



RAPHAEL AND SIENA (Apollo, 2004)

On the occasion of the opening of the Raphael exhibition at the National Gallery, London, **Tom Henry**, one of its curators, examines the evidence for a neglected aspect of the artist's career, his connections with Siena, and in particular Monteoliveto Maggiore.

1 *Enea Silvio Crowned Poet Laureate by Frederick III by Pintoricchio (c. 1454-1513), c. 1503-1504. Fresco, Piccolomini Library, Duomo, Siena. Photo: Bridgeman Art Library*

2 *Four standing soldiers by Raphael (1483-1520), c. 1503. Metalpoint on prepared paper, 21.3 x 22.3 cm. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford*

This article has benefitted from the generosity of John Shearman, to whose memory it is dedicated, and Philippa Jackson. I am grateful to them both.

1 For the exhibitions of 1983-84 see J. Shearman, *Raphael Year: Exhibitions of Paintings and Drawings*, *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. cxxvi, no. 976 (July 1984), pp. 398-403. The same author's *magnum opus (Raphael in Early Modern Sources — 1483-1602)*, New Haven and London, 2003) has a monumental bibliography for Raphael studies.

2 H. Chapman, T. Henry and C. Piazzotta, *Raphael: from Urbino to Rome*, exh. cat., National Gallery, London, 2004-2005.

3 G. Vasari, *Le Vite de' più Eccellenti Pittori, Scultori et Architettori nelle redazioni de 1550 e 1568*, R. Bettarini and P. Barocchi (eds.), Florence, 1986-87, vol. iv, p. 159: avendo egli [Raphael] acquistato fama grandissima nel s'guito di quella maniera [Perugino], era stato allogato da Pio Secondo pontefice la libreria del duomo di Siena al Pintoricchio, il quale, essendo amico di Raffaello e conoscendolo ottimo disegnatore, lo condusse a Siena, dove Raffaello gli fece alcuni disegni e cartoni di quell'opera. [...] when he had acquired very great fame by following his master's manner, Pope Pius II had given the commission for painting the library of the Duomo at Siena to Pintoricchio; and he, being a friend of Raphael, and knowing him to be an excellent draughtsman, brought him to Siena, where Raphael made for him some of the drawings and cartoons for that work].

4 See K. Oberhuber, *Raphael and Pintoricchio, Raphael before Rome, Studies in the History of Art*, vol. xvii, 1986, pp. 155-72.

5 In the *Life of Pintoricchio* Vasari states: *Ma ben vero che gli schizzi e i cartoni di tutte le storie che egli vi fece, furono di mano di Raffaello* (Vasari, op. cit., vol. iii, pp. 571-72). [It is true, indeed, that the sketches and cartoons for all the scenes that he painted were by the hand of Raphael]. Vasari lends authority to his account by adding that he had seen a surviving cartoon for the frescoes in Siena, and

It is twenty years since the quincentenary of Raphael's birth was celebrated with a series of exhibitions and conferences. A great deal of new research was published then, and more has been added in recent years – in particular the posthumous publication of John Shearman's magisterial collection of documents relating to Raphael's life and work.¹ There has not, however, been any very significant attempt to synthesise this material into a new account of the Raphael's career, and the forthcoming exhibition at the National Gallery, London ('Raphael: from Urbino to Rome') offers a timely opportunity to reassess at least the first ten years of the artist's activity.²

Part of this reassessment involves renouncing convenient labels for periods of activity. Examination of Raphael's career from 1504 to 1508 demonstrates how unsatisfactory it is to label these years as his 'Florentine Period'. Similarly, although Umbria and the Marche were the focus of his activity from 1500 to 1505, he was also to be found in Tuscany in this period, not just in Florence, but also in Siena. This article discusses some under-utilised evidence for Raphael's activity in the *territorio senese*, and argues that his activity in (or for) Siena has been underestimated.

Raphael and Pintoricchio

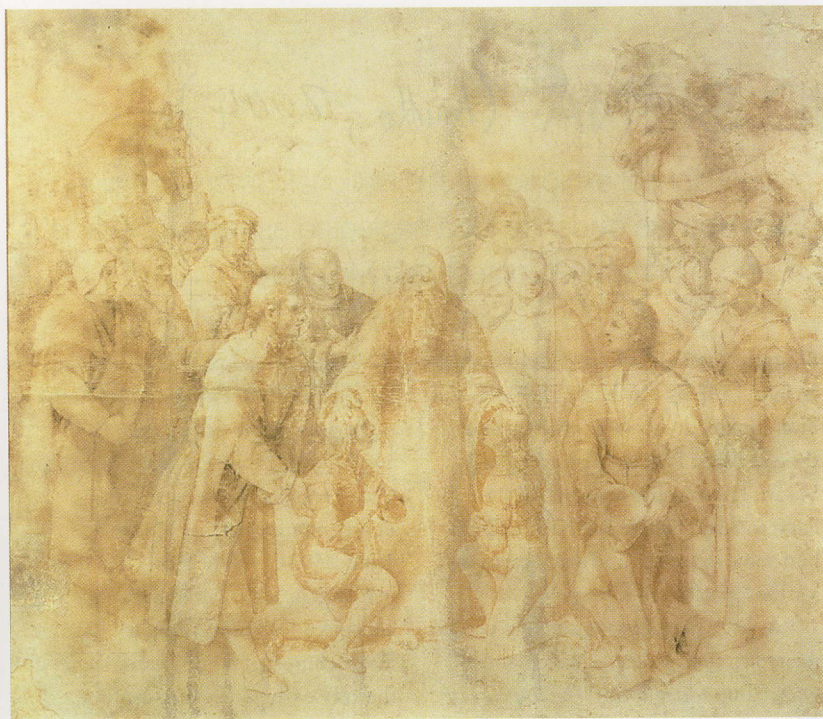
The evidence for Raphael's presence in Siena exists in some of the most obvious places, but has been overshadowed by the desire to see the artist as progressing neatly from the Marche, to Umbria, and then to Florence and Rome. Vasari discusses Raphael's work with Pintoricchio in Siena,³ and most scholars now accept that the younger artist played a role in designing the fresco decoration of the Piccolomini Library (which opens off the nave of the cathedral in Siena). These frescoes (one scene from which – *Enea Silvio crowned Poet Laureate by Frederick III* – is

