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## ender and Power: Layout and Function of the Ducal Lodgings in the Palazzo Pitti, Florence (1587-1636)

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As the city of Florence prided itself on its republican traditions, the notion of a Florentine court began to emerge only gradually in the sixteenth century after Alessandro de' Medici had been raised to the title of duke in 1532<sup>1</sup>. His successor Cosimo I was particularly active in inventing a new princely lifestyle for himself and his entourage. In 1540 he moved into the former center of republican Florence, the Palazzo della Signoria, transforming it into a splendid "Palazzo Ducale" with the help of numerous artists, chief among them Giorgio Vasari<sup>2</sup>. The Palazzo Pitti, situated at the periphery of the city, was acquired by Cosimo's wife Eleonora di Toledo in 1550 and underwent extensive remodelling until 1578<sup>3</sup>. Surrounded by ample grounds, the Boboli gardens, the Pitti palace originally served as a summer retreat and as a place for entertaining guests<sup>4</sup>. This changed only after the accession of Ferdinando I in 1587 who made the Palazzo Pitti his main residence.

Ferdinando de' Medici and his wife Christine of Lorraine whom he married in 1589, were the first grand-ducal couple who actually resided in the Palazzo Pitti. The architecture of the north wing that contained their apartments had been defined by Bartolomeo Ammannati in collaboration with his patrons Cosimo de' Medici and Eleonora di Toledo, but it is by no means clear whether they had intended the rooms to function in the way in which they were later used. The north wing was built between 1561 and 1568 and was therefore never lived in by the duchess who died in 1562<sup>5</sup>. As Cosimo's successor Francesco I used the palace for hosting

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1. DIAZ 1987, p. 51.
2. Ettore Allegri/Alessandro Cecchi, *Palazzo Vecchio e i Medici. Guida storica*, Firenze, 1980. Ugo Muccini, *The Salone dei Cinquecento of Palazzo Vecchio*, Florence, 1990. Ugo Muccini/Alessandro Cecchi, *Le Stanze del Principe in Palazzo Vecchio*, Florence 1991. *Palazzo Vecchio. Officina di opere e di ingegni*, ed. Carlo Francini, Milano, 2006.
3. FACCHINETTI 2003, p. 23, 36.
4. BALDINI GIUSTI 1980, p. 40, 42. CHAUVINEAU 2003, p. 78.
5. FACCHINETTI 2003, p. 27, 33. According to an inventory dating from 1570 Cosimo I had rooms both in the Palazzo Ducale and in the Palazzo Pitti (GÁLDY 2009, p. 32-33). The inventory drawn up after Cosimo's death in 1574 indicates that he and his second wife Camilla Martelli had inhabited some rooms of the then still unfinished palace, but they did not fulfil official ceremonial duties there (GÁLDY 2009, p. 36). Moreover, it seems that Camilla (who was snubbed by her daughter-in-law Joan

guests, almost every room of this wing featured a stately bed with very elaborate textile hangings – a situation documented both by a description of 1576 and by the inventory compiled after Francesco's death in 1587<sup>6</sup>. Thus only after 1587 the rooms of the north wing were used as apartments for the Grand Duke and his wife who had to define the ceremonial use of the spaces afresh.

Although there are a number of publications that address the interior distribution of the Palazzo Pitti in a general way, the layout and functioning of the palace in the first decades of the seventeenth century has never been studied in detail<sup>7</sup>. Several authors build their analysis on Diacinto Maria Marmi's plans from 1662/63 which record the shape and use of the palace after a major remodelling and enlargement<sup>8</sup> (see below fig. 8). While Marmi's drawings are highly interesting for the situation around the middle of the seventeenth century, they offer only little help for understanding the earlier period<sup>9</sup>.

In this paper I will analyse the ducal lodgings of the Palazzo Pitti, covering a period of nearly 50 years that begins with the accession of Ferdinando I in 1587 and ends with the death of his wife in 1636. I will focus on changes in the layout and decoration of the ducal apartments – changes that were caused by shifts in the balance of power between the various residents in the palace. Thus it will be possible to demonstrate how political preeminence was negotiated and expressed through the use of space, highlighting especially the increasing power of women at court.

Christine of Lorraine had been raised by her grandmother, the powerful French dowager queen Caterina de' Medici<sup>10</sup>. During the marriage negotiations one of Ferdinando's agents wrote to Florence that Caterina had instructed her granddaughter in the management of public affairs and that except for the Queen of England and Caterina herself no living woman was better informed about politics than Christine<sup>11</sup>. Not surprisingly, she soon began to play an active role in Florentine politics<sup>12</sup>. When she arrived in Florence in May 1589, she was lodged in the "Palazzo

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of Austria because of her humble lineage) lived only on the mezzanine floor: ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 87, fol. 8v ("Robe nella soffitta dove stava la S.a Camilla rincontro alli allori").

6. The description of 1576 is reprinted in MOSCO 1980, p. 19-20. The still unpublished inventory of 1587 (ASF, GM 126) was analysed only in part by BALDINI GIUSTI 1980, and by GÁLDY 2009, p. 37-38. As the "camerino del Duca" mentioned in the 1587 inventory was located next to the "sala delle statue sopra la piazza" (ASF, GM 126, fol. 108v), i.e. adjacent to the main room of the west wing (see fig. 1, n° 2, and note 21 below), it can be deduced that Francesco I used the rooms immediately to the north of the *sala grande* (fig. 1, n° 3 and 4). Gáldy ignores that according to the inventory of 1587 five rooms of Ferdinando's later grand-ducal apartment contained stately beds (n° 4, 6, 7, 8, 9). Thus they cannot have formed one coherent apartment for Francesco I.
7. Baldini Giusti's ground-breaking study based on the 1597 inventory was reassumed by FACCHINETTI 2003, 35. Both authors do not, however, identify the function of the single rooms within the apartments.
8. Leon Satkowski, "The Palazzo Pitti: Planning and Use in the Grand-Ducal Era", *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. 42, 1983, p. 336-349. FANTONI 1994, p. 51-75. Sergio Bertelli, "Palazzo Pitti dai Medici ai Savoia", in *La corte di Toscana dai Medici ai Lorena. Atti delle giornate di studio, Firenze, Archivio di Stato e Palazzo Pitti, 15-16 dicembre 1997*, eds. Anna Bellinazzi/Alessandra Contini, Roma, 2002, p. 11-109. On Marmi's *Norma per il Guardarobba del gran Palazzo* see also BAROCCHI, BERTELA 2005, p. 902-932.
9. CHAUVINEAU 2003, p. 87: "È purtroppo impossibile sapere precisamente chi visse in questo palazzo prima degli anni 1660, perché non esiste l'equivalente delle piante di Marmi, né è restata traccia dell'organizzazione spaziale del servizio della camera per il primo periodo."
10. Kerrie-rue Michahelles, "Apprentissage du mécénat et transmission matrilinéaire du pouvoir. Les enseignements de Catherine de Médicis à sa petite-fille Christine de Lorraine", in *Patronnes et mécènes en France à la Renaissance*, ed. by Kathleen Wilson-Chevalier and Eugénie Pascal, Saint-Étienne, 2007, p. 557-576.
11. *Négociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane*, ed. by Giuseppe Canestrini and Abel Desjardins, vol. 4, Paris, 1872, p. 757.
12. Francesco Martelli, "Cristina di Lorena, una lorenese al governo della Toscana medicea (prime linee di ricerca)", in *Il Granducato di Toscana e i Lorena nel Secolo XVIII*, eds. Alessandra Contini/Maria Grazia Parri, Florence, 1999, p. 71-81. STRUNCK, 2011 p. 74-93.

Ducale” (Palazzo Vecchio)<sup>13</sup>, and the couple probably stayed there until work on Christine’s apartment at the Palazzo Pitti was finished in the summer of 1590<sup>14</sup>. Therefore the new Grand Duchess had a chance to influence the decisions concerning the future use of her rooms.

Ferdinando de’ Medici aspired to the title of king<sup>15</sup>, and accordingly he meant to “look the part” by displaying his grandeur. As he had been a cardinal until 1588, he drew inspiration from the papal court. Christine’s intimate knowledge of the royal court of France certainly suited his ambitious plans and helped him to work out a new “Medici ceremonial”. The systematic recording of that ceremonial began in 1597 on the orders of the Grand Duchess<sup>16</sup>. Christine’s important contribution to the development of court etiquette was acknowledged by her grandson Ferdinando II who after her death in 1636 commissioned a report on the ceremonial she had practised<sup>17</sup>. As I will argue in this paper, Christine of Lorraine introduced elements of French courtly etiquette to Florence, integrating them with Spanish and Roman traditions that were also important models for the Florentine court.

My reconstruction draws on numerous unpublished sources kept in the Florentine State archives, above all inventories, ceremonial records (*Diari di Etichetta*) and Cesare Tinghi’s court diary. Although the existence of these sources is not unknown to Medici specialists, they have not yet been utilized for a combined reading which analyses the interaction of politics, court ceremonial, palace space and the visual arts.

### *The reign of Ferdinando I (1587-1609)*

On the basis of an inventory dating from 1597 Laura Baldini Giusti established who inhabited which rooms at the end of the sixteenth century<sup>18</sup>. In accordance with traditional gender roles, the Grand Duchess’s apartment on the first floor (*piano nobile*) was located in the more “private” part of the palace, facing the inner courtyard and the garden. It consisted of a large *sala*, six square rooms and a chapel (fig. 1, n<sup>os</sup> 12-18). The Grand Duke’s apartment was bigger, numbering eight rooms, and was connected to the most representative *sala* in the main block of the building<sup>19</sup> (n<sup>os</sup> 2-10). Needless to say, his chapel (fig. 1, d) was also bigger than his wife’s chapel (fig. 1, b).

Since Baldini Giusti did not transcribe the inventory and analysed it only in part, neglecting the function of the single rooms, much additional information can be gleaned from consulting

13. *Descrizione del regale apparato per le nozze Della Serenissima Madama Cristina di Loreno Moglie del Serenissimo Don Ferdinando Medici III Gran Duca di Toscana Descritte da Raffael’ Gualterotti Gentil’uomo Fiorentino*, Florence, 1589, p. 32. ASF, Guardaroba Medicea, *Diari di Etichetta* 3, fol. 13-18, shows that the most prestigious wedding guests were put up at the Palazzo Ducale (rather than at the Palazzo Pitti).

14. BELLESI 1998, p. 53.

15. The ambition to become king had already been expressed through the art patronage of Ferdinando’s father Cosimo I: cf. André Chastel, “La chapelle des Princes à Saint Laurent”, in *Firenze e la Toscana dei Medici nell’Europa del ‘500*, vol. 3: *Relazioni artistiche. Il linguaggio architettonico*, Florence, 1983, p. 787-799. On Ferdinando’s bid to win a crown for himself, see Kaled El Bibas, *L’Emiro e il Granduca. La vicenda dell’emiro Fakhr ad-Din II del Libano nel contesto delle relazioni fra la Toscana e l’Oriente*, Florence, 2010, p. 51-57.

