480) by Ghirlandaio and Botticelli, respectively, in the church of the Ognissanti in Florence. Less known is Mary's study in the mid-fifteenth-century fresco of the *Annunciation* (fig. 10) at Montechiarugolo, the natal castle of Pier Maria Rossi's wife, Antonia Torelli (ca. 1406-1468). Resonant parallels can also be found on library walls. *Terra verde* libraries include that of Michelozzo for San Marco in Florence, and those, decorated during the 1440s to the 1470s, of Emilian and Lombard monasteries closer to Torrechiara, such as San Giovanni a Canale at Piacenza, the Biblioteca Malatestiana in Cesena, Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan, and San Domenico in Bologna[17]. Authors from the Church Father Isidore of Seville to Marsilio Ficino and Giordano Bruno believed that green could act phenomenologically to influence an individual physiologically, stimulating study and encouraging meditation and refreshment[18]. Wooden surfaces might even be colored green in studies; some were stained or painted, or cultivated with the green fungus chlorociboria[19]. Indeed, Torrechiara's materially modest *terra verde* frescoes served to focus concentration and contemplation (and devotion, as we

shall see) through their green hues. The display of scholarly and pious activity was made even more efficacious and conspicuous not only by the intarsia wings swung open and thus directing attention into the *studiolo*, but so too by the frescoes' limited tonality, which arrestingly contrasted with the ostentatious gold and azurite of the surrounding surfaces[20].

Studioli and other spaces associated with learning and books were also colored *verde* in contemporary Ferrara. Giovanni Trullo painted bookshelves green in Eleonora of Aragon's *studiolo*, and Borso d'Este's study at Sassuolo was decorated with figures «facte in verde». The Hungarian artist Michele Pannonio painted green not only the walls of an oratory and a *studiolo* within Borso's Palazzo della Certosa in 1463 (the same year as the first mention of Torrechiara's study), but also one of the monastery's cells[21]. As Charles Rosenberg reminds us, Borso's rooms were hardly austere or ascetic, but were magnificently adorned with gold and azurite ceilings[22].

Likewise conventional for *studioli*, of course, were representations of illustrious men. Torrechiara's *terra verde* frescoes depict Hercules, Virgil, Terence, and Samson below scrolls and gilded stars (see figs. 5-6)[23]. Conflicting sources dating from the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries render difficult secure identification of the lost *uomini famosi* painted on the interior of the fold-out wings, yet it is vital to parse this evidence to move toward a reconstruction of the study's imagery. The poet Gerardo Rustici's *Cantilena* from late 1463 – the *terminus ante quem* for the *studiolo* – names Plato, Socrates, Demosthenes, Bias of Priene, and Aristotle, but curiously none of the four still on view in Torrechiara:

Poi dretto il lecto el studio posto
In cui e pente quil gran platone
Che gli ha dato il sone
E di sua cithera il dolce cante.
E socrate, demostene e quil Biante,
Aristotelle e quil vecchio chi za dete
Propinquo al dolze ymethe
Di calami sua cithera impari septi[24].

Affò's description of the *studiolo* three centuries later cites only one of the *uomini* mentioned by Rustici. He identifies the four extant figures and reports that those of the *portoni* include Aristotle, Dante, Solon of Athens, and others whose inscriptions had deteriorated[25]. These illustrious men, and the panels on which they were painted, must have been lost in the nineteenth century, since Corrado Ricci reported in 1894 that Dante, «until very few years ago», had decorated a «shutter» (*imposta*)[26]. Just who accompanied Hercules, Virgil, Terence,

and Samson cannot be determined definitively, and recent reconstructions have differed slightly. Marco Pellegri argued that Rustici intended the musician whose lyre or cithara produced «sweet song» to be Orpheus, though other scholars have suggested Plato, who is explicitly named two lines prior. The final three lines of these two quatrains have likewise proved troublesome. C.J. Campbell and Holthaus contended that Rustici here invokes Plato again. Antonia Tissoni Benvenuti asserted that this «vechio» (ancient) residing near «sweet» Mount Hymettus, famous for its honey, might be Pan. For Pellegri, however, he would be Terpander, the seventh-century poet traditionally credited with setting Homer's lyrics to music and with adding three strings to the four-stringed cithara. In sum, Holthaus proposed Aristotle, Plato, Dante, Bias, Socrates, Solon, and Demosthenes, while Pellegri appended Orpheus and Terpander but eliminated Dante[27]. The Florentine poet, who was included by both Affò and Ricci, stands out a bit suspiciously as the only modern among this assembly of ancients (and as the only non-Greek on the *portoni*). I am sympathetic to Giuseppa Zanichelli's recent suggestion that these scholars may have misread a damaged inscription and mistook Biante (Bias) for Dante[28]. Beyond the four extant famous men, then, I would argue that we can establish with certainty Aristotle, Bias, Demosthenes, Plato, Socrates, and Solon, and perhaps, but not necessarily two others, as the original denizens of Rossi's *studiolo oratorio*.

The identities of lost *uomini* remain unresolved, yet we can discern meanings that viewers may have supplied for the surviving figures. Those privileged with visual access to the *studiolo* no doubt perceived both Hercules, arrayed in the hide of the Nemean Lion, and Samson to be emblematic of physical force and of the bellicose virtues appreciated by *signori* – martial values, it must be said, which comically resound through the pairs of *putti* locked in mock-heroic combat with formidable fowl in the lunettes above (fig. 11). Hercules was a widespread and polyvalent character in courtly art and literature. For Nicolò III d'Este, Hercules figured as a Christian knight in Pier Andrea de' Bassi's lengthy poem of 1430, and he has been interpreted as a symbol of courage and fortitude depicted slaying the Nemean Lion in a fictive grisaille sculpture originally fusing four *uomini famosi* from Federico da Montefeltro's Urbino *studiolo*[29]. «Antiquo Hercule» painted on green ground, moreover, protected an iron-grated widow and was accompanied by «homini sapienti» (wise men) at the Este villa of Belriguardo[30]. Torrechiara's Hercules holds Omphale's distaff, and Samson, with eyes wide open, brings down a column of the great temple of the Philistine god Dagon following Delilah's betrayal (Judg. 16:4-30); thus, viewers may have pondered their relation to the amorous imagery of the Camera d'Oro's lunettes as negative exempla, warning

of love's power. Desire and «cupidity» were fundamental qualities activated and expressed through *studioli*, though such desires were necessarily restrained in the same spaces in which they were incited. C.J. Campbell aptly described Hercules and Samson in this context as «examples of the active life and its pitfalls, as heroes vanquished by earthly love or *cupiditas*»[31].

