Chapter 15

A NEW DIRECTION

–i–

FILIPPO FARSETTI

BY 1764, the year of Algarotti's death, the great flowering of Venetian art was very nearly at an end. Piazzetta had been dead for ten years; Tiepolo was in Spain and showed no desire to return to Italy; Pittoni, though president of the Accademia, was increasingly neglected as his powers declined. Everyone recognised that the new generation of history painters—men like Fontebasso and Zugno (born in 1709) and Guarana (born in 1720)—were adding little beyond imitation to the heritage of the past. Of the view painters, Canaletto went on mechanically repeating himself until he too died in 1769, while Francesco Guardi was virtually unknown to the great patrons and was working for an altogether different public, as will become clear in a later chapter. Zuccarelli was mostly out of Venice, and Zais was living in poverty, almost completely neglected. Of the great names of the first half of the century only Pietro Longhi carried on for another twenty years, while his son Alessandro was bringing a new spirit of detached observation into his portraits of the grandees and intellectuals of the dying Republic.[1]

The artists were vanishing—but so too were the patrons and even the great collections they had amassed. The Sagredo pictures were being dispersed; the Schulenburg collection was broken up in 1775, and in any case most of it had long since been sent to Germany; Smith's best paintings had been acquired for George III in 1762, and the remainder of his gallery was sold by his widow a few years later. Algarotti's own pictures began to be dispersed soon after the death of his brother Bonomo in 1776. When Zanetti died in 1767, Mariette wrote that he assumed that his pictures too would soon be leaving Venice, as no one seemed interested any longer in forming a collection there.[2] These were the men who had encouraged the revival of Venetian painting during the first half of the century, and the great patrician families were even more concerned to sell their possessions to the hordes of agents that descended like vultures on Venice.

And yet a few men of great distinction proved that the 'Enlightenment', as it had reached Venice through publishers and travellers or men of letters such as Lodoli and Algarotti, suggested new possibilities for a different kind of patronage, though it is

[1] For a vivid account of the deplorable state of Venetian painting during the last quarter of the century see G. A. Moschini, 1810.

[2] Letter from Mariette to Temanza of 15 April 1768 published by E. Müntz, 1890, p. 116.

not surprising that they tended to turn away from painting. The man who exercised the greatest influence in this way was Filippo Farsetti.[1] He was born in 1703 of an exceedingly rich family that had only acquired patrician status in 1664, and at about the age of 17 or 18 he became the pupil of Padre Lodoli[2]—the direct inspirer of all three patrons discussed in this chapter. Like the others he too travelled a great deal and thus acquired a far wider range of culture than was common in the Venetian nobility. In particular he lived for some years in Paris. He avoided the political responsibilities attached to his status by becoming an *abate*, and most of his time, energy and money was devoted to the arts.

The originality of Farsetti's tastes could be better gauged if we had more information about the chronology of his collecting. There is, however, no doubt that he was by far the most important figure behind the neo-classical movement in Venice, and that as the century advanced, his contemporaries, and then his successors, considered him to be the most significant of all patrons in the city. This reputation was earned chiefly by the immense collection he assembled in his family palace near the Rialto of casts taken from antique statues all over Europe, but especially in Rome. He was able to do this through the intervention of his cousin, Carlo Rezzonico, who became Pope Clement XIII in 1758. In Rome he moved with all the assurance of an English *milord*, employing the sculptor Ventura Furlani to make casts from the main statues of antiquity and the painter Luigi Pozzi to copy the principal works of Raphael and Annibale Carracci. That his taste was not as hidebound as that of the later, more rigid, theorists of neo-classicism is shown by his choice of four statues to represent modern sculpture—Michelangelo's *Risen Christ* in Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Sansovino's *Bacchus*, Giambologna's *Mercury* and Bernini's *Neptune*—and also by his small collection of paintings. Few contemporaries were represented, apart from the inevitable Zuccarelli, but he showed great enthusiasm for the Dutch and Flemish and he owned pictures attributed to a wide range of seventeenth-century Italian masters. Essentially his outlook was cosmopolitan rather than Venetian, and this was reflected in his choice of paintings, in the strong classical bias of his sculptures and in the architecture of his country house.

