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# Odoni's Façade

## The House as Portrait in Renaissance Venice

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Whoever wishes to see how clean and candid his mind is should look at his face and his house, look at them, I say, and you will see as much serenity and beauty as one can desire in a house and in a face.<sup>1</sup>

In this sentence from a letter to the Venetian citizen Andrea Odoni (Figure 1), Pietro Aretino conflates two tropes of Italian Renaissance architectural theory. First, he makes an analogy between bodies and buildings: Odoni's face is compared to his house. Second, he alludes to the idea that a house ought to accurately represent its owner: both the face and the house denote the *animo* (mind or spirit) "inside."<sup>2</sup> In employing the metonymic metaphor of house/inhabitant, Aretino was surely influenced by his friend Sebastiano Serlio, who had begun publishing his famous architectural treatise the year before (1537).<sup>3</sup> But Aretino's literary use of the metaphor is particularly complex and layered.<sup>4</sup> For Serlio and other theorists, the relationship between man and house was essentially symbolic; one could represent a man's character and status, translate it in a sense, into the language of orders and ornament: the house is a symbol invented by the architect to represent the patron.<sup>5</sup> As I will demonstrate, Aretino's conception of the relationship between house and owner is iconic and indexical as well as symbolic, for he conceives of the house as a portrait of the owner. Since the owner makes decisions about its decoration and interior space, it is also in effect a self-portrait.<sup>6</sup> For Aretino, houses do not just represent

their inhabitants; they are literally "embodied" by them and thus are "endowed with subjectivity, as quasi-agents rather than mere backdrop in the social drama."<sup>7</sup>

In a letter of 27 October 1537, Aretino used the house/inhabitant metaphor to describe himself, attributing the observations to his friend Giulio Camillo.<sup>8</sup>

[Camillo] . . . used to take delight in remarking to me that the entrance to my house from the land-side, being dark and crooked, with a beastly stairway,<sup>9</sup> was like the terrible name I had acquired by revealing the truth; and then, he would add that any one who came to know me would find in my pure, plain, and natural friendship the same tranquil contentment that was felt on reaching the portico and coming out on the balconies above.<sup>10</sup>

Aretino compares the two parts of his house, the back entrance and the principal room and front, to his own multiple "façades"—his *terribilità* contrasted with his "pure, plain and natural friendship." To visit Aretino's residence is like entering into the man himself; one passes through a sequence of spaces that physically evoke his contradictory persona.<sup>11</sup>

Aretino uses the house/inhabitant analogy in his letter to Odoni to simultaneously describe the *cittadino's* house and evoke his character. (The full text of the letter is translated in Appendix 1.) The passage that begins my essay sets up the conceit and also contains an important double meaning that, to my knowledge, has not previously been noted. Aretino employs the word *fronte* to mean both building



**Figure 1** Lorenzo Lotto, *Portrait of Andrea Odoni*, 1527, Hampton Court, England

front (façade) and forehead (as synecdoche for face). As the social context of the letter makes clear, Aretino chose this word very deliberately. Aretino wrote to Odoni in the first place because of their mutual friendship with the painter Girolamo da Treviso il Giovane, who, it happens, was responsible for frescoing the façade of Odoni's house some years earlier (probably in 1531–32).<sup>12</sup> On the one hand, Aretino is saying that Odoni's face and his house reveal his character; on the other hand, he says that both the façade and the interior of the house (the "*abitazioni*") are products of Odoni's *animo*.<sup>13</sup>

Aretino does not compare Odoni's house so much to his body as to his face, and in this sense he suggests an analogy with portraiture.<sup>14</sup> Aretino used the word *fronte* often when writing about portraiture, one of his favorite subjects, and with good reason. In modern Italian, the expression "avere qualcosa scolpito in fronte" (to have something carved on one's forehead—notably an artistic metaphor itself) means to show one's thoughts, often unintentionally, in one's facial expression.<sup>15</sup> The saying stems from Petrarch: "spesso ne la fronte il cor si legge" (one may often read the heart upon the brow).<sup>16</sup> The concept underlies Aretino's descriptions of several portraits by Titian, and in Ludovico Dolce's dialogue on art theory, the character

named and fashioned after Aretino espouses the proverb.<sup>17</sup> Writing about Titian's portrait of Daniele Barbaro, the real Aretino exclaims: "the elevation of his thought, the generosity of his mind, and the clarity of his soul are seen within the regal space of his serene countenance [*fronte*]."<sup>18</sup> In the face of the duchess of Urbino, also painted by Titian, Aretino sees more feminine virtues: "Chastity and beauty, eternal enemies, join themselves to her in her face [*sembiante*], and between her eyebrows one sees the throne of the Graces. . . . The other internal virtues ornament her face [*fronte*] with every marvel."<sup>19</sup> Self-styled the "Assiduous Demonstrator of Virtue and Vice," Aretino was, in his own terms, a portraitist: "I strive to portray other men's manners with the liveliness that the amazing Titian portrays this and that face."<sup>20</sup> In Aretino's letters as well as in his other writings, both his descriptions of portraits and his descriptions of houses were a means to point out virtues and vices and draw his own verbal portrait of the sitter/inhabitant.<sup>21</sup>

Aretino's letter was a public pronouncement on Odoni's character. Published in his second volume of letters in 1542, the literary set piece was not just a personal missive. It is no accident that Aretino used the man/house metaphor extensively in a letter to Odoni; there is considerable evidence that

Odoni was not only particularly interested in his self-image but was also much attuned to the power of the house, and the manner of living it conveyed, to create distinction. In 1527, he commissioned the painter Lorenzo Lotto to depict him surrounded by a variety of antiquities and other objects that identify him as an “art collector” (see Figure 1), a portrait that Aretino may have been rivaling or complementing in composing his own likeness of Odoni.<sup>22</sup> Vasari also elided man, portrait, and house in his brief mention of Odoni’s portrait, noting that Lotto “depicted Andrea Odoni, whose house in Venice is filled with paintings and sculptures.”<sup>23</sup> The inscription placed on Odoni’s tomb in the Venetian church of Santa Maria Maggiore is indicative as well: “Andrea Odoni a citizen [*civi*] marked by the splendor of his mind [*animi*], his liberality, and elegance that surpassed his citizen [*civilem*] status.”<sup>24</sup> Odoni’s epitaph expresses his desire to transcend his non-noble *cittadino* status, but more importantly, it suggests that he attempted this through his patterns of consumption and display. The words “splendor,” “liberality,” and “elegance” were all part of Renaissance discourse on the proper modes of spending, especially with regard to domestic activities and decoration.<sup>25</sup>

In writing the letter at all, Aretino may have been suggesting Odoni’s (over?) reliance on his house to create his reputation, a general characteristic that was specifically criticized in Renaissance theoretical writing. In the second half of the fifteenth century, the Venetian Giovanni Caldiera, for example, noted, “What is truly appropriate to the houses of citizens is utility and not splendor. . . . The householder should rather make himself worthy of admiration because of the virtue by which he excels than because of the sumptuous home by which he has desired to be conspicuous. Not the house but the virtue makes men immortal and equal to the gods.”<sup>26</sup> He, like others, was echoing Cicero: “a man’s dignity may be enhanced by the house he lives in, but not wholly secured by it; the owner should bring honour to his house, not the house to its owner.”<sup>27</sup> Thus, Aretino’s letter may not be entirely flattering. While it seems on the surface to point out Odoni’s virtues (and this is the way it has nearly always been read in the past), it may also be slyly drawing attention to his flaws.<sup>28</sup>

I propose that we address Aretino’s implication that Odoni’s house and façade can be read as multifaceted portraits of the man. The rest of this article focuses on the exterior of the house—its location, setting, and façade decoration—analyzing how Odoni used his façade to project a public persona that negotiated his liminal status as a non-noble citizen and head of an immigrant family.<sup>29</sup> With the house, Odoni literally and metaphorically created a place for himself in Venetian society.

## A Collector of Art and Taxes

Due to a fortuitous confluence of sources—visual, literary, and documentary—much is known about the exterior ornament, interior contents, decoration, and layout of the Casa Odoni. In addition to Aretino’s letter, there is the innovative and unusual portrait by Lotto (signed and dated 1527), both of which represent him as a collector and lover of fine things. Odoni has been identified as Lotto’s sitter because the painting was described, along with many other works of art in Odoni’s collection, by the Venetian nobleman and art expert Marcantonio Michiel in 1532. Michiel’s notes on Odoni’s house are particularly important because they not only provide the artist and subject of the objects on display, but unlike any of Michiel’s other descriptions of private collections, they are organized by room, as if on a tour.<sup>30</sup> These notes, in turn, may be compared to an extensive inventory of all household property made by a notary some years later (in 1555), also conveniently organized by room.<sup>31</sup> Finally, the frescoes both on the outside and on the inside of the house were described by several art enthusiasts and historians from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century before they faded completely from view.

The fact that we know more about Odoni’s house than we know about him may itself be an indication of how important the house was to his identity. Piecing together details about Odoni’s life is a sketchy enterprise, but research in the past two centuries has revealed some basic biographical information.<sup>32</sup> Born in 1488, Andrea was the son of a wealthy Milanese immigrant to Venice, Rinaldo Odoni.<sup>33</sup> However, his mother Marieta came from an established Venetian *cittadino* clan, and it was his maternal uncle, Francesco Zio, who initiated Andrea into the special privileges accorded Venetian *cittadini*, such as offices in the state bureaucracy and leadership positions in the religious charity organizations known as *scuole*.<sup>34</sup> Odoni also inherited land, works of art, and (presumably) his taste for collecting from Zio, who was a well-known collector in his own right.<sup>35</sup>

Odoni began his career in civil service working as Zio’s assistant at the Raxon nuove (the central accounting office of the state).<sup>36</sup> By 1523, he had obtained the position of *scrivan* (accountant) at the Dazio dil vin (the office in charge of the tax on wine), one of the highest paid positions available to *cittadini*, worth about four hundred ducats a year.<sup>37</sup> He reached a pinnacle in his career in 1532 when he was appointed *co-condutor* of the Dazio, meaning that he and his patrician partner Piero Orio were contracted to be in charge of collecting taxes on wine. The pair amassed record sums, perhaps due in part to shady dealings.<sup>38</sup> Writing in 1533, when Orio and Odoni were still working together, Marino Sanuto noted that Piero Orio “has a bad reputation” (*ba*

*mala fama*), and accused him of cruelty and excessive taxation. In any case, corruption appears to have been endemic in this office.<sup>39</sup>

Although Odoni is often described as a merchant, his involvement in commerce has not actually been demonstrated.<sup>40</sup> The idea probably derives from an unspecified chronicle cited by Emmanuele Antonio Cicogna, which states that Odoni's father, Rinaldo, came to Venice "con grosso capitale di mercanzie."<sup>41</sup> Since *cittadini* were often engaged in commerce related to their bureaucratic offices, the family may have been involved in the wine trade.<sup>42</sup> An inventory of the Odoni family papers lists accounts and receipts concerning the Dazio di vin and various wine merchants and estimators, although it is difficult to determine if these pertain to the Odonis' own trade in wine or whether they are merely records related to their positions as wine tax officers.<sup>43</sup> It is also possible that the family was involved in the cloth trade. The inventory of goods lists a considerable amount of cloth in what appear to be storehouses,<sup>44</sup> and the inventory of documents refers to business with dyers, tailors, and other cloth-related workers, including a four-page account book regarding textiles from the shop (*bottega*) that Odoni's brother, Alvise, had "in company with" a certain Messer Francesco Moranzon.<sup>45</sup> If Alvise was involved in the cloth trade, it is likely that Andrea Odoni was also, since it was common in Venice for brothers to form a family business partnership called a *fraterna*.<sup>46</sup>

Since we cannot be sure what other sources of income (legitimate or illegitimate) Odoni may have had in addition to his salary at the Dazio, it is difficult to determine his relative wealth.<sup>47</sup> The common measures of affluence—land ownership and dowry prices—do not indicate exceptional prosperity. Odoni owned his own house and a few properties in Venice and on the *terraferma*, but his overall investment in real estate is not notable, even for a non-noble *cittadino*.<sup>48</sup> Although Andrea and his wife (Isabeta Taiapiera, née de Monte) had no children, his nieces received dowries that were adequate but well below the allowable limit.<sup>49</sup> Much of Odoni's "disposable income" was probably spent on the "cultural capital" of his house and art collection.

Not only is it difficult to calculate Odoni's net worth, but it is also hard to judge what kind of education he received. While some members of his family were well-educated or married into scholarly circles, there is no concrete evidence about Odoni's background.<sup>50</sup> He must have been very experienced in matters of business and accounting, but there seems little reason for him to have had any kind of humanist education or to have learned Latin. His handwriting is more that of a merchant than a humanist, and it is striking that the inventory of the Odoni household lists only

two books by title—a popular world history and a medical text.<sup>51</sup> From the evidence we have, it would seem that any pretensions Odoni had to learning and culture lay largely in his *abitazioni* and the collection of art and antiquities it housed, an impression reinforced by Lotto's portrait.

