

When the palazzo Bentivoglio in Bologna was systematically demolished in May 1507, its destruction obliterated much of the evidence, both visual and archival, of the exiled family's immense wealth and artistic patronage. Apart from the impressionistic sketches of Gaspare Nadi and Fileno dalle Tuatte in the margins of their respective manuscripts<sup>1</sup>, we must rely on just a few written accounts to get some idea of what the building looked like. Most recently, Francesca Bocchi, William Wallace and Gertrude Billings Licciardello have reconstructed many of its details by carefully analysing the rather fragmentary information in the diaries and chronicles of Giacomo Gigli, Gaspare Nadi, Fileno dalle Tuatte, Leandro Alberti and, of course, Cherubino Ghirardacci.<sup>2</sup>

To these accounts can now be added the testimony of one of the Bentivoglio's closest neighbours, Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti, long a Bentivoglio partisan and already well known to art historians for his detailed descriptions of the Estense villas of Belfiore and Belriguardo in the *De triumphis religionis*.<sup>3</sup> Arienti lived in Via de' Castagnoli, "a lato de retro del dicto palazo", next to a house owned by Giovanni Bentivoglio's son, Alessandro. This position was to prove very inconvenient in 1507, when the destruction of the palace and other Bentivoglio property, including the house of Alessandro, caused him "affanno et fatica assai" because of structural damage to his own house. After a desperate appeal to the papal legate and the Council of Forty, Arienti was given the ruined shell of Alessandro Bentivoglio's house to prevent further attacks on it by those determined to remove all evidence of Bentivoglio rule in Bologna.<sup>4</sup> Arienti had been treated rather coldly by the Bentivolesco regime since the 1490's and it would seem that he shed few tears when Giovanni II and his family fled Bologna in November 1506.<sup>5</sup>

Although cautiously reserved in his comments upon those responsible for the month-long demolition of the Bentivoglio palace in his account of the event to Isabella d'Este — "Non se resta ruinare il magno palazo Bentivoglio. Che tanto mirando edificio vadi in ruina sino a fondamenti ne le mente de li homini dispiace cum sit era [sic] uno ornamento de questa città ma cossi ha voluto et vole chi può etc."<sup>6</sup> — Arienti clearly regretted its demise and has left us a most vivid account of the palace at its moment of greatest triumph. In his vernacular description of the Bentivoglio/Estense wedding of 1487, the *Hymeneo Bentivoglio*, — the relevant section of which is published below<sup>7</sup> — Arienti describes not only the preparations for the wedding, the seven-hour banquet, the ceremonies, spectacles and other entertainments, but also the physical setting of the elaborate theatrical events, most of which took place within the Bentivoglio palace or in the piazza outside it.<sup>8</sup> Begun by Sante Bentivoglio in 1460, the palace project was inherited, three years later, by his successor, Giovanni Bentivoglio, who continued to oversee work on the building for the next two decades. The wedding of Giovanni's eldest son, Annibale, to Lucrezia d'Este, provided the perfect occasion for a concentrated burst of decorative activity both within and around the palace to prepare it for an occasion which was to proclaim, in no uncertain terms, the wealth and political success of the Bentivoglio. Held in the dead of winter, the festivities served to focus attention, above all, on the palace itself, the luxurious and privileged world of the invited guests which stood in stark contrast to that of the other audience who waited outside in frigid temperatures for a glimpse of what was going on within and for the distribution of the left-over food.

Arienti's description of the wedding falls loosely within the tradition of *ekphrasis*. However, he interprets this art of word painting in a very literal fashion, setting out to record the event accurately and systematically, with little rhetorical ornament, in a sense letting the details of Giovanni Bentivoglio's sophisticated grasp of the mechanics of princely *magnificenza* speak for themselves. The architectural and decorative descriptions in both the *De triumphis religionis*, written in the late 1490's after a two year stay in Ferrara, and the *Hymeneo Bentivoglio*, are characterised by an attention to detail and a sense of logical progression through the building which make them very useful accounts indeed and, as Werner Gundersheimer has pointed out, what remains of the Estense buildings described in the *De triumphis religionis*, confirms the accuracy of Arienti's reportage.<sup>9</sup>

In book V of the *De triumphis religionis*, Arienti opens his description of Belriguardo with a suggestive literary snapshot of the villa's many chimneys and crenellated walls rising from the plain. He then goes on carefully to specify the circumference of the walls, the length of the road before it and the impressive approach to the main entrance with its fish pond, bridge and poplars.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, in the unfortunately rather more limited tour of the Bentivoglio palace, Arienti begins and ends his description outside the building. We start in the piazza which Giovanni II had recently created in front of his palace as part of an enormous program of urban renewal in his own neighbourhood and along the route of the bridal procession.<sup>11</sup> When he bought and demolished the houses opposite his palace, Giovanni no doubt aimed to give his building an appropriate *prospettiva*. The piazza also provided a suggestive public space in front of what was gradually becoming the de facto centre of government.<sup>12</sup> It emerges from our document, however, that during the wedding festivities, the piazza offered no clear view of the palace. This may explain why, apart from two indirect references to crenellations — also clearly indicated in Fileno dalle Tuatte's sketches of the palace — and a later brief glimpse of the portico, Arienti does not describe the facade in any detail. He does, however, assure us of its great beauty, referring to the palace as "radiante come il

sole" and "de superbo aspecto" [c. 16r]. The piazza, which Arienti paced out and found to measure 117 x 30 *varghi (passi)*, was completely covered by a huge canopy attached to the *merli* of the palace on one side and to tall wooden poles on the other. With the addition of podiums and benches, it became a covered outdoor theatre for the staged battles and games which entertained the guests, some of whom preferred to interrupt their dancing only briefly to view the action in the piazza from the windows of the *sala grande*. Arienti's friend, Angelo Michele Selimbeni, in his own description of the Bentivoglio/Este wedding, dedicated to Lorenzo de' Medici and written *in ottava rima*, adds the information that this outdoor theatre was lined with wooden architectural sets, constructed "in pochi dì" and depicting "un castel di ligname" which hid the unharmonious jumble of buildings left around its perimeter after the creation of the piazza.<sup>13</sup>

