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The Allegorical Landscape

Alvise Cornaro and his Self-Promotion by the Landscape Paintings in the Odeo Cornaro in Padua

I Summary

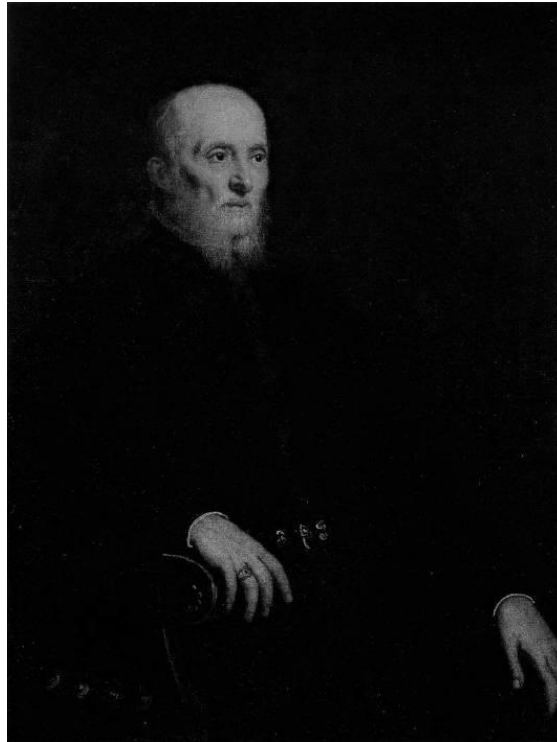
The present study deals with the illusionistic landscape paintings in the villa-like Odeo Cornaro of Padua.¹ Commissioned by the author, patron of arts and land owner Alvise Cornaro, and executed by Lambert Sustris (c. 1505/1510–c. 1585) and Gualtiero Padovano (c. 1505/10–1552/1553) around 1540/1541, these frescos created for the first time the life-sized pictorial illusion of views onto surrounding landscapes in the Venetian Republic of the 16th century. It is the aim of this study to highlight these frescos as important instruments in Alvise Cornaros self-representation and as allegorical comments on his extensive activities in land cultivation for the good of the Venetian Republic and its people.

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II Introduction: The Odeo Cornaro in Padua

In the first half of the cinquecento, Alvise Cornaro, born in Venice (c. 1484–1566) as son of Antonio di Giacomo and Angeliera Angelieri, belonged next to Gian Giorgio Trissino and Daniele Barbaro to the high class of humanistic society in the Venetian Republic, yet he was never accepted as an aristocrat (Ill. 1).² Although he tried to prove his aristocracy to the authorities throughout his life, his name was never to be put into the Golden Book of the Republic.³ Aristocracy remained denied to him.

Agriculture and the reclamation of land were central elements of Alvise's life:⁴ For him, agriculture, or as he expressed with the term *santa agricoltura*⁵ referring to the ancient Roman authors on agriculture such as Publius Vergilius Maro and Lucius Iunius Moderatus Columella, signified independence and power for both the individual and the entire state of Venice. This promotion of the cultivation of marshland in the Venetian Terraferma combined with the propaganda for the *villeggiatura* was his most significant accomplishment.⁶



Ill. 1: Jacopo Tintoretto: Portrait of Alvise Cornaro, Florence, Palazzo Pitti, c. 1560–1562

The efforts of cultivating the mainland became necessary when the Ottoman offences against the Venetians foreign territories and the shifting of the international trade routes to the Atlantic region compromised the republic's stability. The state of Venice and its population was up to this point very independent of shipping traffic that guaranteed a permanent provision of corn, maize and rice – especially in war times. Built on many islands, the capital itself lacked large areas for agriculture, and also its continental soil – called Terraferma – was in many regions watery and insalubrious marshland. Instead of being totally dependent on shipping traffic, it seemed necessary in the middle of the 16th century to build up an agricultural system that could feed the Venetian population on its own.

As depicted in detail by the study of Denis Cosgrove, one of the most intensive and complex enterprises in land cultivation and fertilization in early modern time took place – mainly promoted by the leading figure Alvise Cornaro.⁷ For the Serenissima, this meant an elementary shift in its policy. Venice had been a sea-republic primarily orientated towards the Mediterranean Sea up to this point; Alvise Cornaro though propagandized the Terraferma and its cultivation as the Venetian future. This break with tradition was disputed controversially, of course, i.e. by Cornaro's most famous antagonist Cristoforo Sabbadino, the Republic's counsel for the laguna's security.⁸ Yet, these quarrels could not stop the Venetian's trek versus the mainland and the new enthusiasm for the *vita in villa*, or, as August Buck called it, »Die Villa als Lebensform«⁹.

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Around 1514, Cornaro inherited from his uncle substantial estates in the areas of Codevigo, Este and Padua. This newly acquired property and wealth established his high rank in society, and his cultural activities allowed him an extraordinary form of patronage. Along with the agricultural land, Cornaro inherited a prestigious estate with a Palazzo and various gardens in Padua.¹⁰ Located in a suburban area very close to the Franciscan Church *Il Santo* in the Via Caesarotti, Cornaro expanded this city house with a loggia, finished in 1524 by the architect Giovanni Maria Falconetto (c. 1468–1535). Imitating Roman architecture, this building was used as *scenae frons* for theater performances, such as the comedies of Ruzante. Afterwards, he erected a villa-like edifice called Odeo since its mentioning as a site for musical performances in Sebastiano Serlio's contemporary treatise on architecture (Ill. 2): »Per la qual cosa ricordandomi d'aver veduto in Padova in Italia nella casa di Misser [sic] Luigi Cornaro un'appartamento nell'entrar del cortile di quà dalla bella loggia: il quale il nobile gentiluomo fece fare per le musiche [...].«¹¹



Ill 2: Alvise Cornaro and Giovanni Maria Falconetto: Odeo Cornaro, Padua, c. 1537–1539

In particular, this sumptuous building and its location at the city's periphery made the entire estate comparable to a Roman *villa suburbana*, i.e. a country house situated beyond the troubles of the town.

The Odeo, most likely designed by Falconetto and the autodidact Alvise Cornaro himself, was executed between c. 1537–1539.¹² It is a small, cubic building that with its elegant white facade is orientated towards a rectangular court. The visitor that entered the estate in the 16th century must have been astonished by that kind of noble, neo-classical design far away from the Venetian capital's splendor. Next to the loggia, that quotes with its columns and arcades the dignified architecture of the Tabularium at the Forum Romanum, it is the interior decoration of the Odeo that underlines its significance for the artistic development of modern High Renaissance art in Padua.

For the decoration project, Cornaro not only engaged leading local artists like Tiziano Minio and Gualtiero Padovano, he also called for the Dutch painter Lambert Sustris, who lived and worked in Rome at this period of time. Along with Maarten van Heemskerck and Herman Postma, called Posthumus, he had studied the ancient art in the Eternal City and had visited the Domus Aurea in 1535/1536.¹³ As visible in his mannerism-like style, Sustris also occupied himself with the paintings and frescos of Giulio Romano, Polidoro da Caravaggio, Perino del Vaga or Francesco Salviati. He was especially skilled in atmospheric landscape painting that extended the local tradition of that genre –Giorgione, Domenico Campagnola and Titian are to mention – to a new quality and intensity: The arrival of Sustris in Padua marks therefore the beginning of the large scale landscape painting in fresco technique in the villas of the Venetian Republic. Without his mural decorations in the Odeo and the following Villa dei Vescovi, the development of the Venetian illusionistic landscape painting would not have succeeded in the second half of the 16th century in the way it did.