16. Francesca Fantappiè, “La celebrazione memorabile: potere, arte e spettacolo nelle memorie di corte di Ferdinando I dei Medici”, in *Arte Musica Spettacolo*, vol. 2, 2001, p. 203-240: p. 208-209 and note 24.

17. See below notes 80 and 92.

18. BALDINI GIUSTI, 1980, p. 40-43.

19. The small room just to the east of (above) n<sup>o</sup> 3 was probably the room of the “Cavaliere Ingniatta” mentioned in the 1597 inventory in proximity to the “salone grande detto delle niche” (n<sup>o</sup> 2), the “ricetto fra il salone et la prima camera del Gran Duca” (n<sup>o</sup> 3) and the “camera del Canto che riesce sulla piazza et nel giardino” (n<sup>o</sup> 4): Archivio di Stato di Firenze (henceforward ASF), Guardaroba Medicea (henceforward GM) 422, fol. 4r-5r. Biagio Pignatta, Knight of the Order of Saint Stephen, was a favourite of Ferdinando I and his “cameriere maggiore”: CHAUVINEAU 2003, p. 90. *Camerieri* usually slept close to their masters: *ibidem*, p. 74-75.

the original document<sup>20</sup>. Visitors reached the apartment of the Grand Duke via the main staircase (fig. 1, n° 1) and the loggia. They were then ushered into the central *salone* (n° 2) where they could admire some of the most impressive antiquities from the Medici collection<sup>21</sup>. Rooms n° 3 and 4 led to the anteroom n° 5 which was overseen by grand-ducal guards<sup>22</sup>. The following room n° 6 was watched by armed men<sup>23</sup> who protected the most private room n° 9, the Grand Duke's bedroom. Room n° 8 contained an elaborate gilt state bed with curtains made of golden velvet and purple silk. The walls were covered with leather hangings decorated in green, gold and silver. The room also held two paintings, a Madonna and an "Expulsion from Paradise" attributed to Bandinelli<sup>24</sup>, plus the astonishing number of 39 *seggiole* (chairs)<sup>25</sup>! The chairs alone make it clear that Ferdinando I did not sleep in this state bedroom. The inventory labels the adjacent room n° 9 as the "camera dove dorme il Gran Duca"<sup>26</sup>, i.e. his proper bedroom. Rooms n° 7 and 10 led to the Grand Duke's chapel and connected his apartment with the *sala* that preceded his wife's lodgings (n° 12).

The apartment of the Grand Duchess was accessed via the large staircase and the *sala* in the center of the north wing (nos 11 and 12). Her lodgings consisted of a cluster of six square rooms. The first one (n° 13), decorated in red velvet, was watched by *portieri* and served as an *anticamera* containing 27 chairs<sup>27</sup>. It is interesting to note that 17 of them were expressly classified as "seggiole alla pistolese da donne", i.e. as seats for women: This recalls Caterina de' Medici's custom to hold female conversation circles in her *antichambre*<sup>28</sup>.

Christine's *anticamera* was followed by the so-called "camera della perghola" (the name indicating probably a decoration with painted trelliswork and vegetation) that boasted a precious table made from amethyst (n° 14). Strangely, the inventory does not list chairs in this room, but six mattresses for the beds of the Grand-ducal couple ("per e letti di lor Altezze Serenissime"), while the beds themselves are not described<sup>29</sup>. Probably the mattresses were only in temporary storage in the "camera della perghola", as the proper beds stood in room n° 16. This room, connected by a corridor (fig. 1, c) with the Grand Duke's apartment<sup>30</sup>, contained two gilt beds with canopies. Both the bed curtains and the wall hangings were red<sup>31</sup>. The adjacent room n° 17 had green wall hangings and held the richest and most personal

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20. ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 422. A transcription and more detailed analysis of this inventory will be included in my forthcoming book on the art patronage of Christine of Lorraine.
  21. For a reconstruction of the interior decoration of this room see Fauzia Farneti, "La Sala delle Nicchie: un apparato decorativo ritrovato", in *Palazzo Pitti. La reggia rivelata*, Florence/Milan, 2003, p. 110-123, and Adriano Marinazzo, "La Sala delle Nicchie: una ricostruzione virtuale", *ibidem*, p. 124-127.
  22. ASF, GM 422, fol. 5v ("ricetto delle stanze del Gran Duca dove stanno e portieri"). On the tasks of the "guardia" that watched the door ("portiera") to the Grand Duke's room, see CHAUVINEAU, 2003, p. 86.
  23. ASF, GM 422, fol. 5v: "camera prima dove stanno le lancie spezzate". *Lancie spezzate* were knights or soldiers who formed a sovereign's body guard: cf. Salvatore Battaglia, *Grande dizionario della lingua italiana*, vol. 8, Turin, 1973, p. 734, n° 6.
  24. This may be identical with a painting by Andrea del Minga based on a cartoon by Bandinelli: cf. Mosco 1980, p. 17, note 30.
  25. ASF, GM 422, fol. 7r-7v.
  26. ASF, GM 422, fol. 6v-7r.
  27. ASF, GM 422, fol. 3v-4r: "prima camera dopo il salone".
  28. Brantôme quoted by CHATENET 2002a, p. 190: "[Catherine de Médicis] avoit ordinairement de fort belles et honnestes filles, avec lesquelles tous les jours en son antichambre on conversoit, on discouroit et divisoit, tant sagement et tant modestement que l'on n'eust osé faire autrement". See also Xenia von Tippelskirch, "Lektüren am Hof der Medici zu Beginn des 17. Jahrhunderts – gelenkter Wissenstransfer", in *Höfe – Salons – Akademien. Kulturtransfer und Gender im Europa der Frühen Neuzeit*, eds. Gesa Stedmann/Margarete Zimmermann, Hildesheim, 2007, p. 125-144: p. 133-139 (on the custom of reading texts aloud, particularly among the women of the Medici court).
  29. ASF, GM 422, fol. 3v.
  30. This corridor allowing secret visits of the husband to his wife was built in 1588, i.e. just prior to Ferdinando and Christine's wedding: cf. BALDINI GIUSTI, 1980, p. 42.
  31. ASF, GM 422, fol. 1v-2r.

decoration, for instance portraits of Christine's husband and of her much-beloved grandmother Caterina de' Medici as well as a "tavolino [...] da aconciare la testa", i.e. a table where Christine could do her hair. A *lettino* with a mattress covered in green velvet was probably not meant for sleeping, but rather a day bed for relaxation<sup>32</sup>. The following room n° 18 contained wardrobes for Christine's clothes and was connected to a so-called "stufa" or heatable bathroom<sup>33</sup> (fig. 1, a) – a special, very private feature of Christine's apartment which cannot be found in the apartment of the Grand Duke. In the adjacent room (n° 15) there was a table made from "marmo serpentino", but little other furniture; no chairs, but two mattresses for servants<sup>34</sup>.

Neither the inventory nor the *Diari di Etichetta* and court diaries mention the precise location of the audience chambers. However, the fact that Ferdinando had two bedrooms – one in which he actually slept and the other with a very elaborate bed and numerous chairs – is a clear indicator that he used the latter space (fig. 1, n° 8) for giving audiences. A similar arrangement existed already in the Palazzo Vecchio where an inventory of 1553 recorded two splendidly decorated bedrooms in the apartment of Cosimo I<sup>35</sup>. Such a sequence may derive from the Burgundian ceremonial that was adopted by Emperor Charles V, Cosimo's political ally and model<sup>36</sup>. Neither at the French court nor in Rome was this doubling of bedrooms common at the time<sup>37</sup>.

Both in Rome and in Spain (as well as in England and in France) the development of court etiquette during the sixteenth century was characterized by the introduction of an increasing number of antechambers<sup>38</sup>. In the Palazzo Pitti Ferdinando had three antechambers preceding his state bedroom<sup>39</sup> (fig. 1, n° 3, 4, 5). It is interesting to note that the space at his

32. ASF, GM 422, fol. 2r-2v. As the diminutive "lettino" indicates, the bed was very small: It measured only 1 1/8 x 3 braccia (73 x 175 cm). Mattresses to be slept on were usually covered with "tela" while the green velvet covering of the *lettino* indicates a sofa-like quality.

33. ASF, GM 422, fol. 3r.

34. ASF, GM 422, fol. 3v.

35. I am grateful to Amedeo Belluzzi for bringing this source to my attention. A transcription of the relevant passages from the 1553 inventory can be found in Cosimo Conti, *La prima reggia di Cosimo I de' Medici nel palazzo già della Signoria di Firenze, descritta ed illustrata coll'appoggio d'un inventario inedito del 1553 e coll'aggiunta di molti altri documenti*, Firenze 1893, p. 34-35, and in Andrea Gáldy, "Che sopra queste ossa con nuovo ordine si vadiano accommodando in più luoghi appartamenti". Thoughts on the organisation of the Florentine ducal apartments in the Palazzo vecchio in 1553", *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, vol. 46, 2002, p. 490-509: p. 505.

36. In 1548 Charles V decreed that his son Philip II was to adopt the Burgundian ceremonial: PFANDL 1938, p. 2, 28. On the earlier Spanish ceremonial see HOFMANN 1985, p. 29-44; Rafael Dominguez Casas, *Arte y etiqueta de los reyes catolicos. Artistas, residencias, jardines y bosques*, Madrid, 1993, p. 202-237, and REDWORTH, CHECA 1999, p. 45-47. DE JONGE 2010, p. 65, 69, gives several examples for apartments comprising both a private bedroom and a *parementskamer* with a state bed that served as a semi-private reception room. These examples are all taken from the Burgundian/Spanish Netherlands, with a document of 1594 concerning the Palais du Coudenberg in Brussels being very close in time to the Palazzo Pitti (*ibidem*, p. 62, fig. 1). However, in Spain ceremonial bedrooms are not recorded in this period. Although some high-ranking persons were permitted to enter the king's bedchamber, guests were normally received in special audience chambers: BOTTINEAU 1972; John H. Elliott, "Philip IV of Spain. Prisoner of ceremony", in *The Courts of Europe. Politics, patronage and royalty, 1400-1800*, ed. A. G. Dickens, London 1977, p. 169-189: p. 173. HOFMANN 1985, p. 132-139, 156-157. RODRÍGUEZ-SALGADO 1991, p. 212-213. REDWORTH, CHECA 1999, p. 57.

37. Although in 1585 Henri III tried (in vain) to introduce a *chambre d'état* and a *chambre d'audience* between *antichambre* and *chambre royale* (royal bedchamber), the typical French royal apartment consisted in the late sixteenth century only of *salle*, *antichambre*, *chambre*, *garde-robe* and *cabinet*, i.e. it had only one bedroom (*chambre*): CHATENET 2002b, p. 92; CHATENET 2003, p. 369. An apartment with two representational beds in the *anticamera* and the *camera* was provided for Cardinal Francesco Barberini on his visit to Paris in 1625: WADDY 1994, p. 160. In Rome a state bedroom with a state bed (*zamparano*) preceding the actual bedroom was introduced only around the middle of the seventeenth century: WADDY 1990, p. 13.

