

**MONTEPULCIANO'S PALAZZO COMUNALE, 1440 – c.1465:
RETHINKING CASTELLATED CIVIC PALACES IN FLORENTINE
ARCHITECTURAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXTS**

Two Volumes

Volume I

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Ph.D.

University of York

History of Art

September 2019

ABSTRACT

This thesis argues for the significance of castellated civic palaces in shaping and consolidating Florence's territorial hegemony during the fifteenth century. Although fortress-like civic palaces were a predominant architectural type in Tuscan communes from the twelfth century onwards, it is an understudied field. In the literature of Italian Renaissance civic and military architecture, the castellated motifs of civic palaces have either been marginalised as an outdated and anti-classical form opposing Quattrocento *all'antica* taste, or have been oversimplified as a redundant object lacking defensive functionality. By analysing Michelozzo's Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano, a fifteenth-century castellated palace resembling Florence's thirteenth-century Palazzo dei Priori, this thesis seeks to address the ways in which castellated forms substantially legitimised Florence's political, military and cultural supremacy.

Chapter One examines textual and pictorial representations of Florence's castellated civic palaces and fortifications in order to capture Florentine perceptions of castellated architecture. This investigation offers a conceptual framework, interpreting the profile of castellated civic palaces as an effective architectural affirmation of the contemporary idea of a powerful city-republic rather than being a symbol of despotism as it has been previously understood. Chapters Two and Three examine Montepulciano's renovation project for the Palazzo Comunale within local and central administrative, socio-political, and military contexts during the first half of the fifteenth century, highlighting the Florentine features of Montepulciano's town hall despite the town's peripheral location within the Florentine dominion. Chapter Four casts light on the effective agency of Michelozzo's castellated design in facilitating an architectural dialogue between civic and military, medieval and Renaissance, classical and modern, and centre and periphery, enhancing civic coherence in the town, as well as across the whole Florentine state.

By looking at Michelozzo's mid-fifteenth century design, this thesis demonstrates the interdependence of communal palaces' castellated forms and their civic functions.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOLUME I

ABSTRACT	2
TABLE OF CONTENTS	4
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	7
ABBREVIATIONS	16
CALENDAR, CURRENCY, AND MEASURES	17
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	18
AUTHOR'S DECLARATION	20
INTRODUCTION	21
CHAPTER ONE: FLORENTINE PERCEPTIONS OF CASTELLATED PALAZZI COMUNALI, c.1250 – 1500	39
Introduction	39
1.1 Approaching Fifteenth-Century Perceptions of Castellations, c.1250 – c.1400	41
<i>A Political Campaign</i>	43
<i>A Promised Domain</i>	45
<i>A Measurement</i>	55
<i>A Link to Rome</i>	59
1.2 'The fortress of the fortress': the Castellated Palazzo dei Priori in Early Fifteenth-Century Textual Representations	64
1.3 Fortifications in Fifteenth-Century Pictorial Representations	71
<i>An Agent of Civic Ethics</i>	73
<i>The Face of Power</i>	81
Conclusion	87
CHAPTER TWO: THE COMMUNE OF MONTEPULCIANO AND ITS PALAZZO COMUNALE, c.1281 – c.1465	89
Introduction	89
2.1 The Palazzo Comunale before 1440	91
<i>The Palazzo Comunale in the Thirteenth Century</i>	92
<i>The Palazzo Comunale in the Context of the 1337 Statutes</i>	95
<i>The Palazzo Comunale in 1365</i>	103
<i>The Palazzo Comunale in a Painting of the 1390s</i>	106
2.2 The Palazzo Comunale in Transition, 1440 – c.1465	108

<i>For ‘Honour, Utility and Common Good’: the Façade Act of 27 February 1440</i>	109
<i>The Commencement of the Façade Project, 1440</i>	115
<i>The Façade Project, 1443 – 1447</i>	117
<i>The Completion of the Façade and the Unification of the Old and New Palaces, 1451 – c.1458</i>	121
<i>The Tower Project and its Operai, 1458 – 1460</i>	126
<i>Montepulciano’s Communal Structures under Florentine Rule</i>	129
Conclusion	130
CHAPTER THREE: THE CASTELLATED PALAZZO COMUNALE OF MONTEPULCIANO IN ITS MILITARY CONTEXT, c.1440	134
Introduction	134
3.1 The <i>Dieci di Balìa</i> and the Control of Montepulciano after c.1390	137
3.2 The <i>Càssero</i> of Montepulciano in the Crisis of the Visconti Wars, 1392 – 1397	144
3.3 The Façade Act for Montepulciano’s <i>Palazzo Comunale</i> and Florence’s Military Preparation before the Battle of Anghiari, c. 1437 – 1440	155
3.4 Montepulciano’s <i>Palazzo Comunale</i> in the Aftermath of the Battle of Anghiari (29 June 1440)	166
3.5 Montepulciano: a Florentine Gateway to Rome	170
Conclusion	175
CHAPTER FOUR: A CASTELLATED DIALOGUE BETWEEN CENTRE AND PERIPHERY: FLORENCE, ROME, MONTEPULCIANO, AND OTHER CIVIC PALACES IN TUSCANY	177
Introduction	177
4.1 Montepulciano’s Castellated Façade and Quattrocento Architectural Principles	178
4.2 From Presence to Dominance	188
<i>Tower and Belfry</i>	189
<i>The Machicolated Gallery and Crenellations</i>	192
<i>Travertine Masonry</i>	195
<i>Tiered-Plinth</i>	206
4.3 Montepulciano’s <i>Palazzo Comunale</i> in its Quattrocento Urban Setting	209
Conclusion	214
CONCLUSION	216

VOLUME II

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
ILLUSTRATIONS	3
APPENDIX 1: TIMELINE OF THE BUILDING HISTORY OF MONTEPULCIANO'S PALAZZO COMUNALE	183
APPENDIX 2: SELECTED DOCUMENTS IN RELATION TO THE RENOVATION FOR MONTEPULCIANO'S PALAZZO COMUNALE, 1440 – c.1465	186
Document 1: ASM, "Copialettere," vol. 3, 68v, 29 February 1440	186
Document 2: ASM, "Copialettere," vol. 3, 87v, 16 October 1440	188
Document 3: ASM, "Copialettere," vol. 3, 91r, 7 December 1440	190
Document 4: ASM, "Copialettere," vol. 3, 151v, 4 April 1443	192
Document 5: ASM, "Deliberazioni del Consiglio generale e dei Priori," vol. 38, 104r-104v, 3 November 1458	194
APPENDIX 3: SELECTED DOCUMENTS IN RELATION TO MONTEPULCIANO – FLORENCE POLITICAL AND MILITARY COOPERATIONS, 1437 – 1440	197
Document 1: ASM, 'Copialettere', vol. 3, 24v, 11 Decembre 1437	197
Document 2: ASM, 'Copialettere', vol. 3, 80v, 17 June 1440	199
Document 3: ASM, 'Copialettere', vol. 3, 82v, 2 July 1440	201
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WORKS CITED	203
Unpublished Primary Sources	203
Published Primary Sources	203
Secondary Sources	205

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1 Michelozzo (attrib.): Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, renovated 1440- c.1465

Figure 2 Florence, Palazzo dei Priori (Palazzo Vecchio), 1299-1314

Figure 3 Volterra, Palazzo dei Priori, c.1208-1257

Figure 4 San Gimignano, Palazzo Vecchio del Podestà, after 1210

Figure 5 Poppi, Castello dei Conti Guidi, thirteenth century

Figure 6 Florence, Palazzo del Podestà (Palazzo del Bargello), 1250-1255

Figure 7 Florence, Palazzo dei Priori, 1299-1314, ground plan

Figure 8 Florence, Palazzo del Podestà, 1316-c.1346, evolution of the building complex

Figure 9 Andrea Orcagna (attrib.), *The Expulsion of the Duke of Athens*, 1344-45, fresco, 257 x 290 cm, Palazzo dei Priori, Florence

Figure 10 Jacopo di Cione, *Coronation of the Virgin*, detail of the View of Florence, 1373, 350 x 190 cm, Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence

Figure 11 Mariotto di Nardo, *Saint Anne*, detail of the view of Florence, late 14th century, fresco, Orsanmichele, Florence

Figure 12 Circle of Bernardo Daddi, *The Madonna of Mercy (La Madonna della Misericordia)*, detail of the view of Florence, c.1342, Museo del Bigallo, Florence

Figure 13 Jacopo di Cione, *Saint Ottaviano*, detail of the view of Volterra, c.1383, Sala del Consiglio, Palazzo dei Priori, Volterra

Figure 14 Taddeo di Bartolo, *Assumption of the Virgin*, c.1401, triptych, Cathedral, Montepulciano

Figure 15 Taddeo di Bartolo, *San Gimignano in trono*, detail of the view of San Gimignano, 1401, tempera on panel, Palazzo del Podestà, San Gimignano

Figure 16 Florence, Palazzo del Podestà, 1250-1255, tower

Figure 17 Florence, Palazzo dei Priori, after 1310, Arnolfo's Tower

Figure 18 Domenico Benzi, *Specchio Umano*, 1335-1347, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, ms. Tempi 3, fol. 58r

Figure 19 Rome, Forum of Augustus, 2 BC

Figure 20 Rome, Porta Maggiore, A.D. 52

Figure 21 Rome, Torre delle Milizie (Nero's Tower), c.1210

Figure 22 Anonymous, *Inscription on the West Façade of the Palazzo del Podestà*, c.1255, Florence

Figure 23 Anonymous Florentine Master, *St. Zenobius with the Palazzo Vecchio*, 1415-20, 173 x 110 cm, Palazzo dei Priori, Florence

Figure 24 Workshop of Verrocchio, *Madonna with Saints. Saint Zenobius offers Florence to Mary*, detail of the model of Florence, c.1475, San Martino a Strada, Grassano

- Figure 25 Masaccio, *The Distribution of Alms and the Death of Ananias*, detail of a white fortress, c.1427, fresco, 230 x 162 cm, Cappella Brancacci, Santa Maria del Carmine, Florence
- Figure 26 Master of Apollo and Daphne, *Susanna and the Elders*, 1490s, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool
- Figure 27 Filarete, *Trattato di architettura*, Codice Magliabechiano, fol. 41v & 42r
- Figure 28 Zanobi Strozzi, *Susanna and the Elders*, 1440s, 43 x 170 cm, Musée du Petit Palais, Avignon
- Figure 29 Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *Allegory of Good and Bad Governments*, 1338-1339, Sala dei Novi, Palazzo Pubblico, Siena
- Figure 30 Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Confirmation of the Franciscan Rule by Pope Honorius III*, 1479-85, Santa Trinita, Florence
- Figure 31 Gherardo di Giovanni, *Triumph of Chastity*, c.1475, tempera on panel, 42.5 x 34.9 cm, Galleria Sabauda, Turin
- Figure 32 Francesco di Giorgio Martini, *Triumph of Chastity*, detail of the background fortresses, c.1464, tempera on panel, 37 x 121 cm, J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles
- Figure 33 Filippino Lippi and Sandro Botticelli, *The Story of Esther*, c.1475, panel, central panel in Condé Museum, Chantilly, France; *Esther at the Palace Gate* in National Gallery of Canada, *Vashti Leaving the Palace*, Museum of Horne, Florence
- Figure 34 Lo Scheggia (Master of the Ringling Triumph), *The Siege of Carthage and the Continnence of Scipio*, 1460s, 42.5 x 130 cm, Courtauld Gallery, London
- Figure 35 Biagio d'Antonio, *Camillus Chases the Gauls from Rome (Morelli-Nerli cassone)*, 1472, 40.5 x 162.5 cm, Courtauld Gallery, London
- Figure 36 Biagio d'Antonio, *The Death of Hector*, c.1490-5, 47 x 191.6 cm, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge
- Figure 37 Lo Scheggia, *The Arrival of the Wooden Horse in Troy*, 1460-65, Musée National de la Renaissance, Château d'Ecouen
- Figure 38 Apollonio di Giovanni (attrib.), *The Procession of Darius before the Battle of Issus*, 48 x 154.2 cm, 1450-5, Mr Phil Berg Collection, Los Angeles
- Figure 39 Simone Martini, *Guidoricco da Fogliano*, c.1330, 340 x 968 cm, Sala del Mappamondo, Palazzo Pubblico, Siena.
- Figure 40 Apollonio di Giovanni, *The Invasion of Greece*, c.1463, Allen Memorial Art Museum
- Figure 41 Anghiari Master, *The Taking of Pisa*, 1460-70s (?), National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin
- Figure 42 Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *Security in the Countryside*, 1338-1339, Sala dei Novi, Palazzo Pubblico, Siena
- Figure 43 Anghiari Master, *The Battle of Anghiari*, 1460-70s (?), National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin

- Figure 44 Michelozzo: Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, 1440- c.1465, elevation by Riccardo Pizzinelli (architect and restorer of the Palazzo Comunale)
- Figure 45 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, ground-floor plan by Riccardo Pizzinelli
- Figure 46 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, first-floor plan by Riccardo Pizzinelli
- Figure 47 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, second-floor plan by Riccardo Pizzinelli
- Figure 48 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, third-floor plan by Riccardo Pizzinelli
- Figure 49 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, section by Riccardo Pizzinelli
- Figure 50 Montepulciano, urban development of Montepulciano from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries by Ilio Calabresi
- Figure 51 Montepulciano, Panoramic view from the west
- Figure 52 Orvieto, Palazzo del Popolo, after 1157, external steps
- Figure 53 Perugia, Palazzo dei Priori, after 1200, external steps
- Figure 54 Anonymous, *View of Montepulciano*, seventeenth century, Museo Civico Pinacoteca Crociani, Montepulciano
- Figure 55 Montepulciano, Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo, post fourteenth century, red square marks masonry traces of the old first-floor opening
- Figure 56 Montepulciano, Piazza Grande, 2012, hypothetical reconstruction of the fourteenth-century piazza by Roberto Minetti
- Figure 57 Anonymous, *Execution of Savonarola and his Companions in Piazza della Signoria*, detail of the *ringhiera*, 1498, Museo di San Marco, Florence
- Figure 58 Lucignano, Palazzo Comunale, c.1300-c.1400, east-facing belfry
- Figure 59 Certaldo, Palazzo Pretorio, second half of fifteenth century, belfry
- Figure 60 Montepulciano, Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo, post seventeenth century, south façade
- Figure 61 Montepulciano, Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo, prison
- Figure 62 Montepulciano, Piazza Grande, 2012?, hypothetical view of the fourteenth-century piazza by Roberto Minetti
- Figure 63 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, *sala del consiglio*
- Figure 64 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, *sala magna*
- Figure 65 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, aerial view of the rear block
- Figure 66 Taddeo di Bartolo, *The Assumption of the Virgin*, detail of monumental buildings in the urban centre, c.1390s-1401, triptych, Cathedral, Montepulciano
- Figure 67 Taddeo di Bartolo, *The Assumption of the Virgin*, detail of the old Palazzo Comunale, c.1390s-1401, triptych, Cathedral, Montepulciano
- Figure 68 Siena, Palazzo Pubblico, *Torre del Mangia*, 1338-48
- Figure 69 ASM, "Deliberazioni del consiglio generale e dei priori," vol. 31, fol. 239r
- Figure 70 Geological map showing St. Albino, red arrow indicates location of travertine deposits (coloured mauve on map), Carta Geologica Storica 1:100.000

- Figure 71 Florence, Palazzo del Podestà, after 1316, courtyard
- Figure 72 Scarperia, Palazzo dei Vicari, after 1299, courtyard
- Figure 73 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, building history of the courtyard loggias.
- Figure 74 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, after 1390 – c.1451-1465, looking through the south loggia to the superimposed north loggias
- Figure 75 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, after 1451-c.1465, the ground-floor south loggia
- Figure 76 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, after 1390-c.1465, *foglie d'acqua* capital with an octagonal shaft on a high pedestal base supporting the ground-floor north loggia
- Figure 77 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, after 1451-c.1465, travertine Ionic capital on a round column in the ground-floor south loggia
- Figure 78 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, after 1451-c.1465, travertine Ionic console capital in the south *androne*
- Figure 79 Masaccio, *Trinity*, 1425-1427, fresco, Santa Maria Novella, Florence
- Figure 80 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, columns in the north (left) and south (right) ground-floor loggias
- Figure 81 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, ground-floor plan. The purple zone shows the north loggia built in the 1390s
- Figure 82 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, section of the north superimposed loggias
- Figure 83 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, section of the south superimposed loggias
- Figure 84 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, after 1451-c.1465, four-bay *verone* with colonette in the first-floor north block
- Figure 85 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, after 1451, Michelozzesque Composite capital in the first-floor north *verone*
- Figure 86 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, wall of the first-floor south block
- Figure 87 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, after 1451-c.1465, barrel-vaulted staircase
- Figure 88 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, after 1451-c.1465, ceiling of the first-floor *androne*
- Figure 89 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, section showing the internal staircase connecting the old palace block and the south block
- Figure 90 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, after 1451-c.1465, Ionic column in the staircase
- Figure 91 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, after 1451-c.1465, console bracket in the first-floor chapel
- Figure 92 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, after 1451, *pietra serena* fireplace in the *sala magna*
- Figure 93 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, after 1451-c.1465, superimposed loggia of the south façade

- Figure 94 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, after 1451-c.1465, travertine column of the first-floor loggia on the south façade
- Figure 95 Pienza, Palazzo Piccolomini, 1549-1462, superimposed loggia facing the garden
- Figure 96 Map of Montepulciano's geographical position bordering Florentine, Siense territories, and the Papal State
- Figure 97 Giovan Battista Belluzzi, *Map of Montepulciano*, 1544
- Figure 98 Joan Blaeu, *Map of Florence*, 1665, Austrian National Library
- Figure 99 Leonardo Da Vinci, *Valdichiana*, c.1502, Pen, ink and watercolour, 33.8 x 48.8 cm, the Royal Library, the Windsor Castle
- Figure 100 Anonymous, *Sketch of the Siense Fortress*, c. thirteenth century (?), ASM, Montepulciano
- Figure 101 Anonymous, *View of Montepulciano*, detail of the *càssero*, seventeenth century, Museo Civico Pinacoteca Crociani, Montepulciano
- Figure 102 Anonymous, Map of Montepulciano, the *càssero*, 1749, 52 x 74 cm, ASF, Scrittoio delle Fortezza e fabbriche, n. 603
- Figure 103 Pietro della Valle, *View of the Fortezza*, 1866, oil on panel, 65.5 x 128 cm, Museo Civico Pinacoteca Crociani, Montepulciano
- Figure 104 Augusto Corbi, *The Project of the Fortezza*, 1881-3, Liceo Riuniti, Montepulciano
- Figure 105 Montepulciano, the Florentine *càssero*, masonry
- Figure 106 Montepulciano, view of the Val d'Orcia from the *Sasso*
- Figure 107 Florentine territories in the Valdichiana during the fifteenth century, adapted from Esri World Topographic Map
- Figure 108 Cover of the book of the podestà, Giovanni de' Machiavelli, 1439-1440, ASM, Montepulciano
- Figure 109 Michelozzo: Montepulciano, Church of Sant'Agostino, c.1437, façade
- Figure 110 Michelozzo, Monumental Tomb of Bartolomeo Aragazzi, c.1437, Cathedral, Montepulciano
- Figure 111 Via Francigena and Valdichiana
- Figure 112 Road connection between S. Quirico d'Orcia and Montepulciano in the old Siense road system
- Figure 113 Façade comparisons: left: Florence, Palazzo dei Priori, 1299-1314; right: Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, 1440-c.1465.
- Figure 114 Michelozzo: Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, 1440- c.1465, geometric analysis of the elevation, adapted from Riccardo Pizzinelli
- Figure 115 Florence, Palazzo Spini, thirteenth century
- Figure 116 Florence, Palazzo Davanzati, after 1350
- Figure 117 Michelozzo: Florence, Palazzo Medici, c.1444-1459, elevation
- Figure 118 Alberti: Florence, Palazzo Rucellai, 1469, elevation

- Figure 119 Florence, Palazzo dei Priori, 1299-1314, machicolated galleries
- Figure 120 Michelozzo: Mugello, Villa di Trebbio, 1427-36
- Figure 121 Rome, Palazzo Venezia, after 1467-1471
- Figure 122 Sebastiano Serlio, *Doric Façade*, 1556
- Figure 123 Michelozzo: Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, 1440-c.1465, nineteen string courses
- Figure 124 Volterra, Palazzo Pretorio, thirteenth century
- Figure 125 Tuscan Workshop, *Cassone Panel*, the second half of the fifteenth century(?), *intarsia*, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence
- Figure 126 Siena, Palazzo Capitano del Popolo, fourteenth century, string courses at the impost level
- Figure 127 Siena, Palazzo Pubblico, 1298-1348, string courses at the impost level
- Figure 128 Siena, Palazzo Tolomei, 1205-1267, string courses at the impost level
- Figure 129 Montepulciano, Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo, c. fourteenth century, string courses functioning as arch imposts
- Figure 130 Montepulciano, Palazzo Neri Orsini, fourteenth century
- Figure 131 Rome, Colosseum, A.D. 72, travertine facing
- Figure 132 Guliano da Sangallo, *Antichità di Tivoli (upper) and Porta Palatina a Torino (lower)*, 1465-1469, Codice Barberiniano, fol. 41r
- Figure 133 Michelozzo: Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, 1440-c.1465, displacement of façade elements
- Figure 134 Bernardo Rosellino: Pienza, Palazzo Piccolomini, c.1458, elevation
- Figure 135 Domenico Beccafumi, (attrib.), *St. Agnes*, detail of the model of Montepulciano, c.1507, Museo Civico Pinacoteca Crociani, Montepulciano
- Figure 136 Florence, Palazzo dei Priori, 1299-1314, elevation
- Figure 137 Scarperia, Palazzo dei Vicari, 1299-c.1306
- Figure 138 Bernardo Rosellino: Pienza, Palazzo Comunale, c.1460
- Figure 139 Francesco di Giorgio Martini: Jesi, Palazzo Comunale, c.1487
- Figure 140 Pier Maria Sebaldi (attrib.), *Foundation Medal for the Palazzo dei Tribunali*, c.1509, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican
- Figure 141 Michelozzo: Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, 1440-c.1465, machicolated galleries
- Figure 142 Florence, Palazzo del Podestà, c.1345, projecting console brackets resembling a machicolated gallery
- Figure 143 Scarperia, Palazzo dei Vicari, the 1920s façade before crenellation was added
- Figure 144 Arezzo, Palazzo dei Priori, renovated 1454-1472
- Figure 145 Michelozzo: Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, 1440-c.1452, square openings resembling arrow slits

- Figure 146 Arezzo, Palazzo dei Priori, renovated 1454-1472, stepped console brackets
- Figure 147 Montepulciano, Parta Gozzano, thirteenth century, *cyma recta* profiled console bracket
- Figure 148 Brunelleschi: Vicopisano, Fortress, after 1436, projecting brackets and crenellation
- Figure 149 San Gimignano, Nuovo Palazzo del Popolo, decorated arcade of the machicolated gallery
- Figure 150 Bologna, Casa dei Carracci, sixteenth century, projecting galleries
- Figure 151 Suvereto, Palazzo Comunale, first half of the thirteenth century, crenellation
- Figure 152 Venice, Ca d'Oro, 1421-1430, decorative merlons
- Figure 153 Michelangelo: Rome, Porta Pia, c.1561
- Figure 154 Perugia, Palazzo dei Priori, after 1303
- Figure 155 Todi, The Palazzo del Popolo (left, c.1214) and the Palazzo del Capitano (right, c. 1293)
- Figure 156 Assisi, Palazzo dei Priori, c.1333
- Figure 157 Neroccio de' Landi, *Life of Saint Benedict*, detail of the background urban view, c.1480, tempera on panel, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence
- Figure 158 Siena, Porta Romana, c.1327, brick and travertine structure
- Figure 159 Montepulciano, San Biagio, 1519, travertine façade
- Figure 160 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, 1440-c.1451, ashlar and naturalistic rustication
- Figure 161 Florence, Palazzo Medici, c.1444-1459, tripartite gradated masonry
- Figure 162 Francesco di Giorgio Martini, rustication typology
- Figure 163 Florence, Palazzo dei Priori, 1299-1314, naturalistic rustication
- Figure 164 Florence, Palazzo degli Alessandri, Borgo degli Albizzi, after 1378, severe style of naturalistic rustication
- Figure 165 Florence, Palazzo da Uzzano, Via de'Benci, after 1411-1429, naturalistic rustication
- Figure 166 Florence, Palazzo Scolari, on the corner of Borgo degli Albizzi and Via de'Giraldi, c.1400-1430, naturalistic rustication
- Figure 167 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, 1440-c.1451, detail of the ground-floor naturalistic rustication
- Figure 168 Michelozzo: Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, 1440-c.1451, portal voussoirs
- Figure 169 Prato, Castello dell'Imperatore, thirteenth century, portal voussoirs
- Figure 170 Florence, Via dei Calzaiuoli, 1389-1391, naturalistic rustication
- Figure 171 Michelozzo: Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, 1440-c.1451, roughly bossed rustication
- Figure 172 Florence, Palazzo Medici, c.1444-1459, roughly bossed rustication

- Figure 173 Gentile da Fabriano, *The Presentation at the Temple*, 1432, 283 x 300 cm, Louvre, Paris
- Figure 174 Bottega di Apollonio di Giovanni, *Story of Aeneas*, detail, Musée National de la Renaissance, Château d'Ecouen
- Figure 175 Giotto, *Meeting at the Golden Gate*, detail, c.1300, fresco, Scrovegni Chapel, Padua
- Figure 176 Rimini, Arch of Augustus, 27 BC
- Figure 177 Rome, Porta Maggiore, A.D. 52, ashlar and rustication
- Figure 178 Florence, Palazzo dei Priori, 1299-1314, *bifore* windows
- Figure 179 Michelozzo: Florence, Palazzo Medici, c.1444-1459, *bifore* windows
- Figure 180 Alberti: Florence, Palazzo Rucellai, 1469, *bifore* windows
- Figure 181 Florence, Palazzo Pazzi, after 1476, *bifore* window
- Figure 182 Verona, Porta dei Borsari, A.D. 265
- Figure 183 Michelozzo: Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, 1440-c.1451, tiered-plinth seen from the north
- Figure 184 Michelozzo: Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, 1440-c.1451, tiered-plinth
- Figure 185 Francesco di Giorgio Martini, scarped base of towers
- Figure 186 Giotto, *The Life of Saint Francis, Renunciation of Worldly Goods*, detail of the podium, 1325-1328, fresco, 280 x 450 cm, Bardi Chapel, Santa Croce, Florence
- Figure 187 Montepulciano, Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo, fourteenth century, west façade facing Via Ricci
- Figure 188 Prato, Castello dell'Imperatore, thirteenth century
- Figure 189 Florence, Palazzo del Podestà, detail of the plinth on the Via del Proconsolo
- Figure 190 Biagio d'Antonio, *The Schoolmaster of Falerii (The Morelli-Nerli Wedding Chests)*, 1472, 40.5 x 137 cm, the Courtauld Gallery, London
- Figure 191 Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *Saint Nicholas Offers a Dowry to Three Poor Girls*, detail of wooden street benches, c.1327-1332, tempera on wood, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence
- Figure 192 Michelozzo: Florence, Palazzo Medici, street benches
- Figure 193 Florence, Palazzo Strozzi, 1489-1536, street benches
- Figure 194 Anonymous, *View of Montepulciano*, detail of the Piazza Grande, seventeenth century, Museo Civico Pinacoteca Crociani, Montepulciano
- Figure 195 Montepulciano, road system around the Palazzo Comunale
- Figure 196 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale viewed from Via San Donato, to the south of the palace
- Figure 197 Michelozzo: Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale viewed from Via Ricci, to the north of the palace
- Figure 198 Scarperia, Palazzo dei Vicari, façade

- Figure 199 Florence, Palazzo dei Priori, west façade seen from the Uffizi Gallery
- Figure 200 Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale viewed from Via del Teatro
- Figure 201 Michelozzo: Montepulciano, Palazzo Comunale, corner console bracket in the machicolated galleries
- Figure 202 Montepulciano, Piazza Grande, after 1586, view of the Piazza Grande from the tower of the Palazzo Comunale, to the right are the steps in front of the new Duomo
- Figure 203 Antonio da Sangallo the Elder: Montepulciano, Palazzo Contucci, 1519
- Figure 204 Anonymous, *Map of Montepulciano*, detail of the Piazza Grande, 1749, 52 x 74 cm, ASF, Scrittoio delle Fortezza e fabbriche, n. 603

ABBREVIATIONS

ASF: Archivio di Stato di Firenze

ASM: Archivio Storico 'Piero Calamandrei,' Montepulciano

Abbreviations of statutes cited from the 1337 'Statuto comune di Montepulciano', following the order in the 1966 publication:

bk. 1 of communal statutes: Rubrice primi libri statutorum comunis et populi terre Montispotiani. Rub. 1-69.

bk. 2 in civil affairs: Rubrice secundi libri in civilibus questionibus. Rub. 1-63.

bk. 3 of crimes: Rubrice tertii libri de criminalibus. Rub. 1-119.

bk. 1 of the sindaco: Rubrice statutorum pertinentium ad dominum syndicum. Rub. 1-10.

bk. 2 of the sindaco: Rubrice secundi libri domini syndici. Rub. 11-15.

bk. 3 of the sindaco: Rubrice terii libri domini syndici. Rub. 16-162.

chap. of the Quinque: Capitula Statutorum spectantia ad offitium dominorum Quinque. Rub. 1-22.

CALENDAR, CURRENCY, AND MEASURES

Calendar:

The Montepulciano commune used the *stile Natività*, i.e. 25 December is the first day of a year.

The Florentines used *stile Incarnazione*, in which the new year starts from 25 March, Virgin Mary's Annunciation. For consistency, dates used in this thesis are given in modern style.¹

1 florin = 1 *lira*

1 florin or 1 *lira* = 20 *soldi*

1 *soldo* = 12 *denari*

1 *braccia* = 58.36 cm

1 *stajo* = 24.4 litres

¹ On the chronology of different calendar systems used in Italy, Cappelli Adriano, *Cronologia cronografia e calendario perpetuo* (Milano: Editore Ulrico Hoepli Milano, 1998), 6-11.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My greatest debt is to my supervisor, Amanda Lillie. It is her expertise in Italian Renaissance arts and architecture, her kindness, patience, and generosity that led me to this point of completing my thesis. The amount of energy and effort she has spent on guiding me through this project goes beyond what any graduate student could possibly expect. I know that I will never be able to thank her properly, what I can do is to express my deepest gratitude by saying simple ‘thank you’.

I am indebted to my thesis advisory panel member, Emanuele Lugli, who brought me fresh ideas and useful references that hugely benefited my work. I appreciated his willingness to help even when he was on a research leave, having agreed to meet me at Villa I Tatti in Florence. It was a great privilege to have two experts, Anthony Geraghty and Paul Davies, to read my thesis, from whom I received invaluable comments and advice. I thank Gianluca Belli who kindly hosted me at the University of Florence, introducing me to his research project, as well as giving productive feedback on my research. I am also grateful to Caroline Elam, who offered help with my transcriptions and translations of Italian primary sources. I owe much to Melony Bethala, Harold Guízar, and Livia Lupi, who read through my early drafts.

I am grateful to many individuals and institutions in Montepulciano. Riccardo Pizzinelli, the historian and architect, generously provided me with his drawings of the Palazzo Comunale that vastly enriched my architectural analyses. The librarians and archivists in the Archivio Storico ‘Piero Calamandrei’, Duccio Pasqui and Antonio Sigillo, not only assisted me in locating the manuscripts stored in the archives, but they also allowed me to work beyond the opening hours. The commune’s administrative officer, Luigi Pagnotta, granted me access to the Palazzo Comunale and the Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo, where I was allowed to take photographs.

The Ministry of Education in Taiwan who funded this thesis deserves special thanks for their generosity. I am also grateful to the experienced staff from the Education Division of Taipei's Representative Office in the UK for their friendly and professional assistance.

My friends, Leah Hsiao, Miyuki Kamiya, Shan Shan Lou, Cher Prior, Valeria Viola, and Yusuke Warasawa at the University of York, Ya Fang Cheng at Berkeley, as well as Massimo Curti in Florence, helped me to move on in this journey with their inspiring, and supporting words. My warmest thanks go to my family, especially my husband, Daniel, who was my source of mental support at every stage. Finally, this thesis is for my uncle, Qian Ming (1957-2019), whose help made my study at York possible.

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I, Koching Chao, declare that this thesis is the product of my individual and original work. No material presented in the thesis has been submitted previously for any academic award, either at the University of York or any other academic institution. All sources are acknowledged as references.

INTRODUCTION

In his pioneering work *Renaissance Fortification: Art or Engineering?* (1977), Sir John R. Hale called attention to an evident, yet neglected, role that fortifications played in the Italian Renaissance.² Highlighting the pivotal role artists and architects played in the innovation of fortification design, he demonstrated that Renaissance military engineering and civic architecture shared the same roots, suggesting that fortifications were subject to the constantly evolving stylistic preferences of the time as much as to practical defensive considerations. In spite of this, castellation remains a marginalised theme in the literature on Italian Renaissance architecture.³ The 1994 exhibition *The Renaissance from Brunelleschi to Michelangelo: the Representation of Architecture*, treated fortified elements as gothic, set against the antique revival developing from the early fifteenth century onwards. In his analysis of an anonymous intarsia panel cycle, Krautheimer described how ‘crenellations are placed antithetically atop a palace façade articulated by a classical order of arcades, pilasters and architraves.’⁴ Ackerman

² Hale pointed out that during the Renaissance, military architecture was not separated from ecclesiastical and civic architecture. Architect and engineer were two interchangeable words referred to people who designed and constructed any type of building. Architects such as Brunelleschi, Francesco di Giorgio Martini, Bramante, and Giuliano da Sangallo, as well as artists such as Giotto, Vecchietta, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and Giorgio Vasari frequently contributed to the renovation of defensive structures. For example, between 1423 and 1446 Brunelleschi designed many fortification and defensive system for Pistoia, Pisa and Rimini, as well as fortified towns (*terre murate*) such as Lastra a Signa and Malmantile on the Valdarno. John Rigby Hale, *Renaissance Fortification. Art or Engineering?* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977), 7-19. Also see John Rigby Hale, "The Early Development of the Bastion: An Italian Chronology, c.1450-c.1534," in *Europe in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. John Rigby Hale, J. R. L. Highfield, and B. Smalley (London: Faber and Faber, 1965), 466-94; Eugenio Battisti, *Brunelleschi: The Complete Work* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1981), 230-47, 308-20. For the formal and conceptual development of European military architecture from castles to artillery fortifications, see Paul Hirst, *Space and Power: Politics, War and Architecture* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), 179-97. Also, Lamberini noted that for fifteenth-century contemporaries, paintings, architecture and military engineering might not have been mutually exclusive genres. Daniela Lamberini, "Giuliano da Maiano e l'architettura militare," in *Giuliano e la bottega dei da Maiano*, ed. Daniela Lamberini, Marcello Lotti, and Roberto Lunardi (Firenze: Franco Cantini, 1994), 13.

³ Compared with the great scholarly interest in medieval castles and fortifications, the literature on Italian Renaissance architecture tends to treat castellation as a different genre that was not part of the revival of classical antiquity. Studies of Renaissance fortification normally emphasised on the ways it was related to military technology and warfare rather than to civic palaces. Gian Maria Tabarelli, *Architettura castellana d'Italia: fortezze, rocche e bastioni* (Busto Arsizio: Busto Arsizio Bramante, 1992); Simon Pepper and Nicholas Adams, *Firearms and Fortifications: Military Architecture and Siege Warfare in Sixteenth-Century Siena* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1986). Simon Pepper, "The Meaning of the Renaissance Fortress," *Architectural Association Quarterly* 22, no. 2 (1973): 3-12.

⁴ Richard Krautheimer, "The Panels in Urbino, Baltimore and Berlin Reconsidered," in *The Renaissance from*

offered a similar attitude to fortification by identifying the 1450s as a threshold marking the shift in fashion from castellated gothic to unfortified classical villas.⁵ More recently, in the publication *Renaissance Architecture of Power: Princely Palaces in the Italian Quattrocento* (2016), papers on fifteenth-century rulers' residences such as Francesco Sforza's in Milan, Ercole I d'Este's in Ferrara, and Alfonso I's palace in Naples, draw our attention to the amalgamation of pre-existing medieval defensive structures with *all'antica* loggias and arcaded courtyards.⁶ Yet, the military motifs in these building complexes were understood in contradistinction to *all'antica* innovation, rather than as integral parts of the renovation campaigns.

Nevertheless, the sharp division contrasting medieval castellation to *all'antica* style in a linear understanding of architectural progress has not gone completely unchallenged. In an early paper of 1968, Burns already pointed to the hybrid nature of Quattrocento architecture, often citing fourteenth-century models with classical motifs. Burns postulated that the fluidity between 'Survival' and 'Revival' of classical motifs was the most distinctive feature of Quattrocento architecture.⁷ Although his work did not directly consider military architecture,

Brunelleschi to Michelangelo: the Representation of Architecture, ed. Henry Millon and Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 248.

⁵ James S. Ackerman, *The Villa: Form and Ideology of Country Houses* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1995), 65. Regarding the advent of unfortified, civic style villas in the 1450s as a response to humanistic taste, for example the Medici villas at Fiesole and that at Poggio di Caiano, see Fianico Studio, *The Medici Villas* (Firenze: Libreria Editrice Fiorentina, 1980); Amanda Lillie, "The Humanist Villa Revisited," in *Language and Images of Renaissance Italy*, ed. Alison Brown (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 93-4; Amanda Lillie, "Fiesole: *locus amoenus* or Penitential Landscape?," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 11 (2007): 11-55.

⁶ Silvia Beltramo, Flavia Cantatore, and Marco Folin, eds., *A Renaissance Architecture of Power: Princely Palaces in the Italian Quattrocento* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 7-9, 134-5, 189, 321-5. Other examples adopted as case studies include the Palaces of the Marquis of Mantua (1459-1524), Girolamo Riario, Cosimo de' Medici (the Palazzo Medici on Via Larga), and the Vatican Palace renovated by the order of Pope Nicholas V.

⁷ Howard Burns, "Quattrocento Architecture and the Antique: Some Problems," in *Classical Influences on European Culture A.D. 500-1500: Proceedings of an International Conference Held at King's College, Cambridge, April 1969*, ed. Geoffrey Rudolph Elton and Robert Ralph Bolgar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 270-1. A similar critical perspective towards the essence of an *all'antica* approach and its debt to medieval architecture reappears in recent works, see Richard Schofield, "A Local Renaissance: Florentine Quattrocento Places and *all'antica* style," in *Local Antiquities, Local Identities: Art, Literature and Antiquarianism in Europe, c. 1400 – 1700*, ed. Kathleen Christian and Bianca de Divitiis (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), 13-36. Burke's recent work deals with a wide range of sources and models in the articulation of Renaissance architecture. Peter Burke, *Hybrid Renaissance: Culture, Language,*

it leads us to wonder about the extent to which fortification and defensive buildings were perceived as ‘medieval’ and ‘anti-classical’ by contemporary viewers. In his ground-breaking article, ‘A Tale of Two Cities: Florentine and Roman Visual Context for Fifteenth-Century Palaces’, Sinding-Larsen questioned the extent to which fifteenth-century viewers could correctly distinguish between medieval towers and fortresses and those of ancient Rome.⁸ The antagonism between castellation and classical themes in Renaissance architectural development was partly resolved by Lillie.⁹ In her analysis of Florentine aristocratic country houses, she argued that fortification was still a predominant building type during the second half of the fifteenth century, demonstrating that castellated elements, such as towers, crenellation, and machicolation built or remodelled during this period show a greater accordance with classical principles of symmetry, axiality and uniformity compared with the previous century. Fiore drew the same conclusion, suggesting that the design of fortification during the second half of the fifteenth century adhered more strictly to geometrical principles.¹⁰ Similarly, in his study of Renaissance villas, Burns noted that the castellated villa was an

Architecture (New York: Central European University Press, 2016).

⁸ Staale Sinding-Larsen, "A Tale of Two Cities: Florentine and Roman Visual Context for Fifteenth-Century Palaces," *Institutum Romanum Norvegiae: acta ad archaeologiam et artium historiam pertinentia* VI (1975): 198.

⁹ Lillie, "The Humanist Villa Revisited," 199-200; Amanda Lillie, *Florentine Villas in the Fifteenth Century: An Architectural and Social History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Amanda Lillie, "The Politics of Castellation," in *The Medici: Citizens and Masters*, ed. Robert Black and John E. Law (Villa I Tatti: Harvard University Press, 2016), 311-48. With regard to private castellation, historians underscored that castles, fortresses, towers, and crenellated residences were the cornerstone of the formation of oligarchical and signorial social strata in Renaissance Italy. One of the most comprehensive studies on Italian noble families' concern with castellation is Shaw's 2015 publication, Christine Shaw, *Barons and Castellans: the Military Nobility of Renaissance Italy* (Brill, 2015). On the importance of castellation in the establishment of Florentine families' fame and reputation, see Carol Lansing, *The Florentine Magnates: Lineage and Faction in a Medieval Commune*, New ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014); Loris Macci and Valeria Orgera, *Architettura e civiltà delle torri: torri e famiglie nella Firenze medievale* (Firenze: Edifir, 1994). Rubinstein pointed to the Italian signorial rulers' preference for fortified enclosure as their residence from the twelfth to the sixteenth century. Nicolai Rubinstein, "Fortified Enclosures in Italian Cities under Signori," in *War, Culture, and Society in Renaissance Venice: Essays in Honour of John Hale*, ed. David S. Chambers, Cecil H. Clough, and Michael Edward Mallett (London, Rio Grande, Ohio: Hambledon Press, 1993). Lillie's works are also rich in social and practical analysis of castellation, Lillie, "The Politics of Castellation," 311-48.

¹⁰ Francesco Paolo Fiore, *Storia dell'architettura italiana. Il Quattrocento* (Milano: Electa, 1998), 11-2. Also see Daniela Lamberini, "Architetti e architettura militare per il Magnifico," in *Lorenzo il Magnifico e il suo mondo: convegno internazionale di studi*, ed. Gian Carlo Garfagnini (Firenze: Olschki, 1994), 407-25.

understudied topic.¹¹ One aim of this thesis is to further develop this argument beyond the scope of domestic buildings, exploring the evolution of castellation in the context of Quattrocento urban civic architecture by examining the Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano (Figure 1), a rural commune subject to Florence during most of the fifteenth century.¹²

Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale is particularly apt as a case study to discuss the dialogue between military engineering and civic palaces, gothic and *all'antica* styles during the Quattrocento for two main reasons. First, its fortress-like elevation and defensive enclave plan was executed between 1440 and c.1465, therefore enabling us to explore the very period that Ackerman defined as a threshold. Second, the design of the new façade was most probably provided by Michelozzo, whose Palazzo Medici on Via Larga (after 1444-1459) is widely considered a prototypical *all'antica* palace.¹³ Prior to the publication of Howard Saalman's article 'The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo' in 1965 (Italian version in 1973), Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale went almost unnoticed in Quattrocento architectural historiography.¹⁴ Based on detailed typological analysis, Saalman

¹¹ Howard Burns, *La villa italiana del Rinascimento* (Vicenza: Angelo Colla, 2012), 27-33.

¹² The town was officially under Florence's jurisdiction between 1404 and 1494, and again after 1512 when Florentine rule over Montepulciano was restored.

¹³ The Palazzo Medici has enjoyed great prestige since its completion, as demonstrated by contemporary praise, for example see Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi (Firenze: Sansoni, 1906), vol. 2, 443; Filarete, *Trattato di architettura*, ed. Anna Maria Finoli and Liliana Grassi (Milano: Edizioni il polifilo, 1972), vol. 2, 695-8. Also see Isabelle Hyman, *Fifteenth Century Florentine Studies: The Palazzo Medici; and a Ledger for the Church of San Lorenzo* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Dissertation Publishing, 1968), 206-32; Rab Hatfield, "Some Unknown Descriptions of the Medici Palace in 1459," *The Art Bulletin* 52, no. 3 (1970): 232-49. Architectural analysis of the Medici palace's façade focused on its resemblance with Florence's Palazzo Vecchio, as well as the adaptation of classical elements like the projecting cornice and stringcourses. Key references, see Sinding-Larsen, "A Tale of Two Cities: Florentine and Roman Visual Context for Fifteenth-Century Palaces," 188-94; Hyman, *Fifteenth Century Florentine Studies: The Palazzo Medici; and a Ledger for the Church of San Lorenzo*, 204-5, 225-8; Sinding-Larsen, "A Tale of Two Cities: Florentine and Roman Visual Context for Fifteenth-Century Palaces," 188-94; Harriet McNeal Caplow, *Michelozzo* (N.Y. ; London: Garland Publishing, 1970), vol. 2, 544-57; Caroline Elam, "Il Palazzo nel contesto della città: strategie urbanistiche dei Medici nel gonfalone del Leone d'Ora, 1415-1430," in *Il Palazzo Medici Riccardi di Firenze*, ed. Giovanni Cherubini, Giovanni Fanelli, and Cristina Acidini Luchinat (Firenze: Giunti, 1990); Dale Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2000), 225-8; Brenda Preyer, "L'architettura del Palazzo Mediceo," in *Il Palazzo Medici Riccardi di Firenze*, ed. Giovanni Cherubini and Giovanni Fanelli (Firenze: Giunti, 1990), 58-75.

¹⁴ Howard Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 28, no. 1 (1965): 1-46. No publication prior to Saalman's paper noticed the formal resemblance between the façade of Montepulciano's palace and Florence's seat of government, nor was

described this palace as an architectural masterpiece by Michelozzo, its façade was ‘a kind of symmetrized travertine copy of the Florentine Palazzo Vecchio (Figure 2),’ while the juxtaposition of *foglie d’acqua* and classical Ionic capitals in the courtyard testified to the architect’s distinctive personal approach contrasting ancient with modern.¹⁵ The incorporation of an arcaded courtyard slightly off-centre in the plan, and a belvedere loggia extending from the south side of the pre-existing building block further demonstrated Michelozzo’s awareness of contemporary humanist aesthetic principles and his attempt to modernise and transform Montepulciano’s town hall into an *all’antica* palace. Although it was published more than fifty years ago, Saalman’s paper is still the sole substantial publication on the Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano.

Despite the wide circulation of Saalman’s article, his viewpoint has been frequently misinterpreted. Scholars have tended to emphasise either the influence of Florence’s Palazzo dei Priori or Michelozzo’s authorship. Discussing Montepulciano from the point of view of Florentine architectural studies, Hyman’s doctoral dissertation ‘Fifteenth Century Florentine Studies. The Palazzo Medici and a Ledger for the Church of San Lorenzo’ (1968, published in 1977) asserted that Montepulciano’s communal palace was an ‘old-fashioned motif that traditionally belonged to a Medieval city hall’ with its profile characterised by a tower and machicolations.¹⁶ Most subsequent studies simply describe the façade as a travertine, rather than pietra forte, version of the *all’antica* façade that Michelozzo designed for Cosimo de’ Medici’s town house, *i.e.* Palazzo Medici.¹⁷ From this perspective Montepulciano’s new

Michelozzo’s authorship recognised. Rodolico’s study, published in 1962, speculated that the façade belonged to the circle of Antonio da Sangallo the Elder. Niccolò Rodolico and Giuseppe Marchini, *I palazzi del popolo nei comuni toscani del Medioevo* (Milano: Electa editrice, 1962), 161-2.

¹⁵ Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," 11. Natali also suggested that this palace was an example of Michelozzo’s preference of juxtaposing of two different styles. Antonio Natali, *L’umanesimo di Michelozzo* (Firenze: Maschietto & Musolino, 1996), 103.

¹⁶ Hyman, *Fifteenth Century Florentine Studies: The Palazzo Medici; and a Ledger for the Church of San Lorenzo*, 155-6.

¹⁷ In her paragraph of Montepulciano’s Palazzo Comunale, Preyer mainly reviewed Saalman’s argument regarding

fifteenth-century façade is reduced to a mechanical copy. This claim can be strongly refuted, since the masonry work in Montepulciano was certainly already initiated in 1440, whereas the construction phase of Palazzo Medici in Florence is accepted as having started in 1444.¹⁸ The importance of Saalman, as well as subsequent studies referring to Montepulciano's façade, lies in associating this work with Florence's artistic and architectural circles. Nevertheless, none of these scholars have closely examined the architectural elements of Montepulciano's fifteenth-century renovation, and even Saalman's work was focused on the palace's interior and plan. This thesis thus fills a gap in our knowledge by providing an in-depth analysis of the palace's elevation, in order to better re-examine Montepulciano's castellated façade within the Quattrocento Florentine and its Michelozzesque architectural context.

In his pioneering work *Florentine New Towns: Urban Design in the Late Middle Ages*, Friedman convincingly demonstrated that Florentine rule over subject territories was consolidated through the erection of fortresses and castellated bases in outposts in the Mugello and along the Arno between 1299 and the 1350s.¹⁹ Hewlett's study on rural communes developed Friedman's argument by demonstrating that architecture was a key agent in

the formal resemblance between the façade of Montepulciano's and Florence's urban domestic palaces. Preyer, "L'architettura del Palazzo Mediceo," 65. Belli considers the rusticated masonry on Montepulciano's ground-floor façade as an embryonic stage of the bossed rustication of Palazzo Medici in Florence, Gianluca Belli, "Ex quadratis lapidibus.' I paramenti bugnati nell'architettura del Quattrocento a Firenze" (Università degli studi Firenze, 1995), 117; Gianluca Belli, "Forma e naturalità nel bugnato fiorentino del Quattrocento," *Quaderni di Palazzo Te* 4, no. 1 (1996): 23. Also see Miranda Ferrara and Francesco Quinterio, *Michelozzo di Bartolomeo* (Firenze: Salimbeni, 1984), 283, n.11. Caplow, *Michelozzo*, vol. 1, 415-6; vol. 2, 641.

¹⁸ In general, the construction is thought to have begun between 1444 and 1446 with completion in 1457. Giannozzo Salviati's *Zibaldone* is one of the earliest textual sources: 'nell'anno 1444 si cominciò a murare la chasa di Chosimo de medici.' Cited by Hyman, *Fifteenth Century Florentine Studies: The Palazzo Medici; and a Ledger for the Church of San Lorenzo*, 132-47. Elam, "Il Palazzo nel contesto della città: strategie urbanistiche dei Medici nel gonfalone del Leone d'Ora, 1415-1430," 44-57; Georgia Clarke, *Roman House - Renaissance Palaces: Inventing Antiquity in Fifteenth Century Italy* (New York, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 164; Emanuela Ferreti, "The Medici Palace, Cosimo the Elder, and Michelozzo: a Historiographical Survey," in *A Renaissance Architecture of Power: Princely Palaces in the Italian Quattrocento*, ed. Silvia Beltramo, Flavia Cantatore, and Marco Folini (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 263-90. However, the attribution to Michelozzo is probably questionable. Preyer pointed out that no other primary document confirms Vasari's attribution, arguing instead that Brunelleschi designed the palace: Preyer, "L'architettura del Palazzo Mediceo," 58, 65-6.

¹⁹ David August Friedman, *Florentine New Towns: Urban Design in the Late Middle Ages* (New York, N.Y., Cambridge, Mass: Architectural History Foundation, MIT Press, 1988).

Florence's territorial strategy.²⁰ In the light of this geo-political argument, an analysis of Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale furthers our understanding of the architectural leverage that major artistic centres like Florence exerted over their territories. Montepulciano is particularly important in this regard, as Florence's role within the Valdichiana during the fifteenth century has not yet been fully explored.²¹

An investigation into the relationship between Montepulciano's castellated façade and the Palazzo dei Priori in Florence offers an insight into the architectural typology of Florentine castellated civic palaces in relation to those in other parts of Tuscany.²² Compared with civic palaces in Lombardy, the Veneto and Emilia-Romagna, where the ground-floor arcaded symbolised the welcoming openness of the commune,²³ Tuscan communal palaces appeared rather intimidating with their closed exteriors and fortified configurations.²⁴ Volterra's Palazzo dei Priori (c.1208-1257, Figure 3) is thought to be the oldest castellated civic palace in Tuscany, even older than Florence's civic palaces.²⁵ Its fortress-like appearance, with a slightly off-

²⁰ Cecilia Hewlett, *Rural Communities in Renaissance Tuscany: Religious Identities and Local Loyalties* (Turnhout Abingdon, Belgium: Brepols, 2008), 107-19.

²¹ Kim clarified the dialectical relationship between large centres and smaller towns by highlighting how travelling artists contributed to disseminating the influence of major artistic hubs like Florence. David Young Kim, *The Traveling Artist in the Italian Renaissance: Geography, Mobility, and Style* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 106-11.

²² On the development of Florentine civic architecture development in the context of the Palazzo del Bargello (1250-1255), Ameer Yunn, *The Bargello Palace: The Invention of Civic Architecture in Florence* (London: Harvey Miller, 2015).

²³ One of the earliest examples of an open ground-floor plan palace is the Palazzo del Capitano in Orvieto, Rolf Toman, *Gothic: Architecture, Sculpture, Painting* (Princes Risborough: Ullmann & Könemann, 2007), 248-9.

²⁴ Scholars observed that public palaces in different Italian regions, such as Umbria, Lazio, and Tuscany were characterised by fortified configurations. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that many public buildings in these regions also have external steps connecting them to adjacent public space, such as the Palazzo Comunale in Todi, and the Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo in Montepulciano; or with loggias, such as the Palazzo Comunale at Prato and Cortona both dating to the thirteenth century. See Rodolico and Marchini, *I palazzi del popolo nei comuni toscani del Medioevo*, 22-3, 29-32; Daniel Waley and Trevor Dean, *The Italian City-Republics*, 1st ed. (Harlow: Longman, 1969), 107-9; Gian Maria Tabarelli, *Palazzi pubblici d'Italia: nascita e trasformazione del palazzo pubblico in Italia fino al XVI secolo* (Busto Arsizio: Bramante, 1978), 13; Franco Cardini and Sergio Raveggi, *Palazzi pubblici di Toscana: i centri minori* (Firenze: Sansoni, 1983), 48; Rubinstein, "Fortified Enclosures in Italian Cities under Signori."; Nicolai Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 13; Paul N. Balchin, *Urban Development in Renaissance Italy* (U.K.: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2008), 73-4.

²⁵ According to Davidsohn, the institution of the communal government in Volterra was the model for Florence's *primo popolo*, Robert Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze* (Firenze: Sansoni, 1956), 512. On the significance of Volterra's communal palace, Gino Chierici, *Il Palazzo Italiano dal secolo XI al secolo XIX* (Milano: Antonio

centre bell tower surmounting the building block, has been suggested as an important prototype for castellated civic palaces in Tuscany. The Palazzo Vecchio del Podestà in San Gimignano (first half of the thirteenth century, Figure 4),²⁶ and the Castello dei Conti Guidi in Poppi (second half of the thirteenth century, Figure 5),²⁷ are two other prominent examples predating Florence's seats of government. Castellated civic palaces can also be found in major communes such as Arezzo, Lucca, Siena, as well as smaller urban centres like Scarperia and Massa Marittima. Since Florence's Palazzo dei Priori was not the sole model for this building type, questions arise as to the extent to which Montepulciano's new façade differs from other castellated public palaces in Tuscany. Was the Florentine palace the primary model for Michelozzo's Montepulciano design, or was it a means to bring Montepulciano's communal palace closer to the Tuscan castellated civic palace tradition? Or, more ambitiously, was it meant to express allegiance to the Hohenstaufen and ancient Roman imperial architecture?

It is worth noting that, although Tuscan and Italian castellated public palaces shared the military configuration of fortresses and defensive towers,²⁸ they have generally been excluded from the literature on military architecture. In his study of Italian military architectural evolution, *Architettura castellana d'Italia: fortezze, rocche e bastioni*, Gian Maria Tabarelli investigated defensive towers, fortresses, and fortified settlements, yet he did not include castellated civic palaces.²⁹ Lamberini's survey of the architectural evolution of fortified settlements (*castelli*) in Florence's *contadi*, in areas like Calenzano and Val di Marina, underlined the influence of

Vallardi, 1964), 39; Waley and Dean, *The Italian City-Republics*, 109; Cardini and Raveggi, *Palazzi pubblici di Toscana: i centri minori*, 230.

²⁶ Cardini and Raveggi, *Palazzi pubblici di Toscana: i centri minori*, 226.

²⁷ This is normally attributed to Arnolfo di Cambio's father. *Ibid.*, 225.

²⁸ On the defensive appearance of Tuscan civic palaces, Giovanni Fanelli, *Le città nella storia d'Italia. Firenze* (Rome: Editore Laterza, 1993), 37.

²⁹ For instance, the Church of San Niccolò in Calenzano was a castellated church (*chiesa castellana*). Tabarelli, *Architettura castellana d'Italia: fortezze, rocche e bastioni*, 65-72. Also see Nicola Ricchiuti, Piergiorgio Salvalai, and Daniela Lamberini, *Il Castello di Calenzano. Monstra documentaria e dibattito sulle risorse del territorio* (Firenze: Tipolitografia G. Capponi, 1978), 18-30.

military structures in the evolution of ecclesiastical and civic buildings from the thirteenth century onwards.³⁰ Her study, nevertheless, did not touch upon the origin for the castellated appearance of Tuscan civic palaces. In his article on Bramante's Palazzo dei Tribunali built under the patronage of Pope Julius II, the warrior Pope, Von Moos noticed the communal palace's military appearance, but associated the castellated design more with Lombard and French castles, rather than with fortified civic palaces in Italian communes.³¹ This thesis intends to fill this gap in our knowledge by investigating the military features of the Tuscan castellated civic palaces and the ways in which they were perceived. Typological comparisons between Montepulciano's new façade, Florence's civic palaces, as well as other Tuscan public structures built since the twelfth century enable us to reassess the extent to which castellated civic palaces were an independent architectural type, and if so, what was their importance to Tuscan communes.

A closer look at the town's understudied architectural and urban development during the fifteenth century also casts light on the renovation process of Montepulciano's building complex. Though local historian Ilio Calabresi's work offered important contributions, his study focused on the town's civic and social context between the tenth and fourteenth centuries, rather than on its architectural development.³² Studies of the town's civic and ecclesiastical buildings concentrate on Cinquecento works such as those by Antonio da Sangallo the Elder, including San Biagio (c.1518), palaces for the del Pecora, Contucci (c.1519), and the Tarugi

³⁰ Daniela Lamberini, *Calenzano e la Val di Marina. Storia di un territorio fiorentino*, 2 vols. (Prato: Edizioni del palazzo, 1987).

³¹ Stanislaus Von Moos, "The Palace as a Fortress: Rome and Bologna under Pope Julius II," in *Art and Architecture in the Service of Politics*, ed. Henry Millon and Linda Nochlin (Cambridge, Mass. ; London: The MIT Press, 1978), 46-78.

³² Ilio Calabresi, "Montepulciano e il suo territorio nel medio evo," in *Storia di Montepulciano. In appendice: I. Montepulciano, II. Le sue frazioni, III. Sugli ascendenti di Agnolo Poliziano IV. Miscellanea storica poliziana* (Verona: L'Arco del Gavi, 1968), 199-207; Ilio Calabresi, *Montepulciano nel Trecento: contributi per la storia giuridica e istituzionale: edizione delle quattro riforme maggiori (1340 circa - 1374) dello statuto del 1337* (Siena: Consorzio universitario della Toscana meridionale, 1987).

(mid-sixteenth century), as well as Antonio da Sangallo the Younger's Palazzo Cervini for Pope Marcellus II (mid-sixteenth century).³³

Surveys of the town's urban evolution are an informative source, providing a general overview of the town's urban space. Architect and local architectural historian Riccardo Pizzinelli's paper 'Piazza Grande nel XIV secolo' in the edited volume *Il tempo della città. L'evoluzione di Piazza Grande nei Secoli* (1987) briefly summarises the setting around the communal piazza during the fifteenth century.³⁴ A further edited book, *Fortezza e Liceo Classico a Montepulciano. Storia di un complesso architettonico e di una istituzione scolastica* (1990), uses archaeological evidence to identify the town's most ancient urban centre, originating in the site of the current Fortezza, but it says little about the urban setting around the Piazza Grande where the Palazzo Comunale is located. The edited volume *Montepulciano: il centro storico e il collegio dei Gesuiti* (1992) brings together articles by established local scholars analysing Montepulciano's urban centre, including Manlio Marchetta, Giuseppina Carla Romby, Maria Russo and Pizzinelli.³⁵ Yet none of these works concentrates on fifteenth-century civic architecture and urban morphology. In 1994, Antonio Sigillo organised an exhibition with a catalogue *Umanesimo e Rinascimento a Montepulciano* that addressed the

³³ Montepulciano was known as 'the Pearl of the Cinquecento', a counterpart of the Quattrocento ideal city of Pienza. In his survey of representative Italian civic palaces from the eleventh to the nineteenth centuries, Chierici shortlisted as many as five buildings in Montepulciano, dated them to the sixteenth century, and attributed them all to the Sangallo circle. Chierici, *Il Palazzo Italiano dal secolo XI al secolo XIX*, 202-6, 209, 570. The centrally planned San Biagio in particular attracted scholarly interest. On Montepulciano's famous sixteenth-century architecture, Emo Barucci, *Montepulciano, perla del Cinquecento* (Montepulciano: Banca popolare di Montepulciano, 1964), 42-4; Lorenzo Gori Montanelli, *La tradizione architettonica Toscana* (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 1971), 241-7; Eugen Muntz, "Una terra del Rinascimento," in *Città e terre del poliziano*, ed. Cesare Brandi (Roma: Editalia, 1992); Maria Russo, "La piazza nel Rinascimento," in *Il tempo della città. L'evoluzione di Piazza Grande nei Secoli*, ed. Gino Serafini and Maria Russo (Città di Castello: Editori dei Grifo, 1987), 29-32. On Pienza as the first humanistic ideal city, see Nicholas Adams, "Pienza," in *Storia dell'architettura italiana, Il Quattrocento*, ed. Francesco Paolo Fiore (Milano: Electa, 1998), 314-29. Christine Smith, *Architecture in the Culture of Early Humanism: Ethics, Aesthetics, and Eloquence, 1400-1470* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), vol. 1, 49-51.

³⁴ Riccardo Pizzinelli, "Piazza Grande nel XIV secolo," in *Il tempo della città. L'evoluzione di Piazza Grande nei Secoli*, ed. Gino Serafini and Maria Russo (Città di Castello: Editori dei Grifo, 1987), 21-6.

³⁵ Manlio Marchetta, ed. *Montepulciano: il centro storico e il collegio dei Gesuiti* (Perugia: Electa Editori Umbri, 1992).

history of each monument from the late Middle Ages to the Renaissance, as well as a useful introductory paper by Romby, 'Montepulciano al tempo del Poliziano. Territorio, insediamenti, architettura,' outlining the town's urban evolution.³⁶ This volume is informative, but devoid of original findings. Another key aim of this thesis is to further our understanding of the urban context around the Palazzo Comunale by examining the ways in which Michelozzo's new façade related to adjacent civic palaces and monuments in the communal piazza.

In addition to examining the architectural significance of Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale, this study approaches castellated palaces from a social and political perspective. One of the major limitations of Saalman's and other architectural historians' work is their disregard for the importance of communal palaces in the formation of local political and civic identities. Important contributions have explored the pivotal role played by public buildings in articulating a commune's civic identity and urban life.³⁷ For Bocchi, 'the construction of public palaces was an expression of citizens' autonomy and the city's political strength ... also the symbolic message of the power of communal cities.'³⁸ In the introductory section of their huge architectural survey of Tuscan town halls, authors like Rodolico, Cardini, and Raveggi note that the construction of communal palaces was a phenomenon not only proper to major city-

³⁶ Antonio Sigillo, *Umanesimo e Rinascimento a Montepulciano: Montepulciano, 16 luglio-15 dicembre 1994* (Montepulciano: Del Grifo, 1994). Romby's article is the only work giving an account of Montepulciano's fifteenth-century civic monuments, yet her discussion on the Palazzo Comunale follows Saalman's scholarship. Giuseppina Carla Romby, "Montepulciano al tempo del Poliziano. Territorio, insediamenti, architettura," in *Umanesimo e Rinascimento a Montepulciano: Montepulciano, 16 luglio-15 dicembre 1994*, ed. Antonio Sigillo (Montepulciano: Del Grifo, 1994), 21.

³⁷ Waley and Dean, *The Italian City-Republics*, 107-12; Maureen Miller, "Topographies of Power in the Urban Centres of Medieval Italy. Communes, Bishops and Public Authority," in *Beyond Florence. The Contours of Medieval and Early Modern Italy*, ed. Paula Findlen, Michelle Fontaine, and Duane Osheim (California: Stanford University Press, 2003), 181-9; Francesca Bocchi, *Per antiche strade: caratteri e aspetti delle città medievali* (Roma: Viella, 2013), 235-48; Tabarelli, *Palazzi pubblici d'Italia: nascita e trasformazione del palazzo pubblico in Italia fino al XVI secolo*, 11-6; Balchin, *Urban Development in Renaissance Italy*, 49-91.

³⁸ 'La costruzione del Palazzo pubblico fu un'espressione dell'autonomia cittadina e della forza politica della città...I palazzi, ..., furono anche messaggi simbolici della potenza delle città comunali.' Bocchi's work extensively examined the ways in which public palaces were correlated with the public piazzas to form a distinctive place for civic activities, as well as the importance of communal governments in the construction of public buildings. Bocchi, *Per antiche strade: caratteri e aspetti delle città medievali*, 235.

republics, but also to minor towns and settlements as tangible evidence of municipal *liberty*.³⁹ These books highlight the importance and function of public palaces as the hub of communal government, yet they failed to discuss the architectural symbolism of castellation in its wider implications.

