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A FUNCTIONAL INTERPRETATION OF VILLA MADAMA

Within the last fifteen years our knowledge of Villa Madama has improved quite unexpectedly¹. The text of a lost letter describing the villa, of which Castiglione had a copy and Raphael's cousin Don Girolamo another, has been published by Philip Foster². The interpretation of this remarkable document has scarcely begun; its Plinian form does not disguise Raphael's reading of other sources, and perhaps the evidence it provides for his cultural expansion in Rome may prove in the long run as important as what it tells us about the villa. The letter, however, is unsigned and undated in the form in which we now have it. It may be given a *terminus ante quem*, and its attribution (which must also be that of the villa) may be confirmed, by reference to an unattractive poem by Francesco Sperulo, *Villa Giulia Medica*, the manuscript of which is dated 1 March 1519³; two lines, at least, deserve quotation:

Haec tua sit sedes Leo rex hominumque paterque:
Erigat hic sensus artem ingeniumque Raphael.

The ambiguity of patronage indicated here – was it Cardinal Giulio's commission or in fact Pope Leo's? – is a problem to which we must return; for the moment two

1 A preliminary version of this study was presented at the Kunsthistorikertag in Munich in September 1976. The argument in its present form was presented in public lectures at Princeton and the Courtauld Institute early in 1978. David Coffin had been working independently with some of the same materials and ideas which are now published in his *The Villa in the Life of Renaissance Rome*, Princeton, 1979; I have taken the opportunity to shorten my text where I can now refer to his [1979].

2 Castiglione's letter of 13 August 1522 is conveniently reprinted in V. GOLZIO, *Raffaello nei documenti* ..., Vatican City, 1936, 147; it was addressed to Francesco Maria della Rovere who was perhaps interested in Raphael's description because he was then actively thinking of the extension of Villa Imperiale at Pesaro (G. VACCAI, in *Rassegna marchigiana*, vi, 1927–1928, 59); I would suggest that Castiglione's copy was in his Mantuan house because it had been intended that he should polish it as he did Raphael's letter to Leo X. The copy in the Archivio di Stato, Florence, is published by P. FOSTER, "Raphael on the Villa Madama: the Text of a Lost Letter", *RömJbKg*, xi, 1967–1968, 308–312.

3 Bibl. Ap. Vat., MS. Vat. Lat. 5812 (Cardinal Giulio de' Medici's dedication-copy); in the preface Sperulo remarks "converterem ad visendam villam, quae ad primum fere lapidem mira tibi impensa extruitur". I came across this manuscript, while looking for something else, in 1969; other parts of it have been published by C. L. FROMMEL (with a kind acknowledgement) in his important article "Die architektonische Planung der Villa Madama", *RömJbKg*, XV, 1975, 62, 79; we agree, essentially, upon its evidential value.

things matter above all: Sperulo's unambiguous attribution of the villa to Raphael, and the fact that the description which follows is quite clearly based upon the letter. Further new material has been published by Christoph Frommel, particularly two unknown drawings and documents which make it clear that building had begun by the end of 1518⁴.

Since we are now so much better informed factually it seems an appropriate time to stand back and ask more comprehensive and more awkward questions. How did Villa Madama come about, and why was it built on this particular site and in such exceptional form? As we move into another phase of the study of the villa have we oversimplified the problems, hitherto, in the usual way? And have we isolated these problems within too narrow a concept of "art-history"? I hope it may prove fruitful and opportune to reconsider Villa Madama in relation to politics, diplomacy, ceremonial, food, roads, the enjoyment of scenery, the scandalous muddle in existing hospitable arrangements and (above all) in relation to people, their needs and their offices. These are not all entirely new questions; by pursuing them further we shall not be led to propose a function for the villa which has not been proposed before, but rather a shift of emphasis and a more important rôle for certain functions in its design. And in the process we may certainly see that the history of the building is significantly more complicated than current theories allow.

In reality, of course, Villa Madama is likely to have been intended to fulfill a plurality of functions; furthermore it must be an oversimplification (justifiable only for analytical purposes) to isolate them, for they were surely interwoven. The function which is the principal subject of this paper may be the most important one, but if so it is not much more important than the one normally remembered: that is, to serve as Medicean *palazzo* – its title,

4 C. L. FROMMEL, "Raffaello e il teatro alla Corte di Leone X", *BollPalladio*, xvi, 1974, 173–187, and op. cit. in n.3. The document of 1517, published by FROMMEL in "Bramantes 'Nymphaeum' in Genazzano", *RömJbKg*, xii, 1969, 155, which he interprets as Pope Leo's acquisition of the site (as does R. LEFEVRE, *Villa Madama*, Rome, 1973, 27–28), will be discussed below. It is remarkable, in retrospect, that only twenty years ago G. GIOVANNONI (in *Antonio da Sangallo il giovane*, Rome, 1959, 335) could write: "Nei riguardi ... della generale concezione planimetrica, è al Sangallo ed ai suoi disegni che dobbiamo far capo, e non a Raffaello".

sometimes, in documents⁵ – or *villa suburbana*. That function incontestably conditions many aspects of its design. Its plan, for example, is in some respects related to and no doubt inspired by earlier Sangallesque projects for grandiose Medicean palaces within the city-walls of Florence and Rome⁶. But we must be clear about the functions that could not be fulfilled by Villa Madama: it has no agricultural or semi-industrial possibilities, like all but one of the Medicean villas around Florence, and it is not particularly well placed for hunting, Leo's favourite physical relaxation (and for hunting, in any case, the papal villa at La Magliana provided much better, and was indeed extended and embellished by Leo). Furthermore the Pope when still a cardinal had owned four or five habitable *vigne* on sites within or without the walls⁷. Unlike these the site of Villa Madama is exceptionally endowed with views and communications, and it seems natural to begin our enquiry with an examination of these.

In documents describing the villa's construction the site is defined as "sotto la croce di Monte Mario"⁸, which is a resonant phrase to the student of papal diplomatic and ceremonial sources, in which it recurs with an insistence which suggests a place of symbolic identity. La Croce is an oratory erected on Monte Mario in 1350, rebuilt in 1470⁹; it marks the spot on the pilgrim-route climbing

5 See, for example, the document of April 1523 quoted below (p. 326).

6 G. MARCHINI, *Giuliano da Sangallo*, Florence, 1942, 101, and C. ELAM, "Lorenzo de' Medici and the Urban Development of Renaissance Florence", *Art History*, i, 1978, 43.

7 (i) Near Sant'Agata (*vinea nova*): F. ALBERTINI, *Opusculum de mirabilibus Romae* (3 June 1509), Rome, 1510, fol. Yiii, v. (ii) in or near the Campo de' Fiori: Raffaello Brandolini's letter of 13 September 1500, in *RömQs*, ii, 1888, p. 191. (iii) near S. Maria del Popolo, inside the gate: PARIS DE GRASSIS, *Diarium*, 1 October 1511, "*abijt ad hortum suum ibi citra monasterium situm*" (B.L., MS. Add. 8442, fol. 132r.). (iv) a *Vigna del Popolo*, outside the walls, which Lodovico Canossa wanted to borrow in 1511–1512: C. CLOUGH, in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, xviii, Rome, 1975, 4. (v) an unplaced *suburbana* (possibly the same) mentioned by P. ALCYONIUS, *Medices legatus de exilio*, Venice, 1522, fol. 11, v.

8 For example: Castiglione's well-known letter to Isabella, 16 June 1519: "Fassi una vigna anchor del reverendissimo Medici che sarà cosa excellentissima. Nostro Signore vi va spesso; e questo è sotto la Croce di Monte Mario"; and the payments (1528–1529) to Bartolomeo Gualfeducci da Pistoia *soprapstante alla vigna sotto la + a monte marj ... per fare lavorare a decta vigna ...*, in Archivio di Stato, Florence, *Conventi soppressi* 102, No. 329, fol. 6.

9 F. GROSSI-GONDI, "Le due chiese della Croce a Monte Mario", *Civiltà Cattolica* tom. 250, 1912, 197, and M. DYKMANS, S. J., "Du Monte Mario à l'escalier de Saint-Pierre de Rome", *MelArchHist*, lxxx, 1968, 588. "Vinea ... in loco qui dicitur la Croce di Monte Mare" are mentioned in the *Catasto del Salvatore*, 1430: T. ASHBY, *La Campagna di Roma al tempo di Paolo III*, Rome, 1914, 64.

over the hill where Rome is suddenly revealed. And the approach-roads to Rome are, I suspect, the key to understanding the choice of the site. There were two principal arteries from the North, whence, naturally, came most of the Rome-bound traffic: from the North-West, Via Cassia (Via Clodia) by way of Lucca, Siena and Viterbo, and from the North-East, Via Flaminia through Fano, Foligno and Narni¹⁰. These ancient roads met just beyond the bend in the Tiber outside Porta del Popolo: just to the North of Ponte Molle, in fact, in the plain below Monte Mario. Certainly it would appeal to such a literate pope as Leo X that his villa, like Ovid's, should overlook the junction of Via Cassia and Via Flaminia; but such associations could not have determined the choice of site, for Martial makes the same point in his beautiful epigram on his villa, which was set on the Janiculum¹¹.

