Christoph Luitpold Frommel   # Living *all'antica*: Palaces and Villas from Brunelleschi to Bramante

The Early History

Ecclesiastical and secular buildings followed two different paths of development until the start of the fifteenth century.[1] While sacred buildings had come to represent the highest duty of architecture and had been studied to achieve the greatest perfection possible—whether they were the Parthenon, the Pantheon, the Basilica of S. Sofia or a cathedral—secular buildings, and in particular homes to live in, were destined to undergo much greater oscillations. If, moreover, after places of worship, other new kinds of buildings such as theaters, basilicas, triumphal arches or thermal complexes adopted equally pregnant forms, this was only possible because they were destined exclusively for public use. The more private they were, the more indefinite their architectural form.

Even well into late antiquity there were few residences that could claim to compete as seats of equal dignity with ecclesiastical or public buildings. This tradition still existed in the Middle Ages with the homes of emperors, kings and popes. In the pope's palace at Avignon in the late Gothic age, residential towers, halls, chapels, staircases, courtyards and gardens, were still grouped together without any rigid order. Only the need for protection was a unifying force, which could be noticed in the homes of late antiquity, such as Diocletian's palace at Split, the porticoed villa between corner avant-corps of late antiquity, or medieval castles. The nucleus of a new type of development can already be observed in Frederick II's Castel del Monte, in which both the external construction and the courtyard not only have completely centralized and symmetrical forms, but are also subject to the principles of an octagon[2] (fig. 1). Secular building began also to be a task of high architecture, as a result, not surprisingly, of a commission from a prince for whom religion no longer had absolute priority. At the same time, interest in a kind of symmetrically organized residence with artistic proportions developed in Venice[3]. With the protection of the ambitious Venetian Republic and the lagoon, fortification was no longer necessary. The opening into arches not just of the wall of the hall on the upper story but also the entrance area and both sides went beyond the imperial palace on the waterfront at Split or other villas of late antiquity. The more the facades were opened up, the more the precious marble facing was decorated with gold, ornament and sculptures. But only toward the end of the fifteenth century were princely builders in central Italy such as Federico da Montefeltro or Raffaele Riario to decorate their homes with similar luxuries, so that for centuries the Venetian palaces remained an exception admired by all.

The real first impetus for Renaissance residences did not come from Venice but from Florence. In the earliest period of the Renaissance buildings were already constructed in Tuscany more *all'antica* than elsewhere, but the designs were exclusively for ecclesiastical architecture such as the Florentine Baptistery or Pisa Cathedral. In the elaboration of the design there was an interest—quite the opposite of Venice—in articulating the whole body of the building, and in this sense, centrally planned buildings like the Baptistery were particularly suitable. This strong feeling for a freestanding building and for its relative plastic articulation was a characteristic of Florentine architecture during the Duecento and Trecento, and one of its best early examples was the external construction of Florence Cathedral, with its continuous marble facing. At more or less the same time, secular architecture became the subject of artistic creation. Attempts were made to eliminate the numerous irregularities in the Palazzo Vecchio that had been built about fifty years earlier, and to group into a single building the large hall, courtyard, tower, chapel and rooms used as offices, and even to give the entrance facade a symmetrical design.[4] The stereometric compactness of this body was further and astonishingly emphasized when its freestanding fronts were given an antique-style rusticated facing, perhaps inspired by the Hohenstaufen castles, enlivened by an almost continual row of marble two-light windows linked together by cornices and crenelation all round. About forty years later, another secular building, the now Orsanmichele, was built freestanding, without elements of fortification, and with a completely symmetrical arrangement decorated with ornament right up to the final cornice[5] (figs. 2, 3). However, the difference between these and the material and artistic splendor of sacred buildings—long since outshone by the refined facades of Venetian palaces—still remained considerable.
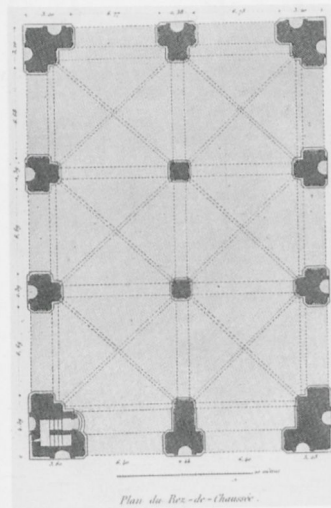

1. Castel del Monte plan

2. Florence, Orsanmichele plan

Richard Wilson
Rome from the Villa Madama
(*detail*)
1753
New Haven, Yale Center
for British Art
Paul Mellon Collection
Cat. no. 219

[1] K. M. Swoboda, *Römische und romanishes Paläste*, Vienna 1919; J. S. Ackerman, *The villa. Form and ideology of country houses*, London 1990.

[2] H. Götze, *Castel del Monte. Gestalt und Symbol der Architektur Friedrichs II.*, Munich 1991.

[3] E. Arslan, *Venezia gotica. L'architettura civile gotica veneziana*, Milan 1970, 1-76.

[4] J. Paul, *Der Palazzo Vecchio in Florenz. Ursprung und Bedeutung einer Form*, Florence 1969; H. Klotz, "Der Florentiner Stadtpalast. Zum Verständnis einer Repräsentationsform," in F. Möbius and E. Schubert, *Architektur des Mittelalters. Function und Gestalt*, Weimar 1984, pp. 307-343.

[5] J. White, *Art and architecture in Italy 1250 to 1400*, Harmondsworth 1966, 173.
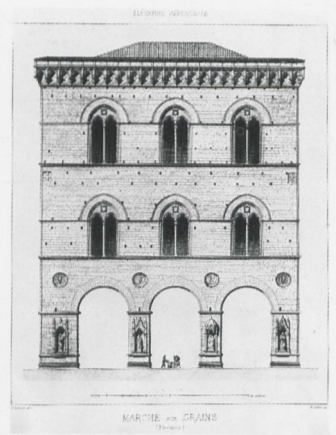
3. *Florence, Orsanmichele facade*

4. *Florence*
Palazzo di Parte Guelfa

From Brunelleschi to Giuliano da Sangallo

When, in the early years of the Quattrocento, antiquity first began to acquire an incontrovertible role as a model, Brunelleschi, in particular, tried to transfer the ancient principles of construction to secular buildings as well, without making fundamental distinctions between the two kinds of building. As early as 1419 he designed the facade of the Ospedale degli Innocenti with the same system of arcades flanked by a great order of pilasters that he gave the interior of S. Lorenzo or of S. Spirito, using even the same materials and details.[6] Toward 1435 he embellished the three exposed corners of the Palazzo di Parte Guelfa, a building with a large hall, comparable to Orsanmichele, with a giant order that embraced a large and a small row of windows[7] (fig. 4).

According to contemporary sources, just before Brunelleschi died he presented a model for the Palazzo Medici, a commission that gave him greater pleasure than any that had preceded it[8] (fig. 5). The palace portal was in front of that of S. Lorenzo—in the same way that the portals of the baptistery and the cathedral (to whose construction Brunelleschi had contributed so much) faced each other. The palace, which was also freestanding, would have flanked a second square by the side of the subsequent Palazzo Medici so that its appearance would have had an effect that only the Palazzo Vecchio had achieved so far. Lastly, it would have been so large and expensive that Cosimo would have feared the envy of his fellow citizens; it was consequently rejected (to his later regret) in favor of Michelozzo's more modest scheme. It is quite probable, therefore, that Brunelleschi wanted to cultivate here the ideas that had been sown in his first town-planning projects, that is, the construction of a regular square with *all'antica* buildings. Like all his other buildings, he would have embellished not

[6] H. Saalman, *Filippo Brunelleschi. The Buildings*, London 1993, p. 32ff., 106ff., 338ff.

[7] op. cit.: 286ff.

[8] C. Elam, in G. Cherubini and G. Finelli, *Il Palazzo Medici-Riccardi di Firenze*, Florence 1990, pp. 44-57; B. Prayer, in op. cit.: 58-75; H. Saalman 1993: 152-156. Manetti could have omitted Brunelleschi's project out of deference to the Medici family. Although Gelli described it for the first time, it corresponds to Brunelleschi's tendencies much more closely than anything else built in Florence in the early sixteenth century, including a project of another kind by Leonardo which could hardly be a posthumous invention.

5. Florence, Palazzo Medici Brunelleschi's project alternative to the reconstruction by C. Elam
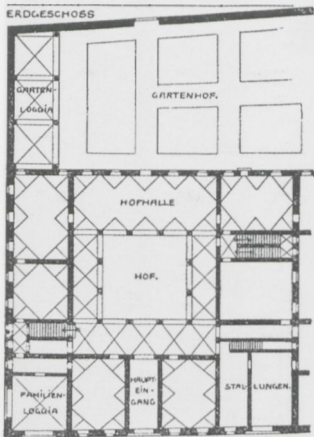
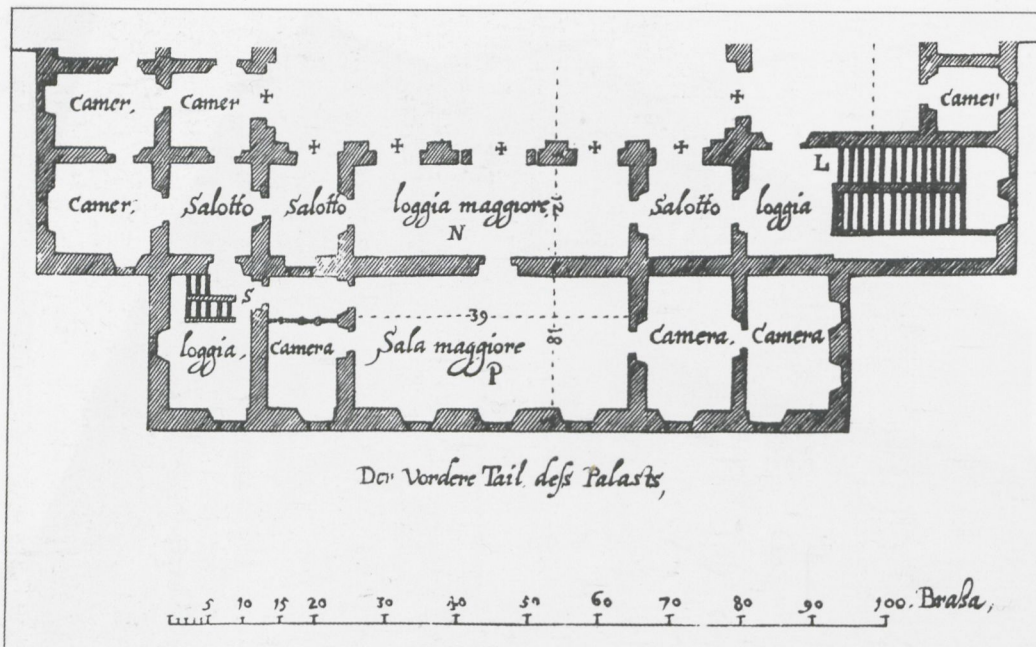
6. Florence, Palazzo Medici plan and garden

7. Florence, Palazzo Medici facade from Piazza San Lorenzo

[9] Filarete (Antonio Averlino), *Trattato di architettura*, ed. A. M. Finoli and L. Grassi, Milan 1972, pls. 20, 33, 42, 60, 65, 67, 77, 85, 90, 93, 94, 103, 121, 122, 124, 125; C. L. Frommel, "Reflections on the Early Architectural Drawings," essay in the present catalog.
[10] *Il Palazzo Medici Riccardi...* 1990; A. Tönnesmann, "Zwischen Bürgerhaus und Residenz. Zur sozialen Typik des Palazzo Medici," in A. Beyer and B. Boucher, eds., *Piero de' Medici "Il Gottoso" (1416-1469)*, Berlin 1993, pp. 71-88.

only the facade of S. Lorenzo with orders, but also the palace opposite—and not just one or two of its facades, but the whole building which in all probability was considerably symmetrical with respect to the axes. This solution would not only have merged Florentine solidity with Venetian splendor but it would have inserted a patrician residence in an urban context in a more symmetrical and exemplary manner than in any other setting of antiquity or the Middle Ages. The classification and archaizing of the secular buildings, starting with the Loggia degli Innocenti and the Palazzo di Parte Guelfa, would now have included the residences—an enormous challenge to Brunelleschi's powers of creativity, inasmuch as he now had to adapt the height of the stories and the bays to the rules of the ancient order of columns, and also bring together rooms of different sizes, staircases, baths, toilets and kitchens into one completely symmetrical body. That these ideas found an immediate response in his contemporaries can be seen first of all in the works of Alberti and Filarete. Toward 1460 Filarete furnished a surprising number of architectural works with orders in his ideal city, Sforzinda, and tried to insert their freestanding and completely symmetrical shapes into an equally organized context.[9] The version of the palace actually built by Cosimo as from 1445 derived directly from the merchant traditions of his home town[10] (figs. 6, 7). The outer construction followed the example of the Palazzo Vecchio in the number of its stories, the ashlar on the ground floor and the two-light windows. Since it was protected by the city walls of Florence and was part of a stable state, Cosimo did not need to build towers and battlements. He had the corners opened up to create a domestic loggia and crowned the building with a cornice *all'antica*. There is a trace of the fortification spirit still in the rustication at the base, a feature that had long been eliminated from Venetian palaces. Michelozzo also tried to unite the various rooms into a single body. The facade system, however, was

8. Florence, Palazzo Pitti
plan

9. Pienza, Palazzo Piccolomini
plan of the piano nobile

interrupted, strangely enough, right on the back of the building facing Piazza S. Lorenzo—probably because this was where it gave on to the garden, and hence its loggia, and the inner courtyard, set behind a wing of the same height, would have been too dark. The slightly off-center placement of the portal, the irregular features of the southern facade, the lack of an axial relationship between the openings of the ground story and those of the upper two, or the plan itself reveal Michelozzo's difficulties in bringing the multiple functions and limitations of a residence built on a pre-existing site into a harmonious context. Probably perfect symmetry did not as yet have the same significance for Cosimo and Michelozzo that it had for Brunelleschi.

The square courtyard also had a more traditional effect than can be imagined in Brunelleschi's project, and only has a complete order on the upper story. The symmetrical peristyle with its arcades *all'antica*, sgraffiti, reliefs and statuary, could have represented Cosimo's intention to create an "antique" house.