From this covered space Arienti leads us into the palace itself, pausing briefly to describe the festive decorations which framed the main door. Painted wooden columns in the antique style held up a splendid arch of box and holly, the central feature of which was the Visconti serpent, which had been assumed by the Sforza, artfully crafted from winter greenery. Into this ephemeral structure were inserted the arms and heraldic devices of the Bentivoglio, Estensi, Gonzaga and, again, the Sforza, the most crucial of the alliances which sustained the regime. Within the building, the windows, doors and ribs of the vaulted ceiling were framed or, in the last case, articulated by gilded stonework, a description echoed by Gigli who later wrote that almost every room had "li uscì tarsiatì da ogni lato e la cornice e frisi de epsi et de le finestre et de li camini de petra schulpitti et dorati nobilmente".<sup>14</sup> A grand staircase, dominated by another great Sforza serpent made of fronds and branches, this one with a Guelph in its mouth, led to the *piano nobile* and the *sala grande* where the wedding banquet and associated entertainments took place. The doorway to this room proclaimed in more permanent fashion Giovanni II's princely ambitions. Its richly carved stone frame depicted Giovanni Bentivoglio's personal heraldic devices and those of his political allies from neighbouring states. These symbolic references become an ever more dominant element of the decorative scheme, especially in the banquet room itself. It is not always easy from Arienti's description, however, to distinguish between the permanent decorations of the *sala*, some of which seem to have been created especially for the wedding, and the more ephemeral elements which were borrowed and then returned to their original contexts or, in the case of the sculptured vegetation, simply thrown away. There was, it would seem, a complex interaction between the tapestries, *spalliere*, gold-starred drapery and heraldic devices around the lower levels of the walls and the ornamental friezes depicting vegetation and heads of men and lions "a l'antiqua" and the elaborate garlands of winter greenery and fruits interspersed with a painted cornice "pincta in cartha de antique foglie" above. As Margaret Haines has pointed out, in Florence during the second half of the Quattrocento, the ephemeral festival garlands and "fregi di verzura" often provided themes for permanent architectural and pictorial representations.<sup>15</sup> In the Bentivoglio palace, the decorative interplay between live vegetation and painted or sculpted botanical motifs was part of a tradition, interpreted spectacularly in contemporary Milan<sup>16</sup>, which set out to amaze the viewer by an ingenious interpretation of the relationship between nature and artifice. What seemed to be marble, or some other inanimate substance, was actually living while the apparently live plants and fruits were artful representations. In similar fashion, the *spiritelli* or *putti*, which unite the levels of botanical decoration in the *sala grande*, are painted so convincingly as to seem alive, "pareano vivi" [c. 13v], while the garlands they hold are made of real plants. Arienti describes the ceiling as "facto a bacini d'oro fino".<sup>17</sup> Gigli refers simply to a gilded ceiling.<sup>18</sup> It was dominated by two huge candelabra in the shape of lilies whose red flowers on six stems held the candles which formed part of the room's elaborate and sophisticated lighting scheme. The seemingly magical illumination of the room, as night fell during the long banquet, was one of the technological highlights of the occasion devised by the Florentine engineer, Francesco d'Angelo, or il Cecca as he was more commonly known, whose career Vasari records in his *Vite*.<sup>19</sup> On the right of the entrance to the *sala* was a musicians' balcony, from which Arienti viewed the banquet. His description of how this bird's-eye view allowed him to appreciate the effect of the flashes of gems, colour and movement suggests the imposing dimensions of the room. At the head of the room was the bridal platform with seven steps, covered in tapestries, leading to it. The traditional marital *credenza*, in this case an imposing triangular one, seems to have been to the left of the entrance in the corner. It displayed gold and silver vessels and was guarded by two fierce-looking figures — Selimbeni calls them giants<sup>20</sup> — sculpted in relief, armed and dressed in antique style. It is not clear whether these figures formed part of the *credenza* or were on the walls either side of it.

Beside the bridal platform, on the side nearest the windows, was a beautiful door with a stone architrave depicting oak leaves and acorns with the Bentivoglio heraldic device of a leopard enveloped in flames which proclaimed in gold lettering, "per amor tutto ben voglio soffrire".<sup>21</sup> This door led to the suite occupied during the wedding festivities by the bride's father and guest of honour, Ercole d'Este. Entry to the duke's rooms was presumably restricted to his courtiers and attendants, and to those privileged clients invited to pay their respects. It was perhaps to impress on the reader his right of access to Ercole's suite, and the many opportunities he had to observe the rooms in detail, that Arienti provides a particularly vivid report about this part of the palace and one that gives us a rare insight into the intricate relationship between furniture — described so often without context in Renaissance inventories — and the decorative elements of hangings, carpets and sumptuous coverings.<sup>22</sup> Arienti

describes what seems to be an apartment, a linear sequence of four rooms, the main bedchamber being the third and its associated *guardacamera* the fourth. Arienti makes a consistent distinction between the *anticamera*, in this case the second room, and the *guardacamera* or *camera servitrice* on the other side of the main bedchamber, which, although just as magnificently decorated as the other rooms and large enough to boast more than one door, was perhaps meant to be less accessible to visitors and more utilitarian in its purpose.<sup>23</sup>