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Between 1539 and 1541, the cabinet-like rooms on the ground floor of the Odeo Cornaro were decorated with a highly elaborated program that quoted ancient and contemporary villa decorations from central Italy, such as the Palazzo Te in Mantova or the Villa Imperial in Pesaro.¹⁴ In order to create a diversified ornamentation *all'antica*, the artists used fresco and secco technique and plastering, and combined various themes.



Ill. 3: Lambert Sustris: Illusionistic Landscapes, Octagonal Hall, Odeio Cornaro, Padua, c. 1540/1541

With the main focus on the vaults, the observer sees ancient gods, floral ornaments, Christian scenes, pictorial representations from the childhood of Hercules, colorful grotesques and an impressive ancient look-alike triumphal procession. With its pictorial and technical quality, this campaign outclassed nearly any other contemporary project in Padua and created at the same time a prototype for the villa decoration soon to come. As an employer, Alvise Cornaro has proven to the society of Padua his relevance as a patron of the arts.

The very protagonists in the Odeio Cornaro are illusionistic landscapes, i.e. painted landscapes that appear in combination with fictitious architecture such as window-like openings onto an imaginary countryside (Ill. 3, 7). Even though this kind of decoration had already been explored in central Italian projects in the early 16th century – such as Baldassare Peruzzi's *Sala delle Prospettive* (Villa Farnesina, Rome, shortly before 1519), the *Sala dei Cavalli* by Giulio Romano (Palazzo del Te, Mantua, c. 1527/1528) or the fresco cycle in Villa Imperiale by Girolamo Genga (Pesaro, from c. 1530) – for the Venetian Terraferma these landscape frescos without a figurative storytelling were, as pointed out also by Elisabetta Saccomani, an absolute innovation.¹⁵ The illusionistic effect in the Odeio, executed by Lambert Sustris and Gualtiero Padovano, must have been therefore very astonishing for the contemporaries: Both the central octagonal hall and the rectangular *Stanza dei Paesaggi* in the north-east angle transform to belvedere-like spaces and lead the eyes of the beholder to various landscapes.



Ill. 4: Lambert Sustris: Illusionistic Landscape, Octagonal Hall,
Odeo Cornaro, Padua, c. 1540/1541

The four landscapes in the octagonal hall that can be attributed to Lambert Sustris are framed by ancient-like caryatides (Ill. 3, 4).¹⁶ Like the window-like architecture and the balustrades, they are painted in grisaille and appear to be made of grey stone. In the distance lie rivers, shores, grassland and ruins. Very similar landscapes were designed by Sustris and Padovano a few years later in the Villa dei Vescovi (c. 1542/1543) and the Villa Godi (1548–1550) (Ill. 5, 6).¹⁷



Ill. 5: Lambert Sustris: Illusionistic Landscape, Stanza del Fanciullo,
Villa dei Vescovi, Luvigliano, c. 1542/1543



III. 6: Gualtiero Padovano: Illusionistic Landscapes, Sala dei Cesari, Villa Godi, Lugo di Vicenza, c. 1548–1550.

Looking onto vistas of nature in all four directions, the octagonal room and its decoration anticipate the aesthetics of the famous Villa Rotonda in the vicinity of Vicenza. Sketched by Andrea Palladio from c. 1567 or later for Paolo Almerico, the Villa is situated on a hill and offers the following four vistas: »Onde perche gode da ogni parte di bellissime viste, delle quali alcune sono terminate, alcune più lontane, & altre, che terminano con l'Orizzonte; vi sono state fatte le loggie in tutte quattro le faccie: [...].«¹⁸ Comparable to this description also the landscapes in the Odeo offer near and distant landmarks, near mountains and vague horizons. The landscape itself transforms to a *Relievo*, an idea that according to Gerd Blum was already pictured by Leon Battista Alberti's descriptions of landscapes in his *De Re Aedificatoria* (1443–1452).¹⁹

The room that deals the most with the effects of illusionistic landscape painting is the *Stanza dei Paesaggi* (Ill. 7, 8, 10). Following the style, which is consistent with the landscapes in Villa dei Vescovi and Villa Godi, it was decorated by Lambert Sustris and Gualtiero Padovano around 1540/1541.



III. 7: Lambert Sustris and Gualtiero Padovano: Illusionistic Landscapes, Stanza dei Paesaggi, Odeon Cornaro, Padua, c. 1540/1541



III. 8: Lambert Sustris and Gualtiero Padovano: Illusionistic Landscape, Stanza dei Paesaggi, Odeon Cornaro, Padua, c. 1540/1541

The mural decoration entirely changes the stanza's appearance into a loggia that stands on a hill surrounded by green nature. Certainly, this decoration was inspired by the Roman *Sala delle Prospettive* in Villa Farnesina. There, Baldassare Peruzzi had created, by the art of painting, a monumental free standing loggia for Agostino Chigi (III. 9).²⁰



Ill. 9: Baldassare Peruzzi: Sala delle Prospettive, Villa Farnesina, Rome, before 1519

Similar to that mural decoration, the four walls in the *Stanza dei Paesaggi* lose their solidness. Framed by ionic columns, eight rectangular windows turn the small room into a belvedere. On all hands lie peaceful fertile grounds and hilly country sides animated by promenaders. The great riverscape that in comparison with his painting *Jupiter and Io* (Museum Hermitage, Saint Petersburg) has to be attributed to Lambert Sustris is the room's highlight (Ill. 10, 11). Behind framing trees extends a colorful arcadian-like landscape with a river, a city, ruins and a water mill (Ill. 12, 15).



Ill. 10: Lambert Sustris and Gualtiero Padovano: Illusionistic Landscape, Stanza dei Paesaggi, Odeo Cornaro, Padua, c. 1540/1541



III. 11: Lambert Sustris: Jupiter and Io, Museum Eermitage, Saint Petersburg, c. 1545



III. 12: Lambert Sustris and Gualtiero Padovano: Illusionistic Landscape, Stanza dei Paesaggi, Odeo Cornaro, Padua, c. 1540/1541, Detail

The technical and iconographical quality of the illusionistic landscape paintings in the Odeo and the fact that they cover extensive mural surface make it clear that they were considered very important by Alvise Cornaro. Obviously they were intended to be the main characters in that project.

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The prominent position of these fictitious perspectives has to lead to the question as to how they were motivated. In general, illusionistic landscapes in Venetian villas are explained by the ancient descriptions of landscape paintings passed on by Vitruvius and Pliny the Elder in the *De Architectura* and *Naturalis Historia*. They depicted these

pictorial representations with »ports, mountains, shores, rivers, fountains, sacred places, woods and hills«²¹ or »lovely forests, hilly country sides, lakes and various promenaders«²². Based upon these sources, Erik Forssman had already assumed that primarily the Vitruvian description »[...] fosse alla base di tutti i paesaggi nelle ville venete«²³.

