Tomaso da Modena
Painting in Emilia and the March of Treviso, 1340–80

ROBERT GIBBS
Lecturer in the History of Fine Art, University of Glasgow

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge
New York New Rochelle Melbourne Sydney
The church

The ex-chiesa of S. Margherita stands to this day as a large and prominent structure on a secondary road into the centre of Treviso, a battered patchwork of old, nineteenth- and twentieth-century fabric now preserved as a gymnasium, its chapels as changing rooms (figs. VII, 32). This church housed the most extensive of Tomaso’s works known to us today: the frescoes of the Legend of St Ursula. Originally the Cappella Maggiore was probably frescoed extensively by Tomaso as well, so that his work dominated the transept, just as Vitale’s frescoes in the Cappella Maggiore and the St Nicholas chapel (first north) dominated Udine Cathedral (fig. 86).2

The church and convent of S. Margherita were built as the establishment in Treviso of the Augustinian friars, the Eremitani. This Order, which had major houses in Padua, Bologna and Modena,3 was the response of those hermits who followed Augustine’s rule to the mendicants. The existing local groupings of hermits including the Bretini who were centred on the March of Treviso, as well as the Zambonini of Emilia and the Tuscan Hermits, were instructed by Pope Innocent IV (1243) and Alexander IV (1256) to join in a single Order and to redirect their spiritual vocation towards the rapidly growing cities.4 The Eremitani’s role was particularly close to that of the Dominicans, who were themselves, in theory, Augustinian canons: their

1 I am indebted to Professor Mario Altariz, editor of Gr Speziale, and the Cassa di Risparmio della Marca Trivigiana, for supporting the photographic research of this chapter, to the Gladys Krble Delmas Fund for supporting my research on it, and to Dom Mario Gazzola and Antonio Betteta for their enthusiastic support for my work in S. Margherita.
2 See Chapter 3 n. 28.
3 See Chapter 2 n. 70.
4 The Augustinian hermits share the Rule of Augustine with the Augustinian Canons, but they have distinct origins and aims, and a more centralised administration. They were formed from a number of different hermitical congregations in Italy, most of which, but not all, had already adopted Augustinian rules. In accordance with the intentions of the Fourth Lateran Council Cardinal Riccardo Annibaldi was charged with uniting the hermitages of Tuscani into a single organisation, accomplished at a meeting at S. Maria del Popolo, Rome, in 1244. In 1256 all other Augustinian hermits were united with them by the decree of Alexander IV: the main groupings were the Tuscan Hermit, the Zambonini (followers of St John Bonis in North Italy) and the Bretini, established in the Marches of Treviso and Ancona. The Bretini shared with the Franciscans the ideal of absolute poverty, mendicancy and the grey sackcloth habit. The other hermits often possessed land, but emphasised social withdrawal and lived by their own labour. The new Order had to reconcile these varying ideals, as well as the black habit of the Augustinians, not without dissent. Moreover the 1256 decree instructed Cardinal Annibaldi to transfer the energies of the new Order from the hermitage to confront heresy and dissent in the cities by preaching and hearing confessions, aims very similar to those of the Dominicans, but destined to go beyond their radical achievements in theology through the teaching and reforms of Martin Luther and the genetics of Mendel. See Gutierrez (1980) and (1977), Roth (1966) 13–17, 33–7, Gwynn (1940) 1–12; Knowles (1948) vol. 1, 199–201; Wycliff taught in the Austin schools at Oxford.

To avoid confusion and repetition I have generally used the Italian name, Eremitani, rather than the English ‘Austin Friars’ to refer to the Italian members of the Order.
administration and theology were very similar, particularly after the adoption of the teaching of Egidio Romano, an Augustinian pupil of Aquinas and Prior-General of the Eremitani, 1292–5, as the official doctrine of his Order. We shall see evidence of at least one indirect connection between the two Orders in Treviso, while across the street from S. Margherita was the house of the Dominican sisters, S. Paolo.

Federici tells us that the Eremitani settled in a humble dwelling in the suburbs of the city and transferred in 1260 to the site of S. Margherita where a humble wooden

5 Because of the prohibition by the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 of new Rules, Dominic began the formation of the friars preacher as an extension of the Augustinian canons with a habit based upon that of the canons of Osma to which he himself belonged when the bishop of Osma imposed the Augustinian rule upon the Chapter in 1201. For Egidio Romano see Gwynn (1940) 35–44.

6 S. Paolo originally belonged to a house of Augustinian nuns who were displaced to the suburbs when the Eremitani built their own convent across the road; S. Paolo was then transferred to the Dominican Second Order (of enclosed sisters): Remacci (1980) 278–9.
oratory was built. 7 In 1282 this was replaced by the present church, modelled on the contemporary Dominican church of S. Nicolò, before it became the great basilica that we see today. This is recorded by the Statute of the Commune which undertook to provide for its erection, as they had done for the Dominicans and Franciscans in 1230. 8 Federici also records the benefactions of Meladusio Tempesta to the completion of the church in the fourteenth century, while the tombs of the wealthy inhabitants of Treviso, and of many Florentine exiles, to be found in the cloister until the 1944 bombing, undoubtedly recall other contributions. The most celebrated tomb of all was that of Pietro di Dante Alighieri (1364) now in S. Francesco. 9

The church was deconsecrated by the Napoleonic authorities and became a military store-room like so many conventual churches. In 1882 demolition began, to make way for a larger store, and Bailo, the founder of Treviso’s museum, made frantic efforts to record and salvage as much of the church and its decoration as possible. He commissioned the young artists Antonio Carlini and Girolamo Botter 10 to make drawings of the church, and as they scraped off the whitewash to seek traces of the murals obscured for centuries large areas of fresco came to light, most spectacularly of all, the complete decoration of the southern of the three east chapels devoted to the Legend of St Ursula. 11 These discoveries, and particularly the Ursula Cycle recognised immediately by Bailo as the work of Tomaso, 12 persuaded Bailo to undertake the detachment of the cycle and many other frescoes: since no substantial public funds were forthcoming, he and his artists taught themselves the technique of stacco and did the best they could. In the circumstances Bailo’s achievement was heroic, and the detached fragments fill several store-rooms as well as forming the star attraction of the Museo Civico itself. 13

Bailo’s efforts seem to have dissuaded the authorities from completing their demolition, or it was perhaps intended to use the walls as a base for the heightened structure, for much of the medieval fabric remains. But Bailo’s rescue of the frescoes also drew the attention of art-historians away from the building as if from a bad memory. Bailo speaks of the church in the past tense; all guide-books before the Second World War describe it as demolished or ignore it altogether. Yet, as Zuliani

---

7 Federici (1803) vol. 1, 208. Renucci (1980) 278 quotes the Cronaca dell’ Antonino Foscarno, vii, 85, which dates the settlement of the S. Margherita site to 1223-4, but this appears to involve confusion with the Bettiini (given the dates) and of site, since the Comunal Statute establishes a much later date.

8 Biscaro (1927) 112 ff; Dellwing (1970) 31; Moscato (1963) 311-12, drawing attention to the relationship with S. Francesco; it is historically misleading, however, to describe S. Margherita as ‘inspired by’ the latter in view of the Statute.

9 Federici (1803) vol. 1, 204; Walters (1976) 195-6, pl. 298; Muraro (1981) 386-7. Muraro notes the resemblance in the figures of the tomb by Zilberio di Marco Santo to Tomaso’s frescoes; for me they depend upon Tomaso and not vice versa.

10 Carlini was to be a distinguished sculptor, making the fine bust of Bailo in the Biblioteca Comunale, while Botter became a distinguished restorer (as did his son, Mario, and his grandson, Meni).

11 Bailo (1883).

12 Ibid., 45: Bailo refers to the Triptych at Kärlerstein, then exhibited in the Belvedere in Vienna, and to the signed frescoes in the Chapter-House of the S. Nicolò, together with the unsigned column figures and the Madonna of S. Maria Maggiore attributed to him. He refers to Federici (1803) and Mechi (1781). But see for a fuller account Olivato (1980).

recalled in 1979, the church survived to be bombed in 1944 and was subsequently rebuilt on the original lines and with original material by the Soprintendenza ai Monumenti. At the time the preservation of monuments was a controversial part of the post-war rebuilding, and the unlucky church was more or less abandoned before its conversion to a gymnasium.

Yet neither destruction appears to have affected the side walls of the chapels, which preserve valuable elements of Trecento frescoes in the north chapel, and a couple of figures and some border fragments in the Ursula Chapel. The Cappella Maggiore has lost its apse, but its consecration crosses survive. Fragments of the cloister, the entrance to the Chapter-House and the west door into the cloister survive, as well as the lower part of the south wall of the nave of the church. The south transept had a triple opening, still visible and perhaps closed before the nineteenth century. The north transept was single-spanned and terminated in an apsidal bay like the Cappella Maggiore: they are shown in Carlini’s drawing of the exterior from the south-east (liturgical north-east). The north chapel’s corners and side walls survive intact with the faded remains of frescoes of an Emilian character: students or lawyers seated on a bench, a series of figures with a donkey or horse, a tree and a lion (?), merchants and fragments of architecture, all of ca 1330–40. These formed a single band around the chapel and were later covered by another layer of which the south-west border remains, rising probably the full height of the chapel.

A series of chapels opened off the north (east) side of the nave which concluded in a Lombard gabled façade of three bays divided by pilasters, corbel-table and rose window, a little wider in the central bay than S. Francesco. The Franciscan church has a series of three round windows about its rose which inspired the Duomo of Spilimbergo (1284 onwards), and close-set lancets; S. Margherita is simpler and more predictable in its even spacing. It has lost its west door; the body of the church is a patchwork of thirteenth- and fourteenth-, nineteenth- and twentieth-century material: only the south wall up to the windows is undamaged, preserving a couple of frescoed heads of ca 1285–1300. The visual focus of the church remains, however, and the polygonal apse that distinguished this great mendicant church from its predecessors in Treviso can readily be visualised with the aid of Carlini’s drawings and plans (figs. 82a–b); before this apse, and to its right, the frescoes of Tomaso dominated the view down the length of the building. It is in this form and in this setting that we should endeavour to imagine them, not as the simply framed gallery pictures that they have become in the last hundred years.

14 Zuliani (1979) 157, exaggerating evidently the destruction.
15 Netto (1979c) 72, gives the date of the reconstruction (again exaggerating its scope) as 1955, presumably that of its completion. See Gibbs (1981) figs. 58–9.
16 Treviso, Biblioteca Comunale, Disegni, Cartella C: Chiese, n. 30. Carlini appears to have merged the inner and the outer chapels, allowing only a single bay instead of the twin windows divided by a buttress, undoubtedly the original disposition. Basso and Cason (1977) 76–1.
17 Ibid., nn. 25, 28, 29; Medoro Coghetto, Chiesa di S. Margherita, oil on canvas, Treviso, Ca’ Noal: Basso and Cason (1977) 74 and 68–73.
18 Walcher (1980b) 37–41, making comparisons also with S. Francesco, Udine; Furlan and Zanner (1985).
fig. viiiA  Reconstruction of the Chapel of St Ursula with Tomaso’s frescoes and the intended Bazzolletti tomb
fig. vmb  Key to the surviving fragments of Tomaso's frescoes used in the Reconstruction
The Chapel of St Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins

Bailo appears to have discovered the *Ursula Cycle* before the demolition of the roof of the chapel, since one of Carlini’s drawings (pl. 60a) shows the chapel still intact after the demolition of the roof in the transept. However, it is likely that the lunette with Gabriel was destroyed immediately after they revealed it: Bailo makes no mention of it, and another Carlini drawing (pl. 60b) shows the demolition at this point. 19

Bailo taught himself and his assistants the art of *stacco* from manuals, chiefly Forni’s, and from the advice of Professor Seitz. The frescoes were mounted on cloth, one sheet for each scene of five square metres apart from the *Massacre* which ran to eleven. 20 Their interest was mainly in the narratives, understandably for an age when content dominated the interpretation of art and the major art works were hung in galleries and salons. These hurried methods, together with the effects of time and white-washing led to the loss of all *al secco* work, a lot of fresco and much of the borders: as Bailo said, if he had not taken such risks the paintings would have been lost forever. Moreover, according to Bailo much of the surface was already lost, including the goldwork, though he admits to further deterioration as a result of the procedure used. The loss in the borders is apparent even in the dimensions he gives: the double scene was a square metre larger than any two of the other scenes. This is the width, half a metre, of the central border absent from the *Massacre*. Bailo was too good an archaeologist to neglect them completely, however: many fragments were detached and are stored in the vaults of the Ca’ Noal, while others are still *in situ* in S. Margherita itself. 21

Fortunately Bailo not only had the state of the church before demolition began recorded in a series of drawings now in the Biblioteca Communale, 22 but he also wrote a very vivid account of the salvaging of the frescoes. In addition to these records we have substantial areas of the cycle: the narratives now displayed in S. Caterina, the borders in store, and the chapel itself with fragments of the borders still in the south-east, south-west and north-west corners (fig. 83).

The chapel itself is to the south of the Cappella Maggiore, clearly visible from the nave and transept of the church, but separated from them by a projecting arch that still bears traces of three figures on its south pilaster (figs. 83a–d). The lower walls are covered with cloakroom fittings, hiding anything of the lower border of Tomaso’s frescoes that might remain, though their height above the floor can be deduced from the square elements of the borders preserved in the corners. Traces of the first and second layers of decoration mentioned by Matteo Sernagiotto and Bailo 23 are still visible also (fig. 83b; pls. 8–9). These traces establish that the lower parts of the chapel are still authentic despite evident repairs to the outside walls, and they provide a valuable control of, as well as information supplementary to, that given in the drawings.

19 See Cat. 12, drawings (b) and (d), and the descriptions given of all the others relating to the Ursula Chapel.
20 Bailo (1883) 24–30.
21 The fragments in S. Margherita establish without doubt that the series of border fragments listed in Cat. 12, come from the cycle, as can be confirmed from Bailo’s drawings. They appear to have been stored, in the second room of the ground floor at Ca’ Noal, as a group.
22 See Cat. 12.
The best known of these, a general view of the chapel (fig. 84), shows the narratives framed by a wide border that encloses them, five or six scenes together, with a separate lunette above, and separated from the edges of the wall. In fact this rather classical conception of placing is quite incorrect, since the previously mentioned drawing from the transept, as well as the fragments in situ, show that the fresco-cycle fitted tightly into the corners like any other Trecento frescoes. This major inaccuracy proves that the general view was drawn from memory, while the transept view has a brilliantly photographic quality that evidently came from working on the spot.\textsuperscript{24} The general view is slightly suspect also in the proportions it gives the chapel and its elements, though it remains the only source for any interpretation of the east wall, showing the Crucifixion above the windows, St Ursula and the Madonna and Child between them. Bailo tells us that the kneeling figures shown also were from an earlier scheme: they look like donors but have haloes.\textsuperscript{25} The lack of any framing on this wall is surprising, and the traces shown seem to be contradicted by the drawing of the respond (pl. 60b) as well as by the transept drawing. On the other hand, the remarkable lunette of the south wall, showing two angels rather than one, is presumably the kind of feature that would be well remembered. The transept drawing shows only the corner of the lunette, but Zuliani has shown that Gabriel's companion does occur very rarely in other depictions, notably Bernardo Daddi's.\textsuperscript{26}

The general view and two charming watercolours of the Cappella Maggiore\textsuperscript{27} show an arched doorway cut into the north wall of the chapel, which caused extensive damage all too visible in the penultimate scene of the Legend. The drawings also show the curtain motif that ran round the walls of the chapel, probably surviving under the panelling. These curtains probably date from the first of the three stages of decoration recorded by Bailo and may have been covered by a new dado, since Tomaso makes no attempt to align his frescoes with it.

The arrangement of the scenes of the Ursula Legend is quite clear from the drawings and from the inscriptions on their reverse. A wide border formed them into three rows of paired episodes within an essentially rectangular frame, indented at the level of the vault responds to allow for the capitals, and completed at the top by the figures of the Annunciation in the lunettes formed by the wall arches. Mary to the north and Gabriel with an angelic companion to the south. The lowest row of the south wall has a single composition, the Massacre, filling a double space and interrupting the structure of the

\textsuperscript{24} The first pictorial reconstruction of the cycle, by M. Lucco (1980) is valuable for presenting the colour scheme, but since most of the dimensions are derived from Bailo's account and from Carlini's posthumous sketch rather than from the chapel itself, a number of errors occur in the calculations, apart from the placing of the Virgin Annuntiata on the south wall in contradiction to Carlini's drawing. The omission of all border fragments accounts for the considerable discrepancy between the dimensions of the frescoes in Lucco's reconstruction and mine.

\textsuperscript{25} Bailo (1883) 37: 'due oranti laterali pittura della fine del sec. XII'.

\textsuperscript{26} Zuliani (1979) 95, 107 n. 47. Offer gives two examples of the representation of two angels, one kneeling, the other with arms folded: Jacopo del Casentino's panel in the Charles Loeser Collection (Corpus section III, vol. II, pt. II, 101–2, pl. xiv) and the panel by Bernardo Daddi or the 'close following of Daddi' formerly in the Capanna Collection and now Paris, Louvre, no. 1301 (Offer, Corpus, III, pt. iv, 109–10, pl. xiii). Lorenzo Lotto's celebrated Annunciation at Recanati, S. Maria sopra Mercanti, has a startled Virgin looking frontally from the picture, possibly inspired by Tomaso's, which he would have known from his stays in Treviso, and a figure of God the Father above Gabriel. This might be another explanation for Carlini's sketchy indication of this lunette.

\textsuperscript{27} Treviso, Biblioteca Comunale, Disegni, C43 and C49.
internal framing between the episodes. The rectangular border was composed of irregular quatrefoils alternating with squares. The quatrefoils are formed of a long label with gabled ends opening at the centre into two semicircular lobes: these contain foliage and are used mainly in pairs joined scissor-fashion by straight-sided pentagons. In the spaces around the label are green strips with red and white intarsia inlaid. The square divisions contain an inverse ‘explosion’ of the barbed quatrefoil in white against a ground of different shades of sinopia. A square falls just above the axis between the two lower rows of the Legend, while a pair of larger ‘label’ quatrefoils are used above it and a pair of rather smaller ones below it. These variations may be confirmed both from two drawings by different artists (pls. 61, 64b) and from the surviving fragments, the lower and smaller ones preserved extensively in situ.