Echoes of at least one of these *uomini famosi* can be found within the lunettes, further substantiating the resonance of the study's imagery when its doors had been swung open. Viewers may have connected Hercules to what appears to be a depiction of the demigod battling the Hydra near the bottom of the left "pilaster" of the south lunette's pavilion, located just above the head of visitors glancing to the right from the *studiolo* (figs. 11-12). This pavilion is comprised of seven additional niches adorned with deteriorated *pastiglia* figures (plus another nearly two dozen worn-away statuettes above), though their poor condition makes it difficult to ascertain whether they might have constituted a cycle of the labors of Hercules or perhaps a program of illustrious men. Either way, such visual echoes and reiterations spurred glances and gazes, and ultimately comparisons and discriminations, between the rather unassuming *studiolo* and the heavily-textured and animated, gold and azurite chamber all around.

Torrechiara's other *terra verde* men – Virgil and Terence (figs. 13-14) – personified solitary literary study in Petrarch's wake, as C.J. Campbell affirmed[32]. Moreover, they were both essential ancient authorities for the education of fifteenth-century lords. Angelo Decembrio, in a dialogue set at the court of Leonello d'Este, praised Virgil and Terence's utility for the prince, and in 1447 «uno Virgilio e uno Terenzio» were purchased in Florence on Leonello's behalf[33]. The noble pupils of Vittorino da Feltre in Mantua recited and memorized passages from Virgil as the foundation of their schooling, and Battista Sforza, at least according to her preceptor Martino Filetico, knew all of Virgil's works by heart[34]. Decades later Jacopo Gallino, the Ferrarese tutor of Isabella d'Este, fondly recalled their lessons, her scans and translations of Virgil as a child, and the «galanteria et gratia» (charm and grace) of Isabella's explanations of his readings of Terence and Virgil[35]. These lords and ladies read not only Virgil's three canonical poems, but also commentaries on and biographies of the author, who in fifteenth-century courts was interpreted as a counselor to the just and virtuous ruler, thus an ancient source sanctioning imperial (and by extension signorial) authority[36]. Crucially, the *Aeneid* served as a cogent structuring paradigm for an array of epic poems glorifying Rossi's aristocratic peers and superiors in the late fifteenth century, chief among them: Francesco Filelfo's *Sforziad* and Antonio Cornazzano's *Sforzeide* for Francesco Sforza; Gianmario Filelfo's *Martiad* for Federico da Montefeltro; Tito Vespasiano

Strozzi's *Borsiad* for Borso, and then Ercole d'Este; Basinio da Parma's *Hesperis* for Sigismondo Malatesta; and Matteo Zuppardo's *Alfonseis* for Alfonso of Naples[37].

Battista Guarino accentuated Virgil's moral and edifying value to courtly education, and though her younger brother Ludovico il Moro preferred Terence, Ippolita Sforza read the *Aeneid* through the lens of her father Francesco's deeds, according to Judith Bryce[38]. We should imagine that the children of Francesco's close ally Pier Maria were expected to do the same. To be sure, for Pier Maria and other visitors to the space, Torrechiara's *uomini famosi* provided models to admire and emulate. These figures additionally activated experiences of the *studiolo* and called to mind the authors of Rossi's books, perhaps explicitly alluded to by the three codices protectively cradled in Terence's arms (fig. 14)[39].

Reading and Singing in the Studiolo Oratorio

No inventories of Pier Maria Rossi's library are known, though Zanichelli and Tissoni Benvenuti have resourcefully pieced together his book ownership, which encompassed vernacular poetry, religious volumes, vernacular translations of ancient histories, and a lavish copy of Francesco Filelfo's commentary on Petrarch's *Canzoniere* (ca. 1470)[40]. Works dedicated to Pier Maria include Gerardo Rustici's verse *Cantilena* celebrating the Rossi dynasty, and one of the earliest books printed in Parma (ca. 1476): an incunable of Lucius Anneus Florus's *Epitomae Rerum Romanarum*, edited by Filippo Beroaldo, who equated Pier Maria with the Roman builder Lucullus, a vital model for Renaissance patrons of architecture[41]. Among the books consulted in Torrechiara's *studiolo*, however, might have been the missal of the Trecento Bishop Ugolino Rossi, which functioned as a *libro di famiglia* (family chronicle), in which Rossi birth dates were recorded from the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries[42].

Pier Maria's grandfather Beltrando (1336-1396) commissioned or purchased at least four manuscripts while in Paris towards the end of the fourteenth century. Two are vernacular translations of Latin texts (a French edition of Seneca's *Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium* and a copy of Pierre Bersuire's *Histoire romaine*, adapted from Petrarch's reconstruction of Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita*) with illuminations attributed to the so-called Ravenelle Painter[43]. It is not certain if these codices ever reached Parma, though two Books of Hours ordered by Beltrando unquestionably came into Pier Maria's possession. Once thought to be Visconti manuscripts because of the splendor of their illuminations, the pages teem with imagery relating to Rossi insignia and devotions. Beltrando is portrayed as donor in both (figs. 15-16), and decades later his grandson was depicted by perhaps Benedetto Bembo in a folio

previously left blank in the Paris manuscript (fig. 17). Pier Maria kneels on a cushion, armed with a sword and dressed in a short crimson garment embroidered with a Rossi emblem, while piously praying alongside his mistress Bianca Pellegrini. Rossi dynastic saints Anthony Abbot and Catherine of Alexandria introduce the pair to Christ in the form of an *Imago Pietatis*, the sacred image we will soon encounter in Torrechiara's *studiolo*[44].

The Rossi *oratore* Jacopo Caviceo, in a posthumous *vita* (ca. 1490), declared that Pier Maria «excelled greatly at vernacular poetry (*rythmica*)» and «was most learned in music and math», while Rustici pronounced that «with his divine voice [Rossi] composed verses, songs, and rhymes». Rustici also maintained that the lord spoke «French, Greek and Latin», and Caviceo stressed his fluency in French and Spanish[45]. While we must be skeptical that Pier Maria spoke Greek (even if his illegitimate brother Rolando, a crusading Knight of Saint John, resided for many years on Rhodes), claims to such knowledge may account for the large company of Greeks – among them Aristotle, Bias, Demosthenes, Plato, Socrates, and Solon – who inhabited Torrechiara's *studiolo*[46]. Caviceo and Rustici's insistence on Rossi's poetic and musical enterprise, moreover, demonstrates an interest in *volgare* poetry, perhaps written by the count or sung with his «voce divina». In the sixteenth century, Vincenzo Carrari asserted that Pier Maria had authored amorous verses exalting Bianca, and later scholars have attributed various inscriptions to him, including that greeting the visitor to Torrechiara and those associated with the tomb of Beata Simona della Canna in Parma's Duomo[47]. The motto from one of Gianfrancesco Enzola's medals depicting Bianca is in hendecasyllable and may have been devised by Rossi. «LIZADRA ET PELEGRINA SOPRA TUTO» invokes the *bianca pellegrina*'s beauty, surpassing that of all other women, and wittily recalls her image frescoed on the Camera's ceiling, literally «above all» (see fig. 2)[48]. In his *Cantilena*, Rustici alludes to «the sound of my lyre», and he refers to the work as a «canzone», as does the poem's title[49]. These verses would indeed have been read or sung aloud, likely in the Camera d'Oro itself, as might have been those penned by Rossi.