The visitor arriving by either of these roads had, after their junction, a choice of routes into the city; if he went straight ahead he would pass through Porta del Popolo and then by one of the branches of the "trident", Leo's chief contribution to the urban structure of Rome, to the Quirinal, the Capitol or the banking centre¹²; alternatively he could fork right before the bridge and take a straight road across the *Prati*, initially tangential to the bend in the river and arriving finally at the main gate to the Vatican, Porta Viridaria (Porta Aurea, Porta S. Pietro, or Porta Porticus), which gave directly onto the Piazza before the Basilica and the ceremonial entrance to the Palace¹³.

10 The relation between Via Cassia, Via Clodia (also Claudia) and Via Flaminia is clarified by G. TOMASETTI, *La Campagna Romana III: Via Cassia e Clodia*, Rome, 1913, 2, and T. ASHBY and R. A. L. FELL, "The Via Flaminia", *Journal of Roman Studies*, xi, 1921, 134–138.

11 Ovid's text (*De Ponto* I, ep. viii: "spectat Flaminiae Claudia iuncta viae") is quoted by Tomasetti, *op. cit.* in n. 10, 2; Martial's (*Epigrams* IV.64) is quoted rather misleadingly on a modern stone seat by Villa Mellini on Monte Mario, and more appropriately (from our point of view more relevantly) in an inscription in the loggia of Villa Lante on the Janiculum, built for Leo's Datary Baldassare Turini. Villas around Ponte Molle are recorded by CICERO, *In Catalinam* III. ii. 5.

12 This road-system was under construction in 1518: L. MADELIN, "Le journal d'un habitant français de Rome au xvi^e siècle", *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire*, xxii, 1902, p. 259.

13 For the approach to Porta Viridaria see Tomasetti, *op. cit.* in n. 10, 4. In the Renaissance there was, halfway across the *Prati*, a left fork towards a gate near Castel S. Angelo, the Porta di Castello (or Porta Collina); these alternatives are clearly seen in a detail from the plan in Tolomeo's *Cosmography* reproduced in E. STEINMANN, *Dokumente zur Sixtinischen Kapelle*, Munich, 1901, i, 119. By 1514 there was another entrance on the right hand (most clearly seen in Bufalini's map of 1551) through Bramante's rusticated portal to the lower court of the Belvedere. There is a helpful early sixteenth-century list of

1. Map of Monte Mario and the Prati by Pietro Ferrerio, c. 1650 (British Museum)
- 1 Vigna di Madama
 - 2 La Croce
 - 3 Strada che va a Ponte Molle per disopra
 - 4 San Lazzaro
 - 5 Fossa della Baldoina (Vigna Sinibaldi-Neroni)
 - 6 The Tiber
 - 7 Fossa della Sposata (Vigna Spinelli)
 - 8 Porta Angelica



These alternatives, however, were supplemented for the traveller on Via Cassia by another which had existed since antiquity¹⁴. About ten kilometres from the city-gates the Via Triumphalis forks right from Via Cassia and climbs the gentle northern slope of Monte Mario to the oratory of La Croce; thence it descended by a steep hair-pin bend (now by several¹⁵) down the southern slope to

gates, the *Nota delle porte di Roma*, cited by M. MONACO, "La situazione della reverenda camera apostolica nell'anno 1525", *Archivi d'Italia*, vi, 1960, 110. Both the last stage of the direct route to Porta Viridaria and the short branch to the Belvedere portal were enclosed under Pius IV within the new fortifications and the entrance thereafter was by the new Porta Angelica.

14 This road is most usefully recorded in the catasto-map of this area drawn for Alexander VII: P. HOFFMANN, "I Casali Strozzi e l'Osteria del Falcone", *Capitolium*, xxxvi, 1961, 6, and Dykmans, op. cit. in n.9, Fig. 3.

15 This part of the road was rebuilt by Gregory XVI (1831-1846): E. MARTINORI, *Via Cassia*, Rome, 1930, 15n.

the little church of San Lazzaro, still standing, with its hospital, to lead finally across the Prati, in the shadow of the Belvedere, to Porta Viridaria. On the last stretch, between San Lazzaro and the Belvedere, the Via Triumphalis crossed two streams running eastwards from the Vallis Inferni to the Tiber, the northern one called the Fossa della Babuina, the southern the Fossa della Sposata. The relation between this road, the one from Via Flaminia across the Prati to the Vatican, and the Villa Madama is seen in a map from the first half of the seventeenth century in the British Museum (Fig. 1)¹⁶. The Via Triumphalis was the favoured ceremonial route to Rome, as its name implies, and it became the popular route for pilgrims *ad limina Petri* for whose benefit it was punctuated

16 British Museum, Map Room, 6 Tab.3, fol. 30, by Pietro Ferrerio (died 1654). A later but perhaps more accurate map is in the *Raccolta Lanciani* (Palazzo Venezia), Vol. 28, II, No. 14.

at intervals of about one mile by six crucifixes. In due course it became, too, the route for pre-mechanical tourists. A long series of visitors, from Frederick Barbarossa to Wordsworth, have missed a heart-beat at their first sight of Rome as the road descends Monte Mario, and then again a little later on a bend where the Vatican and Saint Peter's, at first hidden by another hill, come into view¹⁷.

As Montaigne remarked in 1580 the approach to Rome by Via Flaminia across the plain was an anticlimax¹⁸. But the experience of Rome from the Via Triumphalis was – and with the exclusion of the foreground still is – memorably exciting, and for that reason it was frequently recorded by artists such as William Marlow for the benefit of Grand Tourists. Much earlier this view had been the background to an illumination by Attavante in which Calvary is set on Monte Mario (very near the oratory of La Croce, in fact), and there is a very similar view copied into the Codex Escorialensis¹⁹. Eastlake, who made several paintings of *The Pilgrim's First Sight of Rome*, represents perhaps the last generation which could recapture that ecstasy which gave Monte Mario the alternative title *Mons Gaudii*²⁰.

The approach to Rome of an important visitor in the Renaissance and earlier periods – approaching, that is, the Curia, publicly and not incognito – was spectacular, elaborate and codified, and for all these reasons it was discussed and recorded in letters, chronicles and ceremonial sources. In practice there is little difficulty in finding out what should have happened and what did in fact happen on the arrival of Emperors, whether for coronation or not, of Kings and Princes of various rank, their relatives and ambassadors, of senior ecclesiastics including new cardinals and returning legates, and so on. Ceremony also regulated the departure of some of these. Frequency focusses attention on ambassadors, who were treated most ceremoniously on their advent *in obedientiam*, that is to say as representatives of the temporal powers sent specifically to pay respects to newly-elected popes; about equal importance attached to special embassies treating for peace, or a new league, such as Matthew Lang's in 1512. Replacements of regular ambassadors (*oratori*) to the Curia were scarcely noticed. There is in fact a great deal of source-material to help us, and reading it makes us

especially aware of the measured ceremonial significance attached to topography, of the critical importance of certain points and distances on the approach-roads, above all on the descent of Monte Mario by the Via Triumphalis²¹.

Arrival at the Curia was a continuous, phased and codified performance from the first greeting in open country – in the most exalted cases on entry into Italy – to the final reception by the pope in public consistory. In all cases it entails a pause (normally of about two hours) outside the walls, partly for the practical reason that the travellers need to refresh themselves and to change into splendid clothes (themselves a competitive, sumptuary measure of status), partly because visitors must be addressed and briefed by the Master of Ceremonies, and partly, too, because timing is important – there is a right moment for entry, generally about two hours before sunset. In the extreme case of Imperial entry for coronation it is obligatory that the Emperor spends the previous night waiting outside the walls, a wait symbolic of submission²².