A similar border separated the lunettes from the top row of the Legend, well above the springing of the vaults, while a different border arched above them. In this, larger swags of foliage were apparently set back behind a narrow outer border and circular panels containing figures. Of these St Michael survives, probably from a set of youthful angels. This border appears as two thirds of a tripartite design contrived to suggest that the inner part is hidden from view by the projecting lower edge.

There is no clear evidence for the lowest border of the Legend, though it might survive behind the modern panelling which rises just above its level. However, the fragment containing the Agnus Dei, foliage swags and shields set in barbed quatrefoils resembles closely the St Michael fragment from the lunette and may well represent half of one of these lower borders (pls. 65b, 66a).

The borders, because they were painted in fresco, are well preserved where they survive at all. A notional upper surface of white runs throughout the scheme, while a narrow ochre-coloured edging round the other elements sets them back slightly, the light from the chapel window creating a varied but consistent play of shade upon them, enabling one to be quite certain of the original location of most of the detached fragments. The foliage is essentially white throughout, set against red in the ‘label’ quatrefoils and dark sinopia in the upper and lowest (?) borders. The green around the Cosmatesque work gives a striking accent extensively repeated in the narratives, notably in the Baptism and the Dream, but the yellow ochre and sinopia red also play a large part in the scenes. In the top border light and dark inlays alternate around the green sex-foiled circle of the Archangel, and a series of ochre, brown and red strips emphasise the overhang of the arch above the Annunciation. The border of the Legend also overlapped the space in which Mary is set: Carlini’s drawing of the scene shows these strips were confined to its upper edge and were ‘covered’ by the border below.

Similar ochre and sinopia strips surrounded all the scenes of the Legend itself, on all four sides in the lowest ones, notionally at eye level (though actually almost two metres from the floor) but cut off along the lower edges of the upper scenes behind the internal divisions between them. The horizontals of this inner structure appear to have comprised a single white fillet continuing the outer border, but the vertical division was wider and had more strips of Cosmatesque inlay set into it, still visible

---

28 Cat. 12, fragment 8.
along the right edge of the *Dream* as well as in drawings by both Carlini and Botter (pls. 61, 74).  

The overall view of the decorative structure may be completed from the pilasters in the corners of the chapel and the drawing of the respond during demolition (pl. 60b). The outer border was lined with sinopia up to the corner pilasters, and this turned into red and white half-lozenges on the receding edges of the pilasters themselves, while they carried more inlaid strips on their forward surfaces. The curiously busy capitals and corbels were also painted a pale red, while the wall arches were of ochre. And curving dramatically overhead, the ribs began with a palmette that changed to ogee quatrefoils in white with green centres against a deep red ground. Of the vault cells we have no evidence at all: presumably Bailo never had the facilities to strip the whitewash from them.

So the bustling comings and goings of Ursula and her maidens were given a stage of many levels and angles, adding to them another layer of illusionism that at once enforced and competed with their own space. The judicious arrangement of the compositions that enhanced both their legibility and dramatic impact also prevented this interplay transgressing into conflict; on the contrary the almost outrageous nonchalance with which the door of Pope Cyriacus’ study fell open across the framing structure wittily bridged the conceptual gap.

Although decorative schemes of this type are commonplace in Central Italy, they are altogether exceptional in Treviso. Tomaso and his patrons must be considered to be making a bold break with local tradition in introducing a complete narrative cycle here. As we have seen, most of the surviving chapels of S. Francesco and S. Nicolò have a single horizontal composition on each side wall, rows of standing saints centred on the Madonna and Child or the Crucifixion. Variations are confined to pairs of similar images, single saints added to the original Madonna groups, or an isolated narrative of similar character.  

The obvious inspiration for Tomaso’s innovation was the pair of chapels painted by Vitale in Udine (figs, 16, 86), and Vitale’s influence on many features of Tomaso’s borders is also obvious: the balance of foliage, figures in set frames, geometric surrounds and Cosmatesque strips is similar, and the style of their execution is a natural development from Vitale’s. But the more classic proportions, the way in which the Cosmatesque strips between scenes widely used by Vitale and his Friulan followers are here inset into wider white panels, and above all the careful presentation of almost all mouldings as projecting strips seen and lit from a specific angle, show clear Tuscan influence. The St Nicholas chapel at Udine provides a clear comparison and contrast between Vitale and Tomaso working in similar spaces a few years apart, using similar foliage but narrower borders and a quite different treatment of the joins at capital level. Fragments by Vitale in S. Maria dei Servi, Bologna, show

---

29 Although the distinction between horizontal and the thicker vertical divisions is not made in the general view of the chapel, it is visible in the drawing from the transept.

30 See previous chapter: chapels with Tomaso’s and the Feltre Master’s *Madonnas* in S. Francesco as well as the Coletti Chapel; the northernmost and the two south chapels (Monigo and Campanile) of S. Nicolò, and the north chapel of S. Margherita (see above).

31 See the apse of Pomposa (Gibbs, 1981, pl. 31, 36, 86) and nave (ibid., pl. 41), S. Martino di Terzo, Valeriano. S. Francesco, Cividale, S. Giacomo, Venzone (Rizzi, 1975, pls. 394-405).
strips of foliage with figures set in projecting polylobed squares not dissimilar from Tomaso’s lunette treatment. But these resemblances only show Tomaso’s Vitaleseque education, not the range of forms and sophisticated execution that confronts us in the Ursula Chapel.

One important feature of Vitale’s frescoes on the west wall of Mezzaratta has already been observed in Tomaso’s: the wider border (with foliage panels) that separates the Annunciation from the scenes below. Tomaso’s lunette forms a frontal version of the same scene which he certainly knew well, since he adapted the figure of Joseph in the Nativity below it for his Baptism of the English Prince (fig. 87, pl. 71).32 Otherwise, the frescoes of Mezzaratta and of other Bolognese painters elsewhere, even the Tuscan-inspired ‘Dalmasio’, provide little comparative material. Even Tomaso’s own borders elsewhere have little in common with this one, apart from the foliage panels over the archway into the Chapter-House of S. Nicolò.

The presentation of a fresco-cycle within a series of borders that suggest a series of nearly flat strips of marble enriched with architectonic cornices goes back at least to Giotto’s Scrovegni Chapel at Padua, and as John White has shown,33 marks a break with the more dramatic architectural illusionism of Roman cycles such as the Life of St Francis at Assisi.34 The Scrovegni Chapel also picks out the Annunciation with a special foliate border, though a more modest one than Vitale’s or Tomaso’s. But above all it is the source for the squares of Tomaso’s framing with their quatrefoils composed of semicircles set inside four triangles. Giotto uses these between the Evangelists and Doctors in the corners of the Scrovegni Chapel (fig. 88a), and the triangles appear in the framing between the narratives of the side walls (fig. 88b). The pairs of dart-ended quatrefoils used by Tomaso may have been developed from the pairs of pentagons with triangular interstices that appear between the scenes of the bottom row of the Scrovegni (fig. 88c). These elements are peculiar to the Chapel among Giotto’s few surviving works. However, the proportions of the three-part division of the border implied around the St Michael fragment at Treviso are not dissimilar to the horizontal borders of the Magdalene Chapel in the Lower Church at Assisi, closely related to the Arena Chapel and perhaps reflecting other Paduan works by Giotto, and also containing angels in polyfoils.35 Even closer to Tomaso’s border are the frescoes by Giotto’s workshop and Pietro Lorenzetti in the transept, with angels in truncated circles and foliage panels (fig. 89). Assisi is a site that Tomaso almost certainly visited.36 Typically, Tomaso varies his model by apparently

32 For the high arc of the bishop’s pouring arm, which is quite distinct from that of Vitale’s Eustace Cycle at Pomposa (Gibbs, 1981, fig. 36). The angels on the left of the Mezzaratta Nativity reappear as pages in the Leave-taking (pl. 70).
33 White (1957) 57–8. The red strip which he notes as breaking the architectural illusion at the corners of the chapel has a direct analogy, like the other features noted below, in Tomaso’s chapel, in the thin red bands that separate his borders from the corner pilasters and the wall arches, and even reduce the reality of the former by continuing as unarticulated diaper over their sides.
34 For the Roman origins of the Upper Church decoration of S. Francesco, Assisi, see Belling (1977).
35 As Previtali has shown, there are clear signs of copying from the Arena Chapel frescoes, and the same assistants, if not much of Giotto’s own work, are also present at Assisi (Previtali, 1967, 87–105 and 298–314); Previtali and Gosebruch in Palombo (1969) pls. xvii–xviii. For Lorenzetti’s framing see Santi (1967) pl. 23; Belloli (1982).
36 See above, Chapter 5, nn. 69–70.
hiding the lower strip behind the parapet formed by the arch around the *Annunciation.*

Not only Giotto but his followers provided Tomaso with ideas: the greenish strips into which the Cosmati-work is set recall Taddeo Gaddi’s *Baroncelli Chapel,* while the spatial illusionism of the cupboard door opening across the frame has its counterpart in the painted aumbry of Gaddi’s chapel and the sedilia that Pietro Lorenzetti painted in the Lower Church at Assisi. But despite the strong influence of Tuscan ideals it must be emphasised that Tomaso remains a Northerner in his work, using illusionism more simply and for different effects. At no point does he use the elaborate profiles of Giotto and the Giotteschi that produce the illusion of actual architectural elements on the wall; his structures are clearly a painted architecture, not a built one. And on the other hand he is prepared to play games with the space created, with the cupboard door, that would have seemed undignified to a Tuscan mind. One is forcefully reminded even here of the breadth of Tomaso’s training and experience, and of the independence which accompanied his eclecticism. The overlapping of borders is a favourite trick of illuminators from the Romanesque to the Renaissance, and Bolognese artists were no exception: Tomaso knew them well and may have borrowed this idea from them (fig. 90).

These observations on the original appearance of the *Ursula Cycle* may be completed by considering the original impact of the whole complex on the spectator standing inside the chapel, a very different situation from the reader viewing frontally the reduced reproductions here (pls. 62–3). The chapel is just under 6 metres deep (giving the width of the narratives with borders and pilasters) and 4.40 metres wide. The height of the imposts is given by the Soprintendenza drawing as 8.50 metres and the vault as 12, which may be adjusted in the light of the reconstruction to 12.50 metres. The frescoes begin at 1.80 metres, considerably above head height for most people: it will be appreciated that the angle of vision is therefore very steep, particularly for the north wall, while the south wall is visible as one approaches from the transept. With this in mind, Tomaso kept the top scenes of the north wall very simple, and the dramatically frontal composition of the *Annunciation,* equally simple, even empty at the corners, undoubtedly reflects the same concern. The scenes on the south wall are

---

37 By aligning the similar strips of foliage in the *St Michael* fragment and that of the *Annunciazione* it is clear that there was no room for a lower strip to match the top one; moreover, the poytioi is centred on the two strips visible, not on the notionally central foliage itself. The central medallion may have been lozenge shaped rather than circular, as at Assisi.


40 Just as Tomaso gives a more classical flavour to the intarsia strip by allowing an ample border on either side, so the Tuscan Giotteschi, like their master, frame the kind of border used by Tomaso with two more narrow strips, all of them with raised edges and usually with a double or triple moulding rather than the simple square profile used here. There is another level again of classical aesthetics and illusionism between the Emilian and Tuscan schools, even where Tomaso is deliberately following Tuscan models. All the same, the difference between Tomaso and Vitale is substantial in this respect, and between the two of them and Vitale’s Friulian followers even greater.

41 See Chapter 3.

42 It is frequent in the works of the ‘Illuminatore’ and his predecessors for architecture to continue over the top of the frame. The holdest use of such a device is perhaps on folio 83v of Niccolò’s *early* *Kremsmünster Hours* where the Resurrected climbs a bridge from the lower border into the initial where they are received by the Virgin (fig. 90).

43 Alternatively, the imposts and the whole fresco cycle might be slightly lower on the wall. The round figure probably reflects Bali’s: the vaults having been rebuilt since 1883.
consistently frontal in arrangement, while the north wall makes full use of the diagonal viewpoint imposed on the spectator. The *Sailing to Cologne* is swept along by its diagonal composition, and the apparent imbalance of the two cities, Cologne and Rome, at this level becomes irrelevant when seen from the intended angle. The diagonal side of the church in the *Baptism* clashes with its front less than might be expected because it accommodates the natural viewpoint. A series of diagonal movements runs through both walls, and the three most complex scenes, and the most frontal compositions, fall at the bottom of the cycle where they can be properly seen. Ursula is martyred at the right end of the *Massacre*, almost at the entrance to the chapel.

Tomaso also takes care about the general organisation of his compositions: the pairing of the two kings, of the complex architectural structures opposite, the diagonal pairing of the two sailing compositions and the cityscapes, and the contrast between the palaces of the upper scenes and the cities of the lower ones. These are not accidents: comparison with the textual sources and other Ursula cycles shows that Tomaso made a very individual selection of episodes for visual and dramatic reasons. And, as one might expect in a work by a major artist of this date, the light falls from the east windows on the city towers and gates and the façades and interiors of palaces on either side of the chapel.\(^{44}\)

Tomaso seems also to have divided the wall space according to the same geometric criteria that have recently been traced in panel-painting from Cimabue to Simone Martini.\(^{45}\) The base of his frescoes was governed by the previous *Navicella* and the top by the vault, but the rectangle within which the Legend is painted forms very nearly a rectangle of $1: \sqrt{2}$ (the diagonal of a square with the width of the wall as its base), falling short only through human error or perhaps a correction to allow the lunette figures more space. The irregularity is due to the top scenes which are slightly short of a square (and, of course, indented for the vault springers). The diagonal of the squares of the other narratives gives the square containing the scene plus the width of the border on two sides, and is itself half the width of the wall and twice the side of a square within which the figure group contained by Pope Cyriacus in Scenes vi and ix is inscribed. Similar squares divide the *Massacre*. The heads in these scenes and that of the angel in Scene v are governed by this square; those in the boat are at half the height of the scene, and those in the top row appear to be governed by the golden section. All these ratios are hypothetical, given the fragmentary and irregular nature of the surviving material and the scope for error both in execution and measurement on such a scale, though the ratio of scene to border is very accurate. And the sense of harmony brought by the use of Giotto’s isocephaly accords well with such a strong geometrical emphasis to the overall structure: the ratio of Giotto’s own borders to the narratives appears to be also governed by the diagonals of the latter in the Arena Chapel.

\(^{44}\) The consistent lighting of all architectural forms, including the fonts and the papal book-cupboard as well as the city walls, from the position of the windows provides further and conclusive evidence for placing the *Annunziata* on the north wall and for the location of several of the displaced border fragments.  
\(^{45}\) For the use of $1: \sqrt{2}$ proportions in architecture see P. Kidson (1956) and in painting White (1979) and Brink (1983).
The historical background to the Legend

So far we have been concerned with the physical appearance of the church and the chapel of the Ursula Legend; it is time to consider the origins of the frescoes and what they have to say to their audience, and, in so far as is possible at such a distance, what they might have said to their original audience. Thanks to the researches of Gargan we now have a fairly comprehensive view of the proto-humanist climate in Treviso in which they were created, and of the activities of the house of the Eremitani itself. Around 1320 it was promoted to a studium generale of the Order, a development which indicates that already it was a notable centre of teaching and undoubtedly became more so. In 1315 there was a frater Agostino de Alemania among the brethren, suggesting a degree of mobility among its members. The lectores in the studium included men from Padua, Verona, Venice, Trento, Mantua, Cremona and Rome, of whom at least one, Bonsembiante Badoer, was to become a Master of Theology at Paris, a development encouraged by the Prior-General of the Order, Thomas of Strasbourg (1345-56), who in 1355 reduced the studia generalia to three alone, Paris, Oxford and Cambridge. Whether Tomaso’s work dates from 1355 or 1365, the house was full of eager students and a few distinguished teachers, one or two of whom certainly knew the north of Europe. In 1362 the library of the convent had 65 volumes, including two copies of the Legenda Aurea (Legende Sanctorum) of Jacopo de Voragine, and in 1374 it became the major beneficiary of the legacy of Oliviero Forzetta’s library, receiving a further 82 volumes and 24 unbound fragments, giving an altogether more classical cast to the collection.

Another aspect of recent research by Muraro and Puppi derives from Federici’s major contribution to ecclesiastical history, L’Istoria de’ Cavalieri Gaudenti, the extraordinarily secular semi-military order pilloried by Dante. Among the documents that Federici publishes are two wills drawn up by Alberto Bazzoletti, Prior of the Order in Treviso, and his son, Diomede, nicknamed Pupino, the latter presumably on his admission to the Order or during a passing sickness. In 1307 Alberto left to his wife, Daria, all his houses and gardens between S. Margherita and S. Paolo; in other words he was a neighbour of the convent, and it is therefore understandable that in 1337 his son Pupino chose to be buried ‘apud S. Margaritam Ord. Haeremita. S. Augustini in Capella undecim mille Virginum’. Pupino was the child of Alberto’s second marriage, after the death of Daria, by Maddalena Querini: we know something of his marriage since the commune of Treviso sought, unsuccessfully, to recover her dowry from

46 Recorded in a list of the gifts for clothing by the Commune to the mendicants of Treviso: Marchesan (1923) vol. ii, 403.
47 Gwynn (1940) 29-33; Gargan (1978) and (1979) 12-14.
48 The inventories of S. Margherita’s library and of Oliviero Forzetta’s bequest are published by Gargan (1978) 120-88; Gargan gives the fullest study of Forzetta’s collections to date.
49 Muraro (1980) 353-5; Muraro (1981) 384-7; Puppi (1980) 315-8. The Order is best known for Dante’s bitter attack on the two Bolognese brethren, Catalano dei Malavolti and Loderingo degli Andalò, who held the joint pedestalship of Florence in 1266 (Inferno, canto xxi, ll. 82-109). Federici’s major study (1977) may be usefully supplemented with Ranzano (1965), which gives additional bibliography.