This far surpassed in extravagance even the collections he had assembled in Venice. He had originally planned to construct a Roman-type villa at Padua, but when a dispute with local landowners made this impossible, he turned to the family estates at S. Maria di Sala, a few miles away. The villa, designed to hold his expanding collections, was wholly unlike the standard Venetian prototypes, and was in some ways much closer to the Austrian pattern. A convex bay in the centre projects from the main block, which is joined by lower two-storey wings to small, square pavilions at each end. The lower storey of these wings is made up of rectangular arcades into which are inserted forty-two Doric columns from the Temple of the Dea Concordia in Rome which were ceded to

[1] The main sources for Farsetti's life are the relevant passages in the family history published by his cousin Tommaso Giuseppe in 1778 and the pamphlet of 1829 by [P. A. Paravia]. The pictures in the Farsetti gallery and a great deal of useful material about Filippo and other members of the family are recorded in the article by Giovanni Sforza, 1911, pp. 153-95.

[2] [Andrea Memmo], 1786, p. 60, for Farsetti's admiration of Lodoli.

him by the Pope.[1] An excessive rigidity breaks up the natural rhythm demanded by the plan, and even at the height of its glory it must have been impressive rather than beautiful. It is now a battered shell used as a store by local peasants. Farsetti was said to have spent a million ducats on its adornment, thus nearly ruining his family, but striking the imagination of his contemporaries beyond measure. 'The marvellous splendour of the villa', wrote one of them breathlessly,[2] 'the richness, the grandeur, the fine taste, the collection of rarities, the arrangement of the different parts, everything that is there, everything that decorates it and goes to make up the whole, everything proclaims the genius, the nobility, the fine taste, the magnificence of this man who was so highly thought of in Paris'. As much attention was paid to the gardens as to the house itself: its great botanical rarities were among the most celebrated sights of the Veneto, and it was decorated with columns, temples and towers.

Farsetti's ostentatious wealth and devotion to classical sculpture would in themselves have made him a most important figure in the society of his time. But his real influence derived from his keen interest in the contemporary arts. There seems no doubt whatsoever that he was making a deliberate attempt to change the nature of Venetian painting and sculpture, and that he was at least partly successful. His collections were open to students who were encouraged to come and copy them. And as the Academy had nothing that could even remotely compare with his casts from the antique, his palace became the main centre for all those who were absorbing the theories of Algarotti and others about the need to follow classical models—it is particularly fitting, therefore, that Farsetti should have given Algarotti a regular allowance during the last year of the latter's life.[3]

Among all those who studied in the Palazzo Farsetti the most famous was Antonio Canova, who came to Venice in 1768, and whose first works, two baskets of fruit and flowers, were placed on the staircase of the palace.[4] Thus well before the sculptor went to Rome he was already steeped in the works of antiquity, and when he was actually on the spot he often commented in his diary that he had already seen Farsetti's copies of the originals that he was now viewing; he even found that Raphael's loggie had been much easier to study in the version that he had known in Venice.[5]

But Farsetti did not live to see the success of the one artist who appeared to justify his faith in a classic revival. Some five or six years before his death in 1774 he was struck down by illness and thereafter he was largely incapacitated. He was, however, by no means the only member of his family to encourage the arts. His cousin Daniele (1725-1787), himself an amateur painter who once showed some of his pastels at the exhibition of S. Rocco,[6] inherited the collection and even increased it, and also continued the

[1] De Tipaldo, 1833, and Mazzotti, 1954, p. 133.

[2] Letter from P. Boscovich to Vallisnieri of 1772 published 1811, p. 33.

[3] Archivio di Stato, Venice—Sezione Notarile: Lodovico Gabrieli—Atti, 7567, p. 788v, shows that on 11 April 1764 N. H. Filippo Farsetti made a yearly allowance of 550 *zecchini* to Algarotti.

[4] Malamani: *Canova*, p. 6.

[5] Canova: *Quaderni*, pp. 18 and 31.