21 The most significant source of the period known to me is by PARIS DE GRASSIS: *Tractatus de Oratoribus*, Bibl. Ap. Vat., MS. Vat. Lat. 12270 (begun 1505, with later notes of 1515, partly autograph). Second in importance is the *Liber Caeremoniarum* of Johannes Burchard and Agostino Patrizi, written for Innocent VIII in 1488 and issued in a printed edition by CRISTOFORO MARCELLO in 1516 (*Rituum ecclesiasticorum...*); there is a commented edition of this text, with much pertinent historical information, in JOSEPHUS CATALANUS, *Sacrarum Caeremoniarum sive Rituum Ecclesiasticorum S.R.E.*, Rome, 1750. In preparation for the expected arrival of Charles V a summary of existing practice on Imperial entry was prepared in 1529 by Biagio da Cesena for Clement VII: *Compendium de rebus pertinentibus ad Coronationem Imperatoris*, printed in G. B. GATTICUS, *Acta selecta caeremonialia S.R.E.*, Rome, 1753, ii, 101. There is a collection, made c. 1550, of earlier texts in Italian translation in Bibl. Ap. Vat., MS. Barb. Lat. 2290, fols. 21r.–74r., *Notabilia ex Caeremoniali: Diverse maniere di ricever l'Imperatore o un Re*. Innumerable individual entries are recorded in diaries, letters, biographies and historical texts. The importance of formal entries has recently been noted in relation to Villa Giulia by Coffin, op. cit. in n.1, 149–150.

22 Dykmans, op. cit. in n. 9, 549–550, discusses the history of this ritual and quotes from the diary of Infessura an account of the chaotic reception of Frederick III on his first visit, for coronation, in 1452. There is another account in the *Memoriali* of Pavolo di Benedetto di Cola dello Mastro in MS. Vat. Lat. 5522, fol. 373r.: “dismontorono in Casa de Thomasso Spinelli da Firenze, che sta al ponticelle della Maccia, et li stetti una nocte, et la Imperatrice stetti in casa di Francesco della Zecca, che è descontro, à quella de Thomaso, Di Mercordì à 24 hore 6 de Marzo et lo Jovedi entrao in Roma ...” Other sources are printed in Catalanus, op. cit. in n.21, 175–176; see also Biagio da Cesena and the *Notabilia*, cit. in n.21, and F. WASNER, “Päpstliches Zeremonienwesen im 15. Jahrhundert”, *Archivum historiae pontificiae*, vi, 1968, 146. For the different ceremony on Frederick's second visit, 24 December 1468 to 9 January 1469, not for coronation, the most useful text is Agostino

17 G. TELLENBACH, “La Città di Roma dal IX al XII secolo vista dai contemporanei d'oltre frontiere”, *Studi storici in onore di Ottorino Bertolini*, Rome, 1972, 689 (a reference I owe to Richard Krautheimer), and Hoffmann, op. cit. in n.14.

18 *Journal de voyage*, 30 November 1580.

19 H. EGGER, *Römische Veduten*, ii, Vienna, 1931, pl. 103.

20 D. A. ROBERTSON, *Sir Charles Eastlake*, Princeton, 1978, 40–41.

The principle governing all categories of entry was the graduated reception outside the walls, welcoming groups adding themselves successively to the cavalcade in an approximately standard sequence but at variable distances from the gate – the further out, the more honourable. For example (to start near the bottom of the scale) unexceptional embassies *in obedientiam* were supposed to meet the first wave, the civic dignitaries and the *famiglie* of the cardinals, at the foot of Monte Mario, by San Lazzaro, and the last wave, the College of Cardinals awaits them at the Vatican gate. At the top end of the scale an Emperor is met by the last wave, the College, out at San Lazzaro. So much for theory; what happened in practice was often quite different.

Some extracts from the *Tractatus de oratoribus* (1505–1506) by Paris de Grassis exemplify in detail what should happen on the arrival of embassies, and reveal how architecture comes to be involved with ceremonial; they also reveal a formidable logistic problem for the Curia:

“All ambassadors arriving in Rome, particularly for first submission (*ad obedientiam*) to His Holiness shall be received solemnly and with pomp, with the destination of the households meeting the said ambassadors outside the city-gate fixed at a greater or lesser distance according to the status of those who send the embassy” (and similarly those who come to deal with major diplomatic affairs).

“The Master of Ceremonies should have two or three days’ warning; and it is his duty to arrange with the Cardinal-protector that whatever *locus suburbanus* is chosen for feasting the ambassadors in the morning of the day on which they make their evening entry, this building shall be prepared with all appurtenances and staff necessary for their honourable reception ...”

“Then the Master of Ceremonies, having received in detail the pope’s wishes, and having learnt by which gate the embassy will enter, in which *hospitium* they will be guests, at what hour they will arrive, and their number and quality, sends out emissaries to them ... Nowadays the arrival is normally at the twentieth hour and the usual gate of entry is that of the Vatican Palace (i.e. Porta Viridaria). The Master of Ceremonies briefs the Major Domo, who orders salvoes from Castel Sant’Angelo, bells (etc.), the kitchens prepared, and everyone in place (etc.). Then, two hours before entry, The Master of Ceremonies goes out to meet the embassy; he instructs them on ceremonial, settles the languages of orations” (and so on).

Patrizi’s *Descriptio adventus Friderici III*, in J. MABILLON, *Museum italicum*, I, part 2, 256; for the expenses, see A. GÖTTLOB, *Aus der Camera Apostolica des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Innsbruck, 1889, 311.

“These are the rules to be observed in the progress of the embassy from the *hospitium suburbanum* to the city: while awaiting the signal from the pope’s Major Domo, the Master of Ceremonies orders the cavalcade out into the road ... and sorts out its sequence; when the trumpet-signal is received he orders the embassy to mount ... If the new embassy is Imperial the first of the households, those of the cardinal-deacons, should await them at San Lazzaro ... the last, of the cardinal-bishops, where formerly was the house and vineyard of Falcone de’ Sinibaldi. If, however, it is a Royal embassy the first households should wait just this side of Falcone’s house, and the last, of the cardinal-bishops, just this side of the crucifix opposite the track down to the Prati and just beyond the church of the Spinelli ...”

Paris de Grassis remarks that the road is frequently muddy or even flooded. Then he goes on to describe how and where on the road the subsequent receptions by the papal household, and so on, take place²³.

This and similar texts establish the absolute necessity of a suburban *locus* or *hospitium*. Its ideal position, it may be deduced, covering all degrees of rank, should be beyond the furthest points or stations of formal greeting at San Lazzaro (or, in the cases adjusted to entry by Porta del Popolo, just beyond Ponte Molle).

Practice evidently proved extremely difficult, and was a constant preoccupation of the Masters of Ceremonies. In the period 1480–1535 ten or more *vigne* or *domus suburbanae*, outside Porta del Popolo or *Porta Viridaria*, were used for the reception and preparation of visitors²⁴.

23 Paris de Grassis, MS. cit. in n. 21, fols. 2r.–12v.

24 (i) Bibbiena, describing the entry of the Florentine embassy, including Piero de’ Medici, 19 November 1492, tells in some detail of the descent of Monte Mario, the reception by the *famiglie* of the cardinals and others, and the exchange of speeches “alla casa di messer Domenico Ottava, fuor della porta pocho”; I have not identified this house (G. MONCALLERO, *Epistolario di B. Dovizi da Bibbiena*, i, Florence, 1955, 15). (ii) The Venetian embassy *in obedientiam*, 27 January 1536, came by Via Flaminia to Porta del Popolo, outside which they were briefed by Biagio da Cesena in the “vinea Domini Hieronymi de Castello” (MS. Vat. Lat. 12277, fol. 273v.). (iii) Borso d’Este, in 1471, was entertained in an inadequate house at Varca (Valca, or Casa Valchetta, near Prima Porta), and was subsequently met by the *famiglie* etc. (E. CELANI, “La venuta di Borso d’Este in Roma”, *ArchStorRom*, xiii, 1890, 399). (iv) Julius II, returning from Bologna on Via Flaminia, 26 June 1511, “venit ad quoddam suburbanum Palatium, quod Casale Clementis vocabatur, atque ibi facto prandio, et coena, circa horam 23 eiusdem die pervenit ad Ecclesiam B. Mariae de Populo ...”, where he was met by the nobles, etc. (Paris de Grassis, B.L., MS. Add. 8442, fol. 117r.). (v) The returning legate to France, 8 February 1485, came by Ponte Molle to S. Maria del Popolo; of the twelve French ambassadors with him,

Among these Villa Madama appears to be the only one ideal in scale, facilities and position. The two most frequently used were on the short stretch of the Via Trionfale between the Belvedere and San Lazzaro, and both of them are visible lower right of the view from Monte Mario in the Codex Escorialensis, probably a copy after a drawing by Ghirlandaio of the early 1480s²⁵. Nearer to the Belvedere, to the right of the road, was the *palazzo* or *vigna* built about 1450 by the Florentine merchant Tommaso Spinelli, later treasurer of Innocent VIII; it stood by the bridge over the stream called La Sposata²⁶. The second is the large house on the left of the road by the bridge over the second stream, La Babuina; this is the *vigna* or *domus* of Falcone Sinibaldi, who died in 1492, and it is the one mentioned in Paris de Grassis's *Tractatus* and frequently in the *Diarium*, in which he calls it the *hospitium*²⁷. This house was subsequently acquired by Alessandro Neroni, Major Domo to Julius II and Leo X.²⁸ It

seven were lodged at Baccano, 20 miles out on Via Cassia (JOHANNES BURCHARD, *Liber notarum*, ed. E. Celani (R.I.S. xxxii, part I), Città di Castello, 1907, i, 107). (vi) The Cardinal d'Este, 23 November 1501, was met by Cesare Borgia "prope vineam Cardinalis Senensis", between Ponte Molle and Porta del Popolo (Burchard, ed. cit., ii, 307). (vii) The Genoese embassy of February 1504 first made a secret entry, then on the 25th "exierunt usque ad domum olim Petri Caranza, iuxta viridarium Pape . . .", and then made their formal entry by Porta Viridaria (Burchard, ed. cit., ii, 434); this "pulchra domus cum cortile magno" is described in Bibl. Ap. Vat., Arch. Cap. S. Pietro, Censuali 147 (1517-1542), fol. li, and 165 (1550), fol. 38 v. (viii-xi): Vigna Spinelli, Vigna Sinibaldi-Neroni, Vigna Tuzi (see below), and Villa Madama.