The Order was founded at Bologna, another general connection in the cultural, commercial and artistic ties between Emilia and the Marca Trevigiana.
Venice, which had confiscated all the Querini possessions for treason. Pupino’s election of burial in his parish church confirms that a chapel dedicated to Ursula and her companions already existed in 1337, and, since he wished to have a fully arcaded tomb in the chapel, his evident interest in it must make him a likely candidate for the patronage of the frescoes. His death did not occur till 1366, so that his active participation in the decoration of the chapel in which he planned to be buried is almost certain, while it is inconceivable that Tomaso’s frescoes could be anywhere other than in the chapel dedicated to the saint. Moreover, Pupino himself had a son, Paolo, who is not known to have joined the Order himself: if the figure kneeling before St Ursula to her right is a Cavaliere rather than the Prior of the Eremitani (pl. 82b), the youthful figure in secular dress would be the right age and condition for Paolo Bazzoletti. The habit of the Eremitani was essentially black, as traditional for the Augustinian rule, though in the convent a white undergarment, the tunic, was worn. The cleric here recalls the many variations on white and grey or black found in the various statutes of the Cavaliere Gaudenti that Federici studied. Closest is the 1267 rule for knights, who wear their clothes all of white (hood, tunic, gloves) except for the mantle of altopassino, a brown or black worn by the knights of Altopascio, near Lucca. The resemblance to the Dominican habit noted by Benvenuto da Imola is evident, and in Treviso it was particularly appropriate, since the Cavaliere met in the Chapter-House of S. Nicolò, apparently also dedicated as a chapel of St James.

Pupino Bazzoletti’s claim to the patronage of Tomaso’s frescoes is strengthened by another issue first raised by Puppi: the position of his tomb. No record of the tomb has ever been published, but it is unlikely that Bazzoletti failed to realise his wishes in the remaining twenty-nine years of his life. Tomaso’s frescoes, painted in the second half of this period, must have taken account of the extant or projected tomb. Puppi considers that this and other monuments occupied the gap visible between the Dugento curtains and Tomaso’s Legend in Carlini’s sketch, but there is no certainty that the two were ever visible together. More seriously, it is impossible that there were ever any tombs at this level, let alone Bazzoletti’s ‘monumentum cum archis in loco eminenti’: Italian tombs of the period are either set into the pavement or above eye level, according to the humility or pride (or wealth) of the deceased, and the Cavaliere Gaudenti were under no vows of humility (and even less acquainted with Sister Poverty). Any wall tombs on the side walls would have been placed exactly

50 Federici (1787) vol. II, documents CX (p. 188); CXLV (p. 188)
51 More exactly, to the ‘eleven thousand virgins’ which is the same title as that used for the Ursula Legend by Jacobus de Voragine. Zuliani (1979, 95) associates the decoration with a rededication of the chapel after the acquisition of the relic mentioned in the 1378 inventory, but this now seems chronologically impossible.
52 Zuliani (ibid.) describes the figures as ‘il priore agostiniano e il laico’, while Puppi (1980, 318) proposes Diomede Bazzoletti and his wife. But the younger figure is flat-chested and wears the same headdress as the squire of the first scene.
53 Federici (1787) i, 94-5. The white vestments of the Augustinian hermits were for indoor use and were covered by a black habit on public and liturgical occasions; see Roth (1966) 139, n. 249, and Tuker and Malletson (1900) ii, 215-6.
54 ‘magnam similitudinem cum habitu Prædictorum’: Federici (1787) vii, 98. In fact the white hood is distinctive.
57 ‘che vi dovessero esser collocate arche funerarie, è del tutto evidente e direi . . . anzi obbligatorio’.
58 For the attitude to floor monuments in mendicant churches see Gardner (1973) 435.
where Tomaso’s frescoes begin: examples can be found *in situ* in almost any medieval church of the Veneto. Only one possible site can be found for the tomb, the suggestive space below the frescoes of Ursula in Triumph and the Madonna and Child in Carlini’s sketch. The east wall is certainly *locus eminenter!* Indeed it is so conspicuous as to be almost blasphemous, and one would hesitate to suggest it, were there not a highly relevant precedent. For in the Arena Chapel, which, as we have seen, provided many features of the chapel’s decorative scheme, we find Enrico Scrovegni’s effigy reposing in a curtained tomb above the altar, the cross of the Cavaliere at its centre (the only reference on Scrovegni’s part to the contribution of the Order) (fig. 91). Although Robin Simon has argued that the tomb probably dates from the 1360s, he was able to establish that some form of tomb was intended for his location before Scrovegni’s exile in 1320. The situation ranks Scrovegni with Pope Boniface VIII, Cardinal Giangaeiano Orsini and St Isidore, to take a more local monument of the type, in his chapel in S. Marco. The irony of a chapel of the Eremitani church in Treviso copying the chapel that had caused the Paduan brothers of the Order such aggravation may have been lost on them, but they can have had little confidence in their bargaining power if they allowed such an ostentatious project to be built. Of course, it is hypothetical that the tomb was actually built, but we can say with confidence that Bazzolletti’s claim on the only available site rules out the possibility that any other potential donor of the frescoes could have had the type of tomb in this chapel that he would have felt appropriate.

The present east wall has windows extending down to within two metres of the floor of the chapel, and the edges of the wall preserve plaster continuous with the Ursula walls. The bases of the windows appear to be rebuilt with roughly stepped courses rather than sills, and levelled with those of the other chapels on a sloping site: their present form is therefore an unreliable guide to their original appearance, and they could, in any case, have been blocked up for the erection of the tomb if it was built.

If the role of the Bazzolletti is accepted, or at least the identification of the donors’ costumes, the association with the Cavaliere Gaudenti is of considerable importance for the understanding of the character of the frescoes, as Muraro has emphasised.

59 e.g. the Dandolo tomb in the Baptistery of S. Marco and the Merisini tomb in the Cappella Maggiore of SS. Giovanni e Paolo in Venice, the Lupi tombs in the S. Felice Chapel of the Santo in Padua: see Wolters (1976) passim.

60 Wolters (1976) cat. 29, pp. 161–2, fgs. 92–4. See also Rough (1989) 25. The ‘monk’ of the Donation of the Arena Chapel is a priest in a surplice, whose habit is hidden by it and therefore not identifiable, though he is probably an Augustinian canon.

61 The oculus on the east wall was blocked and overpainted before the erection of the present tomb: contribution to the 1984 Conference of the Association of Art Historians, *Bulletin*, November 1984.


63 For the objections of the Paduan Eremitani to the Arena Chapel see the first document in Frevitali (1967) 148.

64 Muraro (1981). I differ from Muraro in my interpretation of what this signifies for the character of the frescoes. I agree that Zuliani’s characterisation of them as *borgease* is not appropriate to their subject-matter and content, but then Zuliani is discussing their spirit of execution, generally considered to be a phenomenon associated with the rise of the mercantile classes. The noblemen of Treviso had no occasion to feel themselves part of the feudal structure of Europe, and as long as they included men like Scrovegni they were inseparable from the *borgese*. The courtly world of Ursula is then an ideal, a dream-world, to the Trevisan Cavaliere, not the expression of an aristocratic milieu of their own. Ursula also embodies the marital celibacy of the Cavaliere’s views considered by Rough (1989) to underlie the Arena programme.
The proper title of the Order was the Militia Mariae Virginis Gloriosae, and their prime aim was to make peace between the warring factions of the Italian towns. Their qualifications for entry were prudence, nobility of class, wealth, virtue, reputation, morality and age, according to the 1314 Constitution, qualities appropriate for calming the political ambitions of their own class. But if their popular nickname (the ‘Laughing Cavaliers’) was actually derived from their worship of the Virgin Mary, it was very early reinterpreted as a ribald comment on the prosperity which the Order’s members enjoyed, and continued to enjoy after entry in contrast to most men in holy orders. And whatever the rights and wrongs of Scrovegni’s dispute with the Order, the existence of the dispute and even the membership of a man like Scrovegni whom the 1314 specifications might have been designed to exclude suggest a developing crisis in the Order. Such spiritual crises are frequently accompanied by the commissioning of major works of art. The Cavaleri belong to that class of merchant princes whose dream of an ideal chivalry inspired by the courts of the Emperor, the kings of France and England (from Arthur onwards!) form an important part of public entertainment in the Trecento commune. In this context the landed or military aristocracy who formed the basis of the mercantile class of the Veneto and the commercial classes buying their way into the landed class in Tuscany are virtually indistinguishable, but very different from the feudal aristocracy of the north that they admired. A major distinction is their aversion to personal ostentation, variously expressed in the communal sumptuary laws combining social stability with fiscal prudence, the sober garments of the Venetian Senate and the self-imposed austerity of the white and grey habits of the Cavaleri, reflecting, as little else in their rule did, the public self-denial of men who could afford and were entitled to ignore many of the civic restraints of costume. It is striking that the habit permitted woollen garments but not vair, and even less, of course, the luxurious white miniver sported so abundantly by St Ursula.
The world of the Ursula Cycle, then, is one which had a deep and serious fascination for the class of men from whom its patrons came, and was more immediately familiar to them as travelling merchants and scholars, diplomats by vocation, than to the average Italian of the period. But on 22 January 1355 even the best-travelled merchants of the city must have been impressed by the spectacle of Anna of Šwidnica, Empress of Charles IV, encamped before Treviso with twenty ladies of the nobility and six hundred knights in attendance, and those unfamiliar with the courts of Northern Europe must have been overwhelmed by it. The entourage probably included at least some current French fashions in view of Charles’ strong French associations, as well as a range of German and Slavonic styles: Charles’ first wife was the French Blanche of Valois, his second the German Anne of Palatinate; the third, Anna of Šwidnica, was Polish, and there may have been servants of all three. The house of Luxembourg was French in allegiance but held Brabant, Silesia, Bohemia and Moravia, while Charles himself acquired Brandenburg and various Italian towns. All these territories apart from Brandenburg were probably represented among his courtiers in 1355. The nature of this party, led by a woman and with a knightly escort, evokes so strongly that of the Ursula story, particularly the episodes chosen by Tomaso or his patron for the middle of the Cycle, that on one level we should see the Ursula Legend as a commemoration of the occasion.

But the following year Treviso had a much more serious visitation from a Central European monarch. Louis the Great of Hungary, Charles IV’s son-in-law, declared war on Venice and used the extended siege of Treviso to force the Republic to surrender its Dalmatian territories. By encircling the city he threatened to cut Venice off from its land routes to the north of Europe, depriving her of markets and resources of food, timber and power, and exposing her fleets to the hostile rivalry of Genoa. To effect this Louis brought a huge army of his feudatories from North, Central and Eastern Europe – Matteo Villani says that there were 40,000 Hungarians and Slavs – and picked off as many of the Adriatic cities as possible until Venice came to terms. Although his army crumbled with the passage of time until a truce was called between November 1356 and April 1357, the city was effectively besieged again from April 1357 to February 1358. The population of Treviso became desperate, making disastrous sorties for food and fleeing in considerable numbers down-river to Venice, the bishop himself among them. The Doge-elect, Giovanni Dolfin, had had to make a similar escape to take up his office in August 1357. Venice finally surrendered the eastern provinces to recover Treviso in February 1358. In these circumstances there can have been little work for an artist like Tomaso, at least in the later stages of the siege, and he probably left in 1357 or ‘58: by 17 July 1358 he had returned to Modena, and it is in

74 The Bolognese plutocracy included the most successful lawyers and judges: Catalano dei Malavolti and Loderrigo degli Andalo were experienced podestás even before 1266; Jacopo della Luna was not only the commentator of Dante and critic of the Cavalleri but the son of a member of the Order (Roverini in Roverini, 1965, 27; Sartori, ibid., 53-63).
75 See Stejskal (1978) 25-37, 80; Gross (1965) 159-84; Jarrett (1935) passim; Seibt (1978) figs. 10-14.
76 Puppi (1980): 317-8; Biscari (1934) 140, first published the reference to the visit recalled by the notary Ottone da Castagnole. See also Zalloni (1979) 107.
77 Matteo Villani, Croniche, I, cap. vi. Some writers imply an earlier date, 1335, for its origins (Betto, 1980, 94).
78 Hazlitt (1915) 1, 644-55.
Modena that he continues to be resident according to all the subsequent documents so far discovered.

As Puppi has emphasised, Tomasio's frescoes form part of an extensive devotion to St Ursula in the region, due probably to the importation of relics from Cologne via Venice or the Alpine routes, and clearly at a date before 1337. S. Margherita boasted two heads of the martyred virgins in the 1378 inventory of its possessions, hardly the cause in itself, however, for such a lavish redecoration of the chapel in which they had long been housed. Nor is the subject of any particular relevance to either the Order to which the church belonged or that to which its presumed patron did. And it is evident that before Tomasio's Legend the role of Ursula and her virgins in the chapel decoration cannot have been conspicuous.

Puppi, drawing on the Bibliotheca Sanctorum, gives five conditions for which the devotion to Ursula is prescribed: the conclusion of bitter battles, sufferings induced by fire, a painless death, the protection of marriage (!) and the protection of the cloth trade. The last of these is relevant for the fulling mills of Treviso. But it is clearly the first of these that is here invoked: for a town besieged by an army of quite unfamiliar size and savagery, many of its members pagans and untouched by urban civilisation, and sharing a common name with the most notorious barbarians of history, the memory of Ursula's own legend would be only too vivid. With the Venetian militia quite ineffective against them, the Trevisans must have prayed often for a miraculous deliverance like that of Cologne besieged and suddenly abandoned by the Huns after the massacre and sacrifice of Ursula and her companions. Although this outcome is ignored by the Legenda Aurea, it is a consistent feature of the German legends used by Jacobus.

The similarity of name between the Huns who killed Ursula and the Hungarians who menaced Treviso is likely to have strengthened the associations of the last scene, many of whose figures have the exotic garments that Louis' easternmost troops wore, and particularly the tall pointed hats that Stella Newton has studied in Hungarian sources (fig. ix). And both the Huns and the Hungarians, probably of separate peoples kept their religion and customs: Filippo, Bishop of Fermo, spent three unsuccessful years as papal legate to them (1278-81), and Nicolo Boccasini's legation of 1301-3 was concerned not only with the establishing of Carobert of Anjou on the throne of Hungary but also to combat paganism (Mann, 1952, xvii, 432-3). See Hóman (1938) 36-44, 263-79. See also Newton (1980a). Villani shows that the composition of the Hungarian peoples and their armed forces had not changed by 1356: 'gente barbaro non sanno osservare la disciplina militare ...' (Cronica, VI, cap. llv-lv).

83 Newton (1980a). László IV wore the tall pointed cap, the soutane and sandals, of the Cumans (Dercsényi, 1969, 141, pl. 129). The Magyar-Anjou Legendary by a Bolognese or Hungarian workshop (Vatican lat. 8541 and dispersed pages in other collections) shows St Louis of Hungary (László I) fighting Tartars in gabled hats with pointed and feathered peaks and a Cuman with no hat but very long hair: Villani noted that the Hungarians rode without helmets for greater freedom in their archery (fig. ix). See Levárty (1975) pls. 135-6; the tall hats with
origins, had sacked Treviso in the past.\textsuperscript{84} Even if the cycle had been completed in 1355 and if the distinction between Huns and Hungarians was known, the painting of foreign troops, remembered perhaps from Louis’ visit to Modena and Bologna on the way to avenge his brother, Andrea of Naples, in 1347, would have acquired especial poignancy and relevance both to the Legend and to the predicament of Treviso. Hungarian and German mercenaries became prominent in Italy after that 1347 expedition, the Hungarians introducing a new form of fighting as light cavalry armed with bows and throwing spears.\textsuperscript{85} Moreover, medieval etymology made no distinction at all between the Hungarians and the Huns, and the connection is still not entirely discredited.\textsuperscript{86}

The war in the Veneto may have overtaken the cycle, for the courtly scenes appear at the top and the Massacre at the bottom, i.e., at the end of the painting of the frescoes. But the most probable occasion for the commission is the strangely formal truce of the winter of 1356–7, so typical of the contrasts of medieval politics between butchery and the strict etiquette of Arthurian Romance.\textsuperscript{87} But by the time that Tomaso came to paint the Massacre itself any trace of chivalry had vanished from his approach. The depiction of appropriate national dress is no mere literary allusion but a personal testimonial to the city’s experience of a new kind of warfare that was certainly not to be the last, even for Treviso. Its later exponents were English, and since Tomaso shows them wearing some of the same barbarian hats he may be recalling their exploits at Crécy and elsewhere in France, with which the imperial courtiers in Treviso the year before would have been all too familiar.\textsuperscript{88}

Tomaso is, on the whole, a rather controlled, objective artist in his approach to his material, certainly if one compares his art to the Bolognese from which it springs. It is therefore very striking that he should have given a double space to the Massacre, breaking the structure of his framing and perhaps even sacricing to it the posthumous episode normal in Ursula cycles, and it is even more striking that he should paint in it the most savagely immediate battle scene of the century, perhaps of any century, the result of his own all too vivid observations, the fears of his patrons in

\textsuperscript{84} Matteo Villani (Chronica); Hazlitt (1915) i, 644–55. For the conduct of war see M. Prestwich, The Three Edwards (London, Methuen, 1980) 172–213, particularly 203–12 (‘War, profits and chivalry’), and Hewitt (1966) 93–139, as well as Mallet (1974).

\textsuperscript{85} Charles’ father was killed at Crécy in 1346 where ‘the flower of European chivalry’ was cut to pieces by the English archers and footmen (the Welsh and Comish were blamed by Froissart for the wholesale massacre without ransom of the fallen), and by 1356 the extension of Hungarian barbarian costume to the English may well have seemed justified by the havoc that the same men were wreaking throughout France as a result of the official warfare between the two countries. Italy, already suffering the results of unemployment among Louis’ Hungarian and German forces of 1347–8, was soon to suffer the attentions of English and Becon mercenaries as well (Mallet, 1974, passim). For the impact of warfare on towns see Hewitt (1966) 118–23.
Hungarian and Cuman hats and costumes

fig. IX Hungarian Illuminated Chronicle, Budapest OSZK lat. 404
commissioning the work, and his own. And no one could have looked at Tomaso’s frescoes in the years following 1358 without seeing it in the light of recent events:

O tu, qui servas armis ista moenia,
Noli dormire, moneo, sed vigila.
Dum Hector vigil extitit in Troia,
Non eam cepit fraudulenta Graecia.
Prima quiete dormiente Troia
Laxavit Sinon fallax claustra perfida . . .

Tu murus tuis sis inexpugnabilis,
Sis inimicis hostis tu terribilis.
Te vigilante nulla nocet forta,
Qui cuncta fugas procul arma bellica.
Tu cinge nostra haec, Christe, munima,
Defendens ea tua fortis lancea.

