The Artful Hermit. Cardinal Odoardo Farnese's religious patronage and the spiritual meaning of landscape around 1600
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4. THE CARDINAL’S RETREAT: FAMILY-TRADITION AND RELIGIOUS POLICY

When Odoardo Farnese died in 1626, the Cassinese monk Andrea Arcioni gave a funeral oration. He remembered Odoardo’s many virtues, and how his cultivation of virtue not only equaled, but even surpassed that of his ancestors. Arcioni also highlighted Farnese’s predilection for devotional exercises, the special places that were created to fulfill this desire, and the lavish sums that were spent on it:

‘profuse expenditures [spent]... on the solitary accommodation constructed in those devout horrors of Camaldoli, the diverse places made expressly for him among some Religious Orders, so that he could retreat himself there [‘ritirarvisi’] sometimes in order to contemplate the things of GOD ...’

Many of these apartments to which Arcioni referred still existed in the last quarter of the seventeenth century, and were maintained by the Farnese Dukes as monuments of a family tradition. In 1675, the Jesuit Garimberti reported to the General of the Order in Rome that he had talked to Ranuccio II Farnese, Duke of Parma and Piacenza, to obtain the use of one of these spaces, located in the Casa Professa next to the Gesù, main church of the Jesuit Order in Rome. When this request was rejected by the Duke, Garimberti’s remembered that the apartment in the Casa Professa was one of the less important, and that ‘there are other and much more conspicuous memories...’ to which the Duke answered that he attached to ‘having similar ones in all the convents of Monks as well as Religious fabricated by the House of Farnese, like here in the Badia, and in other Convents.’

This episode from the late 1670s reveals that Odoardo Farnese’s proposal to the Orazione e Morte for the use of the Camerino degli Eremiti was not an isolated case; neither in its close relation with the adjacent church, nor in the way in which it was used for devotional retreat. How did Farnese family-ties influence this phenomenon? Where were these other apartments, how were they decorated, and what function did these retreats have?

Arcioni 1626, pp.10-11: ‘ODUARIX) Signori, il quale credette sempre d’havere il campo spaioso, & aperto alla virtu, se si proponeva le attioni piú illustri, e piú memorabili de gli antenati suoi, non solo da imitare, ma da superare ancora, accio che rica de proprii tesori, con lo splendore de nuovo e piu bei raggi, sempre piú chiara rendesse il vivo Sole della sua Famiglia Serenissima.’ On this genre of funeral orations in the period of the Counter-reformation, see McGinness 1980, pp.125-127.

Arcioni 1626, p.13: ‘le spese profuse nella... solitaria habitazione costruita in quei devoti horrori de’Camaldoli, le diverse habitazioni fatte apposta appresso alcuni Religiosi per ritirarvisi tal volta alla contemplazione delle cose di Dio...’

ARSI. Rom.143.11, fol.358r: ‘vi sono altre et molti[a]e conspicuous memorie... non ha voluto accordarmi cosa alcuna, avvertendo massime haverme una simil in tutti li conventi tanto di Monach[i], quanto di Religiosi fabricati dalla Casa Farnese, come qui nella Badia, et in altri chierenti.’
Rome: the Casa Professa-apartment

The project of rebuilding the Casa Professa, the Jesuit headquarters in Rome (fig.58), was begun in 1599 after a number of decades of planning. The vast complex, adjacent to the church of the Gesù, incorporated the older structure of the house where Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Society, had lived for many years. It also contained a sacristy for the church of the Gesù itself. The designs for both the Casa and the sacristy were probably by Girolamo Rainaldi (1570-1655). By the time the Camerino degli Eremiti had received its painted decoration, in 1616 or 1617, the building of the Casa Professa was finally nearing completion.

With his decision to initiate and finance the building of the Casa Professa, cardinal Odoardo Farnese followed in the footsteps of his ancestors. Pope Paul III had approved the order, and since then members of the Farnese family had protected and furthered the Society; the church of the Gesù had been commissioned and financed by Cardinal Alessandro Farnese. This ideal of a Farnese family tradition was consciously evoked by the medal struck to commemorate the event of laying the foundation stone of the Casa Professa. This medal carried on one side a profile portrait of Cardinal Odoardo, and on the other side a dedicatory text reading 'He founded the house of the Society of Jesus in imitation of the piety of his ancestors.' This medal was illustrated in account of the ceremony in the Tesori nascosti by Ottavio Pancirolì of 1600 (fig.59), and the text was moreover applied (with small variations) to a plaque on the façade of the building of the Casa Professa itself (fig.60). Both the inscription and the concept of the

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2 The design has long been ascribed to Girolamo Rainaldi, architect of many projects for cardinal Odoardo; this attribution was based on the account in Passeri 1678-1995: 'et hebbe in Roma la direzione della fabbrica della Casa Professa de Padri Gesuiti congiunta con la bellissima Chiesa del Gesù del Vignola, delle medesimi Padri, e questa Casa fu principiata, e conclusa con la protezione, e spesa del Card.le Odoardo Farnese.' The design was also ascribed to the Jesuit mathematician Giovanni de Rosis, and Rainaldi only taking over after this Father's death; see Pecchiai 1952, p.205C and Buchowiecki 1967-1974 vol 3, p.360.


4 According to Pecchiai 1952, pp.297-300, engravings were also made of this ceremony; an eye-witness report of the event can be found in ARSI, Rom.Hist.Dom.Prof.I, DXXXIV. See New Catholic Encyclopedia 1967 vol.2, pp.335-336 for the ceremonial aspects related to the foundation stone.

5 'MAD×E.REM .AUG. M .FI ΔΝ ΑΕΙΑΘΗΕΣ, SOCIETATI IESU DOMI M. FUNDATUE AN. M.DXCIX.' An example of this medal is in Museo di Capodimonte. See I Farnese 1995, cat.no.263.

6 Pancirolì 1600, pp.330-331: 'Eli eccoti comparir il secondo Nepote del magnanimo Alessandro, dico Odoardo Cardinale Farnese, che come generoso Principe, e nobil germoglio di quel gran Re di Portugal Giovanni III mirando a cose maggiori, ne parendogli, ch'anco ben radicata fosse in Rome questa Religione ... con più larghe & abundanute mano si risolve l'anno passato, di metter anch'egli la prima pietra per la fabbrica d'una ben grande habitazione per questi Padri, che unita alla Chiesa viene d'ogni intorno cinta alle strade in un'isola posta nel più bel sito di Roma, e sopra di quella prima pietra tali paroli furono intagliate, lavandola prima con le solite cerimonie.
medal itself implicitly referred to Alessandro, who had two similar medals made at the beginning of works on the church of the Gesù. A later painting portrayed both Alessandro and Odoardo as founders in front of the interior of the Gesù. In this image, Odoardo is shown with the plan of the Casa Professa and an architectural model to his right (fig. 61).

The ceremony of laying the first stone was not only an occasion for Farnese to display himself to the public as a magnanimous patron, at the same time it presented an occasion to further the process the Jesuits had initiated to have Ignatius canonised. An Avviso of 1 July 1599 connected these three elements in the description that was given of the festivities:

[This] Tuesday, cardinal Farnese went to the Gesù with a grand retinue of prelates where he laid the first stone of the building that those Fathers are constructing for their accommodation, with a medal of gold and silver with the effigy of those Lords of the house of Farnese who donated to the work a sum of 20,000 scudi and much more [from] the Duke of Parma his brother to be paid in yearly terms to finish the work begun by their [great] uncle Alessandro. It is said that on the initiative of the Fathers themselves the process of the life of the blessed Ignatius their founder has been begun, to have him canonised... This contemporary account clearly recognised the fact that each of the two parties involved had their own reasons for this joint venture: the Jesuits furthered their position and their founders' name through this new construction incorporating Ignatius' Roman house, and for Farnese the Casa Professa project was a sign of the continuance of a family tradition. It was for this reason that from 1599 onwards Odoardo contributed at least a thousand scudi a year to this project.

Because it took more than fifteen years to build, the prestige of the Casa Professa-project began to founder, and Odoardo Farnese urged the Jesuits to finish the building as soon as possible. The Avvisi reflected sudden haste when on 9 January 1616 it was noted that the Fathers

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11 I Farnese 1995, cat.nos.258, 259.

12 On the process of canonisation of Ignatius of Loyola, see König-Nordhoff 1982.


14 See for example ARSI, Chiesa del Gesù 2005, fols.45r-b: 'Ditirami ricevuti per la fabbrica della Casa', in which gifts between 1500 and 2000 scudi are reported from 1599 to 1614, amounting to a total of 13,650 scudi.
would receive 30,000 scudi in alms, to complete the work.\textsuperscript{14} Half a year later, the receipt of this donation was reported in another Avviso, with an interesting additional condition:

The same Cardinal Farnese has given this week, partly in cash, and partly in assignats [the amount of] 30 thousand scudi to the Jesuit Fathers, to complete interior and exterior of the building of the Casa Professa of the Gesù, together with the rooms of his apartment ['appartamento']\textsuperscript{15} for the occasions he retreats there ['vi si retira'] during the days of devotion of the Holy Week, and at other times.\textsuperscript{15}

This Avviso of 1616 added a third motif to the two recounted earlier with regard to the project of the Casa Professa: sometime after 1599, cardinal Odoardo opted for a place of retreat, within a monastic community, to dedicate himself to devotional exercises. Sources suggest that the apartment was planned as an integral part of the Jesuit house and built in the same period of time.\textsuperscript{16} What did this appartamento look like?

The present state of the exterior and interior architecture shows where Odoardo's apartment was located and how it was organised. It occupied the first floor of the building, located behind the choir of the Gesù, along the present via degli Astalli, facing the back of Palazzo Venezia. On the outside, this part of the building is visually distinguished from the rest of the façade by its smaller height, the presence of a stuccoed wall and a lowered cornice decorated with Farnese-lilies (fig.58).\textsuperscript{17} The entrance to this area possibly was located in the middle of its façade, where the family's heraldic device can be seen on either side of the portal, but this entrance to the premises has been affected by later alterations. At present the Farnese apartment can be reached through the Casa Professa itself, via the main stairwell, on the landing

\textsuperscript{14} That the account in the Avviso is reliable is indicated by a letter from the Jesuit general to Odoardo Farnese of 10 September 1616, which affirmed the progression of the Casa, and alluded to the magnanimity of the cardinal; see ARSI.Rom.16-H, fols.407v. 451r. In that same year, Farnese obtained papal permission to raise a loan on his revenues from the Abbey of Grottaferrata, of which he was commendatory abbot, for 30,000 scudi. After Farnese's death this led to complications; see ARSI.Fondo Gesuitico lib.205-545 fol.12, 13, and 17r for the approvals for this loan by Paul V and Gregory XV.

\textsuperscript{15} BAV. Urb.Lat.1084 fol.109r-v: 'Il medesimo Card[inali]le Farnese di questa settimana tra danari Contanti, et assignati [assegni?] sicuri ha dato 30 mil[lie] [scudi] alli Padri Gesuiti per finire la fabbrica interiore, et esteriore della casa professa del Gesù insieme con le stanze del suo appartamento per quando vi si retira i giorni di devotione della [settima] santa, et altri tempi.'

\textsuperscript{16} There are no contemporary descriptions of this apartment. For this reason, existing studies are unclear about its scale. Pocchial 1952, p.312 mentioned 'several rooms'; but Buchowiecki 1967-1974 vol.3, p.463 referred to only one space, the Cappellina. Bösel 1985, p.174 described it as the cardinal's 'appartamento', without certainty about its size ('en Privatapartement für den Kardinal'). The apartment seems to have been taken over in the late seventeenth century by the Jesuits; the chapel was restored in the 1940s; see Buchowiecki 1967-1974 vol.3, p.463. Since the accounts for the Casa Professa have largely been lost, payments for Farnese's appartamento are also unknown. The Farnese archives do not contain them; as the Avviso mentioned, it was part of the Casa Professa-project.

\textsuperscript{17} Because of this autonomous architectural character of this tract, it has been called Palazzina Farnese in Pfeiffer 1985; historically there was, however, no such name applied to this building.
of which is an inlay of the Farnese lily in stone. On the lintel above the internal communicating door between the Jesuit complex and the private apartment, Odoardo’s name is also inscribed.

The interior of the apartment itself, located on the first floor, consisted of three sections (see the grey marked area in the plan of the Casa Professa in fig. 62). The first part, to the right of the apse of the Gesù, centred around a wide entrance hall onto which four rooms opened, two on either side; then, after a partition wall with an opening (presumably with a door in the original situation), the second and middle section was situated directly adjacent to the apse. This contained a small chapel, known in modern literature as the Cappella Farnese.\(^\text{18}\) This chapel was originally connected to one of the prior rooms by means of a grate offering a view of the altar, which indicates that it was possible to hear Mass from that room.\(^\text{19}\) The middle part of the apartment also contained another room, opposite the Cappella. A door gave access to the third and last part behind and to the left of the apse, which consisted of a long corridor or galleria along the Via Astalli leading to two coretti on either side of the choir of the Gesù, from which Mass could be heard privately. On both sides of the choir the grates of these windows can still be seen.

