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AGOSTINO CHIGI'S VILLA SUBURBANA
A ROMAN LIFESTYLE: 1510 - 1520

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CHRONOLOGY OF CHIGI AND HIS CIRCLE

Agostino Chigi (1465-1520). Born Siena.

- 1501 - Acquired lease to alum mines at Tolfa.
- 1505 - Purchased land for his Villa Suburbana.
- 1506 - Ennobled by Pope Julius II into Della Rovere family.
- 1508 - Margherita Saracini (Sienese wife) dies.
- 1510 - Villa construction completed.
- 1511 - Chigi in Venice; returns with Venetian mistress.
- 1512 - Imperia dies.
Courtship of Margherita Gonzaga fails.
- 1518 - Decoration of villa completed.
- 1519 - Married by Leo X to Venetian mistress, Francesca, legitimizing his four children.
- 1579 - Villa Chigi sold to Farnese family who renamed in Villa Farnesina.

Influential Personalities for Chigi:

Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472)
 Pietro Aretino (1492-1556); in Chigi's employ, c. 1517-1518
 Baldassare Castiglione (1478-1529)
 Benvenuto Cellini (1500-1571)
 Giulio Romano (1492-1546)
 Julius II (1503-1513)
 Leo X (1513-1521)
 Baldussare Peruzzi (1481-1536)
 Sebastiano del Piombo (1485-1547)
 Platina (b. Bartolomeo Sacchi) (1421-1481)
 Pliny the Elder (23-70)
 Pliny the Younger (61-113)
 Raphael (1483-1520)
 Sodoma (b. Giovanni Antonio Bazzi) (1477-1549)

AGOSTINO CHIGI'S VILLA SUBURBANA
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I. INTRODUCTION

To Agostino Chigi

In others, Augustus, wealth produces their shining
splendor;
You, on the other hand, are a light, a great glory
to wealth.
For you with regal expense renew the gigantic
constructions
Of Rome; thus you recall Ancus's primordial name
And you prevent the loss of so many outstanding
spirits,
So many grand examples of genius, in our generation.
Further, you foster the best of all things at
your genial table
Teaching us what the genuine gifts of kings should be.

On His Palace

After illustrious Rome fell prey to barbarian Furies,
All the gods withdrew, as the city collapsed.
But where Augustus Chigi founded his kingly palace,
And restored (thereby) a (truly) ancient splendor,
Gods and their consorts at once descended again
from the heavens,
Vying among themselves to favour this one blessed
house.
Finally Bacchus and Love, the Graces, golden
Venus, and
Pallas vowed in a pact to inhabit just this place.
Augustus, a man is blest when benevolent gods love
his dwelling;
Men, too, compete to praise it with admiring words.¹

These panegyrics by the Neapolitan humanist Girolamo Borgia speak of the luxurious lifestyle enjoyed by Agostino Chigi (1466-1520), the Sienese banker who became the richest man in Rome, if not all of Italy (Fig. 1). Chigi's Villa Suburbana, known today as the Villa Farnesina, was legendary in its time for its magnificent art, lavish banquets and amusing entertainments (Fig. 2).² Designed by Baldassare Peruzzi and decorated by

Raphael, Sodoma, Sebastiano del Piombo and Peruzzi, the villa showcased Chigi as a patron of the arts. His wealth and ambition provided a catalyst for extraordinary innovation in art and architecture, letters, decorative arts, cookery -- and the art of pleasure.

Like a nineteenth-century Rothschild and present-day Donald Trump or Henry Kravis, Chigi owed his success to his remarkably inventive ability to maneuver in the complex world of finance.³ Self-confident, energetic and charming, he was equally inventive in making his villa an atrio da piacere, or "court of pleasure," for popes, cardinals, nobility, the literati, and cultured courtesans of Rome. It would seem that the humanist Giovanni Pontano modeled his prescription after Chigi for how a powerful man must impress and gain favor:

You have to display everything in the house, cover the coffer and the panels with gold and silver, decorate the dining rooms, scatter flowers on the floor, arrange everything so that, as Horace says, the house itself is laughing.⁴

II. CHIGI AND HIS CIRCLE

Agostino Chigi was born in 1466 into a wealthy Sienese banking family. He came to Rome circa 1487 and quickly built a reputation for being a brilliant banker, establishing close ties with the Medici and other important Italian families. In 1501 he acquired from Alexander VI the lease for the Papal alum mines at Tolfa, a business opportunity which ultimately made him his fortune.⁵ By creating an alum monopoly in Europe, Chigi used

his financial genius to gain control of the most important economic resource of the Papal State. The huge profits which came his way also became a source of income for the Papacy. Chigi loaned the Popes large sums of money and was rewarded by the annual renewal of his lease, as well as Papal favor and honors. In 1509 Julius II made Chigi, his family and heirs members of the Rovere family and gave them the right, still used by their descendants, to call themselves "Chigi della Rovere."⁶

With the same skill and determination used to establish a financial empire, Chigi concentrated on placing his family name and fortune among the ruling families of Rome. To achieve this ambition, Chigi commissioned great artists to create a family seat worthy of an important and powerful man and his heirs, the Villa Chigi. For his patronage of the arts, Chigi was hailed by Vasari as a "true friend of accomplished men," and his splendid home became renowned for its decoration.⁷ As a host, Chigi was equally celebrated.

"The Renaissance invented the Gentleman -- a gentleman with perfect manners and no morals whatsoever."⁸ These were the same gentlemen whom Chigi invited to make merry at his delightful villa during the period when Rome flourished under the "gay corruption" of Leo X. Leo X's often-quoted philosophy of life -- "Let us enjoy the Papacy, since God has given it to us!" -- reflected the spirited lifestyle of the Papal Court. In glorifying the Papacy, artists, writers, scholars and musicians flocked to Rome. Many of them were included in the feasting and entertainments hosted by the Pope and his court, and his wealthy friends, such as Chigi.

Cardinal Bembo, an intimate friend of the Pope and writer of prose and poetry, recorded that the Pope's most intimate friends were Cardinals Bibbiena and Medici [the future Clement VII], Chigi, the poets Tebaldeo and Accotti, Baldassare Castiglione and Raphael. The licentious lifestyle pursued by many Cardinals is exemplified by an erotic comedy authored by Bibbiena with scenery designed by Peruzzi and performed before an audience including the Pope.⁹ Other younger, newly made Cardinals were lovers and patrons of art and literature, but otherwise led "scandalous lives -- days spent in wild sport, luxurious carouses, frivolous dramas and other worse things."¹⁰

Another member of Chigi's circle was Pietro Aretino, a verse-maker, wit and gossip, and known as the first modern journalist and critic. In 1517, at the age of 25, he joined the circle of literati found at Chigi's and the Papal Court. He may have been employed in Chigi's bank, but in any event, lived at the villa and was welcome at Chigi's banquets. His keen observations of the vices of his age, which he later revealed in plays and letters, provide a satirical portrait of the Court of Rome under the Medici Popes.¹¹

Other major writers and artists who were welcome at Chigi's table included Baldassare Castiglione and Raphael. Castiglione, author of Il Cortegiano (The Courtier), a treatise on social behavior for the ideal gentleman of the Renaissance, redrafted this work from 1508 to its final publication in 1528. He may have entertained Chigi's guests with passages on the importance of being

accomplished in art, music, letters, conversation -- and well-mannered at the table. Throwing soups and sauces at one another across the table was no longer acceptable behavior. As Papal architect, Raphael achieved a position of power and wealth never before enjoyed by an artist. Not only did his work for Chigi give celebrity to the villa, but his presence would add a stimulating dimension to the table conversation.

The courtesan would also have been a guest at Chigi's table. This woman played a major role in the life of pleasure, artistic achievement and diplomacy, and the Roman Renaissance banquet table would be incomplete without her company. Chigi's Sienese wife, Margherita Saracini, died in 1508, and their childless marriage does not appear to have had influence on his lifestyle or career. Imperia, the most famous courtesan in Rome, was Chigi's mistress (Fig. 3). A woman esteemed for her intelligence and talents as a poet and musician, she also may have helped Chigi appreciate the classical arts which were not included in his practical education as a merchant-banker. It is often said that Chigi built his villa partly in her honor and had their love celebrated in the decorative schemes.

Courtesans like Imperia were treated with great respect, visited by distinguished men, and mixed easily in court circles. They were wealthy and enjoyed a lifestyle of splendor which influenced new fashions in villa and palace interiors (Fig. 4). Imperia's rooms were described as sumptuous with gold-embroidered fabrics, luxurious carpets and a display of vases of precious materials.¹²

Imperia died in 1512. She was replaced by a new mistress, Francesca Ordeaschi (or Andreazza), whom Chigi met in Venice in 1511. For political reasons, Chigi had attempted to marry into the Gonzaga family of Mantua, but negotiations were not successful and he apparently made no other effort to remarry at this time. He lived with Francesca without the bonds of matrimony for seven years and had four children by her, while at the same time courting the Pope and Roman society. In 1519, a year before Chigi's death, they were married by Leo X. This ceremony, witnessed by fourteen cardinals, was performed to legitimize their four children and ensure the future of his family.¹³

III. VILLA CHIGI: ARCHITECTURE AND DECORATION

The Sienese architect and painter Baldussare Peruzzi was responsible for what has been called the "first great Roman Town Villa built in accord with Alberti's conception of a retreat that also enjoyed the amenities of a city" (Figs. 5-6).¹⁴ In Art of Building in Ten Books, Leon Battista Alberti drew upon the truths of antiquity to detail the attributes of the suburban villa:

. . . the type of private building which combines the dignity of a city house with the delight of a villa
 . . . the suburban hortus [literally "garden"]. . . .

Of all buildings for practical use, I consider the hortus to be the foremost and healthiest: it does not detain you from business in the city, nor is it troubled by impurity of air.

[The hortus should be built to] let everything smile at the visitor and greet him as he arrives. And once he has entered, let him be unsure whether it would be more pleasurable to stay where he is or to venture further, enticed by its gaiety and splendor.¹⁵

Peruzzi built for Chigi an elegant suburban villa.¹⁶ It was set in a garden, open to light, perfectly scaled, inviting and gracious. It had open places for walking, courtyards, grass plots and large, handsome porticoes to let in breezes and light.

Chigi carefully selected a site in Trastevere close to both the business quarter and the Vatican for his suburban retreat, which was begun in 1508 and completed in 1510. Peruzzi designed a similar villa for Agostino's brother, Sigismondo, at Le Volte, near Siena, in 1505 (Fig. 7). Both villas follow in the Roman-loggia villa tradition of a long rectangular form with two projecting wings and both were distinguished by two stories articulated by slender pilasters (Fig. 8).

The Villa Chigi was built of brick with peperino stone used for the plinth and architectural trim, with a stucco frieze of putti and garlands above the upper-storied windows (Fig. 9). Originally all of the surfaces except for the strictly architectural elements were richly frescoed with terra-cotta-colored chiaroscuro paintings, the faint tracings of which can be seen in Figure 10, depicting male and female satyrs supporting baskets of fruit on their heads and standing as caryatids flanking the windows. An upper loggia was built facing the river and gardens (Fig. 11). It was a politically strategic addition, which offered the Pope and guests a belvedere looking out to the Vatican. Though not palatial, the villa was considered a splendid size, with about forty rooms and two ground level loggia, one facing the entrance and the other, the gardens (Figs. 12-13).¹⁷

Chigi spared no expense on the interior decoration, employing outstanding artists of the day to interpret pagan themes of love and pleasure inspired by classical mythology. With the primary intention of decorating his home to amuse his important guests and glorify his person, he commissioned great works of art for posterity.¹⁸

Fresco painting was the most common method of decorating walls in the Renaissance, and a room with elaborate painting was called the camera picta.¹⁹ Alberti described the order of importance of rooms in the Villa, the first being the "bosom" or main reception area, followed by the dining room and bedrooms.²⁰ This order was apparently followed in the decoration of the Villa Chigi, as the first room to be painted was Chigi's reception room, decorated by Peruzzi in 1510 and called the Sala del Fregio (Room of the Frieze), after its frieze of mythological scenes on the walls below the wooden ceiling (Fig. 14). The iconography of the room has never been fully analyzed, but the east and west walls celebrate the feats of Heracles, with whom Chigi wished to identify himself. Alberti advised that

it is surely most appropriate for a portico or a dining hall to be painted or sculpted with scenes of bravery by the citizens, portraits and events worthy of recollection. . . . I would prefer illustration of the tales that poets make for moral instruction.²¹

Costly tapestries would have been hung below the frieze. These could be removed when guests were not expected and replaced with less expensive textiles, or changed with the seasons.²²

From 1514 to 1516 the dining rooms were decorated, and again according to the dictates of Alberti, there was one for the

summer and one for the winter: "The principal requirements of a summer dining room are water and greenery; of a winter one, the warmth of a hearth. . . . Both should be splendid." ²³

The summer dining room with its open-air loggia facing the garden is now called the Sala de Galatea after Raphael's single painting, Triumph of Galatea (Fig. 15). Surrounded by mythological gods and events hailing Chigi's fame and the splendor of his villa, guests enjoyed lavish banquets in this room accompanied by music and theatrical entertainments.

Chigi, like many men of his time, was fascinated by astrology and had Peruzzi depict his horoscope on the ceiling of this room to show the configuration of the central heavens as they were on the night of his birth, November 29, 1466, at 9:30 p.m.²⁴ In the central ceiling panel, the figure of fame blows her horn in the direction of Chigi's arms to symbolize Chigi's life of buono fortuna (Fig. 16).

The artistic scheme of this room continues with frescoes concerning air and sea mythologies, implying that Earth was represented by the Villa Chigi. Sebastiano del Piombo, whom Chigi had brought with him from Venice in 1511, painted the giant one-eyed cyclops Polyphemus, but Chigi was dissatisfied with his work, and commissioned Raphael to complement the Polyphemus with the dramatic Triumph of Galatea (Fig.17).²⁵

The winter dining room on the second floor is called the Sala delle Prospettive after the decorative illusionistic scheme devised and painted by Peruzzi. Used for important dinners

and other occasions, this was the room in which Chigi was married by the Pope in 1519. Over the prominent fireplace the depiction of Vulcan and his helpers forging an arrow for Cupid probably refers to both the villa's theme of love and to one of Chigi's devices, a bundle of four of Cupid's darts (Fig. 18).²⁶

Although each wall is decorated with illusionary columns and landscape scenery, the outstanding feature of this room is an illusionistic painting, conceived as an open loggia on an upper floor, offering a belvedere onto the city of Rome (Figure 19). Rooms painted with architectural features came into fashion in the early sixteenth century, perhaps responding to Alberti's urging that owners of villas have columns depicted on the walls of their great reception room, a classical practice used to convey a sense of splendor: "For the revetment to a wall there can be no project more pleasant or attractive than the representation of stone colonnading."²⁷ Peruzzi's influence on the development of perspective scene painting can be verified by these masterpieces of illusionary art. Performances for Chigi's guests would have taken place before this "scenery."²⁸

The main bedroom was painted in 1516 by Giovanni Antonio Bazzi, known as Sodoma, a Sieneese artist who amused Chigi with his playful humor and pleasing personality.²⁹ The principal fresco, after a drawing by Raphael, commemorates the marriage of Alexander the Great and Roxanne in a sensuous love scene (Fig. 20). Roxanne, sitting on a magnificent, classically inspired bed, is undressed by putti as Alexander approaches her under the watchful

eye of a nude Hymenous, the God of Marriage. The scene which probably symbolizes the love of Chigi for his mistress Francesca may have been inspired by the classical Roman "Mars and Venus" theme, which tells how "the love of beauty diverts the conqueror, even from his arms, or in terms of Chigi, from his business"³⁰ (Fig. 21).

The ornate bed with gilded posts and corinthean columns may have resembled one that Peruzzi designed for Chigi. Documents record that Chigi paid 1592 ducats for sumptuous gold-embroidered bed-hangings, and that he also had a bed of ivory, gold, silver and precious stones.³¹ Peruzzi's role as a furniture designer is unknown. Thornton suggests that architects who designed furniture first appear in the sixteenth century, with Giulio Romano as an example of one who exercised control on the interior decor of his buildings.³²

The last space to be decorated, completed in 1518, was the grand loggia and main entrance to the villa, described by Vasari as a "wonderfully beautiful poem or painting"³³ (Fig. 22). Called the Cupid and Psyche Loggia, its celebration of pleasure may allude to Chigi's upcoming wedding in 1519. The loggia was designed by Raphael and executed primarily by Giulio Romano, who did most of the frescoed scenes, and by Giovanni da Udine, who specialized in painting garlands (Fig. 23). The design was conceived as a pergola or open bower with the fruit and flower garlands along each groin of Peruzzi's vault, linking the house with the surrounding gardens and telling the story as seen against the open sky. Even before

the walls were painted, this space was used as an outdoor stage, enhanced by Peruzzi's exterior frescoes, with the spectators seated on a podium facing the loggia.

The story of Cupid and Psyche derives from a second-century fairy tale by Lucius Apuleius, picturing the trials Psyche was made to endure in her love for Cupid, which finally culminated in their marriage feast and a child, named Pleasure. In 1515, Raphael was appointed by the Pope to be Superintendent of Roman Antiquities in charge of all excavations, and the decorative interpretation here is attributed to his passion for classical Roman frescoes, which offered many new sources of inspiration.

Playful eroticism is evidenced by the well-endowed nudes and sexual allusions in the use of traditional sexual symbols such as figs and cucumbers in the garlands.³⁴ A study of the flowers and fruits in the garlands reveals that they are not only correctly illustrated, but many were old Roman favorites. This valuable document of the variety of flowers grown at this time includes madonna lilies, pink cabbage roses, violets, jasmine, iris, poppies, convolvulus, periwinkles, clematis, daisies, hemerocallis, peonies, dog roses, cyclamen, narcissus, wallflowers, red anemones and chamomile; flowers of blossoming trees included elderflowers, hawthorn, pomegranates and lemon and orange citrus blossoms.³⁵ This bountiful bouquet was a seductive invitation to leave the loggia for the pleasures awaiting in the fragrant garden beyond.

IV. THE GARDEN AND THE TIBER RIVER DINING LOGGIA

Unlike the interior mythological decoration which required study and interpretation, the Villa Chigi's garden was essentially an outdoor room for relaxation, dining and social activity. The garden of love described and illustrated in Hypnerotomachi Poliphili, the allegorical and architectural romance by Fra Francesco Colonna, published in Venice in 1499, was an enormous influence on gardens designed to delight the senses. Its woodcut illustrations of trellised enclosures, flower beds, statuary, topiary and fountains may have served as models for the suburban pleasure garden (Figs. 24-26).

Expanding on the theme of pleasure, Peruzzi designed Chigi's garden in 1512 with features celebrating aspects of love through Psyche's adventures.³⁶ As a patron of art, Chigi favored contemporary sculpture over ancient fragments and models, perhaps similar to the Bacchus by Michelangelo commissioned by the banker Jacopo for his garden (Fig. 27). None of this sculpture now exists, but it was said that Chigi owned an antique statue of Psyche and, according to Coffin's theory of the iconography of the garden, the Three Graces and Cupid in the loggia pictured in Figure 23 are pointing to that statue in the garden.

The principal structure in the garden was the dining loggia on the Tiber River, which was used for summer amusement and dining al fresco. Destroyed by disastrous floods later in the sixteenth-century, the ruins of the loggia appear in a drawing locating it at the northeast corner of the property (Fig. 28). The only

architectual details of this loggia and the villa gardens come from verses composed by the humanist poets Edigio Gallo in 1511 and Blosio Palladio in 1512.³⁷

The loggia was an open arcaded pavillion with pilasters attached to the piers and an underground grotto reached by outside stairs. The grotto, decribed by Gallo as a "cave fit for poets" (antrum aptu poetis), contained a pool for bathing surrounded by a bench and was dimly lit by an oculus in the vault. Although Coffin suggests that the Tiber River would recall the mythical river Styx and the grotto could be interpreted as Hades, this theory of an underworld and poisonous waters hardly pertains to a theme of amusement and pleasure.³⁸

There is no factual record of Chigi's garden, but general characteristics of an early sixteenth-century garden in a location such as Chigi's would include the compartment as a basic unit; elements subdivided into separate parts defined by hedges and pergolas; reference to antiquity; clipped topiary and labyrinths; and the grotto. Trees were integral to the garden, especially those grown for shade, ornament and fruit.