38. PFANDL 1938, p. 21. RODRÍGUEZ-SALGADO 1991, p. 213. WADDY 1994, p. 160-163. REDWORTH, CHECA 1999, p. 57. DE JONGE 2010, p. 62 (fig. 1), 67-69, 73. In France the attempts at enlarging the apartment were probably prompted by the English model, but ultimately not very successful: CHATENET 2002a, p. 179-184. CHATENET 2002b, p. 93-94. CHATENET 2003, p. 363-364. See also note 37 above.

39. N° 4 was probably not used as a *sallette* for dining at that time: cf. below note 67.

disposal would have allowed for an even more impressive sequence of antechambers had the state bed been positioned in room n° 9. The decision to place the state bed in n° 8 can therefore be interpreted as an act of modesty. Probably Ferdinando did not wish to outdo the more powerful monarchs of his age.

Within the two symmetrical clusters of rooms in the north wing, Ferdinando's state bedroom and the bedroom of his wife occupied identical positions (fig. 1, n° 8 and 16). Both were preceded by an antechamber (n° 5 and 13). However, there existed also significant differences: Christine of Lorraine had only one guard (*portieri*, while her husband was protected both by *portieri* and *lancie spezzate*) and she possessed no second bedroom but slept in the magnificent bed placed in room n° 16. The position of her audience chamber cannot be determined with certainty. As Christine had grown up at the court of France where the bedroom fulfilled both public and private functions<sup>40</sup>, it is most likely that she used room n° 16 also for giving audiences<sup>41</sup>.

There is no evidence that Christine of Lorraine introduced a French style *lever* at the court of Florence<sup>42</sup>. However, in her apartment at the Villa La Petraia and later also at Poggio Imperiale, a bed dominated the first room after her *sala*<sup>43</sup>. As audiences did not take place in the public space of the *sala*, it is evident that the Grand Duchess must have received guests in the bedroom. This was an established custom at the French court and did not imply indecency as the protagonists were fully clothed<sup>44</sup>.

At the Palazzo Pitti, the sequence *sala* (n° 12) – *anticamera* (n° 13) – *camera* (n° 16) – “*cabinet*” (n° 17) – *cappella* (b) – *garde-robe* (n° 18) equalled the standards Christine had known in France. In the Hôtel de la Reine, the palace which Caterina de' Medici built for herself in Paris and later bequeathed to Christine of Lorraine, the queen's apartment consisted of *sallette*, *antichambre*, *chambre*, *cabinet* and *oratoire*<sup>45</sup>. The other rooms of the Pitti apartment probably served, according to French custom, as private *cabinets*<sup>46</sup>.

If this reconstruction is correct, Christine had only one *anticamera* (n° 13), while her husband disposed of three antechambers. The interior decoration of the two apartments underlined the hierarchical distinction between the Grand Duke and his wife. A comparison between the inventories of 1587 and 1597 reveals that Ferdinando redecorated his own lodgings, but that he did not commission new decorations for his wife's apartment. His rooms were outfitted with leather wall hangings highlighted in gold and silver, while Christine's lodgings had less costly textile wall hangings that were already in place before the death of Francesco I.

Only a few features of the apartment were expressly created for Christine of Lorraine. The octagonal chapel (fig. 1, b) was built in 1589 and received as its altarpiece a “Baptism of Christ” painted by Alessandro Allori<sup>47</sup>. The room next to the chapel was decorated with a ceiling painting by Cigoli which depicted the goddess Flora<sup>48</sup>. Although both paintings were

40. CHATENET 2000, p. 177. CHATENET 2002b, p. 90-93. CHATENET 2003, p. 363.

41. Judging from their location, rooms n° 14 or 15 could have been audience chambers, but the inventory of 1597 does not list chairs in them; on the contrary, both contained mattresses. Thus a function as private *cabinets* seems more likely.

42. On the *lever* of the French queen, see CHATENET 2002a, p. 187-188.

43. On Christine's apartment at Poggio Imperiale: HOPPE 2012, p. 47 (fig. 22), p. 68-69. For the Petraia see the unpublished inventory of 1609: ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 290, fol. 53v.

44. CHATENET 2002a, p. 192, 195. See also note 79 below.

45. Chantal Turbide, “Catherine de Médicis, mécène d'art contemporain: l'Hôtel de la Reine et ses collections”, in *Patronnes et mécènes en France à la Renaissance*, eds. Kathleen Wilson-Chevalier/Eugénie Pascal, Saint-Étienne, 2007, p. 511-526: p. 515. On the *garde-robe* as part of the royal apartment see above note 37.

46. See note 41 above. At the French court of the late sixteenth century, apartments comprised a growing number of private *cabinets*: CHATENET 2002a, p. 184-185.

47. Simona Lecchini Giovannoni, *Alessandro Allori*, Torino, 1991, p. 274. BELLESI 1998, p. 52.

48. BELLESI 1998, p. 53-54.

commissioned shortly after Christine's arrival in Florence, it is not clear who chose the subject matter. Both subjects were eminently "Florentine", since Flora alludes to the name of the city, while Saint John the Baptist is the patron saint of Florence. Moreover both paintings hinted at the fertility which was expected of the new Grand Duchess. Fertile like Flora, she was to bear numerous children who would then be baptized in the chapel of her apartment. All in all, the paintings formulated the role which the young Grand Duchess was to play. She had to adapt to Florentine traditions and she had to become a devoted mother. Probably these commissions mirrored more her husband's expectations than her own image of self.

### *The reign of Cosimo II (1609-1621)*

When Ferdinando de' Medici died in February 1609, his 18-year-old son Cosimo succeeded him as Grand Duke. Nevertheless it was in fact Christine of Lorraine, then aged 43, who took over the government. She had been designated regent since 1592 and had therefore been kept well informed of the state affairs, participating actively in the "Consulta" where all the major decisions were taken<sup>49</sup>. One of Ferdinando's secretaries praised her excellent memory of "tutte le cose passate" and stressed the Grand Duke's trust in her<sup>50</sup>. It is therefore not surprising that the young and inexperienced Cosimo II depended heavily on his mother, as a Venetian ambassador reported<sup>51</sup>. Her predominance was strengthened by Cosimo's delicate health which confined him to bed for long periods.

In 1608 Cosimo had married the Archduchess Maria Magdalena of Austria. The young couple lived on the second floor of the Palazzo Pitti and continued to do so during the first months after Ferdinando's death<sup>52</sup>. It was there ("di sopra") that Cosimo received the condolences on his father's death "in camera sua", i.e. probably in his (ceremonial) bedroom<sup>53</sup>.

Already during Ferdinando's reign the southern wing of the *piano nobile* had been used exclusively as accommodation for noble guests, and this did not change under Cosimo II<sup>54</sup>. Once he had become Grand Duke, it would have been logical for him to move into his deceased father's apartment in the north wing and to establish his wife in the adjacent apartment of the

49. Franco Angiolini, "Dai segretari alle 'segreterie': uomini e apparati di governo nella Toscana medicea (metà XVI secolo – metà XVII secolo)", *Società e storia*, vol. 58, 1992, p. 701-720: p. 713-717. Franco Angiolini, "Principe, uomini di governo e direzione politica nella Toscana seicentesca", in *Ricerche di storia moderna IV in onore di Mario Mirri*, ed. G. Biagioli, Pisa, 1995, p. 459-481: p. 462-463. STRUNCK 2011, p. 81-83.

50. "Istoria del Gran Duca Ferdinando I scritta da Piero Usimbardi", ed. Guglielmo Enrico Saltini, *Archivio storico italiano*, quarta serie, 6, 1880, p. 365-401: p. 383.

51. *Relazioni degli ambasciatori veneti al Senato. Volume terzo: Firenze*, ed. Arnaldo Segarizzi, Bari, 1916, vol. 2, p. 164: "Onde si può dire [...] che sia ella il capo principale in tutti li negozi e che sortiscano le cose conforme al parer ed al consiglio di lei."

52. ASF, GM, Diari di Etichetta 3, fol. 303: In March 1609 Cosimo and Maria Magdalena dined with Cardinal Zapata in their rooms on the top floor ("Mercoledì poi magniò esso Signor Cardinale col Gran Duca e Arciduchessa che lo convitorno alle loro stanze ad alto").

53. Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze (henceforward BNCF), G. Capponi 261/1, fol. 248v (16.3.1609 *stile moderno*): "il detto Cardinale Zapata andò alla udienza a Madama Serenissima in le sue camere [,] stetero a sedere sotto il baldachino [,] poi il detto Cardinale venne su di sopra a la udienza a S. A. [= Cosimo II] dove S. A. lo rincontrò in su la porta della loggia che entra in sala poi menatolo in camera sua stetero a sedere sotto il baldacino con lo strato in terra [,] erano le camere parate tutte di nero [,] ebbe la man ritta [,] il Cardinale finito l'audienza S. A. lo racompagnò perfino in su la medesima porta di detta sala detta di sopra poi detto Cardinale andò alla udienza alla Serenissima Arciduchessa poi se ne ritornò alle sue stanze."

54. On this part of the palace see Serena Padovani, "Il Quartiere dei Cardinali e Principi forestieri", in *Palazzo Pitti. L'arte e la storia*, ed. Marco Chiarini, Florence, 2003, p. 43-53; Nadia Bastogi, "Le sale delle Virtù", in *Fasto di corte. La decorazione murale nelle residenze dei Medici e dei Lorena, Volume I: Da Ferdinando I alle reggenti (1587-1628)*, ed. Mina Gregori, Florence, 2005, p. 76-87.

Grand Duchess. This raised however the question where the widowed Christine of Lorraine was to live.

The interior distribution of the palace during Cosimo's reign has never been studied and is difficult to understand since we do not have an inventory from this period. There is only a very fragmentary inventory compiled in September 1621 shortly after Cosimo's premature death<sup>55</sup>. It lists the objects acquired by Christine of Lorraine since the demise of Ferdinando I and mentions that some of these objects were located in a chapel and in Christine's *camera* (bedroom), but doesn't give any indications regarding the location of her apartment. However, the puzzle can be resolved by looking at the very detailed inventory of the whole palace drawn up in 1638<sup>56</sup>.

In 1638 the apartment that had once belonged to Christine of Lorraine (fig. 1, n<sup>o</sup> 13-18) was inhabited by Prince Gian Carlo de' Medici<sup>57</sup>. Nevertheless the *sala* through which one entered this apartment (fig. 1, n<sup>o</sup> 12) was still in 1638 dominated by Christine's coat of arms<sup>58</sup> and decorated with the monumental canvases that had been painted for her triumphal entry into Florence in 1589<sup>59</sup>. The other rooms, too, contained many paintings associated with Christine<sup>60</sup>. In her former bedroom (fig. 1, n<sup>o</sup> 16) the 1638 inventory recorded the same paintings that were mentioned by the 1621 inventory in Christine's *camera*<sup>61</sup>, and in the adjacent room (fig. 1, n<sup>o</sup> 17) there was still in 1638 the portrait of Christine's grandmother Caterina documented in the same place by the 1597 inventory<sup>62</sup>. These observations permit two conclusions: firstly, Christine did not relinquish her lodgings on the *piano nobile* after 1609, and secondly when Gian Carlo moved into these rooms after her death in 1636, he did not change much so that the 1638 inventory still gives some impression of the original decoration of Christine's apartment.