The inner layout could have been arranged according to the ceremonials of the great palaces belonging to popes and cardinals. Visitors came through the central passage of the lower loggia and up the double flight of barrel-vaulted stairs to the left to the *piano nobile*, then along a corridor that brought them directly before a large hall positioned on the privileged corner site.[11] This continued into the wing of the facade on Via Larga divided into a series of increasingly smaller rooms kept for the owner, ending with the chapel, as in the papal palaces. As with Nicholas V's palace or Pius II's palace at Pienza, it appears that there were various apartments for the changing seasons, such as the summer apartment in the southern wing on the ground story leading directly in to the garden. During the next fifteen years Alberti and Bernardo Rossellino attempted to render the palace even more regular and *all'antica*. Perhaps before 1460 Alberti succeeded in amalgamating all three stories of the Palazzo Rucellai by combining Florentine rustication with complete orders of pilasters, thus transferring Brunelleschi's principles the residential palace—at least for the entrance facade. It is probable that Alberti was also behind the design of almost contemporary Palazzo Pitti (1458)[12] (fig. 8). In around 1453 Alberti had defined suburban palaces for the first time in his treatise: "*est et genus quoddam aedificii privati, quod una aedium urbanarum dignitatem et villae iucunditates exigat. Hi sunt orti suburbani.*"[13] The enormous block of the Palazzo Pitti also corresponded to his idea of *all'antica* monumentality. It had no internal courtyard but spread out sideways and the ample arcades protected by balustrades opened onto a square in front. While it had no orders whatsoever, the entrance facade with its rustication was much more classicizing than the Palazzo Medici, and likewise the inner layout was substantially closer to the ideal of perfect symmetry. In his Palazzo Piccolomini in Pienza (1461), Rossellino exploited all these new achievements and designed a palace with three symmetrical sides involving windows, false doors, and hiding the loggias on the southern side behind the side fronts[14] (figs. 9, 10). Only the kitchens remained in a separate building. Since he opened the back of the palace to the view of the surrounding countryside it was difficult to connect the palace symmetrically with the cathedral facade. Unlike Brunelleschi, Pius II and his architect also maintained the hierarchical tradition, characterizing the facade with only pale limestone and freestanding columns. The papal palace was built with simple materials and flat pilasters, while the other buildings in the square were simply plastered.
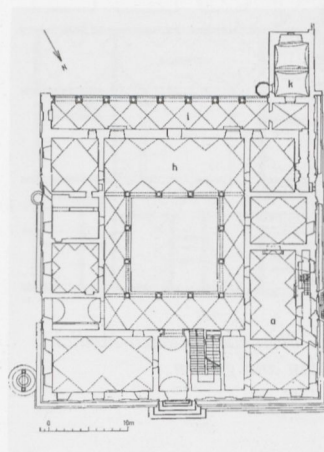
[11] W. Bulst, in *Il Palazzo Medici Riccardi...* 1990: 98-120.

[12] K. H. Busse, "Der Pitti-Palast...," in *Jahrbuch der preussischen Kunstsammlungen 51* (1930), pp. 110-132; A. Tönnesmann 1983b: 77ff.; L. H. Heydenreich and W. Lotz, *Architecture in Italy 1400 to 1600*, Harmondsworth 1974, p. 40, 337ff.; A. Tönnesmann, *Der Palazzo Gondi in Florenz*, Worms 1983, p. 68ff.

[13] L. B. Alberti, *L'architettura (De re aedificatoria)*, ed. P. Portoghesi, trans. G. Orlandi, Milan 1966, IX, 2, p. 791.

[14] C. R. Mack, *Pienza. The creation of a Renaissance City*, Ithaca-London 1987; A. Tönnesmann, *Pienza. Städtebau und Humanismus*, Munich 1990.

10. *Pienza, Palazzo Piccolomini*
flank and corner of the cathedral
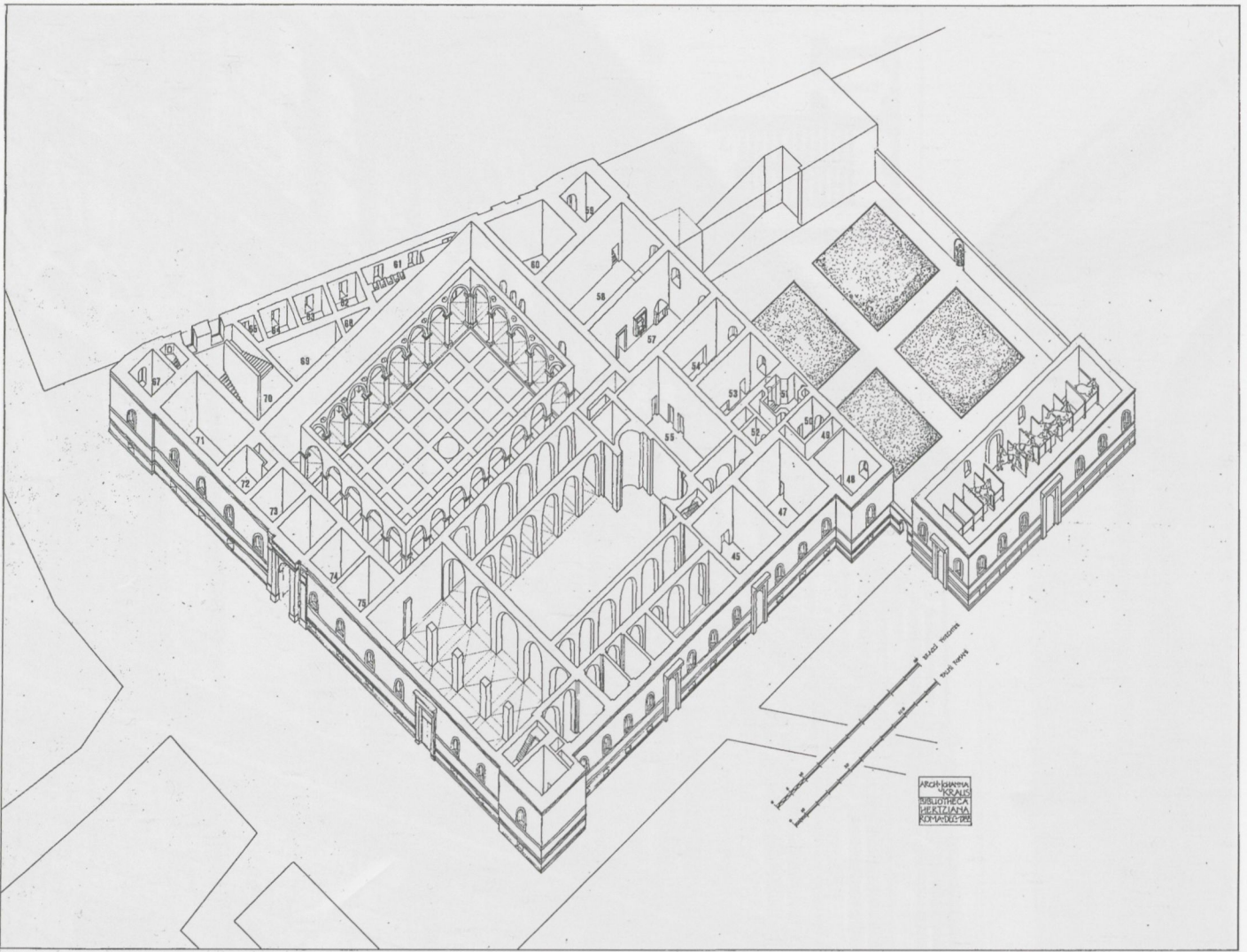
Even though he was designing a papal palace, Rossellino was more influenced by Florentine patrician palaces in his choice of dimensions and plan. It was much more difficult to introduce these fundamental innovations in the extensive regal palaces in Rome and Urbino. The papal ceremonials required not only a church and a private garden in the immediate neighborhood, but also a benediction loggia and a sequence of great halls. If, in Paul II's Palazzo Venezia (begun 1465) the wing of the hall, the residential tower, court, church and garden courtyard are placed loosely one next to the other, this is due most of all to the objective difficulties of its architect, Francesco del Borgo, who came from Borgo S. Sepolcro and learnt his profession in Rome: he could only follow at a distance the developments of the last twenty years.[15] His adhesion to the ideas of Alberti and interest in ancient monuments can be seen in particular in the barrel vaulted entryway and in the theater motif of the benediction loggia. Like many aspects of the project, the two adjacent rectangular squares in front of the palace and the church, could have been inspired by the Piazza della Signoria rather than by Brunelleschi's project for Piazza S. Lorenzo. Luciano Laurana, the first architect of the Palazzo Ducale in Urbino, was not a Florentine either; likewise he did not unite the individual wings into a homogeneous whole with decorative orders all round.[16] On the contrary, the crenelation and irregular wall openings reveal that the external construction followed even more traditional ideas. All the more significant were the developments introduced by Laurana and his successor Francesco di Giorgio in the area of the courtyard, in the furnishings and in the whole organization of the palace: the colonnade of the courtyard was wider and more *all'antica*, the staircase broader, lighter and accessible, rising up almost directly from the entrance loggia. Numerous large windows create an extraordinary amount of illumination. The private apartment is connected to the Studiolo, the chapel, bathroom, *giardino segreto* and loggia with a view of the surrounding hills, and this arrangement made the palace more beautiful and comfortable than any other princely palace since antiquity. The priorities of the court environment were quite different from those of patrician Florence. Even greater efforts were made in Florence to recreate the antique-style house and to make the body of the building symmetrical. Giuliano da Sangallo provided a good example of this in his first work, the Palazzo di Bartolomeo Scala (begun ca. 1473)[17] (fig. 11). Like many ancient villas and Alberti's *suburbanum*, it was sited on the edge of the city. The residential
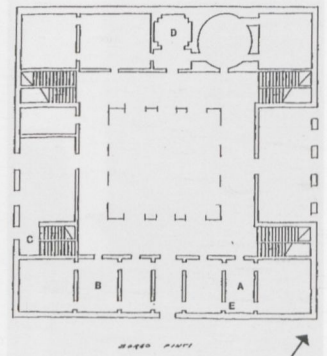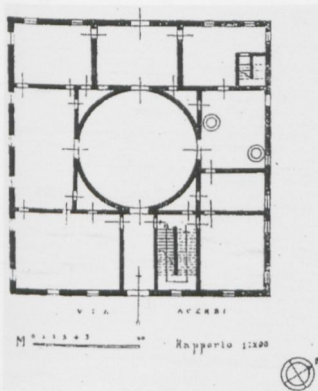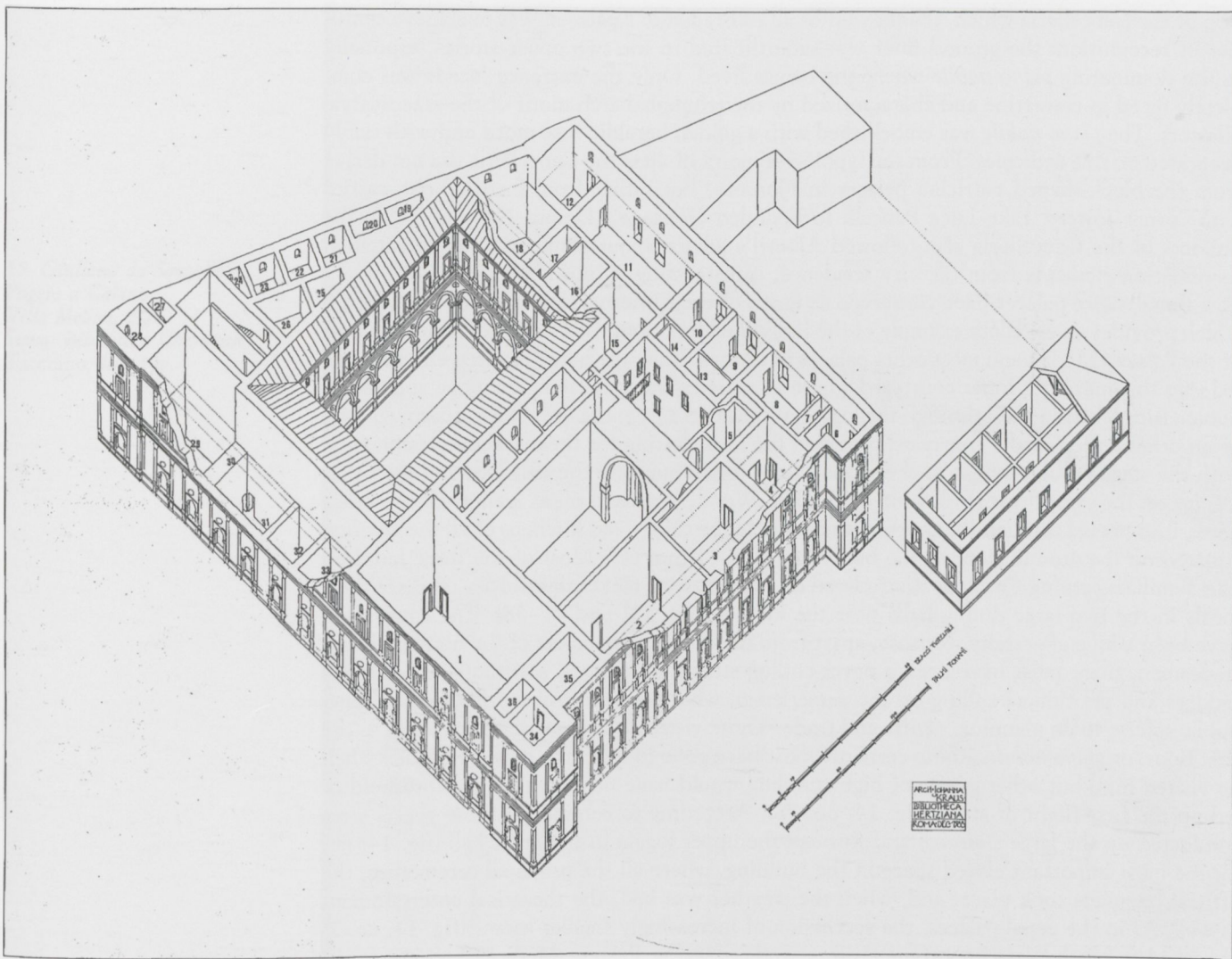

11. Florence, Palazzo della Scala plan

*13. top
Rome, Palazzo della Cancelleria axonometric projection of the ground floor
(drawing J. Kraus)*

[15] C. L. Frommel, "Francesco del Borgo: Architekt Pius' II. und Pauls II.: 2: Palazzo Venezia, Palazzetto Venezia und San Marco," in *Römisches Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 21 (1984), p. 138ff.
[16] P. Rotondi, *Il Palazzo Ducale di Urbino*, Urbino 1951.
[17] A. Tönnesmann 1983b: 93ff.; L. Pellecchia, "The patrons' role in the production of architecture: Bartolomeo Scala and the Scala Palace," in *Renaissance Quarterly* 42 (1989) pp. 258-291.