[6] Haskell and Levey, 1958, p. 185.

patronage of contemporary artists. Daniele's brother, Tommaso Giuseppe (1720-91), was more interested in his fine collection of books and manuscripts than in works of art, but he too remained loyal to the family tradition of which he wrote an exalted account. However, a note of ruefulness comes in when he describes Filippo's collecting and mentions the enormous expense that was involved, and the last years of his life were embittered by the dissipated extravagance of his nephew Anton Francesco whom he even denounced to the Inquisitors.[1] This was to no avail, and in the first years of the nineteenth century the property was finally broken up and the collections sold, to the indignant dismay of Venetian scholars.[2]

Because Canova was the only important artist to emerge from Venice at the end of the eighteenth century, the influence of Farsetti seems in retrospect to have been negligible or deleterious. His contemporaries thought very differently, and all their hopes for a great cultural revival were based on his patronage. At a time when the nobility was no longer playing its traditional rôle of supporting the arts, he alone was held up as an example in a flood of poems and speeches. For all that, he remains a shadowy character, more interesting for his apparent aims than for his achievements. He stands midway between the self-sufficient and magnificent patrons of the past and those new men, exemplified by Andrea Memmo, who saw in their support for the arts a public service designed to benefit the community.

– ii –

ANDREA MEMMO

Andrea Memmo, whom we have already encountered in another capacity,[3] was indeed a much more interesting patron. He was born in 1729,[4] of one of the great patrician families, and in his younger days he was a close frequenter of Consul Smith, in whose library, as he later declared, he first learnt to appreciate 'chaste' architecture.[5] But the main influence on his life was that of Carlo Lodoli, and Memmo missed no opportunity of propagating his ideas and proclaiming the debt that he owed to his master. In later life he became the most 'enlightened' member of the Venetian aristocracy, and looked increasingly to French culture and ideas for his intellectual formation.[6] He showed an enthusiasm for political reform that was altogether exceptional and he made repeated efforts to break down the isolation in which his fellow-nobles lived. He also took full advantage of the many pleasures that were open to the aristocracy of his day—he was not the close friend of Casanova for nothing. As a young man he had become involved with the ubiquitous Giustiniana Wynne, then being wooed by Consul Smith, and he

[1] Archivio di Stato, Venice—*Inquisitori di Stato* (Busta 540), Annotazioni, p. 164—30 Maggio 1792.
[2] Moschini, 1806, II, p. 114.
[3] See Chapter 12.
[4] For a brief general biography of Andrea Memmo see P. Molmenti: 'Un nobil huomo veneziano del secolo XVIII', n.d. and above all Torcellan, 1963.
[5] See Chapter 11.
[6] Tabacco, pp. 32 ff.

continued to enjoy (and write about) a series of love affairs with great enthusiasm.[1] His political career was impressive—he himself turned down an almost certain chance of becoming Doge—and in 1775 he was made Provveditore at Padua. Here he began to show the patronage that was to become the main concern of his life and that has remained the one really significant contribution he made to history. Both in origin and in execution Memmo's ideas reflected a new attitude to art and one that was characteristic of the Enlightenment.

When he arrived in Padua in 1775 Memmo was approached by the municipal authorities with a request that he should take some steps to help the annual agricultural fair, which had been inaugurated some two or three years earlier.[2] His first suggestions were realistic enough, but of little permanent value. The Venetian nobility, he explained, would never come if they were not entertained. So arrangements must be made to organise theatres, operas and masked balls. And then a suitable site must be found for the dealers to set up their stalls. In front of the church of S. Giustina lay a vast area of abandoned marsh land, the Prà della Valle (Plate 62). Memmo decided to reclaim this land, to avoid the danger of flooding to which it was exposed, by building a canal, and in the centre to construct an island which could be used by the traders. He drew up an oval plan, based on the Colosseum, and summoned a professor of architecture at Padua university, the Abate Cerato, to put it into effect (Plate 63). As a conception this was probably the greatest example of town planning to be devised in Italy since the papal schemes in Rome some 150 years earlier. But its motives were very different. Commerce, not religion or family glory, was now the mainspring. And correspondingly Memmo was not an absolute sovereign with unlimited funds. Opposition had to be overcome through negotiations and persuasion. Above all, money had to be raised. It was for this purpose that Memmo designed the scheme which justifies discussing the Prà della Valle in a book concerned with the arts. He invited the co-operation of the public all over Italy, and indeed Europe, by opening subscriptions for the erection of a series of statues to be placed round the island, whose subject and artist could—within limits—be chosen by the donor. As befitted a plan devised by a pupil of Lodoli, it was strictly functional as well as a brilliant commercial idea for attracting international funds and support. The banks of the canal surrounding the island would be strengthened by the foundations of the statues. The statues themselves would act as a public gallery of exemplars to teach civic virtue, as required by the opinion of the Enlightenment.

