

The landscape-garden of Marche region and the building of identity

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1. A macro-historical approach

The Marche region is today one of the most industrialized ones in Italy (**fig. 1**), but its industrialization began in 1970s, during the last century. Before that period the region was an agrarian one, characterized by an intensively cultivated landscape where the urban settlements, generally settled on the hills and still gathered within the boundary of the historical city walls until after World War II, represented (like nowadays they still do) quite a dense settling net. The distance between one center and another was a short one, it was like a patchwork of pieces of grounds with mixed cultivations, entrusted to farm families settled in the various farm lands and farm houses, following the *mezzadria* rules (they had to give half of their harvest to the land owners).

The result of this traditional producing system is the perception of a highly anthropized landscape which may convey the idea, as it usually happens, of a garden in flower (**figg. 2, 3**). That is a common observation and a typical feature of the region, often celebrated in picture books and in tourism advertising campaigns.

The inhabitants of Marche and the tourists, who are told to find themselves in a big garden, generally think of the geographical and productive characteristics – perhaps of the history of agriculture – but they do not suspect that their perception is the result of a look built over a very long time, a historical and social elaboration in which the

cultivated landscape and the urban one have effectively operated as rhetorical topics and means of moral models, as it has generally happened with the landscape.

In this report I will try to synthesize the history of that journey.

In fact, differently from the other contributions to this symposium, which are all dedicated to the analysis of specific cases, mine is, in a way, a *macro-historical* reconstruction extending over a period of about two thousand years, during which the cultural identity of Marche has grown.

In this synthesis, which is part of a bigger study project about Marche's landscape and the rhetorical functions it exerted on the history of the region, I will not be able to expound ever philologically unexceptionable documents. I will try instead to compare clues and correspondences – not fortuitous ones in my opinion – to show how in this region some consciousness-controlling strategies were experimented in a systematic way which is more recognizable here than anywhere else, and then carried out through the use of the landscape as a reference encyclopedia. And that, in a region of farmers, was the equivalent of keeping under control the books to read in a community of *literati*.

My thesis is that (1) the garden, the vegetables garden and the wood (as *Topic*) were constantly controlled by the different managing classes, thus confirming their function of pictorial repertoires with a meditative purpose. (2) The tensions between eremitism/cenobitism, eremitism/urbanization, which were very much present and widespread in the cultural tradition of Marche, must be analyzed within a polarity between the ambition to free individual meditation and the social control of consciousness. (3) With the rooting of the urban social model and the substitution of the urban milieu to the wood, these efforts of control clearly move onto the first, transferring the symbolic function of the *Flores* to the components of the urban landscape.

I have been obliged to synthesize again my speech. So I tried to extrapolate **five strategic steps** in the history of Marche “Landscape-Garden”.

1. The first diffusion of hermitism and its idea of *rhetorical wilderness*.
2. The polarity between hermitage and the community life (in the Benedictine monastery and in the city).
3. The introduction in the cities of landscape devices as in the case of *Monti di pietà* (*piety mountains*) founded by Franciscan friars in the 15th century.
4. The project of building a “New Palestine” in the territory and the evolution of the idea of “Marche-Garden” as a region dedicated to the Virgin Mary, produced by pope Sixtus V, from Marche.
5. The foundation in Rome, in the 17th century, of Arcadia Academy as an extension of Marche social pattern: a great project of regimentation among Italian (not only of the Pontifical State) intellectuals.

2. A rhetorical wilderness

The name ‘Marche’, of medieval and German origin (*Mark; Picenum* in ancient times), indicates a border land.

Especially in the Byzantine influenced area, the karstic zones on the Appenines (**fig. 4**) were the places looked for by the anchorites from the 2nd to the 3rd century AD, and transformed into a new Thebaid. Most of the saint anchorites promoting the evangelization of the inland territories of Marche were in fact, and principally, of Dalmatian origin and somehow linked to the bishops of Rimini and Ravenna.