Recently, I expressed in my PhD-thesis *Das Landschaftsbild als inszenierter Ausblick, Lambert Sustris, Gualtiero Padovano, Paolo Veronese, Andrea Palladio und die illusionistische Landschaftsmalerei in den venezianischen Villen des 16. Jahrhunderts*, that the famous letters about villa life by Pliny the Younger were also interpreted as central stimuli for this kind of mural decoration. In analogy with the Venetian villas, the topos of a beautiful view out of a window is a leitmotif in the ancient villa descriptions that were known to the world of humanism since the early 15th century.²⁴ Nearly every room in the Plinian Villas Laurentina and Tusculana was visually connected to nature. Yet, the landscape was not perceived in its natural panorama but framed and restricted by window architecture:

»[...] then comes a dining-room running down towards the shore, which is handsome enough for any one, and when the sea is disturbed by the south-west wind the room is just flecked by the spray of the spent waves. There are folding doors on all sides of it, or windows that are quite as large as such doors, and so from the two sides and the front it commands a prospect as it were of three seas, while at the back one can see through the inner court, the cloisters, the courtyard, then more cloisters and the hall, and through them the woods and the distant hills.«²⁵

The landscape that is compared by Pliny in another passage to a »landscape painting«²⁶ loses its natural wildness and appears like an artificial work of art. And so does the Odeio Cornaro: The observer finds himself surrounded by architecturally staged vistas onto a painted, diversified, yet framed nature.

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However, these explanations are not sufficient to decode the complex role played by the landscapes in the Odeio. As the present study will show, they were not only inspired by Vitruvius and Pliny the Elder or the ekphrastic descriptions passed on by Plinius the Younger; first and foremost they reveal themselves as strongly motivated by Alvise Cornaro's biography and his activities in land cultivation. Illustrating fertile, peaceful grounds and streams, hills and villages, the frescos are staged indeed as painted comments on the contemporary discourses on reshaping and changing the Venetian Terraferma to a paradisiacal place, to a *paradiso terrestre* as it was called by various authors including Alberto Lollio in 1563: »Medesimamente anchora, se si riguarda il

luogo, chi è che non vegga, che la vita rusticale è più degna, più nobile, & più eccellente della urbana: ricordandosi, che quella da DIO Sapientissimo fù ordinata ad Adamo; assignandoli per habitatione il *Paradiso terrestre*, luogo amensissimo, di tutte le delizie ripieno [...]? «²⁷

During the period in which the Odeo was decorated, the cultivation of the Venetian lands and the enormous agricultural efforts had just begun. Yet, in the illusionistic vistas, this complex operation has already come to a prosperous end. The observer does not see hard workers or troublesome labor. These pictures therefore foretell a future which Alvise Cornaro had always predicted in his official notes and comments: By focusing on this art of agriculture, the Republic could prosper autonomously from the overseas markets, could feed their population independently, and could therefore avoid terrible wars.²⁸ In this context, the frescos – purely decorative only at first sight – get a substantial allegorical and moral quality. Along with the decoration *all'antica*, the illusionistic landscapes take part in a sophisticated visual strategy that was focused on Alvise Cornaro's self-promotion as a man of virtue.

In doing so, the early decoration of the Odeo already met the standard that the Venetian villa should, by its architecture and its interior decoration, be a place of *virtus*. Turning his attention to the motive of virtue, Andrea Palladio also described the decoration program of Villa Repeta in the following lines: »Nel fianco rincontro alle stalle vi sono stanze, delle quali altre sono dedicate alla Continenza, altre alla Giustizia, & altre ad altre Virtù con gli Elogij, e Pitture, che ciò dimostrano, parte delle quali è opera Messer Battista Maganza Vicentino Pittore, e Poeta singolare: il che è stato fatto affine che questo Gentl'huomo [...] possa alloggiare i suoi forestieri, & amici nella camera di quella Virtù, alla quale essi gli pareranno haver più inclinato l'animo. «²⁹

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III Alvise Cornaro: Nobility and *Santa Agricoltura*

During his entire life, Alvise Cornaro surrounded himself with a circle of highly educated people. This group composed of architects, painters, writers and other intellectuals belonged to the elite of the Republic of Venice. In his *Trattato de la vita sobria del magnifico M. Luigi Cornaro Nobile Vinitiano*, first published in 1558, he wrote:

»A questi medesimi tempi vo anchora ogn'anno a rivedere alcuna di queste città circunvicine, et godendo li miei amici che in esse si ritrovano; piglio piacere essendo et ragionando con essi, et per lor mezzo con gl'altri, che vi sono, huomini di bello intelletto: con architetti, pittori, scultori, musici et agricoltori [...]. Veggio le opere loro fatte novamente, riveggio le fatte per l'adietro, et sempre imparo cose che mi è grato il sapere. «³⁰

Alvise was vital for Padua's cultural life. According to Giuseppe Fiocco, his »corte civile« was characterized by a cultural variety that was a novum for the city.³¹ Nevertheless, Alvise was an amateur in nearly all aspects:³² He wasn't a doctor, but wrote the *Vita Sobria*, a medical treatise; born in Venice, he was a townee, however worked as an administrator of land cultivation; he wrote about the principles of irrigation and fertilisation, yet was not an engineer either; and not being an educated architect did not stop him from writing a short treatise on architecture. With his diverse interests in literature, theater, music and architecture – in a nutshell: in arts – he followed the ideals of the Italian noble- and court man formulated by Baldassare Castiglione in 1528 in his influential book *Il Cortegiano*.

Alvise Cornaro's way of life was intended to present himself as a man of literature, humanism and patron of the arts. But the final refusal of his status as a nobleman troubled him deeply. He tried hard to prove that an aristocratic status should be rightfully his. On one hand by the fact, that one of his ancestors was a doge, on the other hand by his genetical relationship to the ancient family of the Roman Cornelii. In the so called *Elogio*, Cornaro formulated his claim with the following words:

»[...] liberame S.^{re} [Signore] ti prego da quelle; perché non mi sia levato dal dolore il dire, che so che tu S.^{re} desideri che io dichi e nari la vita e costumi de uno tanto tuo Luigi [Alvise] nato in Venetia nel quarto grado di Marco Cornaro duce [1365–1368], il quale si dovea nominare Cornelio perché quello fu lo suo vero cognome come afermano le storie e croniche romane, et cosi le venetiane, perché la casata Cornaro disese dali Sipioni Cornelii che venero in Venetia a stantiare schaciati dale tante guere per liberarsi et lo mutare che si fa di tempo in tempo le lingue, muto tal cognome da Cornelia a Cornaro.«³³

According to Martin Gaier, the protection and extension of social position by means of a retrospective ancestor-cult was quite typical in Venice during the 16th century.³⁴ The best way to legitimate one's nobility was by way of »significance and achievements of the ancestors [...]. The »construction of memoria« [as remarked by Martin Gaier] by the search for the roots of nobility was less important than the real proof of nobility.«³⁵ In Venice, participation in government and political power required nobility. Obviously, nobility meant power and being in no state of nobility, on the other side, was a disadvantage. Motivated by that ideology, Cornaro tried to prove his rights by the connection to a *casa vecchia* and a *casa ducale*.

As far-fetched as Alvise's arguments are, are those of the family of Dardana. In a chronicle from 1555, it traced itself as far back as to the Trojans.