Memmo's plan was inspired by the examples of Bologna and Vicenza, whose citizens had co-operated to build porticos with shrines leading up to the pilgrimage churches which dominate the hills outside those towns. But his own proposal was more ambitious in every way. It was calculated that eighty-eight statues would be required, and certain conditions were laid down, which sometimes showed the limitations of the Venetian Enlightenment. Only nobles or men who had brought particular glory to the

[1] Brunelli, 1923.

[2] For the history of the Prà della Valle see Radicchio, 1786, and for the figures, inscriptions, etc. see Neu-Mayr, 1807.

city could be represented; moreover, only certain classes of people could present statues in their own names—nobles or important churchmen or a few old and distinguished professions such as university teachers. On the other hand Memmo was especially anxious that the opportunity to raise a statue should not be available only to the rich. If precious marbles and famous sculptors were avoided—and, after all, he claimed, it was the general appearance that mattered—the price could be kept low enough: 135 *zecchini* or, for something rather better, 150. A certain standard of quality was insisted on and a committee was appointed to see that it was adhered to. The same kind of stone must be used for every statue; the inscriptions must be in Latin and must be brief and, with characteristic ingenuity, this was ensured by designing pedestals with only limited available space.

Memmo himself inaugurated the scheme by offering a statue, to be made by Francesco Andreosi, of Antenor, the legendary founder of Padua. He was followed by the Duke of Gloucester who happened to be passing through and who erected a statue of Azzo, Marchese d'Este, a Paduan citizen who had been the originator of the house of Brunswick.[1] And a third was offered by the city of Padua, which chose one of Memmo's ancestors, a fourteenth century podestà, after he had turned down their proposal that he himself should be represented.

Within a few months enough progress had been made for the poets to ask whether they were dreaming or whether they really found themselves in some new Athens. But in 1777, with 19 statues in place, Memmo left for four years as Ambassador in Constantinople to be followed immediately by another six in Rome. While he was away the Prà della Valle ran into serious difficulties. Debts piled up; the councillors objected to the expense; work slowed down alarmingly. Meanwhile in Rome Memmo remained as enthusiastic as ever. He was constantly badgering his friends to put up statues, proposing subjects to them and spreading his ideas in every way. He had his plans drawn by Giuseppe Subleyras, son of the French painter, and hung in his apartments where they were admired by all the nobility and distinguished visitors, many of whom followed the example of the Pope and contributed a statue. The Grand Duke of Tuscany paid for two—Petrarch and Galileo; the Kings of Poland and Sweden both subscribed. Then Francesco Piranesi engraved Subleyras's drawing, and in 1786 one of Memmo's secretaries, Don Vincenzo Radicchio, wrote an account to accompany the engraving. And so the news spread still wider afield. Indeed by that year only eight out of the original eighty-eight had not yet been promised, and fifty-three were already *in situ*.

Memmo's reputation as an expert and patron was by now very great, and during

[1] The Duke of Gloucester was in Padua, where he fell ill, in September 1775 and again in May 1777. Memmo was certainly in touch with him during his first visit, but it is not quite certain when he persuaded him to order his statue—see the letters to John Strange in the British Museum: Egerton MSS. 1969 No. 80 is from Memmo in Padua, dated 18 October [1775] and refers to the Duke's ill-health. In any case the statue was erected by October 1777, for on the 8th of that month Strange wrote to G. M. Sasso asking him to get Mingardi to make a drawing of the statue in the Prà della Valle 'donata dal nostro Duca'—see p. 373, note 2.

his last year in Rome he published the *Elementi dell'Architettura lodoliana*,[1] the first and only work to give a complete account of his master's architectural theories. He must certainly have felt that the essentially utilitarian basis of the Prà della Valle was as much a tribute to the teaching of Lodoli as was this extensive defence of his system.

