

The “Guidoriccio” Controversy: Notes and Observations

Hayden B. J. Maginnis

Volume 15, numéro 2, 1988

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1073373ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/1073373ar>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

UAAC-AAUC (University Art Association of Canada | Association d'art des universités du Canada)

ISSN

0315-9906 (imprimé)

1918-4778 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer cette note

Maginnis, H. B. J. (1988). The “Guidoriccio” Controversy: Notes and Observations. *RACAR : Revue d'art canadienne / Canadian Art Review*, 15(2), 137–144. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1073373ar>

Résumé de l'article

Depuis bientôt dix ans les historiens de l'art entretiennent une polémique au sujet de la fresque dite « Guidoriccio da Folignano » et une fresque du *trecento* récemment découverte dans le Palazzo Pubblico de Sienne. La littérature en est maintenant vaste, et pourtant les savants ne sont toujours pas d'accord. Voire, la situation actuelle paraît à de nombreux lecteurs plus confuse que jamais.

Dans cet article on suggère que la raison de cette situation peu satisfaisante est qu'il reste à résoudre des questions de fait fondamentales. Certains problèmes découlent d'un manque de consensus quant aux dates et à la fiabilité des sources secondaires anciennes. D'autres problèmes découlent d'un examen inadéquat de l'évidence documentaire. D'autres encore proviennent des contradictions dans les rapports techniques et des discussions peu concluantes sur l'iconographie et la science héraldique. En faisant ressortir les problèmes, les témoignages et l'évidence contradictoires, l'auteur cherche à montrer qu'on ne résoudra point ce problème avant d'avoir confronté un certain nombre de questions de base. D'ailleurs, pour qu'on parvienne à accumuler les faits fondamentalement nécessaires à sa solution, il faudra sans doute compter sur les efforts coopératifs des savants de diverses disciplines.

The “Guidoriccio” Controversy: Notes and Observations

HAYDEN B. J. MAGINNIS

McMaster University

RÉSUMÉ

Depuis bientôt dix ans les historiens de l'art entretiennent une polémique au sujet de la fresque dite « Guidoriccio da Fogliano » et une fresque du *trecento* récemment découverte dans le Palazzo Pubblico de Sienne. La littérature en est maintenant vaste, et pourtant les savants ne sont toujours pas d'accord. Voire, la situation actuelle paraît à de nombreux lecteurs plus confuse que jamais.

Dans cet article on suggère que la raison de cette situation peu satisfaisante est qu'il reste à résoudre des questions de fait fondamentales. Certains problèmes découlent d'un manque de consensus quant aux dates et à la fiabilité des sources secondaires anciennes. D'autres

problèmes découlent d'un examen inadéquat de l'évidence documentaire. D'autres encore proviennent des contradictions dans les rapports techniques et des discussions peu concluantes sur l'iconographie et la science héraldique. En faisant ressortir les problèmes, les témoignages et l'évidence contradictoires, l'auteur cherche à montrer qu'on ne résoudra point ce problème avant d'avoir confronté un certain nombre de questions de base. D'ailleurs, pour qu'on parvienne à accumuler les faits fondamentalement nécessaires à sa solution, il faudra sans doute compter sur les efforts coopératifs des savants de diverses disciplines.

For almost a decade the art-historical world, and the general public, have followed a debate over the fresco of the so-called “Guidoriccio da Fogliano” and a *trecento* fresco recently discovered in Siena's Palazzo Pubblico. Gallons of ink have been spilt in a discussion that, running through learned journals, popular magazines, and newspapers, has produced a multitude of differing arguments, contradictory evidence, and no consensus. Unhappily, the discussion has often become acrimonious. For many readers, such cases are distressing examples of academics at war; for many readers the flood of literature has made the situation more, rather than less, confusing.

It is easy, given the seemingly endless bibliography, to lose interest in the problems. At times, one wonders whether the “Guidoriccio” warrants such attention. Long attributed to Simone Martini—at least in the modern literature—it has, almost as long, been regarded as one of those strange anomalies in the history of art. Before an audience, many art historians have, at best, been

able to say that it displayed the early *trecento* interest in the revival of antique forms (in this case, equestrian portraiture) and that it was a prelude to the great creations of Castagno and Uccello in the fifteenth century. But, if truth be told—and except for these observations—the history of art and culture would be little different if it had never existed. Nor is it certain that we understand Simone Martini (if he is the author) better for its existence.

At our less wearied—and more rational—moments, we know that the work is a puzzle from our past and that solutions to such puzzles often have far-reaching implications. If, for example, the work were not of the *trecento*, but rather a conscious imitation of *trecento* style at a later date, then we would conceive of Western respect for and sensitivity to the “immediate” past as being greater than we often think. If the work is by a follower, executed after Simone's death (1344), it may speak of a remarkable continuation of the master's idiom. If it is just what has always been

claimed, it raises interesting problems about Sieneſe imagery and contemporary understanding of the fresco.