For example, according to the tradition, Leo and Marino, hermits and first evangelizers of the territory of the High Montefeltro (and of the present Republic of San Marino), probably were two Dalmatian stone-cutters gone to Rimini to work on the building of

the new city walls, started in the III century AD, and there they got in contact with the bishop Gaudenzio, linked to the worship of St. Apollinare in Ravenna.

This phenomenon continued until the 4th–5th centuries, whereas from the 7th–8th centuries on the region became much more linked to the Benedictine culture and to its cultural and social model of feudal system.

The Benedictine monasteries modeled themselves, as it is well known, on the feudal court economy. Therefore, as the feudal lord went hunting, the monk used the *silva* (or the monastery library, which was compared to the *silva* and sometimes called with the same name) as a repertory of subjects for meditation and *ruminatio*, and he likened the research for subjects to hunting and fishing to such an extent, that the new encyclopedias adopted the rhetorical form of bestiaries. The wood had therefore replaced the Roman *villa*, but the strategic subject was still the *copia*.

Also in Marche, more significantly than elsewhere, this model tended to come into conflict with the rooted and widespread presence of hermits. The Benedictine monastery tended to imagine itself as an ‘earthly Jerusalem’ contrasting hermits’ life, but it was also in competition with the new urban community when the latter appeared in the 11th–12th centuries (spreading in a very lively way in northern and central Italy). Therefore the first contrast was between hermits and cenobites, which then changed into one between hermits and cities from the 12th–13th centuries. Nevertheless, this polarity had a rhetorical dimension. In the Byzantine tradition the anchorites used the ‘desert’ and the wood as rhetorical subjects, as instruments of support for their own authoritativeness, as illocutionary supports of their ‘diversity’ towards the urban community, for which they often carried out the role of mediators and judges in disputes (*this is the most important acquisition, I am following now, of Peter Brown’s school of Saints Cult in Byzantine melieu*).

Therefore the rusticity and roughness of anchorites seems to be part of a rhetorical strategy that puts forward forms of behaviour which strikingly opposed to the city (abstinence from meat, sex, and solitary life are behaviors which reverse the habits of Late Antiquity metropolis inhabitants, but it is just for this reason that the anchorites seem to address them as the receivers of a message). These behaviors reveal a cultural training and an elegance which tradition, oriented towards *simplicitas*, tried to attenuate, but it is clear that they can be found both in the sender and the receiver.

Also the hagiography of the Marche region, so much linked to the Byzantine world, reveals the tension between spiritual tradition and episcopal authority. For example, the story of the two saints Severino and Vittorino, both from a wealthy family from *Septempeda*, a town of *Picenum* in the 5th century AD, is significant. The two brothers retired on Mount Nero, not far from their town, after handing out all their property to the poor. Severino, retired in an even more remote place, was seized by the desire for a woman and induced to expiate it with a sacrifice lasting three years. This story is evidence of a historical phase in which the religious authority endeavored to make the two forms of authority, the spiritual and the Episcopal one, compatible and complementary also in Marche. The two brothers in fact chose first the eremitic life in the grottos of Pioraco, not far from Fabriano, but this choice exposed Severino to temptation, and after the expiation, he was made bishop of *Septempeda*. The appointment was a solution to the eremitic individualism.

It was just in this region, finally, that a maximum effort of consideration and political action was made in favor of the composition of extreme eremitism and cenobitism. It was in the monastery of Fonte Avellana in fact (**fig. 5**), that Saint Pier Damiani (1007–1072) founded his spiritual model in the 11th century, using the *exemplum* of Saint Romualdo (**fig. 6**). The latter was a monk from Ravenna belonging to the previous generation and founder of the camaldolese order. He had lived in the 10th century and

before his death, he had retired in a local monastery, at Valdicastro, not far from Fabriano.

The compatibility between eremitic life and cenobitism therefore found a champion in the person of Saint Romualdo and a theorist in the cardinal Pier Damiani, and it was translated into the legitimation of a discontinuous meditation in the wood, supported by the community life.

Therefore the meditation in the wood seems an essential crux in the centuries old dispute Pier Damiani tried to solve, revealing its essential function of topic, and motor of meditation. The problem was clearly as follows: how to control the forms, the 'chains' of solitary meditation (that is the processes of association of mental images induced by the wood) while not straying from the orthodoxy.