The first room of Ercole's suite is described as small and hung with beautiful tapestries. It had a fireplace decorated with the Estense and Bentivoglio arms and the canopy above was painted blue with golden suns. The next room was painted with scenes of Alexander the Great's victory in India and contained a luxuriously covered bed. One then entered the main bedchamber through a magnificent doorway, highlighted in gold. Its two windows were decorated with heraldic devices and the arms of the Bentivoglio in coloured glass.<sup>24</sup> Arienti later tells us that it was from these windows that Ercole d'Este viewed the entertainments in the piazza. He points out carefully that the duke paid him the special compliment of calling him to his side at the window to admire the night-time spectacle of the *girandola*, a pyrotechnical marvel also devised by il Cecca, which had taken two months to build.<sup>25</sup> The wooden ceiling of this main bedchamber was notable for its fine carving and decorative painting. The floor was completely covered by carpets and the walls, appropriately enough, were hung with tapestries depicting the labours of Hercules. It may be that these tapestries were borrowed for Ercole d'Este's visit although it is unlikely that Giovanni II Bentivoglio requested that his guest lend him the Flemish set depicting this theme which the Ferrarese duke had inherited from Borso.<sup>26</sup> The bed had an elaborate gold silk covering trimmed with Alexandrian velvet, an abundance of richly upholstered cushions and a beautifully embroidered canopy of fine cloth. There was also a *lettuccio* with a gold brocade covering. According to John Kent Lydecker, the *lettuccio* was essentially a display piece. It was typically 6-8 feet long, 2-3 feet deep on a plinth or *predella*, usually with a vertical *spalliera* or backing piece.<sup>27</sup> It is presumably to this *spalliera* that Arienti is referring when he comments on the fine workmanship of the woodwork.

In the middle of the room there was a table covered by a fine and beautiful carpet and an unspecified number of richly upholstered chairs and benches. As Kent Lydecker points out, chairs were associated with prestige and great wealth.<sup>28</sup> Their presence in the room, and the number of pieces of furniture, suggests that this was a chamber of suitably princely proportions. Arienti certainly gives the impression that the room accommodated quite a crowd of courtiers and attendants. Beyond this main room was its *guardacamera*<sup>29</sup>, which Arienti describes as very ornate and beautiful, with richly embroidered fabrics draping the doorways.

It is conceivable that this series of rooms, occupied temporarily by Ercole d'Este, belonged to Giovanni II's second son, the apostolic protonotary, Antongaleazzo Bentivoglio. Just as Cosimo de' Medici's son, Piero, prepared his own very ornate apartment in the Medici palace for the reception, in April 1459, of the young Galeazzo Maria Sforza<sup>30</sup>, so perhaps the apartment of Antongaleazzo Bentivoglio, similarly famed for its splendour, accommodated the duke of Ferrara in January 1487. According to the chronicle of Gigli, Antongaleazzo's apartments within the Bentivoglio palace were to the north on both the ground floor and *piano nobile*, or as Leandro Alberti put it, "Era la camera et guarda camera di Anton Galeazzo prothonotario duplicata l'una sopra l'altra". They contained paintings by Francia and other "singularissimi pituri" and were clearly very sumptuous.<sup>31</sup> Ghirardacci's later description, based on Alberti and a number of other chronicle sources, provides a little more detail. The paintings by Francia depicted "famosse historie", "et di ogni intorno caminavano fregi di rilievo tutti dorati et dipinti, havendo le volte similmente historiate". He also adds that there were as many as eight rooms, some of them having windows on the northern boundary of the palace, Via de' Bagnaroli, others getting their light "dal portico".<sup>32</sup> It is not clear whether this refers to the portico of the facade or to the large inner courtyard "che porgeva chiarissimo lume a le chamare circonstante" to which Gigli refers.<sup>33</sup>

The four rooms described by Arienti were clearly on the *piano nobile*, north of the *sala grande*, with the main bedchamber, at least, like the banquet hall, overlooking the piazza.<sup>34</sup> There is a clear implication also, towards the end of the *Hymeneo Bentivoglio*, that Ercole viewed the last of the entertainments associated with the wedding, a football game in the piazza "fra gl' homini illustri", not from the main bedchamber from whose windows he had watched the *girandola*, but from the windows of a ground floor room. According to Arienti's description, as the game became more exciting, the crowd, despite the best efforts of the marshalls on horseback, surged in front of the palace, blocking the view from the windows. The duke then emerged from the building to compete for a view with the enthusiastic crowd.<sup>35</sup> If indeed Ercole and his retinue had both ground floor and first floor rooms at their disposal, this interpretation of Arienti's description is consistent with what we know of Antongaleazzo's rooms from Ghirardacci and the earlier chronicles.

Arienti may provide a tantalisingly brief, but indubitably valuable, hint about the "famosse historie" painted by Francia. His main concern was to convey an appropriate sense of the expense and sumptuousness associated with the rooms occupied by the Ferrarese duke; he therefore describes, above all, the gold, intarsia, tapestries and costly furniture which acknowledged Ercole's status while displaying Giovanni Bentivoglio's own claims to magnificence. Arienti does describe, however, the painted decorations of the anteroom to the main bedchamber: "Et intorno le pariete erano pincte vaghe figure in verde come Alexandro vinse Porro (*Porus, King of modern*

*Chenab*) in India" [c. 15r], recalling Vasari's account of Francia's work in the apartments of Antongaleazzo's father, Giovanni II which, we know from Arienti and others, were on the southern side of the Palazzo Bentivoglio, overlooking Via de' Castagnoli and opposite the site of the huge defensive tower he was to build several years later in the aftermath of the Malvezzi conspiracy. In the room above that which contained frescoes depicting *Judith and Holofernes*, Francia had completed, according to Vasari, a *Debate of Classical Philosophers*, "contrafatta di colore di bronzo (...) molto eccellentemente lavorata et espressovi il suo concetto".<sup>36</sup> Arienti's very detailed descriptions of the *sala grande* and Ercole's suite were made possible, in the first instance, by his seven hours of observation from the musicians' balcony during the wedding banquet and, in the second case, by his privileged access to Ercole's room as a valued Estense client. Although he became a familiar figure in the circle of Lucrezia d'Este in later years<sup>37</sup>, Arienti probably paid only a short formal visit to the bridal chamber; his description of it is brief and generalised. The nuptial chamber was situated to the east, that is, towards the rear of the palace. It was decorated with tapestries and silk hangings which featured nymphs and animals in a bucolic setting, following, it would seem, the precepts of Leon Battista Alberti who had recommended that nuptial bedrooms be decorated with "the most comely and beautiful faces" so that beautiful children would be born.<sup>38</sup> The marital bed had a most lovely purple covering and there were fine carpets and so many other ornaments that they were too numerous to mention. The ceiling was of wood, painted and gilded, as were the windows and fireplaces.