Rubinstein's fundamental research, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532: Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, established a way of interpreting the impregnable fortress-like appearance of Florence's communal palace from a socio-historical standpoint. Drawing our attention to domestic crises occurring while the palace was being built, the castellated profile of the Florentine commune's seat of government testified to its needs.⁴⁰ The recent work of Wheatley has also recognised castellation's symbolic implications, around which a ruler's authority and local residents' civic pride were built. Although her book deals with English castles in feudal systems, it still testifies to the need for an interdisciplinary approach to better understand the symbolic and iconographic meanings of castellation.⁴¹ Following their insights, this thesis intends to position Montepulciano's castellated Palazzo Comunale in relation to the Poliziani (the way local residence and government referred to themselves) communal administrative needs and civic rituals, as well as their political ideologies. In so doing, it will provide a systematic analysis of the tie between the castellated communal palace and the development of local government and identity from its establishment in 1243 to the mid-fifteenth century.

³⁹ Rodolico and Marchini, *I palazzi del popolo nei comuni toscani del Medioevo*, 12; Cardini and Raveggi, *Palazzi pubblici di Toscana: i centri minori*, 37, 46-8; Montanelli, *La tradizione architettonica Toscana*. Jones thoroughly examined Frederick II's influence on Italian geopolitical developments, and the collapse of imperial power in Italy after the emperor's death in 1250. Philip Jones, *The Italian City-State: From Commune to Signoria* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 335-58.

⁴⁰ Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*.

⁴¹ Abigail Wheatley, *The Idea of the Castle in Medieval England*, ed. York Medieval Press (Woodbridge, Suffolk; Rochester, N.Y. ; Woodbridge: York Medieval Press in association with Boydell Press, 2004).

In his research on Renaissance architecture, Tafuri demonstrated the ways in which the urban plan and architectural morphology of towns and cities were determined by ruling classes and powerful individuals.⁴² Since Montepulciano's new façade was carried out under Florentine rule, the palace's castellated profile and its similarity with the Palazzo dei Priori may enable us to see Florence's civic identity from a subject commune's point of view. It is worth mentioning that the castellated scheme of Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale was initiated in 1440, the same year Florence achieved one of the greatest victories in its history, defeating its enemy the Duke of Milan at the Battle of Anghiari on 29 June 1440. This thesis explores castellation in its military context. Whilst the impact of Florence's successful military campaign in the first Visconti war (1380s – 1402) on its civic confidence has been examined exhaustively by Baron and numerous other scholars,⁴³ and studies on the influence of war in Florence during the second half of the fifteenth century has focused on works commissioned by Lorenzo the Magnificent,⁴⁴ the extent to which Montepulciano's castellated façade may reflect another surge of civic pride in relation to Cosimo de' Medici's and the city's military success has never been addressed.

Historiographical records of Florence's social and cultural development during the fifteenth century intriguingly show that the rise of the Medici coincided with the city's strong republican tradition and its anti-tyrannical ideology.⁴⁵ While the evaluation of Cosimo de' Medici's role

⁴² Manfredo Tafuri, *Interpreting the Renaissance: Princes, Cities, Architects* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 9-36.

⁴³ On the development of Florentine civic humanism in relation to the city's military campaign against Milan, see Hans Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1955). For scholarship on Baron's civic humanism James Hankins, "The 'Baron Thesis' after Forty Years and Some Recent Studies of Leonardo Bruni," *Journal of History of Ideas* 56, no. 2 (1995): 309-38; Ronald G. Witt, "The Crisis after Forty Years," *The American Historical Review* 101, no. 1 (1996): 110-8.

⁴⁴ Melissa Meriam Bullard, "Lorenzo il Magnifico: Image and Anxiety, Politics and Finance," in *Lorenzo de' Medici studi*, ed. Gian Carlo Garfagnini (Firenze: Olschki, 1994), 3-40; Melissa Meriam Bullard, "Lorenzo and Patterns of Diplomatic Discourse in the Late Fifteenth Century," in *Lorenzo the Magnificent. Culture and Politics*, ed. M. E. Mallett and Nicholas Mann (London: Warburg Institute, 1996), 263-74.

⁴⁵ Numerous publications discuss the ways in which Cosimo de' Medici gained power and established his family's prestige in Florence. Key references include J. R. Hale, *Florence and the Medici: The Pattern of Control*

either as a republican statesman, as illustrated by Rubinstein, or as a signorial ruler of the city, as claimed by Jones, lies beyond the scope of this thesis,⁴⁶ the present study focuses on Cosimo's legacy as one of the most enthusiastic patrons of architecture.⁴⁷ Although Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale has never been associated with Cosimo de' Medici's architectural patronage, the formal resemblance between Montepulciano's palace façade and Cosimo's Palazzo Medici in Florence, as well as the three fortified country villas of Trebbio, Careggi, and Cafaggiolo is striking. By tracking Cosimo's political influence over the whole Florentine territorial state, and particularly over Montepulciano, this thesis aims to challenge the traditional view, according to which Cosimo's architectural patronage was focused entirely on Florence and the Mugello.⁴⁸ An investigation into Cosimo de' Medici involvement in the Poliziani's public construction project in Montepulciano in the 1440s sheds new light on the

(London: Thames and Hudson, 1977), 9-35; D. V. Kent, *The Rise of the Medici: Faction in Florence, 1426-1434*, ed. family Medici (Oxford, UK; New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); Nicolai Rubinstein, *The Government of Florence under the Medici (1434 to 1494)*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, UK; New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

⁴⁶ Historiography on this subject is enormous and traced back to the opposing stance of Nicolai Rubinstein (1911-2002) and Philip Jones (1921-2006). The former considered the Medici as powerful citizens in the Florentine city-republic, whereas the latter claimed that their authority was comparable to that of signorial rulers of the city. Rubinstein, *The Government of Florence under the Medici (1434 to 1494)*; Jones, *The Italian City-State: From Commune to Signoria*. Also see Black's introduction to *The Medici. Citizens and Masters*, Robert Black and John E. Law, eds., *The Medici: Citizens and Masters* (Florence: Villa I Tatti, the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, 2015), 1-12. Also see Peter Denley, *Florence and Italy. Renaissance Studies in Honour of Nicolai Rubinstein*, ed. Caroline Elam and Nicolai Rubinstein (Westfield: Committee for Medieval Studies, 1988).

⁴⁷ Dale Kent provided the most thorough study of Cosimo's architectural patronage. For example, see Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre*. On Cosimo's artistic patronage, see Caroline Elam, "Cosimo de' Medici and San Lorenzo," in *Cosimo 'il Vecchio' de' Medici, 1389-1464*, ed. Francis Ames-Lewis (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992); Rab Hatfield, "Cosimo de' Medici and the Chapel of his Palace," *ibid.*; John T. Paoletti, "Fraternal Piety and Family Power: the Artistic Patronage of Cosimo and Lorenzo de' Medici," *ibid.*; Dale Kent, "Patriarchal Ideals, Patronage Practices, and the Authority of Cosimo *il vecchio*," in *The Medici: Citizens and Masters*, ed. Robert Black and John E. Law (Florence: Villa I Tatti, the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, 2015).

⁴⁸ Caplow, *Michelozzo*, vol. 2, 589-606. On the Medici's struggle to establish an elite network outside Florence and the Mugello, see Robert Black, "Cosimo de' Medici and Arezzo," in *Cosimo 'il Vecchio' de' Medici, 1389-1464*, ed. Francis Ames-Lewis (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), 33-48; Robert Black, "Arezzo, the Medici and the Florentine Regime," in *Florentine Tuscany: Structures and Practices of Power*, ed. William J. Connell and Andrea Zorzi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 293-311.

emerging alliance between the Medici and the Poliziani, as well as expanding our understanding between the elite network between Florence and Montepulciano.⁴⁹

Montepulciano's socio-political context can be gleaned from primary sources. The communal statutes, *Statuto del commune di Montepulciano 1337*, were published in 1966 (after Saalman's publication).⁵⁰ Ubaldo Morandi not only examined the earliest communal statutes compiled in 1337, but he also synthesised clauses introduced and amended in four subsequent reforms during the fourteenth century. The statutes were still in use during the fifteenth century, providing valuable information regarding the commune's civic life built around its civic palaces. Spinello Benci's chronicle *Storia di Montepulciano* is another important source. First published in Florence in 1641, the second edition was reprinted in 1644 with many subsequent reprintings.⁵¹ Benci's chronicle is the only early modern primary source. It is informative in terms of the local commune's political and military events. Dedicated to the Duke of Tuscany, the chronicle unsurprisingly praises the contribution of the Florentine government and the Medici to the good governance of the town. Yet, Benci was less reliable on art and architecture, as he wrongly attributed Michelozzo's façade for the church of Sant'Agostino to Donatello, and his discussion of the town's public buildings and urban setting are brief and uninformative.

⁴⁹ The friendship and patronage between Lorenzo the Magnificent and the Montepulcianese poet Angelo Poliziano (1454-1494) in the 1470s are often cited as evidence of the social network between two cities, Angelo Poliziano began his career as the teacher of Lorenzo the Magnificent's children in 1473. After the 1478 Pazzi conspiracy, Lorenzo the Magnificent commissioned him to write about the event, *Della congiura dei Pazzi*, as part of a public campaign against his rivals. On Poliziano's personal link to the Medici, for example Elizabeth B. Welles, "Introduction," in *The Earthly Republic. Italian Humanists on Government and Society*, ed. Benjamin G. Kohl and Ronald G. Witt (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978), 293-303; Shane Butler, "Introduction," in *Angelo Poliziano. Letters*, ed. Shane Butler (Cambridge, Massachusetts; London, UK: Harvard University Press, 2006), vii-xiii; Gian Carlo Garfagnini, ed. *Lorenzo il Magnifico e il suo mondo: convegno internazionale di studi* (Firenze: Olschki, 1994); Gian Carlo Garfagnini, ed. *Lorenzo de' Medici studi* (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 1992); Giorgio F. Taddei, *Agnolo Poliziano e Lorenzo il Magnifico* (Milano: A. Vallardi, 1945), 17-24.

⁵⁰ Ubaldo Morandi, ed. *Statuto del comune di Montepulciano 1337* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1966). On the significance of Montepulciano's statutes, also see Ilio Calabresi, "Lo statuto di Montepulciano del 1337," *Archivio Storico Italiano*, no. 1 (1965); Calabresi, *Montepulciano nel Trecento: contributi per la storia giuridica e istituzionale: edizione delle quattro riforme maggiori (1340 circa - 1374) dello statuto del 1337*.

⁵¹ This thesis mainly consults the 2005 edition, edited by Arnaldo Forni editore, with an introduction by the local archivist Duccio Pasqui. Spinello Benci, "Storia di Montepulciano," in *Storia di Montepulciano*, ed. Duccio Pasqui (Sala Bolognese: Arnaldo Forni Editore, c.1646, 2005).

For instance, when he describes the temple of San Biago, designed by Antonio da Sangallo the Elder, he simply mentions the architect's name as 'San Gallo' with no further description.

In addition to published works, this study draws extensively on unpublished archival documents preserved at the Biblioteca Comunale e Archivio Storico 'Piero Calamandrei' in Montepulciano. In addition to the documents cited by Saalman, this thesis cites unpublished fifteenth-century administrative letters now compiled as three volumes of *Copialettere*. These sources contain valuable information about the town's domestic and foreign affairs, enabling a consideration of the town's civic palaces within contemporary sociohistorical and military contexts. While searching for documents in relation to the 1440 palace in the archival inventory, a list of the town's foreign officials (Podestà and Capitani del Popolo) from 1371 onwards led to a new archival finding: A bound volume with the Machiavelli emblem, a blue cross with four arrows, documented ordinances executed by Giovanni Machiavelli (1396-1439), the great uncle of the famous author Niccolò Machiavelli, who was *podestà* of Montepulciano in 1439. Although Giovanni passed away before the renovation plan was approved, and the clauses in this volume do not mention the renovation project, they vividly present the thriving communal life at the time, as well as affirming the social network operating between the dominant city and the local town.

This thesis takes castellation in its physical and representational form as an agent of power. While the topic is tightly focused on the case study of Montepulciano's town hall, its wider goal is to probe whether, and to what extent, castellation affirmed political, military, civic and cultural power. Prior to analysing Montepulciano's façade within the Florentine and Renaissance architectural contexts, it is helpful to look at the ways in which Florentines perceived castellated architecture. The first chapter is intended to present the Florentine history of castellation in chronological order. By examining textual and pictorial narratives in relation

to castellation, Chapter One has two aims: first, to identify the limitations in traditional architectural typology, in which castellation was perceived as an anti-classical practice incompatible with *all'antica* taste; and the second aim is to outline a methodological framework for the whole thesis, approaching the significance of castellation through a socio-historical lens.

Chapters Two to Four reassess the significance of Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale in relation to its socio-political, military and cultural contexts. Chapter Two investigates the ways in which the communal palace's form and function reinforced one another, from the completion of the old palace in the 1280s to Michelozzo's renovation in the 1440s. Statutory documents provide rich evidence for the palace's contribution to Montepulciano's civic life, as well as its important role in asserting the presence of the local commune. Nonetheless, in what ways and to what extent Montepulciano's castellated palace was intended to assert the presence and authority of its dominant city – Florence (80 kilometres away) has not yet been explored. This chapter therefore seeks to address Florence's system of territorial control, using Montepulciano as an architectonic exemplum.

Chapter Three examines the castellated design of the façade in relation to the local defensive structures, as well as to broader Florentine diplomatic and military contexts. Due to the traditional typological separation of military and civic architecture, previous studies of Montepulciano's urban development only partly engaged with the local fortress (*càssero*) and do not discuss the Palazzo Comunale as an instrument of self-defence. This chapter aims to capture the many functions of an urban fortress-cum-palace in both civic and military contexts.

With a more comprehensive understanding of the palace's significance for both local and central governments, Chapter Four returns to the research question this thesis outlined at the beginning, namely, the role castellation played in Quattrocento civic architectural concepts. By

comparing Montepulciano's façade with ancient Roman monuments, Tuscan communal palaces, and other urban palaces in Florence and Rome, the final chapter explores the extent to which castellation was interpreted by fifteenth-century viewers as an *all'antica* mode which continued to shape the design of monumental palaces during the Renaissance.

CHAPTER ONE: FLORENTINE PERCEPTIONS OF CASTELLATED PALAZZI COMUNALI, c.1250 – 1500

Introduction

According to Fanelli, the Florentine cityscape was shaped by the communal identity of its popular governments, culminating above all in two government palace projects:⁵² first, the Palazzo del Podestà (Figure 6, now known as *Palazzo del Bargello*) constructed during the 1250s while the first popular government ruled the city; and secondly, the Palazzo dei Priori (Figure 2, now known as *Palazzo Vecchio*), built between 1299-1314 for the second popular regime. These two public edifices constituted the city's two-tiered bureaucratic hubs throughout the republican period, from the first popular regime in 1250 until the abolition of the priors in 1532.⁵³ Although both palaces underwent renovation and expansion over time, crucially their remodelling largely retained their original defensive design, in particular their pre-fifteenth-century fortified exteriors. The extent to which the castellated profile of Florence's seats of government may have shaped viewers' impression of the two palaces is a question worth asking.

Renaissance architecture might be understood as a 'communicative artefact', whose visual configuration ideally conveys the builder's or patron's pre-existing concept of the building to viewers.⁵⁴ If, as Saalman argued, Michelozzo designed the fifteenth-century façade of Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale (c. 1440-1465, Figure 1), whose formal resemblance to

⁵² Fanelli, *Le città nella storia d'Italia. Firenze*, 29-34. Also see Nicola Ottokar, *Firenze: cenni di storia e di cultura fiorentina* (Firenze: La nuova Italia, 1945), 45; Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze*, vol. 5, 110; vol. 7, 519-22; John M. Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200-1575* (Malden, Mass. ; Oxford: Blackwell Pub., 2006), 478-9.

⁵³ On the establishment of the priors of guilds and the political reform in 1532 turning Florence into the Medici Duchy, Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200-1575*, 78-9, 464.

⁵⁴ Caroline Van Eck, "Alberti's De re Aedificatoria," in *Architecture and Language: Constructing Identity in European Architecture, c.1000- c.1650*, ed. Georgia Clarke and Paul Crossley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 72-81; Smith, *Architecture in the Culture of Early Humanism: Ethics, Aesthetics, and Eloquence, 1400-1470*, 82-7.

Florence's Palazzo dei Priori aimed to demonstrate Florence's supremacy in what had formerly been Sienese territory,⁵⁵ a question arises: did viewers in the fifteenth century perceive the Florentine communal palace as they did in the fourteenth century, when the palace had just been completed? Or, as modern scholars argue, can a distinctly fifteenth-century interpretation of the Florentine communal palace be recognized concurring with a rising imperialist Florentine identity developed after the 1380s?⁵⁶

The first part of this chapter uses pre-Quattrocento chronicles to investigate the Palazzo del Podestà and the Palazzo dei Priori in their original socio-historical environment, shedding light on Florentines' perceptions of two castellated communal palaces from the late medieval period. Although no surviving statutes or architectural treatises can be cited to explain or justify the designs of their castellated form, the late thirteenth and fourteenth-century chronicles of Dino Compagni (1255-1324) and Giovanni Villani (1276-1348) shed light on this issue. They were produced close to the time of the two palaces' construction and are rich in political ideas and urban description. In addition, fourteenth-century pictorial representations of the civic palaces are crucial visual sources for interpreting the significance of castellated buildings.

The second part of this chapter concentrates on textual representation of the two civic palaces by fifteenth-century learned politicians, chancellors, and elite merchants such as Gregorio Dati (1362-1435) and Leonardo Bruni (1370-1444), as well as the architectural treatises of Leon

⁵⁵ Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo."

⁵⁶ Historians John Law, Gene Brucker, and Hans Baron all saw the period between the 1380s and the 1410s as a watershed in a new cultural and political climate among the Italian states, John E. Law, *Italy in the Age of the Renaissance, 1380-1530* (London, New York: Longman, 1989). This book covered Italian history from the Great Schism (1378-1415) until the Sack of Rome (1527). Gene Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 102-25. In Brucker's study of Florence's foreign affairs from 1382 to 1402 (chap. 3), he underlined popular support for the acquisition of Arezzo in 1384 as marking a more aggressive attitude in Florentine foreign policy. Moreover, he noticed that the campaign for Florentine hegemony in the 1380s targeted the whole of Italy rather than restricting itself to Tuscany; thus he called 1382-1388 an imperialist period. On Florentine socio-historical and political characteristics in the same period, see Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny*; Hans Baron, *From Petrarch to Leonard Bruni: Studies in Humanistic and Political Literature* (Chicago, London: University of Chicago, 1968), 102-4.

Battista Alberti (1404-1472). Finally, the third part of the chapter focuses on varied pictorial representations of castellation in fifteenth-century narrative paintings. Observing the ways in which painters emulated and adopted castellated components within pictures may broaden our understanding of contemporary Florentine attitudes towards fortification, informing an interpretation of Montepulciano's castellated palace façade.

1.1 Approaching Fifteenth-Century Perceptions of Castellation, c.1250 – c.1400

This section aims to analyse Florentine perceptions of the castellated feature of their two seats of government. The earliest information regarding the Florentine seats of government dates to 1208 - 1210, when documents first mentioned a communal palace (*palatium communis*).⁵⁷ The Latin word 'palatium' initially indicated the residences of the Roman emperor on the Palatine Hill since the time of Augustus.⁵⁸ The term was adopted in Florence's *Statuti del Capitano del Popolo* (1322-1325) and the *Statuti del Podestà* (1325) (both written in Latin) to refer to houses of prestigious public figures, such as bishops and elites, as well as residences built for communal magistrates,⁵⁹ including the 'palatio del Capitano,' 'palatio del Comune,' 'palatio del Podestà,' and 'palatio del Popolo.'⁶⁰ The term *palagio* is an Italian equivalent of *palatium* referring to a large residence belonging to a prestigious owner, whether public or private.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Davidsohn noted a document dating from 1208 seems to reveal the Florentines' intention to build a communal palace (*palatium communis*) for the meeting of the general council. Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze*, vol. 1, 1007, 1224.

⁵⁸ Marco Folin, "Princes, Towns, Palaces: A Renaissance Architecture of Power," in *A Renaissance Architecture of Power: Princely Palaces in the Italian Quattrocento*, ed. Silvia Beltramo, Flavia Cantatore, and Marco Folin (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 3. J. Rasmus Brandt, ed. *Rome AD 300-800: Power and Symbol, Image and Reality* (Roma: Bardi Editore, 2003), 143-63. On the etymology and use of the two words *palatium* and *praetorium*, Simona Alessio, "Praetorium e palatium come residenze di imperatori e governatori," *Latomus* 65, no. 3 (2006).

⁵⁹ While describing the structure of popular government, Leonardo Bruni called the public official *magistratus* (magistrate), thus in this dissertation the word magistrate indicates the civil servant elected or drawn by lot for the commune. Leonardo Bruni, *History of the Florentine People*, trans. James Hankins (Cambridge, Mass.: London: Harvard University Press, 2001), vol. 1, bk. 2, 109.

⁶⁰ Romolo Caggese, ed. *Statuto del podestà dell'anno 1325*, Statuti della Repubblica Fiorentina (Firenze: L. S. Olschki, 1999), bk. 1, rub. 28, 70.

⁶¹ The modern Italian word *palazzo* was not widely used until the sixteenth century. *Vocabolario degli accademici della Crusca*, ed. Appresso Francesco Pitteri (Venezia: Accademia della Crusca, 1741), 306. 'Palagio: Si dice propriamente [l']a casa grande isolata, e comunemente si prende per ogni Grande abituro.'

The Florentines' attempt to construct a communal palace in 1208 appears unsuccessful. According to Giovanni Villani's *Nuova Cronica* (c. 1308-48), the first Palagio di Comune (Communal Palace) in Florence was created in the 1250s under the commune's *Primo Popolo* (the first popular government, 1250-1260).⁶² This palace was built to house the Anziani, the highest officials of the first popular government.⁶³ In his remarkable chronicle, *History of the Florentine People*, Leonardo Bruni praised this palace for not only promoting the majesty of the Popolo, but also establishing a high reputation for Florence both at home and abroad.⁶⁴ However, after the forces of the first popular regime were crushed at the battle of Montaperti in 1260,⁶⁵ this palazzo was repurposed to house another magistrate in Florence, the Podestà, who shared executive authority with the twelve Anziani and the Captain of the People during the first popular government.⁶⁶ For this reason, the palace was commonly known as the Palazzo del Podestà between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Since the palace of the *Primo Popolo* had already been assigned to the *podestà*, when the *Secondo Popolo* ruled the city (the second popular government, 1292-1310), the councils of the Captain of the People permitted construction of another communal palazzo for their new

⁶² Giovanni Villani wrote that a communal palace was commissioned by the first popular government because there was none before: 'chè prima non avea palagio di Comune in Firenze, anzi stave la signoria ora in una parte de la città e ora in altra.' Giovanni Villani, *Nuova cronica*, ed. Giuseppe Porta (Parma: Ugo Guanda, 1990), vol. 1, bk. 7, chap. 39, 329. On the *Primo Popolo*'s governmental system and the construction of its palace, Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze*, vol. 2, 514-5.

⁶³ In the chapter of The Life of Arnolfo di Lapo, Vasari suggested that the architect was Lapo, father of Arnolfo di Cambio: 'fece il modello del palagio oggi del podestà, che allora si fabbricò per gli Anziani.' Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, vol. 1, 283.

⁶⁴ 'A building of extraordinary magnificence was begun in which assembly-rooms and courts were laid out. Before this time judges were for the most part accustomed to use private dwellings and the councils of the People were held in church. Thus was the majesty of the People raised high that year both at home and abroad.' Bruni, *History of the Florentine People*, bk. 2, 16.

⁶⁵ Nicolai Rubinstein, "The Beginnings of Political Thought in Florence. A Study in Mediaeval Historiography," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942): 7; Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 6-7.

⁶⁶ The podestà was a foreign official assigned by a commune's dominant authority, either by emperor or pope to oversee juridical and executive affairs in the subject communities. On the development of the administrative system built around the podestà, known as *comuni podestàrili*, see Francesca Bocchi, Manuela Ghizzoni, and Rosa Smurra, *Storia delle città italiane. Dal tardoantico al primo Rinascimento* (Torino: UTET Libreria, 2002), 159. Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 6-7. Also see Fanelli, *Le città nella storia d'Italia. Firenze*, 30.

magistracy, the Priors of the guilds.⁶⁷ Construction began on 24 February 1299 (modern calendar),⁶⁸ and was completed in the relatively short time of fifteen years (1299-1314).⁶⁹ After its completion, the *Secondo Popolo*'s palace replaced the Palazzo del Podestà, becoming the city's most important political, administrative and civic nucleus until the 1550s.⁷⁰ This palace was first known as the Palazzo dei Priori, then, in the second half of the fifteenth century, as the Palazzo della Signoria, and finally, from the sixteenth century onwards, as the Palazzo Vecchio. Since most sources cited here predate 1450, this thesis adopts the term Palazzo dei Priori for the *Secondo Popolo*'s seat of government.

A Political Campaign

Florentine narratives about the Palazzo dei Priori draw our attention to the significance of its location. According to Villani, the new palace was erected on the very site where the house of the Uberti and other Ghibelline families had previously stood.⁷¹ He then explained that the Palazzo dei Priori owes its irregular shape to the spatial restriction of the Uberti's plot (Figure

⁶⁷ The debate over the communal palace began in 1289, yet the councils officially assigned funding for the project on 30 December 1298, see Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 5, n.1. On the establishment of the priori, see Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze*, vol. 2, 755-8; John M. Najemy, ed. *Italy in the Age of the Renaissance 1300-1550* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 186. Najemy mentioned that the election procedures for the Florentine priorate were stabilised only in 1328-9, more than forty years after the priorate was first instituted.

⁶⁸ Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze*, vol. 7, 520. On the construction of the palace, *ibid.*, vol. 3, 585.

⁶⁹ The foundation was laid in 1298, Villani, *Nuova cronica*, vol. 2, bk. 9, chap. 26, 45-6. On the building's later renovations, see Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 1.

⁷⁰ In 1549, Duke Cosimo I de' Medici moved his residence and court to the Palazzo Pitti. Leon Satkowski, "The Palazzo Pitti: Planning and Use in the Grand-Ducal Era," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 42, no. 4 (1983): 336, n.3; Fanelli, *Le città nella storia d'Italia. Firenze*, 108; Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200-1575*, 478-9; Marilena Mosco, *The Pitti Palace: The Palace and its Art*, ed. Lucinda Collinge (London: Philip Wilson, 1997), 10-2.

⁷¹ The chapter 65 entitled 'Come il popolo di Firenze cacciò la prima volta i Ghibellini di Firenze, e la cagione perchè' in which Villani explained the reason that the Uberti were expelled from Florence in 1258 was due to their alliance with Manfred I, the head of the Ghibelline Party after Frederick II's death. According to Villani, it is above the site of the Uberti house that 'the piazza of the palace, the popolo, and the priors stands nowadays' (*ov'è oggi la piazza del palagio del popolo e de' priori*). Villani, *Nuova cronica*, vol. 1, bk. 7, chap. 65, 359-61. On the site chosen for the communal palace and the Uberti property, also see Gaetano Salvemini, *Magnati e popolani in Firenze dal 1280 al 1295*, Seconda edizione. ed. (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1974), 10, 171; Paula Lois Spilner, *'Ut civitas ampliatur': studies in Florentine urban development, 1282-1400* (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1997), 393-401; Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200-1575*, 98-9.

7).⁷² Villani's statement was adopted by his Florentine successors including Brunni and Vasari. In his *Life of Arnolfo di Lapo*, Vasari further clarified that the irregular shape of the Palazzo dei Priori and its location at the edge of the piazza was not the architect's decision but a deliberate choice of the government, which insisted on placing the new palace on the exact site where the old Uberti properties once stood.⁷³ As the communal architect who was commissioned to examine the palace in 1551, Vasari further suggests that, had the architect enjoyed greater freedom of design, he would probably have built the palace in the centre of the open piazza, as well as laying flat foundations to support the high-rise structure.

Why was the Uberti's former ownership of the land considered a key factor in deciding the site of the communal palace? The Uberti were an ancient and powerful lineage receiving strong support from Florentine feudal nobles and popolani. In 1215 they formed an alliance with the Ghibellines and Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II, which led to an outburst of rivalry between the opposing political factions of the Guelphs and the Ghibellines in Florence, seriously undermining the city's domestic order.⁷⁴ Due to the Florentine government's pro-Guelph

⁷² 'Nel detto anno MCCLXXXVIII si cominciò a fondare il palagio de'priori per lo comune e popolo di Firenze, ... e i priori che regeano il popolo e tuta la repubblica non perea loro essere sicuri ove abitavano innanzi, ch'era nella casa de' Cerchi bianchi dietro a la chiesa di San Brocolo. E colà dove puosono il detto palazzo furono anticamente le case degli Uberti, ribellu di Firenze e Ghibellini; e di que' loro casolari feciono piazza, acciò che mai non si rifacessero. E perché il detto palazzo non si ponesse in sul terreno de' detti Uberti coloro che ll'ebbono a far fare il puosono musso, che fu grande difalta a lasciare però di non farlo quadro.' Villani, *Nuova cronica*, vol. 2, bk. 9, chap. 26, 45-6.

⁷³ On Arnolfo's commission, Vasari wrote: 'essendo state disfatte e mandate per terra le case degli Uberti, rubelli del popolo fiorentino e ghibellini, e fattone piazza, potette tanto sciocca caparbieta d'alcuni, che non ebbe forza Arnolfo, per molte ragioni che allegasse, di far si che gli fusse concesso almeno mettere il palazzo in isquadra per non aver voluto chi governava, che in modo nessuno il palazzo avesse i fondamenti in sul terreno degli Uberti rubello.' He then spoke as the architect of the Grand Duke of Cosimo I: 'se il fondamento del palazzo è bieco e fuor di squadra; essendo stato forza, per accomodar la torre nel mezzo e renderla più forte, lasciarla intorno colle mura del palazzo.' Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, vol. 1, 289-90.

⁷⁴ In book 5, on the discussion of ancient lineage in Florence, Villani noted that 'I maggiori erano gli Uberti, nati e venuto il loro antico della Magna, che abitavano ov'è oggi la piazza de'priori e 'l palagio del popolo.' In Florence the Uberti built their own fortified palace with towers reaching 100 and 120 *braccia* (57 and 68.4 meters) in height, and even barricading streets and blocks to wall up their own enclave. They declared war on the government in 1177 and brought Florence into a two-year confrontation between private factions and communal government. On the Uberti as the head of the Ghibellines in Florence and the magnate regime under the support of the Frederick II, see Villani, *Nuova cronica*, vol. 1, bk. 6, chap. 38, 267-9; bk. 7, chapt. 33, 315-21. On the punishment of the Ghibellines during the first popular government, *ibid.*, vol. 1, bk. 7, chap. 39, 326-7. Also see Dino Compagni, "Dino Compagni's Chronicle of Florence," ed. Daniel Ethan Bornstein (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), bk. 1, chap. 16, 18.; *ibid.*, bk. 1, chap. 11, 13-4.

stance, in 1258 the Uberti were expelled as supporters of Manfred I, the head of the Ghibelline Party after Frederick II's death. The Uberti's lands and properties in the city were either confiscated or destroyed by the government. Villani harshly decreed that the Uberti were 'rebels of Florence and Ghibellines' (*ribelli di Firenze e Ghibellini*),⁷⁵ and his view was reiterated by Vasari in the sixteenth century.⁷⁶ Considering the Popolo government's antipathy towards the Ghibellines and the Second Popolo's anti-magnate policies,⁷⁷ erecting the government palace on the land of one of the city's strongest Ghibelline families sent a powerful political message from the victorious Guelphs, as well as asserting the supremacy of communal power over any individual magnate family.

The Florentines' political interpretation of the site and footprint suggests that the construction of a public palace was connected to the government's political agenda, as well as the historical memory associated with a specific locus. The extent to which Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale was renovated because of the location's political significance will be tackled in the following chapters.

A Promised Domain

Before the Palazzo dei Priori was built, the priors used to stay in a private property rented from the elite family of the Cerchi, who were also the leaders of the White Guelph Party. Yet, according to Villani, the Cerchi house 'seems not safe for the priors', so that the government decided to commission a new communal palace in 1299.⁷⁸ It is possible that the government's

⁷⁵ Villani, *Nuova cronica*, vol. 2, bk. 9, chap. 26, 46.

⁷⁶ 'Essendo state disfatte e mandate per terra le case degli Uberti, rubelli del popolo fiorentino e ghibellini.' Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, 289.

⁷⁷ The civic division and conflict were heightened after the Ordinances of Justice in 1293 prevented noble families from holding public official position, thus reinforcing the power of the *popolo*. On the punishment of the Ghibellines during the first popular government, see Villani, *Nuova cronica*, vol. 1, bk. 7, chap. 39, 326-7. Chapter 39 describes the provisions on the height of private *case-torri* that influenced many magnates' properties. Compagni, "Dino Compagni's Chronicle of Florence," bk. 1, chap. 11, 13-4.

⁷⁸ Villani, *Nuova cronica*, vol. 2, bk. 9, chap. 26, 45-6. On the conflict between the magnates and the *popolo* between 1285-1292, see Nicola Ottokar, *Il comune di Firenze alla fine del Dugento* (Torino: Giulio Einaudi, 1962), 90-128. Salvemini, *Magnati e popolani in Firenze dal 1280 al 1295*, 10, 171.

main concern was the Cerchi's powerful status within the city. Florence's urban history between the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries was replete with uprisings targeting the communal magistrates and their residence. For example, in his chronicle, Dino Compagni wrote about an incident in 1295 when a rioting mob broke into the Palazzo del Podestà, stealing the horses and plundering the property of the *podestà*.⁷⁹ Another plot against the priors happened when Compagni was serving in the priorate. In 1301, the Papal legate Charles of Valois planned to murder the priors at a public event organised at Santa Maria Novella with support from the city's Black Guelph party. The only reason Charles of Valois' malicious plot was not successful was that the priors recognised the risk entailed in leaving their palace, so refused to attend the gathering.⁸⁰ A further incident occurred in 1308, when the leader of the Black Guelph party, Corso Donati, organised an armed attack on the Palazzo dei Priori in an unsuccessful attempt to seize control of the commune.⁸¹

These episodes reveal the magistrates' vulnerability, but they also highlight the extent to which the palace was perceived as the commune's military stronghold, consistently and reliably thwarting armed assaults. The palace was a shelter, separating the magistrates from a dangerous urban environment. Importantly, these texts imply that had the palace not been built to provide a secure and permanent building in which the councils and magistrates could meet and live, the

⁷⁹ Compagni, "Dino Compagni's Chronicle of Florence," bk. 1, chap. 16, 18. 'the popolo dragged kindling to the palace of the podestà to burn its door.'

⁸⁰ Ibid., bk. 2, chap. 13, 42-3. Compagni was one of the priori during that time, he explained that according to the oath of office, they should not leave the palace. But Charles planned a public gathering at the Santa Maria Novella to discuss public issues, and eventually three priori attended this event and ended up endangering their lives. The first term of priorate had only three members, but the number increased to six (one from each *sesto*) from the second term onwards. Then, after the Ordinance of Justice was promulgated in January 1293, a new official – the Standard-bearer of Justice – was formed as the seventh member of the priorate in 1293. Dino Compagni was elected many times to serve in the Florentine chief magistracies, he served as one of the priors from April to June in 1289, elected as the third Standard-bearer of Justice in office from June to August 1293. In October 1301, during Charles of Valois's planning of his conspiracy, Compagni was the prior for the second time. Yet his term of office terminated in only one month, the priors were replaced by a new set of member all belonging to the Black Guelph Party in 8 November. Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200-1575*, 92.

⁸¹ Although Donati escaped Florence, he was later killed by the Florentine military force. Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200-1575*, 94-5.

Florentine Commune might not have been able to survive. This was probably the reason that the Florentine statutes not only request the priors to *morari* [sic: *morare*], *stare*, *dormire* (live in, remain, sleep) within their residence,⁸² forbidding them from leaving the building during their two-month terms of office, but also specifying that no one but elected officials could enter the building complex.⁸³ According to Rubinstein, the magistrates were ‘living in a world of their own... detached from the mass of the people.’⁸⁴

It is worth noting that Florence’s first communal palace, the Palazzo del Podestà, was originally a single block building in the 1250s. Yunn’s study shows that its enclosed plan was not realised before 1316 (Figure 8).⁸⁵ This means that at the Palazzo dei Priori was most likely the city’s first civic palace whose site was fully closed. A closer look at the Palazzo dei Priori (Figure 2) helps us to understand why communal palaces were perceived as an isolated world within the city. First, the site was enclosed by battlemented masonry walls, which not only physically divided the palace from adjacent urban structures, but they also hid the internal space from public visibility. With only one portal and narrow apertures opening high on the ground floor, it is almost impossible to observe the interior of the walled complex from street level. Thus, the enclosed building complex clearly separates the communal officials from the dangerous city, its design also communicating this to the people outside. Secondly, the rusticated pietra forte walls could be perceived as a symbol of strength emulating ancient Roman military

⁸² At this time the Palazzo dei Priori was not finished, and the priors likely still lived in the Cerchi palace: ‘ipsi Priores omnes cum Vexillifero Justitie insimul morari [sic: *morare*], stare, dormire, et comedere debeant in una domo ubi voluerint er quam viderint abiliorem pro eorum officio commodius exercendo.’ Cited from Alfredo Lensi, *Palazzo Vecchio* (Milano: Bestetti e Tumminelli, 1929), 12.

⁸³ ‘QUOD NULLUS NISI OFFICIALIS DEBEAT IN CAMERA COMUNIS CONVERSARI.’ Caggese, *Statuto del capitano del popolo degli anni 1322-25*, bk. 4, rub. 23, 173. Contemporary mentions, see Compagni, “Dino Compagni’s Chronicle of Florence,” bk. 2, chap. 13, 42-3; Leonardo Bruni, “Panegyric to the City of Florence,” in *The Earthly Republic: Italian Humanists on Government and Society*, ed. Benjamin G. Kohl and Ronald G. Witt (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978), 170. Also see Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 14.

⁸⁴ Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 14.

⁸⁵ Yunn, *The Bargello Palace: The Invention of Civic Architecture in Florence*, 123-78.

architecture,⁸⁶ and although the projecting blocks might not be ideal for defence, the rocky texture of the masonry visually enhances the building's strength and military overtones. Thirdly, projecting galleries and console brackets, as well as the bell tower overhanging the top of the main building block, establish an impression that not only the palace's site, its adjacent space, and indeed, the whole city, were under strict surveillance.⁸⁷ Finally, two sets of civic bells, Leone and the Popolo, were installed in the belfry hanging above the soaring watch tower, demonstrating that at any emergency the government could be alerted and react promptly.⁸⁸ In the 1310s the almost-completed Palazzo dei Priori was the most impregnable, and probably the most isolated, public enclosure within the city, almost certainly playing a major role in controlling Florence's unstable social and political situation.⁸⁹

Andrea Orcagna's fresco, *The Expulsion of the Duke of Athens* (c.1344-1345, Figure 9) provides valuable evidence for how the castellated Palazzo dei Priori was perceived in the fourteenth century.⁹⁰ The mural depicts a dramatic scene in which the despot Walter of Brienne,

⁸⁶ Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 13, n.82; F. W. Kent, "Palaces, Politics and Society in Fifteenth-Century Florence," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 2 (1987): 54, n.71; Lansing, *The Florentine Magnates: Lineage and Faction in a Medieval Commune*, 85-7. Typology of Florentine rustication, see Chapter 4.3, 190-4.

⁸⁷ In his chronicle, Gregorio Dati referred to the machicolated gallery in the Palazzo dei Priori in Florence. Gregorio Dati, *Istoria di Firenze. Dall'anno MCCCLXXX all'anno MCCCCV* (Norcia, 1902), 115. Also see Chapter 1.2, 63.

⁸⁸ The Palazzo dei Podestà also had two sets of bells, namely Montanina and Podestà. Among them, the sound of Montanina often signifies critical situation or wartime. Niall Atkinson, "The Republic of Sound: Listening to Florence at the Threshold of the Renaissance," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 16, no. 1/2 (2013): 72, n.33.

⁸⁹ Najemy noted that the street fight and ensuing raging fire of 1304 was the most disastrous turmoil in the commune's history, destroying the central part of Florence. No other urban disaster happened on a comparable scale. After the death of Corso Donati, power was seized by manipulating the communal constitution rather than through ferocious battles, thus creating a relatively peaceful environment in Florence. Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200-1575*, 93-4. On the ways in which the castellated profile of the Palazzo dei Priori successfully drove off attackers and defended official magistrates. Ibid. Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 13, n.82; Kent, "Palaces, Politics and Society in Fifteenth-Century Florence," 54, n.71; Lansing, *The Florentine Magnates: Lineage and Faction in a Medieval Commune*, 85-7. The typological comparison of the castellated elements between Florence's Palazzo dei Priori and other Tuscan communal palaces will be discussed in Chapter 4.

⁹⁰ According to Donato, the development of Florentine civic iconography was closely integrated with the city's religious icons, its political history, as well as the urban space: Maria Monica Donato, "Arte civica a Firenze, dal primo popolo al primo umanesimo. La tradizione, i modelli perduti," in *Dal giglio al David: arte civica a Firenze fra Medioevo e Rinascimento*, ed. Maria Monica Donato (Firenze: Giunti, 2013), 82-3.

also known as the Duke of Athens, was expelled from the city on 26 July 1343, the feast day of Saint Anne.⁹¹ In this fresco, which is distinctive for its round format, the image of Palazzo dei Priori divided the picture into two episodes visually and conceptually. To the left of the palace is Saint Anne, enthroned with two angels supporting her cloth of honour, flanked on one side by a group of at least fourteen soldiers wearing protective armour. Two kneeling soldiers hold swords and three more standing behind carry banners with the arms of the Florentine *popolo*, the city, and the commune.⁹² On the other side of the saint is the Palazzo dei Priori. Saint Anne's open arms, with her hands grasping the arms of the militia on one side, and hovering over the Palazzo dei Priori on the other, suggest that both the people and the commune were under her protection. The group of soldiers kneeling towards Saint Anne seem to be fully absorbed in devotion. To the right of the palace, a throne is empty, as Justice has vacated his throne to chase the Duke. The fleeing Duke turns back to look anxiously at the angel of Justice holding the staff and chasing him. A broken sword and a banner, and a crumpled flag bearing the Duke's emblem are scattered around him, suggesting that a fight has just ended.⁹³ His right

⁹¹ Florentine merchants and bankers invited Walter of Brienne to Florence in 1342 to solve the city's financial crisis. Walter declared himself *signore* of Florence for life, levying harsh taxes and abandoning Florence's communal traditions and guild-based magistracy. The Florentines therefore decided to overthrow his regime. Armed Florentines gathered in the piazza in front of the Palazzo dei Priori shouting: 'Death to the Duke and his followers, and long live the popolo, the commune and liberty' (*Muoia il duca e i suoi seguaci, e viva il popolo e'l commune e liberta*). Villani, *Nuova cronica*, vol. 3, bk. 13, 332. The Duke was besieged inside the palace until he fled into exile during night of 6 August. English Translation: Roger J. Crum and David G. Wilkins, "In the Defense of Florentine Republicanism: Saint Anne and Florentine Art, 1343-1575," in *Interpreting Cultural Symbols: Saint Anne in Late Medieval Society*, ed. Kathleen Ashley and Pamela Sheingorn (Athens, Georgia, etc.: Univ. of Georgia P., 1990), 133. On the financial crisis among Florentine elite families in the 1340s and Walter of Brienne's fiscal reforms in Florence, Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200-1575*, 132-9. On this event's influence on fourteenth-century Florentine republican ideology, see Nicolai Rubinstein, "Florence and the Despots. Some Aspects of Florentine Diplomacy in the Fourteenth Century," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 2 (1952): 21-3. On the analysis of pictorial tradition, Diana Norman, *Siena, Florence, and Padua: Art, Society and Religion 1280-1400* (New Haven, Conn. ; London: Yale University Press in association with the Open University, 1995), vol. 1, 141-2.

⁹² The red cross of the *Popolo* commemorates the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The vertical bipartite white and red shield symbolised the unification of Florence and Fiesole after the battle of 1125. It was frequently used on the chariot in the battlefields. The red lily (*flos*) on white field of the arms of the commune derives from the city's Latin name, *Florentia*. On the iconography of the Florentine coats of arms, Maria Monica Donato and Daniela Parenti, eds., *Dal giglio al David: arte civica a Firenze fra Medioevo e Rinascimento* (Firenze: Giunti, 2013), 74-5, 212.

⁹³ It is also suggested that the book, the balance, and the sword on the ground are emblems of justice. *Ibid.*, 212.

leg pointing towards the palace betrays his unwillingness to leave. The tyrant's body turning away from the palace symbolically indicates that his despotic oppression had no more influence on the Florentine people. In contrast with the peaceful, submissive and orderly figures to the left, the image of the disgraced tyrant conveys a strong moral lesson, showing the consequences of crimes committed against the Republican commune.⁹⁴

The palace's west façade faces the Duke, and its castellated form can be clearly seen. We learnt from Villani that the Duke planned to transform the palace into a 'great and strong *castello* (castle).'⁹⁵ He destroyed the *ringhiera* (platform for oratory) at ground level, a structure reflecting Florence's open parliamentary system and republican tradition,⁹⁶ and replaced it with two *antiporte* (fortified bulwarks) protecting the portals of the palace on the west and north façades, both presented in Orcagna's fresco.⁹⁷ A low parapet circles the building, enclosing the base of the site and connecting the two *antiporte*, thus visually enhancing the building's stability. While his renovation was most probably intended to protect the palace where he resided, in Orcagna's narrative the projecting *antiporte* accentuate the threatening

⁹⁴ According to Donato, civic arts not only celebrated a commune's diplomatic and militant power, but also sought to stigmatise crime in order to promote domestic discipline. Donato, "Arte civica a Firenze, dal *primo popolo* al primo umanesimo. La tradizione, i modelli perduti," 20. Bent associated Orcagna's fresco with the tyrant motif in Ambrogio Lorenzetti's Bad Government cycle in Siena, George Bent, *Public Painting and Visual Culture in Early Republican Florence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 120-1.

⁹⁵ 'Il detto compreso fece cominciare e fondare di grosso mura e torri e barbacani per fare col palagio insieme uno grande e forte castello.' Villani, *Nuova cronica*, vol. 3, bk. 13, chap. 8, 309-10. Also see Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 16; Rubinstein, "Fortified Enclosures in Italian Cities under *Signori*," 3-4, n. 30. According to Burns, in medieval Italian context *castelli* not only indicate a single building but the whole rural area circled by walls, having been fortified so that to protect citizens.' Burns, *La villa italiana del Rinascimento*, 29. Also see Amanda Lillie, "Florentine Villas in the Fifteenth Century: a Study of the Strozzi and Sassetti Country Properties" (1995), 73; Paolo Pirillo, *Forme e strutture del popolamento nel contado fiorentino* (Firenze: L.S. Olschki, 2005), 29.

⁹⁶ Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 15-6, n. 110; Stephen J. Milner, "Citing the Ringhiera: The Politics of Place and Public Address in Trecento Florence," *Italian Studies* 55, no. 1 (2000): 53-82; Geraldine A. Johnson, "The Lion on the Piazza: Patrician Politics and Public Statuary in Central Florence," in *Secular Sculpture, 1300-1550*, ed. Thomas Frangenberg and Phillip Linley (Shaun Tyas Press, 2000), 60.

⁹⁷ In Battaglia dictionary, *antiporta* is translated into simply an entry-door, or fore-gate. On the analysis of the political significance behind destroying the bulwarks, see Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 15-6, n. 110; Lillie, "The Politics of Castellation," 332-3. In his study of the origin of Italian urban settlements, Jones suggested that next to cities and its suburbs, there are numerous minor *castra* and boroughs. Jones, *The Italian City-State: From Commune to Signoria*, 153-5.

characteristics of the palace, associated in this context with tyrant's rule. It is therefore not surprising that, after expelling the Duke from Florence, the government decided to demolish the *antiporte* and defensive walls, rebuilding the *ringhiera* in 1349.⁹⁸ The restoration of the Palazzo dei Priori to its pre-Walter of Brienne configuration symbolically declared the palace's return to the Florentine people, as Lillie argues.⁹⁹

Moving upwards through the elevation of Orcagna's Palazzo dei Priori, the two rows of double lancet windows open on the upper storeys, act like the eyes of the building, staring sternly at the Duke. The block is guarded by a projecting machicolated gallery and battlements. The tower not only doubles the height of the palace, but it includes a further embattled machicolated gallery carried on corbels, above which a belfry is supported by four strong columns. Its height, barely slightly shorter than the figure of Saint Anne, implies dominance. The dimensions of the palace, which diminish persectivally towards the top relate to the visual experience of the building from the Piazza della Signoria.¹⁰⁰ Abutting Saint Anne's throne, the palace seems to receive its power directed by Saint Anne. With its main façade directly engaging the enemy, the palace is comparable to an infantryman confidently standing in the battlefield. This is further underlined by Orcagna's positioning of the kneeling soldiers away from the tyrant and under the protection of St Anne, implying that the main defender of Florence was the sturdy palace.

When we examine the fresco in its original context, the way Orcagna featured the Palazzo dei Priori within the subject is significant. This fresco was painted on the wall of the vestibule at

⁹⁸ On the political motive behind the reconstruction of the *ringhiera*, see Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 15-7. On the political interpretation of the Marzocco on the platform, Johnson, "The Lion on the Piazza: Patrician Politics and Public Statuary in Central Florence," 55-6.

⁹⁹ Lillie, "The Politics of Castellation," 332-3.

¹⁰⁰ Such arrangement was probably related with the viewers' experience of entering the piazza from the city's medieval thoroughfare Via Calzaiuoli. Johnson, "The Lion on the Piazza: Patrician Politics and Public Statuary in Central Florence," 59.

the Carceri delle Stinche, the prison in which the Duke incarcerated his political opponents.¹⁰¹ In this context, the palace's function as a mediator of two episodes may echo the role of the Stinche mediating inmates and good citizens. Furthermore, the importance of Orcagna's fresco lies in demonstrating how castellated architecture helps to serve the commune and its citizens: parapets on the ground floor reinforce structures against external assaults, projecting *antiporte* and machicolated galleries intimidate and thus repel enemies, looming towers enable one to keep a large area under surveillance, and, perhaps most importantly, defensive walls block enemies from outside the city. From this perspective, castellation can be either a symbol of despotism or a protector of liberty, depending on who uses the palace as their instrument of power.

In addition to erecting their seats of government in a castellated enclave, both the first and second popular governments endeavoured to reinforce and expand Florence's city walls.¹⁰² The walls were made of masonry and fortified with battlements, *antiporte* and towers, and pictorial representations like Orcagna's may therefore bolster the broader importance of military architecture in the eyes of contemporary viewers.

In his altarpiece *The Coronation of the Virgin* (c.1373, Figure 10), Jacopo Cione represents the Palazzo dei Priori in a model of Florence held by Saint Anne, who became one of the main patrons and protectors of Florence after 1343.¹⁰³ In a tightly clustered group of buildings

¹⁰¹ Donato, "Arte civica a Firenze, dal primo popolo al primo umanesimo. La tradizione, i modelli perduti," 212-3. While Florence's legal and civil laws lies beyond the scope of this thesis, Wolfgang's study showed that most inmates in this prison were convicted for failure to pay debts and many would eventually be released. The prison was demolished in 1833. The Theatre Verdi now stands on its site. Marvin E. Wolfgang, "A Florentine Prison: le carceri delle Stinche," *Studies in the Renaissance* 7 (1960): 152.

¹⁰² The *Primo Popolo* constructed a new circle of city walls, and the third circle of city walls commissioned by the second popular government from 1284 to 1334 enclosed a space that was eight times bigger than the previous circle. Fanelli, *Le città nella storia d'Italia. Firenze, urban development of the primo popolo*, 29-31; of the *secondo popolo*, 31-5. On public buildings and constructions of the second popular government, Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200-1575*, 98-9.

¹⁰³ The government declared her feast day a civic holiday in 1344, and images of her were displayed throughout the city. On the cult of Saint Anne and the renovation at Orsanmichele, Richard C. Trexler, *Public life in Renaissance Florence* (New York: Academic Press, 1980), 222-3; John Henderson, *Piety and Charity in Late Medieval Florence* (Oxford, New York: Clarendon Press, Oxford University Press, 1994), 204-6; Crum and

enclosed by battlemented city walls, the tower with corbelled machicolated galleries and belfry supported by four massive columns certainly represent the *Torre di Arnolfo*. The tower's prominent position implies its surveillance over the whole walled space. Likewise, in Mariotto di Nardo's fresco of *Saint Anne* at Orsanmichele (Figure 11), the city of Florence is presented as a circular model protected by crenellated walls. Within the walls, one of the most dominant buildings is the castellated Palazzo dei Priori. Since Orsanmichele was the Florentine Guilds' public oratory,¹⁰⁴ the guilds' close relationship with the government of the *Secondo Popolo* may account for the presence of the communal palace in the fresco.¹⁰⁵ This work also draws our attention to Florence's prominent city walls, punctuated by gate towers with parapets, which are only slightly shorter than Giotto's campanile and Arnolfo's Tower. As noted by Pirillo, during the fourteenth century, a settlement's security was established through urban palaces, towers, and merlons.¹⁰⁶ Jacopo di Cione's and Mariotto Nardo's representations of Florence seem to reflect the viewers' understanding of fortifications, including the castellated communal places and the defensive city walls, as an agent of the city's security.

The Madonna of Mercy (c.1342, Figure 12) fresco in the Loggia del Bigallo further develops the civic iconography of fortifications. The urban fabric within the city walls consists of both fortified and unfortified buildings, as well as many recognisable urban landmarks,¹⁰⁷ amongst

Wilkins, "In the Defense of Florentine Republicanism: Saint Anne and Florentine Art, 1343-1575," 141-50. Jacopo Cione's painting was also known as the altarpiece of the Zecca given its commission from the Florentine Zecca between 1372-1373, Donato and Parenti, *Dal giglio al David: arte civica a Firenze fra Medioevo e Rinascimento*, 132.

¹⁰⁴ The ornament at oratory of Orsanmichele during the second half of the fourteenth century greatly contributed to Saint Anne. Vittoria Camelliti, "I santi patroni: le immagini della 'devozione civica' a Firenze fra Duecento e primo Cinquecento," in *Dal giglio al David. Arte civica a Firenze fra Medioevo e Rinascimento*, ed. Maria Monica Donato and Daniela Parenti (Firenze: Giunti, 2013), 83.

¹⁰⁵ Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze*, vol. 5, 325-6. On Orsanmichele's importance in the development of Florence's fourteenth-century arts and public patronage, Diane Finiello Zervas, *The Parte Guelfa, Brunelleschi & Donatello* (Locust Valley, New York: J.J. Augustin, 1988), 54-63; Bent, *Public Painting and Visual Culture in Early Republican Florence*.

¹⁰⁶ Pirillo, *Forme e strutture del popolamento nel contado fiorentino*, 29.

¹⁰⁷ Levin made a comprehensive list of the recognisable buildings in this fresco, from left to right the landmarks presented are Santa Maria Novella, San Lorenzo, Santa Maria Maggiore, Badia Fiorentina, the Palazzo del Podesta, the Baptistery, the Palazzo dei Priori, Santa Reparata, and Santa Croce is on the right end. William R. Levin, *The Allegory of Mercy at the Misericordia in Florence: Historiography, Context, Iconography, and the*

which the Baptistery is the most eye-catching building. Behind the Baptistery there are two of the Florentine government palazzi: to the right is the prominent Palazzo dei Priori, shown from a north-west viewpoint, and the Palazzo del Podestà. The height of the Palazzo dei Priori's tower seems shorter than the actual one, yet its crenellated tower, belfry, and arched windows on the upper storeys are recognisable. By contrast, the Palazzo del Podestà can be identified only through its tower, with a lengthened bell deck, the whole of its main building covered by a rectangular tower. Although the images of Florence's two castellated communal palaces are less dominant in this fresco, an inscription of *Civitas Florenti[a]e* inscribed on the crenellated city walls draws our attention to the civic connotation of the fortifications.¹⁰⁸ In this context, defensive city walls seems to be an allegory of the Florentine city-state itself, rather than a mere extension of the city's urban landscape.¹⁰⁹

Fortified city walls and castellated civic palaces were predominant motifs in most fourteenth-century Tuscan representations of communes' local patron saints. In the Palazzo dei Priori in Volterra, a fresco in the *sala del consiglio* (c.1383, Figure 13) shows the commune's patron Saint Ottaviano holding a model of Volterra. Within the crenellated city walls stands the city's communal palace, whose battlemented tower and curved crenellations are clearly represented. Although this fresco is a devotional work, the image of Volterra's civic palace enjoys greater visual dominance than the cathedral, whose cupola and campanile were partly obscured by the communal palace. Given the focal role played by the Palazzo dei Priori, here closely associated

Documentation of Confraternal Charity in the Trecento (Dallas; Oxford: University Press of America, 2004), 31-2. On the fresco's moral implication of piety, see Beatrice Paolozzi Strozzi, ed. *The Springtime of the Renaissance: Sculpture and the Arts in Florence 1400-60* (Mandragora, 2013), 205-11. On the allegory of Mercy, Bent, *Public Painting and Visual Culture in Early Republican Florence*, 84-91.

¹⁰⁸ On the political connotation of city walls in northern Italian city-states including Florence since the thirteenth century, Simon Pepper, "Siege Law, Siege Ritual, and the Symbolism of City Walls in Renaissance Europe," in *City Walls: the Urban Enceinte in Global Perspective*, ed. James D. Tracy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 583-4; Donato, "Arte civica a Firenze, dal primo popolo al primo umanesimo. La tradizione, i modelli perduti," 82-3.

¹⁰⁹ Bent, *Public Painting and Visual Culture in Early Republican Florence*, 84-91.

with the city's patron saint, it seems fair to argue that this castellated palace was an agent of local identity and civic pride. Similarly, in Montepulciano, Taddeo di Bartolo's altarpiece *Assumption of the Virgin* depicts the local saint, St. Antilia, holding the fortified town of Montepulciano with fortified towers protruding from the skyline (Figure 14). Taddeo's other altarpiece depicting Saint Gimignano (c.1401, Figure 15), the protector saint of San Gimignano from which the commune's name derived, offers a further example of the ways in which local civic identity was forged through military architecture. The *antiporta* guarding a circuit of crenellated walls, and enormous tall towers clustered within the cityscape suggest that, in addition to the saint's spiritual protection, the commune was also guarded by defensive works. The ways in which fourteenth-century painters adopted the image of castellated civic palaces and fortified city walls to represent a secure space for citizens, as well as to highlight local identity draw our attention to the significance of Montepulciano's 1440 castellated façade. Did the façade aim to deter a take-over by a tyrant or a local rebellion as Orcagna's Florentine fresco evokes the expelled Duke of Athens? Or does it reveal that Florence's protection already embraced the town of Montepulciano? The communal palace's role within the town's socio-political, ideological and cultural circumstances is worth reconsidering.

A Measurement

A close look at fourteenth-century visual representations of Florence such as *The Madonna of Mercy* provides us with pictorial evidence for the cityscape characterised by fortifications and castellated palaces. In addition to representing Florence's seats of government, many fortified towers most likely refer to *case-torri*, a type of defensive residence derived from military watch towers and often belonging to powerful lineages in Florence.¹¹⁰ According to Shaw, land and

¹¹⁰ Lansing, *The Florentine Magnates: Lineage and Faction in a Medieval Commune*, 85-6; David Friedman, "Il palazzo e la città. Facciata fiorentine tra XIV e XV secolo" (paper presented at the Il palazzo dal Rinascimento a oggi, Reggio Calabria, 1988), 101-2.

fortresses played an essential role in articulating aristocrats' military strength.¹¹¹ The Uberti built their own fortified urban palace with towers reaching 100 and 120 braccia (57 and 68.4 meters) in height, even barricading streets and blocks to wall up their own enclave.¹¹² When writing about competition between the Black and White Guelphs, Compagni underlined the importance of high-rise buildings: 'seeing the Cerchi rising, [the Donati] walled up and enlarged their palace, living in a grand manner.'¹¹³ Villani mentions that the Ghibellines commonly demolished properties and *case-torri* belonging to the Guelphs as a revenge measure. One of these destroyed towers had even reached 130 *braccia* (75.8 meters) in height.¹¹⁴

In her studies of the Florentine magnates, Lansing argued that 'the lineage identity was closely bound up with the family palaces and towers...Lineage property also expressed political and military power.'¹¹⁵ Proudly guarding private families' territories in the town, the looming feature of *case-torri* was closely associated with the notion of political and military power between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It is therefore not surprising that the Florentine government took legal steps to ensure the dominance of the communal palace over elites' domestic castellated towers and houses within the city. In his chapter on the Palazzo del Podestà, Villani not only mentioned the tall public tower built on the corner of the newly erected seat of the *popolo*, but also noted the statute requiring all private towers to be reduced to 50 *braccia*

¹¹¹ Shaw, *Barons and Castellans: the Military Nobility of Renaissance Italy*, 9, 20, 64-5.

¹¹² Villani, *Nuova cronica*, vol. 1, bk. 6, chap. 38, 267-9; bk. 7, chap. 33, 315-21; bk. 7, chap. 39, 326-29.

¹¹³ Compagni, "Dino Compagni's Chronicle of Florence," bk. 1, chap. 20, 22. Dino Compagni, *Cronica*, ed. Domenico Carbone, 3 ed. (Firenze: G. Barbèra Editore, 1871), bk. 1, 21. Compagni noticed that 'Onde, veggendo i Cerchi salire in altezza, avendo murato e cresciuto il palagio, e tenendo gran vita.'

¹¹⁴ Villani, *Nuova cronica*, vol. 1, bk. 7, chap. 33, 319. 'I Ghibelline che rimansono in Firenze signori colla forza e cavalleria di Federigo imperadore si riformaro la citta alloro guise, e feciono disfare da XXXVI fortezze de' Guelfi, che palagi e grandi torri, intra le quali fu la più nobile quella de' Tosignghi in su Mercato Vecchio, chiamato il Palazzo, alto LXXXX braccia, fatto a colonnelli di marmo, e una torre con esso alta CXXX braccia.'

¹¹⁵ Lansing, *The Florentine Magnates: Lineage and Faction in a Medieval Commune*, 84. Ottokar, *Il comune di Firenze alla fine del Dugento*, 90-128.

(29.18 meters) or less.¹¹⁶ In the 1325 Statutes of the Podestà, one protocol captioned *De Turribus Exquadrandis* set the height for all private palaces and towers:

In order to restrain the arrogance of towers, no family tower should henceforth exceed, under penalty of demolition, the height of that of the church of S. Stefano near the palace [*i.e.* of the Podestà], which amounts precisely to 50 *braccia*.¹¹⁷

By reducing and limiting the castellated *case-torri*, the Palazzo del Podestà's tower (Figure 16, about 100 *braccia*, 57 meters) would have been double the height of private towers.¹¹⁸

Discussing the Palazzo dei Priori's tower, Vasari noted that the government insisted on incorporating the structure of Foraboschi's *casa-torre*.¹¹⁹ Subsequently, in 1310 the government decided to increase the height of the Palazzo dei Priori by adding another belfry on top of Arnolfo's Tower (the whole structure is about 95 metres in height),¹²⁰ symbolically indicating the end of aristocratic rule. The 1415 communal statutes forbade construction of any private fortress or tower higher than the Communal tower of the Palazzo dei Priori.¹²¹ This

¹¹⁶ Villani, *Nuova cronica*, vol. 1, bk. 7, chap. 39, 329. Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 10, n.53.

¹¹⁷ Caggese, *Statuto del podestà dell'anno 1325*, bk. 4, rub. 41, 305. 'Ut refrenetur superbia que dudum in turribus habebatur nec earum perdictio fiat ulterius in construendo turres quam incurrebant sepissime Florentini, statuimus quod nulla persona possit in civitate Florentie, burgis et suburgis murare vel extollere in altum turres vel palatia domus et queque hedificia ultra mensuram illam que redacta est ad squadram cum turri que dicitur Sancti Stephani, que siquidem turris ad cuius instar alique sunt squadrata est alta bracciis quinquaginta.' English translation, see Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 10, n. 53. On the dimension of the tower at the Palazzo del Podestà, Fanelli, *Le città nella storia d'Italia. Firenze*, 31.

¹¹⁸ The Palazzo del Podestà's corner tower evolved from the Boscoli's *casa-torre*. Fanelli, *Le città nella storia d'Italia. Firenze*, 31; Macci and Orgera, *Architettura e civiltà delle torri: torri e famiglie nella Firenze medievale*, 143-5.

¹¹⁹ 'che vollero ancora che si unisse ed accomodasse nel palazzo la torre de' Foraboschi chiamata la torre della Vacca, alta cinquanta braccia, per uso della campana grossa.' Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, vol. 1, 289-90.