Pier Maria was not the first Rossi with serious musical interests and intelligence. His father Pietro (1374-1438) composed *ballate* and motets and served, along with the mathematician and astrologer Giorgio Anselmi, as interlocutor in Anselmi's treatise *De Musica* (1434), no doubt another text in Rossi's library[50]. The musical knowledge shared by both Pietro and Pier Maria presumably guided the latter, and his artists, in the arrangement of the instruments of the Camera d'Oro's *putti*. These five pairs of music-making sprites, and their imagined tones and melodies, must have resonated with the ancients of the *studiolo*'s wings strumming the cithara.

Like the *putti* of the lunettes, the *studiolo*'s extant worthies are coupled by design: Samson with Hercules, Virgil with Terence. Samson and Hercules were commonly paired, and at Torrechiara they wear scanty if any clothing and share a similar rough appearance with scraggly beards. Virgil and Terence don garlands of laurel and are engulfed in voluminous robes. Virgil's is lined sumptuously with fur (see figs. 13-14). Other plausible duos among the lost *uomini* include Socrates and Aristotle; perhaps Terpander and Orpheus; and Bias of Priene and Solon of Athens, two of the Seven Sages of Greece known for *apothegms* (pithy sayings) who would soon be mentioned jointly as wise philosophers by Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti[51]. Demosthenes and Plato may have been coupled, as they were within Sarmato castle's *studiolo* painted by Bonifacio Bembo or an artist close to him in the 1450s for Rossi's ally, Alberto Scotti. Pier Maria's daughter Leonora, who married Alberto's son Bartolomeo, resided at Sarmato, which the Rossi poet Rustici punningly extolled as the «castel sempre armato» (ever-armed castle). In these frescoes, Plato and Demosthenes transmitted wisdom from Greece to Rome (represented in the study's other two authorities, Cicero and Seneca), and from there, by extension, to the Scotti court[52].

The Sacred Studiolo Oratorio

Uomini famosi, of course, often populated *studioli* – spaces conventionally conceptualized as sites for cultivating profane and secular knowledge. Yet, we are increasingly aware of the versatility of Renaissance spaces and of the complex ways their uses, experiences, and perceptions resist simple or singular meaning. Thus, in what follows, I explore the ways that Torrechiara's study complicates a number of assumptions and binaries regarding the distance of Italian Renaissance *studioli* from the sacred; to do so requires that we carefully parse the space's religious inscription and devotional fresco, and the painter Francesco Tacconi's letter to Pier Maria Rossi.

In the late eighteenth century, Affò described an *Imago Pietatis* frescoed «a colori» below Virgil and Terence, and on account of this painting, he compared the fold-down shelf to an altar. The image's polychromy must have stood out from the surrounding *terra verde*, thus enlivening the viewer's devotion. This image and the gilded text above – «CRISTUS REX VENIT IN PACE ET DEUS HOMO F[A]CTUS EST» (Christ the King came in peace and God became man) (see fig. 4) – puzzled the priest Affò, who wondered what Torrechiara's «mix» of sacred and profane imagery could have meant: «Cosa significhi questo misto di profano e di sacro non sembra intendersi»[53]. We can imagine that the *studiolo*'s Christological

inscription reminded its inhabitants that worldly knowledge, the pleasures of love, and collecting luxury books should be restrained. Indeed, the display of piety was fundamental to signorial power, and both the study's sacred image and biblical verse resonated with significant but overlooked regional and dynastic counterparts. Pier Maria and other Rossi, for instance, were decidedly loyal to the *Imago Pietatis* iconography. The church of Sant'Ilario at Sant'Ilario Baganza, under Rossi jurisdiction, still contains a niche with a fifteenth-century frescoed *Imago Pietatis*, as does Parma Cathedral's Valeri chapel, an important arena for the Rossi (figs. 18-19)[54]. As we have seen, a votive portrait of Pier Maria flanks an *Imago Pietatis* in an illuminated *Book of Hours* (see fig. 17); a similar image of Christ embellishes a bronze bell commissioned in 1497 by his son Beltrando for the Duomo of San Moderanno in Berceto (fig. 20); and the empty terracotta niche in Torrechiara's chapel of San Nicomede may have originally enclosed this iconography, either painted or sculpted[55]. The apotropaic inscription prominently painted above the *studiolo*'s window, moreover, can be found on castle facades and interiors near Parma. Variants of *Christus Rex venit in pace et deus homo factus est* signaled or enacted a devotion dear to local signorial families. The phrase marks a number of towers at the Pallavicino fortress of Varano de' Melegari; three are carved in gothic script within the Torelli castle of Montechiarugolo (fig. 21); and yet another decorated the Scotti's Rocca di Varsi[56]. The Christian imagery of Torrechiara's *studiolo* encompassed traditions and cults spread throughout Parma and its territory.

One of the rare documents of Pier Maria Rossi's art patronage further enriches our understanding of the *studiolo*'s spiritual valences, catalysts, and operations. A letter from «Francesco Tachono pictor» to his lord, dated 7 November 1475, accounts for works that the painter both had completed and still intended to undertake at Torrechiara and San Secondo, and at neighboring ecclesiastical institutions. Tacconi notes payments for activity at the Rossi dynasty's key *rocca* of San Secondo and «in general every other work I have done until now», and he agrees to paint and gild an altarpiece for the church of Santa Maria delle Grazie (constructed for the Franciscan Amadei in the town of San Secondo in the early 1470s). The letter additionally attests to payments Tacconi received for «every work I have done at Torrechiara», including those at the nearby Badia of Santa Maria della Neve and within the castle complex: under the baths; within the «studiolo oratorio»; and above a gate (perhaps insignia surmounting an entrance, conceivably the images that Ludovico il Moro Sforza engaged «Christalino pictore» to repaint eight years later, following the death of Pier Maria Rossi and Sforza's confiscation of Torrechiara)[57].

Still very little is known about Francesco Tacconi, the teacher of Filippo Mazzola (Parmigianino's father), and the father of Mazzola's first wife (who was not, however, Parmigianino's mother). Because Tacconi's signed and dated paintings were made in Venice around 1490 and stylistically resemble the work of Giovanni Bellini, attributions for his early career have rarely advanced beyond conjecture. The letter to Rossi, however, supports the attribution to Tacconi of a *Madonna and Child* (fig. 22) from the Benedictine monastery of Santa Maria della Neve, erected by Pier Maria Rossi in 1471[58]. Pertinent here is the artist's reference to the painting of Torrechiara's «studiolo oratorio», which confirms that Tacconi was responsible for the *terra verde* frescoes of the Camera d'Oro's *studiolo*. More significantly, it corroborates my assertion that contemporaries perceived this space to be simultaneously a study and an oratory, a site for contemplation both profane and divine.