»[...] è da sapere, come la gente, e Famiglia Dardana: la qual tra le famiglie de cittadini vinitiane, ben si può dir, ch'essa di nobeltà, et antichità tenga il primo luoco, è discesa, si come si può dal nome coniettura, et ha havuta origine da quelli Troiani, che con Antenore dopo l'occidio di Troia venero a edificar Padoa.«³⁶

A similar – rather bogus – cult of ancestors was created by the Venetian general Pio Enea degli Obizzi to increase the importance of his family.³⁷ The rooms of his castle-like Villa Il Catajo close to Battaglia, built in 1570, were decorated by Giambattista Zelotti. The frescos glorify the historical acts of Obizzi's ancestors. Small scrolls of parchment next to the fresco show the contents as well as – and this is central to the depiction – the sources of these events and also the libraries. The seeming authenticity unmask itself as untrue. The named sources never existed and were part of the fiction created by the mural painting.³⁸ A similar approach was used in the Palladian Villas Pojana (Pojana Maggiore) and Villa Emo (Fanzolo), decorated between c. 1558 and 1565 by Bernardino India, Anselmo Canera and Giambattista Zelotti. Quoting ancient *Gestae* of courage and sense of duty towards the state, the families signify in those locations figuratively their antique roots and therefore their vital ambition to power and political participation.³⁹

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Standing at the very beginning of Venetian villa decorations, such kind of autobiographical impulse has already had an impact on the Odeo Cornaro. This paper poses the thesis that Alvise, living with the life-long stain of the denial of his pretended aristocratic birth, used the Odeo complex and particularly its illusionistic landscape paintings to glorify himself as a land owner, who cultivated marshland turning it into fertile grounds and promoted the efforts in agriculture for the good of the Venetian people; an exemplary conduct of virtue that was worthy of a real Venetian nobleman. Working for the common welfare of the entire Republic, he therefore staged himself as an altruistic member of society.

This benefit to the public is expressed paradigmatically in the following citation that is taken from a paper on land cultivation written by Cornaro to the officials of Venice: »Et in verità l'agricoltura del retrare [to dewater] è la vera archimia, perciò che si vedde che tutte le grandissime ricchezze di monasteri et di qualche privato cittadino si sono fatte per questa via, e non solamente si vede le private persone, ma le città esser fatte grandi e potenti per questo mezo.«⁴⁰ Using the term »vera archimia«, he underlines that agriculture serves as a scientific method not only for the individual but for entire cities. In this spirit also Francesco Sansovino (alias Giovanni Tatti Lucchese)

emphasized in his book *Della Agricoltura* (1561) agriculture as the economic base of the republic's life:

»Non è dubbio alcuno eccellente Sig. Mio, che l'agricoltura è uno de membri principali della Repub., percioche senza questa parte gli huomini s'adunerebbero insieme vanamente non potendo durare.«⁴¹ And also the most famous architect of the Venetian cinquecento – Andrea Palladio – ennobled the agriculture in his *I Quattro Libri dell'Architettura*, first published in 1570 in Venice. In his introduction to villa buildings and villa life he describes it as a true art: »Ma non minore utilità, e consolation caverà forse dale case di Villa, dove il resto del tempo si passerà in vedere, & ornare le lue possessioni, e con industria, & arte dell'Agricoltura accrescere le facultà [...].«⁴²

The extensive land cultivation, that Cornaro started on his inherited estates in Codevigo, Este and Padua already in the years around 1520, is exemplified by the activities in the area of Polesine close to Rovigo: Between only 1533 and 1541, nearly 90.000 campi padovani (c. 34.200 acres) were altered physically and cultivated by canalization and water mills.⁴³ The detailed map by the cartographer Cristoforo Sorte, executed in 1556 in a bird's eye view, documents the agricultural landscape and the many canals and rivers in the northern part of the Republic as a result of this ideology (Ill. 13).⁴⁴



Ill. 13: Cristoforo Sorte: Map of the north region of the Veneto, 1556

The Terraferma appears like a spider's web that consists of canals, rivers and fields. The impact on nature and on the civil life of the Terraferma and the entire state was

tremendous. In only a few decades, 500.000 campi (c. 190.000 acres) around Padua, Treviso, Rovigo and Aquileia were cultivated.⁴⁵ 250 new villages and many splendid villas arose on a land that recently had still been uninhabitable. The newly created farmland also had an effect on the population, especially in the vicinities of Treviso, Padua, Vicenza e Verona. In 1548, the number of inhabitants of the Terraferma (the city Venice excluded) was 1.417.000. In 1565, it had already risen to 1.500.000, and reached the number of 1.573.000 in the year 1625.⁴⁶

The *Elogio*, written by Alvise himself but published in the name of Giacomo Alvise Cornaro, praises this miracle-like effect of the policy of agriculture:

»[...] et in men di due anni li reduce tuti al coltura, et ritornò il buono aere a quelle villa e luogo nel quale tanto era lo aere tristo che non si potea conservare ritti li pinì che naseano. Ma levate le aque il male aere cessò et vene il buono. Et di 40 anime che vi erano, ora ve sono due milia [...]. [...] in tal luogo desse a Dio altare et anime per adorarlo [...].«⁴⁷

Cornaro stylized himself as a creator in a nearly religious way.⁴⁸ Cultivation turns into an act of godlike creation. Yet, he fabricates not only fertile land out of nothing, he gives an altar to the world and increases the number of believers from only 40 up to 2000 souls. His magnanimity towards god and the people of the Terraferma could not have been expressed more emphatic. The noted references to Genesis are obvious and were repeated correspondingly in a contemporaneous note (quoted here in translation) of the *Magistratura sopra i Beni Inculti*, a governmental organization that managed the process of irrigation and cultivation:

»The cultivation of land has to follow the example of God's creation in three steps. When he created the world he primarily divided the sky from the other matter, than the ground from the water. Finally he created various beings: Animals, trees and grain. Any cultivation of land has to follow his plan in three steps. First the water has to be diverted out of the ground [...].«⁴⁹

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It is a very important observation that Cornaro, who wrote various notes concerning the welfare of the Republic including the *Discorso de messer Alvise Corner da Padova delle provision della cavation della laguna* (c. 1540), *Scrittura di Messer Alvise Cornaro sopra le lagune* (1541) and the *Scrittura in difesa della laguna e del porto* (1565), kept up his self-image as an unselfish and noble person to the public even when he described his splendid life in the villa, which was indeed financed by the agricultural enterprises.⁵⁰ He intentionally covered up the facts that he was building himself his own territory of which he was in control. He also ignored the fact of being paid very well by

the state. During one of his first official campaigns of land cultivation, for instance, which affected 10.000 campi, he negotiated a benefit of 10 percent.⁵¹

As in a passage from the book *Vita Sobria*, which depicts Cornaro's villa in the Colli Euganei [destroyed today], the motives of financial profit and power are camouflaged and transformed into an eloquent self-staging:

»Godo poi altrettanti giorni la mia Villa di piano, la quale è bellissima [...]. [...] da l'una & da l'altra parte della quale [the Brenta river] vi è gran spatio di Paese, tutto di campi fertili, & ben coltivati, & si ritrova hora, Dio gratia, molto bene habitata, che prima non era così, anzi tutto il contrario: perche era paludosa, & di mal aere, & stanza più presto da biscie, che da huomini. Ma havendole io levate l'acque, l'aere si fece buono, & le genti vi vennero ad habitare.«⁵²

The text points out without a doubt that the benefit for the country and the conversion of swampy, unhealthy territory into fertile grounds for the ruralists outweighs one's own personal or private needs. In Alvise Cornaro's eyes, the self-serving fact of enjoying the villa privately seems instead a purely accessory phenomenon.