With ſuch lofty thoughts before us, it might be hoped that this diſcuſſion provided a reſolution for problems. That is not the caſe. For reaſons that will become apparent, I ſhall not preſent hypotheſes¹; indeed, I ſhall try to avoid, in ſo far as poſſible, adding to the already confused ſituation. Nor ſhall I try to ſurvey all the literature.² Inſtead, my purpoſe is to ſet the iſſues and problems before the reader and explain why the ſcholarly ſituation remains ſo unſatisfactory: why the iſſues are, at preſent, irreſoluble.³

THE SITUATION

When viſitors now enter the Sala del Mapamondo in Siena's Palazzo Pubblico, they ſee, on the northeast wall: (1) the fresco known as "Guidoriccio" ſtretching the entire width of the room below the ceiling, (2) a partially revealed "new fresco" marked by concentric ſcrapings, and (3) two ſaints by Sodoma (P. Fig. 4). Scholars agree on the date of only the Sodoma ſaints, documented as having been painted in 1529-30.⁴

In 1977, Gordon Moran raised doubts about the traditional identification of one of Siena's moſt prominent frescoes, reputed to be a depiction of the captain of war, Guidoriccio da Fogliano, at the 1328 ſiege of Montemaffi.⁵ He ſuggested that the fresco we ſee today ſhould be diſſociated from a 1330 payment to Simone Martini for painting images of Montemaffi and Saffoforte, arguing that the figure is dressed as a knight Guidoriccio da Fogliano was knighted only in 1332. He alſo argued that Guidoriccio left Siena in diſgrace in 1333 and that, given that fact, it was highly unlikely the Sieneſe would preſerve a painting of him, if one had been executed in 1330. Finally, Moran noted that Guidoriccio did return to

Sieneſe ſervice at the end of his life and was accorded a lavish funeral by the ſtate in 1352. He therefore ſuggested that the fresco might well be a funeral monument created in or near the year of Guidoriccio's death.

The lively debate that enſued led to a technical investigation of the fresco and, beginning in 1979, to the recovery of an aſtoniſhing trecento fresco on the wall directly below the ſo-called "Guidoriccio."

The extraordinary quality of the "new fresco" provoked an initial flurry of attributions.⁶ Looking back, many of theſe early identifications appear to have been overhaſty and it is eaſy, in reſpect, to criticize them. Inſtead, the firſt attributions and identifications ſhould be viewed much as initial ſcientific hypotheſes, which did not bear cloſer ſcrutiny. The "new fresco" was quite without ſurviving viſual parallel, at leaſt among Sieneſe frescoes, and its high quality ſuggested a major maſter.

A ſcholarly comiſſion, created by the mayor of Siena to ſtudy both the "new fresco" and the "Guidoriccio," reported its findings in the January 1982 iſſue of *Proſpettiva*. There, articles by Max Seidel and Luciano Belloſi ſet forth arguments for the traditional identification of "Guidoriccio," for the identification of the "new fresco" as Giuncarico (which we know was a ſubject painted in the Palazzo Pubblico in 1314), and for the attribution of the "new fresco" to Duccio.⁷

Moran and Michael Mallory have challenged the identification of the "new fresco" on iconographic and historical grounds and view the work as a depiction of Arcidoſſo, documented as having been painted by Simone Martini in 1331. Were that identification correct, then the fresco above muſt be miſidentified, as the plaſter of the "Guidoriccio" overlaps the "new fresco" and Simone was paid for painting Montemaffi in 1330.

Through an extenſive ſeries of articles, Moran and Mallory have propoſed ſeveral different hypotheſes regarding the origin of the "Guidoriccio." Their moſt recent, extended piece is to be found in the *Burlington Magazine* of 1986, where they ſuggest the fresco is later, and perhaps a good deal later, than the trecento.⁸ Indeed, they ſuggest that it may poſtdate the two ſaints by Sodoma.

1 I wiſh to expreſs my thanks to the Social Sciences and Humanities Reſearch Council of Canada for ſupport that allowed me to conſult archival and manuſcript material in Siena.

2 The literature on the problem is daunting. Several contributions will be cited below but the reader is referred to the ſtandard bibliographical ſources, particularly RILA.

3 Given the large quantity of available reproductions, I have not illuſtrated this article. Figure numbers here refer to illuſtrations in J. Polzer, "Simone Martini's *Guidoriccio* Fresco: The Polemic Concerning its Origin Revisited, and the Fresco Conſidered as Serving the Military Triumph of a Tuſcan Commune," *RACAR*, xiv (1987), 16-69, and are ſignalled by "P." preceding the figure number.

4 E. Southard, *The Frescoes in Siena's Palazzo Pubblico: 1289-1539* (New York, 1979), 257-61. The figures are St. Anſanus, left, and St. Victor, right.

5 G. Moran, "An Investigation Regarding the Equeſtrian Portrait of Guidoriccio da Fogliano in the Siena Palazzo Pubblico," *Paragone*, xxviii, 333 (November 1977), 81-88.

6 Many of theſe are collected in G. Sacchi, ed., "Guido Riccio e Simone Martini," *Notizie d'Arte*, ix (August 1981).

7 Reſpectively, M. Seidel, "Castrum pingatur in palatio, 1. Ricerche ſtoriche e iconografiche ſui caſtelli dipinti nel Palazzo Pubblico di Siena," *Proſpettiva*, xxviii (1982), 17-41; and L. Belloſi, "Castrum pingatur in palatio, 2. Duccio e Simone Martini pittori di caſtelli ſeneſi a l'eſempio come erano," *Proſpettiva*, xxviii (1982), 41-65.