Odoni did not rise to the highest position in his *scuola*, nor did he obtain a position in the prestigious chancery. Other than his collection, and his ability to collect taxes, there was little that was remarkable about him. His public persona in Venice thus must have been primarily as a tax collector and probably a merchant as well. Through his bureaucratic office Odoni would have had business dealings with a very wide range of people, from wealthy patricians to workers. Although prominent in many ways, he was both an insider and an outsider in Venetian society. As a wealthy *cittadino*, he was accorded a certain social status and economic privilege. But as a non-noble he was politically disenfranchised and excluded from the highest social elite. In addition, despite the established Venetian heritage of his mother's family, in this patrilineal society Odoni remained a newcomer, the son of a wealthy Milanese immigrant. In an important sense, as the eldest of three brothers, Odoni became the first male "founder" of the Venetian branch of his family.<sup>52</sup> It may have been precisely his liminal status and familial ambition that led him to challenge the traditional structures of Venetian oligarchical society—in the words of his epitaph, to "surpass his *cittadino* status." I suggest that the most important way he sought to construct an elevated social and cultural position for himself and his family was through the fashioning of his "*fronte e abitazioni*."

### Location, Location, Location

Although neither the house nor the façade survive in anything resembling their original state, the location of the Casa Odoni may be determined on the basis of an address given by a nineteenth-century visitor.<sup>53</sup> The utterly nondescript residence now on the site (Figure 2) may incorporate pieces of the original structure on the inside, but it does not seem to preserve the original exterior or the interior layout.<sup>54</sup> The house must have been destroyed or rebuilt beyond recognition sometime between 1829 and 1863 (and probably before 1841).<sup>55</sup>

The location and size of the house within the city are significant, however. Near the present-day Piazzale Roma, the house was decidedly on the periphery (Figure 3). Nor does it appear to have been very large. The inventory, which presumably covered the entire house, lists a courtyard and garden, three principal rooms, and six other more utilitarian spaces. Yet, the site of the house had much to recom-



**Figure 2** House at Dorsoduro 3537–38, Fondamenta del Gaffaro, Venice, on the site of the Casa Odoni

**Figure 3** Lodovico Ughi, *Map of Venice*, 1729, showing the location of Odoni's house





**Figure 4** View of the Rio di Malcanton with the Fondamenta del Gaffaro on the right

**Figure 5** Jacopo Barbaro, *View of Venice*, 1500, woodblock print from six blocks on six sheets of paper, detail showing the houses and their gardens on the Fondamenta del Gaffaro



mend it. The façade overlooked the Rio del Gaffaro (now Rio di Malcanton), a principal canal linking the upper part of the Grand Canal (near the current train station) to the lower part past the Rialto bridge (a shortcut around the large bulge created by the S-curve of the Grand Canal) (see Figure 3). Along the portion where Odoni lived the canal is also flanked by two *fondamente* (walkways that run alongside Venetian canals), creating an unusually wide-open and sunny space in the dense, congested fabric of the city (Figure 4).

The more peripheral situation of Odoni's casa also had the advantage of allowing for a substantial garden by Venet-

ian standards. Jacopo Barbaro's perspectival view of Venice in 1500 shows the open space in back of the houses on the Fondamenta del Gaffaro (Figure 5). A property agreement of 1551 between the Odoni family and their neighbors mentions gardens behind both houses, and the inventory of the Odoni residence reveals that Odoni displayed fragmented statuary in his.<sup>56</sup> Thus, while Odoni's house was relatively modest in location and size, he fully exploited the possibilities of the site, creating an *all'antica* garden in the rear and commissioning large, colorful figures on the façade that looked out on a wide and busy canal. Despite its loca-





**Figure 6** Palazzo Dario (at right), begun 1486-87, Venice, view of the marble-encrusted façade

tion, the house certainly had a public presence; the colorful painted façade in particular put Odoni and his house “on the map.”<sup>57</sup>

### The Painted Face

We do not know if Odoni commissioned the fresco from Girolamo da Treviso in 1531–32 as a way of updating, regularizing, and classicizing a preexisting building or whether he had the house built with a painted façade in mind.<sup>58</sup> In either case, because the façade of a house was its most public feature, it bore the heaviest burden of satisfying measures of decorum. Above all, it was the façade that negotiated the house’s place in the city and thus metaphorically, and to some extent literally, the owner’s place in society.<sup>59</sup> The façade was both the external shell of the private home and a part of the urban fabric, and it had to suitably accommodate both roles. The sensitivity of the site was particularly marked in Venice because the physical circumstances of the city called for a “façade architecture” and because the political ideology of the Venetian state, the so-called myth of Venice, held that civic harmony stemmed from (a form of) social equality.<sup>60</sup> Domenico Morosini’s treatise *On the Well-Managed Republic* (begun 1497) provides an example of how these ideas could be applied to architecture. As summarized by Margaret King, Morosini’s treatise made the point that “just as the citizens are to be all of one mind in the ideal republic, the façades of all the buildings should so harmo-

nize according to one grand plan.”<sup>61</sup> On the one hand, the façade was an ornament to the city-state.<sup>62</sup> On the other hand, it was an articulation of the individual or family as distinct from the state.<sup>63</sup>

Built façades in Venice reveal how their owners addressed the tension between promoting themselves and honoring the city. Particularly relevant here is the house façade of Giovanni Dario, perhaps not coincidentally a *citadino* like Odoni. Dario’s house on the Grand Canal is not only more prominently located than Odoni’s, but its façade is also covered in very expensive colored marbles (Figure 6). The rather large inscription on its surface, “URBIS GENIO IOHANNES DARIUS” (To the Genius of the City, Giovanni Dario [has dedicated this]), claims credit for the individual, while at the same time framing the palace as a civic contribution.<sup>64</sup> There was a delicate balance to maintain between “ornamenting the city” and drawing attention to oneself and one’s family, a subject of particular tension in the Venetian Republic where no citizen or family was to stand out too much from the rest.<sup>65</sup> Every new façade had to negotiate this balance.

In examining Odoni’s façade as his public face, three issues must be taken into account: Odoni’s decision to fresco the front rather than ornament it in some other way, his choice of artist and style, and the invention of the iconography. Choosing to have his façade frescoed rather than “encrusted in marble” in the manner of Dario’s could be read as a sign of Odoni’s decorous modesty as well as his

lesser wealth. There is evidence to suggest that painted façades were seen as the more modest alternative, and certainly they were less expensive.<sup>66</sup> But at the same time, they must have been quite flashy and attention-getting, especially in Venice where they were usually painted in color rather than monochrome, color that would have been spectacularly reflected in the water of the canals. Precisely because painted façades were less expensive but very eye-catching and rhetorical, they had the potential for dissembling—activating the Renaissance anxiety that a house, or a façade, might not *properly* depict the owner's character or status.<sup>67</sup> So while the location and size of Odoni's house were decorous, the façade ornament was potentially more socially aggressive. The façade was probably painted in or just before 1532, the year Odoni became *co-condutor* at the Dazio dil vin and Michiel visited and made notes about Odoni's collection. It thus is tempting to see the decoration of the façade as part of a successful strategy of self-promotion.<sup>68</sup>

The fashion for façade frescoes depicting figurative scenes, often of mythological subjects, began in earnest in Venice with the Fondaco dei Tedeschi (begun 1508), a very prominently located building painted by Giorgione and Titian.<sup>69</sup> By ordering a façade fresco in this tradition, Odoni could be seen as advertising his artistic discernment. In Dolce's *Dialogo della pittura, intitolato l'Aretino* (1557), the character named Aretino, exalting the art of painting in general, recommends this form of ornament: "the façades [*facciate*] of houses and palaces give far greater pleasure to the eyes of other men when painted by the hand of a master of quality than they do with incrustations of white marble and porphyry and serpentine embellished with gold."<sup>70</sup> Painted façades thus were not only modest; they could also demonstrate the patron's privileging of skillful art over mere rich material.<sup>71</sup>

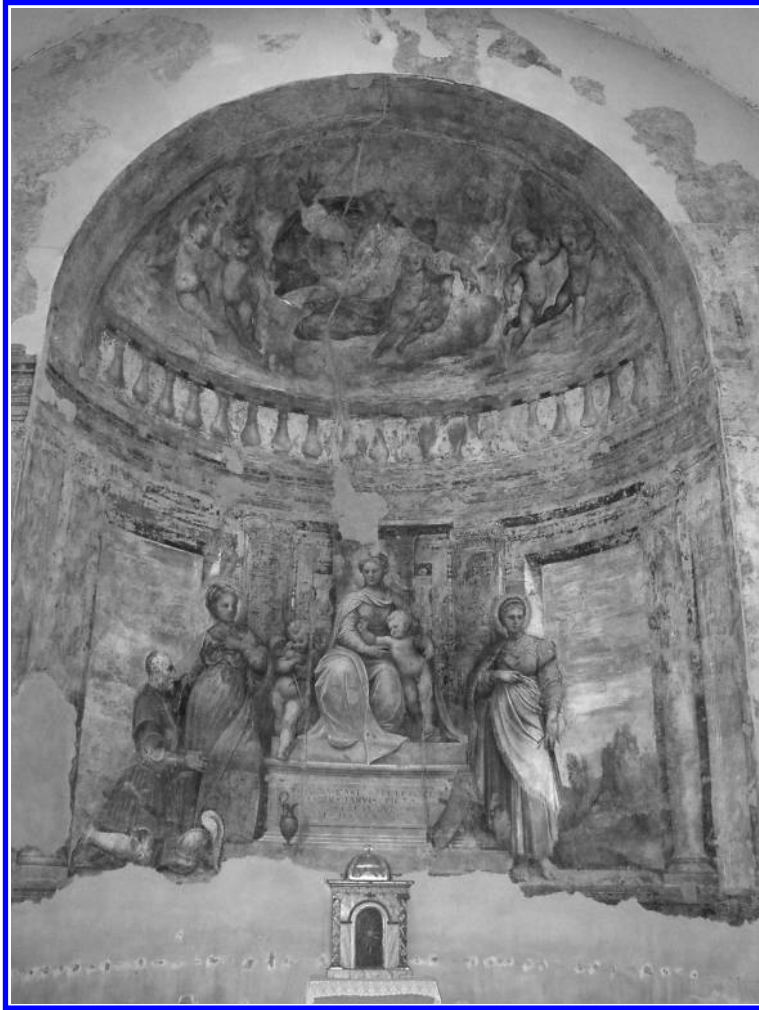
While there are known examples of figurative façade frescoes on private Venetian houses that predate Odoni's, his marked a stylistic shift, again highlighting its visual self-consciousness. Although Girolamo da Treviso was presumably trained in the Veneto, he traveled widely, worked with many important central Italian artists, and developed a Raphaelesque *romanista* (Tuscan-Roman) style that differed considerably from established local practices.<sup>72</sup> While the artist is known to have painted other façade frescoes, Odoni's appears to have been the only one in Venice. Girolamo's work for Odoni is thus "the first Venetian fresco in a modern, classical style," since it predates by several years the larger and more centrally located Palazzo Talenti d'Anna, painted by Giovanni Antonio Pordenone for the *cittadino* Ludovico Talenti.<sup>73</sup>

A sense of the style of Odoni's fresco may be determined from an almost contemporary large-scale fresco by

Girolamo in the apse of the Chiesa della Commenda in Faenza (completed in 1533, following the artist's sojourn in Venice). The fresco demonstrates Girolamo's manner on a monumental scale, showing how he harmoniously integrated figures with fictive architecture to illusionistic effect (Figure 7).<sup>74</sup> Odoni's façade, like most painted in northern Italy (including the Fondaco dei Tedeschi and the Palazzo Talenti d'Anna), almost certainly also depicted a combination of figures and painted architectural motifs. On a frescoed façade in Treviso attributed to Girolamo, one can still make out putti seen through fictive windows at the top of the façade and painted pilasters at the mid-level where a large figurative scene of the judgment of Solomon was once visible (Figure 8).<sup>75</sup> By hiring an artist so influenced by central Italian art, Odoni was making a significant statement of style. Mauro Lucco has suggested that Odoni was actively promoting a "third style," between those of Titian and Pordenone, intended to represent the modern Roman manner. It may be that with this commission, Odoni embraced the opportunity to mark out his own "foreignness"; his aim was perhaps not just to fit into Venetian society, but in fact to distinguish himself within it.<sup>76</sup>