3. From the hermitage to the city

Between the 14th and the 15th centuries, the mendicant orders chose the city as the place for evangelisation and preaching, often also undertaking civil or political functions. Franciscan and Dominican churches were used as halls for civil assemblies, the friars carried out public functions, acted as messengers, often dictated the communal statutes and their reformations.

In the 15th century the Minorite Observance addressed their preaching to urban masses, and the city, recalled and described using very realistic terms, became a rhetorical subject aiming at striking believers' imagination. In the same period, following the brotherhoods linked to the mendicant orders, the pictorial representation of the Passion and the sacred history spread (Crucifixions, *Dormitio virginis*, etc., **fig. 7**), using 'historical' urban landscapes, often presented with realistic and recognizable features. In substance it consisted in transferring the principle adopted by the 'sacred

representations' onto painting, that is setting the stories of the Passion in the historical landscape of the cities or, in rhetorical words, creating 'compositions of place'.

This phenomenon was at the same time evidence and evolution of a process: the building of cities as 'imagined communities'. The processions along the city walls (the one of *Buon Governo* taking place in Siena, for example, was a laic one), the construction of piazzas and public facilities, like fountains – which emancipated the quarters from the influence of the urbanised feudal families – and even the habit, ratified by notaries, of indicating names and addresses of the contracting parties in an agreement made with their dwelling places, all these actions contributed to virtualize the urban space and make it an important component of the city as an 'imagined community', in the same sense as Benedict Anderson argued in the case of the construction of modern state-nations. As Chiara Frugoni wrote, one was moving towards a theatrical dimension. As Enrico Guidoni, a great historian of Italian medieval cities, noticed, the signal indicating the existence of a 'mental urban space' is for example the tendency of the mendicant orders in central Italy to build their churches and convents in specific places (**fig. 8**). The Franciscan, Dominican and Augustinian friars organized settlement strategies according to the presence of public buildings together with their own ones, and these strategies seem to follow regular geometrical patterns or triangulations linked to the reciprocal areas of influence (the *cura animarum*, of course, but also the alms collection).

Processions, piazzas, fountains, and public buildings transform the physical urban space into a rhetorical and mental place, which is then to be discovered in the sermons of the Observance and also used for individual meditation and silent prayer.

The mendicant preachers, such as Bartolomeo from San Concordio or Bernardino of Siena, made a wide usage of these stratagems. They described the city quarters where they preached as *loci* of pathetic stories. But they availed themselves of the same artifice

in the solitary prayer as well. The devotional manual *Zardino de oration*, written in the middle of the 15th century, but then published in vulgar language in Venice in 1493, specifies that to pray, one has to imagine a city, possibly the familiar landscape of one's own city, placed on a mountain, and use it as a locus to mentally set and emotively take part in the scenes of the Passion, consulted in this way. The recalling to the classic "art of memory" is clearly specified.

(...) 'It is helpful and necessary to fix the places and the people in your mind: a city, for example, which will be the city of Jerusalem – taking for this purpose a city that is well known to you. In this city find the principal places in which all the episodes of the Passion would take place (*Zardino de oration*, c. 81r).

The garden-wood therefore moved towards the city and continued to work through its 'memory palaces'. Nevertheless, what is significant is this: if the garden-wood had previously worked as an encyclopedia of the *exempla* and of the *autctoritates*, as a topic, for the whole period of the polarity between hermitism/cenobitism, when the city took the place of hermits' and Benedictines' wood in the cultural imaginary, all efforts of the consciousness direction turned to model and manage the new landscape, in order to accompany it towards orthodox and guarded forms of meditation (the 'chains').

In this effort the mendicant orders intelligently followed the evolution of the middle class and popular culture, which had adopted the city as its own icon. In the 14th century for example, a text thought for women's world (therefore not for a traditionally educated public) such as *La cité des dames* (1405, **fig. 9**) by Christine de Pisan, influenced the rhetorical image of the city as the *exemplum* for the construction of women's individual personality and culture. The city bricks were the *exempla* (passages and *loci*) to memorize in order to build the 'interior city' corresponding to one's own personality.