8 M. Mallory and G. Moran, "New Evidence Concerning *Guidoriccio*," *Burlington Magazine*, cxxviii (1986), 250-59.

A related debate, which we shall have to touch upon, involves the original location of Ambrogio Lorenzetti's revolving *Mappamondo*, or world map. The surface of the "new fresco" has been scraped and most scholars believe these marks were created by the rotation of Ambrogio's map, often said to have been installed in 1345. Moran has argued that these marks were instead created by a fifteenth-century map of the Siene state.⁹ The issue is important inasmuch as Moran and Mallory maintain that the marks originally extended beneath the intonaco of the "Guidoriccio" and thus offered proof that the fresco was of late date.¹⁰ In addition, the marks, if created by Ambrogio's map, give us a *terminus ante quem* for the "new fresco."

Recently two articles have added further theories to the debate. Andrew Martindale has argued that the "new fresco" is indeed Simone's depiction of Arcidosso and that the "Guidoriccio" is Simone's depiction of Montemassi. This he does by suggesting that the "Guidoriccio/Montemassi" fresco was executed only in 1333.¹¹ In this journal, Joseph Polzer has strongly argued in favour of the traditional identification of the "Guidoriccio." He dates the "new fresco" to the second decade of the fourteenth century but leaves the questions of specific identification and attribution open.¹²

EARLY DOCUMENTATION AND RELATED PROBLEMS

One of the major problems for anyone trying to follow the controversy is that the evidence of documents and of early sources is scattered in the literature. Thus, I begin with a collection of relevant material.¹³

1. From a lost Biccherna volume probably of January to June 1312, and apparently under the month of February, transcribed by U. Benvoglianti: "Si pagano lire 16 a Bico di Marchesello, il quale riceve detta somma per il pittore che dipinse la storia del Conte d'Elci una volta, quale doveva dipingere un'altra, a ragione di lire 8 per ciascuna storia."¹⁴

9 G. Moran, "Studi sul mappamondo," *Notizie d'Arte* (February 1982), 6-7.

10 M. Mallory and G. Moran, "The Border of 'Guido Riccio,'" *Burlington Magazine*, cxxix (1987), 187.

11 A. Martindale, "The Problem of Guidoriccio," *Burlington Magazine*, cxxviii (1986), 259-73.

12 Polzer, "Simone Martini's *Guidoriccio* Fresco."

13 The problems for the reader are compounded by the fact that sources and documents have often been partially quoted when the full quotation is needed to understand the meaning. In the notices that follow, the Archivio di Stato di Siena is abbreviated as A.S.S.

14 U. Benvoglianti, *Miscellanea*, Siena, Biblioteca Comunale, MS C.v.4, f. 131. Benvoglianti cites folio 245 of Biccherna

2. From A.S.S., Consiglio Generale, 80, Deliberazioni (December 1311-June 1312), 4 February 1312, ff. 70-70v.: "Dominus Nerius Rinaldi . . . dixit et consuluit quod Conte de Ilcio et Nerius eius filius ponantur pro Rebellibus communis senensis et quod habeantur et teneantur[?] tamquam Inimici ipsius communis senensis. Et quod pingantur. Et quod hic et in hoc consilio sit firmum quod honos communis senensis plene fiat. Ita et taliter quod terra de Ilcio et aliae terrae dati Contis, scilicet, Terra de Giuncarico et terra de monte albano sint et deueniant ad mandata et voluntate dominorium Novem defensorum et gubernatorum communis et popoli senensis et dati communis senensis libere et ad plenum."¹⁵

3. From A.S.S., Consiglio Generale, 83, Deliberazioni, 30 March 1314, f. 120r.: "et quod dictum castrum [Giuncarico] pingatur in palatio Comunis Senarum ubi fiunt Consilia, ubi sunt picta alia castra acquistata per Comune Senarum, et numquam possit talis pictura tolli, abradi, vel vituperari . . ."¹⁶

4. From A.S.S., Biccherna 165, Uscita dello scrittore (January-June 1330), 2 May 1330, f. 31v.: "Anco al maestro Simone dipentore le quagli sedici lire li demo per la dipentura che fece di Monte massi e sassoforte nel palagio di Nove e avemone pulizia di Signori nove - xvi l."

5. From A.S.S., Biccherna 171, Uscita dello scrittore (July-December 1331), 6 September 1331, f. 35: "Anco—a maestro Simone dipentore per suo salaro di sette di che stete in servizio dei chomune chon uno chavallo e uno fante a pie a ragione di vinte cinque soldi per el di avene pulizia di Signori nove - viii l. xv s."

6. From A.S.S. Biccherna 397, Memoriale di debitori e creditori (July-December 1331), 6-7 September 1331, f. 123v. (old f. 121v.): "Maestro simone dipegnitore die' avere a di vi di setembre per vii di che stete in servizio del chomune chon uno chavallo e uno fante ala

106 and dates the entry to 1311. He was presumably using the Siene calendar where the new year began on March 25. Another collection of extracts, *Spogli di notizie dai libri della Biccherna*, compiled in 1700-1701 at the request of Galgano Bichi refers to the same folio and same volume but indicates the entry was under February 1312 (Siena, Biblioteca Comunale, MS A.vii.15, f. 238). Thus, it would seem the payment is related to the project mentioned here in Document 2. The Biccherna volumes for 1312 are no longer extant. This item has been dated to 1311 by Mallory and Moran and by Polzer.