25 H. EGGER, *Codex Escorialensis*, Vienna, 1905, fol. 8 r.

26 The earliest evidence for the existence of this house is to be found in the accounts of its use in 1452, for which see n.22; also, in the same year, Pedro de Burgos, describing the proper *congé* of cardinal-legates, writes that they should be accompanied by the other cardinals out of Porta Viridaria as far as "quadam domum novam, que est ad tres vel quattuor jactus baliste, prope unum parvum pontem. Que quidem domus est hodie Thome Spinelli Florentini camporis curiam sequentis" (M. DYKMANS, S.J., "Le Cérémonial de Nicolas V", *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, lxiii, 1968, 806).

27 For example: 28 May 1514, the embassy of Genoa "urbem ingressi sunt solemniter, et a familia Papae, et Cardinalium honorifice conducti sunt ab hospitio, sive à vinea D. Alexandri Neronij usque in Urbem" (B.L., MS. Add. 8443, 230).

28 Hoffmann, op. cit. in n. 14; I. BELLI BARSALI, *Le Ville di Roma*, Milan, 1970, 368-369; and Coffin, op. cit. in n. 1, 66-67. The identification of the villa of Falcone Sinibaldi with the present Osteria Falcone was already made by E. Celani in his edition of J. Burchard's *Liber notarum*, in *Rerum italicarum scriptores* XXXII, Part I, i, Città di Castello, 1907, 358; the present address is Via Trionfale 60-62. Falcone Sinibaldi was a Roman, Protonotary Apostolic and Treasurer, who built a chapel dedicated to St. Peter Martyr in S. Maria sopra Minerva and died 12 August 1492 (AMBROGIO BRANDI, *Cronica breve*, Archivio Generale dei Domenicani, S. Sabina, MS. XIV, C, 1^a, 29). For

is a building of some architectural importance, since it appears from the drawing in the Codex to have had originally a slightly asymmetrical U-plan which would offer a precedent for another *suburbana*, the Farnesina. It seems likely that it still survives as the present-day Osteria Antico Falcone, with the eastern wing demolished and the arcaded loggia of the western wing, presumably a dining-loggia, walled up. The style of this building's upper windows suggests a date about 1470, as does that of the octagonal brick columns of the loggia; the fenestration onto the street was in part remodelled in a Sangallesque style, probably when the house was acquired by the Strozzi about the middle of the Cinquecento.

The house nearer the Belvedere, the Vigna of the Spinelli, housed the Emperor Frederick III in 1452; he spent there the obligatory night waiting outside the walls before his entry for coronation, for which purpose it was not surprisingly inadequate – tents were erected for his court and the Empress was lodged in a house across the road. But there were difficulties even in more routine cases, partly because Spinelli's Vigna, like Sinibaldi's, was too near the Vatican gate. One example of chaos in each case will illustrate the point. In 1486 the embassy of the King of Poland arrived in Rome informally, and its members were lodged in the city by the Bufalini; but since they came *in obedientiam* formal entry was essential. They left the city secretly by Trastevere and went round behind the Vatican *ad domum de Spinellis* to await the right hour; then they had to go further out again on horseback for the meeting with the *famiglie* of the cardinals at San Lazzaro; finally they proceeded back to Porta Viridaria in proper ceremonial sequence²⁹. This arrangement was untidy and undignified for the Master of Ceremonies and for everyone else concerned. In 1513 an Imperial embassy was received (*hospitati*) in the Domus Neronis, that is Sinibaldi's house, now L'Antico Falcone, and this had the scandalous consequence that the *famiglie* of the cardinals met them almost at the door, being unable to go beyond to San Lazzaro, their proper station for an

Alessandro di Angelo Neroni (1457-1526), Maestro di Casa first to Julius II, Protonotary Apostolic, later Preceptor of S. Spirito, see A. FERRAJOLI, "Il ruolo della corte di Leone X", *ArchStorRom*, xxxvi, 1913, 520-522; he had acquired Falcone's house by 1501; it is described in a notarial document of 1526 as being about half a mile outside Porta Viridaria.

29 J. BURCHARD, *Liber notarum*, ed. cit. in n. 28, i, 153. Similarly on 1 and 4 December 1534 the "Oratores Lucenses" arrived secretly and were lodged first in Rome, then "nos Magistri Ceremoniarum ivimus extra Portam Viridariam versus Spinellos, ubi oratores erant hospitati" (from Biagio da Cesena's diary, Bibl. Ap. Vat., MS. Vat. Lat. 12277, fols. 219 r. and v.).

embassy of this status³⁰. Entry by Ponte Molle and Porta del Popolo presented still greater obstacles to the proper observation of ritual; lack of suitable accommodation led to visitors being lodged six or seven miles from the city, at Baccano on Via Cassia or Prima Porta on Via Flaminia.

Hospitality, service and decorations, including tapestries, for these *alloggiamenti* as they were called were provided by the Curia; in fact in the case of Princes or above the Curia assumed all expenses from the moment they entered the Papal State³¹.

Now, to turn the argument in the direction of Villa Madama let us consider a third of these *suburbane* used occasionally for receptions, this one on Monte Mario. Paris de Grassis reports the arrival on 25 June 1508 of the embassy of the King of Castille *in obedientiam*, with about two hundred horses: "they were given lunch", he says, "in the villa of the doctor Arcangelo under Monte Mario, beyond the Prati, to which went many well-wishers, but because of overcrowding we – the Masters of Ceremonies – sent them away without exchanging greetings; and after waiting all day we set off in decent order ...³²" The owner of this villa was a Sienese, Arcangelo Tuzi, doctor to Leo X and Professor of Medicine, with the highest of all salaries, at the Sapienza, Camerarius and later Dean of the Camera³³.

Arcangelo's villa, which had a loggia, stood on the site of Villa Madama, and it was acquired by Leo X some time between 1513 and 1517. One of the documents which prove this is very well known but it has always, to my knowledge, been misunderstood: it is a note of tax due to the Chapter of Saint Peter's under the date 1517, which is taken to be the date of acquisition of the site, empty³⁴. But 1517, as one discovers in reading the whole manuscript, is simply the year in which the prelate responsible decided that the old ledger was too messy to be useful and made a fair-copy, recording not new but existing arrangements³⁵. The statement that the house and loggia, now the property of Pope Leo, had formerly belonged to Arcangelo (and others) has been ignored. In combination with Paris de Grassis's note on the embassy from Castille, however, this taxation-document and two others like it³⁶ can be made to yield a fact of some interest: that by 1517 Leo had acquired one of the *suburbane* used for receptions – one which was, however, too small for the purpose. At some date before the end of 1518 it was decided to demolish it and build on its site the spectacular project of Raphael's³⁷. But I think there may have been an intermediate and less drastic proposal.

I hope that the proposed conjunction of documents, establishing that the property owned by Pope Leo on Monte Mario was already in existence and use by 1508, may make it respectable to return to and modify an hypothesis I proposed with little conviction some years

30 PARIS DE GRASSIS, *Diarium*, B.L., MS. Add. 8443, 169, 11 October 1513.

31 On expenses see, for example, Biagio da Cesena, loc. cit. in n.21; the furnishing of the vigna Sinibaldi-Neroni for the Venetian embassy of 28 April 1505 is described by Paris de Grassis (B.L., MS. Add. 8440, fol. 192r.).

32 "Ipsi oratores in vinea Medici Archangeli sub monte Mario pranserunt ultra prata ad quam venerunt multi visitantes sed nos ob angustiam remisimus insalutatos, et tandem diu expectati ivimus ordine laudabili ..." (B.L., MS. Add. 8441, fol. 210r.). This text, in another version, was already cited by P. MANDOSIUS, *De Archiatris Pontificiis*, ed. G. Marini, Rome, 1784, i, 282.