At this point, Arienti's description of the inside of the palace ends and he returns briefly to the piazza where he began, this time, however, giving us a glimpse of the facade which rose above a portico founded on fourteen great columns decorated with sculptures. Ghirardacci provides the same information, adding that the portico was "largho piedi 10 et longho piedi 20", here referring presumably to the space between the columns which he says were separated "con grande spazio da una colonna all'altra". Ghirardacci then describes the windows and other aspects of the facade.<sup>39</sup> Arienti proceeds directly to the two inner courtyards, the existence of which is alluded to in most accounts of the palace. The first is described as having a vaulted double loggia with fourteen stone columns carved and highlighted in gold, on the ground floor level, and 28 corresponding smaller columns above. In his later account Gigli refers to "lozie di sotto e di sopra".<sup>40</sup> Arienti's description of the double loggia makes all the more likely the suggestion by Wallace that the splendid courtyard of the Sanuti palace, completed by Giovanni Bentivoglio after the palace was ceded to him by Nicolosa Sanuti in 1484, was directly modelled on that within his own palace.<sup>41</sup> Certainly, the similarity between the Sanuti courtyard and Arienti's description of the Bentivoglio one is striking and allows us to envisage, with some confidence, this aspect of the palace. Arienti makes a further reference to this first courtyard at a later point in the text of the *Hymeneo Bentivoglio*. After the second course of the wedding banquet, the attendants serving the meal descended the great stairway outside the *sala grande* and, turning left, circled the courtyard under the vaulted loggia to be relieved of the left-over food by the kitchen staff: "et descendendo le scale se voltavano a sinistra mano cum li relevi de quella, girando intorno a le logie del gran cortile dove essi relevi erano tolti per li deputati" [c. 34r].

The second courtyard was decorated, according to Arienti, with Bentivoglio arms and heraldic devices carved in stone and contained sculptures of giant warlike figures. Gigli says explicitly that this second courtyard housed the arsenal<sup>42</sup>, near enough, perhaps, to the entrance which, in some accounts of the ideal Renaissance palace, was considered the best place for the armory<sup>43</sup>, but removed sufficiently from immediate view to preserve the fiction that the Bentivoglio ruled not by force of arms but by virtue of their ability to unite a *sanguinosa* city. In 1487, Arienti was still prepared to defend the regime in these terms and was probably reluctant to conjure up the vision of the Bentivoglio palace as bastion. This delicacy would become rather superfluous once Giovanni Bentivoglio built the huge defensive tower opposite, and connected to, his apartments in the palace in the early 1490's. It proclaimed quite unambiguously his determination to resist any challenge to his rule. In an emergency, the tower was designed to be totally self sufficient; according to Gigli, it had its own store of munitions and even a well.<sup>44</sup> Arienti concludes his tour of the palace with a rather tortuous flourish, claiming that if the building had existed when the seven wonders of the world were declared, it would have ranked second, if not first. He then offers a more effective image of parents urging their children to look at the palace and imprint its wonders on their memories. As we know, the seemingly invulnerable palace was soon to live on only in the minds of this generation. Fortunately, a few of these children committed their recollections to paper.<sup>45</sup>

Perhaps no other contemporary palace mirrored the changing fortunes of its owners so closely. Its demise in May 1507, just a few months after the Bentivoglio fled from Bologna, seemed to be prefigured as early as 1504. A series of earthquakes seriously damaged many parts of the palace, especially the section of the portico towards Via de' Castagnoli, and undermined the foundations of the tower so that it began to lean threateningly towards Giovanni Bentivoglio's apartments, seeming to symbolise papal determination to reclaim Bologna.<sup>46</sup> The years 1504 and 1505 were grim ones indeed, with a severe famine and outbreaks of plague making the series of earthquakes in January 1505 all the more unbearable. Such suffering surely indicated divine displeasure, or at least so Arienti thought. In a letter to Isabella d'Este reporting the first severe tremors, he describes his rude awakening from sleep. Convinced that the Last Judgement was imminent, he seems to imply that he was fearful of his proximity to the Bentivoglio palace which appeared to be the main target of divine retribution: "Io credetti fusse l' hora de

lo extremo iudicio et maxime existendo contiguo al palazo de messer Zoanne".<sup>47</sup> The palace's inhabitants were forced to leave their apartments, with only Giovanni Bentivoglio staying on to supervise the demolition of the dangerous top section of his tower.<sup>48</sup> This temporary evacuation was, however, a foretaste of their permanent exile less than two years later.

## NOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> *Gaspere Nadi, Diario bolognese*, ed. Corrado Ricci/Alberto Bacchi della Lega, in: Scelta di curiosità letterarie, 216, 1886, p. 50. *Fileno dalle Tuate, Historia di Bologna*, Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, ms. 1439, vol. II, c. 327v and vol. III, c. 597v.
- <sup>2</sup> *Francesca Bocchi*, Il patrimonio bentivolesco alla metà del Quattrocento, Bologna 1970; *William Wallace*, The Bentivoglio Palace lost and reconstructed, in: *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, X, 1979, pp. 97-114; *Gertrude Billings Licciardello*, Notes on the architectural patronage in Bologna of the Bentivoglio, Columbia University Ph. D. 1990. For the descriptions of *Gaspere Nadi* and *Fileno dalle Tuate* see note 1. *Leandro Alberti, Historie di Bologna divise in cinque deche* (1253-1543), Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, ms. 97, vol. IV, c. 163r and v; *Cherubino Ghirardacci, Della Historia di Bologna*, Part III, (1426-1509), ed. Albano Sorbelli, in: Muratori, RIS<sup>2</sup>, XXXIII, 1932. For *Giacomo Gigli's* description see *Ludovico Frati*, Due cronisti bolognesi plagiari, in: *Atti e Memorie della R. Deputazione di storia patria per le province di Romagna*, 3rd ser., XXIII, 1905, pp. 299-300.
- <sup>3</sup> *Werner L. Gundersheimer*, Art and life at the court of Ercole d'Este: The 'De triumphis religionis' of Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti, Geneva 1972.
- <sup>4</sup> See Arienti's letter to Isabella d'Este of 6 June 1507. Published by *Siegfried von Arx*, Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti und seine Porrettane, in: *Romanische Forschungen*, XXVI, 1909, pp. 812-813.
- <sup>5</sup> See *Carolyn James*, Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti. A literary career, Florence 1996, pp. 94-95.
- <sup>6</sup> Letter to Isabella d'Este of 6 June 1507. See n. 4.
- <sup>7</sup> *Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti, Hymeneo Bentivoglio*, Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, ms. 1294. In his study of the wedding of 1487 as a consummate theatrical exercise by Giovanni Bentivoglio for political ends, *Gabriele Cazzola* publishes the section of text, also included here, which describes the *sala grande* where the wedding banquet and associated entertainments took place. See 'Bentivoli machinatores'. Aspetti politici e momenti teatrali di una festa quattrocentesca bolognese, in: *Biblioteca teatrale*, XXIII/XXIV, 1979, pp. 14-38.
- <sup>8</sup> See *Cecilia Ady's* account of the wedding in *The Bentivoglio of Bologna*, London 1937, pp. 173-174 and *Ghirardacci* (n. 2), pp. 236-241. For the entertainments during the wedding see *Giovanni Zannoni*, Una rappresentazione allegorica a Bologna nel 1487, in: *Rendiconti della R. Accademia dei Lincei*, s. 4, VII, 1891, pp. 414-427.
- <sup>9</sup> *Gundersheimer* (n. 3), pp. 18-19. *Rupert Shepherd* has recently used Arienti's detailed descriptions of the fresco cycles at Belfiore and Belriguardo in chapter 5 of the *De triumphis religionis* to discuss Ercole d'Este's patronage of secular mural painting and its relationship to other aspects of his use of magnificence for political ends. See Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti, Ercole I d'Este and the decoration of the Italian Renaissance court, in: *Renaissance Studies*, IX, 1995, pp. 18-57.
- <sup>10</sup> *Gundersheimer* (n. 3), pp. 56-57.
- <sup>11</sup> On this theme see *Cazzola* (n. 7), pp. 18-30.
- <sup>12</sup> On the desire for a suitable viewing space in front of Renaissance palaces and the ambiguity of these piazzas as public/private spaces, see *Caroline Élam*, Piazza Strozzi. Two drawings by Baccio d'Agnolo and the problems of a private Renaissance square, in: *I Tatti Studies. Essays in the Renaissance*, I, 1985, pp. 105-135. See in particular pp. 111-113.
- <sup>13</sup> *Angeli Michaelis Selimbeni bononiensis Epithalamium pro nuptiali pompa magnifici D. Hannibalis nati illustrissimi principis D. Ioannis Bentivoli Laurentio Medices viro magnifico et in omni vitae colore tersissimo dicatum*, [Bologna 1487], c. 12r.