15 My thanks to Professor Gabrielle Erasmì for assistance with this transcription.

16 The Biccherna Uscita volume for January-June 1314 is no longer extant.

- terra di arcidosso e di chastello del piano e di schanzano—avene pulizia da' nove mesi a scita nel di fo. 33 a ragione di vinticinque s. el di
 — viii l. xv s.
 de deti d. avuti nel di per la kabella e sono mesi a' ntrata fo. 27 — viii s. viiii d.
 Anco avuti a di vii di setembre demo in mano di Ligi del Maestro pauolino — viii l. vi s. iii d.”
7. From A.S.S. Biccherna 171, Uscita dello scrittore (July-December 1331), 14 December 1331, f. 81v.: “Anco—a maestro Simone dipegnitore e quagli ebe per suo salaro e qualle tolse a rischio a dipegnare nel palazzo del chomune arcidosso e chastello del piano in sette fiorini d'oro avene pulizia da nove
 — xxii l. viii s.”
8. From A.S.S., Biccherna 397, Memoriale di debitori e creditori (July-December 1331), 14 December 1331, f. 55v. (old 54v.): “Maestro simone dipentore die' dare a di xiiii di dicembre e quagli demo in mano di francesco di cino — vii fiorini d'oro de dti d. avemo avuti e quagli avemo posti a suo chonto inazi fo. clxxxvj — vii fiorini d'oro”
9. From A.S.S., Biccherna 397, Memoriale di debitori e creditori (July-December 1331), 14 December 1331, f. 144v. (old 186v.): “Maestro simone dipegnitore die' avere a di xiiii di dicembre per suo salaro che dipense nel palagio del chomune arcidosso e chastello del piano avene pulizia da nove mesi a scita nel di fo. lxxx — vii fiorini d'oro de deti d. avuti nel di demo in mano di francesco di cino chome apare in dietro fo. liiii — vii fiorini d'oro”¹⁷
10. From a Siense chronicle known as the chronicle of Agnolo di Tura, p. 496¹⁸: “Montemassi e Sassoforte li féro dipegnare i signori Nove di Siena, a l'esenplo come erano, i quali furo dipenti nel palazo grande di sopra nella sala, e fu il maestro Simone di Lorenzo da Siena ottimo maestro, fu d'aprile 1330.”
11. From a Siense chronicle known as the chronicle of Agnolo di Tura (under 1345), p. 547: “El Napamondo, che è in palazo de' signori di Siena, fu fatto in questo anno; fecelo maestro Ambruoio Lorenzetti dipentore da Siena.”
12. From a sermon of 1427 by St. Bernardino, as
13. From Lorenzo Ghiberti, *I Commentari*, as in *Lorenzo Ghibertis Denkwürdigkeiten*, ed. J. von Schlosser (Berlin, 1912), 41-42 (in the discussion of Ambrogio Lorenzetti): “Nel palagio di Siena è dipinto di sua mano la pace e lla guerra, èui quello s'apartiene alla pace et come le mercatantie uanno sicure con grandissima sicurtà et come le lasciano ne' boschi et come e'tornano per esse. E.lle storsioni si fanno nella guerra stanno perfettamente. Eui una Cosmogrofia cioè tutta la terra abitabile. Non c'era allora notitia della Cosmogrofia di Tolomeo, non è da marauigliare se.lla sua non è perfetta.”
14. From Sigismondo Tizio, *Historiarum senensium*, Vol. 2, Siena, Biblioteca Comunale, MS B.III.8, f. 137 (under 1330): “Pictura Victorie Montis Massi, nec non Saxifortis publico in Palatio a Simone Senensi Pictore celebri parietibus exprompta est.”
15. From Tizio, *Historiarum senensium*, Vol. 2, MS B.III.8, f. 139 (under 1331): “Pictura superati Arcidossi, nec non Castelli Plani a Symone Senense mercede librarum duarum, ac viginti in publici Palatii pariete designata, atque exprompta fuit, ut diximus. Hic enim Symon inter precipuos huius etatis Pictores est habitus multaque opera sua Artis cum Sene, tum alibi peregre relinquit, inter que adhuc Virginis Marie effigies nobilissima, ceteris cum sanctis apud Plateam Papanorum visitur in Sena Urbe, atque regione Camollie, tametsi opus imperfectum, a Cardinali transeunte in Francia secum perductus, reliquerit.”
16. From Tizio, *Historiarum senensium*, Vol. 2, MS B.III.8, f. 182 (in a discussion of Ambrogio Lorenzetti under 1344): “Hoc vero anno mapamundum volubilem rotundumque in aula secunda balistarum publici palatii ille Vir fecit. Pinxerat quoque aulam primam in scalarum primarum vertice, quae aula pacis nuncupatur nobile pictura, et inventione conspicua, atque notanda aliaque complurima ibi, et locis urbis nonnullis.”
17. From Sigismondo Tizio, *Historiarum senensium*, Vol. 10, Siena, Biblioteca Comunale, MS B.III.15, f. 99 (under 1327): “Anno vero trecentesimo vigesimo septimo supra millesimum. Guido Riccius ex Domo Fogliani belli Capitaneus Senensium in Montis Massici expeditione excurrit Pisanum agrum. Hic ille est, quo in aula Dominorum Senensium pictus est
- 17 Martindale, “The Problem of Guidoriccio,” has noted these two entries and the unusual circumstance whereby Simone, owing 7 florins on 14 December (here Document 8) is owed the same sum on the same day. They thus cancel each other out. The reference to folio 80 is certainly an incorrect reference to Document 8 above.
- 18 *Cronaca Senese di Agnolo di Tura del Grasso*, in A. Lisini and F. Iacometti, eds., *Cronache senesi*, in L. A. Muratori, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, section xv, part 6 (Bologna, 1931-37), 309ff.

in Capite Mappe Mundi rotunde, ubi Montis Massici picta est obsidio.”