33 Mandosius (loc. cit. in n.32) notes that Arcangelo may have been the Arcangelo di Maestro Giovanni da Siena lecturing at Perugia in 1500, that he acted as Sienese *orator* at the Curia, and was dead by 1524. He participated in the Lateran *possesso* of Leo X, 11 March 1513 (an allowance for velvet for "M^o Arcangelo fisico sanese" is listed in the expenses in Archivio di Stato, Rome, Camerale I, 1488, fol. 13r.). I think the first evidence that he was in fact Leo's doctor comes in a notarial document of 5 August 1513 which he witnessed ("sanctissimi domini nostri Pape phisicus": O. MONTENOVESI, "Agostino Chigi appaltatore dell'allume di Tolfa", *ArchStorRom*, 1x, 1937, 145); he appears as "medicus" among the Camerarii in the *Ruolo* of Leo X (Ferrajoli, op. cit. in n.28, 374) and he receives a salary of 8 ducats per month from the *spese privati*. For the University salaries in 1514 see L. PASTOR, *The History of the Popes*, viii, ed. R.F. Kerr, London and St. Louis, 1950, 274. I have taken his title "Camere apostolice decanus" from

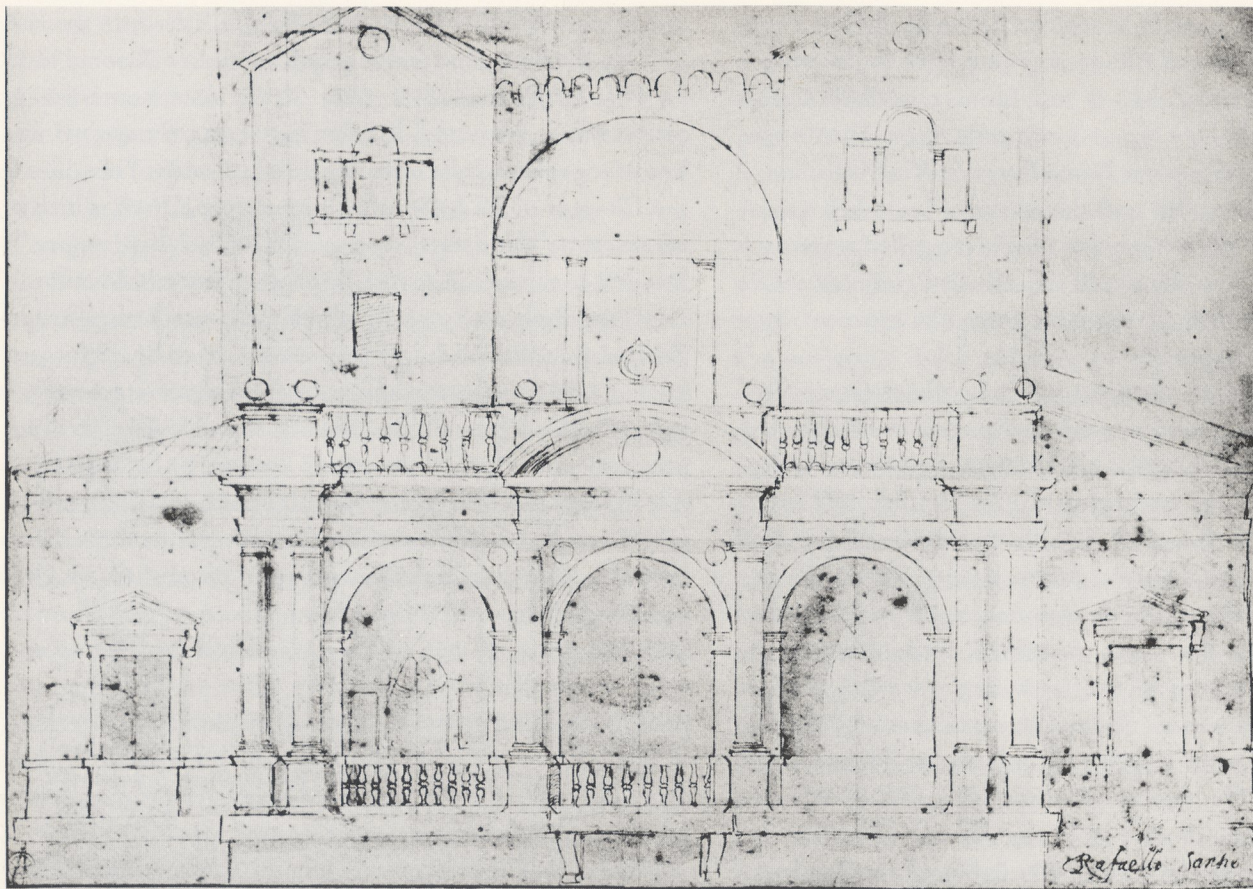
Bibl. Ap. Vat., Arch. Cap. S. Pietro, Censuale 165 (1550), fol. 47v.

34 Bibl. Ap. Vat., Arch. Cap. S. Pietro, Censuale 147 (1517–1542), fol. xcii: "Vinea cum domo et loggia statio sanctissimi Domini nostri Leonis decimi quae olim fuit magistri Archangeli medici de senis sive domini philippi de Senensis Clerici camerae sive petri Francisci vel domini Leonardi Cibo posita in monte Maris sive in dictis pratis neronis in confinibus possidetur per praefatum dominum nostrum soluit Anno quolibet Carlenos quatuor." First published by C.L. FROMMEL, "Bramante's 'Ninfeo' in Genazzano", *RömJbKg*, xii, 1969, 155 (see also xv, 1975, 61); Lefevre, op. cit. in n.4, 28; S. RAY, *Raffaello architetto*, Bari, 1974, 176.

35 At the beginning Andrea Jacobazzi, "Camerarius vinearum" (brother of the distinguished theologian, Cardinal Domenico) states that he made this fair-copy, starting 1 December 1517, "dictum censuale vetustate pene collapsum atque consumptum", and he notes that the annual account was drawn up on the Feast of Saint Michael (September). The very neat, calligraphically rather pretentious, and consistent character of this manuscript (excluding *postille*) makes it just as clear that it is a fair-copy.

36 Censuali 165 (1550), fol. 47v., and 174 (1559), fol. 45v.

37 See the documents, beginning 5 August 1518, published by C.L. FROMMEL in *RömJbKg*, xv, 1975, 85.



2. Raphael, *Elevation of a villa*; Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, No. 579 recto (state in 1859)

ago: that a villa-elevation by Raphael at Oxford (Fig. 2), securely a Medicean project and datable about 1516 from its graphic style – that this elevation might be part of an early design for Villa Madama³⁸. It was then pointed out, first by Manfred F. Fischer³⁹, that this drawing was better interpreted as the classical remodelling and enlargement of an existing structure; the tile-ends visible behind the balustrade hint at the latter's function as improvised screen for an existing roof, and the proportions of the towers (or of one tower, if the other is in this proposal a duplicate) resemble those of pre-Renaissance rural architecture in Lazio. I have failed to find any other Medicean property which Raphael might have been called upon to remodel⁴⁰, and I would now suggest that this is a scheme for the modernization and extension of Arcangelo

Tuzi's house on Monte Mario, in other words that there was a more modest, intermediate scheme before the clearing of the site and the grandiose rebuilding projects beginning with Uffizi 273^A and the letter-plan of 1517–1518 (Fig. 3). There is some evidence that Pope Leo's mind did work in this way⁴¹. And the elevation does have enough features in common with the first *ex novo* projects, assuming that this should be the façade facing down the hill towards Ponte Molle, for the proposed design-sequence to have some plausibility.