- <sup>14</sup> *Fрати* (n. 2), p. 300.
- <sup>15</sup> See *Margaret Haines*, Il principio di 'mirabilissime cose': I mosaici per la volta della capella di San Zanobi in Santa Maria del Fiore, in: *La difficile eredità. Architettura a Firenze dalla repubblica all'assedio*, ed. *Marco Dezzi Bardeschi*, Florence 1994, pp. 38-55. See in particular pp. 50-53.
- <sup>16</sup> On "Feste antique facte de fronde" see *Giuliana Ferrari*, Gli spettacoli all'epoca dei Visconti e degli Sforza: dalla festa cittadina alla festa celebrativa, in: *Anna Antoniazzi Villa et al.*, La Lombardia delle Signorie (Civiltà di Lombardia), Milan 1986, pp. 218-243, esp. pp. 229-236.
- <sup>17</sup> On the much admired ceiling of the *sala grande* in the Medici palace which may have been similar to the one mentioned here see *Wolfger A. Bulst*, Uso e trasformazione del palazzo mediceo fino ai Riccardi, in: *Il palazzo Medici Riccardi di Firenze*, ed. *Giovanni Cherubini/Giovanni Fanelli*, Florence 1990, pp. 98-129; esp. pp. 30, 113-115 and by the same author, Die sala grande des Palazzo Medici in Florenz, in: *Piero de' Medici "il Gottoso" (1416-1469). Kunst im Dienste der Mediceer*, ed. *Andreas Beyer/Bruce Boucher*, Berlin 1993, pp. 89-127. On the various types of ceilings see *Peter Thornton*, The Italian Renaissance interior 1400-1600, London 1991, pp. 53-59.
- <sup>18</sup> *Fрати* (n. 2), p. 299.
- <sup>19</sup> *Giorgio Vasari*, *Vita del Cecca ingegnere fiorentino*, in: *Vasari-Barocchi*, vol. III, pp. 449-456. See also *Cazzola* (n. 7), pp. 32-36. Angelo Michele Selimbeni also says that il Cecca was responsible for "quei duo candelieri che sono in sala". *Selimbeni* (n. 13), c. 50r.
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 13r.
- <sup>21</sup> This may be the door described by *Fileno dalle Tuatte* (n. 1), vol. III, c. 600, as "una porta di maxegna bellissima chera de la sala grande", which was salvaged by monks during the ransacking of the palace in 1507 and placed in the sacristy of the convent of the Santucce who no longer exists. Another door was taken to Santo Stefano where it may remain today. See *Stefano Marchesini*, Un portale erratico: dal palazzo Bentivoglio a Santo Stefano, in: *Arte a Bologna*, III, 1993, pp. 161-164.
- <sup>22</sup> On this theme see *John Kent Lydecker*, The domestic setting of the arts in Renaissance Florence, The Johns Hopkins University Ph. D. 1987, Ann Arbor 1990, and *Bulst*, 1990 (n. 17), esp. pp. 104-129. See also *Thomas Tuohy*, Herculean Ferrara. Ercole d'Este, 1471-1505, and the invention of a ducal capital, Cambridge 1996, pp. 197-233.
- <sup>23</sup> See also the description of Belriguardo in *Gundersheimer* (n. 3), pp. 56-67. *Thornton* acknowledges that Arienti uses both *guardacamera* and *anticamera* in his description of Belriguardo but suggests that the terms were interchangeable, *anticamera* being a latinising and hence more modern word. See *Thornton* (n. 17), pp. 295-312. *Tuohy* (n. 22), pp. 197-198, suggests that in grand princely palaces there was a distinction between the *anticamera*, which was a relatively public room, and the *guardacamera*, a service room which could be adapted to accommodate the staff of the person sleeping in the *camera*. For the theme of the development of the more 'private' apartment in contemporary palaces see *Jean Guillaume*, ed. *Architecture et vie sociale à la Renaissance*, Paris 1994.
- <sup>24</sup> On stained and coloured glass windows see *Thornton* (n. 17), p. 28 and *Tuohy* (n. 22), pp. 207-208.
- <sup>25</sup> *Arienti* (n. 7), c. 70r -v. For Arienti's description of the *girandola* see *Cazzola* (n. 7), pp. 33-34.
- <sup>26</sup> See *Nello Forti Grazzini*, L'arazzo ferrarese, Milan 1982, pp. 35, 112-113, 217 and, more recently, *Wolfger A. Bulst*, Das Olympische Turnier des Hercules mit den Amazonen. Flämische Tapissereien am Hofe der Este in Ferrara, in: *Italienische Frührenaissance und nordeuropäisches Spätmittelalter. Kunst der frühen Neuzeit im europäischen Zusammenhang*, ed. *Joachim Poeschke*, Munich 1993, pp. 203-234.
- <sup>27</sup> *Kent Lydecker* (n. 22), p. 56. See also *Maddalena Trionfi Honorati*, A proposito del 'lettuccio', in: *Antichità viva*, XX, 3, 1981, pp. 39-47 and *Anne B. Barriault*, Spalliera paintings of Renaissance Tuscany. Fables of poets for patrician homes. University Park, Pennsylvania 1994, pp. 28-30.
- <sup>28</sup> *Kent Lydecker* (n. 22), pp. 46-48.
- <sup>29</sup> See n. 23.
- <sup>30</sup> On Galeazzo Maria Sforza's stay in the Medici palace see *Rab Hatfield*, Some unknown descriptions of the Medici Palace in 1459, in: *Art Bull.*, LII, 1970, pp. 232-249, esp. pp. 235-236 and 247-248.
- <sup>31</sup> *Fрати* (n. 2), p. 300 and *Bocchi* (n. 2), p. 61.
- <sup>32</sup> *Ghirardacci* (n. 2), p. 371.
- <sup>33</sup> *Fрати* (n. 2), p. 299.
- <sup>34</sup> This arrangement of rooms seems generally similar to the position of the *sala grande* and the apartment on Via Larga of Piero and then Lorenzo in the Medici palace. See *Wolfger A. Bulst*, Die ursprüngliche innere Aufteilung des Palazzo Medici in Florenz, in: *Flor. Mitt.*, XIV, 1970, pp. 369-392 and *Bulst*, 1990 (n. 17), esp. pp. 104-119.
- <sup>35</sup> *Arienti* (n. 7), cc. 71v-72r.
- <sup>36</sup> *Vasari*, *Vita di Francesco Francia Bolognese*, in: *Vasari-Barocchi*, vol. III, p. 586.
- <sup>37</sup> See *James* (n. 5), pp. 86-88.

- <sup>38</sup> Leon Battista Alberti, *Ten books on Architecture*, Book 9, Ch. 4, ed. Joseph Rykwert, London 1965, pp. 192-193; *Alberti-Orlandi/Portoghesi*, pp. 804-805.
- <sup>39</sup> *Ghirardacci* (n. 2), p. 372.
- <sup>40</sup> *Fрати* (n. 2), p. 299.
- <sup>41</sup> *Wallace* (n. 2), pp. 109-110.
- <sup>42</sup> *Fрати* (n. 2), p. 299.
- <sup>43</sup> See Lois R. Granato, The location of the armory in the Italian Renaissance palace: A note on three literary sources, in: *Waffen- und Kostümkunde*, XXIV, 1982 pp. 152-153.
- <sup>44</sup> *Fрати* (n. 2), p. 300.
- <sup>45</sup> Leandro Alberti was eight when the Bentivoglio/Este wedding occurred and about 20 when the palazzo was destroyed. Fileno dalle Tuatte belonged to the same generation.
- <sup>46</sup> See *Ghirardacci* (n. 2), p. 333.
- <sup>47</sup> See Arienti's letter to Isabella d'Este of 4 January in *James* (n. 5), pp. 111-113.
- <sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

## APPENDIX

*Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti, Hymeneo Bentivoglio. Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, ms. 1294, cc. 11r-16r.*

[c. 11r] Il principe Bentivoglio comprò certe case che erano avanti il suo palazo e fin a terra le fece disfare, et fece li gran piaça che di longheça, per mi misurata, furono cento e decimo septimo varghi, et varghi trenta per latitudine et tuta la fece a sexto tabulare. E tutta la piaça fece de panni celestri coprire a la sumità degli alti merli del palazo et a molti ligni [c. 11v] fabricati come antenne de nave conficati in terra opositi al palazo fece ligare li canapi che sostenevano li panni, che era cosa magnificentissima ad vedere.

La porta del palazo era ornata da li lati cum certe colomne a l' antiqua de ligname pincte e cornixate de fronde de busso cum retorti argentati. Et in cima, sopra le colomne erano da ogni canto relevata la divisa del Duca primo de Milano, renovata per l'alta memoria del Duca Galeazo Maria et donata al nostro principe Bentivoglio, che era uno leone iacente nel fuoco, che in lo pede dritto teneva un troncho relevato, al quale erano dui sechioni da trarre aqua. Et in capo havea uno cimero a strana fogia negro e bianco divisato. E nel negro erano quatro volte scripto "Hic of".\* Poi sopra la porta, possando sopra le colomne, era uno bellissimo arco di fronde de busso et de brusco cum pome inserte, e di sopra uno superbo bione in fronde et da li lati erano dui festuni tondi in li quali erano l'arme del Duca di Ferrara et del Marchexe de Mantua et del principe Bentivoglio.