Since Christine of Lorraine insisted on keeping her lodgings, Ferdinando's former apartment was divided between Cosimo II and Maria Magdalena of Austria. By the end of 1609 Cosimo had taken over the front part of the sequence, as can be deduced from various entries

55. ASF, GM 152, fol. 42-54.

56. A large part of this inventory is transcribed in Barocchi/Bertelà, 2005, p. 495-557. Nevertheless some essential parts are missing in the transcription; where necessary, I will therefore quote from the original document.

57. Barocchi/Bertelà, 2005, p. 544. Gian Carlo was the second son born to Cosimo II and Maria Magdalena of Austria: see the pedigree in LANGEDIJK 1981-1987, vol. 3, p. 1514-1515. His elder brother, Grand Duke Ferdinando II, occupied the noblest apartment on this floor.

58. ASF, GM 525, fol. 47r: "Un Arme di Casa Medici, e Loreno, con figure a canto che la reggono colorita a olio alta braccia 5 incirca".

59. ASF, GM 525, fol. 46v: Among other things, the *sala* contained "Tre quadri grandi in tela che in uno entrovi dipinto Leone Decimo e Clemente Settimo, e la Regina Madre, e altri di Casa Medici di mano di Cosimo Gamberucci, e nell'altro Madama Serenissima di Loreno, che si licenzia dal Rè di Francia, e dalla Regina Madre, e nell'altro un sposalitio... [sic] con molte figure e cardinali con Papa Leone, tutti con ornamento d'albero dipinti alti braccia 9 incirca, e larghi braccia 7" and "Un quadro simile di altezza e largo braccia 4 in tela, entrovi dipinto Madama Serenissima con il Signor Don Pietro quando imbarca per la volta d'Italia". These precise descriptions correspond exactly with the still extant paintings executed in 1589 and the engravings drawn from them: cf. *Ferdinando I de' Medici 1549-1609. Maiestate tantum*, eds. Monica Bietti/Annamaria Giusti, Florence, 2009, p. 66 (scene di nozze e "Cristina di Lorena si congeda da Caterina de' Medici"), p. 108-109 (Cosimo Gamberucci, "Caterina de' Medici tra i parenti"), p. 111 (Giovanni Balducci, "La partenza di Cristina di Lorena da Marsiglia").

60. For instance, the rooms held portraits of Christine's parents and of her husband ("Tre quadri in tela [...] in uno dipinto il Duca di Loreno padre di Madama Serenissima, e nell'altro la Duchessa di Loreno suo moglie, e l'altro il Gran Duca Ferdinando primo in calza intera") as well as the likeness of "a dead pope from the house of Lorraine" ("un Papa morto della famiglia di Loreno"): Barocchi/Bertelà, 2005, p. 546, n<sup>o</sup> 401; p. 548, n<sup>o</sup> 419. Moreover there was a portrait of the blessed Domenica di Paradiso that measured approximately 233 x 160 cm (*ibidem*, p. 548, n<sup>o</sup> 421). Christine had sought to promote Domenica's canonization and had therefore been given an over-life-size portrait of her in 1631: cf. Giovanni Pagliarulo, "Jacopo Vignali e gli anni della peste", *Artista*, 1994, p. 138-198: p. 159.

61. ASF, GM 152 (inventory of 1621), fol. 51-52. Cf. ASF, GM 525 (inventory of 1638), fol. 52r.

62. Barocchi/Bertelà, 2005, p. 550, n<sup>o</sup> 434. Cf. ASF, GM 422 (inventory of 1597), fol. 2v.



in Cesare Tinghi's court diary. For instance in 1614 Tinghi recorded a ball "nella sala delle figure dove era la residenza con baldacino a canto alla porta delle camere di S. A."<sup>63</sup>, i.e. the rooms of "Sua Altezza" (His Highness, the Grand Duke) were situated off the main *sala* that contained the most prestigious ancient statues ("figure") of the Medici collection<sup>64</sup> (fig. 2, n° 2). When Cosimo invited the cardinale Delfino to dine with him in December 1609, he awaited his guest at the door of the "sala delle figure" and led him to the "salotto where His Highness eats"<sup>65</sup> (fig. 2, S).

A special dining room (*sallette*) preceding the antechambers of an apartment is a typical feature of Burgundian ceremonial<sup>66</sup>. However, the Burgundian and Spanish custom that the monarch ate alone in the *sallette*, watched by his courtiers, seems not to have been practised in Florence<sup>67</sup>. The seating arrangements mirrored the hierarchy at court. It was always Maria Magdalena of Austria who held the most prominent place at the head of the table under a baldachin. Being an Archduchess from the imperial house of Habsburg, her noble rank was superior to that of the Grand Duke and his mother. Thus the documents refer to her with the more prestigious title of "Arciduchessa" (rather than "Gran Duchessa" or "Madama Serenissima" as Christine of Lorraine was styled). Christine usually sat to Maria Magdalena's right, while the court etiquette placed Cosimo at his wife's left hand side; guests followed further down the table<sup>68</sup>.

Despite her high rank Maria Magdalena of Austria occupied only relatively small lodgings. She took over the rear part of what had once been the apartment of Ferdinando I. Between 1610 and 1618 there are payments for the remodelling of the chapel which came to house Maria Magdalena's important collection of relics and was embellished with stories from the life of her name saints (fig. 2, d). Thus she personalized her apartment and left a durable trace of her occupancy of this area<sup>69</sup>.

A document of 1612 locates the *Cappella delle reliquie* next to Maria Magdalena's *camera*<sup>70</sup> (fig. 2, AB2). The Grand Duke's audience chamber (A1) was probably still outfitted with a state bed, maintaining the same disposition already in use under Ferdinando I (fig. 1, n° 8). Ferdinando's former bedroom (fig. 1, n° 9) communicated very conveniently with Maria

63. BNCF, G. Capponi 261/1, fol. 454r.

64. On the "sala delle figure" see above note 21.

65. "S. A. lo rincontrò in sula porta della sala delle figure, et menatolo nel salotto dove S. A. magna si lavorno le mane." This extract from Tinghi's diary was quoted by FANTAPPIÈ 2003, p. 158, note 106.

66. DE JONGE 2010, p. 62 (fig. 1), 63, 71 (fig. 4). The Burgundian table etiquette was adopted by the Spanish kings in 1548 and remained in place for 200 years: HOFMANN 1985, p. 67-73, 157. At the French court the *antichambre* fulfilled the functions of the *sallette*: CHATENET 2003, p. 366-370. In Rome, too, there was no special dining room, but meals were usually served in the *anticamera*: WADDY 1990, p. 6-7.

67. Cf. BNCF, G. Capponi 261/1, fol. 244v: Cosimo II "magnìò al solito ritirato con l'arciduchessa sua moglie". When Ferdinando I wanted to honour a guest, he ate with him in his *camera*, i.e. he does not seem to have used a special *sallette* for dining: FANTAPPIÈ 2003, p. 160.

68. BNCF, G. Capponi 261/1, fol. 454v: "S. A. [Cosimo II] fece magniare a tavola sua il detto ambasciatore inperò il Signor Paulo Giordano [Orsini] andò in camera sua a levarlo et lo condusse et S. A. lo ricevè nel salotino pasato la sala delle figure et ebbe la man ritta S. A. et lo menò vicino alla sua camera et rincontrati Madama [Christine of Lorraine] et l'Arciduchessa [Maria Magdalena of Austria] s'inviorno alla tavola che si magnìò nel salotto dell'appartamento di S. A. [...] la Serenissima Arciduchessa in testa di tavola sotto al baldacino [,] da man manca di detta Arciduchessa stette S. A. S. [Cosimo II] poi il Principe Don Francesco [,] da man ritta di detta Arciduchessa Madama Serenissima poi l'ambasciatore poi Paulo Giordano [...]". The same ceremonial was observed when the court stayed elsewhere: see BNCF, G. Capponi 261/1, fol. 448v (regarding a meal with the Principe Peretti in Pisa).

69. Marco Chiarini, "La cappella delle Reliquie", in *Palazzo Pitti. L'arte e la storia*, ed. Marco Chiarini, Florence, 2003, p. 54-56. GOLDENBERG STOPPATO 2005. Ilaria Hoppe, "Maria Maddalena d'Austria e il culto delle reliquie alla corte dei Medici. Scambi di modelli dinastici ed ecclesiastici", in *Medici Women as Cultural Mediators (1533-1743). Le donne di casa Medici e il loro ruolo di mediatrici culturali fra le corti d'Europa*, ed. Christina Strunck, Milan, 2011, p. 227-247: p. 234-241.

70. GOLDENBERG STOPPATO, 2005, p. 140.

Magdalena's *camera* and was thus most likely the place where Cosimo II slept (fig. 2, B1). The three rooms facing the court served as *anticamera* and will have been watched by *portieri* (n<sup>os</sup> 5 and 7) and by armed guards (*lancie spezzate* in n<sup>o</sup> 6 sheltering the sovereign's private bedroom). At the same time these antechambers connected the front and the rear part of the building and were certainly used by the members of the ducal family as a passageway between Christine's apartment and the *sala grande* / *sallette*<sup>71</sup>.

Although Maria Magdalena may have shared the first rooms of her husband's apartment (fig. 2, n<sup>o</sup> 3, S, 5, 6)<sup>72</sup>, it is quite likely that her apartment had a separate access from the *sala* in the north wing (fig. 2, n<sup>o</sup> 9), since one of the door hangings (*portiere*) in this *sala* displayed her coat of arms still in 1638<sup>73</sup>. This disposition mirrored the one documented by the 1597 inventory for Christine's apartment. In both cases one antechamber (fig. 1, n<sup>o</sup> 13 / fig. 2, n<sup>o</sup> 7) led to the bedroom (fig. 1, n<sup>o</sup> 16 / fig. 2, AB1) which probably doubled as audience chamber on certain occasions.

Documents referring to Maria Magdalena's villa Poggio Imperiale prove that the Archduchess sometimes received visitors when she was lying in bed, e.g. in case of sickness<sup>74</sup> – a behaviour completely taboo under the Spanish Habsburg etiquette<sup>75</sup>. As in the Palazzo Pitti, the ceremonial nucleus of the Archduchess's apartment at Poggio Imperiale consisted only of three rooms: a large *sala*, an *anticamera* and the bedroom<sup>76</sup>. According to Hoppe, the *anticamera* served as *camera delle udienze*<sup>77</sup>. Strikingly, at a time when sovereigns generally strove to increase the number of antechambers leading to their audience chamber<sup>78</sup>, Maria Magdalena received guests in the room directly adjacent to the main *sala*. It would have been more dignified to make them pass through the *anticamera* before they reached the audience room, i.e. in this case a room with a state bed. Of course, as at the court of France, audiences in the bedchamber did not normally imply that the host was lying in bed but rather that one stood or sat fully clothed beside the bed<sup>79</sup>. Perhaps Maria Magdalena made use of both variants, depending on the occasion.