illustrated as Fig. 1) were commissioned in June 1502 by Cardinal Francesco Piccolomini, archbishop of Siena and (briefly) Pope Pius III.⁴ According to Vasari, Pintoricchio brought the young Santi to Siena 'where Raphael made for him some drawings and some cartoons' for the Piccolomini Library.⁵

At least five drawings by him can be related to this project: a sketch and a worked-up *modello* for *The journey of Enea Silvio Piccolomini to Basle* (both Uffizi, Florence); a *modello* for the *Betrothal of Frederick III and Eleanor of Toledo* (Pierpont Morgan Library, New York); various studies for standing *putti* (Musée du Louvre, Paris; Ashmolean Museum, Oxford); and a sketch for *Enea Silvio crowned Poet Laureate by Frederick III* (Fig. 2, discussed below).⁶ The decoration seems to have been well advanced by February 1504, and Raphael's involvement probably occurred during the winter of 1502-1503 (or at least by the end of 1503).

Raphael also provided drawings another work of Pintoricchio's in the same period (the *Coronation of the Virgin*, now in the Pinacoteca Vaticana and originally painted for Fratta Perugina, modern-day Umbertide, 1502-1503),⁷ and he may have been involved in a third collaboration: a lost altarpiece for Filippo Sergardi's chapel in the church of S Francesco, Siena. In the very early nineteenth century, various sources refer to Raphael having painted the predella of an altarpiece that was commissioned from Pintoricchio by Sergardi for his chapel (dedicated to the Birth of the Virgin Mary) in S Francesco, Siena.⁸ Both Raphael's autograph receipt for monies received for this picture (which could, of course, have been a later forgery), and the picture itself, are lost. Nevertheless, the picture certainly existed (it was referred to in 1513 by Sigismondo Tizio), and it is perfectly plausible that Raphael and Pintoricchio collaborated in its execution – especially if the picture was





contemporary with the early stages of the decoration of the Piccolomini Library.¹⁰

Monteoliveto Maggiore

In what follows I do not intend to discuss the evidence for Raphael's (fascinating) collaborations with Pintoricchio. Instead I want to consider other evidence for his activity in, for and nearby Siena in the first decade of the sixteenth century. The first piece of evidence is a terribly damaged drawing (Fig. 3), now in a private collection in

New York (having previously been on loan to the Fogg Art Museums at Harvard). Although weak, and damaged, the drawing has been convincingly attributed to Raphael by Oberhuber, Joannides and others; and, having studied it in New York, I agree with this assessment, especially for the principal figures (although the condition of the sheet precludes a firm view). The drawing measures 36.8 x 41.3 cm and is executed in pen and ink over black chalk, with some additions in brush and wash, and with one *pentimento*

executed onto a separate piece of paper, which has been glued to the principal folio. The drawing has been squared in black chalk; each square measures 2.2 cm and the grid that they establish is 15 squares tall and 18 squares wide.

When the drawing was sold at Christie's in London in 1988 its subject was identified as the encounter of Pius II with the Antipope Felix, and related to Pintoricchio's frescoes in the Piccolomini Library in Siena.¹¹ In fact the drawing certainly represents *St Benedict welcoming Maurus and Placidus into the Benedictine order*,¹² and it is strikingly similar to Sodoma's version of this relatively rare scene (Fig. 4) in the great cloister of the mother-house of the Olivetans at Monteoliveto Maggiore, near Siena.¹³