4. *From silvae to tumbae*

The rhetorical techniques formulated on the basis of the classical tradition by the preachers of the Observance, if compared to their antique models, emphasized the capability of words to induce mental images in the listeners, with a persuasive purpose. Whereas the rhetorical classic tradition aimed at exploiting the *enarghéia* of images to make the memorization of passages and concepts easier, the rhetoric of preaching aimed at inducing interior pathetic images with a devotional purpose. Also the images used for individual silent praying had the same function. The Rosary Confraternities, for example, were often the clients of painted images which had to favor the sequence of the mental images consulted through the aid of the rosary.

Whereas the *Flores* were repertories of passages and *exempla* put together and published for the preachers, the *Rosari* were instead permanent collections of images-*exempla* for the believers, following a standard sequence. They were so close to mnemonic techniques that some rosaries were represented in the shape of *rotae* (**fig. 10**). If the garden was a set of possible, infinite *exempla*, the rosary – the virtual garden – was on the other side, an ordered sequence taken from a selection of *exempla* previously chosen, a path to follow.

This kind of prayer spread very precociously between Veneto and Marche. The preachers of the *Osservanza*, maybe because of their contacts with the Byzantine culture, represented the recitation of the rosary as a way of interior elevation, similar to the ascent to a mountain. The Franciscans were among the first who used this interior image, starting from the *Sacred Mountains* of Varallo, in Piedmont, created by Father Bernardino Caimi in 1486.

The production of this way of thinking seems to be specifically linked to the exaltation of a charity institution promoted by the friars of the Observance, which first appeared in

Marche at the end of the 15th century: the *Monti di pietà*, a sort of pawnshops where one could obtain loans upon pledge at moderate rates, and which were also used to fix a ceiling price for the market and to fight usury.

The charity ambitions and the theological basis of the project concerning the *Monti di pietà* are synthesized by one of its most dynamic theorists, the minor friar Marco da Montegalio, through an image: the *Figura della vita eterna* (*Figure of the aeternal life*, **fig. 11**), which appeared in his work *La tabula della salute* (*The table of salvation*), published in 1486 and 1494. The financial capital collected through the predication is there represented in the shape of a hive dispensing honey to the various poor people. Beside the mountain there is the image of the Christ resurrecting from His sepulchre – the *imago pietatis* – and a mass for the souls of the departed. On the background there is the earthly Jerusalem with the elected people.

Soon, the three mountains over which the standard of the *imago pietatis* hangs, became the symbol of the *Monti di pieta* (*Piety mountains*, **figg. 12/15**).

The path seems particularly similar to the one which followed the transformation of the landscape of the Marche region during the centuries, usually synthesized by the historians of agriculture as a landscape passing ‘from the *silvae* to the *tumbar*’, that is from the medieval phase of growing wild, characterised by the intrusiveness of the wood, to the re-colonisation due to the economic and demographic force of the cities. It must be remembered that the first farming settlements in Marche, often fortified, were called *tumbar* probably because of their high position and the presence of defending earthworks. Geographical names of this kind are still easily recognisable in the toponymy of Marche (Castel Colonna for example was called *Tomba di Senigallia* or *Castrum tumbar*, and Tavullia, near Pesaro, *Castrum tumbar monti Pelosi*).

The paronomasic association (representing one of the mechanisms of the medieval meditative chains) between the *tumba*, the high position, the *mount Calvary*, the saint

sepulchre of Christ and the charity action activated by the loan upon pledge, certainly had a great importance in the transformation of the *Monti di pietà* into a typical feature of the *Osservanza*, both in Umbria and Marche. It seems in fact that the association between the *imago pietatis* of the naked and pale Christ coming out of the sepulchre, and the image of the three mountains which became the standard of the *Monti di pietà*, was just conceived in the Marche region in 1428, at Arcevia (a town which is not far from *Tomba di Senigallia* (**fig. 16**) and which was then called *Rocca Contrada*), during preaching of the friar Ludovico da Camerino. His preaching aimed at promoting an institution similar to the *Monti di pietà*, but then it was only created thirty years after, always in Marche, in Ascoli Piceno.