The façade was distinctive for its iconography as well as its style. A general idea of the overall composition and subjects depicted can be pieced together by comparing visual evidence from other painted façades and the descriptions of Odoni's façade written by Vasari, Carlo Ridolfi, and Marco Boschini between 1550 and 1674.<sup>77</sup> All the accounts agree in identifying the principal subject in the upper portion of the façade as, in the words of Boschini, "a chorus of gods."<sup>78</sup> Vasari and Ridolfi agree on the identification of two of these—Bacchus and Ceres. While Ridolfi describes them simply as "sitting on clouds" (*sedente sopra le nubi*), Vasari suggests a more narrative interaction: Bacchus is depicted as "fat and ruddy, with a vessel that he is upsetting, and holding with one arm a Ceres who has many ears of corn in her hands."<sup>79</sup>

Connected with these gods was a second female figure. Vasari describes her as "Juno, seen from the thighs upwards, flying on some clouds with the moon on her head, over which are raised her arms, one holding a vase and the other a bowl."<sup>80</sup> Ridolfi is less positive in his identification: "a girl, I think one of the Graces, who pours wine from two vases, and some flying children with flowers in their hands."<sup>81</sup> Ridolfi's idea that it might be one of the Graces may stem from Vasari, who also notes the appearance of "the Graces, with five little boys who are flying below and welcoming them."<sup>82</sup> Both writers signal the presence of flying putti, a common motif of painted façade decoration, also seen, for example, in the façade fresco in Girolamo's hometown (see Figure 8). In sum, we have the interconnected figures of



**Figure 7** Girolamo da Treviso, *Madonna and Child with St. John the Baptist, Two Saints, and Sabba da Castiglione as Donor*, 1533, Chiesa della Commenda, Faenza

**Figure 8** Girolamo da Treviso (?), remnants of a painted façade, Via Manin, no. 67, Treviso, showing fictive oval windows with frolicking putti still visible above



Ceres and Bacchus, a mysterious female figure (Juno, one of the Graces, or Diana—suggested by the moon on her head—or Venus—to be discussed below), flying putti, and possibly the Graces. All these principal figures were painted in color, although there seem to have been additional figures and ornament in chiaroscuro.<sup>83</sup>

These figures seem to have comprised the upper part of the façade. Below or in front of this, perhaps opening out of the front *camera* (bedsitting room) and/or the *mezzado* (office/study), were balconies (*pergolato*) with sumptuously carved figurative fretwork, which would have contrasted with the more modest use of fresco on the rest of the façade.<sup>84</sup> Parts of at least one of these balconies survive and now ornament the façade of the Palazzo Torre, in another part of the city (1373 Rio Terrà San Leonardo; Figure 9).<sup>85</sup> The Odoni arms that originally filled the central escutcheon have been replaced, but they are still preserved on the inside of the panel (Figure 10).<sup>86</sup> The written descriptions of the



**Figure 9** Sculpted panels originally on the balcony of the Casa Odoni, now at no. 1373 Rio Terrà San Leonardo, ca. 1531–33 (?), Venice

**Figure 10** View of the interior of the panels illustrated in Figure 9, showing a detail of the Odoni family arms

façade suggest that frescoed color figures of the gods Apollo and Minerva flanked the balconies.<sup>87</sup>

### Reading the Façade

Any interpretation of the iconography is severely hampered by the absence of the actual fresco and by the likelihood that the descriptions are approximate.<sup>88</sup> Still, the written accounts provide enough to determine the overall *tone* of the façade and its principal themes. In his account, Vasari provides the beginning of an interpretation of at least parts of the iconography. He describes the Graces with “five little boys who are flying below and welcoming them, in order, so they signify, to make the house of the Udoni abound with their gifts.”<sup>89</sup> And Girolamo painted Apollo and Minerva “to show that the same house was a friendly haven for men of talent.”<sup>90</sup> The figures thus demonstrate that the house is full of Grace (full of the gifts of the Graces) and a friend and refuge of “virtuosi” (talented/virtuous/virile men). Vasari may have taken these interpretations from inscriptions that Ridolfi tells us once filled *cartelle* (cartouches) beneath the windows.<sup>91</sup> Ridolfi could no longer read the words on the *cartelle*, so he probably relied on Vasari for his pronouncement on the meanings of the same figures; the flying putti “indicate the comfort and fortunes of Odoni,” and Apollo and Minerva “demonstrate the talents he derived from many virtues.”<sup>92</sup>

Of particular interest and clearly prominent on the façade were the interconnected figures Bacchus and Ceres. While these gods enjoyed a long iconographic tradition in later painting, in the early sixteenth century, they were not a common pictorial pair. At the most basic level, they could be paired as male and female gods of fertility or as allegorical representations of the two most fertile seasons, summer and fall. Odoni’s façade may also have referred to the proverb “SINE CERERE ET BACCO FRIGET VENUS” (Without Ceres and Bacchus, Venus freezes), which would have been well-known among relatively educated Venetians through contemporary collections of proverbs if not from Cicero, Terence, or other classical authors. As the proverb books make clear, the general meaning of the adage was that food and wine incite desire and love. While the saying was not directly illustrated by Odoni’s time, there were several allusions to it in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, published in 1499 in Venice by the Aldine Press. Illustrations of Venus, Bacchus, Ceres, and Aeolus (personifying the seasons) as individual reliefs decorating the base of an altar to Priapus seem to allude to the proverb, and in another part of the text, the inscription “To the gods—Venus the most reverend Mother and her son cupid, Bacchus, and Ceres have given

of themselves” hangs on a plaquette above a doorway.<sup>93</sup> The association of these particular gods with an entryway may have inspired the idea for Odoni’s façade.

If a reference to the proverb was intended, perhaps the second female figure, whose identity Vasari and Ridolfi dispute, was in fact Venus, who could then appropriately be accompanied by the Graces. What is clear is that the woman held two vessels—either a “vase” and a “bowl” held above her head, according to Vasari, or “pouring wine from two vases,” according to Ridolfi.<sup>94</sup> While this recalls figures of Temperance diluting wine with water (discussed below), it could conceivably be Venus holding burning lamps, not unlike the nude woman, often identified as Venus, in Titian’s *Sacred and Profane Love* (circa 1514). This would fit the proverb since Venus would not be freezing now that she is in the presence of Bacchus and Ceres. An engraving (circa 1595) after a composition by Titian (one of the first surviving depictions of the subject in art) shows Venus holding a burning censer in the shape of a vase with figures of Ceres and Bacchus around her (Figure 11).<sup>95</sup>

The descriptive observations of Vasari and Ridolfi are as revealing, if not more, than their interpretative musings. Bacchus is described as “fat and ruddy,” knocking over a vessel (surely of wine), with a girl on his arm (Ceres)—an image of drunkenness, sexuality, and superfluity.<sup>96</sup> On the positive side it is an image of abundance and fertility, on the other of lasciviousness and drunkenness. The other female figures (one carefully pouring wine, and the Graces) counter this image of excess with restraint and decorum. Similarly, the gods of the arts and knowledge, Apollo and Minerva, who are shown with weapons and armor—Apollo his bow and a cuirass and Minerva her lance and spear—also emphasize the marital and the intellectual as opposed to the amorous and the sensual.<sup>97</sup> The ebullience of Bacchus and Ceres, which conveys the abundance and fertility of the Odoni house, is kept in check to some degree by the other major figures. The façade is simultaneously inviting and protective (particularly in the armor of Apollo and Minerva who stand guard either side of the balcony), appropriate qualities for this permeable barrier between self and society, house and city.<sup>98</sup>

The theme of fertility, abundance, and generosity is reiterated in the balcony decoration (see Figure 9). The two side panels represent mermaids with baskets of fruit on their heads and little satyrs nursing at their breasts.<sup>99</sup> The standing putti between the middle and side panels also have baskets of fruit on their heads, and one of them urinates on the unsuspecting viewer below.<sup>100</sup> These are all well-known allusions to fertility, human and agricultural.<sup>101</sup> In the central panel, two tritons with forelegs raise an escutcheon that



Figure 11 Jacob Matham, *Sine Cerere et Baccho friget Venus*, 1595, engraving after Titian

once bore the Odoni arms. Hanging above the heraldic shield is a grotesque skull-like mask. The central panel thus seems to resonate with the more defensive characteristics of the façade. Given the consonance in theme, it would seem that the balcony was commissioned in conjunction with the frescoes.<sup>102</sup>

Such imagery signals the prosperity and generosity of the homeowner, or as Ridolfi puts it, “i commodi e le fortune dell’Odone.”<sup>103</sup> Vasari refers to hospitality and conviviality when he calls the house “a friend and refuge of *virtuosi*.”<sup>104</sup> Through an iconography of abundance, if not excess, Odoni demonstrated his liberality as well as the splendor and elegance of his life—the three qualities stressed in his tombstone inscription. In Renaissance writings about the home, hospitality and liberality were key aspects of virtuous consumption.<sup>105</sup> This dimension of Odoni’s constructed persona also finds expression in the portrait by Lotto. The *cittadino* is depicted extending a statuette of Diana of Ephesus, a symbol of fecundity and

abundance, to the viewer, who is a visitor to his house and collection.<sup>106</sup>

While the façade fresco had an overall thematic coherence, it is more difficult to say that it had an iconographic program in the strictest sense.<sup>107</sup> Selecting which mythological gods or scenes to depict on your façade was probably akin to selecting which saints to include in an altarpiece. One chose gods or stories that had personal associations. From this point of view, Odoni’s choice of subject makes a lot of sense. Odoni had at this point been working in the Dazio dil vin for at least nine years (since 1522), so he was closely connected to that commodity (and was probably campaigning for the position of *co-condutor*). He may also have been a wine merchant. The façade prominently depicted the god of wine, in a seemingly inebriated state. It also featured vessels and flowing wine: the vessel that Bacchus overturns and the female figure who, according to Ridolfi, pours wine from one container to another—images of excess and of constraint with regard to this substance.

These figures were placed in the most prominent part of the façade, the area that viewers described first.

The figures would also have drawn attention because they were painted in color, in contrast to the elements executed in chiaroscuro and the fictive architectural framework. The viewer would probably have seen these gods, sitting on clouds, through framed openings. They could thus be said to “inhabit” the house—in a pictorial equivalent of a literary conceit used by the poet Girolamo Borgia in eulogizing the Villa Chigi in Rome:

But where Augustus Chigi founded his kingly palace  
and restored [thereby] a [truly] ancient splendor,  
Gods and their consorts at once descended again from the  
heavens  
vying among themselves to favor this one blessed house.  
Finally Bacchus and Love, the Graces, golden Venus, and Pal-  
las vowed in a pact to inhabit just this place.  
Augustus [Chigi], a man is blest when benevolent gods love his  
dwelling;  
Men, too, compete to praise it with admiring words.<sup>108</sup>

Interestingly, some of the same gods inhabit both residences, as if they were considered the most desirable house-mates. And although Odoni’s house is hardly comparable to Chigi’s extravagant pleasure retreat on the banks of the Tiber, the two men may have had some epicurean characteristics in common.