This cloister is painted with thirty six scenes from the life of St Benedict. Luca Signorelli started the decorative scheme with nine lunettes on the west side of the cloister. His activity can probably be dated c. 1498-99, although Kanter dates his last frescoes there to a second campaign in c. 1502-1503.¹⁴ Whether Signorelli returned to Monteoliveto or not, he did not finish the cycle (which was completed by Sodoma between August 1505 and August 1508).¹⁵ The first fresco to be painted in Sodoma's campaign was *How Florentius introduced young women into the Monastery*, immediately preceding Signorelli's fresco of *The death of Florentius*, and Sodoma then continued with the rest of the south wall (all of which was paid for by October 1506). This date is a *terminus ante quem* for Sodoma's fresco of *St Benedict welcoming Maurus and Placidus into the Benedictine order*. The artist subsequently painted eleven scenes on the east wall (the earliest episodes from St Benedict's life), before painting the north wall and the outstanding scene in the north-west corner of the west wall.¹⁶ The respective roles of Signorelli and Sodoma were known to Vasari,¹⁷ and a chronicle history of Monteoliveto (written c. 1507) referred to the hiatus in the middle of the decorative project.¹⁸

Comparison between the drawing and the fresco (Figs. 3 and 4) is not conclusive, but the points of connection are nonetheless striking.

3 *St Benedict welcoming Maurus and Placidus into the Benedictine order* attributed to Raphael (1483-1520), c. 1502-1503. Pen and ink and wash over black chalk on paper, 36.8 x 41.3 cm. Private collection, New York

4 *St Benedict welcoming Maurus and Placidus into the Benedictine order* by Il Sodoma (1477-1549), c. 1505-1506. Fresco. Monteoliveto Maggiore. Photo: © 2004, Scala, Florence, by courtesy of the Ministero Beni e Att. Culturali

that he himself owned several related sketches by Raphael.

6 P. Joannides, *The Drawings of Raphael with a Complete Catalogue*, Los Angeles and Oxford, 1983, nos. 56-61. These drawings have sometimes been attributed to Pintoricchio, but Raphael's authorship is attested to by the presence of his handwriting on two of them (see J. Shearman, *Raphael in Early Modern Sources: 1483-1602*, New Haven and London, 2003, pp. 75-77) as well as by stylistic analysis.

7 Pintoricchio was paid for this altarpiece, which is now in the Musei Vaticani (Oberhuber, op. cit., fig. 12), in June 1503 (with final payments in 1505, see *Archivio storico dell'arte*, 1890, pp. 465-66). See now the new discoveries of P. Scarpellini and M.R. Silvestrelli, *Pintoricchio*, Milan, 2004, pp. 227-30. Drawings in the Louvre demonstrate that Raphael designed the two foreground saints (Joannides, op. cit., nos. 60-61).

8 See Shearman, op. cit. in n. 6 above, pp. 77-79.

9 See L. Pungileoni, *Elogio Storico di Raffaello Santi da Urbino*, Urbino, 1829, p. 55 and Bottari's publication of a letter from Guglielmo della Valle to Cardinal Tommaso Ghilini (G. Bottari and S. Ticozzi, *Raccolta di lettere sulla pittura*, Milan, 1822-25, vol. vi, p. 393). Both refer back to a seventeenth-century manuscript which they had consulted at San Francesco.

10 I am very grateful to John Shearman for sending me his draft entry on this lost document. This has now been posthumously published (Shearman, op. cit. in n. 6 above, pp. 77-79). Shearman places the document c. 1502-1503 (?) and marshals the evidence for the picture's existence and the document's authenticity.

11 Christie's, London, 19 April 1988 (lot 27), pp. 24-25.

12 The literary source of the scene depicted at Monteoliveto and in the drawing is St Gregory, *Dialogues*, 2.4. St Gregory describes how the nobles of Rome demonstrated their devotion to Benedict by entering their sons into his order so that they should be nurtured in the service of God. Maurus, and the younger Placidus, were two such who entered the Order and went on to live saintly lives. The *Dialogues* does not offer any incidental detail, nor is there a strong visual tradition of representing this subject, especially not in isolation.

13 The subject and significance of this drawing was noticed by Laurence Kanter (in G. Testa [ed.], *La Cappella Nova*, Milan, 1996, p. 95, note 2). The drawing's connection with the



5 *How St Benedict recognised and received the true Totila* by Luca Signorelli (c. 1450-1523), c. 1498-99. Fresco, Monteoliveto Maggiore, Florence, by courtesy of the Ministero Beni e Att. Culturali

6 *Standing man* after Raphael (1483-1520), before 1509 (?). Pen and ink on paper, 22.8 x 16.7 cm. Accademia, Venice

7 *Heads* after Raphael (1483-1520), before 1509 (?). Pen and ink on paper, 22.8 x 16.7 cm. Accademia, Venice

8 *How St Benedict discovered the fiction of Totila* by Luca Signorelli (c. 1450-1523), c. 1498-99. Fresco, Monteoliveto Maggiore, © 2004. Photo: Scala, Florence, by courtesy of the Ministero Beni e Att. Culturali

frescoes at Monteoliveto has also been discussed by G. Shepherd, *A Monument to Pope Pius II: Pintoricchio and Raphael in the Piccolomini Library in Siena 1494-1508*, doctoral thesis, Harvard University, Cambridge MA, 1993, and also by W. Andersen, *A Wonderful Early Drawing by Raphael*, *Drawing*, vol. xvi, no. 3, 1994, pp. 49-52. The current owners of the drawing have also produced a booklet and CD-Rom, which reproduce correspondence from various scholars.