Sancta Maria, mater Christi splendidia,
Haec cum Johanne theotocos impetra.
Quorum hic sancta venerantur pignora
Et quibus isia sunt sacrata limina.
Quo duce victrix est in bello dextera
Et sine ipso nihil valent jacula . . .

Nunc rogamus, licet servi pessimi,
ab Ungarorum nos defendas iaculis . . .

Fortis juventus, virtus audax bellica,
Vestra per muros audiantur carmina.
Et sit in armis alterna vigilia.
Ne fraus hostilis haec invadat moenia.
Resultet echo: ‘comes, eja, vigila,’
Per muros, ‘aja’ dicat echo ‘vigila’.89

(‘O you who take up arms to guard these walls, I warn you not to sleep but keep your vigil. While Hector kept watch over Troy, deceitful Greece did not take her, but as soon as Troy fell asleep the treacherous Sinon released the deceiving enclosure . . . Be an impregnable wall to your people, a terrible foe to your enemies. If you watch over us, who can put all armies to flight, no force can harm us. Enfold these walls of ours, O Lord, and defend them with your mighty spear. Saintly Mary, radiant mother of Christ, and John, beloved of God, plead for us. Your relics are venerated here and our sanctuaries dedicated to you. If he leads us we will prevail in battle; without him our spears are of no avail . . . Now we, the worst of servants, beg you to defend us from the spears of the Hungarians. Strong youth, bold courage, let your songs be heard along the walls. And be vigilant on your watches, lest hostile fraud should invade the ramparts. Let echo ring out along the walls, “Hey, comrades, watch!” and echo answer “Comrades, watch!”’)

89 The Modenese watchmen’s hymn of the ninth-century Hungarian invasions (see Chapter 2). The confident use of classical references is striking.
Tomaso brought with him from Modena a timeless prayer for such perils, and to Modena he took the reality of those dark-age terrors back.

To summarise, the small amount of documentation available suggests that the frescoes were commissioned by Diomede (Pupino) Bazzoletti to enhance the chapel in which he was to be buried, and which his family, parishioners of S. Margherita and members of the Cavalieri Gaudenti who were a major force in the prosperous city of Treviso, had possibly taken over. But the evidence of two such schemes within a few years and the distinctive character of the final programme suggests the intervention of more sudden concerns. Historical events in Treviso, the visit of the Empress in 1355 and the Hungarian siege of 1356–8 appear to be not only reflected in the frescoes but to have transformed their character and probably to have provoked their creation. A dating of 1355–7 meets all the criteria of style, costume history\(^{90}\) and historical circumstances. The many similarities between individual figures in the S. Nicolò Chapter-House and the Ursula Cycle strengthen the view that most of Tomaso's work in Treviso was completed within a single, fairly short stretch of time.

The Annunciation

We have been able to reconstruct most of the side walls of the Ursula Chapel as a complex of three rows of narrations, essentially in pairs of square compositions, framed on three or four sides by a wide border of squares and lobed figures. A pair of lunettes surmounted the whole, separately framed, perhaps also following Giotto's separation of the Legend of Mary from the Life of Christ below it in the Arena Chapel, though analogies can also be made with the Arena Chapel east wall. The framing can be seen as an Emilian version of the Arena Chapel, including the red and ochre lining of the scenes and the narrower borders between the scenes, but one can also compare the tight rectangular compositions with the illuminated frontispieces of 'the Illustrator's' Liber Sextus and Clementines (fig. 85) in Padua,\(^{91}\) the panels of the early Riminese and Bolognese schools of the Trecento.\(^{92}\)

The Legend of St Ursula was given a universal significance by the decoration of the east wall: Christ appeared as the first martyr of his church in the lost Crucifixion

\(^{90}\) The manner in which surcoats tighten over the belly is characteristic of the 1350s, while already in the Karlstejn Triptych Tomaso shows the subsequent fashion of padding the breast, which becomes normal ca 1360 (Newton, 1980b). I am grateful to Stella Newton for confirming my dating of the Ursula Cycle, generally dated to the 1360s before the 1979 exhibition and Convegno (Zallani and Gibbs).

\(^{91}\) (Biblioteca Capitolare A 24-5). The Liber Sextus of Bontacue VIII and the Clementines are the third and fourth volumes of the Canon Law, sequels to the Decretum Gratiani and the Decretales of Pope Gregory IX, from which they should be distinguished (Gibbs, 1984b). The Illustrator's volumes are interesting for the striking contrast in the layout of two similar frontispieces, one evenly framed throughout, the other hardly framed at all but internally divided by a wide border with a study of kingship within.

This manuscript, illuminated with the other for a canon of Esztergom, is also interesting for its compositional similarities to Tomaso's frescoes: the Dream of Duke Géza, the Throne of Pope Sylvester II, and the two baptismal scenes. They were presumably part of a complete set and by coincidence, or through interruption of their conveyance, returned to Padua; they represent the positive side of Italy's relations with Hungary. See Arcangeli (1978) 90-1, and Gibbs (1984b) for further bibliography.

\(^{92}\) For Riminese painting, particularly Giovanni da Rimini's panel in the Vatican, see Volpe (1965) 16, 71, fig. 27; Volpe (1966) pl. 1. For Bologna, particularly the panels attributed to 'Jacopino' by Longhi and Arcangeli (Bologna, Pinacoteca inv. 249-50), see Arcangeli (1978) tav. ix-xi. These have a broad painted border but only stamped stars between 'tracelines' to separate the scenes.
(fig. 84) and Mary as the supreme Virgin and spiritual martyr. In his small triptychs in Modena and Bologna (incomplete) Tomaso had already associated the Annunciation (Bologna) and the Madonna and Child (in both) with virgin martyrs, and this aspect of the composition may be his own contribution. Virgin martyrs beautifully dressed are remarkably common in Tomaso's work, \(^93\) while his signatures stress his powerful presence within the programme as well as the form of his creations. \(^94\)

The Annunciation that crowns the Legend binds the spectator into a stunningly dramatic spatial conception in which the Virgin and Gabriel both confront you, the action running between the two of them like an electric charge (pls. 64, 67). This is an unusual, if logical, use of the division of the subject between two facing rather than parallel planes: another artist might have endeavoured to introduce the protagonists on the east wall. The way in which Giotto separates the figures on the triumphal arch of the Arena Chapel may have suggested this arrangement, which is spatially very similar, though very different in its effect on the viewer. But Tomaso reverses the normal relationship by placing Mary to the viewer's left: this suggests the Coronation of the Virgin to which Mary's crossed hands would be as appropriate as to the Annunciation. Although the setting and Carlini's drawing of the angels opposite confirm the accepted interpretation, the attendant angel kneeling behind Gabriel is also most unusual, if helping to fill the empty corners of the lunette. There are three Florentine works that may be compared to it: Annunciations by Daddi and Jacopo del Casentino, and the combination of the Annunciation and Hope on Orcagna's (later) tabernacle for Daddi's Madonna in Orsanmichele (fig. 92a), adding another aspect to the wide range of artistic sources that Tomaso would appear to have used. The last of these is an extended meditation on Mary's life culminating in her Triumph above these figures, and we may be expected to read into our picture of the humble handmaiden of the Lord the same promise of final glory, matching that of Ursula's group of princesses on the east wall. A messenger to a future queen might well have a retainer of his own.

The Virgin is one of Tomaso's many studies of fourteenth-century literacy, though her room is altogether more domestic than that of St Jerome in S. Nicolo. Her evident dedication to reading would have appealed to the scholars of the studium of S. Margherita. The Virgin of the Annunciation is generally a mirror image of the reader of the 'Little Office of Our Lady' (the Book of Hours), and it is normal for both the owner of a book of Hours and Mary on the Annunciation page to be shown in the act of reading. \(^95\) But here Mary is engaged in the very different kind of reading that only a scholar would undertake: she has two books open for comparison on the two-tiered ledges of a desk, and a shelf-full of books below (pl. 66b). She has become the patron of the scholars of S. Nicolo and their fellows. Her books record (or foretell) the drama in which Mary is involved and its sequel, (Luke 1, 38, 46–8) the Annunciation and Visitation.

\(^93\) Of three frescoes of Madonnas flanked by saints in S. Francesco only Tomaso's introduces a virgin; the similar pair near the Sacristy of S. Nicolo do not (cf. Chapter 5).

\(^94\) See Gibbs (1982c). The pulpets of the Pisani family in Tuscany provide a clear example of artistic success generating and influencing the nature of patronage and its content as well as its artistic form.

ecce ancilla domini, fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum . . .

Magnificat anima mea dominum, et exultavit spiritus meus in deo salutari meo.
Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae: ecce enim ex hoc beatam (dicent omnes generationes).

Mary’s desk is a compact structure with sides enriched like the church itself with Lombard banding. This may be assistant’s work in its final form: a preparatory series of regular semicircles between ruled lines are still visible, but the final drawing which added an under-side to the arches got out of step, leaving a half-arch on the right. Tomaso could have seen this effect, however, looking up at the façade of Modena Cathedral from his uncle’s shop (fig. 92b, pl. 66b). There is also a balcony with a window-box and a vase-shaped plant pot, resting on larger arches like a résumé of Treviso’s street arcades, all modelled powerfully in light and shade (unlike the desk).

In the vase and the window-box Mary is growing marjoram (Maiorana), basil (Ozimum) and chives, a still-life feature like those of the Dominican cells of S. Nicolò, but to a Bolognese artist conveying deeper meanings of fertility and fragrance, as we shall see. The basil is similar to the marjoram but straighter and with a much larger leaf, as in nature. Tomaso’s picture of marjoram growing in a ventilated pot with shoots curling out of the holes appears to be the earliest surviving example of a revolution in the depiction of botanical specimens, no longer flattened on the page but growing in a realistic context. His marjoram can be identified from an almost identical specimen in the Historia Plantarum (Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense, MS 459, fol. clvii/154r.), completed in a Lombard workshop at the end of the fourteenth century, significantly for Wenceslas IV of Bohemia (fig. 93a). This is essentially a copy of the medical text Tractatus de herbis, and the majority of its illustrations show schematic or pressed plants in the traditional manner of botanical manuscripts still normal in the Trecento.

But Marjoram is shown growing on a trellis in a vase and Basil in a rectangular tub against an elementary ground plane like Tomaso’s window-box (fig. 93b). The same text was used almost verbatim in Pietro dei Crescenzi’s chapter on marjoram. This treatise by a Bolognese agriculturalist and judge (d. 1321) is specifically concerned with the cultivation of plants and fields, and it is likely that both the Casanatense illuminators and Tomaso drew their inspiration from an illuminated manuscript of his work, which was printed with a similar iconography in the 1490s by Peter Drach of Speyer. 96

The illustration of Pietro’s text may be followed back to around 1330 in the

---

96 For fourteenth-century herbal illustration see Baumann (1974), who lays emphasis on its schematic nature, and the revisions made in Minta Collins’ MA thesis (University of London, 1985). For the Historia plantarum see Gengaro and Arano (1970) 417–4, figs. 303–24; Baumann (1974) 105–6, 118–20, 124–5, and figs. 1–74; Arano (1976) 36–43. For the Tacuinum Sanitatis see Arano (1973) and (1976) particularly 19, pl. xix, figs. 1, 183–4. The Historia Plantarum Marjoram and Basil are closer to Tomaso than the Tacuinum and therefore probably precede it. Pietro de Crescenzi’s book is variously known as the Liber cultus ruris, Liber ruralium commodorum etc., according to the publisher: it was frequently published in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. See L. Fratti in Pier de Crescenzi (1933) 261–306, for the earlier manuscripts of his text, written, significantly, for the Master-General of the Dominicans, Aymerico de Placentia. I am grateful to Minta Collins for many insights into the herbas. For the realistic depiction of nature see Pacht (1950), the fundamental text for all the above material. The ‘Cocharelli Treatise’ must be dated on grounds of costume ca 1325–33, showing that these concerns are earlier than Pacht realised.
Bolognese copy, Vatican lat. 1529. The plants are not yet illustrated separately, but each book has a frontispiece, and that to Book vi, De ortis . . . et utilitate erbarum, shows herbs being cultivated on a hillside (fig. 94a). It is only a short step to Tomaso’s similar treatment of specific species, and we can only guess whether he or an illuminator made it. The direct influence of Bolognese illumination (or the participation of a Bolognese artist) can be seen on fol. ccliiii/251r (Staciones, Milfoil) of the Historia Plantarum in the bold treatment of a pair of streams flanked by trees and bushes (fig. 94b), and it is arguable that illustrated herbals like this originated also in university circles, Wenceslas’ own manuscript perhaps included. Its artists are unlikely to have noticed this particular detail by Tomaso, high up on a wall in Treviso, but it undoubtedly derives either from an early work by him or from his education in Bologna. Similarly Cogliati Arano notes the similarity of the frontispiece of the early Liège Tacuinum to the scholar imagery of Tomaso and Altichiero.

By 1360, at least one other Bolognese artist had adopted this idea: Simone dei Crocifissi, working alongside Vitale in the aspes of S. Maria dei Servi in Bologna, shows the Madonna del Parto as a charming maiden, looking at a rather mischievous lap-dog (an image that appears in Tomaso’s Karlštejn Triptych of the same years) while a herb grows in a pot on a pedestal beside her (fig. 94c). Cassee has interpreted the pot as a reference to Mary’s fertility drawn from Isaiah, xlvi, 8: ‘Aperiatur terra et gemenet Salvatorem’, used in the liturgy for Advent.97 Simone uses the plant pot again for the Annunciation in the Pushkin Museum, Moscow, a few years later, though never for the smaller and simpler treatments that appear as secondary elements in a triptych or polyptych.98 In both scenes Cassee’s interpretation of the pot of earth as a symbol of Mary’s fertility, and more specifically of her parthenogenesis, is highly appropriate.

Simone’s plants are not specific, however, even if the Servite fresco shows the pot with air-holes and beautifully modelled in light and shade. It is Tomaso’s more specific treatment that created the Tacuinum tradition, by bridging the gap from more generalised representations, or which most faithfully reproduced a precocious early example of it. And Tomaso adds a further layer of meaning in choosing to show Origanum marjorana, Sweet Marjoram, ‘so pleasing to ladies for its fragrance’ as the Tacuinum itself puts it. The thinner curling stems distinguish Tomaso’s plant from the coarser Wild Marjoram or Oregon. Its fragrance led it to be used by the Greeks and Romans to crown married couples, a practice not irrelevant to this scene, and the name itself makes, of course, a graceful pun on Mary’s own. In short, Tomaso’s motif is an inversion, on a more exalted spiritual level, of the modern metaphor ‘Sweet Mary Jane’. Given the similarity of the composition to the Coronation of the Virgin, the presence of both Marjoram and Basil (basilicò) may represent the union of Christ and his Church in Mary, a standard interpretation of the Coronation.99

97 Cassee (1978): she appears to misinterpret the herb as an alteration.
99 For marjoram see Grieve (1931) 519–21; Gordon (1984) 111; Il Libro di Casa Cerruti (1985) 43; D’ Ancona (1977) 228, giving literary sources but no examples of its appearance in painting. For the Coronation interpretation see A. Katzenellenbogen, The Sculptural Programs of Chartres Cathedral (Baltimore, 1959) 60–5. Herbals show the more robust and symmetrical Origanum vulgare used in medicine.
The contrasting structures of Tomaso’s *Annunziata* create space symmetrically yet with variety within the awkward lunette, a brilliantly unorthodox method of composing within this shape, given further tension by the curtain behind Mary which seems impossibly straight, though the far corners make it just plausible. The Virgin seems very formal against this varied structure and its domestic/scholastic complexity, until you register that her crossed hands are a reaction to Gabriel behind you and the dove of the Holy Ghost descending above her: she is stunned. The same formality affects the quality of the painting, smooth and impassive from respect for the votive nature of the subject, simple to tell at a distance, and surely Tomaso’s own, though the scene has been assigned to his workshop because of these very qualities. In these lunettes we are looking at the divine, at a considerable height, and the drama is therefore conceptual, spatial and controlled despite the personal touches, whereas in the Ursula Legend the drama is saintly but human, and therefore explicit and emotive.

The Legend of St Ursula

The legend of St Ursula is one of the most absurd creations in the medieval calendar, as the innumerable variations of its details in different accounts and even the attempt at chronological precision by its most celebrated narrator, Jacopo da Varazze (Jacobus de Voragine), affirm. We find the Bishops of Basle and Graz residing not in Switzerland and Austria, nor even in Rome, but in Brittany, Ireland or some unspecified Northern kingdom, perhaps as legates for a Popes, Cyriacus, who has conveniently been expunged from all records because of his unauthorised (!) abdication – even Dante served Pope Celestine better! Jacopo notes that the martyrdom traditionally took place in 238, but in that period neither Sicily nor Constantinopel had kings, although their queens appear at Cologne in the legend. His date of 452 helps little, for there is a still greater inconsistency about both dates: the Celts probably never had kings in the European sense, and certainly none related to the Sicilians, while there was no king of England by that date: the nearest to it would be the Celtic ‘King’ Arthur! There may be echoes in the more specific versions of the legend of the conflict between the Celts and the invading Saxons. And there is also some evidence of historical martyrs at Cologne in an inscription recording a senator, Clematius, dated by Levison between 350 and 450, but this is already submerged by British and Germanic legend in the tenth-century *First Passion* of Ursula and the eleventh-century *Second Passion*. The discovery of male and female bones in the twelfth-century...

100 Cf. the quite unintelligible throne-cloth of Vitale’s *Madonna dei Denti* which appears to hang from the picture-frame and ignores the cushion on top of it and the seat beneath (fig. 4).

101 Zuliani (1979) 97-8; Coletti (1963) 121. but see also Menegazzi (1964) 206, stating that Coletti came to accept Tomaso’s authorship. With characteristic acuity Ballo had already answered all the criticisms of the work in his letter to Coletti (1925): that it was the first thing to be painted and could hardly be left to an assistant, especially since the St Michael of its border is evidently by Tomaso himself, and that its emphatic modelling is due to its height and the needs of legibility.

102 Zuliani (1979) 95, notes that the library of the convent had two copies of his text in 1362 and that this is the source for Tomaso’s frescoes.