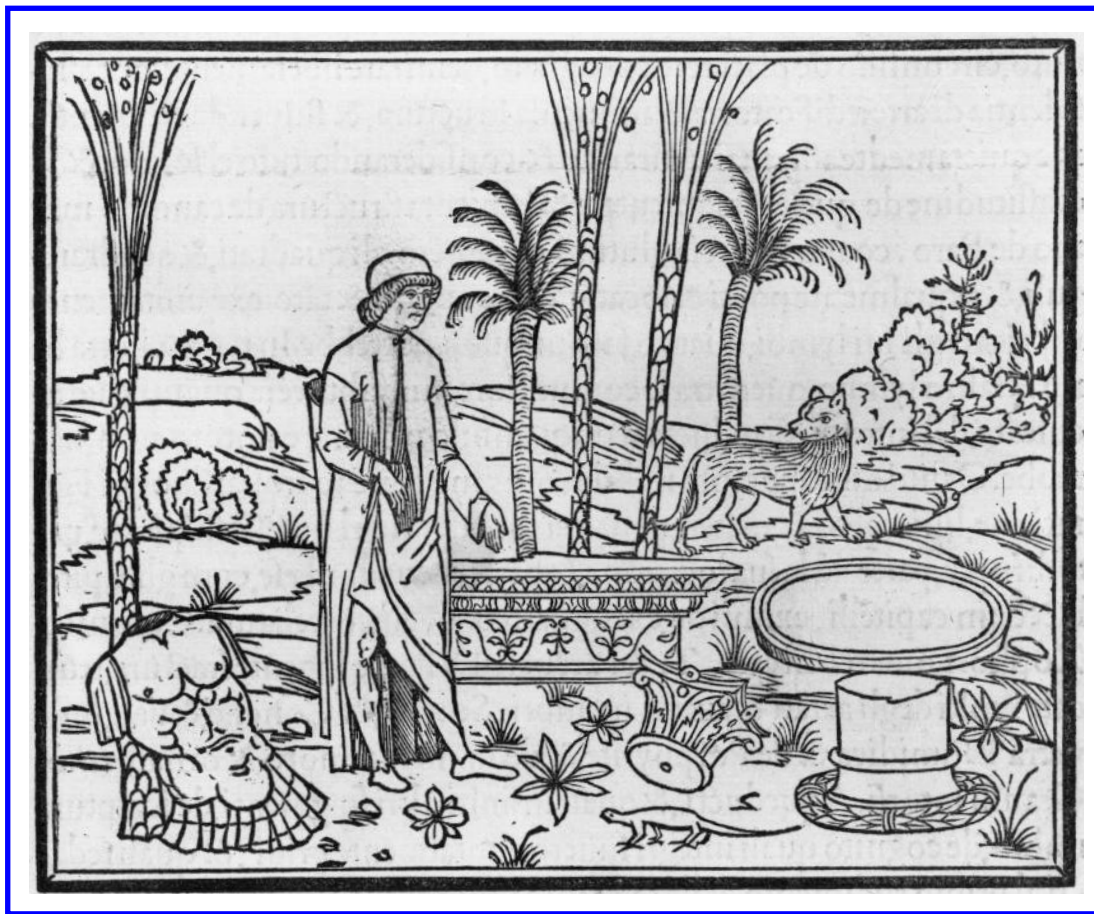
While the Odoni façade may have alluded to a classical proverb (notably a lighthearted one), it could also be understood in a more ludic mode by passersby, who may or may not have grasped its more learned allusions. The depiction of a hefty Bacchus propped up against Ceres was also meant to be amusing, to suggest the owner’s own joviality and perhaps even a willingness to poke fun at himself.<sup>109</sup> A jocular note may also be detected in Odoni’s portrait by Lotto. In the background, a small figurine of Hercules *mingens* is positioned so that he appears to urinate into the vessel in which the larger adjacent statuette of Venus washes her feet, his powerful jet of (acidic) urine eroding her ankle.<sup>110</sup> The sculptures in the foreground, added late to the composition, also poke out from under the tablecloth in a humorous manner.<sup>111</sup> The smaller headless nude female torso reclines against the looming male portrait head, as if suggesting what the male figure (who looks not unlike Odoni) has on his mind. Both the façade and the portrait signal Odoni’s learning and masculinity through humor and wit. This levity may have been an important counter to what might otherwise have been perceived as heavy-handed self-promotion.

At the same time, the classicizing subject matter and

style of the façade also acted as an advertisement for the collection of antiquities and other art works housed within (and depicted in the portrait). Both the design of the balcony and the subject of Bacchus and Ceres can be tied to the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, that well-known monument of Venetian pseudo-classicism.<sup>112</sup> As visitors entered through the canal façade, they would have emerged into a world somewhat reminiscent of the protagonist Poliphilo’s dream as depicted in one of the book’s illustrations (Figure 12); the entrance hall was ornamented by statues in niches and led into a courtyard and garden strewn with fragmented statuary. Aretino pointedly commented that, upon entering Odoni’s house, he felt as though he had been transported to Rome, in particular to places where impressive classical statuary was on display.<sup>113</sup>

Aretino may be explicitly alluding to the campaign to promote Venice as a “new Rome” in the years after the League of Cambrai and the sack of Rome.<sup>114</sup> Odoni’s façade (and possibly the structure of the house itself) was certainly part a new spurt of building in Venice after roughly 1520, when the depression caused by the War of the League of Cambrai had subsided.<sup>115</sup> With its novel central-Italian painting style and its iconographic classicism, the façade’s decoration may have been Odoni’s attempt to participate in the *renovatio* of Venice as a New Rome then being advanced by Doge Andrea Gritti in Jacopo Sansovino’s projects for the Piazza San Marco. Among his other works of art, Odoni displayed a painting of the Justice of Trajan with an architectural backdrop designed by the architect Serlio, a recent immigrant to Venice and a major exponent of central Italian classicism in the city. Odoni’s patronage of such a work suggests that he was interested in and connected to circles concerned with the development of a new architectural style in Venice—circles that included Odoni’s visitors, Aretino and Michiel.<sup>116</sup> While this stylistic revolution is commonly thought of as a top-down campaign instigated by Gritti, centered on the Piazza San Marco, and promulgated by elite patrician patrons, Odoni’s façade may have been a more modest contribution, in paint rather than stone, celebrating renewed peace and prosperity.<sup>117</sup>

To get the full effect of the façade, we must envision it on the outskirts of town but on a major canal and very visible because the canal is two *fondamente* wide. The house was not particularly large, but it had a very brightly painted façade with a sumptuously carved balcony. The façade, both in subject and in ornament, proclaimed the classicizing, innovative tastes and knowledge of the owner. We can imagine Odoni himself coming out onto the balcony, framed by his coat of arms carved below and by the mythological “inhabitants” of his house depicted in the fresco



**Figure 12** Benedetto Bordone (?), *Philiphilo among Fragments*, in Francesco Colonna, *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499), page a7 recto

above and to his sides—making of himself and his house a “degno and reale spettacolo” in the words of Aretino.<sup>118</sup> Appearing thus, he became a kind of Bacchus, the god of wine, the ultimate authority regarding this commodity. Yet, he was a Bacchus also flanked by Apollo and Minerva so that he would appear as a sophisticated *bon vivant* within a classicizing architectural structure and amongst the company of the gods.<sup>119</sup> But the images of abundance—the intertwined, (re)productive figures of the god of wine and the goddess of grain, the carved putti with baskets of fruit, the maritime figures of sirens and tritons—not only signaled Odoni’s wealth and liberality but also the renewed well-being of Venice.<sup>120</sup> In this sense, the façade is about Venice as much as it is about Odoni, or more particularly it is about Odoni’s place in Venice. Celebrating Odoni’s relationship (through the Dazio dil vin) to the city and its economic prosperity, the façade does not just combine honor for the city and promotion of the self/family, it intertwines them. It was Odoni’s most public portrait and a statement of his cit-

izenship; in the words of Leon Battista Alberti, “We decorate our property as much to distinguish family and country as for any personal display (and who would deny this to be the responsibility of a good citizen).”<sup>121</sup>

By commissioning a painted façade, Odoni ornamented the city without explicitly flaunting his personal and familial wealth. At the same time, he undeniably drew attention to himself—his artistic discernment and cultural knowledge as well as his profession and position in Venetian society. What is remarkable about Odoni is the degree to which he was and is known for his house rather than for any other distinction; were it not for his painted façade, his collection, and his portrait, he would be unknown to us today. The example of Odoni demonstrates the degree to which, by the sixteenth century, consumption and display centered on domestic space could make a “Renaissance man.”<sup>122</sup> Aretino’s letter to Odoni is a semi-ironic commentary on this state of affairs. Both Odoni and Aretino understood the power of the house not only to represent but, indeed, to create the man.



## Appendix—Translation of Aretino’s Letter to Odoni

Do not think, my excellent man, that my waiting for the letter from England of signor Girolamo da Trevigi—a man most worthy of the reputation he has earned through the favor of that fortunate and religious [King] Henry—was due to my pride. Of every other defect I may be accused, but not of that vice. Certainly the desire to see you and your house was the reason that before I had that letter in hand I was given the pleasure of seeing your house and you. Whence your delay and your promptness injured me twice, and then shamed me, considering that your service to me—that is owed to me—caused me embarrassment. True, the kindness of the good Udone is so full of goodness that whatever he does is without ceremony and without arrogance.

But whoever wishes to see how clean and candid his mind is should look at his face and his house, look at them, I say, and you will see as much serenity and beauty as one can desire in a house and in a face. If it were not for a little something: I would compare the chambers [bedrooms], the salon, the loggia, and the garden of the apartment in which you live to a bride who awaits her relatives coming to attend her wedding. So I must [do], it is so well-kept, tapestried, and splendid. I myself never visit that I do not fear to tread there with my feet, its floors are so exquisite. I don’t know what prince has such richly adorned beds, such rare paintings, and such regal decor. Of the sculptures I will not speak: Greece would have the best of ancient form [art] had she not let herself be deprived of her [these] relics and sculptures.

For your information, when I was at court I lived in Rome and not in Venice; but now that I am here, I am in Venice and in Rome. When I leave here where I do not see marbles or bronzes, no sooner have I arrived there [at your house] than my soul enjoys that pleasure it used to feel when it visited Belvedere on Monte Cavallo or another of those places where such torsos of colossi and statues are seen. Whence one judges on the evidence of such a worthy and regal spectacle the greatness of your generous and magnificent spirit. Truly the pleasure of such carvings and castings does not issue from a rustic breast or an ignoble heart.

Now to return to the announcement that our friend gave us of his happiness, I tell you it cheers me up. And in this cheerful mood, I beseech you, when you have more news from him, that you be so kind as to let me hear it at your palace, because hearing from him in such lovely accommodations will redouble my joy.

30 August 1538, Venice.

## Notes

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1. Pietro Aretino, letter no. 79, in *Lettere, libro secondo*, ed. Francesco Erspamer (Parma, 1998), 153. “Ma chi vol vedere in che modo il suo animo è netto e candido, miri di lui la fronte e l’abitazioni; e mirile, dico, e vedrà quanto di sereno e di vago si può bramare in una abitazione e in una fronte.” The full letter is translated in the appendix to this article.

2. Both ideas derive from classical writers—Aristotle, Cicero, and Vitruvius in particular—but were much elaborated by Renaissance theorists. The literature on buildings and bodies is vast. For a discussion focused on the façade, see Charles Burroughs, *The Italian Renaissance Palace Façade: Structures of Authority, Surfaces of Sense* (Cambridge, England, 2002), 31–32. For a recent discussion of the correspondence between houses and their owners, see Georgia Clarke, *Roman House-Renaissance Palaces: Inventing Antiquity in Fifteenth-Century Italy* (Cambridge, England, 2003), 57–65.

3. This is argued convincingly by John Onians, *Bearers of Meaning: The Classical Orders in Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance* (Princeton, 1988), 299–301, who also allows that the influence might have gone both ways. Although Onians finds Aretino’s use of architectural simile “highly unusual in a literary context” (299), Aretino could have found inspiration in earlier literature, including Dante’s *Convivio* III, 8 (see n. 119 below).

4. The house/inhabitant analogy had broader diffusion in Renaissance culture as well. In a particularly graphic example, the loose woman Lena, in Ludovico Ariosto’s play by the same name, complains that her “front door” is so trafficked she might have to use the “back one” as well. Ludovico Ariosto, *The Comedies of Ariosto*, ed. and trans. Edmond M. Beame and Leonard G. Sbrocchi (Chicago, 1975), 197 (act 5, sc. 11). This and other examples of popular usage are discussed in Elizabeth S. and Thomas V. Cohen, “Open and Shut: The Social Meanings of the Cinquecento Roman House,” *Studies in the Decorative Arts* 9 (Fall/Winter 2001–2), 64, 79. The analogy is alive and well in contemporary popular culture, for example, in the title of the television show *Extreme Makeovers: Home Edition*.

5. See discussion in Onians, *Bearers of Meaning*, 273, 277; Alina Payne, *The Architectural Treatise in the Italian Renaissance: Architectural Invention, Ornament, and Literary Culture* (Cambridge, England, 1999), 123; and Mario Carpo, “The Architectural Principles of Temperate Classicism: Merchant Dwellings in Sebastiano Serlio’s Sixth Book,” *Res* 22 (Autumn 1992), 135–51.

6. The idea that a house reflects the identity of its owner is commonplace in our own culture, but we tend to think of the owner as the active agent who shapes the house into the image he or she wants. The Renaissance notion of the relationship between house and inhabitant has more abstract underpinnings. If one conceived of the house as a work of art (as men like Aretino and Serlio clearly did), then according to Renaissance artistic theory, the design of the house ought to be based on the study of nature (one of the underlying concepts of Alberti’s architectural treatise). What, then, is the referent? What is being depicted in domestic architecture? The answer is the owner/inhabitant. It is in this sense that the house is a portrait, a built body that imitates the natural body. This also explains why it was so important that the house be an accurate representation of the owner.

7. Burroughs, *Italian Renaissance Palace Façade*, 10. For an interesting and more generalized discussion of façade, portrait, and subject, as well as symbol, icon, and index as applied to architecture, without reference to Aretino’s use of the man/house analogy or to Odoni’s house, see *ibid.*, 2–3, 29–30, 33–34. On the house as “embodiment of the family” and the “metaphori-

cal character” of the home, see Patricia Fortini Brown, *Private Lives in Renaissance Venice* (New Haven, 2004), 24, 89.

8. Camillo also made use of architectural metaphors in his own writing. See Mario Carpo, *Alberti, Raffaello, Serlio e Camillo. Metodo ed ordini nella teoria architettonica dei primi moderni* (Geneva, 1993). Onians, *Bearers of Meaning*, 299–301, analyzes Aretino’s use of architectural metaphors in some detail.