14. top
Rome, Palazzo della Cancelleria
axonometric projection of the
piano nobile
(drawing J. Kraus)

12. Mantua, Casa del Mantegna
outline

[18] E. E. Rosenthal, "The House of Andrea Mantegna," in *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 60 (1962) pp. 327-348; M. Harder, *Entstehung von Rundhof und Rundsaal im Palastbau der Renaissance in Italien*, Freiburg 1991, p. 30ff.
[19] C. L. Frommel, "Il Palazzo della Cancelleria," in *Il Palazzo dal Rinasciento a oggi. Atti del Convegno Internazionale Reggio Calabria 1988*, Rome 1989, pp. 29-54.

part was on the ground floor, as in ancient villas, and gave on to gardens at the back. It was decorated mostly on the inside, while the exterior did not have any real facade. The four residential wings were grouped almost concentrically round the square courtyard, and were connected by means of square corner rooms. With this palazzo, Giuliano came much closer to the ideal centrally-planned secular building, surpassing the Palazzo Medici and the Palazzo Piccolomini. The arrangement of the lower loggias in the courtyard and the relief on the upper story reveal his deep understanding of Roman monuments, while the corner solution and richly stuccoed vaults appear to have been derived already from the palace at Urbino. On the other hand, Urbino must have been an example for Lorenzo de' Medici as well, given that in 1480 he had the exact plans sent to him by Baccio Pontelli.

Similar ideas characterized the house of Mantegna, built three years later, which also had a symmetrical design and, being sited in the outskirts of the city, gave on to a garden[18] (fig. 12). The small cylindrical courtyard has an order, while the windows of the stairs give an asymmetrical appearance to the simple entrance facade. Similar plans can be found in the works of Francesco di Giorgio, and therefore it is likely that their common denominator was once again Alberti. To what extent patrons and architects took advantage of each other, even from a distance, and how quickly their respective innovations spread abroad, can be observed in the Palazzo della Cancelleria, built by Cardinal Raffaele Riario (1489 and after)[19] (figs. 13, 14). Its first architect was perhaps Baccio Pontelli, who exploited his Florentine schooling and long experience in Urbino and Rome. From the Palazzo Venezia he borrowed the ceremonial itinerary arranged on the inside with the series of rhythmically decreasing rooms, and the connection with a church or residential tower next to the garden at the back of the building. His ample inner court with as many as five arches by eight on two stories, and convenient staircase and apartment vied with the Palazzo Ducale in Urbino. The synthesis of the enormous residential palace, and even of the church in one homogeneous body with an order of pilasters running all round it is, however, typical of the Florentine tradition. For the first time the immediate influence of ancient monuments and the Roman humanists brought about the substitution of the medieval remains with the help of a vocabulary, an *aurea latinitas*, taken directly from the ancients.

Lastly, the hierarchical principle was introduced for the first time in the external construc-
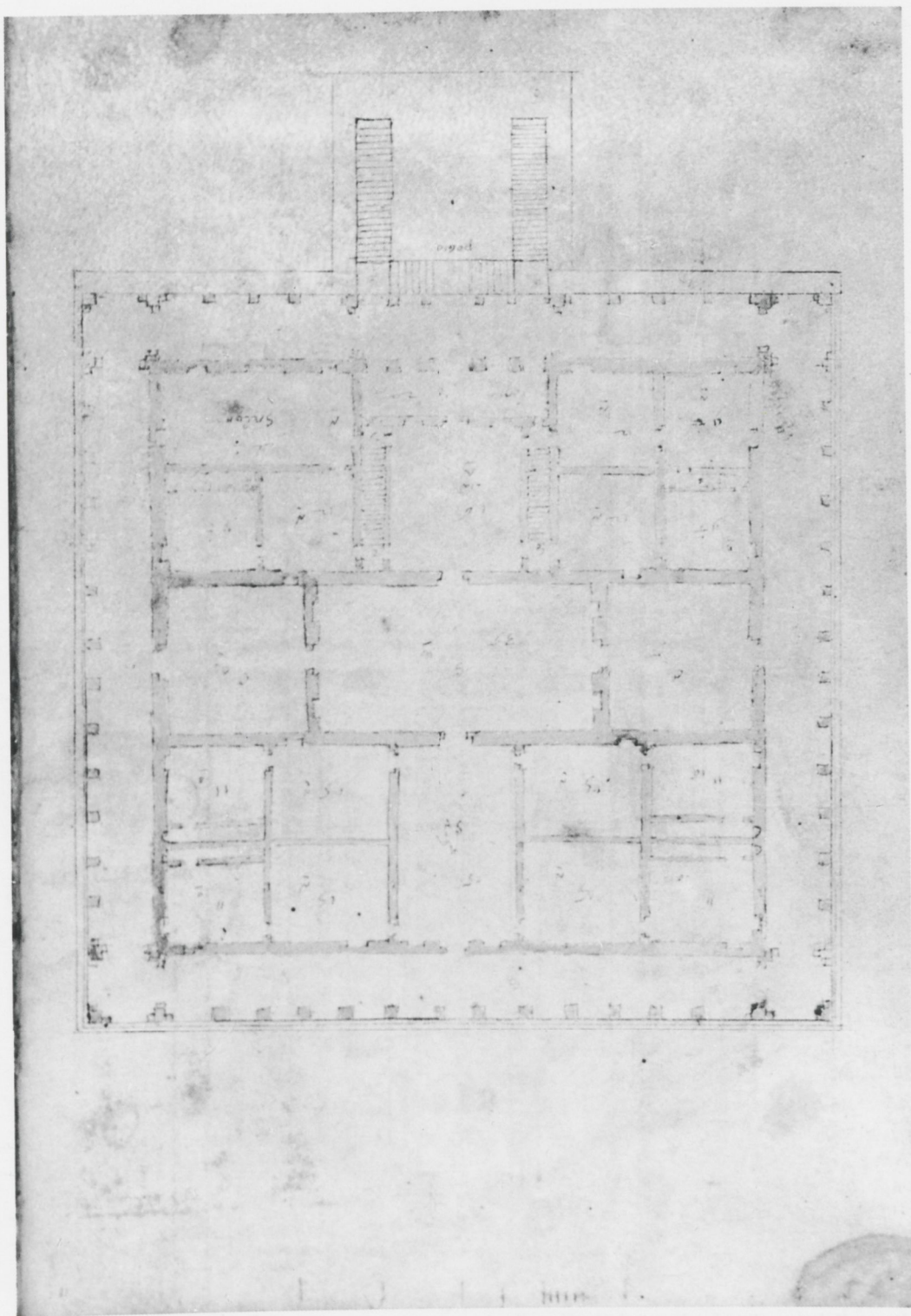
tion of the Cancelleria which, thanks first of all to Bramante's palaces, was to achieve centuries of recognition: the ground floor was subordinated to the two upper stories, especially to the dominating *piano nobile* where the owner lived. Only the entrance facade was completely faced in travertine and characterized by the triumphal arch motif of the araeosystyle pilasters. The *piano nobile* was embellished with a golden heraldic rose motif and with richly decorated marble aedicules. From the typological point of view the Cancelleria did not derive from the block-shaped patrician palaces in Florence, but rather from fortified city castles with corner towers. Like Luca Fancelli in Federico Gonzaga's Domus Nova of 1480, the builders of the Cancelleria also followed Alberti's advice about eliminating all threatening fortification elements from the city residence, transforming it into a pacific *regia*.

Few Renaissance palaces have conserved as much of their internal layout as the Cancelleria, which provides an excellent example of the individual functions, in a sequence similar to that of the Palazzo Medici and most other palaces in Central Italy: the barrel-vaulted entranceway led into the enormous inner courtyard where all activity was centered. The pope and all the noble visitors had to walk through the loggia to the staircase on the left. During carnival time or on other holidays, the courtyard provided the ideal setting for theatrical entertainments, with the stage mounted next to the ground-floor loggia opposite the entrance and the other loggias on the upper two stories for the public. Wood, wine and oil as well as all the other necessities passed through the court on their way to the cellars and kitchens of all the *familiari* situated on the ground floor of the back wing (fig. 13, no. 60). Most of the three hundred plus familiars serving Cardinal Riario lived on the upper or mezzanine stories, and ate their meals in the two large dining halls near the kitchen (fig. 13, nos. 57-58). The court must have been a hive of activity, because, apart from the nobility, members of the household and tradesmen, there must have been a never-ending stream of visitors, assistants, negotiators, bidders and petitioners calling on the camerlengo, who was responsible for revenues, law, public safety, town planning, tariffs and trade. Those visiting the camerlengo went up to the first floor, or *piano nobile*. Riario certainly must have gone to fetch the pope personally when he visited him, but other guests of high standing would have been met on the threshold or led up the first flight of stairs (fig. 14, no. 78). According to ceremonial these guests were conducted up the large staircase and through the upper loggia in the great hall (fig. 14, no. 1), the most important closed space in the building, where all the principal ceremonies, the official banquets took place, and, when the weather was bad, the theatrical entertainment as well. As in the papal palaces, the succession of increasingly smaller rooms (fig. 14, no. 2, 3) served to receive less important visitors, and, as in the Palazzo Medici, this ceremonial sequence of rooms terminated in a large audience room (fig. 14, no. 4) with the cardinal's private chapel next to it (fig. 14, no. 5) and beyond this, his private apartment. It is significant that his bedroom was situated in the northwest tower, one of the safest rooms in the palace with a view toward Castel Sant'Angelo and the Basilica of St. Peter (fig. 14, no. 6). This secret room was connected via a secret staircase (fig. 13, no. 49; fig. 14, no. 7) to the enormous garden and neighboring stables. In the upper mezzanine of the tower was a *studiolo*, in the lower one a bath with a domical vault decorated with grotesques (fig. 13, nos. 51, 52). On the ground floor was a cool room for the summer, close to the garden (fig. 13, no. 48). His private kitchen and larder (fig. 13, no. 53) was in a small, low court (fig. 13, no. 69) next to his dining room, while the wine cellar was probably below it. The cardinal's dining room, with its grotesque work (fig. 13, no. 47) could also be reached by privileged guests through its own entrance in the northern wing. Riario's bedroom in the northwest tower was also the last room at the end of a series of private rooms in another wing (fig. 14, nos. 8-18) that could be accessed through the central vestibule of the *piano nobile* of the rear wing (fig. 14, no. 17), and was directly comparable to the Borgia apartment or the Stanze in the Vatican, the pope's private apartment during the Renaissance. Visitors on business probably did not use the ceremonial route to reach the cardinal, but passed through the private suite, and petitioners used the long rectangular room as an antechamber (fig. 14, no. 11). On the other hand, only the little rooms on the *piano nobile* of the entrance wing have similar precious ceilings. And since Riario doubtless used the balcony in the southeast tower to watch the processions along Via dei Pellegrini and to bless the crowds, there must have been another private apartment there as well (fig. 14, no. 28). He probably used this apartment on certain occasions or during certain seasons, and perhaps his more important guests used the reception rooms on the front wing which were more formal and less comfortable than those near the northwest tower (fig. 14, nos. 27-33). On one occasion he assigned a room to a bishop (a relation) on the piano nobile in the northeast tower and the one next to it, separated from the rest of the palace by large halls, but which had its own staircase (fig. 14, 34-36). He must have distributed the other numerous rooms on the upper and mezzanine floors according to his whims or to hierarchical criteria, while the attic was certainly only inhabited by the lower ranks. Not only the *piano nobile* was organized on a hierarchical basis

[20] C. L. Frommel, "La villa Médicis et la typologie de la villa italienne à la Renaissance," in A. Chastel, ed., *La Villa Médicis*, Rome 1991, p. 324 fig. 11; P. Kehl is preparing a detailed study of this *delizia*.

[21] C. L. Frommel, *Die Farnesina und Peruzzis architektonisches Frühwerk*, Berlin 1961, pp. 86-89; D. Coffin, *The Villa in the Life of Renaissance Rome*, Princeton 1979, p. 87ff.; J. S. Ackerman 1990b: 63-88.

but also its relations with the remaining floors. Moreover the rigid hierarchy of the real exterior seems to suggest the kind of activity going on inside the building.

The derivation from the four-towered castle scheme was still noticeable in shape of country houses; this became one of the tasks of high architecture during the fifteenth century. If symmetry and axiality dominated at Belriguardo, the Delizia degli Este near Ferrara as early as 1435, it is totally ascribable to the influence of Venice, as evidenced by the enormous hall and late Gothic vocabulary.[20] It appears rather as if, here too, an attempt was being made to approach the Vitruvian house with its *atrium, vestibulum, peristylum* and numerous *hospitalia*. But such a trend was also a consequence of seeking a "conventual" kind of solution which, in the opinion of the humanists, was the direct descendant of the idea of the antique house prototype. Similar tendencies could be seen in Florence only just before 1460. In the Villa Medici at Fiesole Michelozzo eliminated all signs of fortification from the building which had instead dominated the earlier designs of the Trebbio a Cafaggiolo and the Villa Medici a Careggi, but the symmetry and decoration due its status were still on a smaller scale compared to urban palaces.[21] The pleasant climate of the site above Florence, the loggia-vestibule to the east leading into the ground floor hall, with its in-

direct lighting, or the loggia-belvedere looking west, all corresponded already to Alberti's ideas (IX, ii).