These gardens were primarily static and could be viewed from a fixed point, as opposed to later gardens which could be experienced only by movement. Chigi's garden of 1512 would have been an architectural statement, displaying an order and harmony of man-made things, such as trimmed hedges, trellised plants, and well-cut walks. Alberti instructed that the gardens should be a "truly festive space . . . full of

delightful plants" and "comic statues."³⁹ Fantastic shapes of topiary, created after designs by contemporary artists, were popularly used to provide a playful and witty balance to the geometric shapes of the beds and paths.⁴⁰

The poet Palladio's verse of 1512 describes Chigi's garden as having an expanse of wooden pergola over which "plants creep and flowers ramble."⁴¹ Specific plants mentioned by the poet were apples, laurel, myrtle, boxwood, cyprus, and citron as well as three flowers often mentioned by Renaissance poets -- violets, roses and lilies. The rose symbolized the flower of love, treasured by Venus for its beauty and fragrance, and trellised roses were used in abundance in gardens at this time (Fig. 29). Violets and lilies were valued for their fragrance, as well as their religious symbolism.⁴²

The only record of a garden designed by Peruzzi is preserved in a drawing made after 1527 (Fig. 30). The plan shows pergolas consisting of tunnel vaults, perhaps of interwoven wooden slats supported on columns, outlining the four sides of the garden. A large octagonal dome crosses at the center of four open compartments planted with flowers. Each of the outer beds has a different geometrical pattern, while the inner beds are identical. Poets have alluded to at least one fountain set in Chigi's garden, perhaps similar to a 1523 drawing by Peruzzi of a pedestal fountain (Fig. 31). Small jets of water spray from a bird perched on the apex of the fountain into the upper basin whose overflow fills each of the lower fountains. A fountain similar to Colonna's Fountain of

the Three Graces, personifying the beautiful handmaidens to Venus, would have been an appropriate amusement in Chigi's garden (Fig. 32).

Pietro Aretino's description of a fictional garden belonging to the courtesan Nana may have been inspired by one of Peruzzi's garden designs, especially as Aretino made a point of saying that that Nana's garden put Chigi's to shame.⁴³ Written before 1536, this satire on the components of a fashionable Roman pleasure garden describes paths shaded by pergolas laden with flowers and grapevines, espaliered jasmine, terra-cotta pots planted with clipped boxwood and compartmental flower beds hedged with clipped rosemary and filled with scented flowers.⁴⁴

Chigi took great pride in his creation. How he must have gloried in strolling through his garden with his guests on the way to his summer dining room in the Tiber River Loggia. All accounts speak of his charm and energy, but perhaps he could be pompous as well, prompting the poet Blossia to write:

While you lead us around your villa's dining rooms
 And stroll through all the gardens, my dear Chigi, the
 Time goes by and my guts are
 Shuddering from starvation.
 Don't dare think that my stomach feeds on painting,
 Noble though it may be.⁴⁵

V. THE PLEASURE OF DINING AL FRESCO

Chigi's lavish banquets and entertainments were the subject of erudite flattery by the humanist poets who were invited as guests and were expected to entertain for their dinner with verse recitations. Rowland writes that "as one of Rome's most illustrious hosts, Agostino maintained his reputation in part through the literary entertainments afforded at his banquets."⁴⁶ Jeanneret maintains that banquet conversation centered on style: "The tongue . . . speaks for the sake of speaking. . . . The speakers, through much wit, paradox and hyperbole, reach a level of artifice where style has a value in itself on account of its grace and subtlety."⁴⁷ With Chigi, a patron of both the arts and letters, as host, his guests would have amused themselves with playful joking, orations and versemaking -- a scene from Castiglione's portrait of the accomplished gentleman. It is ironic, as Rowland notes, that Chigi's Latin was poor and he could not fully appreciate many of the works composed to honor his patronage and lifestyle.⁴⁸

Eating was the essential aspect of entertainment in a Roman garden. It was an antique concept to provide an open-air room for the pleasurable pursuit of dining al fresco. Factual information about the design of ancient gardens was known from literary sources, such as Pliny the Younger's description of his "treasured house" outside of Rome, which details each room and its use, including a garden pavillion which faced the sea (Fig. 33).⁴⁹

Pontano's treatise instructing the host how to impress his guests reflected Chigi's efforts:

The wise master will not be content to be generous with the food, but will flatter his guests by the scope of the spectacle: floral decorations, a succession of dishes, trophies, game from the hunt, music, and thanks to sugar, sideboards laden with confectionery."⁵⁰

Celebrating a Saint's Feast day was a principal reason for having a banquet.⁵¹ An often-told story about one of Chigi's extravagant banquets in the Tiber Loggia at which the Pope was present took place in the summer of 1518 to celebrate the Feast of Saint Lawrence. After each course, Chigi amazed his company by having the servants throw the used gold and silver plates into the Tiber River. Unknown by the guests, there were nets hidden in the water to retrieve his treasure. A footnote to this story includes the possibility that using the nets was a pretense to prevent the guests from taking home their plates.

The stories that have been recorded about Chigi's entertainments can be visualized to some extent in sixteenth-century illustrations, such as one of a luncheon party in a banqueting house showing the pleasures of dining al fresco (Fig. 34). The covered pergola walkways, extending the architecture of the house into the gardens, might have been similar to those leading to the entrance of Chigi's Tiber Loggia (see Plan, Fig. 6). Of an earlier date, Botticelli's scene illustrates servants bringing a succession of fabulous dishes against a backdrop of architectural arcades (Fig. 35).

Another story relates how, at a banquet in honor of Chigi's birthday, each guest found the plate in front of him engraved with his own arms. Table gifts were designed to amuse, and it

is likely that unique mementos of events at the Villa Chigi were often given. Masson recounts a story of a sixteenth-century candlestick found on the grounds of a Roman house now destroyed with the inscription "The sun must be dazzled when he looks at you . . . Contessa of the beautiful demeanor."⁵²

Chigi was not alone, of course, in staging banquets to impress important company with his wealth and power. Pastor relates how another banker, Lorenzo Strozzi, tried to outrival Chigi with an extraordinary banquet during Carnival of 1519 at which several cardinals were present and "choicest viands" were served from "deaths' heads."⁵³ Sharing this love of the macabre, Ascanio Sforza once invited several cardinals to a banquet where there were bones fashioned in sugar and drinking cups shaped as skulls.⁵⁴

Outdoor activities such as sporting contests at the Villa Chigi may have been followed by the pleasures of dining al fresco:

We came to sport many times in the delightful garden of Agostino Chigi, to break lances, to drill horses in its lovely, delightful and shady alleys in order to flee the wicked heat.⁵⁵

The use of the portable trestle table offered a practical solution to dining al fresco. Covered with a linen cloth, it made possible different seating patterns for a varying number of guests (Figs. 36-37). Diners were seated along one side of the trestle, not only because of its narrow size, but because it facilitated food presentation and allowed viewing of the entertainment offered between courses. It is not known what kind of seating arrangement, whether at a permanent table

or trestles, was offered at Chigi's Tiber Loggia, but the table would have been covered with a precious carpet or tapestry overlaid with a fine linen cloth. Chigi's formal banquets would have featured a tiered credenza laden with a magnificent display of symmetrically arranged silver and parcel gilt plate (Fig. 38). For informal garden dining, it was fashionable to display a colorful selection of maiolica (Fig. 39).⁵⁶ The credenza also served as a buffet for a course of dishes containing cold food. The origin of this display refers to a medieval practice of setting out dishes for a tasting ritual to prevent the Master of the house from being poisoned.⁵⁷

In addition to the Tiber Loggia, the other important accessory building on Chigi's property was the three-storied foresteria, or guest house, with stables (Fig. 40). Designed by Raphael and constructed from 1514 to 1518, it was destroyed in 1808. A sixteenth-century drawing shows that the exterior resembled that of a small urban palace. Here was the scene of a practical joke and another legendary Chigi dinner. In April of 1518 the Pope accompanied by fourteen cardinals and several foreign ambassadors came to Chigi's to celebrate the Feast of St. Catherine. Costly eels and sturgeon were served to guests seated at tables set up in a new building. This new dining room was hung with such richly worked tapestries and the credenza so lavishly piled with plate that even the Pope chided Chigi for extravagance. The assembled company must have roared with laughter at Chigi's hoax, for when he called for the walls of

tapestry to be pulled down, the guests discovered they were eating in the unoccupied stalls of the new stable.

A banquet scene painted in 1520 illustrates some of the details of Chigi's dinner in the stables as well as dining customs for a formal meal (Fig. 41). The walls of the room are hung with different-colored panels of costly silk damask. The diners are seated on upholstered chairs before a table set with a linen cloth placed over a large Turkish carpet. The carver serves the guest of honor, while the remaining company help themselves from a variety of dishes placed on the table. At one end of the table is a station for wine bottles. There are no wine goblets on the table, as wine was served on request, and goblets removed after use. Musicians entertain throughout the meal.

On August 28, 1519, Chigi's wedding day, a great banquet was held in Peruzzi's Sala delle Prospettive. In honor of the occasion Chigi went to great expense to have the choicest delicacies as well as live fish sent from France, Spain and the coasts of Bosphorus. Pastor, remarking on the moral tone of the whole event, says "such extravagance, which bears the mark of the parvenu, has something repulsive about it."⁵⁸ But this tone of the day was sanctioned by corpulent Leo X, and his enormous appetite for pleasure called for ever more impressive culinary displays.

VI. COOKERY AND PRESENTATION

The arts of cookery and its presentation were as ephemeral as the garden. Contemporary painting, drawing and prints provide visual information about the banquet and food presentation; poetic descriptions dwell on the pleasurable aspects of eating, conversing and being entertained; and cooking manuals discuss foods, nutrition, recipes and service. These sources, from 1470 to 1570, reveal a picture of what might have transpired at Chigi's Villa Suburbana from 1510 to 1520.

Cooking of the Renaissance began to be codified in the early fifteenth century with circulating manuscripts which were concerned with organized recipes, nutritional aspects of food, weights and measurements, methods of preparation, and order of courses (Fig. 42).

In 1475, the first book of printed recipes by Chef Maestro Martino, De Honesta Voluptate et Valetudine (Concerning Honest Pleasure and Well-Being), was published by Platina, the humanist Vatican librarian, whose real name was Bartolomeo Sacchi. Printed in Venice, its popularity demanded a printing of six editions over the next thirty years. Martino's recipes were based largely on the first-century Roman chef, Apicius, but also included the culinary innovations introduced by the East through the Islamic invasions of Southern Italy, especially in the use of sweets based on honey, almond paste and cane sugar. The intention of this influential text was to subject the pleasure of eating to the rules of science, as Platina stated in the dedication: "To assist the

well-bred man who desires to be healthy and eat in a decorous way, rather than he who searches after luxury and extravagance."⁵⁹

Ancient medicine consisted in large part of rules for the diet, with the study of various properties of foods and their preparation essential to one's well-being. Platino was not unaware of Pliny the Elder's documentation of the benefits of eating simple foods such as the onion, which "promotes a healthy complexion, and if they are eaten everyday on an empty stomach they maintain good health, are beneficial for the stomach, and ease the bowels by moving gas along."⁶⁰ Martino's recipe for torta detta marzapane (marzipan cake) incorporates the influence of Eastern sweet cooking with Pliny's emphasis on the effects of a particular food on healthy living:

I do not recall ever having eaten anything more delicious with my friend Patrizio the elder. Indeed, it is very nourishing, quite digestible, is good for the chest, the kidneys and the liver, and it makes the sperm grown, stimulates one to the pleasures of Venus and refreshes the urine.⁶¹

According to the principles of ancient medicine, food affected not only the body but the mind. A banquet brought together a harmony of the vital functions. Thus, based on classical principles, the humanist sought the joy of eating accompanied by the joy of learning about the composition and effect of foods.⁶²

As Platina was counseling against excessive eating, the recipes of Apicius were printed in a volume called Ars Magirica ("The Art of the Cook") in 1498 with details of complicated and exotic recipes served to excess at splendid banquets of Imperial Romans. A culinary renaissance based

on ancient Rome resulted in renewed observance of order of courses and showy displays of foods. Food historian Waverly Root says that the most ostentatious of Imperial Roman banquets were staged by the newly rich.⁶³ Chigi's feasts must have been as spectacular as these Augustan forebears.

No record of Chigi's menus has been preserved. One can only speculate that his feasts would balance the spirit of the High Renaissance's love of edible conversation pieces with the medical benefits of specific foods. Platina's urging against excessive use of highly seasoned fatty foods in favor of a lighter cuisine emphasizing the use of raw vegetables and fruits to begin and end a meal was beginning to impact Italian cookery.⁶⁴ This aspect has been recorded from a dinner of 1512 at which Chigi entertained the young Federico Gonzaga:

Messer Agostino has made, as usual, the greatest honor of good things in abundance, the finest wines and the best melons and fruits of different sorts.⁶⁵

In 1546, the menus of important meals eaten in a great home in Florence were recorded and are particularly valuable for illustrating the fixed order of service and defined conventions for formal eating. This order was probably observed at the Villa Chigi thirty years earlier. Courses were arranged as serviti, of which there were at least four. For each servito, a line of waiters would carry in large canisters containing from four to thirty courses (Fig. 43). Courses were really like successive buffets. All the dishes were set out on the table at the same time and the diner ate only what was near him or passed by other

guests. After each servito, the tablecloth would be removed, the table redecorated and entertainment provided, following an ancient custom recorded by Pliny the Younger:

Between the courses there is often a performance of comedy, so that the pleasures of the table have a seasoning of letters, and the meal is prolonged into the night, even in summer, without anyone finding it too long amid such pleasant company."⁶⁶

The first servito was called the antipasto (before the meal) and might consist of salads, pies of fresh caviar and marinated fish or meats. The second servito consisted of boiled and poached dishes, including soups, fish or meat. (It was a convention that fish and meat were never served on the same day.) Sauces for this servito were placed in categories according to color, such as yellow sauces made with saffron, green sauces made with herbs, white sauces made with ground almonds, and red sauces made from wine (tomatoes were yet to be imported from the Americas). Chefs were considered artists themselves and belonged to the same guild as painters. Many of the binding techniques of sauce preparation using egg and oil were similar to those of making paints from vegetable dyes for fresco and oil painting.

The third servito, corresponding to today's main course, would consist of fried and roasted dishes. The fourth servito included prepared pastries and pies, both sweet and savory, and this was followed by fruits, vegetables and sometimes frutta di mare, such as oysters.⁶⁷

Pastries, depending on their filling, could belong to any course (Fig. 44). Hunting was such a popular sport that pastries

were popularly filled with cooked and live wild birds. A recipe for pasticcio di uccelli vivi (pie with live birds) concludes with: "Then you set the pie before some gentlemen and ladies, if you wish to have a little fun, and when they open the pie the birds will fly away."⁶⁸ Leo X, with his a passion for both hunting and practical jokes, would have greeted this dish with laughter. Filled pies, since they could be made in advance, were a particularly popular food for dining al fresco, or at a distance from the kitchen.

In 1513, a banquet given in honor of Giuliano di Medici for twenty guests at one table, with a platform below for observers, was recorded by chroniclers present. Each guest found in front of him a linen napkin in which little live birds were imprisoned. When opened, the birds began hopping on the table as the first course was served. The twelve or thirteen services included enormous platters of roasted warblers, quail and other birds; roosters cooked and put back in their skin and feathers; sugared capons covered in fine gold; casks from which flocks of birds escaped and other decorative dishes with surprise effects; and all served with an abundance of wine.⁶⁹

The orchestration of serving these elaborate feasts in such precise order was in itself an art form, supervised by the Chief of Household, called variously the scalco, maestro di cassa or maggiordomo. The Villa Chigi would have required one of first rank capable of organizing elaborate dinners and

entertainments. The scalco's responsibilities included hiring the cooks, kitchen staff, planning menus, ordering food and wine and all the minutiae of staging splendid feasts.

Cristoforo di Messisbugo, a nobleman and scalco at the court of the d'Este Dukes of Ferrara during the first decades of the sixteenth century, wrote a manual in 1549 to instruct others in the profession. Called Banchetti, compositioni di vivande et apparecchio generale, it was one of the earliest printed textbooks on the subject and included information on kitchen utensils, staff duties, and recipes as well as a description of fourteen feasts.

The most influential and comprehensive cookbook and household manual was Bartolomeo Scappi's Opera, first published in 1570 (Fig. 45). As personal cook to the Popes for many years in the sixteenth century, Scappi's book recorded over one thousand recipes, with detailed instruction on required kitchen equipment and food presentation for the wealthy household. Most important, it was one of the first cookbooks to contain engraved copperplate illustrations (Fig. 46).

Proper carving and boning was essential to the presentation of food, and the carver was a highly skilled professional. Vincenzo Cervio's manual Il Trinciante (The Art of Carving) was first published in 1580 in Venice (Fig. 47). Cervio minutely details come si trincia ("how one carves") thirty-seven different meats and fowl, twenty fish, and eight fruits. Shapes and proportions of carving knives, forks and other

implements are illustrated (Figs. 48-50), with instructions given for their precise use. In addition to carving for serving, the correct boning of meat and fish before stuffing and cooking was a crucial aspect of complex cookery. The etiquette for carving fruit for decoration and presentation produced a feast for the eyes as well as the palate (Fig. 51). Revel, translating from Cervio, likens the carver to the knight, one who must have perfect control over his every move, who must use his display of precision as a spectacle, which reflects on the glory of the host, and adds to the pleasure of dining.⁷⁰

VI. TABLE DECORATION

While the spectacular table decorations designed by major artists of the day do not appear until later in the sixteenth century, Messisbugo described in his manual an elaborate table setting for a banquet in the garden which had:

three tablecloths one on top of the other, with napkins variously folded, in a divine way. This table was marvellously decorated with different flowers and arms, with salt cellars and knives. Above it was beautiful foliage with festoons and various finely carved trophies.⁷¹

The table was laid out with figures of Venus, Bacchus and Cupid made of sugar, which were replaced during the next servito by "voluptuous statuettes." Modeled figures made of sugar paste, perhaps similar to the modeled topiary in the garden, were striking ornaments for the dining table, and were used at least as early as 1493 when it was recorded that Beatrice Duchess

of Milan had her table set with over three hundred different objects made of gilt sugar paste.⁷²

Scappi recorded a feast he organized in a garden in Trastevere in May 1536 for which he had designed nine elaborate scenes based on classical mythology for the table which included sculpture in sugar, butter and pastry.⁷³

Another example of the ephemeral edible triumph was created by the Florentine artist Andrea del Sarto (1486-1531), a member of the first modern cooking academy, Compagnia del Pailo, which was described as a:

temple built on a foundation of multi-colored gelatin with sausages for columns and wedges of parmesan cheese for their capitals. Inside was a music stand that held a book with pages of leaves of pasta, its lettering and musical notation picked out with grains of pepper. Near the stand, arranged like singers in a choir, were roasted thrushes.⁷⁴

These intricate but short-lived works of art were intended to stimulate table conversation and impress the guests with the ingenuity of their host. There is little doubt that Chigi basked in the glory of his chefs' creations.

The ancient custom of twining leaves and flowers together to make a rope or wreath was revived during the Renaissance, when garlands were used with delightful innovations. Famous examples decorate the Villa Chigi's facade and Cupid and Psyche Loggia. An illustration from Cervio's manual shows a table draped with a fruit-decorated garland (Fig. 52). Vasari describes the credenza painted by Romano (Fig. 38) as being "decorated with festoons of verdure and flowers and all covered with vines, laden with bunches of grapes and leaves."⁷⁵ Strewn flowers and fragrant woods were

both decorative and functional. The aroma of the strewn flowers was believed to purify the air, repel disease and generally promote health and pleasure. Floors carpeted with sweet-smelling basil or fragrant wood masked food odors and held chewed bones and other food debris.⁷⁶ Although Castiglione's "model gentleman" would not have thrown his bones on the floor, in reality this was probably the case at many of Chigi's dinners. Aromatic burners were also part of the banquet decor, used to dull the scent of cooked animals stuffed back into their skins and feathers.

Chigi's extended stay in Venice in 1511 coincided with the building and decorating of his villa. At this time, he was entertained and courted by noble and wealthy Venetians, and it is possible that he acquired, by gift and purchase, costly objects for his home and table. Venice was world renowned for its elegant enameled and gilt goblets and other exquisite objects in glass from Murano, silk textiles, and imported luxuries such as carpets and spices.

