ANDREA RICCIO’S DELLA TORRE TOMB MONUMENT:
HUMANISM AND ANTIQUARIANISM IN PADUA AND VERONA

by

Rebekah Anne Carson

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctorate of Philosophy
Department of Art
University of Toronto

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Andrea Riccio’s Della Torre Tomb Monument: Humanism and Antiquarianism in Padua and Verona

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Abstract

An important masterpiece by the Paduan sculptor Andrea Riccio, the Della Torre tomb monument broke with contemporary funerary monuments in both its form and content. Understanding what enabled this break with tradition is the central issue in the study of this monument—one that has not been sufficiently addressed in previous scholarship.

Despite the lack of overt references to the Christian faith on the Della Torre monument, the narrative programme is concerned with two very important Christian concerns—the necessity of a life of virtue and the health and afterlife of the soul. I argue that the narrative on the tomb, influenced by contemporary funerary oratory and poetry, presents a model of virtue for the viewer. Moreover, I argue that Riccio has illustrated the presence of this exemplar by the very structure of the monument itself.

This dissertation focuses on the artistic and intellectual community surrounding the creation of this monument and, in particular, on the reconciliation of this strictly all’antica monument with Christian thought in this period. Upon a thorough contextual examination, this unprecedented monument becomes less of an anomaly. It reflects the
ideas of an important circle of humanists from both Padua and Verona, thus illustrating the breadth of their interests and their involvement in contemporary debates over religion, the nature and potential immortality of the soul, and the necessity of virtue.

Analysing this monument within the context of humanist ideas prevalent among the individuals within the Della Torre circle, those who had, or likely had, a great influence on the significance of the monument’s narrative, gives this monument what has been long denied to it—a proper understanding of its Christian programme and didactic function. The fulfillment of this task, which promises to shed additional light on the adaptation of pagan elements to Christian purposes, is the overall aim of this work.
In memoriam
doctoris Guillelmi Irwini Illman
avi professoris atque exemplaris virtutis
Acknowledgements

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The University of Toronto has been a felicitous place to pursue Early Modern Studies, both because of the resources available and the rich community of academics working in this area at the university. I am fortunate to have had access to the resources at the Fisher Rare Books at Robarts Library and the Centre for Reformation and Renaissances studies at Victoria University, University of Toronto.

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Introduction

Once considered among the greatest masterpieces of Renaissance funerary art the Della Torre tomb monument in Verona has been neglected in more recent years, as has its creator a master of Renaissance bronze, Andrea Riccio, who has long merited far greater attention. The tomb monument he created for the medical professors Girolamo and Marcantonio Della Torre is an important work of art: a masterpiece of unparalleled design, its programme reflects the thought of an important group of humanists and scholars from Verona and Padua.

Unprecedented in the history of Renaissance funerary sculpture for the laity, the design of the Della Torre monument broke with contemporary tombs in both form and content. One of the most significant departures is the monument’s exclusively all’antica visual language, which Riccio applied with an extraordinary single-mindedness, allowing no Christian iconography to make its way onto the tomb. This is surprising since, although classical and Christian motifs were often intermingled on contemporary tombs, references to the Christian afterlife were usually included. Concerned with the afterlife, Riccio’s narrative presented its subject solely in pagan language. A Christian message was present, but its full significance was discernible only to the learned viewer. As a result, one of the central issues in understanding the Della Torre tomb is interpreting this departure from convention and explaining the genesis of the narrative.

Riccio Studies

There is much room for further scholarship on Riccio’s work; 2008 saw the first concerted study of his work since 1927. Happily, 2008 saw the first exhibitions dedicated to
Riccio’s work: the exhibition held at Castello del Buonconsiglio in Trent, Italy, focused on Riccio and his contemporaries; the exhibition held at the Frick Collection in New York focused on his autograph works. Both these exhibitions and their catalogues make important contributions to the study of Riccio’s work; they also provide a foundation for future studies. Prior to these exhibitions, the last in-depth study of Riccio’s oeuvre was Leo Planiscig’s 1927 monograph. Planiscig’s book, while the fundamental study of Riccio’s work, has two significant flaws. First, his thesis stated that Riccio’s work progressed chronologically from naturalism to a more refined classicism; however, contemporary scholarship has shown that naturalism in his oeuvre was not limited to his early works. Second, Planiscig assigned an incredibly large oeuvre to Riccio (over 258 works), distorting the nature of Riccio’s work and leaving many questions about the true attributions of these works. Since Planiscig’s monograph, issues of attribution and dating have largely dominated Riccio studies. Riccio’s immense talent has long merited further study. Amongst the factors that have contributed to the neglect of Riccio’s work is the fact that much of his oeuvre consists of poorly documented, small-scale bronzes. In addition, Riccio studies are further complicated by the novel and often arcane nature of many of his works.

The popularity of Riccio’s *all’antica* works has often resulted in him being portrayed as either uninterested in religion or secular in character; this erroneous perception of Riccio has added its own dimension to the discussions of his work and, in particular, the Della Torre monument. In part, the image of Riccio has been distorted by the way in which his oeuvre is studied: it is his *all’antica* works that have proved to be the most appealing to scholars. His small-scale pastoral inspired bronzes—his shepherds, satyrs, and fauns—have worked their charm, becoming his most renowned works. Driven by the desire to understand his more arcane subjects—such as the paschal candelabrum characterized by Riccio’s bold intermingling of
pagan and Christian motifs—scholars often overlook much of his other work. While this esoteric phase of Paduan art, whose language was all but lost by the end of the 16th century, is both fascinating and important, the tendency to separate the study of Riccio’s more “pagan” works from his “straightforward” religious works had had an impact on perceptions of Riccio’s oeuvre.¹ Riccio was the author of numerous religious sculptures; while many are all’antica in nature, others are more conventional. The bronze statuette of the Penitent Saint Jerome in Berlin and the plaquette of the Entombment in London show how tender and pious his work could be, as does the terracotta female mourner in the Musei Civici, Padua, which was once likely part of his terracotta Lamentation group for the Paduan church of San Canziano.² It is unlikely that his contemporaries would have perceived him solely as the maker of fantastic all’antica works for which he is best remembered now.

Some scholars took the all’antica nature of some of his work as a sign of the artist’s weak religious sentiment. In the 1930s, Erice Rigoni recorded that Riccio had not followed the norm in evoking divine forgiveness or repenting for his sins in his final testament:

In the testament written by the hand of the sculptor there is neither a word invoking divine clemency, as was usual in the period, nor does there emerge in the contents any remorse for his sins. The religious sentiment must have been rather weak as is evidenced

¹ This is evident by the attempts of Valerio Polidoro to decipher the imagery of the candelabrum in the 1590s.
² While the example of the two mourning women in the Museo Civico might suggest that Riccio avoided all’antica motifs in his terracotta work, in fact, this was not the case. The manner in which Riccio represented religious subjects does not appear to have changed with the medium; the same complex intermingling of pagan and Christian elements is present in his terracotta Getty Madonna and Child and the Musei Civici Head of the Madonna. See Davide Banzato, “Head of the Madonna,” in Andrea Riccio: Renaissance Master of Bronze, ed. Denise Allen and Peta Motture, New York, Frick Museum (London: Philip Wilson Pub., 2008), 308-311; and Eike D. Schmidt, “Virgin and Child,” in Andrea Riccio: Renaissance Master of Bronze, 312-316. While the number of extant terracotta by Riccio is not large, they demonstrate that he was very proficient in this medium—a proficiency that led Anthony Radcliffe to the view that Riccio’s terracotta oeuvre was likely to have been large. Since this was a difficult medium, Riccio’s skill suggests that this was not something he dabbled in occasionally. The neglect of Riccio’s terracotta works was largely influenced by Planiscig who considered them to be early works and not part of his ongoing artistic creations as they are now understood to have been. Current scholarship concurs with Radcliffe’s assertion that Riccio created terracotta works throughout his career. Anthony Radcliffe, “A Forgotten Masterpiece in Terracotta by Riccio,” Apollo cxviii (1983): 40-8. Giancarlo Gentilini, “La terracotta a Padova e Andrea Riccio, ‘celebre plasticaatore,’” in Rinascimento e passione per l’antico: Andrea Riccio e il suo tempo, ed. Andrea Bacchi and Luciana Giacomelli (Trent: Provincia autonoma di Trento, 2008), 58-75.
in the largely pagan character of his art and, perhaps, because he did not feel worthy of resting in a sacred place of worship, he requested that he be buried on the outside of the church.  

While few Renaissance art historians today would still equate the all’antica nature of Riccio’s art with a diminished religious sentiment, this view has sometimes been permitted to linger; thus it might be prudent to address the difficulties with Rigoni’s statement about Riccio’s testament.

The first difficulty is the tenuous assumption that his request to be buried outside the church is a sign of an uncertain, unworthy spirit or a weak religious sentiment. The second difficulty is that the testament written on the [1’]8 of March, 1532, was not the official, legal testament; rather, it is a short document written in Italian by the ailing artist; it was subsequently translated into Latin, revised, and greatly extended by his notary, Vincenzo Fortuna, on March 18, 1532. This official testament does contain the same request, that he be recommended to God and that his body be buried outside San Giovanni de Verdara, as was included in an earlier version of his will drawn up on June 24, 1531. The short document written by Riccio in March of 1532 related to the division of his property: this constitutes the central difference between these two versions of his testament. As the purpose of this short document from Riccio’s own hand was to amend portions of his earlier testament and since his lawyer was called on to make the more formal and complete version of the testament, it seems tenuous to infer something about the state of the

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4 A.N.P, Lib. 8 Abbrev., not. Vicenzo Fortuna, f. 147.

5 “In primis namque quando altissimus et immortalis Deus animam suam ad se vocabit, illam suae divinae maiestati pie, humiliter atque devote comendavit; sepoluram vero corporis sui elegit et esse voluit extra portam ecclesie S. Iohannis in Viridario a manu dextra....” Riccio’s Last Will is an interesting document in which he expresses much concern over the moral character of his nephew and heir. Antonio Sartori, Documenti per la storia dell’arte a Padova, a cura di Clemente Fillarini, con un saggio di Franco Barbieri (Vicenza: N. Pozza, 1976), 202 - 203.
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artist’s religious concerns based on this document alone. Nonetheless, Rigoni’s interpretation of this document was further developed in the early 1980s by Lanfranco Franzoni, who argued that:

... it appears that he [Riccio] distanced himself from the observance of the Christian faith, in so much that in his handwritten will of [1]8 March 1532 ‘there is not one word invoking divine clemency, as was usual in the period,’ this was justly interpreted by Rigoni as a sign of weak religious sentiment, with which the remainder of the arrangement to be buried outside the Church agrees, testimony of the non-hypocritical conscience of the artist.6

In the mid-16th century, the issue of being buried on the exterior as opposed to the interior of a church was subject to much discussion and remained an issue in subsequent decades. Sometimes the decision could result precisely from sensitivity to religious decorum. Claudio Rangoni, for example, whose tomb was designed by Giulio Romano, made provisions in his will to be buried on the exterior of the church of San Biagio in Modena.7 In Verona, Gian Matteo Giberti asserted that elaborate tombs had little place inside the church, and he pressed for severe limitations on burials within churches, as is evident in the 1542 publication of his Constitutiones.8 In this light, Riccio’s request to be buried on the exterior of San Giovanni di Verdara should not be taken as any sort of indication of his lack of religious commitment. Indeed, the numerous funerary monuments and tombs found in the courtyards of churches like the Basilica of St. Anthony, in

6(My translation) “Il candelabro del Santo a Padova è una sagra dell’immaginario pagano, e sbagliava il buon padre Valerio Polidoro quando si sforzò di interpretare tutte queste figure in chiave di allegoria cristiana. In realtà il Riccio, a seguito della sua frequentazione coi simboli pagani, sembra essersi allontanato dall’osservanza della fede cristiana, tant’è che nel suo testamento olografo dell’[1]8 marzo 1532 ‘non si trova una parola d’invocazione alla clemenza divina, com’era uso del tempo’, il che viene giustamente interpretato dalla Rigoni come segno di debole sentimento religioso, con cui del resto si accorda la disposizione, testimone della coscienza non ipocrita dell’artista, di essere sepolto fuori della chiesa (S. Giovanni di Verdara). L’esistenza del Riccio fu tormentata non solo dai suoi dubbi esistenziali ma anche da disturbi fisici e da rivalità coi parenti. La sua produzione mostra nettamente le tracce dell’inquietudine che ha travagliato il suo sensibile animo d’artista.” Lanfranco Franzoni, “Autoritratto bronzeo di Giulio Della Torre presso La Fondazione Minischalchi Erizzo,” Atti e Memorie della Accademia di Agricoltura, scienze e lettere di Verona Serie VI, Vol. XXXIV (1928-83): 326.

7 Rangoni’s monument, while designed to be placed on the exterior of the church, was placed in the interior, where it stood until it was moved to the city’s cathedral. See Riccardo Pacciani, “Orientamenti iconografici e committenza collegata all’Evangelismo in due opere di Giulio Romano.” Quaderni di Palazzo Te 2 (1985): 18–27.

Padua, further undermine the suggestion that there was anything portentous in the request for burial outside a church. Most important, it is necessary to remember that Riccio was working in an environment in which many devout Christians did not see the use of all’antica language and imagery as impinging on religious orthodoxy, even within a Christian context.

**Scholarship on the Della Torre Tomb Monument**

The Della Torre tomb monument was one of Riccio’s greatest works. While the monument has been addressed by some leading Renaissance scholars, including Fritz Saxl, Erwin Panofsky, and John Pope-Hennessy, none of these discussions have been comprehensive. There have been some important recent contributions to the study of this monument, most notably by Anthony Radcliffe and Dieter Blume. These contributions are concise, leaving room for a more thorough examination of this tomb. The only in-depth study of this monument was in 1927, when Planiscig dedicated a chapter of his monograph on Riccio to the Della Torre monument; however, his discussion of the monument focused primarily on stylistic issues. Thus, there is need for a more detailed examination of this monument and the environment in which it was created.

Fritz Saxl’s consideration of this monument in his 1939 article “Pagan Sacrifice in the Renaissance” included a useful study of some of the significant figures in the Della Torre circle. His brief, well-researched discussion of the monument offered avenues of research for subsequent scholarship, earning this 3-page discussion its place as one of the classic texts on the Della Torre monument.

Erwin Panofsky, in his lectures on tomb monuments, incorporated the Della Torre monument into his discussion of professors’ tombs. His comments on the Della Torre tomb were limited to a brief synopsis of the tomb’s narrative; he expressed his confusion as to which scenes
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commemorated the father and which commemorated the son. His discussion of the Della Torre monument follows his assessment of the tombs of professors in Bologna, which, Panofsky argued, pointed to their concern with “being remembered rather than saved.” The Della Torre tomb monument fits easily into Erwin Panofsky’s categorization of a group of tomb monuments characterized by “a basic change of outlook: a rejection of the Christian concern for the future in favour of pagan glorification of the past.” Panofsky concluded his description of the Della Torre Tomb by stating that it was a “frankly pagan” monument.

Saxl and Panofsky’s examinations of the Della Torre monument raise one of the central issues in studying this monument: how to access this monument’s break with contemporary funerary monuments. The most significant divergence is the monument’s strict all’antica visual language and the absence of any Christian motifs. Arguing that it was wrong to see Riccio’s paschal candelabrum as a “contravention of religious sentiment,” Saxl did not see the Della Torre monument as a rejection of Christian hope in the afterlife. However, he sought the explanation of the narrative’s unorthodox nature by arguing that it reflected the secular interests of the Della Torre brothers and their friends. In his view, they belonged to a group that was “not intent upon religious or moral issues,” and evinced a “detachment from theology.” The all’antica nature of the tomb suggested to him that their secular interests overrode their religious

11 Panofsky, Tomb Sculpture, 71.
12 Fritz Saxl, “Pagan Sacrifice in the Italian Renaissance,” Journal of the Warburg Institute 2, No. 4 (April, 1939): 353-357. “No less characteristic of this group than its detachment from theology is its intimate connection with the arts.” Drawing on Fracastoro’s discussion of Giovanni Battista Della Torre’s deathbed concern for his discoveries in astronomy, Saxl contrasts the piety of Girolamo and Giovanni Battista. Saxl proclaims that Girolamo thought of the rewards of heaven and Giovanni of his own discoveries. And yet, surely the deathbed scene of Giovanni Battista is a device on the part of Fracastoro who wrote his Homocentrica to preserve the memory and knowledge of this friend. Giovanni Battista’s deathbed scene served as a defence of Fracastoro’s publication.
concerns. Indeed, a third of his discussion of the Della Torre monument is his argument that the tomb’s imagery is a sign of the Della Torre brothers’ disinterest in religious matters.

The notion that the humanists surrounding the creation of both the paschal candelabrum and the Della Torre Tomb—Giambattista Da Leone, Niccolò Leonico Tomeo, Girolamo Fracastoro, and the Della Torre—exemplified a detachment or lack of intent in religious matters is the central weakness in Saxl’s interpretation of these two monuments. Panofsky and Saxl’s assessment of this work as illustrating the irreligion of the patrons has left the impression that the work could be explained as an instance of Renaissance paganism. This dissertation proposes that the monument did not violate reform-minded concerns regarding tombs in churches. To interpret the tomb’s all’antica visual language as evidence of irreligion diminishes the narrative’s central focus upon the importance of a life of virtue and the life of the spirit after death. Moreover, recent scholarship has rather clearly demonstrated that the Della Torre neither lacked an interest in the moral and religious issues of the day nor, as Fritz Saxl suggested, exhibited a detachment from theology. On the contrary, allied with Bishop Gianmatteo Giberti, they were active within the church in Verona. Other scholars, such as John Pope Hennessy, did not interpret the absence of Christian imagery as problematic. In his brief discussion of the tomb in his 1958 publication of Italian Renaissance Sculpture, John Pope Hennessy commented that “…the language of the reliefs is so simple, so natural, so transparently sincere, that the imagery is acceptable on a Christian as well as a pagan plane.”

A turning point in the study of this monument came in 1983, when, in a brief catalogue entry, Anthony Radcliffe, who has made considerable contributions to the study of Riccio’s work, made the important link between the Vergilian imagery on the tomb and the contemporary

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debates over the nature and immortality of the soul. This link was accepted by subsequent authors, including John Pope-Hennessy,\textsuperscript{14} and was further developed by Dieter Blume.

In the catalogue of the 1985 exhibition \textit{Natur und Antike in der Renaissance}, Blume expanded upon Radcliffe’s thesis by examining in more detail the Vergilian imagery in Riccio’s narrative. Arguing that the tomb needed to be understood within the context of the contemporary philosophical discourse on the nature and immortality of the soul, Blume gave a brief history of the debates and the contemporary endeavours to synthesize the writings of Aristotle and Plato on the subject. Stating that Riccio does not present a biographical narrative of either the Della Torre father or son, Blume maintained that Riccio’s narrative presents “a comprehensive understanding of the mortal body, immortal soul, and eternal fame.”\textsuperscript{15} Like Radcliffe, Blume focused his discussion of the subject upon the writing of Tomeo, although he did acknowledge that Fracastoro’s poetry draws on Vergil and that it also reflected the contemporary discussions on the immortality of the soul.

These studies opened up a new framework for discussion. There remains much room for a more detailed study of the debates over the nature and immortality of the soul in relation to this monument. The interest in the health of the soul and its afterlife runs through other elements of the narrative—most notably, the scene of sacrifice to the pagan god Asclepius. These ideas need to be combined and considered within a wider context of the Renaissance discussions on the nature of the soul. The ties between Riccio’s narrative and contemporary funerary oratory and poetry have not been sufficiently understood, nor has the significance of this monument’s overall design been fully appreciated.

\textsuperscript{14} Hennessy included a synopsis of Radcliffe’s interpretation of the monument in the “Notes on the Artists” section of his 1996 republication of \textit{Italian Renaissance Art} (London: Phaidon Press, 1996), 416.
The focus of this dissertation is on the artistic and intellectual community surrounding the creation of this monument and, in particular, on the reconciliation of this strictly *all’antica* monument with Christian thought in this period. Upon a thorough contextual examination this unprecedented monument, whose complex narrative programme and structure relates it to many of the wider issues of the day, becomes less of an anomaly. The monument reflects the ideas of an important circle of humanists from both Padua and Verona, illustrating the breadth of their interests and their involvement in contemporary debates over religion, the nature and potential immortality of the soul, antiquarianism, the importance of education, and necessity of virtue. I argue that while Riccio has chosen not to combine pagan and Christian references on the tomb, the absence of Christian iconography should not be understood as a rejection of the decorum of Christian funerary art; seen accurately, the monument represents an innovative and unique development within it. Indeed, the decision not to mix Christian and the pagan may in fact be a powerful expression of the artist’s sense of decorum.

Chapter I examines what is known about the monument, the Della Torre family chapel and the religious interests of the Della Torre family. Chapter II focuses upon the nature of the intellectual exchange between artists and humanists patrons in Padua in general and Riccio’s interaction with humanists in particular. By examining the relationships of the Della Torre brothers with local artists in Verona, this chapter provides an image of the type of relationship between patron and artist that would have set the foundation for the relationship between the Della Torre and Riccio.

Chapter III examines the tomb’s remarkable design—its construction as a free-standing monument with a raised tomb-chest and its use of an expanded narrative. In his design of this monument, Riccio drew on a rather surprising source—the tombs of saints. The very design of
Riccio’s monument for the Della Torre would have informed the viewer that the tomb’s narrative presented a model for them to follow. This is surprising since the tomb’s narrative drew on a purely pagan language at the same time as its very structure drew on a form that was overtly Christian. Thus it is argued that the very structure of the monument would have informed the viewer of the didactic nature of the tomb’s narrative programme.

The remaining chapters of this dissertation examine the tomb’s narrative programme; for the most part the narrative panels are addressed thematically rather than sequentially, and some of the panels are examined in greater detail than others. These chapters on the tomb’s narrative draw on contemporary literature—in particular, dialogues, poetry, and funerary orations.

Chapter IV examines Anthony Radcliffe’s argument that the Vergilian scenes on the tomb are drawn from Niccolò Leonico Tomeo’s dialogue the Alverotus. Tomeo’s dialogue was based on the “Spiritus intus alit,” a famous passage from the Aeneid in which Vergil considered the nature of the soul and its journey after death. It is argued that the narrative on the tomb should be addressed within the wider intellectual climate of the period. It is also argued that the emphasis on the importance of the health of the soul and its survival after the death of the body runs through much of the narrative programme.

Chapter V and VI study the tomb’s scene of pagan sacrifice. In Chapter V, the contemporary popularity of the subject of pagan sacrifice in both the visual arts and literature in the Veneto is examined. Particularly relevant is Riccio’s employment of this motif in his other works and the inclusion of this subject in sacred environments. The use of pagan sacrifice in the writings of Fracastoro is also addressed since his handling of pagan sacrifice may help us understand how the patrons of the tomb might have approached the subject. Of greatest interest to this study is Fracastoro’s use of pagan sacrifice in his Syphilis sive Morbus Gallicus.
Presenting the subject of sacrifice in an entirely pagan language Fracastoro, like Riccio, does so with obvious Christian implications. Chapter VI addresses the significance of the pagan god Asclepius as the recipient of the offering. It is argued that his presence in the narrative is linked to much more than his role as one of the gods of medicine: the inclusion of a sacrifice to Asclepius is tied to one of the wider themes of the narrative—it relates to the health of the soul and its journey into the afterlife.

Chapter VII examines the monument in relation to two other means of commemoration in the Renaissance: funerary oratory and poetry. It is argued that Riccio’s narrative shares with Renaissance funerary oratory and elegy the purpose of persuading the audience to pursue a more virtuous life. It is argued that, not unlike funerary oratory and elegy, the monument serves a didactic function by presenting a model of virtuous life to be followed. This is done by examining the funeral oration written by Giovanni Pierio Valeriano in honour of Girolamo Della Torre, as well as the funerary poetry composed by the Veronese physician Girolamo Fracastoro and the Mantuan poet Niccolò D’Arco in commemoration of Marcantonio Della Torre.

Ultimately, analysing this monument within the context of humanist ideas prevalent among individuals within the Della Torre circle—those who had, or likely had, influence on the monument’s narrative programme—gives this monument what has been long denied to it: a proper understanding of its humanist programme and didactic function. The fulfillment of this task—the task that promises to shed additional light on the adaptation of pagan elements to Christian purposes—is the ultimate aim of this work.
Chapter I The Della Torre Monument and San Fermo Maggiore

Following the death of the physician and professor Girolamo Della Torre (1506) and that of his son, a professor of anatomy, Marcantonio Della Torre (1511), the surviving sons of Girolamo, Giulio, Giovanni Battista, and Raimondo commissioned a tomb monument from the Paduan artist Andrea Briosco, better known by his nickname Riccio. A professor of medicine at the University of Padua, Girolamo Della Torre had an outstanding reputation as both a doctor and a lecturer. His son, Marcantonio, a celebrated anatomist and botanist, was a graduate of the University of Padua; he briefly taught there before leaving to teach at the university in Pavia in 1509.

The study of the Della Torre tomb monument has been hampered by the lack of any surviving documents regarding either the commission of the monument or the date of its construction; such information would be particularly valuable to the study of this unprecedented monument. Our understanding of the monument has been further hindered by 17th-century alterations to the family chapel and the removal of the bronze panels from the tomb at the end of the 18th century. The first part of this chapter examines what is known about the Della Torre monument and its history; the second part addresses the family chapel and the religious interests of the Della Torre family.

While there are no records dating either the commissioning or the construction of the monument, the general consensus is that Riccio commenced working on the monument in the family workshop on the via del Codalunga, Padua, in 1516, following
his completion of the paschal candelabrum for the church of St. Anthony in Padua. The Della Torre monument was likely completed by 1521, when Riccio began work on the monument for Antonio Trombetta in the church of St. Anthony. Since stylistically the Della Torre monument represents one of Riccio’s more mature works, 1516-1521 is the most viable date for its construction.

The Della Torre monument (Fig. 1) is located in the Conventual Franciscan church San Fermo Maggiore, Verona. Situated on the site where the early 4th-century saints Fermo and Rustico were tortured, the church was built by the Benedictines between 1065 and 1143 and transferred to the Franciscans in the mid-13th century. For several generations, the Della Torre were dedicated supporters of this Franciscan community. The family chapel, acquired in 1357, is located in the left transept of the church, and the tomb made for Girolamo and Marcantonio Della Torre was placed in a small chamber accessible only through the family chapel (Fig. 2). While there are no documents showing how much the Della Torre spent on the monument, given the scale of this

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1 The Della Torre family archives provide little information about the monument. In 1537, Raimondo Della Torre requested burial “in monumento familie sue mira arte composito…” in the church of San Fermo. Archivio Stato Verona, Testamenti m. 129 n. 240 Raimondo della Torre di 6 marco 1537. This request was again made in August 1537. Della Torre pergammone, Busta IV. A document from July 27, 1515 (Franzoni dates the document to 1517) focuses on the division of family property and refers to plans to build a worthy monument for the body of Marcantonio. Unfortunately, the document is not fully extant, what remains is very poorly preserved. Archivio Stato Verona, Della Torre Archivio privati, Busta II, No. 54. According to Lanfranco Franzoni, this monument had been provided for in Marcantonio’s testament. Lanfranco Franzoni, “Autoritratto Bronzoo di Giulio Della Torre presso La Fondazione Miniscalchi Erizzo,” Atti e memorie della Accademia di Agricultura, Scienze e Lettere di Verona Serie VI, Vol. XXXIV (1982-83): 324.

2 Between 1521 and 1524 Riccio was working on the monument for Antonio Trombetta in the Santo. There are no dated bronze works of Riccio after 1524; from 1530 to his death in July of 1532, he appears to have been too ill to work. Pope-Hennessy argued for the same time frame as Riccio’s work on the Trombetta Monument, while Planiscig and Radcliffe argue that Riccio’s work on the Della Torre monument most likely came after his work on the paschal candelabrum and before the Trombetta Monument. An earlier date is less convincing as it would have been unlikely for such a large scale monument to have been undertaken during the war of the League of Cambrai. Leo Planiscig, Andrea Riccio (Vienna: 1927), 327; John Pope-Hennessy, Italian Renaissance Sculpture, vol. II. (London: Phaidon Press, 1996), 416; Anthony Radcliffe, “The Illness of the Professor / The Soul of the Professor in the Fortunate Woods,” in The Genius of Venice: 1500-1600, ed. Jane Martineau and Charles Hope, London, Royal Academy (New York: Abrams, 1984): 374.
monument and the extensive use of bronze and marble one could infer that it would have been an expensive tomb. In this period, most professors were commemorated by small-scale wall monuments, considerably less expensive than the Della Torre tomb monument. While the monument is an expensive, elaborate tomb for professors, the Della Torre belonged to a noble Veronese family and enjoyed a standard of living above that of the average professor.

The monument stands in the centre of a small, undecorated chamber lit by two windows on the exterior wall. Placed on a stepped platform, the marble monument consists of a lower altar-like structure with a tomb-chest raised above it. In the lower structure stands a table decorated with a classical frieze, and supported at the corners by short columns. The columns are hybrid in form: the upper section is composed of a fluted ionic order; the lower part consists of a bulbous form decorated with foliage and garlands; on alternate columns, eagles and the heads of winged putti dangle from a rope suspended from the garlands. The decorations and bulbous shape of the columns are

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3 Vicenzo Grandi was paid 80 gold ducats for his work on the wall monument commemorating Antonio Trombetta in the church of St. Anthony in Padua. Riccio was paid 50 gold ducats for the portrait bust of Trombetta. The cost of materials, labour, and shipping would have been considerably higher for the Della Torre monument.

4 On the financial status of the Della Torre, see Gian Maria Varanini and Renato Ponzin, “I Della Torre di Verona nel Trecento e Quattrocento. Aspetti socio-economici, religiosi, culturali di un’affermazione familiare,” in *La Villa Della Torre a Fumani*, a cura di Arturo Sandrini (Verona: Banca Agricola popolare di Cerea, 1993), 35-47.

5 This small chamber was not part of the original structure of the church. Da Liscia argued that the exterior wall of the Della Torre chamber was built in the early 16th century; if correct, this makes the construction of the chamber contemporaneous with the commissioning of the tomb. However, as Brenzoni points out, the chamber has a quattrocento air which may suggest an earlier date. Building this chamber necessitated blocking off much of the *trifora* next to the altar of the Nativity which, thus, cut off some of the light to the nave. The separation of the family mausoleum from the nave is important because it means that the tomb was not visible from the nave. The chamber has a lower level; Da Liscia recorded two tombs contained in this chamber. The question remains as to the location of the other family tombs that were placed in the family chapel, and whether or not there are more tombs in this lower section than Da Liscia recorded. Alessandro Da Liscia, *Studi e ricerche originali sulla chiesa di S. Fermo Maggiore di Verona con le notizie dei restauri recentemente compiti* (Verona: Soccieta Cooperativa Tipografica, 1909), 90-1. Caterina Gemma Brenzoni, “Il mausoleo della famiglia della Torre,” *I Santi Fermo e Rustico. Un culto e una chiesa in Verona. Per il XVII centenario del loro martirio* (304-2004), a cura di Paolo Golinelli and Caterina Gemma Brenzoni (Verona, Parrocchia di San Fermo Maggiore in Verona, 2004), 281.
suggestive of candelabra and likely held funerary connotations. The frieze is decorated with birds, nymphs, and figures emerging from scrolling foliage; medallions and half medallions of red porphyry and verde antico or green serpentine are placed in the centre and on the corner of the frieze. Although uniquely arranged, all of the motifs in the tomb’s ornamental decoration were popular in contemporary Veneto sculpture. While these motifs are found in various types of Renaissance art, they were used with great frequency in funerary art. Within a funerary context, the hybrid figures, nymphs, and birds, served as symbols of the soul’s ascension after death and its successful journey into the afterlife.

In the centre of the lower section of the monument is a chest that has been engraved with the family crest on the short sides; on the longer sides are inscriptions commemorating the father and son. The inscription on the side of the monument facing away from the nave reads:

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In complete concord the brothers Giulio, Giovanni Battista and Raimondo have erected this to their most wonderful father Girolamo della Torre and their brother Marcantonio. It is right for the former to feel this devotion toward the latter and to have their bones transported from the different places where they were previously interred when death claimed them and have them placed in one grave.
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The inscription facing the nave reads:

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HIERONIMO TURRIANO PATRI OPTIMO ET M. ANTONIO FRATRI MAXIME UNANIMI IULIUS IO. BAPTISTA ET RAIMUNDUS FRATRES [OSERUNT] VISUM HUS EST SUAE IN ILLOS PIETATIS ESSE AMBORUM OSSA QUAE DIVERSIS PRIUS IN LOCIS UT QUENOMORS OCCUPAVERAT CONTEGEBANTUR IN PATRIAM TRANSLATA EODEM UNA TUMULO.
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Father lived sixty-two years. Nevertheless he [did no harm] to anyone because of the remarkable arts at which time flourished in him. It would seem that his son was not snatched away prematurely since he had already not only matched his father in praise but also had brought men to expect I do not know what greater things of him. In the bitterest fate of all he perished in his thirtieth year.\textsuperscript{10}

Epitaphs on the tombs of Paduan professors usually included information on the deceased’s profession and / or field of specialization—both of these element are noticeably absent in Della Torre inscriptions. Epitaphs for Paduan professors also extolled the talent and fame of the deceased. This praise was a frequent theme, and in many cases self-glorification prevailed over Christian humility.\textsuperscript{11} While the second part of the Della Torre epitaph records the distinction that Girolamo and Marcantonio earned as a result of their talent, the praise is neither extravagant nor overly vainglorious. Instead, the epitaphs record the brothers’ devotion to their father and brother and their sense of loss.

The upper section of the monument consists of the tomb-chest decorated with eight bronze panels (Figs. 3-10). The tomb-chest rests on four bronze sphinxes placed at the corners and a central marble support decorated with a winged laurel wreath. In the centre of the monument’s lid, which is carved with overlapping medallions and foliage, is a tabernacle that encloses the bronze death masks of the father and son (Fig. 11 and 12).

Six other bronze figures once decorated the top of the monument: four putti were placed

\textsuperscript{10} Translated by John Monfasani and published in Jill E. Carrington, \textit{Sculpted Tombs of the Professors of the University of Padua}, c. 1358 – c. 1557 (Dissertation, Syracuse University, 1996). "VIXIT PATER ANNO LXII N.F.Q. ULLI TAMEN OB PRAECLARAS INGENII ARTES QUAE TUM MAXIME IN ILLO FLOREBANT NON IMMATURE ERIPI VISUS EST FILIUS CUM IS IAM PATRIAE NON SOLUM LAUDI AEQUARETUR SED ET IN MAIOREM ETIAM NESCIO QUAM SUI EXPECTATIONEM HOMINES EREXISSET XXX AET[ATIS] ANNO ACERBISS[IMO] OMNIUM FATO PERIIT."

\textsuperscript{11} For example the epitaph for Jacopo da Forli, who died in 1414, recorded that: “There was no other more distinguished than he in the land of the Latins, nor more learned in Greece. He was another Aristotle, another Hippocrates to the Italians…. ” Translation by Carrington, 431. On the epitaphs of Paduan professors see Carrington.
on the corners and two putti were placed on both sides of the death masks. These bronze figures, likely removed during the Napoleonic occupation of Verona, were subsequently lost.\(^\text{12}\)

The extensive use of bronze was not common on contemporary funerary monuments; the material was usually reserved for those of an elevated status.\(^\text{13}\) To appreciate the decision to include the medium so extensively on the Della Torre monument, it is important to take into account the medium’s use in the decoration of the Church of St. Anthony in Padua and its use on other Paduan tombs. The extensive use of bronze within the choir of the Church of St. Anthony in Padua would not only have fuelled the popularity of the medium in Padua, but it would have also influenced contemporary thinking on the use of bronze within a sacred space.

The Della Torre monument was not the first tomb of a Paduan professor to combine bronze and marble; nor was it the last. It is significant that within a thirty years span three other such monument were made in Riccio’s circle. The first was the monument for Angelo and Paolo da Castro, in Santa Maria Dei Servi, Padua, 1492; the second monument was the tomb of Pietro Roccabonella, in S. Francesco, Padua, c. 1495-1498; and the third was Riccio’s monument for Antonio Trombetta, 1521-1524. Begun by Bartolommeo Bellano and finished by Riccio, the Roccabonella monument was the

\(^{\text{12}}\) Leopoldo Cicognara stated in his 1816 publication of *Storia della scultura* that removal of the figures was recent and lamented that the death masks appeared less eloquent since they were robbed of the seated, nude genietti. Leopoldo Cicognara, *Storia della scultura dal suo Risorgimento in Italia sino al secolo XIX, per servire di continuazione alle opere di Winkelmann e di d’Agincourt*, vol. II (Venezia, 1816), 138.

first Paduan work to make extensive use of bronze since the time of Donatello.\textsuperscript{14}

Significantly, this monument was created for a colleague of Girolamo Della Torre; the two professors would have known each other well as they are recorded as having promoted together a number of doctoral students.\textsuperscript{15}

As John Pope-Hennessy noted, the design of the Della Torre monument is “in all essential elements without precedent.”\textsuperscript{16} Anthony Radcliffe agreed with this assessment, as did Dieter Blume, who noted that the monument “breaks with all conventions.”\textsuperscript{17} Leo Planiscig argued that the Della Torre monument was in part influenced by the Lombard school of sculpture.\textsuperscript{18}

The Panels

The bronze panels designed for the tomb-chest depict a narrative of the life and death of a virtuous professor and his journey into the afterlife; the narrative is set in the classical world. Despite previous attempts to interpret the professor as either Girolamo or Marcantonio, the figure bears no direct resemblance to the Della Torre, whom Riccio faithfully portrayed on the death masks. I contend that the narrative does not refer specifically either to the father or to the son; instead, the professor in the narrative should be understood as an allegorical figure.\textsuperscript{19}

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\textsuperscript{15} Thus, the Roccabonella monument was not only one on which Riccio worked, it is one with which Girolamo Della Torre must have been familiar. Carrington 383-4.
\textsuperscript{16} Hennessy, Italian Renaissance Sculpture, 416.
\textsuperscript{17} Radcliffe, “The Illness of the Professor,” 374; Dieter Blume, “Antike und Christentum,” in Natur und Antike in der Renaissance, ed. S. Ebert-Schifferer (Frankfurt am Main: Liebieghaus, 1985), 113.
\textsuperscript{18} Planiscig, Andrea Riccio, 376.
\textsuperscript{19} Saxl argued that the professor in the narrative represented Girolamo Della Torre. John Pope-Hennessy agreed with Saxl’s identification and believed that the monument was likely commissioned prior to Marcantonio’s death in 1511. Most recently, Caterina Brenzoni has also accepted Saxl’s identification, while Anthony Radcliffe and Dieter Blume point to the professor’s generalized appearance, and therefore, chose not to identify the figure with either father or son. Lanfranco Franzoni argues the professor represents
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The professor lecturing

The first panel (Fig. 3) in the narrative presents the professor instructing a small group of students. Seated in front of a palm tree and at the feet of a statue of Minerva, the professor holds an open book from which he lectures. At his feet are more objects of learning—a book and an armillary sphere. The statue of Minerva illustrates that this is a place of learning and wisdom and may also be understood to identify the discipline of the professor as that of medicine.

Riccio included in this panel, not only the professor and his students, but four somewhat enigmatic figures. The first figure is a personification of a city, most likely Padua. She holds in her hands the model of a city, while at her feet a river flows beneath a river god: like the personification of the city, the river god suggests a geographic location. The professor, crowned with a laurel wreath, lectures under the inspiration of the god Apollo and a veiled woman previously identified as Hygieia. This is a puzzling and unsatisfactory identification because Hygieia is usually portrayed as a young and elegant goddess; her eyes and hair are always visible. It seems more likely that this figure is a personification of philosophy. Riccio has depicted a woman, no longer in the first flush of youth, who holds in her left hand a sceptre and in her right hand a book—these


20 The placement of the palm tree immediately behind the professor’s head is an unusual juxtaposition. The combination brings to mind Psalm 92:12 “the righteous shall flourish like the palm tree…” It may be that this is the first reference to the virtuous nature of the professor. (Riccio’s placement of the personification of the city in front of a laurel tree must then serve a similar purpose, in this case linking the city to attributes of the laurel—virtue and fame.) Planiscig included a discussion of the Biblical significance of the palm in his discussion of Riccio’s plaquettes. Planiscig, *Andrea Riccio*, 455-6.
are the attributes of Lady Philosophy described by Boethius in the *Consolation of Philosophy*. The closed book she holds is thus symbolic of the secrets of nature; Riccio, recognizing the sacred nature of this book, ensured that the arm and hand of *Philosophia* was entirely covered by her garment so that she does not touch the book directly. The sceptre she holds is a symbol of knowledge as the seat of power. In Boethius’s vision, Philosophy was not veiled; however, the idea of veiled knowledge was a common theme in the Renaissance and it would be an understandable alteration for Riccio to have made. Riccio was clearly familiar with the iconography of Hygieia before he began working on the Della Torre monument, as he drew on classical representations of...

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22 This figure was identified in 1816 by Cicognara as Hygieia, the daughter of Asclepius. Hygieia is usually depicted either with her father, Asclepius, or holding a *patera* to feed a snake that represents her father. Cicognara’s identification of this figure was largely accepted by subsequent scholars, including Radcliffe and Pope-Hennessy. Saxl questioned the identification, yet did not suggest an alternative, while Franzoni suggested that it was a representation of *Medicina*. So why was this figure identified as Hygieia in the first place? To answer this question it is necessary to return to Cicognara’s interpretation of this panel. Rather than understanding this scene as one of a professor lecturing, Cicognara believed it represented a consultation of a physician for the health of the ill professor. Thus, in his identification of this figure it appears that he may have sought his attribution primarily amongst the women associated with the medical arts. Hygieia would be an appropriate choice in a monument that includes a scene of sacrifice to her father Asclepius, as well as including representations of two other gods associated with the medical arts (Apollo and Minerva). However, the identification of this figure as Hygieia remains troubling. This attribution was dismissed by Dieter Blume who suggested that the figure represents an allegory of *Wissenschaft*. In a footnote, he writes that the meaning of this figure is still unclear, but “So ist hier an die Weisheit, die die Wahrheit verschleiert, zu denken.” Blume, “Antike und Christentum,” 118, 128 n. 99. Blume does not explain the exact reason for this interpretation, but it is a more convincing attribution than Cicognara’s. Boethius presented Philosophy as a teacher, nurse, and doctor making her inclusion in the narrative even more appropriate. Philosophy serves as the soul’s physician as she implanted in man the desire to follow God. Cicognara, *Storia della scultura*, 142; Radcliffe, “The Illness of the Professor ...”, 374; Pope-Hennessy, *Italian Renaissance Sculpture*, 416; Saxl, “Pagan Sacrifice,” 358; Lanfranco Franzoni, “Formella per il monumento Della Torre in San Fermo di Verona,” in *Bonaparte a Verona*, a cura di Gian Paolo Marchi e Paola Marini, ex. Cat. Verona Museo di Castelvecchio 20 settembre 1997 – 11 gennaio 1998 (Verona: Marsilio, 1997), 335.

23 While Lady Philosophy was not veiled in Boethius’s text, she did prevent the gaze of mere mortals by hiding her head in heaven. Moreover, it was her responsibility to “unfold the causes of things that are hidden and to reveal their principles, veiled in darkness.” Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy*, Prose I.1.2; IV.6.1.
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Hygieia/Salus for his personification of Prudence on the paschal candelabrum.  
Moreover, the clothing worn by the figure in the first panel is similar to that worn by a figure on the paschal candelabrum: a figure most frequently identified as Philosophy (Fig. 13). Thus, the virtuous professor lectures with the support of the figures behind him: the personification of the city and the river god give nourishment, while Apollo and Philosophia provide inspiration and knowledge.

The Illness of the Professor

The scene of the professor teaching is followed by the panel of The Illness of the Professor (Fig. 4). The scene is set outdoors, with draped clothing serving as the backdrop; the professor, his health failing him, is assisted onto a bed by attendants. While these attendants minister to the naked professor in the centre of the panel; on the left, the precariousness of his illness is fully illustrated by the presence of the Fates. Atropos and Lachesis stand in front of a tall post above which a fire blazes in a small brazier: the seated Clotho holds her distaff, while above her Atropos reaches around Lachesis to cut the thread of the professor’s life.

The professor sits on the edge of the bed with his body turned toward the viewer. His position echoes that of the priest in the Laöcooon: the professor’s pain is clearly

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25 On the identification of the personifications on the paschal candelabrum, see Banzato’s chapter on the candelabrum in both the Trent and Frick exhibition catalogues. Davide Banzato, “Il Candelabro pasquale di Andrea Riccio. Note sulla storia, la committenza, la lettera, le derivazioni dall’antico e da altri fonti figurative,” in Rinascimento e passione per l’antico: Andrea Riccio e il suo tempo, ed. Andrea Bacchi and Luciana Giacomelli (Trent: Provincia autonoma di Trento, 2008) and Davide Banzato, “Riccio’s Humanist Circle and the Paschal Candelabrum,” in Andrea Riccio: Renaissance Master of Bronze, ed. Denise Allen and Peta Motture, New York, Frick Museum (London: Philip Wilson Pub., 2008). The representation of Philosophy on the paschal candelabrum does not wear such a heavy veil, nor does she hold the sceptre and the book. With the exception of Theology and Philosophy, most of the female personifications on the paschal candelabrum are not so carefully covered with clothing, and their attire is a little more revealing.
evident. His mouth open, he leans back against two people who assist him, tightly grasping a pillow with his right hand and placing his left hand on his chest. There is a sense of distress and urgency amongst those trying to nurse the professor.

The scene unfolds under the watchful eyes of the Vestal Virgins on the right and Apollo, who stands near the foot of the professor’s bed. The attention of Vestal Virgins is diverted from the fire they tend by the drama unfolding in the centre of the panel. A family member at the foot of the bed seems to have resigned himself to the inevitable: with a calm, quiet sadness, he gazes at the professor. In a gesture of comfort, his left arm rests on the young woman in front of him. There seems little hope for the professor’s recovery.

*The Sacrifice to Asclepius*

In the third panel, a sacrifice is made on behalf of the professor (Fig. 5). A large group of people, predominantly male, have gathered outside a temple for the sacrificial rites. The fire burns atop the sacrificial altar as two libations are gently poured onto the altar. Behind the altar is the façade of a temple with Ionic columns; there are palm trees on each side of the temple, highlighting the central placement of the temple and the altar in the panel.

The participants have brought a number of offerings, including two boars, five sheep, and a bull. The animals are prepared for slaughter. On the left, a young man holds a sheep between his legs, slitting the animal’s throat with his right hand. In front of him, a young boy holds a bowl to catch the animal’s blood. In the right foreground, two young men kneel as they struggle to catch one of the swine while the bull and another sheep are brought towards the altar. In the foreground, immediately in front of the altar, there is a
small pedestal decorated with a garland: on it, a *patera* has been placed containing an offering to the pagan god Asclepius. A snake, entwined around an amphora, has made its way towards the offering. Fritz Saxl’s discussion of this panel in his 1939 article on pagan sacrifice in the Renaissance has made this one of the best known of the Della Torre reliefs. Saxl argued that this scene was included in the narrative to show the sacrifice to Asclepius as a means to secure the ascent of the soul after the death of the body.

*The Death of the Professor*

The narrative continues with the scene of the professor’s death (Fig. 6). The scene is set in an interior space and is lit by torches. A large group of family and friends is gathered around the professor as his body is laid to rest upon his death bed. At the foot of the bed stands a priest, donned in more contemporary clothing than the other figures and holding an open book; he appears to have given the last rites.

In front of the death bed, a young child kneels over a small brazier; he cups his hand behind the small flame as he puffs his cheeks to blow it out. This episode suggests that the scene represents the very moment of the professor’s death and the flame the child extinguishes symbolizes the flame of life. Standing below the body of the deceased professor is his soul, presented as a naked and winged putto. The soul of the professor, set free from the body to begin its journey into the afterlife, holds a palm frond in one hand and a book in the other hand. The book, an attribute of the deceased’s profession, identifies the soul as that of the professor and the palm frond symbolizes his triumph over death. The attention of the soul has been caught by the small vase, the one that was standing rather precariously in *The Illness of the Professor*; it has fallen over and its
contents poured out. Like the flame blown out by the young child, the overturning of this vase also seems to suggest the moment of the professor’s death.26

The scene of the professor’s death is reminiscent of representations of the Lamentation of Christ. The body of the professor is supported by three of the mourners: his upper body is shown frontally, his head fallen down over his right shoulder, his left hand has fallen limply against his right thigh while his other arm hangs over the edge of the bed. Behind the deathbed, female mourners present images of mourning commonly included in scenes of the Lamentation. Wiping tears from their eyes, two mourners cover their head to conceal their grief; some of the mourners have their mouths open, which is suggestive of crying and wailing—others, in their despair, raise their hands heavenward or tear at their hair. While the women in the scene represent the extremes of mourning, the grief of the men, as eloquently illustrated by the figure who sits in the lower right corner of the panel, is noticeably more restrained—a solitary figure, he sits quietly, his head resting in his hand.

The Funeral of the Professor

The fifth panel (Fig. 7) presents the funeral of the professor and it includes a representation of the professor’s tomb, which bears a striking resemblance to the tomb Riccio designed for the Della Torre. Slightly offset to the left, the funerary monument surrounded by two groups of mourners takes up much of the space in the funeral scene.

26 While it would be appropriate for Riccio to include a small vase like this as a container for liquids to nurse or to cleanse the ill professor, it seems significant that this vase—in both The Illness of the Professor and in The Death of the professor—is placed in position that corresponds to the position of the professor. It seems Riccio is using the Ciceronian metaphor of the body as a vessel for the soul. See Frosien-Leinz, Heike, “Antikisches Gebrauchsgerät – Weisheit und Magie in den Öllampen Riccios,” in Natur und Antike in der Renaissance, ed. Herbert Beck and Dieter Blume (Frankfurt am Main: Liebieghaus 1985) and Ute Davitt Asmus, Corpus quasi vas. Beiträge zur Ikonologie der italienischen Renaissance (Berlin: Mann, 1977).
On the right, a group of mourners has turned away from the monument; as they leave the funeral, they are purified by a priest, who, holding a branch high in the air, sprinkles them with water. In the foreground, in front of these mourners, two young men are fully absorbed in their task of raising a large amphora. Anthony Radcliffe identified this episode of the purification of the mourners as the beginning of the Vergilian narrative on the tomb, pointing out that it reflected the account given of the funeral of Misenus in the sixth book of the Aeneid.27

Placed in a more confined space to the left of the funerary monument is the second group of mourners, who observe with great attention the scene of purification and the funeral monument itself. Riccio depicts some of the men straining to see over the heads of the figures standing in front of them, or attempting to view the purification from their position behind the tomb. Their effort to watch the figures on the right of the panel illustrates their interest in the scene of purification.

One episode appears out of place in a funerary scene: two young children are playing in front of the tomb; one of them holds in front of his face a mask with a large distorted mouth, angry eyes, and a broad wrinkled forehead. The other young child trips and falls to the ground in the attempt to escape this foreboding figure; he holds up one

27 Anthony Radcliffe, “The Illness of the Professor / The Soul of the Professor in the Fortunate Woods,” The Genius of Venice: 1500-1600, ed. Jane Martineau and Charles Hope, London, Royal Academy (New York: Abrams, 1984), 374. Vergil, in his description of this funeral, writes that the priest, Corynnaus, after having placed the remains of Misenus in an urn, sprinkled the mourners three times with dew from an olive branch. Clearly the large amphora that Riccio included in this panel is more akin to vessels used to hold liquid than to funerary urns; although the various uses and forms of classical containers was a subject of interest to Riccio, as demonstrated throughout his work, it is difficult to ascertain how knowledgeable he was concerning their usage. This vessel seems to serve, not as the funerary urn, but as a vessel for water used by the priest to purify the mourners.
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arm to protect himself from the frightening vision. These figures were linked to a passage in Seneca’s *De Constantia Sapientis* by Lanfranco Franzoni in 1983.  

Certainly one of the most striking aspects of this panel is the representation of the funeral monument. As will be examined in greater detail in Chapter III, the tomb in the panel echoes the design of the actual Della Torre monument. The structure of the monument is nearly identical to Riccio’s depiction of the monument in the panel, although the decorative details are different. The tomb-chest in the panel has the same design as the one on the monument; however, no narrative reliefs are evident in the panel. (It is ironic that this is how many viewers would have experienced the Della Torre monument in the first half of the 19th century.) In the relief an hourglass and two books have been placed on the table that supports the tomb, a further book lies on the ground in front of the monument. The inclusion of the books in the relief indicates the contemporary funerary practice of using objects in the funeral procession and ceremony to identify the status and profession of the deceased. The hour glass, as a well-known symbol of the swift passage of time, serves as a *memento mori* like the skull below it.

One significant aspect of the representation of the tomb in Riccio’s relief is that it presents an image of how the tomb may have looked before the removal of the bronzes that once decorated the lid. In the panel, two putti holding oil lamps flank the tabernacle in the centre of the lid, while more putti holding masks sit on the corners.

*The Descent of the Professor’s Soul into the Underworld*

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In the sixth panel, the soul of the professor, first seen in *The Death of the Professor*, continues his journey into the afterlife (Fig. 8). This panel and the following one continue to draw on Book VI of Vergil’s *Aeneid*. The scene is divided in the centre by a tall elm tree: on the right, there is the river and the souls waiting to cross it; on the left, the mouth of Tartarus. A sinister group of figures is crowded around the entrance of Tartarus. Here, Riccio has depicted a multitude of tormented figures taken from Vergil’s description of the mouth of hell in the sixth book of the *Aeneid*. Most striking are the monstrous figures emerging from the very mouth of hell, like the winged figure of Strife who has snakes bound around her wrists. In the lower left corner, an elderly man personifying Death is in a deep sleep; the figure of Fear, in the form of a lion, stands at his feet; slumbering at the base of the elm tree, with chimera and centaurs behind him, is the personification of Sleep.

In the lower right corner, the soul of the professor boards Charon’s boat to make his journey to the Elysian Fields. Still grasping the book under his right arm, with his left hand he reaches for the outstretched hand of the ferryman, as he climbs onto the boat. A vigorous old man with muscular arms and a long curly beard, Charon is naked but for a shawl bound by a knot over his left shoulder. The strapping figure of Charon, who gives his hand in assistance to the soul of the professor, takes up most of the space in the small boat, making it clear that there is little space in the boat for transporting souls across the river. Crowded at the edge of the shore is the host of young souls impatiently awaiting their journey across the river. While Planiscig saw this as a representation of Dante’s *Underworld*, in 1983 Radcliffe demonstrated that Riccio was, in fact, drawing on Vergil’s *Aeneid* and that his use of Vergilian imagery was tied to the contemporary debates over
the nature and immortality of the soul. Riccio’s employment of imagery from Book VI of the *Aeneid* was examined in more detail in 1985 by Dieter Blume.

*The Soul’s arrival in the Elysian Fields*

In the seventh panel (Fig. 9), Riccio presents the arrival of the professor’s soul in the Elysian Fields. The scene is set in a verdant grove, with an array of lush trees in the background. The Elysian Fields are filled with merriment as the inhabitants of paradise sing, dance, and make music. In the foreground, the soul of the professor is led through the garden by a guide who shows him the delights of Elysium. Behind the soul of the professor, other young souls dance to the music created by their companions. Riccio also included the three Graces and a pair of embracing lovers. Another amorous exchange is seen as the woman who guides the professor’s soul affectionately touches the chin of the man who stands before her.

In the upper right corner, a soul leans over a bank to drink from the river Lethe; drinking from the river cleanses the soul from the corruption of life. In the lower right corner, the figure of Fame, her trumpet raised, heralds the fame of one of the four sleeping men. At the feet of these men are an overturned amphora and a Bacchic mask coupled with a book and an armillary sphere—the same objects were placed at the feet of the professor in the first panel. The book and the armillary sphere identify this sleeping man as the professor: he is now dressed in the same attire he wore in the first panel. The figure of Fame crowns the sleeping professor with a laurel wreath. The figure of Fame, once more holding her trumpet and the laurel wreath, also heralds the fame of the professor in the eighth and final panel of the narrative.
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*The Triumph of Humanist Virtue*

Set amidst a mountain range, the figure of Fame presides over the last panel (Fig. 10). Standing on a large globe, her wings extended, Fame held a trumpet (now missing) to her lips with her left hand and grasps a laurel wreath with her right. This panel presents the triumph of humanist virtue over Death. On the right of the panel is the figure of Death; on the left, Pegasus is shown creating Hippocrene, the sacred fountain of the Muses.

Riccio has presented Death as a tall, winged corpse. The corpse is not entirely skeletal: although his ribcage is fully exposed, skin is still attached to the sides of his torso and other parts of his body. While Riccio rarely depicted the macabre in his work, his representation of Death at first appears ominous and threatening until the viewer recognizes that this figure is vanquished. The figure of Fame towers over him, Death has dropped his scythe to the ground. He stands, powerless, his arms bound to the large, withered tree behind him.²⁹

At the base of the globe rest two books and a tall vase stands on the right. The vase is shaped like a large jug with two openings. From each of the openings sprout two branches: a laurel emerges from the top opening, and a palm frond from the bottom one. A cornucopia leans against a vase on which there is a small, lit oil lamp and a book. The vase is inscribed with the word “VIRTUTIS” (of virtue); the only word inscribed in the panels, it highlights the importance of virtue to the narrative. The virtue of the professor

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²⁹ The thick branches, which have shrivelled up and been broken off, demonstrated that this tree was once an impressive specimen. Riccio contrasts verdancy with withered, dead growth in much of his work where it was frequently used to illustrate the effects of virtue and vice, in particular, the necessity of nurturing virtue.
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gives life to fame (laurel) and triumph (the palm). The light touch of Fame’s foot on top of the vase not only draws the viewer’s attention to it but also underlines its importance.