The Medici Villa of Poggio a Caiano by Giuliano da Sangallo (1485 and after) was designed, unlike the Villa Medici at Fiesole, to host a large court for a greater length of time[22] (fig. 15). It is quite likely that Lorenzo de' Medici himself took part in the design of the symmetrical building. Several of its characteristics recall Giuliano's earlier Palazzo di Bartolomeo Scala: instead of a courtyard there is a decorated hall, while four apartments replace the square corner rooms, revealing their derivation from corner towers. The *piano nobile* lies on an arched base, a classicizing *podium villae*, and by designing the entrance through a temple portico, or pedimented *vestibulum*, Giuliano was adopting the outer construction and entrance typical of the antique *villa*. The exterior, with its simple articulation and numerous irregularities, is fundamentally different from another urban palace designed at that time by Giuliano, the Palazzo Gondi. Residential tower, hall wing and courtyard were the most important elements of Giuliano projects for a royal palace (1488), or Giuliano da Maiano's for the Villa di Poggioreale in Naples (1489), by which Lorenzo de' Medici was able to strengthen his influence on the ruling dynasty in Naples.[23] (fig. 16) Whether the residential towers stood outside the main body of the building, such as in Giuliano's Neapolitan project, and in the

[22] P. E. Foster, *A Study of Lorenzo de' Medici's villa at Poggio a Caiano*, New York 1978; A. Tönnesmann 1983b: 103ff.

[23] H. Biermann, "Das Palastmodell Giuliano da Sangallos für Ferdinand I., König von Neapel," in *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte 23* (1970) pp. 154-195; C.L. Frommel, "Poggio Reale: Problemi di ricostruzione e di tipologia," in *Atti del Convegno Giuliano da Maiano, Fiesole 1992* (forthcoming).
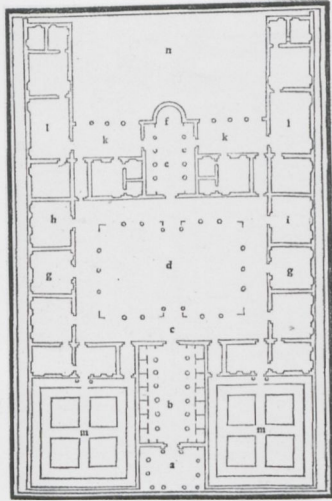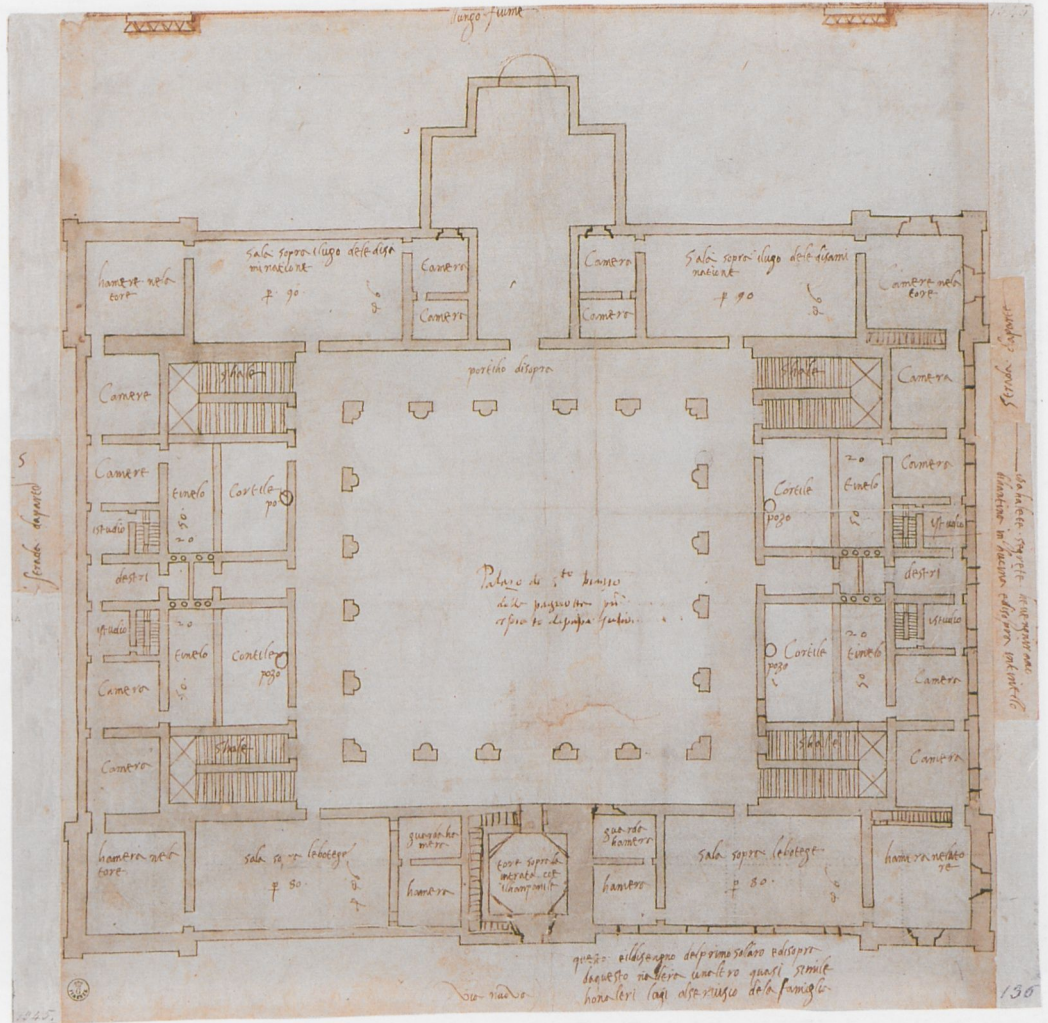
Villa di Poggioreale, or when they disappeared completely inside the building, such as in the villa at Poggio a Caiano, or when the center of the building was designed as a hall or a courtyard, the fundamental elements were always the same and were combined and redesigned according to the varying requirements and circumstances. Gardens close by and the surrounding countryside began to acquire greater importance in the design of urban palaces, which began to include loggias providing the transitional feature from inside to outside, and offering a refuge in inclement weather. Sangallo's great project for Naples and his later one for the Medici family both included characteristics of the *villa*, even though they were designed as urban residences.[24]

Bramante and the High Renaissance in Rome

All these experiences were utilized by Donato Bramante when he was commissioned by Julius II in about 1503–04 to renovate the Palazzo Vaticano.[25] In order to place the temporal authority of the church and its imperial pretensions in the correct light, Julius tried to outshine all the European royalty and go back directly to the tradition of the ancient imperial palaces. The Belvedere Court designed by Bramante was a new *domus transitoria* whose 300-meter-long wings enclosed a gigantic courtyard for ceremonials, tournaments and theatrical entertainments. As in the Temple of Fortune at Palestrina—the presumed palace of Julius Caesar—staircases and terraces led up toward the Belvedere exedra with a statue garden and a plan for baths. Bramante also designed the Palazzo dei Tribunali for Julius II in about 1508, which was supposed to substitute the functions and role of the medieval Palazzo Comunale on the Campidoglio[26] (fig. 17). Bramante urbanized the four-towered castle, just as Baccio Pontelli had done twenty years earlier, and only emphasized the podium story with rough rustication and, like Brunelleschi in the Palazzo di Parte Guelfa, he embellished the upper stories of the four corner avant-corps with a giant order symbolizing the patron's sense of his own importance more than ever. This giant order towering up from the ground story was later not surprisingly perfected by Raphael, Michelangelo, Palladio and Bernini, and became one of the leading motifs of courtly architecture. Bramante's design for the arcades of the square inner courtyard approached the dimensions and form of those of the Colosseum. The

[24] L. Pellecchia, "Reconstructing the Greek House: Giuliano da Sangallo's Villa for the Medici in Florence," in *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 52 (1993) pp. 323-338.
[25] J. S. Ackerman, *The Cortile del Belvedere*, Vatican City 1954; A. Bruschi, *Bramante*, Bari 1969, p. 290ff.; C. L. Frommel, "Il Palazzo Vaticano sotto Giulio II e Leone X," in *Raffaello in Vaticano* (exhibition catalog, Vatican 1984), Milan 1984, p. 122ff.; C. L. Frommel, "Bramante e la progettazione del Cortile del Belvedere," in *Atti del Convegno "Il Cortile delle Statue nel Belvedere"* Rome 1992 (forthcoming).
[26] C. L. Frommel, *Der römische Palastbau der Hochrenaissance*, Tübingen 1973, vol. I, pp. 96, 143, vol. II, pp. 327-335.
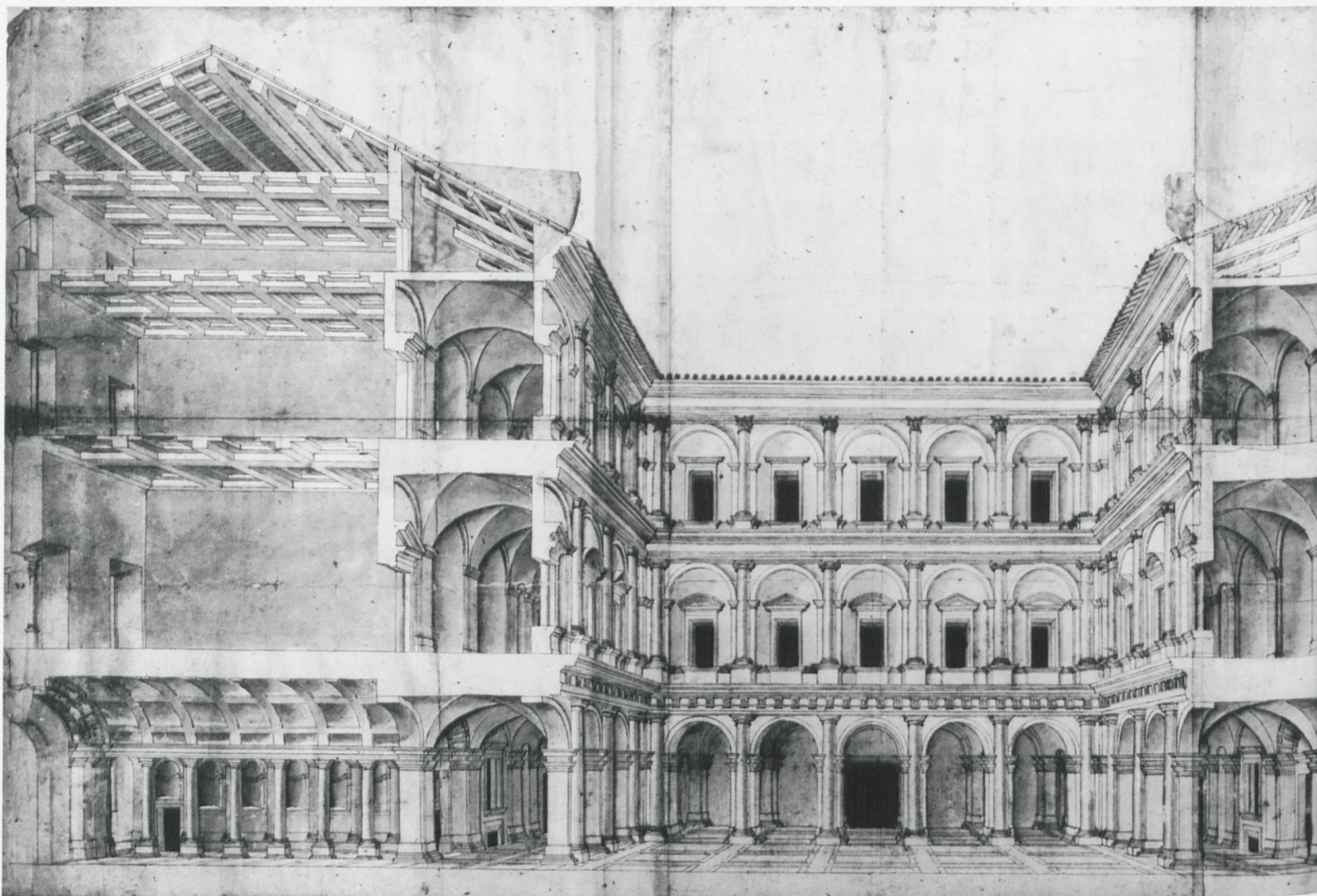
longitudinal axis led into a church, like Fra Giocondo's reconstruction of an ancient house in 1511 (fig. 18).[27] The dome would have been broader than the single nave, and the church entrenched on the shore of the Tiber. The main building, well-proportioned on all sides, would have been a landmark not only from the neighboring square and the other side of the river, but also from afar. Its enormous travertine blocks, tall campanile and dome with the four crenelated corner towers would have left the unmistakable stamp of Julius II's imperial authority on the city. The Palazzo Farnese developed (1513–14 and after) as a direct descendent of the Palazzo dei Tribunali. It was a true princely residence whose architect, Antonio da Sangallo the Younger, had worked as Bramante's assistant from 1509 to 1513 (figs. 19–20).[28]

Once again it is clear how there was no precise distinction between the various types and functions of the palaces and villas. Alessandro Farnese, the future Pope Paul III, expressed his modest ambitions in the reduced size, the elimination of the avant-corps and an external order, or in the simple materials of the first project. Rather, by limiting the rustication to the corners and the portal, and by simply plastering the facade, the exterior of the building in 1513–14 appeared to be more unassuming than the Palazzo Gondi or the Palazzo Strozzi and other Florentine patrician palaces. In spite of this, it is not surprising that the Palazzo Farnese became the prototype of Roman palaces. Under the influence of the Palazzo dei Tribunali, Sangallo succeeded in designing a residence in the city center with a symmetrical structure on all four sides.