The most precious ornaments on Chigi's embroidered or diapered linen cloths would have been his gold and silver dishes. Very little domestic silver of the first half of the sixteenth century survives.⁷⁷ Our knowledge comes from secondary sources in frescoes revealing credenzas filled with plate and drawings of individual objects. In the first quarter of the sixteenth century, Rome was the principal center of the goldsmith's art. Papal ledgers reveal an extraordinary number of goldsmiths employed by Leo X. Antonio de Fabbri of San Marino, an important goldsmith

known to be in the Pope's employ, was also an intimate friend of Chigi and Raphael, which suggests that he may have been used by Chigi as well.⁷⁸

Chigi commissioned artists such as Raphael, Romano, and possibly the young Benvenuto Cellini, to design gold and silver objects. In 1510 he commissioned Raphael to provide a drawing for a large bronze dish with embossed ornament which was executed by the goldsmith Cesarini (Fig. 53).⁷⁹ This drawing provides an example of decorative chargers with classical decoration, serving platters, implements, and ewers displayed on the credenza in homes of the wealthy (Figs. 54-56). The drawings were submitted to the goldsmith who assessed the amount of metal required and produced the cost estimate. The owner of the drawing would then formally commission the work. In 1519, the most famous sculptor in gold of the Renaissance, Cellini, moved to Rome and, at the age of nineteen, made drawings from Raphael's frescoes at the Villa Chigi.⁸⁰ This was a common practice and the Roman nobility were flattered to have young artists study at their palaces, causing one to speculate if Cellini provided Chigi with designs for decorative objects at this time.

Sketches by Raphael, Romano and their pupils were also used as patterns for maiolica, the highly decorative tin-glazed earthenware (Fig. 39). A surviving example of Chigi's frescoes being copied is seen in the engraving of Cupid and the Three Graces (Fig. 57), inspired by Raphael's Cupid and Psyche Loggia (Fig. 23). The source for the painted maiolica dish adapted from this design is

attributed to the engraving (Fig. 58).⁸¹ How many intricately designed ceramic pieces Chigi would have possessed is not known, but they would have been colorfully displayed on the credenza. Also unknown, but conjectured, is whether or not Chigi had his silver and gold plate melted to be refashioned for new occasions.

VIII. CONCLUSION

As ephemeral as a delicately carved pear were these table furnishings. As fragile as the trellised roses were the "golden years" at the Villa Chigi. Chigi's death in April 1520 was followed by Raphael's four days later. Leo X died the following year. The Chigi family finances waned, the garden wilted, the Sack of Rome devastated, and the floods erased evidence of the extraordinary lifestyle enjoyed by a few exceptional men and women of the Renaissance.

It was a gay and prosperous period. The interaction of politics and finance, society and artistic innovation resulted in a rare period of achievement. The essential aspects of a suburban villa were the enjoyment of art and eating. The Villa Chigi embraced the pleasures of both.

ENDNOTES

1. From two poems written in honor of Agostino Chigi by G. Borgia (n.d.). I.D.Rowland, "Panegyrics to Agostino Chigi," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, 47,1984, 195.
2. In 1579, the Chigi family sold the Villa Chigi to Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, who renamed it the Villa Farnesina.
3. F. Gilbert, The Pope, His Banker and Venice, Cambridge, Mass., 1980, 81. This study of Chigi's financial activities in Venice in 1511 details the history of Chigi's business career and his pivotal role in papal politics and finance. A social history of the period is provided by the Venetian diarist Sanuto (1466-1536).
4. M. Jeanneret, A Feast of Words: Banquets and Table Talk in the Renaissance, Chicago, 1991, 50. This passage from De conviventia by Giovanni Pontano (1422-1503) was published in Opera omnia soluta oratione composita (Venice, 1518), a short treatise on the banquet as a political tool to enhance the image of the host through the splendor of his feasts.
5. Alum is a mineral salt used at that time for binding dyes to cloth and in glassmaking. An essential ingredient to both the textile and glass industries, it was needed in great quantities.
6. The primary information about Agostino Chigi comes from a text written about the family in 1618 by his great-grand nephew Fabio Chigi, who became Pope Alexander VII. This biography was later published by Guisepppe Cugnioni, entitled Agostino Chigi il Magnifico, Rome, 1878, and in Archivio della R. Societa Romanan di Storia Patria II, Rome, 1879. To Fabio's text, Cugnioni added information from the Chigi Archives at the Vatican and other public archives. For information on Chigi in English, see Gilbert, The Pope; Rowland, "Panagyrics"; D. Coffin, The Villa in the Life of Renaissance Rome, Princeton,1979; and L. von Pastor, The History of the Popes, VII-VIII, London, 1950.
Chigi loaned large sums of money to Guiliano della Rovere (Julius II) to assist in his efforts to become Pope and largely financed Leo X's extravagant coronation (Possesso), which was said to cost 45,000 ducats. Pastor, VIII, 39. Chigi's financial support of Leo X continued up to two months before Chigi's death in 1520 when a paper in Chigi's archives notes that Leo X received 1500 ducats from Chigi, giving jewelry as security. Gilbert, The Pope, 146, n. 10.

W. Manchester, A World Lit Only by Fire: The Medieval Mind and the Renaissance, New York, 1992. The author attempts to provide currency equivalencies by noting that the florin and the ducat had the same value, and in 1492 could be considered roughly analogous to \$25. (n. 37). Thus Chigi's loan in 1520 of \$37,500 would have been modest compared to what Chigi paid to help defray the \$1,125,000 cost of Leo X's Possesso.

Pastor states that Chigi's annual income was estimated at 70,000 ducats (\$1,750,000) and that when he died he left behind 800,000 ducats (\$20,000,000), History, p. 117.

7. Giorgio Vasari, Lives of the Artists, I, London, 1987, 298.

8. R. Tannahill, Sex in History, New York, 1980, 283.

9. Pastor, History, VIII, 111-114.

10. Ibid., 113.

11. Aretino's years in Rome are described in S. Putnam's preface to P. Aretino, The Works of Aretino: Poison Flower of the Renaissance, Chicago, 1926, 13-22.

Sex, especially talking about it, was one of the most popular outlets for self-expression in the Renaissance. "Aretino's Postures" was a series of sonnets by Aretino illustrated with engravings of sexual positions by Giulio Romano. Published in 1524, it was widely circulated. In 1525, Aretino wrote a social satire on the courtesan, called La Cortigiana, which provided a portrait of this woman of the Renaissance. See Tannahill, Sex, 255-288.

12. P. Thornton, The Italian Renaissance Interior 1400-1600, New York, 1991, 354. This encyclopedic resource provides details of domestic lifestyle in the Renaissance. Information is documented with contemporary illustrations, fresco paintings, drawings and sketches by artists and designers and early prints. Notes and bibliography are extensive.

13. Of Chigi's four children, only one son, Lorenzo, survived to adulthood. He had one son, Agostino, who died without having a child. Lorenzo's financial difficulties forced the family to sell the villa, which was bought in 1579 by Cardinal Alessandro Farnese. Agostino Chigi's brother, Sigismondo, had five sons. It was his descendant, Fabio Chigi, who in 1618 wrote a bibliography of his great-uncle. Gilbert, The Pope, 145.

14. G. Masson, Italian Gardens, New York, 1969, 126.

15. L.B. Alberti, On the Art of Building in Ten Books, trans. by J. Rijkwert, N. Leach and R. Tavernor, Cambridge, Mass., 1989, 294-295. The knowledge of Roman country houses provided by Pliny the Younger and Vitruvius was codified and elaborated upon by Alberti in this treatise, published in 1485. His Ten Books greatly influenced the villa. For Alberti's precepts of villa architecture, see especially "Book Five: On the Works of Individuals," 117-153, and "Book Nine: Ornament to Private Buildings," 291-319.

16. Chigi financed Peruzzi's early architectural education, making it possible for him to travel extensively in Italy to study classical buildings and architectural ruins. He also underwrote Peruzzi's apprenticeship with Bramante in Rome. Peruzzi met Raphael in Siena, beginning a close friendship which continued in Rome. W.W. Kent, The Life and Works of Baldassare Peruzzi of Siena, New York 1925, 5.

17. C.L. Frommel's Die Farnesina und Peruzzis Architectonisches Früwerk, Berlin, 1961, assimilates previously known and unpublished information about the Villa Chigi, including the Tiber River Dining Loggia, stables and gardens. Frommel's text is accompanied by numerous sketches, diagrams and photographs. J.A. Ackerman's "Review of C.L. Frommel, Die Farnesina," Art Bulletin, XLIV, 1962, 242-246, summarizes key aspects of Frommel's work. D. Coffin's "The Early Suburban Villa," The Villa, 63-109, expands on Frommel's thesis with a precise account of the Villa Chigi's architecture, decoration, gardens and entertainment.

18. This paper alludes only to those artistic themes which relate directly to Chigi. In addition to Coffin's description and analyses of the villa's interior decoration in The Villa, 97-107, see P. d'Ancona The Villa Farnesina Frescoes at Rome, Milan, 1956; L. Ettinger, Raphael, Oxford, 1987; F. Hartt, Giulio Romano, New Haven, 1958; Kent, Life; Vasari, "Raphael," Lives, 1, and "Giulio Romano", Lives, 2.

Humorous and erotic aspects of the artistic themes are examined in P. Barolsky, Infinite Jest: Wit and Humor in Renaissance Art, Columbia, Mo., 1978; and L. Lawner, Lives of the Courtesans, New York, 1987.

19. Thornton, "Painted Decoration," Renaissance Interior, 35-41.

20. Alberti, Ten Books, 146.

21. Ibid., 299.

22. Thornton, "Wall-hangings," Renaissance Interior, 44-57.

23. Alberti, Ten Books, 147.

24. I.D. Rowland, "The Birthdate of Agostino Chigi: Documentary Proof," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, 47, 1984, 192-193.

25. Various interpretations for the model for Galatea have included both Imperia and Raphael's mistress, without whom he would not paint. Vasari says Chigi arranged for Raphael's mistress to live at the villa while Raphael was painting the Galatea. Vasari described Raphael as "a very amorous man with a great fondness for women . . . and always indulging his sexual appetites." Vasari, Lives, I, 312.

Raphael, in a letter of 1514 to Castiglione, said the model was a composite of many beautiful women: "In order for me to paint a beautiful woman, I have to look at many different women." Lawner, Courtesans, 120.

26. Coffin, Villa, 103.

27. Alberti, Ten Books, 299.

28. For the impact of Peruzzi's illusionistic painting on the development of scene painting, see G. Kernodle, "The Italian Perspective Scene," From Art to Theater: Form and Convention in the Renaissance, Chicago, 1944, 176-186.

29. Barolsky, Infinite Jest, 90.

30. Coffin, Villa, 105; see also Lawner, Courtesans, 44.

31. Coffin, Villa, 105; see also Barolsky, Infinite Jest, 94. At a dollar equivalency of \$25 to one ducat, 1592 ducats would be approximately \$39,000.

32. Thornton, Renaissance Interior, 111-117.

33. Vasari, Lives, I, 313.

34. See Barolsky, Infinite Jest, 79-86, for humor and eroticism in Raphael's art.

35. Masson, Italian Gardens, 129.

36. Coffin, Gardens, 77.

37. Frommel, Farnesina, 42-43. Frommel includes the verses by Gallo and Palladio, 32-33.

For Palladio's verse flattering Chigi and his new villa at a banquet celebrating the Feast of St. Anne in 1512, see Coffin, Gardens, 233.

For another description of the Tiber Loggia see E. Battisti, "Natura Artificiosa to Natura Artificialis," The Italian Garden, ed. by David Coffin, Wash. D.C., 1972, 33.

38. Coffin, Villa, 188.

39. Alberti, Ten Books, 300.

40. A classical example of clipped boxwood appears in Pliny's description of his house: "In front of the colonnade is a terrace laid out with box hedges clipped into different shapes . . . also with figures of animals cut out of box facing each other on either side. . . . Between the grass lawns here are box shrubs clipped into innumerable shapes, some being letters which spell the gardener's name or his master's." The Letters of Pliny the Younger, trans. by B. Radice, London, 1969, 140-142.
41. Coffin, Villa, 178.
42. As religious symbols, the rose was associated with the Virgin Mary, and violets and lilies were identified with the virtues of humility and purity.
43. Coffin, Gardens, 126.
44. Georgina Masson, "Pietro Aretino and the Small Roman Renaissance Pleasure Garden," Garden History, 8, 1, 1980, 67-68.
45. Rowland, "Panegyrics," 198.
46. Ibid., 195.
47. Jeanneret, Feast, 48.
48. Rowland, "Panegyrics," 195.
49. Pliny, Letters, 75-79; 139-144.
50. Jeanneret, Feast, 51. See Endnote 3.
51. C. Field, "A World Hung with Banners," Celebrating History: The Tastes and Traditions of Italy Revealed Through Its Feasts, Festivals and Sumptuous Foods, New York, 1990, 3-20. By the early sixteenth century, Italian festivals had become so numerous that one day in three was celebrated as a festival. In this uniquely Italian expression of life, huge amounts of food and extravagant entertainments were hallmarks of a long tradition. In the days of the Roman Empire, there were 182 festival days held to honor or appease the gods. Festival foods were meant to be eaten in abundance, with the most gluttonous behavior observed at Carnival, a period when the richest, fattiest foods were served.
52. Masson, Italian Gardens, 132.
53. Pastor, History, VIII, 118.
54. A. Willan, Great Cooks and Their Recipes: From Taillevent to Escoffier, New York, 1992, 28.
55. Coffin, Gardens, 227.

56. Thornton, Renaissance Interior, 106.
57. M. Visser, The Rituals of Dinner, New York, 1992, 139.
In the noble medieval house, a tasting ceremony called "credence," was performed to instill confidence in the quality of the food. Side tables at feasts were known as "credence" tables.
58. Pastor, History, VIII, 118.
59. Willan, Great Cooks, 23.
60. Pliny the Elder, Natural History: A Selection, trans. by J.F. Healy, London, 1969, 225.
61. L. De'Medici, The Heritage of Italian Cooking, New York, 1990, 198.
62. See Jeanneret, "Rules for the Appetite," Feast, 63-88.
63. W. Root, The Cooking of Italy, New York, 1974, 15-23.
Roman cuisine was distinguished by a combination of foods, flavors and aromas which today we might find bizarre and distasteful in its mix of sweet, salt, herbs and spices. Exotic foods, such as peacocks and flamingo served with their full plumage after cooking, were consumed in staggering amounts at Imperial banquets, accompanied by quantities of wine. W. Root's The Food of Italy, New York, 1971, is considered the classic text on Italian food and wine.
64. Platina's suggestion of beginning a meal with the fresh taste of fruit is echoed today in the popular first course of melon or figs with smoked ham. Platina explicitly warned against the ill effects of rich foods such as stuffed peacock: "peacock meat makes the bile turn black, is not very nourishing, and is harmful to anyone with liver or spleen problems." Medici, Heritage, 146.
65. Coffin, Villa, 107.
66. Pliny, Letters, 84.
67. G. Bugialli, The Fine Art of Italian Cooking, New York, 1989, 6-10.
68. Medici, Heritage, 148. Alla Cacciatore, applied to dishes made with fowl, means "hunter style."
69. J.-F. Revel, Culture and Cuisine, New York, 1982, 126-127.
70. Ibid., 59-61.
71. Ibid., 52.
72. Thornton, Renaissance Interior, 347.

73. Visser, Rituals, 200.
74. Root, Cooking, 22.
75. Vasari, Lives, II, 220.
76. G.R.Smith, Table Decoration, Rutland, Vt., 1968, 69-72.
77. Not only were the works of art in silver destroyed, either by melting or looting, but so were the artists' drawings. It is well known that the French ébéniste André-Charles Boulle (1642-1732) was a passionate collector of Renaissance prints and drawings, a large part of which disappeared in the fire which destroyed his workshop in 1720. One can only speculate how few artists' drawings, especially designs for silver, can have survived over the centuries. See A. Pradère, French Furniture Makers, Malibu, CA., 1989, 70-71.
78. Pastor, VIII, 355.
79. J. Burkhardt, Architecture of the Italian Renaissance, Chicago, 1985, 265.
80. J. Pope-Hennessy, Celllini, New York, 1985, 30.
81. A.V.B. Norman, Wallace Collection Catalog of Ceramics 1: Pottery, Maiolica, Faience, Stoneware, London, 1976, 299-300.

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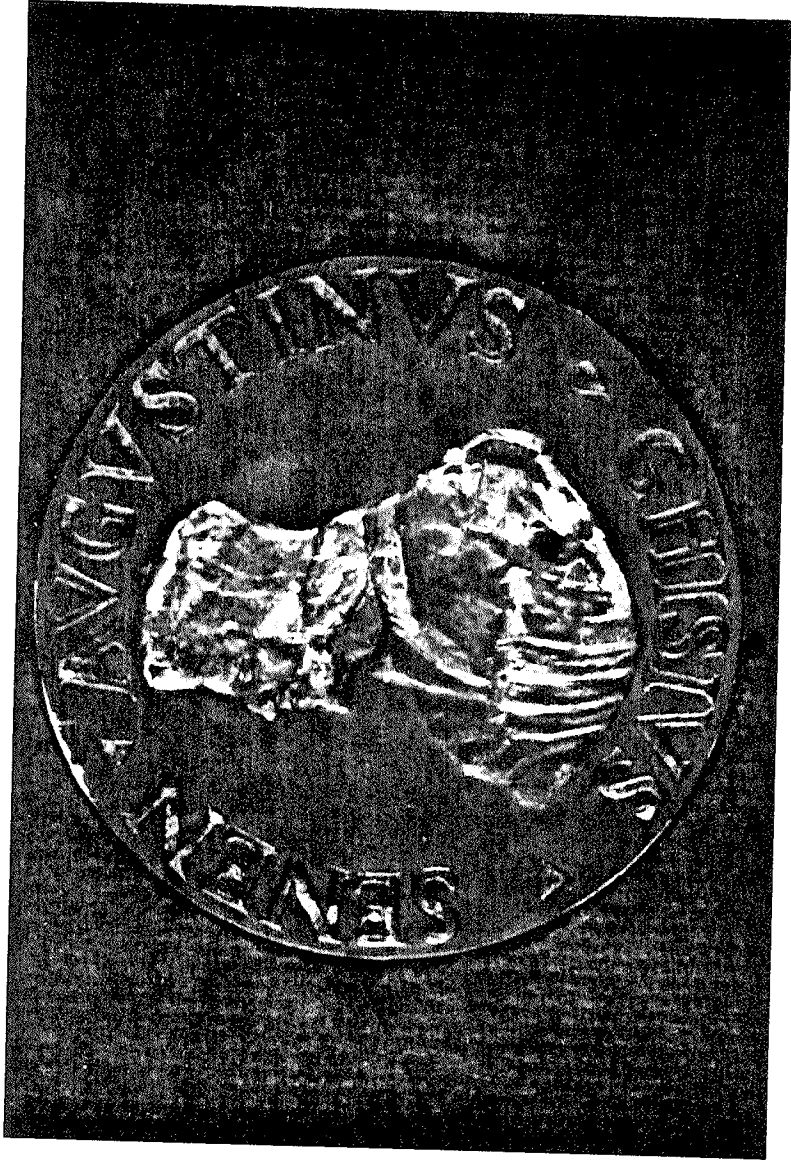