At least until 1675, when Garimberti asked Ranuccio II Farnese to cede the apartment, this part of the Casa Professa remained at the disposal of the Farnese family.\(^\text{20}\) Notwithstanding Farnese’s initial refusal, sometime later the use of the apartment was ceded to the Jesuits who were in need of space.\(^\text{21}\) Little is known about the decoration and furnishing of the apartment in the Casa Professa; there are no contemporary descriptions of the rooms, and only one partial


\(^{19}\) The window between the Cappella and the adjacent room is at present closed; see Buchowiecki 1967-1974 vol. 3, p. 463. Such a division between hearing Mass in public or in private existed in the seventeenth century, see Waddy 1990, p. 7, 112, 189. This suggests that the grate was meant for Farnese’s personal use, to attend the liturgy without being in the (indeed tiny) chapel.

\(^{20}\) ARSI Rom. 143 II, fol. 358r is the minute of a letter of 30 June 1675 from Garimberti in Modena to the prior of the Gesù, reporting the former’s request to the Duke of Parma to cede to the Society the use of this part of the Casa Professa, as it was not used by members of the Farnese family, but was retained as memorial for the prelates of the family. Per ubidire a quello m’imporre V.A. corti nel pil. delle camere dell’Appartamento Farnese, ho voluto parlarne a quest’ereto Sereno, al quale ho vivamente ripetuto lo stato da Casa, quando invitati dalla commodità delle stanz vuote vengono i Prelati a fermarsi in casa professa. Ni ha SA. udito, e mostrato aver la buona di compatri ancora ma al punto di levare la Camera, et guastare l’Appartamento senza volersi risponde a direttura mi ha fatto conchierere chiaramente che ci non app. […] levare quella memoria del Casa Farnese e se bene ho replicato che vi sono altre et [n]elle conspice memorie, non che non ha voluto accordarmi cosa alcuna, assicurando massime haverne una simile in tutti li conventi tanto di Monachi quanto di Religiosi fabbricati dalla Casa Farnese, come qui nella Badia, et in altri [conventi]'. This coincided with other attempts by the Jesuits to persuade Ranuccio II Farnese to fund the improvements of the apse of the Gesù; see Levy 1999 2000, esp. pp. 393-395, 416, and D’Amello 2003.

\(^{21}\) A description in BNC Fondo Gesuitico 1477 55, fol. 469v, made in 1847, described this part of the Casa Professa as housing rooms for the Infermiera.
inventor of this part of the building has survived. The main portion of this inventory comprises entries regarding the reliquaries in the Cappellina, containing remains of Saints Andrew, Peter, Paul, Francis Xaverius, and Ignatius of Loyola.22

Today, only the decoration of the Cappellina survives intact, consisting of oil-paintings set into moulded stucco frames (figs.63-68). These canvases were executed by Baccio Ciarpi, Andrea Commodi and the latter's workshop.23 The original altarpiece was executed by Domenichino, but was sold and replaced by a copy, probably when the Jesuits obtained the use of Odoardo's apartment in or after 1675; the original has recently been identified as the painting in the Matthiesen collection.24 On stylistic grounds Domenichino's original has been assigned a date in the first years of the third decade, which has led people to assume that it was executed only after the canonisation of Saint Ignatius in 1622. Such a date would also accord with the chronology of the Casa Professa, which was finished around 1623; Farnese's apartment and Cappellina were completed around the same time, as the sources cited above seemed to indicate.

On the other hand, Andrea Commodi's paintings have erroneously been dated much earlier, anticipating the beatification of Ignatius in 1609.25 This would suggest that the decoration of the Cappellina was not executed in one campaign; the altarpiece would then not coincide with the aim of the larger series. As a result, it has been assumed that these smaller paintings were only transferred to their present site when the Casa Professa was completed, and Ignatius grave was relocated to the transept of the Gesù. On the basis of Giulio Mancini's account on Commodi's life of circa 1621 in which it was stated that 'many years ago he worked here in Rome on a number of things for the Gesù, at the grave of the blessed Ignatius'26 it has been suggested that the paintings of Odoardo's little chapel were originally destined for the church itself and placed behind the altar, where the founder's remains were kept before 1622.27

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22 ASN: Fondo Farnesiano 1853.1(2), dated 2 April 1626, bearing the heading 'Descrittione di Religie et altre robe esistenti appartamo facto da (lado) v. Cardin nella Casa professa del Gesù, XIII'. Apart from the reliquaries, it listed a considerable number of liturgical vestments. What the existence of this inventory also expressed is that the apartment was considered to be Farnese property.

23 Strinati 1979, p.10; Papi 1988, p.76 and Papi 1994, pp.31-33, 83-84. Various attributions suggest that at least four painters - Domenichino, Commodi, Ciarpi and a fourth unidentified - were hired. The paintings (except for the lunettes) and the stucco frames were restored in 1944 by Mattenoci, see Buchowiecki 1967-1974 vol.3, p.463.

24 Nell'età di Correggio 1986, p.444. That Domenichino's painting only remained above the altar in the Cappellina for a short while, as Papi 1988, p.72 suggested on the ground of the small amount of damage by candles, cannot be upheld as Odoardo's apartment was not used the Cardinals' death in 1626.

25 Papi 1988, pp.73-75 and Papi 1994, p.83; Commodi's paintings were considered iconographically close to the prints with scenes of Ignatius' life produced prior to the beatification of the saint in 1609, and the style of the paintings was supposed to support this early dating.

26 Mancini 1956-1957 vol.1, p.248: 'molti anni sono opero qui in Roma alcune cose del Gesù al sepolcro del beato Ignazio in buona maniera'.

27 Pflügler 1985, p.187, Papi 1988, and Papi 1994, p.83. On the original location of Ignatius' grave, see König-Nordhoff 1982, pp.34, 40-42. This first grave was not very distinguished; General Acquaviva refused to authorise
This cannot be upheld, however, as Andrea Commodi had not been commissioned to do paintings as embellishments of Ignatius' grave, but for another space nearby. In 1610, Felini mentioned that under the said altar is a beautiful Oratory completely painted, with an altar, where the bodies of Saints and Martyrs Abondius and Abondantius rest... At the right side of the Main Altar the glorious Spanish Father Ignatius Loyola, founder of the present Company of Jesus lies buried... The reference here is to a cycle of works illustrating the lives of martyrs other than Ignatius, and indeed Baglione and Baldinucci both mentioned only the one painting with Saints Abondio and Abondantio as executed by Commodi for this location.\(^2\)

Moreover, on account of the size and location of Ignatius' grave in a niche in the back wall of the choir it has been maintained that only one, fairly small portrait of the saint was hung at this spot.\(^3\) Space for an entire painted cycle was not available around the grave in the choir of the Gesù; nor was this kind of decoration permitted prior to official canonisation.\(^4\) In November 1602 the Jesuits had, together with the Oratorians, been reproved in Consistory for the use of prints of the portrait of their founder, which had been hung on the location of the grave with the scope of stimulating popular veneration.\(^5\) It is highly unlikely that shortly after this admonition, any decoration around this spot in 1585-1586 in accordance with papal decrees, reconfirmed by Clement VIII in 1593. On the other hand, some sources did describe the presence of votit-gifts and some decoration on the grave itself - however without any reference to an entire cycle of paintings. In 1599, only one image of the saint was hung near his grave by cardinal Baronio. See for the discussion of the identification of that painting König-Nordhoff 1982, pp.90-92.

\(^2\) Felini 1610 1669, p.91: 'Sotto detto Altare sta un bell'Oratorio tutto dipinto, con un'altare, dove stanno i corpi di Santi Abondio, & Abondantio martiri... Da banda destra dell'Altare maggiore giace sepoltolo il glorioso P. Ignatius Loiola Spagnuolo fondatore della presente Compagnia del Gesù... ' See also l'Annali 1687 vol.1, p.101: 'un altro pur in Tavola rappresentante l' SS. Abundio, & Abundantio condotti avanti il Trittico fatto a olio, e ben intese e di mani 'Andrea Comodo... ' This information and Mancini's citation have been related to the lost decoration of the chapel of Sant'Abbondio and Abbondanzio, for which Commodi indeed delivered one canvas. Salerno (in his commentary to Mancini 1956-1957 vol.2, p.199 n.1077) positively confirmed this identification of Commodi's work in the Gesù with this last painting. For seventeenth-century references to this crypt, see Levy 1999 2000, pp. 417-423.


\(^4\) König-Nordhoff 1982, pp.91-93 discussed form and size of the first grave and proposed that only one painting, now in the Cappelletta (the original Ignatian house, incorporated in the Casa Professa) was meant as painted embellishment. The Commodi's paintings were not taken into account in her discussion.

\(^5\) Hecht 1997, pp.398-403, on the relation between canonisation and the public exposure of images of saints.
they would have commissioned an artist to depict his life in the form of an entire series of paintings; and indeed, no guidebook of this period mentioned such an extended series with scenes from the life of the aspirant-saint as hanging around the first grave.\textsuperscript{33}

Iconography and patronage of the Cappellina Farnese suggest that the entire decoration was commissioned by Odoardo, especially for this location, and was intended to form a uniform whole. After all, both Baccio Ciarpì and Domenichino worked for the Farnese family before. The strict thematic and compositional unity of the Cappellina's decoration suggests that this was not put together at random or by incorporating an existing cycle. The paintings were thus meant for this space, and form the only remains of the original decoration of Odoardo's apartment. How does the decoration of the Cappellina accord with the function of the appartamento as a devotional retreat, as was suggested in the sources?

**Iconography of the Cappellina Farnese**

In the chapel of Farnese's Casa Professa apartment, a total of ten canvases set within stucco frames illustrated scenes from the life of Saint Ignatius. One painting - the Domenichino - was placed above the altar, six other rectangular format canvases were set along the walls, and three more were in the form of lunettes. The latter three are in deplorable state, whereas all the other canvases have been recently restored. Notwithstanding the varying state of conservation, the entire cycle demonstrates a definite unity in form and iconography.

On the entrance wall, a large canvas by Baccio Ciarpì depicted the appearance of Saint Peter to Ignatius during the latter's period of convalescence at his family's castle, after the Battle of Pamplona.\textsuperscript{34} The future saint lay confined to his bed and opened his arms to welcome the Apostle appearing on his left-hand side; Saint Peter is recognisable by his keys and the book (fig.63). The effect of the Apostle's visit was not only that Ignatius was cured of the diseases that had brought him near to death - a broken leg aggravated by infections - but it also resulted in his conversion from the secular to the religious life.\textsuperscript{15} According to one of the first biographies of the saint, written by Pietro de Ribadeneyra and published in 1586,\textsuperscript{16} this change was brought about after Ignatius had read all the available chivalric romances and was brought devotional literature

\textsuperscript{33} See Schudt 1930, pp.206-211 for a list of editions in the first two decades of the seventeenth century.

\textsuperscript{34} BS 1961-1970 vol.7, col.678 and König-Nordhoff 1982, p.59; see Ribadeneyra 1586 pp.6-13 and Bartoli 1659, pp.13-14 for this episode; the latter described more in particular that Saint Peter brought him 'la medicina dal Ciclo. Portoglielaa il Principè degli Apostoli S. Pietro, con una visita, che gli fece quella medesima notte, e fù di si efficace virtù, che il trasse d'ogni pericolo.'

\textsuperscript{15} Ribadeneyra 1586, p.6: "Come lo chiamò Dio dalla vanità del Secolo al suo conoscimento.'

instead. Reading the *Life of Christ Our Lord* and the *Fior de'Santi* made him feel 'a transformation in [his] heart'. Ciarpi's painting explicitly alluded to Ignatius' conversion through the act of reading, as there was a book on the stand beside his bed from which Ignatius seems to have been reading prior to the appearance of Saint Peter.

The second painting, executed by Commodi, depicted a second divine communication: the Apparition of the Madonna and Child to Ignatius (fig.64). This episode occurred shortly after the Apparition of Saint Peter, and was discussed in the 1586 biography in the same chapter. As in the former painting, the context of reading and study is evoked by the lectern and book, with a lighted candle in the background. Here Ignatius, on beholding the Madonna, held his hand upon his heart to indicate his emotional response at visually perceiving the subject he had been reading about. According to the *Vita*, during this vision the saint's soul was purified and all memories of past sins, which he came to abhor, were eliminated by the illumination of his soul.

The largest painting in the chapel, located on the wall opposite the altar, depicted the Mass at Manresa (fig.65). During a mass in the Dominican convent in the Spanish town of Manresa, where Ignatius went after being cured and converted, the saint suddenly came to realise at beholding the Host the dual nature of Christ: his human and his divine existence. Commodi located this episode in a church interior similar to that of the Gesù, where on the right side a priest is shown standing before the altar holding up the Eucharist and showing it to the faithful; on the left side is Ignatius seen kneeling at the lowest step and folding his hands.