The Order of the Panels

The removal of the panels from the tomb by Napoleon’s forces in 1796 complicated the study of the monument and led to the confusion over the original order of the panels. Today, with the exception of Anthony Radcliffe’s assertion in 1984 that the panel of the Sacrifice to Asclepius follows the Death of the Professor, the most convincing arrangement of the panels, the one accepted by contemporary scholars, is the one presented above. In May of 1798, the panels were on display in the Louvre; an entry in a gallery catalogue stated that the narrative depicted the story of Mausolus. In

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30 Cecil Gould, *Trophy of Conquest. The Musée Napoléon and the Creation of the Louvre* (London: Faber and Faber, 1965), 47, 54. While Napoleon’s forces limited the number of works of art they removed from most cities during their expansion, the removal of art from Verona was a punitive measure. As the city had revolted in April of 1797, many works were removed that were not part of a previously prepared list of desired objects. The goal became to take as much as possible from both public and private collections. The Della Torre panels were not amongst the many works returned to Verona in 1815. There is some debate over when the panels were removed from Verona. Cicognara and many subsequent Italian scholars state the works were removed in the period following the uprising. Cicognara specifically refers to them being included in the works taken in May 1797, while the records in the Louvre state they were in Paris in 1796. Cicognara, *Storia della scultura*, 140. Because the classicism of Riccio’s panels was particularly appreciated at the end of the 18th century, it is quite likely that the panels were considered amongst the city’s most valuable works of art, which would have made them a target for removal before the uprising. It is possible that the discrepancy between the two dates may be explained by the fact that the removal of art from Verona in 1797 had a more pronounced impact on the local psyche than the works removed in the previous year.

31 Radcliffe, “The Genius of Venice,” 374. The brief nature of the catalogue entry prevented him from explaining this order; it would appear he thought the scene of sacrifice should follow the death because the sacrifice was made for the well-being of the professor’s soul.

1811 the panels were placed on the doors of the Salle des Caryatides designed by the architect Charles Percier. Urging in 1850 that the panels be moved to the Italian Renaissance Hall, Léon de Laborde argued that the arrangement of the panels on the doors was not a happy one, as it neither reflected the nature of the reliefs’ ‘disposition’ nor allowed the works to be studied. Following the dismantling of the doors in 1854, Percier provided the museum with an illustration of his design (Fig. 14), which clearly demonstrates that the order of the panels on the door could not have reflected the sequence of the narrative that would have been on the tomb.

In the early 19th century, Leopoldo Cicognara dismissed the contemporary interpretation of the narrative and the order of the panels. He argued that the proper order was as follows: 1) the illness of the professor; 2) the soul boarding Charon’s boat; 3) a scene of a medical consultation set in Verona under the guidance of Apollo and Hygieia; 4) the sacrifice to Asclepius; 5) the death of the professor; 6) the soul’s arrival in Elysium; 7) the triumph of Fame; and 8) the panel with a depiction of the funerary monument. He argued that the last two panels were concerned with the desire for...

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The booklet appears to have gone missing. Cicognara, *Storia della scultura*, 139.

The letter of Laborde to Nieuwerkerke from July 30, 1850 is published in Madeleine Rousseau, “Deux lettres de Léon de Laborde A. M. De Niuwerkerke concernant Le Département des sculptures modernes au Louvre,” *Bulletin de la Societe de l’histoire de l’art français* (1934): 299-300. It appears that Auguste Rodin may have seen either the door in his youth or was familiar with Percier’s drawing, as he drew upon both Percier’s door and Riccio’s panels in his creation of *The Gates of Hell*. In one of his early studies for *The Gates of Hell*, the words “maladie” and what appears to be “riccio” are found in a drawing based upon Riccio’s *The Illness of the Professor*. See Kirk Varnedoe, “Early Drawings by Auguste Rodin,” *The Burlington Magazine* 116, No. 853 (April, 1974), 197-204.

Charles Percier, *Drawing of the Porte de la Salle des Caryatides*, Inv. 32297, Recto, Fondes des dessins et miniatures, Très grand format, Musée du Louvre, Département des Arts graphiques. On the Doors, see Geneviève Monnier, *Dessins de architecture du XIVe au XIXe siècle*, Musée du Louvre (Paris, 1972), Cat. Entry 66. The drawing shows from top to bottom: Left door - The Illness of the Professor, The Sacrifice to Asclepius, The Death of the Professor, and The Funeral of the Professor. On the right door: The Soul of the Professor crossing the River Styx; The Professor Teaching, The Professor in the Elysian Fields; and the Triumph of Fame. In the 19th century, the scene of the professor teaching was interpreted as an image of a medical consultation.
posterity. While Cicognara’s order is unlikely, he did make important contributions to the understanding of the narrative, the most significant of which was his recognition that the sacrifice on the monument is made to the pagan god Asclepius.

Authorship of the Tomb

The changing legacy of Riccio’s fame is an important element of the history of the Della Torre monument: at the end of the 16th century, many of Riccio’s works were deemed indecipherable and some of them were considered to be ancient. By the time Napoleon’s troops had plundered the monument, the author was unknown. In 1796 the Veronese architect Luigi Trezza made a series of studies of local architecture, including two illustrations of the Della Torre monument. According to the inscription on the facing page of Trezza’s first study, the monument was the work of Michele Sanmicheli. It was not until 1800, when Abate Don Jacopo Morelli discovered the notebooks of Marcantonio Michiel, that the name of the artist who created the Della Torre monument was recovered. Amongst Michiel’s annotations was an epitaph written in honour of Riccio by the Dominican Fra Desiderio del Legname. The epitaph records Riccio as the author of both the paschal candelabrum in the Santo and Della Torre monument:

For Andrea Crispo Briosco of Padua, outstanding sculptor of our time, who, for his bronze candelabrum in the church of St. Anthony and the famous tomb of the Della Torre of Verona, deserves to be compared

35 Biblioteca Civica Verona, MS. 1010, cc 55 and 56. The first illustration combines the “prospetto maggiore” with the “metta del fianco” and it included a view of two of the panels. Unfortunately the illustration is not faithful enough to the monument to be considered a reliable confirmation of the original order of the panels. Trezza’s primary concern was the correct measurements and shapes of the architectural elements. This is most evident in his portrayal of the putti on top of the monument; they are quite crudely sketched. The lower portion of the monument contains a frieze with figures growing out of scrolled foliage; unfortunately, his frieze does not correspond correctly to the frieze on the tomb, as the figures he placed on the corner of the frieze should be in the centre and the figures in the centre should be in the corner. The second illustration provides further details of various architectural elements of the monument.

36 In the inscription of the first drawing, Trezza wrote “creduta opera di Micheli Sanmicheli.” Biblioteca Civica Verona, MS. 1010, cc 55.
Chapter I The Della Torre Monument and San Fermo Maggiore

with the ancients; Alessandro Bassiano and Giovanni Cavino, executors of the will of their very good friend, set up this place of perpetual rest in the year 1532.\(^{37}\)

Although Riccio designed the monument, there is no evidence that he ever worked in marble; marble sculptors were employed for his other projects that incorporated marble. Riccio designed the marble work for the Antonio Trombetta monument, but Gian Matteo and Vincenzo Grandi were commissioned to carve the marble. Although carved by Francesco da Cola, there seems to be little doubt that the marble base of the paschal candelabrum was designed by Riccio.\(^{38}\) Antonio Sartori proposed in 1976 that family workshops of Briosco and Grandi may have collaborated at times, and Vicenzo Grandi has been proposed as the sculptor who worked with Riccio on the Della Torre monument.\(^{39}\)

\(^{37}\)(My translation) “ANDREAE CRISPO BRIOSCO PAT. / STATUARIO NOSTRAE TEMPESTATIS EXIMIO/ VEL CANDELABRO AENEO D. ANTONII / ET SEPULCHRO INSIGNI TURRIANORUM VERONENSIVM / CUM ANTIQUIS CONFERENDO / ALEXANDER BASSIANUS, ET I[O]HOANNES CAVINUS/ TESTAMENTI CURATOORES / AMICO BEN. MR. / HANC PERPETUAE QUIETIS SEDEM POS. AN. MDXXXII.” An inscription by Girolamo Negro was ultimately placed on Riccio’s tomb. Negro was both a friend of Marcantonio Michiel and a close friend of Marco Mantova Benavides. It is interesting that Negro was the author of Riccio’s epitaph, since he showed little interest in the visual arts. His epitaph focused solely on the fame Riccio received for the paschal candelabrum:

“ANDREAE CRISPO BRIOSCO / PAT. STATUARIO INSIGNI / CUIUS OPERA AD ANTIQUORUM / LAUDEM PROXIME ACCEDUNT / IN PRIMIS AENEUM CANDELABRUM / QUOD IN AEDE D. ANTONII CERNITUR / HAEREDES POS. / VIX. AN. LXII. MENS. III. DIES VII. / OBIIT VIII. ID. JULII MDXXXII.” Both epitaphs were published in Napoleone Pietrucci, Biografia degli artisti padovani (Padua: Forni Editore Bologna, 1858), 51 and 53.

\(^{38}\) Riccio included elements from the base of the paschal candelabrum on the Della Torre monument, and the figures that grow out of foliage on the frieze of the Della Torre monument were also included in the marble carvings on the Trombetta Monument. Marcantonio Michiel, The Anonimo. Notes on pictures and works of art in Italy made by an anonymous writer in the sixteenth century, trans. Paolo Mussi, ed. George C. Williamson (London, 1969), 6.

\(^{39}\) Antonio Sartori, Documenti per la storia dell’arte a Padova, a cura di C. Fillarini (Padua, 1976), 279-80, 442-451. The editors of the recent Riccio exhibition in Trent, Andrea Bacchi and Luciana Giacomelli, agree with this proposition. For the most recent discussions of the Grandi brothers, see Bacchi and Giacomelli, “Rinascimento di terra e di fuoco. Figure all’antica e immagini devote nella scultura di Andrea Riccio,” in Rinascimento e passione per l’antico. Andrea Riccio and il suo tempo (Trent, 2008), 17-58; and Francesca de Gramatica, “‘Anticamente moderni e modernamente antichi.’ I Grandi nella storia della scultura veneta rinascimentale.” in Rinascimento e passione per l’antico. Andrea Riccio and il suo tempo (Trent, 2008), 165-178.
In the 18th and 19th centuries, the Veronese considered the Della Torre monument one of the most magnificent tombs in Italy. The classicism of Riccio’s panels ensured that the monument remained a source of admiration for the Veronese throughout this period; however, the absence of the bronze panels was noted and they were greatly missed. In the 19th century, the recovery of the panels was of ongoing concern in Verona: while other works taken from the city during the Napoleonic occupation were restored to the city in the second decade of the 19th century, the Della Torre panels remained in Paris. In 1827 the Commission of Ornato in Verona ordered the restoration of the Della Torre chapel and unsuccessfully sought the return of the panels from France. A couple of decades later, the issue of the sad state of the tomb was raised by Paolo Brenzoni, a prominent Veronese dedicated to the artistic enrichment of Verona. By 1852 Brenzoni was attempting to convince the French authorities to allow him to make

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40 D. Zannandreis, Le vite dei pittori, scultori e architetti veronesi, ed. G. Biadego (Verona, 1877), 91. Giovani Battista da Persico, Descrizione di Verona e della Sua Provincia, Part I (Verona: Dalla Societa Tipografica Editrice, 1820), 191. In the 19th century, Rodin and Delacroix separately studied the illness of the professor. Varnedoe, “Early Drawings by Auguste Rodin,” 201-2 and Albert E. Elsen, The Gates of Hell by Auguste Rodin (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985). The Veronese were not alone in lamenting the loss of the monument’s panels: in 1839 Antoine Valery observed that “this fine monument was stripped by the war of its bronze…one might have expected that these tombs would be respected in all these ravages.” Antoine Claude Pasquin Valery, Historical, Literary and Artistical Travels in Italy, trans. C. E. Clifton (Paris: Baudry’s European Library, 1839), 112. Twenty years later, S. F. Palgrave added his condemnation of the removal of the panels, stating that the “broken and disfigured panels remain as accusers of this vandalism.” S. F. Palgrave, Handbook for Travellers in Italy, 4th edition (London: John Murray, 1860), 278. The current state of the chamber would appall the monument’s 18th-century audience. The small room is often used as a storage area and most visitors to the church seem unsure if they should actually enter the space. If they do enter the chamber, they tend to stand near the entrance and very few actually encircle the monument. Hopefully, the planned restorations to the chapel and chamber will alter this.

 copies of the panels through the new process of galvano-plastic reproduction.\textsuperscript{42} As a result of Brenzoni’s efforts, the monument now holds these copies.

The Family Chapel in San Fermo Maggiore

The current state of the Della Torre family chapel and the many alterations made to it in the mid-17\textsuperscript{th} century make it difficult to ascertain its appearance in the early cinquecento when plans were made for the commemoration of Girolamo and Marcantonio Della Torre. Prior to the documents related to the 17\textsuperscript{th} century alterations to the chapel, there are few documents about this chapel. The first Della Torre to be buried in the left transept of San Fermo was Domenico Della Torre, who had requested burial in this chapel in his 1357 will.\textsuperscript{43} In the early quattrocento, he was joined by his nephew Domenico and his niece Elena.\textsuperscript{44}

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\textsuperscript{42} His dedication to this project is recorded in letters to his close friend, Angelo Messedaglia: “Qui mi sono occupato di contrattare la rifusione galvano-plastica dei basso-rilievi Della Torre per compiere quel monumento a S. Fermo, e ne mandai a Verona il proggetto e descrizione relativa. Spero bene che venga accettato, ma certi dati, passami talora davanti agli occhi una certa dubbiezza da farmi anche temere. La spesa di mille lire è sì poca allo scopo che si raggiunge, che se non l’accettano, e non l’approvano meritan le fischiate.” Six years later, in a letter to Messedaglia in February of 1858 he recorded: “Ora se posso, procurerò di fare venire a Verona le copie galvanoplastiche degli otto basso rilievi in bronzo che ornarono il monumento Della Torre a S. Fermo: squisito lavoro del cinquecento, che può gareggiare con le porte del Giberti a Firenze, tanto é vero che questi Francesi ne ornarono il loro maggiore ingresso alle Sale di Statuaria nel Louvre.” Giuseppe Franco Viviani, “Paolo Brenzoni: una vita per Caterina Bon, per le ‘povera gente’ a per l’arte,” Atti e memorie dell’Accademia di Agricultura, Scienze e Lettere di Verona Serie VI, Vol. XXIII, CXLVIII dell’intera collezione (1971-1972): 229-265; and Biblioteca Civica Verona, Carteggio Angelo Messedaglia. The battle to recover the original panels continued into the mid-19\textsuperscript{th} century. In 1866 one of the Della Torre descendents, Girolamo Giuliai, attempted to have the panels either returned or the family compensated. Brenzoni, 287, and Franzoni, “Formella per il monumento Della Torre in San Fermo di Verona,” 336. Biblioteca Capitolare Verona, MS. DCCCCLXXXVI, fasc. 7.

\textsuperscript{43} Domenico Della Torre’s tomb is one of two tombs now located beneath the floor in the family’s mausoleum. Da Liscia recorded the inscription on Domenico’s tomb: “K (hic?) iacet sapiens vir dominus Dominicus quondam domin Bartolomei de la Turi: de Verona qui obiit anno domini MCCCLXII die mensi novembris.” The other tomb is that of Gentili Francesco Della Torre who died in 1667. Da Liscia records only two tombs: it is unclear whether or not he investigated this lower chamber fully and, thus, whether or not further members of the Della Torre family were interred here. Da Liscia, Studi e ricerche originali sulla chiesa di S. Fermo Maggiore, 90. Domenico Della Torre’s testament was written on December 14, 1357. See Sartori, vol II. p. 2093, Archivio Stato Verona, S. Fermo, Reg. 2, p. 116v.

\textsuperscript{44} In 1415, his nephew, Domenico, requested to be buried in the chapel before the altar dedicated to St. Francis. Sez. Archivio di Stato di Verona, Uff. De Reg., test n. 81, anno 1415. Domenico’s testament makes it clear that an altar and monument were already in place by June 1415. Domenico’s oldest son
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During the quattrocento, the Della Torre family was actively involved in the Franciscan communities in Verona: they had close ties with the convent of St. Bernardino in Verona and not only supported San Fermo and its convent but also took part in the founding of the convent of St. Chiara in Verona. In the 1480s Ludovico Della Torre, Girolamo Della Torre’s cousin and a friar at St. Bernardino, Verona, wrote an important tract entitled *De immaculata conceptione*. In his funeral oration for Girolamo, Pierio Valeriano paid homage to this Franciscan friar who had died in 1502. Stating that if he had not died prematurely he would have been made a cardinal, Valeriano praised Ludovico’s pious nature.

The chapel’s frescoes

Dedicated to Saint Francis, the Della Torre chapel (Figs. 15-17) was decorated with narrative frescoes of the life of St. Francis c. 1330-1360; however, there are remnants of more than one fresco campaign in this space. Most of the frescoes visible in the chapel...
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today date from the mid-14\textsuperscript{th} century, the period by which almost all the upper church of San Fermo had been painted with narrative cycles. These frescoes are in poor condition and the current remnants reveal that the walls were painted on at least three different occasions. Moreover, it is evident that the majority of the frescoes now visible in the chapel were prepared for an additional layer of frescoes.\textsuperscript{49} In 1909 Alessandro Da Liscia recorded some of the restorations made to the church from 1905 to 1909 and the discoveries made during this period. It was during this period of restoration that the frescos on the upper wall of the Della Torre chapel were restored.\textsuperscript{50} In 1907 Alethea Wiel gave a brief account of the restorations underway in San Fermo: she recorded the uncovering of the 13\textsuperscript{th}-century frescoes hidden beneath a coat of whitewash.\textsuperscript{51} In 1905 the apse on the east wall was reopened, revealing the fresco of the Virgin and Child to the left of the apse and the images of the seraphim in the upper section of the apse.\textsuperscript{52}

\textsuperscript{49} It is unclear if another level was applied. Bourda points to an earlier fresco uncovered in the upper section of the wall that opens onto the small chamber; part of a later fresco is visible on the upper left of the same wall. The fresco of the Madonna and Child on the apse wall was largely untouched; the same appears to be true of a section on the exterior wall. The upper exterior wall was prepared for frescoes, while the layer near the top of the two lower windows was left unprepared. This fits with the height, but not the length, of the planned altar. Most likely, Da Liscia’s restoration of the frescoes in the early 1900s was primarily confined to the removal of whitewash on the walls.

\textsuperscript{50} Da Liscia, 93. Da Liscia’s work was not intended to be an exhaustive study of the church; nonetheless, it contributes much useful information.

\textsuperscript{51} She also praised the removal of the ugly buildings that were crowded around San Fermo. Alethea Wiel, “Monuments at Verona,” \textit{Burlington Magazine} 12, no. 56 (Nov., 1907): 105-106. Amongst the frescoes visible in 1902, she records the frescoes over the archway to the right and the left of the high altar; the fresco of the Crucifixion, the frescoes surrounding the pulpit, and the fresco by Pisanello. In the \textit{Story of Verona}, published in 1902, Wiel wrote that there was a fresco over the small door leading into the Della Torre chapel. It appears that she was referring to the chamber, rather than the chapel, as the opening to the chapel is very large and as she continued by stating that the chapel held the tomb of Girolamo Della Torre. She recorded that this fresco was signed and dated by Francesco Bonsignori in 1484. Alethea Wiel, \textit{The Story of Verona} (London: J. M. Dent & Co., 1902), 207. Currently, the only frescoes on the wall opening onto the chapel appear to be from earlier campaigns and there is no evidence of this late-quattrocento fresco. If the chapel did include a fresco by Bonsignori it must have been a victim of the restoration of the early Franciscan cycle in 1905, but this seems unlikely.

\textsuperscript{52} Gian Paolo Marchini, \textit{Monumenti di Cultura e d’Arte Veronesi}, a cura della Banca Popolare di Verona.
Unfortunately, not much can be deduced about the appearance of the fresco cycle that would have decorated the chapel in the early 16th century.

The 17th-century restorations to the chapel and its altar

The 17th century family archives record the desire to restore the family chapel and its altar. The first records of the plans to restore the chapel date from January 1627; however, the state of the family chapel and altar remained an issue of concern for the Della Torre in the subsequent decades. The restorations were finally begun in 1662.53 In May 1664 Salvatore Bianchi and his son Giovanni Battista were named as the stoneworkers for the new altar and as architects for the chapel.54 The documents indicate that an altar dedicated to St. Francis stood in the apse prior to the mid-17th-century alterations. It was only in the mid-17th century that the apse was closed up, along with most of the windows on the exterior wall of the transept.55 Since the apse is neither large nor very deep, this older altar must have been fairly modest in size. The form of the old altar and its altarpiece remains unknown; unfortunately, all that can be said of the altar during the cinquecento is that it appears to have been placed opposite the opening of the chamber in which the Della Torre monument stands.

The mid-17th-century altar was placed against the exterior wall facing the nave. The height of this new altar was such that it covered most of the long windows and the lower

53 The summaries are contained in the Archivio di Stato di Verona. The Giulieri Della Torre archives are found in the Archivio di Stato and the Biblioteca Capitolare Verona. Various branches of the family met on January 5, 1627, to discuss alterations to the chapel. In Antonio Sartori, Archivio Sartori, Documenti di storia e arte francescana II/2, La Provincia del Santo dei Frati Minori Coeventuali (Padua: Biblioteca Antoniana, Basilica del Santo, 1986), 2148-2149.
54 Funding the alterations to the chapel and the new altar predominates most of the family documents in the Seicento.
55 On May 15, 1664, the plans for the chapel included walling up the niche in which the old altar stood. It was not until 1681 that payment was made for closing up the windows and the apse. This document also records that this is where the previous altar stood. Sartori, Archivio Sartori, 2153, 2156.
portion of the altar would have taken up much of the floor space of the chapel.\textsuperscript{56} In 1706 an altarpiece of the \textit{Madonna with St. Francis pulling up souls from Purgatory} was painted by Giovanni Bellotti for the new altar.\textsuperscript{57} The chapel also held three large paintings depicting scenes from the life of St. Francis by Giovanni Battista Lanceni. The new altar stood at this location for less than a century; in 1860 it was moved to the right side of the nave where it currently stands. Unfortunately, all these changes mean that we are left with very little understanding of how Riccio’s monument was incorporated with the family chapel and its altar. What is clear is that the Della Torre did not commission a new fresco cycle together with the tomb.

\section*{The Della Torre and the Church}

The Della Torre family was actively involved with the Franciscans in the closing years of the quattrocento. While there is little information about Girolamo Della Torre and his sons’ involvement within the church in the years prior to the commissioning of this monument, a closer look at the Della Torre family and friends reveals an image of their religious concerns starkly different from the one that emerged in Fritz Saxl’s article. The Della Torre brothers and many of their closest friends were intimately connected with various reform-minded figures.\textsuperscript{58} Recent scholarship has focused on the involvement of the Della Torre family and many of their friends with Bishop Gian Matteo Giberti.

\textsuperscript{56} Da Liscia, 43. The current altar contains an urn of marble with the relics of St. Gualfardo, a German hermit who arrived in Verona in 1097 and died in 1127.


\textsuperscript{58} As will be discussed in Chapter II, Gian Matteo Bandello’s stories set in Verona (1529-1536) featured several different members of the Della Torre family, along with many of their close friends. Gian Paolo Marchi has argued Bandello’s Veronese stories brought together a group of Veronese intellectuals who were united by the promise of renewal by the bishop of Verona, Gianmatteo Giberti. See Chapter I, Gian Paolo Marchi, “Il Dottore, L’Ignorante: La tramissione della cultura nella Verona del Cinquecento,” in \textit{Palladio a Verona: catalogo del mostro}, ed. Paola Marini (Verona: Neri Pozza Editore, 1980), 9.
shortly after the completion of the monument. It seems unlikely that there would have been such a strong shift in their interests within a span of a few years.

The Della Torre family were strong supporters of Bishop Giberti, who had arrived in Verona in 1528. In 1525 at the age of 18, Giulio’s son Francesco began working as the secretary of Giberti, in whose service he remained for nearly 20 years. Another of Giulio’s sons, Girolamo, entered into the service of the church at the age of 18. Girolamo served as Provost at St. Egidio in Verona; a zealous supporter of Giberti, he had supported the failed election of Cardinal Pole as Bishop of Verona following Giberti’s death.

Because he was the head of the family after Girolamo Della Torre’s death in 1506, Giulio’s interest in religious matters is of special interest. Records indicate that Giulio lent his personal support to Giberti, as did his sons Girolamo and Francesco. Giulio’s religious interests are also evident in his writings and in his medals. An amateur medalist, Giulio created medals that illustrate his piety and also link him with several key reform-minded figures in the Veneto: he made two medals of Aurelio dall’Acqua of Vicenza and one of Marcantonio Flaminio, a close friend of his son Francesco and a prominent figure in the world of reform active in Italy in the 1530s and 1540s. Moreover, the medals

62 On Giulio’s medals, see G. F. Hill, A Corpus of Italian medals of the Renaissance before Cellini, 2 vols (London: British Museum, 1930), 142-146. While Giulio’s medals for Dall’Acqua may have served to flatter a superior; it is more likely they reflect a personal relationship, as the majority of Giulio’s medals were created for his family and friends. The Della Torre and Aurelio Dall’Acqua had in common the friendship of Gian Giorgio Trissino. Flaminio dedicated a collection of poetry to Francesco Della Torre, which was published in Lyons in 1548. On their friendship, see Carol Maddison, Marcantonio Flaminio: Poet, Humanist, and Reformer (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), 74.
Giulio created for himself and his son Girolamo focused on illustrating their Christian devotion. In a medal from 1529, Giulio presented himself as guided by an angel and inscribed the work with the words: MEUS DUX. He commemorated his son Girolamo in two medals: in one, Girolamo kneels at the foot of the Cross; in the other, he is presented to Christ by St. Jerome.

Giulio also wrote *De felicitate ad Paulinam sororem*, a treatise that focused on reconciling pagan and Christian philosophy. The treatise primarily concentrated on the contemplation of truth and the pursuit of virtue as fundamental to the knowledge of God—the source of true happiness. Significantly, *De felicitate* was published in 1531 by Giberti’s publisher, the Nicolini da Sabbio brothers, whose publications were instrumental in the diffusion of Giberti’s reform doctrine. Giulio was also the author of two unpublished works: his manuscript *De amicitia* (codex 1364, Biblioteca Civica, dated to 1526) concerned social and individual morals, which included a focus on the responsibility of individuals as citizens; the other manuscript, *De civitate Dei* (codex 1492, Biblioteca Civica, undated), illustrates Giulio’s concern with the decoration of the church and the decorum of religious practices.63

It should be noted that the family’s involvement with the Gibertine movement in Verona and the monument created for Girolamo and Marcantonio reveals an interesting conflict. Giberti was particularly critical of the contemporary practices of erecting large funerary monuments in churches. The *Constitutiones*, first published in 1542, contained Giberti’s diocesan legislation, which included instruction on burials and funerary monuments. His principal criticisms of contemporary funerary monuments were that

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63 This is found in his discussion of magnificence in Book III, chapter 6 of *De civitate Dei*. See also Gian Paolo Marchi, “Il Dottore, L’Ignorante,” 9-10.
many were larger and grander than altars, and that these grand and expensive monuments were placed too prominently within churches.\textsuperscript{64} He argued that large tomb monuments impeded worship and decreed that burials within the church were to be limited to those tombs already erected, unless specifically approved by the bishop. He insisted that the burials permitted inside the church were only to be allowed below ground, since raised monuments and wall tombs denied the return of body to dust.\textsuperscript{65} In subsequent decades, there were continued calls for the removal of tombs from churches, and many reform-minded figures requested their burials on the exterior walls of churches.\textsuperscript{66} Claudio Rangoni’s request to be buried on the exterior of San Biagio in Modena is an example of such a request.\textsuperscript{67}

The placement of the Della Torre monument in the isolated chamber of the mausoleum meant that it was not visible from the nave of the church; it did not infringe

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\textsuperscript{64} Hiesinger, “The Fregoso Monument,” 284.
\textsuperscript{65} “Postquam iam mos antiquus inolevit, ut cadavera quorumcumque fidelium defunctorum, nullo habito personarum discrimine, in ecclesiis sepeliantur, Nos quoque istud cum patientia tolerantes, his saltem, quae, Nobis absurda videntur, tam propter sacra in locorum reverentiam quam ecclesiis impidimenta e deturbationes obviare studeamus, Mandaamus igitur universis e singulis curatis e aliis presbyternis quibuscumque quod in eorum Ecclesiis non permittant quilquer sepeliiri, nisis in sepulchris iam factis, Nova vero sepulchra, per quae ecclesiis pavimento deturpantur, e praecipue tumulos deposita nuncupatos, quii impedimento, e deformati esse solent, absque licentia nostra de cetero omnino fieri prohibemus et si qua ad praeens deposita reperiantur, amoveant, seu per illos, quorum interest, amovenda curent, Quorumdam autem fastum detestarius, qui mirem in maxima cum impensa, laborata sepulchra in locis eminentibus, e pluralum altaria excendentibus, super quibus unigitus dei aeterno patri quotidie pro humani generis salute victimatur collocare praesumunt, et terrae terrae debet reddere contradicunt, ut six etiam post carnis internum mundana superbia preseveret, cum carnis locum proprie terra sit, et nihil referat, ut corpus magis in honorifico e in altum suspenso mausoleo, quam in vili, e humi posito busto putrescat, immo ut, beatus inquit Augustinus quos peccata graviora deprimunt, si in huius modi locis se sepelire faciunt, restat, ut de sua praesumptione judicentur, quatenus eos sacra loca non liberant, sed de culpa temeritatis accusant.” J. Matteo Giberti, Constitutiones, editae, per reverendiss. In Christo Patrem, D. Io. Matthaeum Gibertum, episcopum Veronam (Verona, 1542), 38. Hiesinger, “Fregoso monument,” 284.
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on the decorum of the church and was unlikely to impede worship. This aspect of isolation is also found in the Pellegrini funerary chapel in San Bernardino (Fig. 18), where the chapel is placed in such a way that it is largely hidden from those in the nave. Built between 1528-1557, the Pellegrini chapel was commissioned from Michele Sanmicheli by Margarita Pellegrini, a relative of the Della Torre. Giulio and his brother Raimondo likely played some role in the discussion and planning for this chapel.68 While the Pellegrini chapel contains no funerary monuments, it was a grand and unconventional commission for the period. Because the Pellegrini Chapel was commissioned only a few years after Riccio must have finished the Della Torre monument, it seems fair to assume that, if the commission for the Della Torre monument was viewed negatively by contemporary members of the clergy or the laity in Verona, it would have affected the plans of other family members for their own commemoration, particularly when those plans challenged convention.

68 The Della Torre brothers must have closely followed this commission because the architect, Michele Sanmicheli, was a friend and because the Pellegrini were in-laws of Raimondo. Margarita had written her 1529 will in Giulio’s house and had named both Giulio and Raimondo as executors. On the chapel, see Catherine King, “Margarita Pellegrini and the Pellegrini Chapel at San Bernardino, Verona (1528 - 1557),” Renaissance Studies 10 (1996): 171-86; Paul Davies and David Hemsoll, “Sanmicheli and his Patrons: Planning for Prosperity,” in Studi in Onore di Renato Cevese (Vicenza: Centro Internazionale di Studi di Architettura Andrea Palladio, 2000), 161-88, esp. 161-72; and Paul Davies and David Hemsoll, Michele Sanmicheli (Milano: Electa, 2004), 87-101.
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While the absence of any archival documents related to commissioning the Della Torre monument means that the role played by the patrons in planning the programme is unknown, the complex programme of the monument—to be examined in the subsequent chapters of this dissertation—suggests that the design for the monument emerged from a close intellectual exchange between Riccio and his humanist patrons. The principal issues to be addressed in this chapter are the nature of the interaction between humanists and artists in Padua and Verona, the intellectual life of Riccio, and the interaction of the Della Torre brothers with artists and architects in Verona. Consideration of these issues will shed light on the nature of the interaction that could have occurred between Andrea Riccio and the Della Torre, and it will help to explain the novel and inventive nature of the Della Torre monument.

While the influence of humanist advisors upon Renaissance art was a subject of prevailing interest in Renaissance art history in the 1950s and 1960s, the study of humanism and the arts has become an outlier in contemporary art historical studies. This shift occurred following particularly influential attempts to minimize the connections between art and humanism in the 1980s.¹ The writings of Charles Hope—a central figure in the effort to reject the influence of Renaissance humanism upon the visual arts—were especially influential on this shift. In a chapter on humanism and the arts in the 1996 publication of *The Cambridge Companion to Humanism*, Hope and Elizabeth McGrath set out narrow perimeters for the possible interaction between humanists and artists.

¹ For a recent discussion of how unpopular this area of research has become, see the related discussions in James Elkins and Robert Williams, eds. *Renaissance Theory* (New York: Routledge, 2008).
Declaring that most humanists “…were committed to the belief that texts alone were the proper vehicle for the expression of ideas…,” they focused their discussion on emphasizing the division between humanists and artists, between word and image. Yet, when it comes to the interaction between humanists and artists in Padua, these parameters are much too narrow. In Padua, relationships among artists, patrons, and humanists were often quite close, and the works of art created in Padua, particularly those of Riccio, reflect the unique involvement of scholars in the creation of art. As the second part of this chapter will demonstrate, the relationships of the Della Torre with artists in Verona reflected the close interaction between artists and humanists that existed in Padua.

**Issues in the Study of Paduan bronzes**

More small bronzes remain from Padua than from any other centre, illustrating how popular the medium was in this small university town. The erudite nature of many of these small bronzes suggests the involvement of Paduan humanists in the creation of these works. Many Paduan humanists had both contemporary and antique bronzes in their collections; such objects were used to stimulate intellectual discussion, encouraging patrons to work closely with artists in devising themes of an erudite and often esoteric

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2 Charles Hope and Elizabeth McGrath, “Artists and Humanists,” *Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism*, ed. J. Kraye (Cambridge, 1996), 185. “Most humanists were committed to the belief that texts alone where the proper vehicle for the expression of ideas, even if these could on occasion be made more palatable and memorable by accompanying illustrations. They accepted the traditional Christian view that art should be didactic, and for this reason, for all their professional concern with ancient texts, they were less interested than the artists themselves in the revival of the subject matter of ancient art, which was usually devoid of edifying content.” For Charles Hope’s other discussions of humanist advisors, see also his “Aspects of Criticism in Art and Literature in Sixteenth-Century Italy,” *Word and Image* 4 (1988): 1-10 and “Artists, Patrons, and Advisers in the Italian Renaissance,” *Patronage in the Renaissance*, ed. G. F. Lytle and S. Orgel (Princeton, 1982): 293-343.

Unfortunately, many issues complicate the study of Paduan bronzes: in particular, issues of dating, attribution, and copies. While the production of small bronze sculpture was very popular in Padua, the often poor documentation of these works creates inevitable issues of attribution and dating. In addition to the lack of existing primary documentation, the study of Paduan bronzes, particularly those created by Riccio, has also been hampered by the prejudice against small-scale bronzes. The study of large-scale sculpture has distinct advantages for scholars: these works are usually better documented and debates over dating and attribution do not predominate to the same extent as they do in the study of small-scale bronzes. Even in the 16th century, Benvenuto Cellini clearly recognized that lasting fame was more easily achieved by creating larger sculptures.

Since much of Riccio’s oeuvre consists of these small-scale works, questions of dating and attribution remain contentious issues in contemporary scholarship. As discussed in the “Introduction,” the seminal and indispensable monograph on Riccio by

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4 See Marcantonio Michiel’s discussion of Paduan collections in the Notizia d’opere del disegno.
5 While Riccio’s work was well received by his Paduan contemporaries, they recorded surprisingly little information about him. The existing archival information is mainly related to the work he undertook for local churches; the remaining contemporary information is derived from the writings of Marcantonio Michiel and Pomponius Gauricus. De sculptura, the dialogue written by Gauricus, contains the earliest information about Riccio. Gauricus recorded that Riccio abandoned the goldsmith profession—the profession of his father—due to gout. “Sed et Donatelli discipulus Bellanus tuus Leonice Inter hos quoque nomen habeit, quamquam ineptus artifex. Quin et Bellani uti volunt discipulus Andraeas Crispus familiaris meus. cuius inter Plastas quoque mentionem fecimus, podagrarum beneficio ex aurifice Sculptor.” Pomponius Gauricus, De sculptura [Padua, 1504], trans. André Chastel and Robert Klein (Genève, Droz, 1969), 281.

Following a move to Padua in 1492, Ambrogio di Cristoforo Briosco opened a goldsmith shop on the via del Codalunga. Although Riccio abandoned his father’s profession, he continued working in the family workshop with his father and his brothers until his father’s death in 1527. From Gauricus that we learn that Riccio studied under Bartolommeo Bellano. His phrasing “whom they call a disciple of Bellano” is important as Gauricus, who claimed a friendship with Riccio, ought to have been able to confirm this information. Instead it seems that Gauricus wished to distance the pupil from the master, a master whom he quite unjustly called “ineptus artifex.” His statement illustrates that shift in taste that had occurred by 1502, for Bellano had been quite well received up until his death in 1496/97. The fact that Riccio was given the task of finishing works previously commissioned to Bellano is further evidence that Riccio likely trained under Bellano. John Pope-Hennessy, Italian Renaissance Sculpture, Vol. II (London: Phaidon Press, 1996), 114.
Leo Planiscig did not help to resolve these issues—the number of works he attributed to Riccio was excessively generous. Issues of attribution are further complicated by the numerous copies made after Riccio’s work or in his style. As Anthony Radcliffe has demonstrated, elements of Riccio’s work were frequently reused, often without an appreciation of the original meaning, denigrating much of Riccio’s vocabulary to a purely decorative function.  

Furthermore, many of the works commissioned and executed in Padua were small decorative objects that frequently served a utilitarian function. Oil lamps, inkstands, plaquettes—the main body of Riccio’s work—were often overlooked by art historians who did not want to associate art with function. Even Riccio’s most important work, the paschal candelabrum created for the church of St. Anthony in Padua, held a functional purpose. These so-called “minor” works are vitally important to the study of Paduan art and patronage since they were a prevalent art form in the city and embodied many ideas of the city’s leading humanists.

As illustrated in Riccio’s own work, the works of art commissioned in Padua during this period were frequently a unique collaboration between the city’s artists and scholars. Created with the input of the philosopher Giambattista de Leone, the complex program for Riccio’s paschal candelabrum, fully illustrates the type of exchange between artist and patron in Padua.  

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7 Leone, who died in 1526, was a philosopher specializing in Greek and Latin literature; unfortunately, little is known about him. Massari dell’Arco at the Santo from 1506-1524, and president of the Veneranda Arca, he was instrumental in commissioning Riccio’s early works for this church—including the paschal candelabrum. A friend of both Pietro Bembo and Niccolò Leonico Tomeo, he also tutored Reginald Pole.
negative impact on the appreciation and study of Riccio’s work, since its highly erudite nature meant that its meaning became obscure within a few generations.

Gauricus

Published in 1504, Pomponius Gauricus’s dialogue on sculpture, *De sculptura*, reflects the unique nature of the exchange between Paduan humanists and the city’s artists in the early 16th century. It also testifies to the popularity of bronze sculpture in Padua in this period. Having arrived in Padua in 1501, the Neapolitan Gauricus quickly immersed himself in a circle of such prominent humanists as Niccolò Leonico Tomeo and Raphael Reggio, both of whom Gauricus used as interlocutors in his dialogue.  

Gauricus and his brother Luca, an eminent astrologer, also included amongst their friends such figures from the Della Torre circle as Pierio Valeriano, Giovanni Battista Ramusio, and Girolamo Fracastoro.

Gauricus also cultivated friendships with local sculptors, including Riccio, Tullio Lombardo, and Severo da Ravenna. From his dialogue, we learn that Tomeo and Reggio counted local artists amongst their circle of friends: both men were said to be friends with alongside Tomeo. Tomeo included Leone as an interlocutor in the *Alverotus sive de tribus animorum vehiculis*, a dialogue to be addressed in the fourth chapter of this dissertation. Leone’s collection of art included Gianmaria Mosca’s *Judgement of Solomon*, which was given as a gift to an English bishop usually identified as Cardinal Pole. Marco Antonio Michiel, *Notizia d’opere del disegno* (Florence: Edifir, 2000), 30. On Leone see Davide Banzato, “Riccio’s Humanist Circle and the Paschal Candelabrum,” in *Andrea Riccio: Renaissance Master of Bronze*, ed. Denise Allen and Peta Motture, New York, Frick Museum (London: Philip Wilson Pub., 2008), 44. The relationship between Leone and Riccio appears to have been quite close. In a letter written by Marcantonio Michiel to the painter Guido Celere in November 1514, Michiel records that his access to Riccio came through Leone and he adds that it is through Leone’s friendship that access to Riccio was to be sought. Michiel: “De Andrea Riccio illud admoneo si forte hominem conventes, Baptistam Leonem quem mihi amicissimum meministi, in medium proferas; nam quaecumque mihi cum Riccio amicitia, ea per Leonem est, quem ille mira benevolentia prosequitur; nihilque est, quod non ad ejus mentionem a Riccio impetres.” Jennifer Fletcher, “Marcantonio Michiel’s Collection,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* XXXVI (1973): 383. Taken from E. A. Cicogna, “Intorno la vita e le opere di Marcantonio Michiel,” *Memorie dell’Istituto Veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti* ix, 1860, 390-391. Jennifer Fletcher, “Marcantonio Michiel: his friends and collection,” *The Burlington Magazine* CXXIII, 941 (August, 1981): 455.

Reggio was a professor of rhetoric at the University of Padua from 1482-1486 and from 1503-1508.
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Antonio Rizzio, and Gauricus writes of Tomeo’s association with Bartolommeo Bellano and of Reggio’s friendship with the sculptor Pyrgoteles.\(^9\) Gauricus’s identification of Riccio as “\textit{familiaris meus}” is not insignificant: as Denise Allen has illustrated, the expression would have been bound to contemporary humanist notions of friendship and its significance would have been construed according to the classical principles of friendship.\(^10\) Implying shared interests and conveying familiarity and respect, it is unlikely that such an expression would have been used lightly by Gauricus.\(^11\)

Gauricus advocated more than cultivating friendships with artists—he encouraged the humanist reader to visit the workshops of artists and to spend time in the artist’s environment. Gauricus himself was said to have dabbled in sculpture, and his writing clearly demonstrates that he possessed a technical knowledge of working in bronze. In his dialogue, he urged Reggio and Tomeo to follow him to the workshop, arguing that it would be more effective for them to witness how things were done than to discuss them in his study.

\textit{De sculptura} illustrates the popularity of the contemporary practices of collecting bronzes in Padua, and Gauricus emphasizes the value of possessing small-scale bronzes.\(^12\) One of the novel aspects of his dialogue is his discussion of the private uses of sculpture, a discussion that reflects the more personal use of sculpture in Padua in the early 16\textsuperscript{th} century. In this his text diverged from most contemporary writings on

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\item\(^{12}\) Gauricus argued that sculpture was useful in inspiring men to imitate greatness as sculpture and medals preserved the moral and intellectual qualities of the person represented. Gauricus, \textit{De Sculptura}, 44-45.
\end{itemize}}
sculpture, which saw the primary justification for the medium in its public and civic use.13

In *De sculptura*, Gauricus argued that sculpture should be included amongst the liberal arts, since sculpting involved the imitation of nature, proportion, and divine inspiration, which, in Gauricus’s view, required imitating the knowledge of the gods, man, and nature.14 Drawing upon both rhetoric and philosophy, Gauricus argued that sculpture, particularly bronze, was noble, dignified and could not be separated from the liberal arts.15 Claiming that Socrates not only recommended the art form but also was a practitioner, Gauricus maintained that sculpture was more dignified and in greater harmony with intellectual pursuits than the other arts.

In an insightful essay, Denise Allen addressed the friendship of Gauricus with Riccio and assesses how this relationship might have influenced Riccio’s narrative art. She argues that Gauricus’s description of Riccio as a modeller emphasized Riccio’s ability “to design in wax and clay, and underscores an artistic capacity for invention akin to the poet’s or rhetorician’s manipulation of words.”16 Gauricus linked the sculptor’s process of *disegno* with the author’s composition of text; in fact, throughout *De Sculptura*, Gauricus underlines the idea that the means by which a sculptor invents—through modeling and through *disegno*—parallels the manner in which the poets and

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13 The value of civic sculpture dominates both Leon Battista Alberti and Antonio Averlino Filarete's discussions of sculpture. See Alberti’s *De re aedificatoria* and *De statua* and Filarete’s *Trattato di architettura*.
14 Gauricus, *De Sculptura*, 46-47.
15 His argument is close to that of Baldassare Castiglione, who stated that in ancient times painting was considered among the liberal arts and should be part of the study of a courtier. Baldesar Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. George Bull (London: Penguin Books, 1976), 96-97, see André Chastel and Robert Klein, “Introduction,” Gauricus, *De sculptura*, 16. Gauricus’s primary interest was in bronze sculpture. Following Pliny the Elder, he held up bronze as the greatest medium, and assigned the title ‘sculptor’ to those who work in bronze and ‘scalptor’ for those who worked in marble. Gauricus, *De Sculptura*, 44, 46.
rhetoricians of antiquity composed texts. As Allen explains, “By virtue of their composition in modeled wax, Riccio’s bronze istoria announced themselves in Gaurican terms as akin to literary inventions…” While it was very common to compare poetry and painting in the period, the comparison of sculpture to poetry was uncommon; both of Gauricus’s interlocutors supported his comparison, agreeing that “…sculpture was the material equivalent to the ancient arts of rhetoric and poetry.”

If the sculptor is able to meet the standards set by Gauricus, his creation becomes a “companion art to the written word.” Gauricus’s dialogue then demonstrates that art was considered in this Paduan circle as a valuable vehicle for the ideas of the humanist patrons.

Gauricus maintained that it was essential for sculptors to possess a literary knowledge. He wanted sculptors to do more than study antiquity; he wanted them to be learned and argued that they needed to be well versed in res, fabulae, and historiae. Challenging those who would argue that this knowledge was not necessary, he contended that the mere imitation of other works of art was insufficient and that it paralleled the actions of poets or orators who took pieces from Cicero or Vergil without truly understanding the significance of what they were borrowing and hence did not know how to properly use their citations. He criticized the works created by Florentine sculptors

Allen, “Riccio’s Bronze Narratives: Context and Development,” 20; Gauricus, De Sculptura, 40-50
Alberti was specifically discussing painting when he suggested that: “For their own enjoyment artists should associate with poets and orators who have many embellishments in common with painters and who have a broad knowledge of many things. They could be very useful in beautifully composing the istoria whose greatest praise consists in the invention.” Leon Battista Alberti, On painting, trans. John Spencer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 90.
and argued that due to their ignorance of literature there were many flaws to be found in their representations of ancient figures. Although Gauricus had only recently arrived in Padua, his writing demonstrates that he appreciated and was inspired by the unique nature of sculpture being created in the city.

Gauricus’s concern with the education of the sculptor is significant. His emphasis on the necessity of literary background for sculptors made the role of humanist friends and patrons more vital since it was through the humanist that such knowledge was to be acquired. Wanting to impress on his humanist audience the need for providing a literary education to sculptors, Gauricus returned to this theme in the conclusion of the dialogue, when he upheld the skill of Severo da Ravenna and argued that, had Ravenna possessed this knowledge, he would have been the perfect sculptor:

I have left for last Severo da Ravenna so that I could praise him the best; I am very surprised that he did not visit me today. He seems to me to fit well all the demands of the art of sculpture—he works excellently in bronze, marble, metals, wood, clay, and paint. If you were to ask me how I envisioned the perfect sculptor, I would answer: I wish that he were as our Severo would be if he had a literary culture—In the future, besides, he will have it, thanks in part to me, much more than sculptors who in my view pride themselves on [their command of] every aspect of the art of sculpture.21

*De sculptura* is an important source for the study of art and humanism not only because it reflects the contemporary interaction between scholars and artists in Padua, but also

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because it promotes the ideal for such an exchange. Gauricus’s dialogue must have further heightened the desires of humanists to foster relationships with Paduan artists, and his plan to undertake Severo da Ravenna’s literary education illustrates the unique interaction of scholars and artists in Padua. Gauricus’s high praise of Severo da Ravenna as the best of sculptors identifies him as an important predecessor of Riccio, and—as Charles Avery and Anthony Radcliffe suggest—had Gauricus been writing later, he would have realized how well Riccio fit his image of the ideal sculptor.\(^\text{22}\)

**The Intellectual Life of Riccio**

As an intellectual movement, humanism was concerned with texts that very few artists could read. The pursuit of humanist studies, with its emphasis upon language and rhetoric, entails the ability to read Latin. While it is evident that Riccio was indeed literate, there is no evidence to suggest that he had ever studied Latin; indeed there were few artists in the period who did have the ability to read Latin. However, this did not preclude them from pursuing humanist interests or studies—many artists relied on the knowledge of their humanist friends or patrons and some even sought translations of

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\(^{22}\) Avery and Radcliffe, “Severo Calzetta da Ravenna,” 117. Gauricus’s inclusion of Riccio in his discussion of important sculptors is surprising since his dialogue was written at a point very early in Riccio’s career. Little is known of Riccio’s work from this period. His praise for Riccio comes in the final chapter of the book, “De Claris Sculptoribus,” where he writes: “In Italia laudatissimus quondam Turanius Fregellanus Nostra etate Vitus Mazon Mutinensis, quem nuper nobis Gallia cum plerisque rebus apstulit, Vxor etiam eius finxit et filia, Lucas Rubius Florentinus ex Aurifice Plastes, cuius inventum, fictile opus encausto pingi, Andreaeas eius ex sorore nepos, nullius quos ego viderim posterior, Naturam existimes ipsam fecisse que huius manus effinxit, Nam quid ego vobis commemorem, Nannum miniatorum, Domitium figulum, et Andraeam crispum Patavinos?” Gauricus, *De sculptura*, 250-251. The praise of Gauricus for the young Riccio presents a difficulty for scholars as it demonstrates the high regard already given to Riccio at this early point in his career. According to Gauricus by this point Riccio had acquired a name for himself not only through his terracotta works, but also through his work in bronze. Riccio’s first authenticated work was the completion of Bellano’s *Pietro Roccabonella monument* in 1498 for the church of St. Francis: for this, Riccio completed the three small figures of Faith, Hope, and Charity. Michiel, *Notizia d’opere del disegno*, 29. Riccio’s next recorded works are from August 1506, when Riccio was given the commission for the *Story of Judith* and *David with the Ark of the Covenant* for the choir enclosure of the Santo. The work that brought Riccio the greatest renown was the paschal candelabrum, commissioned in 1506 and not finished until 1516. Thus, the praise assigned to Riccio by Gauricus is disconcerting as we are not able to fully appreciate the early, positive reception of his work.
classical texts.\textsuperscript{23} This next section will briefly examine some of the ways in which Riccio’s intellectual life may be assessed. The primary sources related to Riccio are largely contracts and legal documents; on the whole, they provide little information about Riccio’s personality or his thoughts on art. His art, of course, speaks volumes, clearly reflecting that his knowledge of classical antiquity surpassed mere imitation of classical art.

Riccio’s sculpture unambiguously illustrates that he was well versed in the visual arts of classical antiquity. The principal ways for an artist to acquire this knowledge in the Renaissance was through a visual study of both classical and contemporary art, travel (most importantly to Rome) and lastly the writings of classical authors. The study of artists’ sketchbooks and collections would have played an important role in acquiring this knowledge; in Riccio’s case, these methods are not sufficient to explain his work. There is no evidence that he ever traveled to Rome, although such a journey would help explain the depth of his knowledge.\textsuperscript{24} Despite the absence of documentary evidence, it seems quite likely that his knowledge of classical art would also have been informed by access to the collections of humanists in Padua.

Collecting classical and contemporary art was a central humanist pursuit in the period. Humanist studies involved an exchange of knowledge and ideas, the sharing of letters and texts, and the showing of collections; such an exchange reminds us that at its very core Renaissance humanism was a communal endeavour, and such a communal aspect would have been particularly strong in the university context of Padua. So, while

\textsuperscript{24} The possibility of such a trip in 1511-12 was suggested by Claudia Kryza-Gersch, “Boy with a Goose,” in \textit{Andrea Riccio: Renaissance Master of Bronze}, ed. Denise Allen and Peta Motture, New York, Frick Museum (London: Philip Wilson Pub., 2008), 297.
artists like Riccio might have lacked the ability to read the texts that were of such interest to humanist friends and patrons, this did not preclude artists from benefiting from the exchange of knowledge and ideas. Social barriers do not appear to have excluded artists from participating in the communities that were created around the collection of art. In the *Notizia*, Marcantono Michiel records visiting the collections of men of varying social classes; in Padua he viewed the collections not only of professors and noblemen but also of merchants and artists. In fact, as Monika Schmitter has shown in her study of Venetian collectors, the interest in collecting created communities that often transcended normal social barriers.  

The nature of such close friendships between artists and humanists in Padua is most clearly demonstrated in the friendship of the medalist Giovanni Cavino and the scholar and antiquarian Alessandro Maggi da Bassiano. The two rather famously—or infamously, as some argue—worked together on creating *all‘antica* medals. Bassiano, who wrote a treatise on the coinage of the twelve Caesars, is believed to have closely advised Cavino in his imitations of antique coins. Cavino’s great skill at imitating ancient coins left him with a less than glowing reputation as his imitation of classical coins was so convincing that distinguishing them from the originals has proven to be quite difficult. There has been much debate as to whether or not Cavino’s coins were deliberately constructed to deceive.  

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25 Monika Schmitter, “Virtuous Riches: the Bricolage of Cittadini Identities in early sixteenth century Venice,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 57 (2004), 915. She is speaking specifically of Venice, but it is evident from Michiel’s discussion of Paduan collections that the same situation appears to have existed in Padua.  

26 Scholars have been divided as to whether he was “a nefarious forger” or a “well-meaning scholar of misplaced ingenuity.” George Francis Hill, “Classical influence on the Italian Medal,” *Burlington Magazine* XVIII (1911), 268. G. F. Hill took one of the most pointed stances against Cavino and his imitations; he claimed that “attempts which have been made to whitewash their maker may be summarily dismissed.” George Francis Hill and Graham Pollard, *Renaissance medals: from the Samuel H. Kress*
Cavino was commissioned to make several portrait medals of Paduan scholars and jurists, including Marco Mantova Benavides, a jurist and professor at the university. Cavino commemorated the friendship of Cavino, Bassiano, and Benavides on a medal. Illustrating that their friendship was of mutual benefit, such commemoration is significant and would have been linked to classical concepts of friendships. Cavino and Bassiano served as the executors of Riccio’s estate, and they erected the monument for Riccio at San Giovanni di Verdara. Since Benavides had served as executor of Riccio’s first will, Riccio was obviously close to all three of these men. Indeed, according to Michiel, Riccio contributed one of his works to Benavides’s collection of art—one of the most important collections in Padua. The type of close interaction that occurred between artists and scholars, as is evident in Bassiano’s relationship with Cavino, would not only have provided Paduan artists with at least some of the literary background that Gauricus had called for; it must also have given these artists access to the collections of the Paduan humanists.

The division between word and image which Hope and McGrath emphasized so strongly is incompatible with the situation in early 16th-century Padua. Indeed, as Allen argues, word and image were equally appreciated in this context, and the collections of Paduan humanists reflect the “need to understand the antique in visual as well as literary terms and to benefit from the contemplation of both as a source of ideas.” She adds that

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the way in which Riccio’s patrons responded to the objects in their collection, both texts and objects, corresponded to the perceptive choices made by Riccio in his narrative art.⁹

The friendship between humanists and artists in Padua would have been the principal means by which Riccio received his knowledge of classical literature. Much of his work seems to illustrate a close intellectual exchange with humanists; indeed, several of Riccio’s creations demonstrate knowledge of classical texts. In his statuette of a Strigil Bearer, Riccio recreated a lost classical work by Lysippus, known in the Renaissance only from classical texts;³⁰ his Boy with a Goose shows a familiarity with Pliny’s description of original statuette by Boethos;³¹ and Riccio’s Shouting Horseman illustrates knowledge of a verse in which Statius describes the equestrian statue of Domitian, discussed by Gauricus in De sculptura.³²

Renaissance artists often demonstrated their status through the inclusion of self-portraits in their work. Allen has argued that Riccio’s inclusion of his self-portraits in his work should be understood as holding greater significance than serving as his signature, a sign of his status as a sculptor, or a record of his fame. She maintains that by presenting himself either as a witness or participant Riccio’s self-portraits in The Story of Judith, David and the Transport of the Ark, the Entombment scenes on the paschal candelabrum, and in the reliefs for the altar of the True Cross play a role in the narrative. Thus, in these reliefs, his self-portraits are of a more erudite nature, and their inclusion

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illustrates Riccio’s intellectual understanding of the subject matter. Riccio is clearly visible in each image—the tight curls in his hair highlight the source of his nickname, *il riccio*, the curly headed one. Despite the classical visual language used in *Judith* and *David*, Riccio presents himself in contemporary attire, placing himself outside the time of the narrative and illustrating that he is not a direct participant in either of the sacred stories. The situation is different in his earlier self-portraits in the *Victory of Constantine* and the *Vision of Constantine*. In these two reliefs for the altar of the True Cross, made c. 1500, he portrays himself in the attire of a Roman *eques* rather than in cinquecento clothing. While this form of self-representation could be interpreted as a comment on his status as an artist, Allen contends that these representations are more sophisticated: she argues that Riccio’s self-portrait is a play on his Latinized nickname “Crispus,” through which Riccio links himself to Flavius Julius Crispus, son of Constantine and co-regent. It is a rather confident association for the sculptor to make in one of his early works. In both scenes, Riccio is linked to the emperor: in the first, he follows closely behind Constantine; in the second, he is the only figure who shares in Constantine’s vision of the cross. The artist presents himself as physically and mentally close to the emperor; so close, in fact, that Crispus is able to share the emperor’s vision. These two self-portraits

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34 Allen argues that in these two reliefs Riccio presents himself as “a commentator on himself and his work.” In the story of Judith he is presented watching the events unfold, in the David relief he has turned from the scene of blasphemy. Allen, “Riccio’s Bronze Narratives: Context and Development,” 32.
35 Allen, “Riccio’s Bronze Narratives: Context and Development,” 31-34. Allen’s views on the reliefs for the altar of the True Cross were first published in Davide Gasparotto, “Andrea Riccio a Venezia: sui rilevi con le ‘Storie della Vera Croce’ per l’altare Donà già in Santa Maria dei Servi,” *In Tullio Lombardo scultore e architetto nella Venezia del rinascimento*. Atti del convegno di studi, Venezia, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, 4-6 April 2006 (Verona, 2007), 389-410. Allen contends that such aspects illustrate that Riccio’s self-portraits “personify the movements of the body and mind, the twin aspects of the *affetti*, fundamental to the depiction of *istoria*.” This is another theme discussed by Gauricus in chapter 1.9 and chapter 8.6-7.
illustrate knowledge of classical history, which again points to discourse between the artist and humanists.