The material quoted above is not a collection of every source and document that has been cited in the debate. It is, however, a collection of the items I regard as critical. They have been included so that major problems may be defined.

For the two scenes of 1312, the painter received 8 lire apiece. In 1330, “Master Simone” received 16 lire for the painting of Montemassi and Sassoforte. For depictions of Arcidosso and Castel del Piano he received 22 lire and 8 soldi or 11 lire and 4 soldi apiece. Now these sums are small.¹⁹ The more or less regular payment for painting one of the Biccherna covers in the late 1320s was 1 lira.²⁰ In 1326-27 Lippo Memmi received a total of 19 lire 18 soldi and 4 denari for a frescoed figure of S. Ansano painted in the office of the Biccherna.²¹ In 1321, Simone Martini himself had received 66 lire for a crucifix, perhaps frescoed, in the chapel of the Nove and in 1323 he was paid 20 lire and 2 soldi for a figure of St. Christopher and a coat-of-arms painted in the office of the Biccherna, again presumably a fresco.²² For a secular, antique subject, a figure of Marco Regolo, he was paid, in 1330, 3 lire and 5 soldi.²³ For painting two carved wooden angels in 1329, he received 1 lira and 5 soldi.²⁴

Given these comparative sums, it is natural to wonder if the payments quoted above have anything to do with works now visible. The issue becomes yet more pressing when we realize that the “Guidoriccio,” if painted by Simone Martini, was only part of his task. There is no existing depiction of Sassoforte. It also seems odd, if this document refers to the existing fresco, that the description is only of two towns. By the same token, the “new fresco” shows only one town and if it is to be

associated with any of the surviving documents, it must be associated with a maximum payment of 11 lire and 4 soldi. This is a matter that, at minimum, requires some discussion.

The documents of September 1331 are of critical importance. It is on the basis of this visit by “Simone dipentore” to Arcidosso, Castel del Piano and Scanzano and of the phrasing in the chronicle of Agnolo di Tura (“a l’esenplo come erano”) that we assume topographical accuracy in the Siense depictions of acquired castles. It may be useful to keep in mind that the connection is hypothetical; the documents make no reference to the purpose of Simone’s “service.” Likewise, we should remember that the documents do not refer to Simone *Martini* explicitly.

The reference to the “Guidoriccio” occurs in Volume 10 of Tizio’s *Historiarum Senensium*, a volume of addenda. It is clear, as Martindale has pointed out, that Tizio does not specifically relate his comments here to Simone or to his earlier *Pictura Victoriae Montis Massi*. On the other hand, he does relate the figure to a depiction of the siege of Montemassi.

The reliability of the so-called chronicle of Agnolo di Tura has been questioned. The importance of Tizio, for the issue of chronology, depends on the date of the text cited in Document 17 above. In citing Tizio, most scholars refer to a manuscript in the Biblioteca Comunale of Siena, which is, in fact, a good seventeenth-century copy of the original in the Vatican.²⁵ As noted, Volume 10 is a volume of addenda and it would be extremely useful if paleographers, consulting the original, could tell us whether these additions are in the hand of Tizio or his secretary. As Tizio died in 1528, that information would provide us with a secure *terminus ante quem* for the “Guidoriccio” fresco.

The chronicle is a strange mixture of accurate and inaccurate information. But a manuscript of Agnolo di Tura, reputedly of the quattrocento, exists that is said to be the earliest surviving version of the text. The combined efforts of linguists and paleographers should be able to place the manuscript chronologically.²⁶

It should be noted, however, that the reliability of Agnolo di Tura is relevant only to Ambrogio Lorenzetti’s *Mappamondo* and to historical circumstances connected with the siege of Montemassi, the career of Guidoriccio, and events connected with other Siense territorial acquisitions. The

19 Polzer, “Simone Martini’s *Guidoriccio* Fresco,” 30, suggests that the 1330 payment to Simone for Montemassi and Sassoforte may be a partial payment inasmuch as the entry begins with “anco.” But this phrasing is absolutely standard in Biccherna records, simply indicating that the item belongs to the same day as indicated at the beginning of the daily account.

20 See, for example, A.S.S. Biccherna 150, Uscita dello scrittore (January-June 1325), f. 82v.: 1 lira paid on 30 June; Biccherna 159, Uscita dello scrittore (July-December 1328), f. 84v.: 1 lira paid on 31 December; Biccherna 161, Uscita dello scrittore (June 1329), f. 16: 1 lira paid on 30 June; Biccherna 167, Uscita dello scrittore (July-December 1330), f. 86v.: 1 lira paid on 31 December.