In 1787 he returned to Venice to take up the post of Procuratore di San Marco to which he had been appointed two years earlier. To celebrate his official assumption of office he published fifty-eight of Lodoli's *Apologhi*—a series of incisive fables which satirised many of the leading figures of Venetian society.[2] The panegyric which greeted his return spoke enthusiastically of his great achievement in organising the Prà della Valle,[3] but Memmo himself was far from satisfied with the progress that had been made. Huge debts had to be cleared up, more grandiose plans for an amphitheatre were rejected by the municipal authorities, further statues needed to be installed. Memmo wrote to his old friend Casanova and asked whether his patron at Dux, the Count of Waldstein, might not be prepared to pay for one—Giovanni Dubravio Skala, perhaps, from Pilsen, the first German student to study at Padua after the League of Cambrai? Or Giovanni Adalbertho Veith, a student of some fame in 1709?[4]

The final results of the Prà della Valle are difficult to assess. The strange division of patronage and the anxiety to complete the work cheaply and quickly led to notable variations in quality and style. Of the sculptors involved only Canova, who was commissioned in 1781 to make a statue of the Marchese Poleni for Leonardo Venier, has survived his age. Indeed within fifteen years the sculptor's own statue, commissioned by Antonio Cappello from Giovanni Ferrari, was to find its place among a host of great and legendary heroes—the only contemporary to be so honoured and an astonishing tribute to the artist's reputation. Many of the others, however, show great competence and sometimes a graceful elegance which curiously enough makes the Prà della Valle one of the best places in Italy to look at the last remaining vestiges of rococo sculpture before neo-classicism swept it all away. Very many of the heroes celebrated, who vary in distinction between some noble donor's insignificant ancestor to Livy or Galileo, date from the Middle Ages, and their costumes are reproduced with varying degrees of accuracy and seriousness. Now time and the Italian climate have modified much of the original impression. In summer the vegetation withers and dust robs the Prà della

[1] See della Valle, III, p. 459: 'Il prato della Valle ornato da esso voi con le statue degli uomini illustri che fiorirono in Padova, e tra queste la destinata al celebre mio paesano e confratello P. Vallotti, e finalmente il sistema Lodoliano, già in parte per opera vostra pubblicato vi rendono degno dell'universale stima, ed onore, non che di esser tra i primi mecenati. . . .' For some reason Memmo published only the first volume of his *Elementi* in 1786, and though he completed the whole work before his death the full two-volume edition did not appear until 1834.

[2] *Apologhi immaginati, e sol estemporaneamente in voce esposti agli amici suoi dal Fu Carlo de' Conti Lodoli Min. Osservante di S. Francesco, facilmente utili all'onesta Gioventù, ed ora per la prima volta pubblicati nell'occasione del Solenne Ingresso che fa alla Procuratia di S. Marco l'eccellentissimo Signor Andrea Memmo, Cavaliere della Stola d'Oro.* Bassano [Remondini], 1787.

[3] *A Sua Eccellenza il Signor Andrea Memmo Cavaliere e Procurator di San Marco in occasione del suo ingresso solenne—orazione*, Venezia, Zatta, 1787.

[4] Molmenti: *Un nobil huomo*, pp. 143-4. For many other examples of Memmo writing to his friends in this way see Torcellan, 1963.

Valle of the effect it must originally have made of an oasis in the general confusion and wilderness. The inscriptions are worn, the figures have retreated into anonymity, and the weaker sculptures have gained from the general decay. In its time, however, the Prà della Valle represented one of the most noble attempts made by a Venetian patron to combine beauty with utility and thus solve a problem which obsessed many thinkers of the Enlightenment.