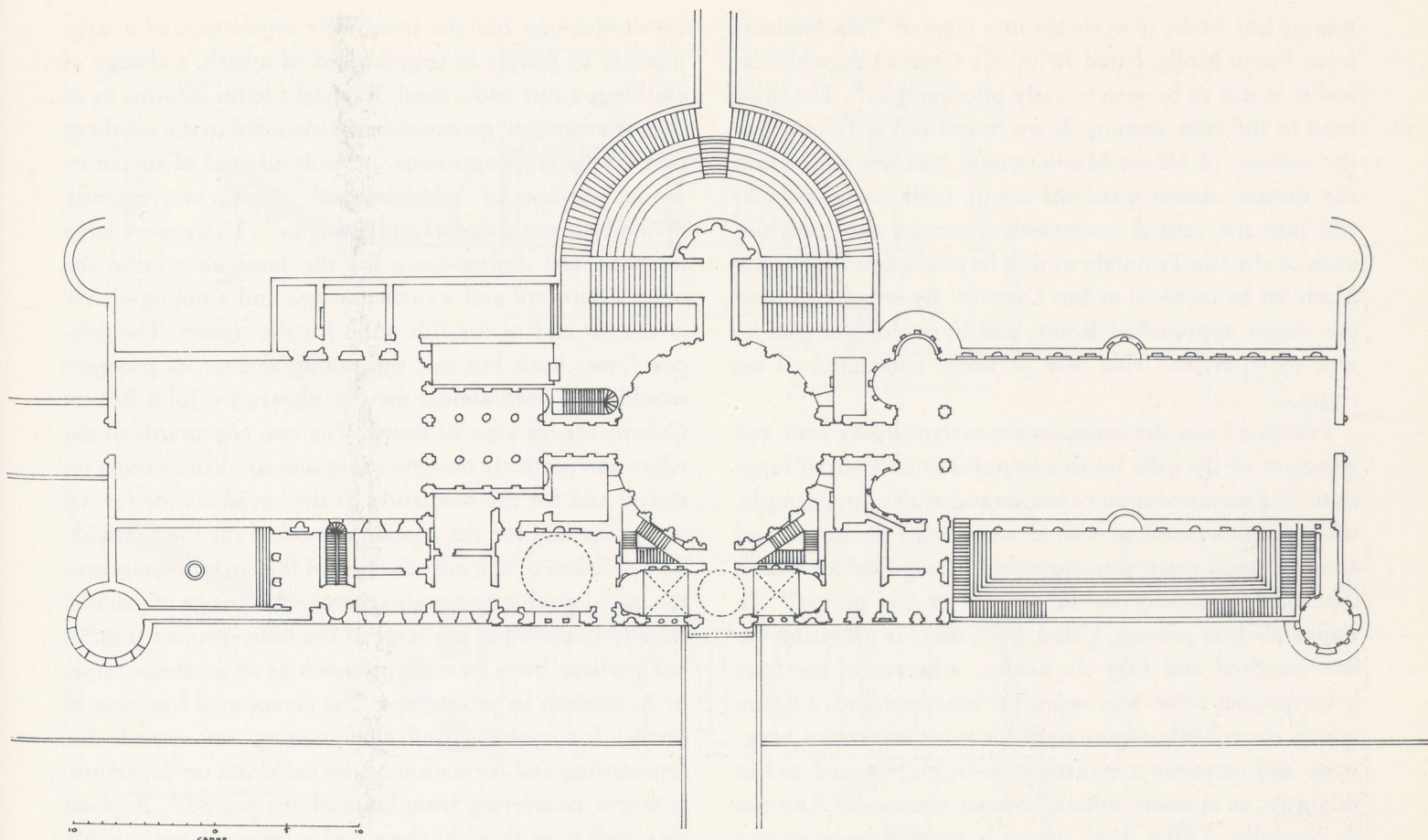
It seems probable, in any case, that Leo X bought Arcangelo Tuzi's villa because it was in the right place to provide the *hospitium* or *alloggiamento* required for ceremonial and diplomatic purposes, hitherto met more or less disgracefully by *ad hoc* expedients. Further, I think that the villa was eventually rebuilt on an enormously larger scale for a perfectly practical purpose. Leo X had unusual respect for the decencies and proper observation

38 J. SHEARMAN, "Raphael ... 'fa il Bramante'", *Studies in Renaissance and Baroque Art presented to Anthony Blunt*, London, 1967, 13–17.

39 In a discussion at the Bibliotheca Hertziana, 1967.

40 Among Leonine properties of this type to be eliminated are the Rocca at Montefiascone and the ex-Orsini Castello at Castel Madama.

41 See, for example, the report by Paris de Grassis of the discussion with Leo which led to the provision of multiple *paramenta* for the Sistine Chapel, published in J. SHEARMAN, *Raphael's Cartoons*, London, 1972, 10.



3. Reconstruction of the project for Villa Madama described in Raphael's letter

of ritual, and for the *maiestas* of his office. But there may be a more particular explanation of the date of rebuilding, for in March 1517 Leo's cousin Cardinal Giulio de' Medici was made Vice-Chancellor, with special responsibility, therefore, for diplomatic affairs⁴². If Villa Madama is interpreted as part of the apparatus of the Curia, especially in the domain of the Vice-Chancellor, this may explain the consistent ambiguity in the sources as to its patronage, in one text the Pope's, in the next the Cardinal's; for example even in the poem of March 1519 by Francesco Sperulo in which it is called Villa Giulia Medica it is also called *Sedes Leonis*.

Curial ceremonial suggests that an ideally sited *hospitium suburbanum* would serve the majority of entries by the Via Trionfale to Porta Viridaria, but should allow alternative entry by Ponte Molle and Porta del Popolo, or from Via Flaminia, that is from the North East, across the Prati to the Vatican. And it should be beyond the furthest points at which most visitors had their first formal greeting, at San Lazzaro at the foot of Monte Mario or at

Ponte Molle. Arcangelo's site, between the Oratory of La Croce di Monte Mario and Ponte Molle seems exactly right.

In his letter describing Villa Madama Raphael describes three new roads which extend the axes of the building. The first, to be raised on a ramp, would lead to and from the Vatican; in fact it would necessarily join the road across the *Prati*. The second, at right angles to this, would lead straight from the *portone* under the Tiber loggia to Ponte Molle. Raphael was very proud of this arrangement, which made it seem that the bridge was built for the villa rather than vice versa, and the intended effect, even without the road, may be recaptured today⁴³. The road

43 To be precise: the road would not lead in a straight line from Ponte Molle, but after following a segment of the curve of the Tiber it would then depart tangentially, straight to the villa; this tangent in fact determines the orientation of the villa-axis. Raphael's pride in this arrangement may in reality exemplify a topos of Renaissance villa-design; one may compare Giovanni Rucellai's appreciation of the relationship between his villa at Quaracchi and local roads, and in particular a road through a pergola and a portal in the garden-wall "per insino ad Arno ... diricto a corda, che istando io a mensa in sala posso vedere le

42 Pastor, op. cit. in n.33, vii, 198.

was in fact built; it is visible in a view of Villa Madama from Ponte Molle, dated 1610, in a German sketchbook, and it is still to be seen in early photographs⁴⁴. The third road to the villa, coming down from the Via Trionfale at the summit of Monte Mario, would lead the visitor into the theatre, down quadrant-ramps (still on horseback) and into the central courtyard; it would also lead him back to the Via Trionfale so that he could descend Monte Mario to be received at San Lazzaro. By whichever road the visitor approached Rome, and by whichever gate he was to enter, the villa was perfectly connected to his route.

I think we can also interpret the extraordinary scale and structure of the villa by this hypothesis of a curial function. The accommodation of horses and mules, for example, was a serious problem with all entries, for the number of animals could reach one thousand⁴⁵. Large stables were a diplomatic necessity in all *palazzi* of the period⁴⁶. In Raphael's first project, Uffizi 273^A, there is provision for one hundred and fifty-six horses, whereas in the later letter-project there was room for four hundred, a figure which is probably about right for most important occasions and certainly a realistic one. In the reduced and in this way, as in many others, cheaper version by Antonio da Sangallo, Uffizi 314^A, there is room for about two hundred and fifty. Reading some accounts of arriving

barghe che passano a dirinpetto per Arno ...” (*Giovanni Rucellai ed il suo Zibaldone*, ed. A. PEROSA, London, 1960, 21).

44 F. THÖNE, *Ein Deutschrömisches Skizzenbuch von 1606–1611*, Berlin, 1960, Pl. 23 (also the earliest documentation, so far as I know, of the supporting-arches built against the north-eastern corner); for an early photograph from a similar position see Lefevre, op. cit. in n. 4, 218. The road is marked (“via di macchia Madama”) on an eighteenth-century plan of the *tenuta* between Ponte Molle and Monte Mario in the *Raccolta Lanciani* (see n. 16), Vol. 28, II, No. 34; G. VASI, *Itinerario istruttivo*, Rome, 1777, 10, apparently describes this road descending from Villa Madama: “delizioso stradone alberato verso ponte molle ...”

45 Some examples: Alberto d'Este travelling to Rome in 1391 went with 420 horses, Galeazzo Maria Sforza arrived in Florence in 1471 with 2000, Borso d'Este in Rome the same year with 700 (L. A. GANDINI, “Viaggi, cavalli, bardature e stalle degli Estensi nel Quattrocento”, *Atti e memorie della R. deputazione di storia patria per le provincie di Romagna ...*, Ser. III, x, 1892, 46–47, 53); the reception-party to meet Borso was estimated at 7000 horses (Celani, op. cit. in n. 24, 372, 399). Cardinal Giulio himself, making a politically very important entry on 23 April 1523, came with 1000 horsemen (Pastor, op. cit. in n. 33, vii, 187).