The next episode showed yet another vision, the Appearance of the Holy Trinity to Ignatius, an event that occurred in Manresa shortly before his departure on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem (fig.66). Although the format of this painting is different from the two former

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1 Ribadeneyra 1586, pp.6-7: 'Tra egli, mentre stava nel lieto, molto curioso di legger libri profani di Cavalleria, e per passar il tempo, che parte dal male, e parte dalla solitudine, lungo, e noioso gli pareva, addimando che gli recassero qualche libro ... e piacque a Dio che all'ora alcuno non ve ne fusse in casa; ma in vece di quelli, altri se ne trovarono, che contenevano cose spirituali, quali gli portarono ... e furono, uno della Vita di CRISTO Nostro Signore, e l'altro delle Vite de'Santi, che comunemente si intitola Fior de'Santi ... e non solo incominciò a gustar quello che leggeva, ma da ciò anco a sentir mutatione nel cuore. ' See Rahner 1964. pp.246-247 on the influence of these books on the later work of saint Ignatius.

2 The attribution to Andrea Commodi has been doubted by Papi 1988. p.78 and Papi 1994, p.84.

3 Ribadeneyra 1586. p.11: 'Che stando egli una notte vegliando, gli appare la chierissima, e soprana Regina de'Angeli, che tra le braccia portava il suo pretissimo Figliuolo, la quale con lo splendore della sua chiarezza lo illuminava, e con la soavità della sua presenza lo riecreava, & ingaghiardiva. Duro buono spazio di tempo questa visione, la onde egli si grandemente abborrì poi la sua vita passata, e specialmente i brutti e dishonesti diletti della carne, che pareva che, come una mano, tutte le deformi rappresentazioni, & imagini si lockassero, e trattecessero dall'anima sua... ' See also Bartoli 1659. p.18.

4 BS 1961-1970 vol.7, cols.680-681; see also Ribadeneyra 1586, p.36. 'Lendo messa un giorno nella Chiesa del medesimo Monastero, stando con grandissima ricerenza, e con divota attenzione, nel tempo che si alzava l'Hostia, e che al popolo si dimostrava, vide chiaramente con gli occhi dell'anima, come in quel divino mistero, e sotto quel
canvases, the parallels are unequivocal. Again we see the future saint on his knees with folded hands and now with his pilgrim's staff. In the upper left corner a cloud-encircled vision of Christ, God the Father and the Holy Ghost is visible; and again, next to Ignatius on the steps of the church of San Domenico lies a book (which is highlighted for the viewer both by its foreshortening and dramatic contrast of light and shade).

In this case, the book was not the preambles to the vision, but alluded to its results and effects. As had been explained in Ribadeneyra's biography, after beholding the figure of the Trinity almost as if he saw it with his bodily senses, Ignatius became deeply impressed with the import of this mystery, and 'being a man who knew nothing more than simply to read and write; he started to compose a book, of eighty pages, discussing this profound subject..." Although this book about the doctrine of the Trinity seems not to have survived, from that day on, Ignatius started to dedicate prayers to the Holy Trinity, receiving great spiritual consolation as a result.

The next painting depicts Ignatius sleeping in the portico of the Procuratie Vecchie, where he was found by the Venetian senator Marc Antonio Trevisan (fig.67). The episode occurred at the beginning of Ignatius' pilgrimage to Jerusalem, when he was living off alms and sleeping on the street, waiting in Venice for a ship to take him to Jerusalem. In the middle of the night, the virtuous senator Trevisan had a dream in which he was summoned to look for a certain person in need, so he went to Piazza San Marco and ordered one of his servants to wake Ignatius. Trevisan offered him a decent meal and a place to sleep, thereby illustrating the divine assistance that Ignatius enjoyed throughout his life. Commodi's painting shows a portal illuminated by torchlight, in which the figure of the future saint lies on the lower left side, draped across the steps, with the senator coming to Ignatius' aid from the right hand side.

The following painting of the cycle showed the Death of Ignatius (fig.68). Lying in bed,
he is shown surrounded by members of his Order involved in the act of prayer. In this case, the bed is standing opposite an altar: a priest is administering the Sacrament of the Dying. Like the preceding paintings, this composition particularly stressed the visionary aspect of the episode: the upper third of the painting contains a heavenly apparition of angels welcoming the ascending soul of the holy man. The rays of light falling on his face constitute a compositional link between the heavenly and earthly realm. According to Ribadeneyra’s biographical account, Ignatius had asked God in a prayer to be taken from ‘this desert’ and be conducted to his place of rest. For this reason, he refused the food offered to him by the Fathers who came to his bed at the hour of death, and spoke the following words to them when they lamented his departure from this world: ‘It is not the time for this [i.e. food] anymore; and raised his hands, and directed his eyes to Heaven, calling with the tongue and with the heart Jesus, and with a serene expression, he returned his soul to God on the last day of July of the year 1556.’

The three lunettes below the vault of the ceiling were also embellished with paintings on canvas. The subject of these paintings extended that of the series along the walls, but not in chronological order. The theme of apparitions and conversion re-emerged in depictions of the Apparition of Christ to Ignatius in Padua, which gave him the strength to proceed with his journey, the Vision of Ignatius at Manresa that demonstrated his advancement in meditation and contemplation, and Ignatius exchanging his habit with a mendicant friar.

17 Ribadeneyra 1586, p.430: ‘io con vehementi sospiri comincio a pregare il Signore che fusse servito di cavarlo da questo deserto e conducirlo a quel luogo di riposo…”
18 Ribadeneyra 1586, p.432: ‘Non è più tempo di questo; & alzate le mani, & affissati gli occhi al Cielo, chiamando con la lingua, e col cuore GESù’, con un volto sereno, rese l’anima a Dio l’ultimo giorno del Mese di Luglio dell’anno MDLV…” See also Bartoli 1659, p.342, who gave a slightly different account of the event, in which the Jesuit Fathers gathered at the death-bed of the saint were described as initially impeding him leaving this world: ‘Hic quia, pia di Di. pia, consolare, il volle far sì, che non glielo impedissero le preghiere dei suoi, come già un’altra volta pochi anni prima, quando vedutolo infermo a morte gli stavano d’intorno al letto piangendo, e supplicando a Dio, che non gli tolgesse loro per anche un padre se ne, e un sostegno si necessario al mantenimento della Compagnia…”
19 It has been suggested that one or more of Domenichino’s pupils were responsible for the execution of these three lunettes, see Papi 1988, p.72. The present state of preservation precludes any attribution of these works.
20 For the Apparition of Christ to Ignatius, see Ribadeneyra 1586, pp.55-56: ‘Perch’eco una notte dopo haverlo quiuno lasciato solo, venendo da Chioggia a Padova, in un aperta campagna gli apparve GESù CRISTO Redentor Nostro, e maravigliosamente lo consolò con la sua dolce & amorosa presenza, e gli diede forza per patire altre cose ma più aspre per amor suo: & in tal momento furono questi suoi viaggi, che, né all’entrata, né all’uscita della Città di Padova, le guardie gli diedero alcun disturbo…” for the vision of Ignatius, see Ribadeneyra 1586, pp.38-39: ‘Stando tuttavia in Manresa, con molto fervore esercitandosi nelle occupazioni da noi disposte narrate, accade che un giorno d’un sabato a l’hora di Compieta, fu destinato & abbandonato di maniera da tutti i sentimenti, che alcuni uomini e donne divote, trovandolo di quella maniera, lo tennero per morto:… Dato in questo fatto, o estasi fino al sabato dell’altra settimana hora di Còpicta…” for the exchange of habits with the Benedictine friar in Montserrat, see Ribadeneyra 1586, p.22: ‘L’asissi la cavalcatura al Monastero, la spada & il pugnale, de’ quali prima s’aveva compiacimento e preguito, e con che hanno servito al Mondo: quando egli se’ rendeva in tempo di notte con la magior secretezza che poteva, & acaso incontrandosi in urbano popolo, mendico, e con le vesti tutte stracciate, gli diede i suoi vestimenti, fino alla propria camoscia, & egli vesti di quel suo tanto desiderato sacco, che comprato aveva: ponendosi poi in ginocchioni avanti l’ Altare della Gloriosissima Vergine.” Ribadeneyra explains: this event as Ignatius
Finally, Domenichino's altarpiece offered another variation on the theme of conversion, miraculous appearances and mystic apprehensions, but here with a direct reference to the institution of the Jesuit Order. The painting showed Saint Ignatius kneeling on the ground in a chapel at La Storta, some small distance from the city of Rome itself along the via Cassia where, at the end of 1537, Ignatius stopped to pray before entering the papal city (fig.69). In a vision God the Father and Christ, with the Cross on His shoulders, appeared before him. God pleaded with Christ to take Ignatius and his 'Compagni' as his servants; God also turned to the future saint and said to him 'I will be favourable towards you in Rome'. This event constituted a turning-point in the life of the saint and in the foundation and history of the Jesuit Society: Ignatius and his companions Fabro and Lainez then decided to found the Order.

Although Domenichino treated the relation between heaven and earth in a different way compositionally than Commodi, the appearance amid clouds and the intense reaction of the saint to the divine revelation in La Storta is the same as in all the other works of this chapel. The iconographic coherence of this series was further strengthened by the compositional similarities between the individual works. So, even if a number of different artists were involved, the unity of the decoration was thoroughly guarded by the patron Odoardo Farnese and certainly did not incorporate a cycle that was conceived with the propagation of Ignatius' saintliness in mind. What then was the intention of the iconographic programme in the Cappellina?

**Ignatius' exemplarity**

The subjects depicted in the Cappellina showed a very particular predilection for visions and divine apparitions to Ignatius. In this respect, the cycle deviated from the Ignatian iconography as found in the first decades of the Seicento; the major difference was the absence of miracles or divine interventions in the paintings for the Cappellina. Before Ignatius' canonisation in 1622, series of prints represented events from the life of the founder following the order established in

becoming a Knight for Christ, which Ignatius had read in the chivalric books. See also Bartoli 1659, pp.23-24 for this episode, where the same relation is suggested with the example given in books.

For the iconography of Ignatius at La Storta, see Rahner 1964, pp.67-80, König-Nordhoff 1982 pp.59-63 and BS 1961-1970 vol.7, col.684; the episode is told in Ribadeneyra 1586, pp.144-146 without the name of the place: 'Accadé in questo cammino, che di gia avvicinadosi alla Città di Roma, entro Ignatio solo in una chiesa deserta, la quale era alcune miglia lontana dalla Città, e quivi si pose a far orazione; & essendo nel maggior ardore dell'orarione fervorosa orazione: quivi gli fu quasi come mutato il cuore, e gli occhi dell'anima sua furono con una risplendente luce resi chiari, si che aprametsche vidde, come Iddio Padre, volgendosi al suo unigentio Filiuolo, che portava la Croce sopra le spalle...'

Ribadeneyra 1586, p.145: 'Ego vobis Roma propitius ero.' See Rahner 1964, p.79 on this particular sentence and the variation upon it introduced in the different hagiographical accounts.

Ribadeneyra 1586, p.145: 'E quando nacque, ch'havendo poi Ignatio, & i suoi Compagni determinato d'instituire e fondar Religione: e trattando fra loro del Nome, che se le haveva a imporre, oer rappresentarla a sua Santita, e supplicarla, che la confermasse...'

On the subject of mystic visions and the messages they convey, see Pike 1978, esp. p.214-220.
the written hagiographies, and in addition to the visions also contained a certain number of miracles - divine interventions and healings through the person of Ignatius. During the process of canonisation, this kind of pre- and post-mortem miracles constituted the primary evidence to support the cause. For example, the set of thirteen prints produced around 1609 by Hieronymus Wierix (1553-1619) included an image of the resurrection of a hanged man, the healing of an ill person by laying on his hands, and the post-mortem appearance of the saint to his followers. Francesco Villamena's engraving of 1600, with scenes from the saints' life in medallions around a central portrait, showed a greater number of miracles than visions. This print was reissued a second time in 1625 (i.e. after Ignatius' canonisation) - which suggests the Ignatian iconography remained constant during the early seventeenth century.

Prints had provided some artistic inspiration for the paintings in the Cappellina Farnese. For example, Commodi's painting of the appearance of Saint Peter beside the bed of the saint was strongly influenced by the prints by Hieronymus Wierix published in 1610 (fig.70) after a series of paintings dated around 1595 by Juan de Mesa. We see the saint in bed, opening one hand in welcome and the other pointing at his heart, while the Apostle appears from the upper right side within rays of light and amidst clouds. Other derivations from this same series can be identified in the pictures of the Domenichino's 'Vision at La Storta' and Commodi's 'Death of Ignatius'. However, the compositions for the Cappellina altered these examples, and most importantly, the thaumaturgic and miraculous scenes that played such a large role in Villamena's and Wierix's series were left out entirely. The painted cycle of the Cappellina Farnese was thus never meant as propaganda for the holy status of Ignatius, for it lacked the most important arguments in favour of canonisation.