Intrando dentro al palazo da ogni banda di sopra e di sotto li ussi, le finestre et li deposamenti de le volte cornisati de pietra [c. 12r] viva cum varii et diversi intagli erano dorati de auro fino. Et nel montare la scala di sopra era uno grande bione in uno festone di fronde che in bocha uno Guelpho havea. La porta de la sala era cornisata de finissima pietra viva cum le divise del principe Bentivoglio da li lati sculpte poste ad auro fino: Il groppo de fede e amore, il radechio illustrato dal sole, lo agnello col monte adosso, la salamandria nel foco, el fascio de le verghe ligate in exemplo, che non è cosa più forte che la unione, et le verghe solte et speciate, significatrice la divisione essere frangibile, et il leopardo nel foco cum la palma in mano. Et di sopra erano l'arme del Re Ferdinando, del Duca de Milano, del Duca di Ferrara, del Duca de Urbino, del Principe de Arimino e degli altri gentili signori Manfredi, Pii, Mirandula et Rangoni congiuncti de affinità al principe Bentivoglio, che ad vedere alegrava gli occhi humani. Poi s'entrava in la sala nuptiale, la quale in questa forma era ornata, come cum la penna e nostro debile ingegno se potrà pingere et narrare la sua excellentia.

\* According to a document of 30 June 1469, Galeazzo Maria Sforza gave Giovanni Bentivoglio the right to use this motto, apparently a corruption of "Ich hof", and certain of his heraldic devices. See *Iacopo Gelli, Motti, divise, imprese di famiglie e di personaggi italiani*, Milan 1916, p. 328.

[c. 12v] Le pariete de la sala intorno intorno li dui terçj de sotto in suso erano ornate de bellissimoi 'raççi et spaliere et banchali a l'arme et divise Bentivoglie. Et da li lati dui terçj in suso erano panni celestri intorno cum stelle de auro, e di sopra uno retorto de fronde de bussio, de myrto, de brusco e di gynepero et de abeto, de pino e de cypresso cum pome rose e 'rance inserte. Et di sotto, a li panni, erano tri retorti de simile fronde cum certi legami argentati. E fra quisti retorti era una cornice pincta in cartha de antique foglie in colore rosso, azuro, zallo et bianco e di sotto un'altra cornice pincta in colore zallo revoltata a l'ultimo retorto de sotto in suso. Et di sopra, al primo retorto, erano capi de feroci leoni aurati et capi de homini rebustissimi aurati cum due ale lontani l'uno da l'altro cinque gubiti, che ne le boche tenevano festoni di hedera, de lauro et agrignolo, che grosso et suso andavano per li stellati panni. Fra quali festoni erano l'arme felice de li Italici principi, signori, parenti e amici del principe Bentivoglio in scudi pincti cum singulare prestantia. Di sopra, al capo de la sala, era l'arma de Innocentio octavo, pontifice [c. 13r] maximo cum quella de la chiesa sopra che dui angeli reverentemente la tenevano. Poi da li lati erano gradualmente l'arma del Re Ferdinando in megio le sue divise: la sedia col foco e la montagna et la [sic] che producea adamantini in punta; quella del Duca de Milano: nel megio de li iacenti leoni nel foco cum li sechioni; quella del Reverendissimo cardinale Ascanio Sforza: in megio de dui bisoni; quella del Duca di Ferrara: nel megio de duo draghi che haveano il capo de leopardo; quella de Alphonsio, Duca de Calabria, cum dui fasciculi de amoroze saette legate cum uno breve che dicea "Tales amores", che due saette da li lati per ciascuno fasciculo speçate erano dal lato del ferro; quella del Marchese di Mantua, la quale havea da li lati due cerve che per força guardavano nel sole secundo narrava il suo germanico breve; quella del Duca de Urbino che dui struççi la miravano; quella del signor de Arimino havea dui elephanti; quella del signor de Pesaro havea due arpie cum capi de homini barbuti et la propria arma Sphorcesca per la nostra illustre madonna Gynevera in megio de simile arpie. Quella del Conte Hieronimo che due palme per ciascuno lato [c. 13v] havea da uno breve ligate, che dicea "Ut iustus palma florebit"; quella del signore Galeotto de Faventia, quale da li lati dui superbi galli havea; quella del signore de Camerino havea dui delphini; quella del signor de Carpi havea dui leoni verdi rampanti; quella del Conte Nicolao Rangone da dui cigni era mirata. Eravi quella del Conte Antoniomaria de la Mirandula che havea due aquile bianche cum l'arma Bentivoglia. Quella del Magnifico Laurentio Medice era guardata da dui rampanti leoni et eravi la felice arma Bentivoglia cum dui leopardi a lato. Et queste arme per la grandezza de la sala erano duplicate. Et di sotto erano spirtelli che pareano vivi quali fermanti li piedi sopra l'ultimo retorto de le fronde tenevano cum le brace alte tondi de fronde de hedera in li quali erano anchora l'arme sopra dicte miste cum la Bentivoglia che empivano il campo di stellati panni di sotto in fra li festoni, che era cosa illustre ad vedere. Dal capo de la sala era fabricato per la spona uno tribunale, che per septi gradi se ascendea, coperto de tapeti. Et sopra li era una mensa parata de uno finissimo tapeto cypriano. Dal canto di sotto de la sala era [c. 14r] una grande credentia in trianghulo parata di panno verde, charicha de bellissimoi richi, varii et diversi vasi de argento et de auro. Di sotto da li lati per guardia erano di relevo figurati dui feroci homini armati a l'antiqua, d'arme aurate e argentate cum certi manti di seta cum raji de auro sopra l'arme traversati da lato sinistro. Et uno tenea in una mano uno scudo in lo quale era l'arma del Duca de Milano e l'arma Bentivoglia et ne l'altra una spada turchesca. Et l'altro teneva in una mano l'arma del Duca di Ferrara e Bentivoglia et in l'altra uno troncho. Al cielo de la sala, che era tutto facto a bacini d'auro fino, erano dui candelieri quali erano dui bellissimoi vasi in li quali erano nati fiori che appellamo gigli, tuti argentati cum minute foglie che andavano quasi al cielo de la sala. Et ciascuno de quisti gigli haveano producti sei rami retorti de sotto in suso cum molta legiadria et haveano li fiori rossi aperti germinanti ciascuno uno dupiero de candida cera per luminare la sala quando le tenebre havessero caciata la luce. Era dal canto di sotto de la sala, entrando dentro a dextra mano, per li sonaturi constructo [c. 14v] uno pogiolo che havea colonne de pietra viva coperte de burnito [sic] argento e sopra il possaturo cornisato de auro et de argento erano quatro leopardi cum proprie palme ne le artiglie e scudi pincti a l'arme Bentivoglie et al ducal diamante cum el fiore de margarita. Quivi certo era tanto felice ornamento che ignoro se la sala laqueata d'auro de Cleopatra et de ornamenti de zoglie e glorioso pavimento come è tanto scripto fu de tanto splendore ornata quando recevette Cesere in Egypto. Finito che fu subito tanto ornamento avanti lo advento de la sposa de octo giorni, se aperse la porta de la sala per leticia e gloria al tuono de una grande spingarda e suono de tube e de campane del templo de Sancto Iacopo ivi propinquo, onde tutto il populo per meraviglia ad vedere concorse indicando mai havere veduto più glorioso ornamento, per la quale cosa ogni homo Dio pregava che conservasse sereno il tempo perché la festa fusse ben beata.