21 See my forthcoming “Simone Martini, the Memmi and Ambrogio Lorenzetti: Documentary Clarifications,” *Rivista d’Arte*.

22 P. Bacci, *Fonti e Commenti per la Storia dell’Arte Senese* (Siena, 1944), 140-42, 144-45.

23 Bacci, *Fonti et Commenti*, 159, and Southard, *The Frescoes*, 396.

24 Bacci, *Fonti e Commenti*, 156-57.

25 Sigismondo Tizio, *Historiarum senensium*, Siena, Biblioteca Comunale, MSS B.iii.6-B.iii.15.

26 Indeed, one believes that with modern techniques of linguistic analysis it should be possible to determine how much of the text derives from a trecento original.

chronicle refers to depictions of Montemassi and Sassoforte but says *nothing* about a fresco of Guidoriccio.

In spite of arguments to the contrary, there seems little doubt that the Sala del Mappamondo did indeed contain a *mappamondo*. Ghiberti clearly knows what he is seeing (inasmuch as he can distinguish it from the relatively recently recovered Ptolemaic system of depicting the globe). San Bernardino's sermon indicates that it was a world map that showed all of Italy, not just Sieneese territories, and Tizio clearly indicates that it was below an image of Guidoriccio. The passage from Tizio quoted in Document 16 makes it clear (a) that in his time the stairs led first to the Sala della Pace, and (b) that his "in aula secunda Balistrum" is a reference to the Sala del Mappamondo. Of course, this is not to say either that Ambrogio's map remained there for many centuries or that it created the scrapings in the wall now visible.²⁷ Both seem highly likely, but cannot be proven.

The evidence of documents and early sources is thus far less conclusive than one might hope. None of the trecento documents refers to Guidoriccio or to an equestrian image. Tizio, in the early sixteenth century, is the first to do so, but without specifically naming Simone Martini as its author. The chronicle of Agnolo di Tura mentions depictions of Montemassi and Sassoforte, but no figure, and attributes them to "Simone di Lorenzo." Thus, none of the early documentation explicitly links Simone Martini and Guidoriccio da Fogliano.

THE TECHNICAL EVIDENCE AND RELATED PROBLEMS

There is no question that the technical evidence should be of the greatest help in resolving the problems. Unfortunately, published materials (and verbal reports) have only added to the confusion. The only facts that seem to be universally accepted relate to the *Guidoriccio* itself: (1) that the intonaco that bears the town/castle of Montemassi is a later insertion, presumably a repair, (2) that, of the inscribed date (ANO.DNI M.CCC.XXVIII), the section of intonaco carrying "M.CCC" is a later replacement, and (3) that the intonaco of the *Guidoriccio* overlaps the intonaco of the "new fresco."

Regarding the sequence of execution, Giuseppe Gavazzi writes:

In questa grande parete il primo post in ordine cronologico spetta all'affresco recentemente scoperto al

27 Conflicting late testimony about the map is discussed by U. Feldges, *Landschaft als topographisches Porträt* (Berne, 1980), 68.

disotto del Guidoriccio ed abbiamo già detto all'inizio come parte della cornice superiore venga coperta dalla cornice del Guidoriccio. Dopo di questo è stato eseguito l'affresco del Guidoriccio quindi il rifacimento del Castello di Montemassi, infine gli affreschi del Sodoma.²⁸

If the intonaco of Sodoma's frescoes overlaps the "Guidoriccio," we clearly have a *terminus ante quem* for the latter *and* for the inserted intonaco carrying the depiction of Montemassi. Moran and Mallory seem to reject Gavazzi's findings.²⁹

Gavazzi also writes:

Come aperto si deve lasciare il discorso riguardo all'attaccatura dell'intonaco del Guidoriccio e quello del Lippo Vanni (angolo a destra per chi guarda la parete). In coscienza dobbiamo però segnalare che l'affresco del Guidoriccio sembra sovrapporsi agli intonaci della parete da Lippo Vanni. Purtroppo la chiarezza assoluta è compromessa da una antica caduta degli intonaci al loro estremo margine, nel punto esatto in cui si sarebbero dovuti incontrare. Solo in un punto un piccolo frammento di intonaco del Guidoriccio si sovrapponeva all'intonaco dipinto da Lippo Vanni.³⁰

This highly important observation has not been pursued, although several scholars have urged further investigation. If there is a place where the intonaco of the "Guidoriccio" overlaps the adjoining fresco of Lippo Vanni, we have a rough *terminus post quem* for the former.³¹

Anyone following the literature is aware that there is contradictory evidence regarding the relation of the "Guidoriccio" and its supporting wall. According to published material, Gavazzi and Piero Torriti say that the fresco of "Guidoriccio"

28 This was published as an appendix to Mallory and Moran, "New Evidence," 256-59, although the accompanying charts are not included. The original is a typescript at the Kunsthistorisches Institut, Florence, catalogued as P. 900e "raro." In another paper, "Esperienze sul restauro del Guidoriccio," *Notizie d'Arte* (September 1985), Part IV, 10-11 (incorrectly numbered), Gavazzi says: "E' riscontrabile che l'intonaco del Sodoma si sovrappone a quello del Guidoriccio, il che consente di stabilire l'esecuzione in data precedente al 1529." A technical report by Leonetto Tintori, which exists as a typescript in the Kunsthistorisches Institut (catalogued as P. 900d "raro": *Ricerche tecniche sul Guido Riccio e gli altri affreschi nella Sala del Mappamondo del Palazzo Pubblico a Siena*), has never been published in its entirety.