Renaissance *studioli* were experienced as both secular and sacred domains, and in versatile, imaginative ways[59]. Este *palazzi* and *ville* in and around Ferrara, for example, were outfitted with numerous spaces that blurred distinctions between *studiolo* and *oratorio* in the fifteenth century, including within Belfiore and the Palazzo della Certosa built by Borso, and in Ercole's rooms at the Palazzo del Corte and Eleonora of Aragon's at the Castello. Indeed, Thomas Tuohy contended that the «conjunction of studio and oratory» was standard at both Ferrara and Urbino[60]. *Terra verde* frescoes depicting hermit saints within the castle of Monticelli d'Ongina – stronghold of the Pallavicino, Rossi's most bitter adversaries – seem to have adorned a study, and they similarly confound a strict division between secular and sacred space[61]. In their original location, these paintings, now in the Galleria Nazionale di Parma, stimulated and focused worship and contemplation through religious imagery and *terra verde* decoration. *Thebiad* scenes were often frescoed in this medium, a fact that resonates with the green-hued environments of meditative Church Fathers, including Jerome and Augustine mentioned above. In his chamber in the Palazzo della Certosa, for instance, Borso d'Este scrutinized *terra verde* vignettes from the lives of the eremitical saints Anthony Abbot, Paul the Hermit, and Macarius of Egypt[62].

The Spatial Operations of the Studiolo Oratorio

The spaces we identify as *studioli* were not conceptualized uniformly in Quattrocento Italy. The wide range of terms utilized in inventories and descriptions – *camerino*, *cameretta*, *anticamera*, *studio*, and *scrittoio*, among others – confirms the fluid understandings of their varying uses and structures. Nor were they

always distinct or discrete rooms; in some cases they may have been constituted by particular furniture or provisions[63]. While the best-known *studioli* – Federico da Montefeltro's studies for his palaces in Gubbio and Urbino – inhabit their own room, many were located within larger chambers as at Torrechiara, set off by distinctive furnishings or decoration. Scholars often seek to resolve ostensible inconsistencies in terminology, yet the fact that Torrechiara's intarsia and *terra verde* frescoes, in the midst of an exceedingly splendid chamber, could become for at least one source both a study and an oratory encourages us to reckon with the productive contradictions and irregularities articulated through contemporaries' designations and characterizations of *studioli* and cognate spaces.

Separation from the rest of the *camera*, of course, would have conferred additional distinction upon those granted access to Rossi's *studiolo oratorio*. Thus, the act of withdrawal to a study situated within a larger *camera* or *sala* might be considered not a disengagement, but rather a public or visible act of privacy[64]. Indeed, *signori* were keen to emphasize their use of *studioli* and to advertise ostensibly solitary endeavors. The ambassador Sigismondo Golfo's insistence to Isabella d'Este in 1496 that Alberto Pio, lord of Carpi, «would gladly be left in peace so he may study», may reveal more about the princely virtue of studious seclusion (and the efficacy of publicizing it) than about Alberto's authentic motivations and practices[65].

In like fashion, Pier Maria Rossi's retreat from the magnificent Camera d'Oro to the materially modest *studiolo oratorio* functioned to promote his authority. The most ostensibly intimate spaces of fifteenth-century Italian courts were never truly personal or absolutely hidden, for the appearance of privacy is created by boundaries that only exist when they can be traversed. This seems particularly resonant for Renaissance *studioli*, sites for the conflicting demands of collecting and exhibiting wealth and knowledge, but equally retreating from the world to «devote oneself to reading, meditation, and cultivation of the humanist self»[66]. Torrechiara's built environment was carefully crafted to manage admittance and access, as visitors negotiated the many gates and passages leading to the castle and may have likewise encountered its *coretto* (see fig. 8), a second innovative intarsia structure utilized by Rossi to generate prestige and amplify signorial authority through dynamics of secrecy and revelation[67]. The *studiolo oratorio* visibly and efficaciously fashioned erudition, piety, and social status by dramatically activating mechanics of hiddenness and unveiling. When open, the nearly monochromatic *studiolo* seemed inviting and intimate, if humble in comparison with the rest of the room. When closed, flat against the wall, it secrets were conspicuously unavailable – if subtly yet unmistakably insinuated, even

advertised, by the intarsia surfaces on display in the thick of the radiantly painted and gilded terracotta walls. Imagining the operations of access and concealment produced by the manipulation of the *studiolo*'s wings – through admittance suggested but denied, or promised and allowed – enables us to conceptualize this space in motion and in practice. Torrechiara's *studiolo* facilitated embodied connections and exclusions; it delineated, framed, and enhanced the status and power of its inhabitants and beholders. Pier Maria Rossi's dynamic *studiolo oratorio* constructed for privileged audiences to the Camera d'Oro both the image and the experience of an ideally learned and pious lord.

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1 For studies of the Camera d'Oro most pertinent to the interpretation offered here, see C. Coerver, *Donna/Dono: Chivalry and Adulterous Exchange in the Quattrocento*, in *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, ed. by G. Johnson, S. Matthews Grieco, Cambridge, 1997, pp. 196-221; C.J. Campbell, *Pier Maria Rossi's Treasure: Love, Knowledge and the Invention of the Source in the Camera d'Oro at Torrechiara*, in *Emilia e Marche nel Rinascimento. L'identità visiva della "periferia"*, ed. by G. Periti, Azzano San Paolo, 2005, pp. 63-88; T. McCall, *Networks of Power: The Art Patronage of Pier Maria Rossi of Parma*, Ph.D. Diss., University of Michigan, 2005. Further, consider J. Woods-Marsden, *Pictorial Legitimation of Territorial Gains in Emilia: The Iconography of the Camera Peregrina Aurea in the Castle of Torchiara*, in *Renaissance Studies in Honor of Craig Hugh Smyth*, ed. by A. Morrogh, F. Superbi Gioffredi, P. Morselli, E. Borsook, Firenze, 1985, pp. 553-564; G. Capelli, P.P. Mendogni, *Il castello di Torrechiara: storia, architettura, e dipinti*, Parma, 1994; S. Roettgen, *Italian Frescoes: The Early Renaissance, 1400-1470*, trans. by R. Stockman, New York-London, 1996 (orig. ed., *Wandmalerei* der *Frührenaissance in Italien. Band I. Anfänge und Entfaltung: 1400-1470*, München, 1996), pp. 358-373, esp. pp. 358, 366 for a diagram of the room and its dimensions.

2 The intarsia's *toppi* borders are heavily restored. I examine the authenticity of Rossi intarsia structures – and embodied experiences of the spaces – in T. McCall, *Secrecy and the Production of Seignorial Space: The* Coretto *of Torrechiara*, in *Visual Cultures of Secrecy in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by T. McCall, S. Roberts, G. Fiorenza, Kirksville, Mo., 2013, pp. 76-104.