In the context of a chapel that formed part of an apartment for a cardinal's devotional

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1 See König-Nordhoff 1982 for these early series of Ignatius' life: the theme of miracles in an early print by Francesco Villamena, dated to around 1600, is discussed on pp.101-103; in this series, Ignatius' life is shown as beginning with his own healing and enlightenment, then curing others, and after his death appearing miraculously. Thaumaturgic qualities were introduced into the hagiographies to back the attempts to open the process of beatification around 1599, unknown in the series before that date; in the first biography of Ignatius, by Ribadeneyra, this aspect was completely absent (see König-Nordhoff 1982, p.115). Other cycles of Ignatius' life show at least a number of miraculous healings, either during the saint's life or after his decease, such as that by Philips Galle of 1610, and another one issued by Le Clerc in 1612.


4 König-Nordhoff 1982, p.256 and ills.283-289. The importance of apparitions of Ignatius is stressed for example in Bartoli 1659, pp.37, 346, 381, 419 and elsewhere, recounting all persons to whom the saint had appeared.

5 König-Nordhoff 1982, pp.261-265; these prints were in turn inspired upon the series of paintings made by Juan de Mesa, that constituted one of the earliest sequential representations of Ignatius' life.

retreat, however, the chosen episodes were most appropriate. Commodi's paintings fitted perfectly into a space arranged for religious exercises - in almost every scene, Ignatius was represented in the act of praying, while in a number of the paintings a book seems to have been put down just an instant earlier. Ignatius himself is consistently portrayed as emotionally moved at the sight of a heavenly apparition, illustrating the result of his prayer and the effect of divine intervention on the course of his life. When Peter appeared, he was converted; the vision of the Madonna and Child resulted in the purification of his soul, and the vision of the Trinity led to an increase in meditational fervour. The scene set in Manresa of the exchange of vestments with the monk was explained in Ribadeneýra's Vita as an exchange of his secular armoury for the vestment of the Christian soldier, laying his life in the hands of God. From then on, heavenly intercession helped Ignatius until divine order was given to him to found the Jesuit society.

The decoration of the Cappellina Farnese primarily illustrated Ignatius' perfection in the method of meditation. Ribadeneýra stated that the saint considered the exercise of prayer as the first of the Virtue of Devotion, and that Ignatius had received this gift direct from God.59 In the Cappellina, the scenes of the Apparition of Peter, of the Madonna, and the Vision at La Storta illustrated the three-tier cycle of abstinence from sin, directing prayers to God or Christ, and communicating with the divine Presence. This corresponded to the classical triad of the Via Purgativa, Illuminativa and Unitiva, which was usually guided by reading devout books.60 It had been one of Ignatius' primary aims to offer his readers an accessible format for these exercises in his book of *Spiritual Exercises*. The paintings in the Cappellina represented his ability to compose this because his method was based on his own experience, as communicated to him through divine intervention.61

The iconography of the Cappellina precisely reflected the kind of devotional function that Odoardo's apartment was meant to facilitate, according to the *Avviso* that first noted its existence. As this description explained, the rooms offered Farnese a place to retreat during the Holy Week.

59 Ribadeneýra 1586, p.449-463 also stressed this aspect, when he began the Fourth book on the saints' Virtues with a chapter on the 'Gift of prayer': *Del dono dell'Orazione, e della familiarità, ch'ebbe Ignatius con Dio. Cominciando adunque dalla Virtù della Devotione, posta da Ignatius nel primo luogo ... diremo quanto segnalato fu il dono dell'Orazione, da Dio ad Ignatius comunicato.*
60 In the *Sommarion della santa vita di San Ignazio* of 1651, this biography was even modelled according to this concept, which was explained on p.5: 'Da tal principio sali S. Ignatio al somo della perfette Christiana per li tre gradi, e vic della Vita spirituale, Purgativa, Illuminativa, & Unitiva.' For an introduction to the stages of prayer and meditation according to the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature, see *DS* 1937-1994 vol 10, cols.906-927, Erdé 1990, pp.94-107.
61 Ribadeneýra 1586, p.43 stressed both the personal experiences of Ignatius and divine inspiration as basis of the *Esercizi*. In questo medesimo tempo con quella sofficienza di lettere ... compose il libro de gli Esercizii Spirituali, il quale cavò dall'esperienza acquistata, e dalla cura & attenta consideratione, con cui andava notando tutte le cose, che
for the exclusive dedication to devotional exercises. What could have been more apt for such a
place than to present one of the most stimulating guides in the practice of devotional exercises.
Ignatius himself? The saint had lived according to a religious model that was immediately
recognisable for the reader around 1600, and for that reason worthy of imitation. Through the acts
of prayer and meditation, one could arrive at communication between one’s soul and God. This
was the theme of the *Spiritual Exercises* and the main theme of the paintings in the Cappellina
Farnese as well.

**Jesuit devotional retreats**

In the introduction to the *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius had prescribed the characteristics of the
most convenient location for doing devotional exercises. Because these prayers should preferably
be done alone, privacy was one of the main functional requirements. The 1625 Italian edition of
the *Spiritual Exercises*, contemporary with the building of the Farnese apartment in the Casa
Professa, recommended the use of a secluded house or room for this purpose and implied that it
should be furnished for this particular goal. It should offer a place where one could leave behind
the worldly life to ascend with the mind to one’s Creator:

'spiritual life will be much more fruitful, in relation to how much one is able to withdraw
from all one’s friends and acquaintances, and all earthly care: such as transferring oneself
from the usual living-quarters into another house, or more secret room, from which one
can, as often as it pleases, leave freely, and without fuss, or disturbed by one’s familiars,
to go and hear Matins, the Mass, or the Vespers. Principally three conveniences, among
others, are the result from this place of retreat. The first is, that refusing entrance to
friends, familiars and to business not directly related to the cult of God, will merit one an
extraordinary grace with His Divine Majesty. The second, that this type of retreat means
that the intellect will be less distracted by other things, and keeping the thoughts gathered
and concentrated on one thing, which is the obedience to God his Creator, and in looking
after the health of one’s soul; much more freely and quickly will it use the natural forces
in searching for that which it desires. The third, that the more apt one dedicates oneself
to this search, and unite oneself with one’s Creator and Lord; to whom the more one gets
closer, the more one is disposed to receive the gifts of the Divine Goodness. '62

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62 Loyola 1625, chapter 1 (Notaizioni per gli Evvocitt): tanto maggior profitto fara nella vita spirituale, quanto
più si sottrarà da tutti gli amici, e conoscenti, e da ogni sollecitudine delle cose humane: come sarebbe il trasferirsi
dalla solita habitazione in qualche casa, o camera più segreta, donde egli possa, quando più gli piacerà, liberamente, e
senza fastidio, e senza esser disturbato da alcun famigliare, uscire ad udire il Matutino, la Messa, o il Vesper. Dal
In this context of the *Spiritual Exercises*, the use of the word *ritiramento* or 'retreat' pointed not merely to the literal significance as a dissociation from daily life, but more positively, it meant retiring to a place with the aim of doing devotional exercises and submitting to God's will.63

In the late sixteenth century, the Jesuits started to set up retreats in accordance to Ignatius' prescriptions, where the Fathers of the Order, and increasingly laymen as well, could dedicate themselves to the practice of the *Spiritual Exercises*. Often these retreats were located in the countryside to provide silence and seclusion, but in other cases these houses could also be located in the midst of cities, next to convents of the Society. In the latter situation, the practitioners of the *Exercises* could receive regular supervision - the main characteristic of the Ignatian system of meditation with respect to other methods of meditation, which often relied upon the reader's autonomous practice.64 Ignatius had devised regular consultation of the students, in the form of a priest hearing confession and offering guidance. Thus, these retreats were devised to resolve the paradox between solitary dedication to spiritual exercises and regular religious supervision.

Especially after 1600, the trend of founding this kind of detached retreat, independently from Jesuit houses, began to flourish, while at the same time the link with the regular community was retained on the level of organisation and supervision. To resolve the dissociation from the Jesuit churches, these special lodgings would often include a private chapel reserved for its occupants.65 The addition of the Cappellina to the Farnese apartment in the Casa Professa thus clearly responded to the issue that from the room in question one should be able to attend liturgical services at regular intervals, and that one should go to Mass without encountering the friends one had fled. Farnese's private apartment in the Casa Professa represented an exclusive form of a general model. The retreat created there was thus not a place to escape from his other obligations, but rather it constituted an apartment to go to with the aim of spiritual advancement along the lines described in the *Spiritual Exercises.*

63 *Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca* 1612, p.728: 'Diciamo vita ritirata, in signif. di vita solitaria, e appartata;' and *GDI* vol.16, p.945: 'Ritirare ... - trasferirsi in un luogo tranquillo per vivere i temporaneamente (in partic, per una vilegiatura o una vacanza) o definitivamente (in partic, alla cessazione di una attività).’ For the meaning of the word 'retreat' in the Ignatian sense, see O’Malley 1993, p.38.

64 The *Spiritual Exercises* were directed towards these supervisors, not to the students themselves, see Ignatius’ *Introduction* to the treatise, and O’Malley 1993, p.37.

Caprarola: the Palazzina Farnese

A second apartment was created for cardinal Farnese within the monastic context of the Discalced Carmelite convent located at Caprarola, outside Rome. The documents on this project make clear that was not only intended, as has been discussed in Chapter 3, as a convent for the training of future missionaries, but also served as a place for retreat of Farnese himself. In 1620, not long after finishing the Camerino and the apartment in the Casa Professa. Odoardo Farnese initiated plans for the foundation of a new convent in the vicinity of his family’s country residence, on the hill opposite the palace, outside the village proper. Negotiations were opened with the comune of Caprarola on 1 November 1620, and the proposal presented by the Cardinal to the Order of Discalced Carmelites on 4 November was discussed during their general chapter held between 10 and 15 November 1620. There was already a church dedicated to Saint Sylvester on the site, where according to legend this pope had hidden from Christian persecutions. This dilapidated edifice was to be torn down; it belonged to a confraternity, which approved of the new plans with the condition that one chapel was to be dedicated to Sylvester in the new church.

Early in 1621 talks between Farnese and the prior-general of the Discalced Carmelites led to the agreement that the cardinal would erect a church and adjacent convent accommodating fifteen religious and a prior, and provide a sum of 12,000 scudi to secure the communities’ future financial independence. In his will of 12 March of that year Farnese left enough money for this project to have it finished, should his death pre-empt its completion. By that time, a plan for the new church had also been designed by Girolamo Rainaldi, the family-architect of cardinal Odoardo who was in charge of executing the projects, and who had also co-operated on the Casa

11 Tuciani 1929, pp.143-174. Di Ruzza 1994, p.32 mentioned a document in the Archivio Comunale di Caprarola, Consilia 1615-1626, dated 1 November 1620, in which these plans are announced to the comune: ‘Fare un monastero di Frati Carmelitani Scalzi a S. Silvestro per una divozione e spirituale beneficenza del popolo et ornamento di questa terra’. Plans for a monastery might have existed earlier. Mascagna 1982, p.149 mentioned that Farnese probably asked permission to rebuild this convent in 1603 during a visit of Clement VIII to Caprarola; the source for this argument is, however, not given; no other documents sustaining this assumption have come to light.

12 Di Ruzza 1994, pp.87-88 contradicted the suggestion made by Mascagna 1982, pp.147-148, that cardinal Alessandro had planned a small villa or loggia on the same spot, as addition to a monastery.


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On 28 May 1621 a contract between Farnese and the Discalced Carmelites was signed. Inauguration of the complex took place only two years later, in 1623. When cardinal Odoardo died in 1626, the monastery had almost been completed; a later account mentioned that by then only the wall surrounding the garden at the back of the monastery had not been properly finished, so that the clausura was not yet perfect.

A small building adjacent to the monastic structure was added at Cardinal Odoardo’s initiative, called ‘Casino appresso li Scalzi’ or ‘Palazzo’ in early sources, and ‘Palazzina’ in the recent literature (fig.71). This semi-independent edifice stood between the monastery and the ravine (on the left in fig.51), and consisted of a number of rooms and a small garden that overlooked the gorge and beyond it, the Roman campagna. It was described in 1741, long after the death of its patron, and after having been turned into a pharmacy by the monks:

Connected to the said convent and church the said liberal patron had built for his religious retreat ['divoto ritiro'] a beautiful Casino with chapel, decorated so delicately in stucco, that it seemed of white, translucent marble. And the sala with a ceiling of beautiful intagli, and the vaulted rooms with beautiful stucchi in the cornices of rare taste. It has its own small garden with a fountain in the middle, with a connection from this, as well as from the said casino, to the convent itself, and its clausura contains on the upper floor rooms for the famiglia and offices downstairs, although those were not finished because of the intervening death of the Cardinal on 26 February 1626, when he was mourned as deeply as his great-uncle.