5. A new Palestine

The attention paid by the mendicant orders from the Marche and other Italian regions to the city, considered as the place of a new evangelization of the consciousness, was remarkably expressed by Sixtus V, Franciscan pope from Marche.

He was born at Grottammare, on the Adriatic coast, as Felice Peretti, from a Dalmatian family that later settled in Montalto, in the south of Marche. In 1585 he became pope with the name of Sixtus; during his five-years pontificate he deeply changed the capital of Christianity, remodelling it on the basis of a urban project, which, according to Franciscan traditions, combined mysticism and pragmatism.

The new urban order of Rome found its major source of support in the Basilica of Saint Mary Major, where the Pope, when he was only Cardinal Montalto, ordered the construction of the Sistine Chapel. Here are situated the Crèche, St. Jerome's tomb, Pius V's funeral monument (the Pope who elected Peretti cardinal) and Sixtus' as well (**fig.**

17). The basilica stood near his private residence, villa Montalto, that was used till he was elected Pope. The basilica represented a very important element of the Pope's mysticism deeply influenced by St. Francis, by reason of its Marian function as well as the presence of St. Jerome's remains, this one considered as a model by the Franciscans (he was Dalmatian like Sixtus V), and of the Crèche relics, whose cult had been developed by St. Francis through the first 'sacred representation' of the Nativity in December 1223, at Greccio, Umbria.

According to Steven F. Ostrow's reconstruction, Sixtus aimed at creating a sort of 'Franciscan temple' inside the Roman Basilica. From St. Mary Major diverged the urban directions of Rome reorganization (which, according to Sixtus' Franciscan mysticism, also had a messianic sense), and they were conceived like a star points (*Roma ad syderis formam*, **fig. 18**), that was, in the Pope's imagination, the comet star. This can be found in his coat of arms as a cardinal: the star is set on the top of three mountains (the *Trimonzio*, *Three mountains*) representing his native town: Montalto. The coat of arms reproduced also a lion rampant, as a reminder of St. Jerome, excellent example for both Heremites and Franciscans, holding in its paw a branch with a pear, the latter referred to the laic name of the Pope: Peretti (**fig. 19**).

The cult of Christ's nativity, the veneration of the Holy Sepulchre (placed in the care of the Franciscans since the 14th century) and of the Virgin Mary represented three distinguishing arguments of the Minorite devotion. Aiming at building a 'new Palestine' inside the Papal State, Sixtus V used on a wide area the same system of 'mystic directions' used in the urban project of Rome, as well as in the towns of the mendicant orders. This project was carried out by creating another 'image' (a great Franciscan

Messianic triangle, **fig. 20**) among the Chapel of the Cradle in the Basilica of St. Mary Major, the Marian cult at Loreto and that of the Holy Sepulchre, which the Pope wanted to move to Montalto.

Pope Sixtus was the one who gave renewed emphasis to the Marian sanctuary of Loreto determined to make it the real mystic capital of the Mark of Ancona as well as the basis of the Catholic Reformation against the Protestants. In a short time and in an original way, he succeeded in giving the little community living near the sanctuary, the status of City, Diocese and Bishopric, delivering it from the control of Recanati. Moreover he ordered the towns of the region to build a palace in Loreto in order to increase its prestige and its number of people, through economic incentives.

The project of institutionalizing the Marian cult of Loreto had a great success. Different was the result of Sixtus' other great project: he wanted to buy the Holy Sepulchre relics from the Turks in order to carry them to his native town Montalto. Here, in the meantime, a great cathedral was being erected. Moreover, like Loreto, Montalto was elevated to the status of City and Bishop's See.

In Sixtus V's Franciscan imagery, as well as in the Friars of the Observance's in the previous century, Marches hill, or rather the system of three hills it was made up of, called to mind the Calvary mountain, like the pawnshops.