In 1800, when Abate Don Jacopo Morelli uncovered Marcantonio Michiel’s *Notizia d’opere di disegno*, he recovered valuable information concerning both Riccio’s interaction with Paduan humanists and his knowledge of the history of local art. In the *Notizia*, Michiel held up two local artists as important sources of information on Paduan art. The first source came from the famous letter, now lost, written to Niccolò Leonico Tomeo by the painter Girolamo Campagnola (1433/5–1522), which contained a discussion of recent Paduan art and, in particular, the work of Mantegna and Squarcione. Michiel also presented Riccio as an important source of information about art in Padua. Michiel’s collection of notes on art in Padua date from 1521 to 1543; by this point Riccio was well established as an artist. As is illustrated by Michiel’s references to Riccio in a letter to Guido Celere, Michiel had met Riccio by 1514, when the sculptor was still working on the paschal candelabrum.\(^{36}\)

Surprisingly, Michiel’s notes indicate that Riccio was sought not for his knowledge of sculpture but rather for his knowledge of painting. With Michiel, Riccio discussed local works of art by Altichiero, Giusto de’ Menabuoi, and Ottaviano Bresciano. Interestingly, all the artists of whom Riccio spoke were 14\(^{th}\)-century painters; this illustrates Riccio’s knowledge of the history of painting in Padua. According to Michiel’s notes, Riccio made several assertions: that Altichiero painted the Lovi Chapel in the Church of San Giorgio (Campagnola rightly pointed out that both Altichiero and Giacomo d’Avanzo had painted there); that Giusto, who painted the chapel of St. Luke in the Santo, had Paduan citizenship (a Florentine by birth, Giusto received Paduan

\(^{36}\) See footnote 7.
citizenship in 1375); that Stefano da Ferrara painted the formerly frescoed chapel (Il Santo) in the Santo; that Giusto had painted the Baptistery at the Duomo (Campagnola agrees, while others attributed it to Altichiero); finally, he stated that Altichiero and Ottaviano Bresciano were among the artists who had worked on the Sala dei Giganti. 37 The sculptor proved to be a reliable source and his knowledge of the local art history is significant. While Riccio’s own work illustrates how well versed he was in both contemporary and classical art, his knowledge of local 14th-century painting illustrates his interest in the history of Paduan art.

Riccio’s epitaph clearly indicates that he received a great deal of esteem from contemporary humanists in Padua. 38 They recognized his innate talent, his ability to rival ancient artists, his knowledge of Paduan art, as well as his ability to give visual expression to their interests and ideas. The artistic freedom and the license he appears to have been permitted in his creations is another sign of the value placed on his talent by his contemporary patrons. 39 There is no doubt that his artistic world overlapped quite closely with that of Paduan humanists and that they played a central role in creating the programme for his sculpture. In order to gain a clearer understanding of the type of interaction that would have occurred between the Della Torre family and Andrea Riccio, it will be useful, at this point, to turn to the patronage and antiquarian interests of the Della Torre brothers.

37 Michiel, Notizia d'opere del disegno, 28, 29, and 34.
The Della Torre and Artists in Verona

A brief look at the Della Torre brothers’ interests in the visual arts demonstrates a taste for works that were both innovative and novel. By far the most famous example of the Della Torre’s interaction with a Renaissance artist was that between Marcantonio Della Torre and Leonardo da Vinci. Giorgio Vasari records in his *Life of Leonardo da Vinci* that the two men had collaborated together on a study of human anatomy:

Leonardo then applied himself, even more assiduously, to the study of human anatomy, in which he collaborated with that excellent philosopher Marc’Antonio della Torre, who was then lecturing at Pavia and who wrote on the subject. Della Torre, I have heard, was one of the first to illustrate the problems of medicine by the teachings of Galen and to throw true light on anatomy, which up to then had been obscured by the shadows of ignorance. In this he was wonderfully served by the intelligence, work, and hand of Leonardo, who composed a book annotated in pen and ink in which he did meticulous drawings in red chalk of bodies he had dissected himself. He showed all the bone structure, adding in order all the nerves and covering them with the muscles: the first attached to the skeleton, the second that hold it firm and the third that move it…

Corroborating this record has proven difficult: there is little evidence that would place the men in Pavia—where such a study would most likely have occurred—during the same period. The interaction between Leonardo and Marcantonio Della Torre is just one such

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41 By this point, Leonardo was already a student of anatomy and had likely viewed anatomical dissections in both Milan and Pavia. Marcantonio was only in Pavia for a short time; he arrived in the city in 1509, but retreated to Lake Garda before his death in 1511. There are no accounts of da Vinci’s presence in Pavia during these years. The winter of 1510-1511 is the most likely time for this interaction. See G. B. de Toni, “Frammenti Vinciani. I. Intorno a Marco Antonio Dalla Torre Anatomico Veronese del XVI secolo ed all’epoca del suo incontro con Leonardo da Vinci a Pavia,” *Atti del Reale Istituto veneto di scienze, lettere,
exchange between the Della Torre and artists. Most of our information about the Della Torre brothers’ interests in the arts comes from the period after the completion of Riccio’s monument. The Della Torre and many of their friends studied at the University of Padua and their years in the city laid the foundation for their subsequent relationships with artists. Of the artistic interests of the Della Torre brothers—Giulio, Giovanni Battista, and Raimondo—the most is known about Giulio’s interest in the visual arts. An amateur medalist with an avid interest in architecture, he appears to have been a close friend of the painter and student of Veronese antiquity, Giovanni Caroto. The Della Torre brothers also cultivated friendship with Michele Sanmicheli, who arrived in Verona in

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*ed art, Venezia* Ser. 7 Vol. 7 (54) (1895-1896): 197. Gian Maria Varanini and Renato Ponzin, “I Della Torre di Verona nel Trecento e Quattrocento. Aspetti socio-economici, religiosi, culturali di un’affermazione familiare,” *La Villa Della Torre a Fumani*, a cura di Arturo Sandrini (Verona: Banca Agricola popolare di Cerea, 1993), 49. Monica Azzolini suggests that Leonardo’s interaction with Marcantonio was likely the last of several interactions between Leonardo and physicians. While Marcantonio received much acclaim for his anatomical studies and doubtless would have had much to contribute to Leonardo’s studies, there is nothing in Leonardo’s drawings that provides direct evidence of their interaction. Monica Azzolini, “Leonardo da Vinci’s Anatomical Studies in Milan: A Re-examination of Sites and Sources,” in *Visualizing Medieval Medicine and Natural History, 1200-1550*, ed. Jean A. Givens, Karen M. Reeds, Alain Touwaide (Aldershot, Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2006), 174. Varanini and Ponzin, “Trecento e Quattrocento,” 49; G.B. De Toni, “Frammenti vinciani,” 192. Unfortunately, Marcantonio’s *Observationes anatomicae* were lost, limiting his eminence in the history of anatomy. Vasari’s source for the interaction between Marcantonio and Leonardo was likely Paolo Giovio, who had been a close friend and was a former student of Marcantonio’s at the University of Pavia. For Giovio’s relationship with Marcantonio Della Torre see: Paolo Giovio, *An Italian Portrait Gallery. Being Brief Biographies of Scholars*, trans. Alden Gragg (Boston: Chapman & Grimes Pub. 1935): 91. Giovio also knew Leonardo, and commented upon his anatomical work.

Many scholars have attempted to find any thread that would prove the collaboration of Marcantonio with Leonardo. It has been suggested that the “messer Marcantonio” in Leonardo’s notebooks may be a reference to Marcantonio Della Torre. These references are found in *Il Codice Atlantico di Leonardo da Vinci nella Biblioteca Ambrosiana di Milano*, Reale Accademia dei Lincei, transcribed by G. Piumati, 35 vols., Milan, 1894-1904, 20vb and *I manoscritti di Leonardo da Vinci della Reale Biblioteca di Windsor. Dell’ Anatomia, Fogli A*, ed. Sabachnikoff and Piumati, Paris 1898, 1910v. Martin Kemp, *Leonardo da Vinci. The Marvelous Works of Nature and Man* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1981), 291. Charles Nicholl points out that Leonardo’s disdain for “abbreviatori” may have resulted from their interaction, as Marcantonio’s only surviving work is highly critical of the “abbreviatori” (those who merely repeat the knowledge of others). Leonardo had planned to “Make a discourse censuring scholars who are the hinderers of anatomical studies, and the abbreviators thereof,” and he stated that: “Those who abbreviate such works should be called not abbreviators but expungers.” Later Leonardo continued on this subject: “The abbreviators of works insult both knowledge and love, seeing that the love of something is the offspring of knowledge of it... It is true that impatience, the mother of stupidity, praises brevity, as if we did not have a whole lifetime in which to acquire complete knowledge of a single subject, such as the human body.” Royal Library 19063. Charles Nicholl, *Leonardo Da Vinci: Flights of the Mind* (New York: Viking Penguin, 2004), 443-444.
1526. One of the short stories of Matteo Bandello, which will be examined shortly, suggests that the painter Girolamo dai Libri was also an intimate of the Della Torre and their circle.

Giulio Della Torre’s work as an amateur medallist has led many scholars to assume that he shared a close relationship with Riccio; therefore, it may be most appropriate to begin with a discussion of attempts to link Giulio Della Torre with Riccio. In his 1816 study of Italian sculpture, Leopoldo Cicognara suggests that it was most likely Giulio who granted the commission for the tomb “all’amico Riccio.”42 As the paterfamilias, Giulio must have played an instrumental role in planning the monument, and his interest in bronze has been deemed a decisive factor in giving the commission to a bronze sculptor.43 Ulrich Middeldorf, in his study of dilettante sculptors, echoed Cicognara by stating that Giulio “must have been a friend of Andrea Riccio.”44 Leo Planiscig imagined that Giulio learned the art of working in bronze directly from Riccio during Giulio’s days as a law student at the University of Padua, and Planiscig asserted that Giulio turned to

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42 Leopoldo Ciognara, *Storia della scultura dal suo risorgimento in Italia sino al secolo XIX, per servire di continuazione alle opere di Winkelmann e di d’Agincourt II* (Venezia, 1816), 142.
43 Giulio advocated the utility of family members being united in decisions that impacted the family and their wealth. In a chapter of *De amicitia* entitled *De amicitia aequalium et primum fratrum*, Giulio underlined the benefits to be found from living with one’s brothers: “Great utility is achieved from the friendship between siblings. If indeed they remain united in society, the family is maintained with minor expenses. To conserve and to augment the patrimony, they lend mutual aid, they can be consulted with the aim to make decisions inspired with prudence: that it happens with greater opportunity when the patrimony is united and not divided.” Giulio Della Torre, *De amicitia*, ms 1364. f. 41r, cited in Arturo Sandrini, “Villa Della Torre: l’antico, la natura, l’artificio,” in *La Villa Della Torre a Fumani*, a cura di Arturo Sandrini, (Verona: Banca Agricola popolare di Cerea, 1993), 122, and Gian Paolo Marchi, “Il dottore, l’ignorante: la trasmissione della cultura nella Verona del Cinquecento,” *Palladio e Verona* (Verona: Neri Pozza Editore, 1980), 10.
44 The use of bronze on the Della Torre monument sets it apart from other tomb monuments. Bronze—an expensive material—was often reserved for the tombs of important people or saints. In 1539, Lilius Gregorius Gyraldus of Ferrara argued that bronze coffins were best left for princes and other rulers. Gyraldus, *De sepulchris et vario sepeliendi di ritu*, (Basle: 1539), 39. Cited in Kathryn B. Hiesinger, “The Fregoso Monument: A Study in Sixteenth-Century Tomb Monuments and Catholic Reform,” *The Burlington Magazine* Vol. 118, No. 878 (May, 1976): 284. However, the use of bronze on the Della Torre monument was likely primarily influenced by the popularity of this medium in Padua and Giulio Della Torre’s own interests in the medium.
his friend, Riccio, with this commission.\(^45\) Considering the popularity of bronze and numismatic collections in Padua, it is a reasonable hypothesis that Giulio’s interest in bronze arose during his studies in Padua. Indeed, this would be the most likely moment for Giulio’s initial contact with Riccio; however, it may have been several years before Giulio began making medals. Although Giulio’s activity as a medallist probably spans a wider period, his dated medals fall between 1519 and 1529.\(^46\)

A study of Giulio’s patronage and his own art illustrates his taste for antiquarianism and for works that were both novel and innovative. As Hill points out, while the amateur status of Giulio is evident in his medals, his work did contain many original ideas.\(^47\) Although best known as an amateur medallist, Giulio was, in fact, more accomplished in bronze sculpture: he created a bronze self-portrait bust; a bronze plaquette of the \textit{Adoration of the Magi} in the Louvre has recently been tentatively attributed to Giulio.\(^48\)

Giulio demonstrated both his skill and originality in his creation of the small bronze self-portrait now in La Fondazione Miniscalchi Erizzo (Fig. 19). Only 14 centimetres in height, this small bust was dated by Lanfranco Franzoni to 1525-1530.\(^49\)

\(^{45}\) Leo Planiscig, \textit{Andrea Riccio} (Vienna: Verlag von Anton Schroll & Co., 1927), 373-374.
\(^{46}\) George Francis Hill argued the medal of Giulio’s father may be dated prior to his death in 1506, contending that he looks younger than 62 in the portrait. Giulio’s medal for Bartolommeo Socino may also presumably date to the first decade of the 16th century as Socino passed away in 1507. George Francis Hill, \textit{A Corpus of Italians Medals of the Renaissance before Cellini}, Vol. 1 (Florence: Studio per edizioni scelte, 1984), 145.
\(^{47}\) Hill, \textit{A Corpus of Italian Medals}, 142. Of the twenty signed medals, eight are of the Della Torre family, one of the painter Giovanni Caroto, and the remaining depict scholars, local patricians, and statesmen.
\(^{48}\) The Louvre \textit{Adoration} is quite close in nature to Riccio’s scene of the \textit{Adoration} on the paschal candelabrum. If the attribution to Giulio Della Torre is accepted, it would illustrate Giulio’s interest in the work of Riccio. Andrea Bacchi and Luciana Giacomelli, “Rinascimento di terra e di fuoco. Figure all’antica e immagini devote nella scultura di Andrea Riccio,” in \textit{Rinascimento e passione per l’antico: Andrea Riccio e il suo tempo}, ed. Andrea Bacchi and Luciana Giacomelli (Trent: Provincia autonoma di Trento, 2008), 47-48.
Apart from the beauty and excellent modeling of this small portrait bust, this unusual work is marked by its strong *all’antica* style, which—given that at this point most *all’antica* busts were not portraits of contemporary figures—makes it both unique and important.

The true *all’antica* bust was rounded at the bottom, had a hollow back, and was placed upon a socle. Because the bases of earlier Renaissance busts were not rounded, they tended to resemble reliquary busts rather than ancient busts. Giulio’s self-portrait with its rounded bust held up by a socle consists of a form that was not used in full-size portrait busts for several more years and that did not become the norm until after 1550. His bust does vary from the later Renaissance *all’antica* busts in two important aspects: its small format and un-hollowed back. Nonetheless, Giulio’s self-portrait would remain a novel creation even if the date of its execution was a decade or so later.\(^{50}\) While small-scale bronze busts similar in style to Giulio’s self-portrait did exist in the period, they were not as strongly *all’antica* as Giulio’s work, and those that do come close to Giulio’s design may not be actual portraits.\(^ {51}\) This is evident in the work of Antico: while he led the field in the creation of *all’antica* bronze busts, he did not create contemporary portraits.\(^{52}\) At a height of a mere 14 cm, Giulio’s self-portrait bust would rest easily in one’s hand; this suggests that this work was meant to be handled and, thus, likely placed in an accessible position in its owner’s collection. One expects that it must have assumed a place of pride in Giulio’s collection of ancient and modern works. That this portrait bust


\(^{51}\) For examples see Wilhem von Bode and J. D. Draper, *The Italian Bronze Statuettes of the Renaissance by Wilhelm Bode*, New edition with aggiornamenti by J. D. Draper (New York, 1980).

was made by a dilettante sculptor is somewhat astounding considering the exquisite workmanship; the work importantly illustrates the scope and nature of Giulio’s antiquarian interests.

Well versed in the antiquities of Verona, the Della Torre brothers were avid collectors. Their taste for the antique was noted by their contemporaries. Hubert Goltz recorded seeing Giulio’s collection of antique coins in the *Iulius Caesar sive Historiae Imperatorum Caesarumque Romanaorum ex antiquis numismatibus restitutae*. In the *Historia di Alessandro Canobbio intorno la nobilità e l’antichità di Verona*, Canobbio praised the Della Torre for their collections, particularly the collection of Giovanni Battista di Raimondo found in the family villa in Mezzane. Giulio also collected epigraphs and drawings of local antiquity in the Valpolicella; these drawings are contained in the *Liber Julij de la Turre*—an unpublished work found in the Biblioteca Civica in Verona. Such interests, by no means unique, reflect the current popular taste for epigraphic studies; however, taken together with Giulio’s numismatic work, his *all’antica* bust, and the design for the villa at Fumane, they suggest that Giulio’s antiquarian studies consumed much of his time and thought.

Amongst Giulio’s medals is one dedicated to the Veronese painter Giovanni Caroto, who is best remembered for his illustrations of ancient Veronese architecture, published in Torello Saraina’s dialogue *De origine et amplitudine civitatis Veronae* in 1540. On the obverse of this medal is Coroto’s portrait; on the reverse is an image of an artist at his

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53 Hubert Goltz, *Iulius Caesar sive Historiae Imperatorum Caesarumque Romanaorum ex antiquis numismatibus restitutae* (Brugis Flandorum, 1563). His visit to this and other collections in Verona must have occurred between 1552 and before Giulio’s death c. 1563. Lanfranco Franzoni, “I Della Torre di S. Egidio e Fumane nel quadro del collezionismo veronese,” in *Villa Della Torre a Fumane*, a cura di Arturo Sandrini (Verona: Banca Agricola popolare di Cerea, 1993), 94.

54 *Historia di Alessandro Canobbio intorno la nobilità e l’antichità di Verona*. in BCV, ms. MCMLXVII, del 1587-1597, 171 verso.

55 An Italian edition followed in 1546.
desk, drawing a nude model (Fig. 20). Vasari recorded that Caroto not only made a portrait of Giulio, but that he had also made one of his brother Marcantonio when Marcantonio was in his youth. This suggests that the friendship between Giulio and Caroto likely spanned many years.\(^{56}\) Taking into account Giulio’s own study of Veronese antiquities, one would imagine that Giulio closely followed Caroto’s study and illustrations of the antiquity of Verona.

By the 1530s, Giulio Della Torre was at the centre of an important group of Veronese—including the Canossa, the Bevilacqua, and the Pellegrini—who were actively engaged in local politics. Prominently involved in art and architecture in Verona, they were also important figures in the city’s literary and intellectual sphere.\(^{57}\) During this period, architecture was a frequent subject of discussion amongst the Della Torre family and their circle as is clearly demonstrated by their growing interest in the design of villas and gardens. The identity of the architect of Giulio’s villa in Fumane (Fig. 21-22) has been an issue of debate, with both Michele Sanmicheli and Giulio Romano being candidates.

\(^{56}\) In Giorgio Vasari’s “Lives of Fra Giocondo, Liberale, and other craftsmen of Verona,” Vasari lists some of the portraits commissioned by the Della Torre. Amongst the artists who created portraits for the Della Torre were Giovanni Caroto and his brother Giovanni Francesco. Vasari records that Giovanni Francesco Caroto painted the portraits of Raimondo and Giulio Della Torre, as well as Girolamo Fracastoro, while his brother, Giovanni Caroto, made portraits of Giulio and Marcantonio Della Torre. None of these works are now known to exist. Vasari also records that Giovanni Francesco Caroto painted little figures in a chamber for Raimondo Della Torre. Vasari, Barrochi, VI: 572-573. Giovanni Caroto may have also been commissioned to paint an altarpiece for Raimondo Della Torre for a church in Mezzane di Sotto. This altarpiece, the *Madonna Enthroned with St. Catherine and St. Paul with donors*, in Santa Maria Assunta, was earlier attributed to Girolamo dai Libri. Barton argues it is more reminiscent of Giovanni Caroto’s work; unfortunately, the altarpiece was badly damaged during a restoration. Baron, “Giovanni Caroto – II,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 18, no. 93 (Dec, 1910): 176. The altarpiece contained the portraits of Raimondo, his wife Beatrice Pellegrini, and two of their children. It was placed in the church in 1540. Lanfranco Franzoni, “Collezionismo e cultura antiquaria,” *Palladio e Verona* (Verona: Neri Pozza Editore, 1980), 125.

suggested as possible candidates. However, the villa, which was built by 1562, is now generally accepted to be principally the design of Giulio Della Torre himself.

As Christopher Pastore has shown, the design of the Villa Della Torre not only draws on ancient descriptions; it also demonstrates that the study of antiquity had expanded beyond that of the Greco-Roman world. The villa culture and desire for the country life encouraged members of this circle to turn to Islamic sources to fill in the blanks left in the Renaissance knowledge of the Greco-Roman villa and, in particular, the design of ancient gardens.\(^{58}\) In a series of letters written from Spain between 1526 and 1527 and subsequently circulated within the Della Torre circle, Andrea Navagero described the architecture and gardens in the Alhambra to Giovanni Battista Ramusio. As is evident in the villa’s inclusion of a channel of water that runs through the courtyard to the fish ponds and down into the garden, the design for Villa Della Torre at Fumane appears to have been influenced by Navagero’s 1526 descriptions.\(^ {59}\) Other figures in Giulio’s circle also must have influenced the design: Giovanni Caroto’s friendship with Giulio and Giovanni’s careful study of ancient buildings in Verona must have played a role in Giulio’s rebuilding of the villa.\(^ {60}\)

The design of the villa was likely also influenced by Giulio’s friendship with Sanmicheli, a member of the circle who received patronage from both Giulio and Raimondo Della Torre.\(^ {61}\) In the Life of Sanmicheli, Vasari states that it was Sanmicheli who designed the small, circular chapel at Giulio’s villa in Fumane (built c. 1558) with

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its centrally placed altar (Fig. 23-25). Intimately associated with Giulio’s brother Raimondo, Sanmicheli was present when Raimondo made a copy of his will in 1541. Raimondo was a key figure in the circle from which Sanmicheli received many commissions in Verona, including the also round Pellegrini Chapel designed for Margarita Pellegrini, mentioned in the previous chapter. In Verona, Sanmicheli was also commissioned to make a design for a hospital of which Raimondo was a principal patron.

We can now make some general remarks about Giulio’s taste and patronage. It is clear that Giulio’s own art and his patronage were often quite novel and modern. Importantly, his own art and patronage was a result of interaction not only with the artists but also with his closest friends. It seems unlikely that he and his brothers would not have been actively involved in the design for the monument to commemorate their father and brother; moreover, it would be surprising if the plans for this monument were not a recurring subject of discussion amongst their closest friends.

The most interesting account of the Della Torre’s interaction with some of their closest friends and artists comes from a somewhat unusual source—a novella written by Matteo Bandello. In the many stories set in Verona, Bandello conveys a lively and realistic reflection of the city’s social environment; his evocative presentation includes descriptions of the local surroundings, the city’s cultural refinements, and its

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63 The writings of the Dominican priest Matteo Bandello are best known to art historians for his account of Leonardo da Vinci’s painting of the Last Supper and his scandalous narrative of the life of Fra Filippo Lippi. Matteo Bandello, Le Novelle, a cura di Gioachino Brognoligo. Vol. II (Bari: Gius. Laterza & Figli, 1910), I, dedication to Novella LVIII.
gastronomy.\textsuperscript{64} The specific references to contemporary Veronese life served to strengthen the impression that Bandello was playing the role of a chronicler. These elements were intended to make his stories read as an account of what he had seen and experienced in Verona.\textsuperscript{65} All the stories taken from Verona include a dedication in which the circumstances of the story are presented—dedications that serve to give Bandello’s Novelle historical importance greater than the other short stories of the period.\textsuperscript{66}

\textsuperscript{64} The Novelle, comprised of some 214 stories, consists primarily of tragic tales of love and humorous stories of buffoons. Some of these stories were gathered during his stay in Verona between 1529-1536 while in the company of his patron, Cesare Fregoso, who provided Bandello with close access to the leading figures in Verona. Many of the stories were set before 1529 and revised by Bandello between 1547-1554. The first three sections of the Novelle were published in 1554, just over ten years before his death (c. 1565), (a 1573 publication included the fourth section). Adelin Fiorato, “Le monde de la beffa chez Matteo Bandello,” in Formes et significations de la <<beffa>> dans la littérature italienne de la Renaissance, Centre de Recherche sur la Renaissante Italienne, ed. André Rochon (Paris: Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1972), 121. Bandello’s Veronese stories served a political role because they illustrated his patron’s place in the city. For more on this subject, see Adelin Charles Fiorato, “Les influences de la culture Véronaise,” in Bandello entre l’histoire et l’écriture: La vie, l’expérience sociale, l’évolution culturelle d’un conteur de la Renaissance (Florence: Olschki Editore, 1979). For a discussion of this, see Fiorato’s section “L’<<otium>> de Vérone: Les <<Tre Parche>>” in Bandello entre l’histoire et l’écriture, 378-400.

\textsuperscript{65} It is important to understand that the stories set in Verona differ from Bandello’s other stories; in the Veronese stories he placed greater emphasis upon reflecting the contemporary society and upon illustrating his patron’s place in the city. In many of Bandello’s Veronese stories, his representations of the life and culture of Verona often pass from the dedications into the novelle themselves, which, as Adelin Fiorato argues, “le signe d’une certaine proximité entre la phase d’observation et celle de la rédaction.” He argues this is most evident in the story set in the Della Torre home. “La matière et l’ambiance de cette anecdote d’actualité s’apparentent à celles des dédicaces et le rôle de la brigata devient prépondérant à l’intérieur même de la nouvelle.” Fiorato, Bandello entre l’histoire et l’écriture, 416.

\textsuperscript{66} Giorgio Bolognini, “Verona nel novelliere di Matteo Bandello,” Atti e memorie dell’accademia d’agricoltura scienze e lettere di Verona serie IV, vol. XVI (LXXXXI dell’intera collezione) (Verona: 1915): 163-164. One of the most contentious aspects in the study of Bandello’s Novelle is the issue of fiction and history. Other novelle have not been gleaned as a source of historical information to the same extent as Bandello’s writings. In part, the dedications before each of his stories have led to this debate. These dedications lend a sense of veracity to the stories because Bandello includes in the dedications the origin of the story and information about the people involved; as well he gives an explanation of how he heard the story. A feverish debate raged in the 1920s and 1930s over the publications of Letterio Di Francia, who argued against previous attempts to attain biographical and historical information from these dedications. He claimed that dedications served the purpose of first, hiding Bandello’s plagiarism (a weak argument as it is not likely that Bandello would have been accused of this by his contemporaries) and, secondly, attempting to ingratiate himself with patrons. See Letterio Di Francia, “Alla scoperta del vero Bandello - I,” Giornale storico della letteratura italiana lxxvii (1921): 290-324; Letterio Di Francia, “Alla scoperta del vero Bandello - II,” Giornale storico della letteratura italiana lxix (1922): 1-94; Letterio Di Francia, “Alla scoperta del vero Bandello - III,” Giornale storico della letteratura italiana lxxxi (1923) 1-74; and T. Gwynfor Griffith, Bandello’s Fiction. An Examination of the Novelle (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955). 4. Di Francia’s views were dismissed by Giaocchino Brognoligo in his “In difesa di Mateo Bandello,” Atti dell’Accademia Ponitamiana Iviii (1928). Brognoligo argues there was some truth in the
Bandello’s *Novella X* was dedicated to Giulio Della Torre’s son, Francesco, who is best known as the devoted secretary of Bishop Gian Matteo Giberti. The novella is narrated by his uncle, Raimondo Della Torre, and Bandello apologizes for lacking the grace to record the story as eloquently as it had been told to him by Raimondo. It is clear from the dedication that Bandello knew much about the Della Torre family; he introduced the family by reviewing their Milanese origins and praised them and wrote of his love for them.

Bandello opened the novella with a discussion of Boccaccio’s *beffa*, or pranksters, whom Bandello contends were neither men of great talent nor observation or perception. Stating that Boccaccio’s pranksters were likely incapable of pulling their pranks on intelligent characters, he recounts two pranks by the painter Girolamo of Verona upon two learned figures: Pietro Bembo and Giovanni Battista Spinello. Bandello emphasizes *Novelle*, but this should be approached with caution. In 1559, only a few short years after the publication of the first books, Boaistuau claimed that Bandello should be read “pour le mérite de l’invention et la vérité de l’histoire.” Griffith, *Bandello’s Fiction*, 5; P. Boaistuau, *Histoires tragiques extraites des oeuvres italiennes de Bandel* (Paris, 1559). While accepting the *Novelle* entirely as a reliable historical source is unwise, it is significant that his contemporaries accepted it as such. Indeed, as we have seen, Bandello does convey an accurate sense of knowledge about the Della Torre family and circle, and the shared interest of these figures in the arts is well known.

Bandello presents Francesco Della Torre as the narrator of *Novella III*, 55, and Marcantonio Della Torre as the narrator of *Novella III*, XV. Matteo Bandello, “Dedication,” *Novella X*, *Le Novelle*, Part II. 410. Italian *novelle* were often stories that had been passed on orally to small gatherings. Bandello’s writings reflect this tradition in his dedications presenting the origins of his stories. Frank S. Hook, “Introduction,” in Matteo Bandello, *The French Bandello: a selection: the original text of four of Belleforest's Histoires tragiques* (Columbia: University of Missouri, 1948), 11.

Bandello, 412. This novella, with its long dedication, differs from Bandello’s other stories. As Fiorato points out, it is also exceptional that the figures presented in the introduction are included in the story itself. He sees this as increasing the sense of veracity in the story and it leads him to refer to Bandello as an amateur historian. Fiorato, “La <<beffa>>,” 156.

Spinello was the count of Cariati who served as the governor of Verona under the Imperial forces. It is presumed that the Girolamo referred to is the Veronese painter and miniaturist Girolamo dai Libri. Bandello records that Girolamo had recently passed away. The greatest difficulty in identifying Bandello’s painter as Girolamo dai Libri is the fact that death of the painter is recorded in the *Novella* a year earlier than the other records of his death in 1555; however, this may be the result of revisions made before the 1572 publication of the *Novella*. Fiorato argues that it must be Girolamo dai Libri in *Bandello entre histoire et l’écriture*, 389. Bolognini agrees that it does seem to be Girolamo dai Libri, although there is no other documentary evidence to confirm this. Bolognini, “Verona nel novelliere,” 168. While there are no
that Girolamo da Verona’s practical jokes were aimed at astute, learned men: the latter prank, as we will see, was perpetuated with great success not only on Bembo but also on the Della Torre brothers and other close friends.\textsuperscript{71}

The story is set in the Della Torre house in Verona. Raimondo recounts how Pietro Bembo was accustomed to staying in their home whenever he came to Verona, as he did one cold January night when he arrived at midnight with Andrea Navagero. As the news of their arrival spread, other friends, including Girolamo Fracastoro, joined the group. The friends were deep in conversation when a servant interrupted to inform Bembo that a relative he had not seen in many years had come to pay his respects. It soon became evident that the new guest, shabbily attired, lacked the dignity befitting a member of the Bembo family. While the guest spoke with great fondness for the Bembo family, his speech was sometimes rude and, to Bembo’s great embarrassment, the new guest overstepped the boundaries of decorum.\textsuperscript{72} As the hosts and other guests attempted to calm the mortified Bembo, the newcomer turned to torment his new victim, Navagero, displaying his knowledge of Navagero’s family history. As he spoke, the newcomer’s

\textsuperscript{71} Girolamo’s first prank occurred when Verona was under the control of the Imperial army. Girolamo, as Raimondo Della Torre tells us, was known in Verona to be very closely attached to the Venetian signori, such that while Verona was occupied by Imperial forces it was difficult for the painter to keep silent regarding his deep affection for Venice. As he was in need of money, he had accepted a project to paint the insignia of the house of Austria on the gate of the Palazzo of the Signori. It was a painful experience for the painter, for he had to work under the eye of the local citizens. During his hours of toil and humiliation, he was often overheard sighing and saying to himself: “Durabunt tempore curto.” His utterance was reported to the Count who feared the painter knew of a plot against the Imperial forces. The painter was carefully interrogated and asked to explain for whom his message was intended. Finally Girolamo explained that he had meant that the insignia would not last for long, since he had chosen colours that would not withstand the air and the rain (Giulio Della Torre and his brothers were also part of the pro-Venetian community in Verona).

\textsuperscript{72} Bandello included a detailed and comical description of the new arrival’s clothing from his greasy hat to his torn stockings, and a handkerchief that was “torn in many places, and so very dirty that it appeared to have spent a month in the kitchen cleaning the frying pans.” (My translation) (“rotto in più luoghi e tanto sporco, che pareva che fosse stato un mese in cucina a nettar le padelle.”) Bandello, 418.
voice and manner changed, and at last, to great relief and much laughter, the guest revealed himself as the painter Girolamo da Verona. We are informed that Navagero was shocked at being so utterly deceived and failing to recognize someone with whom he had spent a great deal of time in both Verona and Venice. Fracastoro was even more surprised, as we are told that he had just spent the day conversing with the painter.

This story is significant for several reasons. While it remains uncertain whether or not it was based on actual event, the success of this novella rests on Bandello’s ability to make the episode seem believable. Indeed, it is evident that Bandello knew much about these men, as he has painted an accurate picture of this group of friends, taking care to underline their closeness. Although this story may indeed be just a story, the fact that the joke is perpetuated by an artist upon Pietro Bembo, the Della Torre, and their friends is important. As the story opens, Girolamo of Verona is presented by Raimondo Della Torre as “...the most jocular and pleasant man and the best companion that one can imagine.”

At the end of the day, impersonating an important guest’s relative is not a small license to take; Bandello’s story would have failed if the reader doubted the openness of the Della Torre household to such a familiar antic by an artist.

The interaction between the artists and humanists in the Della Torre circle was tied to more than just the creation of art; it was also coupled with their pursuit of both

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73 The purpose of this prank also differs from most of Bandello’s other stories, and it definitely differs from those of Boccaccio, for those tricked in Bandello’s story are not presented as fools, rather their acumen is emphasized. Fiorato, “Le monde de la beffa,” 162.
74 My translation. Bandello, 414. “…il più faceto e piacevol uomo il meglior compagno che si possa imaginare.”
75 Practical jokes in the Renaissance served to both to entertain and to illustrate the wit of the prankster. The joke played by Girolamo was meant not to humiliate, but to provide entertainment amongst friends: “La mystification ne modifie en rien le rapport entre les personnages. Personne n’a rien perdu. Bien au contraire, l’acquisition est collective. Beffatori et beffato, qui appartiennent au même cercle socio-professionnel, celui des humanistes élargi aux artistes, y gagnent de rire ensemble un bon moment, tout en sentant corroboré l’idéal d’urbanité et l ‘élitisme qui les unit.” Fiorato, “Le monde de la beffa,” 156-157.
academic and antiquarian interests. Considering the complex programme of the Della Torre monument and the interests of the Della Torre and their friends in the visual arts, it seems clear that they must have been actively involved in the design and narrative programme of the Della Torre monument.

Gauricus’s dialogue gives us an image of the immediate milieu in which Riccio worked; it illustrates the value of a literary education and promotes the exchange of knowledge between humanists and artists. Gauricus’ comparison of the composition of poetry and rhetoric with the *disegno* of sculpture also creates an impression of the respect given to sculptors working within this environment.

It is apparent from the patterns of interactions between humanists and artists in Padua, as well as the interaction of the Della Torre with artists, that these humanists recognized the value of art in giving visual form to complex ideas and themes. Such an involvement of the humanists in commissioning art should not be interpreted as diminishing the role of the artist in its creation; instead, the decision to commission Riccio illustrates the patrons’ recognition of the sophisticated nature of Riccio’s art, his gift of invention, and his ability to express complex ideas in his art. Respect for Riccio’s talent is apparent in the license granted to the artist by many of his patrons. Moreover, the fact that much of Giulio Della Torre’s work and patronage was novel and innovative may help to explain why Riccio was given the commission and why the design of the Della Torre monument breaks with contemporary funerary monuments.

Given the erudite nature of much of Riccio’s work, there must have been considerable discussion between the artist and his patrons over the ideas embodied in his creations. The friendship between artists like Riccio and the leading scholars and
humanists in Padua and Verona implies mutual respect, and the exchange of ideas and knowledge reminds us that the humanist study was a communal endeavour.
Chapter III The Quintessential Christian Tomb?

Although the exclusively *all’antica* visual language used by Andrea Riccio on the Della Torre tomb monument is its most frequently discussed feature, this was not the only departure from contemporary funerary art made by Riccio. Amongst the other remarkable features of this tomb is its design—it’s construction as a free-standing monument with a raised tomb-chest and its use of an expanded narrative. While there was some precedent for decorating a tomb solely *all’antica*, such tombs were, for the most part, smaller in scale and generally kept within a Christian context.\(^1\) Intermingling classical and Christian motifs in Renaissance funerary art was by no means uncommon; however, most tombs held at least a representation of the Virgin and Child or an image of the Resurrected Christ. Normally placed on the upper levels of tomb monuments, these representations were always understood as a reference to the Final Resurrection of the Dead—an element clearly absent on the Della Torre monument.

Even though funerary art was undergoing many changes in the period, it remained a conservative field with strict expectations of decorum. Receiving much public discussion and scrutiny, funerary monuments were often singled out for criticism if they appeared to be excessively self-aggrandizing or if they suggested a greater concern for earthly glory than for eternal salvation. Therefore, certain elements were expected to be included on contemporary tombs and, most importantly, they were expected to be overtly concerned

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\(^1\) For example, although the arcosolia tombs of Francesco Sassetti and Nera Corsi and the immediate surrounding wall, in the Sassetti Chapel, Santa Trinita, Florence, were decorated exclusively with *all’antica* motifs, the frescoes on the walls of the chapel give their tombs a Christian context. It could very well be that the Della Torre had planned other decorations for the chapel that would have brought the monument in line with contemporary practice.
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with the Christian afterlife. While concerned with the afterlife, the Della Torre tomb’s references are not explicitly Christian: discernible to a learned viewer, they are presented solely in a pagan language. But if one turns from programme to structure, a different, distinctly Christian aspect emerges. Riccio’s composition of this monument as a free-standing monument with a raised tomb-chest has important implications for our understanding of the narrative programme. In this chapter, I argue that the structure of the Della Torre monument draws on the typology of the tombs of saints. The very design of Riccio’s monument for the Della Torre would have informed the viewer of the importance of the narrative programme as the structure signals the didactic purpose of the narrative. As will be examined in the chapters that follow, Riccio’s narrative presented a model for the viewer to follow. Thus, while the tomb’s narrative relied on a purely pagan visual language, the very structure of this monument drew on a language that was overtly Christian.

The free-standing monument (Fig. 1) commemorating the Della Torre stands in the centre of a small chamber accessed through the family chapel. Set on a platform, the monument consists of a table over which was placed a raised tomb-chest. The lower section consists of an altar-like table adorned with a classical frieze. This table is supported by a chest in the centre and by short, hybrid columns at the corners. The short sides of the chest bear reliefs of the Della Torre family crest; the long sides bear the inscriptions commemorating Girolamo and Marcantonio. The tomb-chest above is raised at the corners by four bronze sphinxes and in the centre by a marble support on which is carved a winged wreath. Surrounding the raised tomb-chest are Riccio’s eight bronze narrative panels. The lid of the tomb-chest is decorated with overlapping medallions and
acanthus leaves, and in the centre of the lid stands a bronze tabernacle containing the
death masks of Girolamo and Marcantonio.

In the scene of the professor’s funeral (Fig. 7) depicted in the fifth panel of the
tomb’s narrative, Riccio included a representation of the professor’s tomb, which bears a
striking resemblance to the tomb he designed for the Della Torre. While the structure of
the monument and the version of the monument in the panel are almost identical, the
details are not. In both, the lower table is supported in the centre by a chest and at the
edges by hybrid columns. In the panel, the chest is square rather than rectangular and it
bears no inscription. The carvings on the columns in the panel are very similar, although
not identical, to those of the monument. One of the principal variations between the
monument and the relief is the frieze that decorates the table top. While the frieze on the
monument is a combination of decorative coloured marble medallions and half
medallions with carvings of icthycentaurs, nymphs, and birds, in the relief Riccio placed
a human skull in the centre of the frieze. Encircled with a wreath, the skull has garlands
draped on each side, from which hang two bucrania. Contemporary funerary poetry often
includes references to the decoration of funerary monuments with garlands; thus, the
garlands on the tomb could be understood here as temporary decorations of the
monument rather than actual relief work on the monument.

The upper section of the monument and the relief of the monument also consist of
a tomb-chest raised by a central support and sphinxes at the edges. In the relief, a single
garland drapes the central support, while winged wreaths were carved onto the
monument’s central support. An hourglass and two books have been placed on the table
in the relief; the inclusion of the books—an additional one lies on the ground in front of
the monument—point to the contemporary funerary practice of using objects in the funeral procession and in the ceremony to identify the profession of the deceased.

Again, the tomb-chest in the relief has the same design as that on the monument. While the tomb-chest is divided into the correct number of spaces for the reliefs, the reliefs are not evident in the panel. One of the most significant changes between the monument as it now stands and the tomb in Riccio’s narrative is found on the lid of the monument. In the panel, the lid is draped with a cloth on which was placed a tabernacle flanked by putti holding up flaming oil lamps. At the corners of the monument in the relief are further putti who hold masks in front of themselves. The sloped lid of the Della Torre monument, carved with medallions and acanthus leaves, contains only the bronze tabernacle with the death masks of the deceased. Both tabernacles are nearly identical in design although it is not clear that they hold death masks in the panel. The representation of the lid in the panel is significant as it presents an image of what the monument may have looked liked before the removal of the small bronze statuettes that once decorated the lid. Despite these differences, the tomb and the relief are structurally the same and the details of their design are quite similar. Yet, in the relief, there are no specific elements on the funerary monument that would identify the deceased: no portrait; no narrative; and no inscription. Only the books in the relief identify the deceased as a learned man.

The genesis of Riccio’s design remains an issue of importance. The design of the tomb as a free-standing monument was somewhat unusual in the Veneto, where wall monuments were more commonly used.\(^2\) Leo Planiscig observed that, while Riccio made the design of the Della Torre monument entirely his own, its form—a ceremonial table

with a raised tomb-chest—was not new. Contending that Riccio’s design illustrated the direct influence of the Lombard school, Planiscig specifically suggested Giovanni Antonio Amadeo’s work in Milan or Bergamo. Amadeo’s design for the arca of San Lanfranco (Fig. 26) in Pavia, c. 1498-1508, is the closest of his funerary monuments to the design of the Della Torre monument. Since the arca of San Lanfranco draws on a long tradition of Trecento art, it is difficult to sustain that Riccio’s design was directly influenced by Amadeo’s work. They may be, as it were, parallel derivations. Planiscig, also recognizing that the design of the Della Torre monument was ultimately derived from a Trecento source, pointed to Giovanni di Balduccio’s tomb for St. Peter the Martyr in St. Eustorgio, Milan (Fig. 27). An insufficiently understood implication of Planiscig’s suggestions is that it links Riccio’s design to one of the most common types of tombs created for saints, a type that originated not in Lombardy but in Bologna.

In his discussion of the Della Torre monument, Planiscig briefly addressed two other monuments that signalled the return of free-standing monuments for the laity in the Veneto. However, apart from their free-standing status, these monuments offer little to explain Riccio’s design. Dating from before 1479, Antonio Rizzo’s (?) tomb for Orsato Giustiniani, in S. Pietro di Castello, Venice, was one of the earliest free-standing Venetian tombs (Fig. 28). This monument, now destroyed, included a gisant lying on a

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3 While Planiscig does not cite any particular works by Amadeo, he must be referring to the tomb of condottiere Bartolomeo Colleoni in the Colleoni chapel in Santa Maria Maggiore in Bergamo. Amadeo appears to have contributed to the tomb monument for Giovanni Borromeo, which originally was placed in the church of S. Francesco Grande, in Milan; thus, it may have been this work in Milan to which Planiscig was referring. Leo Planiscig, Andrea Riccio (Vienna: Anton Schroll, 1927), 376.

4 Planiscig, Andrea Riccio, 376. Giovanni di Balduccio was active from 1317-1349.

5 The design for the entire monument is known only from a drawing included in Johannes Grevembroch’s Monumenta Veneta ex antiquis ruderibus, I, p. 92. The image was included in Anne Markham Schultz’s book on Niccolò di Giovanni Fiorentino, to whom she assigns the tomb. Anne Markham Schultz, Niccolò di Giovanni Fiorentino and Venetian sculpture of the early Renaissance (New York: New York State University Press, 1978). Planiscig, Andrea Riccio, 374, 376.
funerary bier. Planiscig also pointed to Paolo Savin’s tomb for Cardinal Giovanni Battista Zen in the Zen Chapel, San Marco, Venice (Fig. 29). Commissioned in 1501, this bronze monument clearly demonstrates the influence of the Giustiniani monument, evident in the placement of the Virtues around the funeral bier. Both monuments centred on the presentation of a gisant, an aspect that Riccio omitted from the Della Torre monument. Moreover, the height of these monuments differs from the height of Riccio’s structure—in the Giustiniani and Zen monuments, the gisant was to be viewed from above. Funeral ceremony was an instrumental influence on the design of Renaissance tombs; as a result, the presentation of the body on the funerary bier and the elevation of the body during the funeral became common themes for funerary monuments. It is clear that the very structure of the Giustiniani and Zen monuments are derived from funerary ritual.  

However, funerary ritual does not explain Riccio’s design of the Della Torre monument; thus, it remains an anomaly.  

Free-standing monuments were most frequently used to commemorate figures of particular civic importance; extant examples illustrate that they were commonly used for rulers. Influenced by French examples, this type of monument usually presented a gisant.

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7 The inclusion of the death masks on the Della Torre monument does not make up for the exclusion of effigies. The presentation of a gisant provided a last and very important moment to illustrate the social class and wealth of the deceased. The Della Torre tomb, while it makes use of expensive materials, does not refer to the status of the family in this contemporary manner. The presentation of the gisant served, at least partially, to refer back to the funeral where the sumptuousness of the deceased’s dress and the elaborate funeral illustrated their privileged role in society. This was made particularly clear by the presence of the displayed body, an honour that was only available to certain groups. See Vainglorious death: A Funerary Fracas in Renaissance Brescia, trans. and annotated by J. Donald Cullington, ed. by Stephen Bowd, (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2006). There was a great concern in demonstrating one’s social standing in funeral ceremonies, since such ceremonies provided occasion to advance the position of one’s family through this demonstration of wealth (a wealth made visible through the quality of mourning clothes and the number of paid mourners). See also Sharon Strocchia, Death and Ritual in Renaissance Florence (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992) and Robert Munman, Sienese Renaissance Tomb Monuments (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1993), 9.
of the deceased lying on a funeral bier. Although frequently covered with an architectural structure, the tomb itself was often quite low, thus granting the spectator occasion to view the effigy of the deceased (The French influence on Italian funerary art was strongest in Northern Italy). Some of the most important Italian examples of free-standing monuments for rulers are Cristoforo Solario’s tomb of Ludovico Sforza and Beatrice d’Este, presenting their gisants on funeral biers that are now in the Certosa, Pavia, c. 1497 (Fig. 30); and the bronze tomb of Pope Sixtus IV, also with a gisant, by Antonio Pollaiuolo, 1484-93 (Fig. 31). These tombs are no more than a few feet tall and, again, their structure provides no clues to Riccio’s design. There were, of course, taller and more elaborate tombs for rulers. Planiscig, in his discussion of the Della Torre monument, also pointed to Gian Cristoforo Romano’s monument for Gian Galeazzo Visconti, in the Certosa, in Pavia (Fig. 32). Again, the structure of this monument does not explain that of the Della Torre monument: the Visconti monument consists of a gisant housed in an architectural form based on a triumphal arch. While there are narrative reliefs on the attic of the arch, the narrative is not continuous; instead, the reliefs present a few important moments from the life of Gian Galeazzo Visconti. Since narrative cycles were uncommon on contemporary tomb monuments, the inclusion of a narrative cycle on the Della Torre monument further sets it apart. While it was not unusual for the tombs of rulers or military figures to include scenes of important victories or other moments in their careers, a continuous narrative on the scale found on the Della Torre monument was

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8 The monument was begun by Romano in 1491, but the tomb, made by Galeazzo Alessi, was not finished until 1560. The hands of other artists are evident, including Benedetto Briosco. Anthony Roth, “The Lombard Sculptor Benedetto Briosco: Works of the 1490s,” The Burlington Magazine 122, No. 922, Special Issue Devoted to Sculpture (Jan., 1980): 2, 7-8, 10-22.
quite rare. Moreover, the inclusions of scenes from the life of the deceased were not frequently presented on the tomb-chest itself.

Of course, free-standing funerary monuments were also erected outside the church, but these were primarily linked with rulers or men of civic importance. Verona holds its famous Trecento free-standing monuments commemorating the Della Scala family (Figs. 33-35). Placed in the churchyard of S. Maria Antica, the monuments for Cangrande I, Mastino II, and Cansignorio consist of a tomb with gisant raised quite high and placed beneath a canopy; on top of each canopy is a sculpture of the ruler on a horse.\(^9\)

Important Paduan examples of free-standing tomb monuments include the tomb for Padua’s mythical founder, Antenor the Trojan, erected by the pre-Renaissance humanist Lovato Lovati in 1284 (Fig. 36). Lovati died in 1309 and was given the honour of being commemorated alongside Antenor. The monuments of both Antenor and Lovati consist of a sarcophagus raised on 4 columns; Antenor’s sarcophagus is made more prestigious with the addition of a canopy.\(^10\) When the bones of Livy were thought to have been discovered in the monastery of S. Giustina in 1413, a Paduan monument was planned to

\(^9\) The structure of the monuments for Cangrande I, circa 1330-1335, and for Mastino II, prior to 1350, were influenced by the design of the circa 1320 Castelbarco monument outside St. Anatasia, Verona; it consisted of a free-standing tomb-chest raised by lions. The tomb-chest of Cangrande I, who died in 1329, includes small biographical scenes placed around images of the Virgin and Gabriel, while the centre of the tomb-chest is carved with a relief of the Man of Sorrows. The narrative scenes present various moments of triumph for Cangrande I, including scenes of his military and his administrative career, the transportation of his body from Treviso to Verona, and his treatment of the vanquished. The 1376 monument for Cansignorio Della Scala is much more elaborate than the earlier Della Scala tombs but shares the same typology. The narrative on this monument includes St. George presenting the Cansignorio to the Virgin and Child and the Coronation of the Virgin on the short ends of the tomb-chest, while scenes from the life of Christ were presented on the long sides. On the canopy above the gisant and tomb-chest were sculptures of the Virtues and in 6 tabernacles were the sculptures of 6 warrior saints.

\(^{10}\) On the monuments for Antenor and Lovati, see Sarah Blake McHam, "Renaissance Monuments to Favourite Sons," *Renaissance Studies* 19, Issue 4 (September, 2005): 458-486 and Joseph Trapp, "The Image of Livy in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance," in *Studies of Petrarch and his Influence* (London: Pindar, 2003), 279-339. The tombs of Antenor and Lovati are similar in type to some designed for professors in Padua; in turn, the design for Petrarch’s monument in Arquà is related to that of the monument for Antenor.
commemorate the classical historian. This unexecuted monument, planned by Sicco Polenton, was to consist of a large column made from alternating pieces of red and white marble; four smaller columns, which would have supported a tomb-chest with a statue of Livy seated above it, were to be placed above this large column (Fig. 37).

Tomb monuments for professors were not traditionally elaborate. Following long-standing tradition, they most frequently consisted of a relief of the professor teaching, as is illustrated by numerous examples in Bologna, Padua, and Pavia. Riccio worked on this type of relief in 1498, when he completed the monument begun by Bartolommeo Bellano for Paduan professor of medicine and philosophy Pietro Roccabonella (Fig. 38). This monument included a portrait of the professor seated at his desk. In Bologna, there were also free-standing monuments for professors; however, these were exterior monuments that usually held a stronger civic function than those placed inside churches. As is evident in the monument for Rolandino Passageri

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12 For this monument Riccio made the small figures of the theological virtues. The monument, placed in the Paduan church San Francesco, was more ambitious than the typical funerary monuments for professors. No longer in its original state, and without all the original parts, the monument also included a large, bronze sacra conversazione relief. Volker Krahn, “Riccio’s Formation and Early Career,” in Andrea Riccio: Renaissance Master of Bronze, ed. Denise Allen and Peta Motture, New York, Frick Museum (London: Philip Wilson Pub., 2008), 7.

13 The most common presentations of professors teaching in Bologna vary from the representation found in Riccio’s first panel. In the many Bolognese examples, the professor is presented teaching either frontally, placing the viewer of the monument as a student in the classroom or with the professor seated and his students seated to the side. In Bologna, particularly in the 12th and 13th centuries, this was the primary imagery on professor’s tombs, as exemplified by Rosso de Parma’s monument for Lucio e Mondino de Liuzzi, 1318, in the Church of SS. Vitale e Agricola or, in Verona, the monument in honour of Bavarino de Crescenzi, S. Pietro Martire, from 1346, by a Veronese sculptor. For further examples, see Renzo Grandi, I Monumenti dei dotti e la scultura a Bologna (1267-1348) (Bologna: Comune di Bologna, Insituto per la
(Fig. 39), the structure of these exterior free-standing monuments in Bologna does little
to shed light on Riccio’s composition. Placed in Bologna’s piazza San Domenico, the
Passaggeri monument was created c. 1300 and is typical of this kind of monument as it
consists of a sarcophagus raised on tall columns and covered by a canopy.\(^\text{14}\)

The height of exterior monuments for professors in Bologna, the Della Scala
monuments, the tombs commemorating Antenor and Lovati, and the planned tomb for
Livy differs significantly from the height of the Della Torre monument. The most
noteworthy difference is that these monuments were raised so high that their structure
prevents their audience from having direct contact with the monument and hinders the
close interaction offered to the viewer by other forms of free-standing monuments,
particularly Riccio’s Della Torre monument. The design of the Della Torre monument
and its placement within a small room encouraged a very close and direct relationship
between viewer and monument. Thus, while there are examples of free-standing
monuments for professors, the form and content of the Della Torre monument still sets it
apart from these examples.

The Della Torre Monument and the Tombs of Saints

\(^{14}\) First created for the Glossators, free-standing exterior tomb monuments for lawyers and professors
started to be erected in 1268; they were most commonly placed in courtyards of Dominican and Franciscan
churches in Bologna, as well as in piazzas. The sarcophagus of Passaggeri does include biographical
narrative reliefs; these include a scene of the professor in the classroom and an image of the professor after
University Press, 2001), 305.
None of these free-standing tombs provides the source of inspiration for Riccio’s design of the Della Torre monument. The tombs of saints are a more relevant tradition. The design of the Della Torre monument shares important features with one of the most common types of the tombs of saints—it is a free-standing monument with a raised tomb-chest. In addition, the tombs of saints frequently include a narrative of the saint’s life; this was usually placed on the tomb-chest itself.

The arca of St. Dominic in Bologna (Fig. 40), designed by Nicola Pisano c. 1264 and erected in 1267, was one of the most influential tombs designed for a saint; it not only transformed the tombs of saints in Italy but, being one of the first monumental tombs since antiquity, it greatly impacted the wider field of funerary art. Up to this point, many funerary monuments in Italy reused ancient sarcophagi; thus, creating a large monument entirely from new material was unprecedented.

Originally raised on caryatids, the tomb-chest of St. Dominic (Fig. 41) was carved with six narrative scenes from the saint’s life; the inclusion of this biographical narrative was one of the most important additions to the tomb of St. Dominic. While it was common to depict Biblical scenes or related symbolic themes, the inclusion of scenes from the life of a saint was novel and extremely influential on subsequent tombs of saints. This mid-Duecento monument remained a relevant source of inspiration for artists in the late quattrocento and early cinquecento, as both Michelangelo and Niccolò

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15 Although designed by Pisano, it was likely executed by Arnolfo di Cambio, Lapo, and other assistants. Anita Fiderer Moskowitz, *Nicola Pisano’s Arca di San Dominico and Its Legacy* (Penn: Pennsylvania State University Press for the College Art Association, 1994), 2. The arca was moved from its original placement in the nave to a chapel built in the 15th century. Niccolò dell’Arca worked on the monument between 1469-1473. The predella level below the tomb-chest was added in 1532 and is the work of Alfonso Lombardo.