For the chronological problems see the last sentences of Jacobus’ first section (cap. clxi) between the story of Ursula and that of the relics in Cologne. Most of Jacobus’ details accord with the twelfth-century embellishments of the Legend, particularly those of Elizabeth of Schönau’s *Liber revelationum de sacro exercitu virginum Coloniensium:* see Roth (1886) and Levison (1927/1928) 115-25.

103 For the *First Passio Ursularia* see Analecta Bollandiana, 11 (1884) 5-20 and Levison (1927/1928) 140-57; for the *Second Passio Klinkenberg* (1892) 154-62. Levison gives good
excavations of Cologne spurred Elizabeth of Schönau to new feats of fantasy; in
effect, she furnished the bare narrative line of the legend with all its detail, the
names of Ursula’s family and followers, family relationships, and gave it Church
leadership. Jacobus von Voragine’s text is simply a vivid summary of her text, with a
none-too-successful attempt at a historical perspective. Fortunately absurdity has
never deterred the great story-teller from using a theme, be they Shakespeare,
Racine or Altichiero, and in the Ursula Chapel Tomaso took his place among
them.

Tomaso’s narrative appears to be based directly on the *Legenda Aurea*, as Zuliani
suggests, and, as the S. Margherita inventory includes two copies of this text and no
rival to it, there seems no need to seek a more obscure source. His combination of an
economic structure of eleven scenes with vivid details corresponds to Jacobus’
calls in his text. Jacobus’ emotional emphasis, the threats of the English king, the
enthusiasm of his son, the fearfulness of the Breton king, and above all the
exuberance of the assembly formed around Ursula and her maidens by the company
of attendant knights and soldiers, bishops and archbishops, princes and princesses,
are all recognisable but more vivid in Tomaso’s paintings. And as we have already
seen, a Dominican writer like Jacobus was very much in tune with the ideas of the
Eremitani as well as the Cavaliere Gaudenti.

In the first scene the King of England is instructing his ambassadors to seek the hand
of Ursula for his son, Etherius, and according to the *Legenda Aurea* he is also
threatening them with dire consequences for failure: hence the earnest expression
of the plump older man ticking off points and the bashful demeanour of his
companion (pl. 68). The king, unlike his courtiers, is a ginger-haired barbarian: his
hair long and wild, his beard equally long and fiercely pointed to show that ‘multas
nationes suo imperio subjugaret’. He looks more Irish than English to Northern eyes,
perhaps recalling Frederick Barbarossa for Italian ones. His surcot is short for a king,
suggesting youth, or, in his case, a very active older man. Its mi-partite colours

...
become a heraldic motif throughout the cycle, blue (largely fallen) and pink. He, and the squire with the falcon, have manicottili – long tails of miniver attached to their sleeves by bands, while the ambassadors have more old-fashioned trumpet sleeves.  

The two ambassadors and their following recall the norms of the Comune of Treviso for embassies. When a special nominee was not appointed, and even for quite important missions, ambassadors were drawn by lot from a select register pre-arranged in pairs, one nobleman and one popolano per slip. The two ambassadors were accompanied by a notary and two heralds. The heralds wore special hats with insignia about the city, and the tall hats may have that function here. However, the king’s ambassadors, unlike the republic’s, were both noble, since their hoods and capes are of miniver, and at least in the first scene they appear to have squires as well as heralds: perhaps these get left behind, since the hawk is hardly a suitable travelling companionPadua allowed for a single ambassador but frequently sent pairs consisting of a knight and a doctor-of-law, both of whom might wear such habits as these. 

Traces of the king’s crown can be seen, a series of curves and a slightly wider base, and perhaps a fur lining which has left the appearance of ears on the back of his head. The ambassadors have blue collars and caps, better preserved in the second scene, though they have lost their modelling and look like a foreign element in that picture. The attendants’ costumes also had blue stripes. The blues have generally perished, leaving a grey foundation in the sky and no traces at all on most of the costumes, or shadows on the sinopia preparation, as on the King of England. 

The pink-green bias of the cycle is largely due to the loss of the al secco colours, due to time and the hurried stripping off of the covering plaster, though the Virgin Annunziata above is painted throughout in red earths, her dress a delicate play of the warm red-pink of her tunic against the sharper wine colour of her cloak, and similar pink harmonies recur elsewhere.

The scene is painted in only a few huge giornate: both the ambassadors are contained on one or possibly two patches (the upper one comprising their heads), the king’s head on another, the throne on a third, the attendants probably on two (heads and bodies). The day-lines form irregular intersecting ovals where the toning down has fallen away.

The first two scenes were designed as a pair: two kings, very different in temperament, as in religion, linked by the kneeling ambassadors. In the first scene they are diffident but ready to travel; the turning of the throne, their gestures, the truncated group of followers, all lead to the second scene. In the second scene they kneel with respect, but greater confidence, before the worried King Maurus of Brittany

109 For manicottili see G. Villani, Cronica, XII, cap. iv. He speaks of fur-lined manicottili hanging down as far as the ground, worn by men and women alike, and introduced to Florence by the Duke of Athens see: Newton (1980b) 6–7, 11. It is clear that for a republican of Tuscany, and no doubt of the Veneto too, this style reflected the values of the courts of Northern Europe. It probably fell out of favour in Florence after the expulsion of the Duke of Athens, who is shown wearing such extended cuffs in the celebrated fresco of the Expulsion in the city prison (Stinche Vecchie), the only surviving example of infamatory painting: Antal (1948) 262, pl. 92; Ortalli (1979). Equally significant is the tempstress in Orcagna’s Inferno in S. Croce, Florence (Frescos from Florence, 1969, 76–7). In Emilia and the Veneto the same pejorative sense is retained: see n. 136.


112 For the condition of the frescoes see Zuliani (1979) 157–8.
(pl. 74). He is older or more aged; his locks are grey, his face concerned: Tomaso captures the down-turned mouth and strained eyes. He is clean-shaven; he wears the long tunic and magisterial hood that belong to regal authority on the mainland of European culture. His insecurity apart, he is a king like Charles IV of Bohemia and Charles V of France, whereas the English king might be a more forceful personification of the future Jean le Bon of France or John of Luxembourg. The pointed hats of the English train may be Hungarian, but they share the courtly Gothic fashion of the Bretons. Both scenes and the later Abduction of Pope Cyriacus present authority in a most unusual light. The law books of Bologna are crammed with images of Authority, authority invested with office by God or Justice, authority issuing Justice in the abstract as Law, or exercising its power to effect Justice in trials (figs. 52–3). Yet in all three of these scenes, and in contrast to other Ursula cycles, Tomaso shows the pressure acting on mortals in such exalted roles, or, in the first instance, a king manifestly apart from such abstract concepts of royal authority.

The treatment of space in the first scenes is worth noting: the main interior is the Breton Court; the English throne is only a starting point for the story. At the same time the throne's diagonal position suggests a spatial introduction to the series for the spectator at the front of the chapel, while the echoing of the foliage of the border in perspective on its side panels must have heightened the sense of reality.

Behind King Maurus Queen Daria turns with a worried expression to Ursula who looks up with divinely inspired confidence as she expounds her reply with its conditions: a three-year pilgrimage to Rome with a train of ten virgin ladies and a thousand virgins in the train of each of them, herself included, and the conversion of her suitor to the Christian faith and his instruction in it. The combination in one scene of two episodes that in the Passion fall on successive days, with a night of prayer and divine inspiration between, follows the Legenda Aurea faithfully: 'Rex autem coepit plurimum anxiari... Ipsa autem divinitus inspirata patri suasit, ut praedicto regi assensum praeberet...'. Her divine inspiration is shown by the rays emanating from her mouth.

The worried expression of Queen Daria is very similar in shape and character to the Feltre Master's 1351 Madonna (fig. 66), though it is technically superior. Even the relationship to the figure of Ursula in profile corresponds to that of the Mother and Child. Did the Feltre Master paint these figures as part of Tomaso's workshop, or did they both work from a common drawing? It is likely that the Feltre Master was Tomaso's contemporary or even his senior, though undoubtedly by this time his art depended on Tomaso's inspiration rather than the reverse. The continuing relation-

113 ‘Notus vel Maurus’ in the Legenda Aurea, Deo- natus, King of Scotland according to the Second Passion (‘Regnante Domino...’ in early citations). Maurus King of Scotland according to Elisabeth of Schonau.
114 For typical representations of the two Charles see particularly the mural in the Church of the Virgin Mary, Karlstein, where they appear together (Stejskal, 1978, 114–5, also 207–17). The mural, 1357–8, shows Charles V as Dauphin presenting a thorn of Christ's Crown to Charles IV. See also Charles V (1981) and, for Jean le Bon, Avril (1978) fig. ix, 27–8.
115 Newton (1980a) 235–6: they may reflect the Hungarians' fame as horsemen.
117 Another connection with the Feltre Master is evident in the pilaster figures of a youth and a female saint still in S. Margherita: they are in much the same poses as Ss Victor and Corona in the cloister at Feltre. They are unlikely to belong to the more modest scheme to which the Navicella belongs, a work the Feltre Master may
ship between these artists strengthens the case for dating the *Ursula Cycle* to the 1350s rather than the 1360s.

The scenes opposite correspond pictorially to the first two: the frontal palace interior reflects scene two, though it is a different room of the Breton Palace, with a crenellated gable (like the Palazzo dei Trecento) rising above a crowded ante-room, arcaded (and again counting problems lead to half-arches and worse) and enriched by a simple striped hanging. King Maurus sits in a hall with a wall-hanging too, a courtly method of decoration. The diagonal throne of the first scene is matched by the receding side of a basilica in which the English Prince is baptised: the interior is shown frontally, relating it to the previous composition. The balance of diagonal solids and voids is complementary to the first scene rather than symmetrical with it. Taken as a set of four scenes they show an alternation of red and green grounds behind the figures recalling the curtains of Tomaso’s Dominicans in S. Nicolo.

The third scene shows the *Departure of Ursula*, embracing her grey-haired mother (pl. 70); the lady with a head-dress behind the latter is Gerasina, Queen of Sicily, sister of Daria and Bishop Matrisius (one of the companions?).\(^{108}\) Before her kneel her four daughters, Babilla, Julian, Victoria and Aurea, and their little brother, Hadrianus. One of the bishops is Pantulus of Basle, perhaps introduced into the legend through confusion about the disembarkation there on the way to Rome.\(^{118}\) The sequence of the legend, the reintroduction of the English Prince at different places in it, is generally muddled, particularly in all-embarking versions like the *Legenda Aurea*. All these people, plus a new order of chivalry founded by St Gerasina to form an escort for the party (!),\(^{119}\) have assembled to accompany Ursula and her Virgins to Rome. Later in history the Knights Templar and Hospitalier did, of course, provide escorts for real pilgrims, and the appeal of this aspect of the legend to Bazzarotti and the Cavalieri Gaudenti is obvious when one recalls that this was a central purpose of their Order:\(^{120}\) the dream becomes more immediate. Gerasina’s children are kneeling as an act of oblation to the pilgrimage. This scene is unquestionably a faithful illustration of the *Legenda Aurea*, not of any earlier version, and its content may be fully explained from it.

Giotto was not normally a major influence on Tomaso’s artistic technique, except in so far as Vitale had already absorbed Giotto’s drawing style and various motifs. But in the *Leave-taking of Ursula* the influence of Scrovegni’s chapel extends from the border design to the conception of the composition, entwined with ideas taken from Vitale. The two pages with their arms linked and folded derive from Vitale’s Mezzaratta *Nativity* (fig. 87), though ultimately from Giotto’s own *Feast of Herod* in the Peruzzi

\(^{118}\) Or ‘Macarissius’: all the individuals mentioned in the *Legenda* may be identifiable in this scene, though of course, most of them lack personal attributes to enable us to follow Tomaso’s personal intentions.

\(^{119}\) Chivalric companies in holy orders were occasionally founded for a limited purpose in the thirteenth century, such as the *Militia of Jesus Christ* founded to guard the body of Count Aymeric de Montfort in Carcassonne in 1221: Federici (1787) I, 284, and II, documents v and vii; Roversi in *Ronzani* (1965) 16. Jacobus clearly had such militia, often associated with the Dominicans, in mind when he invented this detail. The Cavalieri Gaudenti themselves sprung from such local and short-lived companies or minor orders: Hinnebusch (1965) 400–1; Roversi (Ronzani, 1965) 11–24.

\(^{120}\) Roversi (Ronzani, 1965) 40.
Chapel; the kneeling children reflect Vitale's *Insane Princess healed by the body of St Anthony* (fig. 95). The isochapy of the scene, on the other hand, is typical of Giotto but not of Tomaso. And at the very heart of the composition the central and most expressive gesture of Ursula saying farewell to her mother is taken from Giotto's *Visitation*, high on the triumphal arch of the Scrovegni Chapel (fig. 96). Above it, Giotto's Gabriel and Mary looked across the opening of the choir, surely the inspiration for Tomaso's remarkable placing of the same figures. The relationship of age yielding to sanctified youth is common to both the scenes below these *Annunciations*, so Tomaso was surely making an inspired choice of model to bring out to the full, at least to his patron and cultured observers, the nature of the event.

Other echoes of the Arena Chapel can be seen elsewhere, notably the *Presentation of the Chapel by Scrovegni* at the centre of the *Last Judgement* transformed into the figures of Ursula and her companions kneeling before the Pope, and the host of the Elect from the same scene become the participants of the *Departure from Rome* (fig. 97).

The *Leave-taking* is celebrated by its tender gestures, for its array of the fair maidens and abundant bosoms, and above all for the fashion-plate splendour of their costumes. This is no Celtic court on the fringes of Europe and in the depths of the past; it is a Venetian subject's view of the present in the great courts of Naples, Paris, Prague, whose representatives appeared from time to time in Italy, travelling like Ursula to Rome, or waging war on their rivals, or paying court to the Serenissima Republica. And this particular inhabitant of Treviso was an artist who had, perhaps, already been commissioned to paint a diptych for the Holy Roman Emperor and most of whose work has a direct or indirect association with the Emperor, a deceased Pope or plutocrats like Bazzoletti.

---

121 Giotto is, of course, the master of the alignment of the figures across and into the depth of the composition, as in Roman reliefs that provided the model, and in Alberti's prescriptions in his *Treatise on Painting*, book I. In the few other narratives to survive, the *Descent into Hell* of the Modena *Triptych*, the *Last Supper* of the Bologna panel and the Mantuan frescoes, Tomaso shows no interest in this type of composition, but follows Vitale in exploiting the plane of the surface to underline the main lines of the composition and its gestures.

122 In some bad verse Jacopo Alighieri, son of Dante, outlines 'the conditions of feminine beauty' (N. Sapegno, *Poeti minori del Trecento*, Milan, 1952, 765-8): youth, fair hair and complexion, dark eyes modestly half-closed, medium height, a small roundish nose, a small red mouth, a throat round and swelling with emotion 'ad ogni atto che 'ngonfi come a colombe tronfi', plump arms and legs but long and dainty hands. The contemporary French poet, and many of his predecessors including Bertrand de Born, add firm breasts, and a curvaceous back to this list. Such canons of beauty and their reflections in literary descriptions are essentially conventional but tally well with Tomaso's frescoes and with most Trecento representations of virgins famed (and merited) for their beauty: see Gibbs (1986).

123 Charles IV was crowned in Rome in 1355 by the papal legate, Pierre Bertrand du Colombier, Cardinal of Ostia and Velletri, and with his fourth wife, Elizabeth of Pomerania, by Pope Urban V himself, who returned to Rome largely at the urging of Charles himself, in 1368.

124 Notably the two invasions by Louis the Great of Hungary, 1347-50, to avenge his murdered brother Andrew in the Kingdom of Naples, and in 1356-8 during his war with Venice. The Savoyards were to be equally conspicuous in Lombardy, Piedmont and Liguria (Cox, 1967). In the earlier years of the century Henry VII (of Luxembourg), his son John of Luxembourg, King of Bohemia, his son, the future Charles IV, and John's rival claimant to the Empire, Ludwig of Bavaria, had all intervened in Italy. Ludwig was crowned in Rome by his anti-Pope, Nicholas V, in 1328, while Charles conquered Feltre and Belluno in 1337 as part of the Venetian alliance against Mastino della Scala.

125 The most celebrated diplomatic occasion in Venice was the reconciliation of Frederick Barbarossa, Alexander III and the Lombard League in 1177; the fourteenth century saw more diplomats (including Dante and Petrarch), but Charles IV was received in Venice in 1337 having evaded capture by them a few months before!

126 The *Diptych* and *Triptych* at Karlstein for Charles IV, and possibly the Baltimore panel (Pujmanová, 1980a-b, and Chapter 8 below), the S. Nicolò frescoes possibly funded by and certainly reflecting the local celebrity of Benedict XI.
The variations of costume in this scene may be significant: the fringed capes and diamond-shaped pendants hanging from the shoulders of the young pages on the left; the longer tunic and straight elbow pendant of Hadrianus. Queen Daria has stiff tulip-shaped over-sleeves, distinctively old-fashioned by the 1350s, while her niece’s over-sleeves are fuller and looser. Ursula and Gerasina have straight pendants tied on like Hadrianus': these appear in Parisian illumination ca 1345 and in Neapolitan court illumination ca 1350. The associations with Southern Italy and Northern France are both appropriate to the narrative. There are also detailed studies of long rows of buttons up the sleeves (such as sumptuary laws usually proscribed by the Italian Communes), pockets, and fur-lined side-vents in Gerasina’s dress.

The direct source of Tomaso’s fashions may not have been his studies in Central Italy but that startlingly splendid impression made by Empress Anna of Swidnica on the citizens of Treviso during her visit in 1355. On the other hand, since the manicottoli of this type do not appear in Bohemian art until much later, we cannot be certain that they were adopted by the Bohemian court. But another great Northern monarch with French connections, the Angevin Louis the Great of Hungary, may also have inspired them, either on his way to or from Naples in 1347–8, when they were the very latest fashion at the Southern court of his sister-in-law, or during the siege of 1356–8. As already mentioned, the pointed hats of his followers have been recognised in the headwear of the English squires (the more European form) and the Huns of the last scene. But the older Hungarian aristocracy would have worn the same fashions as the French. The costume therefore provides several grounds for considering the

---

127 The embroidered or serrated forms of the pages’ capes recall the hoods of the Statuti dell’ Ordone del Nodo, ca 1354–5, at Naples (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, fr. 4274: Bologna, 1969, pls. vi–vii, vii–42–7) and an extremely serrated form worn by one of Potthar’s courtiers at Mezzaratta.