9. Onians translates “di scala bestiale” as “bestial in scale” rather than the more common “with a beastly stairway.” Both translations are probably correct; the phrase is typical of Aretino’s love of double meaning. The entrance has a beastly stair; Aretino’s dark side is beastly in scale. Aretino also used the stairway as a metaphor for himself in another letter dated 27 Nov. 1537: “So many gentlemen break in on me continuously with visits that my stairs are worn with their feet, like the pavement of the Campidoglio from triumphal chariots.” Quoted and translated in Patricia LaBalme, “Personality and Politics in Venice: Pietro Aretino,” in *Titian: His World and His Legacy*, ed. David Rosand (New York, 1982), 122.

10. Aretino to Domenico Bolani, letter no. 213, in Aretino, *Lettere, libro primo*, ed. Francesco Erspamer (Parma, 1995), 442–43. “La cui piacevolezza mi suol dire che l’entrata per terra di sì fatta abitazione, per essere oscura, mal destra e di scala bestiale, si simiglia a la terribilità del nome acquistatomi ne lo sciorinar del vero. E poi soggiunge che chi mi pratica punto, trova ne la mia pura, schietta e naturale amicizia quella tranquilla contentezza che si sente nel comparire nel portico e ne l’affacciarsi ai balconi sopradetti.” Translation based on Samuel Putnam, ed. and trans., *The Works of Aretino* (New York, [1933]), 2:181. Aretino apparently uses the word *portico* (*portego* in dialect) in the Venetian sense, to refer to the principal salon on the *piano nobile* of Venetian homes. He may also be playing at another level with the analogy of body and house because the term “*portego scuro*” (dark entrance hall—of which there are many in Venice) in Venetian dialect/slang (here contrasted with the light portico above), can also mean *culo* (arse), essentially the same metaphor used by Ariosto (see n. 4). Giuseppe Boerio, *Dizionario del dialetto veneziano* (1856; Florence, 1993), 527. Aretino probably intended to liken entering his house to an act of sodomy. For Aretino’s frequent references to the *culo* and sodomy, see Raymond B. Waddington, *Aretino’s Satyr: Sexuality, Satire, and Self-Projection in Sixteenth-Century Literature and Art* (Toronto, 2004), 28–30.

11. On Aretino’s actual houses, see Juergen Schulz, “The Houses of Titian, Aretino, and Sansovino,” in Rosand, *Titian: His World and His Legacy*, 73–118.

12. The exact circumstances of the communication are difficult to decipher from the letter, but Girolamo is clearly the intermediary and in some sense responsible for the correspondence. In Aretino, *Lettere, libro secondo*, 153 n. 2, Erspamer suggests that Aretino asked his friend Girolamo to write Odoni on his behalf and was waiting for this communication to take place when Odoni extended Aretino an invitation to visit the house. For Aretino’s practice of beginning his letters *in media res* with reference to social connections, see Waddington, *Aretino’s Satyr*, 51–52.

13. Aretino is also alluding to Renaissance ideas of physiognomy, in which one could know the soul from an exterior reading of the body, particularly the face. On Aretino and physiognomy, see Luba Freedman, *Titian’s Portraits through Aretino’s Lens* (University Park, Penn., 1995), 28–29. In his discussion of physiognomy, the Neapolitan humanist Pomponius Gauricus compared reading character from a face to knowing the nature of a man from his house. *De sculptura* (1504), ed. and trans. André Chastel and Robert Klein (Geneva, 1969), 128–29.

14. This analogy is made very explicit in Vincenzo Scamozzi, *L’idea dell’architettura universal* (1615; Bologna, 1982), 1:255. “Nelle facciate, e nel di dentro tenghino qualche cose del bello, e gratioso, e con Colonne, e Pilastri, e simili parti, che le accreschino ornamento; acciò da questi segni esteriori: come dalla faccia dell’huomo si possi comprendere che sia Casa da Gentil’huomo”

(emphasis added). For an early example (1432) of the analogy between buildings and portraits, see Onians, *Bearers of Meaning*, 126.

15. *Il grande dizionario Garzanti della lingua italiana* (Milan, 1987), 775.

16. Petrarch, *Petrarch’s Lyric Poems: The “Rime sparse” and other Lyrics*, ed. and trans. Robert M. Durling (Cambridge, Mass., 1976), 379 (sonnet 222, line 12).

17. Mark W. Roskill, *Dolce’s “Aretino” and Venetian Art Theory of the Cinquecento* (1968; Toronto, 2000), 97. See Lora Anne Palladino, “Pietro Aretino: Orator and Art Theorist” (PhD diss., Yale University, 1981), 264. The Italian word *fronte* therefore is very different from “façade” as used in modern English to mean, in the words of Burroughs (*Italian Renaissance Palace Façade*, 32), “the artificial display or suppression in an individual’s face of telltale marks of interior feeling.” By contrast, the *fronte* may betray feelings one does not wish to convey.

18. Translated and discussed in Palladino, “Pietro Aretino,” 265. “[S]ino a lo egregio del pensiero, sino al generoso de la mente, sino al candido de l’anima si gli scorge nel reale spazio de la serena fronte.” Aretino to Paolo Giovio, Feb. 1545, letter no. 150, in Fidenzio Pertile and Ettore Camesasca, eds., *Lettere sull’arte di Pietro Aretino*, (Milan, 1957–60), 2:48.

19. Translated and discussed in Palladino, “Pietro Aretino,” 281–82. “Pudicizia e Beltà, nimiche eterne, le spazian nel sembiante, e fra le ciglia il trono de le Grazie si discerne . . . l’altre virtuti interne l’ornon la fronte d’ogni meraviglia.” Aretino to Veronica Gambarà, 7 Nov. 1537, letter no. 223, in Aretino, *Lettere, libro primo*, 465. These letters also participate in the much beloved Renaissance *paragone* of painting and poetry, which often revolved around portraiture.

20. Palladino, “Pietro Aretino,” 54–55. For Aretino as “Demonstator,” see *ibid.*, 4, 183–86. For Aretino and portraiture, in addition to Palladino see Freedman, *Titian’s Portraits through Aretino’s Lens*; and Waddington, *Aretino’s Satyr*, chap. 3.

21. Waddington, *Aretino’s Satyr*, 64, argues convincingly that the first volume of Aretino’s *Lettere* is visually and physically “designed to present itself as a portrait of the author as demonstrative orator, assigning praise and blame.” Interestingly, Aretino’s author portrait on the frontispiece depicts him inside an architectural frame that resembles a building or house. *Ibid.*, fig. 19.

22. On Odoni’s portrait, see especially Lars Olaf Larsson, “Lorenzo Lottos Bildnis des Andrea Odoni in Hampton Court. Eine typologische und ikonographische Studie,” *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift* 37 (1968), 21–33; John Shearman, *The Early Italian Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen* (Cambridge, England, 1983), 144–48; Barbara Coli, “Lorenzo Lotto e il ritratto cittadino. Andrea Odoni,” in *Il ritratto e la memoria. Materiali I*, ed. Augusto Gentile, (Rome, 1989), 183–204; Monika Schmitter, “The Display of Distinction: Art Collecting and Social Status in Early Sixteenth-Century Venice” (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1997), 223–76; Schmitter, “‘Virtuous Riches’: The Bricolage of *Cittadini* Identities in Early Sixteenth-Century Venice,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 57 (2004), 954–58; and David Alan Brown, Peter Humfrey, and Mauro Lucco, eds., *Lorenzo Lotto, Rediscovered Master of the Renaissance* (Washington, D.C., 1997), 48–49, 161–64.

23. Giorgio Vasari, “Il Palma veneziano pittore,” in *Le vite de’ più eccellenti architetti, pittori, et scultori italiani, da Cimabue, insino a’ tempi nostri. Nell’edizione per i tipi di Lorenzo Torrentino, Firenze 1550* (Turin, 1986), 2:802. “Ritrasse Andrea Odoni che in Vinegia ha la sua casa molto adornata di pitture e di sculture,” changed in the 1568 edition to the more neutral “in casa d’Andrea Odoni è il suo ritratto di mano di Lorenzo, che è molto bello.” Vasari, “Jacopo Palma e Lorenzo Lotto pittori viniziani,” in *Le opere di Giorgio Vasari con nuove annotazioni e commenti di Gaetano Milanesi* (1906; Florence, 1998), 5:249. Vasari could have read Aretino’s letter since it was published before the first edition of Vasari’s *Le vite*.

24. "ANDREAE VDONIO CIVI / INSIGNI ANIMI SPLENDORE / LIBERALITATE ATQUE ELEGANTIA / ETIAM SVpra CIVILEM FORTV-NAM SPECTANDA / HIERONYMVS ET ALOYSIVS FRATRES / MOERENTES SIBI AC POSTERIS PP. / VIXIT AN. LVII. OBIIT A. MDXLV." The inscription, now apparently lost, was recorded by Jacopo Morelli in [Marcantonio Michiel], *Notizia d'opere di disegno nella prima metà del secolo XVI*, ed. Jacopo Morelli (Bassano, 1800), 193. Emmanuele Antonio Cicogna also published the epitaph, taken from the "codice di Giovan Georgio Palfero" with very slight variations, in *Delle iscrizioni veneziane* (1824–53; Bologna, 1969), 3:454.

25. Evelyn Welch, "Public Magnificence and Private Display: Giovanni Pontano's *De splendore* (1498) and the Domestic Arts," *Journal of Design History* 15, no. 4 (2002), 211–27; and Guido Guerzoni, "Liberalitas, Magnificentia, Splendor: The Classic Origins of Italian Renaissance Lifestyles," in *Economic Engagements with Art*, ed. Neil De Marchi and Crauford D. W. Goodwin, annual supplement to *History of Political Economy*, vol. 31 (Durham, N.C., 1999), 332–78. The term *splendore* was associated in particular with "virtuous and pleasurable" magnificence in the private sphere; see Luke Syson and Dora Thornton, *Objects of Virtue: Art in Renaissance Italy* (Los Angeles, 2001), 29–32. It is significant that the inscription makes no claim to "magnificence," a virtue that was accessible only to the most powerful and wealthy.

26. Giovanni Caldiera, quoted in Margaret King, "Personal, Domestic, and Republican Values in the Moral Philosophy of Giovanni Caldiera," *Renaissance Quarterly* 28 (1975), 552. Caldiera probably wrote the text in the early 1460s.

27. Cicero, quoted in Clarke, *Roman House*, 63 (see n. 2), who also discusses Caldiera.

28. For the suggestion that the letter is so hyperbolic that it verges on criticism, see Schmitter, "'Virtuous Riches,'" 960–61. Irene Favaretto, *Arte antica e cultura antiquaria nelle collezioni venete al tempo della serenissima* (Rome, 1990), 75, also notes: "Pietro Aretino descrisse la dimora dell'Odoni con parole piene di ammirazione, senza però riuscire a celare una punta di sottile ironia per il lusso e lo splendore qui profusi a piene mani." Elissa Weaver, who helped with my translation, agreed that Aretino means to imply that the house is ostentatious. It can be difficult to fully grasp innuendo, tone, and connotation in Aretino's letters, and his comments about Odoni's house might have been interpreted variously by different readers.

29. The interior of the house, as well as the portrait by Lotto, will be analyzed in forthcoming publications.

30. Marcantonio Michiel, *Der Anonimo Morelliano* (Marcantonio Michiel's *Notizia d'opere del disegno*), ed. Theodor Frimmel (Vienna, 1896), 82–86. Michiel's manuscript was written ca. 1521–43. The notes on Odoni's collection are grouped under subheadings for each room. Some of Michiel's notations on other Venetian collections may be similarly organized, although in a less explicit manner. For the example of the collection of Taddeo Contarini, see Rosella Lauber, "'Et è il nudo che ho io in pittura de l'istesso Zorzi.' Per Giorgione e Marcantonio Michiel," *Arte Veneta* 59 (2002), 105.

31. Cancelleria inferiore, Miscellanea notai diversi, busta (hereafter b.) 39, carta (hereafter c.) 58, Archivio di Stato, Venice (hereafter ASV). Published in part in Georg Gronau, ed., "Beiträge zum Anonymus Morellianus," in *Archivalische Beiträge zur Geschichte der venezianischen Kunst aus dem nachlass Gustav Ludwigs*, ed. Wilhelm von Bode et al. (Berlin, 1911), 53–84. The inventory was taken after the death of Andrea's brother Alvise; Andrea died in 1545. Isabella Palumbo-Fossati, "L'interno della casa dell'artigiano e dell'artista nella Venezia del Cinquecento," *Studi Veneziani* 8 (1984), 114, estimates that about 70 percent of Venetian inventories are organized by room.