¹²⁰ The Priors and the Gonfalonier of Justice had resided in the new palazzo since 1302 though the tower was not yet built. Arnolfo's Tower, without its spire, is 150 *braccia* in height, Marvin Trachtenberg, *Dominion of the Eye: Urbanism, Art, and Power in Early Modern Florence* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 90-1; Marvin Trachtenberg, *Building-in-Time: From Giotto to Alberti and Modern Oblivion* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2010), 192-200. It has been suggested that the assertive height of the Palazzo dei Priori was designed to symbolise and to render tangible supremacy of public authority. Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 10, n. 46; 13, n. 81.

¹²¹ *Statuta populi et communis Florentiæ publica auctoritate collecta castigata et præposita anno salutis*

almost obsessive control of height and fortification of the domestic buildings is a symbolic manifestation of the supremacy of public authority over individual patrician families. The vicissitudes of Florence's skyline, first marked by private *case-torri* and then by the communal towers, correspond to the shift in power between private and public authority after the establishment of the popular government. Since no other private buildings could exceed Arnolfo's Tower (Figure 17), the tower itself acts as a visible measure of communal jurisdiction and civic order. Its presence and morphology promise stability and justice, which were crucial to a harmonious civic life.¹²² The significance of the palazzo dei Priori's towers is partially embodied in the name of *Ufficio della Torre* (Tower Office), an important section of the Florentine administration, whose jurisdiction gradually increased from repairing public towers and palaces to managing streets, walls, bridges, and ecclesiastical and civic buildings in the city and its *contado*,¹²³ as the image of the tower became synonymous with Florence's cultural and civic norm.

Domenico Benzi's miniature for the account book *Specchio Umano* (1335-1347, Figure 18) provides further evidence for the ways how civic towers were perceived by contemporary viewers.¹²⁴ In the miniature on folio 58r, a high tower on the right corner represents the iconic

MCCCCXV. (Friburgi: Apud Michaelem Kluth, 1778), rub. 92-4; Lillie, "The Politics of Castellation," 314, n. 6.

¹²² According to Lugli, stone measurements (*pietre di paragone*) incised in public buildings became a trend in medieval Italian communes from the twelfth century onwards and were a key device to establish public authority and standardise urban life. Following his perspective, adopting the height of the tower of the communal palace as a measuring standard seems to suggest that the configuration of the palace was an attempt to materialise and visualise the communal power: Emanuele Lugli, "Hidden in Plain Sight: the 'Pietre di Paragone' and the Preeminence of Medieval Measurements in Communal Italy," *Gesta* 49, no. 2 (2010): 77-95; Emanuele Lugli, *The Making of Measure and the Promise of Sameness* (The University of Chicago Press, 2019).

¹²³ The establishment of the Tower Official dates to the fourteenth century. Its authority over public and private constructions gradually increased during the fifteenth century. The 1415 Statutes declared the office's responsibility: 'uniti essere e sieno e essere si intendano l'ufficio della torre, de' signori di tutte le gabelle, de' beni de' ribelli, delle mulina, delle vie de' ponti e delle piazze. E un notaio sia a detto ufficio' Cited from Guidubaldo Guidi, *Il governo della città-repubblica di Firenze del primo Quattrocento* (Firenze: Olschki, 1981), vol. 1, 112; vol. 2, 283-93. Also see Lauro Martines, *Lawyers and Statecraft in Renaissance Florence* (Princeton: University Press, 1968), 136; Christopher Daniel Cribaro, "Urban Planning and Administration in Florence, 1400 - 1600" (University of Nebraska, 1985), 217-70.

¹²⁴ This book registers the price of wheats, and other grains in Florentine between 1320 and 1335. It contains many miniatures depicting contemporary events, Donato and Parenti, *Dal giglio al David: arte civica a Firenze fra*

arched opening of the Palazzo del Podestà's belfry (Figure 16) emerging from the blue backdrop imitating the sky. To the left of the Podestà's tower, the projecting galleries surmounted by Ghibelline V-shaped merlons represent Arnolfo's Tower (Figure 17).¹²⁵ Both towers rise much higher than the Baptistery and the church spire of the Badia to the left. The height of the two communal towers was accentuated by the suggestion that they soared beyond the edge of the folio.¹²⁶ Along with the Baptistery and the fortified city gate, the high-rise structures suggest that these key buildings looked after the citizens' activities. This miniature represents Florence's provision of food for the homeless and the poor expelled from Siena in 1329,¹²⁷ so the presence of these tall, imposing buildings representative of Florentine identity legitimises the city's generosity.

A Link to Rome

The important interconnection between castellated defensive works and the growth of a city-state had already been explored by ancient Roman military engineers. Frontinus used the term *castrum* (fortified settlements) to refer to military settlements at strategic points where armies were garrisoned.¹²⁸ In his *Epitome of Military Science* (*Epitoma Rei Militaris*, A.D. c.383), Vegetius argued that defensive works such as *civitates murata* (walled cities), *castra*, ditches, walls, and towers can be seen as 'a smaller version of fortified camps.'¹²⁹ He then related the

Medioevo e Rinascimento, 110-4.

¹²⁵ Sidney Toy, "A History of Fortification from 3000 B.C. to A.D. 1700," (London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1955), 196; John Ward-Perkins et al., "Excavation and Survey at Tuscania, 1972: A Preliminary Report," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 40 (1972): 201-2.

¹²⁶ The page was not cut down as it was the same size as other folios in the same volume.

¹²⁷ Emilio Ravel, *Il tumulto dei Ciompi* (Firenze: Casa Editrice Bonechi, 1978), 32-33; Donato and Parenti, *Dal giglio al David: arte civica a Firenze fra Medioevo e Rinascimento*, 114.

¹²⁸ In his treatises, Frontinus used the term *castra* mainly referring to military bases: 'contra quos et ipse trans Apeenninum in Sentinate castra communiebat.' Frontinus, *Stratagems and the Aqueducts of Rome*, ed. Mary B. McElwain, trans. Charles E. Bennett (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1925), bk. 1, chap. 8, 58-9.

¹²⁹ In the chapters on castrametation and their significance in war, Vegetius noted that in the circumstance when no pre-existing walled cities or fortified camps were available, *castella* (temporary forts) should be built to guard the routes from which supplies came, denoting that the term *castella* derived from *castra* which implied 'a smaller dimension of fortified camp.' Vegetius, *Epitoma rei militaris*, ed. Michael D. Reeve (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), bk. 1, chap. 21, 25. English translation: Vegetius, *Vegetius, Epitome of Military Science*, ed. N. P. Milner (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2001), 23.

origins of Romans to the fortress on the Capitoline hill, suggesting that the fortress was a safe retreat for Roman citizens and soldiers from which the city expanded, enabling the Romans to extend their jurisdiction over the whole world.¹³⁰ Many Roman buildings that survived in the Middle Ages were most likely perceived by contemporaries types of fortification.¹³¹ It was suggested that the rusticated peripheral wall of the Forum of Augustus (Figure 19) was adopted from pre-existing city walls. Porta Maggiore (Figure 20) was originally an aqueduct, yet it was later incorporated into the Aurelian wall.¹³² The masonry lends both structures an inviolable and sempiternal appearance. Although made of brick, the imposing Torre delle Milizie (Figure 21), commonly known as Nero's Tower, has a tall apertureless fortified exterior.¹³³ Ruins and architectural remnants were probably the most direct and tangible evidence of Roman civilization, conveying its legacy as a formidable ancient empire.

A Latin inscription on the west façade of the Palazzo del Podestà (attributed to Brunetto Latini, c.1255, Figure 22) reveals how castellated architecture shaped perceptions of a powerful city in thirteenth-century Florence:¹³⁴

¹³⁰ While discussing Roman civil and martial dominance, Vegetius stated that the progress of Roman civilization was founded on urban construction: 'the wild and uncivilized life of man at the beginning of time was first separated from communion with dumb animals and beasts by the founding of cities' (a pietate tua innumerabiles urbes ita iugi labore perfectae sunt non tam humana manu conditae quam divino nutu videantur enatae.) Vegetius, *Epitoma rei militaris*, bk. 4, preface, 123-4. English translation: Vegetius, *Vegetius, Epitome of Military Science*, 120-1. Also see N. P. Milner, "Introduction," in *Vegetius, Epitome of Military Science* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2001), xiii-xiv; Vegetius, *Epitoma rei militaris*, bk. 1, chap. 21, 25. English translation: Vegetius, *Vegetius, Epitome of Military Science*, 23. On contemporary perception of Roman antiquity, Hubertus Günther, "The Renaissance of Antiquity," in *The Renaissance from Brunelleschi to Michelangelo: the Representation of Architecture*, ed. Henry Millon and Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 259-306.

¹³¹ Günther listed many Roman ruins survived into the fifteenth century, including Nero's Domus Aurea, the Colosseum, the Arch of Titus, the Arch of Constantine, and the Aurelian Walls, Günther, "The Renaissance of Antiquity," 290-1. James S. Ackerman, "The Tuscan/Rustic Order: A Study in the Metaphorical Language of Architecture," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 42, no. 1 (1983): 30-2.

¹³² Alfonso Acocella, *L'architettura di Pietra. Antichi e nuovi magisteri costruttivi* (Lucca: Lucense Alinea, 2004), 78-9.

¹³³ Although the Tower of Milizie was suggested to be part of Octavian's imperial palace and the place where Nero watched the fire of Rome, the structure was most like built by Pope Innocence III in c.1210. Benelli suggested that Giotto may have adopted the Tower of Milizie as to be his model for the fresco cycle in the Peruzzi Chapel at Santa Croce. Francesco Benelli, *The Architecture in Giotto's Paintings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 122-3.

¹³⁴ Latini served as the notary in the *Primo Popolo* government, Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze*, 515-6.

And may Christ favour and preserve their city in a covenant of peace, because Florence is abounding in riches. She defeated her enemies in war and a great uprising; she enjoys prosperity and distinctions as well as a masterful citizenry. She acquires and affirms, and now impulsively she extends her *castra* in safety: she rules the land, she rules the sea, she rules the whole territory. Thus, by her domination, all of Tuscany becomes prosperous – even as Rome continues to lead the triumphs in wisely restraining all under her determined law. In the Year One Thousand Two hundred plus Five-and-Fifty added under the name of Christ, in the Thirteenth Indication of this present epoch.¹³⁵

The theme of warfare is repeated in different ways throughout this inscription. The phrase ‘Like Rome, She will always remain triumphant’ shows that to Latini, the parallel between Florence and Rome was based on their successful military campaigns. Adopting the plural term *castra* may refer metaphorically to cities and communes defeated by Florence, implying that the city’s rising authority and military might extended beyond the city of Florence.¹³⁶ Both interpretations point to the concept of a *castra* as a prerequisite for Florence’s prosperity, as well as an agent to signpost the presence of a sovereign. Latini’s text implied that castellation

¹³⁵ The full Latin transcription and English translation, Yunn, *The Bargello Palace: The Invention of Civic Architecture in Florence*, App. 1, 203-4.

EST QVIA CV[N]CTORUM FLORENTIA PLENA BONORV[M].
 HOSTES DEVICIT BELLO MAGNO[QUE] TVMVLTV:
 GAVDET FORTVNA SIGNIS POPVLO[QUE] POTENTI:
 FIRMAT EMIT FERVENS STERNIT NV[N]C CASTRA SALVTE
 QVE MARE QVE TERRA[M] QUE TOTV[M] POSSIDET ORBEM.
 PER QVAM REGNANTE[M] FIT FELIX TVSCIA TOTA:
 TA[M]QUA[M] ROMA SEDET SEMPER DVCTVRA TRIVMPHOS.
 OMNIA DISCERNIT CERTO SVB IVRE CONHERCENS:

On the political interpretation of the inscription, Donato, "Arte civica a Firenze, dal primo popolo al primo umanesimo. La tradizione, i modelli perduti."

¹³⁶ On the political interpretation of the inscription, Donato, "Arte civica a Firenze, dal primo popolo al primo umanesimo. La tradizione, i modelli perduti."; Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 7. n. 18,19. Pirillo noted that towns and villages, such as Bibbiena, Valdelsa, were categorised as *castra* in thirteenth-century documents. Yet the term *castra* gradually disappeared in the following century. Pirillo, *Forme e strutture del popolamento nel contado fiorentino*, 21-2, 28-33.

was the cornerstone upon which the notion of a city, a commune and a government were instantiated.

The importance of castellation in the *Primo Popolo*'s public imagery is also suggested by the plaque's location on the west façade of their urban fortress, the Palazzo del Podestà, facing the Via Proconsolo, one of the city's major thoroughfares. When people passed by the inscription, the palace's imposing volume not only testified to the city's advanced military engineering, comparable to the Romans' skill, but the authoritarian appearance of the palace amplified the Florence-Rome analogy of Latini's text. The strong political and ethical connotations behind the communal palace probably explain why the Palazzo del Podestà's configuration of a closed exterior block and tower have been described as the quintessential model for subsequent Florentine civic architecture.¹³⁷

Since the ruins of Roman defensive structures provided evidence for Rome's military strength and durability, it is not surprising that drawing architectural parallels between Florence and Rome became a recurring theme in Florentine historiography. Villani discussed the city's Roman roots in Book II of his chronicles, where he describes how Caesar founded the city of Florence to defend themselves against the Etruscans garrisoned in Fiesole, building a forum surrounded by magnificent public buildings and temples.¹³⁸ Fourteenth-century writers' attempts to describe Florence's two government palaces as shelters for communal officials were possibly aimed at drawing a link with the Roman fortress on the Capitoline hill. Similarly, Coluccio Salutati discussed Roman towers and ruins of city gates and other monuments in

¹³⁷ Yunn, *The Bargello Palace: The Invention of Civic Architecture in Florence*, 189.

¹³⁸ Villani, *Nuova cronica*, vol. 1, bk. 2, chap. 1, 59-62. Coluccio Salutati, "Defense of the Roman Origins of Florence," in *Images of Quattrocento Florence: Selected Writings in Literature, History and Art*, ed. Stefano Ugo Baldassarri and Arielle Saiber (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 2000), 9-10. On fifteenth-century Florentine writers' sensibility of the importance of the Roman past, see Carol Quillen, "The Uses of the Past in Quattrocento Florence: A Reading of Leonardo Bruni's Dialogues," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 71, no. 3 (2010): 363-85. On the urban layout of Florence during the Roman period and the urban fabric around the forum, Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze*, vol. 1, 24-6, 29-33.

Florence as evidence of Florence's Roman origin.¹³⁹ When Alberti reminded his readers that 'a *castrum* (military camp) is like a city in embryo... many city have been founded on sites chosen by experienced generals for camps,' Florence was most likely one example he had in mind.¹⁴⁰ The castellated appearance of Florence's urban space could therefore have played a key role in the development of a Romano-Florentine ideology.

Bearing in mind the importance of castellation to the city's identity, it is intriguing that Florence's two communal palaces were not referred to as a *fortezza* or *rocca* (both the equivalent of the English 'fortress') in official statutes, or by fourteenth-century chroniclers. This may be because originally the two palaces officially functioned as residences rather than military bases.¹⁴¹ Yet, it may also indicate a conceptual distinction between palaces and military strongholds. In his chronicle of Florence, Dino Compagni noticed that the concept of a castle is more threatening than the building itself.¹⁴² Villani's chronicle gives another clue to clarify his contemporaries' fear of fortresses. In 1289, when the Florentine Guelphs intended to wage war against the Ghibelline alliance in Arezzo, the Bishop of Arezzo proposed to use his private properties as security in exchange for his family's safety. According to Compagni, the Florentine priors hesitated over this offer: 'several of them wanted the Bishop's *castella* (fortified town or village), particularly the one in Bibbiena which is beautiful and strong, others did not because they thought war and something malicious would follow.'¹⁴³ Subsequently, the

¹³⁹ Salutati, "Defense of the Roman Origins of Florence," 9-10.

¹⁴⁰ 'Castris ponendis nimirum omnia repetenda pensandaque sunt, quae libris superioribus de urbium ponendarum rationibus disseruimus. Nam sunt castra veluti urbium quaedam saeminaria; et constitutes urbes non paucissimas comperies illic, ubi oeriti bellorum duces metarint.' Leon Battista Alberti, *L'architettura: de re aedificatoria*, ed. Giovanni Orlandi, et al. (Milano: Edizioni Il Polifilo, 1966), bk. 5, chap. 10, 372-3. English Translation, see Leon Battista Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, trans. Joseph Rykwert, Neil Leach, and Robert Tavernor (Cambridge, London: MIT Press, 1988), 131.

¹⁴¹ Although it is worth noting that both palaces retain defensive functions as the Palazzo dei Priori had a *sala d'armor* on the ground floor, and the Palazzo del Podestà housed the civic militia.

¹⁴² 'Perché le cose si temono più da lunge che da presso, e pensa l'uomo molte cose sì come quando una fortezza o uno castello si fa, molti sono che per diversi pensieri la temono.' Compagni, "Dino Compagni's Chronicle of Florence," bk. 3, chap. 15, 78-9. Also see Lillie, "The Politics of Castellations," 317-8.

¹⁴³ Compagni, *Cronica*, bk. 1, 8, 12. 'La cagione della Discordia fu, che alcuni di loro voleano le castella del Vescovo, e spezialmente Bibbiena bello e forte, alcuni no; e non voleano la Guerra, considerando il male che di

victorious Florentine government demolished the walls of Bibbiena. This event shows that to contemporaries fortifications and castellated buildings could be beautiful and magnificent, yet at the same threatening and malicious. Such negative connotations behind military structures might have been the main reason why fourteenth-century chroniclers were reluctant to employ military terms for the city's most important political and civic nucleus.

1.2 'The fortress of the fortress': the Castellated Palazzo dei Priori in Early Fifteenth-Century Textual Representations

While fourteenth-century chroniclers such as Compagni and Villani did not directly adopt military terms in relation to Florence's Palazzo dei Priori and del Podestà, the ways they described the two palaces' defensive characteristics were sometimes strikingly similar to their descriptions of castles and fortresses. Their texts drew our attention to less polarised conceptions of military strongholds and civic palaces, since both were self-defensive measures adopted by the ruling state.

In his *Panegyric to the City of Florence* (*Laudatio Florentinae Urbs*, c.1403-4), Leonardo Bruni enthusiastically reminded Florentines that 'your founders are the Roman people the lords and conquerors of the entire world,'¹⁴⁴ describing Florence 'like a guardian and lord' overseeing its subject cities, villages, towns and military fortifications.¹⁴⁵ He also mentioned the Palazzo dei Priori:

quella segue'; 'Dopo detta vittoria non ritornarono però tutti I Guelfi in Arezzo...Tra i Fiorentini e gli Aretini pace non si fe; ma i Fiorentini si tennono le castella aveano prese, cioè Castiglione, Laterina, Civitella, Rondine, e più alter castella; e alcuno se ne disfece...di poi andarono a Bibbiena, e quella presono e disfeciono le mura' English translation, see Compagni, "Dino Compagni's Chronicle of Florence," bk. 1, rub. 8, 10-1; rub. 10, 12-3. On castellations' psychological impacts on viewers, also see Lillie, "The Politics of Castellations," 318.

¹⁴⁴ Leonardo Bruni, *Laudatio florentine urbis*, ed. Stefano Ugo Baldassarri (Tavarnuzze, Firenze: SISMEL edizioni del Galluzzo, 2000), 11; English translation, see Bruni, "Panegyric to the City of Florence," 144.

¹⁴⁵ Bruni, "Panegyric to the City of Florence," 142-5, 149-50; Bruni, *Laudatio florentine urbis*, 11; English translation, see: Bruni, "Panegyric to the City of Florence," 144.

In the centre of the city proudly rises up a beautiful fortress of remarkable workmanship. This fine building bespeaks by its very appearance the purpose for which it was constructed...so in Florence everyone immediately recognizes that this fortress (*arx*) is so immense that it must house the men who are appointed to govern the state. Indeed, it was so magnificently conceived and looms so towerlingly that it dominates all the buildings nearby and its top stands out above those of the private houses.¹⁴⁶

Subsequently, he claimed that the Palazzo dei Priori ought to be called ‘the fortress of the fortress’ (*arx arcis*) because it was a fortress standing within another fortress, that is within the city of Florence.¹⁴⁷

Unlike his predecessors, such as Latini, Villani and Compagni, who adopted the term ‘palace’ while describing the Palazzo dei Priori, the way Brunni directly called the building *arx* (fortress) was unprecedented in Florentine historiography. ‘Arx’ indicates a fortified building used for military purposes to ward off enemies. Its modern Italian equivalents are *cittadella*, *fortezza* and *rocca*, but not *palagio* (*i.e.* *palazzo* in modern Italian).¹⁴⁸ This conceptual difference was probably the reason Villani and Compagni carefully avoided employing military architectural terms in relation to communal palaces.¹⁴⁹ It is worth noting that Brunni’s fifteenth-century contemporaries seem to have retained the negative attitude towards fortresses. Alberti harshly criticised a tyrant’s fortress as a site of ‘*cruelty and wickedness*’, of ‘*sorrow and pain*’.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ ‘Per media vero edificia superbissima insurgit arx ingenti pulchritudine miroque apparatu, que ipso aspectu facile declarat cuius rei gratia sit constituta. Ut enim in magna classe pretoria navis eiusmodi esse solet ut facile appareat in illa vectari ducem qui ceterorum sit moderaror et princeps, sic huius arcis ea species est ut quivis iudicare possit in ea habitare viros qui gubernatores sint rerum publicarum. Sic enim magnifice instruta est, sic precelsa insurgit, ut omnibus que circa sunt edibous latissimi dominetur appareatque eius plus quam privatum fastigium.’ Brunni, *Laudatio florentine urbis*, rub. 13, 7. English translation adopted from Brunni, "Panegyric to the City of Florence," 141.

¹⁴⁷ Brunni, *Laudatio florentine urbis*, 7. English translation, Brunni, "Panegyric to the City of Florence," 141.

¹⁴⁸ *Vocabolario degli accademici della Crusca*.

¹⁴⁹ See Chapter 1.1, 37-9, 59-60.

¹⁵⁰ ‘Sed arcem tyranni sibi usurpavere locique pietatem et religionem ad scelus immanitatemque verterunt calamitatisque sanctum illud refugium erumnarum fomentum reddidere.’ Alberti, *L'architettura: de re aedificatoria*, bk. 5, chap. 3, 346-7. English translation, see Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, 121-2.

According to Rubinstein, the term *arx* (fortress) was often used to refer to the *sedem tyranni* (seat of a tyrant), and thus having tyrannical associations during the Renaissance.¹⁵¹ Brunni's oration provides a good starting point to approach fifteenth-century attitudes to architectural typology, reinterpreting a castellated palace for a fifteenth-century civic audience.

In Brunni's *Panegyric*, the term *arx* was not only employed in relation to the Palazzo dei Priori, but it was also used to refer to strongholds scattered outside Florence. Brunni noted that these fortresses had 'towers reaching into the sky;' as well as noting they were 'the safest of refuges for the peasants.'¹⁵² As a security measure, the fortress in Brunni's context represented a defensive apparatus ensuring the safety of people living outside the capital city. From this perspective, the term *arx* in relation to Florence's seat of government, and the phrase 'the fortress of the fortress,' were unlikely to refer to Florence's despotic rule, but a strategy to assure his readers that the whole city and its surrounding territories were thoroughly protected. Crucially emphasising the Palazzo dei Priori's formal resemblance to a fortress demonstrates the ways in which castellation may have been regarded as a prestigious form in the architectural hierarchy, ensuring that a civic palace would act as an effective instrument of power. Brunni's words point to the fortress' role as an unparalleled agent, whose formal appearance expresses the Florentines' imagination of a powerful city-state.

¹⁵¹ Rubinstein argued that a fortress (*arx*) was architecture for a tyrant's regime. see Rubinstein, "Fortified Enclosures in Italian Cities under *Signori*," 2, n.11.

¹⁵² Brunni conceived of the city of Florence (*urbs*) enveloped by multiple concentric circles, namely the walls of Florence, then the suburbs (*suburbia*), country houses (*villas*), and finally, in the outermost circle of Florentine territories. Between the fortified towns and villages (*oppida, castella*), there are fortresses (*arces*). 'Inter oppippisa vero castella sunt arcesque in celum minantes et agricolarum tutissima refugia.' Latin transcription see Brunni, *Laudatio florentine urbis*, rub. 21, 11. English translation is adapted from Kohl's version Brunni, "Panegyric to the City of Florence," 144-5. However, Kohl's translation may be misleading in terms of architectural terminologies. While the word *castello, castelli* was a type of fortified village or town, he translated it as 'towns.' With regard to *arx*, his translations are not consistent. In the paragraph on the Palazzo dei Priori, he translated *arx* into palazzo, then in the section referring to the *arces* in the countryside, he used the word castles. However, in both paragraphs, Brunni's references to the dominating height of an *arx* suggest that the Palazzo dei priori and fortified villas in the countryside were the same type of building.

In his preface to *On Architecture*, Alberti noted that in ancient times each city would have a citadel to protect innocent citizens and a place where virgins preserved sacred objects,¹⁵³ as well as crediting the importance of military engineering and architecture: ‘*arces* (fortresses) and whatever else may have served to protect and strengthen the liberty of our country, and the good and honour of the state, to extend and confirm its *imperium* (dominion).’¹⁵⁴ The *arces* Alberti referred to would most certainly include the city’s castellated communal palaces.

Another text almost contemporary to Brunni’s *Panegyric*, Gregorio Dati’s *Istoria di Firenze* (c.1407-8) shares a similar perception of the fortress-like profile of Palazzo dei Priori:¹⁵⁵

Almost in the middle of the city, placed on a great brick-paved piazza stands the Palace which is the abode and residence of the Noble Priors, which is of stone of wonderful strength and beauty, its height reaching 60 *braccia* (35 meters); and above its corbelled galleries and crenellations there is a high fortress on top of the Palace, adding another 60 *braccia*; and at the very summit is a fine corbelled gallery enclosed and crenellated; and on the top of this are the bells of the Commune, that is the great bell...

Unlike Villani who criticised the peripheral site of the palace in the piazza, Dati’s description of the Palazzo dei Priori ‘almost in the middle’ of the city is closer to Brunni’s treatment of the palace in the *Panegyric*. Dati’s precise architectural terms, such as projecting galleries, corbels, crenellations, and the way he described Arnolfo’s Tower as a fortress (*rocca*) surmounting the palace (*palagio*), draw our attention to the progress of architectural terminology in the early

¹⁵³ ‘Arcem veteres urbibus ponere instituerunt, quo in adversis tempestatibus refugium haberent, ubi virginum matronarumque pudicitiam cum sacrorum sanctitate tutarentur.’ Alberti, *L’architettura: de re aedificatoria*, bk. 5, chap. 3, 346-7. English translation, see Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, 121-2.

¹⁵⁴ ‘Adde his tormenta machinas arces, et quae ad patriam libertatem, rem decusque civitatis, tuendam augendamque, ad propagandum stabiliendumque imperium valeant.’ Alberti, *L’architettura: de re aedificatoria*, prologue, 10-1. English translation, see Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, 4.

¹⁵⁵ ‘Quasi nel mezzo della città in su una gran piazza ammattonata, sta il palagio della abitazione e residenza de’ Signori Priori, il quale è tutto di pietra di meravigliosa fortezza e bellezza, alto braccia sesanta, e sopra il suo ballatoio di beccategli e merli è una rocca alta sopra il palagio altre braccia sessanta, e nella sua sommità è uno bello ballatoio sopra beccategli e poi coperto e merlato; e in su esso sono le campane del Comune, cioè la campane grossa...’ Dati, *Istoria di Firenze. Dall’anno MCCCLXXX all’anno MCCCCV*, 115.

fifteenth century. Furthermore, this text reveals the key role fortification played in lending a palace a distinctive, dignified and impregnable look, enabling it to stand out from its urban environment.

It is worth mentioning that both Bruni's and Dati's texts were written during the first decade of the fifteenth century, after Florence had defeated its long-term adversary, the Duke of Milan, in 1402. A closer look at Florence's diplomatic and political circumstances may enable us to interpret their rhetorical strategy concerning castellated seats of government. Compared with the first half of the fourteenth century, when Compagni and Villani were writing their chronicles and Florence's military intentions were thwarted by financial crises, the Black Death (1348), and the Ciompi Revolt (1378),¹⁵⁶ the late fourteenth and beginning of early fifteenth centuries was a period of military success, coupled with a stronger articulation of civic pride and republican ideology.¹⁵⁷

Becker noted that the annexation of a powerful commune like Arezzo in 1384 encouraged Florence's more aggressive attitude to foreign policy, which then led to a serious military campaign against Gian Galeazzo Visconti, the Duke of Milan, between the late 1380s and 1402, when the duke died.¹⁵⁸ According to Baron, Visconti's sudden death considerably

¹⁵⁶ On Florence's domestic circumstances between the financial crisis in the 1340s and the Ciompi revolution in 1378, see Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, 39-46; Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200-1575*, 156-65; William J. Connell and Andrea Zorzi, eds., *Florentine Tuscany: Structures and Practices of Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1. Cohn's study investigates the ways in which Italian city-states' cultural and religious practices were shaped by the Black Death, Samuel Kline Cohn, *The Cult of Remembrance and the Black Death* (Baltimore, London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992). On the Ciompi Revolution and Florence's class struggle between the *popolo grasso* and *popolo minuto*, Victor Rutenburg, "I Ciompi nel 1378," in *Il tumulto dei Ciompi. Un momento di storia Fiorentina ed Europea*, ed. Istituto nazionale di studi sul Rinascimento (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 1981), 1-11; Samuel Kline Cohn, "The Character of Protest in Mid-Quattrocento," *ibid.*, 199-220; Samuel Kline Cohn, *The Laboring Classes in Renaissance Florence* (New York; London: Academic Press, 1980).

¹⁵⁷ Marvin Becker, *Florence in Transition: Studies in the Rise of the Territorial State*, vol. 2 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), 204; Marvin Becker, "The Florentine Territorial State and Civic Humanism in the Early Renaissance," in *Florentine Studies: Politics and Society in Renaissance Florence*, ed. Nicolai Rubinstein (London: Faber, 1968), 104-5; Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200-1575*, 192-3. According to Hewlett, Florence's territorial expansion grew significantly after the 1370s, its peak occurring during the Medicean rule from 1434 to 1494.

¹⁵⁸ In 1440 the Florentine commune spent 40,000 ducats on the purchase of Arezzo from King Charles VI of

boosted Florentine civic pride, as well as their faith in civic liberty.¹⁵⁹ The interest of contemporary writers and humanists in classicism and their republican political ideology closely modelled on the Roman Empire was related to Florence's newly established territorial identity. Bruni's *Panegyric* (c.1403-1404) offers the clearest evidence for interpreting Florence's public imagery after the defeat of Milan. According to Hankins, it was 'essentially an imperialist tract, a celebration of Florence's potentiality to be the centre of a world empire.'¹⁶⁰ For Brown, it stressed the Florentines' legitimate right to rule the entire realm which had belonged to Rome as authentic heirs to the Roman people.¹⁶¹

The specific political purpose of the *Panegyric* may partly explain why Bruni did not refer to the Palazzo dei Priori as a *palatium*,¹⁶² since describing Florence's communal palace as a fortress would further accentuate the Florence's military might that was comparable to the ancient Rome. Dati's precise description of the communal palace's castellated elements further testifies to the way Florence's identity was built on both its intertwined military and architectural campaigns.

France. Giuseppe Pampaloni, "Gli organi della Repubblica fiorentina per le relazioni con l'estero," *Rivista di Studi Politici Internazionali* 20, no. 2 (1953): 274-5. Becker drew three major consequences from the purchase of Arezzo in the formation of the Florentine territorial state: first, it substantially enlarged Florence's territory, population and resources; secondly, it changed the political map in south-east Tuscany; thirdly, it boosted the republic's confidence in its civic ideology and diplomatic policy. He listed strategically valuable communes and cities acquired by Florence during the second half of the trecento and the first half of the quattrocento, namely Volterra, Arezzo, Pisa, Cortona, and Livorno. Becker, "The Florentine Territorial State and Civic Humanism in the Early Renaissance," 104-5; Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200-1575*, 192-3; Najemy, *Italy in the Age of the Renaissance 1300-1550*. According to Hewlett, Florence's territorial expansion grew significantly after the 1370s until the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent in 1492. Hewlett, *Rural Communities in Renaissance Tuscany: Religious Identities and Local Loyalties*, 15-7.

¹⁵⁹ On the development of Florentine civic humanism in relation to its military campaign with Milan, see Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny*. Also see Hankins, "The 'Baron Thesis' after Forty Years and Some Recent Studies of Leonardo Bruni," 309-38; Witt, "The Crisis after Forty Years," 110-8.

¹⁶⁰ James Hankins, "The Civic Panegyric of Leonardo Bruni," in *Renaissance Civic Humanism: Reappraisals and Reflections*, ed. James Hankins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 146.

¹⁶¹ Alison Brown, "The Language of Empire," in *Florentine Tuscany: Structures and Practices of Power*, ed. William J. Connell and Andrea Zorzi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

¹⁶² It is worth noting that in his *History of the Florentine People* (1406-c.1430), Bruni still referred to Florence's two communal palaces as *palatium*. Bruni, *History of the Florentine People*, vol. 1, bk. 2, 123; bk. 4, 388-9.

In the same vein, a preface attached to the 1409 *Statute*, known as *Urbem Nostram*, expressed pride in the city after Florence's victory over Milan: 'Florence exercised more power in Italy than at any other time in her history, the Florentines were riding high, and dreams of empire were in the air.'¹⁶³ This proem demonstrates that Florence's territorial expansion was perceived as historic reality rather than a humanist fabrication.¹⁶⁴ However, it should also be noted that, along with the republic's expanding dominion, questions arose as to how the Florentine ruling class could legitimise their annexation of other city-states without losing their republican identity, which was the key argument bolstering their claim to be a new Rome. Scholars including Brown and Chittolini have pointed out that during the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, no standardised term was devised to describe new territories outside the physical boundaries and juridical regulations of the Florentine *civitas* and the traditional *contado*.¹⁶⁵ While terms like *dominium*, *imperium*, and *territorium* were used interchangeably to designate the whole dominion under Florentine rule,¹⁶⁶ how could Florence exert authority

¹⁶³ On the discussion of the proem, Giorgio Chittolini, "Dominant Cities: Florence, Genoa, Venice, Milan and their Territories in the Fifteenth Century," in *The Medici: Citizens and Masters*, ed. Robert Black and John E. Law (Villa I Tatti: Harvard University Press, 2016), 19, n.22.

¹⁶⁴ According to Tanzini, the texts in the 1409 Statute covered rules from the mid-thirteenth century to 1408, and the purpose of revising them in 1409 was to redefine the institution's jurisdictional authority outside the city of Florence (*urbs*). Lorenzo Tanzini, "Statuti e legislazione a Firenze dal 1355 al 1415: lo statuto cittadino del 1409," (Firenze: L.S. Olschki, 2004), 197.

¹⁶⁵ In his study on the terms of from twelfth to sixteenth century, Chittolini argues that term of the city (*civitas*) refers to an autonomous sovereignty whose jurisdiction covers its surrounding lands, known as the *contado*. Within the *contado*, there were smaller subject units such as fortified towns and villages and territories. However, it is worth noting that if a city is dominated by a ruler, such as Milan, it is not considered as a city, but a capital. The city of Florence and its subject territories were theoretically under the dominance of the Holy Roman Empire. In terms of the *contado* of a city, Chittolini suggests that the border normally coincides with the ecclesiastical diocese. The creation of the magistracy of the *Regolatori* in 1352 responded to the increasing territories of Florence from circa 1350 onwards, moreover, it determined a fiscal-based governing strategy in the dominion outside the traditional Florentine *contado*. Lorenzo Tanzini, *Il governo delle leggi: norme e pratiche delle istituzioni a Firenze dalla fine del Duecento all'inizio del Quattrocento* (Firenze: Edifir, 2007), 252. Chittolini, "Dominant Cities: Florence, Genoa, Venice, Milan and their Territories in the Fifteenth Century," 13-5. Yet, as Giorgio Chittolini argues, the term *civitas* was still inappropriate for newly acquired communes, because in each case their relations and obligations to Florence were different. On the definitions and usages of *imperium* and *dominium*, see Brown, "The Language of Empire," 32-5. Chittolini, "Dominant Cities: Florence, Genoa, Venice, Milan and their Territories in the Fifteenth Century," 16-20. On Florence's traditional *contado* dating to the thirteenth century, including Empoli, Certaldo, Castelfiorentino, Signa, Figline and Borgo San Lorenzo, Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze*, 360-8. Herlihy's works on rural communes in the Florentine territories was assembled in an edited volume, David Herlihy, *Cities and Society in Medieval Italy* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1980).

¹⁶⁶ In her study of the 1409 Florence Statute, Brown notes that the term *urbs* indicated only the city itself and the

over a commune like Montepulciano, which is a territory (*terra*) – that is a fortified settlement subject to the rule of a city (*civitas*) within the administrative and juridical hierarchy established by city-states in north-central Italy?¹⁶⁷ It is most likely to remedy the lack of legal terms that Florence could use to claim ownership of new subject territories that the Florentine government modified its constitution during the first two decades of the fifteenth century. It was not until the end of the fifteenth century that the term *impero* became prevalent, as demonstrated by the writings of Girolamo Savonarola, and it was then taken up in the sixteenth century by Niccolò Machiavelli and Francesco Guicciardini.¹⁶⁸ A close look at Florence's intervention in Montepulciano's new façade project may provide us with a local perspective to tackle Florence's governing attitude towards newly acquired communes during the first half of the fifteenth-century.¹⁶⁹

1.3 Fortifications in Fifteenth-Century Pictorial Representations

word *territorium* was used for the first time in describing the territories outside the Florence *urbs*. On the other hand, the word *civitas* was a wider juridical entity, referring to a capital city along with the surrounding *contado* and further *distretti* controlled by it. According to Tanzini, the purpose of revising communal law in 1409 was to redefine the institution's jurisdictional authority outside the city of Florence (*urbs*), thus it attested that the commune's increasing territory was an admitted historic reality rather than a humanistic fabrication. The 1409 Statute covered rules from the mid-thirteenth century to 1408. Brown, "The Language of Empire," 32-5; Tanzini, "Statuti e legislazione a Firenze dal 1355 al 1415: lo statuto cittadino del 1409," 197. The word *imperium* was not unfamiliar in Italian political circle. According to Jones, when Frederick II seized power, many Italian cities such as Treviso and Volterra, were decreed as the episcopal *imperium*. Jones, *The Italian City-State: From Commune to Signoria*, 335-9.

¹⁶⁷ Pirillo defines *terra* was a fortified settlement. Pirillo, *Forme e strutture del popolamento nel contado fiorentino*, 29. According to Zorzi, *terre* and *borghi* are distinctive from cities. Their relationship with the central government played a key role in stabilising Florence's territorial control, Andrea Zorzi, "The 'Material Constitution' of the Dominion," in *Florentine Tuscany: Structures and Practices of Power*, ed. William J. Connell and Andrea Zorzi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 7-9. Also see Giorgio Chittolini, "Quasi-città. Borghi e terre in area Lombarda nel tardo Medioevo," *Società e storia* 13 (1990). Montepulciano was recognised as a city in 1561, when a diocese of Montepulciano was decreed. Also see Gian Paolo G. Scharf, "Terre murate, borghi e piazze nella Toscana medievale," in *Il castello, il borgo e la piazza: i mille anni di storia di Figline Valdarno, 1008-2008*, ed. Paolo Pirillo and Andrea Zorzi (Figline: Citta di Figline Valdarno. Assessorato alla Cultura, 2008), 45-7. On the establishment of the diocese of Montepulciano in 1564, Editorio del Grifo, *Fortezza e Liceo Classico a Montepulciano: storia di un complesso architettonico e di una istituzione scolastica* (Montepulciano: Editori del Grifo, 1990), 18.

¹⁶⁸ Tanzini, *Il governo delle leggi: norme e pratiche delle istituzioni a Firenze dalla fine del Duecento all'inizio del Quattrocento*, 252. Alberti also adopted the term *imperium* to refer to a sovereign's territories, see Chapter 1.2, 63, n.152.

¹⁶⁹ Chapter 2 will discuss this issue.

Textual analyses of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Florentine writings draw our attention to contradictory perceptions of castellated palaces: on the one hand, fortresses seem to have been perceived as a symbol of despotism; on the other hand, fortress-like urban palaces most likely played a key role in articulating Florence's republican ideology and civic pride. While early Quattrocento descriptions of the Palazzo dei Priori were part of political or rhetorical tracts written by government chancellors or educated patricians, it is still worth asking how the public perceived castellated palaces. To gain a wider view of perceptions of castellated seats of government, this section examines a range of fifteenth-century visual representations of fortifications, including castellated urban palaces, towers, and crenellated city walls in fifteenth-century frescoes and domestic furniture panels, such as *cassoni* (large wooden chests normally used as containers for a bride's dowry) and *spalliere* (decorative wall panels, normally commissioned for the house of a newly-wed couple).¹⁷⁰ Of any genre of pictorial representation in fifteenth-century Florence, painted furniture is the one that most frequently included views and depictions of cities and architecture.¹⁷¹ *Cassoni* panels in particular are

¹⁷⁰ The most valuable contemporary source on domestic decorative panels was Vasari's *Life of Dello* (c.1404-1471), who was a Florentine painter active in the mid-fifteenth century. Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, vol. 2, 148. Both *cassoni* and *spalliere* were prominent decorations for private houses. They were usually installed in the main meeting *sala* or marital bedchamber in the *piano nobile*. *Cassoni* were normally placed on the ground, whereas *spalliere* were installed on walls at eye or shoulder level. *Cassoni* with painted narrative panels began to be popular in Florence after 1450, and the fashion for commissioning painted *spalliere* panels began around the 1450s and continued into the first half of the sixteenth century. Plenty of scholarship on *cassoni* panels is available, for example: Ellen Callmann, *Apollonio di Giovanni* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974); Anne B. Barriault, *Spalliera Paintings of Renaissance Tuscany: Fables of Poets for Patrician Homes* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994); Graham Hughes, *Renaissance Cassoni: Masterpieces of Early Italian Art Painted Marriage Chests 1400-1550* (London: Art Books International, 1997); Cristelle Baskins, *Cassone Painting, Humanism, and Gender in Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Ellen Callmann, "Botticelli's Life of Saint Zenobius," *The Art Bulletin* 66, no. 3 (1984); Caroline Campbell, ed. *Love and Marriage in Renaissance Florence: The Courtauld Wedding Chests* (London: Courtauld Gallery in association with Paul Holberton, 2009), 24-7. For more on how *cassoni* panels were situated in the fifteenth-century domestic environment, see Hughes, *Renaissance Cassoni: Masterpieces of Early Italian Art Painted Marriage Chests 1400-1550*, 46-7; James Lindow, *The Renaissance Palace in Florence: Magnificence and Splendour in Fifteenth-century Italy* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), Chapter 4: The Splendid Interior; Luke Syson, *Objects of Virtue: Art in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Dora Thornton (London: British Museum, 2001), 69-71. On *spalliere* panels *in situ*, see Barriault, *Spalliera Paintings of Renaissance Tuscany: Fables of Poets for Patrician Homes*, 1-2, 12.

¹⁷¹ 'E che è più, si dipignevano in cotal maniera no solamente i cassoni, ma i lettucci, le spalliere, le cornici che ricignevano intorno, ed altri così fatti ornamenti da camera, [...] come infiniti per tutta la città se ne possono vedere.' Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, vol. 2, 148.

known for their didactic approach and were popular in merchant or elite households.¹⁷² An investigation into the ways in which fortifications and castellated palaces were depicted in didactic narratives may enable us to reconsider the agency of military architecture.

An Agent of Civic Ethics

Between 1415 and 1420, the Girolami family commissioned a huge marble plaque dedicated to Saint Zenobius, the patron saint of Florence and the Girolami (Figure 23).¹⁷³ While the lower part of the relief bears an inscription paying tribute to Saint Zenobius, the upper part of the plaque depicts the saint surrounded by recognisable Florentine urban monuments.¹⁷⁴ To the right of the kneeling figure of Saint Zenobius, a gabled church accompanied by a campanile illustrates the parish church of Santo Stefano al Ponte. A rectangular tower behind the church most likely indicates the family tower of the Girolami – the very place where this plaque was installed.¹⁷⁵ To the left of the saint, the image of God hovers over the upper-left corner, apparently leaning towards and stretching out his hands to bless and protect the Palazzo dei Priori and the city it symbolised. Flanking the communal palace are the Loggia dei Lanzi and the Baptistry. The Palazzo dei Priori is here represented from the north west, and is smaller in scale, but still nearly as large as the figure of Saint Zenobius. The Palazzo's distinctive characteristics were carved in detail, including the looming tower with only one small window on its west side, an embattled parapet corbelled with machicolations, and a bell chamber

¹⁷² Baskins, *Cassone Painting, Humanism, and Gender in Early Modern Italy*, 1-7; Callmann, *Apollonio di Giovanni*, 39.

¹⁷³ The Girolami family was keen on commissioning artworks with St. Zenobius as a subject. Callmann has suggested Filippo di Zanobi de' Girolami was the patron of Botticelli's *spalliere* panels on the life of St. Zenobius. Ellen Callmann, 'Botticelli's Life of Saint Zenobius,' *The Art Bulletin* 66, no. 3 (1984): 493-5. On the family's possession of St. Zenobius' ring and its legend, Sally J. Cornelison, 'A French King and a Magic Ring: The Girolami and a Relic of St. Zenobius in Renaissance Florence,' *Renaissance Quarterly* 55, no. 2 (2002).

¹⁷⁴ The inscription was written in Italian with a Gothic hand, for the full transcription, see Donato and Parenti, *Dal giglio al David: arte civica a Firenze fra Medioevo e Rinascimento*, 214-5; Macci and Orgera, *Architettura e civiltà delle torri: torri e famiglie nella Firenze medievale*, 154.

¹⁷⁵ The Girolami's *casa-torre* was destroyed in 1944.

supported by chunky columns. Finally, at the bottom corners, two sections of the crenellated city walls remind the viewer of Florence's strong outer defence system.¹⁷⁶

In view of the plaque's private patronage by the Girolami, and its location on the external wall of their *casa-torre*, also known as the Tower of Saint Zenobius,¹⁷⁷ the inclusion of Arnolfo's iconic Tower may have been intended to legitimise their private tower. It may also have evoked the prestige and supremacy enjoyed by the Girolami family in the city and government. In this context, the Palazzo dei Priori's thirteenth-century fortified exterior and the defensive walls seem less intimidating, and were proudly presented as a civic icon.

Compared with contemporary ecclesiastical commissions in which the model of Florence was carefully held and protected by saints, as for instance in the Verrocchio workshop's *Madonna with Saint Zenobius* (Figure 24), the positioning of the architectural motif in the Girolami plaque is distinctive. In this plaque, the Palazzo dei Priori seems to mediate confidently between God and the patron saint of Florence. This modification suggests that the Florentines' admiration for and dependence on the city's defensive strategy was comparable to their religious faith. Two sections of crenellated city walls in the bottom corners of the relief highlight the significance of fortifications, as they symbolically protect the family, the saint, and the commune. The sculptor's emphatic presentation of the castellation of the palace reminds us of humanists' praise of the palace's authoritative appearance, demonstrating that contemporary admiration for fortress-like palaces was not merely the rhetoric of patriotic

¹⁷⁶ The symbolic meaning of city walls to security, autonomy and standing, Pepper, "Siege Law, Siege Ritual, and the Symbolism of City Walls in Renaissance Europe," 583-4.

¹⁷⁷ The Girolami was an ancient noble family that played an essential role in Florence's thirteenth-century political history. However, the family's political significance gradually waned after the Ghibelline reign was ended by the Guelfs- in the late thirteenth century. In 1293, an act called the 'Ordinances of Justice' was passed, in which many ancient Florentine noble families, including the Girolami, were banned from holding a position in government offices. Consequently, the family was denied access to the Palazzo dei Priori, which served as both home and office to Florentine state officials from the end of the thirteenth century onwards. On the origin of the Girolami family, see Roberto Ciabani, *I canti: storia di Firenze attraverso i suoi angoli* (Firenze: Cantini, 1984), 241-3; Sally J. Cornelison, "A French King and a Magic Ring: The Girolami and a Relic of St. Zenobius in Renaissance Florence," *Renaissance Quarterly* 55, no. 2 (2002): 444.

discourse. It is also worth noting that, the representation of the Palazzo dei Priori from a north-western perspective is strikingly reminiscent of Orcagna's fresco of *The Expulsion of the Duke of Athens*, which was probably intended to underscore the authority of the castellated Palazzo dei Priori.¹⁷⁸

The fortress-like communal palace motif was also adapted and modified in Masaccio's *The Distribution of Alms and the Death of Ananias* (c.1427, Figure 25) in the Brancacci Chapel. To the right of the fresco the protagonist Saint Peter accompanies Saint John the Evangelist and crowds on the street. The body lying in front of them is the merchant Ananias, who died suddenly after attempting to hide part of the donation he had promised to Peter. His death was commonly interpreted as a punishment for his unfaithfulness to God.¹⁷⁹ Behind Saint Paul stands a tower resembling the *case-torri* in the city, whose ground-floor rusticated masonry suggests the structure's durability, as well as demonstrating the defensive nature of Florentine domestic buildings.¹⁸⁰ Next to the tower is a three-storey palace, whose arched openings on the *piano nobile* form a perspectival recession that seemingly regularises the rhythm of the whole pictorial space. In the far background at the top of a hill stands a white fortified *palagio*. Although it is smaller in scale and further away, the whiteness of the building is eye-catching

¹⁷⁸ For the comparison of the images of palazzo in Orcagna's fresco and the Girolami family plaque, see: Donato and Parenti, *Dal giglio al David: arte civica a Firenze fra Medioevo e Rinascimento*, 214.

¹⁷⁹ Scholars agree that the selection of the scene was related to the new Florentine *catasto*, Eckstein suggested that the narrative of Ananias and his wife Saphira corresponds to the didactic purpose of the story of Adam and Eva in the same cycle, Nicolas Eckstein, *Painted Glories. The Brancacci Chapel in Renaissance Florence* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2014), 131; Umberto Baldini and Ornella Casazza, *The Brancacci Chapel Frescoes* (London: Thames and Hudson), 157; Anthony Molho, "The Brancacci Chapel: Studies in its Iconography and History," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 40 (1977): 65. On the fresco cycle's moral implication, Bruce Cole, *Masaccio and the Art of Early Renaissance Florence* (Bloomington, London: Indiana University Press, 1980), 164-5; Patricia Lee Rubin, *Images and Identity in Fifteenth-Century Florence* (London: Yale University Press, 2007), 98-100. Molho's paper interpreted this fresco from the Great Schism context, arguing that the subject is commemorating the Christian good deed rather than Peter's personal distribution since there is another apostle. Molho, "The Brancacci Chapel: Studies in its Iconography and History," 60-1. It is worth mentioning that Masaccio carefully depicted a fluted white column with a pink Corinthian capital and base to the right. On Masaccio's adoption of classical orders, Jacques Mesnil, "Masaccio and the Antique," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 48, no. 275 (1926): 92-8.

¹⁸⁰ Whereas Rubin suggests the palace indicates Peter's social status, Rubin, *Images and Identity in Fifteenth-Century Florence*, 98.

in contrast to the greenery surrounding it. The building seems to be modelled on Florence's Palazzo dei Priori but with a much lower tower. It features a massive block surmounted by two sets of projecting machicolated galleries, a ground-floor arched portal placed off-centre, windows on the principle façade, and a tower that is also slightly off-centre. While the extent to which this castellated villa was intended to enhance the moral connotation of the narrative is still open to debate, Masaccio's work expands our understanding of the iconography of castellation beyond Alberti's critical portrayal of castles as the seats of tyrants. Along with the well-organised urban palaces in the foreground, this castellated villa evokes the landed wealth of citizens, in this case the Brancacci, that enables them to support the poor.¹⁸¹ Compared with the Palazzo dei Priori in Orcagna's fresco at the Stinche, castellation in Masaccio's fresco is certainly not presented as imposing or threatening.

A cassone panel depicting the biblical narrative of Susanna and the Elders provides valuable evidence for observing fifteenth-century viewers' perceptions of fortification. One panel dated to 1490 (Figure 26) presents Susanna's story in three episodes.¹⁸² Starting from the middle section, Susanna leads two maids towards the left, where her bath is located in the garden. While bathing, she sent her attendants away, who are seen passing through the loggia of a grand house at the right. Finally, the left scene represents the moment when Susanna was threatened by two malicious elders who conspired to rape her. All three scenes are connected by a circuit of walls. Tall spires, as well as domestic and civic structures emerging from behind the crenellated walls, indicate a thriving urban life. One of the most eye-catching buildings is

¹⁸¹ On the Brancacci's ownership of the chapel at the Santa Maria del Carmine, Florence, see Molho, "The Brancacci Chapel: Studies in its Iconography and History," 72-85. Salmi suggested that the fortress implies the presence of the commune, Mario Salmi, *Masaccio* (Paris: A. Weber, 1935), 53-4.

¹⁸² On the fifteenth-century feminine virtues, Cristelle Baskins, "'La festa di Susanna': Virtue on Trial in Renaissance Sacred Drama and Painted Wedding Chests," *Art History* 14, no. 3 (1991). On the notion of control embedded in urban design, Richard Ingersoll et al., "Piazza di Ponte and the Military Origins of Panopticism," in *Streets: Critical Perspectives on Public Space*, ed. Zeynep Çelik, Diane Favro, and Richard Ingersoll (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 177-8.

a palace standing directly behind Susanna. This palace's elevation, including the alignment of two sets of windows on the upper storeys, and projecting galleries, is reminiscent of Florence's crenellated Orsanmichele. To the right of this palace, a soaring octagonal tower is the highest structure in the city. Two other fortified towers dominate the city's skyline, as if guaranteeing the security of the city, their tapering spires reminding us of Filarete's drawings (Figure 27).¹⁸³ Their position within the urban centre seems to suggest they are maintaining domestic order without intimidating citizens as a tyrant's fortress might.¹⁸⁴ Although Susanna's villa is situated outside the city walls, a gate behind the garden leads towards the town centre, suggesting that rural residents were still under the supervision of urban authority. The foreground presents Susanna's idyllic life at an elegant villa raised on a podium with its splendid *all'antica* loggia, and formal garden. The crime scene where Susanna encountered the Elders is presented in front of thick trees and bushes. While a grotto and dense foliage surrounding Susanna's bath seem necessary for privacy, they also shield the place from benevolent surveillance, at the same time enabling voyeuristic peeping.

Zanobi Strozzi's panel of the same subject (Figure 28) offers further insight into the usefulness of architecture for structuring civic life. An arched gateway in the middle divides the panel in two halves consisting of four episodes, although the narratives are not presented chronologically. To the left of the gate are two scenes of the governors who will follow Daniel's advice and rightfully judge Susanna's innocence, and Susanna, who walks to the bath,¹⁸⁵ both situated in an urban space resembling Florence. The protagonists are surrounded by a beautiful loggia, houses with street benches, and a building with an octagonal plan modelled on the Baptistery. The scene to the right, where Susanna is attacked by the elders

¹⁸³ Filarete, *Trattato di architettura*, vol. 2, Tav. 20 & 21.

¹⁸⁴ On the distinction between royal residences and a tyrant's fortress, see Alberti, *L'architettura: de re aedificatoria*, bk. 5, chap. 3, 346. English translation: Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, 122.

¹⁸⁵ According to Callman, during the fifteenth century the story of Susanna was popular for it demonstrated saint Daniel's justice and wisdom. Callmann, "Botticelli's Life of Saint Zenobius," 494.

during her bath, is presented in a walled garden, where another gate marks the boundary between the garden and a less regulated zone, where the crowds intent on executing her for adultery are set outside the walled garden. The fortified gates show separate episodes and create different levels of civility.

It is striking that both painters demonstrate three environments, ranging from a walled urban or architectural space, a garden circumscribed by a defensive structure, and unregulated natural surroundings. Although it is commonplace to adopt architecture to create fictive spaces in narrative paintings, the way Florentine painters create a contrast between disciplined urban space and unregulated natural surroundings, articulates moral associations between architecture and nature, reminding us of Ambrogio Lorenzetti's *Good and Bad Government* fresco (Figure 29) in Siena's Palazzo Pubblico.¹⁸⁶ Lorenzetti creates an allegorical contrast between two forms of government by juxtaposing the splendid, well-maintained, and well-governed cityscape of Good Government with the dilapidated and crumbling structures of Bad Government, as well as fertile countryside with farm houses, fortified villas and towns, contrasted with desolate lands with ruined castles and fortresses. It is thus possible to infer that the beautiful and proud appearance of fortifications and castellated buildings in both *cassoni* panels was designed to reinforce the notion of justice conveyed by the story of Susanna.

A close look at Domenico Ghirlandaio's fresco of *The Confirmation of the Franciscan Rule by Pope Honorius III* in the Sassetti Chapel (c. 1475, Figure 30) draws our attention to the civic significance of Palazzi comunali in the eyes of the contemporaries. In Ghirlandaio's

¹⁸⁶ Abundant scholarship on Lorenzetti's cycle. On the allegorical implication behind landscapes of security (*securitas*) and fear (*timor*), see Nicolai Rubinstein, "Political Ideas in Sieneese Art: the Frescoes by Ambrogio Lorenzetti and Taddeo di Bartolo in the Palazzo Pubblico," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 21, no. 3 (1958): 188; Enrico Castelnuovo, ed. *Ambrogio Lorenzetti. Il Buon Governo* (Milano: Electa, 1995), 244, 368; Randolph Starn, *Ambrogio Lorenzetti. The Palazzo Pubblico, Siena* (New York: George Braziller, 1994), 42-3, 70-1.

fresco, the Palazzo dei Priori is viewed from below, creating a less intimidating impression as its fortified characteristics are omitted. That the communal palace can be understood as a meaningful object, encouraging a perception of Florence's liberal and peaceful civic life is suggested by the depiction of citizens' activities around the palace. Men are sitting on the *ringhiera* in front of the palazzo, passing through the doorway, and a man leans out of the first-floor window to talk to others on the ground, women are strolling, and children play with balls in the piazza. The palace seems to become part of a benevolent civic space, open and accessible to all its citizens.

Another piece of valuable visual evidence for exploring the conceptual link between castellated buildings and civic ethics is Gherardo di Giovanni's *The Triumph of Chastity* (Figure 31). In the background of the procession of Chastity, an expansive walled city based on Florence includes a soaring castellated palace surmounted by a machicolated tower that clearly represents the Palazzo dei Priori. It is worth noting that fortresses were often used as emblems of virginity or chastity. For instance, Saint Barbara's emblem was a castle or a tower.¹⁸⁷ Instead of filling up the background space of the narrative, in this civic context the closed and impregnable appearance of the Palazzo dei Priori might refer to virginity and the self-control that lead to order, stability and temperance. This ethical interpretation of the communal palace is further reinforced by its proximity to the figure of Chastity and its height superseding all other buildings, architecturally legitimising Chastity's fair judgement over the culpable Cupid.¹⁸⁸ The comparison is magnified by Chastity's straight backed torso aligned with the perpendicular block and vertical tower of the Florentine palace. Likewise, Francesco di Giorgio Martini's panel depicting the same subject (c.1464, Figure 32) presents a similar

¹⁸⁷ Chastity is one of the major female virtues, Syson, *Objects of Virtue: Art in Renaissance Italy*, 16-20, 56-62.

¹⁸⁸ Cristelle Baskins and Adrain Randolph, *The Triumph of Marriage* (Boston: Osabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 2009), cat. 6, 113-6.

pictorial strategy, incorporating fortifications to visually legitimise civic virtues.¹⁸⁹ The procession unfolds in front of a landscape filled with multiple walled settlements and castellated buildings scattered over the hills. The fortified walls and soaring towers of these *castelli* proudly dominate the surrounding fields, as well as providing an appropriate background for the exercise of chastity.

Filippino Lippi and Botticelli's *cassoni* series of the Story of Esther (Figure 33) also demonstrate the conceptual link between the fortification and the narrative theme of the panels. In addition to dividing the panels into different episodes, the crenellated walls are associated with the figures of two protagonists, Esther and Vashti. In contrast to Esther, who is about to enter King Ahasuerus's grand hall enclosed by elegant arched loggias and palaces protected by fortified walls that signify her honour as future queen, the banished Vashti is shadowed by a tall, forbidding castellated gate. As she stands on an elevated plinth, her gaze over an untamed landscape pre-emptly her uncertain fate.

Although depicting very different narratives, the frescoes and paintings examined above share key similarities in the way they incorporate the impregnable appearance of military architecture to articulate and legitimise civic virtues of a good government, such as faith, charity, justice, temperance, fortitude, and chastity.¹⁹⁰ The deployment of castellation in didactic narratives suggests that it may have been understood as a useful tool to maintain domestic security and civic order.¹⁹¹ However, it should not be inferred from the examples explored in this section

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., cat. 5, 110-2.

¹⁹⁰ Skinner provides a thorough analysis of the interrelationship between civic virtues and Italian communes. Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics: Renaissance Virtues*, 3 vols. (University Press of Cambridge: Cambridge, 2002), 1-159. Also see Rubinstein, "Political Ideas in Siennese Art: the Frescoes by Ambrogio Lorenzetti and Taddeo di Bartolo in the Palazzo Pubblico," 179-207.

¹⁹¹ Vitruvius defines three principles of architecture: 'these buildings must be executed in such a way as to take account of durability (*firmitas*), utility (*utilitas*) and beauty (*venustas*) ... the requirement of utility will be satisfied when the organization of the spaces is correct, with no obstacles to their use, and they are suitable and conveniently orientated as each type requires.' Vitruvius, *On Architecture*, trans. Richard Schofield (London: Penguin, 2009), bk. 1, chap. 3, 19.

that fortification and castellated palaces were motifs firmly associated with certain civic virtues. Such an interpretation would be problematic in the light of evident counterexamples such as Alberti's *De re aedificatoria* or Lorenzetti's *Bad Government* fresco, in which fortifications were associated with tyrannical rule. By looking at fortifications and castellated buildings within different ethical contexts, the aim of this chapter is to shed light on the multi-layered potential carried by military architecture as an architectural motif that deserves careful and contextualised interpretative examination. The range of images explored in this section show that the meanings and associations conjured up by castellated buildings are more fluid and less inherently negative than Alberti's text or Lorenzetti's fresco imply.

The Face of Power

Lo Scheggia's panel *The Siege of Carthage* (c.1460, Figure 34) tackles another type of fortification: the walled city. The right section of the panel represents Carthage besieged by the Roman general Scipio Africanus. In the foreground lie the Romans' siege engines and weapons. They are gathered around the gates and city walls, some with crossbows and arrows.¹⁹² In the background, the city of Carthage was enclosed by splendid rusticated walls fortified by battlements, rectangular corner bastions, and high towers. The position of the city walls almost at the centre of the narrative indicates their significance. The rusticated wall with a portal facing the viewer indicates the entrance to the city and was a target for the Romans. Rusticated blocks make this wall appear robust and durable, and it may have been inspired by façades of Florence's communal palaces, although it is worth noting that for the exterior walls of

¹⁹² Although Romans and Carthaginians would not have used gunpowder, canons and firearms appeared on the battlefield in the second half of the fifteenth century, Lo Scheggia included it to express the Romans' invincible military might and advanced military engineering. On the new mode of warfare after the introduction of gun powder, Geoffrey Trease, *The condottieri: Soldiers of Fortune* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1970), 330-3; John Rigby Hale, *War and Society in Renaissance Europe, 1450-1620* (Stroud: Sutton, 1998), 46-50; Michael E. Mallett and Christine Shaw, *The Italian Wars, 1494-1559. War, State, and Society in Early Modern Europe* (Edinburgh: Pearson Education Limited, 2012); Pepper and Adams, *Firearms and Fortifications: Military Architecture and Siege Warfare in Sixteenth-Century Siena*, 8-9.

defensive buildings, rustication was used less frequently than smooth masonry walls, as the latter would better prevent besiegers from climbing up them.¹⁹³ According to Clarke, for Quattrocento audiences any type of dressed masonry would have been considered as ‘Roman-style worked stone,’ lending a dignified and ancient look to the palace.¹⁹⁴ As the weakest entry point to the city, the gate is reinforced by machicolated galleries resting on a set of projecting console brackets, between which are square apertures and arrow slits. From the galleries Carthaginian soldiers are attacking the Romans who attempt to climb the walls with ladders.¹⁹⁵ In this context, the city walls and defensive structures not only create a fictive space for the battle scene, but they also seem to articulate the city’s fortitude.

The durability of Roman monuments partly accounts for their popularity in ancient myths and historical narratives.¹⁹⁶ For instance, in Biagio d’Antonio’s panel *Camillus Chases the Gauls from Rome* (Figure 35), the victorious Romans stand next to a triumphal arch and a pyramid on the wall in the distance, referring to the Pyramid of Caius Cestius,¹⁹⁷ with the steps to Santa Maria in Ara Coeli. His panel *The Death of Hector* (Figure 36) shares a similar approach. The foreground depicts Greek and Trojan soldiers and horses engaged in battle. To the right of the group, Achilles drags the dead body of the Trojan prince Hector on the back of a horse. Compared with the chaotic scenes in the foreground, the backdrop is occupied by a view of

¹⁹³ Vasari noted that flat rustication (*bozze piane*) make it easy for attackers to climb up walls. ‘E questo si fanno spartite in vari modi; cioè, o bozze piane, per non far con esse scala alle muraglie (perché agevolmente si salirebbe quando le bozze avessero, come diciamo noi, troppo aggetto).’ Giorgio Vasari, “Dell’architettura,” in *Le vite de’ più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi (Firenze: Sansoni, 1906), chap. 3, 129.