A report on the elaborate etiquette observed by Christine of Lorraine, written after her death in 1636, indicates that there was a certain flexibility concerning the use of rooms. Christine received guests in several places – in her *camera*, in an *anticamera* and also in a room next to a chapel<sup>80</sup>. If this text refers to the Palazzo Pitti, the rooms implied are AB2 (the *camera* as both audience chamber and bedroom), n<sup>o</sup> 11 (preceding the chapel) and probably A2 (the

71. The ceremony described in note 68 above implies that Christine of Lorraine passed through her son's apartment when she went to dine in the *sallette*.

72. Such an arrangement would have prefigured the interior distribution of some seventeenth century Roman palaces where husband and wife shared the first rooms of an apartment which then split up into two parallel suites of rooms: cf. WADDY 1990, p. 28, and Christina Strunck, *Berninis unbekanntes Meisterwerk. Die Galleria Colonna in Rom und die Kunstpatronage des römischen Uradels*, Munich, 2007, p. 102-105.

73. ASF, GM 525, fol. 47r: "Dua portiere di panno d'arazzo alte braccia 4 2/3 larghe braccia 3 1/3 l'una con arme de Medici e Austria foderate di tela rossa."

74. HOPPE 2012, p. 86-89.

75. HOFMANN 1985, p. 168.

76. HOPPE 2012, p. 46, fig. 21, n<sup>os</sup> 3, 4, 13.

77. HOPPE 2012, p. 86, 281-284.

78. See above note 38.

79. For a pictorial representation of a formal audience in front of the ruler's bed see for instance Daniel Meyer, *Gli arazzi del re sole. Les Tapisseries de l'Histoire du Roi*, Florence, 1982, plate 8.

80. ASF, Miscellanea Medicea 601, ins. 18, fol. 2v-3r: "Quanto all'Audienze Ordinarie correnti S. A. [Christine of Lorraine] ne usò di due sorti, una pubblica che nell'ultimo haveva tralasciata, et era sopra lo strato piccolo, preparato per tal effetto con sedia vicino alla Cappella, dove finita la Messa, postasi a sedere dava audienza ad ogni sorte di Persona senza muoversi [...]. L'altre Audienze private correnti S. A. le dava in Camera o nell'Anticamera dove le tornava bene, il più delle volte a sedere senza muoversi [...]."

*anticamera* to room n° 11 which at the same time doubled as audience chamber on certain occasions). A similar arrangement of two alternative audience rooms, one of them outfitted with a state bed and both accessible from the same antechamber, was introduced almost contemporaneously at the court of France by the wife of Henri IV, queen Maria de' Medici<sup>81</sup>. As Sara Galletti has argued, this structure served to distinguish between guests of different rank, while at the same time maintaining a sense of "closeness" to the visitors (who only had to pass through one antechamber).

At the Spanish court, on the contrary, visitors were lead through a staggeringly long series of rooms before they finally reached the king's audience chamber. The quasi-sacred Habsburg monarch wished to emphasize the enormous distance between himself and the world of common mortals<sup>82</sup>. Similarly, the Spanish queen also possessed a large apartment comprising several antechambers, with six rooms preceding her bedchamber<sup>83</sup>. In Rome the "standard" apartment of a noblewoman had two *anticamere*, while a female relative of a Pope could boast up to four antechambers<sup>84</sup>. Therefore it seems extremely modest that the French queen and the Grand Duchess of Tuscany disposed only of one antechamber.

In his biographies of illustrious women published in 1596 Francesco Serdonati devoted the final entry to his patron Christine of Lorraine, stressing her accessibility and close contact with her people. He claimed that the Grand Duchess received her subjects rather like brothers and sisters, praising "l'umiltà, e affabilità, con la quale è usata accogliere, chi le va a parlare, ti parrebbe, che ascoltasse fratelli, sorelle e non sudditi o vassalli, che tutti benignamente ascolta, a tutti porge il disiato aiuto, e con tutti si mostra benigna, e umile in fatto, e cortese in detto"<sup>85</sup>. *Familiarité* between the royal family and their subjects constituted a hallmark of the French court where Christine of Lorraine had grown up<sup>86</sup>. Christine's role model, her powerful grandmother Caterina de' Medici, used a seemingly cordial style of intense communication in order to achieve her political aims<sup>87</sup>. I think that Christine wished to emulate this style and therefore already in 1589 opted actively for an apartment structure which privileged easy access and bridged the social gap between the Grand Duchess and her visitors. This was expressed through limiting the number of antechambers to just one (fig. 1, n° 13). Her daughter-in-law Maria Magdalena of Austria later followed her model and adopted the same system (fig. 2, n° 7).

81. Sara Galletti, "L'appartement de Marie de Médicis au palais du Luxembourg", in *Marie de Médicis, un gouvernement par les arts*, eds. Paola Bassani Pacht/Thierry Crépin-Leblond/Nicolas Sainte Fare Garnot/Francesco Solinas, Paris, 2003, p. 124-133.

82. Yves Bottineau, "L'Alcázar de Madrid et l'inventaire de 1686. Aspects de la cour d'Espagne au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle", *Bulletin Hispanique*, vol. 58, 1956, n° 4, p. 421-452: p. 430-432, continued in vol. 60, 1958, n° 1, p. 30-61: p. 33. REDWORTH, CHECA 1999, p. 56-59. Jonathan Brown and John H. Elliott, *A Palace for a King. The Buen Retiro and the Court of Philip IV*, Revised and Expanded Edition, New Haven/London, 2003, p. 31-32. Marie-Louise d'Orléans was expressly told "qu'il n'est pas permis, sans indécence, aux reines d'Espagne de se laisser voir comme de simples mortelles": BOTTINEAU 1972, p. 157.

83. According to HOFMANN 1985, p. 179, before 1621 the queen's apartment at the Alcazar in Madrid consisted of *Sala – Saleta – Antecámara – Cámara más afuera – Cámara del Estrado – Cámara más adentro – Cámara – Retrete*. On the situation after 1621 cf. Yves Bottineau, "Philip V and the Alcázar at Madrid", *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 98, 1956, n° 636, p. 68-75: p. 74. Regarding the ceremonial presence of the queen within the Alcazar see also Catherine Wilkinson Zerner, "Women's Quarters in Spanish Royal Palaces", in *Architecture et vie sociale. L'organisation intérieure des grandes demeures à la fin du Moyen Âge et à la Renaissance*, ed. Jean Guillaume, Paris, 1994, p. 127-134.

84. WADDY 1990, p. 27-29.

85. *Libro di M. Giovanni Boccaccio Delle Donne Illustri. Tradotto di Latino in Volgare per M. Giuseppe Betussi, con una giunta fatta dal medesimo, D'Altre Donne Famose, e un'altra nuova giunta fatta per M. Francesco Serdonati d'altra Donne Illustri Antiche e Moderne*, Florence, 1596, p. 673-674.

86. Marc H. Smith, "Familiarité française et politesse italienne au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle. Les diplomates italiens juges des manières de la cour des Valois", first published in 1988, online version: <http://cour-de-france.fr/article1833.html>

87. CHATENET 2002a, p. 187, 192. See especially Caterina's extensive correspondence: *Lettres de Catherine de Médicis*, ed. by Hector La Ferrière-Percy and Gustave Baguenault de Puchesse, 10 vols., Paris, 1880-1943.

On becoming a widow, Christine's lifestyle certainly changed. A document from 1625 informs us that her *camera* (fig. 2, AB2) had black taffeta wall hangings<sup>88</sup>. Such wall hangings could be used temporarily during periods of mourning, but it seems that Christine opted for permanent black as a widow. A life-size portrait painted before 1618 shows her in a black room<sup>89</sup> (fig. 3), and the description of an audience with Christine in 1613 mentions that she presented herself under a baldachin on a special seat placed on a black carpet (*strato*)<sup>90</sup>.

As Sheila ffolliott has pointed out, Caterina de' Medici valued the capacity of her black widow's dress to make her stand out from the colourful court society, using it as a means for creating authority<sup>91</sup>. Christine of Lorraine did not only wear black and live in black rooms, but at least towards the end of her life she even went so far as to use a black mask during audiences. She only lifted it when she received princes, royal ambassadors and papal nuntios, but not for visitors of lesser rank<sup>92</sup>. The mask, the omnipresence of black and the numerous religious works of art, which according to the inventory of 1621 decorated Christine's lodgings<sup>93</sup>, cast her as the modest, devout widow, a model of decent female behaviour.

The fact that Christine of Lorraine did not yield her apartment to the new First Lady Maria Magdalena of Austria and that she possessed the biggest single apartment within the whole palace (fig. 2, nos 10-13) perfectly expressed her political power in that period. As mentioned above, foreign ambassadors reported that Christine was the one who took the decisions for her young and inexperienced son. Her power is obvious in the political correspondence, but also appears between the lines of the court diaries: ambassadors and other high-ranking guests usually visited Christine first, then the Grand Duke and only finally Maria Magdalena<sup>94</sup>.

88. ASF, GM 435, fol. 116. In 1628 a black baldachin is mentioned: *ibidem*, fol. 122.

89. A colour reproduction of a copy of this painting can be found in *Jacques Callot 1592-1635* (exhibition catalogue Nancy, Musée historique lorrain, Paris, 1992, p. 141, fig. 28. On the various versions of the portrait see Isabelle M. J. Paulussen, "Tiberio Titi, ritrattista dei Medici", *Medelingen van het Nederlands Instituut te Rome*, vol. 42, 1980, p. 101-128 and 179-190: p. 108-109, 185. The dating was corrected by LANGEDIJK 1981-1987, vol. 2, p. 666-667.

90. BNCF, G. Capponi 261/1, fol. 453r: "Il detto ambasciatore andò alla udienza a Madama [,] lo ricevè in camera con la residenza et il baldacino et lo strato nero in terra [,] lo ricevè a mezzo lo strato e stette a sedere poi al'andare se ne l'accompagnò quasi alla fine dello strato [...]". According to Salvatore Battaglia, *Grande dizionario della lingua italiana*, vol. 15, Turin 1990, p. 860, the term "residenza" can denote a "seggio, scanno su cui si siede un magistrato, un ufficiale, un prelado, ecc. durante l'esercizio delle sue funzioni". ASF, Miscellanea Medicea 601, ins. 18, explains in detail how Christine differentiated between persons of different rank by the amount of steps she came towards them on or before the *strato*.

91. Sheila ffolliott, "Catherine de' Medici as Artemisia: Figuring the Powerful Widow", in *Rewriting the Renaissance. The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Margaret W. Ferguson/Maureen Quilligan/Nancy J. Vickers, Chicago/London, 1986, p. 227-241: p. 228-229. See also Sheila ffolliott, "Caterina de' Medici (1519-1589): Königin aus Zufall", in *Die Frauen des Hauses Medici. Politik – Mäzenatentum – Rollenbilder (1512-1743)*, ed. Christina Strunck, Petersberg, 2011, p. 33-40: p. 38.