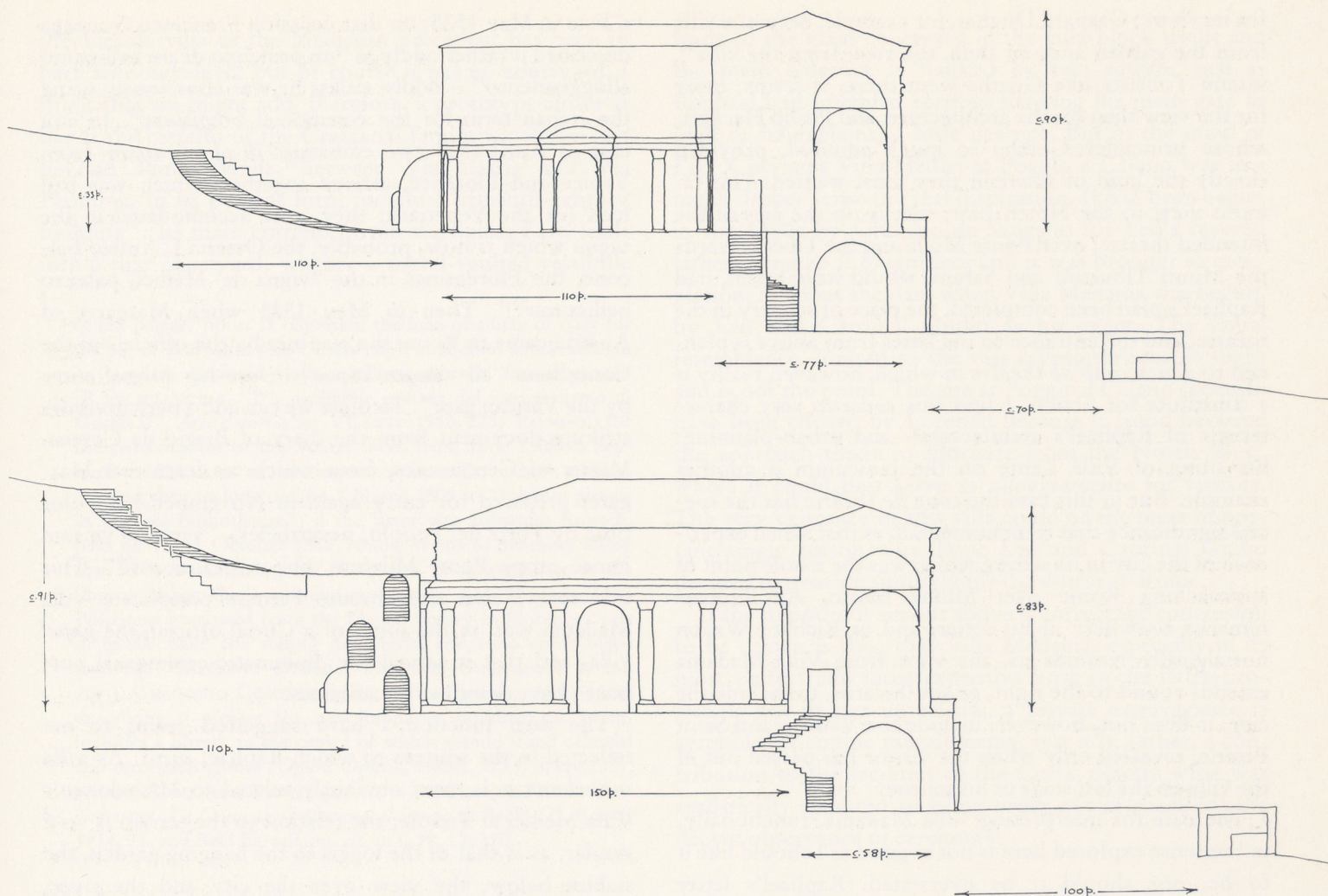
46 Ercole d'Este's at Belriguardo had provision for 500 horses (W. L. GUNDERSHEIMER, *Art and Life at the Court of Ercole d'Este*, Geneva, 1972, 65); the Medici provided c. 1516 400 *braccia* of mangers (for about 250 horses?) in their new stables behind the Sapienza in Florence.

cavalcades one has the irresistible impression of a large number of people in urgent need of a bath, a change of clothing, a rest and a meal. Raphael's letter informs us of the astonishingly extensive baths intended in the southern part of the cryptoporticus, never built, and of the enormous amount of accommodation above, conveniently divided between *signori* and *famiglia*⁴⁷. There were large kitchens and dining-space for the *famiglia* around the outer courtyard and a *cucina secreta* and a dining-alcove at the far end of the fish-pond for the *signori*. The fish-pond was built but not the dining-alcove; its prospect would have been almost the one chosen by John Robert Cozens for his view of Rome. The two courtyards of the villa seem perfectly designed as spaces for dismounting on arrival and for the formation of the *cavalcata* for formal entry, the one for the *signori*, the other for the *famiglia*. The problem of the introduction of the circular court into the initial double-rectangle scheme, the change which had already occurred at the stage of the letter-project (Fig. 3), has perhaps been treated too much as an aesthetic issue, or in relation to prototypes. The ceremonial function of *cortili*, for greeting and dismounting on arrival, for remounting and formation of the *cavalcata* on departure, is worth recovering from texts of the period⁴⁸. Raphael may well have thought the circular form a more suitable and spacious frame or theatre for these ceremonies, and more expressive of the diversity of directions of arrival and departure. Its introduction, one should notice too, has important architectural consequences: it provides more accommodation in the villa-block, and it increases the height of the theatre proper by pushing it further up the hill. These apparent consequences might as well have been effective motives.

The theatre is the last feature that must be noticed here. Its use was probably largely conceived in relation to the villa as *suburbana*. Its Vitruvian form may be a conscious criticism of the primitive theatrical arrangements in the

47 It is not possible to arrive at a reliable figure for the accommodation provided for *famiglie* in the mezzanine (2½ canne high where there were no vaults to the piano nobile) and upper story (2 canne). If there was to be accommodation on both levels in the south-western wing, over the *tinello*, the available floor-area (gross) appears to be c. 1500 m² in the mezzanine, c. 2900 m² above, making a total (net, i.e. subtracting for internal walls, staircases etc.) approaching 4000 m².

48 For example the account by Paris de Grassis of the accommodation of the returning legate from Germany in S. Maria del Popolo, 22 October 1504; he checked beforehand that the cortile was prepared for the mounted arrival of the cardinal's party, its dismounting and remounting; he did in fact make his formal greeting to the cardinal at the moment of dismounting in the cortile (B. L., MS. Add. 8440, fol. 64 v.).



4. Schematic cross-sections of theatre and courtyard in (above) Uffizi 273^A and (below) the letter-project

garden-loggia of the Farnesina, and the ambition to do better may have been inspired by a reading, by patrons or by artist, of the most challenging account of ancient villas, in Flavio Biondo's *Triumphantis Romae*⁴⁹. But the theatre has a potential rôle in a curial function too, as the arena for the welcoming address and exchange of speeches, which would be most important in the case of Imperial entry but were in fact necessary in all. Visitors coming by

the Via Trionfale over Monte Mario would enter the villa at the top of the theatre. There is a very significant difference between the initial project, Uffizi 273^A, and the letter-project in the level of the theatre which I have tried to reconstruct in Fig. 4, which for all other purposes should be taken with a grain of salt⁵⁰. In the letter-project, the lower one, the theatre gives a clear view over the cortile and the lower roof-line of the north-eastern block of the villa; and this very marked structural change conforms with a beautiful *concetto* expressed in the letter: Raphael says that nothing in the theatre obstructs *la veduta del paese* and that scenery is only put up for *comédie*, to improve the acoustics. It is possible that this un-Vitruvian idea was inspired by his knowledge of the sites of Greek theatres, for many of which a spectacular view forms a natural backdrop. Villa Madama has always been famous

49 In the edition of Basel, 1531, Book IX, 190, the analysis of Pliny's villas ("Porticus in O litterae similitudinem ... Postea Hippodromos ... Zetas ... Xysti ...") is followed by his own observation: "Sed et nos per viam appiam villarum vidimus ruinas, in quibus theatra extant, tres mille homines in spectaculum admissura. extant ferarum septa et piscinarum muri ..." (he goes on to note the impressive villa-ruins at Baiae and Locri, and says that some of Cicero's villas are now owned by the Colonna). Book IX is a remarkable survey, oddly neglected in modern literature, of antique sources and ruins known in the Renaissance; reading it one may feel that Villa Madama should have been the first villa in which the magnificence of ancient precedents was matched.