29 Mallory and Moran, "New Evidence," 256 and note 37.

30 Gavazzi, in Mallory and Moran, "New Evidence," 259. Gavazzi, "Esperienze sul restauro," says "E' peraltro vero che l'intonaco dell'affresco di Lippo Vanni (Battaglia di Valdichiana) oltrepassa il livello dell'intonaco del Guidoriccio dal quale è separato da una stuccatura più o meno larga (da 10 a 2 cm. circa). Si potrebbe pertanto dedurre che l'esecuzione del Guidoriccio è posteriore alla Battaglia di Valdichiana, datata lo ricordiamo, al 1364."

31 The precise date of Lippo Vanni's fresco is open to debate. The battle portrayed took place in 1363; the present inscription carries a date of 1373. There is, however, conflicting testimony regarding the history of this inscription. See Southard, *The Frescoes*, 242.

adheres directly to the supporting brick wall.³² Seidel and Polzer say that there is another fresco below the “Guidoriccio” and that this has been proven by ultrasonic tests.³³ This, too, is an issue that must be resolved. Given the practical considerations of fresco, it is hard to believe that decoration of the Sala del Mappamondo did not begin at the top of the wall; yet both the Seidel/Bellosi and Moran/Mallory theses date the “Guidoriccio” after the “new fresco.” It is, of course, possible that an older intonaco was scraped away before the execution of the “Guidoriccio” but we need to know what the hard evidence is.

A good deal has been made of the technique of the fresco of “Guidoriccio.” It has been pointed out that the fresco includes impressed decoration and, according to Gavazzi, traces of tin.³⁴ Simone and his shop employed both techniques. Tintori, who notes that one of the impressed motifs is very like a motif used in the Palazzo Pubblico *Maestà*, says, however, that the same tool was *not* used for both.³⁵ Tintori also says that tin was used in the “Guidoriccio” on the metallic details, but that it was modelled with coloured varnishes and not intended to simulate gold.³⁶ Gavazzi says the illusion of gold was intended.³⁷ Gavazzi reports that the heraldic leaves were originally of metallic appearance, with tin laid over a green preparatory ground executed in buon fresco.³⁸ Tintori says: “The leafy heraldic pattern on the *condottiere*’s mantle consists of malachite (?) green on tin.”³⁹ Further control of these matters is clearly necessary.

It is, of course, noteworthy that much of the impressed decoration of the fresco closely parallels motifs used by Simone and his shop (see P. Figs. 23-25 and Bellosi, “Castrum,” Figs. 80, 82, 90-91).

The *giornate* of the “Guidoriccio” are unusually large for the trecento. All published reports indicate that the sequence of execution was from right to left. Recently Polzer, following Tintori, has said that the upper right-hand corner of the fresco contains a large triangle of re-used intonaco

belonging “to an earlier fresco.”⁴⁰ In all other accounts of the *giornate* this area is included in a much larger section of the intonaco, marked as the second *giornata*.⁴¹

The technical reports are so contradictory that their status as evidence is thrown into doubt. The fact is that we now need a thorough re-examination of the entire wall to resolve the contradictions and to provide scholars with factual evidence.

THE ICONOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE AND RELATED PROBLEMS

As noted above, our assumptions about the topographical accuracy of the Palazzo Pubblico castle series rests on an *interpretation* of the 1331 payment to “simone dipegnitore,” and on the quoted passage from Agnolo di Tura. That hypothesis, however, is strengthened by the fact that neither the “Guidoriccio” nor the visible portion of the “new fresco” carries an identifying inscription. Presumably, then, the viewer was intended to recognize the site by its physical characteristics. It is difficult to judge what contemporary norms of visual accuracy were and one wonders if the same standards applied over every decade of the trecento.

In the case of the “Guidoriccio” the intonaco bearing the depiction of Montemassi is a later replacement, presumably of the damaged original. We *assume* it reflects the lost original but that cannot be proven. Thus, discussions concerning the fourteenth-century appearance of Montemassi and the accuracy of viewpoint may be irrelevant.

The “Guidoriccio” contains a second architectural structure, usually identified as a *battifolle*. Debate arises over whether such a structure could have been built in the trecento or whether it reflects later military engineering. We should note, however, that even in 1330 the depiction could not have been of the actual structure used in the siege of Montemassi. On 18 September 1328, just 22 days after the surrender of the town, a total of 234 lire and 10 soldi was paid to the masters sent from Siena “di disfare el batifollo da monte massi.”⁴²

There has been extensive discussion of the heraldry of “Guidoriccio”; the only exact parallel

32 Respectively, Gavazzi’s verbal report (?), as cited by Polzer, “Simone Martini’s *Guidoriccio* Fresco,” 25; and P. Torriti, in *Nuovo Corriere Senese*, 10 april 1985, reprinted in *Notizie d’Arte* (September 1985), Part iv, 46.

33 Seidel, “*Castrum pingatur in palatio*,” 22 and note 36, and Polzer, “Simone Martini’s *Guidoriccio* Fresco,” 24 and note 50.