128 For a study of this detail see Rasmo (1962); however, the traditional dating of the Milan Judge fragment and Rasmo’s probably fall on either side of the correct one, ca 1355–60, shown in the chinning form of his costume. In any case the judge may be expected to be a trifle conservative in dress compared with the page. Giovanni da Milano shows an evolved form in his 1365 fresco of the Expulsion of Joachim in the Cappella Rinuccini. De Mazzu’s colourful account of 1385 fashions in Piacenza with sleeves ‘apertae exteriori’ refers to a much later type of costume. Tomaso’s may be the earliest surviving example of the former.

129 They are common in works by Paolo Veneziano and in those associated in the older literature with the earlier phase of his career: Pallucchini (1964) figs. 23 (Pesaro), 41 (Trattico di S. Chiara, Trieste), 115 (St Nicholas and the girls without dowries, Florence). Muraro (1970) 149–50, not only excludes the Trieste tripich but dates it ca 1390, along with the Pesaro panels of the Life of the Virgin. See also Newton (1980b) 4.


131 An example is the prohibition by the Parliament of Friuli under Patriarch Bertrand de St Genis (a friend of Charles IV) in 1342 of wearing more than twenty buttons or ornaments worth more than a mark. Menis (1976) 237.

132 This fashion is used by Vitale for Susannah and the Elders in the Cappella Maggiore of Udine Cathedral (fig. 46b), and by his workshop for Moses and the Israelites led out of Egypt in the nave of Pomposa, as well as Potthar’s Wife at Mezzaratta (fig. 98) and the late Riminese fresco in S. Salvatore. Collalto of the Triumph of St Ursula (Volpe, 1965, fig. 290). These cover the period 1348–60.

133 See above, nn. 75–6.

134 The earliest dated example is probably the Six Books of Faith by Thomas of Stíny (Prague, University Library) of 1376, in a temptation scene; together with the Votive painting of Jan Osko of Vastín, possibly of 1371 (Prague, Národní Galerie); Bachmann (1977) pl. vi, fig. 148.

135 Cf. nn. 106, 127.

136 The full range of Hungarian costume from the European to the Tartar is shown in the frontispiece of the Illuminated Chronicle (Newton, 1980a, 235).
cycle to belong to the 1350s but well before 1365: it is almost certain that by the date of the consecration of the Holy Cross Chapel at Karlštejn Tomaso’s Triptych had not only been painted but considerably altered to adapt it to this new setting. In this work the two knightly saints wear the fully padded chests to their jerkins in the manner of the later fourteenth century, a clear terminus ante quem for all the knights and pages of the Ursula Cycle.

Apart from their art-historical value, these costumes play a major part in the atmosphere of Tomaso’s narrative, an ideal view of the charms of the Northern court, almost Pre-Raphaelite in its feminine elegance: it is this scene and the two views of Rome which particularly invite recollections of Anna of Swidnica’s visit. Not even the richest of the Veneto’s citizens would wear such fashions in the 1350s: the manicotti belong to French courtiers and to ladies of high aspirations but doubtful morality. The eminent citizens of great wealth who formed the Cavaliere Gaudenti were sober in dress. Ursula’s world is foreign, and perhaps consciously Angevin: there is a nice irony that the artist should confront the threat of the Angevin Hungarians, and the signori of Milan, Padua and Verona allied to them, with a sainly member of their own social circle.

The compositional breaks in this fresco are stressed by the intersecting areas of the giornate: one for the architecture, one for the bishops’ group, another for Ursula and her neighbours, a fourth for the group on the right, perhaps another for some of the bodies and for Gerasina’s daughters. They are huge and complex divisions of work, showing the extraordinary speed with which Tomaso painted. Much was done al secco and not just for speed. Ursula’s cape was blue on a sinopia base; her tunic and Daria’s cape were in another dry-base pigment, possibly even gold or silver, or vermillion, and both are completely lost. Daria’s dress is a fine flowered silk, white palmettes on purple sinopia, recalling the rich fabrics of panel rather than fresco painting: a tiny fragment of such rich decoration may still be discerned in the damaged figure of St Agnes on the Bologna panel (pl. 7b).

Although the balance of colours is lost for ever, part of its range, the mi-partite rose and purple, pink and green, pink shot with lemon yellow and purple, still remains in this group of noble ladies, together with the range of textures, mi-partite, miniver, and the horizontal bands (blue?) on yellow of the foreground princess that recall Simone Martini at Assisi, also recreating in his work a past (with Hungarian and Imperial associations!) through the contemporary fashions of the courts that he knew well. The costumes precisely described by Tomaso appear as the culmination of the series of

137 Thus in North Italy they may be seen worn by Salome, the Dance before Herod in the Baptistry of S. Marco, Venice, and at Mezzaratta they are worn by the Wife of Potiphar (fig. 98), and the Woman taken in Adultery (and by a temptress in the Bohemian manuscript of n. 131). But in the feudal states of Friuli the fashion has consistently courtly meaning: it is worn by the Princess rescued by St George of the Cappella Maggiore of the Duomo of Venzone, by a king in the first stratum of frescoes in the Duomo of Spilimbergo and by Tobias’ wife in the upper stratum, and again by one of the Magi in the Tempietto at Cividale (Gibbs, 1986).

138 See Zuliani (1979) tav. iii The ‘palmettes’ that appear on the throne cloth behind the Annunziata and on that of Scene 11 foreshadow an extensive use of such motifs in Bolognese panel painting, particularly that of Simone dei Crocifissi.

139 There are many signs of the influence of Simone Martini’s sharp sense of observation and his fascination with costume throughout Tomaso’s work; see Chapter 3. For the contrasts of courtly and foreign fashion see Newton (1980a) 237-8.
Virgin Saints painted by him on the small panels in Modena and Bologna and on the column of S. Nicolò.

The *Baptism of the English Prince* is striking in a different way for its dramatic presentation of the only positive achievement in the legend, the spiritual conversion of a pagan prince. This is expressed by the emphatic anointing gesture (borrowed from Vitale’s Mezzaratta Nativity (fig. 87), where Joseph’s wielding of the jug may prefigure the sacrament of Baptism), the contrasting humility and nudity of the Prince, already classical in its confidence though not yet in form, and the energetic stripping off by one of the Prince’s converted followers. Tomaso and his contemporaries were very conscious of the Early Christian practice of total immersion, requiring huge fonts since many initiates were converted adults like the Prince. The double tub is unusual, however; the Prince is in fact being anointed with water from a font closer in size to North European practice, and kneeling in a shallow basin, which Professor Davies concludes to be typical of Greece, and normal in France, Syria, Palestine, Egypt and North Africa. In the Middle East a few examples of baptisteries even have a second small basin outside the font, the reverse of Tomaso’s arrangement. All the evidence suggests that Tomaso was consciously showing an archaic and foreign rite, even if some of the details are a little confused. The hexagon is normal for Italian fonts and symbolises the Death of Christ – appropriately in this legend.

In many of the scenes the influence of Giotto’s interest in antique relief composition and isocephy is very strong; here, in contrast, the composition is created from an interplay of sweeping arms and of hexagons and gables, stressing its liturgical content. The conversion of the Prince precedes the departure of Ursula in the *Legenda Aurea*, though there is a second reference to it immediately before the *Martyrdom*: the Prince became king on the death of his father, converted his mother, and then had a vision of Ursula’s martyrdom and set out to join her in Cologne. Neither this last episode, nor the story of Cordula, the reluctant martyr, appears in the surviving parts of Tomaso’s frescoes. The *Baptism*, on the other hand, is given far more prominence by Tomaso than by any of the chroniclers, and a different position.

The church in this scene is an extraordinary construction using the frontal view of the three aisles explored at Assisi (fig. 89), the sharpened arches and Lombard banding of North Italian architecture, and a three-quarter view of the exterior more typical of Bolognese painting, although there is no Bolognese picture that shows these giant Gothic forms, inspired perhaps by the transept of S. Nicolò. The font and platform are of red Verona marble, but the church is painted yellow and green, be seen in the *Preaching of St Francis before Honorius III* in the Upper Church, *Previtali* (1967) tav. xxvii, Giotto’s *Presentation* and *Christ and the Doctors in the Lower Transept* (ibid., tav. xcviii and cx), his *Allegory of Obedience* (Palumbo, 1969, tav. xx–xxi), all of which must be dated and attributed with the Bardi Chapel of S. Croce, Florence, on the evidence of figures, composition and architecture, a *Presentation* by the S. Chiara Master (ibid., fig. 248), the *Martyrdom of St Stanislao*, perhaps by Pacco Capanna (ibid., fig. 259) and many of Alighiero’s frescoes in Padua, with similar spatial conflicts.
balancing the pinks of the preceding scene, colours inspired by those used for architectural decoration in the Veneto and Friuli.\textsuperscript{144} Before the front of its roof was lost, this must have presented a curious appearance to any viewer conditioned by the rationality of Tuscan painted architecture.

Tomaso in this cycle consistently expressed ceremonial arrivals and departures by frontal and isoccephalic compositions.\textsuperscript{121} To show travel he uses diagonals, and for the next scene, in which Ursula is told of the martyrdom to come by an angel as she sails up the Rhine, a diagonal harbour wall and the triangular sails provide a thrusting picture structure unbalanced by the loss of most of the detail of the boats themselves (pl. 72). There are four masts but only three hulls visible, the last above the fourth mast! Its passengers are lost, and it is uncertain, though probable, that the boats were twin-masted. The Venetian panels of this subject show both single- and double-masted boats, sailing higher out of the water;\textsuperscript{145} their authors perhaps knew more about ships than Tomaso whose travels would have been by land or river. Tomaso also knew nothing about Cologne as a city, nor, to judge from the next scene, about Rome itself, for he conspicuously avoids reference to any of the popular landmarks, the Pantheon, Colosseum, Lateran, obelisks or the Torre delle Milizie.\textsuperscript{146} A Gothic spire, reminiscent of Provence\textsuperscript{147} or Vienna rises above the walls of Rome, a polygonal tower recalling Aachen, towers from Tuscany, multiple gabled structures from the Assisi Upper Church (pls. 73, 80).\textsuperscript{148} Both cities are fantastic,\textsuperscript{149} perhaps deliberately: Tomaso was sufficiently well read to know a tall story when he painted it.

The Cologne scene and the next, the Meeting with Pope Cyriacus, are linked by the urban backdrop, the change in levels cancelled by the original angle of vision which also emphasised the diagonal movement (pl. 73). They were to be linked also by the profile figure of Ursula: there is a famous \textit{pentimento} in the Cologne scene where the profile was incised but a three-quarter view of her face, reduced in size, was painted within it.\textsuperscript{150} The reception by the Pope again corresponds to the \textit{Lentenda Aurea}. The two bishops look on with admiration as Ursula kneels before him, their faces linear and dramatic, the beginning of a rather sketchy, almost comic, treatment of the personalities of the Curia arranged here behind the Pope. The decorative effect of the

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{144} Botter (1979b); Rizzi (1975); Clonfero (1974) and (1975); Clonfero e Zanette (1977a–b).
\item \textsuperscript{145} Pallucchini (1964) figs. 44–7; Muraro (1970) figs. 84–8.
\item \textsuperscript{146} Cf. Cimabue’s portrait of the city: Sindona (1975) tav. xv, in the vault of St Mark in the Upper Church of Assisi, showing the Pantheon and the Torre delle Mazzie, several basilicas and the Senatorial Palace—the Campidoglio. A more schematic view of Rome is generally to be found flanking the \textit{Martyrdom of St Peter}: two pyramidal towers, the ‘Meta Romuli’ and the Pyramid of Caius Cestius according to Nicholson (1932). For Giotto’s similar treatment of the scene see Prevaliti (1967) tav. cix, and for a fuller analysis of its programme, particularly the topography of the \textit{Beheading of St Paul}, Gardner (1974) 82–3.
\item \textsuperscript{147} Cf. S. Didier and the Tower of the Augustinians at Avignon. Tomaso may have visited Avignon in view of the importance of Simone Martini for the Karlštejn \textit{Diptych} and the echo of Simone’s inscription for Petrarch’s \textit{Vergil} in Tomaso’s signature on the Karlštejn \textit{Triptych} (see below, Chapter 8).
\item \textsuperscript{148} The \textit{Pentecost} and Dream of Innocent III (Prevaliti, 1967, fig. 226, tav. xxiii).
\item \textsuperscript{149} Puopp (1980) 316–7 and (1979) 60–74 gives evidence to suggest that the second is a conceptual portrait of Treviso, inspired by the city’s heraldry, but it is certainly not a physical portrait of the city as is the later representation of Treviso held by St Catherine (fig. 31a). Rome is shown with similar but squatter gates than the latter, a castle inspired perhaps by the Great Seal of Treviso, domes perhaps inspired by the Santo in Padua, plus Gothic spires: a synthesis of the most impressive buildings that Tomaso could recall, but impossible to find together and therefore not a transposition of any one city.
\item \textsuperscript{150} Coletti (1963) 49, pl. 74.
\end{itemize}
cope of the central bishop is a device taken up by Simone dei Crocefissi in his early panel-paintings from Tomaso’s work.¹¹¹

The distinctive nature of Tomaso’s conception is reflected by the absence of such a scene from the Venetian cycle or the Vigo di Cadore frescoes.¹¹² An army, albeit of virgins, is encamped before Rome, just as the Empress Anna of Świdnica and her escort camped before Treviso. Such a force, or at least its conventional counterpart, would not be admitted as a whole within the walls, but instead the Pope has come to meet its leader as Leo the Great met Attila. In this case the occasion is festive, but it is, nonetheless, a gesture of submission that Ursula makes.

Ursula and Gerasina are instantly recognisable as the same characters who appeared in the third scene, Ursula with her long tresses and eager profile, Gerasina older, more fully fleshed and reserved in spirit. Their fully rounded faces, quite different from Tomaso’s Bolognese sources, or those of Giotto whose Presentation of the Scrovegni Chapel provided the central grouping (fig. 97), recall particularly the full-blooded Madonnas and maidens of Ambrogio Lorenzetti or those of the various artists working in the Pisa Camposanto.¹¹³ Ursula’s rather puffy profile suggests the strange image of Jacopo Alighieri for a beautiful girl’s throat, rounded and swelling like a dove’s with emotion.¹¹⁴

Cyriacus could have stepped from the walls of the Dominican Chapter-House, his deeply modelled features and black hair with silvery curls echoing Innocent (pl. 17). His simple tiara with no crowns attached records an even earlier period; it is also richer, covered in flowered white silk.¹¹⁵ He is attended by cardinals who have very freely drawn features, flat-faced, sharp-nosed and anxious, or plump and apologetic; the tensions of the papal court are prefigured here.

In the scenes opposite they become manifest: Cyriacus has a vision of his martyrdom with Ursula and her followers; he abdicates amid the protests of the clergy at his resigning to join a crowd of young women (pls. 74–5). The sleeping face of the Pope is even more like Innocent V in its painting, and Cyriacus is shown to be, like him, a man of learning: a cupboard is open in its upper half to reveal a narrow desk and shelves full of books. Some of the border between the scenes is preserved here, as

¹¹¹ Figs. 17, 70; Tomaso’s St Louis of Toulouse in the Giacomelli Chapel of S. Francesco (pl. B) is probably the earliest example.

¹¹² There is a pair of panels with a possibly incomplete cycle by an associate of Paolo Veneziano or perhaps his workshop, and a single panel from another similar set in Bergamo: Muraro (1970) 144-5, 137-8. For the church of S. Orsola, Vigo di Cadore, see Dalla Vesta (1975) 17-9, 231-2, tav. II, figs. 22-33, and Kaffal (1978) 1012-30 (n. 305). The Ursula cycle probably dates from soon after the creation of a benefice for the church in 1345 by Aminardo di Vigo; I am doubtful whether they are either Bolognese or Emilian/Romagnole; see Lucce (1986) 141-4.

¹¹³ For Tomaso’s interest in Sienese art see Chapter 2; the Roman roads from Modena lead to Siena, unlike those from Bologna. For the Pisa Camposanto frescoes see Bellosi (1974). Significantly the closest parallels are not in the Triumph of Death probably by Buffalmacco, but in the work of the Simone Martini-inspired Francesco Traini: compare Gerasina with Traini’s Princeton Madonna and Child with St Anne (Carli, 1958-9, tav. 35), a graphic combination of curves expressing motherhood in Traini’s work and therefore appropriate to Gerasina too. It is significant that Pisano painting has strong connections with Bolognese art (Longhi, 1973, 207-25; Bellosi, 1974, 82-91) in which Ghiberti suggests Buffalmacco played a large part. Although Bellosi’s arguments for the attributions to him are essentially circumstantial, Maginnis’ criticisms have little bearing on them (Art Bulletin, LVIII, 1976, 126-8).

¹¹⁴ Cf. n. 122.

¹¹⁵ Tomaso appears to have been fully aware of the development of the papal tiara from one crown to three, and the appropriate period for each, perhaps from studying papal tombs (see above, Chapter 4, and Eco, 1984, 197). The silk tiara is clearly more attuned to this courtly cycle than the platted straw that is usual and worn by the Dominican Popes.
well as the strip of yellow around them: a narrow band of inlay patterned with the universal six-part star motif, and with a potent touch of trompe-l’œil Tomaso compensates for the narrow space allowed for the study alcove by letting the door open across the border onto which it casts a shadow. The conventional scene of the sleeping Pope drawn from the Francis cycles of Assisi and elsewhere is transformed by this touch,\footnote{156} defying the equally conventional form of the symmetrical curtains drawn back to reveal him.