50 C.L. FROMMEL's study of the theatre in "Raffaello e il teatro alla corte di Leone X", *BollPalladio*, xvi, 1974, 174-180, does not differ essentially on this point.

for its views; Gaspard Dughet, for example, drew the villa from the garden and, *en suite*, the view from the villa⁵¹. Grand Tourists like Goethe went there, it seems, more for the view than for the architecture, and Philip Hackert, whose principles Goethe so much admired, provided exactly the kind of souvenir they most wanted. This famous view to the North East, that is on the axis of the intended theatre, over Ponte Molle and the Tiber towards the Monti Tiburtini and Sabini, would have taken, had Raphael's plan been completed, the place of scenery in the theatre; and the entrance to the latter from above is planned to give a *coup de théâtre* in which, however, reality is a substitute for fiction. I find this *conchetto* very characteristic of Raphael's architectural- and urban-planning; his siting of Villa Lante on the Janiculum is another example. But in this case the *coup de théâtre* has the special significance that it monumentalizes that visual experience of the city in its setting which was the whole point of approaching Rome over Monte Mario. As Raphael remarks elsewhere in his letter, and as Richard Wilson nostalgically reminds us, the view from Villa Madama extends round to the right, or southwards, to include the city; it does not, however, include the Vatican and Saint Peter's, revealed only when the visitor has passed out of the villa on the last stage of his journey.

The case for interpreting Villa Madama, functionally, in the sense explored here is not as good as I should like it to be, nor should it be overstated. Raphael's letter describing the villa is itself a roughly-sketched work of art, an exercise in the form of the Plinian letter, and its own functions and conventions as a work of art practically preclude discussion of the building's social purpose. Yet it is true that he could have gone beyond the mention of access-roads to talk of visitors to Rome more specifically. Also, of course, the hypothesis offered can scarcely be tested. Since so little of the whole projected complex was in the event completed, it required unusual tolerance of the imperfect to make it serve. Yet it did. I know of only four accounts of receptions at Villa Madama during the lifetimes of the joint patrons, Leo X and Cardinal Giulio, later Clement VII. By accident they divide equally between its use as *suburbana* and its use for the reception of arriving visitors. Clement gave a lunch there for cardinals in April 1524, and a dinner for Isabella

d'Este in May 1525; on that occasion Francesco Gonzaga described it rather oddly as "un principio de un bellissimo alloggiamento" – oddly unless he was consciously using the Italian term for the ceremonial *hospitium*⁵². In any case in April 1523 two embassies *in obedientiam*, from Venice and Florence, arrived together, which was bad luck for the Venetians; they were accommodated in the *vigna* which is now, probably, the Osteria L'Antico Falcone, the Florentines in the "vigna de' Medici, palazzo bellissimo"⁵³. Then in May 1533 when Margaret of Austria came to Rome she was met by the officials of the Cancellaria "ad vineam Papae" before her formal entry by the Vatican gate⁵⁴. To these we can add a perhaps more striking document from the diary of Biagio da Cesena, Master of Ceremonies, from which we learn that Margaret prepared for entry again in November 1538, this time by Porta del Popolo; nevertheless, "venit ad vineam Papae prope Ponte Milvium, ubi ... pransa est"⁵⁵. This text shows that even in the Farnese pontificate Villa Madama was, in the mind of a Curial official, the *papal* villa, and that it served the diplomatic-ceremonial purpose I have described. It still does.

The dual function I have suggested seems to me reflected in the sources to which Raphael turns. As *villa suburbana* it is most obviously related to Michelozzo's Villa Medici at Fiesole; the relation to the terrain is very similar, as is that of the loggia to the hanging garden, the stables below, the view over the city and the river; moreover I think it can be shown that Villa Madama, like Villa Medici at Fiesole, had a library⁵⁶. The importance of

52 See the Venetian ambassador's letter quoted by Lefevre, *op. cit.* in n.4, 139, and Francesco Gonzaga's in A. LUZIO, "Isabella d'Este e il sacco di Roma", *ArchStorLomb*, xxxv, Ser. 4, x, 1908, 14.

53 E. ALBERÌ, *Relazioni degli ambasciatori veneti al senato*, Ser. 2, iii, Florence, 1846, 89–90.

54 Biagio da Cesena, B.L., MS. Add. 8446, fol. 5r.

55 MS. *cit.* in n. 54, fol. 239v.

56 On 14 April 1526 there was a payment "A mastro Agnolo falignamo per il telaio del mapamondo ch'è alla vigna", a work in fact begun in November 1524 (Archivio di Stato, Rome, Camerale I, 1491, fol. 86v.); this *telaio* may have been two-dimensional or spherical. In 1505 Isabella d'Este was attempting to get copies of "quello mapamondo et signi celesti, che sono depinti in due spere solide in la libreria del papa", which were also described as "telari et tondi, che stiano sopra li piedi" (Pastor, *op. cit.* in n.33, vi, 634–635); that library was presumably Sixtus IV's, the main Vatican library, rather than the "biblioteca nova secreta perpulchra ... Pensilis Iulia" described in June 1509 by Albertini, *op. cit.* in n.7, fol. Zii, but the latter, too, was (or more strictly he thought it was to be) decorated "signis planetarum et coelorum". In this connection I should like to add a little-known document: on 3 December 1507, a week after moving his apartment definitively to the Stanze level

51 For example THOMAS MARTYN, *A Tour through Italy*, London, 1791, 255: "The situation is delicious, and it commands a fine prospect of the city, with the bend of the river quite from Ponte Molle"; compare Montesquieu, quoted by Lefevre, *op. cit.* in n.4, 189. For Gaspard's drawings see *The Drawings of Nicolas Poussin*, ed. A.F. BLUNT, iv, London, 1963, Pl. 232 (Nos. G3, G13).

the Fiesole villa as the Medicean precedent has been in part acknowledged, but of course it has no courtyard. I think that we might add, therefore, a prototype closer at hand: the castello of the Crescenzi family which lies just beyond Ponte Molle, between Via Cassia and Via Flaminia, in its present form mostly a fifteenth-century building⁵⁷. Its main entrance, from the South East, leads into a first courtyard, whence a barrel-vaulted vestibule

of the palace, Julius II requested the loan of a map of Italy for the use of Bramante who "visere cupit ut ad illius similitudinem in quodam cubiculo nostro Italiam describi facere possit" (B. FELICIANGELI, "Un probabile indizio del nazionalismo di Giulio II", *Arte e storia*, Ser. VI, xxxv, 1916, 225). Payments for the redecoration of the Stanze level, from June 1508 to September 1509, were at least in part made on Bramante's authority, and they include one on 7 March 1509 to "Johanni pictori in Camera bibliothecae"; if the latter was Johannes Ruysch, paid on 13-14 October 1508, it now seems to me more likely that he was exercising his profession as cartographer in the library rather than painting grotesques. On 27 June 1493 Poliziano borrowed from the Medici library in Florence "una di quelle palle che stanno in libreria, che sono come map-pamondi" (Archivio di Stato, Florence, Guardaroba 1, fol. 20r.). GREGORIO CORTESE, in an undated letter c. 1510-1520, describing a project for new monastic buildings at Lerin, includes a library in the centre of which should stand celestial and terrestrial globes (*Opera Omnia*, Padua, 1774, ii, ep. 135); see also ARMENINI, *De' veri precetti* . . ., 1587, iii, 167.

57 T. ASHBY, *La Campagna romana al tempo di Paolo III*, Rome, 1914, 71, and Belli Barsali, op. cit. in n.28, 12, 370.

leads to the main courtyard in the villa-block itself; and the main entrance is flanked by two towers, just as Raphael had intended *torrioni* flanking his main gate to give, as he explains, a little defence. But in the mind of Leo X perhaps Villa Medici at Poggio a Caiano was in a much deeper sense the real inspiration. It had been begun in the 1480s by Giuliano da Sangallo for Leo's revered father Lorenzo il Magnifico, and it was brought to completion, at about the date when Villa Madama was begun, by Leo and Cardinal Giulio as his agent. The visual resemblance, limited to the vast cryptoporticus, is slight and is not the point. The site at Poggio a Caiano seems to have been chosen by Lorenzo because it stood between the approach-roads to Florence from the North West, where it could best serve as *alloggiamento* for visitors. The very existence of this villa could be the most important single reason why Pope Leo and Cardinal Giulio decided to provide similarly for the visitor to Rome.

If the hypothesis set out above is correct the conclusion to be drawn is this: that Villa Madama, especially in its most perfect and most expensive form in the letter-project, is not in fact unrealistic, a private extravagance, a symbol of Leonine megalomania; but it is, rather, a contribution to the facilities of the Curia, exactly what was realistically required to bring order out of chaos for the decent observance of ceremony.