92. ASF, Miscellanea Medicea 601, ins. 18, fol. 3r (written shortly after Christine's death). This text does not mention the colour of the mask, but probably it was black like the widow's dress. Once Maria Magdalena of Austria was widowed (in 1621), she seems to have adopted the same custom. In the autumn of 1626 Cassiano dal Pozzo encountered Maria Magdalena and her daughters in a black carriage, all of them wearing masks: Barocchi/Bertelà, 2005, p. 329. A portrait of Maria Magdalena of Austria with her daughters shows the princesses wearing black masks: LANGEDIJK 1981-1987, vol. 1, p. 183. A colour reproduction of this painting can be found on the cover of Kelley Harness, *Echoes of Women's Voices. Music, Art, and Female Patronage in Early Modern Florence*, Chicago/London 2006. That the princesses wore masks in public is recorded by Tinghi (BNCF, G. Capponi 261/1, fol. 455r) and proven by bills concerning the production of such masks (ASF, GM 390, c. 217).

93. ASF, GM 152, fol. 51-53: In addition to the family portraits there were several crucifixes, a Madonna by Andrea del Sarto, "un ornamento con il piede d'ebano con una Santa Cicilia morta dipinta in vetro dal Signor Averardo Medici", "un quadretto piccolo con la testa di Cristo di pietre commesse comprato", "un quadretto entrovì un San Francesco di Paola con ornamento d'ebano, havuto di Roma" and "un scatolino d'oro con il ritratto di San Francesco".

94. See for instance note 53 above; BNCF, G. Capponi 261/1, fol. 245r, 246r, 447r, 448v; CHAUVINEAU 2003, p. 93. However, exceptions from this rule were possible: For instance, when ambassadors from Lucca came to congratulate Maria Magdalena of Austria on the election of her brother to the imperial throne in 1619, they visited first the Archduchess, then Christine of Lorraine and finally the Grand Duke. Cf. PELLEGRINI 1901, p. 138-141.

All in all, in the beginning of Cosimo's reign the balance between the sexes shifted significantly. While Ferdinando de' Medici had claimed much more space than his wife (fig. 1), after his death the new Grand Duke accepted the "amputation" of his apartment (fig. 2, n<sup>os</sup> 3-6, S, A1, B1). His wife and his mother now occupied most of the north wing (n<sup>os</sup> 7-13, AB1, AB2, A2). This growing dominance of women at court also found expression through the number of female attendants. Whereas in 1602 Christine of Lorraine had a court of 28 women<sup>95</sup>, in the beginning of Cosimo's reign Christine and Maria Magdalena had 44 female attendants each<sup>96</sup>. This total of 88 still didn't compare to the more than 100 women in Caterina de' Medici's service<sup>97</sup>, but nevertheless it was noticeable that women took over increasingly more space within the palace – not only on the *piano nobile* but also in the *mezzanini* where the female attendants lived.

### The Period of Female Regency (1621-1628)

After years of illness, Cosimo II died in February 1621 at the age of 30. In his testament he had established that his wife Maria Magdalena of Austria and his mother Christine of Lorraine were to act jointly as regents during the minority of his son Ferdinando, supported by four male counsellors<sup>98</sup>. In the meantime, however, the balance of power between the two women had changed. In 1619 Maria Magdalena's brother Ferdinand had been elected emperor, which meant that her international prestige was much higher than Christine's<sup>99</sup>. Nevertheless an ambassador from Lucca stated in 1626 that it was still Christine of Lorraine who drew the strings behind the scenes, manipulating her daughter-in-law just like she had guided her son Cosimo<sup>100</sup>.

How did the regency affect the use of the palace space? During the first years of the regency the triumph of the women was complete. They retained their respective lodgings, and Maria Magdalena probably also used her husband's former rooms. As the emperor's sister she was entitled to a bigger apartment than Christine of Lorraine, i.e. the entire suite of rooms once used by Ferdinando I (fig. 4, n<sup>os</sup> 1-5, 11-16). The women were now the only inhabitants of the *piano nobile*, while the young Grand Duke Ferdinando II lived on the second floor<sup>101</sup>. When noble visitors arrived, Ferdinando, his mother and his grandmother assembled in Maria Magdalena's apartment where all three of them gave audience together<sup>102</sup> – most likely in the same room in which Cosimo II had received his guests (fig. 4, n<sup>o</sup> 14). Some special visitors were first greeted in this "camera delle udienze" and then led into the "camera della Serenissima Arciduchessa" for a secret audience ("udienza segreta")<sup>103</sup>. On the following days the visitor would

95. ASF, Carte strozziane, Serie prima, vol. 29, contains a list of the members of court, dating from September 1602.

96. FANTONI 1994, p. 31. At the same time the number of male courtiers grew, too: *ibidem*, p. 30.

97. CHATENET 2000, p. 178: while the queens of sixteenth century France usually had 50 to 100 women at their service, this figure exploded in the later years of Caterina de' Medici's life. Cf. Alexandra Zvereva, "Par commandement et selon devys d'icelle dame: Catherine de Médicis commanditaire de portraits", in *Il mecenatismo di Caterina de' Medici. Poesie, feste, musica, pittura, scultura, architettura*, eds. Sabine Frommel/Gerhard Wolf, Venice, 2008, p. 215-228: p. 225. Caroline zum Kolk, *La Maison des reines de France au 16<sup>e</sup> siècle. Nobles, officiers et domestiques (1494-1590)*, Paris, Cour de France.fr, 2007 (<http://cour-de-france.fr/article131.html>). Caroline zum Kolk, *État de maison de Catherine de Médicis, 1547-1585* (BNF, ms. fr. nouv. acq. 9175, f. 379-394). Document édité en ligne, Paris, Cour de France.fr, 2007 (<http://cour-de-france.fr/article2.html>).

98. DIAZ, 1987, p. 365-366.

99. See above note 94.

100. PELLEGRINI 1901, p. 158-159.

101. BNCF, G. Capponi 261/2, fol. 367r, 370r. See also FANTAPPIÈ 2003, p. 166.

102. BNCF, G. Capponi 261/2, fol. 367v, 370r, 398v, 642r.

103. ASF, Miscellanea Medicea 11, fol. 2r. See also BNCF, G. Capponi 261/2, fol. 642r. It is quite likely that Maria Magdalena retained her previous *camera* (fig. 2, AB 1); however, she may also have moved into her husband's former bedroom which was better sheltered from the outside (fig. 2, B1).

come to see first Maria Magdalena in her apartment, then Christine in her own apartment and finally the teenage Grand Duke<sup>104</sup>. These changes in ceremonial clearly indicate that Maria Magdalena was now considered more important than Christine, while during Cosimo's reign the sequence had been just the reverse.

The early 1620s saw a period of intense building activities at the Palazzo Pitti. Since 1616 plans to enlarge the palace had been underway<sup>105</sup>. We can now understand that these plans were prompted by Christine's sturdy decision to keep her apartment on the *piano nobile*. This meant that from 1609 Cosimo and his wife Maria Magdalena had to divide the remaining apartment between them – a solution that proved unsatisfactory in the long run. Although in the villa setting of Poggio Imperiale Maria Magdalena actively opted for an intimate, small apartment, she seems to have wanted a more grandiose accommodation in the main Medici residence that could compete with the standards in Spain and Rome where husbands and wives each had huge apartments of their own<sup>106</sup>. Thus it was decided to add a new palace wing to the north in order to provide sufficient space. After the foundations had been prepared from 1618, the first stone was laid in May of 1620<sup>107</sup>, only some months before Cosimo's death. The regents therefore faced the important task of completing and decorating the new building which was ready for use by 1626<sup>108</sup>. The south wing, necessary more for reasons of symmetry rather than for ceremonial use, was built only in 1631-1640<sup>109</sup>.

Perhaps the very first fresco decoration in the new north wing concerned the vault of the so-called "Galleria del Poccetti" (fig. 4, n° 17): The payments for this work began in 1622, just a year after the start of the regency<sup>110</sup>. The iconography clearly refers to the two female regents (fig. 5): their coats of arms face each other, framing a central personification of religion which embodies the guiding principle of a good and just regency. On the two ends of the gallery vault, the female allegories of Florence and Siena personify the Tuscan territory. Their crowns and regal coats make them look extremely dignified, a celebration of female rule.

What was the function of this room? Galleries were often places for private enjoyment – but in this case the rather serious type of decoration suggests a more public destination<sup>111</sup>. In Marmi's plan of 1662/63 the room behind the gallery (fig. 4, n° 18) is labelled "Camera del Consiglio" or council chamber<sup>112</sup>. This accords with the inventory of 1638 which documents that the room contained a highly political decoration. Its walls were covered with four huge maps, each measuring approximately 4 x 4 2/3 braccia (2,33 x 2,72 m). They represented the centers of Florentine foreign politics, namely Italy, Piedmont, France and Germany<sup>113</sup>.

104. ASF, Miscellanea Medicea 11, fol. 178r-178v.

105. SMALZI 2010, p. 73-74, 79.

106. See above notes 82-84.

107. FANTAPPIÈ 2003, p. 164. SMALZI 2010, p. 73.

108. In 1626 Ferdinando II received guests in his new audience chamber in this wing: see below note 115.

109. Rolf Linnenkamp, "Giulio Parigi architetto", *Rivista d'arte*, vol. 33, 1958, p. 51-63: p. 59. Laura Baldini Giusti, "Gli ampliamenti del Palazzo: progetti e realizzazioni", in *Palazzo Pitti. L'arte e la storia*, ed. Marco Chiarini, Florence, 2003, p. 76-86: p. 76.

110. Elisa Acanfora, "La galleria detta ,del Poccetti", in *Fasto di corte. La decorazione murale nelle residenze dei Medici e dei Lorena, Volume I: Da Ferdinando I alle reggenti (1587-1628)*, ed. Mina Gregori, Florence, 2005, p. 156-160 and colour plates on p. 330-333. According to Acanfora (p. 157) the room was originally an open loggia turned into a gallery only during the nineteenth century. However, an exterior view of the palace from the back, drawn by Remigio Cantagallina in 1632, shows already a closed gallery with windows: cf. BALDINI GIUSTI, 1980, p. 46, fig. 11. The 1638 inventory calls this space "Loggia detta della Gallerina" and lists many works of art in it, which presupposes a room closed by windows (Barocchi/Bertelà, 2005, p. 536-539).

111. On the functions of galleries see Christina Strunck, "Die Galerie in der Literatur. Historische Quellen zur Definition, architektonischen Gestalt, idealen Ausstattung und Funktion von Galerien", in *Europäische Galeriebauten. Galleries in a Comparative European Perspective, 1400-1800*, eds. Christina Strunck and Elisabeth Kieven, Munich, 2010, p. 9-32.

112. Barocchi/Bertelà, 2005, p. 915.

113. Barocchi/Bertelà, 2005, p. 535-536.

In his testament Cosimo II had established a regency council which consisted of the two women regents, but also of four male counsellors<sup>114</sup>. I suspect that the name “Camera del Consiglio” reflects the use of the room during the regency period. If this is correct, the gallery led from the joint audience chamber of the regents (fig. 4, n° 14) to the place where the members of the regency council met in order to discuss politics. Appropriately, the gallery decoration reminded the members of the council of their shared values.