This is all the more admirable considering that originally even the great staircase was illuminated by the windows of the front looking on to the square, and Sangallo had to assimilate parts of various earlier buildings into his project. Where Rossellino and Baccio Pontelli, had achieved symmetry only by means of false windows and doors, and had connected the facade and courtyard in only a loose kind of way, with the help of bays and running cornices Sangallo created an astonishing correspondence between the inner and outer construction, so that from the windows of one of the side fronts it was possible to see the windows on the opposite front by looking across the courtyard. The constant effort to achieve a design ever closer to the Vitruvian house can be seen here first of all in the three aisle atrium, whose reconstruction had been studied by Antonio's uncle, Giuliano, and Fra Giocondo, and which also served as the load-bearing structure for the central hall. The direct influence of Bramante's Palazzo dei Tribunali can also be seen in the rectangular
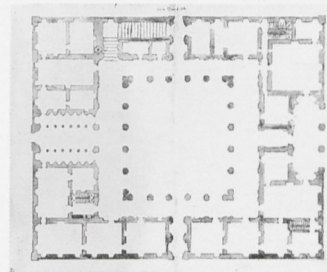

19. Antonio da Sangallo
the Younger
Rome, Palazzo Farnese
project
Florence, Uffizi
Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe
Uff. 298A

20. top
Anonymous
Rome, Palazzo Farnese
project for its completion
ca. 1546
Modena, Archivio di Stato
Fabbriche 77

[27] Vitruvius, De architectura libri decem, ed. Fra Giocondo, Venezia 1511, fol. 64v.
[28] C. L. Frommel, "Sangallo et Michel-Ange (1513-1550)," in A. Chastel, ed., Le Palais Farnèse, Rome 1981, vol. I, 1, pp. 127-224.
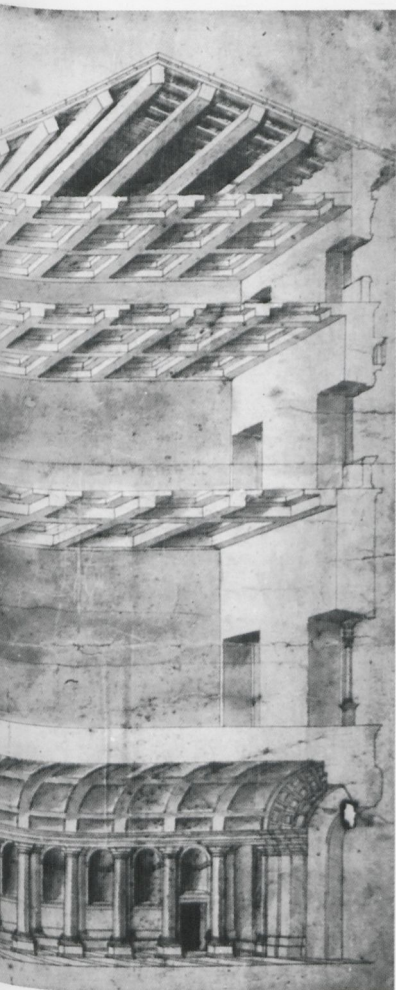
shape, and the three-story courtyard, whose arched piers were inspired by the Theater of Marcellus, where the orders complied closer with the Vitruvian canons.

It is significant that during the papacies of two Medici popes, Leo X (1513–21) and Clement VII (1521–34), the plain exterior of the three-story Palazzo Farnese with its defense-like corner rustication, was hardly imitated at all at first, and that Sangallo and his patron decided before 1527 to make both the upper floors appear even more classicizing by means of a giant order, thus adopting another characteristic of the Palazzo dei Tribunali.[29]

Already by 1501 Bramante had shown with the Palazzo Caprini that, at a low cost, it was possible to build houses much closer to the ideal of architecture *all'antica* than the Cancelleria
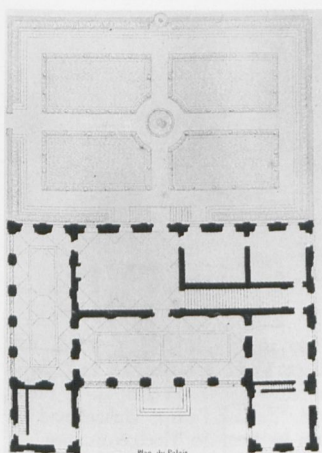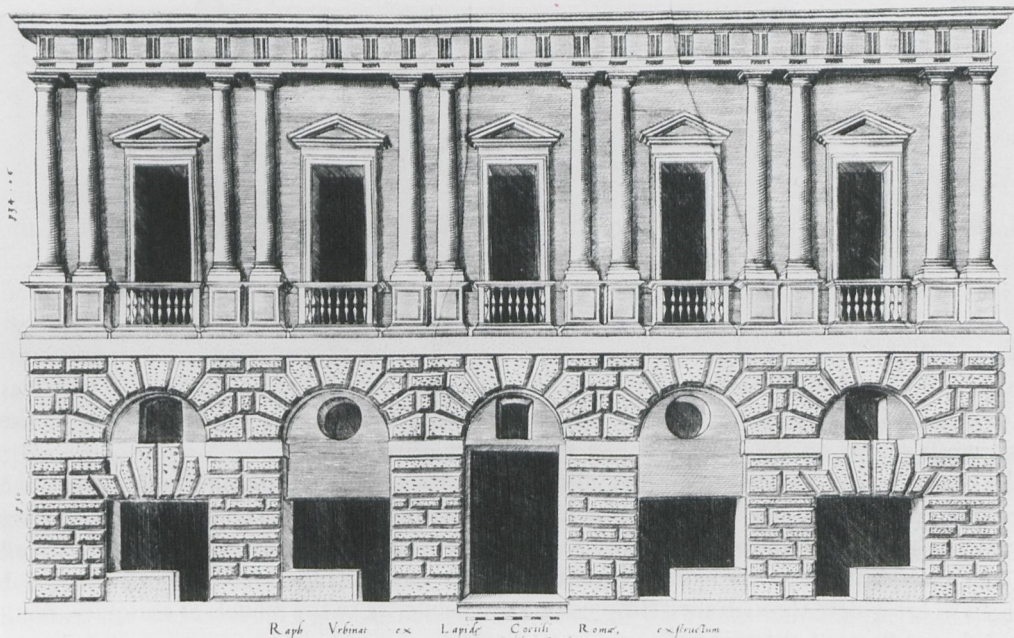
itself[30] (fig. 21). Later on there was more success in furnishing the homes of the middle-ranking clergy, merchants, lawyers, doctors or artists with an archaizing splendor and with all the dignity of a real palace, and therefore in renewing the image of the city much more quickly than the few monumental palaces built previously had ever done. Bramante designed a rusticated podium story in the Palazzo Caprini and built the Doric columns on the *piano nobile* with stuccoed brickwork, giving new life to an old technique. This reduced the costs of construction considerably and made the possibilities of a direct imitation of the ancients very inviting to patrons with reduced financial means. Without this economical technique, Bramante's direct successors—not just Raphael, Peruzzi, and Giulio Romano, but also Jacopo Sansovino, Sanmicheli and Palladio—would never have been able to achieve some of their most important works.

The completely organized palazzetto, articulated on both the inside and the outside, included a small inner courtyard and five or seven, or even occasionally only three window bays. In spite of this, its internal arrangement and spatial sequences followed the same schema of the great patrician, cardinalate and papal palaces. Here too, access was through an entryway into a loggia, courtyard and staircase leading into a hall and from there into the owner's apartments containing a *studiolo* and often a bathhouse and private chapel.

The Palazzo Baldassini by Sangallo (1513),[31] the Palazzo Branconio dell'Aquila by Raphael (1519)[32] and the Palazzo Massimo alle Colonne by Peruzzi (1532)[33] can well be considered as the most successful examples. They illustrate how the members of the upper class in the space of a few decades had become the most avant-garde patrons in Rome, and how, with the adoption of the *piano nobile*, they symbolized their efforts to elevate themselves above the populace and climb the social ladder. They no longer accepted gloomy light shafts, narrow staircases, low ceilings, and irregular rooms; nor had they any intention of following the spartan life styles of their ancestors. Instead they began to enjoy a life of comfort comparable to that which, thirty years earlier, had been the privilege of the Duke of Urbino alone. The knowledgeable architects now created well-proportioned, luminous, richly furnished rooms with sometimes surprisingly stylish dimensions, chimneys that drew well, a heated bathhouse, and kitchens inside the palace building. Even though these upper class patrons rarely succeeded in making their palaces stand out in the urban context their high standard of living went hand in hand with an increasingly courtly lifestyle, in which the familiar form of address "tu" was replaced by the more formal "voi" after 1520. Someone who could afford to built

22. Rome, Villa Farnesina plan with garden

*21. top
Antonio Lafreryi
Palazzo Caprini
(House of Raphael)*

[29] C. L. Frommel, in C. L. Frommel and N. Adams 1993: 38.
[30] C. L. Frommel 1973, vol. I, pp. 93, 80–87; A. Bruschi, "Edifici privati di Bramante a Roma: Palazzo Castellesi e Palazzo Caprini," in *Palladio* n.s. 2 (1989), no. 4, pp. 5-44.
[31] C. L. Frommel 1973, vol. I, p. 122ff., 151ff., vol. II, pp. 23-29.
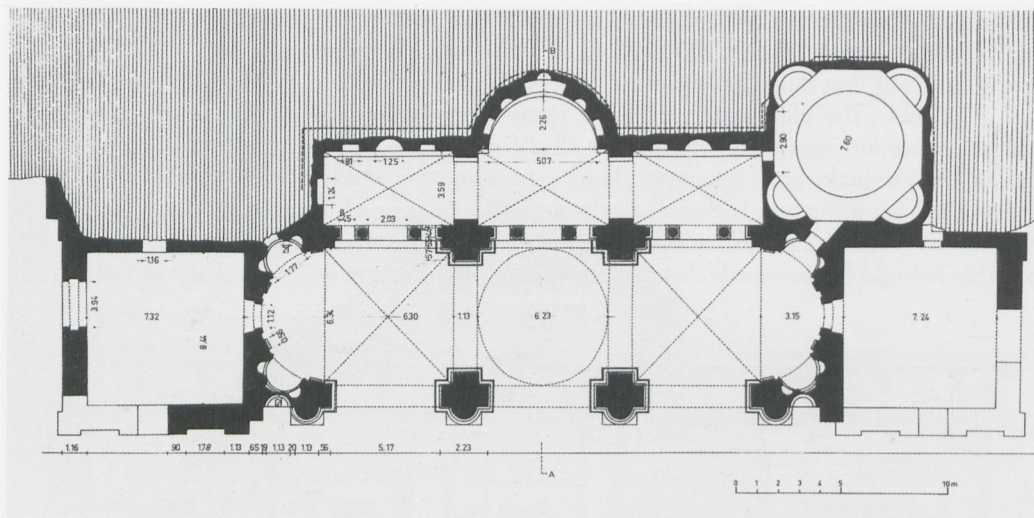
himself a palace the size of the Cancelleria or of the Palazzo Farnese, however, was the wealthy Agostino Chigi (fig. 22).[34] And yet he preferred to build a palazzetto the shape of a villa, like a Plinian *tusci*, in the vineyards on the outskirts of Rome between the Tiber and Via della Lungara; it is quite likely that his choices were influenced by the Palazzo di Bartolomeo Scala. The corner towers (as for the Cancelleria) were transformed into urban avant-corps and linked (Villa Medici at Poggio a Caiano) by a central loggia-vestibule. There was also a second loggia (like in the Villa Medici at Fiesole) on the side of the river, while the hall was situated on the upper floor in the style of urban palaces.

The continuous sequence of pilasters all round the building makes the Farnesina more like an urban palace than the other villas built in the previous decades. Rooms of different sizes and even a comfortable staircase are arranged in the symmetrical freestanding building in an even more skillful way than in the Cancelleria. Palazzo and villa therefore almost became true works of art which, through their proportions and similarity to the models of antiquity, certified the mastery of the architect.

In spite of the loggias and projections, behind this increasingly rigid formalization there was a danger of losing the direct relationship with the physical setting, a feature that had so far characterized the much more flexible structures of the ancient villas. The Farnesina was, in the final analysis, still an "urbanized castle" that did not bring the owner into contact with his surroundings so much as place him over and above them. In this sense it is significant that neither of the two loggias formed a direct link between palace and gardens. The entrance loggia gave on to an open courtyard, and the arches of the loggia looking over the Tiber were balustraded. Where once it had been the fortified building that separated the owner from the outside world, now it was the increasingly rigorous regulation of the immediate surroundings into symmetrical terraces and walks—a tendency that would reach its first climax with the Villa d'Este in 1560.

In spite of this, even in its relations with nature, the Farnesina took a definite step forward beyond the Palazzo di Bartolomeo Scala, which had been the most important *suburbanum* of the Quattrocento in Florence. To the disappointment of Julius II it did not contribute to embellishing the new thoroughfare Via della Lungara, but was hidden from view. Chigi also eliminated all the fortification-type features, together with the travertine facing, and opted for more humble materials perhaps for the same preoccupations that Cosimo de' Medici had once had, or for chiefly esthetic reasons. However, he made up for this outward modesty in his choice of materials by decorating the exterior and interior with scenes of antiquity painted by the leading artists of the time, the same who were employed by Julius II.

In the ensuing decades, both the suburban palazzo and suburban villa in their various shapes and plans were to become one of the most fruitful themes of Roman architecture. The liberty architects enjoyed can already be seen just in the distance between the nymphaea built at Genazzano and the Villa Madama.

In the Nymphaeum at Genazzano (ca. 1508–09) Bramante substituted the bricks used in the Palazzo Caprini with even cheaper tufa stonework, and with the help of a few travertine and marble columns and cornices he succeeded in achieving spatial forms like the imperial *thermae* for the first time ever (fig. 23).[35] Given that in the loggia in front of square rooms he followed the same arrangement of the space used in the porticoed villa with corner avant-corps, like Peruzzi at the Farnesina slightly earlier, it is probable that Bramante, too, considered this kind of villa *all'antica*. But it is the formal facade of the villa that reveals his fundamental distance from the ancient villa model. He achieved a more classicizing effect when he returned to the one-story building, as advised by Alberti, to the shell-capped exedrae of

[32] op. cit., vol. I, p. 105ff., 152ff., vol. II, pp. 13-22; P. N. Pagliara, in *Raffaello architetto* 1984: 197-216; C. L. Frommel, "Raffaels Paläste: Wohnen und Leben im Rom der Hochrenaissance," in *Gewerblicher Rechtsschutz und Urheberrecht* 1986, pp. 101-110.

[33] H. W. Wurm, *Der Palazzo Massimo alle Colonne*, Berlin 1965; C. L. Frommel 1973, vol. I, p. 133ff., 164ff., vol. II, pp. 233-250; C.L. Frommel, in *Baldassarre Peruzzi pittura scena e architettura nel Cinquecento*, Rome 1987, pp. 241-262.

[34] C. L. Frommel 1961; C. L. Frommel 1973, vol. I, p. 101ff., vol. II, pp. 149-174; C. L. Frommel, "Peruzzis römische Anfänge. Von der 'Pseudo-Cronaca-Gruppe' zu Bramante," in *Römisches Jahrbuch der Biblioteca Hertziana* 27-28 (1991-1992) pp. 177-180.

[35] C. L. Frommel, "Bramantes 'Nymphaeum' in Genazzano," in *Römisches Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 12 (1969) pp. 137-160; D. Coffin 1979: 243ff.