During his last years Memmo became involved in friendly controversy with another patrician, Pietro Zaguri, over the merits of Lodoli, to whose memory he remained passionately faithful.[1] But his political ambitions declined with the declining fortunes of Venice. He had had the family palace decorated with a frescoed gallery of classical orators, poets and philosophers, the name of each carefully inscribed on the pedestal,[2] but he seems to have had almost no interest in paintings, of which he owned only forty-eight, mostly copies.[3] In this palace, in the company of his brothers, he would hold open house to the more advanced spirits of the day until his death in 1792.[4]

– iii –

ANGELO QUERINI

Farsetti and Memmo were both men whose patronage of the arts was inextricably bound up with their services to the public life of Venice and Padua. The last important patron to emerge in Venice, Angelo Querini, carried his 'enlightened' views much further than either of these men, but he confined his love of art strictly to his private life—indeed he was accused of furthering his own interests in this field at the expense of those of the public.[5] In his later years he provides the most perfect example of that recurrent ideal—the scholar-gentleman of cultivated tastes who lives quietly on his estates and views the world with a certain detachment. But his earlier life had been very much more stormy.

Born in 1721, he too had been a keen admirer of Carlo Lodoli, and it was he who gave Memmo much information about the earlier years of that influential figure.[6] After beginning a successful career in politics, he was soon in difficulties with the authorities because of a possible association with a foreign ambassador, though—characteristically, perhaps—the association concerned a woman rather than politics. He first achieved notoriety during the constitutional crisis of 1761 in which he played the leading part.[7] The dispute centred on the powers of the State Inquisition which Querini wished to

[1] Molmenti: *Un nobil huomo*, pp. 137 ff.

[2] Fontana, p. 142. These were destroyed in about 1960.

[3] See the inventory drawn up by Sasso and Viero in the Archivio di Stato, Venice—*Petizion* 488, 30 Gennaio 1792 and 24 Febbraio 1792/3 M.V., part of which is published by Levi, II, p. 254. Among the more valuable items in Memmo's collection was a drawing of the holy family by Mengs. He also owned several hundred prints but there is rarely any indication of the artist.

[4] Lorenzo da Ponte, p. 52.

[5] In particular he was accused of obstructing plans for stopping the flooding of the Brenta because they represented a threat to his garden—see Brunelli Bonetti, 1951, pp. 185-200.

[6] [Andrea Memmo], 1786, p. 29, note 1.

[7] See Bozzòla, 1948, pp. 93-116.

reduce. It is doubtful how far this can be interpreted as a 'progressive' move. In fact, the reforms he advocated merely meant an alteration in the balance of power within the ruling class—the substitution of one faction by another—and in no way involved any fundamental change. But even this was quite unacceptable, and the victory of the 'conservatives', led by Marco Foscarini, was followed by Querini's arrest and detention in a fortress for a couple of years. After his release he played no further part in active politics, but devoted himself to intellectual and cultural pursuits.

More and more he became involved with the forces of the Enlightenment. In 1764 rumour credited him with being the author of Beccaria's anonymously published *Dei delitti e delle pene*.[1] In 1777 he went to Switzerland and visited Voltaire.[2] He presented the philosopher with a medal he had had specially coined depicting Philosophy destroying Superstition surrounded by a text from Lucretius EXAEQUAT VICTORIA COELO. During the trip he and his companion, the doctor and scientist Girolamo Festari, stopped everywhere to admire pictures and architecture and to comment on the trade and industry of the places they visited. Most of his life was thereafter devoted to building and decorating his remarkable country house at Alticchiero, a mile or two from Padua. Among his closest friends was the inevitable Giustiniana Wynne, now much older and more respectable than when we first met her flirting with Consul Smith and the young Andrea Memmo. This strange woman, who thus so closely links these three significant patrons, had in 1762 married the Austrian Ambassador, Count Rosenberg, but her main interest in life was still the company of the learned—a condition to which her husband hardly aspired.[3] It is from her rapturous account that we know most of Alticchiero, which has long since been razed to the ground.[4]

The aim of the house is clear enough from her opening remarks. In contrast to 'les grands . . . [qui] ont des palais immenses' and 'les voluptueux, des asyles délicieux', philosophers, she explains, hide themselves in modest retreats. And so at Alticchiero 'the building is not sumptuous, nor is the furniture lavish or choice; but—far better—the arrangement is as simple and convenient as possible'. On the tables are busts of ancient and modern philosophers, among them Voltaire and Rousseau by Houdon, and the influence of both men is felt throughout the villa and gardens. No precautions are taken against theft: nothing is locked up, no dogs roam the grounds. Only at Tahiti and Alticchiero, exclaims Mme Rosenberg, can such trust in human nature be found. Certainly it is unique in Italy, and would be edifying even in Switzerland.