3 C. Ricci, *Il Castello di Torchiara: La Sala d'Oro*, in *Arte italiana decorativa e industriale*, 3, 1, 1894, pp. 7-9.

4 McCall, *Networks of Power*, cit.; *id.*, *Visual imagery and historical invisibility: Antonia Torelli, her husband, and his mistress in fifteenth-century Parma*, in «Renaissance Studies», 23, 3, 2009, pp. 269-287; *id.*, *Pier Maria's Legacy: (Il)legitimacy, Inheritance, and Rule of Parma's Rossi Dynasty*, in *Wives, Widows, Mistresses, and Nuns in Early Modern Italy: Making the Invisible Visible through Art and Patronage*, ed. by K. McIver, Aldershot, 2012, pp. 33-54; *id.*, *Secrecy and the Production of Seignorial Space*, cit.

5 B. Holthaus, *La camera d'oro del castello di Torrechiara. Gli affreschi delle pareti e la ricostruzione dello studio*, in «Aurea Parma», 75, 1991, pp. 3-17; Campbell, *Pier Maria's Treasure*, cit.

6 G. Rustici, *Cantilena pro potenti D. Petro Maria Rubeo Berceti comite magnifico et Noceti domino*, Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS Parm. 1992, c. 10r. The poem is published in A. Pezzana, *Storia della città di Parma*, 5 vols., Parma, 1837-1859, vol. 4, Appendix, pp. 62-65.

7 Milano, Archivio di Stato, Autografi 102, Pittori S-Z, Francesco Tacconi, 7 November 1475. See also E. Motta, *Un documento per il pittore Francesco Tacconi*, in «Bollettino storico della Svizzera italiana», 7, 6, 1885, p. 119. Most recently, A. Talignani, *Tacconi, Francesco*, in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, Roma, 2019, vol. 94 (http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/francesco-tacconi_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/; accessed 30 December 2019).

8 A second interior staircase in the tower of San Nicomede allowed access from the *piano nobile* to the chapel's *coretto*: McCall, *Secrecy and the Production of Seignorial Space*, cit., pp. 95-97. For courtly *studioli* connected by stairs, see *id.*, *Networks of Power*, cit., pp. 60-62.

9 Affò recorded hinges (*gangheri*) and commented that the figures on the interiors of the *portoni* were painted the same color as those of the wall, while the devotional image was «dipinto a colori al naturale in picciolo quadretto a fresco»; see I. Affò, *Descrizione della misteriosa stanza di Torchiara*, Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS Parm. 664, cc. 183-190; partially published in Pezzana, *Storia*, cit., vol. 4, Appendix, pp. 60-62.

10 D. Thornton, *The Scholar in His Study: Ownership and Experience in Renaissance Italy*, New Haven-London, 1997, p. 120.

11 S.J. Campbell, *Cosmè Tura of Ferrara: Style, Politics and the Renaissance City, 1450-1495*, New Haven-London, 1997, p. 29. Essential studies of *studioli* include: L. Cheles, *The Studiolo of Urbino: An Iconographic Investigation*, University Park, Pa., 1986; W. Liebenwein, *Studiolo: Storia e tipologia di uno spazio culturale*, ed. by C. Cieri Via, Modena, 1988; Thornton, *The Scholar in His Study*, cit.; S.J. Campbell, *The Cabinet of Eros: Renaissance Mythological Painting and the Studiolo of Isabella d'Este*, New Haven-London, 2006.

12 E. Borsook, *A Florentine Scrittoio for Diomede Carafa*, in *Art the Ape of Nature: Studies in Honor of H. W. Janson*, ed. by M. Barasch, L. Freeman Sandler, New York, 1981, pp. 91-96; Thornton, *The Scholar in His Study*, cit., pp. 57-58; M. Toffanello, *Le arti a Ferrara nel Quattrocento. Gli artisti e la corte*, Ferrara, 2010, pp. 338-339. Four decades later, Ercole d'Este had the intarsia moved again, to the Palazzo del Corte; see T. Tuohy, *Herculean Ferrara: Ercole d'Este, 1471-1505, and the Invention of a Ducal Capital*, Cambridge, 1996, p. 81.

13 R. Magnani, *Relazioni Private tra la Corte Sforzesca di Milano e Casa Medici, 1450-1500*, Milano, 1910, p. XII; *Le Onoranze fiorentine del 1459. Poema anonimo*, ed. by N. Newbigin, in «Letteratura italiana antica», 12, 2011, pp. 17-135, esp. p. 54.

14 For Arduino da Baiso and Lorenzo and Cristoforo Canozzi da Lendinara, see A. Quintavalle, *Cristoforo da Lendinara*, Parma, 1959; G. Manni, *Mobili in Emilia: Con una indagine sulla civiltà dell'arredo alla corte degli Estensi*, Modena, 1986, pp. 12-19; Thornton, *The Scholar in His Study*, cit., pp. 57-59; P. Bagatin, *Le pitture lignee di Lorenzo e Cristoforo da Lendinara*, Treviso, 2004; Toffanello, *Le arti a Ferrara*, cit., pp. 337-341, 346-348; McCall, *Secrecy and the Production of Seignorial Space*, cit., p. 76. For these artists with Pantaleone de' Marchi, see L. Bellingeri, M. Tanzi, *Bonifacio Bembo dalla cattedrale al museo di Cremona*, Brescia, 1992, pp. 5-11, 41; M. Tanzi, *Benedetto Bembo: Polittico di Torchiara*, in *Museo d'Arte Antica del Castello Sforzesco: Pinacoteca, tomo primo*, ed. by M. Fiorio, Milano, 1997, p. 120.

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20 Regarding *terra verde*, see S.M. Scanlan, *Divine and Demonic Imagery at Tor de' Specchi, 1400-1500: Religious Women and Art in Fifteenth-century Rome*, Amsterdam, 2018, pp. 128-129.

21 Tuohy, *Herculean Ferrara*, cit., pp. 101, 210, 215, 320, 418.

22 C. Rosenberg, *«Per il bene di…nostra cipta»: Borso d'Este and the Certosa of Ferrara*, in «Renaissance Quarterly», 29, 3, 1976, pp. 329-340, esp. pp. 339-340.

23 The inscriptions above Terence and Virgil are lost. Inscriptions below identify «HERCULES, VIR[…], TERENCIUS, […]SON».

24 Rustici, *Cantilena*, cit., cc. 10r-10v. I propose here a very tentative working translation, and I thank Eva Del Soldato, Meredith Ray, and Andrea Rizzi for helping me work though this passage, which is in a few points exceedingly opaque: «Behind the bed [is] located the *studiolo*. / In which the Great Plato is painted / Who gave [us] sound / And from his lyre sweet song. / And Socrates, Demosthenes, and Bias, / Aristotle and the ancient already mentioned / Near sweet Mount Hymettus / His lyre [made] of seven unequal reeds».