16 These caryatids were removed in the late 15th century when the tomb-chest was set on top of an altar. On the caryatids, see John Pope-Hennessy, “The Arca of St. Dominic: A Hypothesis,” *Burlington Magazine* 93, No 584 (Nov, 1951): 347-351. He argued that the sculptures that supported the tomb-chest ranged from 95 - 98 cm in height.

da Bari, better known as Niccolò dell’Arca, added their own contributions to the monument. The design of the arca of St. Dominic was influenced by Pisano’s earlier hexagonal pulpit for the Baptistery of Pisa. Made in 1260, the inclusion of an extended narrative on the pulpit set important precedents.\footnote{Pu

tit design shared other elements in common with the arca of saints; amongst these other elements are the didactic function of the narrative cycle and the use of figural supports and ornamental features that encourage the viewer to circle around the pulpit. The influence of classical sarcophagi on Pisano’s pulpit has been well noted; in particular, his inclusion of scenes from the life of Christ shows the influence of classical biographical sarcophagi. The visual link between Pisano’s pulpit and ancient funerary art is significant as it would have served to cultivate the conception that the pulpit was a representation of Christ’s tomb. Anita Fiderer Moskowitz, \textit{Nicola and Giovanni Pisano Pulpits} (Oostkamp, Belgium: Grafikon, 2005), 58. Eloise M. Angiola, “Nicola Pisano, Federigo Visconti, and the Classical style in Pisa,” \textit{Art Bulletin} 59, no. 1 (1977), 9. The link between pulpit and tomb must have been further heightened when four years later Pisano used a similar design for the arca of St. Dominic and then, in the following year, when he borrowed elements from the arca of St. Dominic for his pulpit in the Siena Cathedral. The narrative reliefs on pulpits most frequently focused upon the life of Christ; by drawing upon this model, the narrative on the tombs of saints created a link between the saint and Christ, and hence, their life was presented as being similar to that of Christ. Sarah Blake McHam, \textit{The Chapel of St. Anthony at the Santo and Development of Venetian Renaissance Sculpture} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 86 and Moskowitz, \textit{Nicola Pisano}, 15. The influence of pulpit design upon the tombs of saints would have emphasized the didactic use of narrative reliefs on the tombs of saints.\footnote{This monument, more elaborate and complex than other examples of the tombs of saints, varies from these examples through its inclusion of the effigy of the saint.}}

The influence of the arca of St. Dominic is evident in the many subsequent tombs for saints. A few examples of this include: Giovanni di Balduccio’s tomb for St. Peter the Martyr (Fig. 27) in Sant’Eustorgio, Milan, completed in 1339; Giovanni Antonio Amadeo’s arca for St. Lanfranco (Fig. 26), in San Lanfranco, outside of Pavia; the arca of St. Augustine (Fig. 42) in S. Pietro in Ciel d’Oro, in Pavia;\footnote{This monument, more elaborate and complex than other examples of the tombs of saints, varies from these examples through its inclusion of the effigy of the saint.} and the arca of St. Luke (Fig. 43), in S. Giustina, Padua. The standard element of these tombs is the raised tomb-chest on which a narrative of the saint’s life was usually presented (the arca of St. Luke is an exception as it does not include a narrative). Most frequently, the narrative was divided into eight scenes: three on each of the long sides and one on each of the short sides of the monument; the tomb-chest is usually raised just slightly above the viewer’s eye level.
Some earlier tombs of saints were altered and adapted to fit the typology established by the arca of St. Dominic. In the church of S. Giovanni in Valle, in Verona, a third-century sarcophagus decorated with Biblical scenes served as the tomb of St. Simon and St. Jude; this sarcophagus was raised and placed on columns circa 1395. Also in Verona, in the church of SS. Tueteria and Tosca, the mid-12th-century tomb of SS. Tueteria and Tosca was decorated and raised on columns in 1427.20 Amadeo’s arca for San Lanfranco demonstrates that the design of the arca of St. Dominic remained popular into the late quattrocento and the early cinquecento. Indeed, the 1479 contract for the Tomb of the Persian Martyrs, commissioned for the abbey of San Lorenzo in Cremona, illustrates the continued importance of the earlier tombs of saints—the patrons demanded that this arca be as good as those of St. Dominic, St. Peter the Martyr, and St. Augustine.21 It is possible that by the later Quattrocento the frequent use of this style of monument, in particular the use of this style for the tombs of early Christian saints, confused the historical origins of the design.

When designing his tomb for St. Peter the Martyr, Balduccio created a sloped lid for the tomb, instead of the flat lid that likely originally covered the arca of St. Dominic. Small statuettes were placed on the lid of the arca of St. Peter the Martyr, and this became a norm for subsequent tombs of saints.22 The Veronese arca of St. Simon and St. Jude was also given a new cover in 1395; the new lid included both effigies of the

21 Nygren, The Monumental Saint’s Tomb, 310. In his dissertation, Nygren presents many examples of quattrocento and early cinquecento arca that demonstrate the continued importance of this type of tomb for saints. In 1505 Isabella d’Este commissioned a raised tomb-chest arca for Beata Ossana Andreasi from Gian Cristoforo Romano. To save money, this monument did not include a narrative, and it was hoped that with additional funds the candelabra on the top of the monument would later be replaced with bronze or marble figures. The monument, no longer extant, was completed in 1508. Nygren, 355-6.
22 McHam, The Chapel of St. Anthony, 87.
saints and four statuettes of saints and Virtues. These small statuettes were often placed on the corners of the tomb; Anita Moskowitz argues that these figures, placed diagonally on the upper corners, were meant to encourage the viewers to walk around the monument. The figures placed on top of the tombs of saints are akin to the figures once placed on top of the Della Torre monument and likely served a similar purpose. Overall, it is clear that the characteristics of the type of tombs of saints are strikingly similar to Riccio’s design for the Della Torre monument.

This type of tomb, which originated with the arca of St. Dominic, was designed to encourage a close and often physical interaction between the viewer and the monument. This is illustrated in the painting of *The Crippled and Sick Cured at the Tomb of St. Nicholas* by Gentile da Fabriano (1425) now in the National Gallery in Washington (Fig. 44), the faithful are shown walking below the monument and placing their hands on the underside of the tomb. The raised tomb was particularly effective in providing the faithful greater access to the thaumaturgical effects of the saint’s relics because the faithful could more easily touch the saint’s tomb.

The arca of St. Luke in S. Giustina in Padua, with which Riccio was very familiar, deserves careful consideration. Between 1513 and 1516, likely the same period in which he received the commission for the Della Torre monument, Riccio worked on two commissions for the monastery and church of S. Giustina. The arca of St. Luke was moved to its current location in the south transept in 1562; before that it was placed in the chapel of St. Luke. Built between 1301-1316, the chapel was painted in 1436-1441 with scenes from the life of St. Luke by Giovanni Storlato. The original position of the monument in the chapel

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24 The relics of Nicholas, a mid-14th century saint, were moved from Bari to Myra in 1087.
25 In 1516 he was commissioned to make a model for the rebuilding of the church and in 1513 he was working on the fountain in the atrium of the monastery’s refectory. On the dating of this font with Riccio’s bronze Moses see Alexander Nagel, “Moses / Zeus Ammon,” catalogue entry for *Andrea Riccio: Renaissance Master of Bronze*, 134-143.
sculpted by an anonymous Tuscan (?) sculptor c. 1316, and combines the influence of the arca of St. Dominic with the simpler raised tomb-chest design created for St. Anthony of Padua in the Santo. While the arca of St. Luke lacks the narrative typically used on tombs of this type, the similarities between the Della Torre monument and the arca of St. Luke are striking. Both are raised by five supports. The reliefs on the tomb-chest are divided into the same eight panels. While elaborate, decorative details were commonly used on the tomb-chests of saints, these elements are missing on both the Della Torre monument and the arca of St. Luke. Both the arca and the tomb have a simple architrave, and the reliefs are framed with simple straight borders.

As this type of tomb for saints was used actively from the mid-Duecento into the Cincecento, one must ask how Riccio might have dated this type of monument. This is uncertain. On the arca of St. Luke see Giulio Bresciani Alvarez, “La Basilica di Santa Giustina nelle sue fasi storico-costruttive,” in La Basilica di Santa Giustina. Arte e Storia (Castelfranco, Veneto: Grifone, 1970), 98-110, and Nygren, The Monumental Saint’s Tomb, 372. This church also held other important arca of saints. The 12th-century arca of St. Giustina was also a raised tomb; however, the arca was undecorated. The arca of St. Prosdocimo in the Oratorio of St. Giustina dates from 1564 and is similar to an unused, mid-quattrocento tomb apparently designed for St. Giustina (now in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London). The relief for the tomb of St. Prosdocimo presented the recumbent saint with kneeling angels at both his feet and above his head. Nygren, The Monumental Saint’s Tomb, 28, 50.

26 Nygren, The Monumental Saint’s Tomb, 61. The arca of St. Anthony of Padua is no longer in its original condition; it was once a tomb-chest monument raised on columns. The arca of St. Anthony is different from the other examples of this type of tomb because it lacked a narrative programme and stairs led up to the tomb. Moreover, the arca itself was used as an altar. It appears that the original arca of St. Anthony was reused for the arca of the Blessed Luca Belludi. The only decoration on this arca is two crosses and a rosette. The same format of the raised tomb-chest that served as an altar, accessed by stairs on one side of the monument, is found again the church of St. Anthony in Padua, this time for the tomb of St. Felix. The current arca of St. Anthony also serves as an altar and was designed in 1593 by Tiziano Aspetti. The narrative of the life of St. Anthony has been placed on the walls of the chapel instead of his tomb. On the altar tomb of St. Anthony, see McHam, The Chapel of St. Anthony, 84-85.

27 Instead of a narrative programme, the reliefs on the arca of St. Luke include the ox of St. Luke and angels holding torches and censers on each of the long sides of the monument. On one of the short ends, there is a relief of St. Luke on one end and, on the other end, the ox, the symbol of St. Luke, has been carved.

28 The arca of St. Luke is raised on four columns; there is a fifth support carved with three angels in the centre. Two columns are of granite, two of alabaster, while the central support is marble. The reliefs on arca of St. Luke are marble, while the arca itself is carved from green porphyry. The top and bottom of the arca are red Veronese marble. Nygren, The Monumental Saint’s Tomb, 372.

29 The narrative reliefs on many tombs of saints were separated by figural sculpture. McHam linked the narrative on the tombs of saints to early Christian sarcophagi. She points in particular to these figural sculptures that served to frame the narrative panels. This element is missing on the arca of St. Luke and on the Della Torre monument. McHam, The Chapel of St. Anthony, 87.
particularly relevant since Riccio took such care in his application of an almost purely *all’antica* style to the decorative elements of the Della Torre monument. While in the early-16th century, tombs for saints were still being made in the style of the arca of St. Dominic, they were still clearly linked to this older model. The question is whether or not Riccio would have linked this design to its duecento origins, or if, in studying an arca of a saint like the one created for St. Luke, he might have deemed it to have been derived from an even earlier model. In the case of Riccio, the latter case appears to be likely. Indeed, the fact that he includes a nearly identical version of the tomb in his relief of the professor’s funeral implies that he considered it an appropriate model for the classical setting of his narrative. Conversely, including his design in the narrative itself suggests that his very design was worthy of the ancients.

In the quattrocento and early cinquecento, artists began to make some alterations to the earlier designs of the tombs of saints; one of the principal changes, as articulated by Barnaby Nygren, was the increasingly rare use of figural supports for the tomb-chests. It appears that this change was linked to the current desire to increase the height of contemporary arcas of saints. Riccio’s use of bronze sphinxes as figural supports and his placement of the tomb-chest at the viewer’s eye level suggest a deliberate archaism, an effort to return the tomb type to older rather than contemporary models of the arca of saints.

As is believed in the case of the arca of St. Luke, altars were commonly placed in front of the tombs of saints; in these instances the images carved on the tomb-chest

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30 Nygren, *The Monumental Saint’s Tomb*, 141. The change in height is particularly evident in the arca of San Lanfranco where the tomb-chest is now raised much higher than eye level.
Chapter III The Quintessential Christian Tomb?

served as an altarpiece. The frequent placement of altars in front of the tombs of saints may help to explain how Riccio arrived at his design for the lower portion of the Della Torre monument. Since the lower section of many tombs of saints would have been blocked from view by the altar, one can imagine how Riccio may have come to the idea of adding this lower, altar-like structure to a monument primarily consisting of the raised tomb-chest.

Overall, it is clear that Riccio’s design for the Della Torre monument shared many characteristics with tombs created for saints. It is a free-standing monument with a raised tomb-chest supported at the corners and in the centre; it is a monument that the viewer was expected to walk around; it includes a narrative presented on the tomb-chest and divided into eight panels; and, finally, the lid was decorated with various figures similar in nature to those found on saints’ tombs. Considering the complete absence of Christian iconography on the tomb, the link with the tombs of saints is surprising and deserves careful consideration. The question, thus, is how to interpret Riccio’s borrowing from the structure of tombs of saints.

First, it should be pointed out that the typology of saint’s tombs did on occasion overlap with tombs made for the laity. The tombs of saints and in particular the tomb of St. Dominic also influenced tombs of the laity; on occasion, this influence created confusion. One case is the Paduan tomb in the Oratory of San Giorgio at the Santo, created for the family of the condottiere Raimondino de Lupi, who died in 1379 (Fig. 45).

31 Nygren, *The Monumental Saint’s Tomb*, 62. On occasion the tombs of saints and the altar were merged into one structure. This is seen in the arca of St. Donato in the Duomo in Arezzo where the altar is attached to the front of the monument. McHam, *The Chapel of St. Anthony*, 88.

32 While the lower section of the Della Torre monument resembles an altar-table, this lower section could not have served the practical needs of an altar. One of the short ends of the Della Torre monuments faced the actual altar, which was in the family chapel in front of this room, not in this small chamber.
Originally, de Lupi’s free-standing sarcophagus was raised on marble columns topped with a canopy. The monument was also surrounded by statues portraying members of the de Lupi family. Accounts of this monument indicate that it was kissed and venerated by visitors who mistook it for the tomb of a saint.\textsuperscript{33} This story illustrates that the tomb of St. Dominic set a precedent that established a strong link between the raised tomb and the idea of sanctity.\textsuperscript{34}

In his dissertation on the tombs of saints, Barnaby Nygren associates three features with this type of tomb: the first is an association between the tomb and an altar; the second is the presence of narrative reliefs on the tomb-chest; and, finally, the structure is a free-standing installation.\textsuperscript{35} Nygren argued that the popularity of free-standing monuments in Northern Italy suggests that “the association between the free-standing monument and sanctity was either less strongly felt (perhaps due to the influence of non-Italian tombs) or was actively being appropriated in order to glorify the occupants of these tombs.”\textsuperscript{36} Nygren specifically points to the monuments of Gian Galeazzo Visconti; Vitalino and Giovanni Borromeo (Fig. 46); the Milanese tomb of Ambrogio Grifo

\textsuperscript{33} The monument was dismantled in the 16\textsuperscript{th} century. Moskowitz, \textit{Nicola Pisano}, 63-63. M. Edwards, “The tomb of Raimondino de Lupi and its Setting,” \textit{Rutgers Art Review} ii (January, 1982): 37-49. A further example of the blurred boundary between the tombs of saints and the laity is once more linked to the city of Padua. The monument commemorating Vitaliano and Giovanni Borromeo is now in the Palazzo Borromeo in Bella Isola, although it was originally placed in the church of San Francesco Grande in Milan. According to tradition, the Borromeo family considered St. Giustina of Padua amongst their ancestors and decided to erect a reliquary monument in her honour. No documentation confirms this tradition. The monument design adheres to the form of early tombs of saints in the tradition of the arca of St. Dominic. It is a tomb-chest raised on 6 columns, with the narrative on the tomb-chest divided into 8 scenes. The gisant is a later addition. It is said that the monument was planned to house relics of St. Giustina, but the church of St. Giustina in Padua refused to share the relics with the Borromeo family. The tradition continues that it was only at a later point that the family chose to reuse the monument for current family members. Work on this monument continued over a long period of time. The scenes from the infancy of Christ on the tomb-chest were likely added in the 1470s. Ellen Louise Longsworth, \textit{The Renaissance Tomb in Milan} (PhD diss., Boston University, 1987), 118, 126.

\textsuperscript{34} Nygren, \textit{The Monumental Saint’s Tomb}, 50.

\textsuperscript{35} He found this last aspect most problematic, in part, pointing to the many tombs of saints that were wall monuments. Nygren, \textit{The Monumental Saint’s Tomb}, 227.

\textsuperscript{36} Nygren, \textit{The Monumental Saint’s Tomb}, 229-230.
(Fig. 47), the personal physician to Gian Galeazzo Sforza; and the Della Torre monument. The tombs of Grifo and Gian Galeazzo Visconti were clearly influenced by French ruler monuments: Grifo’s tomb with a gisant on a bier, and the Visconti monument would most likely have been solely linked to the French influence rather than the tombs of saints. The tomb of Vitalino and Giovanni Borromeo is more problematic as it more closely resembles the tombs of saints. It may have been originally intended as a reliquary although—as Sarah Blake McHam suggests—this story may have arisen as a response to the unorthodox nature of the monument. While it is important to keep in mind the influence of French monuments, it is also necessary to distinguish between free-standing monuments and free-standing monuments with a raised tomb-chest—the latter were more intimately associated with the tombs of saints. Moreover, as is evident in the Paduan example of the tomb of Raimondino de Lupi, Nygren’s suggestion that the association of the free-standing, raised tomb-chest monument with sanctity may have been felt less strongly in Northern Italy is not convincing. Clearly, at least in Padua, the free-standing, raised tomb-chest monuments signalled sanctity even when used for secular tombs.

While Giovanni Antonio Amadeo’s tomb monument for Bartolomeo Colleoni (Fig. 48) in Bergamo was not free-standing, it is not difficult to understand why Planiscig thought it might have influenced Riccio’s design. The monument for Colleoni was also clearly influenced by the tombs of saints, although Amadeo transformed it into a wall

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37 This point is made by Nygren, The Monumental Saint’s Tomb, 226. Grifo’s monument consisted of a polychrome gisant that was placed on a sarcophagus. Made by the Lombard sculptor Benedetto Briosco in 1489, the monument was originally placed in the centre of the chapel of St. Ambrogio in San Pietro in Gessate; however, this placement was found to be unsuitable by the Abbot of the monastery and shortly after its placement in the chapel the tomb was moved to one of the side walls. See Anthony Roth, “The Lombard sculptor Benedetto Briosco.”

38 See footnote 32 and McHam, The Chapel of St. Anthony, 88

monument. The Colleoni monument, executed in the early 1470s, consists of a chest raised on columns. On top of the tomb-chest is an equestrian statue. Both of the chests were carved with narrative scenes and had small statuettes placed on top—these features are clearly derived from the tombs of saints. However, the relief scenes on the chests are not related to the life of Colleoni; instead, they are scenes of the life of Christ. The most direct antecedent of the Colleoni monument is the tomb for Bernabò Visconti (Fig. 49); this monument, dating from before 1363, is now in the Castello Sforzesco, Milan, and it consists of an equestrian monument placed over a raised tomb-chest with carved scenes from the life of Christ. The argument that Riccio’s was directly influenced by the work of Amadeo is not convincing; rather, both were influenced by the tradition established with arca of St. Dominic.

In Riccio’s design for the Della Torre monument, the typology of the tomb of saints appears to have been consciously applied; this is particularly evident when one takes into account the inclusion of a narrative programme on the raised tomb-chest. Nygren points to some secular monuments that make use of narrative cycles, such as the tombs of Gian Galeazzo Visconti, Camillo Borromeo, Gaston de Foix, and the Della Torre. However, in light of the fact that there was an earlier tradition of including some biographical

40 The monument for Count Camillo Borromeo is a tall, raised tomb monument. Raised on 8 pilasters, the monument was originally placed in the chapel for St. Anthony of Padua in San Pietro, Gessate, and was influenced by the family’s earlier raised tomb monument which it has been argued was first planned as reliquary. The monument was moved to the Palazzo Borromeo, Bella Isola, in 1797. Camilio Borromeo’s monument was dedicated in 1549 and included a relief of the Adoration of the Magi, as well as battle scenes. The monument to Gaston de Foix did not contain a raised tomb-chest; rather it consisted of an effigy of the deceased on his funeral bier. The many parts of the monument were scattered and attempts at reconstruction have so far proven futile; however, the monument likely had 8 reliefs presenting de Foix’s military campaigns between 1511-1512. It also included scenes of his death and funeral. Bambaia was given the contract for the monument c. 1515 and work began after 1520, so the monument followed the construction of the Della Torre. It also included statuettes of the Virtues and some of the apostles. It was likely influenced by the Visconti monument and it appears that the final work would have consisted of an effigy placed beneath an architectural structure. See John Pope-Hennessy, *Italian Renaissance Sculpture*, 411-412.
scenes on the funerary monuments of rulers and military figures, the Della Torre monument still remains an anomaly. Nygren adds that, while there were secular tombs with narrative cycles, these were sufficiently infrequent, suggesting that the inclusion of biographical narrative on a funerary monument remained a special feature. Furthermore, he makes the observation that narrative cycles were “particularly well represented” on the tombs of martyrs. This illustrates, as he argues, that the narration of the saint’s martyrdom strongly underlines the use of the biographical narrative as a model for the laity.  

Why did Riccio turn to a type of funerary monument primarily used for saints? On a purely functional level, the structure of a raised tomb would have held an obvious value for an artist who wanted to emphasize the narrative reliefs—this design places the narrative at the best possible level for viewing. Since Riccio’s placement of the narrative on the raised tomb-chest made it the most visually accessible element of the monument, this choice further underlines that the narrative was one of the most important elements of the monument. As with the tombs of saints, the viewers were encouraged to walk around the Della Torre monument and to view the entire narrative. The Della Torre monument’s free-standing status and its placement in the centre of the small chamber would have maximized access to the monument; this would have encouraged a far greater interaction of the viewer with the monument than would have been possible had it been placed against or on a wall.

Riccio’s narrative, being allegorical rather than biographical, contrasts with the narratives used on the tombs of saints. Riccio resisted presenting a commemoration of

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two non-saints in the place in which the very structure of the monument leads the viewer to expect a narrative of a saint’s life. Riccio’s narrative is clearly typological rather than biographical. This also presents further questions. As discussed in Chapter II, Riccio was a proto-art historian; this raises the question of whether or not he was approaching the tombs of saints typologically. In other words, was he thinking about categories when he drew on this design for the Della Torre monument? When Riccio looked at the tombs of saints, was he approaching their narrative with a certain distance and, instead of thinking about the specific life of the saint, was he thinking about the narrative in a more abstract manner? Would he have approached the narrative on the arca of St. Dominic as a narrative of the life of a saint or as a narrative of the life of St. Dominic, or one in relation to the other? If the life of the individual saint was seen with a particular distance by Riccio, then such biographical narratives would have become abstracted, instead providing a general model of a saintly life. Such an approach may have influenced Riccio’s decision to depict an allegorical narrative on the Della Torre monument. Rather than providing a biographical narrative of Girolamo and/or Marcantonio Della Torre, he abstractly provides a rather noble narrative of the life of a professor. If one returns to the representation of the monument in the funeral scene, one might ask again why there is no narrative on this monument. Indeed, there are no narratives, no inscriptions, no portraits on the monument—those specific features are yet to come. It appears that the lack of these features is due to the fact that in this scene Riccio presents the prototype of the monument.

The role of the narrative on the tombs of saints is also important to take into consideration. By raising the tomb-chest of the saints, its narrative was effectively
established as an important focus of veneration. The narratives illustrated the piety of saints and presented their lives as exemplars to the laity. The tomb of saints and their reliefs were intended to inspire and to instruct the viewer in their pursuit of eternal life. This point was made quite effectively by Bishop Bartolommeo da Vicenza at the unveiling of the arca of St. Dominic on June 5, 1267. Stating that the deeds of tyrants found on ancient monuments were harmful, the Bishop marvelled at the presence of such a good exemplar on the arca of St. Dominic. Pointing out the virtues of the saint shown on the arca, he underlined the value for the viewer in imitating what was shown: “These sculptures are on your side if you imitate the father, against you if (Heaven forbid!) you refuse to follow him.” The narratives on the tomb-chests of saints were understood to hold an important didactic function, and the lives depicted served as a model of virtue for the viewer.

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42 Moskowitz, Nicola Pisano, 43.
43 Moskowitz, Nicola Pisano, 43.
44 “The third [tomb] has been blessed with the blessing of beauty which is apparent from its sculptures and diverse carvings. For if the audacious deeds of tyrants were sculpted in arches, columns, and gateways—deeds which were ephemeral and mostly harmful—how much more should the marvellous deeds and acts of this man be commended in a useful, delightul and healthful manner to the memory of his sons, since they are deeds that are going to live eternally? Behold, Brothers, the glorious deeds and works of our father have been carved on the monument, deeds in which are demonstrated the purity of his heart and body; the patience of his sanctity and virtue is presented; his mercy, justice, constancy, and other virtues are suggested. These sculptures are on your side if you imitate the father, against you if (Heaven forbid!) you refuse to follow him.” Translated by Moskowitz in Nicola Pisano, 18. “De tertio benedicta est benedictione decoris, quot patet ex sculpturis et diversis celaturis. Si enim tyrannorum fortia gesta in arcubus, columnis et portis sculpebantur, peritura tamen, et plurimum nocitura, quanto magis mirabilia istius gesta et facta memorie filiorum utiliter et delectabiter et salubriter commendanda in eternum victura? Ecce, Fratres, Patris nostri gesta et opera gloriosa in monumento celata sunt, quibus ipsius ostendit puritas cordis et corporis, sanctitates, et virtutis pretenditur patientia, misericordia, justitia, constantia et virtutes alie insinuautur. Pro vobis sunt he sculpure, si Patrem imitamini; contra vos, quod abisit! Si sequi reunitis.” Published in Moskowitz, Nicola Pisano, 54, J. J. Berthier, Le Tombeau de Saint Dominique (Paris, 1895), 25 and doc. X.
45 Some of the supports that originally held up the arca of St. Dominic and the eight that raise the arca of St. Peter the Martyr would have conveyed this message quite clearly as they were representations of the Virtues. In her discussion of the arca of St. Peter the Martyr, Moskowitz argues that the Virtues would have been understood by the viewer as foundational to the saint’s life. She contends that this tomb provided the faithful not only with a model for their behaviour, but that the monument also served as a contemplative aid in the soul’s journey to be united with God. Anita Moskowitz, “Giovanni di Balduccio’s Arca di San Pietro Martire: Form and Function,” Arte Lombarda 96/97 no. 1-2 (1991): 10-11.
While the Della Torre monument appears to reject the decorum of Christian funerary art, through Riccio’s extraordinary single mindedness in his application of the pagan language to both the decorative details and the narrative, the very structure of the monument is derived from the quintessential Christian tomb—the tomb of saints. The very structure of the Della Torre monument signals the importance of the narrative programme on the tomb, and it must have signalled to the viewer that an exemplar was to be sought in the narrative. As the subsequent chapters of this dissertation will show, the narrative indeed presents a didactic message of timely significance. The omission of any overt Christian references may, in fact, have reinforced a point of decorum: it served precisely to prevent members of the laity from mistaking the Della Torre monument for the tomb of a saint.

An interesting postscript to Riccio’s use of the typology of the tombs of saints is found in a plan for a funerary monument by Giovanni Maria Falconetto, Riccio’s associate. Falconetto’s drawing (Fig. 50) shows the influence of Riccio’s design but not the meaning of Riccio’s choice of structure. The lower portion of Falconetto’s monument is now much larger and more prominent. Unlike Riccio’s monument, Falconetto’s design includes narrative scenes on the lower section and fewer scenes on the upper section, and it does not reflect the idea of a continuous narrative wrapping around the monument. The tomb-chest on the right-side of Falconetto’s design rejects the style of the arca of saints. Thus, while Falconetto’s monument is quite close in style to the Della Torre monument, the alterations to Riccio’s design diminishes the influence of the arca of saints, and the very message that Riccio presented to the viewer seems to have been abandoned.
A good starting point for discussing the tomb’s narrative programme is Riccio’s use of imagery from the sixth book of Vergil’s *Aeneid*—in the fifth, sixth, and seventh panels. These panels represent a visual and thematic shift from the narrative content of the previous panels, as they change the focus from the life and death of the professor to the afterlife of his soul. Because these panels have been linked to contemporary debates over the nature and immortality of the soul, they are central to understanding Riccio’s narrative as a whole. In these panels, Riccio guides the viewer into the realm of Vergil’s *Aeneid* and the journey of Aeneas into afterlife. According to Anthony Radcliffe, the right portion of the *Funeral of the Professor* (Fig. 7) includes a scene of purification that draws upon the funeral of Misenus, an event described in the sixth book of the *Aeneid*.\(^1\) The sixth panel (Fig. 8) presents the soul of the professor crossing the Stygian waters; the next panel (Fig. 9) presents the arrival of the professor’s soul in the Elysian Fields.

In *The Descent into the Underworld*, the soul of the professor, identified by the book it carries under its right arm, is shown as it steps onto the barge of Charon. Here Charon, with a long beard and a shabby garment attached by a knot on his shoulder, lifts his hand to assist the young soul onto the boat. An elm tree vertically divides the panel in half. On the right side of the panel, a group of young souls are gathered along the shore; on the left side, Riccio has presented the material of nightmares—here, gathered at the mouth of Tartarus, are chimera, centaurs, and other tormented figures.

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The next scene, The Soul’s arrival in the Elysian Fields, is set in a luscious landscape filled with happy souls who sing and dance. The soul of the professor is guided through the fields. Riccio filled the scene with the joys of the afterlife. Here, a group of six young, winged souls dance in a merry circle, to the music played by two other young souls. Beside these musicians a man embraces his beloved, tenderly kissing her cheek. Another amorous exchange is included here as the woman guiding the professor’s soul affectionately places her hand beneath a man’s chin. The three Graces, one of whom gazes out at the viewer, are also present.

The figure who sits with his lyre in the lower left corner was identified by Blume as Orpheus, but perhaps this rather feminine figure is a nymph or the Muse Erato. In the upper right side of the panel, a young soul is shown drinking from the river Lethe; in the lower right, we see four men sleeping with objects related to both study and inspiration at their feet. The figure of Fame plays her trumpet while crowning one of the sleeping men with a laurel wreath. A place of peace and rest, this is, at the same time, an active and joyful paradise.

Leo Planiscig declared that Riccio’s Descent into the Underworld was a descent into Dante’s Underworld, yet closer inspection suggests otherwise. Dante introduced Charon in the third canto of the Inferno, when Dante begins his journey into the Underworld. His Charon is a demonic figure who carries souls to Hell. His visual

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3 Blume, “Natur und antike,” 119. While Orpheus would be an appropriate figure to include in this scene there are two issues with this identification. The first is that while Orpheus was often somewhat effeminate in some Renaissance art this figure is perhaps a little too feminine. The chest of this figure is formed quite differently from other male figures in the narrative. The second issue is that this figure differs greatly from Riccio’s undated statuette of Orpheus in the Louvre, where Orpheus is fully clothed and has short hair. The position of this figure in The Soul’s arrival in the Elysian Fields is quite similar to the position of the river god in the opening panel and this may signal that we are looking at representation of a nymph.
4 Leo Planiscig, Andrea Riccio (Vienna: A. Schroll & Co., 1927), 491-93.
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description of Charon’s appearance is limited: “The demon Charon, his eyes like glowing coals, beckons to them and collects them all, beating with his oar whoever lingers.”\(^5\)

Dante’s Charon is a demon-like figure who physically assaults the waiting souls. The reader is informed that he is an old man with a hoary white beard and shaggy cheeks. While Riccio’s Charon is, of course, an old man with a long beard, he lacks the demonic aspect present in Dante’s representation. Moreover, Riccio’s Charon lifts his hand to assist the soul of the professor. Although remaining an intimidating figure, Riccio’s Charon is most definitely not as ferocious as Dante’s.

Riccio draws, rather, upon Vergil’s description of Aeneas’s descent into the Underworld found in the sixth book of the *Aeneid*. We see visual similarities to Vergil’s Charon:

> And these are the rivers and waters guarded by the terrible Charon in his filthy rags. On his chin there grows a thick grey beard, never trimmed. His glaring eyes are lit with fire…\(^6\)

Thus far, the description is the same as Dante’s, but then Vergil continues,

> and a foul cloak hangs from a knot at his shoulder…He is no longer young but, being a god, enjoys rude strength and a green old age.\(^7\)

Riccio has emphasized the knot on the left shoulder of Charon—the garment covers little more than part of the ferryman’s upper body, most likely reflecting Riccio’s effort to

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show its squalid nature. It is also evident that Riccio has taken care to illustrate the muscular body of the old man, suggesting vigour despite his age.

The figures on the left also illustrate Riccio’s dependence upon Vergil’s discussion of the descent of Aeneas into the Underworld:

Before the entrance hall of Orcus, in the very throat of hell, Grief and Revenge have made their beds and Old Age lives there in despair, with white faced Diseases and Fear and Hunger, corrupter of men, and squalid Poverty, things dreadful to look upon, and Death and Drudgery besides. Then there are Sleep, Death’s sister, perverted Pleasures, murderous War astride the threshold, the iron chambers of the Furies and raving Discord with blood-soaked ribbons binding her viperous hair. In the middle a huge dark elm spreads out its ancient arms, the resting-place, so they say, of flocks of idle dreams, one clinging under every leaf. Here too are all manner of Monstrous beasts, Centaurs stabling inside the gate, Scyllas – half dogs, half women – Briareus with his hundred heads, the Hydra of Lerna hissing fiercely, the Chimaera armed in fire, Gorgons and Harpies and the triple phantom of Geryon.

Riccio aptly depicts many of these figures: in the left corner of the foreground sits the sleeping figure of Death, by his feet stands a lion personifying Fear, in the middle of the panel leans against the elm tree the personification of Sleep. While Scylla stands beside

8 “consanguineus lethi” is also frequently translated as Death’s brother.
10 Dieter Blume linked Riccio’s imagery to Pietro Bembo’s Vergilian Manuscript, the Vatican Vergil, MS. 3225. The visual similarities between these two works include the elm tree that divides the scene in half, the cave entrance of the gate of hell, and the two centaurs that stand behind the elm which Blume contends that Riccio quoted from the manuscript. The placement of the elm tree in Riccio’s panel could be understood to demonstrate his familiarity with the text, as Vergil states it was placed in the middle. The rest of the scene is presented in Riccio’s own vocabulary and he has returned to the text itself for much of his imagery. While no information has been uncovered about Riccio’s access to the collections of humanists in Padua, this panel does appear to have been influenced by Bembo’s manuscript. The important issue of how and when Riccio might have become familiar with the imagery from this manuscript remains unanswered. Regardless of whether or not Riccio had access to the original manuscript, there were enough humanists in his circle who could have described the image to him. More problematic is the fact that Bembo did not return to Padua until June 1521. It seems unlikely that the manuscript was in Padua prior to this period,
Sleep, behind the elm tree Riccio has included centaurs and chimaera. At the mouth of Hades stands one of the Erinyes (Strife) with snakes wrapped around her wrists.

In the early 1980s, as a result of the work of Anthony Radcliffe, this Vergilian imagery was given renewed attention. In the exhibition catalogue for The Genius of Venice, Radcliffe linked the last four of the eight panels on the monument to a dialogue by Niccolò Leonico Tomeo. He says:

[H]owever, the clue to the meaning of four of the eight reliefs, which Saxl failed to grasp, is contained in a work to which he refers in another context, the dialogue Alverotus by Niccolò Leonico Tomeo, the Paduan philosopher. This describes a birthday party at the house of Francesco Alvarotti, the jurisconsult, at which Giambattista Leone, the patron and friend of Riccio, recites the account of the wanderings of the soul in the sixth book of Virgil’s Aeneid; it is then discussed by the whole party. It is clear that Riccio followed the text in great detail, and that the reliefs which follow the death scene therefore depict the fortunes of the soul of the professor (whether Girolamo or Marcantonio, or indeed both) in pagan terms.¹¹

The link made between Riccio’s narrative and Tomeo’s Alverotus is a particularly important contribution to the study of this monument, and it is unfortunate that the limitations of a catalogue entry barred Radcliffe from further developing this connection.

In 1985, this discussion was taken up in the catalogue for the exhibition Natur und Antike in der Renaissance by Dieter Blume, who astutely observed that the fact that neither Girolamo Della Torre nor his son are presented in the reliefs illustrates that the individual fates of the two deceased are not represented by the artist. He suggests that the narrative illustrates “a comprehensive understanding of the mortal body, immortal soul,

thus, prior to Riccio’s work on the monument. How this manuscript entered the collection of Bembo is a mystery. The manuscript appears to have surfaced in Rome circa 1514 and it likely entered Bembo’s library in this period. While the manuscript was in Rome, Raphael and others artists in his circle drew on the illustrations in the manuscript. See David H. Wright, The Vatican Vergil. A Masterpiece of Late Antique Art (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993): 110-114. Dieter Blume, “Antike und Christentum,” in Natur und Antike in der Renaissance: Ausstellung im Liebieghaus Museum Alter Plastik, ed. S. Ebert-Schifferer (Liebieghaus: Frankfurt am Main, 1985), 119. Thomas B. Stevenson, Miniature Decoration in the Vatican Virgil. A Study in Late Antique Iconography (Tübingen: Verlag Ernst Wasmuth, 1983), 68-69.

¹¹ Radcliffe, “The Illness of the Professor / The Soul of the Professor in the Fortunate Woods,” 374.
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and eternal fame.” Blume delves briefly into the contemporary debate over the immortality of the soul and the attempts made by Tomeo and others to reconcile Plato and Aristotle’s discussions of the soul with Christian doctrine. Although he noted that Girolamo Fracastoro’s poetry draws both on Vergil and on the contemporary discussions over the nature of the soul, he did not expand upon the significance of Fracastoro’s writing in relation to Riccio’s narrative.

Radcliffe’s thesis was also accepted by Jonathan Woolfson and Andrew Gregory in their article on Tomeo’s bust of Socrates. They suggest that:

Perhaps Leonico’s most significant contribution to the artistic culture of his time was his indirect inspiration of the programme for Andrea Riccio’s ‘Della Torre’ tomb ... As Anthony Radcliffe has demonstrated, the reliefs from this tomb (which are now in the Louvre) closely follow the account of the descent of the soul drawn from Vergil in Leonico’s ‘Alverotus, sive de tribus animorum vehiculis’ ....

While acknowledging the link to Tomeo, it should be noted that Tomeo included neither a description of the figures at the mouth of hell nor a detailed description of life in the Elysian Fields. Riccio was more closely following the text of Vergil rather than of Tomeo.

The Vergilian narrative on the Della Torre monument and its link with the contemporary debates on the nature and immortality of the soul needs to be addressed within the wider intellectual climate of the period. This chapter focuses upon Niccolò Leonico Tomeo as a professor at the University of Padua, the contemporary Paduan

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14 While Radcliffe writes “that Riccio followed the text in great detail” it is not entirely clear whether he means the Alverotus or the Aeneid; Pope-Hennessy responded by stating that “...Riccio followed the texts in great detail...” John Pope-Hennessy, Italian Renaissance Sculpture, vol. II (London: Phaidon Press, 1996), 416.
debates over the nature and immortality of the individual soul, and Tomeo’s *Alverotus* and its relation to the tomb’s narrative. It also addresses Vergil’s discussion of the soul in the sixth book of the *Aeneid*, within the wider context of Renaissance debates on the nature and immortality of the soul. The writings of Girolamo Fracastoro, another important member of the Della Torre circle, come into consideration in relation to this circle’s discussions on the nature and immortality of the individual soul. Fracastoro’s writings on this subject are relevant here, in part, because they illustrate how prevalent this debate was both in the period and within the Della Torre circle. The significance of the descent of the professor’s soul into the Underworld cannot be tied to any one text; rather, it belongs to a much broader area of discussion during the Renaissance.

We might start by asking if any of the other panels in the narrative demonstrate a similar focus on the health of the soul and its survival after death or whether this subject is primarily confined to the Vergilian panels. In fact, many other elements in the narrative are related to this subject. Indeed, if the veiled woman standing beside Apollo in the opening panel is, in fact, *Philosophia*, then this concern with the health of the soul may be presented already in the first panel. As discussed in Chapter I, Riccio’s *Philosophia* appears to draw upon Boethius’s representation of Lady Philosophy in his *Consolation of Philosophy*. In this text, Boethius draws on the Neoplatonic belief that the soul seeks to return to the source of its origin. By informing and encouraging man to follow this path of the soul, Lady Philosophy played a role in the soul’s return. Including *Philosophia* in the opening panel may have signaled to the viewer—much earlier than the *Aeneid* panels—of the nature and potential immortality of the soul was central to the narrative’s programme.
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The scene of sacrifice in the tomb’s third panel is also linked to the health of the soul and the soul’s need for purification. Although this subject will be addressed in greater detail in the next chapter, it should be noted that the significance of the sacrifice would have been easily interpreted by Renaissance viewers. The choice of Asclepius as the recipient of the sacrifice, on the other hand, would have been less easily understood. However, as will be discussed in Chapter VI, this may also be of significance to the present theme since Asclepius was concerned with the health of the soul.

In the next panel, The Death of the Professor (Figure 6), Riccio appears to show the moment of separation between the body of the professor and his soul. In the foreground, the soul of the professor, identified by the scholar’s book under its right arm and the palm frond in its left hand, is shown at the moment of the professor’s death. That this scene portrays the moment of the professor’s death is illustrated by the young child who blows out the flame of life on the tripod in front of the death bed. Furthermore, the soul of the professor is distracted by the overturned vase that appears to have only just fallen (Fig. 51). Since the vase served as a metaphor for the body, the overturned vase, in this instance, seems to suggest that the soul has just been released from the body. The inclusion of the two boys playing with a frightening mask in The Funeral of the

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15 Planiscig, Andrea Riccio, 388.
16 See Ute Davitt Asmus, Corpus quasi vas. Beiträge zur Ikonologie der italienischen Renaissance (Berlin: Mann, 1977), 96. Cicero used the metaphor of the body as vessel for the soul in Book I of the Tusculan Disputations. In his “On the contempt of death,” Cicero argued that death is not an evil. In this book Cicero focused on the nature of the soul and the debates as to whether the soul dies with the body or lives on after the death of the body. His refers to the "corpus quasi vas est animi" in chapter 22 where he discussed those who denied the immortality of the soul on the basis of their inability to understand the form of the soul and its relation to the body. He argued that, when Apollo advised man “to know thyself,” the god was of course not referring to the body, but to knowledge of one’s soul. Cicero continued “for the body is but a kind of vessel, or receptacle of the soul and whatever your soul does is your own act…” Cicero, Tusculan Disputations, 1.22.
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Professor would have signalled to the learned viewer Seneca’s advice to avoid worries and anxieties that weigh the soul and make difficult its ascent after death.\(^{17}\)

The concern with life after death is not only contained in the tomb’s narrative programme, but in its ornamentation as well. The eagles, which decorate the hybrid columns, were associated with apotheosis in the Renaissance; their inclusion on the upper levels of the paschal candelabrum has been interpreted as a symbol of “ascension by means of the divine.”\(^{18}\) Carved with foliage, ichthycentaurs, nymphae, and birds, the tomb’s frieze contains an eloquent expression of the concern with life after death. Seen on many ancient Roman funerary sarcophagi, sea creatures were frequently depicted in Renaissance art. Their presence in classical art has been interpreted by many scholars to be a reference to the soul’s journey to the Islands of the Blessed.\(^{19}\) Likewise, they have been interpreted as a “prefiguration of the soul carried to heaven.”\(^{20}\) The two birds in the frieze may be interpreted as “emblems of the soul,” which again conveys the idea of

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\(^{17}\) See Seneca, Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales, Letter XXIV: “On Despising Death.” A more sustained discussion of this passage and Riccio’s use of these figures is included in Chapter VII of this dissertation.


\(^{20}\) McHam, The Chapel of St. Anthony, 74; Jan Bialostocki, “The Sea-Thiasos in Renaissance Sepulchral Art,” in Studies in French and Italian Art of the Renaissance and Baroque: Essays in Honour of Sir Anthony Blunt (London, 1967), 72. Riccio would have known of these motifs not only from earlier funerary art, but also from the contemporary decoration of the chapel of St. Anthony in Padua, where figures and animals transforming into vegetal forms are included in the chapel’s ornament. It would have been an appropriate theme in a chapel in which the apotheosis of the saint was an important element of the programme. This ornamentation was carried out under Giovanni Minello between 1500-21, and like the Della Torre frieze, the vegetal forms are broken up by marble inserts.
flight and ascension. Thus, it is clear that the concern with life after death runs through the narrative and ornament as a whole: this is a tomb with an intensely spiritual focus.

Tomeo and Renaissance Debates over the Nature of the Soul

Born in Venice of Greek Epirote émigré parents, Tomeo was appointed by the Venetian senate to read Aristotle at the University in Padua in 1497. This period marks the first instruction of Aristotle in Greek within any university—a development destined to have a profound impact on the history of Aristotelian philosophy and science. Tomeo’s post was created at the request of students at the university; the post combined—unusually—natural philosophy, medicine, and the humanities. The popular Paduan professor of practical medicine Francesco Cavalli is recorded to have started teaching Aristotle in Greek in the 1490s. During this decade, Cavalli worked alongside Aldus Manutius publishing Aristotle in Greek. The popular reception of Cavalli’s work on Aristotle laid the groundwork for Tomeo’s appointment to the university in 1497.

Appointing professors to teach Aristotle in Greek at the University of Padua was a momentous development in the history of Renaissance philosophy. Because of these appointments, the authority of the Islamic commentator Averroës was questioned, leading to a move away from the Latin texts and commentaries. The new study of Aristotle was

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21 Bialostocki, “The Sea-Thiasos in Renaissance Sepulchral Art,” 71
22 Paul F. Grendler, The Universities of the Italian Renaissance (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 273. The students had asked for someone to teach the work of Aristotle “in [natural] philosophy and medicine.” Tomeo was granted a salary of 100 florins, which was a low salary by the period’s standards.
23 Grendler, The Universities of the Italian Renaissance, 272. There is only one source that presents Cavalli teaching the Greek Aristotle in the 1490s; hence, the occasional presentation of Tomeo as the first to do so at the University of Padua.
24 Marsilio Ficino’s rejection of Averroës Aristotelianism in his Theologia Platonica de immortalitate animorum, published in 1485, had an extremely influential impact on the study of Aristotle’s writings on the nature of the soul. See John Monfasani, “Aristotelians, Platonists, and the Missing Ockhamists:
accompanied by a return to ancient Greek commentaries on his work. As a result, the
medieval manner of reading Aristotle and Averroës together—as if they were the same
source—was displaced; the result was a more eclectic form of Aristotelianism and a new
desire to recover the original Aristotle. Amongst the most contentious aspects of
Averroës’ interpretation of Aristotle was the notion that there was one universal,
immortal intellect, in which the individual participated during his life-time, and an
individual intellect that was mortal and died with the body. His theory of the universal
intellect implicitly denied the existence of the individual and immortal soul. The
Renaissance debates over the unity of the intellect and the immortality of the soul were
spurred by reading Aristotle in Greek and by the rediscovery of ancient Greek
commentators, such as Themistius and Alexander of Aphrodisias.

The return to Aristotle in Greek stimulated contemporary discussions on the
intellective soul and the question of its dependence on the material body. The dependence
on the body would, of course, imply that the intellective soul dies with the body and,
therefore, lacks immortality. This conclusion contradicted the longstanding theological
tradition, supported by Christian Patristic authors, that the intellective soul was
independent and immortal. For some of the most important Christian theologians,
particularly Thomas Aquinas and John Duns Scotus, God was the “First Cause” who had
created each soul. For Aquinas the individual intellect and its immortality were real and
could be demonstrated through philosophical reflection. However, the idea that one could
provide demonstrable proof of the immortality of the individual soul was often rejected in

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Philosophical Liberty in Pre-Reformation Italy,” Renaissance Quarterly XLVI, No. 2 (Summer, 1993): 247-276.
25 Grendler, The Universities of the Italian Renaissance, 279. For Pomponazzi’s criticism of the manner in
which Averroës interpreted Aristotle’s work see Chapter IV of Pomponazzi’s “On the Immortality of the
Soul.”
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Paduan thought. While Christian Aristotelism was firmly accepted in universities in Northern Europe, it was an entirely different matter in Italy, particularly in Padua. In Italian universities, natural philosophy was more closely linked with the medical sciences ensuring that the interest in Aristotle was primarily scientific rather than theological. In Padua, Aristotle was studied in order to gain insight into cognition and the relation of body and sensation.26

The Paduans often gave Averroës a footing equal to Aristotle.27 In the words of Gasparo Contrarini, writing in the 1490s, Averroës was like a “kind of oracle” in Padua, an oracle with whose opinion on the unity of the intellect no one aspiring to the title of “philosopher” could disagree.28 Although Averroist teachings were not prohibited within the classroom, in 1489 Bishop Pietro Barozzi forbade teaching on the unity of the intellect in public disputation. Those who ignored the edict were liable to “automatic excommunication.”29 For Barozzi, the Averroist teachings were particularly worrisome because they obviously denied the rewards and punishments in life after death. In 1498, the respected instructor of Scotus metaphysics, Antonio Trombetta, published arguments against the Averroës school in Padua.30 This Franciscan abbot from the Santo monastery

26 Grendler, The Universities of the Italian Renaissance, 282.
27 The writings of Paduan philosopher Agostino Nifo provide a good example of this. He cited Averroës and Aristotle together and his work is filled with citations such as “according to the philosophy of Aristotle and Averroës.” He even referred to Averroës as the “priest of Aristotle.” Edward P. Mahoney, “Antonio Trombetta and Agostino Nifo on Averroës and Intelligible Species: A Philosophical Dispute at the University of Padua,” in Two Aristotelians of the Italian Renaissance. Nicoletto Vernia and Agostino Nifo (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2000) ix, 6. 1st published in Storia e cultura al Santo di Padova fra il XII e il XX secolo, ed. Antonino Poppi, (Vicenza, 1976): 289-301.
29 Grendler, The Universities of the Italian Renaissance, 284.
30 Trombetta held the position from c. 1476-1511. Grendler, The Universities of the Italian Renaissance, 287. It is interesting to note that after Riccio completed the Della Torre monument he worked on the tomb monument for Antonio Trombetta. Trombetta, as leader of the local Franciscan order and president of the massari at St. Anthony’s, had approved the plans for Riccio’s paschal candelabrum. As Trombetta was quite concerned with the faithful being misled, his choice of Riccio for his funerary monument must
was deeply involved in emerging debates in Padua over the nature of the soul. His 1498 *Tractus singularis contra Averroistas de humanarum animarum plurificatione* displays the great fear that students were at risk of being misled as a result of Averroist interpretations; particularly worrisome was Averroës’s theory of the unity of the intellect. These interpretations, Trombetta contended, were corrupting Aristotle’s own doctrine.\(^{31}\)

In part the debate centred on whether or not Aristotle believed that the intellect was independent of matter and body or whether it was dependent on the body for its existence and perished with it. The problem with the view of the intellect as dependent on the body was that, in this case, it was seen as corruptible and subject to degeneration alongside its material vehicle. This unpalatable consequence was avoided by insistence on the separation and independence of the intellect from the corruptible material casing. Thus, the main issue of contention had become the question of whether there was room in Aristotle’s thought for the immortality of the soul.

Tomeo’s focus on Aristotle’s metaphysics helped to shed light on the philosopher’s views on the unity of the intellect and to bring the debate on the nature of the soul to fruition. Eventually this led to the development of Pietro Pomponazzi’s revolutionary work on this subject.\(^{32}\) Paduan debates on the subject became so heated that when a Lateran Council was called in 1512 they addressed the issue with the hope of extinguishing some of the more contentious aspects of discussions. The Council presented a bull that forbade any teaching of philosophy that denied the individual immortality of the intellective soul. While the bull was meant to restrict professors, such

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31 Mahoney, “Antonio Trombetta and Agostino Nifo,” ix.18.
was not the case. In 1516 Pomponazzi finally published his *Tractatus de immortalitate animae*. In this treatise, Pomponazzi famously rejected the study of the soul on theological terms; instead, he approached the subject solely in a philosophical manner. He argued that the soul needed the body to function, which led him to believe that the intellective soul was primarily mortal and material.\(^{33}\) To those theologians who were worried that negating the rewards and punishments waiting in the afterlife would lead men to commit grave sins, Pomponazzi contended that true virtue cannot be pursued for the rewards of life after death. Rather, he argued, it would only be true virtue if it were pursued for its own sake.\(^{34}\) He concluded that, while philosophy could not prove the immortality of the individual soul, he maintained it was to be accepted as a matter of Christian faith. His treatise met with much criticism, including accusations of heresy; in 1518 he responded by writing the *Apologia* and again in 1519 he felt the need to respond once more to the continuing criticism in his *Defensorium*.\(^{35}\) Despite the fact that his treatise was met with such strong criticism, his work led to a strong, and largely accepted, division between the spheres of philosophy and theology.

The study of Platonic thought played a central role in the Renaissance debates over the soul. Not only was Tomeo pioneering in teaching Aristotle in Greek, he was also amongst the first professors to teach Plato within a university classroom.\(^{36}\) While Tomeo was appointed to teach Aristotle at the University of Padua, it was his studies of Plato’s


\(^{35}\) In this text, he addressed the criticism of the Dominican Vincentius de Vicentia, Petrus Manna, and most famously, his former pupil Gasparo Contarini (Pomponazzi had requested Contarini’s critique).

writing that garnered him great fame among his contemporaries. His interest in Plato and the writings of the Neo-Platonists precedes that of many other university professors, illustrating once more how novel his thought was. Since Platonism diverged from the thought of Averroës and his belief in the unity of the intellect, it strongly influenced these debates. While Renaissance Platonism was an effective countermeasure to Averroist doctrine, Renaissance Platonists were inclined to accept the philosophic demonstrability of the immortality of the individual soul. In this it was Marsilio Ficino, in his *Theologia Platonica de immortalitate animorum*, who led the way. The writings of Plato were used by Ficino and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola to find agreement between Scripture, Plato, and Aristotle. A considerable amount of Tomeo’s work was focused on the links between Plato and Aristotle; he maintained that much of their thought was not as irreconcilable as many argued.

*The Alverotus and the Vehicles of the Soul*

The *Alverotus* is one of a series of dialogues published by Tomeo in his *Dialogi* in 1524. The *Dialogi* consists of dialogues on such diverse topics as divination, prayer, the

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37 While Ficino had published his translation of Plato’s writings in 1484, it is not until some point after 1512 that Henry Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim gave the second formal university lecture on Plato. Agrippa taught at the universities in Pavia (1512-1515) and Turin (1515-1517). Grendler, *The Universities of the Italian Renaissance*, 297.


39 His writings covered a diverse list of topics from natural science, philology, mythology, and history. Tomeo taught at the university until 1506 and he continued teaching in the city in an informal and unofficial capacity until his death in 1531. Today, he is best known for tutoring English students at the university; in particular, he is noted for his close interaction with former students such as Reginald Pole, Richard Pace, Cuthbert Tunstall, and Thomas Lupset. One of the most famous of his Italian students was Pietro Bembo, with whom Tomeo maintained a close friendship. For his interaction with the English students see Jonathan Woolfson, *Padua and the Tudors: English Students in Italy, 1485-1603* (Toronto, 1998) and Gasquet, *Cardinal Pole and His Early Friends*.