Fig. 1

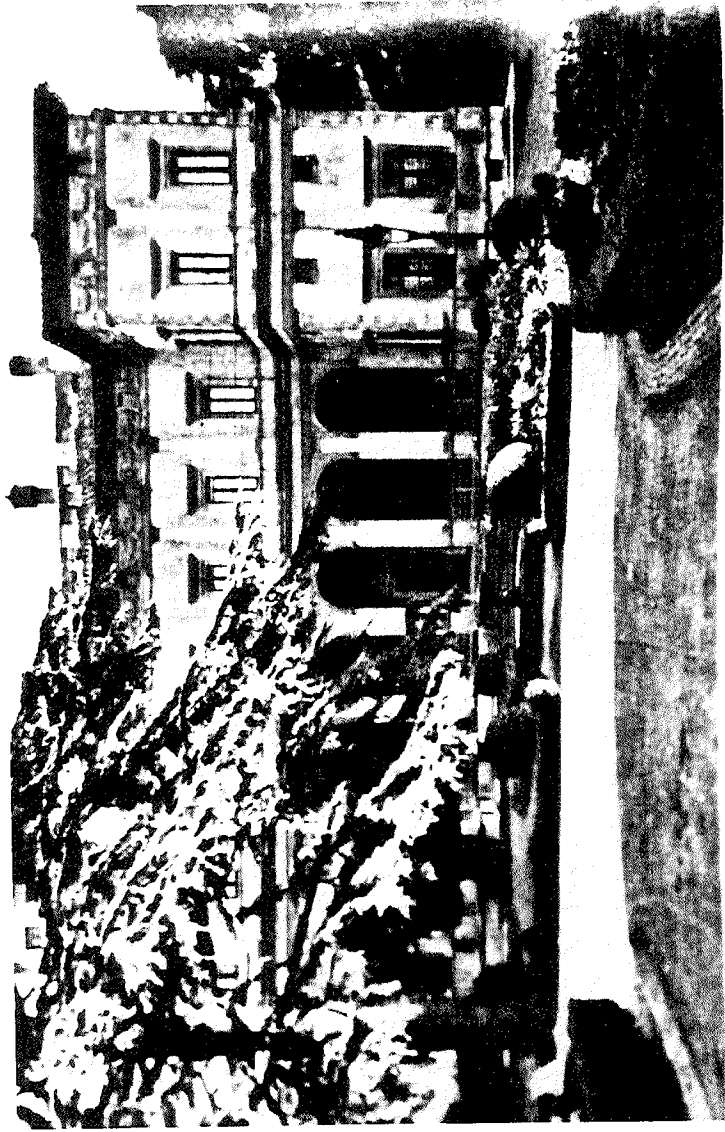


Fig. 2

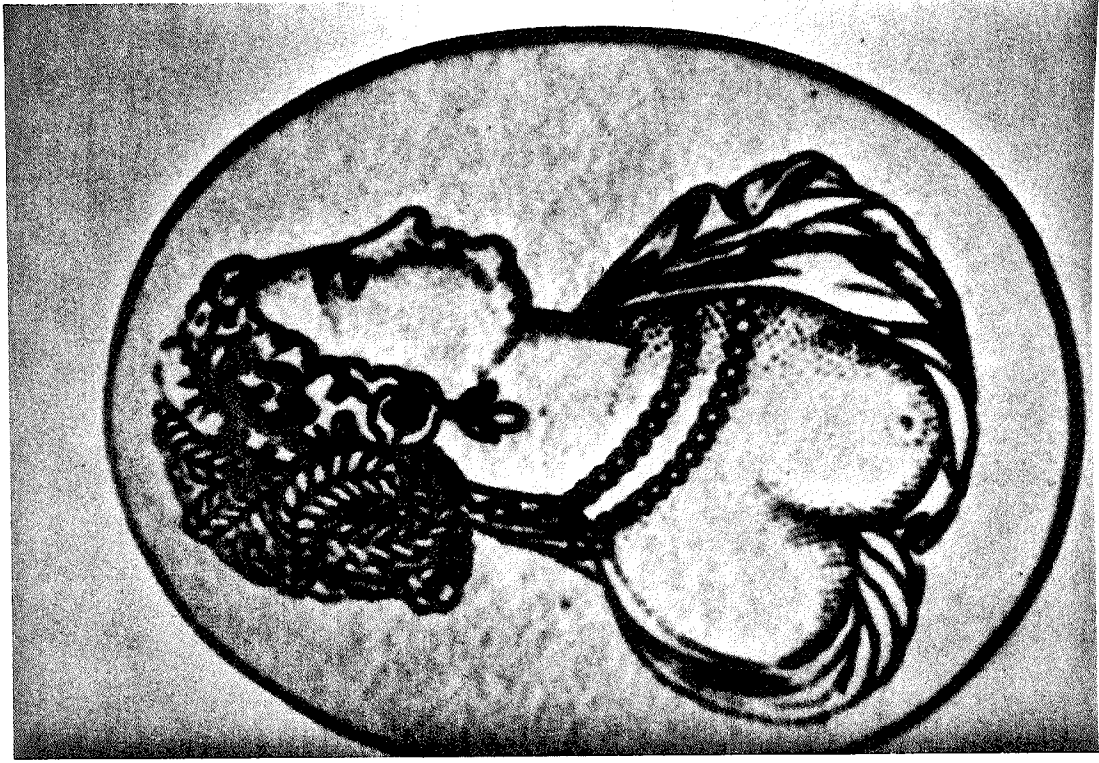


Fig. 3

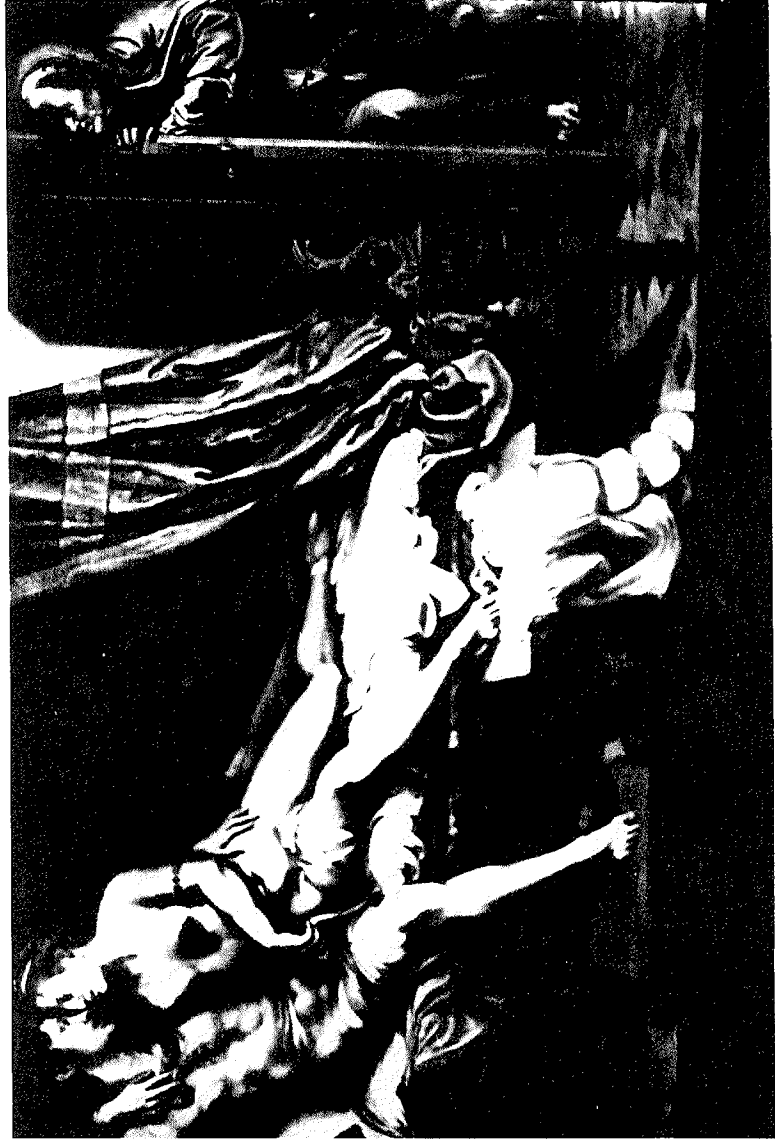


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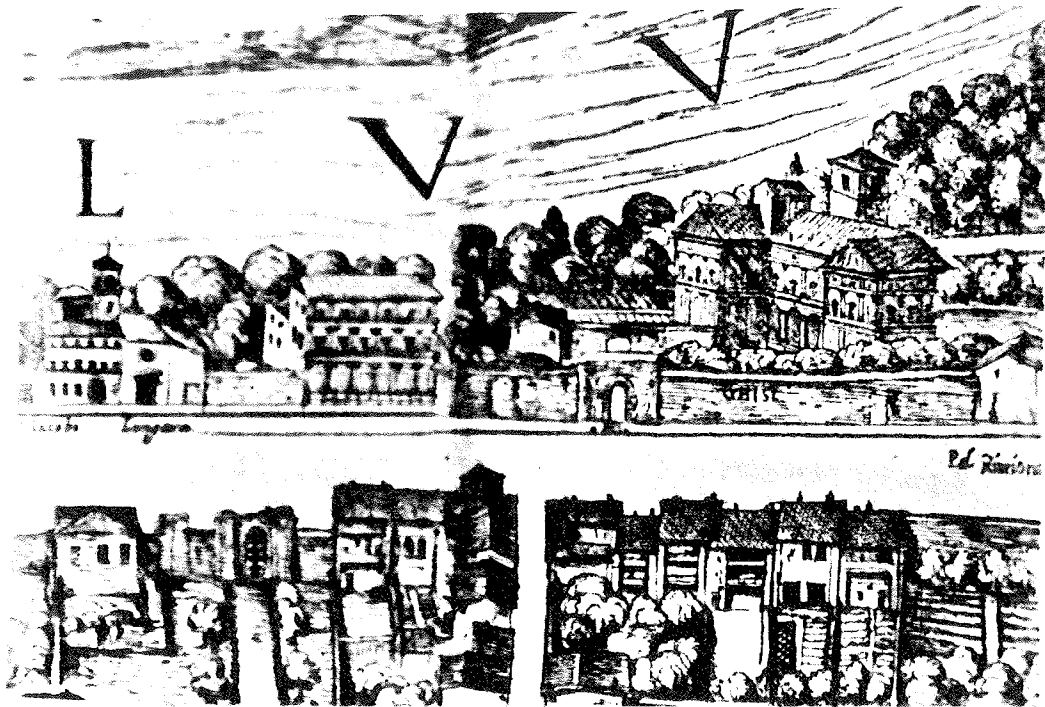


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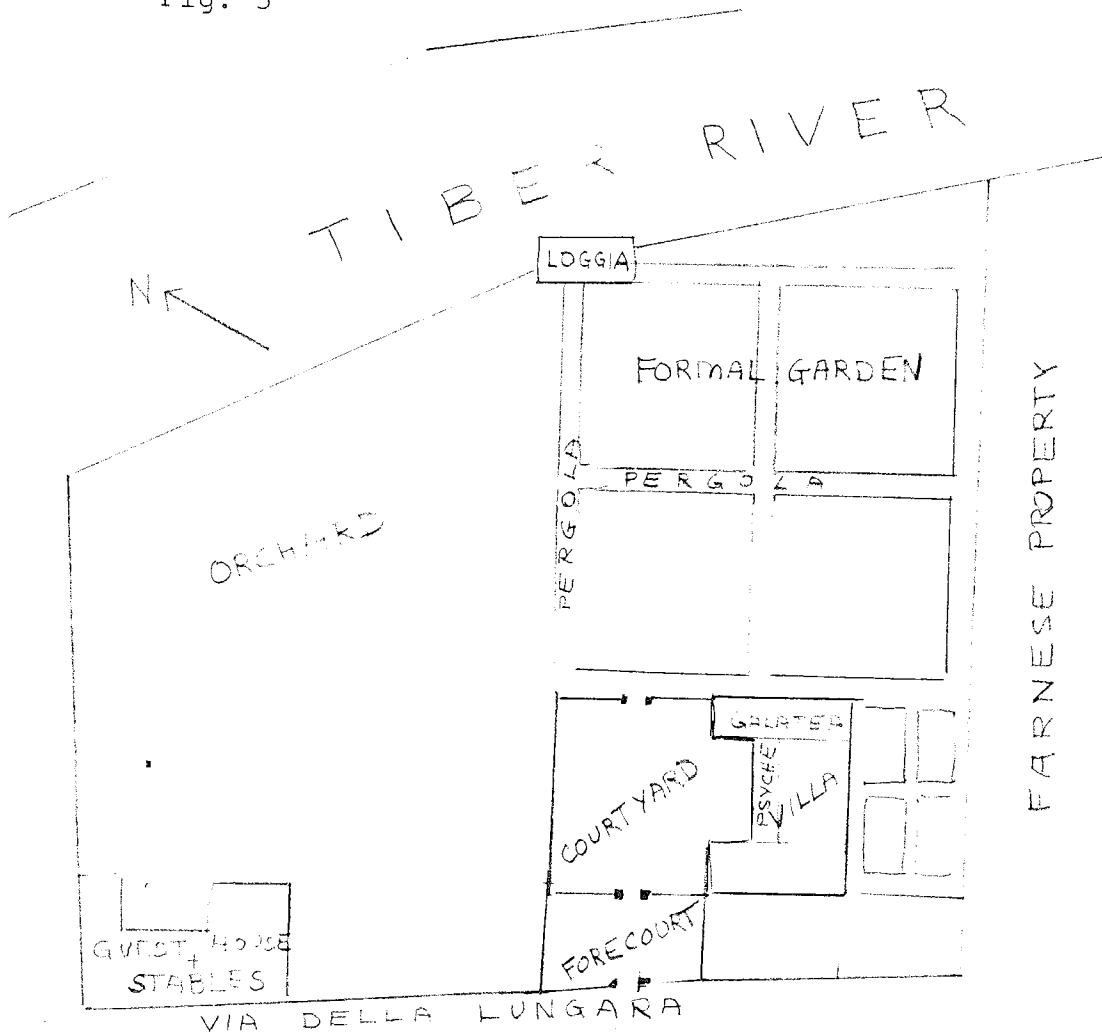