[36] C. L. Frommel, in *Raffaello architetto* 1984: 311-356; D. Coffin 1979: 245ff.; G. Dewez, *Villa Madama. A memoir relating to Raphael's project*, London 1993.
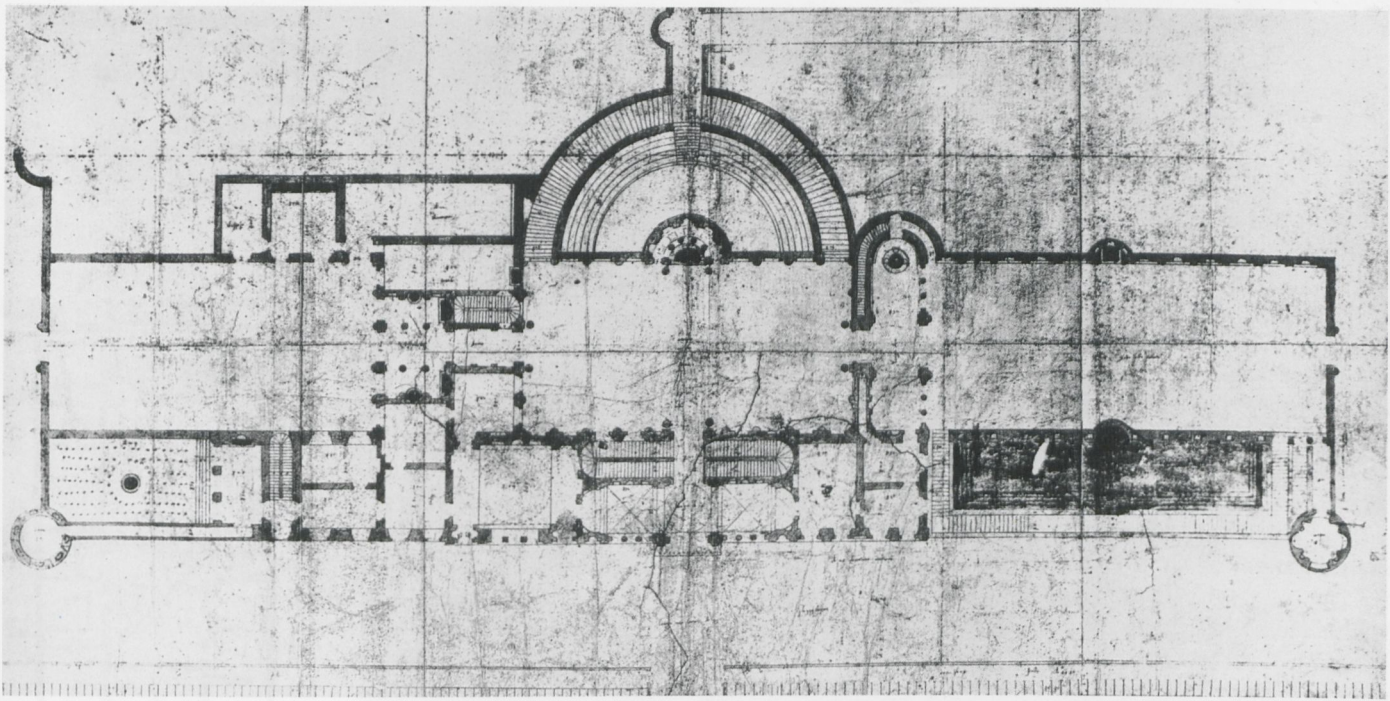
24. Raphael
Rome, Villa Madama
project
Florence, Uffizi
Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe
Uff. 273A

the loggias, to the opening of the back wall for a real nymphaeum and the addition of an open octagonal pool. Even in the dam designed to flood the valley below the loggia, probably for *naumachiae*, Bramante and his presumed patron, Cardinal Prospero Colonna, created an ideal setting for living *all'antica*.

Raphael and Cardinal Giulio de' Medici followed similar objectives ten years later in their design for the Villa Madama (figs. 24, 25).[36]

Raphael also started from a similar nucleus. He enlarged the rooms flanking the loggia, and arranged them (as in the Villa Medici at Poggio a Caiano) for palace life, so that the cardinal's court could stay there for long periods at a time. It seems that the cardinal preferred to spend his longer sojourns in the suburban area beyond the Ponte Milvio (Milvian Bridge) rather than live in the crush of the city center. Here his mania for building was unrestricted, and only here could he achieve in total liberty his ideal of a suburban villa in the antique style with loggias, a hippodrome, theater, nymphaeum, baths, *peschiere* and ample terraced gardens—all elements that Alberti had envisaged and whose prototype was the villa of Giulio de' Medici's ancestors at Fiesole. When illustrating his project, Raphael paid less attention to the antique forms and more to the life-styles *all'antica*. The cardinal and his friends would have been able to take the baths in real *thermae*, perform dramatic works in the Vitruvian theater, organize horse races in the hippodrome, and entertain in real *cenationes*. Here too, the increasing need for outward show in the Renaissance led to the monumental facade overlooking the valley, whose giant order and complex articulation are comparable only with the contemporary projects for St. Peter's.

The Late Renaissance in Northern Italy: Giulio Romano, Sanmicheli, Sansovino

25. Rome, Villa Madama
model
(G. Dewez; Rome, Ministero
degli Esteri)

The Golden Age, the peak of the high Renaissance, came to an end with the death of Pope Leo X (1513-21). When Federico Gonzaga commissioned Raphael's favorite pupil, Giulio
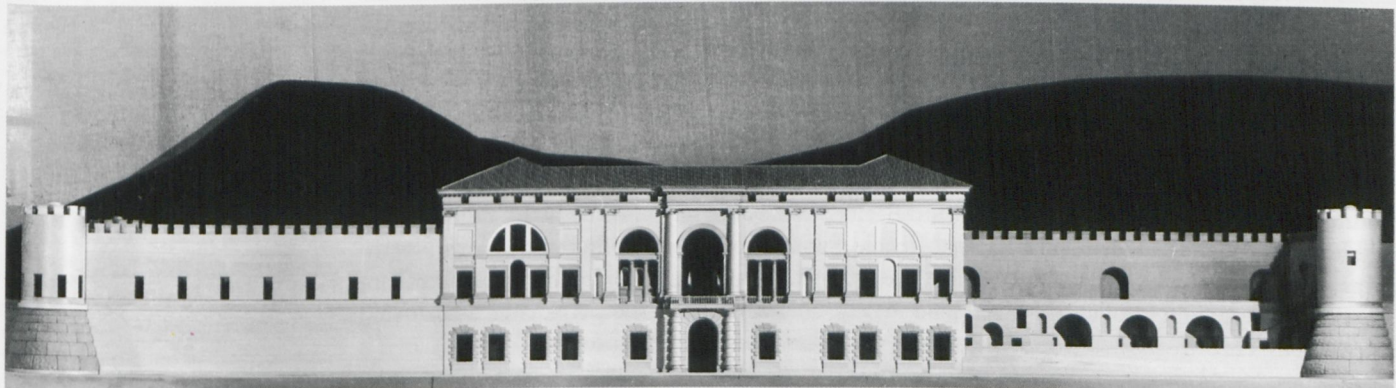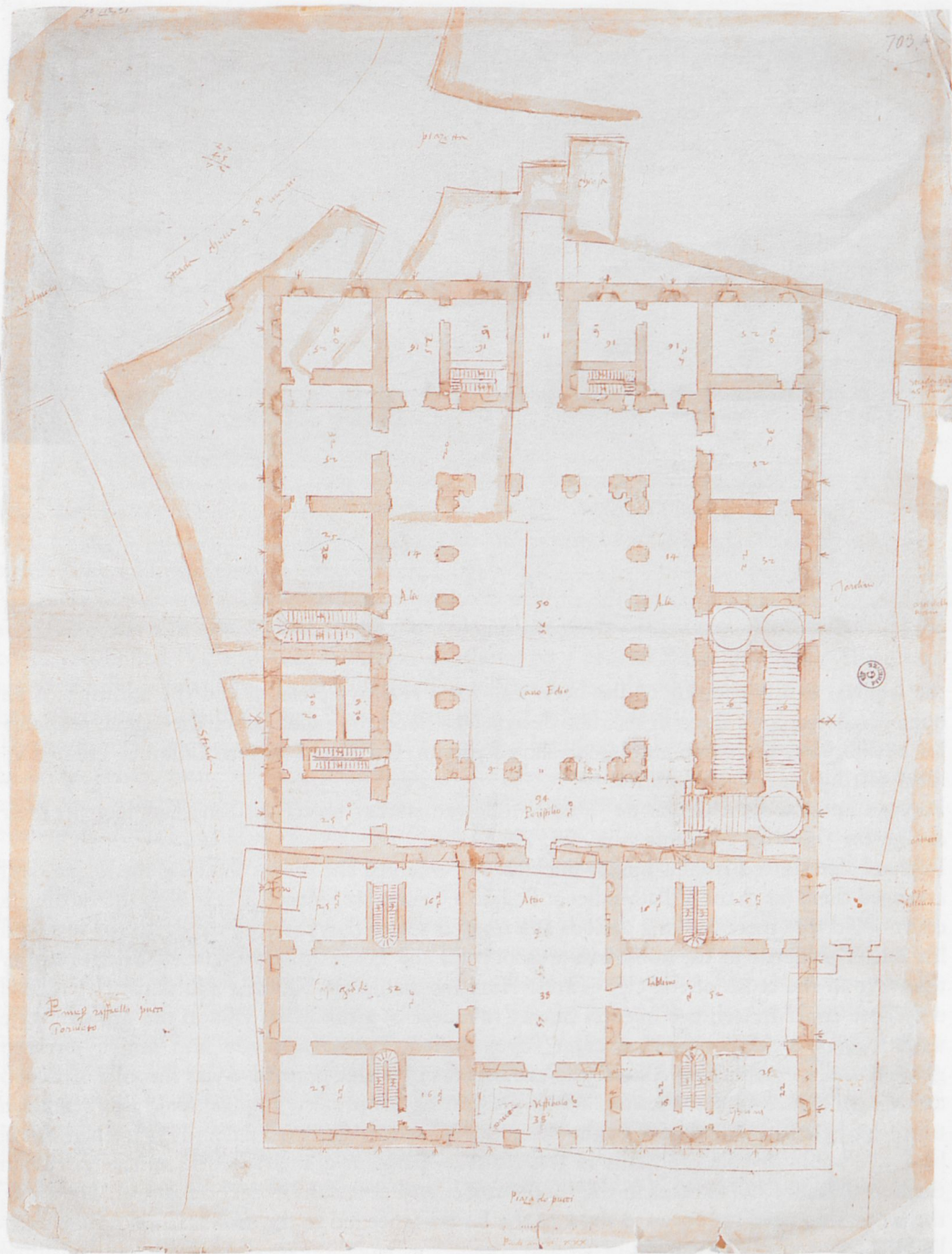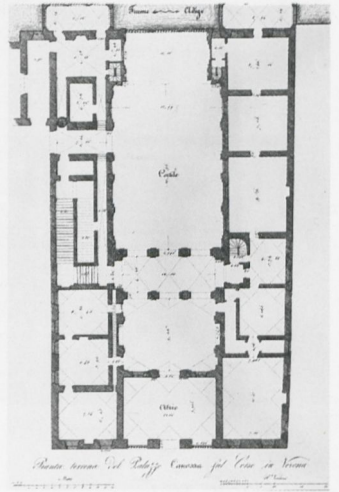
Romano, to refurbish his residences, he asked him to create, first and foremost, a setting *all'antica* for the court.[37] In spite of the space and the remarkable size of the Palazzo del Te (ca. 1525 and after), this one-story building had no theater, no *diaetae*, and no *peschiera*. By contrast, there were numerous halls for entertainment, and numerous apartments for guests. Where the principal aim of Bramante and Raphael had been to superseded ancient architecture on its own terms, in the Palazzo del Te the main intention was apparently to provide the Gonzaga with a setting for their amusement.

In other respects the palazzo was another example of the countless and rather unclassifiable variety of types built in that period. Was it a suburban palace, a suburban villa or a *delizia*? As was often the case, it appears to have been a mixture of many of these types without sparking any new trends.

When Giulio Romano (the only one of the most sought-after architects to have been born in Rome) left his native city for ever, this was the first sign of a future trend. After Leo X's death, Rome lost its magical attraction for artists. Even before the Sack of Rome in 1527 and the subsequent impoverishment of the city, some of the most brilliant architects— Baldassarre Peruzzi, Jacopo Sansovino, Michele Sanmicheli—were tempted away to Northern Italy. Proud city-states such as Venice and Bologna, ambitious princes like Federico Gonzaga in Mantua, and Giovanni Maria della Rovere in Urbino, or local patriots like Lodovico Canossa in Verona, made efforts to imitate the splendor of the architecture of Bramante's Roman circle.

37 A. Belluzzi and K. Forster, in *Giulio Romano* (exhibition catalog), Mantua 1989, pp. 317-335.
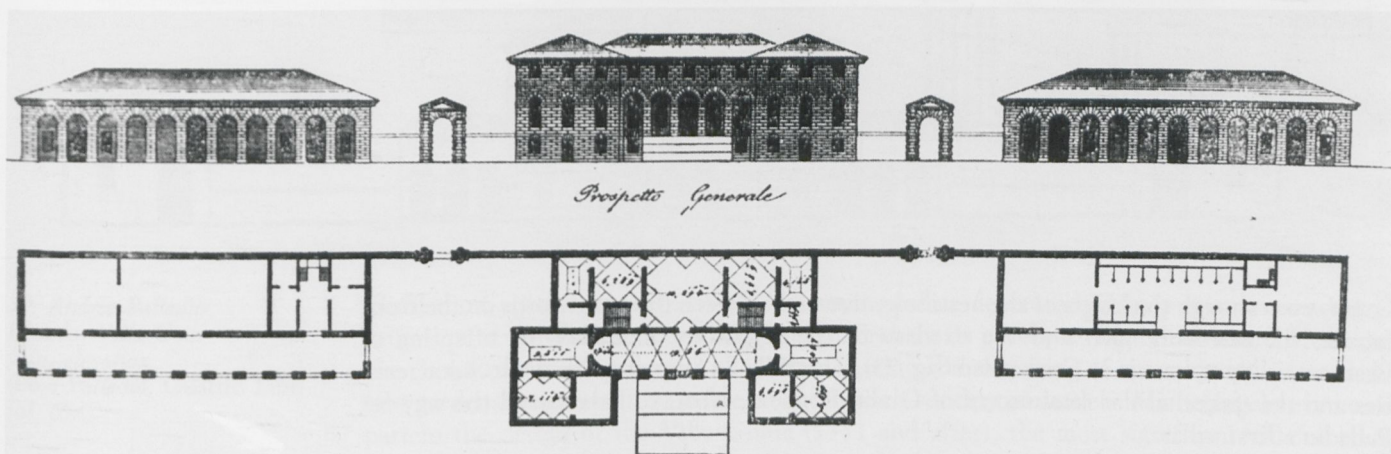
While Antonio da Sangallo the Younger began to dominate the scene in Rome—falling into an increasingly prosaic run in his reconstruction of Vitruvian types and orders—the epicenter of innovation in palace and villa design shifted further and further north. With their love of decoration, the northern Italians were particularly receptive to the Raphael's *ultima maniera* and to the splendid style of his circle.