The door breaks the surface forwards, the Consistory Court breaks it the other way, an effect increased by the exaggerated inward slope of the side walls. The room space is again derived from Assisi — the Confirmation of the Rule — but there is North Italian Lombard banding on the rear wall, and the short, wide Gothic windows recall Avignon rather than Rome.\footnote{157} The subject is almost a parody of those innumerable law manuscripts by the Bolognese illuminators, particularly by ‘the Illustrator’ and Niccolò, where the Pope is enthroned in the Consistory Court surrounded by cardinals, bishops and lawyers, issuing Decrees on his authority and judgements from the established law (figs. 52–3). Zuliani rightly compares the scene to Dalmasio’s Preaching of Gregory the Great in S. Maria Novella, Florence, where the building shows the same Lombard banding.\footnote{158}

Cyriacus now looks like Vitale’s St Ambrose in Pesaro (fig. 99): close-set eyes, high cheekbones, small withdrawn mouth and generally flat features. He has the same rather nervous compact pose and the flowing treatment of the cope, but instead of grasping a sceptre, he is wrenching off his tiara and with it his authority: the power-structure has been thrown in reverse. The surrounding figures are not listening to his judgement but disputing it — even his sanity, according to the Legenda Aurea — with the energy of the plaintiffs who should be appearing before them. At the bottom right a cardinal has a book open, not to record decisions but, as one can tell from the grasp on his scalp, to expunge Cyriacus’ name from the records.\footnote{159} This is another kind of scribal activity to set alongside those of the Dominican Capitolo but not to be found among them: deletion would ill become their devotion to learning, and, moreover, we are following the account of the Dominican Da Voragine that claims to restore this same record.

The eraser proceeds calmly with his work, but above him is another cardinal with staring eyes and dismayed mouth recalling Tomaso’s portrait of Robert Kilwardby, the testy critic of Thomist theology (pl. 21); but here the caricatural stress is unmistakable. Cyriacus, after all, is acting under divine guidance and these worldly politicians are not. And this scene, unique in Ursula cycles, draws not only on Tomaso’s personal

---

\footnote{156} Illusionism is a consistent feature of the Assisi frescoes from the cornices of Cimabue’s apse frescoes and the colonade of the nave (White, 1957; Belting, 1977), to the illusionistic furnishings of the south transept in the Lower Church by Pietro Lorenzetti (Maginnis, 1973; Belloli 1982).

\footnote{157} Gagnière (1965) 90, 94

\footnote{158} Melnikas (1975) Pars I, pls. xiv, xvii; Cassen (1980) figs. 1, 7, 15, 20–2, 24; Zuliani (1979) 98. 108 n. 50, fig. 11; Gibbs (1981) fig. 40

\footnote{159} “Sed cum omnes reclamaent et maxime cardinales, qui eum dilirare putabant, eo quod relicta pontificatus gloria post quasdam mulierculas iatus ire vellet, ille nullatem aequiesens quendam virum sanctum, qui Ametos dictus est, loco suo in pontificem ordinavit, et quia sedem apostolicam invitò clero reliquit, nomen eius de catalogo pontificum idem cleru abrasit omnenque gratiam, quam sacer ille virginum chorus in curia Romana habuerat, a tempore illo amisit.” (Legenda Aurea).
formation among the scriptoria of Bologna but on one of the great controversies of the fourteenth century, the abdication of Celestine, canonised by Clement V but damned (it is assumed) by Dante for his abdication that gave Boniface VIII access to power. Celestine had represented the desire of much of Christendom for a spiritual and austere leadership rather than a material and politically ambitious one, but his lack of preparation for such a politically demanding role led him to abdicate, for fear of his soul according to hostile rumour, and to his death in virtual imprisonment at the hands of Boniface, his exact opposite. Although by the fourteenth century the Dominicans were enemies of the Spiritual trend of the Franciscans with its stress on apostolic poverty, the mendicant orders as a whole, and particularly the Augustinians by the end of the century, undoubtedly reserved much reverence for this position. Even before Celestine’s papacy the Legenda evokes a similar relationship in reverse: the wildly elongated figure kneeling before Cyriacus is the holy man, Ametos, who was to succeed him according to Jacobus. No educated or religious observer could have looked at Tomaso’s fresco in 1357, at the peak of the materialism of the Avignon papacy, without feeling such contradictions: in 1362 the Blessed Guillaume Grimoald, abbot of S. Victor, Marseille, noted for his austerity (although also an experienced diplomat), was elected Pope Urban V, to the delight of Petrarch, of scholars and of the whole of the reformist aspect of the Church.

In the Departure from Rome Cyriacus has recovered much of his authority and, conveniently for the spectator, his tiara too (pl. 76). The Legenda lists many new participants in this journey: the Cardinal Vincent, Archbishop Jacobus of Antioch, the Bishops of Modena, Lucca and Ravena, and to join them at Cologna, Ursula’s Prince and his family. However, we see only two bishops and perhaps a cardinal without his hat. In the middle of the throne are two seculars looking the other way, perhaps Maximus and Africanus, the two Roman generals accused by the narrator of inciting the Hunnish Prince, Julius, to perpetrate the massacre: the lean face visible has an appropriately sombre expression. This scene like the Arrival of Ursula in Rome suggests the moment of Anna of Świdnica’s arrival and departure: only the memories of such an occasion can explain the splendid but very unsainty figure, all tails and pigtails, behind Ursula.

The last scene on the north wall, the Return to Cologne, is virtually lost but may be partly reconstructed by visualising the fragments in their proper places (pls. 77, 62). The scale of the figures suggests that the group on the right reading a large book (the Bible?) was in the prow of Ursula’s ship which would form a continuous frontal element across the composition, with tightly packed hulls above in two rows and a more broken rank of ships behind. The diagonal prow of the latter were balanced by a gently sloping shore with mountains on the left (a drastic conflation of Rhineland scenery!), a fort also visible towards the centre, and a view of Cologne, similar to Scene v but more frontal, filling the right half of the upper part of the frame. The

160 Dante, Divina Commedia, Inferno, III, 58-60, interpreted by Pietro di Dante and most early commentators as a reference to Celestine; ibid., xix, 52-60; Giovanni Villani, Cronica, VIII, caps. 5-6. Villani attributes the canonisation of Celestine to John XXII.
essentially horizontal balance is typical of the bottom row of scenes. If Tomaso knew the *Vigo cycle*, he deliberately replaced its two equal rows of ships with a deeper composition giving prominence to Ursula and a sense of a massed and jumbled fleet.

The final *Massacre* is another example of the frontal composition but of a very different character (pls. 78–80). The city of Cologne now fills the horizon, but its gates are shut against the army of Huns besieging it, and against Ursula and her companions. The Huns have virtually completed the mass execution; only Ursula is left on her feet. She has rejected the offer of marriage by the Hunnish Prince and is about to be shot through the throat by an archer. To ensure a good aim she is held by another soldier: both are in roughly classical armour, but the archer has a sharply pointed hat which belongs to the most extreme Hungarian types, probably Cuman or Tartar (fig. ix).\(^{161}\) He is taken from Vitale’s angry soldier featured in the Thyssen and Spilimbergo *Crucifixions* (fig. 100), but his withdrawn arm acquires a new relevance as it pulls back the bowstring; the whole bow was painted *al secco* and is now lost. As the Hungarians were known and feared above all as archers, these attributes are appropriate not only to Voragine’s text (‘directa sagitta eam transficit’) but to the circumstances of the 1350s. And like the characterisation of Cyruscus it shows Tomaso alive to giving the almost unselectively dynamic images of Vitale da Bologna a particular role for which they appear even better suited than their inventor can have imagined: if it were not for the unquestionable priority of Vitale’s works one would assume that they were created for these roles.

Other soldiers wear chain mail or surcoats, pointed or wide brimmed helmets, while the Prince is a slit-eyed Tartar in a long coat, surely the Cuman soutane worn by László ‘the Cuman’ and on occasion by western nobles like Amadeus, the ‘Green Count’ of Savoy (fig. ix).\(^{162}\) The variety of costume as well as individual particulars well recalls that army of 40,000 Hungarians and Germans led by Louis the Great. Tomaso was invoking the aid of St Ursula in a church all too close to the front line, across the river from the centre of the town, and recreating in deadly earnest a fate that was the very real fear of everyone about him.

In the mid-fourteenth century most Italians had no immediate experience of such deliberate massacres, though, of course, the effects of the Black Death would still be fresh in the memory, and there were many minor wars in the decade 1348–58. But normally humbler prisoners were stripped of their arms and freed, their leaders ransomed, and towns pillaged according to the terms they had obtained. The Black Prince, however, had massacred whole city populations in France, and the appalling Robert of Geneva, as papal legate (later anti-Pope ‘Clement (sic) VII’) butchered the inhabitants of Faenza in 1376 and Cesena in 1377.\(^{163}\) The Hungarians may have given the impression of similar proclivities, judging from the tone of Villani’s account. At

---

\(^{161}\) See nn. 83, 134

\(^{162}\) For László see n. 83. Amadeus of Savoy, returning from a crusade in the Balkans against the Bulgarians and Turks in alliance with the Greeks and Hungarians, had a miniver-trimmed mantle (like this one) made for him in Pisa ‘*ad modum tartariscum*’ in 1367 (Cox, 1967, 238).

\(^{163}\) Mallet (1974) 49–1, 193–201, dealing mainly with fifteenth-century experience. But already by 1386 there was current the idea of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ war practice, and the Bolognese legist, Giovanni da Legnano, contributed to the legal theory of its conduct. (ibid., 205). See also nn. 87–8.
Vigo di Cadore the Massacre opposes a generalised mass of bodies to a row of archers; although their costume is generalised and their leader’s a Roman fantasy, their shortish bows suggest familiarity with the weapons of the Hungarian mercenaries spreading through Italy. The composition lacks Tomaso’s expression of cold-blooded despatching of the fallen, however.

The universality of death is very strongly expressed by Tomaso: the Pope falls to the left of Ursula, his tiara tumbling from his head. Next to him can be seen the chubby profile of the cardinal who looks up to him in the Abdication, his own follower. Gerasina is further up to our left; below, a girl is dragged backwards to be cut down; beyond, another girl is pulled almost upside down by her hair. A writhing tangle of soldiers and tumbling maidens with their priestly companions fills the whole picture up to the city walls. Some figures probably reflect other Vitale or Pseudo-Jacopino motifs, but the range and realism of the movement draws as always on Tomaso’s direct observation, and, may one presume, on a gut reaction to the events around? Some repetition there is, giving rhythm to the catastrophe: a figure above the Pope echoes the pose of Ursula’s executioner (another archer?), and a series of near-profile soldiers cutting down their victims leads across to the left. In the foreground are two striking but very different figures bending over their victims and a third, more frontal, below Ursula. Unlike the other cycles it is not the wild gestures of violence that are emphasised but the interaction of the executioners’ knives and the victims’ agonies, the ‘Cornishmen and Welshmen’ working their way through the fallen knights of Crécy.

The deliberate restraint and repetitive rows of figures used by Giotto for complex and tragic scenes are also avoided. Tomaso seeks profusion and confusion throughout the cycle, especially here. The result is a consistent excitement, a sense of fantasy that stems from the implausible story and the reference to far off lands and peoples, but which is also full of human vignettes, drawn from the experience of Bolognese painters and illustrators, from the awareness of Bolognese lawyers’ contact with reality at its most contentious, through which Tomaso can make us suspend our disbelief or, at the end, thrust us into his own personal experience of reality. The formal entries and exits, the intimate personal encounters, come to a grinding climax in this final Massacre, perhaps the most directly violent picture ever painted in its juxtaposition of murderous frenzy and passive submission.

This sequence is unusual in concluding on such a tragic note; the Ursula Triumphant on the east wall can hardly resolve the narrative; it is a votive image independent of the side walls showing Ursula, Gerasina and her daughters adored by the patrons of the chapel or of this decoration (pls. 81–2). This is not to deny, of course, the element of hope they offered to the fearful congregations of 1356–8. The frontal vision of Ursula is almost heraldic as she lifts her arms like an emergent butterfly to reveal miniver side-vents, miniver-lined cloak and sleeve-tails, in hundreds of skins of different sizes and at different angles. Agnes in S. Nicolò wears the same dress in reverse, but her

---

164 Cl. the development of Giotto’s Massacre of the Innocents from Padua, Arena Chapel, to Assisi, S. Francesco. Lower Church, north transept (Prevalti, 1967, figs. 171-2) where it becomes more complex in content and gesture but preserves these unifying principles. I think that Giotto had a series of experienced and talented assistants (Maso di Banco, Puccio Gappanna, Stefano (?) and Taddeo Gaddi) working for him at Assisi, but not a Doppelgänger as Prevalti suggests.

165 Tomaso’s representation of miniver, although of a
demeanour is shy and modest. Ursula raises her banner aloft (its stem only a shadow across her wrist), a born leader in triumph, though her face is not proud. We are reminded of Dante’s vision of Beatrice ‘quando lo segnore de la giustizia chiamoe questa gentilissima a gloriare sotto la insegna di quella regina benedetto virgo Maria’. Ursula’s face is softer than the comparable face of Mary Annunziata, but it is more worn, and also nearer: the other had to tell at a greater distance; its china-like complexion is not dissimilar from Gerasina’s. Similar triumphs, probably both earlier, were painted at Collalto and Vigo, but though they may have inspired Tomaso’s use of fashion, particularly the furs of Collalto, neither reaches these heights of expressive and decorative intensity, despite the tight space in which Tomaso’s figures appeared.

The cult of St Ursula in the Veneto at the middle of the fourteenth century is amply demonstrated by surviving works of art. A set of sixteen panels by a workshop dependent on Paolo Veneziano survives. It includes a shipbuilding scene and three sailing episodes, well suited to a Venetian narrative. Moreover one of these scenes survives from a similar set, now in Bergamo. Tomaso includes two sailing scenes, and the frescoes at Vigo di Cadore have a spectacular scene of the voyage too. The multiplication of the Venetian panels implies that there was a Venetian cult and not just a single cult in Treviso (though one of these polyptychs possibly stood on the altar of the Ursula Chapel). Probably several heads or other relics were imported into or via Venice, and the travels of the saint from one end of Europe to the other would certainly have appealed to the Venetians as qualifications for a patron saint. An alternative source for the cult is the insatiable relic collector, Charles IV, who was a coniottiere for the Venetians in the 1330s, and who captured and held Belluno and Feltre in 1337 in his own name. For Charles and the citizens of Cadore and Treviso the Ursula cycle had the added interest of dealing with the East European and German peoples and sites with which their commercial and political affairs were closely

rather heraldic effect, is actually quite realistic, including indications of the animals’ legs. The skins were, of course, of varying sizes according to the animal, but would be graded for use. Delott (1978) 1, 283–4, gives the size of miniver skins at York and London as $5\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{2}$–$2$ (14cm × 4–5cm); Ursula’s cape is ten or eleven skins tall, $1.40–1.55$m, or a natural shoulder height. The edging of her dress uses smaller skins, possibly even offcuts, as befits the smaller area available. It would take some 250–300 squirrel skins to make, but the complete outfit might run to many more (ibid., 1, 350-65). Cox (1967) 249, notes a mantle and jaqueté lined with 1200 squirrel skins that Amadeus of Savoy acquired in Paris.

166 Vita Nuova, cap. xxvii. See Gibbs (1986). 167 Muraro (1970) 144–5; formerly in the Queiro Collection, Paris and G. Volterra, Florence. The scenes shown are: (i) the English King instructing his ambassadors (or hearing their report) (ii) the ambassadors before King Mauros (iii) Mauros and Ursula pray for guidance (iv) Ursula is instructed by Christ and advises her father (v) Mauros gives the ambassadors the conditions for the marriage (vi) four carpenters build a ship for Ursula’s voyage (vii) (viii) (ix) three scenes of Ursula’s voyage, in one of which she is instructed by an angel of their martyrdom (presumably the sailing to Cologne, first rather than last as in the present structure) (x) the Prince of the Huns and his army before Cologne (xi) or (xii) either Ursula and her followers’ martyrdom or their Triumph (xii)–(xiii) the Martyrdom of the 11,000 virgins (xiv) the Martyrdom of St Ursula (as in Tomaso’s the Prince instructs an archer who shoots her) (xv) the burial of their heads by the Bishop of Cologne (xvi) (or xv) Ursula appears to a clergymen.

This list modifies slightly that given by Muraro in the light of the Treviso and Vigo cycles. The range of styles within the work and between this and the Bergamo panel might reflect the many sons who collaborated with Paolo, Luca and Giovanni working on the 1345 over of the Palazzo d’Oro, Giovanni on the 1358 Coronation in New York. Marco is recorded as Paolo’s son in Padua, 1362–82, and a ‘Gregorio Paoli de Venetiis pictoris’ is recorded in Bologna (Filippini e Zucchini, 1947, 235, under Vitale da Bologna and not published separately). 168 Muraro (1970) 137–8. 169 Sjeskai (1978) 28, 30, 106; Jarrett (1935) 52–6 (Charles’ own account of the taking of Belluno and Feltre, and of the earlier attempt to kidnap him by the Venetians); for a vivid example of Charles’ pursuit of relics, Cox (1967) 200–1.
involved; Charles had family and political ties with the Hungarian crown and its territories.\textsuperscript{170}

All four Ursula cycles probably date from the 1350s, and if Tomaso’s appears more advanced in style and costume, we cannot ignore the conservatism of Venice and of Alpine villages like Vigo in dating the others. The Venetian cycle also shows the English as Easterners, wearing pigtails, arabic gowns and pointed hats and turbans. All of these might be found among the Hungarian peoples, though the impression is Middle Eastern, Turkish and Arabic rather than Balkan, perhaps the trading partners (buyers of slaves and sometime pirates) of Venice, rather than their political foes of the mid-50s. Tomaso may have been aware of this idea and of other features in the Venetian works: the throne projecting into the picture (which he gives to the active English King rather than the passive Breton King), the city wall behind the \textit{Massacre} scenes, the truncated basilica (taken by the Venetian artist from Giotto’s \textit{Prayer for the flowering of the Suitors’ staffs} in the Arena Chapel, but developed into the Assisi design by Tomaso). But Tomaso’s treatments are invariably more powerful: the reversal of the placing of the two kings within the first pair of scenes is crucial for the characterisation of the two men and their kingdoms. And the conventional backdrop in the Venetian work leaves unspoken the role of the besieged city that is so important for Tomaso.