25 Affò, *Descrizione della misteriosa stanza di Torchiara*, cit., p. 61.

26 Ricci, *Il Castello di Torchiara*, cit., p. 9.

27 A. Tissoni Benvenuti, *Alcune considerazioni su Parma e i letterati parmensi nel XV secolo*, in *Parma e l'umanesimo italiano*, ed. by P. Medioli Masotti, conf. proc., Parma 20 ottobre 1984, Padova, 1986, p. 129; Holthaus, *La camera d'oro*, cit., pp. 13-15; M. Pellegri, *Un feudatario sotto l'insegna del leone rampante: Pier Maria Rossi 1413-1482*, Parma, 1996, pp. 238-242; C.J. Campbell, *Pier Maria's Treasure*, cit., p. 70.

28 G. Zanichelli, *La committenza dei Rossi: Immagini di potere fra sacro e profano*, in *Le signorie dei Rossi di Parma tra XIV e XVI secolo*, ed. by L. Arcangeli, M. Gentile, Firenze, 2007, pp. 187-212, esp. p. 207, note 65.

29 Cheles, *The Studiolo of Urbino*, cit., pp. 51-52; A. Tissoni Benvenuti, *Il mito di Ercole. Aspetti della ricezione dell'antico alla corte estense nel primo quattrocento*, in *Omaggio a Gianfranco Folena*, 3 vols., Padova, 1993, vol. 1, pp. 773-792.

30 W. Gundersheimer, *Art and Life at the Court of Ercole I D'Este: The 'De triumphis religionis' of Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti*, Genève, 1972, p. 59.

31 C.J. Campbell, *Pier Maria's Treasure*, cit., pp. 70-71; S.J. Campbell, *The Cabinet of Eros*, cit.

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37 E. O'Brien, *The* Commentaries *of Pope Pius II (1458-1464) and the Crisis of the Fifteenth-Century Papacy*, Toronto, 2015, pp. 203-205. Essential, too, are D. Robin, *Filelfo in Milan: Writings, 1451-1477*, Princeton, 1991, pp. 6, 58-62; C. Kallendorf, *The Other Virgil: "Pessimistic" Readings of the* Aeneid *in Early Modern Culture*, Oxford, 2007, pp. 17-66.

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39 S.J. Campbell, *The Cabinet of Eros*, cit., pp. 42-46; L. Clark, *Collecting, exchange, and sociability in the Renaissance* studiolo, in «Journal of the History of Collections», 25, 2, 2013, pp. 171-184.

40 Tissoni Benvenuti, *Alcune considerazioni su Parma*, cit.; G. Zanichelli, *I conti e il minio: codici miniati dei Rossi 1325-1482*, Parma, 1996; *ead.*, *Un antico messale de' Rossi di San Secondo*, in «Parma per l'arte», 8, 1, 2002, pp. 7-24; *ead.*, *Tra devozione e studio: i codici miniati dei Rossi*, in *Pieve di San Genesio: storia e archeologia di un territorio nel medioevo*, ed. by S. Rossi, Parma, 2004, pp. 101-125; *ead.*, *La committenza dei Rossi*, cit.; Tissoni Benvenuti, *Libri e letterati nelle piccole corti padane del Rinascimento. La corte di Pietro Maria Rossi*, in *Le signorie dei Rossi*, cit., pp. 213-230. Filelfo's commentary is Milano, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, MS Ambrosiano S 68 sup.

41 G. Clarke, *Roman House – Renaissance Palaces: Inventing Antiquity in Fifteenth-Century Italy*, Cambridge, 2003, p. 33; McCall, *Networks of Power*, cit., pp. 90-91, 400-408; Tissoni Benvenuti, *Libri e letterati*, cit., pp. 214-219.

42 Zanichelli, *Un antico messale*, cit.

43 *Ivi*, pp. 20-24.

44 For the manuscripts and Rossi portraits (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Lat. 757, c. 109v and MS Smith Lesouëf 22, cc. 15v and 285v), see K. Sutton, *The Original Patron of the Lombard Manuscript Latin 757 in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris*, in «The Burlington Magazine», 124, 1982, pp. 88-94; M. Albertini Ottolenghi, *La biblioteca dei Visconti e degli Sforza: gli inventari del 1488 e del 1490*, in «Studi Petrarcheschi», 8, 1991, pp. 1-238, esp. p. 13; Zanichelli, *I conti e il minio*, cit., pp. 53-90; *ead.*, *Tra devozione e studio*, cit., pp. 110-118. For the Rossi insignia and devotions, see S. Tassetto, *Gli emblemi del* messale-libro d'ore *Lat. 757 della Bibliothèque Nationale di Parigi*, in «Arte lombarda», 123, 1998, pp. 10-18; McCall, *Networks of Power*, cit., pp. 78-79, 98-99, 146-150.

45 Rustici, *Cantilena*, cit., c. 10v: «Lingua galica, greca et latina, / E con voce divina / Deduce versi, canzone e rima»; J. Caviceo, *Maximo humanae imbecilitatis simulachro fortunae bifronti vita Petrimariae de Rubeis viri illustris*, Venezia, c. 1490, c. 4v: «rythmica plurimum valuit, musica et arismetica doctissimus extitit, idiomate Hyspano et Gallo Hispanissimus et Gallocissimus fuit».

46 For Rolando, see McCall, *Pier Maria's Legacy*, cit., p. 35.

47 V. Carrari, *Historia de' Rossi parmigiani*, Ravenna, 1583, p. 154. For Rossi as poet, see Tissoni Benvenuti, *Alcune considerazioni su Parma*, cit., p. 130; C.J. Campbell, *Pier Maria's Treasure*, cit., pp. 69-70; Tissoni Benvenuti, *Libri e letterati*, cit., pp. 214-223. For *beata* Simona, see McCall, *Networks of Power*, cit., p. 18. Torrechiara's dedication survives on one of the final gates leading into the castle: «Invocato il nome dela redemptrice / Di cui pronome porto io petro rosso / Fonday sta rocha altiera et felice / M. de magio quarantaocto era il corso CCCC / Et cum divino aiuto fu perfecta / Avanti chel sexanta fusse scorso».

48 Coerver, *Donna/Dono*, cit., p. 215; Tissoni Benvenuti, *Libri e letterati*, cit., p. 222.

49 Rustici, *Cantilena*, cit., cc. 11v-12r: «E il sonne di mia lira […] E a quila alta rima di mia canzone». See, additionally, C.J. Campbell, *Pier Maria Rossi's Treasure*, cit., p. 70.