The Loreto sanctuary (place of the rosary cult) together with the Holy Sepulchre of Montalto would have constituted – as designed by Sixtus V – the vertexes of a triangle (**fig. 20**) messianically pointed towards the Basilica of St. Mary Major in Rome, thus transforming Marche, Umbria and the territory of St. Peter into a new holy land. This territory, after the loss of holy places, in fact, gained a priority role in the years of post–

Tridentine offensive.

The short term of Sixtus' pontificate did not allow him to finish his providential design. However, in a short time, the Holy House of Loreto became a symbol of the post-Tridentine contemplation, a 'building of memory'.

It is not surprising that the victory at Lepanto in 1572, when the Ottoman fleet was defeated by the Christian forces, was attributed to the cult of the Lauretan rosary: for this reason Don Juan de Austria who commanded the fleet, decided to stop at Loreto harbour (Porto Recanati) in 1575, to pay homage to the sanctuary: here, he gave the chains of the Christians set free from the Turkish galleys as gifts, a symbolic reference to the meditative 'chains' of the rosary that had the power to free souls from devil and heresy.

An aura of mysticism poured over the Mark of Ancona territory, which became an expansion of the garden sacred to Mary. The Marche region had a particular relationship with the sanctuary, which could also act as an instrument of legitimation of the papal sacred power throughout the Italian territory.

The painting of *La Vergine di Loreto e angeli* by Avanzino Nucci (1598, Diocesan Museum of Senigallia, **fig. 21**) was a fine product of the papal court: it celebrated the passage of Pope Clement VII in 1597 from Senigallia to Ferrara, where he settled down. The picture represented the territory of the House of Este in the Lauretan Virgin's cloak, that was just under the supremacy of the Papal State. The Virgin Mary's characteristic *Dalmatic* was transformed into a map of the former Este Dukedom.

Travellers of the 16th and 17th centuries (Leandro Alberti in the 15th century,

Montaigne in the 16th, and so many others) described the *Marca Anconitana* and the Dukedom of Urbino as a sort of big garden full of flowers, an intense and fertile cultivated place, influenced by ancient models but perceived in a new spiritual dimension, which is possible to find in the world of the cultured aristocracy of Marche, mostly educated in Rome, at the Jesuits' Roman College. Even if the relation between the Marian cult and the garden is not always so evident, there are many signs which prove the way of regarding the territory through this ideological device.

An original example is represented by the vast number of drawings (**figg. 22/24**) by Gherardo Cibo (about 1512–1600), an original naturalistic artist. He was of noble rank, belonging to the family Varano of Camerino, also related to della Rovere family. Around 1540, he retired from a brilliant military and politic career to settle in Rocca Contrada, in the Dukedom of Urbino, where until 1600, year of his death, he devoted himself to the drawings of plants, herbaria and landscapes of Dutch influence. These represented the Marche territory as a big idealized garden, scattered with caves peopled by eremits, villas, farms and busy farmers at work. His drawings recall the mysticism of the *simplicitas* of Pieter Brueghel the Elder, whom Cibo could have known during one of his diplomatic journeys through the Flanders with Cardinal Farnese. In the beginning Cibo wanted to be a priest, then he learnt the military strategy from his cousins della Rovere.

Cibo's relationship to Della Rovere family, Dukes of Urbino, is not casual because the Dukedom was often represented in old maps as a "State-Landscape" and its new capital, Pesaro, as a "city-garden", as it is written on the first atlas of Italian towns, the *Theatrum urbium* by Francesco Bertelli (1629). The Dukedom was in fact a second level feudal state: it was given by the popes to the Dukes of Montefeltro della Rovere as

vassals (it was, technically speaking, “subinfeudated”). For this reason the creation of a real modern territorial state in the 16th century – when this kind of attitude became a diffuse ambition of the European countries – could anger the papacy. Because of this situation the dukes were obliged to celebrate and present their own possessions as a system of ‘magnificences’, of private properties, pleasant sceneries, *terre e castella*, garden-places singularly linked to the duke, rather than parts of a state organism with its territorial hierarchies.