¹⁹⁴ Clarke notices that the phrase ‘conci alla romanesca’ used by Giovanni Rucellai refers to all type of stonework but not exclusively that used for projecting rustication. Clarke, *Roman House - Renaissance Palaces: Inventing Antiquity in Fifteenth Century Italy*, 187-8, n. 122.

¹⁹⁵ On the benefits of fortified structures in sieges, Trease, *The condottieri: Soldiers of Fortune*, 59.

¹⁹⁶ Amanda Lillie, “Architectural Time,” *Building the Picture: Architecture in Italian Renaissance Painting* (London: The National Gallery 2014), <http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/research/exhibition-catalogues/building-the-picture/place-making/introduction>.

¹⁹⁷ Cestius’ pyramid is suggested to be one of the most well-known antiquity survives almost intact to the Renaissance. Prior to Pier Paolo Vergerio correctly identified the inscription dedicated to Caius Cestius, the pyramid was believed to be the tomb of Remus during the fourteenth century. Günther, “The Renaissance of Antiquity,” 262.

Troy. The Trojans' wealth and power are enclosed by crenelated city walls incorporating a pyramid and circular and rectangular bastions. Their soaring towers crowned with projecting galleries probably portray the Trojans' arrogance. Two gates were decorated with classical ornament, reflecting the city's beauty and grandeur, which seems not to have been affected by the Greeks' ten-year siege. Meanwhile, the splendour of the city walls implies their strength in protecting the city, which was not undermined by Hector's death.

In Lo Scheggia's panel *The Arrival of the Wooden Horse in Troy* (c.1460-65, Figure 37), the narratives also focus on the moment when the Trojan Horse was led into the city. Through a gap in the crenellated city walls we see a pink version of the Florentine Loggia dei Lanzi and the crazy paving used in the Piazza della Signoria in the fifteenth century. Behind the loggia to the left is a three-storey palazzo: the arrangement of windows, rectangular on the ground floor and arched on the other two storeys, resembles the Palazzo dei Priori, with the raised *ringhiera* in front of its façade, although Arnolfo's tower and all machicolation are omitted. The inclusion of Florence's seat of government may have been aimed at presenting the Trojans' strength and dignity in a comprehensible way for Scheggia's Florentine patrons.

Whilst adapting Florence's Palazzo dei Priori and Baptistery for Greco-Roman legend echoed contemporary rhetoric about the ancient origins of Florence, it also testifies to Florentines' pride in their magnificent urban space. The civic and *all'antica* overtones of the Palazzo dei Priori's castellated configuration may partly explain the choice of a castellated design for Montepulciano's town hall in 1440. As for Michelozzo and his contemporaries, the continuity of castellated architecture may have been regarded as evidence of Florence's longevity and strength.

The association between the imagery of defensive architecture and the notion of a powerful sovereign was expressed in the representation of landscape in furniture panels. In *The*

Procession of Darius before the Battle of Issus (c.1450, Figure 38), Apollonio di Giovanni included more than five walled settlements articulating the victories of the Persian King's military campaign. Two at either side of the panel are harbour cities whereas the other three occupy hilltops. Although walled towns and villages in paintings are often regarded as decorative motifs,¹⁹⁸ in this panel their significance is suggested by the emphatic depiction of fortified elements such as crenellation and lofty towers, as well as their strategic sites. The way fortified settlements are represented in the narrative is reminiscent of Simone Martini's fresco in the Sala del Mappamondo of Siena's Palazzo Pubblico (c.1330, Figure 39), in which two fortified communes behind Siena's war captain Guidoriccio da Fogliano have been identified as Montemassi and Sassoforte.¹⁹⁹ Although these castellated settlements in Apollonio's narrative are less likely to represent to specific towns subject to Darius, they stand for Darius' supremacy over vast territories. Similarly, in Apollonio's *The Invasion of Greece*, (c.1463, Figure 40), several castellated structures scattered over the background most likely indicate the great sweep of Darius's expansionist ambitions.

In addition to panels of historical and mythological narratives, a pair of battle-scene panels commissioned by the Capponi offer visual exemplum to explore the agency of magnificent cities and strongly fortified settlements in the Florentine military context. *The Taking of Pisa* (Figure 41) represents Florence's victory over its rival commune Pisa in 1406. The panel focuses on the besieged Pisa and its surrounding landscape. The city of Pisa occupies the whole upper right section of the panel, and its location at the mouth of the Arno River where it leads into the Tyrrhenian Sea underlined its importance as a maritime centre and a new port for

¹⁹⁸ Amanda Lillie, "Place Making," *Building the Picture: Architecture in Italian Renaissance Painting* (London: The National Gallery 2014), <http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/research/exhibition-catalogues/building-the-picture/place-making/introduction>.

¹⁹⁹ Incorporating these two communes conquered by the Sienese most likely aimed to commemorate the city's strength, which is suggested to be one specific feature of thirteenth-century civic paintings in Tuscany. Norman, *Siena, Florence, and Padua: Art, Society and Religion 1280-1400*, vol. 1, 135-7; Castelnovo, *Ambrogio Lorenzetti. Il Buon Governo*, 26-8.

Florence.²⁰⁰ Although the city of Pisa was represented fully fortified, above the fortified projecting gateway, the flag of the Pisan Cross has been removed and thrown to the ground by a soldier – a visual metaphor for the fall of Pisa and the victory of Florence. Outside the city, two fortified towers are located on the opposite bank of the river; these two round castellated structures with turrets resemble the watchtower on the Pisan coastline defending the city from an attack by sea. However, soldiers gathering around these two watchtowers hold shields with the Florentine red-white *militia* emblem and the Florentine lily, implying that the Florentine troops now occupied these fortresses as well.

For the Capponi, the emphatic depiction of Pisa's fortified city walls was probably related to their participation in besieging the city. The impregnable appearance of Florence's newly acquired commune would in turn articulate the family's as well as the Florentine's seemingly invincible military strength. In this context, military architecture in painting visually reinforces the martial characteristics of the patron and Florence. The extent to which fortifications are understood protagonists in fifteenth-century pictorial representation is worth considering.

Compared with the exquisitely delineated view of Pisa, Florence in the upper left corner is less remarkable. We can still identify the city by its location over the Arno, as well as by the monumental buildings such as the church of Santa Croce, Brunelleschi's dome, and the soaring Tower of Arnolfo. While the narrative focuses on Pisa, the treatment of the background landscape surrounding Florence (Figure 41, details) is strikingly reminiscent of Lorenzetti's countryside under good government (Figure 42). The landscape is characterised by at least ten walled settlements and fortresses. Immediately outside Florence's wide city walls, two fortresses stand on hilltops. In the plain lies a settlement enclosed by walls punctuated by soaring towers. High rising spires and towers and gabled buildings within the

²⁰⁰ Amanda Lillie, "Artists Interpreting Sacred Meteorology in Fifteenth-Century Tuscany," in *Art History*, ed. Arturo Calzona and Daniela Lamberini (Mantua, Città di Castello: Leo S. Olschki, 2010), 325-6.

walls further suggest the security and prosperity of the place. These defensive structures not only underline Florence's well-governed and secure territories, but, together with the cultivated lands, farms and wagons around the city, suggest Florence's solid alliances and abundant resources.

The importance of Florence's subject territories to the prosperity of the city itself was shown in the pendant panel, *The Battle of Anghiari* (Figure 43). The selection of this subject was due to the family member, Neri di Gino Capponi, who led the Florentine troops and defeated the Visconti on 29 June 1440.²⁰¹ This battle is depicted with precision, showing fierce combat between the cavalry and infantrymen around the bridges.²⁰² The painter also illustrates the Tiber valley with its three fortified towns of Borgo San Sepolcro to the left, the city of Anghiari on the right, and Città di Castello.²⁰³ The depiction of urban and rural environments largely conforms to their actual position, as the town of Anghiari is situated on a hilltop, while Borgo San Sepolcro and Città di Castello are shown in the plain along the banks of the Tiber.

With regard to the representation of Borgo San Sepolcro and Anghiari, their fortified cityscapes testify to the decisive role that defensive settlements played in military campaigns. Although the dominant cities of these two towns, Milan and Florence, were not depicted in the panel, the serpent emblem of the Visconti family above Borgo San Sepolcro's city gate, and Florence's lily emblem associated with Anghiari help to explain how two peripheral outposts served to

²⁰¹ Since the 1420s, Milan had waged wars against the Republic of Venice in Lombardy, as well as against Florence, an ally of Venice. The first war in Lombardy ended in 1428, but soon broke out again in 1430. Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200-1575*, 269-70. On Florence's wars with Filippo Maria Visconti during the 1420s: Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, 396-471, particularly 446-51; Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200-1575*, 288-90; Antonio Lanza, *Firenze contro Milano: gli intellettuali fiorentini nelle guerre con i Visconti (1390-1444)* (Anzio, Roma: De Rubeis Editore, 1991), 97-118. See Chapter 3.3, 149-59. On Gino di Neri Capponi's and Bernardetto de' Cosimo's contributions to the Battle of Anghiari, Pagolo di Matteo Petriboni, ed. *Priorista (1407 - 1459): With Two Appendices (1282 - 1406)* (Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2001), 297-8; Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre*, 49, 272.

²⁰² Barbara Hochstetler Meyer, "Leonardo's Battle of Anghiari: Proposals for Some Sources and a Reflection," *The Art Bulletin* 66, no. 3 (1984): 369-71. On the battle's significance to Florence's military campaign against Milan, Lillie, "Artists Interpreting Sacred Meteorology in Fifteenth-Century Tuscany," 326.

²⁰³ Lillie, "Artists Interpreting Sacred Meteorology in Fifteenth-Century Tuscany," 326; Eckstein, *Painted Glories. The Brancacci Chapel in Renaissance Florence*, 179-82.

defend the frontiers. Furthermore, their castellated cityscapes articulate the strength of two fifteenth-century military powers revealing their ambitions for territorial expansion.

Cassoni panels commissioned by Florentine elites provide us with evidence of contemporary memorialisations of the city's military achievements beyond the city walls in the first half of the fifteenth century.²⁰⁴ That the Florentine government commissioned a fresco of the Battle of Anghiari from Leonardo da Vinci in 1503 further testifies to the importance of subject communes and Florence's outer territories in the formation of its territorial state.²⁰⁵ Since Montepulciano's town hall was rebuilt between 1440 and c.1465, it is likely that the public palaces and urban space in Florence's subject towns may have been related to Florence's territorial campaigns, and perceived as partaking in Florentine pride. An investigation into Montepulciano's renovation project within the context of Florence's military campaigns may enrich our understanding of the evolving imagery of the Florentine territorial state, as well as shedding light on the ways in which local people perceived the power of central government.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to identify the ways in which the Florentines perceived fortifications and castellated palaces between c.1250 and 1500. A chronological investigation into Florentines' textual and pictorial narratives of the two castellated seats of government has highlighted the complex nature of this enquiry. Attitudes were not fixed and often contradicted one another, as fortresses were understood as condemned symbols of oppression, and at the same time praised for their utility, beauty and magnificence. A socio-political lens casts new

²⁰⁴ Cohn noted the tension between Florence and its subject communes, whose strong local autonomous tradition could even influence the central government's governing policy, Samuel Kline Cohn, *Creating the Florentine State: Peasants and Rebellion, 1348-1434* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 3-4. Hewlett's study focuses on Florence's flexible governing policies in view of its heterogeneous subject communes, Hewlett, *Rural Communities in Renaissance Tuscany: Religious Identities and Local Loyalties*, 1-7.

²⁰⁵ It is paired with Michelangelo's the Battle of Cascina (1364), Ludwig Heinrich Heydenreich, *Leonardo da Vinci* (New York: The Macmillan, 1954), 14.

light on this apparent contradiction. It seems that castellation was an effective agent widely adopted by writers as a means to express their Republican political ideology. What intimidated contemporaries was not the architectural form of castellation but the despotic *signore* who exploited fortification to undermine Florence's liberty.

The relationship of fortifications and castellated palaces to the glorious and righteous Florentine city-republic was substantially boosted after the 1380s, with Florence's successive military campaigns against other communes, particularly against tyrannical Duke of Milan. For early Quattrocento writers such as Brunni and Dati, a fortress (*arx*) was an emphatic emblem that lends the communal palace, as well as the city itself, impregnable, strong and dominant characteristics. From this perspective, the solid stone façade, the soaring tower, the projecting machicolation, and the crenellation of Montepulciano's communal palace may invite us to reassess the importance of military architecture in the formation of the communal ideal during the fifteenth century. The following three chapters will re-examine Michelozzo's design for the Palazzo Comunale at Montepulciano in the light of both the Poliziano and the Florentine administrative, political, military and cultural circumstances.

CHAPTER TWO: THE COMMUNE OF MONTEPULCIANO AND ITS PALAZZO COMUNALE, c.1281 – c.1465

Introduction

On 16 October 1440 the commune of Montepulciano drafted a letter to the Florentine architect and sculptor Michelozzo, in which the Poliziani commissioned him to make a folio size drawing (*disegno in foglio*) for the façade of the Palazzo Comunale.²⁰⁶ Although no drawings or further archival documents survive to confirm Michelozzo's practical involvement in the design of the new façade (Figure 1), the formal analysis conducted by Saalman reconstructed the work of Michelozzo in Montepulciano, and suggested the influence of the Florentine Palazzo dei Priori as the prototype for the communal palace in Montepulciano. Saalman's article mainly focuses on Michelozzo's authorship of the new façade, addressing the appearance of the palace as it emerged gradually from 1440 to 1465 through a series of renovation and reconstruction works. Saalman also draws our attention to the long-term transformation of the palace and its setting over two centuries, from the second half of the thirteenth century to the mid-fifteenth century (Figure 44 & Figure 45 & Figure 46 & Figure 47 & Figure 48 & Figure 49). Saalman's article, however, does not discuss the contemporary socio-historical and political circumstances of the community of Montepulciano.

By positioning Montepulciano's town hall in its socio-political context, this chapter has two aims:²⁰⁷ first, to probe the ways in which the architectural forms of Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale may have met the town's legal, constitutional and administrative needs; and

²⁰⁶ For the purpose of consistency, dates in this thesis are given in modern style. ASM, "Copialettere," vol. 3, 87v, 16 October 1440. The full transcription is adopted from Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," App. 1, doc. 7, 38. See Vol.2, Appendix 2, doc.2. For a summary of the building history of Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale, see Vol. 2, Appendix 1.

²⁰⁷ Rubinstein's socio-political approach to analysing the architectural profile of communal palaces was discussed in the introduction of this thesis, see Introduction, Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*.

secondly to observe the extent to which this palace's configuration might have reflected the political and diplomatic dynamics between Montepulciano and its dominant city of Florence. It should also be noted that this chapter focuses on the communal palace's site and interior settings, whereas the significance of its castellated façade will be discussed in Chapters Three and Four.

The first section of this chapter investigates the period between the 1280s and 1390s, when Montepulciano was affiliated with Siena. The town's first written communal statute composed in 1337 and the Siennese painter Taddeo di Bartolo's altarpiece are key textual and pictorial sources for analysing the role played by the Palazzo Comunale in the formation of a semi-independent rural commune. The building's pre-1440 architectural form offers a comparative model for further enquiry into the fifteenth-century renovation of the palace that was carried out under Florentine rule.

The second part of the chapter uses the archival documents found by Saalman to focus on the renovation of the Palazzo Comunale of Montepulciano from 1440 to c.1465. It is striking that Saalman's article does not adequately review many of the documents that he transcribed and cited, nor did it address the commune's political and diplomatic changes after becoming part of the Florentine territorial state. A re-examination of official documents in relation to the twenty-five-year renovation project provides an opportunity to explore political dialogue between Montepulciano and Florence.

This chapter adopted *I capitoli del comune di Firenze. Inventario e regesto*, a two-volume set of archival documents relating to the Florentine State and its subject communes in which the first volume helpfully summarising Montepulciano's ordinances and missives between 1202 and 1399. The online database of *Diplomatico* is another platform, presenting valuable information relating to Montepulciano's civic and foreign affairs.

2.1 The Palazzo Comunale before 1440

According to the mythology of Montepulciano, the town was founded by the legendary Etruscan King Porsenna in 309 BC.²⁰⁸ While the Etruscan history is only supported by archaeological evidence, at least four archival documents survive testifying to the existence of a fortified town – *Castrum Policianum* (*castello Policiano*) – on the Monte Policiano from the eighth century.²⁰⁹ Ilio Calabresi's reconstruction of the town's urban space (Figure 50) shows the ways in which the defensive work, including the city walls and a fortress, circumscribed the most ancient urban centre at the *Sasso*, the long rocky ridge crowning the hill about 615 metres above sea level (Figure 51).²¹⁰

The establishment of a communal government in Montepulciano, nevertheless, did not take place until February 1243, when the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II granted autonomy to the people *castris Montis Politiani*,²¹¹ although the town's subjection to the emperor lasted only

²⁰⁸ The Florentine humanist Leonardo Dati discussed Florence's Etruscan origin in his *Historia Porsennae*, cited by Fabrizio Nevola, "L'architettura tra Siena e Pienza: architettura civile," in Pio II e il classicismo a Siena, ed. Alessandro Angelini (Milan: Cinisello Balsamo, 2005), 14. Also see Barucci, *Montepulciano, perla del Cinquecento*, 9. Editori del Grifo, ed. *Fortezza e Liceo Classico a Montepulciano. Storia di un complesso architettonico e di una istituzione scolastica* (Montepulciano: Editori del Grifo, 1990), 25.

²⁰⁹ Barucci, *Montepulciano, perla del Cinquecento*, 12-3; Riccardo Pizzinelli, "L'eredità del Rinascimento," in *Il decoro della città. Elementi artistici minori a Montepulciano*, ed. Alessandro Angiolini and Elisabetta Canapini (Perugia: Le Balze, 2004), 11-4.

²¹⁰ According to Calabresi, the *castrum* or *castellum Politianum* comprised only the summit of the hill, an area is known as the *Sasso* (*Saxum*). Calabresi, "Montepulciano e il suo territorio nel medio evo," 275; Pizzinelli, "Piazza Grande nel XIV secolo," 21-6.

²¹¹ The 1254 charter reads: 'Fredericus, Dei gratia Romanorum imperator semper augustus, Jerusalem et Sicilie rex. Per presens scriptum presens etas noverit (...) quod nos attendentes fidem et devotionem synceram quam homines castris Montis Politiani fideles nostri erga majestatem nostram et sacrum imperium habuerunt (...)' Jean Louis Alphonse Huillard-Bréholles, ed. *Historia diplomatica Friderici Secundi: sive constitutiones, privilegia, mandata, instrumenta quae supersunt istius Imperatoris et filiorum ejus. Accedunt epistolae Papparum et documenta varia* (Torino: Bottega D'erasmo, 1963), vol. 4, part 1, 164. Italian translation, see Duccio Pasqui and Paolo Barucci, *Montepulciano: città nobile di Toscana* (Montepulciano: Le Balze, 2006), 16. On the emergence of Italian communal city-states after the twelfth century: Giorgio Chittolini, "Cities, 'City-States,' and Regional States in North-Central Italy," in *Cities and the Rise of States in Europe, A.D. 1000 to 1800*, ed. Charles Tilly and Wim Blockmans (Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 1989), 28-32; Alison Brown, "City and Citizen: Changing Perceptions in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," in *City States in Classical Antiquity and Medieval Italy: Athens and Rome, Florence and Venice*, ed. Anthony Molho, Julia Emlen, and Kurt Raaflaub (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1991), 101; Trevor Dean, ed. *The Towns of Italy in the Later Middle Ages* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 213-220; Andrea Zorzi, "Communal Traditions and Personal Power in Renaissance Florence" in *The Medici: Citizens and Masters*, ed. Robert Black and John E. Law (Villa I Tatti: Harvard University Press, 2016), 39-44.

seventeen years, as it was ceded to Siena after the Battle of Montaperti in 1260. Siena exercised control over the town for more than a hundred years until 1390, when the Poliziani allied themselves with Florence.²¹² This first part of the chapter examines the extent to which the communal palace embodied the notion of communal authority for both local and central governments.

The Palazzo Comunale in the Thirteenth Century

One of the earliest records implying the existence of a Communal Palace in Monte Poliziano is a document of 1 July 1281, showing that a ceremony to celebrate the Poliziani's new jurisdiction over a piece of land in Bagno di Sellena was staged 'at the top of the steps of the Palazzo Comunale' (*super schalis palatij comunis*).²¹³ This record suggests that the communal palace was built at anytime between 1243 and 1281, and clearly indicates the public and ceremonial importance of the palace's steps.

With regard to the setting of these steps, Saalman proposed that the *schalae palatij comunis* might have formed an external stairway situated in front of the principal façade, leading to the entrance on the *piano nobile*.²¹⁴ Incorporating external monumental steps was commonplace

²¹² The end of the battle of Montaperti on 4 September 1260 determined Siena's leading role in the Ghibelline alliance in Tuscany. Regarding Siennese military control over its territories, key references include William M. Bowsky, "City and *Contado*: Military Relationships and Communal Bonds in Fourteenth-Century Siena," in *Renaissance: Studies in Honor of Hans Baron*, ed. Anthony Molho and John A. Tedeschi (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1971), 77-98; William M. Bowsky, *A Medieval Italian Commune: Siena under the Nine, 1287-1355* (Berkeley, London: University of California Press, 1981), 159-61; Odile Redon, *L'espace d'une cité: Sienne et le pays siennois (XIIIe-XIVe siècles)* (Rome: École française de Rome, 1994), 63-72, 208-9. Also see Orlando Malavolti, *Historia del Sig. Orlando Malavolti* (Venetia: Salvstro Marchetti Libraro in Siena, 1599), 16-9; Casa Editrice Sonzogno, ed. *Montepulciano e la Val di Chiana, Le cento città d'Italia Illustrate* (Milano: Casa Editrice Sonzogno, 1920), 2-3; Bowsky, *A Medieval Italian Commune: Siena under the Nine, 1287-1355*, 18, 274-5; Enrico Bosi and Ottavio Matteini, *Di castello in castello: il senese* (Milan: I Libri del Bargello, 1990), 121; Fabrizio Nevola, *Siena: Constructing the Renaissance city* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2007), 26, 164-5.

²¹³ Bagno di Sellena is now referred to as Chianciano, about 5 km away. Emanuele Repetti, *Dizionario geografico fisico storico della Toscana* (Firenze, 1839), vol. 1, 227. According to the 1281 document, 'dominus Monaci de castro Plebis' sold their ownership of the Bagno di Sellena to the Montepulciano commune for the price of 700 *lire* Cortonese. ASF, "Diplomatico pergamene del comune Montepulciano dal sec. XI," 1st July 1281, 1.1r. Also see the 1913 register book of the communal documents pertaining to ASF, Cesare Guasti, ed. *I capitoli del comune di Firenze. Inventario e regesto* (Firenze: Cellini, 1896), 174.

²¹⁴ Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," 18.

in neighbouring Umbrian communes. The Palazzo del Popolo in Orvieto (after 1157, Figure 52) has an extension stairway leading to a balcony on the *piano nobile*.²¹⁵ Perugia, one of the most important civic and ecclesiastical centres in the region during the Middle Ages, also has external steps on its Palazzo dei Priori (after 1200, Figure 53). Considering Montepulciano's position on the border between Tuscany and Umbria, and that Orvieto and Perugia were only about 50 km away, it is not impossible that the thirteenth-century façade of Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale was modelled on those prominent civic palaces. It has been suggested that external steps not only had a functional purpose connecting the palace with the adjacent public piazza, but they also architecturally and politically symbolised the communal government's open attitude towards its subjects.²¹⁶ It is worth noting that, in a seventeenth-century panoramic view of Montepulciano, the Palace of the Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo (another public palace in town) is presented with an external stairway extending to the piazza (Figure 54). Masonry traces of a rectangular aperture are still visible on the external wall, in between the two left windows on the first floor of the south façade of the Palace of the Captain of Popolo (Figure 55), which may signify the old entrance on the *piano nobile*. The possibility that the old Palazzo Comunale also had the external steps stretching from the façade to the Piazza Grande should not be ruled out. A drawing by Minetti, a local historian in Montepulciano, suggests the plausible setting of the external steps stretching from both the Palazzo Comunale and the Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo (Figure 56).²¹⁷

However, a 1913 transcription of documents gives another account of the *schalae palatij comunis*. The author employed the term *ringhiera* rather than *scala* or *scalinata* when

²¹⁵ The palace was originally a papal palace, bequeathed to the commune in 1157. Tabarelli, *Palazzi pubblici d'Italia: nascita e trasformazione del palazzo pubblico in Italia fino al XVI secolo*, 152-3.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 155-6.

²¹⁷ Architectural details of both civic palaces, including the combination of two materials on the façades, as well as the configurations of steps and towers are hypothetical.

translating Montepulciano's Latin documents,²¹⁸ implying that *schalae palatij comunis* were akin to an elevated orator's platform. Guasti seems to suggest a structure similar to the podium or *ringhiera* erected in front of the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence (Figure 57), which was a major public locus that could comfortably accommodate large numbers of officials attending public events. In addition, since the site of the palace is situated at the top of an uneven and craggy slope, an elevated and flat foundation would have added structural stability and grandeur to the appearance of the town hall.

Whatever the form of the steps in the thirteenth century, the 1281 document testifies to the role they played in reinforcing the civic authority of the palace and commune. By offering a raised platform out of doors for a civic ceremony such as the expansion of the commune's power over new territory, the steps offer the government a greater level of public visibility, tangibly engaging townspeople's interest in the activities of their commune. Moreover, the palace façade provided a solemn and dignified backdrop to the event, architecturally legitimising the transfer of the jurisdiction.²¹⁹

In addition to the 1281 document, two other sources of 1294 and 1297 indicate the importance of the communal palace in the articulation of communal authority.²²⁰ The 1297 texts stated that the five governors and rulers of Montepulciano, the general council, the *sindaco* and the Sieneese *podestà* Mino de' Malavolti, Vicar of Chiusi, were gathered in the communal palace of Montepulciano (*palatium dicti comunis*) to discuss diplomatic issues related to the

²¹⁸ "Inventario e regesto. Comune di Montepulciano," in *I capitoli del comune di Firenze. Inventario e regesto*, ed. Cesare Guasti (Firenze: Cellini, 1896), 174. On the function and political significance of *ringhiera* in the Palazzo dei Priori in Florence: *Vocabolario degli accademici della Crusca*, 115. Also see Chapter 1.1, 46.

²¹⁹ This transaction marked one of Montepulciano's earliest attempts at regional expansion. Montepulciano was growing into a stronger sovereignty itself after the municipality regained autonomous privileges from Charles of Anjou, the king of Naples: Emanuele Repetti, "Montepulciano," in *Dizionario geografico fisico storico della Toscana* (Firenze: 1839), 467. Also see Pasqui and Barucci, *Montepulciano: città nobile di Toscana*, 13-7. ASF, Diplomatico, 19 marzo 1279, 1 luglio 1281, 2 marzo 1286.

²²⁰ ASF, "Diplomatico pergamene del comune Montepulciano dal sec. XI," 1.1r, 9 June 1294; 1.1r, 28 August 1297.

commune.²²¹ This text testifies to the role palace played as a power centre where local communal magistrates and officials, including the *Quinque* (the five highest officials of the commune), the general council, notaries, and *sindaco* (judge) congregated during public events.²²² Foreign officials sent by the controlling government, like the *podestà*, would also assemble at the palace to conduct public affairs.²²³ These documents provide valuable affirmation of the claim that a communal government's presence was perceived through architecture. They also demonstrate the way in which the palace's function and form mutually reinforced one another.

The Palazzo Comunale in the Context of the 1337 Statutes

According to Goldthwaite's demographic study, by 1300 the population of Montepulciano exceeded 5,000 inhabitants, which was similar to San Gimignano, Grosseto and Massa Marittima.²²⁴ The composition of the town's first written statutes in 1337 suggests that Montepulciano was already an established political centre in the first half of the fourteenth century.²²⁵ By examining the clauses of the 1337 Statutes that pertain to the communal palaces and public spaces, this section aims to explore Montepulciano's administrative structure as a semi-autonomous commune, as well as answering a key question: to what extent does the

²²¹ Ibid., 1.1r, 28 August 1297.

²²² Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," 15-8. In modern Italian *sindaco* refers to a mayor. However, since the main responsibility of the *sindaco* in fourteenth and fifteenth-century Montepulciano was related to the town's jurisprudence, this chapter retained its title.

²²³ The *podestà* was typically assigned by the city-state that dominated the commune. Although he enjoyed administrative supremacy, the *podestà* was obliged to respect and follow the local regulations to which he served. In Montepulciano, regulations to the *podestà* were legislated in the 1337 Statutes. Morandi, *Statuto del comune di Montepulciano 1337*, bk. 1 of communal statutes, rub. 1,2, 6-10; Repetti, "Montepulciano," 467-8. Redon, *L'espace d'une cité: Sienne et le pays siennois (XIIIe-XIVe siècles)*, 78-81, 294-301.

²²⁴ Florence housed about 100,000 inhabitants, which is at least ten times more than Montepulciano. Siena's population was less than Florence, about 50,000 people, yet it was still much larger than Tuscan rural communes. Richard A. Goldthwaite, *The Economy of Renaissance Florence* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2011), 517-21.

²²⁵ On the importance of the 1337 Statutes in Montepulciano, Calabresi, *Montepulciano nel Trecento: contributi per la storia giuridica e istituzionale: edizione delle quattro riforme maggiori (1340 circa - 1374) dello statuto del 1337*.

communal palace's site, plan, and morphology help us understand the contemporary political dialogue between central and local government, between Montepulciano and Siena?

In the 1337 Statutes, the steps of the Palazzo Comunale (*schalae palatii comunis*) are still a focal point of communal life. It was the rallying point where communal magistrates and officers met during their term of office. The priors (*priori*), that is the highest magistrates of the commune, the *podestà*, the *sindaco*, the good examiner (*bonorum excussione*), and the members of the general council were obliged to appear on the steps of the Palazzo Comunale on different occasions, sometimes for special events but more often for regular administrative affairs, such as the inauguration of incumbent office holders, the stipend distribution, and meetings of the general council. The Statutes even allocate government officers according to their seniority and hierarchy.²²⁶ The steps were equally important for residents, as the town criers used them to make public announcements.²²⁷

It is worth mentioning that the term *palatium comunis* employed in the context of the 1337 Statutes might have referred not only to the Palazzo Comunale, but also to other public buildings belonging to the commune around the Piazza Grande. Communal provisions state that the *podestà* and *sindaco* would make public announcements 'at the top of the steps' of their palaces (of the Palazzo del *podestà* and that of the *sindaco* respectively), suggesting the existence of palaces other than the Palazzo Comunale.²²⁸ One rubric (the 87th rubric of the Third Book of Crimes) employed the plural term *palatia* – palaces – when it specified that no

²²⁶ Higher positions on the staircase indicated the higher status of an official. Chief magistrates would occupy the highest step while council members would stay in the lower part of the steps: 'nisi legitimum excusationem facerit infra terminum pro parte potestatis vel iudicis assignandum per preconem super scalis palatii dicti comunis,(...)' Morandi, *Statuto del comune di Montepulciano 1337*, bk. 1 of communal statutes, rub. 22, 36. See also, Giorgia Scarpelli, *Scultura a Montepulciano dal XIII al XX secolo* (Montepulciano: Le Balze, 2003), 35.

²²⁷ Morandi, *Statuto del comune di Montepulciano 1337*, 32, 36, 97, 99, 101.

²²⁸ On the regulations mentioning the steps of the palace of the *podestà* and the palace of the *sindaco*: *ibid.*, 97, 99, 287, 301-2, 327.

one was allowed to remove the books of communal statutes from the palaces of the *podestà*, or the *Quinque*, or the *sindaco* to any location outside the aforementioned ‘palaces’.²²⁹ Thus at the centre of the town, there were most likely different buildings serving as seats for communal magistrates. Distinguishing the location and function of these three magistrates’ seats of government seems necessary prior to understand the meaning of the term *communal palace* and its significance in the statutory context.

In the section of the Statutes stating the duties of the *Quinque* – the five defenders and governors of the territory and the people of Montepulciano, also known as the five priors,²³⁰ – a clause states that during their two-month period in office, they should remain in ‘the palace of the commune and the territory of the *popolo* of Montepulciano’ (*palatium comunis et populi terra Montepolociani*) day and night,²³¹ those who violated the law would be charged a huge fine of 100 *soldi* (ten times more than their daily wage).²³² Another clause mentions that unauthorised figures were banned from climbing up or entering the palace of the *Quinque* (*palatium dominorum quinque*).²³³ Even the *Quinque* magistrates were forbidden to leave or

²²⁹ Anyone who violated the ordinances would be punished with a penalty of forty *soldi*. However, this does not apply to *numptiis*, *beruariis* and other officials of the Commune, who could lawfully carry documents from one palace to another: ‘LXXXVII. DE PENA PORTANTIS STATUTA EXTRA PALATIA. RUBRICA. Nullus audeat vel presummit librum statutorum dicti comunis extrahere de palatio domini potestatis vel dominorum Quinque seu domini sindici et portare ad aliquem locum extra dicta palatia, ad penam quadraginta soldorum pro quolibet et qualibet vice.’ *ibid.*, bk. 3 of crimes, rub. 87, 225.

²³⁰ The five priors were elected among good citizens from the Montepulciano territory. The election was held annually in November and December. On the two-month term of office and election procedure, see *ibid.*, chap. of the *Quinque*, rub. 1 & 2, 480-2.

²³¹ ‘DE MORA FINDA PER DOMINOS QUINQUE IN PALATIO. RUBRICA. Teneantur domini Quinque, qui pro tempore fuerint, morari et continuam moram facere, toto tempore eorum offitii de die et nocte in palatio comunis et populi terre Montispoliciani, et de dicto palatio non ecire, nisi pro iuxta et evidenti utilitate comunis et populi, vel nisi pro necessaria et evidenti causa, que per priorem dominorum Quinque et alios consotios extiterit approbata et tunc semper prius petita et obtenta licentia a priore. Nec possint ad locum offitii libre accedere, ad penam centum solidorm pro quilibet et qualibet vice, qua contra factum fuerit in aliquot casuum predictorum per dominum potestatem vel dominum sindicum auferendam.’ *ibid.*, chap. of the *Quinque*, rub. 7, 486. An elected person who failed to fulfil his two-month duty would face legal consequences, *ibid.*, bk. 3 of crimes, rub. 113, 239.

²³² *Ibid.*, chap. of the *Quinque*, rub. 7, 486. On the salary of the *Quinque* and their family: ‘DE SALARIO DOMINORUM QUINQUE. RUBRICA. Hebeat quilibet ex dominis Quinque, qui pro tempore fuerint, quolibet die durante eorum offitio pro eorum salario de pecunia dicti comunis per caerarium exsolvenda .X. solidos denariorum cortonensium et non ultra. (...)’ *ibid.*, chap. of the *Quinqu*, rub. 8, 486-7.

²³³ ‘DE PENA ADSCENDENTIS PALATIUM DOMINORUM QUINQUE SINE LICENTIA. RUBRICA. Nulli liceat ascendere vel intrare ad dominos Quinque sine licentia ipsorum vel alicuius eroum ad pena, .V. solidorum

dine outside ‘this palace’ during their term of office.²³⁴ Despite the explicit reference to ‘the palace of the Quinque (*palatium dominorum quinque*)’, this does necessarily mean that the Palazzo Comunale and the Palazzo of the quinque were two different buildings. Rather the mention of the Quinque’s palace could pertain to a certain area within the Palazzo Comunale restricted to the *Quinque*. For example, in Florence, the priors’ dormitory was allocated to the top storey of the Palazzo dei Priori, and for the exclusive use of the priors, whereas meeting halls in lower storeys were designated for council meetings and other public activities. Furthermore, the town’s deliberation of 6 May 1364 mentioned an official gathering ‘in the chapel of the palace where the priors stay,’²³⁵ and since Saalman has identified the chapel on the first floor of the Palazzo Comunale (Figure 46: no. 39),²³⁶ this further supports the notion that ‘the Palazzo Comunale’ and ‘the palace of the Quinque (*palatium dominorum quinque*)’ are merely two different labels for the same building.

The severe restrictions relating to the accessibility of the Palace of the Quinque points to the importance of the priors, since similar meticulous rules were normally applied to the highest magistrates in communes, such as the *priori* in Florence,²³⁷ and the Nine in Siena (the highest governors and defenders of the commune).²³⁸ However, it should be noted that Montepulciano’s constitution granted the town’s priors greater freedom of movement, as a prior could apply to leave the palace (*obtenta licentia a priore*) to carry out business for the good of the commune and the people (*pro iuxta et evidenti utilitate comunis et populi*), or when

contrafacienti per notarium reformationum de facto pro vice qualibet auferendam.’ *ibid.*, chap. of the Quinque, rub. 14, 489.

²³⁴ ‘DE PENA DOMINORUM QUINQUE RECIPIENTIUM HENSENIA. RUBRICA. Quicumque ex dominos Quinque hensenium vel munes receperit, vel ad comedendum iverit cum aliquot extra eorum palatium, durante eorum offitio, in decem libris, per dominum syndicum pro cive qualibet puniatur.’ *ibid.*, chap. of the Quinque, rub. 10, 487-8.

²³⁵ ASM, "Deliberazioni del consiglio generale e dei priori," vol. 3, 1r, 6 May 1364.

²³⁶ Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," 20; App. 1, doc. 3a, 37.

²³⁷ On the same provision enforced on the Florentine *priori*, see Chapter 1.1, 42-3.

²³⁸ Bowsky, *A Medieval Italian Commune: Siena under the Nine, 1287-1355*, 58.

it was absolutely necessary (*pro necessaria et evidenti causa*).²³⁹ Considering that the *Quinque* had to share the book of statutes with other magistrates, as mentioned earlier, it is most likely that they needed to leave their palace for public affairs, since their jurisdiction interlocked with that of the two other chief magistrates in town.

Another feature indicating the communal palace's importance to the town's civic life is the tower-belfry unit. A protocol in the 1337 Statutes required the priors of the commune to elect one man to ring the bell in 'the communal campanile,' which most likely referred to the belfry above the Palazzo Comunale.²⁴⁰ The bell should be rung for meetings of the whole male population, providing evidence that the intended function of the public bell was to gather citizens together in a shared public space.²⁴¹ Furthermore, the communal bell was to be rung every hour day and night, thus regularising civic life of every resident in town, regardless of their gender, age, and social standing, and its supreme authority superseded that of any private group or ecclesiastical fraternity.²⁴²

The Italian term *campanilismo* derives from the word *campanile* (church bell tower), and can be interpreted as a devoted attitude towards one's hometown or city.²⁴³ This expression provides evidence for the ways in which urban life in Italian communities was forged and controlled by both the agency of vision (the palace and its dominating tower and belfry), and the sound of the bell.²⁴⁴ In the development of medieval and Renaissance civic space, the bell

²³⁹ Morandi, *Statuto del comune di Montepulciano 1337*, chap. of the *Quinque*, rub. 7, 486.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, bk. 1 of communal statutes, rub. 33, 50. 'DE ELECTIONE ET OFFITIO PULSATORIS CAMPANE.RUBRICA. Per dominos Quinque dicte terre, qui pro tempore fuerint, eligatur unus homo ad pulsandum campanas comunis pro tempore unius anni.(...) Cuius offitium sit pulsare campanas dicti comunis de mane et de sero et aliis horis congruis, ut moris est. (...)'

²⁴¹ On the Morandi, *Statuto del comune di Montepulciano 1337*, bk. 1 of communal statutes, rub. 33, 50. 'DE ELECTIONE ET OFFITIO PULSATORIS CAMPANE.RUBRICA. Per dominos Quinque dicte terre, qui pro tempore fuerint, eligatur unus homo ad pulsandum campanas comunis pro tempore unius anni.(...) Cuius offitium sit pulsare campanas dicti comunis de mane et de sero et aliis horis congruis, ut moris est. (...)'

²⁴² Atkinson, "The Republic of Sound: Listening to Florence at the Threshold of the Renaissance," 69.

²⁴³ In addition to the patriotic indication above mentioned, *campanilismo* could be a criticism of a close-minded, insular citizen whose parochial perception was limited to the small precinct within which the sound of a parish bell could be heard.

²⁴⁴ Lugli, "Hidden in Plain Sight: the 'Pietre di Paragone' and the Preeminence of Medieval Measurements in

can be interpreted as a symbol of communal autonomy and local identity.²⁴⁵ The soundscape it created is one of the most distinctive elements, associating public authority with a controlled civic space.²⁴⁶ In Florence, townspeople's daily routine was regularised by four sets of civic bells, each having a distinctive sound, rhythm and function.²⁴⁷ It was commonplace for Tuscan communal governments to accommodate a belfry above the tower to increase its visibility and audibility, which was interpreted as an affirmation of political presence. In some cases, only the belfry was built but not the bell tower, such as the relatively simple belfry in the Palazzo Comunale in Lucignano (*campaniletto*, Figure 58);²⁴⁸ while two sets of bells were installed on top of Certaldo's Palazzo Pretorio (Figure 59).

In addition to the Palazzo Comunale, another public palace mentioned in the 1337 Statutes is the palace of the *sindaco*, who was a chief juridical official whose responsibilities covered civil and criminal cases in the territory and district of Montepulciano.²⁴⁹ According to the 1337 Statutes, any interrogation, execution or acquittal had to be carried out in the presence of the *sindaco*, and all suspects and convicts were imprisoned in the '*palatium comunis*'.²⁵⁰ The term *palatium comunis* in this context most likely refers to the Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo (Figure 54 & Figure 60),²⁵¹ a separate building standing opposite the Palazzo Comunale. This

Communal Italy," 79. On the importance of soundscape in the construction of urban environment, see Atkinson, "The Republic of Sound: Listening to Florence at the Threshold of the Renaissance," 57-84.

²⁴⁵ Enrico Guidoni and Angela Marino, *Territorio e città della Valdichiana* (Roma: Multigrafica, 1972), xx-xxv; Cardini and Raveggi, *Palazzi pubblici di Toscana: i centri minori*, 25-7. Also see Peter Murry, *The Architecture of the Italian Renaissance* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986), 65; Atkinson, "The Republic of Sound: Listening to Florence at the Threshold of the Renaissance," 70-1.

²⁴⁶ Atkinson, "The Republic of Sound: Listening to Florence at the Threshold of the Renaissance," 57.

²⁴⁷ The Palazzo dei Priori houses two sets of bells, named the 'Leone' and the 'Popolo', whereas the other two in the Palazzo del Podestà were named 'Montanina' and 'Podestà.' *ibid.*, 72, n.33. Also see Chapter 1.1, 44, n.89.

²⁴⁸ The exact construction date of the belfry is uncertain due to extensive renovation in the nineteenth century. Cardini and Raveggi, *Palazzi pubblici di Toscana: i centri minori*, 16-27.

²⁴⁹ The *sindaco* position was given to a foreigner. The position was held for six months with the salary of 230 *lire*. On the election procedure and the salary of *sindaco*, see Morandi, *Statuto del comune di Montepulciano 1337*, bk. 1 of the *sindaco*, rub. 1, 285-7.

²⁵⁰ On the authority of the officer *sindaco* including putting prisoners in custody, see *ibid.*, bk. 3 of crime, rub. 15, 174-6; bk. 3 of the *sindaco*, rub. 48, 326-8.

²⁵¹ According to local archivist Antonio Sigillo and architect Riccardo Pizzinelli, the jail and tribunal in the Palace of the Captain of Popolo remained in use by local government until the twenty-first century. After the local juridical authority was reallocated to Siena, the building now serves as the public tourist office.

palace has an open courtyard circumscribed by high walls (Figure 61), which was almost certainly the communal jail given the *sindaco*'s juridical duties. A stone slate embedded in the pavement in front of the palace identifies the position where death sentences were publicly carried out. In addition to civil and criminal affairs, the *sindaco* also took responsibility for the audit of chief officials like the *podestà* and priors. The *sindaco*'s juridical duty explains the need for a separate palace to ensure his impartiality.²⁵²

The 1337 Statutes also mentions the Palazzo del Podestà, although its location is still unclear.²⁵³ We can only assume that the palace must have been close to the Palace of the Quinque and the Palace of the *Sindaco* on account of the rubric requiring books of the communal statutes to be circulated between the three palaces. Thus, the term *palatium comunis* in the fourteenth century should be interpreted broadly as a term referring to a public palace belonging to the communal magistrates, but not necessarily to the building on the west flank of the Piazza Grande.

Assigning a separate palace to major magistrates was commonplace in Tuscan communes. The Palazzo Pubblico in Siena was originally constructed for accommodating the *podestà*, but it gradually evolved into an enormous building complex, comprising three units used by the priors, the *podestà* and general communal administrations respectively.²⁵⁴ This investigation into Montepulciano's different civic palaces not only sheds light on the town's administrative

²⁵² The four books of the *sindaco* represent the largest part of the 1337 Statutes, where it is detailed that the *podestà* and the five priors together with their retinues were all subject to the jurisdiction of the *sindaco*. On the *sindaco*'s authority over the *podestà*, see 'DE PENA POTESSTATIS PETENTIS ARBITRIUM.RUBRICA.' Morandi, *Statuto del comune di Montepulciano 1337*, bk. 3 of the *sindaco*, rub. 22 & 313. The *sindaco* also imposed regulations on the Quinque: *ibid.*, chap. of the Quinque. 481-500.

²⁵³ The *podestà* may have resided in the Pieve Santa Maria before his term formally started. *Ibid.*, bk. 1 of communal statutes, rub.1 & 6.

²⁵⁴ Aldo Cairola and Enzo Carli, *Il Palazzo Pubblico di Siena* (Roma: Editalia, 1963), 22-6; Enrico Guidoni, *Il Campo di Siena* (Roma: Multigrafica editrice, 1971), 43-8. Another example is in Florence. There, the *capitano del popolo* was originally a separated palace to the rear of the Palazzo dei Priori, having been incorporated into the main complex after 1444. Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 24-5.

system, but it also sheds light on Montepulciano's dependence on its dominance city, Siena, as the three-tiered bureaucratic structure was most likely modelled on the Sienese system.²⁵⁵

Indeed, all three chief magistrates in Montepulciano were closely associated with the Sienese government. According to a pact between Montepulciano and Siena dated 13 June 1294, the Poliziani were obliged to accept Sienese citizens as their *podestà* and captain.²⁵⁶ When referring to the *Quinque*, their official title 'the defenders and governors' was adopted from the Sienese statutory rhetoric.²⁵⁷ The *sindaco* had a similar jurisdiction as the Sienese government during the regime of the Nine,²⁵⁸ yet played no importance in the Florentine regime, where juridical authority was absorbed by the *podestà* and the *capitano del popolo*. Additionally, it has been suggested that the town's three administrative wards, namely Santa Maria, San Francesco and Sant'Agostino, followed the Sienese *Terzi* (also known as *Terzieri*) system.²⁵⁹ Although the town still enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy under Sienese rule,²⁶⁰ the urban space and the arrangement of public palace in Montepulciano was closely controlled from Siena.

²⁵⁵ Ubaldo Morandi, "Introduzione," in *Statuto del comune di Montepulciano 1337*, ed. Ubaldo Morandi (Firenze: Le Monnier, 1966), ix.

²⁵⁶ Other conditions included that the Poliziani must answer Siena's call to arms by offering troops and military support, as well as making an annual offer of a *cero* (wax candle) and fifty pounds of silver on the feast day of Maria Assunta to Siena; grant Sienese citizens the right to purchase property in Montepulciano; and release Sienese citizens from toll duties ASF, "Diplomatico pergamene del comune Montepulciano dal sec. XI.," Repetti, "Montepulciano," 467; Calabresi, *Montepulciano nel Trecento: contributi per la storia giuridica e istituzionale: edizione delle quattro riforme maggiori (1340 circa - 1374) dello statuto del 1337*, 88; Bowsky, *A Medieval Italian Commune: Siena under the Nine, 1287-1355*, 148; Diana Norman, *Siena and the Virgin: Art and Politics in a Late Medieval City State* (New Haven, Conn. ; London: Yale University Press, 1999), 184.

²⁵⁷ Repetti, "Montepulciano," 467-8.

²⁵⁸ Constituted in 1271, the office of the *sindaco* played an important role during the regime of the Nine (1287-1355). Bowsky, *A Medieval Italian Commune: Siena under the Nine, 1287-1355*, 42-5.

²⁵⁹ Calabresi, "Montepulciano e il suo territorio nel medio evo," 286; Marchetta, *Montepulciano: il centro storico e il collegio dei Gesuiti*, 24.

²⁶⁰ According to Ascheri, Montepulciano in the 1330s was not directly subject to Sienese *vicari*, meaning that Sienese control can only be exerted through the *podestà*. Mario Ascheri and Donatella Ciampoli, *Siena e il suo territorio nel Rinascimento* (Siena: Il Leccio, 1986), vol. 1, 59-67.

The Palazzo Comunale in 1365

Documents from 1365 reveal a major development influencing Montepulciano's urban space, as the Palazzo Comunale was no longer a single block, but was referred to as a building complex comprising two separate palaces: the old palace (*antiquum palatium*) and the new palace (*novum palatium*).²⁶¹ By looking at the communal palace's plan and interior references, this section aims to tackle the extent to which the palace was expanded and remodelled in accord with the commune's administrative needs in the 1360s.

The ground plans and section of the present site of the Palazzo Comunale (Figure 45 & Figure 46 & Figure 47 & Figure 48 & Figure 49) incorporate the sites of the old and the new palaces. Given the different distance between each bay supporting the ground-floor vaulted corridor (*androne*, Figure 45: no. 1- 6),²⁶² and the irregular room shapes in each wing, the building complex as we now see it can be separated into three zones. (1) The east wing begins from the wall facing the Piazza Grande and extends up to the internal staircase (Figure 45: dark grey zone). This is plausibly the most ancient part of the complex, having been used by the commune since the 1280s. Archival references to 'the old palace' (*antiquum palatium*) most likely indicate this block. (2) The white zone in the map (Figure 45) was probably built last, after c.1451.²⁶³ (3) The third area is the block to the west of the courtyard (Figure 45: pale grey dotted zone). Whether this wing was adapted from an existing structure or erected anew cannot

²⁶¹ ASM, "Deliberazioni del consiglio generale e dei priori," vol. 3, 23 May 1365; Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," 15, 17; Romby, "Montepulciano al tempo del Poliziano. Territorio, insediamenti, architettura," 91-2.

²⁶² An *androne* is a corridor linking two parts of a large house. It may also indicate a vestibule, though less common. On the fashion of using a passageway (*androne*) to divide the interior of Florentine architecture, see Hyman, *Fifteenth Century Florentine Studies: The Palazzo Medici; and a Ledger for the Church of San Lorenzo*, 24; Lillie, "Florentine Villas in the Fifteenth Century: a Study of the Strozzi and Sassetti Country Properties," 228-9; Erin J. Campbell, Stephanie R. Miller, and Elizabeth Carroll Consavari, eds., *The Early Modern Italian Domestic Interior, 1400-1700: Objects, Spaces, Domesticities* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 128; Brenda Preyer, "Around and in the Gianfigliuzzi Palace in Florence: Developments on Lungarno Corsini in the 15th and 16th Centuries," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 48 (2004): 58.

²⁶³ Structural alterations executed after 1452 will be discussed in the next section, Chapter 2.2, 116-20. Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," 11-3, 18, 26.

be determined. However, it must have been completed prior to 1365, as the official documents already mention the *novum palatium* in that year. Minetti's other hypothetical reconstruction suggests the setting of the old and new palaces before they were unified into a single building in the mid-fifteenth century (Figure 62).

Communal provisions of the 1360s give clues as to the interiors of the two palaces. It was recorded that the priors assembled in 'the *sala* of their palace'. The term *sala* in the context of communal palaces often referred to a large assembly hall where the government officers or council members used to meet.²⁶⁴ This would suggest that a large meeting hall next to the chapel in the old palace was used for this purpose (Figure 46: no. 24).²⁶⁵ However, the actual setting of the *sala del consiglio* is hard to reconstruct, since the present wooden beamed and coffered ceiling, and the console brackets (Figure 63) are modern reconstructions following typical fifteenth-century Florentine domestic precedents.²⁶⁶

The importance and function of the old palace, as both the priors' residence and the meeting place, seems to have been gradually taken over by the new palace after 1365. According to a provision of 23 May 1365, the priors and the *capitano* gathered in 'the *sala* of the new palace of the dominion priors,' indicating that the priors were already living in the new palace.²⁶⁷ A meeting hall, known as the *sala magna* (Figure 46: no. 29-30 & Figure 64), was arranged on the first floor of the new palace.²⁶⁸ Its size (130.5 square metres) superseded that of the *sala*

²⁶⁴ A *sala* was a reception hall in which magistrates held meetings and met advisory committees. Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 37; App. 3, 102-3.

²⁶⁵ ASM, "Deliberazioni del consiglio generale e dei priori," vol. 3, 22 May 1364; Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," App. 1, doc. 3b, 37.

²⁶⁶ On fifteenth-century Florentine architectural features, such as classical order and *androne*, see Chapter 2.2, 118-20.

²⁶⁷ ASM, "Deliberazioni del consiglio generale e dei priori," vol. 3, 23 May 1365; Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," App. 1, doc. 3c, 37.

²⁶⁸ In the modern disposition of the floor, the *sala magna* was divided into two rooms: the *sala giunta* (no.29) and the mayor's office (no.30). Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," 11.

del consiglio (96.85 square metres) in the old palace. A document of 21 September 1372 states that the general council was assembled in the hall of the new palace (*sala nova palatij dictorum dominorum priorum*)²⁶⁹, and another document dated 1440 reveals that the priors and the general council gathered in ‘the grand hall of the new palace’ (*sala magna novi palatij comunis*).²⁷⁰ These documents lead us to postulate that the *sala magna* then served as the main gathering room for the communal magistrates from 1365 until the fifteenth century.

Incorporating a new wing into the communal palace site including a larger hall for council meetings indicates that the commune was going through a period of growth between the 1330s and the 1360s. The need for a new palace may also have been the result of a major political change in Montepulciano in 1364, when Jacopo del Pecora was nominated the Sienese *vicario*, the *signore* of Montepulciano.²⁷¹ The establishment of a new oligarchical regime might have explained the need for a larger space to accommodate the signorial court and the communal offices at the same time.

Additionally, the extension of the palace through the erection and incorporation of the new wing pushed the body of the building further onto the steep crag (Figure 65). Such an arrangement provided the new palace with an enormous defensive advantage: it was cushioned by the body of the old palace from the front, and protected from assault by the natural barrier of cliffs to its rear. This transformation of the palace into a more securely defended stronghold for the magistrates and the *signore* marks a milestone in the evolution of the communal palace.

²⁶⁹ ASM, "Deliberazioni del consiglio generale e dei priori," vol. 6, 11 September 1372; Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," App. 1, doc. 3d, 37.

²⁷⁰ The deliberation of 27 February 1440 will be discussed in Chapter 2.2, 103-4.

²⁷¹ A hagiography of Saint Catherine discussed the ways in which Jacopo del Pecora attempted to rule Montepulciano. Saint Catharine, *The Lives of St. Catherine of Ricci: St. Agnes of Montepulciano*, trans. Guglielmo Bartoli and Serafino Razzi (London, 1852), 273-5; Benci, "Storia di Montepulciano," 41; Andrea Zorzi, "Verso Est. L'espansione del dominio fiorentino nella toscana orientale," in *Il castello, il borgo e la piazza: i mille anni di storia di Figline Valdarno, 1008-2008*, ed. Andrea Zorzi and Paolo Pirillo (Figline: Città di Figline Valdarno. Assessorato alla Cultura, 2008), 143.

The Palazzo Comunale in a Painting of the 1390s

Apart from textual references, an altarpiece commissioned from the prominent Sienese painter Taddeo di Bartolo (c.1390-1401, Figure 14 & Figure 66) offers another valuable source for analysis of the Palazzo Comunale in the late fourteenth century.²⁷² Taddeo's triptych features the Assumption of Mary in the central panel flanked by ecclesiastical figures on either side. The town's long-lasting and close relationship with Siena before the fifteenth century probably accounts for the choice of the Assumption of Mary (a principal patron saint of the city of Siena) as the subject for the high altar in the town's cathedral, the old Pieve di Santa Maria (demolished in 1612 to make space for the current cathedral).²⁷³ It may also be the reason why the altarpiece was commissioned from a Sienese painter.²⁷⁴

In this triptych, the model of the town is held by St. Antilia, a fourth-century local female patron saint.²⁷⁵ The rising hillside of Montepulciano is viewed from the southeast with striking topographic accuracy. Although the three-nave Pieve di Santa Maria is the most eye-catching building in the *Sasso*,²⁷⁶ this section of the chapter focuses on a partial view of the fortified building situated next to the Pieve on the right (Figure 67), which was the eastern façade of the old palace (*antiquum palatium*) prior to the major changes in 1440 - c.1465. The lighter tone

²⁷² Daniel Philip Waley, *Siena and the Sienese in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Emo Barucci, *Il trittico dell'assunta nella Cattedrale di Montepulciano: pala d'altare di Taddeo di Bartolo* (Montepulciano: Del Grifo, 1991); Sibilla Symeonides, *Taddeo di Bartolo* (Siena: Accademia senese degli intronati, 1965).

²⁷³ Virgin Mary became the patron saint of Siena after the Battle of Montaperti in 1260. Many churches were dedicated to her in Siena, including the Duomo. Luke Syson, "Renaissance Siena: Art for a City," (London; New Haven; Conn: National Gallery, 2007), 18. Nevola, *Siena: Constructing the Renaissance city*, 26.

²⁷⁴ The altarpiece was commissioned by Jacopo di Bartolommeo, archpriest of Montepulciano, who came from the prestigious local family of the Aragazzi. According to Norman, the Marian focus of the altarpiece was an attempt to tie the Aragazzi with the Siena. Norman, *Siena and the Virgin: Art and Politics in a Late Medieval City State*, 188-9.

²⁷⁵ On identity and significance of saints in Taddeo's altarpiece, see Norman, *Siena and the Virgin: Art and Politics in a Late Medieval City State*, Duccio Pasqui and Riccardo Pizzinelli, "La Pieve di Santa Maria," in *Il tempo della città. L'evoluzione di Piazza Grande nei secoli*, ed. Gino Serafini and Maria Russo (Città di Castello: Editori dei Grifo, 1987), 11-20.

²⁷⁶ Benci, "Storia di Montepulciano," bk. 1, 1. Also see, Norman, *Siena and the Virgin: Art and Politics in a Late Medieval City State*, 184.

applied to the façade of the town hall distinguishes this edifice from other brickwork houses painted in red and brown. We can thus assume that the entire eastern façade of the old palace was also made of masonry – most likely travertine since this material was widely used in the town’s public buildings.²⁷⁷ The *bifore* windows in the eastern façade further indicate the building’s status as lancet windows were a quintessential feature of Tuscan civic palaces from the thirteenth century onwards.²⁷⁸

Another feature that indicates the public function of the palace is the castellated profile with crenellation surmounting the main building block, as well as a battlemented tower situated at the north-east corner of the building. Although the Palazzo Comunale is not the only tall building on the square, the other being the cathedral’s campanile and the crenellated tower most likely belonged to the Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo, Taddeo’s painting provides evidence for the communal palace’s strong castellated look that was comparable to civic palaces in other communes built in the same era. These two crenellated tower further testify to the key role fortifications played in the development of a commune.

Signs of the town’s aesthetic dependence on the dominant city of Siena are also perceptible in the palace’s façade. The combination of two different materials used for the masonry façade and brick tower may point to their different construction phases, yet it is worth mentioning that this pattern corresponds to Siena’s architectural example, demonstrated by the Torre del Mangia in Siena’s Palazzo Pubblico (built in 1338-1348, Figure 68).²⁷⁹ Although the extent to which this combination intentionally imitated Siena’s communal palace is still open to debate, this common feature may constitute an example of Siena’s cultural and political influence over Montepulciano in the period prior to the town’s alliance with Florence from 1404.

²⁷⁷ Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," 15-20.

²⁷⁸ Toman, *Gothic: Architecture, Sculpture, Painting*, 248-9.

²⁷⁹ Nevola, *Siena: Constructing the Renaissance city*, 13-9.

To conclude, the investigation of the building history of Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale between the 1280s and the 1390s shows that the palace's form was closely interwoven with the communal government's ruling needs. The external steps and the tower-belfry unit can be interpreted as governing instruments to mark the commune's internal sovereignty over the local population. Additionally, the castellated configuration and masonry not only conform to contemporary fashion of public building, but they also underline the Sieneese city state's influence over Montepulciano's urban settings and the communal palace's architectural form.

2.2 The Palazzo Comunale in Transition, 1440 – c.1465

After 130 years of subjection to Siena, the Montepulciano government decided to terminate this affiliation in response to heavy taxes and military duties imposed by the Sieneese government.²⁸⁰ On 11 April 1390, the Montepulciano commune sent their commissioner and ambassador, Ser Manno Baldi de Campo Lambardi, to submit the town, along with its territory and district, to the Florentine Republic. Four days later, on 15 April 1390, they expelled the Sieneese *podestà*.²⁸¹ These pacts were not recognised by the *de facto* lord of Siena, the Duke of Milan. It had to wait until the fall of Gian Galeazzo Visconti in 1402, when the war-exhausted Sieneese government could not suppress a local revolt in Montepulciano, and on 6 April 1404 the Sieneese government agreed to hand over Montepulciano to Florence in exchange for ownership of another town, Lucignano.²⁸²

²⁸⁰ "Inventario e registro. Comune di Montepulciano," Act, 7-10, 11 April 1390, 114-5.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 115-6.

²⁸² D. M. Bueno de Mesquita, *Giangaleazzo Visconti: Duke of Milan (1351-1402)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1941), 114. Renzo Ninci, ed. *Le consulte e pratiche della Repubblica fiorentina (1404)* (Roma: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 1991), 125-7; Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, 121-2, 128-31, 134-5. Chapter 3 will discuss the military and diplomatic campaign between Florence, Milan and Siena between the 1390s and the 1440s, Chapter 3.1 & 3.2, 128-59.

By looking at the administrative procedure according to which the renovation project was initiated and carried out, this section seeks to investigate the extent to which this renovation project can be seen as an agent of Florence's political supremacy over Montepulciano.

For 'Honour, Utility and Common Good': the Façade Act of 27 February 1440

According to records in the 31th volume of the *Deliberazioni del Consiglio generale e dei Priori* (henceforth *Deliberations*), on 27 February 1440, a petition for renovating the façade of the Palazzo Comunale (*anterior palatij*) in Montepulciano was proposed by the town's standard-bearer and priors, and was subsequently approved by the general council of Montepulciano.²⁸³

The provision stated that 'repairing the communal palace façade was necessary since its dilapidated state was an obstacle to the good functioning of the building'; therefore, 'any expenses related to the project were for the common utility and honour of the commune,' and the document added that 'the façade of the aforesaid palace shall be constructed in the manner and form that would be deemed useful and honourable for the commune.'

The rhetoric of 'useful and honourable' recurring in the 1440 façade act pertain to the civic virtues of *onore e utile*, which constituted an ethical framework embedded in political thought throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.²⁸⁴ Such statutory rhetoric deployed in

²⁸³ 'faciem anteriorem palatij huius comunis in totum ruinam minetur quare opus sit circa eium reparationem et attationem providere quo opus est homines eligere qui reparationi eius et palatij actationi ne ruine tradatur provideant et denarius propterea deputatos omnio comuni utiliter et honorifice expendant Ideo provideatur in predictis sic ut aliter et ut dictis consilijs generalis placuerit.' In this context, the façade is most likely referring to that of the old palace (*antiquum palatium*). ASM, "Deliberazioni del consiglio generale e dei priori," vol. 31, 237r-v, 27 February 1440; Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," App. I, doc. 5a, 37. After re-examining the original documents, I noticed that the transcriptions of 5 (a), 5(b) and 5(c) in Saalman's appendix mistakenly record the actual date on 27 as 20 February. The priorate's petition to renew the communal palace façade was presented to the general council, and approved by 55 votes to 5. ASM, "Deliberazioni del consiglio generale e dei priori," vol. 31, 238r-v, 27 February 1440; Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," App. I, doc. 5c, 37-8.

²⁸⁴ Skinner, *Visions of Politics: Renaissance Virtues*, 46-7, 68. Matthew S. Kempshall, *The Common Good in Late Medieval Political Thought: Moral Goodness and Material Benefit* (Oxford; New York 1999), chap. 2, 54-75.

relation to the communal palace, and based on the notions of internal peace and civic pride have not been fully explored by other scholars working on Italian communal palaces.

Derived from Cicero's *De Officiis*, one of the most widespread and influential texts underpinning medieval political thought,²⁸⁵ 'honour' (*honestas*), and its derivative 'honourable' (*honestum*), refer to society's highest virtues and obligations, whereas 'utility' (*utilitas*) and the adjective 'useful' (*utilis*) are neutral terms relating to any action that can furnish individuals and the general public with comfort, happiness, wealth, and power. As an affirmation of the principles of honour and utility, many Italian communes introduced communal statutes and magistrates directly referring to the two virtues.²⁸⁶ For instance, in 1288, the Bolognese commune declared that its amended statutes were 'for the common utility' (*pro utilitate communis*).²⁸⁷ Likewise, the preamble to the 1337 Statutes of Montepulciano stated that the codification of the Statutes was necessary 'for the public utility (*publica utilite*) of the commune and the people of the territory.'²⁸⁸

Regulations for communal officials were underpinned by the same ethical principles. The author of one of the most widely acclaimed handbooks for the *podestà*, *Oculus Pastoralis* (c.1240s), argued that common utility was the key principle that magistrates should adhere to, for it was regarded as a pathway leading to 'honour, exaltation, benefit and happiness' within

²⁸⁵ In the first two books, Cicero discussed the definition of 'honour' and 'utility', respectively. The third book focused on a case-by-case analysis on the differentiation between the two notions. Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De officiis*, trans. Walter Miller (London, New York: W. Heinemann, The Macmillan Co., 1913), bk. 1, rub. 7-10, 9-13. Kent noted that Cicero's *De Officiis* was widely circulated in fifteenth-century humanistic circles, as cited by Leonardo Bruni and Giovanni Rucellai. Cosimo de' Medici owned at least one copy of *De Officiis*. Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre*, 220-1; Walter Ullmann, *Principles of Government and Politics in the Middle Ages* (London: Routledge, 2010), 252; Walter Ullmann, *Medieval Foundations of Renaissance Humanism* (Ithaca; N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1977), 124. Mario Ascheri, *I diritti del medioevo italiano: secoli XI-XV* (Roma: Carocci, 2000), 257-9.