A lato il tribunale, verso le finestre de la splendida sala, era uno usso adorno de gentil fronde di quercu cum li suoi fructi relegate in petra viva cum l'arma Bentivoglia di sopra e cimie [c. 15r] ro del leopardo che sedeva nel foco cum uno breve che dicea "Per amor tutto ben voglio soffrire" posto ad finissimo auro, per il quale usso s'entrava in una piccola sala tutta de bellissimoi 'raççi ornata. Et ne la campana che receivea il fumo del foco era rilevata l'arma ducale cum le sechie sotto uno padiglione pincto de finissimo azuro cum soli d'oro. Di poi s'entrava in una anticamera, la quale havea un lecto parato di crimisino e intorno coltrinato di seda. Et intorno le pariete erano pincte vaghe figure in verde come Alexandro vinse Porro in India. Di poi se passava per magnifico usso lavorato ad auro in la camera dove havea disporre il Duca Hercule di Ferrara, la quale camera havea il pavimento tutto de tapeti coperto. Et il cielo de belli ligni lavorati e pincti havea. Intorno erano posti finissimi 'raççi cum optimo

ordine in li quali cum naturale figure se dimostrava come Hercule poneva le colonne nel oceano mare presso a lo Atlantico. Et come Diomedes immanissimo dava mangiare gl' homini a li suoi cavalli. Et come per questo Hercule lo ocise. Eravi poi come epso Hercule ardea per la vestimenta li mandò Dianira per obliar[c. 15v]lo de l'amore havea posto a Iole, figlia del Re Eurito. Era lì poi uno lecto de grandissima pompa che havea una coperta de richissimo panno d'oro in crimisina seda, la quale coperta intorno havea una lista larga duo palmi de veluto alexandrino, la quale lista molta gratia donava a la coperta d'oro. E dal capo et da piedi erano dui cusini di purpureo raso cum artificiosi frexi de auro intorno. Di sopra havea uno padiglione cum gentil pomo dorato de candidissima et finissima tela egregiamente lavorato. Lì era anchora uno letucio de ligname fabricato cum optimo magistero che havea una coperta de brochato d'oro alexandrino. Era lì sedia e scanni de drappi crimixini e verdi cuperti. Nel meglio de la camera era una tabula parata de finissimo e vago tapeto. Questa camera era luminata da due finestre di vetro de belli et vaghi colori cum divise e arme Bentivoglie et altri lavori. La camera a questa servitrice, che guardacamera apellemo, era ornatissima et bella cum li ussi parati di crimisino cum l'arme Bentivoglie rechamati. L'altre parte del palazzo e camere erano non poco ornate de 'raççi et cum coperte de varii colori di seta e [c. 16r] specialmente la parte dove havea la spona a disposare. La camera sua, posta a levante, era cinta intorno de vaghi 'raççi, tessuti di seta, figure de belle nymphe e animali terrestri e volatici in gentile verdure. El lecto matrimoniale era bellissimo, vago e iocundo, coperto de purpureo raso et il pavimento de tapeti. Et il cielo non alto cum belli lavori de lignami e pincto ad auro e colori. Similmente erano le campane d'aprehendere il fumo et le finestre per havere la luce ornate d'auro e cum molti altri richi ornamenti che era sì grande felicità ad vedere che impossibile a mi fia ogni cosa comodatamente narrare.

Ma dirò bene che questo magnificentissimo palazzo, radiante come il sole, de superbo aspecto, fondato sopra XIII grande colonne cum belle sculpture et amplo cortile cum voltate logie sopra altre XIII colonne e sopra altre logie firmate sopra XXVIII columnelle di pietra viva cum gentili intagli et de auro fin sopra epsi. Et similmente il secundo cortile de arme e divise Bentivoglie sculpte in pietra viva et pincte ad colori et auro et grande figure de bellicosi giganti cum li narrati ornamenti, et cum quilli che restamo a dire se al tempo fusse stato de Artamisia, moglie del charo marito Mausolo, re de Caria, la quale li extrusse uno sepulcro de tanta excellentia che fu numerato in fra le septe cose mirabile del mondo. Credo sarebbe stato questo palazo posto per la secunda se per la prima non fusse veramente. Et che ciò sia vero non restava piccoli et grandi a tutte l'hore del giorno non l'andasse per maraviglia ad vedere. Et alcuni patri e matre vidi percotere le facie di piccoli figliuoli perché de tanta cosa havesseno memoria.