This is evident in the collection of maps and views of the Dukedom (*Città terre e castella dei serenissimi duchi e prencipi della Rovere*, **figg. 25/27**) produced in 1626 by an artist, Francesco Mingucci, specialized in painting flowers and birds, working for the Barberini’s gardens in Rome.

6. The Arcadia of Marche region

A last season consolidated in the culture and social imagery (not only local) the idea of a garden-region. In 1690 in Rome an academy with the name of *Arcadia* was founded. It aimed at reorganizing the Italian culture under the Pope’s influence. Its objectives were literary ones, but besides the desire of restoring the language and the literature, scholars identified a great project of regimentation among Italian intellectuals, which went far beyond the boundaries of the Papal State.

The *Arcadia* took the Greek region as an example to be imitated, already used by Virgil and Alexandrine poets to set pastoral tales, where rural people acted as poets in love. But apart from the pastoral tale, there was the restoration of a model of social organization in opposition to the new ‘liberal’ society, where the ‘pastorship’ as a

model of dominating people's consciousness was essential, as underlined by Michel Foucault in his courses of the Collège de France in 1977-78. A project that was designed against the secularization of the European society.

However in the *Arcadia* there are some signs which remind us of Marche as a model region of 'pastorship' as it was described so far. Most land owners who took part in the academy were from Marche: one of them, Giovanni Maria Crescimbeni from Macerata, was elected Guardian and Prince of the academy, under the authoritative protection of the Pope Clement XI Albani, from Urbino.

The 'colonies', peripheral seats of the academy, increased to sixty in a short time, among these many (twenty) were in Marche, and after Rome, the second one was *Elvia*, founded in 1693 in Macerata.

The way of presenting the constitution of a colony by virtually giving the properties to its different members reproducing the classical-roman model, recalled the rigid models of organization of the urban oligarchies in Marche and in the Papal State. Therefore, as it happened with the tradition of the pastoral tales represented in the theatres of the little urban oligarchies of Marche, the 'meetings' of the *Arcadia* representatives were presented as meetings between shepherds, their seats as 'Parrasi woods', and the noble houses in which they were lodged as bucolic 'huts'. In the villa Caprile in Pesaro (the 'city-garden' of della Rovere), there was also a *Verzura* theatre (a stage built in the green) where putting on plays and representations.

The ideal place for the papal ruling class was not a city of Utopia, but the faithful representation of a real society, such as that living in Marche. It was based on a 'holy'

natural agriculture, far from commercial or financial profits, in which the nobles represented themselves as farmers, who were the real guardians and keepers of a garden-landscape which works in a powerful way as ‘the order of discourse’.

In 1819, the most famous and important poet of Marche, Giacomo Leopardi (1798–1837) wrote his most famous verse in the poem entitled *L’infinito* (*The Infinite*), while in solitary meditation on a hill of Recanati, in front of Loreto (**fig. 28**): ‘*sempre caro mi fu quest’ermo colle / che da tanta parte / de l’ultimo orizzonte il guardo esclude*’ (...).

‘Dear to me always was this lonely hill, / and this hedge that excludes so large a part / of the ultimate horizon from my view...’ (Translation by R.C. Trevelyan).

The hedge in front of him, preventing him from seeing most of the landscape and the endless horizon, encouraged the romantic poet’s free imagination.

As a member of the rural aristocracy of Marche, the young count Leopardi in this verse synthesizes the meditative function of the hedge, a last bush of the eremitic wood, claiming the romantic freedom of not being too much influenced by the rhetorical strategies impressed on the visible landscape. Like in the ermit’s cave, not to see was like seeing a little further.

Captions for Mangani Power Point 2

1 The Marche region (orange) in Central Italy.

2 Rural landscape around Loreto (The Province of Ancona). Photo by Gianni Berengo Gardin.

3 Farmhouse and rural landscape around Fabriano (The Province of Ancona). Photo by Arnaldo Vescovo.

4 Cave used by the Camaldolese monks of the Massaccio hermitage (now Cupramontana), in the 16th century. The hermitage was also inhabited, in the 15th century, by *Fratricelli*, minor friars who rebelled against the ecclesiastical authority to practise strictly the poverty of Franciscan Rule. These friars were then considered heretical.