²⁸⁶ Martines, *Lawyers and Stacraft in Renaissance Florence*, 401, 408-11, 439-41.

²⁸⁷ Gina Fasoli and Pietro Sella, eds., *Statuti di Bologna dell'anno 1288* (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1937), xxxiv.

²⁸⁸ 'que novam reformationem et compilationem necessario requirebant pro evidenti et publica utilite comuni et hominum dicte terre, fuit provisum solenniter et firmatum quod nova statuta et leges municipales conderentur et reformarentur ad comunem utilitatem comunis et hominum dicte terre (...).' Morandi, *Statuto del comune di Montepulciano 1337*, bk. 1 of communal statutes, preface, 5.

a community.²⁸⁹ By the same token, the statutes of the commune of Chiarentana forbade officials from undertaking any action that could damage the honour of the *signore* and the good standing of the commune.²⁹⁰ For contemporary citizens, statutes and magistrates did not represent honour *per se* – the highest of moral virtues – rather, they were agents of the ethical values.

What has been overlooked in studies of Italian political thought is the strong ethical overtone of communal palaces. In 1282 the Sieneese government approved the proposal for a communal palace, on the premise that the palace would have been useful for the commune (*sit utilius pro Comuni*), and deemed it to be ‘for the utility and honour of the Sieneese commune.’²⁹¹ Likewise, when the Florentine government approved the construction of a home for the standard-bearer of justice (*Gonfaloniere di Giustizia*), the priors, and other magistrates, the 1299 statutory act claimed that such project was an honourable undertaking.²⁹² Therefore, the reference to honour and utility in Montepulciano’s 1440 renovation act seems to follow an established tradition of utilising communal palaces as an agent embodying civic virtues of honour and good standing.

It is also worth noting that associating honour and utility with architecture was a prominent Florentine custom, having been widely adopted in all types of civic construction. In addition to provisions for the Palazzo dei Priori, when the Florentine priorate approved the construction of the palace for the Mercanzia (the commercial court) in 1359, the initial provision expressed

²⁸⁹ Skinner, *Visions of Politics: Renaissance Virtues*, p.19-21,40-5 60.

²⁹⁰ ‘Anco statuto e ordinato si fu per dicti statutori, (...), non ordinando alcuna cosa contra l’onore del Signore e l’buono stato de Chiarentana.’ Cited by Mahmoud Salem Elsheikh, *In Val d’Orcia nel Trecento: lo statuto signorile di Chiarentana* (Siena: Il Leccio, 1990), rub. 13, 9.

²⁹¹ ‘Qui bene et diligenter debeant invenire et ordinare locum et modum et formam, quomodo et qualiter palatium pro Comuni habeatur et fiat melius et utilius, et pro minoribus expensis.’ According to Cairola and Carli, the phrase ‘quod proprium sit Communis’ in the provision of 21 December 1282 can be interpreted as a reference to the communal palace was the commune itself, Cairola and Carli, *Il Palazzo Pubblico di Siena*, 17. On the socio-political context around the Nine’s construction of the Palazzo Comunale, see Bowsky, *A Medieval Italian Commune: Siena under the Nine, 1287-1355*, 91.

²⁹² ‘Domini Priores Artium et Vexillifer Justitie Populi Florentiae et eorum familiares, beroarii et sergentes...morari stare et residentiam facere debeant pro eorum officio gerendo et honorabiliter faciendo.’ Cited by Lensi, *Palazzo Vecchio*, 6-8.

that a beautiful and honourable residence for the Mercanzia and its officials was an appropriate endeavour for the ‘common utility’ of Florence.²⁹³ The expression ‘of common utility’ was also associated with the renovation project of the Palazzo di Parte Guelfa.²⁹⁴ In 1442 another act stated that the new palace should be erected ‘for the honour and dignity of the Parte and *università* of the Florentine commune’ (*pro honore et exaltatione dicte inclite partis et università predicta*).²⁹⁵ In 1440, the expansion plan of the Palazzo dei Priori in Florence reiterated the same rhetoric, declaring that the project was an instrument ‘for common utility’ (*utilitas comunis*).²⁹⁶ Reference to ‘honour and utility’ in the documents of Florence’s and Montepulciano’s major urban building projects suggests shared ideological, linguistic and rhetorical customs, as well as a shared perception of public palaces.

In addition to the notions of honour and utility, another term suggesting Florentine influence on Montepulciano’s 1440 façade act was the term ‘common good’ (*bono com[m]unis*). The phrase appears in relation to Totto di Bonisegna de’ Machiavelli, a Florentine vicar (*vicario*) in Montepulciano and at the same time the commissioner of the Florentine commune’s war committee, *Dieci di Balìa* (*decem balie*, henceforth the *Dieci*), who offered his advice for the ‘utility’ (*utiliter*) and ‘common good’ (*pro bono com[m]unis*) in a speech delivered to the general council in Montepulciano.²⁹⁷ Although the scribe did not transcribe the message from

²⁹³ On 6 June 1359 the Florentine government conferred a piece of land to build the Palazzo Mercanzia: ‘quia ex eo euod multitudini civium proficit et ad decorem civitatis accedit et pecunie in publicum venit comunis utilitas custoditur (...)’ Cited by Antonella Astorri and David Friedman, “The Florentine Mercanzia and its Palace,” *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 10 (2005): App. 1, 58.

²⁹⁴ The renovation project was first approved in September 1422. Cornelius Von Fabriczy, “Brunelleschiana: urkunden und forschungen zur biographie des meisters,” *Jahrbuch der Koniglich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 28 (1907): 59; Zervas, *The Parte Guelfa, Brunelleschi & Donatello*, 201-4; Howard Saalman, *Filippo Brunelleschi: The Buildings* (London: Zwemmer, 1993), 287-93.

²⁹⁵ Battisti, *Brunelleschi: The Complete Work*, 69-78.

²⁹⁶ ‘Et in computatione dicte pecunie assignate de amplificationem que vigore presentis devolvitur ad opus dicte dogane, ubi evidenter ad presens resultat utilias comunis, post perfectam doganam usque ad dictam summam.’ Cited from Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, n. 191, 25.

²⁹⁷ ‘Convocato Congregatio et insufficiente numero Coadunato Consilio generali popoli et comitatus terre montispoliciani ad sonum campanae vocem quem preconis in sala magna novi palatij comunis magnifico Spectabilis virij Totti bonisegne de machiavellis vice potestatis seu commissarij. Magnificorum dominorum

the Florentine commissioner, the possibility that he would have mentioned the renovation project should not be ruled out.

In medieval scholasticism, the notion of common good combined Cicero's 'common utility' (*communis utilitas*) and the Aristotelian notion of 'common good' (*bonum commune*). It acted as the cornerstone of harmonious civic society, and as a moral benchmark against which civic virtues (*honestas*) were evaluated.²⁹⁸ As Martines noted, the superiority of communal authority over individual citizens was largely based on its claim for the public good.²⁹⁹ It was the concept of common good that the Florentines had used to legitimise their republican ideology since the thirteenth century.³⁰⁰ Remigio de' Girolami, an influential preacher in Florence and the author of the seminal book *De Bono Communi* (1302), interpreted the sentence *pro bono commune* as 'for the good of the commune,' rather than the traditional 'for the common good,' hence transforming an Aristotelian moral principle into a political maxim advocating the supremacy of communal interest.³⁰¹ Girolami's political thought was popular as ruling oligarchs could

decem balie electi. Nec non ex deliberatione dominorum priorum et vixilliferi populi dicte terre. In dicto consilio prefatus dominus vice potestas seu commissarius proposuit super propositis soprascriptis. Super quibus consilium petijt et utiliter providerj pro bono comunis ut dicto consilio generali placuerit.' ASM, "Deliberazioni del consiglio generale e dei priori," vol. 31, 238r, 27 February 1440; Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," App. I, doc. 5c, 37-8. The duty of the *Dieci* and their commissioners will be discussed in Chapter 3.1, 132-3.

²⁹⁸ Albertus Magnus (1200-1280) argued that *communes utilitates* signify material advance, suggesting that it is a community's obligation to maintain the material advantage of the public so that the highest moral principles of political society – that is *bonum commune* – can be achieved. See Kempshall, *The Common Good in Late Medieval Political Thought: Moral Goodness and Material Benefit*, chap. 2, 54-75. On the teaching of Aristotelian theory in the medieval educational system, see Skinner, *Visions of Politics: Renaissance Virtues*, 30-3.

²⁹⁹ Communal statutes and legal professionals, such as judges, lawyers and notaries, played an important role in ensuring that the community's conduct followed the principles of the public good. Martines, *Lawyers and Statecraft in Renaissance Florence*, 401, 408-11, 439-41.

³⁰⁰ On the development of Florentine republican liberty on the basis on common good: Robert Black, "Communes and Despots: Some Italian and Transalpine Political Thinkers," in *Communes and Despots in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, ed. Bernadette Paton and John E. Law (Farnham, Surrey; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 49-60; Maria Consiglia de Matteis, *La 'teologia politica comunale' di Remigio de' Girolami* (Bologna: Patron editore, 1977), xliiii.

³⁰¹ Remigio de' Girolami, "De bono communi," in *La 'teologia politica comunale' di Remigio de' Girolami*, ed. Maria Consiglia de Matteis (Bologna: Patron editore, 1977), 1-52. Rubinstein suggested that Remigio's political thought intended to solve Florence's internal strife between the Black and the White Guelphs, Rubinstein, "Political Ideas in Sienese Art: the Frescoes by Ambrogio Lorenzetti and Taddeo di Bartolo in the Palazzo Pubblico," 184-5; Kempshall, *The Common Good in Late Medieval Political Thought: Moral Goodness and Material Benefit*, 316-20.

justify their political and economic interests, what was labelled by Martines as ‘medieval particularism.’³⁰²

During the fifteenth century, when the Florentine government intended to consolidate jurisdiction over its newly acquired territories outside the traditional *contado*, the concept of common good offered a further ethical framework justifying Florence’s expansionist campaign.³⁰³ This is exemplified by the 1409 amendment to Florence’s communal statutes, which introduced the rhetoric of common good in order to legitimate the city’s supreme jurisdiction over its whole dominion. If the phrase ‘common good’ was a diplomatic expression justifying Florentine authority over subject towns, the appearance of this formula in Montepulciano’s 1440 façade act could serve as evidence of the renovation project’s political significance for the entirety of Florence’s territories.

Indeed, an unpublished letter in Montepulciano’s communal archive reveals that on 27 February 1440, the day when the 1440 façade act was approved, the commune of Montepulciano received a message from their envoy in Florence, Giovanni di Bartolomeo Naldini, regarding certain demands from the Florentine government, most likely including the renovation of the façade.³⁰⁴ It is worth noting that the assembly of the general council on 27 February 1440 was an exceptional assembly summoned by Totto de’ Machiavelli rather than by the priors as custom dictated.³⁰⁵ The minute of the meeting further reveals that the

³⁰² Martines, *Lawyers and Statecraft in Renaissance Florence*, 24-5.

³⁰³ On the significance of 1409 Statutes in Florence’s territorial campaign, Andrea Zorzi, "Giusdicenti e operatori di giustizia nello stato territoriale fiorentino del XV secolo," *Ricerche storiche* XIX (1989): 524; Brown, "City and Citizen: Changing Perceptions in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," 105-6; Brown, "The Language of Empire," 32-5; Tanzini, "Statuti e legislazione a Firenze dal 1355 al 1415: lo statuto cittadino del 1409," 197; Black, "Communes and Despots: Some Italian and Transalpine Political Thinkers," 49-60.

³⁰⁴ Naldini’s letter of 27 February was mentioned in the Poliziani’s reply on 29 February 1440. The contents of Florence’s message require further investigation. ASM, "Copialettere," vol. 3. 68v, 29 February 1440. For the full transcription, see Vol. 2, Appendix 2, doc. 1.

³⁰⁵ The council meeting on that day was not a regular one. The minutes reveal that there was an insufficient number of members in attendance. ASM, "Deliberazioni del consiglio generale e dei priori," vol. 31, 238r, 27 February 1440; Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," App. I, doc. 5c, 37-8.

renovation of façade was approved by an insufficient number of council members. Totto's presence in Montepulciano not only testified to the central government's approval of and involvement in the renovation project at the early stage, but also vividly demonstrated Florence's jurisdiction and legislation superseding that of local government. The advice of 'utility and common good' Totto de' Machiavelli used to address Montepulciano's council seems to suggest that the communal palace in Montepulciano was an instrument to legitimate Florence's presence. The 1440 façade act thus provides evidence for the communal palace's significance embodying both local and central government's civic virtues, grounded in the notions of honour, utility and the common good.

The Commencement of the Façade Project, 1440

In addition to legitimating the need to renovate the façade of the Palazzo Comunale, the initial act of 27 February 1440 also constituted a legal procedure to carry out the project. A committee was formed to supervise the project, entrusted with the tasks of estimating the budget for the renovation and financial evaluation for the communal treasury (*camerarium*).³⁰⁶ On 2 March, two representatives were selected from each *terzo* (Figure 69) to sit on the committee: Salimbeni Petij and Giovanni Angelo from Santa Maria; Giovanni Bencij(?) and Papo Maccarij from San Francesco, and Francesco Ghezzo and Papo Andrea from San'Agostino.³⁰⁷

On 16 October 1440, eight months after passing the façade act, the commune wrote a letter to the Florentine sculptor and architect Michelozzo (*Magistro Michelozo de florentia*), requesting that the architect make a *disegno in foglio* for the façade, as well as providing an estimate of costs as soon as possible.³⁰⁸ The phrase *in foglio* was inserted as an annotation, suggesting that

³⁰⁶ ASM, "Deliberazioni del consiglio generale e dei priori," vol. 31, 239r, 2 March 1440; Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," App. I, doc. 6, 38.

³⁰⁷ Although the fourth quarter Sant'Agnese already existed at the beginning of the fifteenth century, the 1440 provision on the election of *operai* seemed to follow the old *Terzi* system.

³⁰⁸ The commune did not expect Michelozzo to visit Montepulciano. ASM, "Copialettere," vol. 3, 87v, 16 October

the Montepulciano government expected a drawing on paper, or more precisely on bifolio-sized paper or parchment (40 x 26 cm). Perhaps to indicate that the project had been officially authorised, or to express their enthusiastic approval of the renovation project, this letter mentioned that the request for a façade design was proposed by the official *operai*. Without further documents and correspondence between the architect and the commune, it is uncertain whether Michelozzo responded to the Poliziani's request. Even if he did, no textual or pictorial evidence survived testifying to Michelozzo's intention to imitate Florence's Palazzo dei Priori. However, it is certain that at this stage the project focused on the façade (*reparazione et constuotione dela faccia del nostro palagio*) rather than the whole building complex.

As mentioned above, the *operai* were in charge of full financial supervision of the project. Most preparatory steps had already been taken in 1440, and it is plausible that the supply of materials, one of the most challenging tasks in building construction as Richard Goldthwaite has demonstrated,³⁰⁹ may have been arranged then. A newly discovered document dated 7 December was sent to the town's *sindaco* in the form of a letter, in which the communal government requested a tax exemption for travertine and dressed stone that would be delivered from a local quarry for their façade project.³¹⁰ This revealing letter shows that in 1440, at the beginning of the project, the commune had already selected travertine as the construction material and established a contract with local quarries for the supply of travertine. The quarries to which the Montepulciano government referred might be those in St. Albino, a village around 4 km away, which was the main supplier of travertine to Montepulciano (Figure 70).³¹¹ These

1440. For the full transcription, Vol. 2, Appendix 2, doc.2. Also see Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," 21-3; App.I, doc. 7, 38.

³⁰⁹ Richard A. Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence: An Economic and Social History*, Softshell Books ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 157-8.

³¹⁰ 'Desiderando noi rifare la faccia del nostro palazo con tevnertino [sic: travertino] e pietre concie le quali trarre intendiamo del nostro terreno.' My thanks to Professor Gianluca Belli for pointing out the meaning of *pietre concie*. ASM, "Copialettere," vol. 3, 91r, 7 December 1440. For the full transcription, see Vol. 2, Appendix 2, doc.3.

³¹¹ Travertine was the most common and popular material for public building in Montepulciano. Francesco

documents suggest that although the Florentine government was involved in the initiation of the project, the following tasks and details were left to the local government.

The Façade Project, 1443 – 1447

Various brief notes and documents referring to the façade reconstruction between 1441 and 1442 point to limited progress on the project. The project may have been stalled until 25 January 1443, when three deputies (*deputatorum*) were elected by the general council to replace the six *operai* elected in 1440,³¹² consisting of only three members, one from each *terzo*: Michelangelo Niccolai from the ward of Santa Maria, Angelo Maccarii from San Francesco, and Papo di Andrea di Giovanni from Sant'Agostino. The re-electing of Papo di Andrea di Giovanni, who also sat on the 1440 *opera*, indicates some continuity between the 1440 and 1443 *operai*.³¹³

On 4 April 1443, over two months later, perhaps on the committee's advice, the commune posted a missive to two stonemasons (*Magistri lapidum*), Checco di Meo di Checchino da Settignano and Mechero da Settignano, in which the Poliziani requested that the two stonemasons come quickly (*con presteza*) to Montepulciano to repair the dilapidated façade and to bring the work already begun to completion.³¹⁴ It is also worth noting that no archival evidence refers to Michelozzo's façade design again, nor mentions any sort of resolution of the

Rodolico, *Le pietre delle città d'Italia* (Firenze: F. Le Monnier, 1965), 292-6. Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," n. 32, 34. Chapter 4 will investigate that significance of travertine to the Poliziani, Chapter 4.2, 190.

³¹² ASM, "Deliberazioni del consiglio generale e dei priori," vol. 32, 23r, 25 January 1443.

³¹³ On the members of the 1440 *operai*, see Chapter 2.2, 110.

³¹⁴ 'Perchè desideriamo che la facciata del nostro palagio che ruina sia aconci et conduxisi ad perfectione il lavoro principiato per la presente vi significhiamo et confortiamo che con prestezza qua veniate ad seguire et finire tale opera' ASM, "Copialettere," vol. 3, 151v, 4 April 1443; Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," App. I, doc. 8, 38. For the full transcription, Vol. 2, Appendix 2, doc 4. According to Borsi, during the mid-fifteenth century, many stonemasons from Settignano were commissioned by the Pope Pius II and worked in the Vatican. In the 1503 *Camerale* of the Archivio di Stato di Rome thirty craftsmen from Fiesole and Settignano were recorded for the works they had done for the Vatican Palace. Stefano Borsi, Corinna Vasić Vatovec, and Francesco Quinterio, *Maestri fiorentini nei cantieri romani del Quattrocento* (Roma: Officina Edizioni, 1989), 129-32.

palace façade. Urgency expressed in the correspondence demonstrates a lack of progress of the project approved in 1440.

The 1443 letter is the first instance when the two stonemasons were mentioned in Montepulciano's official documents. However, prior to 1443 two stone cutters from Settignano may already have worked on the palace. Saalman observed that one provision of 9 September 1443 contains the phrase: 'the masters (*magistri*) of the palace façade intend to return if the due payment of fifty *denari* can be made'.³¹⁵ The use of the verb *recedere* (to return) led Saalman to hypothesise that the two stonecutters had participated in the construction back in 1440, when the project was approved.

However, Mechero da Settignano's name never occurs again in Montepulciano's deliberations or any payroll sheets after 1443, so it is likely that he did not return to Montepulciano, or alternatively, that his was only a minor contribution to the project. The stonemason who seems to have accepted the offer and was fully engaged in the renovation project after 1443 was Checco di Meo di Checchino da Settignano, a stonemason from Michelozzo's circle. Prior to the request to return to Montepulciano in the letter of 4 April 1443, he was closely associated with the construction of Filippo Brunelleschi's cupola in Florence (erected between 1420 and 1436).³¹⁶ His name occurred in the *Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore* on 15 May 1426 for first time, when he was elected one of the master stonecutters (*magistros scalpellatore*). In 1433, he was assigned by the *operai*, as *conduttore di marmo bianco*, to supply white marble at a fixed price, and to ensure that marble would be delivered promptly to the site.³¹⁷ The last

³¹⁵ 'Cum Magistri faciei palatij comunis pemunc recedere intendant et nuncusque restent habere et debeatur bonam sommam quantitatem denarium a comuni (...)' ASM, "Deliberazioni del consiglio generale e dei priori," vol. 32, 224v, 9 September 1443; Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," App. I, doc. 11a, 39.

³¹⁶ Archivio dell'Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore, "Registro di deliberazioni," (1425-36), vol. 2-1, 32v.

³¹⁷ 'Item simili modo et forma et pro eodem pretio et tempore et pactis possint locare Checho Andree Fraschetta et Checho Mei Cecchini ducenta quinquaginta miliaria marmoris albi mensuris eis exhibendis per caputmagistrum Opere.' *ibid.*, vol. 2-1, 201

register listing Ceccho di Meo's name was a payroll sheet of 1 August 1435, a year before the cupola was completed. However, it seems that he was still involved in the cupola project in July 1438, when he is recorded as one of the stonecutters who went to quarries in Campiglia, Carrara, to select marble blocks for the bases and buttresses of the lantern surmounting the cupola.³¹⁸ Given that his contract with the Duomo *operai* was extended multiple times, and his role in managing the supply of marble, Checco di Meo seems to have enjoyed a high reputation as a stonecutter.³¹⁹ He was probably also working for San Lorenzo in c.1444.³²⁰ Checco di Meo and his son Piero di Checco di Meo da Settignano, both worked in the Vatican for pope Pius II in c.1461.³²¹ In Montepulciano, Checco di Meo was also commissioned to build the campanile of the old Pieve (c.1460 to 1470).³²²

On 27 September 1443, Montepulciano's general council decided to extend the *operai* committee by appointing an additional officer, Nanne Cecchi, a goldsmith in town.³²³ In the assembly meeting minutes, Nanne Cecchi's name was accompanied by the names of the three other *operai*: Michelangelo Niccolai (from the quarter of Santa Maria), Antonio Bernaboni

³¹⁸ 'Giovanni di Piero viene designato quale responsabile, nelle cave di Carrara, della scelta del marmo da lavorare e utilizzare per le basi e gli sproni della Lanterna del Duomo di Firenze. Dopo un primo sondaggio eseguito nel luglio dello stesso anno presso la cave dei Campoglia, al quale fra l'altro hanno partecipato alcuni maestri d'intaglio come Cecco d'Andrea Frascetta, C[h]ecco di Meo Cecchini e Piero di Cambio (...).' Cited by Franco Borsi, Gabriele Morolli, and Francesco Quinterio, *Brunelleschiani: Francesco della Luna, Andrea di Lazzaro Cavalcanti detto il Buggiano, Antonio Manetti Ciaccheri, Giovanni di Domenico da Gaiole, Betto d'Antonio, Antonio di Betto, Giovanni di Piero del Ticcio, Cecchino di Giaggio, Salvi d'Andrea, Maso di Bartolomeo* (Roma: Officina, 1979), 313, 12 November 1438. See also: Ferrara and Quinterio, *Michelozzo di Bartolomeo*, 283, n. 10; Cesare Guasti, ed. *La cupola di Santa Maria del Fiore: illustrata con i documenti dell'Archivio dell'Opera secolare* (Firenze: Barbera Bianchi e Comp., 1857), doc. 297, 96.

³¹⁹ Borsi, Morolli, and Quinterio, *Brunelleschiani: Francesco della Luna, Andrea di Lazzaro Cavalcanti detto il Buggiano, Antonio Manetti Ciaccheri, Giovanni di Domenico da Gaiole, Betto d'Antonio, Antonio di Betto, Giovanni di Piero del Ticcio, Cecchino di Giaggio, Salvi d'Andrea, Maso di Bartolomeo*.

³²⁰ Hyman, *Fifteenth Century Florentine Studies: The Palazzo Medici; and a Ledger for the Church of San Lorenzo*, 380.

³²¹ On the *Elenco delle maestranze bei cantieri romani del 400*, Roberto Marta, *L'architettura del Rinascimento a Roma (1417-1503): tecniche e tipologie* (Roma: Kappa, 1995), 395-401. Piero di Checco di Meo da Settignano was documented for 'a lavorare marmi ale schale.' Borsi, Vasić Vatovec, and Quinterio, *Maestri fiorentini nei cantieri romani del Quattrocento*, 131.

³²² R. W. Lightbown, *Donatello and Michelozzo: An Artistic Partnership and its Patrons in the Early Renaissance* (London; Philadelphia: Heyden & Son, 1980), vol. 1, 179-80.

³²³ ASM, "Deliberazioni del consiglio generale e dei priori," vol. 32, 191v, 7 September 1443; Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," 23.

(San Francesco) and Papo di Andrea di Giovanni (Sant'Agostino).³²⁴ Unlike the other three nominees, who were identified with the administrative section where they were registered, Chechi's name appears without reference to his residence, which may imply a non-local origin.

Information on the precise role of Nanne Cecchi is scarce in the communal statutes. He was not referred to as 'Master' when the appointment was made, which may suggest he was not formally qualified in the field of construction. Nonetheless, the inclusion of Nanne as an *operaio* overseeing the project, especially in the context of the reduction of the number of its members in the same year may indicate a greater degree of trust in Nanne and his ability. According to Saalman, Nanne Cecchi might have been a trader, helping to deal with material supplies from workshops and tradesmen outside the town; or he may have operated as a foreman to coordinate the project given a lack of skilled masters stationed in town, either due to the remote location of Montepulciano, or due to the commune's limited budget.³²⁵

As reconstruction progressed more effectively after 1443, several budgets were discussed and approved by councils, and the funds were distributed in the course of 1444 and 1445.³²⁶ Some payments were made to the masters of the palace façade (*Magistri faciei palatium*). The commune's account book *Entrate e Uscite* is an invaluable primary source offering detailed information on the progress of works. The entry from September to December 1445 lists items purchased with the payments approved by the commune's accounting officer (*camerlengo*) Giuliano di Francesco,³²⁷ including a payment of 772 *lire* 6 *soldi* and 8 *denari* made to

³²⁴ Papo di Andrea di Giovanni from the quarter of Sant'Agostino seems to be the most experienced member in the work committee, having been appointed for the third time (the first time in March 1440 and the second in January 1443); Michelangelo Niccolai was appointed again to the *operai*. Appointing the same members to the *operai* suggests the need for consistency in the construction project. ASM, "Deliberazioni del consiglio generale e dei priori," vol. 32, 191v, 7 September 1443; Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," 23.

³²⁵ Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence: An Economic and Social History*, 148.

³²⁶ Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," App. I, doc. 12, 39; doc. 13, 39.

³²⁷ 'a Giuliano dj Francesco Camerlengo Generale delanno Lire settecento settanta e due soldi sej denarj otto le qualj Giovannj dj bartolomeo naldinj Camerlengo degli ufficiali della facciata dinanzj al palazzo de Signorj disse

stonecutters (*scarpellatorj*), to the Jew (*ebreo*), and ‘again to mule drivers (*mulattierj*) who delivered stones to the construction site, and ‘again to the Master stonecutter Checco di Meo da Settignano.’³²⁸ This financial account seems to suggest that stone was ordered by the communal treasury rather than by a stonemason, so that the official administrative procedures, including initiating, voting and deciding on executive details, would have to be completed prior to the purchase of materials. The progress of construction would thus be reflected in the annual budget of the commune. The expenditure listed in the account book during the four years from 1444 to 1447 suggests a busy period of construction for the façade. Nevertheless, Saalman pointed out a sharp drop in the fund in 1447, which might have resulted from the need for other public construction in 1445, *i.e.* the rebuilding of the loggia in front of the old Pieve.³²⁹

The Completion of the Façade and the Unification of the Old and New Palaces, 1451 – c.1458

The façade project continued to progress slowly, or halted entirely between 1448 and 1450, as no budget was allotted. According to the commune’s account book, the next significant

il detto Giuliano avere pagato agli scarpellatorj e allo ebreo et ancora amulattierj che portano le pietra et ancora a maestro checho di meo dj Cecchino da settignano Cioe---L.vij lxxij s.vj d. 8’ *ibid.*, App. I, doc. 13e, 39; E & U, vol. 74, 73v, September - December 1445.

³²⁸ The Jewish money lending business in Italian city-states, and in general the entire Jewish community, was subject to rigorous surveillance during the Renaissance. Jewish money lending should not be confused with the merchant-banker enterprise of the Italian city-state citizens. The former was restricted to local customers who belonged to lower social levels, and the sum of debt was rather minor; the latter often managed international deals which involved larger capital sums. However, depending on the social status of customers, for those who enjoyed a higher social prestige, or for these having loaned to public authority, a larger sum could be released by the Jews. Daniel Capri noted that the Montepulciano government was the main debtor to a Jewish lending family in towns: Daniel Capri, "The Account Book of a Jewish Moneylender in Montepulciano (1409-1410)," *Journal of European Economic History* 14, no. 3 (1985): 501-13. In his study on the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, Rubinstein noted that in 1444, the Florentine commune imposed a 6,000 florins tax on five Jewish moneylenders to renovate the communal palace. Similarly in 1469, 2,300 florins from tax on the Jewish bankers were allocated to refurbishing the Palazzo Vecchio. Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 25, 31. On a broad discussion and case study of Jewish usury in Florence, see: Umberto Cassuto, *Gli ebrei a Firenze nell'età del Rinascimento* (Firenze: L. S. Olschki, 1965); Andrew Gow and Gordon Griffiths, "Pope Eugenius IV and Jewish Money-Lending in Florence: The Case of Salomone di Bonaventura during the Chancellorship of Leonardo Bruni," *Renaissance Quarterly* 47, no. Summer (1994): 282-329.

³²⁹ Saalman summarised the total sum of expenses on the façade between 1444 and 1447. 1444: 937 lire and 10 soldi; 1445: 1440 lire 18 soldi and 24 denari; 1446: 1133 lire 6 soldi and 8 denari; 1447: 332 lire 16 soldi and 3 denari. Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," 25-6.

investment in the façade was made in 1451, when a sum of 100 florins was distributed to a newly formed commission for the façade that consisted of four *operai*, one from each quarter. The appointment of the 1451 *operai* thus provides key evidence for the shift in the town's administrative system from the Sienese *terzi* to the Florentine *quartieri* in the 1450s.³³⁰ Subsequently, in 1452, the commune granted the façade *operai* the power to judge the quality of the project (*balia concessa operarijs facciate fabricandi*).³³¹ Nanne Cecchi enjoyed absolute power to deal with the palace (*arbitrium fabricandum et hedificandum in dicto palatio ut eijs videbitur et placet etcaetera*), supposedly to carry out every necessary task in order to complete the façade. Interestingly, the name of Checco di Meo da Settignano was listed and then crossed out and replaced with that of Nanne Cecchi, suggesting that a discussion might have taken place among the *operai* regarding whom they should appoint as the overseer. This appointment underlined Nanne's long engagement and his importance to the façade project from his matriculation in 1443 to 1452. Although no documents survive to account for orders given by the *ad hoc* executive committee or by Nanne, it is most likely that the renovation of the western façade was completed under his supervision in 1452, especially since no further provisions were mentioned in relation to it.

In addition to finalising the façade, Saalman proposed that Nanne was responsible for the reunification of the old and new palaces by walling up the north and the south wings.³³²

Although many thirteenth-century Tuscan civic palaces were originally constructed as a single

³³⁰ The façade *operai* formed between 1440 and 1450 followed the *terzi* system. ASM, "Deliberazioni del consiglio generale e dei priori," vol. 36, 43v, 7 (?) September, 1451; Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," App. I, doc. 22, 40.

³³¹ 'Quod operaij Electj super facciate palatij una simul cum Magistro Nanne Ciechi habeant arbitrium fabricandum et hedificandum in dicto palatio ut eijs videbitur et placet etcaetera.' A preceding address of 'Master' was recorded as a reference to Checco da Settignano and was kept when Checco's name was scored out and replaced with Nanne Cecchi. This is the only time that Nanne was referred to as 'Master', and may thus be an error of the scribe as Checco was unlikely to be a master. ASM, "Deliberazioni del consiglio generale e dei priori," vol. 37, 33v, 17 June 1452; Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," App. I, doc. 23, 40.

³³² It is worth noting that no document survives to confirm the design and construction of loggias and *androne*. Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," 26.

solid block,³³³ the Florentine preference for an internal courtyard is suggested by the architectural evolution of major civic palaces. For instance, in Florence the Palazzo del Podestà was transformed to the present configuration after 1316, in which the courtyard (Figure 71) was embellished with octagonal columns supporting the loggia and monumental steps leading to the upper storey. In Scarperia, the Palazzo dei Vicari (after 1299, Figure 72) was expanded from a fortified building with a corner tower to a large building-complex centred around a courtyard, after the town became a seat of the Florentine *vicario* in 1415.³³⁴ In addition to being interpreted as a self-defence measure, or a solution to growing accommodation pressures, combining Montepulciano's old and new palaces into a single building with a central courtyard might have reflected the architectural conventions of Florence and its territories.

The formation of the courtyard in Montepulciano's civic palace-complex further points to the *all'antica* language that was well-developed in Florence during the mid-fifteenth century. The newly formed courtyard was flanked by superimposed loggias on the north and south sides. Examination of the masonry and capitals suggests that the ground-floor and first-floor arcades were not planned together, as Saalman suggested, but in four phases carried out between the 1390s and the 1450s (Figure 73).³³⁵ The two ground-floor loggias were probably built separately, as the structure of arches and the distance of each arch span are different. In contrast to the two-bay north loggia (Figure 45: no. 11 & Figure 74), the south loggia has three-bays of different widths (Figure 45: no. 5 & Figure 75). The style of columns and capitals is also

³³³ For example, the Palazzo dei Priori in Volterra was a single block, Rodolico and Marchini, *I palazzi del popolo nei comuni toscani del Medioevo*, 173-4.

³³⁴ The current Palazzo dei Vicario is likely to have evolved from a fortified tower belonging to the Ubaldini. On the history of the Scarperia and the interrelationship between the installation of the Florentine *vicari* in 1415 and the expansion of the tower: Giuseppina Carla Romby and Ester Diana, *Una 'terra nuova' nel Mugello: Scarperia: popolazione, insediamenti, ambiente, XIV-XVI secolo* (Firenze: Comune di Scarperia, 1985), 9-36, 94. On the general history of Scarperia's urban development, Comune di Scarperia, *Scarperia: storia, arte, artigianato* (Firenze: Comune di Scarperia, 1990), 11; Vanna Arrighi, *Gli statuti di Scarperia del XV secolo* (Firenze: Edifir, 2004), 20-4.

³³⁵ Saalman suggested that two loggias around the courtyard were built simultaneously. Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," 18-9.

different in the two blocks. In the north loggia, the combination of short octagonal columns on high pedestals with *foglie d'acqua* capitals (Figure 76) is like those prevalent in Florence during the 1390s and until the 1420s.³³⁶ The console capital has a simple trapezoid impost. The south loggia and *androne* bear finely carved Ionic capitals with volutes and egg and dart rims resting on a fluted *calathos* below the abacus (Figure 77 & Figure 78), which are reminiscent of Masaccio's *Trinity* fresco (1425-1427, Figure 79). The same type of Ionic order can be found in other Michelozzo projects such as the Medici villa at Careggi (c.1457).

Although Saalman argued that a similar combination of two types of capital in the courtyard can be found in the courtyard at Careggi and they were of the same date,³³⁷ it is worth noting that the columns of the north loggia display a greater degree of weathering compared to those on the south (Figure 80), which may relate to the north loggia's earlier date. Considering that between 1392 and 1397 the Florentine government erected a fortress (*càssero*) in Montepulciano,³³⁸ the north ground-floor loggia might have already been built at the end of the fourteenth century (Figure 81 & Figure 82, purple zone), marking the first phase in the formation of a courtyard. Whereas the south ground-floor loggia was probably built after the palace renovations were begun again in 1451 (Figure 83, pink zone), and would have been supervised by Checco di Meo or stonemasons from a Florentine workshop.

In addition to the south ground-floor loggia, two superimposed loggias were added after 1451: one above the north ground-floor loggia, and the other above the south loggia (Figure 73 & 82 & 83, yellow zone). The first-floor superimposed loggia in the north block has a four-bay colonnetted *verone* (balcony, Figure 84) supported by round columns open to the courtyard. One column bears a typical Michelozzesque Composite capital (Figure 85) of a type that can be

³³⁶ Howard Saalman, "Michelozzo Studies," *The Burlington Magazine* 108, no. 758 (1966): 242-6. The Palazzo da Uzzano on Via de'Bardi (after 1411-1429) has this type of capital and column in the courtyard.

³³⁷ Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," 9-10.

³³⁸ See Chapter 3.2, 138-48.

found in the Palazzo Medici (c.1444-1465) and the Ospedale di San Paolo (1451-1497).³³⁹ Although the south block is now walled up, masonry traces and an Ionic capital remnant show that it most likely also had an upper *verone* (balcony, Figure 86). This suggests that the upper loggias on the north and south sides of the courtyard were built during the same construction phase, perhaps added after the completion of the ground-floor structures.

In addition to the courtyard, other motifs introduced during the 1452 renovation accentuate the Florentine overtones of Montepulciano's communal palace. The barrel-vaulted internal staircase (Figure 46: no. 23 & Figure 87), as well as the beamed ceiling of the first-floor *androne* (Figure 46: no. 25 & Figure 88), were both popular innovations of the period, and widely used, especially after the mid-fifteenth century.³⁴⁰ The staircase and *androne* link the north and the south loggias to the old palace, crucially transforming the site into an enclosed building complex. Given masonry traces, they were most certainly added after the completion of the north and south superimposed loggias, indicating the fourth phase of the renovation plan (Figure 89, green zone). A round column supporting an Ionic capital is stylistically similar to the south loggia in the courtyard (Figure 90), suggesting the staircase's construction close to the south ground-floor loggia were planned at the same stage in the 1450s. Classical motifs can also be found in two console capitals in the chapel, with acanthus leaves turning inward, embracing the egg-and-dart moulding resting on a fluted tapering bracket (Figure 91). The ornament of the pietra serena fireplace also imitates an entablature, incorporates a central laurel wreath flanked by swags and ribbons supported by columns with composite capitals (Figure 92).

³³⁹ On the Palazzo Medici, Giovanni Cherubini and Giovanni Fanelli, *Il Palazzo Medici Riccardi di Firenze* (Firenze: Giunti, 1990), 23, 27. On the evolution of Michelozzo's capital design, Richard A. Goldthwaite and W. R. Rearick, "Michelozzo and the Ospedale di San Paolo in Florence," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 21, no. 3 (1977): 289, n. 55.

³⁴⁰ Also see Lillie, "Florentine Villas in the Fifteenth Century: a Study of the Strozzi and Sassetti Country Properties," 105, 110, 117; Lillie, "The Humanist Villa Revisited," 208.

Another salient feature that links Montepulciano's communal palace with the Quattrocento architectural vocabulary is the belvedere loggia with elegant travertine Ionic columns (Figure 46: no. 37 & Figure 93 & Figure 94) added to the south block façade, granting viewers with expansive view of the Val d'Orcia. Considering the vicinity between Montepulciano and Pienza, as well as their similar hilltop locations, remodelling the communal palace by adding a viewing platform and a hanging garden (*giardino pensile*) underlines the idyllic life in a rural commune. This superimposing loggia may have been added later, probably after 1459 following Pius II's palace in Pienza (after 1459-1462, Figure 95), which is sometimes described as the first country house whose design incorporated landscape.³⁴¹

The Tower Project and its Operai, 1458 – 1460

The attempt to renovate the *palagio* continued to 1458. A textual source of 3 November 1458 reveals that Checco di Meo da Settignano requested a sum of 350 *lire* from the commune for his work removing bricks from the tower (*cosa che luj abbia tolto e lavorio della torre*), probably referring to the old corner tower, as well as reimbursing his expenses for labourers he had hired, and other materials for the remaining work on the tower, including dressed stone for the tower's machicolations (*beccatello di canti della detta torre*).³⁴² It is clear from this document that as soon as the old tower was demolished, the construction of a new tower was begun. One month after, on 28 December 1458, a fee for the transportation of twelve pieces of machicolation was listed, which may refer to the projecting galleries crowning the façade.³⁴³

³⁴¹ Charles Randall Mack, *Pienza. The Creation of a Renaissance City* (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 1987), 52-62; Adams, "Pienza," 326-7; Deborah Howard, "Seasonal Apartments in Renaissance Italy," *Artibus et Historiae* 22, no. 43 (2001): 134; Fabrizio Nevola, "L'architettura tra Siena e Pienza: architettura civile," in *Pio II e le arti: la riscoperta dell'antico da Federighi a Michelangelo*, ed. Alessandro Angelini, Andrea Lensini, and Fabio Lensini (Siena; Cinisello Balsamo; Milano: Monte dei paschi di Siena, 2005), 7-8. On the architectural evolution of belvedere loggia, David J. Stalley, "The Renaissance Belvedere in Florentine Villas and Palaces," *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* 6, no. 1 (1980): 64-89.

³⁴² ASM, "Deliberazioni del consiglio generale e dei priori," vol. 38, 104r-105v, 3 November 1458; Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," App. I, doc. 25, 40-1. See also: Ferrara and Quinterio, *Michelozzo di Bartolomeo*, 197-8. For the full transcription, Vol. 2, Appendix 2, doc. 5.

³⁴³ The main façade has 26 corbels supporting the gallery.

We can assume from this that the stonework was dressed and pre-cut prior to its delivery to the construction site, most likely in the quarries following industrial convention at the time.³⁴⁴

In addition to building the projecting galleries, the focus after 1458 turned to the tower. Separating the tower from the construction of the main palace block was not unprecedented, as Hyman noted that in the Florentine fiscal system palaces and towers were two different types of structure.³⁴⁵ According to Checco da Settignano's estimations in November 1458, the tower should have been possible to complete by May 1459. But, although the old tower was demolished, and the height of the new tower raised with an internal staircase to reach the top, the tower was still unfinished in August 1459.³⁴⁶ Most crucially, the clock commissioned from a Cortonese smelter, was still missing.³⁴⁷ According to Saalman, the delay may have forced Checco di Meo da Settignano to leave Montepulciano without finishing the whole project in 1459.³⁴⁸ From a document dating 13 June 1460, we learn that the chairman of the general council, Angelo Niccolai, asked the town's *sindaco* to file a petition to the Florentine

³⁴⁴ Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," App. I, doc. 26, 41. It was commonplace to have raw stone materials cut into standard sizes, and sculpted into decorative pieces, such as capitals, consoles, stringcourses, and cornices in quarries prior to their delivery to construction sites. Masonry work on site was focused on polishing and finalising dressed stones. John Harvey, *Mediaeval Craftsmen* (London: Sydney; Batsford, 1975), 110-3; Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence: An Economic and Social History*, 221-7.

³⁴⁵ Hyman's summary of eight types of structures often listed in Florence's 1269 *Estimo*, including (1) the simple house, (2) the simple house with some indication of size and/or shape, (3) the simple house or commercial building, (4) houses and commercial structures with upper stories, storage cellars, *botteghe*, gardens and fields, (5) houses with building materials specified, (6) house built shortly before the destruction, (7) palaces, and (8) towers. Hyman, *Fifteenth Century Florentine Studies: The Palazzo Medici; and a Ledger for the Church of San Lorenzo*, 6-9.

³⁴⁶ Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," App. I, doc. 28a, 41. 'Item per uno livello per levare laquale per murare (...) Item (...) per fare una scala per arivare alpiu alto(?)'

³⁴⁷ 'Alo Tore de Lo Oriolo del palazzo per lo facto se avesse avere per la fare La quale Cosa non sono chiarite sabino a chiarire lire Mille Cortonesi.' According to a payment record of 1000 *lire* on 28 February 1460, the clock most likely arrived after 1460. ASM, "Deliberazioni del consiglio generale e dei priori," vol. 39, 53r, 28 February 1460; Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," App. I, doc. 29, 41. Giorgetti suggests that this clock installed in c.1460 might be made by Luca di Bondi, the smelter of the bell and the clock of Cortona. Renzo Giorgetti, *Orologi da torre storici della provincia di Siena* (Firenze: Gelli, 2007), 198-9; Fabio Fiorini, "I materiali costituituvi della città," in *Il Decoro della Città. Elementi Artistici Minori a Montepulciano*, ed. Alessandro Angiolini and Elisabetta Canapini (Perugia: Le Balze, 2004), 137.

³⁴⁸ Saalman asserted that Checco di Meo da Settignano might have left Montepulciano for the commune failed to guarantee the availability of materials and budget that he claimed. Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," 27-8.

government, requesting the return of Checco di Meo da Settignano to his position as overseer of works for the commune (*opus comunis*) and the campanile of the old Pieve (*Campanile plebis*) in Montepulciano.³⁴⁹ The work owing to the commune may refer to the unfinished tower of the communal palace, and perhaps to the re-unification of the palace structure with its courtyard and loggia.

Whether it was the Florentine authorities who convinced Checco di Meo da Settignano to return remains unclear, yet the stonemason seems to have returned to Montepulciano as the general councils debated the huge sum of money that he claimed for completing the tower on 22 January 1461.³⁵⁰ The construction of the tower was accompanied by an unprecedented development. The work's office for the tower (*Operarij Turris*) was officially established on 5 April 1460,³⁵¹ which was at least two years after the tower was first referred to in official documents in 1458. The tower commission comprised four *operai*, one from each quarter.

Nevertheless, a question must be posed: why did the government nominate *operai* with specific responsibility for the tower at the very end of the construction? Of many major responsibilities of the *operai*, one was to maintain case-by-case relations with individuals or governments outside the jurisdiction of Montepulciano. Any action within the competencies and liabilities of the *operai* was undertaken after the committee had been legally established. Hence the invitation to Michelozzo was sent after establishing the façade *operai* in 1440; similarly, the letter to the two stonemasons from Settignano was composed after another committee of *operai* had been formed in 1443. It seems fair to assume that in order to successfully file a petition to Florence in 1460, the commune found itself in need of a constitutional body that would be

³⁴⁹ praecipere Magistro checho da Settignano quod veniat ad expletendum opus comunis et Campanile plebis ut praedictum est obligatum." *ibid.*, App. I, doc. 31, 42.

³⁵⁰ 'Cum magister Chechus de setignano asserat debere avere unam magnum quantitatem pecuniarum per fabricatione fatiche et Turris palatuij.' *ibid.*, App. I, doc. 34, 42.

³⁵¹ ASM, "Deliberazioni del consiglio generale e dei priori," vol. 39, 62r; Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," App. I, doc. 30, 42.

capable of undertaking legal action on behalf of the commune. We can thus assume that the *operai* would not have been nominated had the commune not desired to send a petition to Florence, and work on the tower would have continued without the supervision of any committee. Records in communal documents reveal that debates concerning the payment due to the master and his obligations recurred in the general council throughout the years 1461 to 1465. The litigation finally ended on 27 February 1465, when the prior and the standard-bearer approved a payment of 500 *lire* to Checco di Meo da Settignano.³⁵² This document helps us to date this year the official completion of the whole renovation plan for the Palazzo Comunale that lasted twenty-five years.

Montepulciano's Communal Structures under Florentine Rule

Provisions in Montepulciano in relation to the communal palace renovation reveal the complex nature of building and renovating public buildings during the fifteenth century. Although the petition for the project was proposed by the priors of the commune, it is worth noting that their petition was put into effect only when the executive magistracies received major support from the general council. The preservation of Montepulciano's own parliamentary system indicates its autonomous status.³⁵³

Given the *Deliberations*, we also learn that the three magistracies: the five priors (*priori*), the *podestà*, and the *sindaco* were still the town's supreme officials during the fifteenth century. In 1440, the renovation and nomination of *operai* for the façade and in 1460 for the tower were both suggested by the priors. Legal documents in the commune indicate that the priorate could advise the general council on public affairs. They also had the right to assemble councils at their will, which could be seen as evidence that Montepulciano was a self-governing

³⁵² Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," App. I, doc. 40 & 43.

³⁵³ Brown, "City and Citizen: Changing Perceptions in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," 101.

municipality within the Florentine dominion. The *sindaco* remained a major magistrate in Montepulciano even though this was not the case in Florence. The legislative authority of the popular government persisted as well. Executive details in relation to the reconstruction project were chiefly determined by the council following local administrative conventions. The criteria for appointing the *operai* members (one from each administrative section) and the financial officer who recorded and distributed the communal budget were largely determined by the legislative division of the municipality rather than the central government. Also, Montepulciano commune still used the *stile Natività* for calendar (the first day of the year started from 25 December), which was different from the Florentine calendar of the *stile Incarnazione*, where the feast of Annunciation of Virgin Mary on 25 March marked the beginning of a new year. This meant that the commune retained a certain degree of independence after joining the Florentine State.

However, the completion of the renovation project also required considerable assistance from external entities. Without support from foreign authorities, the palace would probably not have looked as it does now. The initiative of the 1440 façade act was carried out under the Florentine government's supervision. This was, likewise, the case in 1460 when the Montepulciano commune needed the stonemason to return to town to complete the tower. The communal palace in Montepulciano thus sheds light on Florence's relatively flexible governing politics and their case-by-case control over their district and *contado* under the Medicean regime.³⁵⁴

Conclusion

This chapter has looked at the rebuilding of Montepulciano's communal palace in its administrative, civic and political contexts. The analysis of statutory documents related to the

³⁵⁴ John M. Najemy, "Dialogue of Power in Florentine Politics," in *The Renaissance: Italy and Abroad*, ed. John Jeffries Martin (London: Routledge, 2003); Hewlett, *Rural Communities in Renaissance Tuscany: Religious Identities and Local Loyalties*, 1-11.

Palazzo Comunale shows the palace was a bespoke object serving a multitude of public purposes. First, its dormitory, chapel, courtyard, and belvedere loggia provided the town's chief magistrates with space for accommodation, worship, and leisure. Secondly, the halls housed the town's assembly, where its administrative work and its meetings were conducted. This was also the place in which officials met suppliants, petitioners, and foreign representatives. Thirdly, the now demolished external steps most likely functioned as a civic place where secular ceremonies were held and public announcements were made. On the one hand, the steps enabled the communal government to establish popular practices, according to which the commune gained and increased public exposure. On the other hand, it gave the public the opportunity to engage in communal activities, greatly enhancing their sense of local identity. Finally, the tower-belfry unit regularised urban time, space, and civic order. The palace was therefore a tangible incarnation of the civic virtues of honour, utility and common good. It is not surprising that the façade was conceived in the same manner in the Façade Act of 27 February 1440.

The architectural evolution of the palace's site further points to the thriving development of the commune over centuries. The 1337 Statutes refer to another palace – the Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo – as part of the communal palace complex, showing the increasing size of the administration in the first half of the fourteenth century, which may explain the incorporation of the new palace (*novum palatium*) in 1365. While Saalman proposes that the unification of the old and new palaces was executed in one phase in the mid-fifteenth century, closer examination of the architectural style and weathering of the columns supporting the loggias opening towards the courtyard suggests that there were four different phases leading to the eventual unification of the site. First, the two-bay ground-floor loggia of the north block was probably built in the 1390s, as its *foglie d'acqua* capitals and octagonal piers are quintessential architectural features of that period. Secondly, the south ground-floor loggia was built after 1451. Thirdly, two superimposed, four-bay *veroni* were added above the north and south

loggias. Finally, a staircase and *androne* were built to connect the north and south blocks to the old palace block. The unification of the old and new palaces in the mid-fifteenth century, as well as furnishing a courtyard surrounded by loggias with elegant capitals, draws our attention to the significance and importance of Montepulciano as the second largest commune in the Valdichiana.

With regard to its architectural profile, Montepulciano's town hall testifies to the significance of fortification as a visible symbol of power, a claim put forward by this thesis. The old palace's crenellated façade as presented in Taddeo's altarpiece, as well as Michelozzo's renovation works undertaken in the fifteenth century, including the closed and fortified façade, and rebuilding of the stone tower both accentuate the military overtones of the palace. The interior design, including the central *androne*, courtyard, and classical capitals employed throughout the palace adhere closely to contemporary domestic palace trends originating in the dominant city of Florence. Archival documents further point to the direct involvement of Florence in the 1440 façade renovation project. The initial provision was carried out under Florence's supervision, and the political rhetoric of the documents carries strong Florentine republican overtones. Montepulciano's new façade is thus an interesting example of architectural symbolism that should be looked at from both local and central standpoints. From the local perspective, it was the symbol of the Poliziani, but in a broader context, it was a sign of Florentine civic identity.

Although the façade restoration may be seen as a small-scale and straightforward project, it took twenty-five years to complete. To put it into perspective, this was much longer than the whole construction, from laying the cornerstone to the completion of the Palazzo dei Priori in Florence that lasted about seventeen years (1298-1314), or of the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena, which took a similar time, or the remodelling of the Palazzo Venezia in Rome, which was

finished in about fifteen years.³⁵⁵ The façade project in Montepulciano was halted multiple times, possibly due to the town's unstable income from agricultural products; or to litigation between the Montepulciano government and foreign craftsmen regarding payments. In light of the above-mentioned financial difficulties, a question arises: why did the Montepulciano government, or the Florentine commissioner, insist on pursuing this project in 1440? The next chapter will tackle this problem from a military point of view, examining the renovation project of Montepulciano's communal palace in the context of the Battle of Anghiari in 1440.

³⁵⁵ Ludwig Heinrich Heydenreich and Wolfgang Lotz, *Architecture in Italy, 1400-1600*, trans. Mary Hottinger (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1974), 69.

CHAPTER THREE: THE CASTELLATED *PALAZZO COMUNALE* OF MONTEPULCIANO IN ITS MILITARY CONTEXT, c.1440

Introduction

In his *Istorie fiorentine* (*Florentine History*), Niccolò Machiavelli concluded that the territorial hegemony of Florence was based on its successful military campaign conducted between 1381 and 1434, marked by the acquisition of five communes: Arezzo (1384), Montepulciano (1390), Pisa (1406), Cortona (1411) and Livorno (1421).³⁵⁶ Of the five communes subjugated to Florence, Montepulciano's role in the resurgent Florentine state has received the least scholarly attention.³⁵⁷ This neglect may be partly related to the town's peripheral location beyond Florence's long-established border with Siena in what is now south-east Tuscany.³⁵⁸ Having been surrounded by the Sienese communities of Torrita, Pienza, and Chiusi to the north, west and south and the Chiana river to the east (Figure 96), the town was cut off from Florence's major territories of Arezzo, Cortona, Pisa and Volterra. Also, the roads from Montepulciano to Florence were indirect and restricted. No direct route between Florence and Montepulciano is marked on Giovan Battista Belluzzi's 1544 map drawn for Cosimo I de' Medici (Figure 97),³⁵⁹

³⁵⁶ Machiavelli suggested that Florence's territorial expansion from 1381 to 1434 was the most successful period prior to the Medicean dukedom: 'Il quale dal MCCCLXXXI al MCCCCXXXIV aveva regnato, e fatto con tanta gloria tante guerre, ed acquistato all'imperio suo Arezzo, Pisa, Cortona, Livorno e Monte Pulciano.' Niccolò Machiavelli, *Le istorie Fiorentine*, 3rd ed. (Firenze: Felice le Monnier, 1851), bk. 3, chap. 29, 174. Also see Robert Black, *Machiavelli* (London: Routledge, 2013), 259; Alessandro Montevecchi and Carlo Varotti, eds., *Opere storiche*, 2 vols. (Roma: 2010), III.11.13-14, 324.

³⁵⁷ Modern scholarship on Florence's territorial expansion has been discussed in Chapter 1.2, 64-5.

³⁵⁸ Montepulciano was circumscribed by three Sienese communities Torrita to the north, Pienza to the west, and Chiusi to the south. Crociani-Windland describes Montepulciano as a place 'between Sienese earth and Florentine water,' arguing that the town's civic identity combining both major city-states' characteristics, Lita Crociani-Windland, *Festivals, Affect and Identity: A Deleuzian Apprenticeship in Central Italian Communities* (London, New York: Anthem, 2011), 36, 92.

³⁵⁹ According to Lamberini, in c.1544 Cosimo I de' Medici commissioned from Giovan Battista Belluzzi a detailed plan to refortify the city walls in Montepulciano, yet only a simple diagram of the confinement of the town survive. Daniela Lamberini, *Il Sanmarino. Giovan Battista Belluzzi, architetto militare e trattatista del Cinquecento* (Florence: Olschki, 2007), vol. 1, 66; 186-8; vol. 2, 112, 116, 118. Also, in a 1548 map of the Guef Party Captain, no direct road system between Florence and Montepulciano was documented. Travellers from Florence most likely need to take a road known as 'strada maestra da Firenze a Monte S. Savino' to go to Montepulciano. Don Antonio Bacci, *Strade romane e medioevali nel territorio aretino* (Cortona: Calosci, 1985), 278-83.

nor on the Medicean Duke's 1749 map of Montepulciano.³⁶⁰ Montepulciano's isolated location and poor road communication with Florence may at first suggest that the town was of little value to the Florentine state. It is Machiavelli's mention of Montepulciano that draws our attention to the town's contribution to the consolidation of Florence's military strength and expansionist confidence during the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, which, according to Zorzi, was the longest and most successful martial era in Florentine history.³⁶¹

By positioning Montepulciano's 1440 façade project in the context of the armed conflicts of Italy's major city-states', this chapter has two aims: first, investigating the extent to which Montepulciano's urban development was largely re-shaped in accord with Florence's military defence against Milan between the 1380s and 1440s. Secondly, probing whether the castellated façade of Montepulciano's new communal palace was related to the local and central communes' military campaign.

The first section of this chapter gives an account of the ways in which the territorial dispute between Florence and Siena over Montepulciano from the late 1380s evolved into open war between Florence and the Duke of Milan, Gian Galeazzo Visconti (1385-1402) between 1389 and 1392. The active role played by the *Dieci di Balìa* – Florence's special war committee, who had supreme authority over territorial security in wartime – over issues concerning Montepulciano reveals the Florentine government's dominant and militaristic attitude towards a rural commune. The second part of the chapter focuses on the construction of a fortress (*càssero*) in Montepulciano. The allocation of the funding from the Florentine *signoria* and the installation of Florentine garrisons in the town provide valuable information about Florence's

³⁶⁰ While a road entering the town from the east gate is marked as 'a road that comes from Siena' (*strada che viene di Siena*), another entering from the north-east gate is designated as 'a road that goes to Cortona' (*strada che va a Cortona*). The other extramural roads in the map lead to surrounding local monuments and churches.

³⁶¹ Zorzi, "Verso Est. L'espansione del dominio fiorentino nella toscana orientale," 142-3.

territorial control policy, as well as shedding light on the ways in which Montepulciano's cityscape was interrelated with the dominant city's wars.

The third and fourth sections of the chapter position the 1440 renovation project for Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale in the context of Florence's military and diplomatic struggle with Gian Galeazzo's successor, Filippo Maria Visconti. The third part explores the extent to which Montepulciano's communal palace was a defensive precaution taken by the Florentine state prior to its victory over the Visconti army at the Battle of Anghiari on 29 June 1440. Also, the town's official letters to the Florentine government enable us to tackle the importance of elite networks in the consolidation of Florence's control over Montepulciano. The fourth section of the chapter turns to the development of the 1440 façade project in the aftermath of the Anghiari battle, arguing that the project may have undergone a conceptual transition from a defensive measure to a celebratory monument, commemorating Florence's honourable military authority and its defeat of the Milanese army. The last part of this chapter turns to the geopolitical significance of Montepulciano in Florence's territorial expansion scheme after c.1440. The town's strategic position at the border between the Florentine State and the Papal States, and its proximity to two routes leading to Rome: the via Francigena and the Valdichiana invites the formulation of an intriguing question: to what extent did the new façade design proclaim the town's twofold role as a guardian of Florentine territories and a gateway connecting the Florentine state with Rome?

Key primary sources for the investigation of Montepulciano's military obligations and participation in Florence's military campaigns include *I capitoli del comune di Firenze: inventario e regesto*, the archival inventory published in 1866. This inventory summarises Florence's treaties and provisions in relation to the Montepulciano commune from 1202 to 1399, providing valuable information regarding Montepulciano's municipal administration

under Florentine rule and the building history of the *càssero* in Montepulciano from 1392 to 1397.³⁶² With regard to Montepulciano's engagement in Florentine military manoeuvres in the context of the Battle of Anghiari, the third volume of *Copialettere* in the Archivio Storico in Montepulciano includes many unpublished letters sent by the Montepulciano commune to the Florentine *Signoria* and the *Dieci di Balìa* (henceforth the *Dieci*) from 1437 onwards, shedding light on the town's military cooperation with the Florentine authorities in the face of war.³⁶³

3.1 The *Dieci di Balìa* and the Control of Montepulciano after c.1390

Chapter Two mentioned that in April 1390, the Montepulciano commune sent their ambassador to Florence to form an alliance with the city.³⁶⁴ According to the Florentine chancellor Coluccio Salutati's record, Montepulciano's submission letter was presented to Florence's highest magistrates – the priors and the standard-bearer of justice, the Twelve (the priors' advisory college, and the war committee – the *Dieci* – in the Palazzo dei Priori. Clauses in the treaty suggested that Montepulciano would be placed under the custody and protection of Florence. In return, the Florentine authorities, including the priors, the standard-bearer of justice, the gonfaloniers of the companies (*gonfalonieri di compagnia*), the Twelve, and the *Dieci* enjoyed the prerogative to control the commune of Montepulciano, including authority to appoint its governing magistrate (the *podestà*) and decide the *podestà*'s chamberlains, horses and salaries.³⁶⁵ In addition, as a Florentine district (*distretto*), Montepulciano's existing local laws,

³⁶² The earliest surviving statutes of the Florentine Republic date to 1325. An investigation into this series of documents may shed light on Florence's territorial control between the thirteenth and early-fourteenth centuries.

³⁶³ For convenience and consistency, dates of the *Copialettere* are converted into modern style. In addition to Professor Amanda Lillie, I am grateful to Professor Caroline Elem and Emanuele Lugli, as well as Dr Livia Lupi and Riccardo Pizzinelli, who corrected my transcription and kindly helped me interpret the contents of these letters.

³⁶⁴ Chapter 2.2, 102-3.

³⁶⁵ The Montepulciano-Florence 1390 treaty stated that the Florentine government would appoint a citizen to be 'the *podestà* and captain' (*il podestà e capitano*) of Montepulciano to direct the town's administrative and juridical affairs. On 15 April 1390, Florentine authorities proceeded to regulate requirements in relation to the *podestà* in Montepulciano, including his duties, salaries, servants and *famiglia*, Guasti, *I capitoli del comune di Firenze. Inventario e regesto*, vol. 1, 115, act 10-12, 15 April 1390. However, the scrutiny of eligible Florentine citizens and the creation of the *borsa* for the Montepulciano *podestà* were not settled until 1391. *Ibid.*, vol. 1,

statutes and ordinances were to be amended in accordance with Florentine custom. In case of any inconsistency between local and central regulations, the *Dieci* were authorised to resolve disputes.³⁶⁶

Active between the late fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries, the *Dieci* was a special committee created to cope with the state's diplomatic problems and military crises.³⁶⁷ As the *Dieci* committee was delegated to the 1390 Montepulciano submission, their jurisdiction over the town draws our attention to Montepulciano's role in Florence's strategic and military agenda. At first the *Dieci* was an extraordinary committee with temporal limitations. It did not sit if there was no war or crisis, and the office would be dismissed once the situation became normal again or could be handled by the commune.³⁶⁸ However, Rubinstein noted that after 1393 the *Dieci* became a permanent office in the Florentine administration, and the members were appointed every six months.³⁶⁹ Dati's chronicle of Florence documented that the officers of *Dieci* were directly appointed rather than drawn by lot, and the *Dieci* enjoyed supreme authority 'as much power as the *signoria* itself and the whole commune.'³⁷⁰ In his study of Florence's foreign affair policy, Pampaloni argued that although the *Dieci* was subordinated under the Florentine *Signoria*, their supreme power and authority to resolve Florence's war

120, act 21, 28 June 1391; act 21-22, 29 July 139.

³⁶⁶ The provision also stipulates that when there is no *Dieci* committee, another Florentine officials would be nominated to oversee Montepulciano's affairs on behalf of the central government. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, 114-5, act 7-10, 11 April 1390.

³⁶⁷ The *Dieci di Balìa* was replaced by the *Dieci di libertà e pace* in 1499. On the *Dieci*'s distinctive role in the Florentine governmental structure, Pampaloni, "Gli organi della Repubblica fiorentina per le relazioni con l'estero," 270-1. Martines, *Lawyers and Statecraft in Renaissance Florence*, 198-200; Nicolai Rubinstein, *The Government of Florence under the Medici (1434 to 1494)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 34-5, 77.

³⁶⁸ Rubinstein, *The Government of Florence under the Medici (1434 to 1494)*, 34-5.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 77.