From 1626 the court diary mentions the existence of a new, colourful reception room where the 15-year-old Grand Duke Ferdinando II gave audiences on his own, without the regents<sup>115</sup>. The descriptions indicate that his audience chamber formed part of the newly-built apartment in the north wing. These rooms received their present fresco decoration by Pietro da Cortona only between 1641 and 1665<sup>116</sup>, but it is likely that the audience chamber mentioned in 1626 was already in the same space that would later become the “Camera di Giove”, Ferdinando’s main reception room (fig. 4, n° 8)<sup>117</sup>.

The central *sala* preceding the new apartment received a new decoration, too (fig. 4, n° 2). The so-called *Sala delle nicchie* or *Sala delle figure* had always been the most prestigious space of the palace. It contained ten ancient marble statues in niches and was outfitted with sumptuous colourful wall hangings<sup>118</sup>. In May of 1626, a new, enormously large painting, measuring about 7 meters in width, was placed in the lunette over the central door<sup>119</sup> (fig. 6). The painting by Justus Suttermans represented the first public appearance of the young Grand Duke and the regents in March 1621, when the Senate had paid homage to Ferdinando in the Palazzo Vecchio. The painting thus commemorated the beginning of the regency although its end (on Ferdinando’s 18<sup>th</sup> birthday) was already close at hand. At a time when Ferdinando was about to become independent and was allowed to give audiences on his own, the regents wished to leave a lasting public memory of their rule. The *Sala delle nicchie* was the ideal space for this, as it served for state receptions, balls and other public events<sup>120</sup>.

The heads of the three protagonists in the painting form a diagonal that suggests their harmonious “alignment”, but also a hierarchy (fig. 6). Maria Magdalena of Austria, the most powerful person of the trio, sits at the right of the Grand Duke. She is placed in the foreground and marks the highest point of the diagonal. The colourful allegory of Florence on the right hand side of the canvas seems almost like Maria Magdalena’s *alter ego*. Her gesture is ambivalent: is she about to hand the sceptre to Ferdinando – or rather to Maria Magdalena? The preliminary drawings and sketches reveal that this personification did not belong to Sutterman’s earliest ideas for the painting, but acquired ever more prominence during the elaboration of his designs<sup>121</sup>. By introducing this figure, Suttermans shifted the focus of the scene: although nominally the Grand Duke was the head of state, the dominant crowned female alluded to the fact that women actually ruled during the regency.

While Suttermans painting foregrounded Maria Magdalena of Austria, Christine of Lorraine celebrated her own biography in the *sala* leading to her apartment in the north wing

114. DIAZ 1987, p. 365-366.

115. ASF, Miscellanea Medicea 11, fol. 178v: “fu condotto nel nuovo Salone, dove S. A. [Ferdinando II] dà Audienza da se, e dove è lo strato, e Baldachino colorato”. See also *ibidem*, fol. 179r.

116. CAMPBELL 1977, p. 185-222.

117. The Sala di Giove, decorated between 1642 and 1644, contained a throne with a baldachin: CAMPBELL 1977, p. 127. On its decoration see, *ibidem*, p. 127-134, 191-199 and plates 96-115. The structure of the apartment was slightly altered in 1638: rooms n° 3, 4 and 5 were united in order to form one big *sala*. Cf. BALDINI GIUSTI, 1980, p. 41.

118. See above note 21.

119. GOLDENBERG STOPPATO 2002, p. 13-14.

120. On the functions of this *sala* see for instance ASF, Miscellanea Medicea 11, fol. 178v, 183v, and FANTAPPIÈ 2003, p. 156-165.

121. GOLDENBERG STOPPATO 2002, figs. 6, 7, 9, 10.

(fig. 4, n° 19). According to the inventory of 1638, this hall contained numerous large history paintings which had been created for Christine's triumphal entry into Florence as a bride in 1589<sup>122</sup>. The choice of paintings underlined Christine's French background. For instance, she exhibited canvases depicting her departure from the French court and her embarkation at Marseille. The largest work represented an ideal family group with Christine's grandmother Caterina de' Medici at the center, surrounded by the French and the Florentine branch of her family (fig. 7). The two Medici popes Leo X and Clement VII tower over Caterina's head, symbolizing their support in raising her to the French throne<sup>123</sup>.

It is interesting to note that Suttermans painting was placed in the Palazzo Pitti in 1626, only a year after Rubens had finished the decoration of the gallery at the Palais du Luxembourg in Paris. The 24 canvases by Rubens celebrate the achievements of Maria de' Medici, Christine's niece, who had married Henry IV of France in 1600 and who had acted as regent during the minority of Louis XIII<sup>124</sup>. The courts in Paris and Florence entertained a close relationship, and therefore the Florentine regents were certainly very well aware of the many difficulties and criticisms that Maria encountered<sup>125</sup>. It seems that the Florentine regents tried to avoid making the same mistakes. Although they celebrated their own biographies, they did so on a less ambitious scale. Not only the style of the Florentine paintings is much more modest, but also their iconography: while Maria de' Medici was immortalized as Juno, the Florentine regents appeared as normal and approachable human beings, in a seemingly realistic rather than panegyric rendering.

### *The Beginning of the Reign of Ferdinando II*

Although the Florentine regents asserted their presence by commissioning Suttermans painting for the old central hall on the *piano nobile*, they left it to Ferdinando II to decorate the new spaces of the palace. On his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1628, Ferdinando took over the government – a ceremony that was staged in the newly-built *sala* on the ground floor<sup>126</sup> (fig. 8, n° 1). At this point the *sala* itself had not yet been frescoed while the regents had commissioned only the decoration of its adjacent loggia (fig. 8, n° 2).

The ceiling frescoes in the loggia depict female allegories of virtues<sup>127</sup>, providing a kind of female guidance for the new Grand Duke who could draw inspiration for his government from them<sup>128</sup>. I think it was an act of modesty that the regents did not decorate the new *sala*

122. See above note 59.

123. For a more detailed interpretation of this important painting see Christina Strunck, "Bilderdiplomatie zwischen Palazzo Vecchio und Palais du Luxembourg. Die Frankreichkontakte Leos X. in Darstellungen des Cinque- und Seicento", in *Der Medici-Papst Leo X. und Frankreich: Politik, Kultur und Familiengeschäfte in der europäischen Renaissance*, eds. Götz Tewes/ Michael Rohmann, Tübingen, 2002, p. 547-589: p. 563-565.

124. Ronald Forsyth Millen/Robert Erich Wolf, *Heroic Deeds and Mystic Figures. A new reading of Rubens' Life of Maria de' Medici*, Princeton 1989. Bernhard Wehlen, "Antrieb und Entschluss zu dem was geschieht". *Studien zur Medici-Galerie von Peter Paul Rubens*, Munich, 2008. The Florentine sources of this programme will be explored in my forthcoming book on Christine of Lorraine.

125. Elisabeth Oy-Marra, "Maria de' Medici (1575-1642), Regentin von Frankreich. Oder: Von der Kunst der Repräsentation", in *Die Frauen des Hauses Medici. Politik – Mäzenatentum – Rollenbilder (1512-1743)*, ed. Christina Strunck, Petersberg, 2011, p. 94-105: p. 98-101.

126. ASF, Miscellanea Medicea 11, fol. 216r-216v.

127. Marilena Mosco, "La loggetta dell'Aiace", in *Palazzo Pitti. L'arte e la storia*, ed. Marco Chiarini, Firenze 2003, p. 63-65. Elisa Acanfora, "La 'loggetta del cortilino' (o cortile di Aiace)", in *Fasto di corte. La decorazione murale nelle residenze dei Medici e dei Lorena, Volume I: Da Ferdinando I alle reggenti (1587-1628)*, ed. Mina Gregori, Florence, 2005, p. 181-184 and colour plates on p. 350-353.

128. The programme of the frescoes can be linked to a "government guideline" written by Alessandro Adimari for Ferdinando II: cf. STRUNCK 2011, p. 85.



with these virtues, but only the loggia, thus giving Ferdinando the chance to develop his own iconography in the main reception room.

In 1635 Ferdinando commissioned the decoration of the *sala* from Giovanni da San Giovanni<sup>129</sup>, a painter who had been much favoured by Christine of Lorraine. For example, Giovanni had already frescoed for her a chapel at the Crocetta monastery and a gallery at her country retreat La Quiete<sup>130</sup>. This goes to show that Christine welcomed the new baroque tendencies in contemporary art – but while the paintings created for her focused on female protagonists, the frescoes commissioned by the Grand Duke celebrated a famous male member of the family, Lorenzo il Magnifico<sup>131</sup>.

In December 1636 both the painter and Christine of Lorraine died. This year marks the end of my paper, but it was also a turning point for the Palazzo Pitti, as Ferdinando needed to find a replacement for Giovanni da San Giovanni. In 1637 Pietro da Cortona began to decorate the new Grand-ducal apartment on the *piano nobile*<sup>132</sup>. By dedicating each room to a planetary deity, Cortona made the Grand Duke preside over the cosmic order, creating a metaphor for “absolute” rule that eventually became a model for the design of the King’s apartment at Versailles<sup>133</sup>.

### Conclusion

Cortona’s frescoes at the Palazzo Pitti have often been studied as they embody the concept of ideal rulership in the age of so-called “absolutism”. However, it is even more interesting to look at the preceding decades in which the balance of power within the palace was constantly being negotiated.

On the basis of archival sources it was possible to establish for the first time the exact use of the rooms on the *piano nobile* during the opening decades of the seventeenth century. In this period the Grand-ducal lodgings formed no stable entity, but were redefined several times. Christine of Lorraine and Maria Magdalena of Austria claimed ever more space on the *piano nobile* – a spatial predominance that corresponded with their growing political power in this period. While Christine championed a French style of courtly etiquette that privileged easy access (via just one antechamber), Maria Magdalena of Austria insisted on apartments with many antechambers following the Habsburg fashion. However, at her villa Poggio Imperiale she imitated the intimate reception style of her mother-in-law.

The paintings commissioned by the two women for the Palazzo Pitti immortalized their contribution to the government of Tuscany, but they did so with a certain modesty, perhaps cautioned by the severe criticisms that Maria de’ Medici had faced during and after her regency. While the Palais du Luxembourg was a widow’s personal residence, the Palazzo Pitti served as the seat of the head of state and thus masculine iconography had to prevail. The Florentine regents saw it as their main task to secure the reign for the young Grand Duke Ferdinando II. Accordingly, they prepared a splendid apartment for him and left it to Ferdinando to decorate it corresponding to his own wishes. Thus their successful governance paved the way for the baroque triumphalism with which Pietro da Cortona finally celebrated the Grand Duke.

129. Malcolm Campbell, “The original program of the Salone di Giovanni da San Giovanni”, *antichità viva*, vol. 15, 1976, n.° 4, p. 3-25.

130. STRUNCK 2011, p. 84-85, 88-89.

131. Julian Kliemann, *Gesta dipinte. La grande decorazione nelle dimore italiane dal Quattrocento al Seicento*, Cinisello Balsamo 1993. Marilena Mosco, “L’appartamento d’Estate dei granduchi”, in *Palazzo Pitti. L’arte e la storia*, ed. Marco Chiarini, Firenze 2003, p. 90-104. Steffi Roettgen, *Wandmalerei in Italien. Barock und Aufklärung 1600-1800*, Munich, 2007, p. 158-161, 166-171.