On the basis of this description and later ground-plans, a tentative reconstruction of the interior arrangement can be made. On the ground-floor were a salone, three rooms, a chapel and an access to the garden which contained a fountain in its middle. This garden must have been of tiny dimensions, as it was bordered on one side by a peperino balustrade on the edge of the...
crevice, and on the other side it was enclosed by the buildings of the monastery - which could be accessed from both the garden and the Palazzina itself. Servicerooms were planned in the basement, and on the first floor a number of chambers for the members of his household. This would indicate, that the cardinal was considering spending time in the vicinity of the Discalced Carmelite monks on a regular basis.

After the death of cardinal Odoardo an inventory of all the Farnese possessions in Caprarola was made up, and it included a description of the furnishings of the Palazzina. Furniture, paintings and other utensils were collected and listed. The presence of a table, some cupboards and a number of paintings suggests the possibility of semi-permanent sojourns. The extant paintings depicted religious subjects, such as Samson and Delilah, Christ on the column, Christ taken down from the Cross, and Saint Elisabeth Queen of Portugal elevated into the air by Angels. The presence of three prayer-stools indicates that devotional exercises could be done here. Books were not listed, but these were probably taken back to the Palazzo Farnese in Caprarola itself and included in a separate inventory of the study in that building.

The 1741 account cited above contains evidence that is confirmed by seventeenth-century sources. Most interesting is the detail about the connection of the Palazzina with the monastery itself. The passageways mentioned in the eighteenth century were located between these private quarters of cardinal Farnese and the building of the monastery itself. The way through the garden was probably caused by the unfinished state of the project, and probably was not intended as a...
permanent route, but the interior connection was planned from the beginning. During the phase of planning and immediately afterwards, this led to a discussion between the cardinal and the Carmelite superior general. Shortly after the first proposal for the monastery, made by Farnese on 4 November 1620, the General Council of the Order (held on the 15th of that same month) advised Ferdinando di Santa Maria who was in charge of the negotiations, to revoke the agreement if the cardinal insisted on having a key to the monastery. It would threaten the tranquillity required for their devotional duties. Moreover, only those who had professed and were accepted into the Order could hold the key to a convent.

Although it seems that at that time Farnese dropped this point, it came up again in a discussion a couple of years later, and then as a fait accompli. The cardinal did not have the key to the main entrance of the monastery, but rather an even more direct point of access. On 18 February 1625 the prior of the Carmelite monastery in Parma presented himself to the cardinal - then reigning in his nephew's name over the Duchy - to complain about a door that had been constructed between the Palazzina and the monastery in Caprarola. Obviously, this had been undertaken without prior consent from the General of the Order. The door had been constructed because Farnese had obtained the privilege of a private cell in the monastery itself, and this passage led directly from the private chambers of the cardinal to the interior of the monastery.

Farnese wrote immediately to the Carmelite general to reassure him that it was only for his own convenience that this door had been made - his physical complaints (gout, as in the case of most seventeenth-century cardinals) severely hindered him climbing the stairs when entering through the official entrance of the monastery. In the subsequent assembly of the General Council of the Discalced Order, it was decided to 'concede to the Cardinal, during his lifetime, that he might enter into the convent from the door adjacent to his room, on the condition that when being away from Caprarola that door may not be opened in the presence of someone else.' In a memorandum of 1641, this was described as an extraordinary favour granted to the cardinal, for 'in no other way the Religion [i.e. the Carmelite Order] would have given licence to build an

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79 Acta Definitorii Generalis 1985, p.76: 'Declaraverant Patres quod e duobus discretis qui a convento eliguntur, ille debit clavum habere qui in praedicta electione discretorum plura suffragia habuerit; et inter eandem aequalia habentes, qui fuerit antiquior professione...'
apartment so connected and incorporated into the convent.\textsuperscript{52}

In conjunction with this consideration by the Carmelites of the Palazzina as an integral part of their convent, various sources mentioned the function of the structure as a place for religious life. A mid-seventeenth-century account by Padre Marziale filled this in with more details. He wrote about the Palazzina in his 'Relazione della fondazione':

Next to the convent the Lord Cardinal had made a beautiful palazzo with its own very beautiful garden, because his Lord wanted to retire for the remaining years of his life and live there with the Fathers of the Convent, where he also had a cell made to retreat and do the Exercises.\textsuperscript{53}

This citation adds the fact that not only did Farnese dispose of his own apartment, he also had a cell inside the convent for the practice of devotional exercises - and for this reason, the rooms of cardinal were considered by the Carmelites as a part of their claustro, the place where particular Carmelite forms of devotion were practised. And Farnese, as the sources indicate, had the Palazzina constructed to partake in this.

In the seventeenth century, the propagation of Carmelite spiritual exercises among the laity was undertaken through confraternities. These were set up by the Discalced themselves, and the spiritual obligations of these layorganisations were modelled upon the monastic Rules. One example is the brotherhood dedicated to the Nativity of the Virgin, that was erected in 1600 in the Roman Discalced Carmelite church of Santa Maria della Scala, and governed by the monks of this convent.\textsuperscript{54} They channelled existing popular devotion to the image of the Madonna housed in their church, that had been found to work miracles.\textsuperscript{55} The new confraternity drafted its first statutes in 1600, in which it was stated that its primary aim was the care of the soul by means of a regular devotional exercises. Most interesting is the fact that these exercises for the associated brothers were very similar to the spiritual obligations of the Carmelites regulars themselves, which

\textsuperscript{52} Alberto di S. Carlo in a letter of 1642 to the cardinal delegate of Viterbo, when during the war of Castro the Farnese possessions also in Caprarola were sequestered, cited from Di Ruzza 1994, p.89: 'nè in altra maniera la Religione avrebbe dato licenza di fabbricare un appartamento tanto annesso e tanto incorporato al convento.'

\textsuperscript{53} Di Ruzza 1994, p.88, citing AGI-OCD 304.d.18: 'Appresso il convento ha fatto il Signore Cardinale un bellissimo palazzo con il suo giardino assai bello, perché voleva sua Signoria Ill.ma ritirare il restante della sua vita e far ristabilirne quelloponentsi, e con il Padre del Convento, dove anco sara fatta una cella per retirarsi a fare gli Esercizi.' The plan of the private cell in the convent itself has not been recovered, and the changes to the building in the eighteenth century have probably altered the original situation. The 1626 inventory of the Palazzo Farnese and the Palazzina in Caprarola does not mention this room as this was considered property of the monastic community, and thus not included among the private possessions of the cardinal.

\textsuperscript{54} The absence of any secondary literature on this confraternity suggests that it was a short-lived initiative.

\textsuperscript{55} See Kuhn-Forte 1997, p.654 for this miraculous image of the Virgin.
consisted of alternating liturgical and mental prayers.\textsuperscript{56} Carmelite forms and frequencies of prayer were actively promoted through these brotherhoods;\textsuperscript{57} indeed, the regular's own schedule was partly copied for the laity.

Farnese's persistence in obtaining permission for the passage between the Palazzina and the cloister itself to reach his own cell indicated the devotional aims for which this ensemble had been built: to partake in the religious practice of the Discalced brothers. The architectural similarities between the Palazzina and the Palazzetto are echoed in the analogous words used to describe their functions: retiring for devotional practice. Odoardo Farnese followed the religious practices common to the Discalced Carmelites in the monastery of Santa Teresa and Silvestro, just as in the Casa Professa Farnese was expected to do Ignatius' \textit{Exercises}.

\textbf{Grottaferrata: the Palazzo Abbaziale}

Even before being created a cardinal in 1591, Odoardo Farnese was nominated commendatory abbot of the monastery at Grottaferrata. This Basilian convent, basically following the Greek liturgical rite, had been one of the prebends of cardinal Alessandro.\textsuperscript{88} He ceded this before his death in 1589 to his great-nephew Odoardo. With this transaction, Odoardo could dispose of the income and the possessions of this abbey. In his commitment to the Badia, he continued the policy of his great-uncle. During Alessandro's abbacy, additions had been made to the abbatial quarters, and under the \textit{commenda} of Odoardo the architectural structure of the monastic buildings and the church was improved.\textsuperscript{89} When this was complete, the interior of the chapel dedicated to the two founders of the monastery, Saints Nitus and Bartholomew, was frescoed by Domenichino between 1608 and 1610.\textsuperscript{90}

Both Farnese cardinals resided regularly at the convent. After Alessandro's death, a number of books, along with his private possessions was mentioned as being in the buildings of Grottaferrata, presumably the abbot's palace (fig.72). Considering the number of books and the fact that it contained valuable manuscripts, these possessions do not seem to have been leftovers.

\textsuperscript{56} See the regulations of the brotherhood, \textit{Regulae et constitutiones confratemit\ae\ oratorij S. Mariae de Scala sub titulo nativit\ae\ B[Mariae] V[erginis]}. preserved in AG-O CD: 'si leggera alquim libro devoto doppo per la mattin au l'offito et immediatam\en\]'faro un quarto d'ora d'oratione mentale, o altr o essercitij che al padre para quell fine della quaj\a\e\ duramn le le\tanie della madona, fessesso farrano il doppo pranzo, diramn il vespro et la completa della madona doppo farrano un quarto d'oratione, o altro esserci\o\o\to il qui\ale\ si\intra con le\leanie...'


forgotten in a faraway place, but reflect his regular presence there.\textsuperscript{27} The addition of a loggia during Alessandro Farnese’s tenure is a further indication that the abbatial palace was used by him: it provided an extension to the abbot’s apartment and was decorated by Cornelis Loots with frescoed landscapes depicting episodes from the history of Grottaferrata.\textsuperscript{28}

How often did Odoardo reside in Grottaferrata? Odoardo used the abbot’s palace to receive guests and in some cases this infringed with the monks’ life. According to reports of visitations to the monastery, in 1603 and in 1608, apparently the clausura was violated twice by ladies invited to parties there by cardinal Odoardo.\textsuperscript{29} That this occurred had to do with the absence of a division between the cardinal’s quarters and those of the monks: the gardens were not partitioned. A letter of 1609 suggested that Farnese went to Grottaferrata during the month of December of that year, while Domenichino was working on the chapel of the two founders.\textsuperscript{30} After Odoardo’s death, another inventory listed a collection of books kept at the Badia that shows that he had continued the tradition of sojourns to the convent, probably until the end of his life.\textsuperscript{31}

Moreover, the wings of the buildings in Grottaferrata were physically linked: the commendatory abbot could pass from his own rooms into the convent by means of a connecting door, the key of which was in his possession.\textsuperscript{32} The abbot was, in juridical terms, head of the community, and had the right to enter the convent. The similarity with the situation of the Palazzina in Caprarola suggests that also in this case, Odoardo was able to participate in the religious life of the Basilian monks.

Camaldoli: a private cell?

A fourth example of a location where Cardinal Farnese could temporarily find retreat was in a real hermitage, at Camaldoli near Arezzo. This settlement consisted of two related parts, a coenobite complex on the lower part of the mountain, and a secluded hermitage on the top

\textsuperscript{28} Fossier 1982, p.71 cited the Grottaferrata inventory of 1589.
\textsuperscript{29} Giannattasio 1999, pp.46-49.
\textsuperscript{30} ASMGr, 'Visitatio Monasterii Stae. Mariae de Crypta ferrata 1575-1825', toils.73v, 76r, 134v.
\textsuperscript{31} Malvasia 1841 vol.1, p.236, cited a letter from Monsignor Agucchi to Cardinal Pietro Aldobrandini, dated 5 December 1609, in which this sojourn was mentioned in connection with Domenichino’s work in the chapel: ‘Tornai il primo di questo da Rignano ac [?] nell’arrivare a Roma ci trovai appunto Domenico, ch’era venuto da Grotta Ferrata per certo bisogno, e mi disse, che la gran fletta, che gli era stata fatta di sollecitare il lavoriero della Cappella, acciocché il Signor Cardinal Farnese, che sta per andarvi, anzi ridotto in parte a buon fine non gli aveva permesso di pensare ad altro.
\textsuperscript{32} ASN. Fondo Farnesiano 1853.11.
\textsuperscript{33} This passage still existed in the early eighteenth century: a historical description of 1738 mentioned it, as well as a corridor that led from the abbatial rooms to the church itself, through a salla and another door; see Memorie riguardanti l’insigne Badia di Grottaferrata in ASMGr, Documenti IV fol.8r. The monastic building was completely rebuilt in the years after 1713; see Rocchi 1994, p.38.
A close relation existed between cardinal Odoardo and the hermitage from the end of the sixteenth century onwards. In 1597, Odoardo paid a visit to the hermitage and decided to express his family’s long dedication to the institution and the Order by means of an architectural addition. Financed by him, a *romitorio* or anchorite cell dedicated to Mary Magdalene was built in 1600 within the confines of the hermitage; funds were also provided to pay for the perpetual upkeep of this structure. Until his death, Farnese regularly supported the hermitage with financial and material gifts such as liturgical vestments, a painting representing the female penitent saint, and probably also an additional altarpiece for the hermitage’s church painted by Annibale Carracci. In tune with these new and splendid vestments he was also asked in 1625 by the monks to send a painter to decorate the choir.