Comparison with the Venetian programme shows a very different emphasis to the story as a whole, Tomaso giving great prominence to the Pope’s participation with its constitutional problems, and I think this was his own choice, reflecting his Bolognese education. As I have stressed, he was a man of culture, writing elegant Latin prayers on his paintings. He was not the first painter in Treviso to boast such an education either. Tommaso di Bonaccorso of Treviso left books on painting and singing, a book in French, two copies of Dante and a \textit{Legend} of St Brendan in his will of 1344.\textsuperscript{171} It is likely, then, that Tomaso had complete control over the choice and arrangement of subjects, and consciously designed the scheme to pair off interior scenes, voyages and urban panoramas. The Venetian cycle omitted both Cyriacus and Gerasina, who provide a colourful foil for Ursula in Tomaso’s, introducing instead the dramatically colourless episode of the enshrinement of the martyrs’ heads by a bishop, using a different source from the \textit{Legenda Aurea}. The Viennese \textit{Biblia Pauperum} discussed by Coletti (Vienna cod. 570, fols. 66–68)\textsuperscript{172} used a similar source to Tomaso’s, but, as emendations to the captions show, with much confusion – Ursula’s mother gets baptised instead of the Prince – so that it is hard to tell whether the \textit{Legenda Aurea} was the actual text used for it. It introduces briefly the Cordula episode, a distraction avoided by Tomaso. The Vigo di Cadore cycle shows Cyriacus but is generally independent of Tomaso’s both in the pacing of the narrative and the pictorial presentation; again the reverence of the bodies and the \textit{Legenda’s} ‘apparition to a devotee of the Virgin Martyrs’ are added to the cycle. Obviously there was no fixed canon of iconography for St Ursula (unlike the Virgin–Christ sequence of the Arena

\textsuperscript{170} Louis the \textit{Great} of Hungary was his son-in-law (Stejskal, 1978, 92). While working for the Venetians against pirates Charles had travelled through Hungary and Dalmatia and developed a lasting interest in the

\textsuperscript{171} Biscaro (1910); Gargan (1979) 27 n. 21.\textsuperscript{172} Coletti (1931) 51–4 (141–4).
Chapel or the life of St Francis, even of St Mark) and probably no consistent choice of text. A *Legenda Sancte Ursule* was recorded in an inventory of the Church of S. Giovanni Battista, attached to Treviso Cathedral, in 1359,173 while Jacobus' *Legenda Aurae* was ubiquitous: one of the first books in the inventory of Fra Fallione’s gift to S. Nicolò in 1347 is a copy of it.174

In the absence of a fixed tradition, Tomaso’s choices of subject, sequence, placing and composition can be seen as conscious and deliberate artistic decisions, made by a mature artist reacting to a particular commission and in exceptional circumstances, almost certainly a patron from the influential Cavalieri Gaudenzia and a moment in the traumatic Hungarian siege. The close resemblances of Tomaso’s painting technique and many of his protagonists to the Dominican portraits of 1351-2, as well as the numerous quotations from Vitale and other Bolognese sources of the first half of the century preclude a dating in the 1360s which had become normal in recent art-history.175 The evidence of costume and fashion points to the 1350s. The mitres and tiaras of the two works are similar in shape and their essentially linear treatment, with a light shadow between the points and on the curved sides. The sketchy white flowers of Gerasina’s dress take up those on the background curtains in the Dominican cells. The Dominican faces are, if anything, more fully modelled, perhaps because they had a *giornata* to each, but their types recur: compare Giovanni da Schio and the younger English ambassador (pls. 39, 68), his companion and Peter Cendra (pl. 36). The nervous profile of Vincent de Beauvais is a common feature of the *Ursula Cycle* – Ursula herself, the English ambassador, the cardinals on the left of the *Abdication*. Gerard de Toulouse resembles the abdicating Pope as well as Vitale’s *Ambrose* (pls. 75, 13). Gerasina resembles, her sex apart, Bernard de Traverserès, particularly in the *Triumph*. Cyriacus’ richly modelled hair in the *Dream* has already been compared to Innocent V’s. The cartoon-like outlines and bulging eyeballs of the cardinals at the *Abdication* appear in Pierre de Tarentaise and in Kilwardby, using outline for very different effects in each case. The idealised faces, softly modelled and elongated like Vitale’s saints and princesses, which we see in the *Massacre* can be seen in the faces with high cheekbones of Pierre, Latino Malabranca and William of England (pls. 20, 22, 28). Such consistency of types is unlikely in a major artist at an interval of more than a decade: one has only to turn to the Karlštejn *Triptych* for contrast. Given the totally different pictorial scope of the two works, the resemblances, the references to reading and the hierarchy of the Church, are quite remarkable. On the other hand there is a general plasticity in all the figures, in their occupation of space and in the outlining of their faces, that looks forward to the *Triptych*, and, significantly, to the fragments of the decoration of the Cappella Maggiore of S. Margherita itself, the style, that is, of Tomaso’s later works.

173 Gargan (1979) 22 no. 15.
174 *Ibid.*, 16 no. 8: see Grimailo (1918) 146, 155.
175 As the leading authority on Tomaso, Coletti had established a date in the 1360s for the frescoes, his original uncertainty giving way to a clear later dating in this period when Tomaso is undocumented, rather than his early activity in Treviso, or the period 1357-60 when he is known to have been in Modena. Zuliani and I both returned to the earlier dating on stylistic and other grounds in 1979.
The Cappella Maggiore

Some small fragments of a Passion cycle from the Cappella Maggiore, notably the Noli Me Tangere and the Road to Emmaus (pls. 84–6), appear to be Tomaso’s last frescoes in Treviso, either from 1357 or from an undocumented return to Treviso in 1360–65. They are, as Zuliani says, more like the Karlštejn Triptych than the other Treviso frescoes, more plastic and rounded in form, more controlled in spirit, and since this anticipates a more advanced phase of his work, it is improbable on logical grounds, as well as those of their undeniably high quality, that they should be the work of a follower as usually suggested.\(^{176}\) There is no sign of an independent creation by artists of such quality and so close in style to Tomaso, who, it should be remembered, signed both the S. Niccolò frescoes at the beginning of this sequence and the Karlštejn works towards its end. And since he was still in his twenties he was unlikely to establish sufficient dominance over capable painters that they should submerge their style so totally in his.

Bailo records removing from the demolished ‘Apse’ of S. Margherita two heads, Christ blessing, and a separate fragment with the Magdalene in an architectural setting from which only her hair survived (fragments 1 and 2 in my Catalogue), and Christ and a pilgrim on the Road to Emmaus (fragment 3).\(^{177}\) Curiously Bailo calls the two heads (Museo Civico P 19–20) ‘stupende,’ the pilgrim ‘scoretissimo’ (was he referring rather to fragment 4?), while Menegazzi accepts the latter, perceptively, as Tomaso’s own, but calls the former ‘tra i saggi più modesti della pittura del tempo’, rather harshly.\(^{178}\) Taste changes our perception of quality as drastically as our evaluation of its ideals! The two heads are perhaps the work of a competent Veronese, and possibly from the decoration that preceded Tomaso’s;\(^{179}\) they are not dissimilar from the few surviving busts of the friezes of S. Nicolò.

The general layout of the surviving fragments of Tomaso’s frescoes can be seen in the drawing by Carlini (Catalogue drawing iii) of the north wall of the chapel, in which they form a horizontal band some 1.60 metres high and 6.75 metres wide, to judge from the surviving fragments (pl. 84). Tomaso’s work fits above an earlier curtained dado and a curious ‘barber’s pole’ border; it extends to the springing of a polygonal apse. Originally there was another dado by Tomaso painted over this, visible at the west (left) of Carlini’s drawing. It is a curiously small-scaled series of scenes with figures one metre high against the one and a half of the Ursula Cycle, and in a continuous space perhaps, though there is a vertical division in fragment 2. This corresponds to the major divisions of the Ursula Cycle as preserved in the Dream of Cyriacus: the other divisions of the Cappella Maggiore may have been lost before Carlini drew it. Perhaps the strip formed the predella to a Last Judgement sequence from which a small fragment survives (pl. 87).\(^{180}\) This has a couple of very expressive figures, of

\(^{176}\) See Zuliani (1979) 167.
\(^{177}\) Bailo (1883) 28.
\(^{178}\) Menegazzi (1964) 189–90, 292–4.
\(^{179}\) For the extensive evidence of a consistent programme of decoration in S. Margherita’s chapels see pp. 91, 113.
\(^{180}\) Bailo (1883) 29, refers to this juxtaposition. The assistant, or at least the assistant responsible for the other fragments may also have worked on the Mantua Chapel.
higher quality than generally recognised, perhaps Tomaso’s own, though hurried, work. Clutching hands play a notable part in this detail – the woman clutched by a demon – and in the unusual (and rather carelessly drawn) Emmaus in which the apostle, dressed, unlike Duccio’s, in the hairy cloak, takes Christ by the hand.

The idealised and deeply modelled features of Christ in the Emmaus and Noli Me Tangere again depict the divine, and we have seen a consistent tendency to idealisation in Tomaso’s approach to this level of being. But there are also traces of a vigorous rocky landscape and a colourful use of plants, elements which his previous work only introduces in the most summary way, though significantly they play a still larger part in the Mantua Passion scenes. The S. Margherita fragments and the ruins of the Mantuan chapel provide a frustrating glimpse of the many facets of Tomaso’s art lost in the passage of time, and perhaps cut short in this chapel by the misfortunes which befell Treviso between 1356 and 1358. S. Margherita itself may have been hit by missiles, located as it was in the outskirts of the city; certainly Bailo’s discoveries in the chapel are extremely fragmentary and almost entirely from the same area. The other two fragments indicated by Carlini and preserved in the Ca’ Noal show a drop in quality, quite startling in the second example: an angel in the top right corner and two figures to the left (fragments 4, 5; pl. 86). The workshop was, it seems, hurrying to finish the job, perhaps in Tomaso’s absence.\footnote{The classic example of such a situation is the Chapel of the Bargello in Florence, attributed to Giotto by Ghiberti, a reliable source (Belloso, 1974, 113-20). Giotto died before its completion in 1337, and the frescoes are the most ragged in composition and quality in Florence (Previtali, 1967, 335–40).} Tomaso’s assistants are now very much in evidence, but they were always few in number, never the team of young pupils who enabled Giotto to paint in several cities at once. But his influence continued through them, men who probably could not afford to abandon the city, and several Emilian painters are recorded in the city after the siege: Martino Gerarducci da Modena, whose signed fragment suggests that he was such an assistant of Tomaso’s, Manfredino ‘il Bastardino’ of Reggio, Guido Guidi of Bologna who was older but not senior in artistic standing. The crypt of the Cathedral and the cloister wall of S. Caterina testify to their success, as we shall see.
fig. 16 Vitale da Bologna: Sts Augustine and Jerome. Udine Cathedral, Cappella di S. Nicolò.
fig. 32  S. Margherita, Treviso: interior (orientated to the south)

fig. 52  'The Illustrator': *Decretum Gratiani, Causa II*: A bishop is tried for fornication by a papal court. Vatican, vat. lat. 1366, fol. 97r

fig. 53  '1346 Master': *Decretum Gratiani, Part I*: Pope and Emperor seated in joint authority between ecclesiastical and civil courts. Geneva, Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire, MS lat. 60, fol. 2r
fig. 66  Feltre Master: *Madonna and Child with Sts Anthony, Francis, Bonaventura and Christopher* (1351), Rinaldi Chapel, Treviso, S. Francesco
fig. 82a  A. Carlini: The apsidal chapels, plan and architectural details of S. Margherita, Treviso. Treviso, Biblioteca Comunale, C31

fig. 82b  G. Botter: The interior of the Cappella Maggiore of S. Margherita, Treviso. Treviso, Biblioteca Comunale, C49

fig. 83a  Tomaso’s workshop: a male and a female saint; fragments of border, south-west (liturgical) pilaster of the Ursula Chapel. Treviso, S. Margherita

fig. 83b  Fragments of Tomaso’s borders and those of the earlier decoration in the Ursula Chapel. Treviso, S. Margherita

fig. 83c-d  Tomaso’s workshop: a female saint. Ursula Chapel, south-west (liturgical) pilaster. Treviso, S. Margherita
fig. 84  A. Carlini: The Ursula Chapel before partial demolition (drawn from memory). Treviso. Biblioteca Comanale, C57

fig. 85 'The Illustrator': The Legend of St Catherine, 1343, 178mm × 171mm (narrative only). Clement V: Constitutiones, Padua, Biblioteca Capitolare, MS A25, fol. 1r

fig. 86  Vitale da Bologna: The Funeral and Posthumous Miracles of St Nicholas, 1348, south wall of the Cappella di S. Nicolò. Udine, Duomo

fig. 87  Vitale da Bologna: the Nativity, from the west wall of S. Apollonia, Mezzaratta. Bologna, Pinacoteca Nazionale
fig. 88a  Giotto: border with St Matthew, south-east corner of the nave. Padua, Cappella Scrovegni

fig. 88b  Giotto: Baptism and border with a circumcision, middle row, north wall. Padua, Cappella Scrovegni

fig. 88c  Giotto: Crucifixion and border with the Brazen Serpent, bottom row, north wall. Padua, Cappella Scrovegni

fig. 89  Giotto and workshop: Nativity cycle (detail), north transept, Lower Church. Assisi, S. Francesco
fig. 90  Niccolò da Bologna: *Intercession for the Dead*, 1349. *Book of Hours*, Kremsmünster, Stiftsbibliothek MS clm. 4, fol. 83r

fig. 91  The apse of the Cappella Scrovegni, Padua, with the Scrovegni tomb above the altar

fig. 92a  Andrea Orcagna: *Hope, Annunciation* (1352–9). Florence, Orsanmichele

fig. 92b  Detail of the west façade of Modena Cathedral
fig. 93a  Lombard workshop: Marjoram. *Historia Plantarum of Wenceslas IV*, Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense MS 459, fol. 154r

fig. 93b  Lombard workshop: Basil. *Historia Plantarum*, Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense MS 459, fol. 188r
fig. 94a  Bolognese illuminator: frontispiece to Book VI, Pietro dei Crescenzi, *Liber ruralium commodorum*, Vatican, vat. lat. 1529, fol. 45r
fig. 94c  Simone dei Crocefissi: Madonna del Parto, ca 1359, fresco in the former north chapel. Bologna, S. Maria dei Servi
fig. 95  Vitale da Bologna: The insane Princess healed by the body of St Anthony, 0.77 × 0.37m. Bologna, Pinacoteca Nazionale
fig. 96  Giotto: *The Visitation*. Padua, Cappella Scrovegni
fig. 97  Giotto: detail of *The Last Judgement: the Elect.*
Padua, Cappella Scrovegni

fig. 99  Vitale da Bologna: *St Ambrose,*
0.72 × 0.32m. Pesaro, Museo Civico

fig. 100  Vitale da Bologna: *Crucifixion,*
0.93 × 0.51m. Lugano, Thyssen Bornemisza Collection
pl. 7b  Detail: St Agnes
pl. 8 Tomaso da Modena and an anonymous Emilian master: the Navecicle from S. Margherita, Chapel of St Ursula, Treviso, Museo Civico
pl. 9a  Detail: the head of Christ

pl. 9b  Detail: the feet of Christ

pl. 9c  Detail: Christ’s disciple

pl. 9d  A. Carlini: *The Navicella before removal from S. Margherita*. Watercolour. Treviso, Biblioteca Comunale C47
pl. 13 The frescoes of the entrance wall: The Dominican Beati and Cardinals and the inscriptions recording the foundation of the Order and the House at Treviso, with Tomaso's signature (lower right). Treviso, S. Nicolò.
pl. 60a  A. Carlini: *The south transept and Ursula Chapel of S. Margherita*. Treviso, Biblioteca Comunale, C32

pl. 60b  A. Carlini: *The Springing of the vault of the Ursula Chapel and another chapel in S. Margherita*. Treviso, Biblioteca Comunale C44
pl. 61  G. Botti: The Dream of Pope Cyriacus and the Navicella before their removal. Treviso, Biblioteca Comunale C52
pl. 62  Tomaso’s frescoes on the north wall of the Ursula Chapel: photomontage of the surviving fragments by the author
pl. 63  Tomaso's frescoes on the south wall of the Ursula Chapel: photomontage of the surviving fragments by the author
pl. 64a  A. Carlini: *Tomaso’s Mary Annunziata*, before removal (?). Treviso, Biblioteca Comunale C53

pl. 64b  A. Carlini: *The Meeting with the Pope*. Treviso, Biblioteca Comunale C56
pl. 65a  Fragments of the borders of the Ursula Cycle (clockwise: nos. 1, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2). Treviso, Ca’ Noal

pl. 65b  The Agnus Dei border fragment (no. 8). Treviso, Ca’ Noal
pl. 66a  St Michael from the border of a lunette in the Ursula Chapel. Treviso, Museo Civico

pl. 66b  Detail of Mary Annunziata: two copies of St Luke’s Gospel on her reading desk
pl. 67a  Mary Annunziata. Treviso, Museo Civico

pl. 67b  Detail of Mary Annunziata: the herb garden
pl. 70  The Leave-taking of St Ursula. Treviso, Museo Civico
pl. 72  The Voyage to Cologne. Treviso, Museo Civico
pl. 73  The Meeting of Ursula and the Pope. Treviso, Museo Civico
pl. 71  The Dream of Pope Cyriacus. Treviso, Museo Civico
pl. 76  The Departure from Rome. Treviso, Museo Civico
pl. 77a  The Return to Cologne. Treviso, Museo Civico

pl. 77b  Three figures from the prow of the Return to Cologne. Treviso, Ca' Noal
pl. 80a  The city of Rome from the Meeting with the Pope.

pl. 80b  The Massacre of Ursula’s companions (detail)

pl. 80c  Pope Cyriacus’ book-cupboard, from the Dream.
pl. 81  *St Ursula in Triumph. Treviso, Museo Civico*
pl. 82a  A. Carlini: *The Voyage to Cologne and the Madonna and Child of the Ursula Chapel*. Treviso, Biblioteca Comunale C.55

pl. 82b  *St Ursula in Triumph*: detail of the donors. Treviso, Museo Civico
pl. 84a  A. Carlini: The north wall of the Cappella Maggiore with Tomaso's frescoes. Treviso. Biblioteca Comunai C48

pl. 84b  The surviving fragments of Tomaso's frescoes in relation to Carlini's drawing of the Cappella Maggiore: the arabic numerals refer to the list of fragments, the roman numerals to the list of drawings.
pl. 85a Christ of the Noli Me Tangere. Treviso, Museo Civico

pl. 85b Magdalene and Emmaus or Jerusalem. Treviso, Ca' Noal
pl. 86a  Christ and an apostle on the road to Emmaus. Treviso, Museo Civico

pl. 86b  Two unidentified figures. Treviso, Ca’ Noal

pl. 86c  Fragment of an angel and the border of a scene. Treviso, Ca’ Noal
pl. 87  Fragment of the Damned from an Inferno. Treviso, Museo Civico