40 In a letter to Pole, which Francis Gasquet dated as circa 1528, Tomeo discusses the origins of his “Dialogue on the Immortality of the Soul” and the collection of dialogues. Thus, it is worth citing here: “Whilst recently I had some leisure, it came into my mind to discourse on the existence of these Spirits, as far as I was competent. The one question is connected with the other, but it is the most difficult. The subject
playing of dice, and mourning. The \textit{Alverotus} is one of three dialogues concerned with the nature and essence of the soul.\footnote{The letter of Tomeo quoted and discussed in Gasquet's \textit{Cardinal Pole and his early friends} are from 1521 (the year in which Bembo returned to Padua) to Tomeo's death in 1531. \textit{Tomeo's letter would seem to give a date to his dialogues on the soul at some point close to 1520 if he is indeed referring to the first publication of his dialogues in 1524, as the content suggests, and not a later publication (1525, 1532, 1542). The later publications included an additional dialogue on the essence of the soul (see below). The credit given to Bembo for the formation of his thought on the soul may suggest a later date for the \textit{Alverotus} then that of the circa 1516-1521 commissioning and execution of the Della Torre monument. This in turn may preclude it as a direct source of influence on the conception of the tomb's imagery.} Sadly, none of Tomeo’s major writings have been translated, and—with the exception of the scholarship of Daniela De Bellis—the lack of in-depth studies of both the \textit{Dialogi} and the thought of this influential Paduan philosopher persists.\footnote{See Daniela De Bellis, “La vita e l’ambiente di Niccolò Leonico Tomeo,” \textit{Quaderni per la storia dell’Università di Padova} xiii (1980): 37-73, and also: Deno J. Geanakoplos, “The career of the little-known Renaissance Greek scholar Nicholas Leonicus Tomaeus and the Ascendancy of Greco-Byzantine Aristotelianism at Padua University (1497),” \textit{Byzantia} xiii (1985): 357-371. Luca D’Ascia, “Un Erasmiano italiano? Note sulla filosofia della religione di Niccolò Leonico Tomeo,” \textit{Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa} xxvi, n. 2 (1990): 242-264. Augusto Serena, \textit{Appunti Letterari} (Rome: Forzani E. C., Tipografi del Senato, 1903), 5-37.}

Tomeo set the \textit{Alverotus} in the Paduan house of Francesco Alverotti, where friends and family of Alverotti had gathered to celebrate his birthday. The evening is recounted submerged me in profound darkness. When I meditated on it and exerted all my powers to fathom it, I became doubtful whether, after all, I could attempt to write on it. I was helped, however, not only by many writings on the matter by ancient authors, but also by what had been written on the opposite side, which I was unable to judge, approve or disapprove. Always attached piously to our religion, I hold it to be true what it tells us to hold and believe, and what it commands its followers to know and observe without doubting. However, since I was urged on by a friend, whom I could not refuse, \textit{I examined every difficulty, and have now collected together into one volume of ‘Dialogues’ what I had already heard from Bembo and got from other reading. And, as I have done in other cases, I dedicate it to you, for to you chiefly I should commend these my late fruits, since you are the most illustrious philosopher of our time and ever my best patron. Vale.”} in Francis Aidan Gasquet, \textit{Cardinal Pole and His Early Friends} (London: G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., 1927), 102-103 (Italics mine). Note the emphasis on piety and the adherence to Christian doctrine in Tomeo’s letter to Pole. Similar statements are found in both the beginning and conclusion of the \textit{Alverotus}. The letters of Tomeo quoted and discussed in Gasquet’s \textit{Cardinal Pole and his early friends} are found in a small volume of Tomeo’s letters in the Vatican, the Codex Vaticanus Rossiana 997. Gasquet states the letters are from 1521 (the year in which Bembo returned to Padua) to Tomeo’s death in 1531. Tomeo’s letter would seem to give a date to his dialogues on the soul at some point close to 1520 if he is indeed referring to the first publication of his dialogues in 1524, as the content suggests, and not a later publication (1525, 1532, 1542). The later publications included an additional dialogue on the essence of the soul (see below). The credit given to Bembo for the formation of his thought on the soul may suggest a later date for the \textit{Alverotus} then that of the circa 1516-1521 commissioning and execution of the Della Torre monument. This in turn may preclude it as a direct source of influence on the conception of the tomb’s imagery.
to Alessandro Capella, who had been absent from the gathering.\textsuperscript{44} One of the primary interlocutors is Giambattista de Leone, a philosopher and a patron of Riccio. Other figures present at the birthday gathering were Giovanni Battista Della Torre, the Paduan humanist Luca Bonfio, and his brother Girolamo.\textsuperscript{45}

The focus of the evening’s discussion resulted from a recitation of a passage from the sixth book of Vergil’s \textit{Aeneid}. This passage, known as the “\textit{Spiritus intus alit,}” (The spirit nourishes within) became the basis for the discussions that followed. This passage was central to many Renaissance discussions on the immortality of the soul because it drew heavily on Platonic thought. In the passage, Vergil presents many of the Platonic notions that were linked during the Renaissance to the debates over the nature of the soul. These notions include the idea of the body as a host for the soul; the view of the body as a prison; the destination of the soul; the idea that even the soul of the wisest man needed to be purified from its life in the body; and the idea of the ultimate enlightenment of man in heaven. The full passage, lines 724-751, as follows, was presented in the \textit{Alverotus}:

\begin{quote}
In the beginning Spirit fed all things from within, the sky and the earth, the level waters, the shining globe of the moon and the Titan’s star, the sun. It was Mind that set all this matter in motion. Infused through all the limbs, it mingled with that great body, and from the union there sprang the families of men and of animals, the living things of the air and the strange creatures born beneath the marble surface of the sea. The living force within them is of fire and its seeds have their source in heaven, but their guilt-ridden bodies make them slow and they are dulled by earthly limbs and dying flesh. It is this that gives them their fears and desires, their grief’s and joys. Closed in the blind darkness of this prison they do not see out to the winds of
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{44} The dialogue commences with Capella telling of his return from Verona and his visit with the senator and prefect Daniel Renier.
air. Even when life leaves them on their last day of light, they are not wholly freed from all the many ills and miseries of the body which must harden in them over the long years and become ingrained in ways we cannot understand. And so they are put to punishment, to pay the penalty for all their ancient sins. Some are stretched and hung out to dry in the winds. Some have the stain of evil washed out of them under a vast tide of water or scorched out by fire. Each of us suffers his own fate in the after-life. From here we are sent over the broad plains of Elysium and some few of us possess these fields of joy until the circle of time is completed and the length of days has removed ingrained corruption and left us pure ethereal sense, the fire of elemental air. All these others whom you see, when they have rolled the wheel for a thousand years, are called out by God to come in great columns to the river Lethe, so that they may duly go back and see the vault of heaven again remembering nothing, and begin to be willing to return to bodies.\(^\text{46}\)

We are told that it was between the courses of Alverotti’s dinner party that a young man was asked to recite this passage. Luca Bonfio recounts that the verses left Tomeo in a state of stupor; having recovered, Tomeo proclaimed the greatness of Vergil, before lapsing, once more, into silence.\(^\text{47}\) Eventually, the recitation inspired Tomeo and the other dinner guests to commence a philosophic inquiry into ancient thought on the vehicles of the soul, the nature of the soul's purification, and its journey in to the Beyond. This passage from Vergil presents many concepts that Renaissance philosophers found fascinating. As De Bellis points out, the first point of interest was the notion that the heat


\(^{47}\) Bonfio was a Paduan humanist and one of Tomeo’s friends. Tomeo dedicated to Bonfio his translation of “un trattato” of his *Parva Naturalia*. He was also connected with Erasmus, Agrippa, and Francesco Zorzi. De Bellis, “Le vite,” 45
found in the world was the source of all life and that this heat was the source of nourishment. The second point of interest concerned the journey of the soul after it was freed from its earthly prison.48

Tomeo’s *Alverotus* explores the links between the Neoplatonic interpretations of the concept of Plato’s vehicles of the soul (ὄχημα) and Aristotle’s *pneuma* (πνεύμα). The vehicles of the soul, or astral bodies, were turned to in the attempt to find something that would bridge the gap—or mediate—between the incorporeal soul and the terrestrial body. Discussions about vehicles of the soul were not easy for Renaissance philosophers because this topic was particularly difficult to reconcile with Christian teaching. In 1542 the Renaissance concept of the vehicle of the soul was succinctly and clearly presented by Jean Fernel in his *Physiologia*. In his work, Fernel stated that the Neo-Platonists considered that the soul:

> before its emanation and immigration into this thick and solid body, *put on as a simple garment a certain shining, pure body like a star*, which, being immortal and eternal, could never be detached nor torn away from the soul, and without which the soul could not become an inhabitant of this world. Then they surrounded the soul with another body, also fine and simple, but less pure, less shining and splendid than the first, not created by the supreme maker, but compounded of a mixture of the finer elements, whence it is named aerial and ethereal. Clothed with these two bodies the soul, entering this frail and mortal body, or rather thrown like an exile into a loathsome and shadowy prison, becomes a guest of the earth until, having broken from this prison and having returned, joyful and free, to its home, it is made a fellow-citizen of the gods.49

D.P. Walker stresses that this theory of the astral body, “the star-like vehicle or garment of the soul,” was not a particularly safe topic in the Renaissance. Much of the danger with this topic lay in the confusion of the many different meanings of the word “spirit” and particularly in the potential confusion between the incorporeal soul and the corporeal spirit. The concept was dangerous for another reason as well. Ficino avoided making specific references to the *vehiculum* or astral body when he wrote on similar concepts in his *De Vita coelitus comparanda*. Walker attributes this caution to the unorthodoxy of the doctrine of astral bodies, which presupposes both the “pre-existence of the soul and metempsychosis.” Indeed, Renaissance discussions of astral bodies appear to have been quite infrequent and always cautious. This is evident in the manner in which Cardinal Bessarion and—as we will see—Tomeo approached the topic.

The Platonic conception of the vehicle of the soul (όχημα) was linked by Proclus with Aristotle's *pnuema* (πνεῦμα). Renaissance discussions of the spirit were primarily derived from medical theory: the spirit was discussed as a certain vapour that spread through the body via the blood. It was believed to be an instrument of the soul that allowed for such activities as sense perception, imagination, and motor activity. As we will see, Aristotle connected the spirit to the substance of the stars. The vehicles of the soul, or astral bodies, join themselves to the soul as it descends to the body. They were thought to be made of a substance described as a “very fine, lucent stuff” that was

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*corpus, seu potius in tetrum et tenebris carcerem tanquam exul dejectus, terrarum fit hospes, donec effracto carcere alacer et liber in patriam reversus, municeps fiat et civis deorum.”

54 Daniela De Bellis, “I veicoli dell’anima,” 4. It was believed to be an important influence upon the brain (sense perception and movement), the liver (nutrition and growth), and the testicles (generation).
similar, or even identical to, that of the stars and spheres. If they were not considered to be made of material identical to that of the stars and spheres, they were thought to be influenced by them because they were believed to have assumed the shape of these spheres as they passed through these realms during their descent.\textsuperscript{55}

In Tomeo's \textit{Alverotus}, three vehicles of the soul are presented.\textsuperscript{56} The first vehicle—simple, immaterial, and immortal\textsuperscript{57}—is the purest in nature; it sustains the course of the body and is not susceptible to suffering.\textsuperscript{58} The second vehicle was an aerial vehicle that was susceptible to suffering; it was irrational and could have a long life. The third and final vehicle—submissive, heavy, and muddy—had a more tragic fate: consigned to the body that it nourished, this most easily corruptible vehicle died with it.\textsuperscript{59} Being earthly and muddy, it was inseparable from the body and the most difficult to return to its native place.\textsuperscript{60} If the first vehicle remained separated from matter and was conceived much like a celestial being, the third vehicle was obviously an earthly form, while the second, thought to hold both celestial and earthly qualities, served to mediate between the others.

As De Bellis showed, Tomeo's thought on the vehicles of the soul owes much to the work of Marsilio Ficino and Cardinal Bessarion. Tomeo, wanting to illustrate concordance between Plato and Aristotle, drew upon Book II of the latter's \textit{De animorum generatione}. Tomeo focused on Aristotle's argument that the rational soul is separable from the body and its communication with the body is only indirect.\textsuperscript{61} It is most likely

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\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{55} Walker, "The Astral Body," 122.
\item \textsuperscript{56} The number of vehicles, their substance, as well as their fate after death varies amongst authors. Walker, "The Astral Body," 121.
\item \textsuperscript{57} Niccolò Leonico Tomeo, "Alverotus, sive de tribus animorum vehiculis," \textit{Dialogi} (Lugduni: Apud S. Gryphium, 1542), 96.
\item \textsuperscript{58} Tomeo, "Alverotus," 98.
\item \textsuperscript{59} Tomeo, "Alverotus," 96, 99.
\item \textsuperscript{60} Tomeo, "Alverotus," 104.
\item \textsuperscript{61} De Bellis, "I veicoli dell’anima," 5-6.
\end{itemize}
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this Aristotelian text that led to the link between the spirit and the vehicle of the soul. In a passage well known in the Renaissance, Aristotle had stated that it was the spirit that made semen fertile. As he stated, “the spirit which is contained in the foamy body of the semen, and the nature which is in the spirit, is analogous to the element of the stars.”

The created souls either descend or await their descent. As they descend into the earthly realm, they are covered by an aerial substance: the *pneuma* becomes heavier and darker as well as material and visible. This material casing is lost with death, and the *pneuma* dissolves itself in the heavens, rejoining the irrational soul. As they descend, souls become tainted and corrupted; in order to return to their original nature they must be purified, shedding all blemishes and stains. If these bodies are allowed to remain heavy and muddy while they are joined to the soul, they can further drag the soul down—the purification is needed to allow them to return to their more natural state.

For the Neo-Platonists, astral bodies served as an explanation of theurgic practices. They viewed astral bodies as more of a religious idea and, Walker argues, as explanations of the theurgic practices, that is to say:

methods of approaching God and salvation which are non-intellectual, such as fasting, lustrations, the use of incense, incantations, etc. To all these practices the astral body corresponds exactly: being corporeal it can be acted on by physical things of a similar nature (vapours, scents, sounds); being the seat of the imagination, or of the irrational soul, it can be affected by prayer and images; since it survives after death, its purification is of the utmost importance.

In the *Alverotus*, Tomeo included a discussion of theurgic practices. He emphasized that it is very difficult to free the soul. However, purification can be achieved if the earthly,

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64 Tomeo, “Alverotus,” 107.
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muddy mass of the body is cleansed by water and begins to shine again. Tomeo articulates the method of purification and the theurgic practices of abstinence, prayer, philosophy, study, baths, and perfumes. All these served to lighten the soul and make it freer and more agile, while rendering the vehicles of the soul pure and whole once more. With time the purification allows the vehicle of the soul to ascend with greater ease. In this state they would be able to return to their original nature. Man’s conduct impacts the vehicles of the soul: with sin the vehicle becomes heavier and thicker, and the potential of its return to its original nature is less likely. Tomeo hints at man’s role in this process and his responsibility for his own destiny, and he points out that man’s soul is marked by his conduct.

The need for purification was one of the concepts most easily reconciled to the Christian faith. It is also one aspect of Tomeo’s dialogue that may be most easily applied to Riccio’s narrative. The scene of sacrifice would have been linked to the need to cleanse the soul. In the funeral scene, Riccio included a classical purification ceremony, a *lustratio*, in which a priest cleanses the mourners from the contamination of death by sprinkling them with water. Again, the subject of purification is presented in *The Soul’s arrival in the Elysian Fields*, where in the upper right corner a young soul bends over to drink from Lethe (Fig. 52)—the river that Vergil describes as an important part of the soul’s final purification from the contaminations of life.

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68 Tomeo, “Alverotus,” 107. Here Tomeo was influenced by Ficino’s writing on this topic in the *De Triplici Vita*. De Bellis, “I veicoli dell’anima,” 15.
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Tomeo’s dialogue concludes with a discussion of the soul’s return to its origins. He tells us that the purified and now unblemished soul would fly on high after submerging itself in the Lethean waters, just as described by Socrates in Plato’s *Phaedrus*. These souls would “plunge themselves into the sea of divine beauty,” where these “most pure souls” would live with God.\(^{72}\) Tomeo, drawing again on Plato, records that the soul by the love of God was inflamed by God and would be transformed.\(^{73}\) The soul drinking from the river Lethe in Riccio’s panel would have symbolized to the learned viewer the most pure and cleansed soul.

Some of these ideas, such as the soul’s need for purification, are easily reconciled to Christian doctrine. But many are not. While astral bodies share certain similarities with the Christian concept of the spirit, the pre-existence of the soul and the idea of reincarnation obviously remain irreconcilable. Tomeo understood the need for caution when discussing the vehicles of the soul. He was compelled to admonish the reader not once but twice in the dialogue to accept only that which conforms to the Christian faith. Jonathan Woolfson and Andrew Gregory assert that his “comments are not really saved from outright doctrinal heterodoxy by his remarks that true believers must nevertheless adhere to Christian eschatology.”\(^{74}\) However, since the first few decades of the 16\(^{th}\) century—the period in which Tomeo was working on this dialogue—was a time in which many humanists felt at liberty to deliberate on some more controversial philosophical ideas, it would be incorrect to assume that Tomeo’s interest in this subject implies

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\(^{72}\) Tomeo, “Alverotus,” 114-115. “…idem etiam in Platonis Symposio Socrates augere, et in maius dare videtur, cum dicit puragtos animos, qui divinam præ cæteris pulchritudinem amaverunt, in ipsum tandem divinae pulchritudinis pelagus sese prorsus immergere, divinosque ibi liquores, non tantum bibere, sed illios ebrios etiam factos in alios iam ex seipsis transfundere.”

\(^{73}\) Tomeo, “Alverotus,” 115.

\(^{74}\) Woolfson and Gregory, “Aspects of Collecting in Renaissance Padua,” 225.
theological heterodoxy. The question remains as to whether Riccio’s narrative makes a specific reference to Tomeo’s discussion of astral bodies. With these more problematic aspects of Tomeo’s discussion in mind, perhaps it is time to look a little more closely at the Renaissance use of Vergil’s “Spiritus intus alit.”

_Spiritus intus alit_

Any assertion of a direct link between the Alverotus and the Della Torre monument should be made with caution as the text followed was one of the most renowned passages from Vergil's *Aeneid*. That the expression "Spiritus intus alit..." was commonplace is evident in the writings of both Marsilio Ficino and Girolamo Fracastoro.75 Enrico Peruzzi, in his discussion of Fracastoro's dialogue the *Fracastorius*, refers to Fracastoro’s use of the phrase "Spiritus intus alit..." as the "usual citation."76 Riccio’s narrative includes no specific features discussed in Tomeo’s dialogue that are not also contained in the *Aeneid*, making it difficult to assume that the knowing viewer of the tomb would have drawn specifically on Tomeo’s thought in their interpretation of the tomb. While the learned viewer may have been aware of Tomeo's text, it is necessary to remember that the Della Torre monument was likely erected before the 1524 publication of the *Alvertous*.77 Thus, this learned audience would have been confined to a particularly small number of individuals who had had access to this dialogue before its publication.

75 On Ficino see D. P. Walker, *Spiritual and Demonic Magic*, 13, i.e. Ficino, *Opera Omnia*, 612.
76 Enrico Peruzzi, "Introduction" to Girolamo Fracastoro. *L'anima*, intro. and trans. by Enrico Peruzzi (Florence: Casa Editrice Le Lettere, 1999), 28 Fracastoro includes the opening excerpt of this passage in both the *Naugerus* and the *Fracastorius*. D.P. Walker and F. Saxl both refer to it as the famous passage or famous verses, further underscoring the widespread use of this passage
77 While it would have been quite likely that such a dialogue would have been circulated prior to its publication, there remains the question of when it was written and, also, of course, when the tomb was commissioned. It is unfortunate that no concrete evidence remains for either the origins or completions of both the dialogue and the tomb.
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It is thus difficult to maintain that Riccio was indeed following the *Alverotus* itself. Moreover, Riccio’s Vergilian narrative includes specific details taken from the *Aeneid* that were not discussed in the *Alverotus*. For example, the figures at the mouth of Hades, the appearance of Charon, and the crossing of the Stygian waters are not discussed in Tomeo’s dialogue. Nevertheless, Tomeo’s dialogue is particularly useful to our understanding of the Della Torre monument as it illustrates how central the sixth book of the *Aeneid* was in the contemporary debates over the nature and immortality of the individual soul. The point is not to discount Tomeo’s potential influence on this monument for, indeed, he was close to many members of this circle and his work was influential upon their thought. The next part of this chapter will look at writings of one other prominent figure in the Della Torre circle—Girolamo Fracastoro.

**Girolamo Fracastoro on the Soul**

While Fracastoro wrote on the nature and immortality of the soul throughout his career, his interest in the matter dates from the emergence of the debates in Padua. His engagement with the subject is evident both in his dialogues and in his poetry, including the funerary elegy he wrote in honour of Marcantonio Della Torre in 1511. In his dialogues, he presented his own unique argument on the subject of the immortality of the individual soul. In 1555, two years after his death, his collected works were published in Venice. The *Opera Omnia* contains three dialogues written on poetry, the intellect, and the soul. These dialogues share a common focus on the nature of human knowledge. Written as a unit, these dialogues are: the *Naugerius, sive de poetica*, with Andrea Navagero and Giangiocomo Bardulone as the principal interlocutors; the *Turrius, sive de intellectione*, mainly a monologue presented by Giovanni Battista Della Torre, who was
also included in Tomeo’s *Alverotus*; and the *Fracastorius, sive de anima*, a dialogue between Fracastoro and Raimondo Della Torre.

Aware of the late publication of these three dialogues, Fracastoro went to great lengths to emphasize that they dated to a much earlier part of his career. In the opening dialogue of the *Naugerius*, he stresses that the discussions in these dialogues were from a much earlier meeting, when he and four friends had withdrawn from Verona to Monte Baldo and Fracastoro’s estate at Incaffi for respite from the summer heat:

Yet, whenever we have chanced to meet, this companionship, short as it is, seems most enjoyable. Usually it brings with it often repeated discussions of our friends, and especially of Andrea Navagero, and of the Della Torre brothers, Giambattista and Raimondo, with whom we had a rarer and more intimate friendship than with their brother Marco Antonio. His friendship seemed somehow as it grew older to lose its vigor. Some time ago therefore when we were at Verona, memories of such dear friends led us back to those experiences which we had shared with them during their lifetime. We chanced to recall the discourses which Andrea Navagero and Giambattista della Torre held in the retreats of Monte Baldo, on the art of poetry one day, and on the intellect the next.

His choice of interlocutors suggests a date prior to 1525, for Navagero spent little time in Italy after 1525, Giambattista Della Torre died circa 1528, and his brother Raimondo died in 1541. Fracastoro thus places these discussions at a point that could not be much later.
than Tomeo’s publication of the Dialogi. Inevitably, of course, they would have undergone much subsequent revision.

Fracastoro continues his assertion that he is returning to conversations of his youth:

Then if you [Ramusio] agreed we would edit them in collaboration, so that everyone might see what these men thought of our intellect, its nature and function, and what conclusions they drew regarding the poet himself, his function and purpose. All of this I think is as pleasing to you as if you saw our illustrious friends in the flesh and heard them discussing these great matters. Some possibly will wonder that I should concern myself at my advanced age with these interests of our youth and these accounts of young men.\(^{80}\)

Definite dates surrounding the editing of the dialogues are also provided in his correspondence. In January 1548, Fracastoro received his dialogues as edited by Giambattista Ramusio.\(^{81}\) Fracastoro’s letters illustrate his desire to continue polishing the texts and his uncertainty that the works were ready for publication.\(^{82}\) His reticence to publish may have had other sources. Francesco Pellegrini asserts that Fracastoro may have intended to include a fourth dialogue, the unedited “Controversia teologica veronese,” which focused on the more controversial topics of free will, grace, and predestination. While the seeds of this dialogue are evident in the Fracastorius, it is quite

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\(^{80}\) Naugerius, 50, 26: “ac tandem, si ista tibi visum suisset, in commune edendos: ut quisque videre posset que viri illi de nostra hac intellecctione, quid esset, et quo pacto fieret, existima vere: quidque de Poeta ipso atque eius officio ac fine constitueret quasi omnia tibi in primis arbitrator futura esse gratissima, quasi amicos tantos te uti vivos et loquentes, et tanta de re discipiantes spectes et audias. Ad mirabuntur fortasse aliqui, quod ego grandiori hac aetate juventia hec et juvenum narrata referre nunc animum inducam.”

\(^{81}\) Consultation with Fracastoro’s correspondence also confirms an early time frame for this work, since he states that this work had been left sleeping for many years. This is found in a 1548 letter to Giambatista Ramusio. F. Pellegrini,“L’inedito del dialogo Fracastoriano ‘Fracastorius sive de anima,’” Studi storici Veronese I (1947-48): 303. Ramusio and Giovita Rapicio (Ravizza) edited the dialogues. In 1549, Ramusio is recorded as having transcribed the dialogues on poetry and on the immortality of the soul. Peruzzi, 12, 13.

\(^{82}\) See Pellegrini,”L’inedito del dialogo Fracastoriano,” 303.
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unlike his previous writing. Instead of paying homage to his friends, the discussions are attributed not to them but rather to abstract characters. 83

While Fracastoro’s discussion of the soul is not as reliant on the “Spiritus intus alit” passage as the Alverotus, his thought on the debate is relevant to us for several reasons. The first is that he was close to the Della Torre family. The second, as we have seen, is that he stresses a similar time-frame for the origins of his discussions on the soul as that of Tomeo's publication. Above all, Fracastoro's dialogues are of interest for the manner in which he bridges the more difficult and controversial aspects of the debate and for his unique argument for the existence of the individual immortal soul. His solution to the question of the potential immortality of the soul was theological; he maintained that man was created for the knowledge of God, a knowledge only available after death. He argued that this knowledge required both virtue and grace. Virtue plays a much more prominent role in Fracastoro’s writing than it did in Tomeo’s Alverotus, and because the subject of virtue is given a place of prominence in Riccio’s narrative, his discussion of the subject may shed light on the Della Torre monument.

In his dialogues, Fracastoro cites Vergil’s “Spiritus intus alit” twice. The first reference found in his discussion of the power of poetry to convey truth, fill the mind with wonder, and give a sense of the divine. 84 The second reference is found in his discussion of the concept of the world soul as passed down by the Neo-Platonists. 85 There

83 See Girolamo Fracastoro, Scritti inediti di Girolamo Fracastoro, intro. and commentary by Francesco Pellegrini (Verona: Edizioni Valdonega, 1955) and Pellegrini “L’inedito del dialogo Fracastoriano,” 303. This dialogue was only uncovered in 1955. The unedited text was in very poor condition when Pellegrini discovered it, and this led to great difficulty in deciphering the text. The characters are Charidemus, Echerates, Theages, Hospes, and Theologus.
84 Fracastoro Navigerius, Sive de Poetica Dialogus, 71.
are further references to the sixth book of the *Aeneid* in the *Fracastorius*: when Raimondo Della Torre presented a discussion of the soul as indivisible, incorporeal, and incorruptible, he illustrated it by referring to the souls in the Elysian Fields who drink from the river Lethe and then wait 1,000 years for rebirth.  

Fracastoro raised the subject of the soul and its separation from the body in his poetry as well. Importantly, Fracastoro included brief references to this subject in his 1511 elegy for Marcantonio, where he wrote of the role played by virtue in separating the soul from the body. The inclusion of this topic in the elegy, which will be addressed more in the following pages, has important implications for our understanding of the soul’s journey and the role of virtue in Riccio’s narrative. In a 1534-35 poem to Marcantonio Flamino and Galeazzo Florimonte, he wrote that it was only with time that the soul could leave the body and that it needed to purify itself from contagions and cleanse itself from its blemishes before it could follow the path that leads to God:

That which has been separated for a long time
from any body and which a binding does not hold, …
know that you must separate the soul from the body
and purge it of any contagion it received, of earthly blemish…..

While the full title of the *Turrius, sive de intellectione* calls to mind the Paduan debates over the nature of the intellect, there are no references in this dialogue to the debates over immortality of the soul or the unity of the intellect. Fracastoro saved these more controversial aspects for the *Fracastorius, sive de anima*, leaving a clear division

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87 E. Di Leo, *Scienza e umanesimo in Gerolamo Fracastoro* (Salerno, 1937), 137. *Hieronymi Fracastorii *... *Poemata omnia: nunc multo, quam antea, emendatiora : accesserunt reliquiae Carminum* (Ex typographia Seminarii, apud Augustinium Carantonium, 1740), Carmina VII, 132: “Quod quoniam longe seijunctum est corpore ab omni nec nexus habet, aut affinem sensibus ullis naturam, scito esse animum tibi dissipandum corpore, purgandumque omni contagae recepta, terrene labe, et mortalis luminis haustu; quaequendaeque aliae silvae, callesque tenendi sunt alii, meliorque Deum quae semita monstrat….”
between natural and supernatural topics in the two dialogues. In the *Turrius*, he concentrated his discussion only on matters for which natural explanations were available. The metaphysical and theological discussions were saved for the *Fracastorius* and his dialogue on grace, predestination, and free will.

This separation of topics allowed Fracastoro to remove the problematic issue of the demonstrative proof of the immortality of the soul from his discussion of the intellect and save it for the subsequent dialogue in which faith plays a more prominent role. The format of the dialogues permits a sharp separation between what truly falls within the bounds of natural philosophy in relation to the soul and what falls within the realm of Christian theology. Fracastoro eliminated the ambiguities that might lay the groundwork for misinterpretation or confusion between the two. The last dialogue is most important to our discussion as it is here that Fracastoro addressed the individual immortality of the soul. For Fracastoro the most important argument for the immortality of the soul was theological. He strives in his dialogues to find a common ground—a position that would satisfy all his major concerns without a need to compromise either natural philosophy or theology. Thus, while the influence of his former teacher Pomponazzi is evident in Fracastoro’s thought, it is most evident in his independent approach to the subject matter rather than his specific solutions. Fracastoro’s study of the soul was not concerned with any sort of demonstrable proof of its immortality. He chose to omit the “hardness” of the Stoics and Peripatetics; instead, he relied on probable arguments. Fracastoro insisted that there can be no available demonstrable proof of the immortality of the soul. For him it is

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88 See Spencer Pearce, “Nature and Supernature in Fracastoro's Dialogues,” 120.
89 Pearce, “Nature and Supernature in Fracastoro's Dialogues,” 120.
a divine matter and should be treated as such; therefore, it is a subject for which one must rely upon theology, not natural philosophy.\textsuperscript{91}

Fracastoro put forward three arguments that would imply the immortality of the individual soul: these are the soul’s desire for knowledge, its immateriality, and its self-moving property, which is used to argue for both its incorruptibility and its eternal nature. It is the first of these three arguments that is of the most interest and relevance to our discussion. The Fracastorius commences with a poem on the abduction of Ganymede, a story used to suggest the soul’s constant desire to contemplate the divine.\textsuperscript{92} Contending that the intellect held an insatiable and eternal desire for knowledge, it argues that, since this desire was inexhaustible, it must suggest a life after the death of the body.\textsuperscript{93} This was a popular topic in the period and because the idea of enlightenment after death is contained in the sixth book of the Aeneid, it may be related to Riccio’s narrative.

When Aeneas arrives in the Elysian Fields, his father Anchises unfolds for his son not only future events but also divine mysteries. After being asked by Aeneas why so many souls had crowded along the shore of the river Lethe, it is Anchises who delivers the “\textit{Spiritus intus alit}” passage. Knowledge of the nature of the soul is not given to Aeneas until he is in the Elysian Fields. Fracastoro must have had this passage in mind when he wrote the elegy for Marcantonio. He describes Marcantonio’s happiness upon his arrival in paradise and his own reunion with the Della Torre ancestors. Not only does Marcantonio recognize his ancestors and is eagerly greeted by them, but here he learns their names and deeds.\textsuperscript{94}

\textsuperscript{91} Pearce, “Nature and Supernature in Fracastoro's Dialogues,” 121.
\textsuperscript{94} Fracastoro, \textit{Poemata Omnia}, 113.
In Riccio’s representation of the Elysian Fields (Fig. 9) the soul of the professor is guided through the happy groves, a garden filled with music, love, and dance. In the upper right corner, a soul drinks from the river Lethe, purging itself of any remaining sins and the memory of its earthly career. The amorous interactions of some of the figures in this panel express spiritual love, the soul’s union with the divine. In the foreground, four men sleep, likely also under the influence of the forgetful waters of Lethe, their minds prepared for the rebirth. A book and a sphere, instruments of knowledge, lie at the feet of these sleeping men; it seems that Riccio is reminding the viewer that this is the place where man is enlightened after his death or perhaps that the pursuit of knowledge played a role in the arrival in the Elysian Fields. The inclusion of references to the cult of Bacchus, in the form of the mask and overturned wine amphora, also suggest epiphany and release. Thus, these elements in this panel contrast to the opening panel in which the figure of Philosophia (Fig. 53) is heavily veiled, her true self is hidden, and the book she holds, containing the mysteries of the universe, is firmly closed. The figure suggests that divine knowledge will only be unveiled after death when all the secrets are revealed.

Fracastoro accepted the appetite of the soul for divine knowledge as a testimony of the soul’s aspiration to return to its natural place.95 He argued, then, in favour of the separation of the soul from the body by pointing to specific operations of the soul—operations that left room for its continued existence after the body had died. The “propria operatio” of the soul were functions that belonged to the soul alone. One of the unique contributions of his argument is his contention that this function of the soul lies in the

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realm of grace. He asserted that the soul’s proper and unique function was the "beatific vision" of God, which is accessible only through the grace of God.96

Fracastoro maintained that the world was created and existed solely for man’s potential knowledge of God and his benevolence; gaining this knowledge was the point of human life from the very start.97 It is this knowledge of God that is the greatest beatitude available to man. For Fracastoro the soul’s potential for the knowledge of God made it the most noble and perfect part of man.98 Drawing upon the language of St. Paul, Fracastoro argues that the function of the soul, then, is this "life of the spirit, on account of which a man is said to be born again and made new, as if he had put off all that is bodily and lives, like God, entirely in the spirit."99 The argument that the "vita dello spirito" can become available to man after his death is supported by a single example. One prime exemplar, who is able to experience the “vita dello spirito,” would be the exception that would make it available to all. As he says,

It was fitting that there should be such a one in the human species since it is necessary that in every species some individual should be found which is most perfect in that species and can fulfill its most perfect function, and also because, if no such human existed, that happiness which I said was to be given to humankind, could not be given, even in death. For it is not given to anyone who in life has not lived the life of the spirit; of itself our species could not merit and attain this without the most perfect and divine man of whom I am speaking.100

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100 Translation by Pearce in "Nature and Supernature in Fracastoro's Dialogues," 125-126; Fracastoro, De Anima, 15.22-24, p. 112: “Eiusmodi autem hominem in humana specie fore oportebat, tum quia in omni specie unum inveniri necesse est, quod perfectissimum in illa sit et perfectissimam operationem obire possit, tum quod, si hic non fuisse, foelicitas illa, quam diximus dandam fuisse homini, dariullo pacto non potuisset, ne etiam mortuo. Nulli enim mortuo datur, qui, vivens, spiritus vivam non vixerit, quod species haec per se mereri atque sequei non poterat sine hoc, de quo loquimur, perfectissimo et divino homine.”
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By drawing upon the example of “Christ made man,” Fracastoro finds his prime exemplar of human perfection, an exemplar who gives the potential of divine knowledge to all men. Christ's perfection set the precedent for man's knowledge of the divine because he was the first to realize this perfection. With Christ as "the model, the origin, and the master of the life of the spirit," man's very capacity for perfection and the potential for divine life could be realized. Here we also see the influence of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and his writings in the *Heptaplus*; this is evident when Fracastoro presents the idea that it was Christ and, more specifically, the Incarnation that made man's potential for divine beatitude possible. Thus, through the imitation of Christ, man is given the first certainty of eternity. For Fracastoro this affirms the potential immortality of the soul. Christ with his merit had obtained grace for man: the “vita dello spirito” is a gift from God and is only available through his grace. Fracastoro reasoned that the only means for the soul to outlive the body was through divine grace.

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103 Pearce, "Nature and Supernature in Fracastoro's Dialogues,” 126-127. This may not be the most sound theological argument on Fracastoro’s part, as Pearce explains: “his cosmos, dominated in the final analysis by God’s purposes for humankind, appears to demand for its completion—for that perfection which the perfect creator can hardly deny it—the Incarnation itself.” See Charles H. Lohr and his discussion of Ficino and Pico in *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. Charles B. Schmitt, Quentin Skinner, Eckhard Kessler, and Jill Kraye (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 578, 568-584.

104 Fracastoro, *L’Anima*, 15.21, p. 114-115. Fracastoro was already considering the “vita dello spirito” by 1528, as the seeds of this and his discussion on virtue are evident in his 1528 oration in honour of Gianmatteo Giberti’s arrival in Verona. Pellegrini, *Scritti inediti*, 250.

105 At this point he shifted his focus to the issue of election. Raimondo Della Torre inquired why, given that our souls were perfectly created by God, the happiness of election was only available to a few. Peruzzi, “L’ultimo Approdo,” in *L’Anima*, 47, Fracastorius, 47:8. In this portion of the dialogue, the hand of the censor becomes evident (This censorship is recorded in a letter from the censor Sisto Medici to Gianbattista
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Fracastoro’s thought grace was the all-important link between matter and spirit and between the human and the divine.107

While grace was essential for the joys of the afterlife, we have seen that Fracastoro emphasized the importance of virtue in man’s journey into the Beyond. Virtues procured for one’s own use or glory were not sufficient, but “heroic virtues” are solid and secure.108 Exercised only with deep devotion and for the love of God, they come as close as possible to the perfection of God.109 It is through the exercise of virtue, Fracastoro argues, that many deserved to be considered amongst the saints.110 Again, the first example is found in the example of Christ, and those who follow and imitate Him have the potential to achieve the “vita dello spirito.”111 It is thus through the imitation of Christ

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Raumusio in 1554. Enrico Peruzzi, “Le censure di Sisto Medici O. P. ai dialoghi ‘De intellectione’ e ‘De anima’ di Girolamo Fracastoro,” Per Alberto Piazz. Scritti offerti nel 50° di sacerdozio, a cura di C. Albarelo e G. Zivelongi, (Verona: 1998), 299-328. The censor made an alteration out of concern that Fracastoro’s view could be misconstrued as Lutheran doctrine. Indeed, the text contained in his unedited writings is less orthodox than what is evident in the published version. Peruzzi, “Il Testo del De Anima,” in L’Anima, 78-80. Despite the change to his original text, Fracastoro’s ideas on grace and free will remain evident in the Fracastorius. The revised version maintains the belief that every one can receive election; that they should not only desire it, but hope to be in that number. Grace remains necessary, but—in the edited version—it is possible for all; it comes spontaneously and is received voluntarily. Fracastoro, L’Anima, 172-173. In the original text, Fracastoro does not seem to accept that the grace is granted by God so liberally. Rather, he was inclined to view the election as being available only to a few. While the Fracastorius is for the most part quite orthodox in nature, there does remain a predestinationist element insofar as not every man is able to ensure his own salvation. Pearce, "Nature and Supernature in Fracastoro’s Dialogues,” 130. Fracastoro’s discussion of grace and predestination in these sections is most likely dated to 1539 or later, when it was a subject of debate in Verona. See Pellegrini, Scritti inediti, 73-138. Pellegrini argues that Fracastoro’s discussion on grace was a gathered from these discussions. See Adriano Prosperi, Tra evangelismo e controriforma: G. M. Giberti (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1969) on the Veronese debates on grace. 105 Pearce, "Nature and Supernature in Fracastoro's Dialogues,” 121, 130.
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that man is able to find his first certainty of immortality—the virtuous man will trust that he is amongst those destined to the eternal “fruitio Dei.”

Fracastoro’s vision of the Beyond, as presented in the Fracastorius, was clearly present in his elegy commemorating Marcantonio Della Torre, where he placed great emphasis upon the virtue of the deceased, a virtue that assisted the soul in its departure from the body. For Fracastoro, consolation was found in the comfort of Marcantonio’s premature death, for Marcantonio’s soul would face no more trials and there would be no more risks for his soul. For Marcantonio there is no more pain or unhappiness, no extremes of summer or winter. Marcantonio now mingles with the gods. Marcantonio’s virtue was essential for his admission to this happy place, for man was able to leave the body and to ascend to heaven only through “a virtue shining with outstanding brightness.” The deceased is granted entry to the place inhabited by pious heroes, those celebrated through warfare. Here Fracastoro echoes Vergil’s description of those admitted to the Elysian Fields—those who cultivated the goddesses and the pious and the just who followed God. Marcantonio resides here amongst the gods and the happy people. Not unlike Aeneas, Marcantonio is welcomed by his family upon his arrival in Elysium. This meeting allows Fracastoro to praise the Della Torre ancestors. Fracastoro urged him to mingle with the gods, promising that his name will always be remembered “while the stars will be in the mindful heavens and while the rivers flow,” and he praises

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113 Fracastoro, Poemata Omnia, 112: “Quippe, ubi praefulgens ulla virtute reliquit Corpoream, sedes advolat aetherias, Semideûmque domos.…”
114 Fracastoro, Poemata Omnia, 112-113: “At sancti heroes habitant, gens inclyta bello, ingenuique, novem qui coluere Deas: quique pii, justique, Deum praecepta securi, et sancta insignes qui fuerint Sophia. Quos inter tuus ipse recens a funere frater miratur caelum, caelicolumque domos, aeternamque diem, et feliciem ex ordine gentem: Inter quos gaudet se quoque dinumerans.”
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Marcantonio’s virtue by stating that the fame of his virtue was so great that it reached the heights of Olympus.\textsuperscript{115}

Fracastoro’s writing is relevant to the Della Torre monument as it may help to explain the emphasis placed upon the role of virtue in Riccio’s narrative. The reward of the virtuous life is presented in the final panels: not only is the soul of the professor granted entrance into the Elysian Fields, but his virtue is also heralded by Fame in the final panel. Furthermore, the presence of Apollo in the opening panels and the inclusion of the sacrifice to Asclepius may have suggested the need for divine intervention as the soul passes into the afterlife. This need for the support of the gods may be understood to parallel the need of God’s grace for eternal salvation.

The notion that virtue was key to immortality is clearly a central part of Riccio’s narrative, in particular the final panel of *The Triumph of Humanist Virtue* (Fig. 10). In this panel Fame, standing on a globe, heralds the victory of the professor over death. In her left hand she grasps a laurel wreath; with the other hand she once held a trumpet (now missing) to her lips to announce the deceased’s triumph. On the right stands the vanquished figure of Death: he is bound to a fruitless, dead tree; his scythe lies discarded on the ground in acknowledgment of defeat. On the other side of Fame is the winged horse Pegasus; the trees behind him are lush and verdant. He paws the ground with his hoof, opening the earth and creating the fountain of Hippocrene. The creation of these

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waters serves to celebrate fame achieved through virtue.\(^{116}\) The left foot of Fame gently touches the top of vase; the vase is inscribed with the only word in the narrative. Here is written the word—VIRTUTIS (of virtue)—this illustrates the importance of virtue in the triumph over death, and, thus, the importance of the role of virtue in understanding the narrative as a whole.\(^ {117}\)

As discussed earlier, in the Renaissance the vase was used as a metaphor for the body as a vessel for the soul.\(^ {118}\) Thus, the inscription emphasizes the virtuous nature of the professor’s soul, making virtue central to the triumph over death (Fig. 54). The vase also supports a cornucopia, a book, and an oil lamp. The lit oil lamp on the vase symbolically illuminates the vase and its inscription, suggesting that the memory of the deceased’s virtue will never be extinguished.\(^ {119}\) In Valeriano’s \textit{Hieroglyphica}, lamps served to reveal the glory of a good name, as it was through the light of the lamp that fame lives and is illuminated for posterity.\(^ {120}\) The presence of books in this panel serves to illustrate the profession of the deceased and to underline the role of learning in the pursuit of virtue.


\(^{117}\) \textit{Virtutus} is the genitive singular of \textit{virtus}.

\(^{118}\) See footnote 16. In both the \textit{Hypnerotomachia Poliphili} and Valeriano’s \textit{Hieroglyphica} the vase serves as a hieroglyph of the soul (and in both texts the plants sprouting from the vase symbolize the virtues of the soul.) The learned viewer of the Della Torre monument would have interpreted the inscription on the tomb to be a reference to the vase (soul) of virtue. A few years after Riccio’s work on the tomb, Giorgio Vasari inscribed a very similar looking vase in his c. 1534 portrait of Lorenzo de Medici with the phrase “Vase of all virtues” (\textit{Virtutum Omnium Vas}). As Vasari shows little familiarity with Riccio’s work in the \textit{Lives of the Artists}, the similarity between the two vases and inscriptions is striking and perhaps suggests that they were using a shared visual model. See Davitt Asmus, \textit{Corpus quasi vas. Beiträge zur Ikonologie der italienischen Renaissance}, (Berlin: Mann, 1977) and Edgar Wind, \textit{Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance} (London: Penguin Books, 1968), 1968.


\(^{120}\) Valeriano, \textit{Hieroglyphica}, (1976), 492.
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The content of the vase—the soul—is shown to promote growth in the last panel. The soul nurtures not only fame in the form of the laurel branch, but also a palm frond. The palm frond would have held many potential references for the Renaissance viewer. One of the most common meanings was victory, but it was also tied to piety and to the life of martyrs.\textsuperscript{121} The palm frond was also a reference to Christ’s triumph over death, and, therefore, it was associated with resurrection and immortality. The final panel illustrates that the life of virtue is fostered by education and knowledge. The life of virtue—fruitful and well rewarded—is the means by which man triumphs over death. If the figure in the opening panel is Philosophia, Riccio may in fact be informing the knowing viewer of this from the beginning, for it should be remembered that according to Boethius, Philosophia promised that virtue is always rewarded. Her presence in the opening panel is significant as she should signal Boethius’s position that she was both the teacher and the nourisher of every virtue.\textsuperscript{122} She is the path to God because she instils in man the desire to follow God.\textsuperscript{123}

To conclude, many of the concepts present in the Aeneid were easily related to similar Christian beliefs: the body as host for the soul, the need for purification, and the goal of that ultimate beatitude—the vision and knowledge of God. The emphasis Riccio placed throughout the tomb’s narrative on the importance of purification and virtue are presented as vital to the professor’s immortality. The Renaissance interest in these ideas is more clearly evident if one looks beyond Toméo’s Alverotus. Perhaps the important

\textsuperscript{121} Giovanni Pierio Valeriano provided many possible meaning for the palm branch in the Hieroglyphica, one of his longest discussions of this motif focused on the life of the pious. The palm could signify the years and months, the long duration of time, equality, justice, the sun, victory, Judea, Sacrifice, Marriage, and Innocence. It was also a symbol of righteousness. See Psalms 92:12: “The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree.” The palm tree was believed to grow straight and tall no matter what adversity it underwent.\textsuperscript{122} Boethius, The Consolation of Philosophy, Prose I.3.3 and Prose II.4.1.\textsuperscript{123} Boethius, The Consolation of Philosophy, Prose V.6.47-8.
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link to Tomeo’s *Alverotus* is the role that the “*Spiritus intus alit*” served as an inspiration for contemporary discussions rather than his specific study of the vehicles of the soul. At this point it should be clear that it is not essential to search for a specific text to explain the Vergilian panels in order to understand their significance. The contemporary debates over the nature and the immortality of the soul were a fundamental aspect of Paduan philosophical discourse in the period, involving those in the circle of the Della Torre and Riccio: Niccolò Leonico Tomeo, Girolamo Fracastoro, Antonio Trombetta, Pietro Bembo, and Girolamo Donato (who translated the writings of Alexander of Aphrodisias). Serving as interlocutors in the dialogues were, most importantly, Giambattista Leone, Giambattista and Raimondo Della Torre. The subsequent chapters will demonstrate that the concern for the health of the soul and its survival after death in Riccio’s narrative for the Della Torre monument can be found throughout the narrative as a whole, not just in the panels that contain Vergilian imagery.
Chapter V Riccio, Fracastoro, and Pagan Sacrifice

As a result of its inclusion in Fritz Saxl’s 1939 seminal article “Pagan Sacrifice in the Italian Renaissance,” Riccio’s *Sacrifice to Asclepius* (Fig. 5) is the best known of the panels from the Della Torre monument. According to Dieter Blume, the placement of a scene of sacrifice between scenes of the professor’s illness and death would have been interpreted by the viewer as an allusion to the Eucharistic rites given to a Christian before death. Nevertheless, the decision to include a scene of sacrifice to a pagan god on a Christian tomb merits careful consideration. This scene is set in front of a classical temple and the offerings are made at a flaming altar. Riccio placed the most important elements in the centre of this panel. The participants stand around the altar onto which libations are poured. Representing the pagan god Asclepius, a snake wrapped around a tall, thin amphora makes its way towards the offering contained in a *patera*, which rests on a pedestal in front of the altar. The pedestal that holds the offering to Asclepius is in the centre of the foreground; beside the pedestal, a penitent kneels with his arms crossed over his chest.

Gathered around the altar is a group of men and two women assisting in the ritual. A bull, five lambs, and two pigs are being readied for the sacrifice; thus, the sacrifice being offered Asclepius is a *suovetaurilia* (a sacrifice of a pig, sheep, and bull). The *suovetaurilia* is a form of sacrifice that was common on surviving classical monuments. The procession before the sacrifice was often depicted in Roman art. One of the most

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copied examples of classical *suovetaurilia* scenes in the Renaissance was a relief now in the Louvre (Fig. 55). Riccio makes no references to procession in his *Sacrifice to Asclepius*; instead, he focused upon the sacrifice itself. It was understood in the Renaissance that the *suovetaurilia* was used in classical antiquity for lustration. While the Latin word *lustrare*, from which the term lustration is derived, can be translated as “purify,” “encircle,” or “brighten,” for Renaissance humanists interested in the theurgic practices of the ancients, the word, at least in certain contexts, was clearly linked to the idea of cleansing and purification.

Riccio’s scene of sacrifice is crowded and busy; he presents the preparation of the various animals for slaughter. In the upper right corner, a semi-clad man strains to hold a lamb upon his back, while in the upper left corner a bull is brought forward towards the altar. A youth, to the left of the altar, holds a lamb between his legs. As he cuts the animal’s throat a young assistant, or *camillus*, holds a bowl to catch the blood of the victim. In the lower left corner, another young *camillus* struggles to lift a vessel almost as large as himself. On the right, a young man leans down and takes hold of a lamb. In front of him, two men struggle to get a firm grip of one of the pigs, while a winged putto, in the right hand corner, taunts it. He holds a stick in his hand and prepares to hit the animal. For Leo Planiscig, this incident illustrated Riccio’s sense of play. Despite the motion of

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5 For example see Fracastoro’s use of the word in the *Syphilis sive Morbus Gallicus* as discussed in the last section of this chapter.
the animals and their attendants in the centre of the panel, calm prevails in the area around the altar.

The *Sacrifice to Asclepius* provided Riccio an opportunity to display his knowledge of classical art. Although it is clear that Riccio was familiar with classical representations of animal sacrifice, the composition of the scene is nevertheless uniquely his own. The setting of the sacrifice outside, at an altar in front of a temple, is true to classical sources. Riccio depicted other objects used in ancient sacrificial ceremonies, including the jugs and the *patera*, and the offerings contained in the cornucopia. He included *victimarii* and *camilli* as assistants in the sacrifice. The clothing worn by the sacrificial attendants in Riccio’s panel is distinguished from the clothing worn by the rest of the community participating in the sacrifice, a feature which is also found in classical reliefs. The pig in the lower right corner is decorated with a *dorsuale* (a ribbon), and the sacrificial bull has also been adorned. The club held by the putto suggests that Riccio was aware that instruments were sometimes used in pagan sacrifice to stun larger animals before their slaughter. In addition, it appears that the contents of the large jug being lifted by the young *camillus* are about to be poured over the head of the ram lying in the foreground, which may be a reference to the custom of obtaining the consent of the animals in classical sacrifice by pouring water or grains upon their head to make them nod or lower their head in a sign of acquiescence.

Although parts of the scene are drawn from classical examples, there is no classical precedent for the scene as a whole. Riccio has diverged from his models and has included elements that break with the classical tradition. As mentioned by Giovanni Pierio Valeriano in his *Hieroglyphica*, in *suovetaurilia* sacrifices swine were sacrificed before
Chapter V Riccio, Fracastoro, and Pagan Sacrifice

sheep, yet Riccio depicts a sheep being bled first. Moreover, the classical models most frequently depicted the animals before their sacrifice, and depictions of the animal being stunned, or about to be stunned, were rare in Roman art. Riccio includes some of the less pleasant aspects of the sacrifice which were often avoided in classical representations. The struggle of the victimarii with the swine in the right corner implies that the animal is resisting; such resistance would not have been a subject in classical art as it would have been considered a bad omen. While Riccio did include musicians in his other representations of animal sacrifice, he did not include any in this scene: musicians, particularly flute players, played an important role in sacrificial ceremonies by drowning out the sound of the dying animals and were often found in classical reliefs of animals sacrifice.

The Sacrifice to Asclepius has other curious omissions. In Roman scenes of sacrifice the celebrant is usually, although not always, depicted with part of his toga pulled over his head. Riccio was clearly aware of this since he included velatus figures in his earlier representations of sacrifice in his David and the Transport of the Ark (Fig. 56) and his Scene of Sacrifice (Fig. 57) on the paschal candelabrum. Riccio was familiar with the Sacrifice (Fig. 58) from the Arch of Marcus Aurelius, in which the offering was made by the Emperor with his head covered, and with the Lustration of the Troops (Fig. 59) on the Arch of Constantine, in which the head of Constantine is uncovered as he makes his offering. As the Lustration of the Troops depicts a suovetaurilia, this may have also

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8 Ingvild Saelid Gilhus, Animals, Gods and Humans: Changing Attitudes to Animals in Greek, Roman, and Early Christian Thought (Florence, K.Y: Routledge, 2006), 114, 118.
9 Gilhus, Animals, Gods and Humans, 119.
11 The toga originally would have covered the head of Marcus Aurelius before the relief was altered under Constantine. Ryberg, Rites of the State Religion, 115.
influenced his decision to include no figures *velatus*. Indeed, the placement of some of the animals in Riccio’s *Sacrifice to Asclepius* corresponds to the position of the animals in the *Lustration of the Troops*: the pig adorned with *dorsuale* in the right corner; the ram in the left corner; and the bull also on the left side. The uncovered head of the priest during the sacrifice may suggest an understanding of the *graecu ritu* which would have been an appropriate choice in an offering to the foreign god, Asclepius.\(^\text{12}\)

It is striking that the animal being killed in the scene is a sheep, rather than a swine.\(^\text{13}\) The slaughter of the sheep corresponds more closely with the Judaic-Christian tradition; thus, he may have chosen to emphasize a sacrificial metaphor more familiar to a Christian audience. After all, Riccio included other elements in this scene that point to Christian rather than pagan traditions. One of the most obvious of such elements is the man kneeling in prayer in front of the altar, with his arms folded across his chest. While prayer was an important part of sacrificial ceremonies in classical antiquity, the kneeling figure more closely corresponds to Christian traditions. In addition, the man carrying the lamb on his back in the upper right corner would have been reminiscent of representations of the Good Shepherd. Given the care with which Riccio cited pagan sources for many of the elements in this scene, it is probable that these are equally deliberate “Christian” citations, here perhaps cast as proto-Christian. Clearly, Riccio had concerns beyond archaeological fidelity. He made the composition very much his own by focusing upon the less decorous features of animal sacrifice and by including elements that were part of the Judaic-Christian tradition.


\(^\text{13}\) While the *Lustration of the Troops* presents the animals in order of their sacrifice, none of them are actually in the process of being killed.
Most classical representations of animal sacrifice have an air of quiet and calm, as is evident in the scenes of sacrifice on both the Arch of Marcus Aurelius and the Arch of Constantine, with which Riccio was evidently familiar. But Riccio’s *Sacrifice to Asclepius* illustrates his interest in the nature of the ritual and the preparation of the animals for sacrifice. Beginning in the lower left, he presents its various stages in counter-clockwise direction. First, the consent of the ram is being sought; next, in the lower right, *victimarii* attempt to restrain a sow—his mouth opened as he squeals. Above them a lamb has already been restrained. The circle finishes with the lamb on the left that is already giving its blood. The resistance of the sow, as mentioned above, would not have been derived from a classical relief of sacrifice. The struggle of the *victimarii* to restrain the animal, coupled with the sound suggested by the animal’s open mouth, points to Riccio’s interest in depicting various emotional states in his art.\(^\text{14}\) While this part of Riccio’s relief breaks with classical art, Riccio would have recognized that the element of movement and the suggestion of sound would have further engaged the viewer in his narrative. As a whole, the *Sacrifice to Asclepius* demonstrates an understanding of the complexity of animal sacrifice, which makes the scene a sensitive and thoughtful representation of the ritual.

Saxl’s study of pagan sacrifice in Renaissance art revealed a disproportionate number of examples from Northern Italy and, in particular, from the Veneto.\(^\text{15}\) Indeed,

\(^\text{14}\) In *De Sculptura*, Gauricus argued that it was important for a sculptor to be able to impart emotion into his work. Through much of his work, Riccio explored the means to convey emotion. The level of psychological insight in his oeuvre is one of the features that sets his work apart from many of his contemporaries. Pomponius Gauricus, *De sculptura*, [Padua, 1504] trans. by André Chastel and Robert Klein (Genève, Droz, 1969), 52-56; Denise Allen, “Riccio’s Bronze Narratives: Context and Development,” in *Andrea Riccio: Renaissance Master of Bronze*, ed. Denise Allen and Peta Motture, New York, Frick Museum (London: Philip Wilson Pub., 2008), 22.

\(^\text{15}\) Saxl examples include *Christ in the Tomb*, Paduan, c. 1500; Giovanni Bellini, *The Redeemer*; Riccio’s paschal candelabrum; Jacobo de Barbari, *Sacrifice to Priapus*; the woodcuts in the *Hypnerotomachia*
the popularity of this subject in this region is amply illustrated in Riccio’s own oeuvre. In order to have a more comprehensive understanding of Riccio’s use of pagan sacrifice on the tomb, it is necessary to look at the contemporary use of this subject both within the visual arts and literature. To this end, we will not only look more closely at Riccio’s and his contemporaries’ various presentations of the subject in the visual arts, but also at Girolamo Fracastoro’s use of pagan sacrifice in his poetry, specifically, his *Syphilis sive Morbus Gallicus*. As a friend of contemporary artists, Fracastoro would have been familiar with the transformations and the growing popularity of this subject in the visual arts, and as a close friend of the Della Torre, his handling of pagan sacrifice should cast light on how the Della Torre might have approached the subject. Moreover, Fracastoro’s use of the subject of pagan sacrifice shares some of the concerns of Riccio’s scene of sacrifice on the Della Torre monument. In the *Syphilis*, Fracastoro presents the subject of sacrifice in a purely pagan language, yet his use of the subject has a strong Christian message. Pagan sacrifice is linked to the Christian themes of piety and man’s need of purification—ideas that are also central, as we will see, to Riccio’s use of pagan sacrifice on the tomb.

While the subsequent chapter will address the significance of the pagan god Asclepius as the recipient of the offering, the central issue for this chapter is to examine the popularity of pagan sacrifice in this period and the reasons why a scene of pagan sacrifice...
sacrifice would have been acceptable on a Christian tomb. Riccio’s use of pagan sacrifice in his other works and the popularity of the subject in the Veneto, particularly at the church of St. Anthony (the Santo) in Padua in the first three decades of the 16th century, are particularly relevant to this study.

Riccio and Sacrifice

Riccio’s interest in the subject of sacrifice is evident in many of his works: from his paschal candelabrum (Figs. 60) to his oil lamps and statuettes. One of his earliest representations of sacrifice is found in his David and the Transport of the Ark for the choir of the Santo (Fig. 56).16 This work was followed by the inclusion of Scene of Sacrifice (Fig. 57) on the paschal candelabrum, again for the Santo.17 Sacrifice was also a subject in many of Riccio’s statuettes and oil lamps. His statuette of a Goat crowned

16 The first dated representation of sacrifice by Riccio is amongst his earliest works for the Santo. In July 1506 the artist was commissioned to complete two bronze panels for the choir screen. Installed in March 1507, Riccio’s David and the Transport of the Ark incorporates a scene of animal sacrifice in the lower right corner. The sacrifice is only one element of a larger narrative in which King David dances before the Ark of the Covenant. Behind the altar stands a velatus priest, while in front of an altar Riccio depicted a kneeling victimarius gently holding a sacrificial lamb. This representation of the victimarius is similar, although not identical, to the representations of the victimarii included in Riccio’s other scenes of sacrifice—the paschal candelabrum’s Scene of Sacrifice, the Sacrifice to Asclepius, and also the men that restrain the sow in his small plaquette entitled The Sacrifice of the Sow (Fig. 66). While this plaquette is entitled The Sacrifice of the Sow, the scene, as Professor Michael Koortbojian pointed out to me, is in fact a scene of coniuratio and not a sacrificial scene.

17 The Louvre Oil Lamp which also includes a scene of pagan sacrifice was attributed to Riccio by Anthony Radcliffe. The scene on the lamp includes two figures pouring their offerings onto a statue of a Herm. In the foreground, to the left of the altar, a fully draped, kneeling woman holds up a vase in offering to the god. Dated by Radcliffe to before 1500, the funerary subject of the lamp and its presentation of the journey of the soul into the Beyond is closely linked to the narrative of the Della Torre monument. Although the Louvre Oil Lamp places a scene of pagan sacrifice within a funerary context, the depiction is different than it is on the tomb. The sacrifice on the Louvre Oil Lamp is made to a statue, while in the Sacrifice to Asclepius there is no idol of the god to whom the offerings is given. Moreover, on the oil lamp there are none of the references to animal sacrifice which are central to the Della Torre scene of sacrifice. In this regard, the Louvre Oil Lamp differs from Riccio’s representations of sacrifice, which for the most part are blood sacrifices. If Radcliffe’s attribution and dating was correct it would make this lamp one of Riccio’s earliest representations of pagan sacrifice; however, Philippe Malgouyres, in the recent Frick catalogue, contends that this work was not by Riccio, but made in the manner of Riccio, most likely after the Della Torre monument. See Malgouyres, “Oil Lamp,” in Andrea Riccio: Renaissance Master of Bronze, ed. Denise Allen and Peta Motture, New York, Frick Museum (London: Philip Wilson Pub., 2008), 278-283. Radcliffe, “Bronze Oil Lamps by Riccio,” Victoria and Albert Museum Yearbook 3 (1972): 43.
with a laurel wreath (Fig. 61), c. 1510, appears to represent a sacrificial goat,\textsuperscript{18} and the similarity between his Pagan Boy, c. 1515-20 (Fig. 62), and the boys who assist in the Scene of Sacrifice on the paschal candelabrum and in the Sacrifice to Asclepius suggests that the boy represents a camillus, or sacrificial servant.\textsuperscript{19} While working on the candelabrum, Riccio executed three oil lamps—the Frick Lamp (Fig. 63), the Bode Lamp (Fig. 64), and the Rothschild Lamp (Fig. 65)—all which included references to pagan sacrifice. His use of pagan sacrifice on these lamps was primarily inspired by Bacchic imagery and was linked to his work on the candelabrum.\textsuperscript{20} In relation to the Sacrifice to Asclepius, the most important of Riccio’s depictions of sacrifice is his presentation of the subject on the paschal candelabrum. The central issue that links these two scenes is the

\textsuperscript{18} The identification of this animal as a sacrificial goat is based upon its male sex and the wreath on its head. See Denise Allen, “Goat crowned with a wreath of laurel,” in Andrea Riccio: Renaissance Master of Bronze, 122-127 and Claudia Kryza-Gersch, “Goat crowned with a wreath of vine,” in Andrea Riccio: Renaissance Master of Bronze, 127-133. Allen suggests that Riccio drew upon classical numismatics for this wreathed goat.