Two years after Giulio Romano had found fertile ground in the Gonzaga court for his endless inventiveness, Sanmicheli found a perfect outlet for his boundless talent in nearby Verona. Like Giulio in the Palazzo del Te, Sanmicheli in the Palazzo Canossa for Bishop Lodovico Canossa (1526 and after) took the *casa antica* as his starting point, with its *vestibulum, cavaedium and peristylium* akin to those developed by Sangallo after the death of Raphael (figs. 26, 27).[38] Not only did he open up the entrance wing with a *vestibulum* like those of the Villa Medici at Poggio a Caiano, the Farnesina, the Palazzo del Te and, later, of the Palazzo Massimo, but he added an atrium leading off into the loggia of the *peristylium* and the *cavaedium* of the courtyard. And while the facade and courtyard reflected the dry language characteristic of mature Sangallo, for his Palazzo Bevilacqua (slightly later) Sanmicheli revived the variety of structural possibilities rediscovered by Bramante, Raphael and Giulio Romano, and by Falconetto in Padua.[39] Such new insights provided him with a key for imitating the ancient monuments of Verona—the Arena, the Porta dei Borsari, and the triumphal Gavi Arch.

In the meantime, in Venice Jacopo Sansovino drew on Sanmicheli's reconstruction of the *casa antica* and the magnificent wealth of his contemporary's classical language when in 1536-37 he designed the three magnificent buildings around St. Mark's Square, and for the Palazzo Corner (Ca' Grande, 1545) on the Canal Grande.[40]

Sansovino had to adapt, more than Giulio Romano in Mantua or Sanmicheli in Verona, to the special traditions and conditions of Venice. Land available for building was even more precious here, and the position, on the Canal Grande, a rare privilege. For more than three hundred years the central part of the palace opened with great arches on to a deep entrance

[38] P. Gazzola and M. Kahnemann, *Michele Sanmicheli*, Venice 1960, pp. 118-121; L. Puppi, *Michele Sanmicheli, architetto di Verona*, Padua 1971, p. 46ff.; C. L. Frommel, "Roma e l'opera giovanile di Sanmicheli. Atti del seminario internazionale di Storia dell'Architettura 'Michele Sanmicheli', Vicenza 1992," in *Annali di Architettura* 1994 (forthcoming).

[39] P. Gazzola and M. Kahnemann 1960: 121-124; L. Puppi 1971: 62ff.

[40] M. Tafuri, *Jacopo Sansovino e l'architettura del '500 a Venezia*, Padua 1969, p. 28ff.; D. Howard, *Jacopo Sansovino architecture and patronage in Renaissance Venice*, New Haven-London 1975, pp. 847, 132-146.

[41] B. Rupprecht, "Sanmichelis Villa Soranza," in *Festschrift Ulrich Middeldorf*, Berlin 1968, pp. 324-332.

28. Villa La Soranza plan

Prospetto Generale

atrium on the ground floor, and had consequently conserved the ancient *vestibulum* throughout the Middle Ages. For the Zecca (Mint) and the Palazzo Corner, Sansovino resumed Sangallo's and Sanmicheli's reconstructions of the Roman house, and he must have been well aware of this exceptional coincidence.

A similarly convincing synthesis between Venetian tradition and Roman High Renaissance can be found in Sansovino's treatment of elevations. While neither he nor Sanmicheli were capable of elaborating a homogeneous pattern for a whole building, Sansovino did at all events include a side bay in the articulation, giving at least the illusion of having superseded the flat facade. The *piano nobile* with its half-columns rose up over the rusticated podium story in a totally Bramantesque way. The Venetian character is conserved in the narrower sequence of arches illuminating the central hall. Sansovino succeeded therefore in shaping a model for post-medieval Venetian palaces in a more fertile and clearer way than his fifteenth-century predecessors.

Sansovino was less successful in his attempts to father a similar tradition in villa building. Like many Venetian villas, his Villa Garzoni at Pontecasale (begun ca. 1540) was flanked by agricultural *barchesse* or long arcaded barns. Its facade opens up with a *vestibulum* and develops along three wings, which in reality formed a *peristylium* with loggias giving on to an inner courtyard in the manner of Roman palaces.
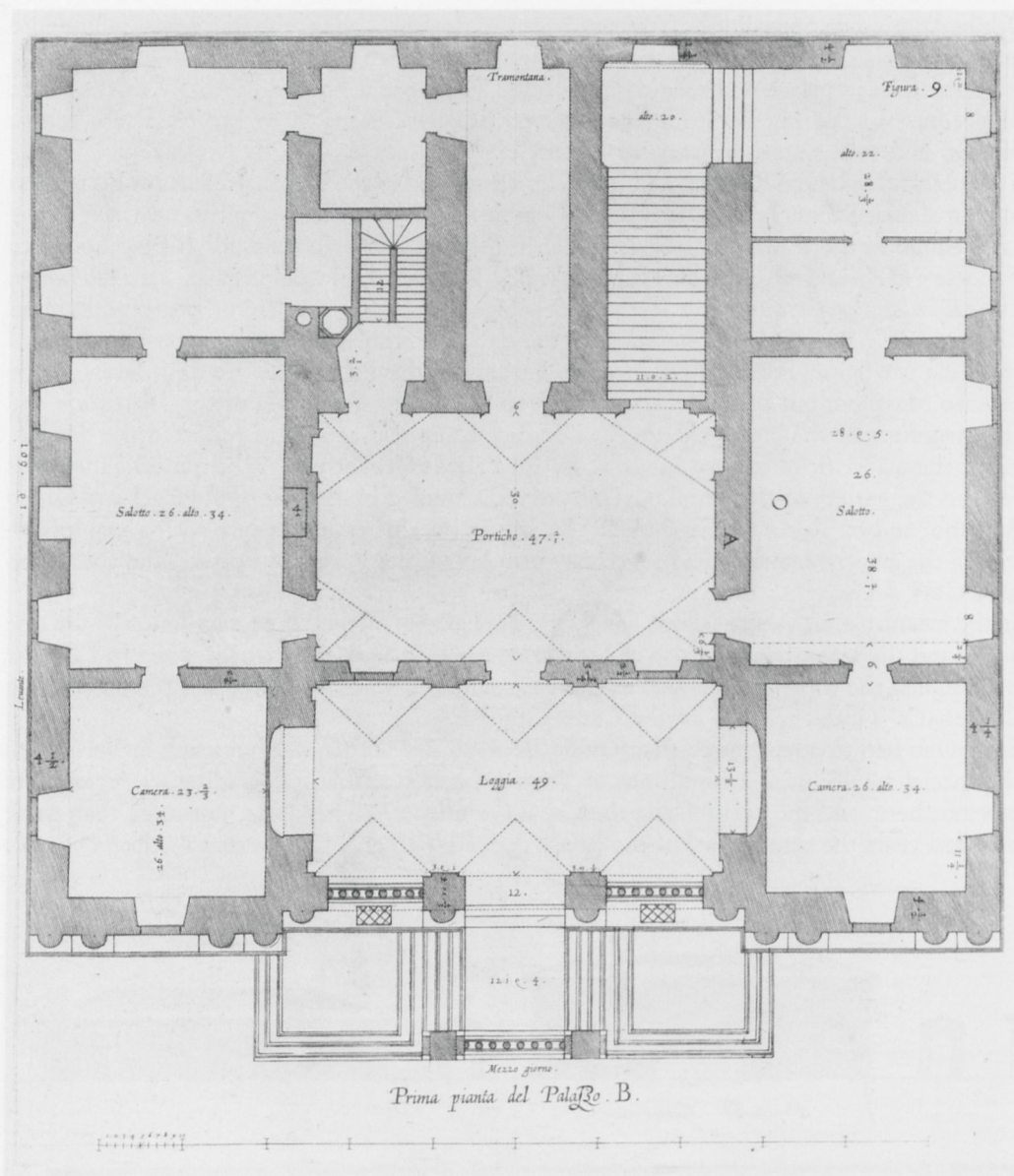
The Villa La Soranza by Sanmicheli (before 1540?) came even closer to the Roman model (fig. 28).[41] With its lateral *barchesse*, it was immediately recognizable as a Venetian country

Prima pianta del Palazzo . B.

house, even though the loggia of the vestibule, inserted between the avant-corps on the front facade, the one-story plan and the exedrae of the loggia are unmistakable offspring of Bramante's Nymphaeum at Genazzano (fig. 23). The Villa La Soranza with these characteristics and the (fake?) ashlar reminiscent of Giulio Romano, seems to have paved the way for Palladio's first villas.

Rome after the Death of Sangallo

After Sangallo's death in 1546, the developments in Roman architecture followed a new course. The first impetus came from Michelangelo and his projects for the Campidoglio (1539 and after), for the Palazzo Farnese (1546 and after) and for St. Peter's (1546–47 and after).[42] Michelangelo moved his own anti-dogmatic, joyous and sometimes even dissonant language toward Bramantesque prototypes and away from Sangallo's dry Vitruvianism— perhaps deliberately and certainly more than he had ever done in his Florentine works. In the Palazzo del Senatore he was inspired by the design for the Palazzo dei Tribunali, and in the two side palaces of the Campidoglio, by the arms of the transept in Bramante's last project for St. Peter's, whereas the third story of the Palazzo Farnese was inspired by the Ionic order of the Belvedere Court. Lastly, in the design of St. Peter's he returned essentially to Bramante's original 1506 project. Antique orders acquired new imposing significance in all these projects. He even adopted Bramante's giant order in the Campidoglio and in St. Peter's, which the aging Sangallo had abandoned in his projects for the exterior of St. Peter's and the Palazzo Farnese. Under Michelangelo's direction the columns of the Palazzo dei Conservatori and the drum of St. Peter's relived the physical intensity that had been slowly lost under Sangallo. Michelangelo's reflections on Bramante's High Renaissance, on the giant order, the columns and rich decoration could have contributed to convincing Cardinal

42 J. S. Ackerman, *The Architecture of Michelangelo*, London 1961, p. 54ff.; G. C. Argan and B. Contardi, *Michelangelo architetto*, Milan 1990, p. 211ff.; C. L. Frommel, "Roma e la formazione architettonica di Palladio," in A. Chastel and R. Cevese, eds., *Andrea Palladio: nuovi contributi. Atti del Settimo Seminario Internazionale di Storia dell'architettura*, Milan 1990, p. 154ff.
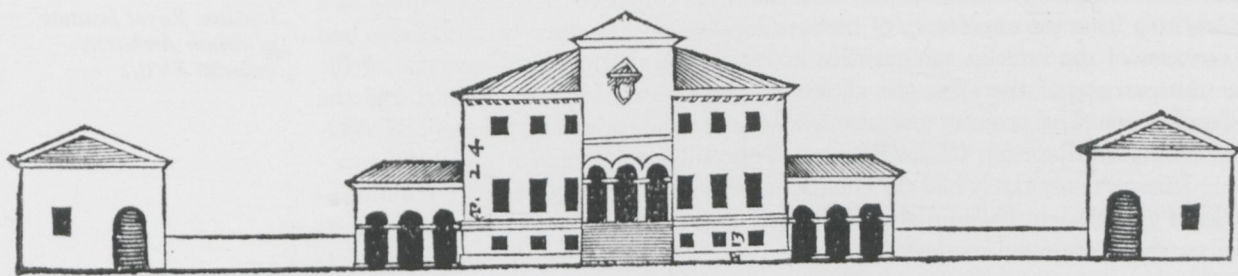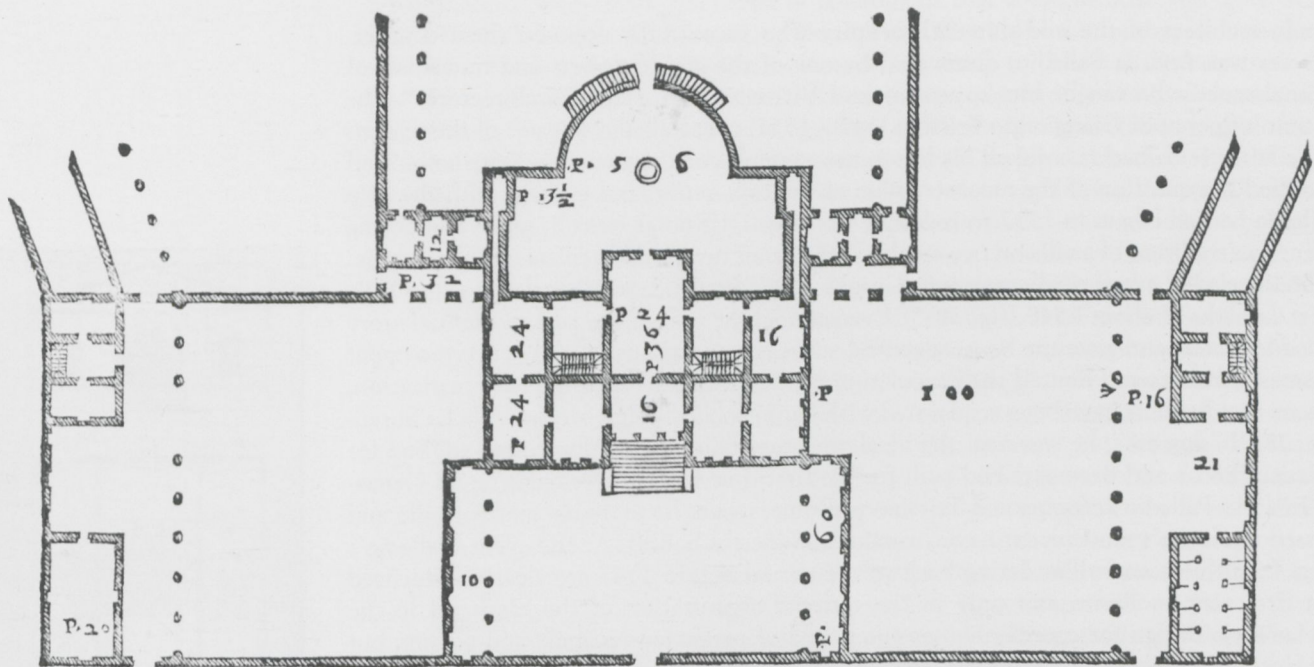
30. *Andrea Palladio*
Lonedo, Villa Godi
plan, elevation
(from Palladio, Quattro Libri...
fol. 65r.)