5 Fonte Avellana Hermitage (The Province of Pesaro Urbino), where the cardinal Saint Pier Damiani (Ravenna, 1007–1072) retired to write his works.

6 Anonymous, *Il sogno di San Romualdo*, 17th century, Cupramontana, San Lorenzo Church. In the Post-Tridentine age, the painting used the image of Saint Romualdo, founder of the Camaldolesi order to relaunch Massaccio hermitage (represented by the monks' cells inside the enclosure) and the cult of rosary (represented by the angel), from which depended the access to Heaven, as it resulted from Giacobbe's stairs used by the monks.

7 Anonymous, *Crucefifixion*, on the background the castle of Polverigi, near Ancona, 15th century, Church o SS Sacramento, Polverigi

8 Settlement of Mendicant Monasteries in central Italy in the 13th century (from Guidoni, 1981). Lucignano (left) and Cortona (right).

9 Christine de Pizan, *La cité des Dames*, Ms London, British Library, Harley Ms 4431, f. 290, 15th century. The two female characters are building the city of women.

10 *Istituzione della Confraternita del Salterio* (rosary), 15th century engraving (printed in Venice), found in the cathedral of Fermo, Fermo Diocesan Museum, represented as a

mnemonic *rota*.

11 *La Tabula della Salute* by Marco da Montegalio, engraving, 1494, Florence, National Library.

12 Lorenzo of Alessandro, *Madonna detta 'del Monte'*, 1491, Caldarola, Collegiate Church of S. Maria del Monte (painting made for the Pawnshop (*Monte di pietà*) of Caldarola, the Virgin is represented in miniature together with the patron saints of the town, the administrators and benefactors of the pawnshop. Registers and money deposits are carried by people in procession).

13 Vicino of Ferrara, Saint Bernardino of Feltre holding the *Mons pietatis* symbol, 15th century, Ferrara Picture Gallery.

14 Luigi Anguissola (attributed to), Saint Bernardino of Feltre holding *Mons pietatis* symbol, 15th century, Novellara, Gonzaga Museum.

15 Giacomo of Monteprandone and the symbol of *Mons pietatis*, 18th century, Bank of Umbria Collection, Perugia.

16 Tomb of Senigallia, from Vatican Ms *Città terre e castella dei serenissimi Duchi e Principi della Rovere* (1626) by Francesco Mingucci.

17 Funeral monument of Sixtus V, Rome, Basilica of St. Mary the Major, 16th century. The Pope is represented kneeling in front of the Crèche.

18 *Roma in syderis formam*, engraving by G.F. Bordino from *De rebus praeclaris gestis a Sixto V*, Rome, 1588. The Basilica of St. Mary the Major is in the middle of the four-pointed star, visible on the left side.

19 Pope Sixtus V's coat of arms with the comet star trail placed on the *Trimonzio*, representing his own native town, Montalto in the Marche region.

20 Sixtus V's mystic "triangle" among Loreto, Montalto and Roma (the map is *Nuova esatta tavola di tutto il Dominio Ecclesiastico*, published by Paolo Petrini, Neaples 1705, private collection).

- 21** Avanzino Nucci, *La Vergine di Loreto e Angeli*, 1598, Senigallia, Diocesan Museum.
- 22** Gherardo Cibo, *Aloe*, 16th century, Ms Addison 22332, London, The British Library, f. 144. On the background a typical country villa of Marche.
- 23/24** Gherardo Cibo, Drawings of Marche landscapes with marine, hermits and woods. 16th century, Jesi, the Planettiana Library.
- 25/26** Francesco Mingucci, Villas and landscapes of Pesaro, 17th century, Pesaro, Town Museum.
- 27** *Stati dei Serenissimi della Rovere*, from Ms Vat. by Francesco Mingucci, *Città terre e castella dei serenissimi Duchi e Prencipi della Rovere*, 1626. The map represents the territory of the Dukedom with a view from the sea, a landscape rather than the territory of a sovereign State.
- 28** Recanati, The Hill of the *Infinite*. Photo by Paolo Monti.