14 See T. Henry and L.B. Kanter, *Luca Signorelli: The Complete Paintings*, London, 2002, pp. 39-45, 124-32.

15 For Sodoma's first appearance in the accounts at Monteoliveto on 5 August 1505 see Siena, Archivio di Stato, Fondo di Monteoliveto, Conventi, n. 321, *Libro d'amministrazione*, formerly IP, fol. 46v, published by S. Borghesi and L. Banchi, *Nuovi documenti per la storia dell'arte senese*, Siena, 1898, p. 368.

16 L.B. Kanter, *The Late Works of Luca Signorelli and his Followers 1498-1559*, unpublished doctoral thesis, New York University, 1989, pp. 99, 104. From the *Uscite* of the Abbey we learn that Sodoma was paid 10 florins (70 lire) for his first scene, and 7 florins (49 lire) for each of the rest. *Ibid.*, fols. 92r, 106r-v (Borghesi and Banchi, op. cit., pp. 374, 380).

17 Vasari, op. cit., vol. III, pp. 636-37, vol. v, pp. 382-83.

18 [Fr. Dominico da Lecco] *Secunda namque abbatium sui electione claustrum magni intercolumnia in dextera ingressu monasterii parte posita, aliquanta de temporis interapedine et pecuniarum comoditate extiterunt. Incoepum (ut sapientis est) tandem opus complere decrevit. Et orientalem meridianalemque claustrum partem et si diverso pictore, haud tamen inferiore pictura decoravit.*

[(Fra Domenico da Lecce) Following the second election of his abbacy (1497-1501) the spaces between the

The similarities between the principal figures (St Benedict, Maurus and Placidus) establish the subject of the drawing, but it is in the populous entourage of horsemen and nobles that the images are most similar. It is also notable that the area occupied by figures at Monteoliveto is similarly proportioned to the equivalent area on the drawing (with its grid 15 by 18 squares), and that the drawing also suggests some centralising element in the background.¹⁹ There is, however, no indication on the drawing of a curved field.

Since one can exclude the possibility that Raphael actually painted anything that survives at Monteoliveto, two possibilities remain: that he provided drawings to Sodoma (thereby collaborating with the Siennese artist before they both arrived in the Vatican),²⁰ or that Raphael was also considered as a replacement for Signorelli when it became clear that the Cortonese artist was not going to complete his work at Monteoliveto. Collaboration (or direct competition in 1505) can probably be ruled out on the grounds that the drawing's style cannot be reconciled with the dating of the fresco to late 1505/1506. Instead the style of the drawing suggests a date c. 1502-1503, and we must consider whether there is any evidence that Raphael might have submitted a trial drawing to the Olivetans at this date, in the hope of obtaining the commission to complete the cycle. Unfortunately, although Sodoma's frescoes are reasonably well documented, the preceding period is not; and there is no evidence that Raphael was asked to supply a drawing for the Olivetans. Nor is there any allusion to such an event in the chronicle of the abbey's history (although it is probably unreasonable to expect that there should be such a reference and the drawing alone is evidence of designing an Olivetan or Benedictine subject).

There is, however, some visual evidence that Raphael visited Monteoliveto c. 1502-1504, and this could have been in connection with the Olivetans' desire to complete the decoration of their cloister.²¹ Derivations from Signorelli's frescoes at Monteoliveto can be found in the





Venice *Libretto*, which is widely held to derive from copy drawings made by Raphael before 1509.²² A figure seen from behind (fol. 9v; Fig. 6) is related to Signorelli's *How St Benedict recognised and received the true Totila* (Fig. 5); and on another folio a group of heads (fol. 4v; Fig. 7) also appears to be based on Signorelli's figures in the two Totila scenes at Monteoliveto (Figs. 5 and 8). A metalpoint study by Raphael in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford (Fig. 2), generally dated c. 1503 and preparatory to a group of soldiers in Pintoricchio's fresco in the Piccolomini Library of *Enea Silvio crowned Poet Laureate by Frederick III* is also highly reminiscent of Signorelli's frescoes at Monteoliveto (again to the Totila scenes, Figs. 5 and 8).²³ And, taken together, the cumulative evidence suggests Raphael's knowledge of Signorelli's frescoes. Given their location – at the heart of a closed order in an isolated position in the crete of southern Tuscany – it seems reasonable to suggest that Raphael would have visited the abbey only for a reason, and this may well have been in connection with completing Signorelli's frescoes.

Against this, one could argue that don Domenico Airoldi – who was apparently the driving force behind Signorelli's frescoes during his second

term as abbot-general of the order (April 1497–May 1501) – was elected to serve a third term in only April 1505, and that Sodoma's commission could not have been conceived before this date. By that point Sodoma could point to an Olivetan track-record at the nearby community of Sant'Anna in Camprena (1503–1504), and Raphael's involvement would have been harder to explain.²⁴ But there is no reason why Airoldi's predecessor should not have wanted to see the cloister completed, and we should perhaps consider whether the plans for Sant'Anna in Camprena might somehow have cut across an earlier recommencement of the cloister frescoes at Monteoliveto. In that case the competition/collaboration arguments which are discussed above – on the basis of a discrepancy between the documented dates of Sodoma's activity and the stylistic dating of Raphael's drawing – could be revisited to reach a different conclusion.