132. Malcolm Campbell, “Cortona tra Firenze e Roma”, in *Pietro da Cortona 1597-1669*, ed. Anna Lo Bianco, Milan, 1997, p. 99-106: p. 99.

133. Robert W. Berger, *Versailles. The Château of Louis XIV*, London, 1985, chapter V.

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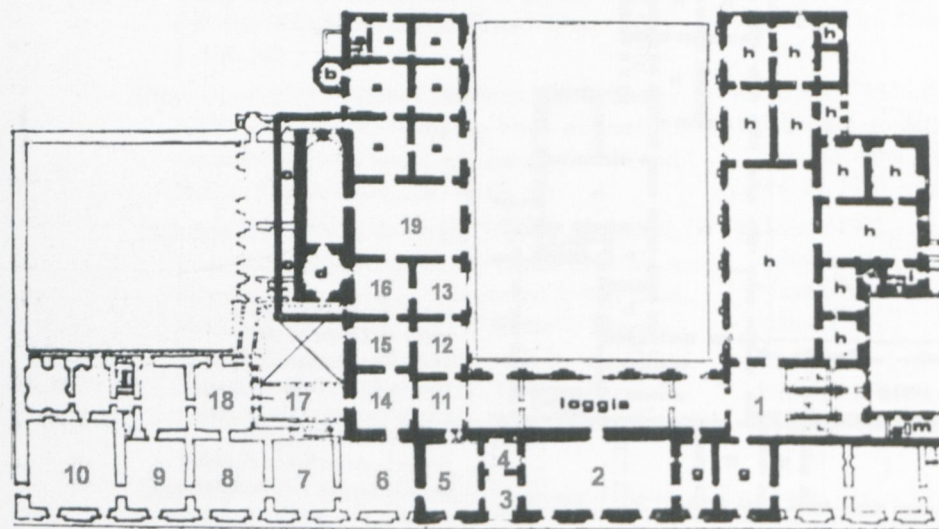
Fig. 1. Palazzo Pitti, *piano nobile*, situation in 1597. Reconstruction of the plan by Laura Baldini Giusti, reconstruction of the interior distribution by Christina Strunck. Only the black parts of the plan existed in 1597; the rest was built after 1618.



Fig. 2. Palazzo Pitti, *piano nobile*, situation in 1609-1621. Reconstruction of the plan by Laura Baldini Giusti, reconstruction of the interior distribution by Christina Strunck. A: audience chamber, B: bedchamber, AB: bedchamber probably also used for audiences.



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Fig. 3. Tiberio Titi, Christine of Lorraine, before 1618. Oil on canvas, 173 x 200 cm. Florence, Poggio Imperiale, n. 210 rosso, n. 1889-538.

Fig. 4. Palazzo Pitti, piano nobile, situation ca. 1626. Reconstruction of the plan by Laura Baldini Giusti, reconstruction of the interior distribution by Christina Strunck.

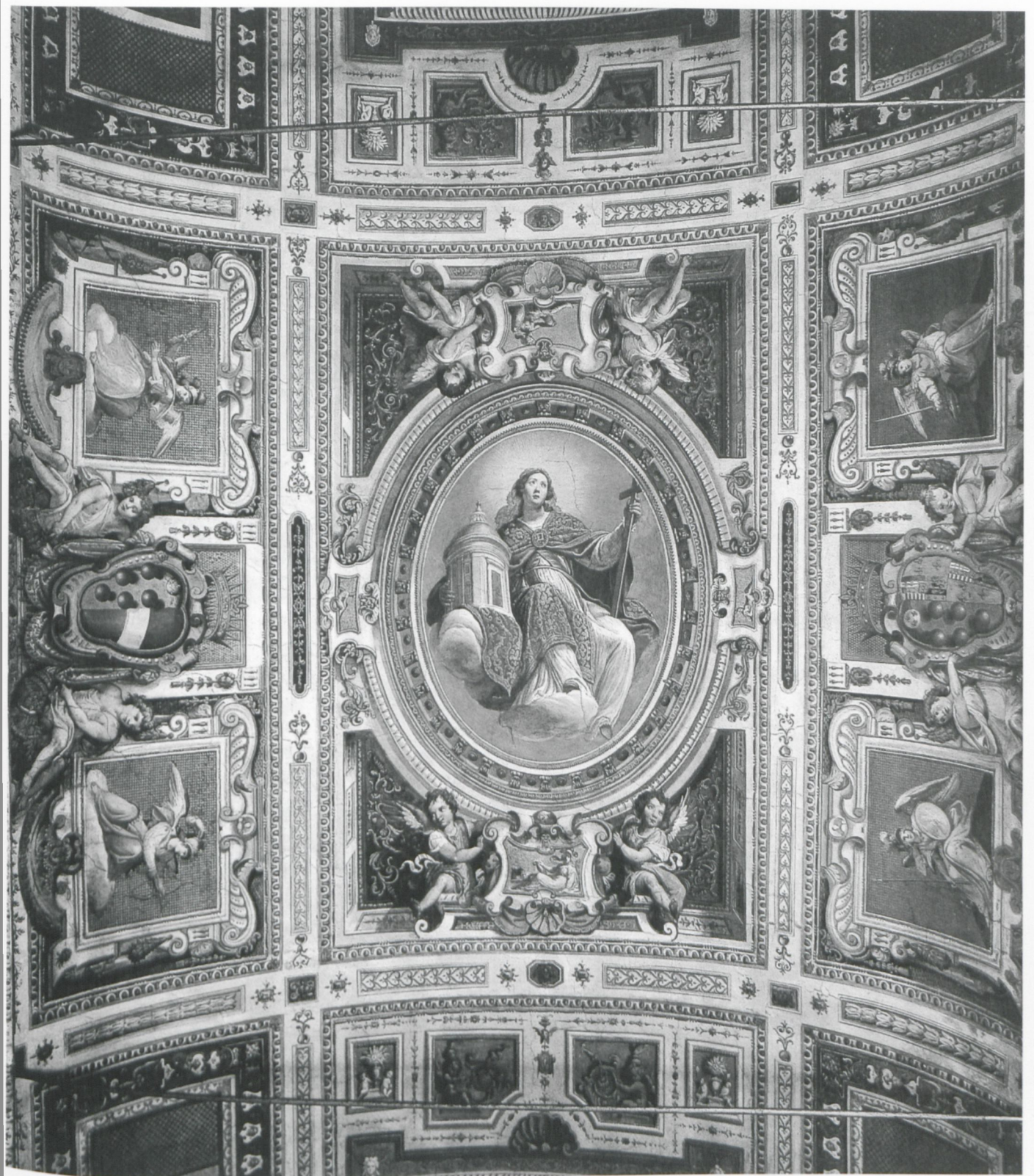


Fig. 5. Palazzo Pitti, vault of the so-called "Galleria del Poccetti". From *Fasto di corte. La decorazione murale nelle residenze dei Medici e dei Lorena, Volume 1: Da Ferdinando I alle reggenti (1587-1628)*, ed. Mina Gregori, Firenze 2005, p. 330.



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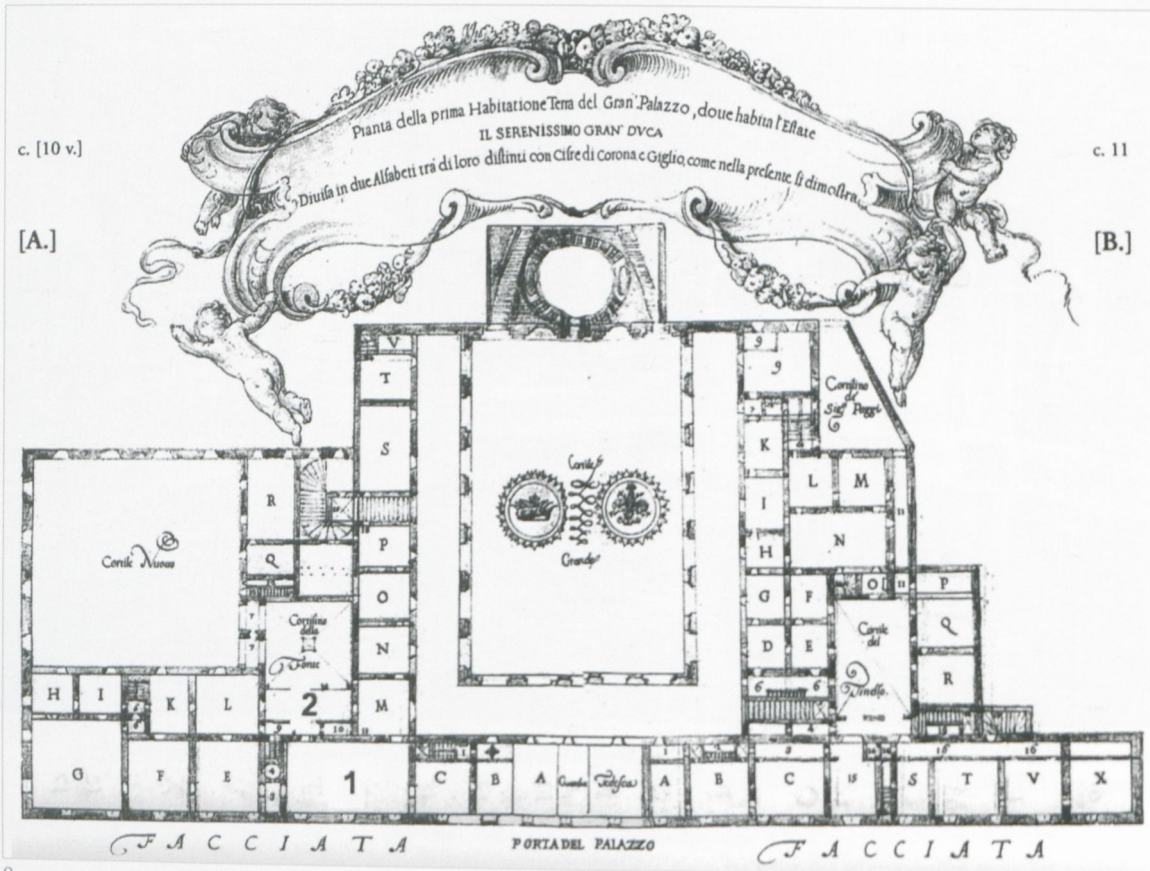


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Fig. 6. Justus Suttermans, The Beginning of the Regency: Hommage to the young Ferdinando II de' Medici in 1621, 1626. Oil on canvas, # cm. From *Il giuramento del senato fiorentino a Ferdinando II de' Medici. Una grande opera del Suttermans restaurata*, eds. Caterina Caneva/Muriel Vervat, Firenze 2002, Tav. II.

Fig. 7. Cosimo Gamberucci, Caterina de' Medici surrounded by the French and Florentine members of her family, 1589. Oil on canvas, 450 x 410 cm. From *Ferdinando I de' Medici 1549-1609. Maestate tantum*, eds. Monica Bietti/Annamaria Giusti, Firenze 2009, p. 108.

Fig. 8. Diacinto Maria Marmi, plan of the ground floor of the Palazzo Pitti, 1662/63. The numbering refers to the situation in 1628.



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