[43] C. L. Frommel 1973, vol. I, p. 139ff., 169ff., vol. II, pp. 62-79; L. Neppi, *Palazzo Spada*, Roma 1975.

[44] T. Falk, "Studien zur Topographie und Geschichte der Villa Giulia in Rom," in *Römisches Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 13 (1971) p. 101ff.; D. Coffin 1979: 150ff.

[45] R. De Maio, *Michelangelo e la Controriforma*, Bari 1978, p. 422ff.; C. L. Frommel, *Michelangelo e Tommaso de Cavalieri*, Amsterdam 1979, p. 91ff.

[46] D. Coffin 1979: 267ff., 311ff.

[47] E. Poleggi, "Genova e l'architettura di villa del secolo XVI," 1969, pp. 231-242; C. L. Frommel 1991: 335, see note 21.

Girolamo Capodiferro in 1548-49 to have his palace decorated with opulent stuccowork in imitation of the Palazzo Branconio and of Francis I's gallery at Fontainebleau.[43] However, the choice of a small gallery in the entrance wing and the siting of the main hall toward the rear gardens reveal the first influences of French residential models. Michelangelo even took part in the design of the Villa Giulia (1551 and after), the most significant villa of those years.[44] The theater-shaped courtyard, the nymphaeum, and the emphatic longitudinal section extending into the large gardens, enter into the great tradition of the Belvedere Court, and note least the Villa Madama, which Julius III visited many times while the project was under way. Nevertheless, after the Sack of Rome the attitude toward antiquity changed fundamentally. In the same way that Michelangelo himself, as from about 1540, under the influence of Vittoria Colonna, had moved away from neo-Platonism toward a Pauline Catholicism,[45] so the admiration for the ancients lost its existential premise. Consequently a master of the caliber of Pirro Ligorio remained even further aloof from the ancients than did the artists of Julius II and Leo X.[46] Closeness to antiquity became more of a learned attitude, a cultural medium, around which the spirit of absolutism and Counter-Reformation began to take hold. The progressive detachment from the Renaissance's real objectives was expressed in a quite unmistakable way in the less obvious field of ornament. This was also true of the first independent buildings designed by masters such as Alessi, Vignola, Vasari or Ammannati. Galeazzo Alessi, Sangallo's favorite pupil, had his first chance of building a monumental residence in 1548 with the Villa Cambiaso at Genoa (figs. 34, 35).[47] Significantly, the choice fell on a suburban villa, in which Alessi, with his preference for freestanding and symmetrically designed buildings, revealed himself heir to Bramante and Sangallo. He followed the prototypes of the mature Sangallo in the rational organization of the interior as well, employing both vestibule and atrium. The introduction, however, of the rich stuccowork decoration inside and out marked a breach with Sangallo's grammar, while the details and ornament derived from his own particular non-conformist approach.

The only architect of the mid-sixteenth century who successfully opposed these counter-tendencies was Andrea Palladio, discovered by one of the greatest poets and humanists of the Renaissance who taught him to understand Vitruvius and ancient architecture.[48] The persistent influence of Giangiorgio Trissino (1478-1551) over Palladio was one of the reasons why the latter remained faithful all his life to the examples of the ancients. Trissino himself had studied the question of the reconstruction of the *casa antica*, and perhaps with the help of Palladio he had begun in 1537 to redesign his Villa Trissino at Cricoli, while conserving the Venetian tradition of a villa on two stories with corner towers and central entrance loggia. Palladio developed avant-garde prototypes in one of his first independent designs, the Villa Godi at Lonedo of about 1540 (fig. 30).[49] Even though he placed the real residential story on a *podium villae* and gave the house a central staircase, and similarly, only gave the upper story small windows and limited the articulation of the facades to applying fake rustication, it appears that he must have been acquainted with Sanmicheli's design for the Villa La Soranza (fig. 28). In any case, he was near the ideal one-story building as Alberti had advised for an *all'antica* house and Bramante had built for the first time with his Nymphaeum at Genazzano. In 1541 Palladio accompanied Trissino to Rome, where he probably met Sangallo and witnessed the latter's most recent reconstructions of ancient houses. At any event, Palladio's projects for palaces and villas dating back to the period before 1547 are clearly influenced by his first visit to Rome, not only in the rational organization of the plan and in the Vitruvian-style design for country houses comprised of peristyle, vestibule and atrium, but also in the few elements comprising the articulation of the facades such as the serlian window, the rusticated surrounds borrowed from Giulio Romano's Roman house, the thermal windows,[50] and thermal–type roofs (fig. 31). Palladio and his learned mentor could have already perceived in country houses the original seed of all human constructions,[51] and from then on Palladio began to dedicate more attention to the villa, giving it a priority in his various activities that no other Renaissance architect had ever conceded. Taking antiquity as a model and learning from the experience of the last decades, within a few years Palladio had become a virtuoso of the interior arrangement as regards the harmonious sequence of the rooms, the transparency of the axes, the variety of shapes used for the vaulting, and the generous illumination. The projects emanate his deep knowledge of the palaces and villas designed by Bramante, Raphael, Giulio Romano, Peruzzi, Sangallo and Sanmicheli.

While his predecessors only rarely had the chance of expressing their creativity in the unconstrained field of villa design, Palladio always succeeded in convincing his Vicentine patrons of his projects: they combined modest dimensions, simplified articulation and economical materials, with the pretensions of a residence *all'antica*. These works signaled the maturity of villa design, a maturity that Bramante had achieved in 1501 with urban palaces.

In the design of palaces for insertion in the urban fabric, the ideal reconstruction of the *casa antica* had been forced to accept site compromises, inasmuch as the urban context required at least two main stories. However, from about 1542 Palladio came much closer to achieving the plan of a Vitruvian house in his first masterpiece—the Palazzo Thiene—than Sangallo had managed with the Palazzo Farnese, Giulio Romano with the Palazzo del Te, or Sanmicheli with the Palazzo Canossa (fig. 32).[52] The temple-front vestibule now projected beyond the plane of the facade—a theme repeated in his later villas—strongly characterizing the entire front of an otherwise completely symmetrical building.

It seems however that Palladio fully appreciated the beauty of ancient columns and the techniques for creating them in stuccoed brickwork only on his successive visits to Rome in the years 1545-47.[53] Only after 1547 did he abandon the dry abstraction of the mature Sangallo, which was perhaps due to his already being influenced by Michelangelo's projects. In any case, as from 1549, he borrowed from the final project for St. Peter's and from the Palazzo Iseppo da Porto the idea of the salient column surmounted by a statue, a characteristic of the triumphal arch theme that Michelangelo had recently proposed for the drum of St. Peter's. In his increasing efforts, building by building, to achieve not only archaic types of architecture, an ancient vocabulary and syntax as well as classicizing details, Palladio can be considered as the last pupil of Bramante, whom he described in his *Quattro Libri* as "the first to bring to light the good and beautiful architecture which had been hidden from antiquity to that day."[54] Palladio's adhesion to the beliefs of the high Renaissance is even more remarkable when considering how his first teachers, Giulio Romano, Sangallo, Sanmicheli and Sansovino, had deviated from Bramante's heritage during the 1540s. What Alberti had longed for and what Bramante and his pupils had achieved only in part, that is to say, the completely *all'antica* style development of a town and its surroundings, only Palladio actually succeeded in doing. It is probable, however, that the greater part of his patrons had given birth to and developed their own opinions already under different conditions. Renaissance
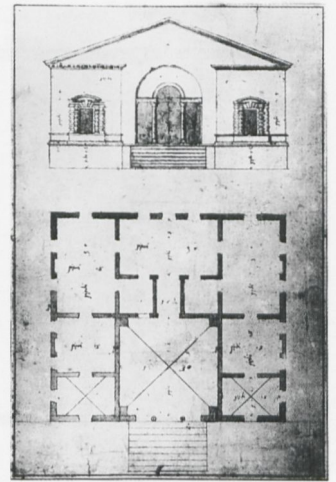
*31. Andrea Palladio
Vigardolo, Villa Valmarana
project
London, Royal Institute
of British Architects
Palladio XVII/2*

[48] R. Wittkower, *Principles of Architecture in the Age of Humanism*, London 1949, p. 51ff.; L. Puppi, "Un letterato in villa: Giangiorgio Trissino a Cricoli," in *Arte Veneta* 25 (1971) p. 72ff.; C. L. Frommel 1990: 146ff.

[49] op. cit.: 149ff.

[50] op. cit.: 149ff.

[51] A. Palladio, *I quattro libri dell'architettura*, Venice 1570, p. 6: "... essendo molto verisimile, che innanzi, l'huomo da per se habitasse, et dopo ... la compagnia de gli altri huomini naturalmente desiderasse ...".

[52] L. Magagnato, *Palazzo Thiene*, Vicenza 1966; L. Puppi, *Andrea Palladio*, Milan 1981-82, p. 251ff.; C. L. Frommel 1990: 154.

[53] op. cit.: 154ff.

[54] A. Palladio 1570: 64.
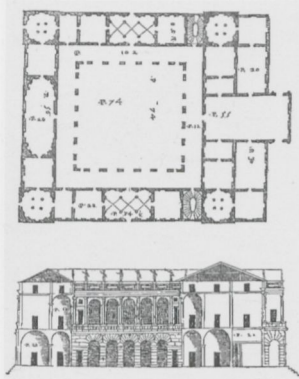
architecture was thus fulfilled exactly when the ground was slipping from under its feet. What trend lay behind the multitude of phenomena that could be observed more or less between 1420 and 1550? The first thing that springs to mind is that perhaps for the first time in western history, secular dwellings succeeded in rising to the level of ecclesiastical buildings. The evident hierarchical distance that separates places of worship such as S. Lorenzo and S. Maria Novella in Florence, the cathedral in Pienza, the benediction loggia of S. Marco in Rome, from the palaces built for the same patrons, slowly diminished. If, in Urbino the cathedral was furbished more modestly compared to the neighboring Palazzo Ducale, and if, in the Cancelleria in Rome, the church was hidden behind the facade of the palace, it was probably the patron who had elaborated this decision. But if, on the other hand, Palladio characterized his design for the Villa Rotonda, a *suburbanum* built in the hills outside Vicenza for a middle-ranking prelate, with symbols of dignity from the Pantheon in Rome, this certainly also reflected his own desires to arrive at the great prototypes wherever he had the chance to. He probably justified the fact he designed a villa like a temple by appealing to the common origins of all kinds of houses. It is clear, however, that the local climate was such that no one was scandalized by this evident effacement of the hierarchical distinctions. This change in priorities was valid both for patrons and for architects. At a time when nepotism was rampant, it was not surprising that patrons thought more about their worldly fame, posterity and their dynastic establishment in impressive town or country seats. Cardinal Raffaele Riario's motto was *Hoc opus sic perpetuum*, which revealed his intimate intentions that the Cancelleria should bring him and his descendants eternal fame. There is no evidence that he made similar efforts to save his soul. Similarly, the future Pope Paul II built the Palazzo Farnese from the outset for his two sons, some time before he undertook the construction of equally ponderous ecclesiastical buildings or charitable institutions.

Naturally the increasing importance attributed to residential buildings cannot be separated from the closer identification with the ancients which was easier to express in secular palaces, especially in villas, than in churches. Lastly, the unrivaled authority of ancient writers justified every attempt of the great patrons to imitate the ancients and to surround themselves with all kinds of luxuries and every comfort. It is significant however that the need to impress, the desire for luxury and comfort accelerated—just when the admiration for the ancients was beginning to fade and religion became once again an uncompromising commitment—and resulted in increasingly elaborate designs for entrances, carriage ways, staircases and furnishings, in the perfection of windows, bathrooms, toilets, fireplaces and household management.

Patrons enjoyed not only the social and civilizing improvements deriving from increasingly perfect residential building, they were also enthusiastic clients who took part impatiently, stimulating the design and construction right through to the end. Moreover, it appears that it was extraordinary patrons like Lorenzo de' Medici and Julius II, who spurred their architects on to achieve their finest accomplishments.

On the other hand, the architects were products of the same epoch and were roused by similar motives, even anticipating their patrons. Moreover, surprisingly often their ideas and dreams were music to the ears of the mighty. Just the extension of their creative powers to the field of villa and palace design must have been vitally important for them. If, during the first half of the Quattrocento their artistic potential had been limited to the design of mostly ecclesiastical buildings, in the sixteenth century nearly every palace and villa was the opportunity for competing with the most beautiful buildings of the ancients. As a result in particular of the methodological vigor, of the admiration for the ancients and the continual drive of a few Florentine masters such as Brunelleschi, Alberti, Michelozzo or Giuliano da Sangallo, residences gradually became real works of art, and not only as far as their construction and articulation was concerned, but also in the individual component parts: the vestibule, courtyard, staircase, halls and adjoining garden.

At first, all energies were poured into residential palaces, but more than fifty years went by before its symmetrical and structural design was within the grasp of everyone. Villa design was somewhat behind so that Raphael could still avoid symmetry and the order in certain areas of his 1518 project for the Villa Madama (fig. 23). Palladio was the first to take the ultimate step toward the formalization of the villa—in actual fact it came to the fore in an urban palace—and in projects like the Villa Rotonda, he amalgamated the Pantheon with the primeval ideal of the far-reaching centrally planned building. Similar ideas were at the root of Baroque castles and only after a return to a natural garden did the architects of the late eighteenth century begin again to slowly free themselves from the rigid principles that had dominated Italian residential architecture from Brunelleschi onward.

32. Andrea Palladio
Vicenza, Palazzo Thiene
plan, elevation
(from Palladio, p. 13)