The Madonna del Silenzio

The second Siennese commission I want to discuss is the tondo that was mentioned amongst the possessions of Silvia Piccolomini in 1542. Silvia Piccolomini was the only child of Pierfrancesco di Andrea Piccolomini and Francesca Savelli. Following her

father's death, she appears to have inherited a major portion of Andrea Piccolomini's inheritance, and was entrusted to the care of her mother. In 1538 she was married to Inigo d'Alfonso Piccolomini d'Aragona, and it was as a result of this marriage that she packed her trunks for Amalfi – which was ruled by the Piccolomini d'Aragona family between 1461 and 1583 – in 1542.

The picture that then belonged to Silvia Piccolomini and was shipped to Amalfi on 15 February 1542 was described as: 'Il tondo bello di casa, con la Madonna, il Signore piccolo che dorme e Santo Giovanni, opera di Raffaello di Urbino che è aprezato più di dugento scudi' [The beautiful domestic tondo with the Virgin (Mary), the baby Jesus who sleeps and St John, the work of Raphael of Urbino, valued at more than two-hundred ducats].²⁵ The description of the composition can be related to only one surviving picture by Raphael – the *Madonna of the diadem* in the Louvre – but this painting is rectangular, and no circular versions of it are known. There is evidence, however, that the Piccolomini picture can be identified with a composition now known through copies – the so-called *Madonna del Silenzio* (Fig. 9).²⁶

This composition was very famous in previous centuries but has not been illustrated in the Raphael monographs of the twentieth century. Although some scholars have resisted the idea that an original by Raphael ever existed, the sophistication of the pose is entirely characteristic of a work by Raphael of c. 1506–1508. The stylistic traits reflected in the known copies also support this dating, and the original was arguably the first tondo in which Raphael came to terms with a circular format. As such, it represents (with the *Holy Family of the Palm* in Edinburgh of roughly the same date) a crucial stage between the *Terranuova tondo* of c. 1504–1505 and the *Alba Madonna* of c. 1509–11.

The most interesting version of the composition seems to be the panel that was sold at Sotheby's in London on 5 July 1967 (lot 14, bought by 'Philippe' for £850, Fig. 9) with an attribution to Andrea del Brescianino.²⁸ This picture, which had been acquired in Spain in

columns of the great cloister positioned on the right-hand side of the entrance to the monastery, which look West, were painted at his instigation with remarkable skill and expense by very famous artists, and the remaining spaces between the columns would have been decorated with similar work, if the unavoidable departure of the artists had not prevented it. after an interval of tin and with the benefit of funds which had appeared finally he decreed that the work which had been started should be completed (as is characteristic of a wise man). And he decorated the East and South sides of the cloister, and if this was with a different painter, yet it was with no inferior painting.] Archivio dell'Abbazia di Monteoliveto Maggiore, *Chronicon Cancellariae*, A, fol. 45v (published by G.M. Thomas, *L'Abbaye de Mont-Olivet-Majeur*, Siena, 1881, p. 201, new transcription).

- 19 Sodoma's fresco is 286 cm wide. There is no evidence that it was transferred from a squared drawing, although this cannot be ruled out.
- 20 For the artists' collaboration in the Vatican, see R. Bartolini, Sodoma, the Chigi and the Vatican Stanze, *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. cxiii, no. 1182 (September 2001), pp. 544–53.
- 21 For the possibility that Raphael and Signorelli met in these years, and for evidence that they both worked on a single piece of paper, now in the Ashmolean (no. P II 523), see T. Henry, Signorelli, Raphael and a mysterious pricked drawing in Oxford, *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. cxvii, no. 1086 (September 1993), pp. 612–19.
- 22 For the Venice *Libretto* see S. Ferino Pagden, *Gallerie dell'Accademia di Venezia: Disegni Umbri*, Milan, 1984. It contains other evidence of Raphael's interest in Signorelli, including copies after a *Massacre of the Innocents*, further discussed in T. Henry, *Signorelli in British Collections*, exh. cat., National Gallery, London, 1998–99, no. 21, p. 25. Ferino Pagden has suggested that Domenico Alfani was the author of the Venice *Libretto*.
- 23 K.T. Parker, *Catalogue of the Collection of Drawings in the Ashmolean Museum*, Oxford, 1956, vol. II, pp. 259–61, no. P II 510.
- 24 For Sodoma's contract of 10 July 1503 (Florence, Archivio di Stato, Patr. Eccl., Pienza, A. ccccxi, II, 461, fol. 18 bis) see P. Lugano, *Il Sodoma e i suoi affreschi a Sant'Anna in Camprena* presso Pienza, *Bullettino Senese di Storia Patria*, vol. xiii, 1902, pp. 241–42. Final payment was received on 25 June 1504. See also E. Carli, *Il Sodoma a Sant'Anna in Camprena*, Florence, 1974, pp. 9–11.
- 25 Excerpts from this inventory (which is apparently in the Naples, Archivio di Stato, # 1121, I) were published by G.M. Monti in a series of articles, for example, *I Piccolomini D'Aragona Duchi di Amalfi, un quadro di Raffaello e la biblioteca di papa Pio II*, *Studi sulla Repubblica Marinara di Amalfi*, 1935, pp. 97–141, especially p. 115. See also the discussion in V. Golzio, *Raphael and Siena* in C. Pedretti, *Raphael His Life and Work in the Splendors of the Italian Renaissance*, Florence, 1989, pp. 66–68 (but with a quite unsustainable conclusion), and Shearman, op. cit. in n. 6 above, pp. 926–27.
- 26 The description of a picture in an inventory is not, of course, a completely reliable piece of evidence. The attribution might be false, the description misleading, and the picture could have entered the collection