Carracci’s altarpiece of *Christ in Glory with saints* (fig.1) has been formerly interpreted as a means to promote Odoardo’s candidature in 1597 for the English Throne, on the basis of the presence of Saint Edward presenting Odoardo to Christ. However, both the dating—which has been placed on stylistic grounds around 1600—and the particular iconography link the altarpiece to the particular relations between the hermitage and its patron, and the larger context of the protectorate. The presence of Mary Magdalene in the left middle ground of the painting indicates that it should be dated close to the donation of the hermitage by Odoardo; the two saints on either side in the foreground are on the left saint Ermenegildo, and on the right saint Edward, who at the same time constitutes the namesake of Odoardo and his obligation as protector of the England. The latter presents Cardinal Odoardo, in praying position, to Christ appearing in the sky between saints Peter and John the Evangelist.

The meaning of this painting should not be sought in Farnese’s presumed aspirations to the English throne, but can be explained analogous to the Camerino’s meaning as an index of ecclesiastical obligations. In the *Christ in Glory*, Carracci depicted both Ermenegildo and Edward to point out Odoardo’s obligations toward the two countries, of which he became cardinal

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97 Fossa Magheri Catalluccio 1979, pp.456-457.
98 This is documented in a letter from Farnese to Ferdinando I de’Medici of August 1597, cited by Petrucci Zangheri 1989, p.16.
99 The thesis put forward by Petrucci Zangheri 1989, that these vestments and other objects were donated at the inauguration of the chapel, cannot be upheld since a letter dated 1625 exists, in which the prior of Camaldoli thanks Farnese for receiving a *pallotto* for the altar in the choir of the church, asking for a painter to be sent to ‘farti fare la effigia della Bona memoria di S[n]t[au]l Altezza S[ignore] e de altri santi sia sua devotio...’ See ASP, Cart.Farn&B orb.int.361.
100 Ginzburg Carignani 2000, p.128.
101 For the political interpretation of this painting, see *Nell’età di Correggio* 1986, pp.290-293, Zapperi 1988, p.348-356, and Zapperi 1994, pp.90-94. This was contested by Petrucci Zangheri 1989, p.10-17. Ginzburg Carignani 2000, pp.126-130 recently opposed this reading, on the basis of a new stylistic dating of the painting to 1600.
protecto rr  i n  1592  and  1600 respectively. In both cases, he was obliged towards the Eternal Church as represented by Christ and Peter; the church of Saint Peter in the background refers to the Church on earth. The secondary position of Mary Magdalene in this painting can be explained by the unofficial relations between Odoardo and the Camaldolese Order, which, as has been discussed, never materialised in a full protectorate as both parties wished as a result of papal intervention in 1611.

By means of these donations and his support, Odoardo continued the long-standing relationship between the Farnese family and the hermitage, which began before the family had been elevated as rulers of the duchy of Parma and Piacenza. This relation originated when in 1521 a Camaldolese monk, predicted to Alessandro Farnese Sr., later Paul III, that some day he would be elected pope. Alessandro had stayed at the hermitage, and his successors - among others the Cardinals Ranuccio and Alessandro Farnese - are also known to have spent time in Camaldoli. Around 1620, Duke Ranuccio Farnese, Odoardo's brother, had a cell built close to the church of the hermitage that might even have functioned as an apartment for sojourns close to the Camaldolese hermits.

A stay at the hermitage of Camaldoli had been popular from the late fifteenth century on, when Florentine nobles started to spent time in its salubrious environment. A description of such a sojourn in the Disputationes Camaldulenses by Christoforo Landino, written around 1472, is famous example of this. The group of friends with whom Landino travelled did not only visit the monastery, located lower down the mountain, but also climbed up the steep slope to reach the hermitage itself. 'And so we first went to the coenobites, and from there to the hermits...'

Admittance to the isolated part of the Camaldolese complex on top of the mountain (fig. 73) was (and still is) severely restricted, and cannot have been obtained solely for reasons of pleasurable activities, or in the case of villeggiatura. Landino's own account indicated that prior to 1500, people could stay on for a longer period of time. After that date, this was perceived as

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1 Petrucci/Zangheri 1989, p.10. An alternative version of this story existed, in which a 'sibyl' called Angeruta, living in the vicinity of Notcia, had predicted Alessandro Farnese his future papacy; see Scarabelli 1986, p.185.
2 See Fossa Magheri Cataluccio 1979, pp.456-457 for the description of this cella, in 1632 incorporated into the rooms of the library of the hermitage.
3 For a general description of the reception of visitors in Camaldoli, which began with reading a passage from the Bible as edification of the visitor, see La regola di San Benedetto 1595, pp.184-187 and Cacciamani 1968.
4 See the introduction by Peter Lohé in Landino 1980, pp.xxviii. Editions of this text were printed until well into the seventeenth century.
5 Landino 1980, p.8: 'Itaque cum primium ad coenobitas, inde etiam ad hermitas... pervenissentus...'
infringing upon the spiritual obligations of the hermits. In 1515, a newly introduced regulation on guests visiting the hermitage proclaimed that they were in fact admitted to the church of the hermitage, but had to leave immediately after concluding their devotional obligations.Obviously, securing peace and quiet remained a matter of concern also later in the century; the Camaldolese Constitutions of 1575 specified that 'the quarters of the Hospitium are isolated in such a manner from the Cells of the Hermits, that the quiet in the Hermitage will not be disturbed by guests.' In Camaldoli, the hospitium was located at the foot of the mountain for that reason.

When permission was obtained to stay within the walls of the hermitage, visitors were required to partake in the religious activities of the hermits - which comprised seven liturgical prayers and two half-hours of mental prayers a day. Apart from that, the monks - both in the monastery and the hermitage - maintained almost perennial silence and rigorous fasting throughout the year, and spent their time mostly studying Biblical texts, especially the Psalms. In the hermitage on top of the mountain, solitude was maximised; the solitary monks only celebrated the liturgy in the church three days a week; the rest of the days they read Mass in their own cell. The visitors to the monastery and hermitage of Camaldoli were required to respect those rules as well. In his Disputationes Camaldulenses Landino described how the day in Camaldoli started with the attendance of religious duties:

After we had risen the next morning, and all of us attended the sacred rites, we decided to wander through the higher parts of the woods, extending to the summit of the mountain, for the sake of relaxation and enjoyment, and so we neared slowly to a place where on a flowery meadow a clear spring was shaded by the branches of a tremendous beech-tree.

While Landino's account still evokes the context of Renaissance villeggiatura, the sojourns of various members of the Farnese-family at Camaldoli should be taken as a sign that they joined
the hermits in their religious exercises. That this was indeed the scope of such visits is suggested in the opening sentence of a letter from Cardinal Farnese to Ferdinando de' Medici, sent in August 1597 from Camaldoli to the Florentine court. Odoardo wrote: ‘Having come to Camaldoli for these holy devotions, where, finding myself so close to Your Highness...’ At that time he probably did not yet dispose of his own quarters in the hermitage. In later years, either the romitorio dedicated to Mary Magdalene initiated in 1600, or the cell patronised by his brother Ranuccio around 1620 were available to him. Thus, while he found himself in the hermitage, he partook in the spiritual exercises of the Camaldolese hermits, just as he had joined the Jesuits, Discalced Carmelites and possibly even the Basilians when he resided in his apartments within these monasteries.

The primary motif for the Palazzina in Caprarola, the apartment in the Casa Professa, the abbatial palace in Grottaferrata, and the visits to Camaldoli was the retreat for meditation and devotion. This evokes the words used by Bellori in his description of the Camerino degli Eremiti. Retreat was not meant to be a random dedication to prayer in solitude, but comprised imitation of, and possibly even guidance and supervision by, experienced religious. The terminology ‘retreating for devotion’ thus signified a retreat from Roman society, but not being completely alone. On the contrary, it seems to have been intended as retreating to a monastic context.

Cardinals retreating: Sfondrato, Borromeo and Bellarmino

Family tradition was not the only factor that spurred cardinal Odoardo to construct private retreats for the practice of prayer and meditation. Farnese belonged to a group of cardinals dedicated to the cause of spiritual renewal within the Catholic Church. Accounts of the Sacred College and its members considered Farnese as intimately linked with Cardinals Bellarmino, Sfondrato and Borromeo, regarding them as a coherent political faction.

Other sources indicate that these bonds were strengthened by financial affairs, professional, familial and even friendly relations. Roberto Bellarmino (1542-1621, canonised in 1930) (fig.74) consecrated Odoardo Farnese as bishop of Sabina in 1621, and Farnese

14 Petrucci Zangheri 1989, p.10 regarded the halt at the hermitage as a convenient stop at the way between Rome and Parma.
15 Petrucci Zangheri 1989 p.16 citing AS Mediceo 3774 ‘Essendo io venuto a Camaldoli a queste sante devotions, dove trovandomi tanto vicino alla [tezza] Vostra...’
16 Arcioni 1626 mentioned that he had a cell available for him in Camaldoli when he went there; see the citation at the beginning of this chapter. It remains unclear whether this alludes to the Cell of Mary Magdalene, or the one that is connected with Ranuccio Farnese in the Camaldolese sources.
17 BAV, Boncompagni C.20, Discorsi de'Cardinali viventi', fol.145r about Cardinal Sfondrato: ‘Amici suoi sono... Farnese, Bellarmino...’ and about Cardinal Bellarmino, fol.160r: ‘Amici suoi particolari sono Farnese, Zapata, Barberino Mellino... et in generale quasi tutti li Cardinali!’
corresponded with Bellarmino from the late sixteenth century on; their families were involved in business matters. Towards the end of Bellarmino's life, they were generally considered to be amici, and when Bellarmino died in the autumn of 1621, Farnese even wrote from Caprarola to Rome to obtain some memento of his deceased friend.\textsuperscript{118} Cardinal Federico Borromeo (fig.75) was also related to the Farnese through the marriage of his brother Renato to Farnese's niece Frsilia, and on Farnese's request he ordained him priest in 1621.\textsuperscript{119} Paolo Emilio Sfondrato (fig.76) was likewise linked to Odoardo by family ties, and they were both created cardinals on the same day in 1591 by Sfondrato's uncle, pope Gregory XIV.\textsuperscript{120} With the latter cardinal in particular, Farnese cherished a life-long friendship, and as has been argued in the preceding chapter, Sfondrato's advisory involvement with the reform of the protectorate was reflected in Odoardo's actions. Connections between Farnese, Borromeo and Sfondrato were furthermore strengthened by their successive protectorates of the Archconfraternity of the Orazione e Morte, as has been discussed above.

All four cardinals shared an interest in retreating regularly to do spiritual exercises, and are known to have practised devotion in solitude, whether on a long-term or incidental basis; and in all cases, this kind of spiritual retreat was an occupation for life. Paolo Emilio Sfondrato had been taught to take spiritual retreats during his sojourn with the Oratorian society and its founder, Saint Filippo Neri, after 1577; the Oratorian sodality of priests actively promoted the practice of meditation and prayer.\textsuperscript{121} The example Sfondrato had been taught by Neri was continued by him later in life. The Avvisi of March 1599 mentioned a sojourn of the cardinal to the hermitage at

\textsuperscript{118} Fuligatti 1624, pp.340-341 cited the complete letter. Farnese obtained the breviary of the deceased. See also Brodrick 1961, pp.405, 414-415, citing the Chaplain of the English College in Rome: 'Two Cardinals, above the rest, seemed to de more solicitous of him, Aldobrandini and Farnesius ... Cardinal Farnesius was at this time [i.e. of Bellarmino's decease, A.W.] at his house of Caprarola, thirty miles from Rome, who hearing of the sickness of Bellarmino wrote many letters to Father Minutoli ... And as often as Farnesius his letters, still full of love, were read to him. Bellarmino would in very effectuall words make remonstrance how far he was indebted unto him, and how little able to discharge that duty which he did owe him, of which in his health he was never unmyndfull ...' For correspondence between the Farnese family and Bellarmino, see ARSI, Opp.NN.143:1-II, fol.202r and elsewhere.

\textsuperscript{119} Rivola 1656, pp.304-505 on Borromeo and Farnese. 'Con amendue quest si fitti legami d'arnista, e parentado, trovandosi legata la casa Borromea con la casa Farnese, si per rispetto dell'antica servitü, ch'ebber o sempre i Conti Borromeo con quelle Altezze, e si per lo matrimonio il vincolo tra' Conte Renato fratello del Cardinal Federico, e Donna Frsilia Farnese figlia del Duca Ottavio ...' For Federico Borromeo, see DHL 1960-present, vol.13, pp.33-42 and Jones 1993.