50 Milano, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, MS Ambrosiano H 233 was published in Georgii Anselmi Parmensis, *De musica: dieta prima de celesti harmonia, dieta secunda de instrumentali harmonia, dieta tertia de cantabili harmonia*, ed. by G. Massera, Firenze, 1961. See, further, J. Handschin, *Anselmi's Treatise on Music Annotated by Gafori*, in «Musica Disciplina», 2, 1-2, 1948, pp. 123-140; Tissoni Benvenuti, *Libri e letterati*, cit., pp. 216-217.

51 Gundersheimer, *Art and Life*, cit., p. 32; Pellegri, *Un feudatario*, cit., p. 241; C.J. Campbell, *Pier Maria's Treasure*, cit., p. 69.

52 Rustici, *Cantilena*, cit., c. 7v. For the frescoes, see A. Matteucci, *Gli affreschi di uno studiolo tardogotico nel piacentino*, in «Arte lombarda», 105, 1993, pp. 19-23.

53 Affò, *Descrizione della misteriosa stanza di Torchiara*, cit., p. 61: «una larga tavola grande come una mensa da altare, e in mezzo a detto quadrato sta dipinto a colori al naturale in picciolo quadretto a fresco un Ecce Homo. Cosa significhi questo misto di profano e di sacro non sembra intendersi». Confusion about or distrust of the room's amalgam of divine and secular imagery are found in E. Battisti, *Cicli pittorici, storie profane*, Milano, 1981, p. 76; Holthaus, *La camera d'oro*, cit., p. 13.

54 For Antonia Torelli's agreement with the convent of San Paolo signed in the Valeri chapel, see Zanichelli, *I conti e il minio*, cit., pp. 85-86; McCall, *Visual imagery and historical invisibility*, cit., p. 282. For the chapel generally, see G. Zanichelli, *La cappella Valeri nel duomo di Parma*, in «Po», 6, 1996, pp. 37-50.

55 Zanichelli, *I conti e il minio*, cit., p. 68; McCall, *Networks of Power*, cit., pp. 78-79, 103; *id.*, *Pier Maria's Legacy*, cit., pp. 41-42.

56 G. Capacchi, *Castelli parmigiani*, 3rd ed., Parma, 1984, pp. 125, 175; Pellegri, *Un feudatario*, cit., p. 240.

57 «[I]ntegro pagamento de ugni lavori havesse facto a quella a Turichiara, cossi alla giexia de Sancta Maria dalla Neva, quam etiam in quelle tre camere della Thora de qualle esso debe dare fornita quella de sotto dal bagno et il studiolo oratorio e pictura facta sopra la porta […] e generalmente dogni altro lavoro chel gli havesse facto dal di presente in dreto […] pingere e mettere a oro una anchona a Sancta Maria dalle gratie da San Secundo»; see above note 7 for the archival reference. For Rossi's patronage of Santa Maria delle Grazie,

see Zanichelli, *I conti e il minio*, cit., pp. 74-80; McCall, *Networks of Power*, cit., pp. 81-82, 247-251. «Christalino» might be Pierantonio Giudorci, see Pezzana, *Storia*, cit., vol. 4, p. 354; McCall, *Networks of Power*, cit., p. 135. Ludovico's instructions are found in Milano, Archivio di Stato, Autografi 98, Pittori Bi-C, Cristalino, 25 May and 5 June 1483.

58 McCall, *Networks of Power*, cit., pp. 79-82. Fundamental now is A. Talignani, *La Madonna in mandorla dell'abbazia di Torrechiara e una proposta di catalogo per Francesco Tacconi*, in *L'Abbazia benedettina di Santa Maria della Neve a Torrechiara*, ed. by F. Tonelli, B. Zilocchi, Parma, 2009, pp. 123-142.

59 For complications of the sacred/secular dichotomy within palatial spaces, including *studioli* and oratories, consider D. Webb, *Domestic Space and Devotion in the Middle Ages*, in *Defining the Holy: Sacred Space in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. by A. Spicer, S. Hamilton, Aldershot, 2005, pp. 27-47; S.J. Campbell, *The Cabinet of Eros*, cit., p. 33; M. Ruvoldt, *Sacred to secular, east to west: the Renaissance study and strategies of display*, in «Renaissance Studies», 20, 5, 2006, pp. 640-657; A. Brundin, D. Howard, M. Laven, *The Sacred Home in Renaissance Italy*, Oxford, 2018.

60 Tuohy, *Herculean Ferrara*, cit., pp. 101, 113, 209, 320, 418, 465.

61 *L'Oro e la Porpora. Le arti a Lodi nel tempo del vescovo Pallavicino (1456-1497)*, ed. by M. Marubbi, Milano, 1998, pp. 15-16, 235-236; Schäffner, *Terra verde*, cit., pp. 309-311.

62 Rosenberg, *«Per il bene»*, cit., p. 339; Tuohy, *Herculean Ferrara*, cit., pp. 215, 320; Toffanello, *Le arti a Ferrara*, cit., pp. 254, 256. Similar cycles survive in Florence's Palazzo Rucellai and at San Miniato al Monte; see Schäffner, *Terra verde*, cit., pp. 232-235, 280-284; *Atlante delle Tebaidi e dei temi figurativi*, ed. by A. Malquori, Firenze, 2013, pp. 71-76, 120-128.

63 S.J. Campbell, *The Cabinet of Eros*, cit., p. 32.

64 A. Stewart, *The Early Modern Closet Discovered*, in «Representations», 50, 1995, pp. 76-100; Clark, *Collecting, exchange, and sociability*, cit.

65 A. Sarchi, *The* studiolo *of Alberto Pio da Carpi*, in *Drawing Relationships in Northern Italian Renaissance Art: Patterns and Theories of Invention*, ed. by G. Periti, Aldershot, 2004, p. 129.

66 S.J. Campbell, *The Cabinet of Eros*, cit., pp. 29-57; Smith, *The Key of Green*, cit., pp. 21-22.

67 McCall, *Secrecy and the Production of Seignorial Space*, cit.

Fig. 1: Francesco Tacconi, Bonifacio and Benedetto Bembo, and workshop, Camera d'Oro with *studiolo oratorio*, ca. 1460. Torrechiara. Photo by Author.

Fig. 2: Bonifacio and Benedetto Bembo and workshop, Camera d'Oro, south and west walls, and vaults, ca. 1460. Torrechiara. Photo by Author.

Fig. 3: Francesco Tacconi, *Terra verde* frescoes of *studiolo oratorio*, ca. 1460. Torrechiara, Camera d'Oro. Photo by Author.

Fig. 4: Christological inscription of *studiolo oratorio*, ca. 1460. Torrechiara, Camera d'Oro. Photo by Author.

Fig. 5: Francesco Tacconi, *Virgil* and *Hercules* of *studiolo oratorio*, ca. 1460. Torrechiara, Camera d'Oro. Photo by Author.