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IV Conclusion

The strategy of self-promotion, which was inspired by the ancient Roman idea of *virtus* sheds new light on the illusionistic landscape paintings of the Odeo Cornaro. While visiting the building, dining in one of its rooms or listening to a concert, the contemporary observer saw himself surrounded not only by decorative landscape pictures in the tradition of Vitruvius or Pliny the Elder, but by visionary, entertaining and prospective vistas of fertile grounds. Especially the window-like appearance and the faked architecture underline their claim to be genuine. The landscapes can therefore be interpreted as pictorial expressions of Alvise Cornaro's achievements and activities in land cultivation, especially in the years around 1540.

When the Odeo was decorated c. 1540/1541, Cornaro wrote a letter to his friend the author Sperone Speroni. This source from April 2 1541 reflects the intensity of Cornaro's occupation with the ideas of land cultivation in this decade. In this text, he not only expressed the main-theme *santa agricoltura* as a motto for his activities he also described his recent achievements: He cultivated an area where it had been impossible to raise children or to live well up to this point in time. But after his efforts, the population prospered: »E pur con tal largo spendere io la ho fatta e con uno edificare ad Iddio (e del mio) tempio, ed a mie spese dando, e ad esso Iddio populo, il quale ho fatto venire al mondo, per aver discacciato io male aere che era in questa villa, dove non si potea allevare figliuoli, e liberandola dalle acque, ho fatto nascere

infinito populo.«⁵³ In this context, the illusionistic landscapes shift to literally prospective out-looks into a prosperous future of the Venetian Republic.

Alvise had no doubt that even war would be needless if the state would follow the Cornarian way of agriculture: Venice »potrà lassar far Guerra alli altri, et star a veder, et così tenir sempre lo suo stato in pace.«⁵⁴ In addition to his theoretical notes and practical efforts, the painted views reveal themselves as allegories on land cultivation and the theme of *santa agricoltura*. Just like the texts, the mural paintings become a text in themselves, which has to be read in detail.

As the contemporary maps of the Terraferma show, streams and canals were of capital importance for the success of irrigation and canalization; and mills as visible in the big landscape in the *Stanza dei Paesaggi* and illustrated in the first edition of Vitruvius by Daniele Barbaro (1556), were used to lift and transport water (Ill. 14, 15).



Ill. 14: Machines to move water, from Daniele Barbaro's comment on Vitruvius, 1556



Ill. 15: Lambert Sustris and Gualtiero Padovano: Illusionistic Landscape, Stanza dei Paesaggi, Odeo Cornaro, Padua, c. 1540/1541, Detail with water-mill

The many water ways that were painted by Gualtiero Padovano and Lambert Sustris therefore can be interpreted as pictorial representations of these efforts. The important role played by rivers for agriculture and the *Villeggiatura* was pointed out also by Andrea Palladio. In his architectural treatise he says:

»Primieramente adunque eleggerassi luogo quanto sia possibile comodo alle possessioni, e nel mezo di quelle: accioche il padrone senza molta fatica possa scoprire, e migliorare i suoi luoghi d'intorno, e i frutti di quelli possano acconciamente alla casa dominicale esser dal lavoratore portati. Se si potrà fabricare sopra il fiume; sarà cosa molto comoda, e bella: percioche e le entrate con poca spesa in ogni tempo si potranno nella Città condurre con le barche, e servirà a gli usi della casa, e de gli animali, oltra che apporterà molto fresco la Estate, e sarà bellissima vista, e con grandissima utilità, & ornamento si potranno adacquare le possessioni, i Giardini, e i Bruoli, che sono l'anima, e diporto della Villa.«⁵⁵

The illusionistic views in the Odeo have a programmatic, nearly allegorical function and do not serve as visual pleasure only. In the spirit of the Horacian »aut prodesse [...] aut delectare«⁵⁶, the landscapes offer a delightful reading and an intellectual and morally based reading, too. Already Leon Battista Alberti had noted that the manorial country houses should have vistas of fields and landscapes. Yet in the *De Re Aedificatoria*, the delightful visual perception of the territory is expanded by the programmatic word »dignissimum«, meaning most dignified:

»Caeterum tecta ingenuorum velim occupent agri non feracissimum sed alioquin dignissimum, unde omnis aurae solis aspectusque commoditas et voluptas liberrime capiatur. Faciles ad se ex agro porrigit aditus; venientem hospitem honestissimis excipiet spatiis; spectabitur, spectabitque urbem oppida mare fusamque planitiem, et nota collium montiumque capita, ortorum delitias, piscationum venationumque illecebras sub oculis habebit expositas.«⁵⁷

The view therefore transforms to an allegory that stages the owner's property and dignity.

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The assumption that also the landscape paintings in the Odeo Cornaro, evoking the idea of the *paradiso terrestre* by means of the painter's brush, serve as dignified allegories, is finally confirmed by the floral decoration painted on the pillars in the octagonal hall (Ill. 16).



III. 16: Lambert Sustris: Mural decoration: »Granturco«, Octagonal Hall, Odeio Cornaro, Padua, c. 1540/1541

As a frame for the four vistas, the beholder sees stylised maize (called Granturco in Venice) prospering in many colors. Alongside with rice, maize belonged to the most important crop that was being cultivated and harvested on the Terraferma in early modern times.⁵⁸ Like the landscapes, this vegetable motif suggests a strong iconographical link to the process of reshaping the Terraferma, and to agriculture as well, or – to quote Alvise Cornaro – to the *santa agricoltura*. The statement is obvious: The emblematic presentation of a flourishing nature on the pillars, the harmonious peaceful *vita in villa*, and the rekindling of the idea of the antique country life becomes reality only by means of a successful policy of land cultivation; a land cultivation that would lead, as predicted by Cornaro, to a world that shows its original beauty.

In a letter with the title *Lettera che scrissi sopra li retriati delle paluti [sic] che circondavano questi monti* (c. 1560), he described this effect on nature as a »miracolosa liberatione«, a miracle-like liberation. Sitting in his villa in the Colli Euganei, he and his guests are surrounded by fields and grounds that had still been a terrible, unhealthy swamp until only short time before, yet now have become a place of joy and happiness. It virtually seems that Cornaro had one of the Odeio's colorful, prosperous landscapes in mind while he was composing the letter and its description of the countryside. As the observer sees them in the *Stanza dei Paesaggi* and the central hall, the reader finds green grounds, clear air, trees, bushes and mumbling streams in the tradition of Francesco Petrarca and Pietro Bembo:

»Ritrovandomi in questi monti e choli Euganei con li Signori sopra li luoghi inculti liberatori di essi monti a li nocivi et bruti paluti che li circondavano. [...] questi monti veduta questa miracolosa liberatione sua sono tanto alegri che in ogni loro parte rideno veramente. Hora questa è la stantia della alerezza et del riso: Rideno li loro prati pieni di vagi e diversi fiori e di odori colmi; rideno li boschi revestiti di uno nuovo et molto allegro verde; rideno li arbori pieni de fruit de tante et sì diverse sorte e tanto delicate; rideno le viti e rendono uno soavissimo odore in questo suo fiorini; rideno le acque de le loro fontane più chiare che mai fossero, et perche se ritrovano in maggior quantità descendono con maggiore mormorio; cantano lit anti ucelini di diverse sorti tirati a forza dal chiaro et nuovo aere.«⁵⁹

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The landscapes of the Odeo Cornaro finally turn out to be an essential character in the visual strategy that put Alvise Cornaro's loyalty to the State and its people on display. Even though Aristocracy remained denied to him, he still staged himself in public as a noble character and a promoter of agriculture. This lifelong self-promotion pictured him as an altruistic person who even without the official confirmation of nobility behaved like a nobleman that lived according to the ancient idea of *virtus*. That he saw himself as a man of such qualities is underlined in the *Elogio*. There, he describes himself as a »uomo caro, pieno di continenza, di carità, di bontà, di belli costumi, ma sopra tutto di alto inteletto [...].«⁶⁰ Together with the interior decoration *all'antica*, the landscape paintings in the Odeo become a personal code for promotion – and an allegorical symbol as well. This conclusion underlines the observation that, alongside the architecture and the figurative programs, the illusionistic landscape paintings and the staged prospects onto diversified surroundings are on equal footing – not only in the Odeo but in many other Venetian villas of the 16th century: The landscape paintings which appear as staged vistas are an imperative part of a great story told by the Venetian villa of the cinquecento.⁶¹

Photography Credits

III. 1: Lionello Puppi (ed.): *Alvise Cornaro e il suo tempo*, exhibition catalogue, Padova 1980, S. 19.

III 11: Online-Database the Hermitage Museum (<http://www.arthermitage.org/Lambert-Sustris/Jupiter-and-lo>)

III. 14: Gerrit Smienk & Johannes Niemeijer: *Palladio, the Villa and the Landscape*, Basel 2011, p. 16.

The other pictures from the author's archive.

Kurzvita des Autors

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1 This study is inspired by my doctoral thesis on the illusionistic landscape paintings in selected Venetian villas between 1540 and 1580, finished in 2011. See Sören Fischer: *Das Landschaftsbild als inszenierter Ausblick*, Lambert Sustris, Gualtiero Padovano, Paolo Veronese, Andrea Palladio und die illusionistische Landschaftsmalerei in den venezianischen Villen des 16. Jahrhunderts, doctoral thesis, Mainz 2011, in preparation for print. At this place I want to express my gratitude to I Musei Civici di Padova and Dr. Davide Banzato, who granted me access to the Odeo.

2 Introducing to the biography of Alvise Cornaro see Giuseppe Fiocco: *Alvise Cornaro. Il suo tempo e le sue opere*, Vicenza 1965; Mirella Blason: *La vita di Alvise Cornaro*, in: Lionello Puppi (ed.): *Alvise Cornaro e il suo tempo*, exhibition catalogue, Padova 1980, p. 18-26; Emilio Lippi: *Cornariana. Studi su Alvise Cornaro*, Padova 1983.

- 3 Giacomo Alvise Cornaro: Elogio, cited after Giuseppe Fiocco: Alvise Cornaro. Il suo tempo e le sue opere, Vicenza 1965, p. 200-203, here p. 200.
- 4 Fiocco 1965 (see. n. 2), p. 15-16, n. 3; p. 23; Denis Cosgrove: Il paesaggio palladiano, Verona 2004, p. 238; Gianni Moriani: Palladio architetto della villa fattoria, Verona 2008, p. 22.
- 5 This term was first used by Alvise Cornaro in a letter to the poet Sperone Speroni, dated 1542. See Alvise Cornaro: Lettera a messer Sperone Speroni, cited after Giuseppe Fiocco: Alvise Cornaro. Il suo tempo e le sue opere, Vicenza 1965, p. 193-194.
- 6 Introducing to the efforts of land cultivation in 16th century Venice see Vincenzo Fontana: Alvise Cornaro e la terra, in: Lionello Puppi (ed.): Alvise Cornaro e il suo tempo, exhibition catalogue, Padova 1980, p. 120-128; Salvatore Ciriaco: Irrigazione e produttività agraria nella Terraferma veneta tra cinque e seicento, in: Archivio Veneto, CXII, 1979, p. 73-135; Salvatore Ciriaco: Acque e agricoltura nell'Europa moderna. Il caso veneziano, Padova 1992; Cosgrove 2004 (see n. 4), p. 211-244.
- 7 Cosgrove 2004 (see n. 4).
- 8 For Alvise Cornaro and Cristoforo Sabbadino see Paolo Morachiello: Alvise Cornaro e Cristoforo Sabbadino: un dialogo sulle tecniche e sulla Natura, in: Lionello Puppi (ed.): Alvise Cornaro e il suo tempo, exhibition catalogue, Padova 1980, p. 130-135.
- 9 August Buck: Die Villa als Lebensform der italienischen Renaissance, Sitzungsberichte der Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft an der Johann-Wolfgang-Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main, Stuttgart 1992. See also Reinhard Bentmann & Michael Müller: Die Villa als Herrschaftsarchitektur. Versuch einer kunst- und sozialgeschichtlichen Analyse, Frankfurt a.M. 1970.
- 10 Giuseppe Fiocco: La casa di Alvise Cornaro, in: Bollettino del museo civico di Padova, LVII, 1968, p. 7-16.
- 11 Serlio Sebastiano: I sette libri dell'architettura, Venezia 1584, reprint, Venezia 1987, vol. 2, VII, 3, p. 218.
- 12 That Cornaro himself was involved in the project is passed on by Giorgio Vasari: Le Vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti, Firenze 1568, ed. by Maurizio Marini, Roma 2007, Vita di Falconetto, p. 815: »[...] per far poi il palazzo secondo il modello fatto da Messer Luigi stesso. « Also Serlio and Palladio confirm the humanist's activities in architecture. See Sebastiano 1987 (see n. 11): vol. 2, VII, 3, p. 218 and Andrea Palladio: I Quattro Libri dell'Architettura, Venezia 1570, reprint, Milano 2006, I, 27, p. 61.
- 13 Vincenzo Mancini: Aggiornamento su Lambert Sustris, in: Saggi e Memorie di Storia dell'Arte, 24, 2000, p. 13-29; Nicole Dacos: Roma quanto fuit. Tre pittori fiaminghi nella Domus Aurea. Roma 2001, p. 17-21; Renate Trnek: Traum vom Süden. Die Niederländer malen Italien, exhibition catalogue, Wien 2007, p. 19-49. The visit in the so-called Grotta nigra of the Domus Aurea is proved by the following preserved inscription: HEMSKERC |HER. POSTMA |LAM AMSTE.
- 14 For the decoration of the Odeo see Wolfgang Wolters: Tiziano Minio als Stukkator im Odeo Cornaro zu Padua, in: Pantheon, Internationale Zeitschrift für Kunst, 21, 1963, p. 20-28, p. 222-230; Lucio Grossato: Affreschi del Cinquecento a Padova, Milano 1966, p. 241-249; Giulio Bresciani Alvarez: Le fabbriche di Alvise Cornaro, in: Lionello Puppi (ed.), Alvise Cornaro e il suo tempo, exhibition catalogue, Padova 1980, p. 36-57; Giovanni Mariacher: Scultura e decorazione plastica esterna della Loggia e dell'Odeo Cornaro, in: Lionello Puppi (ed.): Alvise Cornaro e il suo tempo, exhibition catalogue, Padova 1980, p. 80-85; Wolfgang Wolters: La decorazione interna della Loggia e dell'Odeo Cornaro, in: Lionello Puppi (ed.): Alvise Cornaro e il suo tempo, exhibition catalogue, Padova 1980, p. 72-79; Vincenzo Mancini: Lambert Sustris a Padova, La Villa Bigolin a Selvazzano, Cittadella 1993, p. 33-45; Gerd Jan van der Sman: La decorazione a fresco delle ville venete del cinquecento, Firenze 1993, p. 15-21, n. 17;