On the walls of the various rooms are plans of the great European cities, while the

[1] This is reported by the anonymous author of *Voyages en differens pays de l'Europe en 1774, 1775, et 1776*—published in The Hague in 1777, I, p. 211.

[2] Festari.

[3] The Cardinal de Bernis wrote of him as follows: 'Le Comte de Rosenberg, qui lui succéda [the Marquis de Prié as Imperial Ambassador] avec plus de naissance, d'esprit et d'intrigue, n'avait guère plus de mérite que M. de Prié,' who was himself 'un homme fort médiocre'—*Mémoires et Lettres*, I, p. 166.

[4] Giustiniana Wynne-Rosenberg: *Alticchiero*, Venezia 1787. The remains are discussed and illustrated in a sad little article by Bruno Brunelli, 1931, pp. 4-11. At that time the busts of Heraclitus and Democritus were in the Casa Soster at Padua.

bathroom is lined with prints by Piranesi. Thus everywhere decoration is combined with utility. Other walls are lined with engravings by Picart of oriental customs 'qui amusent les passants, et arrêtent ceux qui aiment à réfléchir sur les folies de tant de prétendus sages'. The library contains all the great classics as well as a large collection of books on agriculture, philosophy 'and even theology'. The 'idol of the temple' is a bust of Bacon—the founding father of the Enlightenment and the particular hero of Lodoli. Querini's own study contained a series of prints designed to lighten his overburdened mind. They were illustrations to *Daphnis and Chloe* drawn by the Régent Philippe d'Orléans and engraved by Audran.[1]

The garden was even more important than the house as an expression of Querini's taste. The main outlines were severely regular, but within this framework could be found an 'agreeable confusion' of bushes and plants. At some distance from the house was a wild area thick with cunningly sited trees through whose branches could just be seen columns and burial urns strewn on the ground with artful casualness. This was called 'Young's Wood' in honour of the poet whose *Night Thoughts* had caught the romantic imagination of Europe.

The main part of the garden was designed as a complete allegory of the philosopher's way of life, and his various ideals were expressed in a number of shrines and carefully chosen pieces of antique and modern sculpture distributed in the grounds. There was, for instance, the Altar of Friendship with its colossal busts of Epicurus 'le Philosophe de la sage volupté', so much misunderstood by vulgar minds, and of Phocion 'le Philosophe Citoyen'—the man who had dared to stand out against the ignorant mob and who was Querini's particular hero. The choice clearly shows his aristocratic cast of mind—long since apparent to the populace which, realising that his proposed 'reforms' certainly augured them no good, had rejoiced at his downfall in 1761. Below the Altar was an inscription dedicated to his closest friend, Girolamo Ascanio Giustiniani. Other altars, formed of real antique sculpture or of modern imitations, celebrated other friendships—those formed in Switzerland, for example, and after her death in 1791 that of Mme Rosenberg herself[2]—and other ideals: Tranquillity and Country Life, Fortune and Apollo, rendered 'in noble repose in the full beauty of his youth' by a modern and still living sculptor.

The romantic nature of the whole conception came to the fore most explicitly in the 'cabane de la folie'—a thatched hut on the door of which was fixed Montaigne's dictum 'De la plus grande sagesse à la folie il n'y a qu'un demi-tour de cheville'. Inside was an antique bust which resembled an old mad woman who used to roam the streets of Venice, and the sight of this stimulated Mme Rosenberg to think of the veneration felt in the East for the mad and to recall their proverbial relationship with prophets and poets. Engravings designed to bring home the point hung round the walls, among them one by Huber of the head of Voltaire taken from a number of different angles.