\textsuperscript{121} On Saint Filippo Neri's tendency to take spiritual retreats and live a solitary and penitential life with a particular attention to fervent prayer, see Gallonio 1601 1995, p.11-13. See Marciano 1693, pp.20-21, Gasbarri 1962, p.276 for the kind of devotional exercises practiced within the Oratorian society around 1600, and see Gallonio 1601 1995, p.263 for Paolo Emilio Sfondrato's dedication to Filippo Neri. Moroni 1840-1879 vol.65, p.83, wrote on cardinal Sfondrato: 'ritirandosi sovente a fare gli esercizi spirituali in qualche casa religiosa.'
Camaldoli. Although the wording used to describe the motif of his stay ('andare a spasso') might seem to evoke worldly pleasures, his immediately preceding visit to the seven prescribed Stations of the Jubilee suggests similar religious intentions for this retreat in the hermitage: the aforementioned examples of Landino and Farnese indicated that this was compulsory during a sojourn among the hermits.

In an alternative version of this same notice in the Avvisi of 1599, Stondrato was said to have gone to Monte Oliveto. This was a monastery of the Benedictine Rule in the vicinity of Siena, which in the seventeenth century still functioned as a hermitage. From the sixteenth century onwards, ecclesiastics like Saint Carlo Borromeo spent time there in spiritual retreat. What is more important is that Stondrato was also cardinal protector of the Benedictine Congregation to which the monastery belonged, and the Avviso mentioned that one of the reasons he went there was to preside over a general chapter; but he stayed on much longer. So whichever destination of the two it was, Cardinal Stondrato was away from Rome and the Papal court for at least a month, partially for religious purposes, and partially as a result of his ecclesiastical duties.

The Vita of Cardinal Federico Borromeo described at length his love of solitude, complete dedication to meditation, and other spiritual exercises. He was probably inspired by the example of his uncle, Saint Carlo Borromeo, who had been devoted to this kind of exercise during retreats. The description of this aspect of Federico's life, published in 1656, retraced this predilection for solitary prayer back to his early childhood:

Moreover, he chose for this aim [of prayer] a wonderful room in the remotest and most secret part of the palace, which was on the order of the Countess his mother embellished with beautiful and enchanting draperies; and in the most convenient place there he made an altar, which was on advice of the same [i.e. his mother] richly furnished with all things necessary to embellish it. Here he spent all alone those hours that remained after literary occupations when he did not leave the domestic confines, sometimes reading a devout book, at other times reciting particular prayers, or singing hymns, and psalms:

122 Avvisi dell'anno 1599, BAV Urb.lat.1067 fol.77r. 6 February 1599 (i.e. 1600): 'Il Cardinale Stondrato biehearti per andare a spasso alle sette chiese et poi sente andato licenziando da alcuni suoi più chari rissoluto passarsene a dipinto p[er] qualche giorno è mese al luogo de Camaldoli et appunto ha capito il tempo a proposito di andare a spasso.'
123 Avvisi di Roma' of 1599, BAV Urb.lat.1067 fol.102r. Dated on the same day of 6 February 1599: 'Il Cardinale Stondrato sta per passarsene a Monte Olivetto p[er] starvi da - mesti fra quei padri dequali è Protettore et farvi un Capitolo [e] p[er] [a]le.'
124 For the abbey of Monte Oliveto, see DIP 1974-1997 vol.6, cols.98-100, and Carli 1961.
and finally sometimes embellishing the altar for his pleasure, and ordering things in various ways.\textsuperscript{126}

When he came to Rome, he found, just as Sfondrato, another example of this kind of solitary devotion in the figure of Filippo Neri. Towards the end of Borromeo's life, this fervour only increased, as the heading of a chapter stated: 'How much he always loved Solitude'. According to the biographer, this even went so far that Borromeo considered laying down his Episcopal duties, to retreat completely from public life and enter a hermitage:

he asked the help of a number of devout persons that they would instantaneously supplicate the Divine King that ... a hermitage would be conceded to him, where living solitary, he could be alone, united with God. And this ardent desire brought him to the point that a number of times it came to his mind [literally: heart] to renounce to the hands of the Pontiff the Arch-Episcopate, so that, being freed of the pastoral cares and all the other duties that this office included, he could attend to his studies and contemplation of Divine things...\textsuperscript{127}

As he could not and would not resign his duties for a complete dedication to the solitary life, he had a cell for regular retreats constructed for this purpose in the woods, about which he recounted in a letter:

I find myself since a number of days in my solitary, forest-cell with utmost pleasure, and I thank God that after so many long obligations, he considers me worthy, even though I am unworthy, of a bit of quiet; and this solitude sweetens my heart, dry from continuous duties, and makes me think of the eternal repose, to which we both aspire.\textsuperscript{128}

\textsuperscript{126} Carlo Borromeo instituted \textit{maisons de retraite} for doing the Ignatian \textit{Spiritual Exercises} in the 1560s, see Guibert 1953, p.292\textsuperscript{f}; he also was known to retreat during Eastern in the monastery of San Pietro in Montorio in Rome for prayer and flagellation; see Treflers 1989, p.533.

\textsuperscript{127} Rivola 1656, p.16: 'Si elesse per tanto nella piu segreta, e piu rimota parte del palazzo una bellissima stanza, la quale per comandamento della Contessa madre fu di belli e vaghi drappi vestita; e nel piu convenevol sito di essa fece egli fabbricar un'altare, il qual parimente d'ordine della medesima fu di tutte quelle cose, che per ben ornarlo erano necessarie, ricamente fornito. Quivi tutto solo, quando d' domestici confini non usciva, consumava quelle ore, che alle litterarie occupationi sopravanzavano, hor leggendo qualche divoto libro, hor recitando alcune sue particolari orationi; hor cantando hinni, e salmi; ed hor finalmente ormando per sua recreazione l'altare, ed in varie guise le cose disponendo.'

\textsuperscript{128} Rivola 1656, p.667: 'e pero hebbe piu volte a pregar alcune divote persone che instantaneamente supplicassero alla Maestà divina, che ... gli concedesse un'eremo, ove solitario vivendo, unito con Dio solo vivesse. E questo ardente disiderio lo ridusse a segno, che gli venne piu volte in cuore di rimuover nelle mani del sommo Pontefice l'Arcivescovado accioche libero del carico Pastorale, e di tutte quelle occupazioni, che con seco porta quest'ufficio, piu sollecitamente attender potesse allo studio, ed alla contemplatione delle cose divine...'

\textsuperscript{129} Rivola 1656, pp.667-668: 'lo mi ritrovo alcuni giorni sono in questa mia solitaria, e boschereccia cella con mio gran piacere, e ringrazio l'Innide che dopo tanti, e lunghi affanni, mi fa degno, d'indegno che ne sono, d'un poco di
But Borromeo’s Episcopal obligations hindered even these short retreats, as he lamented in his letters. As a last resort, painting could function as a stand-in to escape from the urban context: not being able to escape the confines of his Milanese palace, he would repose in a room which offered him the painted views of the woods, so that at least mentally he could feel this solitude. His taste for still-life-depictions of flowers probably served an analogous goal: these works offered Borromeo the chance to admire the beauty of flowers without having to go into a garden. This substitution of real with imaginary nature was alluded to in his own writings: ‘I have had my room ornamented with paintings... And the pleasure I take in looking at these painted views has always seemed to me as beautiful as open and wide views.’

Borromeo alluded in ‘Pro suis studiis’, a manuscript collection of autobiographical notes, to the fact that these images served the spectator to walk in nature without leaving his house, the topic of ‘travelling without moving’: ‘Instead of them, when they are not had, paintings enclose in narrow places the space of the earth and the heavens, and we go wandering, and making long journeys standing still in our room...’ The inclusion of hermit saints in the series that Paul Bril was commissioned to paint and Breughel’s landscapes with the same anchorite theme indicate that these representations of the open air were more than mere pleasant imaginary walks, but were indeed a substitute for Borromeo’s desire for real solitude (fig. 77).

**Bellarmino’s urban retreat**

The fourth and most important figure in this group of cardinals was Roberto Bellarmino, already during his life revered as being almost saintly. He retreated yearly to the Jesuit noviciate of Sant’Andrea al Quirinale (figs. 84 and 85), as was mentioned in an *Avviso* of 1620: ‘Cardinal Bellarmino has retreated for his habitual spiritual exercises to Sant’Andrea at Monte Cavallo of the Jesuit Fathers.’ That Bellarmino went to this particular Jesuit house was because he

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4. Jones 1993, p. 64, note 84. For the literary motif of enjoying nature without leaving the room, which was for example a topic in the captions to the prints *Plaissance, Placation* of 1612 by Visscher, see Bakker 1993, pp. 100-101, and Bakker Leeftang 1993, p. 20 and 29-30, and Levesque 1994, esp. pp. 17-23 on the relation between landscape-series and the theme of ‘travelling without moving’.
7. ‘Avvisi di Roma’ of 1620, ASV Avv.Lat.1088 fol. 559r: ‘Il Card. Bellarmino vè retirato alli soliti esercizi spirituali di S. Andrea de Padri Giesuiti in Monte Cavallo.’ This citation is confirmed in his autobiography; see Döllinger Reusch 1887, p. 69, where this manuscript has been transcribed and translated; and alljährlich, meist im Monat September, zieht er sich zurück, um sich mit Heitsaufklärung anderer Beschäftigungen dem Gekreuzt und dem
remained living in their community after being elevated to the rank of cardinal. This retreat to Sant'Andrea was his habitual practice, as Bellarmino's first biographer Fulgattini described in 1624:

Each year he went for one entire month to the noviciate of Sant'Andrea to do spiritual exercises... during which time he notably edified everyone... In the remaining time, during the hours of exercise he stayed almost continuously secluded in his room without going into the garden. [which was] necessary for those who dedicate themselves to the mental exercises.\(^{136}\)

In contrast to the retreats discussed above, Bellarmino did not isolate himself completely from his environment; he did not even leave the city of Rome. He stayed in the noviciate and retreated to his room for the times of prayer, but in the remaining time he actively communicated with the other inhabitants of the complex, to the spiritual benefit of his audience. His retreat was thus not exclusively for his personal spiritual advancement, but served a larger goal. Another account later on in the book precisely recounted the fruits of these periods of retreat:

This daily interior retreat seemed but little compared to the usual piety of Cardinal Bellarmino, because apart from shaking off the dust gathered during continuous occupations and business, and to prepare himself, and to give account to God of his actions, he was accustomed every year in September for one whole month, as has been alluded to before, to mind to himself, and to God, in the House of Sant'Andrea, place of the Novices of Rome, without admitting visitors, and outside and distracting affairs: where he spent all the time in saintly contemplative exercises, and the reading of spiritual books. The output of those saintly retreats were those spiritual treatises, that he subsequently issued with so much edification, and fruits not only for the devout souls.\(^{137}\)

An important result of these retreats – in particular the religious aspect, other than the practical

\(^{136}\) Fulgattini 1624, p.136: ‘Andava ognianno per un mese continuo a far gli essercizi spirituali al noviziato di Sant’Andrea, ... nel qual tempo notabilmente edificava tutti... Nel resto poi del tempo degli essercizi quasi continuamente stava ritirato in camera senza scendere al giardino, necessario sollevamente a quelli, che a g’essercizi mentali si danno.’

\(^{137}\) Fulgattini 1624, pp.280-281: ‘Questo interno raccolgimento d’ogni giorno parve poco alla sollecita pietà del Cardinale Bellarmino, perché in oltre per iscudere la polvere raccolta nelle continue occupazioni, e negozi, e per apparecchiarsi, a render conto a Dio del suo traffico, fu solito, come più volte si è accennato, ogni anno di Settembre per un mese in circa d’attendere a se solo, e a Dio, nella Casa di Sant’Andrea luogo de’Novizi di Roma, senza ammetter visite, & occupazioni in cose esterne, e distrattive: dove tutto’il tempo passava in santi esercizi di contemplazione, e lettione di cose spirituali. Parti di questo santo ritiramento sono quelle opere spirituali, che poi ha mandato fuora con tanta edificazione, e frutto non solo dell’anime devote...’
side - was thus not only the edification of his own soul. During these periods Bellarmino produced devotional literature useful for other readers. One of these, the *De aeterna felicitate sanctorum Libri quinque* of 1616, was specifically dedicated to Odoardo Farnese. Its foreword moreover recapitulated the close and long-standing ties between the Farnese family and the Jesuit Order and their dedication to the Jesuit cause. Bellarmino also referred to the fact that cardinal Odoardo was one of the alumni of the Jesuit school in Rome, the Collegio Romano, where from the late sixteenth century onwards the pupils were not only taught scientific and literate topics, but also how to do the *Spiritual Exercises* at regular intervals.\(^\text{118}\)

**Funeral monuments as models of devotion**

The ties between cardinals Farnese, Bellarmino and Sfondrato received a more lasting form than dedications of devotional treatises or life-long friendships and political co-operation: two sculptural monuments publicly expressed the same (figs. 78 and 80). Both these monuments were, moreover, an expression of the spiritual zeal that was common to all four cardinals, and the example they set with their dedication to the exercise of prayer. In 1622, the apse of the church of the Gesù was embellished with a tomb for cardinal Bellarmino, possibly at the suggestion of Pope Gregory XV Ludovisi (1621-1623), but commissioned and paid for by Odoardo Farnese. The inscription on the central marble slab explicitly mentioned the latter as patron of the tomb.\(^\text{159}\)

At first, Roberto Bellarmino had been interred in the common grave of the Jesuit Fathers - in accord with his own will, as his biographers stated. This presentation of the facts was a slight exaggeration of the Cardinal’s humility, as he had wished to be buried 'at the feet of his spiritual son' Luigi Gonzaga, or 'wherever the Superiors of the Compagnia might wish to put his remains'.\(^\text{154}\) The project for the funeral monument was begun shortly after Bellarmino’s death on 17 September 1621. Almost immediately, attempts were also made to initiate the process of

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\(^\text{118}\) Bellarmino 1616, foreword: 'Ha magnitudine est, Cardin. Amplissime, tuor in nostrum Ordinem beneficiorum, ut omnes & singulos nostrae Sodalitatis alumnos nominis tuo minifice devinctoris habebas.'