34 Gavazzi, in Mallory and Moran, “New Evidence.”

35 Tintori, *Ricerche tecniche sul Guido Riccio*.

36 L. Tintori, “‘Golden Tin’ in Sienese Murals of the Early Trecento,” *Burlington Magazine*, cxxiv (1982), 95.

37 Gavazzi, in Mallory and Moran, “New Evidence.”

38 Gavazzi, in Mallory and Moran, “New Evidence.”

39 Tintori, “‘Golden Tin,’” 95.

40 Polzer, “Simone Martini’s *Guidoriccio* Fresco,” 24.

41 Seidel, “*Castrum pingatur in palatio*,” fig. 13, and J. Polzer, “Simone Martini’s *Guidoriccio* da Fogliano: A New Appraisal in the Light of a Recent Technical Examination,” *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen*, xxv (1983), 103-41, fig. 5. One should note that these two diagrams do not totally agree.

42 Archivio di Stato di Siena, Biccherna 159, Uscita dello scrittore (July-December 1328), f. 31v.

to the arms found in the fresco appears in P. Litta, but this is meaningless as the fresco is itself the source.⁴³ The problem is further complicated by the contradictory testimony, cited above, regarding the original colour of the leaves on "Guidoriccio's" mantle. Polzer has produced seventeenth-century examples of the family's coat-of-arms and a seal on a document of 1342.⁴⁴ None of these examples exactly parallels the rendering on the flags, the horse's trappings, and the figure's clothing but they do bear remarkable similarities.

Moran and Mallory earlier argued that it would have been inaccurate to show Guidoriccio as a knight in 1330, as he was knighted in Siena only in 1332. This objection they have now withdrawn, having discovered that Guidoriccio was entitled to the designation "Dominus" before he came to Siena.⁴⁵

There is little point in rehearsing the extensive arguments regarding the identification of the "new fresco." It is true that Moran and Mallory have made a strong case that the site is intended to be Arcidosso.⁴⁶

The iconographic evidence is not yet conclusive and has failed to create a consensus. Moreover, iconography alone cannot settle the questions of authorship.

THE STYLISTIC EVIDENCE

In an ironic way the problems we face with regard to the "new fresco" and the "Guidoriccio" are similar: we lack comparable frescoes against which they might be examined. Nonetheless, there are observations that can be made.

As indicated above, Moran and Mallory identify the "new fresco" as Arcidosso and associate it with the 1331 payment to Simone. The problem with this view is, in my opinion, that it is very difficult to date the fresco that late. Although an attribution to Duccio is untenable, the comparisons produced by Bellosi seem to be the correct ones.⁴⁷ From figure style to the depiction of the castle, from matters of scale to the handling of the rocky hillsides, from viewpoint to the conception of pictorial space, all speak clearly to me of a moment

between 1310 and 1325. It has been suggested that the style here is consciously archaizing but that hypothesis cannot carry conviction. No other Siennese trecento work imitates an earlier style in entirety.

The "Guidoriccio" is, and has always been, disappointing. Comparing it with the frescoes of Lippo Vanni, Giovanni di Cristoforo Ghini and Francesco d'Andrea in the same room, one indulged it. But the juxtaposition with the "new fresco" vividly points up its deficiencies. It is not a work of quality. Some aspects, such as the lack of integration of figure and landscape, can however be paralleled in the work of Simone Martini and his shop. Some specific elements, such as the form of the circular tent and the rendering of the horse's hooves, are clearly related to forms in the St. Martin's chapel at Assisi (see Bellosi, "Castrum," Figs. 66-67, 86-87). Thus, if the fresco is not by Simone or by someone from his immediate circle, it represents an extraordinary, quasi-archaeological reconstruction not merely of a period style, but of the style of a specific artist.

I shall leave it to the reader to decide if the foregoing observations point in any direction. My intention here has been merely to draw together the material I see as relevant, to highlight problems, conflicting evidence, and contradictory testimony. I hope it is now apparent why I began by saying the problem is currently irresolvable. We have conflicting technical evidence; we have disagreement about the reliability of secondary sources; we have unresolved issues of iconography and heraldry. As long as the current situation continues, arguments about topography and the history of Siennese territorial acquisitions will, as they have to date, fail to convert anyone.

There is, of course, a major role for hypothesis in art history as in any discipline; but hypotheses command credence only when they account for the logic of the situation and the full range of the available facts. Those of us following the controversy from the sidelines realize we are not in possession of the facts and, given that circumstance, no hypothesis can be completely convincing. That positions have, nonetheless, been taken on the issues suggests to many that dispassionate scholarship has given way to partisan polemic.

It will require the co-operative efforts of scholars in various disciplines to provide a factual basis upon which to build. Until the facts are before us, there will be no resolution of the issues to which the scholarly community at large can subscribe.

*Department of Art & Art History
McMaster University
Hamilton, Ontario L8S 4M2*

43 P. Litta, *Famiglie celebri italiane* (Milan, 1834), Vol. 4. The fresco is illustrated in the section on "Fogliani di Reggio" beginning with plate 1, dated 1834. The problem is further compounded by the fact that a Siennese scholar, Ettore Romagnoli, apparently proposed the work to Litta as a source. See G. Faluschi, Siena, Biblioteca Comunale, MS E.vi.20, f. 133-133(2).

44 Polzer, "Simone Martini's *Guidoriccio da Folignano*," 109 and figs. 12-14.

45 Mallory and Moran, "New Evidence," 255, note 26.

46 Moran and Mallory base their identification on the topography of Arcidosso and its depiction on medieval seals of the town.

47 Seidel, "*Castrum pingatur in palatio*."