\textsuperscript{19} See Claudia Kryza-Gersch, “Pagan Boy (Sacrificial Servant?),” in Andrea Riccio: Renaissance Master of Bronze, 290-3.

\textsuperscript{20} The sacrificial images on the Bode Lamp are found on the lid. On both sides of the opening of the lamp are two men participating in the rites. On the left a man carries one of the sacrificial victims on his shoulders and at his feet stands a small flaming bowl. On the right, another participant slits the throat of a sacrificial victim. Again at his feet is another flaming bowl. Both the Frick Lamp and the Rothschild Lamp include references to Bacchic sacrifice. On both lamps small boys either lead the sacrificial ram or prepare it for sacrifice. Radcliffe had dated the Bode Lamp before 1510, the Rothschild Lamp and the Frick Lamps to the later period of Riccio’s work on the paschal candelabrum, circa 1516. The Bacchic elements on the Frick and Rothschild lamps present a similar subject to the upper level of the paschal candelabrum where young boys dance, make music, and one of them rides a goat. The reference to the goat being sacrificed is more overt on the oil lamps than on the candelabrum. On one side of the Frick Lamp a boy holds a bowl under the chin of the sacrificial goat, to the right is a small flaming altar. On both sides of the Rothschild Lamp are the mirrored images that contain Bacchic celebrations similar to those found on the Frick Lamp. On the Rothschild Lamp a boy holds down a ram. This image draws upon well known classical representations of sacrifice. The link between the imagery on Riccio’s oil lamps and the cult of Bacchus will be briefly discussed in the next chapter. On the oil lamps see Anthony Radcliffe, “Bronze Oil Lamps by Riccio,” 29-58. Heike Frosien-Leinz, “Antikisches Gebrauchsgerät – Weisheit und Magie in den Öllampen Riccios,” in Natur und Antike in der Renaissance, ed. Herbert Beck and Dieter Blume (Frankfurt am Main: Liebieghaus 1985), 226-257; Peta Motture, “The Cadogan Lamp,” in Andrea Riccio: Renaissance Master of Bronze, ed. Denise Allen and Peta Motture, New York, Frick Museum (London: Philip Wilson Pub., 2008), 174-181; Denise Allen, “Oil Lamp,” in Andrea Riccio: Renaissance Master of Bronze, 182-189.
relation between the realms between Christian and pagan, more overt in the candelabrum, more muted on the tomb.

The paschal candelabrum was commissioned in 1506. Although the war would postpone the completion of the candelabrum until 1516, the design was in place at the time of its commission. The candelabrum contains Riccio’s most surprising and complex presentation of animal sacrifice. In the centre foreground of the Scene of Sacrifice, a lamb is being sacrificed before an altar; on a base behind the altar is a statue of the Risen Christ.21 The scene is set in an interior space and lit by torches; a group of men and four young boys crowd around the altar. Three young boys stand in front of a music stand; their singing is accompanied by various musical instruments.22 Originally, the candelabrum was positioned in the centre of the choir in front of Donatello’s High Altar; however, at the end of the 16th century it was moved to the left side of the altar. In its original placement, the Scene of Sacrifice would have originally faced the left transept.23

This Scene of Sacrifice has been most frequently interpreted as a scene of the paschal sacrifice prefiguring the death of Christ. This is a problematic interpretation: the lamb is sacrificed in front of a statue of Christ, yet Riccio has clearly omitted drawing a division between the Old and New—a division that would be necessary to make the theory tenable. Moreover, the lamb is not the only sacrificial victim in this scene—in the background Riccio included a bull also adorned for its sacrifice. The image implies that it

21 For this relief and statues of Christ see Alexander Nagel, “Christ as Idol,” section 2 of Radical Art in the Renaissance (forthcoming, Chicago University Press). Saxl, in his discussion of the paschal candelabrum’s Scene of Sacrifice, argued that in this scene Riccio took archeological exactness too far, and, as a result, failed to achieve the “equilibrium between paganism and Christianity” that earlier artists had been able to achieve. Saxl, “Pagan Sacrifice,” 353.
22 Since the candelabrum originally stood in front of Donatello’s High Altar in the Santo, Riccio’s representation of a bronze statue on top of an altar must have been in part a response to the High Altar—the city’s most important work of art in bronze—on top of which were 5 nearly life-size bronze sculptures.
23 See Alexander Nagel on the original placement of the candelabrum and its marble pedestal in “Christ as Idol.”
is Christ who is being given the offering, an incongruous scene as animal offerings were made obsolete with Christ’s sacrifice. It is surprising to find this rather perplexing scene in the choir of the Santo since it must have held the potential for providing a theologically confused message.

It is clear that the paschal candelabrum’s *Scene of Sacrifice* influenced Riccio’s design of the *Sacrifice to Asclepius*. Both scenes are constructed in a similar manner. Drawing upon classical models, both altars are placed in the centre. In both images, Riccio has emphasized the vertical centre. In the foreground of the paschal candelabrum’s *Scene of Sacrifice*, the *victimarius* sacrifices the lamb in front of a small flaming altar; behind the flaming altar is the statue of Christ. As the swags of the drapery and garlands meet directly behind the head of the statue of Christ they also serve to emphasize the central zone. Riccio’s *Sacrifice to Asclepius* follows a similar construction, but without a statue.

While the paschal candelabrum’s *Scene of Sacrifice* drew on a similar pagan visual language as the *Sacrifice to Asclepius*, the ritual aspects included on the candelabrum make the scene more reminiscent of Christian practices than those presented on the Della Torre tomb. Rather than faithfully following antique examples, Riccio set the paschal candelabrum’s *Scene of Sacrifice* in an interior location. The elements of pagan ritual included in this relief—in particular, the music and the torches—have equivalents in Christian liturgy. The lit torches are reminiscent of the use of candle light in the Catholic Church. The prominence of music in the *Scene of Sacrifice* is perhaps the most suggestive of Christian ceremony, in particular, the inclusion of the three young boys singing mirrors the role of music in Church ceremony and emphasizes the sanctity of the
ritual. Indeed, it seems significant that Riccio has placed a stronger emphasis on music in the paschal candelabrum’s *Scene of Sacrifice* than in any of his other representations of sacrifice. The paschal candelabrum’s *Scene of Sacrifice* appears more orderly and more reverent. In the *Sacrifice to Asclepius*, Riccio combined the intricacies of preparing the animals for the sacrifice with the serious and sombre aspects of the ceremony; this dual focus would have been less appropriate in the *Sacrifice to Christ*. It appears that Riccio appreciated the greater sense of decorum owed to the subject. While in the *Sacrifice to Asclepius* Riccio set the scene outside in front of a classical temple and omitted the musicians and torches, there were, as discussed earlier, still elements reminiscent of the Christian faith, which was seen most clearly in the figure kneeling in prayer before the altar.

The basilica of St. Anthony provides a useful opportunity to examine a range of representations of animal sacrifice, including, of course, scenes from the Old Testament, such as the *Sacrifice of Isaac* and the *Sacrifice of Cain and Abel*. The more unusual representations of sacrifice in the Santo include Riccio’s *Scene of Sacrifice* on the paschal candelabrum and the scene of pagan sacrifice on the stucco ceiling designed by Giovanni Maria Falconetto for the chapel of St. Anthony (Fig. 67). The prominence given to representations of animal sacrifice in these works by Falconetto and Riccio is rather remarkable. In the Old Testament animal sacrifice was necessary for communication with God and for purification. Following the death of Christ, animal sacrifice had no place in

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24 The one exception is the sacrifice scene in the *David before the Ark of the Covenant*; however, in this case the music is linked to the narrative of David dancing before the ark.

25 There are two contemporary representations of the sacrifice of Cain and Abel in the Santo, one by Giovanni Minello and the other by Bartolommeo Bellano. Minello’s reliefs, from 1514, are found on the intrados on the window arch on the west wall of the Chapel of St. Anthony. The second version is by Bellano, and was part of a series of 10 reliefs commissioned for the choir screen of the Santo in 1485. They were completed in 1488.
the Christian faith. In works like Riccio’s *Scene of Sacrifice* and Falconetto’s design for the ceiling of the Chapel of St. Anthony such scenes had the potential to confuse the faithful and to be deemed inappropriate. Although such works were clearly designed for an elite audience, they would have been seen by a wider audience.

A shift occurred in these representations of animal sacrifice in Christian art in this period, the subject of animal sacrifice began to play less of a peripheral role. This is particularly evident in the transformation that occurs between Riccio’s representation of animal sacrifice in *David and the Transport of the Ark* and his next representation of sacrifice found on the paschal candelabrum. The subject of sacrifice moves to the centre of the image and plays a much more dominant role than it had in earlier depictions.

A review of the examples cited by Saxl in his discussion of pagan sacrifice in Christian art illustrates that a transformation has indeed occurred. The scene of pagan sacrifice on Moderno’s silver relief of the *Madonna and Child with Saint* (Fig. 68) was engraved onto the base of the Virgin’s throne. Subordinated to a small, albeit central, zone, the sacrificial scene depicts a bull being led to its slaughter. Another small scene of pagan sacrifice was placed on the throne of the Virgin in Lorenzo Costa’s *Madonna with Giovanni II* (Fig. 69), Bentivoglio, Bologna S. Giacomo, 1488. In these images of the Madonna and Child, the viewer is reminded of Christ’s future death and the hope of salvation. Thus, the inclusion of animal sacrifice in these images both foreshadows Christ’s death and makes an analogy between Christ and the victims of animal sacrifice. Again, on another plaquette—*Christ in the Tomb* (Fig. 70), a Paduan production of circa 1500—a bull is sacrificed before a flaming altar. This sacrifice is depicted on a relief of the sarcophagus. Christ, his life already given for man’s salvation, is shown standing
above the violent scene of the bull’s slaughter. In all these images the representations of pagan sacrifice are integral to the meaning of the images, yet they are all visually relegated to a diminutive area. The representations of animal sacrifice serve typologically; they remind the viewer both that Christ sacrificed himself for mankind and that his sacrifice put an end to the need of animal sacrifice. The death of Christ was frequently presented in a language that drew upon animal sacrifice. In the New Testament, Christ is frequently compared to a sacrificial victim: the Lamb of God “who takes away the sin of the world,” his blood is like that of “…a lamb without blemish or spot.”

Giovanni Bellini set the precedent for these images circa 1460-65. In one of the reliefs painted on the parapet in The Blood of the Redeemer (Fig. 71), Bellini included a scene of pagan sacrifice. In this painting, the blood of Christ is collected in a chalice making a clear reference to Christ as a sacrificial victim: his blood takes the place of the blood of animals collected during animal sacrifice. In one of the painted reliefs, Bellini presents Mucius Scaevola, the Roman hero, whose offering of his own hand played a role in the salvation of Rome. The other relief includes a man pouring a libation onto an altar while a satyr plays a double flute. While the meaning of these two reliefs has been much debated, for Saxl, it was the painting’s emphasis on Christ as the sacrificed victim that made these other scenes all the more essential. Saxl argued that the scenes foreshadow

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26 John 1:29. See also Hebrews 9 and 10.
27 I Peter 1:11.
the rituals of the Church, and he interpreted this imagery as illustrating the conception “of Christianity and paganism as two stages in the same development…”

As Saxl demonstrated, references to pagan sacrifice were not uncommon within a Christian environment. Mantegna included a scene of pagan sacrifice in *St. James before Herod* (Fig. 72), circa 1451, in the Ovetari Chapel, in the Eremitani in Padua. Once more, the reference to pagan sacrifice is presented in the form of a relief. St. James stands before an arch on which a roundel illustrates a sacrifice of a lamb. The animal sacrifice in this painted relief serves as a parallel to the martyrdom of St. James. In all these examples, pagan sacrifice serves as an equivalent to Christian practices, yet in each example the pagan sacrifices visually play a subservient role.

Presented as a relief sculpture and confined to a small space, they are not the subject but decorative elements providing further relevance and context for the main subject. These depictions of sacrifice contribute to the meaning of the scene but never dominate it. Thus, the paschal

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30 Giovanni Maria Falconetto included scenes of sacrifice in his frescoes in the chapel of St. Biagio, in the Benedictine church of SS. Nazaro and Celso in Verona. Executed in 1497-1499 these frescoes predate Falconetto’s work in the Santo by thirty years. The scenes of pagan sacrifice are painted in grisaille and found in the corners of two pendentives. In the first scene a bearded *victimarius* leans over a sow, in the second scene another bearded *victimarius* leans over a lamb. Unfortunately, the exact nature of the second scene is difficult to make out due to the poor condition of the fresco. The scene appears to be set in front of a statue placed inside an open chapel. Painted in the upper corner of a pendentive, the first fresco is in a better state. Standing on the right side of the scene is a soldier holding an axe, to his right is a sacrificial bull and a bearded man who leans over a sacrificial sow. A veiled priest stands at an altar inscribed S.C.L. (?): on the altar stands a brazier from which flames emerge. The altar is positioned in front of statue placed on a high base. Just barely visible in the background behind the statue is a branch of a tree from which hangs the face of a lion; the left portion of this scene is thus a close copy of the *Sacrifice to Silvanus* on the Arch of Constantine. I am unsure of the source of the right side of the scene. These scenes function in the same way as the earlier examples of pagan sacrifice in Christian art—painted to resemble sculptural relief and therefore serving as part of the architectural ornamentation of the space, it contributes to the overall message of the chapel’s frescoes without being a central part of the narrative. The other grisaille scenes include the emperor on horseback, which also appears to include supplicants and a scene of figures standing in front of the seated emperor. McHam, *The Chapel of St. Anthony at the Santo*, 83, Troy Thomas, *Classical Reliefs*, 293, no. 212. He describes the frescoes as including: “Frieze of marine deities, flanking
candelabrum’s *Scene of Sacrifice* represents an important transformation in the depiction of animal sacrifice. Whereas earlier representations of animal sacrifice were normally relegated to the background, now it is moved to the centre stage; displayed more prominently, sacrifice becomes a subject in its own right. This change may explain, in part, why the scene of pagan sacrifice on the Della Torre monument plays such a prominent role in the narrative.

Alexander Nagel contends that the growing popularity of pagan sacrifice in the visual arts in this period should not be interpreted as a sign of Renaissance paganism but rather the reverse: these scenes illustrate a “growing interest in the forms and modes of religious ritual in general…It is evidence, that is, of a greater rather than a lesser interest in religion.”

Because Falconetto’s ceiling for the chapel of St. Anthony combines a scene of pagan sacrifice with funerary ritual and the ascent of the soul, it may shed light on Riccio’s use of sacrifice on the Della Torre Monument. Designed by Falconetto and executed by his assistants between 1533 and 1534, the ceiling is divided into three scenes (Fig.73): the centre scene depicts the soul of St. Anthony as it ascends to heaven (Fig.74); to the left is a funerary scene with an obelisk in the centre and three mourning figures (Fig. 75); to the right is a scene of pagan sacrifice with a flaming altar placed in the centre. A priest pours a libation onto the altar while to the right of the altar a bull is being

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31 Nagel, *Radical Art in the Renaissance*, 82.
prepared for sacrifice.\textsuperscript{32} The ceiling is relevant to our discussion for at least two reasons: first, because of its link between funerary ritual and the ascent of the soul; second, because it illustrates the continued interest in the subject of pagan sacrifice and its continued acceptance in the sacred environment nearly two decades after Riccio’s work on the candelabrum. Furthermore, this commission was very prominently placed. While only those granted access to the choir would have had the opportunity to closely view Riccio’s paschal candelabrum, Falconetto’s stucco reliefs, placed on the ceiling of the Santo’s most important and most visited chapel, were far more accessible to the public.

The most pertinent element of Falconetto’s ceiling central to our understanding of the Della Torre tomb is the connection made between sacrifice, death, and the ascent of the soul. The decision to depict the sacrifice of an animal on behalf of a Christian saint is rather extraordinary. As Sarah Blake McHam points out, the use of pagan sacrifice in a religious setting was often used in association with the death of Christ or the martyrdom of saints.\textsuperscript{33} A pagan sacrifice in honour of St. Anthony makes little sense in this context. Since he was not a martyr, the inclusion of animal sacrifice cannot be linked to this use of the subject. McHam suggests that Falconetto’s design for the ceiling makes use of pagan

\textsuperscript{32} The funerary and sacrifice scenes likely originated from an antique model and were disseminated by Raphael’s workshop. A nearly identical version of the funerary and sacrifice scenes is found in the designs of Perino del Vaga for the Sala dei Giganti, in the Palazzo Doria, in Genoa. Falconetto, while remaining quite faithful to the earlier models, made a couple of variations: he shows the priest in the process of pouring an offering onto the flames, and he added the central scene of the ascension of St. Anthony’s soul. McHam, \textit{The Chapel of St. Anthony}, 83. Elena Parma Armani, \textit{Perin del Vaga, l’anello mancante: Studi sul manierismo} (Geneva: Sagep, 1986), 273-274. Falconetto returned the subject of pagan sacrifice in his secular art as well. Depictions of pagan sacrifices are included on Falconetto’s façade of the casa Trevisani a San Marco, Verona, and his illustration for a tomb that drew on the design of the Della Torre monument. See Gunter Schweikhart, “Eine Fasadendekoration des Giovanni Maria Falconetto in Verona,” \textit{Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz} 13, III/IV (1968): 325-342 and Alessandro Zamperini, “Facciata della casa Trevisani a San Marco, Verona” and Stefano Lodi, “Progetto di monumento funerario,” in \textit{Mantegna e le Arti a Verona 1450-1500}, Catalogo della mostra (Verona, 16 settembre 2006 – 14 gennaio 2007), a cura di Sergio Marinelli e Paola Marini (Venezia: Marsilio, 2006): 331-333, 402-403.

\textsuperscript{33} McHam, \textit{The Chapel of St. Anthony}, 83.
sacrifice as a parallel to the rites of the Eucharist; therefore, this scene of sacrifice, although presented in solely classical language, clearly contains a Christian meaning.\textsuperscript{34} Partaking in the Eucharist was necessary for salvation, as it provided the faithful the opportunity of a union with Christ and was believed to assist in the cleansing of the soul. The representation of sacrifice in connection with death and the ascent of the soul would have been tied with the Viaticum, or last communion, which served to strengthen the spirit and prepare the soul for life after death. The pagan ritual of animal sacrifice serves as a metaphor for the Christian need of the Eucharist to cleanse and purify. Therefore, the presentation of a scene of pagan sacrifice on the ceiling of this chapel was intended to illustrate the need to cleanse the soul before death and emphasize the importance of this final act of purification in the ascension of the soul.

As will be examined in greater detail in the next chapter, the inclusion of these funerary sacrifices, in both Falconetto’s ceiling and Riccio’s Della Torre monument, is tied to a concern for the ascension of the soul after the death of the body. While Anthony Radcliffe placed the Sacrifice to Asclepius after the scene of the professor’s death, if the sacrifice was to be understood as a reference to the Eucharist and the need for the soul to be purified before death, then it is more logical for the scene to precede the death.\textsuperscript{35} Upon observing these representations of pagan sacrifice, the learned viewer would have

\textsuperscript{34} McHam, \textit{The Chapel of St. Anthony}, 83.

\textsuperscript{35} Saxl’s discussion of the sequence of events is confusing as he suggested the vase around which Asclepius is wrapped contained the ashes of the deceased, yet, he also stated that the narrative after the sacrifice panel continued with preparations for the professor’s entombment: “The third scene is the great sacrificial scene...The following scenes deal with entombment and purification.” Saxl, “Pagan Sacrifice,” 358. The suggestion that the ashes of the deceased are present in a scene placed before the preparation of the deceased for entombment is problematic. Anthony Radcliffe, “The Illness of the Professor / The Soul of the Professor in the Fortunate Woods,” in \textit{The Genius of Venice: 1500-1600}, ed. Jane Martineau and Charles Hope (London: Royal Academy in association with Harry N. Abrams, 1984), 374. Dieter Blume, “Antike und Christentum,” in \textit{Natur und Antike in der Renaissance}, ed. S. Ebert-Schifferer (Frankfurt am Main: Liebieghaus, 1985), 118.
recognized the reference to the role of sacrifice in the Christian faith as an essential step in the cleansing of the soul and, therefore, in its ascension and safe passage after death.

Sacrifice was used for several purposes in the classical world. As means of communication, offerings were given as a part of vows made to the gods, to seek divine supplication or to make reparation with the gods. According to Porphyry, Theophrastus stated that man sacrificed not only to give honour and thanks to the gods, but also “out of a need of good things.” During the Renaissance, the theurgic use of sacrifice by the Neoplatonists would have received renewed attention. In the Neoplatonic view, sacrifice was used for purification; it was a means of salvation and transcendence.

Riccio’s work reflects the growing popularity of the subject of pagan sacrifice and the more prominent representations of this subject in Christian art. The subject of sacrifice in antiquity was commonly linked with the virtue of pietas and, in the Renaissance, the altar and the instruments of pagan sacrifice could be used to symbolize piety. While in Antiquity pietas, defined broadly, illustrated devotion to the gods, the state, and family, for the Renaissance humanist the altar would, above all, signify devotion to God. Indeed, altars were used in the Renaissance as symbols of piety, particularly in numismatics. This association would have been well known to Renaissance humanists in general and to those with an interest in ancient numismatics in particular. It is an association that would not have been lost on members of this humanist circle, particularly men like Giulio Della Torre, who was not only known for making

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38 See Valeriano on the flame as a symbol of piety. *Hieroglyphica*, 492.
medals but also for collecting ancient coins.\textsuperscript{39} The nature of this association will be made clear in the next section as we examine Fracastoro and his use of the subject of pagan sacrifice.

**Fracastoro and Sacrifice**

Fritz Saxl made two important points in his brief discussion of the Della Torre monument. In interpreting the tomb’s narrative and particularly the scene of sacrifice to Asclepius, Saxl recognized the importance of the thought of Girolamo Fracastoro. He also understood that the scene was intended to illustrate the need of this rite for the ascension of the deceased’s soul. While Saxl’s interpretation is fundamentally correct, his discussion of the scene needs some revision. There are two significant problems with his evaluation of the *Sacrifice to Asclepius*. The first has been discussed previously—this was Saxl’s belief that the circle of figures surrounding the creation of the tomb, including Fracastoro and the Della Torre sons, was characterized by a detachment from contemporary theological matters, an argument that suggests that a similar detachment may be reflected in the tomb’s narrative. The second issue is that while Saxl recognized the importance of Fracastoro’s interest in the subject of pagan sacrifice and understood the usefulness of Fracastoro’s writings for the interpretation of the tomb, he omitted any discussion of Fracastoro’s use of this subject in his *Syphilis sive Morbus Gallicus*, a work that sheds light on this aspect of the Della Torre monument. It is here that we find Fracastoro’s most thoughtful handling of the subject of pagan sacrifice. Particularly

\textsuperscript{39} A further example is found on the coin celebrating Alberto Pio da Carpi, on the reverse of the medal a lamb is consumed in a fire burning on top of an altar. The altar bears the inscription UNI. George Francis Hill, *A Corpus of Italians Medals of the Renaissance before Cellini* (Florence: Studio per edizioni scelte, 1984), cat. 1184.
important is Fracastoro’s ability to unite both pagan and Christian themes. Fracastoro’s presentation of pagan sacrifice in the Syphilis was clearly intended to impart a Christian message to his reader.

Before turning to Fracastoro’s Syphilis, it is useful to look briefly at Fracastoro’s inclusion of pagan sacrifice in some of his other poetry. References to pagan sacrifice are found both in his funerary poetry and in poetry dedicated to Cardinal Alessandro Farnese and Bishop Gianmatteo Giberti. His evident interest in the subject parallels the popularity of this subject in the visual arts.40 In a poem written to Giambattista Della Torre, dated 1515-1517, Fracastoro lamented the loss of his sons. He wrote of following the ancient rites of bringing offerings to his sons’ graves.41 The bereaved father vowed “I will pay offerings at your grave, until the last day when my feeble shade will be united with you.”42 This, of course, parallels the Christian practices of bringing flowers to the graves of loved ones. In his elegy for Marcantonio Della Torre, Fracastoro also included the subject of sacrifice, except that now the offerings were made to Benacus. In the poem, he instructed Benacus to devour the sacrifices made to him from the peaks of the Alps.43

Fracastoro shared with his contemporaries an interest in ancient funerary practices; similar offerings are included in Niccolò D’Arco’s poetry in honour of Marcantonio. Much of D’Arco’s funerary poetry reflects the concern with funerary ritual found in

40 Fracastoro’s inclusion of pagan sacrifice is found in his pastoral poetry, a genre that played a role in the growing popularity of the subject.


43 Girolamo Fracastoro, Carminum II “In Obitum M. Antonii Turriani Veronensis, ad Joannem Baptistam Turrianum Fratrem,” Poemata Omnia, 111. “Interea, O vos Benaco centum patre Nymphae, Sarcaque ab Alpinis edite verticibus,…”
classical writing. Thus, D’Arco promises to honour Marcantonio’s tomb with flowers and garlands, and he adds that:

the people of Riva every year honour this tomb,
with the blood of a bull, pacify god…

In his other poems commemorating Marcantonio, D’Arco whispers pious words by the tomb. He writes of scattering gifts upon it after performing sacred rituals for the gods and the deceased’s spirit. His floral offerings include narcissi, croci, amaranthus, sweet wild thyme, roses, and laurel. In the scene of the professor’s funeral, Riccio also illustrates the ancient practice of decorating the tomb with garlands. While the language of these poems draws on ancient funerary customs, such practices are not unexpected.

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45 D’Arco, Numeri 47: “Ipse ego purpurei spargo tibi munera veris narcissumque crocummque immortalemque amaranthus et nardum casiamque et odoriferum serpillum; spargo rosam et laurum et dico bona verba sepulchro….” 33. For the poet Cotta, he promised offerings of sacred incense. Numeri 14, 260. In the Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, Poliphilo discovers a sarcophagus decorated with a scene of pagan sacrifice in the cemetery of those who died for the sake of love. However, in the Hypnerotomachia, sacrifice is made in relation to love, and, thus, is not connected with either Riccio or Fracastoro’s use of the subject. It is unlikely to have influenced Riccio’s representation as the woodcut presents a very different representation of sacrifice. See Saxl, “Pagan Sacrifice,” and his article “A Scene from the Hypnerotomachia in a Painting by Garofalo,” Journal of the Warburg Institute 1, no. 2 (Oct., 1937): 169-171. In the Hypnerotomachia woodcut, a shepherd playing a double pipe leans against a tree. The only sacrificial victim was a bull whose head lies on the altar. The woodcut also includes Bacchic dancing. The scene was copied by Garofalo for his The Sacrifice, 1526 (National Gallery, London). Garofalo has changed the scene by omitting the funerary references and the sarcophagus. By omitting the references to death, Garofalo transformed the Hypnerotomachia image to a more general scene of pagan sacrifice.

46 The garland wreath hangs from the top of the altar-like table. In the actual monument this section is decorated with a classical frieze of figures that grow out of plant forms. This is the central difference between the actual monument and Riccio’s representation of the monument in the narrative. The garlands in Riccio’s panel were likely meant to suggest actual greenery placed on the monument during the funeral ceremony itself.
as—with the exception of animal sacrifice—they had equivalents in Christian funerary practices.

A more unexpected use of pagan sacrifice is found in two poems written for the Veronese Bishop Gianmatteo Giberti. Fracastoro’s relationship with Giberti is, in part, illustrated through his poetry. He wrote several short poems in honour of the bishop and dedicated some of his other literary works to Giberti. Amongst Fracastoro’s poems dedicated to the bishop is the *Carmine V*, written in 1534. In this poem, the author asks Giberti to approach as a god an altar constructed for him: “O Giberti, your friend, who set up for you sacred altars in the mountains of Malcesine….”

Geoffrey Eatough argues that in this poem the pleasant shades and scented breezes refer to a Golden Age. Thus, the poet praises Giberti through the allusions to blessings that have come to the area under the bishop’s guidance.

A more surprising offering is suggested in Fracastoro’s *Carminum XXVI*, written between 1533 and 1535. In this poem, a blood offering is suggested as a worthy honour for the bishop:

…a poor votive offering, on the ground he builds an altar of sod, an altar from fresh Thyrsus. Now he strews it with herbs, and adorns it with ivy and with flowers. And Giberti, to you he makes rustic sacrifices. But for you a great victim, a snowy white bull with gilded horns, will be slain by that altar adorned with gold.

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47 See Pellegrini, “Appunti per una disposizione cronologica,” 89-123.
48 My translation. Fracastoro, *Poemata Omnia*, 120: “Ille tuus, Giberte, sacras qui in montibus aras, Melsinei tibi constituit…” The Bishop provided Fracastoro with the use of his place in Malcesine, on Lake Garda; hence, the references to Malcesine in these poems. *Fracastoro’s Syphilis*, intro. and trans. by Geoffrey Eatough (Liverpool: Francis Cairns, 1984), 193.
49 Eatough, *Fracastoro’s Syphilis*, 183.
50 Pellegrini, “Appunti per una disposizione cronologica,” 123.
A native of Malcesine builds and adorns an altar for Giberti; a snowy white bull is to be slain for the bishop. The poem may have been intended to illustrate the author’s support for a bishop whose policy was not always appreciated by the local population. Thus, it may be further significant that the offerings are made by the natives rather than by the author of the poem.

About ten years later, in 1546, Fracastoro would also offer to set up an altar for Cardinal Alexander Farnese and to hold annual religious festivals in his honour. He wrote that on the highest summit of Caphis an altar was consecrated in honour of Farnese. The offerings consist solely of greenery and flowers: roses, violets, purple hyacinth, and verbena. In these examples, pagan sacrifice is used to illustrate the author’s devotion or dedication to two of his patrons. The pagan offerings included in Fracastoro’s funerary poetry served a much different purpose. The practice of bringing offerings to the graves of the deceased is more familiar than the blood sacrifice suggested in the poem to Giberti. These poems illustrate that the subject of pagan sacrifice in Fracastoro’s poetry reflected an appreciation of the wide uses of sacrifice in classical antiquity. Overall, his interest in these works is used to illustrate funerary ritual and demonstrate his devotion.

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52 “Interea, quando mihi Divus habebere semper, ipse tibi Caphiis sacras in montibus aras instituam, qua se summno de vertice collis tollit, et aquatuum Benaci prosipcit aequor, et virides olea ripas, Patriamque Catulli. Hic tibi solennemque diem, et renovanda quotannis Sacra, tuo statuam semper de nomine dicta. Tunc rosa, tunc violae, tunc purpurei hyacinthi verbenaeqae senem deceant…” Fracastoro, Poemata Omnia, 139.

53 Marcantonio Flaminio would also draw on the subject and imagery of pagan sacrifice in his poetry. In one poem he described the sacrifice of a bullock, and in another he writes of building an altar for Cythera. Like the altar for Giberti, the one for Cythera is made of sod. The offerings included milk, wine, flowers, and the blood of a sheep. Carol Maddison, Marcantonio Flaminio: Poet, Humanist, and Reformer (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), 31, 48.
Chapter V Riccio, Fracastoro, and Pagan Sacrifice

There are fascinating descriptions of pagan sacrifice in Fracastoro’s most renowned work—the *Syphilis sive Morbus Gallicus*. As we will see, Fracastoro’s use of pagan sacrifice in the *Syphilis* has an entirely different purpose than its inclusion in some of his other poetry. In the *Syphilis*, sacrifice plays a central role in the message of the poem; here sacrifice plays a necessary role in salvation and the purification of the soul, and it is essential for communication with the divine. The author’s handling of the imagery is significant because he presents it in a seemingly pagan format, yet it is used almost exclusively with an explicit Christian message.

The *Syphilis sive Morbus Gallicus* was published in Verona in 1530 by Gianmatteo Giberti’s printers, the Nicolini da Sabbio brothers. The first draft of the *Syphilis* was written during the 1510s, which places the poem’s origins in the same period as the conception of the Della Torre Monument.\(^{54}\) The first two books were ready by 1520; by 1525, both had been sent to Pietro Bembo for his editorial input.\(^{55}\) The *Syphilis* has a decidedly unusual subject for poetry. It presents a discussion of the disease, its history, symptoms, and remedies. Dedicated to Pietro Bembo and Leo X, the *Syphilis* is divided into three books. Each book contains a scene of sacrifice; moreover, the subject of sacrifice plays a central role in the narrative of each story presented in the poem.

This poem not only provided the author with a most unusual manner of presenting a medical topic, it granted him the opportunity to discuss other issues that were important to him in this period. The poem contains a strong emphasis on the nature of humanity, the

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\(^{55}\) Pellegrini, “Appunti per una disposizione cronologica,” 95.
nature of the gods, and the place of man in the universe. While the last book betrays Fracastoro’s fascination with the exploration of the New World, it also includes his response to contemporary turmoil and upheavals in Italy.

Book I of the *Syphilis* presents the origins and symptoms of the disease; it also includes Fracastoro’s first, and the briefest, reference to pagan sacrifice. In the first book, the sacrifice is given as an act of propitiation. Prayers are made by those suffering from the disease. They burn incense and offer rich gifts; however, these offerings are insufficient and fail to appease the gods.

The second book of the *Syphilis* suggested how to live in order to avoid the epidemic. It also described treatments for the disease, including one of the more dangerous cures—the mercury cure. In this book, Fracastoro presents the story of Ilceus and the manner in which he was healed of syphilis. The story is set in the woods of a valley in Syria where Ilceus cultivated a sacred garden and hunted wild game. Ilceus transgressed against the goddess Diana by killing a sacred stag; as a result, he was afflicted with the disease. While he tended to the garden, Ilceus prayed to the gods to heal him. He also prayed where the fountain Callirhoë ran down, offering to gather the first flowers of spring and to adorn the altars of the goddess Callirhoë. After hearing his prayers, Callirhoë sent forth a Lethean sleep so that she could communicate with Ilceus. In Greek mythology, the waters of the river Lethe granted forgetfulness to those who drank from it. For Fracastoro the state of “Lethean sleep” was associated with the placement of the soul in a state separate from the impure body, thus, enabling knowledge of the divine realms. Drinking from the river Lethe held the same associations in the

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56 *Fracastoro’s Syphilis*, 267.
57 *Fracastoro’s Syphilis*, 56-57.
58 *Fracastoro’s Syphilis*, 76-77.
Renaissance as the drunkenness of Bacchus; it enabled man a foretaste of knowledge not normally available to him.  

While Ilceus was in this Lethean sleep, the compassionate goddess explained to him that his illness was a punishment. She informed him of the manner in which he could right his transgression and predestined his salvation through grace. By killing the sacred stag, Ilceus had deeply offended the goddess Diana. He was told that no salvation could come for him where the sun shines—the only path to redemption was a journey into the Underworld. There is a clear parallel made at this point in Fracastoro’s text to the descent of Aeneas into the Underworld and the descent of Aristaeus in the *Georgics*. Ilceus’s journey into the Underworld was a necessary step to cleanse his soul.

Callirhoë instructed Ilceus that at the first sign of dawn he was to make a sacrifice of a black lamb to Ops. Next, he was to honour with incense the Nymphs, Night, the silent shades, and the gods of the shades. Ilceus was informed that his salvation would come from a flood of silver and living metal: “After you have been steeped three times in the living stream you will leave all this corruption behind in the sacred waters.”

As Ilceus begins his descent into the Underworld, a nymph named Lipare guides and assists him in his cleansing. After he is washed in a “health-giving fountain,” he is freed from

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59 Franz Cumont, *Afterlife in Roman Paganism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1923), 201. Fracastoro’s inclusion of the Lethean sleep was likely influenced by Vergil’s references to Lethean sleep in the *Georgics* and the *Aeneid*.

60 Eatough, *Fracastoro’s Syphilis*, 81-82, 368, “tibi parta salus tellure sub ima est.”

61 Philip Hardie notes that Fracastoro use of the Vergilian narrative to tell a story with such strong Christian references may “be read as an interpretatio Christiana of the Virgilian models.” Philip Hardie, “Virgilian imperialism, original sin, and Fracastoro’s *Syphilis,“ in Latin Epic and Didactic Poetry: Genre, Tradition and Individuality, ed. Monica Gale (Swansea: The Classical Press of Wales, 2004), 224.

62 This myth is related to the cure by quicksilver or mercury. *Fracastoro’s Syphilis*, 82-83: “postquam ter flumine vivo perfusus, sacra vitium omne reliquers unda.” Wynne-Finch argued that the Callirhoë that Fracastoro is referring to is a fountain in Palestine. He also argued that it was here and not the Jordan River in which Naaman, following the command of Elisha, bathed himself. In the *Natural History*, Pliny refers to Callirhoë, a fountain of warm water and medicinal properties, located on the South side of the Dead Sea. Pliny, *Natural History*, V.XV.72. It is also here that Herod was believed to have sought healing. See Eatough, *Fracastoro’s Syphilis*, 22, 159.
the disease. Ilceus is then commanded to prepare another sacrifice and offer it as a
suppliant to Diana, the indigenous gods, and the god of the fountain. 63

Throughout the Syphilis Fracastoro draws on Old Testament discussions of
leprosy and purification. The healing of Ilceus parallels the healing of Naaman in 2 Kings
5. In this Old Testament story, a young maiden recommends the prophet Elisha for the
healing of Naaman’s leprosy. Naaman was informed that his healing would come after
bathing in the river Jordan; he was required to wash seven rather than three times.

Fracastoro’s allusions to a “living flood” and “health-giving fountain” in the context
of salvation make obvious references to both God and Christ, since they were described
as the “living waters” and the “fountain of life.” 64 Water serves as a metaphor for
salvation through Christ. The virgin Lipare’s cleansing of Ilceus also suggests the
Christian act of baptism. Three times Lipare’s cleansing of Ilceus also suggests the
Christian act of baptism. Three times Lipare places her hands in the waters and “thrice
with her virgin hands she scooped the river water over his limbs, thrice cleansed the body
of the youth in its entirety.” This passage reflects the words of St. Mark and the purpose
of Christian baptism: “baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.”

As we have seen, the myth of Ilceus is filled with references to healing, salvation,
grace, and redemption. As Eatough pointed out, five of the six references to salvation in
the Syphilis are found in this one episode. 65 This book culminates with theological
references to salvation, cleansing, purification, and sanctification. The words Fracastoro
uses in this myth—salutti, abluere, lustrare, piare—all have a distinct religious tone. The

63 Fracastoro’s Syphilis, 82-83.
64 In the Syphilis, Fracastoro uses the terms: flumine vivo, fonti salubri, sacri fluvii, and sacra vitium. Jeremiah 2:13 “For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters...” or John 4:10-14 where the gift of God is living water and John 7:38 “Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.”
65 His sixth use of the word salus is found in the last book and is made in reference to his account of the holy tree. Eatough, Fracastoro’s Syphilis, 404.
second book ends on this note: “But come now, as you win through rejoice in salvation close by you; your last care is now reached, a most soothing care, to cleanse your body, purify your limbs and sanctify with lavender.” With the cleansing and purification of the body, salvation is at hand.

Pietro Bembo believed this second myth should be cut entirely out, a proposal Fracastoro rejected. Bembo contended that this story and the mercury cure were redundant. He argued that the myth of Ilceus lacked originality and was too close to Vergil’s myth of Aristaeus. Furthermore, he argued that Fracastoro’s myth was too long and therefore broke with classical style. Bembo’s argument was thorough and reasonable. Indeed, the myth in the next book is the strongest, both stylistically and in its novelty. However, Fracastoro firmly resisted Bembo’s advice and the story remained. This second story was obviously important to Fracastoro. The strong theological undercurrent to the story was perhaps what made this myth so important to the author: it provided Fracastoro with the opportunity to comment on some of the contemporary issues that were of concern to him. One of the more interesting elements found in the Syphilis is the author’s focus upon the abandonment of traditional religious practices—clearly a subject of contemporary relevance. Eatough points out that Fracastoro underlines here the value of venerating the native gods and following the old religion. Eatough argued that when, for his salvation, Ilceus is urged to follow the old religion by making offerings to the chaste Diana (i.e. the Virgin) and to the native god, Fracastoro is making a reference to the Reformation and the growing rejection of Catholic doctrine.

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67 Eatough, Fracastoro’s Syphilis, 21.
68 Eatough, Fracastoro’s Syphilis, 164.
In the *Syphilis* Fracastoro returns more than once to a discussion of the older forms of religious practices: a subject that must have been linked by his readers to the contemporary debates over religious practices. The abandonment of the faith, as we will see, is once again central to the myth in the third book of the *Syphilis*.

The pagan sacrifice presented in Book III is the most fascinating of Fracastoro’s employment of the subject. Consisting of a detailed account of the sacrificial rite, it is the longest of the discussions. There are several aspects of this final book that are relevant to the study of Riccio’s *Sacrifice to Asclepius*. Of central importance is Fracastoro’s prolonged description of pagan sacrifice, set in the New World, and the moral message intended through the inclusion of this rite. The first sacrifices were necessary because after their arrival some of the explorers had killed birds that were sacred to Apollo. Shooting these birds brought misery upon the explorers. By making votive offerings, the explorers attempted to appease the gods who defended the sacred woods that they had violated. After they made these offerings, the explorers came into contact with the natives of the New World.

Now a repentant people, the natives of the New World also had needed to appease god for their earlier sins of impiety and idolatry. The natives were the survivors of Atlantis, a people, Fracastoro wrote, nearly destroyed because of their impiety. Their ancestors, descendents of Atlas, were originally a pious race, but their pride and luxury led them to impiety. They unsuccessfully attempted to appease their sins, but their offerings were inappropriate. The second sin of the natives, for which they were cursed with the disease, was idolatry. A yearly sacrifice was the necessary expiation, a ritual that

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the explorers witnessed. The explorers looked on in great interest as the natives prepared
their annual sacrifice to Apollo. Amongst the participants are a group of sinners covered
with signs of the illness. They awaited the rites:

As they milled around, a priest in white robes cleansed them with purifying waters
and with a branch of leafy Guaiacum. Then before the altars he slaughtered
according to custom a snowy bullock and he sprinkled a shepherd nearby with
blood from the slaughtered beast, scattering drops from a libation bowl, and he
chanted in measured rhythm a hymn for deliverance to the powerful Sun, and the
rest of the crowd followed, and offered up pigs and sheep and feasted upon the
grass on entrails roasted round spits.70

The Spanish onlookers were dumbfounded by both the ritual and the symptoms of a
disease which they had never seen. They sought an explanation of the ceremony from the
king; they inquired why the shepherd had been sprinkled with blood. The king recounted
how the ancestors of his people had moved away from their pious customs and, as a
result, were inflicted with this horrible disease. The origin of their misery came from the
idolatrous actions of a shepherd named Syphilis. Because Apollo had not provided respite
to his flock from the hot summer heat, Syphilis grew angry and disillusioned. He felt that
god was not attending to his needs. The shepherd decided that rather than make his
sacrifices to Apollo he would make offerings to his king, Alcithous. Soon after Syphilis
set up an altar to his king, his contemporaries followed him and abandoned the worship
of Apollo. They presented their king with blood offerings and burnt incense; the king,
flattered by these divine honours, encouraged this veneration and forbade any other form
of worship. Apollo soon demonstrated his vengeance for this act of idolatry: “He had

70 Translation by Geoffrey Eatough. Fracastoro’s Syphilis, 96-99, “Quos circumfusos albenti in veste
sacerdos pura lustrat aqua, et ramo frondentis Hyaci. Tum niveum ante aras caedit de more juvencum, ex
juxta posituum pastorem sanguine caesi, respergit, pateraque rigat: Solique potenti ad numeros paena
canit: nec caetera turba non sequitur, mactantque sues, mactantque bidentes, visceribusque veru tostis
epulantur in herba.”
seen these events, who sees all things, who reviews things in detail, the Sun the Father, and he felt indignation in his mind, he hurled his hostile rays and shone with a bitter light.”71 The unfaithful were inflicted with the disease and Syphilis, as the first blasphemer, was the first to show symptoms of this divine retribution.

Elements of Fracastoro’s third myth echo Old Testament discussions of leprosy. Fracastoro drew on both the manner Moses recommended for cleansing the disease and on the story of King Uzziah. The natives in Fracastoro’s story had transgressed against their god and were punished in a manner similar to King Uzziah, as recounted in 2 Chronicles 26. In awe of his own magnificence, Uzziah went into the temple to burn incense upon the altar. The priests, aghast by the king’s trespass against the Lord, witnessed his punishment with leprosy. In Leviticus 14, God commanded Moses regarding the manner of healing leprosy. His instructions included both cleansing and sacrificial ceremonies for the remission of the disease; this included, as in Fracastoro’s myth, the sprinkling of blood on the diseased.72

The role of purification is central in Fracastoro’s Syphilis. Throughout the work he invokes pagan sacrifice to demonstrate the importance of piety; the role of sacrifice as a means of communication between man and the divine; and its necessity for salvation, which it enables through the purification of the soul. The subject of purification was also included in Riccio’s narrative on the Della Torre monument. In the Funeral of the Professor, a priest sprinkles water with a branch on the faithful; as mentioned in the

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71 Fracastoro’s Syphilis, 102-3: “Viderat haec, qui cuncta videt, quis singular lustrat, Sol pater, atque animo secum indignatus, iniquos intorsit radios, et lumine fulsit acerbo.”
72 In Leviticus 14, the purification process was to begin with the leper being sprinkled with the blood of a bird that had been washed in running water. The leper was then to bath himself and wait 8 days for the next blood sacrifice. The last sacrifice was that of two lambs. The leper was anointed with the blood of one of these victims.
previous chapter, this scene draws on Vergil’s description of the funeral of Misenus: the priest is enacting a lustratio, a ceremony to purify those contaminated by death. It is not insignificant that Fracastoro, likewise, commenced the natives’ ritual with this form of purification, although now the ritual was to cleanse from sin rather than the contamination of death. In both Riccio’s panel and Fracastoro’s Book III, the sacrifice is that of a suovetaurilia, which in both cases seems to be used to illustrate the need for purification.

After the suovetaurilia in Book III, Fracastoro continues by focusing upon the theme of salvation. The natives’ need for an annual sacrifice had been foretold by a nymph named Ammerice, who had warned that the disease could not be removed from the earth but that a cure could be found by sacrificing one black heifer to Juno and another one to Earth. As a result, Juno would give salvation: “seeds of happiness from on high: the Earth will train up a green wood from the happy seed: whence your salvation.”

The explorers are informed that the blood was sprinkled on the shepherd because he was to have been slain to appease Apollo. Juno refused the human sacrifice, and Apollo, recognizing the now chaste soul of the shepherd, agreed to the substitution of a bull. Thus, man’s salvation comes by means of a scapegoat. When the lot was drawn, it was Syphilis himself who was led away to fall at the altar—“one man a sacrifice for all.”

Eatough underlines Fracastoro’s use of the phrase “pro cunctis cadat unus” with its

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73 Fracastoro’s Syphilis, 190.
74 Fracastoro’s Syphilis, 102-103, “illa dabit foelici semina ab alto: Haec viridem educet foelici e semine sylvam: unde salus.”
75 It is not insignificant that Fracastoro chose the goddess Juno to intercede for the sinner, since she was frequently substituted for Mary in the Renaissance. Juno mediated between Apollo and mankind, as Mary did between Christ and his followers. Fracastoro’s use of Juno as an alter-Virgin, further suggests that Apollo was carefully selected by Fracastoro as the god the people sinned against and who needed propitiation. Apollo was seen as one of the classical prototypes of Christ.
76 Eatough, Fracastoro’s Syphilis, 104-5.
evident nuances of Christ’s own role for the salvation of mankind. While the scapegoat in Fracastoro’s story is the guilty party, it is significant that he is also a shepherd.

In Book III a focus on a sacred tree, a tree of salvation, replaces the previous on living waters and healing. In this last book, Fracastoro presents the most modern treatment of syphilis through a newly discovered treatment derived from the Hyacum tree. He opens the third book with the words: “I must now sing of the Gods’ great gifts and of the sacred tree brought from an unknown world, which alone has moderated, relieved, and ended suffering.” The reference to a sacred tree that relieves and ends suffering suggests more than just a medical cure. Again, it is clear that Fracastoro was writing about much more than the disease; he was also writing about transgression and absolution. Fracastoro emphasizes that the disease was a punishment for sin, and his discussion of a sacred tree that was to be the hope of mankind is an implicit reference to the cross of Christ.

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77 Eatough, *Fracastoro’s Syphilis*, 104-5, Romans 5:8.
78 This last book does not appear to have been written as early as the first two books, and the inclusion of the guaiac references suggests a later date than the first two books as this tree was first mentioned in German treatises written in 1517, 1518, and 1519. These references are found in the works of Nicholas Poll (1517), Leonardus Schmaus (1518), and Ulrich von Hutten (1519). Hendrickson, 520. The tree was also known as *Guaiacum*. Its familiar Latin name was *Lignum sanctum*, it is now called *Lignum vitae*. Raymond A. Anselment, "Fracastoro's Syphilis: Nahum Tate and the Realms of Apollo," *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 73 (1991): 115.
79 *Fracastoro's Syphilis*, 86-87: “Mihi nunc magna Deorum munera, et ignoto devecta ex orbe canenda, sancta arbos, quae sola modum, requiemque dolori, et finem dedit aerumnis.”
80 The French disease serves as an equivalent to the sin of man. Since this disease had spread to Europe—Eatough argues—Fracastoro uses the moral state in the New World to illustrate the moral state of Europe. Eatough, “Fracastoro’s Beautiful Idea,” 110. The sacred tree given to the natives is brought back to Europe by the explorers because they also needed healing (Book III commenced with the arrival of explorers in the New World; following their arrival, they killed a parrot sacred to Apollo. It was a rash act that led to their punishment. Hardie argues that this was a *felix culpa* as this mistake led them to the knowledge of the holy tree. Hardie, “Virgilian imperialism, original sin, and Fracastoro’s *Syphilis*,” 228). As in the conclusion of the previous book, Fracastoro closes the third book with strong religious imagery. Returning to the subject of the healing tree, he refers to the Hyacum tree as “haec sacra arbor” and “spes hominum,” drawing obvious parallels to the cross of Christ. *Fracastoro’s Syphilis*, 102-105. The references to the tree of salvation present an analogy to Christ’s sacrifice and the redemption of mankind. Fracastoro’s words suggest the idea of the procession of Christ’s cross; he writes of the tree being carried into every part of Europe. The tree is praised with the use of more religious imagery: “Hail great tree sown from a sacred
The references to sin and the need for expiation through sacrifice and prayer are found from the beginning to the end of the *Syphilis*. This last story—in which the disease serves as the inevitable punishment for turning away from the traditional worship of the gods—would, considering the religious divisions of Fracastoro’s own time, have held great significance for the contemporary reader. This is accentuated by the fact that this work was published by Giberti’s publishers. When Fracastoro presented his 1528 oration celebrating the arrival of Bishop Giberti in Verona, he expressed the need to suppress Lutheranism and the current profanement of the faith. His focus on the necessity of adhering to traditional religious practices in the *Syphilis* seems to suggest the author’s concern with the debates over proper worship in his own day. The emphasis he places on the need of continual sacrifices likely also had a contemporary relevance and must have been understood by his contemporaries as a reference to the contemporary debates over the Mass. In Fracastoro’s third myth, continual sacrifices were necessary for salvation and the natives were required to make annual sacrifices to Apollo for the remission of their sins.

The shift that occurred in the presentation of pagan sacrifice in the visual arts during this period is also illustrated by the growing popularity of the subject in literature. Sacrifice is accepted as a more central subject; the parallels to Christian doctrine are evident and were likely quickly understood. Sacrifice in the *Syphilis*, although pagan has an obvious Christian meaning. In each instance in the *Syphilis*, healing and salvation required divine intervention. As we have seen in these three books, Fracastoro’s use of seed by the hand of the Gods, with beautiful tresses, esteemed for your new virtues: *hope of mankind.*”


sacrifice illustrates its necessity for purification, redemption, and healing; furthermore, the continual need for this practice is emphasized. Although Fracastoro’s use of the subject is presented in uncompromisingly pagan language, the Christian meaning is quite evident. In his presentation of pagan sacrifice, the pagan ritual is reclaimed and used to illustrate the role of religious practices that are central to the Christian faith.

Within Riccio’s narrative as a whole, the scene of sacrifice to Asclepius serves to present the pious nature of the professor. At this point it may be worthwhile to consider one further question—why has Riccio placed so much emphasis on the fire on the altar in the *Sacrifice to Asclepius*? The flame on the altar is large and, as a result, quite prominent: the fire burns as one unified flame. In his other representations of sacrifice, Riccio did not place such strong visual emphasis upon the flame. If one looks at Riccio’s representation of fire in the tomb’s other panels, they are not depicted as burning in this manner. For example, there are two non-sacrificial flames in the *Illness of the Professor* (Fig. 4): one burns on the tripod placed on the wall and the other is tended to by the Vestal Virgins. These flames do not burn in one united flame as is seen on the altar in the *Sacrifice to Asclepius*. Riccio had deliberately altered the manner in which he depicted fire on the altar.

Riccio’s representation of the fire may also be linked to the desire to illustrate that the offering is to be perceived as worthy. The precedent for this may be found in the oldest of the Biblical stories of sacrifices—the sacrifice of Cain and Abel. If we turn to two representations of this subject in the Santo, the first by Giovanni Minello (Fig. 76)
and the second by Bartolommeo Bellano (Fig. 77), it is evident that the manner in which
the fires burn holds a theological significance. The flames on the two altars distinguish
between the offering accepted and the one rejected. The flames on Abel’s altar form a
perfect triangle, whereas the flames on Cain’s altar break apart. The difference between
the two flames is explicitly illustrated in Bellano’s representation of the scene. The
flames on Cain’s altar are separated and appear almost flattened in the centre. In Abel’s
fire the flame is unified and burns so high that it surpasses the boundary of the frame.
Minello’s portrayal of the difference between their offerings is presented in a less
dramatic manner, yet there remains a clear distinction between the fires. The fire that
burns as one unified flame is able to reach higher; this suggests that the smoke and
vapour of the fire reaches the heavens, implying that the offering itself ascends to God.

The story of the sacrifices made by Cain and Abel underlines the importance of
approaching the altar with a right spirit and illustrates God’s approval or disapproval of
the offerings. This interpretation is given in Hebrews 10:11, where the acceptance of
Abel’s offering was interpreted as a sign of his righteousness. By presenting the flames
on the altar of Asclepius as large and unified, Riccio may be drawing on the visual
convention belonging to the representations of the sacrifice of Cain and Abel. The fire
would then confirm that the offering made on behalf of the professor was a worthy and
acceptable offering. The scene, thus, also illustrates the virtuous nature of the professor.

As will be elaborated in the next chapter, it is significant that this offering is made
to the pagan god Asclepius; a god who demanded purity, virtue, and piety, he was

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83 The importance of approaching the altar in a good state is also emphasized elsewhere. See Matthew 5:
instrumental in ensuring the health of the soul and the soul’s successful journey into the afterlife.
As a god of medicine, Asclepius was associated with the medical profession—the profession of Girolamo and Marcantonio Della Torre. Yet, Asclepius also had a wider significance in the Renaissance.¹ This god was understood to play an important role in guiding the soul and preparing man for the afterlife. The subject of making sacrificial offerings to Asclepius in his role as a god of medicine was, moreover, not common; therefore, the inclusion of a sacrifice to Asclepius (Fig. 5) on Riccio’s tomb deserves careful examination.

Asclepius and Christ are not distant figures but play similar roles in the salvation of the soul. This is evident in Renaissance discussions of Socrates’ sacrifice to Asclepius and the role of this god in enabling men’s soul to ascend. In this light, the inclusion of a sacrifice to Asclepius on a Christian tomb presented ideas clearly relevant to the Christian faith, suggesting to the tomb’s humanist audience that the soul of the deceased professor was ready to meet God.