32. Odoni first became the subject of historical research with the publication in 1800 of Michiel's notes. As he did for the other collectors mentioned

by Michiel, Morelli, the editor of the then anonymous text, gathered together the initial primary sources concerning Odoni and his family; see Morelli in [Michiel], *Notizia*, 190–93. These sources were augmented in 1830 by Cicogna in his *Delle iscrizioni veneziane*, 3:434–38. Cicogna, who was born in the house next door (see n. 55), also had the fortune to visit the Casa Odoni (then still-standing) with his friend Girolamo Odoni, a descendent of Andrea. Further contributions, particularly of an archival nature, were made by Gronau, "Beiträge zum Anonymus Morellianus," 55–71; Donata Battilotti and Maria Teresa Franco, "Regesti dei committenti e dei primi collezionisti di Giorgione," *Antichità Viva* 17, no. 4–5 (1978), 58–86; Schmitter, "Display of Distinction," 137–164; and Schmitter, "'Virtuous Riches'" 939–42. Additional research may be present in Rosella Lauber, "Per l'edizione critica della *Notizia d'opere di disegno* di Marcantonio Michiel" (PhD diss., Università degli Studi di Udine, 2001). Lauber's dissertation may contain new findings pertinent to this article, but the author would not permit me to consult it.

33. For the origins of the family, see Schmitter, "Display of Distinction," 139–41.

34. There is no hard evidence that Rinaldo's wife Marieta was Francesco Zio's sister, but Zio and Andrea Odoni were certainly closely related: Francesco refers to Odoni as his *nipote* (a term which could at the time be applied to a variety of younger male relatives). Given that Francesco was only eleven years Andrea's senior, the most likely relationship is uncle-nephew. See Schmitter, "Display of Distinction," 141–43. Both Zio and Odoni belonged to the Scuola di Santa Maria della Carità, one of the five principal Scuole Grande. See Schmitter, "'Virtuous Riches,'" 920, 941.

35. On Zio and his collection, see Schmitter, "'Virtuous Riches,'" 919–38; Schmitter, "Display of Distinction," 46–134; and Anne Markham Schulz, "A Newly Discovered Work by Giammaria Mosca," *Burlington Magazine* 146 (Oct. 2004), 663–64.

36. Odoni is first mentioned by Marino Sanuto in 1517, when he was accused of stealing while working for Zio at the Raxon nuove; the case was later dropped. See Sanuto, *I diarii*, ed. Rinaldo Fulin et al. (1879–1902; Bologna, 1969–70), 24:622; 25:252–53.

37. Odoni was listed as "dal dacio del vin" in 1522; Scuola Grande di S. Maria della Carità, register entitled "Successioni, ereditarie, guardiani, e confratelli, 1450–1545," c. 59r, ASV. He appears listed as "scrivan al datio del vin" in 1523; Scuola Grande di S. Maria della Carità, register 254, c. 179r, ASV. As of 1523, the "notaryship" (apparently the same position as *scrivan*) of the Dazio dil vin had an annual revenue of 400 ducats. See Mary Frances Neff, "Chancellery Secretaries in Venetian Politics and Society, 1480–1533" (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1985), 182–83.

38. Schmitter, "Display of Distinction," 144–45. The contract was renewed in 1533 and 1534.

39. "[E] qual Orio ha mala fama, usa grande crudeltà con tutti, fa stimar fino li cerchii, fa meter per l'ordinario una quarta de più per anfora contra el statuto." Sanuto, *I diarii*, 58:643. It should be noted, however, that Sanuto's family owned a tavern, and Sanuto represented "its interests to the government when higher taxes were being levied on wine sales." Robert Finlay, *Politics in Renaissance Venice* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1980), 15. Sanuto was therefore in a good position to know about Orio and Odoni's practices, but his comments could also be colored by self-interest. Nonetheless, there is considerable evidence of corruption in the Dazio in general. Zio himself was rewarded for catching someone embezzling at the Dazio dil vin in 1513; see Sanuto, *I diarii*, 17:389. In 1516, a certain Marco Michiel was stripped of his office at the Dazio dil vin "per haver fatto alcuni sconti ad alcuni gentiluomini contra li mandati del consiglio di X." Codice Cicogna 2848, Diarii di Marcantonio Michiel 1511–1521, 235r, Biblioteca Museo Correr,

Venice. The following year, Giovanni della Vedova, notary at the Dazio, was charged with embezzlement but was allowed to keep the office after paying 200 ducats. Neff, "Chancery Secretaries," 574. For further evidence, see Schmitter, "'Virtuous Riches,'" 940 n. 113. Odoni had already been accused of stealing when he worked with this uncle, although the charges were subsequently dropped. On this occasion, Piero Orio testified for Odoni, so the relationship between the men was of long standing (see n. 36).

40. See, for example, Battilotti and Franco, "Regesti," 79; Maria Teresa Franco, "Andrea Odoni" in *I tempi di Giorgione*, ed. Ruggero Maschio (Rome, Gangemi, 1994), 217; Shearman, *Early Italian Pictures*, 145 (see n. 22); Michel Hochmann, *Peintres et commanditaires à Venise (1540–1628)*, Collection de L'École Française de Rome, vol. 155 (Rome, 1992), 191; and Coli, "Lorenzo Lotto," 186 (see n. 22).

41. Cicogna, *Delle iscrizioni veneziane*, 3:434, quotes unspecified "cronache nostre." Although I have not been able to determine for certain which chronicle Cicogna used, his phrasing is very similar to that in the late sixteenth/early seventeenth-century manuscript "Le due Corone della Nobiltà di Alessandro Zilioli, Tomo II," MS It. VII, 5 (7926) in the Biblioteca Nazionale, Marciana, Venice. An entry in Sanudo's *I diarii* (50:47) has Odoni acting as a middleman in a wine transaction (worth 9250 ducats!), but it is not obvious whether he was acting for the Dazio or in his own business interest. However, Odoni is not listed as a member of the Scuola dei Mercanti. Scuole Piccole, b. 406, San Cristofalo, Mariogola 1377–1545, ASV.

42. According to Ugo Tucci, "Contacts were especially close between the category of merchant and that of public functionary: the incidence of men employed in both sectors at the same time and equally actively is very frequent. . . . [In the case Tullio Fabri] we see him carrying on an intense commercial activity which was so closely bound up with this public office [*razonato* (accountant)] that it would be difficult to establish which of the two was his principal occupation." "The Psychology of the Venetian Merchant in the Sixteenth-Century," in *Renaissance Venice*, ed. J. R. Hale (London, 1973), 361.

43. Cancelleria inferiore, Miscellanea notai diversi, b. 39, c. 58, ASV. Odoni's brothers followed him in his position at the Dazio; see Schmitter, "Display of Distinction," 145.

44. The following list of items appears in Cancelleria inferiore, Miscellanea notai diversi, b. 39, c. 58, 5r and v, ASV; and in Gronau, "Beiträge zum Anonymus Morellianus," 62 (see n. 31):

"Item alla volta del Bevilacqua, panni ditti cento e ventiquattro (124) computando 42, tenti in cavezzi 84, de diversi colori.

In bottega de mro Domenego Bochinato, panni bassi villazi tenti n.º do.

Alla volta del figer, panni cinque mestrini tenti.

Item sette bassanesi tenti, cavezzi n.º quarantatre tenti.

Item panni vintiotto, in cavezzi cinquantasie imballadi.

In Chiovere de Maragno cavezzi cento e do (102), fanno panni cinquantaun.

Alla tentoria de mro Matthieto cavezzi n.º cento e otto (108), fanno panni cinquantaquattro."

On the Venetian practice of renting storage rooms (*magazini* or *volte*) for merchandise, see Juergen Schulz, *The New Palaces of Medieval Venice* (University Park, Penn., 2004), 26.

45. Cancelleria inferiore, Miscellanea notai diversi, b. 39, c. 58, 15v, ASV. "Un conto in nome di messer Alvise di Odoni di carte 4 per panni habbuti dalla bottega havena in compagnia con messer Francesco Moranzon/ Principia à di 2 decembrio 1546, et finisce à di 23. luio 1547." This document pertained to a court case involving Andrea's estate.

46. On *fraterne*, see James C. Davis, *A Venetian Family and its Fortune 1500–1900. The Donà and the Conservation of their Wealth* (Philadelphia, 1975), 7.

47. Tucci, "The Psychology of the Venetian Merchant," 362, notes that a post as customs officer *al Purgio* had "an annual stipend of 200 ducats and the certainty of 'helping oneself' to more than 40,000 a year—a figure, this, which in its evident exaggeration well expresses the expectations which rested with jobs of this kind."

48. Dieci savi sopra le decime, b. 100, c. 274 (Mar. 30, 1538), and b. 106, c. 703 (Oct. 27, 1540), ASV; Battilotti and Franco, "Regesti dei commitenti," 80–81; and Schmitter, "Display of Distinction," 154–55. Odoni can be compared with some *cittadini* working in the chancery who owned substantially more land and had much higher incomes. See appendix to Neff, "Chancery Secretaries," esp. entries for Alessandro Capella, Giovanni Battista Ramusio, and Gasparo della Vedova.

49. I have not been able to find a contract for Odoni's marriage to Isabeta or otherwise determine the date of their marriage. It certainly took place after 1527, when Isabeta's first husband died, and very possibly not until between 1538 and 1540 when Odoni first declared ownership of land that was part of Isabeta's dowry from her first marriage. See Schmitter, "Display of Distinction," 154–56; and Schmitter, "'Virtuous Riches,'" 942. On Odoni's nieces' dowries, see Schmitter, "Display of Distinction," 153–56; and Schmitter, "'Virtuous Riches,'" 941–42. Yet, a large number of *scuola* members attended Odoni's funeral and were given substantial alms, an indicator of Odoni's wealth and prominence. Scuola Grande di S. Maria della Carità, register entitled "Successioni, ereditarie, guardiani, et confratelli, 1450–1545," c. 99v, ASV.

50. Zio, Odoni's uncle, was procurator of the convent of Santa Maria degli Vergini, a position that probably required him to know Latin, and in his testament he was anxious to arrange for the education of his illegitimate son. Schmitter, "Display of Distinction," 41–42, 98. Odoni's brother Alvise married the granddaughter of a doctor in Padua, who was indirectly related to Zio. *Ibid.*, 143. Odoni's nephew, Rinaldo (son of his brother Gerolamo), was a scholar, prelate, and collector who studied philosophy with Flavio Orsini in Perugia and published a book on Aristotle's conception of the soul. Rinaldo's sister Catherina (mistakenly identified as Margherita by Cicogna) married the scholar and publisher Paolo Manuzio. See Cicogna, *Delle iscrizioni veneziane*, 3:436–37.

51. A sample of Odoni's handwriting can be found in his tax declaration (*decima*); Dieci savi sopra le decime, b. 100, c. 274, ASV. The two titles of books found in the Casa Odoni are "El supplimento delle chroniche coperto di carton, del padre Filippo carmelitano" and "Libbro de medicina de Mro Din da Fiorenza." Cancelleria inferiore, Miscellanea notai diversi, b. 37, c. 58, 15r and v, ASV; and Gronau, "Beiträge zum Anonymus Morellianus," 71. The first book was probably an Italian translation of the *Supplementum chronicarum* by Fra Jacopo Filippo Foresti of Bergamo (1434–1520), a very popular world history. The second was one of several books and commentaries written by the Florentine physician Dino del Garbo (ca. 1280–1327). I am grateful to Paul Grendler, Karen Reeds, and Valery Rees for their help identifying the authors and texts. In the *mezzado*, a mezzanine room used as a business office or study, there were another "[s]ette pezzi de libri de diverse sorte, coperti de cuoro," but the word "libbro" is used elsewhere in the inventory to describe account books. See Gronau, "Beiträge zum Anonymus Morellianus," 68. Since most of the art collection remained in the house until Alvise's death, it is likely that books owned by Odoni did as well.

52. When his eighteenth-century descendants applied for "cittadini originari" status, they used Odoni to prove the antiquity and "nobility" of their family. Avogaria di Comun, Cittadinanze Originarie, b. 404, c. 92 (dated 1716), ASV. Such petitions typically present genealogical information for only the two previous generations.

53. The address given by Cicogna is Fondamenta del Gaffaro numero civico 443. The modern address is Dorsoduro 3537–38 (Fondamenta del Gaf-

faro), as noted by Lino Moretti in his edition of Giuseppe Tassini, *Curiosità veneziane ovvero origini delle denominazioni stadali di Venezia* (1863; Venice, 1970), 737 n. 1. Also see Andrew Martin, “Amica e un albergo di virtuosi.’ La casa e la collezione di Andrea Odoni,” *Venezia Cinquecento* 19 (2000), 157. I independently came to the same conclusion about the location using *planimetrie* and *catasti*. Note: the new Hotel Palazzo Odoni on the opposite side of canal was never Odoni’s residence. The owners of the hotel have capitalized on Odoni’s reputation for splendid living—his “albergo dei virtuosi”—in an ingenious, if obscure, marketing campaign.