Fig. 6

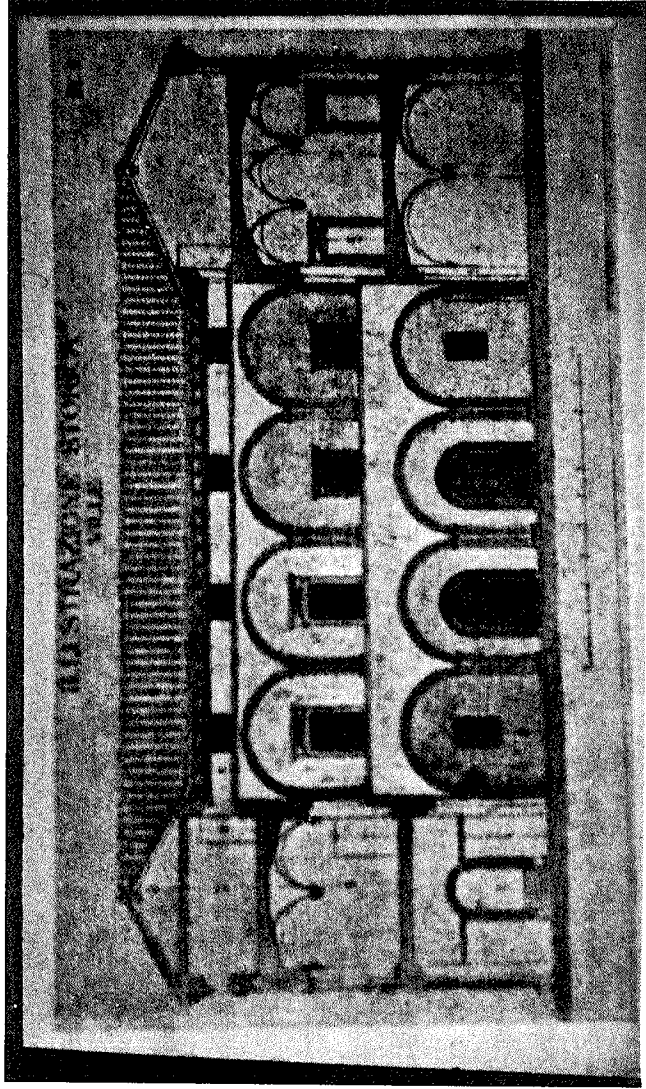


Fig. 7

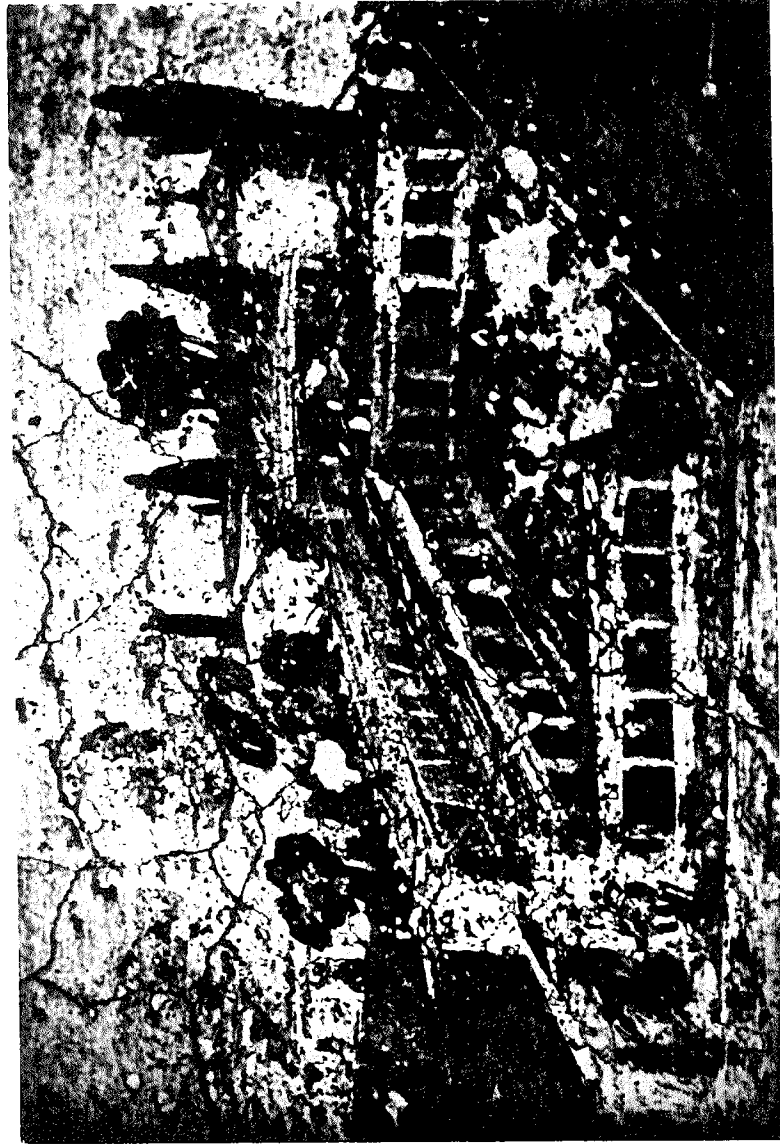


Fig. 8

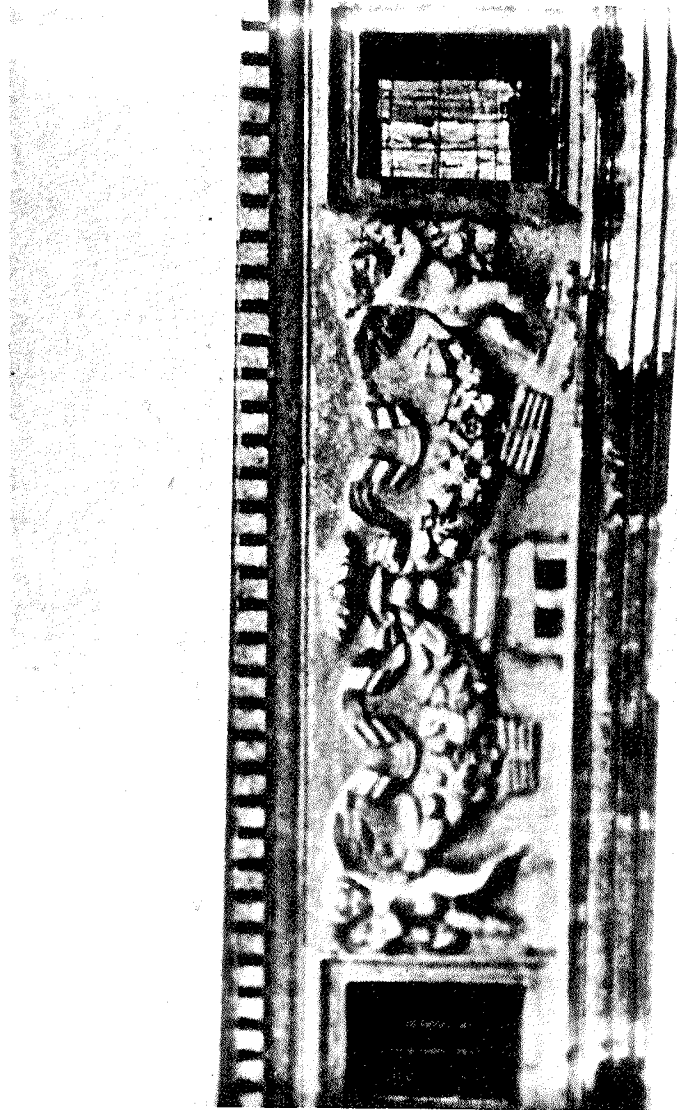


Fig. 9

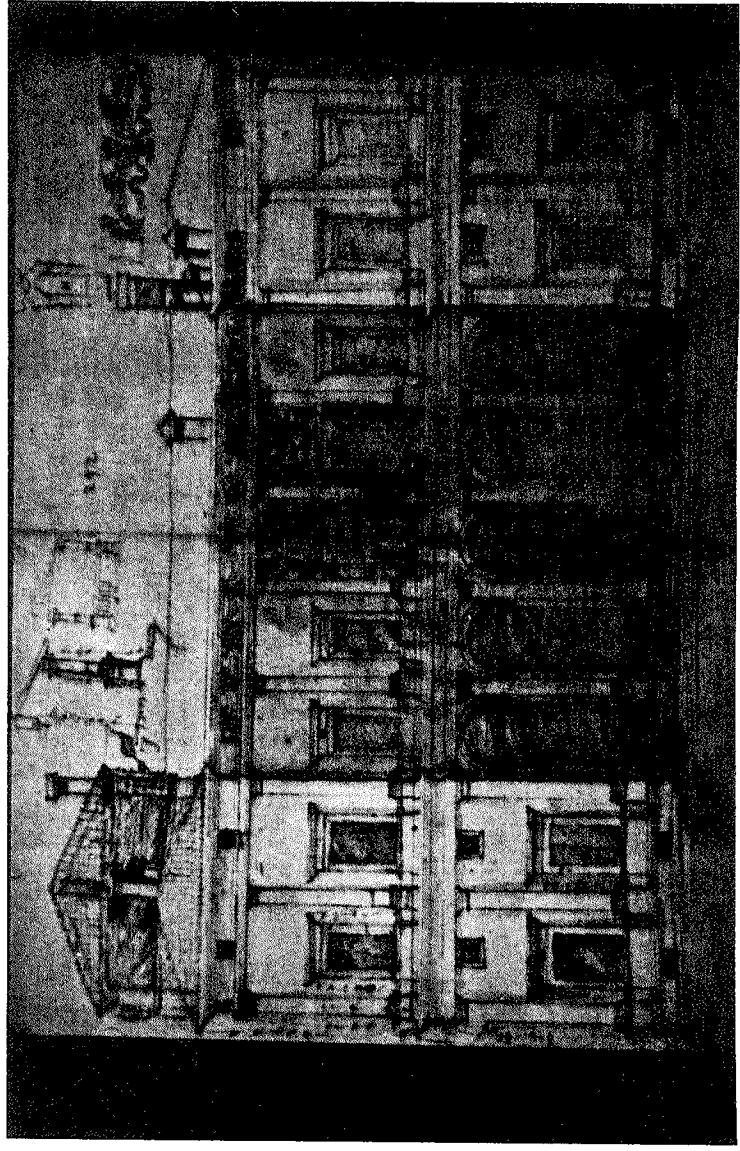


Fig. 10

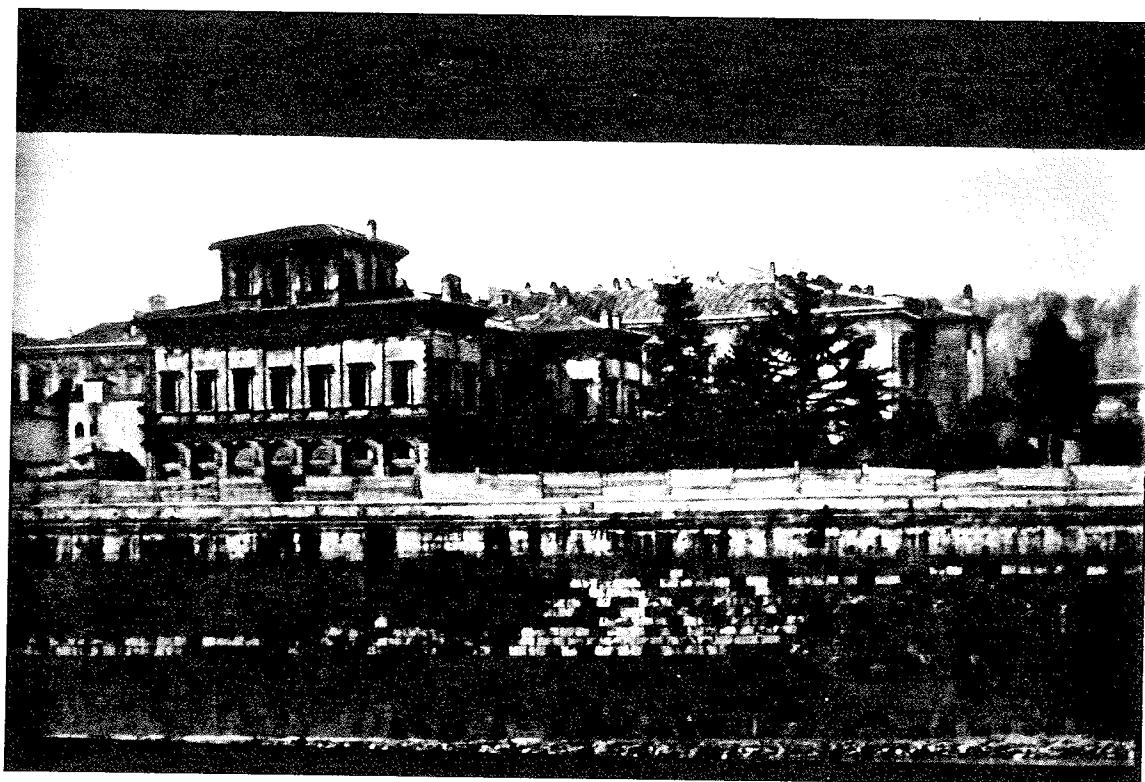


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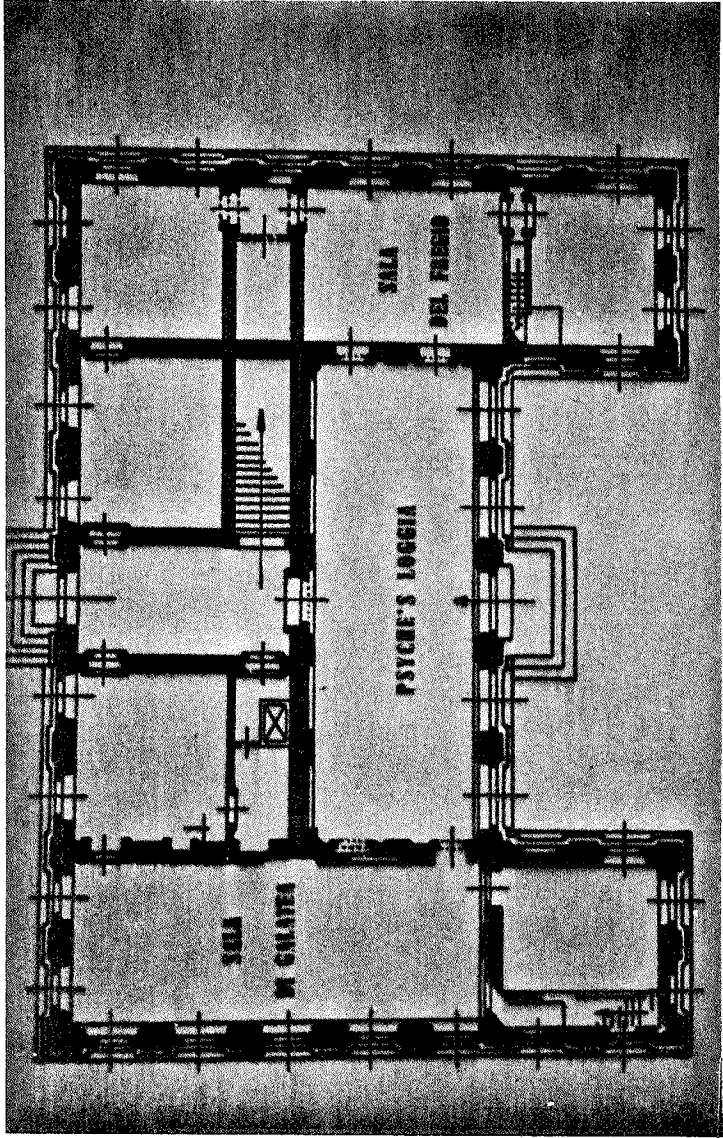