¹Some funerary orations in honour of physicians paid homage to Asclepius and Apollo as the founding gods of medicine, and the same was true of funerary poetry. John M. McManamon, S. J., *Funerary Oratory and the Cultural Ideals of Italian Humanism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 147. In 1551, Fracastoro referred to the arts of Asclepius in a short poem commemorating the Veronese physician Giovanni Battista Montani. Fracastoro recites the myth that Asclepius’s death was punishment for reviving a man from the dead. He lamented that the great skills of Montani, like those of Asclepius, had angered the gods, who, in their jealousy took the physician’s life. Thus, within a funerary context for Renaissance physicians references to the pagan god Asclepius are not without precedence. Girolamo Fracastoro, *Poemata Omnia. Accesserunt reliquiae Carminum J. Cottae, J. Bonfadii, A. Fumani, N. Archii*, ed. Josephus Cominus (Padua: Giuseppe Comino, 1718), 150. Fracastoro, *Poemata Omnia*, 159: “Dum medica, Montane, doces ope vincere fata, et Lachesi invita vivere posse diu, Laethaeo indignans pressit te Parca sopore, Et secuit vitae grandia fila tuae. Sic, animas et tu, Asclepi, dum subtrahis Orco, Te quoque saevorum perdidit ira Deum.”
Chapter VI A Sacrifice to Asclepius on a Renaissance Tomb

In his 1816 publication of the *Storia della scultura*, Leopoldo Cicognara recognized the serpent in Riccio’s Della Torre sacrifice as the serpent of Hygieia or Asclepius.² When Leo Planiscig discussed this panel in his monograph on Riccio, he identified it only as the *Scene of Sacrifice*, and while he pointed out the presence of the snake, he did not discuss the link between the snake and Asclepius. Thus, it was left for Fritz Saxl to expand on the identification of the serpent in his discussion of the panel in 1939. He based his identification of the god on two elements: the presence of the serpent in front of the altar and the combination of animals being sacrificed. According to Saxl, Pausanias recorded that an offering of a pig, a lamb, and a bull were made to Asclepius at Titane. However, while Pausanias was discussing the Asklepieion in Titane, he recorded that this offering was made before a statue of the mother of Asclepius—Coronis.³ Saxl also based his identification of the subject on a medal of Girolamo Fracastoro (Fig. 78), whose

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² Serpents were closely associated with the cult of Asclepius, tame serpents were kept at his temple in Epidaurus, and Asclepius was said to have taken the form of a serpent on numerous occasions. Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, trans. and commented by J. G. Frazer (London: Macmillian & Co., Ltd. 1898), II.28.1 and Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths* (Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1986), I.177. Leopoldo Cicognara, *Storia Della Scultura dal suo Risorgimento in Italia sino al secolo XIX. Per Servire di continuazione alle opera di Winkelmann e di D’Agincourt* (Venice: Picotti, 1816), II.147. Cicognara also suggested that the gods who inspire the professor in the first panel are the medical gods: he identified the statue as Minerva Medica, and the figures behind the professor as Apollo and Hygieia. Cicognara, 142. The daughter of Asclepius, Hygieia was most frequently presented alongside her father or together with the serpent of Asclepius. See my discussion on this figure in Chapter I.

³ Fritz Saxl, “Pagan Sacrifice in the Italian Renaissance,” *Journal of the Warburg Institute* 2, no. 4 (April, 1939): 358. Pausanias: “There is also a wooden image of Coronis. It does not stand in the temple; *but when they are sacrificing a bull, a lamb, and a pig to the god* they bring Coronis to the sanctuary of Athena and honour her there. All the portions of the victims which they offer (and they are not content with cutting off thighs) they burn on the ground, except birds, which they burn on the altar.” Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, II. XI. 7 (Translation by J. G. Frazier, italics mine).

As Saxl pointed out, Pausanias was well read by the Paduan philosopher Niccolò Leonico Tomeo, as demonstrated by Tomeo’s *De varia historia*. Of course, other figures in the circle of Della Torre—including Giovanni Pierio Valeriano—shared an interest in the writings of Pausanias. See Giovanni Pierio Valeriano, *Hieroglyphica* [Lyon: 1602] (Repr. New York: Garland Publishers, 1976). The sacrifice of these three types of animals (a *suovetaurilia*) was not confined to the cult of Asclepius, the *suovetaurilia* was well known in the Renaissance. As discussed in Chapter V, the *suovetaurilia* was one of the more common forms of animal sacrifice represented on surviving classical monuments.
Chapter VI A Sacrifice to Asclepius on a Renaissance Tomb

writings were discussed at some length in the last chapter. On the reverse of the medal is an altar and below it are the attributes of Apollo, Minerva, and Asclepius. A snake representing Asclepius has slithered out from beneath the altar. Inscribed Minervae Apollo et Aesculap Sacrum, the medal is dedicated to the gods of medicine.

Saxl’s method for identifying the scene as a sacrifice to Asclepius is perhaps immaterial—even without these two arguments, the sacrifice must have been readily identifiable as one made to Asclepius. The snake reaching to drink from a patera was a common visual representation of the god in the period. In most images the snake was presented in association with Hygieia, the daughter of Asclepius, who holds out offerings to the animal on a patera. In the Hieroglyphica, Valeriano included a discussion of the representation of Hygieia (Salus) in ancient numismatics. In these images Hygieia, holding the patera in her right hand, was always linked with the serpent. Riccio’s friend Giovanni Cavino made two medals of Hygieia (Salus) copied after the antique. While Cavino’s representations of Hygieia and the serpent (Fig. 79) were made a few years later than the reliefs on the Della Torre monument, they were based upon classical numismatic

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4 There is no information regarding the commission and, thus, it is unknown if Fracastoro played any role in either its commissioning or its design. Saxl credited Fracastoro with choosing this symbol of the altar “to embody the essential qualities of his life.” Saxl, “Pagan Sacrifice,” 357.

5 The medal dates to circa 1540, many years after Riccio’s Sacrifice to Asclepius. However, the coupling once more of the serpent and the altar does support the identification of the scene as a sacrifice to Asclepius. In the case of Fracastoro’s medal, the design refers primarily to the arts of medicine in order to illustrate Fracastoro’s dedication to learning and to the arts of medicine. The author of the medal remains unknown. It was tentatively attributed to Giulio Della Torre, an attribution George Francis Hill dismissed as unlikely. He cited the lack of similarity in the lettering and argued that the composition was unlike Giulio’s other medals. George Francis Hill, A Corpus of Italian Medals of the Renaissance before Cellini [London: British Museum, 1930] (Repr. Florence: Studio per edizioni scelte, 1984), I.148. Fracastoro’s references to pagan sacrifice in his poetry originate between the 1510s to mid-1530s, thus, if Fracastoro played a role in the design of the medal it is amongst his last presentations of the subject.

6 See Pierio Valeriano, Hieroglyphica, 159-160.

7 Cavino’s representation presents this typical iconography of Hygieia, in which the goddess holds out a patera to a snake. The medal commemorates Cosimo Scapti (National Gallery of Art, Washington; British Museum). These medals further cast into question Cicognara’s identification of the veiled figure in the first panel as Hygieia. The unveiled, feminine figure of Cavino’s coin holds nothing in common with the heavily draped woman standing behind the professor in the first panel. See Warwick Wroth, “Hygieia,” Journal of Hellenic Studies 5 (1884): 82-101.
representations that would have been well known in the period.\(^8\) In Cavino’s medals the serpent, wrapped around a branch, reaches down to drink from the *patera* held out by Hygieia. Although sans Hygieia, Riccio’s *Sacrifice to Asclepius* with its representation of the snake of Asclepius reaching out to accept the offering is, in fact, a fairly typical representation.\(^9\) The *Sacrifice to Asclepius* was thus easily identifiable to those conversant in ancient numismatics—as many in this circle were known to be—and most notably to Giulio Della Torre, whose collection of coins was praised by Hubert Goltz.\(^10\) On the basis of a well known ancient text by Serenus, the *Medicinae liber*, Saxl showed that the *Sacrifice to Asclepius* was performed in order to secure the ascension of the deceased’s soul. In the introduction to this work, Serenus wrote that Asclepius was able to bring the manes of the dead back to heaven.\(^11\) As this is central to understanding why the scene of sacrifice to Asclepius should be linked to more than his role as a god of medicine, let us investigate it a little more fully. According to myth, Asclepius, the son of Apollo and Coronis, was born by the first recorded Caesarean section. Most myths claim that he was taught the art of medicine by Chiron the Centaur.\(^12\) A wise god, Asclepius was praised for his skill as a physician rather than for his power to work miracles. There was one exception: Asclepius had also been granted the power to raise men from the dead, a gift that proved to be his downfall, for Asclepius was killed by Zeus for raising a

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\(^8\) Philip Attwood, *Italian Medals c.1530-1600 in British public collections* (London: British Museum, 2003), 192. Cavino’s versions were derived from the coins of Commodus.

\(^9\) It would appear that Riccio drew on the iconography of Hygieia in his representation of Prudence on the paschal candelabrum for the Church of St. Anthony, in Padua. While the serpent is a common attribute of Prudence, Riccio’s Prudence holds out a *patera*, an attribute of Hygieia, to one of the snakes.


\(^12\) See for example Pindar’s *Pythian Odes*. Diodorus and the pseudo-Galenus asserted that Asclepius learned the art of medicine from his father. Emma J. and Ludwig Edelstein, *Asclepius: A Collection and Interpretation of the Testimonies* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1945): II.184-5 (T. 355-6).
man from the dead. Ultimately, Asclepius was resurrected by Zeus, fulfilling the prophecy of his death and resurrection.

Striking similarities to the life of Christ thus emerge. Both were born of a divine father and human mother, both killed and resurrected, both sent by their fathers to aid mankind. Like the birth of Christ, whose arrival was heralded by the star of Bethlehem, the birth of Asclepius was associated with light: the divinity of Asclepius was recognized when light was seen shining around him as a nursing child. Likewise, Asclepius was upheld by some as having lived a blameless life. The myths emphasize that he was sent to heal. Asclepius, praised for his charity and continual benevolence to man, served as a worthy parallel to Christ. Some ancient coins depicted Asclepius with the word Soter, or savior; thus, both Christ and Asclepius were presented as the saviours of mankind who saved men from death but were ultimately condemned to death for their actions. Both were born and died as mortal and resurrected as immortal. In the 2nd century, Aelius Aristides recorded that Asclepius was even said to have saved men at sea during a

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13 Apollodorus records that he received this gift from Athena when she gave him the blood of the Gorgon. The blood that flowed from the right side was said to have these saving powers, while the blood from the other side had a rather more destructive effect. Apollodorus, III.X.3, 17.
16 There are ancient coins on which Asclepius is called “Soter” (Saviour). One such example is a coin of Pergamum, which bears the symbol of the snake and is inscribed “Asclepius the Savior.” Aelius Aristides, in the second century AD, held up Asclepius as “the sheet anchor of salvation for all humanity.” Aristides, Oratio XXIII, 15-8. Gerald D. Hart, Asclepius the God of Medicine (London: The Royal Society of Medicine, 1988), 27 and 185. For Aristides and for Julian the Apostate, Asclepius was the saviour of all mankind. As Julian wrote, “After this, he (Asclepius) manifested himself in diverse ways, stretching out his saving right hand to the whole earth.” Julian’s Against the Galileans, ed. and trans. R. Joseph Hoffman (Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 2004), 115; and Aristides in his Oratio XLII, stated that Asclepius “is the one who guides and rules the universe, the saviour of the whole and the guardian of the immortals, or if you wish to put in the words of a tragic poet, ‘the steerer of government’, he who saves that which always exists and that which is in the state of becoming...” Edelstein, Asclepius, 160.
17 Edelstein, Asclepius, II.75, I (T 235).
storm.\(^\text{18}\) Both were also linked to a trinity: Asclepius was seen as being the third removed from Zeus. In fact, to illustrate to the pagans that Christ’s life was plausible, Justin the Martyr referred to the nature of the birth, death, and resurrection of Asclepius.\(^\text{19}\)

In the early period of Christianity, the cult of Asclepius was a popular religion and the Early Christians made many references to it. They admitted Asclepius’ power to heal and to revive the dead. This is evident in the work of Ambrose who wrote: “To Asclepius let them grant that he revived the dead, provided only that they admit that he himself did not escape the lightning.”\(^\text{20}\) Thus, while Asclepius’s power to resurrect the dead was accepted, he was scorned for his inability to save himself and the power of Christ was to be recognized as surpassing that of Asclepius. Whereas many of the other major cults were experiencing a decline in popularity in the Early Christian era, the cult of Asclepius was growing and remained celebrated throughout the empire; this meant that the Early Church Fathers had to battle the popularity of this cult more than any other.\(^\text{21}\) Many of the Early Christian writers display unease in their discussions of Asclepius. By the 3rd century, the attacks against Asclepius became more intense. Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsarea in Palestine, wrote in his *De Vita Constantini*,

Since much error arose from the purported science associated with Cilician spirit, and countless people got excited about him as a saviour and healer, because he sometimes healed the diseases of those physically ill – though when it came to souls he was a destroyer, drawing the gullible away from the true Saviour and attracting them to godless error…the one who skulked within [the temple of Asclepius], no
spirit, and surely no god, but a deceiver of souls who had practised fraud for many long years.\textsuperscript{22}

The words of Eusebius illustrate the competition between the cult of Asclepius and the newer Christian religion. In particular the closeness between the image of Christ and that of Asclepius meant that this cult was singled out because Christ bore a much stronger resemblance to Asclepius than to any other of the pagan gods.

In his \textit{Church History}, Eusebius presents an account of a statue identified in his day as a statue of Christ, but, which, most likely, was a representation of Asclepius:

\begin{quote}
For they say that the woman with an issue of blood, who, as we learn from the sacred Gospel, received from our Saviour deliverance from her affliction, came from this place, and that her house is shown in the city, and that remarkable memorials of the kindness of the Saviour to her remain there. For there stands upon an elevated stone, by the gates of her house, a bronze image of a woman kneeling, with her hands stretched out, as if she were praying. Opposite this is another image of a man, made of the same material, clothed decently in a double cloak, and extending his hand toward he woman. At his feet, beside the statue itself, is a certain strange plant, which climbs up to the hem of the brazen cloak, and is a remedy for all kinds of diseases. They say that this statue is an image of Jesus. It has remained to our day, so that we ourselves also saw it when we were staying in the city. Nor is it strange that those of the Gentiles who, of old, were benefited by our Saviour, should have done such things, since we have learned also that the likenesses of his apostles Paul and Peter, and of Christ himself, are preserved in paintings, the ancients being accustomed, as it is likely, according to the habit of the Gentiles, to pay this kind of honor indiscriminately to those regarded by them as deliverers.\textsuperscript{23}
\end{quote}

This monument described by Eusebius is now believed to have been a monument celebrating Asclepius, rather than Christ. This misidentification further illustrates just how strong the resemblance between Christ and Asclepius was in the time of the Early Christian Church.


In his scene of sacrifice to Asclepius, Riccio has, like the early Christians described by Eusebius, mixed what the early Church fathers had been anxious to keep separate. In this panel the community has gathered in front of a pagan temple and they bring a substantial offering to the altar of Asclepius. In the foreground a figure kneels in front of the snake, as it moves to accept the offering. Asclepius is, again, presented as a worthy precursor of Christ.

The battle against the popularity of the Asclepian cult was particularly important as the early Christian faith was closely associated with medicine and healing. Not only are Asclepius and Christ presented as having performed similar deeds, but the early gospels presented Christ as a physician. Both Christ and Asclepius were said to use a gentle touch to heal. In addition Christ’s disciples were also sent out to minister and to heal the ill much like the Asclepiads. In a discussion of pagan myths and their proponents, Justin the Martyr noted that the pagans brought forth Asclepius as the prophesied Christ: “Then, too, when they found out that it had been prophesied that He [Christ] would cure every illness and raise the dead to life, they brought forward Asculapius.” To support his argument that the actions of Christ were not so unbelievable, Justin pointed to the belief in the works of Asclepius: if Christ “cured the lame, the paralytics, and those blind from

24 It is possible that this kneeling figure is in fact the professor. This might explain why the attendants to the professor in *The Illness of the Professor* were in the process of lifting him off the bed; yet, the kneeling figure does have slightly different facial features from those in other representations of the professor. Asclepius’ use of touch is seen in both texts and ancient reliefs. See Wells, *The Greek language of healing*, 69.

25 Matthew 10:1. The disciples were called to “heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease,” Wells, *The Greek language of healing*, 209-210. Matthew 10:6: “Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead...” But they are instructed to heal only those from the house of Israel, whereas the Asclepiads were to heal all. See also Luke 9:6, Luke 10:9.

Chapter VI A Sacrifice to Asclepius on a Renaissance Tomb

birth, and raised the dead to life, we seem to attribute to Him actions similar to those said to have been performed by Aesculapius.”

28 When the Church moved away from its early association with medicine and healing, Asclepius was no longer seen as such a contentious figure.

Like Eusebius, Justin mocked the believers of Asclepius for their god’s inability to resurrect himself: “Aesculapius, who, though himself a healer of diseases, was struck by a thunderbolt and ascended into heaven.”

29 Justin continued his attack on the Asclepian cult by deriding Asclepius for having acquired his knowledge from men: “Aesculapius and Apollo learnt the art of healing from Chiron the Centaur—What an innovation, for gods to learn from a man!”

30 In the end Justin attributed the power of Asclepius to the devil. He warned that the powers ascribed to Asclepius were intended to deceive: “And when the Devil presents Aesculapius as raising the dead to life and curing all diseases, has he not, in this regard, also, emulated the prophecies about Christ?”

The most significant difference between Asclepius and Christ was that Christ was sent to aid all sinners, while Asclepius only lent his aid to the pure. Indeed, Asclepius would refuse to aid those who were not virtuous. As Philostratus recorded: “And at the same moment he (Apollonius) looked toward Asclepius, and said: ‘O Asclepius, you teach a philosophy that is secret and congenial to yourself, in that you suffer not the wicked to come hither, not even if they bring to you all the wealth of India and Sardis.’”

Philostratus continues that Asclepius not only rejected the money of the wicked, he also refused their offerings: “For it is not out of reverence for the divinity that they sacrifice

28 Justinus, Apologia, LVIII.
29 Justinus, Apologia, LVI.
30 Justinus, The Monarch or the Rule of God, 455.
31 Justinus, Dialogue with Trypho, 259.
these victims and kindle these fires, but in order to purchase a verdict, which you will not concede to them in your perfect justice.”  

Thus, the favour and intervention of Asclepius was not something that could be purchased—it was only given to those truly worthy.

The manner in which the Asclepian snake approached his offerings shows the god’s discrimination. Warick Wroth has interpreted the scenes of Hygieia feeding the snake as a form of serpent-divination; thus, the manner in which the snakes responded to the offering suggested a positive omen of the future well-being of the supplicant. If Asclepius was willing to aid the supplicant, the snake would approach the offering willingly. Any need to coax the snake would have signified his unwillingness to aid the supplicant.

While it would be difficult to demonstrate that Riccio knew of this when he depicted the snake accepting the offering in the Sacrifice to Asclepius, the manner in which the flame burns on the altar does illustrate whether or not the supplicant was deemed worthy. In Riccio’s panel the large, unified flame on the altar indicates a worthy offering.

Asclepius’s requirement of purity was later held up as an exemplum by Clement of Alexandria. Clement quoted an inscription that was placed over the entrance of the Asclepian temple in Epidaurus: “Pure must be he who enters the fragrant temple; purity

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32 Edelstein, *Asclepius*, I.198, Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii*, I.11. Pindar had recorded that Asclepius had accepted a bribe to resurrect a dead man and for this he was killed by Zeus. Pindar, *The Pythian Odes*, III.50-65. This story proved to be fodder for Christian polemicists. Clement of Alexandria drew on this story in his *Exhortation to the Greeks*, where he derided the belief in a god who was accused of bribery: “You have not only a smith among the gods, but a doctor as well. The doctor was fond of money, and his name was Asclepius…” Clement of Alexandria, *The Exhortation to the Greeks, The Rich Man’s Salvation, and the fragment of an address entitled To The Newly Baptized*, trans. G. W. Butterworth (London: William Heinemann, 1919), 61. Pindar’s story was the only truly disgraceful story of Asclepius on which the critics could draw, and it was a story that was contradicted by other authors. In the other accounts, Asclepius had little concern for monetary rewards. More commonly presented as willing to help without the thought of payment, Asclepius was portrayed as a god for whom virtue was the overriding concern.

33 The concern over the acceptance or rejection of an offering was also part of Fracastoro’s discussion of sacrifice in the *Syphilis*, this is evident in Book I were the offering of the sick was insufficient to appease the gods.
means to think nothing but holy thoughts.”

Clement urged the relevance of this inscription to those approaching Christ, adding that “except you become as little children ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” Thus, the manner in which the pagans were taught to approach Asclepius was held as a model of how to approach Christ.

In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul particularly emphasized the need for purity when partaking of communion. He warned that there were dangers for those who partook of communion with an unworthy spirit. These dangers could consist of illness and death, as those who participated in the wrong spirit set the stage for their own judgment. As discussed in Chapter V, this view is reflected in the New Testament interpretations of the offerings made by Cain and Abel. Abel’s sacrifice was understood to have been made in good faith and with a righteous spirit, whereas Cain’s offering was understood to have been rejected by God because it was made with a sinful spirit.

Another feature relevant to the Della Torre monument is Asclepius’s link to the Elysian Mysteries, a subject of great interest in the Renaissance. Pausanias claimed that Asclepius was a mystes, an initiate into the Elysian cult. In the later development of his cult, Asclepius became associated with Demeter, who was known to give her worshippers knowledge of the afterlife. Asclepius, who is recorded as advising applicants to make prayers to Demeter, was known as having taken dwelling in an Eleusinian temple. The links made between Asclepius and the Elysian Mysteries indicates that Asclepius was

34 Walton gives the inscription as: “Into an odorous temple, he who goes should pure and holy be; but to be wise in what to sanctity pertains, is to be pure.” Porphyry, De Abstinentia, II.19, Walton, The Cult of Asklepios, 77.
37 Hebrews 11:4 and I John 3:12.
39 Edelstein, Asclepius, I.375.
perceived as being concerned with more than just the physical health and healing of mankind; he was also concerned with the state of men’s souls. This is evident in the 4th-century writings of Julian the Apostate, who wrote: “We say ‘Asclepius heals our bodies, The Muses with the help of Asclepius and Apollo and Hermes, god of eloquence, train our souls...Athena, the virgin goddess, with the help of Zeus, presides over them all.”

Thus, Asclepius was held up as more than a healer; he also guided the soul. Asclepius was an integral figure for the passage of the soul from the earthly to the divine realm, and, as was discussed in Chapter IV, the journey of the soul into the afterlife is a central part of Riccio’s narrative.

As the myths surrounding Asclepius developed, he was said to heal men so that they would have the opportunity to purify their lives. Those whom he returned to health were expected “to lead a better life,” for, as it was written on an Asclepieion temple in Africa, “Bonus intra, melior exi.” By healing men Asclepius gave them more time to prepare with knowledge for the afterlife. By postponing death, Asclepius could save men from Hades. By saving men, he gave them the opportunity to live twice through him.

He initiated into the Mysteries only those facing an extreme danger of death. Only a select number of the Greek gods were concerned with man’s life after death and his initiation into the Mysteries. The decision to represent a sacrifice to Asclepius on the Della Torre monument was a significant choice.

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40 Julian’s Against the Galileans, 122. Edelstein, Asclepius, I.165.
41 “Enter a good man, leave a better one.” Edelstein, Asclepius, II.127, I.164. Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, VIII, 1 No 2584. The inscription was found at Lambaesis, Africa (209-11 AD).
42 Edelstein, Asclepius, II.123-124.
43 Edelstein, Asclepius, II.127-129.
44 The presence of a scene of sacrifice and psychopomp (in the form of Mercury) was included on the Louvre oil lamp, which was made in the manner of Riccio, likely after he completed the tomb (see Chapter V, fn 15). Thus, the programme of the lamp illustrates similar concerns for the health of the soul and its
In the Renaissance, Asclepius’ concern with the health of the soul was also linked to Plato’s discussion of the immortality of the soul. Of all the ancient discussions of the sacrificial offerings given to Asclepius, the most famous and most discussed in the Renaissance was that offered by Socrates on his deathbed. The offering was recorded in Plato’s *Phaedo*, a dialogue centred on four arguments for the immortality of the individual soul. As the beloved teacher drew his last breaths, he made the request: “Crito, we owe a cock to Asclepius, pay it and do not neglect it.” The meaning of this sentence has been debated from antiquity to modern times. What was the intent of Socrates’ request? Did he feel a need to repent before his death? Was it a last sign of piety? Was the debt owed to Asclepius because the act of suicide was an offence? Or was Socrates thanking the god because death, freeing the soul from the body, was viewed as a cure from life?45

The view that the offering was made for curing Socrates from life became one of the most popular interpretations.46 The association of Asclepius with the salvation of the soul belongs to Late Antiquity.47 The notion that Socrates’ request signified that death was a cure from life was discussed in the writings of Desiderious Erasmus, Marsilio Ficino, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Giovanni Pierio Valeriano, and Lodovico Ricchieri. Erasmus referred to the last request of Socrates in the *Enchiridion* and in the *De Copia*, interpreting it to mean either that those who are confident that they have lived their life well will welcome death rather than fear it, or that the manner in which one

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approaches death is a measure of one’s life.\textsuperscript{48} Because Socrates’s request was recorded in the \textit{Phaedo}, the sacrifice to Asclepius would have been inextricably tied to the discussions in the Renaissance over the immortality of the soul.

Pointing to the fame of Socrates’ last request during the Renaissance, Dieter Blume proposed that the \textit{Sacrifice to Asclepius} on the Della Torre monument might, thus, suggest the soul’s successful journey into the afterlife.\textsuperscript{49} However, Riccio did not include any birds amongst the sacrificial offerings, and thus his panel makes no direct reference to the sacrifice of Socrates. It may be useful to link the scene of sacrifice to a more general appreciation of Asclepius’ concern for the health of the soul. Renaissance discussions of the episode from the \textit{Phaedo} show that Asclepius was understood not just as a medical god but—in the words of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola—as “a healer of souls.”\textsuperscript{50} In a chapter of the \textit{Hieroglyphica} entitled “Puritas Animi,” Giovanni Piero...

\textsuperscript{48} “...cum mox emoriturus iocatur in Phaedonem, admonens ut gallum persoluat Aesculapio, locus est: Mortem etiam optabilem esse iis qui sibi vitae integre actae conscii sunt’ Rursum alter locus: Cuiusmodi fuerit hominis vita, id in morte potissimum apparere: Rursum, constantis suique perpetuo similis exemplum est: etenim ciusmodi fuerat in omni vita Socratis vultus oratioque, talis erat et morituro.” Desiderii Erasmus Roterodami, \textit{De Copia Verborum ac rerum}, in \textit{Opera Omnia}, vol. I.6, ed. Betty I. Knott (Netherlands: Elsevier Science Pub., 1988), 263. “...just before he died, joking with Phaedo and reminding him to sacrifice a cock to Aesculapius, this suggests: Death is even desirable to those who are conscious of a well-spent life; or this one: The nature of a man’s life is revealed most clearly at his death. This is a good illustrative example of a steadfast and entirely consistent life, since Socrates when faced with imminent death looked and spoke just as he had done through his whole life.” Desiderius Erasmus, \textit{De Copia or Copia: Foundations of the Abundant Style}, trans. and annotated by Betty I. Knott, \textit{Collected Works of Erasmus}, Vol. 24, ed. Craig R. Thompson, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 24.640.

J.L. Heiberg, “Socrates’ sidste Ord,” \textit{Oversicht over del Kgl. Danske Videnskabernes Selskabs Forhandlinger} 4 (1902): 108-109. Lodovico Ricchieri (Caelius Rhodiginus) (1453-1525) was a professor of Greek and author of the \textit{Lectiones Antiquae}, published in Venice by Aldus Manutius in 1516,a work described by Paolo Giovio as outdated and something of a hodgepodge of knowledge. However, Giovio, who had heard Ricchieri lecture in both Padua and Milan, recorded that Ricchieri was a great success as a lecturer.


Valeriano discusses Socrates’s last request and writes that the sacrifice was made for health of the soul.\footnote{Valeriano, \textit{Hieroglyphica}, 287-8; Elizabeth McGrath, “‘The Drunken Alcibiades’: Rubens’s Picture of Plato’s Symposium,” \textit{Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute} Vol. 46 (1983): 234.}

Other classical sources made this connection between Asclepius and the health of the soul. By Late Antiquity spiritual health was linked with Asclepius; the later Neo-Platonists argued that Socrates made his last request because the soul “in the process of generation becomes sick and at the point of death needs help so as to become sound again.”\footnote{Edelstein, \textit{Asclepius}, II.130-131. This was brought up by Olympiodorus in his \textit{In Platonis Phaedonem Commentaria} on 205.24 “Why does he (Socrates) pay a cock to Asclepius? Is it in order that he may heal the parts of the soul that have become sick in the process of generation or is it not that in accordance with the oracle he too desires to return to his native beginnings singing the paean?” and 244.44 “Why did he (Socrates) say he owed the sacrifice to Asclepius and why were these his last words? Naturally, if he owed it, being a watchful man, he would not have forgotten it; or is it because the soul, being liberated from its many cares, requires the foresight of Paeon? Wherefore the oracle also says the souls when returning sing the paean.”}

In the Orphic Hymns, Asclepius was praised because he gave men a good end to their life and opened up the path into the afterlife for those initiated into philosophy.\footnote{Edelstein, \textit{Asclepius}, II.131; I.335 Orphic Hymn, LXVII.}

A reading of Erasmus’ \textit{Ciceronianus} illustrates that this may have been appreciated by Renaissance humanists. In the critique of some of his contemporaries and their insistence on writing in a strict Ciceronian style, a style so strict that they sought to substitute Christian names and terms with pagan ones, Erasmus inquired if they will substitute the names of Apollo or Asclepius for that of Christ.\footnote{Desiderius Erasmus, \textit{The Ciceronian: A Dialogue on the Ideal Latin Style}, trans. and annotated by Betty I. Knott, in the \textit{Collected Works of Erasmus}, Vol. 28 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 388. Edelstein, Vol. II, 134.} It was much more common to substitute the name Apollo for the name of Christ, but Erasmus’ comment suggests that the name of Asclepius may also have been used. As we have seen, the name of Asclepius would have been a fitting substitution since Asclepius, like Christ, led man “to
immortality and true life.”

Those granted aid by Asclepius needed to demonstrate piety, virtue, and desire—all elements pertinent to the Christian faith.

On the Della Torre monument, the Sacrifice to Asclepius is placed at the moment where, in a Christian narrative, we would expect a reference to the Last Communion. But here the last rite is replaced by a scene of sacrifice to Asclepius. The learned viewer is thus encouraged to consider the history of religion, the role of Asclepius as a classical substitute for Christ, and the significance of seeking assistance from Asclepius. The learned viewer, well versed in the history of classical religion, would have been able to appreciate this significance; in particular that Asclepius and Christ were both linked to salvation and the health of the soul.

55 “come blessed one, saviour, granting a good end to life.” Edelstein, Asclepius, II.131; I.335.
56 To equate the snake in the sacrifice panel with the salvation of the soul is not without precedent. In the Renaissance the snake could hold numerous meanings, making it a difficult symbol to interpret. While the most memorable Biblical references to snakes characterized them as a symbol of evil, they could serve as a symbol of both good and bad, of both evil and salvation. Although a serpent could be used to represent the devil, it was also used to signify wisdom and prudence (See Matthew 10:16 “Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore as wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.” Riccio most frequently used snakes in his work to symbolize prudence).

Snakes were also linked with salvation. In the Old Testament, Moses presented the brazen serpent as the cure for snake bites. In his discussion of the god Asclepius, Valeriano made a link between the snakes of Asclepius and the brazen serpent of Moses. Discussing statues of Asclepius, Valeriano observed that Asclepius held a support with a serpent curled around it similar to the one that Moses had used to save the Israelites, one which Valeriano added was also used for healing. Valeriano, Hieroglyphica, 158. Thus, this presents another link between the healing powers of Asclepius and the Judaic/Christian faiths. Moreover, the brazen serpent was presented as a parallel to Christ in John III: 14-15: “as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.” Aby Warburg, “A lecture on Serpent Ritual,” trans. W. F. Mainland, Journal of the Warburg Institute 2, no. 4 (April, 1939): 290. This parallel is found in the church of St. Ambrogio, in Milan, where a brazen serpent placed on a column is balanced by a crucifix on the opposite side of the nave. On the brazen serpent as typology for the crucifixion see also Paolo Marconi, “Virtuti Fortuna Comes’ Gaurino Guarini e il caduceo ermetico,” Ricerche di Storia dell’Arte 1-2 (1976): 29-44. One example of this is Lotto’s painting of the brazen serpent which bears the inscription “Humanae redemptionis figura.” Diana Gallis, “Concealed Wisdom: Renaissance Hieroglyphica and Lorenzo Lotto’s Bergamo Intarsarie,” The Art Bulletin 62 (Sept: 1980): 368.

Valeriano recognized that for Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans the serpent was a sacred symbol. In the Renaissance, it was understood that for the Egyptians and Romans the serpent was not only a symbol of health, but also of the body and the soul. Valeriano’s discussion included the ancient understanding of the snake’s power to rejuvenate itself, to shed its weak body, and the belief that snakes had the knowledge of which plants had healing power and which could revive the dead. Thus, their skills paralleled those of Asclepius. Valeriano, Hieroglyphica, 158; Pausanias, Description of Greece, 65.
The reference to the cult of Asclepius holds parallels to the use of another mystery cult that Riccio drew upon in his work—the cult of Bacchus. The Bacchic mysteries were a common subject on ancient sarcophagi upon which putti represented the souls of those initiated into the faith.\(^57\) The representation of Bacchic celebration was a popular theme on classical tomb monuments because it promised happiness after death. The imagery of children making wine continued to be used on sarcophagi during the medieval period although the subject was transformed to illustrate the joys of paradise made available through the blood of Christ. The link made between the wine of Bacchus and the blood of Christ was a popular metaphor in both Renaissance thought and art. Like the comparison made between Apollo and Christ, comparisons between Dionysus and Christ were frequent in the Renaissance.\(^58\) One of the most important ties between the two was the concept of the “fountain of living waters,” that served as a metaphor for both of them. Bacchic drunkenness enabled man the foretaste of knowledge—that is, knowledge of the divine—not normally available to him.\(^59\)

As pointed out in the previous chapter, Riccio combined images of Bacchic revelry with sacrifice on the Frick and the Rothschild (Fig. 63 and 65) oil lamps as well as on the paschal candelabrum.\(^60\) While the theme of Bacchic revelry is more prominent on the upper level of the paschal candelabrum (Fig. 81), it is also present on the Della Torre monument. The young putti in the panel of The Soul’s arrival in the Elysian Fields (Fig. 9) dance and make music. The theme of drunkenness is presented twice in this panel: in

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the lower right corner, there is an overturned wine amphora placed at the feet of the
sleeping men, and in the upper right corner, a putto leans to drink from the river Lethe
(Fig. 52). Drinking from the river Lethe held the same association in the Renaissance as
Bacchic inebriation.\(^{61}\) As Anchises explained to Aeneas in Book VI of the Aeneid,
drinking from the river Lethe caused the elimination of memory and made the soul ready
for rebirth.\(^{62}\) As we saw in the previous chapter, this motif was used by Fracastoro in the
Syphilis sive Morbus Gallicus: Callirhoë sent Ilceus into a Lethean sleep so that she
might be able to communicate with him. In this example the state of “Lethean sleep”
meant that the soul was in a state separate from man’s impure body; because the soul was
now separated from the body’s impurity, it could receive knowledge of the divine.\(^{63}\)

In Riccio’s work, the most significant intertwining of the cult of Bacchus and the
passion of Christ is found on the marble base of the paschal candelabrum. On one side,
Francesco di Cola carved a bearded mask and a snake emerging from a woven basket
(Fig. 82). Saxl attributed this bearded mask to the cult of Bacchus, adding that the snake
emerging from a woven basket was also tied to the cult and the revelation of mysteries.\(^{64}\)
In this relief the two Bacchic symbols are presented with the instruments of Christ’s
passion—a combination that ties the cult of Bacchus and the passion of Christ with the
initiation of men into the mysteries and the joys of the afterlife.

In the Soul’s arrival in the Elysian Fields, Riccio included a similar reference to the
mysteries. At the feet of the sleeping figures is a mask and a wine amphora; the mask is

\(^{61}\) Cumont, Afterlife in Roman Paganism, 201. Anthony Radcliffe argues that this figure is to be understood
as that of the soul of the professor who is preparing himself to be reborn. Anthony Radcliffe, “The Illness
of the Professor / The Soul of the Professor in the Fortunate Woods,” in The Genius of Venice: 1500-1600.
\(^{62}\) Vergil, Aeneid, VI.710-6.
\(^{63}\) See Chapter V.
\(^{64}\) Saxl, “Pagan Sacrifice,” 353.
nearly identical to that on the base of the paschal candelabrum. While some of the objects in Riccio’s panel—namely, the book and the armillary sphere—may be interpreted to suggest the former professions of the sleeping figures, this interpretation does not explain the inclusion of the mask and the overturned amphora.\textsuperscript{65} By including this mask, Riccio is connecting this motif to its earlier use on the candelabrum and, thus, to the cult of Bacchus. What is the significance then of including references to the cult of Bacchus in this scene? The objects at the feet of the sleeping men in the Elysian Field link the instruments of knowledge (the book and the armillary sphere) with objects representative of the cult of Bacchus (the mask and amphora). Combined, these objects suggest the enlightenment of man after death; thus, Riccio illustrates what was deemed by humanists as one of the most important joys of the afterlife—knowledge of the divine.

In the third panel, the entire community has gathered to present a generous offering of lambs, swine, and a bull to the pagan god Asclepius—a god who served as a parallel to Christ for the learned viewer. While the sacrifice to Asclepius is made at a pagan altar in front of a classical temple, the scene contains references very familiar to the Christian audience: the man kneeling in prayer with his arms crossed over his chest; the sacrifice of a lamb, which was frequently paralleled to the sacrifice of Christ; and, lastly, the man with a lamb on his back, who would have reminded the viewer of Christ as the Good Shepherd. The sacrifice made to Asclepius should have illustrated to the viewer qualities important to the Christian faith: piety, virtue, and purity—qualities that were linked with the life of the virtuous professor.

The sacrifice to Asclepius signals the importance of the health of the soul and the need for its purification. Thus, this panel is linked to the \textit{Aeneid} panels on the tomb,

\textsuperscript{65} This bearded mask is not the mask associated with the arts of poetry.
which, as discussed previously, are tied to the contemporary debates over the nature and the immortality of the soul. The soul’s successful journey into the afterlife is thus one of the predominant themes of the programme.
In the fourth panel, *The Death of the Professor* (Fig. 6), friends and family of the professor mourn his passing; the sense of loss in the scene is overwhelming. Set within an enclosed space, many mourners are gathered around the deathbed of the professor. In this scene Riccio fully presents the intensity of mourning; six women, each presenting a different form of mourning, stand directly behind the body of the dead professor. They are shown to weep and wail, to throw their arms above them in despair or to tear their hair in their grief. One woman wipes the tears from her eyes while another, hunched over the professor, has entirely covered her face as she cries. The men demonstrate greater constraint in their grief: some of them embrace to lend comfort to one another; their mourning is more communal in nature. Their expressions suggest shock at the professor’s passing. One of the most eloquent expressions of their grief is visible in the lower right corner of the scene where one of the mourners, he leans his head upon his hand, sits in silent resignation. This scene, particularly affective and emotional, fully captures the sense of loss from the professor’s death.

Riccio’s death scene reflects contemporary mourning practice: it is set in a private and enclosed setting, where the displays of excessive grief are confined to women. With the development of Renaissance humanism and the increasing importance placed on decorum, mourning practices were transformed. Signs of extreme mourning were considered inappropriate in the public sphere, as weeping and other visible forms of grief were discouraged at funerals and mourning became more introspective, writing became a principal outlet for masculine mourning, and the genres of funerary elegy and consolatory
letter writing became increasingly popular.\textsuperscript{1} Such works were written for a selective, private, and principally male audience.

As stated earlier, the Della Torre monument is exceptional for its exclusively *all’antica* visual language, applied with such single-mindedness that no Christian iconography made its way onto the tomb. And yet, as we have seen, Riccio discovered within that pre-Christian language rich resources for addressing questions concerning the afterlife of the soul. In this panel, Riccio turned above all to the language of funeral elegy.

The correspondence with funeral oratory and elegy brings out the Christian significance of this monument. His narrative shares with Renaissance funerary oratory and elegy the primary aim of persuading the audience to pursue a more virtuous life by presenting a model of such a life. The funeral oration in honour of Girolamo Della Torre written by Giovanni Pierio Valeriano, as well as the funerary elegies in commemoration of Marcantonio Della Torre written by the Veronese physician Girolamo Fracastoro and the Mantuan poet Niccolò D’Arco provide an insightful parallel to the tomb’s narrative.

The strict classicizing aspect of the Della Torre monument and its lack of Christian motifs was a common element in Renaissance funerary elegies. Traditionally, references to pagan antiquity were more acceptable in funeral oratory and elegy than in funerary monuments. This was the result of the nature of their respective audiences. While funerals were public ceremonies, important funerary orations were to be delivered in a flawless classical Latin; as a result, the intended listener was confined to the learned

\textsuperscript{1} Sharon Strocchia, *Death and Ritual in Renaissance Florence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 137 et al.
This audience was expected to understand a Christian parallel in a pagan reference and discern what was and was not fitting to Christian teachings. Most importantly, this audience would be able to dismiss ideas that did not correspond to Christian thought. Elegiac poetry, with an even more private nature and a more limited audience, an audience generally confined to the circle of family and friends of the deceased, permitted even greater freedoms. While orators often intermingled pagan and Christian references, poets often presented their elegies solely *all’antica*.

Riccio’s imagery presents a visual parallel to the imagery and mode of delivery frequently found in Renaissance elegies, providing a context for understanding Riccio’s strict application of ancient language in the monument. I argue that Riccio’s narrative programme was inspired by these genres. But rather than attempting to copy or translate these genres, Riccio absorbed and reinvented the means by which poets and orators commemorated the dead. Riccio’s narrative panels should be seen as rivals to funeral oratory and elegy as a means of commemoration.

**Funeral Oratory and the Tomb**

The central focus of this first section on funeral oratory is the orator’s use of praise to inspire his listeners to pursue a more virtuous life and the parallels that can be found in Riccio’s narrative. Funeral oratory was part of the genre of epideictic rhetoric and, generally, consisted of three parts: the exordium, praise, and peroration. After the exordium the orator would praise the life of the deceased in chronological order. Starting with their birthplace, the orator was given an opportunity to promote civic myths.  

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praise of ancestry and family, which followed, allowed for a discussion of “the nature of true nobility” and its vital role in nurturing virtue, which, in turn, led to a discussion of the deceased’s education. The latter provided the humanist not only with an opportunity to demonstrate the natural talents of the deceased, but also to emphasize the link between character and education and to discuss the belief that the pursuit of knowledge was a central aspect of the ars vitae.

Giovanni Piero Valeriano of Belluno, best known for his Hieroglyphica and De litteratorum infelicitate, was requested to present the funeral oratory for Girolamo Della Torre in 1506. In his Oratio in funere Hieronymi Turriani Veronensis, Valeriano adhered quite strictly to the genre of funerary oratory developed in the Renaissance. Commencing with the common motif of the orator’s reluctance to deliver the oration, he then preceded to the glorification of Verona, the birthplace of Girolamo. Riccio’s narrative, correspondingly, commences with the personification of a city (Fig. 3). Standing in front of a laurel tree, a symbol of fame, this matronly figure holds at waist level a miniature version of a city. There is an empty cartellino that hangs below the model of the city as if providing a space for an inscription, yet it remained un-inscribed. The decision to begin an entire narrative by opening not only with a personification of a city but also with that of a river god—who was usually meant to refer to a specific location and suggest local

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6 A refusal motivated not because he felt he was not up to the task, nor because he consider himself an inappropriate choice. Rather the reference to the numerous pleadings for him to reconsider his original decision, served to suggest that he was greatly sought after by both family and friends of the deceased and considered by the community as the best candidate.
nourishment—is unusual on funerary monuments and is adopted here in clear recognition
of the forms of funerary oratory.\(^7\)

Birthplace often played a significant role in funerary elegy even when the author
was not a native of the same city as the deceased. This is evident in the funerary elegies
written in honour of Marcantonio Della Torre by the Mantuan poet Niccolò D’Arco.
D’Arco, in his laments for Marcantonio Della Torre, writes poignantly of the mourning
of the city of Verona. Looking at Riccio’s panel, we note that the two figures that signify
geographic location are placed by Apollo and Philosophy; this placement is essential
because Apollo and Philosophy stand behind the professor and serve to inspire him. The
personification of the city and the river god seem to be related to the idea that the civic
environment not only nurtures its inhabitants but also instils virtue. This idea was present
in funeral oratory, was emphasized in Valeriano’s commemoration of Girolamo, and it is
evident in D’Arco elegies. In D’Arco’s second elegy commemorating Marcantonio Della
Torre, he presents Verona as the mother of heroes and the parent of virtue.\(^8\)

While the hills in the background of Riccio’s opening panel evoke the countryside
around Verona, the model of the city held in the first panel appears to be that of Padua
rather than Verona. The model includes buildings that are reminiscent of the church of St.
Anthony and the Palazzo della Ragione in Padua.\(^9\) This is surprising since the tomb was
erected in Verona and it was more common to commemorate the birthplace of the

\(^7\) It was not typical to refer to location on funerary monuments of professors. On the topos of birthplace and
the glorification of the civic environment in funerary oratory see McManamon, 20, 26-44, and Strocchia,
Death and Ritual in Renaissance Florence, 105-148.

\(^8\) Niccolò D’Arco, Numeri 75. Elegia ad Battum et Fracastorum et Fœlicem, 45: “At tu quem Verona tenet,
Verona virorum altrix et virtutem omnium amica parens…” Niccolò D’Arco, Numeri 75. Elegia ad
Battum et Fracastorum et Fœlicem, 45.

\(^9\) Most contemporary scholars identify this personification as Padua. Leopoldo Cicognara understood it as
Verona and river god as the Adige River. Leopoldo Cicognara, Storia della scultura: dal suo risorgimento
in Italia sino al secolo di Napoleone per servire di continuazione alle opere di Winckelmann e di
deceased. Perhaps this anomaly may be explained by the fact that the University of Padua was the official university of Venice and, thus, of the Veneto terra firma; therefore, the city of Padua also held civic importance for the citizens of Verona. However, if the reason for the inclusion of this personification was to underline the importance of the city as an instiller of virtue, emphasizing the civic environment in the formation of one’s character, it may not have been necessary for this personification of a city to have been clearly identified.

After the discussion of the deceased’s birth place, the orator typically proceeded to the subject of the deceased’s ancestry. This part of the oration was strongly linked to the orator’s “firm belief in the power of moral exemplars.” The belief in the value of presenting moral exemplars was central to Valeriano’s oratory, and it will be argued that it is also significant to Riccio’s monument. Following a discussion of the origins of the Della Torre, Valeriano turned to the subject of Girolamo’s education. Praise is given to Giovanni Battista, the father of Girolamo, for his great concern for his son’s education. Girolamo’s many talents are recounted; this is followed by a discussion of his academic career and his gift for teaching. Valeriano’s focus upon Girolamo’s popularity and respect he received were not only meant to illustrate Girolamo’s talent for teaching; it also underlines the conventional beliefs in the power of education. We are informed that

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10 Alberti in Book VIII of *De re aedificatoria* would emphasize that public funerary monuments serve to enhance and enoble a city, and encouraged men “to imitate the virtues of the most famous.” Alberti, Book VII, 245. See Alberti and Pliny the Elder on the role of sculpture for civic purposes. For Pliny, sculpture was one manner in which to illustrate the greatness of a city. See K. Jex-Blake and E. Sellers, *The Elder Pliny’s Chapters on the History of Art*, rev. ed. (Chicago: 1968), XXXIV, 29-35, and Jonathan B. Riess, “The Civic View of Sculpture in Alberti’s *De re aedificatoria*,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 32, No. 1 (Spring, 1979): 13.

11 McManamon, *Funerary Oratory*, 47.

12 Valeriano, *Oratio in funere*, 8-10.
Girolamo’s piety and moral nature spilled out and became evident in the lives of his students.\footnote{Valeriano, \textit{Oratio in funere}, 10: “In quo statu, posteaque fama optima, Auctoritate maxima, frequentissimoque Gymnasio annos undeviginti perseueraverat, omnium ingenia optime docens, Sanctissime instituens, Humanissime fouens, peracto iam secondo, et Sexagesimo vitae anno:…”}

Following the discussion of the deceased’s external goods, the orator turned to those of the body, before proceeding to the discussion of the internal goods, the goods of the soul.\footnote{McManamon, \textit{Funerary Oratory}, 20.} Valeriano informs us that Girolamo embodied such virtues as charity, integrity, kindness, and hospitality.\footnote{Medicine and charity were linked by humanists to present an example of “activist spirituality.” McManamon, \textit{Funerary Oratory}, 147-8.} Amongst other things, he was good natured, accessible, and eager. He led a restrained mode of life; according to Valeriano, he was also prudent, constant, and faithful.\footnote{Valeriano, \textit{Oratio in funere}, 11: “Ac, ut missa fiat parumper doctrinae praestantia: In qua: cognitione, Pythagorae: Iudico, Democrito: Ordine, Herophile, experimentia, Hippocrati merito conferendus esset: cogitant insuper plaerique omnes, quanta Deum pietate colverit, quanta integritate, quanta innocencia vitam egerit: Quam benignus: quam comis: quam hospitalis: quam beneficus in homines extrema paupertate laborantes fuerit. In amicos vero, familiaresque omnes, facilis, obuius, expositus, promptus, amabilis. Adiicem hie Proceritatem corporis, Decoram faciem, Civilem cultum: Tot primorum hominum, ac excellentiam principum familiaritates. Naturam magnificam temperantem vitam, Fortituidinem, Iustitiam, Prudentiam, Humanitatatem, Fudem, Constantiam: atque, eas omnis animi dotes: In quibus enumerandis, Parthenium aequalem meum: Iuuenem ingenio, et facundia clarum:…”}

As John M. McManamon has demonstrated in his \textit{Funerary Oratory and the Cultural Ideals of Italian Humanism}, a funerary oration was an important speech for the orator; it was more than an occasion of commemoration—it provided an invaluable opportunity for the orator to demonstrate to his audience the manner in which to live.\footnote{McManamon, \textit{Funerary Oratory}, 32.} The virtues of the deceased were not merely to be listed; specific examples of their actions were to be presented, providing the orator with an opportunity to illustrate the necessity of those virtues.\footnote{McManamon, \textit{Funerary Oratory}, 3, 33. They would at times illustrate that they researched the actions and character of the deceased. Valeriano, in his oration, however, did not follow this very rigorously. He focused on presenting a comprehensive list of virtues, illustrating the effects of only a few.} Moreover, the orator failed his duty if he illustrated virtues...
that were fabricated or gave accounts of which he had no direct evidence.\textsuperscript{19} The actions of the deceased were held up to illustrate that they had pursued the Ciceronian \textit{ars vitae}—the art of good and holy living.

Through their praise of the deceased, funerary orators wanted to inspire their audience. The use of praise, as Bernardo Giustiniani once declared, serves as “a certain innate stimulus to virtue.” Thus—as McManamon has illustrated—many funeral eulogies would conclude by appealing for an imitation of virtue, thereby moving funerary oratory into the realms of deliberative oratory.\textsuperscript{20} By presenting exemplars, funeral oratory was, therefore, connected to the greater educational ideals of the humanists and reflected the wider concern with the manner in which one lived.

Riccio’s narrative may be better understood if the life of the professor is meant to serve as a moral exemplar to the viewer. His role as an exemplar may be observed in the manner in which Riccio’s professor lives and dies. The presence of the gods who give the professor inspiration and support him in his illness indicates to the viewer that the professor had lived a good life (Figs. 3-4). By making a reference to the \textit{Laöcoon} (Fig. 83) in the pose of the professor in the scene of the professor’s illness, Riccio suggest that he died a noble, stoical death.\textsuperscript{21} As we have seen, his piety is evident in the scene of \textit{Sacrifice to Asclepius} (Fig. 5), a god who only assisted the pure and the good. The journey of the professor’s soul into the Underworld and its successful entry into the

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{19} McManamon, \textit{Funerary Oratory}, 3.
\textsuperscript{20} McManamon, \textit{Funerary Oratory}, 32.
\textsuperscript{21} The figure of the professor in the illness scene, in part, echoes that of the priest in the \textit{Laöcoon}. Note in particular, the position of the professor’s legs. Riccio here draws on this as an \textit{exemplum doloris}, giving a parallel between the priest who struggles between life and death as the perfect example of Stoic suffering—suffering without cowardice. As Ettlinger argues, this topos would have been readily understandable to the viewer following the uncovering of the \textit{Laöcoon} in 1506. See Irene Favaretto, \textit{Arte antica e cultura antiquaria nelle collezioni venete al tempo della Serenissima} (Rome: "L'Erma" di Bretschneider, 1990), 122. L. D. Ettlinger, “\textit{Exemplum doloris}: reflections on the Laöcoon group,” in M. Meiss (ed.), \textit{De Artibus Opuscula XL. Essays in honour of Erwin Panofsky} (Zurich: Buehler Buchdruck, 1960), 121-6.
\end{footnotesize}
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Elysian Fields reiterates his virtue (Figs. 8-9). The journey of the professor would have been linked to the journey of Aeneas, who was often presented in the Renaissance as an example of the life perfected and a model to be followed. The importance of a virtuous life is celebrated in the final scene (Fig. 10), which depicts the Triumph of Humanist Virtue over Death. In this last panel, the foot of Fame rests on a vase inscribed with the word VIRTUTIS (of virtue). On the other side of Fame, Pegasus creates the fountain Hippocrene, which denotes fame achieved through virtue. Thus, just as in funerary oratory, Riccio’s professor presents a model of a life well lived.

However, there is a problem: unlike funeral oratory, the narrative on the Della Torre Tomb does not provide specific references to the lives of the deceased it honours. The requirement for orators to present specific examples or anecdotes from the deceased’s life is not reflected on the tomb. Instead, Riccio’s narrative is allegorical rather than biographical. As the comparison with the portraits in the death masks above clearly demonstrates, the professor in Riccio’s narrative is neither Girolamo nor Marcantonio. Indeed, the professor in the narrative should be understood as a “type.”

It is inevitably much harder to present a biographical commemoration of a life in a short visual narrative than in an oration. Riccio, of course, contended with the added difficulty of commemorating two men, making a specific and coherent biographical

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22 Since Pegasus was linked with Fame, he was associated with virtue that “overcoming all, wins itself noble renown.” Michael W. Cole, Cellini and the Principles of Sculpture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). Cole cites this text from an anonymous treatise published by Georg Heinrich Bode, Scriptores rerum mythicarum latini tres romae nuper reperti (Cellis: Schultz, 1834), 62, 90: “De sanguine autem Gorgonis natus est Pegasus, qui fama interpretatur; et pede suo fontem Castalieae sive Pegaseum produxit; quia virtus, omnia superans, bonam sibi acquirit famam.” Benventuo Cellini’s medal of Pegasus for Pietro Bembo was given the latter interpretation. Bembo’s medal was interpreted by G. C. Capaccio “che l’attion virtuosa fa scaturir i fonti della Gloria, e della lode.” from Anthony Hobson, Apollo and Pegasus: An Enquiry into the Formation and Dispersal of a Renaissance Library (Amsterdam: Gérard Th. van Heusden, 1975) and from Cole, 62, 90. However, it is unlikely that Riccio’s use of Pegasus on the Paschal candelabrum is related to the notion of Fame. It appears linked in some manner to divine inspiration since the image of Pegasus is contained in the scene representing Religion. The image on the candelabrum depicts a scene of offering linking it also with devotion.
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narrative difficult. Thus, the move from biographical narrative to allegorical narrative served Riccio well.\textsuperscript{23} By moving away from citing specific instances of the virtuous actions of the Della Torre father and son, Riccio was able to make references that were easily understood and, ultimately, to present an exemplar to the viewer more effectively.

Riccio drew upon both rhetoric and poetry, as will be shown shortly, to make this narrative more effective.\textsuperscript{24} In rhetoric the use of common themes aided the orator in presenting a clear and convincing argument. Riccio uses these well known references to heighten the spectator’s emotion and to present his narrative more effectively. This is clearly illustrated by the \textit{Aeneid} references on the tomb, which would have quickly brought a set of relevant ideas about the soul to the viewer’s mind. Furthermore, Riccio’s citation of the \textit{Laöcooon} in the body of the professor in the scene of his illness likewise would have produced a range of associations in the mind of a learned viewer. As Antonio Tebaldeo captured in his verse about the statue, “I am Laöcooon, so expressive and alive that, if you are not made of the material out of which I am made and my sons, you will make of your eyes a sorrowful river.”\textsuperscript{25} If it was only the hardest of viewers who remained unmoved by the suffering shown in the \textit{Laöcooon}, then the viewers of Riccio’s narrative would have been softened by the pain of the professor in this scene. The reference to this famous model of suffering would have served to make the suffering

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{23} The move to an allegorical narrative resolved issues that might have arisen from the monument’s structure, which, as discussed in Chapter III, was derived from the tombs of saints. The inclusion of a narrative depicting a biography of either Girolamo or Marcantonio would have created the potential for their being identified as saints.


\end{quote}
more evident to the viewer, making the narrative more emotionally charged. Riccio was not attempting to directly translate funerary oratory into a narrative form, but his narrative demonstrates a familiarity with the genre and shares a similar purpose.

A similar device appears to have been included in the tomb’s inscription, which, likewise, may be linked to the desire to heighten the viewer’s emotional response. The expression of loss, found in the second inscription, was not a common element in the epitaphs for Paduan professors.26 By emphasizing Marcantonio’s premature death, the inscription would have created an increased emotional response in the reader, further engaging them in the monument and, thus, in its didactic message.

McManamon found that funeral orators frequently presented parallels between the visual arts and oratory. They did so largely in an attempt to create a vivid image of the deceased in the mind of their listeners. The ancient historian Polybius, writing on funerals, suggested that this tactic of the ancient orators served to create an image of the individual even in the minds of those listeners who were unfamiliar with the deceased.27 Renaissance orators recognized the persuasive power of visual images and appreciated the role that the visual arts had played in antiquity in inspiring men to greatness. Indeed, in his Tractatus de funeribus, Paris de Grassis, Papal Master of Ceremonies for Julius II and Leo X, suggested that the funerals of cardinals should follow the practice of the ancients who had brought paintings depicting the deceased’s life to funerals.28 This would allow both art and oratory to present exemplars to the mourners.