- 9 *Madonna del Silenzio* after Raphael (1483-1520), after c. 1506-1508. Oil on panel, diam c. 120 cm. Present whereabouts unknown. Photo: © courtesy of the author, London

- 10 *Dream of a Knight* by Raphael (1483-1520), c. 1504. Oil on panel, 17 x 17.3 cm. National Gallery, London

- 11 *Three Graces* by Raphael (1483-1520), c. 1504. Oil on panel, 17 x 17.6 cm. Musée Condé, Chantilly

indirectly. In this case, however, the very early date of the inventory makes it less likely that the attribution is false or that the picture was not a Piccolomini commission. Philippa Jackson has nevertheless pointed out to me that some paintings in the Piccolomini collections were in fact part of the estate of Pandolfo Petrucci in 1517 (and were returned to the Petrucci in 1539).

- 27 G. Gronau, *Raffael*, Stuttgart/Berlin/Liepzig, 1909, p. 77 and A. Venturi, *Raffaello*, Rome, 1920, p. 163, illustrated a rectangular version of the composition (now at Princeton), but the composition is awkward in a rectangle, where it is well balanced in a tondo.

- 28 Numerous copies after Raphael have been assigned to Brescianino, and his knowledge of the *Madonna del Silenzio* is suggested by some other versions of the composition (discussed below), but the ex-Bonaparte collection picture seems to be more interesting.

- 29 E. Hinterding and F. Horsch, 'A small but choice collection: the art gallery of King Willem II of the Netherlands', *Simiolus*, vol. xx, no. 1/2, 1989, pp. 5-122, especially p. 110. For the possibility that this picture can be traced to the *marquis del Carpio* inventory of 1688 (and perhaps subsequently in the collection of Conde Duque de Olivares, see J.M. Ruiz Manero, *Pintura Italiana del Siglo XVI en España: El Rafael y su escuela*, Madrid, 1996, p. 94).

- 30 I know of the following circular versions of this composition, the majority of which are c. 120 cm in diameter: Alte Pinakothek, Munich; Museo de Bellas Artes, Seville; Alba collection, Madrid; Sta Maria de las Duenas, Salamanca; Mus e des Beaux-Arts, Agen; Szpm v szeti Museum, Budapest; and formerly Christies, London, sold on 18 February 1927. See L. Baldass, *Die Stellung der Madonna di Gaeta im Werke Raffaels*, *Zeitschrift f r bild. Kunst*, vol. lx, 1926/27, pp. 32-43, especially pp. 39-42; K. Garas, 'Sammlungsgeschichtliche Beitr ge zu Raffael Raffaels-Werke in Budapest', *Bulletin du Mus e Hongrois des Beaux-Arts*, vol. lx-lxi, 1983, pp. 41-81, especially pp. 56-70 and Ruiz Manero, op. cit., pp. 91-96.

- 31 The copies after this composition were discussed by David Ekserdjian in a paper presented at the Raphael Symposium at the National Gallery, London, in November 2002.

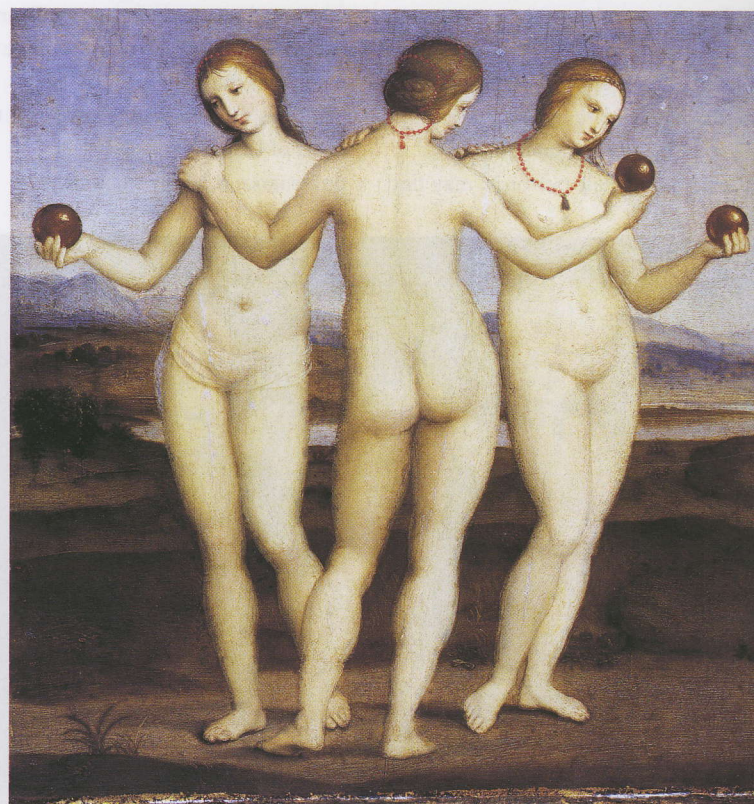
- 32 The cartoon, which was lost during World War II, is illustrated and discussed in A.M. Petrioli Tofani (ed.), *Inventario 2, Disegni Esposti*, Florence, 1986-87, pp. 728-29 (no. 1774E).