54. When I visited the interior in the summer of 1998, I noticed stairs made of red marble and niches in the passageway wall on the ground floor, both items noted by Cicogna. There is also a *pozzo* (wellhead). It is not the ornamented stone one described by Cicogna (see n. 101), but it may mark the location of the original well. If the ground floor and square footage of the plot have not changed, then the house was quite modest in size and the niches were very unimpressive. I would like to thank Renato Oran for his hospitality and Antonella Mallus for arranging the visit.

55. Cicogna visited the house in 1829, but in 1863, Tassini, *Curiosità veneziane*, 273, spoke of it in the past tense. Tassini reports that Cicogna was born on the Fondamenta del Gaffaro at no. 3542–43, but that the building “venne atterrato, meno il piano terreno, che ora ha due magazzini segnati dai N. 3542, 3543.” In the “Elenco dei numeri anagrafi” from 1841 (Biblioteca Legislativa, b. 290, ASV), no. 3537–38 are also listed as *magazzini* rather than *case*, so the Casa Odoni may have suffered the same fate, which fits the physical remains of the building today.

56. Notarile, Atti, Vettor Maffei, b. 8098, c. 214v–215v, ASV.

57. On the way in which “social meanings” were created by houses in their wider physical and social settings, see Cohen and Cohen, “Open and Shut,” 67–69 (see n. 4).

58. The date of the façade fresco is based on the assumption that Girolamo executed it when he was in Venice to paint an altarpiece for the Church of San Salvatore, which is signed and dated 1531. (The altarpiece still survives, albeit in very poor condition.) This seems plausible since this is the only time Girolamo is known to have worked in the city, and as Mauro Lucco has pointed out, the correspondence of this date with that of Michiel’s visit to the collection and Odoni’s appointment as *co-condutor* reinforces the likelihood. While most scholars have suggested the date 1531, Lucco argues that the façade must have been painted in 1532 since Girolamo would have been busy with the altarpiece before. Mauro Lucco, “Di mano del mio Trivisio, pittore certo valente e celebre,” in *Sabba da Castiglione 1480–1554. Dalle corti rinascimentali alla Commenda di Faenza*, ed. Anna Rosa Gentilini (Florence, 2004), 372; and William R. Rearick, “Pordenone ‘Romanista,’” in *Il Pordenone. Atti del convegno internazionale di studio*, ed. Caterina Furlan (Pordenone, 1985), 130.

There are numerous examples of frescoes used to update a preexisting building or of houses built with the intension of a painted façade in mind. Cicogna, *Delle iscrizioni veneziane*, 3:436, also saw remnants of fresco painting on the side of the building facing the “corticella detta della Polvere,” but he could not make out any subjects.

59. For an example of how façades represented inhabitants and were thus the targets of rituals of shaming, see Cohen and Cohen, “Open and Shut,” 71.

60. For the overwhelming emphasis on façades in Venice, see Ralph Lieberman, *Renaissance Architecture in Venice 1450–1540* (New York, 1982), 22.

61. Margaret L. King, *Venetian Humanism in an Age of Patrician Dominance* (Princeton, 1986), 148. Morosini’s treatise is not specifically about Venice, but as a Venetian nobleman, his concept of an ideal closely resembled his patria; *ibid.*, 141. According to Venetian mythology as embroidered by the sixteenth-century patrician Nicolò Zen, the early settlers of the city fixed

“by law, that all residences should be equal, alike, of similar size and ornamentation.” Manfredo Tafuri, *Venice and the Renaissance*, trans. Jessica Levine (Cambridge, Mass., 1995), 3. Also see Brown, *Private Lives*, 35 (see n. 7).

62. The humanist Giovanni Pontano referred to the house as “a sort of public ornament.” Welch, “Public Magnificence,” 214 (see n. 25).

63. Sanuto succinctly expressed this dual role when he noted that the burning of the famous Palazzo Corner on the Grand Canal was both a private sorrow for the family and a public sorrow because the palace was “the most beautiful in Venice”: “Io . . . havendo grandissimo dolor . . . si per il private che questa caxa e mia amicissima, si per il publico ch’è la più bella caxa di Venexia.” *I diarii*, 56:753. In this passage, Sanuto conflates the meanings of “casa” as “family” and “house.”

64. Clarke, *Roman House*, 61 (see n. 2). For more on inscriptions, see *ibid.*, 22–32. A more “self-effacing” inscription on the façade of the palace of the patrician Andrea Loredano referred to Psalms 115: “Not to us, o Lord, not unto us, but to Thy name be the glory given.” Brown, *Private Lives*, 33–34. Vendramin modestly deferred credit more fully than Dario by not actually inscribing his name, and perhaps as a patrician he felt less need to express his devotion to the city-state. For other related examples of palace inscriptions in Venice, see Brown, *Private Lives*.

65. The classic discussion of this is Tafuri, *Venice and the Renaissance*, chap. 1. These ideas were sometimes expressed with fanatical concern about the well-being of the republic. In his dialogue of 1563, Giovanni Maria Memmo wrote that while people used to build for utility and comfort, “finalmente corrotti dall’ocio, si hanno preparato gli edificij a i piaceri, & lascivie loro, con tanti soverchi ornamenti & spese, che non solo rendono stupore a cui le mira, ma sono cagione di corrompere i buoni costumi, & il civile & politico vivere. . . . Il che non solo è dannoso a’ Cittadini, & famiglie private, ma corrompe le Città.” *Dialogo del Magn. Cavaliere M. Gio. Maria Memmo* (Venice, 1563), 73 (emphasis added).

66. Monika Schmitter, “Falling Through the Cracks: The Fate of Painted Palace Façades in Sixteenth-Century Italy,” in *The Built Surface*, ed. Christy Anderson, vol. 1, *Architecture and the Pictorial Arts from Antiquity to the Enlightenment* (Aldershot, England, 2002), 144–45.

67. Schmitter, “Falling Through the Cracks,” 152–54. In book seven of his treatise on architecture, Serlio provides an instructive example. A certain miserly patron, forced to restore the façade of his palace by his prince, placed “statues of the four moral virtues in the four niches [on the façade]; perhaps wishing, by putting on the clothing of the pharisee, to give the impression that he possessed these noble qualities, or else, like a cunning man, he wished to make the world believe that he was good.” Serlio notes dryly that he should have chosen a statue of Avarice instead. *Sebastiano Serlio on Architecture. Volume Two*, ed. Vaughan Hart and Peter Hicks (New Haven, 2001), 310.

68. In a particularly striking example of quid pro quo, in 1559 the lawyer Pietro Cogollo was promised citizenship of Vicenza if he would ornament the façade of his house to the tune of 250 ducats. The façade was designed by his friend Palladio and frescoed by Giovanni Antonio Fasolo with mythological figures that Ridolfi interpreted as an allegory of vanitas. Howard Burns, “Le opere minori del Palladio,” *Bollettino del centro internazionale di studi di architettura Andrea Palladio* 21 (1979), 12–14; and Giangiorgio Zorzi, *Le opere pubbliche e il palazzi privati di Andrea Palladio* (Venice, 1965), 232–37. Lionello Puppi, *Andrea Palladio* (Boston, 1975), 331, notes that the fresco functioned “almost like a shop sign for the lawyer’s office.” 69. The classic overview of external frescoes in Venice is Lodovico Foscari, *Affreschi esterni a Venezia* (Milan, 1936).

70. Roskill, *Dolce’s “Aretino,”* 115 (see n. 17). This is one of the few positive assessments of painted façades in Renaissance artistic theory; see Schmitter, “Falling through the Cracks,” 145–52.

71. In a similar vein, in his comments on cardinals' palaces (1510), Paolo Cortesi notes that some prefer to "face [façades] with incised stucco [sgaffito] thus rendering the house more elegant through skill than sumptuous through the abundant use of marble." Kathleen Weil-Garris and John F. D'Amico, "The Renaissance Cardinal's Ideal Palace: A Chapter from Cortesi's *De cardinalatu*," in *Studies in Italian Art and Architecture 15th through 18th Centuries*, ed. Henry A. Millon, *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 35 (Cambridge, Mass., 1980), 87–89.

72. For a recent discussion of the artist summarizing earlier literature, see Lucco, "Di mano del mio Travasio," 357–78 (see n. 58). Rearick, "Pordenone 'Romanista'," 129 (see n. 58), describes him as "a complete convert to central Italy, although he may never have been south of Emilia."

73. Rearick, "Pordenone 'Romanista,'" 130. For the secure identification of Lodovico Talenti as the patron of the fresco and the builder of the palace, see Blake de Maria, "A Patron for Pordenone's Frescoes on Palazzo Talenti d'Anna, Venice," *Burlington Magazine* 146 (Aug. 2004), 548–49. The frescoes must have been painted between ca. 1535, when the palace was complete, and Sept. 1538, when Pordenone left Venice. The Talentis were Florentine textile merchants who became Venetian citizens. The parallels between the Talenti and Odoni families are striking and may appear to suggest that painted façades are associated with wealthy and ambitious newcomers, but established patrician families also commissioned painted façades. For an initial attempt to decode the social meanings of painted façades in Venice, see Schmitter, "Falling Through the Cracks," 139–45.

74. Paolo Casadio, "Un affresco di Girolamo da Treviso il Giovane a Faenza," in Furlan, *Il Pordenone. Atti del convegno internazionale di studio*, 209–15 (see n. 57). The fresco was commissioned by the collector Sabba da Castiglione.

75. This fresco appears at Via Manin, no. 67, and is described by Carlo Ridolfi, who considered it an early work by Girolamo, in *Le maraviglie dell'arte* (1835; Bologna, 2002), 1:305. The judgment of Solomon was depicted in the main space on the second floor with allegorical figures of Prudence and Fortitude below. Luigi Coletti, *Catalogo delle cose d'arte e di antichità d'Italia: Treviso* (Rome, 1935), 84–85.

76. Odoni was also a patron of the central Italian painter and architect Serlio; see discussion on p. 306 of this text. Lucco, "Di mano del mio Travasio," 373, sees Odoni's patronage of Girolamo as another sign of the Venetian *cittadino's* "marcatissima individualità."

77. The fresco is also mentioned by Anton Maria Zanetti, *Della pittura veneziana*, (Venice, 1771), 213, but by his time very little was visible.

78. Marco Boschini, *Le ricche minere della pittura veneziana* (Venice, 1674), Sestier di Dorsoduro, 52–53. According to Boschini, the "chorus of gods" was above, with the statues in chiaroscuro and figures of Apollo and Diana [?] in color below. Vasari also says these figures are "in a large scene in the middle of this façade" (*nel mezzo di questa facciata è, in una storia grande*). Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, ed. David Ekserdjian, trans. Gaston du C. Vere (New York, 1996), 1:887; Vasari, *Le opere*, 5:136 (see n. 23). All the accounts begin with this subject, suggesting it was the principal one and largest in scale.

79. Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie*, 1:305; and Vasari, *Lives*, 1:887; original in Vasari, *Le opere*, 5:136: "Bacco grasso e rosso e con un vaso, il quale rovescia, tenendo in braccio una Cerere che ha in mano molte spighe."

80. Vasari, *Lives*, 1:887; original in Vasari, *Le opere*, 5:136: "Giunone che vola, con la luna in testa, sopra certe nuvole dalle cosce in su e con le braccia alte sopra la testa; una delle quali tiene un vaso e l'altra una tazza."

81. Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie*, 1:305: "ed una fanciulla, credesi una delle Grazie, che versa vino da due vasi, ed alcuni bambini volanti con fiori in mano."

82. Vasari, *Lives*, 1:887; original in Vasari, *Le opere*, 5:136: "le Grazie e cinque putti, che volando abbasso le ricevano."

83. Vasari, *Lives*, 1:887, notes that Girolamo executed Odoni's façade "in colour, and not in chiaroscuro, because the Venetians like colour better than anything else." However, Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie*, 1:305–6, noted that "there are figures in chiaroscuro above the windows," and Boschini *Le ricche minere*, Sestier di Dorsoduro, 52–53, identified "various statues in chiaroscuro" below in contrast with Apollo and Diana "in color." On the use of color on Venetian façades, see David McTavish, "Roman Subject-Matter and Style in Venetian Façade Frescoes," *RACAR: Canadian Art Review* 12 (1985), 188–96. 84. Among the objects listed in the inventory as in the "stairway room" (*camera della scala*)—the room that housed Odoni's portrait by Lotto and a reclining female nude by Giovanni Gerolamo Savoldo among other works of art—are "due testoline de piera viva, su i balchoni." Listed in the section detailing the *mezzado* are "quatro testoline de marmoro su i balchoni del mezzado." Gronau, "Beiträge zum Anonymus Morellianus," 67–68 (see n. 31). Ridolfi mentions a *percolato*, which was described in detail by Cicogna *Delle iscrizioni veneziane*, 3:436. However, Cicogna also noted *balconi* on the side of the building that faced the *corticella della Polvere*.