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26 Only 7 of the tombs examined by Carrington included expressions of loss; with the exception of the Della Torre monument, all of these date to before 1450. Carrington, 86.
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For humanists, most frequently, it was the portraits of great men that were held up as works of art that inspire the viewer to pursue virtue.\(^{29}\) At the end of the day, orators believed that their power to persuade men to be virtuous surpassed that of the visual arts. Nonetheless, they often commented on the ancient discussion of the power of portraits to encourage men to pursue virtue. It was a common topic in antiquity: Polybius had written of the use of *imagines* to inflame youths to strive for fame and virtue; Sallust declared that *imagines* had inspired the great actions of Publius Scipio and Quintus Fabius Maximus.\(^{30}\) Andrea Navagero, a friend of the Della Torre, argued in his funerary oration for Doge Leonardo Loredan that famous ancestors served as inspiration for their family. Like Sallust, he stated that such ancestors inflamed subsequent generations to pursue greatness.\(^{31}\)

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\(^{29}\) Ultimately, within the funerary context, it was sculpture that was understood to be most closely aligned with the orator’s need to commemorate the deceased. Numerous Renaissance orators would point to the ancient use of both oration and monuments to properly commemorate a hero (McManamon, 30-33). This was a topic taken up by Leon Battista Alberti, who wrote of the role of civic sculpture, in particular, of funerary monuments, in presenting heroes as inspiration and models for citizens. Alberti argued that by presenting images of worthy men funerary monuments show how influential virtue could be. He explained that in antiquity tomb monuments “were a great honor to the name of the city itself…and were a constant incitement to posterity to imitate the virtues of those whom they saw so highly revered.” (Jonathan B. Riess, “The Civic View of Sculpture in Alberti’s *De re aedificatoria,*” *Renaissance Quarterly* 32, No. 1 (Spring, 1979): 10-11. Alberti, Book VIII, 1, 163-166). Alberti wrote that the tombs on the Via Appia provided: “numerous occasions to recall the deeds of great men, and so provoke conversation that itself serves both to make light of the journey and to enhance the reputation of the city.” Leon Battista Alberti, *De re aedificatoria*, trans. Joseph Rykwert, Neil Leach, Robert Tavener (MIT Press, 1988), 245.


\(^{31}\) McManamon, *Funerary Oratory*, 47, 190. “Longe tamen maiores res ab illis geri quos et expectation hominem et parentum virtus excitet. Haeret enim eorum animis, quasi fax quaedam, assidua cogitatio que noctes diesque illos ad egregium agendum aliquid inflammet, quo maiobus (sic) suis digni reperiantur ac patrimonium gloriae sibi ab illis relictum et tueri et augere possint.”(1521). Both portraiture and numismatics in the Renaissance were understood to have a similar purpose. Both collecting coins and studying the portraits of virtuous men was argued to instil a desire for virtue. Niccolò Leonico Tomeo
It was well known in the Renaissance that wax masks were worn at funerals in classical antiquity. It is, however, not clear if Riccio would have appreciated the difference between these masks and death masks. The bronze portraits of the Della Torre above the tomb chest (Fig. 11-12) were cast as death masks, as is evident in their closed eyes, their sunken temples and cheeks, and the pronounced bone structure. It is possible that Riccio’s inclusion of masks on the Della Torre monument was a form of archaeological re-enactment.

The death masks of the Della Torre must have served as a visual parallel to the funeral orator’s praise of ancestors, which were also intended to encourage the imitation of virtue. The Della Torre masks served to keep the memory of the deceased and their rejected the value of possessing busts of ancient representations of “Caligulas, Neros or Domitians,” because these men did not provide a good moral exemplar. The value of moral exemplars for Tomemo far outweighed that of the artist’s skill. Andrew Gregory and Jonathan Woolfson, “Aspects of collecting in Renaissance Padua: A Bust of Socrates for Niccolò Leonico Tomeo,” Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 58 (1995): 264. Enea Vico argued that the moral value of collecting coins was clearly evident: “I have seen some who were so captured by the pleasure of looking at them, that they turned away from their wicked habits, and gave themselves – as if compelled by a certain stimulus – over to an honourable and noble life.” John Cunnally, Images of the Illustrious: The Numismatic Presence in the Renaissance (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1999), 37. Enea Vico, Discorsi sopra le medaglie di gli antichi (Venice: 1555), Book 1, 52. Another figure in this circle, Marco Mantova Benavides argued that: “Necesse est enim affatim in illo esse virtutum, qui sic amat alienas imagines.” (“There must be some virtue in him, who so loves the images of other men.”) Found in Vico, Book II, 89. The humanists would have argued that oratory was more effective in the goal “to persuade to imitation”; nonetheless, they held up the use of collecting of portraits and coins as an incentive to the pursuit of virtue. Thus, the presence of Riccio’s portraits of the deceased must have been closely linked to this goal of instilling virtue.

The popularity of making death masks was revived in the mid-quattrocento, yet they were rarely created in the manner done by Riccio. Vasari credits the revival of death masks to Andrea Verrocchio. He wrote of them being kept in “in ogni casa di Firenze sopra i camini, usci, finestre e cornicioni, infiniti de detti ritratti, tanto ben fatti e naturali che paiono vivi.” Giorgio Vasari, Le vite de’ più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori, testo a cura di Rosanna Bettarini, commento secolare a cura di Paola Barrochi, (Florence: Sansoni, 1966), III:543-4. While most of his contemporaries who made use of death masks did so in order to create portraits that reanimated the figures, Riccio has chosen to emphasize the mortality of the two Della Torre. It was a more common practice to use death masks to make portraits of the deceased as they appeared before their death. Riccio provides an example of this practice in his portrait bust of Antonio Trombetta. The pronounced bone structure, the sunken cheeks and temples suggest the portrait was based on a death mask; however, the portrait of Trombetta was reactivated by opening his eyes and mouth, and depicting him with a raised hand. While death masks were used in Renaissance funerary ritual, these masks were not placed on Renaissance tombs. Thus, Riccio’s inclusion of Girolamo and Marcantonio’s portraits as death masks on the tomb is, yet again, an anomaly—there was no attempt to reanimate their features. On the use of death masks in the Veneto and by Cavino see Charles Davis, “Aspects of Imitation in Cavino’s Medals,” Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 41, (1978): 331-334. See Ernest Benkard, Undying Faces, a collection of Death Masks, trans. Margaret M. Green (London: Hogarth Press, 1929).
virtue alive. The two missing putti, which once sat on the sides of the masks, held up oil lamps (Fig. 84) to keep the portraits of the deceased illuminated and thus prevent them from falling into obscurity.

For Leo Planiscig the divergence between the classicism of the narrative and the realism of the death masks exemplified what he viewed as a discord between Riccio’s tendencies towards naturalism and classicism.\(^{33}\) It seems more likely that Riccio exploited this contrast to rhetorical ends, choosing to emphasize, in the masks, the mortality and individuality of the deceased.\(^{34}\) The indexical portraits of Girolamo and Marcantonio, Riccio accentuates the transience of life, thereby drawing attention to the life of the spirit and the necessity of leading a good life.\(^{35}\) He also points out that these mortals, who suffered the fate of all mortals, yet did embody virtues that lead beyond the grave. To emphasize the death of the body in the death masks is to underline both the difficulty and the importance of pursuing a life of virtue, and thus preserving the health of the soul. As I argued in Chapter III, the structure of the monument drew upon the tombs of saints and would have informed the viewer that a model was presented in the narrative. Riccio’s narrative, like funerary oratory, places emphasis on virtue and on presenting the professor as a model of virtue. Likewise, the means of consolation found in Riccio’s narrative shares much in common with the forms of consolation used in funerary oratory.

\(^{33}\)Planiscig, 397. Planiscig considered Riccio’s naturalism as an indication of his early work. He viewed Riccio’s oeuvre largely as proceeding chronologically from naturalism to classicism.

\(^{34}\) This was not the first time that Riccio mixed classicism with naturalism. Victor Krahn pointed out that Riccio presents himself in the fashion of contemporary times in both the Santo reliefs of Judith and David before the Ark. Krahn, “Riccio’s Formation and Early Career,” in Andrea Riccio: Renaissance Master of Bronze, ed. Denise Allen and Peta Motture, New York, Frick Museum (London: Philip Wilson Pub., 2008), 12.

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Funerary Oratory and Consolation

The subject matter of the last panels of the monument turns from the painful subject of the professor’s illness and death and the mourning of his loved ones to scenes of hope and the celebration of heavenly joys and the rewards available after death. In the last two panels, Riccio depicted the soul of the professor as it arrives in the Elysian Fields and his triumph over death. In the final panel, Fame heralds the professor’s virtue. Death is now vanquished. Powerless, he is bound to a tree; his scythe lies on the ground. A similar shift is found in funerary oratory when the orator offers the mourners consolation. In the conclusion of Valeriano’s oration, the author encourages a feeling not unlike the one present in the concluding scenes of Riccio’s narrative. As Valeriano draws his oration to an end, he starts to reiterate the words beatus and felix. The Professor in the Elysian Fields, which is filled with love, laughter, music, and dance, reflects the sense of blessedness and happiness of the deceased that Valeriano conveyed to his listeners.

Valeriano holds up the life of the professor to his sons, adding an appeal from Girolamo to his sons that they take his life, most happy and innocent, as a model to imitate, so that they might join him in heaven:

Wherefore, since my mortal life has ended desirably and it is possible to do so (and because it is the more just), I enjoin you to imitate it, after letting go of your grief and placing my most happy and innocent life before you. In this way you may during your stay in this dark prison be united even though you have been exposed to so many misfortunes, since it has pleased God, who is the Best and Greatest, to see me happily at leisure in perpetual rest in the brightest height of heaven. And thus you may consider it glorious to be together.36

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36 Translation by Alexander Nagel and Kyle Mahoney. Valeriano, Oratio in funere, 15: “Quare, quum mea potius finita mortalitas, quita sit, quod aequius est, omisso luctu, felicissimam, innocentissimamque vitam meam vobis proponentes, eam imitamini: Ut, dum interim hoc tenebroso carcere, tot expositi calamitatibus devincti fueritis, quum Deo libuerit opt. Max. me in micantissimo coeli culmine liberum, perpetua requie feliciter ociantem visere, ac simul esse gloriemini.”
To appeal to the audience not only to conserve the memory of the deceased but also to follow their virtue as a model was a typical end to humanist funerary orations. Grief is laid aside and the listener is offered the hope of eternal life if he imitates the life of the deceased.

From the many topics of consolation, Valeriano had chosen to touch on the frailty of life and the nature of grief. However, his primary form of consolation came by presenting Girolamo’s virtue as worthy and deserving of imitation. Valeriano concludes that Girolamo’s life had been most blessed and his hope for an imperishable name was a result of his virtue.  

In this Riccio’s narratives echoes Valeriano’s oration: not only is the professor admitted to the Elysian Fields but, as we see in the final panel, he conquers death through his virtue (Fig. 10). Here, Fame, holding the laurel wreath earned by the professor, stands on a globe; she announces his triumph with her trumpet. The vase (Fig. 54) inscribed VIRTUTIS makes it clear that this triumph over death was achieved through virtue. As in Valeriano’s oration, the deceased in Riccio’s narrative is rewarded with life after death because of his virtue. It is clear that the message of Riccio’s tomb complements the intentions of funerary oratory, and, in particular, the approach of Valeriano’s consolation.

The final panel reflects Valeriano’s own words of consolation: Virtue is rewarded with “an imperishable name”—that is, virtue conquers death. The theme of an enduring fame was central to the consolation provided in the funerary elegies in honour of

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37 Valeriano, *Oratio in funere*, 13: “Nobilissimo enim loco natus, clarissimisque parentibus, summa studiorum meorum gloria, fastigioque spectandus: divitas opulentissimas, ad complendos ois vitae beatae numeros, honestissime conquisi. Ex virtute (si fas mihi sit dicere) nomen apud vos indelebile peperi, ac nullo unquam tempore intermoriturum.” The structure of Valeriano’s oration has thus been: to give praise to Verona as Girolamo’s birthplace; to present his family history and his ancestor’s greatness; to focus on his education; and to briefly review his career. This was followed by a discussion of his virtues and then the consolation. The consolation presented by Valeriano consists of nearly a third of the oration, and the main theme of his consolation is that the virtue that leads to beatitude is worthy of imitation.
Marcantonio Della Torre, which we will turn to shortly. Thus, both the tomb and funeral oratory underline the rewards of pursuing a life of virtue and—through the structure of the monument and its narrative—use praise as stimulus to a virtuous life.

**Funerary Elegy and the Tomb**

Funerary orations provide a primary literary context for this tomb, but they are not the only ones that do so: the use of pagan references, the expression of lament, and the manner of consolation illustrates that a literary context is also provided by funerary elegy. Funeral elegy in the Renaissance was divided into three principal parts: praise, lament, and consolation. Praise, as in funerary oratory, consisted of a discussion of the external and internal goods of the deceased. Just as in the case of funerary oratory, it provided the opportunity to present the deceased as a moral exemplar. However, the rules in funerary elegy were less rigid than in funerary oratory and there was much more flexibility in this genre. While the lament typically consisted of the expected expressions of sadness and mourning, it was taken to a further extreme in elegy than was permitted in funerary oratory. The poet often presented an image of a world thrown into disarray—of nature itself reversed.\(^38\) Lament, then, was a more prominent theme than it was in funerary oratory, and the pain of loss was given a more vivid expression. As in funerary oratory, the consolation that followed primarily focused on the hopes of the afterlife. Since the goal was, once again, persuasion, the consolation was understood as deliberative rather than epideictic.\(^39\) The consolation could consist of many arguments: the deceased was

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\(^{39}\) While most Renaissance scholars have interpreted praise to be the most important part of funerary elegy, the classification of funerary elegy as epideictic was rejected by G. W. Pigman, who contended “that it is more comprehensive to conceive of elegy as a representation of the process of mourning.” Indeed changes
now in heaven, everyone dies, he had led a good life, his end had been good, he would be
happier in heaven, and he no longer had any fear of death. Ultimately, the most effective
means of consolation was the Christian hope of a life everlasting.\textsuperscript{40}

Because it shares the goal of consolation and the presentation of an exemplar with
funerary oratory, funerary elegy is relevant to this discussion; however, it is also relevant
because the lack of Christian references was common practice in Renaissance funerary
elegies. As mentioned earlier, elegiac poetry was a more private genre than funerary
oratory. Its audience being more limited, it was permitted greater freedoms. For the
subsequent discussion of such elegies, we turn specifically to the poetry of two friends of
Marcantonio Della Torre and his brothers, Girolamo Fracastoro and Niccolò D’Arco.\textsuperscript{41}
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Funeral elegies drew on numerous classical references, from the Fates cutting the thread of life, to pagan rituals, sacrifice, and all other manner of figures from classical mythology. Nymphs and river gods mourn, while the Muses both mourn and celebrate the deceased. In addition, Renaissance elegists often wrote of the departed mingling with the pagan gods and Muses after his death.

In the poems commemorating Marcantonio, the nymphs give comfort to his family. They, along with the river gods, lament his death and scatter flowers over his tomb. Fracastoro frequently refers to rivers and river gods in his elegies, and this may further explain the inclusion of a river god in the opening panel of Riccio’s narrative. Dieter Blume identified the guide of the professor’s soul in the Elysian Fields as a nymph (Fig 9). The Muses were also evoked in funerary elegy. D’Arco wrote that the Muses attend to the grave of Marcantonio; they honour the deceased and guarantee his immortality. Fracastoro writes that Marcantonio had joined Apollo and the sweet Muses, and that the muses offered solace to Marcantonio’s family.

The Fates were also included in funerary elegy. In The Illness of the Professor, Riccio included the Fates and depicted Atropos preparing to cut the thread of the professor’s life. Fracastoro, in his funerary poem honouring Marcantonio, laments the

42 Hieronymi Fracastorii ... Poemata omnia: nunc multo, quam antea, emendatiora: accesserunt reliquiae Carminum (Ex typographia Seminarii, apud Augustinium Carattonium, 1740), Carminum II 108: “Quo fortasse meis consolarer Camoenis, Si miserors quidquam Musa levare potest”
43 Fracastoro, Carminum II, 108-111.
44 It may be Riccio included another nymph in The Soul’s arrival in the Elysian Fields, since the position of the figure with the cithara in the lower left echoes the position of the river god in the opening panel. However, as this figure plays a cithara, she may be representation of Erato, the muse of lyric poetry. As mentioned in Chapter IV Dieter Blume identified this figure as Orpheus.
46 D’Arco, Numeri 47, 34: “Musas sacro ex Helicone vocabit et canet ad tumulum et tumulo su peraddet honores.”
cruel gods and the cruel Fates who had only allowed Marcantonio a short life.\textsuperscript{48} In a later poem (1551), Fracastoro commemorates the life of Giovanni Battista Montani, a Veronese doctor, by writing of the Fates cutting the thread of life.\textsuperscript{49} The Mantuan poet Niccolò D’Arco wrote three elegies commemorating the loss of Marcantonio. In his \textit{Numeri 47}, D’Arco has Marcantonio plead that the thread of his life not be broken or, if this could not be, that he be permitted a sweet rest in his tomb.\textsuperscript{50}

While Riccio, as far as I am aware, was the only sculptor to include references to the Elysian Fields and the river Lethe on a Renaissance funerary monument, such references are found in funerary elegy. In his poem commemorating Montani, Fracastoro writes of Lethan sleep—a sleep that Riccio represented in the lower corner of \textit{The Soul’s arrival in the Elysian Fields}—and in a poem commemorating his son he writes of sweet Elysium.\textsuperscript{51}

Following the practices of the ancients, Renaissance funerary elegy often expressed great concern over appropriate burial and funerary rites. D’Arco wrote that according to ancient custom Giovanni Battista Della Torre brought annual offerings to the tomb.\textsuperscript{52} The poet himself took his own floral offerings to the tomb and whispered pious words to

\textsuperscript{48} From a short pastoral poem, c. 1512, written to Giambattista Della Torre. Girolamo Fracastoro, \textit{Poemata omnia}, Carmina XIV, 150.

\textsuperscript{49} The poem for Montani is Carmina XXV: “…Laethaeo indignans pressit te Parca sopore, Et secuit vitae grandia fila tuae.” The poem continues with a reference to Asclepius and his punishment for bringing back a soul from the Beyond. \textit{Poemata Omnia}, 159. For the dating of Fracastoro’s poetry see Francesco Pellegrini, “Appunti per una disposizione cronologica dei componimenti poetici del Fracastoro con l’aggiunta di alcune poesie in volgare a lui attribuite,” \textit{Studi Storici Veronesi – Luigi Simeoni 5} (Verona, 1954): 89-123.

\textsuperscript{50} Niccolò d’Arco, \textit{Numeri 47}, 31: “Ille tamen, veluti succumbens victima morti, lumina quum moerens languentia declinaret, has rupit voces et quaestus fudit acerbos: ‘Dii, siqua est pietas, nundum decerpite florem immaturi aevi nec dulcem abrupte vitam: s(in) aliter visum est fatis (viridique) iuventa me spoliare parant – si vitam puriter egi – opto mea in tumulto tunc molliter ossa quiescant.’”

\textsuperscript{51} Fracastoro, Carmina XXV and Carmina III.

\textsuperscript{52} D’Arco, \textit{Numeri 75}, 45: “Annua vota etiam veterum de more patrentum et pompam solennem anxius exequere; namque infausta dies nigroque notanda lapillo haec tibi semper erit: sic voluere dei.”
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Jupiter. D’Arco also included references in his elegies to prayers, incantations, and the burning of incense along with the performance of other sacred rites for both the dead and the gods. The scattering of flowers and the bringing of other verdant offerings was also a common theme taken from classical funerary practices. Fracastoro writes that Naiads scattered flowers over Marcantonio’s tomb. The language of such elegy may explain Riccio’s decision to present a similar concern with funerary rites. In the Funeral of the Professor, the tomb (Fig. 7) is draped with garlands and a priest cleanses the mourners from the contaminations of death.

The pagan language in funerary elegy was permitted to be taken quite far. Marcantonio is likened to a god by D’Arco. He was made a star in Olympus and honoured with garlands. As discussed in Chapter V, D’Arco wrote that every year his tomb was honoured and the blood of a bull was given to pacify God. The poet’s freedom in employing these elements of funeral ritual and the classical forms of mourning and consolation made its way into Riccio’s imagery. The monument, like elegies, was likely created with a specific and a limited audience in mind.

Lament, more emphatic in funeral elegy than what was allowed in funerary ceremonies or orations, typically consisted of the expected expressions of sadness:

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54 Fracastoro, Poemata Omnia, 111: “Tunc vos o patrio prognatae Najades amne spargite odoratis plena sepulcra rosis…”

weeping, loud mourning, the pulling of hair, and swollen eyes. It often extended to the image of a world inside out, a barren earth, for example, or, more extremely, a cosmic disruption.\textsuperscript{56} Both Fracastoro and D’Arco present Verona as deserted, while the Adige River mourns. Marcantonio’s death is cried from the hills by the herdsmen. The mountain and city waver from a tremor; the sirens and nymphs no longer play; nothing blooms or grows.\textsuperscript{57}

Riccio does not present these pagan figures of mourning in his narrative; instead, his panel of \textit{The Death of the Professor} (Fig. 6) draws upon imagery frequently found in contemporary religious art. The scene draws quite strongly on Riccio’s own representations of the \textit{Lamentation of Christ}. \textit{The Death of the Professor} is closest to his \textit{Lamentation} for the paschal candelabrum (Fig. 85), which was clearly influenced by Quattrocento representations, the most obvious and important influence being that of Donatello’s \textit{Entombment} (Fig. 86) made for the High Altar of the church of St. Anthony.\textsuperscript{58} Although mediated by Quattrocento representations, such motifs of intense grief would have been understood as drawing on antiquity, on the story of the death of Meleager, and more generally on the Roman \textit{conclamatio}.\textsuperscript{59}

In one of D’Arco’s elegies, the Della Torre brothers and sisters tear their cheeks and hair with their nails. Their faces and hearts, he says, were on the point of melting

\textsuperscript{56} Hardison, \textit{The Enduring Monument}, 117.
\textsuperscript{57} D’Arco, \textit{Numeri} 47, 30-32.
\textsuperscript{59} Barasch, \textit{Gestures of Despair}, 119.
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themselves in a river of tears. The poet conveys the sounds of mourning—the groans and sighs—and the sounds of students who call after Marco. In the scene of The Death of the Professor, the open mouths of many figures convey the impression of grieving.

Mosche Barasch has pointed out that The Death of the Professor differs from the other panels because the restraint presented in the illness and funeral scene is now lacking. By drawing on the typical representations of the Lamentation of Christ, Riccio provides the viewer with a reference to one of the best known examples of violent mourning. There is a conflict here: while Riccio has shown the extremes of mourning in a private sphere, this image of loss and intense pain is displayed on a public monument in a public setting where such extremes of mourning would contradict both humanist decorum and Christian teachings. However, by using this well known template for the death scene, Riccio makes the death of the professor more immediate to the viewer, allowing a more emotional involvement with the narrative as a whole. Making the viewer more emotionally involved would allow the narrative and the exemplar to become more persuasive.

62 Barasch, Gestures of Despair, 118.
63 Barasch, Gestures of Despair, 120.
64 Hardison, The Enduring Monument, 117. In poetry, mourning and its extremes are often linked with the loss to the community as a whole. The loss was often presented as extending through the whole of Italy, the world, and through nature herself. The author of an elegy wrote to express the grief of the community, rather than just his own. He provided a “common ground on which they can share their grief” and comfort one another as they do in the funeral scene. In poetry then, mourning is a communal act, much as it is for the men on the tomb monument. While the mourning and the consolation of the community were central aspects of both funeral elegy and oration, they do not seem to have been often a central emphasis of funerary art. Thus, this is another aspect held in common between funerary elegy, oration, and the tomb. The theme of community and loss in Riccio’s narrative is evident in the community gathered around the lecturing professor, the classical figures that attend to him during his illness, the community that prepares the sacrifice, and attends his deathbed and funeral. Community is again emphasized as the soul is warmly
According to Alberti, moving the soul of the listener was a central goal of the orator; the artist likewise moved his viewer by painting figures that illustrated the emotions of their soul. Riccio excelled in depicting emotion in his art, and he used various means throughout the Della Torre narrative to present emotion. Some means by which he did so—such as the gestures of the figures, their open mouths, their expression and eye contact—were well established. In the upper left corner of The Death of the Professor (Fig. 6), a figure stares out at the viewer and appears to invite them to participate in the grief. Likewise, in The Soul’s Arrival in the Elysian Fields (Fig. 9), one of the three Graces looks out, encouraging the viewer to join the happy throng. Leon Battista Alberti wrote of the value using a figure in an istoria to explain to the viewer what is happening, to draw them into the story by means of gesture and glance. But as Riccio’s drawing upon the Lamentation of Christ illustrates, Riccio also used more elaborate means to involve the viewer in his narrative.

As discussed in the first section of this chapter, orators were advised to make use of common words and expressions so that the listener may be better able to follow their speech. A central means to arouse emotion in the listener was to make them identify with the subject; likewise, artists encouraged the viewer to identify with the subject of their narrative, thus blurring the boundary between representation and actual presence.

welcomed into the Elysian Fields. Most imagery on contemporary monuments was focused primarily on the individual not the community. In a sense, this underlines the idea that Riccio’s tomb and its narrative were created for this very specific community.

66 Alberti, On Painting, 78: “In an istoria I like to see someone who admonishes and points out to us what is happening there; or beckons with his hand to see; or menaces with an angry face and with flashing eyes, so that no one should come near; or shows some danger or marvellous thing there; or invites us to weep or to laugh together.”
67 van Eck, Classical Rhetoric, 61
and—as Caroline Van Eck argues—generating a sense of living presence. 68 “Painters could also suggest a common ground by using pictorial strategies that appealed to the viewer’s imagination. One of the most powerful ways of doing this was by making viewers feel they were not looking at an image but are part of what they are looking at.” 69 This was most commonly done in Renaissance art by suggesting that the viewer’s space continued through the picture plane or by using a figure in a painting that draws the viewer into the works by means of the aforementioned eye contact and gesture. These devices were ultimately derived from the rhetorical arts and were used to cross the boundary between real and represented space.

The most elaborate and ingenious means by which Riccio sought to establish a common ground with the viewer is found in the funeral scene (Fig. 7). We view a scene that is presented as if occurring in the very space in which we are standing, since the mourners are gathered around a tomb nearly identical with the actual Della Torre tomb. By including an image of the actual tomb in this relief, the reality between the spectator’s world and the narrative is collapsed. The viewer is invited to take part in the classical world of the narrative; in fact, the contemporary viewer physically completes the circle of mourners around the tomb. Likewise, by drawing upon such a well known subject as the Lamentation of Christ in the scene of the professor’s death, Riccio appears to have been using this citation in a manner similar to that of a rhetorician—it serves as a means to further engage the viewer and thus convey the message of the narrative more effectively.

Consolation in Elegy

68 van Eck, Classical Rhetoric, 17, 56-61.
69 van Eck, Classical Rhetoric, 73.
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As we saw with funerary oratory, the consolation in elegy shifted the focus from loss and mourning to the hope in the afterlife. For D’Arco, Marcantonio has left the mad crowds and the cloudy earth for a sweet place where one communes with the gods. Marcantonio no longer heeds his friends’ and family’s offerings or their grief. Instead, surveying the heavens and the stars, he is most content in this happy place.

For Fracastoro, consolation is found in the comfort of Marcantonio’s premature death, for the trials of his soul are finished and the risks to his soul are no more. No more will the deceased experience pain, unhappiness, or the extremes of summer and winter. Fracastoro encourages Marcantonio to mingle with the gods. As discussed in Chapter IV, Fracastoro wrote that Marcantonio’s virtue was essential for his admission to this happy place: only through outstanding virtue was man able to leave the body and ascend to heaven.

Marcantonio was granted entry to the place inhabited by the pious heroes, those celebrated through warfare. This description of those admitted to the blessed places is similar to Vergil’s discussion of those admitted to the Elysian Fields. It is here that the just and pious who followed God are admitted. Marcantonio also resides here amongst the gods and the happy people, and he is welcomed amongst his family.

This meeting allows Fracastoro to engage in the praise of the Della Torre ancestors. Fracastoro urged

72 Fracastoro, *Poemata Omnia*, 112: “Quippe, ubi praefulgens ulla virtute reliquit Corpoream, sedes advolat aetherias, Semideumque domos…”
Marcantonio to mingle with the gods, promising that his name will always be remembered “while the stars will be in the mindful heavens and while the rivers flow,” and he praises Marcantonio’s virtue by stating that the fame of it is so great that it reached the heights of Olympus.\textsuperscript{74} Reflecting the idea that fame reaches the mountaintops, Riccio situated \textit{The Triumph of Humanist Virtue} (Fig. 10) amid mountains.

As might be expected, the same concern with immortality is present in both D’Arco and Fracastoro’s elegies. D’Arco promises to make constant tributes at the marble monument constructed for Marcantonio. He vows that posterity will remember Marcantonio and that his memory will never be erased. The Muses grant Marcantonio everlasting fame, which would not be suffocated in the darkness of oblivion. Likewise, the oil lamps held by putti that once sat on the lid of the Della Torre monument would have served symbolically to prevent the fame of the Della Torre from being suffocated by this darkness; these lamps would have been understood to keep the portraits of the deceased perpetually lit. In words that parallel Riccio’s final panel, D’Arco writes that Marcantonio’s name has conquered death.\textsuperscript{75}

The consolation given by both Fracastoro and D’Arco consisted in highlighting not only the deceased’s union with the divine but also the immortality of his name. The life of Marcantonio was removed from the specific actions of his life and presented in an allegorical form, yet this poetry was intended to provide not only consolation but inspiration as well. The life of the deceased is held up as victorious—a model for the


\textsuperscript{75} D’Arco, \textit{I Numeri} 47, 30: “ut superet mortem fama super aethera notus et vivat magis atque magis, neve ulla vetustas illum noete tegat caeca neu deleat aetas.”
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reader. Their consolation is akin to Valeriano’s, although now presented almost entirely in a pagan language. Likewise, these forms of consolation are presented in Riccio’s last two panels, where the soul of the deceased is shown to be in a most happy place and where the professor is granted triumph over death through his virtue.

Contemporary funerary oratory and elegy is thus the key in Riccio’s break with contemporary funerary monuments. What may seem like unorthodox imagery proves to be part of a well-established literary rhetorical tradition, and moving away from contemporary tomb iconography was a way of reconceiving the decorum of this iconography. The tomb was created with the same limited audience in mind as funerary oratory and elegy—an audience that would have been able to perceive the implicit aim of the narrative to encourage the pursuit of a life of virtue. Moreover, as examined in Chapter III, by drawing upon the typology of the tomb of saints established by the arca of St. Dominic, the very structure of the monument signalled to the viewer that a model of virtue was presented to them in the narrative. Thus, both the structure of the monument and the content of Riccio’s narrative have a cohesive theme. Not only does the content of the narrative provide the viewer with an exemplar, the very structure of the monument also implies that an exemplar is to be sought out in the narrative.

The Fear of Death

In front of the tomb, in the Funeral of the Professor (Fig. 7), there is a curious scene that seems out of place in the sombre context of the professor’s funeral. Here, two small, playing children engage the attention of the viewer. One of the children holds a mask.

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76 Note the pedestal that supports the tomb has been carved with a winged wreath—a symbol of victory. Thus, the whole of the narrative is held up by a reference to victory. This seems to reflect the similar use of this motif by Donatello on the Annunciation Tabernacle in Santa Croce, where the motif again serves as a sort of architectural support.
over his face to frighten the other. In terror, the other child has fallen to the ground and holds up his arm to protect himself from this frightening figure. This small episode illustrates Riccio’s familiarity with contemporary Renaissance discussion of the arts of consolation.

The motif of putti playing with masks was frequently used on ancient sarcophagi; they referred to death and to the Dionysiac afterlife as an eternal inebriation. The masks, therefore, would suggest the Afterlife and the true source of joy. The theme of Dionysiac celebration was cultivated in classical tomb monument: its promise of happiness after death made it a popular subject for funerary art. The subject was also well known in the Renaissance. In Inventing the Renaissance Putto, Charles Dempsey discusses the putti’s play with masks and their related role in protecting the vine of Bacchus. He argues that on Dionysiac sarcophagi, these putti were seen to represent the souls of those initiated into the faith. Understood as a reference to the cult of Bacchus, this was a well known motif in the Renaissance, it is found on Riccio’s paschal candelabrum, the Frick oil lamp (Fig. 63), the Rothschild oil lamp (Fig. 65), and the Della Torre monument.

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79 In Riccio’s representation of the tomb in the Funeral of the Professor, he has placed two naked, winged putti on the corners of the tomb. They both hold in their hands a mask. Riccio had previously used this motif on the third register of the paschal candelabrum. The motif of the mask occurs several times on the Della Torre monument: the three times in the funeral scene; on the leg of the deathbed of the professor; and finally a bearded mask lies at the feet of the sleeping professor in the Elysian Fields. The mask presented in Professor’s arrival in the Elysian Fields is the only bearded mask on the tomb. The bearded mask was most closely associated with the cult of Bacchus, and indeed this scene has a Bacchic-like celebration with dance and music. Likewise, the bearded mask found on the base of the paschal candelabrum is a clear reference to the cult of Bacchus. See Fritz Saxl, “Pagan Sacrifice in the Renaissance,” Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 2, No. 4 (Apr., 1939): 353. On the base of the candelabrum, sculpted by Francesco da Cola, there is a scene with a bearded mask and a woven basket from which emerges a snake, another Bacchic attribute. Here these symbols are combined with the instruments of Christ’s Passion. This mask on
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The scene of the young children playing with masks in *The Funeral of the Professor* was evidently popular in the Renaissance as there are many extant examples. Amongst the most famous adaptations of this scene is the copy made after Mantegna’s version (Fig. 87) in which he presented four naked putti: two with masks and two without. The winged putto, who has caused his friends to run and fall, bears a bearded mask, and his hand emerges from the mouth of the mask. Dempsey argued that the moral of these masked putti was that although they frighten and for that matter threaten their companions, they reflect empty threats and completely lack substance. As Dempsey explains, the fear induced by these masks was no more than an empty panic. Desiderius Erasmus, in his *Adagia*, reasoned that Greek word *panikós* meant those “empty frights that arise without true cause.” Later on Erasmus explained that the Greeks viewed these empty panics as “a morolykeion or mask, similar to a larva or wicked genius used to

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80 This drawing is in the Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins. This motif was found on many Roman sarcophagi, and appears to have been revived in Rome prior to 1471. The first known example is the terracotta matrix for a plaquette found in Rome, now in the Museo del Palazzo Venezia, from which many bronze copies had been cast. Other examples in bronze include a work in the Widener collection of the National Gallery of Art in Washington where it is ascribed to Donatello. Nearly identical versions in bronze are likewise found in the Museo Nazionale del Bargello in Florence. Planiscig ascribed this as work of Riccio. This attribution, however, is unlikely as most of these works are dated before 1471. Leo Planiscig, *Andrea Riccio* (Vienna, 1927), 312. Further demonstrating its popularity, the motif appears twice in the work of the Paduan miniaturist Bartolomeo Sanvito. In his frontispiece for Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, London, British Library, (ms. Royal 14 C.III, fol.2), two putti are frightened by the masked putti, one of which puts his hand through the mouth of the bearded mask. Also, the putti play with masks was included on the frontispiece to his Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale (ms.lat.5814, fol. 1).

81 This is a new Renaissance conception, he argues, of the “eros playing the bogeyman.” Dempsey, *Inventing the Renaissance Putto*, 102
Chapter VII The Tomb, Funerary Elegy and Oration in the Renaissance

terrify children."\textsuperscript{82} Such idle notions were understood to be dangerous if heeded; however, the virtuous and wise person would be able to push them aside.\textsuperscript{83}

The masked child in Riccio’s \textit{The Funeral of the Professor} could be included to denote those “sudden little panicky distractions that fill the mind with confused and empty notions, diverting it from serious business."\textsuperscript{84} Thus, the viewers of the monument would be reminded to push aside their fears. Yet, why has Riccio altered his version of this scene? While it is evident that Riccio was obviously quite familiar with the contemporary representations of this scene, his figures are clothed and wingless whereas his contemporaries presented them naked and winged. He has also presented these figures as children rather than putti.\textsuperscript{85} This alteration of the visual convention points to the writings of Seneca and illustrates that there is a further significance to Riccio’s inclusion of this episode on the Della Torre tomb.

Lanfranco Franzoni linked Riccio’s scene to a passage of Seneca in the \textit{De Constantia Sapientis}, which, he argued, explained the significance of this scene.

Seneca writes:

\begin{quote}
We have got to such a state of absurdity that we are afflicted not only by pain but by the thought of pain; like children who are frightened of the dark and ugly masks and a distorted face, and indeed are moved to tears by a word which jars
\end{quote}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{82}Desiderius Erasmus, “Adagiorum chilades, Chil 3, Cent & Prov. 3 (Panicus casus) \textit{Opera Omnia}, in Dempsey, 102-103: “Nam mormolykeion Graecis persona est, larvae aut malo genio similis, qua pueros territant quidam.”
\item \textsuperscript{83}Dempsey, \textit{Inventing the Renaissance Putto}, 102-103.
\item \textsuperscript{84}Dempsey, \textit{Inventing the Renaissance Putto}, 112.
\item \textsuperscript{85}While it was not necessary for putti to have wings in order to be understood as putti in the Renaissance, the inclusion of naked and semi-naked, winged putti on this monument differentiates them from these clothed, wingless youngsters. Note that where these young figures are most obviously intended to represent putti, the figures in \textit{The Professor crossing the Stygian Waters} and \textit{The Professor’s arrival in the Elysian Fields}, they are all presented as naked and winged. The mask in all these examples is heavily bearded (with the exception of the second mask in Mantegna’s drawing) and resembles the Silenus type mask. Riccio has also given us a beardless mask in this image, which is somewhat uncommon in these representations.
\end{itemize}
on their ears, and snapping of the fingers, and other things which they shrink from in a fit of thoughtless delusion.86

This passage reiterates Dempsey’s interpretation of the link between the play with masks and the panics and fears that assail men. However, rather than using putti, Seneca presented children as playing with these masks, hence the lack of wings in Riccio’s presentation of these figures. The passage from Seneca also focused on the role of wisdom in avoiding downfall. This is a theme that would have fit quite nicely into the humanists’ discussion of the role of education and the importance of knowledge in the pursuit of virtue.

For Franzoni, this episode showed that Giulio Della Torre and his brothers were more interested in finding consolation for their loss “in un passo di Seneca piuttosto che nell fedel cristiana.”87 He argues that this one small episode unfolds the significance of the monument as a whole—that is, Riccio has provided us with a consolatory allegory. The children’s play with masks serves to warn those who might despair and lose hope in the face of death. The wise man would not be deceived by this mask; he would neither be frightened by death nor interpret it as an evil.88 Franzoni’s link between this episode and the consolatory arts is an important connection. However, the fact that the Della Torre might have sought comfort from the classical forms of consolation is not unusual—the


87 Lanfranco Franzoni, “I Della Torre di S. Egidio e Fumane nel quadro del collezionismo veronese,” in Villa Della Torre a Fumani, a cura di A. Sandrini, (Verona: Banca agricola popolare di Cerea, 1993), 85, 90.

use of classical consolation was widespread in funerary oratory, elegy, and letter-writing in the early 16th century. For the Della Torre and their friends, this pagan consolation would have been entirely congruent with their Christian beliefs. The play with masks could have been easily given a Christian message: to accept the inevitably of death is to accept God’s will.

There is another, more significant occasion on which Seneca discussed the children’s play with masks. In his letter On despising death, Seneca argues that death is not to be feared and expands on the theme of the young boys playing with masks:

Believe me, Lucilius; death is so little to be feared that through its good offices nothing is to be feared. Therefore, when your enemy threatens, listen unconcernedly... Remember, however, before all else, to strip things of all that disturbs and confuses, and to see what each is at bottom; you will then comprehend that they contain nothing fearful except the actual fear. What you see happening to boys happens also to ourselves, who are only slightly bigger boys: when those whom they love, with whom they daily associate, with whom they play, appear with masks on, the boys are frightened out of their wits. We should strip the mask, not only from men, but from things, and restore to each object its own aspect.

....What, have you only at this moment learned that death is hanging over your head, at this moment exile, at this moment grief? You were born to these perils. Let us think of everything that can happen as something which will happen. I know that you have really done what I advise you to do; I now warn you not to drown your soul in these petty anxieties of yours; if you do, the soul will be dulled and will have too little vigor left when the time comes for it to arise...90

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89 While the use of pagan consolation had been an issue of contention in the early quattrocento, most objections had dissipated by the early 16th century. In the beginning of the 15th century, Coluccio Salutati rejected the ancient, pagan forms of consolation in favour of the belief that only God resolves grief. Francesco Zabarella argued otherwise. Drawing upon the thought of Cicero, he defended the classical forms of consolation on the basis of a shared belief in immortality. In an exchange of letters in the first two years of the 15th century, Salutati and Zabarella debated pagan and Christian forms of consolation. Their debate proved to be influential to the Renaissance arts of consolation. Zarabella argued that the ancient forms of consolation were acceptable for the Renaissance reader when the immortality of the soul is part of the belief. This latter argument, of course, may be applied quite aptly to the Della Torre monument. George W. McClure, “The Art of Mourning: Autobiographical Writings on the Loss of a Son in Italian Humanist Thought,” Renaissance Quarterly 49, No. 3 (Autumn, 1986): 448. Zabarella’s response to Salutati comes in letter XVIII (Epist. IV [Part 2], 354-355).

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This passage sheds additional light on the presence of this episode in the *Funeral Scene*. Riccio’s funeral scene includes a moral lesson for the viewer, reminding them of the dangers of fearing death.\(^1\) The wise man will put aside these worries; he will not fear the inevitable.

The end lesson in Seneca’s passage is important; he argues that these anxieties weigh down the soul. The soul becomes dulled by anxiety, and its ascent is more difficult after death. This aspect of Seneca’s discussion of the putti’s play with the mask fits this episode into part of the wider programme of the tomb’s narrative and its concern for the soul after death. Within this context, the pagan form of consolation would have been most acceptable because it was concerned with the soul.\(^2\)

Riccio has united an episode confronting the fear of death with a scene of bereavement. This is not an insignificant combination. As George McClure has argued, to link bereavement and the fear of death was a new element of consolation in the Renaissance. Thus, Riccio’s decision to present a reference to the fear of death in his funeral scene is further evidence of his familiarity with the contemporary arts of

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et ad id te quod est iniquissimum compara. Illud autem ante omnia memento, demere rebus tumultum ac videre, quid in quaque re sit; scies nihil esse in istis terribile nisi ipsum timorem. Quod vides accidere pueris, hoc nobis quoque maiusculis pueris evenit: illi quos amant, quibus adsueverunt, cum quibus ludunt, si personatos vident, expavescunt. Non hominibus tantum, sed rebus persona demenda est et reddenda facies sua… Quid, tu nunc primum tibi mortem inminere scisti, nunc exilium, non dolorem? In haec natus es. Quicquid fieri potest, quasi furturum cogitemus. Quod facere te moneo, scio certe fecisse; nunc admono, ut animum tuum non mergas in istam sollicitudinem. Hebetabitur enim et minus habebit vigoris, cum exsurgendum erit.”

\(^1\) George W. McClure argued that “humanist consolation must be seen not just in terms of a revival of a timeless classical tradition but also in terms of a search for a timely eloquence and wisdom that could speak more effectively to the human condition than did scholastic philosophy and theology. The consolatory impulse provided both a forum and inspiration for the discussion of prominent philosophical, theological, and psychological themes.” McClure, “The Art of Mourning: Autobiographical Writings on the Loss of a Son in Italian Humanist Thought (1440-1461),” *Renaissance Quarterly* 39, no. 3 (Autumn, 1986): 442.

\(^2\) See footnote 88.
The link made by Seneca between the dangers of these empty fears and the health of the soul was of additional importance. He argued that such fears needed to be pushed aside; if not, they would weigh down the soul and make its ascent after death more difficult. The episode of the children playing with the mask relates not only to the theme of knowledge in avoiding danger but also to the well-being of the soul and its ascent; therefore, it links the goal of advising the viewer on how to live with the tomb’s other major theme—mortal body and immortal soul.

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Conclusion

Andrea Riccio’s Della Torre tomb monument was a departure from convention. What motivated this departure has long merited further study. This dissertation proposes that the unconventional form of the Della Torre tomb monument is best understood by considering the monument within the humanist context of its creation. We have seen that the religious interests of the patrons and their close friends were in no way surpassed by their secular interests. More important, this analysis has shown that it makes little sense to speak of “religious” and “secular” as separate categories. In this culture, the reading of Plato, Aristotle, and Vergil, was an integral part of a project of spiritual advancement and understanding. For the artist Riccio, forms from pagan and Christian traditions were an intensive and mutually illuminating dialogue.

The tomb’s narrative was concerned with a paramount Christian issue—the immortality of the individual soul. The significance of the tomb’s Vergilian imagery was recognized by Anthony Radcliffe, who linked it to the Alverotus by Niccolò Leonico Tomeo. The panels that present the descent of the Professor’s soul into the Underworld and its arrival into the Elysian Fields would have been understood by the learned viewer as a reference to Vergil’s famous passage the “Spiritus intus alit,” included in the sixth book of the Aeneid and long the subject of Christian exegetical interpretations. The fourth chapter of this dissertation argued that the interpretation of these panels should not be limited to Tomeo’s dialogue but extended to include the broader discussions on the immortality of the soul during in the period.
Furthermore, it is evident that the concern for the health and purification of the soul is not limited only to the Vergilian panels—it extends through the tomb’s programme. While Fritz Saxl importantly recognized that the inclusion of the sacrifice to Asclepius was linked to the god’s role in aiding the ascension of the soul after death, it remained to explore the significance of Asclepius’s role in the Mystery cults or the significance of his concern with the health of the soul. Chapter VI investigated the lessons this scene teaches concerning the necessity of piety and purification in preparing the soul for the afterlife. It turns out that the presence of Asclepius, a pagan god, was far from inappropriate, rather, he was a powerful classical prototype of Christ, in his role as sanctifier of souls.

Chapter VII showed that the narrative programme of the Della Torre monument, drawing on contemporary funerary oratory and poetry, shares with them the same purpose: to present a model of virtue for the viewer. The genres of funerary oratory and elegy were not only a model in themselves, but a well established means of communicating to Christian audiences using classical (and the pagan) forms, and thus served Riccio as basic structural guides.

Looking at the last panel, one might get the impression that the narrative presents a rather vainglorious goal—the triumph of fame. But such glory was understood to be the reward of virtue; this was amply illustrated by Giovanni Pierio Valeriano, who wrote in his funerary oration commemorating Girolamo Della Torre that the reward of virtue is an imperishable name. While the subject of the rewards of virtue was derived from classical sources, it was entirely appropriate to the Christian faith. Indeed, the Church Fathers recognized that both fame and salvation were the rewards of a righteous life—St. Jerome
maintained that because life is short, man should “prepare for a longer lasting reputation” for himself.¹ In the last panel, Riccio clearly emphasizes that virtue is essential to triumph over death. “VIRTUTIS” is the only word inscribed in Riccio’s panel, underlining how important the theme of virtue is to the tomb’s narrative. The triumph in the final panel celebrates not only the immortal fame of the professor, but also, the triumph of the soul as well. This idea corresponds to Fracastoro’s funerary poem commemorating Marcantonio Della Torre where he writes that it was only with outstanding virtue that the soul could leave the body and ascend.

Shortly after this monument was completed, similar large scale monuments came under criticism in Verona as being vainglorious; however, the Della Torre monument appears to have escaped censure, a surprising fact given its elaboration and its pointed lack of Christian iconography. It is possible of course, that such an extreme anomaly simply failed to register, but it is also clear that this tomb carries a spiritual programme, far beyond mere self-glorification. The tomb adopts the structure of the tombs of saints, as shown in Chapter III, but not in a way that suggests hubris. On the contrary, this tomb type provides a governing structure for reading the tomb as a showcase of spiritual exemplarity.

While there are no records that illustrate the interaction between Riccio and Della Torre, the Della Torre brothers are known to have interacted closely with artists in Verona and their relationship with Riccio was likely similar in nature. Riccio’s humanist friends and patrons trusted his ability to give form to humanist thought; the erudite nature

of the programme and Riccio’s unique solution to presenting these complex ideas demonstrate why he was viewed with such esteem by his contemporaries.

It is evident that Riccio’s design for the monument reflects the thought of this important group of humanists from both Verona and Padua. The narrative was discernible to a learned audience, but it was also specifically aimed at this audience reminding them of the importance of virtue in preparing for the afterlife. The Della Torre monument, which to the eye of a modern viewer appears to break with the decorum of Christian funerary art, is not such an anomaly when examined in the context of the humanist circle surrounding its creation. Riccio was not rejecting the appropriate manner of commemorating two Christian men—he was re-conceiving the project of commemoration from the ground up.
Appendix I: The Della Torre Family Tree

**Giovanni Battista Della Torre** c. 1405 – 1476

**Girolamo Della Torre**, born c. 1445- d. 1506, married Beatrice Benindriti in 1478

**Giulio Della Torre**, born c. 1480, died before 1563, married Anna Maffei in 1504
- graduates from the University of Padua in 1503
  **Francesco**, born c. 1507
  - Secretary for Gianmatteo Giberti from 1525-c.1545
  **Girolamo**, born c. 1511
  - Provost at St. Egidio in Verona

**Marcantonio Della Torre**, born c. 1481, died in 1511
- completes his studies at the University of Padua in 1501
- teaches in Padua from 1501-1510
- teaches at Pavia from 1510-1511

**Giovanni Battista Della Torre**, born c. 1484, died c. 1528

**Raimondo Della Torre**, born c. 1487, died 1541
  **Giovanni Battista**

**Cornelia**, born c. 1488,

**Isota**, born c. 1490,

**Caterina**, born c. 1491
One of Riccio’s most popular plaquettes depicts a group of male and female figures crowded around an altar. In the centre foreground, two naked young men kneel over a sow they are about to kill (Fig. 66). Two men dressed in military attire stand on the right side of the plaquette. The younger of the two men stands closest to the altar; un-bearded, he holds his right arm across his chest. Directly behind him stands a more mature, fully bearded soldier. Riccio included another figure in military armour on the far left; this man holds a trumpet to his mouth, while in the background a second trumpeter is visible. The numerous copies of this plaquette clearly demonstrate that it was a desirable work in the early 16th-century Veneto.¹

It is a small work—the various versions range in size from 7.4 to 7.6 cm by 8.9 to 9.15 cm—and its subject appears to be quite straightforward. Traditionally, this plaquette is identified with the title *Sacrifice of a Sow*; however, this title does not reflect its true subject. John Pope-Hennessy suggested these small panels expressed “the voice of an antiquary rather than an artist.” He concluded that they were likely commissioned to fill a void in the patron’s collection, rather than for the novelty of the design.² Yet, this work deserves a little more attention.

The popularity of the *Sacrifice of the Sow* has been interpreted by some scholars as reflecting the popularity of the *Sacrifice to Asclepius* (or vice versa). The differences

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¹ The signed copies include three copies in the British Museum (London) signed R.I., the former Richard von Kaufmann Collection (Berlin) signed R, and the former Figdor collection (Vienna) signed ozir or Rizo. Some versions of this work were likely made by the workshop of Riccio as is the case with a version in the Ca’ d’Oro. Other versions of this scene are to be found in Belluno, Brescia, Florence (Bargello), (Horne Collection), London (Oppenheimer Collection), (V&A – 2 versions), Milan (Castello Sforzesco), (Eugenio Imbert Collection), Paris (Bucquet Collection), (His de la Salle) (Musée du Louvre), (A. Picard Collection), (Vasset Collection), Turin (Museo Civico), Washington (National Gallery, Kress and Widener Collections). On the *Sacrifice of a Sow* see John Wyndham Pope-Hennessey, *Renaissance Bronzes from the Samuel H. Kress Collection* (London: Phaidon Press, 1965), 65 and his “Italian Plaquette,” Aspects of Art Lecture, British Academy (London: Oxford University Press, 1964): 63-85, Emile Molinier, *Les bronzes de la Renaissance, Les Plaquettes: Catalogue raisonné* (Paris: La Biblioteque, 1886), no. 235, and Seymour de Ricci, *The Gustave Collection: Reliefs and Plaquettes* (Oxford: 1931), no. 141.

between the two images, however, should make it clear that the two scenes are not related. If the *Sacrifice of the Sow* was influenced by the popular reception of the *Sacrifice to Asclepius*, then why are there now musicians and soldiers in the scene, figures who are absent in the Della Torre sacrifice? Why is there only one animal included? There were numerous animals in the *Sacrifice to Asclepius*, and even the scene of sacrifice on the paschal candelabrum included more than one sacrificial animal. These differences merit further attention; in fact, they are the key to the proper identification of this scene.

The subject of the plaquette is not in fact the sacrifice of the pig—it is the oath being taken by the young soldier on the right side of the panel. The scene thus represents an oath in which the young soldier makes a formal bond with the commander. The essential elements of the ritual, such as a kneeling figure with a pig and the bearded and beardless soldiers, were recorded on classical coins. The pig is killed not as a sacrificial victim, but to demonstrate the seriousness of the oath taken.

Arthur Hind linked Riccio’s plaquette with two engraving of the Muranese artist Girolamo Mocetto. His two engravings, *The Killing of the Sow* (Fig. 88) and *The Altar of

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3 There are similarities to be found between this plaquette and the Della Torre sacrifice, the most important of which is the central placement of the altar, but this is also seen in the Paschal sacrifice, as is a variation of the figures who prepare the sacrificial victim. While the position of the *victimarii* is altered in the Paschal sacrifice, they hold the same position in the foreground centre as the men who kneel over the sow in the scene of *coniuratio*, whereas in the *Sacrifice to Asclepius* they were moved to the right corner.

4 The fact that the plaquette portrays a scene of *coniuratio*, or oath taking, was pointed out to me by Michael Koortbojian.


6 Arthur Hind, *Early Italian Engravings* (London: Chiswick Press, 1948), V.163, pl 721, as did Molinier in *Les bronzes de la Renaissance*, 170. Born in Murano, Mocetto died in Venice, August, 1531. He worked in Verona in the church of Santa Maria in Organo and in the Chapel of San Biagio, in SS. Nazaro and Celso. He engraved maps for Ambrogio Leone’s *De Nola Opusculum* which was printed in Venice in 1514 (The physician Ambrogio Leone translated Greek and taught at the university in Naples before moving to Venice. He was a friend of Erasmus and was in the circle of Aldus Manutius). For Mocetto see: Emile Louis Galichon, “Girolamo Mocetto: peintre et graveur venitien/ ecole primitive de Venise,” *Gazette des*
Appendix II Riccio and Mocetto’s Sacrifice of a Sow

Sacrifice (Fig. 89), were originally created to form one complete image as is found in an engraving in the Vatican. Like Riccio’s plaquette, Mocetto’s engravings appear also to depict a scene of coniuratio; likewise, they appear to have been highly desirable works and were printed in variant forms.7

Mocetto and Riccio’s scenes share much in common. Neither of the scenes has been firmly dated, making it difficult to ascertain which work came first. It is also unknown if they were following a classical example.8 In the engraving entitled The Killing of the Sow, the sow and the figures that hold it are nearly identical to this group in Riccio’s plaquette, and both artists placed the trumpet players on the left.9 On the right of this engraving, Mocetto included the beard and beardless soldiers—this time the younger soldier clasps the wrist of the older soldier.

The various versions of Riccio’s plaquette have been assigned a date anywhere from before 1500 to1520.10 Likewise, the dating of Mocetto’s engravings remains

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7 While Mocetto’s The Altar of Sacrifice is not visually linked with Riccio’s Sacrifice of the Sow, both this engraving and Riccio’s David before the Ark of the Covenant reference a well known antique model. This is seen in the figure who pours a libation on the flames on the right side of the altar in both the engraving and the panel. Both figures borrow the draped head and stance of Marcus Aurelius from the relief of Marcus Aurelius sacrificing before the Capitoline Temple. For the Renaissance use of this relief see Phyllis Pray Bober and Ruth Rubinstein with Susan Woodford, Renaissance Artists & Antique Sculpture: A Handbook of Source (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 223-224.

8 Most of Mocetto’s extant dated works are from 1484-1513. Riccio drew on Mocetto’s engravings on other occasions. Mocetto’s engraving of Judith, after Mantegna’s engraving, appears to have influenced Riccio’s Judith plaquette—this influence is evident in Riccio’s portrayal of Judith’s maid who bends forward more than in original version by Mantegna. Furthermore, the bag that contains the head of Holofernes is shorter in both Mocetto’s and Riccio’s representations than in the original. On the Judith see George F. Hill, “The Whitcombe Greene Plaquettes,” Burlington Magazine 30, no. 168 (March, 1917): 104, 109, and Randolph Schwabe, “Mantegna and his Imitators,” Burlington Magazine 33, no. 189 (Dec, 1918): 212-213, 215-216, John Pope-Hennessy, Bronzes from the Samuel H. Kress Collection, no. 208, 63.

9 Note that in Mocetto’s representation of the victimarii there is a third figure whose face and most of his body is hidden by one of the other victimarius. This is similar to Riccio’s presentation of the victimarii in the paschal candelabrum’s Scene of Sacrifice in which a third kneeling figure is hidden by those in the foreground. Riccio omitted this third figure in both his Sacrifice of a Sow and the Sacrifice to Asclepius.

10 The Victoria and Albert Museum and the Bargello both favour an early date. Giuseppe Toderi and Fiorenza Vannel-Toderi place it to end of the 15th or the early 16th century. William D. Wilcom and Maria
problematic. Arthur Hind dates the Sacrifice engravings amongst Mocetto’s early works (possibly the late 15th century) due to the draughtsmanship and an irregularity of shading, which he argues is more refined in Mocetto’s later work. Serena Romano concurs with an early date for the engravings and suggests c. 1505. The variant versions of Mocetto’s work add further complications to the dating. 11

The identification of Riccio’s plaquette and Mocetto’s engravings as scenes of military oath-taking makes their popularity in the early 16th century significant. The popularity of the subject of military loyalty in Veneto art in years leading up to the war of the League of Cambrai, and possibly even during the war itself, also makes these works timely and likely desirable to patrons not only for their artistic merit, but for their political meaning as well. The fact that in one variation of his engraving Mocetto situated the scene in the piazza of San Marco seems quite telling. While Pope Hennessy believed that the collectors who sought copies of Riccio’s plaquette were merely trying to fill voids in their collections rather than attempting to acquire novel works of art, one cannot dismiss the idea that these plaquettes were popularized, at least in part, because of the political significance of the subject matter.


11 Hind, Early Italian Engravings, 159, 163. Copies of the Killing of the Sow are found in Berlin; Chatsworth, Cincinnati, London, Oxford, Paris, Vatican, Warsaw. Examples of the smaller engravings are found in London and Paris where the central scenes from his earlier engravings were copied in two small roundel engravings. The versions not only differ in size, but also in the setting of the scene. Some are set in the square of San Marco, while others are without an architectural setting. Romano, Ritratto di fanciullo di Girolamo Mocetto, 52.
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