Fig. 12

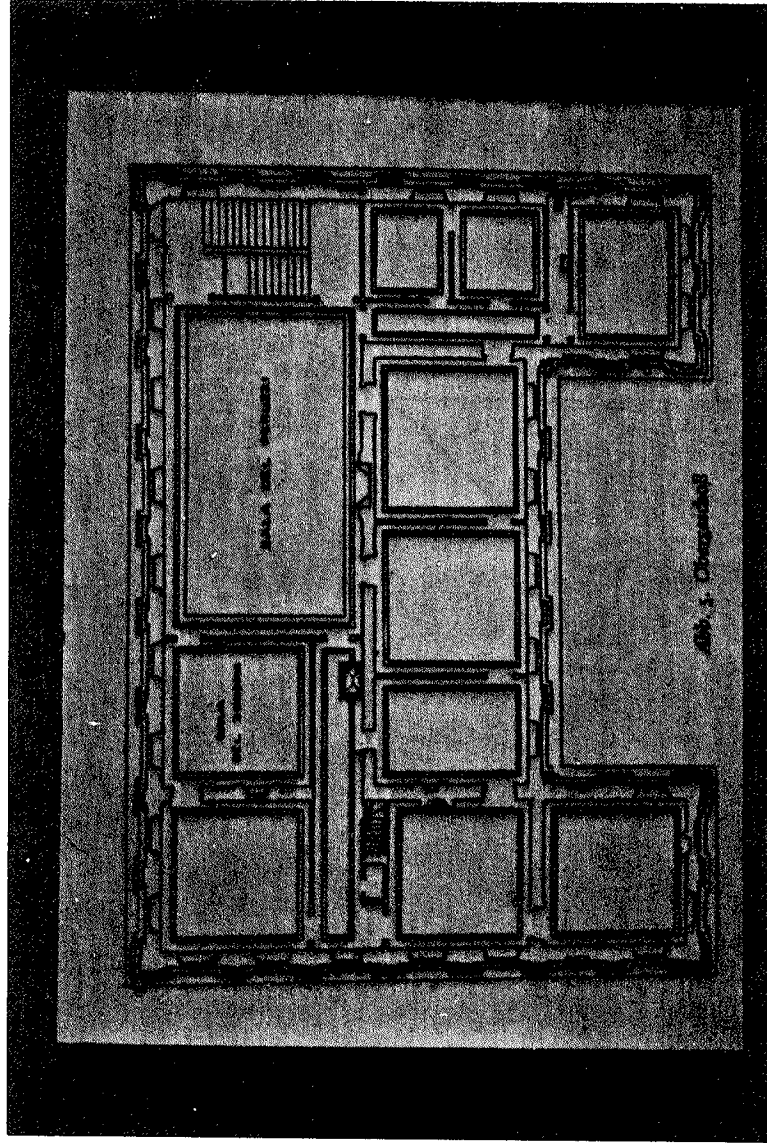


Fig. 13

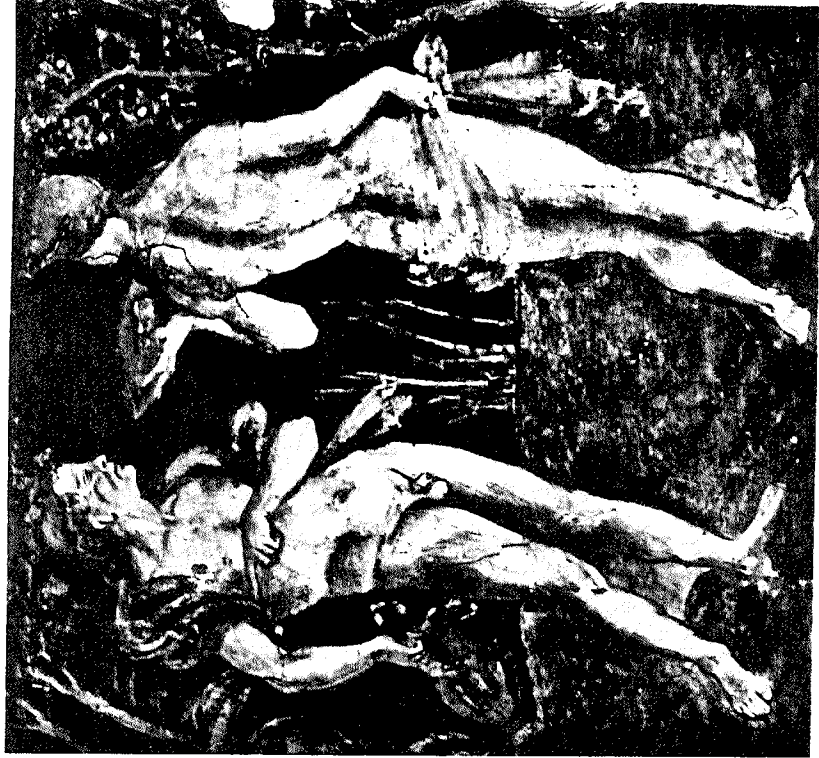


Fig. 14



Fig. 15



Fig. 16



Fig. 17

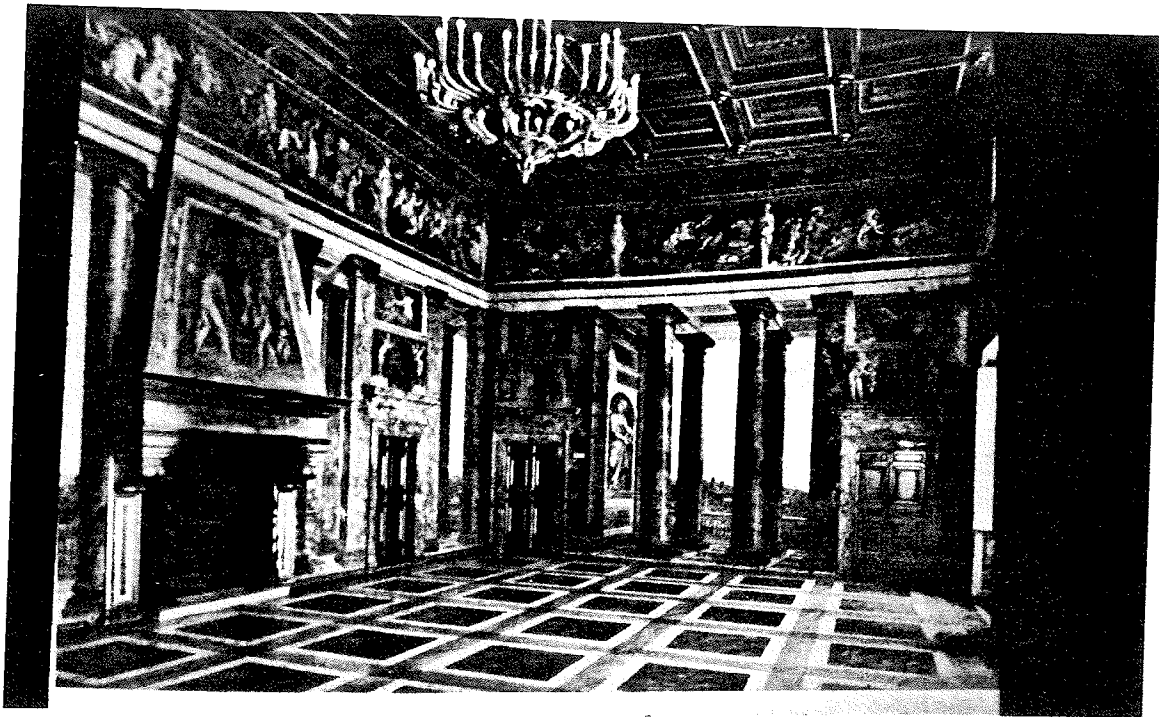


Fig. 18

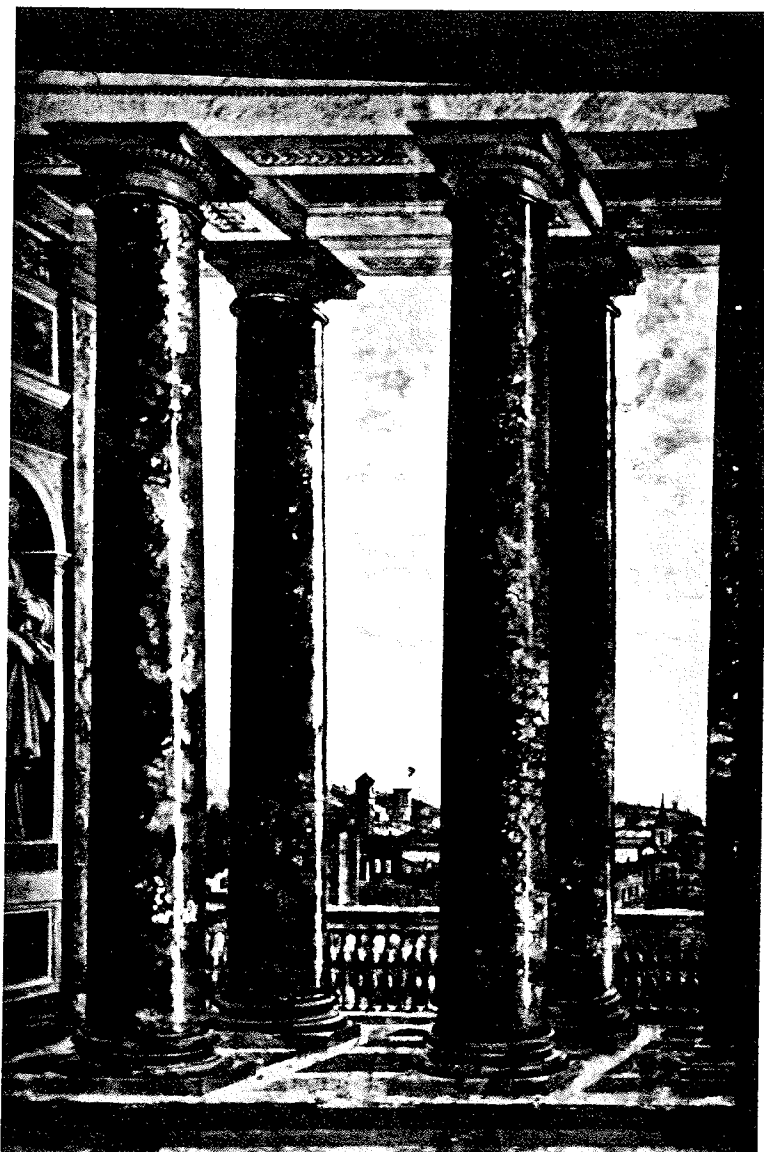


Fig. 19



Fig. 20



Fig. 21

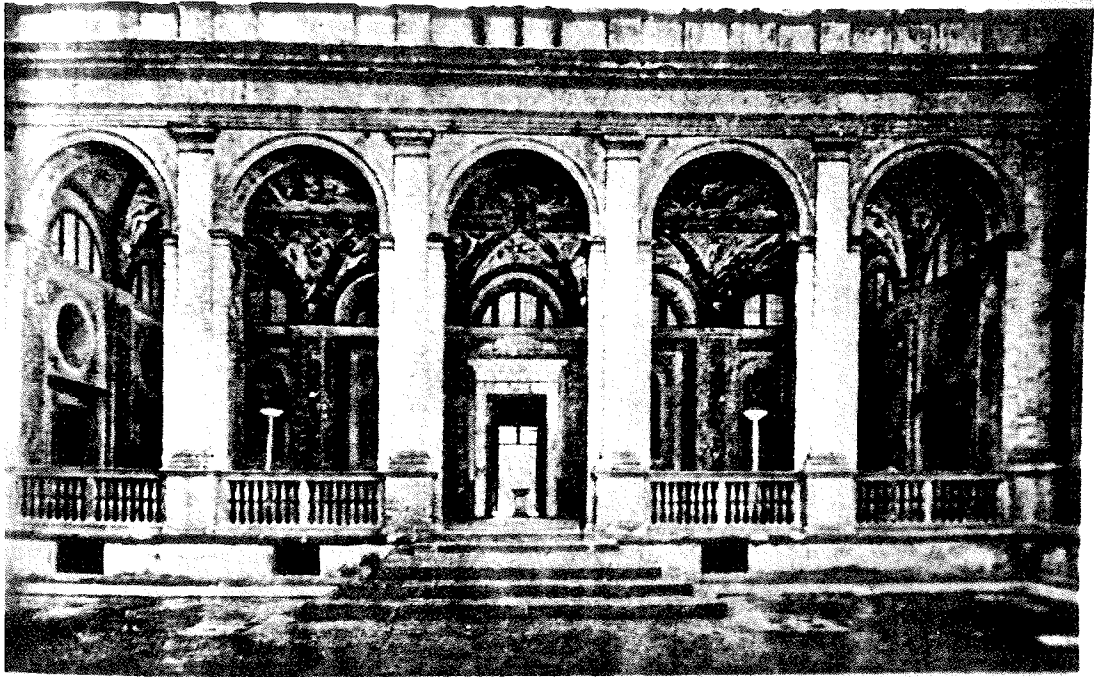


Fig. 22



Fig. 23

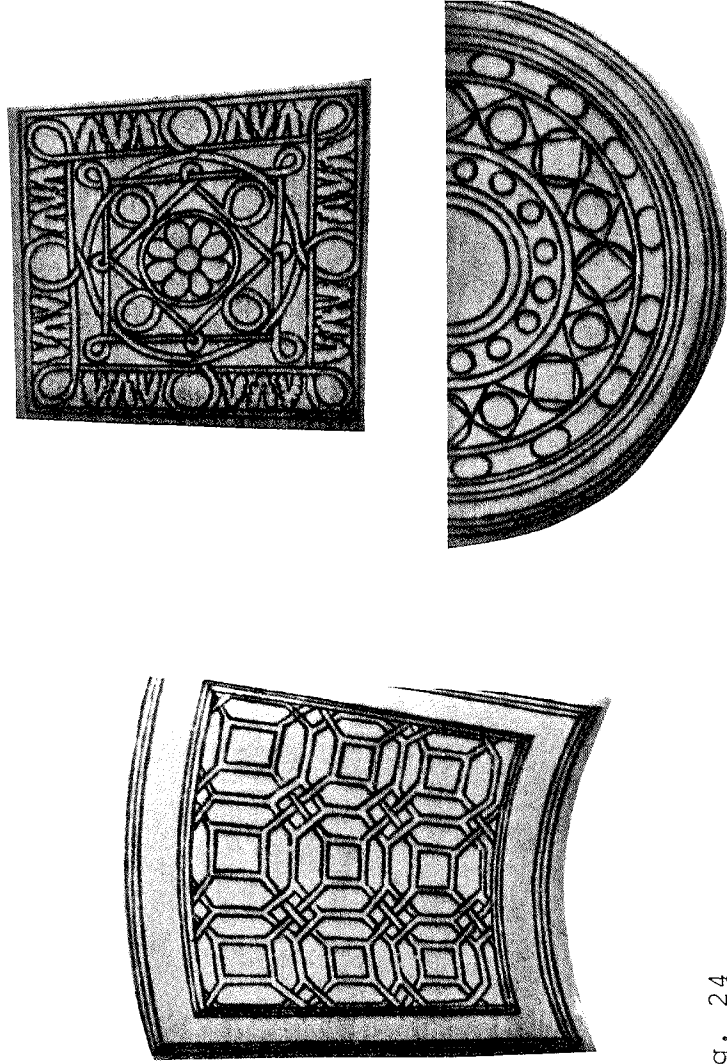


Fig. 24

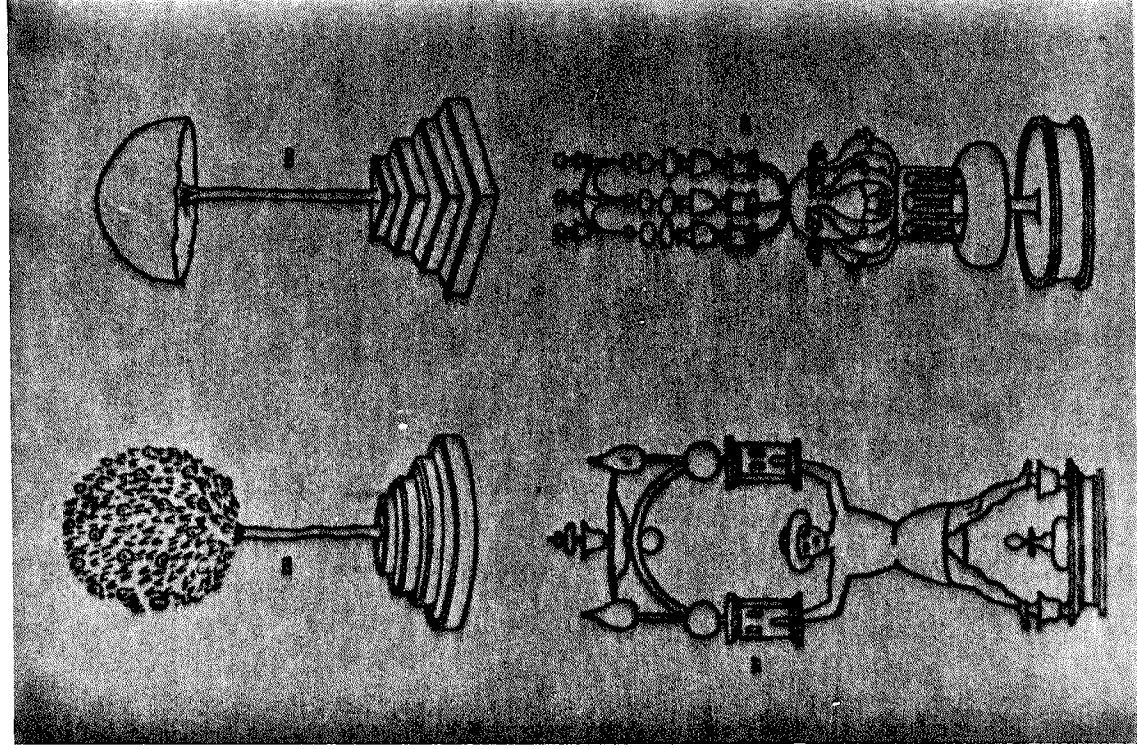


Fig. 25



Fig. 26

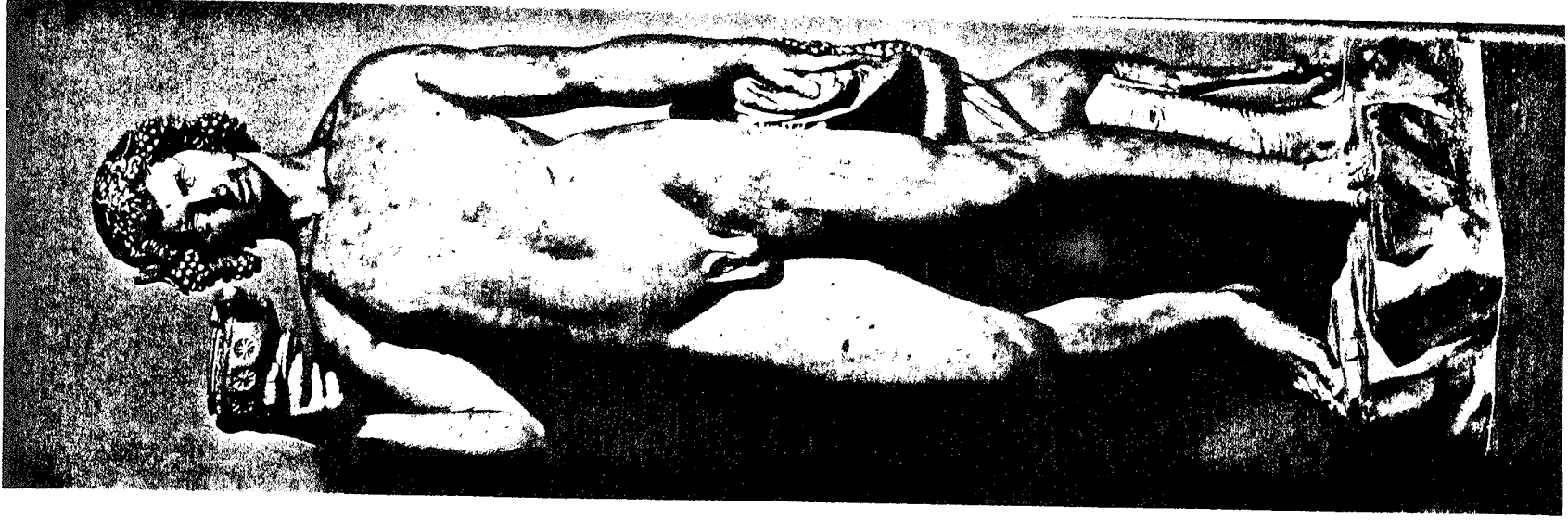


Fig. 27

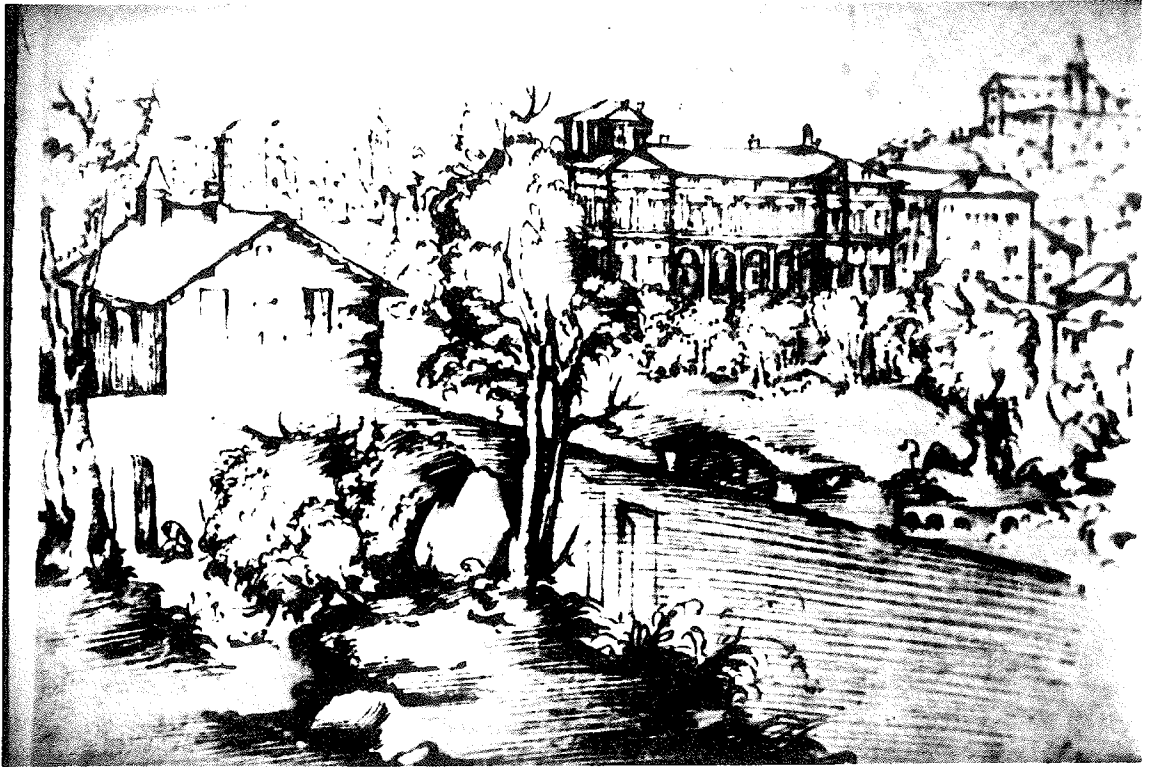


Fig. 28

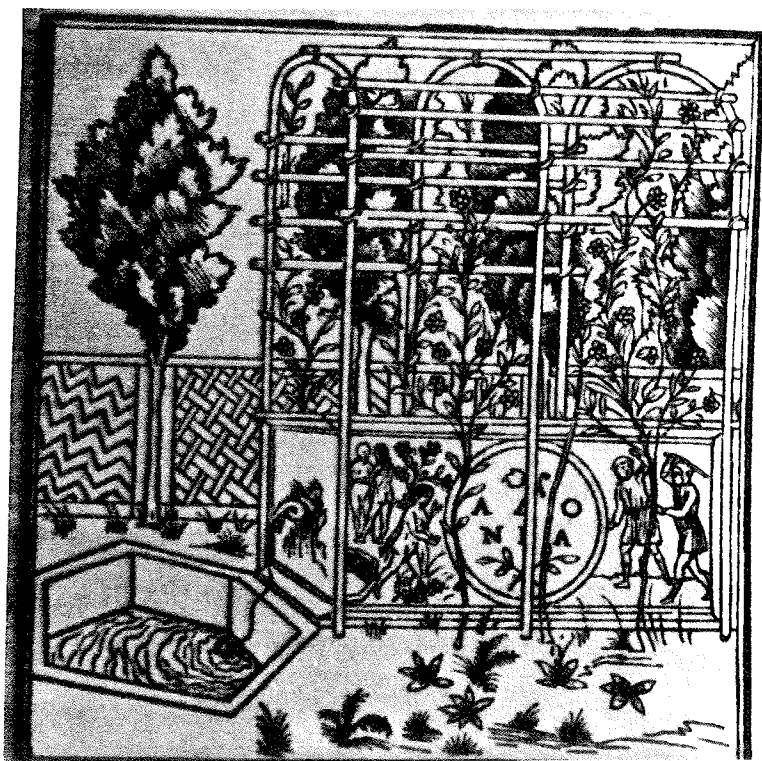


Fig. 29

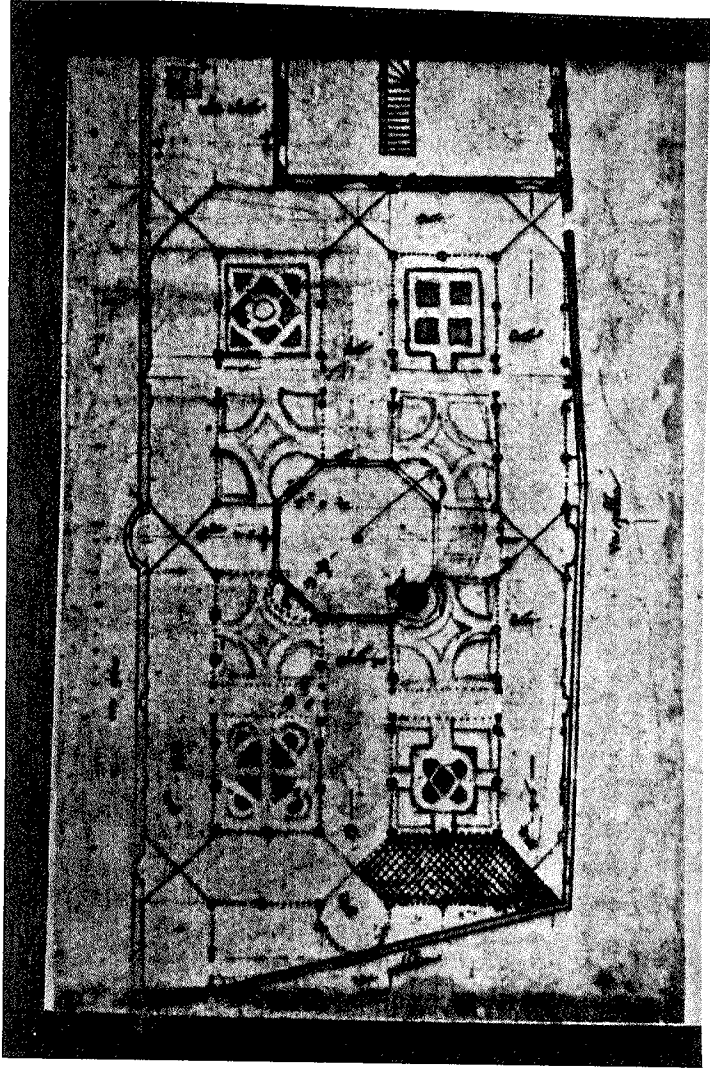


Fig. 30

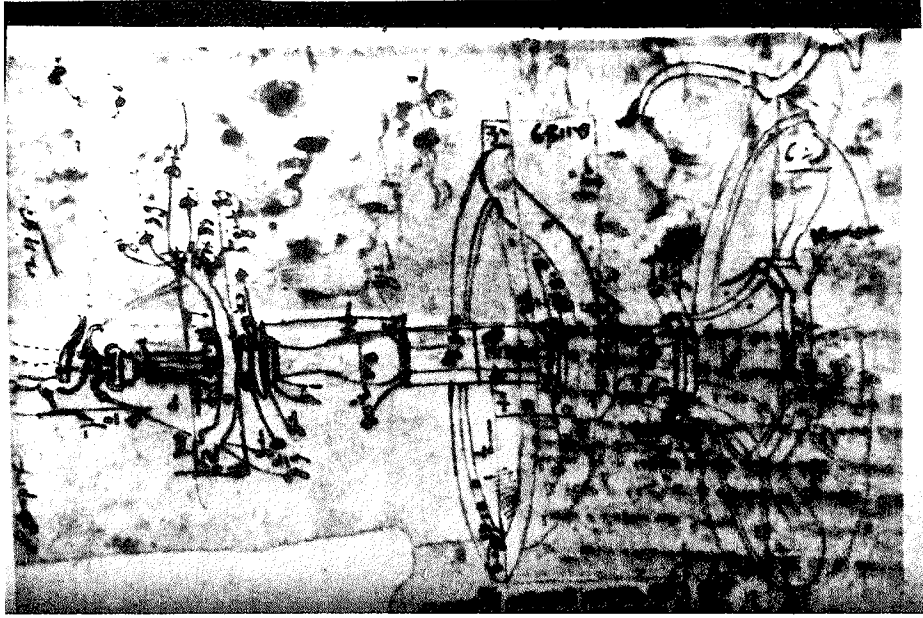


Fig. 31

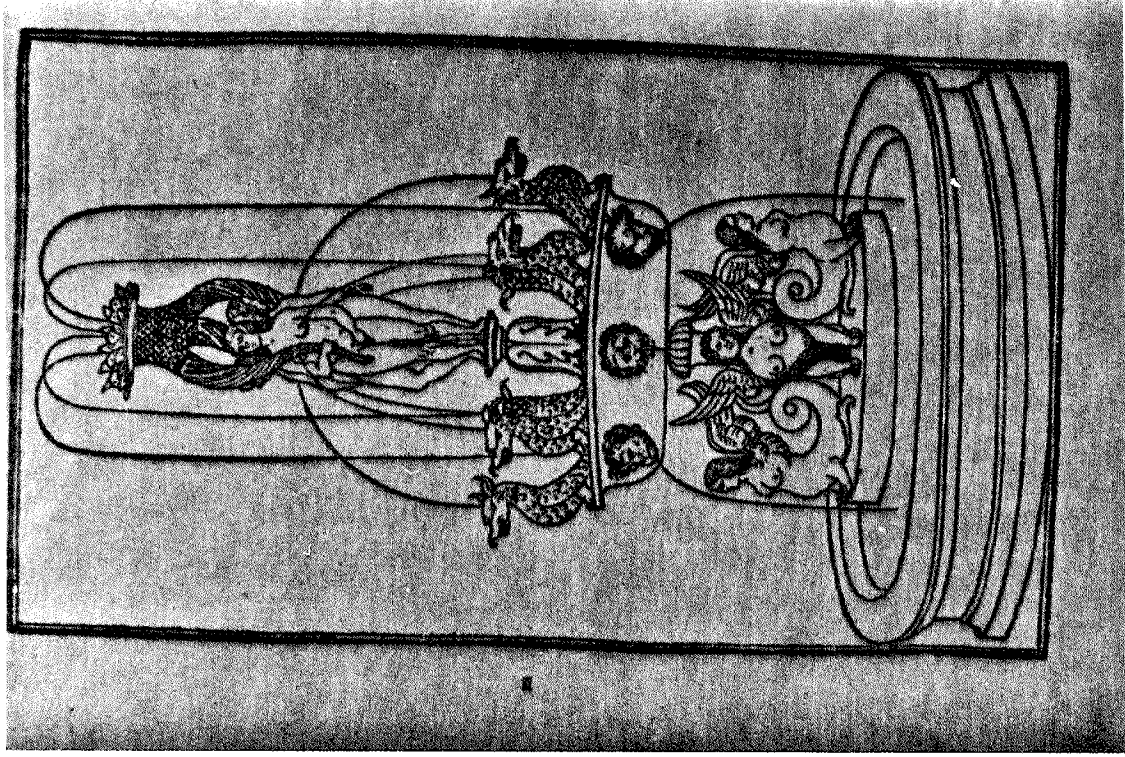
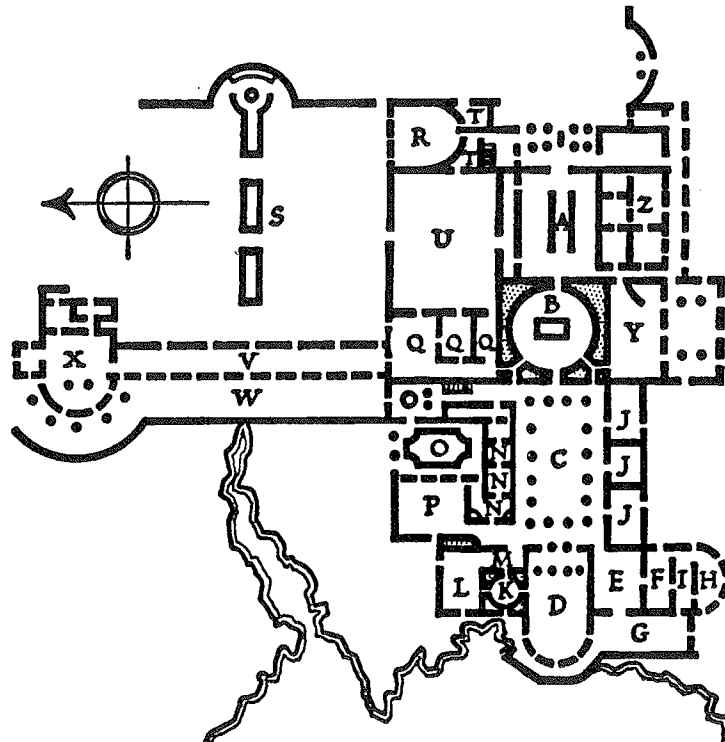


Fig. 32

A reconstructed plan taken from Clifford Pember's model in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.