Filippo Crispo: Angelo Beoloco detto Ruzante, *Atti del Convegno*, Padova 1997; Annamaria Spiazzi: La decorazione della Loggia e dell'Odeo, in: Filippo Crispo: Angelo Beoloco detto Ruzante, *Atti del Convegno*, Padova 1997, p. 211-228; Elisabetta Saccomani: Le Venezie, in: Mina Gregori: *Pittura murale in Italia. Il Cinquecento*, Bergamo 1997, p. 128-155, here p. 144; Elisabetta Saccomani: *Padova 1540–1570*, in: Mauro Lucco: *La pittura nel veneto. Il Cinquecento*, Milano 1998, p. 555-616, here p. 573; Elisabeth Anzi-Hauer: *Das Odeo Cornaro in Padua, Kulturaspekte und Landschaftsmalerei eines humanistischen Theaters*, thesis, Universität Wien 2008; Fischer, in preparation for print (see n.1), chapter III 4a, III 5a.

15 Saccomani 1998 (see n. 14), p. 556.

16 For the attribution see Fischer, in preparation for print (see n. 14), chapter III. 4a.

17 For the illusionistic landscape frescos in these villas see Alessandro Ballarin: Una villa interamente affrescata di Lamberto Sustris, in: *Arte veneta*, 20, 1966, p. 244-249; Alessandro Ballarin: La decorazione ad affresco della villa veneta nel quinto decennio del Cinquecento. La Villa di Luvigliano, in: *Boll. dell. CISA*, 10, 1968, p. 115-126; Sman 1993 (see n. 14), p. 18-23; Giuseppe Pavanello & Vincenzo Mancini: *Gli affreschi nelle ville venete, Il cinquecento, Venezia* 2008, p. 272-286, 294-304; Fischer, in preparation for print (see n. 14), chapter III. 4b-d, III 5, III 6.

18 Palladio 2006 (see n. 12), II, 3, p. 18. The views out of Villa Rotonda recently were studied by Gerd Blum: *Palladios »Villa Rotonda« und die Tradition des »idealen Ortes«: Literarische Topoi und die landschaftliche Topographie von Villen der italienischen Renaissance*, in: *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 70, 2007, p. 159-200, here p. 177-193.

19 Leon Battista Alberti: *L'Architettura. De re aedificatoria*, ed. by Giovanni Orlandi and Paolo Portoghesi. 2. vol. Milano 1966, vol. I, V, 17, p. 419-421. See also Blum 2007 (see n. 18), p. 175.

20 For the Sala delle Prospettive see Christoph Luitpold Frommel: *Die Farnesina und Peruzzis architektonisches Frühwerk*, Berlin 1961; Sven Sandström: *Levels of Unreality. Studies in Structure and Construction in Italian Mural Painting during the Renaissance*, Upsala 1963, p. 102; Christoph Luitpold Frommel: *Baldassare Peruzzi als Maler und Zeichner*, Wien, München 1967/1968; David R. Coffin: *The Villa in the Life on the Renaissance Rome*, Princeton 1979, p. 97; Manfred Luchterhandt: *Im Reich der Venus. Zu Peruzzis Sala delle Prospettive in der Farnesina*, in: *Römisches Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana*, 31, 1996, p. 207-243; Julian Kliemann & Michael Rohlmann: *Wandmalerei in Italien. Hochrenaissance und Manierismus 1510–1600*, München 2004, p. 194-213.

21 Vitruv: *Zehn Bücher über Architektur, De Architectura Libri Decem*, ed. by Franz Reber, Wiesbaden 2009, VII, 5, 2: »[...] portus, promuntoria, litora, flumina, fontes, euripi, fana, luci, montes [...]«.«

22 Plinius der Ältere: *Naturalis historiae libri XXXVII, Naturkunde, Buch XXXV*, ed. by Roderich König, Darmstadt 2007, XXXV, 116: »[...] lucos, nemora, colles, piscinas, euripos, amnes, litora, qualia quis optaret, varias ibi obambulantium species aut navigantium [...]«.«

23 Erik Forssman: *Palladio e la pittura a fresco*, in: *Arte Veneta*, 21, 1967, p. 71-76, here p. 73. These assumption also in Ernst H. Gombrich: *Renaissance artistic theory and the development of landscape painting*, in: *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, Mai-Juni 1953, p. 344-345; A. Richard Turner: *The Vision of Landscape in Renaissance Italy*, Princeton 1966, p. 207; Bentmann & Müller 1970 (see n. 9), p. 44-45; Christine Jung: *Von der irdischen zur himmlischen Liebe, Die neuplatonische Liebesphilosophie des Pietro Bembo und das Bildprgramm der Villa Badoer in Fratta Polesine, errichtet von Andrea Palladio, ausgestattet von Giallo Fiorentino, 1556*, Frankfurt 1994, p. 90; Nils Büttner: *Die Erfindung der Landschaft, Kosmographie und Landschaftskunst im Zeitalter Bruegels*, Göttingen 2000, p. 155-156; Cosgrove 2008 (see n. 4), p. 170.