When the Venetian state rebuilt the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, not only did they choose fresco decoration, but they specifically forbade any kind of carved ornament or fretwork: "ne si possi in esso Fontego far cosa alcuna de marmaro, ne etiam lavoriero alcuno intagliato de straforo over altro per alcun modo." Joseph A. Crowe and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle, *The Life and Time of Titian* (London, 1881), 1:84. This suggests that while the fresco was deemed appropriately modest, the use of elaborate carving was considered too sumptuous.

85. Cicogna's description is so detailed that I discovered the balcony quite by accident and only later learned that its location had already been published by Moretti in Tassini, *Curiosità veneziane*, 737 (see n. 53). The balcony was reproduced in Pietro Paoletti, *L'architettura e la scultura del Rinascimento in Venezia*, pt. 1 (Venice, 1893), 186, 188, fig. 78. Paoletti notes that the balcony was transferred from another house, but does not connect it to Odoni. As both Paoletti and Cicogna note, only the elaborately carved panels of the balcony are original. Cicogna, *Delle iscrizioni veneziane*, 3:436.

86. I am grateful to Signora Foà Marinello for allowing me to examine the inner side of the balcony.

87. Boschini identifies the female figure as Diana, but Vasari and Ridolfi concur on Minerva; Ridolfi describes her as holding a "lance and shield"—attributes more appropriate to Minerva than Diana.

88. In the second edition (1568), Vasari greatly amplified his brief mention of the façade in his first edition of the *Lives* (1550). (He may first have seen the façade when working in Venice between 1 Dec. 1541 and late Aug./early Sept. 1542.) He probably augmented the account for the later edition because he was able to obtain more detailed and accurate information, either as the result of his own observations on a trip to Venice, in 1566 or through correspondence. It is known that after 1562 Cosimo Bartoli wrote letters responding to Vasari's "frequent and demanding" requests for information about Venetian art. All this suggests that his description of the Odoni façade is probably fairly accurate. On Vasari's process for revising and amplifying facts in the 1568 edition, see Patricia Rubin, *Giorgio Vasari: Art and History* (New Haven, 1995), 215–26. For Vasari's trips to Venice, see *ibid.*, 11, 18; and Juergen Schulz, "Vasari at Venice," *Burlington Magazine* 103 (1961), 500.

89. Vasari, *Lives*, 1:887; original in Vasari, *Le opere*, 5:136: "cinque putti, che volando abbasso le ricevono per farne, come accennano, abundantissima quella casa degli Udoni."

90. Vasari, *Lives*, 1:887; original in Vasari, *Le opere*, 5:136: "che fusse amica e un albergo di virtuosi."

91. Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie*, 1:306. Cicogna, *Delle iscrizioni veneziane*, 3:436, noted remnants of inscriptions on the fresco on the side of the house as

well. For inscriptions on façades, see Clarke, *Roman House*, 227–32 (see n. 2), although she does not mention painted inscriptions, which must have been quite common.

92. Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie*, 1:305: “dinotando i comodi e le fortune dell’Odone”; “per dimostrare il talento ch’egli aveva di molte virtù.” Although the general meaning is similar (denoting abundance, hospitality, learning, and virtue), it is interesting to note how Ridolfi reads the façade as providing messages about Odoni himself, whereas Vasari, in a manner more typical of the sixteenth century, attributes these virtues to the house, understood as metonymy for the owner and his family (the “Casa Odoni.”) Writing nearly a century later, Ridolfi rejected the embodied house and severed the tight equivalence between a man and his accommodations.

93. Alison Luchs, *Tullio Lombardo and Ideal Portrait Sculpture in Renaissance Venice, 1490–1530* (Cambridge, England, 1995), 158 n. 10, was the first to connect the proverb specifically to Odoni’s façade. For a discussion of the proverb, its representation, and in particular its connections to the *Hyperotomachia*, see Sarah Blake Wilk [McHam], *The Sculpture of Tullio Lombardo: Studies in Sources and Meaning* (New York, 1978), 78–81; Wilk [McHam], “Tullio Lombardo’s ‘Double-Portrait’ Reliefs,” *Maryas* 16 (1972–73), 79–81, 83–86; and Jaynie Anderson, “The Provenance of Bellini’s *Feast of the Gods* and a New/Old Interpretation” in *Titian 500*, ed. Joseph Manca, *Studies in the History of Art* 45 (Washington D.C., 1993), 273–80. Anderson believes the proverb was the inspiration for Giovanni Bellini’s *Feast of the Gods* (as well as the rest of *camerino* cycle). Interestingly, Bellini depicts Ceres kneeling to support a man who is drinking wine, a scene that recalls Vasari’s description of Odoni’s façade; however, the male figure in Bellini’s painting is usually identified as Apollo.

94. Vasari, *Lives*, 1:887; Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie*, 1:305.

95. See the catalog entry no. 149 by Jaynie Anderson in *Tiziano. Amor Sacro e Amor Profano* (Milan, 1995), 435–36.

96. Vasari, *Lives*, 1:887.

97. As described by Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie*, 1:305.

98. On the façade as social boundary, see Cohen and Cohen, “Open and Shut,” 64 (see n. 4). Burroughs, *Italian Renaissance Palace Façade*, 3 (see n. 2) notes: “[T]he façade precisely marks the threshold between distinct domains, often dramatizing this with architectural and other elements functionally and symbolically related to the act of entry.”

99. Contributing to the theme of rampant fertility, the mermaids’ foliate tails transform into vines that end in flowers from which small figures emerge. While similar designs can be found in the *Hyperotomachia Poliphili*, these motifs were so widespread in Italian art by the second quarter of the sixteenth century that the book need not be a direct source. Alison Luchs, personal communication with Monika Schmitter, 2 Feb. 2005, in relation to her forthcoming book, *The Mermaids of Venice: Hybrid Sea Creatures in Venetian Renaissance Art*.

100. According to Cicogna, *Delle iscrizioni veneziane*, 3:436, who was able to see the relief more closely, the other child is female.

101. On urinating and nursing figures as symbols of fertility, see Waldemar Deonna, “Fontaines anthropomorphes. La femme aux seins jaillissants et l’enfant ‘mingens,’” *Genava* 6 (1958), 239–96.

102. Perhaps the balcony was ordered or installed at the same time as the wellhead in the courtyard, which was carved with foliate festoons between masks and bore the date 1533. Cicogna, *Delle iscrizioni veneziane*, 3:436.

103. Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie*, 1:305.

104. Vasari, *Le opere*, 5:136: “amica e un albergo di virtuosi.” Francesco Sansovino used similar terminology when he described the house of the patrician art collector Gabriele Vendramin as a “ridotto de i virtuosi della città.” *Venetia Città Nobilissima* (Venice, 1581), 144r. Memmo called the Palazzo Corner-Spinelli “vero honore della città nostra et albergo d’ogni

gentile spirito.” Quoted in Michel Hochman, “Tra Venezia e Roma: Il Cardinale Francesco Corner,” *Saggi e memorie di storia dell’arte* 18 (1992), 101. This puts Odoni in very distinguished company.

105. See Welch, “Public Magnificence” (see n. 25); and Guerzoni, “*Liberalitas, Magnificentia, Splendor*” (see n. 25). In the words of the famous Florentine homeowner Giovanni Rucellai: “In the house of a rich man numerous guests should be received and they should be treated in a sumptuous manner; if one did otherwise the great house would be a dishonor to the owner.” Translated in Brenda Preyer, “Planning for Visitors at Florentine Palaces” *Renaissance Studies* 12, no. 3 (1998), 357.

106. The peeing putto on the façade balcony also relates to the depiction in the portrait of Hercules *mingens*, discussed here on p. 306.

107. This looseness of subject matter was typical of contemporary Venetian façades. McTavish, “Roman Subject-Matter,” 190 (see n. 83), notes that whereas narrative subjects were common in Rome, “earlier Venetian façades [before the 1530s] seem only rarely to have included narratives of any sort. Instead, the Venetians preferred allegorical subjects with personifications or classical deities standing for abstract ideas.” McTavish states that the scenes from classical mythology and Roman history on the Palazzo Talenti façade by Pordenone were unusual, but the Talenti façade was also more a collection of parts loosely centered around a theme than a tightly constructed program. For a brief description of the subjects, see de Maria, “Pordenone’s Frescoes,” 549 (see n. 73).

108. Translated and discussed in Ingrid Rowland, “Render unto Caesar the Things which are Caesar’s: Humanism and the Arts in the Patronage of Agostino Chigi,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 39 (Winter 1986), 688–89. The poem presumably predates Chigi’s death in 1520.

109. A parallel can be seen in the design for the Palazzo Talenti-d’Anna, where the patriotic Roman citizen Marcus Curtius, astride his horse, appeared to leap into the Grand Canal, a scene that was attention-getting for its humor as well as for its novel foreshortening. De Maria, “Pordenone’s Frescoes,” 549.

110. On the humor of this and other urinating figures in art, see Keith Christiansen, “Lorenzo Lotto and the Tradition of Epithalamic Paintings,” *Apollo* 124 (1986), 170.

111. Shearman, *Early Italian Pictures*, 145 (see n. 22).

112. See nn. 93, 99.

113. See appendix; and Aretino, *Lettere, libro secondo*, 154 (see n. 1).

114. Just before comparing Odoni’s house to the Quirinale Hill in Rome, Aretino notes that “quando io era in corte, stava in Roma e non a Vinezia; ma ora ch’io son qui, sto in Vinezia e a Roma.” Translated in appendix; original in Aretino, *Lettere, libro secondo*, 154.

115. John McAndrew, *Venetian Architecture of the Early Renaissance* (Cambridge, Mass., 1980), 195.

116. Loredana Olivato, “Con il Serlio tra i ‘dilettanti di architettura’ veneziani della prima metà del’ 500. Il ruolo di Marcantonio Michiel,” in *Les traités d’architecture de la Renaissance*, ed. Jean Guillaume (Paris, 1988), 247–54.

117. On social and political origins of this stylistic turn, see Barbara Marx, “Venezia—altera Roma? Ipotesi sull’umanesimo veneziano,” *Centro Tedesco di Studi Veneziani, Quaderni* 10 (1978), 3–18; Manfredo Tafuri, ed., “*Rinnovatio urbis*.” *Venezia nell’età di Andrea Gritti (1523–1538)* (Rome, 1984); Tafuri, *Venice and the Renaissance* (see n. 61); and Patricia Brown, *Venice and Antiquity: The Venetian Sense of the Past* (New Haven, 1996), 277–81.

118. Translated in appendix; original in Aretino, *Lettere, libro secondo*, 154.

119. In his letter describing his own house, Aretino specifically says that the one side of his character can be known “nel comparire nel portico e ne l’affacciarsi ai balconi sopradetti.” *Lettere, libro primo*, 443 (see n. 10). Aretino associates the revelation of his character with the act of showing

oneself at the balcony, echoing a metaphor used by Dante in his *Convivio* III, 8: “E però che nella faccia massimamente in due luoghi opera l’anima . . . cioè nelli occhi e nella bocca. . . . Li quali due luoghi, per bella similitudine, si possono appellare balconi della donna che nel dificio del corpo abita.” Dante Alighieri, *Convivio*, ed. Franca Brambilla Ageno (Florence, 1995), 2:197–98.

120. On the association between façades and triumphal processions, see Schmitter, “Falling through the Cracks,” 137–38; and Burroughs, *Italian Renaissance Palace Façade*, 19 n. 30.

121. Leon Battista Alberti, *On the Art of Buildings in Ten Books*, ed. and trans. Joseph Rykwert, Neil Leach, and Robert Tavernor (Cambridge, Mass., 1988), 292 (bk. 9, I). For more on the relationship between house building or façade decoration and citizenship, see the examples detailed here in n. 67 and in David Friedman, “Palaces and the Street in Late-Medieval and Renaissance Italy,” in *Urban Landscapes: International Perspectives*, ed. Jeremy W. R. Whitehand and Peter J. Larkman (London, 1992), 70–71, 96.

122. The choice of Lotto’s portrait of Odoni as the cover art of a recent Italian edition of Jacob Burckhardt, *La civiltà del Rinascimento in Italia* (Florence, 1996), is perhaps more appropriate than the publisher realized. A growing body of literature identifies increasing consumption as one of the defining features of Renaissance culture and society, as well as of the “Renaissance

self.” In particular see Richard A. Goldthwaite, *Wealth and the Demand for Art in Italy 1300–1600* (Baltimore, 1993); Lisa Jardine, *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance* (New York, 1996); and Paula Findlen, “Possessing the Past: The Material World of the Italian Renaissance,” *The American Historical Review* 103 (1998), 83–114. Stephen Campbell contributes an important nuance to these arguments in “The Study, the Collection, and the Renaissance Self,” chapter one of his *The Cabinet of Eros: Renaissance Mythological Painting and the Studiolo of Isabella d’Este* (New Haven and London, 2004).

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