1802, was subsequently in the collections of Lucien Bonaparte, Prince Frederik of Holland and Marie, Fürstin zu Wied.²⁹ On the basis of a black and white photograph, it is difficult to judge who painted this tondo, but it appears to be the best of the surviving versions, and an attribution to Raphael cannot be ruled out.

Apart from the obvious connections between this composition and the inventory description of 1542, various pieces of evidence bolster the argument that the *Madonna del Silenzio* was identical with the picture in the Piccolomini collection.

Numerous copies of this picture are either in Spanish collections or originated there, suggesting that a version of the picture was known in Spain from at least the mid-eighteenth century.³⁰ This can probably be explained by the historic links between Naples (to which the Piccolomini d'Aragona ceded Amalfi in 1583) and Spain. The composition was also highly influential in sixteenth-century Siena. As we have seen, the version under discussion has been attributed to Brescianino (who worked in Siena between 1506 and 1524), and another copy of the composition that was sold at Philips in London (1 July 1997) looks even more like paintings by Brescianino.³¹

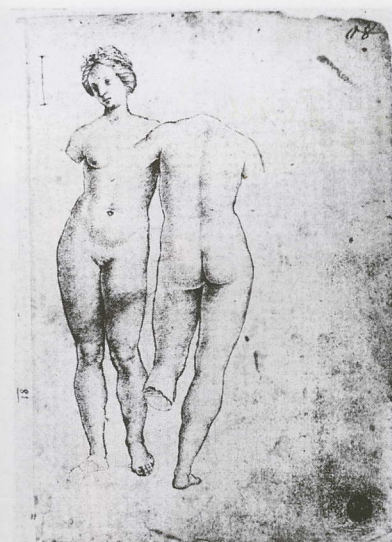
Other derivations (for example, that in the Museo de Bellas Artes in Seville) appear to be Florentine, and may have been based on the cartoon, of dubious authorship, which was in the Uffizi until 1939-45.³² Crowe and Cavalcaselle considered that the earliest of these copies was the rectangular version then in the Brocca collection in Milan, for which they proposed an attribution to Ridolfo Ghirlandaio.³³ If any of the Florentine copies did originate with Ridolfo, then one can reasonably relate the original Raphael to the *Madonna* described by Vasari as destined for some gentlemen of Siena and completed by Ridolfo – it lacked blue draperies, probably the Virgin's dress – when Raphael left Florence for Rome.³⁴ For no very good reason (probably related to its date) this passage is frequently related to the *Belle Jardinière* in the Louvre, and to a putative provenance from the Sergardi of Siena.



If it is accepted that the *Madonna del Silenzio* was painted for the Piccolomini, then it seems most likely to have been painted for Pierfrancesco, Silvia Piccolomini's father.³⁵ Although it is tempting to try to connect the picture with Pierfrancesco's father, Andrea – patron of Pintoricchio's library (1502) and Michelangelo's altar (1501 and 1504) in the cathedral in Siena, as well as of an altarpiece by

Pintoricchio for his chapel in the church of S Francesco in Siena (delivered 1504)³⁶ – his death in 1505 probably rules him out as a possible patron. Instead the most obvious explanation is that Silvia Piccolomini inherited the picture from her father.

Pierfrancesco's activity as a patron has yet to be investigated, but it is clear that in the immediate aftermath of his father's death, he made a number of



documents jointly with his brother Giovanni (who seems to have taken up the responsibility of seeing to completion the commissions of Pintoricchio and Michelangelo). If these brothers frequently acted as a team, Vasari's reference to Raphael painting a Madonna for 'alcuni gentiluomini sanesi' (which is otherwise rather odd: why would a domestic picture have more than one male patron?), may find

an explanation, which could further tie this picture to the *consorteria* Piccolomini. If the original could be traced and appeared to be a collaboration between Raphael and Ridolfo Ghirlandaio, then the connection would be proved beyond reasonable doubt.³⁷

Another Siense patron Raphael's connection with Siena may also be suggested by the *Three Graces* in the Musée Condé at Chantilly, and its relation to the *Dream of the Knight* in the National Gallery, London (Figs. 10 and 11). These two pictures have a provenance from the Borghese collections in Rome (where they were first recorded in 1650), and Panofsky famously connected them to Siense intellectual currents, suggesting Scipione Borghese (b. 1493) as a possible patron in Siena.³⁸ (The Borghese were a Siense family, subsequently famous in Rome.) Although an alternative case can be made that this exquisite pair of paintings was made for a patron at the court of Urbino,³⁹ the Borghese provenance is highly suggestive,

especially when the long-recognised connection of the Chantilly picture (Fig. 11) with the antique group of the Three Graces in the Piccolomini Library (Fig. 13) is considered.