³⁷⁰ 'l'ufficio de' *Dieci di Balìa*, che sono eletti a voce, ovvero colle fave senza [sic: senza] farne borsa, sono uomini valenti, e scelti, e pratici, e non si fanno, se non a tempo di guerra, e costoro hanno allora di fuori della città, e ne' fatti della guerra tutta la balìa e potenza de' signori, e di tutto il Comune.' Cited by Guidi, *Il governo della città-repubblica di Firenze del primo Quattrocento*, vol. 2, 210-1.

affairs (*i Dieci hanno ne' fatto della guerra tutta la balia e autorità del Comune*) was almost never challenged.³⁷¹

The *Dieci*'s responsibilities included the employment of mercenaries, forming alliances and negotiating treaties. They had the power to impose forced loans to meet the government's military expenditure;³⁷² such as for Florence's purchase of Arezzo in 1384.³⁷³ The war committee also participated in most of Florence's diplomatic negotiations with Milan from the late fourteenth to the beginning of the fifteenth century.³⁷⁴ The military-orientated and case-by-case nature of the *Dieci* suggested its creation depended on Florence's current foreign issues. From this perspective, assigning the *Dieci* as the direct supervising office over Montepulciano suggests that the town's submission was not an isolated episode, but may have played a greater role in the formation of the state's foreign policy after the 1390s.

By the time Montepulciano submitted itself to Florence in 1390, the *Dieci* committee had existed for about two years. Its creation in January 1388 was a direct response to the rising threat of Gian Galeazzo Visconti, the Duke of Milan, whose troops reached Tuscany in c.1387 after a successful military campaign in Lombardy.³⁷⁵ On the one hand, Florence tried to negotiate a peace treaty with Milan, and on the other, it sought alliances to form a military league against the Duke's territorial expansion. However, at first Florence struggled to find any Tuscan ally. City states such as Siena, Pisa and Lucca had no intention of supporting Florence's military activities, for its aggressive territorial policy had been negatively affecting its Tuscan

³⁷¹ Cited by Pampaloni, "Gli organi della Repubblica fiorentina per le relazioni con l'estero," 270. Also see Rubinstein, *The Government of Florence under the Medici (1434 to 1494)*, 34.

³⁷² Anthony Molho, *Florentine Public Finances in the Early Renaissance, 1400-1433* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1971), 10.

³⁷³ Becker, *Florence in Transition: Studies in the Rise of the Territorial State*, 2, 204; Becker, "The Florentine Territorial State and Civic Humanism in the Early Renaissance," 104-5. Also see Chapter 1.2, 64-5.

³⁷⁴ Martines, *Lawyers and Statecraft in Renaissance Florence*, 316-30.

³⁷⁵ On the Duke's territorial expansion to Tuscany, Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, 119-25.

neighbours since the 1380s.³⁷⁶ Among them, Siena's hostility towards Florence was the harshest, and tension rose after 1388 because of the territorial dispute over Montepulciano.

Although Siena's lordship over Montepulciano was concluded in 1260,³⁷⁷ its rule was seriously challenged after the 1380s, when Florence's political and military influence over Tuscany significantly increased. For the Florentine government, Montepulciano was a means of manipulating the Siennese government in accord with its own political ambitions and foreign policy. For instance, when Florence wanted to gain Siena's support to defend Tuscany from the Visconti troops in c.1387,³⁷⁸ the Florentine government formally recognised the Siennese territorial dominion over Montepulciano and backed a pact between the Siennese and the Poliziani, signed on 29 October 1387.³⁷⁹ As events evolved into open war, Florence dispatched a troop to Montepulciano in 1388, claiming that it was a measure to maintain order in the town, and did not withdraw its men even though the Siennese government formally complained of this interference.³⁸⁰ The relationship between Siena and Florence worsened. In April 1389, when the Florentine mercenaries and their military captain John Hawkwood were called to Florence from Naples,³⁸¹ the Siennese government feared that the Florentine armies would attack its territories on the way, so it turned to Gian Galeazzo Visconti for military support. The Duke, most likely aware of the two states' territorial dispute, answered Siena's request by sending

³⁷⁶ According to Bayley, Florence's diplomatic relationship with other Tuscan city-states was gradually deteriorated since the 1350s. Charles C. Bayley, *War and Society in Renaissance Florence: the 'de Militia' of Leonardo Bruni* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961), 54. Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, 119-20; Bueno de Mesquita, *Giangaleazzo Visconti: Duke of Milan (1351-1402)*, 90-1.

³⁷⁷ See Chapter 2.1, 86.

³⁷⁸ Siena and Florence's dispute over the territory of Montepulciano, Chapter 2.1, 102-3. On public attitudes towards Florence's intervention in Siena's territories, Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, 121-44.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 121.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 134; Trease, *The condottieri: Soldiers of Fortune*, 132.

³⁸¹ On Hawkwood's role in the Florentine military campaign against Siena and Milan, Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200-1575*, 190-2; Trease, *The condottieri: Soldiers of Fortune*, 127-42. Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, 134; Bueno de Mesquita, *Giangaleazzo Visconti: Duke of Milan (1351-1402)*, 106; Trease, *The condottieri: Soldiers of Fortune*, 127-42; William Caferro, *John Hawkwood: an English Mercenary in Fourteenth-Century Italy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 284-8.

200 lances.³⁸² Later, on 22 September 1389, the Sienese government arranged a ten-year contract with the Duke, accepting Milanese overlordship.³⁸³ This treaty established Gian Galeazzo Visconti's control over the entire Sienese territories, including the commune of Montepulciano.

One month after the Siena-Milan contract, on 9 October 1389, Florence and Milan concluded a peace treaty in Pisa. This 1389 Pisa pact, however, merely stalled the confrontation between the two parties. Military campaigns continued on both sides. The Florentine government eventually created a league with Bologna, Pisa, Lucca and Perugia to curb Milan's alliance with Siena and their increasing military viability in Tuscany.³⁸⁴ Siena's refusal to support the Florentine league and its alliance with Milan was interpreted as a betrayal of Florence, which, according to Brucker, was the reason that Florence accepted Montepulciano's submission in April 1390 as an act of revenge in response to the Sienese government's contract with Milan.³⁸⁵ Florence's intervention in Montepulciano gave Gian Galeazzo Visconti an excuse to declare war on Florence and the Bologna league in May 1389.

From a diplomatic point of view, Florence's takeover of Montepulciano brought the state into twenty months of open war with Gian Galeazzo Visconti.³⁸⁶ Notwithstanding, the acquisition of Montepulciano to a certain degree also improved Florence's military effectiveness in the Valdichiana, which was most likely one of the reasons behind the *Dieci*'s direct involvement

³⁸² The Milanese troop was also assigned to Borgo San Sepolcro, a territory belonging to the Malatesta family. Bueno de Mesquita, *Giangaleazzo Visconti: Duke of Milan (1351-1402)*, 106.

³⁸³ After the Duke signed the contract detailing Siena's submission, he began paying for Siena's military expenses and defending Sienese territories. Lanza, *Firenze contro Milano: gli intellettuali fiorentini nelle guerre con i Visconti (1390-1444)*, 19-20; Bueno de Mesquita, *Giangaleazzo Visconti: Duke of Milan (1351-1402)*, 108-9.; William Caferro, *Mercenary Companies and the Decline of Siena* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 166-7.

³⁸⁴ Bueno de Mesquita, *Giangaleazzo Visconti: Duke of Milan (1351-1402)*, 110.

³⁸⁵ Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, 134-5.

³⁸⁶ The military competition between Florence and Milan from May 1389 to January 1390 was known as the first Visconti war. Bueno de Mesquita, *Giangaleazzo Visconti: Duke of Milan (1351-1402)*, 114-5. On the peace treaty between Florence and Milan in 1392, Ninci, *Le consulte e pratiche della Repubblica fiorentina (1404)*, 125-7; Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, 121-2, 128-31, 134-5; Bueno de Mesquita, *Giangaleazzo Visconti: Duke of Milan (1351-1402)*, 136; Trease, *The condottieri: Soldiers of Fortune*, 142.

in Montepulciano's submission deal. Stretching from the city of Arezzo in the north to Chiusi in the south, the Valdichiana was a natural border between the territories of Florence, Siena and Perugia (Figure 98).³⁸⁷ The geographical location of the town also lent Florence's ownership over Montepulciano great strategic value. Not far to the east of Montepulciano is the Ponte a Valiano (Figure 99), one of the major bridges linking the eastern and western banks of the Chiana River, giving Florence easy access to Cortona and the Umbrian city of Perugia.³⁸⁸ Financial benefit was likely another motive behind the wish to annexe Montepulciano. During the fourteenth century Montepulciano provided great financial support to the Nine regime in Siena. Documents indicate that in 1353 the Nine levied a forced loan (*preste*) of 6,000 florins on the Montepulciano commune and its inhabitants;³⁸⁹ then in July 1384, when the Siena government incurred a financial deficit due to wars, another 700 florins loan was imposed on the Montepulciano commune, which was the same amount as that levied on Cortona.³⁹⁰ Montepulciano similarly contributed to Florence's treasury, which was heavily depleted by war expenditure. According to the 1390 submission treaty between Montepulciano and Florence, the Montepulciano commune was obliged to purchase 800 *staia* of salt at a fixed rate of 3 lire (about 60 *soldi*) per *staio* from the Florentine commune,³⁹¹ which brought a very moderate

³⁸⁷ On Perugia's *contado* in the plain around the Valdichiana, Sarah Rubin Blanshei, "Perugia, 1260-1340: Conflict and Change in a Medieval Italian Urban Society," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 66, no. 2 (1976): 14.

³⁸⁸ On the strategic importance of the Ponte a Valiano, Carlo Starnazzi, *Leonardo Cartografo* (Firenze: Istituto Geografico Militare 1948), 130, n. 116; Guidoni and Marino, *Territorio e città della Valdichiana*, LIV.

³⁸⁹ According to Bowsky, the forced loan, i.e. *preste* or *prestanze*, was imposed when the Sienese government faced severe financial crisis, which is different from the direct taxes and the indirect *gabelles*. William M. Bowsky, *The Finance of the Commune of Siena, 1287-1355* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), 166-7.

³⁹⁰ Bayley, *War and Society in Renaissance Florence: the 'de Militia' of Leonardo Bruni* 39.

³⁹¹ The treaty also requested the Montepulciano commune to purchase salt only from Florence but no other provider. Violation will be punished by a penalty of 1,000 *lire*. 'Rubric 13. Che il detto C. [commune di Montepulciano] debba ogni anno comprare dal C. di Firenze 800 stadia di sale, al peso firentino di libre 72 per staio, e al prezzo di 3 lire; ricevendolo nel castello di Montavarchi. (...) Che se gli abbisogansse più sale, lo compri solo dal C. di Firenze, a pena di lira 1,000.' Guasti, *I capitoli del comune di Firenze. Inventario e regesto*, vol. 1, 117, 7 May 1390. The salt *gabelle* levied on Montepulciano was 60 *soldi* per *staio*, an average rate in the Florentine dominion during the 1380s. On the analysis of fluctuation of salt *gabelle* from fourteenth to early fifteenth century, Charles M. De la Roncière, "Indirect Taxes or "Gabelles" at Florence in the Fourteenth Century: The Evolution of Tariffs and Problems of Collection," in *Florentine Studies: Politics and Society in Renaissance Florence*, ed. Nicolai Rubinstein (London: Faber, 1968), 158-61; Molho, *Florentine Public Finances in the*

amount of 2,400 lire (about 2,400 florins) to Florentine revenues. However, this source of income can hardly have covered the Florentine expenses, since the annual expenditure on fortifications alone was about 93,300 *lire* (about 93,300 florins) during the fourteenth century.³⁹² The requirement to purchase salt from the dominant city may thus have been a symbolic policy rather than a means of raising income. The benefit of acquiring Montepulciano was probably related to food supply. After the early fourteenth century, the swampy and marshy condition of plains around the Chiana River had largely been improved, and the fertile alluvial soils began to support agricultural development in the Valdichiana.³⁹³ As the second largest commune,³⁹⁴ Montepulciano's agricultural products such as grains and foddors from the region would have been a great source for the city of Florence.

While Florence's *contadini* continued to decrease from about 200,000 in the 1330s to 123,796 in 1428, the inhabitants of Montepulciano may have provided Florence with a new source of armed forces.³⁹⁵ For instance, a 1366 military contract between seven major Italian states survives, in which Montepulciano is recorded as having contributed a troop of fifteen horses and fifteen infantrymen to the league.³⁹⁶ Although thirty soldiers was not a huge contribution, the unit Montepulciano provided was still larger than the ten horses and ten infantrymen that Cortona, the largest commune in the Valdichiana, had provided. Considering the small

Early Renaissance, 1400-1433, 47-51.

³⁹² De la Roncière, "Indirect Taxes or "Gabelles" at Florence in the Fourteenth Century: The Evolution of Tariffs and Problems of Collection," 142-3.

³⁹³ The reclamation of the river and the solution to the flooding problem had to wait until the seventeenth century, during Ferdinando I de' Medici's regime. Blanshei, "Perugia, 1260-1340: Conflict and Change in a Medieval Italian Urban Society," 15. Fabio Bargagli-Petrucci, *Montepulciano, Chiusi e la Val di Chiana senese* (Bergamo: Istituto italiano d'arti grafiche, 1907), 33-5.

<https://brunelleschi.imss.fi.it/itinerari/luogo/BonificheValdichiana.html>; Lamberini, *Il Sanmarino. Giovan Battista Belluzzi, architetto militare e trattatista del Cinquecento*, 73, n. 108.

³⁹⁴ According to the 1438 demographical statistics, Cortona was the largest urban centre in the Valdichiana, with a population of 22,097. Montepulciano made the second largest with 10,197 inhabitants. Emanuele Repetti, "Arezzo," in *Dizionario geografico fisico storico della Toscana* (Firenze: 1839), 120-1. Early fourteenth-century demographic number, Goldthwaite, *The Economy of Renaissance Florence*, 517-21.

³⁹⁵ Molho, *Florentine Public Finances in the Early Renaissance, 1400-1433*, 25-6.

³⁹⁶ Caferro, *Mercenary Companies and the Decline of Siena*, 105-6.

population of the Montepulciano commune, this number can be understood as an expression of political affiliation and loyalty towards its dominant city.

Taking into account that from 1388 to 1390 Florence's military campaigns against Siena and Milan had yielded poor results, Florence's territorial control of Montepulciano provided one triumphal outcome of Florence's military operation against the Ghibelline Sienese government and its alliance with Milan. Given its strategic, military, and financial value, the submission of Montepulciano seems not only to have boosted Florence's expansionist confidence, but it also helped to boost Florence's military vitality during the period of rapid territorial expansion noted by Machiavelli. Given the intense political wrestling behind Florence's successful takeover of Montepulciano, it is probably not by chance that in 1440 Florence was actively involved in Montepulciano's new façade project from the beginning. For the Florentines, Montepulciano's communal palace might have served as a means of expressing their triumph over their political rivals, just as Florence's Palazzo dei Priori symbolised the commune's victory over the Ghibelline magnates.³⁹⁷

3.2 The Càssero of Montepulciano in the Crisis of the Visconti Wars, 1392 – 1397

Expressing its objection to the Florence-Montepulciano alliance, in December 1390, the Sienese government sent troops to retaliate against Florence. The Sienese succeeded in entering the city walls, destroying a fortification (*bastia*) controlled by the Florentines and driving off the Florentine garrisons stationed in Montepulciano.³⁹⁸ Although the Florentines ultimately regained control of the town, this episode revealed the vulnerability of Florentine authority in Montepulciano at the beginning of the 1390s. This section focuses on one of Florence's major

³⁹⁷ Chapter 1.1, 39-41.

³⁹⁸ 'A dì XII di dicembre ci ebbe novelle chome la gente de l'arme de' senesi aveva forza tolta la bastia del Comune di Firenze che era a Monte Pulciano. (...) A dì XXII di dicembre la gente del Comune di Siena chavalchè a Monte Pulciano credendovi entrare dentro.' Anthony Molho and Franek Sznura, eds., *Alle bocche della piazza: diario di anonimo fiorentino (1382-1401)* (Firenze: Olschki, 1986), rub. 40, 99-100.

public construction projects in the first decade of its dominance in Montepulciano, that of the *càssero*, built from 1392 to 1397. The aim is to explore the extent to which Florence's control over Montepulciano was consolidated through military architecture.

A sketch found on the fly leaf of a manuscript of *Gabelle* in Montepulciano's archive (Figure 100) may refer to the fortress in the town. The grid of lines covering the main building imitates the fine masonry that accentuates the strong appearance of the building. The draughtsperson carefully depicted the lock on the portal, implying that the fortress was well-guarded. The swallow-tailed merlons surmounting the main block and three towers likewise evoke its defensive strength, as well as giving a clue to Montepulciano's Ghibelline allegiance under Sienese rule.³⁹⁹ Although the precise identity of the building is still open to debate, it vividly demonstrates the key role castellation played in relation to the security of a settlement.

Since the fortress of Montepulciano has been dismantled and reconstructed many times during various wars, the following section adopts the Florentine term *càssero* to refer to a keep in Montepulciano erected by the Florentine government between 1392 and 1397, to distinguish it from the fortress belonging to Sienese rule. This is partly because the term *càssero* was frequently used in Florentine provisions regarding its construction; and its etymology is rooted in the Latin *castrum*, which is also the origin of the word *castellano* – the official appointed by the Florentine government to guard the fortress after its completion.⁴⁰⁰

The territorial dispute over Montepulciano continued to be a key diplomatic issue between Florence, Milan and Siena after 1390. In an anonymous Florentine merchant's diary, the author recorded that in 1392 Siena and Florence negotiated over the ownership of Montepulciano, and

³⁹⁹ My gratitude to the archivist Antonio Sigillo for showing me this sketch.

⁴⁰⁰ Salvatore Battaglia, ed. *Grande dizionario della lingua Italiana* (Turino: Unione tipografico-editrice torinese, 1961), vol. 2, castellano 2.2, 855. 'Governatore militare di un castello, di una fortezza.' The appointment of a *castellano* after 1397 will be discussed later, Chapter 3.2, 146.

one clause of the Peace of Genova stated that ‘any [inhabitants of] territories subject to the Count of Virtue [Gian Galeazzo Visconti] have the right to enter the city of Florence’ (*di ciaschuna terra sottoposta a messer lo conte sopradetto sia lecito potere venire nella città di Forenze*).⁴⁰¹ The text suggests that jurisdiction over Montepulciano was still an unfinished business between Milan, Siena and Florence. The 1392 Genova treaty did not settle the issue of Montepulciano’s ownership, nor did it resolve the conflict between Florence and the Siena-Milan league. According to Bueno de Mesquita, the 1392 Genova pact was ‘not a peace, but a truce of exhaustion’ of both Florence and Gian Galeazzo Visconti, since neither Florence nor Milan could claim victory in their military campaigns.

It was probably as a precaution against retaliation by Siena and Milan that, in November 1392 Florence’s Council of the Capitano del Popolo passed an act authorising a *rocca, fortilitia et casserum* to be erected in Montepulciano, ‘to guard [the town] for the Florentine commune, built in its honour and as a reflection of its standing.’⁴⁰² In his 1866 translation of this act, Guasti adopted *rocca, fortezza*, and *càssero* as Italian equivalents.⁴⁰³ These three terms are all related to the Latin word *arx*,⁴⁰⁴ bearing strong military overtones. *Rocca* was a fortress constructed in an elevated place or indicating the most protected or highest point in the

⁴⁰¹ Gian Galeazzo Visconti was also known as ‘the Count of Virtue’ by his contemporaries. In January 1392, the first Visconti war was concluded by the peace treaty signed in Genoa between Florence, Milan, Perugia, and Siena. A diary entry of 17 February 1391 written by an anonymous Florentine merchant mentions that a pact was made in Genoa between the communes of Florence, Milan, Perugia, and Siena: ‘Sabato a di XVII di febraio innazi terza si bandì per la città di Firenze con molte trombe ed altri stomenti lagnerà le pace fatta fra ’l Chomune di Firenze e messer lo conte di Virtù, signore di Milano, e ’l Comune di Siena e ’l Comune di Perugia, e che a ciascheduno de’ detti Comuni e di ciaschuna terra sottoposta a messer lo conte sopradetto sia lecito potere venire nella città di Forenze cho mercatantia e senza, e mercatare e non mercatare, e per qualunque modo a ciascheduno sia di suo piacere senza nesuno impedimento, nella città, contado, distretto di Firenze.’ Molho and Sznura, *Alle bocche della piazza: diario di anonimo fiorentino (1382-1401)*, rub. 62, 131-2. Also see Bueno de Mesquita, *Giangaleazzo Visconti: Duke of Milan (1351-1402)*, 121-36; Trease, *The condottieri: Soldiers of Fortune*, 142; Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, 121-2, 128-31, 134-5; Ninci, *Le consulte e pratiche della Repubblica fiorentina (1404)*, 125-7.

⁴⁰² ‘Fiat quanto citius poterit, pro comuni florent., una rocca, fortilitia et casserum, cum edifitiis et fortilitiis opportunis, in terra montis politiani; quae avix custodiri debeat pro comuni florent., ad ipsius honorem et statum.’ Italian summary of this provision, Guasti, *I capitoli del comune di Firenze. Inventario e regesto*, vol. 1, 120, act 6-7, 23 November 1392. Ferrara and Quinterio, *Michelozzo di Bartolomeo*, 112.

⁴⁰³ Guasti, *I capitoli del comune di Firenze. Inventario e regesto*, vol. 1, 120, act 6-7, 23 November 1392.

⁴⁰⁴ On the entry of *castello*: *Vocabolario degli accademici della Crusca*, vol. 1, 416.

defensive system in castles or medieval towns.⁴⁰⁵ *Fortezza* indicates structures intended for defence and shelter, or a fortified location, consisting of a continuous circuit of walls.⁴⁰⁶ As to the word *càssero*, it was mainly used to refer to ‘the most elevated and fortified part of castles, keeps and towers.’⁴⁰⁷ Employing these three terms, *rocca*, *fortezza*, and *càssero*, at the same time underscores Florence’s determination to build an inviolable stronghold to protect this newly-acquired territory.⁴⁰⁸

One clue to the military value of the *càssero* was the selection of its site, which should be ‘in the place deemed to be the safest in the territory’ (*in quel luogo della terra che parrà loro più sicuro*).⁴⁰⁹ Although the entire fortified system of Montepulciano was destroyed, rebuilt and reinforced many times after the sixteenth century, and the Florentine *càssero* built in the 1390s did not survive, visual sources suggest it was probably situated on the southern border of the *Sasso* area, the highest point in Montepulciano’s urban centre. Taddeo di Bartolo’s c.1401 altarpiece does not provide clear representation of the building on this site. However, the seventeenth-century panoramic view of Montepulciano includes a fortified complex on the southern side of the *Sasso* (Figure 101), enclosed by a circuit of crenelated walls with three bastions at the corners.⁴¹⁰ A 1749 map shows a walled structure stretching out towards the south-eastern corner of the town’s city walls (Figure 102). Within the structure, one building is marked as *La Rocca*, while a defensive building with a rectangular floor plan is situated on

⁴⁰⁵ ‘Fortezza costruita in luogo elevato. La fortificazione più protetta o più elevata del sistema difensivo di un castello o di una città medievale.’ Battaglia, *Grande dizionario della lingua Italiana*, vol. 17, 9.

⁴⁰⁶ ‘Opera di fortificazione costituita essenzialmente da una cinta di mura continue, rinforzate da ripari, costruzioni di case matte o altri elementi atti alla difesa; piazzaforte. (...) in senso generico: opera di difesa, riparo, luogo fortificato.’ *ibid.*, vol. 6, 221.

⁴⁰⁷ ‘La parte più elevata e munita del castello, mastio, torrione.’ *ibid.*, vol. 2, 847.

⁴⁰⁸ On the etymology of *rocca*, *fortezza*, and *càssero* in Italian, Chapter 1.2, 59.

⁴⁰⁹ Guasti, *I capitoli del comune di Firenze. Inventario e regesto*, vol. 1, 120, act 6, 23 November 1392.

⁴¹⁰ The painting was dedicated to Cristina di Lorena, wife of the Grand Duke of Tuscany Ferdinando I de’ Medici. Daniela Galoppi and Riccardo Pizzinelli, *Panorama di Montepulciano: restauro di tre dipinti in Palazzo Cervini* (Montepulciano: Editori del Grifo, 1995). The credibility of the view of Montepulciano was questioned since many buildings were not actually carried out. For instance, the façade and the cupola of the Duomo and the twin towers of the temple of San Biagio were proposed yet have never been completed. The painter might have not executed this work on site.

the southern corner of the walls. A bridge supported by three massive arched piers was the only entrance to the *càssero*, which survived until the nineteenth century (renovated in 1885), and is visible in Piero della Valle's painting from that period (Figure 103). In c.1885, however, this site was reconstructed by the Sienese architect Augusto Corbi (Figure 104) and the building was repurposed for modern manufacturing.⁴¹¹ The castellated form that Corbi designed, and the building's name *La Fortezza*, still point to the defensive importance of the site and the fortification that once stood there. Surviving remnants of masonry do not seem to belong to the nineteenth-century construction phase (Figure 105) given their irregularity and weathering, and may be part of the *càssero* built in the 1390s. The construction of this *càssero* may also suggest another renovation phase of Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale in the 1390s. Since the *càssero* was rebuilt by Florentine authorities, it is likely that Florentine craftsmen were consulted and employed in Montepulciano during the 1390s. This may provide a clue to the *foglie d'acqua* capital and octagonal piers used for the ground-floor north loggia in the Palazzo Comunale, both typical features of Florentine architecture in the period between the 1390s and the 1440s.⁴¹²

The distribution of the *càssero*'s interior space further testifies to its military purpose. The 1392 provision stated that an armoury (*cameram et locum armorum*) and other dedicated rooms to store and maintain military equipment must be included in the *càssero*'s design.⁴¹³ The request for an armoury was commonplace for fortified buildings. The Palazzo dei Priori in Florence also had a weapon chamber on the ground floor where the commune's military officials and

⁴¹¹ On the building history of the neo-gothic *Fortezza*, Mauro Cozzi, *Antonio da Sangallo il Vecchio e l'architettura del Cinquecento in Valdichiana* (Genova: Sagep editrice, 1991), 60-1; Grifo, *Fortezza e Liceo Classico a Montepulciano: storia di un complesso architettonico e di una istituzione scolastica*, 25-48.

⁴¹² The same theme was popular in Florence, Chapter 2.2, 118-9.

⁴¹³ '6. Che debbano nel detto *càssero* e rocca fare costruire un luogo per le armi e per le altre munizioni, e quello approvvigionare di armi, vettovaglie, ferramenti ec.; e provvedere a quanto è necessario per il loro mantenimento, non che a quello dei tetti e degli altri edifizii.' Guasti, *I capitoli del comune di Firenze. Inventario e regesto*, vol. 1, 120, act 6, 23 November 1392.

officers, such as war captains, castellans and the personal servants of the *Signoria* (*famigli della Signoria*) were often stationed.⁴¹⁴ The mention of the armoury and other facilities for military equipment in the 1392 provisions strongly suggests that the *càssero* became one of Florence's permanent garrisons in its subject territories in the 1390s.

The *càssero* project was most certainly begun in May 1393 since a verse stated:⁴¹⁵

On the 25th of May 1393, with mirth, joy and great devotion, we laid with great faith the first stone of our *càssero*, which stands up here. It is called *grifalco* because it is so well placed and wise. It can be seen from any journey route dominating (*signoreggiando*) the Valdichiana.

The word *signoreggiare* indicates ruling, governing and commanding as a Lord. It also refers to a dominant building situated in an elevated place.⁴¹⁶ This text perhaps emphasises Montepulciano's dominance over the Chiana valley. As the highest settlement along the Valdichiana, the Poliziani enjoyed wide and expansive views of the Val d'Orcia to the west (Figure 106), as well as to the Lago di Trasimeno to the east.⁴¹⁷ The site of the *càssero* would have enabled the town and Florence to monitor the Duke of Milan's, as well as the Siense

⁴¹⁴ It was also used for the assembly of the general council of 300. Lensi, *Palazzo Vecchio*, 16.

⁴¹⁵ 'Mille trecento con novanta tre, Con festa e allegrezza, e grand'omaggio, a vinticinque del mese di Maggio, la pietra prima si pose, e con gran fê del *Càssero* nostro che quassù sta in pié. Grifalco ha nome tant'è ben posto, e saggio. Che ben si vede per ogni viaggio, signoreggiando Val di Chiana, e qui era Podestà il nobile Cavaliere Ms Baldo della Tosa da Fiorenza, e di Montepulcian Gonfaloniere Michel di Figo popular valente. E su compagno Nino d'Agnolo Priore. E furon tutti à por la pietra detta ciascun portando di rose ghirlandetta. Loda e ringrazia Dio pur meritatamente. E co compagni buoni sei d'un volere, e del scoprire ti guarda fortemente e si temperato nel mangiare, e sul bere e quando se proposto quel da me due fa tuo dicatore né amistà ti manca né timore che tu revolli altrui quelch'è credentia. atende al ben comune primieramente e serve a chi domanda giustamente se imprometti vogliolo atenero, di rado parla, e sempre honestamente non mettere cosa inlecita a partito e di quel del comune non fare convito.' Calabresi, "Montepulciano e il suo territorio nel medio evo," 284. Calabresi suggested that the 1392 *càssero* was the new palace (*novum palatium*), i.e. the rear block of the present Palazzo Comunale building complex. However, Calabresi's hypothesis is unconvincing since there was already records of the new palace in 1365.

⁴¹⁶ *Vocabolario degli accademici della Crusca*, vol. 4, 358.

⁴¹⁷ Although most of the settlements along the Valdichiana were situated on hilltops, none of them exceeds the height of Montepulciano. The altitude of major communities north to Montepulciano are shown as followed: Lucignano c.373 metres, Fojano c.318 metres, Sinalunga c.365 metres, and Torrita c.325 metres above sea level. Also see Crociani-Windland, *Festivals, Affect and Identity: A Deleuzian Apprenticeship in Central Italian Communities*, 36.

government's military undertakings in its neighbouring region. Also, the Umbrian commune Perugia was originally loyal to Florence, yet the connection was undermined by the Duke's supporters. This characteristic is most likely the origin of the neologism 'grifalco', symbolically comparing the town's fine views to those seen by the eyes of a griffin (*grifo*) and a falcon (*falco*).⁴¹⁸

From 1392 to 1395, at least 1,500 florins were invested in the *càssero* project.⁴¹⁹ The amount may at first seem moderate compared with other public palace projects; for instance the renovation project of the Palazzo Vecchio which in c.1469 cost about 2,300 florins.⁴²⁰ However, considering Florence suffered a great financial deficit in the 1390s,⁴²¹ allocating some of the state's budget to build a *càssero* in a peripheral *terra* showed its strategic importance.

While constructing a Florentine military base within the Montepulciano territory revealed the central government's authoritarian policy over a subject *terra*, how to include this fortification in the pre-existing Florentine bureaucratic system was problematic in the late fourteenth century. At first the Florentine government appointed four officers (*ufficiali del càssero*) to supervise the *càssero*'s progress over a year. The first four officers,⁴²² Buoninsegna Filippo de'

⁴¹⁸ Montepulciano's current coat of arm of the griffon is decided in the nineteenth century. Calabresi, "Montepulciano e il suo territorio nel medio evo," 284.

⁴¹⁹ On 23 March 1395, one payment of 1,500 florins was allocated to the *càssero* in an attempt to reinforce it or to finish the project: 'affinchè il *càssero* cominciato nella terra di Montepulciano possa essere condotto a termine, o meglio fortifiato, sotto di 23 marzo, deliberano. Che sulla cassa della Condotta degli stipendiati si assegnino 1500 fiorini d'oro, senza veruna ritenzione, e si paghino al camerlengo degli ufficiali di Montepulciano.' Guasti, *I capitoli del comune di Firenze. Inventario e regesto*, vol. 1, 122, 23 March 1395.

⁴²⁰ Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 31.

⁴²¹ For instance, between 1390 and 1392 Florence spent more than 2,158,000 florins on mercenaries, civic armies, armour and heavy taxes due to the wars with Milan. On Florence's expenses for military operations in the 1390s, Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, 143. It is worth noting that from 1363 to 1371 Florentine authorities enhanced fortifications in more than forty towns and villages in the *contado*. De la Roncière, "Indirect Taxes or "Gabelles" at Florence in the Fourteenth Century: The Evolution of Tariffs and Problems of Collection," n. 1, 142.

⁴²² The Latin names as documented: Boninsegna Filippi de Machiavellis, Filippus Tommasi de Peruzis, Laurentius Matteij Perini *beccarius*, Matheus Iacobi Arrigi. Guasti, *I capitoli del comune di Firenze. Inventario e regesto*, vol. 1, act 22-23, 6, 7, 23 November 1392, 120.

Machiavelli,⁴²³ Filippo Tommaso de' Peruzzi, Lorenzo Matteo Perini, and Matteo Iacobo Arrigi and were reappointed in the following four years. The establishment of the post of officers of the *càssero* is surprising because at the time the *podestà* of Montepulciano was also appointed by Florence. The creation of a new central office to oversee the project on the one hand shows the central government's great concern for the project. On the other hand, this might be related to the different prerogative between extrinsic officials (*uffici estrinseci*), such as the *podestà*, captains, and vicars, and officials directly affiliated with the Florentine central government.⁴²⁴ While it was commonplace for major city-states to send extrinsic officials to govern their subject communes, these officials were obliged to conform to local conventions and communal government,⁴²⁵ as was the case in Montepulciano, where vows and provisions required the Florentine *podestà* to follow local statutes.⁴²⁶

The role played by the four Florentine officials of the *càssero* in Montepulciano was most probably similar to the Florentine commissioners (*commissari*), who enjoyed higher authority over local communal jurisdiction.⁴²⁷ In his study of late fifteenth-century Florentine commissioners, Connell notices that the appointment of commissioners can be understood as an indicator of crisis, as their responsibilities included reconciling internal conflicts between local and central government, as well as acting as mediators between the Florentine government and its war captains (*condottieri*) in war time.⁴²⁸ Florence's creation of a central

⁴²³ Buoninsegna Filippo de' Machiavelli sit in the Florentine *signoria* twice in 1383 and 1396. He was the Florentine commissioner to Montepulciano in 1391. See Shamà's online dataset of the Italian noble family genealogy, Davide Shamà, "Genealogie delle famiglie nobili italiane," (2003). <http://www.sardimpex.com/M/Machiavelli.asp>.

⁴²⁴ According to Zorzi, vicars, captains and *podestà* were obliged to carry out administrative and juridical duties in accordance with local statutes. But vicars and captains mainly served in peripheral areas, whereas *podestàs* were assigned to govern minor urban centres, Andrea Zorzi, *L'amministrazione della giustizia penale nella repubblica Fiorentina: aspetti e problemi* (Firenze: Olschki, 1988), 24-7.

⁴²⁵ Skinner, *Visions of Politics: Renaissance Virtues*, 19-21, 40-5, 60.

⁴²⁶ 'Procedendo per altro e sentenziando secondo lo Statuto di quella terra [Montepulciano].' Guasti, *I capitoli del comune di Firenze. Inventario e regesto*, vol. 1, 15 April 1390, 115.

⁴²⁷ The Florentine government began adopting the term '*commissari*' from the 1360s, William J. Connell, "Il commissario e lo stato territoriale," *Ricerche storiche* 18, no. 3 (September - December, 1988): 596-7.

⁴²⁸ *Ibid.*, 592-3.

administration in charge of the *càssero* project reveals one way in which the dominant city exerted its superiority over the local commune, shedding light on the meticulous surveillance and militaristic policy Florence imposed on Montepulciano during the 1390s.

It is worth noting that the duties of the four Florentine commissioners covered not only the construction of the *càssero*, but also responsibility for inspecting the entire Montepulciano territory. Apart from setting up the budget for the *càssero*, consulting craftsmen for its construction, and ordering materials,⁴²⁹ they were also obliged to scrutinise and maintain all defensive structures in Montepulciano, including the city walls, towers, bridges and other buildings. Besides, one clause in the provision of 7 November 1392 stated that the four officials should put the territory of Montepulciano under close custody to protect the city from harm,⁴³⁰ most likely a reference to possible Sienese retaliation.

Records relating to the four commissioners assigned to the *càssero* project disappear after November 1396. Instead, the construction and management of the fortification was allocated a two-tier administration: the castellan and the *Sei di Arezzo*.⁴³¹ A Florentine provision of 27 January 1397 designated the creation of a new magistrate – the castellan (*castellano, officiales castrorum*) to oversee the Montepulciano *càssero*. According to Becker, castellans were officials stationed in castles and fortified settlements in the Florentine dominion, and their proliferation was a sign of the state's territorial expansion in the second half of the fourteenth century.⁴³² Statistics show that in 1415 there were about 130 castellans in the Florentine dominion, the most numerous of Florence's chief extrinsic officials (vicars, captains, *podestà*

⁴²⁹ Guasti, *I capitoli del comune di Firenze. Inventario e regesto*, vol. 1, act 6-7, 23 November 1392, 120-1.

⁴³⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴³¹ The history and importance of the *Sei di Arezzo* will be discussed in the following paragraph.

⁴³² Becker, *Florence in Transition: Studies in the Rise of the Territorial State*, 2, 215.

and castellans), suggesting that the installation of armed castellans was becoming commonplace in the Florentine dominion.⁴³³

In addition, Florence requested the *Sei di Arezzo* (Six of Arezzo) to oversee the expenditure of the *càssero*. The creation of the *Sei di Arezzo* dates from 1386, two years after Florence acquired the commune of Arezzo.⁴³⁴ Originally it was a new office created by the Florentine government to manage Arezzo's treasury and fortifications. But later on, the *Sei di Arezzo* were authorized to inspect and oversee fortifications scattered all over Florence's newly acquired districts. Since Montepulciano was a new district in the Florentine dominion, the reallocation of the castellan's duties to the *Sei* can be read as an attempt to reduce bureaucracy or a reorganisation of the administrative system in the Florentine territorial state.

While it seems at first that the *càssero* of Montepulciano was supervised by a two-tier administration deployed by and directly affiliated with the central government, the administrative system Florence implemented to control the *càssero* revealed the central government's struggle to position the town within the established administrative structure. The appointment of a castellan in Montepulciano proved to be a controversial decision. On 12 February 1397, barely a month after the provision of the first castellan Casino Nicolai Casini, a further provision stated that Casino's duty overlapped with those of the *Sei di Arezzo*.⁴³⁵ The Florentine government was therefore forced to revoke the appointment of the castellan, terminating his service and transferring the administration of the *càssero* to the *Sei*.⁴³⁶ Yet, the Florentine government changed its mind again in the same year, and in May 1397 it reinstated

⁴³³ In 1415, the Florentine government appointed a total of about 256 extrinsic officials, including 11 vicars, 15 captains, about 100 podestà and approximately 130 castellans. Guidi, *Il governo della città-repubblica di Firenze del primo Quattrocento*, vol. 3, 165-6.

⁴³⁴ According to Guidi, its jurisdiction extended to Pisa in 1407, and to Pistoia, San Miniato and Volterra in 1415. However, provisions for Montepulciano's *càssero* indicate that in 1397 the authority of the *Sei di Arezzo* already extended beyond Arezzo. Ibid., vol. 3, 244-5. Zorzi, "Giusdicenti e operatori di giustizia nello stato territoriale fiorentino del XV secolo," 524.

⁴³⁵ Zorzi, "Giusdicenti e operatori di giustizia nello stato territoriale fiorentino del XV secolo," 524.

⁴³⁶ Guasti, *I capitoli del comune di Firenze. Inventario e regesto*, vol. 1, 124, 12 February 1397.

Casino Nicolai Casini as the castellan in Montepulciano, claiming it a necessary security measure, and adding eleven crossbowmen (*balistariis*) and eleven infantrymen (*peditibus armigeris*) to his unit.⁴³⁷ The size of the Montepulciano castellan's armed retinue underscored the military nature of his role, as well as the vulnerability of Montepulciano. The position of castellan in the Montepulciano *càssero* was officially approved by the Florentine priors and the Twelve. It is also worth noting that, according to the 1415 Statutes of Florence, the castellan in Montepulciano was listed in the same *borsa* as were those in major towns such as Arezzo, San Miniato, Pisa, Pistoia, and Volterra, belonging to the highest grade in the administrative structure.⁴³⁸ In his diary, a Florentine aristocrat Luca di Maso degli Albizzi recorded that in 1432 Montepulciano was besieged by Siense troops and defended by Niccolò da Tolentino, Florence's war captain who was stationed in Arezzo at that time.⁴³⁹ Siena's attack in 1432 is further evidence of the tactical value of Montepulciano, which was still coveted by other city states.

To conclude, the construction of a defensive building in Montepulciano demonstrated the way in which the war waged by Florence directly affected the defensive infrastructure and urban fabric of Montepulciano. The building history of the *càssero* also points to Florence's authoritative control over a semi-independent *terra*'s defensive system, as the operation of the *càssero* in Montepulciano still lay beyond the local government's jurisdiction. This explains the fortress's position on the outskirts of the city centre, connected to the city walls and gates, so that the foreign authority could effectively defend the town on the one hand, and monitoring domestic order from a safe place on the other hand. As one of Florence's surveillance nuclei, the *càssero* in Montepulciano reveals the way in which the Florentine government controlled

⁴³⁷ On the duty and salary of castellans and the recruitment of their retinues, *ibid.*, vol. 1, 123-4, 2 February 1397.

⁴³⁸ The scrutiny for castellans were divided into four hierarchical groups: major, first, second and third grades. Guidi, *Il governo della città-repubblica di Firenze del primo Quattrocento*, vol. 3, 247-9.

⁴³⁹ Michael E. Mallett, *Mercenaries and their Masters: Warfare in Renaissance Italy* (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1974), 181-2.

its subject communes and managed its dominion by focussing on the physical occupation of fortifications situated at strategic points. The *càssero* thus tangibly proclaimed Florence's dominance over the town and the adjacent Valdichiana.

3.3 The Façade Act for Montepulciano's *Palazzo Comunale* and Florence's Military Preparation before the Battle of Anghiari, c. 1437 – 1440

The previous section analysed the construction of Montepulciano's 1392 *càssero* project in the light of Florence's national defence against the Sienese-Milanese alliance in the 1390s. In c.1440, the Valdichiana was again targeted by the Duke of Milan, now Filippo Maria Visconti. This section explores the extent to which the renovation project for Montepulciano's *Palazzo Comunale* in February 1440 was another defensive measure enacted by Florence.

Filippo Maria Visconti gained the title of the Duke of Milan in 1412.⁴⁴⁰ During his regime, Milan successfully retained the economic, political and military stability achieved in the late fourteenth century, which allowed Filippo Maria to devise an imperialistic plan aimed at expanding Milanese rule to the central Italy. These ambitions were perceived as tyrannical by the Florentine humanists, and the Duke of Milan was pronounced a despotic ruler, whose political ideology posed a serious threat to republican Florence. After 1434, hostility between the two states intensified after the Duke recruited Rinaldo degli Albizzi, an exiled Florentine aristocratic. The Albizzi were a noble Florentine family, who in 1433 succeeded in banishing their lifelong political opponent Cosimo de' Medici. Rinaldo's regime in Florence, however, was short-lived as in 1434 Cosimo de' Medici returned from exile. The restoration of the pro-

⁴⁴⁰ Milan had waged wars against the Republic of Venice in Lombardy and its ally Florence from the 1420s. The first war in Lombardy ended in 1428, but soon broke out again in 1430. On Florence's wars with Filippo Maria Visconti during the 1420s, Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, 446-51; Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200-1575*, 269-70; 288-90; Lanza, *Firenze contro Milano: gli intellettuali fiorentini nelle guerre con i Visconti (1390-1444)*, 97-118. From October 1436, Niccolò Piccinino and his troops, garrisoned in Tuscany in preparation for the invasion of Florentine territory. Benci, "Storia di Montepulciano," bk. 4, 74-5; Repetti, "Montepulciano," 476.

Medicean government resulted in Rinaldo's and his son Ormanno's exile.⁴⁴¹ But Rinaldo degli Albizzi did not abandon his political ambitions. During his exile Rinaldo joined Filippo Maria Visconti in the hope of organising a popular rebellion to overthrow the Florentine government that was under the Medici control.⁴⁴²

To prevent its opponents' potential plots, the Florentine government developed its network of secret agents across its dominion, including the town of Montepulciano. According to Machiavelli, a ciphered missive was intercepted in Montepulciano in 1440, which, if undiscovered by the Florentine government, could have severely undermined the defence of Florence.⁴⁴³ The letter was sent by Cardinal Giovanni Vitelleschi, the military captain of Pope Eugenius IV, to his counterpart in the army of the Duke of Milan, Niccolò Piccinino. Even though the content of this letter was not decoded, Vitelleschi's attempt to contact Niccolò Piccinino was suspicious in itself, since at that time pope Eugenius IV had established a strong collaboration and private friendship with Cosimo de' Medici, whom he supported against the Duke of Milan.⁴⁴⁴ Florence feared that Vitelleschi would push his troops from the south (from Rome) to cooperate with Piccinino's troops from the north, therefore surrounding the entire Florentine territory and the Papal states. Persuaded by the Florentine government, Eugenius IV suspended Vitelleschi's military role, and sent him to prison for treason. In April 1440

⁴⁴¹ Dale Kent, *The Rise of the Medici: Faction in Florence, 1426-1434* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 339-40.

⁴⁴² Rinaldo degli Albizzi was exiled on 2 October 1434. On the conflict between the Albizzi and Medici clans in 1433-4. Lanza, *Firenze contro Milano: gli intellettuali fiorentini nelle guerre con i Visconti (1390-1444)*, 112-6; Bayley, *War and Society in Renaissance Florence: the 'de Militia' of Leonardo Bruni* 119-21, 148-51. On the exile of Rinaldo degli Albizzi and his role in the anti-Medicean party, Kent, *The Rise of the Medici: Faction in Florence, 1426-1434*, 137-8, 187-8, 340; Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre*, 49.

⁴⁴³ 'Teneva quella Repubblica in tutti i luoghi diligenti esploratori di quelli che portavano lettere, per scoprire se alcuno contra lo stato loro alcuna cosa ordinasse. Occorse che a Montepulciano furono prese lettere, le quali il patriarca scriveva senza consenso del pontefice a Niccolò Piccinino; le quali subito il magistrato preposto alla guerra presentò al papa.' Machiavelli, *Le istorie Fiorentine*, 261. Bayley, *War and Society in Renaissance Florence: the 'de Militia' of Leonardo Bruni* 159-60.

⁴⁴⁴ Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre*, 166-7; Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200-1575*, 267.

Vitelleschi died in jail.⁴⁴⁵ Machiavelli's chronicle points to the critical role Montepulciano played in Florence's military strategy against the Milanese invasion, which has been overlooked in previous scholarship.

Unpublished archival documents further our understanding of Montepulciano's participation in Florence's military manoeuvres. Of many topics addressed in the town's letters sent to their envoys in Florence and to the Florentine *Signoria* from 1437 to 1440, Florence's distribution of Montepulciano's military unit was a recurring issue. Since 1437, the Florentine government had often dispatched the Montepulciano infantry unit (*fanti*) to defend Arezzo and the route along the Chiana.⁴⁴⁶ Posting Montepulciano's infantrymen to Arezzo, only about thirty kilometres south of Poppi, was most likely a tactical measure the Florentine government adopted to reinforce its southern border against Milanese forces. A letter of 30 March 1438 shows that the Montepulciano commune had sent an ambassador to request the *Dieci* to release Montepulciano's infantrymen who were sent to Arezzo and the tower of Chiane.⁴⁴⁷ The Poliziani's petition implies that the pressure of the war with Milan extended across the north-western Florentine dominion, spreading to the south-west border in Montepulciano.

In spring 1440, Niccolò Piccinino, by order of the Duke, led the Milanese troops heading south to merge with those of their ally in Tuscany, the Count of Poppi in the Casentino. The tensions

⁴⁴⁵ Luca Pitti was sent to protect the Castel Sant'Angelo in Rome as a favour for Eugenius IV. In return, Eugenius IV commanded the troops to work for the defence of Tuscany. Gino Capponi, *Storia della Repubblica di Firenze* (Firenze: G. Barbèra Editore, 1875), vol. 2, bk. 5, 18; Bayley, *War and Society in Renaissance Florence: the 'de Militia' of Leonardo Bruni* 158-61.

⁴⁴⁶ In a letter of 21 December 1437 to Francesco Ghezzo, the Poliziani's envoy in Florence, the Montepulciano commune mentioned that the tower of Chiana was guarded by three Cortonese and three Poliziano infantrymen: 'Per proprio fante ti significammo come i magnifici Signori *Dieci* aveano scatte al nostro podestà avere inteso che la torre di chiane era consueta guardarsi per tre fanti da cortona e tre di nostri.' ASM, "Copialettere," 27r, 21 December 1437.

⁴⁴⁷ 'che i nostri fanti erano in ciptadella d'arezo [sic: Arezzo] e qualli erano nella torre di chiane ritornassino. Onde a noi scrivere degnasti che di quelli della torre di chiane per noi alla presente sapesse patientia et che quelli di ciptadella ordinavate scambiare et prestamente gli rimanderesti. et a voce a noi il simile detto nostro oratore riferi dicendo che per tutto il presente mese i detti fanti qua ritornerebbero o prima.' *ibid.*, 33r, 30 March 1438. The cittadella di Arezzo is also known as the Fortezza di Arezzo, on its sixteenth-century renovation, Lamberini, *Il Sanmarino. Giovan Battista Belluzzi, architetto militare e trattatista del Cinquecento*, 180-1.

continued to increase in the Valdichiana. In his research on Italian and European warfare, Mallett points out that from the mid-fifteenth century onwards, many Italian states, including the papacy, Siena and Florence, carried out reinforcement or reconstruction works on their fortifications, mainly thickening the walls, in order to face the new technologies of the Renaissance battlefield, such as gun powder and artillery.⁴⁴⁸ It is probably because of the pressure of war the Montepulciano commune intended to reinforce their communal palace, whose façade was in disrepair, so as to protect their supreme magistrates from enemy attacks.⁴⁴⁹ The *Dieci* committee's engagement with Montepulciano's renovation project further testified to the defensive purpose when the project was initiated in February 1440.

On 17 June 1440, less than two weeks before the Battle of Anghiari, Montepulciano sent a missive to the *Dieci* committee:⁴⁵⁰

Magnificent fathers and most honoured Lords. We hope Your Magnificence is aware that Niccolò Piccinino or his brigades are on the battlefield in the territory of Cortona. With this letter, we beg Your Lordship to intervene quickly in Valiano. Its loss would bring great harm to Cortona, Castiglion [Fiorentino], Fojano, and it would cut off our access to the Fortezza of Valiano. We have sent some of our men there, as well as to the Torre di Chiana, having seen this evil. We hope the said Torre di Chiana will be saved, but we have grave doubts about Valiano because it has not been properly fortified, and for many other reasons and shortcomings that we do not mention out of respect. Furthermore, we have information from our source that, of the men stationed in Valiano to defend the fortress, around seventeen have fled. For God's sake, Magnificent Lords, quickly send mercenary infantrymen to defend the place, because

⁴⁴⁸ Mallett, *Mercenaries and their Masters: Warfare in Renaissance Italy*, 164-6.

⁴⁴⁹ ASM, "Copialettere," vol. 3, 68v. 29 February 1440. '*la facciate iuxta posse rivocare per levare in tutto ciascuno errore e inconveniente che occorrere potesse.*' For the discussion of this provision, Chapter 2.2 103-9.

⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, 80v, 17 June 1440. For the full transcription, see Vol. 2, Appendix 3, Document 2.

if you do not do that, it will be lost, bringing great harm to the land. Apparently Baldoccio is in Fighine, a fortified town belonging to Orvieto, 14 miles from us, and we are doubtful about him, although he cannot attack us except through Sienese territory. It is said that he [Baldoccio] is Niccolò Piccinino's infantry captain, but he says he is his own man and no other's. We hope Your Lordship knows the truth about this and we await your information. We are ever ready to serve Your Magnificence. Given in the territory of Montepulciano, on 17 June 1440, at 23 o'clock.

This letter strongly expressed Montepulciano's vulnerability, as well as its determination to defend itself. It also suggests that Florence had delegated the responsibility of guarding key strongholds and castles scattered to the west of Lago di Trasimeno, such as the tower of Valiano and that of the Chiana, to the Poliziani. Since Niccolò Piccinino's men may have headed south, crossing Arezzo and Castiglion Fiorentino and reaching Cortona (Figure 107), Montepulciano was obliged to report Niccolò Piccinino's military activity in the surrounding regions as Florence's military foothold in south-west border of Florentine territories. The Poliziani's request for foreign mercenaries clearly indicates that the local commune and Florence did not have enough manpower on their own to resist the Milanese operation.

Only twelve days after Montepulciano's 17 June letter requesting military supplies, armed conflict between the Florentine and the Milanese armies finally broke out on 29 June 1440. Niccolò Piccinino, with Rinaldo degli Albizzi's advice, organised a surprise attack on the Florentine troops encamped around the fortified town of Anghiari, calculating that without the leadership of Francesco Sforza, Florence's war captain (*condottiere*) who was in Lombardy to guard the Venetian territory, they could easily defeat the Florentine troops.⁴⁵¹ What was not

⁴⁵¹ The Veneto-Florentine alliance co-hired the condottiere Francesco Sforza to defend the Venetian border with Milan in Lombardy Kurt S. Gutkind, *Cosimo de' Medici, Pater Patriae, 1389-1464* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1938), 149-50. On Piccinino's attack to Anghiari: Bayley, *War and Society in Renaissance Florence: the 'de Militia' of Leonardo Bruni* 168-70; Niccolò Capponi, *La battaglia di Anghiari: il giorno che salvò il*

foreseen was that the Florentine troops, under the lead of war commissioners Neri di Gino Capponi and Bernardo d'Antonio de' Medici (known as Bernardetto),⁴⁵² and war captains Pier Giovanni Paolo Orsini and Baldaccio d'Anghiari, not only successfully defended the town, but also crushed Piccinino's force. Piccinino lost half his army and escaped the battlefield, retreating back to Lombardy so that the Duke's ambition to annex Florence was demolished.⁴⁵³

In addition to illustrating the military crisis on the Chiana Valley in 1440, this letter draws our attention to the town's attempt to seek for help from the *Dieci* committee, as well as from Cosimo de' Medici. The first section of this chapter discussed the supreme role of the *Dieci* in the Florentine government, in particular in relation to the state's military and diplomatic affairs.⁴⁵⁴ The following section explores the extent to which the Florentine government exerted its surveillance over the whole dominion through the elite circle who controlled the *Dieci* committee.

During 1440, the *Dieci* members were Neri di Gino Capponi, Lorenzo Ridolfi, Antonio Serristori, Leonardo Bruni, Lionardo Bartoli, Piero Beccanugi, Cosimo de' Medici, Alessandro degli Alessandri, Cambino Cambini, and Giuliano Comi.⁴⁵⁵ Of these, two had served

rinascimento (Milano: il Saggiatore, 2012), 154-68.

⁴⁵² Bernardetto de' Medici (1393-1465) did not belong to the same branch of Cosimo de' Medici. According to Spencer, Bernardo d'Antonio de' Medici appeared to be active in Florentine political circle. From 1436 to 1444, he was appointed many times as Florentine ambassador and commissioner by the *Signoria*, serving in Marches, Bologna, Venice, and Milan. Also, while the Peace Treaty of Lodi was concluded in 1454, he was one of the Florentine commissioner. John Spencer, *Andrea del Castagno and his Patrons* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 1991), 18-9; 23. On the contribution of Neri di Gino Capponi and Bernardetto de' Cosimo to the Battle of Anghiari, Petriboni, *Priorista (1407 - 1459): With Two Appendices (1282 - 1406)*, 297-8; Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre*, 49, 272.

⁴⁵³ It is estimated that more than 6,000 horses and 3,000 infantrymen were involved in the battle, the number of deaths reaches 60, injury of 400 and about 1,800 Milanese soldiers were captured. Spencer, *Andrea del Castagno and his Patrons*, 18; Bayley, *War and Society in Renaissance Florence: the 'de Militia' of Leonardo Bruni* 169-70. The defeat at the Battle of Anghiari was probably the reason forced the Duke to draw the peace treaty of Cavriana with Florence in 1441. On the aftermath of the Battle of Anghiari and the fall of Filippo Maria Visconti's military strength, see Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200-1575*, 286-9; Gutkind, *Cosimo de' Medici, Pater Patriae, 1389-1464*, 149-50; Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre*, 279-80.

⁴⁵⁴ Chapter 3.1, 132-3.

⁴⁵⁵ Scipione Ammirato, *Istorie Fiorentine* (Stamperia Nuova d'Amador Massi, 1641), vol. 3, bk. 21, 18. Members of the 1438 Deici were: ser Lorenzo di Antonio di Niccolò Ridolfi, Neri di Gino Capponi, Nero del Nero,

continuously from 1438 to 1440.⁴⁵⁶ One was Neri di Gino Capponi, an experienced Florentine statesman who had served as war commissioner of the Florentine army in the battlefield at Anghiari.⁴⁵⁷ Another was Cosimo de' Medici, who was not present at the battlefield yet still played a key role in Florence's military campaign. He was the relative of Bernardetto d'Antonio de' Medici, another Florentine war commissioner at the Battle of Anghiari, and most importantly, Cosimo was the *de facto* leader of the Florentine government, who had exerted his political influence and deployed the *Dieci* as an apparatus to consolidate his power in the state's foreign affairs after his return from exile in 1433.⁴⁵⁸

From 1434 onwards, most of the *Dieci* officials were either Medici partisans, or from families with close ties to the Medici in banking and political affairs. Cosimo's deep involvement in Florence's diplomatic and military operations meant that to the Medicean partisans the victory in Anghiari represented more than merely the state's victory over Milan, also marking the establishment of the Medicean authority in Florence.⁴⁵⁹ After the battle, Cosimo's major political opponent, the exiled Rinaldo degli Albizzi, lost the only military ally that would have enabled him to threaten Florence, and his anti-Medicean supporters had no chance of regaining power over the Medici.⁴⁶⁰ In addition, Cosimo's ability in matters of foreign affairs and warfare

Alamanno di Salviati, Bernardo Giugni, Giovanni Altoviti, Piero Beccanugi, Nerone Dietisalvi, Cosimo de' Medici, Puccio Pucci. Rubinstein, *The Government of Florence under the Medici (1434 to 1494)*, 294.

⁴⁵⁶ Rubinstein noted that after the initial six-month period in 1439, their service was extended twice, on 1 May 1440 and on 1 June 1441, and many members were reappointed several times. In April 1440 the Florentine government decided to keep the *Dieci* in service, appointing ten citizens to the committee with a new term starting on 1 June 1440. The chosen members were Neri di Gino Capponi, ser Lorenzo d'Antonio Ridolfi, ser Leonardo di Francesco Bruni (Florence's chancellor born in Arezzo), Antonio di Silvestro Serristori, Angelo di Jacopo Acciaiuoli, Filippo di Giovanni Carducci, Cosimo de' Medici, Alessandro degli Alessandri, Niccolo di Zanobi Borromei, and Giovanni di Piero (the *scodellarius*, locksmith). Rubinstein, *The Government of Florence under the Medici (1434 to 1494)*, 77. Spencer, *Andrea del Castagno and his Patrons*, 18. On Leonardo Bruni's role in the *Dieci di Balìa*, Lauro Martines, *The Social World of the Florentine Humanists, 1390-1460* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), 171-2.

⁴⁵⁷ On Neri di Gino Capponi's military role in Florence, Bayley, *War and Society in Renaissance Florence: the 'de Militia' of Leonardo Bruni* 14.

⁴⁵⁸ Rubinstein, *The Government of Florence under the Medici (1434 to 1494)*, 77-98.

⁴⁵⁹ Bayley, *War and Society in Renaissance Florence: the 'de Militia' of Leonardo Bruni* 172; Trease, *The condottieri: Soldiers of Fortune*, 271; Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre*, 279; Spencer, *Andrea del Castagno and his Patrons*, 18.

⁴⁶⁰ On the fall of Albizzi faction after the battle, see Bayley, *War and Society in Renaissance Florence: the 'de*

was widely recognised, and his decisions in foreign policy and diplomatic strategy were seldom challenged by his contemporaries.⁴⁶¹

It was under Cosimo's term of office in the *Dieci* that Totto de' Machiavelli was sent to Montepulciano. This appointment demonstrates the importance of interpersonal networks in facilitating communication between central and local government. Totto di Buoninsegna de' Machiavelli came from an old oligarchical family in Florence. Between 1390 and 1409, the Machiavelli family members were elected six times to the *Tre Maggiori*, the Florentine Republic's highest executive offices, and twice to the supreme magistrate – the standard-bearer of justice.⁴⁶² Totto's father, Buoninsegna Filippo de' Machiavelli, served as the Florentine prior in 1383 and 1396.⁴⁶³ He was one of the four Florentine officials sent to supervise the construction of the Florentine *càssero* in 1393.⁴⁶⁴ Totto's brother, Giovanni di Buoninsegna de' Machiavelli, was the *podestà* in Montepulciano from 1439 (Figure 108).⁴⁶⁵ The appointment of Totto de' Machiavelli was most likely dictated by the Machiavelli's long record of public service in both Florence and Montepulciano, which certainly contributed to their good understanding of the local commune and its private connections. The Machiavelli's long history with Montepulciano also explains the reason that Niccolò Machiavelli was the first chronicler who remarked upon the interception of Vitelleschi's coded letter to Niccolò Piccinino in Montepulciano.⁴⁶⁶

Militia' of Leonardo Bruni 171-4.

⁴⁶¹ Gutkind, *Cosimo de' Medici, Pater Patriae, 1389-1464*, 143-50; Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre*, 279-80.

⁴⁶² David Herlihy et al., "Florentine Renaissance Resources, Online Tratte of Office Holders, 1282-1532," (Florentine Renaissance Resources/STG: Brown University, 2002).

⁴⁶³ On Buoninsegna Filippo de' Machiavelli's public service in the Florentine government, see Chapter 3.2, 144, n.421.

⁴⁶⁴ See above Chapter 3.2, 144-5.

⁴⁶⁵ Giovanni died during his term of office. Shamà, "Genealogie delle famiglie nobili italiane." <http://www.sardimpex.com/M/Machiavelli.asp>

⁴⁶⁶ Black, *Machiavelli*, 259; Montevicchi and Varotti, *Opere storiche*, III. 11.13-14, 324.

For the Poliziani, having interpersonal connection with Florence's statesmen would have most likely served as a valuable political asset. Prior to their 17 June letter addressed directly to Cosimo, the commune had already manifested their pro-Medicean attitudes early in 1437. One clue lies in a letter of 8 December 1437, when the town appointed Ser Giovanni di Bartolomeo and Francesco di Ghezzo as its envoys to deliver letters to the central magistracies including the Florentine *Signoria* and the *Dieci di Balìa*, as well as to Cosimo de' Medici.⁴⁶⁷ The letter to Cosimo states:

Beloved protector. We are sending as envoys to Your Magnificent Office and to other magistrates, for some needs of concern to our community, our dear fellow countrymen Ser Giovanni di Bartolomeo and Francesco di Ghezzo, to whom we have commissioned that they speak with you about something, as they will explain in detail to you. We have confidence, and have recourse to you as our true father and protector, hoping Your Magnificence will give us help, advice and favour. We recommend ourselves to Your Magnificence, to whom both the community and ourselves are ready to serve you in any welcome thing. Given in the territory of Montepulciano, 11 December 1437.

This letter to Cosimo draws our attention to the government of Montepulciano's ambitious pursuit of Cosimo's support. In addition, given the content of the letter it seems that the Montepulciano government had already built up its link to Cosimo, so that they informed him regarding the town's planned appeal against the Florence government.

The two envoys (*oratori*),⁴⁶⁸ Giovanni di Bartolomeo Naldini and Francesco Ghezzo, were prominent citizens in Montepulciano. Ser Giovanni di Bartolomeo Naldini was an educated humanist who was sometimes referred to as 'Doctor' (*doctore*). He was one of the executors

⁴⁶⁷ ASM, "Copialettere," vol. 3, 24v, 11 Dicembre 1437. For the full transcription, Vol. 2, Appendix 3, doc. 1.

⁴⁶⁸ In the fourteenth and fifteenth-century Florentine political context, the term *oratore* refers to a temporary diplomatic representative. Battaglia, *Grande dizionario della lingua Italiana*, vol. 12, 4.

of the testament of Bartolomeo di Francesco Aragazzi of Montepulciano after his death in 1429,⁴⁶⁹ and his associates included Florentine humanists such as Niccolò Niccoli and Leonardo Bruni.⁴⁷⁰ In contrast, Francesco Ghezzo was a rather modest citizen who lived in the *contrada* of Granciano in the *terzo* of Sant'Agostino.⁴⁷¹ Yet, he was actively involved in the town's political and public life. Apart from his role as the Poliziano envoy to Florence, he was elected in 1440 as one of the *operai* for the Palazzo Comunale project in Montepulciano.⁴⁷²

Sending communal envoys to Cosimo strongly suggests the Poliziani's political awareness of Cosimo's powerful position in the Florentine government. The Montepulciano commune's attempt to build a private and direct communication with Cosimo was probably aimed at finding an ally that would strengthen their position in negotiations with the Florentine *Signoria*.⁴⁷³ An unpublished letter of 26 February 1440 supports this hypothesis by showing that the Montepulciano commune wrote to its envoy in Florence, Giovanni di Bartolomeo Naldini, asking him to file a formal petition to the Florentine *Signoria* to adjust the obligatory supply of grain and fodder requested by the commissioner of the *Dieci* due to the poor yield of the harvest. The Poliziani claimed to have consulted Cosimo de' Medici on the issue, and had been advised by him to file a formal petition.⁴⁷⁴ Another letter of 30 March 1440, again sent to

⁴⁶⁹ Caplow, *Michelozzo*, 245. Bartolomeo Aragazzi's will was originally assigned to Messer Jacopo the Arciprete. However, Jacopo died in 16 September 1431 and left the task to Ser Giovanni di Bartolomeo Naldini and Don Battista. Lightbown, *Donatello & Michelozzo: An Artistic Partnership and its Patrons in the Early Renaissance*, 171-2. On Don Battista who was the prior of Parcia in 1439, *ibid.*, 178.