- A. Entrance Hall
- B. Courtyard
- C. Inner hall
- D. Dining-room
- E. Bedroom
- F. Bedroom
- G. Gymnasium
- H. Bedroom
- I. Bedroom
- J. Slaves' rooms
- K. Bedroom
- L. Small dining-room

- M. Rooms and antechambers
- N. Bathrooms
- O. Heated swimming-bath
- P. Ball court
- Q. Suite with upper storey
- R. Dining-room, with stores above
- S. Garden with vine pergola
- T. Rooms behind dining-room
- U. Kitchen garden
- V. Covered arcade
- W. Terrace
- X. Pliny's private suite
- Y-Z. Kitchens and storerooms, not mentioned by Pliny

Fig. 33

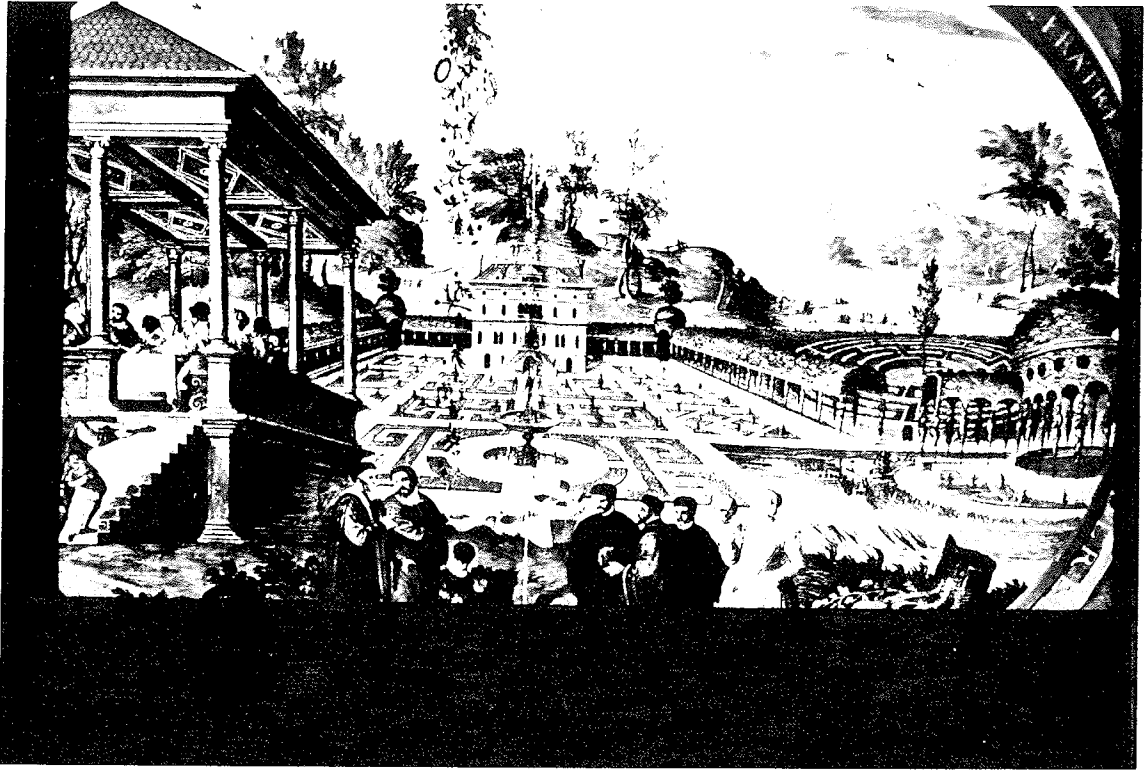


Fig. 34



Fig. 35



Fig. 36

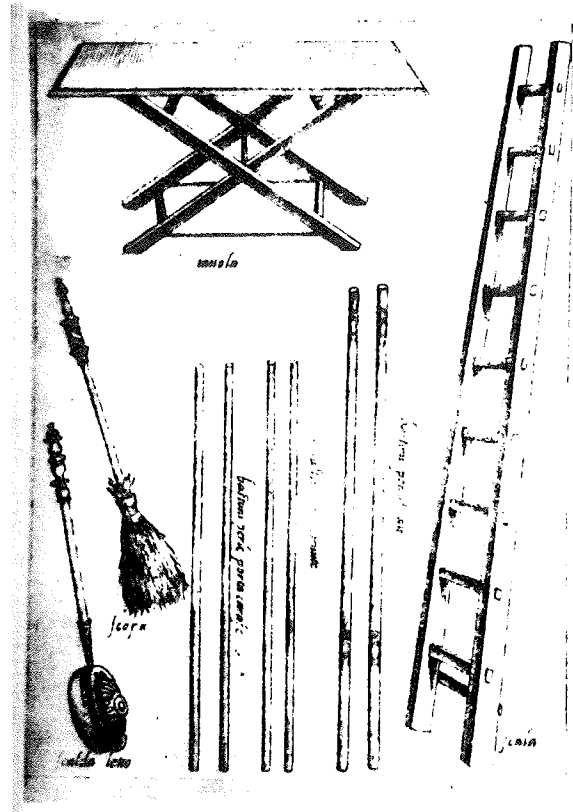


Fig. 37



Fig. 38



Fig. 39

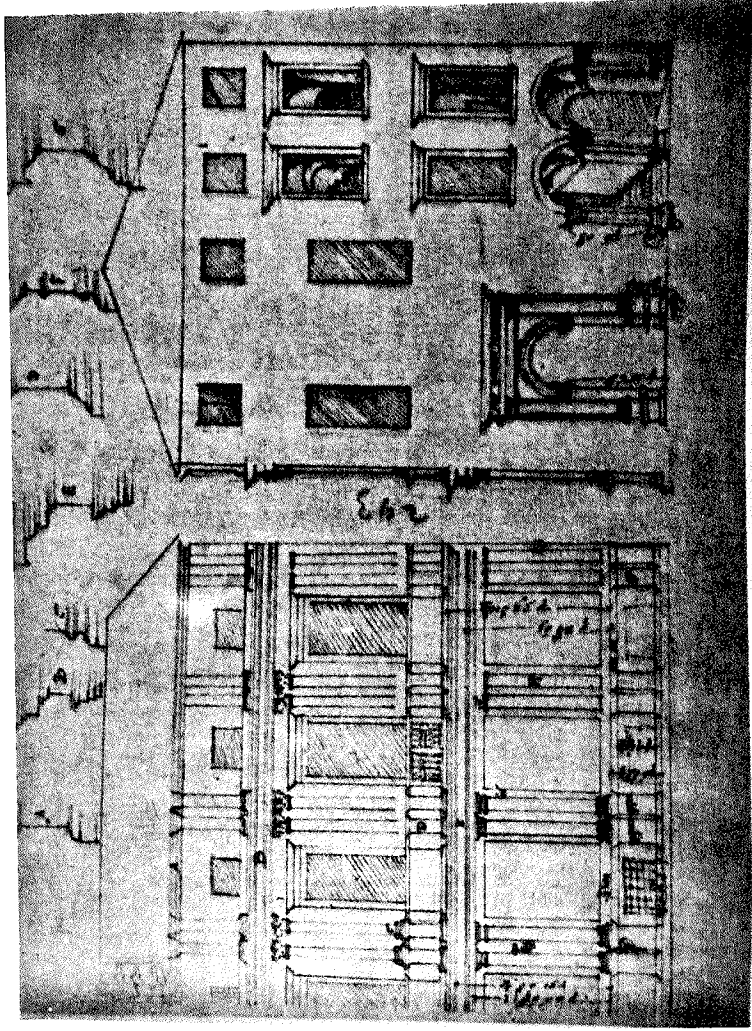


Fig. 40



Fig. 41

compositione de la torta del ferro sopra for-
 ra de farina gialla co lo Zaffrano.

Farra comune.

A bi di ben case co otto oua & co ben grasso
 di porcha & di vicello, o vero del buccro,
 della uapassa in sopra del Zorzeuero, de
 la Cannella, & vn pocho di pan grattato,
 co vn pocho di brodo grasso, ch' sia giallo
 de Zaffrano, & cociaro la farrai como di fo-
 gra e dicto de la torta bianca.

A bi lo meglio pisto lauato molto bene, ch' sia
 bianco & netto, & fallo cocer i bano latte
 di capra, o di vaccha, & fa ch' uoca stretto,
 & ch' sea ben cotto, & piglia vn pocho di fior
 di farina & dei bianchi dioua, & di stampe-
 rali i forme co la detta farina, & achu no
 piacesse l'oua po distemperar co latte l'af-
 rina, Et distemperata la metterai nel
 dicto miglio menandolo molto ben calcocchur-
 ro, & anchora la lassarai bollet vn pochetto.

A prouendua di bon Zucchare mengondo-
 lo di nouo & mescolandolo molto bene.

Poi cauarai questa tale compositione sof
 vn gran tagliero distendendola & allar-
 grandola al modo ch' farresti il primo di-
 na torta & lassarala i fredar, Et quan-
 do la uorrai tagliar in tauola faranda
 feste grandi o picciole como ti piacer, &
 frigitale in la padella co bone fructo ual-
 gondole alcuna uolta, & cocerale tanto.

Page of a fifteenth-century manuscript, including the recipe for *crema di miglio frita*, showing the early Italian use of flour for thickening and the technique of roux and balsamella.