Raphael would, of course, have known this group as a result of his involvement in the decoration of the Piccolomini Library, and his direct study after the group is also suggested by a drawing in the Venice *Libretto* (Fig. 12). One can also point to Raphael's early Roman connections with Siense artists (Sodoma in 1508-1509 and Peruzzi in 1511), and patrons (including Agostino Chigi).⁴⁰ It is less well-known that the 'computista fabricarum' of the Vatican, Girolamo di Francesco (who appears to have been Bramante's right-hand man, and made all the most important documents regarding the decoration of the Stanze, including the first document for Raphael's activity in Rome), was also Siense.⁴¹

Conclusion

The *Reception of Maurus and Placidus* and the *Madonna del Silenzio* have not been taken into account when trying to evaluate Raphael's activity in Siena. This is relatively new ground for Raphael studies, which has not hitherto allowed the artist's work in the *territorio senese* to have any significance. If the cumulative evidence is weighed, it seems to me that we should rewrite the history of Raphael's early years to credit his connections with Siena with a real significance in the way his career developed. Raphael may have developed significant artistic and patronal networks in Siena at an early date. And, given the strong connections between Siena and Rome in this period, it could even be argued that his contact with Siense artists such as Sodoma and his work for Siense patrons such as the Piccolomini may have been at least as important in securing a call to Rome as any of his work in Florence, Perugia or Urbino.

The exhibition 'Raphael: from Urbino to Rome' is at the National Gallery, London from 20 October 2004 to 16 January 2005.

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12 *Three Graces* after Raphael (1483-1520), before 1509 (?). Pen and ink over traces of black chalk and stylus, 22.8 x 16.7 cm. Accademia, Venice.

13 *Three Graces*. Antique marble. Piccolomini Library, Duomo, Siena. Photo: Bridgeman Art Library

33 J.A. Crowe and G.B. Cavalcaselle, *Raphael: His Life and Works*, London, 1882-85, vol. 1, pp. 354-56.

34 Vasari, op. cit., vol. iv, p. 165 (1568, and see 1550 edition). Vasari recorded: Et intanto fece un quadro che si mand in Siena, il quale nella partita di Raffaello rimase a Ridolfo del Ghirlandaio, perch egli finisse un panno az[z]urro che vi mancava [At the same time he painted a picture that was afterwards sent to Siena, although, on the departure of Raphael, it was left with Ridolfo Ghirlandaio, to the end that he might finish a piece of blue drapery that was wanting]; Vasari, op. cit., vol. v, p. 438 (1568): [Raphael] gli lasci a finire il panno azzurro et altre poche cose che mancavano al quadro d una Madonna che egli avea fatta per alcuni gentiluomini sanesi: il qual quadro finito che ebbe Ridolfo con molta diligenza, lo mand a Siena. [Raphael left him to finish the blue drapery and other little things that were wanting in the picture of a Madonna that he had painted for some gentlemen of Siena; which picture Ridolfo, after he had finished it with much diligence, sent to Siena] Shearman, op. cit. in n. 6 above, pp. 926-27 argues that the wording of the inventory suggests that the picture came from Silvia's mother (Francesca Savelli), but the phrasing seems to follow from the fact that Silvia was entrusted to her mother's care after the death of Pierfrancesco Piccolomini, and I cannot see a reason why the picture should not be traced to his patronage.

36 For these commissions see Oberhuber, op. cit.; H.R. Mancusi-Ungaro, *Michelangelo: The Bruges Madonna and the Piccolomini Altar*, New Haven and London, 1971 and A. Toti, La chiesa di San Francesco in Siena ed i Piccolomini, *Bullettino Senese di Storia Patria*, vol. 1, 1894, pp. 77-97 (with reference to Sigismondo Tizio, September 1504).

37 It will be impossible to test this thesis unless the original is re-discovered, but it is clear that some of the copies had difficulties interpreting the Virgin's draperies.

38 See E. Panofsky, *Hercules am Scheidewege und andere antike Bildstoffe in der neueren Kunst*, Leipzig/Berlin, 1930, pp. 37-52, 76-83, 142-50; E. Wind, *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance*, New York, 1967, pp. 81-85 and C. Gould, *Catalogue of the Sixteenth Century Italian Schools*, London, 1975, p. 212-15.

39 See C. Plazzotta in Chapman, Henry and Plazzotta, op. cit., pp. 138-41.

40 For these see Shearman, op. cit. in n. 6 above, pp. 143-46, 154-55.

41 For comments on the crucial role played by Girolamo di Francesco da Siena in the decoration of the Stanze, see the Appendix to my article on Cesare da Sesto and Baldino Baldini in the Vatican apartments of Julius II, *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. cxii, no. 1162 (January 2000), pp. 29-35, especially pp. 34-35.