⁴⁷⁰ For example, Giovanni di Bartolomeo was mentioned in a letter of 1432 from Niccolò Niccoli to Michelozzo. Lightbown, *Donatello & Michelozzo: An Artistic Partnership and its Patrons in the Early Renaissance*, 170-1.

⁴⁷¹ In a study of Montepulciano's 1410 *estimo*, Ghezzo d'Agnolo was registered as a butcher (*carnaiolo*), living in the *contrada* Granciano in the district of Sant'Agostino whose personal patrimony amounted approximately to 606 *lire*. Ghezzo d'Agnolo was mostly likely the father of Francesco Ghezzo. Bernardini Gabriella, "Montepulciano: società e proprietà secondo l'estimo del 1410" (Università degli studi di Firenze, 1972), vol. 1, 113; vol. 2, 194.

⁴⁷² ASM, "Deliberazioni del consiglio generale e dei priori," vol. 31, 239r, 2 March 1440; Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," App. I, doc. 6, 38. Also see Chapter 2.2, 110.

⁴⁷³ On the importance of interpersonal relationship as a political asset during the fifteenth century, Bullard, "Lorenzo il Magnifico: Image and Anxiety, Politics and Finance," 133-51.

⁴⁷⁴ Considering the *Dieci*'s chief responsibility for Florence's diplomatic relationship during times of war, their request for food supplies might be part of the preparations for the impending war with Milan. 'Egregie Docto dilectissime nostro. Perche hieri [insert] scripta a di 13 del persente. [end of insert] ricevemo dato excellentissimo

Giovanni di Bartolomeo Naldini, stated that the Poliziani requested that the local infantry unit, stationed in Arezzo by order of the Florentine government, be moved back to Montepulciano.⁴⁷⁵ These bold requests were probably advanced in light of Naldini's personal influence within the Florentine *Signoria* or of Cosimo's, meaning their requests would be seriously considered by the central government.

Apart from these letters, from 1437 and 1440, when Cosimo was a member of the *Dieci*, at least ten other letters sent by the Montepulciano commune to the *Dieci* survive,⁴⁷⁶ and another two directly addressed to Cosimo himself.⁴⁷⁷ Key issues discussed in these documents cover negotiations over the town's military obligations, including food supplies and weaponry to defend Florence, reports of the enemy's military operations in Montepulciano and its surrounding territory, as well as seeking Cosimo's advice on official appointments within the commune. These letters highlighted the elite network between the Medici and the Montepulciano commune, suggesting that Cosimo de' Medici's influence was reminiscent of a spider's web, covering the whole dominion.⁴⁷⁸

et preclaro ciptidino cosimo di medici per la quale la comunita nostra richiede della tratta di staia secento di grano.' ASM, "Copialettere," vol. 3, 68r, 26 February 1440.

⁴⁷⁵ 'Di poi da noi n'abbiamo avuta un'altra per la quale examinato et insoma tutto raccolto insieme con altro occorremente inditiamo che operate con Magnifici Signori *Dieci* che li nostri fanti ad loro instantia mandati in citta della overo cassetto d'arezzo per uno mese se no litentati attesa la porita del nostro comune e deli suoi huomini et etrandio le nuove occorrente per le quali utilissimo sirelle li proprij terrieri essere ala difesa dela terra occorrente il bisogno.' *ibid.*, vol. 3, 70v, 30 March 1440.

⁴⁷⁶ The number of letters to the *Dieci* dropped significantly after the Battle of Anghiari. There were three letters in 1438, another three in 1439, and four in 1440, yet only one in 1441. On the contrary, Montepulciano's missives to the Florentine *Signoria* increase from zero in 1440 to six in 1441. The table below lists the surviving letters sent from Montepulciano to Florence:

	To the Florentine Commune	To the <i>Dieci di Balìa</i>	To Cosimo de' Medici
1437	--	--	1
1438	2	3	0
1439	3	3	1
1440	0	4	1
1441	6	1	--

⁴⁷⁷ ASM, "Copialettere," vol. 3, 48r, 6 January 1439; 91r, 7 December 1440. There are at least three other letters addressed to Cosimo in 1443 and 1444. *Ibid.*, vol. 3, 144v, 9 January 1443, 30 April 1444, 16 October 1444. And one to Pietro Cosimo de' Medici in 1444. *Ibid.*, vol. 3, 180v, 20 March 1444.

⁴⁷⁸ Leon Battista Alberti, *The Family in Renaissance Florence*, trans. Renée Watkins, 1st ed. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1969), 215-6; Kent, "Patriarchal Ideals, Patronage Practices, and the

3.4 Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale in the Aftermath of the Battle of Anghiari (29 June 1440)

The previous section argued that the renovation project for Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale in 1440 might have reflected Florence's military crisis under the Milanese force. However, if the reinforcement of Montepulciano's seat of government was a defensive measure, it is striking that the renovation plan was put on hold in the first half of 1440 when the conflict between Florence and Milan climaxed, resuming only after the Milanese troops had suffered a catastrophic setback at the Battle of Anghiari.⁴⁷⁹ By situating Michelozzo's commission in the aftermath of the Battle of Anghiari, this section argues that when the Poliziani resumed the façade project in October 1440, Milan's conclusive defeat may have turned the commission into a memorial monument commemorating Montepulciano's fidelity to Florence, as well as creating an impregnable and outward facing Florentine imagery on the state's border.

After their victory on the battlefield on 29 June 1440, the two Florentine commissioners, Bernardetto d'Antonio de' Medici and Neri di Gino Capponi, instantly sent a letter to Cosimo de' Medici, informing him that their tactics in the battle field had 'crushed him [Niccolò Piccinino] and scattered all his people.'⁴⁸⁰ The significance of Florence's victory in Anghiari was immediately recognised by contemporary Florentines. Not only was a great celebratory procession organised in only two days, taking place on 1 July, during which the campanile of the Duomo was lit as though for the feast day of Saint John the Baptist, but the two

Authority of Cosimo *il vecchio*," 228-9.

⁴⁷⁹ No evidence survived referring to the progress on the façade renovation between 2 March and 16 October 1440. For a summary of the building history of Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale, see Vol. 2, Appendix 1.

⁴⁸⁰ Spencer notes that in the letter both commissioners emphasised their sacrifice for and dedication to their patria, requesting rewards for them and their families. 'N.[iccolò] P.[ccinino] venne a ore 19 ½ qui da Borgho chon tutte le sue gienti per rompere noi, et noi abbiamo rotto et frachassato lui.' For the transcription and translation of the letter of Neri and Bernardetto, Spencer, *Andrea del Castagno and his Patrons*, 18-9, 152-3.

commissioners Bernardetto de' Medici and Neri di Gino Capponi also received great honours from the Florentine government on their return.⁴⁸¹

News of Florence's victory at Anghiari arrived in Montepulciano within a few days, and the town, as a subject commune belonging to the Florentine dominion, fully realised the importance of this battle. In their letter of congratulation, sent on 2 July 1440 to the *Dieci* committee, the Poliziani passionately expressed their loyalty:⁴⁸²

Magnificent priors and our most honoured lords. Upon hearing of Tuscany's great victory ensuring the preservation and health [of the region] against the tyrant Duke of Milan and Niccolò Piccinino, we wish to express to your Magnificence our most ardent joy and utmost delight (*con ardentissima iocundita et letitia grandissima ci rallegriamo*).⁴⁸³ Even though the night before your envoy arrived here we celebrated with fireworks and a great feast this victory which had been communicated to us by the *podestà*, by the priors of Fojano and by Paolo da Ghiacceto, Captain of Arezzo, via his own horseman. That evening we had fireworks and had the bells rung, and tomorrow we will have a procession to give thanks to God and St Peter and St Paul who secured such a great victory against the tyrant, which will result in his final extermination, for the glory and eternal fame of the glorious Florentine people and for the preservation, union, health and peace of the whole of Italy. Although your envoy was to have been given 30 florins, we had him given 2, reserving the greater gift for when he will bring us news of the present or future death

⁴⁸¹ The Florentine government rewarded them with a pennon, a horse, and shield with the Florentine emblem, and a helmet to celebrate their military success. *Ibid.*, 19.

⁴⁸² ASM, "Copialettere," vol. 3, 82v, 2 July 1440. The Full text, Vol. 2, Appendix 3, Doc. 3.

⁴⁸³ In his *La grazia divina*, Giovanni Rucellia adopted the word '*letitia*' to praise God: 'O Signor, speranza de' santi e torre di loro fortezza, vita dell'anima mia, per la qual vivo senza la qual muoio, lume degli ochi miei, per lo qual vegio senza 'l quale intenebrisco, allegrezza del cuore mio, letitia dello spirito mio: amarotti di tutto 'l cuor mio e con tutta l'anima mia e con tutte le merolle ed interiore mie, però che i prima tu m'ai amato.' Cited by Francis William Kent, Alessandro Perosa, and Nicolai Rubinstein, eds., *Giovanni Rucellai ed il suo Zibaldone*, vol. 1 & 2 (London: Warburg Institute, 1960), vol. 1, 119. The term *letizia* (or *leticia*, *letiza*, *litizia*) was commonly used in the context of religious practice and experience, or describing one with great pleasure, joy and happiness. Battaglia, *Grande dizionario della lingua Italiana*, vol. 8, 975-6.

of N.[iccolò] P.[iccinino], true enemy to your Magnificence, would be a better gift. We are ever ready at your service your Magnificence. In the territory of Montepulciano, 2 July 1440.

While hosting feasts and processions to celebrate military achievements was customary in Italian communes, the 1 July feast in Montepulciano may have even greater significance, since it was held on the same day as Florence held its own,⁴⁸⁴ almost like a live broadcast of the celebration in Florence.⁴⁸⁵ Also, inviting the Florentine officials to the event, as well as ringing the bell simultaneously as did in Florence symbolically united the Poliziani to its dominant city. By engaging local townspeople in the celebration of Florence's military achievement, the feast of 1 July in Montepulciano can be understood as a medium through which the dominant city conveyed and implemented its control over the town. At the same time, it was a way for Montepulciano to express its allegiance to and pride in their dominant city.

The Poliziani's letter of congratulations draws our attention to the commune's awareness of the rhetorical debate about tyrants and republics informing the armed conflicts and shifting of power after the Battle of Anghiari. For instance, the Poliziani congratulated Florence for its successful military operation against its 'true enemy' Niccolo Piccinino (*ala magnificentia vostra vero inimico*) and for victory over the tyrant, the Duke of Milan. This rhetoric has its roots in the development of Florence's republican identity during the late fourteenth century in response to Gian Galeazzo Visconti's interference, as Baron notices.⁴⁸⁶ It is the contrast with

⁴⁸⁴ To celebrate the victory in Anghiari, the Florentines illuminated Brunelleschi's newly completed dome as though in the festival of San Giovanni. Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre*, 279; Spencer, *Andrea del Castagno and his Patrons*, 19. In her study of the ritual on the festival of San Giovanni in Florence, Chrétien notices that it was commonplace to light up major public buildings such as the Palazzo dei Priori and the Palazzo del Podestà. Also, firework displays were introduced in Italy after the fourteenth century. Heidi L. Chrétien, *The Festival of San Giovanni: Imagery and Political Power in Renaissance Florence* (New York: Peter Lang, 1994), 42.

⁴⁸⁵ The analogy comparing events in different cities as a live broadcast is suggested by Nevola, See Nevola, *Siena: Constructing the Renaissance city*, 64.)

⁴⁸⁶ Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny*.

the tyrannical Duke of Milan, whose conduct harmed his subjects, that the republican characteristics of the Florentine Commune and its role as the protector of liberty were highlighted. From this perspective, Florence's defeat of the Duke in Anghiari not only substantially reduced Milan's military strength, but more importantly it legitimised the Florentine Republic's military campaign and its territorial pursuits. In addition, by assimilating Florence's reputation with its military success, the rhetoric surrounding Florence's victory at Anghiari defines Florentine rule in the region as peaceful and righteous. The rhetoric adopted in this letter thus testifies to the Poliziani's awareness of the diplomatic and military struggles between Florence and Milan, most likely as a result of the town's shifting allegiance in 1390 and of the key role its submission to Florence played in the long-term conflict between Florence and Milan.

Bearing in mind the Poliziani's cultural and political simulation with Florence, it is probably not by chance that four months after the Battle of Anghiari, when the Poliziani intended to resume the façade renovation, they turned to the Florentine architect Michelozzo for the design of the façade.⁴⁸⁷ On the one hand, Michelozzo had a good reputation in Montepulciano, having finished the new façade for the church of Sant'Agostino (Figure 109), as well as a monumental tomb for the town's aristocrat Bartolomeo di Francesco Aragazzi (Figure 110), which is considered to be one of the first humanistic tombs in Italy.⁴⁸⁸ On the other hand, Michelozzo was Florence's state military engineer, who was appointed to inspect and repair the Florentine *càssero* in 1432, for which the Florentine commune still owed Michelozzo 44 florins in 1457.⁴⁸⁹ Furthermore, Michelozzo was Cosimo's favourite architect and one of the Medici's

⁴⁸⁷ Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," 21-3; App. I, doc. 7, 38.

⁴⁸⁸ Rufus Graves Mather, "New Documents on Michelozzo," *The Art Bulletin* 24, no. 3 (1942): 226-31.

⁴⁸⁹ The payment was documented in Michelozzo's *catasto* in 1457. Document published by Ferrara and Quinterio, *Michelozzo di Bartolomeo*, doc. 22, 43-4. ASF, *Catasto* 825, Portata 1457, Quartiere S. Giovanni, Gonfalone Drago. Between 1430 and 1440, Michelozzo was commissioned by the Florentine authority as the consultant for fortifications at least four times in Lucca, Lago di Castigliano, Castellina de Greve. He was also invited to

amici who accompanied Cosimo into exile in 1433. The appointment of Michelozzo for the new façade testifies to Cosimo's influence on, if not his direct intervention in, the local commune. It is not impossible that the architect took the Poliziani's commission as a chance to express Cosimo de' Medici's personal contribution to the Florentine state's successful military operations at Anghiari,⁴⁹⁰ just as the ways in which Uccello's painting of the Battle of San Romano, and Andrea del Castagno's fresco of Niccolò di Tolentino commemorate Bernardetto d'Antonio de' Medici's success in warfare.⁴⁹¹ That the palace's nature as a monument is suggested by a 1544 survey of the town's defensive scheme.⁴⁹² Of more than thirty fortifications and public and private towers listed by the architect, the Palazzo Comunale and its stone tower (*in conci*) were not mentioned.

3.5 Montepulciano: a Florentine Gateway to Rome

In addition to analysing Montepulciano's contribution to Florence's war against Milan, this section argues for the town's geopolitical significance, which enabled Florence to conclude their interregional routes to Rome during the fifteenth century, a perspective which has not been considered by scholars.⁴⁹³

supervise the fortifications at Ragusa, Harriet McNeal Caplow, "Michelozzo at Ragusa: New Documents and Revaluations," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 31, no. 2 (1972): 110.

⁴⁹⁰ On the ties between the Medici faction and Florence's public monuments of their war captains (*condottieri*), Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre*, 272-7.

⁴⁹¹ According to Kent, the Battle of San Romano was Florence's first victory in its war with Lucca under command of the state's *condottiere* Niccolò da Tolentino. Cosimo and Averardo de' Medici were important figures in the Florentine political establishment and friends with Niccolò da Tolentino. *Ibid.*, 265-72.

⁴⁹² Belluzzi was commissioned for reinforcing Montepulciano's defence, analysing the town's city gates, the Florentine *càssero*, as well as private and public towers in strategic point. Lamberini, *Il Sanmarino. Giovan Battista Belluzzi, architetto militare e trattatista del Cinquecento*, vol. 2, 112-8.

⁴⁹³ Pepper and Adams pointed to the strategic importance of Montepulciano for the Florentine government. Yet their analysis focused on the regional defence rather than considering the town as a knob linking Rome. Pepper and Adams, *Firearms and Fortifications: Military Architecture and Siege Warfare in Sixteenth-Century Siena*, 85-92. In his study on the architectural work of Antonio da Sangallo il Vecchio, Cozzi analyses the development of the Valdichiana and its significant as an external route linking the Florentine Republic to the south. However, his research focus on the sixteenth century whereas the geopolitical circumstance during the fifteenth century is less touch upon: Cozzi, *Antonio da Sangallo il Vecchio e l'architettura del Cinquecento in Valdichiana*, 1-30.

Montepulciano was close to two major pilgrimage routes, the Via Francigena (Via Romana) and the Valdichiana (Figure 111). Documents record that in c.1404 at least four *spedali* immediately outside Montepulciano's city walls were recognised by the Florentine government and were exempt from tax,⁴⁹⁴ meaning that the town must have hosted a considerable number of pilgrims and travellers. Most likely pilgrims were heading towards S. Quirico d'Orcia, only 15 kilometres to the west (Figure 112), which was one of the most prestigious and principal stops along the Via Francigena from the tenth century onwards.⁴⁹⁵ The orientation of S. Quirico d'Orcia's three major gates opening towards Siena to the north, Rome to the south and Montepulciano to the east (Porta Cappuccini) testifies to S. Quirico d'Orcia's pivotal role within the road network of southern Tuscany: not only does the north-south axis of the Via Francigena pass through the town, but regional roads going east and west, such as that leading to Montepulciano, also converge in S. Quirico d'Orcia.⁴⁹⁶ Therefore, the convenient link between Montepulciano and S. Quirico d'Orcia may have provided Florentines with a new way of joining the Via Francigena while completely bypassing Siena.⁴⁹⁷

⁴⁹⁴ Repetti, "Montepulciano," 483. On the ecclesiastical origins of the ospedali to serve pilgrims and the Church, Bocchi, *Per antiche strade: caratteri e aspetti delle città medievali*, 304-5. Although it is worth noting that no medieval source mentioned Montepulciano was a pilgrimage stop, Renato Stopani, *La Via Francigena: una strada europea nell'Italia del Medioevo* (Firenze: Le Lettere, 1988).

⁴⁹⁵ S. Quirico d'Orcia was the seat of the vicar of Holy Roman Empire during the Middle Ages. The town accepted the Siense *podestà* from 1256. On the importance of the town in the medieval road system, Edoardo Martinori, *Via Cassia (antica e moderna) e sue deviazioni* (Roma: Stampato nella Tipografia S.A.P.E, 1930), 141, n. 2. According to the memoir of the archbishop of Canterbury Sigeric, who travelled from Rome back to his diocese between 990 and 994, the main pilgrim stops in Tuscany were Lucca, Siena and S. Quirico d'Orcia. Renato Stopani, *Le grandi vie di pellegrinaggio del Medioevo le strade per Roma* (Firenze: Centro Studi Romei, 1986), 55-62. On the route of the Via Francigena between Lombardy and Tuscany, *ibid.*, 47-52; Stopani, *La Via Francigena: una strada europea nell'Italia del Medioevo*, 13-28; Renato Stopani, *Le vie di pellegrinaggio del Medioevo: gli itinerari per Roma, Gerusalemme, Compostella* (Firenze: Le Lettere, 1991), 16-20. On the Siense government's development of its road system: Thomas Szabó, *Comuni e politica stradale in Toscana e in Italia nel Medioevo* (Bologna: Clueb, 1992), 235-56.

⁴⁹⁶ Renato Stopani, *La Via Francigena nel senese: storia e territorio* (Firenze: Salimbeni, 1985), 55. Martinori, *Via Cassia (antica e moderna) e sue deviazioni*, 141-2; Mario Ascheri, *Lo spazio storico di Siena* (Siena: Fondazione Monte dei paschi di Siena, 2002), 88-9.

⁴⁹⁷ On the Siense road system on the Val d'Orcia: Szabó, *Comuni e politica stradale in Toscana e in Italia nel Medioevo*, 235-56.

In addition to the Via Francigena, the Valdichiana where Montepulciano is situated was another artery connecting Tuscany to Umbria. Despite the stench caused by local swamps and pools, described by Dante as ‘hellish miasma’ in his *Divine Comedy*,⁴⁹⁸ the valley was dominated by the Via Cassia, a Roman road to Florence built in the second century A.D. 171.⁴⁹⁹ From the mid-thirteenth century the Chiana Valley was being used by pilgrims as an alternative route when travelling from Rome back to the northern Apennines.⁵⁰⁰ That the valley became an even more popular travelling channel during the fifteenth century is testified by a letter of 1473, in which the Sienese diplomat Francesco Luti bitterly mentioned that fewer pilgrims chose to take the Via Francigena and stop in Siena after the Florentine government granted tax incentives to users of the Valdichiana.⁵⁰¹

Florence’s attempt to promote a new north-south road partly reflected the growing numbers of pilgrims. Yet, the foremost concern of the Florentine government was likely to be hostility between Guelf cities, including Florence and Bologna, and Ghibelline Siena, as well as the need for a safer commercial route to the south that did not go through Sienese territories. A

⁴⁹⁸ In his *Divine Comedy*, Dante adopted the unhealthy miasma and irritating smell of the Chiana valley to describe the imagery of hell, stating that ‘Qual dolor fora, se de li spedali di Valdichiana tra luglio e’l settembre, e di Sardigna e di Maremma i mali fossero in una fossa tutti insembre, tal era quivi, e tal puzza n’usciva qual sòl venir de le marcite membre.’ Dante Alighieri, “Comedia,” in *Dantis Alagherii Comedia*, ed. Federico Sanguineti (Firenze: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2001), Inferno, canto xxix, 154. Cited by Bargagli-Petrucci, *Montepulciano, Chiusi e la Val di Chiana senese*, 28-9.

⁴⁹⁹ The Via Cassia was an ancient road linking Roma to Florence. It passes the Arno and entered Florence’s city centre through the Ponte Vecchio, Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze*, vol.1, 26. One of its routes passes Tuscany through Chiusi, Acquavia (subject to Montepulciano), Cortona, Castiglion Fiorentino, reaching Arezzo to the north of Valdichiana. Martinori, *Via Cassia (antica e moderna) e sue deviazioni*, 4, 109-121; Szabó, *Comuni e politica stradale in Toscana e in Italia nel Medioevo*, 22-25. On the Roman road system in the western Tuscany, Raymond Chevallier, *Roman Roads*, trans. N. H. Field, 1 ed. (London: Batsford, 1976), 132-40; Stopani, *La Via Francigena: una strada europea nell’Italia del Medioevo*, 17-8; Dorothy F. Glass, *Portals, Pilgrimage, and Crusade in Western Tuscany* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1997), 3-9; Stamazzi, *Leonardo Cartografo*, 74-5.

⁵⁰⁰ Two thirteenth-century documents referred to the Valdichiana as an alternative route to travel through Tuscany. One, written by Matthew of Paris, in c.1253, suggests a route travelling from Arezzo, Perugia and continuing to Assisi. Another, composed by brothers Tirri and Firri, notes a route crossing Arezzo and Castiglion Fiorentino towards the Largo Trasimeno. Stopani, *La Via Francigena: una strada europea nell’Italia del Medioevo*, 85-99.

⁵⁰¹ Cited by Nevola, *Siena: Constructing the Renaissance city*, 93, n. 16. Also see Mario Ascheri and P. Pettici, “La situazione politica senese del secondo Quattrocento,” in *La Toscana al tempo di Lorenzo il Magnifico*, ed. Riccardo Fubini (Pisa: Università di Pisa, 1996), 1001, n. 17.

close look at the hydrographic features of the Chiana river and the Florentine boundary along the valley gives a clue to Montepulciano's strategic significance in linking Florence with Rome. First, the course of the Chiana connects the upper Arno, mainly controlled by the Florentines, to the upper Tiber communes subject to Papal authority.⁵⁰² Secondly, unlike the Tuscan section of the Via Francigena that mainly fell within Sienese territories, Florence had greater authority over the Valdichiana. Florence's territorial expansion from the 1380s onwards (Figure 107) included a systematic attempt to take over the Valdichiana: in 1383 Florence acquired Fojano, a town that used to belong to Arezzo;⁵⁰³ then in 1384 it purchased Arezzo, meaning it also achieved jurisdiction over the ex-Aretine town of Castiglion Fiorentino in the northern Valdichiana.⁵⁰⁴ The Florentine government's intention to gain a holistic control over the valley may also account for its decision of 1404 to concede Lucignano to Siena in exchange for Montepulciano,⁵⁰⁵ since Montepulciano's position is closer to the south end of the valley. Finally, with the conquest of Cortona (1411), which was the largest commune in the Valdichiana,⁵⁰⁶ Florence had acquired most of the strategic sites on both banks of the river. It is worth noting that Cortona is north of Montepulciano, meaning that Montepulciano was the southernmost territory of the Florentine state in the Chiana valley. It is most likely due to the town's strategic importance that by 1552 the Florentine government installed at least 14 pieces of artillery to protect the area around Montepulciano, which equalled those around the Fortress of Cortona, and almost comparable with the 20 batteries in Borgo San Sepolcro.⁵⁰⁷

⁵⁰² Bargagli-Petrucci, *Montepulciano, Chiusi e la Val di Chiana senese*, 9-12.

⁵⁰³ The commune of Fojano was institutionalised in 1300. It fell into the Aretino control in 1336 and joined Florence in 1383. Guidoni and Marino, *Territorio e città della Valdichiana*, 73-4.

⁵⁰⁴ Prior to joining the Florentine dominion as part of the Aretino territories in 1384, Castiglion Fiorentino was known as Castiglion Aretino. On the town's political affiliation under major city-states. *Ibid.*, 8-10.

⁵⁰⁵ Edoardo Detti, Gian Franco Di Pietro, and Giovanni Fanelli, *Città murate e sviluppo contemporaneo: 42 centri della Toscana* (Lucca: C. I. S. C. U, 1968), 170-9.

⁵⁰⁶ Guidoni and Marino, *Territorio e città della Valdichiana*, 82-95.

⁵⁰⁷ According to Pepper's and Adams' study, there were 126 artilleries install in Pisa, which outnumbered all other towns within the Florentine territories including 49 in Elba, 47 in Pistoia, 40 in Arezzo, and 26 in Livorno. Pepper and Adams, *Firearms and Fortifications: Military Architecture and Siege Warfare in Sixteenth-Century Siena*, 13, Tab. 1.

With regard to Florence's external road networks, possessing Montepulciano not only shortened the distance between the Florentine territories and the Papal States, but it also meant greater flexibility in the selection of travelling routes to the south. When reaching Montepulciano, pilgrims and travellers could continue their journeys to Rome either through the Valdichiana, or along the Via Francigena. For instance, in 1429 Leonardo Bruni met an ox cart driver on a country road near Arezzo, who was using the Valdichiana to transport Michelozzo's sculptures to Montepulciano.⁵⁰⁸ It is in this context of the Florentine state's communication with Rome that Montepulciano's peripheral location deserves to be re-evaluated. As the last Florentine destination prior to entering the lands of the Church, the town may have acted as a gateway linking Florence and Rome, thus supporting Florence's self-styling as the authentic heir to the ancient capital in competition with Siena, which frequently used its location on the Via Francigena as a key argument for its political and ideological superiority.⁵⁰⁹ In 1533, when the Medicean Pope Clement VII travelled from Rome to Pisa, he went via Montepulciano and Monte S. Savino instead of the Via Francigena – showing that Montepulciano could be an important stop between Rome and the Florentine territories.⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁸ In a letter of 29 June 1429 to Poggio Bracciolini, Bruni harshly criticised Bartolommeo Aragazzi's desire to build a marble tomb for himself in his home town Montepulciano. Lightbown, *Donatello & Michelozzo: An Artistic Partnership and its Patrons in the Early Renaissance*, vol. 1, 128-9.

⁵⁰⁹ According to Szabó, constructing roads and bridges over its territories was a useful governing apparatus to express the public authority over a community. On the Italian communal governments' growing interest in the development of road system: Szabó, *Comuni e politica stradale in Toscana e in Italia nel Medioevo*, 87, 113-49. On the ways in which Siena's location on the Via Francigena was specifically promoted by the Sienese government, transforming the city's urban space and street orientation, Fabrizio Nevola, "'Per Ornato Della Città': Siena's Strada Romana and Fifteenth-Century Urban Renewal," *The Art Bulletin* 82, no. 1 (2000): 26-50; Nevola, *Siena: Constructing the Renaissance city*, 116-155; Bocchi, *Per antiche strade: caratteri e aspetti delle città medievali*, 33-4.

⁵¹⁰ Martinori, *Via Cassia (antica e moderna) e sue deviazioni*, 151. Monte S. Savino was the centre of the Florentine troops in the Valdichiana during the Medicean principality, Cozzi, *Antonio da Sangallo il Vecchio e l'architettura del Cinquecento in Valdichiana*, 33-5; Lamberini, *Il Sanmarino. Giovan Battista Belluzzi, architetto militare e trattatista del Cinquecento*, vol. 1, 45-6.

Conclusion

This chapter examined Montepulciano's 1440 renovation project for the Palazzo Comunale façade from the point of view of Florence's military campaign. Montepulciano's shift of allegiance from Siena to Florence in 1390 greatly contributed to the outbreak of the first Visconti War. The town was incorporated into Florence's national defensive scheme, and served as a military outpost guarding Florence's southern border, providing military and material supplies including grain and fodder to the infantry units garrisoned in the Valdichiana and Arezzo. The construction of the Florentine *càssero* provides evidence for the way in which the town's urban setting was shaped to accommodate Florentine military needs.

During the first half of the fifteenth century, Montepulciano greatly contributed to Florence's military campaign in south-east Tuscany. The incident of the interception of Vitelleschi's missive to Niccolò Piccinino is key evidence of the town's strategic location on the vital route linking northern and central Italy. It can be hypothesised that if the content of the letter had not been known to Montepulciano, the Florentine army would have been out-flanked from the north and south, which could have possibly even led to a different outcome of the 1440 Battle of Anghiari. The approval of the renovation project in 1440 points to an urgent concern faced by the Montepulciano government, that is whether the old palace was capable of protecting the town's magistrates. Sources dating from between 1437 and 1440 highlight the importance of the Florentine *Dieci* war committee through which the *de facto* ruler of Florence, Cosimo de' Medici, exercised his influence over the town, shedding further light on the Medicean network beyond Florence.

The commune of Montepulciano displays a pro-Medicean attitude from 1437, which was probably the reason why the commune commissioned a design for the new façade of the Palazzo Comunale from Michelozzo. The resumption of the façade project in October 1440,

just three months after the victory Anghiari, can be interpreted as a symbol of the triumph of the Florentine government over the tyrannical Duke of Milan. From this perspective, the impregnable castellated façade was an agent through which the imagery of a potent Florentine republic overseeing the Valdichiana and even the whole of Tuscany was instantiated. The way in which castellation was employed reminds us of the imagery of the Palazzo dei Priori in Orcagna's fresco of the Expulsion of the Duke of Athens, both serving to seal and consolidate the supremacy of Florence's Republican ideology.

CHAPTER FOUR: A CASTELLATED DIALOGUE BETWEEN CENTRE AND PERIPHERY: FLORENCE, ROME, MONTEPULCIANO, AND OTHER CIVIC PALACES IN TUSCANY

Introduction

Chapters Two and Three explored political, administrative, and military aspects of the 1440 – 1465 renovation of Montepulciano’s Palazzo Comunale. Continuing the notion that architecture was an affirmation of power and authority, this chapter considers the Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano as tangible evidence of Florence’s cultural and territorial hegemonies. The first section of the chapter highlights the adherence of the façade’s design to the principles of geometry, proportion, symmetry, and axuality. These conceptual features distinguished Montepulciano’s town hall from Florence’s thirteenth-century Palazzo dei Priori, as well as other renovations of pre-fifteenth century fortified civic palaces, and would soon dominate the design of monumental palaces from the second half of the fifteenth century.

The second part of the chapter focuses on a typological analysis of the tower-belfry unit, the projecting machicolated galleries, crenellation, rusticated masonry and plinth of Montepulciano’s communal palace. Ancient Roman monuments, Tuscan castellated communal palaces built between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries, as well as prominent *all’antica* civic palaces erected after the mid-fifteenth century provide useful comparative models. By investigating architectural features of Montepulciano’s palace façade, this section aims to tackle three questions proposed in this thesis. First, to what extent military and civic architecture were interdependent genres in Renaissance architectural practice? Second, in what ways might the façade’s formal appearance have reflected Florence’s ruling policy over its subject town? Third, bearing in mind the ways in which the imagery of castellation was emphasised in *cassoni* panels of Greco-Roman subjects as Chapter One discussed, to what

extent might castellation be perceived as a classical motif, having been adopted in civic architecture to legitimise an alleged link to ancient Rome?

The third part of the chapter looks at the ways in which Montepulciano's seat of government stands out from adjacent buildings, governing the whole urban space. The ways in which castellated components were carefully planned to forge a united cityscape might have followed the same pictorial strategy in the representation of a good government and an ideal city developed from the fourteenth century onwards.

4.1 Montepulciano's Castellated Façade and Quattrocento Architectural Principles

In his 1965 article, Saalman argued that Montepulciano's new façade was 'a symmetrised and simplified version of the Florentine Palazzo della Signoria.'⁵¹¹ Indeed, when juxtaposing Montepulciano's fifteenth-century elevation with the thirteenth-century Palazzo dei Priori in Florence (Figure 113), their formal resemblance is evident. Both façades are of three storeys, with narrow ground-floor openings contrasting with the large arched-windows on the upper storeys. The ways in which castellated elements were incorporated into Montepulciano's façade clearly refer to its Florentine prototype. With regard to the machicolated galleries, both palaces have two sets of galleries, one surmounting the main building block and another between the tower and the belfry. The machicolated galleries share the same pattern, framed by triangular corbels below and by crenellated merlons above. The way in which three sets of crenellation were incorporated in Montepulciano's elevation, one running across the top of the main building block, another over the tower and finally crowning the bell chamber, echoes its Florentine predecessor. Another quintessential feature of Florence's Palazzo dei Priori incorporated into the design of Montepulciano's town hall is its belfry, which is narrower than the tower below, emerging from the wide projecting gallery. The adaptation of rusticated

⁵¹¹ Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano: An Unknown Work by Michelozzo," 31.

masonry, as well as the placing decorative sculptures symbolising the commune (griffins in Montepulciano's palace) on corbelled shelves at either side of the ground-floor portal further enhance the similarities between these two palaces.

In spite of their similar castellated profile, a re-examination of Montepulciano's façade reveals that Michelozzo's design was not a straightforward imitation of the Florentine prototype. One of the most evident differences between the two palaces is the emphasis on a central axis. While the Arnolfo's Tower and the main portal are off-centre in Florence, in Montepulciano the tower and main door are rigorously in line with the central axis, which greatly contributed to the visual balance of the whole building. In comparing Montepulciano's façade with its Florentine and Tuscan castellated palace predecessors, this section argues that the importance of Montepulciano's palace lies not only in creating a modernised symmetrical version of Florence's castellated city hall, but in exemplifying the architect's ingenious interpretation of architectural principles of modularity and axuality.

One of the earliest references to the fundamental importance of modularity in architectural design is found in Vitruvius' treatise.⁵¹² Vitruvius adopted the term *symmetria* to refer to a standard unit that determines the dimensions of a building's individual components and the proportional system of the whole building. He argued that *symmetria* was the fundamental principle in the planning process (*ordinatio*) determining an appropriate dimension for each architectural element, whereby harmony (*eurhythmia*) is achieved 'when all the elements match its modular system,' which differs from modern readers' usual interpretation of bilateral symmetry.⁵¹³ In the fifteenth century, although Leon Battista Alberti did not explicitly use the

⁵¹² While arguing for the quality of good architecture, Vitruvius proposed six principles: planning, projection, harmony, modularity, appropriateness, and distribution. Schofield translated Vitruvius's term *symmetria* as 'modularity' or 'commensurability' referring the numerical and commensurable relationship between individual components of a building. Vitruvius, *On Architecture*, bk. 1, chap. 2, 13-9; 407.

⁵¹³ Vitruvius' text, however, did not specify the interrelationship between *symmetria* and the other three principles: projection, appropriateness and distribution. *Ibid.*, bk. 1, chap. 2, 13-9.

term *symmetria*, he proposed that each part of a building should be arranged ‘in accordance with the demands of proportion and harmony,’ which corresponded to the Vitruvian notion.⁵¹⁴ Francesco di Giorgio Martini’s treatises followed Vitruvius’s doctrine, stating that ‘harmony, modularity (*symmetria*), and ornament should be included when considering the projection (*distribuzione*) of a work.’⁵¹⁵ According to Friedman, modularity was a key principle in creating a ‘rational, strong and aesthetically pleasing’ building or city.⁵¹⁶

Although no written works nor drawings survived to testify to Michelozzo’s knowledge of the Vitruvian architectural principles, Montepulciano’s new façade demonstrates his awareness of fixed proportional systems leading to an overall visual harmony (Figure 114). Just as the height of the upper two storeys decreases as they go up, so the height of their windows is proportionally reduced by thirty percent. Such proportional adjustment of window height cannot be found in the Palazzo dei Priori in Florence, nor other well-planned Tuscan civic palaces like Volterra’s Palazzo dei Priori and Siena’s Palazzo Pubblico, in which the size of the windows is fixed regardless of the height of the storeys. Although the diminution of windows in higher storeys was not unprecedented in Florentine domestic architecture, as can be seen in the façades of the thirteenth-century Palazzo Spini (thirteenth century, Figure 115), and the fourteenth-century Palazzo Davanzati (after 1350s, Figure 116),⁵¹⁷ this feature was not commonplace during the fifteenth century. Windows in prominent fifteenth-century Florentine

⁵¹⁴ ‘*qualem proportionum ratio et concinnitas diffinierit.*’ Alberti, *L’architettura: de re aedificatoria*, bk. 2, chap. 1, 100-1. English translation: Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, bk. 2, chap. 1, 35.

⁵¹⁵ In the annotation of their transcription of Francesco di Giorgio’s treatises, Maltese and Degrassi pointed that the term *simmetria* in the context means an organic unit that varies according to the number and characteristic of a work. This interpretation conforms to Vitruvius’ notion therefore this chapter adopts Schofield’s translation of ‘modularity’ and ‘commensurability’ while translating Francesco di Giorgio’s text: ‘Ora ci resta a considerare l’aurittima (*armonia*) e la simmetria e l’ornamento insieme colla distribuizione.’ Francesco di Giorgio Martini, *Trattati di architettura ingegneria e arte militare*, ed. Corrado Maltese (Milano: Il Polifilo, 1967), vol. 1, tab. 17, 39.

⁵¹⁶ Friedman, *Florentine New Towns: Urban Design in the Late Middle Ages*, 118.

⁵¹⁷ I am grateful to Professor Paul Davies, who drew these two examples to my attention.

all'antica town palaces such as the Palazzo Medici (Figure 117) and the Palazzo Rucellai (Figure 118) are of the same height on different storeys.

In addition to the fenestration, the design of the two sets of machicolated galleries follows the same proportional diminution. The upper set of machicolated galleries, located between the tower and belfry, is a smaller version of the lower one surmounting the main block. The vertical diminution in Montepulciano's façade is different from that in the Palazzo dei Priori in Florence (Figure 119), as well as Michelozzo's villa at Trebbio (c.1427-1436, Figure 120), in which the upper gallery's console brackets are longer, and their projecting arcades are much narrower than the lower ones. A closer examination demonstrates that the height of the projecting galleries on upper storeys is also reduced by thirty percent compared to those in the lower storeys, suggesting that the whole façade was governed by a fixed ratio. This adjustment might have been designed to correspond to the perspectival recession when looking at the façade from street level, visually elongating the palace's façade height.

The way in which Michelozzo arranged the fenestration is also unconventional. While Trecento civic palaces, such as Florence's Palazzo dei Priori and Siena's Palazzo Pubblico, demonstrated a strict spatial correlation through the same number of windows on the two upper storeys of the principle façade, the number of windows on each storey of Montepulciano's new façade is different. Yet the whole façade still creates visual harmony, which was probably achieved by making rational adjustment of the numbers of windows while moving upwards. There are four windows on the ground floor, eight on the *piano nobile* and again four on the top storey. This simple 4:8:4 or 1:2:1 pattern helped to bring a harmonious rhythm, pointing to the importance of modularity in creating a unified visual effect.⁵¹⁸

⁵¹⁸ Although having been criticised for overstating the importance of philosophical movement in architecture practice, Wittkower argues that adherence to geometric and musical ratio allows architecture to 'embrace and express the cosmic order.' Rudolf Wittkower, *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism* (London: Warburg Institute, University of London, 1949), 101. Also see Robert Tavernor, *On Alberti and the Art of Building* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1998), 44-8; Matthew A. Cohen, "How Much

The merlon and the console brackets in Montepulciano's elevation provide further evidence of the façade's rigorous adherence to modularity. A closer inspection of the distribution of merlons and console brackets reveals that the upper machicolated gallery in the tower has four merlons in accordance with eight console brackets below, a 1:2 ratio. In the lower machicolated gallery of the main block, fourteen merlons correspond to twenty-six triangular console brackets (14:26), which is also nearly a 1:2 ratio. Subsequently, moving towards to the tower-belfry unit, the merlons at the top of the belfry and those in the tower conform to the same 1:2 ratio, as there are two merlons on the belfry and four on the tower. This internal consistency of castellated elements in Montepulciano's façade is striking.

Amongst the Quattrocento architectural theorists, Filarete was likely one of the earliest authors mentioned a correspondence between merlons and console brackets in his treatise (c. 1464), suggesting that there should be one merlon built above a projecting console bracket.⁵¹⁹ Francesco di Giorgio Martini gave precise advice on the proportional relationship between the height of each element and that of the building itself, yet he did not discuss a numerical correspondence between battlements and machicolations.⁵²⁰ As Lillie noted, castellated palaces built prior to the 1440s seldomly displayed symmetrical machicolation.⁵²¹ The two seats of government in Florence show no regularised ratio in the design of crenellation and

Brunelleschi? A Late Medieval Proportional System in the Basilica of San Lorenzo in Florence," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 67, no. 1 (2008): 27-31. On the mathematical analysis of the proportional system, Lionel March, *Architetonics of Humanism. Essays on Number in Architecture* (West Sussex: Academy Editions, 1998), 91-102. On criticism of Wittkower's architectural analysis, Paul Hirst, "Foucault and Architecture," *AA Files* 26 (1993): 53-5.

⁵¹⁹ 'le torri braccia dieci da questa altezza della trenta braccia infino a' loro beccategli, e così di sporto tanto e beccategli delle torri quanto quegli delle muraglie, cioè di braccia due; fatto antipetto e merli, sopra di ciasched'una volse uno torricino di venti braccia alto.' Filarete, *Trattato di architettura*, vol. 1, chap. 6, 41v, 160-1.

⁵²⁰ 'E sopra questo [parapetto] li merli, li quali overo sieno della medesima grossezza, se non ponno essere bombardati, overo sieno grossi piedi 6 acciochè dallu passavolanti non sieno gittati in terra, e parapetti per due.' Francesco di Giorgio Martini, *Trattati di architettura ingegneria e arte militare*, vol. 2, tab. 247, 437.

⁵²¹ Lillie points to the castellated tower in the Strozzi's villa of Santuccio (renovated between 1483-1486) as an early example of symmetrical machicolation in contrast to the asymmetrical scheme used in the nearby Strozzi tower of the Rocca di Campi, built in the 1370s. Lillie, "Florentine Villas in the Fifteenth Century: a Study of the Strozzi and Sassetti Country Properties," 108-10.

supporting console brackets, nor did in Michelozzo's castellated Medicean villas at Cafaggiolo (c.1451) and Careggi (c.1457) demonstrate this regularity.⁵²² Even the Palazzo Venezia in Rome (after 1467-1471, Figure 121), one of the most significant castellated bishop's palaces in Quattrocento Rome, presents no numerical correspondence between battlements and the machicolated gallery.⁵²³ By contrast, the ways in which these elements in Montepulciano's façade were united by means of the proportional system is significant.

In addition to adhering to the principle of modularity, the façade's visual unity was designed through the realization of a clear axiality. From the ground floor moving upwards, the main portal, the interval between the two first-floor niches, the clock, and the arched opening of the belfry surmounting the new tower are all visually in line with the central tower. The central vertical axis visually unifies the tower and the three lower storeys into a single structural entity, thereby offering a baseline according to which architectural elements of each storey could be distributed symmetrically. On the ground floor, the main portal is flanked by six horse-stays (*ferri da cavallo*)⁵²⁴ and a bracketed shelf holding the sculpted emblem of the town – the griffin. On the first floor, three arched windows extend from a pair of niches centred above the ground-floor portal. Such symmetrical distribution of individual elements at either side of the central axis was not common in pre-fifteenth century Tuscan communal palaces. None of the castellated communal palaces in Florence, Siena, and Volterra demonstrate such rigid concern for a central axis. It did, however, become a salient feature in the sixteenth-century, as can be seen in Sebastiano Serlio's drawing of the classical *Doric Façade* (Figure 122).⁵²⁵ The modernity of this central axis in Montepulciano's 1440 façade also lies in its role coordinating

⁵²² Cafaggiolo was a castle that used to belong to Florence in the fourteenth century, Caplow, *Michelozzo*, vol. 2, 601; Stalley, "The Renaissance Belvedere in Florentine Villas and Palaces," 66.

⁵²³ Heydenreich and Lotz, *Architecture in Italy, 1400-1600*, 66-7. Fiore noted that the crenellation in the Palazzo Venezia is not practical. Fiore, *Storia dell'architettura italiana. Il Quattrocento*, 386.

⁵²⁴ The *ferri* on the ground-floor façade have two main functions: one is to tether horses, and the other is to hold standards torches.

⁵²⁵ Sebastiano Serlio, *D'architettura* (Venetia: Francesco Senese, 1566), bk. 4, 255.

the spatial organisation of the interior. The vaulted *androne* extending behind the main portal largely aligns with the central axis of the façade (Figure 45). The spatial correspondence between the exterior and interior signals another distinctive feature of Montepulciano's façade not present in other renovation projects, where the newly clad façades were not always correlated with the interior structure, such as Pius II's Palazzo Piccolomini in Pienza.⁵²⁶

Having nineteen parallel horizontal string courses evenly running across the façade also accentuates the horizontal axes of Montepulciano's palace (Figure 123, 1-19). Many pre-fifteenth century castellated palaces have string courses unevenly distributed, for instance in the Palazzo Pretorio in Volterra (thirteenth-century, Figure 124) in which string courses were inserted on the lower storey, but not over the whole elevation. In San Gimignano's Palazzo Vecchio del Podestà (Figure 4), no clear regularity governs the distribution of string courses on the main façade. Those string courses extending from the slightly off-centre tower in the Castello dei Conti Guidi are not level on either side (Figure 5). By contrast, Belli pointed out that string courses were a key agent of visual stability and regularity in Quattrocento Florentine architectural design.⁵²⁷ Within the lower three storeys of Montepulciano's façade, there are five string courses (Figure 123, 1-5): one dividing the plinth from the rusticated façade (Figure 123, 1); another two dividing each storey (Figure 123, 2 & 4); and two further forming the imposts supporting the voussoirs of the arched windows (Figure 123, 3 & 5). Above the three-storeyed façade, the lower and upper machicolated galleries each have five horizontal bands with an identical distribution (Figure 123, 6-15), including one underneath the triangular console brackets (Figure 123, 6 & 11); a horizontal band formed by chamfered flat blocks acts as the capitals of the console brackets that visually perform like string courses (Figure 123, 7 & 12),⁵²⁸

⁵²⁶ The blind portal of the façade facing the piazza visually sustains the spatial rhythm of the façade yet does not have practical function.

⁵²⁷ Gianluca Belli, "Il disegno delle facciate nei palazzi fiorentini del Quattrocento," *Opus Incertum* 2, no. 4 (2007): 19.

⁵²⁸ The chamfered flat blocks acting as capitals of the console brackets are counted because they reinforce the horizontal regularity marked by string courses.

another one running across the top of the arcade between brackets (Figure 123, 8 & 13); one between the parapet and the merlons (Figure 123, 9 & 14), and one crowning the merlons (Figure 123, 10 & 15). Finally, four mouldings in the belfry, including one acting as the impost of the arched piers (Figure 123, 16); one marking the apex of the arch opening (Figure 123, 17); another supporting the merlons (Figure 123, 18), and one more resting on top of the merlons (Figure 123, 19).

In addition to acting as an ornament,⁵²⁹ these mouldings divide elements into horizontal bands corresponding to one another. The lowest course above the plinth (Figure 123, 1) provides a firm baseline for the whole building, as recommended by Vitruvius.⁵³⁰ The ways in which two string courses running below the windows mark the presence of two upper storeys (Figure 123, 2 & 4) seems to correspond to the Italian term *cornice marcapiano*, which clearly refers to the cornice of a classical entablature,⁵³¹ as well as explaining its later use as a floor marker in Italian architecture. They particularly echo the Duecento civic architectural scheme developed in Florence, where the string course not only marks different storeys of a building, but also serves as a window sill, as can be seen in the Palazzo del Podestà (on the first floor) and the Palazzo dei Priori. An *intarsia* cassone panel of the second half of the fifteenth century testifies to this twofold function of string courses in Florentine palace design (Figure 125). Regarding the courses framing the machicolated galleries and the console brackets, and those resting on top of the merlons, they can be interpreted as a moulding (*cymatium*), a term Vitruvius adopted to refer to a horizontal band surmounting another component.⁵³² The flat capitals in the console

⁵²⁹ According to Stalley, string courses are a common decorative motif in medieval architecture. Roger Stalley, *Early Medieval Architecture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 191-2.

⁵³⁰ Vitruvius, *On Architecture*, bk. 3, chap. 4, 80.

⁵³¹ See for example Vitruvius's account of the entablature, in which the cornice marks the topmost part that supports a pediment, *ibid.*, bk. 3, chap. 5, 86.

⁵³² Schofield summarises Vitruvius' definition of moulding as a type of decorative band surmounting architraves, door frames, capitals, or columns. *Ibid.*, 407-8.

brackets of the machicolated gallery (Figure 123, 7 & 12) most likely served the same purpose, since they tie individual brackets together into one unit.

Bearing in mind the Florentine characteristics of the 1440 façade, it is striking that Michelozzo adopted two string courses functioning as the imposts of window arches (Figure 123, 3 & 5). It has been suggested that this is a typical Sienese feature, almost never used in Florentine civic palaces.⁵³³ String courses of this type were widely used in Sienese civic palaces, such as the Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo (thirteenth-century, Figure 126) and the Palazzo Pubblico (Figure 127), as well as in domestic buildings, like the Palazzo Tolomei (1205-1267, Figure 128). They can also be found in Montepulciano, as shown in the fourteenth-century façades of the Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo (Figure 129), and of the Palazzo Neri Orselli (fourteenth century, Figure 130). If this arrangement of string courses provides visual evidence for the town's Sienese affiliation, it is significant that the 1440 façade of the Palazzo Comunale continues this tradition, even it was built under Florentine rule. That this Sienese type of string course was permitted in Montepulciano's communal palace reminds us of the town's three-tier bureaucratic structure based on the Sienese administrative model, that remained unchanged even during the fifteenth century.⁵³⁴ The 1440 façade may thus reveal a less centralistic and more tolerant approach adopted by the Florentine government towards its subject commune.

The clear linear and horizontal rhythm of Montepulciano's façade, deriving from the correspondence between string courses on different registers, draws our attention to the influence of classical examples. Amongst the surviving Roman monuments known to contemporaries, the Porta Maggiore (Figure 20) and the Colosseum in Rome (Figure 131) are prominent examples employing horizontal mouldings to support arches. Giuliano da Sangallo's drawing of the Porta Palatino in Turin (Figure 132), presented in the lower part of the folio,

⁵³³ Orsanmichele, the only Florentine civic building adopted string courses supporting arches, was probably an isolated case, Belli, "Il disegno delle facciate nei palazzi fiorentini del Quattrocento," 19.

⁵³⁴ On Montepulciano's three-tier bureaucratic system modelled on the Sienese government, Chapter 2.2, 100-2.

depicts multiple horizontal mouldings stretching across the façade, including those on the stepped impostes of the projecting arch, ultimately contributing to an interlocking spatial unity between different elements of the façade.

Acting as a horizontal counterbalance to the vertical axis created by the central tower, the string courses enhance the grid of the elevation, forming an overall impression of uniformity. It is probably this rigid axiality that succeeded in masking various misalignments on the façade. For instance, the main portal is not precisely centred below the interval between the two blind niches on the *piano nobile* (Figure 133). The intervals between the four windows on the ground floor and the eight on the *piano nobile* are equal, whereas the intervals between the four arched windows on the top storey vary. Such a minor misalignment was most likely due to the restriction imposed by some pre-existing structure or contemporary construction technology.⁵³⁵

To conclude, the ways in which Montepulciano's façade utilised the principles of modularity and axiality to integrate individual elements into a tightly designed entity points to the tendency for overall visual cohesion that characterised Michelozzo's Palazzo Medici built almost at the same time (c.1444-1459),⁵³⁶ as well as other *all'antica* town palaces built after the second half of the fifteenth century,⁵³⁷ such as Alberti's Palazzo Rucellai (1446) in Florence, and the Palazzo Piccolomini in Pienza (1458-1464, Figure 134).⁵³⁸ Although the extent to which

⁵³⁵ Forster noted that windows in the Palazzo Medici in Florence are not perfectly symmetrical. The small openings on the ground floor do not align with the windows on the upper storeys, and the alignment between the main portal and the windows on the *piano nobile* is slightly skewed. Kurt W. Forster, "The Palazzo Rucellai and Questions of Typology in the Development of Renaissance Buildings," *The Art Bulletin* 58, no. 1 (1976): 110. Frommel asserts this kind of imperfection in detail demonstrates that Michelozzo's design process was less mathematical and precise compared with Brunelleschi. Christoph Luitpold Frommel, "Living *all'antica*: Palaces and Villas from Brunelleschi to Bramante," in *The Renaissance from Brunelleschi to Michelangelo: the Representation of Architecture*, ed. Henry Millon and Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 186.

⁵³⁶ The principle façade of Palazzo Medici originally did not have a symmetrical plan. Before Michelangelo walled up the corner loggia in 1517, the central portal flanked by a corner loggia at the one side and a blind door at the other. Preyer, "L'architettura del Palazzo Mediceo," 59, 285. On the construction time of the Palazzo Medici after 1444, see Introduction.

⁵³⁷ Friedman, "Il palazzo e la città. Facciata fiorentine tra XIV e XV secolo," 101.

⁵³⁸ Considerable research has been dedicated to the masonry of the façade of Palazzo Recellai, including the full order of the pilasters and the *opus reticulatum* (the diamond grid). For example see Brenda Preyer, "The Rucellai Palace," in *Giovanni Rucellai ed il suo Zibaldone*, ed. Kent. F. W., Alessandro Perosa, and Brenda Preyer

Montepulciano's 1440 façade, in which no classical order was used,⁵³⁹ can be seen as one of the first Quattrocento Florentine *all'antica* civic palaces is still open to debate, its design testifies to the currency of the castellated civic palace design during the fifteenth century – an issue this thesis intends to address. This palace also demonstrated the hybrid nature of a castellated civic palace integrating fortified and non-fortified elements, underlining an architectural dialogue between military and civic architecture. The pleasing and cohesive look of Montepulciano's castellated Palazzo Comunale may have been the reason why Michelozzo was appointed as the *maestro della muraglia* for the renovation of the Palazzo dei Priori in 1457, seventeen years after his design for Montepulciano's façade.⁵⁴⁰

Finally, while the design of the 1440 façade was based on the prototype of Florence's Palazzo dei Priori, it also included a salient feature of Siene architecture. This façade thus draws our attention to Florence's flexible attitude towards a subject town's cultural and architectural traditions. Additionally, the ways in which the architectural languages of two rival states were amalgamated in Montepulciano's façade strikingly corresponds to the development of the town's political and cultural situation, having been associated firstly with the Siene, and then the Florentines.

4.2 From Presence to Dominance

One of the earliest representations of Michelozzo's new façade is Domenico Beccafumi's painting of St. Agnes (c.1507, Figure 135).⁵⁴¹ Although the proportions of the palace were

(London: The Warburg Institute, 1960); Charles Randall Mack, "The Rucellai Palace: Some New Proposals," *The Art Bulletin* 56, no. 4 (1974): 184-97; Lindow, *The Renaissance Palace in Florence: Magnificence and Splendour in Fifteenth-century Italy*, 88.

⁵³⁹ However, it is worth noting that classical arcades used in the courtyard, interior and the *verone* of the south façade.

⁵⁴⁰ The title of *maestro della muraglia*. Cited by Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 27-8. Morisani dated Michelozzo's work in the Palazzo dei Priori in the 1470s, Lensi, *Palazzo Vecchio*, 63-71; Ottavio Morisani, *Michelozzo architetto* (Torino: Einaudi, 1951), 97.

⁵⁴¹ This painting was recently dated to 1507 and attributed to Domenico Beccafumi based on an archival document in Montepulciano, describing a payment to the artist in that year. Alessandro Angelini, "Una 'Sant'Agnese di Montepulciano' di Domenico Beccafumi. Per una revisione dell'attività giovanile del pittore," *Prospettiva*:

distorted and the size of the main building block was reduced, Beccafumi captured the castellated profile of the palace and its dominance over the townscape. From this perspective, the lofty palace seems to correspond with contemporaries' perception of a fortification, which was 'threatening, rugged and rocky, stubborn and invincible,' according to Alberti.⁵⁴² In a 1424 document, the Florentine government requested machicolation, merlons and towers to be built to reinforce the walled village (*castrum*) of Malmantile, testifying to the defensive importance of these military elements.⁵⁴³ Based on a similar military architectural typology, this section intends to investigate to what extent architectural elements in Montepulciano's communal palace, including the tower, belfry, machicolated gallery, tiered plinth, selection of material and rusticated treatment of the new façade cladding, share military architecture's pursuit of spatial dominance, which may in turn bridge the gap between military and civic architecture in Renaissance architecture historiography.

Tower and Belfry

According to Westfall, the imposing imagery of towers was a common architectural motif of political and military power.⁵⁴⁴ Chapter One pointed to the ways in which Florence's towered communal palaces helped to evoke viewers' reverence for public authority.⁵⁴⁵ By analysing the ways in which the tower was configured in Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale, as well as in

rivista di storia dell'arte antica e moderna, no. 157-158 (2015): 74-93; Andrea Giorgi, "'Domenico dipintore sta in chasa di Lorenzo Beccafumi': di alcuni documenti poliziani intorno al culto di Agnese Segni e ai suoi riflessi in ambito artistico (1506-1507)," *ibid.*: 94-103.

⁵⁴² 'minax aspera rigidaque sit oportet pervicax invicta.' Alberti, *L'architettura: de re aedificatoria*, bk. 5, chap. 4, 351. English translation, *ibid.*, bk. 5, chap. 4, 123.

⁵⁴³ 'In the said *castrum* resistance is not possible because of the machicolations, merlons and towers that have not been built.' The *Dieci* further requested that the fortification should 'be built and completed entirely, according to the standards of good masters, the walls, machicolations, small vaults, towers, vaults, and stairways.' anyone who wishes to complete it at small expense.' Battisti, *Brunelleschi: The Complete Work*, 310.

⁵⁴⁴ C. W. Westfall, "Chivalric Declaration: The Palazzo Ducale in Urbino as a Political Statement," in *Art and Architecture in the Service of Politics*, ed. Henry Millon and Linda Nochlin (Cambridge, Mass. ; London: The MIT Press, 1978), 32-3.

⁵⁴⁵ See Chapter 1.1, 51-4.

key prominent Tuscan seats of government, this section aims to address the conceptual significance of towers in establishing the spatial dominance of a public palace.

A lofty, fortified and apertureless tower-belfry unit is a quintessential motif of Italian communal palaces from the twelfth century onwards. In addition to Florence's two seats of government, prominent examples include the Palazzo dei Priori in Volterra, the Palazzo Vecchio del Podestà in San Gimignano, and the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena. A closer look at quadrangular towers built in Florence and its subject communes reveals their similar configuration.⁵⁴⁶ In addition, the proportional system defined by Arnolfo's Tower seems to set up a prototype for successive civic palaces in Florentine territories. Montanelli and Trachtenberg both noted that the height of the Torre di Arnolfo is equal to the three-storeyed block beneath it (Figure 136).⁵⁴⁷ The same proportion between the tower and the main building block was adopted for the renovation projects of the Palazzo del Podestà after 1345,⁵⁴⁸ as well as Scarperia's Palazzo dei Vicari (Figure 137).⁵⁴⁹

In Montepulciano's elevation (Figure 114), the height of the main building block (17.54 metres from the plinth to the top of the lower level of the machicolated gallery without the projecting merlons) almost equals that of the tower (17.81 metres). In other Tuscan civic palaces, the ratio between the tower and building block varied on a case-by-case basis: for instance, the tower of the Palazzo dei Priori in Volterra, which is on octagonal plan, is only two thirds of the height of the palace; the *Torre del Mangia* in Siena (Figure 68) is almost three times taller than the block underneath. The 1:1 ratio between the tower and the block of Montepulciano's palace

⁵⁴⁶ Yunn, *The Bargello Palace: The Invention of Civic Architecture in Florence*, 191.

⁵⁴⁷ Montanelli, *La tradizione architettonica Toscana*, 61; Trachtenberg, *Dominion of the Eye: Urbanism, Art, and Power in Early Modern Florence*, 160-2.

⁵⁴⁸ According to Yunn, the Palazzo del Podestà after 1345 has a tower of 28.2 *braccia* and the main block of 27.5 *braccia*. Although the proportional scheme is 1:1.16 rather than of a precise 1:1, it can be hypothesised that the proportion 1:1 was aimed for, and that such a small inaccuracy might just have been a result of technological limitation of the time. Yunn, *The Bargello Palace: The Invention of Civic Architecture in Florence*, 163-74. Also see Fanelli, *Le città nella storia d'Italia. Firenze*, 31.

⁵⁴⁹ Romby and Diana, *Una 'terra nuova' nel Mugello: Scarperia: popolazione, insediamenti, ambiente, XIV-XVI secolo*, 9-36, 94. Comune di Scarperia, *Scarperia: storia, arte, artigianato*, 11; Arrighi, *Gli statuti di Scarperia del XV secolo*, 20-4.

was surely not coincidental, providing further evidence for its conceptual link with Florentine architectural convention. In spite of its overall formal resemblance to the Florentine civic architectural prototype, it is worth noting that Montepulciano's belfry also reveals the town's Sienese past. The arched opening of the belfry was supported by piers (Figure 113) that can be seen in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena. As with the string courses functioning as impostes for window arches, this element draws out attention to the influence of Siena that had not completely disappeared during the fifteenth century.

As mentioned in the Introduction, one of the reasons why Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale has been understudied is most likely related to the way its castellated tower resembled medieval fortified residences.⁵⁵⁰ However, it is worth noting that many public palaces built in the second half of the fifteenth century still incorporated towers. For example, the seats of government built in the second half of the fifteenth century, such as Bernardo Rossellino's Palazzo Comunale in Pienza (c.1460, Figure 138),⁵⁵¹ Francesco di Giorgio's Palazzo della Signoria in Jesi (c.1487, Figure 139),⁵⁵² and Bramante's design for the Palazzo dei Tribunali in Rome (Figure 140), all shared the same towered grandeur.⁵⁵³ The adherence to a towered profile for these fifteenth-century public palaces strongly suggests that although the tower was presented in a less intimidating manner, its dominant and authoritative connotations did not disappear in the age of classical revival. In 1526, when the Florentine government decided to demolish lofty towers in the city walls to provide space for low-profile bastions which were more suitable for installing and defending gunpower weapons, the Florentine humanist Benedetto Varchi

⁵⁵⁰ Introduction, 22. On high towers' psychological impact that could not only induce fear and drive off potential aggressors, Lillie, "The Politics of Castellations," 318-9. Also see Chapter 1.1, 59.

⁵⁵¹ Rosellino's communal palace in Pienza and Michelozzo's work in Montepulciano were two rare examples of the fifteenth-century construction of castellated seats of government in Tuscany.

⁵⁵² The tower was built after Francesco di Giorgio's death in 1511. Chierici, *Il Palazzo Italiano dal secolo XI al secolo XIX*, 155.

⁵⁵³ In his reconstruction of Bramante's Palazzo dei Tribunali, Frommel suggested that the building has a projecting central bay protected by crenellation, resembling an *antiporta* in military architecture. Christoph Luitpold Frommel, *Architecture of the Italian Renaissance* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2007), 108. Also see Frommel, "Living *all'antica*: Palaces and Villas from Brunelleschi to Bramante," 193-4.

dismally wrote that ‘the city loses almost all the towers which crowned the walls of Florence like a garland.’⁵⁵⁴ Whether the tower was a threatening and less-desired motif to the Florentines is worth reconsideration.