[1] A very unclassified inventory of Angelo Querini's effects at Alticchiero is published by Levi, II, p. 255.

[2] G. A. Moschini, 1806, II, p. 116.

The same aspect of Querini's temperament was emphasised in the Altar dedicated to Ignorance, Envy and Calumny; for, as Mme Rosenberg pointed out, his soul was 'somewhat pagan or at least Manichean', and he believed that, the world being what it was, one should sacrifice to evil as well as to good spirits if one was to hope for happiness. Hence these vices were depicted in a bas-relief based on the famous composition of Apelles as recorded by Pliny.

Querini's villa attracted enormous attention. Among the visitors who came to see it was the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and Querini recorded the occasion by erecting a monument, crowned with a sphinx, containing a flattering inscription and a bas-relief in which the reforming prince was allegorised as Apollo. Like many people during the second half of the eighteenth century Mme Rosenberg distrusted allegory—she found painted ceilings hard to understand, but in sculpture the whole problem was much easier, for so few figures were involved. And above all she found that the allegories in Querini's garden were absolutely straightforward.

Despite the illustrations in Mme Rosenberg's book it is difficult to assess the quality or even the type of sculpture that Querini collected and put to such strange use. His taste for the antique was clearly inspired by the 'digne et malheureux' Winckelmann; in it he saw a restraint and lack of excess which constituted its main character.[1] His more modern work included a Hercules by Algardi and sculpture by the young Canova. But he also ranged much further afield. He owned ancient Etruscan phallic symbols, which caused Mme Rosenberg a certain amount of difficulty in explaining, and a large number of Egyptian figures.

Apart from sculptors the only artist with whom he had close contacts was Dominique De Non, who later (as Dominique Vivant-Denon) became Napoleon's celebrated director of museums.[2] De Non settled in Venice for about five years in the early 'nineties, and led a busy life as a controversial but highly admired engraver and also as a collector. He bought a large proportion of Zanetti's prints, including the Rembrandts, which had a profound effect on his own style and that of his principal pupil Francesco Novelli. At Ferney he had engraved a portrait of Voltaire and in Naples he had worked on the Abbé de Saint-Non's *Voyage Pittoresque de la Grèce et de la Sicile*, and he was thus well qualified through his political and antiquarian interests to appeal to Querini. He moved a great deal in his circle and drew his portrait (which he signed 'amico suavissimo') and also that of Mme Rosenberg among her friends.

The literary inspiration of Querini's collecting and patronage is obvious enough. In many ways it encouraged him to live with his works of art in a spirit that had largely died out since the early Renaissance. In his younger days he had been closely associated with another potential reformer, Paolo Renier, and he had commissioned Canova to make him a bust of this friend after his successful (but exceedingly corrupt) campaign

[1] Querini was in touch with a number of antiquarians and neo-classicists such as Isidoro Bianchi, Francesco Milizia and Jacopo Morelli, all of whom dedicated books or monographs to him.

[2] For the relationship with De Non see de Tipaldo, and for De Non himself G. A. Moschini, 1924, and Pallucchini; *Mostra degli Incisori Veneti del Settecento*, 1941, p. 112.

to become Doge in 1779. When, later, Renier compromised with the forces that he had once attacked, Querini flung the bust in a rage of disappointment against the Altar of Furies in his garden.[1] For him the shrines and temples of paganism had a real significance, however sentimental or romantic, that they lacked for most of the scholars and antiquarians of his age. It is this that distinguishes his activities so greatly from those of a man like Scipione Maffei who in an earlier generation had also collected antique sculpture and lovingly recorded the evidences of the past. More even than Winckelmann —though, of course, with far less intellectual or critical insight—Querini, after his baffled retirement from contemporary politics and problems that henceforward admitted of no solution, returned to the ideal world of the past. And his view of it was inextricably bound up with the influence of Rousseau. When he died in 1796 his heart was, at his request, buried in the Temple of Pallas in his garden.

[1] Brunelli Bonetti, 1951. Actually what must be the bust (in terracotta) survives in the Museo Civico at Padua, and as it shows no obvious signs of irreparable damage it has been suggested that Querini kept it in the servants' lavatories.