- 24 The letters of Pliny the Younger were rediscovered in 1419 by Guarino Veronese (1374–1460). See Remigio Sabbadini: *Storia e critica di tesi latini*, ed. by. Eugenio u. Myriam Billanovich, Padova 1971, p. 263-264; Remigio Sabbadini: *Le scoperte dei codici latini e greci ne'secoli XIV e XV*, ed. by Eugenio Garin, vol. I, Firenze 1996, p. 242-243. See also Fischer, in preparation for print (see n. 14), chapter I.
- 25 Plinius der Jüngere: *Briefe. Epistularum libri dieci*, ed. by Helmut Kasten, München 1968, II, 17, 5: »est contra medias cavaedium hilare, mox triclinium satis pulchrum, quod in litus excurrit ac, si quando Africo mare impulsum est, fractis iam et novissimis fluctibus leviter adluitur. undique valvas aut fenestras non minores valvis habet atque ita a lateribus, a fronte quasi tria maria prospectat; a tergo cavaedium, porticum, aream, porticum rursus, mox atrium, silvas et longinquos respicit montes.« Translated by John B. Firth.
- 26 Plinius der Jüngere 1968. (see n. 25), V, 6, 7: »imaginare amphitheatrum aliquod inmensum.«
- 27 Alberto Lollio: *Lettera di M. Alberto Lollio a M. Hercole Perinato in laude della villa. Delle oratione di M. Alberto Lollio Gentil'Huomo Ferrarese. Volume Primo. Aggiuntavi una lettera del medesimo in laude della villa*, Ferrara 1563, fol. 219r.
- 28 Moriani 2008 (see. n. 4), p. 23
- 29 Palladio 2006 (see n. 12), II, 15, p. 61.
- 30 Alvise Cornaro, *Trattato de la vita sobria del magnifico M. Luigi Cornaro Nobile Vinitiano*, Venezia 1558, fol. 21v.
- 31 Fiocco 1965 (see n. 2), p. 52.
- 32 Emilio Menegazzo: *Alvise Cornaro: Un veneziano del cinquecento nella terraferma padovana*, in: Arnaldi, Girolamo and Manlio Pastore Stocchi: *Storia della cultura veneta. Dal primo quattrocento al concilio di Trento*, Vicenza 1980, p. 513-538, here p. 526.
- 33 »[...] I ask Thee, oh God, to free me from this things; because I didn't rise myself out of the pain, to tell, that I know, Oh my God, you want that I say and that I talk about the live and the habit of one, who is Yours; and who was born in Venezia in the fourth grade of Marco Cornaro, the doge. His real name was Cornelio, which tell us the books and chronicles of Venezia. Because the lineage belonged to the old Sipioni Cornelii, who went to Venezia, to settle down, and to free himself tormented by wars; and the name changed in time like the languages. It changed from Cornelia to Cornaro.« Giacomo Alvise Cornaro: *Elogio*, cited after Fiocco 1965 (see n. 3), p. 200.
- 34 Martin Gaier: »Ius imaginis nihil esse aliud, quam ius nobilitas«. *Bildpolitik und Machtanspruch im Patriziat Venedigs*, in: Janette Kohl und Rebecca Müller: *Kopf und Bild. Die Büste im Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*. Berlin 2007, p. 255-282.
- 35 Id. p. 257.
- 36 Biblioteca Marciana, Venezia (BMV), Cod. It. VIII 366 (7660), *Discorso della famiglia Dardana*, c. 2, cited after Gaier 2007 (see. n. 34), p. 260.
- 37 Sabine Glaser: *Il Cataio. Die Ikonografie einer Villa im Veneto*, München, Berlin 2003.
- 38 Julian Kliemann: *Programme, Inschriften und Texte zu Bildern. Einige Bemerkungen zur Praxis in der profanen Wandmalerei des Cinquecento*, in: Wolfgang Harms: *Bild und Text, Bild und Text*, DFK-Symposium, Stuttgart 1988, p. 79-95.
- 39 For interpretations of the interior decorations in Villa Pojana and Villa Emo see Gabriele Poggendorf: *Palladios Villa Emo in Fanzolo. Hemorum origo. Zur Ikonographie der Fresken von Giambattista Zelotti*, Berlin 1995; Petra Schmied-Hartman: *Die Dekoration von Palladios Villa Pojana*, München 1997.

- 40 Alvise Cornaro: Discorso de messer Alvise Corner da Padova delle provision della cavation della laguna [...], cited after Giuseppe Fiocco, *Alvise Cornaro. Il suo tempo e le sue opere*, Vicenza 1965, p. 99-105, here p. 102.
- 41 Giovanni Tatti Lucchese: *Della agricultura di M. Giovanni Tatti Lucchese. Libri cinque. Ne quali si contengono tutte le cose vtile, & appartenenti al bisogno della villa, tratte da gli antichi & da moderni scrittori. Con le figure delle biave, delle piante, de gli animali & delle herbe cosi medicinali, come comuni & da mangiare*, Venice 1561, dedication text.
- 42 Palladio 2006 (see. n. 12), II, 12, p. 45.
- 43 Moriani 2008 (see. n. 4), p. 30.
- 44 Gerrit Smienk & Johannes Niemeijer: *Palladio, the Villa and the Landscape*, Basel 2011, p. 16. See also Cosgrove 2004 (see n. 4), p. 245-273.
- 45 Moriani 2008 (see. n. 4), p. 24.
- 46 Cosgrove 2004 (see n. 4), p. 207, n. 1.
- 47 Giacomo Alvise Cornaro, *Elogio*, cited after Fiocco 1965 (see n. 3), p. 201.
- 48 Bentmann & Müller 1970 (see n. 9), p. 64.
- 49 Cited after Michelangelo Muraro & Paolo Morton: *Villen in Venetien*, Köln 1999, p. 43.
- 50 Cornaro: Discorso de messer Alvise Corner da Padova delle provision della cavation della laguna [...], cited after Fiocco 1965 (see n. 40), p. 99-105; Alvise Cornaro: *Scrittura di Messer Alvise Cornaro sopra le lagune, 1541*, cited after Giuseppe Fiocco: *Alvise Cornaro. Il suo tempo e le sue opere*, Vicenza 1965, p. 111-112; Alvise Cornaro: *Scrittura in difesa della laguna e del porto, 1565*, cited after Giuseppe Fiocco: *Alvise Cornaro. Il suo tempo e le sue opere*, Vicenza 1965, p. 136-138.
- 51 Moriani 2008 (see. n. 4), p. 25. As an aside it is to note that the land cultivation of the Terraferma primarily was under control of the Venetian nobility that acquired and cultivated enormous areas in a short period of time only: In the province of Rovigo i.e. the Venetian noble families possessed 16.000 campi in 1537 but more than 54.000 campi in 1661.
- 52 Cornaro 1558 (see n. 30), fol. 21r-21v.
- 53 Cornaro: *Lettera a messer Sperone Speroni*, cited after Fiocco 1965 (see n. 5), p. 193.
- 54 Moriani 2008 (see. n. 4), p. 23.
- 55 Palladio 2006 (see. n. 12), II, 12, p. 45.
- 56 Horaz: *Ars Poetica. Die Dichtunst*, ed. by. Eckart Schäfer, Stuttgart 2005, 333-334: »aut prodesse volunt aut delectare poetae | aut simul et iucunda et idonea dicere vitae.«
- 57 Alberti 1966 (see n. 19), vol. I, V, 17, p. 415.
- 58 Moriani 2008 (see. n. 4), p. 41-47.
- 59 Alvise Cornaro: *Lettera che scrissi sopra li retrati delle paluti [sic] che circondavano questi monti*, cited after Giuseppe Fiocco, *Alvise Cornaro. Il suo tempo e le sue opere*, Vicenza 1965, p. 203-204, here p. 203. See also Cosgrove 2004 (see n. 4), p. 239. Compare also a passage in the *Elogio*: »Trovò poi modo di liberare da acque il padovano, che nella sua quarta parte era fato paludoso et inutile. Et questo hora si vede in fato come questi belli monti che erano circondati da paludi per cagione de le acque, hora aricordando esso io modo di levarle sono liberati da quelli, et fati molto belli et infiniti patroni de tali luogi et de altri simili, sono fati richi.« Giacomo Alvise Cornaro, *Elogio*, cited after Fiocco 1965 (see n. 3), p. 202.
- 60 Giacomo Alvise Cornaro, *Elogio*, cited after Fiocco 1965 (see n. 3), p. 200.
- 61 Fischer, in preparation for print (see n.1), chapter IV.