The Machicolated Gallery and Crenellations

In Montepulciano’s new elevation, two sets of machicolated galleries, one at the top of the main building block and the other above the tower (Figure 141), as well as the protruding crenellation, accentuate the palace’s military bearing. Although projecting machicolated galleries are one of the salient features of fortifications, they were not commonly used in Tuscan communal palaces. In Florence, the Palazzo dei Priori was the only civic palace in which the machicolated galleries had murder holes opened for defensive purposes.⁵⁵⁵ The Palazzo del Podestà in Florence (Figure 142) may at first seem to have had machicolated galleries surmounting the main building block, yet a closer inspection reveals that the console brackets are a decorative element only projecting slightly from the wall and not supporting the battlements above. The projecting machicolated galleries in Scarperia’s Palazzo dei Vicari were added after the 1920s (Figure 143).⁵⁵⁶ In the Palazzo Comunale in Arezzo, only the tower had a projecting machicolated gallery but not the main building block (Figure 144). This means that Montepulciano’s town hall was most likely the only Quattrocento communal palace that adopted this military element.

⁵⁵⁴ ‘S’erano con infinito dispiacere, e rammarico di chiunque ciò vide, quasi tette le Torri, le quali a guisa di ghirlanda le mura di Firenze intorno intorno incoronavano, rovinare, e gittate a terra.’ Benedetto Varchi, "Storia fiorentina," in *Storia fiorentina di messer Benedetto Varchi*, ed. Pietro Martello (Colonia: Pietro Martello, 1721), bk. 2, 26. English translation, see Pepper, "Siege Law, Siege Ritual, and the Symbolism of City Walls in Renaissance Europe," 585, n. 38.

⁵⁵⁵ On events in which soldiers used the projecting galleries to defend the palace from attack, Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 12.

⁵⁵⁶ The Duecento Palazzo dei Vicari featured only a battlemented roofline. Comune di Scarperia, *Scarperia: storia, arte, artigianato*, 27-8. Many projecting machicolated galleries in Italian historical buildings were nineteenth-century renovations aiming at imitating the castellated component of gothic palaces. These type of defensive components were fake (*falsi*) since they only kept the formal configuration but lost the defensive function. Cardini and Raveggi, *Palazzi pubblici di Toscana: i centri minori*, 181-2.

However, the projecting galleries in Montepulciano's town hall do not serve defensive purposes as no functional murder holes (*cadutoi*) were presented in the galleries. The square arrow holes (Figure 145) opened between the console brackets resembling arrow slits are blind. Incorporating the machicolated galleries and projecting corbels might have reflected contemporaries' perception, associating the galleries' projecting and intimidating profile with the notion of political and military power, as Quattrocento *cassoni* painters demonstrated.⁵⁵⁷ This symbolic and aesthetic association is further suggested by the elegant and ornamental profile of the corbels. While the projecting brackets supporting the machicolated galleries in Florence's Palazzo dei Priori, as well as in Montepulciano's communal palace, are both of simple triangular shape, Arezzo's communal tower (Figure 146) and Montepulciano's thirteenth-century Porta Gozzano (Figure 147) have elegant cyma recta profiles. The twofold role of machicolation as a military measure and an ornamental motif is suggested by the same type of stepped brackets used in the Fortress of Brunelleschi in Vicopisano (after 1436, Figure 148),⁵⁵⁸ and San Gimignano's Nuovo Palazzo del Popolo (Figure 149). The sixteenth-century Casa dei Carracci in Bologna (Figure 150) has an ornamental archivolt framing the arcade of the projecting galleries, whose function was most likely to buttress the overhanging upper storey rather than to offer any practical means of defence.⁵⁵⁹ In Montepulciano's new façade, the whole machicolated galleries resemble an entablature with arches of the machicolation functioning like an architrave, the plain horizontal strip in the middle framed by string courses functioning like a frieze and the battlements acting as a cornice or crown on top. The way in which the projecting galleries unify the principal façade suggests its similar role to the massive cornice presented of the Palazzo Medici.⁵⁶⁰

⁵⁵⁷ Chapter 1.3, 67-81.

⁵⁵⁸ Battisti, *Brunelleschi: The Complete Work*, 233-43.

⁵⁵⁹ Chierici, *Il Palazzo Italiano dal secolo XI al secolo XIX*, 158.

⁵⁶⁰ Murry, *The Architecture of the Italian Renaissance*, 68.

In addition to the machicolated galleries, crenellation is another common motif in civic palace design that derived from military architecture, although the extent to which it still bears a defensive function is worth asking.⁵⁶¹ For instance, while the battlements run across the whole principal façade of Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale facing the Piazza Grande, they only partly cover the north and south blocks, and are absent from the rear wing. In the thirteenth-century Palazzo Comunale in Suvereto (first half of the thirteenth century, Figure 151),⁵⁶² the crenellation surmounting the parapet on the rooftop exaggerated the height of the façade, yet no curtain wall or galleries were built from which the defenders could hide behind the battlement and guard the palace. Venice's Ca d'Oro (1421-c.1430, Figure 152) is another example of the merlons' ornamental role, in which the alternative high and low merlons not only embellish the façade, but also create an upward extending rhythm that unifies the asymmetrical design.⁵⁶³ The patron Marino Contarini even specified the way in which various types of merlons should be incorporated: 'the round and semi-circular merlons underneath those of the floral-shaped,'⁵⁶⁴ clearly underlining their primarily aesthetic purpose. Michelangelo's Porta Pia (c.1561, Figure 153) provides one example of battlement's symbolic use in a civic monument.⁵⁶⁵

Although these fake merlons were often called 'redundant' in civic architectural studies, taking into account the ways in which Quattrocento *cassoni* painters used machicolated galleries and crenellation to enhance the civic overtone of subjects,⁵⁶⁶ Montepulciano's castellated façade

⁵⁶¹ Pepper, "The Meaning of the Renaissance Fortress," 3-12; Francesco Paolo Fiore and Manfredo Tafuri, *Francesco di Giorgio architetto* (Milano: Electa, 1993), 386.

⁵⁶² Cardini and Ravaggi, *Palazzi pubblici di Toscana: i centri minori*, 170.

⁵⁶³ Deborah Howard, *The Architectural History of Venice* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2015), 103-6.

⁵⁶⁴ For example, a document 15 September 1431: 'doratura alle palle dei merli e al toro che sta sotto i fiori dei medesimi, e alla rosa sotto gli archetti.' Cited by Royal Institute of British Architects, ed. *La Ca d'Oro. Le sue decorazioni policrome*, vol. 34, Archivio Veneto (Venezia: 1887), 123.

⁵⁶⁵ On Michelangelo's original design that might have had a stronger fortified profile, Elisabeth B. Mac Dougall, "Michelangelo and the Porta Pia," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 19, no. 3 (1960): 100.

⁵⁶⁶ See Chapter 1.3, 69-81.

seems to testify to the iconography of fortifications, lending the palace an impregnable and dignified appearance. The castellated tower of Pienza's Palazzo Comunale, in which the tower originally had a projecting battlement at the top of the tower,⁵⁶⁷ further points to the importance of military architectural components in the civic palace practice during the fifteenth century.

Travertine Masonry

According to a rubric of 7 December 1440, the Montepulciano *operai* of the Palazzo Comunale renovation noted that they: 'wished to rebuild the façade of our palace with dressed stone, that we intend to extract from our own land.'⁵⁶⁸ Starting with a consideration of travertine as used in the fifteenth century, and compared with examples from ancient Rome and Florence, the aim of this section is also to probe the political, civic and aesthetic significance of Montepulciano's rusticated travertine cladding.

Many ancient Roman monuments surviving in the fifteenth century were made of travertine, such as the Porta Maggiore, the rear wall of the Forum of Augustus, as well as civic monuments such as the Colosseum and the Teatro di Marcello, which explains why travertine is also known as *pietra romana*.⁵⁶⁹ Between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, travertine was often used for major civic palaces in regions where the material was available, such as the Umbrian civic palaces, the Palazzo dei Priori in Perugia (Figure 154), the Palazzo del Popolo and the Palazzo del Capitano in Todi (Figure 155) and the Palazzo dei Priori in Assisi (Figure 156).⁵⁷⁰ In the fifteenth century, Pius II praised travertine for its whiteness, comparable to marble.⁵⁷¹ As

⁵⁶⁷ Mack, *Pienza. The Creation of a Renaissance City*, 117.

⁵⁶⁸ ASM, "Copialettere," vol. 3, 91r. 7 December 1440. For the full transcription, see Vol. 2, Appendix 2, doc. 3. Also see Chapter 2.2, 111.

⁵⁶⁹ It is suggested that from the emperor Tiberius (A.D. 14-37) onwards, rusticated travertine had become the most important building material for public construction. Rodolico, *Le pietre delle città d'Italia*, 364; Acocella, *L'architettura di Pietra. Antichi e nuovi magisteri costruttivi*, 78. On the discussion of the available Roman sources during the Renaissance: Ackerman, "The Tuscan/Rustic Order: A Study in the Metaphorical Language of Architecture," 31-2.

⁵⁷⁰ Rodolico, *Le pietre delle città d'Italia*, 365. Filarete recorded that travertine (Filarete spelled it *tevertino*) was available in the River Adda in Lombardy, as well as in Rome. Filarete, *Trattato di architettura*, vol. 1, bk. 3, 14v, 65-66.

⁵⁷¹ In his *Commentarii*, Pius II praised the travertine façade of the Cathedral in Pienza, cited from Mario Bevilacqua,

Bevilacqua noted, in the eye of contemporary viewers, white stones illuminated a building and lent them a dignified look.⁵⁷² This may partly explain why in a *predella* panel of Saint Benedict (c.1480, Figure 157), the painter Neroccio de' Landi highlighted all of the identifiable Roman monuments in bright white.

Bearing in mind travertine's popularity in Umbria and Lazio, it is striking that although travertine is available in the Valdichiana,⁵⁷³ it was not a common material for public buildings. Amongst the communal palaces in the Valdichiana where original fabric is still visible various materials were used, including sandstone for the Palazzo Comunale in Cortona, and brick cladding in Sinalunga, and stone rubble for the façade of Lucignano's communal palace, with no preference for travertine. While the higher cost of travertine may account for the selection of less expensive materials in many small towns, it is worth noting that even in a more powerful and affluent commune like Siena, travertine was only used to accentuate decorative details rather than for the whole structure. The Palazzo Pubblico and most of the main portals of the city walls in Siena, such as the Porta Romana (Figure 158), combined brick and travertine, presenting a contrasting bichrome effect.⁵⁷⁴ It is almost certain that Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale was the only communal palace in the Chiana valley to use travertine to cover the whole façade.

Travertine was the preferred material of the Poliziani.⁵⁷⁵ In his *Chronicle of Montepulciano* (c.1464), Benci noted that the *Sasso* was formed geologically of a type of whiteish limestone similar in colour to travertine (*sasso bianchiccio, simile nel colore al Trivertino*).⁵⁷⁶ Benci, who

"Mura di Luce, facciate di diamanti. Metafore del bianco nell'architettura del Quattrocento," *Opus Incertum* 2 (2016): 34.

⁵⁷² Ibid., 34-7.

⁵⁷³ Francesco di Giorgio Martini mentioned that travertine was found in the Sienese contado: 'Di questa ancora si trova al Bagno a Vignone nel contado di Siena (...)' Francesco di Giorgio Martini, *Trattati di architettura ingegneria e arte militare*, vol. 2, 312. Also see Rodolico, *Le pietre delle città d'Italia*, 287-92.

⁵⁷⁴ Sinding-Larsen noted the structural benefit of placing heavier stone below and lighter brick above. Sinding-Larsen, "A Tale of Two Cities: Florentine and Roman Visual Context for Fifteenth-Century Palaces," 192.

⁵⁷⁵ Rodolico, *Le pietre delle città d'Italia*, 292-6.

⁵⁷⁶ 'Termina la cima del Monte in un sasso bianchiccio, simile nel colore al Trivertino [sic: travertino].' In Benci's

documented the town's civic and ecclesiastical buildings, underscores the importance of travertine, referring to the Palazzo Comunale 'with its façade and tower of travertine, it is a grand building, its architecture not unpleasant.'⁵⁷⁷ Other travertine buildings listed include the Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo, the campanile of the duomo, Michelozzo's Church of Sant'Agostino, the Church of San Francesco, of Sant'Agnese, and of Santa Maria dei Servi, as well as the temple of San Biagio that cost a hundred thousand *ducats* (1518, Figure 159).⁵⁷⁸ In addition to those directly mentioned by Benci, the Florentine *càssero*, city walls, and the fortified gates such as the Porta delle Farine were all built of travertine. To the contemporaries' eyes, the travertine façade of Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale was probably evidence of local identity. That this architectural tradition survived during the fifteenth century further testified to the continuity of a local cultural identity in Montepulciano, which had not been completely suppressed under the predominant Florence.

Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that the rough naturalistic rustication covering the palace's ground-floor and the combination of two types of masonry are unprecedented in the town (Figure 160). Prior to further investigation of the palace stonework, some clarification of the term 'rustication' or 'rusticated masonry' is needed, since terms in relation to types of masonry were ambiguous during the fifteenth century.⁵⁷⁹ In fifteenth-century texts, the term *pietre rustiche* did not indicate projecting masonry. Rather, in his treatise (c.1461-1464), Filarete

text, he spelled travertine as *trevertini* rather than *travertino*. Benci, "Storia di Montepulciano," 1.

⁵⁷⁷ 'Seguì poi in piazza quella del palazzo pubblico, con la facciata, e torre di trevertini [sic: travertino], edifizii d'apparenza, e d'architettura non ingrata. L'altra overo siede il Commessario, ed i ministri della giustizia [*i.e.* the Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo], con una scalea di trevertini, ...del campanile del Duomo, situato nella medesima piazza, con cantonate di trevertino, ..., La Chiesa di S. Agostino con facciata, e scalea similmente di trevertino alla magnifica; quella di San Francesco, ..., di S. Agnese; e de' Servi. ... L'altra pure nominata la Madonna di S. Biagio, tempio dentro, e fuori di trevertini, architettura del Sangallo, insegne in quella professione, di spesa di centomila ducati, e di vantaggio.' *ibid.*, bk. 6, 132.

⁵⁷⁸ If Benci's record is correct, it means that the temple cost twice more than Pius II's Palazzo Piccolomini in Pienza (50,000 ducats).

⁵⁷⁹ Eck, "Alberti's *De re Aedificatoria*," 187-9; Belli, "Forma e naturalità nel bugnato fiorentino del Quattrocento," 9-10; Sinding-Larsen, "A Tale of Two Cities: Florentine and Roman Visual Context for Fifteenth-Century Palaces," 167.

adopted it to describe substandard stone, such as tufo and other soft lime or sandstone.⁵⁸⁰ The most common contemporary words referring to masonry with a projecting face were *bugne*, *bozze* or the phrase *pietra a bozza*, or *abbozzata*, although these terms did not specify the design and pattern of the face.⁵⁸¹ Alberti did not mention projecting rustication in his treatises. One of the earliest attempts to distinguish different types of rustication is again from Filarete, who noted that a fortified façade should be built with bossed stone (*pietre sbozzate*) in contrast to those façades facing a moat or a ditch which should be clad in dressed stone (*pietra pulite*).⁵⁸² However, Filarete struggled to adopt proper terms to specify the gradated masonry of Palazzo Medici on Via Larga (Figure 161), only vaguely commenting that various types of stone finish were used.⁵⁸³ He did not distinguish the ground-floor naturalistic rustication from the drafted masonry (*bugnato liscio*) on the *piano nobile*,⁵⁸⁴ or from that of the smooth ashlar on the top story. Francesco di Giorgio's treatises (c.1482) provide evidence for a typology of rustication based on shapes of each block's projecting face, imitating the shape of diamonds (*diamanti*) or

⁵⁸⁰ 'Ècci di quelle altre spezie che sono più rustiche, pur fanno qualche utilità, come dire pastori e gente che stanno per li boschi. E così è ancora una certa spezie di pietre che si chiama tufo, quasi pietra matta, e simili generazioni di pietre che non sono buone a farne calcina, neanche belle, ma pur sono utili quando l'uomo non ha d'altra ragione, e questo sono come quelli rusticissimi.' Filarete, *Trattato di architettura*, vol. 1, bk. 3, 17v, 76. '

⁵⁸¹ For instance, the masonry on the ground-floor of Palazzo Strozzi was described as 'bozzi.' Cited from Belli, "Forma e naturalità nel bugnato fiorentino del Quattrocento," 9, n.5; Clarke, *Roman House - Renaissance Palaces: Inventing Antiquity in Fifteenth Century Italy*, 187. The term *bugnato rustico* was not used until 1537, when Sebastiano Serlio published his treatises in which he illustrated six types of rustic ornament (*ornamento rustico*). Sebastiano Serlio, *Regole generali di architettura* (Venetia, 1559), 5. On the significance of Serlio's typology of rustication: Ackerman, "The Tuscan/Rustic Order: A Study in the Metaphorical Language of Architecture," 15-34; Belli, "Forma e naturalità nel bugnato fiorentino del Quattrocento," 9-11; Clarke, *Roman House - Renaissance Palaces: Inventing Antiquity in Fifteenth Century Italy*, 187-8.

⁵⁸² 'E così si fe' tutto di pietre sbozzate dalla scarpa in su e da quello in giù, quanto il fosso tiene, tutto di pietre pulite.' Filarete, *Trattato di architettura*, vol. 1, bk. 6, 160.

⁵⁸³ 'pietre fini... di varie intagliate.' *ibid.*, vol. 2, bk. 25, 688.

⁵⁸⁴ The *bugnato liscio* has a levelled projecting face and perpendicular edge of each block. However, it was achieved by incising channels on a flat stucco or stone surface. Ackerman thus suggested to call this technique 'drafted masonry' to distinguish from rustication. Ackerman, "The Tuscan/Rustic Order: A Study in the Metaphorical Language of Architecture," 30. Following Ackerman's argument, Clarke also treated drafted masonry another technique, Clarke, *Roman House - Renaissance Palaces: Inventing Antiquity in Fifteenth Century Italy*, 194-7. On the development of the flat face and geometric pattern of drafted masonry (*bugnato liscio*) on the Palazzo Rucellai, Belli, "Il disegno delle facciate nei palazzi fiorentini del Quattrocento," 23-4.

that of feathers (*spiumati*, Figure 162).⁵⁸⁵ Yet, the rugged and untrimmed style of rustication used on Montepulciano's façade was not even mentioned.

The type of rustication used on Montepulciano's 1440 façade was certainly derived from Florence, where the same type of irregular and coarse textured rusticated masonry is distinct from that of other regions and cities which tended to imitate geometric and symmetrical patterns.⁵⁸⁶ Although scholars are still debating the origins of Florentine naturalistic rustication, it was predominant in Florentine urban palaces from the thirteenth century onwards.⁵⁸⁷ One of the earliest surviving examples of this type of rustication is the Palazzo dei Priori (Figure 163), in which the roughly-hewn blocks were used over three-storeys on all three façades, giving 'the expression of a symbiosis of architectural regularity and naturalistic spontaneity.'⁵⁸⁸ According to Sinding-Larsen, naturalistic rustication was less popular during the middle of the fourteenth century. The Palazzo Davanzati (after 1350s, Figure 116) imposed a relatively subtle and less rugged texture. In the 1370s, naturalistic masonry was revived and developed into a 'severe style' as exemplified by the Palazzo degli Alessandri on Borgo degli Albizzi (c.1378, Figure 164). This masonry is known for its relatively flat projecting face compared with that on the

⁵⁸⁵ 'Ornati i suoi ripieni di bugne o quadrate ricinte pietra intagliate a forma di calcielli [sic: cancelli] o diamanti, spiumati o altre diversà d'opere, sicondo la degnità loro.' Francesco di Giorgio Martini, *Trattati di architettura ingegneria e arte militare*, vol. 1, 89.

⁵⁸⁶ Sinding-Larsen, "A Tale of Two Cities: Florentine and Roman Visual Context for Fifteenth-Century Palaces," 167, Plate II, III; Belli, "Ex quadratis lapidibus.' I paramenti bugnati nell'architettura del Quattrocento a Firenze," 72. Also see Clarke, *Roman House - Renaissance Palaces: Inventing Antiquity in Fifteenth Century Italy*, 167-8.

⁵⁸⁷ This chapter follows Sinding-Larsen's rustication typology. Sinding-Larsen, "A Tale of Two Cities: Florentine and Roman Visual Context for Fifteenth-Century Palaces," 169-70. On the plausible architectural model for the Palazzo Vecchio's rustication, see *ibid.*, 169-72; Nicholas Adams and Laurie Nussdorfer, "The Italian City, 1400-1600," in *The Renaissance from Brunelleschi to Michelangelo: the Representation of Architecture*, ed. Henry Millon and Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 210; Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 13-4. *ibid.*, 13, n. 82; Kent, "Palaces, Politics and Society in Fifteenth-Century Florence," 54, n. 71; Lansing, *The Florentine Magnates: Lineage and Faction in a Medieval Commune*, 85-7. The Palazzo dei Cerchi provides us with one of the earliest examples of Florentine rusticated masonry. However, many palaces were demolished during the internal wars between the White and Black Guelphs. Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze*, vol. 2, 707.

⁵⁸⁸ Sinding-Larsen, "A Tale of Two Cities: Florentine and Roman Visual Context for Fifteenth-Century Palaces," 171. Belli, "Forma e naturalità nel bugnato fiorentino del Quattrocento," 14.

Palazzo dei Priori. Then, the ‘neo-naturalistic’ type is another variation of the Florentine town hall’s masonry, widely used in civic and private buildings in the 1390s.

Subsequently, naturalistic rustication was used in a group of private palaces built between the 1400s and 1430s.⁵⁸⁹ The Palazzo da Uzzano on Via de’Bardi (after 1411-1429, Figure 165), and the Palazzo Scolari on the corner of Borgo degli Albizzi and Via de’Giraldi (c.1400-1430, Figure 166) generally feature a similar craggy and uneven profile with only subtle alterations on the treatment of the face, edge (the sides of the block projecting from the wall) and degree of projection. The rusticated masonry of these palaces is characterised by the broken transitioning edges, wide and even joints between each block, about 10 centimetre projections from the wall, and the height of the blocks – varying from 15 – 50 cm.⁵⁹⁰ In his analysis of ideal fortification, Alberti suggested that ‘the base of the citadel must be solidly constructed out of huge stones.’⁵⁹¹ It can thus be hypothesised that the Florentines’ taste of civic palaces was at least partly shaped and influenced by military architecture. Reinforcing palace façades with rough naturalistic rustication might have lent the palaces an inviolable and robust appearance, so that they acquired some of the characteristics of a fortress, even if they lacked towers, machicolation and crenellation.

⁵⁸⁹ Belli noted that the pre-Medicean palaces have masonry courses smaller than 58 cm, such as the Palazzo Scolari (26 – 44 cm) and the Palazzo da Uzzano (22 – 50 cm). On the typological comparison between Quattrocento rustication before the Palazzo Medici, Belli, "Ex quadratis lapidibus.' I paramenti bugnati nell'architettura del Quattrocento a Firenze," 109-11. Preyer’s study on Florence’s private palaces built between the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century, including Palazzo Cavalcanti (c.1390), Palazzo Uzzano and Palazzo di Alberto di Zanobi seem to conform to the naturalistic type. Brenda Preyer, "The 'chasa overo palagio' of Alberto di Zanobi: A Florentine Palace of about 1400 and Its Later Remodeling," *The Art Bulletin* 65, no. 3 (1983): 387-92.

⁵⁹⁰ The Palazzo Medici’s rustication is much larger in size, its courses reaching the unprecedented height of 58 cm (about one Florentine *braccia*); its blocks jutting 30 cm out from the wall is much evident than pre-1440 palaces. Furthermore, it set up a new prototype of rustication that later developed into the cushion, or barrel-shaped rustication employed in the Palazzo Strozzi. Belli, "Forma e naturalità nel bugnato fiorentino del Quattrocento," 23; Belli, "Ex quadratis lapidibus.' I paramenti bugnati nell'architettura del Quattrocento a Firenze," 117-8, n. 70; 138; Sinding-Larsen, "A Tale of Two Cities: Florentine and Roman Visual Context for Fifteenth-Century Palaces," 180-8.

⁵⁹¹ 'Arcis podium ponetur solidum, vastis lapidibus.' Alberti, *L'architettura: de re aedificatoria*, bk. 5, chap. 4, 351. English translation, Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, bk. 5, chap. 4, 123.

On the ground-floor of Montepulciano's communal palace (Figure 160 & Figure 167), the rocky and untrimmed texture, as if imitating the sketchy effect of freshly quarried stone, is reminiscent of the Palazzo dei Priori in Florence. Some blocks seem to be close to the severe-style of Palazzo degli Alessandri. The most straightforward prototype, however, probably derived from Florence's early fifteenth-century domestic palaces such as the Palazzo da Uzzano and the Palazzo Scolari. The masonry courses of the Montepulciano façade seem to have been designed to make the building look more Florentine. On the ground-floor, nineteen courses of stone are laid above the plinth of the palace. The length of each block varies one from the other, hence no regular grid pattern is formed by the coursed masonry. The height of the courses decreases towards the top creating a type of perspectival recession. The eight courses below the springing line of the main portal's arch being generally taller than the others from the arch impost to the first-floor string course, which was a solution developed in Florence in the fourteenth century.⁵⁹² Similar voussoirs, with pronounced profiles projecting from the wall, arranged independently and not integrated with the surrounding courses, can also be found in the Palazzo degli Alessandri, Palazzo da Uzzano, and Palazzo Medici. Moreover, the fact that the voussoirs of the ground-floor portal were arranged independently from the adjacent courses, and that the apex of the arch cuts into the horizontal course above and surrounding it (Figure 168), underlines their debt to Florentine architectural models, rather than to a Hohenstaufen example such as the Castello dell'Imperatore in Prato (Figure 169); or to Roman models, such as the portal on the rear wall of the Forum of Augustus (Figure 19), in which the apex was trimmed by the course above it.

The bipartite design of the façade, *i.e.* having naturalistic rustication terminated at the *piano nobile*, might have reflected another Florentine civic architectural tradition developed in the

⁵⁹² Sinding-Larsen, "A Tale of Two Cities: Florentine and Roman Visual Context for Fifteenth-Century Palaces," 181.

fourteenth century. In 1389-1391, when the Florentine government intended to create a harmonious urban view on the city's thoroughfare Via dei Calzaiuoli, they employed naturalistic rustication to renovate the ground-floor façades of private palaces and public space (Figure 170).⁵⁹³ The upper storeys retained flat ashlar or plastered walls partly due to the high cost of imposing masonry over the whole façade. This inconsistency can also be accounted for by the custom of adding projecting galleries (*sporti*) or jetties (*tettoie*) between the ground and first floor, which would have blocked a building's upper registers from public view at street level.⁵⁹⁴ This bipartite design was common in Florence from the fourteenth century onwards, and is different from the tripartite gradated scheme (*bugnato a scalare*) applied to the Palazzo Medici on Via Larga.⁵⁹⁵ From this perspective, the bipartite façade design of Montepulciano's town hall, as well as the naturalistic rustication on its ground floor shed light on the cultural and architectural dialogue between centre and periphery. It might also have been a deliberate Florentine architectural quotation to create a shared townscape evoking the presence of Florence in its distant territories.

While Montepulciano's rustication mostly conforms to the features of Florence's pre-1440 rustication, another type of rustication founded on Montepulciano's façade suggests its modernity. This type of rustication features a more curved, slightly roughened profile and

⁵⁹³ The ground-floor façade between the Palazzo dei Priori and Orsanmichele should have a new cladding, 'facies ... bugnose et testas picchatas a gradina.' Cite from Friedman, "Il palazzo e la città. Facciata fiorentine tra XIV e XV secolo," 103. Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre*, 92-3. Sinding-Larsen, "A Tale of Two Cities: Florentine and Roman Visual Context for Fifteenth-Century Palaces," 186-7; Preyer, "The 'chasa overo palagio' of Alberto di Zanobi: A Florentine Palace of about 1400 and Its Later Remodeling," 387; Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio, 1298-1532. Government, Architecture, and Imagery in the Civic Palace of the Florentine Republic*, 83; Belli, "Il disegno delle facciate nei palazzi fiorentini del Quattrocento," 19-20.

⁵⁹⁴ On the custom of building *sporti* in Florence. Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze*, vol. 7, 494-5. According to Friedman, thirteenth and fourteenth-century palace façades mainly focused on the ground floor, whereas the Palazzo Medici was one of the earliest examples that abandoned projecting galleries and jetties and intended, presenting the full façade to the viewers. Friedman, "Il palazzo e la città. Facciata fiorentine tra XIV e XV secolo," 105-7.

⁵⁹⁵ According to Belli, the tripartite gradation of rustication in the Palazzo Medici was an exceptional example in the mid-fifteenth century, and only became popular after the end of the century. Belli, "Il disegno delle facciate nei palazzi fiorentini del Quattrocento," 20. Also see Preyer, "L'architettura del Palazzo Mediceo," 59.

projects further from the wall (Figure 171), which, to an extent, is closer to that of the Palazzo Medici (Figure 172) than to the pre-1440 models. Although compared with those in the Palazzo Medici, the rustication on Montepulciano's façade is smaller in size, the recession is less strong and the deep, and slanting chisel strokes are absent. Its similarity chiefly lies in the attempt to sculpture each block as if it were an individual piece of work rather than a mere cladding for the whole structure, as an agent of monumentality.⁵⁹⁶ That rustication was seen an artistic motif is suggested by fifteenth-century *cassoni* panels. In *The Presentation at the Temple* (1423, Figure 173), Gentile da Fabriano depicted various types of rustication, including the diamond-shaped, drafted, and naturalistic styles. Apollonio di Giovanni's *Story of Aeneas* (Figure 174) further testifies to an awareness of the visual impression made by rough masonry, carefully outlining the projecting surface of each individual block in the palace where Queen Dido resided. Considering that the construction of Montepulciano's façade most certainly began before the Palazzo Medici, it is possible that Michelozzo might have treated Montepulciano's town hall as an experimental project for devising and testing out a new type of rustication for the Medici's town house.

While the form of rustication on Montepulciano's façade closely adhered to Florentine architectural prototype, it is important to note that travertine was not a common building material in Florence.⁵⁹⁷ The whiteness of the travertine façade in Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale, as well as the visual contrast built around combining two types of masonry, might have referred to classical examples. Viewers' perception of masonry's classical overtones is suggested by the Golden Gate depicted in Giotto's Scrovegni chapel (Figure 175). While the semi-circular opening with decorative archivolt surmounted by merlons probably derived

⁵⁹⁶ Friedman, "Il palazzo e la città. Facciata fiorentine tra XIV e XV secolo," 106.

⁵⁹⁷ In Florence the sandstones and soft limestones such as pietra forte, pietra serena, and pietra bigia are the most common building materials available locally. Rodolico, *Le pietre delle città d'Italia*, 239-42. Also see Agostino del Riccio, *Istoria delle pietre*, ed. Raniero Gnoli and Attilia Sironi (Torino: Umberto Allemandi, 1996), LXXXIII. Della Pietra Bigia di Fiesole; LXXXV. Della Pietra Forte, 120-1.

from Roman model such as the Arch of Augustus in Rimini (Figure 176), the lower register of the wall below the springing is faced with rusticated masonry, whose uneven and coarse texture adds a visual *varietà* to the building that ultimately contributes to the monumentality and strength of the gate and the setting for the protagonists.⁵⁹⁸

Of ancient Roman monuments, the Porta Maggiore might have particular importance as the combination of strongly projecting rustication on the lower register against the ashlar stonework on the upper register is distinctive (Figure 177). Although it was originally built as part of an aqueduct, Porta Maggiore was later integrated into the city wall system by order of Claudius.⁵⁹⁹ Having occupied a strategic point in Rome linking two thoroughfares Via Prenestina and Via Labicana, it is suggested that the Porta Maggiore was a civic monument of the emperor. The defensive and civic functions of this monumental gate may have served as a classical prototype for Michelozzo and his design, who most certainly understood well the strategic value of Montepulciano in defending Florence's south-eastern frontier, as well as the symbolic meaning of the new palace façade as a triumphal monument commemorating Florence's military success at the Battle of Anghiari.⁶⁰⁰

In addition to the political and civic connotations of the mixture of two types of masonry, the novelty of Michelozzo's design also lies in its consideration of the visual effect of building materials. Although travertine was used throughout the façade, when the light hits it the shadows created by the craggy surface and recessions of the rustication contrast with the

⁵⁹⁸ On the classical and idealistic characteristics of Giotto's architecture in the Scrovegni fresco cycle. Benelli, *The Architecture in Giotto's Paintings*, 72.

⁵⁹⁹ Acocella, *L'architettura di Pietra. Antichi e nuovi magisteri costruttivi*, 78-9.

⁶⁰⁰ Michelozzo most likely worked for the *Ufficiali di Torre* in the 1460s. His responsibility most likely included maintaining buildings and fortifications, public infrastructure such as roads, bridges, channels and hydro system within the Florentine territories, as well as solving the flooding in the Arno River. Ferrara and Quinterio, *Michelozzo di Bartolomeo*, 105-21. On the Florentine military overtones of Montepulciano's 1440 renovation project, Chapter 3.4, 160-3.

brightness of the smooth and seamless ashlar on the higher registers. Arguably, this rich visual contrast might have corresponded to a contemporary artistic preference of *varietà*.⁶⁰¹

Although Montepulciano's elevation did not accommodate classical columns, the round-arched windows used on the two upper storeys draw our attention to the façade's differences from Florentine prototypes. Most Florentine town palaces, including the Trecento Palazzo del Podestà and Palazzo dei Priori (Figure 178), as well as the Quattrocento Palazzo Medici (Figure 179), Palazzo Rucellai (Figure 180), and Palazzo Pazzi (after 1476, Figure 181) adopted elegant *bifore* or *trifore* windows.⁶⁰² By contrast, the simple arched windows with semi-circular intradoses in Montepulciano's façade might have been intended to make the palace look more antique. These rounded arch openings and the ashlar wall form a horizontal rhythm of plain and void, which echoes the schema visible in the Porta Maggiore, as well as in the Porta dei Borsari in Verona (A.D. 265, Figure 182). The innovative ways of incorporating local traditions of utilising travertine, with Florentine naturalistic rustication, as well as antique architectural language, not only underlines Michelozzo's artistic creativity;⁶⁰³ but it also points

⁶⁰¹ It is worth noting that placing rough rusticated revetment on the lower storey, and the more elegant and smoother on the upper storey was a salient feature in Cinquecento civic palace design. In his treatise, architectural theorist Serlio praised the visual effect of juxtaposing the naturalistic roughness with the classical orders, which was 'very pleasing to the eye, and represented in itself great strength,' and was suitable for a grand fortress.' Serlio, *D'architettura*, bk. 4, 133v. English translation, Sebastiano Serlio, "Tutte l'opere d'architettura et prospetiva," in *Sebastiano Serlio on Architecture*, ed. Vaughan Hart and Peter Hicks (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1996), bk. 4, 133v. Also see Ackerman, "The Tuscan/Rustic Order: A Study in the Metaphorical Language of Architecture," 28. Prominent examples include Bramante's Palazzo Caprini (House of Raphael, c.1510), Giulio Romano's garden loggia at the Palazzo del Te (c.1526-1534).

⁶⁰² For instance, the Papal Palace in Viterbo (1266-7) has decorative *bifore* windows in the loggia. On the typical use of *trifore* windows in prestigious buildings from the thirteenth century onwards, Belli, "Il disegno delle facciate nei palazzi fiorentini del Quattrocento," 20-1. According to Sinding-Larsen, in Florence the Palazzo dei Priori and the Palazzo del Podestà are among the earliest secular buildings employed *bifore* windows: Sinding-Larsen, "A Tale of Two Cities: Florentine and Roman Visual Context for Fifteenth-Century Palaces," 171. Hyman, *Fifteenth Century Florentine Studies: The Palazzo Medici; and a Ledger for the Church of San Lorenzo*, 163.

⁶⁰³ According to Francesco di Giorgio, innovation was the most important factor in architectural practice, outweighing written architectural principles: 'Tre sono le principali spezie di templi, quanto alla sua forma e figura, alle quali infinite particolari figure si possono ridurre, secondo infinite invenzioni che nella mente dell'architetto possono occorrere.' Francesco di Giorgio Martini, *Trattati di architettura ingegneria e arte militare*, 372-3.

to this Palazzo Comunale's 'avant-garde classical enthusiasms' that was probably comparable with his Palazzo Medici.⁶⁰⁴

Tiered-Plinth

Another architectural element that consolidates the spatial dominance and monumentality of the Palazzo Comunale is the built-in tiered plinth in front of the building, which also functioned as a street bench (*muricciuolo*) and seating for public ceremonies.⁶⁰⁵ The tiered plinth consists of two steps (Figure 183). The tread of the lower step projects about half a metre from the façade and extends along the whole west wall, interrupted only by the main portal is (Figure 184). From the south end (to the left of the photograph), where it almost touches the ground, the riser of the lower step gradually increases in height towards the higher north end towards the Vicolo del Leone (to the right of the photograph). The upper step, whose semi-cylindrical edge acts as a string course running along the entire length of the façade, creates an even, clearly-defined base line one braccio above the lower tier.⁶⁰⁶ The plinth reduces the distorting effect of the Sasso's slope site, creating an level baseline for the rusticated revetment, which was ideal for high-rise buildings.⁶⁰⁷ Enhancing the corner would have given the building a dignified look appropriate to its function, according to Alberti.⁶⁰⁸ Also, it echoes many palaces and fortifications with a scarped base, such as the tower of the Palazzo dei Vicari in Scarperia

⁶⁰⁴ Kent adopted this phrase when she summarised the importance of the Palazzo Medici in the architectural evolution of Florentine civic palaces. Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre*, 225-6.

⁶⁰⁵ Yvonne Elet, "Seats of Power: The Outdoor Benches of Early Modern Florence," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 61, no. 4 (2002): 445-53. It is suggested that in order to enhance the monumentality of the west façade of the Palazzo del Podestà in Florence, stone base was added during the renovation between 1291-1308. Yunn, *The Bargello Palace: The Invention of Civic Architecture in Florence*, 104.

⁶⁰⁶ The mouldings over the treads of the lower and upper steps are different in shape. This structure must have been reworked many times as indicated by the different state of weathering between the cut stone used in the steps and that of the rest of the façade.

⁶⁰⁷ For Vasari, having a levelled podium as the foundation was a wise and practical means to lend greater stability to the structure solution. Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, 289-90.

⁶⁰⁸ Alberti, *L'architettura: de re aedificatoria*, bk. 1, chap. 8, 60-1. 'Nam obiectum angulum arera eo versus, unde repens montis pendet, eumque consolidavit angulum congestis praegrandibus immanium fragmentorum frustis et mole; deditque operam componendis lapidibus, ut structurae servata parsimonia decorum afferret.' English translation: Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, bk. 1, chap. 8, 21.

(Figure 137), or most of the fortresses and defensive towers sketched by Francesco di Giorgio (Figure 185).

A tiered plinth also made the building more monumental. Vitruvius suggested utilising a tiered plinth to elevate a temple,⁶⁰⁹ and this scheme was adopted in many Italian ecclesiastical buildings, which, according to Friedman, demonstrating a privilege that these institutions enjoyed due to their spiritual supremacy.⁶¹⁰ Giotto testifies to an elevated plinth's commanding characteristics in the scene of St. Francis denouncing earthly goods (the Bardi Chapel, Figure 186); the Bishop of Assisi stands on a step of this type running across the palace façade. The Bishop was adjudicating the dispute between the young Francis and his family, as well as the protector of the young saint when he abandoned his secular life. Given the bishop's superior social status and ecclesiastical authority, it is significant that he was the only figure presented on the step.

It is worth noting, however, that such a practice was not commonplace in Montepulciano nor in its surrounding communities along the Valdichiana. In Montepulciano, the façade of the Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo facing the Via Ricci does not have a base supporting the ground-floor arcades (Figure 187); instead, the piers lengthen towards the lower ground level so that the imposts of the arches maintain the same springing level. A similar approach can be found in other hilltop communities' such as Lucignano and Torrita,⁶¹¹ where no horizontal plinth was laid to even out the sloping ground on which their government seats stand. Therefore, the tiered plinth in Montepulciano's new façade is likely to derive from other examples.

It was rather in north Tuscany that many castellated palaces included an elevated podium. The Castello dell'Imperatore in Prato (Figure 188) may serve as an example. The main portal

⁶⁰⁹ Vitruvius suggests the ideal height for steps is between 3/4 and 5/6 foot. Vitruvius, *On Architecture*, bk. 3, chap. 4, 80.

⁶¹⁰ Friedman, *Florentine New Towns: Urban Design in the Late Middle Ages*, 178.

⁶¹¹ Guidoni and Marino, *Territorio e città della Valdichiana*.

situated on an elevated platform increases the monumentality of the fortress. In Florence, the two most significant civic palaces – the Palazzo del Bargello (Figure 189) and the Palazzo dei Priori (*ringhiera*, Figure 57) – both have an elevated plinth.⁶¹² In the Morelli cassone, a palace flanking the piazza is depicted above an elevated plinth, reflecting the importance of this structure in establishing the authority and spatial dominance of a civic building (Figure 190). In addition, considering the chronology of Michelozzo's work, the tiered plinth can also be interpreted as a street bench, such as that made of wood represented in Ambrozio Lorenzetti's fourteenth-century panel of Saint Nicolas (c.1327, Figure 191), or that in the Palazzo Medici on Via Larga built of stone (Figure 192). According to Elet, these public benches not only monumentalise the site, but also transform the castellated and defensive palace into a theatrical and open space for the townspeople.⁶¹³ Lillie and Mussolin suggested that the street bench was employed to bind the building visually to the ground, as well as to mitigate the passage between the private palace and its surrounding public space.⁶¹⁴ After the completion of Palazzo Medici, the street bench became a common feature of many Quattrocento domestic palaces in Tuscany. For instance, the Palazzo Strozzi (1489-1536, Figure 193) has benches running across principal façades, which not only adjusted the uneven terrain of the site, but also served as a street bench.⁶¹⁵

Nonetheless, the analysis highlights two substantial differences between the two-tier step of Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale and the benches for private residences. First, the upper step of Montepulciano's façade is much higher above the ground. One has to climb up the step

⁶¹² According to Yunn, the size of the plinth in front of the Palazzo del Podestà (1 braccio in height and 2/3 in width) conforms to the 1 braccio limit of a projecting architectural structure specified in the Trecento Florentine regulation. Yunn, *The Bargello Palace: The Invention of Civic Architecture in Florence*, 107. On the political significance of the ringhiera in front of the Palazzo dei Priori. Johnson, "The Lion on the Piazza: Patrician Politics and Public Statuary in Central Florence," 54-70.

⁶¹³ Elet, "Seats of Power: The Outdoor Benches of Early Modern Florence," 444-58.

⁶¹⁴ Amanda Lillie and Mauro Mussolin, "The Wooden Models of Palazzo Strozzi as Flexible Instruments in the Design Process," in *Giuliano da Sangallo*, ed. A. Belluzzi, Caroline Elam, and Francesco Paolo Fiore (Milan: Officina libraria, 2017), 220.

⁶¹⁵ *Ibid.*

rather than comfortably sit on it. Secondly, instead of covering the whole façade surface, the upper step terminates at the extrados of the ground-floor portal (Figure 183 & Figure 184). Considering that the 1337 Statutes stipulated that only communal officials would have the privilege to enter the palace,⁶¹⁶ it is likely that the shortened upper step was meant to provide the communal magistrates with easy access to the elevated platform, so that communal officials could enjoy greater public visibility when engaging in public activities and events, as they did on the ringhiera in front of the Palazzo dei Priori. In this sense, the tiered plinth in front of the principal façade of Montepulciano's seat of government not only defined the boundary of the communal palace, but it also aimed at establishing the palace's and the communal government's dominance by presenting the castellated seat of government as if a free-standing sculpture to the public that often gathered in the Piazza Grande.

4.3 Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale in its Quattrocento Urban Setting

Previous sections analysed the ways in which Montepulciano's façade blends motifs from military architecture, thirteenth to fifteenth century Tuscan civic palaces, as well as classical monuments to establish the palace's spatial dominance. In his study on Florentine urban planning, Trachtenberg pointed to the scenographic views of public buildings and spaces shaped by perspectival points within the surrounding urban fabric.⁶¹⁷ Following this aspect, this section intends to explore the ways in which the castellated profile of Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale stands out from its surroundings, and at the same time forging the focal point, engaging the whole settlement.

⁶¹⁶ 'DE PENA ADSCENDENTIS PALATIUM DOMINORUM QUINQUE SINE LICENTIA. RUBRICA. Nulli liceat ascendere vel intrare ad dominos Quinque sine licentia ipsorum vel alicuius eorum ad pena, .V. solidorum contrafacienti per notarium reformationum de facto pro vice qualibet auferendam.' Morandi, *Statuto del comune di Montepulciano 1337*, chap. of the Quinque, rub. 14, 489. Also see Chapter 2.1, 91-2.

⁶¹⁷ Trachtenberg, *Dominion of the Eye: Urbanism, Art, and Power in Early Modern Florence*, 165-6. Also see John Shearman, *Only connect--: Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992).

In his chronicle, Benci described that ‘at the summit [the *Sasso*] lies the Piazza, the Duomo, many public palaces and those of private owners.’⁶¹⁸ The topographic prominence of the *Sasso* standing out from the surrounding urban space not only lends the town ‘a dignified and agreeable appearance’, as Alberti described the advantages of a hilltop city;⁶¹⁹ but also provided the Poliziani with natural defence, realising Vegetius’ notion of an ideal way of defending a place, where landscape and man-made fortifications are brought together in synergy.⁶²⁰ A seventeenth-century anonymous painting, dedicated to Christina of Lorraine, the wife of the Grand Duke of Tuscany Ferdinando I de’ Cosimo (c.1609-1616, Figure 194),⁶²¹ captures the defensive scheme of the fortified *terra* of Montepulciano protected by crenellated city walls punctuated by bastions and gates. Meanwhile the Palazzo Comunale proudly oversees its subject lands from the *Sasso*. The defensive scheme built around the castellated Palazzo Comunale reminds us of Brunni’s remarks on Florence’s seat of government circled by the city walls which he called ‘a fortress of the fortress.’⁶²² Additionally, as Francesco di Giorgio noted, the Romans tended to erect fortresses in high and prominent sites to judge and protect the whole city lying beneath.⁶²³ Although his argument concerned fortifications, the

⁶¹⁸ ‘nella sommità, che è piana, risiede la Piazza, il Duomo, ed alcuni Palazzi pubblici, e privati.’ Benci, "Storia di Montepulciano," 1.

⁶¹⁹ ‘Itaque erit quidem loci forma et digna et amoena, quae nequaquam humilis et quasi immersa, sed quae celsa et admodum speculatrix siet et quo laetissimus aer assiduo aliquo spiritu moveatur.’ Alberti, *L’architettura: de re aedificatoria*, bk. 1, chap. 4, 36-7. English translation: Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, bk. 1, chap. 4, 13.

⁶²⁰ While discussing the selection of sites for cities, Vegetius noted that settlements protected by both natural terrain and artificial fortification are the most strongly defended: ‘Urbes atque castella aut natura muniuntur aut manu aut utroque, quod firmitus ducitur.’ Vegetius, *Epitoma rei militaris*, bk. 4, chap. 1, 125. English translation, Vegetius, *Vegetius, Epitome of Military Science*, bk. 4, chap. 1, 120-1.

⁶²¹ Galoppi and Pizzinelli, *Panorama di Montepulciano: restauro di tre dipinti in Palazzo Cervini*.

⁶²² Brunni, *Laudatio florentine urbis*, 7. English translation, Brunni, "Panegyric to the City of Florence," 141. Also see Chapter 1.2, 62.

⁶²³ ‘siccome noi vediamo gli antichi avere posto tutte le fortezze ne’ più forti e eminenti luoghi che hanno trovato, e massime nella città a defensione e conservazione d’essa; così la natura avendo mostro a loro el capo e faccia del corpo umano essere el più nobile membro d’esso, e che cogli occhi visivi tutto el corpo giudicar debba, così la fortezza dia essere posta in luogo eminente che tutto el corpo della città giudicare e vedere possa.’ Francesco di Giorgio Martini, *Trattati di architettura ingegneria e arte militare*, Fortezze, 3. On Francesco di Giorgio’s human body metaphor of city, Fiore and Tafuri, *Francesco di Giorgio architetto*, 130-4. According to Nevola, the concept of stratification was adopted by the architect in his urban renewal in Siena for the newly established Noveschi elites, Nevola, *Siena: Constructing the Renaissance city*, 175-9.

idea nevertheless signifies the importance of a castle placed on high ground was a measure to assure a sovereign's governance over subject territories.

Indeed, an investigation into the ways in which Montepulciano's communal palace stands out from the surrounding town supports Francesco di Giorgio's notion. The *Sasso* not only promises the Palazzo Comunale's public visibility, but its steep terrain and the narrow ridge help to create a stratified urban space that further instantiated public authority.⁶²⁴ Furthermore, because of the *Sasso* blocking at the centre of the settlement, no east-west road could cross the town centre, nor could a gridded road system be formed (Figure 50).⁶²⁵ This meant that townspeople who wanted to travel between the east and west quarters had to divert through the Porta di San Donato (Figure 50, A) or the Porta San di Francesco (Figure 50, C & D), passing the town's north-south arteries: Via Ricci and Via di San Donato, as well as the Piazza Grande where the Palazzo Comunale stands. An investigation into the ways in which the communal palace's façade was presented from the viewpoints of the town's thoroughfares around the square may shed light on its pivotal role within the town centre.

Via San Donato and Via Ricci both radiate out from the Palazzo Comunale (Figure 195). Via San Donato runs south towards the Florentine *càssero*, only two hundred metres from the palace, meanwhile the Via Ricci goes north to the Church of San Francesco, one of the oldest and most prestigious ecclesiastical sites in the town. Most likely due to the significance of these two arteries meeting at the principle façade of the Palazzo Comunale, the 1440 travertine cladding partly covers the façade of the palace's south and north blocks that was visible from these two streets. By continuing the new cladding about 2 metres onto the south wall (Figure

⁶²⁴ According to Nevola, the concept of stratification was adopted by the architect in his urban renewal in Siena for the newly established Noveschi elites, Nevola, *Siena: Constructing the Renaissance city*, 175-9.

⁶²⁵ No direct route connects the Collazi quarter with the Piazza Grande, even though it directly faces the rear façade of the Palazzo Comunale. As for the quarter of Cagnano, the only access to the Piazza Grande was through the Porticciola di Piazza. Montepulciano's administrative boundaries gradually expanded along the new rings of city walls reaching the quarter of Sant'Agnese. On the town's urban development: Giuseppina Carla Romby, "La città e il territorio di Montepulciano nella storia," in *Montepulciano: il Centro Storico e il Collegio dei Gesuiti*, ed. Marchetta Manlio (Perugia: Electa Editori Umbri, 1992), 23-36.

196), and about 1.75 to 1.8 metres onto the north exterior wall (Figure 197), the new façade creates a mask so that the bare walls on the north and south façades are almost unnoticeable when approaching the palace from the north-south thoroughfares.

In addition, when standing on the Via San Donato (south of the palace), the palace's ashlar masonry stands out from the *intonaco* façades of the adjacent buildings, so that the rustication and plinth in front of the palace can be seen clearly from a distance. The imposing visual effect is reminiscent of the castellated profile of the Palazzo dei Vicari in Scarperia (Figure 198), and the view of the west façade of the Palazzo dei Priori in Florence (Figure 199), where the building projects into the public piazza, and thus can be seen clearly from the major public streets. Similarly, from the Via Ricci (north of the palace), the machicolated galleries, and the soaring tower-belfry create a strongly fortified profile overshadowing the lower private houses.

From another main entrance into the Piazza Grande, the Via del Teatro (Figure 50, B & Figure 200), which slopes down behind the piazza, the lower viewing position emphasises the scale of the palace with its central tower. On the one hand, the height of the fortified tower exceeds all the surrounding buildings, focusing the viewers' attention on the castellated profile. On the other hand, two narrow alleys at either side, Vicolo del Leone and Vicolo Danesi, which are perpendicular to the north-south arteries of Via San Donato and Via Ricci, together create a grid-like structure around the palace, separating the block from adjacent buildings and thus emphasising the freestanding sculptural effect of the Palazzo Comunale commanding the whole Piazza. Perhaps to accentuate further the volume and projection of the overhanging machicolated galleries, the supporting console brackets in the lower gallery are arranged outwards, as if pushing the galleries resting on them away from the plane. Similarly, the lower position of the corner console brackets aims to form a perspectival recession (Figure 201). However, unlike a heavily fortified stronghold built to drive off its enemies, the castellated elements in Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale were introduced more as a means to give an

interactive and scenographic appearance to the palace. Thus, Montepulciano's castellated façade created a less intimidating using military components taken from Quattrocento civic architectural design.

In addition to adopting castellated elements to ensure the focal dominance of the town hall, the façade also suggests Michelozzo's holistic ambition to form a harmonious urban space. The travertine façade already used in other monuments in the town centre, consolidated the local identity. The slightly pointed arches framing the windows and the stepped mouldings running across the new façade correspond to the nearby Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo. The two blank tabernacles on the *piano nobile* clearly refer to Michelozzo's façade of Sant'Agostino, thus testifying to the synthetic nature of Montepulciano's façade.

The 1440 renovation project of the town hall seems to have reverberations beyond the palace itself, governing the town's urban renewal carried out in the following centuries. The Duomo, built after 1586, incorporated a wide step in front of the façade to allow more space for the viewers to enjoy the frontal view of the Palazzo Comunale (Figure 202). The façade designed by Antonio da Sangallo the Elder for Palazzo Contucci (Figure 203), situated across the piazza, adopted naturalistic rustication on its two lower storeys and a very similar type of rusticated block, seemingly referring to the Palazzo Comunale across the piazza. Bearing in mind the close spatial relation between the Palazzo Comunale's new façade and the public streets around the Piazza Grande, as well as the sense of order and regularity defined by the clear axiality of the Palazzo Comunale, it is not surprising that in the eighteenth-century urban survey of the town (Figure 204), the Piazza Grande is drawn as a perfect rectangle whose central axis aligns with the tower of the Palazzo Comunale, although the actual piazza is a slightly irregular trapezoid. These works testify to the significance of the Palazzo Comunale in articulating a rational spatial order for the Piazza Grande, as well as in defining the town's urban morphology. Montepulciano's town hall might have served as a touchstone for a holistic urban plan

Michelozzo had in mind, which ultimately contributed to a formation of a harmonious and modern urban space as ‘the pearl of the Cinquecento’ (*Perla del Cinquecento*).⁶²⁶

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the ways in which various civic and military architectural references were incorporated into the façade of Montepulciano’s Palazzo Comunale. Morphological analysis of the 1440 elevation suggests its design drew upon different architectural models. First, the fortress-like configuration and its design, including its lofty tower-belfry, the projecting machicolated galleries and crowning merlons, as well as the naturalistic rusticated masonry on the ground floor mainly derived from the thirteenth-century Palazzo dei Priori in Florence. This mimicry points to Florence’s cultural and political influence on Montepulciano during the fifteenth century. Second, the ways in which string courses were placed at the level of arch impostes, as well as the arched opening of the belfry supported by piers, followed the Sienese tradition. Third, selecting travertine as the building material reflects local architectural traditions, which can be understood as an attempt to uphold local identity.

The design of Montepulciano’s town hall façade also points to modern architectural aesthetics. The castellated elements were carefully incorporated according to fifteenth-century architectural principles of symmetry and axiality, thanks to which the renovation project achieved a visual uniformity. Furthermore, the façade sheds light on Michelozzo’s attempt to modernise Tuscan castellated palaces with classical motifs. Replacing lancet windows, which were widely used in Florentine civic palaces, with simpler round arched windows was unprecedented in Tuscany in the 1440s, and may have been a direct architectural reference to Roman antiquity. The façade’s masonry combining naturalistic rustication and ashlar may likewise have referred to both Florentine and ancient Roman prototypes simultaneously,

⁶²⁶ Barucci, *Montepulciano, perla del Cinquecento*, 6.

providing an example of an architectural dialogue between two political capitals and a minor town. From this perspective, Montepulciano's towered communal palace defies the traditional dichotomy between castellation and the *all'antica* architectural style.

For contemporary viewers, the impregnable and proud, fortified profile of Montepulciano's communal palace would have legitimised the rule of the Florentine state as righteous and virtuous, as well as underpinning the Florentine state's military might, that was no less significant than its Roman predecessor. Additionally, the Sienese and local architectural details, which can still be seen in Montepulciano's façade, provides evidence for Florence's more tolerant and less totalitarian control over the cultural and historical characteristics of its subject town.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has explored the conceptual and typological significance of castellated civic palaces in the architectural and political contexts of fifteenth-century Florence. More precisely, it argued for the essential role castellated civic palaces played in consolidating the Florentine state's political, military and cultural ideologies during the fifteenth century. The symbolic meanings of castellation account for the fortress-like profile of Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale, renovated between 1440 and c.1465, which in turn reinforced the symbolism of castellation.

An investigation into the ways in which Florentine textual and visual representations employed Florence's Palazzo del Podestà and Palazzo dei Priori in various narratives has shed light on castellation's political and ethical undertones. When fourteenth-century chroniclers and fifteenth-century humanists like Alberti condemned fortresses as a symbol of despotism, what they criticised was not their architectural form, but the occupier, who was most likely a political opponent of Florence. As for the defensive fortification of Florence, including the city walls, gates, towers, bastions, as well as the castellated civic palaces, not only did they embody the military power of the city and emphasise its physical presence, but they also functioned as virtuous objects legitimising civic discourse according to which an ideal society could be built. Furthermore, an analysis of Quattrocento *cassoni* panels depicting ancient Greco-Roman cities reveals an ignored aspect of fortified architectural elements, which could be viewed as *all'antica* motifs in the eyes of contemporaries. For the Florentines, the impregnable, fortress-like civic palaces were tangible evidence of the city's political authority, righteously derived from their glorious Roman ancestors. It is thus misleading to conclude that the form of a fortress or a fortress-like palace was considered displeasing or out of fashion during the fifteenth century.

The Palazzo Comunale itself was a microcosm of the commune's political and diplomatic achievements. The construction of the Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano between 1254 and 1281 marked the town's transition from a fortified settlement (*castrum*) to a politically autonomous entity. Its 1440 façade renovation project was formulated in line with the political notions of 'honour and utility,' further testifying to the important role the town hall played as a symbol of the Poliziani's civic pride and political legitimacy. The evolution of the architecture of the civic palace followed the town's contemporary geopolitical progress. As a semi-independent *terra* (territory), the communal palace reflected Montepulciano's political and cultural dependence on its dominant city. When the town was subjected to Siena, its old Palazzo Comunale seemed to display many quintessentially Sienese civic architectural features, as the Sienese painter Taddeo di Bartolo's altarpiece suggests (c.1390-1401). Subsequently, after the town's allegiance had shifted to Florence in 1390, the 1440 palace façade was designed to reflect Florentine architectural taste.

Although Saalman's study pointed to Michelozzo's artistic influence behind the stylistic shift of Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale, newly identified archival documents have demonstrated that the local government was gradually losing its control over public architecture, urban space, and territories under Florentine rule. Between 1392 and 1397, the Florentine government built a *càssero* at the most strategic point of the town. Although this stronghold was connected to the town's city wall, its jurisdiction and operation were completely managed by the central government. The first act of the 1440 project strikingly reveals that the legislative process of the renovation plan for Montepulciano's town hall was directly supervised by a Florentine commissioner, Totto de' Machiavelli, whose authority delegated by Florence's war committee, the *Dieci di Balìa*, overruled that of the local commune. Furthermore, Florence's intervention was justified as being for the 'common good,' a political rhetorical term used from the fourteenth century onwards to legitimise the Florentines'

expansionist campaign as an anti-tyrannical and liberal republican ideology. The association of Montepulciano's Palazzo Comunale with the notion of common good suggests that for the Florentine government, public architecture in a subject commune was part of their national self-defence strategy.

The Montepulciano commune's official letters to Florence between the 1430s and 1440s further prove the political and military interdependence between centre and periphery. Montepulciano's attempt to build up and sustain a personal network with Cosimo de' Medici, the *de facto* ruler of Florence, from the 1430s onwards shows the local government's intention to win a powerful political ally in the central government who would be able to protect the local commune's interest. Having a personal link with a strategic town like Montepulciano was beneficial for Cosimo as well, as it enabled the statesman in the capital city to exert wide-ranging control over all Florentine territories through a reliable network of local envoys. The renovation project of Montepulciano's town hall commissioned from Michelozzo, Cosimo's favourite architect, architecturally expressed the Poliziani's fidelity not solely to Florence, but more specifically to the Medici. This proposition seems more likely when we consider that the Poliziani cut their ties with Florence in 1494, when Piero de' Medici was exiled from Florence, re-entering the Florentine dominion in 1513, a year after the Medicean authority was restored in Florence.

Unpublished letters in Montepulciano's communal archive attest to the close military cooperation between Florence and Montepulciano in preparation for the defence of the state's southwest frontier during the first half of the fifteenth century, culminating in the Battle of Anghiari on 29 June 1440. This was a critical battle in which Florence conclusively defeated its political and military enemy, the tyrannical Duke of Milan. Montepulciano was responsible for guarding the region on behalf of the central government, while the Poliziani received military support from Florence to fend off the Milanese invasion of the Valdichiana in the

1440s. Montepulciano's congratulatory letter to Florence eloquently attributed military success in the Battle of Anghiari to the central government, at the same time glorifying Cosimo's personal contribution. The political overtone behind Michelozzo's 1440 façade design comes into clearer focus in the aftermath of Florence's honourable military success. The palace's impregnable castellated façade, resembling Florence's most iconic civic symbol, the Palazzo dei Priori, was an architectural rendition of a painted fortress type found in Quattrocento paintings. Castellated buildings were evidence of Florence's diligent surveillance over and protection of its subject lands, at the same time highlighting the state's virtuous rule and military might.

In addition to referring to Florentine castellation iconography, Montepulciano's 1440 renovation demonstrates the interrelationship between fortification and Florence's territorial expansion. In 1299, the Florentine government built its seat at the very site where the residence of the commune's political rival, the Uberti, used to stand, marking the establishment of communal rule. Building a modernised version of the Palazzo dei Priori in an ex-Sienese and Milanese town marked the rise of Florentine rule in Montepulciano. When Florence expanded its jurisdiction between 1229 and c.1350 to the immediate *contado* in the Mugello and the Arno valleys, a series of new fortified colonies were built. Subsequently, the Florentine government dedicated itself to reinforcing walled settlements in the Chianti between the 1420s and 1430s. In the same vein, Florence's intervention in Montepulciano's town hall renovation between 1440 and c.1465 suggests that their control had reached the Valdichiana.

The architecture of Montepulciano's new Palazzo Comunale played a key role in the evolution of castellated civic palaces. First, its overall formal resemblance to Florence's thirteenth-century prototype demonstrates that castellation was still considered an appropriate form to express and reinforce the image of a powerful state during the fifteenth century. The unmistakable similarity between the two monumental examples of a fortress-cum-palace

architecturally and symbolically unified the Florentine territories, visually enhancing Florence's self-fashioning as a New Rome. Secondly, a formal analysis of the façade and interior details reveals its hybrid nature, blending military and civic architecture, local and foreign, classical and contemporary architectural languages. Its fortress-like shape was not only modelled on the most prominent thirteenth and fourteenth-century Tuscan castellated civic palace, but also reflected contemporaries' image of Roman defensive works. Unlike many Duecento and Trecento castellated urban palaces where fortified and non-fortified motifs were often added at different stages and were not part of an overall design, the way in which military and civic architectural elements were integrated in the palace at Montepulciano through principles of symmetry and axuality into a self-governing work singles out the design's modernity. The simultaneous presence of local travertine, naturalistic rustication modelled on Florentine examples, and classical motifs such as round arches and string courses is evidence of the taste for *varietà* – a notion that characterised Quattrocento architecture. The modernised castellated civic palace defies the antagonism between castellation and classical architecture articulated in existing scholarship.

Thirdly, Michelozzo's design testifies to the significance of civic palaces in creating a well-organised and united urban space. While the castellated configuration established the dominance of the palace, its architectural details cross-referencing other monuments in the town reflect Michelozzo's vision of a cohesive urban space. Michelozzo's communal palace offered a spatial benchmark, according to which subsequent urban renewal in the sixteenth century was shaped, harmoniously consolidating the whole surrounding urban space. Montepulciano's communal palace thus conforms to the distinctiveness of castellated civic palaces: its towered and impregnable profile communicate a commune's or a state's dominance, yet it is different from a self-contained military stronghold as it also aims to engage with the surrounding environment.

Adopting castellation as one of the architectural agents of visible dominance throws new light on existing interpretations of Renaissance architecture. Despite having been largely ignored in the literature, a closer look at prominent Quattrocento civic and domestic town palaces, including the Palaces of the Medici, Rucellai, Strozzi and Gondi in Florence, the Palazzo Venezia and della Cancelleria in Rome, and communal palaces in Jesi, Pienza, and Rome, as well as Cinquecento urban palaces and country houses like the Palazzo Caprini and Villa Madama, we can see that they all incorporate some of military features that Michelozzo's 1440 design included. Serving as a departure point, it is hoped that this thesis will help to stimulate further research into the architectural dialogue between military and civic, domestic, and even ecclesiastical architecture, which will enrich our understanding of Renaissance architecture beyond typological limitations.