Fig. 6: Francesco Tacconi, *Terence* and *Samson* of *studiolo oratorio*, ca. 1460. Torrechiara, Camera d'Oro. Photo by Author.

Fig. 7: Attributed to Lorenzo and Cristoforo Canozzi da Lendinara, intarsia of *studiolo oratorio*, ca. 1460. Torrechiara, Camera d'Oro. Photo by Author.

Fig. 8: Attributed to Lorenzo and Cristoforo Canozzi da Lendinara, *Coretto* of Torrechiara, ca. 1460s. Milan, Castello Sforzesco, Civiche Raccolte d'Arte Applicata. Photo by Author.

Fig. 9: Attributed to Lorenzo and Cristoforo Canozzi da Lendinara, detail of frame, polyptych of Torrechiara, ca. 1462. Milan, Castello Sforzesco, Pinacoteca. Photo by Author.

Fig. 10: *Virgin Annunciate*, mid-fifteenth century. Montechiarugolo, Castello Torelli. Photo by Author.

Fig. 11: Bonifacio and Benedetto Bembo and workshop, south lunette, ca. 1460. Torrechiara, Camera d'Oro. Photo by Author.

Fig. 12: Bonifacio and Benedetto Bembo and workshop, detail of pavilion, south lunette, ca. 1460. Torrechiara, Camera d'Oro. Photo by Author.

Fig. 13: Francesco Tacconi, *Virgil* of *studiolo oratorio*, ca. 1460, Torrechiara, Camera d'Oro. Photo by Author.

Fig. 14: Francesco Tacconi, *Terence* of *studiolo oratorio*, ca. 1460, Torrechiara, Camera d'Oro. Photo by Author.

Fig. 15: *Madonna and Child with donor Beltrando Rossi*, MS Lat. 757, c. 109v, ca. 1390. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France. Photo: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

Fig. 16: *Madonna and Child attended by Beltrando Rossi and Saints Catherine of Alexandria, Christopher, and Anthony Abbot*, MS Smith Lesouëf 22, c. 15v, ca. 1390.
Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France. Photo: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

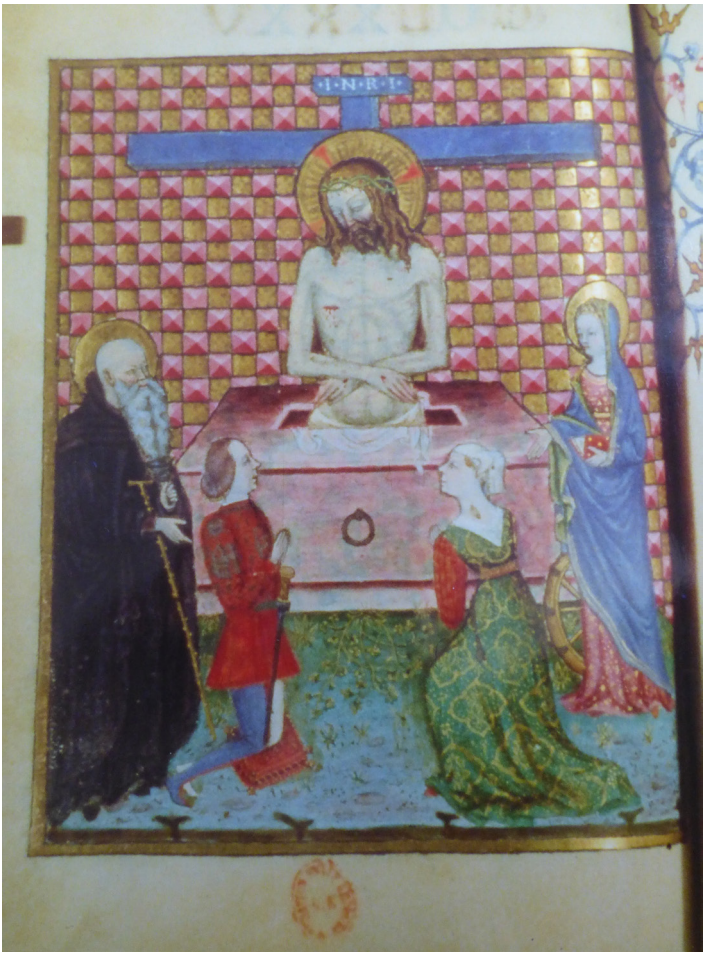

Fig. 17: Attributed to Benedetto Bembo, *Pier Maria Rossi and Bianca Pellegrini (or Antonia Torelli) with Saints Anthony Abbot and Catherine of Alexandria and Imago Pietatis*, MS Smith Lesouëf 22, c. 285v, ca. 1460. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France. Photo: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

Fig. 18: *Imago Pietatis*, mid-fifteenth century. Sant'Ilario Baganza, church of Sant'Ilario. Photo by Author.

Fig. 19: *Imago Pietatis*, fifteenth century. Parma, Duomo, Valeri Chapel.
Photo by Author.

Fig. 20: Jacopo da Reggio, *Imago Pietatis*, Bell, 1497. Berceto, San Moderanno. Photo by Author.

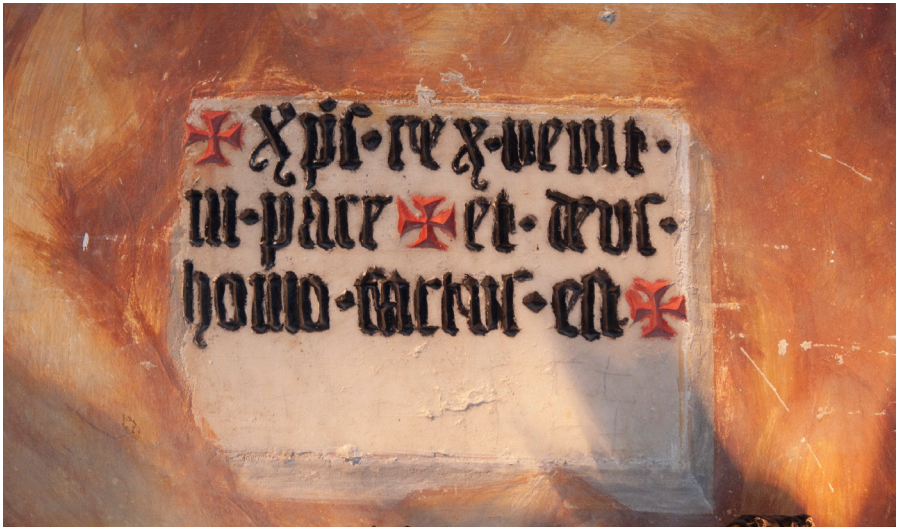

Fig. 21: Christological inscription, fifteenth century. Montechiarugolo, Castello Torelli. Photo by Author.

Fig. 22: Francesco Tacconi, *Madonna and Child*, ca. 1471. Torrechiara, Santa Maria della Neve. Photo by Author.