Fig. 42



Fig. 43



Fig. 44

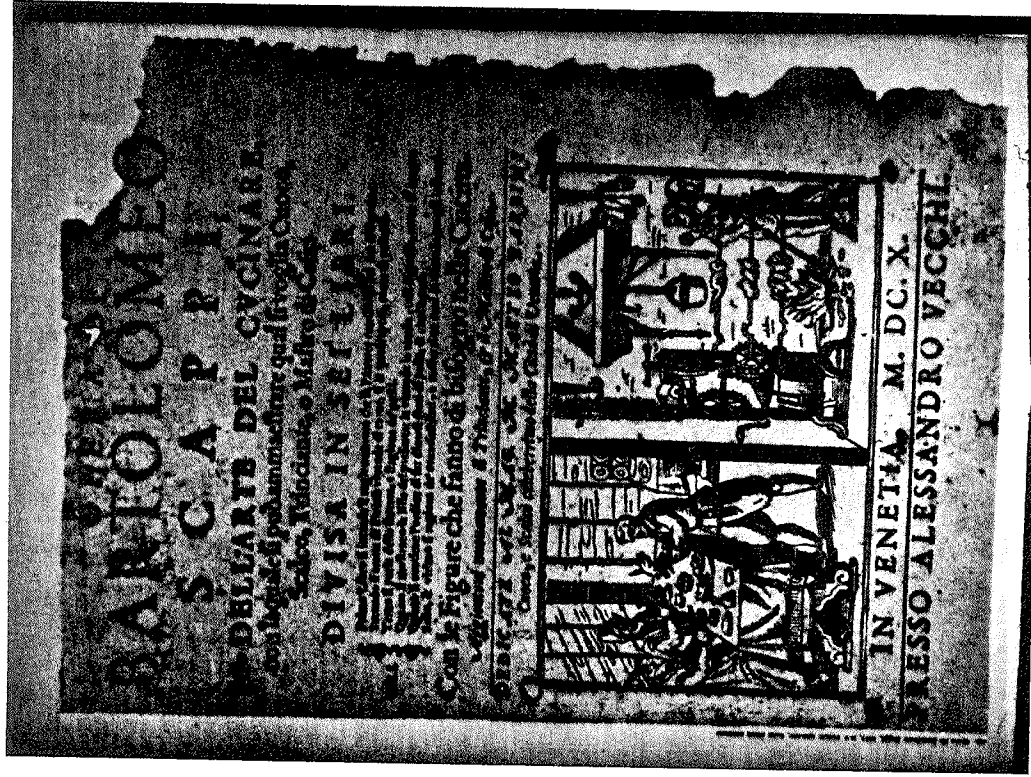


Fig. 45

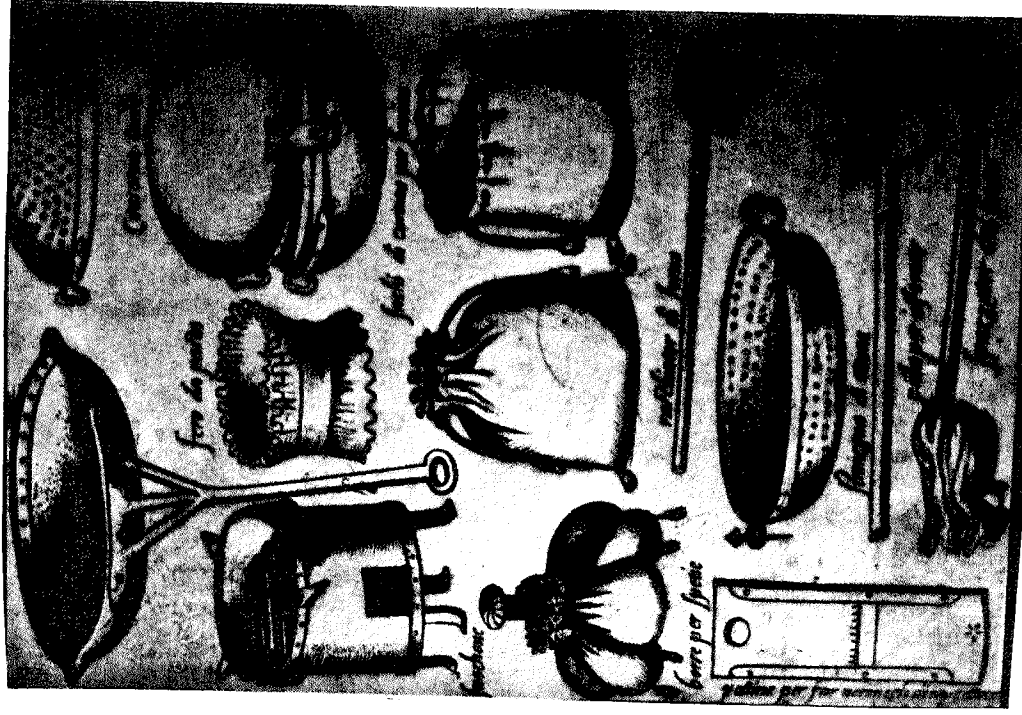


Fig. 46



Fig. 47

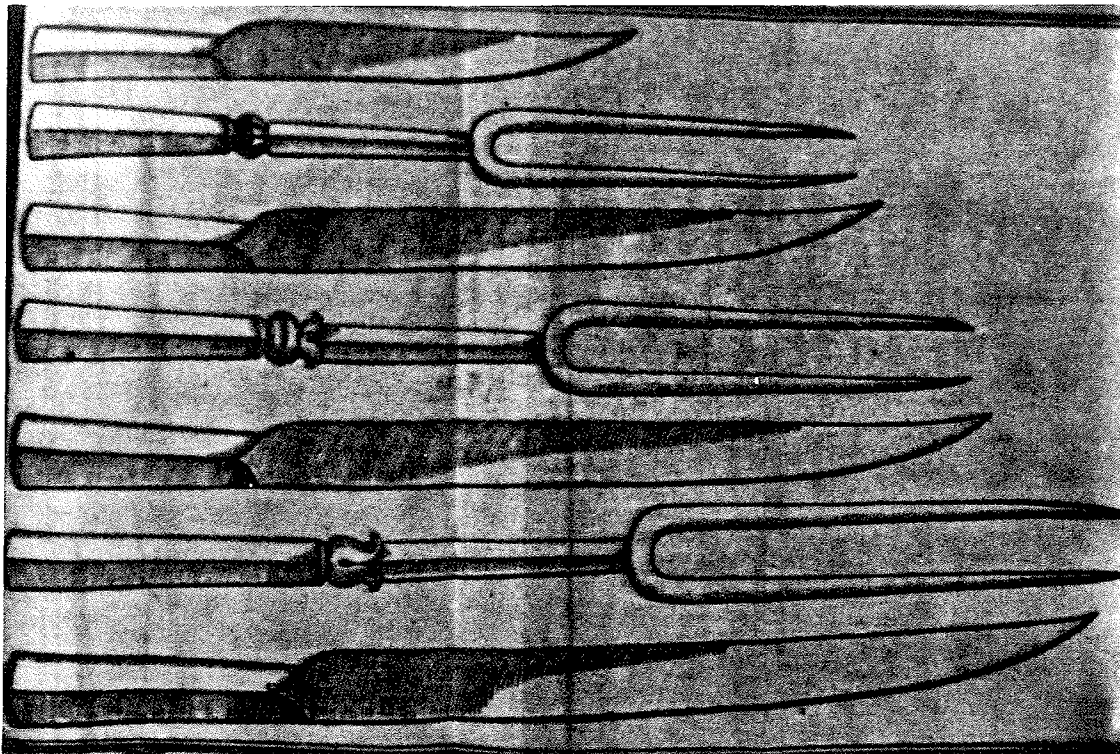


Fig. 48

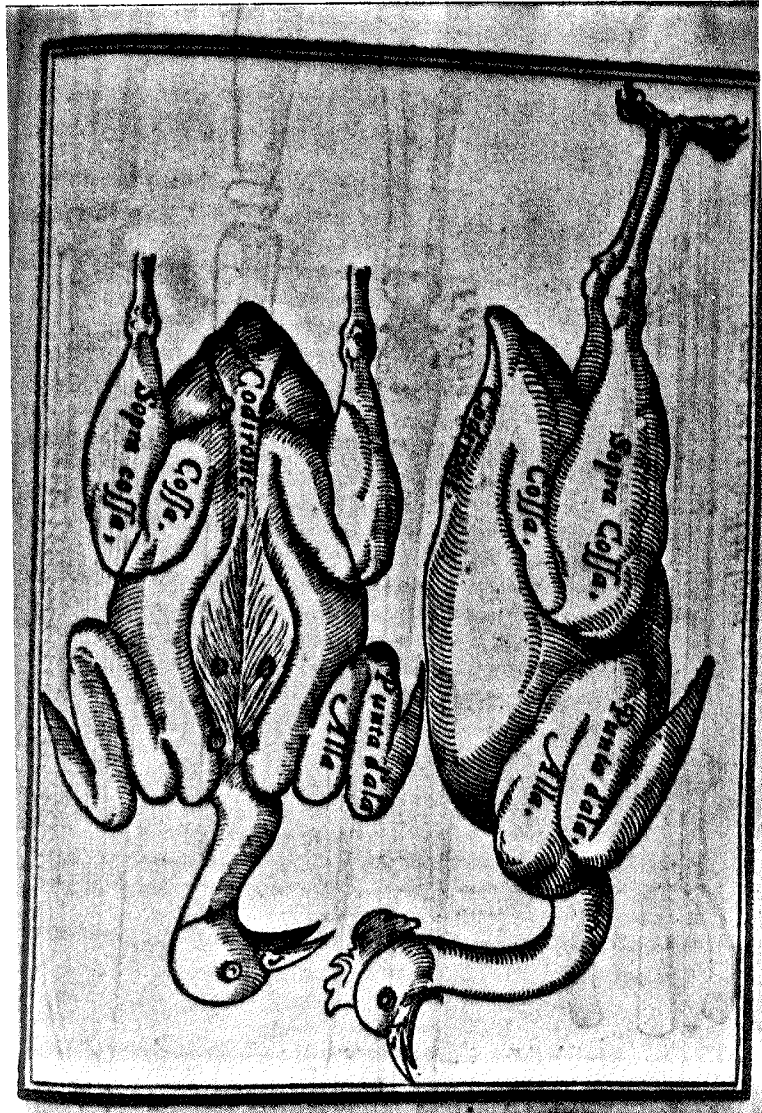


Fig. 49

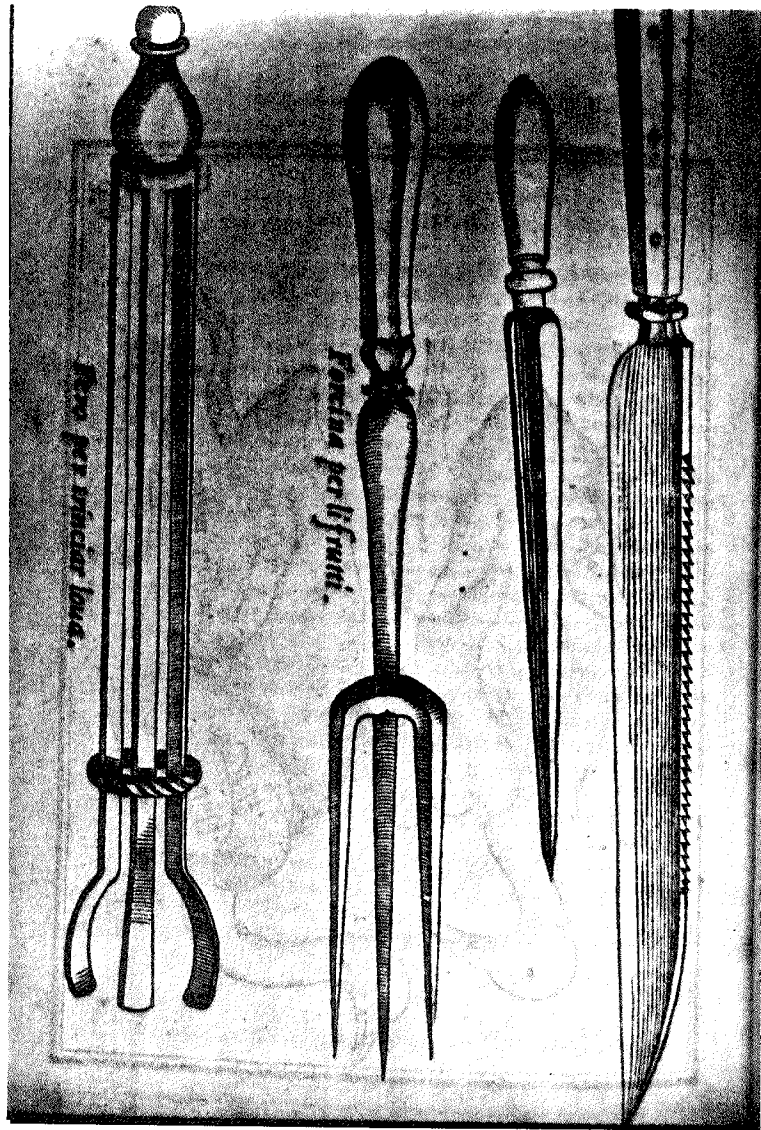


Fig. 50

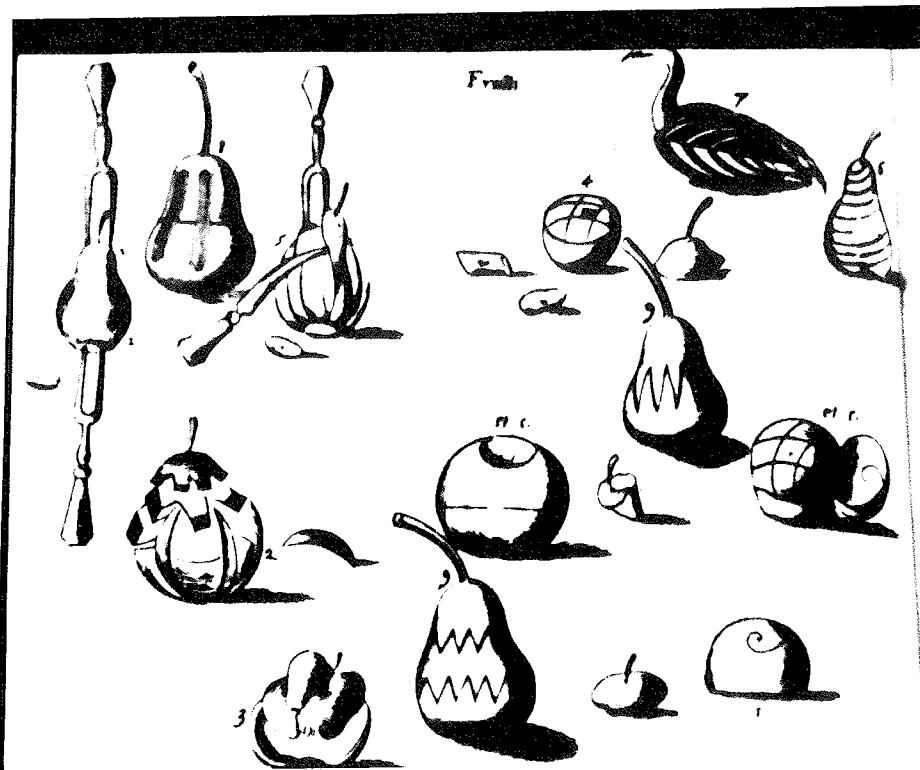
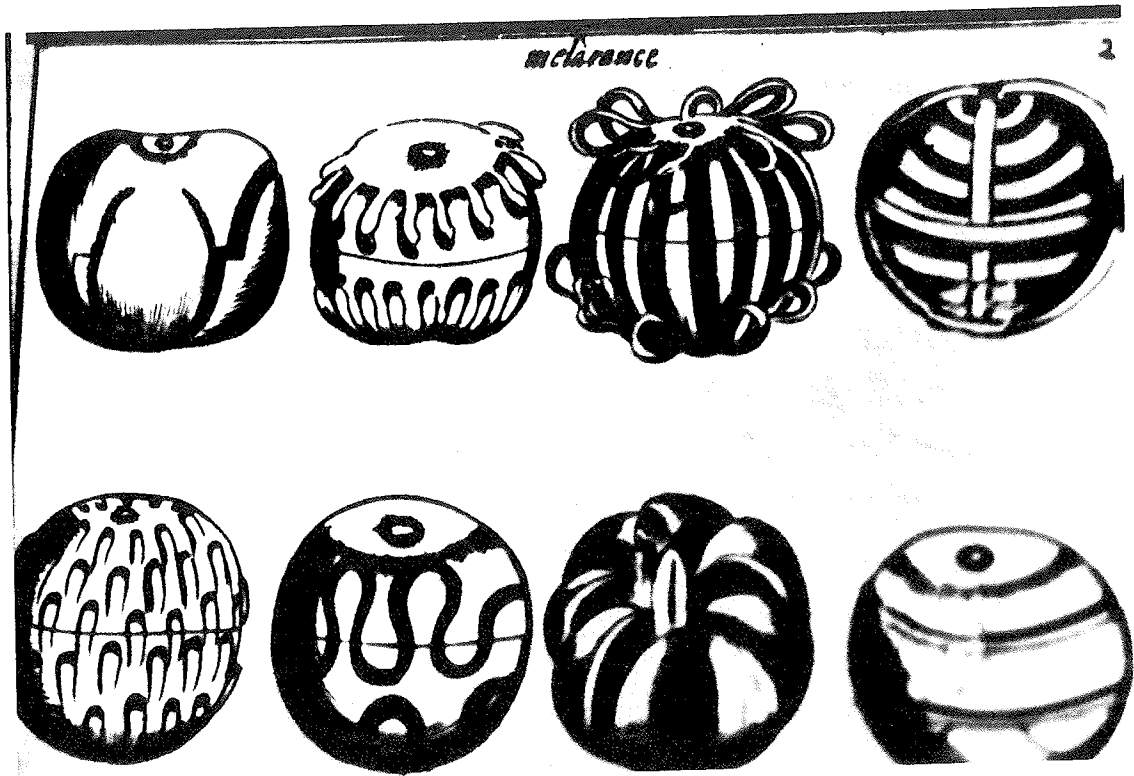


Fig. 51

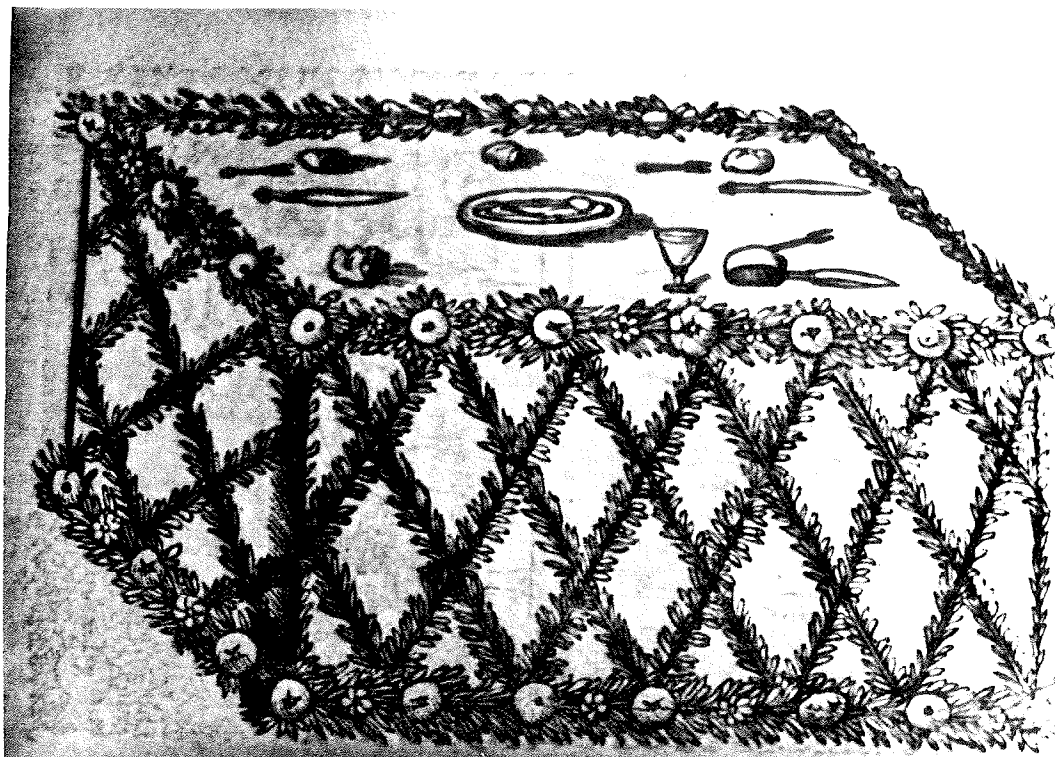
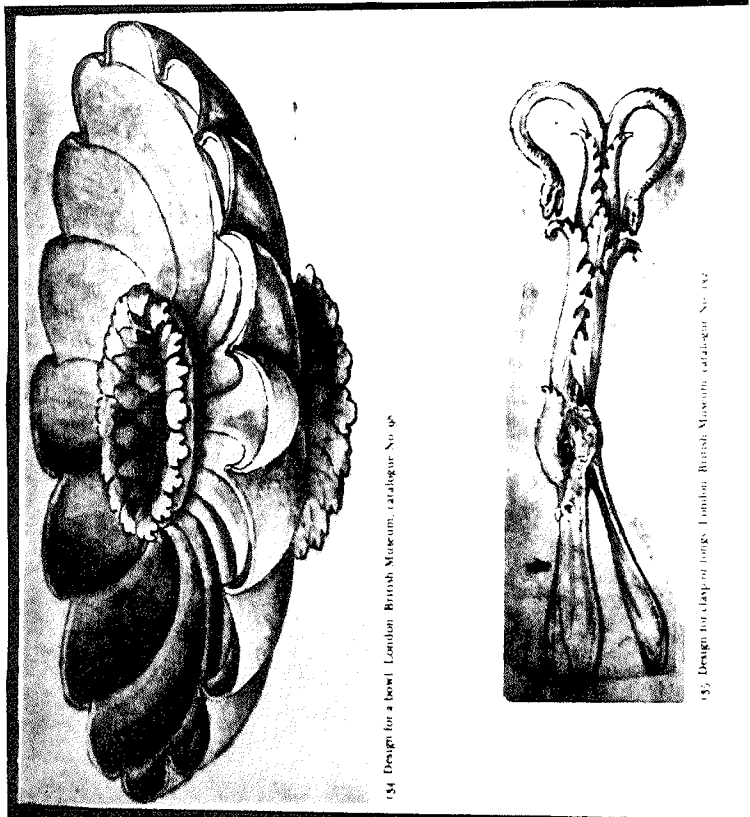


Fig. 52



Fig. 53



154. Design for a bowl. London. British Museum, catalogue No. 98.

155. Design for clasp or hinge. London. British Museum, catalogue No. 107.

Fig. 54

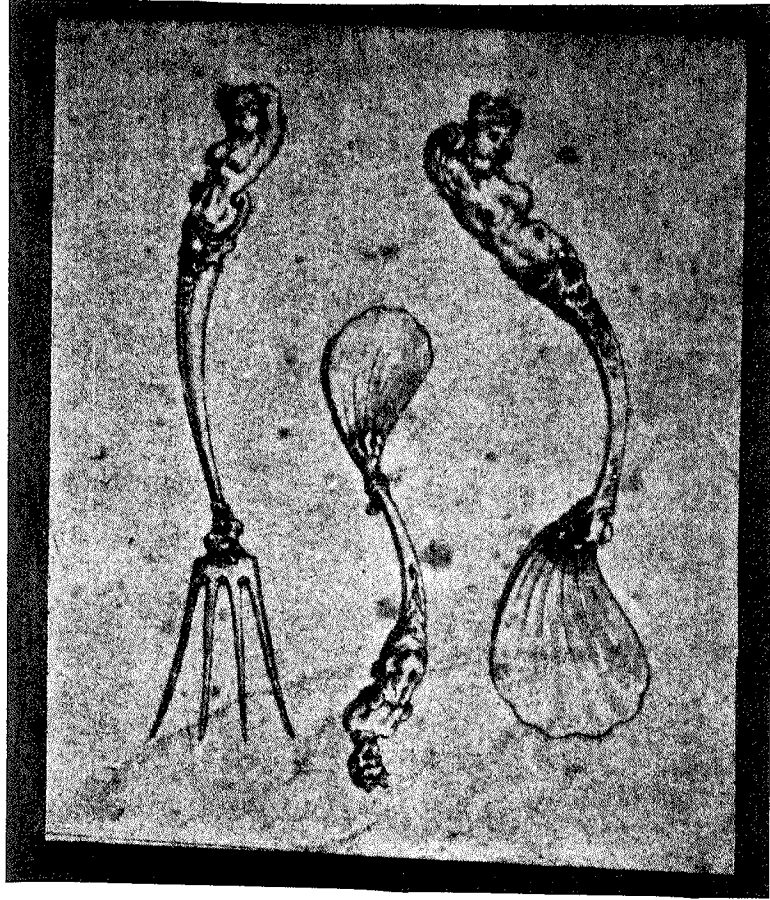


Fig. 55

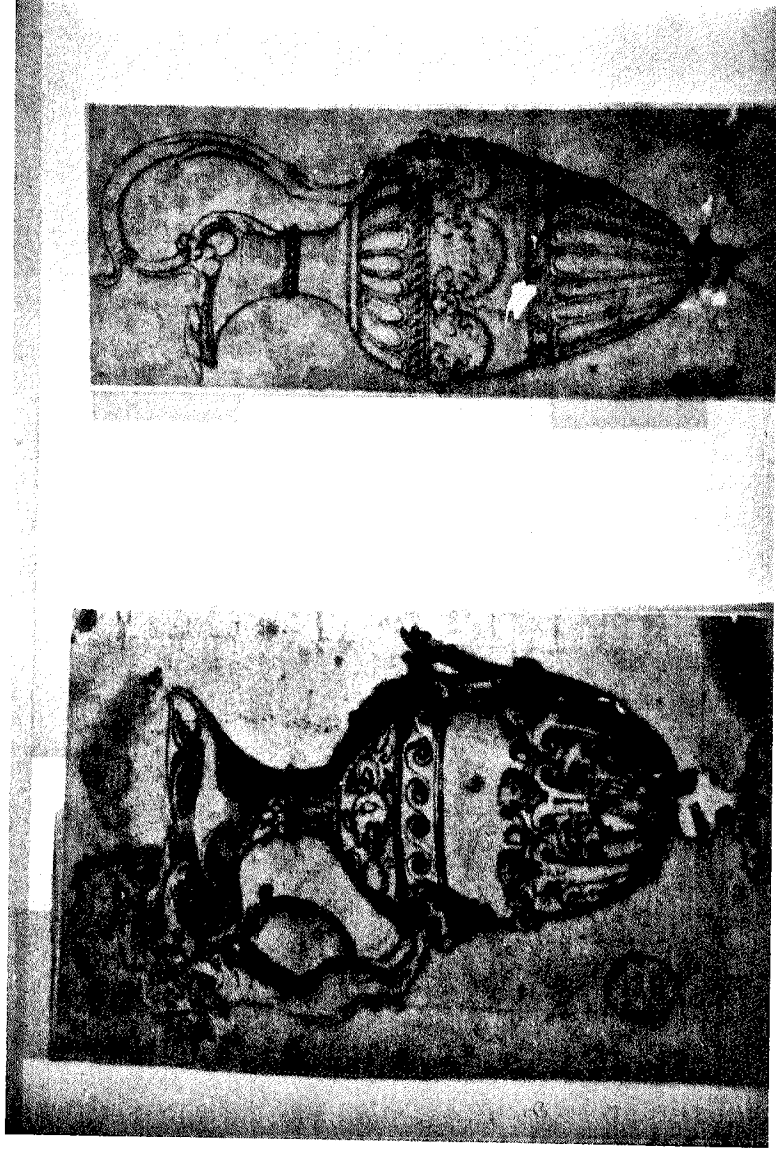


Fig. 56

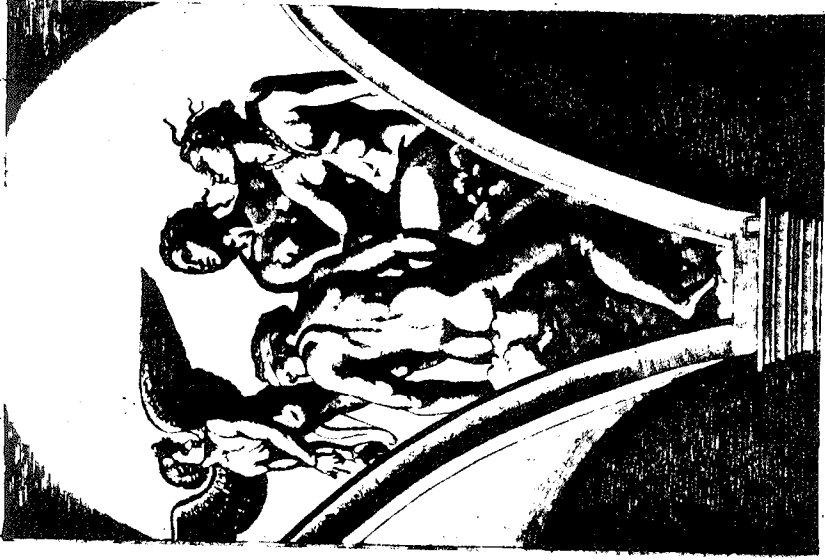


Fig. 57

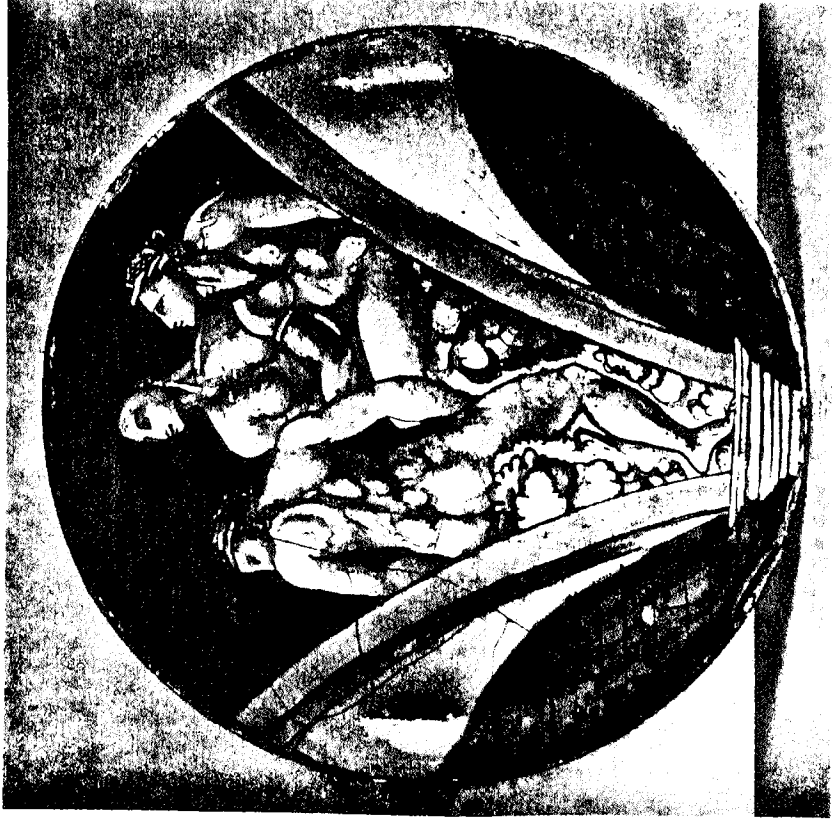


Fig. 58