\(^\text{159}\) The inscription on the marble slab still in the Gesù reads: 'ROBERTO CARD. BELLARMINO POLITIANO, E SOC. JESUS. MARCHI ILL. P. SORORIS, V. ODOARDI CARD. FARNESII SUAE GRAEVI VIRT. PATRIE, L. COR. SEMPER COLIT. ANNO MDC. XVIII. TIBI MEMORIA.' The assumption that the funeral monument was conceived and paid by Farnese is also sustained by the account in Bellarmino’s biography, Bartoli 1678, p.262: 'perché il medesimo Cardinal Farnese volle egli fonore d'onorare il suol Bellarmino cofr[...] quel santo sepolcro di marmo, e di statue, che gli si leva altro da pie del corpo; sopra il busto del Bellarmino dal naturale, e nel mezzo la susseguente memorial.'

\(^\text{154}\) Tulliattii 1624, p.353-356: 'Infine all’uopo della sepoltura hauete molto caro, che il mio corpo fosse collocato alli piedi del Beato Luigi Gonzaga, gia mio figliuolo spirituale; nondimeno li Superiori dela Compagnia punghino il mio corpo dove vortarono.'

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canonisation.  

Several months later, on March 12 of 1622, the existence of a monument for the cardinal was mentioned in Giacinto Gigli's diary. This referred to the place at the back of the choir originally containing the bodily remains of Saint Ignatius himself, which had become vacant with Loyola's canonisation in these same days and his translation to a new and grander grave in the transept of the same church. On 14 September 1622, the body of Cardinal Bellarmino was exhumed from the common grave, placed in a leaden casket and relocated in the niche at the back of the apse. The unveiling of the funeral monument took place two years later, on 3 August 1624.

At the left side of the main altar in the apse of the Gesù an architectural setting was created following a design by Girolamo Rainaldi. Niches at the sides housed the allegorical figures of Religion and Wisdom; in the middle a black marble slab contained the inscription, and this was surmounted by an oval niche with the bust of the cardinal; the young Gianlorenzo Bernini (1598-1680) sculpted this portrait. The original layout has been preserved in a nineteenth-century design (fig.78) and in Sacchi's painting of the church interior; the monument itself was demolished in 1843 when the apse was remodelled. The portrait-bust was then given a new place in the apse of the Gesù - coincidentally under the grated window from which Farnese could attend mass, when he stayed in his apartment in the Casa Professa.

Bellarmino was represented in the act of prayer, with his hands folded, and slightly turned

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12 Gigli 1994 vol.1, p.98: ‘alla man destra dell’Altar maggiore; dove appunto hoggi si è fatta la sepultura del Card. Bellarmino.’ For the location of Ignatius' original grave, see also Felini 1610-1699, p.91, cited at note 28 above.
13 Fulgatti 1624, pp.348-349: ‘Restava in quel tempo vuota la sepultura, che gia fu di S. Ignatio, al lato destro dell’altare maggiore del Gesù, per haver havuto il Santo, coll’occasione della Canonizzazione, luogo per le sue ossa, sotto il proprio altare. In questa sepultura parve ben’al Padre Generale, & ad altri Padri, che si riponesse il corpo del Cardinale Bellarmino, come si fece; acciocche s’intenda forse, che si viene in vita ottimo, e perfetto herede fu delle virtù del suo Santo Padre, e Patriarca Ignatio; cosa dopo morte qual vero figliuolo conveniva, che partecipasse nella gloria del suo sepolcro.’
14 As the original monument is only known from a nineteenth-century design, the exact location of Bellarmino's remains in this setting remains uncertain.
15 Pollak 1928-1931 vol.1, p.126.
16 Rainaldi’s involvement is attested to in various sources; Titi 1987 vol.1, p.100: ‘A mano destra di questo Altare è il deposito del Card. Bellarmino, fatto con disegno di Girolamo Rainaldi...’. In the 1725 edition of Roma ampliata e rinovata, p.89, it was stated ‘Osservate fra i Depositi quello etto al Cardinal Bellarmino con architettura di Girolamo Rainaldi, e colle Statue del Cavala[ier] Bernini.’
17 The sources disagree upon the authorship of the two sculpted Virtues; Baglione 1642-1695, p.305 attributed both allegories to Pietro Bernini, which was followed by Martinelli 1660-1669, p.68 and Titi 1987, p.101; Passeri 1678-1695, p.247 however ascribed them to Giuliano Tinelli but executed under the direction of Bernini, which was followed by Pascioli 1730-1992, p.864; **Baldinucci 1845-1847 1974, pp.76, 177. Domenico Bernini stated around 1700 that Gianlorenzo made the figure of Religion. See for a discussion Bruhns 1940, pp.315-316 and Lavín 1968, p.243.

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to the right. Because of the location of the monument behind the high altar, the bust was directed towards this liturgical focus and at the same time, beyond the space of the apse, facing towards the beholder in the nave (fig. 79). The pose of this bust, especially the clutching of the hands in the pose of 'ewiger Anbetung' or eternal adoration, was a familiar sixteenth-century form. Images of figures in the act of prayer can be found north of the Alps in later medieval times, and in Spain and Naples in the early modern period. This iconography was, however, unusual in Bernini's oeuvre, and only reoccurred once, several decades later, in the monument to Pimentel. With the decisive adoption of this traditional form, Bernini introduced into the Roman context the deceased in the act of prayer, and added the suggestion of bodily movement that reflected interior motion. Instead of a frozen image, this bust became a living example for the beholder of how to attain spiritual perfection.

Bellarmino's monument was not the first of this kind in Rome, however, and it is significant that a similar example was executed only three years earlier: the funeral monument of Paolo Emilio Sfondrato. An Avviso of 1602 mentioned that the cardinal intended to be buried in front of the monument erected to the titular saint of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, of which church he was titular cardinal: his testament of 1618 repeated this intention. A simple marble slab directly in front of the sculpture of the female saint was to cover his coffin. In addition to this, the executors of his testament, Agostino Pacinelli and Odoardo Farnese, also decided to erect an independent funeral monument against the wall of the nave of the church (fig. 80). The design of the monument has been ascribed to various artists, among whom the names of again Girolamo Rainaldi, Pietro Bernini, and that of Angelo Pellegrini have been suggested. The contract for the execution of the funeral monument, however, only referred to Clemente Gargioli, the 'scalpellino' hired to execute the architectural structure in stone.

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14 The recent exhibition on Bernini included this bust; see Bernini 1999 cat no.38, pp.322-333.  
15 The term 'ewiger Anbetung' was coined and linked to Bernini's bust by Bruhn 1940, p.315.  
16 Wittkower 1981, cat.no 15. Silla Longhi and Nicolas Corder used a similar form in the Cappella Paolina in Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome, where the full-length-figure of Paul V is shown holding his hands in prayer and gazing towards the altar; see Ostrow 1996, p.172.  
17 Bondini 1855, p.139. Bruhn 1940, pp.313-314. Matthias 1970, p.48 supposed that Baglione had ascribed the design to Carlo Maderno. However, Baglione 1642 1695 did not mention this monument in the life of Maderno. On its recent restoration, see Marchetti 1999, p.43.  
19 During the eighteenth-century redecoration, this monument was moved to the portico of Santa Cecilia.  
20 Economopoulos 2001, pp.38, 45; the contract dated 23 May 1623, is in ASC, Archivio Urbano, sez L 414, fols.329r-330v, 355r-355v. This contract contained a drawing for the monument without reference to an author. Barry 1999, p.193 n.27 regarded Rainaldi as the architect of the tomb on the basis of the contract as published in Bertolotti Atti svizzeri a Roma, p.192; however, the edition 1886-1974 of this book does not refer to Rainaldi or the tomb in question.
Sfondrato's monument in many respects resembled Bernini's project in the Gesu: a marble plaque with inscription, in this case praising the efforts undertaken by Sfondrato in embellishing the church and his general virtues such as piety and charity, surmounted by a round niche with the actual bust; on either side niches crowned by triangular pediments house the Saints Cecilia and Agnes.155 The sarcophagus was the only element lacking in the Bellarmino monument; the total design and the details were nearly identical. While Sfondrato's image (fig.81) could be described as rather stiff and Bernini's bust (fig.79) much more lively, they both represented the deceased in the act of prayer and turned in the direction the altar, the liturgical and devotional focus of the church. They both visually joined the visitors in their daily prayers and seemed to exhort to this exemplary behaviour.

The iconography of prayer adopted in the monuments of Sfondrato and Bellarmino did not merely herald individual characteristics of the two devout ecclesiastics. Instead, this decoration reflected the spiritual intentions of a political faction in the Sacred College of Cardinals, which shared a predilection for devotional retreats and the exercise of meditation and contemplation. The Farnese family tradition, as announced in the funeral oration and the letter of 1675 cited at the beginning of this chapter, was thus not the only factor that determined Odoardo's interest in having special apartments for spiritual retreat linked to convents of Monks as well as confraternities.156 It was, on the contrary, a sign of spiritual zeal of several cardinals belonging to the same political faction as Farnese, and which determined not only their life, but also their (posthumous) public image.

All of Farnese's apartments fulfilled the requirement of undisturbed prayer and meditation: the apartment in the Casa Professa and the Palazzina in Caprarola were physically autonomous from their architectural surroundings. However, the devotional practice was in each case related to the regular community in the adjacent monasteries to which these apartments were attached. In the apartment of the Casa Professa, the decoration of the small Cappellina referred to the act of prayer. In Grottaferrata and Camaldoli, separate rooms were available to him from which Farnese was able to join the regulars in their daily liturgical and individual devotions. Even the Camerino degli Eremiti belonged to this phenomenon: Bellori's words that Farnese 'was

155 The inscription reads: 'O.DO.ORINO.UNO.PAULO.SFOND.RATO.CARD.STIS.CIAT.HAV.ARTX.GREG.XV.F.R.BRONONIEN.
LG.G.L.I."SIGN.LURLA.GRATIAE.FRA.RICO.CRE.MONU.S.PRAL.SELL.PITAL.IN.DE.MU.DE.VOS.EU.ANIM.ESUL.PR.
CHARTA.FE.X.PATIRES.PLANE.MEMOR.TIO.O.M.S.^.SANCTA.EC.A.LCIE.F.P.ROCOR.PES.INSIGN.L.C.P.ORB.M.S.
CENT."F:"P:"PERI.TIO.O.M.S.CEN.(TM.ER ISTREL.PROP.CFO.DECORAVIT.TR:PL.MUX:ORNATUM.SAC.RO.DIUM.
used to retreat to this room, for his devotion fits perfectly into the described pattern. He was able to participate in Mass, and possible other religious events, as the original contract of 1611 stated. Thus, for Farnese, this kind of room fitted into a series of related objects. And just as the other cardinals, his posthumous fame was partly based on this characteristic. Bentivoglio’s *Memorie* of 1688 stated about Farnese that he ‘too often enjoyed the [act of] retreat’.

The situation and use of the Camerino within the Palazzetto also accords with the kind of retreat to which other cardinals devoted a part of their time. Paolo Emilio Sfondrato also sojourned with the monks he was cardinal protector of; Roberto Bellarmino habitually went to Sant’Andrea where a comparable situation of a room near a garden could be found, and the landscape backgrounds were related to the intentions that Federico Borromeo had indicated in his letters, and in the choice for such themes in the paintings he had ordered from Paul Bril and Pieter Brueghel. In many respects, Farnese’s Camerino contained elements that could be found in other objects and similar situations, where the theme of landscape played a particular role. How was the subject of nature considered by the group of cardinals around Farnese?

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1. See note 1 above.
2. Bellori 1672, p. 167: ‘essendo solito ... ritirarsi in quella camera, per sua divozione...’
3. Bentivoglio 1668, p. 44: ‘Giudicavasi, che egli amasse troppo la retiratezza alle volte...’